

**"Thoughts all Easie and Sociable":
Friendship and Community in Early Modern Women's Poetry**

**Robin Kirschbaum
PhD Thesis
University of Newcastle upon Tyne
July 2012**

NEWCASTLE UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

210 26580 0

Thesis L10220

Abstract

Seventeenth century Britain was defined by political conflict and social upheaval: this period of change has led scholars to describe withdrawal from public life as a natural response for many writers. This thesis traces a trajectory of women's political engagement through textual exchange and the manipulation of the classically derived traditions of friendship and community which reforms such retreat as an enabling, rather than restrictive, condition. The intersection of personal experience and communal memory works to preserve a community set adrift without a stable political state, and solidify the individual's place within this community through a turn inwards rather than reliance on external structures. For the writers of this study, platonic friendship is the stabilising force in an uncertain world and the means of creating and sustaining a political community through individual relationships.

The three women under study, Katherine Philips, Jane Barker and Elizabeth Singer Rowe, present three historically and individually distinct experiences of political engagement and social reconstruction. However despite their differences there is discernable a common thread in the re-imagining of the boundaries of the social world. Their verse goes beyond the analogies made between state and domestic authority to reveal the complex way in which individuals reacted to the turbulent political events of the seventeenth century. Engagement with established poetic forms, such as the Pindaric ode, and poetic traditions, such as the pastoral, is a means of exploring the roles and agency available to women.

This thesis will examine the letters and verse of these three women alongside the works of their contemporaries, some of which appeared in printed poetic collections and others, such as Barker's Magdalen manuscript and Rowe's Green Letter Book, remain only in manuscript form. These texts illustrate a complex nexus of political history, neo-Classical philosophy, textual studies and social theory which shape a fluid concept of community and self which is imaginatively constructed and self-sustaining.

Acknowledgements

I wish to acknowledge the unwavering support of my supervisors, Kate Chedzoy and Jennifer Richards, throughout the long process of researching and writing this thesis. Thanks are also due to the Archives at Northumberland Castle for generously granting access to their manuscript collection, and a great deal of thanks and appreciation also goes to the British Library and the National Library of Scotland for access to their extensive collections. A special thanks to my family for their love and support throughout this process.

Table of Contents

Abstract	ii
Acknowledgements	iii
Introduction: Female friendship, community and retreat	1
Friendship and Virtue: Classical Models	
Friendship and Virtue: Early Modern Models	
Friendship and the Communal Impulse	
Women and Community	
The Space of Sociability: The Pastoral	
Textuality and Community	
Conclusion	
Chapter I Katherine Philips and the tradition of female friendship	39
Daughters of 'Orinda': Philips's literary legacy	
Biographical Background	
Royalist Poetic Response.....	
Sociability and Retreat.....	
The Pastoral	
Politicised Poetics: Pindaric and Horatian Odes.....	
Platonism and Politics.....	
Conclusion	
Chapter II Jane Barker: an experience of community from the fringes	82
Biographical Background	
The Cambridge Coterie.....	
The Magdalen Manuscript: The Jacobite verse of St. Germain.....	
Authorial Voices: Fidelity, Galesia and the Muse.....	
Mythologisation of the Jacobite Experience.....	
The Pastoral Tradition.....	
Conclusion	
Chapter III Elizabeth Singer Rowe: a poetics of nonconformity	126
The Pindarick Lady and the Athenians	
Coterie Connections: Lady Hertford and the Longleat Circle.....	
Friendship in Letters: The Alnwick Manuscript	
Communities in Retirement.....	
Spirituality and Sociability	
The Pastoral: the setting of spiritual transformation.....	
Conclusion	
Epilogue	168
Bibliography	173
Primary.....	173
Secondary.....	175

Introduction: Female friendship, community and retreat

Friendship still has been design'd,
The Support of Human-kind;
The safe Delight, the useful Bliss,
The next World's Happiness, and this.
Give then, O indulgent Fate!
Give a Friend in that Retreat
(Tho' withdrawn from all the rest)
Still a Clue, to reach my Breast.
Let a Friend be still convey'd
Thro' those Windings, and that Shade!
Where, may I remain secure,
Waste, in humble Joys and pure,
A Life, that can no Envy yield;
Want of Affluence my Shield.¹

Anne Finch's "The Petition for an Absolute Retreat" is one of a number of verses by early modern women which engage with the poetic traditions of friendship and the pastoral.² Finch employed the imagery and language of the pastoral to shape a convivial but protected space of retreat. The key to achieving the sanctity of such a space is virtuous friendship, which Finch implies is both enabled by and enabling of pastoral retirement. Finch's retreat is not an absolute retirement; she calls for "a Friend in that Retreat / (Tho' withdrawn from all the rest)" to share in the "humble Joys and pure" of the pastoral. Friendship is "design'd [as] the Support of Human-kind", a divine gift to ease the burden of human reason and passion. The cause of "the next World's Happiness, and this",

¹ Anne Finch, "The Petition for an Absolute Retreat" in *Miscellany Poems, on Several Occasions*, printed for J.B. and sold by Benj. Tooke at the Middle-Temple-Gate, William Taylor in Pater-Noster-Row, and James Round (London, 1713), pp. 33-49, lines 192-205.

² Like the other writers examined in this dissertation, Anne Finch has received increased scholarly and critical attention in recent decades. Relevant studies include Dorothy Mermin, 'Women Becoming Poets: Katherine Philips, Aphra Behn, Anne Finch', *ELH: Journal of English Literary History* (57:2) 1990, 335-55; Ann Messenger, *Gender at Work: Four women writers of the eighteenth century* (Detroit, MI: Wayne State University Press, 1990); Barbara McGovern, *Anne Finch and her poetry: A critical biography* (Athens, GA: Georgia University Press, 1992); Charles H. Hinnant, *The Poetry of Anne Finch: An essay in interpretation* (Newark: Delaware University Press, 1994); Carol Barash, *English Women's Poetry, 1649-1714* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2001); Jane Spencer, 'Anne Finch, Countess of Winchelsea (1661-1720): Sorrow into Song', *Women and Poetry 1660-1750*, ed. Sarah Prescott and David E. Shuttleworth (London: Palgrave, 2003), 60-70; Paula R. Backscheider, *Eighteenth-Century Women Poets and Their Poetry: Inventing agency, inventing genre* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2005); Bronwen Price, 'Verse, Voice and Body: The retirement mode and women's poetry 1680-1723', *Early Modern Literary Studies*, 12:3 (January 2007), 5.1-44.

Finch's vision of friendship is spiritually elevated and because it is disembodied is able to transcend the boundaries of life and death. Finch's verse illustrates the social and metaphysical themes which dominate the emerging early modern women's literary tradition. Engaging with established poetic forms and subjects, women like Finch adapted inherently masculinist models of friendship and community which, set in the space of the pastoral, offered a vision of security and conviviality. In doing so, Finch participates in a model of female literary engagement largely initiated by Katherine Philips, better known in the period by her poetic pseudonym, 'Orinda'. It is this evolving female poetic tradition which is the subject of this thesis.³ The full implications of the figure 'Orinda', both for Philips's career and for this tradition of women's writing, will be discussed in Chapter 1.

Community and friendship are the cornerstones of this emerging female poetic tradition, and are themselves tightly connected. The verse and literary activity of the women of this thesis contribute to an evolving tradition of friendship with political and communal potential. Looking at the philosophical and material expressions of community in the writing of three early modern women, Katherine Philips, Jane Barker, and Elizabeth Singer Rowe, I identify common ideological threads which contribute to a broad social philosophy of early modern community, as well as a model of early modern women's literary and political engagement. All three women shape philosophies of friendship which are foundational to the formation of communities, both real and imagined, and which are based on the idea of shared virtue and political commitment. It is necessary within the course of this introduction to examine the concepts of community and friendship in their contemporary usages, showing how this may depart from our modern understanding of the terms.

Early modern philosophy was heavily influenced by the revival of the classical writers and their definitions of the social world. Classical philosophies of friendship consider the relationship central to the construction of the *polis*, or the public body, and early modern philosophies of friendship likewise considered the relationship as

³ The influence of Philips, as 'Orinda', can be traced from contemporary commendatory poems as shown by Ellen Moody, to poems comparing later writers with Orinda, the pinnacle of female literary achievement. See Ellen Moody, 'Orinda, Rosania, Lucasia *et aliae*: Towards a new edition of the works of Katherine Philips', *Philological Quarterly*, 66 (1987), 325-54 (p. 327); Jeslyn Medoff, 'The Daughters of Behn and the Problem of Reputation', in *Women, Writing, History: 1640-1740*, ed. by Isobel Grundy and Susan Wiseman (Athens, Ga.: University of Georgia Press, 1992), pp. 33-54; Kathryn King, *Jane Barker, Exile: A literary career 1675-1725* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2000), p. 45.

foundational to larger social bodies.⁴ Friendship was considered as separate from the official ties which bind the public body, such as marriage, familial obligations, and hierarchical governance. Same-sex friendship transcends the more material relationship between the sexes, and is therefore represented as a spiritual, disembodied union of souls.

Through engagement with the discourse of friendship, a discourse inherited from classical writers and evolved in the Renaissance, the writers of this study position friendship as foundational to the building and sustaining of communities. The focus of this study is, broadly, communities: the ways in which they are individually and collectively imagined, their relationship to historical events and political ideology, and the material means of their textual representation. The seventeenth century was a time of political conflict, institutional upheaval, and, as a result, social experimentation. Textuality played a significant role in social cohesion, with the acts of both reading and writing providing intellectual and emotional bridges to connect individuals across time and space. This would become an important feature of the philosophy of friendship envisioned by seventeenth-century writers, as it offered a means of connecting individuals torn apart by the political conflict and social splintering of the Civil War. A close examination of the literary activity of women in the later seventeenth century reveals attitudes towards political conflict and change through a range of social imaginings and textual transmission.

The women who comprise this study come from diverse backgrounds: Katherine Philips, a staunch royalist whose ‘Society of Friendship’ challenged assumptions about women’s political and literary engagement after the dissolution of the monarchical state⁵;

⁴ Early modern friendship philosophy looked to Aristotle’s *Nicomachean Ethics*, Plato’s *Symposium*, and Cicero’s *On Duties*. See Michel de Montaigne, *On Friendship* (1580), trans. by M. A. Screech (London: Penguin Books, 2004); Jeremy Taylor, *A Discourse on the Nature, Offices and Measures of Friendship, with Rules of Conducting it. Written in Answer to a Letter from the Most Ingenious and Vertuous M.K.P.* (1657); Francis Finch, *Friendship* (London, 1654).

⁵ Sarah Prescott, “‘That private shade, wherein my Muse was bred’”: Katherine Philips and the Poetic Spaces of Welsh Retirement’, *Philological Quarterly*, 88:4 (2009), 345-366; Sasha Roberts, ‘Women’s Literary Capital in Early Modern England: Formal composition and rhetorical display in manuscript and print’, *Women’s Writing*, 14:2 (2007), 246-269; Susannah B. Mintz, ‘Katherine Philips and the Space of Friendship’, *Restoration*, 22.2 (1998), 62-78; Bronwen Price, “‘Spotless passion’”: Public face and private space in the poetry of Katherine Philips, the ‘matchless Orinda’”, *Poetry Wales* 33.1 (1997), 44-49; Claudia A. Limbert, “‘The unison of well-tun’d hearts’”: Katherine Philips’ friendships with male writers’, *English Language Notes* 29:1 (1991), 25-37; Carol Barash, *English Women’s Poetry 1649-1724: Politics, community and linguistic authority* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000); Catharine Gray, ‘Katherine Philips and the Post-Courtly Coterie’, *English Literary Renaissance*, 32:3 (2002), 426-451; Gray, ‘The Knowing Few: Katherine Philips and the Courtly Coterie’, chapter 3 of her *Women Writers and Public Debate in 17th Century Britain*, (Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 105-142.

Jane Barker, a Catholic convert and devout Jacobite, whose poetry reflects the material and social conditions of exile and otherness post-1688⁶; and Elizabeth Singer Rowe, a nonconformist poet whose provincial retreat shaped her vision of both friendship and the self.⁷ Phillips - as represented by her literary persona Orinda - remained at the centre of literary circles in the years after her death, and would be invoked in complimentary poems to both Barker and Rowe. Linking Barker and Rowe to the model of Orinda is not a modern critical invention; Barker herself connects her authorial experience with the figure of Orinda, and Rowe's posthumous biographers invoked the comparison of female virtue and poetic talent.⁸ Thus it is historically appropriate to discuss the influence of Phillips and Orinda on those women who followed.

These three women express distinct experiences of community, both physically and imaginatively. The relationship between physical and social aspects of exile and marginalisation is complex: a physical removal can be the impetus for a stronger identification with a core community; conversely physical proximity is no guarantee of

⁶ Jane Spencer, 'Creating the Women Writer: The autobiographical works of Jane Barker', *Tulsa Studies in Women's Literature*, 2 (1983), 165-81; Carol Shiner Wilson, ed, *The Galesia Trilogy and Selected Manuscript Poems of Jane Barker* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997); Kathryn King, *Jane Barker, Exile: A literary career 1675-1725* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2000); King, 'Of Needles and Pens and Women's Work', *Tulsa Studies in Women's Literature* 14 (Spring 1995), 77-93; King, "'The Unaccountable Wife'" and Other Stories of Female Desire in Jane Barker's *A Patch-Work Screen for the Ladies*', *The Eighteenth Century: Theory and Interpretation* 35 (Spring 1994), 155-72; King, 'Galesia, Jane Barker, and Coming to Authorship', in *Anxious Power: Reading, Writing, and Ambivalence in Narrative by Women*, ed. Carol J. Singley and Susan Elizabeth Sweeney (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1993), pp. 91-104; King, 'Jane Barker, Poetical Recreations, and the Sociable Text', *ELH* 61:3 (Fall 1994), 551-70; Toni Bowers, 'Jacobite Difference and the Poetry of Jane Barker', *English Literary History*, 64:4 (1997), 857-69.

⁷ Sarah Prescott, 'Provincial Networks, Dissenting Connections, and Noble Friends: Elizabeth Singer Rowe and Female Authorship in Early Eighteenth-Century England', *Eighteenth-Century Life*, 25:1 (Winter 2001): pp. 29-42; Prescott, 'Elizabeth Singer Rowe: Gender, dissent and whig poetics', in *Cultures of Whiggism: New essays on English literature and culture in the long eighteenth century*, ed. by David Womersley, Paddy Bullard, Abigail Williams (Newark: Delaware University Press, 2005); Jennifer Richards, *Elizabeth Singer Rowe: Printed writings 1641-1700* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003); Sharon Achinstein, 'Romance of the Spirit: Female sexuality and religious desire in early modern England', *ELH: Journal of English literary history* 69:2 (2002), 413-438; Norma Clarke, 'Soft passions and darling themes: From Elizabeth Singer Rowe (1674-1737) to Elizabeth Carter (1717-1806)', *Women's Writing* 7:3 (2000) 353-371; Marlene R. Hansen, 'The Pious Mrs Rowe', *English Studies*, 76: 1 (1995), 34-51; Kathryn King, 'Elizabeth Singer Rowe's tactical use of print and manuscript', *Women's Writing and the Circulation of Ideas*, ed. by George Justice and Nathan Tinker (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp. 158-181; John J. Richetti, 'Mrs. Elizabeth Rowe: The novel as polemic', *PMLA*, 82:7 (December, 1967), 522-529.

⁸ Jane Barker, "The contract with the muses writ on the bark of a shady ash-tree" in *The Poems of Jane Barker: The Magdalen Manuscript*, ed. by Kathryn King (Magdalen College, Oxford, 1998), pp. 40-1, which also appears in *Love Intrigues; or, the History of the Amours of Bosvil and Galesia* (London, 1713), p 14; Elizabeth Singer Rowe, *The Miscellaneous Works in Prose and Verse of Mrs. Elizabeth Rowe*, ed. by Theophilus Rowe and Henry Grove (London, 1739).

social inclusion.⁹ All three women can be considered in one way or another as exiles, and their engagement with community can also represent a response to this experience of not-belonging. Katherine Philips, a strong royalist in a family of Parliamentarians, during the Interregnum positioned herself at the centre of her Society of Friendship through which she disseminated her work to influential readers in the court from her position in Cardigan, West Wales. Jane Barker voiced an experience of a marginalised community from the fringes, desperately desiring a central role in the exclusive politicised communities to which she was attracted, but never realising her vision of social security. Elizabeth Singer Rowe spent her married years in London, but returned to Frome, Somerset, for the remainder of her life, often expressing her desire for retreat from society in her verse and letters to the coterie of which she was a leading member. Although differing in political and religious identification, and separated by geography and time, these women convey a larger, sustained response to the political instability of the seventeenth century through a common desire for communal belonging. Responding to experiences of national and local trauma and loss, these women turn towards sociable communities united imaginatively, if not physically, to repair and restore a fractured social identity. Their models of friendship and community are expressed within a tradition of partisan writing which forms a close connection between the political and social.¹⁰ Common threads in their writing can be identified which weave into the wider

⁹ Scholarship on the experience of meanings of exile have explored the diversity of experiences of exile, from physical displacement to social and spiritual estrangement. At the heart of critical studies on the subject is theoretical reflections on the effect of the experience of exile, in its diverse forms, on individual and cultural identity. Some scholars have focused on the theme of loss and physical displacement, such as Christopher D'Addario has explored the theme of loss in the specific landscape of the English Civil War in *Exile and Journey in Seventeenth-Century Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007); Helen Wilcox has examined the relationship between identity and exile in 'Selves in Strange Lands: Autobiography and exile in mid-seventeenth century', in Ronald Bedford, Lloyd Davis, and Philippa Kelly, eds., *Early Modern Autobiography: theories, genres, practices* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press: 2006), 131-59; others have explored exile as a theoretical focal point for personal introspection, such as Edward Said's seminal *Reflections on Exile and Other Essays* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002).

¹⁰ The tradition of partisan writing is the intersection of friendship and the political, leading to 'friend' denoting a fellow political sympathiser. The notion can be traced to the classic theories of friendship: Aristotle identifies "civic friendship" (*politike philia*) as a necessary, if morally ambiguous, means of achieving social harmony (see *Nicomachean Ethics*); Cicero's notion of *amicitia* is achieved by virtuous individuals united by their (political) similarity. Penelope Anderson argues that Katherine Philips's poetry stresses the civic dimension of friendship and signifies the royalism of the coterie itself. See Daniel T. Lochman, Maritere Lopez and Lorna Hutson, *Discourses and Representations of Friendship in Early Modern Europe 1500-1700* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2010), pp. 131-148.

social fabric: the use of the pastoral form, the significance of friendship as socially cohesive, and the underlying theme of virtue.

This study is an attempt to broaden the horizon of the history of early modern female literary and political engagement by looking at women writers from diverse backgrounds and with different political allegiances who participated in the formation of communal identity through a variety of literary forms: epistolary correspondence, political and pastoral verse, and prose narrative. The women who form the basis of the study were all involved in varied socio-political networks of writers and readers maintained through textual exchange, and although the context of their literary activity differed widely, all three women convey a similar philosophy of sociability in their poetic texts and shaped by their material literary practice. Approaching both the material conditions of these literary communities and the philosophies of sociability expressed within the texts themselves allows us a more comprehensive picture of women's place in literary history.

Friendship and Virtue: Classical Models

Friendship is, as I have noted, the cornerstone of early modern social philosophy, representing a relationship which significantly shapes and sustains wider social and political groupings. Approaching the notion of friendship is complicated by the lack of firmly agreed and socially acknowledged criteria for what makes a person a friend, as Graham Allan shows.¹¹ There is a specifically modern notion of friendship as a personal relationship separate from the sphere of political activity, and critical focus on friendships has been limited by our modern understanding of interpersonal relationships. Michael Walzer warns that, "Friendship, like love, describes a more personal relation, and it is probably a mistake to seek the special delights of that relation in the public arena," and this seems to be a common modern perception which is often historically applied.¹² However, the early modern models of friendship, derived from classical philosophers such as Aristotle and Cicero, classify friendship as a social and political activity. Classical literature was the core of early modern education, and the influence of texts such as

¹¹ Graham Allan, *Kinship and Friendship in Modern Britain* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), p. 85.

¹² Michael Walzer, *Radical Principles* (New York: Basic, 1980), p. 13.

Aristotle's *Poetics* and the *Nicomachean Ethics*, Ovid's *Metamorphosis*, and Plato's *Symposium* can clearly be seen in the works of early modern writers. It is crucial to separate our contemporary ideas of friendship, with their emphasis on the private individual and the constraints of gender, class, geography, and ethnicity, from the social, historical, and literary contexts of early modern philosophies of friendship.

Classical philosophy informs both the language and imagery used to describe friendship in early modern literature, as well as shaping its basic function and place in the larger social and political spheres. The Renaissance and Enlightenment revival of Greek and Roman philosophers incorporated the ideas of Aristotle, Cicero, and Plato into arguments relevant to contemporary politics, morality and social theory. In ancient Greece, friendship between men was the foundation of all communal civic life, and therefore represented the highest rational, ethical and political ideals. The classical philosophy of friendship was largely defined by Aristotle's classification of the different kinds of friendship and their applications. The *Poetics* describes the ideals of 'perfect friendship' which is not based on individual benefit or necessity, but on mutual virtue which shaped a spiritual union. Aristotle's concept of *philia* represents "a general sociability, a desire to cooperate in shared activity of any sort, from the utilitarian business transaction to the close, personal relationships of true friends."¹³ This 'general sociability' pervades all aspects of public and private life, forming the building block of larger sociable structures.

In the *Nicomachean Ethics* Aristotle argues that political community is founded on the basis of individual friendship, and thus places friendship within the realm of public activity rather than in opposition to it.¹⁴ The purpose of friendship, for Aristotle and his followers, is to create and sustain the life of a community. It is, as Alastair MacIntyre puts it, "a sharing incorporated in the immediacy of an individual's particular friendships."¹⁵ The "sharing" is that of individual virtue which, when shared between individuals, is amplified and increased. Virtue is a key attribute for both Aristotelean and Platonic friendship, the sharing of which forms a morally upright foundation for larger social structures. The virtuous potential of 'perfect friendship' creates a spiritualised relationship. Through the female philosopher Diotima of Mantinea in his *Symposium*,

¹³ Richard Mulgan, *Aristotle's Political Theory* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1977), p.14.

¹⁴ Aristotle *Nicomachean Ethics*, trans. by D. P. Chase (Courier Dover, 1998), pp. 150-4.

¹⁵ Alastair MacIntyre, *After Virtue: A study in moral theory* (London: Duckworth, 1985), p. 156.

Plato explores the potential of friendship to achieve ascent to contemplation of the divine.¹⁶ Platonic love came to mean a relationship in which each individual inspires the mind and soul to achieve a more elevated spiritual existence. Cicero also believed in friendship based on mutual virtue, but only between ‘good men’, and goes so far as to argue that virtue without friendship is impossible.¹⁷

Aristotle acknowledges the diverse contexts of friendship, embracing the horizontal relation between peers as well as the vertical bond uniting those of unequal status. His philosophy also embraces the utterly singular relational experience as well as political cohesion: friendship seems to hold a polis together. This element of social cohesion and community forming is based in the ethical relevance of friendship in political communities. The ideal of friendship involves the capacity to promote communal and political stability and trust which justice, as a purely formal set of rules and laws, would be unable to attain.¹⁸ Thus friendship had at the heart of its discourse a notion of inherent virtue and therefore the potential for political transformation, ideas that would become increasingly relevant in the seventeenth century as the political sphere became increasingly unstable.

Friendship and Virtue: Early Modern Models

Renaissance philosophers and writers would take up the classical model of virtuous friendship, further developing its individual and social merits for application to the world around them. Friendship was a common topic for seventeenth-century pamphlet writers, showing the continued popularity and relevance of the topic.¹⁹ Michel de Montaigne’s treatment of friendship appears to bridge the gap between ancient political philosophy’s concern with the relationship between the virtuous state and friendship and the modern political philosophy’s dismissal of friendship as a ‘private’ interest. Friendship became an

¹⁶ Plato, *Symposium*, trans. by Richard Hunter (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

¹⁷ Cicero, *De Senectute, De Amicitia, De Divinatione*, trans. by William Armistead Falconer (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1923), pp. 127-9. Also see *On Duties*, p. 106.

¹⁸ Elena Irrera, ‘Between Advantage and Virtue: Aristotle’s theory of political friendship’, 2nd Pavia Graduate Conference in Political Philosophy, <<http://www-1.unipv.it/deontica/seminari/irrerera.pdf>> [accessed 7th January 2009], (p. 6 of 14).

¹⁹ Michel de Montaigne, *On Friendship* (1580), trans. by M. A. Screech (London: Penguin Books, 2004); Jeremy Taylor, *A Discourse on the Nature, Offices and Measures of Friendship, with Rules of Conducting it. Written in Answer to a Letter from the Most Ingenious and Vertuous M.K.P.* (1657); Francis Finch, *Friendship* (London, 1654).

important tool in political verse. Signalling a shared ideological connection which often followed political lines, 'friend' could mean political ally as well as personal companion. Montaigne argues that the virtue of friendship contributes to the public good. Once a friendship has been established, "with the more worthy aspect of it fulfilling its duties and predominating, they said that it produced fruits useful for private and public life ... that it was the main defence of right conduct and freedom ... that is why they call it sacred and divine."²⁰ Montaigne drew from the dual Greek conception of friendship as a political activity and friendship as a sacred bond, shaping an early modern philosophy of friendship which was both a civic and personal activity. Such relationships are defined by the "willing freedom" which produces "the peak of perfection ... in friendship", demonstrating the classical notion that true friendship reflects and amplifies inner virtue.²¹ These virtuous attachments are not exclusive; on the contrary, society is built upon a web of such friendships which, through their virtue, form the building blocks of the greater social moral code.

Aristotle's notion of the friend as a mirror image of the self which reflects virtue, a concept initiated by Plato and expanded on by his followers, relates exclusively to male citizens. This masculinist concept of the friend as the 'second self' came to define critical approaches to early modern friendship.²² Montaigne follows Aristotle's idea of the 'second self', as he writes of his friend la Boetie's death that "I was already so formed and accustomed to being a second self everywhere that only half of me seems alive now."²³ and Plato in his conception of ideal friendship and places friendship in contrast to the sexual passion between men and women, although Montaigne imagines friendship to be strictly homosocial. He imagines friendship as opposite to the baser physical relations which signify marriage: "To enjoy [sexual love] is to lose it: its end is in the body and therefore subject to satiety. Friendship on the contrary is enjoyed in proportion to our desire: since it is a matter of the mind, with our souls being purified by practising it, it

²⁰ Montaigne, p. 9.

²¹ Ibid, p. 3.

²²The notion of the "second self" can be traced to Aristotle's discussion of friendship in Book IX of the *Nicomachean Ethics* (p. 320). See Francis Vander Valk, "Political Friendship and the Second Self in Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*", *Innovations: A journal of politics*, vol. 5 (2004-2005) and Richard Mulgan, "The Role of Friendship in Aristotle's Political Theory," in *The Challenge to Friendship in Modernity*, ed. Preston King and Heather Devere (London: Frank Cass, 2000), p. 15.

²³ Montaigne, p. 197

can spring forth, be nourished and grow only when enjoyed.”²⁴ Michael Harris credits Montaigne for his contribution to a reworking of the Platonic ideal from a homoeroticism into a ‘sublime spiritual eros’, in which human passion is transformed into religious devotion through virtuous friendship; Mark Llewellyn links this notion of sublime friendship to Philips’s representations of platonic friendship.²⁵ This idea of a disembodied, spiritual friendship is used to designate a wider discourse of neo-platonic friendship to which both Montaigne and Philips contributed.

Jeremy Taylor’s *A Discourse on the Nature, Offices and Measures of Friendship, with Rules of conducting it* (1657) follows in Montaigne’s footsteps and pointedly omits friendship between women from his vision of Christian companionship.²⁶ Lorna Hutson notes that although Philips and her contemporaries appropriate the masculine tradition of same-sex friendship, their representations of the relationship differ.²⁷ For Taylor and his predecessors in the classical tradition, friendship was represented through embodiment: the physical presence (or absence) of the friend provoked an emotional response in the subject. Montaigne laments “Since that day when I lost [La Boetie], I merely drag wearily on. The very pleasures which are proffered me do not console me: they redouble my sorrow at his loss. In everything we were halves: I feel I am stealing his share from me.”²⁸ For royalist writers, and in particular Philips and her coterie, friendship also hinges on the absence of the friend; however in literary representations the physical absence is often transcended by a spiritual presence. Philips describes a spiritual connection across the divide of physical separation in “Parting with Lucasia: A song”:

Well! we will doe that rigid thing
Which makes Spectators think we part;
Though absence hath for none a sting

²⁴ Ibid, p. 6.

²⁵ Frances Harris, *Transformations of Love: The friendship of John Evelyn and Margaret Godolphin* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), pp. 4-5; quoted in Mark Llewellyn, ‘Katherine Philips: Friendship, poetry and neo-platonic thought in seventeenth-century England’, *Philological Quarterly*, 81:4 (2002), 441-68 (p. 450).

²⁶ Taylor, p. 330. Also quoted in Lydia Hamessley, ‘Henry Lawes’s Setting of Katherine Philips’s Friendship Poetry in his *Second Book of Ayeres and Dialogues*, 1655: A musical misreading?’ in *Queering the Pitch: The new gay and lesbian musicology*, ed. by Philip Brett, Elizabeth Wood, Gary Thomas, (Abingdon, Routledge: 2006), 115-138, n. 32.

²⁷ Lorna Hutson, ‘The Body of the Friend and the Woman Writer: Katherine Philips’s absence from Alan Bray’s *The Friend* (2003)’, *Women’s Writing*, 14:2 (August 2007), 196-214 (pp. 204-7).

²⁸ Montaigne, p. 19.

But hose who keep each other's heart.²⁹

Philips laments the “tedious smart / Of absent friendship” but acknowledges that they can “all obstructions overthrow” because they “keep each other's heart.”³⁰ Philips goes further to describe friendship as not only enduring despite physical absence, but growing stronger and confirming its virtue in “Parting with a Friend”:

If I read in either's Mind,
As sure I hope I do,
That each to other is combin'd,
Absence will make it true.³¹

Philips engages with the classical model of friendship which in its true form is a spiritual connection; however she suggests that it is only through absence that its nature is tested and validated. The verse demonstrates a subtle gendered difference in friendship traditions in which physical absence intensifies the spiritual connection.

In the early modern era, men and women largely inhabited a world segregated by gender. Most research on homosociality in the period has focused exclusively on men, perhaps because of the more documented masculine environments of the military, university, and coffeehouses.³² Additionally much has been written on male friendships in the late Renaissance from a modern perspective, from literary representations such as the much speculated relationship between Hamlet and Horatio in Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, to early philosophical tracts on friendship, and historical relationships evidenced by letters and manuscripts.³³ By contrast, relationships among women have been largely overlooked as scholars have historically examined women through the prism of

²⁹ Katherine Philips, “Parting with Lucasia, 13th January 1657/8: A song” in *Katherine Philips: The Matchless Orinda. Volume 1: The poems*, ed. by Patrick Thomas (Stump Cross, Essex: Stump Cross Books, 1990), pp. 136-7, lines 1-4.

³⁰ *Ibid*, lines 9-10, 22, 4.

³¹ Philips, “Parting with a Friend” in *Poems*, pp. 231-33, lines 29-32.

³² Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, *Between Men: English literature and male homosocial desire* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1985); Brian Cowan, *The Social Life of Coffee: The emergence of the British Coffeehouses* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005); Mario DiGangi, *The Homoerotics of Early Modern Drama* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

³³ See Thomas Macfaul, *Male Friendship in Shakespeare and his Contemporaries* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007); Alan Bray, *The Friend* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003) and “Homosexuality and the Signs of Male Friendship in Elizabethan England,” *Queering the Renaissance*, ed. by Jonathan Goldberg, (Durham: Duke University Press, 1994), 40-61.

marriage.³⁴ Corresponding studies of contemporary female friendship have in the past been notably absent. Penelope Anderson notes the ‘double exclusion’ of women’s friendship from civic life, brought about by treatises which deem true friendship between women as impossible and by the ‘problematically emotional’ stereotype of women.³⁵ More specifically Lorna Hutson highlights the omission of Katherine Philips from Alan Bray’s *The Friend*, raising questions about the relationship between female friendship and the masculine tradition. Hutson argues that Bray’s omission of representations of early modern female friendship does not signify the continuation of a misogynist literary history, but rather highlights the different representations of male and female friendship in the seventeenth century.³⁶

Mary Beale’s *A Discourse of Friendship* (1667) explores the potential of same-sex friendship for female agency. Beale’s manuscript, dedicated to the wife of John Tillotson, later Archbishop of Canterbury, describes friendship as the pinnacle of emotional and social achievement, the “Union, which distinct Soules are capable of.”³⁷ Beale emphasises that the relationship is achieved on a spiritual level. It is significant that Beale departs from her male counterparts as she considers this perfect union available to women, echoing Katherine Philips’s notion of the ungendered soul in her poem “A Friend.” “If Soules no sexes have, for men t’exclude / Women from friendship’s vast capacity”, Philips argues, then women are equally capable of participation in the union imagined by male predecessors.³⁸ The poem argues for women’s ability to participate in virtuous friendship by emphasising the spiritual nature of the relationship. Philips’s verse echoes Thomas Overbury’s “A Wife”, a poem which describes marriage as a platonic and spiritual union:

So let me chuse, as wife and friend to find,
Let me forget her sex, when I approve:
Beasts likeness lies in shape, but ours in mind:
Our soules no sexes have, their love is cleane,
No sex, both in the better part are men.³⁹

³⁴ Amy Froide, ‘Female Relationships in Early Modern England’, *Journal of British Studies*, 40:2 (2001), 279-89 (p. 279).

³⁵ Penelope Anderson, ‘The Absent Female Friend: Recent studies in early modern women’s Friendship’, *Literature Compass*, 7:4 (April 2010), 243-253 (247).

³⁶ Hutson, pp. 196-197.

³⁷ Washington, DC, Folger Shakespeare Library, MS 420127, p. 6.

³⁸ Katherine Philips, “A Friend”, in *Poems*, 165-68.

³⁹ Sir Thomas Overbury, “A Wife” (G. Eld for Lawrence Lisle: London, 1614), lines 74-78.

The poem describes a marriage companion in the terms of classical friendship: the body represents only carnal desire, and their relationship is formed through a “likenesse ... in mind”. Beale and Philips rework the Ciceronian tradition of friendship which contends that friendship can only exist between good men. Beale suggests it can only exist between “distinct Soules”, which, as Philips argues are ungendered, is available to men and women alike, both emphasising the virtuous nature of the bond and disembodiment of the subjects themselves.

Friendship is imagined as a redeeming spiritual bond and Beale positions it as a sacred relationship which amplifies virtue, both religious and intellectual. Before entering into such a bond, Beale believes she “ought to make a serious enquiry, and passe an imparshall censure on my self; that soe I may the better understand how farre I am qualified, for so sacred a bond: and learning thence mine owne imperfections, may be able to strive against, and restraints them, both by Religion, and reason.”⁴⁰ Friendship spans the divide between religion and reason, the humanist dichotomy of the Enlightenment. Beale’s friendship is the highest relationship of which humankind is capable and “cannot be base in it’s ends”, but she warns of the dangers of imperfect friendship:

Now, that Friendship which is truly Noble in it self, cannot be base in it’s ends, for then it ceaseth to be Friendship; and is changed in some deformed and ugly passion, unworthy of so excellent a Name: For as the best things corrupted become most loathsome, soe Friendship viliated, degenerates into the worst of Evills.⁴¹

Beale’s philosophy of friendship, like that of Aristotle, is based on individual virtue which is amplified through a noble spiritual connection with another of equal virtue. However she warns that the relationship is by its nature virtuous and is therefore incorruptible, and friendship which strays outside its moral boundaries is no longer friendship. Warning against the “false Vertues” which easily lead friendship astray, Beale sets out the parameters of true friendship. This is described as a contractual relationship governed by a set of philosophical and moral laws:

⁴⁰ Folger MS 420127, p. 7.

⁴¹ Ibid, p. 9.

That Freindship therefore be established, and it's Lawes inviolably kept; it is necessary, that myself, or any who are industrious to enter into this Alliance; consider both my owne temper, and Theirs in whome I choose, to repose this Trust.⁴²

Beale's use of such as "Alliance" and "confederacy" to describe the nature of the relationship shapes a friendship which is politically founded. Furthermore, she also highlights the importance of reason, rather than passion, in governing true friendships. Calling religion "the highest Reason, and a more unerring Guide, then Philosophy", Beale argues that religious virtue is the connecting bond which yields "the wholesome fruites of Peace".⁴³ The implications of friendship's role in political governance are clear. However as friendship has the potential for guidance and the amplification of virtue, its false application also has the potential for "ill consequence". If there are excesses of "distrust and Jealousies", it will "impaire their strength, and encrease their burthen."⁴⁴ Beale's vision of friendship as both idealistically virtuous and secularly grounded by governing laws is highly pertinent to the study of Katherine Philips and her model of friendship as foundational to community building. Like Beale, the women of this study participate in a heavily masculine discourse of friendship, manipulating the classical parameters of virtuous friendship to open it up to female participation and thus provides entry into wider political and social life.

In her study of early American affiliation, Ivy Schweitzer considers friendship essential to social and political life. Schweitzer notes the prevalence of classical philosophy in shaping politically inflected cultural practices, in particular the Aristotlean notion of a 'mirror' or 'second self'.⁴⁵ Schweitzer does not exclude marriage from her examination of affiliation; on the contrary she traces the language and imagery used to represent female friendship back to a larger cultural trend of applying the terminology of classical friendship to heterosexual marriage in order to redefine marriage as a form of spiritual companionship.⁴⁶ Schweitzer breaks down the gendered divide which suggested that female friendship was marginal to the tradition of male friendship. Other critics have seen female friendship as a rejection of the heterosexual norm of marriage and therefore

⁴² Ibid, p. 7.

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Ivy Schweitzer, *Perfecting Friendship: Politics and affiliation in early American literature* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006), p. 3.

⁴⁶ Ibid, p. 6.

representing a potentially transgressive social and political power.⁴⁷ Friendship, because of its voluntary nature, remained outside the sphere of marriage and family, relationships governed by church and secular authority, and thus has the potential for political disruption. Certainly women's engagement with the masculine tradition of friendship has political implications. From the classical ties to the polis, through to the pastoral revival of the Caroline court, friendship has been a vital means of social and political cohesion. As a number of scholars have argued, the court of Henrietta Maria largely shaped contemporary and modern interpretations of female friendship and continued to be a powerful social influence into the early eighteenth century.⁴⁸ The courtly coterie which was united around the queen and which was involved in the revival represent the ways in which literary imagery and language function to unite a community. Henrietta Maria cultivated a neo-pastoral revival defined by passionate female friendship and which mimicked a French Epicureanism and the platonic principles of the courtly coterie would continue to influence the imagery and ideals of later representations of friendship.⁴⁹ Erica Veevers has drawn attention to Henrietta Maria's cultural role, in effect serving as a counterpart to her husband's political role: the queen promoted religious-political views through the patronage, content and performance of masques.⁵⁰ Henrietta Maria, like Queen Elizabeth I before her, took advantage of her influential position to further her own literary visions. However many women writers would identify with her coterie and the pastoral form with which it became associated despite their own lack of public political role.⁵¹

The connection between friendship and individual and communal virtue is a significant subject in female social discourse, raising the question of the role of women not only in philosophical and political discourse, but in the very social fabric which had

⁴⁷ Harriette Andreadis, 'Re-configuring Early Modern Friendship: Katherine Philips and homoerotic desire', *Studies in English Literature 1500-1900*, 46:3 (2006), 523-542 (p. 530).

⁴⁸ Julie Sanders, 'Caroline Salon Culture and Female Agency: The Countess of Carlisle, Henrietta Maria, and public theatre', *Theatre Journal*, 52:4 (December 2000), 449-464.

⁴⁹ Charles Kay Smith, 'French Philosophy and English Politics in Interregnum Poetry', in *The Stuart Court and Europe: Essays in politics and political culture*, ed. by Robert Malcolm Smuts (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 177-209 (pp. 177-9, 189-90).

⁵⁰ Erica Veevers, *Images of Love and Religion: Queen Henrietta Maria and court entertainments*, ch. 4 'The Queen's Masques' (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 110-49. See also Karen Britland, *Drama at the Courts of Queen Henrietta Maria* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006).

⁵¹ Su Fang Ng notes the connection between Henrietta Maria's cult of Platonic Love and Margaret Cavendish's *The Blazing World*. See *Literature and the Politics of Family in Seventeenth-century England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), p. 182.

friendship as its core ideal. The possibility of women engaging in the traditionally masculine relationship of perfect, virtuous and politically grounded friendship opened up possibilities for women which were far reaching. Women like Beale and Philips argued that women are not only capable of perfect friendship, but ideally suited to its civic and moral virtues, thus opening up the political dimensions of the classical model to women. This thesis explores representations of friendship and community by women as a separate female literary tradition, but one which is closely aligned to the masculine tradition from whence it derived.

Friendship and the Communal Impulse

The social function of friendship and the ways in which it was represented in the seventeenth century requires a distinction between early modern and modern definitions of friendship. Friendship, in its modern usage, is confined to the characterisation of an intimate relationship between two people, inspired by mutual feelings of love, trust and pleasure. Friendship in a politicised community, however, cannot be confined to the intimate sphere of two people and necessarily affects every member of the community. Jacques Derrida viewed friendship, normally considered marginal to the field of politics, as itself a political relationship which is inherently democratic. Derrida looks beyond friendship as fraternalistic. “Let us dream of a friendship which goes beyond ... the congeneric double, beyond parenthood, the most as well as the least natural of parenthoods”, he suggests.⁵² The values of reciprocity, trust and solidarity which characterise Aristotle’s perfect friendship also contribute to Derrida’s sense of community, a political association in which ethical virtue can be exercised by its members on the basis of a shared view of the common good. The politicised communities imagined by the women of this study are inherently idealistic, reactions against their experiences of community which are invariably unstable, fractured or marginalised.

The primary aim of this section of the introduction is to explore the term ‘community’ in early modern historiography and to examine the ways in which it was conceptually imagined in the seventeenth century. Contemporary notions of community hinge on geography, race, economic and political factors which can be both ideologically

⁵² Jacques Derrida, *Politics of Friendship*, trans. by G. Collins (London: Verso 1997), viii.

and spatially formed. On a general level, community can be defined as “bodies of individuals, generally consciously congregating within the framework of a specific social or ideological body.”⁵³ The question arises how individuals structure and maintain the “specific ... ideological body” which unites a community separated by time and space. This connection between individuals across boundaries, either real or imagined, opens up the space of community to further interpretation.

The public sphere is one means by which individuals come together continually and voluntarily to form a civic body.⁵⁴ The Habermasian public sphere is closely related to civic society. Habermas defined the public sphere as “the sphere of private people com[ing] together as a public.”⁵⁵ This definition resonates with the notion of communities as “bodies of individuals” coming together for a “specific social or ideological means.” Habermas clearly imagines the public sphere as a discursive space which facilitated the free exchange of ideas: “The public sphere was constituted in discussion ... as well as in common action.”⁵⁶ However he fails to address it sufficiently as such, shaping the public sphere as a bound space without defining its boundaries or considering what lies beyond them. Habermas’s theory came under fire for its exclusion of marginal groups, particularly women, from participation in the public sphere. These restrictions on the public sphere can be seen as not simply a historically bound social issue, but as systematically problematic. Habermas himself acknowledges the constitutive exclusion of minority groups, including women, from the public sphere, an element of the theory of a unified public sphere which remains problematic for critics. Mary Ryan argues for a rethinking of the space of the public in light of transformations in women’s history over the past two centuries, warning “against a spatial or conceptual closure that constrains the ideal of the public to a bounded sphere with a priori rules about appropriate behaviour

⁵³ Rebecca D’Monté and Nicole Pohl, eds., *Female Communities 1600-1800: Literary visions and cultural realities* (London: St. Martin’s Press, 2000), p. 4.

⁵⁴ Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1958); Jurgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An inquiry into a category of bourgeois society*, trans. by Thomas Burger (Cambridge, Mass: The MIT Press, 1989); Nancy Fraser, ‘Rethinking the Public Sphere: A contribution to the critique of actually existing democracy’, *Social Text* 25:26 (1990), 56-80; Habermas, ‘Further Reflections on the Public Sphere’, in *Habermas and the Public Sphere*, ed. by Craig Calhoun (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1993), 109-42; Gerard Hauser, *Vernacular Voices: The rhetoric of publics and public spheres* (Columbia, SC: The University of South Carolina, 1999), Nick Crossley and John Michael Roberts, eds., *After Habermas: New perspectives on the public sphere* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2004).

⁵⁵ Habermas 1989, p. 27.

⁵⁶ *Ibid*, p. 3.

therein.”⁵⁷ Nancy Fraser has highlighted the exclusion of women from public discourse and representation, relegated to the private, domestic space of the home and family, proposing the idea of multiple spheres which encompass excluded groups.⁵⁸ By contrast, Paula McDowell makes a case against the political disenfranchisement of women in the public sphere, arguing that the mid-seventeenth century public sphere was maintained by the participation of middle- and lower-class women's political activity, which took place largely through print.⁵⁹ McDowell's argument reforms Habermas's public sphere into an egalitarian socio-political space that gives voice to excluded groups. A more inclusive and multifaceted approach to political community is required and which has been initiated by scholars such as Catharine Gray, Sue Wiseman, Hilda Smith, Jacqueline Broad and Karen Green, whose work will be discussed in more detail in this study.⁶⁰

Mary Ryan, Nancy Fraser, and Geoff Eley have all called for a re-evaluation of the notion of a single public, instead shaping a critical framework of multiple and overlapping publics.⁶¹ The alternative social frameworks which are evident in the literary activity of the women in this study reveal a sustained attempt to re-imagine the function and structure of community. Charles Taylor considers the public sphere as a ‘metatopical’ common space, in which individuals come together to share ideas which shape the civic body. Taylor’s public sphere is representative of a group’s social imagining, its shared understanding of itself and its power relations.⁶² Taylor follows Habermas’s idealisation of the metaphorical space of the public sphere as a locus of discussion which existed separately from, but connected to, political structure. He departs from Habermas’s unified public body in his notion of ‘metatopicality’, or the knitting together of a plurality of common spaces.⁶³ The concept of multiple and overlapping spheres supplements the Habermasian notion of a singular ‘literary public sphere’, reshaping the model in a way

⁵⁷ Mary Ryan, ‘Gender and Public Access: Women’s politics in nineteenth-century America’, in Calhoun, 259-288 (p. 218).

⁵⁸ Fraser, pp. 115-16.

⁵⁹ Paula McDowell, *The Women of Grub Street: Press, Politics and Gender in the London Literary Marketplace, 1678-1730* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998), p. 9.

⁶⁰ Gray 2002; Susan Wiseman, *Conspiracy and Virtue: Women, writing and politics in seventeenth-century England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006); Hilda Smith, *Women Writers and the Early Modern British Political Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998); Jacqueline Broad and Karen Green, *A History of Women’s Political Thought in Europe, 1400-1700* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009).

⁶¹ For further discussion on multiple and overlapping circles see Geoff Eley, ‘Nations, Publics, and Political Cultures,’ in Calhoun, pp. 289-339; Fraser, pp. 122-29.

⁶² Charles Taylor, *Modern Social Imaginaries* (Duke University Press: 2004), p. 86.

⁶³ Ibid.

which is inclusive of women and other liminal groups. However Craig Calhoun, in the introduction to *Habermas and the Public Sphere*, cautions against neglecting the “communicative relationships” between the varied spheres, suggesting that we as critics needs to think in terms of a “field of discursive connections” which link the overall framework.⁶⁴ In analysing the textual activity of early modern women, I will explore the processes of communication and engagement by women writers as they shape and participate in multiple spheres of political activity and, in so doing, explore the ways in which these spheres are connected, expanding on Habermas’s idea of communicative reason.

The extent of Habermas’s influence is demonstrated by the fact that contemporary theoretical conceptions of community are largely discussed as imagined rather than spatially defined. This allows for a greater flexibility in shaping sociable structures. Benedict Anderson’s *Imagined Communities* applies the idea of imaginatively structured groups specifically to nations, focusing on the political mode of identifications which unite individuals.⁶⁵ I am concerned with the way in which smaller circles of communities are formed, sustained and interrelate with both each other and larger socio-political identities. Thus in exploring what I consider to be ‘imagined communities’ within this study, I am more closely applying the idea of the ‘virtual community’ as put forth by Rebecca D’Monté and Nicole Pohl. This is a key concept in the argument of this thesis, illuminating the way in which individuals forged connections across time and space. The work of D’Monté and Pohl differs from Anderson’s ‘imagined communities’ in that while Anderson focuses on communities delimited by national boundaries, D’Monté and Pohl focus on communities which are not spatially limited and on smaller networks which provide an “inclusive alternative” to larger socio-political units.⁶⁶ These smaller communities are, like their national counterparts, largely imaginatively constructed and united through the image of communion and equality, but are spatially unbounded and therefore fluid and changeable.

D’Monté and Pohl’s *Female Communities 1600-1800* provides a foundation of early modern social frameworks from which to approach the theoretical and material

⁶⁴ Calhoun, ‘Introduction’, pp. 37-8.

⁶⁵ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism* (London: Verso, 1991), pp. 37-46.

⁶⁶ D’Monté and Pohl, p. 4.

concepts of community. Their work explores imagined social networks united through a mutual experience of gender, and other critics have similarly seen evidence of a gendered sociability in the literary activity of seventeenth-century women.⁶⁷ Although I follow D'Monté and Pohl in exploring the ways communities are represented virtually, it is important to acknowledge that spatially defined communities were still a powerful social form in the seventeenth century. The primary social units were the family and, in a wider sense, the local community. Parishes were significant political, social and geographical spaces both within cities and in the provinces. Geographical analyses of the English Civil War look beyond the county as a unit of analysis, demonstrating variation in human response within the same geographical environment.⁶⁸ These current studies reveal the lack of geographical determinism, opening up the opportunity to explore social organisation outside of geographical determinants. Thus although the writers within this study are united in their construction of what Elizabeth Rowe would call 'imaginary Regions'⁶⁹ which function as spaces of disembodied sociability, geographical location and material community remain significant to the historical context of their social philosophies.

Although community may be compatible with a geographically defined sense of place, it is not merely a function of a person's residence. Through historical analysis of communities such as the guild, parish, village and county, scholars have produced a grid of social explanation which defines economic, politic, and social interaction between individuals. This is akin to social network analysis which has been vital in articulating alternative ways of looking at sociability by correlating the connective outlines of community across space, in addition to the imperatives of residence and geographic proximity within place. Social network analysis, primarily used in the social sciences, allows thinking about multiple relationships concurrently, with multiple sets of other participants. Rather than approaching individuals as discrete units of social analysis, network theory focuses on how the structure of ties between individuals affects them and

⁶⁷ D'Monté and Pohl; Elizabeth Eger, et al, eds, *Women, Writing and the Public Sphere, 1700–1830* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001); Margaret Ezell, *Writing Women's Literary History* (Baltimore and London: John Hopkins University Press, 1996).

⁶⁸ Leonard Hochberg, 'The English Civil War in Geographical Perspective', *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, 15:4 (Spring 1984), 729-750 (p. 733).

⁶⁹ Alnwick MS 110, Letter 25, p. 89.

their relationships with others.⁷⁰ Alexandra Shepard and Phil Withington's collection *Communities in Early Modern England* shows the value of this approach in making sense of early modern interaction provide useful frameworks for visualising the 'shape' formed by communities and their individual members. Space is and always will be socially imbued, from city squares and public assembly points, to the architectural authority conveyed by state buildings. Space is, as Julia Wood points out, "a primary means by which a culture designates who is important, who has privilege."⁷¹ Feminist theory in particular has used spatial metaphors to explore geographical and discursive participation, tracing movement in and out of circles, spaces and boundaries.⁷² It has traditionally celebrated spaces of resistance, what Kerstin Shands terms 'bracing space'. Such spaces are contrasted with the more open and fluid 'embracing space', which is both politically and spiritually empowering.⁷³

For an example of the way in which such spaces were conceptualised in the writing of early modern women, we can look to Margaret Cavendish's "The World in an Ear-ring." Cavendish engages with contemporary physical theories of atoms, which prompted scientists to conceive of whole worlds which were beyond the sight of the naked eye. Cavendish's poem works upon this premise, looking to poetry as a way of exploring the relationship between the unobservable and the observable world, complicating the binary notion of the socially visible exterior and the invisible individual interior:

An *Eare-ring round* may well a *Zodiacke* bee,
Wherein a *Sun* goeth round, and we not see.
[...]
all within the *Compass* of this *Ring*,
And yet not tidings to the *Wearer* bring.⁷⁴

Cavendish's poem demonstrates the negotiation between a communal and individual self: the woman of the poem sees herself as an autonomous individual, and yet contained

⁷⁰ Linton Freeman, *The Development of Social Network Analysis: A study in the sociology of science* (Vancouver: Empirical Press, 2004), p. 3.

