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MODES OF JUDGEMENT IN MARVELL'S POETRY

by

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A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

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The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research, for acceptance, a thesis entitled "Modes of Judgement in Marvell's Poetry," submitted by John R. Thompson in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree Master of Arts.

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ABSTRACT

In the poetry of Andrew Marvell, judgement is a successful effort directed toward full understanding. Its two basic elements are a pressing effort to evaluate, and an equally strong effort to balance opposing points of view. These two elements are found in isolation in two poems that do not judge, "Flecknō, an English Priest at Rome" and "Mourning," and are combined in a poem of judgement, "The Coronet."

Most of the techniques of judgement are also present in "The Definition of Love," but it is not a poem of judgement, because the understanding it expresses is, at best, much too elusive to be regarded as a judgement. Several poems express, without judiciously balancing, their attitudes, and convey at least opinion, if not judgement. These are, "Musicks Empire," "Bermudas" and "The Fair Singer." Others express attitudes, and also balance opposing points of view, without however conveying judgement. These are, "On a Drop of Dew," "The Gallery" and "The Picture of little T.C. in a Prospect of Flowers." In each of these three poems an evaluation is expressed, and balance is present, but each fails to express a full understanding of its situation. Yet it is only by a narrow margin that "On a Drop of Dew" fails to judge.

The remaining poems of judgement in which balance and evaluation are most successfully combined are, "An Horatian Ode," "A Dialogue, between The Resolved Soul, and Created Pleasure," "On Mr. Milton's Paradise Lost" and "A Dialogue between the Soul and Body." Since the first four poems embody significant public concerns, their evaluations gain a great deal of strength from their representative nature. On the other hand, "The Coronet" and "A Dialogue between the Soul and Body" are more private and personal utterances; but because they involve specific and publicly accessible Christian issues, their attitudes can be assessed.

Neither "To his Coy Mistress" nor "The Garden" is a poem of judgement. The attitudes in the former, while seemingly justified by ~~the~~ formal argument, do not seem appropriate for the occasion. Attitudes in "The Garden" are too elusive, and in crucial places, too idiosyncratic to be regarded as judgements.

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When used in a loose sense, judgement is often taken to be synonymous with opinion, but there is another, more restricted sense that entails the presence of evidence upon which the judgement is based. The judgements arrived at in courts of law are the most notable examples of this use of the term, for there judgements, at least in the ideal situation, invariably involve wise and judicious consideration of sound evidence. Thoughtfully to weigh and consider valid evidence in any situation would be to judge in this sense.

This thesis attempts to isolate this activity in the non-satirical poetry of Andrew Marvell. His poems do not, of course, proceed as do courts of law, but the principle whereby the situation in a poem is given the kind of treatment that calls forth the response that this is a poem of judgement, is the same principle at work in the ideal law court: the poem, as well as the ideal judge, will display an attempt to come to the fullest, most mature understanding of its situation. The most suggestive description of this activity is given in Coleridge's elucidation of the imagination:

> This power . . . reveals itself in the balance or reconciliation of opposite or discordant qualities . . . judgement ever awake and steady

> self-possession, with enthusiasm and feeling profound or vehement; and while it blends and harmonizes the natural and the artificial, still subordinates art to nature; the manner to the matter; and our admiration of the poet to our sympathy with the poetry.[1]

Where Marvell's imagination balances and reconciles opposite or discordant qualities, and subordinates the manner to the matter, we will probably find a poem of judgement.

This approach to Marvell's poetry is anticipated by A. Alvarez. While contending that Marvell is "the foremost poet of judgment in the English language," he defines his critical term:

> By judgment I mean a quality which presents, balances and evaluates a whole situation, seeing all the implications and never attempting to simplify them. The poet's whole effort is directed towards a full and delicate sanity, so that what he finally achieves is a kind of personal impersonality.[2]

This definition is almost fully adequate for my purposes, requiring only three refinements. First, I want the phrase,

[1]Samuel Taylor Coleridge, "Biographia Literaria," ch. xiv, in Samuel Taylor Coleridge: Selected Poetry and Prose, ed. Elisabeth Schneider (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1951), pp. 274-275.

[2]The School of Donne (London: Chatto and Windus, 1962), pp. 105-106.

"a full and delicate sanity" to be understood not as a psychological [illegible] to its complexity, even within its clinical framew[illegible] to make it useful for this type of disc[illegible] phrase will be taken to signify an [illegible] seem to be the maturest possible.

Second, the meaning of personal impersonality" must be understo[illegible] the sense asserted by F. R. Leavis in his description of Marvell's [illegible] us with interested concern" in the "Horatian Ode:"

> the attitudes seem to be wholly determined by the nature of what is seen and judged, and the expression of feeling to be secondary and merely incidental to just statement and presentment.[3]

The outstanding aspect of Leavis' statement is the succinctness with which its first phrase essentially restates the desideratum of Coleridge that the manner of presentation is wholly at the service of the subject. Leavis' phrasing is suitable for my purposes because of the way it stresses the obligation in a poem of judgement that the poet has toward his evidence. He will not, for example, direct his effort toward displaying his own ingenuity, but will give us the impression that the situation itself is as important as his own feelings about it.

[3]"'Thought' and Emotional Quality, Scrutiny, 13 (1945), rpt. in A Selection From Scrutiny, I, ed. F. R. Leavis (London: Cambridge University Press, 1968), p. 224.

The last refinement of Alvarez's definition is based on the difficulty involved in determining the extent to which Marvell's poetry "presents, balances and evaluates" a situation, especially when emphasis is placed on evaluation. I assume that if a poem merely presents and balances a situation without providing an evaluation, then it cannot properly be called a poem of judgement. And it is a commonly acknowledged problem with Marvell's poems that their evaluations, when present, are notoriously difficult to define. This feature is representatively stated in Andor Gomme's discovery of a "curious elusiveness in his poetry which has been felt by many readers."[4]

This thesis consists of four chapters. The first examines three poems, two of which display in isolation the two basic features of judgement: balanced antitheses and evaluation. The third poem, "The Coronet," combines these two elements in a poem of judgement. The second chapter examines two poems that seem to contain most of the features of "The Coronet," and yet clearly do not judge. The third examines six poems: the first three display quite clear presentation of attitudes, along with some of the techniques of judgement, in order to express what is commonly taken to be judgement; the next three express something very similar to a judgement. The last chapter examines Marvell's four remaining poems of judgement. There is also a short conclusion that attempts to justify, in a necessarily brief way,

[4] "The Teasingness of Andrew Marvell," Oxford Review, No. 8(1968), p. 13.

the exclusion from the category of poems of judgement, two of Marvell's most famous poems: "The Garden" and "To his Coy Mistress."

I. THE ELEMENTS OF JUDGEMENT

A poem that is, in some, though not, fortunately, in all ways representative of Marvell's characteristic techniques of presentation is "Mourning."[5] The ostensible motive of the poem is to provide the meaning of Chlora's tears. The first speculation is that the "Woe" they stem from is the death of her lover: "As if she, with those precious Tears, / Would strow the ground where Strephon lay" (ll. 11-12). This seems to be the speaker's imputation of sincere grief, but the next four stanzas undermine this view by expressing the opposing speculations of two skeptics. The first sees Chlora courting "her self in am'rous Rain" (l. 19), which may or may not have been precipitated by real grief, but which now seems to be selfish indulgence in the trappings of grief. The second is "bolder" in viewing her tears as, in one way like garbage "from her Windows thrown" (l. 24),[6] and in another like "Donatives" (l. 27) given upon the arrival of a new lover.

The speaker addresses the speculations of the two skeptics:

> How wide they dream! The Indian slaves
> That sink for Pearl through Seas profound,

[5]My line references throughout correspond to the line notations in, Andrew Marvell: Complete Poetry, ed. George deF. Lord (New York: The Modern Library, 968). Additional explanatory material is obtained from, The Poems and Letters of Andrew Marvell, ed. H. M. Margoliouth (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1927), I.

[6]see James Winny's comment in Andrew Marvell: Some Poems (London: Hutchinson Educational, Ltd., 1962), p. 99, that this refers to "one contemporary means of rubbish-disposal."

Would find her Tears yet deeper Waves
And not of one the bottom sound. (ll.29-32)

The challenging tone of the opening statement gives "wide" its primary meaning as wide of the mark: the speaker is saying the skeptics are wholly wrong. But the speaker's immediate appeal to evidence from half-way around the world introduces the concept of wideness in the sense of far-ranging. The speaker, as well as the skeptics, is wide, so that the taint of wrongness ascribed to the skeptical views adheres also to the view of the speaker.

The figure he offers is apparently meant to refute the skeptics, but because it seems primarily to assert that there can be no solution, this figure is an evasion. And as Winifred Nowottny's discovery of a possible ambivalence created by a pun on "sound" points out, the evasion itself is ambiguously presented:

> If 'sound' is taken as a verb, the quatrain says that the waters of Chlora's tears are so deep that even the Indian pearl-divers could not sound their depths; if however it is taken as an adjective, then the quatrain says that if one were to procure divers experienced enough to get to the bottom of these waves it would be found that none had any solid ground beneath.[7]

The temptation, taken with such aplomb by Winifred Nowottny,

[7] from The Language Poets Use, (1962), rpt. in John Carey, ed., Andrew Marvell: A Critical Anthology (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1969), p.319.

to see ambivalence in this passage, is quite strong. Beginning with ambiguity in "wide," the impression is that this speaker is evading the question, and this impression is amplified by a subtle suggestion that this figure is uncomplimentary. The figure also contains a good reason for not writing the poem. Since the speaker knows that the meaning of Chlora's tears seems impossible to fathom, we must ask why he wants to pretend to search for that meaning. In this stanza he is plainly not attempting to offer a solution.

That he is not seriously attempting to understand the situation is evident from the almost snide tone of the last stanza:

> I yet my silent Judgment keep,
> Disputing not what they believe:
> But sure as oft as Women weep,
> It is to be suppos'd they grieve. (ll.33-36)

The first line is redundant, for the effort in the previous stanza is clearly a suspension of judgement. The second line is doubly redundant, and also confirms the latent possibility in the previous stanza for taking the meaning of "wide" in the sense of far-ranging: the skeptics are given the credence they seemed at first to lose with that stanza's opening refutation. The last two lines of the poem contain two possibilities: they could mean that when women weep we concur in the polite fiction that they grieve, and they also could mean that when women weep we can safely assume that they really are grieving.

Although the offhanded tone of the final lines may be

taken as support for the anti-feminist reading the effort directed throughout the poem to avoid the presentation of unambiguous attitudes suggests that, "I yet my silent Judgment keep," is the only seriously held attitude the poem offers. We note that had the first two words of this line been reversed to say, "Yet I...," the stress would have fallen on "I to give a stronger sense of the speaker's presence, a sense that would also have been emphasized by internal rhyme. The fact that this possibility, presumably, was rejected, lends greater objectivity and less credibility to the speaker.

This line seems to mock the effort to judge. It may mean he has a judgement, but is keeping it to himself, and might also mean that a "silent" judgement is expressed in the verse. And "yet" suggests that he is either still keeping to himself a judgement he has had for some time, or that he may reveal his judgement at some later time. This wealth of possibilities that stress the cleverness of the speaker much more than the ostensible situation makes it clear that not only is this poem not a poem of judgement, but that it strenuously resists judging. Its effort is directed toward avoiding judgement, not toward understanding the situation.

"Mourning" illuminates the central problem involved in regarding Marvell as a poet of judgement. The situation is,

in accordance with Alvarez's criteria, presented and balanced in a remarkably precise way, but the evaluation necessary to reconcile the balanced attitudes in order to form a judgement is deliberately withheld. Most readers search for the speaker's attitudes toward the poem's question about the meaning of Chlora's tears. So M. C. Bradbrook and M. G. Lloyd Thomas find a "delicate malice" directed against Chlora,[8] and Donald M. Friedman defines the speaker's pose as a "cynical, yet painstakingly polite disbelief in the constancy of women."[9] But these subtle discriminations of attitudes receive a great deal less emphasis from the speaker than does his relentless refusal to make any judgement; and this refusal is not necessarily related to any sense he might have of maintaining politeness of discourse. Instead of attempting to decide upon the meaning of Chlora's tears he seems to mock attempts to do so.

Robert Frost in an interview describes his attitude toward writing a poem:

[8]Andrew Marvell (London: Cambridge University Press, 1940), p. 32.

[9]Marvell's Pastoral Art (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1970), 46.

> The whole thing is performance and prowess and feats of association. Why don't critics talk about those things -- what a feat it was to turn that way, and what a feat it was to remember that, to be reminded of that by this? Why don't they talk about that? Scoring. You've got to score.[10]

Frost's interviewer on that occasion, Richard Poirier, has attempted to construct a critical method that seems to have been inspired by this attitude toward artistic activity. In the title essay of his recent book, The Performing Self,[11] Poirier advocates a novel approach to the type of literature in which the writer treats "any occasion as a 'scene' or a stage for dramatizing the self as a performer," and where the writer often "admits with unusual candor that what excites him most in a work is finally himself as a performer" (The Performing Self, pp. 86-86). With the writer's performing self as a focal point, Poirier discusses Frost, Norman Mailer, Henry James, and, to a lesser extent, Marvell and Thoreau.

The outstanding feature of this approach in relation to the question of judgement is its diminution of the importance of meaning -- "It is a question not of belief in meanings," Poirier claims (p.88) -- a diminution strikingly evident in "Mourning."

[10]Writers at Work: The Paris Review Interviews, 2nd series, ed. George Plimpton (New York: The Viking Press, 1968), p. 32.

[11]"The Performing Self," in Harvard English Studies 2:

The effort of the speaker in this poem is so intensely directed to his performance that to consider it as a serious expression of attitudes, however subtle or complex, is to miss its essential nature. And poems such as "Mourning" that show more concern for treating attitudes in a playful manner in order to display delight in ingenuity are at an opposite extreme from poems of judgement. But the two extremes are not easily differentiated.

"Mourning" provides the techniques for making a judgement, especially the central technique: the establishment of antithetical points of view. These are most pointed in the ambivalent attitudes expressed by puns on "wide" and "sound," and almost as sharply in the conflict between the speaker's opening view and the views of the two skeptics. This pattern is repeated in the sixth and seventh stanzas by comparing tears first with garbage, then with gifts given on special occasions. These antitheses are not reconciled as they would be in a poem of judgement, but are instead concluded by another antithesis in the two final lines. And yet this sharp delineation of antithetical points of view is characteristic of Marvell's most successful poems of judgement. This consistent pattern of antitheses suggests a state of mind that takes delight in setting forth opposing viewpoints without

Twentieth Century Literature in Retrospect, ed. Reuben Brower (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1971), pp. 87-109, rpt. in Richard Poirier, The Performing Self (New York: Oxford University Press, 1971), pp. 86-111.

feeling the need to reconcile them.

"Fleckno, an English Priest at Rome" provides an illustrative contrast to "Mourning." In place of the deliberate withholding of attitudes of "Mourning," this poem presents its attitudes with such unambiguous clarity that it seems to offer what is commonly thought of as a judgement. Fleckno is evaluated, but the conspicuous absence of a balance of attitudes suggests that Marvell is not interested in scrupulously examining the situation in order to understand and judge it. If judgement is taken in the restricted sense of weighing and considering evidence, then what Marvell offers in this poem is not a judgement, for there is little in the nature of evidence to be weighed, and almost no effort to consider what is presented.

When describing his motives for writing this poem, the speaker seems to assume that he and the reader are in essential agreement about the woeful inadequacy of Flecknoe's verse:

> Only this frail Ambition did remain,
> The last distemper of the sober Brain,
> That there had been some present to assure
> The future Ages how I did indure. (11.27-30)

The tone of this passage seems to show a clever young man speaking to his peers, all of whom are in the know about the inflated literary pretensions of Richard Flecknoe. The self-consciousness of the speaker is not the kind associated with

understanding, but the kind that, by pointing to oneself as a performer, mocks the situation. This is not a performance in the sense that "Mourning" displays clever legerdemain with assessments, but in the sense that the assessment is a known factor; so the task remaining is to put on a show to entertain a select group.

Intimacy is also assumed in the conversational tone the speaker takes toward his audience:

> Nothing now Dinner stay'd
> But till he had himself a Body made.
> I mean till he were drest: for else so thin
> He stands, as if he only fed had been
> With consecrated Wafers: and the Host
> Hath sure more flesh and blood than he can boast.
> (ll. 57-62)

The comfortable assumption in the third line is that the reader is interested in the story itself, as well as any interpolations the speaker might add. And the humour issuing from this aside is based on a prejudice, so it, too, assumes a similar attitude in the reader.

