

EARLY MODERN LITERARY STUDIES



Marvell's Maps: Reading Empire through Microcosm at Nun Appleton

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To begin with a micro-episode of fictional history: Andrew Marvell peruses Thomas Fairfax's library at Nun Appleton. He comes across two books that propel his imagination from his patron's Yorkshire estate to distant lands across the Atlantic, the nurseries of England's fledgling empire. One, Thomas Gage's *The English-American his Travail by Sea and Land* (1648), recounts the author's journeys across the Spanish territories in what will become Mexico and Central America. The other, Edward Norgate's *Miniatura* (1628, rev. 1648), is a study of 'the art of limning' in miniscule dimensions, divided into considerations of pictures 'by the Life, Landskip, and History' and written by an erstwhile cartographer who once mapped Bermuda to aid England's imperial venture there. The former book is dedicated to Fairfax himself; the latter to his daughter Mary, whom Marvell tutors from 1650 to 1652, writing, at some point during that period, his country-house poem 'Upon Appleton House'.¹ To move from historical to literary speculation: both books leave their mark on that topography-in-verse. Gage's descriptions of Mexican feather paintings, appealing to the poet's strikingly visual and spatially acute sensibility, are acknowledged in the poem's glancing reference to a 'Mexique painting' (580). More profoundly, Norgate's techniques instruct Marvell in a method of expressing that sensibility by *writing* in miniature, condensing geography onto a page.

As Norgate's career demonstrates, the ability to draw in miniature could be imperially useful. This essay argues that Marvell's poem attempts to take advantage of such utility by depicting the estates at Nun Appleton as a microcosm of larger, even global, spatial expanses, and that this dimensional reframing shapes its depicted contest between

¹ *The Poems of Andrew Marvell, Revised Edition*, ed. by Nigel Smith (Harlow: Pearson Longman, 2007), p. 234, n.580; Rosalie L. Colie, *'My Echoing Song': Andrew Marvell's Poetry of Criticism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970), p. 194 n. 12. I quote from Smith's edition throughout.

retirement and civic engagement.² To safeguard his political future in the new Protectorate, Marvell had to avoid ruffling the feathers of both Fairfax, who had recently decided to resign his military post and retire to his ancestral estates at Nun Appleton, and Oliver Cromwell, who wanted the general to extend the civil wars into Scotland.³ He had, in other words, to depict the virtue of political withdrawal without unduly slighting the virtue of expansive political and military activity. The poem's microcosmic strategy is an attempted solution to this conundrum, allowing Marvell to depict Fairfax's house as at once its own self-contained 'world' and a necessary node in the global networks of Cromwell's new England, a nation of purified Protestantism and imperial promise. In foregrounding the poem's multidimensionality, I hope to show how a long-recognized feature of the poem, its virtuosic manipulation of space, conveys particular political meanings that have received less attention.⁴ Scale itself, I suggest, gets politicized at Marvell's Nun Appleton, where the spatial logic that underwrites national expansion is transmuted into the techniques of poetic figuration. To recognize this canny appropriation – and miniaturization – of that which rightfully belongs to long epic, namely the concerns of nation and empire, is to appreciate the poem's unusual generic status as an epic-in-miniature. Recent criticism has revealed how the poem extends, and even subverts, epic tropes, especially the celebration of family genealogy as the patriarchal means of ensuring futurity; thus Katie Kadue has highlighted the rhetoric of preservation in the poem's vision of a 'suspended' futurity, one that can replace the traditionally progressive 'linear teleology' that David Quint identified as the structuring temporal feature of epic.⁵ But

² For other announcements of explicitly dialectical readings of the poem, see John M. Wallace, *Destiny his Choice: The Loyalism of Andrew Marvell* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1968), p. 248, and M.J.K. O'Loughlin, 'This Sober Frame: A Reading of "Upon Appleton House"', in *Andrew Marvell: A Collection of Critical Essays*, ed. by George deF. Lord (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1968), pp. 120-42 (p. 124).

³ Marvell would indeed enjoy fine political fortunes in the Interregnum government throughout the 1650s. Obsequious poems such as 'The First Anniversary' (1655) ensured his status as Cromwell's *de facto* laureate, and in 1657 he succeeded Milton as Latin secretary to the Council of State. See Nigel Smith, *Andrew Marvell: The Chameleon* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010), pp. 136-65.

⁴ For older, representative readings of the poem's spatial and perspectival dynamics, see David Evett, "'Paradice's Only Map': The 'Topos' of the 'Locus Amoenus' and the Structure of Marvell's 'Upon Appleton House'", *PMLA* 85.3 (1970), 504-13; Frederic H. Roth, Jr., 'Marvell's "Upon Appleton House": A Study in Perspective', *Texas Studies in Literature and Language* 14.2 (1972), 269-81; and Jonathan Crewe, 'The Garden State: Marvell's Poetics of Enclosure', in *Enclosure Acts: Sexuality, Property, and Culture in Early Modern England*, ed. by Richard Burt and John Michael Archer (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1994), pp. 270-89.

⁵ Katie Kadue, 'Sustaining Fiction: Preserving Patriarchy in Marvell's *Upon Appleton House*', *Studies in Philology* 114.3 (2017), 641-61 (pp. 644-5); David Quint, *Epic and Empire: Politics and Generic Form from Virgil to Milton* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), p. 9.

‘Upon Appleton House’, in modifying the matter of epic, also transforms the specifically imperial energies at the heart of that genre. Though designed to flatter Fairfax by celebrating his retreat from public life – indeed, retirement and seclusion themselves – as sage and necessary acts, the poem manages to sound imperial notes of national expansion even within its localized country-house setting. In so doing, Marvell develops a novel rhetoric of empire that differs significantly from the traditional figurative resources undergirding the politics of epic. This rhetoric emanates from rooted, landed domesticity rather than from maritime questing; as such, it is shaped by tropes of miniaturization rather than those of enlargement.

