Katherine Philips and the Discourse of Virtue

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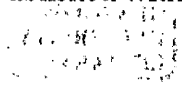

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Abstract

For many years after her death in 1664, Katherine Philips ('The Matchless Orinda') was celebrated by admirers and commentators as an icon of female virtue and as an appropriately chaste model for other women writers. Modern analyses of Philips' writing have challenged this patriarchal construction of 'Orinda', and today Philips is most commonly known as the author of potentially subversive and erotic poems on the subject of intimate female friendship. However, such analyses have tended to overlook the fact that virtue and the question of the virtuous life are recurring and dominant themes in Philips' writing. This thesis focusses on those themes. It examines the models of virtue constructed by Philips in her poetry and drama in the context of the religious, political, and philosophical discourses that informed seventeenth-century ideas concerning right conduct and the good life. The thesis questions the assumption that virtue in Philips' writing operates merely as a discourse of female (sexual) constraint or denial. It explores how Philips' representations of ideally virtuous men and women interact with and negotiate Early Modern conceptions of good statecraft and self-government. It demonstrates Philips' contribution to seventeenth-century debates around kingship, faith, and government, and her articulation of a subtle critique of the received wisdom that accounted women inferior in virtue to men.

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Abbreviations

Poems	Katherine Philips, *The Collected Works of Katherine Philips, The Matchless Orinda*, vol. 1, *The Poems*, ed. Patrick Thomas (Stump Cross, Essex: Stump Cross Books, 1990).
Letters	Katherine Philips, *The Collected Works of Katherine Philips, The Matchless Orinda*, vol. 2, *The Letters*, ed. Patrick Thomas (Stump Cross, Essex: Stump Cross Books, 1990).
Translations	Katherine Philips, *The Collected Works of Katherine Philips, The Matchless Orinda*, vol. 3, *The Translations*, ed. G. Greer and R. Little (Stump Cross, Essex: Stump Cross Books, 1993).

N. B. The first reference to each poem in each chapter is followed by the number of the poem as it appears in the Thomas edition.

Contents

Introduction

> At last ('twas long indeed!) Orinda came,
> To ages yet to come an ever-glorious name;
> To virtuous Themes her well-tun'd lyre she strung,
> Of virtuous Themes in easy numbers sung.
>
> Thomas Rowe, 'Epistle to Daphnis'[1]

> *Socrates* demanded of *Memnon* what vertue was: There is answered *Memnon*, the vertue of a Man, of a Woman, of a Magistrate, of a private Man, of a Childe, of an old Man: What vertue meane you? Yea marry, this is very well, quoth *Socrates;* we were in search of one vertue, and thou bringest me a whole swarme.
>
> Michel de Montaigne, 'On Experience'[2]

This study is concerned with the representation of virtue in the poetry and drama of Katherine Philips, 'The Matchless Orinda' (1632-64). It focusses largely upon the historical figures who populate her writing and who are transformed by it into models of good conduct and exemplary character. It examines these models in the light of various religious, political and philosophical discourses around the subject of virtue and the virtuous life that dominated the period in which Philips lived and wrote.

The introduction to this study begins, however, not with Philips as the author of models of virtue, but as the subject of such a discourse. Following her public success with *Pompey* in 1663 and particularly after her death from smallpox in 1664, Philips was fêted by admirers and commentators as an icon of female virtue. The commendatory poems which preface the 'unauthorised' 1664 edition of her works and the posthumous

[1] From Thomas Rowe's *Poems on Several Occasions* appended to Elizabeth Rowe, The *Miscellaneous Works in Prose and Verse, of Mrs. Elizabeth Rowe*, vol. 2, 5th ed. (London, 1772), 365.

[2] Michel de Montaigne, *The Essayes of Montaigne*, trans. John Florio (New York: The Modern Library, 1933), III:13, 967.

1667 volume, as well as several other verse eulogies, contain many references to virtue, both as a subject of Philips' pen and as a personal trait of the poet herself. Abraham Cowley's ode, 'On *Orinda's* Poems', for example, commends Philips' 'inward virtue' which 'like a Lanthorn's fair inclosed Light,/ ... through the paper shines where she does write.'[3] William Temple's 'Upon the Death of Mrs Catherine Philips' includes the assertion that Philips 'taught sullen Vertue to be kinde' and rejoices that the poet 'more then *Women* knew how to be good'.[4] Thomas Flatman, in his pindaric ode 'To the Memory of the incomparable *Orinda*', avers that 'all that can be said of vertuous Woman was [Philips'] due' and invites all of the female sex who would 'be pure as Angels are' to come to Orinda's tomb.[5]

One difficulty with the term 'virtue' is its abstractness - its ability to comprehend a potentially inexhaustible number of generally positive qualities. Courage, justice, humility and mercy were all much valued seventeenth-century virtues, and the singular word 'virtue' could imply one or all of these, as well as many others. But 'virtue' is also a relative term. This is a problem attested to by Montaigne's quotation (cited above) from Plato's *Meno*, a dialogue that explores the complexity of knowledge in general and of knowledge of virtue in particular. Montaigne was widely read in Early Modern England, both in French as well as in John Florio's English translation (first published in 1603 and reissued in 1613). In the preface to his translation, Florio remarks upon 'the diversities of copies, editions and volumes' of the French original available to him for his work. Nicholas Myers regards the year of Florio's translation as '[une] date fatidique pour la fortune de Montaigne en Angleterre': 'Des lors les *Essais* ne cesseront

[3] Stanza 4, ll. 7 & 8 (*Translations* 191-195). The ode was one of two commendatory poems to appear in the 1664 edition of Philips' works, *Poems by the Incomparable, Mrs. K. P.*

[4] ll. 18 & 28 (*Translations* 205-207). Temple's poem was apparently made at the behest of his wife Dorothy, with whom Philips was acquainted (see *Letters* 137-142 for the only extant letter from Philips to Mrs Temple). The poem was printed for Samuel Speed in 1664.

[5] Stanza 5, ll. 17 & 2-3 respectively (*Translations* 211-214). Flatman's ode was printed as the sixth of the commendatory poems in the 1667 edition of Philips' works, *Poems by the Most Deservedly Admired Mrs Katherine Philips, the Matchless Orinda.*

d'excercer une influence grandissante sur les lettres outre-Manche'.[6] Charles Cotton's 1685 translation testifies to the continuation of this influence throughout the seventeenth century. Although Philips' most recent editor, Patrick Thomas, notes no direct allusions to Montaigne in either her poems or letters, it is possible that Philips was familiar with the work of the French essayist, either in Florio's translation or in the French original (given her facility in that language). Interestingly, Florio's translation is dedicated to Lucy, Countess of Bedford and her mother, Lady Anne Harrington, a dedication that might be taken to imply or promote an enthusiastic female readership.[7] Montaigne's invocation of Socrates' dialogue with Memnon touches upon a pervasive Early Modern discourse concerning the social and gendered values of the term virtue, that was rooted in classical prescriptions on the subject.

In the *Meno*, Socrates attempts to impart an understanding of virtue that transcends Memnon's division of it into categories of gender and social status. Distinctions between male and female are set aside in an effort to reach a knowledge of the 'one common character whereby' Memnon's 'many and various' values 'are virtues' purely and simply.[8] 'Both the woman and the man require the same qualities of justice and temperance, if they are to be good,' Socrates asserts, though he does not specifically question his companion's assertion that a woman's virtue lies in domestic

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[6] Nicholas Myers, "Jacques 1er Stuart Lecteur de Montaigne", in Claude-Gilbert Dubois, ed. *Montaigne et L'Europe, Actes du Colloque International de Bordeaux (21-23 Mai 1992)* (Mont-de-Maison: Editions InterUniversitaires, 1992), 201. The influence of Montaigne upon Bacon and Shakespeare has been thoroughly examined by scholars. More pertinent to the French essayist's influence upon writers and thinkers of Philips' milieu is Tom Mason's essay, "'Et versus digitos habet': Dryden, Montaigne, Lucretius, Virgil and Boccaccio in Praise of Venus", *Translation and Literature*, 2001, 10 (1): 89-109, and Louise Wrestling's paper, "Montaigne in English Dress from Florio to Cotton", *Pacific Coast Philology*, 1978, 13: 117-24.

[7] Lucy, Countess of Bedford 'is a figure of great importance in the culture of the Stuart court'. The Countess promoted the literary careers of Samuel Daniel, Ben Jonson, and John Donne, and 'is also important as a patroness: a considerable number, and wide variety of works were dedicated to her in both poetry and prose'. See Jane Stevenson and Peter Davidson, eds. *Early Modern Women Poets (1520-1700), An Anthology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 130.

[8] Plato, *Meno*, from *Laches, Protagoras, Meno, Euthydemus*, Vol. 4, with an English translation by W. R. M. Lamb, The Loeb Classical Library (London: William Heinemann Ltd., 1952), 271.

duties, while a man's is exercised in the management of the state.[9] In Book V of the *Republic*, Plato challenges this commonplace sexual division of labour and virtue with the argument that women as well as men might become governors, or 'guardians', of the ideal city state. 'If it appears that [women and men] differ only in just this respect that the female bears and the male begets,' declares Socrates, 'we shall say that no proof has yet been produced that woman differs from the man for our purposes ... the natural capacities are distributed alike among both creatures, and women naturally share in all pursuits'.[10] Women deemed suitable by nature for the role of guardian must participate fully in the government of the state, 'tak[ing] their part with the men in war and the other duties of civic guardianship'. Socrates makes only one concession in this matter to notions of gender difference: the assignment of 'lighter tasks' to the women in view of 'their weakness as a class'.[11]

Plato's *Republic*, then, introduces into Western thought the concept of the exceptional woman who, in spite of the usual handicaps of her sex, can assume an equal role in the political domain with men. Such a concept runs counter to the political philosophy of Aristotle whose *Politics* firmly consigns men and women to separate spheres and defines virtue along a naturally ordained sexual (and social) scale. In answer to the question 'whether the woman should bee temperate ... and just', Aristotle concludes that she may be, but only in accordance with the demands and limitations of her natural subjection. He contradicts Socrates' suggestion of potential equality with the judgment that women possess 'the morall vertues ... not after the same manner and measure [as men]':

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[9] Ibid., 273.

[10] Plato, *The Republic*, with an English Translation by Paul Shorey, Vols. 1 and 2, The Loeb Classical Library (London: William Heinemann, 1930), 445-449. No English translations of Plato were available to Philips. However, French translations of the *Meno* and the *Republic* were published during the sixteenth century and may have been available to her. These are *Platonis Meno, vel de virtute*, Paris: 1551 and *La Republique de Platon ... Traduicte de Grec en Francois et enrichie de commentaires par L. le Roy*, Paris: 1600.

[11] Plato, *Republic*, 451.

> ... the modestie of the husband and wife are not the selfe same, nor their Fortitude, nor Justice, as Socrates held opinion, but the one hath Fortitude apt to governe, the other to serve.

And he elaborates:

> ... a man would be accounted a coward, if he were but so valiant, as the valiantest woman is, and a woman would be accounted a pratler, if shee were but so modest, as an honest and the modestest man may be. Considering also that the husbandry and huswifery of man and woman are not all one, for it is his office to get and bring in, and hers to keepe and lay up.[12]

In Aristotle's political economy, then, the value of virtue for all women is the same, and there are no exceptions to the natural rule of female subjection to male government.

In *Woman Triumphant, Feminism in French Literature, 1610-1652,* Ian Maclean summarises the Renaissance adoption and interpretation of Aristotle's gendered virtues, arguing the importance of Tasso's notion that each sex is dominated by a characteristic virtue. In women this is chastity; in men, courage. By logical extension, the most despicable vice in women is unchaste behaviour, and in men cowardice. Similarly, lack of chastity in men and lack of courage in women are the sexes' least objectionable failings. Tasso develops this primary 'sexual spectrum' of virtues into what Maclean defines as 'a kind of sexual ethics' by which 'men may be virtuous in practising eloquence, liberality, courage, magnificence; women by being silent ... economical, chaste, modest'.[13] The masculine virtues are those which equip the male for the business of state and public life, while the feminine define the female's naturally domestic and private role. Tasso's meditation on classical notions of gendered virtue

[12] *Aristotles Politiques, or Discourses of Government. Translated out of Greeke into French, with Expositions taken out of the best Authors* ... By Loys Le Roy, called Regius, Translated out of French into English (London: 1598), 55-56 and 145.

[13] Ian Maclean, *Woman Triumphant, Feminism in French Literature, 1610-1652* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1977), 19-20.

thus refines the Aristotelian teaching in a way that more closely defines and further restricts the realm of virtuous action considered appropriate to women. Virtues that Aristotle sees as broadly shared by men and women though operating in different spheres and in different degrees are replaced by Tasso with specific, inherently gendered qualities. Maclean notes that Tasso is forced to allow an exception to his rule in the matter the royal woman, who, uniquely, may be considered 'a man by virtue of her birth' and one, therefore, who is 'enjoined ... to practise the heroic virtues'.[14]

Most of Philips' contemporary admirers do not clearly define, or circumscribe, the virtue to which they refer in their commendatory verses, but some, and Flatman's ode is a good example, do give the term a particularly gender-specific meaning. Flatman contends that Philips possessed all the qualities of 'vertuous Woman' and he further restricts the field of such female virtue with his call to all women to imitate Philips' example:

> You of the Sex that would be fair,
> Exceeding lovely, hither come,
> Would you be pure as Angels are,
> Come dress you by ORINDA's Tomb.
> And leave your flatt'ring Glass at home ...[15]

Flatman's invocation of the female body through allusion to the coquetry and sexuality of the women who adorn themselves before their looking glasses effectively positions Philips as a chaste alternative to such female vanity. Her 'purity', and by extension her virtue, is marked as primarily sexual.

By the early eighteenth century this reductive use of the term 'virtue' in commentaries upon Philips had become commonplace. Aphra Behn scholars note (with some disdain) the habitual tendency of late seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century

[14] Ibid., 20.

[15] Stanza 5, ll. 1-5.

critics to position Behn as a lewd and therefore unfeminine female writer in contrast to the appropriately chaste and feminine Katherine Philips.[16] Janet Todd, in *The Critical Fortunes of Aphra Behn*, notes that the verses prefacing Elizabeth Singer Rowe's *Poems on Several Occasions. Written by Philomela* (1696) proclaim Rowe as 'Sappho and Behn reform'd .../In thee we see the Chast Orinda live.'[17] In 1719 Major Richardson Pack, recommending Philips' published letters to a friend, writes that,

> ... they are such as a Woman of Spirit and Virtue should write to a Courtier of Honour and true Gallantry. ... But if you would be entertained by some that are more *luscious*, let me recommend to you the *Sylvia* and *Philander* of Mrs. BEHN.[18]

Thomas Rowe's poem 'To Daphnis. An Epistle' (1739), which is essentially written in praise of his wife's writing, continues the same kind of comparison. Philips' 'vertuous themes' (see the quotation prefacing this chapter) are set in opposition to Behn's lamentable subject matter. Though Rowe commends Behn's style, he regrets that her

[16] In *The Critical Fortunes of Aphra Behn* (Columbia: Camden House, 1998), Janet Todd observes that 'By the early years of the eighteenth-century Behn had come to rest in a binary opposition of modesty and lewdness, either with the chaste Katherine Philips or with the pious Elizabeth Rowe' (31). Germaine Greer illustrates the same point in her Introduction to *Kissing the Rod, An Anthology of Seventeenth-Century Women's Verse*, ed. Germaine Greer, et al. (New York: The Noonday Press,1989), by quoting verses written by John Dunton in *The Athenian Mercury*, 27 November 1694 in answer to 'a love-sick correspondent':

> Thus *Afra*, thus despairing *Sappho* mourn'd;
> Sure both their Souls are to your *Breast* return'd.
> By the same Tyrant-Passion all enslav'd,
> Like you they wrote, like you they lov'd and rav'd.
> But ah! the *Vertue Vanish'd*, what remain'd?
> Their *Verse* as spotted as their *Glory* stain'd?
> They lost that Gem with which *Orinda* shin'd,
> And left a sully'd Name and Works behind.

(Todd also refers to these verses by Dunton in *Critical Fortunes*.)

[17] Todd, *Critical Fortunes*, 20. (See note 16 above for publication details.)

[18] Richardson Pack, *Miscellanies in Verse and Prose* (London, 1719). Cited by Patrick Thomas in *Poems* (33). Major Pack is referring to Behn's *Love-Letters Between a Nobleman and his Sister* (London, 1684-85).

mind was not filled with the 'chaste transports' and 'permitted pleasures' which have occupied more noble women writers.[19] More harsh is John Duncombe's dismissal of Behn in his *Feminiad* of 1754 as one of a small number of objectionable female authors whose 'bold, unblushing mien' frights 'the modest Muse' of the respectable woman writer. By contrast, Duncombe eulogises 'the chaste ORINDA' as one who rose 'Like modest Cynthia' 'amidst a train/Of shameless bards, licentious and profane'.[20]

Philips and Behn both suffer from the tendency of their (predominantly male) critics to read a woman writer's personal character and conduct into her writing, and to conflate the morality of the female author with the moral tone of her verse. George Ballard, in his chapter on Philips in *Memoirs of Several Ladies of Great Britain: who have been celebrated for their writings or skill in the learned languages, arts and sciences* (1752), quotes an assessment of the poet by an 'anonymous author of a letter printed in the Duke of Wharton's *Works*'. 'Though I know nothing of Mrs. Philips but what I have learned from her own poems,' this author remarks, 'I am confident she was discreet, good-humored, modest, constant and virtuous, as well as ingenious'.[21] The pattern for this kind of criticism of Philips is set by the prefatory material of the 1667 edition of her works, where the unknown editor praises her for 'her Verses and her Vertues both' as well as for her 'eminent Piety'.[22] In 1689, Robert Gould, addressing his wife in 'To Madam G. with Mrs Phillips's Poems', repeats the 1667 editor's coupling of verses and virtues and recommends Philips as a laudable model for his lady's emulation:

[19] Rowe, *The Miscellaneous Works*, 366.

[20] John Duncombe, *The Feminiad* (1754), The Augustan Reprint Society, no. 207 (Los Angeles: William Andrews Clark Memorial Library, University of California, 1981), ll. 141-142 & 108-111 (respectively).

[21] George Ballard, *Memoirs of Several Ladies of Great Britain*, ed. Ruth Perry (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1985), 274. Mary Hays, in her *Female Biography or, Memoirs of Illustrious and Celebrated Women , Of All Ages and Countries*, vol. 6 (London, 1803), follows Ballard's commentary on Philips and cites the same anonymous letter-writer (64-65). In *Poems*, Thomas identifies the letter-writer as Richard Gwinnet ('Pylades') writing to Elizabeth Thomas ('Corinna') (35).

[22] See *Poems*, 23. Charles Cotterell is frequently assumed to have been the editor of the 1667 *Poems By the Most Deservedly Admired Mrs. Katherine Philips, The Matchless Orinda*, but some scholars dispute the validity of this assumption.

Orinda's lasting Works to you I send,
Not doubting but you'l prove her lasting Friend;
... Her *Verses* and her *Vertuous Life* declare,
'Tis not your only Glory to be Fair.[23]

Philips is also pronounced a suitable example for the fairer sex by John Dunton in his *The Ladies Dictionary* of 1694. Dunton declares her works 'worthy the perusal of young Ladies'.[24]

As the years progressed and as the number of new printings of Philips' poetry declined, the figure of the chaste Orinda or the virtuous Mrs. K. P. came to eclipse the works themselves. Ballard, for example, quotes other (male) writers on Philips' poetry and drama but does not quote anything written by Philips. His 'memoir' is more concerned with creating a portrait of the poet as an exemplary wife and a retired composer of private verse. This, argues Margaret Ezell in *Writing Women's Literary History*, is perfectly in keeping with the whole design and intention of Ballard's text, which, far from being the objective, antiquarian study it purports to be, and has since by anthologists and scholars been taken to be, should rather be recognised as 'a didactic narrative defining female excellence in specifically eighteenth-century terms', where 'virtue and modesty are as important as literary success for women'.[25] Katherine Philips, with her already well-established reputation for 'great modesty' and 'remarkable humility', fits neatly into Ballard's carefully structured ideal; more morally dubious writers such as Behn or Delarivier Manley, whom Ballard excludes from his

[23] Quoted by Thomas in *Poems* (24-25).

[24] Ibid., 28.

[25] Margaret J. M. Ezell, *Writing Women's Literary History* (Baltimore & London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993), 78-88.

selection, do not.[26] Ballard's assessment of Philips sets the terms for subsequent accounts of her life. His enormously influential text forms the basis of later commentaries by Mary Hays and Matilda Betham. In *Female Biography or, Memoirs of Illustrious and Celebrated Women, Of All Ages and Countries* (1803), Hays, whose entry for Philips is an almost verbatim copy of Ballard, adds to the poet's 'modesty' both 'sweetness' and 'unassuming manners'.[27] Betham, in *A Biographical Dictionary of the Celebrated Women of Every Age and Country* (1804), confirms Philips' 'remarkable humility' and sums up Ballard's portrait of the poet as a dutiful spouse with the assertion that '[Philips] proved, in all respects, an excellent wife'.[28]

Moralists of the period exhorted the good wife to be, in accordance with scriptural teaching, obedient, modest, humble, and, above all, chaste. Chastity was the single, crowning glory of the Early Modern woman, and the word 'virtue' when used in the context of female conduct always implied sexual continence. (Indeed, in Samuel Richardson's mid-eighteenth century novel, *Pamela*, the eponymous heroine's exemplary virtue rests purely in her chastity and in her defence of that chastity.) In many ways the model of the chaste, conjugally dutiful Orinda was an enabling one for the women writers who followed Philips: they were able to appeal to her reputation as an appropriately feminine writing woman in defence of their own assumption of the traditionally masculine pen. Even Behn invokes 'Orinda' when, in her translation of Book Six of Cowley's *Sex Libri Plantarum*, she makes an appeal for her own lasting fame:

[26] Ballard, *Memoirs*, 269. Ezell notes the exclusion of Behn and Manley. She observes that his selection contains 'no commercial female playwrights', no 'professional women writers', no Quaker women, and no women writers whose themes and/or personal life were less than irreproachable. She points out that Ballard's vision of 'celebrated' ladies 'is fundamentally based on the moral character of the subject rather than literary, scientific, or artistic merit' (*Writing Women's Literary History*, 85-86).

[27] Hays, *Female Biography*, 61. (See note 21 above for publication details.)

[28] Matilda Betham, *A Biographical Dictionary of the Celebrated Women of Every Age and Country* (London, 1804), 621.

Let me with *Sappho* and *Orinda* be,
Oh ever sacred Nymph, adorn'd by thee;
And give my Verses Immortality.[29]

Anne Killigrew (1660-1685) draws on Philips' legacy in defence of her own claims to authorship in the poem, 'Upon the saying that my Verses were made by another', and Anne Finch, Countess of Winchilsea (1661-1720) makes several references to Philips' work and reputation in the Preface to the manuscript of her collected poems.[30] Finch's Preface, which acts as a (sometimes apologetic) justification and defence of her writing, alludes to 'the prayses' bestowed upon 'Mrs Phillips' for 'the great reservedness' of her poems and in particular for the absence of any inflammatory themes such as 'Love'. Finch also cites Philips' translations of Corneille as good precedent for her own dramatic works which 'tho' originals' are not, she hopes, 'lesse reserv'd'.[31] Half a century later, Laetitia Pilkington likewise appeals to the legendary restraint of Philips' poetic themes. In her 'Verses wrote in a Library' (from her *Memoirs* of 1748) she

[29] ll. 592-594. Aphra Behn, *The Works of Aphra Behn*, ed. Janet Todd, vol. 1 (London: Pickering, 1992), 325.

[30] Killigrew writes:

Orinda, (*Albions* and her Sexes Grace)
Ow'd not her Glory to a Beauteous Face,
It was her Radiant Soul that shon With-in,
Which struck a Lustre through her Outward Skin;
... Nor did her Sex at all obstruct her Fame,
But higher 'mong the Stars it fixt her Name;
What she did write, not only all allow'd,
But ev'ry Laurel, to her Laurel, bow'd!

See Anne Killigrew, *Poems (1686) by Mrs. Anne Killigrew*, ed. Richard Morton (Gainesville, Florida: Scholars' Facsimiles and Reprints, 1967).

Finch's manuscript, though in Katharine M. Rogers opinion 'quite clearly left for publication after her death', was not published until 1903.

[31] Anne Finch, *Selected Poems of Anne Finch, Countess of Winchilsea*, ed. Katharine M. Rogers (New York: Frederick Ungar, 1979), 12-13. Philips also appears as one of the models for Finch's contemporary female writers in her poem 'The Circuit of Apollo'.

Philips' translation of Corneille's *La Mort de Pompée* was completed during her stay in Dublin in 1662 and 1663. It was performed at Dublin's Smock Alley Theatre in 1663. At her death in 1664, Philips was translating Corneille's *Horace*; she had completed four of the five acts.

addresses

> ... thou chaste and lovely Muse,
> Who didst once thy Dwelling chuse
> In *Orinda's* spotless Breast,

and she asks the muse to 'Condescend to be my Guest'.[32] Later in the *Memoirs*, she cites Philips as one of only two 'Ladies' who have 'deserved the Name of a *Writer*'. Again, Philips' reputation for purity is uppermost in Pilkington's thoughts: she commends Philips' 'Sentiments ... great, and virtuous' and avers that when love was the subject of her pen 'it was such as Angels might share in without injuring their original Purity'. Once more, Pilkington craves inspiration from this chaste lady: '... dear *Orinda*! gentle Shade! sweet Poet! Honour of thy Sex! Oh, if thou hast Power to do it, inspire me!'.[33]

If Philips' successors found this model of conventional female (sexual) propriety enabling it must also be admitted that Philips did too. Though she was celebrated posthumously as all that was great in a (female) poet and good in a woman, and though, during her life, she was protected in her literary endeavours by a circle of accomplished and socially significant men and women, she was not immune from criticism.[34] In fact, early in the 1650s she was subject to a virulent attack by John Taylor, the 'Water Poet', in a poem entitled 'To Mrs K: P:'. Peter Beal discusses this poem in *In Praise of Scribes*, describing it as a 'remarkable piece of invective', and quoting a sample of its abusive sentiments:

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[32] Laetitia Pilkington, *Memoirs of Laetitia Pilkington*, ed. A. C. Elias Jr., vol. 1 (Athens, Georgia: University of Georgia Press, 1997), 58-59.

[33] Ibid., 227-228. No doubt, Pilkington's appeals to the virtuous Orinda and her chaste muse are in some part prompted by her own tenuous position in polite society following her husband's divorcing her on the grounds of adultery.