Flecknoe stands evaluated, but he is not judged, for neither he nor his poems can be said to exist in the poem: if they do not exist they cannot have been judged. A caricature who eats flies (l. 50), and who, is so hungry that his gut strings keep tune to his lute (ll. 41-44) is presented, and the speaker's

exaggerated reactions to Flecknoe's verse are presented, but neither Flecknoe nor his verse are given sufficient reality to allow the reader to weigh and consider for himself if the speaker's reactions are justified. Attitudes are not balanced, but thrown out boldly, even flagrantly, with no consideration for either the integrity of the situation nor for the reader who might wish to come to a fuller understanding of the subject than the poem offers. This technique could conceivably produce a humorous poem, but never a poem of judgement.

When the impulse of "Mourning" to balance attitudes is combined in a single poem with the impulse of "Fleckno" to communicate them, it should be a poem of judgement: such a poem is "The Coronet." Although readers disagree about Marvell's precise attitude toward his previous poetry in this poem, all agree that it is in some way being assessed. Where Friedman finds a "passionate and uncompromising disavowal of secular verse" (Marvell's Pastoral Art, p. 82), Dennis Davison declares that "we do not know exactly what kind of poetry has been condemned" and that, far from uncompromisingly disavowing his former verse, "he expresses a quiet pride in the knowledge that his work has been 'set with skill and chosen out with care'."[12] Unless one, or perhaps both of these critics have misread the poem,

[12]Marvell: Poems (London: Edward Arnold, 1968), p. 17.

their difference of opinion raises the possibility that the attitudes expressed in the poem are balanced so equally that the poem seems, like "Mourning," to avoid judgement.

This possibility seems to me one of the crucial difficulties in reading Marvell's best poems of judgement, and I intend to offer what is at least a partial resolution of the problem. To begin with, there is T. S. Eliot's famous criterion for Marvell's wit: "It involves, probably, a recognition, implicit in the expression of every experience, of other kinds of experience which are possible."[13] This critical commonplace has the virtue of combining general utility with sharp insight. It is used to explain in a vague way, a very great deal about Marvell's poetry, as its inclusion in numerous analyses, usually in connection with the term "balance," testifies. But to say of "The Coronet" that Marvell recognizes, as he does not in "Fleckn[illegible]," that a single, simple attitude toward his subject does it injustice, and that other attitudes have therefore to be accounted for, goes only part way in defining with precision the interplay of attitudes in the poem. And this is the kind of imprecision that Eliot's phrase permits.

More pointed is Louis Martz's thesis that a quality central to Marvell's vision is the view that:

[13]"Andrew Marvell," in Selected Essays, 3rd ed. rev. (London: Faber and Faber, 1969), p. 303.

> nothing in this world exists absolutely, the opposite of every reality is also real and true. Everything is expressed in extremes opposed to other extremes, and it is only by this paradoxical pairing of opposites that meaningful statement is possible. This paradoxical approach does not signify, however, that each statement is the retraction of the last, but that truth inherently has two sides, that reality is Janus-faced, and that adherence to truth and reality involves the avoidance of all over-simplification and comprehending things in their complexity.[14]

Here Eliot's "other kinds of experience" is more specifically defined as a "pairing of opposites," and the mode of apprehending reality is given a cosmographic dimension that it does not have in Eliot's description. It is not merely wit that Marvell exemplifies but a way of perceiving everything in life as inherently entertaining its opposite. This is surely a more precise rendering of "balance" in Marvell, for it explains the motive behind each particular case, and at a glance it seems attractive, for, aside from what I have termed the "performing self" in "Mourning," nothing else so accurately describes the mode of that poem. If, however, it is true that Martz defines a quality that lies at the very "center of Marvell's vision" (The Wit of Love, p. 170), then the question of judgement in Marvell becomes more subtle than it has hitherto appeared.

[14]The Wit of Love (Notre Dame: The University of Notre Dame Press, 1969), p. 170.

That is, whether or not one accepts this view of ultimate reality, some particular, especially very complex sit ns will command from most men a similar response. But such a response is, in common usage, a suspension of judgement. A situation in this case may be presented, and balanced, but not judged in the normal sense, and this presentation may be the maturest possible assessment of the situation: the judgement would not be one-sided but would consist of the simultaneous expression of conflicting attitudes. Thus, when Marvell's poems seem to endorse conflicting attitudes, it is the reader's task to determine whether or not the best possible judgement has been mad . If these attitudes "seem to be wholly determined by the nature of what is seen and judged," then he cannot be said to be wholly committed to the antithetical perspective. If, however, the presentation of conflicting attitudes pairs opposites where no opposites need exist, then his judgements cannot be regarded as fully adequate, but will seem to be spurious.

The sentence consisting of the first eight lines of "The Coronet" is syntactically difficult:

> When for the Thorns with which I long, too long,
> With many a piercing wound,
> My Saviours head have crown'd,
> I seek with Garlands to redress that Wrong;

Through every Garden, every Mead,
I gather flow'rs (my fruits are only flow'rs)
Dismantling all the fragrant Towers
That once adorn'd my Shepherdesses head. (ll. 1-8)

The repetition, uncommon in Marvell, of "long," on first reading encourages the acceptance of "I long" as an active verb. But since the longing "to" thorns has no object, this reading must be rejected. The fourth line, "I seek with Garlands to redress the Wrong," presents a more complex problem. "I seek," again on first reading, seems to refer to "Thorns": "For Thorns...I seek," is the first impression. This too, must be rejected, but still the syntax is not clear, for the construction implies that in place of thorns he seeks for something else, but a "for" to identify this expected object is not to be found. Instead, the object is the infinitive: "I seek with Garlands to redress that Wrong." The firm establishment of replacement of physical thorns by an intangible "redressing" action requires careful rereading. Once that is done, however, the meaning becomes substantially more clear: "When I seek to redress the wrong I have done to my Saviour by crowning His head with thorns for much too long, I gather flowers..."

The inadequacy of this paraphrase to the emotional content of the original is obvious, because the strain involved in

clarifying the involutions reenacts for the reader the sense of anguish felt by the speaker, an anguish that seems appropriate to his actions. The syntactical ease of lines 5-8 contrasts with the strain of the previous four lines, suggesting that while seeking to right the wrong is immensely difficult, the actual putting a resolution into effect is easy. Action comes easily to the speaker, but making the resolution to perform right action is very hard. The speaker's attitude toward his work is richly ambivalent, and consistent in this ambivalence. For example, while the anguish embodied in the first four lines seems quite sincere, the word "redress," while carrying the primary meaning of amending a wrong, also means simply to dress again, so that the sincere wish seems slightly tainted by association with less significant activity. In this case the literal meaning diminishes the significance of the allegorical, as a shepherd redecorating a coronet and a poet expiating his sins are forced into an alliance which seems on the surface to be incongruous. It has the potential to turn in a humourous direction.

A recognition of incongruity in the two activities, however, seems also to be the attitude of the speaker who declares "my fruits are only flowers." By thus associating his poems with floral decoration he is implicitly declaring that they are not

worthy in reality to "redress that Wrong." This slur on his [illegible]on ought, perhaps, to end the poem at this point, but [illegible]act that the poem continues denotes an alternative attitude toward his work, an attitude that seems to be a pride in his performance. This coexistence of antithetical attitudes is reiterated:

> And now when I have summ'd up all my store,
> Thinking (so I my self deceive)
> So rich a Chaplet thence to weave
> As never yet the king of Glory wore.. (ll. 9-12)

Here his conflicting attitudes are strikingly explicit. The imposition of a qualification between the indication of thought and the thought itself means that the qualification is not an afterthought but that it is inextricably bound to the impulse to self-aggrandisement. This recognition that his best and worst impulses are inseparable, that as soon as one surfaces, its opposite springs up to counter it, seems to be unflinchingly honest self-analysis.

The following lines precisely identify the temptation as "wreaths of Fame and Interest" (ll. 13-16). The yearning for these effectively balances the yearning stated at the opening to repair the wrongs he has committed. He also reiterates the inextricability of good and bad impulses by juxtaposing the foul

coils of the serpent with Christ's coronet in the pun on "wreaths." Then, as if achieving a breakthrough, which Ann Berthoff declares "is itself an act of grace,"[15] the speaker comments on his succumbing to the appeal of those wreaths:

> Ah, foolish Man, that would'st debase with them,
> And mortal Glory, Heavens Diadem! (ll., 17-18)

This clear, untainted condemnation shows that his conflicting attitudes have been sorted out, and that each has finally been given the judgement it deserves. At least a change of heart seems to have occurred.

The change of attitude at this point seems not so dramatic as to require the description, "an act of grace." This declaration is the proper and logical evaluation of weakness that has already been implicitly evaluated. Its identification as an act of grace would have to be justified by the results it produces. If it is such an act then the result will have to be commensurate with the speaker's new state: he will demonstrate that his heart is now pure. If, however, it is only an expression of his will to become pure, the problem will remain, and could even be more intense than before.

The remainder of the poem (ll. 19-26) is a prayer to Christ

[15] The Resolved Soul (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970), p. 51.

for assistance in defeating the satanic impulse. But two aspects of the prayer indicate that the speaker's heart is much less pure than would be expected from a man who had just received infusion of grace from God. First, the word "curious" taken in the sense of "skilfully, elaborately or beautifully wrought" (O.E.D.), establishes what seems to be the properly just pride of the speaker in his work. It has to admit a positive evaluation of his work or the prayer might appear to be about trifling matters, and the attitude expressed by this single adjective strikes the required balance between the wish to overcome temptation and the recognition of the importance to the speaker of what is being given up. Had the prayer ended with the next line, with the emphasis on "die," it would have demonstrated the purity of heart consistent with a state of grace, but the additional self interest comes with the force of an afterthought that markedly disturbs the balance maintained in the prayer to that point:

> Or shatter too with him my curious frame:
> And let these wither, so that he may die,
> Though set with Skill and chosen out with Care.
> (ll. 22-24)

The last line is truly an afterthought, for he has already recognized the value of his verse. The fact that the line seems like an afterthought suggests that the speaker's previous

inability to separate satanic from divine impulses has to some extent been overcome. The assignment of a full, separate line to the thought emphasizes the distinction of this thought from the syntactically complete prayer.

This differentiation, however, is not absolute, for, according to the logic of the verse it is implied from the beginning of the prayer. Without a line in this position ending with a word that rhymes with "Snare," the metrics of this section would be incomplete. The rhyme scheme would appear as ABC AB (ll. 19-25) so that an extra line "C" is required even though the first five lines are syntactically complete.

Nevertheless, the speaker has achieved at least partial distinction between good and bad impulses that he was previously unable to attain. It is also clear that A. Berthoff's insistence that the speaker's resolution to sacrifice his works is the "human correlative of grace" (The Resolved Soul, p. 51) fails to recognize that this distinction is only partial. Despite his declared willingness to sacrifice his works, the extra line indicates that he himself questions his ability to put this declaration into action. The resolution is made too tentatively and qualified too seriously to be termed a correlative of grace.

The second aspect of the prayer showing the speaker's impurity of heart is the conspicuous conceitedness of the final

two lines; lines that, by demonstrating a function for the speaker's works, further indicate his attachment to them:

> That they, while Thou on both their Spoils dost tread,
> May crown thy Feet, that could not crown thy Head.
> (ll. 25-26)

For Martz, this "intricate flourish of wit that shows the pride of the indomitable intellect...is all too clever" (The Wit of Love, p. 156). The projection of the declaration to sacrifice into a witty reversal of the poem's central metaphor is a clever demonstration of intricacy; but whether or not it is also a "too clever" flourish, and thus wholly subverts the effect of the prayer, requires careful consideration. The poem seems to establish an evaluation of intricacy as opposed to simplicity: complexity of syntax and concept, in the first four lines especially, accompanies inextricable mingling of divine with satanic impulses, and the simple syntax of the first part of the prayer (ll. 17-24) is accompanied by at least some separation of the two. This pattern associates complexity with impurity and simplicity with purity of heart, so that the complexity of the last two lines implies that these lines are not free from

satanic influence. Moreover, more than this loose association condemns complexity and endorses simplicity, for the speaker's problem of conscience is precisely the difficulty in making plain and clear the complex intermingling of good and evil. The intricacy of these lines, does, therefore, as Martz insists, cast suspicion on them, but a finer differentiation must be made.

It seems that these two lines are less intricate than the opening four lines where the problem is most intense, yet more intricate than the first part of the prayer (ll. 17-24) where the problem is closest to being resolved. They embody the "Skill" and "Care" that the speaker values at the same time that they are an expression of humility. The pride he clearly feels in his skill does make his humility less than absolute, but absolute humility at this point would be incompatible with the attitude of pride that he expresses throughout the poem. And although the intricacy and obvious cleverness of the speaker at this point judges him by his own terms to be impure of heart, and questions his sincerity, this self-judgement is the only honest possibility. The poem is thus preeminently a poem of judgement.

The firm and convincing demonstration that the speaker is unable to attain the total purity of heart necessary for writing devotional poetry would seem unconvincing had he suddenly, as A. Berthoff thinks he has, experienced a miraculous change of

heart. Such a poem would be an escape from the poet's most difficult task: the evaluation of human experience. "The Coronet" is no such escape but rather "an artful recognition of the ultimate issues,"[16] for it expresses the maturest possible assessment of the situation. That this assessment embodies the pairing of opposites does not necessarily mean that this is a quality central to Marvell's vision, but that for this particular situation apparently irreconcilable antitheses are the techniques necessary for expressing true judgement. The poem demonstrates admirably that Marvell understands and appreciates the value of humility; and his simultaneous recognition, conveyed conclusively by the two closing lines, that he cannot attain it with the ease that often comes to, say, Herbert, is the strength rather than the weakness of the poem. The poem also warns the reader that the most adequate acts of judgement are often so complex as to seem finally inconclusive. And the kind of inconclusiveness found in "The Coronet" is that which is most appropriate to the situation, not the kind found in "Mourning" where opposites seem to be paired for the joy of the performance.

[16]Joseph H. Summers, "Marvell's Nature," Journal of English Literary History, 10 (1953), rpt. in John Carey, ed., Andrew Marvell: A Critical Anthology (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1969), p. 150.

II. POEMS THAT SEEM TO JUDGE

"Eyes and Tears" and "The Definition of Love" share with "The Coronet" techniques which are employed in the latter to convey judgement; but these poems are not poems of judgement. They do, however, more closely approach this type than does "Mourning," for example, and thereby occupy a middle ground between poems that refuse to judge and those whose whole effort is directed toward achieving judgement. I do not intend these three "types" of poetry to be understood as unassailable categories. Instead they represent more or less definable points in a continuity, and may be taken therefore as guides rather than as rigid classifications. While the difference between "Mourning" and "The Coronet" is vast enough to make them seem almost polar opposites, it is much more difficult to place either "Eyes and Tears" or "The Definition of Love" at one or other pole. It will be instructive to examine the qualities that differentiate this middle type from true poetry of judgement: such an examination should isolate the essential characteristics of judgement more precisely.

Like "The Coronet," "Eyes and Tears" involves antithetical perceptions: grief is happiness, sorrow is joy, and tears provide "Sight more true" than eyesight. But this point of comparison is less obvious than the differences between the two poems; one of the most striking of these differences is the fact that in spite of the speaker's urging himself to action in the three final stanzas, "Eyes and Tears" bears so little relation to human activity

that it cannot be regarded as evaluating human experience in any meaningful sense. Where "The Coronet" encounters the speaker's deepest concerns, this poem is set at a greater distance from its issues, issues that are difficult, in any case, to relate to real concerns for the speaker. It does not clearly define the speaker's attitudes toward these issues, but instead mingles attitudes that would ordinarily be kept apart. The result is disordered variety not the humanly understandable intertwining of "The Coronet."