⁷¹ Julia Wood, *Gendered Lives: Communication, gender, and culture* (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 1994), p. 160.

⁷² Kerstin Shands, *Embracing Space: Spatial metaphors in feminist discourse* (Greenwood Publishing Group, 1999), p. 1.

⁷³ *Ibid*, p. 2.

⁷⁴ Margaret Cavendish, "The World in an Ear-ring", *Poems and Fancies* (London: Printed by T.R. for J. Martin, and J. Allestrye, 1653), pp. 45-6, lines 1-2, 37-8.

within her person is the potential for infinite smaller and self-sustained worlds. The poem provides a useful visual analogy for the theoretical concepts at play in early modern political philosophy: the woman is figured as the body politic, but within this body are any number of smaller communities, in perpetual movement and transition which is largely unnoticed by the naked eye.

Cavendish's *Description of a New World Called the Blazing World* (1666) also uses images of infinite and interlinking worlds to explore the framework of imagined sociability. Within Cavendish's novel, female friendships transcend the boundaries of the physical world: the Duchess forms a close friendship with the Empress of the Blazing World despite their different geospatial positions, and they continue their friendship in a spiritual transportation into the body of the Duke. The two female friends are described as "several parts of one united body", echoing both the political metaphor from "The World in an Ear-ring" and the 'second self' which defines Platonic friendship.⁷⁵ Again it is significant that Cavendish portrays the classical model of virtuous friendship but, contrary to classical and contemporary precedent, it is portrayed between women. Cavendish's theory of friendship which is spiritually formed and sustained is set against her more personal feelings of isolation and solitude. While it has been observed that Cavendish's presentation of herself as a recluse was exaggerated to reinforce her projected image as a melancholic intellectual, her feelings of isolation are by all appearances genuine.⁷⁶

Though critics have long regarded Cavendish as anomalous because of her self-proclaimed 'singularity', the imagery, language and representations of disembodied sociability which define her verse can also be seen in the poetry and prose of her contemporaries. Katherine Philips conveys a philosophy of sociability which is similarly unconstrained by physical or spatial boundaries in her retirement poetry:

In my remote and humble seate
Now I'm again possess
Of that late fugitive, my breast,
From all thy tumult and from all thy heat
I'le find a quiet and a coole retreat;

⁷⁵ Margaret Cavendish, *The Blazing World and Other Writings*, ed. by Kate Lilley (London: Pickering, 1992), p. 183.

⁷⁶ James Fitzmaurice, 'Fancy and the Family: Self-characterisations of Margaret Cavendish', *Huntingdon Library Quarterly*, 53 (1990), 199-210 (pp. 201-3).

And on the fetters I have worne
Looke with experienced and revengefull scorne,
In this my soveraigne privacie.
'Tis true I cannot governe thee,
But yet my selfe I can subdue;
And that's the nobler empire of the two.⁷⁷

The vision of retreat imagined by Philips is expansive and self-governing, the “soveraigne privacie” in contrast to the “fetters . . . worne” in the physical world. The tension between a desire for community, on the one hand, and the desire for retreat and interiority, on the other, is prominent but not problematic. This has tremendous importance for the discussion of community in this thesis. Although Philips, Barker and Rowe all engage with the trope of pastoral retirement, this does not preclude their participation in varying communities and with varying levels of involvement. Cavendish and her contemporaries represent communities which are spiritually connected and which satisfy the dual desires for sociability and solitude. The image of “infinite Worlds” which extend beyond the observable physical world and which offer a space of creative and social expansion is a common trope in early modern women’s writing. Elizabeth Singer Rowe expresses a similar desire for an imagined space in which creative and intellectual pursuits can flourish:

Indeed I have some imaginary Regions of my own framing
When Fancy in her airy Triumph Reigns⁷⁸

Rowe’s “imaginary Regions” are analogous to Cavendish’s “infinite Worlds”; both women construct disembodied spaces which offer social, political and creative possibilities for women. These spaces represent the power of the female imagination and the opportunity for women to exert authority over intellectual and social spheres. Indeed Cavendish demonstrates that knowledge is an epistemic tool which is subject to imagination or ‘fancy’. Imagination is “the eye of knowledge”; poetry and fancy is a means of access to the unseen world.⁷⁹ Cavendish represents an evolution of classic

⁷⁷ Philips, “An ode upon retirement, made upon occasion of Mr. Cowley’s on that subject”, in *Poems*, pp. 193-95, lines 18-28.

⁷⁸ Alnwick MS 110, Letter 25, p. 89.

⁷⁹ G. Gabrielle Starr, ‘Cavendish, Aesthetics, and the Anti-Platonic Line’, *Eighteenth Century Studies*, 39:3 (2006), 295-308 (pp. 298-9); Bronwen Price, “Journeys Beyond Frontiers: Knowledge, Subjectivity and Out Space in Margaret Cavendish’s *the Blazing World*,” *Literature and History* 7 (1998): 21-59; Lee Cullen Khanna, “The Subject of Utopia: Margaret Cavendish and Her Blazing World,” *Utopian and Science*

Epicureanism, whereby the means of obtaining knowledge is a study of imagination. Cavendish cautions, however, against a misunderstanding of imaginative utility:

Yet *Fancy* cannot be without some *Braines*.
If *Fancy Without Substance* cannot bee,
Then *Soules* are more, than *Reason* well can see.⁸⁰

Rather than an anomalous vision of individual isolation and creative desire, Cavendish voices a communal desire for a disembodied sociable space which enables creative achievement. This desire, however, can be tinged with loneliness and wistful longing. Cavendish often presents herself as a recluse, whether from political exile or through a perceived lack of belonging, “being addicted from my childhood to contemplation rather than conversation, to solitariness rather than society”.⁸¹ As I will demonstrate in the course of this study, these dual imperatives of sociability and interiority are characteristic of the early modern women’s literary tradition.

Women and Community

Community is discussed on both a theoretical and historical level as groups of individuals coming together.⁸² This coming together of select individuals necessarily implies an exclusion of others, raising questions regarding the entry to the community and the way in which membership is represented. As previously explored, a significant branch of feminist scholarship has focused on the exclusion of women from the public sphere, asking whether the term itself is inherently masculinist. Habermas takes note of the fact that women of all classes were legally and historically excluded from the bourgeois public sphere which was defined by the political and legal authority of the land-owning classes. Joan Landes astutely points out Habermas’s own qualifying remark on the apparent exclusion of women from participation in the male dominated public: “Female readers as well as apprentices and servants often took a more active part in the

Fiction by Women, ed., Jane L. Donawerth and Carol A. Kolmerton (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1994), 15-34.

⁸⁰ Margaret Cavendish, “It is hard to believe, that there are other Worlds in this World”, in *Poems and Fancies*, p. 44, lines 40-2.

⁸¹ Margaret Cavendish, *The life of William Cavendish, Duke of Newcastle: To which is added the true relation of my birth, breeding and life*, ed. by C. H. Firth, 2nd edn (London: Routledge, 1909), p. 172.

⁸² See Pohl and D’Monte, p. 4; Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *The Social Contract: And the first and second discourses*, ed. by Susan Dunn (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002).

literary public sphere than the owners of private property and family heads themselves.”⁸³ In contrast to the bourgeois public sphere, the literary public sphere was accessible to those outside the factual and legal authority of the political state. This quote demonstrates the alternative means of participation available to women; even the role of reader marked significant engagement in the literary public sphere. Although property owners and family heads were included in the public sphere, at the exclusion of their female counterparts, the literary public sphere was more accessible to those female readers who could access, read and respond to literary texts from the confines of domestic space. Habermas himself admits that his model of the public sphere underestimates the significance of gender exclusion. “If one seriously tries to make room for the feminist dynamic of the excluded other ... the model is conceived too rigidly.”⁸⁴ Landes shows the extent to which the universal model of a public sphere remained a fiction for women, who instead experienced a counterpublic formed out of an exclusion from participation in the normative public. Nancy Fraser argues that with the formation of the public sphere, alternative spaces of political and social activity were also made available. Literary discourse is a key component of the formation and continuance of such “subaltern counterpublics”, in which “members of subordinated social groups invent and circulate counterdiscourses to formulate oppositional interpretations of their identities, interests, and needs.”⁸⁵ Women, excluded from formal participation in the public sphere, found acceptance and agency in these alternative counterpublics. We have seen how women are excluded from the space of community, yet the instances I have just given reveal that they did find ways of forming and participating in community. The question which this study will explore is, how did they go about it and what was at stake?

Susan Wiseman has written two responses to the question posed by Habermas’s neglect of female engagement in his conception of the public sphere. In her earlier contribution, an essay published in *Women, Writing and the Public Sphere, 1700-1830*, Wiseman clearly links the rise of republicanism with the emergence of a public sphere

⁸³ Habermas, p. 56, quoted in Joan B. Landes, ‘The Public and the Private Sphere: A feminist reconsideration’ in *Feminism, the Public and the Private*, ed. by Landes (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 135-163 (p. 141).

⁸⁴ Habermas, ‘Further Reflections on the Public Sphere’, in Calhoun, 421-461 (p. 430).

⁸⁵ Fraser, p. 123. For more on counterpublics, see Michael Warner, *Publics and Counterpublics* (New York: Zone Books, 2002).

and the exclusion of women from both.⁸⁶ Her recent monograph, *Conspiracy and Virtue*, takes a longer historical view and ranges much more widely across authors and genres, enabling her to provide a detailed and nuanced critique of early modern female literary activity. Wiseman continues to use gender as the defining factor for public activity; however in *Conspiracy and Virtue* she questions the relationships women had to the political sphere and the ways in which both women and men thought and wrote about this. Wiseman argues that gender, acting as an exclusionary identity, was the very basis by which women claimed entry into a politicised public sphere and thus shaped their response to it.⁸⁷ She engages with a critical focus on exclusionary writing in which threshold groups use their liminal identity to create multiple alternative avenues of political, social and literary engagement. In the context of this study, gender is not the only liminal identity at play; political marginality in its various forms throughout the later seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries is identified as a clear impetus to writing.

Not all experiences of community are inclusive, clearly, and community can be represented from a liminal or marginal position, or one of exclusion. Jane Barker's work illustrates this; she presents herself as being located on the fringes of society, and her desire for belonging reminds us that community is experienced from a variety of positions, often simultaneously. In a poem dedicated to her coterie friends at Cambridge, Barker laments that she is connected to and yet removed from the centre of learning in which she seeks inclusion. The poem celebrates solitude, "where peace and virtue shroud / Their unvail'd beautys from the cens'ring crowd", but behind the celebration of pastoral retreat there is a feeling of exclusion, of the nostalgic celebration of a space to which she no longer has access. Kathryn King reads the poem as a "fantasized and unstable identification with an imagined community of learned men", demonstrated by the ultimate symbol of the Tree of Knowledge.⁸⁸ Noting that she has "spent some time" in the "culture" of the Tree, she is currently placed outside its influence:

And I too here, am plac'd in innocence,
I shu'd conclude that such it really were,
But that the Tree of Knowledge won't grow here:
Though in its culture I have spent some time,

⁸⁶ Susan Wiseman, 'Catharine Macaulay: History, republicanism and the public sphere', in Eger, et al, pp. 181-199.

⁸⁷ Wiseman 2006, pp. 7-10.

⁸⁸ King, 2000, p. 80.

Yet it disdains to grow in our cold Clime,
Where it can neither Fruit nor Leaves produce
Good for its owner, or the public use.⁸⁹

Emphasising the distance between her friends and herself, the narrator takes care to point out that the tree was planted “in *your* fertile ground, / Whilst *you* in wit, grow as its branches high, / Deep as its root too, in Philosophy” [emphasis added].⁹⁰ The narrator has acknowledged the different spheres in which she and her addressees live and work, though the poem itself demonstrates a bridge across these spheres. As King notes, Barker's poetical subjects make a connection to the learned communities which played a crucial role in Barker's identification as a writer engaging with the nation's intellectual life.⁹¹

The three women of this study reveal a wide range of experiences of community in the early modern period. This study approaches community as both a process and an ideal, looking at the people who were involved in (or excluded from) shaping the rhetoric by which the community was represented, discussed, and ideologised. In order to achieve this I have focused on the manuscript epistles and published verse of women writers who span the political and chronological spectrum of the early modern period. Representing different kinds of communities, from varying perspectives of inclusivity, the writers of this study suggest common threads of experience and response, thus contributing to a wider tradition of early modern women's writing.

The Space of Sociability: The Pastoral

Literary forms corresponded to the political and social ideas I have outlined above; pastoral is one example of a literary mode much used by early modern women writers to create a textual space of sociability and a site of social imagining.⁹² The pastoral is approached in this thesis as both a literary tradition and a theoretical space in which

⁸⁹ Jane Barker, “An invitation to my learned friends at Cambridge: To my country solitude”, in King 1998, pp. 43-5, lines 35-41.

⁹⁰ Ibid, lines 45-7.

⁹¹ King 2000, p. 42.

⁹² Josephine Roberts, ‘Deciphering Women's Pastoral: Coded language in Wroth's *Love's Victory*’, in Claude J. Summers and Ted-Larry Pebworth, eds., *Representing Women in Renaissance England* (Columbia and London: University of Missouri Press, 1997), pp. 163-174.

political and social experimentation can take place.⁹³ Seventeenth-century writers drew from established classical and Renaissance pastoral models, appropriating the poetic form for highly politicised verse. Leah Marcus explores the early Stuart engagement with the pastoral tradition, arguing that the form was more closely associated with political argument and was used to explore policy by both monarch and court.⁹⁴

Celebrating Britain's natural wealth and self-sufficiency, poetical engagement with the pastoral presents a model of national community founded on innate and shared virtue, in which the people live well off of the natural bounty of the land. Marcus uses the Stuart masques as examples of the use of the pastoral to exert political power over the landscape, creating an idealised countryside reflecting the virtues of the monarch and court.⁹⁵ Edmund Waller, famous for his pastorals which celebrate Britain's natural wealth and happiness, describes the self-sufficient isle in "Panegyrick to my Lord Protector":

Our little World, the Image of the Great,
Like that amidst the boundless Ocean set,
Of her own Growth has all that Nature Craves,
And all that's Rare as Tribute from the Waves ...
Things of the noblest kinde our own soyle breeds,
Stout are our men, and Warlike are our Steeds;
Rome, though her Eagle through the world had flown,
Could never make this Island all her own.⁹⁶

Waller's poem celebrates the prosperity of the "little World" which produces "all that Nature Craves", clearly working from a model of national utopia derived from Sidney's *Arcadia*.⁹⁷ The space of the pastoral countryside functions as an imagined landscape of

⁹³ James Sambrook, *English Pastoral Poetry* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1983); David R. Shore, *Spenser and the Poetics of Pastoral: A study of the world of Colin Clout* (Quebec: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1985); Elizabeth V. Young, 'Aphra Behn, Gender, and Pastoral', *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900*, 33:3 (Summer 1993), 523-543; Leah Marcus, 'Politics and Pastoral: Writing the court on the countryside', in Kevin Sharpe and Peter Lake, eds., *Culture and Politics in Early Stuart England* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1993), 139-160; Judith Haber, *Pastoral and the Poetics of Self-Contradiction: Theocritus to Marvell* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994); Simon Scama, *Landscape and Memory* (New York: Random House, 1995); Susan Snyder, *Pastoral Process: Spenser, Marvell, Milton* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998); Ann Messenger, *Pastoral Tradition and the Female Talent* (New York: AMS Press, 2001); Bronwen Price, 'Verse, Voice and Body: The retirement mode and women's poetry 1680-1723', *Early Modern Literary Studies* 12.3 (January 2007), 5.1-44; Jennifer Munroe, *Gender and the Garden in Early Modern English Literature* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008).

⁹⁴ Marcus, p. 140.

⁹⁵ Ibid, p. 143.

⁹⁶ Edmund Waller, "A panegyrick to my Lord Protector by a gentleman that loves peace, union, and prosperity of the English nation" (London: Printed by Thomas Newcomb, 1655), lines 49-52, 65-8.

⁹⁷ Sir Philip Sidney, *The Countesse of Pembrokes Arcadia* (London: printed for William Ponsonby, 1590).

experimentation, both social and imaginative, which like the “boundless Ocean” is limitless and self-sustaining. This space is removed from the real world, though the reference to “Rome, [whose] Eagle through the world had flown” is a reminder of the ties this pastoral utopia retains to the outside world.

During and after the Civil War, royalist poetics engaged with the pastoral tradition, merging the form with the cause of the defeated monarchists. Poets from Herrick to Lovelace used the pastoral countryside to reconfigure the space of political exile and the sociability which was found there. The space which they imagined was both removed from and connected to the real world, with the nostalgic memory of pre-war Britain merging with images of the primal virtue and fertility of the Garden of Eden.⁹⁸ Poets struggled to negotiate between a desire for a haven from the chaos and instability of the present world, and an equal desire to remain connected to sociability of that world. These seemingly contradictory desires were united in friendship forged in the pastoral, a friendship which was defined by both sociability and selectivity. Friendship is key to the pastoral as it represented a “semi-private space in which like-minded friends could meet and speak to each other freely in a hostile environment.”⁹⁹ The pastoral became a clearly coded poetic language during and after the Civil War, creating a textual space which mimics the safety and liberty of the metaphorical pastoral countryside.

The ‘semi-private’ space of pastoral retreat was represented as a specifically domestic space which lacked the political and public authority, and hence was considered a ‘feminised’ space.¹⁰⁰ The negative associations of retreat and femininity were projected onto post-war Royalists; James Loxley has suggested that the shift in royalist modes of expression from the promotion of a masculine military ideal to a more passive and covert form of political writing is associated with the post-1649 cultural assumptions about

⁹⁸ See Leah Marcus’s discussion of Marvell’s ‘Mower’ poems, in *The Politics of Mirth: Jonson, Herrick, Milton, Marvell and the Defense of Old Holiday Pastimes* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986), p. 307.

⁹⁹ Michelle O’Callaghan discusses pre-war pastoral, but her definition is very much applicable to Civil War era pastoral as well. See *The ‘shepherds nation’: Jacobean Spenserians and early Stuart political culture 1612-1625* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2000), pp. 11-12.

¹⁰⁰ See Diane Purkiss, ‘Dismembering and Remembering: The English Civil War and male identity’ in *Literature, Gender and Politics During the English Civil War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 32-51; Catherine Coussens, ‘Virtue’s Commonwealth: Gendering the royalist cultural rebellion in the English Interregnum (1649-1660)’, *Journal of Arts and Sciences*, 6 (2006) <[http://jas.cankaya.edu.tr/jas6/\(02\)CatherineCoussens.pdf](http://jas.cankaya.edu.tr/jas6/(02)CatherineCoussens.pdf)> (accessed 10 December 2007).

royalism and femaleness.¹⁰¹ Loxley notes that although the imagery and language employed in royalist poetry significantly altered, the political meaning behind the images remained one of active engagement rather than passive acceptance. Contrary to contemporary comparisons of political defeat and subsequent demasculinisation, the strategy of ‘feminisation’ became a positive and strategic exploitation of female cultural influence which enabled, rather than restricted, political and social authority. The close readings of female poets in this thesis will demonstrate that women were able to utilise the feminisation of the pastoral to their advantage: able to engage with political dialogue under the guise of a poetic trope lacking public and political power, women embraced the pastoral as an empowering female space of sociability. If we approach the use of poetic form as a conscious decision in shaping political and communal identification, the trope of retirement and retreat in the royalist poetic tradition thus takes on new meaning during and after the Civil War. Hero Chalmers argues: “The notion that retirement leads to the most effective affirmation of values takes political engagement out of the traditional public sphere to which women have severely limited access and situates it in a more private territory, enhancing women’s opportunities for political agency alongside their male counterparts.”¹⁰² Chalmers clearly frames retreat within a Habermasian context of public/private, but imagines the ‘private’ to be an enabling rather than a restrictive space of political action. In privileging the feminised spaces of retreat and interiority as sites of authority, Philips promotes the royalist strategies of arguing for the empowerment of the monarch and his subjects through the turn away from the outside world.

Virtue is also connected with the space of the pastoral countryside which, through its natural innocence and fecundity, enables virtue to flourish through mutual relationships.¹⁰³ It is a place of reflection, of emotion, and of creativity, and as such, provides a background to the development of a friendship based on virtue. Ann Messenger notes the overlap of the pastoral and retirement verse, creating an idealised landscape with political and social resonance.¹⁰⁴ All of the women within this study engage with the pastoral as the setting for ideal friendship: Katherine Philips’s “A retir’d

¹⁰¹ James Loxley, *Royalism and Poetry in the English Civil Wars: The drawn sword* (London: Macmillan, 1997), pp. 74-7.

¹⁰² Chalmers, p. 108.

¹⁰³ Ann Messenger (1996) observes the association of women and the pastoral and the feminised language used to describe the virtue and beauty of nature (pp. 4-6).

¹⁰⁴ Ann Messenger, “‘Happy the Woman’?: Retirement to the countryside”, chapter 4 in *Pastoral Tradition and the Female Talent*, pp. 57-82.

Friendship: to Ardelia” urges Ardelia to join her in the retreat, that “happy quiet” of the “neighbouring streams”, where they can “innocently spend an hour . . . kindly mingling Souls.”¹⁰⁵ Friends of virtue “enlarge and extend each other’s moral experience”, and thus the Aristotelean model of virtuous friendship is more an activity than a static relationship. Interaction and reciprocity are key to this dynamism: Ray Pahl explains that “the friends are bound together, as they recognize each other’s moral excellence. Each can be said to provide a mirror in which the other may see himself [and herself]”.¹⁰⁶ “A retir’d Friendship” subverts the masculinist model of friendship existing in its perfect form only between men, opening up the model of classical friendship with its emphasis on shared virtue to women. As the friends reflect and amplify moral goodness on each other, so the pastoral landscape itself reflects natural and innocent virtue on its inhabitants.

Textuality and Community

For the women in this study, involvement in various literary and political communities entails a negotiation of identities which are political, religious, individual and communal. Philips, Barker and Rowe identified themselves at the core of various political and literary communities, and yet simultaneously at the periphery of others. Barker, for example, clearly positions herself within the fervently loyal Jacobite community, but within the localised community of exiles at St. Germain-en-Laye, the former royal residence outside of Paris, she voices a strong and ultimately unfulfilled desire for belonging.¹⁰⁷ Oftentimes it is from their identification with the periphery that Philips, Barker and Rowe derive creative authority, forming alternative textual communities away from centralised authority. As social and political stability became increasingly fragmented in the build up to the Civil War, writers manipulated literary discourse to cohesively shape an alternative communal identity maintained through textual activity. The circulation of their verse in manuscript form was an important aspect of the process of community.

¹⁰⁵ Katherine Philips, “A retir’d Friendship: to Ardelia”, in King 1998, pp. 97-8, lines 14, 27, 3, 2.

¹⁰⁶ Ray Pahl, *On Friendship* (Cambridge: Polity, 2000), p. 22.

¹⁰⁷ Barker’s identification with and connection to the Jacobite community in exile and will be the focus of Chapter 2.

This study will focus primarily on the manuscript production of Philips, Barker and Rowe as a conscious authorial choice which creates and sustains sociable communities of writers. Margaret Ezell has argued that, contrary to critical beliefs that manuscript was considered an aristocratic and outdated form after the Renaissance, manuscript remained a “competitive, if not the dominant, mode of transmitting and reading.”¹⁰⁸ Manuscript existed concurrently with the burgeoning print culture of the late seventeenth century, and all three writers continue to choose manuscript circulation as a principal means of production and dissemination after the publication of early verse and narrative. Manuscript verses and their dissemination are evidence of wider authorial and sociable connections and help to shape our understanding of the social, literary and political networks in which they participated. All of the writers within this study refer to their authorial activity in their works, either directly or indirectly, as a means of transcending material limitations. The authorial personae variously adopted by these writers signal both an engagement with the pastoral tradition and a conscious fashioning of an autonomous, participatory selfhood. Orinda, the pseudonym used by Katherine Philips in the pastoral verse exchanged within the Society of Friendship, came to represent the pinnacle of female virtue and poetic achievement. Jane Barker’s heroines, Galesia and Fidelia, are both narrators within their own right and openly identify themselves primarily as female poets. Elizabeth Singer Rowe writes reflexively about writing in her correspondence with the Athenians, and speaks of the physical and emotional responses to writing in her more private correspondence with Lady Hertford.

Even after the popularisation of readily available printed texts, manuscripts were used in favour of printed texts for government agencies, the church, law, education and commerce, and were an obviously advantageous means of transmitting politically or religiously subversive material. Harold Love notes that scribes fed a thriving trade in both the formal and informal production of texts; and for what we might think of as literary and political texts there was a well-organised manuscript trade, functioning concurrently with the one in printed books. Love has gone so far as to claim that through the end of the seventeenth century scribal publication was “quite equal in terms of status to transmission in printed form.”¹⁰⁹ It is clear from the continuing trade of manuscript

¹⁰⁸ Ezell 1996, p. 12.

¹⁰⁹ Harold Love, ‘Scribal Publication in Seventeenth-century England’, *Transactions of the Cambridge Bibliographical Society*, 9:2 (1987), 130-155 (p. 147).

texts, and the recognition of manuscript both as a normal form of personal record and as a normal form of publication into the early eighteenth century, that the tactical use of manuscript to circulate verse to a controlled readership is not the last resort of a provincial writer on the margins of the metropolitan world of print. Given that all three women had made, at various points in their careers, previous forays into print publication, manuscript exchange can be considered a meditated choice for a writer which enabled the dissemination of writing to a controlled and sympathetic readership.¹¹⁰

This readership was established through the circulation of letters and verse in manuscript form. Letters become both a means of introducing and documenting verse which often accompanied them, and literature which by its very nature created a controlled audience. The epistolary mode is one of conversational intimacy rather than rhetorical self-display, allowing for a greater degree of intellectual and emotional equality between writer and reader. Letters are the physical artefacts of an emotional and spiritual relationship, representing a conduit for intimate but disembodied relationships. Elizabeth Singer Rowe describes her textual exchange as a stand-in for her physical presence:

I left off just here yesterday, & am as good as my word to vissent y^r La^{shp} every morning tho I can't stay now¹¹¹

Time passes within the text of the letter, as the writer comes and goes, picking up where she last left off and in so doing, creating a sense of continual time. In this way the reader is brought into the immediate world of the writer and calls attention to the act of writing and, implicitly, reading. The text is a form of spiritual embodiment in which the physical absence of the writer is compensated for by the intimate address. Playing a large part in the construction of a 'feminised' friendship defined by its lack of physical embodiment,

¹¹⁰ Katherine Philips, *Pompey. A Tragedy. Acted with Great Applause* (London: Printed for John Crooke, 1663), "To the much honoured Mr Henry Lawes, on his Excellent Compositions in Musick", in Henry Lawes, *Second Book of Ayres, and Dialogues* (London: Printed by T. Harper for John Playford, 1655), "To the Memory of the most Ingenious and Vertuous Gentleman Mr. Wil: Cartwright, my much valued Friend", in *Comedies, Tragi-comedies, With other Poems, by Mr. William Cartwright, late Student of Christ-Church in Oxford, and Proctor of the University. The Ayres and Songs set by M^r Henry Lawes* (London: Printed for Humphrey Mosely, 1651); Jane Barker, *Poetical Recreations: Consisting of original poems, songs, odes, &c. with several new translations* (London: 1688) and *The Entertaining Novels of Mrs. Jane Barker*, 2 vols. (London: Printed for A. Bettesworth and E. Curll, 1719); Elizabeth Singer Rowe, *Poems on Several Occasions, Written by Philomela* (London: John Dunton, 1696), and *Friendship in Death: To which are added, letters moral and entertaining, in prose and verse* (London, 1728). For more on women and manuscript circulation, see Victoria Burke, 'Let's Get Physical: Bibliography, Codicology, and Seventeenth-century women's manuscripts', *Literature Compass*, 4:6 (November 2007), 1667-1682 [<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1741-4113.2007.00492.x/full>], accessed December 2010]

¹¹¹ Alnwick MS 110, p. 10.

the epistolary exchange is figured as a form of spiritual presence. Rowe figures the letter as a substitute for physical presence, promising to “vissit” Lady Hertford daily in text, if not in person. The continual reference to the time and place of textual production and reception, as well as the effects on the narrator, creates a physical aspect to the disembodied epistolary relationship.

However the continuing coexistence of the different modes of production raised new issues regarding both audience and authorship. Textual integrity was important to authors and audience alike, and manuscript circulation, in contrast to the relative detachment of print readership, allows writers to retain authorial control over content and readership.¹¹² All three writers in this study struggled with control over their own work in the print domain. Katherine Philips famously condemned the 1664 printed collection of her works, arguing that the publisher had taken liberties both with her works and her image, and Elizabeth Singer Rowe likewise was the subject of an unauthorised publication of her poems by Edmund Curll in 1737, the year of her death.¹¹³ Jane Barker released a manuscript version of the verse that “without her consent, were printed in the year 1688” in a book of miscellany poems, and which were now “corrected by her own hand.”¹¹⁴ The threat to such unauthorised copies in circulation in the public domain is that they will be exposed to an unknown readership. Leigh Eicke argues that for Barker, scribal publication allowed her “to exploit both the protective and community-building aspects of manuscript and the visual conventions of print.”¹¹⁵ Manuscript writing implied a certain level of authorial control over both content and readership, and any discussion of manuscript authorship necessitates defining the domain in which the work will be read and received.

The use of coded poetic discourses suggests an anxiety over the security of private correspondence, and perhaps with good reason. The newly formed General Letter Office (later the General Post Office) was still in its infancy, and with the appointment of Daniel

¹¹² J.A.I. Champion, “Manuscripts of Mine Abroad”: John Toland and the circulation of Ideas, c. 1700-1722’, *Eighteenth Century Ireland* 14(1999), 9-36.

¹¹³ Katherine Philips, in *Katherine Philips: The Matchless Orinda. Volume 2: The letters*, ed. by Patrick Thomas (Stump Cross, Essex: Stump Cross Books, 1990); Chantel Lavoie notes that Curll’s edition makes Rowe “the subject as much as the author of the work”, *Collecting Women: Poetry and Lives, 1700-1780* (Cranbury, NJ: Associated University Presses, 2009), p. 42.

¹¹⁴ King 1998, p. 43.

¹¹⁵ Leigh Eicke, ‘Jane Barker’s Jacobite Writings’, in *Women’s Writing and the Circulation of Ideas: Manuscript publication in England, 1550-1800*, ed. by George Justice and Nathan Tinker (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 137-157 (p. 141).

O'Neill as the Postmaster-General in March 1663, there was greater discontent over the "Uncertainty and Neglectfulness of the Post" amongst royalists and republicans alike.¹¹⁶

Was there a real need for the use of coded language to protect letters in transmission?

There is certainly a perceived sense of danger in textual transmission and a mistrust of the discretion of those who transmit such texts. Katherine Philips, writing to her close friend Sir Charles Cotterell, voices her suspicions:

I take an Opportunity of writing to you by a private Hand, because the Post is so very unsafe, that I fear many of mine, and yours too, which are of ten times more Importance, have miscarry'd: but because we have no other way to depend on constantly, I must beg you to make so effectual a Complaint, as may not only produce a greater Conveniencey and Ease to our Correspondence, but be likewise a Help to the whole Country.¹¹⁷

Although written in 1663, well after the perceived threat to Stuart loyalists from the republican state was over, the security of correspondence remains of utmost importance for Philips and her addressee. Jane Barker, writing from the Jacobite stronghold St. Germain, was faced with a more immediate threat to the security of written texts. St Germain was a contained community of Jacobite loyalists, and dissemination of written correspondence required transmission across a physical and political divide. Thus although there was a printing press at St. Germain, the majority of printed Jacobite propaganda was produced in Britain, and manuscript use continued to flourish within the exiled community.¹¹⁸ Despite the continued dominance of manuscript production, letters were viewed as suspicious and possibly seditious by those both inside and outside the community.¹¹⁹

Coded language fulfilled another function apart from the perceived need for security. Using a coded poetic discourse was, in essence, announcing your identification with a literary community, both past and present. Invocation of the pastoral form evoked the classical writers as well as more contemporary English pastoralists such as Edmund Spenser, Andrew Marvell, and Richard Lovelace, amongst others; engagement with the

¹¹⁶ Katherine Philips, "Letter XXXVI, Orinda to Poliarchus", 17 September 1663, in *Letters*, p. 101.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁸ David Szechi, *The Jacobites, Britain and Europe, 1688-1788* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1994), p. 58.

¹¹⁹ Szechi notes that following the failure of Jacobite restoration, the Hanoverian regime intercepted letters from abroad and messengers were suborned (p. 87).

trope of friendship established oneself within a lineage from Plato and Aristotle through to Francis Finch and Jeremy Taylor. Engagement with established poetic forms, imagery and language is a means of forging connections across time as well as space, demonstrating textual connection with communities both past and contemporary through shared language and imagery which suggests a common ideological connection.

The act of writing itself had significance beyond the physical texts that were produced and circulated. For Katherine Philips, married to a Parliamentarian leader in Wales, the act of writing royalist pastoral verse was a means of asserting her political identity as separate from her identity as married woman. For Jane Barker, writing in the Jacobite exiled community outside Paris, written material, especially letters, held the possibility of subversive and potentially dangerous information. Barker's production of strongly Jacobite verse and its circulation within the St. Germain community aligned her with the politically dissident community and confirmed her conversion to Catholicism. Elizabeth Singer Rowe identified herself with several distinct communities of identification throughout her life, from the coffeehouse coterie in which the *Athenian Mercury* circulated, to the pious dissenting religious community of her later work. These women, though differing in their individual identifications, share the propensity to use textual activity as a means of shaping the self and positioning that self in relation to the wider social and political world.

Community is characterised in the seventeenth century by mutual participation. For the writers explored in this thesis this means participation in the production and transmission of texts as well as in ideologically bound groups. The chapters which follow examine both individual narratives of political experience and social construction, as well as the imagined and material connections between individuals which build a wider social entity.

Conclusion

This study takes as a departure point the model of authorship initiated by Katherine Philips, whose engagement with classical and contemporary discourses of friendship and sociability shaped a means of political engagement for women. Philips's verse forms part of a conversation concerning the role of friendship in building and

sustaining political community, while simultaneously opening up the masculine models of friendship to women. Philips shaped a literary community united by common political ideology and pastoral imagery. The 'Society of Friendship', a circle of writers and thinkers with Philips at the forefront, exchanged verse using pastoral pseudonyms and shared poetic imagery and form. Chapter 1 will explore the verse dedicated to and circulated within this Society, examining both the political and social implications of her poetry and textual activity. The use of established poetic forms, in particular the Pindaric and the pastoral tradition, create a common readership which is united through a shared discourse of politicised poetics. Philips's social and literary circle is examined, as well as her textual conversation with writers such as Abraham Cowley and Andrew Marvell. Philips establishes a model of female literary engagement which is predicated on verse celebrating friendship in pastoral retirement circulated to a cultivated readership. Philips's model would be invoked after her death to connect female writers with the virtuous image of 'Orinda', and the tradition of pastoral friendship which she formed.

The second chapter expands the model of women's literary and political engagement initiated by Philips through an examination of the works of Jane Barker. Focusing on the manuscript verse produced during her time of exile with the Jacobite community of St. Germain, this chapter explores the experience of community from the opposite end of the political spectrum. The complex interplay of authorial and narrative voices in Barker's works depart from Philips's more calculated use of 'Orinda', and raise questions regarding textual readings of individual experience. 'Fidelia', a character appearing as a narrator in the verse produced at St. Germain, is a loyal Jacobite and Catholic who contributes to a communal memory of the Jacobite community from a personal perspective. The implications of using a pseudonym with resonance in a classical tradition in which women find their voice through violent suppression is also explored.

The final chapter follows the female tradition of friendship and community in the verse of Elizabeth Singer Rowe. Rowe was a contemporary of Barker, but as the 'Pindarick Lady' of the dissenting periodical *The Athenian Mercury* her experiences represent a different literary and political perspective. Rowe connects herself strongly with the Williamite regime throughout her life; her experiences of community offer the flip side of Barker's consistent feelings of exile and liminality. Rowe is significant to this

study of early modern communities because of the variety of literary and political groups with which she associated over the course of her career. Her engagement with the *Athenian Mercury* represents her initial foray into print publication and a politically sympathetic but ultimately anonymous readership; however she was concurrently involved in a provincial coterie which shared nonconformist ideals. Rowe's range of authorial experience, from London periodical contributor and print poetess through to her coterie manuscript circulation, demonstrate the avenues available to early modern women writers for engagement in the political and literary spheres.

Bridging the classical notion of friendship as politically relevant and the eighteenth century notion of friendship as a form of association which cumulatively contributes to a moralised civil society, the friendship which is imagined in the verse and prose of Philips, Barker and Rowe has significance for the formation of both individual and communal identities.¹²⁰ Although I identify a tradition of women's writing initiated by Katherine Philips, and developed by both Jane Barker and Elizabeth Singer Rowe, it remains a flexible model which is adapted to individual circumstances. These women contribute to a larger conversation about the communal effects of religious and political identity.

¹²⁰ See Aristotle's discuss of political or civic friendship, which is identified as a like-mindedness among citizens for the good of the polis. See Aristide Tessitore, *Reading Aristotle's Ethics: Virtue, Rhetoric, and Political Philosophy* (Albany: State University of New York, 1996), p. 85. For more on eighteenth-century theories of friendship and its connection to a moralised society, see Naomi Tadmor, *Family and Friends in Eighteenth-Century England: Household, kinship, and patronage* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), pp. 213-16.

Chapter I

Katherine Philips and the tradition of female friendship

Katherine Philips has been regarded as a role model for many of the women writers who followed her, offering a gendered model of literary activity which is tied to the domestic, and hence private, space of the feminine.¹²¹ As recent critical trends have broadened their focus to explore the socio-political contexts of textual production, so this gendered model of female literary activity has been expanded to encompass the complex strategies of female political engagement in the seventeenth century.¹²² Serious attention to the underlying political motivations of Philips's work prompts a rethinking of the model of authorship which she initiated and enriches our understanding of early modern women's engagement with the political and social spheres.

Recent scholarship in early modern women's literary history has explored the ways in which women participated in wider literary and political communities, and re-evaluations of the work of Katherine Philips have been instrumental in shaping this new critical direction. Catharine Gray and Carol Barash have argued against a reading of Philips as disengaged from the political, and hence public, sphere, recognising the centrality of royalist political allegiances to her poetic production.¹²³ Gray persuasively argues that Philips's poetry cannot be separated from its post-Revolutionary context, and I expand on her argument that the revolution of 1642 and subsequent royalist defeat were significant influences on Philips's socio-political philosophy.¹²⁴ Gray looks primarily to her involvement in the William Cartwright volume of

¹²¹ Paula Loscocco notes the many poems written in praise of her feminine virtue and poetic talent by her male contemporaries in 'Manly Sweetness: Katherine Philips among the Neoclassicals', *Huntington Library Quarterly*, 56:3 (Summer 1993), n. 2. More recent discussion of Philip's virtuous model of feminine writing can be found in Marilyn L. Wilson, 'Orinda and her Daughters' in *Raising Their Voices: British women writers 1650-1750* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1990), pp. 64-77; Jeslyn Medoff, 'The Daughters of Behn and the Problem of Reputation', in Isobel Grundy and Susan Wiseman, eds., *Women, Writing, History: 1640-1740* (Athens, Ga.: Univ. of Georgia Press, 1992), pp. 33-54.

¹²² Carol Barash, *English Women's Poetry 1649-1724: Politics, community and linguistic authority* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000); Catharine Gray, 'Katherine Philips and the Post-Courtly Coterie', *English Literary Renaissance*, 32:3 (2002), 426-451; Hero Chalmers, *Royalist Women Writers 1650-1689* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2004); James Daybell, ed., *Women and Politics in Early Modern England 1450-1700* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004).

¹²³ See Carol Barash's exploration of the term "friend" in relation to William Cartwright (p. 63).

¹²⁴ Gray 2002, pp. 428-29; see also Gray, 'The Knowing Few: Katherine Philips and the Courtly Coterie', chapter 3 of her *Women Writers and Public Debate in 17th Century Britain*, (Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 105-142.

1651 and her connection with the other contributors as evidence of her political activity.¹²⁵ The first of her poems to be published and the only poem by a woman to be included in the collection, Philips's contribution to the Cartwright volume remains important in signalling her royalist identification and connecting her to the larger royalist community, as Hero Chalmers has shown.¹²⁶ I argue that her political activity took many forms and was not defined by or limited to the particular engagements represented by the 1651 volume. This chapter discusses the philosophy of friendship in her verse and the material conditions of her coterie production, examining the ways in which such activity signifies her political allegiance and contributes toward a wider ungendered royalist discourse.

Katherine Philips's occasional poems commemorating events of the Civil War and the royalist community are clearly politically charged; however her pastoral friendship poems also represent a literary response to the political events of the mid-seventeenth-century. Within these pastoral verses Philips demonstrates a sociable philosophy which sustains non-partisan community. In the post-war royalist context, 'friend' denotes a political sympathiser, marking an individual as part of a confraternity united through political ideology and a shared language of subversive poetics.¹²⁷ Re-examining her explicitly political verse alongside her more well-known verses of friendship and pastoral retreat reveals a multi-layered political philosophy which hinges on friendship and community as structuring elements, and which further obscures the boundary between public (political) and private activity.

Daughters of 'Orinda': Philips's literary legacy

It is necessary to acknowledge the traditional portrait of Philips which emerged shortly after her death and remained dominant throughout the twentieth century, and which largely shaped the critical response to her life and works until recent years. After her death in 1664, her image as 'Orinda', the champion of virtuous piety and pastoral verse, was promoted by her friend Sir Charles Cotterell and furthered in poetic tributes to her in the decades which

¹²⁵ Ibid.

¹²⁶ Chalmers, p. 124.

¹²⁷ Barash, p. 76. Barash discusses friendship in the context of Phillips's political dependence on Anne Owen, or Lucasia as she was known within the poetic coterie.

followed.¹²⁸ This model of Philips both as an author and a woman persisted for many years and perhaps unfairly pigeon-holed Philips as a sentimental poet whose lyrical verse typified inward-looking female literary activity. Frederick Rowton, writing in the 1848 anthology *The Female Poets of Great Britain*, articulates the gendered model of female writing which has limited critical approaches to Philips:

Mrs Philips has always seemed to me to be one of the best Female Poets. Her versification, though often careless, is chaste and harmonious, and her sentiments extremely pure and excellent ... Mrs Philips was known, as a poetess, by the name Orinda; and was as exemplary in the discharge of her domestic duties as she was celebrated for her poetic abilities.¹²⁹

I question how aware Rowton may have been of Philips's "domestic duties", but what is clear from his excerpt is that, to Rowton and his contemporaries, the posthumous construction of the image of 'Orinda' represents the pinnacle of pious female writing. Philips was considered among the "best Female Poets" because of the gendered virtue which transcended her writing, providing evidence of chaste character and a literary authority derived from her femininity. Paula Loscocco has traced the history of Philips's critical reception, noting that her contemporaries applauded her verse as part of the revival of neoclassical works in the mid-seventeenth century, but as the concept of neoclassical poetics evolved in the later seventeenth century and early eighteenth century, so did the "gender configurations" used to describe her poetry.¹³⁰ Thus it is the shifting response to the poetic devices and tropes which she employs, rather than her specific works, which have informed the traditional response to her verse and shaped the subsequent feminist response.

In the 1990s, Philips became an icon of contemporary feminist criticism, which paradoxically both promoted and questioned this gendered model of female literary activity.¹³¹ Her philosophy of sociability was interpreted as a rejection of the patriarchal social world in

¹²⁸ Cotterell commemorated Orinda in a posthumously published book of 121 poems and two plays, prefaced with several verse tributes to her. See Ellen Moody, 'Orinda, Rosania, Lucasia *et aliae*: Towards a new edition of the works of Katherine Philips', *Philological Quarterly*, 66 (1987), 325-54 (p. 327). Moody reads the edition as Cotterell's attempt to honour Philips as a paragon of conventional womanhood and Stuart loyalty.

¹²⁹ Frederick Rowton, *The Female Poets of Great Britain: Chronologically arranged, with copious selections and critical remarks* (London, 1848), p. 67.

¹³⁰ Loscocco, p. 260.

¹³¹ Elaine Hobby and Chris White, eds, *What Lesbians Do in Books: Lesbians as writers, readers and characters in literature* (London: Women's Press, 1991); Arlene Stiebel, 'Not since Sappho: The erotic in poems of Katherine Philips and Aphra Behn', in *Homosexuality in Renaissance and Enlightenment England: Literary representations in historical context*, ed. by Claude J. Summers (New York: Harrington Park, 1992), 153-71.

favour of passionate, inward-looking friendships between women. Jeslyn Medoff, in her article ‘Aphra Behn and the Problem of Reputation’, divides early modern women’s authorship into different camps.¹³² The ‘daughters of Orinda’, those who, like Philips, made their literary mark through virtuous manuscript verse, stood in stark contrast to the ‘daughters of Astrea’ who, like their namesake Aphra Behn, achieved popularity and success through bawdy and outspoken published works. Philips’s status as a manuscript poet stood as the only alternative to the model of professional print poets, exemplified by Behn’s title of ‘Punk Poetess’.¹³³ Medoff’s article has been useful in exploring different models of female authorship, but provides a narrow view of possibilities for the early modern woman writer. It helped to establish a dichotomy which defined early modern women writers by their sexuality and femininity and which remained fixed for several years.

Twentieth century critics have read in Katherine Philips’s philosophy of friendship a passion which translates into homosexual desire. In *Kissing the Rod*, Germaine Greer acknowledges that to modern feminists Philips is “chiefly important for her exaltation of Platonic friendships between women; some of her champions choose to ignore her own stipulation that such friendship be free from carnal interest.”¹³⁴ The “exaltation of Platonic friendships” is supported in Elaine Hobby’s argument for a sexualized poetic identity in *What Lesbians Do in Books*, where Philips is labelled the “Seventeenth-Century Lesbian Poet”.¹³⁵ Examples of homosocial tendencies were found in her poems of female friendship, such as “A retir’d Friendship”, where her desire for platonic friendship in the space of retirement is conflated with same-sex desire:

Come, my Ardelia, to this bowre,
Where kindly mingling Souls a while,
Let’s innocently spend an houre,
And at all serious follis smile¹³⁶

¹³² Medoff.

¹³³ The origin of the term “Punk Poetess” can be traced to Robert Gould’s “The Poetess: A Satyr, Being a Reply to *Silvia’s Revenge*”: “For *Punk* and *Poetess* agree so Pat, / You cannot well be *This*, and not be *That*.” In *Poems chiefly consisting of Satyrs and satirical Epistles* (London, 1689).

¹³⁴ Germaine Greer, ed., *Kissing the Rod* (New York: Farrar Straus Giroux, 1988).

¹³⁵ Hobby and White, p. 201.

¹³⁶ Katherine Philips, “A retir’d Friendship”, in *Katherine Philips: The Matchless Orinda. Volume 1: The poems*, ed. by Patrick Thomas (Stump Cross, Essex: Stump Cross Books, 1990), pp. 97-8, lines 1-4. All further poems cited will be from this edition unless stated otherwise.

The poem, dedicated to her childhood friend Mary Aubrey, or Lucasia as she was known within the Society of Friendship, is typical of the friendship poems which have largely shaped Philips's literary reputation in the centuries following her death. The pastoral setting for her poems of friendship has been interpreted as a rejection of the external world in preference for a highly private and eroticised space.¹³⁷ The pastoral setting of the "bowre" is tied to the idyllic space of retreat where the "mingling [of] Souls" is translated into an inward-looking yet sociable desire – sociable within the bounds of the same-sex space of pastoral retreat – and which is often perceived as homosexual desire. However as I will explore further in relation to this poem, the trope of "mingling Souls" is tied to a tradition of platonic friendship and its use in contemporary royalist verse, and therefore carries both a religious and a political resonance for Philips and her readers. This demonstrates that the tendency to oppose public to private and friendship to politics in critical readings of Philips has set up a false dichotomy. In showing how friendship and politics relate to each other I am following groundbreaking work by Carol Barash, Catharine Gray and Hilda Smith, among others, extending their argument for politicised friendship by exploring the use of poetic forms such as the pastoral and the Horatian Ode as political discourses.¹³⁸

Philips's literary sociability requires a complex reading of female involvement in both political and literary circles post-civil war. A closer look at the representation of the space of retreat as figured in such poems as "A retir'd Friendship" suggests an explicitly politicised space which enables virtuous friendship. The poem presents the pastoral as a respite from political conflict, a place free from dissembling, disguise and treachery:

Here is no quarrelling for Crowns,
Nor fear of changes in our fate;
No trembling at the Great ones frowns
Nor any slavery of state.

Here's no disguise, nor treachery
Nor any deep conceal'd design;
From blood and plots this place is free,
And calm as are those looks of thine.¹³⁹

¹³⁷ Harriette Andreadis, *Sappho in Early Modern England: Female same-sex literary erotics, 1550-1714*, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2001), p. 143.

¹³⁸ Gray 2002 and 2007; Barash, p. 63; Hilda Smith, *Reason's Disciples: Seventeenth-century English feminists* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1982), p. 6.

¹³⁹ *Ibid*, lines 5-12.

The space of retirement, beyond the notion of an isolated haven implied by more traditional interpretations of the pastoral, is here shaped as an alternative space to the disorder and instability of the political sphere. “[F]ree ... from blood and plots”, the space of retreat will be shown to be removed from the “slavery of state” but not from the sociable practices which sustain political communities. Throughout her body of work, both the explicitly political occasional poems and her friendship verse, Philips initiates a new way of engaging with and evolving the central features of the trope of retirement and uses the concept of physical and imaginative withdrawal to establish a new tradition of feminine poetics.

Biographical Background

Born in 1632 to Katherine Oxenbridge and the cloth merchant John Fowler, Philips spent the early formative years of her life in London. From the age of eight she attended a Presbyterian girls’ boarding school in Hackney run by a Mrs. Salmon, where she made influential friendships with classmates including Mary Aubrey, later a key member of the Society of Friendship.¹⁴⁰ After her father’s death in 1642 her mother married her second of three husbands, Sir Richard Philips, and the family moved to his home in Pembroke, Wales, in 1646. Philips’s family had strong republican connections. An aunt, Elizabeth Oxenbridge Cockcroft, in 1645 took as her second husband Oliver St. John, Cromwell’s Chief Justice of the Common Pleas from 1648-60 who had been married formerly to Cromwell’s cousin Elizabeth.¹⁴¹ Philips later entered into an arranged marriage with Col. James Philips, a cousin and former son-in-law of her step-father Sir Richard and a supporter of Cromwell who had fought for the parliamentary side during the civil wars. After their marriage, they resided in the remote countryside of Wales at Cardigan Priory. Col. Philips served as a Welsh M.P. between 1653 and 1662, and was appointed to the High Court of Justice.¹⁴²

¹⁴⁰ George Ballard, *Memoirs of Several Ladies of Great Britain: Who have been celebrated for their writings or skill in the learned languages arts and sciences* (Oxford, 1752), p. 287.

¹⁴¹ William Durrant Cooper, *The Oxenbridges of Brede Place, Sussex and Boston, Massachusetts* (London: Published by J.R. Smith, 1860), p. 6.

¹⁴² Samuel Rush Meyrick, *The History of Cardiganshire* (1810).

With such a strong parliamentary background, it is some surprise, therefore, that Philips proclaimed her royalist allegiance strongly throughout her life and largely shaped her authorial identity on her identification with the loyalist community. Perhaps an even greater surprise is that Col. Philips was a prominent figure in Philips's Society of Friendship despite his Parliamentary ties, adopting the pastoral pseudonym of 'Antenor' and actively engaging in the poetic and epistolary correspondence of the primarily royalist community. Although strongly political in its poetic subjects, as well as in the ideology of its participants, the Society's activity does not suggest political debate or conflict. However the marriage of opposing political viewpoints was not always a harmonious one, as Philips expresses in her verse, indicating the extent to which political identities upset the basic social fabric of mid-seventeenth-century Britain.