[34] Peter Beal offers a particularly useful analysis of Philips' 'Society' and their protective 'sanctioning' of her literary activities in his chapter on Philips, "'The virtuous Mrs Philips' and 'that whore Castlemaine': Orinda and her apotheosis, 1664-1668", in *In Praise of Scribes* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 147-191.

But Bedlam ffuries, native hate.
Only create,
The fetterd follies of thy Rhymes
Like ill tun'd chymes.
The Jangling of bells backward rung
So is thy tongue.
Snatcht from Vipers dryd' in Hell
Alecto's Cell
Ownes thee, the mistresse of her Schoole ... [35]

The existence of this attack lends a generally unappreciated pertinence to the voluminous praise of Philips' admirers; it also, as Beal suggests, provides a context for Philips' apparent reluctance to appear in print and, in particular, her reaction to the 'unauthorised' 1664 publication of her poems.[36] As is well known, Philips responded to this publication with an emphatic defence of her innocence in the affair in the form of a letter addressed to her courtier friend Sir Charles Cotterell and designed for circulation amongst 'any body that suspects my Ignorance and Innocence of that false Edition of my Verses'.[37] The letter condemns the 'Publisher and Printer' for the 'injury' done to the unwillingly 'exposed' writer.[38] (Writing to Dorothy Temple on the same subject Philips describes the publication as the 'pittifull design of a Knave to get a Groat'.[39]) It also includes repeated complaints about the inaccurate and corrupt nature of the edition.[40]

[35] Beal, *In Praise of Scribes*, 150-151. For bibliographical details see footnote above. Taylor's poem can be found in University College London MS Ogden 42, pp. 225-6.

[36] Beal writes, 'No wonder that Katherine Philips was afraid of publication.' Ibid., 151.

[37] Letter XLIV, *Letters*, 125.

[38] Letter XLV, *Letters*, 128.

[39] *Letters*, 142.

[40] 'It is impossible for malice it self to have printed those Rimes ... with so much abuse to the things,' she writes in the opening lines of the letter. Later, she complains of 'the falseness of the Copies' and goes on to agonise over their being 'abominably transcrib'd'. (Letter XLV, *Letters, 128-130.*)

Philips' response to the 1664 *Poems* has provided fertile ground for modern scholarly commentary. Germaine Greer, for example, finds that Philips protests too much. In *Slip-Shod Sibyls: Recognition, Rejection and the Woman Poet* she argues that the poet herself was responsible for the publication, motivated by the possibility of financial gain at a time when her husband's own finances were in particular difficulty. In support of her argument, Greer points out that the 1664 edition is not, as Philips maintains it is, full of inaccuracies and corruptions, but compares very favourably to the text of the authorised 1667 publication, and must therefore have come from a reliable source. She also notes that the publisher, Richard Marriott, was a respectable printer - far from the kind of hack 'knave' Philips accuses him of being - who must have been authorised to produce the edition. Greer therefore concludes that Philips composed her famous letter in response to her friends' alarm over the publication, in whose pages they occasionally appear undisguised by the proper and conventional use of sobriquets. She regards Philips' response as the poet's beating a hasty retreat and distancing herself from an action her noble acquaintance have convinced her was very ill-conceived.[41]

Beal considers Greer's argument 'interesting' but unconvincing.[42] He finds Philips' letter to Cotterell to be both 'sincere' and 'transparent', and he contends that 'the notion that [Philips] consciously conspired to publish in 1664 ... run[s] totally against the grain of all other evidence we have for the nature of her psychology, ambition, and demonstrable sense of political diplomacy'.[43] Beal sees Philips as

[41] Germaine Greer, *Slip-Shod Sibyls: Recognition, Rejection and the Woman Poet* (London: Viking, 1995), chapter 5, 'The Rewriting of Katherine Philips', 147-72.

[42] Beal discounts Greer's financial argument. Citing a number of payments for works to other seventeenth-century authors, he concludes that Philips might have received anything from 10 - 30 pounds for her poems: 'hardly a bonanza to salvage the Philipses' declining fortunes even by contemporary currency standards'. He agrees that a respectable man like Marriott believed he was authorised to publish but that he was misled on this score by his supplier of the manuscript. Beal considers Marriott's copytext to have been one of the collections of Philips' poems made within her circle of close friends - hence its accuracy - but he finds it unlikely that Philips was the publisher's supplier as the poet would have been careful to disguise the identity of her addressees in any copy she intended for circulation outside of her acquaintance. (*In Praise of Scribes*, 163.)

[43] Ibid., 163-164.

essentially a social poet who carefully controlled and orchestrated the circulation and revision of her poems to promote her own social ambitions - to gain access to, as well as the 'approbation' of, an elite circle of genteel and influential literary men and women. Philips was not, Beal insists, a manuscript poet trying to 'break-out' into print, but a middling-class woman poet seeking merit and status as a Court writer. Her appearances in print prior to 1664, he remarks, were all 'sanctioned' by her close coterie of socially significant friends, and therefore risked none of the 'exposure' Philips repeatedly agonises over in her correspondence with Cotterell. Philips was innocent of any collusion in the 1664 edition because such an edition would not have served her social ambitions. Its appearance as a small, octavo volume was unimpressive (by comparison, the 1667 publication was a lavish folio edition); its failure adequately to disguise the identities of some of its noble poetic addressees was a social faux-pas that someone with Philips' concern for proper conduct and approval would not have made.[44]

Beal's understanding of Philips as a 'social' poet agrees with Margaret Ezell's analysis. In her commentary on the events of the 1664 *Poems* in *Social Authorship and the Advent of Print*, Ezell argues that Philips would have considered the printing of her collected verse as 'inappropriate' since the majority of that verse had not been written for a general audience - the significance of the poems depended upon the close circle who had inspired them and within which they circulated in manuscript. For Philips, Ezell concludes, 'print was ... not always a better technology for presenting her poetic works'.[45]

Though modern scholars remain divided about the motives behind Philips' reaction to the 1664 edition, the language in which she couches her defence has had a significant influence upon the development of her posthumous reputation for unsullied

[44] Ibid.

[45] Margaret J. M. Ezell, *Social Authorship and the Advent of Print* (Baltimore & London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999), 52-54.

virtue. In the famous letter to Cotterell, Philips carefully constructs herself as an essentially retired and private woman, whose verses were designed simply for her own amusement. She likens the undesired entrance of these 'scribbles' into the public arena to an assault upon her private imaginations, and the terms of her analogy suggestively convey the idea of ravaged female chastity:

> I thought a rock and a Mountain might have hidden me, and that it had been free for all to spend their Solitude in what Resveries they please, ... but 'tis only I who am that unfortunate person that cannot so much as think in private, that must have my imaginations rifled and exposed to play the Mountebanks, and dance upon the ropes to entertain all the rabble ... .[46]

Philips' choice of language invites the correlation between the female body and the female-authored text. In making her poems available to a general audience, the printer of the 1664 edition has shamefully defiled a pure and virtuous woman. Philips' assertion of her innocence, couched in the rhetoric of rural retreat, works to keep that purity, and the honourable nature of the poems themselves, intact. Her trope is an appropriate response to John Taylor's invocation of her as 'a showy, meretricious, even harlot-like woman' in his early attack:

> You dame of Corinth,
> Commit no Rape.
> Upon the Muses be not bold.
> To make them scold [47]

Philips may well have had Taylor's abuse in mind when composing the letter.

The editor of the 1667 *Poems* included the letter to as part of the prefatory material in his edition, and, as Carol Barash comments in *English Women's Poetry, 1649-*

[46] *Letters*, 128-129.

[47] Beal, *In Praise of Scribes*, 150.

1714, Politics, Community and Linguistic Authority, Philips' image of herself as the chaste, secluded woman so shamefully exposed has shaped the way in which she and her writing have been read ever since.[48] Modern Philips scholars - Barash included - have found the model of the virtuous Orinda to be an extremely restrictive one which has limited both the way in which Philips' works have been interpreted and the kinds of subjects and genres open to the ('virtuous') women writers who came after her. Greer comments that Philips' 'respectability [was] made a rod' with which to beat other women writers,[49] and some sense of the shackles imposed by the Orinda myth on her successors can be detected even in the comments of those women who hailed Philips as their model. Finch, for example, reminds herself resignedly in the Preface to her poems: 'Nor shalt thou reatch Orinda's prayse,/Tho' all thy aim, be fixt on Her'. Her references to the 'great reservednesse' of Philips' verse and drama (quoted above) are also part of a discourse of self-censorship and regulation. Finch feels obliged to measure up to the standards of respectable restraint represented by Orinda. She admits of having written 'sometimes of Love' but hopes such verse will be as 'inoffensive' as the more reserved poems produced by 'Mrs. Philips'. She also reveals that Philips' legacy, 'together with my desire not to give scandal to the most severe':

> ... has often discourag'd me from making use of [the subject of "Love"], and given me some regrett for what I had writt of that kind, and wholy prevented me from putting the Aminta of Tasso into English verse ... .[50]

Although some modern scholarship has reconfirmed the representation of Philips as a conventionally proper, chaste woman who wrote on appropriately

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[48] Carol Barash, *English Women's Poetry, 1649-1714, Politics, Community and Linguistic Authority* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), 55.

[49] Greer, *Kissing the Rod*, 26-27.

[50] Finch, *Selected Poems*, 9 and 12-13 respectively.

feminine and morally unobjectionable themes,[51] much commentary in recent years has sought to challenge this conception of her life and oeuvre. By far the majority of academic interest in Philips has centred on her poems of female friendship, in particular those addressed to Mary Aubrey ('Rosania') and Anne Owen ('Lucasia'). Focussing on these poems, critics such as Dorothy Mermin and Elaine Hobby have argued Philips' radical appropriation of male poetic discourses and conventions for the expression of female experience and female autonomy.[52] The most recent article on this theme, Susannah B. Mintz's "Katherine Philips and the Space of Friendship", avers that Philips' friendship poems daringly 'reconfigure' the 'spatial and power dynamics' of patriarchy in their creation of a privileged site of exclusively female friendship, and concludes that 'Philips's is no apologetic voice, shut up in the domesticated interior of a patriarchal world'.[53] Many scholars of the friendship poems have also drawn attention to the fictive nature of the 'matchless Orinda', pointing out in particular the discrepancies between

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[51] Sandra M. Gilbert and Susan Gubar's assessment of Philips in the introduction to their selection of her work in *The Norton Anthology of Literature by Women: The Traditions in English*, 2d ed. (London: W. W. Norton, 1996) takes the poet's self-representation in Letter XLV at face value. Gilbert and Gubar assert the essentially private nature of Philips' writing and sum up her subject matter as 'courtship, marriage and her own painfully thwarted maternity' (102). Their selection bears out this summary. In their general introduction to the 17th and 18th centuries, Philips' professed aversion to print (from Letter XLV) is cited as the representative attitude of female authors in this period:

> If women agreed to publication, it was often - with Katherine Philips - 'with the same reluctancy as I would cut off a limb to save my life,' and frequently they published anonymously. (78)

Studies on manuscript and print culture by scholars such as Peter Beal, Margaret Ezell, and Harold Love have shown that the issue of women and print publication in the Early Modern period is far less simplistic and clear-cut than Gilbert and Gubar here suggest. See Beal's *In Praise of Scribes* and Ezell's *Social Authorship and the Advent of Print*, both discussed above, pp. 10-13. See also Harold Love, *Scribal Publication in Seventeenth-Century England* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993).
Dorothy Mermin, in "Women Becoming Poets: Katherine Philips, Aphra Behn, Anne Finch," *ELH* 57 (1990): 335-55, insists upon Philips as a private writer. Mermin avers that Philips 'almost invariably wrote as if for a private audience, on private themes, and ... pretended to do so even when her actual subject was public and political' (341). (In spite of this Mermin argues for the radical nature of Philips' appropriation of male poetic discourses and conventions for the expression of female experience.)

[52] See Mermin, "Women Becoming Poets" (publication details in note 51 above) and Elaine Hobby, *Virtue of Necessity: English Women's Writing, 1649-88* (London: Virago Press, 1988).

[53] Susannah B. Mintz, "Katherine Philips and the Space of Friendship," *Restoration* vol. 22, no. 2 (fall 1998): 75-76.

Philips' self-construction as a paragon of modest feminine retirement in Letter XLV and the biographical facts of her life (which include travel to and from London, an extended period of absence from her husband in Dublin, and several appearances in print).[54] Hobby, for example, notes that Philips' letters to Cotterell 'provide material for a fascinating study of the process through which 'Orinda' is constructed and refined'.[55]

Perhaps the most lively debate around the friendship poems concerns the matter of their erotic potential and the consequent question of Philips' sexuality. Critics such as Harriette Andreadis, Hobby, Arlene Stiebel and Elizabeth Susan Wahl have highlighted the implicitly sexual nature of Philips' expressions of love for and intimacy with her female addressees. There is some debate among these critics concerning the exact nature of Philips' homoerotic passion, a debate which is encapsulated by Andreadis' 1989 paper "The Sapphic-Platonics of Katherine Philips, 1632-1664" and Stiebel's response to that paper in "Not Since Sappho: The Erotic in Poems of Katherine Philips and Aphra Behn".[56] Andreadis argues that Philips' appropriation, in the female friendship poems, of the male, amatory poetic voice 'constitute[s] a form of lesbian writing', but she resists the notion that the poet's desire might be thought of as physical; she defines it instead as 'desexualized – though passionate and eroticized'.[57] Stiebel asserts the contrary, accusing Andreadis and other contemporary critics of denying the lesbian content of Philips' poems which, she avers, are 'clearly erotically

[54] See Hobby, *Virtue of Necessity*. Also Lucy Brashear, "The Forgotten Legacy of the 'Matchless Orinda'," *Anglo-Welsh Review* 65 (1979): 68-79, and Claudia A. Limbert, "Katherine Philips: Controlling a Life and Reputation," *South Atlantic Review* 56 (1991): 27-42.

[55] Hobby, *Virtue of Necessity*, 130.

[56] Harriette Andreadis, "The Sapphic-Platonics of Katherine Philips, 1632-1664," *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* Autumn (1989): 34-60. Stiebel's essay is published in Claude J. Summers, ed., *Homosexuality in Renaissance and Enlightenment England: Literary Representations in Historical Context* (New York: Harrington Park Press, 1992).

[57] Andreadis, "Sapphic-Platonics", 60 & 39 respectively.

charged with the love of women for women'.[58] Whatever their degree of emphasis upon Philips' sexual passion for her female friends, such readings of the friendship poetry pose a radical challenge to the tradition of the virtuous Mrs K. P. and the legendary chaste nature of her poetic themes.

Yet in spite of modern critics' attempts to rescue Philips from the restrictive model of virtue to which she had been allied since her death, it remains true to say that Philips is a writer who is profoundly concerned with the subject of virtue and the question of the virtuous life. A brief survey of her oeuvre bears out this contention. At her death she was working on a translation of Corneille's drama *Horace,* a text that examines the Roman conception of virtue through the lens of family and gender and gives weight to a peculiarly female or feminine interpretation of moral conduct. *Pompey* (also translated from Corneille and printed in 1663) is a play which explores and problematises the notion of heroic virtue and political leadership. The panegyrics that Philips addressed to King Charles II and other members of the royal family during the early years of the Restoration are, by definition, texts which seek to construct an exemplary model of virtuous royalty. The occasional poems written (largely during the Interregnum) in praise of friends, family and neighbours, as well as to mark their marriages and deaths, perform a similar function to the state panegyrics. These verses, addressed to subjects variously described as 'excellent', 'truly noble', and 'Justly honour'd', are devoted to the representation of an ideal code of conduct predicated on a stock of individual virtues which include (among others) constancy, fortitude, wisdom and modesty. In a number of religious and contemplative poems, Philips explores the nature of the virtuous life in relation to scriptural teaching, contemporary religious doctrine, and her own personal sense of God. Even the much celebrated female friendship poems articulate female intimacy through the discourse of virtuous Platonic love and eulogise their subjects as paragons of perfect goodness.

[58] Stiebel, "Not Since Sappho", 155. Stiebel also challenges Dorothy Mermin's conclusion that Philips' poems 'did not give rise to scandal' and are therefore 'asexual'.

Those commentators who have found in the female friendship poetry a challenge to early modern conceptions of gender hierarchy and sexual norms have tended either to ignore the emphasis upon virtue which permeates the poems, or to explain it away as the poet's conscious attempt to disguise the real nature of her meaning. Philips' extensive use of the Platonic tradition of spiritual love, in which the chaste intercourse of souls is preferred to the impure fire of physical passion, is, for example, regarded by both Andreadis and Stiebel as simply an acceptable mask for the poet's expression of erotic love for other women.[59] Those critics who recognise Philips' repeated allusions to virtue as a central characteristic of the female friendship she describes tend to quantify such allusions as part of a discourse of submission to contemporary prescriptions upon female conduct. Kate Lilley's study of the friendship poems is one example of this kind of reading of 'virtue', and her categorisation of many of the poems as types of elegy suggest her focus upon the loss inherent in this language of virtuous constraint.[60]

This study seeks to broaden our understanding of the significance of the discourse of virtue in Philips' writing. Like many of the studies made by modern commentators on Philips, it is critical of the (deliberately constructed) figure of the chaste Orinda that dominated discussions of the poet for so long. However, its critique of that figure occurs through the examination of virtue itself as a positive category in Philips' texts, with a range of meanings, rather than a strategy of constraint or denial whose meaning necessarily devolves to patriarchal ideals of female (sexual) propriety.

[59] Andreadis comments that 'because [Philips'] discourse was familiar her subject was acceptable' ("Sapphic-Platonics", 55). Stiebel develops this assessment with the suggestion that 'in literature conventional representations of friendship [and] courtly romance ... may mask true meaning' (Stiebel, "Not Since Sappho", 162).

[60] Kate Lilley, "True State Within: Women's Elegy, 1640-1700" in *Women, Writing, History, 1640-1740*, ed. Isobel Grundy & Susan Wiseman (London: B. T. Batsford, 1992), 84. See also Elizabeth Susan Wahl's suggestion in *Invisible Relations: Representations of Female Intimacy in the Age of the Enlightenment* (California: Stanford University Press, 1999) that Philips' 'longing for an extrabodily, spiritual mingling of souls,' is a response 'to a world that denies her any other possibilities' (150). These readings are discussed more fully in Chapter 5 of this study.

The study reexamines the female friendship poems from this perspective but more importantly, perhaps, it also encompasses the texts that have been largely ignored by modern critics. These neglected works include Philips' religious verse, her occasional poetry, her state and political poems, and her drama translations.

Philips is certainly not unique among early modern poets for her preoccupation with that which is noble and virtuous. In his *Explorata: Or Discoveries*, Ben Jonson, for example, alludes approvingly to Aristotle's belief that the study of 'Poesy ... offers to mankinde a certaine rule, and Patterne of living well', and he also maintains that 'the wisest and the best learned have thought [poesy] the ... neerest of kin to Vertue'.[61] Much of Jonson's own verse is devoted to the praise of various members of England's ruling class, verse which he distinguishes from servile and dishonest flattery for its instructive value: '... Who e're is rais'd,/For worth he has not,' he claims in Epigram LXV 'To My Muse', 'He is tax'd, not prais'd'.[62] Earlier in the period, Sir Philip Sidney had defended the honour of poetry with reference to its ability to portray and to inspire 'virtuous action'. Considering the art of poetry beside philosophy and history (the accepted twin pillars of learning), Sidney concludes in his *Defence of Poesy* that,

> ... as virtue is the most excellent resting place for all worldly learning to make his end of, so Poetry – being the most familiar to teach it, and most princely to move towards it – in the most excellent work is the most excellent workman.[63]

The same sentiments are articulated by John Dryden a few years after Philips' death, during the heyday of Restoration heroic drama. In his dedication of *The Conquest of Granada* (1672) to James, Duke of York, he emphasises the traditional connection

[61] Ben Jonson, *Works, Volume VIII, The Poems, The Prose Works*, ed. C. H. Herford Percy and Evelyn Simpson (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1954), 636.

[62] Ibid., ll. 15-16.

[63] Sir Philip Sidney, *Selected Writings*, ed. Richard Dutton (Manchester: Carcanet Press, 1987), 122.

between 'poesy' and virtue, affirming that 'Poets, while they imitate, instruct' and declaring that '[T]hat kind of Poesy, which excites to vertue the greatest men, is of greatest use to humane kind'.[64]

As these assertions of the value of poetry suggest, virtue lay at the heart of Early Modern conceptions of national glory, and its promotion was therefore the provenance of civil government, as well of the church. In *Divine Right and Democracy, An Anthology of Political Writing in Stuart England,* David Wootton writes of 'a lengthy tradition [in English political thought] that ... aspired to establish a godly society', and he suggests that the majority of seventeenth-century English men and women would have believed that virtue was 'the only secure foundation for national greatness'.[65] Wootton reminds us that in the seventeenth century, 'The study of politics, it was generally agreed, was based upon two key texts. The first was Aristotle's *Politics* .... The second was the Bible'.[66] Stephen Everson, editor of the Cambridge University Press *Politics,* notes that 'Aristotle takes the very purpose of the state to be that of enabling its citizens to lead the good life', for which virtue (or 'excellence' as the translator of this edition renders it) is the primary prerequisite.[67] 'Let us assume,' writes Aristotle, '... that the best life, both

[64] In John Loftis and David Stuart Rhodes, eds. *The Works of John Dryden,* vol. 11, *Plays,* general ed. H. T. Swedenberg (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, 1978), 3. All references to Dryden's work will be to the Swedenberg edition.

[65] David Wootton, ed., *Divine Right and Democracy: An Anthology of Political Writing in Stuart England* (Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin, 1986), 74. Wootton is discussing the challenge to this tradition by political theorists such as Hobbes and Harrington, whose ideologies promoted the concept of self-interest and restrained vice as the foundation for civil order and national prosperity.

[66] Wootton, *Divine Right and Democracy,* 16. The following print editions of the *Homily against Disobedience* are listed by the British Library ESTC Abstracts Record List: *[Certain sermons or homilies appointed to be read in churches. Book 2. Selections] An homilie against disobedience and wylful rebellion.* [Imprinted at London: In Powles Churchyarde by Richard Jugge and John Cawood, printers to the Queene's Majestie [1570?]]; *An homily or sermon, against disobedience and wilful rebellion appointed by Act of Parliament to be read in all churches, &c On the 30th January, being the anniversary of the martyrdom of King Charles I ... Read at St. Dunstans in the West* ... London: printed for S. Keble, 1712. The Act requiring the sermon to be read on the anniversary of Charles I's execution demonstrates the relevance of its contents to seventeenth-century political thought and events.

[67] Stephen Everson, introduction, *The Politics,* by Aristotle (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1988), xxi.

for individuals and states, is the life of excellence'.[68] The government-issued *An Homily against Disobedience and Wylful Rebellion* of 1570, which Wootton describes as representing the 'generally accepted view of political authority' in the early Stuart period, begins its disquisition upon obedience with the doctrine that 'the wealth and prosperity of a kingdom and people' rests upon 'the maintenance of all virtue and godliness'.[69]

The particular conception of virtue taught by the *Homily Against Disobedience* centres on the strict observance of divinely ordained social and gender hierarchies. Every subject owed obedience to his king, every wife to her husband, every child to his parents, every servant to his master. To challenge this social order was to disobey God and to invite chaos. The established church and the secular government worked hand in hand to maintain this sacred order.[70] Government-authorised sermons like the 1570 *Homily* taught the ideology of virtuous obedience to a godly monarchy to a people for whom attendance at church was a legislated activity. For the literate public, instruction regarding godly and socially appropriate behaviour could also be found in printed conduct manuals. The end of the sixteenth- and beginning of the seventeenth-centuries saw a proliferation of these texts. Many were written by clergymen, and they set down, with reference to scriptural authority, and often at great length and in minute detail, the rules for the virtuous deportment of men in a variety of callings and social roles, and for women as maidens, wives and mothers.[71]

Although the ideological conflicts of the 1640s and 50s left traditional gender

[68] Aristotle, *The Politics*, ed. Stephen Everson (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1988), 158.

[69] Wootton, *Divine Right and Democracy*, 94.

[70] James I's oft-quoted observation, 'No bishops, no king', succinctly expresses the interdependent relationship between secular and spiritual authorities in this period.

[71] Examples of these texts include Thomas Becon's *Catechism* (1564), William Gouge's *Of Domesticall Duties* (1622), Richard Braithwait's *The English Gentleman* (1630) and *The English Gentlewoman* (1631), and Joseph Hall's *Characters of Virtues and Vices*. The substance of these texts is discussed in more detail in chapters 3 and 4 of this study.

hierarchies intact, they did much to challenge the accepted idea of the inviolable sanctity of monarchy and the established church. During the decades of civil unrest and religious dissent which form the context for Philips' writing, the question of what constitutes civic virtue and how it might best be promoted featured prominently in the political literature that fuelled (and which was in turn fuelled by) England's constitutional crisis. Supporters of monarchy were able to assert the traditional wisdom that virtue in the state 'does stand and rest ... in a wise and good prince'.[72] Opponents and critics of the traditional constitution disputed monarchy's claim to a monopoly on the advancement of virtue and formulated alternative forms of government and political practice in which the same goal of a virtuous citizenry might be more effectively realised. William Walwyn's radical democratic politics, for example, recognised that 'the end of Government [is] to promote virtue, restraine vice', but he based the pursuit of that end in the principles of religious toleration and social egalitarianism, rather than in religious uniformity and the rule of one.[73] The republican Algernon Sidney proclaimed in the title to Section Eleven of his *Discourses Concerning Government* that 'Liberty produces Vertue, Order and Stability' and he argued, contrary to the conservative Robert Filmer in *Patriarcha*, that virtue and absolute monarchy 'did never subsist together'.[74]

Philips' concern with the virtuous life is, then, one that she shared with her contemporaries, and it reflects Early Modern conceptions of the role of poetry and the poet, as well as important aspects of the period's political, social and religious thought. Her poetry addresses many of the philosophical questions that underpinned the constitutional upheavals of the mid-seventeenth century: what is religious truth; what

[72] Wootton, *Divine Right and Democracy*, 94.

[73] William Walwyn, *The Compassionate Samaritane* (1644) in *The Writings of William Walwyn*, ed. Jack R. McMichael and Barbara Taft, foreword by Christopher Hill (Athens and London: University of Georgia Press, 1989), 107.

[74] Sidney's *Discourses Concerning Government* were published posthumously in 1698. Text from Algernon Sidney, *Discourses Concerning Government*, The Second Edition carefully corrected (London: 1704), 92.

makes the good man or the godly society; what are the necessary qualities of the good ruler; does virtue lie in tradition or in progress, in action or in contemplation? These questions were just as important (and as open to debate) when Charles II returned from his exile to govern England in 1660, and Philips' Restoration writings articulate the nation's anxiety about the new government as much as its optimism.