The first seven stanzas are fairly consistent in maintaining an ironically detached tone toward the subject. The examples put forth to illustrate the proposal demonstrate a mixture of incongruity and clever manipulation that discourages the reader from regarding the perceptions with any degree of seriousness. We admire the wit that sees rain as pity emanating from the sun, and sees tears as better measurements of reality because they are straight lines and plumb bobs, but the eighth stanza introduces a shift in tone: its inclusion of the mercy of Christ as another example of the importance of tears is more than merely clever incongruity; yet we note how cleverly the situation is manipulated:

> So Magdalen, in Tears more wise
> Dissolv'd those captivating Eyes,
> Whose liquid Chaines could flowing meet
> To fetter her Redeemers feet. (ll. 29-32)

To prove that tears can do things that eyes cannot, the speaker says that Magdalen's "captivating" eyes, (which accounted

for her previous life of sin), are "Dissolv'd" by tears that captivate Christ by fettering his feet. The implication, treated with such delicacy in "The Coronet," that Christ is obligated to save repentant sinners seems here to be flaunted as if it were common knowledge. The suspicion that this treatment reduces Christ's most humane quality to something like mechanical cause and effect does not seem to occur to this speaker; as if in ignorance of the issues, he employs this exemplum suggesting it ought to be accorded the same importance as his other examples. Since Marvell demonstrates remarkably acute perception of the issues at stake in "The Coronet" and elsewhere, it appears that he simply does not bother to deal with them in this poem. He seems more interested in effects than issues.

And yet there remains a suspicion, voiced by Dennis Davison, that "a serious moral concern underlies the verbal wit" (Andrew Marvell: Poems, p.19). In this case, Christ's mercy, rather than suffering a reduction, could be regarded as elevating the level of the argument by associating tears with an important Christian exemplum. Davison finds further serious undercurrents in the suggestions in stanza xi that prayer is worthy only if based on grief, and that stars are lovely only if seen as drops of eternal light. It thus seems that the poem consists of at least two central attitudes, one being a serious concern pointed to by Davison and the other a playful, only partly serious attitude that sees the whole

argument as an opportunity to apprehend incongruities. Whatever Marvell's intentions, however, the poem does not take hold of its subject with any degree of consistency.

I suggest that in "Eyes and Tears" Marvell does not wish to sort out his attitudes as he does in "The Coronet," but that he advances his mixed feelings without caring to relate them with each other, or to harmonize them in a delicate balance that poises the alternatives in the best solution available. The lack of harmony is seen in the fragmentary nature of the poem's utterances. Each stanza is a complete utterance with little relationship with the other stanzas, and the connectives "And," "So," "Yet," and "Thus" are only minimally effective in giving a sense of unity to the poem. This lack of overall unity is evidenced by the fact that rearranging the order of stanzas iii to xi has no discernible effect on the reading. Also, one of the couplets of stanza iv could be interchanged with one from stanza xi because the four couplets in these two stanzas are related only because each demonstrates one aspect of the superiority of tears to eyes. The tightly integrated unity of stanza viii is the exception. The effect of this lack of design is to make the poem appear as if composed of largely unrelated perceptions of the same theme, advanced with no concern for apprehending a consistent or harmonized attitude toward the subject. Far from emerging naturally from the subject, these attitudes often prompt us to wonder how they could have got there. The remoteness of this speaker's effort from that of his counterpart in "The Coronet" stands out clearly, and does much to demonstrate why this

poem is not a poem of judgement. More can be said about what kind of poem it is after discussing "The Definition of Love."

It is not an easy matter to define the essential nature of "The Definition of Love," as the markedly diverse opinions of readers testify. Where F. W. Bradbrook finds "a complete statement of platonic love,"[17] A. Berthoff declares that this cannot be a poem about platonic love because despair is never found in this type (The Resolved Soul, pp. 94-95); and where several readers respond to an intense emotional content, A. Alvarez sees the poem as "an essay in abstraction" (The School of Donne, p. 115). The list of widely divergent readings, many of which are in direct conflict, is so extensive as to indicate that at the heart of this poem remains an indefinable quality.

Some of this diversity of opinion can be accounted for by considering how and what the poem defines. Two uses of the word, "define," are given by The Random House Dictionary of the English Language: 1. "to explain the nature or essential qualities of;" 2. "to determine or fix the boundaries of." This definition poem seems to be defining in the first sense of the term, for it begins with, "My love is..." and ends with, "Therefore the Love which us doth bind...is..." Such syntax promises clearly apprehensible

[17] "The Poetry of Andrew Marvell," From Donne to Marvell, rev. ed., ed. Boris Ford (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1968), p. 198.

statements of definition. I will return to the opening, but consider for the moment the degree of clarity present in the conclusion:

> Therefore the Love which us doth bind,
> But Fate so enviously debarrs,
> Is the Conjunction of the Mind,
> And Opposition of the Stars. (ll. 29-32)

As Andor Gomme points out, there is a wealth of possible meanings in this stanza ("The Teasingness of Andrew Marvell," pp. 32-33). Since "which" can be either nominative or accusative, Fate can be seen as debarring the love, or as being debarred by it. But there is also a bilingual pun on "debarrs," Gomme declares, which permits the original Latin meaning of "to unbar." Thus, despite the clarity of statement implied by the form of presentation, the definition remains hidden behind multiple meanings. Moreover, what the love "is," is similarly indefinite, for we cannot be sure if the love is meant to be opposed by the stars, and thereby defeated by Fate, or opposed to the stars, thereby achieving at least the satisfaction of defiance.

While it may seem unfair to Marvell to demonstrate inconclusiveness solely on the evidence of a single concluding stanza, the procedure does reveal an interesting point: this type of concluding inconclusiveness is common both to "Mourning," which refuses to judge, and to "The Coronet," which emphatically judges. The point that has to be delicately made is to decide which of these modes best represents "The Definition of Love." This requires careful

consideration of the body of the poem, which conceivably could justify, or even necessitate, such an ambiguous conclusion.

The Definition of Love

My Love is of a birth as rare
As 'tis for object strange and high:
It was begotten by despair
Upon impossibility.

Magnanimous Despair alone
Could show me so divine a thing,
Where feeble Hope could ne'r have flown
But vainly flapt its Tinsel Wing.

And yet I quickly might arrive
Where my extended Soul is fixt,
But Fate does Iron wedges drive,
And alwaies crouds it self betwixt.

For Fate with jealous Eye does see
Two perfect Loves; nor lets them close;
Their union would her ruine be,
And her Tyrannick pow'r depose.

And therefore her Decrees of Steel
Us as the distant Poles have plac'd
(Though Loves whole World on us doth wheel)
Not by themselves to be embrac'd.

Unless the giddy Heaven fall,
And Earth some new Convulsion tear;
And, us to joyn, the World should all
Be cramp'd into a Planisphere.

As Lines so Loves oblique may well
Themselves in every Angle greet:
But ours so truly Paralel,
Though infinite can never meet.

Therefore the Love which us doth bind,
But Fate so enviously debarrs,
Is the Conjunction of the Mind,
And Opposition of the Stars.

Several features of this poem stand out at once. First, it is unified as "Eyes and Tears" is not. The ABAB rhyme discourages the couplet distinctiveness that characterizes "Eyes and Tears," and where the latter, although ostensibly an argument, and therefore requiring logical development, maintains only minimal relationships between stanzas, this poem develops its case from each stanza to the next. Whether or not the "Therefore" of the last stanza is justified remains to be seen, but the other stanzas do maintain consistency in their use of geometrical and astronomical figures, and cannot be shifted in order as can the stanzas of "Eyes and Tears." The seventh stanza, for example, draws strength from its position, for it restates succinctly, and on a similarly geometrical level, the sense of absolute separation that emerges naturally from the previous four stanzas.

This consistency of figures also helps maintain a more nearly consistent level of discussion than is found in "Eyes and Tears." Both, it is true, stretch hyperbole toward its limit, but where "Eyes and Tears" draws from a variety of realms including Nature, geometry, myth, Christianity and astronomy, suggesting indiscriminate culling of every possible viewpoint, this poem, by restricting its hyperbole chiefly to the related realms of astronomy and geometry, reduces the possibility of disruptive tonal intrusions. There is no odd and jarring effect comparable to that achieved by the Magdalen stanza in "Eyes and Tears," where the

question of whether or not the speaker knows what he is saying seriously presents itself.

is unity, however, is not the same type as that of "The Coronet." Our lack of knowledge of the actual poems being discussed in "The Coronet" does not diminish significantly our grasp of the basic issues in question nor our consequent assessment of the attitudes that speaker takes toward them. The issues are his own private, personal problems, but are made public and accessible to the reader both because they involve prior knowledge of typical Christian attitudes and because the poet is so unflinchingly honest in his presentation of his attitudes. We can in one sense assess the appropriateness of his attitudes in terms of known doctrine, and in another sense in terms of the standards he himself sets forth. But these are features necessary for a poetry of judgement; without them the reader would not be able to say whether the attitudes presented are even derived from the situation itself, let alone the maturest assessment of it. They are for the most part absent in "The Definition of Love."

In the first place, while the title suggests that the definition is generic, and thereby applicable to all types of love, the introduction of "My Love" indicates that the poem will refer only to one specific case. The implication here may be that the essential nature of all love will be found in that speaker's situation, or it may mean that Marvell is toying with the definition genre; if the latter is true, then to take the attitudes of the poem

seriously is to misrepresent it. At any rate, this preliminary dilemma, and the strenuous efforts of readers to find a subject for the poem, makes it clear that what is being discussed, (the situation which in a poem of judgement will be presented, balanced and evaluated), is, to say the least, elusive.

For example, compare the situation presented at the opening of "The Coronet" with that described by the first two stanzas of "The Definition of Love." It is immediately apparent that the situation described in "The Coronet" is real in a way that the corresponding description in "The Definition of Love" is not. The speaker's powerful sense of guilt is rendered with precision, even though the specific actions accounting for it are not presented, and his own reaction to this guilt feeling, with its underlying uncertainty, is also rendered precisely. The impression established by the opening of "The Coronet" is that a humanly apprehensible situation is engaging the most intense feelings of the speaker: there is no doubt that the conflicting perspectives are justifiably part of the situation and that the speaker is in a real sense involved with his predicament.

But doubts about the position of the speaker at the opening of "The Definition of Love" abound. The impression of almost mathematical control conveyed by very regular rhythm, and syntactical pauses and breaks of equal lengths, suggests that there is either little or no emotional involvement in the situation, or that the speaker has achieved intense control over it by a strenuous effort of will. If the situation is real, then the act of

will would seem to be necessary, for the love is "strange" (in the sense of coy), yet "high" and "divine." But the introduction of sexual innuendo in the first stanza, the paradoxical reference to "Magnanimous Despair," (enforced by the "Despair"-"divine" parallelism), and the overturning of the normal status of despair and hope in the second, shows a mind more interested in performing with concepts than in expressing reality. His love is obscured by the cleverness of the very conceits that are supposed to be describing it. This obscurity, to reiterate, is evidenced by the variety of identifications readers have seen in the love. The situation, to the limited extent that there is one, is presented, and, with the skill and pleasure we noted in "Mourning," balanced; but we cannot say that it is evaluated, for the assessment of the situation is abandoned as it is in "Mourning," to witty manipulation. To ask of the poem where "Love" exists in it is to make this point clear, for what we bring away from it are precise notions of "cramp'd" poles, the interesting difference between parallel and intersecting lines, and a fresh perspective of the general incongruity of things. Since the body of the poem embodies chiefly this interest in incongruity, the last stanza, with its manipulation of various contradictory meanings, perfectly accords with the previous stanzas.

The effort embodied in this poem and in "Eyes and Tears" is rather like that in "Mourning." All ostensibly set out to achieve

a conclusion, but this goal is in all three abandoned in favor of diverse, incongruous perspectives which, as it were, become the real interest of the writer. The kind of effort maintained throughout "The Coronet" to achieve the most delicate, yet most accurate balance of attitudes is not evident in these poems. All four poems, however, display Marvell's remarkable ability to balance incongruities on several levels, and also evident is the fact that there is not a great deal of difference, at least with respect to technique, between a poem like "The Corone which achieves judgement, and one like "The Definition of Love" which does not.

The foregoing discussion of a few of Marvell's poems makes it possible to provide tentative answers to some of the questions raised to this point. The description by other readers of qualities of Marvell's work that I have looked are helpful in isolating the essential characteristics of judgement. Eliot's description loosely characterizes this mode, but does not account for its peculiarity, for I have shown that the effort of the speaker in "The Coronet" is more intensely directed toward truthful assessment of his situation than could possibly be indicated by terming it "a recognition, implicit in the expression of every experience, of other kinds of experience which are possible" (Selected Essays, p. 303). The "other kinds of experience" are seen in this poem to be just and necessary accompaniments to the original experience: this is not mere "recognition" on the speaker's part, but indicates his effort

to tell the truth, and nothing but the truth. In fact, as I have indicated, the mode of expression that characterizes "The Coronet" is most accurately described by the terms set forth by Alvarez and Leavis.

Eliot's phrase does, however, have more appeal when considering some of Marvell's other poems. "The Definition of Love" and "Eyes and Tears" especially seem to answer to his description, for clearly they examine varieties of experience with a motive for doing so that does not seem to go beyond the kind of "recognition" implied in Eliot's phrase. And yet, the term I have most frequently used to describe the mode of expression of these poems is "incongruities." The purpose for using this term is that it seems more properly characteristic of the visions embodied in these poems than is Eliot's description, and may, in fact, be the essential quality of "The Definition of Love:" surely the impression about this poem that readers have in common is that it forces together realms which are not ordinarily congruent.

The advantage of this term over Eliot's phrase is that it focusses on Marvell's fondness for joining things that do not normally go together. It seems that Marvell's energy is directed not so much toward trying to include merely "other kinds of experience" as Eliot indicates, or toward "seeing all the implications and never attempting to simplify them" as Alvarez declares is characteristic of Marvell's poems of judgement (The School of Donne, p. 106),

but more toward expressing a vision of the inherent incongruity of things. This feature of the poems examined to this point places poems of judgement in a more advantageous perspective. We can now see that Marvell's outstanding talent is expressing incongruity. Sometimes the expression itself is more or less incoherent, but when incongruity is expressed in as coherent a poem as "The Coronet," the achievement of making incongruity seem congruous is seen to be a difficult and eminently worthwhile endeavor. When Marvell's poems manage to express a coherent vision of a situation that would otherwise seem to be incongruous, we have a poem of judgement.

The positive delight evident in "Mourning" for manipulating attitudes evinces this vision, and the inability of readers to establish firmly an underlying subject for "Eyes and Tears" and "The Definition of Love" suggests that the elusiveness of the subject is evidence that the real subject may well be just that elusiveness. The thesis advanced by Martz that at the center of Marvell's vision is the view of reality as inherently paradoxical, where every perspective of reality has its opposite which is also real and true, does not successfully account for this quality of elusiveness, for although such a vision characterizes "Mourning," it does not apply to either "Eyes and Tears" or to "The Definition of Love." In these poems the vision does not take hold of strict opposites but rather expresses diversity in a less antithetically rigid form. The essential quality of the metaphor about lines in "The Definition of Love" does not involve a pairing of opposites, but consists rather

of the oddness of the view that sees absolute separation in terms of infinite parallel lines. This is not opposition but incongruity. The same might be said of the apparently paradoxical reference to "Magnanimous Despair" in the same poem, which is not so paradoxical as it is merely strikingly incongruous; although, it must be admitted, most of us will want to use the term paradoxical for this reference, merely for convenience. A less than fully antithetical expression also characterizes most of Marvell's figures examined to this point.

Of crucial importance, of course, is the point at which in terms of any of these views of Marvell's vision, a poem pairs its opposites, harmonizes its experiences, or assesses its incongruities to become a poem of judgement, and it must be noted that in the single poem of judgement so far examined, the mode of expression accords with Martz's thesis. "The Coronet" does pair opposites, but such pairing does not account for the essential nature of the poem, as it seems to for "Mourning." Clearly we need to go beyond Martz's thesis to account for the nature of such poems, and the formulation of a characteristic mode of judgement that this essay attempts is meant to do just that. Martz's thesis can account for the similarities between "Mourning" and "The Coronet" but it is not sufficient for the more important task that differentiates them. Similarly, Eliot's phrase helps us to sympathise with the variety of experience offered by Marvell, but it, too, does not point toward

the crucial difference between a poem like "The Definition of Love" and "The Coronet." I feel that the term "incongruities," when used with care in describing Marvell's poems, accounts for the best qualities of the insights given by Eliot and Martz, and, in conjunction with the concepts given by Alvarez and Leavis, provides the best means for analysing Marvell's poems of judgement.

III. POEMS THAT ALMOST JUDGE

The other poems I want to consider as poems of judgement are the following: "An Horatian Ode," "A Dialogue Between the Soul and Body," "A Dialogue,Between The Resolved Soul,and Created Pleasure," and "On Mr. Milton's Paradise Lost." Noticeably absent from this list are two of Marvell's most popular poems, "The Garden" and "To his Coy Mistress." These two do not obviously fall into this category, and will be considered separately. They should be a valuable test for the relevance of the category. There are also several more poems that are not poems of judgement, but which deserve consideration, both for their intrinsic value and for their relevance to poems of judgement. These poems are: "The Gallery," "On a Drop of Dew," "Bermudas," "The Fair Singer," "The Picture of little T.C. in a Prospect of Flowers," and "Musicks Empire."

