

Order Number 9401180

A new reading of Andrew Marvell's mower poems

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Middle Tennessee State University, 1993

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William John Badley

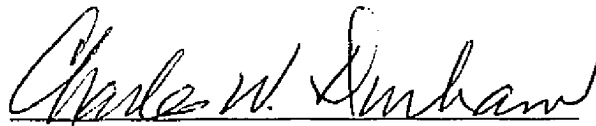
**A dissertation presented to the
Graduate Faculty of Middle Tennessee State University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Arts**

August, 1993

A New Reading of Andrew Marvell's Mower Poems

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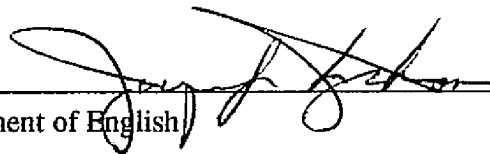
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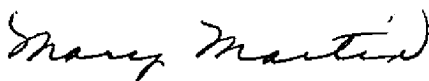
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Abstract

A New Reading of Andrew Marvell's Mower Poems

by William John Badley

Andrew Marvell's Mower poems, as a group, have been seen divergently as "charming" pastoral divertissements, ironic anti-pastorals, emblematic soul struggles, and theological allegories but have not been examined carefully in the context of his canon. From my reading, there does not appear to be, as some have maintained, more than one Marvell. That is, Marvell uses themes, techniques, and images found in the Mower poems in his other works. This continuity is seen in the Mower poems in his inclusion of most levels of language and allusion--from the Greek and Roman classics to the bawdy street singers, both in the context of biblical imagery. His satiric humor appears along with his noted wit of joining apparently opposite ideas. The political and religious debates of mid-seventeenth century appear, along with contemporary sciences of optics, alchemy and horticulture. His continuing interests in art, nature and their relation appear in conjunction with two major themes of the Renaissance, love and death. My argument is that Marvell's work is syncretic and synthetic, that he is the "ultimate

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Renaissance poet" (Donno, "The Unhoopable" 44).

Specifically, the Mower poems provide a "casebook" of Marvell's poetry and prose; Renaissance concerns of perception and rational thought are examined through the pastoral peregrinations of the bawdy Mower whose struggle with Love and Death enfolds on him as a character in time and as Time.

My analysis begins with a discussion of critical opinion of Marvell generally and the Mower poems in particular in Chapter One. Chapter Two is a detailed reading of "The Mower against Gardens," with its mix of biblical and erotic diction. Chapter Three describes the bawdy connotations in the shifting perspectives found in "Damon the Mower." Chapter Four examines the sinister and erotic connotations in "The Mower to the Glowworms," drawing on information from the classics and folklore. Chapter Five describes the shattering experience of passion aroused, self-satisfaction, and despairing anger when frustrated. This is followed by a Conclusion that suggests areas for further study.

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank especially Dr. Charles W. Durham for his careful, perceptive, and timely reading of my dissertation. His introduction to seventeenth-century poetry and Marvell, in particular, has provided me with a great deal of enlightenment and pleasure. Also, I would like to thank Dr. Frank Ginanni, my second reader, for his encouragement and help. Finally, I want personally to thank Dorothy (none), William A., and Linda C.

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Introduction

Andrew Marvell's Mower poems, as a group, have been seen divergently as "charming" pastoral divertissements, ironic anti-pastorals, emblematic soul struggles, and theological allegories but have not been examined carefully in the context of his canon. From this reading, there does not appear to be, as some have maintained, more than one Marvell. That is, themes, techniques, and images found in the Mower poems, Marvell uses in his others works, prose and poetry. This continuity is seen in the Mower poems by his inclusion of most levels of language and allusion, from the high culture of the Greek and Roman classics to the bawdy street singers, all levels in the context of biblical imagery. His satiric humor appears along with his noted wit of joining apparently opposite ideas. The current political and religious debates of mid-seventeenth century appear, along with contemporary sciences of optics, alchemy, and horticulture. His continuing interests in art, nature and their relation appear in conjunction with two major themes of the Renaissance--love and death. I argue that Marvell's work is syncretic and synthetic, that he is the "ultimate Renaissance poet" (Donno, "The Unhoopable" 44). Specifically, the Mower poems provide a "casebook" of Marvell's poetry; here, Renaissance concerns of perception

and rational thought are examined through the pastoral peregrinations of the bawdy Mower whose struggle with Love and Death enfolds on him as a character in time and as Time.

Based on commonality of themes, here it is assumed that the four Mower poems are a group as they appear in the 1681 Folio. Much of Marvellian wit is found in the various definitions of words that resonate through standard, colloquial, and biblical English, with several levels of wit in Latin, Greek, and Hebrew. As John Aubrey (1626-97) says, "He was a great master of the Latin tongue . . ." (qtd. in Donno, Critical 101). He probably knew Dutch, French, Italian, and Spanish (Craze 7). Thus, Marvell's poetic imagination, counterpart to Shakespeare's, "is deep and multifocal: it comprehends things, ideas, colors, feelings, tones, and verbal formulations in two or more languages at once" (Clayton 51). It is also assumed that "He knew all his Bible, in the Authorized Version of 1611" (Craze ix; Lewalski "Religious" 251; Bradbrook and Lloyd-Thomas 121). For matters of convenience and the re-examination of the existing Marvellian texts, Elizabeth Story Donno's edition of Andrew Marvell: The Complete Poems (1972; rpt. 1985) with its modernized spelling is used for quotations except where H. M. Margoliouth's The Poems and Letters of Andrew Marvell (1927) or the facsimile edition of the Marvell's Miscellaneous Poems 1681 (1969) is noted.

I argue that there very well are poetic parallels to Marvell's poems. These can be found in his English contemporaries and those on the Continent, for part of what made him a Renaissance poet was his desire to synthesize but also to particularize with his wit and elegance. What Donno calls "a diction marked by sexual overtones" (Poems 260) in "The Mower against Gardens" is here argued as dominating the four poems. This discussion of connotation and colloquial use makes Marvell's bawdy connotations explicit. This is not an exclusive reading but one that describes a level of wit in Marvell's pastoral love poetry.

While it is a commonplace that Marvell uses allusions to classical and contemporary literature, it is quite clear that he was aware of contemporary colloquial diction, also. Although the Archdeacon of Canterbury Samuel Parker, who is pilloried in Marvell's Rehearsal Transposed (1672), is clearly on the counterattack and describing prose, he describes the diction which Marvell uses:

As all your prefest fooling either by way of
 Similitude or Rithm or Story; your playing upon
 single words, your confusing introductions and
 transitions, your smutty imaginations, your
 general and insolent censures, with abundance more
 of such bold and immodest stuff, that though it
 signifies nothing by it self, yet is almost enough
 to bear any modest man out of countenance by pure
 force of brow and confidence. But in answer to
 your Ribaldry I can only blush and say nothing;
 and as for your rude and uncivil language, I am
 willing to impute it to your first unhappy

Education among Boat-Swains and Cabin-boys, whose phrases as you learn'd in your Childhood, so it is not to be expected you should unlearn them by your Conversation with the Bear-herds of Barn, the Canibals of Geneva, the Boys and Lackeys at Charing-Cross, and in Lincolns-Inn-fields. (qtd. in Donno, Critical 38)

Parker does point out several interests that this and later chapters concern: "playing upon single words," "smutty imagination," "Ribaldry," and the language of sailors and bars. Since some of these elements are found in the Mower poems that are considered "early" poems rather than later political satire, it follows there is not a "dichotomized figure" (Donno, Critical 4) of Marvell.

Rather than forcing a reading of a particular symbol or word because of an echo or parallel to another ancient or contemporary poet, I focus on how Marvell uses the word in other poems but primarily in the four poems under discussion. This should help us to see the poet not with multiple personae but as a brilliant poet who uses several levels of diction in English, Latin, Greek, and Hebrew. The "sexual overtones" are inherent in the pastoral genre (Poggioli 13-14), and they appear in most of Marvell's writing, from lyric, religious, and satiric poetry to his prose. As Summers and Peabworth maintain, "Love, either sacred or profane, is the preeminent subject of Renaissance literature" (Discourses 1).

Making explicit the "sexual overtones" in the first of the Mower poems, "The Mower against Gardens," sets up the analysis of the Mower poems as a group. It is assumed in this study that the name "Damon" is generic. But with Marvell's genius at using general and particular, the character of the Mower becomes one of another of the Renaissance's controlling ideas, the microcosm mirroring the macrocosm (Mintz 144, 163); or, as Marvell writes in "On a Drop of Dew," "The greater heaven in a heaven less" (26). The Mower is humankind as clown and lover, but he is a character who mows and wants to love Juliana but fails and turns upon himself and his world. Damon suffers from satyriasis, but he is also the object of satire when viewed from the distance of the aesthete/voyeur as found in "Damon the Mower." For the character, the progression, if there is one, is from what he was before Juliana entered his microcosmic world, to his distant wooing of her and her indifference, to his self-love, and finally despair and anger. Lord, discussing "The Garden," says, "Marvell's irony characteristically exposes aspiration to reality, and here the virtues of rural contemplation are slyly and humorously qualified" (xxvi). In the Mower poems, the "rural contemplation" is not by a retiree from the city and court, but by a character who has first love on his mind and then death. The conception of love or its frustration determines the Mower's perceptions and reactions.

Symbolically, Marvell uses the circle, what might be called a Mobius strip: it infinitely circles back on itself. This "reversibility" is noted as a Marvellian technique (Carey, "Reversals" 142-143). The beginning and end of the circle of these four poems are in "profane love" in the mind of the speaker of "The Mower against Gardens" who sees and judges in sexual terms. Vitruvius' idea of man as a square inscribed inside a circle, later sketched by Leonardo, is alluded to by Marvell as "The circle in the quadrature" ("Upon Appleton House" 46). In Vitruvius, the extended limbs inscribe the circle with the navel of man as the center, but "the sexual organs are the center of the square" (Norford 243). Marvell does square the circle in the Mower poems since there are circular patterns, but the center of the square is the Mower's "vegetable love" ("The Garden" 11) which grows in his body and mind. When Juliana comes, her heat brings the spring and growth of the grass/flesh. Her rejection of the Mower's love proposal leads to "withering" of the grass/flesh and its converse flesh/grass (Hartman 188), and, eventually, leads to Juliana's harvest of, as the Mower says, "my thoughts and me" ("The Mower's Song" 6). Part of the annual farming cycle ends in cutting of the hay. The four poems have several cycles, too: morning, noon, evening/night; spring, summer, "fall"; youth to age; innocence to experience; sexual arousal to detumescence; and past, present, and future.

Throughout the Mower poems, tension is created between memory of the distant past, experience in the more recent past, the present, and the future. Sir Thomas Browne (1605-1682), along with a considerable number of others, describes the human as "that great and true Amphibian, whose nature is disposed to live . . . in divided and distinguished worlds" of flesh and spirit (qtd. in Witherspoon and Warnke 333). But the human is an amphibian in time also, for he lives (psychologically) in the past, the present, and the future. For the Christian believer, time is not circular but has a direction--the end of time and the Second Coming of Christ. In another sense, the end of time will be circular, for a new heaven and a new Earth will be re-established, a restoring of the damage of the Fall.

In the Mower's case, when Juliana invades his perceptions, time's arrow and Cupid's arrow ("thistles sowed," "Damon the Mower," 66) strike vitally. Both arrows hit the center of the square in the Mower's circle. Flood and Lockwood note that it is the "arrow of time" because, "[u]nlike space, time seems to us to be inherently directional" (1-2). That is, causation seems to work in one direction: broken windows do not spontaneously reassemble themselves. In the Mower poems, Damon's passion for Juliana shatters his "glass" ("The Mower's Song" 4) or mirror of green nature (3); it does not reassemble.

The arrow of time's hit alters Damon's perceptions but has moral repercussions, also. Psychologically, our memory considers the past closed but the future as open; we might be able to change something tomorrow, but yesterday's error remains closed to alteration. Damon's pride and erotic obsession lead to self-tempting and self-gratification. Yesterday's little "death" must be paid for today and in the future with the "blood" of alienation and isolation. Thus, the amphibian Mower swims in circular and linear times, the natural seasons and a human life line, his. This is a joining of Greek and Christian views of time (Patrides, Aspects 38-56). In these poems, the squared circle of man carries and slices with an ambiguous tool--a scythe.

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Chapter One

Review of the Criticism

A logical and convenient place to begin the discussion of critical responses to Marvell's poetry would be Elizabeth Story Donno's Andrew Marvell: The Critical Heritage (1978). After discussing the three types of "plagiarism" in Marvellian criticism--texts, biographical information, and "critical aperçus" (15-16)--Donno characterizes the types of critical approaches to Marvell from his contemporaries to 1921 (the tercentenary of Marvell's birth). She describes not a consensus but "critical fragmentation" (19). Part of the centrifugal force that spins critical opinion outward is the assuming of a tenuous chronology of composition from meager biographical information. In the reading below, speculations on date of composition or drawing biographical inferences from the poetry are avoided. But Donno gives other reasons for the critical fissuring.

Donno attributes these divergences to several sources. Partly, the disagreements are a result of the recognition of "variety of kinds [literary forms]" which are in Marvell's "small canon," including panegyric, pastoral, country-house, and others. Another source is that, as Joseph H. Summers mentions, Marvell sought to "'summarize and

surpass' " what other poets had written before him (qtd. in Critical 13). Donno mentions that "[c]oncomitant methodologies supported" these insights. The first of the four groups produced appreciation for and explications of the "complexities" of Marvell's poetic expression. The combination of close reading of texts--what Eliot¹ superciliously called the "'lemon-squeezer'" mode of criticism (qtd. in Donno, Critical 19-20)--and the explication de texte led to appreciation of Marvell's ironies, paradoxes, "commingling" of divergent attitudes, and subverting standard grammar and diction. William Empson's Seven Types of Ambiguity (190; 1947) is an "allied approach" (Donno, Critical 20).

Two of the critical approaches to Marvell place emphasis on history and his aesthetic predecessors. The second group is the historical critics who attempt to place Marvell in the social (Hill, Upside), scientific (Hunt; Friedman, "Sight"; Abraham) political (Wallace; Condren and Cousins), and aesthetic (Farmer; Toliver, "Songs"; Bradbrook, "Masque"; Clayton) contexts of seventeenth-century England (Kermode; Leishman) and Europe (Warnke

¹ In his own analysis of Marvell, Eliot sounds more like a winepress worker: "To bring the poet back to life--the great, the perennial task of criticism--is in this case to squeeze the drops of the essence of two or three poems; even confining ourselves to these, we may find some precious liquor unknown to the present age" ("Tercentenary" 362).

Versions) delineating Marvell's intellectual ties to literary traditions of the Renaissance or to stylistic movements (modes) of metaphysical, Cavalier, or baroque. The third major approach, which overlaps with the historical, is what John Carey has termed those who are the "'source hunters and echo hearers'" (qtd. in Donno Critical 20). These are critics who would find philosophic and aesthetic precedents for Marvell's eclecticism in other systems of thought--neo-Platonic, alchemic, hermetic, Neo-Plotinian. Donno mentions that H. M. Margoliouth and J. B. Leishman suggest that Marvell might "have been undertaking a witty response to a particular poem" (Critical 20), a hint that provides engagement for the profession.

As Donno mentions, this points to the very complex issue of "borrowing" in Renaissance writing. The critic should ask whether the borrowing was a "knowing reference to a current literary piece, a reflection of imitatio directed to a purposed end, an overt tribute to a contemporary . . . or, simply, a bold filching" (Critical 25). With Marvell, the issue is even more bewilderingly complex, for he might have been writing "for his own gratification, 'drinking liberally by himself to refresh his spirits and exalt his muse'" (John Aubrey qtd. in Donno, Critical 25, 101). Regardless, those seeking echoes of other systems and of allusions to historical, religious, and political events certainly can find them in Marvell, some finding, to the

exclusion of Marvell's inclusive intellect, for example, a Puritan and Cromwellian poet (Critical 20-21; Colie; Chernaik).

The fourth, and last group Donno describes, she calls the "allegorists." Ann E. Berthoff is one who sees the poems as allegories of the soul's struggle (see below). These are the critics who find in Marvell a guilt-driven Puritan whose every line of poetry is concerned with the postlapsarian state of humans and the world (Donno, Critical 21).

As a representative of the first type of criticism, William Empson uses Marvell's poetry to illustrate three of the Seven Types of Ambiguity and draws biographical conclusions from the Mower poems. He uses a close reading of the first stanza of "On a Drop of Dew" to illustrate Type 2 ambiguity where "two or more alternative meanings are fully resolved in one" (101-102). He concludes that the question of whether the dew drop falls off the petal to destruction or stays in relative security is not answered. Marvell's "Dialogue between the Resolved Soul and Created Pleasure" is used by Empson to illustrate Type 3 ambiguity that provides, simultaneously, two meanings which at first appearance are not connected; the word "chordage" puns on binding and musical meanings (134-135). Empson's Type 5 ambiguity occurs when passages of poetic expressions provide "a fortunate confusion" (209)--that is, heuristic. This

ambiguity is illustrated by Marvell's hidden puns in "The Horatian Ode" and "The Unfortunate Lover," vaguenesses in "Upon the Death of Lord Hastings," and meanings that are confused, particularly in "Eyes and Tears." The last poem, Empson argues, appealed to different audiences in the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries because of the confusion of meanings (209-220). Type 3 ambiguity of simultaneous meanings is most evident in the following analysis of Marvell's Mower poems, at times exhibiting simultaneous meanings in linguistic, religious, political, psychological, and erotic contexts.

When Empson specifically mentions the Mower poems, his comments are brief and critically suspect ("Natural Magic" 36-61). Here, Empson's main thesis deals with "populism," but he then reads Marvell's biography in his poetry, assuming a type of political conversion:

There is nothing so far to excite a populist sentiment; indeed, admiring the country estate might put him in favour of the landed gentry. The wise thoughts of the General [Fairfax] would, of course, be heard with attention, but a sudden and permanent conversion is likely to have a more emotional cause. I think he fell in love with the Mower. The tutor at the great house would be socially isolated; he would sometimes meet young ladies on their visits, but their mothers had told them never to look at a man owning less than a thousand acres--you could see it in every eye. Many readers of his love-poetry feel that he has an uneasy relation to the girls addressed; he is intensely interested, readily fascinated, but he

does not seem to like them much. And he could not have easy relations with his inferiors either. It does him credit, I think, to have raised himself above this dismal situation by regarding a mower with (necessarily distant) yearning.
(William Empson, "Natural Magic" 48)

This type of speculative criticism that reads biography of the author directly from the poetry as if it were thinly veiled confession clearly has allowed a subset of poetry to define the whole. Interpreting the psychological state of the poet by "retrojecting" modern theories is to lose sight of the fact that ". . . it is precisely the intractability of Renaissance texts to theory that is significant--because this intractability discloses the historical specificity of the Renaissance" (Shuger 270). Of course, Empson's "yearning" may not include sexuality, as Donald Hall's speculation about "The Definition of Love" as an homoerotic poem does (Hall 433-434). In discussing the Renaissance, it is important to separate erotic and sexual desire and not to force modern definitions on the past. Shuger states "Heterosexuality and homosexuality are both misleading terms, not because Renaissance persons were bisexual, but because desire was not identified with sexuality before the late seventeenth century . . ." (271). So it is important to remember historical distinctness, including linguistic use. Empson's and Hall's comments are ahistorical in approach and promote a form of criticism that appears to

exalt "readers" to a type of omniscience that we do not have.

Insisting on the importance of the rhetorical and literary context in which Marvell wrote his poetry, Rosalie L. Colie's "My Ecchoing Song" Andrew Marvell's Poetry of Criticism (1970) sees him as the culmination of many Renaissance critical traditions. Colie maintains that Marvell "does not break new ground in his lyric poetry. Rather, he sums up, examines, and questions the traditions . . ." (3-4). But Marvell's poetry is not simply a poetry of criticism, according to Colie; it is a criticism of life, making Marvell "a moral critic of literature" (5). His poetry is regarded as "intellectual and critical" but "rarely satirical" in his lyrics; even when one might "sense his ridicule" of a character, Colie insists one senses "far more his protection, of the Nymph, of Damon, of the unfortunate Lover" (5, 132). His style can be considered "philosophical," defined as "skepticism always tempered by common sense and reasonableness" (5). Instead of the poet with no persona to choose or the poet with multiple personae, Colie sees Marvell as one who "is distinguished for his humane understanding of the human situation" (5) and those literary areas where there are human disagreements. For example, Colie sees Marvell as a poet of the pastoral where "The tantrums of the Mower-against-gardens are understood, if made fun of" (5), but under the surface of

the pastoral genre, very human problems exist. Marvell's introductory poem "On Mr Milton's Paradise Lost" provides a brief preview of Marvell as literary critic whose understanding of the tasks set by the poetic project provide the compliments and witty imitation (6-8).

Colie discusses the Mower poems in a section entitled "Problems of Pastoral" (30-42) in the first part of her book where she is considering theme and genre of Renaissance traditions. The four Mower poems provide "four different perspectives upon pastoral" traditions (30). The Mower in "The Mower against Gardens" is seen as "a speaker with a grudge, a speaker verging on tantrum" (36). Emotionally, Colie sees him as "tense, obsessed, and hostile," the antithesis of the relaxed pastoral ideal, and if "taken seriously, this Mower is insane . . ." (38). Because of the great number of contemporary improvements in horticulture, Colie sees Marvell questioning the pastoral ideal of the perfectly natural by placing the argument of excluding all artificiality in the mouth of "a natural man and a leveler" (38). "The Mower to the Glowworms" is seen in the context of Cavalier poetic compliment to "a lady's supernatural beauty" (30), whose light of love and passion on the part of the Mower have left him "alienated" from a "cherishing environment" (31). Thus, passion destroys the traditional equanimity of the pastoral. "The Mower's Song" has an "heroic apocalyptic" aura when the Mower ruins his world

because of rejection by Juliana (30). He does this to maintain "the beautiful, nonsensical, wish-fulfilling image of man 'at one' with nature . . ." (33). The tradition turns on itself:

Insisting upon his rights as a pastoralist, the Mower ruins his environment, destroys the dream, to keep intact the hyperbole to which he is accustomed. The pastoral contract is thus made to recoil upon itself, the tradition's self-destruction made to seem a natural implication of its own convention. (Colie 33)

Clearly, the Mower poems have several instances when image, themes, and language "recoil" upon themselves.

For Colie, "Damon the Mower" is a poem that challenges the theme of innocence in the pastoral with a hero who reveals too much (30). While the Mower in "The Mower's Song" cuts the grass because it is green unlike his thoughts, the Mower in "Damon the Mower" cuts the grass because it is like his hopes, withered (33); the work continues regardless of the state of the grass or the Mower. But Colie asserts Damon finds that work is "not therapeutic" and almost leads to self-destruction (35). In this instance, nature is restored through the use of natural medicines while the poet who views Damon laments "the fall of another singer . . ." (35). By choosing a mower rather than a shepherd, Marvell keeps the "death-theme" in "counterpoint" to the traditional happy and innocent

pastoral. The eschatological theme of death is altered by the cyclic promise of the pastoral spring (35).

Colie argues that the four poems are "tonally and thematically inconsistent" and, therefore, concludes that "the person of the Mower . . . cannot be identical in the four poems," although she notes that Joan Webber disagrees and assumes one person in all four (30, 124). Colie argues that "Marvell is playing" with traditional themes, and so the Mower poems are "pastoral exercises . . . [in which] he considers the assumptions of the conventions . . ." (40). It does not follow that Marvell was "simply an apprentice poet" (305), but as shown in the context of "The Coronet," "many of Marvell's poems exhibit, individually, that "It is a professional's poem about a professional problem . . ." (41).

In response to Rosalie Colie's insistence on Marvell's "professionalism" and the "preoccupation with poetry's problems" (Colie 151-155), Ellrodt maintains that "there is no evidence that he allowed his unpublished poems to circulate as freely as other amateur poets did" (Ellrodt, "Mind" 221). Ellrodt sees Marvell as a metaphysical poet "who views reality in terms of balance and antithesis rather than unifying paradox . . ." (Lewalski paraphrasing Ellrodt, "Religious" 252). As with most of Marvell's biography, the evidence is not available. Again, it is largely speculation when the critic attempts to read from the poetry to

biography. Ellrodt, then, assumes who might have been Marvell's audience and draws different inferences than does Colie:

If Marvell wrote his non-political poems and the "Horatian Ode" only to please himself or a narrow circle (his patron Fairfax and his friends), it does argue a genuine delight in poetry for its own sake, but the kind of delight that will lead an amateur poet, unlike a professional, to write as he chooses and therefore to betray his own inclinations even when seeking to emulate or excel his predecessors. (Ellrodt, "Mind" 221)

He further lists themes in Marvell that he maintains have a "natural harmony":

[These are] the rejection of "Passions heat" in so many poems; the obvious attraction to girls "too green / Yet for Lust, but not for Love" ("Young Love"); the persistent opposition of the world of plants and innocence and the world of women and experience; the keen delight in the lusciousness of fruit and the sweetness of flowers as a substitute for the gratification of the sexual instinct; even the preference insistently expressed for shade and coolness in the very evocation of Paradise. The recurrence of these predilections, joined to Marvell's command of style and rhythm, is responsible for the uniqueness of poems which are often so little original in theme or even in diction. (Ellrodt, "Mind" 221)

One may not agree with Ellrodt's definition of "original[ity]" considering one aim of the Renaissance was to be so familiar with the Greek and Roman classics that the writer could then incorporate them into his own writing as if they were from his own vernacular (Preminger 621-622).

Still, Ellrodt's list seems both too particular and general but does attempt to generalize on a small corpus.

Ellrodt describes how both the Renaissance and Reformation increased interest in how the mind works and how rationality is involved in epistemology:

The Renaissance and the Reformation resulted in a heightened self-consciousness, but the self-examination practised--whether religious or profane--was a dissection of the heart, an anatomy of the passions of the soul. In his interest for the workings of the mind Lord Herbert of Cherbury--a philosopher and a poet--was truly a pioneer when he criticized the schools for judging matters which refer to the forms of apprehension by means of "discursive thought." He invited "a careful attention to the testimony of consciousness," insistently "referred the Reader to his inner consciousness," for "inner perception is more trustworthy than external perception, and the latter more trustworthy than discursive thought." With Donne introspection meant an attempt to define his emotions and his own self: a self "Meteor-like, of stufte and forme perplext, / Whose what, and where, in disputation is" ["To the Countesse of Bedford at New-yeares Tide"]. With Lord Herbert, and occasionally with Marvell, it came to mean a turning in of the mind upon itself which can be described as "reflexive consciousness" rather than "self-consciousness." (Lord Herbert's De Veritate qtd. in Ellrodt, "Mind" 229)

Marvell's interest in epistemology is reflected in a scope from "The Gallery," with various "portraits" of the beloved in the lover's mind to "Annihilating all that's made / To a green thought in a green shade" of "The Garden" (47-48). As

discussed below, a central theme of the Mower poems is the mind perceiving, conceiving, remembering, and being "displaced."

In contrast to the apocalyptic Marvell of Margarita Stocker's Apocalyptic Marvell: The Second Coming in Seventeenth Century Poetry (1986) or the ubiquitous alchemist of Lyndy Abraham's Marvell and Alchemy (1990) or the religious emblem of the Mower as Adam by Gilbertson, Ellrodt cautions that when dealing with Marvell's poetry, "One should also refrain from erecting a philosophical superstructure over poems of lyric grace and witty playfulness" (Ellrodt, "Mind" 222). This is not to imply that philosophy and theology cannot inform and enlighten one's reading, but it does not follow that the poem is comparable to Lucretius' De rerum natura, the Epicurean philosophical description of universe in verse form from about 60 B.C. Ellrodt argues that hints of philosophy in a poem do not prove direct reliance. Some of Marvell's poems do reflect

. . . Platonic idealism and may be read in the light of a philosophy which has pervaded Renaissance literature. It does not mean either that their author was deeply read in Plato or Plotinus (not to speak of Hermes or St Bonaventura) or that he was under the tutelage of the Cambridge Platonists, a theory exploded by Muriel Bradbrook in her review of D. M. Friedman's Marvell's Pastoral Art. (Ellrodt, "Mind" 223)

Friedman's book has an initial chapter that discusses the broader implications of the term "pastoral," along with mention of the Neoplatonism of Cudworth and others.

Friedman argues that many of Marvell's pastoral figures are used

as metaphors for faculties and processes of the mind. And when he [Marvell] writes explicitly about the debate between the divided principles within man, he is often trying to draw an analogy between the mind's own problematic state and the moral dichotomies that may be, ultimately, reflections of the primal one in the mind of man. (qtd. in Collins 278)

While I agree with Friedman regarding the emphasis on the mind, one should look carefully at the Mower then Ficino. Besides Friedman and his discussion of Neoplatonism, Ellrodt might have included Harold Toliver.

Toliver's Marvell's Ironic Vision (1965) has as its first chapter "A Grammar of Seventeenth-Century Platonism." There, he describes contemporary philosophy, which he terms "Puritan-Platonist" (3), especially associated with the "Cambridge Platonists" (5). Marvell and these philosophers considered

the self, at least when its potential was fully realized, to be no less than a mirror and epitome of the macrocosm, which is to say, integrated with nature. The incongruity between self and scene was paradoxically part of an encompassing general harmony. (3-4)

For Marvell, the discrepancies between the divine order and the actuality of the worlds of history and nature were bridged by "irony and vision together, not separately," vision to span opposites and irony to maintain their discreteness (4). For Toliver, Marvell's persistent and keen interest in dichotomies "suggests a Manichean dualism" (4). One might conclude that Manicheism--hatred of the flesh by the spirit--is suggested if one takes both the Soul and the Body as reliable narrators and no ironic intentions on the part of the poet in such a poem as "A Dialogue between the Soul and Body." But humans are amphibians of flesh and spirit, and it is ironic if they cannot stand to exist together.

As two of his major interests, Toliver ties together Marvell's working in "restrictive modes" and his "experiments with limited perspectives" (4). He suggests that the intellectual conflict about nature was a continuum; on one end was the New Science or empiricism viewing the universe as mechanistic, with the Calvinists insisting that nature is depraved at the other end. Somewhere between the two ends, the Cambridge Platonists sought to reestablish the previous century's integration of moral and natural law, the three spheres of God, man, and nature (11-13).

Specifically, Toliver discusses the Mower poems in "Pastoral and History," where as a group they "are concerned with the loss of that [divine-human] congruity" (103). He

argues that the poems are not lyric but dramatic (113) and are "anti-pastoral, or poems of pastoral failure," which do not allow the comfort of the "protected world" (90).

Toliver argues that aesthetics have a devastating effect upon the Mower when "[a] corrupted idea of art undermines nature and turns the Mower himself into a destroyer, a 'Mower against Gardens'" (90). The break with nature may indicate the breakdown of the ability of the poet to reproduce landscape in symbol; harmony and meaning are lost as Juliana cuts down the thoughts of the Mower in "The Mower's Song" (90-91).

Toliver sees Marvell confronting nature which "stimulates ambiguously the impulse to maim, and the impulse to be absorbed into it and to absorb it in return" (93). In the Mower poems, love, which is traditional in the pastoral, is allied with death in the person of the Mower. When he is rejected by Juliana, the Mower re-enacts the Fall and accepts chaos and Death, awaiting the latter "as a cure for the wound heterosexual love has given him" (103). The speaker in "The Mower against Gardens" is seen by Toliver as an "articulate and lyrical Diogenes" who "has no perception of his own fallibility" (104). These failings include completely separating nature and art, precluding compromise, and his "[uncritical]" acceptance of unfallen meadows and "sweet Fields" (105). Toliver entertains the idea that this poem should not be grouped with the other three Mower poems

but assumes that the 1681 Folio order has a "progress" in the Mower's dilemma (104).

He argues that the three remaining poems re-enforce the idea that innocence cannot be maintained in nature (106). Toliver does distinguish a different voice--"the poet's own voicing" (109)--in stanza 1 and 11 of "Damon the Mower." He insists that Damon draws the "correspondences" between his emotional state and nature, and it is a poem from the Mower's "limited vision" (106, 109). Damon's "naive braggadocio" and rustic "crudities" provide the poet with opportunities to point out the ironies between "rusticity" and "simplicity" (107-108). The ironic recognition of Death as a fellow-worker means that "Damon and Death work side by side in the once innocent meadow; the unqualified quest for innocence leads to a quest for death, to the Mower mowing himself" (109).

Toliver sees "The Mower to the Glowworms" as a "reminder of innocence" of the Eden which for the Mower is "irretrievably lost" in his alienation (109-110). For Toliver, "The Mower's Song" represents "another stage" of "displacement" where the Mower ironically exhibits the "double mind" that he found in the gardener in "The Mower against Gardens" (111). The Mower is described as having the "puritanical temperament" of the earlier poem but here combining a "[p]sychological disintegration" and "moral aimlessness" leading to his destructive mowing. "The

Mower's Song" ends with the Mower's failure to settle the conflict between "what is and what might have been, rather than a reconciliation of what is and what ought to be" (112).

In contrast to those who intellectualize Marvell's Mower poems, Michael Craze's The Life and Lyrics of Andrew Marvell (1979) rarely mentions irony, ambivalence, or prevailing seventeenth-century philosophical debates. He separates "The Mower against Gardens" from the other three, calling it "a postgraduate exercise in academic debate" and denying that it is a pastoral (132). He continues to suggest that "The Mower against Gardens" is so unlike the three other Mower poems that if one attempts to "generalize" about the four, he will "court critical disaster" (139). The Mower is labeled "an anonymous misanthrope" (132). He does note the internal structure of the poem, seeing sixteen (first eight and last two) of the twenty couplets forming quatrains (130) and the shifts in verb tenses (136-137). Following J. B. Leishman's The Art of Marvell's Poetry (1966; 2d ed. rpt. 1968), who credits E. E. Duncan-Jones on pages 134-135, Craze assumes that the "Man" in the first line of the poem is not Adam after the Fall but Epicurus, the traditional inventor of the city-garden (132). Craze briefly discusses the remaining three Mower poems. "The Mower's Song" is analyzed in a page and a half that notes the shifts in verb tenses (152-154). "The Mower to the

Glowworms" is discussed in another page and a half with the nightingale in stanza 1 "emulat[ing] Marvell himself" (155). Craze considers "Damon the Mower," including the full text, for nine pages (156-164). He notes the "theatrical" beginning and end (156, 163) but assumes that there is one speaker, Damon. He does note the stanza design, which he says exhibits "consummate skill" (159), and linguistic construction and puns in Greek (160-161) and Latin (163).

J. B. Leishman's posthumously published The Art of Marvell's Poetry emphasizes Marvell's literary context. According to Leishman, Marvell was aware of such writers as Crashaw, Vaughan, Carew, Randolph, Cleveland, Milton, Lovelace, Cowley, and Suckling. Marvell, he maintains, wrote most of his most famous poems during his two years at the Fairfax estate where he sought to synthesize and improve on their models (29-30). Generally, Leishman believes Marvell was successful in his attempt, but he does reprove him for "excessive use of inversion" and "excessive use of expletives" (30). Marvell's originality is not of invention but "originality of combination" (85). It is his contention that Marvell did not seek to reveal religious or philosophical beliefs but to exhibit wit and elegance "to a few intimate friends" (29).