The work’s localisms are temporal as well as spatial: it is attuned to the pressures of the immediate moment, acutely aware of the reputations of the historical and political figures it treats. When Fairfax, chief commander of the Parliamentary forces in the First Civil War, resigned rather than invade Scotland and fight its Presbyterians in 1650, he exposed himself to the slings of furious rumormongering, even to charges of betrayal from former followers. His faint attraction to Royalism, and his known objections to the execution of Charles I in 1649, helped inspire gossip-charged skepticism about his true political allegiances. Such distrust fed on the lack of hard facts about the general’s reasoning, which he was unwilling or unable to fully explain, pointing instead to a set of interior promptings with presumably divine origins. ‘What my conscience yields unto as just and lawful’, he explained to the Council of State committee when resigning, ‘I shall follow, and what seems to me otherwise I will not do. My conscience is not satisfied, and therefore I must desire to be excused’.⁶ The rhetoric of this apologia seeps into stanza 45 in Marvell’s poem, a meditation on privacy’s relationship to publicity figured in vegetative and floral imagery:

For he did, with his upmost skill,
Ambition weed, but conscience till.
Conscience, that heaven-nursèd plant,
Which most our earthly gardens want.
A prickling leaf it bears, and such
As that which shrinks at every touch;
But flowers eternal, and divine,
That in the crowns of saints do shine. (45; 353-60)

Fairfax’s ‘shrinking’ conscience is just one in a panoply of figured withdrawals throughout the poem. The paradox implied here is that this righteous shyness must be

⁶ Clements R. Markham, *A Life of the Great Lord Fairfax* (London: Macmillan, 1870), p. 360.

performed in public and therefore can't help but be interpreted as, say, antagonistically 'prickly' behavior. In 1650, such attempts to read the commander's illegible interior were rampant. As with most gossip, the essential privacy and unknowability of his motivations increased the circulation in public conjecturing about them. 'The peaceful retreat of Appleton House was a retreat within a larger context of military activity', Michael Wilding writes, 'and Fairfax's withdrawal from engagement in that activity was something that could not but have been talked about and speculated upon'.⁷

Though this was a kind of scandal that carried real historical and political weight, it was quickly read through the sexualized lenses that often color perceptions of possible wrongdoings by those in power. The shrinking Fairfax was coded as a weakly effeminate pushover, a characterization that acquired currency from the forward behavior of his excessively 'masculine' and politically questionable wife, whose outbursts at Charles's trial had won her notoriety: 'When the President interrupted the King, and required his answer to the charge exhibited in the name of the Commons of England, Lady Fairfax again interrupted the proceedings... and cried out, "It is a lie – not half the people. Where are they and their consents? Oliver Cromwell is a traitor"'.⁸ Lady Fairfax's opposition to the Scottish campaign was widely understood as a cause of her husband's resignation, so that the question of who, exactly, was the commander in the family became an urgently public, not merely a private, subject for anxious gossip.⁹ Marvell's country-house poem, then, had to address the status of a controversial figure whose decision to prioritize privacy had ironically resulted in the kind of fervent public speculation that thrives on transgressions of the border between seclusion and exposure.¹⁰ The poem, in other words, is an effort to manage scandal. One of its strategies for doing so is the displacement of the immediately present, topical, and problematic material of gossip onto established cultural scapegoats, familiar tropes provoking reflexive revilement. Thus the specter of an excessively powerful, rhetorically skilled, Lady Fairfax-like woman is contained and neutered through its conversion into the nunnery episode's licentious prioress, a

⁷ Michael Wilding, *Dragons Teeth: Literature in the English Revolution* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987), p. 168.

⁸ Markham, p. 349.

⁹ Annabel Patterson, *Marvell and the Civic Crown* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978), p. 96; Wilding, p. 141.

¹⁰ For a fine-grained account of Marvell's negotiation of the especially delicate poet-patron position in the summer of 1651, the likely period of composition, see Derek Hirst and Steven Zwicker, 'High Summer at Nun Appleton, 1651: Andrew Marvell and Lord Fairfax's Occasions', *The Historical Journal* 36.2 (1993), 247-69 (p. 253). For a general account of Marvell's relationship with Fairfax, see Smith, *Andrew Marvell*, pp. 94-9.

comfortably anti-Catholic figure.¹¹ Microcosm, I argue, works in much the same way throughout the poem: it is a containing device for problematic narratives, a way of defusing scandalous and politically troubling energies, of transmuting slanderous material into the material of sanction.

Proper containment, in fact, is the theme of the poem's opening stanzas, which didactically celebrate the virtues of a properly humble, diminished home while decrying the 'unproportioned dwellings' of the estate's vainer neighbors (10). Human shelters, the poet argues, should be determined by the size and needs of the human body itself, just as 'beasts are by their dens expressed; / And birds contrive an equal nest' (11-12). Like Ben Jonson contrasting Penshurst with gaudy mansions, Marvell transforms Nun Appleton's seeming weakness, its modest proportions, into the very model of a counterintuitive aesthetic of restraint.¹² That aesthetic hinges on the collapse of the architectural onto the corporeal: the most praiseworthy houses, the poet suggests, are the ones that are least 'superfluously spread' and nearest to their owners' bodies, more clothing than palace (17). These houses even take on the attributes of the bodies they sheathe. Appleton, for example, 'does sweat, / And scarce endures the Master great: / But where he comes the swelling hall / Stirs, and the square grows spherical' (49-52). The personification of the structure, its sweating, reinforces its status as a near-extension of its resident, both house and body working in tandem as a unified organism. These striking conceits lay the groundwork for later stanzas' use of microcosm: the reader is primed to interpret the house as representationally malleable, now able to take on attributes of a human organism, now the attributes of a nation. The first lines portray a world characterized by figurative slippage from one dimensional scale to another, a world that fosters the growth of microcosm and metaphor.

Just as these stanzas encourage a reading 'inward' from house to body, so they compel a reading 'outward' from Appleton to England. Witness the poem's first couplet: 'Within this sober frame expect / Work of no foreign architect' (1-2). The 'frame' of the house – and, one suspects, of the poem itself – is immediately announced as emphatically English, sounding a nationalist note that will persist throughout the ninety-seven stanzas. This note

¹¹ Hirst and Zwicker, 260-2.