I have been placing a great deal of stress on the presentation of attitudes as an important aspect of judgement. It is therefore appropriate at this point to examine three poems, "Musicks Empire," "Bermudas," and "The Fair Singer," all of which are commonly thought to exemplify clear and straightforward presentation of attitudes.

Though readers agree that the praise expressed in the last stanza of "Musicks Empire" is unambiguously sincere, there seems to be doubt about who is being praised: Margoliouth "suggests" (Marvell's Poems and Letters, I, 226), and J. B. Leishman states emphatically that the recipient of the compliment is Fairfax,[18] but John Hollander elaborately argues that the praise is ultimately meant for Cromwell,

[18]The Art of Marvell's Poetry (London: Hutchinson and Company, 1966), p. 218.

even though "Fairfax might still form a figura with Cromwell as a type of the secular political leader celebrated as music in the poem."[19] This ambiguity is not of the same order as that found in "The Definition of Love," for example, and does not markedly offset the clarity with which the attitudes of the poem are otherwise expressed.

"Musicks Empire" contains an elaborate, charming device that conveys an attitude of praise. In this sense it might be said to embody a judgement of a situation, for it expresses what is commonly thought of as a judgement. But it is not a poem of judgement. Something that might seem to explain this absence of judgement is the absence of the central technique of balance. Instead, it maintains a consistent chronological progression without entertaining antithetical or incongruous perspectives; and the [illegible] the end that has the "Victorious sounds" overcome by a "gentler Conqueror" is not an antithetical movement, but a summary climax to a poem that would otherwise seem to be headed nowhere. This absence of incongruous or antithetical development at least places "Musicks Empire" in a different mode from "The Coronet."

This difference, noticeable as it is, does not necessarily disqualify "Musicks Empire" from being a poem of judgement, for if

[19] "Marvell's Commonwealth and 'The Empire of the Ear'," from The Untuning of The Sky: Ideas of Music in English Poetry, 1500-1700 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1961), pp. 299-315, rpt. in George deF. Lord, ed. Andrew Marvell: A Collection of Critical Essays, Twentieth Century Views, (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1968), p. 37n.

a poem presents and evaluates a situation so appropriately that no more adequate assessment seems possible, one would not be justified in claiming that it was not a poem of judgement merely because it lacks balance. "Musicks Empire" is not a poem of judgement, not because the situation is presented unilaterally, but because it does not judge. The mythical story comprising the first five stanzas does not invite critical attention. Consider, for example, the first stanza:

> First was the World as one great Cymbal made,
> Where Jarring Windes to infant Nature plaid.
> All Musick was a solitary sound,
> To hollow Rocks and murm'ring Fountains bound.
> (ll. 1-4)

The significance of "Cymbal" seems to be that it represents relatively undisciplined sound that Jubal will order, but a single cymbal suggests that perhaps no sound at all can be heard, so the emphasis of its singleness in "solitary" is effective only in the least critical way. Moreover, "hollow" and "murm'ring", with their cliched deadness, along with the inversion of "bound" for no purpose except that of rhyme, suggests that what is being presented is not directed toward anything like an understanding of the situation.

Perhaps, then, the compliment might be accepted as commonly held truth? It may, but the inability of readers to assert with finality the identity of the person being praised, proves that the speaker himself does not attempt to justify his compliment. He is

not interested in understanding the situation, but wants only to embody with grace his attitude toward a man whom he does not identify. There is no judgement at the end, for there is no evidence that the speaker has critically considered his position. Without such critical consideration, the effort to understand and judge the situation cannot be present, and judgement cannot be made.

"Bermudas" affords another example of the absence of an effort to judge, but it is a more thoughtful and interesting poem. Not only is the incongruity that I have identified as a characteristic of Marvell's vision overcome, but congruity between man, nature, and God is positively asserted. This situation has its basis in human experience as the imaginary story in "Musicks Empire" does not: the Bermudas are geographically identifiable islands, and English puritans, such as Marvell's one-time host, John Oxenbridge, did go there; and the couplet,"He lands us on a grassy Stage,/ Safe from the Storms , and Prelat's rage" (11.11-12), invokes the very real contemporary Anglican persecution of puritans.

Although the speaker does not seem directly involved in the situation at the opening, his sympathy for the puritan condition, and his endorsement of the attitudes expressed in the song itself, are implied in his very relating of the song. The poem's joyful,celebrative tone is a positive evaluation of its situation, and the speaker's endorsement is most emphatically presented in the final quatrain:

> Thus sung they, in the English boat,
> An holy and a chearful Note,
> And all the way, to guide their Chime,
> With falling Oars they kept the time. (ll. 37-40)

This comment cannot be assigned to the listening winds, for no winds could seriously be considered as having the ability to make these assessments. The first line seems to emphasize the previously implied Englishness of the singers by stating their country of origin with what seems to be a sense of pride. The second line merely states the obvious: we are all well aware that the song is holy and cheerful, but its mere inclusion indicates that the speaker enjoys and is praising the song. At this point he is more involved than the distance established at the opening seems to allow for. The final couplet also confirms that the speaker is pleased with the song. The bare statement, "to guide their Chime... they kept the time," and its ancillary phrases, "And all the way...With falling Oars," are each placed in precisely parallel positions in the line. This parallelism, in conjunction with the strikingly regular rhythm, gives the statement a sense of sympathetic naturalness in which the speaker can be said to be participating. It also contains a rather radical content, for it says that these singers are rowing in order to keep time to the music. This subversion of practicality stresses the Edenic innocence of the situation of the rowers, and also, by claiming, in effect, that prayer is more important than work, enforces another, and quite powerful, commendation of the song.

The final couplet, then, as well as some of the descriptions

in the song itself, in a minor way employ incongruity. But the type of incongruity found in this poem is notably less striking than that found in "The Coronet," for all tensions between attitudes have been eliminated here. The type of conflict between loving and yet fearing one's earthly efforts engendered in "The Coronet" is not even suggested in "Bermudas," where all nature, at the behest of God, conduces to man's physical well-being. The spiritual concomitant of this sense of well-being is stressed by the absolute unity between work and prayer. But the congruity evident in this poem seems easily achieved in comparison with the more intense and more precarious balance evident in "The Coronet."

The fresh sense of the congruity of things emerging from "Bermudas" places this poem at the opposite extreme from "The Definition of Love," whose effort is directed at displaying with great ingenuity, a sense of ultimate incongruity. Common to both extremes is the absence of an effort to judge the situation. "Bermudas," more obviously than "The Definition of Love," does express attitudes, but these attitudes are not worked for and do not seem to emerge naturally from the situation: they seem instead to be the speaker's fancifully imaginary longing for an innocent world.

"The Fair Singer" maintains incongruity more obviously than does "Bermudas," and it expresses attitudes as clearly, but it, too, is not a poem of judgement. Description of the lady as "so sweet an Enemy" and of her beauties as a "fatal Harmony" make it plain that this poem entertains a perspective that is as antithetical as

that maintained in "The Coronet;" and the speaker in this poem seems to be similarly present, for it is spoken in the first person singular. But the important difference, and it is not markedly to the disadvantage of "The Fair Singer," is that the situation presented here is not real in the sense that the situation in "The Coronet" is real. This is evidenced by the problems encountered when trying to take the discussion with great seriousness, with, for example, Donald Friedman, who feels that in "The Fair Singer:"

> all the activities traditionally associated with reconciling differences, with connecting dissimilarities, with bringing order to chaos... are here in the service of cruelty and destruction. The last couplet of the stanza, "That while she with her Eyes my Heart does bind, / She with her Voice might captivate my Mind" (ll. 5-6), alludes to a division of the human faculties which was a commonplace. (Marvell's Pastoral Art, p. 44)

Friedman clearly regards this poem as if its obviously inadequate surface meaning demands revelation of deeper, more serious meanings. "Eyes and Tears" might be amenable to this approach, but this poem is not.

If it is to be said that the lady's charms are "in the service of cruelty and destruction," these horrors must be in the poem. Consider the first three lines:

> To make a final conquest of all me,
> Love did compose so sweet an Enemy,
> In whom both Beauties to my death agree.

We do not need to appeal to biographical speculations about Marvell's

love life to establish that in this poem he is not likely discussing a situation that really occurred. The juxtaposition of "agree" with "death" displays no discomfort at the thought of death, but, in fact, stresses the agreeableness of it. The "death" mentioned is not, therefore, his real death, but must rather be a convenient term used for its antithetical and hyperbolic appeal. The poem, in fact, is all sweetness and, in spite of the enmity stated, there is nothing to show that the speaker feels any sense of "cruelty and destruction." And if the speaker does not feel it, it does not exist. To say with Friedman that this sense does exist in the poem would necessitate showing that Marvell expresses an ironic attitude toward his speaker by giving the reader clues that reveal the speaker is in danger even though he is not aware of it. That this is not the case is amply evident in the consistency with which the "I" of the poem precisely identifies his own situation, a consistency that does not allow for a perspective different from his own.

Were "The Fair Singer" a poem of judgement, it would have to convince us that it is dealing with issues that are important and seem real to the speaker. Its comfortable references to death, and enslavement of soul and body, confirm that the dichotomy upon which the poem is based does not command the serious interest of the speaker: it is merely a convenient device for exploring a concern which may amount to little more than the enjoyment involved in balancing "sweet" with "Enemy." The effect employed here of borrowing

only enough of the meaning of, for example, "death," and "dis-in-tangled Soul" to create the antithesis required, seems to be overlooked by Friedman and Christopher Hill when they search beyond the surface meaning. Hill states rightly about the second stanza that, "I do not think the following lines from The Fair Singer are intended to be taken at more than their surface value," but then he goes on to say, "but they could be interpreted as a perfect allegory of the influence of society on the individual."[20] They could be interpreted in many interesting ways, but the primary responsibility of the reader is to determine the most accurate meaning, a responsibility that Friedman and Hill forego with this poem. As in "Bermudas," congruity here is achieved by abandoning the effort to judge the situation. The result is a charming and delicately poised achievement that does not make the claims for itself that some readers make.

Of additional interest in this poem is the remarkable kind of congruity achieved by balancing one realm of experience against another:

> But how should I avoid to be her Slave,
> Whose subtile Art invisibly can wreath
> My Fetters of the very Air I breath? (ll. 10-12)

Fetters of air are given by the context a tangibility that could be

[20] "Society and Andrew Marvell," Modern Quarterly, 4 (1946), 6-31, rpt. in John Carey, ed. Andrew Marvell: A Critical Anthology (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1969), p. 99.

described as synaesthesia were it not for the fact that the effect of the fetters, rather than being sensuously experienced, is intellectually apprehended. It is an experience, to be sure, but the experience is more intellectual than emotional or sensuous. It displays a kind of balanced congruity, (we cannot easily separate the sensuous from the intellectual), that we have not seen in Marvell to this point, and is very relevant to the activity of judgement. If Marvell is able to achieve this kind of intertwining of issues that are as important as, say, those in "The Coronet," in a poem of judgement, then a new mode of judgement will have been created. What is remarkable about the passage is that its antitheses are combined as inextricably as those of "The Coronet," but at the same time, the combination is effected with a great deal more compression than "The Coronet" shows at any point. Such compression on important issues is perhaps the most valuable tool Marvell possesses for expressing judgement. That the effectiveness of this passage depends on its compression is evident when it is compared to the Magdalen passage from "Eyes and Tears" (ll. 29-32). There the physical and non-physical realms are not so abruptly joined, because the line, "Whose liquid Chaines could flowing meet" supplies the middle ground to form a solid connection to both realms. No such connecting link is supplied in this passage as it develops the same concept in a manner so much more compact and economical that it is a demonstrably different mode of apprehension.

These three poems reveal that the mere presentation of attitudes, even when effected by balancing one against another, and accompanied to some degree by a sense of the speaker's involvement, does not necessarily create a poem of judgement. More important is the effort of the speaker sincerely directed toward achieving judgement. This effort alone, even without Marvell's characteristic techniques of judgement, would constitute a poem of judgement. This effort will show itself as a critical attempt to come to a full understanding of the situation. That is, the attitudes will seem to emerge naturally from the situation, and if there are antitheses, they, too, will seem to be parts of the appropriate response.

Such an effort, along with Marvell's characteristic techniques of judgement, are evident to a greater degree in "The Gallery," "On a Drop of Dew," and "The Picture of little T.C. in a Prospect of Flowers." All three poems contain most of the techniques of this mode, and to some degree, all display the more important effort directed at achieving true judgement. Balanced antitheses and incongruities, a sense of personal involvement, attitudes that emerge naturally from the situation, in one case, the kind of image found in "The Fair Singer," and an effort to come to the fullest understanding of the situation, are all present to greater or lesser degrees in these three poems. It is not as difficult to show how close "The Gallery" and "On a Drop of Dew" come to fulfilling this mode without wholly doing so, as it is to show how "The Picture of

little T.C." does not become a poem of judgement.

Donald Friedman says of "The Gallery" that, "The pastoral vision is set against the guises of the court and the world, and judgement is made" (Marvell's Pastoral Art, p. 40). But he must have a very different idea of judgement from that employed here, for he proceeds to contend that because there is nothing explicit in the last portrait to explain the rejection of the others, "the poem seems wrenched to make a point...the attitudes that determine the movement are not yet articulated" (p. 41). If "The Gallery" makes a judgement in our sense, then the conclusion cannot seem "wrenched," and the attitudes that determine the movement will have been articulated.

If the endorsement of the last portrait seems to be the just and appropriate conclusion to the poem then a judgement has been enacted. This portrait endorses attitudes that have been conspicuously present throughout the poem:

> But of these Pictures and the rest,
> That at the Entrance likes me best:
> Where the same Posture, and the Look
> Remains, with which I first was took.
> A tender Shepherdess, whose Hair
> Hangs loosely playing in the Air,
> Transplanting Flow'rs from the green Hill,
> To crown her Head, and Bosome fill. (ll. 49-56)

Since two subjects demand a verb, the enjambment at the end of the stanza's third line is very strong, giving "Remains" a great deal of weight that is further emphasized by its position at the beginning of the next line. This weight stresses the permanence

of the figure in the portrait, the inviolability of the poet's memory and a sense of immobility. In the previous portraits marked activity is associated with unpleasantries. The "Murtheress" of the second stanza tests her "fertile Shop of cruel Arts," the "Enchantress" of the fourth is shown to be "vexing" her "restless Lover's Ghost," and the two more pleasant portraits stress slow, gentle movements manifested in "wooing Doves," Halcyons, gentle breezes, an Aurora who "slumbering lyes, / And stretches" and a Venus who sits. The kind of movement associated with the Shepherdess is the free playing of her hair, a freedom that is contrasted with the "curled Hair" of the cosmeticized Clora of the second stanza. The gentleness suggested by the word "took" indicates a much more harmonious beginning than is conveyed by the Clora of the second stanza whose "cruel Arts" torture rather than please him. In this way the Shepherdess resolves positive and negative criteria established in the previous stanzas.

The most significant of these criteria is the contrast between the inhuman "Arts" of the two negative portraits, the obvious artifice of the two positive portraits and the naturalness of the last portrait, a naturalness emphasized by free movement of her hair and also by the fact that she is "Transplanting," not plucking flowers. I will return to this contrast, which permeates every aspect of the poem, but first it should be noted that the form of the poem augments the impression that a judgement is being made.

The poem progresses through a series of antitheses to conclude with what seems to be a synthesis, thus revealing a roughly dialectical structure. This structure is made explicit by the penultimate summary of antitheses in lines 41-44 and by the explicit choice of the last portrait: "But, of these Pictures and the rest, / That at the Entrance likes me best" (ll.49-50). The strength of this structure and its relevance to conveying judgement, is that it encourages critical examination of the argument. The argument stands or falls on the appropriateness with which the conclusion summarises the attitudes emerging from the series of antitheses. I have shown how in this case the conclusion is to some extent justified, as opposed to Friedman's contention that it is not, but the crucial question of justification in terms of the superiority of naturalness over artifice is considerably more complex.