The Mower poems are discussed by Leishman in his chapter "Pastoral and Semi-Pastoral" (101-192). Leishman argues that it is important to look at various sources for

the lyric in the late Elizabethan and early seventeenth century--including song-books and miscellanies--in order to see the continuity of the poetry (101-102). As a type of "source hunter," Leishman finds the source of "The Mower against Gardens" in Thomas Randolph's "Upon Love fondly refus'd for Conscience sake" which was published four times from 1638 to 1652 (132-133). In a note, Leishman acknowledges Frank Kermode for this hint from 1953 (132). Leishman also finds sources for Marvell's horticultural ideas in Philemon Holland's translation of Pliny's Natural History (134-136), mentioned above by Craze. If "The Mower against Gardens" is "charming" in its examination of the art versus nature theme, then "Damon the Mower" is "equally charming, though less tightly constructed" (137). The coherence of "Damon the Mower" is provided by two "ancient topics": the "pastoral hyperbole" of Juliana's heat greater than the sun and Damon's "catalogue of delights" of wooing. Leishman finds parallels of these in Theocritus' eleventh Idyll (139-141) where Polyphemus woos Galatea, partly imitated by Virgil's second Eclogue, and "exuberantly, and, at times, grotesquely elaborated" in Ovid's Metamorphoses (137-138). Again, Thomas Randolph's "A Dialogue. Thirsis. Lalage" is claimed by Leishman to be the source which "provided the initial impulse" for "Damon" (138). Leishman sees an "almost Swiftian particularity and concreteness" in this poem, especially in what Damon uses for a mirror:

with a characteristic blend of the realistic, the fanciful and the emblematic, with a touch of humour that approached, but remains on this side of, the whole poem's side of, the burlesque and the grotesque, and with a wit that is both surprising and "natural," he [Marvell] makes him contemplate it [his face] on his scythe. (141)

If the essential quality of "burlesque" is the "discrepancy between subject matter and style" (Holman 63), then the poem does "burlesque" with a style of bawdy innuendoes and connotations while treating serious subjects of love, death, and time.

Leishman asserts that "The Mower to the Glowworms" achieves its "beauty and memorability" by the repetition of "balanced relative clauses" in the first three stanzas leading to the dramatic fourth where the main verb appears (144). Leishman finds the source of this "phraseological, rhythmical, and syntactical repetition" in Carew's "Aske me no more where Iove bestowes" (144-145). He convicts Marvell of being "one of the worst offenders" in the seventeenth century of using expletives, such as "do," "does," "doth," and "did," and inversions for purposes "either of rhyme or mere metrical convenience" (146). Leishman lumps Marvell with "other fine amateur poets of the seventeenth century," leaving only two who were not, Milton and Dryden (151).

Leishman judges that "The Mower's Song" is a "charming, though less concentrated and memorable, exploitation of the possibilities of hyperbole and antithesis" (153). He finds

the genesis of this poem in Holland's translation of Pliny's Natural History, Book XXII, chapter three. There the defeated warrior offers to the victor grass as a symbol for offering all that he might have, including the right of burial in Mother Earth (153-154). He claims, "This passage certainly 'gave' Marvell his last stanza, which he may well have written first, and then built up to it (as to the climax) the rest of the poem" (154).

In a review of Leishman's book, Frank Kermode ("Marvell Transposed" 77-84) compliments the work of a classical scholar and finds Legouis' Andrew Marvell: Poet, Puritan, Patriot (1965) not perfect but sound. On the other hand, Kermode sees Toliver's Marvell's Ironic Vision as resulting from Arthur O. Lovejoy's history-of-ideas approach and "a culmination of all that is most harmful in the criticism of this poet and, by analogy, of any poet." Kermode further charges that Toliver reads whatever he wants in Marvell's poems and displays "critical evasiveness, pretentious nomenclature, error, and nonsense" (qtd. in Collins 230). One need not accept ex cathedra critical pronouncements at face value from one whose genre critical approach has evident limitations (see Legouis, "Marvell and the New Critics" 382-389).

Ann E. Berthoff's The Resolved Soul: A Study of Marvell's Major Poems (1970) sees Marvell's poetry as allegories of the soul in confrontation with the

restrictions of time, giving Marvell opportunities "to speak feelingly of such paradoxes as the love born of despair and impossibility, of the conjunction contingent upon opposition, of the ruin which is birth" (32). She argues that this "master theme of the soul's response to temporality" provides unity for Marvell's major poems, along with consistent tone and the "voice of allegory" (x). For Berthoff there are not several Marvells: "Andrew Marvell--poet, Puritan, patriot--is not a tripartite being" (xii).

Berthoff's analysis of Marvell's Mower poem appears in her chapter "Love, Nature, and Innocence" (132-142). The Mower poems represent the soul's recognition that love is tyrannical in time and that it breaks the myth of man and nature as one, since the pastoral can be maintained only in solitude (133). Damon is a "metaphor" for both innocence and experience, mower and "philosopher-poet," and, thus, there are not various voices in "Damon the Mower" (133-134). Following Leishman and others, Berthoff provides parallels to Virgil's Eclogues but sees the character Damon, as a Mower rather than a shepherd, more complex than is "characteristic of the pastoral mode," at the same time noting that Kermode places the Mower squarely in a French pastoral tradition (134-137). She argues that Marvell "regards his models ironically, even to the point of parody," particularly in Damon's courting gifts (136). Damon is a soul caught in passion for Juliana and so is not

"free to oppose time as best he can, by the contemplation of heaven or by identification with nature in its simplicity" (139). In "The Mower's Song," Juliana has broken Damon's relationship to nature, and it is restored "[b]y means of a metaphor"; imagining the death of all, Damon is restored as a "part of the natural cycle, rejoining the fellowship" (140). "The Mower against Gardens" demonstrates that "artfulness is as grave a danger as woman" (140). Berthoff provides very little close linguistic or stylistic analysis.

Patrick Cullen's Spenser, Marvell, and Renaissance Pastoral (1970) is a genre study to place the two poets from different eras in the malleable pastoral tradition. He divides the tradition into "amorous pastorals" and a miscellaneous group including religious pastorals and "anti-pastorals" (181-182). "The Mower against Gardens" is considered one of the Christian lyrics where Marvell's use of the "Eden analogue" leads the Mower to reject man's arrogant changing of nature, placing his own face on it rather than the image of God (166-167).

The other three Mower poems are placed by Cullen in the "amorous pastorals" category (183-197). He disagrees with Toliver's assumption in Marvell's Ironic Vision that there is a psychological and narrative progression, where the quest for innocence leads to further alienation (183-184). He sees "Damon the Mower," "The Mower to the Glowworms," and "The Mower's Song" as "companion-pieces, three witty

variations on a mower's theme, his love for Juliana" (184).

He sees "Damon the Mower" as

an ironic and witty examination of the contradictions and absurdities of the amorous mind, and should thus be seen in terms not of "The Garden" but of comic amorous pastoral such as Theocritus' tenth and eleventh idylls or Spenser's "March" and "August" [of the Shepheardes Calendar]. (191)

"The Mower to the Glowworms" is a witty and ironic elucidation of the disparity between the order in nature and the disorder in the mind of the lover (196-197). In "The Mower's Song," Marvell is dealing with the "paradoxes of human psychology," or "playing with the wit of sentiment" (197). Therefore, it is incorrect "to discover an antierotic meaning in images of grass's fall, the Mower's falling down into the grass, and his forcing all into a 'common Ruine' by relating these images analogically to Eden" (197). Cullen insists that Marvell's aims in these poems are to be witty and comic, not moral (198). He also insists that Marvell's comic love pastorals "are concerned with the comic irony emerging from the psychology of man as a sexual animal. Sex is not treated with moral disdain" (199).

In contrast, John Klause's The Unfortunate Fall: Theodicy and the Moral Imagination of Andrew Marvell (1983) seeks to discover "the mind of Andrew Marvell"--whether he is balanced (Lord xiii), "conscious and cultivated" (Eliot,

"Tercentenary" 363-364), playful (Warnke, "Play" 23-30), or "detached [and] ironic," as Toliver makes him out to be. Klause finds Marvell to be a moral philosopher who uses his imagination to confront moral ambiguity. It is in the unresolved moral paradoxes of life and "in his quarrel with God that [his] imaginative faculty most faithfully reveals itself" (8-9). He describes "Damon" as a "man-child devastated in growing up," and quotes from "Damon the Mower," "The Mower to the Glowworms," and "The Mower's Song," assuming the character is the same and does not essentially change (62-63). Klause does note that Marvell uses the sickle to describe "the procreative act of love" in "Upon an Eunuch; a Poet" (70). Generally, there is not an extended discussion of the Mower poems.

While Donald Hall argues for the "manyness" of Marvell (431-439) and Donno describes him as "unhoopable," Chernaik sees at least two separate Marvells:

Perhaps the central problem in Marvell criticism is how to reconcile the two Marvells. On the one hand there is Eliot's Marvell, the detached, fastidious, sophisticated ironist, the author of the Mower poems, "To his Coy Mistress," and the Horatian Ode; on the other, there is the radical Puritan, the political activist and moralist, serious, committed, and uncompromising in his political and religious beliefs, the author of "A Dialogue between the Resolved Soul and Created Pleasure," The Growth of Popery, and the millenarian prophecies of The First Anniversary. (268)

His main thesis is that Marvell, as Milton, "is centrally a Puritan, but that he differs from most other writers in the Puritan tradition by his consistent irony and wit" (Chernaik, "Marvell's Satires" 268).

Margarita Stocker's Apocalyptic Marvell: The Second Coming in Seventeenth Century Poetry (1986) sees Marvell in the milieu of the Puritan end-of-the-world expectations which recent historians of the seventeenth century have delineated. In the "Introduction," Stocker explains that her "essential purpose" is to "alter radically the received image of Andrew Marvell" (Stocker xiii). Stocker argues that there are two "things" wrong with the image. One is that

he has been seen as a difficult, elusive, elegant, poised--one might say even etiolated--poet, celebrating Nature and withdrawal from the world: too poised to be committed, his every statement undermined by unresolved ironies which render the location of "meaning" impossible. So admired has been this enigmatic effect that it has become the central cliché of Marvell studies, an expression of Marvell's "exquisite impartiality" or his inability to take sides. (xiii)

Second, the received image has a multiplicity of Marvells since his works seem so disparate and are considered by critics as in "discrete groups" (Stocker xiii). Her aesthetics seem linear by her use of terms such as a "location of 'meaning.'" Rather than singular "place" of meaning, should there not be various locations or levels of

meanings? Stocker has the answer, for she has the image of a "key" which will open the lock of understanding Marvell. This key is found in "The First Anniversary" which "becomes the focus for his poetry as a whole" (Stocker xiv).

Because of the traditional "inconclusive" Marvell and lack of categorization of his poetry, Marvell is "[e]mptied of individuality" and thus "has become fair game for all comers" (Stocker xiii). Stocker's image of the key and hunter's analogy might prompt one to ask: where is the game preserve to which our bird-- "[Who] whets, and combs its silver wings" ("The Garden" 55)--the poet, must be remanded? Stocker argues that the "dissolving Marvell and the fragmented canon of his works" are "mistaken, both in premise and in interpretations." These errors

disappear when we recognize that he is committed to a distinctly larger ideology than has been considered hitherto: that of apocalyptic belief. In the light of this ideology we will find that he is a trenchant and contentious poet, committed to his convictions. (Stocker xiii)

"The Mower Poems" are interpreted in the context of what Stocker maintains is the transforming of "national myths" into "private myths," primarily in chapter six. Stocker argues that her "reinterpretation" answers many questions that have been raised by criticism, among which are the unity of "Upon Appleton House," the structure of "The Garden," the tone and political stance of the poet in

"An Horatian Ode," and the "sources of Marvell's peculiar tone" (Stocker xiv-xv). When Stocker has "resolved" these various questions that have been raised by criticism, then she explains that Marvell's poetry can be seen in the "truly witty light, only once we recognize Marvell as the great lyric exponent of apocalyptic" (Stocker xv).

Stocker includes her longest interpretation of one of the Mower poems, "The Mowers Song," in the sixth chapter, "Revelations of Love: Amorous Images of the Eschaton," section (ii) "Renovation of the Desolator: The Mowers Song." She argues that, as elsewhere, Marvell uses a classical genre, "the traditional Pastoral 'Complaint' of the unrequited lover," but transforms and revivifies it by placing it in a context of "Latter Day ambiance" (234-235). In this interpretation the Mower is "tragi-comic," and both he and Juliana are "unregenerate or 'natural' beings--a spiritual value denoted here partly by their rusticity or 'naturalness'" (235). This leads to "magnified images of desolation: in the psychological crisis of the poem, 'natural' love and its antichristian bondage goad the Mower into his naive salvation" (235); he commits suicide.

After noting Marvell's departure from the traditional figure of the shepherd as central to the pastoral tradition, Stocker argues that the Mower "figure reflects his [Marvell's] chiliastic cast upon Pastoral, as the figure represents Death, desolation, and--foreshadowing Christ the

Mower--desolating harvest in the service of renovation" (235). Stocker parallels the Mower with the sinful Cain, another "sweaty reaper," who slew his shepherd brother Abel. The Mower has fallen into the lust of idolatry for Juliana who is associated with the "antichristian July of Latter Day desolatio" (236), the earth's last conflagration. Juliana is contrasted with "Maria-Astraea," a figure of renovation of the Second Coming found in "Upon Appleton House." Juliana is a "profane Coming" that destroys the Mower's hopes of salvation; thus, she is "the Mower's personal Scarlet Whore" (236). "By such means this tragi-comic Pastoral lyric takes a blackly comic intensity from its transformation into a Pastoral comedy of Latter Day love" (236).

In popular culture, the Mower, Stocker notes, is a bawdy figure. He is associated with

concupiscence and frequently featured in bawdy ballads. Indeed the word "mow" was colloquial for copulation. As a faintly comic lyric protagonist, the Mower personalizes apocalyptic psychology, while his resonances as a type universalize the experience of the poem, as a sort of witty parable for individual experience of the Latter Days. (Indeed, this tragi-comic parabolic quality is probably the source of critics' difficulties with the Mower poems). (236-237)

Stocker notes that Juliana separates the Mower and creation, but at the same time that he is, like all poetic lovers, consumed by unrequited love. He is "spiritual" food

for Juliana "because she is antichristian" (237). Thus, the Mower has fallen as an Adamic figure and is in "subjection" to Juliana's treading of him under foot as he trod on the grass, an "antichristian obverse of Christ's treading the serpent at the End, the Mower's personal experience of the antichristian dominance which precedes that final victory" (237).

Stocker turns the Mower into a Christ-like figure. In order to be rejoined with creation and to repair the disunion, the Mower must "precipitate the apocalypse" through suicide, a "comically diminutive account of the eschatological trope" (237-238). Through this "one common Ruine" of his cutting of the grass/flesh, the Mower performs a function comparable to Christ at the End, and thus "the Mower's wilful [sic] suicide does in fact save him from Juliana and damnation." This provides the Mower with participation in Christ's victory over "antichristianism and mortality" (238). Stocker notes that the voluntary suicide is paradoxical in that it may be a symbolic killing of the natural man of the conversion experience (239).

Stocker summarizes by stating that Juliana makes the Mower "conscious of sin and alienation," a first step for conversion. He then mows all the grass and makes it a "Heraldry" of renovation: "As Juliana destroys him, so he destroys all, and thereby restores it" (239). By tying together eschatology and individual psychology, Stocker says

that Marvell has made the Mower's experiences "not merely vaguely comic and almost antipastoral (as they seem), but rather wittily clever exploitations of psycho-spiritual realities" (239-240). "Damon the Mower" is mentioned as supporting the image of Juliana as the destroyer of the Latter Day (236), and in "The Mower to the Glowworms" Juliana's "foolish fires" of lust mislead the Mower (236). "The Mower against Gardens" is cited for support of man's double mind and his separation from nature (38, 116).

Because of the emphasis on the erotic in this dissertation, it is interesting to consider Stocker's analysis of "To His Coy Mistress." She finds irony but in the service of chiliasm:

In a sense, then, the poem is ironic about the pagan mode of epicurean love-lyric, but only in the service of an eschatological transformation that is deeply felt: sexual energy and chiliastic fervour are identified. (Stocker 203)

Stocker identifies sexual patterns in "To His Coy Mistress": "Another Christological image appropriated by the speaker, this sexual joke picks up the pun on 'juice' in the previous line, and is a wittily literal rendering of 'flesh is grass' (penis as plant) . . . [and] Christ as the victorious 'seed' of man (Genesis 3:15)--semen is Christ-like, generative and therefore vegetative, too" (Stocker 215). In the reading of the Mower poems that follows, Stocker's awareness of the sexual jokes and puns is continued and they are noted, but

the tie to theological precepts is at the linguistic level of recognizing similar patterns in the Authorized Version of 1611.

In sum, Stocker argues that "The First Anniversary" is central to the interpretation of Marvell as a chiliast. Does it follow that if that poem can be read that way (e.g., Wallace argues the poem is unique, aberrant 106-144), that other poems must be read in a similar fashion? The particularity of that poem's rhetorical audience might circumscribe its broadened use as a "key." The "key" of eschatological language being used by a polyglot may open the wrong lock, or none:

It is impossible to determine to what degree the details of the biblical Apocalypse reflect Marvell's private convictions or hopes and to what degree they are introduced as a method of undercutting and redirecting the attacks which the more radical groups to whom the poem alludes hostilely (Fifth Monarchists, Quakers, Ranters, and Anabaptists) were making against Cromwell at the time. (Summers, "Some" 196)

While in the context of the Cromwell poems, the caution against taking a rhetorical strategy for interpretive certainty where limited evidence is available is well observed.

With a limited focus, Stocker largely ignores the lyric poems. She deals extensively with "The First Anniversary," "Horatian Ode," "Upon Appleton House," "To His Coy

Mistress," "The Garden," and "The Unfortunate Lover," with a total of five pages out of 305 devoted to the Mower poems, primarily "The Mowers Song," with little specific analysis of line, tone or structure.

Finally, categorization and finding historical parallels are part of the professional scholar's duty, and they are important for rhetorical and genre contexts and are intellectually gratifying. It is hoped that by carefully considering Marvell's poems as works of art and by analyzing their "verbalizations," their "structures, ambiguities, [and] pictures" (Shawcross, Intentionality 3), their humor, profundity, and artistry will appear. Finally, it is the poetry as a human construct that should be the focus not the person:

Rather than lock him [Marvell] into such categories as Cavalier, Puritan, or satirist, one ought to consider him as the ultimate Renaissance poet, that is, as a distinctly "literary" poet; otherwise he would not have made traditions so conspicuously the subjects of his song. He is also very much the Renaissance poet in that, at least so far as the evidence indicates, he considered a poem to be a literary construct needing no further justification than that it was pleasing--if to no one but himself. (Donno, "The Unhoopable" 44)

While contemporary poets, religious and political events, and contemporary colloquial meanings are discussed, the main concern of this dissertation is to view the Mower poems as Renaissance poetic texts.

Chapter Two

"The Mower against Gardens": The Art of Gardening as Sexual Dalliance, or "Don't Touch My Nature"

"The Mower against Gardens" is a poem written as if it were a debate; it has alternating rhymed couplets with stresses of five and four. Only one voice is heard, however, the Mower's. It is he who sets the tone and the scope of the discussion. The controversy is phrased in his language, the language of the radical Reformation, but the diction is dominated by sexual innuendo and explicit reference.

The poem focuses on the entry of the Mower from the fields and meadows to condemn the gardener's art of horticulture, suggesting a movement from one world to another. Clearly, worlds are being contrasted by the wandering Mower. He is a character who is always between two worlds, meadows and garden, past and present. In a sense, he is Sir Thomas Browne's "amphibian" who swims in the world of the spirit and flesh. The Mower is an amphibian not only between country and court, but he is an amphibian swimming in time, in the three worlds of past, present, and future. As a symbol of time, he carries the

scythe,¹ and structurally the poem is divided into past, transition into the Latin continuous present, and to the present.

Dramatic irony is also at work. The reader begins to see the unreliability of the Mower in his diction; he describes gardens as someone obsessed with sexual comparisons and pictures. (The obsession will find an object in "Damon the Mower," Juliana.) Here in "The Mower against Gardens," the Mower perceives the gardener as a seducer of his former love. His perception, as it is in all the Mower poems, is dominated by his conception, sexual desire.

Donno mentions that the theme of "The Mower against Gardens" is in the Renaissance tradition of the supposed

¹ The Latin word for sickle is falx'cis (f.). Scythe is the same Latin word falx, genative fal'cis, f., diminutive fal'cula, falcic'ula, f.; sici'llis, f. (Woods 257). It should be noted that the Latin word fallax is in English the adjectives "deceptive, deceitful, fallacious." This might be an indicator of the role of the Mower as deceiver or false prophet. Marvell uses the Latin "Falces" in "Upon an Eunuch: a Poet" (see McQueen and Rockwell 42), with the "um" as the normal "neuter" ending. The Greek words for sickle are amete'riou, n.; drep'ane, f., drep'anon, n., dim. drepa'nion, n.; ple'gas, f.; zan'clon, n., zan'cle, f. (Woods 257). Apropos of the Mower poems, Abraham associates the mowers in "Upon Appleton House" with the seventeenth-century figure of Saturn, Time as the Reaper (108-112). Thus, Damon performs both functions of Death and Time later in the sequence.

opposition of nature and art. In this instance, horticulture is the art that transforms nature, as in Perdita's speech in Shakespeare's The Winter's Tale (Donno, Poems 260). As mentioned above, Kermode argues that Marvell's poem is a refutation of Thomas Randolph's poem "Upon Love Fondly Refused for 'Conscience' Sake" that parallels some of the ideas in "The Mower against Gardens." These parallels are enclosures as the works of men rather than nature, the controversy of man's sovereignty over nature, and husbandry's arts of grafting and inoculation as the practice of gardeners. Finally, as Donno summarizes, "both poems have the same pattern of rhymed couplets of ten and eight syllables, which is a pattern Marvell used only on this occasion, and both poems use a diction marked by sexual overtones" (Poems 260)². These overtones will be made explicit below.

As noted earlier above, several have found that the Mower's condemnations of the gardener and his garden to have

² In contrast, Donno summarizes J. C. Maxwell, who shows that it is likely that both Marvell and Randolph were imitating Horace's Epodes, 1-10. Maxwell further argues there were numerous examples of alternating ten and eight syllable lines in Jonson, Randolph, Thomas Creech, and Richard Fanshawe. Maxwell, in later articles, adds another example of the rhymed pairs in William Habington and warns that a poem provides its own context for interpreting the meaning of significant words, such as "green," and that it can destroy a poem to attempt to make it conform to another poet's color system of symbolism (summarized in Donno, Poems 260).

a long tradition from Theocritus and the censure of the supposed first city-gardener, Epicurus. But the poem also has echoes of the radical Reformation (King 237-242), including the economic and political conflicts associated with the "enclosure" of land which during the Middle Ages and feudalism were held in "common." This parallel to contemporary history again invokes the idea of a Marvell who is not "dimorphic" (Donno, Critical 13) but one who spent almost twenty years as a Member of Parliament for Hull dealing with public issues (Craze 20-21; Donno, Poems 15).

Behind the Mower's denunciation of the gardener's creations is the tradition in which art and nature were separate realms. But the disputation about them was complex, for art and nature in the Renaissance could be viewed from a variety of perspectives, "Art, so the Renaissance commonplace goes, can perfect and complement nature, or oppose and corrupt it. In Marvell the latter is most often the case . . ." (Norford 246-47). In contrast, Thomas Browne (1605-1682), "a towering figure in English literature of the seventeenth century" (Witherspoon and Warnke 332), does not see a conflict between the two realms in his Religio Medici (written 1635, first published in 1642; Witherspoon and Warnke 333; eighth edition, 1682):

Now nature is not at variance with art, nor art with nature, they being both servants of his [God's] providence. Art is the perfection of nature. Were the world now as it was the sixth

day, there were yet a chaos. Nature hath made one world, and art another. In brief, all things are artificial; for nature is the art of God.
(Witherspoon and Warnke 336)

In the Mower poems are several different configurations of art and nature. One is allowed to see the Mower as lover of meadows and fields and as enemy to the "art" of horticulture, to see the Mower view nature as his companion while he alters it for love, to see the Mower lose inspiration and prophecy from nature, to see the Mower lose his former "true" picture of nature and then make it correspond to his emotions. In another critic's words, "In the Mower Poems we have a reflection of the passions in the landscape and incidents" (Ellrodt, "Mind" 225).

Generally, critics see several aspects of "The Mower against Gardens" at first glance. Several have noted the sexual overtones of the poem and its tone of Puritan ire. The poem possibly alludes to several aspects of the radical Protestant Reformation and the social revolution that were coincident with the political revolution of the Civil War and the execution of Charles I in 1649. It is clear from the verb tenses that the poem is divided between the past and the present. The verbs in lines 1-18 are in the past tense; lines 19-22 are in a combination of subjunctive and past tense, Latinized structure for continuous present, and

lines 23-40 are in the present tense.³ There is some ambiguity in line 22, for Latin structure of the "historic present" (Craze 136-137) means the present is forced against the past: "No plant now knew the stock from which it came." With the words "now knew," Marvell has used an adverb, a word indicating time in the present, in conjunction with a past tense verb. For the "amphibian" human, the present and the past are not dissoluble psychologically when in memory. This play of the amphibian swimmer in memory and time will be seen in "The Mower's Song"⁴ where circular and linear time coincide.

The first word that the Mower uses in "The Mower against Gardens" is the word "Luxurious" as an adjective to modify "man" (1). And "luxurious" is an epithet of condemnation in the vocabulary of seventeenth-century

³The verbs in lines 1-18 include the following: "Did . . . seduce," "(Did) . . . allure," "was," "enclosed," "did knead," "stupified," "fed," "grew," "did change," "did . . . taint," "were taught," "did . . . seek," "learned," "did hold," "was . . . sold," "was searched." The turning point of the poem and the physical center of the forty-line poem is lines 19-22 whose verbs move from the subjunctive (line 19, "might be allowed") to a past tense reference (line 21, "Had . . . not dealt").

⁴ The verbs for lines 24-40 include the following: "grafts," "might put" [subjunctive explaining why "man" "grafts"], "has," "Lest," "outdo," "does vex," "'Tis . . . enforced," "do lie," "does . . . despense," "do . . . till," ["statues, polished"] "May . . . stand," "do excel," "do dwell."

Puritan reformers (Hill, Upside Down 336-337). As Bradbrook and Lloyd-Thomas state, "This poem begins gravely enough: Man has sinned, and brought Death into the world. He has infected all Nature with his own 'luxurious' vice: every flower has learnt deceitful allurements . . ." (39). It can be argued that the diction is extravagant and, thus, ironic: "The wit of the writing is directly opposed to the Puritan asceticism it claims to advocate . . ." (Bradbrook and Lloyd-Thomas 39-40). The Mower's predisposition interprets purposes and results of the gardener's art. "Luxurious" is a moral and pejorative word that sets the tone for this poem but also provides one of the keys to see the mind of the Mower and how he judges the world and himself.

Marvell returns to the theme of luxury several times in his lyric poetry. Luxury is the temptation to indulge the senses, to allow the physical senses to dull one's purpose, to dim one's awareness that the human is an amphibian in the two worlds of flesh and spirit as in time. In "The Mower against Gardens," the Mower swims only in the medium of erotic nature, not in the waters of erotic art; later, he takes a soaking in self-love. Marvell uses the words "luxuriant," "luxurious," and "luxury" in comparable contexts in some of his other poetry. He uses the word

"luxurious" only once, however, in "The Mower against Gardens," in line 1.⁵

This diction of prophetic denunciation is reminiscent of the radical Reformation. Many lumped together several religious sects in the radical Reformation, assuming that Diggers, Levellers, and Munsters were about the same (Lamont and Oldfield xx-xxi). There were similarities, for religion, politics, and social reform were closely allied in the radical reformers. In order to indicate how religion, politics, and economic land policies converge, it might be informing to consider a letter sent to Lord Fairfax a number of months before he retired to Appleton House and Marvell became tutor to Mary Fairfax. Several critics assume that Marvell's moves in 1650 to Appleton House and the two years

⁵ He does use the word "luxury" to describes vice three other times, in lines 14 and 129 in "Last Instructions" and line 234 in "Loyal Scot." The Latin adjectival form luxuriosus is a synonym of "voluptuous" or "extravagant." The OED mentions that in the seventeenth century the word "luxuriant" could mean simply "producing abundantly, prolific" but also applying to plants as "growing profusely, exuberant, rank." When the word "luxuriant" is applied to "flesh," it is seen as "Growing to excess." And it should be remembered, as the OED points out, that in Latin and Romance languages the word "luxury" "connotes vicious indulgence," and in English it connotes "lasciviousness, lust." It should also be noted that lux lucis (f.) is Latin for the "light; light of day, daylight." It can also mean "public, the world; [or] light of hope." The words luce or luci mean "by daylight, in the daytime." The light in the season of summer is lux aestiva and of winter is lux brumalis (see Traupman).

he was there were the period of his composition of most of his lyric poems including the Mower poems (Leishman 32-33; Craze 12-13; Bradbrook and Lloyd-Thomas 2-3). Gerrard Winstanley, a leader of the Digger movement, sent a letter "To the Lord Fairfax, Generall of The English Forces, and His Councill of War," and it was delivered June 9, 1649. Sabine in a footnote relates that Gerrard Winstanley and William Everard presented the Diggers' case to Fairfax at Whitehall on April 20, and later Fairfax visited the Digger colony at St. George's Hill outside London on May 26 of the same year (Sabine 379-381). The Diggers were attempting to be like the early Christians of Acts 4:32 who were of "one soul" and "neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things in common."

This extensive text (see Appendix) echoes many of the Mower's concerns in "The Mower against Gardens." First, there is a castigation of man's greed and the enclosure of formerly "common" lands (Hill, Upside 47, 54; Trevelyan 33). Both appear to abhor the use of force and seek to restore a lost relationship with the land or nature. Both use the biblical language and biblical analogies to support their arguments. Thus, Marvell is attuned to the diction and arguments of his contemporaries even though he might not share their beliefs.

The trope of temptation is one which Marvell uses several times. Most notably, Marvell has temptation poems or sequences in "A Dialogue, between the Resolved Soul and Created Pleasure" and lines 97-196 of "Upon Appleton House." Certainly he has other seduction poems, or poems about the temptation to sexual love, in "Ametas and Thestylis Making Hay-ropes" and the renowned "To His Coy Mistress." Even though "The Mower against Gardens" uses the word "seduce" in line 2, it is more like a sexual seduction of the plant world for gustatory fulfillment and diversity. It has been noted by several critics that the plants are described as sexual objects or prostitutes (e.g., Craze 132, 137). It might be a parallel to the country girl who comes to London and finds work only as a prostitute and cut-purse as the fictional Moll Flanders does in the next century.

In "Resolved Soul and Created Pleasure," there is a comparable temptation to sensual delights. First, the Soul is told to have courage and to be armed for combat, as in Ephesians 4:16-17, where the Christian is reminded of the "shield of faith," "helmet of salvation," and "sword of the spirit." After several allures to various physical senses, the Resolved Soul "wins" by not giving in to temptations.⁶

⁶ "Created Pleasure" tempts Soul with flattery and food: "[S]ouls of fruits and flowers / Stand prepared to heighten yours" (15-16). But the Soul, in a simple couplet compared to the six lines of Pleasure's tempt, explains: "I sup above, and cannot stay / To bait so long upon the way"

In one sense, "The Mower against Gardens" is the reversal of "Resolved Soul and Created Pleasure," for the latter is to "show that Nature wants an art / To conquer one resolved heart" (9-10) while the former begins with the seduction of Nature by man. In the Mower poems, the Mower accuses the gardener of "seducing" the flowers from the fields in order to "seduce" and tempt himself with greater diversity of sensual pleasures. The "Resolved Soul" rejects "Created Pleasure's" overtures, since he is Christian and judges them by Eternity's time. In "The Mower against Gardens," the flowers are tempted, seduced, and thrive in

(17-18). Pleasure presents other temptations: to physical comfort ("downy pillows lie," 19), to olfactory sense ("perfumes" "fragrant clouds," 24 and 26), to the beauty of sight ("attract thine eye" and "In this crystal view thy face," 32 and 34), to aural beauty ("music" "charming airs," 37-38). Then a Chorus commends the Soul for its "fence / [with] The batteries of alluring sense" (46-47), and Pleasure offers a woman who as a "beauty" combines all that is "fair, and soft, and sweet" (51-54), the riches of the world (57-60), glory and power over the world's inhabitants (63-66), the knowledge of past and future, omniscience (69-72). Twice the Soul mentions the shortness of humanity's lifespan, its transience, to make the point that the Soul is an amphibian in time and the spirit world. In rejecting the temptation of the palate, the Soul responds, "I sup above, and cannot stay" (17), and in a summary rejection of "alluring sense," the Soul explains the urgency in brief couplets of refutation: "Had I but any time to lose, / On this I would it all dispose" (41-42). How very similar this line is to "Had we but world enough, and time" (1) of "To His Coy Mistress."

the gardener's seed-bed, bordello; the country cousin has lost his "girl" to the city-slicker.

Chernaik ties together the "uncompromisingly, rigidly Puritan" aesthetics of the Mower of this poem, the narrator in "Tom May's Death," and Marvell's verse satires of the 1670's and The Growth of Popery. These attitudes share the belief that

metaphors are likely to be lies, and true art is "sworn Enemy to all that do pretend," ["Tom May's Death" (30)] forswearing the fraudulent and corrupt inventions by which "Luxurious Man" seeks to transform "plain and pure" nature into his own "double" and fallen image. ("Satires" 283)

Of course, Marvell is aware of the "lie" in the metaphor as is made clear in "The Coronet," but the poet Marvell should be seen separately from his characters, in particular the Mower.

The Mower's description of the past seduction of nature continues with the human application of fragrance to the rose. This is indicative of an appeal to the senses, to the olfactory. In the Neo-Platonic background, this, of course, is appealing to that which is lower in the human, pleasure of smell. One is reminded of Cromwell's distinction of "fleshly reason" in his letter of 25 November 1648 to Robert Hammond regarding the fate of Charles I (rpt. in Lamont and Oldfield 126-127). In one sense, the Mower uses "fleshly" diction to describe what many, outside biblical circles,

would not consider a sexual matter. Vaulting human desire, charges the Mower, transforms the simplicity of the rose as it has been created by God, even though it too is a part of the fallen world. The gardener is a creator; he recreates the Edenic landscape by the control of what is walled in and out. It might be seen as the gardener's attempt to become god; the gods are offered incense, and sacrifices on altars smell good to the gods. The Mower sees the gardener adding "strange perfumes" to the rose as a sacrifice to his own god-like control of nature, and the Mower condemns the acquired fragrance not as an improvement but as a "taint" (11). The words "taint" or "tainted" Marvell uses six other times, all in a negative sense of less than the previous "pure" (see Guffey 509).

Contrary to the narrator's praise of free Nature in "Upon Appleton House," the Mower condemns the artifice of color achieved through crossbreeding of flowers. In "Upon Appleton House," the narrator praises how nature has been allowed its reign:

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.
(75-78)

In "The Mower against Gardens," Marvell's narrator has "luxurious man" teaching flowers to paint: "And flowers themselves were taught to paint" (12). Consequently, the

flowers become the "Art[ists]" who then literally "[deface]" themselves by adding color or makeup to their cheeks, like the painted trollops of London: "The tulip, white, did for complexion seek, / And learned to interline its cheek" (13-14). In this instance and in "The Coronet" where the art of poetry--"my curious frame . . . Though set with skill and chosen out with care" (22, 24)--poetic art is seen as inextricably tied to pride of craftsmanship and self-seeking of praise from the world rather than humble presentation of works to God. Therefore, in some instances, art is seen in contrast to Nature. Humans do become god-like in their creations, but in so doing they can recommit the sins of Adam and Eve in seeking in their pride not simply to mimic the Creator but to replace Him and His works, to improve the color of the flower, to break the bounds of the human and to become god-like.

The Mower then claims that since "Luxurious man" taught flowers the art of make-up that this has led to envy among flowers. The tulip that was "white," a symbolic color of purity and perfection in its containment of all colors, "did for complexion seek, / And learned to interline its cheek" (13-14). In a comparable context of licentiousness, "Upon Appleton House" has a nun tempt "the blooming virgin Thwaites" to put on the white of the nuns' robes, to perfume her breath with prayers, and to cry the tears of the

faithful in order to cleanse her "complexion," the only other instance of Marvell using this last word:

14

'Here we, in shining armour white,
Like virgin Amazons do fight.
And our chaste lamps we hourly trim,
Lest the great Bridegroom find them dim.
Our orient breaths perfumed are
With incense of incessant prayer.
And holy-water of our tears
Most strangely our complexion clears.'
(105-112)

The context of the nun's speech is that she is tempting Isabel Thwaites to go against nature and to remain in the Cistercian Abbey at Nun Appleton. This would mean that she then would not marry William Fairfax of Steeton, the ancestor of the Lord General Fairfax by whom Marvell was hired as tutor to Mary Fairfax (Donno 248-249). Thwaites was heir to the lands around the Abbey, and her guardian, the prioress, confined her in 1518 expecting that the inheritance would eventually belong to the order. William Fairfax first used the courts to free Thwaites; then, he used force to release her.