Philips' role as a wife is significant in defining her relationship to and engagement with the literary and political spheres of the 1650s. Despite the potential for friction between the couple because of their differing political stances, they demonstrate great amity in literary terms. "To Antenor, on a paper of mine, which J. Jones threatens to publish to his prejudice" is a poem written in response to an attempt by a publisher to blackmail Col. Philips with his wife's political identification during Cromwell's reign.¹⁴³ The poem is addressed to her husband using his pastoral pseudonym and defends her right to express her political sympathies in contradiction to his own. The poem begins with a question of authorial responsibility and attribution: "Must then my crimes become thy scandall too?" she asks of her husband and, implicitly, the reader:

My Love, & life, I must confess, are thine,
But not my errors, they are only mine.
And if my faults should be for thine allow'd,
It will be hard to dissipate the cloud.¹⁴⁴

The admission of equal culpability shows that Philips's philosophy of friendship extends to relationships between men and women. Neither women nor men hold privileged moral positions, either within marriage nor, it is insinuated, in the larger social sphere. It is important to note that Philips, contrary to the idealised portrait of 'Orinda', does not present herself as the epitome of feminine virtue but rather subject to the same human errors as her husband. Philips goes on to

¹⁴³ Paula Loscocco, 'Inventing the English Sappho: Katherine Philips's Donnean Poety', *Journal of English and Germanic Philology*, 102 (2003), 59-87.

¹⁴⁴ Katherine Philips, "To Antenor, On a Paper of mine, which an unworthy Adversary of his, threatened to publish, to preguidice him, in Cromwels time" in *Early Modern Women's Manuscript Poetry*, ed. by Jill Seal Millman and Gillian Wright (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2005), p. 131, lines 3-6.

invert the notion of original sin, arguing that men are as culpable as women. That is, they cannot blame feminine wiles for human sin:

But, Eves rebellion, did not Adam blast,
Untill himself forbidden fruit did tast.¹⁴⁵

The biblical imagery elevates the importance of the dispute at stake. “Eves rebellion” is paralleled with Philips’s own claim to individualist authorship; and yet, Philips subtly challenges the significance of women’s ‘rebellions’ by representing both Eve and herself as instilled with the god-given right of individual choice. She takes control over her own authorial activity while simultaneously acknowledging the effect of her choices on her husband:

So if my Ink, through malice prov’d a stain,
My blood should justly wash it off again.
But since that mint of slander could invent
To make so dull a rime his instrument,
Let verse revenge the quarrel.¹⁴⁶

The violent imagery used to describe literary activity raises the act of writing from a trivial action to a politically significant one on a par with martial engagement. Philips’s “ink”, the tool of her literary trade, is paralleled with the redemptive power of her “blood”. The juxtaposition of the benign ink stain with the spilling of the author’s blood alters both the source and effect of her writing. Evoking the spilling of blood which marked the military defeats of the royalists during the Civil War, Philips connects her own literary struggles with the physical conflicts of her male counterparts. The parallel continues as Philips represents verse as the tool of revenge against malicious detractors. The poem shows that there was clearly the potential for discord between the couple, but the extent to which their conflicting political outlooks resulted in marital discord is unclear from Philips’s letters and verse. The poem displays both the typical images of marriage relations, “My love and life I must confesse are thine”, set against more dynamic declarations of independent action, “My blood should justly wash it off again”. This ambivalence over her authorship in her domestic life is paralleled by her political ambivalence.

Philips’s political verse takes up the idea of culpability, exploring communal repercussions of individual actions as well as the impact of communal experience on the

¹⁴⁵ Ibid, lines 7-8.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid, lines 13-14.

individual. Indeed throughout her verse runs an undercurrent of concern with ordinary individuals caught up in national events and the roles they must assume in times of political instability and chaos. Her political identification is linked with a communal fate, dependent on the monarch and his followers, and her poetry written during the 1650s exhibits a simultaneous desire to follow the monarch and a craving for a more autonomous, stable political community which is not subject to the rise and fall of political leaders. Philips makes clear in her verse that the political affiliations which offered her participation in a wider political community, and her allegiance to the monarchy and its courtly literary culture, continued during and after the fall of the Protectorate. After the Restoration, her close friendship with the reinstated Master of Ceremonies Sir Charles Cotterell gave Philips close contact with the new court and a celebrated poetic reputation, while her husband was stripped of his political authority and underwent trial for his participation in the Civil War in the High Court of Justice. She would have been acutely aware of the rapid change of fortunes for both royalists and republicans alike, and her political philosophy seeks a refuge from the circumstances of a fluctuating majority.

Royalist Poetic Response

Philips developed her literary persona in the context of political change and uncertainty. In the aftermath of the Civil War, writers found themselves struggling to engage with the new regime, which has led scholars to describe withdrawal from public life as a natural response.¹⁴⁷ The royalist tradition of retirement poetry became synonymous with a retreat from public life and a turn inwards, revealing a deep-rooted scepticism of the stability of political structure. Claude J. Summers argues that the cavalier poetic tradition marks the production of ‘protective enclosures’ which are coping mechanisms for the politically defeated.¹⁴⁸ The cavalier poets who established the royalist poetic tradition do exhibit a detachment from ‘public’ life as they establish a tradition of retreat, but rather than expressing a disengagement from and rejection of

¹⁴⁷ Maren-Sofie Rostvig, *The Happy Man: Studies in the metamorphoses of a classical ideal* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1954), pp. 60-61.

¹⁴⁸ Claude J. Summers, ‘Herrick, Vaughan and the Poetry of Anglican Survivalism’, in *New Perspectives on the Seventeenth-century English Religious Lyric*, ed. by John Roberts (New York: Columbia, 1994), pp. 46-74 (p. 49). See also Lois Potter’s comparison of the tavern and prison as “protective enclosures” which promoted the Cavalier rituals of loyalty in *Secret Rites and Secret Writing: Royalist literature 1641-1660* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), p. 138.

political culture as a whole, their textual activity reveals an anxiety over their role in the new political and social landscape.¹⁴⁹ Philips is clearly responding to this complex poetic tradition of simultaneous political engagement and withdrawal, constructing in her verse a fluid ideological atmosphere which allows both a nostalgia for the lost regime and the re-imagining of potential autonomous sovereignty. Such ambivalent expressions towards state authority are part of the emergence of a complex discourse of loyalty post-Civil War in which writers attempt to “reinvest social models and paradigms with power [and] to reimpose structures of identity and behaviour.”¹⁵⁰ The displacement of the king and court from London and its physical sites of power coupled with Parliament’s denial of the monarch’s authority and the eventual execution of the king led to a diminishment of centralised cultural and political authority. Various radical movements demanded a rethinking of the nature of political authority at this time, and writers responded by proposing alternative models. Philips clearly responds to such a shift in political authority in her verse as she addresses the fragile nature of the state, and in so doing places herself within an evolving royalist poetic discourse which both supports and questions monarchical authority. Philips’s “On the 3rd of September 1651” exhibits her anxiety over political change as she questions the tenuous hold on power to which all leaders are subject. Commemorating the Battle of Worcester, in which Cromwell’s forces soundly defeated the loyalist troops and forced the king into exile in France, the poem laments the communal fate of the defeated monarch’s subjects who must share in his downfall:

Unhappy Kings! Who cannot keep a throne,
Nor be so fortunate to fall alone!
Their weight sinks others: Pompey could not fly,
But half the world must beare him company;
Thus Captive Sampson could not life conclude,
Unless attended with a multitude.¹⁵¹

Philips notes the fluctuation in political authority, but the tragedy is not in the individual fall of leaders; political change also drags down the followers who ‘sink’ under the weight of the fallen

¹⁴⁹ Summers and Ted-Larry Pebworth note the anxiety resulting the withdrawal from political turmoil in the poetry of Richard Lovelace in *The English Civil Wars in the Literary Imagination* (Columbia, Missouri: University of Missouri Press, 1999), pp. 81-2. See also Christopher D’Addario ‘Abraham Cowley and the Ends of Poetry’, in *Literatures of Exile in the English Revolution and its Aftermath, 1640-1690*, ed. by Philip Major (Farnham: Ashgate, 2010), pp. 119-131.

¹⁵⁰ Jerome de Groot, *Royalist Identities* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), p. 6.

¹⁵¹ Philips, “On the 3rd September 1651”, in *Poems*, p. 82, lines 21-26.

monarch. The poem laments the fall of an exceptional figure to the level of his common followers. Why, Philips ponders, do we place trust in political leaders only for disappointment and ruin to inevitably follow? As the symbols of royal power “become thus cheap”, a less material symbol of authority is sought:

Who'd trust to Greatness now, whose food is ayre,
Whose ruine sudden, and whose end despaire?
Who would presume upon his Glorious Birth,
Or quarrel for a spacious share of earth,
That sees such diadems become thus cheap,
And Heroes tumble in the common heap?
O! give me virtue then, which sums up all,
And firmly stands when Crowns Scepters fall.¹⁵²

Though still retaining loyalty to the fallen monarch, Philips laments that she and her fellow loyalists suffer a parallel fate. She exhibits a strong political commitment throughout her body of verse; however it is clear from the poem that she feels that her commitment is, to an extent, forced rather than voluntary. Her share in the king's downfall is fated rather than chosen, and it is this communal destiny which binds the royalist community left without a central monarchical authority, and stands for a nation in the absence of physical location. The life of a monarch, “quarrel[ing] for a spacious share of earth” is an undesirable existence, and likewise the crown itself is stripped of its symbolic power. Philips exhibits an ambivalence towards the stability of any political state and seeks an alternative and lasting structure for when “Crowns Scepters fall”, substituting internal governance for external as she replaces the monarchical state with virtue. The alternative strategy which she advocates is to construct a more permanent space of community based on virtue and a shared code of behaviour. Although the poem expresses sadness and confusion as an initial response to political conflict, Philips reworks the central image of royalist poetics, the fallen monarch, into a more stable authority grounded in an ideal of virtue and community.

The royalist community post-1649 remains united through shared ideology but must negotiate a new identity which is not dependent on the court and crown, repairing the faults of the previous generation and in so doing creating an ideal sociability which is voluntary rather than imposed. In a poem dedicated to Palaemon, the pseudonym employed by the writer Francis

¹⁵² Ibid, lines 27-34.

Finch within the Society of Friendship, Philips identifies the community as one which is misled, acknowledging their own contributing faults and ignorance which must be recognised before the community can move forward:

We had been still undone, wrapt in disguise,
Secure, not happy: cunning, but not wise;
War had been our design, int'rest our trade,
We had not dwelt in safety, but in shade.¹⁵³

Speaking with a plural, communal voice, Philips freely admits the culpability of the royalist community after the loss of the monarch. The admission of the community's errors parallels Philips's admission of her individual "errors" and "faults" to her husband in her dedicatory poem to him described above. Just as Philips argues for her own authority despite, or perhaps because of her faults, so she defends the autonomy of the royalist community despite its errors.

In order to understand Philips's writing as part of a wider response to the Civil War and its aftermath, it is important to appreciate that the royalist concept of retreat is itself multilayered, giving voice to a range of ambivalent political responses to exile and community.¹⁵⁴ The poetic championing of the power of retreat and interiority is, in a sense, an acknowledgement of the situation of royalist men during the Interregnum, and was manipulated by women poets to situate themselves as active participants in the evolving literary and political tradition.¹⁵⁵ During the civil wars, the trope of pastoral retirement gained new meaning as the court and its followers were stripped of political and social authority and exiled to the countryside. As a result, the nostalgia inherent in the pastoral is transformed into a site of longing for a lost state, assuming a vital role in shaping and perpetuating a royalist cultural memory.¹⁵⁶ By appropriating the conventions of the pastoral, writers were able to connect a personal experience with a larger political community's experiences of contemporary events. This is clearly evident in Philips's engagement with the pastoral tradition in poems such as "A Countrey Life", "A retir'd friendship,

¹⁵³ Philips, "To the noble Palaemon, on his discourse of friendship", in *Poems*, p. 83, lines 1-4.

¹⁵⁴ Thomas Healy, "'Dark all without it knits': Vision and authority in Marvell's *Upon Appleton House*", chapter 9 in Thomas Healy and Jonathan Sawday, eds., *Literature and the English Civil War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 170-88; Philip Major, ed., *Literatures of Exile in the English Revolution and its Aftermath* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2010).

¹⁵⁵ Hero Chalmers (p. 104) notes the "potency of feminized retreat". See also Bronwen Price, 'Verse, Voice, and Body: The retirement mode and women's poetry 1680-1723', *Early Modern Literary Studies* 12:3 (January 2007) <<http://purl.oclc.org/emls/12-3/priceve2.htm>> [accessed December 2010]

¹⁵⁶ Anthony Welch, 'Epic Romance, Royalist Retreat, and the English Civil War', *Modern Philology*, 105:3 (February 2008), 570-602.

to Ardelia”, and “Invitation to the Countrey”. The poems seek to place her experience of friendship within the larger context of the changing site of political power during the Civil Wars. Much of her participation in the pastoral is marked by an engagement with memory, representing both individual experience and communal history. The intersection of personal and communal memory works to preserve a community set loose without a monarch and confirm her own place within this community through a turn towards internal authority rather than a reliance on external structures.

Sociability and Retreat

Sociability played a key part in Philips’s literary activity and ambitions, and was developed from an early age. As a young girl she was sent to a boarding school in Hackney where she formed close friendships with several young women who would later figure prominently in the Society of Friendship, including Mary Aubrey, known in the Society as Rosania. Critics have pointed towards this time in her life as formative to her later philosophy of friendship and its material manifestation in the Society of Friendship.¹⁵⁷ However throughout her life Philips was continuously involved in overlapping circles of friends, writers and readers, both male and female. Philips is described in Theophilus Cibber’s *Lives of the Poets*: “As few ladies ever lived more happy in her friends than our poetess, so those friends have done justice to her memory, and celebrated her, when dead, for those virtues they admired, when living.”¹⁵⁸ Both Philips’s sociability and her virtue are implicated in her authorship.

Philips is considered a sociable poet in several senses: in the traditional sense that she circulated handwritten manuscripts which were expected to be rewritten and revised as they were distributed by her extended circle of friends and fellow writers, as well as through a philosophy of sociability which emphasises friendship as the basis of alternative communities. A recent focus on the social history of early modern literature, to which this thesis contributes, has lent new significance to the process of writing as a means of identifying and maintaining political and sociable groups. Such exchanges have several personal, social, and literary functions. Kathryn

¹⁵⁷ Patrick Thomas, *Katherine Philips ('Orinda')* (Wales: University of Wales Press, 1988), pp. 2-4.

¹⁵⁸ Theophilus Cibber, *Lives of the Poets of Great Britain and Ireland*, vol. II (London: Printed for R. Griffiths, at the Dunciad in St. Pauls’s Church-Yard, 1753), p. 156.

King argues that the coterie mode of textual production employed by Philips is an acceptable form of sociable writing for women in which the manuscripts are exchanged as a means of establishing relationships as well as serving as a form of textual dialogue.¹⁵⁹ Although Philips is not physically separated, she clearly identifies with a community in political and social exile. Christopher D'Addario's *Exile and Journey in Seventeenth-century Literature* explores the way in which texts function to fill the gap between the author and the homeland, a gap which for Philips is emotional rather than physical.¹⁶⁰ The letters between Philips and Poliarchus (Sir Charles Cotterell) demonstrate the purposes of the coterie: textual dissemination, critical commentary and communal identity. The identity which the 'Society of Friendship' develops is based on an immaterial sociability. Letter VI from Orinda to Poliarchus positions the letter as a form of sociability itself, standing in for the physical presence of the addressee. The letter was written from Philips when she resided in Cardigan, Wales, to Sir Charles Cotterell in London, emphasising both the distance between them and the inconsequence of that distance in the face of true friendship:

'tis in some measure a Justice in you to afford me your Correspondence, since without it the great Advantages I reap'd in conversing with you would have been injurious to me, in rendring me dissatisfy'd with my present condition; and I could never, without the Relief your Letters bring me, have been able to reconcile my self to a place which deprives me of so desirable a Conversation as yours: Nor could my beloved Rocks and Rivers, which were formerly my best Entertainments, have given me any Satisfaction without hearing from you. But now I can much better content my self in that Solitude¹⁶¹

The "Correspondence" is itself a form of "Conversation", providing a material means of sustaining friendship across time and distance. The letters provide "relief" from the presumed solitude of her situation and "Satisfaction" with the barren "Rocks and Rivers" of her "present condition". Philips professes that with the letters she can "much better content [her] self in that Solitude", showing the transformative power of friendship and epistolary exchange. Clearly letters play a significant role in sustaining friendship; I wish to examine the ways in which verse exchange also functioned to bond together friends across boundaries of time and space.

¹⁵⁹ Kathryn King, 'Jane Barker, *Poetical Recreations*, and the Sociable Text', *English Literary History (ELH)*, 61 (1994), 551-70, (pp. 563-4).

¹⁶⁰ Christopher D'Addario, *Exile and Journey in Seventeenth-century Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), pp. 31-2.

¹⁶¹ Philips, "Letter VI: Orinda to Poliarchus", April 8 1662, in *Letters*, pp. 25-7.

Philips's Society of Friendship was primarily a textually-based group of like-minded people who shared an artistic and political purpose. The members of the coterie represented a range of political identifications and communicated their shared royalist identification through coded verse. Mary Beale's *A Discourse of Friendship* describes friendship as voluntary entry into a society which, as with entry into any society, must be considered soberly and seriously:

Another Care of Those who would be admitted members of this Society, ought to be a sober enquiry into the nature of it, what it is, wherein Freindship consists; least through ignorance hereof, They give this Sacred Name to that, which true Freindship most of all abhors: (Flattery, and Dissimulation, which is but a kinde of mock-Freindship) though for the same reason, that the appearances of Vertues, have always had more Followers, then the reall Vertues themselves; it hath found best acceptance in the World.¹⁶²

Beale's description of friendship as a membership of a moral elite has obvious resonance with Philips's 'Society of Friendship', a group connected by the sense of shared cultural and political values. Beale warns of false friendships which, though they have "the appearances of Vertues", are defined by "Flattery, and Dissimulation". This echoes Philips's vision of a virtuous friendship which is "free from ... flatterye and feares".¹⁶³ Both Philips and Beale contribute to a wider contemporary discourse of friendship, which shapes a social relationship "nearer than a Brother" in its intensity, with two "minds [of] a like proportion each to other", in which discourse should be "free and open, without any veile drawne over them, sudden, and unconstrained, not concealing them".¹⁶⁴ This draws parallels with the Platonic notion of the 'second self', and the 'sublime spiritual eros' imagined by Montaigne.¹⁶⁵

Philips's strategy of positioning her literary community in terms of friendship is explicitly political: she forms a community of royalists whose sociable practices are able to transcend geographical distance. Adopting pastoral pseudonyms, the group expanded their circle of writers to include established figures in the exiled royalist literary and political communities. The Society of Friendship dates in its formal incarnation from 1651, and it can be assumed from the date that it was initiated through Philips's participation in the Cartwright volume and her working relationship with several of its contributors, among them Henry Vaughan and Henry

¹⁶² Folger MS 420127, p. 8.

¹⁶³ Philips, "A Countrey Life", in *Poems*, pp. 159-60, line 4.

¹⁶⁴ Folger MS 420127, pp. 9, 12.

¹⁶⁵ See Introduction, p. 9.

Lawes, both key figures in the royalist intellectual community.¹⁶⁶ Philips was also involved in Lawes's 1655 *Second Book of Ayres, and Dialogues*, contributing two poems to a collection which included John Berkenhead, Sir Edward Dering, Francis Finch, among other notable royalist contributors. The verse was set to music by Lawes, which was likely performed at private social gatherings.¹⁶⁷ Her involvement in such notable royalist verse collections indicates her reception amongst manuscript circles from the early 1650s and the writers with which she associated. Both Finch and Jeremy Taylor circulated treatises on friendship, treatises which are echoed in Philips's friendship poems, suggesting the importance of friendship to the royalist poetic community.¹⁶⁸ Despite the royalist identification of the group and its members, and the strongly politicised language and imagery of the verse produced and circulated in the group, the coterie was not, as we have seen, exclusively royalist. Philips's husband, John Philips, was a Parliamentary leader in western Wales as well as a contributor to the coterie under the pseudonym 'Antenor'. This demonstrates that although the Society was political in its ideology, in membership it was more fluid.

Margaret Ezell, in an essay exploring royalist assertions of friendship in a manuscript collection of poems and plays by the Cavendish sisters, Jane Cavendish and Elizabeth Brackley, maintains that their verse acts "as reaffirming bonds between members of a threatened society [linking] like-minded friends, and ... subjects and monarch."¹⁶⁹ The society which forms the conceptual basis for Philips's literary and political philosophy functions in a similar way. A formalized coterie of sympathetic writers, both male and female, who together articulate a royalist ideology and nostalgia for the stability of the pre-war social and political world, it generated writing which realises Lois Potter's definition of royalist literature as fulfilling "the functions most necessary for the culture of a repressed group: enabling communication and consolidating its sense of itself as an elite."¹⁷⁰ Potter suggests that royalist texts, and the act of

¹⁶⁶ Chalmers, "'Her Harmonious Numbers': The politics of friendship in the poems and plays of Katherine Philips", Chapter 2 in *Royalist Women Writers 1650-1689*, pp. 56-105.

¹⁶⁷ Stacy Jocoy Houk, "'Touch but thy Lire (*my Harrie*)": Henry Lawes and the mirthful music of Robert Herrick's *Hesperides*", a paper delivered at *Lords of Wine and Oil: Community and conviviality in the work of Robert Herrick and his contemporaries* (Buckfast Abbey, Devon, 18-20 July 2008).

¹⁶⁸ Francis Finch, *Friendship* (1654), Jeremy Taylor, *Discourse on Friendship* (1657). See Philips, "Friendship", "Friendship's Mystery. To My Dearest Lucasia", "A Friend", "A retir'd Friendship. To Ardelia", in *Poems*.

¹⁶⁹ Margaret Ezell, "'To Be Your Daughter in Your Pen": The social functions of literature in the writings of Lady Elizabeth Brackley and Lady Jane Cavendish', *Huntington Library Quarterly*, 51 (1988), 281-96, (p. 287); quoted in Chalmers, p. 60.

¹⁷⁰ Potter, p. 113.

writing and circulating them, define and unite a displaced community through shared poetic language and form. Reworking the central features of the royalist discourse of retreat, Philips's philosophy of friendship shapes a sociability which is not dependent upon geographical proximity, thereby opening up the notion of community to constitute both a real and imagined coming together of individuals.¹⁷¹ Philips contributes to such 'consolidating' of the post-war community in a number of ways: through a philosophy of friendship represented by the activity of the Society of Friendship, her engagement with the royalist trope of retreat as a site of both nostalgia and communal re-imagining, and the use of established poetic forms to signal a connection with other poets, their communities and philosophies.

The Pastoral

Engagement with established poetic forms, in particular the tradition of the pastoral, connected Philips and her coterie with a literary community both historical and contemporary. I have previously discussed the classical origins of the pastoral and its early-modern resurgence.¹⁷² Andrew Marvell signalled a new engagement with the pastoral during the Civil War, transforming rural retreat into a site of political reflection. Philips's engagement with Marvell's pastoral trope is important to making sense of her own representation of the pastoral. Philips's "A Country Life", written shortly after Marvell's "The Garden", clearly engages with the Marvellian model of politicised pastoral.¹⁷³ In Marvell's poems the pastoral remains tied to the virtue and peace of a pre-fall garden, but cannot be detached from the contemporary world of political, social, and religious upheaval. Marvell's "The Garden" celebrates the classical landscape of rural life and argues for a model of virtuous solitude:

Fair Quiet, have I found thee here,
And Innocence, thy sister dear!
Mistaken long, I sought you then
In busy companies of men:
Your sacred plants, if here below,
Only among the plants will grow;

¹⁷¹ Price 2007, pp. 44-6.

¹⁷² See Introduction, pp. 25-8.

¹⁷³ Donald Friedman notes that Philips's poem is written a few years after Marvell's. See Friedman, *Marvell's Pastoral Art* (London and Berkeley: University of California Press, 1970), 189n.

Society is all but rude,
To this delicious solitude.¹⁷⁴

Marvell is here using the pastoral landscape to exalt the removal from the political and social sphere which characterized the post-Civil War royalist community, celebrating “delicious solitude” as a conscious alternative to “rude ... Society” rather than an enforced and therefore disempowering condition. There is a noted parallel in both content and rhyme in Philips’s “A Country Life”, which also argues for the superiority of solitude over society:¹⁷⁵

Then wellcome dearest solitude,
My great felicity;
Though some are pleas’d to call thee rude,
Thou art not so, but we.¹⁷⁶

Susan Snyder explores the post-war engagement with the pastoral as a move towards an inward orientation as she engages with William Empson’s idea of ‘pastoral process.’¹⁷⁷ The ‘process’ of the turn inwards marks a transition from innocence to experience, stability to displacement, of both the individual and by extension the larger community. This interpretation of pastoral engagement is predicated on the assumed break from public-political life which rural retirement suggested.

A comparison of the way in which Philips engages with both the tradition of the pastoral and, more specifically, Marvell’s use of the genre, makes it clear that she is placing herself within a wider political and poetic context. Although both poets appear to equate pastoral retirement with a physical seclusion defined by “delicious solitude”, the retreats envisioned in Marvell’s “The Garden” and later in Philips’s “A Country Life” are neither isolating nor confining. Rather, the pastoral countryside is a site of reawakening and intellectual development. Marvell continues to develop his pastoral retirement as an alternative space which functions a site of self-examination and reflection on the wider world:

Meanwhile the mind, from pleasure less,

¹⁷⁴ Andrew Marvell, “The Garden” in *The Complete Poems*, ed. by Elizabeth Story Donno (London: Penguin Classics, 1972), pp. 100-102, lines 9-16.

¹⁷⁵ This parallel has been noted by Donald Friedman in *Marvell’s Pastoral Art* (see 50n above) and Alan Pritchard, “Marvell’s “The Garden”: A Restoration poem?”, *Studies in English Literature 1500-1900*, 23:3 (1983), 371-388.

¹⁷⁶ Philips, “A Country Life”, in *Poems*, p. 159-162, lines 29-32.

¹⁷⁷ See Susan Snyder’s discussion of Marvell’s ‘Mower’ poems in particular in *Pastoral Process: Spenser, Marvell, Milton* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1998), pp. 11-12, 47-64.

Withdraws into its happiness;
The mind, that Ocean where each kind
Does straight its own resemblance find;
Yet it creates, transcending these,
Far other worlds and other seas,
Annihilating all that's made
To a green thought in a green shade.¹⁷⁸

Marvell's space of retirement signifies a retreat from the new socio-political regime, but not the physical and emotional removal which the term 'retreat' evokes. Marvell's poem suggests a social and imaginative liberty enabled by a step back from the clamour of "busy companies of men." Although "the mind ... withdraws" it also "creates ... far other worlds", suggesting that the new social space which grew out of the Civil War and its aftermath was an imaginatively created one. This resonates strongly with the idea of "virtual communities" conceptualised by Pohl and D'Monté and transforms the idealised world of the pastoral from an externalised to an internalized state.¹⁷⁹ As royalist writers such as Marvell manipulated the limitations of post-war exile, so Philips reforms her state of rural retirement from a site of nostalgia for the past into the site of a forward-looking sociable community. Like Marvell, Philips imagines a country retreat which, as it celebrates the virtues of a withdrawal from the political state, remains sociable and engaged:

There are below but two things good,
Friendship and honestie;
And only these of all I would
Ask for felicitie.

In this retir'd integritie,
Free from both warre and noise,
I live not by necessitie,
But wholly by my choice.¹⁸⁰

Again emphasising that her retirement is chosen rather than enforced, Philips imagines an ideal world which is ruled by virtue and friendship and uninhibited by political conflict, akin to a second Eden. Indeed much of the imagery of her pastoral retreat is figured in the language of

¹⁷⁸ Marvell, "The Garden" in *Complete Poems*, pp.100-102, lines 41-48.

¹⁷⁹ Rebecca D'Monté and Nicole Pohl, eds., *Female Communities 1600-1800: Literary visions and cultural realities* (London: St. Martin's Press, 2000), p. 4.

¹⁸⁰ Philips, "A Country Life", in *Poems*, pp. 159-162, lines 81-88.

paradise to describe both the physical and social landscape, placing it outside the contemporary world and the realm of the imaginary. In Philips's verse the pastoral countryside is represented as a space of retreat, but the extent to which that retreat is a removal from the world or a separate space within it is ambiguous.¹⁸¹ It is a space where "Silence and Innocence are safe", where the narrator would "contented sit" in this "hermitage"; but still "Friendship and honestie" are found.¹⁸² This sociable potential is an important element of Philips's vision of the pastoral, and one which appears to contradict the impulse of retreat which drives pastoral nostalgia. "A Countrey Life" addresses the assumed break with public-political life with a typical representation of the shelter and security of the countryside:

How sacred and how innocent
A countrey life appears,
How free from tumult, discontent,
From flatterye and feares.
That was the first and happiest life,
When man enjoy'd himself;
Till pride exchanged peace for strife,
And happinesse for pelfe.¹⁸³

Here the pastoral landscape is portrayed as a pre-fall Eden, the site of "the first and happiest life", representing both personal and communal purity and harmony. The "sacred and ... innocent" countryside was corrupted by man himself, as it was he that "exchanged peace for strife" and created a world of "tumult [and] discontent." Philips appears to demonstrate Snyder's 'pastoral process' as she casts the countryside as an idyllic enclosed site sheltered from a corrupt and violent external world:¹⁸⁴

Secure in these unenvyed walls
I think not on the state,
And pittie no man's case that falls
From his ambition's height.
Silence and Innocence are safe;
A heart that's nobly true

¹⁸¹The ambiguity of the space of retreat, particularly for women, is further explored in Bronwen Price's "Verse, Voice and Body: The retirement mode and women's poetry 1680-1723", *Early Modern Literary Studies* 12:3 (January 2007), 44-66.

¹⁸² *Ibid*, lines 49, 54, 77, 82.

¹⁸³ *Ibid*, lines 1-8.

¹⁸⁴ Snyder, pp. 11-12.

At all these little arts can laugh
That do the world subdue.¹⁸⁵

Writing from a position of security “in these unenvyed walls”, she represents her physical removal as her entry into a space of contemplation and reflection. Although she welcomes “dearest solitude” as the source of her joy and security, Philips is not advocating a complete withdrawal from the public world, but rather from the political conflict which threatens the outside world.

The poem is clearly a response to a communal experience of loss and upheaval, and as Kate Lilley and Catharine Gray argue, the experience of loss and a perceived lack of social structure are crucial to Philips’s identity as a writer.¹⁸⁶ She explains her desire for retirement in her letters to Sir Charles Cotterell, a key member of her coterie, maintaining that her ‘solitude’ is an enabling condition rather than a limiting one:

... [N]ow I can much better content myself in that Solitude, which you are so generously pleas’d to sweeten, by assuring me that I have still so considerable a Share in your Friendship, in spite of all my Occasions of tiring it, and all my Incapacities of deserving it.¹⁸⁷

Philips clearly sees friendship as compatible with retirement, recasting solitude as a sociable state. This has significance for the politicisation of her verse. The pastoral retreat is, in the post-war world, politicised by its deliberate removal from centralized authority and structure. Thus the sociable state which Philips imagines is also politicised, and within this context ‘friend’ clearly becomes a euphemism for political ally. Philips’s political philosophy represents the creation and continuation of a society in retreat, a sociable structure which opened up a new space for coterie writers. Her engagement with the pastoral is, rather than an absolute turn away from the material towards the metaphysical as argued by Snyder, a means of exploring the roles and agency available to both the ‘feminised’ royalist exile and, by connection, to women themselves.

Philips’s “Invitation to the Countrey”, in which she extols the virtues of a country retreat, demonstrates the way in which she manipulates the imagined boundaries of the space of retirement to be a sociable rather than an isolated space. Addressed to Rosania, the poem initially

¹⁸⁵ Ibid, lines 29-30, 45-52.

¹⁸⁶ Kate Lilley, ‘True State Within: Women’s elegy 1640-1740’, in Grundy and Wiseman, 72-92 (pp. 84-5); Gray 2002, p. 427.

¹⁸⁷ Katherine Philips, “Letter VI: Orinda to Poliarchus”, April 8 1662, in *Letters*, p. 25.

begins within the traditional framework of female friendship but soon moves to the pastoral rejection of the corruption of urban life in favour of the quiet countryside:

For a retirement from the noise of Towns,
Is that for which some Kings have left their Crowns:
And Conquerours, whose Laurells prest their Brow,
Have chang'd it for the quiet Mirtle bough.
For titles, honours, and the world's address,
Are things too cheap to make up happiness¹⁸⁸

Philips is setting up a contrast between the false happiness of the urban life, here linked with political titles and honours, for the honesty and virtue of rural retirement and the friendship found within it. Taken alongside Marvell's vision of the pastoral as a haven from the political struggles for power as expressed in "The Garden", the friendship associated with rural retreat is, for Philips, a lasting alternative to the instability of the political world. "The Garden" reveals the futility of power struggles, represented by the fight for traditional arboreal trophies which are, in Marvell's pastoral, themselves naturally abundant:

How vainly men themselves amaze
To win the palm, the oak, or bays;
And their uncessant labors see
Crowned from some single herb or tree,
Whose short and narrow-verged shade
Does prudently their toils upbraid;
While all the flowers and trees do close
To weave the garlands of repose.¹⁸⁹

The parallel between the poets' visions of the pastoral as a space of peace and reflection is clear; however, unlike Marvell's "The Garden" Philips's "Invitation to the Countrey" is more explicitly concerned with the falsity of the world than the virtues of the pastoral retreat. Indifferent to the "ripe apples ... about my head" and "the luscious clusters of the vine" which capture Marvell's imagination, Philips views the countryside less as a locus of sensuous pleasure than as a site for social re-imagining. Retirement is, for Philips, an acknowledgement of the corruption of the political world and the opportunity to shape an alternative community:

Thus all the glittering world is but a cheat,

¹⁸⁸ Philips, "Invitation to the Countrey" in *Poems*, pp. 173-175, lines 11-14.

¹⁸⁹ Marvell, "The Garden", in *The Complete Poems*, pp. 100-102, lines 1-8.

Obtruding on our sence things grosse for great.
But he that can enquire and undisguised,
Will soone perceive the sting that hidden ly's:
And find no Joys merit esteem but those
Whose scene ly's wholly at our own dispose.¹⁹⁰

Condemning the present world as a “cheat” which clouds perception and disguises virtue, Philips offers hope to those like herself and Rosania, who clearly view the “sting that hidden ly's”. The pastoral is an intimate space common to both the writer and reader, suggesting shared values. The poem suggests the use of the pastoral form as part of the process of “consolidating [the community's] sense of itself as an elite” as argued by Lois Potter.¹⁹¹ Philips constructs a community of mutual knowledge and political loyalty out of those who are able to distinguish between false power and true virtue.¹⁹² She represents the pastoral countryside as conducive to such a realisation:

Kings may be slaves by their own passions hurl'd,
But who commands himself commands the World.
A countrey=life assists this study best,
When no distractions doth the soule arrest:
There heav'n and earth ly open to our view,
There we search nature and its author too;
Possess'd with freedome and a reall State
Look down on vice, on vanity, and fate.¹⁹³

Monarchs may be “by their own passions hurl'd”, but stable authority comes from within, the poem suggests. Through this turn inwards a “reall State” emerges which, freed from the “distractions” of the public life, enables true and lasting autonomy. The community which forms in response to the instability of the political state is a virtuous one, “possess'd with freedome” and looking down “on vice, on vanity, and fate.” Philips suggests a removal from a corrupt world which, with “heav'n and earth [lay] open to our view”, is outside the realm of either the earthly or the divine, but rather lying in the imaginative and intellectual realm.¹⁹⁴

¹⁹⁰ Philips, “Invitation to the Countrey”, in *Poems*, pp. 159-62, lines 31-36.

¹⁹¹ Potter, p. 113.

¹⁹² Potter, p. 113.

¹⁹³ Philips, “Invitation to the Countrey”, in *Poems*, pp. 159-62, lines 39-46.

¹⁹⁴ See also Catherine Gray, ‘Katherine Philips in Ireland’, *English Literary Renaissance*, 39:3 (Autumn 2009), 557-585.

Refusing to give absolute authority to a single person who “may be ... by their own passions hurl’d”, Philips imagines an ideal world where individuals have authority over themselves rather than external governance by a tyrant. It is the paradoxical facilitation of authority through retreat which underlies Philips’s socio-political vision, as there is the possibility of both liberty and a “reall State.” The term ‘state’ is used ironically, as a condition of being rather than a formal institution and which is internally derived rather than externally imposed. This concept of internal governance is fundamental to Philips’s political philosophy and is played out in the image of expansive internal worlds, a concept later imagined by Margaret Cavendish in poems such as “A World in an Ear-ring”.¹⁹⁵ Within the pastoral countryside, the landscape functions as an alternative to the urban centre of London, which itself is at this time undergoing an identity change as the cultural and political power of the king and court relocate. The relationship between the pastoral and the urban mirrors the changeable relationship between the self and the state, and the body and the mind.

Politicised Poetics: Pindaric and Horatian Odes

Philips’s engagement with and manipulation of established poetic traditions signals a larger movement which sought to transcend the material boundaries of post-Civil War life through a sociability which was unbound by time and place. Comparison with the verse of her contemporary Abraham Cowley reveals this, highlighting the ambivalence of mid-seventeenth-century political involvement and the complexity with which Philips and her peers engaged with the socio-political spheres from a position of intellectual retreat. Philips met Abraham Cowley during her time in London in March 1664, and they appear to have moved in similar literary and intellectual circles. His elegy upon her death was included in his 1668 collection of verse and heralded her virtue and wit, but unusually celebrated not just her individual talent and fame, but her friendship as well:

The Fame of Friendship which so long had told
Of three or four illustrious Names of old,
Till hoarse and weary with the tale she grew
Rejoyces now t’ have got a new,

¹⁹⁵ See discussion of Cavendish in the Introduction, pp. 19-20.

A new, and more surprizing story,
Of fair *Leucasias* and *Orindas* Glory.¹⁹⁶

It is important to note that Cowley chose to eulogise Philips with a poetic form common to them both: the Pindaric ode. As I will later demonstrate, Philips also engaged with the Horatian ode as a means of engaging with male fellow poets. The use of the Pindaric in this poem, alongside Philips's commendatory ode "Upon Mr. Abraham Cowley's Retirement", suggests a coded poetic form used to establish a shared political and poetic culture among writers and to connect them with a like-minded community of readers. As argued by Jerome de Groot in *Royalist Identities*, for royalist writers an understanding of the text was dependent upon the reader sharing in a set of textual conventions, and hence a specific coded language.¹⁹⁷ The Pindaric ode, as used by both Cowley and Philips and, as I will discuss in the following chapters, Jane Barker and Elizabeth Singer Rowe, signals such a poetic practice, addressing a specific and targeted readership.

The Pindaric form stood in contrast to the seventeenth-century use of the Horatian ode, which conveyed a more intimate and reflective poetic voice. Philips employs both forms with specific purpose in her body of verse, and an understanding of how both form and subject interrelate, and Philips's own relationships with the contemporary masters of such forms, is fundamental to making sense of her poetic political engagement. The Pindaric ode has its origins in classical poetry and was originally viewed as a vehicle of flattery and praise in the heroic mode. However the Pindaric tradition, adopted by English lyricists, reveals a more complex interaction between poet and the social and political institutions which are the poetic subjects. Abraham Cowley's 1656 *Pindarique Odes* set the standard for the seventeenth-century use of the genre in English, which marked a lyrical engagement with worlds of political power.¹⁹⁸ Pindar himself exposes a tension between the poet's response to the formal occasion of the poem and the institution which it celebrates, bringing into question the poet's role in sustaining and questioning social and political establishments. The tension between movement and stasis is intrinsic to the mode and is, in the lyric poetry of both Cowley and Philips, used to signal ambivalence towards political institutions. Annabel Patterson argues that Cowley's verse is,

¹⁹⁶ Abraham Cowley, "On the death of Mrs Katherine Philips", from *The Works of Mr Abraham Cowley* (Printed by J. M. for Henry Herringman, at the Sign of the Blew Anchor in the Lower Walk of the New Exchange, 1668), lines 88-93.

¹⁹⁷ De Groot, p. 59.

¹⁹⁸ Stella Revard puts Cowley's volume in political context in "'Pindarique Odes' and the Politics of the Interregnum", *Criticism* 35(1993), 391-418. See also Revard, *Politics, Poetics and the Pindaric Ode 1450-1700* (Turnhout: Brepols Publishers, 2010).

despite his outward protestations during the Interregnum, strongly coded royalist verse which employs the Pindaric ode as “dependent for its interpretation upon readers with special competence.”¹⁹⁹ This is supported by Cowley’s own description of the Pindarics in his 1656

Poems:

For as for the *Pindarick Odes* (which is the third part) I am in great doubt whether they will be understood by most *Readers*; nay, even by very many who are well enough acquainted with the common Roads, and ordinary Tracks of *Poesie*.²⁰⁰

Cowley clearly does not intend his verse to be fully accessible. Patterson suggests that, by using a coded poetic form, Cowley was shaping an exclusive community of readers who would read ‘with special competence’ the royalist discourse embedded in the verse.

In his 1656 collection of verse Cowley employs the Pindaric style as an overt mediation between his loyalty to the royalist cause and the need to reconcile himself to the current state authority. Writing in the preface to the *Poems*, Cowley argues that what at first may appear to be constraints on creativity are in fact enabling measures which lead to liberation:

Amongst all holy and consecrated things which the *Devil* ever stole and alienated from the service of the *Deity*, as *Altars, Temples, Sacrifices, Prayers*, and the like, there is none that he so universally and so long usurpt as *Poetry*. It is time to recover it out of the *Tyrants* hands, and to restore it to the *Kingdom of God*, who is the *Father* of it ... And as men before their receiving of the *Faith* do not without some carnal reluctancies apprehend the *bonds* and *fetters* of it, but finde it afterwards to be the truest and greatest *Liberty*: It will fare no otherwise with this *Art*, after the *Regeneration* of it; it will meet with wonderful variety of new, more beautiful, and more delightful *Objects*; neither will it want *Room*, by being *confined to Heaven*.²⁰¹

Cowley makes clear the connection between politics and art as he attempts to reclaim poetry from the “Tyrants hands.” Typical of the imagery in royalist discourse, Cowley argues that the “bonds and fetters” are paradoxically the “truest and greatest Liberty.”

The images of bondage and confinement are recurrent in royalist poetry, and were employed by Philips in her both her political verse and lyrical friendship poems. In “Upon the double murder of K. Charles,” Philips uses the occasion of the king’s execution to contemplate the fate of the wider royalist community:

¹⁹⁹ Annabel Patterson, *Censorship and Interpretation* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1984), p. 146.

²⁰⁰ Abraham Cowley, “The Preface” in *Poems* (1656), (b)2v, (b)3.

²⁰¹ *Ibid*, (b)2-3.

Though you have seiz'd upon all our defence,
Yet do not sequester our common sense.
But I admire not at this new supply:
No bounds will hold those who at scepters flye.²⁰²

Like Cowley, Philips employs the image of bonds and boundaries in order to transcend them, showing imaginative power to have the ability to supersede material constraints. Philips follows in a royalist textual tradition which politicised the imprisonment of the body, showing liberty to be a relative condition.²⁰³ Rejecting Parliamentary power as false as it can only govern the body, royalist writers emphasised the role of the king in shaping the boundaries of individual freedom. Within Philips's model of royalist philosophy in which monarchical authority is continued and reformed in the royalist community itself, true liberty is derived from the sociable friendship within this imagined community. The sociability which Philips shapes as a liberating power is cast as platonic friendship. Philips again recasts the restraining power of bonds and fetters in "Friendships's Mysteryes, to my dearest Lucasia" to negate their restrictive power:

Twere banishment to be set free,
Since we wear fetters whose intent
Not bondage is, but Ornament²⁰⁴

Here the image of fetters is manipulated, and instead of limiting physical restraints, the bonds are transformed into "Ornament" and thus become harmless physical decoration.²⁰⁵ Within the poem Orinda entreats Lucasia to enter into a space of withdrawal which is transformed into a politicised state. "We court our own captivity", she argues, choosing a space of authority in which there is no single centralised power but rather they are "Both Princes, and both subjects too."²⁰⁶ The poem was printed in Henry's Lawes's 1655 *Second Book of Ayres and Dialogues*, suggesting an identifiable group of readers and writers who compose the "we" of the poem.²⁰⁷

Philips's "Upon Mr. Abraham Cowley's Retirement", printed in the 1664 edition of her poems, is a Pindaric addressed to Cowley after his withdrawal from London to Chertsey. The

²⁰² Philips, "Upon the double murder of K. Charles, in answer to a libellous rime made by V.P.", in *Poems*, p. 69, lines 25-28.

²⁰³ De Groot, pp. 44-6.

²⁰⁴ Philips, "Friendship's Mysteryes", in *Poems*, p. 90, lines 16-20.

²⁰⁵ Catharine Gray also notes the transformation of the traditional image of bondage and confinement into courtly ornament. See Gray 2007, p. 125.

²⁰⁶ *Ibid*, lines 16, 25.

²⁰⁷ Gray 2007, p. 117; Chalmers, p. 19-20.

poem echoes the political images of ‘fettters’ and the royalist pastoral retreat, signalling a common political discourse established through poetic conventions:

In my remote and humble seat
Now I’m again possest
Of all that late fugitive, my Breast,
From all thy tumults and from all thy heat,
I’le find a quite and cool retreat;
And on the Fethers I have worn
Look with experience’d and revengeful scorn
In this my sov’raign Privacy.
‘Tis true I cannot govern thee,
But yet my self I may subdue;
And that’s the nobler Empire of the two.²⁰⁸

Again employing the image of bonds and fetters to symbolise social and political constraints, Philips is clearly responding to the paradoxical relationship between retreat and autonomous engagement with the political sphere. She sets up her position as “remote” and a “quiet and cool retreat”, but also figures it in political terms as a “sov’raign Privacy” and a “noble Empire”.

Philips engages with poetic forms other than the Pindaric as a means of connecting to predominantly male politicised poetic traditions. The Horatian ode, in contrast to the varying rhymes and rhythms of the Pindaric and its inherent ambivalence, is a more regulated form which typically celebrates historic events.²⁰⁹ Marvell’s famous Horatian ode commemorating Cromwell’s return from Ireland has become representative of the ambiguous use of poetic form to express political ideology. Blair Worden has drawn parallels between Marvell’s political odes and those of Horace himself as poets who seek to convey both the losses and gains of political transition.²¹⁰ A close look at the way in which Marvell engages with the classical tradition and adapts the poetic conventions to personal expression provides a context in which to read Philips’s use of the same form. Jerome de Groot observes that the poem is representative of the wider

²⁰⁸ Philips, “Upon Mr Abraham Cowley’s Retirement”, in *Poems*, lines 18-28.

²⁰⁹ N. E. Collinge, ‘Form and Content in the Horatian Lyric’, *Classical Philology*, 50:3 (July 1955), 161-68; David Norbrook, ‘Marvell’s “Horatian Ode” and the Politics of Genre’, chapter 6 in Thomas Healy and Jonathan Sawday, eds., *Literature and the English Civil War* (Cambridge University Press, 1990), 147-69; Norbrook, ‘Is Marvell’s “Horatian Ode” a Horatian Ode?’ in William Lamont, ed., *Religion, Renaissance and Civil War, Proceedings of the Folger Institute Center for the History of British Political Thought*, vol. 3 (Washington, DC, 1990), 221-58; Michele Lowrie, *Horace’s Narrative Odes* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997).

²¹⁰ Blair Worden, ‘The Politics of Marvell’s Horatian Ode’, *The Historical Journal*, 27:3 (September, 1984), 525-547 (p. 526).

reaction to the death of Charles I which beyond the initial shock and distress of the event itself, provoked a traumatic aporia which reshaped the way the nation conceived of itself and the political body.²¹¹ The poem, written in 1650, addresses the relationship between retirement and action, a relationship which became increasingly intricate in the context of changing social and political roles of the post-Civil War era:

Much to the man is due,
Who from his private gardens, where
He lived reservèd and austere
(As if his highest plot
To plant the bergamot),
Could by industrious valor climb
To ruin the great work of Time,
And cast the kingdom old
Into another mold;
Though Justice against Fate complain,
And plead the ancient rights in vain:
But those do hold or break,
As men are strong or weak.²¹²

Marvell positions the life of retirement against the moral obligation to military action. For loyalist such as Marvell, the moral notion of constancy is bound up in the *vita activa* or ‘life of action’. Andrew Shifflet notes that Stoic constancy was a moral ideal celebrated by both sides of the civil war in England, complicating the notion of retirement.²¹³ Even Cromwell himself, Cowley tells us, had once lived in a “reserved and austere” retreat spent in “private gardens”. The poem confirms De Groot’s argument that the death of the king was not merely a traumatic experience, but a completely destructive event which irrevocably ruptured the community and its sense of self. Marvell suggests that the “kingdom old” cannot be mended and restored, but must be “cast ... into another mold” through communal effort. This is consistent with Philips’s representation of retreat as a space of imaginative healing which would recast, but not reproduce, the lost royalist community.

²¹¹ De Groot, pp. 171-73.

²¹² Marvell, “An Horatian Ode Upon Cromwell’s Return”, in *The Complete Poems*, pp. 55-58, lines 28-40.

²¹³ Andrew Shifflett, *Stoicism, Politics and Literature in the Age of Milton: War and peace reconciled* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998) pp. 9, 44.

“A Retir’d Friendship, to Ardelia” is a familiar poem often quoted in studies that focus on the homoeroticism of Philips’s verse.²¹⁴ What is less often noted is that it is also a Horatian ode which engages with the dilemma of royalists living in retirement and contributes to a larger philosophy of sociable retreat. The pastoral imagined in the poem provides safety from “crouds of dangers” and offers a sociability found in the “mingling [of] Souls”, an ideal of Platonism. Within the bower there is “no disguise, nor treachery, / Nor any deep conceal’d design” offering a space free from dissimulation, deceit and pretense. Within this landscape friendship flourishes and provides the stability lacking in the outside world:

Here let us sit, and blesse our Starres
Who did such happy quiet give,
As that remov’d from noise of warres
In one another’s hearts we live.

Why should we entertain a feare?
Love cares not how the world is turn’d.
If crouds of dangers should appeare,
Yet friendship can be unconcern’d.²¹⁵

Friendship endures despite the uncertainty of the material world and its “crouds of dangers”, offering an answer to the desire for a stable base which would have resonated with loyalists coming to terms with the complete destruction of the state and society.

Both Philips and Marvell echo Horace’s Ode 3.29 which sets human anxieties against the seasonal alterations of violence and tranquillity, in effect characterising the ebb and flow of political conflict as natural fluctuation. Horace sets out the physical landscape as a discursive space, as Maecenas is positioned on high viewing the smoke, wealth and urban clamour that are Rome while he broods on looming dangers to the empire. Horace’s ode imagines flocks and shepherds seeking the shelter of shade against a parched summer landscape. The metaphor of shade as a sheltering retreat is a clear parallel with Philips’s poem:

In such a scorching Age as this,
Whoever would not seek a shade
Deserve their happiness to misse,
As having their own peace betray’d.²¹⁶

²¹⁴ Valerie Traub, *The Renaissance of Lesbianism in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), p. 304.

²¹⁵ Philips, “A retir’d friendship, to Ardelia”, in *Poems*, pp. 97-8, lines 9-16.

The classical ode presents a choice for the inhabitant: the *vita activa*, the active life of power, or the *vita contemplativa*, the peaceful life in the countryside. This choice was of utmost importance to the royalist pastoral poets, and a much contested one. The royalist reformation of the pastoral tradition inverts this binary choice, positioning the possibility of the *vita activa* within the contemplative pastoral countryside. Philips and Marvell evoke the pastoral shade as a space of peace and safety, but break down the barrier between such pastoral retreat and political action, suggesting that an active engagement with the political sphere can be maintained within a space of retirement.

David Norbrook identifies the Horatian ode as a generic signal of royalist engagement, and Eleanor Windsor Leach has explored Horace's Odes as functions of collective memory.²¹⁷ Rather than a nostalgia for a lost past, this suggests the use of classical forms to signal communal reconstruction. Cowley, Lovelace and Herrick also incorporate Horatian elements into their verse to shape a retreat as a sociable response to the Royalist defeat. The use of both poetic forms by established royalist writers like Cowley and Philips, as well as more ambiguously political writers such as Marvell, was therefore steeped in a political resonance of which they undoubtedly would have been aware. It is significant that Philips chose to write within the two contemporary traditions of royalist retirement verse: on the one hand the strictly structured lyrical verse of the Horatian ode, and on the other the more freely structured and meditative form of the Pindaric. Both forms signal an engagement with contemporary writers such as Cowley and Marvell, but furthermore they reveal shared anxieties over the direction of political governance and its impact on social relationships.