Rosalie Colie's observation that, "There is a curiously aseptic quality to this poem, as if the situation were in fact only mental, as if there were no real lady, no real love affair,"[21] aptly accounts for the difficulty encountered by many readers who treat the poem as if it were merely trying to choose among various guises of the speaker's beloved. There are several aspects of the poem indicating that his attention is more intensely directed at himself and his own performance than at his beloved. The opening lines demonstrate this emphasis:

[21] My Ecchoing Song (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1970), p. 108.

> Clora, come view my Soul, and tell
> Whether I have contriv'd it well.
> Now all its several lodgings lye
> Compos'd into one Gallery. (ll. 1-4)

The appeal for Clora's approval establishes the poem as a performance in which the poet will try to impress Clora, and, by implication, any reader. This attitude toward his work, the self-consciousness of which is stressed by the verbs "contriv'd" and "Compos'd," shifts attention from the ostensible subject to the way in which the subject is limned. The use of the extended conceit suggests by itself that the poet is as interested in his manner of presentation as he is in his matter.

With this in mind we can see that the second stanza, whose operative concept is "Arts," draws attention to itself:

> Here Thou art painted in the Dress
> Of an Inhumane Murtheress;
> Examining upon our Hearts
> Thy fertile Shop of cruel Arts:
> Engines more keen than ever yet
> Adorned Tyrants Cabinet;
> Of which the most tormenting are
> Black Eyes, red Lips, and curled Hair. (ll. 9-16)

The first six lines, with the proviso that this is only a guise of Clora, seriously propose extraordinary cruelty in her behaviour, but the closing couplet identifies her "cruel Arts" as her eyes, lips and hair. Clearly we have been deceived. The incongruity between real instruments of torture and Clora's charms is maintained. The comparison is not meant to be seriously accepted but is rather

an extravagant and entertaining conjecture that tells us little about Clora, but a great deal about the poet's cleverness. The fact that the identification of the "cruel Arts" comes at the end of the passage and undermines by its placement the ostensible effect of the comparison, suggests that the artifice that is really questionable is not Clora's but the poet's. The stress on himself as performer at the opening augments this impression.

The other negative portrait, the fourth stanza, gives a similar impression, for it proposes Clora as a witch examining her lover's entrails to determine how long she will continue to be beautiful: this compliment also draws attention to its own extravagance by being similarly placed as an ordinary womanly phenomenon. The horrors depicted in these two portraits are meant to be taken no more seriously than the "death" of the lover in "The Fair Singer." This kind of self-conscious artifice is also displayed in the similarly extravagant positive portraits. Associated with Aurora, who is abandoned before she can become really erotic, are a choir, manna roses and "harmless" turtle doves, all of which emphasize the lover's sensuous, yet chaste reaction rather than describing Clora. In the fifth stanza Clora as Venus is similarly forsaken for birds and pleasant smells.

What these four portraits emphasize is not Clora but the poet's various reactions to perspectives of her, an emphasis that prompts from Bradbrook and Thomas the remark that, "There is really more about the great impression the lady was fortunate enough to make

than about the lady herself" (Andrew Marvell, p. 30). But she is pushed even further into the background than this remark suggests, for the consistent emphasis is upon the poet's manipulation of various techniques. The relevant attitudes in the poem are those about poetry, not those about Clora. The two realms are, however, associated.

In summing up his first four portraits the poet comments:

> These Pictures and a thousand more,
> Of Thee, my Gallery do store;
> In all the Forms thou can'st invent
> Either to please me, or torment. (ll. 41-44)

We have noted that the torments inflicted by Clora are superseded by the pleasure of composition, and that the pleasures involved are not those given by Clora, but those experienced in his performance. The strong impression is that it is not Clora who can "invent" these "Forms," in any way that is important, but the poet himself. She has very little to do with the workings of his imagination, for her existence is never established by the poem.

When we come, therefore, to the last portrait, and note that artifice is rejected in favour of naturalism, we find a substantially new attitude. Where he previously enjoyed artifice as much as, if not more than Clora enjoyed her "Arts," he now chooses the naturalistic pose of

> A tender Shepherdess, whose Hair
> Hangs loosely playing in the Air,
> Transplanting Flow'rs from the green Hill,
> To crown her Head, and Bosome fill. (ll. 53-56)

But the choice does not involve a wholesale rejection of artifice. This portrait remains one of those that has been "contriv'd" for Clora, and the reader, to judge, so there is an element of the performing self involved in limning it. Also, even though the Shepherdess seems natural, and the description is congruent in a way that of the second stanza, for example, is not, there is an element of artifice present that is, perhaps, (and this might be the poet's message) inevitable with every poetic utterance. The skill involved in choosing the word "Transplanting," to suggest naturalness that fulfills rather than disrupts nature's functions, is the same skill that chose the word "Smell," to convey with catachresis the poignant experience of smelling perfume. This is true no matter what attitude the performer takes toward his achievement. Moreover, the admission that this is Clora's first pose (l. 52) reminds us that the natural artifice of the Shepherdess is the basis from which the extravagant artifice of the other portraits derived.

The final portrait thus rejects, as best it can, artifice in favour of naturalness, but in doing so recognizes that when poetry is involved, the two are intimately, and inseparably related. The poem expresses a yearning for innocence that is reflected in other poems by Marvell, and its conclusion, involving recognition of antithetical impulses, is somewhat similar in manner and theme to the conclusion of "Coronet." But this poem does not convey

judgement as emphatically as does "The Coronet," for the issues are not clearly enough stated to be adequately defined, understood and judged. The issue at the heart of the poem, the conflict between naturalness and artifice, is disguised by the ostensible theme that is expressed as antithetical portraits of Clora, by its absence until the end, and by the amount of self-conscious performance that affects the poem from start to finish. We acknowledge that a considered conclusion has been made, but the activity whereby the poet demonstrates the appropriateness of his conclusion, and the need for just that conclusion, is obscured by consideration of his attitudes towards sexuality, women in general, and the overall sense that the poem is largely a performance created for the pleasure involved in its writing. Judgement is not abandoned, but neither is it fully achieved.

By most accounts, "On a Drop of Dew" falls into two sections of equal length, followed by a concluding quatrain. The first section about the drop of dew consists of the first eighteen lines, the second about the soul runs from lines 19-36, and the conclusion is given in lines 37-40. The poem thus seems to balance in equal space aspects of the soul against aspects of the drop of dew, offering a suitable technique for extracting from their relationship something in the nature of a judgement. This, at least, seems to be the implication of the poem's design.

Nevertheless, the drop of dew and the soul are not presented so antithetically as this form encourages the reader to expect. They seem more alike than different. The description of the

dewdrop so humanizes it by imputing [illegible] human motivations, that had the poem ended at line 18 it would strongly suggest that what was being described was the soul's relationship with its two homes. If this were all the poem was doing, the remainder would be redundant. The fact that it cont[illegible] implies that Marvell wants to say something different, or to communicate this description more intensely and precisely than he does in the first section; or perhaps it merely indicates his extended interest in exploring a situation, which, by its very nature, encourages ingenious poetic speculation. I feel that a combination of the second and third of these possibilities most accurately describes the movement of the poem, and that the overall tone is similar to that resolution of incongruities found in "Bermudas."

The significant antithesis in "On a Drop of Dew" is that between the worldly and heavenly realms. It is this conflict that the poem attempts to resolve. The first section by itself makes some attempt both to distinguish and merge the two realms:

> Yet careless of its Mansion new
> For the clear Region where 'twas born,
> Round in its self incloses:
> And in its little Globes Extent,
> Frames as it can its native Element. (ll. 4-8)

It is impossible to read this poem without puzzling over the meaning of the first eight lines. The rhyme scheme, ABCABCDD, suggests that two interrelated statements of three lines each are concluded by a couplet. The lines beginning with "Yet"

and "And" support this reading. Thus, the first three lines quoted are to be taken as a syntactically complete unit. My reading has the line, "For the clear Region where 'twas born," explain both the previous line and following line. The sense of the three lines is: it is heedless of its new home because of the clear region and incloses in itself the clear region. Thus "clear Region," by an act of mental gymnastics, is simultaneou the focal point for two related but different syntactical ts. An analogous practice that suggests this possibility is found in "Burnt Norton," part II:

> And hear upon the sodden floor
> Below, the boarhound and the boar
> Pursue their pattern as before
> But reconciled among the stars.[22]

Admittedly, there is less contortion required to ize that the syntactical unit does not end with "boar" than there is to sort out the passage from Marvell, but in both, it seems to me, the effort has to be consciously made to offset what is originally received on first impression.

The felicity of this reading is that it calls attention to the central but inexpressible "clear Region." As we read the fifth line, twice as it were, we realize that Marvell wants strongly to invoke the presence of what he cannot present. As Blake sees all heaven in a wild flower, Marvell sees a little

[22]T. S. Eliot, Collected Poems 1909-1962 (London: Faber and Faber Limited, 1963), p. 191.

bit of heaven in a drop of dew. This passage more or less successfully suggests the copresence of both realms in the dewdrop.

Another evocative image suggesting merging is found in the concluding lines of the first section:

> Till the warm Sun pitty it's Pain,
> And to the Skies exhale it back again. (ll. 17-18)

This description, suggesting a super-naturalistic aspect by its imputation of pity to the sun, takes advantage of the "Platonic concept, recently revived by Kepler, of the sun as residence of God,"[23] to express a congruence between the actions of nature and God that closely resembles the vision of "Bermudas." Just as the sun pities the restless, "unsecure" dewdrop and saves it from becoming "impure," so a benevolent God, through his mediator, the Son, takes pity on the human soul and returns it to its heavenly abode. There is no suggestion in this poem of the kind of perpetual warfare between the soul and earthly phenomena that is found in "A Dialogue, between The Resolved Soul, and Created Pleasure." Instead, heaven and nature are shown for the most part to be in harmonious accord. It is this harmony that makes the comparison of soul with dewdrop, and the concluding emphasis on the unity of heavenly and earthly realms embodied in manna, so appropriate to the poem's vision.

[23]Dennis Davison, Andrew Marvell: Selected Poetry and Prose (London: George G. Harrap and Co., Ltd., 1952), p. 44.

But the poem proceeds to make more specific the similarity between the dewdrop and the soul by pointing to correspondences between roses and "the humane flow'r," between the sky and heaven, and between the sunlight contained in the round dewdrop and the heavenly "circling thoughts" of the soul. With this congruence apparently established by the connective, "So," the poet takes up a new tone:

> In how coy a Figure wound,
> Every way it turns away:
> So the World excluding round,
> Yet receiving in the Day.
> Dark beneath, but bright above:
> Here disdaining, there in Love.
> How loose and easie hence to go:
> How girt and ready to ascend.
> Moving but on a point below,
> It all about does upwards bend. (ll. 27-36)

This passage seems to take the unity of dewdrop with soul for granted as it describes the plight of the latter in terms that ostensibly apply to the former. That is, we need the image of the dewdrop firmly in our minds in order to apprehend the condition of the soul. Notably appropriate to a vision of earthly and heavenly congruity is that the darkness beneath is subordinated to the brightness above (ll. 30-31), and the short, sharply defined units of utterance give a sense of lightness and, perhaps even happiness. If the description of the first section is to be given greater intensity and precision, it is in this passage.

Roundness, of course, is the predominant point of comparison. Presumably, because circularity is taken to be a symbol of perfection, the purer a soul is, the rounder it may be said to be. It is appropriate, therefore, that in this passage, roundness is given opening and concluding emphasis. The first two lines describe how a dewdrop's roundness rejects its surroundings because at every point its surface seems to turn away from contact. It is very difficult to approach a perfect circle perpendicularly. So the soul actually rejects earthly phenomena, a rejection whose apprehension depends on the comparative roundness of soul and dewdrop.

The last two lines of this passage employ this comparison so well as to approach the kind of compression found in the "Fetters" passage in "The Fair Singer." In a footnote explaining the richness of meaning found in this poem in the word, "recollecting" (l. 24), J. B. Leishman seems to approve of the practice of maintaining various meanings in a single word when he declares that it "might more appropriately be described as 'concentrated' than as 'ambiguous'"(The Art of Marvell's Poetry, p. 200n). But he proceeds in the next few pages to complain of "clumsy inversion and expletives" (p. 203) that are a characteristic defect in much of Marvell's verse. One of his examples of clumsy use of expletives is the line, "It all about does upwards bend:" presumably, "does," merely fills out the line. It is very odd, therefore, that concen-

tration on Marvell's defects blinds Leishman to the unusually concentrated effect involved in the word, "bend ."

The circular dewdrop moves only on a single point because it is perfectly round, and the soul, in like manner, strains to avoid contact with nature. And the dewdrop's circular surface at every point bends upwards, just as the soul bends or inclines upwards toward heaven. In this instance the single word "bend ," takes the circularity of the dewdrop and combines it with the inclination of the soul in order to convey with some precision the soul's situation in the world.

This passage conveys with much greater precision and demonstrably more intensity the soul's situation: the first eighteen lines are vague by comparison. The nearly jubilant tone of the second half of this passage, muted by comparison to the happy congruence between God and nature that ends the first section, and especially to the overtly victorious tone of the final quatrain, is the appropriate attitude for the soul that hopes for, but cannot be wholly certain of salvation. It is clear that an opinion, perhaps even a conviction, is being conveyed, but the question of whether a judgement is present depends more acutely on the quality of the evidence.

Although the last quoted passage successfully merges qualities of the soul with aspects of the drop of dew, the suspicion is that the achievement of this unity is strained:

> And, recollecting its own Light,
> Does, in its pure and circling thoughts, express
> The greater Heaven in an Heaven less. (ll. 24-26)

Without the firm recognition that both the soul and the dewdrop are circular, and comparably so, the passage following this excerpt would lose most of its effectiveness. Thus, the phrase, "circling thoughts," is meant to supply the necessary basis for comparison. But the phrase is puzzling, for although the circle may be said to symbolize perfection, it would be difficult to provide a complimentary meaning to the phrase. Thoughts that go around in circles are normally taken to be ineffective. It seems, therefore, that the phrase is merely inserted to suggest, perhaps on an emblematic level, the necessary concept, but its real relevance is not examined. If this is the case, the poem does not sufficiently explain why we are to assign circularity to the soul, and thereby weakens its comparison: and unless this comparison is so firmly established as to preclude the kind of doubts expressed here, the concluding triumphant tone seems substantially less appropriate.

There also seems to be a real conflict that the implied congruence between earthly and heavenly realms overlooks. We grant that even in an Edenic world a soul would rather be in heaven. That the world of this poem is Edenic is implied by the affection with which nature is portrayed: "Morn" has a "Bosome,"

the sun takes pity on the dewdrop, and man's body is described as "sweet leaves and blossoms green." We therefore wonder why the sun, which is as much a part of nature as the other elements mentioned, helps the dewdrop, while the rest of nature is a source of impurity (l. 16). In one way the beauty of nature provides a foil to set off the indescribable beauties of heaven, but since nature is also, when the poet needs it for his argument, a benevolent agent of God, this conflict is not managed consistently, and the argument is somewhat vitiated. We can legitimately ask why the rose is not gleaned for its supernatural, mythic qualities when the sun so obviously is. It seems that Marvell is limiting his vision of things in order to speculate with ingenuity about the interesting correspondences between the human soul and a dewdrop. This speculation does say something in lines 27-36 with precision, but the vision the poem conveys, is, like the vision in "Bermudas," conveyed only by ignoring the inconsistencies necessary to maintain it. Consistency of vision is achieved by inconsistent, or merely negligent thought, qualities that legislate against the activity of judgement.

Most of the actions in "The Picture of little T.C. in a Prospect of Flowers" are described in either a hyperbolic or oblique manner. The girl will not merely rebuke suitors, but her eyes will "drive, / In Triumph over Hearts that strive;" the poet does not want merely to be friends, but hopes to "compound" and

"parly" with her eyes; and Flora will not kill the girl, but might "Nip in the blossome all our hopes and Thee." Since this poem does not employ the kind of elaborate device that in "On a Drop of Dew" controls discussion of one realm of experience in terms of another, it is difficult to maintain a consistent frame of reference. Nor does it offer the kind of obviously balanced antitheses found in "The Gallery." The concept of a portrait of a little girl will not help in placing the "Enemy of Man" of the second and third stanzas, and will not account for the differences between the first and third, which both seem to focus on an actual portrait.

Neither does it help to conceive of the girl's manifestations as mere speculations in a self-consistent, imaginary realm of future behaviour. Although most of the actions seem oddly unreal, some, such as the appeal, "Roses of their thorns disarm," are eminently and specifically mundane.