¹² As Lee Erickson points out, the large house at Appleton traditionally associated with Marvell was likely built a few years after the poem's composition. Marvell would thus have been familiar with the much humbler dwelling developed from the former Cistercian convent depicted in the work; see 'Marvell's *Upon Appleton House* and the Fairfax Family', *English Literary Renaissance* 9.1 (1979), 158-68 (pp. 162-5). John M. Wallace links the poem's celebration of plain style with larger rhetorical trends in the poetic tradition of the early seventeenth century (*Destiny his Choice*, p. 237).

is soon joined by undertones of nascent imperialism, expressed through references to crucial moments in ancient Roman history in stanzas four and five. The poet notes that, at Appleton, one can ‘the dimensions find / Of that mores sober age and mind, / When larger-sized men did stoop / To enter at a narrow loop’ (27-30). This is historical code: it refers to a similar moment in Virgil’s *Aeneid* when Aeneas visits Evander’s ‘lowly dwelling’ soon after arriving in Italy near the future site of Rome (VIII. 359-68).¹³ Rome’s origins also inform the next stanza, with its prediction of a distant, presumably more glorious future, when Fairfax may be so celebrated that the humble stature of his house will inspire awe. The speaker expects that ‘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’ (37-40). Through these references to Rome’s key founders at moments of relative modesty, even squalor, the poem reveals its sensitivity to the vertiginous widening of historical perspective that occurs when one considers the banal contingencies that underlie grand events – like, say, the birth of the West’s most expansive polity. Even Rome hinged on a visit to a hut; even transcontinental empire begins in a ‘bee-like cell’. Through what M.J.K. O’Loughlin identifies as ‘the openness of the house to history... put[ting] our awareness of size and style in the context of history, in the presence of the Roman past or in the future significance of the English present to the later generations that will return here’, Marvell constructs a precise historical parallel that maps Rome’s progress onto England’s.¹⁴ He tries to imagine the present moment with a fully historical consciousness, as future generations might. Through the Roman analogues, he locates Appleton at a crucial historical juncture, a ‘founding moment’ just prior to the fledgling, isolated state’s eruption into international history. He manages, that is, to root the kernel of empire in the domestic home.

For Marvell and his contemporaries, the Roman example’s most relevant detail was the transition from republic to empire. If the ‘sober’ Roman republic was a foreshadowing type of the Protectorate, could the subsequent Roman empire likewise hold a mirror to England’s near future? If the former world power provided a convenient historical prism through which to consider imperial expansion, another, more recent *theoretical* prism confirmed the link between that expansion and a republican model of government: the political philosophy of Nicolò Machiavelli. In the influential writings of the Florentine thinker, English readers found a definition of republicanism as both a safeguard of domestic liberty and a spur for imperial enlargement. *Libertas*, in this view, was closely tied to *imperium*, not opposed to it; as Julianne Werlin interprets this notion, ‘The pursuit and preservation of liberty may require the conquest of others – liberty for oneself need

¹³ See Nigel Smith’s note in *The Poems of Andrew Marvell*, p. 217 n. 29-30.

¹⁴ O’Loughlin, 127.

not entail, and indeed is incompatible with, liberty for all'.¹⁵ This aspect of Machiavellian thought would have appealed to the Protectorate's imperial republicans, who believed that the health of Cromwell's state depended on a border-crossing military belligerence, despite the ostensible incompatibility of such expansionism with the new state's values. Marvell himself delicately navigated this complicated political terrain in his Cromwell poems of the 1650, celebrating the commander who quelled rebellion in Ireland and 'once more joined us to the continent'.¹⁶ As Machiavelli had shown, and as Cromwell's increasing military ambitions seemed eager to prove, republican virtue at home could be honed through martial valor abroad.

If the opening stanzas of 'Upon Appleton House' gesture at a possible future progression from, or yoking of, republic to empire, how can such a broadening of political definitions coexist with the poem's obvious (and perhaps necessary) attraction to the pleasures of retirement? Fairfax, after all, resigned his command precisely *because* he could not share Cromwell's desire for an expansive war across the Scottish border. Indeed, Marvell makes clear that his patron's withdrawal to Yorkshire involves a rejection of a specifically maritime form of power:

And yet there walks one on the sod
Who, had it pleased him and God,
Might once have made our gardens spring
Fresh as his own and flourishing.
But he preferred to the Cinque Ports
These five imaginary forts:
And, in those half-dry trenches, spanned
Power which the ocean might command. (44; 345-52)

The 'Cinque Ports', the bastions of the Royal Navy on the coasts of Sussex and Kent, would have been Fairfax's to command had he remained a member of the Council of State.¹⁷ At once within the nation and without it, protective and aggressive, they existed both as defensive markers, protecting the England's interior, and as outposts from which offensive forays against international enemies could be launched. Within the poem, then,

¹⁵ Julianne Werlin, 'Marvell and the Strategic Imagination: Fortification in *Upon Appleton House*', *The Review of English Studies* 63.260 (2012), 370-87 (pp. 373-4).

¹⁶ Ibid, 378. See also Blair Worden, 'Andrew Marvell, Oliver Cromwell, and the Horatian Ode', in *The Politics of Discourse: The Literature and History of Seventeenth-Century England*, ed. by Kevin Sharpe and Steven Zwicker (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987), pp. 147-80.

¹⁷ See Nigel Smith's note in *The Poems of Andrew Marvell*, p. 226 n. 349.

they imply both national integrity and coiled imperial force. Arriving as it does in the midst of an extended figuring of Appleton's gardens as a martial landscape, stanza 44's comparison of the Cinque Ports to the 'five imaginary forts' located on Fairfax's grounds suggests a topical interpretation of the estate as nationalist microcosm. Within this Little England, whose war-scarred topography bears a remarkable resemblance to a realm wracked by civil conflict, Fairfax still retains his identity as a commander. The scalar diminution of his power's reach from 'the ocean' to 'those half-dry trenches' is not just a bathetic anticlimax; in actively preferring the gardens' five forts to the Cinque Ports, the domestic hearth to the coastal arsenal, the general has preserved his quality of military potency. Marvell's language is judiciously diplomatic, alive to the continuation of his patron's martial capability: Fairfax '*might* [have] command[ed]' the ocean, and so, potentially if not actually, *could* still be the Lord High Admiral, England's main wielder of imperial power. His retirement is not final because his regenerative qualities, that which 'might once have made our gardens spring', still attach to his person.

Hence the garden-as-microcosm is very explicitly not a replacement of that for which it stands; it diminishes neither Fairfax himself nor the country which he could have made 'flourish'. Rather, the relationship between dimensions is metonymic as well as metaphorical, contiguous rather than substitutive, a complex figuration that renders *both* options – country seclusion and maritime dominance – simultaneously viable. As Marvell's martial refiguring of the estate demonstrates, the specter of international power cannot vanish from Nun Appleton any more than the facts and images of warfare's havoc can be expelled from the English countryside. Thus even the gardens are figuratively imbued with imperial power through the representational contamination of Marvell's language. Revealing how the garden passages derive from 'diagrammatic illustrations that represent the world schematically rather than naturalistically – that show the world as it was measured and made use of, rather than as it was seen and enjoyed' – Katherine Acheson argues that this visual culture encouraged 'forms of 'dominion' through which open spaces are made into territory and possession'.¹⁸ From this vantage point, Fairfax's gardens exhibit a notion of space as inherently suggestive of political ideas, of basic concepts of property ownership and the privileged powers that derive from it. Thus the garden, like the estate as a whole, does not imply a retreat from politics and public life, but a transfiguration of them. The 'five imaginary forts' do not replace the Cinque Ports; rather, the Cinque Ports haunt the 'forts' and the estate which they adorn.