Because the subjects of Philips' poetry are often female, and because her personal life was so dominated by her intimate relations with other women, much of her writing is also concerned with the subject of the good woman. On this issue, Philips' work interacts with a huge body of contemporary literature and discourse about the nature of woman and the virtues considered appropriate to her. Scripture, classical philosophy, English law, proto-medical texts, poetry, conduct manuals: all addressed the woman question and passed judgment upon her natural condition and the (apolitical) social role she was designed to fulfill. Philips' constructions of female virtue are informed by and respond to this literature; however, it is rarely possible to separate them from issues pertaining to contemporary politics. Indeed, it is rarely possible, as we shall see, to make significant distinctions between Philips' constructions of ideally virtuous men and her portraits of the good woman, since almost all are made in response to the same (inimical) political context and all draw on a shared set of philosophical assumptions about the virtuous life.

The nature of these philosophical assumptions is brought to the foreground in this study. Most dominant in Philips' writing are the Platonic and stoic philosophies, often affiliated with or filtered through Christian doctrine. That this should be so is hardly surprising given the importance of Platonism and stoicism to Early Modern thought, and the high regard in which educated men of the period held Plato and Seneca. Both were acclaimed by seventeenth-century admirers as philosophers who,

though pagan, had anticipated Christ and his message in their work.[75] Early Christian theologians had in fact amalgamated aspects of Platonic and stoic wisdom with scriptural teaching in their writings, so the tradition of Platonic-stoic-Christianity was a well-established one.[76]

Although there are several examples of Early Modern women receiving education in the classical languages and philosophies, Philips was not one who enjoyed such privileges.[77] In spite of this, her knowledge of stoicism and Platonism appears to go beyond the merely passive inheritance of a cultural tradition. The works of Plato, while not available in English, had been translated into French in the sixteenth-century,

[75] Joseph Hall, in *Heaven Upon Earth: or, Of True Peace and Tranquillity of Mind* (1637) asserts of Seneca that 'never any heathen wrote more divinely'. See *The Works of the Right Reverend Joseph Hall*, ed. Philip Wynter (New York: AMS, 1969), 3.

Robert Burton, author of *The Anatomy of Melancholy* (1628) agrees with Hall. See Burton's comments on Seneca in *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, ed. Floyd Dell and Paul Jordan-Smith (New York: Tudor Publishing, 1927), 460.

In Anna Baldwin and Sarah Hutton, eds., *Platonism and the English Imagination* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1994), Sarah Hutton remarks that 'The image of Plato which dominates the Renaissance is that of ... the Greek sage whose wisdom echoed the teaching of the Bible' (67).

In the address to the reader prefacing Book I of Henry More's *Platonick Song of the Soul* (1647), More avers that 'God hath not left the Heathen, *Plato* especially, without witnesse of himself'. See Henry More, *The Complete Poems*, ed. Alexander B. Grosart (1878; reprint, Hildesheim: Georg Olms Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1969), 10.

[76] See chapters by Anne Sheppard, Anna Baldwin and Andrew Louth in Baldwin and Hutton, *Platonism and the English Imagination* (cited in note 75 above). Baldwin lists Clement, Origen and Augustine as Fathers of Christianity who accepted aspects of Platonic philosophy and incorporated them into Western Christian theology (22-23). Louth observes that such theologians were actually embracing 'what modern scholars have come to call 'Middle Platonism', a mixture of mainly Platonic and Stoic doctrines' (53).

[77] Stevenson and Davidson identify an impressive number of women literate in Latin and sometimes Greek in their anthology *Early Modern Women Poets*. Such women are well-represented, as we might expect, amongst the royalty and nobility, and include Katherine Parr, Lady Jane Grey, Elizabeth I, Elizabeth Cary, Countess of Falkland, and Lucy Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon. Many of Stevenson and Davidson's examples hale from the ranks of the gentry, such as the daughters of Sir Anthony Cooke, Lucy Hutchinson (daughter of Sir Allan Apsley) and Damaris, Lady Masham. A surprising number of highly educated women from the middling classes are also represented in the anthology. These include Anne Lok (Locke), daughter of 'a member of the Merchant Adventurer's company in the time of Henry VIII' (30), Anna Ley, Rachel Jevon, Rachel Speght, and Bathsua Makin. Stevenson and Davidson note that 'a number of conspicuously learned women were educated by their fathers in early modern England' (199).

and these editions may perhaps have been known to Philips.[78] However, the principles of Plato's thought, in particular his philosophy of divine love and the immortality of the soul, would have been available to Philips in Thomas Stanley's important work, *The History of Philosophy* (1655-1662). A reference to the Roman emperor and philosopher, Marcus Aurelius Antoninus (121-80 BC) in Philips' poem 'To my dearest Friend, upon her shunning Grandeur' (113), suggests that Philips was familiar with Meric Casaubon's translation of *The Golden Book of Marcus Aurelius* (1634).[79] Marcus Aurelius' meditations detail a socially oriented stoicism; his emphasis upon the value of friendship, love, and peaceful sociability closely agrees with Philips' own ideals.[80] Moreover, Philips' correspondence with Cotterell shows that she was familiar with the writings of the stoic philosophers Seneca and Epictetus - available to her in translations by Thomas Lodge and John Healey respectively - and that she had given thought to the relationship between these philosophers' teachings and the principles of Christianity.[81] In addition, Philips' knowledge of Platonism is not confined to the potentially erotic Platonic love themes of Renaissance amatory verse (in spite of the close affinity between her own friendship poetry and the courtly love poetry of her male peers and immediate precursors). Platonic ideas underpin her portraits of male and female virtue, and her religious poetry. She had read the (complex) philosophical poetry of the Cambridge Platonist, Henry More (1614-1687), one of whose verses she quotes at some length at the beginning of her poem 'God'. In addition, her letters demonstrate her familiarity

[78] See page 4, note 10 (above) for details of two of these translations. French translations of Plato's *Symposium* and the *Phaedo* , and the likelihood of Philips having access to these texts, are discussed below in Chapter 1, pp. 39-41.

[79] 'That *Antoninus* writ well, when/ He held a Scepter and a Pen' (ll. 33-34).

[80] *The Golden Book of Marcus Aurelius*, translated out of the Greek by Meric Casaubon (1634) (London & Toronto: J. M. Dent & Sons Ltd., 1906)

[81] *The Workes of Lucius Annaeus Seneca, both morrall and naturall.* Translated by Thomas Lodge, D. London: Printed by William Stansby, 1614. (A 'newly enlarged and corrected' edition was issued in 1620.) *Epictetus manuall. Cebes table. Theophrastus characters.* By John Healey. London: Printed by George Purslowe for Edward Blount, 1616. (A second edition was issued in 1636.) See *Letters*, 81 for Philips' critique of Seneca and Epictetus. I discuss this critique in chapter 2 of this study.

with such neo-Platonic texts as Castiglione's *The Book of the Courtier*, and her poetry implies her knowledge of other, contemporary disquisitions upon neo-Platonic thought, such as Stanley's account of Plato's philosophy in his *History of Philosophy* as well as his translation of the Italian neo-Platonist Pico della Mirandola's *Commento sopra una canzona de amore da H. Beniveni*, entitled *A Platonick Discourse upon Love* (1651).[82]

Philips' Christian-Platonism is where I begin my examination of virtue in her writing. Chapter one focuses upon the religious and contemplative verse that Philips composed during the Interregnum. It reminds us of the centrality of religious belief and practice in the Early Modern period, and positions Philips' spiritual texts within the large body of mid-seventeenth-century commentary on religio-political issues. The chapter argues that Philips found in the Christian-Platonism of theologians such as Henry More a doctrine with which to critique the religious conflict of the time, and from which to build a philosophy of pacific tolerance centred upon humanity's duty to imitate an all-loving God. The contradictions inherent in Philips' philosophy are also addressed, particularly in the light of her professed commitment to the established Anglican Church of the Restoration. The chapter also aims to provide an important spiritual and theological context for the models of virtue examined in the rest of the study.

Chapters two and three explore Philips' representations of male virtue. Chapter two focusses upon the occasional verse that she addressed to her male friends and acquaintances during the Interregnum. It examines her construction of the stoic 'good man' in these poems in the light of the literary tradition of that ideal and the politics of his representation in the mid-seventeenth century. The chapter problematises the

[82] Stanley's *A Platonick Discourse Upon Love* was printed 'privately for his friends' in a collected edition of his works in 1651. See Galbraith Miller Crump, ed. *The Poems and Translations of Thomas Stanley* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1962). It also forms part of his section on Plato in his *History of Philosophy*, where he introduces it with the words: 'After so serious a Discourse, it will not be amisse to give the Reader a Poeticall entertainment upon the same Subject'. See Thomas Stanley, *A History of Philosophy in Eight Parts* (Printed for Humphrey Moseley and Thomas Dring, London, 1655-1662), *The Fift Part. Containing the* Academik *Philosophers*, 94. Philips' expressions of perfect intimacy between female friends share much of the vocabulary of Stanley's translation of Pico.

ready association of Philips' Interregnum verse with a straightforwardly Royalist politics, and argues that her broadly stoic ideal, married to a Platonism that tends to valorise transcendent virtues over party values, resists political exclusivity. Chapter three examines the stoic model as it pertains to the representation of the perfect king in the Restoration and Coronation panegyrics composed by Philips in the early 1660s. Philips' virtuous monarch is discussed in relation to the Stuart tradition of panegyric verse and compared with similar representations by her male and female peers. The chapter highlights the passive nature of Philips' model of kingship and the strain of nostalgia for the previous Stuart reign that permeates her state verse. These traits are examined with reference to the climate of political uncertainty created by England's civil conflicts, and they are contrasted with the active, forward-looking representation of the king in the panegyrics of the dominant literary voice of the Restoration, John Dryden.

The fourth and fifth chapters are concerned with Philips' virtuous women. Chapter four examines the occasional poems inspired by the poet's female acquaintances and neighbours. It explores how these tributes to female excellence employ the discourses of stoic and Platonic virtue to broaden or to subtly subvert the narrow scope of virtuous action conventionally allowed to seventeenth-century women. Philips' ideal women, I argue, are represented as politically significant figures whose virtuous influence far exceeds the domestic confines of the conduct text ideology that dominated the period in which she wrote. The discussion of Philips' female subjects as public figures is continued in chapter five with an analysis of the meaning of virtue in the female friendship poems. In this chapter I argue that Philips' constructions of female intimacy draw on the literary and political tradition of virtuous male friendship and, in doing so, lay claim to the virtues considered requisite to man as the natural and divinely ordained superior sex, and denied to woman as his inferior. The religious and philosophical roots of Philips' Platonically realised friendship are emphasised over its amatory associations in order to highlight the public and political nature of the models of female virtue inscribed in the poems.

The final chapter, chapter six, explores the representation of political virtue in Philips' drama translation *Pompey*. The play is considered in the context of the political disputes of the period as well as to Philips' personal and familial situation with regard to the Restoration regime. My analysis takes issue with the usual critical assumption that Philips designed her play to flatter Charles II and argues that it looks back to the reign of Charles I and celebrates the virtues that characterise the mythology surrounding his legacy. The chapter draws attention to the impact Philips' additions to Corneille's original text have on the characterisation of the eponymous hero of the play, who conforms, in Philips' version, to the Platonic-stoic ideal of her Interregnum verse.

As this summary indicates, my study as a whole is structured according to considerations of genre and, to some extent, gender. Each of the chapters is devoted to a particular literary form or mode, and chapters two through five make distinctions between male and female models of excellence. Each chapter draws on a specific body of context material in order to illuminate the various and sometimes subtle political, theological and socio-sexual meanings of Philips' constructions of virtue. These contexts have been chosen for their relevance to both the subject and form of the texts under consideration as well as to the occasions which stimulated the writing of those texts. The religious poems are therefore examined in the light of mid-seventeenth-century theological disputes and contemporary religious literature; the portraits of noble men are set beside competing ideologies of the 'good man' and the numerous verse tributes to male virtue composed by Philips' contemporaries; similar verses on virtuous women form part of the context for the study of Philips' 'good woman', and all of these verses are read in the light of the abundant female conduct literature which, as I have suggested and will argue further, played a significant role in shaping and reinforcing popular conceptions of female perfection. The studies of Philips' female friendship poems and of the verse drama *Pompey* need necessarily to take into account current critical assessments of those works, and the contentions of both of these chapters respond to prevailing critical assumptions about the texts with which they are

concerned. As I have already stated, my emphasis upon the religious and philosophical foundations of Philips' discourse of virtuous female friendship engages with a considerable body of criticism which finds such virtue problematic or regrettable. In challenging current readings of the politics of *Pompey*, I draw on details of the play's composition and the contemporary political meanings of its French and classical sources.

The chapters that make up this study certainly work independently of one another. They are linked, however, by the common concern with Philips' representation of virtue and the poet's consistent interest in the subject of the virtuous life and the philosophical, spiritual and political issues surrounding it.

During the course of my research, I read two relatively recent commentaries on Philips whose critical approach seemed particularly to resonate with those of this study. These commentaries, which were not familiar to me at the outset of my work, are Carol Barash's chapter on Philips in *English Women's Poetry, 1649-1714*, "Women's Community and the Exiled King: Katherine Philips's Society of Friendship" (1996), and Andrew Shifflett's paper, "'How Many Virtues Must I Hate': Katherine Philips and the Politics of Clemency" (1997).[83] Barash's study examines Philips' state panegyrics along side the more familiar friendship poems and argues that the latter represent subtle but intricate political texts which celebrate monarchy and Royalist values. Shifflett's paper offers an insightful reading of the politics of *Pompey* that not only draws Philips out from the private world of amatory verse, but also challenges the conventional wisdom that marks her as a champion of monarchy. Though my own readings of these texts differ from those of Barash and Shifflett, much of my work here shares the spirit of their refreshing approach to Philips as a writer who responded to and engaged directly in the complex social and political events of her time.

[83] See page 17, note 48 for publication details of Barash's book. Shifflett's paper is published in *Studies in Philology* Winter (1997): 103-135.

Chapter 1

"To grow more like unto the Deity": doctrinal conflict and transcendent virtue in the religious poems

Probably the last poem that Philips wrote before her death from smallpox on 22 June 1664 was an address to Gilbert Sheldon, Archbishop of Canterbury, entitled 'To my Lord Arch:Bishop of Canterbury his Grace' (116). The poem represents one of two public texts that Philips produced and circulated in an attempt to clear herself of any imputed involvement in the 1664 printing of her poems.[1] Philips constructs her address to Sheldon as an appeal for succour on behalf of the poet/speaker's Muse. The Muse is represented as a naturally humble and retired woman who has been 'dragg'd malitiously' and unwillingly by an unnamed assailant 'into the Light' (8) of the public view, and who now seeks, because of this exposure, the protection of Sheldon and his Church.[2] Sheldon's qualifications to act as such a protector are enumerated in a warm panegyric to his many virtues, and, at the zenith of her admiration, the poet/speaker is inspired to call upon the Archbishop as her new Muse, one whose hallowed position and personal piety will infuse her with 'Raptures' (59) and 'Noble Thoughts' (57).

'To my Lord Arch:Bishop' is important to this study of the discourse of virtue in Philips' writing for a number of reasons. It offers, for instance, a rare example of Philips' reflecting upon her position as a woman writer and upon the implications of that position for her reputation as a (conventionally) good woman. The language with which Philips chooses to make her defence and clear her name in the poem suggests and reinforces the language of her posthumous construction as 'The Matchless Orinda', the virtuous model of acceptable female literary endeavour which I discussed in the

[1] The other took the form of a letter addressed to her friend, the courtier Sir Charles Cotterell, which she requested him to circulate. (This is printed as Letter XLV in *Letters*.)

[2] The trope of the privacy is not unique to women writers, however by Philips' day it was less commonly invoked by men than it had been.

Introduction. The terms of the defence are set by that most persistently defining (and confining) condition of seventeenth-century female virtue, sexual chastity, and its guardian, retirement. The poet/speaker likens the violation of her Muse's chosen privacy to a rape, an abuse which taints the Muse herself, who is shown falling at the Archbishop's feet 'with Just confusion' (12). Although the poet/speaker attempts to establish a distance between herself and her sullied Muse, this distance cannot be sustained. The distinction between the female writer and the (anthropomorphically) female figure of poetic inspiration is precarious at best and it collapses completely towards the close of the poem when the poet/speaker assumes the Muse's shame as her own and appeals, as a poet, for inspiration from Sheldon:

> If Noble things can Noble Thoughts infuse,
> Your Life (my Lord) may, ev'n in me, produce
> Such Raptures, that, of their Rich Fury Proud,
> I may, perhaps, dare to repeat aloud;
> Assur'd, the World that Ardour will excuse,
> Applaud the subject, and forgive the Muse. (57-62)

With this appeal Philips seeks rehabilitation as a poet inspired by a man of God. Rather than renounce her writing she adroitly reconfigures the literary enterprise as a laudable one. The 'Noble things' and 'Noble thoughts' from which she will fashion her future verses are given a particularly pious cast, associated as they are with the Church and its chief prelate. The poem indicates both Philips' concern for conventional notions of female propriety and her determination to bring her writing within the bounds of that propriety. The poet/speaker/muse ends the poem a public woman still, but the kind of public woman who, writing on subjects appropriate for female contemplation, will serve as a glory to her sex, not an abomination.

Philips' address to Sheldon is also important to this study because it reminds us of the central and leading role of religion in the seventeenth century in defining the

virtuous life and in policing and reinforcing certain behaviours. To what greater figure of religious and social authority could Philips have appealed in her own defence? But Sheldon not only represents religious and social authority; he is also a symbol of political legitimacy. The Restoration of the monarchy in 1660 brought about the restoration of the Church of England. After the election of the predominantly Royalist and Anglican 'Cavalier Parliament' in 1661, the Church came increasingly to underline its alliance with monarchy. Given the erastian nature of the Church, 'To my Lord Arch:Bishop' must also be read as a statement of Philips' political loyalties. In her Coronation panegyric of 1661, Philips had confidently acclaimed Charles II the 'best' of kings.[3] It is only appropriate then that she should, in this poem to its chief prelate, affirm the Church of England 'the best Church of all the World' (16). The pious woman who writes on religious themes is also a good subject, loyal to the Restored Church and her king.

The political import of 'To my Lord Arch:Bishop' becomes clearer when we consider Sheldon's activities within the Anglican Church, particularly during the early 1660s. Sheldon's biographer, Victor D. Sutch, describes the Archbishop as the 'architect of the Anglican restoration'.[4] Committed to the re-establishment of the Church upon the principles of the Elizabethan settlement, Sheldon fought doggedly to resist encroachment by Presbyterian or Puritan values over the practice and doctrine of the national religion. His ascendancy over the Restoration Church was made possible not only because of his considerable closeness to and influence over Charles II, but also because of his astute politicking and manipulation of parliamentary affairs. He worked 'industriously' to bring the Act of Uniformity (1662) into existence, and continued to push further legislation through parliament during the first half of the 1660s in an effort

[3] 'On the Coronation', l. 28.

[4] Victor D. Sutch, *Gilbert Sheldon, Architect of Anglican Survival, 1640-1675* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1973)

to ensure (or to enforce) the nation's religious conformity.[5] Sutch regards Sheldon as the consummate politician, not a man of any particularly profound piety or spirituality. He was 'a leader who was thoroughly familiar with the workings of parliament, in both its houses; who recognized the importance of, and knew how to mold [sic], public opinion'; he was 'one of the most politically-oriented, and also perhaps the most politically astute, of all England's primates'.[6] Philips' tribute to this man is very much therefore a political poem, and one that declares her sympathy with a strictly Anglican national faith.

Philips' declaration of allegiance to the established Church of England is a far cry from the dissenting fervour of her youth, as recorded by John Aubrey. In his *Brief Lives*, Aubrey writes that as a child Katherine was 'much against the Bishops, and prayd God to take them to him'.[7] Aubrey sets this evidence of Philips' Presbyterian convictions in the context of other details of the religious intensity of the poet's early years. He writes:

> She was very religiously devoted when she was young, prayed by herself an hour together, and took sermons *verbatim* when she was but ten years old. ... she had read the Bible through before she was full four years old; she could have said I know not how many pieces of Scripture and chapters. She was a frequent hearer of sermons ....[8]

The particulars of Aubrey's account, for which, he acknowledges, he is in debt to

[5] The details of this legislation, known collectively as the Clarendon Code, is discussed in more detail on pp. 68-69 below.

[6] Sutch, *Gilbert Sheldon*, p. 130. Details of Sheldon's orchestration of the Anglican restoration can be found on pp. 65-148.

[7] John Aubrey, *Brief Lives*, edited from the Original Manuscripts and with a Life of John Aubrey by Oliver Lawson Dick (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1957), 242.

[8] Ibid.

Philips' 'cosen Blacket'[9], seem chosen deliberately to convey the atmosphere and rituals of a Puritan household.[10] The emphasis upon lengthy and assiduous prayer, the centrality of the Bible and the believer's intimate knowledge of scripture, the importance of the sermon: all these are recognisable elements of non-conformist faith. But while Aubrey takes trouble to evoke the religious tenor of Philips' early faith and milieu, he provides less detail about the poet's ultimate rejection of her Presbyterian background. His testimony to Philips' eventual allegiance to the episcopalian established Church appears as an almost throw-away comment appended to his description of her initial antipathy to the bishops: 'but afterwards [she] was reconciled to them'.[11] Such a laconic comment does not convey the spiritual enquiry we can assume Philips must have undertaken to reject so decisively the dissenting faith of her youth and family and to embrace the state Church.

Into the space of Aubrey's silence we can insert the religious and spiritual poetry written by Philips during the 1650s. In spite of her suggestion in the poem to Sheldon that the pious verse inspired by him will form a new and more noble subject for her pen than it had hitherto entertained, Philips was already the author of a number of verses on the subject of God and faith, and all of these had been included in the

[9] Ibid. This cousin, says Aubrey, 'lived with [Philips] from her swadling cloutes to eight, and taught her to read' (254).

[10] Philips is not the only seventeenth-century learned lady to have demonstrated such powers of pious application and studiousness as a child. As Thomas observes, Aubrey's description of Philips' early years is strikingly similar to the account given by Katherine's contemporary, Lucy Hutchinson, of her own childhood. In her *Memoirs of the Life of Colonel Hutchinson*, vol. 1, 3d ed. (London: 1810) Lucy - also the author of a translation of Lucretius - writes:

> By that time I was foure years old I read English perfectly, and having a greate memory, I was carried to sermons, and while I was very young could remember and repeate them exactly, and being caress'd, the love of praise tickled me, and made me attend more heedfully. (25)

It is tempting to read both descriptions as deliberate attempts to place the potentially socially transgressive nature of female learning in an acceptable context of piety and religion. (Thomas cites the same passage in his introduction to *Poems*.)

[11] Aubrey, *Brief Lives*, 242.

'unauthorised' edition of her poems. Though few of these poems can be dated with absolute accuracy, they can all be ascribed with some confidence to the period of the Interregnum since they appear in an autograph manuscript of fifty-three of Philips' poems (National Library of Wales MS 775) that Peter Beal has concluded dates from before 1660.[12] The poems in question are small in number but they incorporate a considerable range of issues and ideas. They are almost always urgent and passionate in tone, and they run the gamut from personal and private contemplation to engagement with contemporary debates over church doctrine and discipline. They are distinctly exploratory and often self-contradictory in nature; they make no explicit statement of loyalty to any one creed or sect, and they resist the attempts of the scholar to align them with any formal religious position.

One thing which all of these poems share, however, is a commitment to a broadly Platonic interpretation of the Christian God, and Philips' debt to seventeenth-century Christian Platonism will be the primary focus of this examination of her religious thinking. The philosophy gives her a discourse of divine and immutable truths with which she is able to criticise the polarised and partial religious creeds of her day and to establish a personal theology which promotes the ideals of peace and unity. The polarities of mid-century religious conflict are broadly represented by the portrait that Aubrey provides of Philips' Puritan childhood and the construction which Philips makes of herself as a loyal Anglican in 'To my Lord Arch: Bishop'. This chapter examines Philips' Interregnum religious poems as texts which interact with and respond to these conflicting theological positions. The discussion focuses on four poems: 'God' (48), 'The Soule' (73), 'God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself' (71), and 'On Controversies in Religion' (44). Although the poems differ from the other texts considered in this study in that they do not construct a particular individual model of human virtue, they are none the less centrally concerned with the question of the

[12] In his *Index of English Literary Manuscripts 1450-1700*, vol. 2, part 2 (London: Mansell Publishing, 1993), Beal describes the manuscript as an autograph collection of 'over fifty-five of [Philips'] poems made in the late 1650s' (126).

human capacity for virtue and the moral and spiritual imperative for human beings to lead a 'good' life. Informing this concern is the Christian Platonic imperative to pursue the path of virtue in order to attain spiritual purity and union with God. The (sometimes tentative) conclusions which Philips' religious poems draw on such matters furnish much of the philosophical, political and moral foundation for the constructions of virtue in her secular verse.