When confronted with the type of diversity offered by this poem, the temptation to pronounce, along with A. Berthoff, that it contains a "discomforting ambiguity" (The Resolved Soul, p. 129), and to proceed to other things is quite strong. An alternative, suggested by Frank Warnke, is that we should not speak too somberly of the poem:

> For it is concerned not with making allegorical statements about experience but with participating

> in the reality of experience through the magic ritual of play -- which, by pretending that a little girl is alternately a devastating love object and the mind of man itself, imitates the transforming alchemy of that Nature which is the frame of subject and poem alike.[24]

If the poem is doing only what Warnke says it is, it could not remotely be considered a poem of judgement. But it is not merely "participating in the reality of experience," although Warnke's phrase is helpful for an understanding of what the poem actually does. His insight seems to stem from Eliot's reference to recognition of other kinds of experience, but where Eliot saw unity of diverse experience as wit, the unity emphasized here is that of judgement. If the poem is unified in this sense, it will seem to make a more or less definite judgement that embraces the variety of experience it offers.

Consider the kind of experience offered in the first stanza:

> See with what simplicity
> This Nimph begins her golden daies!
> In the green Grass she loves to lie,
> And there with her fair Aspect tames
> The Wilder flow'rs, and gives them names:
> But only with the Roses playes;
> And them does tell
> What Colour best becomes them, and what Smell.
> (ll. 1-8)

[24]"Play and Metamorphosis in Marvell's Poetry," Studies in English Literature 1500-1900, 5 (1965), 23-30, rpt. in William R. Keast, ed., Seventeenth Century English Poetry: Modern Essays in Criticism, rev. ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1971), p. 353.

The tone is affectionate, even excitedly so as the imperative indicates. The word "Nimph " establishes the type of fairy tale atmosphere appropriate to the feelings of a young girl playing in nature, and the remainder of the stanza maintains this tone. That she "tames" the wilder flowers, names them, and gives instructions to roses is consistent with the mythical power associated with the imaginary world of beautiful young ladies. The description, in which only the action of lying in the green grass is specifically physical, is an appropriately oblique way for a grown man to "participate in the reality" of the young girl's experience. The innocence and "simplicity" of a young girl is abundantly manifest in this stanza, and Warnke's insight is helpful in describing what this stanza is doing.

But the next two stanzas take up the single flaw in the innocent world of the first, (the clear indication in "begins " that this idyllic experience exists in the realm of time), to speculate on future ramifications of her power. I will return to these two stanzas, noting at this point only their demonstration that the innocence of the first stanza cannot exist through time, and examine the fourth stanza:

> Meantime, whilst every verdant thing
> It self does at thy Beauty charm,
> Reform the errours of the Spring;
> Make that the Tulips may have share

ess, seeing they are fair;
And Ros[illegible] their thorns disarm:
t most procure
That [illegible]y a longer Age endure. (11. 25-32).

Mean ti[illegible] apparently p[illegible]es us back in the world of the first st[illegible]za, but in the simp[illegible]st terms, the lesson of the two intercepting stanzas has [illegible]hang[illegible]d that world irrevocably. Their weight oppresses "Mean time" [illegible]h an air of resignation so that it now carries the burden [illegible] the knowledge that time itself will obl[illegible]te[illegible] [illegible]orld's natural innocence.

The girl's absolute command of the situation expressed in the first stanza is here delimited: she cannot improve the appearance of tulips, for they are already "fair." This limitation of power is also conveyed by the poet's command to "Reform the errours of the Spring," and all that involves. What is involved is intimations of brutality in "thorns" that the roses of the first stanza conspicuously lacked. But most poignant is the recognition that omnipotent time is involved: the command of the last two lines refutes itself by recognizing that it is impossible, and, because it is the "most" significant task, undermines the previous commands. The tone of this stanza is so different from that of the first as to imply a refutation of it: it is certainly a vastly different way of regarding what is essentially the same activity. And the legitimate question to ask is: what relevance has this stanza to the activity of judgement?

The question can be answered by deciding on the degree to which this stanza contains a judgement of the situation. The second and third stanzas speculate, in a manner as oblique as, but more hyperbolic than the first, about the continuance in time and into the world of man of the power stemming from the child's beauty. The question about the "high cause" for which "This Darling of the Gods was born!" (ll. 9-10) continues from the first stanza the poet's affection and moves the child into the even more oblique and more hyperbolic world of Olympian deities. She will break Cupid's bow, the poet speculates, as her "chaste Laws" defeat his wantonness. This conflict is necessary if the poem is to maintain its complimentary nature, and the oblique hyperbole with which it is described is appropriate for the compliment it bestows.

The second stanza ends with a concern natural to the situation: "Happy, who can / Appease this virtuous Enemy of Man!" In the next stanza the poet gallantly attempts to answer the challenge. The military terms, "compound," "parly," "wound," "glancing wheels," "Triumph," and "yield" bring the girl down from Olympian heights to the more specific and more destructive world of man. The obliquity of this description has the virtue of maintaining the essential nature of the girl's involvement, while at the same time making as specific as possible the actual events. Her beauty in the first stanza, as a "fair

Aspect" tames wild flowers, here is specified as "conquering Eyes" that become "glancing wheels" which drive over the hearts of suitors. The same quality is being described, but when taken out of the innocent world of nature and placed in the world of man, it becomes destructive. The essence of the girl is this quality, and had the speculations of the second and third stanzas concentrated on the girl instead of on this quality, the situation would have been more complex; admitting, for example, the possibility of a peaceful love affair. The felicity of the abstraction made possible by the obliqueness of the description is that it concentrates on the representative nature of the activity of her beauty in the two opposed realms. Moreover, involvement of the poet himself gives the abstraction some sense of reality, for he affords a specific example in a world that might otherwise appear lifeless.

His personal involvement, prepared for in the second stanza and made specific in the third, lends an air of reality to these two stanzas. This sense is augmented by the fact that these stanzas also represent the ordinary world of men and women in love shared by most readers. Given the inevitable destructiveness of her beauty in our world, the question now paramount is how this beauty can be accomodated with the real world.

It cannot, of course, and this is what the resigned tone of the fourth stanza, with its poignant emphasis on time, communicates.

Something like a judgement is made by this stanza, but it is not so specifically a judgement of attitudes realized through a summary of balanced antithetical attitudes as it is a judgement expressed in tone. The affectionate, indulgent tone of the first stanza is, through a recognition of the inevitable corruption by time and the world of man, replaced by a tone that mourns that loss. It is not mere opinion, nor is it the kind of uncritical yearning for innocent worlds found in "Bermudas," for here the reality of the innocent experience is balanced with the less pleasant reality of the real world, and the importance of both is understood.

The fifth stanza does not substantially alter the conclusion of the fourth, but adds a dimension to it by warning the girl that her beauty might, if not handled properly, precipitate destruction now. The world of the first stanza is here forced to accept the reality of the ordinary world, and the innocence previously celebrated is shown to be extraordinarily precarious, and perhaps impossible to maintain.

The poem does, despite Warnke's assessment, make a statement about existence, and this statement is made by employing the technique of "participating in the reality of experience." This technique, with this degree of consistency, is found elsewhere in Marvell, in "The Garden," some parts of "Upon Appleton House," "A Dialogue between the Soul and Body," and "To his Coy Mistress."

The disadvantage of this technique for involving the activity of judgement is that it does not tend to express attitudes clearly, thus making judgements very elusive and hard to perceive. There seems to me a further weakness in the judgement expressed in this poem. This involves the hyperbolic extension of beauty into the future. Such hyperbole is, of course, appropriate to the complimentary nature of the poem, but it does delimit the situation to the degree that we feel the poet has not shown adequate recognition of its possible complexity. This is not to say that he is insincere, but his allegiance seems to be directed more toward his own dilemma about the nature of innocence than toward apparent subject of the poem. Notably, had he given more attention to the girl herself, his dilemma would not seem nearly so acute. To a demonstrable, but less marked degree than in "On a Drop of Dew," the attitudes in this poem do not seem naturally to emerge from the situation.

IV. POEMS OF JUDGEMENT

The poems of Marvell that most effectively exhibit the elements of judgement are: "A Dialogue, between The Resolved Soul, and Created Pleasure," "An Horatian Ode upon Cromwel's Return from Ireland," "On Mr. Milton's Paradise Lost," and "A Dialogue between the Soul and Body." Balance of the antithetical or incongruous, situations involving significant human experience, attitudes that seem to be determined by the situation, evaluations that provide the most appropriate summary of these attitudes, and, in one case, the notably effective kind of image found in "The Fair Singer," are qualities characteristic of these poems.

The second dialogue, "A Dialogue between the Soul and Body," involves a technique of presentation slightly different from the other three, so it will be discussed last. Where the achievement of judgement in the others involves a public, representative quality to the statements, this poem, while not a wholly private vision, shows less concern for appealing to cultural norms and ways of thinking. Its mode of presentation has more in common with that of "The Picture of little T.C. in a Prospect of Flowers" than with the mode of the other poems of judgement.

The movement of "A Dialogue, between The Resolved Soul, and Created Pleasure" can more appropriately be described as consistently linear than the alternating movement the dialogue form, with its movement back and forth between individual

statements, might suggest. This does not mean that the issues are not sufficiently polarized, but that the reader, ideally a seventeenth century Christian, knows beforehand what the issues are and what the conclusion will be. It is an old story that he has probably heard before, and if he has not heard it the fact that the soul is "Resolved" tells him that the soul must win. The wisdom expressed in the evaluations the poem so starkly makes is the product of a rich tradition that is shared with deep conviction by many of Marvell's contemporaries. The enormous popularity of Pilgrim's Progress testifies to this. It is this public aspect of the poem that seems to prompt Bradbrook and Thomas's remark that, "It is a public affair," a remark that, with its emphasis that makes "public" something unattractive, seems to account for their correlative that, "The conflict in this poem is not very serious" (Andrew Marvell, p. 72).

The conflict is serious, unless by serious they mean dramatic in the manner associated with Donne, and its seriousness takes its strength from the way it is also public. It utters the hard-won truths of a civilization in which a great deal more attention was given to the issues surrounding temptation than most moderns are comfortable with. If this poem's emphasis on asceticism seems distasteful to us, or perhaps merely irrelevant, we can remember that it represents a way of living that many admirable men, Marvell among them, spent their lives defending.

It is also the way of living, as R. H. Tawney argues, that is the original informing spirit of modern capitalist civilization. With this prejudice acknowledged, we can examine how the poem gives its issues the treatment that makes it a poem of judgement.

The kind of seriousness with which the poem regards itself cannot be taken as in any way synonymous with solemnity:

> Courage my Soul, now learn to wield
> The weight of thine immortal Shield.
> Close on they Head thy Helmet bright.
> Ballance thy Sword against the Fight.
> See where an Army, strong as fair,
> With silken Banners spreads the air.
> Now, if thou bee'st that thing Divine,
> In this day's Combat let it shine:
> And shew that Nature wants an Art
> To conquer one resolved Heart. (ll. 1-10)

Marvell's artistic dilemma is similar to Milton's in creating the Satan of Paradise Lost; both must make temptation seem interesting and attractive without giving it so much attractiveness as to woo the reader away from the truth. But where Milton gives his tempter almost irresistible human appeal, then uses grotesque mockery, outright scorn and reductive humour to belittle him, Marvell avoids this problem entirely by making the soul appear only slightly comic. The vision evoked in these lines of a man addressing his own soul as if it were a living human being armed in a real helmet with real sword and shield, places the situation in a realm precisely remote enough from

human experience that the question of the relative merits of the tempter that plagued Milton cannot present itself. This does not mean that the issues are obscured or that their force is diminished to any extent, but it demonstrates the brilliance of Eliot's critical insight that finds in Marvell's wit an "alliance of levity and seriousness (by which the seriousness is intensified)" (Selected Essays, p. 296).

This introduction, with its felicitous incongruity of great moral seriousness within a slightly comic scene, sets the terms of the battle, which, interestingly, takes the form of an artistic conflict: "And shew that Nature wants an Art." That words are the art form in which the battle will be conducted is suggested by the source in Ephesians: the sword of the spirit is the word of God, so this soul's weapon is words, with the further implication that God, if not the direct source, is at least in the immediate background.

To judge from their literature, words to puritans are extraordinarily significant. Milton's interest in the poet as mouthpiece of heavenly truth is not so much in question here as is the crucial importance of involvement with words found in Bunyan's work. Grace Abounding, for example, besides placing an enormous importance on preaching, lays great weight on the individual words that sinners constantly reflect upon: to this

"chief of sinners" words seem as talismans that directly reflect his distance from Godliness. Also, in the Holy War the single most important gate to the soul is Eargate. Throughout these two works, words are seen as the soul's most direct link with either God or Satan, thus indicating that, at least for Bunyan, hearing is the predominant sense. Milton's fascination with the moral force of music also suggests itself here. This emphasis by two eminent contemporary puritans suggests that the significance Marvell gives to the function of words in this poem places it in the mainstream of puritan literature.

The Soul's advantage over its opponent is its unflinching adherence to Christian, and specifically puritan truth, and manifests itself in its command over words. With a stark minimum of adornment it engages the disguised center of Pleasure's temptations and exposes their true nature. The heightening effect promised by partaking of "Nature's banquet" (ll. 11-16) is succinctly shown to be the wrong kind of heightening:

> I sup above, and cannot stay
> To bait so long upon the way. (ll. 17-18)

It is significant that Pleasure's offer is not seen as evil: there is no suggestion of deviltry here. Instead, the offer is merely placed in its proper perspective by ambiguity in "above" and "bait." There is only the slightest suggestion of entrapment in the latter, which takes its primary meaning as the rest and

refreshment offered to travellers. Nothing could be more "natural" than accepting this offer, but the simply stated rejection makes it plain that this natural ease is in the wrong realm. Again, when Pleasure offers aromatic satisfaction that will make the Soul "show/ Like another God" (ll. 27-28), the Soul exposes the real meaning of this perfume:

> A Soul that knowes not to presume
> Is Heaven's and its own perfume. (ll. 29-30)

By the simple device of rhyming "presume" with "perfume" the Soul demonstrates its grasp of the mortal danger of Pleasure's ostensibly innocuous offer. By refusing to accept the minor godhead offered by Pleasure, the Soul shows that it is "That thing Divine."

Fencing with words in this poem is notably simplistic, an effect that accounts, perhaps more than anything else, for the dissatisfaction some readers feel with this poem when it is compared with "A Dialogue between the Soul and Body." That dialogue is often praised for the tensions and heightened sense of conflict that this poem so obviously lacks, and the poem with the "real" tension is felt to be superior, or at least more serious. So readers applaud the conflict found in:

> Had I but any time to lose,
> On this I would it all dispose.
> Cease Tempter. None can chain a mind
> Whom this sweet Chordage cannot bind. (ll. 41-44)

William Empson's discovery that, "It is exquisitely pointed, especially in that most cords are weaker than chains, so that the statement is paradox, and these chords are impalable, so that it is hyperbole,"[25] has attracted widespread approval.

But this passage is a distinct deflection from the movement of the poem. The hyperbole, (exemplifying the same concept as the "Fetters" passage in "The Fair Singer"), and the adjective "sweet," indicate that the Soul actually feels the temptation, so we have a sense of tension that is not found elsewhere in the poem. It is notable that Pleasure's temptations are presented in heptasyllabic trochees suggesting lushness and emotion, while the Soul's answers are given in octosyllabic iambs and provide the appropriate sense of precise, non-sensuous control to accompany its statements of unadorned truth. And the Soul's equally spare use of figures, except, that is, for its puns, also shows his unwillingness to be deflected by ornament from truth. The unusually figurative nature of this passage, in comparison to the remainder of the Soul's answers, is a measure of the Soul's susceptibility to this temptation. Since the ear is the most important sense in this poem, it is therefore appropriate that it supersedes the normal predominance of sight.

It is this adamant adherence to truths which succinctly, and for the most part, unfiguratively, evaluate the world of

[25] Seven Types of Ambiguity, 3rd ed. (London: Chatto and Windus, 1970), p. 105.

nature, that embodies the judgement of the poem. The answers are made in the poet's mind and known by the audience beforehand: their utterance has the form of widely held conclusions expressed with only enough graceful charm to make them palatable. More of this charm in presentation would create a poem in which the "Chordage" passage were the norm, and it would decidedly not be the poem before us. The attitudes these evaluations express have the sanction of a strong, religious culture behind them, and it is in this sense that the poem is a "public affair."

