

© 2016

Stephanie Elizabeth Hunt

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

THE FORMS OF NATURE:
POETRY AND THE LIMITS OF POLITICS IN EARLY MODERN ENGLAND

By
STEPHANIE ELIZABETH HUNT

A dissertation submitted to the
Graduate School-New Brunswick
Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey

In partial fulfillment of the requirements

For the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
Graduate Program in Literatures in English

Written under the direction of

Henry S. Turner

And approved by

New Brunswick, New Jersey

May 2016

ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

The Forms of Nature: Poetry and the Limits of Politics in Early Modern England

By STEPHANIE ELIZABETH HUNT

Dissertation Director:

Henry S. Turner

This dissertation examines how ideas drawn from early modern poetics were integral to narratives of the founding moments of political obligation that shaped the development of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century political thought. George Puttenham claimed that the origins of all political communities derived from the work of the poet: “poesie” came “before any civil society was among men”; moreover, it was the “original cause and occasion of their first assemblies.” For early modern writers, pastoral in particular exemplified poetry’s ability to frame ways of thinking about political communities and their origins. Poets such as Spenser, Shakespeare, Marvell, and Milton recognized that pastoral’s depictions of landscapes that were removed from the centers of power allowed them to trace representations of what I call “extrapolitical” moments in early modern literature: forms of collective life that arise outside normative institutional structures and imagine alternative foundations for political membership. Spenser’s *Faerie Queene* shows that allegorical reading takes the place of legal judgment within its lawless romance and pastoral terrains, while exile in Shakespeare’s *As You Like It* forces characters excluded from the court to invent new ideas of collective obligation through the resources of pastoral drama. Marvell’s *Upon Appleton House* and Milton’s *Paradise Lost* experiment with pastoral lyric conventions to imagine idyllic domestic spaces and relationships that expand theological arguments about prelegal forms of government. These writers use pastoral not merely as a genre, defined by

its recognizable figures, themes, and situations, but as a *mode* of inquiry that penetrated a wide range of literary forms, from epic, to allegorical romance, georgic, and lyric.

Furthermore, pastoral served as a versatile apparatus for examining how concerns central to literary studies – including invention, mediation, and affect – were integral to political philosophy’s claims about the sources of our obligations to other humans and to the natural world.

Acknowledgments

It seems both inevitable and fitting that a dissertation about pastoral poetry should be accompanied by a struggle to find words adequate enough to express my deeply felt gratitude for all those who have offered me invaluable guidance, support, and encouragement as I completed this project. I would like to thank foremost my director, Henry Turner, and the members of my dissertation committee, Ann Baynes Coiro, Jacqueline Miller, and Steve Mentz, whose guidance and insights at various stages of the project have been instrumental to its completion. I'd like to thank Henry in particular, without whose endless patience, kindness, and encouragements, careful suggestions, and energizing conversations this project would not have been possible. I am particularly grateful for his continuing faith in what I was doing and how I was doing it, even when it had become unclear to me.

This project and my approaches to my work as a scholar and teacher more generally have benefited in many ways both directly and indirectly from the generous faculty at Rutgers, including Stacy Klein, Emily Bartels, Ron Levao, Christopher Iannini, Evie Shockley, Michael McKeon, Ann Jurecic, Richard Miller, Stephane Robolin, and Colin Jager. Thomas Fulton deserves special thanks for his continued mentorship and valuable feedback. I would also like to thank Lynn Festa and members of the Dissertation Workshop for the tremendously helpful advice in the early stages of the project, particularly for their insights on chapters 1 and 3. I also owe an immeasurable debt to Christopher Warley at the University of Toronto, who taught me how to read poetry and showed me that the Renaissance is, in fact, pretty cool.

I would also like to thank the Social Sciences and Humanities Council of Canada, the Rutgers School of Arts and Sciences, and the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation for

generous funding in the form of dissertation fellowships and travel grants that gave me time to write and opportunities to do research at various stages of the project. I am also grateful for the feedback I received on chapter 3 from the “Researching the Archives” dissertation seminar, led by Nigel Smith and Peter Lake at the Shakespeare Folger Library, and for financial support from the Folger Library, which made this possible. Audiences and readers at various sessions of the Renaissance Society of America and the Shakespeare Association of America gave me valuable feedback on sections of chapters 1 and 2 of the project, and helped me to shape my methodology more generally.

Finally, I’d like to thank the many colleagues who helped make Rutgers a great place to work. Cheryl Robinson and Courtney Borack do so much, and I am grateful that they have continued to keep an eye out for me. Many members of the Medieval/Renaissance Colloquium have also been a wonderful source of feedback on my work, as well as intellectual and emotional support. I’d like to thank Brian Pietras for some of the most important advice I’ve received, and which I’ve sincerely tried to follow: “perfection is the opposite of finished.” Countless morning-coffee conversations with Amy Cooper about our projects were essential to my thinking. Alicia Williams, too, has been a great source of support. I’d like to thank Caroline Pirri for both her intellectual companionship and her boundless kindness: she never ceases to remind me how exciting this work can be. Erik Wade has been a wonderful hiking partner and true companion. Debapriya Sarkar served as an important and invaluable mentor from the start, and continues to be my generous guide through everything. Erin Kelly and Alvin Chin have also been there from the start, and in addition to collaborating with Erin from the very beginning, they have also fed me many times. Finally, I’d like to thank my parents, Dawn and Keith

Hunt, and my sister, Katie, for their support throughout this entire process. And last but not least, to Luc Barton, who let me ramble at him sometimes, who read many of my ramblings at others, and who tempered the “scary intensity” I bring to my work with much needed moments of levity, joy, and silliness. You deserve all the red pandas.

Table of Contents

Abstract	ii
Acknowledgments	iv
Table of Contents	vii
Introduction: The Poet-Lawmaker in Early-Modern England	1
<i>Puttenham's Orphic Lawmaker and the Causes of Politics</i>	6
<i>The Art of Politics: How Nature Becomes Political</i>	14
<i>Historical Background I: Nature and Politics in Aristotle and Cicero</i>	23
<i>Historical Background II: Nature and Politics in Early-Modern England</i>	30
Chapter 1: The Political Philosophy of Allegory in Edmund Spenser's <i>The Faerie Queene</i>	50
<i>A "Plausible and Pleasing Analysis of All": The Method of "Historicall Fiction"</i>	50
<i>Justice and the Nature of Allegory</i>	59
<i>"True Iustice how to deale": History and Romance in Artegall's Law</i>	69
<i>"To make experience": Romance, Exile, and the Heuristic Possibility of Political Renewal</i>	81
<i>Calidore's Exile and the Politics of Pastoral</i>	88
Chapter 2: Pastoral's Political Ecologies in William Shakespeare's <i>As You Like It</i>	108
<i>Pastoral Attachments</i>	114
<i>"Much Virtue in If": Artificial Nature</i>	127
<i>Pastoral Exile and the Forms of Political Ecology</i>	142
<i>"Compact of Jars": Jaques and the Desert City</i>	152
Chapter 3: Framing an Infinite Nature in Andrew Marvell's <i>Upon Appleton House</i>	166
<i>The Country House Poem</i>	169
<i>Upon Appleton House: "Where Everything Does Answer Use"</i>	174
<i>"Paradise's Only Map": Nature's Infinitude and Theological History</i>	185
<i>Framing a Political Nature: The Meadows</i>	192
<i>Towards a Lyric Jurisdiction</i>	206
Chapter 4: <i>Paradise Lost</i> and the Forms of Politics in Milton's States of Nature	219
<i>The Fall into Law</i>	228
<i>Literary Form and the Redemption of Politics</i>	232
<i>"Our Being Ordained": The Politics of Nature and the Legitimacy of the Law</i>	240
<i>"Only sign of our obedience left": Natural Law and Minimalist</i>	

<i>Positive Law in Eden</i>	251
“My Author and Disposer”: Mediation, Lyric and Law in Miltonic Marriage	259
Bibliography	275

Introduction: The Poet-Lawmaker in Early Modern England

The figure of the poet-lawmaker, and its more capacious relative, the figure of the orator-lawmaker, has been ubiquitous in rhetorical theory since antiquity. Cicero's *De Inventione* famously illustrates the beginnings of the first civil society, showing how the first social and political groupings were convened under the auspices of a great orator's powers of eloquence. Cicero argues that before any durable civil institutions existed, humans must have occupied a wilderness in which their own actions and behaviors were indistinguishable from the beasts with whom they shared the open fields:

There was a time when men wandered at large in the fields like animals and lived on wild fare; they did nothing by the guidance of reason, but relied chiefly on physical strength; there was as yet no ordered system of religious worship nor of social duties; no one had seen legitimate marriage nor had anyone looked upon children whom he knew to be his own; nor had they learned the advantages of an equitable code of law.¹

The first humans' nomadic existence owed its transitory, unrooted nature to the absence of customary obligations and institutions. In Latin, the passage argues that "*nondum divinae religionis, non humani officii ratio colebatur*": that is, no system of religious orders, nor of human offices or duties had been established, or (literally) *cultivated* (*colebatur*).² Orders and offices are likened to the establishment of the first agricultural activities, showing how Cicero invokes georgic efforts to use and dominate an external natural world as a metaphor for how humans dominated their own nature through institutional foundations. Likewise, "legitimate marriage" and the recognition of one's own children's legitimacy, both concerned with the reproductive functions of the family and their implication within nature's own rhythms and metabolisms, are aligned with the

¹ Cicero, *De Inventione*, trans. H.M. Hubbell, *The Loeb Classical Library* (Cambridge MA: Harvard UP, 1949), 5.

² *De Inventione*, 4.

recognition of the utility of an “equitable code of law.” Law and domesticity, the distribution of offices and obligations, natural processes and their facilitation by human activity, are all necessary to the establishment of a peaceful and harmonious civil life. Yet, human beings seem to naturally *resist* coming together in civil partnerships. Both incorporated within its foundations and necessarily excluded from it, “nature” (human nature, natural reproduction and growth) both make and threaten to undo the foundations of stable political societies.

But in *De Officiis*, Cicero argues that “nature” is a source for human obligations. Nature provides the necessary resources that facilitate the exchange of goods and duties that subtend stable human relationships. Nature also serves as a guide to humans that allows them to fulfill their potential as social and political beings:

We are not born for ourselves alone, for our country claims a share of our being [*ortus*], and our friends a share; and since, as the Stoics hold, everything that the earth produces is created for man’s use; and as men, too, are born for the sake of other men, they may be able mutually to help one another; in this direction we ought to follow Nature as our guide, to contribute to the general good by an interchange of acts of kindness, by giving and receiving, and thus by our skill, our industry, and our talents to cement human society more closely, man to man.³

“*Ortus*” becomes in this translation “claim a share in our being” but it also means “having originated” or “descended from.” We are duty-bound to both our closer affective relationships and a larger allegiance to the state because, as Cicero argues, we owe our very being to them. Forms of partnerships predicate our own existence, and it is for this reason of the state’s and of friendship’s antecedence that we are obligated to make use of natural resources for each others’ benefit. Our nature, then, is always social and political

³ *On Obligations*, trans. Walter Miller, *The Loeb Classic Library* (London: William Heinemann, 1913), 23, 25.

even as, as *De Inventione* argues, we are allegedly not disposed to desire political belonging and stability.

How are we to reconcile these two contradictory accounts of human nature? Is the natural world a fundamentally apolitical condition that resists the establishment of durable political forms? Or is the natural world instrumental to their foundation? As the argument continues in *De Inventione*, we find that nature's instruction requires a supplement to draw humans from their natural antisociality to fulfill their obligations:

At this juncture a man – great and wise I am sure – became aware of the power latent in man and the wide field offered by his mind for great achievements if one could develop this power and improve it by instruction. Men were scattered in the fields and hidden in sylvan retreats when he assembled and gathered then in accordance with a plan; he introduced them to every useful and honorable occupation, though they cried out against it at first because of its novelty, and then when through reason and eloquence they had listened with greater attention, he transformed them from wild savages into a kind of gentle folk.⁴

This mysterious man of great eloquence is preternaturally gifted with the ability to perceive an occult potential for human excellence, not yet explicitly in evidence in the world he inhabits, but which nevertheless he reasons could be brought about by the constitution of stable laws and institutions. Possessing qualities of remarkable reason and the gift of eloquence to manifest reason's powers, qualities which every other member of his species possess only *in potentia*, the orator impossibly straddles the precipice of two ontological conditions, as well as two political ones: one in which humans are fundamentally predisposed to antipolitical tendencies, the other in which they come into their full nature by means of political affiliation. The full achievement of humanity's natural excellence comes about through the induction of artificial institutions – reverence for the gods, systems of obligations and law, domestic ties – that are utterly absent from

⁴ *De Inventione*, 5, 7.

this inhuman prepolitical wilderness, except in the form of the eloquent man's "fore-conceit."⁵

Cicero also emphasizes that this transformation from prepolitical antisociality to sociable cooperation secured by institutional orders is an agonistic development rather than an instantaneous and secured transformation in their nature. Human excellence is political in the sense that human intellect is fit for "great achievements" and best fulfilled in collective groupings set under "ordered systems." The efficient cause of that *telos* is the wisdom of one eloquent lawmaker, but the process of becoming political is not without interruption or resistance: "they cried out against it at first because of its novelty." The establishment of law by the wisdom of one great man is a necessary but not a sufficient condition for transforming prepolitical beings into political ones; this establishment requires the supplement of eloquent expression to bring about its fulfillment, but the act of persuasion also appears to be engaged necessarily in a continual process of translating natural antisocial beings into beings receptive to political forms of order and enforcement.

Cicero's pseudo-anthropological account of human origins is ubiquitous in the history of Western political thought and rhetoric. Prepolitical imaginaries of wildernesses populated by nomadic, antisocial beings were a consistent presence in philosophical and literary texts because of its heuristic value for thinking about problems that have been central to human experiences of political belonging and social interaction. Cicero's narrative of the orator-lawmaker asks: are political institutions natural or artificial? Do they allow us to cultivate our true nature, or are they a necessary corrective to it? How

⁵ Philip Sidney, *An Apology for Poetry, or The Defence of Poesy*, ed. Geoffrey Shepherd (London: Nelson, 1965), 101.

and why do we recognize political concepts and potentialities within apolitical entities? If reason and speech are preconditions for political duties and entitlements, how do we then encompass a nonhuman nature within our idea of political order and obligation? What do we owe to a natural world that does not speak in our own language?

From native forestlands and wildernesses to the new world, from Edenic social arrangements to State of Nature arguments in Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau, and others, accounts of prepolitical spaces, both real and imagined, allowed early moderns to speculate about human modes of existence before the establishment of stable political institutions in order, ultimately, to discover the ends, uses, and limitations of political life and to formalize its administrative, legalistic, and sovereign institutions. In early modern England, Cicero's account of eloquence as the engine that convened the first human societies had become commonplace, as did the Horatian identification of Orpheus as the first poet-legislator.⁶ This dissertation argues that in the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, poets claimed that because of its particular ability to invent new entities, to imagine new possibilities for affective engagement, and to think about how artifice uses, and even improves upon nature's own potentialities, *poetry* has a unique efficacy for reimagining prepolitical spaces as sites of inquiry into human relationships with each other and with the natural world. More specifically, the works of George Puttenham, Edmund Spenser, William Shakespeare, Andrew Marvell, and John Milton argue that pastoral is particularly disposed to theorize about state of nature arguments and their philosophical value because of its ability to examine how literature transforms the natural

⁶ For a catalog of Orphic orators in Tudor rhetorical manuals see Brian Vickers, "'The Power of Persuasion': Images of the Orator, Elyot to Shakespeare," *Renaissance Eloquence: Studies in the Theory and Practice of Renaissance Rhetoric*, ed. James J. Murphy (Berkeley: U of California P, 1983), 411–35.

world into political artifacts and modes of engagement. Moreover, pastoral recognizes that its conventions make these translations explicit and innately tenuous. In short, pastoral transforms politics and nature into a field of literary concerns.

Puttenham's Orphic Lawmaker and the Causes of Politics

Literary critics have shown the deep interpenetration of rhetoric and eloquence on the one hand, and the practice of law in early modern England on the other.⁷ These studies have tended to focus on the, now obvious, connections between dramatic form and legal practice and procedure, but inquiry into pastoral's relationship to law has remained more underdeveloped.⁸ As I will show, in Book 1, chapter 18 of *Arte of English Poesy* strongly implies that, by offering accounts of the earliest human societies, pastoral fictions serve a similar function as his version of the Ciceronian lawgiver, transformed into Orpheus and Amphion in his account. In chapter 3 of the same book, Puttenham claims for the poets the distinction of being, among other things, the first priests and prophets. Puttenham also claims that because they were possessed "of much wisdom and experience in the affairs of the world," the ancient poets held the distinction of being "the first lawmakers to the people, and the first politicians, devising all expedient means for the establishment of a commonwealth, to hold and contain the people in order and duty

⁷ For representative examples see Kathy Eden, *Poetic and Legal Fiction in the Aristotelian Tradition* (Princeton, Princeton UP, 1986); Luke Wilson, *Theaters of Intention: Drama and Law in Early Modern England* (Stanford: Stanford UP, 2000); and Lorna Hutson, *The Invention of Suspicion: Law and Mimesis in Shakespeare and Renaissance Drama* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2007).

⁸ For work on law and nondramatic literature, see R.S. White, *Natural Law in English Renaissance Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1996); Victoria Kahn, *Wayward Contracts: The Crisis of Political Obligation in England, 1640-1674* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 2004); Brian Locket, *Law and Empire in Renaissance Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2006); and Bradin Cormack, *A Power to Do Justice* (Chicago: Chicago UP, 2008). None of these studies has paid particular attention to how the politics of pastoral as a genre speaks to the history of legal thought.

by force and virtue of good and wholesome laws, made for the preservation of the public peace and tranquility.”⁹ In Cicero’s account, the efficient cause of political durability is eloquence’s capacity to convince the multitude of the expediency of institutionally-enforced cooperation. Puttenham’s account of poetry’s lawgiving force also claims this kind of expediency. Poetry’s “virtue” lies both in its “force” (Puttenham’s binomial pairing reminds of the etymological tie between the two words), and also in its moral excellence. No mere metaphor, the poets are literally lawgivers, and Puttenham wholly substitutes the arts of poetic-making for the arts of governance. Those arts that consist in “devising expedient means,” “establishing,” “holding and containing,” and “preserving” the public peace are explicitly *poetic*, not legal activities.

Not solely a substitute for the political knowledge of expedient governance and institutional-making, poetry also produces knowledge of the natural world and shows how natural knowledge is, in turn, deeply implicated in ethical knowledge: “The profession and use of poetry is most ancient from the beginning, and not, as many erroneously suppose, after, but before any civil society was among men. For it is written that poesy was the first cause and occasion of their first assemblies” (96). Invoking the language of Aristotelian science, poetry is, according to Puttenham, a “cause” of civil society: here, specifically, the efficient cause that assembles the materials of prepolitical life into a civil grouping. In addition to being the first legislators, poets were the “first that intended to the observation of nature and her works” (97). Not merely constrained to the study of the affective structures that compose human partnerships or the forms of

⁹ *The Arte of English Poesy, a Critical Edition*, eds. Frank Wingham and Wayne A. Rebhorn (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 2007), 97; hereafter cited in text.

governance that ensure their the observance of obligations, knowledge of the “causes” of political association explicitly demands natural knowledge:

Then forasmuch as they were the first observers of all natural causes and effects in the things generable and corruptible, and from thence mounted up to search after the celestial courses and influences, and yet penetrated further to know the divine essences and substances separate, as is said before, they were the first astronomers and philosophers and metaphysics. (99)

We can see in Puttenham’s claims of poetry’s disciplinary expansiveness a resemblance to similar claims made by Philip Sidney in *The Defense of Poesy*, that poetry is a “mistress knowledge, by the Greeks called *architectonike*,” which includes, under its purview, *ethical* knowledge of “well-doing, and not ... well-knowing only.”¹⁰ Sidney claims that poetry, the “mistress knowledge,” presides over the other arts. These arts – astronomy, geometry, arithmetic, natural and moral philosophy, law, grammar and rhetoric, medicine and metaphysics – are “built upon the depth of nature.”¹¹ They take nature as their central object of study, but they are not ends in themselves: they “are but serving sciences, which, as they have each a private end in themselves, so yet are they all directed to the highest end of the mistress knowledge.”¹² Sidney deems that natural knowledge is not an end in itself, but poetry translates natural knowledge into virtuous action, both “ethic” and “politic.” Likewise, according to Puttenham, the poets were the “first philosophers ethic” who

did altogether endeavor themselves to reduce the life of man to a certain method of good manners, and made the first differences between virtue and vice, and then tempered all these knowledges and skills with the exercise of a delectable music by melodious instruments, which withal served them to delight their hearers, and to call the people together by admiration, to a plausible and virtuous conversation. (99)

¹⁰ Sidney, *An Apology for Poetry*, 104.

¹¹ Sidney, *An Apology for Poetry*, 100.

¹² Sidney, *An Apology for Poetry*, 100.

Poetry, then, attempts to systematize knowledge, distilling from other spheres of intellectual inquiry and human experience a “certain method of good manners,” and, from thence, determining “differences between virtue and vice.” The pleasing, delightful qualities of its “delectable music” moves its auditors to practice the “knowledges and skills” imparted by its orderly arrangement of ethical knowledge within the context of “plausible” (that is, praiseworthy) and “virtuous conversation.” But as Sidney famously declares, unlike all other arts poetry is not subject to nature, for the poet “freely rang[es] in the zodiac of his own wit,” making things which are not of nature because they are *better* than nature: “Nature never set forth the earth in so rich tapestry as divers poets have done; neither with pleasant rivers, fruitful trees, sweet-smelling flowers, nor whatsoever else may make the too-much-loved earth more lovely; her world is brazen, the poets only deliver a golden.”¹³

Puttenham’s use of poetry to explore what politics and ethics are also entails a problem of what poetry is in relation to nature:

It is feigned that Amphion and Orpheus, two poets of the first ages, one of them, to wit, Amphion, built up cities and reared walls with the stones that came in heaps to the sound of his harp, figuring thereby the mollifying of hard and stony hearts by his sweet and eloquent persuasion. And Orpheus assembled the wild beasts to come in herds to hearken to his music and by that means made them tame, implying thereby how by his discreet and wholesome lessons uttered in harmony and with melodious instruments, he brought the rude and savage people to a more civil and orderly life, nothing, as it seemeth, prevailing or fit to redress the cruel and sturdy courage of man than it. (96)

The myth that Amphion and Orpheus built cities by moving stones and animals with their music suggests how poetry manipulates natural processes to “figure” political ones: that is, to both “fashion” or invent political forms, but also merely to imitate or represent them. Even as Puttenham claims that poetry preceded civil society, he also points to the

¹³ Sidney, *An Apology for Poetry*, 99-100.

fact that the poet is merely a figure of the lawmaker, and poetry merely stands in for an ineffable force that compels political associations to emerge out of natural states: “it is feigned.” The contradictions within Puttenham’s account of the poet-lawmaker, which states that poetry supplants the political work of lawmaking even as it merely represents it also illuminates another question about art and its relationship to nature: does poetry harness nature, or is it, like Sidney’s golden world, removed from it?

Throughout the *Arte of English Poesie*, Puttenham expands on the distinction between “natural” and “artificial” in an inconsistent fashion.¹⁴ The ability to speak is “natural,” but its actual development into intelligible utterances is itself “artificial”: “Utterance also and language is given by nature to man for persuasion of others and aid of themselves, I mean the first ability to speak. For speech itself is artificial and made by man, and the more pleasing it is, the more it prevaieth to such purpose as it is intended for” (98). This statement receives further development in Book 3, when Puttenham examines in a more systematic way how nature and art are related. Art is a “coadjutor to nature, and a furtherer of her actions to good effect” (382). That is, art improves upon nature by facilitating the achievement of her ends. Art also relates to nature by “surmounting” it, drawing out “effects [that] shall appear more beautiful or straunge and miraculous” (383). Art also merely imitates nature, “following and counterfeiting her actions and effects,” and is thus subordinate to it (383). And finally, art is an “encounterer” of nature, in that it makes things “contrary” to it, “producing effects

¹⁴ Derek Attridge, *Puttenham's Perplexity: Nature, Art, and the Supplement in Renaissance Poetic Theory*, *Literary Theory/Renaissance Texts*, eds. Patricia Parker and David Quint (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1986), 255-79, argues that art’s supplemental function in Puttenham destabilizes nature’s unique claim to “oneness and self-sufficiency” since art is called upon “to *produce* the oneness and self-sufficiency of nature by virtue of its own healing and perfecting powers” (271).

neither like to hers, nor by participation with her operations, nor by imitation of her patterns, but makes things and produceth effects altogether strange and diverse, and of such form & quality (nature always supplying stuff) as she never would nor could have done of her self” (383). Unlike Sidney’s chimeras and wonders, however, Puttenham’s examples of things “contrary to nature” are rather pedestrian: the house built by the carpenter and the garment made by the tailor are among those artifacts that transform nature’s materials into objects whose use are not prescribed by their natural essence, nor whose form are like anything found in the natural world.¹⁵ While Puttenham doesn’t return to a discussion of his initial definition of political making in the first book to tell us what kind of thing a political artifact is in relation to the natural world – whether it follows nature, improves nature, or is an “encounterer” of nature – he does conclude by telling us what kind of nature poetry has. The poet works “even as nature her self working by her own peculiar virtue and proper instinct and not by example or meditation or exercise as all other artificers do.” The conjunction “even as” suggests that the poet’s work resembles nature itself, but the force of the statement here seems to suggest that we are to take this resemblance to be something stronger than a mere imitation of nature’s processes. The more artificial the poet’s making becomes, the more he executes the “artificial well dissembled,” the more the poet’s art comes to be *natural*, not only in the sense that he lacks conspicuous artfulness but in the deeper sense that he augments nature’s – that is, his nature’s – internal virtues (385-86).

¹⁵ In this final example, we find something close to the examples Aristotle provides in *The Physics* of those things that do not exist by nature, though the basis of Aristotle’s division between natural things and nonnatural things depends on whether the object itself has an internal principle of motion and change. See Aristotle, *Physics*, *The Basic Works of Aristotle*, trans. Richard McKeon (New York: Random House, 1941), 192b.

In addition to its association with the investigation into natural causes, there is another sense in which Puttenham understands poetry to be a “cause” of political assembly. As a “cause” of political affiliation, poetry offers plausible descriptions to explain an apparent pattern of temporal and spatial arrangements of persons, objects, and events, but it is also an “occasion,” which gives it an entirely different temporal character. While “cause” and “occasion” may be regarded as synonyms, wherein the “occasion” is that which gives the grounds and reason for an occurrence (OED 7), “occasion” is also associated with the contingency and sporadic quality of “occasionality.” That Puttenham should also use “occasion” to describe the originary moment of political aggregation implies the fleeting temporal aspects of the poetic performance. The oral performance itself only occupies its own particular moment; its efficacy for compelling association amongst those beings predisposed to solitude is a matter of chance.

This version of political convening resembles one of two opposed definitions of political form put forward by Bonnie Honig. One definition pertains “(conceptually and territorially) to the juridical, administrative, or regular tasks of stabilizing moral and political subjects, building consensus, maintaining agreements, or consolidating communities and identities.”¹⁶ Politics in this vein is concerned with the settlement of institutional questions in order to “get politics right, over, and done with, to free modern citizens” from politics.¹⁷ A second definition sees politics as a source of disruption, as the “remainder” that cannot be contained by the juridical, institutional, and administrative

¹⁶ Bonnie Honig, *Political Theory and the Displacement of Politics* (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1993), 2.

¹⁷ Honig, *The Displacement of Politics*, 2.

settlements of this first kind of politics.¹⁸ This idea of politics, which encapsulates the “occasional” quality of Puttenham’s poetic lawmaking, consists in “contingent sites of principled coalescence” that have “no direct relation to a larger institution, state, or community,” but which nevertheless, as Julia Lupton argues, continue to address issues of obligations and rights that attend ideas of citizenship, political responsibility, belonging.¹⁹ The tension latent in Puttenham’s juxtaposition of “cause” and “occasion” is that the occasional quality of the poetic performance emphasizes the contingency of political association, which undercuts any argument of the natural ineluctability of political cohesion under legal institutions *even as* it asserts that humanity’s political nature might manifest in other ways outside the boundaries of these institutional settlements. In sum, poetic-lawmaking shows two contradictory ideas of political association: the first, an idea of politics that has a natural “cause” whose processes poetic intervention merely accelerates; the second, an idea of politics composed of elemental energies whose entropy poetry and law (as analogous yet distinct entities) struggle to contain.

Puttenham’s images of political instantiation, then, also generate a body of knowledge that clarifies, through the translative structures of allegorical figure, the essential properties that characterize human polities. Through the trope of the poet-legislator we are meant to see the “causes” of politics in the sense that we can now perceive the essential qualities that polities possess. Poetry functions not merely as a tool

¹⁸ Honig, *The Displacement of Politics*, 3.

¹⁹ *Thinking with Shakespeare: Essays on Politics and Life* (Chicago and London: U of Chicago P, 2011), 11. For a similar reading of Arendt that characterizes her politics as peripatetic in nature, see David Macauley, “Hannah Arendt and the Politics of Place: From Earth Alienation to Oikos,” *Minding Nature: The Philosophers of Ecology*, ed. David Macauley (New York: Guilford, 1996), 102-33, 125.

for recasting historical causality in the guise of ornamental figures; rather, figurative language intensifies our understanding both of poetry's effects on political constituents (eloquence persuades them to convene and cooperate) and of what defines "politics" as such. The stones Amphion moves with his harp are the materials out of which he builds a city. They also represent figuratively the "stonie hearts" of men that are softened by Amphion's song. In both the human and the natural worlds, pliability, the capacity to embody change, is a necessary condition for political existence. Allegorical figures enable the reader's movement from the known properties of experience to unknown properties of a remote past; the labor involved in tracing out the implications of the figurative substitution discovers the natural properties of poetry and human nature that enable political relationships.

The Art of Pastoral: How Nature Becomes Political

It is not a mere coincidence that many of these concerns about art, nature, and politics, which the emblem of the Orphic lawgiver raises, resurfaces in Puttenham's chapter on pastoral, particularly in Puttenham's disavowal that while pastoral art produces the effect of its own primitiveness, it is, as a genre, *not* in fact *a* truly ancient poetic form, nor does it offer a true account of prepolitical societies:

I do deny that the eclogue should be the first and most ancient form of artificial poesy, being persuaded that the poet devised the eclogue long after the other dramatic poems, not of purpose to counterfeit or represent the rustical manner of loves and communications, but under the veil of homely persons and in rude speeches to insinuate and glance at greater matters, and such as perchance had not been safe to have been disclosed in any other sort. (127-28)

Pastoral's character as "artificial poetry" ostensibly reminds us that its fictions of rusticity, of landscape, and of prepolitical antiquity are nothing more than mere fictions,

and that its representations displace their true matter to other times and places. As Michael McKeon has argued, pastoral “acquires its meaning” by mobilizing a “negative pole,” a dialectical structure which contrasts opposing spaces (specifically the rural and the urban), and the opposing values which are associated with these spaces in order to invert and demonstrate their interpenetration.²⁰ As a mode, pastoral always invokes oppositional terms: art and nature; native and foreign; past and present; rude and sophisticated. The pastoral process, then, always performs a comparison of the values associated with its discrete spaces. The mode of that reflection tends to be allegorical, and it tends to be read allegorically, particularly in light of Puttenham’s claim that pastoral fictions merely “glance at greater matters.”

Puttenham’s revision of a classical literary genealogy places pastoral at the end, not at the beginning, of a teleological development; it deserves that recognition as the most sophisticated form of “dramatic poesy” because of its political investments. Its political nature derives from its implicit allegorical structures, which use the generalizing aspects of its conventions (its stock setting and characters, its “homely persons” and “rude speeches”) to “insinuate and glance at greater matters.” Puttenham denies that pastoral can offer true versions of the “rustical manner,” and diminishes the importance of achieving poetical truth in the sense of crafting a plausible verisimilitude of country life, simpler times, and simpler people. Pastoral is “true” in an allegorically referential sense, and it is that particular kind of “trueness” that makes pastoral political. It is thus political in the sense that its topicality serves the function of covertly signing political

²⁰ Michael McKeon, “The Pastoral Revolution,” *Refiguring Revolutions: Aesthetics and Politics from the English Revolution to the Romantic Revolution*, eds. Kevin Sharpe and Steven Zwicker (Berkeley: U of California P, 1998), 268.

intrigues and presenting potentially unwelcome council to those in positions of greater power and influence than the poet himself can occupy.

Critics take Puttenham's famous assertion that pastoral "glances at greater matters" more or less at face value in their readings of Spenser and other exemplary practitioners of English Renaissance pastoral: through pastoral's fictions we (and Renaissance readers) are meant to recognize their authors' criticisms of contemporary persons and events. Critics such as Annabel Patterson and David Norbrook use thick descriptions of Sidney's and Spenser's participation in court politics to argue that texts such as *The Old Arcadia* and *The Shepheardes Calendar* show their authors' ideological investments and factional allegiances.²¹ And yet, in spite of that apparent transparency of intention, the fiction itself also conveniently gives their writers plausible deniability.

According to critics, pastoral is political, then, because it signals a text's investment within its own historical moment and the institutions of power that prevail in that moment. New Historicism, adopting a Foucauldian analysis of the relationship between discursive production and the production of power, has thus tended to focus on how pastoral perpetuates the networks of power it ostensibly positions itself against.

Louis A. Montrose argues that Elizabethan pastoral

creates beautiful and benevolent relationships between the royal shepherdess and her flock, and between the queen of shepherds and the spiritual and temporal pastors who guide her flock: that is, between the sovereign and the whole people,

²¹ See David Norbrook, *Poetry and Politics in the English Renaissance*, rev. ed. (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2002); and Annabel Patterson, *Censorship and Interpretation: The Conditions of Writing and Reading in Early Modern England* (Madison, WI: U of Madison P, 1984), 32-52. Norbrook argues that Sidney's *Old Arcadia* deploys its critique of pastoral conventions in the service of the larger project of critiquing the aestheticization of politics. Likewise Patterson suggests that Sidney's pastoral romance enacts a covert critique of monarchy and the overall system that had thwarted his ambitions at court.

and between the sovereign and the political nation, the elite through whom she governs her people.²²

Elizabeth's adoption of pastoral aesthetics subsumes any potential tensions between rival groups and their representative political bodies within pastoral depictions of the state as an organic, harmonious unity. Its reduction of the complex to the simple (to paraphrase Empson) in this sense enacts a sublimation of political tension in the service of a dominant ideology.²³ As Annabel Patterson argues in *Pastoral and Ideology*, Virgil's *Eclogues* "was so structured as to provoke, consciously or unconsciously, an ideological response."²⁴ Its history of reception and reinterpretation shows that pastoral's ultimate ideological expression is that "literature should be nonideological," should deny its investments in particularized conditions even in the act of declaring these investments.²⁵ But if pastoral's deployment of the generalizing and obfuscating disguises of its stock figures is indeed meant to import "greater matters" of courtly politics into a fictional framework, the question remains: what kind of ethical engagement does it represent? What kinds of judgment does it invite the reader to exercise, beyond the judgment required to recognize and to construct a commensurability between the "real" of political contexts and pastoral's fictional apparatuses?

Critics tend to extract Puttenham's famous formulation that pastoral fictions merely glance at contemporary events, but Puttenham's description of pastoral as a

²² Louis Adrian Montrose, "'Eliza, Queen of the Shepherdes' and the Pastoral of Power," *ELR* 10.2 (1980): 157.

²³ William Empson, *Some Versions of Pastoral* (New York: New Directions, 1974), 22.

²⁴ Annabel Patterson, *Pastoral and Ideology: Virgil to Valéry* (Berkeley: U of California P, 1987) 7. By ideology Patterson means "not only the dominant beliefs in a society, but also singular views (heterodox, subversive, maverick); not only the biases inherent in class differentiation and structured by large-scale, long-term economics, but also the lonely structures of personal ambition or its restraint" (7-8). "Ideology," then, is pervasive, but not uniform, and Virgil's *Eclogues* were flexible enough to support a broad range of ideological readings.

²⁵ Patterson, *Pastoral and Ideology*, 8.

fiction disguising its political matter follows from a previous discussion of how it exemplifies aspects of Aristotle's *Politics*. Pastoral's self-consciously artificial representations of prepolitical antiquity thus invite us to inflect contemporary political events and institutions with a kind of analytic framework that allows us to see their participation in more generalizing concepts. Paul Alpers' argues that the defining feature of "pastoral" is its capacity to produce "representative anecdotes": pastoral figures achieve the Empsonian maxim – that pastoral puts the complex in the simple – by showing how these anecdotes, while imbued with topical significance, nevertheless also refer to universal and comprehensive statements about human experience.²⁶ When Puttenham says that pastoral fictions invite us to see the first formations of society – "say they, the shepherds' and haywards' assemblies and meetings when they kept their cattle and herds in the common fields and forests was the first familiar conversation" (127), where conversation can be taken, among other things, as "the action of living together" (OED 2) – he is in fact also inviting us to see the first and general "causes" of politics.

Moreover, Puttenham argues that pastoral shows an engagement with different understandings of political causes, for he suggests that these first pastoral fellowships were convened for the sake of virtue as well as for the sake of advantage, convenience, and order, goals that are central (as well will see) to Aristotle's definition of the polity: "For no doubt the shepherd's life was the first example of honest fellowship, their trade the first art of lawful acquisition or purchase," where acquisition refers in Aristotle to the art of the household and economics, which were, not properly speaking, political

²⁶ Paul Alpers, *What is Pastoral?* (Chicago: Chicago UP, 1996), 15. In Marvell's "The Glowworms," to use Alpers' example, the full implications of the image of the comets "are not grasped by extending its significance into the world of wars and princes" – this is what makes for portentous interpretations. Rather, the comets become "representative" of all forms of death, suggesting a fundamentally common experience (55).

activities, though Puttenham here gives them this distinction by inflecting them with a “lawful” quality (127).²⁷ Here the “fellowship” or “conversation” defines the types of human relations found in pastoral in terms of “honest” interactions, but they are also the first “arts” or economic activities: their “trade” literally refers to the shepherd’s trade of keeping sheep, an action that presumably takes place in the open, uncultivated space of the pasture and common land, but it also stands here for the labor that underpins economic interactions as a kind of proto-political engagement in anticipation of “political economy.”²⁸

We might also further consider what it means for the activities of “acquisition or purchase” to be characterized as “lawful,” and what it might mean for the idea of a “lawful” institution to be figured within a prepolitical imaginary. According to Hannah Arendt, labor and work are human activities that are prepolitical and yet are nevertheless necessary for maintaining political life. Labor is “the activity which corresponds to the biological process of the human body, whose spontaneous growth, metabolism, and eventual decay are bound to the vital necessities produced and fed into the life process by labor.”²⁹ Labor also engages in ceaseless conflict with the vicissitudes of nature, its “processes of growth an decay,” in order to allow humans to escape nature’s hold on human life, to contain the processes that would threaten the durability of human

²⁷ “One kind of acquisitive expertise, then, is by nature a part of expertise in household management, and must either be available or be supplied by the latter so as to be available.” Expertise in acquiring these goods “is both necessary for life and useful for partnership in a city or a household” (Aristotle, *The Politics*, trans. Carnes Lord, [Chicago: Chicago UP, 1984], 1256b).

²⁸ See Michel Foucault, *Security, Territory, Population*, trans. Graham Burchell (New York: Picador, 2004) for an account of governmentality as a form of political economy: the “art of governance” that distinguishes a form and exercise of political power that cannot be “assimilated to or confused with the methods used to subject men to a law or to a sovereign” (165).

²⁹ *The Human Condition* (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1998), 7.

institutions.³⁰ This durability is produced by a second activity, work, which “corresponds to the unnaturalness of human existence” and produces artificial things including, among others things, legal institutions.³¹

An “authentic” politics, according to Arendt, is distinct from both the spheres of labor and work, for it consists in “action” that makes the political sphere inherently unstable and unpredictable, not because of its dependency on the realm of necessity and nature, but rather because of its allowances for human plurality that exemplify this plurality’s contingent, dynamic nature. According to Arendt’s distinction between private and public realms, between *oikos* and *polis*, nature is subject to politics only in the sense that concepts classically defined as “natural” have, since the seventeenth century, infiltrated the public sphere. Arendt argues that concerns of “house-keeping” and management – those activities which in classical philosophy pertained to “the fact of mutual dependence for the sake of life and nothing else” and which are suggested by Puttenham’s “arts of lawful acquisition” – assumes public significance.³² According to Arendt, by the end of the seventeenth century in Europe, politics had become absorbed by its administrative, regulatory functions, which she calls “lawmaking,” and these bureaucratic dimensions in turn have themselves absorbed “nonpolitical” facets of human life that pertain to the realm of necessity, and, thus, of nature.³³ Puttenham’s reading of the immanence of political law in pastoral landscapes perhaps suggests the processes that

³⁰ Arendt, *The Human Condition*, 100.

³¹ Arendt, *The Human Condition*, 7.

³² Arendt, *The Human Condition*, 68, 46.

³³ “The lawmaker was like the builder of the city wall, someone who had to do and finish his work before political activity could begin. He therefore was like any other craftsman or architect.... To them, the laws, like the wall around the city, were not results of action but products of making” (*The Human Conditions*, 194-95). In other words, law produces the conditions of public life but was not, however, a political concept until Plato and Aristotle.

Arendt has diagnosed, for presumably these “arts of lawful acquisition” allow us to escape the conditions of necessity. Yet the “occasionality” of the causes of these first fellowships thrusts a different kind of instability into these landscapes that makes the division Arendt wants to uphold between *oikos* and *polis* never quite complete.

The presence of “lawful” exchanges and the kinds of social infrastructure such exchanges would entail perhaps also point to the impossibility of expressing an unknown entity (an inaccessible past, an idea of a natural space or golden age that has since lapsed) except through known entities, such as legal and political infrastructure. The prevailing problem that eco-criticism has identified is the problem that “authentic nature” seems to reside beyond language’s ability to represent it faithfully: any representation necessarily risks distorting its object. According to Raymond Williams, Renaissance pastoral mobilized a constructed nature in the service of erecting sentimental depictions of an exploitative moral economy.³⁴ To this end, pastoral mystifies “real” conditions (by which he means the conditions of labor and production): “A considerable part of what we call natural landscape ... is the product of human design and human labour.... Some forms of this popular modern idea of nature seem to me to depend on a suppression of the history of human labour.”³⁵ Williams suggests that “step by step, these living tensions are excised, until there is nothing countervailing, and selected images stand as themselves: not in a living, but in an enameled world.”³⁶ Just as the effects of human labor and human

³⁴ “What we can see happening ... is the conversion of conventional pastoral into a localized dream and then, increasingly, in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, into what can be offered as a description and thence an idealization of actual English country life and its social and economic relations.” Raymond Williams, *The Country and the City* (London: Hogarth Press, 1985), 26.

³⁵ Williams, *The Country and the City*, 16. See also Williams, “Ideas of Nature,” *Culture and Materialism* (London: Verso, 1980) 78.

³⁶ Williams, *The Country and the City* 18.

suffering are excised from pastoral landscapes, so to do pastoral representations of nature contribute to its “alienation” from human society. We are left, then, with an idea of nature that can only be known through its constructions, in its “enameled,” petrified images, not in and of itself.

This is a version of a problem outlined by Bruno Latour in *The Politics of Nature*, which argues that the kinds of divisions between human subject and natural object will remain intractable so long as we maintain the ontological categories they depend upon. Either you make “subjects” into “objects,” and everything becomes inert recipients of external deterministic forces, or you convert “objects” into “subjects” and you lose the foundation of objectivity, disintegrating the composition of the world into absolute relativism. Latour argues that the impasse is resolvable if we examine subjects and objects as “actors,” both human and nonhuman, and trace the channels of their interactions, disruptions, and recalcitrance.³⁷ In this way, we come to recognize that “Language is not cut off from the pluriverse; it is one of the *material* arrangements through which we ‘charge’ the pluriverse in the collective.”³⁸ In literary studies, Timothy Morton implicitly uses Latour’s insights in his own critique of “ecomimesis,” which encompasses literary forms and critical practices that seek to eliminate the distance between subject and object by creating a sense of false oneness between them.³⁹ “Ecology wants to go from dualism to monism,” but Morton’s proposal to practice a “dark ecology” would have us perpetually acknowledge the separation between humans

³⁷ Bruno Latour, *The Politics of Nature: How to Bring the Sciences into Democracy*, trans. Catherine Porter (Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 2004), 85.

³⁸ Latour, *The Politics of Nature*, 81.

³⁹ Timothy Morton, *Ecology Without Nature* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 2007), 96-105, examines “world,” “state,” “system,” “field,” and “body” as the conventional metaphors that uphold this “false oneness.”

and nonhumans: “Rather than seeking some false oneness, acknowledging the gap is a paradoxical way of having greater fidelity to things.”⁴⁰ I propose that pastoral’s particular intensifications of its own artifices performs these kinds of translation of the natural world in order to show the “interactions, disruptions, and recalcitrance” of Latour’s collectives. That is, pastoral produces the “enameled” images of golden world fictions that appear to alienate both human action and nature from literary representations, but these alienations make these processes of translation explicit. Latour and Morton, then, offer a model for putting nature back into pastoral’s politics without forcing its politics out. Puttenham describes pastoral interactions as “lawful” to assert how legal structures are immanent within pastoral landscapes, and pastoral naturally anticipates their eventual foundation. Pastoral, already an artificial mode tacitly aware of its own sophistications, projects itself as a threshold between prepolitical and political institutions; that is, it presents a political community coming-into-being, a site for “lawful exchanges” that thrive in the absence of lawgiving institutions and even resist these institutions’ final settlement.

Historical Background I: Nature and Politics in Aristotle and Cicero

Pastoral fictions of prepolitical forms of fellowship, which derive from nature, which show the potential for nature to become political, and which nevertheless distinguish themselves from and disrupt legal forms of politics, point to questions that have persisted throughout the history of western political thought: namely, whether there is anything beyond the state that could give shape to ethical human interactions. In Aristotle’s *Politics*, political life is natural in two respects. Political organization is

⁴⁰ Morton, *Ecology Without Nature*, 142.

natural because it springs organically from other forms of association, particularly the household, which itself is formed because of a natural inclination to form partnerships for the sake of reproduction as well as affection: “Between man and wife friendship seems to exist by nature; for man is naturally inclined to form couples – even more than to form cities, inasmuch as the household is earlier and more necessary than the city.”⁴¹

According to Aristotle, while the household contains a range of partnerships which are distinct from the forms of rule found in the city, and that the household deals with kinds of human activities that are not political *per se*, he argues that they are nevertheless similar in kind to the larger forms of social organization that are proper to the city, for they evidence a kind of natural affection and respect for the needs of common advantage that can also be found in a city’s sphere of concerns.⁴²

Aristotle also argues that a political regime – that is, a particular distribution of laws and offices – is a natural entity. When Aristotle defines political justice in both *The Politics* and *The Nichomachean Ethics*, he attributes parts of it to “nature” and others to “law.” The “natural” part of the political regime and of political justice is that which corresponds to the universal, “that which everywhere has the same force and does not exits by people’s thinking this or that.” The natural part of political justice is distinct from the “legal” part, which consists in those parts of a city’s constitution that are “originally indifferent” until they have been laid down in laws.⁴³ Political justice, then, is natural in respect of its capacity to be aligned with a moral code that holds universally:

“constitutions are not all the same, though there is one which is everywhere by nature the

⁴¹ *The Nichomachean Ethics*, trans. David Ross (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1998), 1162a16.

⁴² The relationship between husband and wife is “political” because it is a partnership formed between free persons. The household also contains the “kingly rule” of fathers over their children, and “mastery” of masters over their slaves (*The Politics*, 1259a40).

⁴³ *The Nichomachean Ethics*, 1134b18-20.

best.”⁴⁴ Law, on the other hand, is only made “good” by convention, by the tacit or overt agreement of the members of particular political communities. But if a constitution takes part in “what is best,” it might also be considered natural because it embodies a universal moral excellence.

We thus find two kinds of justice in Aristotle’s account of politics. The first is an idea of justice that is primarily a legal and administrative form of justice: “justice exists only between men whose mutual relations are governed by law.”⁴⁵ Justice in this sense pertains to a well-ordered distribution of offices: “The virtue of justice is a thing belonging to the city. For adjudication is an arrangement of the political partnership, and adjudication is judgment as to what is just.”⁴⁶ But there is also a higher end to which political association also strives:

the city is not a partnership in a location for the sake of not committing injustice against each other and of transacting business. These things must necessarily be present if there is to be a city, but not even when all of them are present is it yet a city, but [the city is] the partnership of living well both of households and families for the sake of a complete and self-sufficient life.⁴⁷

A political unit, then, is not merely an arrangement of partnerships which is formed according to the convenience of proximity and the convenience of refraining from harming our neighbors, but for an ethical end of “living well.” Partnerships without virtue are merely alliances and are not genuinely political because their ends don’t endure.⁴⁸ To borrow Lupton’s terms, for Aristotle, “virtue” is the engine of “principled coalescence”; it becomes the *sine qua non* of political partnership.

⁴⁴ *The Nichomachean Ethics*, 1135b1.

⁴⁵ *The Nichomachean Ethics*, 1134

⁴⁶ *The Politics*, 1253a40.

⁴⁷ *The Politics*, 1280b30-34.

⁴⁸ *The Politics*, 1280b10.

Aristotle argues for another understanding of politics that also relies not only on the presence of a moral dimension, but also an affective dimension. Justice is a form of friendship that binds a city together, but friendship also outdoes justice and makes it redundant:

Friendship seems too to hold states together, and lawgivers to care more for it than for justice; for concord seems to be something like friendship, and this they aim at most of all.... and when men are friends they have no need of justice, while when they are just they need friendship as well, and the truest form of justice is thought to be a friendly quality.⁴⁹

“Affection,” then, is both a cause that enables political society, but it also produces the possibility for partnerships that resemble the kinds found within a virtuous city even as it allows for the possibility of an ethical fulfillment in partnerships that are also distinct from political alliances.

Aristotle’s philosophy then suggests two contradictory ideas of political order and its enabling of human virtue. The first holds political order as a totality in that nothing seems to lie outside its purview, for the city is ordered for the sake of “life as a whole.” The second shows a definition limited to those kinds of arrangements made by lawmakers. There are limits to the encompassing, unifying nature of politics, for as we saw, the affection that binds a city together is both a supplement to “political justice” in its legal sense, but also something else distinct from this juridical definition. Within the ideal city, it is also necessary that multiplicity prevents it from becoming too unified. Critiquing the communism of Plato’s *Republic*, Aristotle argues that members of a city are partners in some things, and not in others: “it is evident that as it becomes increasingly one it will no longer be a city. For the city is in its nature a sort of multitude, and as it becomes more a unity it will be a household instead of a city, and a human being

⁴⁹ *The Nichomachean Ethics*, 1155a24.

instead of a household.”⁵⁰ The city’s “completeness” and “wholeness,” then, is qualified, in the sense that it is complete and self-sufficient because of its internal multiplicity arising from human beings who are “differing in kind” and who may be viewed as equals not absolutely, but “reciprocally.”⁵¹

Still more, Aristotle also holds that it is possible to be supremely virtuous and fulfill one’s ethical function outside the city, for the kinds of action that virtue requires need not be in relation to anything external to the individual:

Yet the active way of life is not necessarily to be regarded as being in relation to others, as some suppose.... Indeed, not even cities that are situated by themselves and intentionally choose to live in this way are necessarily inactive. For this activity can come about on the basis of a city’s parts: there are many sorts of partnerships that belong to the parts of the city in relation to one another. This is available in a similar way to any individual human being as well. For otherwise the gods and the entire universe could hardly be in a fine condition, since they have no external actions beyond those that are proper to themselves.⁵²

Aristotle asserts that philosophical contemplation, then, is a kind of internal action, which can be internal to both the city and the individual human. Endowing the city with a kind of personality on the one hand, and suggesting that an individual is a composite of parts, justice on both the individual and the political levels consists in action directed towards the excellent management of the relation between these parts. In an effort to reconcile the argument that the happiest life is fulfilled in partnerships with his earlier statement in Book 1 that the gods, complete in themselves, are in no need of partnerships to attain the happiest condition, Aristotle then concedes that there is a self-sufficiency which belongs to the virtuous person that does not require participation in public life.

⁵⁰ *The Politics*, 1261a17-20.

⁵¹ *The Politics*, 1261a30.

⁵² *The Politics*, 1325b16-29.

The inconsistent distinctions Aristotle makes between the political and the apolitical, between the collective and the individual persist in Ciceronian thought; in Cicero, this indistinction is at the heart of the question: how does one determine both the proper object and limits of one's obligations? In Cicero's political thought, "nature" (that is, specifically, human nature) compels fellow feeling, for all human beings are endowed by nature with both reason and speech, which allows them to "share a common language and life."⁵³ As in Aristotle's *Nichomachean Ethics* and *Politics*, affection is a necessary aspect of duty and obligation. In *De Officiis*, the common life, which reason and speech give rise to, produces this affective feeling, which has the potential to be universal: "by teaching, learning, communicating, debating, and evaluating" language "endears men to each other, and unites them in a kind of natural alliance" that results in "fellowship of the whole human race."⁵⁴ A natural affinity for each other nurtured by a shared capacity for language and reason makes the limits of political obligation infinitely extendible.

Yet, Cicero nevertheless seeks to prioritize some obligations over others by distinguishing between smaller sub-sets of association within this wider universal community:

Setting aside that shared by the human race without limit, there is the closer link between those of the same race, nation, and tongue, which unites men immediately. Within this group lies the closer union of those from the same city-state, for such citizens share many things in common – a city center, shrines, colonnades, streets; their laws, rights, courts, and voting privileges; and beyond these the circles of acquaintances and close friends, and the many who have connection with each other in public affairs and in business. Closer still is the social bond between kindred. Thus we start from the unrestricted fellowship of the whole human race, and arrive at this small and confined group.⁵⁵

⁵³ *De Officiis*, 1.12.

⁵⁴ *De Officiis*, 1.51.

⁵⁵ *De Officiis*, 1.53.

Of these types of association, the family shares most in common and, moreover, is first by nature.⁵⁶ The “most pre-eminent or enduring” bond of fellowship is “friendship forged between good men of like character.”⁵⁷ While family and friends gain priority over citizens, and citizens over foreigners, Cicero concludes “we should respect, defend, preserve the bond of union and association between members of the whole human race.”⁵⁸ And yet, set above all these types of allegiance, the state compels the highest fidelity. Cicero’s political theory collapses the ethical field with the political, and places duty to the state above all other kinds of obligations: “none of these affinities has more weight and induces more affection than the allegiance which we each have to the state.”⁵⁹ In Book 3 of *De Officiis*, Cicero seeks to determine the relationship between two goods, what is useful (*utile*) and what is honorable (*honestum*), the former of which Richard Tuck aligns with self-interest, the latter with the public good.⁶⁰ Cicero’s ultimate conclusion is that the two goods are synonymous. In effect, he collapse goods that are proper to the self with goods that are proper to the state. According to Cicero, deserting the common good would go against one’s own self-interest, and against human nature itself. The state and the ethical use of nature are coincident fields; it is impossible to be ethical without being political.⁶¹

⁵⁶ *De Officiis*, 1.54.

⁵⁷ *De Officiis*, 1.55.

⁵⁸ *De Officiis*, 50.

⁵⁹ *De Officiis*, 1.57.

⁶⁰ Richard Tuck, *Philosophy and Government, 1572-1651* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1993), 7.

⁶¹ Tuck, *Philosophy and Government*, argues that Cicero’s prioritization of obligations to the state was taken to its logical limits in humanist thought, particularly in Machiavelli, where the preservation of the state becomes the highest political goal (20). Maurizio Viroli, *From Politics to Reason of State: The Acquisition and Transformation of the Language of Politics, 1250-1600* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1992) notes the absence of “politics” in Machiavelli’s *The Prince*, and its use of “state” (understood both as the particular regime of Cosimo de Medici and as a wider sovereign institution) in its place (128-29).

Historical Background II: Nature and Politics in Early-Modern England

In the sixteenth and seventeenth century, problems fundamental to classical ethics and political philosophy were transformed by new ideas about nature. Emerging theories of natural rights and property emphasized gaps between ideas of common possession shared among all humans equally and particular claims to limited, exclusive prerogatives. States of nature, both real and imagined, allowed early modern political theorists to think about how national jurisdiction and the powers of the state came to be instruments for enforcing natural rights. From Roman civil law, the early modern period received ideas of *imperium* and *dominium* as ways of categorizing different kinds of legal relations to the land. International law and colonial investments created new geopolitical problems concerning the scope of national sovereignty.⁶² Colonial expansion also confronted Europeans with contemporary societies in the New World whose political structures were not recognizable to them as civil societies, presenting them with what they imagined to be empirical evidence of prepolitical states of nature. Accounts of Eden, particularly in John Milton and Gerrard Winstanley, served a similar function, in that they enabled inquiry into the kinds of institutions that would inhere in prepolitical spaces and which

In *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, rev. ed. (London: Verso, 2006), Benedict Anderson traces the emergence of the “nation” as a concept that had acquired considerable ideological force in the eighteenth century, particularly as a consequence of the Enlightenment’s dismantling of the holds that religious organization, particularly in the form of a universalist church, had over European populations, and a simultaneous rise in the emphasis on vernacular languages (4-19).

⁶² There has been extensive historical accounts on the relationship between law and seventeenth-century developments on an international scale. See Richard Tuck’s *Natural Rights Theories* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1979), which traces genealogies of concepts of rights and modern political vocabulary of the state in humanist thought. For more histories that deal more generally with developments in political and legal theory and ideology that result from colonial and international encounters see David Armitage, *Ideological Origins of the British Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2000), and Ken MacMillan, *Sovereignty and Possession in the English New World: The Legal Foundations of Empire, 1576-1640* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2006).

could offer the promise for redeeming politics in the fallen world.⁶³ The emergence of new ways of thinking about scientific laws, which hold nature as a predictable object of knowledge, had to account for singularities in nature: wonders and marvels which could not be fully understood through available theories.⁶⁴ At the same time, an Aristotelian understanding of a vital nature whose motions emanated from within its own being was superseded by a mechanistic universe that saw nature as inert matter enacted on by external forces that could be generalized in descriptive laws of nature. In the domain of early modern political thought and beyond it we find conflicting roles for the idea of nature: on the one hand, an idea of politics as the domain of organic institutions derived from a natural order; on the other hand an idea of an apolitical nature as a wilderness that resists social constructions, and against which political institutions were founded.

The central question that early modern political thought raised about the essence of politics was whether it was in fact natural, and an amplifier of human nature's innate goodness, or whether political concepts were merely artificial and the effect of conventional agreement. The Aristotelian idea that the state is an extension of "natural" forms of association continued to hold sway in the sixteenth century. Thomas Smith's *De*

⁶³ In *The Law of Freedom in a Platform*, Winstanley uses Eden to argue for a radical restructuring of property relations. Gerrard Winstanley, "The Law of Freedom in a Platform," *The Complete Works of Gerrard Winstanley*, vol. 2, eds. Thomas N. Corns, et. al. (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2009) 278-404. For development of the use of Edenic dominion to justify man's sovereignty over nature see Keith Thomas, *Man and the Natural World: Changing Attitudes in England 1500-1800* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1996), 46.

⁶⁴ See Ann Blair, *The Theater of Nature: Jean Bodin and Renaissance Science* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1997), and Lorraine Daston and Katharine Park, *Wonders and the Order of Nature, 1150-1750* (New York: Zone Books, 1998) for different accounts of how natural philosophers encounter the problem of the marvelous. Blair shows how Bodin and his contemporaries struggled to bring order and coherence to ever-increasing quantities of objects of natural knowledge, which overcome the discursive frameworks that try to encompass them. Daston and Park observe a broad historical change in the idea of the experience of wonder, from an Aristotelian sense of wonder at the regularity of nature, to the wonder at marvels that break down the categories used to understand nature.

Repubblica Anglorum (1583) argues that “The naturalest and first conjunction of two toward the making of a further societie of continuance is of the husband and the wife after a diverse sorte ech having care of the familie.”⁶⁵ The family, in turn, evolves into a political community through its reproduction:

But for so much as it is the nature of all thinges to encrease or decrease, this house thus encreasing and multiplying by generation, so that it cannot wel be comprehended in one house and the children waxing bigger, stronger, wiser, and thereupon naturally desirous to rule, the father and mother sendeth them out in couples as it were by provining or propagation.⁶⁶

Because the household’s natural expansion propagates larger political units of “cities, townes, nations, and kingdoms, and of all civil societies,” Smith’s account of political origins suggest that the force which drives the commonwealth’s cohesion is, in part, a sense of genealogical identity.⁶⁷ The commonwealth is a natural institution not only because it resembles the household by analogy, but also because it is the natural outgrowth of the household.

However, during the same period, the idea of the state as a natural institution transformed into an idea of the state as an exclusively artificial institution arrived at by conventional agreement, as Victoria Kahn has shown.⁶⁸ Another chief difference between classical ideas of politics and early modern ideas was a new understanding of the animating force that holds political collectives together. As we saw with Aristotle and Cicero’s accounts of politics’ natural origins, the signature of political life, which distinguishes it from other kinds of agreement, is the presence of virtue, in whose name a political community comes into being. By the seventeenth century, sovereignty had

⁶⁵ Sir Thomas Smith, *De Republica Anglorum*, ed. Mary Dewar (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1982), 58.

⁶⁶ *De Republica Anglorum*, 59.

⁶⁷ *De Republica Anglorum*, 60.

⁶⁸ Victoria Kahn, *Wayward Contracts*, 56.

displaced the virtuous force of the ethical dimension as the primary means by which political organizations were convened and animated. In Jean Bodin's *Six Books of the Commonwealth* (1576), the signature of politics is the sovereign, which is both the necessary and sufficient condition for a commonwealth: "A commonwealth may be defined as the rightly ordered government of a number of families, and of those things which are a common concern, by a sovereign power."⁶⁹ A commonwealth, for example, need not be localized to a particular place, nor can it be too small or too large, for "So long as they are subject to the authority of a single sovereign, and the laws and ordinances made by it, they constitute a commonwealth," and without the unifying force of a sovereign, no association can be said to be a true commonwealth.⁷⁰ There is an ethical dimension to Bodin's commonwealth, for the commonwealth must be "rightly ordered," especially with a view to the "intellectual and contemplative virtues." But this right ordering requires that the commonwealth tends to the "mundane activities such as the administration of justice, the defense of the subject, the provision of the necessary means of subsistence," for just as the procurement of necessary goods are required to sustain individual human life in the household, itself a composite of offices, so to are the performances of administrative offices necessary to the maintenance of the state.⁷¹ While we see that Bodin collapses the ethical definition of politics with an administrative one, we also see a collapse of the affective definition into the administrative, legal definition: "A society or a community is rooted in mutual affection.... But it would have flickered out had it not been kept alight and fed by alliances, communities, corporate associations,

⁶⁹ Jean Bodin, *The Six Books of the Commonwealth*, trans. M. J. Tooley (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1955), 1.

⁷⁰ Bodin, *Six Books of the Commonwealth*, 20, 7.

⁷¹ Bodin, *Six Books of the Commonwealth*, 5.

and guilds, instituted by all sorts of people who knew no form of commonwealth, and were ignorant of the nature of sovereign power.”⁷² Virtue and affection remain indispensable to Bodin’s idea of political organization, and yet both are subordinated to the need for sovereign authority to maintain its absoluteness.

Debates about the relationship between natural law and English common law illuminate some of these questions about the “naturalness” of early modern political institutions. Universal and eternal, natural laws by definition cannot have an origin, but they offer a universal backdrop against which imitations of their forms emerged in human institutions and through which human institutions derived their authority. In turn, temporal institutions could derive their legitimacy from their resemblance to Natural Law. Critics such R.S. White, Brian Lockey, and Bradin Cormack have discussed how the English common lawyers celebrated the Common Law’s own uniqueness as a system of governance, as one particularly well-suited to the historical, geographic, and cultural specificity of England.⁷³ Though the common law lacked the kind of universality of Natural Law, early modern common lawyers nevertheless developed arguments that derived the authority of the Common Law from its historical durability. The history of the English Common Law (also known as customary or case law) deserves consideration in any account of Natural Law, not least because its defendants (primarily the medieval scholar English John Fortescue and the early modern lawyers Edward Coke and John Selden) argue that its customary character renders it the force of a “second nature”: that

⁷² Bodin, *Six Books of the Commonwealth*, 98.