Platonism and Politics

Classical odes were clearly influential in shaping a royalist discourse of retreat which explored the role of the royalist in exile within a pastoral space. Alongside this manipulation of classical poetic form was the utilisation of classical social philosophy, most notably the trope of

²¹⁶ Ibid, lines 29-32.

²¹⁷ David Norbrook, *Writing the English Republic: Poetry, rhetoric and politics, 1627-1660* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), p. 252; Eleanor Winsor Leach, 'Personal and Communal Memory in the reading of Horace's *Odes* 1-3', *Arethusa*, 31:1 (1998), 43-74.

friendship which had itself undergone a transformation during the Renaissance. Early modern friendship discourse was largely informed by the treatises of classical philosophers such as Aristotle, Plato and Cicero, who argued for friendship as the highest and most perfect social relationship. The discourse of same-sex union pervades the language of male friendship in Renaissance England, providing the rhetorical hook upon which social philosophy hangs.²¹⁸ The notion of a friendship which places emphasis on a union of souls irrespective of physical distance would clearly be appealing to royalists separated by exile and loss after the Civil War.²¹⁹ Philips's use of the classically derived discourse of friendship both marks an engagement with a traditionally male social discourse, more specifically with a masculine discourse which had itself been politicised, and indicates a wider range of engagement for women in political and social discourse in the seventeenth century.

The language of virtue and modesty which has, in the past, led to the classification of Philips's writing as feminine and inward-looking, is tied to this tradition of royalist writing which sought to elevate the 'feminised' position of royalists in retreat.²²⁰ This is part of the larger literary shift which sought to move away from engagement with a form of royal representation which required acknowledgement of external factors.²²¹ As monarchical authority was no longer officially recognised by the state, the authority of virtue offered an alternative, and more stable, form of political authority.

Virtue was also a key component of the early modern model of platonic friendship. In the *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle distinguishes three different kinds of relationships: friendship of pleasure, of utility, and of virtue.²²² It is important to note that Aristotle considered only this third kind, friendships based on virtue, to be 'true' or 'perfect' friendships. It is towards this ideal of 'perfect' friendship that early modern models of Platonism strive, a notion of friendship free from the 'utilitarian' relationships of the public, political sphere which imply material and political gain. Philips's model of friendship, represented both in the philosophy of her verse and the sociable practices of her coterie, works towards this Aristotelean model of virtuous friendship.

²¹⁸ See Alan Bray, *Homosexuality in Renaissance England* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995); Laurie Shannon, *Sovereign Amity: Figures of friendship in Shakespearean contexts* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2002).

²¹⁹ Chalmers, p. 72.

²²⁰ Chalmers, p. 109.

²²¹ James Loxley, *Royalism and Poetry in the English Civil Wars: The drawn sword* (London: Macmillan, 1997), p. 81.

²²² Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, trans. by D. P. Chase (Courier Dover, 1998).

Philips's turn to this classical discourse of friendship answers the political problems of her era by shaping personal relationships as political imperative. In a time defined by political change and uncertainty, friendship is not only socially cohesive, but a means of forming political communities which are durable despite greater changes in political fortune.

"A Friend", published in the 1667 collection *Poems*, explores the ideal qualities of friendship. Opening with typical expressions of platonic love associated with the Society of Friendship and the 'daughters of Orinda', Philips moves towards an explicitly political definition of friendship. "Love, nature's plot, this great Creation's soule" is the root of happiness and stability, Philips argues, where "Friendship is the abstract of this noble flame", a refined derivative of nature's guiding principle:

The next to Angells Love, if not the same,
Stronger then passion is, though not so grosse:
It antedates a glad Eternity,
And is a heaven in Epitomy.²²³

Philips's vision of friendship hovers between divine love and passion, occupying a new social space outside of both marriage and public institutions. Derived from love, the platonic ideal promotes egalitarianism and affinity. By retreating from explicit political and carnal interests, Philips is able to explore more freely a range of ideas with political resonance in a distinctive context, that of friendship and community. Friendship is guided by political principles, and Philips quickly moves from friendship as "nobler than kindred or than mariage band" to describe the relationship as one of honour and intimacy:

Friendship doth carry more than common trust
And treachery is here the greatest Sin:
Secrets deposed then none ever must
Presume to open, but who put them in.
They that in one Chest lay up all their stock,
Had need be sure that none can pick the lock.²²⁴

Philips is calling for more than a mere confidant in her description of friendship; rather, she demands a relationship akin to political loyalty. The poem, with talk of "treachery", "secrets" and "trust", is a clearly a reaction to the perceived need for security arising out of the volatile

²²³ Philips, "A Friend", in *Poems*, pp. 165-68, lines 9-12.

²²⁴ *Ibid*, lines 37-42.

political state. Philips is making an explicit connection between the social and political aspects of friendship.

For royalist writers friendship is the stabilising force in an uncertain world, and Philips sees friendship as the means of creating and sustaining political community. “To the noble Palaemon on his incomparable discourse of Friendship” clearly positions friendship as a unifying force. Although the community was “secure, not happy” and “had not dwelt in safety, but in shade”, hope was not lost:

Hadst thou not hung out light more welcome far
Then wandring Seamen think the Northern Star;
To shew, least we our happiness should misse,
‘Tis plac’d in Friendship, Men’s (and Angells) bliss.²²⁵

Exhibiting uncertainty and anxiety over the volatile political and cultural situation, the narrative voice is presented as a member of a lost community that has been torn apart through war and political fracture. The friendship of Palaemon, the pastoral pseudonym of Sir Charles Cotterell, is the guiding force in unifying the fractured community. Using the established image of “wandring Seamen” to emphasise the isolation and despair of the individual exile, the community is also ironically united by this common experience of isolation and loss. As a seaman is guided through dark and unknown waters by the Northern Star, so friendship is the light which guides a community through dark and uncertain times. Philips lived in a time of change, on both a national and individual level, and the poem is a response to the uncertainty and anxiety over the volatile political and cultural climate. Palaemon’s influence, and their friendship, remains a constant in an inconstant world:

Th’ hast rear’d thy self a glorious monument;
And that so lasting as all fate forbids,
And will out-live Egyptian Pyramids.
Temples and Statues time will eat away,
And Tombs (like their inhabitants) decay;
But there Palaemon lives, and so he must
When Marbles crumble to forgotten dust.²²⁶

The “glorious monument” is Palaemon’s friendship, which Philips positions as his personal crowning glory and an emblem of the stability and continuity of the relationship. As friendship

²²⁵ Philips, “To the noble Palaemon on his incomparable discourse of Friendship”, in *Poems*, p. 83, lines 2, 4, 5-8.

²²⁶ *Ibid*, lines 34-40.

itself becomes a means of immortality, Philips again juxtaposes everlasting friendship with the impermanence of material emblems.

Engagement with the tradition of friendship initially appears to be a rejection of the material world in favour of an inward-looking sociability and as an alternative to the chaos and instability of the political state. In a laudatory poem to Henry Lawes printed in his 1655 *Second Book of Dialogues and Ayres*, Philips again casts friendship as an alternative unifying structure in a chaotic world. The poem begins with a meditation on the relationship between nature and culture:

NATURE, which is the vast creation's soul,
That steady curious agent in the whole,
The art of Heaven, the order of this frame,
Is only Number in another name.²²⁷

Philips creates a new space governed by both nature and heaven which are, she suggests, one and the same. Nature, as “vast creation’s soul”, is the spiritual centre of the contemporary world. Positioning Lawes within such a world testifies to his own spiritual and creative robustness, demonstrating the kind of authority, talent and moral steadfastness which are typical monarchical attributes:

And as true Reason triumphs over sense,
Yet is subjected to intelligence:
So Poets on the lower World look down,
But Lawes on them; his Height is all his own,
For, like Divinity itself, his lyre
Rewards the wit it did at first inspire.
And thus by double right Poets allow
His and their laurel should adorn his brow.²²⁸

Lawes is distinguished from the class of poets who are themselves removed from the “lower World” through their moral and intellectual integrity. The double-crowning of laurel, the classical symbol of immortality in the arts as well as on the battlefield, serves as a natural foil to the more ostentatious man-made crowns. The verse likens creative achievement to religious virtue,

²²⁷ Katherine Philips, “To the much honoured Mr. Henry Lawes, on his Excellent Compositions in Musick”, in Henry Lawes, *Second Book of Ayers, and Dialogues* (London: Printed by T. Harper for John Playford, 1655), b1, lines 1-4.

²²⁸ *Ibid*, lines 23-30.

creating a metaphysical lyric which is both egalitarian and exclusive.²²⁹ Lawes, though not a poet himself, is initiated into the close circle through his creative achievement and demonstrable virtue. This echoes Edmund Waller's commendatory poem to Lawes, "To Mr. Henry Lawes, Who Had Then Newly Set a Song of Mine, in the Year 1635", as he says, "Verse makes heroic virtue live." Waller clearly argues for the moral didacticism of poetry and, implicitly, music and other creative endeavours. Philips expands on this by arguing that "true Reason triumphs over sense, / Yet is subjected to intelligence"; however, friendship amplifies individual reason and virtue. In her commendatory verse to Lawes she emphasises the importance of friendship in creative and intellectual pursuits:

Friendship the Unison of well-tun'd hearts,
Honour's the Chorus of the noblest parts,
And all the world on which we can reflect,
Musique to th' Eare, or to the intellect.
If then each man a little world must be,
How many worlds are cobby'd out in Thee?²³⁰

Evoking the neo-Epicurean ideal of Margaret Cavendish's *Poems and Fancies*, Philips turns away from the splintered external world and looks inward for the source of a stable sociable structure. The verse follows in the royalist tradition of presenting poetic ability as an expression of both intellect and virtue, but its scope is limited without social interaction. If, as Philips suggests, "each man a little world must be", it is not a self-sufficient world. The creative relationship between members of a coterie was reciprocal: poems were dedicated to other members, exchanged between them, and set to music. Although the state she imagines is stable and enduring because of its distance, it is a sociable state which is dependent upon like-minded people coming together. Within the context of the poem, the poet's friendship with Lawes is a unifying and inspirational force:

Charm us to sence, and though experience faile,
And reason too, thy numbers will prevaile.
Then (like those Ancients) strike, and so command
All nature to obey thy generous hand:
None can resist, but such who needs will be

²²⁹ Lydia Hamessley, 'Katherine Philips's Friendship Poetry in his *Second Book of Ayres and Dialogues, 1655: A Musical Misreading*', in *Queering the Pitch: The new gay and lesbian musicology*, ed. by Brett et al (New York and Abingdon: Routledge, 2006), pp. 115-138 (p. 118).

²³⁰ Philips, "To the truly noble Mr Henry Lawes", in *Poems*, pp. 87-8, lines 11-16.

More stupid then a Stone, a Fish, a Tree.
Be it thy care our Age to new=create:
What built a world may sure repayre a state.²³¹

Philips positions Lawes as an edifying force, whose friendship elevates the community of which he is a part. It is here that Philips makes clear that the turn away from the external world is not a limiting retreat but rather a move towards an alternative state. The community seeks the “Age to new=create”, offering an alternative to the splintered world around them. By creating a new, more stable and enduring world, Philips suggests, they are repairing the fractured royalist state. Political and pastoral verse exist concurrently within a broader social philosophy of friendship, providing a new model of political stability and loyalty.

Philips’s other poems dedicated to members of her coterie are shaped in similar political metaphors which reveal an anxiety over the stability of the political state and its impact on a de-centralised community. “To the truly noble, and obleiging Mrs: Anne Owen (on my first approaches)” describes the friendship as a political conquest:

As in a triumph conquerours admit
Their meanest captives to attend on it,
Who, though unworthy, have the power confest,
And Justify’d the yielding of the rest:
So when the busy world (in hope to excuse
Their own surprise) your conquests doe peruse,
And find my name, they will be apt to say,
Your charmes were blinded, or else thrown away.
There is no honour got in gaining me,
Who am a prize not worth your Victory.²³²

The poem exhibits the narrative modesty typical of such dedicatory verse, as Philips demurs that she is “a prize not worth your Victory” and “there is no honour got in gaining [her]”. Philips uses the language of political conflict to describe authorial activity. The addressee has “conquests” over which she gains “Victory”; the outside audience are “triumph[al] conquerours” with “captives to attend”. Her discourse of poetic authorship is imbued with political language.

Mark Llewellyn notes that critics have acknowledged Philips’s Society of Friendship as part of a strategy of political identification and loyalism, a reading which can be extended to

²³¹ Ibid, lines 33-40.

²³² Philips, “To the truly noble, and obleiging Mrs: Anne Owen (on my first approaches)”, in *Poems*, p. 102-3, lines 1-10.

suggest a symbolic representation of friendship based upon High Anglican iconography.²³³ Thus Llewellyn suggests that the Society, and the literary activity which formed and sustained it, is as much a reaction against Puritanism as to the republican state. Within this reading, the image of intermingled hearts and souls is a central idea which, echoing Aristotle's theory of platonic love, suggests Protestant spirituality in a social context. Philips's poem "Friendship" exemplifies the "secular religion" of her sociable philosophy, describing friendship as "the summe of all divinity."²³⁴ Though stressing the spirituality of the union, within Llewellyn's reading this vision of friendship is a political and religious commentary:

For when two soules are chang'd and mixed soe,
It is what they and none but they can doe;
And this is friendship, that abstracted flame
Which creeping mortals know not how to name.
All Love is sacred, and the marriage ty
Hath much of Honour and divinity²³⁵

The intermingling of two souls is, as previously noted, a significant image in Philips's friendship verse and has political and religious resonance. The multiple references to friendship's "sacrifice" are likewise both political and religious in nature: the symbol of divine love sacrificed on the altar signifies the loss and death of royalist friends and family. With Philips's knowledge of French literature, and the royalist connection to the French court culture, the philosophy of friendship and the Society of Friendship itself appears to have been influenced by the *préciosité* of the French salon culture, which employed such language of divine love.²³⁶ The intersection of pious language and political philosophy is the backbone of Philips's authorship, revealing her verse to be both overtly and covertly politically engaged. A language of inward-looking piety, heretofore considered a 'feminine' discourse, is itself a tradition which is consciously used and manipulated to signify political and philosophical identity, and its relationship to male poetic tradition in the seventeenth century deserves more critical attention in the history of female authorship.

"Friendship in Emblem, or the Seale", a poem addressed to Lucasia, explores the context of Philips's religiously charged friendship through the Platonic image of the merging of souls.

²³³ Llewellyn, pp. 450-51.

²³⁴ Philips, "Friendship", in *Poems*, p. 150, line 20.

²³⁵ *Ibid*, lines 25-30.

²³⁶ Llewellyn, p. 458.

The “Emblem” of the poem is, Patrick Thomas suggests, the seal of the Society itself, though there is no evidence that a material badge existed.²³⁷ Regardless of the existence of the emblem itself, the poem depicts the philosophy of friendship promoted by the Society, beginning with a declaration of mutual love, united in one figure:

The hearts thus intermixed speak
A Love that no bold shock can break;
For Joyn'd and growing, both in one,
Neither can be disturb'd alone.²³⁸

Clearly echoing Aristotle’s notion of a friend as a ‘second self’, Philips begins by positioning friendship as a deeply intimate and personal relationship. The image of intermingled souls was part of the formal and ritualistic language of early modern male friendship which is clearly reflected in the poem’s imagery and, implicitly, in the philosophy of the Society of Friendship. Alan Bray argues that friendship was part of a larger structure of early modern social relations which included Christian ritual and service.²³⁹ The notion of twinned souls is an unmistakable reference to the courtly tradition of Platonic friendship, but within the context of Philips’s writing gains new political significance. Platonic friendship, based on a non-material union of souls, offers an opportunity of subjectivity which was denied to disenfranchised women.²⁴⁰ Philips’s literary representation of friendship follows in a tradition of “one soul in bodies twain” initiated by the Greek and taken up by Renaissance male writers.²⁴¹ Philips describes a “new love” which has redeeming powers:

Thus our twin souls in one shall growe,
And teach the World new love;
Redeem the age and sex, and show
A flame fate dares not move:

²³⁷ Thomas, p. 343, also cited in Mark Llewellyn, ‘Katherine Philips: Friendship, poetry and neo-platonic thought in seventeenth-century England’, *Philological Quarterly*, 81:4 (2002), 441-68 (p. 457). For more on Philips’s poetical engagement with *preciosité* see Thomas, pp. 7-10, Chalmers, p. 74, and Barash, p. 33. For more general readings of *precieux* culture see Erica Veevers, *Images of Love and Religion: Queen Henrietta Maria and Court Entertainments* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), pp. 14-21.

²³⁸ Philips, “Friendship in Emblem, or the Seale, to my dearest Lucasia”, in *Poems*, p. 106, lines 1-4.

²³⁹ Alan Bray, *The Friend* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), pp. 104-5. Bray argues that friendship, as a “voluntary kinship”, is expressed through an idealised rhetoric of love and fidelity inscribed in letters, verse and monuments negotiated the fear of the impermanence of the union.

²⁴⁰ Chalmers, p. 118.

²⁴¹ Michel Montaigne, *On Friendship*, trans. by M. A. Screech (London: Penguin Books, 2004), p. 13.

And courting death to be our friend,
Our lives together too shall end.

A dew shall dwell upon our tomb
Of such a quality,
That fighting armies, thither come,
Shall reconciled be.
We'll ask no epitaph, but say
Orinda and Rosania.²⁴²

Behind the exaltations of a spiritualised relationship lies the practical reason for its formation: security. The friendship is formed so “that no bold shock can break”, even physical death, exemplifying the stability which Philips craved. The virtue of their relationship will reconcile “fighting armies” after their physical demise, suggesting the social and political significance of friendship. The endurance of the disembodied union will “redeem the age and sex”, offering possibilities for community and, more specifically, women.

Although the friends are symbolically, even spiritually, joined, they remain physically apart. Thus the sublimation associated with the Platonic ideal is transformed into a connectedness which facilitates an enlightened sociability while retaining individuality. Philips is here employing a traditional image of the metaphysical and pastoral poets of the early seventeenth century, most notably John Donne, to express her philosophy of friendship. Donne, whose poem “The Ecstasy” suggests both religious and bodily rapture, uses the images of souls entwined to lift the image from the realm of the physical to that of the divine:

This ecstasy doth unperplex
(We said) and tell us what we love ;
We see by this, it was not sex ;
We see, we saw not, what did move :

But as all several souls contain
Mixture of things they know not what,
Love these mix'd souls doth mix again,
And makes both one, each this, and that.²⁴³

The “ecstasy” of the poem is quickly desexualised by Donne, as he complicates the notion of love and religious enlightenment. As Philips suggests an intertwining of souls which both creates

²⁴² Philips, “To Mrs Mary Awbrey at parting”, in *Poems*, pp.145-48, lines 49–60.

²⁴³ John Donne, “The Ecstasy”, in *Poems of John Donne*, ed. by E. K. Chambers (London: Lawrence & Bullen, 1896), pp. 53-56, lines 29-36.

unity and retains individuality, so Donne suggests that “these mix’d souls” are “both one, each this, and that”:

We then, who are this new soul, know,
Of what we are composed, and made,
For th’ atomies of which we grow
Are souls, whom no change can invade.

But, O alas ! so long, so far,
Our bodies why do we forbear?
They are ours, though not we ; we are
Th’ intelligences, they the spheres.²⁴⁴

Consistent with the compass image in “A Valediction Forbidding Mourning”, Donne shapes a relationship between two people which transcends the physical: “we are / Th’ intelligences”, while the bodies are merely “the spheres”, the conduit of the soul and mind. Philips takes this metaphysical imagery and applies it to the spiritual union of platonic friendship. The friendship which Philips presents is both divinely virtuous and intricately connected: “Each follows where the other Leanes, /And what each does, the other meanes.”²⁴⁵ The relationship is more than an emotional bond, representing a meeting of minds as well as souls, as friendship “meanes a mutuall knowledge too.”²⁴⁶ The flames of friendship are “noble and devine”, free “from grosseness or mortality”, and thus enter the realm of divinity.²⁴⁷ The images suggest an intimacy of hearts and minds which underpin the friendship itself, shaping the relationship as an intellectual and emotional connection which, therefore, is able to transcend material boundaries. Philips’s poem demonstrates the Platonic ideal of “twin souls in one”, echoing the metaphysical verse of poets like Donne to “redeem the age and sex”, reforming both the socio-political and spiritual realms.

Conclusion

Ultimately what emerges from Philips’s verse is a profound sense of insecurity and a deep mistrust of established political structures. This, in turn, feeds into a desire for something

²⁴⁴ Ibid, lines 45-52.

²⁴⁵ Ibid, lines 27-8.

²⁴⁶ Ibid, line 5.

²⁴⁷ Philips, “Friendship in Emblem, or the Seale, to my dearest Lucasia”, in *Poems*, pp. 106-8, lines 16, 18.

more enduring which can only be achieved by a turn away from material structures of power and towards an inwardly derived, but outwardly looking, social authority. This authority is based upon a philosophy of spiritualised friendship which unites like-minded members across the boundaries of time and space. Her verse engages with traditional poetic forms, forming literary dialogue with a community of royalist writers both male and female who seek, through literary imagining, to shape an intellectual space of retreat from an unreliable world.

The nature of Philips's verse and its connection to wider political and literary dialogues represents one facet of the engagement of the public with the political sphere, which began with Parliament's revolt against the monarchy and continued through the Interregnum and, implicitly, with the restoration of Charles II.²⁴⁸ Creating a complex vision of community which is founded upon individual virtue and friendship and sustained through a common discourse of pastoral retreat, Philips demonstrates a committed engagement with the philosophical and political debates of the seventeenth century and reveals the complex ways in which individuals reacted to them.

Philips's poetic contribution to the discourse of friendship was multilayered: her verse, heavily imbued with Platonic imagery of a 'union of souls', presented friendship as a stable and lasting relationship; however, her involvement in various literary circles and the textual conversations recorded in verse and letters contributes to a new tradition of friendship. Mary Beale places Philips within the classical tradition:

The Theban, or H. Band, mention'd by Plutarch; were not soe famous for their Valour, (though even that was without any Example) as for their Love: For it was their Friendship which animated their Courage, and made them worthy K. Philips teares: and had not that given a kind of Eternity to their memory they, like many other excellent Warriours, might at once have slept in the dust, and have been buried in Oblivion.²⁴⁹

Beale connects Philips with the tradition of Plutarchian friendship, establishing a lineage of sociable philosophy from the classical giants to her contemporaries. Beale, and by extension Philips, place emphasis on love over valour, connecting friendship with "a kind of Eternity" in contrast to the "other excellent Warriour" who "have been buried in Oblivion". Philips' "teares" celebrate the virtue of her predecessors, perpetuating their memory and significance in future

²⁴⁸ David Underdown, *Revel, Riot and Rebellion: Popular politics and culture in England 1603-1660* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), p. 289.

²⁴⁹ Folger MS 420127, p. 20.

generations. As I will demonstrate in the following chapters, Philips was far from anomalous in her participation in traditions of social philosophy, both classical and contemporary. Writers who followed her would develop Philips's model of female authorship as they, too, sought to create a sociable space through text which transcends the insecurity of institutionalised structures of authority. The tension between the move inward and the desire for wider community is a clear and persistent theme throughout Philips's verse. The conciliation of the positions is possible, but remains unrealised. This would become a key feature of the model of female authorship which was associated with Philips, and would be taken up and expanded by Jane Barker as discussed in the following chapter.

Chapter II

Jane Barker: an experience of community from the fringes

The Jacobite writer Jane Barker has often been aligned with the ‘daughters of Orinda’, a lineage of early modern female literary activity which is defined by a presumed virtue and modesty, a moral authorial persona, and a resistance to public authorship.²⁵⁰ However, as we re-examined the model of female authorship initiated by Katherine Philips and her literary persona ‘Orinda’ in the previous chapter, so must we rethink what it means for early modern women to follow and expand on that model. How might a such a rereading of Barker's engagement with the politics of friendship and community complicate the model of ‘Orinda’ as previously explored? I have shown the ways in which Philips engaged with classical philosophies of friendship and community to shape a model of politicised friendship open to women. Barker engages with the model of authorship initiated by Philips, continuing a tradition of female participation in masculine discourses of friendship and community.

Building on the work of Kathryn King, I argue that Barker's authorial persona was influenced by the model offered by Katherine Philips's ‘Orinda’ but also differed from it in crucial respects. The link was noted in Jane Barker's own time. Even from her early involvement with the Cambridge coterie, Barker was consciously positioned by others within the context of Katherine Philips's literary heritage. John Newton's commendatory poem to Barker, printed as part of *Poetical Recreations* in 1688, idealised her image of modesty and poetic genius by aligning her with the virtuous Orinda. Newton, known as Philaster in the pastoral poetics, was Barker's central contact within the coterie based at St. John's College, Cambridge, and they shared a sustained poetical correspondence.²⁵¹ Newton's commendatory poem to Barker draws a comparison between the two women in terms of a virtuous poetic persona. Associating burgeoning women writers with the successful figure of Orinda was a common poetic trope in the years following Katherine Philips's death, and confirms the image of Orinda as the epitome of feminine virtue and, by

²⁵⁰ Jeslyn Medoff, ‘The Daughters of Behn and the Problem of Reputation’, in *Women, Writing, History: 1640-1740*, ed. by Isobel Grundy and Susan Wiseman (Athens, Ga.: University of Georgia Press, 1992), pp. 33-54; Marilyn Williamson, *Raising Their Voices: British women writers, 1650-1750* (Detroit, MI: Wayne State University Press, 1990), p. 102.; Elaine Hobby, *Virtue of Necessity: English women's writing 1649-1688* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1989), p. 161.

²⁵¹ Kathryn King, ‘Jane Barker, *Poetical Recreations*, and the Sociable Text’, *English Literary History (ELH)*, 61 (1994), 551-70, p. 555. King identifies John Newton of Uffington as a fellow of St. John's College, Cambridge.

extension, an authorship based on virtue. Newton's poem clearly compares Philips with Barker in terms of a moral poetic practice:

The Great *Orinda*, whose *Seraphick* Pen
Triumph'd o'er *Women*, and out-brav'd ev'en *Men*:
Then our *Male-Poets* modestly thought fit,
To claim that honour'd *Primacy* in Wit;
But, lo, the *Heiress* of that *Ladies Muse*,
Rivals their Merits, and their Sence out-do's;
With swifter flights of fancy wings her *Verse*,
And nobler Greatness valiant Act rehearse.²⁵²

Newton figures Barker here as “the *Heiress* of that *Ladies Muse*”, inheriting a tradition of feminine verse as defined by assumptions about Philips's own model of gendered writing. The poem demonstrates a tradition of gendered poetic competition, each seeking to claim “*Primacy* in Wit.” Newton's ode to Barker paints a portrait of expectations about women's writing: Philips's identity as a writer is bound up in a fictional representation of femininity, establishing and perpetuating a dichotomous tradition of female authorship which imagines pious women whose intellectual and bodily virtues triumph over the vulgar arena of their counterparts in print publication. However the importance of virtue in the context of classical models of friendship and the pastoral implies that the acclamation of Barker's quality as a writer is an indication of the esteem held for her adaptation of a pastoral friendship, rather than a personal estimation.

As I argued in the previous chapter, Philips used the figure of Orinda to position herself within a circle of writers through the coterie exchange of shared poetic discourses. Kathryn King notes that Barker looked to Philips as a source of poetic identity, but that it is the figure of Orinda rather than of Philips herself which informed Barker's own authorial persona.²⁵³ The complexity of the relationship between Philips and Barker, and likewise between Orinda and Fidelia, requires further examination. Orinda is a representation of a public poetic self, a pseudonym for Philips's role in the Society of Friendship and a consciously exaggerated authorial persona. Galesia and Fidelia, Barker's prosaic and poetic narrative pseudonyms are, by contrast, largely projections of her own experiences both as an author and as an individual desirous of belonging in various marginal communities. Orinda serves as an authorial persona, a

²⁵² Jane Barker, *Poetical Recreations: Consisting of original poems, songs, odes, &c. with several new translations* (London: printed for Benjamin Crayle at the Peacock and Bible, at the West-end of St. Pauls, 1688); quoted in *Katherine Philips: The Matchless Orinda. Volume 1: The poems*, ed. by Patrick Thomas (Stump Cross Books, 1990), p. 28.

²⁵³ Kathryn King, *Jane Barker, Exile: A literary career 1675-1725* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2000), p. 45.

stand-in for Philips herself in the alternative sociable network over which she presided, and a façade recognised by her readers. Barker, by contrast, does not directly present her varied narrative personae as versions of herself, but rather utilises them to explore her own ambivalent political and religious identifications through alternative voices. Fidelia and her prosaic counterpart Galesia are themselves narrative characters rather than authorial façades, who strongly identify with political, religious and gendered groups, but ultimately experience these communities from the fringes. Like Philips, Barker strongly identifies with her chosen communities; however, while Philips remained a core member of the Society of Friendship and the wider royalist community, Barker consistently searches for belonging and acceptance in intellectual coteries and the exiled Jacobite community, belonging and acceptance which she does not always find. Galesia and Fidelia are narrative tools which Barker uses to convey her sociable impulses and, ultimately, her rejection. These fictive voices articulate a more complex notion of community, authorship and selfhood than that of Orinda and her Society of Friendship, one which shows that the boundaries of community can be delineated through exclusion as well as inclusion. Thus although the model of female authorship initiated by Philips undeniably informs Barker's model of authorship and community, it serves here as a starting point for exploring Barker's own complex visions of community and authorial identity, rather than a critical framework. Barker's surviving verse and correspondence paints a picture of an educated woman seeking engagement with a wider intellectual and political life, as shown in her early correspondence with a coterie of young men at Cambridge through to her later engagement with localised Jacobite communal poetics. Barker's experience of community was very different from Philips's ability to position herself in a central role in the Society of Friendship. Consistently presenting herself as on the fringes of communities with which she strongly identified, Barker offers a different view of exile and belonging.

Though Barker does not have the same standing in contemporary critical discourse as Katherine Philips, her work nevertheless, as Jane Spencer has established, poses questions foundational to investigations of female authorship.²⁵⁴ Although initially approached as a case study of the 'rise' of the female novelist by Spencer and others, Barker's political identification became the focus of more recent studies by

²⁵⁴ See Jane Spencer, 'Creating the Women Writer: The autobiographical works of Jane Barker', *Tulsa Studies in Women's Literature*, 2 (1983), 165-81, and *The Rise of the Women Novelist: From Aphra Behn to Jane Austen* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1986).

scholars including Carol Barash, Hilda Smith, and Carol Shiner Wilson.²⁵⁵ My focus here is on the politics of Barker's verse, drawing from particularly pertinent studies that include Kathryn King's recent work, which draws attention to her political involvement and Jacobite identification as defining features of her authorship.²⁵⁶ Toni Bowers has also looked to Barker's political identifications to explore the range of Jacobite identifications beyond the rigid definition of dedicated supporters of the exiled King James II.²⁵⁷ Bowers explores the fluctuation of ideology in early Augustan England across the political spectrum, and raises the issue of differing ideologies existing within the same political camp: "Where we might expect an unequivocal celebration of the Jacobite poet's chosen path of poetry and loyalty, we find instead disappointment, uncertainty and dark regret. In Barker we confront a Jacobite not true to type, at once wholly committed and deeply equivocal."²⁵⁸ Bowers highlights the need to take writers such as Barker not as representative of a unified political and religious ideology, but as part of a broad range of identifications which are sometimes contradictory or at odds with the dominant associations of a particular position. Barker does exhibit uncertainty, both over her own tenuous position and that of the larger Jacobite community. Indeed although Barker voices her Jacobitism actively and vociferously throughout the body of her verse, underneath this outward political fervour lies a deeply rooted anxiety over her role within the local and broader Jacobite communities, an anxiety which is linked to her own authorship.

Barker's career marks a shift both chronological and ideological from the community in retirement shaped by Philips's Society of Friendship. Nearly a quarter of a century passed from Philips's death in 1664 to the publication of Barker's *Poetical Recreations* in 1688. While those writing during the Civil War and its aftermath were necessarily affected by the political upheaval and articulated a personal experience of the war and the resulting loss and exile through a communal poetic discourse, Barker

²⁵⁵ Carol Barash, *English Women's Poetry 1649-1714: Politics, community, and linguistic authority* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), pp. 174-198; Hilda L. Smith, *Women Writers and the Early Modern British Political Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998); Carol Shiner Wilson, ed., *The Galesia Trilogy and Selected Manuscript Poems by Jane Barker* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997).

²⁵⁶ Kathryn King, 'Galesia, Jane Barker, and Coming to Authorship', in *Anxious Power: Reading, Writing, and Ambivalence in Narrative by Women*, ed. Carol J. Singley and Susan Elizabeth Sweeney (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1993), 91-104; King (1994), 551-70; King, "'The Unaccountable Wife'" and Other Stories of Female Desire in Jane Barker's *A Patch-Work Screen for the Ladies*', *The Eighteenth Century: Theory and Interpretation* 35 (Spring 1994), 155-72; King, 'Of Needles and Pens and Women's Work', *Tulsa Studies in Women's Literature* 14 (Spring 1995), 77-93; King 2000.

²⁵⁷ Toni Bowers, 'Jacobite Difference and the Poetry of Jane Barker', *English Literary History*, 64:4 (1997), 857-69.

²⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 868.

was only a child when the Restoration occurred, and would have had little, if any, memory of the Interregnum. The political climate in which Barker lived and wrote was a drastic change from the post-Civil War days of Philips's authorship, as the return of the Stuart monarchy was first established and then undermined again from within, culminating in the Revolution of 1688-9 and the subsequent exile of the Stuart king and court. The instability of state which was the undercurrent of the royalist poetic tradition of the Interregnum was now an established reality, and the fervently imagined hopes of a Jacobite return to the throne were largely disregarded by the Williamite regime.²⁵⁹ However the most significant difference between Philips's textual responses to the political and literary climates of the 1650s and 1660s and Barker's post-1688 response is the poet's own relationship to the wider community. Philips positioned herself as a central figure in both the Society and the wider royalist poetic community, whereas Barker consistently positions herself on the fringes of communities with which she strongly identifies but to which she will never fully belong. The varying responses of these two writers demonstrate both a changing cultural and political atmosphere, and the range of individual responses to national events.

My exploration of these issues focuses primarily on the manuscript verse produced during and after the time Barker spent as a political exile in the community of St. Germain, although I set this body of work in the context of Barker's literary career as a whole, which embraced the roles of both the professional female poet and the coterie manuscript writer.²⁶⁰ The principal textual source is the poems contained in Kathryn King's 1998 printed edition of the manuscript collection of Barker's verse currently held in Magdalen College, Oxford.²⁶¹ Magdalen MS 343 contains eighty poems, some of which appear in her prose fiction and some of which also appear in the 1688 publication of *Poetical Recreations*. Barker protested that the verses were "without her consent, ... printed in the year 1688" and are "now corrected by her own

²⁵⁹ John Childs notes that although the court at St. Germain remained confident in their mainland support and eventual success, the supposed support of English army officers was largely unfounded. Childs, 'The Abortive Invasion of 1692', in *The Stuart Court in Exile and the Jacobites*, ed. by Eveline Cruickshanks and Edward Corp (London: The Hambledon Press, 1995), pp. 61-72 (66).

²⁶⁰ Leigh Eicke argues that Barker manipulates the conventions of both manuscript and print, representing herself as a manuscript author and her work as the process of manuscript exchange to ameliorate the stigma of print on both political and gendered levels. Leigh Eicke, 'Jane Barker's Jacobite Writing', *Women's Writing and the Circulation of Ideas: Manuscript publication in England, 1550-1800*, ed. By George L. Justice and Nathan Tinker, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp. 137-157 (p. 137). For more on the political history post-revolution see J. P. Kenyon, *Revolution Principles: The party politics, 1689-1720* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002); Mark Knights, 'History and literature in the Age of Defoe and Swift', *Literature Compass*, 3:1 (May 2005), doi: 10.1111/j.1478-0542.2005.00131.x;

²⁶¹ Jane Barker, *The Poems of Jane Barker: The Magdalen Manuscript*, Kathryn King, ed., (Magdalen College, Oxford, 1998).

hand”, echoing Katherine Philips’s objections to the inaccurate representations of her verse in print.²⁶² The majority of the verse is, however, unique to this source. The Magdalen Manuscript spans nearly a quarter century of Barker’s life, detailing the political events of the late seventeenth century and chronicling Barker’s own search for community and identity across political, religious and intellectual communities in the context of wider political change and engagement with community from the margins.

The manuscript is divided into two parts. The first section, acknowledging its political focus with its title “Referring to the Times”, was written between 1685 and 1691, and is filled with overtly political occasional poems which reflect on recent Jacobite history. The second section was written during Barker’s time in St. Germain, and was completed by the time she returned to England in 1704. When she was left virtually blind by an unsuccessful cataracts operation in 1696, her cousin William Connock acted as her scribe.²⁶³ ‘Referring to the Times’ is written in his hand, the second and third sections in Barker’s own. The verse is preceded by a dedication to the Prince of Wales on the occasion of his first birthday, when a bound copy of the manuscript was gifted to him, and by a preface to the reader. These prefaces place Barker within a community that is like-minded and sympathetic, hinting at the verse within which strongly proclaims her Jacobite allegiance and Catholic faith. Her desire for royal recognition is evident from the presentation of a bound manuscript to the Prince of Wales on January 1, 1701. Although from August 1700 there was renewed hope for Jacobite succession to the throne with the death of William, Duke of Gloucester, which made it a particularly promising time to seek patronage, by all accounts Barker was unsuccessful in her bid for patronage, and she remained on the periphery of a community centred around the king and court.

Biographical Background

Jane Barker was the only daughter of Thomas and Anne Barker of Wilsthorpe, Lincolnshire.²⁶⁴ Thomas had been one of the Secretaries of the Lord Keeper of the Great Seal of England and continued to have inner court contacts and retain strong royalist

²⁶² Barker, *The Poems of Jane Barker*, p. 43. Philips refers to the 1664 publication of *Poems. By the Incomparable, Mrs K.P.* as “this most Treacherous accident”, noting the “effrontery” of the publication in *The Collected Works of Katherine Philips. Volume 2: The letters*, ed. by Patrick Thomas (Stump Cross, Essex: Stump Cross Books, 1990), p. 131.

²⁶³ King 1998, p. 9.

²⁶⁴ Kathryn King and Jeslyn Medoff, ‘Jane Barker and her life (1652-1732): The documentary record’, *Eighteenth-Century Life*, 21:3 (1997), 16-38 (p. 18).

identification throughout his life. Anne's family, the Connocks, were strongly Catholic and were reportedly the converting influence on Jane.²⁶⁵ After her father's death, Barker moved to London and spent four years living with her mother. It was during this time that Barker converted to Catholicism, and although the exact date of her conversion is unknown the experience continued to be a significant factor in her life and features heavily in her early verse. After the Revolution of 1688-9, and James II's subsequent exile to France, Barker became one of more than 40,000 loyalists to follow the king to set up court at the site of a former royal residence at St. Germain-en-Laye, just outside of Paris.²⁶⁶ Jane inherited the manor house at Wilsthorpe and the surrounding areas and left France for her Lincolnshire village in 1704, while her living younger brother Henry was effectively written out of the will, receiving the small sum of ten pounds.²⁶⁷ While it was not unusual for daughters to be heirs to family estates, it was unusual for daughters with surviving brothers to be named the primary beneficiary and we can assume that Henry was not the apple of his parents' eye. The family rift must have been substantial to warrant his effective disinheritance, and was played out in later years as Henry's daughter took Barker to court in a bitter legal battle over a disputed sum of money.²⁶⁸

Barker's time in the country was far from a quiet provincial retreat. On the contrary, Barker was, in her words, in "necessitous Circumstances", alluding to the financial troubles she suffered during the prolonged court disputes with her niece Mary, who lived with her as her companion.²⁶⁹ Despite her personal difficulties it was during this time that Barker composed the *Galesia* trilogy, a fictional account of Galesia's search for communal belonging after rejection by her lover. The prose trilogy was Barker's most popular work, shaping her reputation as a writer but not manifesting the financial rewards she desperately needed. It is fitting that Barker is known primarily through her narrative characters: through her poetic and narrative texts, Barker has in effect rewritten her personal history within that of the larger Jacobite, Catholic, medical, and intellectual communities, communities with which she identified strongly but which, she suggests, never fully embraced her. Unlike Katherine Philips, who positioned herself at the centre of the Society of Friendship, Barker was not at the core of any of

²⁶⁵ King 2000, pp. 113-4. King identifies Barker's mother's family's connection with Catholicism and notes that in a time of anti-papist prejudice, it was difficult to identify practising Catholics because of the concealment or disguise of religious affiliations.

²⁶⁶ King 2000, p. 119.

²⁶⁷ King 2000, pp. 13-14.

²⁶⁸ King and Medoff, pp. 23-5.

²⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 24.

the communities with which she was involved. In her early years in Wiltshire and London she exchanged verse within amateur circles, most notably a circle of male academics based at St. John's College, Cambridge. After her voluntary removal to France she circulated occasional poetry which described the events of 1688-9 at the Stuart court in exile at St. Germain-en-Laye, and during the reign of George I she reinvented herself again as a professional novelist. Consistently affiliating herself with a community apart, whether as a woman denied belonging in the masculine intellectual communities or as a persecuted religious minority and political exile, Barker complicates what we think we know about female literary activity and sociability in the early modern period. This chapter will explore Barker's varying experiences of community from the fringes, beginning with her involvement with a predominantly male intellectual coterie.

The Cambridge Coterie

As a woman, Barker was excluded from formal participation in the academic community by virtue of her sex. Her search for inclusion in the scholarly world is evident from her earliest datable verse included in her coterie correspondence with a circle of scholars based at St. John's College, Cambridge, in the 1670s. Barker's epistles from this period reveal an assortment of correspondents including a "Reverend Friend Mr. H", an "Honoured Friend, Mr. E.s—t", the "Unkind Strephon" and a "Young Lover", among others. Despite her older brother Edward's attendance at St. John's College, Oxford, it was in all probability not Edward who introduced Barker to the students of St. John's College at Cambridge, but rather "one John Newton, a man ten years her junior, who lived in the nearby village of Uffington", as suggested by Kathryn King and Jeslyn Medoff.²⁷⁰ Carol Shiner Wilson notes that Barker was introduced to the circle by "a Kinsman" studying at the college, who remains unnamed, and retained correspondence with a select group of students whose poetic works appeared alongside her own.²⁷¹ Such correspondence between aspiring women writers and established male intellectuals was unusual but not unique, as Margaret Cavendish had maintained a correspondence with Thomas Hobbes and René Descartes, among others, and Anne

²⁷⁰ King and Medoff, p. 20.

²⁷¹ Wilson, p. xxii. King 1994, p. 555. King identifies Philaster as John Newton, first a student (1678-1685) and then a fellow (1685-1700) of St. John's. Another member of college, who was known as Exillus in coterie correspondence has not been identified but is discussed by King (1994, p. 568). The basis of their relationship is unknown, though King notes that Barker actively sought correspondence with academics, particularly those of Cambridge University.

Finch was to do the same with Jonathan Swift and Alexander Pope.²⁷² The absence of other female addressees within Barker's coterie correspondence suggests that Barker identified very closely with exclusively male communities, but inevitably remained marginal to these intellectual groups as she was barred from formal participation in scholarly institutions.

“An invitation to my learned friends at Cambridge: To my country solitude” is an address to the coterie that likens the university to the Tree of Knowledge: an attractive temptation for Barker but ultimately one which she cannot permanently embrace. Although connected to her addressees by a mutual desire for virtuous knowledge, Barker soon acknowledges the gulf between herself and them, admitting that rural Lincolnshire is not the same fount of learning and virtue as that enjoyed by her friends in Cambridge:

But that the Tree of Knowledge won't grow here:
Though in its culture I have spent some time,
Yet it disdains to grow in our cold Clime,
Where it can neither Fruit nor Leaves produce
Good for its owner, or the public use.²⁷³

The distance goes beyond the geographical. For Barker the image of the Tree of Knowledge serves as a symbol of an unattainable community: she “spent some time” in “its culture”, but now in a “cold Clime” is bereft of its “Fruit [and] Leaves.” The metaphor explores the narrator’s relationship to a community with which she obviously feels great kinship, but in which she is unable to fully participate. The image also echoes the biblical Tree of Knowledge whose forbidden fruit was plucked by a woman and for which womankind paid a dear price. Barker's tree is not only forbidden to her as a woman, it is barren in her region, suggesting an accessibility which hinges on qualifiers beyond gender. Although her status as a single woman would necessarily have impacted her ability to participate in the primarily masculine intellectual communities,

²⁷² Anna Battigelli, *Margaret Cavendish and the Exiles of the Mind* (University Press of Kentucky, 1998), p. 46. Battigelli notes that the Newcastle salon was a fertile environment for discussion of contemporary philosophy, and attracted many thinkers who resided in Paris during the 1640s and 1650s. See Jonathan Swift's commendatory poem “Apollo Outwitted To the Hon. Mrs Finc (since Countess of Winchilesea) under the name of Ardelia: 'Phoebus now short'ning every Shade”, in *Miscellanies: Consisting of Verses by Dr. Swift, Dr. Arbuthnot, Mr. Pope, and Mr. Gay*, vol. IV (London: printed for Charles Bathurst, at the Cross Keys opposite St. Dunstan's Church, Fleetstreet, 1767), pp. 123-7 and Pope's poem “To the Right Hon. ANN Countess of WINCHILSEA: occasion'd by four verses in the rape of the Lock” and Finch's response “To Mr Pope In answer to a copy of verses occasion'd by a little dispute upon four lines in the Rape of the Lock”, in *The Anne Finch Wellesley Manuscript Poems*, ed. by Barbara McGovern and Charles H. Hinnant (Athens GA and London: The University of Georgia Press, 1998), pp. 68-9.

²⁷³ Barker, “An invitation to my learned friends at Cambridge: To my country solitude”, in *The Poems of Jane Barker*, pp. 43-5, lines 37-41.

she does not figure the barriers to her relation to this community in terms of her gender, but ultimately in terms of social distance.

“To my friends who prais’d my Poems”, a poem which appears in the Magdalen Manuscript and was later published in the prose work *A Patch-work Screen for the Ladies* (1723), continues to explore Barker’s attempts to find a place in an inherently masculine sphere. The poem begins with a tribute to her scholarly comrades:

I doubt not to come safe to glories port,
Since I have such a troop for my escort,
This band of gallant youths, bear me along,
Who teach me how to sing, then praise my song²⁷⁴

Through the support of her friends Barker comes to a safe haven of “beauty, learning, eloquence”, an idyllic space of intellectual and creative freedom.²⁷⁵ Barker clearly credits her friends with her own poetic achievements, lauding them for their guidance, support and praise. The community functions as a vehicle for her own success, and her glory is in turn reflected back onto them:

Tell me what constellation rul’d my birth?
That I’m become copartner of your bays,
And what’s more glorious, subject of your praise²⁷⁶

Barker flatters her friends and establishes her own authorial ambitions at the same time, presenting their relationship as serendipitous, a mutually enabling artistic collaboration. She cannot “a poets honour claim” because “they have powers to make me what I am.”²⁷⁷ Barker conforms to the self-effacing tradition of poetic dedications, but it is notable that she attributes her artistic success to her fellow writers.

In lines which appear in the 1688 printed version of the poem but were later dropped when the verse reappeared in *A Patch-Work Screen for the Ladies* in 1723, Barker defends her desire for retreat by arguing for its “Innocence” next to the deception and falsity of “this World”:

We'll find out such inventions to delude
And mock all those that mock our solitude
That they for shame shall fly for their defence
To gentle Solitude and Innocence.

²⁷⁴ Barker, “To my friends who prais’d my Poems, and at the beginning of the little printed book placed this motto”, in *The Galesia Trilogy*, pp. 307-8, lines 1-4.

²⁷⁵ Ibid, lines 19.

²⁷⁶ Ibid, lines 16-18.

²⁷⁷ Ibid, lines 11-12.

Then they will find how much they've been deceiv'd,
When they the flatt'ries of this World believ'd.²⁷⁸

Barker is careful here to make a distinction between different kinds of knowledge: an innocent, perhaps innate, knowledge, and a more worldly knowledge which is corrupted by the deception and false pretences of society. Barker positions herself within a collective 'we', an aspiring member of the community of male scholars to whom she writes in Cambridge, and with whom she seeks to share a virtuous intellectual pursuit removed from the "flatt'ries" of the world. The "innocence" which the group enjoys refers to a shared virtue, in direct opposition to the more worldly type of knowledge with its connotations of vice and corruption. This notion of a community united through virtue is one which recurs in Barker's later, more religiously inspired, Jacobite verse and which forms the foundation for her relationship to subsequent communities.

Barker's address to the Cambridge coterie is evidence of her early involvement in literary communities, but it also highlights the importance of virtue to both individual and communal identification. Barker's perception of female authorship expands on the presupposition of Orinda as a virtuous figure, clearly linking her own commitment to authorship with her religious and political commitments. In the years following her early involvement with the Cambridge coterie, Barker's religious and political commitments would become foundational to her authorship. The intersection of the individual with wider political and religious communities is the driving force behind many of the poems of the Magdalen Manuscript, composed during and after her religious conversion and move to the exiled Jacobite community of St. Germain, and is the focus of the following section.

The Magdalen Manuscript: The Jacobite verse of St. Germain

The Jacobite community which resided at St. Germain in the late seventeenth century experienced a continental retreat distinct from its royalist counterpart in exile in the 1650s. At St. Germain, the Jacobite court re-established itself as an insular and self-sufficient community which retained its British identity within its European setting.²⁷⁹ James II and his queen, Mary of Modena, socialised with the French royal family and maintained the trappings of a royal court, if not the stately authority.²⁸⁰ The community

²⁷⁸ Barker, "An Invitation to my Friends at Cambridge", in *Poetical Recreations*, pp. 1-4, lines 9-14.

²⁷⁹ Cruickshanks and Corp, p. 24.

²⁸⁰ Ibid.

retained its own money, produced pamphlets and other texts on its own printing press, governed the affairs of its countrymen, and retained English language and identity.²⁸¹ Jacobite sympathisers, most dominantly in Scotland and Ireland, still looked to the exiled court of St. Germain as the royal household and the source of social, religious, and political authority.

The Magdalen Manuscript offers us an insight into Barker's place in the St. Germain community and its literary culture as it is explicitly geared towards the Jacobite community in exile. Barker was in residence at St. Germain by June 10th 1689, a date derived from a manuscript poem dedicated to the Prince of Wales (later James III) on his first birthday.²⁸² The manuscript contains a number of complimentary poems addressed to influential members of the St. Germain court, including Queen Mary of Modena; Arabella Fitzjames, the illegitimate daughter of James II; and Princess Louise Maria.²⁸³ There is no evidence that Barker was intimately involved in courtly circles, as there is no mention of her name in any official court documents, household lists, memoirs or courtly correspondence.²⁸⁴ However the dedication of her poems to various key figures in the St. Germain community suggests her contact, however peripherally, with the political elite and demonstrates her own political and social commitment.

Hilda L. Smith describes the way in which alternative communities such as the one at St. Germain were political in nature: "Encouraging privatistic retreat among free-thinking circles of friends within garden estates and public acceptance of existing religious and state forms promoted political quietism, and therefore supported absolute monarchy."²⁸⁵ The community was centred around the court and royal family, which beyond its political commitments was also a centre for arts and literature.²⁸⁶ Eveline Cruickshanks and Edward Corp explore the culture of the Jacobite press and literary culture, arguing that writers did not restrict themselves to "justifying the Stuart monarchy", as argued by Smith, but "appropriated the language of 'liberty' and resistance to tyranny that was common to all oppositional groups."²⁸⁷ This counters the argument that retirement promoted 'political quietism' and suggests a less insular reading and a more politically engaged consideration of the experience of exile,

²⁸¹ Nathalie Genet-Rouffiac, 'Jacobites in Paris and Saint-Germain-en-Laye' in Cruickshanks and Corp, pp. 15-38.

²⁸² King and Medoff.

²⁸³ King 1998, p. 2.

²⁸⁴ King and Medoff, p. 21.

²⁸⁵ Hilda Smith, *All Men and Both Sexes: Gender, politics and the false universal in England, 1640-1832* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2002), p. 208.

²⁸⁶ Cruickshanks and Corp, "Introduction", p. xv.

²⁸⁷ Paul Monod, 'The Jacobite Press and English Censorship, 1689-95', in Cruickshanks and Corp, pp. 125-142, (p. 127).

exploring the political activity possible from a position of retreat. The letters and poems produced by Barker while residing at St. Germain support Cruickshanks and Corp's 'language of liberty' as they explore the construction of an alternative political sociability, both in the fictive expressions of retreat and community and in the epistolary networks formed within the Jacobite community and other coterie back in England.