The possible sources for Philips' Platonism are many. Some of these have been identified in the Introduction and will be given further consideration now. While there were no English translations of Plato available to Philips, French translations of all the major discourses had been made in the sixteenth-century, and, since Philips had good French and an interest in general in French literature it is possible that she was familiar with these translations. The Spenser scholar, Robert Ellrodt, has demonstrated the influence of Louis Le Roy's translation of (and commentary upon) Plato's *Symposium* (1558/9) on Spenser's use of Platonic language, and he affirms that the French translator, who also produced versions of the *Phaedo* and the *Republic*, 'was well known in England by the end of the sixteenth century'.[13] My readings of Le Roy's *Sympose* and *Phedon* have found nothing to disprove nor conclusively to prove that Philips knew these texts. Certainly, Philips' Platonic discourse reflects the material in Le Roy's renderings of Plato, but while her familiarity with them remains a possibility, it is more

[13] Robert Ellrodt, *Neoplatonism in the Poetry of Spenser*, Travaux D'Humanisme at Renaissance, Vol. 35 (Folcroft, PA: The Folcroft Press, Inc., 1969 reprint), 104. Le Roy's translation of the *Symposium* was published in Paris in 1558/9 under the title, *Le Sympose de Platon, ou de l'amour et de beauté, traduit de Grec en François, avec trois livres de Commentaires, recueillis des meilleurs autheurs tant Grecz que Latins, & autres, par Loys Le Roy* .... Another edition appeared in 1581. His translation of the *Phaedo* (which also contains passages from a number of Plato's other discourses) was printed in Paris in 1553 as *Le Phedon de Platon traittant de l'immortalité de l'ame ... Le dixiesme livre de la Republique, en ce qu'il parle de l'immortalité ... Deux passages du mesme autheur a ce propos, l'un du Phedre, l'autre du Gorgias. La remonstrance que feit Cyrus Roy des Perses a ses enfans ... prise de l'huitiesme livre de son institution escrite par Xenophon: le tout traduit de Grec en Francois avec l'exposition des lieux plus obscurs et difficiles par Loys le Roy, dit Regius.* A further edition appeared in 1581. In 1600, Le Roy's translation of the *Republic* was printed in Paris. This included extracts from the *Phaedo*, the *Phaedrus*, and the *Gorgias*. It was entitled, *La République de Platon ... Traduicte de Grec en François et enrichie de commentaires par L. le Roy. Plus quelques autres traictez Platoniques, de la traduction du mesme interprète touchant l'immortalité de l'âme pour l'esclaircissement du x. livre de ladicte Rep. Le tout revu ... par F. Morel.*

probable, I believe, that her influences came from sources more immediately available to her than Le Roy's editions would likely have been.[14] We know for sure that she was familiar with the poetry of Spenser since she twice makes reference to episodes from the *Faerie Queene*, once in the poem 'To the noble Palaemon on his incomparable discourse of Friendship' (12), where she describes the witnesses to the truths of friendship as standing 'amaz'd ... As Fairy Knights touch'd with Cambina's wand' (23-24),[15] and again in 'Content, to my dearest Lucasia' (18), where Spenser's Red Cross Knight, deluded by the false Duessa, is offered as a symbol of man's inability to distinguish true happiness from false (4-5).[16] Given her knowledge of the *Faerie Queene*, we can conclude her likely familiarity with Spenser's *Fowre Hymnes*, two of which treat of earthly love and beauty and two of 'Heavenly' love and beauty.[17] The latter are redolent with Platonic language and concepts, and from them Philips may have learned of Plato's 'Idees' and 'pure *Intelligences*' and read Spenser's account of Platonic ascent from the contemplation of earthly beauty to apprehension of the divine vision.[18] Another likely important source of Platonic language and ideas is Thomas Stanley's *The History of Philosophy* (1655-1662). The 'Fift Part' of this lengthy work, published in 1656, details 'The Doctrine of Plato', including Plato's philosophy of the immortality of the

[14] Le Roy's *Sympose* and *Phedon* were published more than a hundred years before Philips was writing. It is important to bear in mind, I think, when considering the likelihood of Philips' knowledge of these texts, how much greater a span of time that would be to Early Modern culture than to our own.

[15] This refers to an episode in Book 4, Canto 3 of the *Faerie Queene*, stanza 48. The first complete edition of all twelve books of the *Faerie Queene* was published in 1596 in London for William Ponsonbie, under the title, *The Faerie Queene. Disposed into twelve bookes, Fashioning XII. Morall vertues.* Editions of Spenser's poetic works were published several times during the seventeenth century. *The faerie queen; The shepheards calendar; together with the other works of England's arch-poet, Edm. Spenser* was published in London for Mathew Lownes in 1611, 1613, and 1617. I have consulted the text of the *Faerie Queene* in Spenser, *Complete Poetical Works*, ed. J. C. Smith and E. De Selincourt (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1970).

[16] See *Faerie Queene*, Book 1, Canto 2.

[17] *Fowre Hymnes* were first published in London in 1596. An edition also appeared in 1611, printed in London for Mathew Lownes.

[18] 'An Hymne of Heavenly Beautie' ll. 82-84 & 22-28. Text from Spenser, *Complete Poetical Works*, ed. Smith and De Selincourt.

soul, and his understanding of what constitutes the *'Good'* and *'Perfect Virtue'*.[19] To his account of Plato's philosophy, Stanley also appends his translation of Pico della Mirandola's neo-Platonic discourse *Commento sopra una canzona de amore da H. Beniveni.* This translation had been published earlier in 1651 as *A Platonick Discourse upon Love.*[20] The precepts and language contained therein bear a close affinity with Philips' concept of the divine in her religious verse as well as with her expressions of friendship as a divine passion - 'The next to Angells Love, if not the same' - in her friendship poetry.[21]

To some extent, the search for specific sources for Philips' Platonism belies the fact that Platonic ideas were in wide and general circulation during the Early Modern period in England (and Europe). Ellrodt notes that by the time Spenser was writing his early poetry, 'Many Platonic notions had always been or had lately become commonplaces. They circulated freely.' He draws attention to 'the existence of a diffuse Platonism in literary criticism, poetry and conversation'.[22] Indeed Philips' attraction to the language of Platonism as a means of expressing both intense human intimacy and divine illumination, was one she shared with many contemporary or near-contemporary poets.[23]

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[19] Stanley, *The History of Philosophy in Eight Parts* , 81-84 & 19-21.

[20] See Stanley, *Poems and Translations,* ed. Crump.

[21] The quotation is from the poem, 'A Friend' (64, l. 9). Stanley's translation of Pico describes the release of the soul from the 'bondage' of the body through 'the amatory life' in which the soul 'by the flame of love [is] refined into an Angell' (*The History of Philosophy,* 99). Thomas also notes the affinity between Pico's concept of angelic love, in Stanley's translation, and Philips'. See *Poems,* 366.

[22] Ellrodt, *Neoplatonism in the Poetry of Spenser,* 11 & 9.

[23] The list would include John Donne, William Cartwright, Abraham Cowley, and Henry Vaughan. Affinities between Donne's poetry and Philips' verse have been well-established by Philips scholars. See Andreadis, "Sapphic-Platonics", Hobby, *Virtue of Necessity,* and Mermin, "Women Becoming Poets" (full bibliographic details are given in chapter 1). Philips testifies to her admiration of Cartwright's writing in 'In Memory of Mr Cartwright' (51). Both Vaughan and Cowley addressed verses to Philips - Vaughan's 'To the most Excellently accomplish'd, Mrs. K. Philips' and Cowley's 'On Orinda's Poems. Ode'. Philips was among the first to imitate Cowley's form of the Pindaric Ode with 'An ode upon retirement, made upon occasion of Mr Cowley's on that subject' (77). She also visited Cowley's home, Barn Elms, recording her visit in the poem 'Upon the engraving. K: P: on a Tree in the short walke at Barn=Elms' (91).

However, in the specific case of Philips' Christian Platonism, the poet herself provides us with evidence of arguably her most significant source. This evidence consists of an eighteen line quotation from a poem called 'Cupid's Conflict' by Henry More that Philips uses to preface her contemplative poem, 'God'.[24] 'Cupid's Conflict', one of More's 'minor poems' was published along side his major work of Christian-Platonic philosophy, the *Platonick Song of the Soul,* in the 1647 edition of his *Philosophical Poems.* Philips' familiarity with 'Cupid's Conflict' rather favourably argues therefore her familiarity with the *Platonick Song.*[25] Armed with the sure knowledge of Philips' familiarity with the writing of one of the most important and prolific of seventeenth-century Christian Platonic philosophers,[26] this examination of Philips' religious philosophy focusses on the affinities between her contemplative verse and More's complex philosophical poetry.

More was one of a group of philosopher-theologians based at Cambridge who came to be known as the Cambridge Platonists. Other members of this group included Ralph Cudworth, Benjamin Whichcote, and John Norris, and several of them proved the inspiration for, and forged close connections with, a number of seventeenth century women writers and thinkers. Mary Astell conducted a correspondence with John Norris in which they debated 'the nature of love' and in which Astell questioned Norris's 'theory that God should be the sole object of human love'.[27] This

[24] Nowhere else does Philips quote so extensively from another writer.

[25] *Philosophicall Poems, by Henry More: Master of Arts, and Fellow of Christs Colledge in Cambridge* (Cambridge: 1647). The *Platonick Song* was first published in 1642. I have consulted the poem as it appears in Henry More, *The Complete Poems,* ed. Alexander B. Grosart (1878; reprint, Hildesheim: Georg Olms Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1969). All textual references will be to this edition.

[26] Anna Baldwin and Sarah Hutton, eds., *Platonism and the English Imagination* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1994), 73.

[27] John Hoyles, *The Waning of the Renaissance, 1640-1740, Studies in the Thought and Poetry of Henry More, John Norris and Isaac Watts* (The Hague: Martnus Nijhoff, 1971), 94. Bridget Hill's Introduction to her edition of a selection of Astell's writings, *The First English Feminist, 'Reflections on Marriage' and other writings by Mary Astell* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1986) provides a useful account of Astell's correspondence with Norris.

correspondence was published in 1695 under the title *Letters Concerning the Love of God.* Mary, Lady Chudleigh numbered both Astell and Norris among her acquaintances. She pays tribute to Norris in her poem 'The Resolution' as 'Th'ingenious *Norris*': *'Plato* reviv'd, we in his Writings find, His Sentiments are there, but more refin'd'.[28] Damaris, Lady Masham was Ralph Cudworth's daughter. Like Astell, she had also 'corresponded with Norris on the subject of Platonic love'. In 1696 her 'reply to the letters between Norris and Astell' were published under the title *Discourse Concerning the Love of God.*[29] More himself conducted a long correspondence with Anne, Vicountess Conway, and he may have been the Latin translator of her treatise, *The Principles of the most Ancient and Modern Philosophy, concerning God, Christ, and the Creatures,* which was published posthumously in 1690.[30] Philips' interest in More belongs, therefore, to a rich tradition of female Christian Platonism.

It is on account of the Cambridge Platonists that Sarah Hutton regards the seventeenth century as 'the golden age of English vernacular Platonic philosophy'. In *Platonism and the English Imagination,* Hutton argues the pervasive and widespread influence of Cambridge Platonism upon the literature of the period. 'The religious poetry of such writers as Milton, Vaughan, Traherne and Marvell,' she writes, 'is in

[28] ll. 48 & 52-53. The poem was published in 1703 in Chudleigh's *Poems on Several Occasions.* Text from *The Poems and Prose of Mary, Lady Chudleigh,* ed. Margaret J. M. Ezell, Women Writers in English 1350-1850 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993). Hoyles, in *The Waning of the Renaissance* notes that 'some of [Chudleigh's] poems are direct paraphrases from Norris' (93).

[29] Hoyles, *The Waning of the Renaissance,* 94. Though Masham originally held Norris in high regard, she came to reject many of his theories. Her response to the Astell-Norris correspondence critiques some of the central precepts of Norris's Christian Platonism from a Lockean perspective. See Patricia Springborg, "Astell, Masham, and Locke: religion and politics" in*Women Writers and the Early Modern British Political Tradition,* ed. Hilda L. Smith (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998) for a discussion of the philosophical relationship between Masham, Astell and Norris.

[30] The Latin title cites More as the translator from English into Latin. Conway's treatise was subsequently published in English as *The Principles of the most Ancient and Modern Philosophy, concerning God, Christ, and the Creatures ... Being a little treatise published since the author's death, translated out of English into Latin ... and now again made English. By J. C., Medicinae Professor.* (London: 1692). The More-Conway correspondence can be found in Marjorie Hope Nicholson, ed. *The Conway Letters: The Correspondence of Anne, Viscountess Conway, Henry More, and their Friends, 1642-1684* , Rev. ed. with an introduction and new material edited by Sarah Hutton (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992).

many ways the poetic counterpart of the Cambridge Platonists [sic] philosophical theology'.[31] Hutton's list of poets cuts across the boundaries of religious and political division, incorporating the republican, Puritan Milton and the Royalist, Anglican Vaughan. This inclusiveness is not incidental. Though Milton and Vaughan would have certainly regarded one another's stance on political and religious government as obnoxious, the Cambridge Platonists who influenced them saw themselves as occupying a moderate and mediating position on matters of faith and doctrine. Gerald R. Cragg observes that they hoped such a mediating position 'would prove to be a reconciling one as well'.[32] Eschewing the factious spirit of the Laudians on the one hand and the sectaries on the other, the Cambridge Platonists emphasised the common ground between Christians of all kinds and argued for a broader and more inclusive Church doctrine which attended to the shared and essential truths of Christianity, rather than splitting hairs (and creating conflict) over the finer points of dogma and theory.

This spirit of mediation, reconciliation and peace is is present in all of More's philosophical writings, and is especially marked in his *Platonick Song of the Soul.* [33] The *Platonick Song* is a lengthy and complex exposition of Christian-Platonic theology and cosmogony written in Spenserian stanzas.[34] It is made up of six discrete sections, divided into various books and cantos, over which More expounds upon such Platonic themes as 'The Life of the Soul', 'Her Immortalitie' and 'The Unitie of Souls'. The central premises of More's moderating and inclusive religious philosophy are given their fullest

[31] Baldwin and Hutton, eds., *Platonism and the English Imagination*, 72-7.

[32] Gerald R. Cragg, *The Church and the Age of Reason 1648-1789* (1960; London: Penguin Books, 1990), 68. I am indebted to Cragg's clear and helpful account of Cambridge Platonism in this text for my own summary.

[33] A full bibliography of More's writings can be found in Flora Isabel MacKinnon, *Philosophical Writings of Henry More* (1925; New York: AMS Press, 1969).

[34]More's choice of Spenserian stanzas is explained by his deep love of Spenser's *Faerie Queene*, which he fondly recalls his father reading to him as a child. See the introduction to *Philosophical Poems of Henry More*, ed. Geoffrey Bullough (Manchester: Manchester UP, 1931).

treatment in Parts One and Two of the poem, which More entitles respectively, *Psychozoia* and *Psychathanasia*. Together they depict and argue the essentially loving nature of God and his vital presence in the created world, the immortality of the soul, and the duty of every person to seek spiritual unity with the deity through the exercise of reason and virtue.

The extent of the influence of More's Christian Platonism upon Philips' personal relationship with God during the 1650s is illustrated in the meditative poems, 'God' and 'The Soule'. The religious philosophy of these poems is unmistakably Platonic in nature and centres on the belief in the immortality of the human soul and its divine capacity for virtue. Central too is the conviction that God is an infinitely good and infinitely loving being, whose benign influence is vitally present in his created universe. Philips' account of the nature of God and the soul uses language that is strikingly similar to the language used by More in the *Platonick Song*. In 'The Soule' we read of the human spirit as a 'self-mov'd' entity (25) which animates the 'grosse heap of matter' that makes up the physical world (27-28), and which 'pants and catches at Eternity' (23). In *Psychathanasia*, More describes the soul as a 'Self-moving substance', which 'Raiseth herself to catch infinity' and whose 'vitality ... doth ... move th'inert Materiality'.[35] In the poem 'God' the deity is described as 'supreamely good' (25), an entity whose compassion knows no limits and who 'Lovs't to disburse [himself] in kindness' (35). The speaker of 'The Soule' claims that the deity possesses 'unbounded Love' and 'unbounded mercy' (63-64). Such claims resonate with More's own conviction that love, unconditional and inexhaustible, is the structuring principle of God and his universe:

> ... sure the end
> Of this creation simply was to shew
> His flowing goodnesse, which he doth out-send

[35] *Psychathanasia*, Book I, Canto 2, st. 25; Book II, Canto 2, st. 27, and Book II, Canto 1, st. 7, respectively. All references are to Henry More, *The Complete Poems*, ed. Alexander B. Grosart (1878; reprint, Hildesheim: Georg Olms Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1969).

. . . . . .

This infinite *Good* through all ye world doth wend
To fill with heavenly blisse each willing heart.[36]

In addition to sharing More's conception of God and the soul, Philips' meditative poems also explore some of the central philosophical issues of the *Platonick Song*, in particular, the nature of faith and the possibility of the virtuous person's spiritual unity with the deity. This last issue forms the main subject of the poem 'God' and Philips' treatment of it is anticipated by her quotation from 'Cupid's Conflict'. The extract cited by Philips describes the 'thrice happy' virtuous, contemplative man, who, like Plato's Socrates, rejects the life of the world and the needs of the body in favour of the life of the spirit, and prepares his 'purged Soule' for its longed-for departure from the world of the senses.[37] It is worth noting that More's model of virtuous contentment includes many of the qualities of the 'good man' of the stoic philosophical tradition. He is a man, for example, who 'recks not what befalls him outwardly', who finds his true worth 'in himself' and 'his pure conscience', and who can both 'master and controll' his 'passions'.[38] These qualities, which form the staple of the period's ideal of nobility, and which recur in Philips' constructions of virtue, are established in 'Cupid's Conflict' as the precondition for spiritual enlightenment and the immortal soul's eventual unity with God.[39]

More's lines interact with Philips' meditation on God in two ways. At first they

[36] *Psychathanasia*, Book III, Canto 4, st. 16.

[37] ll. 265 & 271 respectively. Line references refer to the whole text of the poem as it is printed in Grosart's edition of More's poems.

[38] ll. 268, 269-270 & 273 respectively.

[39] The inclusion of stoic principles in More's Platonism should not be surprising. Students of the history of Platonism in Western thought have noted that early Christian theologians embraced not Plato himself but what modern scholars call 'Middle Platonism'. In 'Platonism in the Middle English Mystics' Andrew Louth describes Middle Platonism as 'a mixture of mainly Platonic and Stoic doctrines' (Baldwin and Hutton, *Platonism and the English Imagination*, 53).

seem to function as the spiritual preparation for Philips' speaker's own divine enlightenment, an enlightenment which is heralded by the jubilant tone of the opening couplet: 'Eternall reason! glorious majestie!/Compar'd to whom what can be said to be?' (1-2). This couplet is an abrupt transition from the calm and gentle closing image of the 'Cupid's Conflict' extract: 'Thus mindlesse of what idle men will say/He takes his own and stilly goes his way', but the transition from quiet contemplation to illustrious vision makes sense if More's representation of philosophical virtue is read as the necessary precursor to Philips' speaker's communion with the divine. The speaker's voice is not only jubilant, it is also public. It offers up a tribute to the divine creator in a tone very similar to the one Philips will use to welcome the return of the King at the Restoration. The tone alters, however, and with it the significance of More's lines, when, just over half way through the poem (at line 37), the celebratory voice cedes to an introspective and self-doubting one. Praise gives way to prayer and a humble plea for God's grace: 'On this accompt, O God, enlarge my heart'. Fearing her soul's corruption by 'sordid' pleasures (43), the speaker loses sight of the divine vision. More's happy man is thus recast as an ideal not yet achieved, one towards which the speaker is struggling fitfully, doubtfully:

> When shall those cloggs of sence and fancy break,
> That I may heare the God within me speak?
> When with a Silent and retired art,
> Shall I with all this empty hurry part? (49-52)

The contrast with the 'purged Soule' and 'still' self-possession of More's virtuous ideal could hardly be greater. But whether bathed in the light of divine revelation or pleading for the strength to cast off the 'profaner mixtures' of earthly existence (44), Philips' speaker makes the connection between spiritual revelation and the exercise of virtue very clear.

She is less clear when it comes to dealing with the role played by reason in the matter of religion and spiritual belief, though reason, as her opening address to the deity signifies, is an integral part of her creed. Indeed, the poem's climatic image of union with God - 'Here we are swallow'd up and gladly dwell,/Safely adoring what we cannot tell' (24) - appears to abandon the notion of reason as completely as it obliterates individual human consciousness, and it is hard to reconcile with the speaker's opening address to the deity as 'Eternall reason'. Between the opening address and the image of the ignorantly adoring faithful some twenty-four lines later, Philips' speaker traces a process of rational enquiry into the existence of God about which she is never entirely confident, but which she is clearly reluctant to relinquish:

> Yet if this great Creation was design'd
> To severall ends, fitted to every kind;
> Sure man (the world's epitomy) must be
> Formed to the best, that is, to study thee.
> And as our dignity, 'tis duty too,
> Which is summ'd up in this, to know and do.
> These comely rows of Creatures spell thy Name,
> Whereby we grope to find from whence they came,
> By thy own chain of causes brought to think
> There must be one, then find the highest link. (7-16)

Much of the vocabulary in this extract signals the speaker's trust in the powers of the rational process. Humanity's duty in relation to the creator is 'to study', 'to know', 'to think', and to find out 'causes'. This application of reason, the speaker argues, constitutes the whole of humanity's 'dignity'; it is the faculty, she seems to imply, which separates humankind from the beasts. The extract itself is an example of the deductive reasoning which it valorises. Ideas build on one another progressively. Each couplet represents another step towards resolving the problem and arriving at the truth. Each is marked by a phrase which signals the speaker's deductive method: 'Yet if', 'Sure', 'And as', 'Which is', 'Whereby', 'There must be'. But this confidence in human reason is

undermined quite significantly by the unexpected and therefore striking use of the verb 'to grope' in line 14 to describe the whole human rational process. The image of humans 'groping' after knowledge is hardly a dignified one. It suggests clumsiness, error and baseness, a feeling around in the darkness of ignorance rather than thinking clearly in the light of reason.

Similar contradictions run through the whole of 'God' as the speaker grapples with the apparently conflicting elements of divine reason and divine revelation. From the opening invocation of the deity as 'Eternall reason' she moves quickly to the assertion that God's 'essence can no more be search'd by man,/Then heaven (thy throne) be grasp'd within his span' (5-6). She then proceeds to attempt to do what she has claimed is impossible by applying reason and logic, in the passage analysed above, to the search for God's essence, only to conclude, in line 21, that humanity's knowledge of God must rest in 'impressions born with us'. This conclusion invokes mysticism over reason and leads, in the poem, to the image of revelation and blind faith in line 24: 'Safely adoring what we cannot tell'.

In his study of the Church in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Europe, Cragg argues that in the doctrinal struggle between reason and revelation 'lies the perennial interest of this period'.[40] He summarises the sea change in intellectual outlook that takes place over the course of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries as one which involved a shift away from a 'predominantly medieval' conception of life and creation towards a recognisably 'modern' rational and scientific approach to the world and to human existence. 'At the outset,' writes Cragg, 'the new thought was cordially disposed toward the Christian faith. Gradually the balance shifted from what God has revealed to what man has discovered'.[41] Cragg sees the Cambridge Platonists as characteristically adopting a mediating position between the poles of this debate. G. A. J. Rogers, J. M. Vienne and Y. C. Zarka agree: in their introduction to a recent study of

[40] Cragg, *Church and the Age of Reason*, 13.

[41] Ibid., 13.

Cambridge Platonism in its political, metaphysical and religious context, they argue that the Cambridge Platonists 'pleaded the cause of reason' but that they 'maintained that a certain sort of mystical illumination lay at the heart of all true thought, and that human reason had validity only in virtue of its divine origin'.[42]

In More's philosophy, reason and revelation are reconciled within the human soul, an entity which More regards as linking the world of sense-experience with the world of the divine.[43] More's soul is tripartite; it is the seat of the senses, of the faculty of reason, and of an intuitive and divinely given apprehension of God which More quantifies as a kind of supra-reason. The duty of humankind is to develop this mystical connection with God. We may begin to do this with the aid of our reason, but as we purify our souls and draw closer to the state of divine illumination, we transcend the realm of the rational and join with the goodness of God that is beyond thought and language. More's articulation of this intuitive sense of God in *Psychathanasia* is echoed very closely in Philips' 'impressions born with us' and 'Safely adoring what we cannot tell':

> So that it is plain that some kind of insight
> Of Gods own being in the soul doth dwell
> Though what God is we cannot yet so plainly tell.[44]

In her poem 'The Soule', Philips returns to the same problem of the relationship between reason and revelation, and attempts, like More, to resolve it with reference to the nature of the human soul. The poem begins with a critique of humanity's capacity for understanding and exposes the limitations of reason:

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[42] G. A. J. Rogers, J. M. Vienne and Y. C. Zarka, eds., *The Cambridge Platonists in Philosophical Context, Politics, Metaphysics and Religion* (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1997), ix.

[43] See David W. Dockrill, "The Heritage of Patristic Platonism in Seventeenth-century English Philosophical Theology" in Rogers et al. (cited above).

[44] *Psychathanasia*, Book II, Canto 1, st. 10.

... in the search after our selves we run,
Actions and causes we survey;
And when the weary chase is almost done,
From our own quest we slip away. (9-12)

The speaker laments this ignorance and vanity, and expresses regret over the common failure of the learned - 'those that know most' (17) - to provide a satisfactory explanation for humankind's innate belief in the immortality of the soul:

'Tis strange and sad, that since we do believe
We have a Soule must never dy,
There are so few that can a reason give
How it obtains that life, or why. (13-16)

The speaker's own attempt at an explanation for this belief is draws heavily on contemporary Platonic discourse. Like More, she credits the soul with a native knowledge of God - 'Yet hath she notions of her own' (38) - and defines this knowledge as a supra-rational intelligence, which 'Peirces and Judges things unseen' (26). The 'things unseen' constitute goodness and virtue in their absolute and uncompromised states. 'Good and evill' cannot be discerned by the physical body, declares the speaker, for 'What these words honesty and honour meane,/The Soule alone knows how to learn' (34-36). This concept of the soul as a thing of extraordinary intelligence and perceptive power, which alone can search the truth of God and creation, brings together the rational and the mystical and resolves the tensions which the poem 'God' could not quite reconcile.

The debate over reason and revelation in the religious literature of the seventeenth century has, as all discussions of religion in this period do, its political dimension. That this is so has been suggested already by Cragg's assessment of the Cambridge Platonists' mediating position between the poles of contemporary religious

belief. The balance of the rational and mystical in More's religious philosophy can be read as a response to the competing interests of mid-century Calvinism and Laudianism, a religious conflict at the heart of England's civil and political unrest. Both creeds are satirised in *Psychozoia*, one for its reliance upon empty and superstitious forms of worship, the other for its over-emphasis upon the role of human reason in matters of faith. More implicitly allies these 'extreme' doctrines with extreme positions in state politics - Laudian high church with absolute monarchy, Calvinism with anarchic democracy - and he has the hero of his poem reject both.[45] This mediating creed retains its political currency well into the second half of the seventeenth century. The terms of More's critique in *Psychozoia* are reiterated in Dryden's famous examination of faith and religious authority, 'Religio Laici' (1682). Dryden's poem carefully forges a middle way through the errors of excessive rationalism, Catholic superstition and sectarian lawlessness, to accommodate a faith built, like More's, on the dual pillars of reason and revelation. This accommodation can be read as the religious equivalent of Dryden's political theory in 'Astraea Redux', a poem which argues for a mixed constitution of king, commons and peers, presided over by a monarch whose 'Goodness only is above the Laws'.[46]

Philips was no less alert to the political dimension of religious faith and she addresses it in 'God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself' and 'On Controversies in Religion'. In these poems the personal Platonic creed of 'God' and 'The Soule' operate as the lens through which contemporary doctrinal conflict is

[45] The politics of More's creed are brought to the foreground in a number of stanzas which More added to the second (1647) version of *Psychozoia*. In these stanzas More dramatises a debate between a group of churchmen, who represent the spectrum of Christian belief from Catholicism to Puritan sectarianism, and his hero Mnemon. The debate focuses on the derivation of the certainty of faith: does this certainty proceed from Scripture, from Church authority, God's spirit, or man's reason? The last of these comes to dominate the discussion, and Mnemon argues for the centrality of God's spirit, which he characterises as neither 'reason nor unreasonableness'. Immediately following the debate, the moderate Mnemon is shown choosing between three alternative routes by which he might continue his journey. One leads to the city of Monarchy, one to Democracy, the other, middle route, leads out of the land of Beiron (the brutish life). Mnemon takes this middle route.