¹⁸ Katherine O. Acheson, 'Military Illustration, Garden Design, and Marvell's "Upon Appleton House"', *English Literary Renaissance* 41.1 (2011), 146-88 (pp. 148 and 179).

Appleton's failure to exist as a perfectly contained, removed *locus amoenus* is characteristic of what Werlin calls 'Marvell's repeated use of figures of containment giving way, of limits being breached or extended', a literary strategy she sees underwriting the depiction of the political 'relation between republic and empire' in the Cromwell poems.¹⁹ Cromwell's imperialist counselors viewed the civil war, and the mass mobilization it entailed, as linchpins for England's entry into international prominence. As Barbara Donagan writes, 'The nature and terms of legitimation of war reflected the country's integration into international military and intellectual culture'.²⁰ Even the defensive forts and bastions erected during the 1640s came to symbolize the potential for England's spread; military containment ironically implied military expansion, an association perfectly suitable for a Machiavellian program of republican empire.²¹ This pragmatic awareness, in fact, likely informed the very long tradition of imagining gardens as both military bastions and microcosms for empire. Ancient Roman aristocrats frequently designed gardens as miniature replications of their larger world, even to the point of naming their small streams 'Nile' or 'Euripus'.²² More recently, Diego Saavedra de Fajaro's *Idea Principis Christiano-Politici* (Brussels, 1649) had designated the garden as an ideal military training ground for a prince.²³ This fluidity of gardens' representational capacities, the constant figurative swellings of their size, must have appealed to the Marvellian obsession with perspectival flux, so crucial to the optic play in 'Upon Appleton House'.²⁴

The poet's interdimensional imagination seizes on another microcosmic possibility raised by the Cinque Ports: the traditional association of gardens' 'five bastions' with the five

¹⁹ Werlin, 377-8.

²⁰ Barbara Donagan, *War in England, 1642-1649* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), p. 23.

²¹ England itself, of course, was traditionally figured as an island fortress, most famously in Shakespeare's *Richard II*: 'This fortress built by Nature for herself, / Against infection and the hand of war' (II.i.43-4). For a discussion of these traditions, and an account of the furious bulwark- and fortress-construction in the 1640s, see Werlin, 375.

²² See Don Cameron Allen, *Image and Meaning: Metaphoric Traditions in Renaissance Poetry* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1960), pp. 197-8. For Renaissance texts that demonstrate how 'comprehensiveness was a contemporary ideal in landscape-painting', see *Andrew Marvell: A Critical Anthology*, ed. by John Carey (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1969), p. 306 n. 1.

²³ See James Turner, *The Politics of Landscape: Rural Scenery and English Poetry 1630-1660* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1979), pp. 70-1.

²⁴ For a study of the poem's perspectival shifts that also locates it in an era of increased fascination with optic devices, see Frederic H. Roth, Jr., 'Marvell's "Upon Appleton House": A Study in Perspective', *Texas Studies in Literature and Language* 14.2 (1972), 269-81.

human senses. Describing the construction of the Appleton gardens by one of Fairfax's ancestors, Marvell is careful to stress the parallels with the general's own retirement:

Who, when retired here to peace,
His warlike studies would not cease;
But laid these gardens out in sport
In the just figure of a fort;
And with five bastions it did fence,
As aiming one for ev'ry sense. (36; 283-8)

The poet describes this first Thomas Fairfax as irrepressibly defined by his militarism; having supposedly found peace, he must transmute his 'warlike studies' into 'sport' rather than fully 'cease' them. This extension of the battlefield into the garden provides a historical excuse for the poet's later mock-heroic transformation of the landscape into a combat zone. But it also lends him the imagistic tools by which he can rescale the garden in the 'opposite' direction, contracting it to the contours of the human body as well as inflating it to a national dimension. The correspondence of the 'five bastions' to 'ev'ry sense' was a Renaissance commonplace; it also appears in the extended bodily metaphor of Edward Benlowes's long religious poem *Theophila* (1652), which is likewise eager to establish a numerological connection between the familiar horticultural adornment and the weighty coastal presence of the Cinque Ports:

...Then be sure
That all thy outworks stand secure...
...Design
With constant care a watch o'er every part;
Ev'n at thy Cinque-ports, and at thy heart
Set sentinels... (23-9)

Benlowes's moralistic admonitions play on the senses' locations on the body's 'borders', managing the body's intake of sense data from the exterior world just as England's naval 'outworks' manage the island's *national* boundaries.²⁵ The anxious self-maintenance of the individual body becomes a valuable method of preserving the body politic, erecting, in the words of Marvell's poem, a protective and form-giving 'fence'. But if Benlowes's poem, moving freely from body to nation, is representative of the frequent seventeenth-century use of topological tropes that read the state in terms of the individual person and

²⁵ *The Poems of Andrew Marvell*, p. 224 n. 285-8 and p. 226 n. 349; Carey, *Andrew Marvell: A Critical Anthology*, p. 305 n. 1.

vice versa, its reference to ‘outworks’ suggests the role of aristocratic estates, especially houses and gardens, as intermediating stops along these metaphoric routes. According to a long tradition of architectural theory that stretched back to Vitruvius, a house, symbolizing its owner’s body, could (and should) be modeled on human anatomy.²⁶ *Partheneia Sacra* (1633), an emblem book of Catholic devotion written by English Jesuit Henry Hawkins, succinctly expresses this ideal:

What are the most judicious Artizans, but the Mimiks of Nature? This same in our *House* is seen, comparing it with the fabric of our natural bodies, wherein the high *Architect* of the world hath displayd such skil as even stupifies the human reason to enter into it...²⁷

Hawkins’s symbolic account of architecture, in which human design and craftsmanship emerges as an attempt to replicate the natural world, possibly underwrites Marvell’s keen imagining of Appleton House as a plastic extension of Fairfax’s body, a fleshy, responsive organism that (as we have seen) ‘swell[s]’ ‘to endure the Master great’. Together with the poem’s association of garden bastions with sensing organs, that passage suggests that the poet’s interest in the metaphoric relationship between estate and owner was a highly developed one. He may also have adopted the mannered deployment of anthropomorphism in another country-house poem of the mid-seventeenth century, Constantijn Huygens’s *Hofwijk* (published in 1653, but likely composed between 1650 and 1651). Describing his own rural retreat, Huygens represented its house as a head and its gardens as a body. Marvell met the Dutch poet while visiting Holland during his four years on the continent in the mid-1640s, and though the chronology of influence remains uncertain, their two nearly contemporaneous works are remarkably similar in their carefully guided surveys of country-house estates. In particular, the ornate descriptions of the forests near Appleton closely echo Huygens’s rich topography.²⁸

²⁶ *The Poems of Andrew Marvell*, p. 216 n. 6-8.