The manuscript opens with a dedication to the young Prince James, the 'Old Pretender' who would in later years unsuccessfully exercise his right to the English throne. The fact that the deposed prince is the subject of her dedication, combined with the political theme of the verse, suggests that Barker intended to circulate the manuscript within the Jacobite community rather than transport the work to England for circulation or publication. Jacobite poetry was considered subversive and dangerous in England, and there is strong evidence for a policy of nonconformist suppression.²⁸⁸ Transportation of documents in and out of St. Germain was under surveillance from both governments; it was a risky undertaking in which subterfuge was often required in order to protect sensitive letters. Barker would have undoubtedly been aware of the subversive potential and political threat of the circulation of political tracts.²⁸⁹ It can therefore be assumed that the Magdalen Manuscript was intended for circulation within a select group of like-minded people, most likely within the St. Germain Jacobite community. This supports Kathryn King's argument that Barker's protestations against seeing *Poetical Recreations* in print were, in fact, genuine and she never intended her verse to be published and circulated to an anonymous audience.²⁹⁰ Barker clearly envisions her verse as contributing to the communal experience of exile for the Jacobites residing in St. Germain.

The opening dedication to the manuscript demonstrates the intensity of Barker's Jacobite identification as she positions her authorial self in opposition to the 'Rebellious' writers who, though perhaps as intellectually and creatively talented, are morally and spiritually bankrupt:

No doubt but there are many writers in our country, who have not bowed the knee to Baal, whose learned pens have performed this work more anply and gracefully, But Rebellious, and rigorous laws have fixd as it were an impassable gulf betwixt them and the place of your abode; but that which is a piller of a clowd to them, is a piller of fire to me lighting me to the most desirable presence of your Royal Highness, the haven of happiness, the asylum of virtue, and the reward of Loyalty: You who are Sir not onely the hopes of us your miserable followers, but of all

²⁸⁸ Ibid.

²⁸⁹ King 2000, p. 9.

²⁹⁰ Ibid, p. 31.

Europ, and the darling of mankind; as your birth renders you Heir of great dominions, so your worth makes you reign in all minds replenish'd with virtue and Honor.²⁹¹

Barker's dedication reveals the intensity of literary representations of Jacobite religious and political affiliation. Barker hails the prince of a year old as "the darling of mankind" and a "pillar of fire", a biblical allusion to God leading the Israelites through the wilderness in Exodus 13:21-22. The image likens the Jacobite exile to the great Exodus from Egypt and the subsequent wandering in the wilderness as they seek the Promised Land of Canaan, reaching it only after generations have passed in exile. The young prince is addressed as "the *haven* of happiness" and "the *asylum* of virtue" [emphasis added], creating a twofold notion of retreat as both a physical place and a disembodied community. The reference to biblical exile is an apt one for a community displaced, and the Prince of Wales is the source of haven and asylum to the Jacobite community as they face their own wilderness years in a foreign land, much as God was to the Israelites. The dedication contributes to a tradition of Jacobite mythologisation in which the monarch is represented as a source of spiritual leadership, safe haven and hope for a community in exile, raising his status from royal figure to a near-deity on earth.

Part I of the Magdalen Manuscript reveals Barker's active engagement with the Jacobite community as she describes her personal experience of the events of 1688-89 and her voluntary exile to St. Germain, set against the greater political exile of James II and his court. In Part I, titled "Referring to the times", Barker employs the narrative character of Fidelity, who in exiled retreat on the Continent, voices an experience distinct from the vision of retreat expressed by Katherine Philips, who reformed the pastoral as a "retirement from the noise of Towns".²⁹² The poems in the first part of the manuscript are "occasionally writ according to the different circumstance of time and place", clearly responding to Barker's own experiences of exile and communal retreat as she sets the fictive narrator Fidelity against the same background of the St. Germain community as she recounts the greater tragic history of the Jacobite community paralleled with her individual tragedy and loneliness.²⁹³ The poems tell a history of moral, rather than political, conflict, again emphasising the mythologisation of the Jacobite experience. Barker does not seem to desire respite from the bustle of urban life like Katherine Philips, but seeks a haven from a false and often dangerous external world and which is achieved at great personal cost. Although the space of retreat is

²⁹¹ Ibid, p. 25-6.

²⁹² Katherine Philips, "Invitation to the Country" in *Poems*, p. 173, lines 11-14.

²⁹³ King 1998, p. 2.

imagined as a reformed paradise, the *Fidelia* poems reveal an anxiety over its stability which is, within her verse, highly localised. In Barker's poems the threat of warfare remains ever present to the peaceful gardens of St. Germain, and the consequences of political conflict are palpable.

The local geography of St. Germain figures largely in Barker's verse and prose as a site of recollection of both individual and communal history. The backdrop of the gardens and the old French courtly buildings dominate the first section of the *Magdalen Manuscript* poems. This setting is echoed in *Love Intrigues: Or, the history of the amours of Bosvil and Galesia*, Barker's prose romance, which is "related to Lucasia, in St. Germain's Garden" and is set against the:

Heat of Summer, when News is daily coming and hourly expected from the Campaigns; which, as it employs the Heads of the Politicians, and Arms of the Heroes, so it fill the Hearts of the Fair with a thousand Apprehensions, in Consideration of their respective Friends and Relations therein concern'd.²⁹⁴

The subjects of the narration are removed from the "Campaigns" themselves, but eagerly wait on the "News [which] is daily coming and hourly expected" to learn the fate of their brethren. Although Barker focuses on the introspective feelings of nostalgia and loss of the poetic narrator *Fidelia*, the physical and emotional presence of the Jacobite community is constant throughout her writing. The physical location is steeped in the emotional resonance of a communal history and has the ability to "fill the Hearts" and provoke an emotive personal response which is recorded and becomes part of the communal history itself.

Barker makes it clear within the dedication that the intention of the manuscript is to record the experience of Jacobite history as a faithful rendition rather than to produce a work of poetical fiction. Without the typical self-effacing language of prefatory material in the standard *apologia*, Barker presents her manuscript as a truthful testimony of the Jacobite communal experience:

But truth is bold and what I here present to your Highness has so much of reality that it supersedes fancy, and scarce leaves place for what they call poetical fiction: The discourses (or at least some of them) contain not onely the sentiments, but even the very words which mallice dictated to people in those days, that one might rather call them a verbal than a poetical repetition²⁹⁵

²⁹⁴ Barker, *The Amours of Bosvil and Galesia as related to Lucasia in St. Germain's Garden*, in *The Galesia Trilogy*, p. 7.

²⁹⁵ Barker, 'To his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales' in *The Poems of Jane Barker*, p. 25.

Barker protests that the manuscript “has so much of reality that it superseds fancy”, conceding that the verses contain personal sentiments and objective experiences. However the volume reveals itself to be far from an objective testimonial, representing national history through a highly personal individual experience. For example, the verse “Fidelia alone lamenting her parents lately dead, and her Relations gone into the west against Monmouth” appears in the Magdalen Manuscript as well as the prose *A Patch-Work Screen for the Ladies*, contributing to Barker's fictionalised narrative of the Jacobite experience as the narrator Fidelia overhears a neighbour praising the Duke of Monmouth, the illegitimate son of Charles II and instigator of the rebellion to gain the throne from James II. Barker sets historical events critical to the Jacobite community as a backdrop for Fidelia's personal history, blurring the line between fiction and reality. Leigh Eicke suggests that Barker used poetic narrators, in particular Fidelia, to express her own Jacobite politics under the screen of fiction, all the while expressing moderate political and religious views in her prefaces.²⁹⁶ Undoubtedly Fidelia's character was heavily influenced by Barker's own experiences, but any connections between the fictional and actual narrative experiences are speculative. The relationship between Barker and her narrators, and between the narrators and historical reality, is explored in the following section.

Authorial Voices: Fidelia, Galesia and the Muse

Barker employed various narrative personae throughout her literary career to give voice to experiences of religious and political commitment, communal belonging, and loss. Though she does not use them as straightforward projections of her own identity, Barker employs the heroine of her prose romances, Galesia, and her earlier Catholic poetic narrator, Fidelia, to explore and articulate her own experiences of political exile, religious conversion, communal identity and female authorship. They are one facet of Barker's complex negotiation between roles she inhabits and those she strives towards variously as a Jacobite, a Catholic, an author, and a woman. The Fidelia character, who only appears in the verse produced during Barker's time with the exiled Jacobite court at St. Germain, near Paris, is consistently presented alone, mourning a community in which she seeks belonging but from which she ultimately remains distanced.²⁹⁷ Galesia, a figure most prevalent in Barker's later prose fiction is, like

²⁹⁶ Eicke, p.145.

²⁹⁷ Jane Barker, ‘To the Reader’, *The Poems of Jane Barker*, p. 27.

Fidelia, also a solitary individual who searches for belonging, but amongst a circle of women after a failed courtship. Like the authorial representations of ‘Orinda’, both of these figures have become synonymous with the author and have been interpreted as biographical figures by scholars who entwine fiction and reality.²⁹⁸ Much of what we as critics know about Barker is, in fact, derived from her own texts, but these authorial personae are problematic biographical figures.

Fidelia is a figure inextricable from the Jacobite and Catholic community and who serves both to reinforce the ideology and inward-looking nature of the Jacobite community in exile, and to negotiate Barker’s own place within that community. Barker herself was one of the nearly 40,000 Jacobite exiles to depart for France in 1688-9; in her verse, she chooses to use the fictive narrative voice of Fidelia to articulate an individual experience of political exile akin to her own rather than use an autobiographical voice.²⁹⁹ Fidelia is an interesting choice of a literary pseudonym: associated with the threat of sexual violence and bodily harm, the name nevertheless implies innate virtue and fidelity. John Lyly’s *Love’s Metamorphosis* (1588) recounts the story of the transformed nymph Fidelia, whose virtue withstands the ardent advances of a satyr. Objectified and overpowered by men, Fidelia would appear to conform to the classic virginal figure who in order to preserve her virtue must escape the physical threat of men, echoing the tale of Daphne and Apollo in Ovid’s *Metamorphosis*. Fidelia’s renunciation of marriage and sexual congress threatens the social order and therefore male authority. The men represent not simply a threat to Fidelia’s virginity, but also to her personal autonomy as a single woman.³⁰⁰

Spencer’s Fidelia of *The Faerie Queen* (1590) is the eldest of three chaste and deeply spiritual sisters. She is described with New Testament imagery, the halo around her head a physical sign of her piety:

Like sunny beames threw from her Christall face,
That could have dazd the rash beholders sight,
And round about her head did shine like heavens light.³⁰¹

²⁹⁸ See Spencer 1986, p. 69. Spencer calls Barker’s prose fiction “autobiographical narratives”, but also suggests that she “defined her authorial position by suggesting connections between her own character and situation and the kind of writing she produced.”

²⁹⁹ Cruikshanks and Corp, p. 17

³⁰⁰ Theodora A. Jankowski, *Pure Resistance: Queer virginity in early modern English drama* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000), p. 142.

³⁰¹ Edmund Spenser, *The Faerie Queen: The shepherds calendar, together with the other works of England’s arch-poët, Edm. Spenser, collected into one volume, and carefully corrected* (printed by H. Lines for Mathew Lownes, 1611), I.x.12.

Spencer constructs Fidelity as the embodiment of Christian devotion and loyalty, physically manifested in the symbol of the halo and the Christ-like sun. David Radcliffe argues that Spenser was so closely associated with the pastoral that “in any given era his reputation can almost be measured by the presence or absence of important work in the genre.”³⁰² By this argument Barker, writing within this genre, would have been aware of the implications of the name Fidelity and employed it as a narrative voice to signal the character's religious faith and her allegiance to king and court. Fidelity, with clear connotations of fidelity, loyalty and integrity, came to represent qualities associated with Jacobite rhetoric as well as a clear effort to participate in the Jacobite community through shared discourse.³⁰³

Barker and her fictive persona Fidelity both occupy liminal positions in relation to the communities with which they identify, moving across thresholds of belonging. The ways in which their relationships to these communities shape their representations of community and of the authorial self are significant to a broader understanding of early modern community. The terms ‘marginal’ and ‘liminal’ both suggest peripheral positions outside of the core of the group but not completely excluded from it. Marginality is defined by two parameters: societal and spatial. In the context of Barker’s literary and political engagement, I will be addressing both aspects. However, as the term ‘marginal’ and ‘marginalisation’ have come to refer to social exclusion, Barker’s position, and her identification, is perhaps more accurately described as liminal, which at its linguistic root means ‘threshold’ and implies indeterminacy and ambiguity. St. Germain was, clearly, spatially marginal to the central authority and power of the ruling Williamite regime. The Jacobite community used geographical distance to materially enforce its liminal social status: although speaking English and in many ways holding on to social practices of their homeland, the community chose to align itself with the Catholic royal family of France, both physically and symbolically, by locating itself within the former royal residences at St. Germain. In the Magdalen Manuscript St. Germain functions as a “highly localized site of memory” which explores the civil

³⁰² The reprint of Spenser's *Works* in 1679 ensured his continued popularity; poets such as Thomas Rymer and John Dryden discussed Spenserian verse in their own prefaces, demonstrating his poetic influence in the later seventeenth century. David Hill Radcliffe, *Edmund Spenser, A reception history* (Columbia, SC: Camden House, 1996), pp. 26-7. Quote, p. 12.

³⁰³ Paul Monod, *Jacobitism and the English People 1688-1788* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), p. 36. Quoted in Rivka Swenson, ‘Representing Modernity in Jane Barker's Galesia Trilogy: Jacobite allegory and the aesthetics of the patch-work subject’, *Studies in Eighteenth-Century Culture* 38:1. (2005), 55-80 (p.61).

conflict's "reshaping of place and belonging" which had a lasting and profound communal effect.³⁰⁴

Fidelia's ongoing search for communal belonging is motivated by her strong personal and political identifications, identifications which are shared by Barker herself. Fidelia narrates a profoundly personal experience of loss and isolation linked to Barker's own experiences as a Jacobite and a Catholic; as Barker writes in the title of the first section the poems are "Occasionally writ according to the different circumstances of time and place." Like Philips's occasional verse written on the national and personal events of the Civil War and its aftermath, Barker's verse is introduced as a product of violent contemporary conditions and reveals a personal anxiety paralleled with national turmoil. The manuscript demonstrates the ways in which Barker positions personal experience against the backdrop of the national upheaval. She uses the parallel between personal and collective history as an organisational structure for poetry and as a way to understand larger public events within the context of personal experience.

The Fidelia poems set a personal experience of loss and isolation against the historical events of the 1688-9 uprising. "Fidelia alone lamenting her parents lately dead, and her relations gone into the west against Monmoth", the first poem of the Magdalen Manuscript, introduces Fidelia as alone, mourning her relatives and friends who lost their lives in the conflict or are absent due to martial action:

I mourn my parents dead, and mourne alone,
For all my other friends, to th' wars are gone;
Were they but here, they'd help me bear a share,
But I their presence want, their danger fear³⁰⁵

Fidelia begins by grieving for a community lost through war, mourning her own feelings of loneliness and separation as she contemplates her friends' and relatives' fates at the Battle of Sedgemoor. "Were they but here", she reflects, they would share the burden of her grief:

How my poor heart's with grief and fear oppres'd,
Which robs my days of joy, my nights of rest?³⁰⁶

The political conflict "robs" her of communal stability and personal happiness and she is instead "with grief and fear oppres'd". Fidelia is herself far removed from the

³⁰⁴ Kate Chedgzoy, *Women's Writing in the British Atlantic World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), pp. 125, 126.

³⁰⁵ Barker, "Fidelia alone lamenting her parents lately dead, and her relations gone into the west against Monmoth", in *The Poems of Jane Barker*, p. 28-30, lines 3-6.

³⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, lines 1-2.

battlefield, but she imagines “my aged Uncles dying groans, / And see by’s side, his grandson’s shattered bones.”³⁰⁷ Fidelia’s sympathetic imaginings of the fate of her family and friends exposes a sustained anxiety about her own tenuous position and demonstrates the interpolation of the individual experience within the ongoing communal fate. It is ironically her separation from, rather than belonging to, the Jacobite community which largely shapes her communal identity. Fidelia prays “that all my friends return to mee”:

Safe from the Rebels, crown’d with victory,
And I will search, with all the power I can,
The surest way to thy bles’d son God man;
No shame nor punishment shall me dismay,
I’ll seek which church shews us the surest way.³⁰⁸

The poem connects the themes of political and religious allegiances and communal identification which form the basis of Barker’s authorial self-construction. She continues to “search, with all the power [she] can” for “the surest way”, the way sanctioned by crown and church, overcoming the obstacles of “shame” and “punishment”, suggesting that she must overcome hardship to achieve salvation on a personal and communal level. However despite Fidelia’s clear and constant devotion to a religious and political cause, she does not find the acceptance and security for which she prays. She will continue to “seek which church shews us the surest way” to a community “Safe from the Rebels, crown’d with victory” despite the underlying apprehension that her search will ultimately remain in vain.

“A dialogue between Fidelia and her little nephew, Martius” is distinguished by the fact that Fidelia appears for the only time within the Magdalen Manuscript in the company of another person, her young nephew. Martius, called “my child” and “my dearest boy” by his aunt, is too young to understand the full extent of the Jacobite exile and to remember its history of defeat and expatriation. He functions within the poem as an instrument through which Fidelia can recount both the history of the Jacobite community and her own personal experience of exile and loss for the poetic audience. Because of his youth, he also represents the next generation of Jacobites who will take up the cause, fulfilling the hopes and dreams of the older generation who experienced first-hand defeat, loss and exile. At the pleading of her nephew, Fidelia relates the story of her own misfortune derived from the fate of the wider community in exile:

³⁰⁷ Ibid, lines 9-10.

³⁰⁸ Ibid, lines 38-42.

Then tell me why you left your native land,
And when you took ill fortune by the hand,
For I remember you in better state,
Then tell me how you came unfortunate³⁰⁹

Fidelia is thus urged to relate her personal history, and in the process reimagines Jacobite communal memory as well. Precluding the narrative of her personal exile with a moralizing passage places the historical account within the framework of religious conflict, again drawing upon the mythology of Jacobite righteousness in her formation of narrative selfhood.

Fidelia begins her narrative with the impact of the political conflict on her own family: “My father and his brother Cavaliers ... Were forc’d to quit the court, the camp, and town”³¹⁰. The poem focuses on the human effect of national events and exposes the personal effect of the political upheaval:

Thus helpless, friendless, destitute forlorn,
‘Twixt debtors, creditors, and lawyers torn,
I wander’d on, in hopes of better chance,
Till cursed orange drive us all to France,
And here we wander vagabons alone,
Not knowing any, or to any known,
And all methinks do our acquaintance shun³¹¹

The community was forced to leave by “cursed orange”, and so Fidelity “wander[s] on, in hopes of better chance” for herself, her personal experience paralleling that of the wider community. “Not knowing any, or to any known”, the community takes up residence in St. Germain, a former courtly residence whose cultural and physical distance from the metropolis of Paris offers a space in which to form a self-contained community in retreat. In contrast to the abundance and bounty of traditional representations of pastoral retirement, Fidelity’s retreat is coloured by the “barren” lands which mirror her “friendless, destitute forlorn” condition. At the same time, she grieves for the lost loyalist community, who:

Stuck to their king as did their ancestors,
Wives portions, and paternal means they spent,
To serve the King against the Parliament,
Thus for their Loyalty being both undone³¹²

³⁰⁹ Barker, “A dialogue between Fidelity and her little nephew, Martius, as they walk in Luxembourg, disguis’d as a shepherdess or country maid”, in *The Poems of Jane Barker*, pp. 35-8, lines 6-9.

³¹⁰ *Ibid.*, lines 21, 27.

³¹¹ *Ibid.*, lines 93-103.

³¹² *Ibid.*, lines 22-6.

Barker shapes the banishment from the corrupt and treacherous world of the “Rebell Parliments” as a chosen retreat rather than an enforced exile. This retreat is tied into the tradition of pastoral verse. Fidelia herself is “disguis’d as a shepherdess or country maid”, and her banished family exchanged their swords for “plows ... sheep and cows.”³¹³ The space of rural retirement is, in Barker’s verse, antithetical to the violence and chaos of political conflict. Although initially “forc’d to quit the court”, the exile is transformed into a peaceful place and ultimately, a preferred condition:

Free from court factions, and the discontents,
Which dayly rise in Rebell Parliments,
Free from ambitious plotings how to get,
This prise amongst the rich, that place amongst the great,
And for their Loyal losses, never felt regret³¹⁴

The repetition of the word ‘Free’ at the beginning of the lines emphasises the retreat as a liberation rather than a limitation. Clearly evoking the royalist discourse of retreat in the pastoral space of retirement as explored in the previous chapter, Barker expands the boundaries of an established poetic tradition which configured the town and country as binary opposites, and shapes the country ideal as an idyllic pre-fall haven. Barker’s verse follows from the royalist discourse of retreat which maintains the importance of a *vita activa* within the physical confines of retirement and thereby seeks to transform the space of retirement itself into a “little kind of Eden”, an ideal communal space which remains politicised.³¹⁵

In “A dialogue” Barker transforms the events of 1688-9 into a mythology of Jacobite righteousness as Fidelia prefaces her own narrative with a didactic passage on the enduring virtue of the Jacobite community:

To vertue I too nearly was aly’d
To have good fortune ever on my side.
But though we suffer, by hard fortune froun,
A vertuous mind, can never be cast down,
And that I allways shall depend upon.
Now since you ask my fate of former years,
And what’s the cause of present griefs and tears,
Come sit thee down, I’ll tell thee how ith’ fenn,
We fed our flocks upon the banks of **Glenn**.³¹⁶

Fidelia prefaces the “fate of former years” with its “cause of present griefs and tears”,

³¹³ Ibid, lines 30.

³¹⁴ Ibid, lines 33-7.

³¹⁵ Ibid, lines 42-45.

³¹⁶ Ibid, lines 12-20.

linking the past political events with the present pastoral position. Through the suffering and hardship of the past and present, the constant remains the virtue and moral certainty of Fidelity and her fellow Jacobites, as she adds the reminder that “A virtuous mind, can never be cast down”. As she begins to relate her tale, the narrative takes on a biblical tinge:

Now did my life, a different manner role,
Since Heav'n gave this new byas to the bowl,
My flocks decay'd, my barns and houses fell,
My lands grew barren, in fine nought went well³¹⁷

Fidelity portrays herself as a Job figure who must suffer the trials and hardships associated with her political and religious identification, drawing strength from her faith in the Jacobite cause and community. Despite her loneliness and repeated references to a community torn apart, the shared memory of the hardships and suffering of her fellow Jacobites connects her to the community on an emotional level. She reforms her search for a “better chance” into a communal pursuit of “a little kind of Eden” ruled by “honour, conscience, virtue”.³¹⁸

The poem, with overtones of political mythology and biblical allusion, exemplifies the Jacobite themes of loss, exile and cultural memory. The experience of exile portrayed in the poem is far different from Philips's “Invitation to the Countrey”, which argues for retreat “from the noise of Towns” in favour of a “countrey life” in which individuals are “possess'd with freedom and a reall State”.³¹⁹ Within this vision of pastoral retreat, Philips extols the stability of personal relationships in the face of the collapse of the larger social framework. Barker, in contrast, questions the stability of any community, depending instead on “a virtuous mind [that] can never be cast down”. Fidelity reiterates the importance of virtue as she concludes:

Pride imbitters all our happiness. 'Tis not true want, that this or that we crave, But
pride makes us think we too little have. For human nature's by few things supply'd,
If we lay superfluitys aside.³²⁰

Pride comes before the fall, and Barker draws a direct link between the mythologised fall of the Jacobites and personal and communal pride. Fidelity participates in a communal construction of the memory which shapes the war as a moral conflict.

³¹⁷ Ibid, lines 93-6.

³¹⁸ Ibid, lines 45, 104.

³¹⁹ Philips, “Invitation to the Countrey”, in *Poems*, p. 173, lines 11-14.

³²⁰ Barker, “A dialogue between Fidelity and her little nephew, Martius, as they walk in Luxembourg, disguis'd as a shepherdess or country maid”, in *The Poems of Jane Barker*, pp. 35-8, lines 120-23.

Fidelia's experience is situated within the context of the continuing political crisis and reveals women's involvement in the exiled community. The men "sold their swords and other warlike things, / As did their wives, their petycotes and rings", and took up the "homly scean" of pastoral cultivation and husbandry.³²¹ The retreat is shaped as a virtuous retirement, a reformed Eden which recalls Anne Finch's "On these Words: Thou hast hedg'd in my way with thorns". Finch, like Barker, was a steadfastly loyal Jacobite, and because her husband Heneage Finch refused to take the oaths of allegiance to William and Mary, they were effectively barred from a return to public life and remained in retirement in a country estate in Kent.³²² The poem, like Barker's "A dialogue", presents a cross-generational dialogue in which the older generation relates their personal experience of defeat and exile to a younger generation, who are implicitly bound up in the communal fate of the community long after the events take place. The narrator is:

By strange Events to Sollitude betray'd
 How often have I wish'd to quitt this shade
 How often sigh'd amidst this lonely Grove
 For liberty for honour wealth and love³²³

Echoing Barker's "A dialogue", Finch's narrator is "by strange Events to Sollitude betray'd", confined to a pastoral retreat through a series of unfortunate events. Wishing to "quitt this shade" which, in the poetic pastoral tradition is associated with safety and restfulness, the Lady seeks "liberty ... honour wealth and love" instead, and soon sees "the Prospects wide and gay" enabled by her "unrestrain'd ... Mind". The passage recalls the poem "A World in an Ear-ring" explored in the Introduction, in which Margaret Cavendish explores the potential of the unrestrained mind, imagining infinite worlds in the small physical confines of a woman's earring. Both Finch and Barker explore the potential of the pastoral space for women, specifically women in exile.

Like Fidelia, the figure of the muse represents constancy and virtue; however Fidelia is defined by her lack of community and the discomfort this brings, while the muse is a guide and a constant, if disembodied, companion. The "Rural Muse" of "To my friends who prais'd my Poems" is connected to the pastoral landscape, preferring

³²¹ Ibid, lines 27, 38.

³²² Barbara McGovern, *Anne Finch and her poetry: A critical biography* (Athens, GA: The University of Georgia Press, 1992), pp. 56-7.

³²³ Anne Finch, "On these Words: Thou hast hedg'd in my way with thorns", in *The Anne Finch Wellesley Manuscript Poems*, ed. by Barbara McGovern and Charles H. Hinnant (Athens GA and London: The University of Georgia Press, 1, 998), pp. 118-9, lines 1-4.

the natural virtues of the countryside to the “wealth and dignities” of the external world.³²⁴ She:

never higher aimes,
Than to discourse, of shepherds and their lambs
Of groves, obscure retreats³²⁵

placing both spiritual contentment and artistic endeavour in the simple pleasures of the pastoral. Newton’s commendatory poem to Barker describes the muse as an inconstant though ever-present creative force:

Sometimes her angry *Muse*, fill’d with *Satyrick* rage,
Lashes the *frantick* follies of a froward Age;
Then whips, and fiery Serpents ev’ry Verse entwine,
And sharpest-pointed Vengeance fills each threatenng line.
Sometimes her kinder *Muse* do’s softly sing
Of *native* joys, which in the Country spring.³²⁶

Barker’s muse is intemperate, and Newton suggests that it is her muse’s direct influence which shapes the tone of her verse, whether the stringent political verse associated with her Jacobite identification, or the more ‘gentle’ pastoral verse associated with her earlier involvement in the Cambridge coterie. It is significant that in the classical tradition the muses are a spiritual sisterhood, who both inspire and embody the creative arts. Hesiod’s *Theogony* locates the muses as the daughters of Mnemosyne, the goddess of memory, thus strongly linking artistic pursuits and the role of memory, both collective and individual.³²⁷ The muses represent models of artistic achievement and are linked to the natural landscape itself; but more importantly, they are models of female autonomy.³²⁸

In Barker’s verse the muse is a secondary character who does not narrate her own experience, but rather functions as a spiritual guide for the primary narrators. It is Barker’s muse who inhabits the “barran Region of [her] brest”, a space left empty by the loss of friends and community in exile. As the title of the poem “To her muse, whos kindness at first she seemed to slight, but afterwards accepts kindly” suggests, the

³²⁴ Barker, “To my friends who prais’d my Poems, and at the beginning of the little printed book placed this motto”, in *The Galesia Trilogy*, pp. 307-8.

³²⁵ *Ibid*, lines 21-3.

³²⁶ John Newton, “To Madam Jane Barker, on her Incomparable Poems”, in *Poetical Recreations*, lines 19-24.

³²⁷ Hesiod, *Theogony*, ed. by M. Lines West (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1966).

³²⁸ See Elizabeth Eger, ‘Representing Culture: “The Nine *Living Muses* of Great Britain” (1779)’, in *Women, Writing and the Public Sphere, 1700-1830*, ed. by Elizabeth Eger, et al (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), pp. 104-132; Eger, *Women of Reason from Enlightenment to Romanticism: Living muses* (Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2010).

narrator initially rejects, but eventually embraces her muse as her one constant companion, albeit an imagined one. She addresses the muse directly as “thou kind friend” and “companion to me”, extolling the virtue of her constancy and devotion:

Few friends like thee will be so kind,
To come where intrest does not bind,
And fewer yet, return again,
After coldness and disdain.³²⁹

Whilst other friends disappear with the first hint of hardship or misfortune, the muse remains to console and inspire. The relationship with her muse fortifies the narrator, and she applauds her muse as she “gently drive’st my grief away / Which else would make my heart their prey.”³³⁰ This strengthening is derived from a mutual virtue, as she tells the muse that she “fill’st [my heart’s] empty places too, / With thoughts of what I ought to do.”³³¹ The muse inhabits an interior space from which the narrator derives both her creative and sociable impulses. The emphasis on the transitory nature of physical attachment is contrasted with the constancy of emotional connection, reflected in the heroine’s commitment to chastity.³³² This contributes to a model of female friendship which is based on individual virtue as foundational to wider sociable structures.

“The contract with the muses writ on the bark of a shady ash-tree”, from the second section of the Magdalen Manuscript, further explores the relationship between the muses and female poetic creativity. The narrator winds through the shades of the pastoral when she comes upon the muses:

Methinks I hear the muses sing,
And see em all dance in a ring,
And call upon me to take wing.

We will say they assist thy flight,
Till thou reach fair Orindas height,
If thou canst this worlds follis slight.³³³

Though Orinda herself is not represented as a muse, she remained the pinnacle of poetic achievement for early modern women writers in the decades after her death and her image was invoked as both a poetic inspiration and a standard of virtue. The muses will

³²⁹ Barker, “To her muse, whos kindness at first she seemed to slight, but afterwards accepts kindly”, in *The Poems of Jane Barker*, pp. 56-7, lines 15-18.

³³⁰ *Ibid*, p. 57, lines 23-4.

³³¹ *Ibid*, p. 57, lines 26-7.

³³² Toni Bowers discusses the relationship between political fidelity and female chastity. ‘Jacobite Difference and the Poetry of Jane Barker’, *English Literary History*, 64:4 (1997), 857-69.

³³³ Barker, “The contract with the muses writ on the bark of a shady ash-tree”, in *The Poems of Jane Barker*, pp. 40-1, lines 4-9.

“assist thy flight” as she seeks poetic achievement, but only if she “canst this worlds follis slight”, suggesting a poetic talent that is morally conditional. The image of the muse suggests that she is compelled by creative impulse to “take wing” above the material conditions of the contemporary world, and through poetic creation is able to transcend a world she finds full of hardship, deceit and conflict. The poem also reappears in *Love Intrigues: or the Amours of Bosvil and Galesia* (1713), as the spurned Galesia composes the verse on the bark of a tree, following the advice of the muses to reject marriage and embrace chastity:

Then gentle maid, cast off this chain,
Which links thee to thy faithless swain,
And vow a virgin to remain.

Write, write, thy vow upon this tree,
By us it shall recorded be,
And thou fam'd to eternity.³³⁴

The urge to “write, write” is tied to the condition of virtue, and Galesia’s status as a single woman is seen to enhance rather than hinder her creative potential. She will, the muses assure her, achieve immortality through both her literary fame and her piety, thereby reaching “fair Orindas height.”

The poem links virtue to intellectual achievement, suggesting that, like Galesia, Barker's commitment to a moral (and inherently religio-political) cause will free her poetic potential and lead to the same level of literary achievement and fame. Such achievement comes at a price, however. The muses warn her that “since [she] has the muses chose, Hymen and fortune are thy foes”, consistent with the connection between virtue and poetic achievement. Fidelia is the “unlucky maid” whose “whole life [will] pass in discontent, in want, and wo, and banishment”.³³⁵ She is cursed to a life of loneliness and hardship, but is the company of the muses in their “bright aboads, Amongst the Heroes, and the Gods, If thou and wealth, can be at odds”.³³⁶ The poem establishes the poet's physical solitude and spiritual sociability which are the markers of creative potential.

Barker evidently drew her authorial identity from her proximity to the various communities in which she participated, drawing a parallel between the communal experience of retreat and her own feelings of marginality which are combined in her

³³⁴ Barker, “The contract with the muses writ on the bark of a shady ash-tree”, *The Poems of Jane Barker*, pp. 40-41, lines 13-18; also appears in Jane Barker, *Love Intrigues: Or the amours of Bosvil and Galesia* (London: E. Curll and C. Crownfiled, 1713), p. 14.

³³⁵ *Ibid*, lines 22-23, 40-41.

³³⁶ *Ibid*, lines 10-12.

narrative personae. She sought communal belonging throughout her career, but her verse suggests that she never found it and turned inwards to find the sociability she craved. “To her muse, whos kindness at first she seems to slight, afterwards accepts kindly” features a spiritual friendship which is more genuine and enduring than physical relationships. The muse replaces lost companions:

Ah silly Muse thus to infest
This barren Region of my brest,
Which never can a harvest yield,
Since sorrow has o’ergrown the field³³⁷

The muse, unlike her physical companions, is a constant presence even in times of trouble and distress. “Few friends like thee will be so kind, / To come where *intrest* does not bind” [emphasis added].³³⁸ Barker underlines the true nature of their relationship which is, like the Aristotelian model of perfect friendship outlined in the introduction, free from individual interest. The muse is “Companion . . . at all times” who “fills’t [the] empty places” of lost friends.³³⁹ Although Barker gently chides her muse (“Ah silly Muse”) for her poor judgment in choosing Barker as a companion, the muse is ultimately a welcome presence because of her fidelity, a character trait shared by the other narrative personae in the manuscript, Fidelia.

Mythologisation of the Jacobite Experience

Barker’s verse in the manuscript contributes to a wider Jacobite literary tradition with roots in classical poetics. Using coded literary forms and language which mythologise the experience of king and community, Barker reforms the space of political retreat into a virtuous, spiritual retirement. As a Catholic convert, it is possible that both Barker’s fervent loyalty to the Jacobite cause and her anxiety over the nature of ideological conflict itself are rooted in her conversion. She was entering a new community as a neophyte and as an outsider, and given the climate of anti-papist activity, both officially sanctioned and informal, the community would have been wary of outsiders and potential threats. Although there is no reason to doubt that her conversion was genuine, and she continued to loudly voice her Catholic identity in her post-conversion verse until her death in 1732, her continued expressions of exclusion

³³⁷ Barker, “To her muse, whos kindness at first she seems to slight, afterwards accepts kindly”, in *The Poems of Jane Barker*, pp. 56-7, lines 1-4.

³³⁸ *Ibid*, lines 15-16.

³³⁹ *Ibid*, lines 31, 25.

and the experience of community at the fringes suggest that she was not embraced by the religious community.³⁴⁰ This raises a larger question of the nature of identification and belonging in early modern social and political spheres. Clearly, personal identification does not ensure communal inclusion.

Barker's poem identifies the Jacobite exile as one resulting from religious persecution, thereby figuring the Jacobites and, implicitly, herself, as religious martyrs. Fidelity laments the conflicts caused by religion: "Sure never times were like to these our times, / In which Religion authorises crimes".³⁴¹ Their exile is not the idyllic pastoral retreat of Philips and Cowley, but a condition which must be endured and overcome in order to achieve true paradise, the reinstatement of Jacobite authority, both political and social. "The Miseries of St. Germain, writ at the time of the pestilence and famine, which reign'd in the years, 1694 et 95" describe the exiled community in Old Testament imagery as rife with disease and hunger:

Preachers no more, you need your people tell,
Of curses, judgments, or the pains of Hell:
Bid em but to st Germain come and see,
Cains curss at large, Hell in epitomy,
The plague of Athens, Can'ans want of food
Israells murmuring, by th' bitter flood,
The pride of London, scotlands poverty,
Hollands Religion, young monks bigotry,
In all much Pharisaicall hipocrisie.
In fine, those judgments, which diverted were,
Byth' ninnivits humility and prayer,
Were hoorded up, and executed here.³⁴²

The anger of the narrator at her current condition is palpable, as she feels that she suffers not only for the wrongs of her own community, but pays the price for the sins of others as well. For Fidelity, St. Germain is "Hell in epitomy", greater in magnitude than the Biblical plagues. Fidelity's account may be exaggerated for effect, but the Jacobite community in St. Germain experienced famine and disease, little money for royals or their followers, warfare and the loss of friends and family.³⁴³ The image of the community exiled only to find further hardship and persecution became a key part of the

³⁴⁰ For more on Barker's Catholic identification see Tonya Moutray McArthur, 'Jane Barker and the Politics of Catholic Celebacy', *SEL Studies in English Literature 1500-1900*, 47:3 (Summer 2007), 595-618.

³⁴¹ Barker, "Fidelity alone lamenting her parents lately dead, and her relations gone into the west against Monmoth", *The Poems of Jane Barker*, pp. 28-30, lines 25-6.

³⁴² Barker, "The Miseries of St. Germain, writ at the time of the pestilence and famine, which reign'd in the years, 1694 et 95", in *The Galesia Trilogy*, p. 302-6, lines 1-12.

³⁴³ Wilson, p. xxviii.

mythologisation of the Jacobite experience, and which was closely connected to the Christian ideal of physical and emotional hardship reaping spiritual rewards.

“A dialogue between Fidelia and her little nephew” communicates hope for a Jacobite triumph, which suggests that the poem was written prior to 1701, when renewed hope for Jacobite succession on the throne was thwarted by the Act of Settlement.³⁴⁴ In Barker’s narrative of war followed by displacement and hardship, there is the expected resolution of happiness and success brought about by moral certitude. Despite the banishment to France, Fidelia recounts that “honour, conscience, virtue brought us here, / We cannot sink, since they the vessel steer”.³⁴⁵ Fidelia, and Barker herself, belong to the older generation who witnessed the wars and experienced first-hand the loss and exile which drive the Fidelia poems, but any renewed hope for Jacobite succession is a triumph for the next generation of loyalists. Little Martius falls asleep and Fidelia muses on the beauty of the innocence of youth: “Tis true, his glittering eyes, and noble grace, / Are hidden, by sleeps curtains o’er his face, / But innocence is seated in their place”, suggesting hope for redemption in the next generation.³⁴⁶ The boy’s virtues are temporarily hidden but will eventually emerge, like those of the Jacobite community. Fidelia muses further on the fluctuations of fortune:

The bright rays of thy soul pierce the dark cloud
Of thy low fortune, which its glories shroud,
So a fair plant in its small seed remains,
Till proper time, its beauteous leaves expands
Thy noble race, has not a fairer sprout,
If fortune do but shine to bring it out³⁴⁷

Though fortune is with “its glories shroud[ed]” the “small seed remains” until which time “its beauteous leaves expands” and inherent virtue and moral rectitude will flourish. Fortunes change; goodness will prevail and eventually “fortune [will] but shine to bring it out”. Martius represents the future of the Jacobite community, for although their situation is a cruel fate, their virtue and “noble grace” will in its “proper time” emerge to facilitate a change in fortune.

“Fidelia in St Germain’s garden, lamenting her misfortunes” follows from “A dialogue” in exploring Fidelia’s identification with and place within the exiled

³⁴⁴ Ann Lyon, *Constitutional History of the United Kingdom*, (London: Cavendish Publishing Limited, 2003), p. 261.

³⁴⁵ Barker, “A dialogue between Fidelia and her little nephew, Martius, as they walk in Luxembourg, disguis’d as a shepherdess or country maid”, in *The Poems of Jane Barker*, pp. 35-8, lines 104-5.

³⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, lines 110-2.

³⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, lines 127-32.

community. The poem begins in the by now familiar setting of the garden in St. Germain, Fidelia alone in the pastoral space lamenting her ill fortune:

Under what constellation was I born,
That I on every side to mischief turn,
No step, or motion, that I ever make,
But I misfortunes meet, or overtake.³⁴⁸

The poem connects her misfortunes with those of the greater Jacobite community. Although she has experienced loss and hardship, and her current state is an unhappy one, she gains comfort in the knowledge that the experience and memory is shared. The narration of Jacobite history is once again described in biblical terms, likening the revolution of 1688 and subsequent defeat to a “fall”, a reference to Adam and Eve's expulsion from the Garden in Genesis:

‘Tis true, our lives are warfar since the fall,
Yet some have little comforts mix’d withall,
...
Some blame their fate, that comforts are but short,
But I’d be glad of them, of any sort³⁴⁹

The parallel drawn between the hardship and loss experienced by loyalists post-1688 and the Divine Fall serves to raise the significance of the Jacobite exile on a moral level. Fidelia acknowledges that there are “little comforts mix'd withall” the hard lives they now lead, but rather than lament her situation she finds consolation that the experience is a communal one. Within Barker's poetic trope of retreat the safe haven is found not in the pastoral countryside but in the reformed social and political space formed by the community in retreat.

Barker employs poetic images which connect and sustain the community in exile by positioning them as moral victors against the ruling political state. “Fidelia weeping for the Kings departure at the Revolution” was written on the occasion of King James’s exile to France after he was ousted from the throne by the dominate Williamite regime, and explores the historical events of Jacobite exile from an individual perspective. Fidelia aligns herself with the marginalised Jacobite community in her narration, describing her reaction to the king’s banishment in 1688 as a personal loss:

Unhappy I, to live to see this day,
On which my Royal Lord is gone away;

³⁴⁸ Barker, “Fidelia in st Germain's garden, lamenting her misfortunes”, in *The Poems of Jane Barker*, p. 39, lines 1-4.

³⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, lines 5-6, 11-12.

Heav'n bless his flight, and make him soon return,
I'm sure his absence I shall ever mourn.³⁵⁰

Fidelia openly identifies herself as a staunch Jacobite who will remain loyal to her deposed king in his absence; however, her political and religious faith does little to temper the profound sense of loss and isolation she feels. Barker is here articulating yet another sort of exile: that of the loyalist left behind and separated from their community. Although she accompanied the Jacobites into exile, her experience of retreat as expressed through Fidelia is defined by an ideological departure from the new regime rather than by physical separation. Fidelia establishes a dichotomy between the loyal Jacobite followers and the 'rebel' Parliamentarians, defined as one of religious, and hence moral, difference:

[I] wish all curses Hell cou'd e'er invent,
May light on those, who caus'd his banishment.
Shou'd they not have, worse than Iscariot's fate,
I shou'd think Heav'n unjust, as them ingrate.
Forgive me God, if here I go too far,
To think our Traitors, worse than Judas are.
[...]
They buy it at the price of all that's good,
Their Honor, profit, and perhaps their blood.³⁵¹

Using the biblical figure of Judas, the most famous traitor in history, to parallel the treachery of the English people in usurping the monarch, Barker shapes the political conflict in religious terms. Her denunciation of the Parliamentarians is striking in its vehemence. She wishes "all curses Hell cou'd e'er invent" for forcing the king into exile and, implicitly, herself as well. The community loyal to King James is a constant in uncertain times and morally superior to the Protestant royalists.

Even before her voluntary political exile to St. Germain in 1689, Barker was already articulating her sense of otherness through an ambivalent portrayal of fervently committed communities which she both questions and defends. Converting to Catholicism in the mid-1680s, Barker clearly feels alienated from both her Protestant neighbours and her adopted religious community. In the first poem of the Magdalen collection, Barker's Catholic narrator Fidelia muses on religion as a definitive and politically charged identity:

³⁵⁰ Barker, "Fidelia weeping for the Kings departure at the Revolution" in *The Poems of Jane Barker*, p. 31, lines 1-4.

³⁵¹ *Ibid.*, lines 5-10, 12-13.

Sure never times were like to these our times,
In which Religion authorizes crimes;
If this be the effect of holy cant,
I am asham'd that I'm a Protestant.³⁵²

Fidelia's loyalty is confirmed with the appearance in the poem of her "neighbour Frindly", a "mendacious presbyterian" who hails the Duke of Monmouth, denounced by Jacobites as a traitor to the throne, as a sacred soldier in a holy war. The poem reflects the contemporary policy of nonconformist persecution, in which Fidelia is witness to religious conflict on the street. She counters with a more zealous religious view than the questioning of sectarian violence found earlier in the poem:

What blasphemy does this curss'd woman speak
Sure Heav'n will on her tongue quick vengeance take.

...
She is the perfect emblem of her gangue,
She's fit to teach the Devils to harangue.³⁵³

Fidelia exhibits an ambivalence towards organised religion as she both decries its role in political conflict and conforms to the very sectarianism she laments. The juxtaposition of Fidelia's religious ambivalence with her intense Catholic identification reflects the uncertainty and vulnerability resulting from religious conflict. As Jonathan Scott notes in *England's Troubles*, the revolution of the 1640s was both politically and religiously charged; as the century wore on, the conflict took on more religious significance and politicised literature became more sectarian.³⁵⁴ At the time of the revolution of 1688-9, England was experiencing anti-Catholic rioting, most notably in the capital city; a failure to enforce religious uniformity and censorship regulations which resulted in an outpouring of printed argument; and a disintegration of confidence in the state. All of these contributed to the new revolution's status as a conflict of ideology.³⁵⁵ Barker's occasional verse contributes to this sense of the political conflict as an ideological battle drawn along religious lines, yet also divulges a deep rooted anxiety over the nature of the conflict itself.

³⁵² Barker, "Fidelia alone lamenting her parents lately dead, and her relations gone into the west against Monmouth", in *The Poems of Jane Barker*, pp. 28-30, lines 25-32.

³⁵³ Ibid, lines 59-60, 64-5.

³⁵⁴ Jonathan Scott, *England's Troubles: Seventeenth century English political instability in the European context* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), p. 135. Scott quotes *An Advertisement to the whole of the Kingdom of England* (London, 1642), which calls the conflict a 'Warre for Defence' of both "Religion [and] Parliament".

³⁵⁵ Scott, p. 205-6.

The way in which the spheres of politics and religion are joined in the seventeenth century connects the formation of individual identity and the issue of conformity with both political allegiance and religious identification. Oppositional political groups defined themselves in moral terms, and were therefore ideologically linked to religious mores. This is clearly evident in the way in which Barker presents her political engagement and identification and is at the heart of the experience of persecution and martyrdom which shaped her political and social engagement. The connection between political and religious spheres post-Restoration remained a contentious issue. Jürgen Habermas has analysed the move of the religious faith post-1660 from being tied with the court and crown to being a private matter, and “in the end they [the competing powers of the eighteenth century] split into private elements, on the one hand, and public ones, on the other.”³⁵⁶ As demonstrated through Barker’s conflation of her experience as a Catholic and the religiously rebellious community of the Jacobites, both political and religious matters remained a means of private identification and defining aspects of public communities.

The mythologisation of Jacobite history and community clearly shapes Barker’s personal identity, which was itself strongly religiously aligned. In “Fidelia, in St Germain garden, lamenting her misfortunes”, Fidelia not only uses the discourse of exile to gain belonging into a privileged community, but shapes her personal experience into a religious martyrdom deriving from the exile of the king. She once again appears in the physical location of the exiled Jacobite community in St. Germain, exhibiting a mournful nostalgia for a Jacobite restoration which would never be achieved. As Kathryn King notes, Barker uses the themes of “poverty, victimization, exclusion, persecution and banishment” to contribute to the communal discourse of exile.³⁵⁷ Fidelia contributes not only to the mythologisation of the Jacobite community, but shapes her own myth of exile based on her individual experiences of exclusion, longing and loss. Although remaining steadfastly loyal to her community, she feels alone in her misery. “Under what constellation was *I* born” she wonders in “Fidelia in st Germain’s garden, lamenting her misfortunes”. Though she makes passing reference to the shared experience of exile (“’Tis true, *our* lives are warfar since the fall”), her focus remains on her own misfortunes and the moral question of why bad things happen to good people:

³⁵⁶ Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An inquiry into a category of bourgeois society*, trans. by Thomas Burger with the assistance of Frederick Lawrence (Cambridge: Polity, 1992), p. 11.

³⁵⁷ King, “Introduction”, 2000, p. 24.

Had I been lewd, unfaithfull or unjust,
To friend or lover, or betray'd my trust.
I then might well expect the lot I have:
But not for being, vertuous, chast, and grave.³⁵⁸

Fidelia questions the reason for her birth, if her life was to consist of such misery. Like Job, Fidelia endures a life of hardship and anguish, not in recompense for wrongs committed or ill intentions, but as a test of moral strength and faith. And so, as she comes to the realisation that “In vain in vain it is ... to strive against our fate”, Fidelia submits to her fate and accepts her burden:

Assist me patiently to take the dose
And give me strength to bear my weighty cross.³⁵⁹

Although it is Fidelia who bears the “weighty cross”, her burden is indeed shared by her fellow Jacobites in exile, as “curssed orange drive *us all* to France, and here *we* wander vagabons alone”[emphasis added].³⁶⁰ Fidelia's portrayal of her own tenuous position as a Jacobite in exile parallels the larger experience of a community existing on the fringes, with little political power but moral certitude in abundance.

Fidelia's narratives, though set against the background of political conflict, focus on the moral and religious aspects of exile and a community in crisis. “Fidelia alone lamenting her parents lately dead, and her relations gone into the west against Monmouth” displays a religious identification which permeates Fidelia's more political role as Jacobite exile. In the poem, Fidelia supplicates God to return those she has lost in the political conflicts:

Then Holy Virgin, (if thou'st power in Heav'n
As some affirm God much to Thee has giv'n)
Obtain that all my friends return to mee,
Safe from the Rebels, crown'd ith victory,
And I will search, with all the power I can,
The surest way to thy bles'd son God man³⁶¹

³⁵⁸Barker, “Fidelia, In st Germain's garden, lamenting her misfortunes”, *The Poems of Jane Barker*, pp. 39-41, lines 1, 5, 25-28. Emphasis added.

³⁵⁹ Ibid, lines 31-2.

³⁶⁰ Barker, “A dialogue”, lines 100-1.

³⁶¹ Barker, “Fidelia alone lamenting her parents lately dead, and her relations gone into the west against Monmouth”, in *The Poems of Jane Barker*, pp. 28-30, lines 36-41.

Supplications to the Virgin Mary clearly signify her Catholicism, and by entreating Mary to intervene in the political conflict and take on a divine and protective role, Barker again shapes the revolution of 1688 as a holy war. Writing from a liminal position, Barker invokes past models of community to reinforce her commitment to the ideals of the Jacobite community and marks her function as self-appointed historian. Reshaping the history of King James and his followers in a gloss of Catholic iconography, Barker marks herself as a central part of a community which is united morally, if not physically.

The poem “Fidelia Having Seen the Convent at St. James’s” describes the Catholic monastic community as an ideal and the source of personal and social resolution. Barker’s appreciation of the monastic ideal, and the corresponding conventual possibilities for women, is founded in the belief that the ideal is applicable “Whether in Solitude, or in a throng.”³⁶² Tonya Moutray McArthur explores Barker’s use of the image of the convent as indicative of female involvement in and support of nonconformity in the eighteenth century.³⁶³ The convent is a site of retreat, and while the late seventeenth century saw a proliferation in fictional representations of female communities epitomised by the convent, Barker’s use of the image does not suggest a gendered, separatist community.³⁶⁴ Her ideal model of religious community is therefore feasible whether in the hostile environment of London, or in the secluded exile of St. Germain. Claire Walker has documented the active participation of monastic and conventual communities in the political activism of the English Catholic population abroad.³⁶⁵ Convents have connotations of a rejection of the ideals of marriage and associated domesticity for early modern women, and were often used as the site of alternative female communities.³⁶⁶ Convents figure prominently in the *Fidelia* verse as strongholds of Jacobite Catholicism and sites of female political engagement, and later in the *Galesia* trilogy their role in assisting women to make social choices outside of marriage is emphasised. Barker follows in a tradition of subverting the traditional associations of female monasticism with confinement and withdrawal, emphasizing instead the socially empowering aspects of a community based on virtue and social

³⁶² Barker, “Fidelia Having Seen the Convent at St. James’s”, in *Poems of Jane Barker*, line 28.