"The Mower against Gardens" has several ironic reversals from "Upon Appleton House." Both the garden and the nunnery are "enclosed."⁷ The garden has its noxious sounding "dead and standing pool of air," and is described

⁷ See Stewart for a discussion of tradition of the hortus conclusus, and Allentuck on the "pool of air."

by the Mower as a square, as if walled even though most English gardens were not walled. Most Italian gardens were walled which makes a clear contrast. The nunnery is walled to prevent men's entry and to insure against their temptations:

These bars inclose that wider den
Of those wild creatures called men.
The cloister outward shuts its gates,
And, from us, locks on them the grates.
(101-104)

The movement described by the Mower is the seduction of flowers and plants from their purity of the fields to the "enclosed" garden where they are "stupified," as if with drink, and taught the arts of using color to make them more attractive to humans. On the other hand, the nuns of Appleton enclose themselves to "purify" themselves by donning the white robe, adding the perfume of prayers, and achieving a clarified-by-tears "complexion." Thwaites is directly described as if she were a flower, "blooming." In one sense, the nuns are "blooming" behind their walls, but their luxuries are robed, perfumed, and clarified by a false white of religious piety.

Debauch, says the Mower, is the result of the enclosed garden, and the narrator of "Upon Appleton House" implies a homoeroticism within the Abbey's "purity":

What need is here of man? unless
These as sweet sins we should confess.
(183-184)

Each night among us to your side
 Appoint a fresh and virgin bride.
 (185-186)

Where you may lie as chaste in bed,
 As pearls together billeted,
 All night embracing arm in arm
 Like crystal pure with cotton warm.
 (189-192)

The nun's smooth tongue has sucked her in.
 (200)

These two passages again suggest how Marvell may use the same symbols and themes in contexts that reverse meanings. Certainly, both passages deal with force, capture and freedom, power and domination, but with different poetic movements. The Mower castigates the removal of the pure flowers and plants from the world to the garden where they are changed for humans' pleasure of their senses: loss of sentience, adding of scent, and adding "self" decoration through color. The narrator of "Upon Appleton House" castigates the forced withdrawal from the world of the "flower of mankind," the "blooming" Thwaites, to an enclosed "purity" disguised in white, perfumed in incense, clarified complexion, but just as "unnatural" as the Mower's garden. The nunnery excludes men, an important element in God's command to multiply and replenish the earth (Donno, Poems 250).

Additionally, both go back to the assumed principle that the Garden of Eden can be restored. The Lord General

Fairfax has to some extent restored the Garden by working in concert with nature. The Mower claims that the gardener "forces" nature for his own sensual satisfaction. The narrator of "Upon Appleton House" claims a forced withdrawal from nature is unnatural and that force can be legitimately used to restore the natural process of marriage and having children, as in Spenser's "Epithalamion," where marriage is so "That we may raise a large posterity" (417), "Of blessed Saints for to increase the count" (423; Heatt 64-65).

Another parallel is that force is used to insure the natural process of procreation. It was necessary, or there would have been no Lord General Fairfax nor Mary Fairfax. But if force to hold Thwaites was wrong, so was, according to the Mower, the forcing of the wild plants and flowers into the garden where they were altered for the pleasure of humans, not to fulfill God's work in the world. The gardener's creation, "'Tis all enforced, the fountain and the grot, / While the sweet fields do lie forgot" (31-32), including the cherry that is induced "To procreate without a sex" (30). Force clearly is ambiguous; the determinant is the result if it is a good or bad use of force. In the midst of action, the creator usually can not tell the result. Many times those actions reverse on one: "Agents who, through whatever devious or disastrous chain of events, end up achieving precisely the opposite end to that they

intended [sic] have, inevitably, a rueful appeal to Marvell" (Carey, "Reversals" 145).

Then the Mower narrator explains how man's tampering and "improving" nature by the art of adding color to flowers to make them more ocularly beautiful have distorted human values. In particular, the tulip that was "white" (13) now has color in "its cheek" (14) and was so valued that one bulb was sold for what might have been the price of a "meadow" (16). For the Mower, it is self-evident that a single flower bulb could never be as valuable as a meadow.⁸ Foreshadowing the final four lines of the poem that deal with "statues" and where "The gods . . . dwell" (37-40), the Mower continues his Jeremiad. He accuses the commercial gardeners of creating "other gods" by their own hands and then worshipping them--idolatry. This worship of one's own creation is again a theme which Marvell engages in "The Coronet." The Mower sees gardeners as valuing their own handiwork (in this instance the tulip that has color added) over that which is natural and "pure," a meadow. MacCaffrey

⁸ Ramist logic--which was named for Pierre de la Ramee whom many considered "the first Protestant martyr" and who had a great influence on Puritan esthetics and rhetoric in the seventeenth century--has several elements which appear to be similar to the Mower's. Ramist logic was above all "natural" and, therefore, true. It also emphasized the "intuitive," and as a consequence, the axiomatic and the self-evident were emphasized (Slone 323-325).

also concludes that idolatry is at the core of the Mower's tirade.

Inveighing against gardens, he attacks the propensity of fallen man, "that sov'raign thing and proud," to reverse the beneficent relationship, established in Eden, between himself and nature. Instead of gazing into the mirror of natural innocence, he narcissistically forces Nature to give him back his own image. . . . This is a version of idolatry: "The Pink grew then as double as his Mind, . . . The Tulip white, did for complexion seek." ("The Scope" 225-226)

To indicate how far humans have overvalued the tulip, he reminds the reader that the tulip shares some characteristics of the "onion," the most common herb for cooking. Further, the Mower claims that the desire for aesthetic sights of exotic flowers has led men to cross "oceans new" and examine "Another world" to find the author's self-referential "Marvel of Peru" (17-18).

This seeking for other aesthetic "gods," "these rarities might [have] be[en] allowed" (19) had not "man, that sovereign thing and proud" "dealt between the bark and tree, / Forbidden mixtures there to see" (20-22). What precisely this may mean is controversial. First, it should be noted that the Mower insists that the gardener/artist is not completely god-like in his creations, for man is a "thing," a creation by God, which has a certain "sovereign[ty]" over the world granted by God's command to

"have dominion" over the Earth (Genesis 1:26). But tied together with sovereignty is the overarching sin of pride.

It should be emphasized that the word "proud" stands at the center of the poem, the last word of line twenty of a poem of forty lines. Of the alternating rhymed couplets of ten and eight syllables, the word "proud" is number ninety, the numerical center of the poem. As argued elsewhere, this strategic place in structure and numbers in Marvell's poetry are of utmost importance for interpreting meanings. As is clear from "Upon Appleton House," Marvell was very conscious of architecture and was very concerned with the structure or architecture of the poem.⁹ In this instance, human pride stands at the center of the poem and the Mower's condemnation of gardens.

Thematically, this is comparable to "The Coronet" where the narrator/poet searches "Through every garden, every mead, / I gather flowers . . ." (5-6) in order to replace the crown of thorns on "My Saviour's head" with a garland of flowers, his poem. But in the act of creation that is to be devotional, the poet recognizes "the serpent old" (13): his pride in the act of creation has brought forth the desires "of fame and interest" (16). The poet asks "Thou" to

⁹ See Stocker 52, 131, 179, 200, 233, 247, 297, although she insists on the last image being ultimate; Rostvig emphasizes the central position with mirroring of words and circular patterns 245-267.

"disentangle" the motives, tame the serpent, and through His grace allow the flowers of the garland to be scattered at His feet since they were unworthy to crown His head. This entangled wreath of devotion, self-seeking, and pride of "The Coronet" is similar to the "double . . . mind" of the Mower's charge of duplicity, literally "double-dealing." At least at this point, the poet of "The Coronet" and the Mower of "The Mower against Gardens" share the view that when humans create, regardless whether the motive is to create a devotional wreath or to restore the Garden of Eden, that creation can also proclaim their self-seeking, idolatry, and pride.

In the postlapsarian world, only God's grace can transform human creations into divine creations. The gardens may have "statues, polished by some ancient hand" (37), but they are dead stones in "A dead and standing pool of air" (6). The living "gods themselves with us do dwell" (40), outside the walls of force, claims the Mower. Nature and the true gods cannot be diminished to fit the artist's representation of them in stone or as "seduced" and "painted" flowers.

As noted above, line 19 shifts from the consistent past tense into the subjunctive mood, the hypothetical or conditional. Craze, as mentioned, sees this as a Latinate verb structure of the "continuous present" in order for the Mower to "transition" from what has happened--"historical

excursion"--to what the present practice is (137). In other words, the Mower claims that a certain decree has precluded "these rarities [which] might be allowed / To man" (19). But, man in his "sovereign" power and because he is "proud" "had . . . dealt between the bark and tree, / Forbidden mixtures there to see" (21).

The carving on or separating of bark from trees is an image which Marvell uses elsewhere; trees are sentient and human-like. *Prima facie*, line 21 appears to make reference to grafting which is mentioned later in the poem at line 24: "He grafts upon the wild the tame." The separation of the bark and the tree in "Upon Appleton House" is executed by a bird. The hewel "Doth from the bark the woodmoths glean" (542). The hewel can topple the "hollow oak" but could not have "had the tree not fed / A traitor-worm, within it bred, / (As first our flesh corrupt within / Tempts impotent and bashful sin)" (553-556). The narrator here is "I, easy philosopher," who is "but an inverted tree" (561, 568) and who attempts to "read in Nature's mystic book" (584).

Carving on trees can be ambiguously a blotch or a compliment. The trees are alive as in "The Garden" (19-24) where the narrator castigates lovers for carving names of their lovers on the trees but he will only "wound" "your barks" by carving the trees' names. The trees are also alive in "Upon the Hill and Grove at Bilbrough." There the trees had been carved by Lord Fairfax with Lady Vere's name:

"And on those oaks engraved her name; / Such wounds alone these woods became: / But ere he well the barks could part / 'Twas writ already in their heart" (45-48). "For they ('tis credible) have sense" (49). The carving in "The Garden" is done by oblivious lovers, but in "Upon the Hill and Grove at Bilbrough," the trees anticipate the owner's desire, and so they (humans and nature) cooperate in harmony and mutual affection.

In sum, without losing sight of the individual poems, the words "wound," "dealt," "bark," and "tree" appear in significant sections in several of Marvell's poems. The tree is sentient; the easy-philosopher is an inverted tree, and man "Had . . . dealt between the bark and tree, / Forbidden mixtures there to see" (21-22); the worm/serpent/sin invades the oak/garland/man. The Mower then attacks the gardener for not viewing trees as sacred objects; this, of course, reflects the growing scientific spirit of Bacon that saw nature as mechanistic (Mintz 159), and both religion and science accused the other of pride (Willey 35-37).

The Mower's accusation includes contrasts of "wild" and "tame" (24). The result is an "uncertain and adulterate fruit" (25) which is designed to excite--put in "dispute" (26)--the taste buds, to satisfy orally. When seventeenth-century English poets mention trees and the "adulterate fruit," the literary echoes point back to the disaster of

Adam and Eve who, also in their pride, tasted of the forbidden fruit of the Tree of Knowledge to become "like the gods" (Genesis 3:5). In fact, the Mower implies that feeding desire of the eyes, nose, and tongue is to re-enact the first temptation: when Eve "saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes" (Genesis 3:6), she ate the "forbidden fruit" and gained a terrible knowledge.¹⁰

At the end of "The Mower against Gardens," the Mower avers that the "gods" dwell with him and the fauns, fairies, in the meadows, not in the falsely restored Garden of Eden, which indeed is a place of death, not life. This appears to be central to "The Mower against Gardens"--the grasping and tasting of the "Forbidden fruit" of the Tree of Knowledge which was human's first act of rebellion against God. Here the Mower has shifted in verb tense from the past to the present tense: "He grafts" (24), and "No plant now knew" (23). Donno cites M. P. Tilley's A Dictionary of the Proverbs in England as a source for the contention that the phrase "Had he not dealt between the bark and tree" was used in the seventeenth century as signifying "audacity" and as "interference between man and wife" (Donno, Poems 261). In

¹⁰ Carl Sagen argues in The Dragons of Eden (1977) that roughly eighteen million years ago in our evolution from the great ape, frontal lobes appeared on Proconsul's brain; thus, knowledge of self and others and mortality is a fall into consciousness and responsibility (97-104).

that case, the Mower here is the rejected country lover whose "wife"--the flowers--has run-off with the gardener to his "grot" where the seedbed is intoxicating and begins to paint and perfume herself in sluttish manner. The country-cousin Mower will also be rejected when he seeks a human lover, Juliana.

Legouis maintains that the phrase "Forbidden mixtures," refers to Leviticus 19:19 and Deuteronomy 22:9 (43). These stipulate Mosaic laws of purification and holiness--sow fields with one kind of seed and do not wear cloth made from different wools. Both passages in the Old Testament are in the context of prohibited sexual behaviors. It is the case that from this point the Mower's comparisons and diction become explicit sexual references: "adulterate fruit" (25), "green seraglio" (27), "eunuchs" (27), and "To procreate without a sex" (30).

In Marvell's works there are two other uses of the word "forbidden." The first instance is the first part of Marvell's poem that was published with Milton's 1674 edition of Paradise Lost. "On Mr. Milton's Paradise Lost" reads, "Rebelling Angels, the Forbidden Tree" (4). Donno points out that Marvell's first ten lines are in the Miltonic style but with end rhymes. In the latter portion of this poem, Marvell wittily plays upon his own rhyming and Milton's blank verse, complimenting the latter for his boldness and artistry (Donno, Poems 301). Second, "The Last Instructions

to a Painter" reads "Not unprovoked, she tries forbidden arts" (73). The last is a reference to Anne Hyde, Duchess of York, who is accused (evidently rightly so) of licentious behavior, and here the poet has her using magic to gain other lovers (Donno, Poems 282-283). "For-bidden" has the implication of religious sanctions, the Tree of Knowledge and witchcraft. So, the Mower has the diction of the prophet.

When the Mower charges that gardeners have used "Forbidden mixtures" in their grafting process, he assumes that is a clear concept to whomever his audience might be. He assumes that certain prohibitions should be clear to anyone who understands nature and the human's role in the world (see Sloane above, note). If Donno is correct regarding the proverbial nature of the phrase, then it could tie the Mower's strictures of gardening to the sexual conduct prohibitions found in Leviticus and Deuteronomy, mentioned by Legouis above. If the trees are indeed sentient and under the same strictures of mixing kinds that are found in the Old Testament, then man leads the trees into adultery, comparable to "The Garden": "The gods, that mortal beauty chase, / Still in a tree did end their race" (27-28). The Mower does use the term "adulterate fruit" (25) to describe the "offspring" of these "forbidden" unions.

Interestingly and significantly, the Mower's verb tense shift from the past to the present indicates that for the Mower gardening currently contributes its own decadence and in so doing re-enacts the Fall. It does appear that the Mower parallels the biblical denunciation of mixing "kinds" and makes clear the sexual nature of the Mower's diction:

And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself, upon the earth: and it was so. And the earth brought forth grass, and herb yielding seed after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed was in itself, after his kind: and God saw that it was good. And the evening and the morning were the third day. (Gen. 1:11-13)

Of course, this passage is prelapsarian, but it appears to question the degree that nature was involved in the Fall of humans. The Mower, at least, charges that once God's decree has been made against mixing of "kinds," it is not canceled because man has certain sovereignty. The Mower states that grafting the "wild" on the "tame" leads to confusion on the part of the plants as to their ancestry: they are creations of "the gods." Hence, to mix "kinds" is to move further from the Golden Age of Perfection and simplicity. But confusion on the part of the sentient plants is not the only result; the plants' offspring or "fruit" is both "uncertain" and "adulterate" (25). This means that now the "family tree" has offspring that also inherit the "double" mind of "uncertain[ty]" of line 9. Second, the offspring is

"adulterate" which can mean both "not pure" and one that is involved in adultery.

Marvell's other two uses of "adultery" and "adult'rers" are in "The Last Instructions to a Painter" (454, 313). In the first, it is a vice to be condemned. In the second line, it is in a list of outcasts and evildoers, "Wand'ers, Adult'rers, Lyers, Munser's rest," the latter being an antinomian sect in Munster, Germany who took literally the Pauline injunction that "All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but all things edify not" (1 Cor. 10:23). For the Mower the gardener is an antinomian who has broken the laws of nature because of his appetite and pride.

The OED has the participial adjective "adulterate" defined in the two ways. In regard to humans, it means "Defiled, or stained by adultery, either in origin or conduct; adulterous"; and in regard to things, it means "Spurious, counterfeit; of base origin, or corrupted by base intermixture," as in 1658 J. R[owland] translation of Mouffet's Theater of Insects; or Lesser Living Creatures "Not of good Honey indeed, but of base, adulterate, impure trash" (OED). Interestingly, as a verb, the word "adulterate" has a seventeenth century parallel to the Mower's description of the tulip "interlin[ing] its cheek": 1611 [Thomas] Coryat Crudities "They adulterate their faces" (OED).

This ambiguity of the word "adulterate" mirrors the biblical injunction of husbandry prohibitions and of human sexual prohibitions and signals a transition. This is a transition from the Mower's castigation of "Luxurious man" for seducing plants to his garden so that he could add smell and sight, to the denunciation of man's taste, his lust.

In the Mower's vision, man "bring[s] his vice in use" (1). While there are several instances of the word, Marvell uses the word "vice" in "The Loyal Scot" in a context of pederasty and anality:

Even Father Dis, though so with age defaced,
With much ado preserves his postern chaste.
The innocentest mind there thirst alone,
And, uninforced, quaff healths in Phlegeton.
Luxury, malice, supersition, pride,
Oppression, avarice, ambition, Id-
Leness, all the vice that did abound
When first they lived, still haunts them
underground. (229-236)

Donno's note to line 230 makes reference to a Cleveland poem that she has cited earlier for "The Last Instructions" (497). Marvell's lines from the latter read:

His [Hyde's] minion imps that, in his secret part,
Lie nuzzling at the sacramental wart,
Horse-leeches circling at the hem'rrhoid vein:
He sucks the King, they him, he them again.
(495-496)

Donno also cites Cleveland's, The Rebel Scot, (1644):

Sure England hath the hemerrhoids, and these
On the north postern of the patient seize,
Like leeches. (83-85)

What this has to do with the Mower is speculative, but he does mention man's bringing "his vice in use," "eunuchs," and "To procreate without a sex" (1, 26, and 30). The Leviticus and Deuteronomy passages do forbid lying with a man as with a woman and against sexual intercourse with beasts. The implication is that Marvell did not simply use ribald and salacious diction or images solely in his satires. In this reading, I argue that Marvell uses explicit sexual allusions here in the diction of the Mower, and most bawdily in "Damon the Mower." In this context of sexual diction, it is important to again consider Marvell's choice of a Mower with his scythe rather than the traditional shepherd.

Marvell explicitly, although in Latin, connects mowing with coitus and, particularly, the scythe with the penis. Marvell's poem "Upon an Eunuch: a Poet" is written in Latin:

Nec sterilem te crede; licet, mulieribus exul,
Falcem virginæ nequeas, immitere messi,
Et nostro peccare modo. Tibi Fama perenne
Praegnabit; rapiesque novem de monte sorores;
Et pariet modulos Echo repetita nepotes.

Don't believe yourself sterile, although, an exile
 from women,
 You cannot thrust a sickle at the virgin harvest,
 And sin in our fashion. Fame will be continually
 pregnant by you,
 And you will snatch the nine sisters from the
 mountain;
 Echo too, often struck, will bring forth musical
 offspring. (1-10)

McQueen and Rockwell, in an introductory note to this poem, remark that Marvell himself was described as a eunuch in the poem "A Love Letter to the Author of the Rehersall Transposed." Richard Leigh in The Transproser Rehears'd accuses Milton and Marvell of homosexuality and Marvell of impotence:

O marvellous fate! O fate full of marvel!
 That Nol's Latin pay two clerks should deserve
 ill!
 Hiring a Gelding, and Milton the Stallion!
 His Latin was gelt and turn'd pure Italian.
 (qtd. in Bradbrook and Lloyd-Thomas 19).

McQueen and Rockwell reject any direct reference to Marvell himself in "Upon a Eunuch" or, for that matter, any "actual person" (42-43).

Nevertheless, this poem and its references to poetry, creation, and sexual conduct do have implications for the interpretation of the sexually explicit references made in "The Mower against Gardens." First, in the Latin poem, there is the explicit comparison to the Mower's job as sexual intercourse between a man and a woman. Particularly, the sickle is the penis which the eunuch "cannot thrust" "at the virgin harvest." The narrator of "Upon an Eunuch" dissociates himself from the eunuch but identifies with those who have testicles by excluding the sexually altered from the group who "sin in our fashion" (7-8). This immediately places the Mower and his function in a sexual

context of presumably heterosexual relations; certainly, that is what the Mower wants to happen in "Damon the Mower." Second, this influences the way that an interpreter might want to consider the biblical reference to grass as flesh (Hartman 175-176). The Mower is not simply in the act of destruction but of regeneration; his is also an act of love, or at least passion. So in some sense, the Mower may be an expert on love or generation. He certainly is involved in making it possible for cattle to survive the winter, and he does not permanently kill the grass but leaves the root system to regenerate with the turning of the seasons.

In "The Mower against Gardens," the Mower sees a garden that is sexually aberrant, out of control. In breaking the Hebraic injunction against "mixing" kinds, the Mower sees humans tampering with a sacred injunction:

And God blessed them [Adam and Eve], and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth. (Gen. 1:28)

The Mower indicts the gardener for breaking God's law of "kinds" and forcing dominion over plants that do not "moveth upon the earth."

In this artificial garden, humans have bordellos, eunuchs, and sexless procreation. Thus, the human garden is a "green seraglio" (27) which clearly identifies the flowers

as prostitutes with their painted faces. The Mower claims that as in a Turkish "seraglio" there are "eunuchs" who protect the flowers and are considered safe from heterosexual contact because of castration. This "tyrant" (28) gardener "vex[es]" nature when he produces a cherry "without a sex" (29-30; on stoneless cherries see Carey, "Reversals" 148-149). This is the eunuch mentioned in line 27 since, colloquially, "stoneless" meant "without testicles" (Wilcher 91). Regardless, in god-like fashion, the gardener, seeking to satisfy his own tastes and to create his Garden of Eden, has turned his creation into a garden of earthly delights and sexual license. The harmony of the original Garden has here become a garden of "dispute" and force, not freedom.

The Mower's emphasis on "'Tis all enforced, the fountain and the grot" (31) sets up a familiar and major theme in Marvell's poetry--that is, the conflicts of freedom and constraint, of freedom and force, or of excess and self-control (Cousins 57-58, 97-99; Friedman 127-128). Most comparable to "The Mower against Gardens" is the section (stanzas 41-46) in "Upon Appleton House." There, just before the poet enters the "unfathomable grass" (370) and the mowers enter to cut it down (388), the narrator describes England after the Civil War:

Oh thou, that dear and happy isle
The garden of the world ere while,

Thou paradise of four seas,
 Which heaven planted us to please,
 But, to exclude the world, did guard
 With watery if not flaming sword;
 What luckless apple did we taste,
 To make us mortal, and thee waste? (321-328)

If England can be a garden, the Mower's criticism of the individual garden may be seen as also another Puritanical indictment of how England's morals have degenerated.

Further, the Mower's point is that to satisfy his taste--to put "the palate in dispute"--the gardener has used force to the exclusion of freedom. Wilcher points out that the voice of the Mower is unaware of the complexities of the art and nature conflict; therefore, it should be read with the "mantle of irony" over the performance (93). That irony can be seen in the idea of freedom:

With characteristic irony, Marvell warns that man's gift of freedom does not enable him to remake the world according to his desires, or even to make much of a dent in his environment: "For men may spare their pains where Nature is at work, and the world will not go the faster for our driving." To Marvell as to Milton, absolute freedom is a chimera and "to dispute with God" a sign of rebellious pride. (Chernaik, "Marvell's Satires" 272)

This certainly ties into Marvell's championing of Parliamentary freedom and his republicanism.

Several critics have pointed out that the Civil War was a shaping factor for Marvell. One clear implication of Marvell's reference to England as a Garden in "Upon Appleton

House" is that "political gardens" can exist in this world, at least metaphorically. Second, a country or a political system can reenact the Fall of Mankind, to taste the forbidden fruit. It might be the case that the Mower does so on the personal level.

While the Mower of "The Mower against Gardens" appears to be a digger preacher, he does share concerns with the Mower of the other three poems. "They" are concerned with nature and art, plant life (flowers, grass), sex, love, fairies, pride, competition (from gardeners or shepherds), sickles (which in English can also sound very close to a word that means "unwell"), death, growth, regeneration, loss, decay or degeneration, the seasons, fields and meadows, and passion (for meadows, for self, for Juliana, for guidance or illumination, for the past, and for revenge).

Further, several critics have pointed out that the word "mower" could mean "clownish" in the seventeenth century. One recurrent irony, if it is assumed that the Mower in "The Mower against Gardens" is the same character as in the other three poems, is that the moral frame that he uses in "The Mower against Gardens" can also be used to judge his actions in the other three poems. One major irony in "The Mower against Gardens" is that the preacherly tone of the Mower in his diatribe against gardeners is seen in somewhat a different light in his identifying with fairies and the

final "gods," the plural making a great difference from Spenser's Great Pan.

Lines 32 through 36 set up the contrast with the garden that has been described in the first three quarters of the poem. The contrast is first noted in lines 3 and 4, where the fields that had been the habitat for the plants and flowers are described as "Where nature was most plain and pure." Thus, the poetic movement has been from the fields to the garden and how that change came about in the past (31-32). Then, there is the shift to the result in the present tense of sexual extravagance (23-30), with a comparison of the meadows and fields in the present (31-40).

In the Mower's mind, the contrast could not be clearer. The fields and meadows are where free will of the natural world can exercise, but the garden is dominated by man through his will or force. The "fountain and the grot" do not exist for their own sakes but are "channeled" by man, the gardener, replacing the harmony of water, rock, and land contour with the vision of "enforced" variety. The freedom that is associated with consent of the will is now lost in the present with the "enforced" artistry of the gardener.

Added to the earlier mentioned qualities of nature being "most plain and pure," here the Mower adds that "willing nature does to all dispense / A wild and fragrant innocence" (33-34). In contrast to the "strange perfumes" in line 11, here the fragrance is that of "innocence."

Comparable to the nuns at Nun Appleton, the Mower says the gardener has built a prison for his flowers and trees; innocence has been lost in the newly contrived garden. The Mower in present tense avers that "fauns and fairies do" continue to care for the meadows, not by active horticulture but because they have not abandoned the meadows for the gardener's compound. Their very "presence" "till[s]" (35-36) the meadows and assures their continuation.

In another reflection of that which is lost, the Mower mentions that the gardener has also included in his garden "Their statues," presumably the "fauns and fairies." Some critics have explained that Marvell was quite aware of gardens in France, England, and Italy (Hunt 333-345). Italy, particularly, had examples of "ancient" sculpture of both Greek and Roman origins. In contrast to the stone images which only "stand," the "gods" "dwell" (40); that is, exist. Further, the Mower acknowledges that the "figures do excel" (39); they are works of art and are "excellent." Comparable to the "dead and standing pool of air," the statues do not live or "dwell." Of great consequence is how one assumes Marvell uses the terms of "fauns and fairies" and the phrase "The gods themselves" (35 and 40). There is some indication that Puritans did not like the mention of "fairies" and assumed that this use was associated with Roman Catholicism. From the whole of Marvell's work, it appears that his view was a more aesthetic use of a poetic

device, rather than a polemical attack (Friedman, Pastoral 128-129).

When the Mower claims that the "gods" "dwell" with him, the pagan and the orthodox meet in an ambiguity. Friedman notes that the pastoral genre makes the "fauns and fairies" to be pagan (129). However, the plurality of the "gods" also exists in the same Garden of Eden sequence in the Old Testament:

And the LORD God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever: Therefore the LORD God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken. So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life. (Gen. 3:22-24)

The Hebrew is interesting and problematic for some monotheists. The word for "God" is plural, so the "one of us" is appropriate. Strong's Concordance defines it:

[word number] 430. 'elohiym, el-o-heem'; plural of H433; gods in the ordinary sense; but specifically used (in the plural thus, especially with the article) of the supreme God; occasionally applied by way of deference to magistrates; and sometimes as a superlative: --angels, X exceeding, God (gods) (-dess, -ly), X (very) great, judges, X mighty.

Thus, the Mower claims the "gods" who are alive, not the stone statues: they are idols.

As Rostvig (245-245), Norford (242-243), and Marvell ("On Mr Milton's Paradise Lost" 53-54) point out, it is important to consider numbers and structure in poetry. The poem has the significant number of forty lines. As has been pointed out by others, in biblical symbolism the number forty is associated with the forty years of wandering in the wilderness after the children of Israel fled from Egypt and were forced to wander in the wilderness as punishment for their sins of idolatry in worshipping the golden calf and their doubting of God's prophet, Moses. Numbers 14:33 has the children of Israel wander in the wilderness because of their "whoredoms" until their "carcasses [sic] be wasted," but Deutoronomy 8:12 has the forty years "to humble thee." However, Joshua 5:6 has the forty-year wandering experience a time of purging the violent and the militaristic, "till all the people that were men of war . . . were consumed."

The number forty is used to signify a time of purging in Christian mythology. Jesus fasted and prayed in the wilderness forty days before his three temptations from Satan (Matt. 4). The Mower does represent a wanderer from the "wilderness." In biblical mythology there is another wanderer who comes in from the wilderness, John the Baptist. His is a voice "crying in the wilderness" which the writer of the Gospel of Matthew echoes from Isaiah. John is the primitive from the wilderness wearing "camel's hair" and leather loin cloth and eating "locusts and wild honey,"

proclaiming the need for immediate repentance since the Kingdom of God is at hand (Matt. 3:1-4). John accuses Herod of adultery and loses his head by decapitation. The Mower charges the gardeners with "whoredoms" and, subsequently, loses his mind because of Juliana. The Mower in "The Mower against Gardens" does appear to have an ascetic and prophetic mentality, proclaiming Old Testament horticultural and sexual prohibitions associated with statues or idols.

There is no doubt about how the Mower thinks, but the further question of Marvell's predilection for gardens can be seen in the semi-autobiographical poem "Upon Appleton House" where the poet/narrator praises Lord Fairfax's garden in lines 289-320. There the poet names two flowers that are mentioned in "The Mower against Gardens":

See how the flowers, as a parade,
Under their colours stand displayed:
Each regiment in order grows,
That of the tulip, pink, and rose. (309-312)

In contrast to "The Mower against Gardens," here the flowers praise and pay obeisance to their acknowledged and rightful commander, Lord Fairfax.

If critics assume that the poet/narrator in "Upon Appleton House" is closer to what the poet Marvell might have thought, then one should be reluctant to ascribe the diatribe of the Mower in "The Mower against Gardens" to Marvell's deeply held Puritan beliefs or assume that the Mower "is Marvell's voice" even though altered (Friedman,

Pastoral 128). Instead, one should see the character as one who has views similar to the contemporary diggers and, conveniently for Marvell, can be used in the continuing dialogue with genre of the country versus the court, nature versus art, freedom versus control/domination, appetite control versus license of desire, and life versus death. So, at one level the alternating line lengths of ten and eight syllables give the "form" of a debate, and there are important issues under discussion, but there is only one voice. In "Damon the Mower," there clearly is a second voice heard.

However, the Mower triumphantly proclaims that the living "gods" "do dwell" "with us," presumably the Mower and the fauns and fairies of line 35, and possibly the "sweet fields" and meadows. Finally, the Mower claims that his is a triumph of life over death, living gods over the dead statues and the dead standing pool of air.

Thus the verb system serves to highlight the Mower's position. The poem begins in the past tense to describe what man the gardener has done to re-create his own lost Garden. In so doing, the Mower claims that man has used the Hebraic injunction to take dominion of the world to create an area of deadness that distorts natural creations for his own appetites. The Mower claims that man the gardener has broken the Hebraic injunction of "mixing kinds" that led to the current garden of sexual excess and perversion, denoted

by the present tense. Fauns and fairies "till" in the present tense while the statues that were "polished by some ancient hand" in the past tense simply "stand." That is, they do not have life or movement, comparable to the dead idols of the Ancient Near East. Significant for the Mower, "The gods" who are eternal--the past, present, and future are in the present and knowable--remain with him and his fauns, fairies, and fields.

Very important to the poem is the epistemological question of knowing and memory. The Mower in the first half of the poem describes the past, a memory or description of what has happened. At the physical center of the poem, the word "proud," describing "man," turns the poem to the present tense. Because of the "Forbidden mixtures" "dealt between the bark and tree" (22 and 21), "No plant now knew the stock from which it came" (23). The Mower claims that nature's plants have lost memory of their birthright and lineage. But the Mower claims that memory is not lost to some: the meadows that the fauns and fairies continue to till still remember, and the Mower does also. That continuous memory is based on continuous experience, "dwell[ing]" with the living "gods." In this sense, the eternal exists in the present through experience and through memory. In the subsequent Mower poems, memory of experience with nature will be lost when the Mower "falls" in love with Juliana, falls on the ground in self-inflicted injury, loses

his spiritual home in the world, loses his "true" picture of meadows, and predicts his fall in death with the grass.¹¹

¹¹ The issue of idolatry is tied to creation as shown in Gen. 1:26, "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. "Strong's Concordance transliterates the verse as:

Gen .1:26 . 'elohiyim:H430 'amar:H559 . . .
 'asah:H6213 'adam:H120 . . tselem:H6754 . .
 demuwth:H1823 radah:H7287 . . dagah:H1710
 . . yam:H3220 'owph:H5775 . . shamayim:H8064
 behemah:H929 . . kol:H3605 . 'erets:H776 . .
 kol:H3605 remes:H7431 ramas:H7430 . . 'erets:H776

The key words are defined as:

6754. tselem, tseh'-lem; from an unused root mean. to shade; a phantom, i.e. (fig.) illusion, resemblance; hence a representative figure, espec. an idol:--image, vain shew.

1823. demuwth, dem-ooth'; from H1819; resemblance; concr. model, shape; adv. like:--fashion, like (-ness, as), manner, similitude.

7287. radah, raw-daw'; a prim. root; to tread down, i.e. subjugate; spec. to crumble off:--(come to, make to) have dominion, prevail against, reign, (bear, make to) rule, (-r, over), take.

Since Marvell is a master at languages, the word "image" which could be both "to shade" and "idol" could provide several meanings at once, particularly since the idea of "identity" some argue is the problem which "attracts Marvell" (Friedman, "Sight" 321). Further the Hebrew word radah or "dominion" has linguistic implications in "The Mower's Song," for Damon chastises flowers "While I lay trodden under feet" (16).

Chapter Three

"Damon the Mower": The Rise and Fall of Self-Love

"Damon the Mower" is the longest of the four poems. The poem has eighty-eight lines, divided into eleven stanzas of eight lines each. The rhyme pattern is a4a4b4b4c4c4d4d4. Numerically and biblically, the eleven stanzas might represent the less than perfect. When one of the twelve apostles betrayed Jesus of Nazareth, it was important for the other apostles to find a replacement so that there would be twelve. The Apostle Paul would later claim apostolic adoption for that twelfth position because of his noonday, blinding experience on the road to Jericho. Below, it is argued that the eleven stanzas relate to the rising and falling experience of the Mower. While other critics have pointed out the classical allusions (e.g., see Leishman; Wilcher 95-97) and the traditional references to the biblical Fall (e.g., Gilbertson, "Type" vi-ix; Stocker 234-240), my main focus in this chapter is the sexual puns and innuendoes. These exemplify Marvell's ribald humor that is shown here in his lyrics and in his "later" work as a satirist. This ribald, burlesque humor is related to the main theme of the genre, unrequited love. The comic

elements do not provide simplicity, for Damon's "simplicities are ridiculous to the sophisticated eye; but his sophistication of manner is formidable to the simple reader" (Everett 221).