[46] l. 267

examined and condemned. The poems also figure belief in an all-loving and infinitely merciful God as a solution to religious and political discord. 'God was in Christ' focusses on one particular aspect of contemporary religious controversy: the on-going debate over the Calvinist doctrine of predestination. It ends with a personal prayer in which the speaker asks God to distinguish her from the proponents of predestination by filling her soul with love for all people. 'On Controversies in Religion' undertakes a critique of religious dispute in general. Through her use of the public voice, its speaker shares responsibility for human conflict and religious intolerance, and she finds a solution to this conflict by appealing to the virtuous and expansive soul that is the property of every man and woman.

'God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself' takes its title from Chapter 5 of Paul's second letter to the Corinthians, in which Paul explains the redemptive power of Christ's crucifixion. Philips, apparently using the authorised King James translation of the Bible, quotes part of verse 19:

> ... that God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them: and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation.

Philips' autograph manuscript dates the poem '8th Aprilis 1653'; in his commentary, Thomas notes that this was Good Friday. The details of the title thus prepare the reader for a meditative poem on the central event of the Christian faith: the death of Christ for the salvation of humankind. But Philips' meditation on this event quickly assumes a contemporary and worldly significance. From contemplation of Christ's sacrifice, her speaker proceeds to reflect on the enormity of human sin, and then launches into a passionate attack against certain Christians - she calls them 'wretched men' (19) - whom she accuses of denying the infinite capacity of God's love for his creation. She continues, in defiance of these 'wretched men', to proclaim the all-encompassing nature

of God's mercy and compassion, and concludes with a prayer for the enlargement of her soul, that she too might love as completely as the God she has just described.

Philips' allusions to specific civil or religious controversies are rarely explicit in her Interregnum poems, but in spite of her rather allusive and imprecise language there are a number of reasons why we might safely conclude her speaker's denunciation of the 'wretched men' and 'narrow souls' (35) who 'confine' God and 'restrain [his] mercy' to be an assault upon the proponents of the Calvinist doctrine of predestination. Most of these reasons are to be found in the poem itself. To begin with, Philips' speaker's assertion of God's all-encompassing love directly contradicts the fundamental theological premise of the doctrine of predestination. According to the formulation of the doctrine in the Westminster Confession of Faith of 1646, predestination teaches that,

> By the decree of God, for the manifestation of his glory, some men and angels are predestinated unto everlasting life, and others foreordained to everlasting death.

And furthermore that,

> These angels and men, thus predestinated and foreordained, are particularly and unchangeably designed; and their number is so certain and definite that it can not be either increased or diminished.[47]

Conversely, the God of 'God was in Christ' appears to extend his gift of everlasting life to all. 'What flouds of Love proceed from heaven's smile,/ At once to pardon and to reconcile!' (17-18), Philips' speaker proclaims, and, she avers, 'Did there Ten thousand worlds to ruin fall/One God would save, one Christ redeem them all' (33-34).

[47] The Westminster Confession of Faith was drawn up by assembly of Presbyterian and Puritan divines following the ascendancy of Parliament in the civil wars. It articulates the religious position of those who had been seeking further reform in the English Church along Calvinist principles. As a Presbyterian document it reflects the beliefs of both the family into which Katherine Philips was born and the one into which she married.

The details of Philips' attack against the 'wretched men' and the scriptural allusions which underpin it also suggest that her antagonists are the proponents of predestination. Though her critique is both barbed and passionate, it is founded on solid and carefully chosen scriptural exegesis. Her citation from Paul's second letter to the Corinthians is not only relevant to the events of Good Friday, it is especially relevant to the question of the scriptural authority of the doctrine of predestination. Advocates of the doctrine supported their position with reference to the writings of St. Paul, in particular Ephesians, Chapter 1 and Romans, Chapters 8 and 9.[48] Philips' critique therefore refutes their doctrine with the teachings of the very same apostle. In Corinthians, the verses which precede the one appropriated by Philips for the title of her poem proclaim that 'all things are of God' (v. 18) and that 'Christ died for all' (v. 15). These dicta, of which the Bible-literate Philips would have been fully cognizant, are brought into play both implicitly and explicitly in the poem. They provide an authoritative background to her ideas, and they are restated in her speaker's assertions about the universal redemptive power of Christ's sacrifice and the infinite love of the creator. The same verses from Corinthians had been used by many Early Modern theologians hostile to hardline Calvinism to refute the doctrine of predestination.[49] That this was so argues that Philips was well-informed about the issues surrounding the religious controversies of her day.

In addition to being well-informed, her critique is also subtle and astute. It defends the conception of an all-loving, all-merciful deity upon the same premises as the proponents of predestination defended their position: the omnipotence and omniscience of God. The argument that God has immutably determined the spiritual fate of each of every human being rests upon the notion that God is, and must be, all-

[48] For a full discussion of the scriptural basis of predestination see, Peter White, *Predestination, policy and polemic, conflict and consensus in the English Church from the Reformation to the Civil War* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1992).

[49] Again, see White, *Predestination* (cited above) for details of the scriptural opposition to Calvinist predestination.

powerful and all-knowing. Philips' speaker meets her antagonists on this very point. God is so perfect and complete, she argues, that he cannot possibly need to demonstrate or add to his power by condemning humankind; he needs no 'additions from Our misery' (30). Furthermore, she asserts that God's omnipotence can be demonstrated in the act of salvation alone, for, "Tis equall pow'r to save, as to destroy' (32).

Although historians tread rather warily when it comes to assessing the importance of doctrinal disputes to the religious protests which contributed to England's civil wars, certain developments in religious policy under Charles I and Archbishop Laud did move the controversy over predestination to a more prominent position in radical Protestant protest.[50] The disagreements of the central players in the dispute tended to focus on the exact interpretation of the doctrine of predestination. In theory, belief in predestination had always been part of the creed of the Protestant English Church. It is set down as Article XVII of the Thirty-nine Articles which formed the doctrinal basis of the Elizabethan Church settlement. But in practice, the English Church treated the doctrine with a considerable degree of latitude. Many of the early reformers of the English Church were uncomfortable with the hardline Calvinist position on predestination with its emphasis upon condemnation to everlasting death.[51] Nevertheless, sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Puritan conversation narratives bear witness to the anguish experienced by many members of the reformed faith over the question of their election to life. Owen C. Watkins study of such narratives in *The Puritan Experience* demonstrates the profound influence of the doctrine over the mental

[50] Barry Coward, in *The Stuart Age, England, 1603-1714* (Harlow, Essex: Pearson Education, 1994), describes Archbishop Laud's perceived attack upon the doctrine of predestination as one of the causes of popular protest against his religious policies, 'though not the most important' (173).

[51] In *Church and People, 1450-1660: The Triumph of the Laity in the English Church* (Harvester Press: 1976), Claire Cross remarks that predestination proved from the 1550s 'to be one doctrine of the magisterial reformers which some of the English laity could not stomach' (98).

and spiritual lives of the Protestant faithful.[52] Constant introspection and self-examination were demanded in the unending search for 'evidence of saving grace', and since 'it was emphasized that only God could really know the truth about a man's regeneration', self-doubt often led believers to despair of salvation.[53] Watkins observes that in the conversion narratives 'temptations to suicide are recorded quite frequently ... where the believer ... is so completely overwhelmed by his fears as to be in a pathological condition'.[54]

In the 1630s and 40s, Archbishop Laud came to test the boundaries of the Established Church's latitude on the doctrine of predestination with his conviction that the redemptive power of Christ's death was theoretically sufficient for the salvation of all. This position was quietly tolerated by the Church of England, but when taken together with Laud's 'Popish' changes to outward forms of worship in the English Church, it became, for his opponents, another indication of the Archbishop's design to subvert the Protestant religion. The Westminster Confession of Faith, drawn up by an assembly of Presbyterian and Puritan divines following the ascendancy of Parliament, represents the theological position of Laud's opponents. Its articles on predestination are a response to what its authors perceived as the Romanish policies of Charles I and his bishops. The articles re-establish the centrality of the doctrine of election and damnation and comprehensively reject the Laudian notion of the theoretical sufficiency of Christ's sacrifice for the salvation of all. It is apparent from the affirmations which Henry More makes of his commitment to a moderate religious and political ideology, that he regarded the debate over doctrine of predestination as one of the contributing factors in his country's religious and civil conflicts. More had in fact been compelled to reject the doctrine of predestination on the grounds of its incompatibility with his own

[52] Owen C. Watkins, *The Puritan Experience* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd., 1972)

[53] Ibid., 21 & 29

[54] Ibid., 42

sense of God's goodness.[55] And though in a letter to Samuel Hartlib, treating of the religious controversies of the 1640s, his criticism of 'those men that make the greatest cry about religion, and count themselves the only godly in the Kingdome', reads as less than benign, More also restates the need for tolerance over issues, like predestination, which he felt did not touch the essentials of the Christian faith.[56]

The doctrinal position of the Westminster Confession of Faith reflects, according to available biographical evidence, the creed of both the family into which Philips was born and the one into which she married. It is clear, however, that by 1653 and the composition of 'God was in Christ', the concept of a God who had foreordained the majority of his creation to eternal damnation was not one Philips was reasonably or spiritually able to accept. 'God was in Christ' challenges the 'wretched' predestinarians to a series of feats the impossibility of which is likened to the impossibility of their doctrine being true:

> Go, stop the Rivers with an infant's hand!
> Or count with your Arithmetique the Sand!
> Forbid the Light! the fertile earth perswade
> To shut her bosom from the lab'rer's spade! (21-24)

Each challenge asserts the overwhelmingly powerful and irresistible presence of God in the created universe by invoking the powerlessness of man - with all his reason and science - in the face of a natural world imbued with divinity.

Though Philips was not alone in expressing a repugnance towards the Calvinist

[55] In the Preface to the Latin edition of his collected works, More records that, 'neither [at Eton School], nor yet anywhere else, could I ever swallow down that hard Doctrine concerning Fate. On the contrary, I remember ... that I had ... a deep aversion in my Temper to this Opinion, and [a] firm and unshaken ... Persuasion of the Divine Justice and Goodness'. See introduction to Flora Isabel MacKinnon, *Philosophical Writings of Henry More* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1925; reprint, New York: AMS Press, 1969), xi.

[56] I am indebted to G.A.J. Rogers' essay, 'The Other-Worldly Philosophers and the Real World: The Cambridge Platonists, Theology and Politics' for the details of More's letter to Hartlib. Rogers' essay appears in Rogers et al. eds., *Cambridge Platonists in Philosophical Context*, 1ff.

doctrine of predestination, her apparent espousal in 'God was in Christ' of a doctrine of universal salvation would have been regarded by most of her contemporaries as heretical and even politically suspicious. Those who shared Laud's conviction that Christ's death could theoretically save all also held that many men and women would reject God's grace and so damn themselves; salvation still rested upon an individual's faith and obedience to God's word. The theology of 'God was in Christ' seems to go further than this. Rather than talking of the faithful and unfaithful, the speaker of the poem invokes the world in general as the entire object of God's inexhaustible, saving love, roundly declaring that God is 'As Universall as the Sea or Sun' (26). The poem also transforms what orthodox Protestants would see as God's just damnation of the godly (foreordained or otherwise) into an act of hate, a vice which has no place in the heart of a perfect and loving God: 'What God hath made he therefore cannot hate,/For it's one act to Love and to Create' (27-28).

Such assertions agree with the descriptions of the deity in 'God' and 'The Soule', where the 'unconfin'd' kindness of God expresses itself in 'unbounded Love' and 'unbounded mercy'. Fascinatingly - and ironically given Philips' long-established association with Royalism - such convictions read very like those espoused by a number of seventeenth-century social and political radicals. In his anthology of seventeenth-century political writing, David Wootton observes that John Milton and George Wither rejected 'the Calvinist orthodoxy of the day in order to assert man's capacity for goodness', an assertion which formed the theological foundation of their political argument for popular sovereignty.[57] William Walwyn, Wootton notes, argued that 'God's grace was given freely to sinners, and that consequently all men should have equal rights in civil society, since ... all of them were ... loved by God'.[58] In *A New-Yeers Gift for the Parliament and Armie* (1650), Gerrard Winstanley argues his communist

[57] David Wootton, ed., *Divine Right and Democracy, An Anthology of Political Writing in Stuart England* (London: Penguin, 1986), 55. Milton, as Wootton observes, later retreated from this position to a notion of a godly minority.

[58] Ibid., 55 & 56.

social ideal upon the basis of God's universal love and salvation.[59]

The social policies of these men were no doubt anathema to Philips, whose writing generally displays a profound respect for traditional notions of order and hierarchy, and an aristocratic-like contempt for the people at large. Nowhere does she pursue the radical possibilities inherent in her theology, though she may well have been aware that such possibilities existed.[60] Indeed, there are certain paradoxes and contradictions within and between Philips' religious poems on the subject of God's limitless love and humanity's capacity for virtue which suggest that she was troubled by the implications of her theology even while she regarded it as a solution to the civil conflict she so abhorred. In 'God', for example, the speaker's description of the deity's abundant love concludes with a statement which appears to repeal what has been asserted before:

> ... as the Sea to fill a vessel heaves
> More greedily then any cask receives,
> Beseiging round to find some Gap in it,
> Which will a new infusion admit:
> So dost thou covet that thou mayst dispence
> Upon the empty world thy influence;
> Lov'st to disburse thy selfe in kindness: thus

[59] 'That is no salvation to the creation, mankind, while any part groans for the true saviour,' writes Winstanley, 'when he comes he will wipe away all tears, he comes not to destroy any but to save all'. This belief is the foundation for Winstanley's social policy of the 'community of mankind, which is comprised in the unity of spirit of love, which is called Christ in you or the law written in the heart, leading mankind into all truth and to be of one heart and one mind'. Text from 'A New-year's Gift for the Parliament and Army' in Gerrard Winstanley, *The Law of Freedom and other Writings*, ed. Christopher Hill (Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin, 1973), 193 & 198-199.

[60] It is interesting to note that in spite of his assertions of the infinitely loving nature of God, Henry More was careful to protect his theology from imputations of universal salvationism. In a recent essay on the role of spiritual illuminism in More's thought, Robert Crocker comments on More's 'theological optimism' and suggests that universal salvation 'is perhaps the extreme logical implication' of his philosophy. (See Crocker, "The Role of Illuminism in the Thought of Henry More" in Rogers et al., eds., *The Cambridge Platonists in Philosophical Context*, 139). Crocker also points out, however, that this is not likely to be More's actual theological position. He cites More's reference to universal salvation as a 'stoic dream' in *Psychathanasia* and an early letter to Anne Finch, Viscountess Conway in which More warns her against the doctrine.

Philips' sensual metaphor highlights the irrepressible nature of the love her God bears for humanity. It is a restlessly active and urgent love: it 'heaves', it besieges, it is greedy. It insists on being accepted by and is tirelessly seeking an entrance into its object. This imagery asserts the primacy of God's will to love over a human being's will to accept that love. The vessel receives less eagerly than the sea hungers to fill it; the cask resists the sea's infusion, unwilling to expose the 'Gap' through which it might be invaded. Such suggestions are abruptly undercut, however, by the closing line of the extract, 'The King of Kings waites to be gracious'. The conclusion is discordant: what does a greedy, surging abundant flow of love have to do with waiting? The line checks the flow and makes that which was freely given, contingent. Responsibility for salvation is shifted back onto the shoulders of each and every human being, and the God whose love was irresistible now looks for humankind to accept his grace. Philips' withdrawal from the idea of universal salvation implicit in her image of God here is, however, neither entirely successful nor convincing. The rich energy of her account of God's love cannot be wholly contained by her single-line capitulation to a more orthodox position.

There are contradictions also in 'God was in Christ' which arise in general from the speaker's inability to practise what she preaches. It is ironic, for instance, that her declaration of the all-loving nature of God is predicated upon such a strong and contemptuous critique of her 'narrow souled' antagonists. The prayer which the speaker makes for the enlarging of her soul in the final movement of the poem implicitly admits the imperfect nature of her compassion for humankind, but it rests on a distinction between the speaker and the predestinarians which renders the predestinarians 'other' and which effectively places them outside of the loving virtue which the speaker claims is the true condition of God and the faithful:

But O my soule, from these be different,
Imitate thou a nobler president:
As God with open arms the World does woo,
Learn thou like him to be enlarged too (37-40)

By the end of the prayer (which is also the end of the poem), the speaker is no longer concerned with embracing the world but with shaking it off. 'Dy to the world,' she urges her soul, 'as [God] dy'd for it then' (48). During the course of the prayer the speaker moves from the fundamentally social impulse to embrace all humanity, to the private, and essentially self-centred, concern for her individual soul. In spite of her urging she appears to have failed to be like the God she invokes. The final line figures a grammatical opposition which suggests this failure: the speaker dies 'to' the world and God 'for' it.

The private mood of the end of 'God was in Christ' is quite different from the final image of 'On Controversies in Religion'. Both poems, as I have suggested, deal with the same subject of religious conflict and follow a similar structure, but 'On Controversies' offers a more theoretically coherent, less paradox-ridden solution to the problem it considers. The speaker adopts the inclusive, plural voice for most of the poem, a strategy which supports her theology of universal love and articulates the very unity and tolerance which the poem promotes. The speaker implicates herself in the human tragedy of conflict and hatred, and, by invoking the notion of the essential virtue of the human soul in general rather than the virtue of an individual, particular soul, her solution to religious dispute succeeds in being inclusive.

'On Controversies' begins, however, with an attempt to locate the blame for humanity's religious quarrels. Those charged consist of a mix of theological and political figures and forces. At first, the speaker invokes Satan, 'that old deceiver' (3) and 'great enemy of souls' (7), as the chief protagonist in religious controversy. Such references cast religious conflict as part of an age old, timeless struggle between good

and evil, and obscure the historical specificity of Philips' subject. Responsibility is deflected away from the real, human protagonists of contemporary conflict to whom a more polemical poem (or polemical poet) might have referred directly. The presence of these human protagonists is felt a few lines later, though only vaguely, when the speaker compares Satan to 'those Tyrants who their wills pursue,/If they expound old Laws, need make no new' (11-12). This couplet, with its allusion to such politically loaded terms as 'Tyrants' and 'Laws', develops a political discourse which has been subtly present from the beginning of the poem. Satan is described, for example, in line 4 as the 'chief *party*' [my emphasis] in religion's decay, and the very first line of the poem contains the dictum that 'true policy befriends religion'. With such smatterings of political vocabulary Philips deftly conveys her appreciation of the close relationship between religion and politics while avoiding making an explicit commitment to any one side in the debate. Even though it would seem reasonable, given Philips' association with Royalist writers during the Interregnum and the readiness with which she greeted Charles II in verse at the Restoration, to read her invocation of 'Tyrants' and 'Laws' as an allusion to Cromwell, it is worth noting just how politically ambiguous such terms are. Both Charles I and Parliament accused each other of tyranny, of pursuing their wills beyond the bounds of the established law. Both parties claimed to be defending the ancient and traditional constitution. Philips' notion of a tyrant introducing innovative legislation under the guise of old could serve happily as an analogy for Charles or Cromwell.

This (deliberate) ambiguity is far more in keeping with the spirit of unity and reconciliation which suffuses the rest of the poem, and with it Philips avoids the ironies and contradictions of 'God was in Christ'. Leaving aside the question of blame, the speaker makes an appeal for peace, proposing simultaneously that peace itself represents the highest divine truth: 'But 'tis injustice, and the mind's disease,/ To think of gaining truth by loosing [sic] Peace' (23-24). This is followed by a detailed and fervent contemplation upon the nature of the soul in which the speaker describes an

ascent from the 'clogg'd' (49) and 'contracted' (34) state of spiritual error and falsehood to the perfect illumination of the soul's union with the deity. Like the God of Philips' other religious poems, this deity is 'Good, Universall' (63) and embraces 'all the world' (74). Moving from the politics of religion to the spiritual journey of the human soul, the poem finds resolution for the doctrinal struggle in the state in the image of the soul's unification with an all-loving God.

Philips' account of the soul's spiritual journey to union with the divine in 'On Controversies' uses the vocabulary of Platonism to be found in More, Stanley, and Castiglione. It describes a state of spiritual illumination that goes beyond the orthodox Christian contemplation of God to a fully realised unity with the divinity that, once again, has Philips' theology teetering on the edge of heresy. The human soul, 'dilate[d]' by a 'true Light' (37) casts off the 'Meane sordid things' of the world (51), including partial 'opinions' and 'custome' (48), and travels steadily towards 'th' roote of all its Immortality' (60). In the presence of the divine, the soul is

> swallow'd up and grown
> With god and with the whole Creation One;
> Its self, so small a part, i' th' whole is lost,
> And generalls have particulars engross'd. (65-68)

The climatic image of the soul's perfect union with God is that of 'one shining Sphaere ... Fill'd with true love wisedom' (71-72). The final two lines of the poem indicate that the imagined union takes place not after death, but in life. The perfect soul, radiant with light, reaches out in love to God and to the world; she 'Beholds her highest good with open face,/ And like him all the world she can embrace' (73-74). This corrects the insular image of the individual soul shunning the world at the end of 'God was in Christ' and provides a much more satisfactory resolution to the critique of conflict and appeal for reconciliation. The poem offers a guide to conduct in life. It figures a profound spiritual

faith as the path to divine truth and the foundation for civil peace: 'Knowledge and Love [of God], if true, doe still Unite' (25).

It is perhaps no coincidence that Henry More believed that the promise of the soul's perfection and union with God in eternal life would or should be an effective antidote to his country's religious troubles. In the Preface to the Latin edition of his collected works, he gives his writing of the *Platonick Song*, and in particular *Psychathanasia*, an explicitly political motivation:

> After *Psychozoia*, I composed another poem called *Psychathanasia*, motivated by the fact that I thought the argument appropriate to the times, which on account of the Scottish, Irish, and English disturbances began to seethe and shudder with civil wars and slaughter of men; in order that I might alleviate the troubles and miseries of these times, against which there is no more effective remedy than the certain conviction of the immortality of the soul.[61]

The extent of Philips' debt to More for her own response to the century's conflicts becomes evident if we compare her account of religious and political strife in 'On Controversies' with a passage on the same subject in *Psychathanasia*. More's account is worth quoting at length:

> Can warres and jarres and fierce contention,
> Swoln hatred, and consuming envie spring
> From piety? No, 'Tis opinion
> That makes the riven heavens with trumpets ring,
> And thundring engine murd'rous balls out-sling,
> And send mens groning ghosts to lower shade
> Of horrid hell. This wide world doth bring
> To devastation, makes mankind to fade:
> Such direfull things doth false Religion persuade.
> But true Religion sprong from God above

[61] Preface to *Opera Omnia* (1675), quoted in Henry More, *A Platonick Song of the Soul*, ed. Alexander Jacob (London: Associated University Presses, 1998), xiv.

Is like her fountain full of charity,
Embracing all things with a tender love,
Full of good will and meek expectancy,
Full of true justice and sure verity,
In heart and voice; free, large, even infinite,
Not wedg'd in strait particularity,
But grasping all in her vast active spright,
Bright lamp of God! that men would joy in thy pure light![62]

Though it is not surprising to find two poets expressing a shared condemnation of conflict during this period, the similarities between Philips' poem and these stanzas by More are detailed and specific. Both articulate the notion of a 'true' religion which is allied with peace and virtue and with a God characterised by love and light. Both lay the blame for religious discord at the feet of partiality and falsehood; in More this is 'opinion', in Philips 'passion' and 'interest' (16). More's 'riven heavens with trumpets ring[ing]' and the 'thundring engine' of war are invoked in Philips' 'Thunder' and 'Noise' (29). In both poems God is seen to 'embrace' all creation with love and both poets see a spiritual return to this God as a solution to human conflict. Such spiritual rebirth collapses difference and dissent: More's true religion knows no 'particularity', it has a soul which 'grasps all'; Philips' perfect soul can 'embrace all the world' (74) since, in its unity with God 'generalls have particulars engross'd' (68).

Philips' search for a political and religious peace in 'God was in Christ' and 'On Controversies in Religion' may well have been motivated, aside from a natural repugnance towards conflict, by her personal situation with regard to her family and friends. Though she came from what appears to have been a non-conformist, pro-Parliamentarian family, and though her husband, James Philips, was 'one of the leaders of Parliamentarian cause in west Wales',[63] the relationships which Philips chose for

[62] *Psychathanasia*, Book II, Canto 3, stanzas 5 & 6.

[63] Patrick Thomas, *Katherine Philips ('Orinda')*, Writers of Wales (n.p.: University Of Wales Press, 1988), 5.

herself 'favoured', as Patrick Thomas points out, 'the royalists or displayed no obvious political partisanship at all'.[64] Given the divided nature of Philips' loyalties, it is appropriate that she should have looked for a political and religious creed which promoted the virtues of reconciliation, inclusion, and peace.[65] In Henry More's Christian Platonism she found a philosophy which fulfilled these needs.

With the ideals of peace and inclusion in mind, it is instructive to return to the poem to Archbishop Sheldon as Philips' final word on religious matters. I noted at the being of this chapter that Philips represents Sheldon as an ideally virtuous individual, one whose piety can rescue her and her fallen muse from scandal and shame. Sheldon's piety is also shown to have a benign effect in the political sphere. Mixing politics and religion, Philips portrays the archbishop not only as the foe of the religious conflict she laments so deeply in her earlier poems, but also as the prime agent of resolution. The poem anticipates peace and reconciliation and offers Sheldon as the catalyst for harmony. His conciliatory powers reside in 'the conscience of [his] Virtue' (44), the palpable truth of which silences both the 'sullen Schismatik' (45) and the 'Factious' (50).