³⁶³ McArthur, 595-618.

³⁶⁴ Nicole Pohl, *Women, Space and Utopia, 1600-1800* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006), pp. 95-124.

³⁶⁵ Claire Walker, *Gender and Politics in Early Modern Europe: English convents in France and the low countries*, (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003).

³⁶⁶ Kate Chedzoy, “‘For Virgin Buildings Oft Brought Forth’: Fantasies of Convent Sexuality’, in *Female Communities, 1600–1800: Literary visions and cultural realities*, ed. by Rebecca D’Monté and Nicole Pohl (London: St. Martin’s Press, 2000), pp.53-75.

values.³⁶⁷ Barker's vision of retreat would, like Katherine Philips's nearly half a century earlier, be alluring for a community constrained by its minority position. As Tonya Mouray McArthur says:

For an audience sympathetic with ... Barker's politics, the possibility of living apart from political and domestic pressures and joining a community of like-minded and spiritually devoted individuals might have been attractive, even idyllic.³⁶⁸

Barker's *Fidelia* poems offer a model of pious communality for women which would have been unavailable in Protestant England, emphasising the possibilities for women within the politicised exiled community.

What did it mean for Barker to openly identify as a Catholic and a Jacobite at a time when both were subject to social and political exclusion? Barker herself proclaims her ambiguous identification with the Jacobite community, though her Catholic faith remains strong throughout. In "Fidelia alone lamenting her parents lately dead" Fidelia prays to the Holy Virgin that her friends return from war, safe and victorious. For, as Fidelia says, "Methinks a Virgin shou'd a virgin hear, And readily present a virgins prayer."³⁶⁹ The deification of the Virgin Mary by the Roman Church is a central tenet of Catholic belief, and Fidelia's direct supplication to the Virgin Mary is a clear marker of her faith. With the accession of William of Orange to the throne of England and the affirmation of a Protestant state, openly Catholic identification was considered subversive and, oftentimes, dangerous. Marie Rowlands notes that women were able to commit to Catholicism without the compromise necessary for their male counterparts: "The women – precisely because they had no public role and were protected to some extent by public opinion – were able to engage in resistance."³⁷⁰ Although Rowland explores an earlier historical moment in female history, the context of female conventual space is significant to its application in late seventeenth century women's literary history. Therefore the ability of women to commit to Catholicism without the political ramifications of their male counterparts is significant as it allows them an avenue of political engagement. This engagement was often ideological in nature,

³⁶⁷ See Margaret Cavendish, *The Convent of Pleasure* and *The Female Academy*, in *The Convent of Pleasure and other plays*, ed. by Anne Shaver (Baltimore, London: John Hopkins University Press, 1999).

³⁶⁸ McArthur, p. 610.

³⁶⁹ Barker, "Fidelia alone lamenting her parents lately dead", in *The Poems of Jane Barker*, p. 28-30, lines 34-5.

³⁷⁰ Marie B. Rowlands, 'Recusant Women 1560-1640', in *Women in English Society 1500-1800*, ed. by Mary Prior (London: Methuen, 1985), pp. 112-135 (p. 162).

articulated through a model of heroic virtue. Barker is able to proclaim her own faith and link it with a virtue which extends to the community with which she identifies.

Barker underscores her belonging and inflates her Jacobite and Catholic identity, overemphasising her identification in an effort to validate her place within the community. She takes on the role of religious martyr, calling attention to her feelings of loneliness and isolation and marking her experience as a Jacobite as central to her identity as a writer. Barker admits as much when she says that her exile “is so far from displeasing that it gives me rather a secret satisfaction to have suffered something for such a cause.”³⁷¹ Clearly, Barker takes pleasure in imagining her retreat as religious martyrdom and it is an image which permeates her politicised verse.

The Pastoral Tradition

We have seen the ways in which Barker's identifications with intellectual, political and religious communities are explored through verse. The focus of this section will be the poetic tools Barker employs to articulate her own experiences of community. Barker contributes to a tradition of retreat in which the space of retirement forms the idyllic basis for a reborn, virtuous social space. This vision of pastoral retreat was influenced by Anne Finch's “The Petition for an Absolute Retreat”, in which she reforms the space of retirement to reinforce the mythologisation of the Jacobite experience by connecting exile to biblical paradise. Finch's retreat is, like the Garden, naturally abundant:

Fruits indeed (wou'd Heaven bestow)
All, that did in *Eden* grow,
All, but the *Forbidden Tree*,
Wou'd be coveted by me;
Grapes, with Juice so crouded up,
As breaking thro' the native Cup³⁷²

The fecundity of the garden signifies both procreative and creative potential; the space of retreat, free from conflict, encourages growth both physical and spiritual. Carol Barash emphasises that the space of retreat in Finch's poem is also political, providing her with a “rhetorical stance from which she can continue to praise the Stuarts in their

³⁷¹ Barker, “Dedication to Prince of Wales”, in *The Poems of Jane Barker*, p. 25.

³⁷² Anne Finch, “The Petition for an Absolute Retreat” *Miscellany Poems, on Several Occasions* (London: printed for J.B. and sold by Benj. Tooke at the Middle-Temple-Gate, William Taylor in Pater-Noster-Row, and James Round, in Exchange-Alley, Cornhill, 1713), pp. 33-49, lines 34-9.

absence.”³⁷³ Retreat provides a similar resource for Barker in the Magdalen poems, as she uses the gardens of St. Germain as a space of reflection and remembrance. Barker’s engagement with the pastoral begins with her verse to the Cambridge coterie, evolving as she becomes involved with the Jacobite community at St. Germain.

Barker’s most well-known retirement verse, “An invitation to my learned friends at Cambridge: To my country solitude”, echoes the pastoral verse of Katherine Philips as it celebrates the country retreat as a site of moral and intellectual freedom away from the corruption and confinement of city and state. Barker begins with praise of “my Rural joys” and invites her Cambridge circle to participate in her pastoral freedom:

Hail solitude, where peace and virtue shroud,
Their unvail’d beautys from the cens’ring croud,
Let me but have their company and I,
Shall never envy this worlds gallantry³⁷⁴

Barker is clearly following in the established discourse of retreat as established by the earlier royalist poets, positioning the rural countryside as a preferable option to the corruption of town and state. Once again Barker positions her retreat as a moral choice, a refuge against the “cens’ring croud” and akin to a pre-fall paradise:

Yea, such a kind of solitude it is,
Nor much unlike to that of Paradise
Where all things do their choicest good dispenche,
And I too here, am plac’d in innocence.³⁷⁵

As the royalist poets manipulated the limitations of their post-war exile, Barker reforms her present condition of rural retirement into the site of an alternative social and creative space for the displaced community. In this complex context of social and political reformation, Barker’s ‘innocence’ is not the feminine virtue which clung to Barker as a pious woman writer based on the model of Orinda, but a reference to the pre-fall state of innocence defined by natural harmony and creation. By representing the exiled community as a second Paradise, and one to which she was called and embraced, Barker clearly separates her own idyllic society from that of her friends at Cambridge. She resides among “Rural joys”, while her friends remain amongst the “avarice”, “wantonness”, and “politick contrivances of state”.³⁷⁶ Barker is clear to position her

³⁷³ Carol Barash, ‘The Political Origins of Anne Finch's Poetry’ in *Huntington Library Quarterly*, 54:4 (Autumn, 1991): 327-351 (p. 341).

³⁷⁴ Barker, “An invitation to my learned friends at Cambridge: To my country solitude”, in *The Poems of Jane Barker*, pp. 43-5, lines 5-8.

³⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, lines 32-5.

³⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, lines 15, 19, 21.

retreat as a voluntary state, and escape from an immoral world to a reformed paradise, echoing her earlier anxious sense of spatial exclusion exhibited in her verse to the Cambridge coterie.

Like Philips before her, Barker utilises and manipulates the conventions of the pastoral and the discourse of retreat to articulate her own simultaneous withdrawal from and engagement with the political world.³⁷⁷ “The lovers Elesium, Or Foolls Paradiçe: a dream” employs similar imagery to Philips’s pastoral lyrics, showing a common language of loyalist poetics. Using the trope of a verdant countryside as the site of intellectual and emotional growth, Barker establishes the pastoral as an enabling haven from trouble and strife. The poem establishes a lyrical pastoral scene in which a vision is delivered:

Sleeping by th’ river Glen, methought I found,
My self into a pleasant labrinth wound,
Whether the pritty windings of the stream,
Or love or youth, presented me this dream³⁷⁸

The vision comes from “the pretty windings of the stream”, a labyrinthine image which suggests an uncertainty about the vision of the pastoral ideal. The lines are open to interpretation about the origin of the dream, whether it is the stream, youth, or love.

Although the pastoral is significant, it is not the only factor at play in the poem. Unlike the “delicious solitude” of Marvell’s pastoral, Barker’s Elysium is filled with “all sorts of company, / Old, young, gay, sad, wise, mad, reserv’d and free.”³⁷⁹ Among those the narrator meets is a “gentle youth” who, grieving for an inconstant lover, “took the field, And at Sedge-more deservedly was kill’d.”³⁸⁰ The pastoral paradise, then, is a place of eternal reward for the loyalist dead. Confirming the space as a specifically Jacobite one, the “gentle youth” recounts:

But e’er I dy’d, I did in mercy trust,
I saw my guilt, and pray’d for James the Just,
Mor’over did forgive, that faitless she,
Who made me actor, in this tragedy.³⁸¹

³⁷⁷ Barash makes a similar claim about Anne Finch's verse specifically in relation to her engagement with the pastoral friendship theme associated with the “female community and mythic female authority engendered by James II's second and Catholic wife, Mary of Modena” (Barash 1991, p. 329-330).

³⁷⁸ Barker, “The lovers Elesium, Or foolls Paradiçe: a dream”, in *The Galesia Trilogy*, p. 320-23, lines 1-4.

³⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, lines 11-12.

³⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, line 25.

³⁸¹ *Ibid.*, lines 26-29.

The paradise is reserved as a haven for martyred loyalists who conform to a standard of religious and political virtue. “This my Repentance God receiv’d so well,” he goes on to say, “That with the others, I went not to Hell.”³⁸² “The others”, in this context, are the followers of James who likewise fought for the loyalist cause. The narrator is implicit in this community, as she also inhabits the pastoral setting and not the “Fool’s Paradise”, where all who live “are given up to folly ... All was confusion here, they’d but one rule, / That none must enter, but must play the fool.”³⁸³ The chaos results from lack of unified authority, as the inhabitants are more concerned with titles, riches and style.

In the Magdalen poems Fidelia likens the gardens of St. Germain to a pastoral retreat which is similarly a space of Jacobite respite and reward. In “A dialogue” Martius refers to Fidelia as a “Rural maid”, suggesting that though she resides in the space of retreat she has “not a shepperdess’s mien”.³⁸⁴ Fidelia responds with the story of how she and her fellow Jacobites came thus to a retreat so different from their previous lives. “A good old tippling swain, was gardner here” she recounts, though he had been a corporal in the war, and others were not so fortunate.³⁸⁵ Though their retreat was forced rather than voluntary, Fidelia protests that they found happiness in such a paradise:

Here we as in a little Can’an liv’d,
 And for our former manna never griv’d.
 Here milk and hony, did not only flow,
 But we’d a little kind of Eden too.
 Well furnish’d with good fruit, fresh herbs, gay flowers,
 Fountains and grass-plats, walks, and shady bowers,
 Yet more by nature, than by art was dress’d
 And our content made of its fruits a feast.³⁸⁶

Fidelia protests that their “little kind of Eden”, with its undertones of a pre-fall idyllic existence, is such paradise that they “never griv’d” for their former home. Though the space of St. Germain is a safe haven, it is tainted with the loss and hardship of recent history. Barker repeatedly draws parallels between her retreat and the biblical model of paradise to enforce the desirability of retreat as a peaceable haven rather than as a sentence of exile.

³⁸² Ibid, lines 30-1.

³⁸³ Ibid, lines 37, 61-2.

³⁸⁴ Barker, “A dialogue”, lines 11, 10.

³⁸⁵ Ibid, line 50.

³⁸⁶ Ibid, lines 42-49.

Conclusion

In the dedication to the Magdalen Manuscript, Barker refers to Cowley's royalist verse as an example of the difficulties writers face in articulating the "transactions of [the] time".³⁸⁷ The unsettling events of the later seventeenth century, and the multifaceted political identities which emerged, shaped a society which both strove to move on from the political upheaval and clung to the memory of the events themselves. Writers struggled to voice an experience that was both national and personal in an effort to define the world around them and their role within it. Kathryn King argues that Barker creates fictions of persecution, banishment, suffering and heroic fidelity to transform the bleakness of exile into an affirmation of Jacobite ideals.³⁸⁸ Indeed Barker, through the narrative persona of Fidelia, figures her exile as a religious martyrdom, amplifying the conditions of her chosen exile in her search for belonging within a radical community. Barker's pursuit of acceptance by the exiled Jacobite community comes across as over-zealous, and her extreme representation of religio-political exile set against her acute sense of not-belonging leads to an ambivalence over her own position within the community. Her verse looks back to the royalist trope of retreat as shaped by Cowley, Lovelace and Philips, among others, and yet it is a nostalgia for a past which is undesirable. The royalist discourse of the 1640s and 1650s emerged from the Cavalier defeat in the Civil War, expressing distress at the splintering of the royalist community through death and exile. That Barker should return to a discourse inseparable from the suffering and loss of the royalist community necessarily positions the Jacobite community, and herself as part of it, as martyrs.

Barker says that as a result of her truthful rendition of events she gained 'much Hatred and many enemys'.³⁸⁹ Barker's conception of truth is highly subjective, as her mythologised vision of the Jacobite defeat and exile is a re-imagining of historical events from a highly localised perspective. It is the precise nature of the text's subjectiveness that is pertinent to this study of early modern women's political engagement, as her verse voices a communal identification from the margins. Barker's ambivalent identification with the exiled community results from this divergence between her imagined world of persecuted righteousness and her strong sense of community loyalty tainted by her perceived marginal status. Thus she portrays an experience of double exclusion, initially as a religio-political minority and secondly as a

³⁸⁷ Barker, "To his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales", in *The Poems of Jane Barker*, p.25.

³⁸⁸ King 2000, p. 102.

³⁸⁹ Barker, "To his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales", in *The Poems of Jane Barker*, p. 25.

peripheral member of this minority community. Barker's sense of community is two-fold: on the one hand the material experience of community which is primarily one of loss and separation, and on the other hand this imagined communality with fellow writers and sympathists, which although immaterial provide the community she so intensely craved.

There is a tension in Barker's verse between her personal experience of community and her idealised representations of the community in exile. Though she continually refers to a communal experience of exile, lamenting that "we suffer, by hard fortunes frown", she is not an immediate part of this community, as she "mourn[s] alone".³⁹⁰ Building a community is inevitably a process of exclusion as well as inclusion, and Barker experiences both simultaneously. Her narrative verse and prose reflect this complex experience of identification with a threshold community with which Barker herself is liminally associated. In the preface to *A Patchwork Screen for the Ladies*, Galesia describes her position as one of acceptance and rejection:

I was greatly rejoyc'd at this my *Fall*, when I found my-self amongst these happy Undertakers, and hop'd to unite my-self in their Confraternity; but they finding some Manuscript *Ballads* in my Pocket, rejected me as one of that Race of Mortals who live on a certain barren Mountain 'till they are turn'd into *Camelions*; so I was forc'd to get away, every one hunching and pushing me, with Scorn and Derision.³⁹¹

The repeated imagery of the biblical fall from grace here is a joyful and sociable experience because it is a chance to "unite [her]-self" into a "Confraternity", those "happy Undertakers" with whom she identifies. However her joy soon turns to sorrow as she is rejected upon discovery of "Manuscript *Ballads*", her status as a female poet exposed and received with "Scorn and Derision." Thus, it is not only religious and political identification which set her apart, but her identity as a female author as well.

Jane Barker voices a distinctly individual experience of the historical, political and social contexts of a post-1688 Britain. Her representations of exile, loneliness, loss, and the search for belonging which can only be found in an imaginatively united community reflect her personal experience of wider political conflict. The textual response to her experience follows in the royalist tradition of sociable retreat in which the purity of the pastoral landscape provided an ideal setting for social transformation. However, threads can be identified between Barker's representations of friendship, community, and spirituality and broader contemporary philosophical dialogues.

³⁹⁰ Barker, "A dialogue", lines 100-1; "Fidelia alone lamenting her parents lately dead", p. 28-30, line 3.

³⁹¹ Barker, "To the Reader" in *A Patch Work Screen for the Ladies*, in *The Galesia Trilogy*, p. 53.

Elizabeth Singer Rowe, who is Barker's contemporary though separated from her by religious and political identification, continues to develop the notion of a community united through virtue and existing across physical boundaries.

Chapter III

Elizabeth Singer Rowe: a poetics of nonconformity

Like her predecessor Katherine Philips, Elizabeth Singer Rowe's pious and sentimental authorial persona has often overshadowed her literary work, and her significance as a writer has been read in terms of this iconic image.³⁹² Rowe's image of sentimental piety and modest retirement in the history of women's writing is largely due to the posthumous biography published in 1739 by her brother-in-law Theophilus Rowe.³⁹³ This perception is, to a certain extent, consistent with her own projected image which was shaped both through her spiritual subjects and poetic insistence on her desire for retirement. The model of early modern female authorship initiated by Katherine Philips is clearly influential for Barker's literary identity, as discussed in the previous chapter, and for Rowe's own authorial persona: the connection between individual and communal virtue and the imperative to write is foundational.³⁹⁴ I have explored the ways in which political identity was a key component of both Philips' and Rowe's authorial personae. Although Rowe's later verse was spiritually focused, her early involvement in the London periodical the *Athenian Mercury* and her sustained involvement with the nonconformist coterie based at the Longleat home of Frances Thynne, Lady Hertford, demonstrate a varied and politically active literary career. Although Rowe is most famous for her later, more religiously motivated work, including *Friendship in Death: in Twenty Letters from the Dead to the Living* (1728) and *Letters Moral and Entertaining* (1729-32), it is her early involvement with both the Athenians and the Longleat coterie which will be the primary focus of this study. Her involvement with these distinct communities, set against her participation in the wider nonconformist community, demonstrates the range of literary and political engagement available to early modern women.

Rowe herself identified her friendship with the Weymouth family and associated coterie participants, including the nonconformist writers Matthew Prior and Isaac Watts, as integral to her literary production.³⁹⁵ However her involvement in the

³⁹² Marlene R. Hansen, "The Pious Mrs Rowe", *English Studies*, 76: 1 (1995), 34-51; John J. Richetti, "Mrs. Elizabeth Rowe: The novel as polemic", *PMLA*, 82:7 (December, 1967), 522-529.

³⁹³ Theophilus Rowe and Henry Grove, eds, *The Miscellaneous Works, in Prose and Verse, of Mrs Elizabeth Rowe, to which are added, Poems on Several Occasions by Mr Thomas Rowe, and to the whole is prefixed, an account of the lives and writings of the authors* (London, 1739).

³⁹⁴ See Chapter 1, p. 28.

³⁹⁵ Sarah Prescott, 'Provincial Networks, Dissenting Connections, and Noble Friends: Elizabeth Singer Rowe and Female Authorship in Early Eighteenth-Century England', *Eighteenth-Century Life*, 25:1

Longleat coterie and in particular her epistolary exchanges with Frances Thynne, Lady Hertford, represent but one facet of a complex engagement with contemporary sociable literary practices. As the ‘Pindarick Lady’ of the London periodical *Athenian Mercury*, Rowe was involved with a community of writers and readers, male and female, who recreated the intellectual dialogue of the public coffeehouses within an anonymous printed space. As the previous chapter showed, Jane Barker’s participation in diverse literary communities was an attempt to find a lasting and stable community but also an expression of multiple identifications. But where Barker appears to have been unsuccessful in her quest for communal belonging, Rowe gained entry into several privileged literary communities over the course of her life and her authorial identity reflected these inclusive social contexts.

The political events of 1688-9 were formative to Rowe’s authorial identity and textual production, just as they were for Jane Barker, although their political views were at opposite ends of the political spectrum. Barker voiced a strongly Jacobite allegiance and contributed to the growing tradition of Jacobite poetics; Rowe, in contrast, wrote in support of the Williamite regime and contributed to the literary culture of nonconformity. The previous chapter discussed the centrality of Barker’s religious and political identification to her narrative voices; likewise Sarah Prescott has called attention to the need to read Rowe’s poetry and authorial image in relation to the different discursive and geographical contexts in which she lived and wrote.³⁹⁶ Prescott has highlighted Rowe’s political and religious affiliations, arguing that her early poetic production demonstrated “a feminine version of the Whig poetic agenda”.³⁹⁷ Rowe’s engagement with whiggish poetics is clear from her occasional verse and connection with the *Athenian Mercury*; however, I argue that it is her nonconformist sympathies which are most clearly and forcefully conveyed in her textual activity as she positions herself as part of the wider nonconformist community as well as at the centre of the localised Longleat coterie. Her dual positions in local and national nonconformist communities demonstrate multiple and overlapping communal identifications.

Rowe had a strong family connection to the Dissenters. She was the eldest daughter of Walter Singer, himself a nonconformist who raised his children in a strict dissenting tradition and supported his daughter’s later literary pursuits. Her father had been imprisoned for nonconformity and indeed first met his wife when she was visiting

(Winter 2001): pp. 29-42 (35). Prescott notes the centrality of the friendship to Rowe’s literary production, demonstrated through dedicatory poems to Lady Hertford.

³⁹⁶ Sarah Prescott, *Women, Authorship and Literary Culture 1690-1740* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), p. 141.

³⁹⁷ Prescott 2003, p. 142.

prisoners.³⁹⁸ In 1710 she married Thomas Rowe, also from a nonconformist background: his uncle ran a dissenting academy at Newington Green, London. Students of this academy included John Wesley, Henry Groves and Isaac Watts, with whom Rowe would have had a close working relationship for the remainder of her life, and who were themselves connected to the Longleat coterie. Thomas Rowe was characterised posthumously as having “much anxiety for his native country” so that “not very long after his return thither in the year 1708, [he] observed, that a set of wretched principles, destructive of its liberties and welfare, were growing in fashion under the countenance of some in power.”³⁹⁹ Rowe’s biographers suggest that the match between the two was a natural one born out of shared virtue and dissenting ideals.⁴⁰⁰

Although her participation in a number of different literary circles fluctuated during her lifetime, Rowe’s writing shows a persistent identification with and commitment to the tenets of post-1688 nonconformity. The late-seventeenth century shift in the nature of Dissent, in part due to the political shift of the Revolution of 1688, and in part due to a generational shift as the martyrs of early nonconformity faded from memory, shaped an ideology which drew from the principles of rationality and sought to replace an increasingly materially-focused hierarchical society with relationships based on shared virtue.⁴⁰¹ Presbyterian nonconformists attempted to reform the established church from within, in effect seeking modification of their church in accordance of their principles. A sincere hope by its leaders for sufficient comprehension to enable them to re-enter the national church tied the identity of its followers to the central authority of church and state. The political aspects of early modern nonconformity are tied to its religious aims: to reform, modify and redefine society.

As discussed in the Introduction, Rowe wrote at a time when utopian visions of female communities by Mary Astell and Margaret Cavendish suggested the internally derived power of an isolated communal life.⁴⁰² Cavendish’s imagined social and political spaces in poems such as “A World in an Ear-ring” demonstrates the sociable potential of retirement, and Astell’s vision of secular communities which are self-

³⁹⁸ Sharon Achinstein, *Literature and Dissent in Milton’s England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), p. 247.

³⁹⁹ Rowe and Grove, p. x.

⁴⁰⁰ “The Life of Mrs. Elizabeth Rowe”, in *Poems on Several Occasions. To which is prefixed an account of the life and writings of the author*, (London: printed for D. Midwinter in St. Paul’s Church-yard, 1759), p. 21.

⁴⁰¹ Achinstein, p. 240.

⁴⁰² Examples of early modern female utopias can be found in the verse of Margaret Cavendish as well as the dramatic works *The Convent of Pleasure* and *The Female Academy*, both printed in *Playes* (London: Printed by A. Warren for John Martyn, James Allestry and Tho. Dicas. 1662), and Mary Astell, *A Serious Proposal to the Ladies: For the advancement of their true and greatest interest. By a lover of her sex* (London: Richard Wilkin, 1696).

supporting and utopian in *A Serious Proposal to the Ladies* demonstrates a similar application of political and social philosophies. Rowe also draws on politically charged images of a feminised retreat to renegotiate traditional ideas of withdrawal to include notions of female autonomy, literary creativity, and communal action. In both her verse and prose, Rowe promotes a philosophy of disembodied friendship achieved through retirement, shaping a ‘virtual’ community constructed through shared philosophical and political values and maintained through the production and exchange of manuscript writing. As previously discussed, Nicole Pohl and Rebecca D’Monté have identified female friendship as the catalyst for such ‘virtual’ communities, which are imagined through common political or social convictions.⁴⁰³ However, the retreat which Rowe seeks is not imagined as exclusively female, and her literary activity connects her to men and women alike, creating a heterosocial communal space.

Much of the content of the Athenians’ arguments would have been attractive to Rowe because of her family connection with the nonconformist tradition and her presumed background in its philosophy. Rowe was the eldest daughter of Walter Singer, himself a nonconformist who raised his children in a strict dissenting tradition and supported his daughter’s later literary pursuits. Rowe’s identification with the nonconformist movement would play a crucial role in her literary career, beginning with her involvement with the *Athenian Mercury*.

The Pindarick Lady and the Athenians

It was during Rowe’s initial time in Frome that she became involved with the London periodical the *Athenian Mercury*, corresponding with the editor John Dunton and contributing verse and letters as an anonymous female contributor. Rowe’s involvement with the *Mercury* marks her initial foray into print publication and was a formative early experience which would shape her later literary activity. Her poetic contributions to the periodical indicate her interest in the dissenting ideals of the Athenians.⁴⁰⁴ The Athenians heralded her as the ‘Pindarick Lady’, a title which represents both feminine virtue and a poetic heritage. The Pindaric ode, as discussed in

⁴⁰³ Rebecca D’Monté and Nicole Pohl, eds, *Female Communities 1600-1800: Literary visions and cultural realities* (London: St. Martin’s Press, 2000). See also Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism* (London: Verso, 1991), and Susan Sniader Lanser, *Fictions of Authority: Women writers and narrative voice* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1992), for more on imagined communities.

⁴⁰⁴ Prescott 2001, p. 33.

chapter 1, was a poetic form which signals a mediation between the poet's response to the formal occasion of the poem and the institution which it celebrates, defining the seventeenth century revival of the form as politically ambivalent.⁴⁰⁵ Rowe's engagement with the Pindaric form, and the conscious positioning of her authorial image in relation to the English poetic tradition, is significant to this study and further explorations of her literary career.

The *Athenian Mercury* represents the intersection of the intellectual freedom of the coffeehouses and the burgeoning print culture in post-Restoration England. Edited by John Dunton, the periodical was published serially from 1691 to 1695 and featured an innovative question and response format which addressed a genre-defying range of topics including "divinity, history, philosophy, mathematicks, love, poetry" as described in the title.⁴⁰⁶ Indeed the *Mercury* was the first periodical to directly solicit reader's letters, and the authority it claimed for itself was derived from its ability to act as a vehicle for public discourse and to register the presence of a virtual collective in print. Although there is no evidence for the circulation or size of the readership, Helen Berry estimates several hundred copies per each twice-weekly run, with copies available both for sale in Dunton's shop, and by so-called 'Mercury Women' selling copies on the street.⁴⁰⁷ There is some speculation that some of the submitted letters were fabricated by Dunton himself, although the survival of original letters from the subscribers of the *Mercury* held at the Bodleian suggests a sustained, authentic involvement of the readership in the printed content.⁴⁰⁸ Whether or not the letters were entirely authentic, the *Mercury* was still a collaborative effort which encouraged involvement from both men and women, urban and provincial. Berry calls the periodical a "radical, gender-inclusive project" which used as its theme an ongoing dialogue between the sexes.⁴⁰⁹ Although the identities of the contributors were anonymous, Dunton capitalised on the gender of his female contributors to position their works within the feminised discourse of the *Mercury*'s moral reform.

Dunton was a famous figure in the London literary scene and like his notorious contemporary Edmund Curll, Dunton used his writers for personal profit and reputation,

⁴⁰⁵ See discussion of Katherine Philips's and Abraham Cowley's use of the Pindaric form in Chapter 1, pp. 65-70.

⁴⁰⁶ Helen Berry, *Gender, Society and Print Culture in Late-Stuart England: The cultural world of the Athenian Mercury* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003), p. 26.

⁴⁰⁷ Berry 2003, p. 22.

⁴⁰⁸ Helen Berry, "'Nice and curious questions': coffee houses and the representation of women in John Dunton's *Athenian Mercury*", *The Seventeenth Century*, 12 (1997): 257-76 (p. 258). Berry does not subscribe to the theory of Dunton's fabrication of printed letters.

⁴⁰⁹ Berry 2003, p. 36.

contributing to the burgeoning ‘Fleet Street’ culture of print publication.⁴¹⁰ Whatever his personal motivation and ethics, Dunton’s reputation enabled the writers with whom he worked through publication and introduction to established writers, both of which furthered their literary careers. Rowe was a young girl when she became involved with the *Mercury*, little known outside of her small provincial circle and certainly inexperienced in the ways of metropolitan print culture. Her contributions to the periodical marked her first foray into print, and her only experience with this very public format. Rowe’s participation in the Athenian experiment connected her to a larger group of women readers and writers of the periodical, whose participation as both readers and writers in the *Athenian* led to the formation of the *Ladies Mercury*.⁴¹¹ The letters they submitted to these publications touched on both secular and spiritual matters, bringing women’s concerns into public debate.

Rowe’s first anonymous contribution consisted of a question and a poem commemorating the Battle of the Boyne in 1691. The poem confirmed the hitherto unknown poet’s Williamite identification, in keeping with the Athenians’ political ideology, and the question submitted alongside the poem aligned her with the ideology of reformation upon which the *Mercury* was founded. She asks of the Athenians:

Whether Songs on Moral, Religious or Divine Subjects, composed by Persons of Wit and Virtue, and set to both grave and pleasant Tunes, wou’d not the Charms of Poetry, and sweetness of Musick, make good impressions of Modesty and Sobriety on the Young and Nobel, make them really in Love with Virtue and Goodness, and prepare their minds for the design’d Reformation?⁴¹²

Rowe’s question directly addresses the agenda of moral reform of the early Athenian project, which Dunton avowed was “to open the avenues, raise the Soul, as it were into Daylight, and restore the knowledge of Truth and Happiness, that had wandred so long unknown, and found out by so few.”⁴¹³ The letter reveals the idealism of Rowe’s early writing as she suggests that poetry, penned by “Persons of Wit and Virtue” on appropriate topics, would serve both to educate and moderate youth, thus establishing a virtuous and noble mind upon which ideal political and social tenets could be imposed. This is a common thread in nonconformist literature, as for instance, Mary, Lady

⁴¹⁰ Edmund Curll was engaged in a literary battle with the Scriblerians, who included Jonathan Swift, Matthew Prior, Thomas Rowe and others, for repeatedly pirating items for inclusion in his published miscellanies. As Paul Baines and Pat Rogers comment, “If people then had seen recycling as an economic and ecological virtue, Curll’s name would have shone as brightly as anyone’s.” Baines and Rogers, *Edmund Curll, bookseller* (Oxford: Oxford Univeristy Press, 2007), p. 68.

⁴¹¹ Berry 2003, p. 59.

⁴¹² *Athenian Mercury* 5:2 (December, 1691).

⁴¹³ Dunton, p. 188.

Chudleigh, argues in the preface to *The Song of Three Children Paraphras'd* that writing leads to both personal and civic edification. She writes:

... with no other design than that of exercising and enlarging my Thoughts, and of heightning and refining those Ideas which I had already fram'd, of the infinite Goodness, Wisdom, and Power of God, to whose Service I think my self oblig'd to devote my Time, my Faculties, and all that small Stock of Understanding which it has pleas'd his Divine Goodness to bestow upon me.⁴¹⁴

Chudleigh's statement that her literary activity is entirely driven by the aim of "exercising and enlarging [her] Thoughts" cautions that authorship must be directed and purposeful, as opposed to poetry which is driven by "Fancy". This belief underpins the dissenting literary tradition in which the purpose of literary activity is to expand the intellect, but within the natural bounds of human capability. Sharon Achinstein argues that the dissenting literary tradition, "[like the] radical political tradition, vaunted the workings of conscience – a conscience that could only be observed in the inward reflection of God and the individual soul."⁴¹⁵ The emphasis on spiritual reflection was supported by intellectual edification.

The male writers behind the *Mercury* argued for the education of women: "Women have undoubtedly the same Principles of Reason with Men, and therefore, whatever would tend to the accomplishing of Men ... would be useful to Women."⁴¹⁶ This argument would have appealed to Rowe's own interest in intellectual and moral reformation and her status as a female writer. In the preface "To the Reader" in the 1696 *Poems on Several Occasions*, Rowe makes an impassioned "appeal to all the World" to recognise and respect mankind's "Fundamental Constitutions", in particular the "Liberties of Free-born English Women".⁴¹⁷ Rowe positions herself within the history of women writers from the ancient figure of Sappho to her contemporaries Aphra Behn and 'Orinda' who resisted male authority through authorship, "humbl[ing] the most haughty of our Antagonists, and made 'em do Homage to our Wit, as well as our Beauty".⁴¹⁸ Read alongside her contemporaneous contributions to the *Mercury*, the appeal fits within the nonconformist agenda of social reformation achieved through intellectual pursuits but also suggests a source of proto-feminist thought.

⁴¹⁴ Mary, Lady Chudleigh, "The Preface" in *The Poems and Prose of Mary, Lady Chudleigh*, ed. by Margaret J. M. Ezell (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), p. 169.

⁴¹⁵ For more on the dissenting literary tradition see Sharon Achinstein, *Literature and Dissent in Milton's England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), p. 11.

⁴¹⁶ *Athenian Mercury* 15:3 (September 11, 1694); quoted in Berry 2003, p. 216.

⁴¹⁷ Elizabeth Singer Rowe, "To the Reader", in *Poems on Several Occasions, Written by Philomela* (London: John Dunton, 1696), A3.

⁴¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. A3.

Rowe's contributions to the periodical were, as her pseudonym suggests, largely Pindaric odes in the English tradition initiated by Abraham Cowley and also employed by Katherine Philips.⁴¹⁹ The Pindaric continued to be a popular poetic form well into the eighteenth century; however, the later use of the form marks a discursive shift from its earlier incarnations. Whereas the early Pindarics of Cowley and Philips were allegorical meditations on formal institutions of power, as the century drew to a close poets used the form to reflect on the relationship between the physical and the spiritual.⁴²⁰ Anne Finch is the producer of one of the era's most famous Pindarics, "The Spleen", a poem which addresses the transportation of the soul, a theme which would recur in Rowe's later, more explicitly religious, verse. Rowe was connected with Anne Finch through the Hertford literary circle and they may possibly have been familiar with each other's work through coterie exchange. Whether this is evidence of a deliberate shared engagement with the Pindaric mode, or perhaps a less mediated echo, is uncertain. Unlike "The Petition for an Absolute Retreat", "The Spleen" is not normally read as a poem of retreat. The poem focuses on the relationship between the body and the soul, shaping retreat as a spiritual space encumbered by the physical body. The poem opens with allusions to the classical figures of Proteus and Brutus, figuring the spleen as the cause of their downfalls and the representation of human weakness:

Falsely, the Mortal Part we blame
 Of our depresst and pond'rous Frame,
 Which, till the First degrading Sin
 Let Thee, its dull Attendant, in,
 Still with the Other did comply,
 Nor clogg'd the Active Soul, dispos'd to fly,
 And range the Mansions of it's native Sky.⁴²¹

Finch creates an opposition between the "pond'rous Frame" of the body and the "Active Soul" which seeks to escape its physical boundaries. The poem is indicative of the thematic shift of the trope of retreat in the later seventeenth century from an external

⁴¹⁹ See discussion of Philips and the Pindaric in Chapter 1 pp. 65-70. See also Stella Revard, "'Pindarique Odes' and the Politics of the Interregnum", *Criticism* 35(1993), 391-418; Revard, *Politics, Poetics and the Pindaric Ode 1450-1700* (Turnhout: Brepols Publishers, 2010).

⁴²⁰ Achinstein, pp. 250-54. Achinstein notes John Hughes's "An Ode to the Creator of the World. Occasion'd by Fragments of Orpheus" (1713) as an example of the philosophical Pindaric form of the late seventeenth century, in which Hughes contemplates the boundlessness of God's creation and the inability of "the narrow Cells of human Brain / The vast immesurable Thought contain" (251).

⁴²¹ Anne Kingsmill Finch, "The Spleen: A Pindaric Poem", in *Miscellany Poems, on Several Occasions: Written by a lady*, (London: printed for J.B. and sold by Benj. Tooke at the Middle-Temple-Gate, William Taylor in Pater-Noster-Row, and James Round, in Exchange-Alley, Cornhil, 1713), pp. 88-103, lines 26-32.

towards an internal orientation.⁴²² Whereas the pastoral retreat of the early royalists saw physical threat from outside forces, as figured in the image of shade providing respite from Philips's 'Scorching Age', in Finch's vision of retreat the threat comes from within.⁴²³ The body is a burden to the spiritual self, framed as a physical weight which "clogged the Active Soul" and prevented it from taking its natural place in "the Mansions of it's native Sky". The spleen is a destructive and imprisoning force, which "Retain'd thy Pris'ner, thy acknowledg'd Slave, / And sunk beneath thy Chain to a lamented Grave."⁴²⁴ The image of external bondage which dominates the Pindarics of Cowley and Philips are here transformed into the physical boundaries of the body itself.

As the potential threat is transformed in Finch's pastoral, so is the space of retreat itself. Finch suggests a private space of idyllic retreat and spiritual freedom which lies within each individual. Following the dissenting literary tradition which emphasises individual spirituality, Finch suggests that each person has "his own heaven", a "fertile garden" that allows the mind to freely reflect and introspect:

That, often, Men of Thoughts refin'd,
Impatient of unequal Sence,
Such slow Returns where they so much dispense,
Retiring from the Croud, are to thy Shades inclin'd⁴²⁵

Though still finding respite for the "clogg'd ... Active Soul" in "retiring from the Croud", Finch's poem signals a new engagement with the relationship between the body and the soul. Here the Pindaric becomes a self-conscious form in which the reflexive exchanges reveal an anxiety over the boundaries between the speaker and the subject.⁴²⁶ Desiree Hellegers associates the Pindaric form with "an aesthetics of 'discontinuity' and 'randomness'" to which Finch's representation of the spleen as both a physical and immaterial entity conforms.⁴²⁷ The spleen defies fixed material embodiment, variously a "being substantial" and a "perplexing form" which cannot conform to "one continued Shape." Thus the question posed at the onset, "What art thou, *SPLEEN?*", remains unresolved as the spleen continues to be represented as both material and immaterial, fixed and fluid. Finch's use of the poetic form explores the relationship between the

⁴²²Bronwen Price, 'Verse, Voice and Body: The retirement mode and women's poetry 1680-1723', *Early Modern Literary Studies* 12.3 (January 2007), 5.1-44.

⁴²³ Katherine Philips, "A Retir'd Friendship. To Ardelia", *Poems*, pp. 97-8, line 29.

⁴²⁴ Finch, "The Spleen", lines 149-50.

⁴²⁵ *Ibid.*, lines 70-3.

⁴²⁶ Margaret Koehler, 'Odes of Absorption in the Restoration and Early Eighteenth Century', *Studies in English Literature 1500-1900*, 47:3 (Summer 2007), 659-78, (p. 672).

⁴²⁷ Desiree Hellegers, "'The Threatening Angel and the Speaking Ass': The Masculine Mismeasure of Madness in Anne Finch's "The Spleen"', *Genre*, 26: 2/3 (Summer/Fall 1993), 199-217, (p. 211).

physical and spiritual, the morally instructive and the creative. Finch changes the focus from the praise of exterior figures and features towards a more introspective ode of personified abstraction. Rowe's use of the Pindaric echoes Finch's move towards spiritual introspection, keeping in line with their shared nonconformist ideals.

Rowe's Pindarics engage with the encomiastic traditional style as well as the more introspective and romantic use of the form. Her first printed poem to the Athenians, "A Pindaric Poem on Habbakuk", takes as its subject the Book of Habbakuk in the Hebrew Bible, which details God's earthly appearance and man's gradual transition from questioning God to trusting God. There is a tradition of biblical Pindarics, which by their form are open to multiple interpretations and thus suitable for contemplations on the nature of the knowable and unknowable.⁴²⁸ This makes the classical form particularly suited to religious themes. The subject matter is also significant, indicating both faith and spiritual burden:

His Glory soon eclips'd the once-bright *Titan's* Rays,
And fill'd the trembling Earth with Terror and Amaze.
Resplendent Beams did crown his awful Head,
And shining Brightness all round him spread;
Omnipotence he grasp'd in his strong Hand,
And listning Death waited his dread Command⁴²⁹

In the poem, the natural landscape responds to the power of the divine presence: a presence which eclipses the classical deities and "fill'd the trembling Earth" and its inhabitants "with Terror and Amaze".⁴³⁰ The divine is presented in the poem as both omnipotent and terrifying, shaping a meditation on the misuse of absolute power. Rowe concludes by linking the Hebrew myth with contemporary politics:

So now, great God, wrapt in avenging *Thunder*;
Meet thine and William's Foes, and tread them *groveling* under.⁴³¹

God is presented in the Old Testament form an absolute deity and wrathful avenger, powerful and terrifying but only to the foes of the righteous. The poem was one of a group which were written in praise of King William, contributing to a mythologisation of the Williamite regime reminiscent of Barker's Jacobite verse. Rowe's Williamite identification is similarly significant to her political purpose and authorial identity. The

⁴²⁸³³ See discussion of Cowley's Pindaric paraphrases of the Bible as political allegory in James D. Garrison, *Dryden and the tradition of panegyric* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1975), pp. 101-105.

⁴²⁹ Rowe, "A Pindaric Poem on Habbakuk", in *Poems on Several Occasions*, pp. 18-20, lines 5-10.

⁴³⁰ *Ibid.*, lines 32, 34.

⁴³¹ *Ibid.*, lines 46-7.

poem demonstrates that strongly religious verse, both in content and in tone, was characteristic of Rowe's authorship from the beginning.

The Athenians responded to the verse in poetic kind, offering a Pindaric in praise of Rowe's biblical paraphrase. The verse response commends Rowe on her poetic ability, proclaiming her verse "noble", "loyal" and "divine", thus confirming their shared Williamite identification:

We yield! we yield! the Palm, bright Maid! be thine!
How vast a Genius sparkles in each Line!
How Noble all! how Loyal! how Divine!
Sure Thou by Heaven inspir'd, art sent
To make the King's and Nation's Foes repent,
To melt each stubborn Rebel down,
Or the Almighty's hov'ring Vengeance show,
Arm'd with his glittering Spear and dreadful Bow,
And yet in a more dreadful Frown⁴³²

The poem is overwhelming in its praise for Rowe, echoing her imagery and language in their praise. A portion of the praise is divinely directed; the female poet is "by Heaven inspir'd", and was sent "the Almighty's hov'ring Vengeance [to] show". However the poetess is not purely religiously motivated, she was "sent /To make the King's and Nation's Foes repent / To melt each stubborn Rebel down", clearly linking her literary activity with a strong Williamite ideology. The Athenians encourage her poetic endeavours, identifying devout verse as the path to eternal fame:

Thus sing, bright Maid! thus and yet louder sing,
Thy God, thy King!
Cherish that Noble Flame which warms thy Breast,
And be by future Worlds admir'd and bless'd:
The present Ages short-liv'd Glories scorn,
And into wide Eternity be Born!
There chast *Orinda's* Soul shall meet with Thine,
More Noble, more Divine;
And in the Heav'n of Poetry for ever shine:
There All the glorious few,
To Loyalty and Virtue true,
Like Her and You.
'Tis That, 'tis That alone must make you truly Great,
Not all your Beauty equal to your Wit⁴³³

⁴³² The Society of Gentlemen who wrote the Athenian Mercury, "TO THE Author of the foregoing ODE. By the ATHENIANS", in *Poems on Several Occasions*, pp. 20-6, lines 1-9.

⁴³³ *Ibid.*, lines 55-68.

The poem is another example of the invocation of Orinda's image to praise and elevate female poets who followed. Through poetic achievement Rowe will transcend "the present Ages", entering the "Heav'n of Poetry" to join in chaste union with the spirit of Orinda. The platonic image of the mirror self, here reflected in the "chast Orinda", is invoked to signify a disembodied authorship which, unfettered by the physical body, achieves immortality in the "Heav'n of Poetry", a space of "Loyalty and Virtue true". The poem argues for poetry as a spiritual endeavour, one which ensures the progress of the soul.

The praise of "A Pindaric Poem on Habakkuk" is echoed in the dedicatory verse preceding the 1696 *Poems on Several Occasions*. "To the Author" praises Rowe's "Female Arts," again linking authorship to a lineage of Sappho and Orinda through the "Honour and Virtue" inherent in her works.⁴³⁴ The poem goes beyond such gendered praise to link Rowe's authorship to the Williamite political ideology:

WILLIAM's a Name, you're Fated to Record;
No Pen but yours can match the Heroes Sword.
If you ASSOCIATE too, you'll guard Him more,
Then all the Lord Myriads gon before.
Let harden'd Traitors know what 'tis to' abuse
The Patience of a King and of a Muse.
Let 'em no more a Monarch's Justice dare,
Draw off his side, at once, and END THE WAR!⁴³⁵

The poet figures Rowe as a vital recorder of Williamite history, drawing comparisons with Barker's fervent belief that she was faithfully recording the Jacobite experience. Like Barker, Rowe sees herself as tasked with recording a communal history, a task which is vital to shaping and sustaining communal identification. Rowe's literary participation is equal to military activity, as the "Pen ... can match the Heroes Sword", suggesting that her recording of the communal history is on a par with the military service from which she is excluded because of her gender.

Dunton capitalised on his relationship with the 'Pindarick Lady', idealising platonic friendship and the virtues of women and waxing lyrical about platonic friendship in the periodical, a philosophical ideal to which he ultimately failed to adhere in his relationship with Rowe as he increased his efforts to woo her via

⁴³⁴ "To the Author of the Poems, Known only by Report, and by Her Works", in *Poems on Several Occasions*, A8.

⁴³⁵ Ibid.

correspondence.⁴³⁶ It is evident from Dunton's post-Athenian projects and Rowe's lack of direct communication with him after she ceased involvement with the Athenians that the friendship had cooled considerably, although Dunton continued to profess his affection for her in print.⁴³⁷ The *Athenian Mercury* ran until June 1697, though Dunton continued to produce periodical offshoots of his initial venture after that date. While Rowe continued to enjoy the growing success of her printed prose and verse after she ceased contact with the *Mercury*, Dunton's career faltered and he increasingly used the accomplishments of the 'Pindarick Lady' in a number of shaky projects which ultimately failed to find commercial success or to attract the intellectual community of the *Mercury*.⁴³⁸

Coterie Connections: Lady Hertford and the Longleat Circle

By 1697 Rowe was involved in a different literary circle, far from the 'Fleet Street' image of the periodical and Dunton's use of her authorial and personal image. Her involvement with the coterie at Longleat, with whom she had developed a personal and literary relationship prior to her involvement with the *Mercury*, was now well established. Her biographers posthumously presented her as a lover of 'absolute solitude' who rejected the activity and corruption of the town in favour of a virtuous rural retreat. Her brother-in-law, Theophilous Rowe, writing in *The Life of Mrs. Rowe*, describes a provincial retreat in which she "indulged her unconquerable inclinations to solitude, by returning to Frome in Somersetshire ... to conceal the remainder of her life in absolute retirement."⁴³⁹ This image of a happy recluse does a disservice both to Rowe and the sociable coterie in which she participated in Somerset. Contrary to the portrait of a provincial location as isolating and asocial, her position in Frome provided an important link to the sociable circle of writers centred at the country estate of the Weymouth family at Longleat.

Introduced to the Weymouths through her father's association with Henry Thynne, son of the first Viscount Weymouth, Rowe was encouraged in her literary endeavours and by 1694 became companion to Henry Thynne's daughter Frances, later

⁴³⁶ See Jennifer Richards, *Elizabeth Singer Rowe: Printed writings 1641-1700* (Ashgate, 2003). Richards notes that Dunton's *Athenianism or, the New Projects of Mr John Dunton* (1710) contains a description of his spiritual and sexual desire for Rowe and a diatribe against the hypocrisy of "Platonick-love" (xi).

⁴³⁷ John Dunton, *The Life and Errors of John Dunton, Citizen of London*, ed. by J. B. Nichols, vol. 1 (London, 1818), p. 185.

⁴³⁸ *Ibid.*

⁴³⁹ Rowe and Grove, p. xviii.

Countess of Hertford. Such a connection was advantageous to both Rowe's social and literary ambitions, as:

the friendship that commenced from that time, subsisted ever after; no more to her honour, who was the favourite of persons so much superior to her in the outward distinctions of life, than to the praise of their judgment and taste who knew how to prize, and took a pleasure to cherish such a blooming worth.⁴⁴⁰

The passage compliments both Rowe, whose "blooming worth" as a writer is noted, and the Weymouth family, who "took a pleasure to cherish" her worth. Here it is explicit that Rowe's friendship with Lady Hertford is cherished despite even though the latter is "so much superior ... in the outward distinctions of life". The support of the Weymouth family gained Rowe a great deal of literary interest and praise, but it is suggested in a posthumously published letter that their relationship went beyond mutual benefit and was a deeper spiritual and emotional connection. Rowe writes to Lady Hertford:

This is the last letter you will ever receive from me; the last assurance I shall give you, on earth, of a sincere and stedfast friendship. But when we meet again, I hope it will be in the heights of immortal love and ecstasy. Mine, perhaps, may be the first glad spirit to congratulate your safe arrival on the happy shores. Heaven can witness how sincere my concern for your happiness is.⁴⁴¹

Rowe's description of the relationship between herself and Lady Hertford demonstrates the dissenting literary tradition of the enhancement of individual spirituality through poetic practice.

The association with the Weymouth family offered Rowe a connection with a circle of established writers and thinkers who shared similar moral and social values. It was at Longleat that Rowe was first introduced to Matthew Prior, the popular dissenting poet and politician, who would become an admirer and life-long friend of Rowe.⁴⁴² Prior was educated at St. John's College, Cambridge, the same college where Rowe's brother was educated and the one to which Barker was linked early in her career. Prior's political connections provided a sympathetic readership. This friendship led to a literary relationship both public and private, as they exchanged correspondence and both contributed to John Dryden's 1704 *Poetical Miscellanies: The Fifth Part*.⁴⁴³ Rowe's public and private involvement with the Longleat coterie solidified her connection to the

⁴⁴⁰ Ibid, p. A4.

⁴⁴¹ "To the Countess of Hertford", in Rowe and Grove, p. xxv.

⁴⁴² Rowe and Grove, p. lxxv.

⁴⁴³ John Dryden, *Poetical miscellanies: the fifth part. Containing a collection of Original Poems, with several New Translations. By the most Eminent Hands*. (London: printed for Jacob Tonson, within Grays-Inn Gate, next Grays-Inn Lane, 1704).

dissenting community and enabled, rather than limited, her literary activity through a system of manuscript transmission and exchange.

Rowe participated in this community through textual dialogue with a select circle of fellow writers and political and religious sympathisers. Letters addressed to core members of the coterie as well as acquaintances identified as Mrs. Marow and Miss St. Johns form a system of textual transmission in which prose and verse were exchanged, critiqued, reworked and distributed both within the coterie and to outside acquaintances. As I noted above, Anne Finch was also involved with the Weymouth family, and several of her verses are dedicated to members of the coterie.⁴⁴⁴ Kathryn King argues that Rowe's manuscript exchange with the Weymouth family was instrumental in establishing her authorial identity and the text demonstrably explores and expands her notion of authorship and creative integrity. King positions the coterie activity, however, as a specifically feminine form of literary engagement, calling it a refuge from the "grossness and irreligion [women] expected to encounter as a matter of course in her quotidian dealings with men" and as evidence of Rowe's retreat into a "strikingly homosocial feminine world".⁴⁴⁵ Certainly her encounter with Dunton would support the "grossness and irreligion" experienced in "dealings with men", but her friendship with Prior, Grove and Watts refutes this.