²⁷ Quoted in Colie, p. 187. For a hypothesis that Marvell encountered Hawkins’s book as an undergraduate at Cambridge, see Smith, *Andrew Marvell*, p. 36. For an interpretation that reads Hawkins’s influence in *Upon Appleton House*’s first stanza, see *The Poems of Andrew Marvell*, p. 216 n. 5-6.

²⁸ For the anthropomorphic section in Huygens’s poem, see *A Selection of the Poems of Sir Constantijn Huygens (1596-1687)*, Revised Edition, ed. and tr. by Peter Davidson and Adriaan van der Weel (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2015), pp. 188-189, ll. 977-990. For a discussion of the relationship between Marvell and Huygens, as well as a detailed comparison of their country-house poems, see pp. 265-271 in that volume. See also Smith, *Andrew Marvell*, pp. 49.

These complex metaphorical exchanges between the three tiers of a dimensional framework – body, house-garden, and nation-empire all representing, and therefore blending with, one another – ensure the poem’s own ‘failure of containment’, the inability of its visual scales to maintain themselves and of its author to assume a stable perspective. From the viewpoint of a young, unknown tutor struggling to sustain multiple, occasionally competing lines of patronage, though, this is a happy failure. For metaphor here becomes a mode of political argument as well as the vehicle for unusually dynamic portraiture. The work’s unstable microcosms demonstrate how empire itself can be contained in a man, especially one of Fairfax’s stature and ability. The imagistic transfers, in other words, allow this singular man to be more than individual, to contain political multitudes, to embody a house or even a nation on the cusp of empire. Fairfax (as well as his daughter, as the last stanzas demonstrate) wields an uncanny power over the structures and land he owns. As he influences the house, so he may enjoy a symbiotic relationship with England and its future; he has eschewed the Cinque Ports, but their imperial potential still clings to him. The nation may still swell to endure its master.

This master, the poem takes pains to show, is genetically suited for such a leadership position, capping a long line of noble Fairfaxes whose deeds animate the work’s first half. Crucially, these deeds are distinguished by their geographic intrepidity: the family, it seems, tends to express its military courage through invasion. That history begins close to home, with William Fairfax’s rescue of Isabel Thwaites from the clutches of the Cistercian nuns whose convent once stood on Nun Appleton’s grounds (in fact, it was likely the structure from which the poem’s house was developed) (stanzas 33-4). That rescue is depicted as a forceful border-crossing: ‘Young Fairfax *through the wall* does rise’ (258; italics mine). The fledgling hero tests his mettle through violent trespass, one that is both sexualized (the invasion as righteous rape) and politicized (this invasion as metaphor for the justified conquest of irreligious nations). William’s action epitomizes a kind of engaged, belligerent Protestantism, willing to forge empire in the name of doctrinal rectitude. This religious justification for expansion also undergirds the achievements of William’s descendants, who replicate his feat on a far larger scale:

Is not this he whose offspring fierce
Shall fight through all the universe;
And with successive valour try
France, Poland, either Germany;
'Til one, as long since prophesied,
His horse through conquered Britain ride? (31; 241-6)

These exploits take place in a field of spatial boundlessness: the sons – the three Thomases who continue William’s line, including Marvell’s patron – are able to fight ‘through all the universe’, especially in a Europe plagued by irreligion. William’s miniature battle against the wicked nuns is magnified through the decades by his ‘offspring fierce’; his original invasion is depicted as a type from which typical Fairfax activity is cast. His small invasion is transmuted into his descendants’ actual invasions of foreign territory. Appleton, then, becomes an incubator of proper Protestant Englishness, which can be generously spread throughout Europe in the furtherance of imperial anti-Catholicism.²⁹

Significantly, though, this familial expansiveness only circulates out of Nun Appleton in order to return there: Fairfax’s ancestors merely ‘try’ France, Poland, and Germany so that he can fully realize the family’s promise back in England. What began at Appleton comes back to Appleton, thanks to Fairfax’s retirement, which, on its surface, seems to be a neat inverse of the family’s earlier ventures, a withdrawal that closes the circle of imperial enlargement. But the poem has shown that Fairfax genealogy proceeds according to an accumulative logic: just as William’s actions shape those of his sons, so those sons’ actions inform the commander’s. Like the cultural residue of the Cinque Ports, the legacy of past Fairfax endeavor accrues to Marvell’s patron. He may have withdrawn for now, the poet emphasizes, but it’s clear that a capacity for righteous invasion lies genealogically coiled within him, a quality that inheres in his very blood and body. Indeed, the poem ends with a roll-call of European place names, manors whose hollow splendor and renown only offsets the indigenous primacy of Appleton’s ‘somber frame’:

For you Thessalian Tempé’s seat
Shall now be scorned as obsolete;
Aranjuez, as less, disdained;
The Bel-Retiro as constrained;
But name not the Idalian grove,
For ’twas the seat of wanton Love;
Much less the dead’s Elysian fields,
Yet nor to them your beauty yields. (95; 753-60)

²⁹ ‘By depicting Fairfax as a type of Protestant heroic virtue and primarily using that image of him to frame the nunnery episode’, A.D. Cousins writes, ‘Marvell’s persona...indicates that the principles of ideal community lie not in Catholicism (pictured as belonging to the past) but are rather to be found in the singular, Protestant world of Nun Appleton’; see ‘Marvell’s “Upon Appleton House, to my Lord Fairfax” and the Regaining of Paradise’, in *The Political Identity of Andrew Marvell*, ed. by Conal Condren and A.D. Cousins (Brookfield: Scolar Press, 1990), pp. 53-84 (p. 69).