⁷³ White, *Natural Law*, 59-71; Lockey, *Law and Empire*, 114-21; and Cormack, *A Power to Do Justice*, ch. 2. See also MacMillan, *Sovereignty and Possession*, whose introduction identifies this as a perpetual problem for common law theorists and colonial administrators because of the challenges it posed to the theoretical and practical underpinnings of extending English jurisdiction to colonial outposts.

is, since English Common Law has existed since “time immemorial,” and since it retains a certain durability in its resistance to innovations it comes to resemble a kind of naturalized law.

English legal theorists including Edward Coke and Francis Bacon attempted to systematize, rationalize and institutionalize an erratic, varied, and unwritten English common law and to suggest common ground between it and other legal codes.⁷⁴ The common law depended on strategic uses of “historical jurisprudence” in order to assert its coherence and organic development over time.⁷⁵ The common law’s achievement of an appearance of transcendence relied on “veil[ing] the actuality that judicial authority [was] always in the process of becoming, of being freshly instantiated.”⁷⁶ Historical jurisprudence, placing recursive moments of fresh instantiation into a narrative of institutional continuity, thus asserted customary law’s resemblance to universal nature. In other words, the common lawyers denied its contingency and the process whereby it acquired its present form.⁷⁷ This use of historical narrative produced legal institutions as an artificial, secondary nature, by conflating their perceived normativity with the moral authority and transcendence of universal precepts.

⁷⁴ J.H. Baker, *An Introduction to English Legal History* (London: Oxford UP, 2002); J.G.A. Pocock, *The Ancient Constitution and the Feudal Law: A Study in English Historical Thought in the Seventeenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1957); Theodore F.T. Plucknett, *A Concise History of the Common Law*, 5th ed. (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1956); A.W.B. Simpson, *An Introduction to the History of the Land Law* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1961); and Simpson, *Legal Theory and Legal History: Essays on the Common Law* (London: Hambledon, 1987). By contrast, Glenn Burgess, *The Politics of the Ancient Constitution: An Introduction to English Political Thought, 1603-1642* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State UP, 1993) argues that the common law’s resistance to innovation is idiosyncratic to Edward Coke’s work and that it forces him to hold a contradictory idea (namely that the common law is both customary but resistant to historical change) resolved later in the mid-seventeenth-century by common law theorists.

⁷⁵ Virginia Strain, “The Winter’s Tale and the Oracle of Law,” *ELH* 78.3 (Fall 2011): 558.

⁷⁶ Strain, “Oracle of Law,” 558-59.

⁷⁷ Cormack, *Power to Do Justice*, 333, n.11.

This brief survey of the relationship between natural and conventional understandings of political order has attempted to show that three main ideas seem to be definitive of early modern ideas of politics: first, that political order must be durable or suggest its durability, either through reference to its compliance to an external universal standard, such as Natural Law, or through the production of the effect of its institutional continuity, as the common law in England sought to achieve; second, that the administrative functions of governance, implied as a secondary cause of Aristotle's politics, become politics' primary end, ultimately displacing an ethical understanding of politics ends; third, that this institutional definition also accompanies the innovation that the legal force of the sovereign is the necessary and sufficient condition for any definition of politics.

At the same time, Natural Law suggested models for human forms of sociability that were not political, and which show the possibility for prelegal forms of fellowship. The medieval scholastics, particularly Thomas Aquinas, would add to classical ideas of natural law an account of human nature deriving from projections of prelapsarian forms of associations. Aquinas' *Summa Theologica* speculates about the type of "dominion" that would have prevailed in the state of innocence had Adam not sinned. Following Aristotle, he concludes that because humans are social animals, they would have led a social existence. Because this social existence and the "common good" which unites it require someone who (by nature elevated above the rest in virtue and knowledge) directs social life towards that common good, this social existence has a political quality in that it contains both rulers and those who are ruled.⁷⁸ The Thomist philosophers, including

⁷⁸ Aquinas: *Political Writings*, *Cambridge Texts in the History of Political Thought*, ed. R.W. Dyson (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2002), 4.

Francisco de Vitoria (1492-1546) and Francisco Suarez (1548-1617), later transformed Aquinas's claim that political, and not just social order, might have prevailed in a state of innocence. While Suarez was also an Aristotelian in the sense that he held that all men were social by nature, they were also all by nature free, and could thus hold no political jurisdiction over others. Rather, men were governed by natural law in non-political associations. Political societies, which required the curtailment of natural equality and liberty, came about because some insecurity persisted in a fallen, yet natural, state. Fallen humans could perceive some aspect of natural law, but nevertheless remained uncertain of or inconsistent in their pursuit of the common good.⁷⁹ Vitoria held that politics is a necessary unifying force, for without it we all independently pursue our own individual ends, and not the ends of the common good; but our "need to formalize our natural communities" comes from God rather than from self-interest, and we sacrifice our natural liberty for a greater liberty enjoyed under the protection of the state.⁸⁰

In the seventeenth-century, a new conception of natural law emerged which transformed the nature of political obligation: an Aristotelian emphasis on the virtues and a medieval political theory that saw natural law as a source of universal moral order derived from God became a form of natural law defined by its association with negative liberty and minimalist conceptions of legal constraint in a precontractual state of nature. As Victoria Kahn explains, a natural law that prescribed an objective order of duties shifted to a natural law characterized by its emphasis on the subjective right of self-preservation.⁸¹ Hugo Grotius' *De juri belli ac pacis* (1625) argues that conventional

⁷⁹ Quentin Skinner, *Foundations of Modern Political Thought*, vol. 2 (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1978), 158-60.

⁸⁰ Skinner, *Foundations of Modern Political Thought*, 2.161.

⁸¹ Kahn, *Wayward Contracts*, 36.

agreement – namely contracts, oaths, promises, vows, etc. – constitute a secondary law of nature. Political government became a large-scale version of private economic and domestic contracts.

At the same time, Grotius' political thought took the sphere of geopolitical problems to investigate kinds of natural order that might endure outside positive political law and yet also evidence human aptitudes for cooperation. In *Mare Liberum* (1609), Grotius argues that “dominion” and “possession” are natural concepts that allow us to make use of nature. As a remnant of the domain of natural law, the ocean, which is a space that exists outside positive national jurisdiction, might be *used* even as it cannot be subjected to national proprietary claims.⁸² Grotius derives his claims against proprietary right over the ocean in part from the logical absurdity of imagining that the ocean's apparently limitless expanse might be subject to the same kinds of enclosure that land, a finite resource, had been subjected to.⁸³ As in Grotius's example of the ocean, these speculative zones of natural law's jurisdiction persisted as geographic pockets in which ideas of imagined natural sociability could be implemented again without the explicit interference of positive law.

Grotius holds the view that human beings are naturally social, but political contract becomes necessary because the natural disposition towards this sociability is not a sufficient condition for maintaining order and security. In *De juri belli ac pacis*, Grotius writes: “But among the traits characteristic of man is an impelling desire for society, that is, for the social life – not only of any or every sort, but peaceful, and organized

⁸² For John Selden, the “law of contracts” constitutes a “secondary natural law.” See Kahn, *Wayward Contracts*, 196 and Tuck, *Natural Rights Theories*, 68; 90-94.

⁸³ Hugo Grotius, *The Freedom of the Seas*, trans. Ralph Van Deman Magoffin (New York: Oxford UP, 1916), 28.

according to the measure of his intelligence, with those who are of his own kind.”⁸⁴ There existed a time, Grotius argues, of “great simplicity” in which humans “lived on the terms of mutual affection such as rarely appears.”⁸⁵ While there may be no “politics” in this natural state in its narrowed definition of a legally-constituted power and the rights and offices that pertain to this abstract authoritative body, there nevertheless exist implied conventional agreements that might secure cooperation apart from these political bodies.

By contrast, Hobbes posits a natural state for man that is absolutely anterior to political contract and, in the absence of a sovereign, is also fundamentally unaccommodating of stable human institutions of any kind. Hobbes’s *Leviathan* (1651) famously stated that life in the state of nature was “solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short”; escaping these conditions proved to be a powerful motivation for adhering to positive law.⁸⁶ The violent competition over resources in this imagined state emphasized the necessity for legal force to ensure ethical relationships. The undesirability of the State of Nature as a perpetual state of war makes the acquiescence to the sovereign authority of the Leviathan tolerable. Within this State of Nature, the Law of Nature, “convenient articles of peace, upon which men may be drawn to agreement,” appears to have sufficient force to draw humans away from this anti-social, antagonistic solitude and, moreover, to hold them in compliance to their relinquishment of their natural liberty to a higher body.⁸⁷ While the State of Nature appears as a domain utterly before and outside any kind of political or social order (for without a universal agreement among individuals to relinquish their natural liberty to the authority of the state, no social institutions or

⁸⁴ Hugo Grotius, *De juri belli ac pacis*, trans. Francis W. Kelsey et. al. (Indianapolis: Howard Sams, 1962), 11.

⁸⁵ Grotius, *De juri belli ac pacis*, 186.

⁸⁶ Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*, ed. C.B. Macpherson (London: Penguin, 1985), 186.

⁸⁷ *Leviathan*, 188.

activities might endure), the Law of Nature presents another version of nature – one that suggests the always latent potential of humans, even monstrously antisocial ones, to *become* political beings.

Yet Hobbes differs from Aristotelian and Ciceronian statements that humans are naturally political in two main ways. The first lies in his assertion that absolutely no possibility for society (forms of social organization which lie outside the domain of politics) might exist in the absence of a political sovereign: “men have no pleasure, (but on the contrary a great deale of grieffe) in keeping company, where there is no power able to over-awe them all.”⁸⁸ Hobbes identifies forms of social organizations (which he calls “systems,” organizations formed according to joint purpose, including families and business partnerships) that are not political, if by “political” we mean that they “are made by authority from the Sovereign Power of the Common-wealth.”⁸⁹ Nevertheless, earlier statements in the first book of the *Leviathan* assert that the State of Nature is a precontractual domain devoid of any institutions of either civil society or political law. Those “things as are necessary to commodious living” – industry, arts, navigation, trade, sciences – could never exist among the “continual fear and danger” of the State of Nature.⁹⁰ That this continual dread persists in political societies is evident, according to Hobbes, in our habitual distrust of other humans in spite of “Lawes, and publicke Officers, armed, to revenge all injuries shall be done,” for we continue to take precautions, such as arming ourselves or locking up our homes.⁹¹ According to Hobbes, a perpetual fear that something of human nature exceeds the powers of legal enforcement

⁸⁸ *Leviathan*, 185.

⁸⁹ *Leviathan*, 274.

⁹⁰ *Leviathan*, 186.

⁹¹ *Leviathan*, 186-87.

suggests that humans always have the potential to lapse into their natural belligerent dispositions in spite of legal forms of enforcement. Consequently, Hobbes discounts the possibility of an Aristotelian idea that human virtue, a natural *telos* and natural goodness, is possible in the absence of sovereign enforcement; moreover, that human nature is inherently political, for it always threatens to slide back to its antisocial disposition. The greatest evidence for this, according to Hobbes, is the renewal of a state of nature in the trauma of catastrophe – most immediate to his experience, a civil war. While political force is not a sufficient condition for “commodious” forms of social existence, it is nevertheless a necessary condition for their durability, but this political force always seems to fight against tendencies that threaten its own endurance.

The second of Hobbes’s insights is the assertion that the State is *artificial*; that is, it is not a natural body that evolves organically from human dispositions towards affection, cooperation or hierarchical arrangements. Hobbes points to “political creatures” such as bees and ants, which “live sociably one with another ... and yet have no other direction than their particular judgements and appetites; nor speech, whereby one of them can signifie to another, what he thinks expedient for the common benefit.”⁹² Hobbes offers a number of explanations for why humans fail to form organic collective groupings as other animals do: among animal groups there is an absence of constant “competition for Honour and Dignity,” an absence of a distinction between common and private good, and an absent of disagreement about the means of ruling and conducting public life.⁹³ “The agreement of these creatures,” Hobbes argues, “is Naturall; that of men, is by Covenant only, which is Artificiall: and therefore it is no wonder if there be

⁹² *Leviathan*, 225.

⁹³ *Leviathan*, 225-26.

somewhat else required (besides Covenant) to make their Agreement constant and lasting; which is a Common Power, to keep them in awe, and to direct their actions to the Common Benefit.”⁹⁴ Neither is “justice” a natural concept, for it, too, is a mere effect of conventional agreement.⁹⁵ Hobbes’s prepolitical imaginary leads to the ineluctable conclusion that the State must be an artificial institution that derives its form from a conventionally-agreed upon sovereign representative. Moreover, the sovereign becomes an all-encompassing force that produces social totalities and political totalities as coincident fields. While there are spaces of social engagement that are not political *per se*, they are nevertheless not unqualifiedly “natural” because they cannot exist in the absence of a political power that sustain them. The kind of political argument from nature that the Hobbesian State of Nature emblemizes, then, depends on the production of a homogenized understanding of “nature” as a category that remains fundamentally incompatible with a symmetrically homogenized idea of “politics.”⁹⁶ As Bruno Latour’s discussion of Simon Schaffer and Steven Shapin’s *The Leviathan and the Air Pump* explains, Hobbes’s arguments become emblematic of the “modern Constitution” which has “declared that there is no common measure between the world of subjects and the world of objects,” between society and nature.⁹⁷ This present study proposes that by looking at pastoral’s development from Spenser to Milton, we might disrupt this “modern Constitution,” and uncover a history of political philosophy that runs counter to Hobbesian arguments about nature and politics. In sum, I aim to suggest how literature’s persistent fascination with the utility and disruptiveness of fictional speculations about

⁹⁴ *Leviathan*, 226.

⁹⁵ *Leviathan*, 188.

⁹⁶ Latour, *Politics of Nature*, 19, 29.

⁹⁷ *We Have Never Been Modern*, trans. Catherine Porter (Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1993), 59.

extralegal ideas of order, action, and belonging might offer new possibilities for bringing these now apparently incommensurate terms together and reanimate a politics of virtue practiced among humans and the natural world.

Chapter One begins with allegory in Spenser's Book of Justice and in the pastoral episodes in Book 6 of *The Faerie Queene*. In the *Letter to Raleigh* Spenser announces his investment in allegory's "darke conceit" to figure forth in veiled form, among other things, Elizabeth's person.⁹⁸ As many critics have argued, the expanded edition in 1596, which deals with explicitly collective and political kinds of virtue (friendship, justice, and courtesy), is increasingly invested in using allegory to veil commentary on contemporary political events. However, the epic's form as an "historical fiction" is "historical" in two senses: it constructs fictional images of antiquity to use as its models for political virtues, and it submits these "ensamples" to "history," that is, to narrative modalities, in order to speculate about the effects of temporal change on the world these "ensamples" of virtue inhabit.⁹⁹ Therefore, we should not lose sight of how Spenser's allegory serves a heuristic, diagnostic function that connects "ensamples" to their animating "rules," and how, moreover, this action of finding resemblances between particulars and generals draws the natural world into the sphere of political decision. The Proem of Book 5 describes not only an ethical and political crisis, but a cosmological one; Spenser uses allegory to connect moral degeneration with erratic planetary motion to show how the failures of institutional justice not only mirror, but emerge from natural disorder. Spenser's allegory thus suggests that political problems are not confined to particular

⁹⁸ Edmund Spenser, *The Faerie Queene*, ed. A.C. Hamilton, 2nd ed. (Harlow, UK: Longman, 2007), 714.

⁹⁹ Spenser, *Letter to Raleigh*, 716.

institutions but also implicate the natural world. The multi-modality of the epic, which draws upon romance narrative and pastoral exile, enables Spenser to put forth propositions about how natural and political knowledge are entangled. Tropes of romance errancy produce an artificial set of conditions that make the causes and possible forms of political and extrapolitical affiliation visible. For instance, in Book 5 Artegall's legal judgments rely on understandings of the formal properties of allegorical romance to account for the impact of nonhuman agencies on human affairs. In Book 6, the doubled alienation implied by the pastoral process, in which Calidore neither inhabits the world of the court, nor the world of pastoral, allows us to see the role that poetic making plays in discerning the natural forms of political virtues.

Spenser's allegory sought to draw the natural world within the horizon of political concerns by showing the networks that entangled both spheres, and, moreover, by showing how ideas of political virtue were immanent in its apolitical, natural landscapes. In chapter two, I move from Spenser's allegory to Shakespeare's *As You Like It* to consider how pastoral's appearance in dramatic and lyric performance offers a repertoire of literary techniques for embodying originary moments of political settlement within the play's imaginary landscapes of exile. As in *The Faerie Queene*, *As You Like It* is particularly interested in an ethical aspect of politics, an idea of politics that holds that political virtue is a latent potential within nonpolitical beings, both human and nonhuman, that may be drawn out through collective engagements that include, among other things, the translativ vectors of pastoral artifice. Shakespeare's pastoral play offers an analysis of Aristotelian forms of social and political organization, and reinvents them within the forest of Arden. However, the play's interest in voluntary exiles, who are

exiled neither by circumstance nor by accident, but by election, produces a form of collective belonging unanticipated by Aristotle's definitions. These extrapolitical groupings, which derive their extrapolitical character from the fact of their extrication from legal and administrative ideas of politics, take apolitical man as its effective starting point in order to ask in what capacity individuals might fulfill their ethical potential both within and outside political groupings. In Shakespeare's play, pastoral becomes political because its capacity for invention makes visible the origins of affective obligations that subtend political partnerships, allowing characters to see that capacity for affective investment latent in apolitical beings.

Moving from exile in Arden to the household economy of Nun Appleton, the third chapter examines formal experimentation in Marvell's *Upon Appleton House*. It is indisputable that the country house poem is a political genre in that it takes the estate's management of its natural resources as an exemplary moral economy that provides a model for an ideal commonwealth. An idea of politics as virtue, and an idea of politics as governance and domestic management thus converge in the genre. Moreover, Marvell's country house poem, which draws heavily on topical references, makes the political resonances of the estate's landscapes all the more apparent. The inherent formal complexity of the genre, which draws upon a number of tributary genres, including pastoral and georgic, also allows for an investigation into the effects of multi-modality on a literary text's political meanings. As in *As You Like It*, Marvell's poem flaunts pastoral's intensifications of its own artifice in order to examine how nature might be transformed into political entities, but in the process he also extends the logic of these artificial conventions to the point of absurdity. The poem's georgic modes describe the

labor on the estate, seeking to make that labor complicit in the political making that would draw nature into stable institutions and stable frameworks of topical meaning. Meanwhile, the poem's pastoral modalities constantly signal how these georgic ends are illusory, for nature's infinitude evades these accommodations. Furthermore, nature's recalcitrance becomes an *effect* generated by the very poetic vehicles that seek to augment nature's potential for modeling political virtue. The subject's disappearance within his own elaborate conceits displaces both nature and art from the country house estate's landscapes, erecting in their place a new entity that seeks to enclose the complex, indeterminate threshold between natural and artificial forms within the Marvellian lyric subject's manic pastoral inventiveness. Pastoral mediation thus becomes the condition of possibility for describing the encounter between the natural world and human experience of it, but in the process of trying to excel at his execution of pastoral and georgic modalities – that is, in short, to excel at writing a country house poem – the lyric subject undermines the claim, typical of the genre, that the idealized landscape of the estate could underwrite a stable political settlement.

From the country house, the final chapter moves to consider how *Paradise Lost* and Milton's political prose use a variety of landscapes in the prelapsarian and postlapsarian worlds as tools for thinking about whether political concepts, such as the state, rule, obedience, and law, are natural concepts, or whether anxieties about a Fallen language, which persistently points to the gap between words and things, likewise results in political institutions that are utterly artificial. I argue that the poem uses epic, georgic, and pastoral modalities to imagine various states of nature to explore this and other questions that it implies about a "politics of being"; that is, a politics that asks in what

capacity humans are by nature political beings, and in what capacity they fulfill their being in collective engagements. I suggest that the poem's emphasis on the individual's achievement of his ethical potential independently of fallen political institutions introduces two contradictory arguments: the first, that political association is not a necessary condition for achieving one's natural ethical potential; the second, that this potential is also only fulfilled within partnerships among humans, and between humans and the natural world. I argue that the poem uses marriage to address these tensions, invoking it as a social form that straddles different kinds of being – both natural and artificial, prelapsarian and postlapsarian, apolitical and political. As we see in *Upon Appleton House*, the Marvellian lyric subject's production of pastoral mediations ultimately proved to be incompatible with ideas of domestic virtue, figured in the poem's closing emblem of Maria. As rival modes for managing nature's political potential, neither pastoral lyric nor domestic law seemed sufficient for securing the household as a stable repository for political ideas. In *Paradise Lost*, Eve's and the narrator's pastoral lyric praises of the married state strive to reconcile ideas of pastoral mediation with ideas of domestic virtue, in the process fulfilling Alpers' definition of pastoral as the "representative anecdote." Eve's understanding of her relationship to Adam and the external natural world shows that an idea of positive law, which resembles natural law in this instance, mediates her experience of both. Pastoral lyric's efforts to manage contradictory ideas of the natural origins of human political authority – that is, in an objective natural law that produces a universal moral order, which implicates both humans and nonhumans, and a subjective natural law that positions human will as the

origin of its political authority – articulates a paradox of modern political subjectivity that makes Eve its representative figure.

In sum, pastoral's deployment of modes of double alienation – alienation from nature as a source of collective obligation, and alienation from the self through externally enforced forms of mediating political law – are also productive for generating ideas about collective obligation that do not emerge exclusively from the state. Pastoral doesn't resolve this alienation, or even seek to do so, but rather to exploit its possibilities. By separating out nature from political forms, the type of political thought exemplified in Hobbes's arguments limits the types of institutions we might call "political" to the sovereign commonwealth, over which no higher authority, as both Bodin and Hobbes argued, could be set. As Catherine Nicholson has shown, the commonplace of the Orphic legislator allowed early modern writers to use classical rhetorical traditions to theorize a national poetics and its making of a national identity.¹⁰⁰ Nicholson's study responds to a long-standing tradition in literary historicism that takes the nation-state as the primary unit of political analysis, albeit an emergent and inchoate one that set itself against a "pluralist communal base."¹⁰¹ As these studies have shown, the forms of this emergent nation-state weren't settled, and they suggest how we might look to other models of political convening in early modern society that continued to resist its settlement.

¹⁰⁰ Catherine Nicholson, *Uncommon Tongues: Eloquence and Eccentricity in the English Renaissance* (Philadelphia: U of Pennsylvania P, 2014), 1-9.

¹⁰¹ See Richard Helgerson, *The Forms of Nationhood: The Elizabethan Writing of England* (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1992), 5. Studies of the so-called "British Problem" have also revised our sense of the coherence of the British nation in the present in light of its conflicted, heterogeneous past. See Willy Maley, *Nation, State and Empire in English Renaissance Literature, Shakespeare to Milton* (Houndsmill, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave, 2003), 15; Andrew Escobedo, *Nationalism and Historical Loss in Renaissance England: Foxe, Dee, Spenser, Milton* (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 2004), 5-6. See also Claire McEachern, *The Poetics of English Nationhood, 1590-1612* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1996).

A recovery of pastoral's prepolitical natural imaginaries seeks to divorce ideas of ethical political engagement and obligation that emanate from the state. As Andrew Dobson notes, environmental problems frequently exceed the bounds of nation states, but citizenship in modernity has almost always been defined in terms of these very bounded and limited ideas of political form. A politics of nature, that is, a politics that engages with the natural world, which exceeds the capacity of any particular national jurisdiction to manage, requires the generation of new models. "What ... is the 'citizenship-space of ecological politics?'" Dobson asks.¹⁰² Is it possible to think about political rights, responsibilities, and belonging that do not originate in the modern state? *The Forms of Nature* suggests that nature itself – not Nature as an abstract concept that resides utterly outside human constructs, but rather nature as an emergent, contested multiplicity incipient within and effected by pastoral's "artificial poetry" – offers these models of obligation, even as its representations in pastoral perpetually contest, upset, dismantle, and reassemble the very political forms it participates in.

¹⁰² Andrew Dobson, *Citizenship and the Environment* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2003), 5.

Chapter 1: The Political Philosophy of Allegory in Edmund Spenser's *The Faerie Queene*

A "Plausible and Pleasing Analysis of All": The Method of "Historicall Fiction"

The didactic intention of Edmund Spenser's *The Faerie Queene*, stated in the *Letter to Raleigh*, indicates that "fashion[ing] a gentleman or noble person in vertuous and gentle discipline" could be achieved through "an historicall fiction" whose instruction would be "most plausible and pleasing."¹ This didacticism therefore suggests the particular usefulness of narrative poetry for ethical and political ends. While "historicall fiction" refers to the epic's setting in historical Britain and to its use of allegory to represent and critique contemporary political events (which is particularly true of Book 5, the poem's most topical book), this "historicall fiction" also names an allegorical mode integral to Spenser's didacticism and analytical methodology.² This chapter argues that, in pointing to the aspect of narrative, the "historicall fiction" of Spenser's allegory, which submits abstract ideas to the contingency of time, person, and place, results in an understanding of the "natural causes" of politics: it determines the natural circumstances which facilitate and hinder political order, as well as the *telos* or final cause of politics – that is, the ideal ends towards which human communities strive.

¹ *The Faerie Queene*, 2nd edition, ed. A.C. Hamilton (Harlow, UK: Longman, 2007) 714-15; hereafter cited in text.

² For accounts of how critics have read Book 5 as a repository of topical political references, see Andrew Fichter, *Poets Historicall: Dynastic Epic in the Renaissance* (New Haven: Yale UP, 1982), 198ff; and T.K. Dunseath, *Spenser's Allegory of Justice in Book Five of The Faerie Queene* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1968), 4. For representative examples of New Historicist examinations of institutional concerns sedimented in Spenser's work, see Louis Adrian Montrose, "Spenser and the Elizabethan Political Imaginary," *ELH* 69.4 (Winter 2002): 907-46, which examines, following Patrick Collinson, the quasi-Republican character of Elizabeth's reign and the effects of this political climate on Spenser's work; and David Norbrook, *Poetry and Politics in the English Renaissance*, rev. ed. (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2002), which interprets Book 5's use of contemporary history to express the fulfillment of the political ideals of the Sidney and Leicester circles.

By expanding our understanding of the epistemological functions of poetic representation, this kind of historical allegory imagines how ideas, derived from the literary modes of romance and pastoral, could challenge how we understand the political function of literary texts.³

Spenser's *Letter to Raleigh* recalls Philip Sidney's distinction in *The Defense of Poesie* between history and poetry. Where history provides a limited epistemology, poetry offers a more comprehensive method:

And whereas a man may say, though in universal consideration of doctrine the poet prevaileth, yet that the history, in his saying such a thing was done, doth warrant a man more in that he shall follow, – the answer is manifest: that if he stand upon that *was*, as if he should argue, because it rained yesterday therefore it should rain to-day, then indeed it hath some advantage to a gross conceit. But if he know an example only informs a conjectured likelihood, and so go by reason, the poet doth so far exceed him as he is to frame his example to that which is most reasonable, be it in warlike, politic, or private matters; where the historian in his bare *was* hath many times that which we call fortune to overrule the best wisdom. Many times he must tell events whereof he can yield no cause; or if he do, it must be poetical.⁴

By this account, history is an inventory of inert exempla that require the animating force of the “poetical” in order to discern their “causes.” Mere knowledge of the “bare was,” knowledge of what happened without a sense of why or how it came about, cannot be applied in other circumstances, as illustrated by Sidney's example that one cannot suppose with any degree of certainty that it will rain today based solely on the assumption that it rained the day before. Sidney's view of history as a genre identifies its specific failing as providing a narrative without adequately “fram[ing] his example to that

³ For the distinction between genre and mode, see Kenneth Borris, *Allegory and Epic in English Renaissance Literature: Heroic Form in Sidney, Spenser, and Milton* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2000): “In modal usages, a genre comes to depend structurally upon another genre, or combination of genres, yet inwardly modifies that host form or compound” (57).

⁴ Philip Sidney, *An Apology for Poetry or The Defence of Poesy*, ed. Geoffrey Shepherd (London: Nelson, 1965), 110.

which is most reasonable”: in other words, in “tell[ing] events” and “standing upon that *was*,” the historian fails to theorize adequately, to arrive at an understanding of the general “causes” which not only forms the basis of a more comprehensive knowledge of human experience in time, but also facilitates its application beyond its particular moment in history. If the historian does produce these kinds of general insights, the method he uses to do so, Sidney concludes, “*must* be poetical.” That is, the method must display a way of thinking that is typical of poetry, which uses figures to match particulars to the abstract ideas that explain them. A “poetical” analysis supplies the necessary framework for drawing attention to the causal relations imbedded in these particular examples from history, but it need not be limited to the sphere of human action. Sidney’s analogy between human history and the phenomena of the natural world (the rain) also invites the conclusion that a “poetical” mode might be equally useful for explaining both the human and natural worlds: as I will show, what Sidney understands as poetry’s ability to move between these two spheres of experience in ways that illuminate the interdependency of their causes, Spenser calls the “pleasing Analysis of all” (*Letter* 717).

Further, the poetical mode of analysis transforms these abstract ideas into substantial, imitable figures. According to Sidney, the poet’s “delivering forth ... is not wholly imaginative, as we are wont to say by them that build castles in the air; but so far substantially it worketh, not only to make a Cyrus, which had been but a particular excellency, as nature might have done, but to bestow a Cyrus upon the world to make many Cyruses, if they will learn aright why and how that maker made him.”⁵

Understanding how this imitation works – how it places the principles which Cyrus’ actions demonstrate – in embodied, substantial form facilitates the production of further

⁵ Sidney, *An Apology for Poetry*, 101.

imitations. Exceeding nature's "particular excellency," the poet's augmented example facilitates the production of further virtuous copies. It illuminates "why and how" it was made so that the reader might then more readily understand and imitate the principles imbedded within it. Poetry moves its audience to "well-doing" since it gives the universal example, whose applicability extends beyond the specifics of time and place.⁶ In short, understanding and imitating nature's causes, or making, become coextensive processes.

Allegory is the mode Spenser deploys to match particular (that is, historical, fictional) examples of political forms to a theoretical level of argument without at the same time forcing them into calcified abstractions.⁷ The allegorical aspect of the "historicall fiction" functions as more than a covert commentary on Britain's past or present; it is also a heuristic tool for facilitating knowledge of political virtues and how they might best be imitated as political action:

For the Methode of a Poet historical is not such, as of an Historiographer. For an Historiographer discourseth of affayres orderly as they are donne, accounting as well the times and actions, but a Poet thrusteth into the middest, euen where it most concerneth him, and there recouring to the thinges forepaste, and diuining of thinges to come, maketh a pleasing Analysis of all. (LR 716-17)

Spenser's distinction between "Poet historical" and the "Historiographer" calls upon the commonplace division between poetic and historiographical understandings of narrative

⁶ For Sidney's use of Aristotle and Neoplatonism, see S.K. Heninger, *Sidney and Spenser: The Poet as Maker* (University Park and London: Penn State UP, 1989), 223-260.

⁷ The importance of the image and its relationship to metaphysical and allegorical abstractions have been thoroughly explored. See Carolyn Van Dyke, *The Fiction of Truth: Structures of Meaning in Narrative and Dramatic Allegory* (Ithaca and London: Cornell UP, 1985), 251, who challenges the argument that the material of allegorical narrative culminates in the "argument of a higher truth." Instead, Spenser's poem employs "allegorical relativism" that eschews authoritative allegorical patterns even as it invites its readers to observe analogies and suggestive correlations (256). See also Jane Grogan, *Exemplary Spenser: Visual and Poetic Pedagogy in The Faerie Queene* (Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate, 2009), for discussion of Spenser's indebtedness to visual culture; Kenneth Gross, *Spenserian Poetics: Idolatry, Iconoclasm, and Magic* (Ithaca and London: Cornell UP, 1985), which explores Spenser's distrust of images.

order.⁸ Not only does the historiographer report on things as “they are done,” he does so in an “orderly” fashion that respects the dictates of chronology. In contrast to the historiographer’s slavish duty to the facts, the poet’s active production of narrative out of these historical materials accords him access to a higher order of significance. While “thrust[ing] into the midst” might describe the epic poet’s tendency to begin *in medias res*, and thus to reorder narrative chronology for particular emphasis, it also indicates a violent rupture of the material with which he works. The mastery of this total knowledge relies on the poet’s overt, violent mediation of his materials, indicating the potential for poetry to impose disfiguring abstraction onto the world it imitates. At the same time, by disrupting spatial and temporal structures, the poet’s “thrusting into the midst” points to the contingency of the forms these universals take, a contingency which itself has philosophical value because of the way its dismantling by poetic modalities reveals its composite causes and materials.

Spenser’s poetics also recuperates these unstable forms to avoid the problem of becoming too abstract. Deploying a Sidneyan distinction between poetry and philosophy (which also engages an “analysis of all” but without the “pleasing” dimension of fiction),

⁸ For the distinction between “poet historical” and “historiographer,” see Michael O’Connell, *Mirror and Veil: The Historical Dimension of Spenser’s The Faerie Queene* (Chapel Hill: U of North Carolina P, 1977), 70-81, which contrasts the use of history in Book 2, canto 10, seeing Guyon’s history of Faeryland as an historical fiction that improves upon Arthur’s chronicles of British history; Heninger, *Sidney and Spenser*, points to the etymologies of “fiction” and “story” to gloss Spenser’s distinction between historical fiction (as a thing made) and historiography (as an “account of an actual occurrence”) (379); John Steadman, *Moral Fiction in Milton and Spenser* (Columbia, MO: U of Missouri P, 1995), 101-22, argues that in writing an “historical fiction,” the poet isn’t bound to excavate the past in the strictest sense; rather, history, fictionally rendered, offers the materials to illustrate universal moral truths; David Galbraith, *Architectonics of the Imagination in Spenser, Daniel, and Drayton* (Toronto: U Toronto P, 2000), 1-15, examines how the English epic, in its engagement with Roman and English approaches to history, informs the relationship between the genres of epic and history and their related, but distinct, understandings of *imitatio*; and Rebecca Helfer, *Spenser’s Ruins and the Art of Recollection* (Toronto: U of Toronto P, 2012) 168-230, examines the distinct uses of the art of memory by the “poet historical” and the historiographer.

Spenser's opposition between historical "ensample" and philosophical "rule" defines the former as the particularized manifestation of an idea:

For this cause is Xenophon preferred before Plato, for that the one in the exquisite depth of his iudgement, formed a Commune welth such as it should be, but the other in the person of Cyrus and the Persians fashioned a gouvernement such as might best be: So much more profitable and gracious is doctrine by ensample, then by rule. (*LR* 716)

The Platonic commonwealth exemplifies what political form "should be": that is, it is fashioned according to "rule," according to a normative claim derived from an understanding of universal nature, the Platonic forms. And although the "rule" fulfills one aspect of the historical fiction's requirement of "plausibility" – its praiseworthiness (OED 1) – it fails to achieve the second – its possibility, its potential to be actualized in the world. Spenser sets the category of possibility over and against the category of necessity, favoring the flexibility of the "ensample" in spite of its failings to bring forth what "should be." While falling short of achieving the full idealism of the philosophically engendered moral imperative, the example derived from Xenophon – using the modality of "might best be" – offers a kind of negotiated second-order idealization; that is, while Cyrus's rule is exemplary, it is possible to imagine its reproducibility in the world. It is also significant that Spenser forms a distinction between "should be" and "might best be," between "rule" and "ensample," with a political example – namely, an example of exemplary government – as if to suggest that it is possible to apply the "ensample" in the world not only because of its historical precedence, but also because it situates individual actions in a collective body. Cyrus may be exemplary as a ruler, but the compound nominative which yokes him with his nation ("the person of Cyrus and the Persians") reminds us of the collective effort of fashioning a virtuous government. What is more, the

“doctrine of ensample” is more overtly political than the mere “rule” for it capitalizes on a quality of expediency while maintaining an orientation towards virtue.

Such is the allegorical character of Spenser’s historical fiction: the Spenserian example, “thrusting into the midst,” mitigates the contingency of unprocessed historical experience by enclosing it in an analytic form that reveals its causes and thus magnifies the translatability of its uses.⁹ Allegory asserts a connection between two levels of association – between images and ideas; between examples and rules; between phenomenal nature and their forms; between narrative and the higher order significance which it implies – keeping these terms in balance.¹⁰ It requires the reader to recognize resemblances between the fiction and the ideas to which it points, often relying upon an index of symbols and their conventional associations to do so.¹¹ In turn, the abstract “rule” informs the example, recognizing how the metaphysical aspects of the poetic text “refer images to their animating idea,” without, however, constraining the example to an impossible moral imperative that would make it inimitable.¹² Imitation, in other words, becomes the foundation for fashioning a virtuous government. If living well together and imitating the virtuous actions of others constitutes the ideal of political life, then this ideal

⁹ As Jeff Dolven, *Scenes of Instruction in Renaissance Romance* (Chicago and London: U of Chicago P, 2007) suggests, the example occupies the unstable middle ground between the generalized maxim and unframed experience (145).

¹⁰ Maureen Quilligan, *The Language of Allegory: Defining the Genre* (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1979), 26-33, has defined this understanding of allegory as a “vertical” alignment that asserts an equivalence between the textual surface of the narrative and the “abstract pattern” or “higher order significance to which it points.” By contrast, Quilligan argues that allegory has a horizontal, rather than a vertical orientation, for its meanings “accrete serially” (28).

¹¹ Sayre N. Greenfield, *The Ends of Allegory* (Newark: U of Delaware P, 1998): “Allegory demands that we rear a complex structure of meaning. We must piece together one realm of association, considering how proximity, cause and effect, and the inherence of parts in wholes link objects and ideas; simultaneously, we must construct another realm, with all of its own intricacies, keeping this realm in metaphoric balance with the other” (13).

¹² Jon A. Quitslund, *Spenser's Supreme Fiction: Platonic Natural Philosophy and The Faerie Queene* (Toronto: U of Toronto P, 2001), 91.

requires knowledge of universals and an understanding of how they intersect with ordinary affairs. But even as allegory asserts an equivalence between word and meaning, between textual surface and the “abstract pattern” of cosmological order to which it points, it also recognizes the inescapable differences between these two registers. Allegory’s governing assumption is that its full significance, though deferred, will ultimately be understood; but this is an illusory promise, and the eschatological clarity upon which it depends is never fully actualized.¹³

Spenser’s allegory becomes an aggregation, through narrative, of images of what “might best be” and examples of their application. Books 5 and 6 multiply poetic “images” of natural extrapolitical collectives: Golden Age antiquity, romance itinerancy, and pastoral escape all offer examples of affiliation which are fundamentally unrealizable in the present moment, and even within Spenser’s fictional world. Fairyland departs from the idealized image of the ethical and political ideals it imitates more often than not. The morally bankrupt characters that populate its terrain and the endless possibility for error, in which Spenserian heroes are never assured of the right course of action, suggest the problem of moral relativity that characterizes the “state of present time” (5, Proem 1).¹⁴ If allegory promises a rehabilitation of politics by investing its forms with their animating ideals, Spenser’s “historical” narratives, by submitting his examples to unstable

¹³ Quilligan, *The Language of Allegory*, 28. Quilligan argues that the “polysemy” of words generates narrative; the narrative which unfolds frequently functions as commentary on “the implications of the words used to describe the imaginary action” and their violations of grammatical categories through figuration (53). Quilligan builds her argument from Edwin Honig, *Dark Conceit: The Making of Allegory* (Cambridge: Walker-DeBerry, 1960), which understands the “allegorical device” as a “threshold image” or emblem which introduces indeterminacy only given significance by the narrative (4-12).

¹⁴ Michael F.N. Dixon, *The Politicke Courtier: Spenser’s The Faerie Queene as a Rhetoric of Justice* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill Queen’s UP, 1996), discusses how Artegall inhabits a “double-vision,” simultaneously occupying the world of the ideal and the actual, of antiquity and the “chaotic now of historical sequence” (96).

conditions, also recognize the limitations of this process.

But this moral ambiguity is recuperative, because it also fosters the conditions for the poem's political epistemology. Rather than merely demonstrating the limits of poetic vision, the failure to produce fully realizable ideal political models even within the text's narrative space fulfils the poem's inquiry into definitions of politics; the contingency of allegorical figures of political order suggests the "occasional," transient quality of political community and the flexibility of its boundaries.¹⁵ A just political order is not merely rendered through a static kind of imitation, where human society, if correctly ordered, perfectly shadows a universal rule. Rather than reducing politics to a doctrine of abstract precepts, the Spenserian method embodies the universal causes of politics in material, contingent, and fragile allegorical structures.

Spenser's historical allegory, dependent largely on romance ideas of circuitous temporal and spatial progression, suggest opportunities to imagine prepolitical forms of fellowship detached from institutionally constrained ideas of politics – those tied specifically to networks of courtly preferment, or identified with unifying figures such as the sovereign, the nation, empire, and the governmental bodies which represent them. For a poem so obsessed with celebrating an ideal political government it is all the more remarkable that the central institutional site of *The Faerie Queene* – Gloriana's court – is conspicuously absent from Spenser's epic. In Book 1, Arthur's vision of the Faerie Queene emphasizes her material absence from the text, and introduces his inconclusive

¹⁵ For discussion of Hannah Arendt's sense of the contingency of politics, see Julia Lupton, *Thinking with Shakespeare: Essays on Politics and Life* (Chicago and London: U of Chicago P, 2011): Arendt "theorizes a democratic politics built not on already existing identities or shared experiences but on contingent sites of principled coalescence.... Such an impromptu *polis* bears no direct relation to a larger institution, state, or community, and yet it opens lines of action and testimony to those gathered in its circle of citizenship" (11).

quest to find her:

I awoke, and found her place deuoyd,
 And nought but pressed gras where she had lyen
 ... From that day forth, I cast in carefull mynd,
 To seeke her out with labor, and long tyne,
 And neuer vowd to rest, till I her fynd. (1.9.15)

While digression and delay are the *modus operandi* of knights in Renaissance romance, in *The Faerie Queene* the knights' endless wandering in the wilderness of Faerieland mirrors the endless circumlocution around Gloriana.¹⁶ The sovereign queen and the court of Faerie, then, are the institutions at the center of the poem its knights-errant continually pivot around. The poem's use of the pastoral and romance imaginaries divest ideas of political making and political virtue from an institutional orientation in order, ultimately, to understand how the natural world is implicated in both.

Justice and the Nature of Allegory

In Book 5, "justice" is the term Spenser uses in place of the general "cause" of politics – that is, the reason for which political structures are erected, and the principles according to which they operate. If the epistemological end of Book 5 is both the discovery of "justice" as a universal idea and of its capacity to be realized through action in the world, the proem to the book establishes how allegory and romance provide the method for this inquiry. Though Book 5 fails to produce a settled idea of justice, it nevertheless generates a means of understanding the concept through fictive allegorical examples situated within romance's dilatory narrative form. As the proem announces, and as scholars have also remarked, *The Faerie Queene's* Book of Justice is particularly

¹⁶ For discussions of the political effects of circumlocution in *The Faerie Queene*, see Jonathan Goldberg, *Endlesse Worke: Spenser and the Structures of Discourse* (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins UP, 1981), 124; and Elizabeth J. Bellamy, "The Vocative and the Vocational: The Unreadability of Elizabeth in the *Faerie Queene*," *ELH* 54.1 (1987): 1–30.

concerned with contingent, inassimilable narrative events that unfold in ways unanticipated by teleological epic structures.¹⁷ While epic offers accounts of history, the shape which history acquires in this genre unfolds in an progressive and coherent pattern that leads up to the poet's present moment. In other words, epic is concerned with accounts of political genealogy that legitimate authority by positing a direct line between a foundational moment and the present.¹⁸ As Spenser's allegorical epic more and more begins to resemble allegorical romance, new uses of "history" as a concept emerge, as do new possibilities for political forms. Instead of marking a steady progress from the past to the present, the narrator announces a marked decline from an historical ideal into a degenerate political moment: "So oft as I with state of present time, / The image of the antique world compare / When as mans age was in the freshest prime, / And the first blossome of faire vertue bare" (Proem 1). Unlike the perfections of the "image" of the past, the "state of present time" denotes the set of conditions which defines this particular moment, and which is in flux. In a different sense, the "present state" pertains to the mundane business of administrative and royal offices, and yet this characterization of the

¹⁷ James E. Phillips, "Renaissance Concepts of Justice and the Structure of *The Faerie Queene*, Book V," *Huntington Library Quarterly* 33.2 (Feb 1970): 103-120, argues that the apparent formlessness of the narrative in the last four cantos is an effect of Spenser's systematic treatment of legal topoi throughout the book; Fichter, *Poets Historicall*, 198ff, responds to claims that the overtly topical nature of the book diminishes its aesthetic achievement; Dunseath, *Spenser's Allegory* observes that the tendency with criticism is to either ignore Book 5, or to use it as a hunting ground for "historical equations," as a key to historical allusions and references, which does a disservice to Spenser's literary achievement (4). While Book 6 is usually understood to be apolitical, given that the overt topicality of the preceding cantos suddenly disappears, scholars have marked its overt language of contingency and argue that the book is an exercise in working through post-Machiavellian political theories. See for example Clare Kinney, *Strategies of Poetic Narrative* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1992), 70-119; Bruce Danner, "Courteous *virtu* in Spenser's book 6 of *The Faerie Queene*," *SEL* 38.1 (1998): 1-18; and Douglas A. Northrop, "The Uncertainty of Courtesy in Book VI of *The Faerie Queene*," *Spenser Studies* 14 (2000): 215-32.

¹⁸ For discussion of dynastic and prophetic history, see Fichter, *Poets Historicall*. For Spenserian prophecy, its affiliation with the eternal, and its relationship to unstable reality, see Angus Fletcher, *The Prophetic Moment: An Essay on Spenser* (Chicago and London: Chicago UP, 1971).

present in terms of a definition of politics as a set of legal, bureaucratic apparatuses lies far outside the realm of the political concerns imagined in the proem. By contrast, the “image of antiquity,” substituting “state” for “image,” and thus substituting this legal definition of the present for a poetic vision of the past, presumably would model alternatives to the state of present time, if its principle causes could be understood and reanimated.

The “image of the antique world” that Spenser’s poem turns to is that of the Golden Age (5, Proem 8-9).¹⁹ While the prehistoric Golden Age is a self-consciously fictional construct – a place in time to which we have only imaginative access and of which the authenticity of its representations cannot be guaranteed – its inescapable fictiveness is also a necessity for the kinds of philosophical inquiry *The Faerie Queene* engages: for, the interpretation of allegories of imagined histories, when rightly pursued, promises the systematic revelation of knowledge of political values. The *Faerie Queene* uses ideas of history – antique images and their narrative realization – to discover political organization in its original, emergent form, but as John Guillory argues, the text’s recursive return to new narrative beginnings is a symptom of the failure of literary form to capture the uniqueness of the sacred origin and to see it through to its own completion within the literary text.²⁰

The proem argues that in this ideal past, political stability and the harmonious

¹⁹ Harry Levin, *The Myth of the Golden Age in the Renaissance* (Bloomington and London: Indiana UP, 1969), notes that the pastoral and the Golden Age myth were not considered synonymous (with the exception of Virgil’s Fourth Eclogue) until the Renaissance (42-43). The Golden Age myth could refer to any number of possibilities, from pre-classical, primitive idealized ages; to the Elizabethan era celebrated as a new Golden Age; to the Golden Age of utopian speculation.

²⁰ John Guillory, *Poetic Authority: Spenser, Milton and Literary History* (New York: Columbia UP, 1983), 27.

synthesis of the human world with the natural one came about in part because of the reliable reference of words to their abstract values. An original justice becomes a harmonious alignment of abstract universal nature, the nature of the visible world, the world of human action, and the language used to describe these domains. For this reason, the narrator actively tries to reproduce virtuous images of the past: “Of vertue and of ciuill vses lore, I doe not forme them to the common line / Of present dayes, ... / But to the antique vse” (Proem 3). The problem presented by the proem is that these analogies between past and present have been disrupted by historical change; as a result, the “common line of present dayes” offers only deficient models of “vertue” and “ciuill vses.” The narrator laments that the corruption of the present world also infects our ability to grasp the historical images and the universal ideals they represent: “that which all men then did vertue call, / Is now cald vice; and that which vice was hight, / Is now hight vertue, and so vs’d of all: / Right now is wrong, and wrong that was is right” (Proem 4). The antique image offers the possibility of allegory that does work as a stable one-to-one correlation between word and meaning, where “vertue” and “vice” were once used to signify their meanings unproblematically. But images are never an unproblematic concept in Spenserian allegory; the possibility for deception which allegory enables is never far removed from the poem’s thematic and aesthetic concerns. The narrator’s complaint about the production of false equivalencies in the present age belabors this point. It is not merely that vice exists (for we can assume that it once existed in the past if we follow the logic of the analogy) which troubles the narrator, but that we mistake it for virtue, while true virtue itself goes unrecognized. While figures of the Golden Age offer perfected forms of “vertue and ciuill vses,” history’s progress and the ineluctable

degeneration of human nature make them unrealizable: the fallen human condition makes them both ungraspable by imperfect reason, and untenable because of “infected will.”²¹

According to Neoplatonists, such as Marsilio Ficino, matter is degraded form. The elements of the contingent, phenomenal world veil a higher reality, but while they are degraded they nevertheless occupy a position on the same scale of being as ideals do, which is an enabling condition of our ascent from knowledge of material particulars to the higher order of universal nature through philosophical inquiry.²² As Spenser’s explication of the “darke conceit” suggests, Renaissance allegory, deeply tied to Neoplatonic assumptions about the order of the universe, enables a framework for understanding the relationship between the material world and the precepts that animate its motions (*LR* 714).²³

But as scholars have pointed out, those moments where Spenser’s Neoplatonism is most pronounced are counterbalanced by other parts of the text that enable readers to

²¹ Isabel G. MacCaffrey, *Spenser’s Allegory: The Anatomy of Imagination* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1976), 22.

²² In Platonic ideas of cosmology, nature is a world of bodies that move in regular, ordered, predictable ways. Nature is permeated by an idea of reason; that is, the orderliness perceived in nature is an analogical extension of the mind’s capacity to rule and impose order on itself and its environment. See R.G. Collingwood, *The Idea of Nature* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1945). For discussion of the influence of Platonic insights on medieval and early modern natural law theory, see also R.S. White, *Natural Law in English Renaissance Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1996): “Two realms operate at the same time, the metaphysical and the physical. The one is defined by unalterable, binding, and immutable laws, while the other is characterized by an infinity of unique and unrepeatable applications of the universals which can be observed in nature or constructed by mankind. What links the two realms is human nature itself, a faculty which discovered, or constructed, or at least hypothesized, such a distinction, and in doing so intuited the fundamental principles of reason itself in metaphysical law” (22). For a recent survey of the possible influence of Platonism, and especially Ficino, on Spenser’s work, see Valery Rees, “Ficinian Ideas in the Poetry of Edmund Spenser,” *Spenser Studies* 24 (2009): 73-133.

²³ Quitslund, *Spenser’s Supreme Fiction*, 135. See also Heninger, *Sidney and Spenser* for Sidney’s and Spenser’s neoplatonism and its later replacement by materialist worldviews; Borris, *Allegory and Epic* argues that epic came to be viewed as “allegorical” by the sixteenth century, when readers were disposed to interpret it as a source of historical, moral, and natural knowledge, as well as “divinely inspired first principles” (32-37).

call Neoplatonism's political motives into question.²⁴ Critics have argued that allegory functions as an instrument of power, for allegory uses conceptions of cosmic hierarchy to justify the arrangement of political order as its mirror reflection: "[A]llegory interprets any existing regime not as what it actually is – a political entity created through struggle – but as the natural expression of universal order."²⁵ Gordon Teskey's argument identifies allegory as a "strategy of mystification."²⁶ Many Renaissance cosmologies and political texts uphold this parity between political and natural hierarchy; Teskey argues that this coincidence between *cosmos* and *polis* is produced only by the violent imposition of an artificial hierarchical order onto a chaotic nature: in other words, allegory produces an understanding of natural order that it claims only to have unveiled, and uses this revelation as justification for the present state of politics.²⁷ Allegory's ostensible idealism is "driven ... by a will-to-power that subjects what it does not understand, the realm of *physis* or growth, to a knowledge it imagines it already has. Hence a form such as Justice reduces to indifferent substance an other that it still needs as a place to occur outside itself."²⁸ Drawing from Walter Benjamin's argument that allegory produces significance by digging "the jagged line of demarcation between physical nature and significance," producing history as a "petrified primordial landscape," Teskey suggests that allegory seeks to "capture" nature and the "materials of narrative" within a structure of meaning; both nature – the realm of organic growth and change – and narrative, then, are fundamentally incompatible with the allegorical

²⁴ Paul Suttie, "The Lost Cause of Platonism in *The Faerie Queene*," *Spenser Studies* 24 (2009): 413-30.

²⁵ Gordon Teskey, *Allegory and Violence* (Ithaca and London: Cornell UP, 1996), 132.

²⁶ Teskey, *Allegory and Violence*, 122-23.

²⁷ Teskey, *Allegory and Violence*, 2.

²⁸ Teskey, *Allegory and Violence*, 17.

project.²⁹ Building on Teskey's claims, Jeff Dolven argues that justice in Book 5 "render[s] that capture orthodox."³⁰ If Artegall's justice resembles the poet's example-making, the punitive emblems he produces derive their authorization from the assumption that his applications of justice merely follow from natural precepts.³¹ Allegory, then, takes the erection of meaning as an aggressive engine that passes off nature's violent suppression for its true essence, producing in its place a secondary, artificial nature.

But this account of allegory's political function obscures allegory's analytic potential. If the "political" functions in Spenserian allegory merely as an instrument of deceit in the service of ideology, then it follows that we don't learn anything about the nature of justice, except that poetry functions as a handmaiden to a political power that reinforces the remoteness of justice and nature from the world of the text and from language itself.³² I do not dispute the truth of the claim that political power appeals to nature as a justification for, and as an obfuscation of, its violence, and that Spenser is manifestly culpable in this active suppression of nature's alterity, as well as other versions of alterity found throughout *The Faerie Queene*.³³ However, not only does this reading discount the potential for poetry to engage with ideas of nature and politics in a substantial way, it also implicitly dismisses allegory's power to account for agencies that

²⁹ Walter Benjamin, *The Origin of German Tragic Drama*, trans. George Steiner (London: Verso, 2009), 166; Teskey, *Allegory and Violence*, 23.

³⁰ Dolven, *Scenes of Instruction* 215.

³¹ Dolven, *Scenes of Instruction* 213.

³² For a counter example to the argument that representations are necessarily remote from, and inferior to, the nature they imitate, see the distinction between "mimesis" and "methexis" which Elizabeth Bieman makes in *Plato Baptized: Towards the Interpretation of Spenser's Mimetic Fictions* (Toronto: U of Toronto P, 1988). The former imitates the pattern laid out by the forms, but is a lesser version of that pattern. The latter relies on a vitally informed universe, which "overcome[s] the sense of hierarchical alienation imposed upon us by 'mimesis'" where the imitation "grows actively to identify with the imitated model" (17).

³³ See Roland Greene, "A Primer of Spenser's Worldmaking: Alterity in the Bower of Bliss," *Worldmaking Spenser: Explorations in the Early Modern Age*, eds. Patrick Cheney and Lauren Silberman (Lexington, KY: UP of Kentucky, 2000), 9-31.

cannot be reduced to human ones, a concern which Spenser powerfully articulates in Book 5.

The visible world's reflection of the universal one is, as the proem argues, not simply passive. Rather, the mimetic thread that connects multiple frames of reference is also a causal one composed of Neoplatonic sympathies.³⁴ Disturbances in one domain cause reciprocal changes elsewhere:

... all things else in time are changed quight.
Ne wonder; for the heauens reuolution
Is wandered farre from, where it first was pight,
And so doe make contrarie constitution
Of all this lower world, toward his dissolution.

For who so list into the heauens looke,
And search the courses of the rowling spheares,
Shall find that from the point, where they first tooke
Their setting forth, in these few thousand yeares
They all wandered much; that plaine appears. (Proem 4-5)

The narrator's interjections and declaratives – “ne wonder” and “that plaine appears” – mark the absence of his surprise that the world should be fallen to such a condition, and he confidently commands his readers to find for themselves the relationship between human society and the natural world as one in which the transformation of human vices and virtues find their corollaries in natural phenomena. If the axiom – that one sphere of evidence (human actions) can offer sufficient explanation for “all else” – isn't sufficiently self-evident for the skeptical reader, the poet asserts that we merely “into the heauens looke” for corroborating evidence that the heavens and “this lower world” do in fact

³⁴ Spenser's poem illustrates Foucault's account of “sympathy” as a premodern principle of change: “Sympathy is an instance of the *Same* so strong and so insistent that it will not rest content to be merely one of the forms of likeness; it has the dangerous power of *assimilating*, of rendering things identical to one another, of mingling them, of causing their individuality to disappear – and thus of rendering them foreign to what they were before. Sympathy transforms. It alters, but in the direction of identity.” Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences* (New York: Vintage, 1994), 23-24.

compose a system of “all things.” And yet, while the heavens and the lower world compose one system, this system shows an unequal distribution of agency and influence: the “heavens revolution . . . doe make contrarie constitution”; that is, the stars’ motions provide the cause that explains the present state of human affairs. Likewise, the logical connective “for the heavens revolution . . .” distributes the blame for the postlapsarian condition of human relations to otherworldly sources. All of nature finds itself at odds with an initial point of departure located both temporally in the past and spatially at the center, the “point” where it “first was pight.” Early modern romance “wandering” provides a vocabulary for explaining this shift, for understanding change in the natural world as well as in the human one; it describes the space “twixt those, and these which are” (Proem 1) and the opportunity for realizing justice in imagining how these forces interact.³⁵ In effect, the passage proposes a hypothesis of the natural determination of human order, implicitly asking what remains for human agencies. Book 5, then, is in part an examination of the consequences of this hypothesis, and an attempt to work through the kinds of literary forms that might provide sufficient knowledge to undertake a productive course of action.

If allegory produces retroactively an image of a timeless, hierarchic order of the cosmos to justify the state of politics, we run into significant problems in then trying to use allegory to account for why the natural world seems to be changing from its original form. Book 5 explicitly relies on Neoplatonic and Aristotelian ideas of cosmology to structure its understanding of historical change and its effect on images of perfected

³⁵ I am indebted to Patricia Parker’s discussion of romance dilation and its relationship to the suspended image in *Literary Fat Ladies: Rhetoric, Gender, Property* (New York: Methuen, 1987), 52-66. See also David Qunit, *Epic and Empire: Politics and Generic Form from Virgil to Milton* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1993), for the argument that romance digression implies a resistance to epic narrative of foundation and conquest.

political orders. Although inferior to universal forms because it occupies the world of “becoming” rather than that of “being,” visible nature is only different in degree to the forms it imitates.³⁶ For Aristotle, *physis* consisted in the source of movement or change immanent within objects, and thus nature entails not inert matter only, but also a potentiality particular to it: of those things that exist by nature, “each of them has *within itself* a principle of motion and of stationariness (in respect of place, or of growth and decrease, or by way of alteration).”³⁷ Likewise, the hermetic tradition held that *natura* is distinct from *materia*, insofar as the former referred to the “formative, vivifying, and regenerative principles” immanent within “physical phenomena.”³⁸ “Nature” is not merely the chaotic world of physical matter upon which meaning is imprinted arbitrarily in the name of a justice that claims spurious objectivity, but consists in the interactive process between form and matter. Allegory in the world of Spenser’s poem is not solely imposed from without, but a process immanent within its materials. While nature contains its own emergent qualities that are reminiscent of how allegory erects structures of meanings, the poetic activities of assembling and interpreting them also manifest the ways in which nature offers civil knowledge. The poet’s comparisons – his own “thrusting into the midst” to illuminate resemblances between moments in both human and natural history – makes the influence of natural causes on the political world visible.

³⁶ Heninger, *Sidney and Spenser* 62-64. See also Patricia Fumerton, *Cultural Aesthetics: Renaissance Literature and the Practice of Social Ornament* (Chicago and London: U of Chicago P, 1991) on the relationship between form and matter as an “exchange” in Spenser’s Neoplatonism.

³⁷ *Physics, The Basic Works of Aristotle*, trans. Richard McKeon (New York: Random House, 1941) 192b15. See also Collingwood, *The Idea of Nature* 81-83.

³⁸ As Quitslund, *Spenser’s Supreme Fiction* has argued, “Allegory is sometimes, and somewhat appropriately, described as dependent upon a hierarchical model of the cosmos, a theater of elaborate images that added literal and figurative dimensions to the plain sense of language at the same time that it added immaterial implications to the world presented to our senses” (104).

In short, allegory points to the distributions of natural and human causes and causal chains that animate its meanings.

As the proem indicates, an examination of particular examples in isolation is insufficient to the universal conditions of political and natural degeneration, since the corruption of present-day politics is not confined to particular contemporary institutions but has a universal application, requiring a more generalizing methodology. If Spenser's cosmos indicates causal relations between the structures of human society and nature, then political redress would also need to account for precisely how these two domains are entwined, a task which allegory is particularly equipped to perform. And justice, then, is not the "higher truth" to which the allegory points, of which the narrative is an illustration, but rather it is immanent in the human, nonhuman, material, and cosmic forces that Spenser's poem strives to understand. The pursuit of justice, therefore, is as much an examination of what allegory *does* as it is an unfolding of what allegory reveals. It is through this animation of the "images" of natural and political antiquity by "romance wandering" that an account of political communities, and the "ideas of justice" which undergird them, can be achieved.

"True Iustice how to deale": History and Romance in Artegall's Law

The first test of allegorical romance's heuristic potential emerges in the second canto, when Artegall encounters the so-called "egalitarian Giant" and his radical proposals to fundamentally alter the present state of nature and politics to restore universal harmony. Throughout the ensuing debate, different aspects of justice emerge through multiple examples of its application. Artegall's conception of law, relying on ideas of history, allegory, and romance, challenges the Giant's ideas of justice derived

from an understanding of absolute parity between the natural and human worlds. Critics usually frame the dispute as an exercise in distinguishing between true and false images of justice.³⁹ Denouncing the Giant's strict materialism, Artegall shifts the grounds of justice from the realm of the material to the immaterial, from "ponderable things to those imponderable."⁴⁰ I would add to these readings that the distinctions between Artegall's and the Giant's understandings of correspondences within the political and natural worlds offer multiple literary frameworks of explanation, with the end of constructing (rather unsystematically) models through which the relationships between the material and the immaterial, and between the past and present, can be perceived.⁴¹

Artegall's encounter with the Giant exemplifies alternative models of "historical fiction." The Giant appeals to an imagined past as a normative order against which the present state might be assessed, for he hopes to restore the balance of natural and social things "as they were formed aunciently" (5.2.32). Thus far, the Giant's intentions do not

³⁹ Although critics have used disparate sets of oppositional terms to identify these contrary views of justice, these terms can usually be organized in terms of strict interpretation of the letter and deference to the spirit of the law. Fletcher argues that the Giant mistakes the basis of the just distribution of wealth, according to British custom, as being absolutely egalitarian rather than proportional (*The Prophetic Moment*, 242). See also Annabel Patterson, "The Egalitarian Giant: Representation of Justice in History/Literature," *Journal of British Studies* 31.2 (1992): 97-132, for the distinction between "applied" justice and justice as "abstraction" (113); Dixon's juxtaposition of the law and wit or judgment (*The Politicke Courtier*, 109-12); Mary Thomas Crane, "Spenser's Giant and the New Science," *Go Figure: Energies, Forms, and Institutions in the Early Modern World*, eds. Judith H. Anderson and Joan Pong Linton (New York: Fordham UP, 2011), 19-37, argues that the poem favors "an extreme idealism that mistrusts materiality" (19); and Bradin Cormack, *A Power to Do Justice: Jurisdiction, English Literature, and the Rise of the Common Law, 1509-1625* (Chicago: Chicago UP, 2007), 168-170, for the argument that the episode reflects the tension between "extra-legal" Irish customs and the statutes of the English Common Law. Assuming the normativity of the English Law, and equating that normativity with rationality, Spenser uses Artegall's decision to eradicate customary law, using the Common Law's standards of rationality to discredit the apparent irrationality of customary law.

⁴⁰ Judith H. Anderson, *Words that Matter: Linguistic Perception in Renaissance England* (Stanford: Stanford UP, 1996), 180.