Antithetical and incongruous presentment in this poem is muted by the need to convey with great precision the public judgements it offers, but that the situation is evaluated is clear from the public approval the sentiments that it expresses would receive. An element of performance is also present, but it is strikingly unlike that of "Mourning," or "The Gallery," for here the performing Soul is involved with issues that demand more adherence to meaning than this quality can easily manage. There is too much at stake in the outcome for it to be treated with the kind of bemused detachment evident in "Mourning" or the kind of self-interest represented by "The Gallery." That Marvell is more interested in presenting his civilization's truths than in displaying the ingenious skill he clearly possesses is apparent from the poem's absence of figures, and also by its uncharacteristic lack of obliquity in approaching its subject.

Alvarez's assertion that Marvell is "the foremost poet of judgment in the English language, and 'An Horatian Ode' is his foremost poem" (The School of Donne, pp. 105-106), seems to be an unequivocal placement of this poem as the greatest poem of judgement in English. But to judge from the diversity of opinions on this poem, its most salient feature might seem to be its resolute inconclusiveness, a feature shared with "The Definition of Love" and "Mourning", which do not judge. These three poems show a mind ranging over a number of possibilities without firmly endorsing any single perspective, and it is T. S. Eliot's distinction to have illuminated this feature by pinpointing it with the phrase, "other kinds of experience." But this insight does not differentiate this poem from the others. For this we need to recognize that the "Horatian Ode" contains the evaluation of its experience that the other poems lack; and this recognition must take into account the impression of many readers, representatively stated by John M. Wallace, that "a tentative suspension of final judgement "[26] is perhaps the best description of the tone of the ode.

What immediately and forcefully differentiates the "Horatian Ode" from "The Definition of Love" is that the idiosyncratic vision characterizing the latter is wholly absent in this ode. Wallace's convincing argument that in almost every

[26] Destiny His Choice (London: Cambridge University Press, 1968), p. 103.

case, "Marvell's feelings meet the historical probabilities" (Destiny His Choice, p. 79), places the ode as an eminently public performance. His research shows that Marvell's unwillingness in the poem to formulate a sharply defined attitude either for or against Cromwell was shared by several important contemporaries. The type of singleminded intensity towards the issues that Milton exemplifies was not the norm among those who expressed their true feelings toward the rising general. The poem thus does not resemble "The Definition of Love," for it is about a real and historically significant human experience.

Its affinity with "Mourning," however, seems more profound. That poem's inconclusiveness, so boldly stated in, "I yet my silent Judgment keep," and enforced by puns and equivocal statements, might seem to characterize the "Horatian Ode," where admiration for and awe of Cromwell are balanced against at least sympathy and possibly equal admiration for Charles. The kind of ambiguity and ambivalence that seems to delight the speaker in "Mourning" is a recurrent technique in the ode:

> The forward Youth that would appear
> Must now forsake his Muses dear. (ll. 1-2)
>
> As if his hightest plot
> To plant the Bergamot,
> Could by industrious Valour climbe
> To ruine the great Work of Time. (ll. 31-34)
>
> Nor yet grown stiffer with Command,
> But still in the Republick's hand. (ll. 81-82)

The first quotation is reminiscent of the opening of "To his Noble Friend Mr. Richard Lovelace, upon his Poems:"

> Sir,
> Our times are much degenerate from those
> Which your sweet Muse, which your fair
> Fortune chose. (ll. 1-2)

Both announce a crisis in the age in terms of the condition of the arts, but where the address to Lovelace everywhere unambiguously stresses that the times are "degenerate," the other introduces a curious consideration with "appear."

If this word is an example of Marvell's carelessness, the poem is more seriously flawed than most readers have thought, but if, as seems more probable, it is thoughtfully placed, then, along with the implication of untoward pushiness in "forward," it associates the youth with the world of the socialite whose chief concern is to make a good showing. When it later becomes clear that this "Youth" provides an analogy for the rise of Cromwell, the meaning expands to include the sense in which a remarkable act of nature or the gods looms into significance. It is difficult to say covincingly with this example whether Marvell is only juggling incongruent meanings or whether the poem as a whole embraces and sufficiently accounts for their diversity.

The first couplet of the second quotation seems to pun on "plot," to reveal Cromwell's deliberate and cunning plan to ascend, at the same time that it primarily maintains a compliment

by associating him with the Roman soldier/farmer ideal. The choice of the "Bergamot" plant intensifies the pun, for, as George deF. Lord points out in his note to this line, the Bergamot is "A pear associated with royalty." The strong suggestion here, emphasized by the qualifying "as if," is that when Cromwell was a farmer he was plotting, at best perhaps unknown to himself, to ascend to the status of royalty The "perhaps," indicated by the speaker's "as if," is almost sly in its suggesting without stating this suspicion. The next couplet seems to be even more ambivalent, because "industrious," according to Thomas R. Edwards, involves "both the approving sense of 'intelligent skill' and a more hostile sense of 'rich in crafty devices and expedients'...with further complication by a third meaning, 'trade or manufacture'."[27]

The last quotation is the most problematic of the three, and the disagreement between Cleanth Brooks and Douglas Bush did not close the questions raised in these lines.[28] Brooks' opening contention that "still " implies "the recognition of

[27] Imagination and Power (New York: Oxford University Press, 1971), p. 74.

[28] see Brooks, "Marvell's 'Horatian Ode'," English Institute Essays 1946 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1947), pp. 127-158; Bush, "Marvell's 'Horatian Ode'," Sewanee Review, 60 (1952), 363-376; and Brooks, "A Note on the Limits of 'History' and the Limits of 'Criticism'," Sewanee Review, 61 (1953), 129-135; all rpt. in Seventeenth Century English Poetry, ed. William R. Keast (New York: Oxford University Press, 1962), pp. 321-340, 341-351 and 352-358 respectively.

the possibility that Cromwell will not always so defer to the commonwealth" (p. 333), is countered by Bush's conviction that "Marvell's words afford no ground for an ominous hint of a possible change of heart in Cromwell" (p. 350). Brooks seems to give this point to his opponent, but answers about the previous line: "Surely this line implies the possibility that men in whom so much power is vested may grow stiffer" (p. 353); and so ardent a proponent of the view that Marvell is arguing for the acceptance of Cromwell's regime admits:

> There can be no objection to reading in the ambiguous 'yet' a hint that unless Cromwell's power is kept within the republic's hand it may well grow arbitrary, but the adverb may more confidently be asserted to introduce the reasons why the denigration of Cromwell has been ill founded. (Destiny His Choice, p. 92)

The hesitation may be small, but it is still there.

These three examples of ambiguity and ambivalence forcefully reveal that the way the situation in the "Horatian Ode" is presented bears striking similarity with the presentation in "Mourning." The most careful discussion of the content of individual passages can be stated only with the kind of exemplary prudence of John Wallace's recognition that firm definitions of the poem's attitudes might finally be impossible. The crucial task, then, is to show how the "Horatian Ode" does not diminish the importance of meaning by juxtaposing opposites as "Mourning"

does primarily for the delight involved in the performance, [illegible]hat Marvell's effort in the poem justifies Wallace's con[illegible]n that in the "Horatian Ode" Marvell's "function was to speak not himself, but the truth, to mirror reality, not to express opinion" (Destiny His Choice, p. 105).

Wallace's examination by itself goes a long way toward justifying the poem's balance of attitudes, although it does not sufficiently account for the way the poem embraces and resolves its pervasive ambivalence. And general agreement with Wallace's thesis does not oblige us also to agree with him that "Charles is merely an incident in a narrative which begins with Cromwell's extraordinary past and concludes with the expectancy of his glorious future" (Destiny His Choice, p. 78). As an ode the poem primarily praises Cromwell; but as an "Horatian" ode it is marked by a judicious quality. This judiciousness is evident in the choice of the form, for its pagan origin discourages the difficult introduction of crucial questions arising from the religious controversy: the problem of natural law, for example, is more readily managed by leaving open in, "The force of angry Heaven's flame" (l. 26), the origin of Cromwell's authority. If it is made irrefutably clear that the Christian God sent him, the debate is closed.

This judiciousness reaches its peak in the passage about Charles:

> He nothing common did, or mean,
> Upon the memorable Scene:
> But with his keener Eye
> The Axes edge did try:
> Nor call'd the Gods with vulgar spight
> To vindicate his helpless Right,
> But bow'd his comely Head
> Down, as upon a Bed:
> This was that memorable Hour
> Which first assur'd the forced Pow'r. (ll. 57-66)

There is nothing in this passage to suggest that Charles is anything but noble. And the emphasis "Down " gains by virtue of its position evokes from the reader a sense of involvement in the beheading itself; an involvement that makes it impossible to regard this execution as "merely an incident" in a poem that is ostensibly dedicated to Cromwell. The stress on Charles' nobility, with its emphatic rejection of "vulgar spight," endorses the negative aspects of the desc ions of Cromwell, and gives at least emotional sympathy to the "great Work of Time" (l.34) destroyed by Cromwell's "forced Pow'r." And the appropriateness of this emotional antithesis is justified by the way in which the poem is a public performance.

One of the things established by Wallace's research is that the attitudes the poem expresses, both in their complex ambivalence and in individual instances, are firmly representative of the maturest attitudes held at the time of writing. The poem is not, therefore, a distinctly individual utterance, even though

no one but Marvell could have written it. His skill in presenting both sides of any question, sometimes to the point of endorsing each opposite with equal emphasis, is unique to him. And the success of this poem is based upon the way the issues it balances so honestly were among the most divisive issues of his time.

The supreme instance of this public quality is found in the fact that in an ode ostensibly in praise, albeit qualified, of Cromwell, Charles is given such enormous sympathy. The portrait of Charles makes it plain to anyone who might have doubted it that Cromwell has destroyed something of value to the whole nation. This sympathy, based upon the King's nobility in the face of death, judges Cromwell with a force that, although it does not detract from admiration for his practical achievements, does give the impression that there is an eminently admirable realm of conduct for which he shows no evidence of being suited. The implication of this judgement is that the doubts expressed in the ambiguity of the lines describing him are given the weight of humane regard for a single, noble individual. It is plain that the Cromwell in this poem is never so intimately regarded, suggesting that he may be either unattractive personally or merely incapable of being understood in normal human terms because beyond them. Both these possibilities are suggested and both are left open.

This heightened judiciousness gives the poem a represen-

tative quality, for it expresses simultaneously the doubts and sanctions of Cromwell in a manner so representative as to include almost everyone at the time. That it does this in an age known for its intensely sectarian politics testifies to its value: it exemplifies a way of thinking that would severely limit the opportunities for war and strife in any age. This universal quality, although achieved with some of the same techniques employed in "Mourning" for the purpose of writing a clever poem, so differentiates the "Horatian Ode" from that poem as to place it firmly as a poem of judgement in the very highest sense.

"On Mr. Milton's Paradise Lost" is as clearly a public performance as the "Horatian Ode," but in place of the ode's inconclusiveness, this poem presents its attitudes with an unambiguous clarity that is rare in Marvell outside his satires. It does contain satire, but this does not deflect the poem's movement. The denigration of Dryden is, in fact, thoughtfully integrated with praise of Milton, for it provides a basis against which Marvell balances what Milton's preface to Paradise Lost would imply is the poem's most radical feature: its lack of rhyme.

This poem has not received much critical attention. There seem to be two related reasons for this, the first of which is the general feeling, voiced here by George deF. Lord, that

> "The First Anniversary of Government under the Lord Protector" marks his abandonment of the balanced, judicious attitudes of "An Horatian Ode"... From 1667 on, in the remaining decade of life, his energies were entirely spent participating in and writing about political affairs. (Andrew Marvell: Complete Poetry, pp. xi-xii.)

This widespread impression, which has been advanced as evidence that Marvell epitomizes the "dissociation of sensibility," in part explains why Lawrence W. Hyman can find "On Mr. Milton's Paradise Lost" distinctly "prosaic."[29] This poem contains a quality similar to the "balanced, judicious attitudes of 'An Horatian Ode'," and is prosaic only for those who tend to agree with Arnold's unhappy description of the poetry of Dryden and Pope.

The poem's structure is integrally balanced. The first twenty-two lines expressing doubts about Milton's epic are balanced by the next twenty-two which resolve these doubts, and the remainder examines Milton's radical abandonment of rhyme. The resolution settles the doubts in reverse order: the epic's source is not Samson-like "spight" (l. 9), but inspiration from Heaven (ll. 41-44); fear of Milton's success (ll. 11-16) is quashed by testimony to the epic's greatness (ll. 27-40); and fear that lesser talents might badly imitate the effort (ll. 17-22) is resolved by Marvell's conviction that no one will "dare" to do so (ll. 25-26).

[29] Andrew Marvell (New York: Twayne Publishers, Inc., 1964), p. 117.

The last conviction may have its basis in fact, for Margoliouth suggests that during the time between obtaining his licence and the composition of this poem, Dryden had decided not to publish his operatic version of Paradise Lost (The Poems and Letters of Andrew Marvell, I, p. 260).

At any rate, the attitudes Marvell poises with such judicious care here remain, as a glance at criticism of Milton since Eliot's famous essay will confirm, vital issues. This fact, along with his sharp recognition that the driving force behind Samson Agonistes is "spight" (l. 9), testifies to the maturity of Marvell's judgements. It is no disgrace even today to hold these attitudes, and the fact that they were uttered at the time Paradise Lost first appeared, makes it clear that the technique of balance and the quality of judiciousness Marvell brings to political issues as significant as those in the "Horatian Ode" are brought to bear on the equally important issues raised by Paradise Lost.

Marvell's management of the heroic couplet in this poem looks forward to the political poetry of Dryden and the social poetry of Pope, but it also maintains the more Jonsonian impression of the mind actively seeking truth. As W. B. Piper points out, the first four and one half lines expressing the scope of Paradise Lost are balanced by the speaker's response in the next five and

one half lines.[30] The shift to the response does not permit the couplet form to dictate its entrance. Since it breaks a line of verse with a new thought, it gives the impression that the thought is almost independent of, or at least more important than the verse form.

This impression is augmented by Marvell's mastery of the couplet form:

> Just Heav'n Thee, like Tiresias, to requite,
> Rewards with Prophesie thy loss of Sight.
> (ll. 43-44)

Because this couplet follows two questions about the source of Milton's inspiration, and is an answer to the speaker's first and most serious doubt, it carr s a considerable burden. It quickly dissolves the suspense by placing "Just Heav'n " in an emphatic, climactic position, and by suspending until the next line the complete resolution to the questions and doubts. By placing syntactical emphasis on "Rewards," the strong enjambment enhances the implication of "requite " and brings home with the force of conviction the satisfactory resolution. The strength of this resolution is important, for the lasting impression, even until today, of the mixture of Milton's blindness and boldness,

[30] The Heroic Couplet (Cleveland: The Press of Case Western Reserve University, 1969), pp. 307-308.

(an impression enforced in this poem by assonance in the first line), seriously questions his suitability for writing a biblical epic. The balanced antithesis is not, therefore, gratuitous.

Marvell's mastery is most strikingly evident in the second last couplet:

> I, too, transported by the Mode offend,
> And while I meant to Praise thee, must Commend.
> (ll. 51-52)

Marvell uses the couplet's rhyme to enforce a judgement that combines praise for Milton with a display of his own skill. Rhymed verse is admitted to be inferior to Milton's unrhymed verse, but the rhyme in this couplet is responsible for the praise. Humility is balanced against skill, and skill is ascendant, for it is the source of the praise. This theme and its management recall the similar intertwining of skill with humility that ends "The Coronet." Marvell's performance in this couplet evinces not Metaphysical wit, but the kind of wittiness common to Dryden and Pope. It requires ordinary thought rather than a radically different mode of perception. Nevertheless, it is far from prosaic, and achieves an effectiveness that is fittingly faithful to its subject.

"On Mr. Milton's Paradise Lost" accomodates the sentiments of its audience with the author's own feelings to enforce about Paradise Lost a judgement that has the air of complete understanding

and faithful p[illegible]sent[illegible]ion of the issues. The fact that the issues raised s[illegible]mmar[illegible] a great deal of critical debate testifie[illegible] [illegible]sp[illegible] their significance. Moreover, his inc[illegible] s[illegible] [illegible]der and his balance of rhymed against unr[illegible]y[illegible] invite th[illegible]nvol[illegible]ment of the poetry-reading pub[illegible]ic. The [illegible]oem sta[illegible]s as a f[illegible]ne; if uncharacteristic achievement by Marvell, [illegible] is[illegible]lity to employ his characteristic techniques of balance to the impression of considered thought in a [illegible]dium f[illegible]w[illegible]ch he usually shows less concern for presenting both sides of the issues.