Since the Mower of "The Mower against Gardens" is not distinguished by name and since "Damon the Mower" has the love-seeker labeled in the title and the beloved called Juliana, a simple question is who and what are they.¹ Cullen sees him as "a big shot in the rustic world" (187). On the other hand, some see him as Tayler does, as a mythic

¹ The name "Damon" is a close anagram of "Adam" (Gilbertson, "Many" 152-153). "Damon" is also associated with the Greek with derivations in Sanskrit with one meaning as "to rule" or "to guide" or as cognate with Greek for "tame, conquer, make subject to a husband" (Shawcross, Intentionality 162-163). But if one considers the New Testament Greek, Damon is associated with the spirit world and might be a type of vegative god, a Comus. The New Testament has Jesus of Nazareth casting out "demons" from the wild man of the Gadarenes who lived in the "tombs" and "neither could any man tame him" (Mark 5:1-21). Jesus is also accused by the Pharasees as having a "demon" (Mark 9:34). Strong's Concordance defines these as: 1142. daimon, dah'-ee-mown; from daio (to distribute fortunes); a daemon or supernatural spirit (of a bad nature):--devil. Mark 5:12 "devils." 1139. daimonizomai, dahee-mon-id'-zom-ahee; mid. from G1142; to be exercised by a daemon:--have a (be vexed with, be possessed with) devil (-s). Mark 5:15="possessed with the devil." 1140. daimonion, dahee-mon'-ee-on; neut. of a der. of G1142; a daemonic being; by extens. a deity:--devil, god. In contrast, the word "devil" (the devil who tempts Jesus in the desert as in Matt. 4:1) is defined separately: 1228. diabolos, dee-ab'-ol-os; from G1225; a traducer; spec. Satan [comp. H7854]:--false accuser, devil, slanderer.

figure, or "Marvell's symbol of fallen man, the lowest of the angels and the highest of the beasts" (163). Noted above are instances of seeing Damon as Adam re-enacting the Fall. He might not have been a "true rustic" since cutting grass is seasonal and everyone helps (Bradbrook, "The Masque" 223). Closer to my argument is Empson's seeing Damon in the role of "the Clown as Death" (Versions 106). Juliana is seen as an aspect of "Eros" who has only disdain for Damon and dislocates him from his cosmos "by the impact of frustrated sexual experience" (Nevo 18-19). Her name also is indicative of godhood since her name is drawn from the same Latin root as "Jove" (Shawcross, Intentionality 163-164). Wilcher sees her as "symptomatic of disturbances in the very fabric of seventeenth-century life for which the traumas of awakening sexuality are a convenient and powerful paradigm" (104). Stocker sees her as "unregenerate" (235) and "antichristian," Damon's "personal Scarlet Whore" (236) who ushers in the Last Days. I view Juliana as the beloved other who does not return the love offered by Damon and, thus, precipitates the changes in Damon's mind and his microcosmic fields and meadows.

As noted in chapter one, "Damon the Mower" is in the "ancient Theocritean tradition" of the rustic whose love is unrequited, as in Cyclops Polyphemus' complaint regarding Galatea (Idyll XI) and Virgil's retelling (Eclogue II). But Ovid was very much a source for Renaissance mythology in

Latin and after 1567 in English when Golding's translation appeared. In many ways the choice of Ovid to exhibit Marvellian parallels or echoes seems more appropriate, for he was a Latin scholar and as did Ovid sought to link all classical mythology with the theme of change or transformation (Miller, "Introduction" xi-xii). Marvell has both characteristics in that he seeks to sum up all pastoral poetry (Friedman 101), and change and transformation are important themes in his work (Abraham 63-66). Ovid describes Polyphemus' love for Galatea in Book XIII of Metamorphoses, and we see several parallels to "Damon the Mower." ²

² Polyphemus' occupation, home, and person are changed by passion/love. The narrator says of him: "[H]e feels the power of love and burns with mighty desire, forgetful of his flocks and of his caves" (XIII, 760-770; Loeb, 283). Polyphemus is concerned how he appears to others:

. . . you become careful of your appearance, now anxious to please; now with a rake you comb your shaggy locks, and now it is your pleasure to cut your rough beard with a reaping-hook [*falce*], gazing at your rude features in some clear pool and composing their expression. (XIII, 760-770; Loeb, 283)

And after boasting of fruits of various kinds and flocks beyond count, Polyphemus offers not "easily gotten pets or common presents" but "two cubs of a shaggy bear for you to play with" (XIII, 831-837; Loeb, 287). Polyphemus has no reason to think that Galatea will "despise" (XIII, 838-840; Loeb, 287) his gifts. They, to him, are wonderful because of his effort, but to her, they are objects of indifference. He still loves but she cares not:

The first word of the poem "Hark" signals that poetic expression is coming. The "frame" of the poem is that of a poet/aesthete relating the complaint of the rustic, love-sick Damon. It might be the case that where the Mower in "The Mower against Gardens" is the voice of the "country" describing the "court," here it is the "court," or certainly the courtly, describing the "country." How closely one might want to identify this poet/aesthete with Marvell is again a matter of controversy. This poet/aesthete has a different voice than that of Damon. The poet/aesthete uses similes and references to painting that signal his education and sensibilities. Further, it should be noted that the poet/aesthete speaks in the past tense while Damon is in the present tense. This might tie "Damon the Mower" to "The Mower against Gardens." As noted earlier, the Mower

For oh, I burn, and my hot passion, stirred to
frenzy, rages more fiercely within me; I seem to
carry Aetna let down into my breast with all his
violence. And you, Galatea, do not care at all.
(XIII, 865-869; Loeb 289)

These passages in Ovid do provide similarities to Marvell's "Damon the Mower" but share these same qualities with the love lyric found in the pastoral. The shaggy demigod character who uses a sickle on himself, boasts of his wealth, and provides ridiculous gifts to a would-be beloved who remains completely indifferent may not serve to be a locus of "source gathering" for Marvell, but they do support to contention of Marvell being a consummate Renaissance poet.

"dwell[s]" in the present with the living "gods" while the gardener was the agent in the past who seduced the plants from the fields and "worships" his stone statues "polished by some ancient hand" (37). That "ancient hand" could have been the same one that, in idolatry of self, picked the "adulterate fruit" from the Tree of Knowledge. In addition, it appears that the gardener in "The Mower against Gardens" was the artist-in-residence who was the instrument when "flowers themselves were taught to paint" (12). The poet/aesthete also makes reference to the stage--"The scene" (4)--to further enhance his role as the "court" person. He may be the master of the "masque" or "anti-masque" (for elements of the masque elsewhere in Marvell, see Bradbrook, "Masque" 204-223). In one sense, this poet/aesthete is the "stage director" of Damon's lament since he is the one who describes the complaint as an event in the past, "Damon sung" (1).

The major symbols of the poem are introduced in the first stanza: Damon, love, Juliana, "fair eyes," hope, complaint, the heat, the scythe, and grass. It seems clear that this narrator is just as unreliable as one might consider the Mower in "The Mower against Gardens." In "Damon the Mower," both perspectives are distorted, the aesthete's and Damon's. Although there is no evidence that the arrangement was Marvell's (see Donno, Poems 9-12), it might be that being placed next to each other in the 1681

Miscellaneous Poems is the correct position. This would reinforce the dialogic nature of the two poems; the Mower views the gardener, and the gardener/poet/aesthete views Damon, both unreliably.

Again, this poem emphasizes the sexual nature of the Mower poems. For example, in stanza one there is the contrast of the sharpness of Damon's sorrow that is "like" his scythe and his "withered" hopes that are like the grass, "scorch[ed]" by his "am'rous care" (5-8). As established earlier in the discussion of "Upon an Eunuch: a Poet," Marvell explicitly uses the scythe as a phallic symbol. In this particular instance, that symbol is in a context of the state of detumescence, wilted, limp, not standing as would the green life-filled grass. Second, lines 15 and 16 also graphically depict the sexual nature of the poem.

Only the snake, that kept within,
Now glitters in its second skin.

Certainly, this can be seen at one level as the Christian symbol of casting off the old skin of sin, a symbol of regeneration. That conception is found in the words of a New Year's carol published in 1642 with the tune of "Greensleeves" added: "Now, like the snake, your skin cast off, of evil thoughts and sin, and so the year begin: God send us a happy New Year" (see jacket notes, A Musical Panorama of Shakespeare's England). However, in this instance, it appears to be associated not with the Christian

symbol of the serpent that was raised up in the desert to provide healing (Num. 21:8-9), nor the Greek snake of the Caduceus, symbol of Mercury's staff, the healing of the gods. In the context of the sexual imagery of "Damon the Mower," the snake is more like the serpent of the Garden, and specifically, the penis during coitus. In colloquial diction "mow" was "copulation" (Stocker 236).

The first four lines of stanza 2 emphasize heat and physical impairment of an insect and amphibians, "hamstringed frogs" (9-12). In contrast, there are some who are surviving and flourishing; the "green frog wades" and "grasshoppers seek out the shades." However, the snake "that kept within" does the dance of life, and indeed "glitters" with the moisture of life from the "second skin" of the lover. This certainly can be seen as a symbol of renewal, but it can also be seen as a rebirth or the process of starting birth, coitus.

There may be a subtle thread of contrasts that ties the four Mower poems together. With no evidence for support, this thesis assumes that the 1681 edition was published as Marvell might have arranged the order of, at least, these four poems. That does not have to be the case, but Donno is convincing when she argues that the 1681 Folio edition along with the Popple manuscript from English Poetry Drawer 49 (Eng. poet. d. 49) determine the arrangement that is chronological "in so far as this can be ascertained" (Donno,

Poems 10-11). Furthermore, she goes on to caution that granted Marvell's works were circulated in manuscript and that he did not arrange them for publication, "We must acknowledge, I think, the impossibility of establishing the texts of Marvell's poetry with absolute certainty" (Donno, Poems 11-12).

While there are some indications of unifying elements, the critic must acknowledge that "absolute certainty" is not a goal to be sought regarding interpreting his poetry. First, the theme of perspective or viewpoint ties together the four poems. In "The Mower against Gardens," the Mower views the gardener's creations and horticultural experiments from outside the "enforced" and "enclosed" garden; he sees the results as sexually distorted, idolatrous, and dead. In "Damon the Mower," the poet/aesthete sees the Mower as comically foolish in his unacknowledged love; the courtly sophisticate uses his garden grotto as a place for seduction while Damon is disastrously driven by the perspective of self-love. The Mower in "The Mower against Gardens" sees the courtly gardener as sexually profligate while the poet/aesthete sees the Mower in "Damon the Mower" as sexually obsessed and unfulfilled because he offers "rustic" gifts rather than costly, courtly gifts that might win Juliana. The Mower in "The Mower against Gardens" views the gardener/creator's values as distorted, for example, paying the price of a meadow for a single tulip (15-16).

Conversely, the poet/aesthete sees the values of Damon as "silly" (as in Spenser's "innocent" sheep) and of very little real worth as the world estimates. So, the two poems are different perspectives of the two participants on the values of country and court.

The thread of contrast that ties "Damon the Mower" and "The Mower to the Glowworms" together is again perspective or vision, the former in the light of midday and the latter in darkness. The whole poetic sequence can be seen in the Renaissance concern with perception versus conception. This was the age of the invention of the telescope and Galileo's viewing the moon (Rattansi 231-232) and the age in painting of the development of perspective to increase verisimilitude. The developments in the science of optics for the first time proved the existence of the microcosm of the world in the eye of the beholder (Friedman, "Sight" 307-308). In Marvell's era, along with developments in optics, a different type of rationalism is developed which mimics scientific vision:

What was really new and original in the seventeenth century was the way in which some minds began to exercise their reflexive faculty in the contemplation of the outer world. The "reflex act" is then no more than the awareness of perceiving all natural objects as objects of the mind, seated in the mind itself.

With Marvell this kind of introspection allowed a simultaneous involvement in and

detachment from Nature and the world of the senses. (Ellrodt, "Mind" 229)

The "detachment" that is seen in "Damon the Mower" is made evident by the use of a separate voice.

The theme of perception or viewpoint is a link between "The Mower to the Glowworms" and "The Mower's Song." In the former the Mower loses his way home because, as the Mower says, Juliana "my mind hath so displaced," and thus he will "never" find his home as he gropes in the night (15-16). In "The Mower's Song," the mind's "true survey" of nature--or map to the original Garden--is lost because of obsession with Juliana. The obsession ends in revenge and death in a tomb covered with grass, a complete loss of hope. Here, in "Damon the Mower," viewpoint distorts all perspectives: the poet/aesthete's, Damon's (in multiple ways), and Juliana's.

In stanza 1, the poet/aesthete frames the poem, for he has the first words and may be the "author," or redactor, of Damon's complaint. This is indicated from the verb tense in the first line "the Mower Damon sung," which is in the past tense. The poet/aesthete provides the "screen" on which the reader views Damon and his complaint; therefore, a reader must recognize the basic unreliability of the poet/aesthete, just as that reader has reason to recognize the basic unreliability of the Mower in "The Mower against Gardens" when he sketches the gardener/aesthete. Perspective determines what one sees; the Mower sees the gardener as

creating an enclosed garden of sexual delights, and the poet/aesthete/gardener sees the clown who tries to love which is his specialty.

The poet/aesthete is the judge, if not the "author," of Damon's love complaint. His frame of the introductory stanza sets the arena for action or provides the stage directions. He draws the similes between the love object (Juliana's eyes) and the day ("was fair"), between Damon's attitude ("am'rous care") and the day ("scorching"), between Damon's scythe ("sharp") and Damon's emotion ("sorrow"), and between the grass ("withered") and Damon's expectancy/desire ("hopes"). When the poet/aesthete says that Juliana's eyes are like "the day was fair," this could be a "fair day" as in "gaudy May games" in "The Mower's Song," a day for feasting and dancing. Stocker takes the "scorching" day like "his am'rous care" to be an apocalyptic day, a day like the "scorching day" of Revelation (236-237).

The first word of the poem is the poetic expression "Hark" or "Heark."³ Marvell uses the word "Hark" or "Heark"

³ Marvell uses this word in three other poems: line 202 in "The Loyal Scot," which requests the reader to listen or attend; line 37 in "A Dialogue, between the Resolved Soul and Created Pleasure" where Pleasure seeks to "seduce" the soul by an aesthetic appeal to music by saying, "Hark how music then prepares / For thy stay these charming airs." To which the Resolved Soul mentions its lack of time and declaims, "Cease, tempter. None can chain a mind / Whom this sweet chordage cannot bind" (37-38 and 43-44; see Empson in Chapter One above on ambiguity). Interestingly,

in three poems, other than "Damon the Mower": by Pleasure in an aesthetic temptation of the soul, by a chorus in a wedding celebration to draw attention to the forthcoming dialogue, and by remarking on sound level in "The Loyal Scot." Adding to the definitions of listening well and attending to what is being said, in the intransitive form, both the Wyclif and the Coverdale bibles use the word to mean, "To listen privily; to play the eavesdropper; to eavesdrop" (OED). In one sense, this is precisely what the poet/aesthete does; he has eavesdropped on Damon and now recounts his complaint. He further invites the reader to "eavesdrop" on what Damon has "sung," and makes clear in stanza ten what the reader could not have known, Damon's self-inflicted wound from his scythe.

If it is assumed that the poet/aesthete is the "author" of Damon's complaint, then it might be the poet/aesthete who chooses the sexual imagery of "Damon the Mower." It is the poet/aesthete who is the "expert" on courtly love and possibly the same gardener whose gardens are filled with types of sexual license, if the Mower is believed.

Regardless, the poet/aesthete turns Damon into an aesthetic

it is an aesthete which begins "Damon the Mower." The ear is the target; this is an appeal to the aural sense. In the final use of the word "Hark," Marvell has a chorus call attention to the forthcoming dialogue between Endymion and Cynthia in "Two Songs at the Marriage of the Lord Fauconberg and the Lady Mary Cromwell" line 5: "Hark how he sings, with sad delight, / Thorough the clear and silent night" (5-6).

object for the listening audience who have "harkened." Damon and the entire world exist in an aesthetic world of analogy, for the microcosm and the macrocosm share qualities; they mirror each other.

As mentioned, the mirror image is important in Marvell's poetry, and the idea is comparable to the echo song with its repeated sounds or words (e.g., Henry Purcell's "In our deep vaulted cell" in Dido and Aeneas). The Mower in "The Mower's Song" has a mirror image of the meadows in his mind prior to his encounter with Juliana. Damon sees his own image in his scythe if he "looked right" (58). The gardener "mirrors" God's image of the creator in his "rebuilding" of the garden but in so doing corrupts the natural world, according to the Mower. The Mower and the grass are one, or mirror each other, since all flesh is grass. In "The Mower to the Glowworms," the Mower is disconsolate, lost, and denies that the glowworms are portents of miraculous or world-shaking events; their light of nature does not provide a mirror of the future or prophecy (5-8). In "The Mower's Song," the mirror images of flesh and grass collapse. The Mower, in desperation, sees himself under the grass, and, eventually, through the natural process of decomposition, he becomes a part of it. In this sense, the Mower has "decomposed" himself out of existence and out of the poem, but like the grass, he

returns. His immortality is through art--ars longa, vita brevis.

I have designated the narrator of "Damon the Mower" as the poet/aesthete since he uses the language of the arts to introduce Damon's complaint. As noted above, others hear the voice of Damon looking back at himself, or as a poet or as the voice of Marvell. The narrator says, "While everything did seem to paint / The scene more fit for his complaint" (3-4). This indicates clearly that the narrator is familiar with painting and theatrical performances. It might be that the narrator's presumed audience too would understand his aesthetic references. Again this appears to be the gardener of "The Mower against Gardens" who has taught flowers to paint and creates "scenes" in his grot with "statues, polished by some ancient hand" (37), a hand that stretches back to our "ancient parents" and stretches to pluck a "forbidden" fruit once again.⁴

⁴ In the whole of Marvell's work, the words "scene" or "scenes" are used nine different times, three times in "Upon Appleton House" (385, 441, 679). Lines 385 and 441 are in the Mower sequence where the meadow becomes a stage for wars, religious controversy, and world history. Stanza 49 reads:

No scene that turns with engines strange
Does oftener than these meadows change.
For when the sun the grass hath vexed,
The tawny mowers enter next.
(385-388)

Donno explains that "engines strange" is a reference to "devices for manipulating stage effects" (Poems 251). So it is clear that for the narrator of "Upon Appleton House" the mowers appear to be actors entering the stage of the meadow which is an arena for transmutation or certainly change (MacCaffrey 232; Abraham 105-106). This would appear to suggest that both narrators see the mowers and meadows as characters on stage to be watched for humor, instruction, and delight and as opportunities to speculate on "Nature's mystic book" ("Upon Appleton House" 584). The second use of the word "scene" in "Upon Appleton House" is when the grass has been cut and piled in "cocks" and the plain is a "levelled space" comparable to a place--Lely--where cloth is stretched to dry or to the bull ring at "Madril" (Madrid) or to that "Which Levellers take pattern at" (stanzas 55-57; 450). Without doubt the meadows and the mowers are the stage and actors which start the "play." In "Damon the Mower," it is the narrator who is the poet/aesthete who sets the stage and describes the "scene" for the audience. Later, in stanza 10, the poet/aesthete provides exposition before the last stanza. In derision, Marvell's poem "On Mr Milton's Paradise Lost" uses the word "scene" in line 22 to take a critical jab at Dryden's heroic opera The Fall of Angels and Men in Innocence (Donno, Poems 301), implying that to take the epic theme of Creation and turn it into scenes in a play would be "presum[ptuous]" by "some less skilful hand" (22, 18). A significant passage in "An Horatian Ode" describes the "scene" of the execution of Charles I. The poet is in praise of Cromwell for devising a scheme--"a net"--to get Charles to try to escape from England. The "net" catches Charles at "Carisbrooke's narrow case," and he is taken to be executed and "play" his part:

That thence the royal actor born
 The tragic scaffold might adorn:
 While round the armed bands
 Did clap their bloody hands.
 He nothing common did or mean
 Upon that memorable scene.
 (53-58)

On the simplest level, the poet/aesthete points out that "All the world's a stage," and in struts Damon to bewail an unfulfilled love for Juliana. As a type of chorus master, the narrator poet/aesthete begins the poem "Damon the Mower" by drawing the reader's attention to the correspondences. By doing so, he emphasizes the artificiality of what follows, both poem and Damon's passions, rhetoric, and actions. As the poet/narrator in "Upon Appleton House" plays poetically with the mower sequence, so does the narrator poet/aesthete play with Damon's complaint in "Damon the Mower." The poet/narrator in "Upon Appleton House" has "encamped [his] mind" behind trees to view the scene

. . . where the world no certain shot
 Can make, or me it toucheth not.
 But I on it securely play,
 And gall its horsemen all the day.
 (602-608)

This does not seem to be prejerative or derisive, but in contrast with Cromwell who is compared to lightning (13) and a falcon (91), Charles is an "actor born" while Cromwell is a "force" of nature, one artificial and contrived and the other natural and elemental. The beauty of the dipolarity of artificial and natural is that one is valued over the other depending on the circumstance or "scene." On the scaffold, Charles I played his role with regal aplomb, "nothing common did or mean," unlike the "armed bands" who applaud at the grisly "scene." So, in "Damon the Mower," the "scene" to be acted will be judged by the "actions" of the "watched" and by the reader who "watches" both aesthete and Damon.

The poet/narrator is free to "play" and "gall" all that he surveys. In the instance of "Damon the Mower," the poet/aesthete comments on the love "complaint" of the local mower, or clown. As mentioned, Damon and the poet/aesthete may be playing alternating roles of judge, each with a distorted view. Later, in "The Mower to the Glowworms" and in "The Mower's Song," the mower's complaint is heard without the intervention of the poet/aesthete. That does not mean that Mower is reliable, for his mind is "displaced."

The poem is divided into three major parts: stanza 1, the introduction by the poet/aesthete who provides the "frame"; stanzas 2 through 9 which is Damon's love complaint; stanza 10 where the poet/aesthete's voice breaks up Damon's complaint to provide exposition about the mower's self-inflicted wound; and stanza 11 that is Damon's coda on his identification by metaphor with Death as a mower.

Within these three larger parts, there are subdivisions. Stanzas 2, 3, 4 are a traditional description of the summer heat with its consequences for creatures and the fields; from these effects, the mower seeks causes in the heavens and mythology. He finds them in Juliana, his desired love, finding relief not inside the earth or its waters "but only in her icy breast" (32). Stanza 5 is a second subdivision in Damon's complaint, a description of his love "presents" to the indifferent Juliana, the "fair

shepherdess" (33). Stanzas 6, 7, 8 are Damon's boast of his renown, his riches, his beauty, and his magical power. A fourth subdivision of Damon's complaint is stanza 9 where the Mower laments that he has fallen in love and describes his mowing as a labor of lost love, filled with pain when compared to his earlier felicity. That leaves the two larger elements of stanza 10 where the poet/aesthete's voice re-enters and stanza 11 that is Damon's coda or summary. Stanza 11 has Damon finding correspondences between his self-inflicted scythe-wound and Juliana's love-wound delivered by her eyes; between his natural, herbal cures and lower-case "death" as a cure for love of Juliana; and between upper case "Death" and the Mower's function as harvester.

Each of the eleven stanzas has eight lines or four paired couplets or two quatrains. There are three end sight-rhymes: "was," "grass" (7-8), "heat," "sweat" (45-46), and "grass," "was" (69-70). Thus, the total number of lines is eighty-eight; the numerical line center would divide between lines 44 and 45. As mentioned, the rhyme scheme is a4a4b4b4c4c4d4d4 and is basically iambic with 352 stressed syllables which makes the exact numerical stress center after stress 176 or after line 44. At the center of the poem is Damon's boast that he is the center of the macrocosm's concern. At the same time, line 45 splits Damon's day at the center since he describes the gods'

concern for him at "noon." The first four lines of stanza 6 (41-48) are Damon's boast of his renown, of pride in self, and of how the "morn" "[be]dew[s]" him before her flowers. In the last four lines of stanza 6, Damon describes his noon and his evening with the natural world as his comforter and co-worker. Thematically, at the center of the poem is pride, and certainly "Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall" (Proverbs 16:18). His morning, noon, and night are changed by his encounter with Juliana.

His mornings are no more, and as other unrequited lovers in the pastoral tradition, he stands at noon (Ettin 136) in the blazing heat of love with neither shade nor comfort in the natural world. His evening is coming and is foreshadowed by the last two lines of stanza 6:

While, going home, the evening sweet
In cowslip-water bathes my feet.
(47-48)

However, in the last stanza, 11, his feet are bathed by herbal medicines that he applies, not nature. So, the numerical center of the poem is a thematic center also with its recapitulation of Damon's Day and foreshadowing of his evening or Night, always ominous for the pastoral (Ettin 137).

Central to "Damon the Mower," and possibly to the Mower sequence as a whole, is the poetic image of the scythe (see

also Chapter Two above). The scythe, of course, is the defining tool of the mower; it is his source of income and identifies him as a type of worker and within a class. It clearly has several symbolic functions in the poem. For the poet/aesthete in stanza 1, the scythe is a simile for how "sharp" was the mower's sorrow (8). In stanza 7, Damon claims that his scythe "discovers" "More ground" than are hidden by the shepherd's sheep (51-52). In stanza 8, Damon uses his scythe as a mirror to see his reflection and compares it in a simile to the moon, he being the "Sun" (57-60). In stanza 9, Damon speaks of his scythe as an instrument to cut grass and as concomitant to his emotions of "grief" and "woe." Further, through a play on words, he turns his "scythe" into a "[Sigh]": to sharpen his scythe is to sharpen his woe (69-72). In stanza 10, the poet/aesthete describes how Damon's "whistling scythe," "The edged steel" (75, 77) cuts his ankle, and he falls down to the earth. Finally, in Damon's coda, stanza 11, he uses a metaphor comparing Death and his occupation as a Mower, echoing the pictorial and dramatic representations of Death as carrying a scythe, the harvester of people.

The fact that it is stanza 11 may have some ironic significance. Frankie Rubinstein notes that in Shakespeare the word "eleven," which is close to the word "leaven" (as used to make bread rise), connotes "erotic rising of the penis, and comfort of fornication" (81). This is just the

opposite of how Damon finds himself--cut, fallen, and unfulfilled. As has been noted earlier, Marvell has used the scythe to represent the male phallus (see "Upon an Eunuch: a Poet" and above).

In mythology, the scythe can be carried by Death and Time. Symbolically, there was a shift from the Middle Ages where Death was everywhere present to the Renaissance where Time became the symbol of mutability:

But hiding from death, mocking death, and wearing death's face as an amulet against death will not make death go away, and the human mind always needs symbols through which it can comprehend and grapple with the feared object. So as the corpse, skeleton, and skull ceased to be useful, poets were forced to seek new symbols. One logical symbol for an event, of course, is the process that leads to it. And during a literary period of concern with love, youth, and beauty, Time as process is, logically, Time the destroyer. Throughout the poetry of the late sixteenth century, then it is not Death but Time who carries the scythe, Time who places his hand on living flesh. In Spenser's *Faerie Queene*, he is the enemy in the Garden of Adonis, the destroyer whom not even gods can halt:

Great enemy to it, and to all the rest,
That in the Gardin of Adonis springs,
Is wicked Tyme, who, with his scythe addrest,
Does mow the flowring herbes and goodly
things,
And all their glory to the ground downe
flings.
For all that lives is subject to the law:
Al things decay in time, and to their end do
draw.
(*FQ*, III.vi.39-40 qtd. in Spinrad, 24-25)

So, while Damon explicitly identifies with Death, he also enacts linear and cyclic time. He is a seasonal worker or a worker of seasons.

While Marvell uses the name "Damon" for shepherds in "Corinda and Damon" and "Two Songs at the Marriage of the Lord Fauconberg and the Lady Mary Cromwell," the name in Greek means "devil" daemon. One characteristic of devils is that they tempt people to self-violence. Devils tempting the despairing soul to suicide is a part of Elizabethan drama, and Marvell satirically mentions suicide as a release from earthly strife in "A Dialogue between Thyrsis and Dorinda" (45-48). Of course, death is sought by many traditional Petrarchan lovers when rejected by the beloved. Considering that "Damon" is another name for the Greek word "daemon" or "devil," it is an irony when "playing devil's advocate" to himself that Damon identifies with Death. The Devil, as a character, in theatrical performance is a tempter:

Devils, too, retain their foothold on the stage, bearing away souls already contracted to them (as in Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay, Doctor Faustus, and The Devil's Charter), but also tempting living creatures to suicide, and thus to damnation. Elizabethan experts on ghostlore indeed saw this temptation to despair as one of the signs that an apparition might be the devil in "a pleasing shape," and King James himself, before his accession to the English throne, warned about the danger in his Daemonologie: "It is [the devil's purpose] to obtaine . . . the tinsell of their

life, by inducing them to perrilous places at such time as he either followes or possesses them which may procure the same." (qtd. Spinrad 117-118)

For Damon the Mower, he does not have to be "induce[d]" or "seduce[d]" (from "The Mower against Gardens") to "perrilous places," for where he works is already that dangerous place.

For poetry, there is a clear shift in the image of mortality from the figure of Death as Conqueror to Death as feeble or inconsequential:

Further, in the great religious poetry of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, this is largely how death will appear: when invisible, as a mighty force struggling within the poet's soul, but when given a shape or personification, as an ineffectual figure who is invoked only to be dismissed or patronized:

[Shakespeare:]

So shalt thou feed on Death, that feeds on men,
And Death once dead, there's no more dying then.
(Sonnet 146)

[John Donne:]

One short sleepe past, we wake eternally,
And death shall be no more, Death thou shalt die.
(Holy Sonnet 6)

Death thou wast once an uncouth hideous thing,
Nothing but bones,
The sad effect of sadder grones,
Thy mouth was open but thou couldst not sing.

Into thy face;

Thou art growne fair and full of grace,
Much in request, much sought for as a good.
(Death)
(qtd. in Spinrad 25-26)

While in the seventeenth century Donne and Browne continue to exhibit the decay of the charnel house, several others, including Marvell, shift the view from the "'spittle ward" (Friedenreich 158) to Time as the source of change and decay:

As the corpse began to be hidden, and Time gained ascendancy as a process-symbol for the event, it was more logical to choose an end product more appropriate to the process. And with Time so often depicted as a mower-down of fields, a changer of seasons and destroyer of earthly beauty, what better end product could there be than the withered flower?

. . . it is sufficient to observe how the moment of death--the event itself--was realigned into symbols of process and end product in Renaissance art and poetry. (Spinrad 26)

Symbolically, Damon the Mower is that transitional figure, since he identifies with Death and incorporates elements of both linear and cyclic times.

Through diction, the poet/aesthete, as the courtly narrator, sets the stage and tone for Damon's love complaint. That tone is one of comedy and eroticism. As suggested above, the implication might be that the poet/aesthete is the author of the complaint, and Damon is his clown or voice during his venture into pastoral love. As noted the word "mow" means to clown. The poet/aesthete uses key words, such as "stung" "With love of Juliana," as if Damon suffers only a slight injury from a bee sting (2). From the poet/aesthete's perspective, it is a slight injury

as to be smitten and rejected by a lover, but for Damon, it is a matter of life and death. Again, there may be an ironic parallel in stanza 1 when the poet/aesthete compares Damon's sharp scythe to his sharp sorrow and when he compares Damon's "withered" "hopes" and the "grass."⁵

Several critics have pointed out the irony of the Mower's cutting down himself (Friedenreich 154); the poet/aesthete plays on words to indicate that for him it is ironic and amusing. But a further irony may be, if one accepts the pun on the word "hope," is that Damon uses his own phallic scythe to cut his own flesh/grass and opens a "wound" which Rubinstein argues is a pun in Shakespeare for "the genitals" ("female pudendum" in Eric Partridge's Shakespeare's Bawdy). Thus, to prick is to hurt or wound, hence to copulate (311). Damon "pricks" himself with his scythe, a phallic symbol, and "wounds" or copulates with himself, performing autoeroticism. All of this may be foreshadowed in stanza 1.

⁵ Rubinstein states that Shakespeare puns on the word "hope" which "connotes potency, fruitfulness: penis, testes," with The Two Gentlemen of Verona, III.i.246 cited where Proteus says: "'Time is the nurse and breeder. . . . Hope is a lover's staff" [STAFF, penis]" (Rubinstein, 333). If the poet/aesthete is punning on the word "hope," he is placing the phallic scythe next to the flacid, drooping grass (=flesh) which is like Damon's "hopes" or penis (flesh). It appears for the poet/aesthete that this is a comedy which he wants to share with the reader/listener.

Stanza 2 is the beginning of Damon's complaint. He begins with his own poetic exclamation of "Oh." In contrast to the poet/aesthete, assuming that Damon is not a complete creation of the poet/aesthete and does have some control of diction and imagery, Damon describes the same "scene," but his emphasis in stanza 2 is not on correspondences of external weather and internal emotional states. His is a declaration of "unusual heats," something extraordinary, and the consequences for insects (grass-hoppers), amphibian (frog), and reptile (snake). He describes the meadows as "sunburned" and "sear[ed]" (10). The results of these "unusal heats" are that the grass-hopper--note it is singular--gives up its "pipe," the sound that it makes by rubbing its legs together to attract mates, and grasshoppers "seek out shades" (14).

Of course, the pipe is the traditional instrument of the pastoral, but the word "pipe" has other traditional connotations. It could, from Chaucer's time on, have the meaning of, "A tubular organ, passage, canal or vessel" that can have anatomical implications in a love complaint. In the eighteenth century as a transitive verb, the word means "To propagate flowers (pinks, etc.) by cuttings or slips taken off at a joint of the stem" (OED). In either of the latter instances, the grasshopper appears to be emasculated; Damon or the poet/aesthete projects his rejection by Juliana into the natural world.

At the most obvious, the grasshopper stops playing his music. This leads to what happens to the dancers when the music stops; the dance [of life?] ends. The frogs are "hamstringed" because of the heat and so "can dance no more" (12). Donno glosses this word as "disabled" (Poems 261). It should be mentioned that the place of impairment too is near the buttocks, the "ham" (OED). The hamstring in quadrupeds "is the tendo Achillis, corresponding to that of the heel in man" (OED). This, of course, provides a foreshadowing to Damon's ankle injury in stanza 10.

Regardless of the nature of the injury, the frogs no longer dance. Again if Marvell or the poet/aesthete is punning on the word "dance" as Rubinstein suggests that Shakespeare did in All's Well that Ends Well, then the image of the physically impaired frogs that "can dance no more" means that they can no longer "fornicate" (Rubinstein 70). If it is Damon or the poet/aesthete who provides the image, it anticipates or foreshadows his own impairment with rejection by Juliana and his own "hamstring[ing]" by his own tool, his scythe/penis; he "pricks" himself.

The "green frog wades" in the brook (13); in contrast to the "hamstringed" frogs, this is the singular frog and has the adjectival word of fecundity "green" describing him. Further, Rubinstein suggests that the word "brook" connotes to "[e]njoy carnally. Lit[erally] to enjoy" in Shakespearean

punning (36). This latter suggestion would re-enforce the epithet "green."

Line 14 has "grasshoppers" seeking shade because of the heat. If, as has been suggested by several critics, grass equals flesh from the biblical reference (see above), surely it is not unreasonable to turn "grasshoppers" into "flesh/hoppers" and have them seeking "shades,"⁶ or getting behind curtains. The word "grasshopper" is occasionally associated with Ecclesiastes 12:5 (OED). There one is reminded to remember one's creator in one's youth before the days of trouble come when

the grasshopper drags itself along and desire
fails; because all must go to their eternal home,
and the mourners will go about the streets; before
the silver cord is snapped and the golden bowl is
broken, and the pitcher is broken at the fountain,
and the wheel broken at the cistern, and the dust

⁶ The word "shade" or "shades" is of great significance in Marvell's work: sometimes used to refer to souls or dead souls ("Tom May's Death" 13, 39, 89; "Loyal Scot" 1) but primarily out of the sun and a place for contemplation ("Nymph Complaining" 81; "Picture of Little TC" 24). And the most famous of Marvell's shades is the one in "The Garden": "Annihilating all that's made / To a green thought in a green shade" (47-48); in this instance, the contemplative has used the capacious ability of the mind to generalize and comprehend the whole universe into a thought which is alive, "green" in an alive shade/shadow/soul. The Hebrew for "image" used in Gen. 1:26 is interesting in that it ties together spirit, shade, and idol. Strong's Concordance: 6754. tselem, tseh'-lem; from an unused root meaning to shade; a phantom, i.e. (fig.) illusion, resemblance; hence a representative figure, especially an idol:--image, vain shew.

returns to the earth as it was, and the breath returns to God who gave it. Vanity of vanities, says the Teacher; all is vanity. (12:5-8, RSV)

But germane to Damon and his grasshoppers, Marvell does have one instance when the shade is a place for sexual dalliance. "Two Songs at the Marriage of the Lord Fauconberg and the Lady Mary Cromwell" has the chorus encouraging Endymion to continue wooing Cynthia. For Anchises was successful with her sister, "Yet is her younger sister laid / Sporting with him in Ida's shade" (31-32). So it may be reasonable in the context of the love complaint to think that the "grass[flesh]hoppers" are seeking the shade for other reasons than just avoiding the sun.