⁴¹ Kirsten Tranter, "The Sea Itself Doest Thou Not Plainly See?: Reading The Faerie Queene Book V," *Spenser Studies* 21 (2006): 83-107, observes that the episode works through "forms of comparison" to discover the "proper basis of correspondence" (91).

significantly depart from the narrator's stated intentions in the proem. Indeed, Artegall himself argues that any judgment in the situation requires a knowledge of original forms:

ere thou limit what is lesse or more
In euery thing, thou oughtest first to know,
What was the poyse of euery part of yore:
And looke then how much it doth ouerflow
Or faile thereof. (5.2.34)

If the assumptions they make – that historical precedent offers the soundest basis for judgment – are essentially the same, they nevertheless arrive at different conclusions for how this historical image ought to be constructed or used. Consequently, they offer different models for how poets “thrust into the midst” to derive knowledge about the natural and political worlds, and to offer prescriptions for applying that knowledge in political reforms.

The Giant holds the contradictory position that everything in the universe is fundamentally interchangeable, but that all things, both natural and political, have also violated their historically determined categories and are no longer what they once were.

The Giant proclaims that the elements which make up the cosmos

all vnequall were,
And had encroched vpon others share,
Like as the sea (which plaine he shewed there)
Had worne the earth, so did the fire the aire,
So all the rest did others parts empaire.
And so were realms and nations run awry.
All which he vndertooke for to repaire,
In sort as they were formed aunciently;
And all things would reduce vnto equality. (5.2.32)

The Giant's arguments explicitly naturalize social categories in ways not incommensurate with the proem's assertions of a causal relation between *cosmos* and *polis*, a conclusion hardly surprising given the dominant early-modern worldview that the microcosm of

social relations reflects natural hierarchies. However, the Giant's account of this universal order relies on a static, unifying understanding of the relationships that structure it. The near anaphora – “so did,” “so,” “and so” – that connect successive clauses in a logical progression shows how the Giant makes a series of similitudes which emanate from a single point of empirical reference (the sea in plain sight). He uses analogical reasoning to demonstrate that relations of imitation structure universal order, where action in one sphere produces reciprocal results in another, but the “rule” that governs this imitative chain is that everything can be “reduce[d] vnto equality,” an essential sameness which, in turn, makes possible their redistribution. The sea, earth, fire, and air are all elementally distinct, but the Giant assumes a simple substitution would adequately reaffirm their just proportions. Further, the Giant's scales, the instrument through which these changes might be effected, represent a singular rule applying uniformly to all circumstances, flattening correspondences to an idea of absolute equality and bare analogy. The punning of “empair” (that is to “impair” but also to “pair together”) further emphasizes the potential for destruction wrought in “pairing” together corresponding terms. But, as the natural elements are the subject of this verb, it is clear that the Giant objects to nature doing its own “empairing,” and nature's autonomous agency is part of the problem. In short, for justice to be restored, a vitalist universe must be made to cohere with the Giant's unifying vision of allegorical correspondence.

It is not merely that the Giant relies on a materialist worldview, but that his limited insight into immaterial causes distorts his understanding of the visible world. In Sidney's words, the Giant's program isn't sufficiently “poetical.” From the Giant's opening arguments, Artegall unfolds an unsystematic inquiry into the natural causes of

politics, relying on multiple literary frameworks to generate a more open-ended and less prescriptive analysis. For instance, Artegall knows he can win the argument by shifting the grounds of the debate to examine how language itself works. Knowing that the Giant's weighing is ill-equipped for literary interpretation, Artegall asks "Weigh but one word which from thy lips doth fall, / For how canst thou those greater secrets know, / That does not know the least thing of them all?" (5.2.43). Not only do the Giant's scales fail because it is absurd to measure words by other physical means, they also fail because they lack a necessary methodological adaptability to different orders of matter, form, and levels of scale.

Artegall proclaims that "of things subiect to thy daily vew / Thou dost not know the causes nor the courses dew" (5.2.42). However, his critique is also circular and internally inconsistent: "Of things unseen how canst thou deeme aright / ... Sith thou misdeem'st so much of things in sight" (5.2.39). The statement that an understanding of "unseen things" follows from an understanding of the visible world flatly contradicts the logical priority of understanding metaphysical causes before making determinations about the physical. Artegall's self-contradiction is symptomatic of the problem of determining whether it is the universal idea that precedes and informs its image, or whether examples produce the effect of a transcendent rule. But more than this: the circularity of Artegall's counterpoints also outlines a kind of perpetual feedback-loop where the ends are not predetermined. Mary Thomas Crane argues that Artegall's position reflects a historical breakdown of confidence in Aristotelianism's claims that our observations about natural phenomena could reveal certain knowledge about their underlying essences. According to Crane, Artegall shows a profound mistrust of

experimentation: not only does experiment impose artificial parameters on natural phenomena, it only reveals knowledge about invisible things through analogy.⁴² I argue that the unsystematic nature of Artegall's argument suggests a hesitancy to take any proposition as orthodox.⁴³ Artegall's argument doesn't proceed from a consistent set of assumptions; in fact he seems more reactive in his rebuttals to the Giant's claims. This inconsistency results from an unwillingness on Artegall's part to settle prematurely on what would count as a legitimate set of starting assumptions. In fact, Artegall's inconsistencies suggest that he proceeds through a set of contradictory assumptions in the name of progressing towards a greater adaptability of method at various levels of scale. Artegall catalogues natural change in terms of a far-ranging network of examples:

What though the sea with waves continuall
 Doe eate the earth, it is no more at all:
 Ne is the earth the lesse, or loseth ought,
 For whatsoeuer from one place doth fall,
 Is with the tide vnto an other brought:
 For there is nothing lost, that may be found, if sought. (5.2.39)

That is, universal equilibrium might be observed, but only through the collection of multiple data points: where the Giant perceives change that results in imbalance, Artegall supposes a redistribution of materials to remote places that might be ascertained empirically and through romance wandering: they "may be found, if sought." In effect, Artegall uses a speculative modality that offers a plausible account of how universal motions work, and from which he might make plausible conjectures, but which cannot be demonstrated with certainty in the present.

⁴² "Spenser's Giant and the New Science," 22.

⁴³ "We glimpse here the possibility of a radically non-Platonic world, a world in which the phenomena come first and are not only themselves all subject to time and change, but are the ground from which even metaphysical structures are erected" (Suttie, "The Lost Cause of Platonism," 419).

Thus, Artegall demonstrates how the Giant's justice is a coercively applied set of equivalences. In its place, he offers multiple, contradictory alternative accounts of historical, natural, and political change. Artegall recasts the proem's account of cosmic romance wandering to suggest that justice seeks to reconcile different causes, both immanent in nature and imposed by providential design:

Such heauenly iustice doth among them raine,
That euery one doe know their certaine bound,
In which they doe these many yeares remaine,
And mongst them al no change hath yet beene found.
But if thou now shouldst weigh them new in pound,
We are not sure they would so long remaine:
All change is perilous, and all chaunce vnsound,
Therefore leaue off to weigh them all againe,
Till we may be assur'd they shall their course retaine. (5.2.36)

Trusting that nature is fundamentally self-sustaining, Artegall's explanation that there are different orders of change that might be perceived, logically deduced, or assumed anticipates the appearance of the allegorical figure of Nature in the *Mutabilitie Cantos*, where she speaks for herself in a court of law to decide on Mutability's claims to rightful sovereignty over the material world. Appealing to her own ontology (or rather, appealing to the domain she rules over, for she refers to herself in the third person plural), Nature pronounces that: "They are not changed from their first estate; / But by their change their being doe dilate; / And turning to themselves at length againe, / Doe work their owne perfection so by fate" (7.7.58). It is not that things do not change, but that change restricts itself to Nature's formal bounds: its being, which remains constant, is merely perfected through romance dilation. Reconciling observations of the natural world with providential design, Artegall in effect offers a plausible explanation for the universal wandering that both the proem's narrator and the Giant have observed. In other words,

justice requires recognizing how nature's own autonomous structures of romance contingency participate in animating universals.

But even as he assures us that apparent cosmic errancy is justified, in advising the Giant to defer his action, Artegall upholds a fantasy of justice as passive observation, which ultimately diminishes the poet's role as maker. "Weighing" incurs "chaunce unsound," threatening to disturb the integrity of nature by exposing it to artificially-induced contingencies. While romance facilitates a mode of inquiry into political causes, the poem also struggles to reconcile the fact that hypotheses formed from literary resources disrupt the forms they strive to understand. In other words, the poem struggles to understand whether nature and justice are remote from poetic representations, or immanent within them, and whether it is the proper purview of the poet to "make" contingency and by deliberately interfering with natural processes in order to discover something new about them, or to refrain from disturbing her courses.

When the Giant refuses to acquiesce to Artegall's terms ("But he the right from hence did thrust away, / For it was not the right, which he did seeke" [5.2.49]), Talus, Artegall's enforcer, abruptly intervenes on Artegall's behalf, throwing the Giant and his scale over a nearby cliff, indefinitely suspending a resolution to the debate. Talus's action demonstrates the law's inability to engage with the incompleteness of the philosophical project, particularly in light of the real urgency of these questions: his dispensing of the "lawlesse multitude" that threatens violence against Artegall in retaliation for the Giant's death indicates the limitations of rational deliberation as a resolution to this kind of imminent, violent lawlessness (5.2.52). Talus' intervention also participates in the deferral by asserting a sudden ending to this episode, and by shifting the narrative

revelation of justice onto a new course and into new sets of narrative examples. The abrupt ending to the debate, then, reinforces the consequences of Artegall's argument: the inconclusiveness of the singular instance requires the production of more narrative examples, which in turn makes the discovery of justice an endless work.

Talus's intervention also takes the Giant's threat – to reduce all things to equality – to its logical extremes; Talus's disturbing, unmitigated violence equally applied (without recourse to equity or mercy) presents an understanding of absolute justice in which all corroborating examples through which justice might be signaled are razed into oblivion. Earlier in the same canto, for instance, Artegall and Talus had punished Pollente's and Munera's extortion of itinerant travelers (and by extension their obstruction of romance wandering) by making their bodies into examples. The fragmentation of their bodies – Pollente's head was "pitcht vpon a pole ... / To be a mirrour to all mighty men" (5.2.19), while Talus amputates Munera's golden hands and silver feet – presents an example of justice that lacks a clear reference to narrative context. A.C. Hamilton points out that the handless Munera, now unable to accept bribes, resembles conventional images of justice.⁴⁴ When Talus disposes of her body in the river, he produces her as an example but destroys the image of justice he sought to create. And where the Giant means to restore things to a prior vision of order (however misconceived), Talus destroys Pollente's castle in order to leave "no hope of reparation / Nor memory" (5.2.28), leaving in the wake of the example an untraceable absence that cannot be read. Talus's unflinching adherence to regularity through an uncompromising application of a single result takes the Giant's totalizing proposals to their absurd and bloody conclusions. In short, Talus's efficiency obstructs Artegall's use of romance

⁴⁴ 519, n. for stanza 26.

endlessness as the mode of erecting an image of justice. In doing so, however, his indiscriminate legal force produces a version of justice that lacks its contextualizing apparatus, its sense of historical determinism. Contingency, difference, and disruption, even if artificially induced by poetic making, seem necessary to produce an understanding of true justice.

In canto 12, as Artegall and Talus achieve their initial objective of rescuing Irena from the usurper Grandtorto, they commence the pursuit of justice by rebuilding her kingdom. The transition itself apparently runs smoothly, for Artegall “Did her therein establish peaceable, / And to her kingdomes seat restore agayne” (5.12.25), but the irony is that Artegall’s successful intervention restages Talus’s totalizing violence: “Not one was left” (5.12.25). But Artegall’s violent legal reforms of Irena’s kingdom also acquire a more philosophical component; in addition to meting out justice in the form of punishment, the narrator suggests that this process of judicial application also uncovers the nature of justice itself:

During which time, that he did there remaine,
His studie was true Iustice how to deale,
And day and night employ'd his busie paine
How to reforme that ragged common-weale:
And that same yron man which could reueale
All hidden crimes, through all that realme he sent,
To search out those, that vsd to rob and steale,
Or did rebell gainst lawfull gouernment;
On whom he did inflict most grieuous punishment. (5.12.26)

In order to maintain the rhyme structure, the second line of the stanza uses a syntactical inversion: while “true Iustice” is the direct object of the infinitive verb “to deale,” the word order of the line initially places it as a predicate of the main verb; the infinitive is a belated qualification that replaces theoretical inquiry with active making. “Iustice” is,

according to Spenser's grammar, something that "was," that has a reality prior to Artegall's reform; it is also revealed, not through passive "studie" of its rules, but by being actively made in its concrete examples through his "dealing."

But an arbitrary interruption prevents the full discovery of justice, outlining further the distinction between politics as the domain of legal institutions (here represented by the sovereign's command) and politics as the domain of philosophical making:

But ere he could reforme it thoroughly,
He through occasion called was away,
To Faerie Court, that of necessity
His course of Iustice he was forst to stay,
And *Talus* to reuoke from the right way,
In which he was that Realme for to redresse.
But enuies cloud still dimmeth vertues ray.
So hauing freed *Irena* from distresse,
He tooke his leaue of her, there left in heauinesse. (5.12.27)

The conclusion of the book's main narrative cannot help but be unsatisfactory for readers who yet again have been thwarted in their expectation that a Spenserian knight might find and keep to the "right way." A chance "occasion" deters Artegall from his quest, but it is an artificially construed obstruction, for we might also read the summons to return to the Court of Faerie as the sovereign voice imitating romance contingency in order to, in fact, arrest its progress. In effect, the premature conclusion to Artegall's journey produces contradictory accounts of romance structure: there is a fundamental tension between romance dilation that produces narrative and, by extension, multiplies exemplary models of justice on the one hand, and romance contingencies, which, on the other hand, suspend narrative momentum and thrust it into a new course altogether.

We can only speculate on the narrative functions of this interruption. Perhaps the historical allegory intends to reflect the apparent hopelessness of subduing Ireland and Spenser's personal frustrations on that front.⁴⁵ Perhaps the interruption indicates a fundamental conflict between finding out justice as an ideal and attending to institutional mandates. The *sententia* in line 7 – “But enuies cloud still dimmeth vertues ray” – hovers between multiple explanations of the motives involved in this sudden occurrence: either the envy is Artegall's, and his virtue is diminished because he begrudges the sovereign's command, or Gloriana is envious of Irena, and her prioritization of personal interest interrupts true justice's course. The undecidability of the *sententia*'s referent unfolds the tension that has thus far been subtending the book's examination of justice and its narrative models. Its position models a form of premature narrative completion, for, as Jeff Dolven suggests, *sententiae* usually appear in the alexandrine of the Spenserian stanza, offering a kind of closure to the thought developed within its frame.⁴⁶ Beginning with an adversative conjunction and appearing before the concluding couplet, the sententious closure interrupts the logical progression of the stanza just as Artegall's quest is in turn interrupted. If we see the envy as Artegall's unjust reaction to his queen's

⁴⁵ Explorations of the last two books of *The Faerie Queene* and the influence of Spenser's experiences of political disappointment in Ireland have been particularly prevalent in recent historicist criticism, and as a way of categorizing the political matter of Spenser's work as political complaint. See David J. Baker, *Between Nations: Shakespeare, Spenser, Marvell, and the Question of Britain* (Stanford: Stanford UP, 1997), ch. 2, which examines how Spenser's work reveals an affinity between England and Ireland while also insisting on their irreducible difference; Andrew Hadfield, *Spenser's Irish Experience: Wilde Fruit and Salvage Soyl* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1997), argues that the tensions between civil and savage in *The Faerie Queene* and the *View* show how English national identity was both forged and fractured through programs of reform in Ireland; Christopher Highly, *Shakespeare, Spenser, and the Crisis in Ireland* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1997); Willy Maley, “‘To Weet to Work Irenae's Franchisement’: Ireland in *The Faerie Queene*,” *Irish University Review* 22.2 (1996): 303-17; Thomas Herron, *Spenser's Irish Work: Poetry, Plantation, and Colonial Reformation* (Aldershot, Hampshire, England: Ashgate, 2007), ch. 9-10, interprets English activities in Ireland as they are presented in *The Faerie Queene* as working out the fulfillment of a protestant destiny.

⁴⁶ “The Method of Spenser's Stanza,” *Spenser Studies* 19 (2004): 17-25, 22.

commands, then we might understand that his dalliance in the world of romance and in the pursuit of justice has overstepped its proper bounds (as determined by sovereign will). If, however, the line attempts to rationalize the interruptive “occasion” as the result of sovereign caprice, it then equates her voice with a premature, unstable ending. The concluding force of the line upholds an arbitrary spatial boundary, producing justice as the “remainder” (to borrow Bonnie Honig’s term), the course Artegall has yet to explore.⁴⁷ By asking Artegall to choose obedience to sovereign authority, which brings the narrative to a false conclusion, over pursuing the romance dilation to its protracted end, the end of Artegall’s quest reinforces the idea that exile, the positioning of the errant knight beyond (and perhaps in violation of) the sovereign’s domain, is an enabling condition for a genuine engagement with true justice.

“To make experience”: Romance, Exile, and the Heuristic Possibility of Political Renewal

Book 5 concludes with an instance of a political community brought back into being by Artegall’s reform project; this reform in turn structures the gradual discovery of “justice.” This concluding example echoes Artegall’s beginnings, described in the first canto of the book. Astraea, the goddess of Justice, entices Artegall to leave his companions with gifts (5.1.5), in effect showing that an economy of exchange facilitates Artegall’s entrance into this world of “naturalized” justice. The narrative example here also facilitates an artificial production of the experience of exile, which in turn amplifies the relationship between the world of universals and the exemplary figures who embody them. His education under Astraea indicates how an artificially produced set of natural conditions facilitates the knight’s acquisition of political expertise: “So thence him farre

⁴⁷ *Political Theory and the Displacement of Politics* (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1993), 3.

she brought / Into a caue from companie exiled, / In which she nourled him, till yeares
 he raught, / And all the discipline of iustice there him taught” (5.1.6). The irony of
 Artegall’s education in the discipline of Justice is that it occurs in a political vacuum, but
 only if we define the “political” in strictly human terms: “for want there of mankind, /
 She caused him to make experience / Vpon wilde beasts, which she in woods did find, /
 With wrongfull powre oppressing others of their kind” (5.1.7). That Artegall can impose
 judgments on the animal world assumes parity between political and natural conditions,
 which, in turn, allows for a universal application of justice across these divides. But
 Artegall’s encounters with the animal world are artificially produced, and the legal
 pronouncements he makes are foregone conclusions, for the animals Astraea brings to
 him are the ones whom she has already deemed to have wielded their power wrongfully.
 This is not to say that “real” nature is thereby remote from its artificial imitations. Rather,
 this “fictive” nature offers a model that enables an understanding of justice as the product
 of artificial making. Spenser frames justice as an external, transcendent “cause”
 personified in the figure of Astraea, which brings about a state of affairs that make her
 operations in the world visible in concrete terms. Her conveyance of animals to Artegall
 offers another version of the Orphic myth that places the origins of political communities
 in the natural world. In this way, Astraea constructs for Artegall an originary political
 moment to facilitate an understanding of her being and his imitation of her actions.

Artegall’s temporary disaffiliation from concrete political institutions reiterates
 and draws upon the kinds of definitional work which allegorical narrative does. To this
 end, Book 5 offers contrasting views of exile as both “static” and “dynamic” conditions.
 The former, framed as a profound injustice, defines exile as an absolutely apolitical

condition of dwelling in nature that cannot be accommodated with political forms. The latter imagines nature as a set of conditions that enable the formation of political affiliations. The political exile, divested of his native political affiliation, requires alternative, extralegal models for political definition, ideas of justice which are not spatially determined or culturally contingent.⁴⁸ In other words, exile allows isolated characters to experience chance encounters, defining politics by its occasionality, rather than as a set of stable institutional structures.⁴⁹

The latter cantos in Book 5 are frequently criticized for diminishing the historical allegory to a matter of mere commentary on contemporary events. However, reducing the interpretation of these episodes to a matter of decoding their topical reference dismisses the way in which their fictional frames structure the poem's philosophical engagement with justice. Recalling the tropes which define Artegall's exile, the episode in which Arthur comes to Belge's aid after her banishment from her own kingdom by the tyrant Geryoneo is more than an exposition of the political tensions between the Protestant Low Countries and Catholic Spain.⁵⁰ Rather, the various understandings of exile, which romance facilitates, swiftly accumulate models of political communities coming into

⁴⁸ For banishment as a speech act that removes the exile from their civic, familial, and romantic connections, and thus divests them of their identity, see Jane Kingsley-Smith, *Shakespeare's Drama of Exile* (Houndsmill, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave, 2003), 1, 28.

⁴⁹ For exile in Spenser's work, see Julia Reinhard Lupton's "Home-Making in Ireland: Virgil's Eclogue 1 and Book VI of *The Faerie Queene*," *Spenser Studies* 8 (1990): 119-45, which argues that Book 6 of *The Faerie Queene* posits a 'legal fiction' wherein Ireland, because it is "natural" and not "social," has the character of the "extra-legal" and thus renders it an "outlaw" province without rights (133). One implication of Lupton's argument is that Ireland, produced by Spenser as a function of nature, rather than of society, enables its designation as outside the law, and thus requires action that exceeds the parameters of law.

⁵⁰ For the episode's historical reference, see A.C. Hamilton, ed., *The Spenser Encyclopedia* (Toronto and Buffalo: U of Toronto P, 1990), 216.

being. Belge's first speech to Arthur emphasizes that her exile prevents her engagement with networks of exchange:

May you in heauen immortall guerdon gaine
For so great trauell, as you doe sustaine:
For other meede may hope for none of mee,
To whom nought else, but bare life doth remaine,
And that so wretched one, as ye do see
Is liker lingring death, then loathed life to bee. (5.10.21)

She describes her exile as “bare life,” as a life bereft of the material means for sustaining her humanity and for fully occupying the role which romance prescribes for her, as a damsel in distress beholden to her rescuer.⁵¹ Despairing that her material insolvency prevents her from showing a requisite gratitude, Belge instead imagines an eschatological system of eternal reward that will supplement Arthur's romance errancy (his “so great trauell”) in a way that she cannot. In consequence of this otherworldly definition – that the knight's just due can only be achieved through heavenly guerdon – she erects a perfected form of romance exchange from which she imagines her absolute exclusion. In other words, she perceives romance tropes as offering ideal set of conditions that she cannot hope to reproduce herself.

The realm of universals defines for her the epitome of justice, set in opposition to the temporal world where a repository of figures drawn from elemental nature indicates the absolute injustice of temporal political institutions. As Belge continues to describe her experience of “bare life” in the wilderness, she positions her own experience of apolitical life against a related understanding of the political institutions that have been themselves

⁵¹ Spenser's phrase anticipates Giorgio Agamben's concept of “bare life” as the structuring condition of political inclusion in *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, trans. Daniel Heller-Roazen (Stanford: Stanford UP, 1995). Agamben synthesizes the classical distinction between two words for “life” – *zoe* (natural, biological life) and *bios* (as a political form of life alienated from natural life) – to consider how sovereignty constitutes itself by excluding biological life from political life.

reduced to apolitical conditions by her banishment. Responding to Arthur's attempts to dissuade her from abject despair, Belge argues that her banishment has annihilated any possibility for political identification:

Ay me (sayd she) and whether shall I goe?
 Are not all places full of forraine powres?
 My pallaces possessed of my foe,
 My cities sackt, and their sky-threating towres
 Raced, and made smooth fields now full of flowres?
 Onely these marishes, and myrie bogs,
 In which the fearefull ewftes do build their bowres,
 Yeeld me an hostry mongst the croking frogs,
 And harbour here in safety from those rauenous dogs. (5.10.23)

Her exile figures both natural and political spaces as lawless wildernesses: she herself inhabits nature outside her native city, but the impossibility of her return to the city is not a result of her own isolation from political belonging, but of the city's reduction to a wilderness when it is "Raced, and made smooth fields now full of flowres." This hauntingly lovely image indicates a contradictory understanding of nature's potential to create political forms. The destruction of her city seems to transform it into a natural world drawn from Golden Age mythology, but she also experiences nature in terms of its elemental cruelty, fundamentally opposed to justice. Belge draws upon this understanding of nature to thus construct her exile as absolute: "all places full of forraine powres" indicates that she is an alien wherever she goes. Consequently, Belge's understanding of exile is fundamentally static, and fundamentally devoid of justice; it is an absolute condition where a return to her native political community has now been made impossible both by its transformation into a territory occupied by enemy forces and by its imagined reduction to a natural state devoid of human community. But the "flowres," connected through rhyme to the "forraine powres" show a possibility not only for

political alienation, but political renewal, and, given the connection between “flowres” and “poesies,” by poetic means.

By contrast, Arthur imagines the exiled individual as a mobile figure capable of voluntary affiliation. He consoles her by suggesting her isolation is in fact an anticipatory condition, rather than an antipolitical one absolutely deprived of the possibilities of political inclusion: “Nathlesse (said he) deare Ladie with me goe, / Some place shall vs receiue, and harbour yield; / If not, we will it force, maugre your foe, / And purchase it to vs with speare and shield” (5.10.24). Arthur’s first argument – that some place is bound to receive them – reimagines her isolation as a kind of mobile agency that opens up the possibility of her being received by hospitable places. Arthur’s vision of hospitality then acquires a more fluid definition as he considers possible encounters with places not predisposed to give up their resources to them spontaneously: the gift of “harbour” slides into a “purchase” by force. Arthur reconfigures the hospitable other into the “foe”; yet, unlike Belge’s understanding of the “forraine” that makes it impossible for her to imagine her repatriation, Arthur imagines the “foe” that can be overtaken and made to enter into a temporary allegiance whose origin is violent. To these, Arthur adds a third possibility, an idea of nature that adequately compensates for the loss of human community: “And if all fayle, yet farewell open field: / The earth to all her creatures lodging lends” (5.10.24). He contradicts the idea that partnerships can only be formed between human actors. The “earth,” which Belge had earlier figured as an inhospitable site, becomes a dwelling place for those excluded from political relationships.

This episode, then, illuminates how the formal resources of romance can offer a double perspective on the relationship between nature and political belonging. On the one

hand, Belge imagines the natural world as a sign of an absolute abjection that renders both political institution and the possibility for her repatriation untenable. On the other hand, Arthur attempts to refigure exile as an enabling condition for hospitality, a system of exchanges at first suggested as a spontaneous generosity that quickly falls back into the paradigm of violence that enforces it. A third possibility for the political resonance of exile emerges also with Arthur's imperative: "with me goe" (5.10.24). The apolitical condition which results from Belge's unjust banishment allows for new kinds of relationships: it replaces an idea of politics as a set of legal institutions with an idea of politics as a network of spontaneous, organic, and temporary relations which can only be called into being by the mobility invoked in Arthur's invitation. Politics has, in short, become romance: the tropes of itinerant wandering figure forth the possibility of relationships, though neither permanent nor stable ones.

In other words, romance wandering becomes a heuristic vehicle for organically producing ideas of political belonging and community, and their limits. The role that romance plays is philosophical in its capacity to produce from imagined conditions of dwelling in nature definitions of political concepts. It manifests allegorical romance in political terms insofar as it submits the example to narrative circumstance in order to arrive at an understanding of justice and its possibility to be realized in political practices and forms of partnership. As a narrative trope typical of romance (and of Spenserian pastoral) the condition of exile deploys forms of temporal and spatial rupture – for example, itinerancy and mobility; voluntary and involuntary affiliation and disaffiliation; historical change and narrative contingency – to arrive at, and test the limits of, political definitions. In Book 5, therefore, exile becomes a necessary condition for arriving at

“truly poetical” understandings of justice that go beyond the spatial and temporal determinants that mark particular political jurisdictions.⁵² Rather, the extralegal space of Spenser’s romance landscape facilitates a derivation of the “causes” of political constitution, the conditions that produce, sustain, and disrupt its existence. Belge’s imagining of exile as an absolute condition produces negative instances of political community, indicating how a return to nature utterly dismantles ideas of political belonging and their conventional attachment to institutional networks. Arthur’s multiple alternatives offer a middle-ground; unable to promise her total accommodation within conventional ideas of politics, his compromising visions of political belonging offer an understanding of politics where acquiring knowledge of its definitions is a partially completed, endless work.

Calidore’s Exile and the Politics of Pastoral

While in Book 5 justice seems to be that arch-virtue which determines an idea of politics unbound by spatial determinants, Spenser shifts grounds in Book 6 to consider another version of the supreme political virtue. Spenser’s return to pastoral in the *Faerie Queene* after renouncing it at the beginning of Book 1 raises questions about the heuristic potential of different generic modes. Why is it that Spenser seems to find pastoral, rather

⁵² By definition, natural laws, universal and thus eternal, cannot have an origin, but they offered a source, a universal backdrop against which imitations of their forms emerged in human institutions and through which human institutions derived their authority. In turn, temporal institutions were said to be “just” because of their resemblance to the Natural Law’s normativity. R.S. White, Brian Lockety, and Bradin Cormack demonstrate the influence of debates between Natural Law and nativist tendencies on some English writers, including Spenser. See White, 59-71; Lockety, *Law and Empire in Renaissance Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2006), 114-21. English common law celebrated its own uniqueness as a system of governance, but the consequence of their awareness of the common law’s local and customary nature was that its defenders could not appeal to universal nature for its legitimacy, as systems derived more explicitly from natural law, such as civil law codes, could.

than epic or courtly romance, a more suitable mode for discovering courtesy and civility? The apparently most obvious answer resides in the conventional view that pastoral offered a fictional veil for discussing matters at court. By definition, courtesy ought to be a political virtue bound to its specific institutional milieus and practices; but, as with justice, the narrative of *The Faerie Queene* displaces the practice of the virtue from an institutional context.⁵³ The pastoral setting offers the opportunity to examine “courtesy” as a virtue that, while not necessarily institutionally bound, maintains an institutional character through the vehicle of allegory.⁵⁴

The Book of Courtesy, much like the Book of Justice, examines its eponymous virtue through the mode of allegorical romance. The canto begins with an abstract definition of “courtesy” derived from exemplary “vses” located within, but not confined to, particular political institutions:

Of Court it seemes, men Courtesie doe call,
For that it there most vseth to abound;
And well bessemeth that in Princes hall
That vertue should be plentifully found,
Which of all goodly manners is the ground,
And roote of ciuill conuersation. (6.1.1)

⁵³ In a similar vein, critics have often suggested that Book 6, and the pastoral episodes in particular, represent the withdrawal of the poem’s action to a private, internalized space. See Richard Helgerson, *Self-Crowned Laureates: Spenser, Jonson, Milton and the Literary System* (Berkeley: U of California P, 1983), 89-96; see also Borris, *Allegory and Epic*, 179-180.

⁵⁴ John D. Bernard, *Ceremonies of Innocence: Pastoralism in the Poetry of Edmund Spenser* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1989), considers this thesis in terms of Montrose’s argument that the “pastoral of power” was a mode of self-deception perpetuated by the poet: while pastoral enabled an imagined dissolution or rank, and thus became a vehicle whereby the poet could imagine his own ascent to a position of political influence, pastoral also affirmed that the poet remained ever subservient to these structures of power. Bernard argues that Spenser returned pastoral to its contemplative functions, which posited a pastoral community as a genuine alternative to the court, rather than as an extension of courtly power dynamics, and which could offer a viable position for critique (1-6).

Spenser's play with the verbal echo of "court" and "courtesy" initially associates the virtue with a fixed institution – the "Princes hall," where the virtue plays itself out through the "good manners" and "ciuill couersation" of those who occupy its walls. The indefinite relative pronoun "which" has two possible antecedents: the "Princes hall" and "vertue." It is uncertain whether the hall provides the "ground" of "good manners" and "roote of ciuil conuersation" (those actions which structure human relationships) or whether the virtue of courtesy itself is their source. The pronoun serves, then, as a hinge between two levels of temporal and spatial scale connecting the historically and institutionally specific with the abstract. But as with justice in the preceding book, the narrator worries that historical change has evacuated courtesy of its ethical dimensions: "courtesy is now so farre from that, which then it was, / That it indeed is nought but forgerie" (6 Proem 5). The narrator's indignation at the hypocritical forms of courtesy in the "state of present time" sets up a challenge to its conventional definition as a virtue tied to particular spaces.

Two types of courtesy's allegorical dimensions unfold from these examples: the first shows allegory in a Neoplatonic vein, in which particular examples serve to help us understand their general causes; the second manifests allegory as a veil of falsehood that conceals its true meanings. Presumably, Spenser's epic turns to pastoral because it lacks the sophistication and deceit of courtly practices and so promises to example courtesy in its idealizing terms once again. But more than this: even though they replicate in broadest terms the work of allegory as political engine in the preceding book, the pastoral episodes of *The Faerie Queene* present a different kind of engagement with nature and its political potential. I argue that the pastoral episodes attempt to resolve the difficulties encountered

with romance's endless, partial reconstruction of political ideals through recourse to the dialectic implied by the allegorical doubleness that structures the relationship between pastoral country and its antithesis in the court.⁵⁵

Until Calidore's arrival, the pastoral world is hermetically sealed from the effects of allegorical errancy.⁵⁶ The "showes" of the court are but "vaine shadowes to this safe retire," suggesting that the pastoral world occupies a greater order or reality on a Neoplatonic scale (6.9.27). Moreover, its equation with a realm of ideals gives the pastoral world a greater deal of constancy than the tumultuous political world of "becoming," which is dominated by "fortunes wrackfull yre, / Which tosseth states" (6.9.27). As we saw with Arthur, temporal and spatial mobility are necessary conditions for examining possibilities of political affiliation not otherwise conceivable. Likewise, Artegall's travelling assizes enable a cumulative (though inconclusive) understanding of political virtue. But Calidore's pastoral digression and self-imposed exile suspend the narrative momentum of epic and romance. As Meliboe invites the errant knight Calidore to his home, he declares that though it is humble, "better so / To lodge, then in the saluage fields to rome" (6.9.16), suggesting that a pastoral ethos is antithetical to the "salvage" spaces of romance wandering and their associations with uncivilized wilderness. In naming the open fields as "salvage," Meliboe's opposition between pastoral settlement and romantic "roming" implicitly depoliticizes the landscapes of the latter. Untilled and uncultivated as they are, these landscapes are "salvage" in the respect

⁵⁵ See Susan Snyder, *Pastoral Process: Spenser, Marvell, Milton* (Stanford: Stanford UP, 1998), which understands "pastoral process" to be a dialectical superimposition of an "idyllic then and a blighted, alienated now" (3). The kinds of temporal dialectical logic characteristic of pastoral, therefore, resemble the same assumptions guiding the arguments about allegorical romance in the poem to Book 5.

⁵⁶ MacCaffrey, *Spenser's Allegory* argues that pastoral in Book 6 represents a "pre-allegorical" mode where "being and seeming" have not yet parted company (410).

that they are opposed to forms of georgic order that metonymically sign nature's subjection to a political foundation.

Although Calidore infiltrates the pastoral world, we are persistently reminded of its isolation from the effects of things which are foreign to it, including both the world of politics and the overriding plot of the book. While Calidore's pursuit of the Blatant Beast ostensibly leads him from court, through cities, towns, to farm land (6.9.3), and finally "From thence into the open fields" (6.9.4), the Blatant Beast is notably absent from the shepherds' domain: the shepherds reply to Calidore's inquiries that "no such beast they saw, / Nor any wicked feend, that mote offend / Their happie flockes, nor danger to them draw" (6.9.6). Calidore's loss of the scent indicates a wandering out of the linear trajectory of the epic into the domain of dilatory romance, which finally leads him to a place that apparently suspends both these models of mobility and narrative progression. The shepherds have never seen the Blatant Beast, who functions as the engine of the book's narrative – as both the reason for Calidore's adventure and also as a dispenser of the disruptive intrigues and slanders that beset the knights and ladies of the book. Calidore also elects to stay in this pastoral milieu indefinitely, thereby suspending the narrative altogether: "Giue leaue awchyle, good father, in this shore / To rest my barcke, which hath bene beaten late / With stormes of fortune and tempestuous fate" (6.9.31).⁵⁷

⁵⁷ Amelia Zurcher Sandy, "Pastoral, Temperance, and the Unitary Self in Wroth's *Urania*," *SEL* 42.1 (2002): 103-119, examines the intersections of plot and pastoral in Mary Wroth's *The Urania* to argue that where "romance narratives converge at [an] impasse," this stalling is prevented by returning self-consciousness to each character through pastoral framing (107). Though Calidore's principal motive for delaying among the shepherds is his pursuit of Pastorella, the political argument he gives for choosing the pastoral world depends on the idea that pastoral contentment is a palliative to political disappointment, giving the disenchanted individual an opportunity to retreat from the instability of the political world. For an account of the pastoral of content that seeks to erect an apolitical pastoral world (as opposed to satirical pastoral whose content is explicitly more political), see Robert Stillman, *Sidney's Poetic Justice: The Old*

Allegory in Book 6 of *The Faerie Queene* stages a conflict between a universalizing mode of pastoral (that is, an idea of retreat to a static condition of political ideals which cannot be corrupted by time) and its prepolitical, anticipatory mode. Implicitly complicit in structures of power, the pastoral perspective nevertheless rests on the enabling fiction of its double alienation from both political institutions and from the idealized pastoral world.⁵⁸ The book's failure to enclose pastoral from the effects of this doubleness finds its corollary in narrative's forceful encroachment upon the pastoral terrain. Pastoral complicates the dynamic of exile in that there is usually a sense of belonging which it enables, especially as man is conventionally felt to have belonged "in a garden rather than in a city."⁵⁹ To be exiled from the networks of political power located at court allows the pastoral figure to imagine himself returning to his "natiue home," as Meliboe puts it when speaking of his self-imposed "exclusion" while he remained at court (6.9.25). But membership in the pastoral community is conditional and transitory.⁶⁰ The allegorical character which it has in Spenser's *The Faerie Queene* produces a doubled perspective that limits its sustainability as a political ideal. The pastoral world is never fully present-to-itself: as a mode that relies upon structures of difference between art and nature, between court and country, pastoral perspective can therefore only speak about nature from a position of culture, and can only speak about

Arcadia, *Its Eclogues, and Renaissance Pastoral Traditions* (Lewisburg, PA: Bucknell UP, 1986).

⁵⁸ For arguments about alienation as endemic to English uses of pastoral, see Catherine Nicholson, "Pastoral in Exile: Spenser and the Poetics of English Alienation," *Spenser Studies* 23 (2008): 41-71. Nicholson argues that, as a poetic form alien to Britain, pastoral always risks dissolving a familiar landscape into a foreign one.

⁵⁹ Kingsley-Smith, *Shakespeare's Drama of Exile*, 108.

⁶⁰ See Kimberly Huth, "Come Live With me and Feed My Sheep: Invitation, Ownership, and Belonging in Early Modern Pastoral Literature," *Studies in Philology* 108.1 (2011): 44-69, which argues that the logic of pastoral invitation paradoxically upholds distinctions between permanent inhabitants and visitors only temporarily included in the pastoral scene (48, 67).

apolitical being from a position of political investment. While Calidore's deceptions, habits cultivated at court, point to the insincerity that seems to underlie any pastoral representation, they also reflect a different order of political consequences. Calidore's interruptions of pastoral contentment and containment, accompanied by interruptions of the forms of action and temporality that accompany narrative, are nevertheless essential to the production of knowledge of the causes of political virtues, and to their distillation in allegorical figures.

In order to introduce aspects of this doubleness of perspective, the poem presents the pastoral episodes as a reversion to a prior state within the narrative action. Pastoral defers narrative completion in Book 6: it delays Calidore's conquest of the Blatant Beast and takes us from the narrative lines that follow other principle characters of the Book – Arthur, Calepine and Serena – leaving them suspended in inconclusive narratives. Further, the narrator's awareness of narrative process also draws attention to a more complex relationship between potential and the completion that it anticipates. As the narrator returns to Calidore's quest in canto 9, he announces that the swerve in the narrative is largely retrospective:

Now turne againe my teme thou iolly swayne,
 Backe to the furrow which I lately left;
 I lately left a furrow, one or twayne
 Vnplough'd, the which my coulter hath not cleft:
 Yet seem'd the soyle both fayre and frutefull eft,
 As I it past there were too great a shame,
 That so rich frute should be from vs bereft;
 Besides the great dishonour and defame,
 Which should befall to Calidores immortall name. (6.9.1)

Anadiplosis, the repetition of the final words of one clause to begin the next, imitates the plow's action of moving to and fro in a circular pattern. Turning back to a neglected

beginning, rather than advancing in the field to subsequent furrows and subsequent narrative events, the action of the narrative and the pattern of the verse stall progression by effecting a recursive lateral movement. Likewise, returning to Calidore in the place where he has languished since the narrative's attention outstripped him indicates the expansiveness of narrative threads whose potential are as yet unfulfilled: the "soyle" seems "both fayre and frutefull," and the narrator would be loathe to leave it undeveloped, not only because of what it would deprive us, his readers and himself, but also because leaving it aside might risk Calidore's "immortall name." Calidore's tale is a "rich frute" – rife with instructive potential that must now be tended to and plucked. But that it is a fruit, rather than a seed, also conveys a strange temporal folding: the field in which the fruit will be generated has not yet been prepared or tended to, and yet the crop has already come to fruition in the image which stands in for the narrative that would clear Calidore from "dishonour and defame." There is both narrative potential that has not yet begun to bloom, and the fruit which precedes the conditions that would allow for its completion. The fruit, the rule, is immanent within the example, but not yet fully present, requiring narrative momentum to animate its components and its limiting conditions. We are interested in witnessing the arrested development of this strain of the plot because Calidore's example offers the opportunity to observe the emergent manifestation of virtue in unstable material form.

When Calidore remarks to Meliboe that the shepherds' community seems remarkably exempt from the effects of contingency ("more happie is the state, / In which ye father here doe dwell at ease, / Leading a life so free and fortunate" [6.9.19]), Meliboe

explains that it is material self-sufficiency, modeled after nature's example, that makes his own "happie state" sustainable:

... hauing small, yet doe I not complaine
Of want, ne wish for more it to augment,
But doe my selfe, with that I haue content;
So taught of nature, which doth little need
Of forreine helps to lifes due nourishment. (6.9.20)

Meliboe brings nature into parity with forms of human fellowship, not as its double, but as a necessary condition for pastoral contentment and pastoral containment, where "forreine helps" are purely superfluous. Spenser's pastoral contentment, which disavows that any pastoral figure should have any need for desire – "Therefore I doe not any one enuy, / Nor am I enuyde of any one thereof" (6.9.21) – seems to be characterized by the absence of Puttenham's pastoral "acquisition" altogether.⁶¹ Not only is Spenser's pastoral an extralegal domain, it signifies an absence of the need for the "lawfulness" (as Puttenham defines it) that coordinates these exchanges. Pastoral contentment operates on two levels: on the literary, formal level, it denies its dependency on external referents, the "forreine helps" to its meanings – namely, the political meanings and their grounding in spaces, events, and persons that are external to the pastoral fiction. At an economic level, pastoral content comes about from its lack of dependency on legal forms that regulate material acquisitiveness, simply because "nature" supplies this lesson in "contentment" that nullifies their necessity.

Meliboe claims that "The litle that I haue, growes dayly more / Without my care, but onely to attend it; / My lambes doe euery yeare increase their score, / And my flockes farther daily doth amend it" (6.9.21). Meliboe denies actively seeking the material

⁶¹ Puttenham, *The Arte of English Poesy: A Critical Edition*, eds. Frank Whigham and Wayne A. Rebhorn (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 2007), 127.

augmentation of his condition, relying on the idea that nature fulfills her own perfection organically through time, which in turn enables instances of relationships between human and natural categories that are also organically self-regenerating. But Calidore's pun, that Meliboe appears "fortunate" (6.9.19), undermines the seamless integration between Meliboe's pastoral economy and nature's example. As Meliboe continues his account of his humble pastoral prosperity, we begin to see the other forms of increase which sustain the pastoral world's human communities:

Sometime I hunt the Fox, the vowed foe
Vnto my Lambes, and him dislodge away;
Sometime the fawne I practise from the Doe;
Or from the Goat her kidde how to conuay;
Another while I baytes and nets display,
The birds to catch, or fishes to beguyle (6.9.23)

Effectively, Meliboe's claim that his flocks increase "without my care" does not extend to his relationships with other animals. He is aware that nature poses a threat to his own animals, but he also actively dissembles in order to steal from nature itself, "practicing" the young from their mothers, and using baits and nets and other beguiling tactics to colonize nature for his own use. We might notice the parallelism between Astraea's baiting of Artegall and Meliboe's baiting of fish and birds. The former illustrates, as I had argued, the erection of an artificial political vacuum as a heuristic device for revealing justice's true nature to Astraea's pupil. The latter suggests the artifice of nature's indefatigable generosity that subtends its impossibly idealized economies: even as we are meant to see Meliboe's mode of living as ideal in its self-sufficiency, we are also invited to see the fault lines that structure it. Meliboe's "fortune" depends on recognizing that this pastoral lifestyle is not self-sustaining; it relies on his ability to anticipate potential needs and to practice dissembling in order to maintain the aspect of nature's preternatural

inexhaustibility. In effect, Meliboe's use of nature suggests the failure of pastoral to remain internally self-consistent. If pastoral's political vision is understood as its ability to offer "fortunate" conditions of "conversation" between the natural and human worlds, it invites us to see how its "fortunate," contingent qualities require the unveiling of its sublimated artifice. To see Meliboe's dissembling as a form of allegory depends on Puttenham's definition of allegory as "false semblance or dissimulation," not unlike Calidore's usage for the sake of expediency in "insinuating his harts desire" (6.9.27).⁶² In sum, pastoral's natural economy requires the practice of a courtly aesthetic in order to sustain its self-sufficiency.⁶³

The dialectic tension between values attributed to their respective places of the court and the country likewise inflect Calidore's unsuccessful attempts to immerse himself entirely within a pastoral ethos. Calidore's desire for Pastorella suspends plot, for he lingers among the shepherds, heedless of his romance calling, precisely because he persistently fails to win Pastorella, to be united with pastoral's allegorical image and achieve full integration within the pastoral world through marriage. Calidore's protracted achievement of the object of his desire also defers pastoral's total actualization, suggesting that courtesy itself, a concept at once both alien and central to pastoral, initiates pastoral, not as a static condition, but as a process striving for the revelation of the causes of the political virtues that subtend it. Calidore attempts to pass for a pastoral figure by taking on a shepherd's guise and replicating the kinds of exchanges that define pastoral interactions, but he persistently misreads how this pastoral world operates.

Calidore's poetic "courtesies" to Pastorella lack currency (6.9.34):

⁶² Puttenham, *Arte of English Poesy*, 271.

⁶³ As Miller, "The Courtly Figure," has argued, the "political expediency" of courtly dissembling shows how allegory functions as an instrument of power (51-53).

But she that neuer had acquainted beene
 With such quaint vsage, fit for Queenes and Kings,
 Ne euer had such knightly service seene
 But being bred vnder base sphepheards wings,
 Had euer learn'd to loue the lowly things,
 Did litle whit regard his courteous guize,
 But cared more for *Colins* carolings
 Then all that he could doe, or euer deuize:
 His layes, his loues, his lookes she did them all despize (6.9.35)

When Calidore bests his rival Coridon in a singing contest, rather than claiming his pastoral achievement by keeping the crown which would have marked it, his courtesy dictates that he instead transfer the token of his accomplishment to his rival: “Then was the oaken crowne by *Pastorell* / Giuen to *Calidore*, as his due right; / But he, that did courtesie excel, / Gaue it to *Coridon*, and said he wonne it well” (6.9.44). While his triumph should here mark his immersion in the pastoral world, he actively defers it by artificially sustaining rivalry that perpetuates his pursuit of Pastorella and pastoral. Calidore imitates the pastoral ethos of unconditional generosity, recognizing Coridon as equally worthy of distinction, but he does so by overlooking the fact that they are *not* equals: Calidore did beat him fairly after all. Calidore mistakes the genre he occupies and misreads the proper order of the relations which inhere in it, but this is because he “*excels*” at courtesy, the virtue the genre is meant to manifest. His lack of decorum, his inability to adjust his practice of this “quaint vsage” to the circumstances, prevents his ability to fully manifest the virtue that he nevertheless excels at. The image of Calidore wearing his armor underneath his shepherd’s weeds when he goes to rescue Pastorella from the brigands demonstrates the use of a pastoral dissembling to achieve romance goals, but the absurdity of the image shows an emblem of pastoral courtesy that exceeds its own genre and requires other systems of generic reference to enable its narrative

completion as well as its ethical fruition (6.11.36). Furthermore, as Jacqueline Miller reminds us, Pastorella is herself a figure drawn from romance conventions: a foundling of noble heritage, she provides an instance of courtly dissimulation in pastoral guise without recognizing that she does so.⁶⁴ The “naturalization” of pastoral’s artifice, then, relies in part on its absorption of allegorical doubleness into an apparently seamless surface that nevertheless fails to completely reconcile the oppositional forces that compose the layers of its representations.

The Dance of the Graces on Acidale, orchestrated by Colin Clout’s poetic skill, shows how pastoral’s doubled alienation is a condition of possibility for political knowledge. Calidore immediately intuits that this landscape is in fact allegorical, and not wishing to disturb the beauty before him, he holds back at first: “He durst not enter into th’open green, / For dread of them vnwares to be descryde, / For breaking of their daunce, if he were seene” (6.10.11). But his curiosity gets the better of him; able to see that this vision is allegorical, but unable to parse its meanings, he “resolves what it was to know” (6.10.17), breaking into the concentric circle of dancers to demand an interpretation. Calidore’s penetration of the vision resolves two issues which passive observation does not: the syntactical inversion (“resolving what it was to know”) indicates that Calidore hopes his presence will both enable an understanding of what he sees; but it will also give him knowledge of what it means *to know*. But his interruption causes the vision to dissolve, and Colin breaks his pipes in frustration. Calidore apologizes for his lack of civility: Colin accepts his apology, and generously offering a gloss of the image Calidore has just disrupted, reveals that it had been an “ensample” (in the sense of practical political knowledge) of the “skill” (the praxis or art) which “men

⁶⁴ Miller, “The Courtly Figure,” 60-61.

call Ciuility” (6.10.23). The emblem’s significance is overtly political, but it remains to be seen in what sense it exemplifies the quality of “ciuility,” how it offers an example of “ciuil vses,” and how it unites this virtue with the qualities of courtesy and grace that also manifest in the emblem.

We learn from this interruption that the pastoral allegory had signified nature’s self-sufficiency; at the same time, the allegorical gloss that Colin offers also records disruptions to its emergent, self-organizing qualities. The narrator describes Acidale as a place of idealized, perfected nature: “For all that euer was by natures skill / Deuized to worke delight, was gathered there, / And there by her were poured forth at fill, / As if this to adorne, she all the rest did pill” (6.10.5). “Natures skill” organizes the scene, but a prepositional phrase and passive voice subordinate this agent that “devises” and “gathers” everything to this composition. Even as the place is saturated by nature’s whole being, nature’s “pilling” or “pillaging” of “all the rest” that adorns this spot undermines illusions of any self-sufficient harmony.⁶⁵ Further, Colin’s poetry is as much an engine of this allegorical emblem as the matter of the emblem itself. Yet, Colin claims that once disturbed, the Graces “by no meanes thou canst recall againe, / For being gone none can them bring in place / But whom they themselves list so to grace” (6.10.20). Transforming their name into a verb, the pun “to grace” suggests that they alone can will the fulfillment of their own being. In a gesture of metapoetical framing, the narrator addresses Colin

⁶⁵ Michael C. Schoenfeldt, “The Poetry of Conduct: Accommodation and Transgression in The Faerie Queene, Book 6,” *Enclosure Acts: Sexuality, Property, and Culture in Early Modern England*, eds. Richard Burt and John Michael Archer (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1994), 151-69, argues that courtesy is a practice that allows one to cross social boundaries, but the poetics of accommodation upon which it relies, aspiring to perform these border crossings without threatening them, instead punctures the spaces it enters: “the emphasis in the pastoral episodes is not on the romantic withdrawal into an imaginative landscape that many readers have suggested but rather on the debilitating vulnerability of all imagined space” (151, 162).

with the imperative: “Pype iolly shepheard, pype thou now apace / Vnto thy loue, ... Thy Loue is present there with thee in place, / Thy Loue is there aduaunst to be another Grace” (6.10.16). The cause of Colin’s music is thus further displaced by one more remove. The shepherdess to whom the song is addressed “is present” because Colin is “in place,” but the efficient cause of her own advancement to be among the Graces herself is the place indicated by the deictic “there.” That is, Colin’s music brings her *here*, but it is not enough to advance her to the virtue she is called upon to represent and for the meaning of the allegory to achieve its total fulfillment. The emblem participates in nature both in the sense that Acidale is itself a particular place, composed of palpable material beauties, both human and nonhuman, and in the sense that it is the animating force through which these representatives of political virtues manifest their own becoming. As the skill that drives courtesy and civility, “grace” is immanent within the natural and mythical setting, but also requires external pressures – Colin’s piping, Calidore’s disruptive demands for an interpretation, the narrator’s imperatives, the shepherdess’s desire for Colin’s music – to draw out these qualities and understand their uses. In other words, the Dance of the Graces reveals to us how “language is also an actor,” and the Dance of the Graces, as an object of knowledge, itself becomes what Donna Haraway refers to as a “material-semiotic generative node.”⁶⁶

In a quite obvious sense the allegory is not political, for the “iolly Sheapheards lass” is explicitly not a stand-in for a political person, and Colin apologizes to Gloriana, his sovereign, for having displaced her from the center of the emblem: “Pardon thy

⁶⁶ Haraway, “The Promises of Monsters: A Regenerative Politics for Inappropriate/d Others,” *The Haraway Reader* (New York: Routledge, 2004), 63-124, on p. 68. See also *When Species Meet* (Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 2007): “all the actors become who they are *in the dance of relating*, not from scratch, not ex nihilo, but full of the patterns of their sometimes-joined, sometimes-separate heritages both before and lateral to *this* encounter” (25).

shepherd, mongst so many layes, / As he hath sung of thee in all his dayes, / To make one minime of thy poore handmayd” (6.10.28). Colin’s apology depends on the claim that this is an exceptional instance in which a female figure is *not* meant to shadow some aspect of Gloriana’s (and thus Elizabeth’s) person. If the allegory fulfils the function of Puttenham’s political pastoral in pointing to greater matters, it does so in spite of its denial that the emblem could be read as a simple correlation between pastoral surface and political reference. Colin argues that the emblem really does only (as Puttenham would say) “represent the rustical manner of loves and communications,” here in the vehicle of a sophisticated and obscure Neoplatonic conceit.⁶⁷ “Who can aread what creature mote she bee,” Colin asks, pointing to the fact of her own inscrutability, but she is of allegory and not of allegory at once (6.10.25): “But what so sure she was, she worthy was, / For be the fourth with those three other placed: / Yet was she certes but a countrey lasse, / Yet she all other countrey lasses farre did passe” (6.10.25). Asserting that she is correctly placed among the Graces, Colin assures us that she is “certes but countrey lasse” affirming that she stands for nothing other than herself just as certainly as she is no higher person in disguise as a shepherdess. And yet she is also more than what she seems, passing all other country lasses:

Ne lesse in vertue that beseemes her well,
 Doth she exceede the rest of all her race;
 For which the Graces that here wont to dwell,
 Haue for more honor brought her to this place,
 And graced her so much to be another Grace.

Another Grace she well deserues to be,
 In whom so many Graces gathered are,
 Excelling much the meane of her degree;
 Diuine resemblance, beauty soueraine rare,

⁶⁷ Puttenham, *Arte of English Poesy*, 127.

Firme Chastity, that spight ne blemish dare;
 All which she with such courtesie doth grace,
 That all her peres cannot with her compare,
 But quite are dimmed, when she is in place.
 She made me often pipe and now to pipe apace. (6.10.26-27)

Much of the poetry of this section is over laden with end rhymes and internal rhymes linking “grace” with “place,” and the excessive repetition in this passage insists on how these meanings are compounded: the shepherdess’s exemplary virtue merits her presence here, but the causality is confused, for she does not come to completely inhabit grace until she is brought there: a composite of many graces herself – divinity, beauty, chastity, all bound together (“graced”) with courtesy – they enable her to become a Grace, but only once the Graces have “graced” her according to her merit.

The Dance of the Graces offers both a promised fulfillment of and a limit case for allegory as a system for depicting the infinite in the actual of the material present. However palpable, the golden image remains beyond Calidore’s full understanding. Though they are “naked, without guile / Or false dissemblance” so that “all them plaine may see” (6.10.24), and thus appear to be unallegorical, they nevertheless compose an emblem of an impenetrable, enclosed feminine space. But his intrusion also produces another outlet for allegory. The emblem thus demonstrates the tension between competing definitions of “allegory.” On the one hand, Colin’s piping and the image itself suggest the poetic practices of distilling “rarefied” matter into a unifying but impenetrable image;⁶⁸ on the other hand, this version of poetic making struggles against *allegoresis*, the activity of interpreting the poetic image to construct, or reconstruct, another register of meaning: “since things passed none may now restore,” Calidore says,

⁶⁸ Humphrey Tonkin, *Spenser’s Courteous Pastoral: Book Six of the Faerie Queene* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1972), 130.

“Tell me, what were they all” (6.10.20). Narrative disruption, contingency, and accident, especially in Book 6, is the vehicle that makes this “becoming political” of the natural world possible, for the disruptions and delays that are characteristic of Spenser’s erratic narrative resist the achievement of the allegorical image’s perfection, and yet without the *allegoresis* of interpretation and interruption, we would not have knowledge of the “skill” which “men call Ciuility.” The poem’s account of political forms in nature requires that we recognize how pastoral allegory is not present-to-itself, not only in the sense of its false-speaking that pushes the matter of its referential content – the natural world, the political world – beyond the horizon of representation, but also in the sense that it discerns the diffusion of human and nonhuman agencies, traces their uneven effects, and focalizes the paradoxes of Spenser’s political “ensamples” in Calidore and in Colin’s shepherdess.

Calidore’s disruptive actions returns to the language of “thrusting into the midst” which suspends Calidore’s immersion into the Golden Age fiction, but it produces *allegoresis*:

But soone as he appeared to their vew,
They vanisht all away out of his sight,
And cleane were gone, which way he neuer knew;
All saue the shepheard, who for fell despight
Of that displeasure, broke his bag-pipe quight,
And made great mone for that vnhappy turne. (6.10.18)

Ultimately, Calidore’s desire to know the image destroys it; his “thrusting into the midst,” his desire to fully occupy the pastoral image, to partake in its animating precepts by better knowing them, also shows the allegorical image’s limiting conditions and betrays its fragility. At the same time, after these concrete universals are disbanded without any material trace, what remains is the pastoral poet “in the midst,” the

interpreter of forms who speaks for the wordless, and now invisible, images of universals. Ironically, Calidore's destruction of the pastoral allegory leaves in its wake the pastoral figure. A further level of irony is that Colin Clout, as the well-acknowledged avatar for Spenser, is, like Calidore, a courtier in pastoral clothing. A fiction of a pastoral is what remains to us of universals; its destruction is the condition of knowing the skill of civility, the manifestation of the virtues it represents in concrete forms.

The destruction of the Meliboe's pastoral dwelling, the murder of most of the shepherds, and Pastorella's abduction leaves scarcely any trace of pastoral's idealisms:

Ne wight he found, to whom he might complaine,
 Ne wight he found, of whom he might inquire;
 That more increast the anguish of his paine.
 He sought the wood; but no man could see there:
 He sought the plaines; but could no tidings heare.
 The woods did not but echoes vaine rebound;
 The playnes all waster and emptie did appeare:
 Where wont the shepheards oft their pypes resound,
 And feed an hundred flocks, there now not one he found. (6.11.26)

At this point, the poem has been emptied out of pastoral just as the vision on Acidale had been emptied out by Calidore's violations. Calidore initially finds himself in absolute solitude, left utterly alone in a natural wasteland. An apparent impossibility of community accompanies an apparent impossibility of explanation, leaving Calidore in temporary ignorance of the causes of this violence and of the reason for pastoral's ultimate failing as a political mode and as an image of natural harmony. But this desolate vision is not entirely bereft of possibility: "The woods did not but echoes vaine rebound" recalls the "rebounding echoes" of the Acidale vision before its dispersal, signifying an imitation (the "vain echoes") of an imitation (Meliboe's tenuously inhabitable pastoral) of the universals of Colin's song: "he seemed that he a merry sound / A shrill pipe he

playing heard on hight, / And many feet fast thrumping th'hollow ground / That through the woods their Eccho did rebound" (6.10.10) We see in the echoes of echoes a persistence of the emblem beyond its own narrative moment in the form of a vestigial acoustic materiality. This verbal echo allows us to read back onto Colin's emblem its own proleptic fragility and disintegration, but we also see its persistence, the ability for pastoral ideality to linger in the world of phenomenal, contingent experience.

The echoes within the text suggest the fragility of images and of these chains of imitation, but they also present a possibility of their renewal in other forms. Just as the dissolution of the vision on Acidale leaves an allegorical pastoral figure in its wake, the destruction of the poem's pastoral space leaves a figure representing the synthesis of pastoral and romance. In other words, for Spenser, literature gives us knowledge, but this knowledge comes at the cost of alienation and detachment from the ideal. If the practice of political virtue requires the union of the general with the particular, then, there is a triumph in a constitution that makes this kind of relationship durable; the tragedy, which the allegorical mode of Spenserian romance and pastoral make clear, is that this relationship is always a partial compromise of the ideal conditions it seeks to understand. But while the allegorical figure might only exist as the vestiges of the lost, unrealizable ideal political conditions that remind us of our detachment from them, it also offers a restorative middle ground. Its figures and its artificial constructions, while failing to give us Plato's commonwealth, give us something else: what might best be within the realm of possibility.

Chapter 2: Pastoral's Political Ecologies in William Shakespeare's *As You Like It*

Early-modern pastoral's use of the green world to reflect on and reform social institutions has been well established.¹ As I have shown, this political function of pastoral has been typically reduced to topical commentary, particularly in light of Puttenham's claim in *The Arte of English Poesie* that pastoral's symbolic spaces are not particularly concerned with adequate representations of country life and the natural world, but rather "glaunce at greater matters" taking place at the centers of political activity – in particular at the court.² The fictional green world offers the promise of a "place of escape and exile, of non-normative, and therefore potentially transgressive, practice."³ The pastoral country is thus not only allegorically and analogically related to the court; it manifests the politics of subversion and containment. But the enabling paradox of New Historicist analysis of pastoral is that literature is always subordinated to, and is an extension of power, defined as a totalizing entity that saturates all of culture, even those aspects of culture that would seem to lie outside these centers of power.⁴ Pastoral and pastoral poets have also been frequently charged with complicity in the structures of power they seem to oppose from a

¹ For analysis of pastoral's distinction between the active and contemplative in Shakespeare, see Cathy Curtis, "The Active and Contemplative Lives in Shakespeare's Plays," *Shakespeare and Early Modern Political Thought*, eds. David Armitage et. al. (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2009), 44-63; and Janette Dillon, *Shakespeare and the Solitary Man* (Totowa, NJ: Rowman and Littlefield, 1981). For arguments about Shakespeare's use of the green world as vehicle for political critique, see Kiernan Ryan, *Shakespeare's Comedies* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2009), ch.9; and Rosalie L. Colie, *Shakespeare's Living Art* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1974), 256-57, which argues that Jaques, as the most antisocial character is also the play's most pastoral due to his affirmation of the pastoral values of critique.

² *The Arte of English Poesie, a Critical Edition*, eds. Frank Wingham and Wayne A. Rebhorn (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 2007), 89.

³ Julie Sanders, *The Cultural Geography of Early Modern Drama, 1620-1650* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2011), 65.

⁴ For example, see Louis Adrian Montrose, "'Eliza, Queen of the Shepheardes,' and the Pastoral of Power," *ELR* 10.2 (1980): 153-82: "Pastoral power might seem an oxymoronic notion, for pastoral literature is ostensibly a discourse of the powerless in dispraise of power... My argument is that the symbolic mediation of social relationships was a central function of Elizabethan pastoral forms; and that social relationships are, intrinsically, relationships of power" (153).

position of disinterestedness, represented metonymically by the pastoral world's own displacement from the physical places and institutions that normalize these power structures.