[64] See Thomas' biographical note in *Poems*. Philips' maternal uncle, John Oxenbridge, was, according to Thomas, 'a noted Puritan preacher' and acquainted with both Andrew Marvell and John Milton. Her maternal aunt, Elizabeth Oxenbridge, married the leading parliamentarian Oliver St. John. Philips' mother's third husband was Sir Richard Philipps of Picton Castle, Pembrokeshire, described by Thomas as 'a lukewarm royalist at the outbreak of the Civil War' who later switched sides to join the Parliamentary forces in 1644. Her fourth husband was a stauncher Parliamentarian, Sir Philip Skippon. He had been Major General of the Parliamentary forces in London during the Civil Wars. Philips' intimate female friends included Mary Aubrey ('Rosania'), daughter of Sir John Aubrey, a leading Glamorgan Royalist, and her literary friendships were centred upon the group of Royalist Cavalier writers drawn together by the court composer Henry Lawes. This group included such prominent Royalists as John Jeffreys and the propagandist John Berkenhead.

[65] Significantly, Philips' literary pseudonym for her husband James was 'Antenor', the Trojan general who advised his people to return Helen and make peace with the Greeks. Philips' re-naming of her husband casts him, therefore, as a mediator and peacemaker. This may have been wishful thinking on Philips' part, and perhaps represents an attempt to influence her husband's position. Although Thomas considers James Philips to have been among the more moderate Parliamentarians (he remained loyal to Cromwell after the establishment of the Protectorate), he also points out that James took 'an active part in suppressing Royalist uprisings in west Wales' (*Katherine Philips*, 6). In his biography of Philips, Philip Webster Souers describes James Philips as 'a zealous supporter of the [Cromwellian] government' who 'gained a reputation as a commissioner of sequestration in hunting out the Royalists who tried to evade the importunities of Parliament'. See *The Matchless Orinda* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1931), 27.

These stirrers of conflict and sedition are, the speaker suggests, convinced by the eminent goodness of Sheldon that 'A Church=man may be Great and Innocent' (46) and this conviction removes the source of all their discontent with the unified and established state Church. Philips thus constructs the archbishop and his Church in the mould of her personal theology, and describes the triumph of the Church of England as a peaceful event which establishes religious harmony and comprehensive inclusion. Furthermore, her poem implies that such harmony and inclusion are the inheritance of the Restoration Church from its Caroline counterpart. Sheldon represents a continuing Stuart tradition; the poem offers him as the figure whose (providential) mission is to 'Govern and Restore/That Church whose confessor you were before' (21-22).

Just how satisfactory a reconciliation of the ideal and real this portrait of Sheldon is for Philips and for the student of seventeenth-century religious history is open to question. In the context of the historical events of the early Restoration Church, Philips' picture of a community of believers reunited under the pious influence of Gilbert Sheldon reads as hopelessly idealistic or willfully naive.[66] Historians of the English Church in the 1660s describe a developing ideology of intolerance and persecution driven by the political grievances of a Cavalier Parliament seeking redress for the hardships its members had suffered during the Civil Wars and Interregnum. 'In a great wave of militant Anglicanism,' writes Barry Coward, 'some local gentlemen suppressed conventicles and ejected church ministers even before the Cavalier Parliament met in 1661, and when it did meet it put a savage, repressive code (the Clarendon Code) on the statute book, directed at all those who refused to conform to the established

[66] Philips was not the only woman poet to praise Sheldon as a paragon of holy virtue. The pseudonymous woman writer 'Ephelia' composed 'An Elegy On the Right Reverend Gilbert Sheldon, Ld Arch-Bishop of Canterbury' in 1677. The elegy is remarkable for its strong expressions of grief and loss, which suggest the poet knew Sheldon personally. The speaker declares that the news of Sheldon's death had 'seiz'd' her with 'A sudden Consternation' and rendered her 'Senseless' (2-3). She also complains that 'fierce Rapture choaks [her] words' and prevents her from continuing her tribute. Aside from this, Ephelia's paean to Sheldon's virtues is quite conventional. The poem celebrates his 'holy life' (16) and accounts him 'strictly Pious' (15) and both 'good' and 'great' (7). This is the only other poem to Sheldon I have been able to find. References are to the text of the poem in *Female Poems On Several Occasions Written by Ephelia* (1679), Women Writers Project (Brown University: 1993).

Church'.[67] The Clarendon Code - a series of statutes aimed at enforcing religious uniformity - was not enacted in its entirety until 1665. But by the time Philips came to praise Sheldon as the 'Comprehensive Mind' at the head of the established Church, the Corporation Act (1661) and the Act of Uniformity (1662) had already been instituted. Contrary to Charles II's apparent desire for a tolerant and comprehensive Church, these statutes provided for the expulsion of non-conformists from all positions in local government, Church, and education.[68] Sutch regards the successful enactment of the Clarendon code as the Archbishop's personal victory. He comments that Sheldon was instrumental in writing the laws, which would be 'more appropriately entitled the "Sheldon Code"'.[69] Gerald R. Cragg concludes that, 'In weighing the desirability of inclusiveness against uniformity, the Restoration church [chose] the latter'.[70]

Philips was only ten years old when, in 1642, the established Church of England under Charles I, which by that point had alienated so many of its congregation, succumbed to the predations of civil conflict. She was thirteen when its chief primate and source of so much religious dispute, Archbishop Laud, was executed. At what point did the serious Puritan child of Aubrey's *Brief Lives* cease praying for God to take the bishops to him and become reconciled to them? The personal theology that Philips developed during the 1650s, in the absence of a state church, holds a number of convictions which, as I have argued, do not sit comfortably with the official doctrine of either the Restoration Church of Gilbert Sheldon nor the Church of Charles I and Laud. Perhaps, in 1664, Philips was able happily to reconcile her ideals of inclusive religious truth with obedience to a state church which seemed to offer the best hope for the establishment of civil peace. The triumph of this Church, as described by Philips in her

[67] Coward, *The Stuart Age*, 282. (See page 56, note 50 above for full publication details.)

[68] In 1663 Charles II attempted to mitigate the harsh effects of this legislation upon his dissenting subjects with a declaration of indulgence, but he was forced to renege on his intentions by Parliament.

[69] Sutch, *Gilbert Sheldon*, 95 & 146.

[70] Cragg, *Church and the Age of Reason*, 52.

address to Sheldon, constitutes a kind of Platonic victory of the singular and unified over the divided and divisive many of an inferior condition. This is an idea which recurs in the constructions of virtue which Philips makes in her secular verse and drama translations. She repeatedly pays tribute to passive and pacific heroism, to a fortitude that resists but does not attack, to the qualities of wholeness, unity and mutual concord. There is also a tendency for her admired figures to be transplanted from the world of material imperfections to the realm of the divine, and even to become divine themselves, 'To grow,' in other words, 'more like unto the Deity'. These models of virtue form the subject of the remaining chapters of this study.

Chapter 2

"The great immortal man": models of male virtue in the occasional poems

The matter of political allegiance and its possible transcendence also underpins the constructions of male virtue in Philips' poetic tributes to the 'good men' of her family and social circles. One of these poems, composed in 1660 and belonging therefore to broadly the same period as her tribute to Sheldon and the state panegyrics in praise of the restored Stuart monarchy, is a warm eulogy on her step-father, Sir Philip Skippon, entitled 'Epitaph on my truly honoured Publius Scipio' (110). Skippon, Philips' mother's fourth (and final) husband, was the former Major-General of the Parliamentary forces, and had been a member of both the Council of State and Cromwell's House of Peers. Philips' poem commemorates her step-father chiefly as a soldier and secondly as a man of piety and faith. The speaker recalls Skippon's military action in the Palatinate and the Netherlands during the 1620s and 30s, and makes a rather more general allusion to his role in the Civil Wars of the 1640s and 50s. Skippon's courage and prowess in battle is shown to be informed and guided by his profound regard for religion, 'his first and highest care,/Which rul'd his Heart in Peace, his Hand in War' (21-22). He is honoured as a man 'good, as well as great'(6), 'Just' and tolerant (33), with an upright and unassailable 'Conscience' (32). These virtues, his eulogist maintains, will win him an 'immortal name' (39).

Skippon's qualities as an able soldier and an honourable man justify Philips' decision to celebrate him as a second Publius Scipio, for the similarities between Skippon as eulogised by his step-daughter and the Roman soldier and statesman as immortalised by Plutarch in his *Lives* far exceed the happy coincidence of their shared initials. In *The Life of Scipio African*, Plutarch pays tribute to his subject as an exemplary soldier, repeatedly lauding his 'noble mind and corage', detailing his various battles,

and military achievements, and praising his skill and expertise 'in martiall discipline'.[1] In addition, Plutarch's Scipio is 'also a goodly gentleman', 'beloved' as well as 'feared' by his enemies, whose actions in war are guided as much by the virtues of 'clemencie' and 'curteous[ness]' as they are by duty to Rome and its code of heroic action.[2] No less significant, perhaps, given Skippon's work on behalf of the English proto-republican forces, is Scipio's reputation for unbending loyalty to the republican values of the Roman state. Plutarch gives more than one example of this loyalty, affirming Scipio's dislike of the title of 'king', 'which he knew to be hatefull to the noble men of his contrie, and also unmeete for the libertie of the Romanes', and noting his refusal 'to bring in any newe custome' out of respect for the established constitution of Rome.[3]

Philips may or may not have intended the stalwart republicanism of her step-father's Roman counterpart to operate as an important context for her portrayal of Skippon. Plutarch's *Lives* was, after all, standard reading for educated Englishmen of any political persuasion, and increasingly common subject matter, in translation, for literate Englishwomen. Nevertheless, Philips' tribute to Skippon belongs to a period in English political and literary history during which such classical texts were increasingly subjected to partisan and political readings, and Plutarch's insistence on Scipio's fidelity to republican values may well have informed a seventeenth-century reading of Philips' characterisation of her step-father. Whatever Philips' intentions, her portrait of Skippon is remarkable in her oeuvre for being the only eulogy to a servant of the Cromwellian

[1] Plutarch, *The Life of Scipio African* from *The Lives of the Noble Grecians and Romans Compared Together by that Grave Learned Philosopher and Historiographer Plutarke of Chaeronea*, translated out of Greeke into French by James Amyot: and out of French into Englishe by Thomas North (London: The Nonesuch Press, 1930), 125 & 129.

[2] Ibid., 126, 125, 129, & 138.

[3] Ibid., 129 & 135.

regime.[4] In the 1667 edition of Philips' poems, Skippon sits uneasily among such notable Royalists as Archbishop Gilbert Sheldon; the propagandist, John Berkenhead; the king's musician, Henry Lawes; and the Welsh politician, Sir Walter Lloyd.[5] Philips' Interregnum verses to men such as Lawes and Berkenhead mark her close affiliation with mid-century Royalist poetics and politics. She first appeared in print with a commendatory poem in the politically sensitive 1651 edition of the works of William Cartwright.[6] Fifty-four such poems preface the Cartwright volume, and their authors read, in the words of Philips' editor, as 'a roll-call of royalist sympathisers'.[7] Berkenhead and Lawes are among the authors and so are a number of others - Sir Edward Dering, John Jeffreys, Francis Finch, Henry Vaughan - whom Philips celebrated in verse. All of

[4] Philips addressed three poems to her husband, James, who was also a Parliament man and loyal to Cromwell. None of these poems is strictly concerned with eulogising its subject, however. 'To Antenor, on a paper of mine wch J. Jones threatens to publish to his prejudice' (33) responds, as the title suggests, to a potentially harmful scheme by one of James Philips' political ill-wishers to do damage to his public career; 'To my dearest Antenor on his parting' celebrates Katherine and James's Platonic love; 'To my Antenor, March 16. 1661/2' is an attempt to rally James out of a depression following the ebbing of his political fortunes with the return of Charles II. Interestingly, in this last poem, Philips invokes the stoic ideal for James's emulation.

[5] The 1667 printing is the earliest extant version of the poem. Thomas describes Berkenhead (1617-79) as 'a leading cavalier propagandist' (*Poems*, 340). He edited the Oxford Royalist newspaper *Mercurius Aulicus* during the Civil War. Interestingly, Berkenhead ridiculed Philip Skippon in *Bibliotheca Parliamentari* (1653). Thomas quotes the following extract:

> Item 3. The Hermaphrodite, or Half Souldier, teaching the Posture of Fighting with the Word and the Sword, as it was held forth to an Assembly in the new Artillery Ground, by Philip Skippon. (*Poems*, 388)

Before the dissolution of the Stuart court, Henry Lawes (1595/6-1662) had been a Member of the King's Private Musicke, and was intimately connected with the culture of Caroline literature and arts. He was 'perhaps the most important English composer of his period' and he set a number of Philips' verses to music. During the 1650s he became the focus of a group of cavalier writers, with whom he maintained the values of the defeated regime. (Thomas, *Poems*, 334-335). Sir Walter Lloyd (1580-1662?) was one of the leading Welsh Royalists. He was made a commissioner of array for Charles I in 1642 and knighted in 1643. In 1644 he was disabled by Parliament for 'deserting the Service of the House, being in the King's quarters and adhering to that party'. He was fined by Parliament in 1647 and his estates were sequestered in 1651 (*DNB*).

[6] Cartwright (1611-43) had died of camp fever during the siege of Oxford. For many Royalists he represented the ideal figure of the cavalier. His works were published in the same year as the exiled Charles II's attempted uprising.

[7] Thomas, *Poems*, 6.

these men figure in her poetry as an ideal model of virtue.

The anomalous nature of Philips' tribute to Skippon is made more striking for its having been written at or around the same time as her Restoration panegyrics. It is necessary to say 'at or around' since there is some uncertainty surrounding the exact date of Skippon's death, and therefore of the composition of Philips' eulogy. Philips' first twentieth-century biographer, Philip Webster Souers, assumes that Skippon died 'a few months after the Restoration' as records show that his will was proved on October 25 1660.[8] Patrick Thomas, on the other hand, relying on information in the *DNB*, dates Skippon's death to March 1660, some two months before Charles II's triumphant return to London. But regardless of their disagreement over the date of Skippon's death, both Souers and Thomas express considerable surprise that Philips should have written such a sympathetic and warm memorial to one of the Stuarts' most steadfast political opponents at this point in England's political history, as well as at this moment in her own nascent literary career. Souers (ascribing the composition of the poem to the period of Philips' Restoration panegyrics) wonders at her readiness to turn her pen from the praise of monarchy to the praise of one of monarchy's former enemies. 'That she held [Skippon] in high esteem appears certain,' writes Souers, 'for at the time of his death she had become one of the most enthusiastic heralds of the Restoration'.[9] Assuming that Philips' tribute to her step-father just precedes the return of the king, Thomas regards its writing as an act of potentially risky political indiscretion: 'On the eve of the Restoration,' he avers, 'it would have been very imprudent to eulogize a hero of the crumbling regime too directly. That the poem was written at all is a measure of Orinda's respect for her step-father'.[10]

Thomas' description of the eulogy to Skippon as an act of imprudence seems to

[8] Philip Webster Souers, *The Matchless Orinda* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1931), 30.

[9] Ibid., 30.

[10] *Poems*, 388.

overstate the matter somewhat, both because his analysis relies on a knowledge of the king's imminent return - knowledge which Philips could not have had - and because he assumes the poem to be a public text when, in fact, it is a private, domestic piece of writing.[11] Thomas, and Souers, are surely right however to speak of Philips' 'high esteem' and 'respect' for Philip Skippon. Though we might expect the family poet to feel obliged to compose some lines in memory of a deceased relation, there is nothing merely dutiful or simply obliging about Philips' eulogy.[12] In it she proclaims Skippon a model for the world's emulation. He is, her speaker declares (invoking the twin pillars of Early Modern moral education), 'the best Sermon, and best History' (4). The portrait is rich in superlatives; it honours Skippon's 'great Heart' (25), his 'Bounty unconfin'd' (34), and commends him for having 'So wisely govern'd, and so bravely Faught' (16). By using the public voice (the poem opens with the line, 'To the officious Marble we commit'), Philips lends her subject a universal significance and gravitas which explicitly validates Skippon's public and political identity, and implicitly acknowledges the regime for which he worked. The inclusive 'we' is also capable of conveying personal intimacy and here it incorporates something of the private and personal relationship between Philips and her step-father.

But while Skippon and Souers take due notice of the (surprising) warmth and sincerity of Philips' tribute to her Parliamentarian step-father, they fail to observe that the model of virtue epitomised by Parliament's Major-General, in spite of his association with a Roman republican hero, differs very little in essential details from the

[11] Thomas' own textual annotations record that the 'earliest extant version of the poem appears in the posthumous edition of 1667' (*Poems*, 312). This would suggest that few, if any, copies of the poem circulated in manuscript and that Philips retained strict control over its readership.

[12] For an example of a poem that is merely dutiful, see Philips' rather formal and restrained epithalamion on the marriage of Mary Aubrey (Rosania) to William Montagu entitled 'Rosania's private marriage' (37). Other of Philips' verses to Rosania testify that the poet was not happy about her friend's marriage (see 'Injuria amici' (38) and 'To Rosania {now Mrs Mountague} being with her' (42)). The ceremony appears to have taken place quietly and in some secrecy. Philips was not at the wedding and may not have known about it until it was a *fait accompli*. 'Rosania's private marriage' is a perfectly appropriate and conventional epithalamion but it lacks the kind of warmth of Philips' other poems to her friend.

ideal to which Philips' Royalist subjects are made to conform. Indeed, Philips' occasional poems faithfully subscribe to a broadly unchanging and consistent model of virtue, to which all her subjects, regardless of their public roles or political convictions, are appropriated. In this Philips is following accepted literary practice. In her study of seventeenth and early eighteenth-century conservative poets, Isabel Rivers observes of Ben Jonson that, 'None of [his] poetic heroes is distinguished as an individual; rather each is seen to approximate to an unchanging moral norm'.[13] Jonson himself, often profoundly anxious about the relationship of the eulogist to his subject or patron and the moral implications of flattery, justified his writing in terms of its instructive value. His assertion in 'To My Muse' (Epigram LXV), that 'Who e're is rais'd,/For worth he has not, He is tax'd, not prais'd', shares the attitude of Owen Fellltham's observation in his widely read text, *Resolves* (1623): 'And for *Flattery*, no man will take *Poetry Literall*: since in *commendations*, it rather shewes what men *should* be, then what they *are*'.[14] Because poetry is perceived to have this instructive, morally edifying function, Jonson is able, in the dedication of his *Epigrammes* to William, Earl of Pembroke, to absolve himself from misrepresentation or unfaithful portraiture:

> ... if I have praysed, unfortunately, any one, that doth not deserve; or, if all answere not, in all numbers, the pictures I have made of them: I hope it will be forgiven me, that they are no ill pieces, though they be not like the persons.[15]

The gentle, self-mocking irony of this confession may be read as Jonson's acknowledgement of the uneasy balance stuck by eulogy between dishonest and self-

[13] Isabel Rivers, *The Poetry of Conservatism, 1600-1745, A Study of Poets and Public Affairs from Jonson to Pope* (Cambridge: Rivers Press, 1973), 33.

[14] Jonson, *The Poems*, ed. Percy and Simpson, ll. 15-16. Owen Fellltham, *Resolves, A Duple Century*, 7th Edition (London: 1647), 216.

[15] From the dedication to 'The Great Example of Honour and Virtue, The Most Noble William, Earl of Pembroke' in Jonson, *The Poems*, ed. Percy and Simpson, 26.

interested flattery and its claim to higher moral purpose. But what is important about the passage for this analysis of Philips' portraits of noble virtue is the connection between Jonson's assertion that his 'are no ill pieces' and the 'unchanging moral norm' that those pieces construct and purvey. Jonson's representations of his poetic subjects do not have to be faithful copies to be good pieces. Far from being character sketches, they take up, albeit in quite a different genre and style, the aim of Spenser's allegorical romance, *The Faerie Queene*, 'to fashion a gentleman or noble person in vertuous or gentle discipline'.[16]

The fundamental tenets of the unchanging moral code promoted by Philips' portraits of virtue are set down in her abstract, contemplative poem, 'La Grandeur d'esprit' (60).[17] From the quiet seclusion of a rural retreat, the poem's speaker muses on the vices and vanities of the world and proceeds to describe the ideal, 'vertuous ... great immortall man' (96) who is capable of rising above the petty cares of ordinary existence to attain the tranquillity of true happiness. A brief survey of the particular qualities of this man shows his affinity with Philips' 'truly honoured' step-father. Like Skippon, he is 'great' and 'good' (44), dutiful to God (50), ready to 'forgive ... and obleige' (64), with a 'conscience' that can neither be bought nor compromised (46). Like Skippon, such virtues win him immortality. Philips' ideal also shares her step-father's military prowess; he is a man 'Who dares both fight and dy, but dares not feare;/ Whose only doubt is, if his cause be cleare' (59-60).

The ideal espoused in 'La Grandeur d'esprit' is also broadly stoic in nature. The title of the poem, which translated from the French means 'greatness of soul', invokes the Roman stoic virtue of magnanimity, and Philips' hero possesses all the traits of the neo-stoic ideal. He values virtue over pedigree, and goodness over greatness; he is

[16] Spenser's moral purpose is explained in his letter to Sir Walter Raleigh of 23 January 1659. The letter was published with *The Faerie Queene*. Text from Edmund Spenser, *Complete Poetical Works*, ed. J. C. Smith and E. De Selincourt (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1970), 407.

[17] The poem is dated 1653 in the professional manuscript of Philips' works made for Rosania shortly after the poet's death (National Library of Wales MS 776).

honest, wise and innocent, just and courageous; his is free from pride, avarice and restless ambition; his conscience is inviolable. The stoic character of Philips' ideal reaches its climax towards the end of the poem where the speaker pays tribute to her (imaginary) subject's self-sufficiency and indifference to fortune:

> Who from the top of his prosperities
> Can take a fall, and yet without surprize;
> Who with the same august and even state
> Can entertain the best and worst of fate;
> Whose suffering's sweet, if honour once adorne it,
> And slights revenge, not that he feares, but scornes it;
> Whose happynesse in every fortune lives, ...
> ... Who loosing all his titles and his pelfe,
> Nay, all the world, can never loose himselfe;
> This person shines indeed ... (83-95)

He shines 'Like Jewells in the dark' as a single example of 'a native worth' (38) that distinguishes him from the general vice and chaos of the sublunary world.

Philips' 'great immortal man' belongs to a long and noble tradition in Early Modern thought and letters. Audrey Chew, in her study of stoicism in Renaissance English literature, remarks on the pervasiveness of stoic ideas and language in Early Modern texts.[18] Maren-Sofie Røstvig agrees. In *The Happy Man*, she writes that, 'the influence of Senecan ideas in England in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries was profound,' and she describes the figure of the stoic sage as 'a general *leitmotif* for the whole age'.[19] It is not difficult to locate this figure again and again in any number of early seventeeth-century verse. Sir Henry Wotton's 'The Character of a Happy Life',

[18] Audrey Chew, *Stoicism in Renaissance English Literature: An Introduction* (New York: Peter Lang, 1988), 1.

[19] Maren-Sofie Røstvig, *The Happy Man: Studies in the Metamorphosis of a Classical Ideal, 1600-1700* (Oslo: Oslo University Press, 1954), 10.

for example, exemplifies the ideal.[20] His poem pays homage to the man who lives above fortune in a heaven of self-sufficient contentment. 'How *happy* is he,' Wotton's speaker muses, who is '*Lord* of himself, though not of *Lands*,/And having *nothing*, yet hath *all*'.[21] In the panegyrics and poetic compliments addressed by poets to their admired friends, to their patrons, and to members of the aristocracy, the stoic ideal operates as the model of virtuous nobility. The verse portrait of the Countess of Cumberland composed by Samuel Daniel in 1610 is prefaced by some seven stanzas devoted to the wise and happy man. He is offered as an ideal against which the Countess, in spite of her sex, is favourably compared. Daniel's paragon of stoic virtue is shaken by 'neither Feare nor Hope', but possesses 'resolved powres' and a 'setled peace', 'from whence hee may/The boundlesse wastes and weilds of man survay'.[22] He rejects 'distraught Ambition' and looks calmly down upon the 'lower Regions of turmoyle' where the average man is ravaged by 'stormes of passions'.[23] The tropes of stoic virtue are particularly important to Jonson's model of nobility. In his 'Epigram on Will[i]am Lord Burl[eigh] Lo: high Treasurer of England', the tumultuous and stormy passions which mark Daniel's sublunary world are invoked in Jonson's approving remark that Burleigh 'in all tempests, never quit the helme,/But stood unshaken in his Deeds, and Name'.[24] This idea repeats itself tirelessly across Jonson's verse. Robert, Earl of Salisbury is commended for 'the constant suffring of thy equall mind', Sir Edward Herbert is praised for 'standing upright to thy selfe', and William, Earl of

[20] The poem was first published in 1651 but must have been written before 1639, the year of Wotton's death.

[21] ll. 1 & 23-24. Text from Sir Henry Wotton, *Reliquiae Wottonianae: or, A Collection of Lives, Letters, Poems with Characters of Sundry Personages*, The Third Edition (London: 1672).

[22] 'To the Lady Margaret, Countesse of Cumberland', ll. 6-11. Text from Samuel Daniel, *Poems and A Defence of Ryme*, ed. Arthur Colby Spragne (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, Ltd., 1950). All further references to Daniel's work will be to this edition.

[23] Ibid., ll. 51, 13 & 14.

[24] Jonson, *The Poems*, ed. Percy and Simpson, ll. 10 & 11. The poem was first published in Sir Kenelm Digby's two-volume folio of Jonson's works in 1640. Jonson died in 1637.

Pembroke is eulogised as

> ... thou, whose noblesse keeps one stature still,
> And one true posture, though besieg'd with ill
> Of what ambition, faction, pride can raise;
> Whose life, ev'n they, that envie it, must praise. [25]

These tropes are predicated on an understanding of the physical world as a realm characterised by uncertainty, pain and suffering. Such troubles are the lot of all humanity in a postlapsarian world, but the stoic wise man, who is also a noble man, can and must rise above the general mêlée. He has the fortitude to bear the slings and arrows of the imperfect human condition, and by this fortitude, secure in his spotless conscience and firm constancy, he ascends above the moral weakness of the (low-born) multitude. Change and inconstancy are the provenance of the vulgar – Philips' much feared and despised 'rabble' – as well as of the fallen world which they inhabit.[26] And though Jonson, like Philips' ideal man in 'La Grandeur d'esprit', tends to think 'he can't be great that is not good' (44) and derives true nobility from virtue, 'Not from the mention of a Pedigree' (40), both poets would almost certainly agree with Owen Felltham that '*Earth* hath not anything more *glorious* than *ancient Nobility*, when 'tis found with Vertue'. 'He that is *good* and *great*,' declares Felltham, 'I would sell my life to serve him *nobly*'.[27]

A similar social and world view is articulated in much of the religious writing of the period. Just as Sarah Hutton considers the seventeenth century 'the golden age of

[25] Epigram LXIII, 'To Robert Earle of Salisbury', l. 8; Epigram CVI, 'To Sir Edward Herbert', l. 7; Epigram CII, 'To William Earle of Pembroke', ll.13-16. The poems were originally published in 1616. Text from Jonson, *The Poems*, ed. Percy and Simpson.