The reptile that is mentioned in lines 15-16 is the snake, and it certainly has sexual connotations. But clearly a snake that is "kept within" can also be a phallus. This snake which "kept within" "glitters." The latter word is directly associated by Milton in Paradise Lost X, 452, with the first serpent, Satan, who shines "With what permissive glory since his fall Was left him, or false glitter" (OED, 1157; Shawcross, "Simile" 5).

Stanza 3 is Damon's description of the source of these "unusual heats." Damon immediately rejects the sun as the source of "This heat" (17). In a secular sense, the source of "unusual" sexual passion is not the sun/Son, although God's injunction is to "Be fruitful and multiply" (Genesis 1:28). Additionally, Damon rejects the "Dog Star" as the

source which "so inflame[s] the days" (18). The "Dog Star" is either the star Sirius in the constellation of the Greater Dog, which is the brightest of the fixed stars, or Procyon in the constellation of the Lesser Dog, the "Dog-days" variously being considered July 3 to August 15 depending on the helical or cosmological rising (OED). Regardless of the exact dates, this period of summer has been considered since ancient times to be the hottest and the most unwholesome period of the year, including the time when dogs are most likely to go "mad" (OED). Spenser's Shepherd's Calendar has E. K. gloss "Dog star" as occurring on July 21 when "Syrius, or Canicula reigneth" (OED). In about 1550 the word "dog" was also used as a deformation of the "God" used in profane oaths: "By dog's precious wounds, that was some whoreson villain" (Lusty Juventus in [William] Hazlitt's] Dodsley II.84; OED). In several instances in Shakespeare when someone is referred to as a "dog," it is an insult implying the person is an "eunuch; sodomite," and the dog is often "curtailed, docked," which again implies castration or impotence (Rubinstein 79). Considering the previous images of "withered" "hopes" and "grass," the "pipe[less]" grasshopper, and "hamstringed frogs," it is not likely that the "Dog Star['s]" rising, which ironically implies impotence or detumescence, is the source of Damon's "passion."

Marvell uses the phrase "dog days" elsewhere in one of his political satires. "The Last Instructions to A Painter" uses the phrase to describe the devastation of an excise tax and to malign a Colonel John Birch, a Member of Parliament and excise commissioner:

She ["Excise" tax] wastes the country and on
cities preys.

Her, of a female harpy, in dog days,
Black Birch, of all the earth-born race most hot
 And most rapacious, like himself, begot,
 And, of his brat enamoured, as't increased,
 Buggered in incest with the mongrel beast.
 (141-146)

This passage lends credence to the association of "dog days" and the sodomite, along with the "unnatural" time of the year--"unusual heats" (9).

Damon finds the source of "this heat" "grow'th" not from the sun or the stars, but from "Juliana's scorching beams," "an higher beauty" (19, 24, 19). Juliana has burning and maddening effects, comparable to the sun and Dog Star. Juliana's "higher[-]beauty" heat is one "Which burns the fields and the mower both: / Which mads the dog . . ." (20-21). Damon compares Juliana's heat which "makes the sun / Hotter than his own Phaeton" (21-22) to the classical myth of Phaethon's hubristic attempt to drive Phoebus's sun chariot.

One source for this myth is found in Ovid's Metamorphoses, II, 150-328 (Loeb). Phaethon's lack of

strength and fear led the horses, Pyrois, Eous, Aethon, and Phlegon, to run out of their normal courses and to run near the earth, scorching and setting it on fire, leaving "The meadows . . . burned to white ashes" (Loeb 75). But Juliana's heat is "Hotter than his [the sun's] own Phaeton" who was knocked from the chariot by Zeus' "forked bolt" and hit the earth "still smoking with the flames of that forked bolt" (Loeb 83). With Phoebus not in control, the horses ran to the extremes of the stars--to the point where "the Serpent, which lies nearest the icy pole, ever before harmless because sluggish with the cold, now grew hot, and conceived great frenzy from that fire" (Loeb 73)--to "unknown regions of the air" (Loeb 75) above the earth. Comparably, Damon describes "these extremes" of heat (23) as not caused by the normal month of July, "But [by] Juliana's scorching beams" (24). Damon places the source of the heat outside himself, in Juliana. In fact, it is he who burns in obsessive passion for Juliana and eventually satisfies his own lust.

It is noteworthy that in stanza 1, the poet/aesthete describes Damon's "am'rous care" as "scorching," but here it is Juliana's "beams" that do the "scorching" of the earth and the mower. This is indicative of Damon's conception of love distorting the perception of what is outside him. The poet/aesthete provides the outside perspective, but he is also unreliable since this is related in past tense and is a

re-creation. Later in stanza 5, Damon describes Juliana as indifferent, but here in stanza 3, Juliana's "scorching beams" "burn" Damon. The sexual passion, as in Ovid's Polyphemus, is within Damon himself. This points to the isolating effect of love and passion which Damon seeks to "ease" (29). Damon is projecting his own "am'rous care" onto the world; the person in love sees the world in one's own emotions. For Damon, Juliana is Phoebus' chariot but "Hotter," and she has swung into his orbit, and this extremity has left him in flames of passion.

In stanza 4, Damon considers ways of escape from the physical heats and sexual passion. After identifying the two, Damon clearly distinguishes them: "'Tell me where I may pass the fires / Of the hot day, or hot desires'" (25-26). This, of course, is a rhetorical display with a deliberate confusion of the literal and the metaphoric. According to Rubinstein in Shakespearean punning, "to pass" is usually associated with flatulence or excrement (186), while with Latin metaphors from the word "passage" (meatus) it connotes the vagina or anus (341). This can be seen as how Suckling (Donnelly 117) and some of the other Caroline poets saw sex--that is, as an itch to be scratched or a bodily function similar to gas. In "The Mower to the Glowworms," gases rising from the Earth produce ignis fatuus or "foolish fires" (12) and produce "comets" (5-8). The crudity again

exemplifies the lower end of the seventeenth century scale of love as an itch to Platonic ideal:

Among Renaissance discourses of desire are world-weary expressions of disgust with physicality as well as idealistic Neoplatonic love lyrics; and they incorporate traditions of erotic poetry ranging from the urgency of carpe diem to the philosophical bemusement of the senex amans. Representations of sexuality in the period range from the idyllic, prelapsarian naturalness of Adam and Eve in Paradise Lost to the greedy and lustful burning of the same couple after the Fall, from the tender union of lovers in "close united Extasie" of Felltham's "The Reconcilement" to the cruel comedy of impotency in Behn's "The Disappointment." Writers throughout the seventeenth century variously idealize and demystify sex, alternately equating (or confusing) it with religious transcendence, as in Donne's "The Canonization," or exposing it as a mere bodily itch, as in numerous poems by Suckling and Rochester. (Summers and Pedworth 2)

So, in effect, Damon is rhetorically asking how can he avoid the summer's heat and dissipate the heat that is produced in him by his passion for Juliana.

Traditionally, the heat of summer can be avoided in a cave below ground, to "descend" (27). In Marvell's "Clorinda and Damon," the cave is where Clorinda seeks to seduce Damon, the shepherd:

C. Seize the short joys then, ere they vade,
 Seest thou that unfrequented cave?
 D. That den?
 C. Love's Shrine.
 D. But virtue's grave.
 C. In whose cool bosom we may lie

Safe from the sun.

D. Not heaven's eye.

C. Near this, a fountain's liquid bell
Tinkles within the concave shell.

(8-14)

For Damon, the shepherd in "Clorinda and Damon," because he has met "Pan"--comparable to Spenser's God or Christ--Clorinda's invitation to a cave, "Love's Shrine," is an invitation to "lie" upon the "cool bosom" of the earth and to escape the fires of passion and the summer's heat. But for Damon the shepherd, his sexual passion is secondary to his spiritual desire. In "Two Songs at the Marriage of Lord Fauconberg and the Lady Mary Cromwell," Endymion seeks to woo Cynthia, Diana/moon, by inviting her to a "dark" cave where "none can spy" and she can "shine" and be his "sky" (49-51). Thus, the cave is associated with sexual pleasure and clearly is a euphemism for the female pudendum.

Damon the Mower seeks the quenching of his thirst in some "gelid fountain" (28). Contrary to Damon the shepherd of "Clorinda and Damon," Damon the Mower is driven both by sexual and gustatory thirsts. Quite obviously, the adjective "gelid" and the word "fountain" have several sexual associations. Traditionally, the fountain has been seen as a lascivious symbol. For example, Acrasia's Bower in *Faire Queene*, II, xii, 60-68 has naked "Damzelles" trying to entice the Knight Guyon just outside the Bower of Bliss. This particular example may be apt since Guyon was the Knight of Temperance, something which Damon the mower is

not. Further, the image of a "gelid fountain" is not too far removed from an image of a phallus and ejaculate.

When the verb "bend" is added to the adjective and the noun--"gelid fountain"--and the next line of the poem is analyzed, the image is more suggestive. To "bend" can mean to incline from erect posture, to aim one's spear, or to "turn aside or pervert from the right purpose or use" (OED). All three of the meanings seem appropriate in the context of sexual innuendo, but they take on further significance if one considers a type of enjambment. The next word of the poem is "Alas!" Which can be read, without too much perverseness, as "A lass!" Damon seeks "a lass" but is not successful: "I look for ease in vain" (29). The word "vain" can mean "ineffectually, uselessly," but when applied to persons, it means "Devoid of sense or wisdom; foolish, silly, thoughtless; of an idle or futile nature or disposition" (OED). However in the light of the following stanzas where Damon boasts, the word "vain" can mean "Given to or indulging in personal vanity; having an excessively high opinion of one's own appearance, attainments, qualities, possessions, etc." (OED). Thus, Damon seeks sexual passion but is seen as "clownish" by the poet/aesthete and, subsequently, will show himself to be conceited and proud, a vain man.

At the literal level of the poem, Damon states that his search for "ease [is] in vain, / When remedies themselves

complain" (29-30). A literal reading would be Damon's overt declaration of purpose of sexual pleasure: "I look for ease in vain [the vein=penis]." A contemporary use of the word is found in the Bishop Percy's Folio Ms. from about 1650, "Walking in a Meadowe Greene," stanza four:

And then he thought to venter her, thinking the
ffit was on him;
But when he came to enter her the poynt turnd back
upon him.
Yet she said, "stay! goe not away although the
point be bended!
But toot againe & hit the vaine! once more & none
can mend it.
("orig.," "The Art of the Bawdy Song," 11-12).

Later in the poem, ironically, the "poynt" of his tool will turn back upon him and "prick" him.

Through the logic of correspondence and hyperbole, Damon proclaims that caves and fountains--"remedies" for the heats--join in his complaint, and so "complain." They, too, burn in the heat, and "Alas!"=a lass may "complain" about Damon's passionate intent. Finally, stanza 4 ends with ironic echoes of "remedies," but they are his own "tears" from the fountain of his eyes and the "cold," "icy" disdain found in Juliana's "breast" (31-32). Stanzas 5, 6, 7, and 8 are the core of Damon's "complaint" and the catalogue of his gifts (5), fame (6), wealth (7), and good looks (8).

Stanza 5 begins his rhetorical direct address to his "fair shepherdess," Juliana, describing his gifts of love: a defanged, "harmless snake" (36, 35); "chameleons" (37); and

"honey dew" dipped "oak leaves" (38). Of course, it is interesting to see what Damon is offering to his love; to him, he is offering his best gifts which can be "attractive" in several ways. These "treasures" of the wilderness are reminiscent of Polyphemus' bear cubs. Line 34 mentions that Juliana "Esteem[s]" Damon's presents "less" than his person. Yet at the end of the stanza, Juliana appears to be equally oblivious of both Damon and his gifts. His first gift is given the prominence of two lines to emphasize its importance, at least to Damon: "To thee the harmless snake I bring, / Disarmed of its teeth and sting" (35-36). To give Damon the benefit of some doubt, it is recorded in John Bunyan's Grace Abounding that he defanged a snake while walking in the country:

[I]t chanced that an adder passed over the highway; so I, having a stick in my hand, struck her over the back; and having stunned her, I forced open her mouth with my stick, and plucked her sting out with my fingers. (qtd. in Witherspoon and Warnke 540)

Evidently, this is some type of public service, an expression of helping the community. This might be one implication of Damon's "harmless snake." "Harmless" can mean "Free from guilt; innocent" (OED).

Damon the Mower is thus offering sexual pleasure--a snake--with no "fangs" of guilt or social condemnation. This is an ironic appeal, for it claims that coitus is

natural, but nature has been "artificialized" by Damon's "defanging." The Mower's appeal is to a Golden Age when Eros was free. As Poggioli points out, this was one of the supposed attractions of the pastoral, its ideal of innocent sex. He discusses this ideal in the context of one of the most famous pastorals of the Renaissance, Tasso's Aminta (1573):

The theme of Aminta's first chorus is a praise of free love or, rather, of the only time when Eros was really free. That was the Golden Age, which Tasso now lauds for that reason alone. 'O bella età de l'oro' (O beautiful Golden Age), exclaims the poet, not for being blessed by the spontaneous fertility of the earth and the everlasting clemency of the weather, nor for being spared the curses of war, trade, and work (I. ii)

Ma sol perché quel vano
nome senza soggetto,
quell'idolo d'errori, idol d'inganno,
quel che da 'l voigo insano
Onor poscia fu detto,
che di nostra natura it feo tiranno,
non mischiava il suo affanno
fra le liete dolcezze
de l'amoroso gregge;
né fu sua dura legge
nota a quell'alme in libertate avvezze;
ma legge aurea e felice
che Natura scolpi=: S'ei piace, ei lice.

But only because that vain and hollow name, that idol of error and deceit, which the insane crowd later called honor, thus making it our nature's tyrant, had not yet mixed its worries among the merry delights of the amorous throng; nor was its harsh law known to those souls

accustomed to freedom, but rather the happy and golden rule that nature engraved: What delights, is lawful. (qtd. and trans. Poggioli 13-14)

Comparably, Damon offers "delight" in the natural act of love but has improved upon nature by his "handiwork" as dentist. Tasso's innocence of the sex act is comparable to the Mower's description of the "sweet fields" that are provided by "willing nature" with "A wild and fragrant innocence" ("The Mower against Gardens" 32-34). Ironically, this Mower has earlier condemned the gardener for destroying the ideal innocence by taking flowers from the meadows and fields.

However, it was a commonplace in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries to refer to the phallus as a "harmless snake," and one that will not impregnate is without a "sting." Especially interesting is Damon's diction; to "[Disarm]" means to "unman" which echoes the earlier images of "withered" grass/flesh and "pipe[less]" "grass[flesh]-hoppers." Damon appears to be offering a suggestive gift--sexual pleasure without consequence--disguised as an act of community good.

He offers other gifts which he thinks will appeal to Juliana's senses. To appeal to her sight, Damon offers "chameleons, changing hue" (37). For her gustatory delight, Damon offers "oak leaves tipped with honey dew" (38). Juliana's response is complete indifference: "Yet thou, ungrateful, hast not sought / Nor what they are, nor who

them brought" (39-40). At the level of character, this appears to emphasize the cultural differences between Juliana, the shepherdess, and Damon, the mower. To him the gifts he offers are difficult to gain or procure like Polyphemus' hard-to-capture bear cubs, but to Juliana they are worthless. These are "natural" gifts, the type which "The Mower against Gardens" might offer; but the other hand, the gifts are not "unaltered" from their natural state. The snake is defanged and made "acceptable" to the polite company of one's lover, and the common oak leaves have been "sweetened" by "honey dew." Damon, thus, can be seen as a type of "artist" since he alters or improves on nature. Further, Damon is a type of artist since he supposedly is the "maker" of the love complaint which is related to the reader by the poet/aesthete. Juliana's response to Damon's gifts of love is less than not "Esteem[ing]" but is obliviousness.

Stanza 6 is Damon's recounting of his world-wide fame and how he is the center of nature's concern. Stanza 6 is also the center of the poem, numerically and stanzaically. Between lines 44 and 45, the poem splits the 88 lines total. Also, there are 176 stressed syllables from line 1 through line 44 and 176 stressed syllables from the start of line 45 through line 88. There are five stanzas before stanza 6 and five stanzas following stanza 6. Thematically, stanza 6 is parallel to the center of "The Mower against Gardens,"

"proud" (20) and is Damon's boast of his fame and of his being the darling of nature. In response to Juliana's lack of interest, Damon provides the information that she does not seem to want.

His fame, Damon attests, is throughout "all the meadows I have mown" (42). He has again personified the "meadows," giving them sentience. But this also can be seen as a boast of a successful lover; his fame as a lover is known to all the meadows where he has cut the grass/flesh. If one is reminded of Marvell's allusion in "Upon an Eunuch: a Poet" of the scythe being a phallus, then the word "[M]own"--the past participle of "mow"--is the sound of love, to "moan" in ecstasy. The word can simply mean "to groan" in agony or grief. All of these meanings appear in the poem. Here the word "mown" appears as the past participle and the boast of a supposedly successful lover. In line 80, it is used in the double sense of "cutting down" and "moaning" in pain. In the poem as a whole, Damon "moans" or complains that Juliana will not love him.

In stanza 6, Damon identifies himself with his profession: "'I am the Mower Damon" (41), and in the last line of the poem, Damon identifies Death as "a Mower too" (88). Like other pastorals that emphasize stages in life (Ettin 141), stanza 6 recapitulates "Damon's Day," or his life, and it also foreshadows his doom which appears in stanza 11. In stanza 6, Damon's boast is that all nature

turns on him to provide him with comfort in his work and his life. As the macrocosm wheels around Earth, its center, so nature wheels around its microcosm, Damon being its center. Comparable to a part of nature, Damon is be"dew[ed]" by "the morn" before she spreads dew on "her darling daffodils" (43-44).

The word "dew" is used by Marvell as a symbol of the soul, as a symbol of passion, and as a biblical metaphor. In "On a Drop of Dew" and its Latin counterpart "Ros," he uses the word "dew" as an explicit comparison to the soul, but, as Donno suggests, the diction of "Ros" is "more erotic" than what the English, at first, might indicate (Poems 258). Certainly, Marvell uses the word "dew" in a sexual context of "To His Coy Mistress":

Now, therefore, while the youthful glue
Sits on thy skin like morning dew,
And while thy willing soul transpires
At every pore with instant fires,
Now let us sport us while we may;
And now, like amorous birds of prey,
Rather at once our time devour,
Than languish in his slow-chapped power.
(33-40)

This probably is the dew that Damon has in mind. It is a corollary to his boast of how hard and how late/early he works as a lover and as a mower. This is clearly redundant since he is a literalized image of clownish lover and the clown of time, the human. As a literalized figure of Death/Time, he cuts grass and goes through the cycle of the

day and a life. Marvell uses the technique of taking metaphors literally in all forms of his writing (Bradbrook and Lloyd-Thomas 107). By his account, Damon is the center of concern for the morn, not her flowers. Further, nature caters to his physical well-being throughout the day, noon and evening.

At noon, the hottest part of the day, Damon sees himself as the object of the sun's concern: "And, if at noon my toil me heat, / The sun himself licks off my sweat" (45-46). As a worker in the field, Damon has the personal care of Phoebus himself to dry his perspiration. This again might have sexual connotations. Elsewhere in his poetry, Marvell variously spells "toil" as "toyl" ("On the Victory Obtained by Blake" 95), "toyles" ("The Garden" 6; "A Poem upon the Death of His Late Highness the Lord Protector" 155), and "toyls" ("The Loyal Scot" 160). The spelling of Damon's "toil" is the only instance in Marvell's poetry. However, it is a sound and sight allusion to the word "toy" which for sixteenth- and seventeenth-century poets is a reference to sexual dalliance. In other words, Damon is suggesting that if during a passionate encounter at noon, when he is at "toyl," and were to break into a "sweat," the "sun himself licks" off the sweat, evidently with his own tongue. For Shakespearean punning the tongue could be either the penis or the clitoris (Rubinstein 278). Further, the words "heat" and "sweat" provide a sight rhyme that

turns Damon's perspiration into a delicacy, something "sweet" like his "oak leaves tipped with honey dew" (45-46, 38). Damon's perspiration is nectar for the gods! Of course, in "To His Coy Mistress" sweat is associated with the sexual encounter.

At evening Damon is still the center of the natural world, for "While, going home, the evening sweet / In cowslip-water bathes my feet" (47-48). He claims that personally the "evening sweet," as a matter of homage, cools and cleans his "feet." This is comparable to Mary, the sister of Lazarus, bathing the feet of Jesus of Nazareth with precious oils and perfumes (John 12:3). Again the flower chosen has particular and consistent references to earlier verses. The "cowslip" flower is the Primula veris but is also called the "paigle" and "oxlip" (OED). However, the origin in Old English is cu-slyppe, apparently feminine cu cow + slyppe viscous or slimy substance, "i.e. 'cow-slobber' or 'cow-dung'" (OED). The "cowslip" could thus be pronounced "cow's lip," which provides an elegant parallel to the sun licking off sweat but here is a saliva bath to cool Damon's "feet." Thus the central stanza of "Damon the Mower" has Damon's declaration of his fame and how throughout the day he is nature's concern, in morning, noon, and evening.

If one assumes that the order of the poems as they appear in the 1681 Folio is correct and that "The Mower

against Gardens" is the mower Damon, the first three poems may be morning, noon, and night for Damon. "The Mower against Gardens" has the mower observing from the outside the sexually corrupt garden as morning for the mower; in "Damon the Mower," the mower is at high noon of sexual passion; and his evening appears in "The Mower to the Glowworms" where he is lost and confused in the dark with only false lights to lead him. "The Mower's Song" recapitulates the life of the Mower--his morning, noon, and evening/night--by references to before Juliana, Juliana (present tense), and after Juliana. Further, within the poem "Damon the Mower," line 48 foreshadows the flowers "shepherd's-purse, and clown's-all-heal" (83) bathing Damon's self-inflicted "wound" rather than "evening sweet['s]" "cowslip-water" cleaning/"bath[ing]" his feet, the latter of cleansing and cooling turning into cleansing and healing.

Stanza 7 is Damon's boast of superior wealth, superior to possible rivals, shepherds. Line 49 again uses the suggestive term of "piping" to describe the shepherd. In contrast to the "grass[flesh]hopper [who] its pipe gives o'er" (11), the shepherd continues his song/fluting; he is not "pipe[less]" but "stock[s] / The plains with an unnumbered flock" (49-50). Behind the boast of monetary wealth is Damon's boast of the consummate and capacious lover. In Shakespearean punning, according to Rubinstein,

the word "plains" can allude either to a reclined position of copulation "'Pleyn': amorous play" or to sodomy from the biblical "cities of the plains," Sodom and Gomorrah (Genesis 25; Rubinstein 196-197). Monetarily, the shepherd has the plains covered with "unnumbered flock," but Damon has "This scythe of mine [which] discovers wide / More ground than all his sheep do hide" (51-52). Damon's tool for work, his scythe, is an instrument of discovery (Wilcher 98). Damon's scythe/penis "discovers wide," a suggestive image of "spread-eagled" or a boast of a large manly endowment. What does the scythe/penis reveal? It "discovers" "More ground," where "ground" is a synonym for "The plains" of line 50. In other words, we have the "piping shepherd stock[ing] / The plains," where "to stock" means to breed, and Damon boasting that his scythe/penis "discovers wide / More ground" or he has more lovers. Damon further boasts of his scythe that "With this the golden fleece I shear / Of all these closes every year" 53-54).

As noted above Summers and Pebworth claim, "Love, either sacred or profane, is the preeminent subject of Renaissance literature" (Renaissance Discourses of Desire 1). Marvell is in that tradition, for several of Marvell's poems emphasize the momentary nature of love and that love must be frustrated to be real (A. J. Smith 63-65). Certainly, Marvell's Mower poems are in the pastoral or

anti-pastoral tradition which has inherent in it the issue of sexuality:

The pastoral tradition's emphasis on the innocence of love bespeaks both a nostalgic longing for an idyllic sexuality and a rueful recognition that such innocence is possible only in the timelessness of art. But perhaps more surprisingly, at the very heart of the anti-Petrarchan, anti-Platonic libertine tradition is disillusionment with the very sexual fulfillment it advocates. The great irony of libertinism's successful insurgency against Petrarchism during the seventeenth century is that it led to a sexual despair that mocks its success. (Summers and Pebworth 2-3)

It is not inconceivable that Marvell's Mower poems are in the Renaissance tradition, which appears in Donne, Carew, Herrick, Cowley, Lovelace and others, "of the myth of a sexual golden age in which male desire and sexuality were free of laws and inhibitions" (Summers and Pebworth, 10). In Marvell, though, it is usually "disillusionment" that is seen.

In analyzing Marvell's poetry, one should not be analyzing the poet:

Northrop Frye has observed that when critics make qualitative judgments about literature they are revealing more about themselves than they are about texts. Moreover, as reader-response criticism indicates, when texts deal with such sensitive subjects as sex, critics' evaluations of erotic themes, tones, and moods--as distinct, largely from their explications of them--are even more likely to reflect the critics' own

unconscious wishes, anxieties, conflicts, and frustrations. (Rollin 132).

And as Raymond B. Waddington points out, it is important to remind ourselves that most Renaissance poetry is not "confessional" but "poems of rhetorical addresses" (13-14). Certainly, with the type of elusive character of Andrew Marvell and the nature of his poetry as completely private, one must keep one's focus on the poem, not the man.

In relation to the poet/aesthete, William Shullenberger's "Love as a Spectator Sport in Donne's Poetry" notes that Donne "creates a visual field in his amatory poetry and stations an observer in relation to it," in other words a "voyeuristic component" which ". . . aesthetically, [is] a way of implicating the reader and the act of reading in the poem" (48). The other person watching provides the artist with opportunities to present various viewpoints:

Physical detachment assures psychic mobility, as the vision or imagination of the erotic scene in its totality from outside it, rather than from a specific location determined within it, permits the shifting of imagination between the positions of pleasure-giving and -receiving, active and passive, male and female: "Through the willing surrender to the active / passive alternations of reading, readers (subjects who become objects) play within and also escape the confines of voyeurism and exhibitionism." Donne inserts an erotic spectator in so many of the love poems, then, for several reasons, not the least of which is to inscribe within the fictive speech a

reminder to the reader that the pleasure of the text is a voyeuristic pleasure.

(Robert Con Davis, "Lacan, Poe, and Narrative Repression," *MLN* 98 (1983): 988 qtd. in Shullenberger 61).

Marvell's poet/aesthete not only implicates the reader but also allows that audience to enjoy the irony as Damon spins in the winds of passion. In analyzing "The Definition of Love," A. J. Smith puts Marvell at one end of the range of opinion.⁷

Marvell laments the brevity of desire in his own ironic way; but no less than the love poetry of Suckling and Rochester his poem turns on a disillusioned acknowledgment that our commitments must be frail when their fruition brings instant change. ("Wit" 61)

In stanza 7 when Damon claims that "With this the golden fleece I shear," (54) one is reminded again of Marvell's "Upon an Eunuch: A Poet":

Falces virginæ nequeas immitere messi,
Et nostro peccare modo.

You cannot thrust a sickle at the virgin harvest,
And sin in our fashion.
(2-3, 7-8)

⁷ The erotic at the Caroline court was on the range of libertin, "brute natural facts, egoistic desire and will" to the precieux, associated with Queen Henrietta Maria and her "championing of 'Platonics,'" transcendence of love. This range was challenged in the 1630s and later by Milton and the Protestant Christianity who emphasized redeemed flesh through the incarnation and the glorification of marriage (Donnelly 108, 128-129).

At the linguistic level, it is interesting that the Latin for "sickle" is "falcem," which in English sounds as if it implies the word "false." This again leads one not to take the hyperbole of Damon seriously and to assume that irony and humor inhere in a symbol which means sickle, tool for cutting grass, something which is not well--"sick[le]"-- penis, and false.

At the agricultural level, it is a description of Damon's cutting the wheat or barley fields, or possibly hops, which indeed are golden when in bloom. At one level, the reference is to classical mythology of Jason and the Argonauts who sailed the seas in search of a "golden fleece." It was secured through the magic of Medea who passionately burned for Jason and thus helped him harness the flaming bulls, plow the unfurrowed fields, kill the earth-born men, and lull to sleep the dragon that protected the fleece (Ovid, Metamorphoses, Book VII). Interestingly, Medea uses a bronze sickle to harvest some of the herbs to be used to make Jason's father, Aeson, young again.

For Marvell the word "gold" or "golden" is usually associated with the metal of great value (for example, "A Dialogue Between the Resolved Soul and Created Pleasure" 58 and 61 or "Nymph Complaining" 101). But the word "golden" is also associated with the "Golden Age" from which humans have "fallen" (for example, "Last Instructions" 47: "But thought the Golden Age was restor'd"). The only other

comparable use of "golden" is in "Upon the Death of the Lord Hastings" and is in the context of alchemy:

and Mayern
 Like some sad chemist, who, prepared to reap
 The golden harvest, sees his glasses leap.
 (48-50)

Donno glosses these to mean that the alchemist who was just about to turn lead to gold breaks his "glasses" or beakers for mixing and heating (Poems 232).

But for Damon in stanza 7, his is not the "golden harvest" of the precious metal or precious grain, but "fleece" or wool, hair of the lamb. It should be noted that this is not the green grass of mid-summer but may be a reference to the fall gathering.

The OED defines the word "shear" simply as "To cut (something) with a sharp instrument." It also has secondary meanings that indicate the ambiguity and duality of the use of a single word. "To shear," as a transitive verb, means both "To cut the fleece from (an animal)," and "To cut down, to reap (grass, crops, etc.) with a sickle (formerly also, with a scythe)." In another definition, the word can mean "To divide" (OED); the last can have erotic suggestiveness when in the context of scythe/penis, fleece/hair.

The OED defines the word "close" "To enclose with walls, etc.; to enclose as walls or boundaries do," which is associated with the enclosure of "free lands" discussed above in the context of "The Mower against Gardens." A

secondary meaning of "close" is "To come close together in contact or union; to join, unite, combine" (OED). This again has erotic suggestiveness for Damon's boast about his prowess as a lover. He is renowned throughout "closes" or "close" combat of loves where his scythe/phallus "shears"/divides in "closes every year" (51-53)

Damon claims that it is he and his scythe--"With this" --who "shear" "the golden fleece." This is not the Damon of the meadows who speaks in this poem, however, but the laborer in "all these closes" (54-55). Donno glosses the word "closes" as "enclosed fields" (Poems 261). It will be remembered that the Mower of "The Mower against Gardens" was adamantly against the enclosure of fields and the creation of "gardens" behind walls; "He first enclosed within the gardens square / A dead and standing pool of air" (5-6). In contrast, Damon the mower does not appear to condemn "enclosed" fields but indeed works in them "every year." The word "close" clearly may have erotic import for Damon the boastful lover. Marvell uses the word "close" in several instances but at least once in a possible erotic context:

For Fate with jealous eye does see
Two perfect loves, nor lets them close:
The union would her ruin be,
And her tyrannic power depose.
("The Definition of Love" 13-15)

In "The Definition" the word "close" can be the innocent "next to" and thus make it a sight rhyme with "depose," or it could be "to conclude" or "to consummate," a term that also means that a couple had coition after a marriage ceremony. So the erotic implication of Damon's "shear[ing]" "golden fleece" in "closes" is certainly not an unsupported interpretation.

In the last two lines of stanza 7, Damon's complaint sets up a contrast between types of "wealth." He says, "And though in wool more poor than they, / Yet am I richer far in hay" (55-56). At the literal level, Damon boasts that shepherds have more wool than he, but he is "richer far in hay," his specialty. Erotically, the boast may be that when it comes to being "in hay" as a lover, he is "richer." The reference to "hay" could also be to the dance that is associated with the conclusion of the cutting as seen in "Upon Appleton House":

And now the careless victors play,
Dancing the triumphs of the hay;
Where every mower's wholesome heat
Smells like an Alexander's sweat.
Their females fragrant as the mead
Which they in fairy circles tread:
When at their dance's end they kiss,
Their new-made hay not sweeter is.
(425-432)

It is also the case that with the dance and the cutting of the grass there were opportunities for festivals and "Maying," which were associated with fertility rites and

joy, not simply destruction (Warnke, "Meadow-Sequence" 239-240). Marvell also makes a direct reference to coitus "in hay" in the poem "Ametas and Thestylis Making Hay-ropes" which is clearly in the carpe diem tradition:

4
Thestylis
What you cannot constant hope
Must be taken as you may.

5
Ametas
Then let's both lay by our rope,
And go kiss within the hay.
(13-16)

The euphemism in the phrase "lay by our rope" should be fairly evident in a carpe diem genre along with the context of the amour.

Stanza 8 is the last of Damon's boast and is his description of his physical beauty, his artistry in singing and dancing, and his relationship to "The deathless fairies" (61). In this stanza, Damon claims that he is not "so deformed to sight, / If in my scythe I looked right" (57-58). In the previous stanza, 7, the scythe was an instrument which "discovers wide," but here the scythe is narrow and reveals only partially. Further, there may be an allusion to Polyphemus and his deformity. Damon seems to imply that there is some deformity, since with a partial view in his scythe he is not "so deformed." Damon appears to state that he has to contort himself in order to see himself. He sees himself in the crescent of his scythe; his

"mirror" is a narrow blade. At another level, Damon sees an image of himself as reflected by his tool, his scythe/penis.

In the Renaissance, and in Marvell in particular, the mirror is a complex and important symbol (Farmer 25; Ellrodt, "Mind" 228-229; Friedman, "Sight" 307-308). Certainly, as noted earlier, Marvell is concerned with perspective--in how the gardener is viewed by the Mower and how Damon the Mower is viewed by the poet/aesthete. Vision is clearly an important symbol in "The Mower to the Glowworms" where the Mower stumbles in literal and symbolic darkness. It will be seen that the Aristotelian idea of art being a mirror of nature returns, as a "true survey" in the mind of the Mower, in "The Mower's Song." This is an important symbol of what one knows or has lost; there, the mirrors are "meadows fresh and gay" and "the greenness of the grass / Did see its hopes as in a glass" (2-3). Clearly, this has implications for the other, or the lack there of, leading to Narcissism or solipsism.

Damon the Mower, when considering his physical beauty as reflected in his scythe, sees a portrait of himself and compares himself to the sun:

If in my scythe I looked right;
 In which I see my picture done,
 As in a crescent moon the sun.
 (58-60)

Damon's reflection is in the blade of the scythe; in "The Mower's Song" before he encounters Juliana, the Mower sees his mind and emotions reflected in nature:

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.
(1-4)

In "Damon the Mower," the mower sees himself pictured not in a blade of grass but in the blade of a scythe. The mirrors are different, one of steel/flesh, one of grass/flesh. The mind that looks at the mirrors changes also, from "green thoughts" to "displaced" mind. Further, the mirrors have a symbolic identification, blade of grass/flesh and blade of scythe/penis/flesh. Damon the Mower can only "picture" himself as the consummate lover when he is boasting and rhetorically trying to prove his worthiness to Juliana.

Indeed, the person in the "extremes" of passion, as Damon is, may see only one thing; certainly, the genre touts the conception of all-consuming passion that precludes true perception. Damon also compares his own beauty or picture to the sun, the source of all light. As the sun is reflected in the "crescent moon," so are his features reflected in his scythe. This simile is interesting considering the earlier associations of the sun. The poet/aesthete declares the day to be "fair" but "scorching"; the sun is shining. In Damon's complaint, he declares that

neither the sun nor the Dog Star could have burned him and the fields so and makes a reference to Phaeton who in a fit of pride "drives" the sun's (Phoebus Apollo's) chariot out of control and burns the Earth and the heavens. Damon is now that Phaeton whose passion for Juliana is out of control and rules his world; the sun of his own passion is reflected in his tool, and narcissistically, the image is as blinding as the sun.