While Shakespeare's *As You Like It* upholds the demarcations of space typical of pastoral – erecting a division between the court on the one hand, and the wilderness of Arden on the other – I will suggest that the play appropriates pastoral space in the service of exploring new ways of seeing literature's political potential. Shakespeare's pastoral drama composes the forest as a speculative domain through a repertoire of representational techniques: fictions, conventions, bodily gestures, reported speeches, and theatrical framings. It does so in order to show how literature is formative of the play's political ecologies. Bruno Latour has identified two kinds of political ecology. The first kind, exemplified by “deep ecology,” produces a politics of nature that sees “nature” as a mere addition – as a new item on a list of topics to debate in political arenas – without adequately rethinking the terms of its initial apparent exclusion from those debates. The second strives to reimagine politics and nature under the rubric of a new collective, whose construction requires a fundamental reevaluation of nature (conventionally defined as the realm of inert, incontestable “matters of fact” merely reported on by a select group of experts) into “disputed states of affairs.”⁵ This chapter argues that pastoral shows how literature's imaginative possibility, affective models of engagement, and representations of new entities are integral to the structure of these political ecologies. *As You Like It's*

⁵ Bruno Latour, *The Politics of Nature: How to Bring the Sciences into Democracy*, trans. Catherine Porter (Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 2004), 25. Latour's metaphors for this new arrangement continue to rely on administrative political concepts: the bicameral “constitution” of subjects and objects, society and nature, will be reorganized according to a new “separation of powers,” into a unified collective house where propositions about new matters of concern are subject to rigorous procedural examination.

energies are directed towards finding a poetic form sufficient for the undertaking of describing political ecologies as open-ended collectives composed of a multiplicity of persons, ideas, social formations, and pastoral fictions, and which takes the nonhuman natural world as a supplement to their structures, both integral to, as well as excluded from, its foundations. That is, far from merely exposing the limitations of pastoral's artificiality and pointing to its ideological investments in institutionalized structures of power, *As You Like It* transforms the problem of pastoral's artificial nature into a tool for thinking about renewed possibilities for affiliation and affective attachment both among humans and between humans and the natural world. In short, this chapter will argue that you can't speak of political ecologies at all without pastoral.

Characters exiled in Arden are forced to reconstitute relationships among themselves and the animal and human inhabitants they encroach upon. By examining a range of figures excluded from the city by circumstance and by choice, *As You Like It* strives to assert a collective form within nature that is also inclusive of it. Those exiled by unjust applications of the law – Duke Senior, Rosalind, Orlando, Oliver – present the opportunity to examine the effects of material deprivation, forced political disaffiliation, and exclusion. A second grouping, identified by Rosalie Colie as “spiritual exiles” – Celia, Touchstone, Adam, and the Duke's loyal subjects – demonstrates a condition of voluntary exile that remains essentially sociable, for they example forms of partnership that can be sustained in the absence of institutionally-guaranteed protections.⁶ Though they, too, experience the same physical removal from the court and endure the forfeiture of their legal privileges and proprietary claims, the cause of their exile is not legal force, but voluntary election.

⁶ Colie, *Shakespeare's Living Art*, 246.

This voluntary election leads the play's characters to reproduce Arden as a landscape of collective forms striving towards another kind of politics, one based in ethical and affective definitions that see political life as a form of the "good life." In *The Politics*, Aristotle offers a definition of political life as the fulfillment of "human excellence" in collective formations

The partnership arising from [the union of] several villages that is complete is the city. It reaches a level of full self-sufficiency, so to speak; and while coming into being for the sake of living, it exists for the sake of living well. Every city, therefore, exists by nature, if such also are the first partnerships. For the city is their end, and nature is an end: ... when its coming into being is complete, we assert, the nature of that thing. Again, that for the sake of which a thing exists, or the end, is what is best; and self-sufficiency is an end and what is best.⁷

"Living well" is political because it is collective; political life is natural because it allows humans to achieve an ethical end. "Living well" also seems to be a property of the city as a whole. For in striving towards its own "completion," the city as a composite entity strives towards its own "end" and thus towards what is "best." What remains to be seen is whether it is a necessary condition for all of its members to achieve this end of living well on an individual scale in order for the city to achieve this end of living well as an aggregate; that is, whether it is a requirement for a city to be just in all its individual parts in order for it to be just as a whole.

One definition the play offers of "human excellence" consists in the individual virtues and gentleness that are natural to Orlando's character, but which cannot thrive so long as he remains tied to a position of legally-enforced subordination. Orlando can only fulfill his "excellence" in exile in the wilderness. But if Aristotle's definitions of political life is to hold true, he would need to do so in alternative collective forms, for Aristotle also argues that choosing to be apolitical is fundamentally inhuman: "He who is without a

⁷ Aristotle, *The Politics*, trans. Carnes Lord (Chicago: Chicago UP, 1984), 1252b1.

city through nature rather than chance is either a mean sort or superior to man.”⁸ In Aristotle’s terms, apolitical man is naturally deficient, and so it is in his nature to seek out his complements in partnerships. Here, we find two definitions of nature: first, nature as uncultivated wilderness, consisting of rocks, trees, brooks, deer, and, ultimately, uncivilized, “rustical,” solitary people – those things excluded from Aristotle’s politics because they are not human or fully human according to his definition. But they have the perceptible potential for becoming political according to Aristotle’s second use of nature: their “nature” would be manifested within a collective form that would in turn enable the ethical fulfillment of its individual components. In this sense, those “natural” things excluded from the *polis* can become political when they enter the kind of unity that Aristotle labels as political – that is, the collective that allows them to strive towards their own nature, their own excellence.

In *As You Like It*, the voluntary exiles are exiled not by circumstance or accident, and not on account of their own natural dispositions towards antisociality; rather, as participants in voluntary exile, they occupy the state that Aristotle attributes to the condition of apolitical man, but they choose to reproduce the extremity of that condition in collective forms. *As You Like It* thus finds a category of political affiliation not anticipated by Aristotle’s definitions, one which makes the solitary human in the wilderness an effective starting point for establishing obligations even as he is excluded from the category of “political animal,” the individual human entity that strives to inhabit (exclusively) human collectives. If, as Aristotle argues, the end of political partnership is the achievement of self-sufficiency, Jaques’ desire to inhabit the forest in a permanent state of contemplative solitude would seem to undercut that end. Examining

⁸ *The Politics*, 1253a3-4.

Shakespeare's exiles in terms of the deprivation proper to an apolitical condition, recent criticism has argued that the state of nature exposes the fact that humans are, on an individual level, not self-sufficient.⁹ What follows from this recent work is that exile thus reduces politics to the terms of the nonnatural, artificial institutions through which human self-sufficiency is obtained, and that the natural world is fundamentally opposed to these political goals. This idea of politics, then, excludes the possibility of imagining an extrapolitical contact with the natural world that might itself produce alternative understandings of political engagements with nature. The affective dimension of collective living, which understands obligation as an end in itself and not in terms of its instrumental functions, paradoxically finds its fulfillment in the apolitical conditions of the forest, and the misanthrope functions as the counterintuitive signature of that definition. In the final section of this chapter, I will suggest that the figure of the misanthrope, who exemplifies a monstrous kind of self-sufficiency, offers a limit case for pastoral's articulation of a political ecology. As we shall see, Jaques' particular

⁹ Writing on *King Lear* in a way that might as well apply to *As You Like It*'s patterning of dispossession, Simon C. Estok, *Ecocriticism and Shakespeare: Reading Ecophobia* (Houndsmill, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave, 2011) argues that "To lose domestic space, to be thrust into the natural world (conceptually or literally), to lose home in this play means to be sentenced to exile from all of the rights and privileges of human society into a hostile nature" (29). According to Laurie Shannon's reading of the same in "Poor, Bare, Forked: Animal Sovereignty, Human Negative Exceptionalism, and the Natural History of *King Lear*," *Shakespeare Quarterly* 60.2 (2009): 168–196, humans are nature's "negative exception" to the rule of "self-sufficiency," and are therefore, unlike any other creature, completely ill-equipped for dwelling in natural states (170, 185). Arriving at similar conclusions by exploring the tragic possibilities of *As You Like It*, Paul Kottman, *Tragic Conditions in Shakespeare: Disinheriting the Globe* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 2009), argues that Duke Senior's encounter with a hostile wilderness confronts him with a life deprived of all social forms and benefits: "'What' he is, of course, is a human being – bereft of property, home, rights and entitlements, political allegiances, kinship ties, and material comforts of all kinds. He has been dispossessed of all wealth, domesticated resources, and established routines as well as their correspondent prerogatives" (23). In Arden, character encounters are driven by "the hope of a nascent polity in the unlikeliest of places, without even the basic protection of human artifice, institutions, or buildings" (Kottman, *A Politics of the Scene* [Stanford: Stanford UP, 2007], 2).

implication with pastoral fictions also magnifies the central role that artificial nature itself plays in constructing such ecologies.

Pastoral Attachments

As You Like It's use of green space departs from pastoral's conventional organization of political and (what appear to be) apolitical spaces, for its characters are engaged in something quite separate from a desire to redress the corruption of their political institutions with the end of ultimately reinforcing, *as per* the conventions of green world fictions, the normativity of these institutional structures.¹⁰ Though multiple instances of injustice initiate the plot and its subsequent removal to the forest, justice and other aspects of the usual subject of politics in Shakespeare's plays – good governance, succession and legitimacy, the law – seem to be incidental. The play begins with an elder brother's denial of his responsibility to oversee his younger brother's welfare. It shifts this fraternal dispute from a domestic to a political level in the tyrant usurper's unlawful

¹⁰ For arguments about the green world as a restorative, autonomous space distinct from the world of social norms, but which nevertheless reflects upon and resolves the difficulties imposed by these norms, see Northrop Frye, *The Anatomy of Criticism* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1957), 182; C.L. Barber, *Shakespeare's Festive Comedy: A Study of Dramatic Form and Its Relation to Social Custom* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1959), 223-236, for analysis of Shakespeare's comedies' use of festive social customs to create Arden's "liberty from ordinary limitations" (223); James G. Turner, *The Politics of Landscape: Rural Scenery and Society in English Poetry, 1630-1660* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1979), which argues that ideal landscapes "green" political institutions by bringing them into alignment with natural order (7); and Hugh Grady, *Shakespeare and Impure Aesthetics* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2009), 59-73, for analysis of how the green world as the realm of the aesthetic reflects upon "determinate human needs, wants, and desires in various stages of their satisfaction; to reflect on human needs and their impediments; and to imagine alternatives to the world as it currently exists" (60-61). There has been substantial critical dispute on the extent to which Arden might be considered as a green space in this capacity. Alan Hagar, *Shakespeare's Political Animal: Schema and Schemata in the Canon* (Newark: U of Delaware P, 1990), for example, argues that Arden's infiltration by Duke Senior's "network of spies" compromises its status as a 'utopian green world.' (121). Others turn to the harshness of its natural conditions to undermine its status as green space: see Harry Morris, "As You Like It: Et in Arcadia Ego," *Shakespeare Quarterly* 26.3 (1975): 269-75, for a reading of the play's reminders of the dead shepherd that undermine its pastoral idealism.

treachery against his brother, Duke Senior, a legitimate ruler. As is often the case in Shakespeare's representations of exile, Orlando's and Duke Senior's banishments become the ultimate sign of the injustice committed against them, but since the play begins after the Duke's banishment, we have little sense of what a just political system found at the court might have looked like under Duke Senior. As Adam reports, Oliver "hath heard your praises and this night he means / To burn the lodging where you used to lie, / And you within it.... / This is no place; this house is but a butchery."¹¹ Neither court nor home can function as a "place" for Orlando, for they cannot accommodate his "virtues" and "graces," which, along with Oliver and Duke Frederick, have become his "enemies" (2.3.10-12). Politics as the domain that enables a kind of ethical fulfillment (that is, in the flourishing of individual virtues in a collective setting) is no longer compatible with the kinds of political formations that inhere in the court and the home. A dispute over wills and inheritance laws, now turned violent, leaves Adam grasping for a label for Oliver – "Your brother – no, no brother, yet the son – / Yet not the son, I will not call him son – / Of him I was about to call his father" (2.3.19-21) – indicates how these forms of intimacy and kinship have become alienated from the domain of political concerns.

But when the play's action shifts to Arden, its characters seem disinclined to actively rectify the wrongs acted against them and, in so doing, to achieve some kind of meaningful political reform that would be recognizable as such. Unlike Shakespeare's other banished rulers, such as Lear or Prospero, Duke Senior seems disinclined to complain about his condition, or to seek his reintegration with the court, imagining for

¹¹ William Shakespeare, *As You Like It*, ed. Leah Marcus (New York: Norton, 2012), 2.3.22-27; hereafter cited in text.

himself a new court that is appreciably different from the court he has been evicted from, both in the sense that it admits nonhuman nature into his council, and also in the sense that the pastoral world relieves his courtiers from their subordination to a sovereign, forming new relationships based in reciprocal equality. This pastoral court differs from its political counterpart also in the fact that it relieves the Duke from the responsibility of governance as a primary political activity: we do not see the Duke govern in the forest at all; rather, we see him engage in pastoral entertainments and, through them, contemplate the nature of his enmeshment with other lives. Oliver's and Orlando's mutual animosity dissolves instantaneously, and not because either pursues reconciliation, but because accident brings them together and something like instinctive affection motivates Orlando to come to Oliver's rescue. Rosalind's cross-dressing performances, though repurposed towards commentary on the matter of romantic courtship, seem more of an artificial impediment to the desired end of her marriage to Orlando – that is, until she is reunited with her father and integrated within the court, a goal she doesn't actively seek. She even reports on an offstage meeting with the Duke that amounts to little more than an extraneous detail (3.4.29-31). Rosalind's activities in the play emphasize authenticity of expressions of feeling as a primary concern, and while these concerns have a courtly dimension (particularly in the persuasive powers that mastery of courtly *sprezzatura* confers), her interests in the matter are focused on private, intimate attachments. The play invites us to see "justice" not as a restitution of balance, order, harmony, and good governance secured through institutional channels, nor is it a matter of the proper distribution of rights, prerogatives, and offices, or the performance of bureaucratic competency. The ultimate achievements of justice – Oliver's reconciliation with Orlando,

which results in the former's self-dispossession of his property; Frederick's concession of his dukedom to its rightful possessor; Rosalind's reunion with the court and her father – come about by accident, and the play seems to conclude that justice is itself a matter of chance, rather than a principle that animates the play's action.

The play thus seems to abandon an idea of political unity that consists in a legal system that relies on bureaucratic procedures to maintain and perpetuate a stable society. The play's plotlessness, which generates multiple unpurposive, intersecting narrative threads and encounters, emphasizes the impossibility of supporting a unifying agreement about the ends of justice and the means of institutional reform. Paul Kottman has argued that *As You Like It* dismantles political institutions without promising their restitution, giving a tragic edge to the play's pastoral comedy and its outlook on inherited forms of sociality.¹² I argue, however, that the play shows that the failure of the norms of political society, rather than tending towards the tragic, are a sign of the play's open field of possibilities for political renewal in ways that do not culminate in a determinate end. There is no stable legal form that retains its shape in the play. Rather, the play's primary focus rests on intimate pairings that often take on characteristics of political forms, and which are in part guided by concerns that are usually considered political, including property distribution and legally-protected hereditary rights, marriage contracts, companies and other forms of corporate identities, citizenship, courtly patronage, etc. Yet, these pastoral extensions of political forms cannot be entirely encapsulated by available institutional terminologies.

¹² In *Tragic Conditions*, Kottman argues that the absence of narrative coherence in *As You Like It* is analogous to the failure of its fixed institutions, customs, and inherited forms of sociality, through which we ought to be able to make sense of our experiences of the world (4).

The play depicts a range of domestic partnerships – including marriage and relationships of romantic love, and forms of service, ranging from Adam’s service to Orlando and the subjects’ duty to their exiled sovereign – all of which manifest the failure of their legal, normative form so long as they remain in Arden. As in most comedies, the play culminates in a series of marriages – or promises of marriage soon to happen – that bring some form of closure to the play’s messy entanglements: Hymen declares, “Peace, ho! I bar confusion, / ‘Tis I must make conclusion / Of these most strange events” (5.4.111-13). The play’s use of masque conventions draws attention to the forest as a space characterized primarily by its theatricality, but it is also precisely these qualities of theatrical performance that threaten the integrity of the marriage ceremony as legally-binding: Orlando and Ganymede/Rosalind play out a marriage scene that presumably has no legitimacy, and Touchstone and Audrey spend the better part of their time in the forest forced to find ways to assure the legitimacy of theirs. Romantic love, therefore, proves to be a relationship whose excess cannot be contained or find its own fulfillment within marriage’s legal forms.

Like marriage, service falls under Aristotelian classifications of domestic partnerships that offer models for particularly monarchical constitutions, which establish natural hierarchies between rulers and the ruled.¹³ But Orlando and Adam’s relationship evidences a kind of altruistic attachment whose nature as such becomes evident through their mutual exile. Too enfeebled to endure living in the forest, much less to perform his duties to Orlando, Adam requires Orlando to serve him (2.6). But this reversal of the household relationship of a master/servant dynamic had preceded their entry into

¹³ *The Politics*, 1259a41.

Arden.¹⁴ When Adam warns Orlando of his danger, and subsequently offers to join him in exile, Orlando praises his exemplary service: “O good old man, how well in thee appears / The constant service of the antique world, / When service sweat for duty, not for meed!” (2.3.56-58). Adam’s embrace of a condition of material destitution in the service of his master shows “duty,” and not material recompense, as its foundational principle. The movement to Arden allows us to see an idealized master/servant relationship at the point of its dissolution: Adam declares that “Fortune cannot recompense me better / Than to die well and not my master’s debtor” (2.3.75-76); Adam imagines his service as pure duty, which Orlando himself reciprocates through a similar kind of service, by caring for Adam and finding him food at the banquet held by the court-in-exile (2.7). Adam conceives of his service as a form of living (and “dying”) “well” that ends in the fulfillment of the debt of service. And while their relationship continues to be based on their mutual provision of each others’ needs, ultimately they evidence a form of social arrangement that the forest cannot support: once Adam and Orlando have fulfilled their mutual obligations and Adam has been fed, he disappears from the play. Exile as it is experienced by the play’s characters thus imagines the conditions in which the means of upholding these kinds of social relationships – based in material advantage, legal enforcement, and hierarchy – can no longer be depended upon.

The play’s use of Petrarchan lyric conventions presents one possibility for expressing these ideas of affective attachment. It might be said that lyric poetry sets its ability to authentically index interiority and erect structures of affective reciprocation as the conditions of its own success, but Renaissance poetry also foregrounds the question

¹⁴ For arguments about service in early modern drama, and how these kinds of reversals between master and servant are the effect of performance and mimesis, see Elizabeth Rivlin, *The Aesthetics of Service in Early Modern England* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern UP, 2012), 3-25.

of how true its “feigning” can be when its recourse to conventionality so often distorts the uniqueness of the speaker’s identity, or enables him to exaggerate about his uniqueness to the point of implausibility. For example, Orlando’s bad poetry is symptomatic of the limitations of both pastoral and Petrarchan convention to offer a sense of authenticity, and therefore to offer a reliable index of the authenticity of his feelings for Rosalind. Rosalind/Ganymede critiques Orlando’s love poetry by urging him against his tendencies towards hyperbole: “these are all lies: men have died from time to time and worms have eaten then, but not for love” (4.1.76-79). The matter of being convincing when speaking poetically of one’s feelings lies in a direct continuum with a problem that has both affective and political dimensions at the beginning of the play: how does one use language to convey the security of a bond? What is the origin and strength of affect that subtends political allegiance and how might language articulate that strength?

The problem of affective attachment and the inadequacy of language to describe it surfaces in Celia’s questioning of Rosalind’s sudden affection for Orlando: “Is it possible on such a sudden you should fall into so strong a liking with old Sir Rowland’s youngest son?” (1.3.22-23). In the absence of any rational explanation for why Rosalind’s desire should appear so immediately binding, Rosalind relies on an argument from analogy: “The duke my father loved his father dearly” (1.3.24). For Rosalind, a deeply felt commitment to Orlando arises from a transferred familial obligation. Assuming a likeness between father and son on the one hand, and between father and daughter on the other, Rosalind extrapolates from the horizontal bond of friendship between the fathers an equivalent relationship between their offspring. Her underlying assumption rests on the idea that affect is a heritable property conveyed by “likeness” transmitted through

genealogical lines of both biological and social inheritance.¹⁵ This particular kind of resemblance not only describes a set of relationships, it calls new allegiances into being and asserts their “trueness.” But Celia questions what Rosalind takes to be a self-evident principle; Celia’s incredulous reply to Rosalind’s reasons – “Doth it therefore ensue that you should love his son dearly?” (1.3.25) – indicates the limits of this genealogical analogy.

The very same scene transposes the problem of determining the strength of an obligation into a concern that has an institutional dynamic, for the frameworks of monarchy, sovereignty, and hereditary laws that reinforce normative political order fail to accommodate these kinds of expressions of affect. Forced into a calculation that weighs his promise to his own daughter against the necessity for assuring his present and her future political position, Frederick reverses his grant of amnesty to Rosalind. The nominal reason for Frederick’s animosity arises from the Duke’s perception of the transfer of the people’s loyalty through lineage:

I can tell you that of late this duke
Hath ta’en displeasure ‘gainst his gentle niece
Grounded upon no other argument
But that the people praise her for her virtues
And pity her for her good father’s sake. (1.2.231-35)

The people’s praise for her on account of her father legitimates the genealogical argument for political authority, and Rosalind’s “virtue” adds additional cause for that

¹⁵ For discussion of the use of the state/family analogy and its structuring of “political temporality” as a legitimating argument in the seventeenth century, see Erin Murphy, *Familial Forms: Politics and Genealogy in Seventeenth-Century Literature* (Newark: U of Delaware P, 2011). Murphy draws upon Gordon J. Schochet, *Patriarchalism in Political Thought: The Authoritarian Family and Political Speculation and Attitudes Especially in Seventeenth-Century England* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1975) for arguments about “genetic doctrine” – the idea that the origin of government is relevant to current political practices and institutions, and “genealogical doctrine” – the argument that this particular link is one of a literal family descent.

affect. When asked to explain his capriciousness, Frederick responds: “Let it suffice thee that I trust thee not” (1.3.47). After further prompting from Rosalind to explain the “likelihood” of her becoming traitor (1.3.49), he responds, “Thou art thy father’s daughter – that is enough” (1.3.50). He reduces complex political motives into a tautology: Frederick gives no particular reason for his mistrust except to announce that he does mistrust her. The argument from resemblance and the appeal to legal inheritance by which Frederick justifies his suspicions of Rosalind are entirely consistent with Rosalind’s own explanations of her attachment to Orlando. Frederick’s conviction of her future guilt – what Rosalind calls his intimation of a “likelihood,” a probable outcome which he extrapolates from the social and biological forces that define Rosalind’s relationship to her father – becomes the basis for an arbitrary rearrangement of the current political state, according to his liking. Affective attachment (Rosalind’s for her father; Frederick’s subjects’ for the dispossessed duke’s daughter) threatens to disrupt Frederick’s attempts to establish a stable political settlement under his rule. Frederick can’t name this “likeness” and “liking” directly; his vision of political order can’t accommodate it, and so he strives to contain it within his own political order by banishing Rosalind, the representative figure of the force he cannot name.

The play’s critiques of these appeals to resemblance expose the limitations of imagining affiliations within the form of a political system that uses the “natural” form of genealogy to perpetuate its own arbitrariness. I would suggest that one of the primary functions of the play’s retreat to Arden is to examine another means of imagining how partnerships are formed, one that exists at the vanishing point of likeness: that is, the point at which likeness becomes difference, and recognition or familiarity are no longer

sufficient conditions for establishing affective ties. Roberto Esposito has argued that “community is the totality of persons united not by a ‘property’ but precisely by an obligation or a debt.”¹⁶ If obligation is the constitutive fiber of the community, then “community” is not bound together by shared interest, by “property” that belongs in common to all members, but by lack, by a continuous requirement for the reciprocation of an originary debt that can never be fulfilled. Esposito’s community is thus suggestive of an ontology of political form that opposes essentializing the collective, for “community” isn’t “a mode of being, much less a ‘making’ of the individual subject. It isn’t the subject’s expansion or multiplication, but its exposure to what interrupts the closing and turns it inside out.”¹⁷ In the play, to “like” someone, and to have that likeness be the condition of possibility for mutual obligation, is also to recognize that this tendency to see ethical relationships in terms of a multiplication of resemblances mistakes the foundation upon which collective groupings are built. It might be said that Adam’s “dying well” (instead of “living well”) and ultimate disappearance from the play results from the fulfillment of his duty, from a definitive naming of what it would mean to fully achieve mutual reciprocity with another that arrests the “interruption of the closing.” Rather, this failure of likeness, of mutual reciprocity, guarantees a collective form’s perpetuation. *As You Like It* uses pastoral as the mode through which this definition of political community manifests in a fictional dimension and, moreover, in which obligations of this kind can be understood to cut across ontological thresholds to include nature itself. For pastoral drama is always other-to-itself, always aware that what

¹⁶ Roberto Esposito, *Communitas: The Origin and Destiny of Community*, trans. Timothy Campbell (Stanford: Stanford UP, 2010), 6.

¹⁷ Esposito, *Communitas*, 7.

it purports to represent is not “true” because of the differences that undercut and constitute its mimesis.

In other words, pastoral flaunts the gap between fiction and what it represents, and that gap in turn reshapes the problem of describing affective bonds. At the end of the play, Oliver emphasizes the arbitrariness of his love for Aliena/Celia to Orlando with a pastoral conceit. Orlando asks his brother, “Is’t possible that on so little acquaintance you should like her?” (5.2.1). Oliver justifies the suddenness and security of his bond with a tautology:

Neither call the giddiness of it in question, the poverty of her, the small acquaintance, my sudden wooing, nor sudden consenting, but say with me, ‘I love Aliena.’ Say with her that she loves me. Consent with both, that we may enjoy each other. It shall be to your good, for my father’s house and all the revenue that was old Sir Rowland’s will I estate upon you, and here live and die a shepherd. (5.2.5-10)

As with other instances in which characters marvel at the sudden eruption of so binding a commitment, Orlando’s questioning of his brother and Oliver’s failure to produce a justification suggests that liking Aliena is beyond reason itself, and need only to be assented to at Oliver’s bidding: “but say with me, ‘I love Aliena.’” Celia’s pastoral identity makes her a figure of the Other: as an exile she is other from the political world of the court, but as a noblewoman who is ill-equipped to contend with the hardships of Arden, she is other to the pastoral world itself.¹⁸ She is also other to herself, for she

¹⁸ Newly arrived in Arden, Rosalind (now disguised as Ganymede), Touchstone, and Celia (now Aliena) lament their weariness. Aliena succumbs first to exile’s hardships: “I pray you, bear with me; I can go no further” (2.4.8). Rosalind for her part experiences weariness equal to Aliena’s own account of her female sex; her disguise as a boy – more specifically her masculine clothing and its conferment upon her of a need to perform endurance that exceeds Aliena’s – allows her to forebear her exile, indicating an instance of how theatricality offers the necessary resources for inhabiting the wilderness: “I could find in my heart to disgrace my man’s / Apparel and to cry like a woman; but I must comfort / The weaker vessel, as doublet and hose ought to show / Itself courageous to petticoat” (2.4.3-6).

adopts an identity not her own and names that new identity according to its strangeness to her. Given their scant acquaintance, she is other to Oliver. In her, therefore, Oliver confronts a horizon of strangeness, the point at which one cannot simply “like it” or be likened to it. Instead he finds a genuine “liking” at the vanishing point of likeness.

“Aliena” – as assumed pastoral identity, as theatrical persona – is linked to an idea of exile that also initiates Oliver into the pastoral world and thus of resolves one of the play’s central conflicts. Oliver takes up the pastoral mantle to forfeit his claims in a dispute over property distribution between brothers.¹⁹ Furthermore, Oliver imagines that living as a shepherd with Aliena will be a sufficient condition for supporting himself. Oliver’s assumptions about pastoral living naïvely overlook the hardships of Arden, and we might take this as yet another instance of showing pastoral’s absurdities for what they are. Yet, this naivety does not discount the fact that Oliver is engaged in fashioning a definition of relationship through a pastoral lens: pastoral imagines a permanent condition of exile. Whether he might *inhabit* that condition successfully is another matter entirely, for what pastoral achieves here is a reprioritization of the ends of partnership.

Arden becomes a site in which characters explore the problem of how to represent affect as a binding agent of political ecologies, and whether this constitutive affect and its surety may be expressed convincingly through its limit cases. Rather than trying to

¹⁹ Jane Kingsley-Smith, *Shakespeare's Drama of Exile* (Houndsmill, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave, 2003) argues that exile is innately dramatic because it forces characters to inhabit new roles and identities: “Shakespeare's drama of exile is self -consciously metatheatrical. Every exile must decide how he will appear in the future: whether to adopt a disguise and perhaps a new accent, what name to call himself and what history to invent, in his estrangement from the world” (29). For arguments about dramatic form and performance as offering a repertoire for managing environmental catastrophe and survival in the wilderness in *As You Like It* and *King Lear*, see Steve Mentz, “Tongues in the Storm: Shakespeare, Ecological Crisis, and the Resources of Genre,” *Ecocritical Shakespeare*, eds. Lynn Bruckner and Dan Brayton (Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate, 2011), 155-71.

circumvent language's distancing from the things it seeks to represent, characters in Arden magnify its capacity to represent those things. Orlando's exaggerations yield to the scrutiny of other fictional frameworks erected by Rosalind, and her own nested performances effect a kind of circling back to her own identity through multiple refractions and displacements in order to, as paradoxical as it may seem, produce a more accurate accounting of both her feelings and Orlando's. While Rosalind/Ganymede professes that she shall cure Orlando of his lovesickness (3.2), her method entices him to perform his distress more convincingly. She does not aim beyond representation, therefore, but rather seeks to augment it. To paraphrase Touchstone's statement on poetry's feigning, poetry displaces accuracy as its primary concern: the play doesn't want its poetry – or specifically its pastoral – to be “true,” but rather it wants to arrive at this “trueness” by exploiting its capacity to feign.

In Arden, Rosalind's self-appointed task is to determine the nature of affect and its relationship, among other things, to pastoral convention. Upon entering Arden, she witnesses Silvius's confession to Corin of an unrequited love for Phoebe, which causes him a pain he claims Corin could not possibly understand:

No, Corin, being old, thou canst not guess,
 Though in thy youth thou wast as true a lover
 As ever sigh'd upon a midnight pillow:
 But if thy love were ever like to mine –
 As sure I think did never man love so –
 How many actions most ridiculous
 Hast thou been drawn to by thy fantasy? (2.4.19-25).

If Corin could be a true lover like him – and Silvius insists that he could not – but *if* he could, Silvius acknowledges the possibility that it would authorize the lover's “fantasy”: a potential for identification (which exists only as mere potential) becomes a condition

for feigning well. For all his protestations of his exceptionality as a lover, Silvius immediately finds a receptive audience in Rosalind. Moved to pity by the spectacle, she exclaims: “Alas! Poor shepherd! Searching of thy wound, / I have by hard adventure found mine own” (2.4.38-29). Hers is an expression of a simple recognition of shared suffering, which she later magnifies through theatrical means. Hearing later that the quarrel between the shepherds Silvius and Phoebe is a “pageant truly played” (3.4.44), Rosalind exclaims: “O come, let us remove / The sight of lovers feedeth those in love. / Bring us to this sight and you shall say / I’ll prove a busy actor in their play” (3.4.48-51). First positioning herself as a member of the audience, fed by the “sight” of true lovers, Rosalind also names herself as an “actor” in the play. In doing so, she establishes a fictive frame for this spectacle, recreating Silvius’ and Phoebe’s quarrel as a pastoral play, only then to dissolve its boundaries by indicating her intent to participate within it. Positioning herself as both viewer and participant, Rosalind models a theatrical immersiveness that allows her to manipulate, and respond to the vicissitudes of, pastoral economies of desire from within, even as she points to the fictive conditions that frame her participation. By placing herself within this love plot and also, at the same time, naming this plot as theater, Rosalind points to the capacity of pastoral drama and love poetry to highlight the heuristic effect of its artifice. Pastoral’s capacity to reveal herself through its fiction, through its acknowledgments of the distance between things and their representations, makes her enmeshment in a network of relationships visible. Not only does pastoral drama enable her identification with Silvius’ unrequited love, it draws her into a messy entanglement with the shepherd and his love, and, ultimately, with Orlando.

“Much Virtue in If”: Artificial Nature

The relationship between truth and fiction, the ideal and the real, between convention and authenticity are concerns endemic to pastoral. In response to Audrey's request for a definition of the "poetical" and whether it is a "true thing" (3.3.13-14), Touchstone responds: "No, truly – for the truest poetry is the most feigning" (3.3.15), thus encapsulating one of the central representational problems of the play, and of pastoral and poetry more generally: that is, the capacity of theatrical and poetic signifying practices to be referential, and the implications of their failures to be so. Critics often characterize *As You Like It* as a play that demystifies pastoral's fictions by constantly drawing attention to the artificiality of theatrical mimesis and of pastoral drama more specifically. Cynthia Marshall argues that the play's fascination with doubling and likeness positions the "real" perpetually beyond the horizon of our apprehension of it: "*As You Like It* returns again and again to the ability or propensity of language to veil an inaccessible zone, a 'reality that is other than that we are allowed to see' and is taken for reality precisely because we are unable to see it."²⁰

But what is this "reality" that lies outside the play's language and pastoral convention? Cultural materialists since Raymond Williams suggest that this "real" consists in the socioeconomic dimensions of labor, production, and class that pastoral idealism tends to "naturalize" and make apparently unassailable.²¹ As critics of *As You*

²⁰ Cynthia Marshall, "The Double Jaques and Constructions of Negation in *As You Like It*," *Shakespeare Quarterly* 49.4 (1998): 375-92, on p. 379.

²¹ Raymond Williams, "Ideas of Nature," *Culture and Materialism* (London: Verso, 1980): "A considerable part of what we call natural landscape ... is the product of human design and human labour, and in admiring it as natural it matters very much whether we suppress the fact of labour or acknowledge it. Some forms of this popular modern idea of nature seem to me to depend on a suppression of the history of human labour, and the fact that they are often in conflict with what is seen as the exploitation or destruction of nature may in the end be less important than the no

Like It have frequently noted, the play points to the hardship experienced by those who inhabit the countryside.²² As Linda Woodbridge argues, New Historicism calls texts like *As You Like It* anti-pastoral because they disabuse us of the claim that pastoral gives us a plausible account of the natural world and the idealized communities that inhabit it. But by demystifying systems (e.g. class, the state) that seem natural in order to show how they are culturally and historically contingent, Marxist and New Historicist materialisms continue to reify nature as a transcendent entity that exists “out there,” beyond history, defined here as the exclusive realm of human activity. I would suggest that *As You Like It* draws attention to the fissures of its representations of the natural world, not to demystify its cultural milieu’s claims to the “naturalness” of Elizabethan ideologies and power structures, but rather to show how its fictions of the natural world are integral to its composition of collective forms that genuinely strive to include nature.

less certain fact that they often confuse us about what nature and the natural might be and are” (78).

²² For commentary on pastoral effacement of labor (in the vein of Raymond Williams’ *Country and the City* [Oxford: Oxford UP, 1975]) and the argument that so-called anti-pastoral attentions to the conditions of labor and economic exploitation in the English countryside is a *feature* of pastoral, see Linda Woodbridge, “Country Matters: *As You Like It* and the Pastoral-Bashing Impulse,” *Re-Visions of Shakespeare: Essays in Honor of Robert Ornstein*, ed. Evelyn Gajowski (Newark, DE: U of Delaware P, 2004), 189-214: pastoral conventionally opposes “an acquisitive society and posits in its place the ideal of ‘contained self-sufficiency’ achieved without labor and industriousness” (41).

On the alienation of labor and emergence of the money economy’s symbolic logic in the play, see Robert N. Watson, *Back to Nature: The Green and the Real in the Late Renaissance* (Philadelphia: U of Pennsylvania P, 2006), 99-100; on transformations in agrarian economy and its effects on Arden and other woodland spaces in Tudor-Stuart England, see Edward Berry, *Shakespeare and the Hunt* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2001), 170; Victor Skripp, *Crisis and Development: An Ecological Case Study of the Forest of Arden, 1570-1674* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1978); A. Stuart Daley, “The Dispraise of the Country in *As You Like It*,” *Shakespeare Quarterly* 36.3 (1985): 300-14; William C. Carroll, “Enclosure, Vagrancy, and Sedition in the Tudor-Stuart Period,” *Enclosure Acts: Sexuality, Property, and Culture in Early Modern England*, eds. Richard Burt and John Michael Archer (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1994), 34-47; and Richard Wilson, “Like the Old Robin Hood: *As You Like It* and the Enclosure Riots,” *Shakespeare Quarterly* 43.1 (1992): 1-19.

According to eco-critics, *As You Like It*'s pastoral self-consciously frames a problem quintessential to "nature writing" more generally: that to bring "nature" as a facet of the "real" into language necessarily risks its distortion by various forms of constructivism: by narcissistic anthropocentrism, by the violence of the symbolic order, and by ideological mystification.²³ As I have discussed in the preceding chapter, Gordon Teskey argues that allegory, in assembling its objects of representation within a system of artificial coherence, places "nature" at an infinite remove from these representations. Critics of *As You Like It* have likewise seen the play's awareness of language's removal from things-in-themselves as a demonstration of art's inability to adequately accommodate the phenomenal natural world within its representations without imposing instrumental value upon it. Robert Watson argues that *As You Like It* is "infatuated with hopes of recovering some original and authentic reality."²⁴ The play views nature (as Eden, as flora and fauna) as the focal point of nostalgia for this authentic reality, one which we can only know "as we liken [it], never in or as [itself]."²⁵ Building on Harry Berger, Jr.'s insights into the concept of a "second nature," constructed by Renaissance literary "techniques of controlled and experimental withdrawal into an artificial world ... where the elements of actuality are selectively admitted, simplified, and explored," Watson argues that there is an unbreachable "polarity of the existing material world and

²³ See Catherine Belsey, *Shakespeare and the Loss of Eden: The Construction of Family Values in Early Modern Culture* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers UP, 2000). She frames this problem of access to an authentic "real" in terms of a dialectical struggle between biological imperatives and the symbolic Law, a Law which we, as "organisms-in-culture," use to formulate our basic desires, but which also sunders us from their full realization, for "the symbolic Law imposes the order of culture on a nature, which cannot thereafter recover an imagined wholeness" (30).

²⁴ Watson, *Back to Nature*, 78, in reference to Berger, Harry, "The Ecology of the Mind," *The Review of Metaphysics* 17.1 (1963): 109-34.

²⁵ Watson, *Back to Nature*, 77.

the conceiving human mind, which builds a likeness of the world and then inhabits it.”²⁶

For Watson, the relationship between the self and the other-as-nature is a zero-sum game: “Know the world perfectly, and you will have no mind of your own; you become a mirror, incapable of other kinds of reflection.”²⁷ The price of a purely objective access to the real is human subjectivity, the capacity of a human self to know his own mind and know how it engages with the world. In Watson’s analysis, *As You Like It* swings towards the other extreme: he argues that the play’s use of Petrarchan narcissism anticipates Cartesian solipsism. The characters’ projections of pastoral fantasies onto Arden’s landscapes show how they become trapped within themselves: unable to see the world except as a function of their own minds, the natural world becomes the mirror from Watson’s metaphor.

However, Watson’s argument rests on an assumption that “nature” is a transcendent entity, utterly distinct and removed from human experience, and only accessible through distorting intermediary technologies, namely language. This quandary holds true if intersubjective identification and its more politically-inflected form of “common interest” were the only means of understanding the foundations of collective identification. While it might be said that the kinds of anthropomorphization committed by pastoral form threaten to reduce the natural world to a projection of the self at nature’s expense, we might also say that characters expand their sense of the natural world by reproducing it as an immersive fiction, much in the way that Rosalind does when she enters Phoebe’s and Silvius’s pastoral play. Nature cannot be a simple addition to what we recognize as “political” or “human,” as if it existed on a flat ontological continuum

²⁶ Watson, *Back to Nature*, 98.

²⁷ Watson, *Back to Nature*, 87.

with these terms. Nor can we unproblematically incorporate “nature” into communities based on structures of intersubjective recognitions. Rather, the play shows us a pastoral theatricality, consisting in a gathering of representational forms, that brings nature and non-nature together in dynamic entities. These new entities in turn derive their political charge through pastoral’s coordination and constant reprioritizations of the materials of political life: affective attachment, human and nonhuman individuals, legal designations, distributions of obligations and offices, and so on. The artifice of pastoral makes these coordinating activities explicit.

Nature in *As You Like It* is always artificial. This is obvious in the sense that we experience Arden in the setting of a play, which exists only through theatrical performance, itself composed of confluences of human bodies and human artifacts, both of which consist in natural things transformed and mediated by culture. We can have a stag’s antlers appear as both a diegetic and non-diegetic prop in Act 4, scene 2, but the actual deer itself remains conspicuously absent from scenes like Act 2, scene 1. The physical presence of the actors on stage juxtaposes their biological being with the fact of their occupying contingent social roles. Jaques’ Seven Ages of Man speech emphasizes this fact by pointing to biological functions – the growth and decay of human life – as extensions of stage craft and the “world stage” at large. Within the play nature is a fiction, or rather a set of fictions: Arden is a biblical Eden; a classical Golden Age; a French forest and an English countryside; a pastoral counterpoint to the court; an intertextual domain referencing Italian and English romances and folklore; and, above all, a source of metatheatrical commentary that constantly reflects on these fictions and their functions. This saturation of our perception of ‘nature’ by the play’s metatheatricality

also emphasizes the problem of the natural world's misrepresentation by human language and literary convention. While the play's overt artificiality draws attention to its (and by extension our) removal from the natural world, it also shows how this artificiality is not an impediment to understanding the natural world, but rather it allows an unfolding and remaking of the affective relationships that compose the totality of human and nonhuman interactions.

Shakespeare's characters posit the "reality" of the natural world as an "if," as a set of speculative conditions whose parameters and consequences are explored in the space of fiction. Like many of the interactions in the play, the encounter between Jaques and Touchstone in the final act seems a mere display of superfluous wit, but it also encapsulates the play's use of extralegal fictions to resolve the play's political problems. Jaques, amused at Touchstone's facility with word play, engages him in a discussion about his insights into the gentlemanly rituals of quarreling. In enumerating, by Jaques' request, "the degrees of the lie" (5.4.78), Touchstone says that "we quarrel in print, by the book" (5.4.79) and follows with an itemized list of the kinds of speech acts that instigate and resolve disputes. Touchstone explains why the quarrel between himself and the courtier has abruptly ceased:

All these [causes for quarrel] you may avoid but the Lie Direct, and you may avoid that too with an 'if.' I knew when seven justices could not take up a quarrel; but the parties were met themselves, one of them thought but of an 'if' – as 'if you said so then I said so' – and they shook hands and swore brothers. Your 'if' is the only peace-maker: much virtue in if. (5.4.84-89)

Unmooring the cause of injury and its consequences from a codified system of verbal exchanges akin to the "books for good manners" which govern courtly decorum (5.4.80), the "if" suspends the cycle of rhetorical escalation. Touchstone argues that the

hypothetical modality of “if” qualifies the “lie direct” – a statement of absolute falseness – by suspending it in favor of indeterminacy, and prevents the dispute’s escalation by converting the indicative mood to the subjunctive without, however, resorting to an outright falsehood.

This conversion of mood distinguishes between untruth – a cause of strife – and the fictional modality characteristic of poetry – a cause of resolution. In its capacity to evade the divisiveness of the “lie direct,” the virtue in “if” resembles Sidney’s assertion that the poet “nothing affirms and therefore never lieth.”²⁸ Seen as a grammatical invitation to propose a counterfactual alternative, “if” lends a vividness to fictional narrative so persuasive that it overcomes (to borrow Sidney’s phrase) the “bare was” of the conflict, much in the way that Touchstone claims that the “lie direct” might be overcome by this hypothetical alternative.²⁹ The “if” encourages a new perspective that might mitigate the degree of the initial offence.³⁰ Nothing materially has changed about the circumstances of the case, but the interpretative framework imposed by “if” sets the conditions for a resolution not otherwise possible.³¹

²⁸ *An Apology for Poetry, or The Defence of Poesy*, ed. Geoffrey Shepherd (London: Nelson, 1965) 123.

²⁹ Sidney, *An Apology for Poetry* 110.

³⁰ In this capacity it might be seen as analogous to Sidney’s *enargia*, the quality of poetry to call images to the reader’s mind. On the subject of *enargia* as the quality of vividness in fiction that explains its ability to move its audiences, see Linda Gaylon, “Puttenham’s Enargeia and Energeia: New Twists for Old Terms,” *Philological Quarterly* 60.1 (1981): 29–40; Judith Dundas, “To Speak Metaphorically: Sidney in the Subjunctive Mood,” *Renaissance Quarterly* 41.2 (Summer 1988): 268–82. See also Kiernan Ryan: “The plot of *As You Like It* acquires the power to make wonder seem familiar, by bringing what appears to be impossibly remote in time and space within the imaginative reach of the present; the power to make the *as yet* improbable imaginable, by treating it *as if it were possible* and inviting us to watch it transpire in the theater before our very eyes” (*Shakespeare’s Comedies* 206–207).

³¹ For the relationship between poesis and the framing of legal arguments, see Kathy Eden, *Poetic and Legal Fiction in the Aristotelian Tradition* (Princeton, Princeton UP, 1986): Oratory and dramatic poetry, like forensic law, offer representations of what happened by deriving plausible narrative causes through formal logic. That is, both poetry and law craft plots according to “a

Touchstone also presents the “if” as an alternative to legal intervention, for it effects a resolution when multiple judicial figures prove powerless to intervene effectively in the quarrel: “seven justices could not take [it] up.” Further, the promissory intonations of this “swearing” to a new or reconstituted relationship places “if” as the cause of a newly founded obligation. Touchstone’s “if,” therefore, not only revises the past by offering a new perspective on the underlying probable causes of the conflict, it also performs an imaginative extension of the current conditions of peacemaking into the future. In alluding to the fraternal quarrels which subtend the play’s political struggles, Touchstone’s sententious identification of the “if” as peacemaker, exercised in its capacity to restore a relationship that resembles a fraternal one (“they shook hands and swore brothers”), encapsulates the play’s political machinery. As a bond formed between equals, brotherhood should offer a structure for an ideal “democratic” relationship (that is, in the reciprocal proportionate equality between citizens and quantitative equality among friends in Aristotle³²), but its forms of intimacy cannot be accommodated by normative legal order. As in Touchstone’s imagined example, the family dramas which form the center of the play’s political crises cannot be resolved by legal recourse, but by the extralegal “virtue in ‘if’” which Arden, as a green space, supplies. “If” and its syntactic resourcefulness, therefore, envision a solution not yet conceived by law, but made possible through imaginative license.

“If” is emblematic of the superfluousness and efficacy of invention found throughout the play. Here, it achieves a reconciliation, both political and familial, which

preeminently logical construct designed to increase [the audience’s or jury’s] understanding and, with the aid of the proper emotional responses, enrich [their] judgment” (61).

³² *The Politics*, 1261a; *The Nichomachean Ethics*, trans. David Ross (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1998), 1158b25.

legal procedures had proved to be incapable of managing. In the play at large, “if” constitutes a pastoral nature and the space of dramatic action – the “unreal conditions of the forest” in which the political potential of the poetic imagination is explored.³³ Embracing this hypothetical modality *as if* it were a real set of conditions enables political and ethical action. One reading of “much virtue in if” indicates that it carries moral weight – that is, the “virtue” of the subjunctive mood lies in its capacity to index a moral excellence. At the same time “if” as a conditional modality is not as constrained as the moral imperative of the “should” or the “ought.”³⁴ If, as Spenser argues, fiction presents the world as it “might best be,” its idealizations are based in contingency, rather than necessity, and this contingency enables a palimpsest of alternative political possibilities. This moral excellence is not realized simply as an abstract principle, but as a virtual force that has the capacity to bring about this excellence in the world into a political form. In this way, the “if” presents a logical course through which we might harness the potential of an ideal that, as yet, has no empirical reality, and which constitutes that ideality within the institutions, norms, and material conditions that make up the world as we know it; but it also possesses a mobility that the institutional forms of political organization cannot accommodate.³⁵ In sum, in the play at large, the “if” is

³³ Maura Slattery Kuhn, “Much Virtue in If,” *Shakespeare Quarterly* 28.1 (1977): 49.

³⁴ It also extends the “may be,” the realm of possibility, in time and space because of its syntactical dependence on temporal sequence (namely, the “if-then” structure of the conditional formula) or metaphoric arrangement (the “as if” that unfolds similitudes).

³⁵ Woodbridge, “Country Matters” discusses a long tradition of critics’ denigration of pastoral “idealism” as a deliberate obfuscation of the hegemonic political ideology running through it. Woodbridge includes a defense of idealism: “Even Golden Age myths, an extreme manifestation of the pastoral impulse, are not without value – *is* what is irrecoverable in the past (or never existed) necessarily unattainable in the future? Can an ideal, however unrealistic, not at least *correct* reality, creating a synthesis out of the thesis of hierarchical authoritarianism and the antithesis of a classless Golden Age? And if an ideal is worth articulating, how much does it matter who articulates it or how pure his motives?” (200).

nature itself, but a nature invented by literary form.

“If” constitutes the most pervasive rhetorical gesture in the play.³⁶ Its use in scenes establishing new bonds of affection and obligation shows how it fashions instances of political origin, particularly in the way it coordinates pastoral hospitality. As Julia Reinhard Lupton has argued, “Hospitality can be enjoined to signal both *the end of politics* (the disappearance of civic virtue into public housekeeping) and *the beginning of politics* (the calling into speech and action of beings without recourse to a formal public sphere).”³⁷ In *As You Like It*, the forest picnic fulfills these conditions: the forest represents an “end” of politics in the sense that it marks the disappearance of the normative codes of institutionalized politics – to the extent that Orlando fails to recognize its alternative forms of sociability for what they are. We might also say that it marks an “end” in a teleological sense (and thus a beginning of new kinds of political relationships) by drawing upon the play’s logic of “if” to induct Orlando into a new way of seeing the inherent virtue of this landscape and its population of transplants that will, in turn, activate his own individual virtues.

Newly exiled to Arden and driven by hunger to utter desperation, Orlando attacks the Duke and his company:

Orlando. Forbear and eat no more!
 Jaques. Why, I have eat none yet.
 Orlando. Nor shalt not till necessity be served. (2.7.88-90)

Orlando’s opening demand assumes that the only “necessity” that needs to be served is his and Adam’s. The governing principle of Orlando’s calculus of obligation, then, values

³⁶ For discussion of the pervasiveness of “if” as a rhetorical strategy in *As You Like It*, see Kuhn, “Much Virtue in If.”

³⁷ Julia Reinhard Lupton, “Hospitality,” *Early Modern Theatricality*, ed. Henry S. Turner (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2014) 423-31, on p. 428.

the relationships contained within a household economy, a relationship whose possibility he cannot recognize here among these potential strangers. Orlando needs to be taught to see that this setting is imminently and immanently political; “if” functions as an opening to this version of politics. When the Duke invites Orlando to the feast, Orlando enumerates his conditions for acceptance:

But whate’er you are
That in this desert inaccessible
Under the shade of melancholy boughs,
Lose and neglect the creeping hours of time:
If ever you have looked on better days,
If ever been where bells have knolled to church,
If ever sat at any good man’s feast,
If ever from your eyelids wiped a tear,
And know what ‘tis to pity and be pitied,
Let gentleness my strong enforcement be,
In the which hope I blush and hide my sword. (2.7.109-119)

Orlando’s list produces multiple conditions for establishing common experience. By echoing Orlando’s conditionals with their indicative counterparts, the Duke confirms that he satisfies them (2.7.120-26). By the end of the scene, after Orlando has returned with Adam to the banquet, the Duke renews his invitations with yet another “if.” The Duke appeals to the similarity between Orlando and his father and the remembrance of his own liking of Sir Rowland as the conditions for extending his invitation to join his company:

If that you were the good Sir Rowland's son,
As you have whispered faithfully you were,
And as mine eye doth his effigies witness
Most truly limned and living in your face,
Be truly welcome hither. I am the duke
That loved your father. (2.7.191-96)

But this is not the first invitation extended to Orlando; throughout the scene there are so many offers of hospitality that this final invitation points to the superfluity of “if” as a condition for establishing relationships. The final “if” that punctuates the scene – “If that

you were the good Sir Rowland's son" – reminds us that Orlando's own sequence of conditionals had forestalled the effect of the Duke's very first invitation: "Sit down and feed, and welcome to our table" (2.7.105). What is the purpose of Orlando's apparent reluctance to accept the Duke's open invitation? One possibility is that these "if's take the unconditional offer of hospitality and reframe it in contingency, unmoored from a necessary dependence on a prior empirical reality, a common thing, a referential content that would ground their likeness.

Another possibility is that these "ifs" seem to be a necessary palliative to the kinds of political order Orlando wishes to impose on this landscape: "I thought that all things had been savage here, / And therefore put I on the countenance / Of stern commandment" (2.7.107-109). The landscape's potential savagery indicates an absolute lack of political qualities: it marks the land as uncultured, wild, uncivilized, and undomesticated; its inhabitants solitary, ungovernable and potentially cruel. This absolutely apolitical imaginary requires (by Orlando's reckoning) "stern commandment" – that is, a kind of unyielding, absolute legal force. But the Duke's and Orlando's 'ifs' induce Orlando to interpret the landscape differently – that is to say, pastorally – in the sense that it allows him to see a multiplicity of political potentialities and forms of order. These superfluous "ifs" seem to be required to complete the transition from Orlando's "stern commandment" to "gentle" enforcement (2.7.118). It is not enough for Orlando to say that he will drop his countenance of stern commandment; these multiple "ifs" are necessary to translate one form of organizational force into another. This transformation is not only external to Orlando; by fundamentally altering how he sees and interacts with his surroundings, he also transforms himself and draws out his own political nature.

Orlando's own poetic production in subsequent scenes seems to confirm this initiation into this way of seeing the natural world. Imitating a pastoral convention himself (that of the poet-vandal who pins his poems to the trees), Orlando leaves behind the following verse: "Why should this a desert be – / For it is unpeopled? No. / Tongues I'll hang on every tree / That shall civil sayings show" (3.2.112-15). Orlando's own verse stands in for those absent people whose presence would transform the forest into a landscape of "civil sayings." Of course, these civil sayings, as we learn from the other characters who read them, are his love poems, and so the trees become the instruments through which Orlando propagates his own private desire. Watson reads this as an instance in which Arden's landscape becomes a mere backdrop for Orlando's narcissistic self-expansion.³⁸ After all, if these "tongues" seem civil to Orlando, it is because they reflect a version of himself. Another reading, however, indicates that Orlando's induction into a pastoral way of interpreting the landscape allows him to proliferate "civility" – that is, political-orderedness but also political virtuousness – through literary frames. He sees the trees as civil, and gives them the "tongues" that draw this civil quality out; if the trees speak his own civil sayings, then it is because he has been transformed by this desert into a civil being himself.

That this landscape nevertheless remains a kind of desert, however, points to the fact that something continues to escape these efforts of transforming the landscape into a civil collective. The conditionality of the "if" that defines Arden's social relations points to a version of nature that remains a negative definition for the ethical categories that

³⁸ For discussions of the transposition of unrequited desire for women onto the natural world and the "homology between the anthropomorphic invasion of nature and the misogynistic shadow of Petrarchism," see Watson, *Back to Nature*, 86-90, and Judy Kronenfeld, "Jaques and the Pastoral Cult of Solitude," *Texas Studies in Literature and Language* 18.3 (1976): 451-73.

define human relationships. Amiens' lyric interludes that interrupt the scene of Orlando and Duke Senior's meeting punctuate this point that nature cannot appear as itself in the play, but this absence nevertheless defines hospitable encounters: "Blow, blow, thou winter wind. / Thou art not so unkind / As man's ingratitude" (2.7.174-76), a theme he develops in the second stanza:

Freeze, freeze thou bitter sky
That does not bite so nigh
As benefits forgot.
Though thou the waters warp
Thy sting is not so sharp
As friend remembered not. (2.7.184-89)

Immediately preceding the Duke's remembrance of Orlando's father, and therefore his remembrance of his obligation to Orlando on his father's account, Amiens' song offers a commentary on the harshness of the forest in terms that reflect the moral categories relevant to the scene. A lyric translation of the Duke's own sentiments at the beginning of the act, Amiens' song converts phenomenal nature into specifically moral qualities: kinder than ingratitude, more tolerable than forgotten benefits and unremembered friendships, nature's biting wind and freezing sky imitate concepts drawn from classical moral philosophy without, however, embodying these qualities outright. The wind may be kinder than ungrateful men, but it does not example gratitude in positive terms, nor does Amiens explicate how it might prove to be an apt analogy. In offering an incomplete translation of natural phenomena into moral categories, Amiens shows the limitations of philosophizing from nature about political virtues. And yet, as a set piece spliced into the middle of hospitable encounters, Amiens' verse represents the capacity of poetry to offer an approximation of the moral qualities that subtend Orlando and the Duke's meeting. Nature, then, functions as an incomplete model that is nevertheless sufficient for

providing a moral frame for guiding human relationships more generally, and particularly in the remaining action of the scene. While this pastoral lyric points to the moral categories that undergird the Duke and Orlando's exchange of hospitality, it also points to how nature cannot be fully encapsulated, or likened, by literary form, yet "if" suspends the necessity of closing the gap. That is, "if" shows how arresting this closure between representations of nature and an authentic nature (always elusive, if it exists at all) itself produces the materials for ethical political convening.

Pastoral Exile and the Forms of Political Ecology

Pastoral convention is both of nature and not of nature. In other words, pastoral counter-intuitively situates humans in artificial nature in order to bring us back to nature through its invented forms. Pastoral convention finds its political corollary in the fact that convention itself articulates, as Paul Alpers argues, a "coming together":

As opposed to epic and tragedy, with their ideas of heroic autonomy and isolation [pastoral] takes human life to be inherently a matter of common plights and common pleasures. Pastoral poetry represents these plights and these pleasures as shared and accepted, but it avoids naïveté and sentimentality because its usages retain an awareness of their conditions – the limitations that are seen to define, in the literal sense, any life, and their intensification in situations of separation and loss that can and must be dealt with, but are not to be denied or overcome.³⁹

The exile's state encapsulates the intensification of the "limitations" of commonness in situations of "separation and loss." In *As You Like It*, the convention of pastoral exile in particular traces two ideas of the natural world: the first uses nature as a space for determining common ground among humans, and between humans and nonhumans; the second sees nature as a space of isolation, alienation, and unfulfilled obligation.

³⁹ Paul Alpers, *What Is Pastoral?* (Chicago and London: U of Chicago P, 1996), 93.

Speaking in the vein of pastoral consolation, the Duke's address to his loyal followers strives to dissolve the urgency of exile and its material discomforts: in effect, he aims to deploy pastoral in order to produce a stable political alternative within Arden, but his own use of these conventions also militates against his efforts.⁴⁰ The Duke appeals to two distinct ways of perceiving the natural world:

Now my co-mates and brothers in exile,
 Hath not the old custom made this life more sweet
 Than that of painted pomp? Are not these woods
 More free from peril than the envious court?
 Here feel we not the penalty of Adam –
 The season's difference, as the icy fang
 And churlish chiding of the winter's wind,
 Which when it bites and blows upon my body
 Even till I shrink with cold, I smile and say,
 "This is no flattery: these are counselors
 That feelingly persuade me what I am."
 Sweet are the uses of adversity
 Which like the toad, ugly and venomous,
 Wears yet a precious jewel in his head.
 And this our life exempt from public haunt
 Finds tongues in trees, books in the running brooks,
 Sermons in stones, and good in everything. (2.1.1-17)

Critics have taken the Duke's romanticizing of rural destitution, whether his own or that of Arden's native inhabitants, as an indication of the play's exasperation with pastoral naivety, and as a sign of his inability to distinguish between the natural world and his conventional expectations of it.⁴¹ It could also be said that this escapist fiction indexes a paradox at the center of any articulation of the relationship between nature and human communities: that is, that nature is both a source of political foundation and its exclusion.

⁴⁰ Kingsley-Smith, *Shakespeare's Drama of Exile*, argues that exile seems a less pressing concern in *As You Like It*: it is a desirable alternative to the "claustrophobic and alienating" court (116); at the same time, court practices, flattery, the civilizing influence of language that converts the landscape into a topography of commonplaces also reproduce the court in pastoral exile (118).

⁴¹ For a reading of the scene's potential for antipastoralism as potential for mockery of the Duke, see A.D. Nuttall, *Shakespeare the Thinker* (New Haven: Yale UP, 2007), 232.

The speech's double perspective crystallizes in the Duke's ambiguous declaration: "Here feel we not the penalty of Adam." On the one hand, the Duke argues that in Arden "we do not feel the penalty;" Arden represents for him a prelapsarian world isolated from the effects of original sin, and their consolation for the painful condition of exile is that it enables an Eden to be reconstituted for them. "Penalty" also invokes legal terminology, and so another sense of the Duke's pronouncement is that in the forest they are free from law. The Duke grafts this temporal division between pre- and postlapsarian experiences of nature and politics onto a spatial plane; aligning Arden with Eden's perfections requires that the law and the court (and the political world they metonymically represent) come to be associated with the fallen condition.

But a secondary meaning of the line also shows how the Edenic aspect of his pastoralism provides theological and legal framings to make their experience of expulsion intelligible. The dash at line 5 marks a shift in his logic that points to the ulterior meaning of "don't we feel the penalty of Adam": it becomes a rhetorical question that acknowledges this forest as a hostile natural world that serves as a legal punishment. The undecidable line yokes the valued conditions of the "old custom" and the freedom of the woods (in distinction from the "peril" of the "envious court") with an unaccommodating elemental nature that threatens to undermine the security of that freedom. The Duke's own acknowledgments of the harsh realities of elemental nature challenge his idealizations. At the same time, he engages in a constant process of reincorporating this hostile nature into a pastoral reimagination of the political setting of the court.

This double vision of pastoral and the self-reflexivity that recognizes its own absurdities and contradictions, even as it embraces them, constructs a field of political relationships not reducible to human terms: a field whose composition is never fixed or stabilized, but revolves through multiple arrangements. The Duke relies on pastoral convention in order to balance emergent affiliations in dialectical tension with an unaccommodating nature. If wind and cold provide political council in its truest, most unaffected and disinterested form, that council is peculiarly limited, since nominally the benefit of this adversity comes solely to the Duke himself, as collective pronouns “shrink” into the singular personal pronoun “I” through influence of the “cold.” The Duke’s council by nature’s adversity, therefore, momentarily reduces a collective vision to solipsism. While the golden world offers the opportunity to experience an ideal mode of collective living and a generation of political knowledge that is “just” because it is devoid of deceitful flattery and, by extension, filled with wise council and truthfulness, the unforgiving nature of the fallen world apparently fails to sustain the Duke’s recuperated courtly political imaginary.

Even as the Duke imposes an anthropocentric view on nature that invests it with human language (“And this our life ... / Finds tongues in trees, books in the running brooks, / Sermons in stones, and good in everything”), he also animates nature with a language of its own: the “blowing” and “biting” of the wind advise him of “what” he is, and also gives to nature a non-linguistic voice whose medium of communication is elemental contact. The Duke’s perception of the natural world, analogized to human discourses of political council, translates nature into political and self-knowledge: “This is no flattery: these are counselors / That feelingly persuade me what I am.” An adverse

nature functions as an ecosystemic extension of a monarch's advisory council upsetting the Duke from his customary mode of living in order to reveal to him a greater understanding of his implication within a wider system. Moreover, "feelingly" verges on sentimentality that might echo the Duke's affective response to his own condition, but as an adverb modifying "persuade," it also attributes this kind of affect to the natural world, investing it with sensibility and understanding bolstered by "just perception" (OED "feelingly" 2), a correctness of moral vision. The Duke's immersion within a wilderness of strife, therefore, not only affords him a kind of intuitive, sensible knowledge that leads him through an unadulterated experience of phenomenal nature to greater self-understanding. It also emphasizes an abundant materiality of sensual experience made possible by a state of privation from political life.