The members of the coterie openly identified as nonconformist and Rowe's participation solidified her position within the wider nonconformist community. Her poetics followed in a tradition of literary dissent which further transformed the space of retreat. Although the immediate threat of political violence was by now a distant memory, the dissenting tradition continued to shape pastoral retreat as a politicised space. A poem by Matthew Prior, who came to figure prominently both in the Longleat coterie and the wider nonconformist community, articulates the residual fear of political instability which continued to haunt the British landscape post-1688:

Secure by William's care let Britain stand,

⁴⁴⁴ See "To the Right Honourable Frances Countess of Hertford who engaged Mr Eusden to write upon a wood enjoining him to mention no tree but the Aspin and no flower but the King-cup", "After drawing a twelf cake at the Hon:^{ble} Mrs Thynne's", "A letter to Mrs Arrabella Marow", and "These verses were inserted in a letter to the Right Hon:^{ble} The Lady Vicountess Weymouth written from Lewston the next day after my parting with her at Long Leat", in *The Anne Finch Wellesley Manuscript Poems*, ed. by Barbara McGovern and Charles H. Hinnant (Athens GA and London: The University of Georgia Press, 1998); "A Description of One of the Pieces of Tapistry at Long-leat", in *Miscellany Poems, on Several Occasions*, printed for J.B. and sold by Benj. Tooke at the Middle-Temple-Gate, William Taylor in Pater-Noster-Row, and James Round (London, 1713).

⁴⁴⁵ Kathryn King, 'Elizabeth Singer Rowe's tactical use of print and manuscript', *Women's Writing and the Circulation of Ideas*, ed. by George Justice and Nathan Tinker (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp. 158-181.

Nor dread the bold invader's hand:
From adverse shores in safety let her hear
Foreign calamity, and distant war;
Of which let her, great Heaven, no portion bear!
Betwixt the nations let her hold the scale,
And as she wills, let either part prevail⁴⁴⁶

Prior's poem positions William as protector and saviour of Britain, keeping the nation safe from "foreign calamity, and distant war", reflecting a wider desire for peace and prosperity after a century of political conflict both home and abroad. Britain would distance itself from the warring factions on "adverse shores", safe and "Secure by William's care". Prior imagines Britain will be transformed from a nation torn apart by internal strife to a morally superior state who "Betwixt the nations ... hold[s] the scale" of justice. In poetic terms, he suggests that a movement for peace between warring factions was growing. Within this movement the concept of friendship would again take centre stage in re-imagining a reformed social sphere. Rowe's friendships with Frances Thynne and the Longleat coterie, as shown through manuscript letters, clearly demonstrate the sociable tenets of the new Dissent. The correspondence provides an intimate look into the personal relationship between the two women, illustrating the way in which this friendship was foundational to the coterie and its relationship to the wider nonconformist community.

Friendship in Letters: The Alnwick Manuscript

Nowhere is the relationship between Lady Hertford and Rowe more intimately portrayed than in the manuscript letter book Alnwick MS. 110, currently held in the library of the Duke of Northumberland at Alnwick Castle. This collection of letters between the two women explores literary, social and personal subjects, and will be the primary focus of this section. The letters date from 1697 to 1734, covering the time directly after Rowe's involvement in the Athenian project, through her correspondence with Matthew Prior and the beginning of her identification in dissenting literary circles, encompassing her marriage and widowhood, and move from London back to Somerset. Also called 'The Green Book' for its dark green leather exterior, the book is 361 pages

⁴⁴⁶ Matthew Prior, "Carmen Seculare, for the year MDCC", in *The Poetical Works of Matthew Prior* (Edinburgh: Ballatyne and Company, 1858), pp. 107-125, lines 348-54.

of letters and verse copied in Lady Hertford's hand.⁴⁴⁷ For the purposes of this study I am most interested in the first section of the book, which documents the development of Rowe's textual friendship with Lady Hertford and her search for community after the end of her collaboration with the Athenians.

The first five letters are signed by Philomela, Rowe's pastoral pseudonym, but letter no. 6 she signed simply as E. Rowe. Letter no. 10, one of the few dated letters in the manuscript, is dated as 1709. Thus, although she was not married to Thomas Rowe until the following year, her previous writing persona is overwritten as either her pastoral pseudonym Philomela or Elizabeth Rowe. Philomela is the pseudonym which Rowe employed in her correspondence with the Longleat coterie and with Lady Hertford, adopted after her involvement as the 'Pindarick Lady' with the *Athenian Mercury*. Kathryn King has argued that Rowe used the name Philomela to mark her break with the Athenians and her image as the 'Pindarick Lady', and that the pseudonym was indicative of her move towards the manuscript society of the Longleat coterie.⁴⁴⁸ Rowe used the poetic pseudonym of Philomela throughout her life, from the 1696 publication of *Poems on Several Occasions* which has the subtitle "written by Philomela", to her later correspondence with Lady Hertford. Rowe's biographers, Theophilus Rowe and Henry Grove deduce that it is "most probable" that the name of Philomela was given to Rowe by her friends "at the publication of her poems, before which her modesty not consenting that her own name should appear".⁴⁴⁹ The sobriquet thus identifies her role in a new circle of writers and thinkers which enables her search for authorial and communal identity. The pastoral pseudonyms used by the coterie are reminiscent of Katherine Philips' Society of Friendship and the free and intimate manner of correspondence which she cultivated. Similarly, as I showed in the last chapter, Jane Barker also appropriated narrative names which evoke myths of female characters overcoming sexual violence, though Rowe's use of Philomela differs from Barker's use of Fidelity. Whereas Fidelity represented political loyalty and communal belonging from the fringes, Philomela which evoked female virtue and poetic autonomy and more closely resembled the myth of Orinda.

The choice of the name Philomela has intriguing significance. Philomela, the princess of Athens from Ovid's *Metamorphosis* who was ravished and subsequently had her tongue cut out by her brother-in-law, initially seems an odd choice of pseudonym for

⁴⁴⁷ Helen Sard Hughes initiated the title of the 'Green Book' in 'Elizabeth Rowe and the Countess of Hertford', *PMLA*, 59:3 (September 1944): 726-746, (p. 728).

⁴⁴⁸ King 2002, p. 166

⁴⁴⁹ Rowe and Grove, p. vi.

a female writer seeking a free and easy communal discourse, to the extent that the story behind the name implies a lack of female agency and voice. However, Ovid's Philomela is able to overcome the violent restrictions on her physical voice through creative artistry. The name has additional resonances. The figure of Philomela also appears in Sidney's *The Shepherdes Calender* and *Colin Clout Comes Home*, which follow from Ovid in linking political status with vocational talent. Additionally the myth of Philomel or Philomela has been read into Marlowe's "The Passionate Shepherd", a figure associated with the power of pastoral retreat.⁴⁵⁰ Prescott argues that the use of Rowe's pseudonym refers to the transformation of Philomela into a nightingale, playing on the connections with Rowe's then-name Singer and her lyrical poetry, rather than evoking the more violent aspects of the myth.⁴⁵¹ The name is thus an apt image because of Rowe's own search for creative freedom, but remains problematic because of the violent stifling of female voice which provokes the intellectual and creative liberation which follows. The pseudonym implies a triumph over material obstructions to the expression of the female voice, and can be read into Rowe's prior involvement with the Athenians and their appropriation of her text and authorial identity, and her subsequent reclamation of her own authorship.

Rowe's correspondence with Lady Hertford and the Longleat coterie marks the development of a sociable writing in which gender, along with class, religion and political allegiance, provide a language for elaborating commonalities of experience and defining identity. Epistolary writing, which by its nature requires an act of selection that necessarily excludes others, is an instrument of social and political positioning in which the writer negotiates new extended relationships with the reader through text. Letters, by their very nature, are social documents and Rowe, as a member of a coterie literary network, clearly anticipated that her letters would be exchanged, read, and critiqued by a chosen audience. The manuscript letters are addressed primarily to Lady Hertford and convey the means by which texts were circulated and the ways in which readerships were established and shaped into communities.

The letters between Lady Hertford and Rowe reveal epistolary strategies to articulate personal experience within a complex system of literary and social relations. A letter is a social document which projects an image of its author, at a given point in

⁴⁵⁰ Patrick Gerard Cheney, 'Career Rivalry and the Writing of Counter-Nationhood: Ovid, Spenser, and Philomela in Marlowe's "The Passionate Shepherd to His Love"', *English Literary History (ELH)* 65:3 (Fall 1998): 523-555 (p. 528).

⁴⁵¹ Prescott, p. 142.

time, and negotiates a relationship with a dedicated reader.⁴⁵² Lois Potter argues that for liminal groups literature can fulfil “the functions most necessary for the culture of a repressed group: enabling communication and consolidating its sense of itself as an elite.”⁴⁵³ The exchange of verse and letters in early eighteenth century nonconformist provincial coterie functions in a similar way to the exiled communities of the half century previous, with the emphasis on textual dialogue as socially enabling suggesting a move towards a communal private, rather than the glory of the individual in the public. The intimate discourse of the letters stands in contrast to Rowe’s description of the formal social world, with its “uneasie pagentrys” and “plagues to thoughts & sence.”⁴⁵⁴ Suggesting a distinctive social agency to literary practice in early modern provincial coterie, Rowe’s correspondence articulates a conscious choice for the unfettered creativity made possible by a retreat from the “studdyed” and unnatural discourse of the metropolitan print world.

The extensive correspondence between Rowe and Lady Hertford illuminates the way in which literary coterie operated in the early eighteenth century: poems were exchanged, ideas shared, and texts and writers discussed and critiqued. Rowe illustrates the critical nature of verse circulation in a letter of 1697 to Lady Hertford. A letter in a “hand very much like” Lady Hertford’s was delivered to her, “and before I could look on the letter that came with the poem I fell a reading the verse, and wondered at my heart what had put your Ladyship into such an unlucky versifying humour for I must needs say I did not like it – no – tho’ I thought it your Ladyships & if any thing in the world could have made me partial that would.”⁴⁵⁵ Discovering the verse to be from an unfamiliar gentleman who would, unfortunately, be the topic of unfavourable criticism, she shares the verse with her reader as an example of uninspired poetry. “See how the mighty Bard begins”, Rowe sarcastically delivers a sample of his verse:

When ver began to peep from Athens coasts
 On Terqueans Globe & numerous hosts
 Of arid paddling objects all around
 Encompassing the frozen Ground⁴⁵⁶

⁴⁵² Janet Gurkin Altman, ‘The Letter Book as a Literary Institution 1539-1789: Toward a cultural history of published correspondence in France’, *Yale French Studies*, 71 (1986): 17-62 (p. 19).

⁴⁵³ Lois Potter, *Secret Rites and Secret Writing: royalist literature 1641-1660* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), p. 113.

⁴⁵⁴ Alnwick MS 110, Letter no. 3, p. 7.

⁴⁵⁵ Alnwick MS 110, Letter 5, p. 17.

⁴⁵⁶ *Ibid*, p. 20.

The elevated style of the verse represents the “uneasie” and studied style against which Rowe protests, standing in contrast to her own philosophy of natural authorship. Rowe shares a portion of the verse with Lady Hertford to illustrate the difference from their own easy discourse. “I’ll show it you if I don’t dye of a broken heart before I see you again. But you shall have a little more of it now” she teases:

Loe Philomela dos prepare to sing
Her warbling Anthems to the joyfull spring
She peeps her radiant head
Up from her grass green bed
And among the circumambient notes
She’s known from all their charming Throats⁴⁵⁷

The poem is pastoral in theme, and the subject matter is a clear reference to Rowe herself. We can surmise that the unnamed author sent the poem in tribute, showing an awareness of her growing literary reputation and perhaps sending the poem in the hopes of facilitating a textual relationship. The verse is no more than a passing anecdote in the letter, but demonstrates the reputation and exclusivity of the coterie. Clearly there was a perceived standard of participant in the poetic exchange, and unfortunately the gentleman does not attain that standard and therefore does not gain entry into the textual community.

Rowe also implies that this exchange is not an uncommon occurrence. “[Y]ou may expect [a letter] every week with some of the poetry that the country Squires in their Rob Perriwiggs send me. I would have sent some of their Panegyricks now but that I thought this letter enough for one time.”⁴⁵⁸ Rowe positions herself at the centre of a coterie maintained through textual exchange; she sets a standard of poetic achievement which is shared with her correspondents. Critical commentary on contemporary poetry produced outside of the coterie demonstrates both her connection to the wider literary culture, as well as positioning herself as a poetic authority. The letter contains a poem of her own which, set against the poor verse related earlier, reinforces this poetic standard. Although the verse is her own she marks it as communal production, as “my Lord Weymouth did my Muse the honour to propose it this them, & I am to send it to Drayton the next post day.”⁴⁵⁹ The muse, and by extension Rowe, is the intermediary between Lord Weymouth and Drayton. In contrast to Barker’s representation of the

⁴⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁵⁹ Ibid.

muse as sharing in her lonely state, Rowe's muse is clearly a part of her communal poetics and is herself in communication with other members.⁴⁶⁰

The letters were instruments of poetic transmission, either the author's own verse or samples of verse passed on by other coterie members. In undated Letter no. 7, Rowe traces the transmission of a poem in its manuscript form:

I will (if your Ladyship has not seen it) when I have an opportunity send you a Poem sent me by a young Gentleman that is now in the country they have it at Bristol & Bath where tis strangely admird, and I suppose will shortly be printed. Some Gentlemen have carried the Copy from Bath to London & tis in a Bookselers hands they tell me, but if my interest with the Author can do any thing I'll stop the publishing of it when you have red it.⁴⁶¹

Outlining the physical movement of the text itself, Rowe traces the formation of a collective readership, which in turn forms a community across the parameters of time and space. Rowe's related experience of epistolary transmission is not anomalous; although the Royal Mail had been available to the public since the early Stuart reign, letters and documents continued to be transmitted by acquaintances and private messengers. It is clear from the continuing trade of manuscript texts, and the recognition of manuscript both as a normal form of personal record, and as a normal form of publication into the early eighteenth century, that Rowe's tactical use of manuscript in which to circulate her verse to a controlled readership is not the last resort of a provincial writer on the margins of the metropolitan world of print. Given her previous foray into print publication, manuscript exchange can be considered a meditated choice for Rowe which enabled her writing to be disseminated to a controlled and sympathetic readership. Hinting at a latent mistrust of official systems of communication, the transmission of the texts retains a sense of community and, more importantly, textual authority and autonomy for its members. Rowe's letters suggest that this is the preferable method of authorship and seeks to avoid the publishing of texts to an anonymous audience. Collective authorship, achieved through the creation, adaptation, and transmission of texts, is intrinsic to the coterie environment and instrumental to Rowe's conception of disembodied community.

The letter book also demonstrates the philosophical and religious debates of the early dissenting community, essentially confronting the question of how to recognise the

⁴⁶⁰ See discussion of Jane Barker's "To her muse, whos kindness at first she seems to slight, afterwards accepts kindly", in Chapter II, pp. 124-5.

⁴⁶¹ Alnwick MS 110, Letter 7, p. 18.

true religion at a time of schism.⁴⁶² Rowe's verses, and those of her contemporaries Isaac Watts and Matthew Prior, reveal scepticism of religious institutions while shaping a transcendent image of virtue and unity. Like Watts, Rowe configures friendship as essential for a sociable religion, an enduring relationship in a transient world. Recalling the sociable philosophy of Katherine Philips's Society of Friendship, her correspondence reveals a tension between reforming interiority as the site of authority and re-establishing an autonomous community. Although like Philips she sees no conflict between the communal impulse and the country retreat, Rowe does express an anxiety about the relationship between the inwardly reflective spiritual realm and the outwardly governed social world.

Drawing on the classical models of perfect friendship, Rowe sees her spiritual fulfilment in a relationship which mirrors and amplifies individual virtue. Her representation of friendship draws on the tradition of secularised devotion found in the friendship verse of Katherine Philips. Such friendships are best formed outside the artifice of a world governed by decorum, and the natural virtue of the countryside, reminiscent of the innocence of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, provides the perfect setting for spiritual transformation. A translation of the Canticles 7:2 develops the trope of retreat as a space in which friendship can flourish:

Thou object of my highest bliss,
And of my dearest love,
Come, let us from this tiresome world,
And all its cares remove.
Among the murm'ring crystal streams,
The groves, and flow'ry fields,
Let's try the calm and silent joys
That blest retirements yields.⁴⁶³

The idealised pastoral space of the "blest retirement" is reflective of the idealised friendship which is only made possible through the retreat from the "tiresome world." Although extolling the virtues of a "calm and silent" retreat, Rowe follows in the pastoral tradition which petitions a reader to join the blissful sanctuary and thus create a sociable retreat. Friendship both enhances and is enhanced by the experience of retreat.

⁴⁶² Claude J. Summers, 'Herrick, Vaughan and the Poetry of Anglican Survivalism' in *New Perspectives on the Seventeenth-century English Religious Lyric*, ed. by John Roberts (New York: Columbia, 1994): 46-74, (p. 47).

⁴⁶³ Rowe, "Come, my Beloved ... Cant. Vii.II" in *The Miscellaneous Works, in Prose and Verse, of Mrs Elizabeth Rowe*, pp. 43-44.

Communities in Retirement

That the community which Rowe seeks is constructed away from the social and political centre of the metropolis is not incidental. The dissenting tradition offered a radical space from which to challenge the established social, political, and religious practice which found its authority in the centralised space of state and court. This centralisation was fairly recently re-established, as the Revolution of 1688-9 and the introduction of the Williamite regime was still establishing its authority at the end of a politically tumultuous century. Whereas the state and court of Philips's youth was, as imagined in exile, stable and inclusive, the re-established central authority of Rowe's time was achieved through the exclusion of 'undesirable' or unsympathetic groups of people like Jane Barker and her fellow Jacobite exiles. Rowe remained, largely through choice, on the outer circles of the wider dissenting community, but a central member of her localised dissenting circle.

Dissent has noted ties to non-metropolitan locations, although it also flourished in London and Rowe, living in London with her husband from 1710-15, made many contacts within the community which she upheld when she returned to Frome in Somerset.⁴⁶⁴ Although she identifies herself as residing in provincial retreat, she uses the medium of the letter as a sort of textual dialogue to create and maintain friendships, constituting a community which is neither materially connected nor hierarchically constructed. The language of the letters reveals the inconsistency between the enabling space of retreat and formal society, mixing images of burial and solitude with those of intellectual freedom and release: "I am certainly dead and buried according to your notions of life, interr'd in the silence and obscurity of a cuntry retreat: for from the dear town in your gay apprehensions cannot be call'd living, but for me who ask nothing but ease and liberty in order to be happy."⁴⁶⁵ Rowe clearly separates the different notions of 'social': on the one hand the manners and status of the 'high society' of which Lady Hertford, with her titles, is necessarily a part; on the other the "ease and liberty" which she sees finds in the country retreat. Rowe's statement acknowledges that sociability can take many forms, and is not a simply dichotomy between "the dear town" and the "obscurity of a cuntry retreat", as Lady Hertford herself is able to traverse the different circles.

⁴⁶⁴ Sarah Prescott, 'Provincial Networks, Dissenting Connections, and Noble Friends: Elizabeth Singer Rowe and female authorship in early eighteenth-century England', *Eighteenth-Century Life*, 25:1 (Winter 2001), 29-42 (p. 33).

⁴⁶⁵ Alnwick MS 110, Letter 60, p. 159.

Rowe acknowledges that her country retirement can be seen as a complete removal from accepted notions of social life; however, she confidently asserts her preference for the provincial over the metropolitan as unfettered by the strict standards of social decorum, emphasising her choice as conscious rather than enforced. The concept of choice is an oft-repeated one throughout the tradition of pastoral retreat. The “ease and liberty” of mind and soul which Rowe seeks can only be achieved in a space unfettered by standards governing speech and behaviour. She continues to argue for the ennobling effects of retirement in a letter addressed to Henry Thynne:

But you know there are nobler inducements to retirement than these. If I tell you sirs that I chuse it as the greatest improvement of my reason and morals, and the best method I can find to be happy ... I confess sirs one may think in a crowd and make some imperfect reflections, but tis alone that you form your most exact and impartial notions, tis then you examine vulgar prejudices and reject the little principles of the bigoted and superstitious, tis then you fortifye your self against the Tyranny of Custom and the impositions of persons who do a thousand unreasonable things themselves and gravely tell you tis singularity and ill breeding not to Imitate them.⁴⁶⁶

Rowe emphasises her preference for retirement, protesting that she chooses retirement as “the best method” for happiness and moral improvement, arguing for retreat as an individual instrument for moral and intellectual progress. Linking her personal preference for country retirement with the “improvement of ... reason and morals” which was the backbone of nonconformist reform, Rowe clearly positions herself against the “Tyranny of Custom” which determines standard social practice and in so doing aligns herself with a dissenting tradition which is both morally upstanding and original in thought. The false pleasures of the material world and the constraints of social custom stand in contrast to the liberty and virtue enabled by spiritual retreat. This echoes Lady Mary Chudleigh’s “Preface to the Reader” in *Poems upon Several Occasions*, in which she also addresses the falsity of the social world:

The way to be truly easie ... is to retire into our selves, to live upon our own Stock, to accustom ourselves to our own Conversation, to be pleas’d with nothing but what strict and properly speaking, we may justly pretend a Right to; of which kind, such things can never be said to be, of which ‘tis in the power of Fortune to deprive us.⁴⁶⁷

⁴⁶⁶ Alnwick MS 110, Letter 72, p. 179.

⁴⁶⁷ Mary Lee Chudleigh, “Preface to the Reader”, in *The Poems and Prose of Mary, Lady Chudleigh*, p. 45.

Marilyn Williamson reads in both Chudleigh and Rowe a desire for female self-sufficiency and a rejection of a restrictive patriarchal world.⁴⁶⁸ Indeed both Rowe and Chudleigh address the relationship between the sexes and, more specifically, call for “Civility” in marriage relations; however they are not calling for female liberation, but rather the liberation of the unsexed soul. The “Tyranny of Custom”, the social conventions which constrain and restrict the “improvement ... of reason and morals”, are not exclusive to the female gender but rather suggest an oppressive social dimension. The “vulgar prejudices” and “little principles” of the social majority stand in the way of being “truly easie” and happy.

The response to such social constraints is, throughout this study, an imagined sociability which takes shape in the space of pastoral retreat. Rowe writes often of her desire to leave behind the formality and ostentation of the social world; the world she sees as her alternative is comprised of imaginary regions where creative potential is nourished and, in turn, flourishes. Extolling the virtues of a chosen retreat which facilitates autonomy of both body and mind, Rowe writes in a poem to Lady Hertford:

If I liv'd in a cave, I could not be more ignorant of what passes in the *Grand Monde*. I have indeed some imaginary regions of my own framing, some poetical dominions;
Where fancy in her airy Triumph Reigns,
And spreads her gay, delusive Scenes.⁴⁶⁹

The letter, along with a small selection of other letters from the manuscript, appears also in the posthumously published *Poems on Several Occasions*. Within the epistolary context, Rowe's protestations that she cares nothing for the happenings of high society, and prefers the “imaginary regions” of her own creation, can be interpreted as archetypal defence of absolute retirement. Rowe, however, makes a distinction between the “Grand Monde”, the ostentatious and formal mannered society, and a more natural and sustainable sociability.

The poem entitled “On the Grove above the Gardens at Longleat” reforms Lady Hertford's estate into a pastoral background against which their virtuous friendship can thrive:

These stately trees how high
They lift their tops as made to sweep the sky
Too close for any scorching Beam t'invade

⁴⁶⁸ Marilyn Williamson, *Raising their Voices: British women writers 1650-1750* (Wayne State University Press, 1990), pp. 295-306.

⁴⁶⁹ Alnwick MS 110, Letter 25, p. 89.

And all beneath them cast a grat'full Shade⁴⁷⁰

As explored in previous chapters, shade is significant in the seventeenth-century pastoral tradition as representative of safety.⁴⁷¹ Rowe's poem echoes the image of Philips's "A retir'd friendship, to Ardelia" in which shade offers a haven against the "scorching Age" of political conflict, again evolving the Horatian trope of shade as political and spiritual sanctuary.⁴⁷² The shade forms "A quiet Solitude" in which "T'indulge the noblest Raptures of my Muse" and to rest "with peace & freedom bless'd".⁴⁷³ And, although "far from the path or cheerfull sight of men", the pastoral haven of the gardens at Longleat does not function as a "Solitary Den" meant for complete removal from the human world. The narrator is kept company by the companionship of the addressee, whose "smiling face" is a comfort, and in whose presence "the wildest cave a paradise would be / Celestial Plains and Blissful groves to mee".⁴⁷⁴ This is key to understanding the relationship between pastoral retirement and community, as it is not the physical and material setting of the pastoral which has restorative effects, but rather the friendship which is formed within such a space. The narrator goes on to portray the peace and bliss of the pastoral as deriving from the addressee herself:

Immortal life springs up where e're thou art
And heavenly day breaks in from every part
Thou moon, ye Stars, and thou fair Sun adieu
I ask no more thy rising Beams to view
For oh the Light himself with Rays Divine
Glows in and Gods Eternal day is mine.⁴⁷⁵

Longevity is found "where e're thou art", suggesting that "Gods Eternal day" is found in spiritual communion rather the pastoral location itself. The light of divine love comes not from the "moon, ye Stars, and thou fair Sun" from is derived internally as "the Light himself with Rays Divine / Glows in". Thus although the verse is dedicated to Lady Hertford's estate, the subject suggests it is not the pastoral landscape but friendship which enables political respite and spiritual communion.

Letter no. 4, estimated to date between 1696 and 1699, illustrates the role of friendship in Rowe's social and spiritual ideology. Addressed to Lady Hertford, the first

⁴⁷⁰ "On the Grove above the Gardens at Longleat", Alnwick MS 110, p. 22-4, lines 7-10.

⁴⁷¹ See discussion of Marvell and Philips's engagement with the trope in Chapter II, p. 73.

⁴⁷² Philips, "A retir'd friendship, to Ardelia", in *Poems*, pp. 97-8, line 30.

⁴⁷³ "On the Grove above the Gardens at Longleat", Alnwick MS 110, pp. 22-4, lines 17, 18, 21.

⁴⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, lines 37-8.

⁴⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, lines 43-8

half of the epistle is typical of Rowe's manner of address to her patron and friend. Rather than describing their relationship in the conventional representations of the relative roles of patron and client, the friendship with Lady Hertford is represented as a union of equals. There is an easy intimacy in the language free from the deference found in the works of other patronised writers:

But after all madam I would not have you Imagine that I hold it necessary to a future happiness to Quitt all the innocent enjoyments of this world, or that I am contracting such intimacies with the invisible beings, as to grow indifferent to all my material acquaintance; no, I assure you madame I am not so much mortify'd to transitory things as that comes to, my friends have still the same share in my thoughts, I find in my soul an eternal propensity to love, I received that generous principle with the breath of life and tis inseparable from my existence, and whatever I talk of retirement, I can't but confess the hours I have spent in your conversation to be some of the most pleasing intervals of my life.⁴⁷⁶

The passage paints an internal sociability found within and into which her friends are invited. Rowe does not claim that retreat from the social world is essential for her "future happiness"; on the contrary she clearly states that her friends share the utmost intimacy. A "share in [her] thoughts" and a role in her creative thought and output are the rewards for both parties.

Retirement is, throughout Rowe's letters, figured as both a space of personal reflection and of sociability, and is infinitely preferable to the "pageantrys of state" to which she is witness. She describes a visit to Longleat and the "plagues to thought & sence" which she must endure. Rowe hopes to find Lady Hertford alone, but instead happens upon what is to her an awkward and unendurable display of social ceremony. "Lady Seymour & three other Ladys which for 5 long hours had the conscience to sit knocking their fans on the nails of their thumbs condemning us to the same pretty exercise and ... put me beyond all patience"; clearly she finds the "remarks on fanns & gloves & the indispensable nessesity of tags & tyeing hoods close to ones chin this hot weather" to be vacuous and tiresome.⁴⁷⁷ One can little doubt the sincere boredom which she conveys, and many a female writer has expressed similar frustration at the inane social niceties to which they are subject in polite company.

Rowe demonstrates ambivalence over her own retirement. Throughout the letters to Lady Hertford, Rowe consistently defends her "inclinations to solitude" and her desire for creative and spiritual space. Although she makes light of the "intimacies with the invisible beings" she forms in her solitude, she is quick to remind Lady Hertford that

⁴⁷⁶ Alnwick MS 110, Letter 4, p. 12.

⁴⁷⁷ Alnwick MS 110, Letter 3, p. 7-8.

she has not forgotten her friends in the outside world. Rowe thus notes a mismatch in her longing for retirement and her desire for friendship, but does not consider them to be contradictory impulses. In an anecdote from Michel de Montaigne's "Life of an Honest Man", he describes his private turret from which he wrote as a "conjugal, filial, and civil community" ('la communauté et conjugale et filiale et civile').⁴⁷⁸ Rowe, too, fashions a community from within, a sociability independent of geographical location which is formed and maintained through a system of textual exchange and which supports the moral reform agenda of early eighteenth-century nonconformity.

Like both Barker and Philips, Rowe seeks an intimacy based not on false social practices, but on shared virtue and common ideological viewpoint. Friendship is the building block of the alternative community and the way in which it is represented in Rowe's writing signifies the ideological aims of the wider community. Friendship is the key discourse for figuring the relation of equals in nonconformist literature and can be traced from the courtly male genre of classical and Renaissance traditions which informed the royalist and Jacobite traditions. To the ancient philosophers, friendship was bound up in virtue and continues to be a vital part of 'perfect' friendship in commercial society.⁴⁷⁹ Rowe's spiritual values are likewise bound up in her model of friendship, as individual virtue is amplified and reflected in the other. Although resonating with the classical models of friendship founded in virtue, Rowe's letters mark a distinct change in the way friendship is perceived and described from her predecessors. Moving into an age dominated by sentimentalism, Rowe communicates a relationship which is highly romanticised in language and sentiment, rather than the mythologised political imagery used by Barker.

Spirituality and Sociability

I have previously discussed the highly coded language and imagery of the pastoral which heightened the connection between writer and readers; the romantic language and imagery at play in the textual exchange of Rowe with Lady Hertford and her coterie functions in a similar way. The first letter describes their textual exchange as a sort of pious ecstasy in which the soul overwhelms the physical being: "I am so

⁴⁷⁸ Quoted in Pierre Michel's "Vie d'un Honnête Homme," the biographical sketch for his edition of Montaigne's *Essais* (Paris: Livre de poche, 1972), x.

⁴⁷⁹ See Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, trans. by D. P. Chase (Courier Dover, 1998); Cicero, *De Senectute*, *De Amicitia*, *De Divinatione*, trans. by William Armistead Falconer (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1923).

transported to hear from you, I have such a mind to say something to you that my soul exerts its utmost force as resolv'd to conquer the weakness of my body", she writes:

I have been a long time hovering on the very edges of the immaterial world & tho the prospect look'd all dark & formidable yet my soul cou'd not fancy herself at the very precipice of the invisible world, & cease to be inquisitive, any more than she cou'd cease to be a Soul, my curiosity was so great to know how unbody'd spirits act & what regions they inhabit that I cou'd willingly have taken a leap in the dark to be satisfy'd⁴⁸⁰

The letters describe a tension between the physical and emotional worlds. Friendship bridges the divide, functioning as a socially cohesive tool in both the physical and spiritual realms.

The tension between the physical and the emotional represents a shift in seventeenth-century models of friendship towards a more romanticised vision which was popularised in the eighteenth century. Religious verse, particularly verse produced by women, has often been interpreted as a product of individual piety. Claude J. Summers has cautioned against a reading of religious lyric as an exercise of private devotion, arguing that the religious lyric is never completely divorced from the pressures of worldly concerns and is inevitably rooted in the socio-political contexts of its time.⁴⁸¹ The concern with the physical reflects the eighteenth-century preoccupation with the body and its relation to the soul. Thus Rowe's 'fancies' are considered the result of her spleen rather than her mind, or so she acknowledges. "You may call it spleen or fancy or what you please but I think it more reasonable to believe it the impulse of some friendly Spirit to prepare me to encounter the melancholy horrors of death if you never hear from me again you may be satisfy'd I will carry my freindship for you to the grave & that I'll cherish the bright flame till we meet again" she writes to Lady Hertford.⁴⁸² Rowe undermines the view of the body's physicality affecting her emotional and intellectual production, arguing that it is "more reasonable" to consider it the result of a "friendly Spirit" than "spleen or fancy." The "friendly Spirit", like Barker's inspirational muse, is an imagined and immaterial sociable being which provides companionship and inspiration in retirement. The spirit facilitates both Rowe's creative and her sociable endeavours, inspiring her intellectually and preparing her to continue her relationships after her physical death. The recurring image of spirits as

⁴⁸⁰ Alnwick MS 110, "Letter the 1st to the Honorable Mrs Thynne", p. 2.

⁴⁸¹ Summers, p. 46.

⁴⁸² Alnwick MS 110, Letter 2, p. 5.

inspirational, but imagined, entities is connected to the humanist debate on the soul versus the body.

Rowe's later devotional work further explores the relationship between the soul and the body as it shapes relationships which continue after death. *Friendship in Death: In twenty letters from the dead to the living* (1728), which went through sixty editions in the eighteenth century alone, proved her most commercially popular work and demonstrated the prevalent interest in the soul and its experience after it is transported from the material body. The purpose of the letters is "to impress the Notion of the Soul's Immortality; without which, all Virtue and Religion, with their temporal and eternal good Consequences, must fall to the Ground."⁴⁸³ The context of separation offers the opportunity for the characters to describe their transportation from earthly to ethereal regions. Letter number five, signed 'Junius', describes the far off regions of the universe very much like the spaces where "Fancy in her Airy Triumph reigns". Contrasted with the "dark and heavy" court and cities, the ethereal realm is beautiful because of its integration into nature. The narrator describes the inhabitants of this "enchanted world":

They have such a command and knowledge of the powers of nature, that in an instant they raise a variety of sylvan scenes, and carry the perspective through verdant avenues, and flowery walks to an unmeasurable length ...⁴⁸⁴

The letter is what one might expect of a ghostly epistle to a friend left behind in the physical world: a description of the "glorious worlds" which wait beyond our own for the reader left behind. The letter also reassures the reader of the constancy of their friendship, even as they both inhabit dramatically different realms:

I shall continue my intelligence to the most agreeable friend I had on earth; and be assured, when you are released from mortality, you will meet, in spite of distance of time and space, (those mortal foes to love upon earth), Your constant and unchanged Junius.⁴⁸⁵

Demonstrating the permeable boundaries between life and death, the narrator intimates that although physically separated, their spiritual union will continue emotionally and, demonstrably, textually.

A common theme in Rowe's verse, and in the later neo-romantic poetry of the eighteenth-century, is the transportation of the soul. The question of the relationship between the body and the soul was a heated topic in humanistic discourse, and was

⁴⁸³ Elizabeth Singer Rowe, *Friendship in Death: To which are added, letters moral and entertaining, in prose and verse* (London: Printed for Henry Lintot, 1750), A3.

⁴⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 16-19.

⁴⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 13.

linked to the debate over the relationship between rationality and spirituality. Anne Finch's "The happynesse of a departed Soul" describes the joy at the liberation of the soul from its earthly shackles:

Blest is the Soul which loos'd from sordid Earth
Soars to the Mansions of her Heavenly birth
And broke from prison where she lived confin'd
Is now to the eternal Being join'd⁴⁸⁶

Finch's verse goes on to describe the "sweet Socieity" found in the spiritual retreat for "those who their weary pilgrimage have done / And fellowship with Saints and Angells won" again emphasising the moral and spiritual opportunities available in retreat.⁴⁸⁷ The soul reaches enlightenment when "loos'd from sordid Earth ... broke from prison where she lived confin'd" and given space for spiritual enlargement. Finch's verse takes care to emphasis the opportunity for women's spiritual progress, as the soul breaks free from the prison "where *she* lived confin'd", though the bonds and fetters are not distinguished. Rowe's "On the Grove above the Gardens at Longleat" describes the countryside as the site of spiritual release:

Ye loftly muses who above the Sky
Adorn your brows with everlasting days
And in the Strains of immortality
Sing your renown'd Almighty makers praise
Celestial warmth into my Soul infuse
And me with transports all divine inspire
Let Theams like yours imploy my Serious muse
And heaven have all my regulated fire⁴⁸⁸

The celestial muses who inhabit the region "above the Sky" serve as inspiration for Rowe's own spiritual transformation, as she implores them to "Let Theams like yours imploy my Serious muse / And heaven have all my regulated fire." Rowe's engagement with the transportation of the soul demonstrates her participation in contemporary nonconformist discourse. Isaac Watts writes in "The Hurry of the Spirits, in a Fever and Nervous Disorders" (1734):

If I but close my eyes, strange imagesa
In thousand forms and thousand colours rise,
Stars, rainbows, moons, green dragons, bears, and ghosts,
An endless medley⁴⁸⁹

⁴⁸⁶ Anne Finch, "The happynesse of a departed Soul", in *The Anne Finch Wellesley Manuscript Poems*, pp. 94-5, lines 1-4.

⁴⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, lines 19-20.

⁴⁸⁸ Alnwick MS 110, p. 23.

The dream-like state of the imagination is presented in contrast to the rational thought which drives the waking body. The relationship between fancy and reason, and implicitly between the mind and the body, is not irreconcilable according to the Hobbesian theory which makes a distinction between fancy and judgement, but argues that the two work together rather than against each other in creative production.⁴⁹⁰ Rowe explores the relationship between reason, as represented by the brain, and fancy, the product of imagination. In the “Third Canto” Rowe postulates that fancy resides within the structure of the brain itself:

The Brain contains ten thousand Cells:
In each some active Fancy dwells;
Which always is at Work⁴⁹¹

Rowe clearly does not see a conflict between her spiritual and intellectual pursuits, but intertwines the separate pursuits of reason and fancy as one and the same. The verse obfuscates the boundaries of the physical mind and the spiritual self, contributing to the nonconformist agenda of intellectual and spiritual progress.

Mary, Lady Chudleigh’s poem “On the Death of his Highness, the Duke of Gloucester” describes a search for “some little safe Retreat [that] might be forever mine”, giving up the “gaudy Poms of life.”⁴⁹² The peace of the shaded abode she finds is replicated in her own mind:

Cool was the place, and quiet as my Mind,
The Sun cou’d there no Entrance find:
No ruffling Winds the Boughs did move:⁴⁹³

The royalist connotations of shade as a restorative haven are invoked, but the pastoral space of contemplation is not an idyllic space entirely removed from the world. Even within this “unenvy’d state” the threats of loss and conflict invade. The narrator is alerted to the news of death of the Duke of Gloucester by the mournful song of the nightingale, here the classical character of Philomela. The sound of the bird’s song provokes a spiritual awakening in her, as she “with new Delight was seiz’d”:

⁴⁸⁹ Isaac Watts, “The Hurry of the Spirits, in a Fever and Nervous Disorders”, in *Reliquiae Juveniles: Miscellaneous thoughts in prose and verse* (London, 1734), lines 21-4.

⁴⁹⁰ David B. Morris, ‘The Poetry of Absence’, in *The Cambridge Companion to Eighteenth-Century Poetry*, ed. by John Sitter (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), pp. 225-248 (p. 240).

⁴⁹¹ Rowe, “Third Canto”, in *Poems on Several Occasions*, pp. 359-381 (p. 365).

⁴⁹² Mary Lee Chudleigh, “On the Death of his Highness, the Duke of Gloucester”, in *The Poems and Prose of Mary, Lady Chudleigh*, pp. 47-59.

⁴⁹³ *Ibid.*, lines 44-6.

Her Voice with tender'st Passions fill'd my Breast,
And I felt Raptures not to be express'd;
Raptures, till that soft Hour unknown,
My Soul seem'd from my Body flown:⁴⁹⁴

The nightingale's song, a classical image of feminine mourning, ruptures the peace and quiet of the countryside. The "hollow Melancholy Sound" of the nightingale "Dispers'd an awful Horror round, / And hideous Groans thro' all the Grove resound / Nature the dismal Noise did hear, / Nature her self did seem to fear."⁴⁹⁵ The natural scenes of mourning reflect the narrator's own inner state and, implicitly, that of the wider community:

Upon the Ground I pensive lay;
Complain'd and wept as much as they:
My Country's Loss became my own,
And I was void of Comfort grown.⁴⁹⁶

Lady Chudleigh connects communal loss with individual mourning. Her body "upon the Ground ... pensive lay" while her soul "seem'd from my Body flown". Chudleigh's representation of a natural response to a spiritual state confirms the relationship between the space of pastoral retirement and the social world.

Rowe's religiously inspired verse conveys her beliefs of the perpetuity of the soul set against the time-bound flesh, echoing classical musings on the relationship between the body and soul. Chapter II addressed Katherine Philips's appropriation of the Horatian Ode; here, Rowe continues the engagement with classical forms and subjects as her Christian verse echoes Horace's odes on the earthly pursuit of material signs of power and authority.⁴⁹⁷ While Philips employed the classical form to question the structures of political authority, Rowe turns her gaze inward to examine the nature of the soul. Rowe responds to the subject of Horace's "Otium Ode" which questions the nature of spiritual peace and contentment:

It isn't treasure nor even the consul's lictor that can banish the soul's miserable
tumults and the cares that fly unseen about the paneled ceilings.
[...]
Joyful let the soul be in the present, let it disdain to trouble about what is beyond
and temper bitterness with a laugh. Nothing is blessed forever.⁴⁹⁸

⁴⁹⁴ Ibid, lines 55-9.

⁴⁹⁵ Ibid, lines 81-5.

⁴⁹⁶ Ibid, lines 233-6.

⁴⁹⁷ Chapter II, pp. 70-2.

⁴⁹⁸ Horace, "Otium Ode", in *The Odes and Epodes of Horace*, trans. by Stephen Edward De Vere (London: Chiswick Press, 1893), pp. 98-100.

In Horace's ode it is the soul which seeks a retreat from the world of material pursuits through right and present existence. Rowe engages with this poetic discourse as she, too, finds the soul's happiness not in wealth but in the "eternal bliss" of spiritual contentment:

What if serenely blest with Calms I swam
Pactolus! in thy golden Sanded stream?
Not all the wealth that lavish Chance cou'd give
My soul from Death cou'd one short Hour reprieve.
When from my Heart the wandring Life must move
No Cordial all my useless God cou'd prove.
What tho' I plung'd in Joys so deep and wide,
'Twou'd tire my Thoughts to reach the distant side,
Fancy it self 'twou'd tire to plump the Abyss;
If I for an uncertain Lease of this
Sold the fair hopes of an eternal bliss?⁴⁹⁹

The poem suggests the fleeting nature of material wealth and the uselessness of such worldly goods in the spiritual realm. All the riches in the world could not the soul "from Death ... one short Hour reprieve". As death is the ultimate end for the physical body, so is it a transformation for the soul which cannot be undone. Nothing can be done after death to counter a life squandered on pleasure and "Joys so deep and wide" and achieve "the fair hopes of an eternal bliss". Continuing to seek shade from Philips's "scorching Age", Rowe's verse suggests that such haven and safety can be found internally, rather than in external structures.

The Horatian ode, discussed in previous chapters as an element of the royalist poetic tradition, is also evident in the writings of the early eighteenth century nonconformist community. Matthew Prior's "Ode: In Imitation of Horace, III, Od. II" (1692) reforms the glorious state of Edmund Waller's imagination into a diminished nation:

How long, deluded Albion, wilt thou lie,
In the lethargic sleep, the sad repose,
By which thy close, thy constant enemy,
Has softly lulled thee to thy woes?⁵⁰⁰

Prior's ode reshapes the pastoral glory of the early Horatian tradition into a clear commentary on the political and spiritual state of post-Restoration England. "Lulled ...

⁴⁹⁹ Rowe, "The Vanity of the World, In a Poem to the Athenians", in *Poems on Several Occasions*, pp. 33-4, lines 1-11.

⁵⁰⁰ Matthew Prior, "In Imitation of Horace, III, Od. II", in *The Poetical Works of Matthew Prior* (Edinburgh: Ballatyne and Co., 1858), pp. 361-9.

to thy woes” by a “constant enemy”, the “deluded Albion” requires renewed vigour to regain its former glory. The image of a slumbering state in unknown peril fits the nonconformist aim of reformation, both moral and social. Philips’ Horatian “A Retir’d Friendship, to Ardelia” similarly presents sociable retreat as unconcerned with external conflict:

Why should we entertain a feare?
Love cares not how the world is turn’d.
If crouds of dangers should appeare,
Yet friendship can be unconcern’d.⁵⁰¹

In Philips’ poem friendship is the salvation in a world turn apart by peril; friendship is “unconcern’d” with the events of the external world. In Prior’s verse the welcome respite from conflict and uncertainty is a false and “lethargive sleep” which cannot be indefinitely sustained.

The Pastoral: the setting of spiritual transformation

For women writers engaging with the pastoral, the verdant backdrop of the countryside is reminiscent of a pre-fall Eden ruled by innocence and which enabled freedom of the mind and of the soul. Anne Finch’s untitled poem, fragmented for the publication of the 1713 *Miscellany*, explores the transportation of the soul using natural imagery. In the poems she likens the soul to a bird, “th’ imprison’d wretch”:

Now sinking low now on a loftyer stretch
Flutt’ring in endlesse cercles of dismay
‘Till some kind hand directs the certain way
Which through the casement an escape affoards
And leads to ample space the only Heav’n of Birds⁵⁰²

Finch follows in a gendered pastoral tradition where the countryside is the site of spiritual liberation from the burden of the (female) body. As the bird flies away, joining the “Heav’n of Birds”, the body of the poet is rooted to the earth. The weight of the body is considered a burden which binds the soul to the material world:

So here confined, and but to female Clay,
Ardelia’s Soul mistook the rightful Way:

⁵⁰¹ Philips, “A retir’d friendship, to Ardelia”, in *Poems*, pp. 97-8, lines 9-16. See further discussion of the poem in Chapter I, pp. 37-38, 60-61.

⁵⁰² Anne Finch, “Some occasional Reflections Digested (tho’ not with great regularity) into a Poem”, Folger Shakespeare Library, MS Yb. 303, pp. 291-93, lines 30-5.

Whilst the soft Breeze of Pleasure's tempting Air
Made her believe, Felicity was there;
And, basking in the warmth of early Time,
To vain Amusements dedicate her Prime⁵⁰³

The poem addresses the complexity of the pastoral discourse, in which the soul is liberated in the natural innocence of the countryside, but is still under moral threat. Ardelia's soul "mistook the rightful Way" and was led astray by "the soft Breeze of Pleasure's tempting Air", which provided a false happiness.

Rowe's use of the pastoral also functions as the site of spiritual expression and transformation and anticipates the evolution of the poetic form into the romantic, meditative lyric of the later eighteenth century⁵⁰⁴. Whereas the earlier royalist pastoral of Philips and Barker use the natural setting to meditate on loss brought about by political upheaval, Rowe gestures towards the use of the pastoral to meditate on a more personal transformation evident in romantics such as William Wordsworth. In Wordsworth's *Lines Written a Few Miles above Tintern Abbey* it is the memory of the pastoral which functions as a haven, the mind retreating in times of spiritual darkness. "How oft", the narrator muses, "have I turned to thee /O sylvan Wye! Thou wanderer through the woods, / How often has my spirit turned to thee!"⁵⁰⁵ The purity and tranquility of the natural world is "The anchor of my purest thoughts, the nurse, / The guide, the guardian of my heart, and soul /Of all my moral being."⁵⁰⁶ The natural innocence of the pastoral landscape shapes the virtue of its human inhabitants and their relationships to one another.

Earlier discussion of Katherine Philips's use of the pastoral focused on the countryside as a space of retreat from political conflict; and although Rowe's pastoral verse still figures the countryside as a safe haven, it is transformed from a politicised to a spiritual space. "A Pastoral in Imitation of Mrs Killigrew", attached to Letter no. 8, is a dialogic verse which pays tribute to the countryside haven and the triumph of friendship over death. The subtitle, "in Imitation of Mrs Killigrew", implies a specific form of pastoral which is tied to religious virtue. Killigrew's representation of the

⁵⁰³ Ibid, lines 36-41.

⁵⁰⁴ Percy Shelley's portrayal of the pastoral is a site of self-improvement and spiritual salvation is epitomised in "Adonais" (see William Spiegelman, *Majestic Indolence: English romantic poetry and the work of art* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), pp. 108-141).

⁵⁰⁵ William Wordsworth, *Lyrical ballads: With pastoral and other poems*, vol. 1, 4th ed. (London: printed for Longman, Hurst, Rees, and Orme, by R. Taylor and Co., 1802), p. 194.

⁵⁰⁶ Ibid, p. 197.

pastoral is not as a bucolic ideal, but as a commentary on the corrupting effects of material interests.⁵⁰⁷

Rowe's pastoral dialogue is initiated by Mirtilla, who extols the "opening Blossoms", "babbling fountains" and "verdant pastures" of the rural landscape. Only verse is capable of capturing the beauty and virtue of such scenes, and Mirtilla is rewarded for her exalted subject matter. Alexis proclaims that "Unfading wreaths may'st thou, Mirtilla gain, / And deathless glory, by thy verse obtain," acknowledging both her ability as a poet and, implicitly, the inspirational subject.⁵⁰⁸ Despite the temptation of poetic fame, Mirtilla says that she has "no such ambitious aim"; the pleasure of friendship is all that she desires:

Cou'd I but please thee, with my artless Lays,
I proudly shou'd neglect all other praise:
Wou'd'st thou be gratefull, every Grove and Stream,
And spacious vale, shou'd echo with thy name⁵⁰⁹

The verse follows the conventions of the pastoral, using dialogic structure and idealisation and allegory to shape the social imagery at the heart of the verse. Despite the conventions of the young speakers whose boundless love is reflected in the fecundity of nature, in Rowe's verse friendship is the single concern and sole aim. Rowe makes explicit the connection between friendship and the space of the pastoral, suggesting that the innate beauty and innocence of the pastoral countryside reflects back on those who inhabit it, nurturing platonic love and modest virtue. The 'seduction' in the pastoral is the temptation for fame, the care of the material world which is ultimately rejected in favour of spiritual connection. This departs from Barker's verse which uses natural symbols of praise but in which everlasting poetic fame is desirable. "A contract with the muses" marks poetic achievement upon the bark of a tree, inscribing the pastoral landscape with personal accomplishment:

Write, write, thy vow upon this tree,
By us it shall recorded be,
And thou fam'd to eternity.⁵¹⁰

⁵⁰⁷ Bronwen Price, 'Verse, Voice and Body: The retirement mode and women's poetry 1680-1723', *Early Modern Literary Studies* 12.3 (January 2007), 5.1-44; Ann Messenger, *Pastoral Tradition and the Female Talent* (New York: AMS Press, 2001)

⁵⁰⁸ Alnwick MS 110, "Letter no 8 to the same", p. 31, lines 1, 2, 5.

⁵⁰⁹ Ibid, lines 17-20.

⁵¹⁰ Jane Barker, "The contract with the muses writ on the bark of a shady ash-tree", in *The Poems of Jane Barker: The Magdalen manuscript*, ed. by Kathryn King (Magdalen College, Oxford, 1998), p. 40, lines 13-18.

Although Rowe makes no mention of seeking the eternal fame for which Barker's narrator yearns, the pastoral dialogue does seek the praise of a select audience. Mirtilla desires no other praise than that of her companion and would "proudly ... neglect all other praise".

Rowe includes another pastoral passage in letter number 10, calling the original verse dialogue which she translates "the finest Pastoral that was ever writ." The verse, titled in the manuscript "The Speech of Amarillis in Pastor Fido", takes as its premise the popular pastoral tragicomedy *Il pastor fido* (1590), by the Italian poet Giovanni Battista Guarini. The title translates as "the faithful shepherd", and the subject of the virtuous and gallant pastoral hero set a code of refinement and gallantry in the genre for years to come. Rowe's adaptation of the story again shapes the pastoral countryside as a place of repose removed from the false pretensions of the courtly world. "Leave me to choose a Bliss that suits my mind: All my Ambition I wou'd here confine" Amarillis protests:

Nor for Elysium these dear shades resign
The fortunate Remains of Demi=Gods
I wou'd refuse for these belov'd abodes
For what alas [sic] Deluded Mortalls call
Substantial goods, are real Evils all
And he who gains of Wealth the greatest share
With that increases his perplexing care
& quits his Freedom for a gilded Snare.⁵¹¹

The speech highlights the tension between the material and the spiritual, between the false displays of quality which "deluded mortals call Substantial goods" and the "Bliss that suits my mind", and between constriction and freedom. The false idols of society are the root of evil in the pastoral world. Insufficient against the true virtues of the innocent countryside, the artificiality of the social world and its values is revealed. This is a repeated feature in the seventeenth century pastoral.⁵¹² Jane Barker's "To My Friends" configures the pastoral as a space of intellectual freedom, superior to the court and town for its "Innocence" and virtue:

⁵¹¹ Alnwick MS 110, "The Speech of Amarillis in Pastor Fido", Letter no. 10, p. 37.