Damon certainly does not see himself as the poet/aesthete nor evidently as Juliana does. The mirror in which Damon sees his reflection is the "crescent moon," not the moon at full since his scythe is an arc. Whether the scythe arc is up, waxing, or down, waning, it has ambiguous sexual implications. Damon is promoting himself as a lover whose scythe is waxing; for the poet/aesthete, the scythe is waning because of Juliana's indifference. The first association of the scythe with the moon and the realm of night is also important, particularly with the idea of the scythe as a part of human anatomy. In this instance, it could be the scythe/penis is waning and is also associated with the moon, the symbol of the virginal Diana, the huntress. In relation to Juliana, Damon could be described with both epithets.

The second quatrain of stanza 8 is Damon's boast of his relations to the worlds of magic, dance, and song.

The deathless fairies take me oft
 To lead them in their dances soft:
 And, when I tune myself to sing,
 About me they contract their ring.
 (61-64)

As noted earlier in the discussion of "The Mower against Gardens," there is in the seventeenth century an ambiguous attitude toward fairies and the occult. It was the case that witchcraft was condemned; for example, James I published the dialog Daemonologie in 1597 in Edinburgh when he was James VI of Scotland, six years before he became king of England. In that book, James I makes a distinction between white and black witches and between sorcery and witchcraft. Sorcery is

the art by which the devil is compelled, or believed to be compelled, by charms, hidden names and the drawing of circles; and witchcraft, which entails a formal pact with the devil, ending almost invariably in his worship. (Briggs 35)

Briggs mentions that James I describes fairies as near to Scottish folk beliefs (35). This emphasis on magic and fairies, of course, had influence at court poetry and drama once James came to the throne in 1603 (35).

In Marvell's work, he uses the word "fairies," "fairyes," or "faryes" only two other times, in "The Mower against Gardens" that was discussed earlier, and in "Upon Appleton House" which was quoted earlier in the context of the dance that was called the "Hay," line 430, "Which they in Fairy Circles tread." This is a description of the

dance following the cutting of the meadow by the mowers. In "Damon the Mower," as in "The Mower against Gardens," the fairies are associated with divinity; in "Damon" they are called "deathless," and in "The Mower against Gardens" they dwell with the "gods" (40). Damon claims that he frequently--"oft"--is taken "To lead" the fairies in their dances. His boast appears to be that he is the premier dancer because of skill; an auditor would assume that he is light on his feet "in their dances soft."

The last two lines of stanza 8 are Damon's proclamation of his artistry as a singer. The person who "tunes" is familiar in Marvell. Cromwell "tun'd the ruling Instrument" ("First Anniversary" 68); he tried "To tune this lower to that higher sphere" ("First Anniversary" 48), and wittily, "And Jubal tuned Musicks Jubilee:" ("Music's Empire" 6). The image of Damon who "tune[s] myself" as his own instrument can be suggestive of masturbation, particularly in the light of his own reflection in his tool, his scythe/penis.

As Damon begins to "warm up" his vocal cords for his performance, he says the fairies "About me they contract their ring" (64). It is the case that rings of mushrooms were considered fairy rings; actually, the mushroom reproduces by popping spores in three hundred and sixty degrees, thus the circle. In this instance, Damon mentions that the fairies move in closer, presumably to hear better. However, the phrase "contract their ring" is sexually suggestive.

With this image of Damon alone with fairies in the meadows about to sing, stanza 8 closes the boast section. As a character who complains of his lack of a love response from the absent Juliana, he appears to be left alone in a meadow except for his imaginary woodland friends; his supposed renown and wealth have left him alone to seek self-satisfaction with an imaginary "ring."

Stanza 9 is a collapse of Damon from the outward, boastful character of the three previous stanzas back into a personal lament of love's disruptions and a swim in time by the human amphibian. Damon considers the subjunctive when he thinks of his encounter with "Love." He says, "How happy might I still have mowed, / Had not Love here his thistles sowed" (65-66). Before "Love" with a capital "L" changed his meadow of mowing, Damon was "happy" and presumably would have continued to be so. Suggestively, before Juliana, who is not mentioned in this stanza, he simply "mowed" whatever "grass"/flesh which was available and was "happy." As mentioned, in this stanza there are just Damon and "Love," not Juliana, which seems to emphasize the narcissistic nature of the lover. The Object is not there but the emotion is, and Damon sees himself in his mirror, his scythe/penis.

The phrase "[T]histles sowed," not grass or flowers, adds several variations on Cupid's arrow or dart. The Authorized Version of 1611 does not make a great distinction

between "thistles" and "thorns." Damon has "thistles," and the Apostle Paul mentions that he has a "thorn in the flesh" in 2 Corinthians 12:7. Strong's Concordance defines the word "thorn" which the Apostle uses as "skolops, skol'-ops; perh[aps] from the base of G4628 and G3700; withered at the front, i.e. a point or prickle (fig. a bodily annoyance or disability):--thorn." This Greek word may hold a further bawdy joke when Damon "falls" down in front. Further, the Apostle claims that the "thorn" is not from God but is present to prevent him from boasting of revelations: "And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure" (2 Cor. 12:7). The Hebrew word for "thorn" specifically has connotations of "cutting" and "pricking." Strong's Concordance defines it as,

6975. gowts, kotse; or gots, kotse; from H6972 (in the sense of pricking); a thorn:--thorn.
 Hebrew: 6972. quwts, koots; a prim. root; to clip off; used only as denom. from H7019; to spend the harvest season:--summer. 7019. gayits, kah'-yits; from H6972; harvest (as the crop), whether the product (grain or fruit) or the (dry) season:--summer (fruit, house). 2336. chowach, kho'-akh; from an unused root apparently. mean. to pierce; a thorn; by anal[ogy] a ring for the nose:--bramble, thistle, thorn.

For a poet with the genius for languages which Marvell had, these various definitions and connotations provide bawdy and

witty support underneath the surface of the poem. Usually, the sexual innuendoes were more explicit in the Latin and Greek, but the play of the words could have been seen working consistently throughout the languages (see companion poems, Latin "Ros" and English "On a Drop of Dew" and Latin "Hortus" and English "The Garden" in McQueen and Rockwell 12-17, 20-27).

The word "thistle" has its origin in the Old English "pistel-el," and from about 1400 in the Romance of the Rose, the word, when used rhetorically or scripturally, has been vaguely applied to "various prickly plants" but is also the heraldic emblem of Scotland (OED). For example, Thomas Fuller's The Holy State and The Profane State (1642) is cited: "He snatcheth the thistle of a project, which first pricks his hands and then breaks" (OED). The word "thorn" is from the Old English "þorn" which is applied to "a spine, a prickle" of the stem or other part of a plant. In figurative language, the word "thorn" means anything that causes pain or emotional distress, the Apostle Paul's "thorn in the flesh." For example, Shakespeare's Hamlet (I.v.82-90) has Hamlet's Father/Ghost charge him to not allow the "royal bed of Denmark" to be "A couch for luxury" but to avenge his death upon the usurper but not against Gertrude: "Against thy mother aught: Leave her to heaven, / And to those thorns that in her bosom lodge, / To prick and sting her. Fare thee well at once! / The glow-worm shows the

matin to be near, / And 'gins to pale his uneffectual fire"
(OED).

Also figuratively, it refers to the parable of the sower of Matthew 13:7. As a verb, it can also mean, "To prick with or as with a thorn; to vex." For the Christian, the thorn is representative of the suffering of Jesus when he was mocked by the Roman soldiers who made him a crown of thorns (OED). The word "tare" is from the parable of the sower in Matthew 13:25 for a type of weed that sometimes grows with corn (Wycliffe's New Testament of 1388). There is such a weed called the "tare-thistle" or "sow-thistle" that is a prickly weed that also grows in corn (OED).

Thus when Damon shifts from his "boast" back to the lament, his first statement is his assurance of happiness in his "mowing" "Had not Love here his thistles sowed" (66). Love, who is male--"his"--in this instance, does not shoot his arrows but here has "planted" or "sowed" "thistles." That is, Love here is a sower of seed, an agricultural and fertility image, but the plants that will grow are not corn or wheat but "prickly weeds." Damon has a "thorn in the flesh," a thistle. Suggestively as mentioned above, the Apostle Paul's "thorn in the flesh" of 2 Corinthians 12:7 may be deformity or an impotence. Damon's "here" may not be the heart as traditionally it should be but may be a "thorn in his scythe"/phallus. In light of the "hamstringed frogs" which are no longer "dancing," the "pipe[less]" grasshopper

and the "withered" grass, Damon may be "withered at the front" like the Apostle Paul.

Further, this is the next stanza after Damon has described the act of where he "tune[s] myself." The images of detumescence echo those earlier in the poem and possibly the poem as a whole with its eleven stanzas and the implication of descent rather than elevation. Damon has Love's "thistles" in him; he has "prickly plants" inside him. Of course, in punning, the word "prick" has several suggestive implications. In this stanza, Love has "sowed" "prickly plants"; that is, the plants have "pricks." This image is consistent with what Damon sees in his scythe/penis/mirror and is consistent with his boasts and his passion for Juliana. Further, in the next stanza, Damon will "prick" himself with his own scythe and will "deflate" or fall to the ground, wounded in the ankle.

The first two lines of stanza 9 are in the subjunctive mood and the past tenses; Damon "might" have been happy "mowing"/having coitus "Had not Love. . . sowed" thistles. But for Damon, that is only wishful thinking: "But now I all the day complain, / Joining my labour to my pain" (67-68). The amphibian in time, which is man, dives down and back to the past but here resurfaces into the present, "now." In reference to his idyllic day in his boast in stanza 6, the present day--"all"--is filled with Damon's "complain[ing]."

Line 68 is an image of postlapsarian pregnancy and work, thus amalgamating both images of Eve and Adam.

In Genesis 3:16, Yahweh has just pronounced judgment upon the serpent whose head will be "bruise[d]" by the seed of Eve and who will "bruise his [Eve's seed's] heel" and tells Eve she will be in "sorrow" in childbearing, when in "labour." This traditional eteological myth accounts for "labour pains" during the birthing process and Adam's curse to work for his sustenance. Before the Fall, Yahweh's plenitude did not demand hard labor requiring sweat to eat. Yahweh's curse on Adam and the earth was that "thorns" and "thistles" will spring up and he could no longer eat of the fruits of the Garden but must "eat the herb of the field" (Gen. 3:18).

The transition from stanza 8 to stanza 9 is a transition from the world of classical mythology and literature to the world of biblical mythology and symbolism. Stanza 8 ends with Damon's making references to the world of "deathless fairies" and magic "ring[s]," but stanza 9 has "Love" who "Had" "sowed" "his thistles" comparable to Yahweh's/"Love" curse upon the ground and upon childbearing and work/sustenance. Gilbertson is right when she argues that Damon, at this point, is a reenactor of the Fall ("Many" 151-153). However, as a character, he is more like Damon, the shepherd of "Clorinda and Damon," before as he says, "Pan met me" (20). Damon the shepherd has been

transformed by his encounter with "great Pan," for he will not be seduced by Clorinda's carpe diem appeal to enter "Love's Shrine." But Damon the Mower is not transformed by his encounter with Juliana nor his encounter with "Love"; he still burns and still complains.

Marvell appears to take the genre of love poetry of the Caroline poets to the extreme of despair, for Damon at the end of this poem identifies his profession of Mower/lover with Death, comparable to John Donne's "little deaths" of coitus. Damon the Mower is self-pregnant; he is the embodiment of both Adam and Eve. His pride leads to self-love, and he sees himself in his own tool, a type of narcissism. The Other appears to be absent in these images of mirrored selves, masterbatory impotence, and false pregnancy through "thistles"/prickly plants.

Stanza 9 provides a sight rhyme that is first used in stanza 1 by the poet/aesthete but here by the character Damon. He says, "And with my scythe cut down the grass, / Yet still my grief is where it was" (69-70). His work in the fields does not provide relief from his grief; in the language of love and the pun, his scythe/penis "cuts down" the grass/flesh but finds that his "grief" remains. Then in a commonplace "scythe"/"sithe" becomes identified with "sigh." In a flourish of poetic irony and punning, Damon the poet says, "But, when the iron blunter grows, / Sighing, I whet my scythe and woes" (71-72). Again, this could be

the "rendering" of the poet/aesthete's rather than the character Damon "playing" with the words and their meanings; the sight rhyme, while a poetic cliché, is a parallel in diction between the two characters/speakers. Damon explains that when his "iron"/scythe/penis "blunter grows," when "blunt[ly]" tumescence occurs, ironically when dullness "grows" on his scythe/"iron," then he must "whet my scythe and woes" while "Sighing"/scything. The "whet" stone was used to sharpen farm tools and usually meant sliding the stone along each side of the blade to be sharpened.

Marvell uses the word "whet" or "whets" twice in "Last Instructions" (941 and 466) and here in "Damon the Mower" to indicate to sharpen. Marvell uses the word "whets" in "The Garden":

Casting the body's vest aside,
My soul into the boughs does glide:
There like a bird it sits, and sings,
Then whets, and combs its silver wings.
(51-54).

Donno glosses this to mean "preens, apparently a nonce use" (Poems 257). So autoerotically, Damon "preens" his scythe/penis or rubs it with a stone and does the same to his "woes."

Stanza 10 is the re-entry of the poet/aesthete who provides exposition on what has happened to Damon and to set up the last stanza, or Damon's coda or tail. The poet/aesthete brings to the audience's attention the aspect

of time. His first word of interruption is the word "While," an adverb denoting time, and his fourth word is the word "threw," the past tense of throw, which is another indicator that he may be the "author" of Damon's complaint (73). This again would make a parallel with "The Mower against Gardens" as the view of the Mower regarding the gardener/aesthete while "Damon the Mower" is the poet/aesthete/gardener's view of the Mower's foray into the pastoral/love experience.

Stanza 10 has several similarities to the mower sequence in "Upon Appleton House." It reads:

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)

Stanza 50 of "Upon Appleton House" reads:

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 forebode.
 (393-400)

At the linguistic level, both share some words: "elbow," "while," "whistling scythe," and "stroke." Thematically, both share the emphasis on time and situation. "Damon the Mower" has the "frame" in past tense indicating that this is a rendering through another voice, the poet/aesthete. "Upon Appleton House" is in present tense as the poet/narrator views the mowers and has an underdeveloped "rail" (bird=corncrake) who is "untimely mowed." Thematically, the situations are similar: Damon "by careless chance" cuts his own ankle, and "Appleton House" has a mower "unknowing[ly]" kill a young bird. Damon is "Depopulating all the ground" (74), while the mowers in "Appleton House" "massacre the grass" (394).

The adjective "whistling" has several bawdy associations in Shakespeare and in the seventeenth century. Rubinstein mentions that Shakespeare uses the word for flatulence, which both he and the ancient Greeks associate with pederasty, and for syphilis (303). In this instance, Damon is in the process of "Depopulating all the ground" which has associations with Onan, the biblical character who practiced coitus interruptus with his brother's wife and "spilled his seed upon the ground, lest that he should give seed to his brother. And the thing which he did displeased the LORD: wherefore he slew him also" (Gen. 38: 9-10). To commit Onanism, autoeroticism, then is to depopulate the earth of possible children, "Depopulating all the ground."

Certainly, as several critics have pointed out, an immediate allusion could be to the Civil War where there was no security for high or low, as the rail learns in "Upon Appleton House" (e.g. Summers, "Apocalyptic" 190-191). According to Henke, both words "cut" and "stroke" had associations with copulation (62, 261) when in drama, but in this instance, Damon is alone, except for the poet/aesthete/voyeur. As discussed earlier, "ground," "earth," is associated with the female (see Henke 295 "waste piece of ground"), and the root word is euphemistically a term for the penis, and as a verb it is an "Innuendo of phallic thrusting, of copulation" (Henke 226).

As Damon is cutting grass/flesh and throwing "his elbow round," he literally cuts himself down. As noted, Marvell, throughout his works, uses the technique of taking a metaphor literally.⁸ "The edged steel" refers to his scythe, but also has military associations of sword (OED), another phallic symbol. And "The edged steel," as if he had a mind of its own, "by careless chance / Did into his own ankle glance" (77-78). One is reminded again of Ecclesiastes 9:11, which mentions that all are subject to time and chance:

⁸ Baruch quotes a contemporary of Marvell, Samuel Pecke, who says, "Time devours Things; his Sithe our Legs will hit." Baruch comments: "Trope becomes reality," when Damon's scythe hits his own leg (Baruch 256).

I returned, and saw under the sun, that the race
is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong,
neither yet bread to the wise, nor yet riches to
men of understanding, nor yet favour to men of
skill; but time and chance happeneth to them all.

Theologically, for the Christian, faith assures the believer
that God's providence, and possibly predestination,
determines the final result outside time.

Comparable to the scene in "Upon Appleton House" where
the rail is killed, in "Damon the Mower" the scythe directed
by chance which is "careless" or "without care" "Did into
his own ankle glance." To make more complex the image of
self-reflexiveness and self-absorption, it should be noted
that in stanza 8 Damon "looked right" or "glanced" into his
scythe/mirror and saw his own reflection. Here in stanza
10, the poet/aesthete has the scythe/mirror "glance" "into
his own ankle." In the two other instances where Marvell
uses the word "glance" or "glances," they refer to eyes and
their ability to harm or wound lovers, "Eyes and Tears" line
37, "The sparkling glance that shoots desire"; and "The
Picture of Little T.C., in a Prospect of Flowers":

O, then let me in time compound,
And parlay with those conquering eyes;
Ere they have tried their force to wound,
In triumph over hearts that strive,
Ere, with their glancing wheels, they drive
And them that yield but more despise.
Let me be laid,
Where I may see thy glories from some shade.
(17-24)

Certainly, the "glance" of the eye can be destructive for a lover.

In "Damon the Mower" the "glance" of the scythe/penis/mirror returns to "wound" Damon just above the heel. From a standing erect position while cutting the fields, Damon "among the grass fell down" which has both theological and erotic allusions. As Gilbertson points out, this is on the theological level a recapitulation of the Fall of Adam and Eve ("The Mower as a Type of Adam" 273-281). Erotically, it alludes to detumescence or flaccidity. The erotic image then has Damon "wounding" or "pricking" himself with his own scythe/penis while in the act of autoeroticism. His "steel" or sword is thus turned back on himself which is another allusion to flaccidity. One can compare stanza four of "Walking in a meadowe greene" from Bishop Percy's Folio Ms. (c. 1650) quoted above.

In any event, Damon's scythe "wounds" him in the ankle, and he falls down. The poet/aesthete/voyeur then describes the "scene" that he saw with what must be a delicious sense of irony and a play on words: "By his own scythe, the Mower mown" (80). Here the ambiguity of the literal, theological, and erotic are exquisitely bound. Literally, Damon's scythe nicks his ankle, and he falls and "moans." Theologically, Damon's pride in himself has led to a fall and a recapitulation of The Fall; like all flesh/"grass" he has committed self-wounding as did Adam and Eve when they

disobeyed Yahweh's command not to eat of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. Thus, Damon is "mowed" down by that legacy of the Ancient Parents and his own actions, and as one son of Eve, he is bruised above his heel, his ankle. Erotically, Damon in the act of autoeroticism, seeking relief from the "extremes" of desire for Juliana, is self-satisfied "By his own scythe"/penis, and consequently, "the Mower mown" [moan]. The self-absorption of pride of Narcissus, the boast of sexual prowess, the pushing of sexual gratification to the Caroline "itch to be scratched," here come together in an image of a Mower, or clown, who exemplifies all these and is so described for the audience.

Stanza 11 is Damon's coda or end. Ironically, he is sitting on his end, and as noted earlier, the number eleven has connotations of detumescence. In the first three words of the stanza, the poet/aesthete/voyeur breaks in again to remind that it is his rendering: "'Alas!' said he" (81). Again to reinforce the idea that it is a love complaint, the poet/aesthete/voyeur mentions that Damon's cry was for "Alas[s]," a female. Then Damon compares his physical "hurts" "To those that die by love's despite" (82). Damon describes his physical "hurts" as "slight," the latter having "an innuendo of adultery" or deprivation of sexual service (Henke 243). While Damon claims that the literal hurts/pains of the scythe's wound are small or "slight," he claims that they are "slight" only when in comparison "To

those that die by love's despite." In other words, those that "die," or have orgasm (Henke 67) and thus "fall," have a greater hurt since this "death" comes from "love's despite." It is when love has "The feeling or mental attitude of looking down or despising anything; the display of this feeling; contempt, scorn, or disdain" (OED). When autoeroticism, Onanism, is Damon's choice, he certainly would be held in contempt by the tradition Petrarchan love, and Yahweh would not be pleased, either. Platonic love would also look down on the itch which Damon has scratched. Theologically, Perfect Love would look down on Damon who sits on the grass healing his self-inflicted wound and despise the sins of lust and pride.

On the literal level, Damon seeks to heal the injury with natural medicines, "shepherd's-purse, and clown's-all-heal" (83). The OED describes the former as, "A common cruciferous weed, Capsella Bursa-pastoris, bearing pouch-like pod." The OED cites John Gerard's (or Gerarde's) The Herbal, or General Historie of Plants (1597) for its reputation as a coagulant: "Shepheardes purse staith bleeding in any part of the bodie" (OED). A further description is cited in William Coles' Adam in Eden: Natures Paradise (1657): "In English it is called Shepherds purse or Scrip, from the likenesse the Seed hath with that kind of leatherne bag, wherein Shepherds carry their Victualls into the field" (OED). The OED also offers a comparison to the

French, bourse-a-pasteur, and to the medieval Latin bursa pastoris, both of which have a primary meaning of "purse" but with a secondary meaning in anatomy of "scrotum" (OED; Harper Collins Robert French-English Dictionary, Second Edition, 1987). Apropos of Damon's love complaint, the OED, in defining "purse" as a reference to the "scrotum," cites Richard Androse's translation of Alexis' Very Excellent Booke: the Fourth and Finall Booke of Secrets (1568), "To remedy the iche of the purse of the testicles" (OED).

"Clown's-all-heal" is defined in the OED as the plant Stachys palustris and is also referred to as "clown-heal" and "clown's wound-wort" with William Gerard as a citation (OED). In addition, the OED defines "clown" with phrases such as "A countryman, rustic, or peasant." "implying ignorance, crassness, or rude manners," and "A fool or jestor [sic], as a stage-character" (OED). Thus, Damon's medicine--clown's-all-heal--could also be a play upon the word "heal"/"heel," leaving the impression of the rustic's vulnerability to the bruise of the heel: "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:23). Literally, Damon has bruised himself above the heel in the ankle.

With the two natural medicines, Damon heals himself of his physical wound: "The blood I staunch, and wound I seal" (84). When he continues his comparison of wounds, he claims that he cannot cure the emotional, psychic wound which has

its source in "Juliana's eyes," "Only for him no cure is found, / Whom Juliana's eyes do wound" (85-86). This sounds as if Damon is incorporating female gender into himself as a consequence of his self-love, in the euphemism, the "wound that does not heal," the female pudendum (see Rubinstein). Then, since he cannot be cured in time in this world, Damon states that "Tis death alone that this must do" (87). This can be read literally as death will stop the emotional wound which Juliana's eyes have opened in Damon; consciousness and emotional pain come to an end at one's death. But read with another emphasis, the phrase "death alone" suggests again the isolation and self-absorption of the Narcissistic self-lover. In this instance, "death" with a lower case is like the Renaissance "little death" of coitus, here autoerotic.

The last line of the poem makes the arc complete, from the heat of bright sun of the midday to the cold embrace and identification with "Death," upper case. The arc begins in images of sexual dysfunction and extremes of heat/passion/lust, then to seeking relief, to boasting pride, to autoeroticism and self-love and self-injury, and finally to identification with the last lover--"Death." This arc ends also in stanza 11, the deflation or lowering, which is associated with the number "eleven" discussed above. Damon is lowered to the ground by his self-wound, and erotically detumescence occurs through the images of autoeroticism. This arc, of course, is the scythe which is

like the "crescent moon." The "arc" is, in astronomy, "The part of a circle which a heavenly body appears to pass through above (diurnal arc) or below (nocturnal arc) the horizon," this being the earliest use in English (OED). That part of the circle's three hundred and sixty degrees can also be described as the distance/time that the sun travels each day from ancient symbolism (OED "degree"). From the reference to the "Dog Star" and the uncontrollable ride of the sun's chariot with the hubristic and inexperienced Phaeton aboard in stanza 3, the celestial image of the arc is appropriate. Further, it is appropriate if one assumes that the order of the four Mower poems is deliberate, for the next poem--"The Mower to the Glowworms"--is in the nocturnal arc, in the dead of night. The arc is also the arc of the scythe as the image of time; Chronos/Saturn carries the scythe. As in Marvell's "The Garden," stanza 9,

How well the skilful gardener drew
Of flowers and herbs this dial new,
Where from above the milder sun
Does through a fragrant zodiac run;
And, as it works, the industrious bee
Computes its time as well as we.
(65-69)

Time is reflected in the sun's travels across the arc of the sky and is recorded on the sun dial, whether floral or statuary, but in Marvell, as in the Renaissance as a whole,

it is always present: "But at my back I always hear / Time's winged chariot hurrying near" ("To His Coy Mistress" 21-22). For Damon, the chariot he has been riding has been Phaeton's chariot of run-away passion or lust, ending in the pride and self-love of autoeroticism. The arc/sun/scythe/penis has come back to earth with Damon's fall and detumescence.

In the last line of the poem--"For Death thou art a Mower too"--Damon identifies with Death's traditional role of the "harvester of flesh," the Grim Reaper. However, the statement of identification can be taken several ways, none exclusively. For the poet/aesthete/voyeur, to state that "Death is a Mower" is simply to say that "Death, you are a clown, a mocker, a jester," comparable to John Donne's calling death "poor" since he has little "power." In Herrick's poem "Time," the main character is called "slack," as is Damon. Considering that stanza 1 began with references "to paint" and that Marvell frequently in his poetry is discussing aesthetics, one might think that wit could break the line as "Death thou art." This ties together "Damon the Mower" and "The Mower against Gardens" since the latter is an attack on the art of gardening. The poem comes full circle, or at least the half circle of the arc, back to the theme of art which is found in stanza 1. Here, in the last stanza, the reference is to "Death." It is direct address, and the word is capitalized, unlike the "little death" mentioned earlier. This note of familiarity

with Death anticipates the last two poems. Therefore, there is an art to death or dying.⁹ With the cold embrace of his fellow worker--Death--Damon finds his relief from the "unusual heats" of the sun and then walks or hobbles into the night of "The Mower to the Glowworms."

⁹ See Phoebe S. Spinrad, The Summons of Death on the Medieval and Renaissance English Stage, chapter II, "Answering the Summons: The Art of Dying," 27-49. Also see Jeremy Taylor's The Rule and Exercises of Holy Dying, Witherspoon and Warnke 438-454.

Chapter Four

"The Mower to the Glowworms": No Light at the End of

Love's Tunnel

"The Mower to the Glowworms" is a single sentence with three stanzas of apostrophes (Donno, Poems 262). The poem has a total of sixteen lines and sixty-four stresses with a rhyme scheme of a4b4a4b4, the only one of the Mower poems that is not in rhymed couplets. Thus, the stanzaic and numerical stress center of the poem is between stanzas 2 and 3, between the words "fall; / Ye" (8-9). So, at the focal point of this poem is a theme which C. A. Patrides argues is a constant for Marvell:

the same cosmic morality [found in the poems on Cromwell] also informs the rest of Marvell's poems, equally concerned as they all are with the reality of imperfection within the created order.

The reality so designated is, in theological terms, the fact of the Fall. As a datable historical event, the Fall is nowhere expressly formulated in Marvell's poetry; but as an ever-present human experience, it is never absent from his consciousness. ("Till prepared" 41)

There is a turning at that point too from the benefits of the glowworms for the "nightingale" and their non-grandiose prophecies to their usefulness to mowers, in general, and to the Mower who encountered Juliana, in particular. So, the center of "The Mower against Gardens" was the word "proud,"

and the center of "Damon the Mower" is a boast of being the axis of nature's concern. There were "falls" in "Damon the Mower," but here in "The Mower to the Glowworms" the results of the fall are seen to be the loss of direction from nature to find one's home. When the passion of love rules, the mind is "displaced" (15). The poetic movement of the Mower's progress reminds one of a biblical description of the progress of sin:

But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death. James 1:14-15

The Mower is "drawn away of his own lust" since the passion is in his mind, not Juliana's. When thus "drawn," the Mower "entice[s]" and satisfies himself; he "conceived" by himself with the help of his scythe. The "child" of that union is "sin," alienation from nature and its divine revelations and alienation from "home." The end comes in "The Mower's Song" where a "common ruin" (22) is predicted.

Donno mentions that Marvell "may be indebted to Pliny's accounts of the glowworm, called 'the husbandman's star', and the nightingale," which can be found in the translation of the Natural History by Philemon Holland, 1635, book X, chapter 29 and book XIX, chapter 27 (Poems 262). The OED defines the word "glowworm" as "A coleopterous insect (Lampyrus noctiluca, Linn[aeus]), the female of which emits a shining green light from the extremity of the abdomen.

The female is wingless; the male is winged, but non-luminous" (OED). The OED also points out that in the seventeenth century the term "glowworm" is often used figuratively to describe persons contemptuously. For example, Burton's Anatomy of Melancholy, (II, iii, II, 260; 1624 ed.) is cited: "A Nobleman there in some likelyhood . . . [is] an outside, a gloworme, a proud fool, an arrant ass" (OED). The last definition has import when the Mower identifies with the glowworm.

The OED offers several examples in the seventeenth century of the contrast of the glowworm's small or false light compared to the large light of the sun or the moon and cold light compared to hot light of the sun. The OED also mentions that the word sometimes is spelled "glose-worm" which is close to the sound "gloze-worm." To "gloze" is to shine brightly, but also when one is "glozing" it is to use "Flattery, cajolery, deceitful blandishment, specious talk or representation" (OED). The ambiguity is inherent in a symbol for light; it can be beneficial or superficial. The ambiguity is also present even in the diminutive light.

The single word "glowworm" is made up of the two words "glow" and "worm," and when defined separately, the two take on sinister meanings. The word "glow" means to give off light, to be incandescent, to be luminous as if from the action of heat or burning. Thus, one could glow "with passion; [to be] ardent, impassioned, fervid" (OED). The

second part of the word "worm" has several sinister meanings. The word "worm" can be, when used figuratively, associated with a gnawing grief or passion and can be "A whim or 'maggot' in the brain; a perverse fancy or desire; a streak of madness or insanity" (OED). The "worm" is associated with the earthworm that eats the body in the grave; therefore, man is "worm's meat" and suffers their eating as one of the pains of Hell (OED). Finally, and significantly, the "worm" can be "A serpent, snake, dragon," as in Milton's Paradise Lost, IX, 1068, "O Eve, in evil hour thou didst give eare To that false Worm" (OED). These definitions of "glowworm" remind one of the line in "Damon the Mower": "Only the snake, that kept within, / Now glitters in its second skin" (15-16). Damon has his "glitter[ing]" "snake," and here the Mower has a "glow" "worm."

In "Damon the Mower" there is a "snake, that . . . glitters," and in the poem "The Mower to the Glowworms," one finds a shrunken image of the glowworm. Erotically, there is a diminution. This clearly ties into the imagery of "Damon the Mower" where the images of heat, sun, burning, and passion proliferate. The images of light in "Damon the Mower" are the "extremes" of the sun, the Dog Star, "Juliana's scorching beams," "fires," "hot day, or hot desires." These "unusual heats" "[scorch]," "[wither]," "sear," "inflame," "[burn]," "mad[den]," "[make] the

sun / Hotter." As mentioned above, "Damon the Mower" is structured in an arc, beginning with the bright sun, to images of moonlight in stanza 8, to the cold embrace of Death in stanza 11. Those images of light and heat have been dissipated in pride, self-love and autoeroticism. The only light one finds in "The Mower to the Glowworms" is miniature, without heat, and false. Thematically, this image expresses the desperation underlying some of the erotic poetry of the seventeenth century. This is not the Platonic ideal of love, but love as sex as an itch. After the scratch, the lover is left stumbling in the dark: "For she my mind hath so displaced / That I shall never find my home" (15-16).

Theologically, the poem reinforces the idea that pride and self-love lead to the fall and to abandonment of love and revelation. Marvell's language is very close to the King James Version of Job's lament as he sits on a pile of ashes:

My days are past, my purposes are broken off, even
the thoughts of my heart. They change the night
into day: the light is short because of darkness.
If I wait, the grave is mine house: I have made my
bed in the darkness. I have said to corruption,
Thou art my father: to the worm, Thou art my
mother, and my sister. (Job 17:11-14)

In "The Mower's Song," the Mower laments that Juliana does to "my thoughts and me" what he does to the grass; in Job

"the thoughts of my heart" "are broken off." In "The Mower to the Glowworms," the Mower wanders in darkness, is without a home, and addresses glowworms in a courteous and even reverential manner. Similarly, Job makes his "bed in the darkness" and has made the "worm"¹ his family. The ashes on which the Mower sits, though, are those of his own making; his burning passion for Juliana has turned into self-love and the ashes of autoeroticism.

The passage in Job identifies the human as a worm which is similar to Damon's linguistic comradeship with the glowworm. Later, Bildad the Shuhite implies in a rhetorical question that man, since he is a worm, can not be justified before Yahweh: "How much less man, that is a worm? and the son of man, which is a worm? (Job 25:6). The Hebrew word in Strong's Concordance has the implication of a bright red worm:

towla', to-law'; and (fem.) towle'ah, to-lay-aw'; or towla'ath, to-lah'-ath; or tola'ath, to-lah'-ath; from H3216; a maggot (as voracious); specifically. . .the crimson-grub, but used only (in this connection) of the color from it, and cloths dyed therewith:--crimson, scarlet, worm.

In the New Testament, the worm is associated with fire and punishment in Hell, "Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched" (Mark 9:46). The Greek word is

¹ Job uses the Hebrew "worm" which is defined by Strong's Concordance as "rimmah, rim-maw'; from H7426 in the sense of breeding. . . ; a maggot (as rapidly bred), lit. or fig.:--worm."

"skolex, sko'-lakes; of uncertain derivation; a grub, maggot or earth-worm:--worm" (Strong's Concordance). Biblically, the worm is just about as low as one can get; for the Mower, worms are his close acquaintances.

All the first lines of the four stanzas of "The Mower to the Glowworms" start with the letter "Y": stanzas 1, 2, and 3 with the formal "Ye" and stanza 4 with "Your." The OED defines "Ye" as, "The pronoun used (as the plural of Thou) in addressing a number of persons (or, rhetorically, of things), in the nominative (or vocative)." The "Your" is second person, singular or plural, possessive, but can also be a form of respect as in "your highness" (OED). The formality of the address may have political implications, for Puritans thought that plain speaking of "yea and nay" should exemplify their language and that forms of address should be "thee" and "thou" (Miller I, 359-361). Therefore, the language with which the Mower addresses the glowworms can be indicative of his respect for one of nature's creatures or comparable to the language of "The Mower against Gardens" which has the rhetoric of the radical Reformation of Winstanley. On the whole, the affectionate language that is directly addressed to nature and its creatures is nearer the language of "The Mower against Gardens" than what is found in "The Mower's Song." Further, the mower directly addresses meadows in "The Mower's Song" with the informal "you" (13) first and the formal "ye" (25)

second. This is the reverse of "The Mower to the Glowworms," where the speaker goes from the more formal "ye" to the probably less formal "you."