A salient feature of the discussion to this point is that those figures normally thought of as Metaphysical conceits are not often found in Marvell's poems of judgement. In fact, of the poems examined, "The Definition of Love" is the most striking display of this type of figure. The "Chordage" passage in the dialogue is not typical of that poem, and compression and complexity in "The Coronet" are achieved by techniques other than Metaphysical conceits. This might seem to indicate that judgement is incompatible with Metaphysical poetry. Were this the case, the view that Marvell is a poet of judgement would seem at odds with the common understanding of him as a Metaphysical poet. Fortunately, "A Dialogue between the Soul and Body" combines judgement with consistent Metaphysical figures.

James Smith proposes this definition of Metaphysical poetry:

> It is, that verse properly called metaphysical is that to which the impulse is given by an overwhelming concern with metaphysical problems: with problems either deriving from or closely resembling, in the nature of their difficulty, the problem of the Many and the One.[31]

Pierre Legouis would apparently agree that "A Dialogue between the Soul and Body" is concerned with a problem of that difficulty, but his description of Marvell's activity in this poem would disqualify it as a poem of judgement:

> Marvell seeks rather to parade his ingenuity than to persuade or move; if he at all gives the the impression of sincerity he owes it to the confession of his perplexity at one of the most abstruse problems of divinity and philosophy.[32]

I want to show how the ingenuity in this poem is not paraded as it is, for example, in "The Definition of Love," but is unswervingly employed for the purpose of expressing an appropriate

[31]"On Metaphysical Poetry," Scrutiny 2 (1933), rpt. in A Selection From Scrutiny, II, ed. F. R. Leavis (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1968), p. 162.

[32]Andrew Marvell, Poet, Puritan, Patriot, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968), p. 39.

judgement upon real and significant human experience.

The level and tone of the discussion in "A Dialogue between the Soul and Body" is a source of concern for some readers. Andor Gomme feels that it is "much more serious" than "A Dialogue, between The Resolved Soul, and Created Pleasure" ("The Teasingness of Andrew Marvell," p. 23), and F. W. Bradbrook mines Eliot's insight into Marvell's "alliance of levity and seriousness" to discover that the paradox and exaggeration in this poem create "an effect verging on comedy" ("The Poetry of Andrew Marvell," p. 195). Fulke Greville's lines on a similar theme provide an illustrative contrast:

> Oh wearisome Condition of Humanity!
> Borne under one Law, to another bound:
> Vainely begot, and yet forbidden vanity;
> Created sicke, commanded to be sound:
> What meaneth Nature by these diverse Lawes?[33]

The three central lines achieve an effect of almost oppressive solemnity as the antitheses accumulate to stress the burden of man torn by irreconcilable forces. "Commanded," because alliterative and following a heavy caesura, comes with the force of a physical blow. Greville's passionate outcry is quite different from the second stanza of Marvell's poem:

[33]quoted for a similar purpose in George Williamson's Six Metaphysical Poets (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1967), p. 226.

> O who shall me deliver whole,
> From bonds of this Tyrannic Soul?
> Which, stretcht upright, impales me so,
> That mine own Precipice I go:
> And warms and moves this needless Frame:
> (A Fever could but do the same.)
> And, wanting where its spight to try,
> Has made me live to let me dye.
> A Body that could never rest,
> Since this ill Spirit it possest. (ll. 11-20)

There is little sense here of Greville's vision of the absolute distinction between rival claims, so the nearest we come to his rigid antitheses is in the fourth couplet. But the emphasis in "made," which approximates Greville's forcefulness, is shifted by "let;" to introduce a consideration Greville's lines cannot admit. That is, the relationship between Marvell's Soul and Body entails complexities that Greville's lines are not remotely concerned with.

Greville's plain diction and syntax, strong verbs in "bound," "forbidden," and "commanded," and, most of all, his lack of figures, places his lines on a more passionate, less purely intellectual level than Marvell's. The Body's complaint seems, by comparison, exaggerated. On this point Rosemond Tuve singles out the Body's second couplet as an example of

> the poet's own ironic qualifications --
> a dry reminder, in the figure's hyperbolic

> inconsequence, that only the Body would think being upright is responsible for falling.[34]

We grant that the figure seems exaggerated, but not that it embodies "ironic qualifications" or that it is inconsequential. The Body is "stretcht upright" because it is human and it owes its life, as the Soul explained so forcefully, to the Soul's presence in its "Nerves, and Arteries, and Veins" (l. 8). It is impaled in the sense that the quality of life given by the Soul is the source of its suffering; and the state of erectness in "impales" directly balances the Soul's description of its being "hung up, as 'twere, in Chains" (l. 7) of the Body.

The couplet's second line, containing what Miss Tuve sees as irony, brings together in a manner that stresses their inseparability the idea of death with the already established fact of life, by creating the sense of an extraordinarily delicate balance between living and dying. The Body is animated by the very thing that causes its death, and its complaint against the Soul is that by giving life, it has made the Body susceptible to and aware of its inevitable death. The perception embodied with such vigour in this figure can be favourably compared with the "Fetters" figure in "The Fair Singer," where

[34] Elizabethan and Metaphysical Imagery (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1947), p. 207.

the antithesis is so compressed that it is difficult to separate its parts. But the compression amounting to fusion here is rendered so effectively that separation of life from death in the figure is impossible. The concept and the feeling of death in life and life in death are intertwined in the single figure of a moving precipice. The inseparability of the fusion is shown to be nearly absolute when the figure is compared to a similar perception from The Rehearsal Transpros'd, to which Margoliouth has called our attention:

> After he was stretch'd to such an height in his own fancy, that he could not look down from top to toe but his Eyes dazled at the Precipice of his Stature. (The Poems and Letters of Andrew Marvell, I, p. 221).

Clearly, Samuel Parker's condition is not so intensely precarious as the Body's.

This figure, perhaps the most effective Marvell ever created, is exaggerated, but does not, as Miss Tuve thinks, admit of "hyperbolic inconsequence." The Body's uprightness is the condition of its being alive, and especially being human, so it certainly has the right to think that being alive and human is responsible for dying: unless alive it cannot die, and unless human it cannot be aware of its death. And because this poem is concerned with expressing the enormous

difficulty in trying to distinguish soul from body, this figure embodies a judgement in the most effective possible manner.

All the figures in the poem approximate this perception: the Soul is "enslav'd" in the "Nerves, and Arteries, and Veins" of the Body, and that is the ineluctable condition of being alive on earth. It complains of the Body:

> And all my Care its self employes,
> That to preserve, which me destroys:
> Constrain'd not only to indure
> Diseases, but, whats worse, the Cure:
> And ready oft the Port to gain,
> Am Shipwrackt into Health again. (ll. 25-30)

But the complaint is directed more at the indissoluble union between Soul and Body than at the Body itself. Both diseases and their cure torture the Soul, for it is the condition of human life that produces the Soul's entrapment. The "Port," the Body's death, is the Soul's ostensible goal, but that is the end of human life. The last couplet is dramatically effective in combining these irrevocable paradoxes entailed in being alive: being "Shipwrackt into Health" is as deleterious to the Body as it is to the Soul, for the Body's state of health entails inescapable "Maladies" (l. 32) for the body, and enslavement and torture for the Soul. On the other hand, lack of health pains the Body in the normal way, and also pains the

Soul who laments:

> What Magick could me thus confine
> Wi[illegible]thers Grief to pine?
> [illegible]ever it complain,
> [illegible] cannot feel, the pain. (ll. 21-24)

The indissoluble union that human life entails is expressed with remarkable force by Marvell's characteristic technique of juxtaposing antitheses. The vision the poem expresses is similar to the fresh sense of incongruity found in "The Definition of Love," with the crucial addition that incongruity here is intimately bound to significant human experience. The exaggerations are justified by the force with which, especially in the "Precipice" figure, the perception is embodied in the texture of the verse. It is an odd sort of perception that comes to no simple, final judgement, a feature which prompts from Andor Gomme the remark that he finds this poem, "one of the most disturbing in our literature" ("The Teasingness of Andrew Marvell," p. 23). It is so, but since the sense of perplexity it expresses is so adamantly justified by the situation it creates, this "disturbing" quality takes the form of the most appropriate judgement of the subject. Here we find Marvell's talent for holding in balance apparently irreconcilable antitheses brought to a problem as difficult as the problem of the "Many and the One." This application,

along with the figures that satisfy every criteria of Metaphysical images, makes this Marvell's most Metaphysical poem of judgement.

The poem concludes with a figure that is quite different from those in the body of the poem:

> What but a Soul could have the wit
> To build me up for Sin so fit?
> So Architects do square and hew
> Green Trees that in the Forest grew. (ll. 41-44)

This difference is highlighted when we agree with F.R. Leavis that the conclusion has a "curiously satisfying effect as of a resolution"[35] and yet notice that the issues addressed by the figure are rich in elusive implications. The figure seems to suggest a conflict between "Green" naturalness and human artifice, but the precise relationship between this loosely defined conflict and the conflict in the poem cannot readily be identified. To compare this figure with the "Precipice" passage is to mark this difference distinctly. Each requires the context of the whole poem in order to achieve its full effect, but this figure has an independence from the issues of the poem that the earlier figure does not. Notably, were this figure characteristic of the poem as a whole, we would not have a poem of judgement: we would have a poem that is even more evocative than "The Definition of Love."

[35] "The Responsible Critic, or The Function of Criticism at Any Time," Scrutiny, 19(1953), rpt. in A Selection From Scrutiny, II, ed. F.R. Leavis (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1968), p. 288.

CONCLUSION

Throughout this thesis is a persistent, if unstated, concern with the nature of Marvell's placement as a Metaphysical poet, and with current attitudes toward that kind of poetry. My argument is that if a poem delights or merely excites readers, as "The Definition of Love" seems to do , by displaying what T.S. Eliot thinks of as "wit," then it is a substantially less fully realized achievement than many readers have thought. In this sense, two of Marvell's most popular poems, "To his Coy Mistress" and "The Garden," are problematic achievements.

Since judgement involves just presentation of attitudes toward apprehended issues, "To his Coy Mistress" is not a poem of judgement. The occasion of the poem is that of persuading a lady to make love. The formal argument is directed to this goal. But the tones are extremely various. They range from gentle self-mockery in the first section (ll. 1-20), to a mixture of serious consideration of human mortality with the grim humour of "The Grave's a fine and private place,/ But none I think do there embrace"(ll.31-32), in the second section; and in the last section, incongruous tones are more intensely concentrated:

> Now let us sport us while we may;
> And now, like am'rous birds of prey,
> Rather at once our Time devour,
> Than languish in his slow-chapt pow'r. (ll. 37-40)

And tear our Pleasures with rough strife,
Thorough the Iron gates of Life.
Thus, though we cannot make our Sun
Stand still, yet we will make him run. (11.43-46)

The first passage invokes a quality of unseemliness based on consideration of the way the "sport" of human lovers is like the mating of birds of prey. The violence done to the lady's sensibility by this simile might more reasonably be expected to persuade her to "languish" in time rather than to "devour" it. That the speaker's pleasures have more in common with pain than with what is normally considered pleasure, is again evident in the first couplet of the second passage. To the extent that "Iron gates" stand for female genitalia, the speaker is describing, in a very unpleasant way, violating a virgin. How, as he seems to think, this pleasure could be mutual, is difficult to know. And the unsavoriness of these feelings is not mitigated by the humorous implication in the last couplet.

This extreme range of attitudes is quite inappropriate for the ostensible occasion of the poem: the appeal for the lady to make love. And it should be noted that the argument seems to force Marvell to endorse violent passions that most of his other poems, especially the Mower sequence, denigrate. This poem's argument condones essentially ugly attitudes that its opposing attitudes of levity and mockery fail to redeem. One consequence of Eliot's

influence is that this poem is often taken to be a major achievement of Metaphysical poetry. This is unfortunate, for it is a severely limited achievement in a way that "A Dialogue between the Soul and Body" is not.

Attitudes are overtly expressed in six of the nine stanzas of "The Garden." The first two and the ninth stanzas involve attitudes toward society, and the third, fourth, and eighth are addressed to the question of sexuality. Thus, sex and society each occupy a third of the poem: the other third, stanzas five to seven, expresses three levels of experience. Were "The Garden" a poem of judgement, it would evaluate its various attitudes toward sexuality and society. I will consider only those attitudes toward sexuality.

The third and fourth stanzas claim that love of foliage is superior to love of women. The third makes this claim by means of an assertion: this speaker will not carve in trees the name of a woman, but will carve instead the name of the beloved tree. The assertion takes the form of such a bold, almost laughable parody that its seriousness seems to be undermined. The fourth stanza repeats the claim by suggesting that Apollo and Pan chased Daphne and Syrinx only in order that they would become foliage. The conspicuous wittiness of this suggestion also makes the claim in this stanza seem rather less than fully solemn. The tone of these two stanzas, tending toward whimsical humour, implies that while the

speaker might be quite serious about the superiority of "green" to sexual love, the heretical nature of this feeling makes it necessary for him to adorn it with a partly mocking tone. We have a mixture of levity with seriousness that preserves both the underlying attitude and also a less than whole-hearted acceptance of it.

In the eighth stanza, however, this whimsical tone is somewhat reduced. This stanza, which directly follows the experiences in the garden, comes as a comment on those experiences:

> Such was that happy Garden-state,
> While Man there walk'd without a Mate:
> After a Place so pure, and sweet,
> What other Help could yet be meet! (11.57-60)

Although the strangeness of this attitude makes most readers view this passage as light-hearted humour, there seems to be a shift from the whimsy of the third and fourth stanzas to a more direct expression of feeling, a directness that is intensified by reminding us in the clever use of the Biblical phrase "help meet", that a woman was the instrument of the Fall. Any justification of this attitude, whether we take it seriously or as a joke, must be found in stanzas five to seven, for it is a comment on these stanzas.

It is made plain in,"Stumbling on Melons, as I pass,/ Insnar'd with Flow'rs, I fall on Grass"(11.39-40), that the extraordinary sensuous experience in the fifth stanza is a superior alternative to sexual experience. This subtle

dismissal of sexuality maintains the same tone as similar dismissals in the two previous stanzas. It should be noted, however, that in these three stanzas the ingenuity and charm with which the superiority of "green" love is established discourages anything like the more direct dismissal of sexuality in the eighth stanza. To the extent that the eighth stanza is a comment on the fifth, it seems inapropriately solemn.

In the sixth stanza the speaker not only transcends this sensual world, although depending on it for release from it, but also creates

> Far other Worlds, and other Seas;
> Annihilating all that's made
> To a green Thought in a green Shade. (ll.46-48)

This concretely apprehended experience of nothingness requires the previously established superiority of "green," and infuses this evaluation with significance beyond the phenomenal world. Sexuality is irrelevant here, so irrelevant in fact that its return in the eighth stanza as a comment on this experience seems quite out of place. The whimsicality of tone in stanzas three to five has been justified by being transcended and placed in its appropriate realm. To the extent that the eighth stanza is a joke it seems a jarring return to this tone, for the tone has outlived its usefulness. To the extent that the attitude in the eighth stanza

is serious, it seems a gross misapprehension of the evaluation made of "green" love in the sixth stanza. Although it would be difficult to define the precise nature that a comment on the sixth stanza ought to take, it is plain that the comment offered by the eighth is inappropriate. Rather than enhancing or explaining the significance of that experience, the eighth stanza seems either to cast aside consideration of meaning in favour of a silly joke, or, if taken seriously, it misapplies the evaluation the experience so intensely conveys. In this instance, Marvell's wit obscures more than delights.

The extremely elusive nature of the attitudes and feelings in "The Garden" and "To his Coy Mistress" makes it very difficult to determine whether or not they express something in the nature of a judgement. They seem to be private, personal utterances that do not show in an obvious way the concern evident in Marvell's poems of judgement directed toward a full understanding of the situation.

Significantly, three of the five poems of judgement are notably public performances. The other two, "The Coronet" and "A Dialogue between the Soul and Body," directly involve public, explicitly Christian, issues. There seem to be no such public issues in "The Garden" or in "To his Coy Mistress." This suggests that a wholly private poem of judgement may not be possible, for without evidence publicly available for scrutiny, the reader would probably be unable to assess the appropriateness of the poem's

attitudes. Poems of judgement thus remain statements of the poet's unique or representative understanding of significant public issues. It is Andr / Marvell's distinction to have expressed a uniquely balanced and judicious understanding of five such issues.

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