[26] In her (in)famous letter to Sir Charles Cotterell defending herself against any imputed involvement in the 1664 'unauthorised' printing of her poems, Philips imagines herself 'exposed to play the Mountebanks, and dance upon the Ropes to entertain all the rabble' (*Letters*, 129). (This letter is discussed on pages 13 - 17 above).

[27] Felltham, *Resolves*, 438-439.

English vernacular Platonic philosophy', so students of stoicism in Early Modern English thought regard the period as the cradle of a veritable neo-stoic movement.[28] It was commonly accepted among seventeenth-century divines and other educated men and women that the precepts of stoicism were in harmony with the moral teachings of Christianity. The contemplative sage of Henry More's broadly Platonic poem 'Cupid's Conflict' possesses, as we have seen, all the virtues of the stoic happy man, and other English divines and moralists paid more extensive tribute to stoic wisdom.[29] In *Heaven Upon Earth: or, Of True Peace and Tranquillity of Mind* (1627), the Reverend Joseph Hall, otherwise known as 'our English Seneca', acknowledges his profound regard for Seneca's philosophy. 'Never any heathen wrote more divinely,' he avers, 'never any philosopher more probably'.[30] The clergyman, Robert Burton, makes frequent allusion in his popular *Anatomy of Melancholy* (1628) to the wisdom of Seneca and Epictetus. 'When I read Seneca,' he writes, 'methinks I am beyond all human fortunes, on the top of a hill above mortality'.[31] Burton and Hall temper their admiration with reference to the Roman philosophers' paganism and to the greater, divine wisdom of Christ, but they consider the lessons of stoicism as providing a moral pathway to the more sublime truths of Christianity. Of the delight Burton finds in reading Seneca, he asks, 'If this comfort may be got by Philosophy, what shall be had from Divinity?'.[32] In the Dedication of *Heaven Upon Earth* to Henry, Earl of Huntingdon, Hall carefully states his debt to Seneca's philosophy and his distance from it:

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[28] See Chew, *Stoicism in Renaissance English Literature.*

[29] More also acknowledges his respect for stoic philosophy towards the climax of *Psychozoia* when his hero is granted a vision of three goddesses of philosophy, Pythagorissa, Platonissa and Stoicissa. Mnemon is attracted to the goddesses, but learns that his vision of them is merely the prelude to his communion with the God of the one true religion.

[30] Joseph Hall,*Works*, 3.

[31] Robert Burton, *Melancholy*, 460.

[32] Ibid.

> I have undertaken a great task, to teach men how to be happy in this life. ... Wherein I have followed Seneca, and gone beyond him: followed him as a philosopher, and gone beyond him as a Christian, as a Divine ...[33]

The sense of social hierarchy and order which informs the poets' portraits of stoic nobility is both more explicit and more wide-reaching in the Christian-stoic ideology of writers like Hall and Burton. In their works, the Senecan ideals of fortitude and constancy filtered through the Christian emphasis on humility and passive suffering constitute a powerful tool for maintaining social discipline and obedience to the status quo. The Christian-stoic happy man is one who suffers quietly and even cheerfully under the lot that fortune - or Divine Providence - has dealt him. He is humble, modest and free of desires, and he accepts his god-given place in the social order. The attainment of happiness on earth, teaches Hall in his *Remedy of Discontentment*, requires that we 'calm our spirits to a meek undergoing of those sufferings which the Divine Providence hath thought fit to measure forth unto us'.[34] In *Characters of Virtues and Vices*, he describes the 'happy man' as one who 'can frame his thoughts to his estate'.[35] Burton conjures us to be 'thankful for that thou hast', and he alerts us to the unwelcome social and political ramifications of failing to live by this creed:

> If every man might have what he would, we should all be Deified, Emperors, Kings, Princes ... we should have another Chaos in an instant, a mere confusion.[36]

[33] Hall, *Works*. (The 'Dedication' is unpaginated.)

[34] Ibid., 551-552.

[35] Ibid., 104.

[36] Burton, *Melancholy*, 495 and 543.

Virtue and godliness are made to serve the current social and political structure. Stoicism in the conservative discourse teaches the great how to be truly great and the humble how to be grateful.

Philips' own analysis of the relationship between stoic philosophy and Christianity agrees with the analysis of Burton and Hall. In a letter written to Sir Charles Cotterell from Dublin in August 1662, she ponders 'the Art of Contentment' as it is taught by stoicism and Christianity:

> I would be easie to my self in all the Vicissitudes of Fortune, and SENECA tells me I ought to be so, and that 'tis the only way to be happy; but I knew that as well as the Stoick. I would not depend on others for my Felicity; and EPICTETUS says, if I do not, nothing shall trouble me. I have a great Veneration for these Philosophers, and allow they give us many instructions that I find applicable and true; but as far as I can see, the Art of Contentment is as little to be learn'd, tho' it be much boasted of, in the Works of the Heathens, as the Doctrine of forgiving our Enemies. 'Tis the School of Christianity that teaches both these excellent Lessons. And as the Theory of our Religion gives us reason to conform and resign our Will to that of the Eternal, who is infinitely Wise, and Just, and Great, and Good; so the Practice of our Duty, tho' in the most difficult Cases, gives us a secret Satisfaction, that surpasses all other earthly Pleasures: And when we have once had the Experiment of it, we may truly say the Poet was in in the right to exhort us to study Virtue, because the more we practise it, 'twill prove the more pleasant ...[37]

The passage suggests that Philips was familiar with the doctrinal position of writers like Burton and Hall and that she had also read Seneca and Epictetus themselves. This would have been made possible by a number of translations of their works that appeared in the first part of the century, translations which Røstvig credits with making

[37] *Letters*, 46.

the stoic philosophy popular.[38] Like her contemporaries, Philips has taken from Seneca and Epictetus the dicta of self-reliance and indifference to fortune, the qualities with which she invests her 'great immortal man' in the climax of 'La Grandeur d'esprit'. While she admits she has 'great Veneration for these philosophers', she qualifies that veneration with reference to her greater esteem for the teachings of Christianity. What the resulting creed teaches her is the necessity of personal passivity - the conforming and resigning of one's will - to the attainment of earthly happiness. The creed promotes the stasis of contentment and equates 'Virtue' with the 'secret satisfaction' of performing one's 'Duty'.

During the politically troubled years of the 1640s and 50s, the ideological significance of concepts such as 'Virtue' and 'Duty' was, as I suggested in the Introduction, fiercely contested. In his 1644 tract, *Of Education*, Milton, addressing the social reformer and revolutionary propagandist Samuel Hartlib, declares that his essay shall 'point ye out the right path of a virtuous and noble education'.[39] Milton's concept of virtue is intimately connected with the social and religious reforms of the English revolution, tied to radical idea of patriotism, and, as his verse addresses to the leaders of the army and Commonwealth illustrate, to a valorisation of manly social action. It has little to do with passive suffering and obedience to the existing order. After the Royalists' defeat by the forces of reform and revolution, the stoic ideal of the self-sufficient, inward-turning man, quietly resolved to withstand the vagaries of fortune, acquired a new currency. The metaphoric storms and tempests of the uncertain and changing sublunary world could be used to represent the chaos and hardship of political defeat and social disorder. Stoic contentment could function simultaneously as a trope of loyalty to England's traditional social and political structure, and as the

[38] Røstvig, *The Happy Man*, 85. Translations included Thomas Lodge's *The Workes of Lucius Annaeus Seneca, Both Morall and Naturall* (London: 1614).

[39] John Milton, *John Milton: A Critical Edition of the Major Works*, ed. Stephen Orgel & Jonathan Goldberg (Oxford: Oxford University Press,1991), 229. All further references to Milton's work will be to this edition.

appropriate, noble response to the collapse of that order.

In the early years of civil conflict, when the active virtue of Royalist soldiers on the battlefield was as necessary as the courage of their opponents, Cartwright condemned passivity as a treacherous response to the historical moment (although he was careful to disassociate his cause from the stoic vice of ambition). 'When thus the Fury of Ambition swells,' he writes in 'Upon the death of the Right valiant Sir Bevill Grenvill Knight', 'Who is not Active, Modestly Rebells'.[40] However, the Royalist poetry considered most characteristic of the mid-century is the nostalgic verse of the Cavalier poets. Dispossessed of the public field of action by their Parliamentarian opponents, they weathered the inclemency of the Interregnum writing of the retired, self-sufficient, loyal man, who, laughing at his woes, kept alive the cultural values of the Stuart court in song, wine and friendship. The monarch whose legacy they sought to maintain was himself celebrated as a nobly suffering stoic hero. Røstvig notes that Sir Edward Sherburne published his *Seneca's Answer to Lucilius His Quare ... Now Translated into English Verse* in the year before Charles's execution, and that he dedicated it to the king who 'though *under* all the *Pressures* of these times, yet still is *above* them'.[41] The enormously popular and, in propaganda terms, successful, *Eikon Basilike*, printed immediately after the execution, portrayed Charles as a Christian-stoic martyr. In its pages the captive king dwells on the virtues of patience, humble suffering and self-command. He finds, as Philips in her letter to Cotterell suggests may be found, 'much sweetness' in the struggle to bear his hardships, and he insists, as Philips does in 'La Grandeur d'esprit' and the epitaph on Skippon, upon the pure conscience as the measure and the mark of a great man. 'I shall never think myself less than myself,' he declares, 'while I am able ... to preserve the integrity of my conscience'. Charles's constancy, however, is the resolve of one confronting an inimical universe and it

[40] ll. 19 & 20. Text from William Cartwright, *Plays and Poems*, ed. with an introduction and notes by G. Blakemore Evans (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1951). All further references to Cartwright's works will be to this edition.

[41] Røstvig, *The Happy Man*, 84.

merely helps him 'with patience to bear what I could not remedy'.[42] The same resignation is to be found in Abraham Cowley's Preface to the 1656 edition of his poetry, in which he announces his decision to relinquish the pen and accept defeat:

> I have cast away all such pieces as I wrote during the late troubles, with any relation to the differences that caused them ... for it is so uncustomary, as to become almost *ridiculous*, to make *Lawrel* for the *Conquered*. ... when the event of battel, and unaccountable *Will* of *God* has determined the controversie, and that we have submitted to the conditions of the *Conqueror*, we must lay down our *Pens* as well as *Arms*, we must *march* out of our *Cause* itself ...[43]

This attitude conforms to what Ruth Nevo has described, in her study of seventeenth-century political verse, as a peculiarly conservative conception of the historical process as 'cyclic and repetitive', and therefore beyond the volition or intervention of human beings. Complementing this view, Nevo suggests, is an equally conservative distrust of individual action and instrumentality.[44] The construction of Charles I in *Eikon Basilike* can be usefully compared with the representation of Oliver Cromwell by poets of the Parliamentarian party. Broadly speaking, these poets place an emphasis upon the need for vigorous action and for grasping the historical initiative. In 'To the Lord General Cromwell', Milton, for example, ascribes a series of intensely vigorous verbs to his subject's military and political legacy: Cromwell has 'ploughed' his way to peace and truth, and 'pursued' God's work, for which the battlefield

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[42] Philip A. Knachel, ed., *Eikon Basilike, The Portraiture of His Sacred Majesty in His Solitudes and Sufferings*, The Folger Shakespeare Library (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1966), 173, 136, & 34 respectively.

[43] 'The Unmutilated Preface of 1656' from Abraham Cowley, *The Complete Works in Verse and Prose*, vol. 1, ed., Alexander B. Grosart (Hildesheim: Georg Olms Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1969), cxxviii. All further references to Cowley's work will be to this edition.

[44] Ruth Nevo, *The Dial of Virtue: A Study of Poems on Affairs of State in the Seventeenth Century* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1963), 76.

'resounds [his] praises loud'.[45] Andrew Marvell's Cromwell in the 'Horatian Ode' is pictured 'Urg[ing] his active star'; his 'valour' is 'industrious' and he 'March[es] indefatigably on'.[46] Even when Marvell celebrates Cromwell's confirmed and secure rule in 'The First Anniversary', he emphasises the Protector's 'vigour', which, in outrunning the sun, seems to control the forces of time and history. Always Cromwell is 'indefatigable'; he 'cuts his way still nearer to the skies', 'shak[ing]' princes, as he builds the Commonwealth, from their 'regal sloth'.[47] For his victory over the process of history, Marvell makes Cromwell, in the 'Horatian Ode' 'the Wars' and Fortune's son'.[48]

Such character is anathema to the seventeenth-century conservative mind. Conservative moralists like Hall and Burton cast individual action as the dangerous vice of ambition, a vice which would overthrow the peace and order of the established social structure. They attempt to deflect it by denying its efficacy in a divinely ordered world, and, somewhat paradoxically, by warning of the chaos that ambitious men can create. Thus Burton, while promoting the necessity of endurance and conformity to a universe that must run its given course 'whether thou wilt or no', avers that 'wars are begun, by the persuasion of a few unquiet Hotspurs, restless innovators ... to satisfy one man's private spleen, lust, ambition ...'.[49] Hall describes 'Ambition' as 'a proud covetousness; a dry thirst of honour; ... an aspiring and gallant madness'.[50] Its madness is intensified by

[45] Probably written in 1652. The quotations are from ll. 4, 6 & 8 respectively.

[46] 'An Horatian Ode upon Cromwell's Return from Ireland' (1650), ll. 12, 33, & 114 respectively. Text from Andrew Marvell, *The Complete Poems*, ed., Elizabeth Story Donno (Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin, 1986). All further references to Marvell's work will be to this edition.

[47] 'The First anniversary of the Government under His Highness the Lord Protector, 1655', ll. 7, 8, 45, 46 & 120 respectively.

[48] l. 113.

[49] Burton, *Melancholy*, 493 & 45 respectively.

[50] From *Characters of Virtues and Vices* (Hall,*Works*, 121). Burton appropriates Hall's words for his own description of ambition in *The Anatomy of Melancholy* (243).

its futility: 'Strive or lie still, thy destiny shall run on, and what must be shall be'.[51] Cowley reflects this world view when, in his prose polemic, 'A Discourse Concerning the Government of Oliver Cromwell', he transforms Marvell's 'son of Fortune' into a usurping Richard III (also a 'Protector') and the slave of that 'so subtle a tempter', 'Ambition'. Cromwell's 'indefatigable vigour' is recast as 'the diligence of wicked persons'.[52]

The Royalists and Royalist sympathisers who are the subjects of Philips' verse eulogies conform, as we might expect, to the stoic, conservative model of virtue. Sir Edward Dering, for example (poem 14), is commended for his 'even state', and cast as a rare example in these 'frown[ing]' times of one who 'dare[s] to be good' (2-3).[53] Francis Finch, we are told (poem 52), 'keeps Passion and fate in aw' (34) and is praised for being 'his own happiness' (33); this self-reliance 'seats him quiet, safe and high/ Above the reach of time or destiny' (47-48).[54] The poem to Finch also contains an attack on 'Ambition' and the 'feare' and 'tyranny' that it gives rise to. Finch's exemplary character is offered as an antidote to such vice and to the petty squabbling over empty and worthless material things which a desire for earthly greatness inspires in lesser men:

[51] From *Heaven Upon Earth* (Hall, *Works*, 39).

[52] 'A Discourse Concerning the Government of Oliver Cromwell' (Cowley, *Complete Works*, 297, 298, & 304 respectively). The tract was written in 1658 in response to the Protector's death, but not published (for obvious reasons) until 1661. It is worth pointing out the problem that the poets of Cromwell's rule had when dealing with his instrumentality. Nevo, in *The Dial of Virtue*, notes that the danger of rooting Cromwell's virtue in his indefatigable action was that he would 'slip back ... into the category of mighty conqueror', the very role he played in anti-Cromwellian satire (14).

[53] Dering (1625-84) was the son of the Kent antiquary and politician, Edward Dering. Thomas notes that he did not take part in the Civil Wars, and spent 1643-4 overseas (*Poems*, 333). In 1648 he married Mary Harvey with whom Philips had become friends at Mrs Salmon's school in Hackney.

[54] Francis Finch was a younger son of Sir Moyle Finch and uncle of Heneage Finch. According to Anthony Wood he studied law in London and became a barrister. He was the author of a treatise entitled *Friendship* which he addressed to 'D. noble Lucasia-Orinda'. This was published in 1654 and dedicated to 'Mrs. A. O.' (See Thomas, *Poems*, 8.)

Had all been like Palaemon, pride had ne're
Taught one man tyranny, and t'other feare.
Ambition had been full as monstrous then
As this dull world doth render worthy men.
Had men his Spirit, they would soon forbeare
Groveling for dirt, and quarrelling for Ayre. (37-42)

We might well see the shadow of Cromwell behind the tyrannous man of ambition in these lines. They might equally reasonably be read as a Jonsonian stoic critique of a generally bad world, populated by bad people, above whose vice only the noble few manage to ascend. Unlike Cowley (and others of her contemporaries), Philips wrote nothing that could be described as polemical during the Interregnum. (Indeed, such polemics would have been at odds with the pacific philosophy mapped out in her religious verse.) Though Philips' virtuous ideal is clearly conservative in nature, and her preferred companions and associates broadly Royalist, we might yet ask how important the specifically Royalist meanings of this ideal are in her verse representations of those associates. This is a question particularly worth considering in the light of the poem to Philip Skippon as well as her critique of political division in the poems discussed in the previous chapter.

A number of Philips' portraits of Royalist sympathisers contain allusions to monarchy. Twice Philips appears to invoke the recent tribulations of the uncrowned Charles II: once in her address to the musician, 'the truly noble' Henry Lawes (15), and once in her poem to John Berkenhead (24). In the Lawes poem she develops a monarchist metaphor to convey the idea that the variety of harmony creates a unifying and governing whole:

... as some King, conqu'ring what was his own,
Hath choice of severall titles to his crown;
So harmony, on this score now, that then,
Yet still is all that takes and governs men. (5-8)

It is difficult to imagine that the seventeenth-century reader could fail to recognise the dispossessed Charles II in the 'King, conqu'ring what was his own'. The allusion apparently contains the hope of Charles Stuart's restoration and confirms the rightful rule of monarchy, which, as harmony in music, 'is all that ... governs'. Nevertheless, the reference is rather coyly expressed; it is couched in metaphor and rendered rather general by the 'some' attached to 'King'. The same indefinite pronoun modifies Philips' allusion to Charles II in the poem to Berkenhead. The poem chides Berkenhead for seeking to conceal his (supposed) authorship of a 'composition' which, the title claims, 'he was not willing to own publiquely'. Berkenhead's attempt to hide his learning, the speaker contends, is the same as

> ... when some Injur'd Prince assumes disguise,
> And strives to make his carriage sympathize,
> Yet hath a great betraying meen and aire,
> Which speaks him royall ... (1-4)

In spite of the 'some', it is clear that Philips is alluding to Charles's famous escape from England in disguise after the defeat of the Royalist army at the Battle of Worcester.

A reference to politics and the power of kings in the eulogy to 'the truly noble' Edward Dering is rather different in tone, however. The poem has been occasioned by some verses of Dering's own in which he has apparently paid compliment to the friendship between Orinda and Rosania. Philips returns compliment with compliment and, acknowledging the divine nature of Dering's nobility, contends that his muse 'honours gives, than kings more permanent,/ Above the reach of Acts of Parliament' (15-16). It is difficult to judge the tenor of this comment, but, given the elaborate nature of Philips' praise of Dering, and the intimate context of the poem, it is possible that Philips intends some humour in this reflection upon the transient nature of kingly power. Certainly it is ironic. And though irony can be bitter as well as humorous, the allusion does illustrate the speaker's acknowledgement of the fallibility of monarchy,

and the fallacy of its rhetoric - a rather surprising admission given Philips' reputation as a Royalist poet. In ascribing to Dering's verses the kind of permanent honour that eludes a king, the poem implicitly accepts the (Republican) lesson of the period, that kings and monarchy are not above the world. These are the sentiments of a realist rather than a Royalist ideologue.

On this subject, it is worth introducing a poem here which, while not concerned with the good man, also forces us to rethink Philips' easy association with Royalism. The poem is addressed to Lady Elizabeth Ker, daughter to Robert Ker, first Earl of Ancrum, and it is entitled, 'To the Rt. Hono: the Lady E. C.' (1653-58?, poem 45). It has much in common with Philips' many other eulogies to noble women of her acquaintance (or wouldbe acquaintance), but it is distinguished from these for the striking oration its speaker makes on the subject of the corrupt power of monarchy. Early on in the poem the speaker alludes, with apparent approval and respect, to the Lady E. C.'s royal ancestry, and makes the perfectly conventional claim that her personal merit far exceeds the honour of such connections. Then, about two-thirds of the way through the poem, the speaker embarks on an extended critique of the political and personal vices of a non-specific, but apparently representative, body of 'Kings'. She declares:

> The world hath Kings whose thrones are cemented
> Or by that bloud they boast, or that they shed:
> Yet these great Idolls of the stooping crew
> Have neither pleasure sound, nor honour true.
> They either fight, or play; and power court,
> In triviall anger, or in cruell sport.
> You ... a nobler priviledge enjoy
> (For you can save whom they can but destroy) (107-114)

This reads as an emphatic and damning criticism of monarchical tyranny and triviality. The opening words of the passage consign the 'Kings' to a 'world' whose favours and

splendours the speaker has exposed and rejected earlier in the poem. The theory of the divine right of kings is demolished: monarchs secure their thrones either through their boast of noble ancestry, or their capacity for shedding the blood of others. Both are crimes of the corrupt world: the sin of pride and the sin of murder. Finally, the poem denies to these kings the quality with which Philips will, ironically, invest the restored Charles II in 1660, the virtue of clemency and its power to save. Even in the context of Philips' comments on the fallibility of kingly power in the Dering poem, this critique of monarchy is remarkable. The image of kings as 'great Idolls of the stooping crew' with its evocation of the (blasphemous) emptiness of royal grandeur and the abject servility of its admirers, would grace the pen of any of the Parliamentarian propagandists of the day.

Though such sentiments of antipathy towards kingly rule are hard to reconcile with Philips' apparent loyalty to the Stuarts, the contempt for politics and the play for power which these lines also evince is more in keeping with Philips' consistent valorising of the social over the political in her Interregnum verse. The context of intimacy and literary exchange that stimulates Philips' praise of Dering is a common thread in the majority of her Interregnum portraits of 'truly noble' men. Though her ideal in 'La Grandeur d'esprit' incorporates aspects of the soldier - 'Who dares both fight and dy, but dares not feare' (59) - few of the figures she paid tribute to before 1660 were known for their military activities. During the 1650s, Philips 'great immortal man' tended to move in artistic circles, among the literati, and many of the men to whom she addressed verses at this time - Edward Dering, Francis Finch, John Berkenhead, Henry Lawes - appear to have played some kind of role in her own much celebrated, yet ill-defined literary circle, the 'Society of Friendship'. Some of these men bear the Society's pastoral sobriquets. Dering is 'the worthy Silvander', Berkenhead, 'the noble Cratander', and Finch is styled 'the excellent Palemon'. Dering's 'Letter-book' shows that he had been a great admirer of Philips' philosophy of friendship. A letter that he wrote to Anne Owen (Lucasia) several months after Philips' death is largely responsible

for our current notion of the 'Society of Friendship'. Referring to Philips as 'Orinda', he writes:

> [She] had conceived the most generous designe, that in my opinion ever entred into any breast, which was to unite all those of her acquaintance, which she found worthy, or desired to make so, (among the later number she was pleased to give me a place) into one societie, and by the bands of friendship to make an alliance more firme then what nature, our countrey or equall education can produce: and this would in time have spread very farr, & have been improved with great and yet unimagind advantage to the world.[55]

Some of Philips' verse allude to the interchange of literary texts between herself and her male addressees. One poem to Francis Finch is dedicated entirely to celebrating his 'incomparable discourse of Friendship', which Finch addressed to 'D. Noble *Lucasia-Orinda*' (poem 12). The text is invoked again in a subsequent poem commending Finch's virtues. 'To the truly noble Sir Ed: Dering (the worthy Silvander) on his dream, and navy' is a response, as I noted above, to a poem written by Dering about Philips' friendship with Mary Aubrey (Rosania). The title of the poem as it appears in Dering's manuscript of seventy-six of Philips' poems tells us that Dering composed his compliments in the persona of Orinda.[56]

The philosophy of friendship underpins all of Philips' pre-Restoration constructions of male virtue to some degree or another. Her addressees are appropriated to an ideal of harmony and concord which claims to be above or outside of politics and ideologies. Dering's account of Philips' ideal of friendship, quoted above, describes it appropriately as 'an alliance more firme then what ... our countrey ... can produce', and Dering himself is commended by Philips, as we have seen, for possessing

[55] Dering's Letter-book, f. 65. Quoted by Thomas in *Poems* (11).

[56] The title reads 'To the noble Silvander on his dreame and navy, personating Orinda preferring Rosania before Salomons traffique to Ophir in these verses', and the poem is prefaced by eight lines apparently from Dering's verse (Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center, University Of Texas at Austin, Misc *HRC 151 Philips MS 14, 937).

qualities far greater than those which accrue to the business of government: he has a worth that is above the power of kings or 'Acts of Parliament'. In 'To the noble Palaemon on his incomparable discourse of Friendship', Philips' speaker characterises the 'Politician' and the 'souldier' as types who have held the illustrious ideal of friendship in contempt:

> Friendship! which had a scorn or mask been made,
> And still had been derided or betray'd;
> At which the politician still had laugh'd,
> The souldier stormed, and the gallant scoff'd,
> Or worn, not as a passion, but a plot,
> At first pretended, or at last forgot. (9-14)

The practitioners of statecraft and of war, along with those motivated by lust rather than love, are associated with the promotion of deceits and lies, the pursuit of partial self-interest and the betrayal of truth. Most interesting in this regard, perhaps, given her subject's notoriety as a royalist propagandist (and purveyor, therefore, of partial truths), is Philips' poem to John Berkenhead, 'To Mr. J. B. the noble Cratander, upon a composition of his, which he was not willing to own publiquely'. The portrait contains some indications of Berkenhead's loyalty to king and crown, though they are obliquely expressed. Commending Berkenhead's erudition the speaker appears to cast him, approvingly, as a disciple of traditional learning over the new science, and associates such learning with the support of traditional institutions of (established) church and monarchy:

> Thou study'st not belief to introduce
> Of Noveltys, more fit for shew then use;
> But think'st it nobler charity t'uphold
> The credit and the beauty of the old:
> And with one hand canst easily support

Studies such as Christopher Hill's *Intellectual Origins of the English Revolution* have shown that the advocates of the new science, which challenged old ideas and orders with its emphasis upon experiment and observation over traditional wisdom, tended to support the cause of Parliament in the Civil Wars.[57] The debate over learning was not, however, the most pressing nor most topical issue of the time and it is certainly an indirect line to take on Berkenhead's politics. Interestingly, in his commentary on this poem, Patrick Thomas suggests that the text to which Philips alludes in the title may well be a neo-Platonic book, *Amoris Effigies*, edited (though not written) by Berkenhead and published in 1651. Thomas proposes that Philips, 'attracted to the book by its neo-platonism', may well have assumed (or wished to believe) that Berkenhead had a greater role in the book's composition than he apparently did.[58] Thomas may be wrong, of course, but his suggestion seems probable in the context of Philips' preoccupation with matters of Platonic love and friendship. It would be appropriate, given Philips' tendency to veil political allusion in her poems, that Berkenhead the propagandist (he was still active in this capacity during the 1650s) should be effaced by Berkenhead the philosopher of Platonic love.