The name "Damon" is used only in "Damon the Mower" and is used both by the poet/aesthete (1) and Damon the "speaker" (41). The second naming by the poet/aesthete is "the Mower," not the personal name (80). In "The Mower against Gardens," the speaker does not use the first person singular but only the third person singular nominative and possessive cases "man," "he," "his," and the first person plural objective case "us"--"The gods themselves with us do dwell" (40). Fauns and fairies and the gods have pronoun replacements of "their" (36-37) and "themselves" (40). "Damon the Mower" uses the words "I" sixteen times and the words "me," "my," "myself," and "mine" seventeen times; this, of course, is expected in a lover's complaint but also in a poem about self-absorption and narcissism. "The Mower to the Glowworms" uses the words "I" and "my" three times in the last two lines (15-16). "The Mower's Song" uses the word "I" nine times and the words "my" and "me" thirteen times. "The Mower against Gardens" does not have a single pronoun that refers to the female gender. "Juliana" is used only three times, and the possessive pronoun "her" is used twice in "Damon the Mower." In the same poem, stanza 5 directly addresses Juliana with the respectful "thou" (33, 39) and "thee" (35, 37), with "fair shepherdess" in

apposition to the first "thou." The only other use of the word "thou" is when Damon identifies with Death: "For Death thou art a Mower too" ("Damon the Mower," 88). "Juliana" is used once, and the pronoun "her" is used once in "The Mower to the Glowworms." In "The Mower's Song," "Juliana" and the pronoun "she" are used five times each, all of these in the refrain.

The poem first appears as a type of poem similar to Spenser's "Virgil's Gnat," where the miniature is praised grandiosely. This was characteristic of the era. As Norford mentions, there was "the curious seventeenth-century preference for the small--for fleas, bees, ants and spiders" rather than elephants or behemoths (245). Of course, it was a commonplace to find the face of God in his handiwork, nature:

For our sight of God here, our theater, the place where we sit and see him, is the whole world, the whole house and frame of nature, and our medium, our glass, is the book of creatures, and our light, by which we see him, is the light of natural reason. (Donne "Sermon XXIII, Folio Of 1640"; Witherspoon and Warnke 78).

Here in "The Mower to the Glowworms," "the light of natural reason" has been "displaced" by Juliana, so claims the Mower. To the reader of "Damon the Mower," he is the instigator of having his mind "displaced" because of his passion, not reason.

"The Mower to the Glowworms" is the shortest of the four poems and appears to carry much less thematic weight than the other three. That is, on the surface, to use Leishman's word from another Marvellian poem, it is "charming" (35). Citing this first stanza, A. J. Smith describes the conceits as "comic yet luminous" ("Wit" 68). It is below that surface "charm" of a rustic addressing a glowworm that one glimpses the alienation of the lover who "falls" in love with an image in his mind.

In stanza 1, the Mower respectfully names the glowworms "living lamps" (1). Marvell uses the words "lamp" or "lamps" three other times in his work. First it is used to describe the moon as a "wakeful Lamp" ("Two Songs at the Marriage of Lord Fauconberg and the Lady Mary Cromwell" 23). Second, the word describes oranges, "Like golden lamps in a green night" ("Bermudas" 18). Last, it is an allusion to the biblical parable of the wise virgins but here in the nun's speech, in a context of temptation: "And our chaste lamps we hourly trim, / Lest the great Bridegroom find them dim" ("Upon Appleton House," 107-108). Biblically, one is reminded of Jesus of Nazareth's Sermon on the Mount:

Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven. (Mat 5:14-16)

Clearly, the imagery of light and darkness and the battle between the two are very significant in Christian mythology. In fact, the Gospel of John can be seen as the battle of light and dark:

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.

.

He [John] was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light. That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. (John 1:1-5, 8-9)

The obvious irony is that the Mower is in darkness and the only light he has is from "living lamps" of the glow-worms, not the "living light" of the elect of Christianity or the "Living Light" of the Incarnation.

The Mower is aware of what he does not have--true illumination to find his home or his "displaced" mind (15-16). The glowworm's light is called "dear" by the Mower. Other than a form of address, Marvell consistently uses the words "dear" or "deare" in twenty-eight other lines to mean "costly" or "valuable," except in "The Nymph Complaining for the Death of Her Fawn" where it is used for the animal and as a play on the word "beloved" (32).

The light of the glowworm is used as a study lamp for the nightingale in its preparation for singing. Pliny in

Natural History explains that the birds sing continuously, compete, die when they lose, and instruct:

Nightingales pour out a ceaseless gush of song for fifteen days and nights on end when the buds of the leaves are swelling--a bird not in the lowest rank remarkable. In the first place there is so loud a voice and so persistent a supply of breath in such a tiny little body; then there is the consummate knowledge of music in a single bird: the sound is given out with modulations, now is drawn out into a long note with one continuous breath, now varied by managing the breath, now made staccato by checking it, or linked together by prolonging it, or carried on by holding it back; or it is suddenly lowered, and at times sinks into a mere murmur, loud, low, bass, treble, with trills, with long notes, modulated when this seems good--soprano, mezzo, baritone; and briefly all the devices in that tiny throat which human science has devised with all the elaborate mechanism of the flute. . . . And that no one may doubt its being a matter of science, the birds have several songs each, and not all the same but every bird songs of its own. They compete with one another, and there is clearly an animated rivalry between them; the loser often ends her life by dying, her breath giving out before her song. Other younger birds practise their music, and are given verses to imitate; the pupil listens with close attention and repeats the phrase, and the two keep silence by turns: we notice improvement in the one under instruction and a sort of criticism on the part of the instructress. (Book X, xliii, 81-84; Rackham, 345)

Pliny also mentions that after the two-week period of continuous singing, the "artistic trills" cease and that as the summer heat increases, the sound of the note has "no

modulations or variations" (Book X, xliii, 85; Rackham, 347).

In the Mower's estimation, the light of the glowworm shines on him as it does Pliny's nightingales. Comparable to the nightingale, the Mower has just sung his complaint in "Damon the Mower." Secondly, in the sequence of the four poems, "Damon" precedes "The Mower to the Glowworms," and the dying song of the Mower--"The Mower's Song"--follows "Glowworms." Again comparably, the Mower has one note at mid-summer, passion. That passion is erotic, despairing, or violent. While "The nightingale does sit so late, / And studying all the summer night" (2-3), so does the Mower "[wander]" (10) "so late" (2) that he now is in complete darkness. The Mower sees the nightingale "studying all the summer night, / Her matchless songs does meditate" (3-4). Just as the nightingale, the Mower is alone "studying" by the light of the glowworm, and he too may have "matchless songs" (4).

From Marvell's poem "The Match," it is clear that the word "matchless" can have several meanings. As Donno points out in a note on "The Match," the seventeenth century meanings of that word were varied: "antagonist, counterpart, equal, contest, pairing, alliance, and . . . the wick used to ignite gunpowder" (Poems 245). In "Glowworms" the nightingale has "matchless songs" which can mean that no peer or competitor can equal them, but the reference does

indicate the loneliness of the composing process, just as the Mower is alone. Certainly, it is apparent that his song of boasting and later lament did not win the contest for Juliana's affection or attention. Once the Mower has "meditate[d]," the result in the poem sequence will be "The Mower's Song," a song of darkness, one without a "pairing."

Further parallels between the nightingale and the Mower can be seen in English proverb, "To sit (sing) like a nightingale with a thorn against one's breast" (The Oxford Dictionary of English Proverbs 566). Two examples are the following: Kyd's The Spanish Tragedy, (c. 1592; line 806) which reads, "The gentle Nightingale . . . singing with a prickle at her breast," and Shakespeare's Edward III (I, 109) which reads, "Fervent desire . . . Is farre more thornie pricking than this blade; That with the nightingale, I shall be scard, As oft as I dispose my selfe to rest" (Oxford Dictionary of English Proverbs 566). In a Christian context, Thomas Adams' Fire Content (1630) suggests that "the godly" sit like the nightingale with a "thorn against her breast" (ODEP 566). Remembering the discussion above in "Damon the Mower" and the "thistles sowed" by Love in Damon's heart or flesh, one is reminded of the thorn in the flesh of Saint Paul and the erotic implications of "prickle" and "pricking."

Donno suggests that the verb "meditate," while it is mentioned by Pliny, "is perhaps intended to recall Virgil's

Musam meditari (Ecl. I, 2)" and should also be compared to Milton's line 66 of "Lycidas" which reads, "And strickly meditate the thankless Muse" (Poems 262). Thus, the Mower is guided or illuminated by the light of the glowworm as is the nightingale, and both share characteristics: they are each alone except for the glowworm; they are up late in the summer in the dark, and they are song makers who now in "the summer night" have one note.

Stanza 2 of "The Mower to the Glowworms" is again a contrast with the normal and the diminutive worlds of the glowworm and the Mower, the macrocosm and the microcosm. As in "Upon Appleton House," once the grass is cut, the world is metamorphosed:

Fairfax's tenants are mowing the hay; after which they dance, set up haycocks, turn out the cattle to graze, and finally, as the meadows are flooded, the cattle, already diminished to the size of fleas in the huge expanse, but moving like constellations, become transformed with everything else, and we enter a world where glowworms could be comets. (Bradbrook "The Masque" 215-126)

It is argued below that the bucolic context of the conceit is ironically altered by the ambiguity of the comparisons made.

The main comparison is between the "country comets" of the glowworm and the larger comets in the Earth's atmosphere. In the context of the constellations, their rising and lowering, Pliny describes how glowworms are

Nature's stars, or Pleiads on Earth that indicate times for planting and harvesting. May 10 is the date of the rising of the Pleiads (a cluster of seven stars in the Taurus constellation, one invisible--the "Lost Pleiad"--who hides for shame or grief). This is an indicator for sowing millet:

And the sign alike of the barley being ripe and for sowing these crops consists in the fields in the evening shining with glowworms (that is what the country-people call those starlike flights of insects, the Greek name for which is lampyrides) thanks to Nature's unbelievable kindness. She had already formed the remarkable group of the pleiads in the sky; yet not content with these she has made other stars on the earth, as though crying aloud: "Why gaze at the heavens, husbandman? Why, rustic, search for the stars? Already the slumber laid on you by the nights in your fatigue is shorter. Lo and behold, I scatter special stars for you among your plants, and I display them to you in the evening and as you unyoke to leave off work, and I stimulate your attention by a marvel [miraculo] so that you may not be able to pass them by: do you see how their fire-like brilliance is screened by their folded wings, and how they carry daylight with them even in the night? I have given you plants that mark the hours, and in order that you may not even have to avert your eyes from the earth to look at the sun, the heliotrope and the lupine revolve keeping time with him. Why then do you still look higher and scan the heavens themselves? Lo! you have Pleiads at your very feet." Glow-worms do not make their appearance on fixed days or last a definite period, but certain it is that they are the offspring of this particular constellation. Consequently anybody who does his summer sowing before they appear "will have himself to thank for

labour wasted." (Natural History XVIII, lxvi-lxvii, 250-253; Rackham, 347-349)

Thus, in classical tradition, the glowworm has appeared at a time for sowing and a time for cutting grass: "These Glowbards never appeare before hay is ripe upon the ground, ne yet after it is cut downe" (Pliny, I, Bk. XI, Ch. xxviii, p. 326 of the Philemon Holland translation of 1601 qtd. in Gilbertson Diss. 372-373).

But the Mower addresses the glowworms as "Ye country comets," not as stars. Comets, in the traditional Ptolemaic cosmology, had their origin in the region near the moon in the "sublunar vault," as exhalations from the earth striking a region of fire. The purpose of the fire was to protect the "supralunar vault" from the contamination of the sublunar world of sin (Kester Svendsen 199-201; Gilbertson, Diss. 375-376). Svendsen, quoting John Swan's Speculum Mundi (London, 1643), mentions that the exhalations leave earth, rise to the region of fire, are set ablaze, and that "it appears as if a starre fell down or were thrown to earth" (quoted in Svendsen 202). The falling star image as the Mower points out is harbinger of cataclysm but is also associated with the fallen Angel of Light: Lucifer.²

² But one must not conclude that the image of the comet is necessarily evil in all of Marvell's work. For example, in "An Horatian Ode upon Cromwell's Return from Ireland," Marvell ambiguously describes Cromwell with images of the falling star of prophecy:

Then burning through the air he went,

Thy pomp is brought down to the grave, and the noise of thy viols: the worm is spread under thee, and the worms cover thee. How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High. Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit.
(Isaiah 14:11-15)

Again this emphasizes the rise of pride and the fall down to the earth, comparable to what happened to Damon in "Damon the Mower." Gilbertson provides numerous parallels to Paradise Lost (Diss. 335-338). In this context, the "country comets" are worms that provide no signification for the future. They rise in the night but have no divine light

And palaces and temples rent:
And Caesar's head at last
Did through his laurels blast.
'Tis madness to resist or blame
The force of angry heaven's flame. (21-26)

Cromwell was the star which foretold the demise of Charles I. Further, Marvell in "Upon Appleton House" describes how Maria, daughter "Of Fairfax, and the starry Vere" (724) calms the evening world by her flames:

Maria such, and so doth hush
The world, and through the evening rush.
No new-born comet such a train
Draws through the sky, nor star new-slain.
For straight those giddy rockets fail,
Which from the putrid earth exhale,
But by her flames, in heaven tried,
Nature is wholly vitrified.
(681-688)

to lead the Mower "home." Although he may use words in several poems, clearly, the context of the poem determines the meaning of key words in Marvell's work. In the context of "The Mower to the Glowworms," the light of these "comets" is minimally ineffectual, maximally associated with the demonic.

So in the macrocosm, the comet is an exhalation "from the putrid earth," and in the microcosm of the Mower's world, the glowworm/comet is supposed to be his source of prophecy or revelation. The Mower knows the diminutive function of the glowworm does "portend / No war, nor prince's funeral" (5-6). However, the prophetic function of the glowworm is to "presage the grass's fall" (8). Thus, the glowworm may function as a foreshadowing of the Mower's own end in "my tomb" ("The Mower's Song" 28). His is not a "prince's funeral" although he will claim meadows for his "heraldry" ("The Mower's Song" 27; see below). If the glowworms' prophecy is his fall or death, then he has reason to be courteous; they will be his dinner guests.

Erotically, as mentioned above, there are "glittering worms" which are diminutive images of the "snake, that kept within, / Now glitters it its second skin" ("Damon the Mower," 15-16). Elsewhere, Marvell uses the worm image as a substitute penis in "To His Coy Mistress"; after death,

Thy beauty shall no more be found;
Nor, in thy marble vault, shall sound

My echoing song: then worms shall try
 That long-preserved virginity:
 (25-28)

Further, the Mower notes that the glowworms "presage the grass's fall" which can be seen as an image of detumescence in the biblical equation of grass=flesh. Certainly, the image of the falling comet is the opposite of the rising.

Stanza 1 of "The Mower to the Glowworms" has the Mower respectfully address the glowworms as the source of illumination for the nightingale in its night-long study, and stanza 2 has the Mower compare the glowworms' prophetic function to comets, with the former foretelling of the "grass's fall."

Stanza 3 has the Mower respectfully describing the function of the glowworms for the "wandering mowers" who "have lost their aim" (10-11). In line 9, the Mower who in line 1 refers to the glowworm's "dear light," here refers to its "officious flame."

The word "officious" means "eager to serve or please: attentive, obliging, kind," also "dutiful," and "efficacious." But the word can have negative connotations:

Unduly forward in proffering services or taking
 business upon oneself: doing, or prone to do, more
 than is asked or required: interfering with what
 is not one's concern: pragmatical, meddlesome.
 (OED)

Again, this is a point of comparison between the glowworm and the Mower. Damon the Mower was "unduly forward" in his

pursuit of the shepherdess Juliana in "Damon the Mower." It is the "flame" of passion that obsesses the Mower.

Priapically, the miniature "worm that glows" is "[a]flame" with "unduly forward" passion. The "officious flame" of glowworms is supposedly a corrective for "wandering mowers" who "in the night have lost their aim" (12-11).

The word "wandering" at one level simply means seasonal worker, but it can have both positive and negative connotations. In "The Garden," the narrator desires the contemplative luxury of leisure solitary time "To wander solitary there [the prelapsarian Garden of Eden]" (62). After the Fall, Adam and Eve became "wanderers" outside the walled Eden. Milton's last two lines of Paradise Lost are that "They hand in hand with wand'ring steps and slow, / Through Eden took thir solitary way" (Bk. XII. 648-649). As a matter of fact, after Cain (the tiller of the soil) killed his brother Abel (the shepherd), he was sent by Yahweh into the Land of Nod [Hebrew, "to wander"]. Strong's Concordance defines "Nod" as: "nowd, node. . . exile:--wandering." The same Hebrew word is used in Job 12: 24-25:

He taketh away the heart of the chief of the people of the earth, and causeth them to wander in a wilderness where there is no way. They grope in the dark without light, and he maketh them to stagger like a drunken man.

Since this is Damon the Mower, he may well be "stagger[ing]" because of an injured ankle, and certainly, he is one of the

"wandering" mowers he mentions who "grope in the dark without light." The other lights are "foolish fires" (12) which do not sound all that promising.

Theologically, physically, and phallically, the Mower is "fallen" and wanders in the darkness without true light but has the "dear light" and "flame" of the glowworm and the even more delusionary light of "foolish fires" (12). But the reference to the guidance of glowworms is not personal. It is for other "wandering mowers," (10) not for the one who sings and has encountered Juliana; the narrator shifts to the personal in stanza 4.

Again the imagery is very similar to another child of the wilderness, John the Baptist who was sent by God "To give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace" (Luke 1:79). In "The Mower to the Glowworms," that revelation or light is not present; only the "worm that glows" and "foolish fires" illuminate "the night" (11). The other "wandering mowers" "have lost their aim, / And after foolish fires do stray" (11-12). It should also be noted that in this "night" the traditional lights of the night--the moon and stars--are not mentioned. The "foolish fires" are the ignis fatuus, and Milton in Paradise Lost associates the phenomena with the demonic:

Hope elevates, and joy

Bright'ns his [Satan's, the Serpent's] Crest, as
 when a wandring Fire
 Compact of unctuous vapor, which the Night
 Condences and the cold environs round,
 Kindl'd through agitation to a Flame,
 Which oft, they say, some evil Spirit attends,
 Hovering and blazing with delusive Light,
 Misleads th' amaz'd Night-wanderer from his way
 To Boggs and Mires, oft through Pond or Poole
 There swallow'd up and lost, from succour farr.
 (IX, 633-641; see Shawcross "Satan")

With such sinister and demonic implication, it almost appears as if Damon is in his own private hell. He is in total darkness with a worm that burns and glitters, and homeless in an alien world where signification has been broken.³

The seventeenth century was a time of mysticism and spirit beings. It is important to remember that the scientific culture that we live in is not the seventeenth century's:

The idea of regular law guiding the universe was unfamiliar to the contemporaries of Francis Bacon. The fields around town and hamlet were filled, as soon as the day-labourers had left them, by goblins and will-o'-the-wisps; and the woods, as soon as the forester had closed the door of his hut, became the haunt of fairies; the ghosts could be heard gibbering all night under the yew tree of the churchyard; the witch, a well-known figure in the village, was in the pay of lovers whose

³ The point is not to find an echo or source hunt, but to illuminate common beliefs at mid-seventeenth century (Svendsen, 108-112). It is important not to simply use an historical period to "help" us understand our own; the historical distinctiveness is a delight.

mistresses were hard to win, and of gentlemen-farmers whose cattle had sickened. (Trevelyan 50)

To attempt to enter that world intellectually is to enter the humanist rational tradition. It is hoped that close attention to word meaning and poetic structure provide entry.

The Mower compliments the glowworms who apparently correct the direction of "wandering mowers" after they have walked toward the "foolish fires" thinking that the light must come from their home fires. Svendsen points out that in the seventeenth century ignis fatuus was "nearly always a[n] [emblem] of self-deception" (108), and clearly the Mower has shown himself to be self-deceived "Damon the Mower." Earlier, in stanza 2, the glowworms themselves were compared to an exhalation from the Earth, the comet. Glowworms or "foolish fires," they both are self-deceiving and associated with the demonic.

Erotically, "foolish fires" can be associated with autoeroticism, which reverberates from "Damon the Mower," who cuts himself "down": "By his own scythe, the Mower mown" (80). "Foolish fires" also foreshadow the first line of stanza 4. There light is "waste[d]." Even these "false" lights have no illumination to the Mower, who has stood in the brilliance of Juliana, or in the brilliance of his passionate conception. Because of his encounter with her

and her departure, the Mower stands blinded, mindless, and homeless "in the night" (11).

Stanza 4 shifts from the formal "Ye" to the more informal "Your" and "you": "Your courteous lights in vain you waste" (13). If the Mower addresses the glowworms, he simply states that they perform their office or duty to help guide the laborer to no avail. However, if the Mower also addresses himself, it is a self-reproach for his onanism. He might say to himself, "The light by which you 'court' Juliana, 'in vain[vein/penis] you waste.'" The pronoun shift can, thus, ambiguously allow a double reading of address to glowworms and address to self.

The verbs in the last four lines are interesting because of the shifts. They are the present tense, "waste"; then, passive voice, "is come"; next, past participle, "hath . . . displaced"; and future tense, "shall [never] find." In the present, the glowworms and the Mower "waste" "lights." Then, Juliana appears, but in the poem in the passive voice--a creation of the Mower in his mind. His creation of the love Object then "hath so displaced" the rest of his mind. His conception of love has led him to passion, to rejection, to self-love, and finally to darkness and despair. The result will be his continually wandering and homelessness, "That I shall never find my home" (16).

The last line of the poem provides a disclosure of "self"; "Perhaps the most Marvellian way to put it is to

point to the Janus-like nature of the word that expresses the problem that attracts Marvell--'identity'" (Friedman, "Sight" 321). The outbreak of the first person singular "I" and "my" in the last line physically separates the self-directed dialog of line 13. Between lines 13 and 16 lie Juliana and her effect upon the Mower, her passive arrival and a "mind . . . displaced." Juliana's passive arrival to the Mower leads to a disassociated mind and foreshadows the refrain of the fourth Mower poem: "When Juliana came, and she / What I do to the grass, does to my thoughts and me" (5-6).

Chapter Five

"The Mower's Song": The Sweep of Love and Time's Scythe, or
The "Hamstringed" Amphibian Is Harvested

Stanza 1 of "The Mower's Song" begins with the Mower describing what he thinks his thoughts were like prior to his encounter with Juliana. And the immediate question one might ask is "How reliable is the narrator?" Certainly, in a postlapsarian world, the question remains as to how far reason has fallen and if each individual does recapitulate the fall of Adam and Eve? The Mower is convinced that in the past his mind was "once the true survey / Of all these meadows fresh and gay." Donno uses "delineation" as a synonym for "survey" (Poems 262). In consideration of the importance of perception in Marvell's poetry (see Friedman, "Sight" 311 ff.), it is instructive to regard carefully the use of language pertaining to vision, perception, or conception. What should be kept in mind is what Friedman says in the context of "Eyes and Tears":

It would be enough, in a conventional poem about the fallibility of the senses and the wisdom of humility, to note that the faculty of sight is easily deceived and often mistaken. But for Marvell the object seen is as vain as is the effort to see it truly; thus the eye is not only deluded by fallen nature but deludes the self because of its intrinsic nature. ("Sight" 322-323)

Given the inability to see well through tears, how does one see in this "vale of tears"? The light of natural reason is the key, as Donne says. The example which Marvell places in his meadows is Damon whose "natural reason" told him he was in love with Juliana. He ends up with no light except for worms which glow. Here, in "The Mower's Song," he is aware that he has lost "the true survey" that was in his mind. Epistemology and time are introduced in the first line. It is informative to consider what Damon has lost.

Marvell uses the word "survey" or "survey'd" four other times, in line 81 of "Upon Appleton House" and in lines 117, 729, and 525 of "Last Instructions." In "Upon Appleton House," the narrator has just described how Nature has been free to "sweetly waste" gardens, woods, meadows and floods and where Art would "more neatly have defaced" these (77-78). The narrator then invites the reader to walk around and talk of the history of the Appleton House, "While with slow eyes we these [gardens, woods, meadows, and floods] survey." In this instance the word appears to suggest all three, "to see" or "to contemplate" and "to traverse" as a land surveyor might. The OED mentions the act of viewing, examining, or inspecting in detail, especially for some specific purpose, but also in the figurative sense of "A comprehensive mental view, or (usually) literary examination discussion, or description, of something," citing Ascham, Hakluyt and other contemporaries (OED). The word also has

the sense of viewing from a commanding position or testing for value.

In the lines from the "Last Instructions" (117), "survey" is used by the narrator to urge the painter to consider or look carefully at how the Parliament plays the game of State, but the other two uses of the word are in reference to the symbolic rape by Michael de Ruyter, the Dutch captain who captured the ship Royal Charles in an attack along the Thames. While de Ruyter "surveys" his captive Charles' strengths, his "seamen search her all within, without" (729-731), with the spelling of "seamen" as an "impregnating fluid of male animals" used as early as 1398 and 1495 (OED). Certainly, in some twentieth century feminist criticism, the male "survey" or view or scrutiny has a connotation of invasion or dominance. So the word "survey" can have sinister, aggressive connotations also.

The word "survey" can also mean a map or description, and this is particularly important in the context of "Upon Appleton House" where it is referred to as "heaven's centre, Nature's lap, / And paradise's only map" (767-768). Previously, in the same stanza, Appleton House and its grounds are compared to the world, "a rude heap together hurled," but the Fairfax house and grounds are a "lesser world [which] contains the same, / But in more decent order tame," echoing the idea of the correspondence between Appleton

House and the world, and a reflection or map of heaven, a survey.

For the Mower in "The Mower to the Glowworms," Juliana has displaced his mind, and he can "never" find his home. Here in "The Mower's Song," the encounter with Juliana has meant the "map of nature," "the true survey," has been lost. The source is not in Juliana, but in Damon's own self-love--self and pride alienate the Mower from nature.

The Mower claims that his "mind was once the true survey" of currently present meadows that are "fresh and gay." In other words, his memory has a picture, comparable to the pictures of Clora in "The Gallery," of past time when his mind was a map or delineation of the meadows. Then the Mower abstracts an essence from the experience and the memory, "greenness of the grass" (3). The Mower explains that the greenness of the grass and "its hopes," of which the greenness is representative, were reflected in the mirror of his mind, "as in a glass." If "its hopes" are read ambiguously as also referring to the Mower's mind, then the mind as a mirror and the grass as a mirror become a continuous reflective loop, a Mobius strip. By seeing the greenness of the grass with intentions for the future--"its hopes"--the Mower gives grass a desire, a will, a personality. This he also identifies with his mental "survey" or memory. When he sees those same "hopes" reflected "as in a glass" in the former greenness of his mind, he assumes that

their "thoughts" are identical, currently and for the future.

But cyclic ["sicklic"] time and human linear time are not identical. This simile provided by the Mower states that the grass, and in particular its greenness, is indicative of hopes that come with renewal of spring and the beginning of the life cycle of the earth. The greenness of the grass was seen by the Mower as reflecting his mind's hopes which were also green; that is, alive, renewed, and "gay." If, on the other hand, "its hopes" refers to the hopes of the grass, then the Mower sees the blades and their greenness as mirrors that reflect again the green thoughts of the Mower in spring time. In "Damon the Mower," the Mower sees his own reflection in his "scythe," if he "looked right" (58). This circularity of vision and perception and identification with nature will be broken by the Mower's encounter with Juliana, an encounter which was only visual since she is oblivious to his gifts. It is an encounter with his own passion that excludes all else, except his obsession for sensual self-gratification. It is an encounter with time and in time that divides his life chronologically and psychologically.

In stanza 1, lines one through five detail the past, including "Juliana came." The two-line refrain is the only one used by Marvell. It is an Alexandrine of only monosyllables (Donno, Poems 262) which changes only with the

verbs "came" (5, 11, 17) and "comes" (23, 29). The first three stanzas are in the past tense and the final two in present tense. Thus, within the refrain in the first three stanzas, time shifts from the past to the present, Juliana "came," but the Mower cuts the grass--"What I do to the grass"--while continuously Juliana "does to my thoughts and me."

In other words, there is a dialectic of the past and the present, with memory and the mind involved as the amphibian of time. The Mower's memory reminds him of an earlier time of identification with and reflection of Nature's spring time. But that relationship of harmony, of identification and green hopes, is shattered by the Mower's encounter with Juliana and the shattering of time for nature: "'Tis not, what once it was, the world, / But a rude heap together hurled" ("Upon Appleton" 761-2). For Nature and the meadows which the Mower now condemns, time is circular; the seasons return continuously, spring, summer, fall, and winter. Not so with the natural man, for his is a linear time line with mocking signs of circularity, from crawling to walking to creeping, summed up in the Sphinx's riddle of Aeschylus' Oedipus the King--what has four legs, two legs, and then three. Patrides sees Marvell's view of history as "veritably Aeschylean" in its linking crime and crime, and blood shed with blood shed ("'Til prepared" 41). Damon "mows" himself, erotically and medically, and the

blood shed will lead to his "revenge" (20) in a "common ruin" (22) for "all" (21). When a microcosmic human dies, a universe, an "all," dies. But the conflicts of times, circular and linear, provide tension within each stanza.

Further tension is created by memory of the distant past, experience in the more recent past, the present, and the future. As mentioned above, Thomas Browne provides the analogy of the human as "that great and true Amphibian, whose nature is disposed to live . . . in divided and distinguished worlds" of flesh and spirit (qtd. in Witherspoon and Warnke 333). Part of the human amphibian's swim is in the stream of psychological time. That is a spiritual medium where the past actions of the flesh are stored and considered by the rational spirit in the present. That swim is dangerous, for the memory distorts, and fleshly satiety can dull the senses which reflect on the past. The future clearly is a spiritual realm that is changed by the action of the flesh today. Today is the arena of action where both parts of the amphibian must attempt to live in all three worlds of time and seek the "best" future, for the past is closed. For the Christian believer, time is not circular but has a direction. The Incarnation of the Eternal in the time-line means that Christ's actions on Earth determine the future, for He fulfilled the potential of the First Adam at his creation. Linear time is directed toward the end of time and the Second Coming of Christ. In

one sense, when time ends in the New Heaven and the New Earth, Greek circular time will be united with linear time in a spiritual recapitulation and restoration of The Garden square.

As noted earlier, time's arrow and Cupid's arrow have struck Damon at the center of his being (in the Vitruvian sense). As explained above, both wounds are self-inflicted. Time's arrow is his own scythe, and Cupid's "thistles" are the products of his fertile and obsessive imagination. In "The Mower's Song," Damon swims in the spirit world of the past memory of "a true survey" of meadows and greenness whose existence is destroyed by his own pride and sexual obsession. As he swims in the present arena of action, he thinks of the past, sings of it and to the meadows, while in a continuous cycle of thoughts that are "cut" by Juliana. His future is seen as the spirit world to come, and he sees a princely death. All of this is going on while he does his seasonal job of cutting grass, singing as he wields his scythe.

As Margoliouth notes, "the rhythm [of the refrain] suggests the long regular sweep of the scythe" (225). To the long sweep of the Alexandrine of the final couplet as he sings, the Mower is working, cutting while remembering. Juliana is a mower, too. This self-absorption, thus, has led the Mower to identify himself with: "fauns and fairies" outside the garden's wall in "The Mower against Gardens";

Death in "Damon the Mower"; "wandering mowers" lost in mindless and lightless night; the "meadows" and the "greenness of the grass" in "The Mower's Song"; and, finally, Juliana's destructive effect on him as he mows and sings "The Mower's Song." As mentioned, he carries the arrow of time in his memory but Love's "thistles" rather than Cupid's dart or arrow in his heart.

Regardless, the Mower continues to work, function and sing; his experience is turned into art and an enhancement to work. The movement then is from the idyllic distant past of hope in the world and hope mirrored in the Mower to the entry of Juliana into the Mower's life "When Juliana came." That is, the Mower compares the more recent past to the present of cutting the meadows, while Juliana in the continuous present tense cuts the Mower's "thoughts and me" (6, 12, 18, 24, 36).

Immediately, one realizes that the Mower is amphibiously singing of two worlds, if not more. First of all, he sings of his experience that is to reshape it through memory and through aesthetics. In the context of Marvell's "The Garden," Friedenreich ties together conceptualizing and creating poetry:

In creating other worlds, the mind imitates God, the first Creator, the first poet. But in creating these other worlds, and certainly the mind's act of creation includes the "other world" of the poem itself, the mind figuratively destroys the actual,

material world by substituting for it one of its own manufacture, which is, of course, "The Garden" itself. Whatever is annihilated and reduced to "a green Thought in a green Shade" is presented by the poem itself. So the mind is at once a source of creation and destruction, it murders and creates, it gives form to chaos and reduces all to chaos if it wishes. Marvell provides simultaneously the machinations of the artistic impulse-creation and annihilation. ("The Mower" 174)

So the image of the Mower is thinking, singing, and mowing has at least three linked pairs of destruction and creation, moving in the syncopation of a timed "Song."

Certainly, this aesthetic rendering of past experience should be compared to "Damon the Mower," for there the love complaint is recorded by a poet/aesthete, clearly distinguished by time and aesthetic indicators. It would not be unreasonable to note the differences in perspectives of the poet/aesthete and Damon the Mower and the Mower of the "Mower's Song." The continuities are function (mowing), symbols (scythe, meadows, grass, flowers, sun, night, day, seasons), characters (Juliana, meadows, grass, flowers, Earth), themes (humans' relation to nature, sexual conduct, love, passion, life and death cycle, artistic creation and destruction, metamorphosis, and shifting perspectives). But there are a great number of differences, including perspective (aesthete looking at and relating his story of the "clownish" Damon and the Mower with his tragic first person account). Thus, in both there is distance provided by time and aesthetics.

But there are several other distances involved if one assumes this is the same Mower in both poems, as is done in this study. In "Damon the Mower," the Mower relates that from a distance he has placed gifts for Juliana, but she has not "sought" to find out what the gifts are or who sent them. In "The Mower's Song," the distance from Juliana will close, for she is within some kind of "sight"--"Juliana comes" (23, 29). The Mower also describes a distance between "my thoughts and me." Some have taken this to be the end of a disintegration of the Mower (see Toliver).

The Alexandrine of the refrain has some interesting historical notes. Preminger records that the Alexandrine has been used especially in dramatic and narrative forms and was an integral part of the French Renaissance of Ronsard and du Bellay of the sixteenth century (11). Du Bellay, particularly, emphasized the necessity of intimate knowledge of the classics and contemporary literature. With this visceral knowledge, the writer does not consciously imitate them, but their thoughts so permeate him that he will naturally convey them in his French writing for his cultivated countrymen (Preminger 621-622). The Alexandrine was in vogue in seventeenth century Germany and Holland (Priminger 11).

Marvell might have used the Alexandrine for several reasons, not the least of which is Margoliouth's suggestion of the sweep of the scythe noted above. "The Mower's Song"

is more dramatic than the almost "clownish" "Damon the Mower," and it is narrative. But at another level, Marvell is taking all of the pastoral genre and making it English; in effect, he has taken the sixteenth-century French Renaissance Pleiade poets' challenge of assimilating the classics and using them in the vernacular of his England. The pastoral genre of Virgil and Horace was turned into a form for both Christian and pagan symbolism. That "bifurcation" fit Marvell's Christian vision and is seen in Edmund Spenser's "Shepherd's Calendar" (Cullen 182). But the assimilation for Marvell transformed the shepherd, a keeper of flocks with the New Testament's connotations of pastor, into the mower, a figure of "natural" sexual passion, a figure of time and transience, and a figure of destruction and renewal.

It might be also that the medial caesura at the comma of the Alexandrine refrain provides "a kind of expressive counterpoint or opposition as well as enforcing the rhetorical sense . . . [or] a metrical fulcrum for the rhetorical antitheses" (Paul Fussell 23). The medial caesura is consistent with the Renaissance French Pleiade work of Pierre de Ronsard (1524-85) whose Odes and Hymnes made him the "most celebrated poet in Europe" at the latter part of the sixteenth century and the first part of the seventeenth (Preminger 292-293). As noted above, Marvell spent part of the Civil War on the Continent studying

European languages. One critic argues that his style is not metaphysical but Baroque (Warnke, Versions 52-65). T. S. Eliot acknowledges an influence from the continent: "Marvell's best verse is the product of European, that is to say Latin, culture" (qtd. in Donno, Critical 363). On the other hand, Odette De Mourgues warns against finding "direct literary influences" between the Continent and England since it "is bound to be a short-sighted process" (97). But the colloquial language of the refrain is consistent with poetic practice in Europe in the first half of the seventeenth century (Preminger 293).