Jane Bennett's vital materialism offers a means of reclaiming anthropomorphism by pointing to the political value inherent in these kinds of accommodations. According to Bennett, a vital materialism, which recognizes the "capacity of things ... to act as quasi agents or forces with trajectories, propensities, or tendencies of their own," cultivates a greater awareness of how human and nonhuman bodies are "inextricably enmeshed in a dense network of relations": "in a knotted world of vibrant matter, to harm one section of the web may very well harm oneself. Such an enlightened or expanded notion of self-interest is *good for humans*."⁴² Bennett's reimagining of the structure of "self" and "interest" in terms of a diffuse, complex network of agencies, intentions, and obligational ties balances a tendency to anthropomorphize the natural world and center human self-concern with a greater regard for the interdependent vitalities of the nonhuman parts of an

⁴² Jane Bennett, *Vibrant Matter: A Political Ecology of Things* (Durham and London: Duke UP, 2010), viii; 13.

ecosystem. In framing self-understanding in terms of an examination of the self as an extension of the natural world, where that extension is in turn framed as a relationship to the elements as political agents, the Duke lays claim to a self-knowledge that is, in effect, a greater awareness of his own entanglements with the world.⁴³

The Duke returns to the collectivity gestured to by the vocative: “co-mates and brothers in exile,” showing that exile and the absence of a political infrastructure produces a sense of commonness among them. The prefix in “co-mate” imbeds a redundancy in his address to his followers, which his naming them as “brothers” magnifies, suggesting that exile not only produces but also intensifies the equality between the Duke and his supporters.⁴⁴ Through this surplus of equality, he perhaps intends to show how exile amplifies what they share in common: what makes their difference (in rank, in relative degrees of power) possible dissolves, but the superfluity of the Duke’s vocative also points to the multiplicities that subtend his speech and refract this sense of common purpose. This virtual equality among many becomes subsumed within a larger, encompassing singularity, a totality comprised by the Duke’s “I,” signifying how these pastoral conditions also facilitate a conception of a barren apolitical landscape. His pastoralism erupts by turns into an imagined landscape inhabited by the

⁴³ As Ken Hiltner shows in *Milton and Ecology* (Cambridge: Cambridge 2003), the dissolution of ego boundaries that separates self from others and humans from nature is an insight of deep ecology: “While the view from Freud onward is that ego boundaries form in infancy, and so differentiate the Self as ego from all Others, Deep Ecology has taken the position that perhaps these boundaries could be expanded outward so that human beings might not think of the rest of the Earth as something other than the Self” (13).

⁴⁴ Jacques Derrida, *The Politics of Friendship*, trans. George Collins (London: Verso, 2005) has discussed how “fraternity” as a category of political organization draws together “law” and “nature” under the same heading: “We were saying above that nature commands law, that equality at birth founds *in necessity* legal equality. It is difficult to decide here if this foundation in necessity is a just foundation, just according to nature or just according to the law” (99). “Fraternity” as a political relationship, which figures equality under the law and equality in nature at the same time, constitutes the vanishing point between nature and law where both become indistinguishable from the other.

Duke alone, by a court of biting winds, by an entirely human “we,” and by the universal goodness of a vital nature that shares with them. In short, pastoral fiction makes it possible to imagine the interpenetration of ethical ends on a variety of levels of scale.

The vision of the natural world as the domain of a sociable voluntary exile recalls Charles’s romanticizing of the Duke’s plight when he explains the political situation to Oliver in Act 1: “They say he is already in the Forest of Arden, and a many merry men with him; and there they live like the old Robin Hood of England. They say many young gentlemen flock to him every day and fleet the time carelessly as they did in the golden world” (1.93-96). Charles’ fantasy about their “careless” existence in the woods, which relies on a pastiche of classical pastoral traditions and nativist English folklore, participates in the fiction that extrapolitical circumstances (and here specifically the extralegal condition represented by Robin Hood’s outlaw status) enables a reconstitution of a “golden world.” This new golden world, moreover, relies on pastoral divisions of space to organize a complex system of obligational ties, evidenced in Charles’s account of the voluntary exile’s motivations: “There is no news at court, sir, but the old news: that is, the old duke is banished by his younger brother, the new duke; and three or four loving lords have put themselves into voluntary exile with him, whose lands and revenues enrich the new duke; therefore he gives them good leave to wander” (1.1.80-84). The self-selecting aspect of their communal exile explores the problem of identifying the necessary conditions of political commitment, for it establishes the idea that the act of depriving themselves of the essential means for sustaining their individual, private lives affirms the affective dimension of idealized collective obligation. Although it is plausible that a later reversal in the Duke’s fortunes might have entered into their calculations, the

lords cannot be assured of this eventuality. The principle that motivates their convening, therefore, is not born out of a sense that they will be materially rewarded for their loyalty (which would make their relationship to the Duke fundamentally instrumental) but rather out of their active reproduction of the Duke's own state of privation for themselves. In other words, their voluntary dispossession reimagines political interest independently of the ends of acquisition and security. Electing this state freely, they show that exile allows them to reprioritize what is essential to politics as they flock to the pastoral world and willingly forgo the comforts of court life for what seems to be a higher purpose.

That Duke Frederick readily gives them "leave" to abandon his realm shows misanthropy as a starting point for this particular vision of collectivity, but a kind of misanthropy that imagines fellowship solely in terms of its instrumentality, as a means of accumulating material goods at the expense of other kinds of goods that disinterested sociability offers. The old Duke collects friends; the new Duke collects their lands and their income. But even as the play seems to condemn this kind of material acquisitiveness as fundamentally antisocial (antisocial in that it cultivates a political life increasingly depopulated of people, or exchanges people for things), it also reaffirms that these two organizing principles are contiguous, mutually constitutive aspects of the same political system, for the lords' ability to "forfeit" their claims depends on Frederick's leave-giving. Therefore, their voluntary exile and Frederick's enabling of that exile mark the point where competing wills converge in a temporary alignment of interest, a convergence that is contingent upon the idea that their implied affection for Duke Senior might be placed on the same scale of value as the "income" which they leave behind in their stead.

The play therefore uses the green world to an unusual effect in that its reinvention of political order depends on the play's multiplication of antisocial figures. Duke Frederick's conversion, which brings about the final resolution to the play's political crisis (which in turn also brings about a resolution to the play's love plots), emphasizes how its pastoral dynamics resolve the difficulties and hardships presented by the "ordinary" world of political and social institutions through a fortuitous suspension of their logic. Jaques de Bois, the absent brother of Oliver and Orlando, arrives to announce the development that enables the play's conclusion:

Duke Frederick, hearing how that every day
Men of great worth resorted to this forest,
Addressed a mighty power, which were on foot
In his own conduct, purposely to take
His brother here and out him to the sword.
And to the skirts of this wild wood he came,
Where, meeting with an old religious man,
After some question with him, was converted
Both from his enterprise and from the world,
His crown bequeathing to his banished brother
And all their lands restored to him again
That were with him exiled. (5.4.145-51)

Duke Frederick's self-dispossession is a threshold condition for his own admission into the pastoral world. It is also the necessary condition for a restoration of the court and for Duke Senior's and his followers' reentry into it. This sudden reversal of the pastoral's polarized spaces not only emphasizes the mutual interpenetration of the political and extrapolitical facets of pastoral dualism, it also complicates the channels that organize the circulation of benefits because this shift necessitates a redistribution of property, social position, and obligational ties. Frederick's tyranny represents a more conventional form of antisociality. As a monarch, he is antisocial in that he has no equal within the political system that he presides over. He is also antisocial in that he fails to use his political

privilege to fulfill his obligations to society at large. Frederick's elective dispossession counters one version of antisociality (his assumption of worldlessness that erases him from both the play and its economic and political relationships) with another – a political world populated by the absolutely singular sovereign.

Duke Senior is notably magnanimous, and yet in him we also find a metonym for a system of economic relations falling under the purview of his own private interest. Repeating the same kinds of language he had used in Act 2 to describe the kind of groupings the court-in-exile creates, the Duke reflects the effects of retranslating those dynamics to a more overtly courtly and legal setting. The verb “restore” implies a return to an original owner and, at the same time, it effects a shift in pronoun that places Duke Senior alone as the beneficiary of that restoration, for the plural possessive “their” modifying “land” becomes in the predicate a singular pronoun. The delay of the referent of “their” (l. 151) to the following line (they who “were with him exiled”) establishes the sovereign's singularity, producing the effect of a social and political constitution oscillating between its provisions for the one and for the many. Moreover, the grammar of the sentence indicates the lords' tacit involuntary dispossession, where their relationship to their property is mediated by the claims of the Duke's feudal privileges. This transfer produces an obligation: that is, the lords are now beholden to the Duke's magnanimity, and they can only expect a material return of what is already theirs in exchange for their fealty. At the same time, this transfer also erases the collective character of the restored political order, finding in its wake Duke Senior's solitary claims to these privileges within a new model of totality reduced to the sovereign's legal prerogatives. The old Duke, now the new Duke, reproduces the antisocial logic of the

original new Duke's (Frederick's) regime. This new constitution takes the nominal equality the Duke had found amongst his brothers in exile and collapses their collective "they" into the Duke's "him" to justify their dispossession in the name of political reform. In repeating the pronoun instability from the Duke's own pastoral vision, the play ends with a definition of a political grouping that oscillates between reductionism to the private interest of the Duke's person on the one hand, and a metonymic form for an entire system of obligations and exchanges of material and affective goods on the other.

"Compact of Jars": Jaques and the Desert City

As the play's misanthrope, Jaques would seem to define an absolute exception to political community. Of all the exiles in the play, he most closely associates himself with its pastoral landscape, and the Duke and other members of the court often associate him with the inhuman natural world. When Duke Senior cannot find Jaques, he muses: "I think he be transformed into a beast, / For I can nowhere find him like a man" (2.7.1-2).⁴⁵ At the end of the play, Jaques remains in solitude to study the spectacle of the recently converted Duke Frederick: "To see no pastime I what you would have / I'll stay to know at your abandon'd cave" (5.4.181-82). Jaques' apparent total absorption within the pastoral world and the world of nature perhaps strives to achieve the effacement of self that Watson argues would mark the final achievement of an immediate access to nature.

⁴⁵ Gabriel Egan, *Green Shakespeare: From Ecopolitics to Ecocriticism* (London: Routledge, 2006) takes Jaques' identification with the animal as a sign of similarity between human and animal society (102), but it is also a point of identification that marks Jaques' difference from the domain of culture. For early modern discourses on the distinction between the human and the animal, see Erica Fudge, *Brutal Reasoning: Animals, Rationality, and Humanity in Early Modern England* (Ithaca and London: Cornell UP, 2006). For Fudge's discussion of Jaques' "unreasonable" empathy for the deer (set against the Duke's "inward government" and stoic disposition) as an instance of "becoming animal" see pp. 74-76.

Yet Jaques dissolves into the forest because of, not in spite of, his association with pastoral fictions and the forms of its conventions. He is, throughout the play, a figure associated with poetic and pastoral excess. In response to one of Amiens' pastoral songs, Jaques cries for "More, more – I prithee more!" (2.5.9), a demand he will repeat twice (2.5.11, 12). Through its refrain of "Come hither, come hither, come hither / Here shall he see / No enemy / But winter and rough weather" (2.5.5-8), the song reprises the themes of the Duke's first speech: the hospitality and inclusiveness of pastoral nature set against the backdrop of an unaccommodating wilderness. When Amiens excuses himself by complaining that more would only make Jaques melancholy and that his now ragged voice would fail to please, Jaques responds: "I do not desire you to please me, I do desire you to sing. Come, more" (2.14-15), and he provokes Amiens to continue, adding a stanza himself. Jaques' entrance in the play, therefore, establishes him as a figure generative of pastoral superfluity, desiring it for its own sake even if he doesn't find the exercise particularly desirable for himself. Surfeiting on poetic production even as he demands more, he therefore evinces the integral role pastoral plays in supplying a remedy for his melancholic lack that can never be sated even by this poetic superfluity.

Even as Jaques becomes a figure through which the Duke's particular version of pastoral can be multiplied and refracted, he also becomes a figure through which the natural and political worlds might be disrupted by his excessive poetic production: when the Duke hears that Jaques is "merry, hearing of a song," he cries "If he, compact of jars, grow musical / We shall have shortly discord in the spheres" (2.7.1-6). "Compact of jars," Jaques represents discontinuous, contradictory tendencies that threaten the fabric of the Duke's vision of cosmological order and Arden's harmony. Herein lies the main

distinction between what the Duke and Jaques reveal as representatives of pastoral visions of politics in *As You Like It*. On the one hand, the Duke persistently folds the collective into an “I,” even as this collective form constantly escapes this shape. On the other hand, Jaques, accruing “jarring” pastoral modes to his person, threatens to fragment the Duke’s imagining of Arden’s harmony. Thus, he illuminates a gathering of open-ended collective forms for describing the interactions between humans and nonhumans.

Jaques first receives mention in the play when one of the courtiers uses him to describe the complexity of the “desert city,” a term used by the Duke for Arden. Following his pronouncements on the fundamental goodness of this pastoral world, and on the goodness it has brought to him, the Duke punctuates his speech with a lament for the deer, the native inhabitants of the “desert city”:

Come, shall we go and kill us venison?
And yet it irks me the poor, dappled fools,
Being native burghers of this desert city,
Should in their own confines, with forked heads,
Have their round haunches gored. (2.1.21-25)

The Duke’s analogy raises a question central to the distinctions between political and natural worlds: what makes the forest of Arden a “desert city”, and for whom is it a “desert”? Invoking a conventional bifurcation of pastoral space (the waste or green space of the country and the opposing pole of the urban center), the concept of the “desert city” traces parallels between the Duke’s exile and its consequences for the natural world: namely, that his own displacement results in a reciprocal displacement of woodland creatures. The phrase also invokes an idea of nature that is a space vacated of political activity. In drawing attention to the similarities between his and the deer’s circumstances, the Duke recognizes that his presence has transformed this natural city into a desert

dwelling that can no longer accommodate its “native burghers.” The Duke represents the green space as privative and uncultivated, inadequate for both animal and human life, and thus lacking in the basic necessities to sustain any kind of permanent dwelling-place. This “desert city” stands in as a vanishing point for an instrumental politics.

At the same time, the “desert city” also imagines pastoral in terms of its potential to become political. Historically, the “desert” forest was not a uniform landscape, but rather a mixture of “woodlands, clearings, and pastures,” that enclosed a range of economic activities and that was also a legal designation restricting those activities.⁴⁶ Hunting was a prerogative of the king and social elite, and forest-lands were themselves protected spaces.⁴⁷ The term “forest” referred to land that had been taken from the public domain and was subordinated to a special kind of jurisdiction, for those who infringed on the king’s forest land were prosecuted under forest law, rather than common law.⁴⁸ In this capacity, the forest acts as an extension of jurisdiction, and thus points to an idea of nature defined as a domain of exclusive legal privileges. As an outlaw, the Duke no longer has legal claim to this space: the forest signals his involuntary dispossession, and his hunting becomes an illegal reacquisition of a domesticated wilderness. In the late

⁴⁶ Simone Pinet, *Archipelagoes: Insular Fictions from Chivalric Romance to the Novel* (Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 2011), 13-14; A. Stuart Daley, “Where are the Woods in *As You Like It*,” *SQ* 34.2 (1983): 172-180.

⁴⁷ Berry, *Shakespeare and the Hunt*, 11. Berry observes *As You Like It*’s unusual blending of pastoral: “To treat the hunt within the traditional pastoral context is to threaten the traditional values that the shepherd’s life represents, which center upon the nurturing, not the destruction of animals, and to threaten an aggressive radicalizing of the form by making law-abiding shepherds into poachers” (164). Although we don’t see the shepherds become poachers in the play, their destitution (represented by Corin’s exploitation by his master) indicate the conditions which would drive shepherds to this kind of desperation. Kronenfeld, “Social Rank and the Pastoral Ideals,” argues that the Duke’s views on hunting comes into question: it seem to be at odds with the pastoral milieu because it demonstrates how he is at odds with nature (unlike shepherds who are in harmony with it), which exposes the tension between pastoral’s social idealism and the realities of class privilege (338).

⁴⁸ Robert Pogue Harrison, *Forests: The Shadow of Civilization* (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1992), 69.

sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, a renewed interest in asserting customary rights pitted royal prerogatives against protestors, who relied on forest resources for their livelihoods, claiming “customary gathering rights” or “rights of the common.”⁴⁹ The “desert city,” therefore, becomes a figure for imagining a landscape as a space not of unified interest, but of a common interests refracted into competing ones.

The Duke also uses it as a means of explicitly incorporating nonhumans into a political landscape, and the figure of the desert city becomes a means of coordinating nonhuman interests and rights, as well as human ones. Presumably, the Duke’s analogy doesn’t prompt him to reconsider the ethics of his eating habits; it could be argued that for all the empathy he expresses here, he hasn’t advanced beyond a superficial recognition of the affinity between himself and the animals he encroaches upon. As Watson argues, the Duke anatomizes the deer, referring to them by their flesh (“venison” and “haunches”), hides (“dappled”) and horns (“forked heads”), which demonstrates the play’s complicity in a “violence of naming” that threatens to objectify the natural world by ignoring its distinct autonomy from human measures of use value.⁵⁰ Even as he attempts to establish a common horizon, he also cannot, by necessity, maintain his and the animals’ needs. The depletion of the forest’s deer population by the Duke and his court-in-exile is necessary collateral damage, for it fosters the barest means by which the political world-in-exile sustains itself. In this way, the desert city becomes a thought

⁴⁹ Sanders, *Cultural Geography*, 65-67.

⁵⁰ Watson argues that this kind of anatomization of the deer shows the “violence of naming” that characterizes the play’s anthropomorphism (*Back to Nature*, 81). Watson’s use of “anthropomorphism” in this sense more closely resembles what Bruce Boehrer, *Shakespeare Among the Animals: Nature and Society in the Drama of Early Modern England* (New York: Palgrave, 2002), calls “absolute anthropocentrism,” which holds the assumptions that human beings are radically distinct from and superior to all other forms of life, and that that this superiority designates nature as an exploitable resource, aligning the hierarchical distinction between nature and culture with a hierarchical distinction between servant and master (8-12).

experiment that entertains a fiction of a political vacuum for the sake of imagining what “common interest” might look like apart from the ways legal designations of the forest define it: common interest in shared resources, in land usage, its contestation by the king’s exclusive privileges, etc. Rather, it acknowledges that this common interest cannot be contained by legal structures alone.

Taking up the Duke’s analogy and his apparent regret that his prerogative to produce for himself a sustainable livelihood in the forest should come at the expense of its inhabitants, an unnamed Lord presents the Duke’s court with an elaborate account of Jaques’ lamentation for the deer: “Indeed my lord, / The melancholy Jaques grieves at that / And in that kind swears you do more usurp / Than doth your brother that hath banished you” (2.1.25-28). “That” – whose antecedent is the Duke’s claim to sympathy for the deer – aligns Jaques’ regret with the Duke’s, and the speech which follows amplifies the Duke’s own sensibilities. The Lord proposes to explore the implications of the Duke’s concerns about his impact on the natural world, employing the plaintive Jaques as a figure through which a political critique may be delivered. The scene presents a series of intersecting framing devices. The Lord first presents it as a kind of dramatic scene: “Today my lord Amiens and myself / Did steal behind him as he lay along / Under an oak” (2.1.29-31). The composition of the scene positions the Lord and Amiens as ostensibly passive observers, their voyeurism pointing to the theatricality of the tableau. This framing device contains within itself other representational forms. The image of the weeping deer comes from conventional emblems of unrequited love. The Lord’s elaborate description of the deer reproduces that emblem as a verbal picture, which is in turn a simultaneous substitution for both the visual of the emblematic deer and the body

of a real suffering deer that would likely not appear on stage. The immediate framing of the scene's specific thematic developments, namely of usurpation and dispossession, extend the meanings of the conventional image into the domain of a political critique.⁵¹ This framing lends itself to the development of another framing device – what the Duke refers to as the “moralization,” the motto that accompanies and ostensibly offers an explication of the emblem. In this particular instance we move from one such moralization – the Duke's expression of regret that the native burghers should be so usurped from their natural habitat – through the Lord's account of Jaques and the deer, and finally to the Lord's account of Jaques' multiple moralizations, his “thousand similes” (2.1.45). This moralization is refracted through even more framing moralizations: the moral of unrequited love and pity conjured by the emblem's conventional associations with Petrarchan lyric, the political moral the Lord's speech intends to illustrate, and the multiple sentences the Lord claims Jaques had spoken on the occasion. The urban metaphors also call us to recollect the urban environment in which this play would have been enacted and the civic institutions that frame the collective life of the Elizabethan theater's audiences.⁵²

⁵¹ For interpretation of the emblem's various levels of meaning (as sign of frustrated love, as an indication of humanist aversions to the hunt, as disaffection with the courtly world), see Claus Uhlig, “‘The Sobbing Deer’: *As You Like It*, II.i.21-66, and the Historical Context,” *Renaissance Drama* 3 (1970): 79-109. For the form of emblem and its wider saturation of the play, Raymond B. Waddington, “Moralizing the Spectacle: Dramatic Emblems in *As You Like It*,” *Shakespeare Quarterly* 33.2 (1982): 155–63. Waddington argues that the play's form (its artificiality, its attention to conversation, debate, and interaction over plot) instructs the audience how to read emblems and “moralize spectacles” (157). For the political symbolism and proto-environmentalist import of the iconography of the sobbing deer in early modern culture, see Matt Cartmill, *A View to a Death in the Morning: Hunting and Nature Through History* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1993), 76-90.

⁵² Michael D. Bristol, “Shamelessness in Arden: Early Modern Theater and the Obsolescence of Popular Theatricality,” *Print, Manuscript, and Performance*, eds. Arthur F. Marotti and Michael D. Bristol (Columbus: Ohio State UP, 2000): “The metaphorical links between the imaginary space of the forest and the contingent reality of the London neighborhoods from which the

But the stag's and Jaques' absence from the stage punctuates the unrepresentability of the scene in a theatrical context and its reliance on discursive forms to bring its vividness to our imagination, even as the image it constructs is pointedly impossible.⁵³ Calling to the foreground the play's characteristic mimetic strategy – the use of multiple representational techniques to show the palpable gap between what we see and what we are told – reminds us of the problem of “nature's” (i.e., the rocks, trees, animals, etc.) absence from the stage except in translated form. Jaques is a figure that focalizes multiple literary genres – pastoral elegy, ekphrasis, courtly poetics, political satire – whose presence results in the production of multiple ways of seeing nature through forms of shifting attachments. The Duke and the Lord draw upon Jaques as a figure who embodies an idea of theatricality that gathers to itself multiple representational techniques in order to clarify pastoral's production of a “desert city” – a political unity whose being is realized in the simultaneous abjection and incorporation of the apolitical world (the solitary man, nonhuman nature) into its definitions.

The Duke's interruption of the Lord's account – “But what said Jaques? / Did he not moralize this spectacle?” (2.1.43-44) – does not merely suggest his anticipation to hear how Jaques will interpret the scene, for we have, implicitly, already received the moral by the Lord's introduction of the subject. Rather, the “thousand similes” Jaques is said to have uttered show the power of poetic superfluity to unfold a kind of totality of networks of translations and obligational exchanges:

audience is watching is given specific expression in Jaques' speech about the wounded deer” (299).

⁵³ Martha Ronk, “Locating the Visual in *As You Like It*,” *Shakespeare Quarterly* 52.2 (2001): 255-76, has noted that the play's emphasis on discursive representations of the visual transforms the play into a series of speaking pictures, and in so doing draws attention to the limitations of precisely what can be seen on the stage, ultimately “problematiz[ing] theatrical representation itself” (256-57).

First, for his weeping into the needless stream,
 "Poor deer," quoth he, "thou mak'st a testament
 As worldlings do, giving thy sum of more
 To that which had too much." Then, being there alone,
 Left and abandoned of his velvet friend,
 "'Tis right," quoth he, "thus misery doth part
 The flux of company." Anon a careless herd,
 Full of the pasture, jumps along by him
 And never stays to greet him. "Ay," quoth Jaques,
 "Sweep on you fat and greasy citizens!
 'Tis just the fashion: wherefore do you look
 Upon that poor and broken bankrupt there?"
 Thus most invectively he pierceth through
 The body of country, city, court –
 Yea, and of this our life – swearing that we
 Are mere usurpers, tyrants, and what's worse
 To fright the animals and to kill them up
 In their assigned and native dwelling place. (2.1.46-63)

Beginning with a simile of the deer's tears as a bequeathal to an indifferent beneficiary, Jaques identifies the disproportionate scale between both watery emblems. The metaphor expresses affect in economic terms, emphasizing that the surplus of the deer's self-pity overflows into excessive distributions of its feeling: the dying deer becomes a "bankrupt," issuing a legacy of its "sum of more." The image that "more" modifies is the deer's weeping, but that this image cannot be neatly translated into a specific economic amount transforms the currency of this exchange into an empty signifier. Jaques' similes therefore incur a sense of loss that resembles the deer's outpouring of self-pity to an indifferent successor. The second simile extends the tenor of the river imagery from an indifferent nature to an indifferent assembly, "the flux of company." It also translates the deer into an emblem of "misery" itself. In generating a sententious generalization from the deer's suffering – "thus misery doth part / The flux of company" –, Jaques purports to make a comment on the "justness" (in the sense of due proportion and plausibility) of the deer's condition: "tis right," he observes, indicating that the commonplace explains how

his isolation seems a fitting outcome to ingratitude and indifference, even if this isolation is not morally desirable. The third simile, returning to the wounded deer as a figure of a “bankrupt,” imagines the rest of the herd as “greasy citizens.” Moving from ostensibly apolitical terms – “company,” “herd” – to the more overtly political term of “citizen” to describe their collective nature, Jaques’ multiplication of similes suggests how poetic language itself reflects (or causes) a non-political entity’s coming-into-politics.

But in what capacity have these deer entered into politics? “Company” here could be understood in the more general sense of any sociable group formation, but more particularly it could refer to a range of corporate legal structures, including livery companies, guilds, and theater companies, that populate the early modern socio-political urban landscape.⁵⁴ Jaques thus shifts between different collective terms that invest them with a range of political and legal statuses. Drawing upon the work of Anthony Black, John Michael Archer shows that “company” refers to a specific form of citizenship, based in guild systems, concerned with the protection of economic interests and marked specifically by its exclusions, for not all urban dwellers could be “citizens” in this capacity, since women, foreign nationals, and unaffiliated, unincorporated tradesmen were denied equal access to the privileges of citizenship.⁵⁵ If the deer form a “company,” then Jaques invests them with a sense of political privilege tied to the preservation of their economic interest. That the speech shifts emphasis between anthropomorphic, politicizing nouns like “company” and “citizen” to apolitical, nonhuman nouns like “herd” also communicates that their company is in “flux” in the sense that the nature of

⁵⁴ See John Michael Archer, *Citizen Shakespeare: Freeman and Aliens in the Language of the Plays* (New York: Palgrave, 2005) 1-20, for the forms of civic group association that defined citizenship in early modern urban spaces.

⁵⁵ Archer, *Citizen Shakespeare* 6-7.

their group identity exceeds the conceptual framework supplied by politics in its institutionalized, legalistic sense. Nor does “herd” appear to suffice to encapsulate the nature of their “groupness,” and thus Jaques searches for a thousand metaphors to convey it. Alternating between human words to describe a natural formation for which there is no other term that suffices, and natural words for collective nouns that fail to encapsulate the kinds of legal rights, responsibilities, and inequalities that constitute citizenship, Jaques’ multiple similes “pierce” through “the body of country, city, and court.” That is, these similes implicate these natural and political concepts within a larger system, and they point to the overlaps that seek to convey an idea of group identity and behavior that exceeds both available natural and political terminologies.

The multi-modality that inheres in the emblem of Jaques and his deer points to the representational practices that subtend an ideology of landscape, which offers “ordered, simplified visions of the world” that are also “complete systems”; though any given landscape might index multiple symbolic orders at once, the representational techniques of landscape attempt to perform a unifying function to show how organic social formations inhere in nature.⁵⁶ And yet, the Lord’s representation of Jaques also prompts a way of rethinking the stability of this totality by pointing to the absences it signifies but can never capture. The Lord’s first description of the deer presents an impossible image of affective exchange:

The wretched animal heaved forth such groans
That their discharge did stretch his leathern coat
Almost to bursting; and big, round tears
Coursed one another down his innocent nose
In piteous chase. And thus the hairy fool,
Much marked of the melancholy Jaques,

⁵⁶ Alan R.H. Baker and Gideon Biger, *Ideology and Landscape in Historical Perspective: Essays on the Meanings of Some Places in the Past* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1992), 4-5.

Stood on th'extremest verge of the swift brook,
Augmenting it with tears. (2.1.36-43)

The image of the deer augmenting the river with its tears conveys the sign of extreme suffering dissipating in the face of the profound indifference of the “needless stream.” The disparity in respective volumes of the finite tears and the immeasurable river produces a logical incongruity in the idea that such a small quantity of water might augment the river’s infinitude in any meaningful way. The deer’s tears, therefore, present a metonym for suffering that is at once both calculable, because finite, but also incalculable because there is an absence of a meaningful scale for gauging its impact. The excessive tears at first belonging to the deer are transmitted to Jaques by the end of the Lord’s account, for he leaves Jaques “weeping and commenting / Upon the sobbing deer” (2.1.65-66). Both the deer and Jaques share in distributing excess: the deer’s sobbing has already been accounted for, but the Lord points to Jaques’ excessive grieving through its omission, implying that there is more feeling in the scene than can be encapsulated. The shared “weeping” and “sobbing” implies reciprocation, but that pity moves in a linear direction. The deer, heedless of Jaques’ sobbing, engages in self-pity that diffuses into a void, while Jaques himself, in issuing unreported “commenting” in addition to his “weeping,” gives out more in his sympathy for the deer than the deer itself can acknowledge. In framing the deer’s tears as giving more to nature than what is owed to it, the metaphor incurs a sense of an impossible obligation – impossible by virtue of the fact that the river, as an inanimate object, a metonym for an indifferent nature, and a figure of an incalculable quantity that distorts any sense of proportion, cannot be called to enter into coherent exchanges.

This particular exchange breaks down, given that the receiver of the deer's tears is an emblem of a self-sufficient being that cannot enter into mutual obligation. The river's excess, its "needlessness," makes it into an emblem of self-sufficiency, while Jaques's likening of the river to the "flux" of the herd transfers that quality of self-sufficiency to them. The Lord's identification of the deer's companions as "a careless herd, / full of pasture" points to the herd well provided for, without care both in the sense of their heedlessness of their own danger and their lack of compassion for their fallen fellow. Their carelessness, therefore, marks their failure to recognize the suffering of the other that is also, at the same time, a failure to recognize their own potential for suffering. This indifference comes as a cost of their own sense of autonomous self-sufficiency, the fact that *their* own needs have been attended to defines them as a common unit (a herd). Their dying companion, on the other hand, manifests the potential for their own failures to fulfill their obligations that, in their indifference, they fail to recognize as unfulfilled and unfulfillable. The "herd" as a "company" and group of "citizens," therefore, represents the paradoxical condition of the misanthropic collective: the "fat and greasy citizens" embody a failure to recognize the potential for their own lack even as they enjoy an interdependently-generated self-sufficiency. "Citizen" more strongly conveys exclusive political and economic privileges than the more neutral and more nonhuman "herd" can; in settling on a political term, Jaques makes us more aware of the incalculable prerogatives and exclusions that subtend the networks of associations encapsulated within political unity. If the achievement of a body of citizens' self-sufficient autonomy is the highest end for political living, it also marks the point at which it collapses under the weight of their imagined collective self-integrity.

Jaques' critique against the herd, and, by analogy, against the humans who hunt it frames the emergence of political partnerships at the point of their dissolution, unfolding the oxymoronic conditions of the "desert city" he inhabits. The misanthrope's self-imposed exclusion from a sense of common purpose might revise our sense of what it means for a pastoral perspective to lie outside the hegemonic power structures it critiques. The play's pastoral forms adhere to Jaques as an idea (or as a repository of ideas) about obligations to the natural world and to other humans; its very multiplicity of representational forms resists the closing of a political totality that would make pastoral convention complicit in its (i.e. political power's) self-reproduction. By exposing the "sum of more," the debt that cannot be represented, the multi-modality of pastoral theatricality and its representational resourcefulness accounts for, or strives to account for, the intricate enmeshment of persons, things, legal concepts, and affective forces within political ecologies that also resist their own closure.

Chapter 3: Framing an Infinite Nature in Andrew Marvell's *Upon Appleton House*

Nothing would seem more obvious than to characterize Andrew Marvell's *Upon Appleton House, To My Lord Fairfax* as a political poem. Literary critics have done so time and again by defining its poetry's engagement with a politics of historical allegory: topical reference pervades Marvell's quasi-narrative country house poem, both in its historical interlude that looks back on events in the house's history, and in its embedded references to the civil war, the regicide, religious conflict, and larger geopolitical and cosmopolitan concerns. Critics have focused on the poem's treatment of the marriage in 1518 of William Fairfax and Isabel Thwaites (the ancestors of the estate's current proprietor) and the subsequent cession of the estate to Fairfax and Thwaites' children in 1542 as a result of the dissolution of the monasteries.¹ In addition to Marvell's revisionism of his patron's family history, other scholars have considered the poem's commentary on the moral and political duties of its current owner, General Thomas Fairfax, commander of the New Model Army until his resignation in 1650 following his objections to both the regicide and a planned invasion of Scotland.² Others have examined the historical Marvell's relationship to his patron in order to reflect on broader cultural anxieties about the nature of authority raised in the wake of pervasive agrarian

¹ Isabel Thwaites, a ward to Lady Anna Langton, the prioress of Nun Appleton, was confined to the priory in spite of her betrothal to William Fairfax. Fairfax both obtained a legal warrant to reclaim Thwaites, and seized her by force when the nuns allegedly refused to comply. See James Holstun, "'Will you Rent our Ancient Love Asunder?': Lesbian Elegy in Donne, Marvell, and Milton," *ELH* 54.4 (Winter 1987): 835-67, on p. 847.

² See especially Derek Hirst and Steven Zwicker's "High Summer at Nun Appleton, 1651: Andrew Marvell and Lord Fairfax's Occasions," *The Historical Journal* 36 (1993): 247-69, which argues for the poem's date of composition in 1651. By this time, Fairfax had resigned, and the Leveller leaders Lilburne and Walwyn were organizing enclosure riots in nearby Hatfield in 1650. In the summer of 1651 there was a resurgence of millenarian support and unrest amongst republicans.

reform, and in the political vacuums caused by the war.³ Ongoing debates about property as a central political concern raged in the Republican public sphere, adding to our understanding of the political functions of the country house poem, a genre notoriously invested in ideas of property and land usage.⁴

Just as nothing would seem more obvious than to characterize the poem as a political poem, I would also argue that nothing would seem more obvious than to characterize its politics through its engagements with nature. John Rogers and Graham Hammill have done precisely that. Rogers examines how the poem's indebtedness to contemporary scientific theories of natural vitalism reflects a political ethos of passive nonviolent reform that was also consistent with an emergent liberalism.⁵ Hammill argues that the poem's references to Mosaic constitutions point to the dissolution of political foundations. Fairfax's political choices have led to a puissant "creaturely life in search of

³ The poem's celebration of Thomas Fairfax's daughter Mary and her exemplary virtues, and its assurances of her future success in marriage that would further bolster the perpetuation of the Fairfax line shows Marvell's attempts at political maneuverability: as a dependent occupying a marginalized social position, Marvell, according to these arguments, used the poetry of praise to secure his patron's favor and his own social station. See Annabel Patterson, *Marvell and the Civic Crown* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1978), 103; Lee Erickson, "Marvell's *Upon Appleton House* and the Fairfax Family," *English Literary Renaissance* 9 (1979): 158-68; and Hirst and Zwicker, "Andrew Marvell and the Toils of Patriarchy: Fatherhood, Longing, and the Body Politic," *ELH* 66.3 (Fall 1999): 629-54. Anne Cotterill, "Marvell's Watery Maze: Digression and Discovery at Nun Appleton," *ELH* 69.1 (2002): 103-32, examining the poem's generic deviance, argues that it pushes against an idea of genealogy as its principle organizational mode (104). Lord Fairfax's departure from politics and involvement in the war leaves an "authoritative vacuum." In the place of established authoritative figures – whether this includes the landed classes represented by Fairfax, or the literary lineages Marvell draws upon – "paradox, nostalgia, and self-mockery must do the work of government in 'Upon Appleton House'" (106-107). In other words, the absence of the stabilizing apparatuses of a well-placed, firmly established historical and formal genealogy results in the poem's more centrifugal tendencies.

⁴ See Sarah Monette, "Speaking and Silent Women in *Upon Appleton House*," *SEL* 42.1 (2002): 155-71, which shows the disruptive presence of gender in the poem, and its implications for property relations; and Brian Patton, "Preserving Property: History, Genealogy, and Inheritance in *Upon Appleton House*," *Renaissance Quarterly* 49.4 (1996): 824-39.

⁵ John Rogers, *The Matter of Revolution: Science, Poetry and Politics in the Age of Milton* (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1996) 39-69. A subsequent chapter also examines Maria's political role in the poem, arguing that virginity in its own right exemplifies a kind of passive political action. See 70-102.

a political form” – that is, life that has not yet been made into the subject of jurisdiction that nevertheless fails to contain it.⁶ I will argue that Marvell’s country house poem invents a peculiar lyric persona whose poetic facility with the conceits of the genre does not merely point to a failure of art to bring ideas of politics, always sedimented in natural landscape, into a stable form. Rather, the formal complexity of Marvell’s innovations exceeds the genre’s expectations; the failure to describe a singular, stable encounter between human concepts and natural entities comes about not because of his art’s limitations to encompass a recalcitrant natural world, but because its mediating forms produce the very complexity he seeks to find.

One of the innovations of seventeenth-century political discourse was the emergence of property as a central concern of politics. As we have seen, while the household, or *oikos*, had since Aristotle and through the sixteenth and seventeenth-centuries an analogical relationship to the larger political forms of the commonwealth, the state, and monarchy, in the seventeenth century the idea that property-ownership defined individuals as political stakeholders began to take hold, particularly in the theories of Hugo Grotius and, later, John Locke.⁷ As an institution, property mobilizes natural concepts (namely, rights to tenure established by possession and usage) and natural space (the land itself) in order to frame the conditions of individual’s participation and representation within the political state. In the country house poem tradition, a

⁶ Graham Hammill, *The Mosaic Constitution: Political Theology and Imagination from Machiavelli to Milton* (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 2012), 182.

⁷ See Michael Komorowski, “Public Verse and Property: Marvell’s ‘Horation Ode’ and the Ownership of Politics,” *ELH* 79.2 (Summer 2012): 315-40, for discussion of Marvell’s understanding of property. Komorowski is beholden to J.G.A. Pocock’s account of property’s emergence as a threshold for political engagement in the latter part of the seventeenth-century in “The Mobility of Property and the Rise of Eighteenth-Century Sociology,” *Virtue, Commerce, and History: Essays on Political Thought and History, Chiefly in the Eighteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1985), 103-23.

politics of virtue intersects with an institutional idea of politics in the form of property management: the well-ordered estate both argued for its landlord's exceptional private virtue that made him an ideal governor, and provided a model for an exceptionally virtuous arrangement of a commonwealth. As I will show, Marvell's poem puts in relief a concern with an unyielding nature that strains against the definitions of property, upon whose clarification political rule and effective estate management depend. Ultimately, Marvell's pastoral modality unsettles these entanglements between virtue, legal property, landscape design, and natural order, and displaces the necessity for political making altogether by inventing a new subject of political virtue: a Marvellian lyric subject.

The Country House Poem

Marvell's choice of the country house poem as a vehicle for understanding how we might accommodate the natural world within human categories is strategic, principally because, as a genre, the country house poem is always tacitly aware of its formal hybridity and thus is best disposed to interrogate how a collective of poetic figures can manage the unwieldiness of natural concepts. In a seminal article, G.R. Hibbard defines the genre's formal elements, showing how it stressed the "social function of the great house in the life of the community."⁸ Hibbard also establishes the privileged position of the poet in the country house poem, who enjoys a special access to his

⁸ G.R. Hibbard, "The Country House Poem of the Seventeenth Century," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 19 (1956): 158-68, on p. 159. According to Hibbard, stylistically the country house poem reflects a literary debt to the epigrammatic style of Martial and Horace, and to Augustan praise for the achievements and values of civilization. Later studies have also examined the genre with respect to its aesthetic aspects and its generic antecedents in pastoral, georgic, satire, and the epideictic epistle. See Alastair Fowler, "Country House Poems: The Politics of a Genre," *Seventeenth Century* 1.1 (1986): 1-14, and Heather Dubrow, "The Country House-Poem: A Study in Generic Development," *Genre* 12 (1979): 153-75, which suggests that the origins of the form lie in pastoral praises of country life, Juvenalian satire, and epideictic poetry (155-59).

patron's home as an honored guest.⁹ For my purposes, the most significant aspect of the country house poem consists of the genre's detailed praise of the estate's design and arrangement, reflecting how the efficient and commodious construction of both house and grounds shows the moral authority of its inhabitants. The harmonious rapport between man and nature and the exemplarity of the family's virtue, which its architecture and landscape reflect, also indicate that the house is properly the moral foundation for the local community and for the commonwealth as a whole.¹⁰

In this vein, critics have also used the form to examine the larger cultural effects of the transformation of agrarian economies and the perceived disintegration of traditional society, now viewed, in the seventeenth century, with nostalgia.¹¹ As William McClung observes, depictions of human interactions reinforce this sense of nature's hospitality by replicating it in their own social interactions: "Everyone performs his task of his own accord, and the riches of the earth grace the villa. The spontaneous overflow of generosity takes the form of traditional hospitality, which is returned and renewed by

⁹ Hibbard, "The Country House Poem," 159, 163-65.

¹⁰ Hibbard, "The Country House Poem," 164. See Hugh Jenkins, *Feigned Commonwealths: The Country House Poem and the Fashioning of the Ideal Community* (Pittsburgh: Duquense UP, 1998) for discussion of the country house as a model for the commonwealth. He argues of Marvell's poem that it parodies the constitutive tropes of the country house genre not only to question Fairfax's political choices, but also to question "the whole idea of the estate; its larger referent, the state itself, and the genre it works in and its originary desire to 'faine a commonwealth'" (127-28). See also Don E. Wayne, *Penshurst: The Semiotics of Place and the Poetics of History* (Madison: U of Wisconsin P, 1984), 23-24.

¹¹ William McClung, *The Country House in English Renaissance Poetry* (Berkeley: U of California P, 1977) characterizes the country house poem's abiding concern to reinforce a sense of tradition and community – a sense of durability of group identity and social practices, now, by the seventeenth century, felt to have lapsed because of sweeping historical transformations in English agrarian society. He argues that the country house poem participates in the tradition of complaint literature, which constructs a nostalgic vision of the past as a lapsed Golden Age, still accessible only in the well-managed country estate (28-29).

the neighboring farmers.”¹² Nostalgia in turn conceals the political ideologies the genre promulgates. Since Raymond Williams’ *The Country and the City*, critics have recognized how the *sua sponte* trope and other conventional elements of the Golden Age of Virgilian georgic, ubiquitous in the country house poem, reinforce an idealizing vision of the inexhaustible generosity of nature that obliterates the “real” material conditions of local agrarian economies. In other words, the fantasy of unlimited natural resources obviates the necessity for labor, an obfuscation which in turn facilitates the obfuscation of exploitative relations.¹³ The estate praised in the country house poem remains a lone example of good economy among a plethora of badly managed households, but that excellent household management, in turn, effaces itself. While the self-sufficiency of a well-managed estate is an object of praise, the estate is at the same time apparently preternaturally blessed with abundant resources – an implicit providential reward for the lord’s virtue and not an explicit result of the estate’s industry.

¹² McClung, *The Country House*, 16. For further readings that stress the genre’s relationship to political and agrarian crises of the period and the rise of new political institutions, see Christina Malcolmson, “The Garden Enclosed/The Woman Enclosed: Marvell and the Cavalier Poets,” *Enclosure Acts: Sexuality, Property, and Culture in Early Modern England*, eds. Richard Burt and John Michael Archer (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1994), 251-69, which argues that Marvell produces his own ideology, the cultivation of the land ideally overseen by “enlightened property owners” (262); Christopher Kendrick, “Agons of the Manor: ‘Upon Appleton House’ and Agrarian Capitalism,” *The Production of English Renaissance Culture*, eds. David Lee Miller, Sharon O’Dair, and Harold Webers (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1994), 13-55, which sees the poem as a celebration of absolute property in its trivialization of the radicals’ interventions in debates about property and political inclusion (50).

¹³ *The Country and the City* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1973), 18. See also James Grantham Turner, *The Politics of Landscape: Rural Scenery and English Society in Poetry 1630-1660* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1979), for similar attention to the use of the language of class in defense of landed property; and Garrett Sullivan, *The Drama of Landscape: Land, Property, and Social Relations on the Early Modern Stage* (Stanford: Stanford UP, 1998), which argues that literary landscapes reflect three types of social landscape: the landscape of absolute property, which sees land as commodity in a capitalist economy; the landscape of stewardship, which champions a land-based moral economy, and a landscape of custom, structured by customary rights which depended on the lord’s benevolence for their maintenance (12).

While an emphasis on the spontaneous generosity of nature and the human codes of hospitality which replicate it are generally agreed upon as features of the country house poem, critics continue to wage debate over the other formal components that define the genre, and what these features in turn tell us about the genre's political functions. The primary difficulty scholars have encountered in characterizing the country house poem as a distinct seventeenth-century literary genre lies in that fact that the rules and conventions are themselves difficult to establish. Its coherence as a genre is largely a retrospective imposition, and the degree to which Marvell is both aware of the estate poem as a coherent literary model, and a model that he also self-consciously imitates and overturns, can only be speculated upon.¹⁴ This is, as Heather Dubrow argues, part of the genre's politics: the country house poem is a pastiche by political necessity; it explores generic mixtures to exemplify on the level of form its attitudes towards social values of hospitality, whereby potentially transgressive agents can be transformed into "guests whose behavior is regulated by social codes."¹⁵

I would add that Marvell exploits the genre's varied modal resonances, which carry contradictory understandings of nature that are accompanied by different ideas of its uses for human societies. As Paul Alpers argues, "mode is the literal manifestation, in a given work, not of its attitudes in a loose sense, but of its assumptions about man's nature and situation."¹⁶ Interpretation reflects on how the "emphases, devices,

¹⁴ Dubrow, "The Country House Poem: A Study in Generic Development," responds to critics who have suggested that Marvell's poem is unrecognizable as a country house poem, arguing that it is a mistake to misconstrue Marvell's innovations as wholly distinct from it (170).

¹⁵ Heather Dubrow, "The Politics of Aesthetics: Recuperating Formalism and the Country House Poem," *Renaissance Literature and Its Formal Engagements*, ed. Mark David Rasmussen (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2002), 67-88 on p. 75.

¹⁶ Paul Alpers, *What is Pastoral?* (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1996), 50.

organizations, effects” of the work manifest these assumptions.¹⁷ In particular, the country house poetic tradition juxtaposes pastoral and georgic understandings of the natural world and the human communities that inhabit it. Like the country house poem, both genres were in their own rights difficult to define. As Alpers demonstrates, pastoral was not rigorously theorized in the Renaissance: it was not discussed by either Aristotle or Horace, the two major classical models for poetics, and it only receives short discussion from Philip Sidney and George Puttenham.¹⁸ Most attempts to describe the genre are found in the prologues and prefaces to pastoral works. Until the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, georgic was rarely practiced, except in isolated incidences of its modal penetration of other genres, of which the country house poem is one example.¹⁹

A shared concern over the contingency of nature and the contingency of human societies unites both pastoral and georgic, although the manner in which they engage with these concerns differs. Generally speaking, pastoral deals with an idea of uncultivated nature, and with *ad hoc* human societies whose borders, as we saw in *As You Like It* in particular, are ever-shifting. As Bruce Thornton has argued, the georgic mode carries with it a different understanding of nature that, in turn, invokes a different sense of the durability of conditions of belonging. Because the georgic understands nature as essentially disorderly, labor, which proscribes how nature might be managed and ordered

¹⁷ Alpers, *What is Pastoral?*, 50.

¹⁸ For discussion of the historical trajectory of Classical, Renaissance, and modern theorizations of pastoral, see Alpers, *What is Pastoral?*, 8-13.

¹⁹ For arguments that suggest that the country house poem is more properly classified as georgic, see Fowler, “The Politics of a Genre” 5.

through cultivation, is glorified.²⁰ Further, georgic argues that the human activities that cultivate and order nature is a metonymic representation of a commonwealth's or empire's own foundation.²¹ In other words, georgic is most concerned with representing those activities and industries that can establish lasting political settlements. Elements of both the georgic tradition, which recognizes nature's taming by human action, and of the pastoral, which recognizes that nature cannot submit entirely to human will and its communities cannot maintain stable forms, shape our understanding of nature in Marvell's poem as a force that is both unyielding and acquiescent to human demands. I will argue that the multi-modality of Marvell's poem deploys pastoral resourcefulness to chase nature's ever-receding horizon. Marvell's poetics exploits those tropes that we have seen conventionally belong to pastoral – putting the complex in the simple, veiling political allegory, desiring to harmonize human society with the natural world, unveiling the machinery of its artifice – ultimately to undermine any potential for the natural world's reclamation by settled political forms.

Upon Appleton House: "Where Everything Does Answer Use"

When the poem says that Appleton House is a *locus amoenus* precisely because it is "Where everything does answer use" (62),²² it makes a claim not only for the estate as an idealized location where human relations and relationships between humans and

²⁰ Bruce Thornton, "Rural Dialectic: Pastoral, Georgic, and *The Shepheardes Calendar*," *Spenser Studies* 9 (1991): "The georgic shows the necessity of work, and the ethical responsibility to engage in work, as a means of demonstrating man's ability to overcome the harsh conditions and contingencies of the natural world in order to create and maintain civilization.... Given the potential disorder of the natural world and of humanity's passions and drives, only relentless struggle and diligence, and the values of hard work and self-control these foster, can create the order and stability that make civilization and ultimately human identity possible" (4-5).

²¹ Anthony Low, *The Georgic Revolution* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1984), 7-8.

²² Andrew Marvell, *The Poems of Andrew Marvell*, revised edition, ed. Nigel Smith (Harlow, England: Longman, 2007) 210-41; hereafter cited in text.

nonhuman nature are correctly ordered: it posits the possibility of an instrumentalized nature that is absolutely colonizable. The expansiveness of “all things” (25) and “everything” which the estate puts in order suggests the totalizing capacity of the household economy to make every aspect of the estate, the entirety of “nature” as it is found within the estate’s grounds, useful to some end. Nature (and “everything” else which the term encompasses) “answers” to, or corresponds to, use. We might also reflect on the possibility of a pun here between “use” and the Latin *ius*, meaning law (as in *ius naturale* and *ius gentium*) but also usually translated as “right.”²³ The resonances of the language of legal entitlement suggest that nature “answers” to use in the sense that it also submits itself to forms of dominion. In the opening stanza, the poem politicizes nature by arguing that the estate’s concrete, architectural form translates abstract, ideal natural order and the concrete materiality of the land’s resources into the terms of utility and protected rights.

As in all other country house poems, Marvell’s *Upon Appleton House* argues that its landlord is justified in his claims to his land because his industry on the estate exemplifies the virtuous government of his resources. The poem begins with a conventional assertion that the architecture of the house itself displays an exemplary decorum that reflects a sense of proportion found in nature itself. When all other country houses example ostentatious disproportion, Appleton House’s modesty shows itself in its imitation of the harmony between animals and the suitability of their habitats for their needs: “No creature loves an empty space; / Their bodies measure out their place” (15-

²³ For the distinction between *lex* and *ius* in Hobbes and his contemporaries, see Richard Tuck, *Natural Rights Theories: Their Origin and Development* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1979), 119-42. Generally speaking, in Hobbes right is a liberty to do or possess something, law a restriction or constraint against liberty.

16). The modesty of Appleton House's size best approximates these spatial proportions: "But all things are composed here / Like Nature, orderly and near" (25-26). The appositive phrase defines "Nature" as both orderly and as proximate, "near." The estate's arrangement, following nature, thus implies that it is itself both physically close to nature and that it also *approaches* an ideal of natural order.

Of other homes he asks, "Why should of all things man unrul'd / Such unproportion'd dwellings build" (9-10). As an adjective modifying "man," "unrul'd" identifies the problem of mismanagement as a distinctly human problem – that is, not man confronting disorderly nature, but man exhibiting his own disorderly nature when he injudiciously makes things that fail to conform to an ideal. The repeated prefix "un-" emphasizes the *absence* that characterizes other country estates: the absence of proportion and regulation that guide conduct. If we understand "unrul'd" in the political sense of "ungoverned," the political component of this couplet becomes clearer. Since the inverse of "proportion'd" dwellings would indicate man's "rul'd" and orderly conduct, then the "unproportion'd" dwellings emblemize the ungovernability of men. While country house poems are often considered to be political in a metonymic capacity (the well-run estate is a microcosm for the commonwealth, and the lord's virtue becomes an emblem for benevolent, responsible stewardship over the commonwealth), these lines suggest another way for the poem to be understood as political in nature. The modesty exemplified in proportion'd dwellings becomes a *political* virtue insofar as it suggests the capacity for man to be *governed*, to be ruled, by natural models of order.

However, the narrator has scarcely begun his praise when he characteristically (for Marvell) over-indulges in the conceit, turning it on its head and inadvertently

inverting his praise in the process. The narrator suggests the fact that “tortoises dwell / In cases fit of tortoise-shell” serves as a fitting model for humans (29-30). In the following stanza, this proposal becomes an indictment of human extravagance, but the implied praise for Appleton House’s exceptionality is double-edged. Men “superfluously spread, / Demand more room alive than dead” (17-18). By implication, Appleton House provides as much space as a tortoise’s shell does for the tortoise, but the only other human artifact perfectly formed to the size of a human body is a coffin. The perfect efficiency of Appleton House’s natural use, in which nothing is wasted or in excess of perfect proportion, encompasses a sense of death that compromises the ability of the estate to become a lasting institution. The tone is inscrutable, for it is unclear whether the narrator is sincere in his praise of the estate’s modesty. The joke seems to be leveled in part at the estate’s expense, but also in part at the poem’s *own* expense, for it shows the absurdity of the literal sense of the figure.

The closer the artifice of the estate’s house and grounds comes to approximating natural universals in its forms, the more it threatens to transform the estate into a calcified monument – a dubious vehicle for praising the longevity of the Fairfax estate and line since, as the historical digression suggests, this kind of architectural and landscaping perfection is analogous to the law’s stultifying codification of the family’s reproductive lines:

And surely when the after age
Shall hither come in pilgrimage,
These sacred places to adore,
By Vere and Fairfax trod before,
Men will dispute how their extent
Within such dwarfish confines went:
And some will smile at this, as well
As Romulus his bee-like cell. (33-40)

The passage preempts Catholic terminology of pilgrimage and sacred space, as if to suggest that the Vere and Fairfax lines that now sanctify the property complete the dissolution of Catholic-owned lands begun over a century before and which formed an integral part of Nun Appleton's history. The stanza translates a moral quality into a figure of spatial proportion: future generations won't hear of Vere and Fairfax's exemplary virtue or greatness, but of their "extent," for which any household would be an unfitting monument. That is, the stanza literalizes the analogy between virtue as an idea of proportion to an idea of *architectural* proportion in terms that will then threaten Vere and Fairfax's legacy.²⁴ They make a sacred foundation that, unlike the Catholic establishment that preceded it, endures in the "after age," but the monument is unfitting, "dwarfish" by proportion, because the house's status as a metonym for an intangible quality (moral greatness) is always absurd. The sense of proportion that we understood to be the sign of the family's virtuous management of their estate's resources begins to warp the sense of institutional durability the poem strives to articulate.²⁵

Producing the house as a lasting monument to ideal natural proportions, the poem inevitably also imagines the house's petrification. But, as Clinton Allen Brand argues, "the poem turns decisively away from static analogies of correspondence and towards problems of human agency in the dynamic and horizontal plane of history. The relevant

²⁴ For virtue's definition as a mean between extremes, see Aristotle, *The Nichomachean Ethics*, trans. David Ross (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1998), 1106a17.

²⁵ I am indebted throughout to Marshall Grossman, "Authoring the Boundary: Allegory, Irony, and the Rebus in Marvell's 'Upon Appleton House,'" *The Story of All Things: Writing and the Self in English Renaissance Narrative Poetry* (Durham, NC: Duke UP, 1998), 197-217, for its distinction between allegory, which "reduces history to signification" and "conducts its reader to the realm of universal and atemporal truth," and irony, which "reverses allegory by reducing signification to the inscription of a historically present voice" (202).

analogies become diachronic and teleological narratives.”²⁶ In other words, the poem seeks to reenergize its account of the house’s perfect economy with natural models of order by submitting it to different frameworks of historical possibility.²⁷ Just as the speaker can imagine the house as an incongruous testament to Fairfax’s moral virtue that will last into perpetuity, the estate is a monument to its own family and a repository of significant moments in its history:

While with slow eyes we these survey,
And on each pleasant footstep stay,
We opportunely may relate
That progress of this house’s fate. (81-84)

One of the country house poem’s primary functions is to assure the landlord of the enduring legitimacy of his and his progeny’s claims to his own estate. But, as critics have discussed, the poem’s complex understanding of historical scale undermines its equal interest in the durability of the family’s possession over the land over generations.²⁸ Appeals to the providential triumph of Protestantism over Catholicism supplement the poem’s mock heroic narrative of Nun Appleton’s seizure and the seizure of Isabel Thwaites by William Fairfax. William Fairfax himself gives voice to the theological source of his claim by wedding the history of religious conflict to ideas of resource management. Fairfax attacks the nuns, Isabel’s guardians, for their questionable husbandry – a thinly veiled euphemism for Catholic excess and the nuns’ elicited sexuality:

²⁶ Clinton Allen Brand, “‘Upon Appleton House’ and the Decomposition of Protestant Historiography,” *ELR* 31.3 (2001): 477-510, on p. 487.

²⁷ Brand, “Decomposition of Protestant Historiography” examines the multiple ways of reading history that the poem puts into play, including analogical, typological, providential, allegorical, apocalyptic, and hermetic (479).

²⁸ Patsy Griffin, “‘Twas no religious house till now’: Marvell’s ‘Upon Appleton House,’” *SEL* 28 (1988): 61-76. “To live in a former monastery or build on the site of one was widely regarded as sacrilege. Marvell’s reconstruction of the Fairfax legend suggests an effort to relieve Fairfax’s fears that Providence was acting against him or would do so because he assumed and retained the Nun Appleton property” (62).

But sure those buildings last not long,
 Founded by folly, kept by wrong.
 I know what fruit their gardens yield,
 When they it think by night concealed. (217-20)

The “fruit” the nuns’ garden yields – an ironic version of the fruit that a union between Fairfax and Thwaites would produce through procreation – points to their non-productive homoerotic activities. Their unpurposive fruit resembles the crumbling architecture, “Founded by folly, kept by wrong.” By implication, Fairfax justifies his own legal entitlements because his heterosexual procreation will serve to extend his line, in turn preserving the estate’s “buildings” that metonymically stand for this line’s futurity. The intersecting activities of husbandry, property maintenance, and the production of progeny all show an ethical use of the land in that they seem to guarantee a lasting foundation. By contrast, the nuns’ tenure of the estate shows its presumed illegitimacy in the production of illicit fruits, which in turn seem to make it “sure” that the estate more generally cannot endure unless there is a drastic change in its management.

As Brian Patton argues, Marvell’s poem presents the transference of property from generation to generation as much more seamless than the historical record shows.²⁹ When the nuns refuse to acknowledge the “lawful form” Fairfax has been granted, a mock battle between Fairfax and the nuns ensues (234). Fairfax easily “waves aside” their defenses – a comic arsenal of “wooden saints,” rosary beads, and “sharpest . . . tongues” (249-56) – and seizes Isabel, “That weeping at the altar waits” – showing the doubtfulness that she had any pleasure at a prospective marriage (264). A single couplet suffices to announce the effects of Fairfax’s actions, and to combine two events that

²⁹ For a detailed account of the history of the Fairfax family’s possession of the estate in the generations intervening between William and Lord General Thomas Fairfax, see Patton, “Preserving Property,” 829-32.

occurred over a period of twenty years: “The wasting cloister with the rest / Was in one instant dispossessed” (271-72). While seventeenth-century ideas of “waste” were symbolically rich (and indeed many of its cultural connotations are in play throughout Marvell’s poem), its use here is plainly derogatory, anticipating the poem’s later use of “waste” to refer to the postlapsarian world: “What luckless apple did we taste, / To make us mortal, and thee waste?” (327-28).³⁰ This latter allusion allegorically refers to England, “the dear and happy isle / Garden of the earth erewhile” (321-22). The “luckless apple” plainly points to the political discord sown by the civil war. The biblical analogy serves an obvious political function, here, showing how the commonwealth as a whole has been ravaged to the point that its garden has fallen into disrepair.

But what compels us to see the political meanings immanent in natural symbols? Marvell’s overuse of “waste,” producing different reverberations and echoes throughout the poem, points to this question. In its political usage in ll. 327-28, the collective pronoun and the finite verb “did we taste” indicates the presentness and finality of an act that has seen its completion, and which also implicates a “we” that includes the narrator, his patrons, and his contemporaries in the destructive act. Marvell’s earlier usage of “wasting” to describe the house and grounds under the nuns’ tenure deploys a present participle that shows an ongoing action, which suggests disuse and disrepair that may nevertheless be arrested and reversed through timely intervention. England’s disrepair perhaps shows the intractability of larger historical processes playing out in the grander arena of political life, events which make a collective “we” complicit even as they are powerless to intervene. Appleton House’s “dispossession” is itself deeply implicated in

³⁰ Karen L. Edwards, “Eden Raised: Waste in Milton’s Garden,” *Renaissance Ecology: Imagining Eden in Milton’s England*, ed. Ken Hiltner (Pittsburg: Duquensne, 2008), 259-71, shows how “waste” signified “what it is not, or is not yet”—fertile land that has yet to be cultivated (262).

the political strife of the English Reformation, but Marvell's version of these events removes that sense of urgency. The convention that the household serves as an analogy for the commonwealth at large here serves to distill the widespread entanglements of the political arena into local, more manageable dimensions. The remoteness of the episode in time also appears to vitiate the urgency of its effects. Fairfax may complete the "dispossession" and arrest the estate's "wasting" only because of the comparatively smaller scale of the legal and political drama he encounters.

William Fairfax professes to arrest the estate's "wasting" by managing it more efficiently. But as we saw with the Marvellian narrator's struggles to articulate the virtues of ideal proportion, this promise of absolute efficiency is rather more foreboding than productive: "At the demolishing, this seat / To Fairfax fell, as by escheat" (273-74). While "fell" here suggests that the estate comes to him by a chance occurrence, or by providential design, it also suggests that the estate succumbs to his violent siege. This siege is substituted by a legal action, which is, in turn, subordinated to a simile: "as by escheat." "Escheat" comes from feudal law and refers to the reversion of property to the lord, king, or state after the death of a tenant leaves no suitable heir to inherit the title under its original provisions (OED 1a). The nuns' unpurposive sexuality delegitimizes their legal claims to the estate as much as their inability to prevent the estate's "demolishing" (a figure that, while pointing to the dissolution of the monasteries, is suggestive in this context given the wasting we have seen). The escheat implies that the estate's transference to Fairfax's tenure is in fact a restoration of the estate to its proper lord, for the nuns' tenure has seemingly been enabled by a mere contract that has since been annulled. The nuns' claim to the estate is made possible only through law; as the

implied original owner, Fairfax, by contrast, has a presumed *natural* claim to the land. We are nevertheless made dubious of this transfer, for the event implicates violent destruction with domestic management and legal action all at once. The present participle of “demolishing” and the preposition that makes its demolition simultaneous with Fairfax’s possession indicates the unwieldiness of the historical, natural, and legal forces in play and shows, moreover, Fairfax’s inability to manage these forces.

The narrator’s construction of this particular event in the estate’s history attempts to uphold a dubious sense of continuity in the Fairfax family’s ownership of the estate and the ideal conditions in its landscape that their tenure promises to produce. His use of the law to argue for a sense of that legitimacy is limited: it operates in a merely pragmatic and particular way, suturing an apparent rift in the estate’s history only to reveal its machinations as a supplement to the family’s claim of possession. In the poem at large, and even in this small-scale example, the law, equipped to handle historically specific applications, perpetually confronts larger-scale discontinuities it is incapable of resolving. Nature’s resistance to its total submission to the very economies of proportion modeled by nature itself mirrors the vicissitudes of broader historical trajectories, asking what kinds of institutions (if any) might withstand historical change.