Harkening back to stanza 31's narrative of continental conquest, this climactic display of aesthetic one-upsmanship makes sure to contrast Fairfax's home with the spiritual deserts of Catholic Spain and the pagan, moribund wilderness of Greece and Rome. Extending and refiguring the poem's earlier limning of English religious crusade, Marvell stages a contest between cultures by evaluating their telling architectural and geographic expressions. The adjectives affixed to the foreign losers in this battle are revealing, particularly the critique of Spain's Bel-Retiro as 'constrained'. The criteria by which this *agon* will be determined seem clear: it is Appleton's expansive fluidity, and the culture of overseas involvement it has nurtured, that have secured its present dominance over the enclosed, impotent, and sacrilege-tainted estates overseas. Fairfax's estate, like the man himself, conceals a dynamic imperial history within its deceptively bounded borders. In this it is like any metropole, any compressed center of power that commands vast swaths of territory. From this viewpoint, the Fairfax family take on emblematic value as a prototypically, and ideally, English community, symbols of the nation, its post-Reformation history, and its hopefully expansionist future.

'Upon Appleton House' thus attempts to define its values by naming their opposites. Such a strategy, of course, depends on legibility: Nun Appleton must be read, Bel-Retiro must be analyzed, and these interpretations must be clear. The poet, accordingly, assigns great significance to his capacity for expansive and extensive vision. The ability to manage different dimensional scales, to move gracefully from microcosm to macrocosm, is integral to this effective spatial navigation. In the geopolitical context established by this essay, one might term such a practice 'imperial reading': easily gleaning the whole from the part, extracting a wealth of data from a seemingly minor object or detail. This method is 'imperial' because it mimics the dimensional relationship between a small metropole, especially an insulated one like England, and the extensive territory over which it rules. Such an interpretive practice is fitting in a poem where, as we have seen, figurative techniques of scalar shift are politicized in the service of a nationalist agenda. The poet's most explicit self-aggrandizing declaration of visionary proficiency occurs when he is wandering in the Appleton forests, observing the play of the leaves:

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. (73; 577-84)

Describing himself as both uniquely privy to the recorded insights of the sibyl, the classical prophetess, and imbued with an overactive ‘fancy’ that can imaginatively construe her messages, the speaker proceeds to emphasize the sheer economy of his interpretive work. He can swiftly construct a single ‘history’ from the variety of the sibyl’s leaves, a history that somehow encompasses the entirety of classical and scriptural tradition – ‘what Rome, Greece, Palestine ere said’. Earlier stanzas’ invocation of the congruence between Roman and English history make it difficult to read these lines innocently: they suggest that the materials of European culture have been shepherded to England, that the island nation has become the true repository of European civilization, and that this knowledge inheres in its soil and vegetation.

Alongside this temporal compression – many eras’ worth of knowledge accessible in a single view – is the spatial and geographic collapse implied by the reference to a ‘Mexique painting’.³⁰ Marvell possibly encountered descriptions of these ‘paintings’, which were composed of feathers, in Gage’s book, whose dedication underscored the international reach of Fairfax’s reputation.³¹ In the context of the stanza as a whole, the image becomes more than just an exotically incongruous detail naturally suggested by the circumstances of the leafy scene. The passage strategically yokes an Old, exhausted World to a still-beckoning New one, portraying England, and Marvell’s Appleton especially, as the crucial pivot point where the material promise of the latter can meet the accrued wisdom of the former. At its most extreme, the poet’s metaphor claims that the bedrock of continental culture can be reconstituted and refigured as an American medium in a nation that is responsive and accessible to both worlds.³² As Robert Cummings notes, Marvell would not have been the first to connect the culture of America’s natives with the

³⁰ Drawing on an image from the last stanza, Colie sees ‘an amphibiousness of time as of place’ in the poem. She analyzes its ‘interpenetration of time and place’ in *My Echoing Song*, pp. 250-63. Along similar lines, Turner describes the work as ‘a prospective poem...a visual survey of places which reveal the argument of past and future’ (*The Politics of Landscape*, p. 84).

³¹ Mexican feather paintings later appear (to lesser glory) in Marvell’s *Last Instructions to a Painter* (1667), ll. 13-14: ‘...if to match our crimes thy skill presumes, / As the Indians, draw our luxury in plumes’. For depictions of geographically ‘topsy turvy’ worlds, such as ‘the Antipodes’ referred to in ‘Upon Appleton House’’s last stanza, Marvell may have turned to Bishop Wilkins’s *A Discourse concerning A New World and Another Planet* and Richard Brome’s play *The Antipodes* (both 1640). See Carey, *Andrew Marvell: A Critical Anthology*, p. 308 n. 2.

³² Marvell’s own receptiveness to news from the New World is also demonstrated by the prioress’s reference to the ‘sea-born amber’ the nuns use on their clothing. This is ambergris, collected from the surface of tropical seas; it also shows up in Marvell’s ‘Bermudas’, which he wrote a few years later for John Oxenbridge, a Commissioner for the colony’s government (see Smith, *Andrew Marvell*, pp. 112-15 and Colie, p. 141).

ritualistic traditions of the distant classical past. Accounts of Mexican and Virginian religious ceremonies in Renaissance travel literature often borrowed details from similar descriptions of priestly rites found in classical literature, while Theodore de Bry's engravings, based on the watercolors John White painted in Virginia, garb natives in (supposedly) ancient British dress. History and exploration provided multiple models of primitivism. For Cummings, the forest sequence's densely syncretic layering of ceremonial details from a variety of international traditions allows Marvell to 'try out different versions of himself', from ancient Greek cultist to Druid priest to American shaman.³³ This gleeful pantomiming, though, should not be read as some expression of inert cosmopolitan curiosity. The poet seeks interpretive power, and even in the seemingly pure ludic loafing in the forest, his self-fashioning serves specific political ends. His implied grouping of Mexico with 'Greece, Rome, and Palestine', like the catalog of foreign place names in stanza 95, seems organized, in part, based on religious criteria: these are all locales tainted by irreligion, that is, a lack of Protestantism. Stanza 42 depicts a process of purification-through-reading, a cyclical interplay of destruction (the 'consuming' of the history offered in the 'sibyl's leaves') and creation (the 'weaving' performed by his fancy upon those consumed materials). The factory of the poet's imagination is devoted to the construction of a cleansed text, built from the recycled raw materials of unregenerate, anachronistic cultures. The poet is engaged in a project of *reformation*.³⁴ As such, he is embarked on an interpretive conquest, a cultural crusade of

³³ Cummings notes that accounts of Mexican ceremony often stressed the feathered costumes worn by priests; these reports inspired Edmund Spenser's depiction of Fancy in *The Faerie Queene*: 'His garment neither was of silke nor say, / But painted plumes, in goodly order dight, / Like as the sunburnt *Indians* do aray / Their tawney bodies, in their proudest plight' (III.ix.8). See 'The Forest Sequence in Marvell's "Upon Appleton House": The Imaginative Contexts of a Poetic Episode', *Huntington Library Quarterly* 47.3 (1984), 179-210 (pp. 182, 196, and 198-9).