There are possibilities the caesura might be the apogee of the scythe's arc, the cut of the blade on the grass, the separation of life and death, certainly for grass. And let us not forget that grass and human flesh are symbolically identified in the biblical text. It is a point of separation of human line, the ending of the time line; time's arrow hits the mark where the Mower's scythe strikes. In "Damon the Mower," the scythe does strike his ankle which may be a foreshadowing of suicide (Stocker 238-239). This separates earthly time of the linear human existence and the circularity of natural time; eternity, existence without time, is initiated by the stroke of the caesura/scythe.

Further, the caesura provides a contrast, an antithesis of the external and the internal. The Mower continues to cut grass--providing for the future--while comparing

Juliana's effect upon him to harvesting him, cutting his thoughts (preventing them from further growth), and cutting him physically down, "does to my thoughts and me." As Fussell points out, the caesura can be used in "two quite antithetical ways:

(1) as a device for emphasizing the formality of the poetic construction and for insisting on its distance from colloquial utterance; and (2) as a device for investing fairly strict meters with something of the informal movement--the unpredictable pauses and hesitations--of ordinary speech. (Poetic Meter 25)

In "The Mower's Song" it plays both roles; it emphasizes that it is a song, and at the same time it has the quality of colloquial speech. In this limited sense, the Mower has gained a type of harmony, for song, work, and themes have an interdependency. For the Mower, the song and work will end in a temporary destruction. The meadows with their flowers and grass will return in the spring. The Mower's work is only temporary; as an agent in time, nothing is eternal. For the Mower, the destruction and his "revenge" will end his time line; his morning, noon, and night and his four seasons come to an end in his grass-covered "tomb" (28).

The second stanza begins with a pronoun reference "these" whose antecedent is "meadows" of stanza one. The time sequence, however, has some ambiguity. The speaker begins an indictment of meadows through which he works with the contrasting words "But these." The meadows are in

contrast to his mind that has been changed by his encounter with Juliana; the map or survey of the meadows no longer is in his mind. The description of the meadows is interrupted by an adverbial clause, "while I with sorrow pine." The Mower's description of the thriving of the meadows in the past is interrupted with a dependent clause that is in the continuous present tense. Again the time frame is broken by the past impinging on the present.

This indictment of meadows in stanza two in some ways echoes "The Mower against Gardens." Marvell uses the word "luxuriant" only here in line 8 and the word "luxurious" only once in line 1 of "The Mower against Gardens." Marvell uses the word "luxury" to describe vice three other times, lines 14 and 129 in "Last Instructions" and line 234 in "Loyal Scot." The Latin adjectival form luxuriosus is a synonym of "voluptuous" or "extravagant." The OED mentions that in the seventeenth century the word "luxuriant" could mean simply "producing abundantly, prolific" but also could apply to plants as "growing profusely, exuberant, rank." When the word "luxuriant" is applied to "flesh," it is seen as "Growing to excess." And it should be remembered, as the OED points out, that in Latin and Romance languages the word "luxury" "connotes vicious indulgence," and in English it connotes "lasciviousness, lust" (OED).

Further, the word "fine" has several applicable meanings. The most obvious meaning at first sight would be

"Of handsome size or growth" (OED). Marvell also uses the word "fine" to connote "finished, consummate in quality" when he uses it in "Upon Appleton House" line 659 to describe how "loose Nature" arranged itself at the coming of Maria, "And everything so whist and fine." Another instance from "Upon Appleton House" is the Abbess, who in a role comparable to that of Satan in Paradise Lost, attempts to persuade Isabel Thwaites, heiress to Nun Appleton, not to marry William Fairfax but enjoy "Nature's finest parts" behind the walls of the nunnery. In this context, the word connotes "highly ornate, showy." In "Tom May's Death," the word "fine" appears to be used in the sense of "finished" (45). Marvell's most famous use of the word "fine" appears as the closing couplet of the second stanza of "To His Coy Mistress," "The grave's a fine and private place, / But none, I think, do there embrace" (31-32). Certainly, the grave is an "end" and an "End of life, decease, death" and a "limit of anything; a boundary" but also "extremely thin or slender" (OED). But the OED points out the word "fine" can be reproachful as in "egregious" and "often used ironically." The circle of the Mower poems is closing with the language of the Mower castigating "meadows" with almost the same words with which he denounced the gardener in "The Mower against Gardens." Of course, a circle may close, but it does not end--the poem/song continues. In contrast, Vitruvius' squared portion of the human ends in the grave

when linear time's arrow strikes the target from which it was sent, Earth.

Rhetorically, stanza two has some oddities. Immediately, there is ambiguity of pronoun reference. First, the Mower objectifies the meadows in the present with the word "these," as he is in the midst of them as he is cutting. In line nine, the Mower shifts to the second person "you." This appears to be a general "you" or anyone could not see a single blade of grass without its being bracketed by flowers. The words "you spied" are in the past tense, again a contrast to the Mower's continuous, in the present, "pine." If the "meadows" are given separate existence with the direct address of "you," then the meadows regarded themselves in the past with flowers surrounding each blade of grass while the Mower suffered because of rejection by Juliana. Or the "you" could be an audience of one, like the aesthete in "Damon the Mower." Or the "you" could be a direct address of the Mower to the past self from whom in the present he is disassociated. It would be a type of resurrecting in memory of the "survey" of the meadows as they were before Juliana. As noted above, an objectified meadow in the mind is a creation and a destruction. That is, in the act of creating the mental picture, the Mower has destroyed what the meadows were. More specifically, he is the source of the alienation through his own uncontrolled passion and self-indulgence. Regardless,

of who the "you" may be, the picture or "survey" must be a distortion, an idealized perfection of perfect meadows with perfectly framed blades of grass.

Again, the conception of the Mower, as when he "looked right" in his scythe/mirror, determines what he sees or has seen in the mirror of grass. This current reflection happens after the Mower's encounter with Juliana which he says in the first stanza broke his identification with the meadows. If the "glass" that reflected the hopes of the grass is symbolically shattered after the Mower's encounter with Juliana, then there clearly is distortion in the reflection of that more recent past.

The hyperbole of his pain appears to have led him to exaggerate the showy and ornate, over-abundance of the meadows. His logic of self-love and rejection has led him to accuse that with which he identified in stanza one. There the "meadows fresh and gay" were mirrored in his mind, and the "hopes" of "greenness of the grass" were his, also. His inability to attract Juliana has led to a conception of the "luxuriant" meadows with the connotation of lust.

For the reader, the change is not in the circular time but in the Mower who now "perceives" what the meadows are like based on his altered emotional state. Marvell seems again to be turning the art as mirror of nature around. The mirror, which is memory, "paints" the picture of former meadows with exaggeration and with lasciviousness. If this

is the same Mower as the one in "The Mower against Gardens," he endows not only the gardens with sexual license but also the meadows and fields that are there described as having "A wild and fragrant innocence" (34). This is also consistent with "Damon the Mower" where the Mower, as a human filled with pride, insists that nature revolves around him and his work. And again the refrain returns with the downward stroke of scythe. Juliana "came" while the Mower cuts the grass and sings; at the same time, she continues to cut his "thoughts and me." The past memory of rejected love impinges on the present--emotionally, intellectually, and physically. But the poet/aesthete has let us know that Damon the Mower literally cuts himself down; through autoeroticism, he has also "cut" his own grass/flesh.

In stanza 3, the Mower unambiguously directly addresses the "Unthankful meadows" as "you." He does so with a rhetorical question; the other two instances in the Mower poems when a question is asked also appear to be rhetorical. The question on the part of the Mower assumes that the dialog with the "meadows" is not completely severed. The Mower is in the process of mowing and so is in the presence of the "Unthankful meadows" (13), this being the only use of the adjective "Unthankful" in Marvell's poetry. The Mower asks the meadows how they can continue to celebrate "your gaudy May-games" (15) and "forgo" a "fellowship so true" (14) with him. The word "forgo" in one sense means to forsake or

to abandon, but in another sense it means "a messenger sent before, forerunner, a harbinger" or one who leads the way "leader; hence, an example, pattern" (OED). The word "forgo" is used only one other time in Marvell's work, in "A Dialogue Between the Soul and Body." There the Body describes the "maladies" of emotions which the Soul "teach[es]": "cramp of hope," "palsy shakes of fear," "pestilence of love," "hatred's . . . ulcer," "Joy's . . . madness," "sorrow's . . . madness," all "Which knowledge forces me to know, / And memory will not forgo" (31-40). Comparably, Damon the Mower complains of Love sowing "thistles" in "Damon the Mower" (66), a "malady" of the fields.

Comparably, the Mower of "The Mower's Song" has "knowledge" of Juliana's past coming and of a relationship, or "fellowship," with the meadows and Nature that his "memory will not forgo." But the meadows appear to the Mower not to have that memory. The Mower assumes that the meadows should be "thankful" to him for his cutting them and not leaving them to the wild where the "fauns and fairies do the meadows till, / More by their presence than their skill" ("The Mower against Gardens" 35-36). Instead, the meadows meet in "gaudy May-games," oblivious to the plight of the Mower after his encounter with Juliana: ". . . I lay trodden under feet" (16). This can be seen as a foreshadowing of the future when the Mower will have the grass to be the

"heraldry" of his "tomb" (33-34). In "Damon the Mower," the Mower "scythe[s]" himself to the ground; in "The Mower's Song," Juliana "scythe[s]" the Mower's thoughts, and consequently, he will be under the grass not on it, "trodden under feet" (16).

There are thirty lines in "The Mower's Song." Thus, the exact center of the poem is between lines fifteen and sixteen, "And in your gaudy May-games meet, / While I lay trodden under feet?" The Mower identifies with the grass that has just been cut. The word "gaudy" can connote something showy or ostentatious, but it also might reflect an anti-Roman Catholic position since it can refer to the "gaudes" that are larger beads on a rosary (OED). Further it would be consistent for a Puritan to advocate the "plain" style which condemns the ritualized spring festivals that were associated with Roman Catholicism's feast days. This is the only use of this word by Marvell. Certainly, the word has associations of paganism by its very sound of "god-y." And the word is used as an adjective to describe "May-games," a festival whose main symbol was a dance around a pole, not supine but vertical. "May-games" are the "merrymaking and sports associated with the first of May," usually condemned by the Puritan clergy, "The Holy Sabbaths of the Lord were . . . spent . . . in May-poles and May-games [from 1641]" (OED). A spring festival with sexual license is the dance of the May Pole with its pagan phallic

symbol. Despite attempts to Christianize this festival and despite the condemnation of the Puritan clerics, the Maying continued in the seventeenth century. It should be noted that in "Damon the Mower" Juliana is described by the poet/aesthete as having "fair eyes" (5). Days of festivals and selling were called "fair" days (OED), and the "gaudy May-games" day was a time of feasting and dalliance. So it could be that the Mower is referring to the dance of the May festival. The dance is also associated with an early cutting of the hay as in "Upon Appleton House" where the mowers are "Dancing the triumphs of the hay" (426). As Warnke states, "The mower's dance is a ritual of fertility, and properly so for fertility is what the mowing has been all about" ("Meadow Sequence" 240). It certainly is a celebration of life and renewal although the grass is "trodden" under "feet." The meadows play host to the "gaudy May-games" and, thus, are hosts and participants, according to the Mower, in the sexual replenishment of other humans and nature.

The Mower states that by being hosts and participants, the meadows "forgo" "A fellowship" (14) with him, for he will not be renewed since he is not cyclic but linear in time. At another level, the Mower, when he says, "Death thou art a Mower too" ("Damon the Mower" 88), acknowledges his destructive role like Death but also like Time. Maybe not for the Mower but for the Christian believer, Death, as

a figure or a process, is not an end, but an entry to eternity. Time, as a figure or as a process of metamorphosis, will come to an end when eternity or timelessness breaks the cycle of the natural with the supernatural. The Mower is "trodden under feet" of the dancers at the "gaudy May-games" (15-16).

Stanza 3 is the numerical center of the poem and so warrants close attention since Marvell is a poet who considers verses carefully for "number, weight, and measure" ("On Mr. Milton's 'Paradise Lost'" 54). There is a total of two hundred seventeen or two hundred sixteen words, depending upon whether "May-games" of line fifteen is one or two words. Thus the numerical midpoint for words would be one hundred eight and one half, or in the middle of the word "I" of line 16 if "May-games" is counted as one word. The poem may revolve around the "I" of egotism and self-centeredness, as does the poem "Damon the Mower" where the numerical center is in the middle of a boast of being the object of nature's concern. In an era when Copernicus' theories were changing the center of the physical universe from the Earth to the Sun, this can be seen as an indication that for the Mower the "I" determines what the perception of that physical world is. Nature and the meadows are seen as breaking "fellowship" with him since they do not "correspond" to his mind after his experience of Juliana's

rejection. Later, as both Mower and singer, he makes them correspond.

As noted above, the numerical center of "The Mower against Gardens" is the word "proud." There that word "proud" describes "man, that sovereign thing" (20). The numerical center of "The Mower to the Glowworms" is between the words "fall" and "Ye." In "The Mower's Song," there are one hundred and thirty stressed syllables with a numerical center between sixty-five and sixty-six, "I lay" in line sixteen.

The verbs in stanza 3 provide a perfect analog for the sweep of the sickle and the sweep of the amphibian mind swimming in the past, in the present, in the past, and in the present. Lines 13 and 14 have the Mower asking of the meadows about the past "decision" on their part to sever "fellowship" with him that was "true." After the Mower accuses the meadows of ingratitude, being "Unthankful," he rhetorically asks the meadows "could" (past tense of can or the subjunctive) they "forgo" a "true" relationship with him in order for them to "meet" in their (that is, "your") "gaudy May-games." The word "meet" is in the present tense, as is the next, "While I lay trodden under feet?" (16). Actually, it is joining of the past assumed relationship with the present "May-games." This is the only use of the verb "trodden" by Marvell, although he uses "trod" twice in "Nymph" (70) and in "Appleton House" (60) to allude to the

grounds which Vere and Fairfax had walked. Similar to the transmutations of the meadows in the Mower's mind, the meadow sequence in "Appleton House" points out another medium through which the amphibian swims:

In terms of the poem's major themes, the whole meadow passage represents, I think, Marvell's effort to describe the medium in which a rational amphibium must lead his life. We are amphibious not only between earth and heaven, but between the world within and the world without. Imagination unites the two, mediates between them; or, more accurately, imagination is the means whereby we perceive the continuity between world and mind. Elements from the two worlds can change places readily because these realms of being are congruent and interdependent, though we must resist the temptation to assimilate them completely to each other. (MacCaffrey, "Upon Appleton House" 236)

As shown by the Mower, the imagination "paints" the picture of the past too well. While the mower's dance in the newly mowed hay, Damon finds himself "trodden."

Marvell uses the verb "tread" in the present tense in other poems. It is used three times in "Appleton House" (430, 530, and 699), once in "Tom May's Death" (39), once in "First Anniversary" (107), once in "A Poem upon the Death of O. C." 290), and once in "The Coronet" (25). The two of greatest significance in the context of the Mower poems are in "The Coronet" and in line 430 of "Appleton House." Line 25 of "The Coronet" has the poet offering his poem, "flowers" (6), as a path for "King of Glory" (12) to walk.

The "serpent old" (13), the pride of surpassing other poets ("wreaths of fame and interest" 16), has become enmeshed in his "curious frame," not only the poem but his body; therefore, the wreath is worthy only to be "tread" (25) on. Thus, the "King of Glory" will tread upon the serpent's head, fulfilling the prophecy of Genesis, by walking upon the poet's poem and his body. Thus the word "tread" in the present tense is used in a context where flowers and a body --of the "old serpent" and possibly the poet's "curious frame" of the poem and bodily structure that the serpent inhabits and is ensnared--are walked upon.¹

Stanza 4 begins in the present tense with the Mower directly addressing the "meadows" as "you" (19). The Mower has personified the meadows with the "you" of a distinct personality, and now he anthropomorphizes the meadows by reminding them of a human emotion--compassion--which should have compelled them to some type of sympathetic and symbolic action. The Mower's poetic logic appears to be that because

¹ Significantly and as noted above, a parallel use of the present tense of "tread" appears in "Upon Appleton House" stanza 54:

And now the careless victors play,
 Dancing the triumphs of the hay;
 Where every mower's wholesome heat
 Smells like an Alexander's sweat.
 Their females fragrant as the mead
 Which they in fairy circles tread:
 When at their dance's end they kiss,
 Their new-made hay not sweeter is.

Juliana came and her memory continues to cut down the Mower's thoughts and person--"me"--then the meadows who were in "fellowship so true" with him should feel compassion for his anguish from his rejected love. They should, therefore, refuse to grow or to join in the May-games and join him in death.

This, of course, is similar to "Damon the Mower." The poet/aesthete describes Damon's "scene more fit for his complaint" (4) when nature did parallel his emotions. He says the day was "scorching like his am'rous care," and the grass was "withered like his hopes" (6, 8). Further in the same poem, Damon relates that "Juliana's scorching beams" produce the current "extremes" of heat and not the month of "July" (23-24). Because the meadows lacked "compassion" and did not perform the symbolic act of dying to match the jilted lover's soul, the Mower says that the meadows "Shall now . . . be wrought" "by my revenge."

Marvell uses the word "revenge" in two other poems, three times in "Last Instructions" (361, 363, and 626), all with malevolent connotations. It is used significantly in "On Mr. Milton's Paradise Lost" (10):

Heav'n, Hell, Earth, Chaos, All; the Argument
 Held me a while misdoubting his Intent,
 That he would ruine (for I saw him strong)
 The sacred Truths to Fable and old Song,
 (So Sampson groap'd the Temples Posts in spite)
 The World o'rewhelming to revenge his Sight.
 (5-10)

As has been pointed out, the comparison of Milton to Samson was also made by his political enemies, for the self-destructive revenge of Samson was seen later in the seventeenth century as not praiseworthy (Wittreich 304). Contrary to Marvell's example of Milton, the Mower insists on revenge and his blindness is self-imposed.

The several parts of "On Paradise Lost" provide interesting parallels to the Mower and the Mower poems. In this particular parallel, the poet of "On Paradise Lost" "misdoubt[s]" Milton's "Intent" by transforming "sacred Truths" into "Fable and old Song," as an unbelieving aesthete might. That is, "he would ruine" them as Samson "ruined" the pagan "Temple Posts" because he had been blinded and mocked by the Philistines. The word "ruine" can be both turn to rubble, as in a temple that has suffered complete "Destruction, complete overthrow or devastation" (OED) and "To spoil, damage, injure, in a complete or destructive manner" (OED). The poet parallels Milton and Samson in two ways, blindness and strength. So the poet had doubted Milton's "argument" of using the sources of sacred truths as objects for artistic and dramatic purposes, that his purpose might have been an argument with God because of his blindness. The poet fears that the "Intent" might be to provide Milton with an opportunity for "spight" and "revenge," like Samson. This spoiling and destruction of sacred truths would "The World [o'rewhelm]." Later the poet

asks "Pardon" of Milton for his "surmise" (23-24). The Mower insists on "one common ruin" for "all."

It is interesting that the Mower does sing a song of destruction of the world of grass and flowers and does "The World [o'rwhelm]" for "revenge." And it might be that the Mower does so because of "his Sight" that is no longer "the true survey of all these Meadows fresh and gay." Both Samson and the Mower have been "blinded" by encounters with women, Delilah and Juliana. And comparably, the Mower vows to revenge himself on "all, / Will in one common ruin fall" (22). Some critics take this to be a direct reference to the fall on humankind, particularly, the end of time.

The word that the Mower uses to describe his destruction is "wrought" (20). Marvell uses the word "wrought" four times to mean "to work, to alter, to create, or to work over" in "The Match" (32), "The Mower's Song" (20), "Upon Appleton House" (419), and "First Anniversary" (79). If the use of the word "wrought" is seen in the context of his other poems, the word does not have the finality associated with a theological end of all in an apocalypse. In this instance, it appears that the Mower is participating in the yearly cycle of "change." In this context, the Mower predicts, using the future tense for the first time in the poem, an all-encompassing destruction--"And flow'rs, and grass, and I and all"--brought about by his "revenge" (20-21). All will fall.

It should be remarked that there are several "falls" in Marvell's poems that do not have a sinister connotation or sense of finality. He uses the word "fall" thirty-three times, the word "falling" five times, the word "fall'n" two times, the word "falls" five times, and the words "faln" and "fal'n" once each (Guffey 169-170). Marvell uses the word "fall" only twice in the Mower poems, in "The Mower to the Glowworms," "Then to presage the Grasses fall" (8), and this instance in "The Mower's Song." Several are expressly associated with the fall on or through grass. In "The Garden," the narrator says he is "Insнар'd with Flow'rs, I fall on Grass" (40). In the mowing sequence in "Upon Appleton House" (380), the mowers enter the grass like an ocean "Whether [t]he[y] fall through it or go," and the last in "Glowworms" (8), mentioned above. In fact, Norford sees the fall as part of a "fortunate fall," in that it is a "precondition for the redemptive act" ("The Mower's Song" 252).

Dramatically, Juliana "comes" with a shift to the present tense in stanza 4. Before this, Juliana has been referred to as a past event "came" but existing in the Mower's memory currently "What I do, she does." When the Mower states that "flow'rs, and grass, and I and all, / Will in one common ruin fall" (21-22), he is including Juliana. Does the Mower contemplate murder and suicide, the latter being the inference of "A Dialogue between Thyrsis and

Dorinda" (40-48)? Or when he mentions the "common ruin," is he simply referring to human mortality and the prospect of "Deserts of vast eternity" which "yonder all before us lie" ("To His Coy Mistress" 23-24)? Gilbertson believes that the Mower commits suicide and thus participates in the self-sacrifice in a Christ-like manner. Stocker also believes the Mower commits suicide as a type of Christ-like redemption and resolution with nature. As with other thematic ambiguities in Marvell, it is probably both. That is, the common metamorphosis that leads to death for all Earthly life and the Christian belief in "common ruin" at the end of Time at the Apocalypse when the Uncommon replaces change. In support of the Apocalyptic interpretation and the self-centered world of the Mower, there is the very dramatic paratactic line and its punctuation: "And flow'rs, and grass, and I and all" (21). This division with four "and[s]" leads one to assume that the "common ruin" will be all-encompassing. If the punctuation is correct, as we must assume, then the Mower does not separate himself from "all" by the pause of a comma. This may simply be a reference to the macrocosm being in the microcosm of the Mower who is "Annihilating all that's made / To a green thought in a green shade" ("The Garden," 47-48). As a matter of fact, in stanza 5 the Mower predicts he will become a "shade"/spirit under grass in his tomb (27-28). Thus, this "shade," who has had "thoughts more green" but were cut down by Juliana,

will lie in "a fine and private place" but in "Deserts" on the "ashes [of] all my lust" ("To His Coy Mistress" 31, 24, 29). As the Mower though, this is the end of his summer, "And withered like his hopes the grass" ("Damon the Mower" 8).

Stanza 4 line 23 begins the refrain, but dramatically with the shifting into the present tense, the line begins with the word "For" rather than the word "when" of the previous three stanzas. The word "For" has a certitude of the present tense that follows and the certitude of a conclusion that is inescapable. The word "When," in contrast, has the uncertainty of the future that has not yet come to pass. The word "For" can also indicate a conclusion drawn from premises of a syllogism. It also can mean "because" or show cause and effect. If it is a syllogism of solely the stanza, then the major premise might be this: "You meadows, in compassion for my 'cut-off' existence since Juliana's arrival, should have altered the cycle of the seasons and died prematurely." The minor premise might read: "I 'by my revenge' will cut down 'flow'rs, and grass, and I and all," with the conclusion being "[There]for[e] Juliana comes."

Or the "For" could indicate that the Mower means to say that because the fellowship is broken with the meadows and they no longer act in sympathetic accord, he will cut down "all" because of Juliana's immanent return. It appears to

suggest that the character Juliana is in sight, "Juliana comes" (23).

Stanza 5 begins with a conjunction and a logical term for a conclusion for the syllogism, "And thus" (25). The major premise appears to be found in stanza 3, the first direct address to the "Unthankful meadows." The major premise might be this: "'Unthankful meadows' you have broken our fellowship and met to celebrate 'gaudy May-games'" (13, 15). The minor premise might be this: "'By my revenge' of my sickle, 'all, / Will in one common ruin fall'" (20-22). The conclusion to be drawn from the "thus" reiterates and echoes stanza 1. The Mower states to the meadows that once where they (the meadows) "have been / Companions of my thoughts more green," they "Shall now" come full circle to be the "heraldry" which in the future "will adorn" his "tomb" (25-28). The Mower appears to be declaring that the meadows and he will be joined again in a kind of fellowship, one where the meadows will now match his thoughts to cover his tomb. This appears to be more optimistic than some critics have granted. The Mower states that the meadows and their greenery will indicate his "armorial" pedigree but also will perform the function of the herald by "making royal or state proclamations" and "arranging public processions [or] funerals" (OED). In other words, the Mower reunites with the meadows in a symbolic relationship that was referred to in stanza 1 as a "true survey" of the

external world of nature in his mind. Now the symbolism is not of the life-giving spring with the "hopes" found in stanza 1 but of the symbolism of cut flowers and grass of funeral adornment.

Further, there seems to be the possibility of resurrection, for the tomb is green (momentarily) and bedecked with flowers. The natural cycle will return with the greenery annually. This was frequently used as a symbol for Christian resurrection, as opposed to the "Deserts of vast eternity" found in "To His Coy Mistress" (24). Certainly, it is the case that the "flow'rs, and grass, and I and all, / Will in one common ruin fall." But for the pagan and the Christian, circular and linear time, there will be a "return," whether of the cycle of the earth or the Day of Judgment when there will be a new heaven and a new earth. In this ambiguous sense, the tomb of Mower can be green; that is, once again hope does not end at the cyclic death or the first bodily death of the Christian.

Comparable to stanza 4, stanza 5 has its swing of the amphibious swimmer in time. The first line (25) of the stanza incorporates the present with the direct address to "ye meadows," but later in the same line refers to the past tense, "have been." This past tense is carried over into line 26 by a description of a lost "Companions[hip]" with the meadows when the Mower's "thoughts [were] more green." This, too, seems to imply more hopefulness than some critics

have allowed since the implication is that the Mower's "thoughts [which were] more green" than they are now. However, there may still be greenness in his thoughts; certainly, his tomb will be a kind of green proclamation to others who might come by.

This brings to mind some interesting parallels with another of Marvell's famous poems, "The Unfortunate Lover," about which there is much critical disagreement. Whoever "The Unfortunate Lover" might be, he is described as "The amphibium of life and death" (40) and dies of unrequited love. He may be the bombastic end of the Petrarchan lover, or as Margarita Stocker maintains, he is Charles Stuart I (Stocker 257 ff.). Nevertheless, he does leave behind a heraldic symbolism comparable to the Mower's.

This is the only banneret
That ever Love created yet:
Who though, by the malignant stars,
Forced to live in storms and wars,
Yet dying leaves a perfume here,
And music within every ear:
And he in story only rules,
In a field sable a lover gules.
(57-64)

Here "The Unfortunate Lover" receives his "battlefield baronet" through conflict in love's war, and his personal banner with which he can lead vassals into battle (OED) is one with a black--"sable"--"field" or background of the banner where "a lover gules"; a lover, "in heraldry," in red is a vertical line (OED). He also leaves behind music in

ears and a sweet smell in the air. Of course, with Marvell one might see the word "gules" and pronounce it "gulls" or "to deceive; trick; cheat." In contrast to the Mower of "The Mower's Song," the symbolism of the black banner with a red vertical does not appear to be particularly hopeful. The Mower, though, has as his "heraldry" the flowers and the greenery of the grass that will cover his tomb.

This is further complicated by the fact that the Mower maintains that he "will adorn" his own tomb. And the word "tomb" implies a prepared burial vault but can also mean an earthen excavation or simply "grave" (OED). Marvell uses the word "tomb[e]" three other times, twice in "Upon the Death of the Lord Protector" (123, 300) and once in "The Last Instructions to a Painter" (408). All three instances are of burial monuments for the remembrance of the famous. This future tense implies that it will happen. As opposed to stanza 4 where the first four lines of the stanza are separated from the closing refrain by a period, here in stanza 5, the first four lines are joined to the refrain by a semicolon. This may indicate that the "For" of line 29 is to show a direct cause and effect of "Juliana comes" in the present tense. The future is determined by the present. Because "Juliana comes" as the Mower cuts the grass--"do to the grass"--so she "does" to the Mower's "thoughts" and his person, "me." The swing of the Mower's scythe cuts down the grass/flesh and at the same time the swimmer in time--"The

amphibian of life and death"--strokes from the present "ye meadows" to the past who "have been / Companions," then back to the present "Shall now . . . become." The Mower's swing of his scythe predicts the future of the grass, "With which I will adorn my tomb" (27). However, the final words of "The Mower's Song" are in the present tense "Juliana comes" and "I do" and "she . . . does."

The final Alexandrine leaves the Mower in a Mobius loop of continuous return--the cyclic return of the grass, the work to be done, the "fall" of his "thoughts," and the continuous "cutting" or metamorphosis of his person "me" (30). The swing of Time's scythe continues in its cyclic pattern for nature, but the time line of an individual is finite. In Christian mythology, that cycle will be broken when Eternity breaks metamorphosis with the stasis of perfection. Damon the Mower as singer, as mower, and as Time is an interlocking image of patterned processes of creation and destruction. The singer as poet/creator destroys part of chaos to create order. The Mower destroys the grass so that generation and creation can continue during the winter. The Mower as Time separates the "square" human and his linear flight with time's arrow from the "circle" of the cyclic time of nature. The Mower's scythe, an arc of the circle, meets the perpendicular of the blade of grass: eternity waits as entropy increases.

We have looked through the window on to the world provided by the Second Law, and have seen the naked purposelessness of nature. The deep structure of change is decay; the spring of change in all its forms is the corruption of the quality of energy as it spreads chaotically, irreversibly, and purposelessly in time. All change, and time's arrow, point in the direction of corruption. The experience of time is the gearing of the electrochemical processes in our brain to this purposeless drift into chaos as we sink into equilibrium and the grave. (Atkins 98)

Conclusion

My intention has been to emphasize, in several contexts, the use of language in the Mower poems. My aim has been to see individual words first in the context of the poem, next in relation to the other poems of the group, then in relation to other poems and prose by Marvell, and finally in contemporary colloquial diction. This reading makes the colloquial and even bawdy nature of the Mower poems explicit. It does not follow, however, that the poems are not "serious" literature concerned with what it means to be human, but rather the reverse. In fact, as Samuel Johnson first said, it is "heterogeneous ideas . . . yoked by violence" (Witherspoon and Warnke 1054) that make Marvell's poetry "metaphysical." Again to quote Johnson, Marvell is one of those poets who alludes "to things high or low, elegant or gross" and is "sometimes indelicate and [to Johnson] disgusting" (Witherspoon and Warnke 1058-1059). My purpose is not to exclude other readings but to add the bawdy and witty word and image play to indicate the Mower poems' relation to the pastoral genre and to the seventeenth-century discussion of sacred and profane love. Of course, this type of analysis provides an opportunity for an ad hominem rebuttal that the bawdy is in my eye and not in the poems. It is my intention to exhibit the nuances of

the poem found in the tradition of the genre and in all of Marvell's works.

My reading suggests several areas and approaches for further research. One area involves the various forms of address within the poems--Mower to gardener, poet/aesthete to audience, Mower to Juliana, Mower to Death, Mower to meadows, Mower to glowworms, Mower to himself. While I indicate the ironic use of perspective or point of view, rhetorical devices, and logical constructs, each of these topics could use further study in the Mower poems. For example, my analysis mentions several instances when Marvell uses key terms of argumentation such as "thus" and "but," which suggests that the poems might be examined as Aristotelian syllogisms or as Ramist logic. J. L. Austin's speech-act theory might be adapted to these rhetorical approaches. While I have examined some expressions of desire in Marvell's language, I have steered away from psychoanalytic theories of desire and language, or the relation between them. Because of the complexity of reading the seventeenth century in the light of current theories of human sexuality and iconography, I have not evoked Freud, Jung, Lacan, or Kristeva, for example, although all could provide further depth for understanding of poems explicitly dealing the psychology of Eros. Particularly, Lacan's essay "The Mirror Stage" is insightful in interpreting Damon's scythe as mirror and his destructive pronouncements as the

self, the imago, is alienated from nature. Another area related to this study that deserves attention is Marvell's use of colloquial diction in his other lyric, political, and satiric poems.

One larger issue debated by critics of Marvell is the question, as it appears to some, of the apparent disparity and diversity of tone, themes, and diction in the whole of Marvell's works. On the surface, his "early" lyric poetry appears to be exquisitely balanced while his "later" verse satires and prose pamphlets are ribald and bawdy partisan attacks. I have been reluctant to accept this division, which tends to regard the "early" lyrics, including the Mower poems, as lacking satiric and partisan positions. Most of his poetry, not simply the prose and poetry of the 1660's and 1670's, has these elements. Because we have only the posthumous 1681 Miscellaneous Poems, a plausible assumption is that Marvell could have worked on the poems throughout his life. My reading of the Mower poems finds more similarities than differences in the "early" and the "later" Marvell.

Appendix: Letter of Gerrard Winstanley

This is a copy of the letter sent "To the Lord Fairfax, Generall of The English Forces, and His Councell of War" and delivered June 9, 1649:

First, we demand I [sic] or No, whether the earth with her fruits, was made to be bought and sold from one to another? and whether one part of mankind was made a Lord of the land, and another part a servant, by the law of Creation before the fall? I affirme, (and I challenge you to disprove) that the earth was made to be a common Treasury of livelihood for all, without respect of persons, and was not made to be bought and sold: And that mankind in all his branches is the lord over the Beasts, Birds, Fishes, and the Earth, and was not made to acknowledge any of his owne kind to be his teacher and ruler, but the spirit of righteousnesse only his Maker, and to walk in his light, and so to live in peace, and this being a truth, as it is, then none ought to be Lords or Landlords over another, but the earth is free for every son and daughter of mankind, to live free upon. This question is not to be answered by any text of Scripture, or example since the fall, but the answer is to be given in the light of it self, which is the law of righteousnesse, or that Word of God that was in the beginning, which dwells in mans heart, and by which he was made, even the pure law of creation, unto which the creation is to be restored. Before the fall, Adam, or the Man did dresse the garden, or the earth, in love, freedom, and righteousnesse, which was his rest and peace: But when covetousnesse began to rise up in him, to kill the power of love and freedom in him, and so made him (mankind) to set himself one man above another, as Cain lifted up himself above

Abel, which was but the outward declaration of the two powers that strive in the man Adams heart; and when he consented to that serpent covetousnesse, then he fell from righteousnesse, was cursed, and was sent into the earth to eat his bread in sorrow: And from that time began particular propriety to grow in one man over another; and the sword brought in propriety, and holds it up, which is no other but the power of angry covetousness: For, Cain killed Abel, because Abels principles, or religion, was contrary to his. And the power of the sword is still Cain killing Abel, lifting up one man still above another. But Abel shall not alwaies be slain, nor alwaies lie under the bondage of Cains cursed propriety, for he must rise: And that Abel of old was but a type of Christ, that is now rising up to restore all things from bondage.

2. I demand, whether all wars, blood-shed, and misery came not upon the Creation, when one man indeavoured to be a lord over another, and to claime propriety in the earth one above another? Your Scripture will prove this sufficiently to be true. And whether this misery shall not remove (and not till then) when all the branches of mankind shall look upon themselves as one man, and upon the earth as a common Treasury to all, without respecting persons, every one acknowledging the law of righteousnesse in them and over them, and walking in his light purely? Then cast away your buying and selling the earth, with her fruits, it is unrighteous, it lifts up one above another, it makes one man oppresse another, and it is the burthen of the Creation.

3. Whether the work of restoration lies not in removing covetousnesse, casting that Serpent out of heaven, (mankind) and making man to live in the light of righteousnesse, not in words only, as Preachers do, but in action, whereby the Creation shines in glory? I affirm it. [The letter continues.]

(The Works of Gerrard Winstanley: With an Appendix of Documents Relating to the Digger Movement. Edited and Introduction by George H. Sabine, New York: Russell & Russell, 1941;1965, pp. 289-290).

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