One resolution to this difficulty lies in the poem’s exploitation of the country house poem convention in which the poet shows his skill by effacing both his and the estate’s art:

Him Bishop’s-Hill, or Denton may,
Or Bilbrough, better hold than they:
But Nature here hath been so free
As if she said, ‘Leave this to me’.
Art would more neatly have defaced
What she had laid so sweetly waste;

In fragrant gardens and shady woods,
Deep meadows, and transparent floods. (73-80)

The stanza juxtaposes Fairfax's dominion over his other Yorkshire estates at Bishop's Hill, Denton, and Bilbrough to his tenure over Appleton House, made tenuous here by the fact that "Nature," as an abstract allegorical figure, rules here instead of Fairfax and his art. The stanza intimates that Appleton House's comparative perfections are organically derived, and that any intervention on the part of "art" would merely mar the "sweetly waste" of its landscape. The estate shows Nature left to her own devices, producing a "sweet waste" unmarred by human art, but is nevertheless exempt from the same kinds of accusations that attend the profession of the estate's "wasting" under the nuns' care, and the "wasting" of England as a whole. The husbandry of nature, which is here a husbandry and care that is only evident by its absence, makes Appleton House into a kind a natural landscape ordered not only in spite of, but because of its own "freedom" from human constructions.

The poem's initial concerns with proportion as a concept that manages scale finds its metonymic corollary in the architecture of the house itself, but the initial arguments of the poem seem to suggest that modeling the house's perfect proportion after nature's own economies undercuts its own ideological intentions. Where the house's architectural plan suggests the perfect containment of natural models of use (and *ius*), and the law appears to supplement an idea that the Fairfaxes themselves have solidified their proprietary right because they too seem to use nature in absolutely efficient ways, neither concept is equipped to comprehend the value of natural waste – that is, of waste that is not merely wasteful, but also productive and useful – and to be able to integrate it within the legal and ethical valences of "property" and "propriety." The central concern posed by these

opening stanzas and the following historical interlude consists in finding a means of regulating proportion that would ensure a durable settlement where the action of human laws, and their metonymic representation in a country house that seems perfectly accommodated to natural models, prove to be inadequate. To subject nature to human terms, at least in Marvell's poem, would ideally give it a sense of measure, proportion, and significance, but, as we will see, Marvell's poem also literalizes the country house poem's conventional understanding of nature's infinite plenty and, in doing so, raises the specter of nature that cannot be accommodated to human use at all.

“Paradise's Only Map”: Nature's Infinitude and Theological History

As we have seen, one of the poem's central concerns is the complexity of time and history, and the mock epic interlude that had erupted in the early stages of the poem makes explicit how different levels of historical scale intercede in and interrupt the estate's efficient management of its natural resources.³¹ Up to this point, I have discussed how the Fairfax/Thwaites episode attempts to normalize Marvell's patron's proprietary claims. While the poem appeals to legal actions in its construction of a seamless transfer of property over time, the law appears only in its barest, most mundane form as a supplement to what is otherwise an agricultural effort to submit a recalcitrant nature to forms of order. The speaker also sought to establish the estate as a monument to Thomas Fairfax's virtue so that it might endure and serve as an object of veneration to future generations, but this very same enlargement of historical scale beyond the present moment had also revealed the insufficiency of the estate as a model of governance, and

³¹ In this way, the natural world resembles what Timothy Morton calls “hyperobjects”: “things that are massively distributed in time and space relative to humans ... [involving] profoundly different temporalities than the human-scale ones we are used to.” See *Hyperobjects: Philosophy and Ecology at the end of the World* (Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 2013) 1.

family genealogy as a model for asserting its own enduring stability. Elsewhere in the poem the cataclysmic ruptures that characterize a theological understanding of time (the fall which ineluctably severs the fallen world from an idealized past, and the apocalyptic terminus that, through the fulfillment of history, also promises an end to history) threaten the kinds of continuity that are upheld by architectural projects, and by the pragmatic and mundane action of the law.

When the poem turns to the universal scale of theological time in order to assert the legitimacy of the lord's claims through providential means, the lord's tenure of his estate appears to be even more unsettled. Thomas Fairfax was himself something of a poet, and Marvell's poem refers to his patron's own poetic tribute to the estate. Both Fairfax's poem and Marvell's adaptation of it reflect a tropological reading of the estate's significance, which sees it as a sign of the individual's earthly exile from a spiritual home.³² "Upon the New-built House att Apleton," warns "Think not, O man! That dwells herein / This house's a stay, but as an inn."³³ Fairfax's understanding of his house as an "inn" shows that he sees it as a temporary resting place on his soul's progress to its final dwelling in heaven. Given the secondary importance of this life to the next, any possession on earth becomes temporary and is devalued accordingly. The house cannot be a "stay" in two senses: it cannot be a place to rest or remain, nor can it be a "prop" or "support." Fairfax's *memento mori* intimates that the country estate is thus not sufficient for an ethical fulfillment in a spiritual, Christian sense. Further, Fairfax's designation of his home as an "inn" characterizes it as a public space, made so by the fact that it

³² For discussion of possible poetic collaboration between Fairfax and Marvell, see Nigel Smith, *Andrew Marvell: The Chameleon* (New Haven and London: Yale UP, 2010) 96-97.

³³ Quoted in Vitaliy Eyber, *Andrew Marvell's "Upon Appleton House": An Analytic Commentary* (Madison: Fairleigh Dickinson UP, 2010), 86.

produces the opportunity for the economic transactions and temporary occupancies of a diverse range of people. In effect, it reimagines the hospitality of the country house, open to all its tenants, in terms of less stable forms of public association. But the inn itself, the forum in which these transactions take place, appears to be an enduring institution, even if it prevents anyone from “dwelling” within it.

Fairfax’s claim, and by extension Marvell’s, bears a striking contrast to the concluding lines of Ben Jonson’s “To Penshurst”:

Now Penshurst, they that will proportion thee
With other edifices when they see
Those proud ambitious heaps, and nothing else
May say, their lords have built, but thy lords dwells. (99-102)³⁴

Jonson sees Penshurst as an exception to all “heaps” that other “lords have built” because it enables its lord to “dwell.” Penshurst has been so well-managed under Robert Sidney’s tenure, that Sidney himself has become a kind of genius of the place, perfectly in harmony with his property. Fairfax’s refusal to call Appleton House a “dwelling” disrupts the ideological force of the kind exemplified in Jonson’s country house poem. “Think not” that anyone “dwells” at Appleton House, Fairfax exclaims, and while Marvell’s lines don’t directly disabuse us of any notion we might have that Nun Appleton represents a dwelling place, his preservation of Fairfax’s sentiment of the house as an “inn” strongly implies his agreement with his patron:

The house was built upon the place
Only as for a mark of grace;
And for an inn to entertain
Its Lord a while, but not remain. (69-72)

³⁴ Ben Jonson, “To Penshurst,” *Seventeenth-Century British Poetry, 1603-1660*, eds. John P. Rumrich and Gregory Chaplin (New York: Norton, 2006) 97-100; hereafter cited in text.

While logically one expects that the adversative clause that concludes the stanza would refer to the “Lord’s” departure, according to the syntactic logic, the “inn” will “not remain,” and the stanza reminds us that not only is our occupancy of this world transitory, but that all material “marks” will also fade in time. Even though the house is itself built as a “mark of grace,” a sign of its owner’s divine favor and a point of intersection between this world and the next, it too will fade. The ineluctable temporariness of both human artifacts and human life imply how the immeasurable scale of time, which the poet has introduced in order to imply Fairfax’s spiritual blessedness in his present material circumstances, also *contests* the possibility of institutional durability altogether. Just as Fairfax’s tenure at Nun Appleton is tenuous, the house’s projected “wasting” is inevitable, in spite of anything Fairfax might do to prevent it.

The speaker, perhaps in spite of himself, and perhaps in an effort to expand on the theological tropes that would confirm Appleton House’s status as an ideal place, a *locus amoenus*, continues to enlarge the temporal scales of his poem by asserting that it is a remnant of a prelapsarian nature, and a forerunner of postapocalyptic time. The closing moments of the poem deploy an idea of a prelapsarian nature as a template through which the estate’s own perfections might be more easily discerned in juxtaposition with the chaos not in the human world, but in the natural world at large:

‘Tis not, what once it was, the world,
 But a rude heap together hurled;
 All negligently overthrown,
 Gulfs, deserts, precipices, stone.
 Your lesser world contains the same,
 But in more decent order tame;
 You Heaven’s center, Nature’s lap,
 And Paradise’s only map. (761-68)

This stanza introduces the figure of the estate as a microcosm, not of the commonwealth, but of the *natural* world; more precisely, of the natural world that could be potentially assimilated to human technologies of containment: namely, the surveyor's map, pointing to the commodification of land and its subjection to legal designations.³⁵ But by suggesting that it is a model of the natural world, rather than the political one, it deprioritizes the political ends of the genre. The estate is not a model of ethical natural usage that the political state might imitate; rather, the estate is a model that nature might imitate to improve itself, even as the estate also takes *nature* as a model for how that improvement might come about.

As "Heaven's center" and "Nature's lap," the estate convenes two idealized spaces, becoming a focal point for both and producing within itself a kind of palimpsest that superimposes an idealized historical version (represented by Paradise) of the phenomenal world in the present (represented by Nature as an allegorical figure) and an idealized world to come (represented Heaven). There are two ways in which Appleton House can be "Paradise's only map." The first sense suggests that Appleton House is a survey of paradise, its abstract representation in imagistic form: we may know what paradise looked like because the estate itself, and the poem used to represent it to us, gives us the contours of a paradisaal plan. It is also "Paradise's only map" in the sense that it provides a means of directing us *to* paradise. It gives us a plan for revisiting paradise by reproducing it. The suggestion that Appleton House is "Paradise's only map," which we erect through the composite work of industry, law, cartography and, above all, poetic

³⁵ Sullivan, *The Drama of Landscape*, 31-56 for discussion of the impact of surveying and mapmaking in agrarian economies. For discussion of military diagrams and land surveying in the poem, see Katherine O. Acheson, "Military Illustration, Garden Design, and Marvell's 'Upon Appleton House,'" *ELR* (2011): 146-88.

figure – suggests that it distills an inaccessible natural imaginary to an *interpretable* object that offers the possibility of an ideal’s epistemic and proprietary reclamation.

The surveyor’s map, in this regard, is analogous to a pastoral technology that, as William Empson claims, puts the “the complex into the simple”: the “lesser world” of the estate “contains the same” as the world at large.³⁶ But in what sense might the estate, ostensibly perfectly ordered, “contain the same” when the world at large, is no longer “what it once was” but is now a “rude heap” of inhospitable landscapes: of “Gulfs, deserts, precipices, stone”? What differentiates the two worlds, the whole world and the “lesser world” of the estate, is the fact that the world at large has been “negligently overthrown.” If it is the case that nature as an unused wasteland is the consequence of a failure of human productivity to maintain its proper order, then the poem reveals that labor is a necessary supplement to preserving it, and Nun Appleton remains a lone relic of this idea of labor as a source of an ideal natural world.

The poem pushes the country house genre’s dual ideological functions – to justify the institution of property and to present the well-run estate as a model for the commonwealth as a whole – to its logical limits. Ideal Nature can only manifest when it is transformed by proprietary activities that nevertheless always fail to manage nature’s prohibitive spatial and temporal infinitude. The universal time scale which the poem incorporates when it uses Eden as a reference point for the estate’s perfections seems to construct nature as a normative model of estate management, yet the more it attempts to assert it as such, the more this idea of a natural model according to which human activities should be arranged and, moreover, should be invested in maintaining, strains the understanding. The poem’s persistent use of an Edenic landscape as a point of

³⁶ William Empson, *Some Versions of Pastoral* (New York: New Directions, 1974), 22.

reference for describing Appleton House's own exemplarity tests the limits of nature's knowability. While we might have no clear sense of what the world "once ... was," the poem persistently informs us that the world as it *is*, and indeed what it *might be*, can be understood relative to a past necessarily made alien to ordinary human experience by the Fall and by its historical remoteness.

The argument that Marvell's *Upon Appleton House* therefore appears to make about poetry is that its relation to nature is twofold: it imposes an artificial order on a disordered nature even as it suggests that it reveals an order already immanent in nature. Poetry thus posits that nature is a graspable, knowable entity, but it also suggests that even as poetry ostensibly imitates natural order, it also always chases nature as an ever-receding horizon. In short, the more that poetry seems to accommodate within itself nature's own immanent sense of propriety and proportion, effecting to produce "paradise's only map," the more nature seems to escape its representations. The apparent contradiction that lies at the heart of the poem – the notion that nature is ordered and disordered at the same time – is the result of the two contrasting views of nature, first as a model of order and second as an unfathomable gulf. As I will argue in the remainder of this chapter, for Marvell, nature is a concept so abstract and varied that it cannot be useful or comprehensible until poetry provides the interpretive frames to give it legibility, to make it useful for the ordering of human life at both individual and political levels. However, the increased resolution that the multiplying poetic frames supply comes at a cost: the overflow of poetic borrowings upon which Marvell draws produces the multiple natures it seeks to pin down definitely. In Marvell's poem, nature is not only literally superabundant, it is also made so by the technologies of its mediation, namely its multi-

modality, its figurative inventiveness that strives to contain an idea of absolute proportion, of absolutely efficient use.

Framing a Political Nature: The Meadows

Two distinct versions of the account poetry gives of nature are evident in Marvell's *Upon Appleton House*. The first is what eighteenth-century aesthetic theory will call the "sublimity of nature," an idea of nature that is infinite, unfathomable, and unrepresentable. The second is the inevitable realization that poetry constantly attempts to assimilate nature conceptually with poetic figures (metaphor, emblem, analogy, metonym) and the hermeneutic frames which coordinate this formal hybridity and strive to make nature meaningful.³⁷ As Donna Haraway argues, "figures" are "worldmaking entanglements": they are material-semiotic nodes or knots in which diverse bodied and meanings coshape one another.³⁸ For Marvell, poetic figures construct order out of disorder by unveiling the similarities and correspondences that subtend the natural world. *Upon Appleton House* gives the experience of nature an ordered form through Marvell's distinctive amalgamation of various organizing figures, which, as I will argue, give shape to the speaker's lyric subjectivity. Marvell's poem relies on an economy of formal borrowings that overflow their immediate contexts. Rosalie Colie's influential study has observed that Marvell's poetry is thoroughly imbedded in a project of excavating a

³⁷ See Stephen Halliwell, *The Aesthetics of Mimesis: Ancient Texts and Modern Problems* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 2002), ch.12, for discussion of the conventional narrative of this transition from a mimetic understanding of nature's relationship to art (i.e. art principally defined as "imitation of nature") to the emergence of an antimimetic concept of nature as the Sublime in late eighteenth-century and Romantic aesthetic theory. Halliwell argues that this trajectory, which presupposes a straightforward equivalence between mimesis and "the imitation" of nature, ought to be reconsidered given the greater nuances which the term "mimesis" historically encloses (351-52).

³⁸ Donna Haraway, *When Species Meet* (Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 2007), 2.

literary past: unlike Shakespeare and Milton, who are concerned principally with overcoming the burden of literary inheritance in order to carve out new terrains for poetic vision, Marvell's "vision," she suggests, "is thoroughly mediated."³⁹ In Colie's understanding, "mediation" refers to a sense of Marvell's self-conscious overuse of "exhausted" literary tropes: "Marvell could expand a genre remarkably; it is a point of theoretical interest that generic 'expansion' and 'exhaustion' are in fact difficult to distinguish, that formal limitations do not allow of much 'enlargement' before they seem exhausted,' – or better, to have been transformed into something else, with other boundaries of sense and expectation."⁴⁰ The weirdness of the narrator's perspective, which the palimpsest of poetic tropes produces, defamiliarizes the process of translating nature into artifice and the process of extracting political "use" from the natural world.

Upon Appleton House is interested in an idea of nature that can be made finite and serve a more overt political function in which nature is compressed into interpretable figures that reduce, particularly through depictions of labor and the reading of topical allegory, its complex significations into a singular meaning, arresting the layers of

³⁹ Rosalie Colie, *"My Echoing Song": Andrew Marvell's Poetry of Criticism* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1970), 4. In a similar vein, see Judith Haber, *Pastoral and the Poetics of Self-Contradiction: Theocritus to Marvell* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2002), who remarks that Marvell criticism has been particularly concerned with describing Marvell's complicated relationship to the literary models he imitates, given that he is at times apparently "deeply attached to pastoral and [...] decidedly separate from it, as coolly ironic as fundamentally nostalgic" (106); and Diane Kelsey McColley, *Poetry and Ecology in the Age of Milton and Marvell* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007), which argues that Marvell's country house poem "unsettles conventional binaries" in order to enable new perceptions and to produce a sense of a "copious, polysemous, and surprising" paradisaical space (13, 17). Joan Faust, "Blurring the Boundaries: *Ut pictura poesis* and Marvell's Liminal Mower," *Studies in Philology* 104.4 (2007): 526-55, examines how Marvell's unique contribution to the genres in which he engages, particularly pastoral, is that he challenges "the frame itself," the expectations which the genre carries with it (239). For a counter example of this kind of reading, see John Creaser, "Prosodic Style and Conceptions of Liberty in Milton and Marvell," *Milton Quarterly* 34.1 (2000): 1-13, which argues that the regularity of Marvell's line, his use of the line as a form as a "container" suggests a more conventional, less experimental aspect of his poetry (4).

⁴⁰ Colie, *"My Echoing Song,"* 57.

infinitudes that nature's symbolic complexity might generate. The same kinds of difficulty of determining the provenance of "waste" in the estate's landscapes – a difficulty that asks whether order is immanent in Appleton House's natural vistas, or whether it must be imposed by labor to make "everything ... answer use" – becomes in the latter stages of the poem a more overt question of nature's interpretability. Raymond Williams has argued that country house poems typically efface the presence of a laboring class's shaping influence on the seventeenth-century rural landscape in an effort to naturalize the hierarchical and exploitative nature of traditional English agrarian society.⁴¹ *Upon Appleton House* both does and does not follow this paradigm. Even as it effaces the mediating impact of human activities in nature, the poem also persistently draws attention to the many forms of labor required to maintain the estate.⁴² In the middle sections of the poem, the narrator provides a vibrant and eclectic account of ordinary agricultural activities: the mowing of the grass, the grazing of cattle, and the yearly sluicing of the fields occupy the speaker's attentions. Furthermore, the speaker's own indebtedness to a literary genealogy of mediating forms draws attention to his own labor's influence on the landscape even as he disavows the efficacy of his mediations. If property underlies the country house poem's depictions of the efforts to manage nature, and if the work of the country house poem is to stabilize this concept of property in an

⁴¹ *The Country and the City*: "There is ..., throughout, an ideological separation between exploitation, which have been, in effect, dissolved into a landscape, and the register of that exploitation, in the law courts, the money markets, the political power and the conspicuous expenditure of the city" (46). For Williams, then, the "city" becomes a metonym for all the "real" conditions of economic production and political administration that have been excised by idealized representations of the country.

⁴² See also Grossman, "Allegory and Irony" for the observation that unlike "To Penshurst," *Upon Appleton House* shows that Fairfax works the land intensely (199).

effort to invoke an idea of political durability, Marvell's poem also pushes this function of the genre to its logical limits.

While the narrator's description of the meadow gives us ostensibly the closest thing to a depiction of labor in the poem, it also baffles attempts to comprehend the kinds of ordered vistas such active landscaping would produce:

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

To see men through this meadow dive,
We wonder how they rise alive.
As, under water, none does know
Whether he fall through it or go.
But as the mariners that sound,
And show their lead the ground
They bring up flowers so to be seen,
And prove they've at the bottom been. (369-84)

Denis E. Cosgrove has argued that subjective perspective is central to our understandings of how landscapes become "social products": "landscape denotes the external world mediated through subjective human experience in a way that neither region nor area immediately suggest. Landscape is not merely the world we see, it is a composition, a composition of that world."⁴³ As Alpers argues, pastoral landscape is not intended as a form of "nature poetry," but rather demonstrates a "selective emphasis determined by individual or cultural motives" that are represented by the lives of the shepherds' who

⁴³ Denis E. Cosgrove, *Social Formation and Symbolic Landscape* (Totowa, NJ: Barnes and Noble, 1984), 14, 13.

inhabit the pastoral scene.⁴⁴ But if this is the case, Marvell's poem notoriously disrupts the effects of perspectival shaping even as perspective is central to his style. Part of the difficulty of visualizing the scene emerges in the narrator's insistence that the landscape is a void space that is incapable of being fully exhausted of its resources, of being "sounded" by the narrator. The green space of the meadow becomes the blue space of the sea, characterized by its obscurity and impenetrability, its resistance to externally-imposed forms of order.⁴⁵ This scene reminds us of Grotius's characterization of the ocean as a space that resists proprietary dominion because of its limitlessness.⁴⁶ We struggle to grasp visually how the meadow could be an "abyss ... of unfathomable grass" because, as the metaphor continues to shift between different levels of scale, it ends by locating the object it tries to represent at the vanishing point between the incommensurable figurative systems deployed in its representation.

However, the laborers not only control the shape of this vast space, they also have access to esoteric knowledge about its depths: they "sound" the bottom, indicating that they have a sense of its limits in a way that we do not. They also mine it for significance, extracting "flowers," which in turn invoke poetic production given poetry's association with *poesies*. Poetry, then, becomes a vehicle by which the impossible might be achieved, for it takes the limitlessness of the infinite and transforms it into discrete, movable units. Nevertheless, while we see that these labors extract from the meadow an actual yield, we

⁴⁴ Alpers, *What is Pastoral?*, 27.

⁴⁵ Steve Mentz, *At the Bottom of Shakespeare's Ocean* (London: Continuum, 2009), argues that the "oceanic world" presents us with a natural world which cannot sustain human life, and which therefore challenges paradigms of an accommodated natural world and of an environmental ethics dedicated to preserving its presumed stability and equilibrium (xiii).

⁴⁶ Hugo Grotius, *The Freedom of the Seas*, trans. Ralph Van Deman Magoffin (New York: Oxford UP, 1916): "The sea is common to all, because it is so limitless it cannot become a possession of anyone" (28).

only see the process of this labor, and not the actual *significance* or meaning we are told it produces. The field remains as unfathomable as ever in spite of, or perhaps even because of, their work of tending to it.

I say that the field remains inscrutable *because* of their work primarily because the more the passage's poetics tries to plumb the scene's depths, the less pictorial resolution we have. The narrator struggles to devise a way of articulating the image when the repertoire of poetic techniques – of simile, analogy, allegory, and rhyme – seem less than adequate for arranging intelligible systems of proportion and size. For instance, the couplet “where men like grasshoppers appear / but grasshoppers are giants there” instantaneously yokes two different senses of scale, but the effect, rather than making the scene, to borrow Marvell's earlier words, “orderly” (that is, intelligible and coherent) and “near” (that is, more readily present to the understanding), is disorienting. Men become as small as grasshoppers until the grasshoppers, now enlarged, become the tenor of the subsequent metaphor. The adversative conjunction located in the middle of the stanza retracts the speaker's initial comparison, and the slant rhyme of “appear” and “there” also demonstrates how the two analogies are not quite commensurate. The revolving scales of the simile imply a motion that renders the objects in the field of view larger as the speaker approaches, but although we are told of the narrator's progress – he “passes” through the fields – the speaker's motion seems deliberately withheld as an immediate cause of the visual distortion the simile effects. This incomprehensibility is a function of the lack of a sense of the personal perspective viewpoint that is nevertheless orchestrating the account of the scene. Even as the speaker strives to disavow the interruptive mediations of the first person perspective and his application of literary

figure, he calls attention to the fact that we must presume the presence of these mediating techniques in order to make sense of the shift in scale.

In other words, the Marvellian style becomes an answer to the problem we encountered earlier: that is, how do we reconcile the logical relationship between art and nature, between original and copy, when neither art nor nature can be identified as the cause or effect of the other with any degree of certainty? In the meadows, we are constantly made aware of what lies beyond perception – there is a bottom, a firm ground that subtends and therefore presumably limits the meadow's space, and which presumably may be traced – but the space of that beyond perpetually shifts in and out of the figural frames deployed to take account of it. By deploying a range of poetic registers, the episode renders this elusive natural scene at once both more immediate – that is, it gives us a sense that this natural world comes to us unfiltered by the effects of art – but also more remote because these frames constantly reprioritize what we see and thus cannot help but call attention to its own labors. The poem's deployment of multiple frames, none of which are readily privileged, necessarily makes the zone of contact between nature and human concepts heterogeneous and indeterminate.

This kind of attention to saturated mediations gains particular political significance in the meadow scene, as alternating frames of reference enable multiple allegorical interpretations. "Nature" might seem ineffable, but it is put to various uses (including political ones) through hermeneutic processes: the speaker's thoughts at once transform the unfathomable green into the Red Sea and into a battlefield strewn with cut grass that signify bodies massacred by the mowers' scythes (385-432). These poetic figures are thus accompanied with the violent effects of the mowers' labor. In other

words, the landscape is not inherently political, but rather must be made political through the intersecting work of the speaker's poetic perspective and the mowers' labors. Their mutual violence works as an event in the sense that it reorders the landscape so that it can become commensurate with the allegorical significance the poet wants to read into it. For example, the speaker produces a political allegory when he likens the mowers to Israelites (389). As critics have noted, the political allegorical significance of the landscape becomes inescapable when the speaker names them, for the figure was a conventional designation for the English as an elect nation in its own right.⁴⁷ As Hammill argues, the figure suggests how a poetic making becomes a political-theological making that is, however, undone by the fact that something of the natural world still seems to escape this reading.⁴⁸

Yet, the poem's accounts of labor are what make the landscape immanently political, for the laborers also belatedly authorize his interpretations, as the rail's accidental death shows:

With whistling scythe, and elbow strong,
These massacre the grass along:
While one, unknowing, carves the rail,
Whose yet unfeathered quills her fail.
The edge all bloody from its breast
He draws, and does his stroke detest;
Fearing the flesh untimely mowed
To him a fate as black forbode.

But bloody Thestylis, that waits
To bring the mowing camp their cates,
Greedy as kites, has trussed it up,
And forwith means on it to sup:
When on another quick she lights,
And cries, 'He called us Israelites;

⁴⁷ Hirst and Zwicker, "High Summer at Nun Appleton," 253.

⁴⁸ For his reading of the Israelites as a reference to the Mosaic constitution, see Hammill, *The Mosaic Constitution*, 179-82.

But now, to make his saying true,
 Rails rain for quails, for manna, dew. (393-408)

The incident emblemizes the destruction of nature. The fact of the mower's innocent intent, his "unknowing" razing of the hapless bird, introduces the problem of determining an ethics for interpreting and justifying the kind of violence which property management necessarily entails: the mower's action is unintentional; the event itself is accidental. At first, there does not seem to be anything inherently political about the bird's death, and yet the poem compulsively continues to try to draw these scales of meaning together.

Thestylis, a figure drawn from pastoral, and the convener of the pastoral feast that caps the mowing scene in the poem, retroactively integrates the image of the abyssal meadow – an impenetrable negative space that the narrator nevertheless tried to insist was an image of the Red Sea – into the framework of political and theological significance it had once resisted. The pastoral spokesperson, then, *authorizes* and naturalizes an historical-political reading that was not sufficient in itself to raise its own structure of meaning. In typical Marvellian fashion, however, the very act of authenticating the political significance ascribed to the landscape also ironizes it. Thestylis is initially incredulous about the speaker's grandiose comparison of the mowers to both the Israelites and the English nation at large, for she exclaims at the comparison. But the rail's death "make[s] his saying true," allowing her not only to accept the reading, but to build upon it as if it were her own. It becomes true that the mowers are now Israelites, but the extent to which the analogy is made true also depends on her deliberate substitution, driven by an equivalence constructed by internal rhyme, of the biblical quails for the rail accidentally harvested through a mower's carelessness. When Thestylis transforms the rail into a pastoral feast, it also becomes an emblem for the country

house's *sua sponte*, of nature's generosity that subtends its economy of hospitality, but we are now made aware of the costs, both natural and political, that makes this economy possible. The pastoral spokesperson facilitates the fulfillment of the political allegory, constructing a commensurability between nature, the estate, and the commonwealth, that did not exist prior to her intervention. This commensurability in turn implicates the smooth functioning of the household economy in the larger context of national violence and social and economic upheaval.

One destabilizing aspect of the poem's political allegory is the fact that in spite of a continuous pronouncement to the contrary, the poem's natural landscapes never accommodate these readings in a stable form. When the speaker moves on to the woods, he witnesses a "hewl" (or woodpecker) take down an oak with one stroke, an occurrence that invites a political reading given the English monarchs' symbolic association with the tree. But the allegorical stakes of the image are mystifying:

The good he numbers up, and hacks;
 As if he marked them with an axe.
 But where he, tinkling with his beak,
 Does find the hollow oak to speak,
 That for his building he designs,
 And through the tainted side he mines.
 Who could have thought the tallest oak
 Should fall by such a feeble stroke!

Nor would it, had the tree not fed
 A traitor-worm, within it bred,
 (As first our flesh corrupt within
 Tempts ignorant and bashful Sin.)
 And yet that worm triumphs not long,
 But serves to feed the hewl's young,
 While the oak seems to fall content,
 Viewing the treason's punishment. (545-60)

The hewl fells the tree, signaling the king's death at the hands of an oppositional political force that sought to hollow out the king's body politic to make a home for itself. But it turns out the hewl had not been the sole cause of the tree's destruction, for the "traitor-worm" had already secretly hollowed out the tree from within. The traitor-worm brings in a tropological level to the allegory, for it is likened to an individual moral failing already immanent in the tree's body. The emblem merges the king's two bodies, pointing to a personal moral failing on his part, and a moral failing on the part of the commonwealth as a whole. The image finds its completion in the hewl's feeding of the worm to its young, taken to be a final "punishment" for its treachery. The oak is "contented" by this; which is to say that it finds its own fulfillment in this image and also finds satisfaction within the economy of vengeance it invokes, but to have this satisfaction come about by one of the two engines of the oak's destruction strains the simple reciprocity (the "eye for an eye" logic) of vengeance even as it strains the intelligibility of the allegory itself. The hewl's hacking sets in motion a chain of events that figuratively drills larger moral and political significances into the symbol of the oak, which "contents" it – that is, fills it in and makes it complete in itself. Nevertheless, this penetration of a natural object by human meaning makes it as impenetrable as ever.

Thestylis might acquiesce to the speaker's political reading of the field laborers' work, and we as readers might likewise acquiesce to the political allegory implied by the oak's destruction, but in so doing we recognize that the allegory isn't fully intelligible. Sometimes a rail is just a rail, not a quail after all, and an oak is not a murdered king or a commonwealth decimated by civil war. Neither have any meaning beyond themselves; and yet they also quite obviously *do* for the poem absolutely invites us to impose this

political allegory on its landscapes, to search after the potential for proportion to be erected between its layers, even as that work also makes us complicit in the violence done against and within the natural world. In other words, the poem asks us to reflect on the work involved in translating nature into political use.

The meadows become a place where the speaker might harvest political significance. He obsessively reads topical references into the landscape, but his own compulsive self-indulgence in the conceits he uses to assert these readings and their proportion to the landscape itself also disrupt their own coherence. The experience of reading the poem leaves us with an inescapable sense that its political readings are immanent within nature, but we also have the sense that Marvell's efforts to draw these readings out overextend the pastoral process of putting the complex into the simple:

The scene again withdrawing brings
A new and empty face of things;
A leveled space, as smooth and plain,
As cloths for Lely stretched to stain.
The world when first created sure
Was such a table rase and pure.
Or rather such is the *toril*
Ere the bulls enter at Madril.

For to this naked equal flat,
Which Levellers take pattern at
The villagers in common chase
Their cattle, which it closer rase;
And what below the scythe increased
Is pinched yet nearer by the beast.
Such, in the painted world, appeared
Dav'nant with th'universal herd. (441-56)

Beginning with the conceit that the landscape consists in a series of revolving and receding theatrical tableaux, the speaker imposes an organizing frame that he then immediately dissolves to produce a blank stage. Taking away one form of framing, he

proceeds to replace it with a vertiginous series of new substitutive frames that shift between different levels of scale: a “table rase,” an “empty face,” a stretched cloth or a blank canvas, the newly created world, and an empty bullring all serve to convey the scene’s emptiness. These empty surfaces, like the “table rase” or *tabula rasa*, seem not to contain any inherent properties in themselves, but they all anticipate new inscriptions, inviting the speaker to read the political significance he claims in the stanza that follows. For example, the reference to Peter Lely (1618-1680), a Dutch portraitist who served both the Stuarts and the Cromwells, promises the imprint of the landscape with ruling figures and the factions they represent.

The series of images serves to suggest a recalcitrant blankness that unsettles concepts of proprietary claims. The reference to the “Levellers” invokes the radical religious sect that patterned their political philosophy after the argument that enclosure was a cause of the fall and the root of tyranny, and that Eden itself was originally designed to be common land.⁴⁹ The “flatness” of the land’s topography becomes a social entity when the Levellers translate it into a figure for economic equality and equality of access to natural resources. The force of the Edenic comparison, then, spurs the speaker to imagine the estate as a common, a plot of land not subject to private property, and the stanza retroactively gives the images of blankness in the previous stanza the appearance of an endorsement of this original openness. This reading, in turn, is given more weight by the presence of the actual “villagers” who chase their cattle in the field – and thus, we

⁴⁹ Gerrard Winstanley, “The Law of Freedom in a Platform,” *The Complete Works of Gerrard Winstanley*, vol. 2, eds. Thomas N. Corns, et. al. (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2009), 278-404: “The law of necessity, that the earth should be planted for the common preservation and peace of his household, was the righteous rule and law to Adam, and this law was so clearly written in the hearts of his people that they all consented quietly to any counsel he gave them for that end” (313).

finally arrive at the tenor of these metaphors. All along, Marvell's speaker had been searching for a way to describe an idea of common land by resisting to call it by its official legal designation, but he finds himself there eventually.

The cows, real cows grazing this field, then complete the speaker's metaphor, thrusting it back into the realm of refracted figuration as they extend the work of the laborers' scythes. Even as the speaker himself had overextended the conceit, the cows appear to take it one step further, for they "closer rase" the grass and "pinch it nearer." That is, they make the image truer (nearer) to its tenor even as they obliterate it. The multiple conceits and their multiple tenors – the political significance, the actual landscape, the representation of labor, legal terminology – all become impossibly entangled:

They seem within the polished grass
A landskip drawn in looking-glass
And shrunk in the huge pasture show
As spots, so shaped, on faces do.
Such fleas, ere they approach the eye
In multiplying glasses lie.
They feed so wide, so slowly move,
As constellations do above.

Then, to conclude these pleasant acts,
Denton sets ope its cataracts;
And makes the meadow truly be
(What it but seemed before) a sea.
For, jealous of its Lord's long stay,
It tries t'invite him thus away.
The river in itself is drowned,
And isles the astonished cattle round. (441-472)

The first stanza expands the metaphor from the previous one but the tenor, the landscape itself, now becomes the vehicle of the metaphor (ll. 449-56): the poetically produced landscape becomes "polished grass," that is, a mirror of itself, which in turn becomes the

“landskip” painted in it. The same kinds of poetic inventiveness of the preceding stanzas, in which the speaker accumulated multiple frames of references, now collapses in on itself. As with mirrors that face each other, the conceit produces the illusion of depth that nevertheless remains merely a series of “multiplying” surfaces.

While Thestylis had already authorized the allegorical interpretation, the field’s annual flooding reduplicates that authorization, making the pasture become a previous metaphor: the sea that the field workers dive into, and the Red Sea that the mowers cross. The sea and its pastoral agency, and not the speaker’s poetic wit, become the engine that destabilizes the lord’s tenure: “Jealous of its lord’s long stay” this ocean inverts pastoral invitation, calling the lord “thus away” to make way for its own proprietary reclamation. So carried away has the Marvellian speaker become with his own conceit, the more the poem becomes invested in suggesting that nature has its own proprietary investments, the more it unsettles the very efforts of human labor that facilitate this natural agency. But what is more, the more the Marvellian conceit seeks to encompass nature, the more poetic conceit and natural tenure become indistinguishable.

Towards a Lyric Jurisdiction⁵⁰

The dissonance of the poem that both denies the influence of labor and human activity that drive the country house economy and, at the same time, asserts the necessity of poetic interventions, manifests in its preoccupation with the lyric subject who organizes the estate in subjective terms. Marvell’s addition to the genre is the

⁵⁰ I am indebted in this section to Bradin Cormack’s understanding of jurisdiction as an inherent multiplicity coming into an idea of an irreducible singularity. See *A Power to Do Justice* (Chicago: Chicago UP, 2008), 1-44, and “Shakespeare’s Other Sovereignty: On Particularity and Violence in *The Winter’s Tale* and the Sonnets,” *Shakespeare Quarterly* 62.4 (Winter 2011): 485-513.

understanding of a first-person perspective composed from a network of poetic components, a subjective effect that emerges as a way to resolve the poem's contradictory attitudes toward nature and art. Marvell's innovation is to deploy mediation to make the threshold between natural and human categories immanent within the lyric subject itself. The "expansion" and "exhaustion" of the mediating tropes upon which Marvell's speaker relies further enables the lyric subject to become a conceptual envelop that contains human language and the nonhuman natural world. This lyric subjectivity thus embodies and then *surpasses* the estate poem's function to demonstrate how poetic form encompasses this ontological threshold. Poetic hybridity, which derives its shape through the speaker's saturated mediations, becomes the necessary condition for upholding the country house poem's poetic ambitions of accommodating human institutions with natural models. Yet, its very investments in the logic of proprietary reclamation also, ultimately, threatens to usurp these institutional frameworks with the emergence of new entity that usurps both nature and politics by drawing them together.⁵¹

Marvell's mower poems, and their peculiar investment with describing an absolute parity between human subjectivity and natural states, illustrate this effect, for the conventional pastoral figures and tropes they employ show how pastoral lyric performs the same kinds of proprietary labors of the country house poem. The key difference is that Marvell's pastoral lyric realizes this proprietary function by internalizing its landscapes. "The Mower's Song," for example, establishes an absolute equivalence

⁵¹ Marvell's lyric subject, then, resembles something of Donna Haraway's "cyborg": "a hybrid of machine and organism, a creature of social reality as well as a creature of fiction.... The cyborg is our ontology; it gives us our politics. The cyborg is a condensed image of both imagination and material reality, the two joined centers structuring any possibility of historical transformation." See "A Manifesto for Cyborgs: Science, Technology, and Socialist Feminism in the 1980s," *The Haraway Reader* (New York: Routledge, 2004), 7-46, on pp 7-8.

between nature and the speaker's interior landscape that is only possible through constant attention to the conventions of pastoral lyric that mediate this encounter:

My mind was once the true survey
Of all these meadows fresh and gay,
And in the greenness of the grass
Did see its hopes as in a glass;
When Juliana came, and she,
What I do to the grass, she does to my thoughts and me. (1-6)⁵²

Marvell's speaker is unable to distinguish between original and copy: his interiority functions as an index to the pastoral landscape, for his mind was "once the true survey" of the meadows he tends. That is, his mind is a map that produces an abstract representation of the landscape, which is, nevertheless, also a mirror, "a glass," to his mind in its own right. Moreover, Juliana becomes a rival mower in the conceit, who works the lyric speaker's interior landscapes in the same way that he works the land. That is to say, though positioned by the lyric's argument as an indifferent Petrarchan mistress insensible to the speaker's expressions, Juliana nevertheless also becomes the speaker's *ideal* reader for she fulfills the means by which the speaker might be fully integrated both within the natural landscape *and* the pastoral conventions he uses to articulate the relationship. When Juliana does to the speaker what he does to the grass, she mows him down, destroying his subjectivity and the vehicle that constructs it, but she also, per the logic of the stanza, sees herself in the speaker as a "glass"; she becomes a mower like him, and thus diminishes the distance between them.

The poem's refrain – "What I do to the grass, she does to my thoughts and me" – obliquely indicates what is made clearer in "Damon the Mower": namely, that the

⁵² "The Mower's Song," *The Poems of Andrew Marvell*, 144-45.

mower's investment in the logic of pastoral and Petrarchan conventions results in his own self-immolation:

While thus he threw his elbow round,
 Depopulating all the ground,
 And, with his whistling scythe, does cut
 Each stroke between the earth and root,
 The edged steel by careless chance
 Did into his own ankle glance;
 And there among the grass fell down,
 By his own scythe, the Mower mown. (73-80)⁵³

Preoccupied with his Petrarchan lament of the previous stanzas, the speaker carelessly does to himself what he does to the grass, completing the parity between the speaker's subjectivity and the natural landscape by means of a violent overthrow of both. The participle the mower uses to describe his actions against the grass – “depopulating” – also anthropomorphizes it, further reifying the identification between human and natural categories. It also indicates how the mower's activities eviscerate the pastoral landscape even as they contribute to its shaping. But this evisceration produces a new entity by the end of the stanza. The juxtaposition of the active and passive participles of the verb “to mow” marks the speaker's transformation by Petrarchan zeal into both grass and grass-cutter. Consequently, the speaker's dissipation into poetic convention does not result in an absolute self-cancellation, the disappearance of his individualized voice into the collective drone of the conventional one; rather, it reproduces his subjectivity as ontologically double. Folding both nature and human subject into one entity, the deployment of exhausted poetic conventions becomes the necessary condition for rendering nature more readily accessible, and for reconstructing the psychological space of the lyric subject as a conceptual envelope capable of encompassing nature within

⁵³ “Damon the Mower,” *The Poems of Andrew Marvell*, 135-39.

human subjectivity. But, as in “The Mower’s Song,” a third entity – Juliana, a female reader – also seems necessary to complete this process even as she interrupts it. As we shall see, in *Upon Appleton House*, Maria – the poetic avatar for Thomas Fairfax’s thirteen-year old daughter, Appleton House’s future proprietor, and Marvell’s pupil, Mary Fairfax – performs that function, for she becomes nature’s ideal representative even as she usurps the Marvellian narrator’s claims to that title.

In *Upon Appleton House*, the Marvellian narrator claims a mastery over Adamic language that allows him to speak directly to nature in its own language

Already I begin to call
In their [the birds’] most learned original:
And where I language want, my signs
The bird upon the bough divines. (569-72)

The speaker’s language – the “most learned original” which he calls upon to speak to the birds, and which the birds readily interpret – implies the “perfect organic semiotics and an Edenic grasp of nature” that creates a linguistic proximity between the speaker’s subjectivity and the external world.⁵⁴ The symbiosis apparently also gives him a privileged understanding of nature and its multiple possibilities, for it allows him to become an interpreter of the Book of Nature:

Out of these scattered sibyl’s leaves
Strange prophecies my fancy weaves:
And in one history consumes,
Like Mexique paintings, all the plumes.
What Rome, Greece, Palestine, ere said
I in this light mosaic read.
Thrice happy he who, not mistook
Hath read in Nature’s mystic book. (577-84)

⁵⁴ Robert N. Watson, *Back to Nature: The Green and the Real in the Late Renaissance* (Philadelphia: U of Pennsylvania P, 2006), 47.

As Dominic Gavin observes, the Marvellian interaction with nature encounters its limits: “While the poet’s imagination leads him outside himself, it takes him no further than identification with the scene before him, another instance of the one step forward, two steps back irony or missing ‘illumination’ of Marvellian nature.”⁵⁵ But while it is true that the poetic persona does not in fact illuminate nature’s meanings, he nevertheless glances at a deeper interaction with nature: he “weaves” “strange prophecies,” which is to say that he constructs out of the “scattered” fragments of nature multiple anticipatory narratives. As Nigel Smith suggests, the final couplet of the stanza implicitly aligns the speaker with the mystic divine Hermes Trismegistus, reiterating the speaker’s claims to the privileged hermetic knowledge entrusted to Trismegistus by Adam.⁵⁶ Natural knowledge itself becomes a kind of transferable property that now ultimately resides with the Marvellian persona. Though Marvell (and the Marvellian speaker), as an employee, cannot be said to have any claims to the land on Fairfax’s estate, he nevertheless posits his own particular privileged relationship to the space he inhabits through an alternative *intellectual* genealogy.

The narrator of *Upon Appleton House* also resembles the speaker of the “The Garden,” who luxuriates masochistically in a terrifyingly suffocating natural world that “annihilat[es] all that’s made / Into a green thought in a green shade” (47-48), completing

⁵⁵ Dominic Gavin, “‘The Garden’ and Marvell’s Literal Figures,” *Cambridge Quarterly* 37.2 (2008): 224-52, on p. 252.

⁵⁶ Smith, note lines 582-84, 234. For further discussion of the tradition of Christian mysticism and its relationship to the poem, see Lyndy Abraham, *Marvell and Alchemy* (Aldershot: Scholar, 1990), 165-80. Abraham’s study, while not necessarily providing a rigorously theoretical reading of Marvell’s poetry, and the particular implications of its pervasive reference to alchemical principles, does nevertheless extensively mine the text for possible encodings of alchemical symbols. She notes that the “Book of Nature” commonplace is a unifying principle in the poem, which is paired with several instances of the poem calling upon the “Text of God” in the reference to the grasshoppers from Numbers, the Israelites, and Noah.

the epistemic capture of nature's infinity by asserting an absolute proportion between mind and the overabundant created world:⁵⁷

What wondrous life in this I lead!
 Ripe apples drop about my head;
 The luscious clusters of the vine
 Upon my mouth do crush their wine;
 The nectarine and curious peach
 Into my hands themselves do reach;
 Stumbling on melons as I pass,
 Ensnared with flow'rs, I fall on grass. (33-40)

But even as the narrator of *Upon Appleton House* seeks to "encamp" his mind in the wooded landscape through a kind of bodily entanglement (602), the narrator also argues that such an epistemic reclamation would require a sacrifice like Christ's at the crucifixion:

Bind me ye woodbines in your twines
 Curl me about ye gadding vines.
 And oh so close your circle lace,
 That I may never leave this place:
 But, lest your fetters prove too weak,
 Ere I your silken bondage break,
 Do you, O brambles, chain me too,
 And courteous briars nail me through. (609-616)

The mutual interpenetration of mind, body, and landscape that would seal his attachment to "this place" depends on a visceral language drawn from a sacrificial violence, not unlike that used to account for the rail's death. Marvell's lyric persona's disappearance into the land by his own imagined violent death displaces proprietary right. His symbolic death is the culmination of the sacrificial economies that drive the country house poem as a genre, that subtend its translations of natural objects into objects circulating in its moral and its labor economies.

⁵⁷ "The Garden," *The Poetry of Andrew Marvell*, 152-59.

By the later stages of the poem, the lyric subject becomes the privileged instance by which formal hybridity captures an understanding of the parity between human and natural categories with the effect that it ultimately undermines the necessity of making the political community a central object of analysis in the country house poem. Marvell seems to suggest that by using poetic tropes conventionally authorized by discernible resemblances between natural phenomena and human behavior, we lose politics *and* nature, or rather nature becomes folded into the impenetrable emblem that seeks to capture nature and political meaning within its form. In *Upon Appleton House*, the speaker professes that his poetic skill comes closest to replicating a prelapsarian state that he may “dwell” within. The spirit of Marvell’s lyric modality appears to be similar to Jonson’s declaration in “To Penshurst” that both the conventions of the genre and the superabundant economies of country hospitality enable the poet to declare: “all is there / As if thou, then, wert mine, or I reigned here” (74-75). Yet Marvell’s poem lacks the same kind of open assertiveness, as if to suggest that the political language of “reigning” that makes the country estate a political institution is no longer necessary to claim a kind of epistemic possession over the land.

Yet, his lyric possession over the natural world is made precarious by the very conventional structures that also enable it. The poet promises that Maria is the figure who will guarantee the perpetuation of the Fairfax line, its claims to the estate, and the idealized natural order which estate management produces. But Maria’s disruptive entrance usurps the authority of the lyric subject as the primary vehicle by which nature may be accommodated within artificial forms of order, and vice versa. Her own parity with nature perpetuates in a new form the speaker’s proximity to nature, for the poem

uses her as a figure that redistributes the formal multiplicity through which he had imagined a subjective alignment between himself and the natural world:

But now away my hooks, my quills,
And angles, idle utensils.
The young Maria walks to night:
Hide trifling youth thy pleasures slight.
'Twere shame that such judicious eyes
Should with such toys a man surprise;
She that already is the Law
Of all her sex, her age's awe. (659-66)

Maria's sudden entrance signals the limitations of the "hooks" and "angles" (as objects used for harvesting nature), and "quills" (both as angling equipment and as an instrument for writing). Her presence prompts the speaker to diminish poetry and angling as frivolous activities, for he is made to realize that they are "trifling," "slight," and "shameful." Consequently, the speaker suddenly seems to discard poetry and other "utensils" as instruments for culling and controlling objects and ideas from nature. Maria's interruption of this autoerotic lyric moment, then, displaces one mode of imagining an alternative alignment between human and natural worlds.

Maria's intervention marks the conversion of political concepts into purely domestic ones when she represents an idea of law. Marvell's use of the law here is notably neither "natural law," nor a political idea of positive law, like we saw in the Fairfax/Thwaites episode, but rather a gendered idea of behavioral models. Maria's sex genders the law: "She that already is the Law / Of all her sex" shows how Maria's exemplarity corrects the nuns' excessive yet sterile female homoeroticism. In a similar vein, Maria's "judiciousness" (which implicitly connects her to a concept of judgment, and hence, of law) renders the speaker's own implicit poetic and autoerotic production ineffective in its excess. Because Maria's "judiciousness" represents an idea of sexual

discretion and gendered virtue, rather than of the law as such, we find that the poem ultimately displaces both poetry and law as ordering modes.

Domestic autonomy, represented by Maria as a moral authority in her own right, manifests an idealized natural economy. The language of economy and debt inflect the poem's description of nature – thereby suggesting nature as an economic concept, but as an economic concept also folded into the language of feminine virtue:

‘Tis she that to these gardens gave
That wondrous beauty which they have;
She straightness on the woods bestows;
To her the meadow sweetness owes;
Nothing could make the river be
So crystal-pure but only she. (689-94)

The stanza reverses the usual resonances of country-house natural bounty by placing Maria, and not nature, as the source of nature's "wondrous beauty," "straightness," and "sweetness" – that is, of both its more severe ordering and the pleasantness with which that ordering is imposed. That she gives freely to nature is also offset by the insistence that she will always surpass nature itself: "She yet more pure, sweet, straight, and fair, / Than gardens, woods, meads, rivers are" (695-96). Maria, not nature, is the inexhaustible source of the estate's bounty, and the guarantor of its continued productivity.

The same impenetrable yet infinitely productive quality elsewhere attributed to nature manifests in Maria's own sexual self-containment. An idea of domestic order emanating from the female subject displaces a structure of externalized law imposed from without *and* the mediating work of poetic figure, represented by the speaker's discarded instruments. A concept of political durability is no longer manifest in the estate's management of natural resources; rather, an infinite nature, which is the condition for sustaining political durability, manifests in the ideal of feminine virtue which upholds the

absolute separation of the domestic sphere from the political one. When Maria enters we no longer have an idea of nature as a self-perpetuating concept. The poem stops, and the speaker sets aside his poetic tools and the hybrid networks that sought to intersect concepts of nature, law, poetic convention, and political significance: “But by her flames, in heaven tried, / Nature is wholly vitrified” (687-88). As a celestial comet, Maria becomes a portentous apocalyptic sign; her “vitrification” of nature recalls St. John’s vision of the sea’s transformation into glass (Rev. 15:2).⁵⁸ In other words, Maria makes the speaker’s “saying true” just as Thestylis had done, effecting the absolute completion of the grass’s transformation into the sea and glass, into a “wholly” reflective surface. Marvell’s speaker thus inducts her into poetic making herself; however, though she becomes the authoritative figure of the nature poet, completing what the speaker could not, like Spenser’s Gloriana, she does not speak herself, becoming a silent receptacle for the poet’s poetic imagination even as she forecloses its possibilities.

The structural similarity between the speaker’s subjectivity and the figure of Maria, wherein both represent the interpenetration of natural and human figures, shows the shared contingency of their respective social positions and their status’ as emblems of the estate. The speaker loses focus and thus loses the privileged connection to nature when Maria emerges as an apparently more fitting emblem for the estate’s perfections. Likewise, in spite of Maria’s canny ability to control natural processes, we are always aware of the contingency of her own tenure over the estate, and her own ability to wield the kinds of necessary authority that would sustain it. Dependent on the legal orchestrations her father engineered to make sure that she, Fairfax’s only child, could inherit, and later dependent on her husband, George Villiers, the second Duke of

⁵⁸ Smith, *The Poems of Andrew Marvell*, 239, n. 688.

Buckingham, who would squander her property, the historical Mary Fairfax's position suggests that while she might be a moral authority, she can have little political influence or control over her own destiny and, by extension, the destiny of the estate itself.⁵⁹ While Maria is present as a supplement to nature that always exceeds nature's possibilities and drives the country house economy, nature's infinity is also put at risk precisely because Maria's historical position is always dependent on institutional realities and particular legal interventions.

Marvell's *Upon Appleton House* presents the vanishing point of political institutions on multiple levels: in its depictions of the estate as an apolitical, Edenic totality, in the lyric subject's privileged access to nature, and in the final reterritorialization that converts political virtue into domestic ones. While Marvell takes the encounter between human cognition and the natural phenomenal world of the estate as its primary focus, it does not invoke the predominant modes through which "Nature" is taken as a repository of political ideas from the mid-seventeenth-century onwards. The concepts of natural law and natural rights are absent from Marvell's poem. While the law does appear as a component of Marvell's political arguments within *Upon Appleton House* (namely through his invocation of sixteenth-century post-feudal property law in the Fairfax/Thwaites interlude and in his designation of Maria as an idealized "law" for

⁵⁹ While in 1651 Marvell could not have anticipated her marriage to the second Duke of Buckingham in 1657, and its subsequent disastrousness, many critics have noted it as an intriguing historical irony. As Cotterill, "Marvell's Watery Maze," argues, this marriage may have been tied to the Fairfax family's historical obsession with pedigree, family records, and acquisitive property claims, but the marriage ultimately attached the Fairfaxes to Buckingham's scandalous public behavior, and Mary was forced to sell Nun Appleton to pay off her husband's debts (113-14). In spite of the legally-broken entail her father procured to secure her inheritance of the property, the poem's discussion of gender and property perhaps explores the real tenuousness of Mary's position, given that even his legal interventions were insufficient to guarantee her complete legal control over the estate.

her sex), the poem is primarily concerned with ordering human encounters with nature that exceed the law's capacity to do so. Marvell's ending, then, reminds us of the circularity of his poetic borrowings: by extending the logic of the genres and modes he works within to their logical limits, he outdoes himself. The ultimate artifact of his poetic making – Maria's vitrified nature – ushers in an end to history, an end to unmediated nature, an end to his poem and, less fantastically though no less dramatically, opens the fault lines between domestic virtue and legal form.

Chapter 4: *Paradise Lost* and the Forms of Politics in Milton's States of Nature

The concluding lines of *Paradise Lost* rehearse several paradoxical statements that encapsulate the political and formal concerns of John Milton's epic:

The world was all before them, where to choose
Their place of rest, and Providence their guide:
They hand in hand with wand'ring steps and slow,
Through Eden took their solitary way. (12.646-49)¹

Going "hand in hand," yet nevertheless "solitary," Adam and Eve form an image of atomistic solitude-in-partnership that exemplifies the central political problem in Milton's epic: what is the fundamental unit of association that guarantees the individual's achievement of his ethical potential and his political nature? Previously, Raphael had prescribed that Adam "Think only what concerns thee and thy being" (8.174), which, in addition to confining Adam's inquiries into the natural world to the terrestrial plane, also entails that he "joy ... / In what He gives to thee, this Paradise / And thy fair Eve" (8.170-72). What, then, is Adam's being, and how encompassing is it?²

Since William Empson, the politics of *Paradise Lost* has usually been understood through its engagements with kinds of constitutional arrangements, particularly with its enigmatic and unsettling representation of God as a kind of monarch.³ Others have

¹ John Milton, *Paradise Lost*, ed. Alistair Fowler (New York: Routledge, 1997); hereafter cited in text.

² Charles Monroe Coffin, "Creation and the Self in *Paradise Lost*," *ELH* 29.1 (1962): 1-18, examines early modern ego-construction, and its contradictory tensions between distinguishing a "self" in terms of autonomy and freedom and recognizing the self's involvement in a "natural-supernatural axis" (2).

³ See *Milton's God* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1969). For the argument that *Paradise Lost* is a text of political philosophy, rather than a mere repertoire of topical references, see Martin Dzelzainis, "The Politics of *Paradise Lost*" *The Oxford Handbook of Milton*, eds. Nigel Smith and Nicholas McDowell (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2009), 547-568. Others have settled on justifying God's apparently absolutist rule by attempting to reconcile it with the poem's emphasis on the rule of law. See Joan Bennett, *Reviving Liberty: Radical Christian Humanism in Milton's Great*

examined the Republican nuances within the poem that reflect its complex responses to the civil war, Interregnum, and Restoration, and the crises of authority that these events created.⁴ Still others use the poem to speculate about Milton's disappointment with and ultimate withdrawal from political life, which in turn raises questions about the individual's civic responsibilities.⁵ Stanley Fish has called this withdrawal from public life a kind of "politics of being" that "follows from monism: if God is the essence of all things and there is no space he does not already occupy, the only arena in which a free agent can act effectively – act so as to make a difference, either good or bad – is the internal arena of the will."⁶ I suggest that *Paradise Lost* does indeed engage a "politics of being" but not exclusively in the way that Fish suggests it does. Raphael's injunction to Adam to tend to "thee and thy being" is a central political problem of the poem, not because it manifests an absolute withdrawal into the "internal arena of the

Poems (Cambridge, MA: Harvard, 1989), which argues that Milton's God is "an absolute monarch voluntarily accountable to law" (9); Robert Thomas Fallon, *Divided Empire: Milton's Political Imagery* (University Park, PA: Penn State UP, 1995), 34-35; and John Rogers, *The Matter of Revolution: Science, Poetry, and Politics in the Age of Milton* (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1996), 147-68, which examines the apparent contradictions between a vitalist nature established by God's natural law, and God's capacity to intervene in nature once this law has been ordained.

⁴ For *Paradise Lost* as a complex defense of Republicanism and a poetic intervention in specific political events of the 1650s and 1660s, see David Loewenstein, *Representing Revolution in Milton and his Contemporaries: Religion, Politics and Polemics in Radical Puritanism* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2001); and David Norbrook, *Writing the English Republic: Poetry, Rhetoric and Politics 1627-1660* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2000), 433ff, which argues that Adam is a proto-Republican.

⁵ For arguments about Milton's retreat from political engagement in the Restoration, see Blair Worden, "Milton's Republicanism and the Tyranny of Heaven," *Machiavelli and Republicanism*, eds. Gisela Bock, Quentin Skinner, and Maurizio Viroli (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1990), 225-46; Mary Ann Radzinowicz, "The Politics of *Paradise Lost*," *John Milton*, ed. Annabel Patterson (London: Longman, 1992), 12-42, offers a different account of Milton's Restoration politics than the narratives of "engagement" and "encryption"; she suggests that *Paradise Lost* offers a "political education" through the Bible; and Annabel Patterson, "Why is there no rights talk in Milton's Poetry?," *Milton, Rights, and Liberties*, eds. Christopher Tournu and Neil Forsyth (Bern, 2007), 197-202, argues that Milton sought to prevent readings that correlated his poetry with his polemic.

⁶ Stanley Fish, *Surprised by Sin: The Reader in Paradise Lost* (Cambridge MA: Harvard, 1998) lvii.

will” but because of the way it coordinates an idea of internal will as the source of the political authority of the modern subject with an idea that collective obligation continues to make demands on the individual.

The question of what the individual’s being entails is intimately connected to the problem of determining whether political society is natural, and whether the institutions and ideas that appear to sustain political order – contract, sovereignty, rule, obedience – are themselves natural concepts. Victoria Kahn has argued that the hallmark of seventeenth-century political thought was the realization that the state was an artificial, and not a natural institution. Common lawyers, natural rights theorists, and covenant theologians had contributed to a “denaturalization and demystification” of political obligation, which had been shown to be a “product of human artifice.”⁷ I contend that *Paradise Lost* is unable to settle the problem of determining whether politics is “natural”: that is, whether humans are sociable by nature or require political law to enforce that sociality; and whether tending to human concerns can and ought to encompass the nonhuman natural world. Milton’s political prose and Milton’s epic devise a range of states of nature in order to explore these questions. In Milton’s prose, ideas of human nature and its possibilities for redemption in a fallen world shape his understanding of the ends and limits of political engagement. In his epic, generic experimentation allows him to explore these questions through literary examples drawn from the Virgilian *cursus*. As I will argue, poetic form, and especially pastoral lyric that celebrates marriage, becomes integral to shaping an understanding of the relationship between contradictory ideas of natural law. If natural law implies the internalization of law’s ordering capacities that

⁷ Victoria Kahn, *Wayward Contracts: The Crisis of Political Obligation in England, 1640-1674* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 2004), 56.

fulfills the individual's ethical and political development, pastoral mediation, I argue, is the condition for that internalization.

Coupled as it is with an insistence on "place" and their perpetual movement through and towards their ambiguous, indeterminate "place of rest," the image of solitary partnership that concludes the epic insists on the integral role both space and time have in defining the nature of this foundational postlapsarian relationship. Though charted out by Providence's guidance, Adam and Eve are neither able to return to Eden nor is their final establishment clearly settled; the final image of their wandering indicates a displacement from the prelapsarian condition that is absolute both temporally and spatially.⁸ Their expulsion from Eden reflects what Ken Hiltner has argued is the poem's representation of the Fall as an instance of "earth alienation," which marks an epochal division between premodern and modern attitudes held by humans about their environments.⁹ According to Hiltner, the Fall (especially Eve's) reflects an historical transformation from the perception of the earth as dwelling place (in which humans can be imagined to share in a more holistic, particularized relationship to the natural world) to an idea of the earth conceived as abstract space, in which, among other things, humans instrumentalize nature while human subjectivity is alienated from it.¹⁰ This earth alienation constitutes a radical

⁸ Marshall Grossman, *"Authors to Themselves": Milton and the Revelation of History* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1987), examines "authorship" as a conceit that captures the problem of how fate can be "at once divinely foreknown and historically contingent": it provides a figure for freedom with the constraints laid out by providence (1).

⁹ Ken Hiltner, *Milton and Ecology* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2003), 3.

¹⁰ "What should trouble us all is that the notion of the Earth covered with particular *places* has almost completely given way to an understanding of the Earth as *space*. Again with respect to out habitats, this is now abundantly clear. While indigenous people inhabited particular places which had ... their own 'moods, seasons, changes, aspects, [and] nature creatures,' the dominant Western view is to see such 'undeveloped' places as 'wide open space' onto which a grid of streets, wires, and pipes can be imposed – entirely irrespective of the character of place already situated in this 'space.' The notion that the place itself could provide for its inhabitants is lost" (Hiltner, *Milton and Ecology* 14-15). Implicit in this distinction between the "place" as

break in how human beings engage with nature as an aspect of their own ethico-political development: Michael's promise to Adam that though Eden will be destroyed in the flood, a new Eden will be constituted in himself as subjective space – "then wilt thou not be loath / To leave this Paradise, but shalt possess / A Paradise within thee, happier far" (12.585-87) – becomes an inverted reflection of Satan's proclamation of "ontological individualism" – that Hell has become a subject position – "myself am Hell" (4.75) – a state of mind absolutely divorced from what Hiltner calls "internal relations" with its environs.¹¹

As we shall see, Michael's claim that Adam will cultivate a "paradise within" suggests that in the poem's postlapsarian world, ethics as the form of self-management and discipline has emerged as a central concern. But its definition here in terms of inwardness and individuality suggests that ethics has become detached from a collective and political orientation. Redemption for Adam entails an internalized self-cultivation.¹² Eden and its improvement through stewardship become mere metaphors for internal growth, now lacking the connotation of a moral dynamic that explicitly entangles the self with the outside world. In Michael's telling, if there is a sense that humankind might be repatriated in an Edenic garden understood as a physical place, its eventuality will only

premodern and "indigenous," and "space" as a modern worldview is the perpetuation of the myth of the "noble savage," perhaps itself evident in Milton's own poem, as critics such as J. Martin Evans, *Milton's Imperial Epic: Paradise Lost and the Discourse of Colonialism* (Ithaca and London: Cornell UP, 1996) and Diane Kelsey McColley, "Ecology and Empire," *Milton and the Imperial Vision*, eds. Balachandra Rajan and Elizabeth Sauer (Pittsburg: Duquense UP, 1999), 112-29, observe how Milton's epic imagines the new world and its precivil societies as a model for Adam and Eve.

¹¹ Hiltner, *Milton and Ecology* 29.