⁵¹² Josephine A. Roberts, 'Deciphering Women's Pastoral', in *Representing Women in Renaissance England*, ed. by Claude J. Summers and Ted-Larry Pebworth (Columbia and London: University of Missouri Press, 1997), pp. 163-174; Ann Messenger, *Pastoral Tradition and the Female Talent* (New York: AMS Press, 2001).

Then they will find how much they've been deceiv'd,
When they the flatt'ries of this World believ'd.⁵¹³

Secure in the knowledge of the virtue of the pastoral retirement, both Barker and Rowe envision a retreat from the vice, artifice, and materialism which structure the social world. However the pastoral is not the site of the happy-ever-after finale; in Rowe's interpretation of the pastoral dialogue the characters are left with love unfulfilled. Amaryllis's "Am'rous Whispers" and "Constant Fires" are acknowledged but unrequited, as Pastor Fido sacrifices the possibility of love for virtue:

To thee a Spottless sacrifice I'll prove
Nor stain my Virtue with forbidden Love
My Life, my dear Myrtilia then forgive
A Heart that wou'd thy tender cares relieve...
Forgive me Gentle Youth, or if thy mind
Some just revenge for this deceit would find.⁵¹⁴

The "Spotless sacrifice" will be offered up to the altar of love, but physical pleasure is rejected in favour of a more virtuous bond. The poem emphasises spiritual virtue over transient earthly pleasures:

Tho' Heaven & Earth our Destiny wou'd part
Not Gods nor men can tear thee from my Heart
That Heart which bleeds in every tear of thine
The vital breath thy sighs consume is mine
In my Complaints my Passion is express'd
And all thy sorrows wound my tender breast.⁵¹⁵

If, as Elizabeth Young argues, the pastoral had by the seventeenth century become coded, then Rowe would have been conscious of the trope's double meanings and used it to her advantage.⁵¹⁶ Rowe's interpretation of the pastoral incorporates many romantic aspects which evoke the earlier revival of the pastoral romance. This is significant because of the role of women within the pastoral romance: young women were more often the main subject of the works than their male counterparts, and through their virtue and honour were able to restore the pastoral haven to its natural state. The women

⁵¹³ Jane Barker, "To My Friend", in *Poetical Recreations: Consisting of original poems, songs, odes, &c. with several new translations* (London: printed for Benjamin Crayle at the Peacock and Bible, at the West-end of St. Pauls, 1688), 1, 2.

⁵¹⁴ Alnwick MS 110, "The Speech of Amarillis in Pastor Fido", Letter no. 10, p. 39.

⁵¹⁵ Ibid.

⁵¹⁶ Elizabeth V. Young, 'Aphra Behn, Gender, and Pastoral', *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900*, 33:3 (Summer 1993), 523-543, (p. 530).

in the verse, whether daughters, lovers or noblewomen, become repositories of traditional values which help rather than hinder their pursuit of autonomy.

Virtue is bound to the pastoral romance in Rowe's writing, and emotional devotion replaces religious worship. Lois Potter notes the tradition of seventeenth century romance with its roots in the court of Henrietta Maria and the development of the genre along the lines of political succession.⁵¹⁷ The tragicomic model was reinvigorated after the Restoration, emphasising the divine pattern behind events and the importance of Providence. By the early eighteenth century, the form was once again reinvigorated. The letters to Lady Hertford are filled with excesses of romantic language, which paid heed to the tragicomic pastoral tradition: "I know not how you'll excuse your self for writing me but one letter all this while when this is my fourth my being sick never hinders me from writing to you even when I am ready to fancy the mists of death involving me & that I am past all ceremony with mortals."⁵¹⁸ Facilitated by the absence which a letter implies, Rowe fashions her own pastoral triumph: though ill and ostensibly "ready to fancy the mists of death", their friendship endures and flourishes and they, not death, are the victors. Rowe devotes herself to her friendship wholeheartedly, a friendship which she sees as spiritual:

I'll be your friend & Guardian Angell & leave Paradise to converse with you & when fate shall call you away Ill be the first kind spirit that shall greet you & with a thousand celestial songs welcome your arrival to the bless'd land of love & to endear my self the more to you.⁵¹⁹

The letters are a clear predecessor to Rowe's most celebrated work, *Letters from the Dead to the Living*, as they depict death as a permeable boundary and one which does not prevent friendship, but rather facilitates a more spiritual union. Echoing the union of souls which embodied the neo-Platonic social philosophy of Katherine Philip's Society of Friendship, Rowe imagines a friendship which can only exist in its purest form as a disembodied spiritual union:

My Soul I will so much conform to thine
Thou scarce shall know thy own bright Soul from mine⁵²⁰

Rowe's interpretation of platonic friendship borders on a merging of spiritual selves, an extreme representation of the mingling of souls which is a clear unifying theme across the span of early modern writing and is derived from classical philosophy and its

⁵¹⁷ Potter, pp. 72-112.

⁵¹⁸ Alnwick MS 110, "Letter no 6 to the same", p. 26.

⁵¹⁹ Ibid, p. 2-3.

⁵²⁰ Ibid, p. 3.

Renaissance interpretations. Rowe's use of the imagery is distinctly spiritual and invokes the consubstantiation of souls in the New Testament. The highly politicised vision of platonic friendship in the verse of Katherine Philips and the early royalists has diminished by the early eighteenth century, with the emphasis on individual and communal spirituality. Rowe writes in *Friendship in Death* of the importance of virtue in individual salvation and Christian passionate friendship:

.. mine is an affection suited to your guiltless inclination, and consistent with the most refined virtue. Indeed, this is the superior charm, the powerful attraction, that has gained you a celestial lover; those divine graces, those sparklings of goodness and generosity, that sacred impression of virtue Heaven has stamped on your soul, charm me beyond your lovely person ... if you continue stedfast to the rules of virute, you shall be mine by all the engagements of celestial love.⁵²¹

Rowe shapes a friendship which is heavily dependent both on the Christian idea of virtue and the classical model of rural retirement, reflecting a shift in social and political values after the re-centralisation of state authority in the 1690s. As a supporter of the dominant regime, Rowe's verse differs from that of Philips or Barker, who wrote from a minority political community. Rowe's pastoral is therefore represented not as a safe haven from political conflict or persecution, but as part of the reinvigoration of cultural authority.

Elizabeth Young has noted Aphra Behn's conscious use of the pastoral to explore sexual politics through an ungendered social structure.⁵²² Rowe, too, uses the pastoral to imagine radical social experimentation, but it is not gender equality which is the focus of her verse, but rather the enduring nature of spiritual friendship. Rowe's pastoral is a distinctly spiritual space in which individual spirituality connects a community, facilitating an autonomous state governed by virtue. Rowe imagines herself on a precipice, "on the very edges of the immaterial world", hovering in a marginal position somewhere between physicality and spirituality.⁵²³ In using the pastoral form, Rowe is acknowledging its imaginative and transformative potential, but rather than exploiting such advantages to envisage radical social reform, she shapes a more devout communality based on natural equality of souls.

⁵²¹ Elizabeth Singer Rowe, *Friendship in Death: In twenty letters from the dead to the living, to which are added letters moral and entertaining, in prose and verse. In three parts*, (London: printed for W. Straham, J.F. and C. Rivington, T. Lowndes, T. Longman, B. Low, T. Cadell, G. Robinson, Jo. Johnson, J. Bew, J. Nichols, and W. Goldsmith, 1733), pp. 283-4.

⁵²² Young, 541.

⁵²³ Alnwick MS 110, Letter 3, p. 2.

Conclusion

A new relationship between the politically centered life of the seventeenth century and the inward-looking eighteenth century takes shape in Rowe's coterie letters to Lady Hertford and her friends. Rowe has been characterised as a solitary pious writer, and as such the significance of her life and works have been vastly diminished. In an essay on the use of print and manuscript as poetic mediums, Kathryn King calls for the reassessment of Rowe's significance in light of a "theoretical framework that accounts for the complexity and variousness of women's writing in early print culture without recourse to moralized dichotomous models."⁵²⁴ Complicating portraits of her as isolated and devout, shunning physical company in favour of an inwardly derived piety, Rowe's correspondence reimagines the early modern female writer as a sociable being who exists in a circle of human and textual relations. For the dissenting community, friendship was a social and religious contract that evolved from the courtly tradition into a signifier of socio-religious networks. Rejecting external marks of hierarchy as false, friendship was part of a devotional poetic model which created a spiritual economy to replace a material one. Rowe shapes the spiritual aspect of platonic friendship which had been used by both Philips and Barker to transcend material boundaries of community. It is clear that there is an easily discernible philosophical thread running through early modern writing on community: friendship lays the foundation for the formation of intimate communities. This foundational relationship is made possible by individual virtue and fidelity, which are in turn amplified through the lens of friendship.

Elizabeth Singer Rowe's conception of friendship, community, and faith speaks of the way in which religio-political engagement had evolved by the early eighteenth century. Rowe identifies with the model of authorship initiated by Katherine Philips and developed by Jane Barker, but moulds and evolves this model to support the ideals of the nonconformist community. Philips's space of pastoral retreat is a political haven from a "scorching Age", while Barker seeks companionship and belonging in a community enabled by pastoral virtue. Rowe capitalises on the natural virtue of the space of the pastoral, imagining it as a space conducive to elevated friendship. In so doing she continued a tradition of early modern women's literary engagement initiated by royalist writers such as Katherine Philips but which transcended the boundaries of political identity to question the nature of social identities, spirituality, and friendship.

⁵²⁴ King 2002, p. 161.

Epilogue

I have briefly explored some of the many theories of community and friendship which inform the critical context of early modern women's literary history and examined the application of these theories through the poetic works of three women involved with communities that span the political spectrum. But what did community mean to those living and participating in the changing socio-political atmosphere of the seventeenth century? It is important to remember that community is both a process and an ideal, and a framework must be developed to account for the complexity and variation in social interaction and its literary representations. There is evidence of an acknowledged differentiation between the concepts of society and community in the early seventeenth century which should inform the way in which we approach sociability.⁵²⁵ Society implies an institutional construction which was broad and inclusive, and which was maintained by the authority of legal and state structures. By contrast community has the potential for autonomous association separate from, but remaining connections to, the dominant social sphere.⁵²⁶ The women of this study explore the potential of imagined community through the pastoral trope of retreat. As Anne Finch begs in her "The Petition for an Absolute Retreat":

Let th' Ambitious rule the Earth;
Let the giddy Fool have Mirth;
Give the Epicure his Dish,
Ev'ry one their sev'ral Wish;
Whilst my Transports I employ,
On that more extensive Joy,
When all Heaven shall be survey'd
From those Windings and that Shade.⁵²⁷

Finch voices the dual imperatives of retreat from the world and the desire for a connection with it, here represented by the pastoral scene of "Windings and ... Shade." Finch voices resistance to the dominant sphere ruled by the "Ambitious", the "giddy" and fools of the public world, asserting her preference for an alternative communal space which offers perspective on the world she has rejected. Because of this potential for resistance and autonomy, such communities were inherently politicised. The

⁵²⁵ Shepard and Withington, p. 3.

⁵²⁶ Ibid.

⁵²⁷ Anne Finch, "The Petition for an Absolute Retreat" in *Miscellany Poems, on Several Occasions*, printed for J.B. and sold by Benj. Tooke at the Middle-Temple-Gate, William Taylor in Pater-Noster-Row, and James Round (London, 1713), pp. 33-49, lines 286-93.

methods of communal participation suggest that a community is an emotional, rather than a material, entity and therefore the boundaries are much more fluid and less defined.

This study has explored women's engagement with the traditionally male discourses of friendship and the pastoral and the ways in which such literary engagement marked a participation in the political sphere. Their work reveals that political engagement in the seventeenth century can take many forms outside participation in a unified public sphere, a claim largely supported by recent critical responses to Jürgen Habermas's *Transformation of the Public Sphere* which propose a model of multiple and overlapping spheres.⁵²⁸ I have shown that the women of this study participated in various communities, with varying levels of involvement and belonging, and come from across the political spectrum, hinting at the wide range of early modern expressions of community. This demonstrates the prevalence of a culture of communal production which suggests that we as scholars must widen the scope of our research to encompass social groups in all their many forms.

I had two aims in this research: to demonstrate the continuity in early modern women's literary history across ideological, geographical and generation boundaries, and to explore the imaginative and textual representations of community. In order to achieve these aims, I chose to focus on three women writers across the political spectrum to trace the development of literary forms as the century progressed. I chose these women not as case studies, but to demonstrate the breadth of literary possibilities available to women. The women of this study are not anomalous in their engagement with contemporary political, social and religious philosophy. Through the process of this research it became clear that although these women, and their male and female contemporaries, use common language and poetic forms to represent community, each individual experiences community from a unique viewpoint.

This study does not attempt to draw grand conclusions, but rather to identify common threads of experience and expression in early modern women's writing and the way in which these threads come together in wider historical contexts. The prominence of occasional poems and verse epistles in the writing of Philips, Barker and Rowe can be related to the experiences of political and religious events of the day. The epistolary form answered the sense of loss of community and the need for an intimate use of

⁵²⁸ See Craig Calhoun, ed., *Habermas and the Public Sphere* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1993); Joan B. Landes, ed., *Feminism, the Public and the Private* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1998).

language which would contribute to the reshaping of an ideal community. The figures which occupy the poetic space are linked by ties of friendship, shared political values, and common poetic form and language.

The development of a philosophy of sociability and its material practice in the early modern period draws attention to broader conceptual movements. The model of community promoted by the early royalists, which was defined by its close political engagement even from a distance, is ideologically different from the later nonconformist model of community which is strongly based on individual spirituality and virtue. Although there remain clear similarities, the differences suggest a gradual movement towards a sentimentality and romance which would come to define the literary history of the eighteenth century.

I have hinted at the ways in which women imaginatively create social spaces which circumvent physical and geographical boundaries. The way in which the women of this study do so is expressed within established but flexible poetic traditions. Their engagement with the classical precedent of pastoral poetics, reformed by the Renaissance poets and heavily politicised as the seventeenth century conflict swelled into civil war, transformed the space of retirement. The feminine appropriation of the pastoral is a specifically sociable space in which the natural fecundity of the countryside mirrors the creative potential of the mind. Philips, Barker and Rowe have all gestured towards the enabling potential of the natural landscape, which offers a space of social experimentation that transcends gendered boundaries.

The emergence of the pastoral tradition in this study of textual representations of community was gradual; initially I intended to focus on the explicitly politicised occasional and friendship verse of Philips and Barker. What emerged from my reading was a strong impression that the pastoral setting in which such friendships were formed, and in which political events took place, was deeply significant as a conceptual space. The space of the pastoral was an imaginative playground in which social and political ideals could take shape. I have demonstrated the evolution of the pastoral in the seventeenth century through the verse of Katherine Philips, Jane Barker and Elizabeth Singer Rowe, as well as their male and female contemporaries, who all employ the pastoral to evoke distinct visions of virtuous sociability. Lois Potter has argued that the existence of a common area of reference creates the possibility for dialogic writing, and hence for the possibility of community achieved through intertextuality.⁵²⁹ This study

⁵²⁹ Lois Potter, *Secret Rites and Secret Writing: Royalist literature 1641-60* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), p. 114.

has addressed the possibility of such dialogic writing through shared poetic forms and traditions; however I have not fully developed the notion of a specifically female pastoral tradition. Elizabeth Young has noted the prevalence of the pastoral form in Restoration women's writing, arguing that it is both a "ladylike" form and potential subversive.⁵³⁰ The specific way in which the pastoral was employed by these women and their contemporaries as an enabling creative and social space suggests a specifically feminine pastoral tradition. Kate Chedgzoy argues that the writing of the Cavendish sisters, Jane and Elizabeth, and that of Hester Pulter, evokes a distinctly feminine version of the pastoral which is linked to the domestic.⁵³¹ Chedgzoy suggests that the female transformation of the classical tradition shaped the discourse of nostalgia which defined early royalist poetics.

Michelle O'Callaghan has raised the importance of the pastoral form in early modern political discourse, while Josephine Roberts and Elizabeth Young have focused on women's engagement with the pastoral tradition.⁵³² Valerie Traub argues that the representation of chaste female friendship in the pastoral setting transforms the topos, reimagining a pastoral space which is wholly sympathetic to female friendship and love.⁵³³ Traub's argument is persuasive, and supports Lorna Hutson's classification of Philips and her contemporaries as having "disruptive potential" to orthodox poetic traditions.⁵³⁴ The argument highlights the challenge to the classical notion that only men are capable of elevated friendship which are posed by the representations of spiritual female friendships.

Female appropriation of traditionally male discourses can be approached as 'disruptive' to their male practitioners; however this study has taken the approach that the women writers engaging with such traditions as friendship and the pastoral were not seeking disruptive, but rather inclusion. If, as Roberts suggests, the pastoral is a poetic form which offered "a landscape in which the political and social relationships of

⁵³⁰ Elizabeth V. Young, 'Aphra Behn, Gender, and Pastoral', *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900*, 33:3 (Summer 1993), 523-543 (p. 523).

⁵³¹ Kate Chedgzoy, *Women's Writing in the British Atlantic World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), p. 127.

⁵³² See Young 1993; Josephine A. Roberts, 'Deciphering Women's Pastoral', in *Representing Women in Renaissance England*, ed. by Claude J. Summers and Ted-Larry Pebworth (Columbia and London: University of Missouri Press, 1997), pp. 163-174; Michelle O'Callaghan, *The 'shepherds nation': Jacobean Spenserians and early Stuart political culture 1612-1625* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2000).

⁵³³ Valerie Traub, *The Renaissance of Lesbianism in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp. 301-2.

⁵³⁴ Lorna Hutson, 'The Body of the Friend and the Woman Writer: Katherine Philips's Absence from Alan Bray's *The Friend* (2003)', *Women's Writing*, 14:2 (August 2007), 196-214 (p. 197).

women might be questioned, challenged, and refashioned”, the emerging tradition of a female pastoral must be established and explored.⁵³⁵

I have always been drawn to both the works and lives of women writers, not necessarily because of literary expressions of the so-called ‘female experience’, but because women writers, like other marginalised and excluded groups, use alternative avenues of expression and engagement. Although the primary subjects of this thesis are women, I have taken pains to emphasise that, far from being excluded from participation because of their gender, are welcomed and often integral members of heterogenous literary groups. Too often early modern women writers have been explored through a singularly gendered position, and while their status as women remains influential to their authorial personae, it is not the only factor. Philips, Barker and Rowe develop notions of authorship which are necessarily gendered but are not exclusionary; their status as women does not preclude participation in the political and literary spheres.

In considering early modern women writers this study has looked at the specific conditions of reading, writing and the nature of authorship in the later seventeenth century. Larger issues have arisen about the way in which individual experiences of wider political and social events are imagined, expressed and shared. One of these is the notion of lasting communities which are sustained through political continuity discontinuity. This study breaks down chronological and political divides in early modern women’s writing, suggesting that further work yet needs to be done to create a more comprehensive view of early modern literary history.

⁵³⁵ Roberts, p. 173.

Bibliography

Primary

- Alnwick Castle Archives, MS 110.
- Aristotle *Nicomachean Ethics*, trans. by D. P. Chase (Courier Dover, 1998)
- Astell, Mary, *A Serious Proposal to the Ladies: For the advancement of their true and greatest interest. By a lover of her sex* (London: Richard Wilkin, 1696)
- Barker, Jane, *The Poems of Jane Barker: The Magdalen manuscript*, ed. by Kathryn King (Magdalen College, Oxford, 1998)
- *The Galesia Trilogy and Selected Manuscript Poems of Jane Barker*, ed. by Carol Shiner Wilson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997)
- *Love Intrigues; or, the History of the Amours of Bosvil and Galesia* (London: E. Curll and C. Crownfield, 1713)
- *Poetical Recreations: Consisting of original poems, songs, odes, &c. with several new translations* (London: printed for Benjamin Crayle at the Peacock and Bible, at the West-end of St. Pauls, 1688)
- *The Entertaining Novels of Mrs. Jane Barker*, 2 vols. (London: Printed for A. Bettesworth and E. Curll, 1719)
- Beale, Mary, *A Discourse of Friendship*, Washington, DC: Folger Shakespeare Library, MS 420127.
- Cartwright, William, *Comedies, Tragi-comedies, With other Poems, by Mr. William Cartwright, late Student of Christ-Church in Oxford, and Proctor of the University. The Ayres and Songs set by M^r Henry Lawes* (London: Printed for Humphrey Mosely, 1651)
- Cavendish, Margaret, *Poems and Fancies* (London: Printed by T.R. for J. Martin, and J. Allestrye, 1653)
- *The Blazing World and Other Writings*, ed. by Kate Lilley (London: Pickering, 1992)
- *The Convent of Pleasure and other plays*, ed. by Anne Shaver (Baltimore, London: John Hopkins University Press, 1999)
- *The life of William Cavendish, Duke of Newcastle: to which is added the true relation of my birth, breeding and life*, ed. by C. H. Firth, 2nd edn, (London: Routledge, 1909)
- *Playes* (London: Printed by A. Warren for John Martyn, James Allestry and Tho. Dicas. 1662)
- Chudleigh, Lady Mary, *The Poems and Prose of Mary, Lady Chudleigh*, ed. by Margaret J. M. Ezell (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993)
- Cibber, Theophilus, *Lives of the Poets of Great Britain and Ireland*, 4 vols (London: Printed for R. Griffiths, at the Dunciad in St. Pauls's Church-Yard, 1753)
- Cicero, *De Senectute, De Amicitia, De Divinatione*, trans. by William Armistead Falconer (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1923)
- Cooper, William Durrant, *The Oxenbridges of Brede Place, Sussex and Boston, Massachusetts* (London, 1860)
- Cowley, Abraham, *The Works of Mr Abraham Cowley* (Printed by J. M. for Henry Herringman, at the Sign of the Blew Anchor in the Lower Walk of the New Excahnge, 1668)
- *Poems* (1656), (b)2v, (b)3.
- Donne, John, *Poems of John Donne*, ed. by E. K. Chambers (London: Lawrence & Bullen, 1896)
- Dunton, John, *The Life and Errors of John Dunton, Citizen of London*, ed. by J. B. Nichols, vol. 1 (London, 1818)

- Finch, Anne, *Miscellany Poems, on Several Occasions*, printed for J.B. and sold by Benj. Tooke at the Middle-Temple-Gate, William Taylor in Pater-Noster-Row, and James Round (London, 1713)
- *The Anne Finch Wellesley Manuscript Poems*, ed. by Barbara McGovern and Charles H. Hinnant (Athens GA and London: The University of Georgia Press, 1998)
- Finch, Francis, *Friendship* (London, 1654)
Folger Shakespeare Library MS Yb. 303.
- Gould, Robert, *Poems chiefly consisting of Satyrs and satirical Epistles* (London, 1689).
- Hesiod, *Theogony*, ed. by M. Lines West (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1966)
- Horace, *The Odes and Epodes of Horace*, trans. by Stephen Edward De Vere (London: Chiswick Press, 1893)
- Killigrew, Anne, *Poems* (London: Richard Everett Morton: 1686)
- Lawes, Henry, *Second Book of Ayres, and Dialogues* (London: Printed by T. Harper for John Playford, 1655)
- Marvell, Andrew, *Complete Poems*, ed. by Elizabeth Story Donno (London and New York: Penguin Classics, 1972)
- Meyrick, Samuel Rush, *The History of Cardiganshire* (1810)
- Montaigne, Michel, *On Friendship* (1580), trans. by M. A. Screech (London: Penguin Books, 2004)
- Overbury, Sir Thomas, "A Wife" (G. Eld for Lawrence Lisle: London, 1614)
- Philips, Katherine, *Poems. By the Incomparable Mrs. K.P.* (London: Printed by J.G. for Richard Marriott, 1664)
- *Pompey. A Tragedy. Acted with Great Applause.* (London: Printed for John Crooke, 1663)
- *Katherine Philips: The Matchless Orinda*, 2 vols., ed. by Patrick Thomas (Stump Cross, Essex: Stump Cross Books, 1990)
- Plato, *Symposium*, trans. by Richard Hunter (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004)
- Prior, Matthew, *The Poetical Works of Matthew Prior* (Edinburgh: Ballatyne and Company, 1858)
- Rowe, Elizabeth Singer, *Poems on Several Occasions, Written by Philomela* (London: John Dunton, 1696)
- *Poems on Several Occasions. To which is prefixed an account of the life and writings of the author.* (London: printed for D. Midwinter in St. Paul's Church-yard, 1759)
- *Friendship in Death: In twenty letters from the dead to the living, to which are added letters moral and entertaining, in prose and verse. In three parts.* (London: printed for W. Straham, J.F. and C. Rivington, T. Lowndes, T. Longman, B. Low, T. Cadell, G. Robinson, Jo. Johnson, J. Bew, J. Nichols, and W. Goldsmith, 1733)
- Rowe, Theophilus, and Henry Grove, eds, *The Miscellaneous Works, in Prose and Verse, of Mrs Elizabeth Rowe, to which are added, Poems on Several Occasions by Mr Thomas Rowe, and to the whole is prefixed, an account of the lives and writings of the authors* (London, 1739)
- Rymer, Thomas, *The Critical Works of Thomas Rymer*, ed. by Curt Zimansky (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1956)
- Sidney, Sir Philip, *The Countesse of Pembrokes Arcadia* (London: printed for William Ponsonby, 1590).
- Spenser, Edmund, *The Faerie Queen: The shepherds calendar: Together with the other works of England's arch-poët, Edm. Spenser: Collected into one volume, and carefully corrected* (printed by H. Lines for Mathew Lownes, 1611)

- Swift, Jonathan, *Miscellanies: Consisting of Verses by Dr. Swift, Dr. Arbuthnot, Mr. Pope, and Mr. Gay*, vol. IV (London: printed for Charles Bathurst, at the Cross Keys opposite St. Dunstan's Church, Fleetstreet, 1767)
- Taylor, Jeremy, *A Discourse on the Nature, Offices and Measures of Friendship, with Rules of Conducting it. Written in Answer to a Letter from the Most Ingenious and Vertuous M.K.P.* (1657)
- Waller, Edmund, "A panegyrick to my Lord Protector by a gentleman that loves peace, union, and prosperity of the English nation" (London: Printed by Thomas Newcomb, 1655)
- Watts, Isaac, *Reliquiae Juveniles: Miscellaneous thoughts in prose and verse* (London, 1734)
- Wither, George and Francis Finch, *Friendship* (London: 1654)
http://gateway.proquest.com/openurl?ctx_ver=Z39.88-2003&res_id=xri:eebo&rft_val_fmt=&rft_id=xri:eebo:image:174130 [Accessed 28 January 2009]
- Wordsworth, William, *Lyrical ballads: With pastoral and other poems*, vol. 1, 4th ed. (London: printed for Longman, Hurst, Rees, and Orme, by R. Taylor and Co., 1802)
- Wroth, Lady Mary, *The Countess of Montgomery's Urania: Part I*, ed. by Josephine Roberts (Binghamton, N.Y.: Center for Medieval and Early Renaissance Studies, State University of New York at Binghamton, 1995)

Secondary

- Achinstein, Sharon, *Literature and Dissent in Milton's England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003)
- 'Romance of the Spirit: Female sexuality and religious desire in early modern England', *ELH: Journal of English literary history* 69:2 (2002), 413-438
- Allan, Graham, *Kinship and Friendship in Modern Britain* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996)
- Altman, Janet Gurkin, 'The Letter Book as a Literary Institution 1539-1789: Toward a cultural history of published correspondence in France', *Yale French Studies*, 71 (1986), 17-62.
- Anderson, Penelope, 'The Absent Female Friend: Recent studies in early modern women's Friendship', *Literature Compass*, 7:4 (April 2010), 243-253
- Anderson, Benedict, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism* (London: Verso, 1991)
- Andreadis, Harriette, *Sappho in Early Modern England: Female same-sex literary erotics, 1550-1714*, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2001)
- 'Re-configuring Early Modern Friendship: Katherine Philips and homoerotic desire', *Studies in English Literature 1500-1900*, 46:3 (2006), 523-542.
- Backscheider, Paula R., *Eighteenth-Century Women Poets and Their Poetry: Inventing agency, inventing genre* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2005)
- Baines, Paul and Pat Rogers, *Edmund Curll, bookseller* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007)
- Ballard, George, *Memoirs of Several Ladies of Great Britain: Who have been celebrated for their writings or skill in the learned languages arts and sciences* (Oxford, 1752)
- Barash, Carol, *English Women's Poetry 1649-1714: Politics, community, and linguistic authority* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000)

- ‘The Political Origins of Anne Finch's Poetry’ in *Huntington Library Quarterly*, 54:4 (Autumn, 1991): 327-351
- Battegelli, Anna, *Margaret Cavendish and the Exiles of the Mind* (University Press of Kentucky, 1998)
- Bedford, Ronald, Lloyd Davis, and Philippa Kelly, eds., *Early Modern Autobiography: theories, genres, practices* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press: 2006)
- Berry, Helen, *Gender, Society and Print Culture in Late-Stuart England. The cultural world of the Athenian Mercury* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003)
- “‘Nice and curious questions’”: coffee houses and the representation of women in John Dunton’s *Athenian Mercury*, *The Seventeenth Century*, 12 (1997), 257-76.
- Bowers, Toni, ‘Jacobite Difference and the Poetry of Jane Barker’, *English Literary History*, 64:4 (1997), 857-69.
- Bray, Alan, *The Friend* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003)
- *Homosexuality in Renaissance England* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995)
- Brennan, Michael, “‘A SYDNEY, though un-named’”: Ben Jonson's Influence in the Manuscript and Print Circulation of Lady Mary Wroth's Writings’, *Sidney Journal*, 17:1 (1999), 31-52.
- Brett, Philip, Elizabeth Wood, and Gary C. Thomas, eds, *Queering the Pitch: The new gay and lesbian musicology* (London: Routledge, 1994)
- Britland, Karen, *Drama at the Courts of Queen Henrietta Maria* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006)
- Broad, Jacqueline and Karen Green, *A History of Women's Political Thought in Europe, 1400-1700* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009)
- Burke, Victoria, ‘Let's Get Physical: Bibliography, Codicology, and Seventeenth-century women's manuscripts’, *Literature Compass*, 4:6 (November 2007), 1667-1682 [<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1741-4113.2007.00492.x/full>], accessed December 2010]
- Calhoun, Craig, *Habermas and the Public Sphere* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1993)
- Chalmers, Hero, *Royalist Women Writers 1650-1689* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2004)
- Champion, J.A.I., “‘Manuscripts of Mine Abroad’”: John Toland and the circulation of Ideas, c. 1700-1722’, *Eighteenth Century Ireland* 14 (1999), 9-36.
- Chedgzoy, Kate, *Women's Writing in the British Atlantic World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007)
- Cheney, Patrick Gerard, ‘Career Rivalry and the Writing of Counter-Nationhood: Ovid, Spenser, and Philomela in Marlowe's “The Passionate Shepherd to His Love”’, *English Literary History*, 65:3 (Fall 1998), 523-55.
- Clarke, Norma, ‘Soft passions and darling themes: From Elizabeth Singer Rowe (1674-1737) to Elizabeth Carter (1717-1806)’, *Women's Writing* 7:3 (2000) 353-371.
- Clery, Emma J., *The Feminization Debate in Eighteenth-Century England: Literature, commerce and luxury* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004)
- Coussens, Catherine, ‘Virtue’s Commonwealth: Gendering the royalist cultural rebellion in the English Interregnum (1649-1660)’, *Journal of Arts and Sciences*, 6 (2006) <[http://jas.cankaya.edu.tr/jas6/\(02\)CatherineCoussens.pdf](http://jas.cankaya.edu.tr/jas6/(02)CatherineCoussens.pdf)> (accessed 10 December 2007)
- Cowan, Brian, *The Social Life of Coffee: The emergence of the British Coffeehouses* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005)
- Crossley, Nick and John Michael Roberts, eds., *After Habermas: New perspectives on the public sphere* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2004)
- Cruikshanks, Eveline and Edward Corp, eds, *The Stuart Court in Exile and the Jacobites* (London: The Hambleton Press, 1995)

- Daybell, James, ed., *Women and Politics in Early Modern England 1450-1700* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004)
- D'Addario, Christopher, *Exile and Journey in Seventeenth-century Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007)
- De Groot, Jerome, *Royalist Identities* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004)
- Derrida, Jacques, *Politics of Friendship*, trans. by G. Collins (London: Verso, 1997)
- DiGangi, Mario, *The Homoerotics of Early Modern Drama* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997)
- D'Monté, Rebecca and Nicole Pohl, eds, *Female Communities 1600-1800: Literary visions and cultural realities* (London: St. Martin's Press, 2000)
- Donawerth Jane L. and Carol A. Kolmerton, eds., *Utopian and Science Fiction by Women* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1994)
- Eger, Elizabeth, *Women of Reason from Enlightenment to Romanticism: Living muses* (Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2010)
- Eger, Elizabeth, Charlotte Grant, Cliona O Gallchoir and Penny Warburton, eds, *Women, Writing and the Public Sphere, 1700–1830* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001)
- Ezell, Margaret, *Writing Women's Literary History* (Baltimore and London: John Hopkins University Press, 1996)
- “‘To Be Your Daughter in Your Pen’: The social functions of literature in the writings of Lady Elizabeth Brackley and Lady Jane Cavendish”, *Huntington Library Quarterly*, 51 (1988), 281-96.
- Fitzgerald, William, *Agnostic Poetry: The Pindaric mode in Pindar, Horace, Hölderlin, and the English ode* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1987)
- Fitzmaurice, James, ‘Fancy and the Family: self-characterisations of Margaret Cavendish’, *Huntingdon Library Quarterly*, 53 (1990), 199-210.
- Freeman, Linton, *The Development of Social Network Analysis: A study in the sociology of science* (Vancouver: Empirical Press, 2004)
- Friedman, Donald, *Marvell's Pastoral Art* (London and Berkeley: University of California Press, 1970)
- Froide, Amy, ‘Female Relationships in Early Modern England’, *Journal of British Studies*, 40:2 (2001), 279-89.
- Garrison, James D., *Dryden and the Tradition of Panegyric* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1975)
- Goldberg, Jonathan, ed., *Queering the Renaissance* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1994)
- Gray, Catharine, ‘Katherine Philips and the Post-Courtly Coterie’, *English Literary Renaissance*, 32:3 (2002), 426-451.
- *Women Writers and Public Debate in 17th-century Britain* (Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007)
- ‘Katherine Philips in Ireland’, *English Literary Renaissance*, 39:3 (Autumn 2009), 557-585.
- Greaves, Richard, ‘The Role of Women in Early English Nonconformity’, *Church History*, 52:3 (September 1983), 299-311.
- Greer, Germaine, ed., *Kissing the Rod* (New York: Farrar Straus Giroux, 1988)
- Grundy, Isobel and Susan Wiseman, eds, *Women, Writing, History: 1640-1740* (Athens, Ga.: Univ. of Georgia Press, 1992)
- Haber, Judith, *Pastoral and the Poetics of Self-Contradiction: Theocritus to Marvell* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994)

- Habermas, Jürgen, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An inquiry into a category of bourgeois society*, trans. by Thomas Burger with the assistance of Frederick Lawrence (Cambridge: Polity, 1992)
- Hamilton, John T., *Soliciting Darkness: Pindar, obscurity, and the classical tradition* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2003)
- Hansen, Marlene R., 'The Pious Mrs Rowe', *English Studies*, 76: 1 (1995), 34-51.
- Harris, Frances, *Transformations of Love: The friendship of John Evelyn and Margaret Godolphin* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002)
- Hauser, Gerard, *Vernacular Voices: The rhetoric of publics and public spheres* (Columbia, SC: The University of South Carolina, 1999)
- Healy, Thomas and Jonathan Sawday, eds., *Literature and the English Civil War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990)
- Hellegers, Desiree, "'The Threatening Angel and the Speaking Ass": The Masculine Mismeasure of Madness in Anne Finch's "The Spleen"', *Genre*, 26: 2/3 (Summer/Fall 1993), 199-217.
- Hinnant, Charles H., *The Poetry of Anne Finch: An essay in interpretation* (Newark, DE: University of Delaware Press, 1994)
- Hobby, Elaine, *Virtue of Necessity: English women's writing 1649-1688* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1989)
- Hobby, Elaine and Chris White, eds, *What Lesbians Do in Books: Lesbians as writers, readers and characters in literature* (London: Women's Press, 1991)
- Hochberg, Leonard, 'The English Civil War in Geographical Perspective', *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, 15:4 (Spring 1984), 729-750.
- Houk, Stacy Jocoy, "'Touch but thy Lire (*my Harrie*)": Henry Lawes and the mirthful music of Robert Herrick's *Hesperides*', a paper delivered at *Lords of Wine and Oil: Community and conviviality in the work of Robert Herrick and his contemporaries* (Buckfast Abbey, Devon, 18-20 July 2008)
- Hughes, Helen Sard, 'Elizabeth Rowe and the Countess of Hertford', *PMLA*, 59:3 (September 1944), 726-746.
- Hutson, Lorna, 'The Body of the Friend and the Woman Writer: Katherine Philips's absence from Alan Bray's *The Friend* (2003)', *Women's Writing*, 14:2 (August 2007), 196-214.
- Irrera, Elena, 'Between Advantage and Virtue: Aristotle's theory of political friendship', 2nd Pavia Graduate Conference in Political Philosophy, <<http://www-1.unipv.it/deontica/seminari/irrerapdf>> [accessed 7th January 2009]
- Jankowski, Theodora A., *Pure Resistance: Queer virginity in early modern English drama* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000)
- Justice, George and Nathan Tinker, eds, *Women's Writing and the Circulation of Ideas* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002)
- Kenyon, J. P., *Revolution Principles: The party politics, 1689-1720* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002)
- King, Kathryn, 'Jane Barker, *Poetical Recreations*, and the Sociable Text', *English Literary History (ELH)*, 61 (1994), 551-70.
- "'The Unaccountable Wife" and Other Stories of Female Desire in Jane Barker's *A Patch-Work Screen for the Ladies*', *The Eighteenth Century: Theory and Interpretation*, 35 (Spring 1994), 155-72.
- 'Of Needles and Pens and Women's Work', *Tulsa Studies in Women's Literature* 14 (Spring 1995), 77-93.
- *Jane Barker, Exile: A literary career 1675-1725* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2000)
- King, Kathryn and Jeslyn Medoff, 'Jane Barker and her life (1652-1732): The Documentary Record', *Eighteenth-Century Life*, 21:3 (1997), 16-38.

- Knights, Mark, 'History and literature in the Age of Defoe and Swift', *Literature Compass*, 3:1 (May 2005), doi: 10.1111/j.1478-0542.2005.00131.x
- Koehler, Margaret, 'Odes of Absorption in the Restoration and Early Eighteenth Century', *Studies in English Literature 1500-1900*, 47:3 (Summer 2007), 659-78.
- Lamont, William, ed., *Religion, Renaissance and Civil War, Proceedings of the Folger Institute Center for the History of British Political Thought*, vol. 3 (Washington, DC, 1990), 221-58.
- Landes, Joan B., ed., *Feminism, the Public and the Private* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1998)
- Lanser, Susan Sniader, *Fictions of Authority: Women writers and narrative voice* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1992)
- Lavoie, Chantel M. *Collecting Women: Poetry and Lives, 1700-1780* (Cranbury, NJ: Associated University Presses, 2009)
- Leach, Eleanor Winsor, 'Personal and Communal Memory in the Reading of Horace's Odes 1-3', *Arethusa*, 31:1 (1998), 43-74.
- Limbert, Claudia A., "'The unison of well-tun'd hearts': Katherine Philips' friendships with male writers', *English Language Notes* 29:1 (1991), 25-37.
- Llewellyn, Mark, 'Katherine Philips: Friendship, poetry and neo-platonic thought in seventeenth century England', *Philological Quarterly*, 81:4 (2002), 441-68.
- Lochman, Daniel T., Maritere Lopez and Lorna Hutson, *Discourses and Representations of Friendship in Early Modern Europe 1500-1700* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2010)
- Lamont, William, ed., *Religion, Renaissance and Civil War, Proceedings of the Folger Institute Center for the History of British Political Thought*, vol. 3 (Washington, DC, 1990), 221-58.
- Loscocco, Paula, 'Manly Sweetness: Katherine Philips among the Neoclassicals', *Huntington Library Quarterly*, 56:3 (Summer 1993), 259-79.
- 'Inventing the English Sappho: Katherine Philips's Donnean Poety', *Journal of English and Germanic Philology*, 102 (2003), 59-87
- Love, Harold, 'Scribal Publication in Seventeenth-century England', *Transactions of the Cambridge Bibliographical Society*, 9:2 (1987), 130-155.
- Lowrie, Michele, *Horace's Narrative Odes* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997)
- Loxley, James, *Royalism and Poetry in the English Civil Wars: The drawn sword* (London: Macmillan, 1997)
- Lyon, Ann, *Constitutional History of the United Kingdom*, (London: Cavendish Publishing Limited, 2003)
- Macfaul, Thomas, *Male Friendship in Shakespeare and his Contemporaries* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007)
- MacIntyre, Alastair, *After Virtue: A study in moral theory* (London: Duckworth, 1985)
- Major, Philip, ed., *Literatures of Exile in the English Revolution and its Aftermath, 1640-1690* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2010)
- Marcus, Leah S., *The Politics of Mirth: Jonson, Herrick, Milton, Marvell and the defense of old holiday pastimes* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1986)
- McArthur, Tonya Moutray, 'Jane Barker and the Politics of Catholic Celibacy', *Studies in English Literature*, 47:3 (Summer 2007), 595-618.
- McDowell, Paula, *The Women of Grub Street: Press, Politics and Gender in the London Literary Marketplace, 1678-1730* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998)
- McEwen, Gilbert D., *The Oracle of the Coffee House: John Dunton's 'Athenian Mercury'* (San Marino, CA: The Huntington Library, 1972)
- McGovern, Barbara, *Anne Finch and her poetry: A critical biography* (Athens, GA: The University of Georgia Press, 1992)

- Mears, Natalie, *Queenship and Political Discourse in the Elizabethan Realms* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005)
- Mermin, Dorothy, 'Women Becoming Poets: Katherine Philips, Aphra Behn, Anne Finch', *ELH: Journal of English Literary History* (57:2) 1990, 335-55
- Messenger, Ann, *Gender at Work: Four women writers of the eighteenth century* (Detroit, MI: Wayne State University Press, 1990)
- *Pastoral Tradition and the Female Talent* (New York: AMS Press, 2001)
- Michel, Pierre, 'Vie d'un Honnête Homme,' in *Essais* (Paris: Livre de poche, 1972)
- Millman, Jill Seal and Gillian Wright, eds, *Early Modern Women's Manuscript Poetry* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2005)
- Mintz, Susannah B., 'Katherine Philips and the Space of Friendship', *Restoration*, 22.2 (1998), 62-78
- Monod, Paul, *Jacobitism and the English People, 1688-1788* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989)
- Moody, Ellen, 'Orinda, Rosania, Lucasia *et aliae*: Towards a new edition of the works of Katherine Philips', *Philological Quarterly*, 66 (1987), 325-54
- Mulgan, Richard, *Aristotle's Political Theory* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1977)
- Munroe, Jennifer, *Gender and the Garden in Early Modern English Literature* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008)
- Ng, Su Fang, *Literature and the Politics of Family in Seventeenth-century England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007)
- Norbrook, David, *Writing the English Republic: Poetry, rhetoric and politics, 1627-1660* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999)
- O'Callaghan, Michelle, *The 'shepherds nation': Jacobean Spenserians and early Stuart political culture 1612-1625* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2000)
- Pahl, Ray, *On Friendship* (Cambridge: Polity, 2000)
- Patterson, Annabel, *Censorship and Interpretation* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1984)
- Major, Philip, ed., *Literatures of Exile in the English Revolution and its Aftermath* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2010)
- Pohl, Nicole, *Women, Space and Utopia, 1600-1800* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006)
- Potter, Lois, *Secret Rites and Secret Writing: royalist literature 1641-1660* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989)
- Prescott, Sarah, *Women, Authorship and Literary Culture 1690-1740* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003)
- 'Provincial Networks, Dissenting Connections, and Noble Friends: Elizabeth Singer Rowe and female authorship in early eighteenth-century England', *Eighteenth-Century Life*, 25:1 (Winter 2001), 29-42.
- "'That private shade, wherein my Muse was bred": Katherine Philips and the Poetic Spaces of Welsh Retirement', *Philological Quarterly*, 88:4 (2009), 345-366
- Prescott, Sarah and David E. Shuttleworth, eds., *Women and Poetry 1660-1750* (London: Palgrave, 2003)
- Price, Bronwen, 'Verse, Voice and Body: The retirement mode and women's poetry 1680-1723', *Early Modern Literary Studies* 12.3 (January 2007), 5.1-44
- "Journeys Beyond Frontiers: Knowledge, Subjectivity and Out Space in Margaret Cavendish's *the Blazing World*," *Literature and History* 7 (1998): 21-59
- "'Spotless passion": Public face and private space in the poetry of Katherine Philips, the 'matchless Orinda', *Poetry Wales* 33.1 (1997), 44-49
- Prior, Mary, ed., *Women in English Society 1500-1800* (London: Methuen, 1985)

- Pritchard, Alan, 'Marvell's "The Garden": A Restoration poem?', *Studies in English Literature 1500-1900*, 23:3 (1983), 371-388.
- Purkiss, Diane, *Literature, Gender and Politics during the English Civil War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005)
- Radcliffe, David Hill, *Edmund Spenser, a reception history* (Columbia, SC: Camden House, 1996)
- Revard, Stella, "'Pindarique Odes" and the Politics of the Interregnum', *Criticism* 35(1993), 391-418.
- *Politics, Poetics and the Pindaric Ode 1450-1700* (Turnhout: Brepols Publishers, 2010)
- Richards, Jennifer, *Elizabeth Singer Rowe: Printed writings 1641-1700* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003)
- Richetti, John J., 'Mrs. Elizabeth Rowe: The novel as polemic', *PMLA*, 82:7 (December, 1967), 522-529.
- Roberts, John, ed., *New Perspectives on the Seventeenth-century English Religious Lyric* (New York: Columbia, 1994)
- Roberts, Sasha, 'Women's Literary Capital in Early Modern England: Formal composition and rhetorical display in manuscript and print', *Women's Writing*, 14:2 (2007), 246-269
- Rostvig, Maren-Sofie, *The Happy Man: Studies in the metamorphoses of a classical ideal* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1954)
- Rousseau, Jean-Jacques, *The Social Contract: And the first and second discourses*, ed. by Susan Dunn (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002)
- Rowton, Frederick, *The Female Poets of Great Britain, Chronologically Arranged, with Copious Selections and Critical Remarks* (London, 1848)
- Said, Edward W. *Reflections on Exile and Other Essays* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002)
- Sambrook, James, *English Pastoral Poetry* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1983)
- Sanders, Julie, 'Caroline Salon Culture and Female Agency: The Countess of Carlisle, Henrietta Maria, and public theatre', *Theatre Journal*, 52:4 (December 2000), 449-464.
- Sandy, Amelia Zurcher, 'Pastoral, Temperance, and the Unitary Self in Wroth's *Urania*', *Studies in English Literature*, 42:1 (2002), 103-20.
- Scama, Simon, *Landscape and Memory* (New York: Random House, 1995)
- Schweitzer, Ivy, *Perfecting Friendship: Politics and affiliation in early American literature* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006)
- Scott, Jonathan, *England's Troubles: Seventeenth century English political instability in the European context* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000)
- Sedgwick, Eve Kosofsky, *Between Men: English literature and male homosocial desire* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1985)
- Shands, Kerstin. *Embracing Space: Spatial Metaphors in feminist discourse* (Greenwood Publishing Group, 1999)
- Shannon, Laurie, *Sovereign Amity: Figures of friendship in Shakespearean contexts* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2002)
- Sharpe, Kevin and Peter Lake, eds., *Culture and Politics in Early Stuart England* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1993)
- Shepard, Alexandra and Phil Withington, eds, *Communities in early modern England: networks, place, rhetoric* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 2000)
- Shifflett, Andrew, *Stoicism, Politics and Literature in the Age of Milton: War and peace reconciled* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998)

- Shore, David R., *Spenser and the Poetics of Pastoral: A study of the world of Colin Clout* (Quebec: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1985)
- Singley, Carol J. and Susan Elizabeth Sweeny, eds., *Anxious Power: Reading, Writing, and Ambivalence in Narrative by Women* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1993)
- Sitter, John, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to Eighteenth-Century Poetry* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001)
- Smith, Hilda L., *All Men and Both Sexes: Gender, politics and the false universal in England, 1640-1832* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2002)
- *Reason's Disciples: Seventeenth-century English feminists* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1982)
- *Women Writers and the Early Modern British Political Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998)
- Smuts, Robert Malcolm, *The Stuart Court and Europe: Essays in politics and political culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996)
- Snyder, Susan, 'Creating the Women Writer: the autobiographical works of Jane Barker', *Tulsa Studies in Women's Literature*, 2 (1983), 165-81.
- *Pastoral Process: Spenser, Marvell, Milton* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1998)
- Spencer, Jane, 'Creating the Women Writer: The autobiographical works of Jane Barker', *Tulsa Studies in Women's Literature*, 2 (1983), 165-81.
- *The Rise of the Women Novelist: from Aphra Behn to Jane Austen* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1986)
- Spiegelman, William, *Majestic Indolence: English romantic poetry and the work of art* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995)
- Starr, G. Gabrielle, 'Cavendish, Aesthetics, and the Anti-Platonic Line', *Eighteenth Century Studies*, 39:3 (2006), 295-308.
- Summers, Claude J., ed., *Homosexuality in Renaissance and Enlightenment England: Literary representations in historical context* (New York: Harrington Park, 1992)
- Summers, Claude J. and Ted-Larry Pebworth, *Representing Women in Renaissance England*, ed. by Claude J. Summers and Ted-Larry Pebworth (Columbia and London: University of Missouri Press, 1997)
- *The English Civil Wars in the Literary Imagination* (Columbia, Missouri: University of Missouri Press, 1999)
- Swenson, Rivka, 'Representing Modernity in Jane Barker's Galesia Trilogy: Jacobite allegory and the aesthetics of the patch-work subject', *Studies in Eighteenth-Century Culture* 38:1 (2005), 55-80
- Szechi, David, *The Jacobites, Britain and Europe, 1688-1788* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1994)
- Taylor, Charles, *Modern Social Imaginaries* (Duke University Press: 2004)
- Thomas, Patrick, *Katherine Philips ('Orinda')* (Wales: University of Wales Press, 1988)
- Traub, Valerie, *The Renaissance of Lesbianism in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002)
- Turner, James, *The Politics of Landscape: Rural scenery and society in English poetry 1630-1660* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1979)
- Underdown, David, *Revel, Riot and Rebellion: Popular politics and culture in England 1603-1660* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1985)
- Veevers, Erica, *Images of Love and Religion: Queen Henrietta Maria and court entertainments* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989)
- Walker, Claire, *Gender and Politics in Early Modern Europe: English convents in France and the low countries* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003)

- Walzer, Michael, *Radical Principles* (New York: Basic, 1980)
- Warner, Michael, *Publics and Counterpublics* (New York: Zone Books, 2002)
- Welch, Anthony, 'Epic Romance, Royalist Retreat, and the English Civil War', *Modern Philology*, 105:3 (February 2008), 570-602.
- Wiesner, Merry E., *Women and Gender in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000)
- Williamson, Marilyn, *Raising their Voices: British women writers 1650-1750* (Wayne State University Press, 1990)
- Wilson, Marilyn L., *Raising Their Voices: British women writers 1650-1750* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1990)
- Wiseman, Susan, *Conspiracy and Virtue: Women, writing and politics in seventeenth-century England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006)
- Womersley, David, Paddy Bullard and Abigail Williams, eds., *Cultures of Whiggism: New essays on English literature and culture in the long eighteenth century* (Newark: Delaware University Press, 2005)
- Wood, Julia, *Gendered Lives: Communication, gender, and culture* (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 1994)
- Worden, Blair, 'The Politics of Marvell's Horatian Ode', *The Historical Journal*, 27:3 (September, 1984), 525-547.
- Young, Elizabeth V., 'Aphra Behn, Gender, and Pastoral', *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900*, 33:3 (Summer 1993), 523-543.