³⁴ Harold E. Toliver, lifting the poem's own description, sees the forest as Marvell's 'Ark', a place of Protestant sanctuary from otherwise all-pervasive war: 'It is necessary...to transmute the struggle into the scriptural symbolism of the grove in order to overcome its dangers and purge it of reclusive, Catholic connotations'; see *Marvell's Ironic Vision* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1965), p. 121. This purging work may also inform the treatment of the striking array of influences visible in the poem. These include William Davenant's heroic poem *Gondibert* (published in 1652, but known before then); French *libertin* poetry with similarly peripatetic speakers in rural areas; the retirement poetry of the influential Polish Jesuit and Stoic Casimire Sarbiewski; and, not least, the English country-house genre itself, strongly associated with Royalist and Cavalier culture. See Wallace, *Destiny his Choice*, pp. 239-24; Erickson, 166; Gary D. Hamilton, 'Marvell, Sacrilege, and Protestant Historiography: Contextualizing "Upon Appleton House"', in *Religion, Literature and Politics in Post-Reformation England, 1540-1688*, ed. by Donna B. Hamilton and Richard Strier (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), pp. 161-86 (p. 177); Patterson, *Marvell and the Civic Crown*, p. 106; Wilding, *Dragons Teeth*, p. 163; Cousins, 54. What is remarkable about these texts is their deep incompatibility with the aesthetic, political, and religious intent of Marvell's text. The

his own that might acquire political capital from its geographic proximity to the built presence of the Fairfax clan, which has similarly pursued a policy of reformed purification-through-acquisition.

Just as the poem seeks to redefine Fairfax's resignation and retirement as acts of imperial engagement, so its creator refigures his withdrawal within the 'sanctuary' of the 'closely wedged' forest trees as an opportunity for broad, intercultural consumption (482, 503). Both poetic transformations, moreover, depend on the interpretive advantage provided by microcosm: Fairfax can have his little empire at Appleton, while 'Marvell' can read globally in the narrowly bounded grove. Indeed, withdrawal becomes a necessary prerequisite for sprawling knowledge. Stanza 73's gnomic conclusion – 'Thrice happy he who, not mistook, / Hath read in Nature's mystic book' – plays on this notion of empowerment-through-removal. According to the tradition of 'nature's book', possibly originating in the mystical writings of Hermes Trismegistus, natural phenomena could themselves be 'read' and interpreted, obviating the need for any interfering, explanatory medium such as a written text. Once a Christianizing framework was placed over this Neoplatonic fantasy, 'nature's book' became code for the direct relationship Adam had in Eden, able to communicate with animals and, as Elias Ashmole put it, 'fully understand the true and pure knowledge of *Nature*... in the highest degree of Perfection'.³⁵ The poet's claim to supernatural divination of the wood's languages seems to constitute an imagined return to this prelapsarian condition:

Already I begin to call
In [the birds'] most learned original...
No leaf does tremble in the wind
Which I returning cannot find. (72; 569-70, 575-6)

According to hermetic tradition, this Edenic communicativeness was damaged by the Fall and destroyed in the linguistic division at Babel. Communion with nature was rendered impossible, and the unified polity of humankind was fractured into petty fiefdoms.³⁶ (It's perhaps no accident that this fantasy of prelapsarian language is placed in stanza 72, the number of nations and languages into which God divided men after the Tower's fall.) Earlier, the poem obliquely associates the pre-Babel order with global cohesion by way

poem may be attempting to reform these 'contaminating influences', just as the nunnery must be reformed through redesign rather than outright demolition. It is involved in the task of generic purification.

³⁵ See Lyndy Abraham, *Marvell and Alchemy* (Aldershot: Scolar Press, 1990), pp. 165-76.

³⁶ Michael Srigley, 'Stanza 72 of Marvell's "Upon Appleton House"', *Notes and Queries* 43 (1996), 284-7.

of architectural critique against those ‘that think by breadth the world t’*unite* / Though the first builders failed in height’ (23-4; italics mine). By speaking in nature’s ‘most learned original’, then, the poet is returning to a world without linguistic differentiation, borders, or nations. He is implicitly fulfilling a promise of international unity, a promise that is tellingly close to the imperial endgame: a uniform singularity imposed across widespread territories.

His successful, ‘perfect’ perusal of nature’s book appears to eliminate the requirement for poetic figuration itself, microcosms included. What need for any legibility handicaps when the Thing Itself is exposed and to hand? The irony of the speaker’s supposedly total insight, though, is that it *is* so emphatically temporary, a brief superpower than only be enjoyed in a specific place. It’s even unclear how seriously the persona is treated; just a few stanzas later, he’ll compel himself to throw down ‘my hooks, my quills, / And angles, idle utensils’ (649-50), as if he’s been lazily fishing rather than imbibing nature’s inmost mystical truths. Such tonal discord reinforces the suspended status of the grove, its position as a microcosmically bounded space between whose arboreal parentheses imperial reading can succeed. Empowering insight of the Adamic, pre-Babel kind, a knowledge that can make one sovereign over beast and land, is fleeting in the forest. That the space of this knowledge’s realization is narrowly circumscribed stresses once more the interpretive utility of withdrawal.

The distant reading of the world through isolating and intermediating devices of metaphors and microcosms, it seems, is analogous to physical withdrawal itself. John M. Wallace notices that ‘the poetic theory behind *Upon Appleton House*...appear[s] to be platonic, since the removes of art from reality are emphasized, and the rationale of Marvell’s view of nature can also be found in the platonic theology [most notably that of Ficino] in which both he and Fairfax are known to have been interested’.³⁷ Beyond the microcosms and shifts in perspective already examined here, the poem mentions two striking modes of ‘removing art from reality’ which simultaneously allow reality to be read *through* that art: maps and landscape paintings. The links between the two, and their utility for imperial readers, are illustrated by the career of the aforementioned Edward Norgate, the colonial cartographer and miniaturist whose instructive book included advice for landscape painters. In this context, landscapes, visible geographies writ small, are simply less useful maps. Unsurprisingly, Marvell’s poem emphasizes the optic innovations of this relatively new painting genre from Holland, using them to suggest the distant sighting of villagers and cattle:

³⁷ Wallace, *Destiny his Choice*, p. 234.