¹² For discussion of georgic as mere metaphor in postlapsarian contexts, see Richard DuRocher, "Careful Plowing: Culture and Agriculture in *Paradise Lost*," *Milton Studies* 37 (1994): 91-107.

be apocalyptic: “When this world’s dissolution shall be ripe / ... then the Earth / Shall all be Paradise, far happier place / Then this of Eden, and far happier days” (12.459-65).

In the meantime, Michael argues, this “paradise within” requires neither natural nor political knowledge: that is, neither natural philosophy nor the political concepts of dominion and stewardship. Instead, knowledge of Christ’s saving grace will become the essence of the individual’s ethical well-being:

This having learnt [i.e. acknowledging Christ], thou hast attained the sum
Of wisdom; hope no higher, though all the stars
Thou knowst by name, and all the ethereal powers,
All secrets of the deep, all nature’s works,
Or works of God in heaven, air, earth, or sea,
And all the riches of this world enjoydst,
And all the rule, one empire; only add
Deeds to thy knowledge answerable, add faith,
Add virtue, patience, temperance, add love,
By name to come called charity, the soul
Of all the rest; then wilt thou not be loath
To leave this Paradise, but shalt possess
A paradise within thee, happier far. (12.575-87)

In terms that rehearse the narrator’s injunctions to the first pair to “know to know no more” (4.775) and Raphael’s exhortation (when Adam inquires about the erratic planetary motions Eve had observed) to “Solicit not thy thoughts with matters hid” and “be lowly wise” (8.167, 173), Michael inscribes the proper bounds of both knowledge’s acquisition and the acquisition of natural resources. However, these limits are not absolute: though Adam might “hope no higher” than the “sum / Of Wisdom,” Michael’s wording suggests that humankind might also “knowst” all the stars by name and achieve a mastery of the “secrets of the deep” and “all nature’s work.” Though Michael reinforces that “knowledge answerable” should look to spiritual matters, and that other forms of knowledge (natural and political) lie beyond its scope, his warning is not that knowledge

of the Book of Nature is forbidden or impossible, but rather that it is superfluous to the “sum / Of Wisdom.”¹³ Superfluity of natural knowledge runs parallel to the superfluity of political possession or dominion over the earth: the “one empire” that would enable “all the rule” and “enjoyment” of “all the riches of this world.” Both natural knowledge and nature’s conquest might be achieved by human industry, but they are no longer ends in themselves, nor ends worth pursuing.

If we understand “answerable” in its purely instrumental sense of being “useful” knowledge, we take Michael’s advice as an indication of what kinds of knowledge Adam might find most appropriate for conducting his worldly existence. If we take “answerable” in its legal sense of being under an obligation, Michael promises that this “knowledge answerable” offers a means for Adam to satisfy the conditions of this obligation. The pervasive legalistic terminology that surrounds the Fall – the language of “judgment” and “justice,” “satisfaction” and “redemption” – suggests how the Fall is, in effect, a Fall into law, into a new sense of how the terms of an obligation may be upheld and met, and into a new temporal understanding that displaces the fulfillment of this satisfaction to an eschatological redemption, whose appointed time has not yet been revealed. Michael’s account of history suggests a perpetual extension of human obligation to the law of a higher authority: the text’s saturation by the legalistic language used to describe the efficient and final causes of history – ends which are constantly recurring and always deferred within the text’s typologies – marks a perpetual “coming into politics” as the central concern of human history. The typological structure of Michael’s account of history presents a perpetual emergence of “one greater man” in the many forerunners of Christ (1.4): namely, Noah, Moses, and Joshua, political founders as

¹³ Dayton Haskin, *Milton’s Burden of Interpretation* (Philadelphia: U of Penn P, 1994), 205.

well as types of Christ whose own coming foretells an apocalyptic end to all worldly conditions, including political ones. But each return of Christ's forerunners perpetually defers the fulfillment of the covenant by renewing it. Each type's appearance in the course of history revivifies the promise of a future deliverance from the Law (specifically the ceremonial law of the Hebrews): "So Law appears imperfect" (12.300), but the Laws are "giv'n / With purpose to resign them in full time" (12.300-301). However, this deliverance never comes, and we find then that human history is a history of perpetual subjection to a the law that never materializes in full force.

As Victoria Kahn argues, covenant theology was one of the models for the seventeenth-century idea of political contract.¹⁴ Covenant theology also posited that the gospels transformed the letter of the law from an external source of authority to a metaphor for an internal disposition towards self-discipline.¹⁵ In *A Treatise of Civil Power in Ecclesiastical Causes* (1659), Milton argues for the self-determination of the virtuous Christian that exempts him from secular power:

Christ hath a government of his own sufficient of it self to all his ends and purposes in governing his church; but much different from that of the civil magistrate; and the difference in this verie thing principally consists, that it governs not by outward force, and that for two reasons. First, because it deals only with the inward man and his actions, which are all spiritual and to outward force not lyable: secondly, to shew us the divine excellence of his spiritual kingdom, able without worldly force to subdue all the powers and kingdoms of this world.¹⁶

"Civil government" thus becomes superfluous, an unnecessary addition to the self-sufficient government of the universal church. But the Law's "imperfection," as Michael

¹⁴ Kahn, *Wayward Contracts*: "once the heavenly contract was reconfigured as a mutual pact or divinely authorized exchange of redemption for obedience, it made sense to compare this exchange with a political contract" (51).

¹⁵ Kahn, *Wayward Contracts* 53.

¹⁶ John Milton, *Complete Prose Works*, 8 vols., Don M. Wolfe et al., eds. (New Haven: Yale UP, 1953-82) 7.255; hereafter cited as *CPW*.

describes it, lies in the fact that the Law of the Church also fails to adequately account for the individual's ethical development under its auspices. Michael's repeated accounts of new political foundations redouble the insistence that human laws are established with the "purpose" that they will be rendered unnecessary by the course of history and by a political theology that disavows its own necessity. In effect, Michael implies that Adam might achieve his "paradise within" through his pursuit of the virtues of faith, patience, temperance, and charity (12.582-84), which threaten to make not only these "imperfect Laws," but Christ's saving work and the work of history ultimately irrelevant. Moreover, while faith, patience, and temperance are notably individual virtues, "charity" requires an explicitly *collective* orientation, and the poem therefore asks what forms such virtuous collective endeavors might take, if not explicitly political or legal ones.

In a similar vein, an idea of nature as a landscape that humans might inhabit and cultivate, and through these activities find some kind of repatriation in Eden, persists in the poem's final image. The preposition that describes the course of Adam and Eve's solitary wanderings hints that the postlapsarian wilderness proleptically anticipates the coming apocalyptic reestablishment of Paradise: even as they leave it behind them, they wander "through Eden," suggesting how all the earth has already become a new Eden, a place that Adam and Eve pass through even if they cannot dwell within it until their "place of rest" might be established. The surprise of their paradoxical joint wandering in solitude finds its corollary in their wandering through a place they are told they cannot inhabit because it no longer exists and is also only yet to come. Eden is not a place specifically located, but neither is it an abstraction or a subjective condition definitively detached from its environs. Rather, Eden's boundaries have been expanded so that it is no

longer experienced as a place per se, but rather as an historical process enclosing the genesis of a foundational human relationship now recontextualized in the postlapsarian moment.

The Fall into Law

Theological accounts of human nature following Original Sin are formative of Milton's protean statements on the problem of whether the individual's ethical fulfillment (that is, the full exercise of his virtuous nature) might be enabled or hindered by politics. In *The Tenure of Kings and Magistrates*, his defense of the regicide, Milton argues that "all men naturally were borne free, being the image and resemblance of God himself, and were by privilege above all the creatures, born to command and not to obey."¹⁷ Milton's natural freedom entails that the privilege to "command" is universally shared: obedience, that is, being ruled by others, has no place in human relations. If there is anyone to command, it is the nonhuman "creatures" God sets Adam above. (Eve, of course is an interesting exclusion here, and an interesting problem in *Paradise Lost*, as I discuss below.) But this state of nature where "all men" were free never existed except in potential. "Adams transgression," Milton argues, had interrupted it before it could ever be effected.¹⁸ A dystopian state of nature – a postlapsarian but precontractual condition in which men were "falling among themselves to doe wrong and violence" – had subsequently taken its place.¹⁹ Humans, Milton argues, were able to leave this lawless apolitical condition, similar to Hobbes' own, through a voluntary agreement: "foreseeing that such courses must needs tend to the destruction of them all, they agreed by common

¹⁷ *CPW* 3.198-99.

¹⁸ *CPW* 3.199.

¹⁹ *CPW* 3.199.

league to bind each other from mutual injury.”²⁰ Milton’s account of the origin of political society under the rule of monarchs and magistrates resembles Hobbes’s insofar that both suggest that self-interested fallen man nevertheless possesses within himself a fundamental abhorrence of the political vacuum that threatens his individual security.

The key difference between Hobbes’ and Milton’s respective accounts is the allowance, in Milton’s account, that the agreement not be a binding one. Milton’s theological framing of the argument suggests that the political contract between subject and sovereign body might produce a secondary Eden: voluntary subjection to law not only offers an escape from the antagonistic secondary state of nature, it also allows for the reconstruction of an approximated natural liberty under the political rule of a popularly-appointed magistrate. One of the conditions of this approximated natural liberty is that the individual still maintain the latitude to prioritize his individual welfare over his obligation to the state. As Stephen Fallon argues, Milton “derives from the Fall a contract theory of government, but he holds on to a vision of the dignity of the upright and godly that minimizes the very effects of the Fall that led to his own account of the need for submission to magistrates.”²¹ Fallon argues that Milton’s defense of regicide arrives at two incompatible positions: the first, that subjects have a right to resist tyrants who act outside the law; the second, that subjects have a right to depose a ruler or magistrate for any reason, and that this right must endure if a “free government” is to prevail.²² The latter proposition depends on the idea that men who are virtuous enough to recognize and value good governors do not in fact *need* to be governed, and

²⁰ *CPW* 3.199.

²¹ See Stephen M. Fallon, “‘The strangest piece of reason’: Milton’s *Tenure of Kings and Magistrates*,” *The Oxford Handbook of Milton*, 245-46.

²² Fallon, “The strangest piece of reason” 246.

yet nevertheless choose to be governed. A decade later, in *The Readie and Easie Way to Establish a Free Commonwealth* (1660), Milton reminds his readers on the eve of the Restoration that

the ground and basis of every just and free government (since men have smarted so oft for committing all to one person) is a general council of ablest men, chosen by the people to consult of public affairs from time to time for the common good. In this Grand Council must the sovranitie, not transferd, but delegated only, and as it were deposited, reside.²³

In a similar vein, the argument that the Godly need no political government, and that, furthermore, the law that subjects the individual to the higher authority of a state must not be binding forms the basis of *Areopagitica*'s argument for the elimination of pre-publication censorship. As Blair Hoxby argues, Milton's vision of the literary commons sacrifices any idea of collective well-being, or guarantee of the well-being of every member of the commonwealth, for the sake of particular individuals' ethical thriving.²⁴ According to these arguments, human potential is best realized in a state of minimalist political law, of the kind that approximated an Edenic state of nature, but this thriving only pertains to some individuals and never to a collective body as a whole.²⁵

But, as we saw in *The Tenure of Kings and Magistrates*, the fallen human condition also makes laws *necessary*. Other examples of Milton's political polemic, particularly those expressing some reservations about the directions the republican

²³ *CPW* 7.432.

²⁴ Blair Hoxby, "Areopagitica and Liberty," *The Oxford Handbook of Milton* 218-37: "Milton opposes pre-publication censorship because it denies men the opportunity to cultivate their own virtue and liberty and thus will have a deadening effect on the body politic.... A system of free speech that is not *risk-free* speech may take a personal toll on some citizens, but it also extends an ethical benefit: it offers those virtuous men who have the courage of their own convictions the psychic reward of speaking boldly" (237).

²⁵ Robert Thomas Fallon, *Divided Empire*: "There would seem to be little occasion for political life in Milton's Eden since the poet assumed that prelapsarian Man, guided by natural law and the rule of reason, was disposed to act rightly, that is, in concert with God's will, and hence had no need for governments" (97).

experimented had taken, or outright disappointment with its ultimate failure, bear out this argument. The “Digression,” a brief passage excised from the original publication of Milton’s *History of Britain* in 1670, reflects on the parallels between England’s present political climate and the period in its history following the Romans’ withdrawal from Britain.²⁶ Milton turns to this episode in British history not only because of these resonances, but also because of the heuristic value he finds in examining the foundation of a new “civil government”:

because the gaining or loosing of libertie is the greatest change to better or to worse that may befall a nation under civil government, and so discovers, as nothing more, what degree of understanding, or capacitie, what disposition to justice and civilitie there is among them, I suppose it will bee many wayes profitable to resume a while the whole discourse of what happen’d in this Iland soon after the Romans goeing out.²⁷

The early Britons resembled people in a state of nature in that they found themselves in a unique position to refashion a new political government in the wake of the Romans’ departure. But they failed to capitalize on this opportunity, and this failure is instructive. Just as Milton’s contemporaries seemed unequal to the task of erecting a virtuous political government, natural liberty was a burden to the early Britons because of their own moral failings: “Liberty hath a sharp and double edge, fit only to be handled by just and vertuous Men; to bad and dissolute, it becomes a mischief unwieldy in their own hands.”²⁸ As Thomas Fulton argues, where *Tenure of Kings and Magistrates* emphasizes the Britons’ innate potential for true liberty, both *The History of Britain* and *The Digression* show how a collective moral deficiency squandered this potential for

²⁶ The historical moment of the Digression’s original composition is unknown, with scholars suggesting a range of possible dates, from the late 1640s to as late as 1670. For a summary of these arguments, see Thomas Fulton, *Historical Milton: Manuscript, Print, and Political Culture in Revolutionary England* (Amherst: U of Massachusetts P, 2010) 118-19.

²⁷ *CPW* 5.441.

²⁸ *CPW* 5.448.

liberty.²⁹ “so soon as they felt by proof the weight of what it was to govern well themselves, and what was wanting within them, not stomach or the love of Licence, but the Wisdom, the Vertue, the Labour, to use and maintain true Liberty, they soon remitted their heat, and shrunk more wretchedly under the Burden of their own Liberty, then before under a foreign Yoke.”³⁰ In *The Readie and Easie Way*, Milton argues that Parliament derived its authority from natural law: Parliament was “not bound by any statute of preceding Parliaments, but by the law of nature only, which is the only law of laws truly and properly to all mankind fundamental; the beginning and the end of all Government.”³¹ Finding that the political vacuum left by the regicide had given the English yet another opportunity to fashion a government from the foundations of a natural law uninhibited by positive law, Parliament and the English people as a whole nevertheless failed to preserve the liberty that was their right under this natural law. Milton’s political theology, then, defines “politics” as a form of legal constraint that curbs the potential for the human will to become depraved, but serves no nobler function. Even if we take Milton’s more optimistic view that there yet remain some individuals of “upright heart and pure” (1.18), they need no externally-imposed law to achieve that moral purity.

Literary Form and the Redemption of Politics

The thrust of Milton’s political philosophy in his prose work thus seems utterly unoptimistic about the redemption of a politics of virtue in a fallen world, and yet throughout *Paradise Lost* literary forms proliferate in an attempt to describe how a

²⁹ Fulton, *Historical Milton* 138-41. See also Martin Dzetzainis, “Conquest and Slavery in Milton’s *History of Britain*,” *The Oxford Handbook of Milton*, 407-23.

³⁰ *CPW* 5.131.

³¹ *CPW* 7.412-13.

“politics of being” might extend beyond the individual to accommodate collective ways of living. The Virgilian *cursus* permeates Book 12’s account of history and the development of different kinds of political government after the Fall, offering literary examples of the various forms of legal structure that give shape to postlapsarian partnerships. Most readily apparent is epic, but the narrator of Milton’s epic famously indicates his intentions to revise the genre’s conventions and its political functions: “Me of these / Nor skilled nor studious, higher argument / Remains” (9.41-43). If the goal of the Virgilian epic is to provide an understanding of history as a process that unfolds a temporal progression towards an inevitable political founding, then Milton’s epic subverts that expectation in four principle ways.³² First, as we have seen, the poem understands the culmination of its historical trajectory to be not the founding of a great nation, but rather humanity’s redemption through Christ. Second, we have also seen Milton’s subversion of epic form in the fact that – if political making is epic’s primary goal – Michael argues that political rule in the postlapsarian world is a punishment for the Fall, and that any positive model of political rule and subjection was forfeited by the first disobedience. Third, the poem’s final image of partnership is the marital dyad of Adam and Eve wandering “hand in hand.” As I discuss in the final section of this chapter,

³² For Milton’s use of epic as veiled critique of the Restoration and the failed Commonwealth, see David Quint, *Epic and Empire: Politics and Generic Form from Virgil to Milton* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1993), 268-324. Quint argues that the poem turns towards a romance mode in its unwillingness “to celebrate the absolutist modern state and its centralizing institutions” (13). Evans’ *Milton’s Imperial Epic* argues that Milton achieves an epic register through its complicity in imperialist ideology and its use of biblical exegesis towards this end. Using familiar commonplaces of God as planter and Adam as colonist, characterizing Eden as a new world, and Adam and Eve as noble savages, the poem shows Milton’s awareness of “England’s colonial role in the world of seventeenth-century geopolitics” (6).

domesticity, and not political government, seems to be the poem's ultimate social institution.

Fourth, the poem's epic tendencies revert back to more "primitive" genres in the Virgilian *cursus*. Pastoral and georgic, not epic, offer the literary models that evidence a form of governance that best approximates natural law. The "tragedy" of Milton's epic lies in the fact that it subverts, rather than fulfills the forms of collective engagement that these other genres manifest (9.6). In Book 12, georgic is the mode Milton turns to in order to show the invention of natural forms of governance in postlapsarian society. Michael punctuates the vision of the Flood with competing biblical accounts of political foundations in the postdiluvian world. Having razed one corrupt human society through environmental catastrophe, God creates a *tabula rasa* through which a political experiment may begin anew: "Thus hast thou seen one world begin and end / And man as from a second stock proceed" (12.6-7), Michael tells Adam, and this epochal structure of historical narrative – suggested metonymically by the replacement of one "world" with a new beginning – constitutes a second creation as well as a second covenant that marks a new political beginning:

And while the dread of judgment past remains
 Fresh in their minds, fearing the Deity,
 With some regard to what is just and right
 Shall lead their lives and multiply apace,
 Labouring the soil, and reaping plenteous crop,
 Corn wine and oil; and from the herd or flock,
 Oft sacrificing bullock, lamb, or kid,
 With large wine-offerings poured, and sacred feast,
 Shall spend their days in joy unblamed, and dwell
 Long time in peace by families and tribes
 Under paternal rule. (12.14-24)

Michael describes a postdiluvian human society that examples not what “should be,” but what “might best be” (to borrow Spenser’s turn of phrase) in that the Israelites live in “joy unblamed” and in “peace,” but, nevertheless, also live under the shadow of “the dread of judgment past”: most immediately the judgment that culminated in the Flood, but also, of course, the consequence of Original Sin. By producing a hybrid of Hebraic, georgic, tribal, and paternal forms of rule, this quasi-idyllic political arrangement suggests the types of order that would be required to constitute a second-order idealization of human society.

Given that the flood had wiped out any previous institution, reducing the political world and the human population to a single household, the establishment of the Noahide covenant offers a biblical account of a secondary political arrangement that emerges from a single domestic unit. Georgic productivity incorporates the “plenteous crop” into another form of social and symbolic order, the Hebraic law, where “corn, wine, and oil” become the agricultural tributes required by tithe law (Deut. 14:23). This hybridization of classical and scriptural generic sources of ecological governance effects a kind of political theology that takes agriculture and domestic management as its primary modes for describing a political foundation. In effect, this new arrangement combines an Aristotelian account of politics’ organic development from the household with a theological account of covenantal law, all arranged under the auspices of a georgic modality.

However, within the same sentence, a second model of postlapsarian governance overwhelms the covenantal version. Calling upon the commonplace depiction of Nimrod as the first Biblical monarch and (according to Republican sympathizers) the first tyrant,

Michael's allusion to the hunter produces a second conflicting account of the origins of postlaparian political rule.³³ Humans will live in harmony

till one shall rise
Of proud ambitious heart, who not content
With fair equality, fraternal state,
Will arrogate dominion undeserved
Over his brethren, and quite dispossess
Concord and law of nature from the earth,
Hunting (and men not beasts shall be his game)
With war and hostile snare such as refuse
Subjection to his empire tyrannous:
A mighty hunter thence he shall be styled
Before the Lord, as in despite of heaven,
Or from heaven claiming second sovereignty;
And from rebellion shall derive his name,
Though of rebellion others he accuse. (12.14-37)

Empire, war, tyranny, and ambition attend the first monarch's ascendancy, showing types of rule, action, and psychological disposition, which the poem codes as belonging to epic.³⁴ Through syntactic delay, we learn that the state of idyllic "paternal rule" had in fact represented "equality" and "fraternal state." The pun of "fair equality" – pointing to an egalitarianism that is beautiful and also a form of equitability that is redundant in its equality – brings to the surface the problem of surplus that is characteristic of the poem's fixation on problems of representing equality in a stable form. Nimrod's inability to be "content" with "fair equality" implies that equality is insufficient to satisfy the desires of the ambitious individual, and also that equality is itself a form of social relationship that cannot be contained and containing, that exceeds its own bounds and manifests inevitably in its opposite: in hierarchy, order, and degree. "Epic" as a mode for organizing political

³³ See Dzelzainis, "The Politics of *Paradise Lost*": "Nimrod is the key agent in the transition from the natural world of patriarchy to the political realm of dominion, empire, and sovereignty" (566). For Abraham and Nimrod as opposed political founders, see Barbara Lewalski, *Paradise Lost and the Rhetoric of Literary Form* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1985), 53.

³⁴ "Since first this subject for heroic song / Pleased me long choosing, and beginning late; / Not sedulous by Nature to indite / Wars, hitherto the only argument / Heroic deemed" (9.25-29).

order comes as an inevitable consequence; it is a means of managing this surplus of equality. The eruption of epic form into the Genesis narrative illustrates a form of political order that inevitably takes the individual as its basic unit. Pastoral, georgic, and lyric, on the other hand, as we shall see, continue to offer understandings of law and political order that ineluctably retain the form of a human and nonhuman collective.

Moreover, epic's politics – its rearrangement of equal relationships into hierarchical ones – is a symptom, not a cause, of an individual ethical failing, as Michael clarifies when Adam partially misinterprets the significance of Nimrod's example:

O execrable Son so to aspire
Above his Brethren, to himself assuming
Authority usurpt, from God not giv'n:
He gave us only over Beast, Fish, Fowl
Dominion absolute; that right we hold
By his donation; but Man over men
He made not Lord; such title to himself
Reserving, human left from human free. (12.64-71)

Adam sees just order in terms of a natural hierarchy that places all men on an equal plane above the rest of the natural world. He thus understands political "authority" to consist of "dominion absolute" over the natural world, that is, in terms of husbandry. Indeed, that Adam's experience with "dominion absolute" has dealt primarily with the management of natural resources manifests when he scorns Nimrod for lack of foresight in organizing his campaign to build the tower of Babel:

But this usurper his encroachment proud
Stays not on man; to God his tower intends
Siege and defiance: Wretched man! what food
Will he convey up thither to sustain
Himself and his rash army, where thin air
Above the clouds will pine his entrails gross,
And famish him of breath, if not of bread? (12.72-78)

According to Adam, Nimrod's error lies not in his challenge to God's authority, but in the fact that he and his troops will be unable to sustain themselves as they ascend the tower. Adam thus conflates two kinds of natural order: God's rule over all things and the natural laws that place limits on the types of environments humans can inhabit. While Adam's definition of dominion follows from biblical precedent, it also follows from his limited experience of ruling.

But Michael denies the utility of even this understanding of political rule. He shows Adam that he fails to recognize the new conditions that recontextualize what political rule entails. Michael's correction of Adam's interpretation reveals Nimrod's rebellion, not as a version of Satan's political ambitions, but as a repetition of Adam's Fall:

Justly thou abhorr'st
That Son, who on the quiet state of men
Such trouble brought, affecting to subdue
Rational liberty; yet know withal,
Since thy original lapse, true liberty
Is lost, which always with right reason dwells
Twinned, and from her hath no dividual being:
Reason in man obscured, or not obeyed,
Immediately inordinate desires
And upstart passions catch the government
From reason, and to servitude reduce
Man till then free. (12.79-90)

The double meaning of "affecting" incorporates both readings – Adam's and Michael's – into Michael's authoritative gloss of the episode: in Adam's understanding, Nimrod "affects" to subdue liberty in the sense that he attempts it; in Michael's understanding, Nimrod's actions project the false appearance of usurping liberty, but his actions merely represent a psychological process in which reason (and by extension natural law) has already been dispossessed. Michael's gloss on the episode thus locates the origins of

political tyranny not in Nimrod's ambition, but in the individual's nature, whose lack of self-discipline requires external mechanisms to punish transgressions:

Therefore since he permits
 Within himself unworthy powers to reign
 Over free reason, God in judgment just
 Subjects him from without to violent lords;
 Who oft as undeservedly enthrall
 His outward freedom: tyranny must be,
 Though to the tyrant thereby no excuse.
 Yet sometimes nations will decline so low
 From virtue, which is reason, that no wrong,
 But justice, and some fatal curse annexed
 Deprives them of their outward liberty,
 Their inward lost. (12.90-101)

Michael's interpretation of the biblical origins of tyranny translates the particularity of Nimrod's person into an abstract type that stands for a universal psychological condition, which, in turn, originates tyranny as a political condition. "Tyranny must be," not because political order inevitably degenerates, but because human nature makes it necessary. And yet political justice – that is, justice effected by temporal institutions and political rulers – cannot be found within political order itself. Though God's "judgment" is "just" in its subjection of men to the rule of tyrants, it does not follow that tyranny in itself is just: tyranny has "no excuse," and tyrants "undeservedly enthrall" other men's "outward freedom." A transcendent, divine source of justice thus manifests in earthly politics as a form of necessary injustice.

"Rational liberty" finds its corollary in natural law, also supplanted by Nimrod's ascension. Michael equates the ascendancy of "paternal rule" established by the Noahide covenant with the "law of nature" when Nimrod overturns both: out of the establishment of monarchy we learn of another model of governance revealed by its "dispossession" from the earth, and we learn about the nature of the authority that justifies paternal rule

by the intercession of what it is not. “Rational liberty” remains the sole trace of a prelapsarian governmental concept (12.82). In a postlapsarian world, it exists only as an imagined, infinitely deferred future condition, a “paradise within.” It might be possible to imagine an alternative reality in which Adam and Eve may have continued in a condition of “rational liberty,” and might have populated the earth with others who likewise remain subjects to that form of internalized law, but it is difficult to imagine what kinds of *political collectives* these governments might have taken without the use of literary form. In effect, this narrative belatedly argues that paternal rule, represented in the georgic representation of early Hebraic society, had offered the best approximation of the “law of nature” within human forms of governance. We saw, however, how georgic efforts to contain ineluctable surplus in both the natural world (in the garden’s constant “tending to wild” [9.212] in spite of Adam and Eve’s constant labors to control it), and in human forms of social organization fall again and again into epic foundations of hierarchy that reinforces the antisocial dispositions of the tyrants who take their place at its head. Nature and human society both strain the boundaries imposed by georgic covenantal forms, and so the poem turns to other kinds of poetic modalities to model new ways of encapsulating these contradictions.

“Our Being Ordained”: The Politics of Nature and the Legitimacy of the Law

Paradise Lost is rife with narratives of politics’ emergence from states of nature. Milton’s poem uses these accounts to experiment with different configurations of natural and political order, ultimately, as I will suggest, to show how literary form plays an integral role in constructing politico-natural imaginaries that seek to resolve some of the tensions between the individual and the collective that Milton’s postlapsarian politics

raises. In Book 5, Milton's Heaven is lexically saturated by overtly political concepts, including law, sovereignty, right, and dominion. Heaven's saturation by forms of political order are, moreover, a source of dissent. Satan points to the imposition of "New laws from him who reigns" as a specific instance of provocation for his rebellion (5.680). Satan's grievance is that, with the Son's installment as God's heir (an act that appears to Satan as arbitrary preferment), the Father has produced an intolerable surplus of order: "Knee-tribute yet unpaid, prostration vile, / Too much to one, but double how endured, / To one and to his image now proclaimed?" (5.782-84). Satan already feels revulsion for God's authority before the Son's existence, but the Son's appearance with "new laws" functions as a tipping point. Satan objects to this new order's doubling of a singular subjection that was already "too much" to bear. Since Satan characterizes the production of these "new laws" as God's self-replication of his own "image," this legislative act comes as an oppressive mimetic production of resemblances that threatens to violate a prior "just" order. The apparent injustice of this originary law therefore arises from two sources. It is on the one hand a violent rupture of what Satan claims was an original ontological arrangement; on the other hand, Satan holds that God's "new laws" redouble his authority. In other words, the law's injustice doubles a form of subjection born out of God's self-imitation at the same time that it also emerges without precedent. The emergence of God's new laws implies that the Son, whose being and authority these laws ordain, is a supplement, a necessary addition to Creation that also disrupts its order.³⁵

³⁵ Catherine Belsey, *John Milton: Language, Gender, Power* (New York: Basil Blackwell, 1988), has observed this irony: Milton's "God is absolute plenitude, full, continuous and eternal; he is the first and the last; he is unequalled, without similitude. God is complete, without lack," but "Such plenitude exists only in the imaginary world of undifferentiated totality" (68). The Son's reception as His "image" acts as a supplement to his authority: promising its continuity even as it divides the unity of his person.

The double nature of Satan's grievance raises the question: what is the "law's" relationship to prelegal order? Does law seek to imitate nature, and its injustice (as Satan argues) lies in the fact that law is merely an unnecessary additive? Or does law obstruct natural order? Heaven's "new laws" represent arguably *the* originary instance of positive law in that they are not, according to Satan, coincident with the natural order implemented at the Creation, though I hesitate to use the word "natural" because (as I will discuss below) what defines "nature" in the poem's non-earthly geographies is a point of considerable contention. Nevertheless, the system of hereditary monarchy that these laws appear to implement introduces an innovation that contradicts the angels' prior "liberty" (5.793).³⁶ Furthermore, his argument bears a structural resemblance to the Hobbesian State of Nature argument in that it suggests that the "law" institutes a political order that is utterly distinct from what had come before. His argument pivots on a concept of "being" and by extension Natural Law (even if Satan does not name it as such), for as Milton argues in *De Doctrina Christiana*, a "law of nature" refers to the "character of a thing": it is the "general law in accordance with which everything comes into existence and behaves."³⁷ Satan's version of prelegal order in heaven is "natural" insofar as it derives its legitimacy from organically-derived "orders and degrees" that

The perplexing problem of introducing a Son, co-eternal with God's being and yet somehow also "new" and in His image, has received much comment. For debates about Milton's anti-Trinitarianism, see: John Rumrich, "Milton's Theanthropos: The Body of Christ in *Paradise Regained*," *Milton Studies* 42 (2003): 50-67; Rumrich, *Milton Unbound* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1996), 36-49.

³⁶ Incidental to Satan's argument, but significant nonetheless, these are also "unnatural" in the sense that God insists that they operate according to a hierarchy determined by "merit" and not according to the biological descent and determinism that usually attends the institution of hereditary monarchy. The Son "hast been found / By merit more than birthright Son of God" (3.308-309). Erin Murphy, *Familial Forms: Politics and Genealogy in Seventeenth-Century Literature* (Newark: U of Delaware P, 2011), argues that Milton's critique of patriarchalism and hereditary monarchy shifts to the private sphere in *Paradise Lost* (105).

³⁷ *CPW* 6.131.

emanate from the angels' being. Their liberty is "natural" in that it reflects an ontological, rather than a legal, understanding of political order, but he never names nature itself as its source.

Satan's challenge to these "new laws" raises the following concerns: how does one account for the necessity of the legislative event itself? What deficiency can there be in natural law that would make positive law necessary? One of the central problems of seventeenth-century political thought was the problem of providing plausible motivations that explained why humans would leave a state of nature and consent to their subjection under positive law – a move that would require the forfeiture or transfer of their natural right to the State.³⁸ As Victoria Kahn suggests, a "supplementary motive" (which she identifies as the "passions") was needed to rationalize narratives of political subjection.³⁹ In this episode, Satan devises his own supplementary narrative, one that depends on insisting on the illegitimacy of this transfer – an illegitimacy derived from an argument that the law "mediates" natural order, violating it in the name of replicating it.

Satan's argument in part hinges on the assumption that mediation as an imitation of nature in artificial form always seems to accompany declarations of power in *Paradise Lost*, with the result that it is impossible to distinguish false from true, "authentic" images of just political order that derive their legitimacy from natural precedent. Satan argues that God's will is distinct from "nature," and thus his power as a legislator is illegitimate; yet he also claims that his *own* will offers a legitimate instance of constituting power. In order to show what this prior political state might have entailed, Satan himself reproduces

³⁸ See Richard Tuck, *Natural Rights Theory: Their Origin and Development* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1979), 82; Victoria Kahn, "'The Duty to Love': Passion and Obligation in Early Modern Political Theory," *Representations* 68 (1999): 84-107; Quentin Skinner, *Foundations of Modern Political Thought*, vol. 2 (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1978), 158-60.

³⁹ Kahn, "Duty to Love" 84.

the language of God's new political order. Directly mimicking God's own speech to the angel host ("Thrones, dominations, principdoms, virtues, powers, / Hear my decree"

[5.601]), Satan addresses his prospective supporters:

Thrones, dominations, principdoms, virtues, powers,
If these magnific titles yet remain
Not merely titular, since by decree
Another now hath to himself engrossed
All Power. (5.772-76)⁴⁰

Satan's "counterfeited truth" (5.771), his repetition of God's language, produces an image of the original source of political structures of power and dominion. Satan argues that such titles are directly linked to a kind of political order that indicates their natural capacity to rule: they are "imperial titles which assert / Our being ordained to govern, not to serve" (5.801-802). In reproducing God's speech, Satan claims the authority to recreate natural political order in God's image ("Affecting all equality with God" by professing to do the same work as Him [5.763]), and also to assert that God's new "decree" is unnatural, for he casts into doubt whether these titles maintain a direct correlation to their being, or whether they are now "merely titular."⁴¹ Satan strives to make himself into an image of God in order to rival both His and the Son's authority, but also to discount the authority of the image God himself has made by insisting that it

⁴⁰ John Rumrich, "Milton's God and the Matter of Chaos," *PMLA* 110.5 (1995): 1035–1046, argues that Satan's appeal to an original order, and his sense that God has imposed upon them, is more of a projection of his own authoritarianism; he desires order but only with himself at the head of the hierarchy (1040).

⁴¹ Satan's appeals to a division between language and things as an effect of a fundamental transformation of political order offers a variation on seventeenth-century accounts of the fall of Adamic language. For seventeenth-century universal language recovery projects and its influence on Milton's epic, see John Leonard, *Naming in Paradise: Milton and the Language of Adam and Eve* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1990), and Kristen Poole's "Naming, *Paradise Lost*, and the Gendered Discourse of Perfect Language Schemes," *ELR* 38.3 (2008): 535-59.

implements a new order that has fundamentally changed the very nature of the cosmos itself, including the language used to speak about it.

Though Satan does not name “nature” directly, he maps their “being” onto prelegal “liberty”:

Natives and Sons of Heaven possessed before
By none, and if not equal all, yet free,
Equally free; for orders and degrees
Jar not with liberty, but well consist
Who can in reason then or right assume
Monarchy over such as live by right
His equals, if in power and splendor less,
In freedom equal? or can introduce
Law and edict on us, who without law
Err not. (5.790-799)

The angels who, “without law / Err not” do not, by their nature, require law; God’s law preempts its own necessity. In this state of prelegal liberty, the angels “live[d] by right / His equals” and yet were also “not equal all.”⁴² While “Possessed before” intimates a form of subjection to another’s dominion, the enjambment – “possessed before / By none” – collapses this implied hierarchy into horizontal relationships that resemble the state of nature from Milton’s *Tenure of Kings and Magistrates*, in which individuals were exempted from subjection to others’ jurisdictions. “Possessed” could also modify “Heaven,” rendering it a kind of state of nature itself that has been exempted from claims of possession. “Heaven” is a *terra incognita*, like the new world, where the absence of prior possession justifies the angels’ own claims to their absolute dominion over it.⁴³

⁴² As Robert Thomas Fallon, *Divided Empire* has argued, Milton cannot help but imagine hierarchy in spite of any efforts to distill a theory of equality (97).

⁴³ For discussion of the Lockean language of proprietary rights and its consistency with the ideology of imperial conquest of the new world, see Duncan Ivison, “The Nature of Rights and the History of Empire,” *British Political Thought in History, Literature, and Theory, 1500-1800*, ed. David Armitage, (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2006), 191-210. Ivison argues that because Native American Indians were not regarded by Europeans such as Locke to have formed “civil

Their original liberty thus derives from a double source – one which claims that they are naturally free from jurisdiction, the other which points to the land’s freedom from jurisdictional claim. Struggling to articulate a vision of a prelegal state that is nevertheless “political” in that it contains an idea of governance – “Our being ordained to govern, not to serve” – the passage strives to capture a sense of “orders and degrees” that enable a form of political order composed only of those who are, by their nature, “governors” and “without law.”

By claiming that they “live by right,” Satan names “right” not only as a political possession, but also as a principle that animates the apparently paradoxical ontological order of his cosmos, in which “orders and degrees / Jar not with liberty.” By taking the individual as its primary subject, seventeenth-century natural rights theory corroborates this quasi-atomistic understanding of presocial order, in which every member may hold equal rights and yet nevertheless exist in a natural hierarchy derived from natural aptitudes such as relative physical strength or wit.⁴⁴ This double source of “right” both within a kind of nonnatural horizontally-arranged order on the one hand, and an organically engendered hierarchy on the other, is symptomatic of the contrary claims of “right” and “law” that seventeenth-century law theorists sought to reconcile. As Richard Tuck suggests, states of nature arguments required that early modern law theorists including Grotius, Selden, and Hobbes, reconcile theories of individualistic natural rights

societies” under sovereign representatives, Europeans argued that they were thus not entitled to natural rights of possession: the contradiction at the center of natural rights theories, then, is that they require a concept of a sovereign state that precedes and validates them (196).

⁴⁴ Mary Nyquist, *Arbitrary Rule: Slavery, Tyranny, and the Power of Life and Death* (Chicago: Chicago UP, 2013): “A condition of fearful insecurity in which natural, formal equality results in competitive violence, Hobbes’s state of nature is characterized as an unreflective sociality that exhausts itself in the struggle of survival” (258).

with natural law theories that emphasized communal obligation.⁴⁵ Satan seeks to resolve this contradiction through an idea of political right that could be imagined without the law-giving bodies (namely the State, but in Satan's instance, God-as-monarch) that would uphold it. In short, Satan seeks an antecedent model of natural right that precedes the state and can withstand the absence of the state's protections of these rights.

Abdiel objects to Satan's insinuation that God's new laws have no antecedent:

Shalt thou give law to God, shalt thou dispute
With him the points of liberty, who made
Thee what thou art, and formed the Powers of Heav'n
Such as he pleased, and circumscribed their being? (5.822-25)

For Abdiel, God's lawgiving, his ordination of the "powers of Heaven," coincides with the circumscription of their being. In effect, he naturalizes their political subordination to God's law. When Abdiel avers that because He originated their being, God holds political authority over them, Satan responds:

who saw
When this creation was? rememberst thou
Thy making, while the Maker gave thee being?
We know no time when we were not as now;
Know none before us, self-begot, self-raised. (5.856-60)

As Satan presents it, the originary moment of political foundation that precedes God's "new laws" is an "event," in the sense of what Jacques Lezra calls *eventum*, which "has no properties of its own except those having occurred unforeseen, unpredicted, and as it were unpredicated."⁴⁶ When Abdiel forces him to concede that the legislative event does in fact have the quality of *actum* in that there is a stable subjectivity (God's) that initiates it, only then does Satan concede the point that political authority must come from

⁴⁵ Tuck, *Natural Rights Theory*, 90.

⁴⁶ Jacques Lezra, *Unspeakable Subjects: The Genealogy of the Event in Early Modern England* (Stanford: Stanford UP, 1997), 8.

somewhere, but he will use that argument as a source for his own autonomous political authority that imitates God's creative powers.⁴⁷ For Abdiel, political legitimacy is not a matter of consent, but whether natural laws accord with positive laws, which he claims they do, and by necessity.⁴⁸ Satan, on the other hand, takes the terms of Abdiel's argument and transforms political legitimacy into a matter of consent: these new laws are not only illegitimate because they depart from an external, objective natural law, but because they also violate his subjective right residing in his own will, which never consented to such an arrangement. Abdiel and Satan's dispute thus points to a central paradox of contract models of politics, which rely on an idea of antecedence to secure the legitimacy and strength of an obligation when this antecedent agreement is always already only ever implied. That is, if "contract" and "covenant" are to serve as a metaphor for politics, and if we allow that "consent" is a defining feature of this metaphor, then we require a moment in which an agreement was willfully contracted by all parties in order for it to be legally binding. But when Satan and Abdiel both imagine their political status as a function of their being, their consent becomes implicit since neither can, logically, recall the moment of their own inception. As Satan says, "we know no time when we were not as now" (5.859). Satan's efforts to assert that his authority emanates from his own will attempts, unconvincingly, to overcome this problem.

In a parallel instance, fallen Adam complains about the injustice of his own subjection to a contract he does not recall agreeing to: "Inexplicable / Thy Justice seems" (10.754-55). Although we might argue that Adam deliberately confuses the nature of this justice in order to evade culpability (he had, after all, once agreed that the terms were

⁴⁷ Lezra, *Unspeakable Subjects*, 8.

⁴⁸ Skinner, *Foundations of Modern Political Thought*, 2.151.

“easy” [4.421]), Adam’s complaint is also indicative of the logical and temporal aporia that subtends any account of politics’ origins. Adam’s soliloquy offers a new interpretation of his first conversations with God as he had recounted to Raphael in Book 8: “Sternly he pronounced / The rigid interdiction, which resounds / Yet dreadful in mine ear, though in my choice / Not to incur” (8.333-36). Though Adam’s conversation with Raphael acknowledges the fact of his “choice” – a choice whose existence he has denied in his resentment – the interdiction’s “rigidity” belies any sort of latitude for Adam to have objected to its terms. Although Adam acknowledges the justness of his punishment, within the same sentence he denounces the justness of the conditions under which he and God established the initial agreement:

it were but right
And equal to reduce me to my dust,
Desirous to resign, and render back
All I received, unable to perform
Thy terms too hard, by which I was to hold
The good I sought not. (10.747-52)

Adam may have consented to these terms, but it remains unclear when that moment occurred: “then should have been refused / Those terms whatever, when they were proposed” (10.756-57). Adam insists that he agreed to these terms, that there must have been a moment when he made a choice, but that moment of choice was indistinguishable from his own creation, to which he could not logically have consented: “Did I request thee, Maker, from my clay / To mould me man” (10.743-44). Adam’s soliloquy tries to close the gap between ontological and political problems that Satan and the poem wedge open again and again. The conflation of Adam’s natural and ethical being with his political being makes the presumed antecedence of political obligation a logical impossibility.

Abdiel's apology for God's exercise of his authority depends on an argument that his positive law is not only consistent with natural law, but is in fact synonymous. Satan argues that nature is temporally prior to and the exclusion of these new laws. Yet neither Satan nor Abdiel have settled nature's nature, nor have they settled its relationship to political beginnings. Indeed, the poem itself has not settled "nature's" meanings, substituting in its place either negative definitions of what nature is not (chaos, art) or metonymic terms that substitute for it – earth, garden, wilderness, etc.⁴⁹ Within the narrative chronology of Milton's poem, "nature" as the "created universe" does not yet exist. Raphael implies that the Son's annunciation by God in Heaven occurs when "yet this world was not, and chaos wild / Reign'd where these Heavens now roll, where earth now rests" (5.577-78). While it makes intuitive sense to suggest that "chaos" had once reigned over the earth before God subdued this "wild" matter with boundaries and constraints, Raphael also, almost impossibly, implies that the Heavens themselves did not yet exist; this temporal paradox suggests the conceptual difficulty of imagining a chronological order punctuating the implied coeval and eternal present of all beginnings.

In the account of the first "laws," "nature" does not appear as itself. Though Satan imagines an idea of "liberty" as a condition that has an existence prior to political

⁴⁹ There is considerable debate on the subject of chaos in *Paradise Lost* and its relationship to the created world. Regina Schwartz, "Milton's Hostile Chaos: 'And the Sea Was No More,'" *ELH* 52.2 (1985): 337–374, has argued that Milton holds that the matter of chaos is inherently good, for to think that there might be an idea of evil is to imply that God's creation is not perfect or that Chaos has an origin separate from him (337-38). In *Paradise Lost*, the moral dimension of Chaos lies in the fact that it represents the choice "not to create," the failure to set bounds, orders, and degrees, which characterizes the natural world (368). In a similar vein, John Rumrich, "Milton's God" argues that "deficient ontology does not necessarily imply a loss of being that results from evil. The ontological deficiency of chaos indicates instead a material potency that is the precondition of creation" (1041). On the other hand, John Leonard, "Milton, Lucretius, and 'the Void Profound of Unessential Night,'" *Living Texts: Interpreting Milton*, ed. Kristin A. Pruitt & Charles W. Durham (Selingsgrove: Susquehanna, 2000), 198–217, suggests that Chaos is morally ambivalent (199). Chaos is governed by "chance" and not "free will," with the former aligned with tyrannical arbitrariness, the latter with moral responsibility (204-205).

subjection to the law (and yet distinct from unformed chaos because it still retains “orders and degrees”) the fact is the poem’s narrative, and its multiple narrators (including both Raphael and Satan) struggle to articulate in clear and distinct terms a kind of “nature” that is not also inescapably political. Thus far, there is no “nature” except as an effect of political argument, as a tool or asserting political legitimacy. Satan understands the law’s function as a source of “mediation” as a root cause of this lack of distinction between legitimate and illegitimate force because of the way “law” always seems to obstruct epistemic access to “nature.” As I will argue, pastoral lyric embraces this idea of nature’s ineluctable mediation by law as a condition for political and ethical fulfillment.

“Only sign of our obedience left”: Natural Law and Minimalist Positive Law in Eden

According to Milton’s *De Doctrina Christiana*, God implants natural law in man to make him self-sufficient in a moral capacity; that is, it invests him with an innate disposition towards goodness that requires no external supplement:

Man was made in the image of God, and the whole law of nature was so implanted and innate in him that he was in need of no command. It follows, then, that if he received any additional commands, whether about the tree of knowledge or about marriage, these had nothing to do with the law of nature, which is itself sufficient to teach whatever is in accord with right reason (i.e. whatever is intrinsically good). These commands, then, were simply a matter of what is called positive right. Positive right comes into play when God, or anyone else invested with lawful power, commands or forbids them, would in themselves have been neither good nor bad, and would therefore have put no one under any obligation.⁵⁰

Natural law enables the autonomy of the rational individual, prompting virtuous action in accordance with universal moral order.⁵¹ In other words, natural law contains within itself

⁵⁰ *CPW* 6.353.

⁵¹ For discussion of natural law in Milton’s political writings, particularly as it is understood to be a mathematically demonstrable, irrefutable moral system that functions as an epistemic foundation for the rational liberty of the individual, see Thomas Fulton, “*Areopagitica* and the

both the source of an obligation to act in accordance with a universal moral order, and the source of an internal motivation to fulfill that obligation. “Positive right,” on the other hand, produces no inherent obligation because it is not from nature, and thus not tied to moral necessity: positive rights are “in themselves ... neither good nor bad.” When perceived by reason, natural law reveals precepts about what is right or good that must be followed: it cannot be abrogated because it would be unthinkable to do so. Natural law thus also makes positive law superfluous: Adam and Eve were “in no need of command” because natural law already contains within itself all that is required to compel them to right action.

By establishing natural law as a self-sufficient system of moral order, and thus reprising Satan’s claim that the angels “without law” cannot “err,” Milton broaches an irresolvable problem that attends any account of human nature that posits its innate goodness: if natural law is sufficient in itself, how is it that positive law came to be necessary? If human nature is good, and human beings cannot help but be good, how came they to fall? Any additional laws in Eden are not of natural law; they are neither intrinsically moral nor immoral, nor are they derived from reason. What these laws command are not inherently necessary, and they would never have become the subject of an obligation without positive law. Milton’s understanding of God’s interdiction as a form of “positive right” emphasizes that positive law and natural law are fundamentally, ontologically distinct, for positive right has absolutely no relationship to necessity as a

Roots of Liberal Epistemology,” *ELR* 34.1 (2004): 33–50. Matthew W. Binney, “Milton, Locke, and the Early Modern Framework of Cosmopolitan Right,” *Modern Language Review* 105.1 (2010): 31–52, argues that Milton, like Locke, appeals to a higher moral authority that continues to remain relevant after the social contract has been implemented; in other words, natural law persists as a standard or judgment that remains external to positive law, and through which positive legal systems might be called to account (34).

defining condition. The end of positive law is not to outline a moral necessity that accords with natural law, but rather to affirm God's power to make arbitrary commands:

It was necessary that one thing at least should be either forbidden or commanded, and above all something which was in itself neither good nor evil, so that man's obedience might in this way be made evident. For man was by nature good and holy, and was naturally disposed to do right, so it was certainly not necessary to bind him by the requirements of any covenant to something which he would do of his own accord. And he would not have shown obedience at all by performing good works, since he was in fact drawn to these by his own natural impulses, without being commanded. ... A command, whether it comes from God or from a magistrate, should not be called a covenant just because rewards and punishments are attached: it is rather a declaration of power.⁵²

Milton defines God's prohibition as a covenant whose definition is *not* tied to a concept of its enforceability, for it is not "a covenant just because rewards and punishments are attached."⁵³ Yet "it was necessary" that it should exist, that there should be some restriction on man's dominion, for without it Adam and Eve could have no sign of their ultimate obedience to a higher authority. Milton's characterization of God's command as a "covenant" argues that it deserves that distinction because it is a "declaration of power." The command seeks to articulate what "power" might be in itself, without any reference to external things that are merely contingent to it. As William Empson has

⁵² *CPW* 6.351-52.

⁵³ This detachment of covenant from an idea of consequence appears unusual in contrast to other seventeenth-century thinkers. In the *Leviathan*, Hobbes' argument for the necessity of a Leviathan posits that no law, not even natural law, can be enforced without an idea of consequences:

And covenants, without the sword, are but words and of no strength to secure a man at all. Therefore, notwithstanding the laws of nature (which every one hath then kept, when he has the will to keep them, when he can do it safely), if there be no power erected, or not great enough for our security, every man will and may lawfully rely on his own strength and art for caution against all other men. (*Leviathan* 223)

Hobbes's natural law, which holds that a principle of sociability might be sought after if it can guarantee the security of one's self-interest, is not inviolable, for it is only "kept" "when he has the will to keep" it or when it is enforced by the "sword." John Selden had similarly argued that it was incomprehensible to have an idea of law without an idea of punishment or consequence to deter its violation (Tuck 91-92).

argued, the apple is “an empty signifier.”⁵⁴ While there are consequences attached to its violation (namely, Adam and Eve’s expulsion from the garden and the fundamental transformation of their nature and the natural world around them), Milton appears to describe an idea of God’s power that is complete in itself. Yet, the absence of reference to things outside itself also makes it inscrutable to Adam and Eve, for it departs from the forms of rule they are accustomed to in the garden.

If positive law’s primary function in the garden is to show obedience, where natural law would be insufficient to do so, Milton’s poem is also concerned with whether obedience, and the system of dominion and hierarchy it would produce, could itself be natural or implicate the natural world.⁵⁵ The Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil stands as a strange anomaly. In one of the few instances in *Paradise Lost* in which Adam refers to his “dominion” before the Fall, Adam reminds Eve the tree is

The only sign of our obedience left
Among so many signs of power and rule
Conferred upon us, and dominion giv’n
Over all other creatures that possess
Earth, air, and sea. (4.428-32)

God’s positive right and its “sign” disrupt Adam’s dominion over the natural world; it also marks an exception to Adam’s intuited knowledge. Adam’s naming of the animals shows that his interpretation of natural signs comes immediately to him: “I named them, as they passed, and understood / Their nature, with such knowledge God endued / My sudden apprehension” (8.352-54). That is, “naming” and “understanding” the nature of

⁵⁴ *Milton’s God*, 188.

⁵⁵ For arguments about Milton’s materialist natural philosophy and its ethical implications, see Stephen M. Fallon, *Milton Among the Philosophers: Poetry and Materialism in Seventeenth-Century England* (Ithaca and London: Cornell UP, 1996): “To make good on a program to remove necessity from will, one had to leave the confines of theology and engage the discourse of natural philosophy” (19).

the things he names are a simultaneous process; this intuited knowledge is “sudden” and implicitly requires no intermediary. Adam’s knowledge of the tree’s significance, on the other hand, must be revealed to him, and, what is more, that revelation never comes as completely sufficient. Discussing gendered subordination and hierarchy in *Paradise Lost*, John Rogers argues that positive law requires divine revelation in that ideas of hierarchy would not have been intelligible through either empirical observation or ratiocination.⁵⁶ The command compels a decision to obey that can never be made with full knowledge of its consequences.

Similarly, Eve declares to Satan (when he has led her there in the form of a serpent) that the Tree is “Fruitless to me, though fruit be here to excess” (9.648). Playing on the pun, Eve recognizes that the tree is distinct from the rest of creation in an artificial, arbitrary manner: though it is naturally fecund, producing an “excess” of fruit in much the way that the rest of the garden is unruly in its luxurious, unrestrained production, this very “fruitfulness” has no use for her. Eve’s reference to the “fruitless” tree puns on the Latin *fructus*, meaning profit as well as fruit. *Fructus* also points to a principle derived from Roman law and which shaped legal fictions of the proprietary rights of “natural man.” *Usufruct*, the entitlement to the benefits of a property held in common, was regarded by scholastic and humanist natural law theorists as a version of the common entitlement, found in the state of nature, to enjoy commodities without requiring a notion of private property.⁵⁷ The tree’s “fruitlessness” thus marks it as an exception to common

⁵⁶John Rogers, “The Fruit of Marriage in *Paradise Lost*,” *Milton and Gender*, ed. Catherine Gimelli Martin (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2004), 115-32: “Even when using their presumably perfect, rational faculties, neither Adam nor Eve is able to intuit anything like the hierarchical constitution of their relationship. Legal ordination rather than ontological facts, all distinctions of authority and superiority must be revealed to them by divine instruction” (122).

⁵⁷ Tuck, *Natural Rights Theory*, 56.

enjoyment of nature which Adam and Eve are entitled to, creating the tree as a token of exclusive privilege and enclosure. It is thus an object within Milton's state of nature that does not belong to it in more ways than one: because knowledge of its use and purpose cannot be intuited; because it is the only sign of obedience among many signs of dominion and power; because it deviates from an idea of the common; and because it introduces an exceptional instance of positive right in a domain otherwise governed by natural law and individual self-determination. The Tree thus suggests that law is an arbitrary sign signaling its own unnaturalness.

Nevertheless, Raphael's cosmic hierarchy in Book 5 insists that positive right and the obedience it makes visible are in fact part of the natural world. Responding to a simple question about whether angels observe dietary restrictions, Raphael expands his response into an account of a vitalist universe:

Wonder not then, what God for you saw good
If I refuse not, but convert, as you,
To proper substance; time may come when men
With angels may participate, and find
No inconvenient diet, nor too light fare:
And from these corporal nutriments perhaps
Your bodies may at last turn all to Spirit,
Improved by tract of time, and winged ascend
Ethereal, as we, or may at choice
Here or in Heav'nly paradises dwell;
If ye be found obedient, and retain
Unalterably firm his love entire
Whose progeny you are. Meanwhile enjoy
Your fill what happiness this happy state
Can comprehend, incapable of more. (5.491-505)

Taken on its own as an independent syntactic unit, the line – “Your bodies may at last turn all to spirit” – points to the sublimation of the human body to spirit as the end of this conversion process; if “all” is taken as a substantive noun, then the line implies that not

only their “bodies” but all matter becomes spirit through digestion. Adam and Eve make the choices that would allow for the sublimation of their material being, and all matter, into pure spirit, but the “corporeal nutriments” also have a vital energy in themselves that becomes the engine of their conversion.⁵⁸ “Obedience” names the teleological development that animates this sublimation, and which yokes its two causes together. A vital universe that tends towards the achievement of eventual unification of human and nonhuman substances is revealed to be a universe that derives its order from humanity’s ethical choices, here given greater influence in determining both his dwelling place and the course which natural motions follow. Adam is “perfect” and “happy” by God’s grace and making, but he can only remain so if he actively pursues his perfection – always fulfilled and yet never quite complete: “that thou art happy, owe to God; / That thou continuest such, owe to thy self, / That is, to thy obedience” (5.520-22).

But Raphael’s disclaimer – “If you be found obedient” – also confuses his account, for it seems to introduce a causal explanation that is alien to Adam’s understanding:

What meant that caution joined, *if ye be found*
Obedient? can we want obedience then
 To him, or possibly his love desert
 Who formed us from the dust, and placed us here

⁵⁸ Richard J. DuRocher, “The Wounded Earth in *Paradise Lost*,” *Studies in Philology* 93.1 (1996): 93–115. “Earth felt the wound” “extends the scope of the Fall from a human to a cosmological event” (94). Ellen Goodman, “Sway and Subjection: Natural Causation and the Portrayal of Paradise in the *Summa Theological* and *Paradise Lost*” *Milton and the Middle Ages*, ed. John Mulryan (London and Toronto: Associated UP, 1982) 73-87, points to the distinctions between Thomistic and Protestant thought on the matter of natural philosophy’s ethical dimension. Aquinas argues that the “operations of natural causation” were unaffected by original sin, though humanity’s relationship to nature was altered, but Luther and Calvin argue that nature was implicated in man’s fall (76-77). Milton takes a middle ground: “Their [i.e. Adam’s, Raphael’s, Michael’s, and the angels’] knowledge reconfirms Milton’s insistence upon the interdependence of man and nature before the Fall – the dependence of nature’s harmony on human integrity” (85).

Full to the utmost measure of what bliss
Human desires can seek or apprehend? (5.513-18)

At the root of Adam's question is a question of representation: how does one describe obedience and hierarchy, volition and necessity, when the very system that both creates and reveals these principles is not yet itself intelligible? Perhaps it is in part owing to the fact that "obedience" occupies the middle ground between natural law and positive law; it has consequences for the natural world, but it is difficult to imagine that any other created being besides humankind might disobey natural order. We might read Adam's question as a sign that he has conflated natural law with the law that requires obedience of him: he asks whether he and Eve can "want obedience" as if it were an automatic condition.

Raphael's framing of his future, and natural, election to a higher substance as a conditional statement introduces the possibility that, until now ostensibly unthinkable, things might be otherwise than what they are. Raphael reveals that obedience does not, and cannot logically, have the aspect of necessity; that it must in fact be a choice between alternatives.⁵⁹

Unlike natural law, obedience only comes about as an effect of God's positive command. And yet, when Raphael describes it as a principle that would allow Adam to perfect his natural *telos* in a political direction, the archangel also implies that it is a

⁵⁹ Lorrain Daston and Michael Stolleis, "Introduction: Nature, Law and natural Law in Early Modern Europe," *Natural Law and Laws of Nature in Early Modern Europe: Jurisprudence, Theology, Moral and Natural Theology*, eds. Lorrain Daston and Michael Stolleis (Farnham: Ashgate, 2008), 1-12, point out the conceptual problem that attends usage of "laws of nature" to describe natural motions, particularly motions that are understood to be a form of certain knowledge, since it is difficult to conceptualize how inanimate nature may be said to "obey" law except metaphorically (3). In the same volume, Catherine Wilson, "From Limits to Laws: The Constructions of the Nomological Image of Nature in Early Modern Philosophy," 13-28, takes up this problem, asking why "law," and not another correlative term, such as "logical relation, essences, correspondences, or Form," emerged in scientific discourse as the preferred term to describe natural motions (14).

principle immanent in nature itself. “Obedience” becomes a synonym for the progressive sublimation of matter into spirit that guides the trajectory of natural history, and an act of volition on Adam’s part that sets him apart from nature (for nature does automatically what Adam must choose to do). Raphael’s interdiction against prematurely striving for a happier state relates political concepts of obedience to ontological ones. Adam is, at present, “incapable of more”: that is, incapable of “comprehending” more than what he might experience in “this happy state,” Adam must remain “unalterably firm.” The original “perfection” of his being, the very nature given to him by God, can only be sustained by his perpetual submission to a nonnatural version of law, a law that regulates natural processes that shouldn’t need the law or obedience at all.

“My Author and Disposer”: Mediation, Lyric and Law in Miltonic Marriage

If the Tree as a “law” acts as a mediator that is both of and not of nature, it suggests the integral role that poetic form plays in our understanding of the relationship between nature and politics. In Milton’s depiction of social relations in the garden, “law” emerges solely within particularly lyricized celebrations of marriage and of Eve’s self-conception of her place in the social and natural world of Eden. In Book 4, Eve prefaces her song with praise for Adam as her “law” (4.635-58). A hundred lines later, the narrator’s epithalamium celebrates Adam and Eve’s marriage as a “mysterious law” (4.750). In *Paradise Lost*, marriage constitutes the vanishing point of politics, its beginning and its outer limit, and not only because it reflects the widespread arguments in seventeenth-century political thought that saw the marriage contract as a model for political partnerships, as a moral center for the well-ordered commonwealth, and as a fundamental unit of political order. As many critics have discussed, Milton’s writing on

marriage in the divorce tracts and in *Paradise Lost* reflects the emergence of arguments that analogized the marriage contract with the social contract, which, in turn, made possible an understanding of the contracting liberal subject as the central figure of political theory.⁶⁰

I argue that marriage's representation in Milton's epic rehearses a central formal problem that defines the poem's political arguments. Marriage, with its simultaneous associations with both law and lyric, occupies an unstable middle ground between prelegal and legal orders, between natural and artificial institutions. Occupying the indistinct threshold between nature and society, between the prelapsarian and postlapsarian worlds, it allows for a kind of heuristic access that cuts across these categories. This heuristic flexibility names and defines "law" as a principle of political order and as a metaphor for describing the operations of the natural world: but more than this, it also embeds human political order, represented by law, within nature, implicating human partnerships with accounts of nature's motions and operations. Marriage is also

⁶⁰ Mary Nyquist, "The Genesis of Gendered Subjectivity in the Divorce Tracts and *Paradise Lost*," *Re-membering Milton: Essays on the Texts and Traditions*, eds. Mary Nyquist & Margaret W. Ferguson (New York and London: Methuen, 1987): 99–127, summarizes a critical tradition that takes Milton's views on companionate marriage as a source of liberal ideas of "equal rights": "Milton's insistence on the contractual form of the first institution is produced by a Protestant pressed into the service of an historically specific form of individualism, an individualism paradigmatically masculine, autonomous, articulate, and preternaturally awake to the implications of entering into relations with others" (114–15). See also Lynne Greenberg, "A Preliminary Study of Informed Consent and Free Will in the Garden of Eden: John Milton's Social Contract," *Living Texts: Interpreting Milton*, eds. Kristin A. Pruitt & Charles W. Durham (Selingsgrove: Susquehanna, 2000), 99–117, which responds to Anthony Fletcher's narrative of 17th century political history as a conflict between patriarchalists and social contract theorists, the former supporting divine right monarchy, absolutism, and female subordination, and the latter supporting liberal constitutionalism, religious liberty, and freedom of choice (99). Milton's work "resides in a liminal space in which the realm of patriarchal obedience and subordination vies with a simultaneous vision of a contract-based, egalitarian society" (99). See also Matthew Biberman, "Milton, Marriage, and a Woman's Right to Divorce," *SEL* 39.1 (1999): 131–153, and Kahn, *Wayward Contracts*, 221, for arguments about Milton's understanding of the marriage contract as a model for all other social contracts.

inseparable from the problem of sociability and self-concern that makes up the fabric of the poem's ethico-political field, for it addresses the tension between self and other that Michael's later account of politics threatens, but it does not resolve it entirely. While marriage is connected to "charity" and "law," the twinned ideas that govern collective life both in Eden and in Michael's "Paradise within," as critics have argued Milton's emphasis on the male partner's ethical fulfillment within marriage also threatens to erase the female partner's status as an ethical being.⁶¹

Eve's lyric bears out these difficulties. She prefaces her lyric exposition with an acknowledgement that Adam's account of the daily routine they ought to follow seems fitting to obey, and in doing so she names her acquiescence as a kind of law:

My author and disposer, what thou bidd'st
Unargued I obey; so God ordains,
God is thy law, thou mine: to know no more
Is woman's happiest knowledge and her praise. (4.635-38)

Eve is the first to utter the name of "law" in Paradise, and moreover to acknowledge that this "law" has the appearance of a naturalized hierarchy that sets God over Adam, and Adam over Eve. John Rogers argues that Eden is naturally egalitarian, its inhabitants entirely free and self-determining. Yet Eden's social relationships also appear to enforce a gendered hierarchy. Nevertheless, Rogers argues that these vertical social arrangements

⁶¹ See Christine Froula, "When Eve Reads Milton: Undoing the Canonical Economy," *Critical Inquiry* 10.2 (1983): 321-47: "As the voice interprets her to herself, Eve is not a self, a subject, at all; she is rather a substanceless image, a mere 'shadow' without object until the voice unites her to Adam" (328). Nyquist, "Gendered Subjectivity" argues that Eve's appearance of autonomy is an effect of an emergent capitalistic economy that sentimentalizes the private sphere, but it is ultimately illusory: "To become available for the mutuality the doctrine of wedded love requires, Eve's desire therefore must in effect lose its identity, while yet somehow offering itself up for correction and reorientation" (121). For arguments about the emergence of bourgeois domesticity and sexual subordination of women within marriage in Milton, see David Aers and Bob Hodge, "'Rational Burning': Milton on Sex and Marriage," *Literature, Language and Society in England, 1580-1680*, eds. David Aers et al. (Dublin: Gill and MacMillan, 1981).

are untenable because they are effectively not natural – that is, they are not intuitive in the way that natural law is.⁶² But if “egalitarianism” is natural in Milton’s paradise, Eve also sees hierarchy as an extension of natural law, for her claim that what Adam bids is something she will obey “unargued” is also consistent with Milton’s definition in *De Doctrina Christiana* of natural law as a kind of automatic compulsion. If Eve invents an idea of law by naming it, her capacity as a kind of *de facto* legislator runs counter to her displacements of authority to others: her epithets for Adam – author and disposer – name him as both her creator and governor, and she ultimately attributes her “unargued” obedience to Adam to God’s ordination over him. Repeating a version of the narrator’s observation that Adam was created “for God only, she for God in him” (4.299), Eve positions herself within this hierarchy of legal order at a greater remove from God.

But Rogers is right to point out that Eve isn’t unequivocally subordinate to Adam. For instance, the narrator had previously attributed the source of “true authority in men” to *both* Adam and Eve’s resemblance to God:

In their looks divine
The image of their glorious maker shone,
Truth, wisdom, sanctitude severe and pure,
Severe, but in true filial freedom placed;
Whence true authority in men; though both
Not equal, as their sex not equal seemed. (4.291-96)

Locating earthly authority in the resemblance between the first humans and their creator, the narrator makes an argument for the mimetic origins of law and dominion. The passage also points to the persistent problem of difference that pervades relations of resemblance throughout the poem. Though both Adam and Eve are said to bear the image of their maker, they are “not equal” owing to their sexual difference. To the narrator, the

⁶² Rogers, “The Fruit of Marriage,” 125.

inequality in their sexes depends on mere “seeming”; Eve’s natural subjection is only “implied” (4.307). Both Adam and Eve are made in the image of God, and nevertheless they appear (“seem”) unequal. The narrator assures us that both Adam and Eve possess “true authority” that nevertheless inconsistently resembles God’s authority. The narrator makes a problem of representation, of refracted mimetic images that both are and are not like their original, into a problem of political organization. By striving to articulate a prepolitical idea of authority, the narrator grafts the language of postlapsarian politics, which grounds Eve’s exclusion from wielding the “true authority in men” in her sexual difference, on to an idea of prepolitical cosmic order. Though Adam and Eve are different, that difference is effectively meaningless without a language of political jurisdiction. The narrator’s fallen language supplies a concept of “subjection” that only approaches the “original” source and nature of their gendered difference.

Eve’s own recourse to a concept of “law” also supplies that language. Eve always exists in relation to law through its mediated forms: God’s voice, Adam, the Tree; her very existence makes this mediating relationship explicit. In other words, Eve’s being lies at a pivotal point in the poem’s constant translations of natural law into positive law. This position, however, also leaves Eve with a particular kind of pastoral lyric autonomy. Eve’s lyric, I would argue, fulfils Paul Alpers’ definition of pastoral as the “representative anecdote” of human lives insofar, as it encapsulates how her relationship to herself, to other humans, and to the nonhuman natural world – in short, her orientation to the problem of what pertains to “thee and thy being” – is necessarily mediated by a law originating obligations simultaneously from an objective external source and from her

subjective will.⁶³ In turn, this idea of Eden's pastoral presents a discourse of law that shows how natural conditions of liberty could be imagined within an idea of law that has not yet become entirely artificial. In other words, according to the poem, pastoral effects a kind of law that anticipates its own foundation even as it resists it:

No more of talk where God or Angel guest
With Man, as with his friend, familiar used
To sit indulgent, and with him partake
Rural repast, permitting him the while
Venial discourse unblamed. (9.1-5)

Pastoral is the mode for "venial discourse," and this language reveals that the concern of literary decorum is not the only reason why the narrator abandons pastoral at this crucial moment. "Venial" suggests a kind of transgression that, nevertheless, remains pardonable or allowable. But the inverted syntax, which belatedly qualifies this venial discourse with the adjective "unblamed," implies that this apparent "blamelessness" is not self-evident. Not only does pastoral represent the limit of what is permissible in Eden, offering a generic framework for understanding the scope and extent of human activities that accord with God's command, it offers a literary understanding of the vanishing point of legalistic answerability in Eden. The belated pardoning of the error that does not need pardoning (and therefore cannot be "venial" though it nevertheless bears the name of it) marks the point at which nothing is interdicted, but which could be *made* into the subject of an interdiction that requires another generic mode altogether. Consequently, the narrator turns from pastoral to tragedy in an effort to show the point when the political discourse of "just rebuke, and judgment given," emanating from a definitively external source, becomes necessary (9.9-10).

⁶³ Paul Alpers, *What is Pastoral?* (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1996), 22.

Pastoral, meanwhile, enables the paradox of a collective foundation that takes subjective individual will as a starting point. Indicating how the rhythms of pastoral labor and leisure are in tune with nature's own rhythms, Adam reminds Eve that night has come, and that they must cease their labors out of respect for the time of day. Eve's lyric response extols the wonders of the natural world, made wonderful by Adam's presence:

With thee conversing I forget all time,
 All seasons and their change, all please alike.
 Sweet is the breath of morn, her rising sweet,
 With charm of earliest birds; pleasant the sun
 When first on this delightful land he spreads
 His orient beams, on herb, tree, fruit, and flow'r,
 Glist'ring with dew; fragrant the fertile earth
 After soft showers; and sweet the coming on
 Of grateful ev'ning mild, then silent night
 With this her solemn bird and this fair moon,
 And these the gems of heav'n, her starry train:
 But neither breath of morn when she ascends
 With charm of earliest birds, nor rising sun
 On this delightful land, nor herb, fruit, flow'r,
 Glist'ring with dew, nor fragrance after showers,
 Nor grateful ev'ning mild, nor silent night
 With this her solemn bird, nor walk by moon,
 Or glittering starlight without thee is sweet.
 But wherefore all night long shine these, for whom
 This glorious sight, when sleep hath shut all eyes? (4.639-58)

Adam rules over the natural world by arranging how Eve experiences and understands it. At the same time, Eve wrests control over that capacity to arrange the world, not by taking it explicitly for herself, but by amplifying Adam's rule over her through her panegyric. Once the long, epanaleptic sentence begins, any presence of a lyric "I" that functions as a perspective focal point mediating the natural landscape disappears. This penetration of Eve's lyric subjectivity with Adam's prelapsarian legal jurisdiction therefore shows a lyric mimesis of nature as an extension of a law that is both alien to Eve, and also the structure of her consciousness and a source of delight. The "sweetness,"

the cause of delight, consists of Adam's presence, nature's engagement in dynamic symbiosis (the sun spreading its beams on the earth, the earth receiving the sky's showers, etc.) and the interdependence of Adam's presence and nature's activities; take Adam's presence away, and nature's delight, immanent in its motions, is absented, too: "not ... without thee is sweet."

Lyric also functions as a site of resistance to this externally imposed sense of order. While Adam's presence is said to permeate her experience of nature, his presence is also utterly withdrawn from it. Eve's song makes no mention of Adam until the end. This erasure produces the effect of an apparently objective natural world abstracted from both her and her "author and disposer's" mediating influence. Thus, Adam is absent from the world the poem creates, even as the poem asserts his necessary role in enabling nature to fulfill its end to delight.⁶⁴ In the absence of identifying pronouns in the first part of the poem, and in the assertion of his absence in the second, it would seem that Adam's presence in the world of nature is a decided remainder, an exclusion, whose necessity for the right operations of the world is nevertheless the thesis of the poem. Eve's poem renders the legalistic structure of cosmic order precarious even as it recreates this order.

Eve's pastoral lyric anticipates the contradictions of nature's relationship to positive law that we find in Book 5. Satan's arguments had addressed whether politics (as law) is a natural or unnatural thing; the problem is that it is both, and that problem emanates from the fact that God dispenses two kinds of natural law: an apparently objective law, external to the human mind, which governs natural motions; and a

⁶⁴ John Ray Knott, "Milton's Wild Garden," *Studies in Philology* 102.1 (2005): 66–82: "Whatever order exists in the Garden, whether in the larger pastoral landscape or in the more intimate spaces tended by Adam and Eve, coexists with this sense of an unrestricted, virginal nature playing out its own fantasies independent of any human (or angelic) presence" (68).

subjective version of natural law which originates in human will. In Book 9 we revisit this problem through Eve's perspective when she explains to Satan, disguised as a serpent, how the Tree is one of two sources of law:

Serpent, we might have spared our coming hither,
Fruitless to me, though fruit be here to excess,
The credit of whose virtue rest with thee,
Wondrous indeed, if cause of such effects.
But of this Tree we may not taste nor touch;
God so commanded, and left that command
Sole daughter of his voice; the rest, we live
Law to ourselves, our reason is our law. (9.647-54)

Eve's taxonomy of laws registers the tension elicited by the fact that both "laws" – reason and the "command" – have their origin in God and yet also have a distinct character. A synonym for "natural law," Adam and Eve's "reason" outlines a form of jurisdiction whose source is internal, enabling their self-directed ability to derive a "law to ourselves." Collapsing their reason with their will, Eve's natural law articulates sovereignty founded in legal self-determination which is not entirely inconsistent with Satan's account of his "self-begetting" that enables him to imagine himself as a source of law that competes with God's authority. Eve asserts a distinction between her reason as a source of law and God's "command," but when she calls it His "sole daughter," she also creates the command in *her* image, seeing it as a version of herself, who is another "sole daughter" of God. Recasting Eve's misrecognition of her own image in the lake in Book 4, her identification of the Father's voice as a "sole daughter" of God both collapses her self-image in God's command and effaces her own identity as a rational, autonomous, subjective being at the very moment that she asserts it as such.⁶⁵ Conflating natural law,

⁶⁵ Froula, "When Eve Reads Milton" argues of Eve's relationship to patriarchal discourse: "Eve's indoctrination into her own 'identity' is complete at the point at which her imagination is so successfully colonized by patriarchal authority that she literally becomes its voice" (329).

her own will, and God's law at the very moment when she names their distinction, Eve asserts her own autonomy even as it disappears into an obligation that comes from outside herself.

The lyric interval concludes with Eve's question about the stars: "But wherefore all night long shine these, for whom / This glorious sight, when sleep hath shut all eyes?" (4.657-58). While her account of the progression of the day and her catalog of natural objects lead up to this moment, the question at first seems associative and not fully integrated within the logic of the verse's argument, for it leads her to a realization that Adam is in fact not the center of this world, as she would like him to be. She perceives something in nature that cannot be contained or accounted for in either Adam's or God's law; it isn't until Book 8 that Raphael belatedly marks this inquiry off as interdicted knowledge. Eve's self-interruption points not only to an incompleteness that punctures the unity and parallelism of both the song's epanaleptic form and its shorter epanaleptic expression of a hierarchy of laws ("God is thy law, thou mine"), it translates a social issue of a simultaneous incompleteness and superfluity into a cosmic one. Eve's song, perhaps accidentally, points to the imperfection of the cosmic as well as social worlds it strives to imitate.

The instability of Eve's poem's understanding of the form that political relationship takes arrives at a central ambiguity in *Paradise Lost*'s argument about the ends of politics: namely, whether the political order of the law is necessary in Eden to enforce a sense of structure and obedience, or whether politics is more properly defined as an activity that is pursued, not out of necessity, but because it is a source of pleasure. Eve desires Adam's company, not because it would be something she would benefit

from, but because it amplifies the delight she takes from the natural world. In effect, Eve's lyric arrives simultaneously at two interrelated versions of human nature: one which sees an idea of institution, such as an artificial law, as a necessary corrective to nature, and another that sees it as a precondition for a natural human flourishing in affective ties. Eve's lyric becomes a way of articulating these diverging functions of law; a way of sketching the intersection between human and natural forms of order; and a way of positioning marriage at that intersection.

Shortly after Eve's account of law, the narrator's epithalamium affirms the presence and essential goodness of a paradisaal marriage law that governs erotic love.⁶⁶ In a move that is hardly surprising given the longstanding tradition that places marriage as a point of origin and model for political partnerships, its praise of wedded love identifies marriage as a foundational social institution that all postlapsarian relationships imitate:

Hail wedded Love, mysterious Law, true source
 Of human offspring, sole propriety,
 In Paradise of all things common else.
 By thee adulterous lust was driv'n from men
 Among the bestial herds to range, by thee
 Founded in Reason, Loyal, Just, and Pure,
 Relations dear, and all the charities
 Of Father, Son, and Brother first were known.
 Far be it, that I should write thee sin or blame,
 Or think thee unbefitting holiest place,
 Perpetual fountain of domestic sweets,
 Whose bed is undefiled and chaste pronounced,
 Present, or past, as saints and patriarchs used. (4.750-62)

⁶⁶ Turner, *One Flesh* addresses Milton's and his contemporaries' responses to the problem of sex in paradise, namely if Adam and Eve consummated the marriage, why was there no conception? This question in turn leads to questions about the function of marriage, and the nature of the marriage relationship: "The reconstruction of Paradisaal sexuality, then, could lead either to a world-renouncing spiritual libertinism, or to a new sense of holiness in the everyday business of matrimony" (96).

The first sentence of the epithalamium, an extended apostrophe to “wedded Love,” uses apposition to imbed marriage in a constellation of both legal and reproductive functions: “mysterious Law,” “true source / Of human offspring,” “sole propriety.” These appositive vocatives give “wedded Love” a legal character, both in naming it as an extension of divine law, and in suggesting that it is an aspect of “propriety”: that is, the “sole possession,” the only thing in Paradise that humans might claim as an exclusive right when all other things in Paradise are “common else.”⁶⁷ In *De Doctrina Christiana*, Milton defines marriage as one of two instances of originary positive right, and so its identification as such here comes as no surprise.⁶⁸ But, “sole propriety” carries with it an ontological function because it suggests that marriage confers upon humans their rights-bearing nature, as if it – and not, as is conventionally the case, reason or speech, and thus humanity’s ability to perceive and act according to natural law – definitively distinguishes human from nonhuman animals.⁶⁹ Marriage as a “mysterious law” thus creates a form of natural order by instituting (or codifying) a hierarchy between humans and animals.

The apposition in Milton’s typical hypotactic syntax forces the reader to hold two contradictory ideas of the relationship between “propriety” and “common” at once: for if we are to take “of all things common else” as syntactically parallel to the foregoing “of human offspring,” then grammatically “wedded Love” also becomes the “true source ... /

⁶⁷ Eric B. Song, *Dominion Undeserved: Milton and the Perils of Creation* (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 2013): the epithalamium is a celebration of property relations specific to Edenic marriage, showing a “strong link between marriage and reproductive politics” (61).

⁶⁸ *CPW* 6.359-63.

⁶⁹ For discussion of the relationship between human loneliness and animal contentment and sociability in Milton’s work, see Bruce Boehrer, “Animal Love in Milton: The Case of the ‘Ephitaphium Damonis,’” *ELH* 70.3 (2003): 787–811. The contrast between human solitude and animal contentment offers a language for a range of human partnerships, particularly heterosexual love (based in a language of difference) and homoerotic or homosocial bonds.

... of all things common else.” Milton’s knotty syntax reproduces the characteristic effect of the poem’s poetics that cannot settle its forms of distinction-making absolutely, but rather persistently collapses these distinctions into a homogenous field, which, in this particular instance, also cuts across ontological thresholds: “mysterious law” establishes at the same time a means of defining human exceptionality from animal creation and also a means of imagining egalitarianism and communal sharing.⁷⁰ The narrator’s address to wedded love provides a vision of egalitarianism made possible through an idea of law, but only made possible by emphasizing the exceptionality of this law to humankind. It also points to the fact that this law is also the source of the exceptionality it asserts: “By thee adulterous lust was driv’n from men, / Among the bestial herds to range.” The “mysterious law” of wedded love establishes what is held in common – “all things ... else” – precisely by producing, isolating, and governing the exception, what is *uncommon*.⁷¹

As Adam tells Raphael, reason suggested to him why animals would be unfit companions for humans: “Among unequals what society / Can sort, what harmony or true delight? / Which must be mutual, in proportion due / Given and received” (8.383-86).

That is, “proportionate” mutuality, a partnership among equals who are nevertheless unequal in some respect constitutes a “society,” one that is specifically aimed at “delight”

⁷⁰ The narrator’s hypotaxis is symptomatic of the poem’s larger struggle to formally and thematically negotiate the contrary poles of vertical and horizontal social and natural arrangements. See Ronald Levao, “‘Among Unequals What Society’: *Paradise Lost* and the Forms of Intimacy,” *Modern Language Quarterly* 61.1 (2000): 79–107: “Hierarchy jostles with egalitarianism, symmetry with asymmetry, precision with imprecision, and promises of formal completion with discoveries of incompleteness” (82). See also Christopher Warley, *Reading Class through Shakespeare, Donne, and Milton* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2014): “essence” in the poem is “an ongoing process of hierarchical organization” (146).

⁷¹ As Song, *Dominion Undeserved* argues Milton’s praise of marriage shows a tension between patriarchal rule and dominion (which would have been Adam’s boon had paradise stood) and Edenic communalism (61).

and “harmony.” The “mysterious law” of “wedded love” gives a legal name to this definition of “society.” It distinguishes between man and animals by elevating men above “adulterous lust,” imposing a presumably necessary constraint without which humans would be no different than the “bestial herds.” But the “mysterious law” creates what it opposes itself to – the extralegal and nonhuman domain of bestial desire – even as it implies that its existence was made necessary by the prior existence of the natural tendencies it seeks to correct. If adulterous lust belongs to nature, and if it arises only by the implementation of its prohibition by “wedded love,” then it follows that “nature” (or those attributes belonging to humanity’s bestial nature) exists only through the creation of the more “lawful” and rarified manifestation of the love that binds humans together in social relations. In seemingly producing its extralegal, natural corollary by its implementation, the social institution of marriage unsettles the priority of an extralegal natural world that exists before and outside the law.

When the narrator enjoins Adam and Eve to “Sleep on / Blest pair; and O yet happiest if ye seek / No happier state, and know to know no more” (4.773-75), he concludes the epithalamium with an interdiction against any ambition to strive beyond their present state. Eve’s own declaration of her “unargued” obedience to Adam prefigures the narrator’s epithalamium, for the narrator echoes Eve’s declaration that the greatest happiness is “to know no more.” That this precise phrasing should occur at the two moments in which society in Eden should be framed in terms of law serves as a reminder that what is lawful within paradise is consistent both with the married state and with an understanding of the appropriate restrictions on knowledge. Eve’s and the narrator’s pairings of a legal idea with a state of innocence intimates that a limited

presence of the law, a law stripped down to its most essential aspects, requires limited knowledge to comprehend its intentions and effects. Eve refers to an idea of an unexamined law whose arbitrary imposition *is*, in fact, its essence and final end in that it seems to exist for no other reason than to test her capacity for unquestioning obedience.

That marriage should be the “happiest” condition indicates the quality of appropriateness to the circumstances; to be happiest in marriage is to suggest that it is the state best suited to the fulfillment of human excellence. Its intimation of contentment also implies the self-sufficiency of the married state to human needs, and therefore indicates a quality of insularity. At the same time, the praise of marriage as the “happiest” state also indicates that that contentment is not only contingent, given the etymological association between happiness and an idea of fortune and fortuitousness, but that it is the *most* contingent and precarious of human conditions. The “if” forebodingly reminds us of the infelicitousness of the narrator’s wish for Adam and Eve, which places the continuance of their happiness within a conditional temporality that both he and his readers know will be counterfactual. In other words, the kinds of constancy, mutuality, rationality, justness, and proprietary dominion that the married state confers upon Adam and Eve comes only as a contingent state that depends upon their obedience to an authority externally prescribed by a “mysterious law.” The superlative adjective “happiest” places the Edenic married state at the utmost limit of human fulfillment; that they might seek beyond that limit for a “happier” state comes as a logical impossibility, as unreasonable as it is futile.

And in this way, Paradisal marriage, its expression in pastoral lyric, and its implications in natural landscapes finally suggest an alternative to artificial political form, for they suggest ideas of artificial order that nevertheless retain some aspect of their

natural origins. Marriage, lyric, and landscape all share in aspects of political form, in that they share in the structures of law that govern both politics and nature, and which seek to reconcile the gaps and fissures that would separate the two domains. Poetic form, translating natural forms into a range of social and political ones, gives shape to collective arrangements that exceed definitions of political boundaries tied to the State. Through poetic form, Milton's epic strives to reconcile a model of political ethics that takes the self-governing, contracting liberal subject as the foundational political unit with a model of political ethics tied to external obligations whose antecedents, though never explicitly assented to, are always inarguably imperative.

Bibliography

- Abraham, Lyndy. *Marvell and Alchemy*. Aldershot: Scolar, 1990.
- Acheson, Katherine O. "Military Illustration, Garden Design, and Marvell's 'Upon Appleton House.'" *English Literary Renaissance* (2011): 146-88.
- Aers, David and Bob Hodge. "'Rational Burning': Milton on Sex and Marriage." *Literature, Language and Society in England, 1580-1680*. Eds. David Aers, et al. Dublin: Gill and MacMillan, 1981. 122-51.
- Agamben, Giorgio. *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*. Trans. Daniel Heller-Roazen. Stanford: Stanford UP, 1995.
- Alpers, Paul. *What Is Pastoral?* Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1996.
- Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, rev. ed. London: Verso, 2006.
- Anderson, Judith H. *Words that Matter: Linguistic Perception in Renaissance England*. Stanford: Stanford UP, 1996.
- Archer, John Michael. *Citizen Shakespeare: Freeman and Aliens in the Language of the Plays*. New York: Palgrave, 2005.
- Arendt, Hannah. *The Human Condition*. Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1998.
- Aristotle. *The Nichomachean Ethics*. Trans. David Ross. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1998.
- . *Physics. The Basic Works of Aristotle*. Trans. Richard McKeon. New York: Random House, 1941.
- . *The Politics*. Trans. Carnes Lord. Chicago: Chicago UP, 1984.
- Armitage, David. *Ideological Origins of the British Empire*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2000.
- Attridge, Derek. "Puttenham's Perplexity: Nature, Art, and the Supplement in Renaissance Poetic Theory." *Literary Theory/Renaissance Texts*. Eds. Patricia Parker and David Quint. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1986. 255-79.
- Bacon, Francis. *The Elements of the Common Law*. London, 1630.
- Barber, C.L. *Shakespeare's Festive Comedy: A Study of Dramatic Form and Its Relation to Social Custom*. Princeton: Princeton UP, 1959.
- Baker, Alan R.H. and Gideon Biger. *Ideology and Landscape in Historical Perspective: Essays on the Meanings of Some Places in the Past*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1992.
- Baker, David J. *Between Nations: Shakespeare, Spenser, Marvell, and the Question of Britain*. Stanford: Stanford UP, 1997.
- Baker, J.H. *An Introduction to English Legal History*. London: Butterworth, 2002.
- Bellamy, Elizabeth J. "The Vocative and the Vocational: The Unreadability of Elizabeth in *The Faerie Queene*." *ELH* 54.1 (1987): 1-30.
- Belsey, Catherine. *John Milton: Language, Gender, Power*. New York: Basil Blackwell, 1988.
- . *Shakespeare and the Loss of Eden: The Construction of Family Values in Early Modern Culture*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers UP, 2000.
- Benjamin, Walter. *The Origin of German Tragic Drama*. Trans. George Steiner. London: Verso, 2009.
- Bennett, Jane. *Vibrant Matter: A Political Ecology of Things*. Durham and London: Duke UP, 2010.

- Bennett, Joan. *Reviving Liberty: Radical Christian Humanism in Milton's Great Poems*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard, 1989.
- Berger, Harry. "The Ecology of the Mind." *The Review of Metaphysics* 17.1 (1963): 109-34.
- Bernard, John D. *Ceremonies of Innocence: Pastoralism in the Poetry of Edmund Spenser*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1989.
- Berry, Edward. *Shakespeare and the Hunt*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2001.
- Biberman, Matthew. "Milton, Marriage, and a Woman's Right to Divorce." *SEL* 39.1 (1999): 131-153.
- Bieman, Elizabeth. *Plato Baptized: Towards the Interpretation of Spenser's Mimetic Fictions*. Toronto: U of Toronto P, 1988.
- Binney, Matthew W. "Milton, Locke, and the Early Modern Framework of Cosmopolitan Right." *Modern Language Review* 105.1 (2010): 31-52.
- Blair, Ann. *The Theater of Nature: Jean Bodin and Renaissance Science*. Princeton: Princeton UP, 1997.
- Bodin, Jean. *The Six Books of the Commonwealth*. Trans. M. J. Tooley. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1955.
- Boehrer, Bruce. "Animal Love in Milton: The Case of the 'Ephitaphium Damonis.'" *ELH* 70.3 (2003): 787-811.
- . *Shakespeare Among the Animals: Nature and Society in the Drama of Early Modern England*. New York: Palgrave, 2002.
- Borlik, Todd A. *Ecocriticism and Early Modern English Literature: Green Pastures*. New York: Routledge, 2011.
- Borris, Kenneth. *Allegory and Epic in English Renaissance Literature: Heroic Form in Sidney, Spenser, and Milton*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2000.
- Bristol, Michael D. "Shamelessness in Arden: Early Modern Theater and the Obsolescence of Popular Theatricality." *Print, Manuscript, and Performance*. Eds. Arthur F. Marotti and Michael D. Bristol. Columbus: Ohio State UP, 2000. 279-306.
- Burgess, Glenn. *The Politics of the Ancient Constitution: An Introduction to English Political Thought, 1603-1642*. University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State UP, 1993.
- Bushnell, Rebecca. *Green Desire: Imagining Early Modern English Gardens*. Ithaca: Cornell UP, 2003.
- Campbell, Gordon. "The Son of God in *De Doctrina Christiana* and *Paradise Lost*." *Modern Language Review* 75 (1980): 507-514.
- Carroll, William C. "Enclosure, Vagrancy, and Sedition in the Tudor-Stuart Period." *Enclosure Acts: Sexuality, Property, and Culture in Early Modern England*. Eds. Richard Burt and John Michael Archer. Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1994. 34-47.
- Cartmill, Matt. *A View to a Death in the Morning: Hunting and Nature Through History*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1993.
- Cicero. *De Inventione*. Trans. H.M. Hubbell. *The Loeb Classical Library*, No. 386: *De Inventione, de Optimo Genere, Oratorum*. Cambridge MA: Harvard UP, 1949.
- . *De Officiis*. Trans. Walter Miller. *The Loeb Classic Library*. London: William Heinemann, 1913.

- Coffin, Charles Monroe. "Creation and the Self in *Paradise Lost*." *ELH* 29.1 (1962): 1-18.
- Colie, Rosalie. *"My Echoing Song": Andrew Marvell's Poetry of Criticism*. Princeton: Princeton UP, 1970.
- . *Shakespeare's Living Art*. Princeton: Princeton UP, 1974.
- Collingwood, R.G. *The Idea of Nature*. Oxford: Clarendon, 1945.
- Collinson, Patrick. *Elizabethans*. London: Hambledon and London, 2003.
- Coole, Diana and Samantha Frost, eds. *New Materialisms: Ontology, Agency, and Politics*. Durham, NC: Duke, 2010.
- Cormack, Bradin. *A Power to Do Justice: Jurisdiction, English Literature, and the Rise of the Common Law, 1509-1625*. Chicago: Chicago UP, 2007.
- . "Shakespeare's Other Sovereignty: On Particularity and Violence in The Winter's Tale and the Sonnets." *Shakespeare Quarterly* 62.4 (Winter 2011): 485-513.
- Cosgrove, Denis E. *Social Formation and Symbolic Landscape*. Totowa, NJ: Barnes and Noble, 1984.
- Cotterill, Anne. "Marvell's Watery Maze: Digression and Discovery at Nun Appleton." *ELH* 69.1 (2002): 103-32.
- Crane, Mary Thomas. "Spenser's Giant and the New Science." *Go Figure: Energies, Forms, and Institutions in the Early Modern World*. Eds. Judith H. Anderson and Joan Pong Linton. New York: Fordham UP, 2011. 19-37.
- Creaser, John. "Prosodic Style and Conceptions of Liberty in Milton and Marvell." *Milton Quarterly* 34.1 (2000): 1-13.
- Curtis, Cathy. "The Active and Contemplative Lives in Shakespeare's Plays." *Shakespeare and Early Modern Political Thought*. Eds. David Armitage, et. al. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2009. 44-63.
- Daley, A. Stuart. "The Dispraise of the Country in *As You Like It*." *Shakespeare Quarterly* 36.3 (1985): 300-14.
- . "Where are the Woods in *As You Like It*." *Shakespeare Quarterly* 34.2 (1983): 172-180.
- Danner, Bruce. "Courteous *virtu* in Spenser's Book 6 of *The Faerie Queene*." *SEL* 38.1 (1998): 1-18.
- Daston, Lorraine and Katharine Park. *Wonders and the Order of Nature, 1150-1750*. New York: Zone Books, 1998.
- Daston, Lorrain and Michael Stolleis. "Introduction: Nature, Law and natural Law in Early Modern Europe." *Natural Law and Laws of Nature in Early Modern Europe: Jurisprudence, Theology, Moral and Natural Theology*. Eds. Lorrain Daston and Michael Stolleis. Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate, 2008. 1-12.
- Derrida, Jacques. "Force of Law: The 'Mystical Foundation of Authority.'" *Deconstruction and the Possibility of Justice*. Eds. Drucilla Cornell, Michel Rosenfeld, and David Gray Carlson. New York: Routledge, 1992. 3-67.
- . *The Politics of Friendship*. Trans. George Collins. London: Verso, 2005.
- Dillon, Janette. *Shakespeare and the Solitary Man*. Totowa, NJ: Rowman and Littlefield, 1981.
- Dixon, Michael F.N. *The Politicke Courtier: Spenser's The Faerie Queene as a Rhetoric of Justice*. Montreal and Kingston: McGill Queen's UP, 1996.
- Dobson, Andrew. *Citizenship and the Environment*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2003.

- . "States, Citizens, and the Environment." *States and Citizens: History, Theory, Prospects*. Eds. Quentin Skinner and Bo Stråth. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2003. 208-25.
- Dolven, Jeff. "The Method of Spenser's Stanza." *Spenser Studies* 19 (2004): 17-25.
- . *Scenes of Instruction in Renaissance Romance*. Chicago and London: U of Chicago P, 2007.
- Dubrow, Heather. "The Country House-Poem: A Study in Generic Development." *Genre* 12 (1979): 153-75.
- . "The Politics of Aesthetics: Recuperating Formalism and the Country House Poem." *Renaissance Literature and Its Formal Engagements*. Ed. Mark David Rasmussen. Basingstoke, Houndsmill, England: Palgrave, 2002. 67-88.
- Dundas, Judith. "To Speak Metaphorically: Sidney in the Subjunctive Mood." *Renaissance Quarterly* 41.2 (Summer 1988): 268-82.
- Dunseath, T.K. *Spenser's Allegory of Justice in Book Five of The Faerie Queene*. Princeton: Princeton UP, 1968.
- DuRocher, Richard J. "Careful Plowing: Culture and Agriculture in *Paradise Lost*." *Milton Studies* 37 (1994): 91-107.
- DuRocher, Richard J. "The Wounded Earth in *Paradise Lost*." *Studies in Philology* 93.1 (1996): 93-115.
- Dzelzainis, Martin. "Conquest and Slavery in Milton's *History of Britain*." *Oxford Handbook of Milton*. 407-23.
- . "The Politics of *Paradise Lost*." *The Oxford Handbook of Milton*. 547-68.
- Eden, Kathy. *Poetic and Legal Fiction in the Aristotelian Tradition*. Princeton, Princeton UP, 1986.
- Edwards, Karen L. "Eden Raised: Waste in Milton's Garden." *Renaissance Ecology: Imagining Eden in Milton's England*. Ed. Ken Hiltner. Pittsburg: Duquensne, 2008. 259-71.
- Egan, Gabriel. *Green Shakespeare: From Ecopolitics to Ecocriticism*. London: Routledge, 2006.
- Empson, William. *Milton's God*. London: Chatto and Windus, 1969.
- . *Some Versions of Pastoral*. New York: New Directions, 1974.
- Erickson, Lee. "Marvell's *Upon Appleton House* and the Fairfax Family." *English Literary Renaissance* 9 (1979): 158-68.
- Escobedo, Andrew. *Nationalism and Historical Loss in Renaissance England: Foxe, Dee, Spenser, Milton*. Ithaca: Cornell UP, 2004.
- Esposito, Roberto. *Communitas: The Origin and Destiny of Community*. Trans. Timothy Campbell. Stanford: Stanford UP, 2010.
- Estok, Simon C. *Ecocriticism and Shakespeare: Reading Ecophobia*. Houndsmill: Palgrave, 2011.
- Evans, J. Martin. *Milton's Imperial Epic: Paradise Lost and the Discourse of Colonialism*. Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1996.
- Eyber, Vitaliy. *Andrew Marvell's "Upon Appleton House": An Analytic Commentary*. Madison: Fairleigh Dickinson UP, 2010.
- Fallon, Robert Thomas. *Divided Empire: Milton's Political Imagery*. University Park, PA: Penn State UP, 1995.

- Fallon, Stephen M. *Milton Among the Philosophers: Poetry and Materialism in Seventeenth-Century England*. Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1996.
- . "'The strangest piece of reason': Milton's *Tenure of Kings and Magistrates*." *Oxford Handbook*. 241-51.
- Faust, Joan. "Blurring the Boundaries: *Ut pictura poesis* and Marvell's Liminal Mower." *Studies in Philology* 104.4 (2007): 526-55.
- Ferguson, Arthur B. *Utter Antiquity: Perceptions of Prehistory in Renaissance England*. Durham and London: Duke UP, 1993.
- Fichter, Andrew. *Poets Historicall: Dynastic Epic in the Renaissance*. New Haven: Yale UP, 1982.
- Fish, Stanley. *Surprised by Sin: The Reader in Paradise Lost*. 2nd ed. Cambridge, MA: Harvard, 1998.
- Fletcher, Angus. *The Prophetic Moment: An Essay on Spenser*. Chicago and London: Chicago UP, 1971.
- Froula, Christine. "When Eve Reads Milton: Undoing the Canonical Economy." *Critical Inquiry* 10.2 (1983): 321-47.
- Foucault, Michel. *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences*. New York: Vintage, 1994.
- . *Security, Territory, Population*. Trans. Graham Burchell. New York: Picador, 2004.
- Fowler, Alastair. "Country House Poems: The Politics of a Genre." *Seventeenth Century* 1.1 (1986): 1-14.
- Frye, Northrop. *The Anatomy of Criticism*. Princeton: Princeton UP, 1957.
- Fudge, Erica. *Brutal Reasoning: Animals, Rationality, and Humanity in Early Modern England*. Ithaca and London: Cornell UP, 2006.
- Fulton, Thomas. "Areopagitica and the Roots of Liberal Epistemology." *English Literary Renaissance* 34.1 (2004): 33-50.
- . *Historical Milton: Manuscript, Print, and Political Culture in Revolutionary England*. Amherst: U of Massachusetts P, 2010.
- Fumerton, Patricia. *Cultural Aesthetics: Renaissance Literature and the Practice of Social Ornament*. Chicago and London: U of Chicago P, 1991.
- Galbraith, David. *Architectonics of the Imagination in Spenser, Daniel, and Drayton*. Toronto: U Toronto P, 2000.
- Gavin, Dominic. "'The Garden' and Marvell's Literal Figures." *Cambridge Quarterly* 37.2 (2008): 224-52.
- Gaylon, Linda. "Puttenham's *Enargeia* and *Energeia*: New Twists for Old Terms." *Philological Quarterly* 60.1 (1981): 29-40.
- Greenberg, Lynne. "A Preliminary Study of Informed Consent and Free Will in the Garden of Eden: John Milton's Social Contract." *Living Texts: Interpreting Milton*. Eds. Kristin A. Pruitt & Charles W. Durham. Selingsgrove: Susquehanna, 2000. 99-117.
- Greenblatt, Stephen. *Marvelous Possessions: The Wonder of the New World*. Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1991.
- Greenfield, Sayre N. *The Ends of Allegory*. Newark: U of Delaware P, 1998.
- Griffin, Patsy. "'Twas no religious house till now': Marvell's 'Upon Appleton House.'" *SEL* 28 (1988): 61-76.

- Grossman, Marshall. *"Authors to Themselves": Milton and the Revelation of History*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1987.
- . *The Story of All Things: Writing and the Self in English Renaissance Narrative Poetry*. Durham, NC: Duke UP, 1998.
- Grotius, Hugo. *De juri belli ac pacis*. Trans. Francis W. Kelsey et. al. Indianapolis: Howard Sams, 1962.
- . *The Freedom of the Seas*. Trans. Ralph Van Deman Magoffin. New York: Oxford UP, 1916.
- Goldberg, Jonathan. *Endlesse Worke: Spenser and the Structures of Discourse*. Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins UP, 1981.
- Goodman, Ellen. "Sway and Subjection: Natural Causation and the Portrayal of Paradise in the *Summa Theological* and *Paradise Lost*." *Milton and the Middle Ages*. Ed. John Mulryan. London: Associated UP, 1982. 73-87.
- Grogan, Jane. *Exemplary Spenser: Visual and Poetic Pedagogy in The Faerie Queene*. Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate, 2009.
- Gross, Kenneth. *Spenserian Poetics: Idolatry, Iconoclasm, and Magic*. Ithaca and London: Cornell UP, 1985.
- Grady, Hugh. *Shakespeare and Impure Aesthetics*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2009.
- Greene, Roland. "A Primer of Spenser's Worldmaking: Alterity in the Bower of Bliss." *Worldmaking Spenser: Explorations in the Early Modern Age*. Eds. Patrick Cheney and Laura Silberman. Lexington, KY: UP of Kentucky, 2000. 9-31.
- Guillory, John. *Poetic Authority: Spenser, Milton and Literary History*. New York: Columbia UP, 1983.
- Haber, Judith. *Pastoral and the Poetics of Self-Contradiction: Theocritus to Marvell*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2002.
- Hadfield, Andrew. *Shakespeare and Renaissance Politics*. London: Arden, 2004.
- . *Spenser's Irish Experience: Wilde Fruit and Salvage Soyl*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1997.
- Hagar, Alan. *Shakespeare's Political Animal: Schema and Schemata in the Canon*. Newark: U of Delaware P, 1990.
- Halliwell, Stephen. *The Aesthetics of Mimesis: Ancient Texts and Modern Problems*. Princeton: Princeton UP, 2002.
- Hamilton, A.C., ed. *The Spenser Encyclopedia*. Toronto: U of Toronto P, 1990.
- Hammill, Graham. *The Mosaic Constitution: Political Theology and Imagination from Machiavelli to Milton*. Chicago: U of Chicago P, 2012.
- Haraway, Donna. "A Manifesto for Cyborgs: Science, Technology, and Socialist Feminism in the 1980s." *The Haraway Reader*. New York: Routledge, 2004. 7-46.
- . "The Promises of Monsters: A Regenerative Politics for Inappropriate/d Others." *The Haraway Reader*. New York: Routledge, 2004. 63-124.
- . *When Species Meet*. Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 2007.
- Harrison, Robert Pogue. *Forests: The Shadow of Civilization*. Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1992.
- Haskin, Dayton. *Milton's Burden of Interpretation*. Philadelphia: U of Penn P, 1994.
- Helfer, Rebecca. *Spenser's Ruins and the Art of Recollection*. Toronto: U of Toronto P, 2012.

- Helgerson, Richard. *The Forms of Nationhood: The Elizabethan Writing of England*. Chicago: Chicago UP, 1992.
- . *Self-Crowned Laureates: Spenser, Jonson, Milton and the Literary System*. Berkeley: U of California P, 1983.
- Heninger, S.K. *Sidney and Spenser: The Poet as Maker*. University Park, PA: Penn State UP, 1989.
- Herron, Thomas. *Spenser's Irish Work: Poetry, Plantation, and Colonial Reformation*. Aldershot, Hampshire, England: Ashgate, 2007.
- Hibbard, G.R. "The Country House Poem of the Seventeenth Century." *Journal of the Warburg and Courtland Institutes* 19 (1956): 158-68.
- Highly, Christopher. *Shakespeare, Spenser, and the Crisis in Ireland*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1997.
- Hiltner, Ken. *Milton and Ecology*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2003.
- Hirst, Derek and Steven Zwicker. "Andrew Marvell and the Toils of Patriarchy: Fatherhood, Longing, and the Body Politic." *ELH* 66.3 (Fall 1999): 629-54.
- . "High Summer at Nun Appleton, 1651: Andrew Marvell and Lord Fairfax's Occasions." *The Historical Journal* 36 (1993): 247-69.
- Hobbes, Thomas. *Leviathan*. Ed. C.B. Macpherson. London: Penguin, 1985.
- Holstun, James. "Will you Rent our Ancient Love Asunder?": Lesbian Elegy in Donne, Marvell, and Milton." *English Literary History* 54.4 (Winter 1987): 835-67.
- Honig, Bonnie. *Political Theory and the Displacement of Politics*. Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1993.
- Honig, Edwin. *Dark Conceit: The Making of Allegory*. Cambridge: Walker-DeBerry, 1960.
- Hoxby, Blair. "Areopagitica and Liberty." *Oxford Handbook of Milton*. 218-37.
- Hutson, Lorna. *The Invention of Suspicion: Law and Mimesis in Shakespeare and Renaissance Drama*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2007.
- Huth, Kimberly. "Come Live With me and Feed My Sheep: Invitation, Ownership, and Belonging in Early Modern Pastoral Literature." *Studies in Philology* 108.1 (2011): 44-69.
- Iverson, Duncan. "The Nature of Rights and the History of Empire." *British Political Thought in History, Literature, and Theory, 1500-1800*. Ed. David Armitage. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2006. 191-210.
- Jenkins, Hugh. *Feigned Commonwealths: The Country House Poem and the Fashioning of the Ideal Community*. Pittsburgh: Duquense UP, 1998.
- Jordan, Constance. "The Household and the State: Transformations in the Representation of an Analogy from Aristotle to James I." *Modern Language Quarterly* 54.3 (1993): 307-326.
- Kahn, Victorian. "'The Duty to Love': Passion and Obligation in Early Modern Political Theory." *Representations* 68 (1999): 84-107.
- . *Wayward Contracts: The Crisis of Political Obligation in England, 1640-1674*. Princeton: Princeton UP, 2004.
- Kendrick, Christopher. "Agons of the Manor: 'Upon Appleton House' and Agrarian Capitalism." *The Production of English Renaissance Culture*. Eds. David Lee Miller, Sharon O'Dair, and Harold Webbers. Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1994. 13-55.

- Kingsley-Smith, Jane. *Shakespeare's Drama of Exile*. Houndsmill, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave, 2003.
- Kinney, Clare Regan. *Strategies of Poetic Narrative*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1992.
- Knott, John Ray. "Milton's Wild Garden." *Studies in Philology* 102.1 (2005): 66–82.
- Komorowski, Michael. "Public Verse and Property: Marvell's 'Horation Ode' and the Ownership of Politics." *ELH* 79.2 (Summer 2012): 315–40.
- Kottman, Paul A. *A Politics of the Scene*. Stanford: Stanford UP, 2007.
- . *Tragic Conditions in Shakespeare: Disinheriting the Globe*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 2009.
- Kronenfeld, Judy. "Jaques and the Pastoral Cult of Solitude." *Texas Studies in Literature and Language* 18.3 (1976): 451–73.
- Kuhn, Maura Slattery. "Much Virtue in If." *Shakespeare Quarterly* 28.1 (1977): 40–50.
- . "Milton, Lucretius, and 'the Void Profound of Unessential Night.'" *Living Texts: Interpreting Milton*. Eds. Kristin A. Pruitt & Charles W. Durham. Selingsgrove: Susquehanna, 2000. 198–217.
- Latour, Bruno. *The Politics of Nature: How to Bring the Sciences into Democracy*. Trans. Catherine Porter. Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 2004.
- . *We Have Never Been Modern*. Trans. Catherine Porter. Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1993.
- Leonard, John. *Naming in Paradise: Milton and the Language of Adam and Eve*. Oxford: Clarendon, 1990.
- Levao, Ronald. "'Among Unequals What Society': *Paradise Lost* and the Forms of Intimacy." *Modern Language Quarterly* 61.1 (2000): 79–107.
- Levin, Harry. *The Myth of the Golden Age in the Renaissance*. Bloomington and London: Indiana UP, 1969.
- Lewalski, Barbara. *Paradise Lost and the Rhetoric of Literary Form*. Princeton: Princeton UP, 1985.
- Lezra, Jacques. *Unspeakable Subjects: The Genealogy of the Event in Early Modern England*. Stanford: Stanford UP, 1997.
- Loewenstein, David and Paul Stevens. "Introduction." *Early Modern Nationalism and Milton's England*. Eds. David Loewenstein and Paul Stevens. Toronto: U of Toronto P, 2008. 3–21.
- Loewenstein, David. *Representing Revolution in Milton and his Contemporaries: Religion, Politics and Polemics in Radical Puritanism*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2001.
- Low, Anthony. *The Georgic Revolution*. Princeton: Princeton UP, 1984.
- Lupton, Julia Reinhard. "Home-Making in Ireland: Virgil's Eclogue 1 and Book VI of *The Faerie Queene*." *Spenser Studies* 8 (1990): 119–45.
- . "Hospitality," *Early Modern Theatricality*. Ed. Henry S. Turner. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2014. 423–31.
- . *Thinking with Shakespeare: Essays on Politics and Life*. Chicago and London: U of Chicago P, 2011.
- Macauley, David. "Hannah Arendt and the Politics of Place: From Earth Alienation to Oikos." *Minding Nature: The Philosophers of Ecology*. Ed. David Macauley. New York: Guilford, 1996. 102–33.

- MacCaffrey, Isabel G. *Spenser's Allegory: The Anatomy of Imagination*. Princeton: Princeton UP, 1976.
- MacMillan, Ken. *Sovereignty and Possession in the English New World: The Legal Foundations of Empire, 1576-1640*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2006.
- Malcolmson, Christina. "The Garden Enclosed / The Woman Enclosed: Marvell and the Cavalier Poets." *Enclosure Acts: Sexuality, Property, and Culture in Early Modern England*. Eds. Richard Burt and John Michael Archer. Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1994. 251-69.
- Maley, Willy Maley. *Nation, State and Empire in English Renaissance Literature, Shakespeare to Milton*. Houndsmill, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave, 2003.
- . "'To Weet to Work Irenaes Franchisement': Ireland in *The Faerie Queene*." *Irish University Review* 22.2 (1996): 303-17.
- Marshall, Cynthia. "The Double Jaques and Constructions of Negation in *As You Like It*." *Shakespeare Quarterly* 49.4 (1998): 375-92.
- Marvell, Andrew. "Damon the Mower." *The Poems of Andrew Marvell*, rev. ed. Ed. Nigel Smith. Harlow, England: Longman, 2007. 135-39.
- . "The Garden." *The Poems of Andrew Marvell*. 152-59.
- . "The Mower's Song." *The Poems of Andrew Marvell*. 144-45.
- . "Upon Appleton House." *The Poems of Andrew Marvell*. 210-41.
- McClung, William. *The Country House in English Renaissance Poetry*. Berkeley: U of California P, 1977.
- McColley, Diane Kelsey. "Ecology and Empire." *Milton and the Imperial Vision*. Eds. Balachandra Rajan and Elizabeth Sauer. Pittsburg: Duquense UP, 1999. 112-29.
- . *Poetry and Ecology in the Age of Milton and Marvell*. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007.
- McEachern, Claire. *The Poetics of English Nationhood, 1590-1612*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1996.
- McKeon, Michael. "The Pastoral Revolution." *Refiguring Revolutions: Aesthetics and Politics from the English Revolution to the Romantic Revolution*. Eds. Kevin Sharpe and Steven Zwicker. Berkeley: U of California P, 1998. 267-89.
- Mentz, Steve. *At the Bottom of Shakespeare's Ocean*. London: Continuum, 2009.
- . "Tongues in the Storm: Shakespeare, Ecological Crisis, and the Resources of Genre." *Ecocritical Shakespeare*. Eds. Lynn Bruckner and Dan Brayton. Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate, 2011. 155-71.
- Miller, Jacqueline T. "The Courtly Figure: Spenser's Anatomy of Allegory." *SEL* 31.1 (1991): 51-68.
- Milton, John. *Complete Prose Works of John Milton*, 8 vols. Eds. Don M. Wolfe et al. New Haven: Yale UP, 1953-82.
- . *Paradise Lost*. 2 ed. Ed. Alistair Fowler. New York: Routledge, 1997.
- . *De Doctrina Christiana*. *Complete Prose Works*. Vol. 6.
- . "The Digression." *Complete Prose Works*. Vol. 5. 405-67.
- . *The History of Britain*. *Complete Prose Works*. Vol. 5. 1-403.
- . "The Readie and Easie Way to Estbalish a Free Commonwealth." *Complete Prose Works*. Vol. 7. 396-463.
- . "The Tenure of Kings and Magistrates." *Complete Prose Works*. Vol. 3. 190-258.
- . "A Treatise of Civil Power in Ecclesiastical Causes." *Complete Prose Works*. Vol. 7. 229-73.

- Monette, Sarah. "Speaking and Silent Women in *Upon Appleton House*." *SEL* 42.1 (2002): 155-71.
- Montrose, Louis Adrian. "'Eliza, Queen of the Shepherdes,' and the Pastoral of Power." *ELR* 10.2 (1980): 153-82.
- . "Spenser and the Elizabethan Political Imaginary." *ELH* 69.4 (Winter 2002): 907-46.
- Morris, Harry. "*As You Like It*: Et in Arcadia Ego." *Shakespeare Quarterly* 26.3 (1975): 269-75.
- Morton, Timothy. *Ecology Without Nature*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 2007.
- . *Hyperobjects: Philosophy and Ecology After the End of the World*. Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 2013.
- Murphy, Erin. *Familial Forms: Politics and Genealogy in Seventeenth-Century Literature*. Newark: U of Delaware P, 2011.
- Nagel, D. Brendan. *The Household as Foundation of Aristotle's Polis*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2006.
- Nicholson, Catherine. "Pastoral in Exile: Spenser and the Poetics of English Alienation." *Spenser Studies* 23 (2008): 41-71.
- . *Uncommon Tongues: Eloquence and Eccentricity in the English Renaissance*. Philadelphia: U of Pennsylvania P, 2014.
- Norbrook, David. *Poetry and Politics in the English Renaissance*, rev. ed. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2002.
- . *Writing the English Republic: Poetry, Rhetoric and Politics 1627-1660*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2000.
- Northrop, Douglas A. "The Uncertainty of Courtesy in Book VI of *The Faerie Queene*." *Spenser Studies* 14 (2000): 215-32.
- Nuttall, A.D. *Shakespeare the Thinker*. New Haven: Yale UP, 2007.
- Nyquist, Mary. *Arbitrary Rule: Slavery, Tyranny, and the Power of Life and Death*. Chicago: Chicago UP, 2013.
- . "The Genesis of Gendered Subjectivity in the Divorce Tracts and *Paradise Lost*." *Remembering Milton: Essays on the Texts and Traditions*. Eds. Mary Nyquist & Margaret W. Ferguson. New York: Methuen, 1987. 99-127.
- O'Connell, Michael. *Mirror and Veil: The Historical Dimension of Spenser's The Faerie Queene*. Chapel Hill: U of North Carolina P, 1977.
- Parker, Patricia. *Literary Fat Ladies: Rhetoric, Gender, Property*. New York: Methuen, 1987.
- Patterson, Annabel. *Censorship and Interpretation: The Conditions of Writing and Reading in Early Modern England*. Madison: U of Wisconsin P, 1984.
- . "The Egalitarian Giant: Representation of Justice in History/Literature." *Journal of British Studies* 31.2 (1992): 97-132.
- . *Marvell and the Civic Crown*. Princeton: Princeton UP, 1978.
- . *Pastoral and Ideology: Virgil to Valéry*. Berkeley: U of California P, 1987.
- . "Why is there no rights talk in Milton's Poetry?" *Milton, Rights, and Liberties*. Eds. Christopher Tournu and Neil Forsyth. Bern, 2007. 197-202.
- Patton, Brian. "Preserving Property: History, Genealogy, and Inheritance in *Upon Appleton House*." *Renaissance Quarterly* 49.4 (1996): 824-39.
- Pelton, Markku. *Classical Humanism and Republicanism in English Political Thought, 1570-1640*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1995.

- Phillips, James E. "Renaissance Concepts of Justice and the Structure of *The Faerie Queene*, Book V," *Huntington Library Quarterly* 33.2 (Feb 1970): 103-120.
- Pinet, Simone. *Archipelagoes: Insular Fictions from Chivalric Romance to the Novel*. Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 2011.
- Plucknett, Theodore F.T. *A Concise History of the Common Law*, 5th ed. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1956.
- Pocock, J.G.A. *The Ancient Constitution and the Feudal Law: A Study in English Historical Thought in the Seventeenth Century*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1957.
- . "The Mobility of Property and the Rise of Eighteenth-Century Sociology." *Virtue, Commerce, and History: Essays on Political Thought and History, Chiefly in the Eighteenth Century*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1985. 103-23.
- Poole, Kristen. "Naming, *Paradise Lost*, and the Gendered Discourse of Perfect Language Schemes." *English Literary Renaissance* 38.3 (2008): 535-59.
- Puttenham, George. *The Arte of English Poesie, a Critical Edition*. Eds. Frank Wingham and Wayne A. Rebhorn. Ithaca: Cornell UP, 2007.
- Quilligan, Maureen. *The Language of Allegory: Defining the Genre*. Ithaca and London: Cornell UP, 1979.
- Quint, David. *Epic and Empire: Politics and Generic Form from Virgil to Milton*. Princeton: Princeton UP, 1993.
- Quitslund, Jon A. *Spenser's Supreme Fiction: Platonic Natural Philosophy and The Faerie Queene*. Toronto: U of Toronto P, 2001.
- Radzinowicz, Mary Ann. "The Politics of *Paradise Lost*." *John Milton*. Ed. Annabel Patterson. London: Longman, 1992. 12-42.
- Rees, Valery. "Ficinian Ideas in the Poetry of Edmund Spenser." *Spenser Studies* 24 (2009): 73-133.
- Rivlin, Elizabeth. *The Aesthetics of Service in Early Modern England*. Evanston, IL: Northwestern UP, 2012.
- Ronk, Martha. "Locating the Visual in *As You Like It*." *Shakespeare Quarterly* 52.2 (2001): 255-76.
- Rogers, John. "The Fruit of Marriage in *Paradise Lost*." *Milton and Gender*. Ed. Catherine Gimelli Martin. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2004. 115-32.
- . *The Matter of Revolution: Science, Poetry and Politics in the Age of Milton*. Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1996.
- Rumrich, John. "Milton's Arianism: Why it Matters," *Milton's Heresy*. Eds. Stephen B. Dobranski and John Rumrich. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1998. 75-92.
- . "Milton's God and the Matter of Chaos." *PMLA* 110.5 (1995): 1035-1046.
- . *Milton Unbound*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1996.
- . "Milton's Theanthropos: The Body of Christ in *Paradise Regained*." *Milton Studies* 42 (2003): 50-67.
- Ryan, Kiernan. *Shakespeare's Comedies*. Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2009.
- Sanders, Julie. *The Cultural Geography of Early Modern Drama, 1620-1650*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2011.
- Sandy, Amelia Zurcher. "Pastoral, Temperance, and the Unitary Self in Wroth's *Urania*." *SEL* 42.1 (2002): 103-119.
- Schmitt, Carl. *The Concept of the Political*. Trans. George Schwab. Chicago: U of Chicago P, 2007.

- Schoenfeldt, Michael C. "The Poetry of Conduct: Accommodation and Transgression in The Faerie Queene, Book 6," *Enclosure Acts: Sexuality, Property, and Culture in Early Modern England*. Ed. Richard Burt & John Michael Archer. Ithaca and London: Cornell UP, 1994. 151-69.
- Schochet, Gordon J. *Patriarchalism in Political Thought: The Authoritarian Family and Political Speculation and Attitudes Especially in Seventeenth-Century England*. Oxford: Blackwell, 1975.
- Schwartz, Regina. "Milton's Hostile Chaos: 'And the Sea Was No More.'" *ELH* 52.2 (1985): 337-374.
- Seznec, Jean. *The Survival of the Pagan Gods: The Mythological Tradition and Its Place in Renaissance Humanism and Art*. Trans. Barbara F. Sessions. Princeton: Princeton UP, 1972.
- Shannon, Laurie, *The Accommodated Animal: Cosmopolity in Shakespearean Locales*. Chicago and London: U of Chicago P, 2013. 1-81.
- . "Poor, Bare, Forked: Animal Sovereignty, Human Negative Exceptionalism, and the Natural History of *King Lear*." *Shakespeare Quarterly* 60.2 (2009): 168-196.
- Shakespeare, William. *As You Like It*. Ed. Leah Marcus. New York: W.W. Norton, 2012.
- Sidney, Philip. *An Apology for Poetry, or The Defence of Poesy*. Ed. Geoffrey Shepherd. London: Nelson, 1965.
- Simpson, A.W.B. *An Introduction to the History of the Land Law*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1961.
- . *Legal Theory and Legal History: Essays on the Common Law*. London: Hambledon, 1987.
- Skinner, Quentin. *Foundations of Modern Political Thought*. Vol. 2. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1978.
- Skinner, Quentin. "The Idea of Negative Liberty." *Philosophy in History: Essays on the Historiography of Philosophy*. Eds. Richard Rorty, et. al. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1984. 193-221.
- Skripp, Victor. *Crisis and Development: An Ecological Case Study of the Forest of Arden, 1570-1674*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1978.
- Smith, Nigel and Nicholas McDowell, eds. *The Oxford Handbook of Milton*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2009.
- Smith, Nigel. *Andrew Marvell: The Chameleon*. New Haven and London: Yale UP, 2010.
- Smith, Thomas. *De Republica Anglorum*. Ed. Mary Dewar. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1982.
- Spenser, Edmund. *The Faerie Queene*, 2nd edition. Ed. A.C. Hamilton. Harlow, UK: Longman, 2007.
- Snyder, Susan. *Pastoral Process: Spenser, Marvell, Milton*. Stanford: Stanford UP, 1998.
- Song, Eric B. *Dominion Undeserved: Milton and the Perils of Creation*. Ithaca: Cornell UP, 2013.
- Steadman, John. *Moral Fiction in Milton and Spenser*. Columbia, MO: U of Missouri P, 1995.
- Stillman, Robert. *Sidney's Poetic Justice: The Old Arcadia, Its Eclogues, and Renaissance Pastoral Traditions*. Lewisburg, PA: Bucknell UP, 1986.

- Strain, Virginia. "The Winter's Tale and the Oracle of Law." *ELH* 78.3 (Fall 2011): 557-84.
- Sullivan, Jr., Garret. *The Drama of Landscape: Land, Property, and Social Relations on the Early Modern Stage*. Stanford: Stanford UP, 1998.
- Suttie, Paul Suttie. "The Lost Cause of Platonism in *The Faerie Queene*." *Spenser Studies* 24 (2009): 413-30.
- Teskey, Gordon. *Allegory and Violence*. Ithaca and London: Cornell UP, 1996.
- Thomas, Keith. *Man and the Natural World: Changing Attitudes in England 1500-1800*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1996.
- Thornton, Bruce. "Rural Dialectic: Pastoral, Georgic, and *The Shepheardes Calendar*," *Spenser Studies* 9 (1991): 1-20.
- Tonkin, Humphrey. *Spenser's Courteous Pastoral: Book Six of the Faerie Queene*. Oxford: Clarendon, 1972.
- Tranter, Kirsten. "The Sea Itself Doest Thou Not Plainly See?: Reading *The Faerie Queene* Book V." *Spenser Studies* 21 (2006): 83-107.
- Tuck, Richard. *Natural Rights Theory: Their Origin and Development*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1979.
- . *Philosophy and Government, 1572-1651*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1993.
- Turner, James Grantham. *One Flesh: Paradisal Marriage and Sexual Relations in the Age of Milton*. Oxford: Clarendon, 1987.
- . *The Politics of Landscape: Rural Scenery and Society in English Poetry, 1630-1660*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1979.
- Uhlig, Claus. "'The Sobbing Deer': *As You Like It*, II.i.21-66, and the Historical Context." *Renaissance Drama* 3 (1970): 79-109.
- Van Dyke, Carolynn. *The Fiction of Truth: Structures of Meaning in Narrative and Dramatic Allegory*. Ithaca and London: Cornell UP, 1985.
- Van Es, Bart. *Spenser's Forms of History: Elizabethan Poetry and the 'State of Present Time'*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2002.
- Vickers, Brian. "'The Power of Persuasion': Images of the Orator, Elyot to Shakespeare." *Renaissance Eloquence: Studies in the Theory and Practice of Renaissance Rhetoric*. Ed. James J. Murphy. Berkeley: U of California P, 1983. 411-35.
- Viroli, Maurizio. *From Politics to Reason of State: The Acquisition and Transformation of the Language of Politics, 1250-1600*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1992.
- Waddington, Raymond B. "Moralizing the Spectacle: Dramatic Emblems in *As You Like It*." *Shakespeare Quarterly* 33.2 (1982): 155-63.
- Warley, Christopher. *Reading Class through Shakespeare, Donne, and Milton*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2014.
- Watson, Robert N. *Back to Nature: The Green and the Real in the Late Renaissance*. Philadelphia: U of Pennsylvania P, 2006.
- Wayne, Don E. *Penshurst: The Semiotics of Place and the Poetics of History*. Madison: U of Wisconsin P, 1984.
- White, R.S. *Natural Law in English Renaissance Literature*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1996.
- Williams, Raymond. *The Country and the City*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1975.
- . "Ideas of Nature." *Culture and Materialism*. London: Verso, 1980. 67-85.

- Wilson, Catherine. "From Limits to Laws: The Constructions of the Nomological Image of Nature in Early Modern Philosophy." *Natural Law and Laws of Nature in Early Modern Europe: Jurisprudence, Theology, Moral and Natural Theology*. Eds. Lorraine Daston and Michael Stolleis. Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate, 2008. 13-28.
- Wilson, Luke. *Theaters of Intention: Drama and Law in Early Modern England*. Stanford: Stanford UP, 2000.
- Wilson, Richard. "Like the Old Robin Hood: *As You Like It* and the Enclosure Riots." *Shakespeare Quarterly* 43.1 (1992): 1-19.
- Winstanley, Gerrard. "The Law of Freedom in a Platform." *The Complete Works of Gerrard Winstanley*. Vol. 2. Eds. Thomas N. Corns, et. al. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2009.
- Withington, Phil. *The Politics of the Commonwealth: Citizens and Freemen in Early Modern England*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2005.
- Woodbridge, Linda. "Country Matters: *As You Like It* and the Pastoral-Bashing Impulse." *Re-Visions of Shakespeare: Essays in Honor of Robert Ornstein*. Ed. Evelyn Gajowski. Newark, DE: U of Delaware P, 2004. 189-214.
- Worden, Blair. "Milton's Republicanism and the Tyranny of Heaven." *Machiavelli and Republicanism*. Eds. Gisela Bock, Quentin Skinner, and Maurizio Viroli. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1990. 225-46.