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. (58; 457-460)

This especially artificial pastoral makes every effort to obfuscate the reader's view with an interfering mirror and painting, but such confusion only serves to strengthen the viewer's authority. His gleeful dimensional maneuvering demonstrates his formal command over the scene, while his diminishing of the laboring villagers establishes a visual sovereignty solidified along class lines.³⁸ These authoritarian visual politics, moreover, are predicated on *distance*, the withdrawal of the voyeur. The farther away he is, it seems, the more he can observe – and the greater his resulting potency. Withdrawal once again becomes a strategy of self-empowerment. This expression of this power reaches its emotional climax in the work's penultimate stanza:

'Tis not, what once it was, the world;
But a rude heap together hurled;...
Your lesser world contains the same,
But in more decent order tame;
You, heaven's center, Nature's lap.
And Paradise's only map. (96; 761-9)

Nun Appleton stands in the same relationship to the disorderly world as a landscape painting to its subject: it is a microcosmic refuge, a referring tool that allows its viewer or owner to assume dominance over its referent. Describing the territory as 'Paradise's *only* map', Marvell extends the forest sequence's prelapsarian fantasy and underlines the estate's singularity, its privileged position at the 'center' – the metropole? – of heaven. No other manor, it seems, can claim the representational power Appleton wields as a navigational, legible miniature of Eden. It is this spiritual legibility which justifies the Fairfacian claim to primacy as an imperial propagator of Protestant might (whatever the political desires Thomas expressed immediately after his retirement).³⁹

³⁸ For extended discussions of the role of landscape painting in the poem, see Colie, pp. 192-6 and Turner, pp. 78-9. To return to our microcosmic gardens: a prominent ancient Roman horticultural feature, topiaries, derived their name from *topia*, landscape painting. According to Vitruvius, these constructions depicted the larger world and contained 'ports, promontories, shores, rivers, fountains, temples, mountains, herds, and even shepherds' (see Allen, *Image and Meaning*, p. 198). Davenant's preface to *Gondibert* discussed landscape in poetry; Marvell places him among the cattle at line 456 (see Roth, 270).

³⁹ Thomas Vaughan also used cartographic imagery to suggest the proper route to spiritual knowledge and potency: 'Give me an art then, that is a perfect intire *Map* of the *Creation* that can lead me directly to the

Through his imperial reading, Marvell attempts to transform summer 1651's circumstances of scandal into the material of encomium. He does so in part by using various forms of microcosm to refigure the trope of withdrawal as a representation of engagement and even expansion. This is a clearly paradoxical endeavor, and it may be worthwhile to ask if the poem's miniatures can suffer the interpretive strain its politics place upon them. Why, for example, do 'those short but admirable lines, / By which, ungirt and unconstrained, / Things greater are in less contained' (42-4), stretch on for so long, longer than any other Marvell poem? An answer, or at least a mark of wry self-consciousness, may be found in the following couplet: 'Let others vainly strive t'immure / The circle in the quadrature!' (45-6). Beyond the familiar, unsolvable geometric conundrum of 'squaring the circle', these lines hint at specifically dimensional concerns: in traditional formulations of microcosmic relations, the 'square' represented the finite, earthly world and the 'circle' the perfect realm of Platonic forms. 'Upon Appleton House's visually squat stanzas, meanwhile, seem deliberately shaped according to George Puttenham's recommendation of the 'square or quadrangle equaliter', a verse form supposedly tied to the grounded affairs of the earth.⁴⁰ The sprawling length of the entire poem, then, may evidence an increasingly untenable attempt to stuff cosmic concerns into an earthly work, to embed macrocosm in microcosm. Marvell possibly suggests that his poem shaped itself in this struggle, in the discrepancy between its reforming didacticism and its actual ornateness.

In Thomas Gage's travelogue and Edward Norgate's manual on the 'art of limning', then, Marvell might have found congenial spatial imaginations, ones that delighted, as his did, in the creation of politically resonant miniatures. As shown by Norgate's experience mapping Bermuda, those versed in the arts of *Miniatura* could be useful servants to those engaged in the work of empire. If this work fostered new cartographic and representational modes aligned with Marvell's poetic interest in transforming the dimensions of geography, it also produced new kinds of translations: the founding of 'New' Englands across the Atlantic and the accompanying development of family-owned plantation estates that, in many cases, mimicked the domestic properties and cultures celebrated in country-house poetry. To draw this comparison is not to demand forced 'Americanized' readings of Cookham, Penshurst, and Appleton, but it is to suggest that the overseas translation of the English nation's territory demanded the kind of new

Knowledge of the true God...and by which I can attain to all the Secrets and Mysteries in Nature' (quoted in Abraham, *Marvell and Alchemy*, p. 62).

⁴⁰ George Puttenham, *The Art of English Poesy: A Critical Edition*, ed. by Frank Whigham and Wayne A. Rebhorn (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2007), p. 189.

topographical sensibilities – and, in turn, new conceptions of domestic space and its boundaries – that inform Marvell’s poem.⁴¹ It is, finally, to argue for Marvell’s place among the imperial readers of landscape, adept translators of expansive territories into wieldy forms and ready-to-hand texts.

⁴¹ Of course, this expansion also encouraged the rise of chattel slavery, a very different form of domestic labor than the sort so often obscured in the country-house genre. Maureen Quilligan’s powerful arguments that Renaissance imperial epics were forced to contend with New World slavery as the basis of empire seems especially suggestive vis-a-vis Marvell’s miniature epic. If labor, however concealed, is central to country-house poetry, then slave labor on the colonial plantation lies adjacent to the poem as I have considered it here, a haunting peripheral presence. See Quilligan’s essay ‘Freedom, Service, and the Trade in Slaves: The Problem of Labor in *Paradise Lost*’, in *Subject and Object in Renaissance Culture*, ed. by Margreta de Grazia, Maureen Quilligan, and Peter Stallybrass (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), pp. 213-234, and her article ‘On the Renaissance Epic: Spenser and Slavery’, *The South Atlantic Quarterly* 100.1 (2001), 15-39.