It would be naive and inaccurate, however, to think of the discourse of friendship, in spite of its claims to the contrary, as an apolitical discourse. Studies of the male Cavalier poetry of the period have shown how friendship functions as a trope for Royalist values. Gerald M. Maclean, in *Time's Witness, Historical Representation in English Poetry, 1603-1660,* observes that in the political pamphlets of the 1640s and 50s there is 'a struggle to assume a position that seems not to be political', and he suggests that the

[57] Christopher Hill, *Intellectual Origins of the English Revolution* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1965).

[58] *Poems*, 340. The book, Thomas notes, was actually written by Robert Waring. Thomas also records that 'William Griffith, the second editor of the work, "paid tribute to Berkenhead's accurate editing and to his honesty in not claiming the text as his own"' (ibid.).

higher literary and intellectual value of poetry helped the poet of the times lay claim to a position of disinterested impartiality.[59] The claim to transcendent truth is virtually a trade mark of Philips' poetry; certainly it is an integral aspect of her construction of nobility. Francis Finch, Philips asserts, is in his virtue, 'Above the reach of time or destiny' (48). In her poem to Henry Lawes, Philips praises the former court musician as the semi-divine practitioner of a divine art. She represents his music as a microcosm of the music of the heavens. All the world is structured by concord and harmony, the speaker proposes, and she urges Lawes 'to asswage' with his music, 'The savage dullness of this sullen age' (31-32). 'Be it thy care,' she exhorts, 'our Age to new=create:/What built a world may sure repayre a state' (39-40). The poem argues that poets and musicians inhabit a higher realm where they partake of 'Eternity' (22) and 'on the lower world look down' (25). This may well just be (empty) rhetoric on Philips' part. It might be contended that at the time of this poem's composition (the precise date is unknown, but it most probably predates 1655) only a Royalist would have found Cromwell's England 'savage' and in need of repair. Puritans were also commonly portrayed in Royalist propaganda as the enemy of the arts, and especially of music. Rather than eschewing politics completely, Philips' discourse seeks to transcend partisan conflict, though the nature of her transcendent world belongs, aesthetically, to a Royalist poetic tradition.

However, Philips' allusion in the Lawes poem to the musical harmony of the heavens reminds us of the thread of neo-Platonism that weaves its way throughout her oeuvre. In the previous chapter, I noted that Henry More's Platonic sage, the 'thrice-happy man' whose description Philips places before her contemplation upon the divinity in her poem 'God', had much in common with the typical stoic hero. He possesses, for example, a 'pure conscience', 'recks not what befalls him outwardly', and 'can his passions master and controule'. This stoic tranquillity functions for More as the precondition for Platonic enlightenment, and it is connected, therefore, with the tolerant

[59] Maclean, *Time's Witness* (Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 1990), 43.

and inclusive nature of his theology. In her assessment of Seneca and Epictetus in the letter to Cotterell discussed above, Philips adds to the important Christian-stoic philosophy of contentment the equally important Christian doctrine of forgiveness:

> ... the Art of Contentment is as little to be learn'd, tho' it be much boasted of, in the Works of the Heathens, as the Doctrine of forgiving our Enemies. 'Tis the School of Christianity that teaches both these excellent Lessons.

At the time of the letter's composition, forgiveness was a particularly salient political issue pertaining to the restored Charles II's domestic policy, and it concerns Philips in her Restoration panegyrics, as well as in her translation of Corneille's *Pompée*.[60] But in this letter to Cotterell, she seems to be invoking forgiveness as it relates to her personal situation - in particular her feelings of betrayal and disappointment about Lucasia's marriage - and her train of thought connects it with the pursuit of earthly tranquillity.

It is possible that Philips' allusions to a truth beyond party in her constructions of nobility genuinely speak to the kind of spiritual unity anticipated in her religious poetry, rather than to the rhetoric of a naturalised, divinely-approved Royalism. (The tropes of Platonic divinity which mark her constructions of friendship and the noble man are absent from the friendship poems of her Cavalier contemporaries.) Certainly, Philips' value for tolerance enabled her respect for Philip Skippon, and in the 'Epitaph' she characterises him as equally tolerant: 'to all Religions kind' (33). Similar qualities of generosity and fairness are attributed by Plutarch to Scipio, who was, we are told, 'marvelous gentle and curteous unto them that came to him' and able to win 'the love and good will of every man'.[61] There is also another classical portrait of Scipio in addition to Plutarch's that Philips may have been familiar with, and which may therefore serve as an equally important context for reading the tribute to Skippon. This

[60] Mercy towards his former enemies was counselled as the best means to heal the country's civil wounds. The extent of the reach of this mercy was a subject of dispute.

[61] Plutarch, *Lives*, 134 & 126.

is the description of Scipio in Cicero's *De Amicitia* and it connects Philips' eulogy to 'her' Publius Scipio with the tradition of exemplary friendship (so important to the representation of her Royalist acquaintances) rather than the heroics of military action.

Philips certainly knew enough of Cicero's treatise on friendship to cite one of its central premises - 'none can be a friend that is not good' - in her poem 'A Friend'.[62] While this maxim was something of a philosophical commonplace in the seventeenth century, *De Amicitia,* had been translated into English in the sixteenth century, and Philips may have been familiar with the text as a whole.[63] In Plutarch's account of Scipio, the Roman hero appears primarily as a soldier and military tactician. In Cicero's *De Amicitia,* Scipio's pre-eminence in friendship takes precedence over his heroics on the battlefield. Laelius, Cicero's speaker, commemorates Scipio as the best of men and friends in the hope that 'the friendship of Scipio and Laelius will be known to posterity'.[64] 'Such is my enjoyment in the recollection of our friendship,' Laelius avers, 'that I feel as if my life has been happy because it was spent with Scipio'.[65] In addition to commemorating his own intimacy with Scipio, Laelius also praises his friend's general warmth and sociability, extolling 'his most affable manners, ... his devotion to his mother, ... his generosity to his sisters, ... his kindness to his relatives, ... his strict integrity to all men' as qualities already well-known to Scipio's admirers.[66]

This portrait of Scipio is as likely to have informed seventeenth-century readings of Philips' tribute to her step-father as Plutarch's more militaristic account. Certainly it is more in tune with the values epitomised by the good man of Philips' Interregnum

[62] Poem 64 in the Thomas edition, l. 36.

[63] *The booke of freendeship of Marcus Tulle Cicero.* translated by John Harrington (London: 1562). The reservations, made above in connection with Philips' Platonism, surrounding the likelihood of Philips' familiarity with texts that pre-date her by so many years apply in this case.

[64] Cicero, *De Senectute, De Amicitia, De Divinatione,* with an English translation by William Armistead Falconer, The Loeb Classical Library (London: William Heinemann, 1923), 125.

[65] Ibid.

[66] Ibid., 119-121.

verse, and as a context it helps to place Skippon the Cromwellian soldier into the moral code established in the earlier poems. Nevertheless, Philips does not shy away from celebrating her step-father's military achievements, though she is forced to employ a number of strategies to integrate these into a non-partisan ideal. In the *DNB* entry for Philip Skippon the first word we read is the word 'soldier', and the account is almost exclusively devoted to recording Skippon's military activities. These begin with his service in the Palatinate under Sir Horace Vere, include his initial work for the Parliamentary cause in the early years of the Civil Wars (his control over the London trained bands, his actions in battle under Essex, his success at the second battle of Newbury, the dangerous wound he received at Naseby), and end on his appointment as commander-in-chief of the London militia at the outbreak of the second Civil War, and his role, as major-general for London, in the suppression of Royalist uprisings during the mid-1650s. The entry also documents his rise in status and wealth under the Commonwealth and Cromwell's Protectorate.

In her tribute to this man, who is honoured with a place in John Vicars' *England's Worthies,* a celebration of Parliamentarian heroes published in 1647,[67] Philips makes very specific reference, as I noted at the beginning of this chapter, to Skippon's participation in military campaigns in the Palatinate and the Netherlands, but is far more general and abstract when it comes to his part in the Civil Wars. Skippon:

> ... first Engaged his Arms to prop the State
> Of the almost undone *Palatinate,*
> And help the Nether-Lands to stem the tide
> Of *Rome's* ambition, and the *Austrian* Pride;
> Which shall in every History be fam'd,
> Wherein *Breda* or *Frankendale* are name'd.
> And when forced by his Country's angry Stars
> To be a Party in her Civil Wars,

[67] John Vicars, *England's Worthies, Under Whom All the Civill and Bloudy Warres Since Anno 1642 to Anno 1647 Are Related* (London: 1647). I have consulted the 1845 edition, printed for J. R. Smith, London.

He so much conduct by his Valour taught,
So wisely govern'd, and so bravely Faught,
That the English Annals shall this Record bear:
None better could direct, or further dare. (7-18)

Though Skippon's action in Europe on behalf of beleaguered Protestant regimes suggests the militant nature of his reformed beliefs and his ideological distance from the international policies of the then ruling Charles I, the wars are far enough back in time - and distanced therefore from the immediate civil troubles - for Philips to treat of them directly. She refers to them in the language of the chronicler: nation states are named, the location of battles given, and enemies identified. Significantly, the stoic sins of pride and ambition are given to Skippon's (Catholic) enemies, a move which helps to turn the former servant of Cromwell into a foe of revolutionary forces. On the other hand, the language used to described Skippon's role in the Civil Wars suits the philosopher rather than the chronicler; here, Philips focusses on abstract virtues divorced from their specific political, or partisan, context. Skippon's chosen allegiance is not named, he is merely '*a* Party' (14, my emphasis) in the Wars. Furthermore, the speaker represents his active service as the '[en]forced' consequence of a conflict brought about by 'his Country's angry Stars' (13). In this way, the poem denies Skippon's instrumentality; the Wars themselves, and Skippon's part in them, are constructed as the outcome of forces far greater than mere human will or volition. This is quite different from the explanation given just lines earlier for Skippon's military involvement in Europe. In that case it was his 'Courage ... which first Engaged his Arms' (5-7), in other words, Skippon himself.[68] The abstract nature of Philips' account of Skippon's role in the Civil Wars dissolves into a broader consideration of his generous and noble character, emphasising Skippon's lack of interest in political machinations ('He was above the little arts of state', 29), his clear 'Conscience', and his tolerance toward those of different

[68] Interestingly, Philips' tribute to Skippon may make a nod in the direction of a more (appropriately) Puritan language of praise. In line 3 of the poem the speaker describes her subject as 'righteous, Valiant *Scipio*'. These two epithets recur several times in the tribute to Skippon in *England's Worthies*, 50-59.

beliefs ('to all Religions kind', 33).

In the portraits of noble men that Philips composed after the Restoration there is a noticeable change in the nature of the political allusions which complement her discourse of virtue. The period from 1660 to her death in 1664 is dominated by Philips' public writing, the panegyrics with which she welcomed the restored royal family, and *Pompey*, which was performed in Dublin's Theatre Royal in 1663. Philips' biographers characterise the period as one in which she both embraced the new regime and courted its favour. Souers is of the opinion that the Restoration released Philips from personal and political constraint. 'With the Restoration in 1660,' he writes, 'she no longer needed to restrain her sympathies for the cause of royalty'.[69] Thomas has a more pragmatic point of view, suggesting that the flurry of panegyrics represents a deliberate effort on Philips' part to mitigate the political disaster potentially facing her Parliamentarian husband with the return of the king.[70] Whether Philips became a 'herald of the Restoration' because she could or because she had to (or a combination of both), the change in her literary relationship to her political context can be seen in the occasional poems after 1660, as well as the royal panegyrics.

Apart from the direct addresses to members of the royal family, three of Philips' post-Restoration eulogies make significant reference to the civil conflict of the 1650s. These are an elegy on the Welsh Royalist, Sir Walter Lloyd, entitled, 'On the death of the truly honourable Sir Walter Lloid Knight' (1662, poem 105), 'To my Lord Duke of Ormond, Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, on the discovery of the late Plot' (1663, poem 103), and 'On the Death of my Lord Rich, Only son to the Earle of Warwick, who dy'd of the Small Pox' (1664, poem 89). The model of virtue promoted in these poems is still stoic in nature. Sir Walter Lloyd is praised for having 'triumph[ed] o're th' unquiet wave'

[69] Souers, *The Matchless Orinda*, 93.

[70] *Poems*, 15.

and magnanimously contested with the 'wild storm' (16 & 17).[71] We are told that 'Duty, and not ambition, was his aim' and that he 'study'd Conscience' (21-22). In the address to the Duke of Ormonde, 'Fortune' is disdained and opposed to true virtue (9-10), and the Duke himself is commended for being 'stedfast' in adversity (16).[72] But these familiar invocations of constancy in troubled, stormy and tempestuous times are given an historical specificity largely absent or obscured in the Interregnum verses. Sir Walter's heroic steadfastness is placed in the context of 'that flood of woes' which 'on our Land ... was sent' (9). The line explicitly appropriates the metaphor of inclement weather as a term to describe the civil conflict. Sir Walter's noble suffering is also explained by specific reference to the Interregnum tribulations of Charles II; the loyal knight's trials are figured as paralleling those of his monarch, his pains are a mark of his Royalism:

> [He] thought it so desirable a thing,
> To be prefer'd to suffer for his King,
> That he all Fortune's spight had pardon'd her,
> Had she not made his Prince a sufferer;
> For whose lov'd cause he did both act and grieve,
> And for it only did endure to live. (23-28)

[71] According to the *Dictionary of Welsh Biography*, Sir Walter Lloyd was High Sheriff of Cardiganshire in 1621, and MP for the county from 1640-1644. He was made a Commissioner for Array for Charles I in 1642, and knighted in 1643. He voted against the impeachment of Strafford and in 1644 was disabled by Parliament for his loyalty to the King's party. He was fined by Parliament in 1647 and his estates were sequestered in 1651. Thomas suggests that Philips' tribute to Sir Walter 'represents a tactful attempt to mollify her husband's political opponents in Cardiganshire' (*Poems*, 386).

[72] The *DNB* notes that James Butler, 12th Earl and 1st Duke of Ormonde was 'unique in [his] freedom from any suspicion of double dealing' during the years of Civil War and the Interregnum. He was a very active military figure. From April 1640 he was lieutenant-general of the horse and commander-in-chief of all the forces in Ireland. On the death of Charles I, he immediately proclaimed Charles II in Ireland. Cromwell's success in Ireland forced Ormonde to flee to Europe. He attended the Queen and Duke of York and eventually Charles II himself in Paris and was involved in intelligence gathering throughout the King's exile. he returned to England in 1660 in the King's train and carried the crown at the coronation ceremony the following year. He was made Duke of Ormonde in the Irish peerage in March 1661, and landed in Dublin as Lord-Lieutenant in July 1662.

The 'desperate' plot hatched by former Parliamentarians, which forms the occasion of Philips' tribute to Ormonde, is closely allied with the rebellion of the civil war period, and both are laid at the feet of 'impious' 'Wretches' and 'bold ungrateful Rebells' (8, 13 & 25). Ormonde's constancy, which 'no Storm dismay'd', is specified as the 'settled Loyalty' he paid to 'afflicted Majesty' (19 & 17). Whereas, in the poem to Skippon, civil conflict appeared as the consequence of 'angry Stars', in the elegy on Lord Rich it is ascribed to human agents of anger: 'Our own wild fury, and Usurpers rage' (6).[73]

It is tempting to read the apparently uncompromised Royalism of Philips' Restoration writing back onto the poetry she composed during the 1650s. It would be fairer, however, to keep in sight the difficult and often conflicting series of loyalties which Philips was required to keep in balance during the years of the Interregnum. Respect for a Parliamentarian step-father most probably caused less inner conflict than maintaining a dutifully affectionate and respectful relationship with a husband whose political beliefs also challenged those of most of Philips' chosen friends and associates. This analysis of Philips' portraits of noble, male virtue has attempted to question and to complicate the (too) ready labelling of Philips as a straightforwardly Royalist poet. Though her constructions of virtue are rooted in the social and political upheaval of the times, the language she uses to allude to that context is often generalised and unspecific, and resists consistent appropriation for a clear political cause. While her stoic emphasis upon concord, equanimity and constancy stands in opposition to Parliamentarian eulogies to action, change and the forging of historical progress, such values, which also form part of the Platonic model of virtue, might be read as contributing to an ultimately non-partisan valorisation of social unity. This reading is supported by Philips' ability to include a man like Philip Skippon within her ideal of noble virtue. That poem, and Philips' rare but striking demonstrations of scepticism towards and even outright criticism of the mythology of monarchical power, certainly require us to consider how

[73] Charles, Lord Rich was the son of Charles Rich, Earl of Warwick and Mary, daughter of Richard Boyle, 1st Earl of Cork. He was born in September 1643 and died in May 1664 in London.

politically exclusive Philips' Interregnum conservatism can be said to be.

Chapter 3

"Ours of Kinges the best": kingly virtue in the state poems

The conflicting political loyalties of Philips' Interregnum experience helped to shape the nature of her most explicitly Royalist writings: the Restoration panegyrics and Coronation verse of the early 1660s. Philips' faculty in the art of poetic compliment, demonstrated in the poems to Berkenhead, Dering, Lawes, and Skippon, well-equipped her for the role of state panegyrist, and the stoic flavour of her Interregnum verses anticipated an important aspect of the representation of Charles II in the poems composed by his subjects in honour of his assumption of the throne. Philips wasted no time in turning her pen to the praise of the new king. In the spring of 1660, before Charles had even set foot on English soil as the country's lawful monarch, she wrote two panegyric verses celebrating his immanent return. These are (rather loquaciously) entitled, 'On the numerous accesse of the English to waite upon the King in Holland' (2) and 'Arion on a Dolphin to his Majestie in his passadge into England' (3). The following year she marked the occasion of Charles's Coronation with two poems, 'On the Coronation' (124) and 'On the faire weather at the Coronacon' (4). Philips was not alone in her fervour. Charles's Restoration was greeted with a flurry of such verses, some by poets who have remained obscure (including a number of other women writers), and others by writers who would become some of the dominant literary voices of the age: men such as Edmund Waller and John Dryden, both of whom had praised Cromwell and his Protectorate during the 1650s, but who readily

welcomed the restored monarchy.[1]

In 1701, looking back on the literature which commemorated the King's return and characterised the early Restoration period, George Granville commented disparagingly:

> Our King return'd, and banisht peace restor'd,
> The Muse ran Mad to see her exil'd Lord;
> On the crackt Stage the Bedlam Heroes roar'd,
> And scarce cou'd speak one reasonable word.[2]

Even though Granville's ridicule appears to be directed largely against Restoration heroic drama, his attitude signifies the critical downfall, in the eighteenth century, of the panegyric mode in general. In spite of Granville's contempt, however, seventeenth-century English verse panegyric had a very serious purpose.[3] Modelled largely on Pliny's oration to the Emperor Trajan (circa A.D. 100)[4], the Stuart verse panegyric sought to define and to construct the ideal relationship between monarch and people, and to offer a model of perfect kingship for the emulation of the current ruler. In a period when one of the primary roles of government was to ensure the virtuous and godly conduct of the people, and when the health of a nation was deemed to be

[1] Maclean in *Time's Witness* states that by the time of the coronation 'well over a hundred separately printed poems had appeared celebrating the king's return' (256). Female panegyrists included Rachel Jevon, Ann Lee, and Barbara McKie, Lady Rea. Their poems can be found in Stevenson and Davidson, eds. *Early Modern Women Poets*. Among the many male panegyrists were Abraham Cowley, Thomas Fuller, Charles Cotton, Sir Francis Fane, Henry Bold, and John Evelyn. Charles's coronation inspired fewer poetic tributes; Philips and Dryden ('To His Sacred Majesty, A Panegyrick on His Coronation') were among those who marked the occasion in verse.

[2] George Granville, *An Essay Upon Unnatural Flights in Poetry*, (1701), ll. 23-26.

[3] James D. Garrison sums this up as 'instruction of the monarch'. See Garrison, *Dryden and the Tradition of Panegyric* (California: University of California Press, 1975), 20.

[4] See Garrison, p. 46. See also, Nevo, *Dial of Virtue* and Rivers, *Poetry of Conservatism* for discussions of the legislative role of poetry and of the poet as state counsellor. For Pliny's address to Trajan see Pliny, *Letters and Panegyricus*, Vol. 2, with English Translation by Betty Radice (London: The Loeb Classical Library, William Heinemann Ltd., 1969).

determined by the virtue of its ruler, the panegyric had a significant legislative function.

The panegyrists of Charles II's reign had a wealth of tradition upon which to draw for their construction of the ideal monarch. Ben Jonson, to whom the public and legislative role of the poet was so important, is credited with introducing Pliny's form of political oratory into English verse with his 'A Panegyre, on the Happy Entrance of James, Our Sovereign, to His First High Session of Parliament in This Kingdom, the 19 of March, 1603'.[5] James I succeeded to the English throne a stranger and a foreigner. Jonson's poem teaches this alien monarch how to behave as England's ruler. It portrays Themis, the personification of Justice, advising James upon the means to secure his subjects' love and obedience. James, as the ideal king, wisely heeds Themis' teaching. He is portrayed as a peace-loving and merciful monarch, whose actions are guided by justice, tempered with fatherly affection for the people. Though 'entering with the power of a king', he brings 'the temperance of a private man' to constrain that power. As the father of his people he knows

> ... that those, who would, with love, command,
> Must with a tender (yet a steadfast) hand
> Sustain the reins ...[6]

James I, himself, helped to develop the idea of the 'Stuart Peace', both by actively

[5] See Nevo, *Dial of Virtue*, 10. In his *Explorata: or Discoveries*, Jonson describes the mutually beneficial relationship between the prince and the man of letters:

> Learning needs rest: Soveraignty gives it. Soveraignty needs counsell: Learning affords it. There is such a Consociation of offices, between the *Prince*, and whom his favour breeds, that they may helpe to sustain his power, as hee their knowledge. (Jonson, *The Poems*, ed. Percy and Simpson, 565.)

[6] ll. 139-140 and 121-123 respectively. Text from Ben Jonson, *The Complete Poems*, ed. George Parfitt (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1975). None of these ideals are original to Jonson; all can be found in his classical model. Pliny reveres Trajan for his moderation, for his ability to 'show humanity but remain a sovereign power' and for establishing peace in the Empire. He also invokes the emperor as the *pater patriae*: 'one who is our father not our over-lord'. Pliny, *Letters and Panegyricus*, vol. 2, trans. Betty Radice, The Loeb Classical Library (London: William Heinemann, 1969), 333 and 325 respectively.

pursuing a policy of peace with other European states (at least until events in the Palatinate forced his attention upon the Thirty Years War), and through his own self-construction. In a speech to Parliament in 1604 he announced that, 'The first ... of these blessings which God hath, jointly with my person, sent unto you is outward peace'.[7] His motto was *Beati Pacifici*: 'Blessed are the Peacemakers'.[8]

Unlike his father, Charles I came to the throne eager for war, first against Spain (by whom he had been humiliated in the failed marriage negotiations with the Infanta) and then later with France (who, in 1625, concluded a secret peace treaty with the Spanish). Charles's eagerness resulted only in military disaster and increasingly strained relations with his Parliaments, who resented the measures that Charles had taken to fund his disastrous campaigns.[9] The 1630s were to see a radical change in Charles's management of international policy. Treaties were made with France in 1629 and with Spain in 1630, and peace became the key to establishing stability and prosperity at home. Celebrating Charles's return from his Coronation visit to Scotland in 1633, Cartwright praises the king's 'pious Raign', and rejoices that the only noise and clamour to be found in the realm issues from the people's 'eager Love' to see and know their king.[10] Cowley, who composed two panegyrics on the same occasion (both of which bear the title, 'On his Majestie's Return out of Scotland'), was also compelled to glorify Charles's pacific nature. One of the poems (later published as one of the 'Miscellanies' in the 1656 *Works*) begins:

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[7] King James VI and I, *Political Writings*, ed. Johann P. Sommerville, Cambridge Texts in the History of Political Thought, ed. Raymond Geuss and Quentin Skinner (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 133.

[8] See Mark Kishlansky, *A Monarchy Transformed: Britain 1603-1714* (London: Penguin, 1996), 77.

[9] For more details on the failed marriage negotiations with Spain negotiations and for an account of Charles's disastrous military attempts against the Spanish and French, see Kishlansky, *Monarchy Transformed*, 102-110.

[10] 'To the King, On His Majesties Return from Scotland', ll. 27 and 30 respectively.

Welcome, great Sir, with all the joy that's due
To the Return of Peace and You.
Two greatest Blessings which this age can know;
For that to Thee, for Thee to Heaven we ow.
Others by war their Conquests gain,
You like a God your ends obtain;
Who when rude Chaos for his help did call,
Spoke but the Word, and sweetly Order'd all.[11]

For those who supported the Royalist cause in the Civil Wars, such peace would come to characterise Charles's reign. Poets of the 1640s and 50s looked back on the 1630s as a golden age of harmony and concord, and lamented its loss.

Caroline panegyric, particularly in the hands of Cowley and Waller, also developed a tendency to represent the monarch as a species of literary hero. This is a development which Nevo argues distinguishes the literary celebration of the Stuart kings from that of Elizabeth I, whose apotheosis as 'Gloriana' had emphasised her suprapersonal significance as as symbol of the English crown and nation, rather than her individual autonomy and agency. An example of what Nevo calls the 'Stuart glorification of the King-hero' can be found in Waller's poem, 'Of the Danger His Majesty (Being Prince) Escaped in the Road to St. Andero'.[12] Written in the mid-1620s, the poem transforms Charles's unsuccessful courtship of the Spanish Infanta into an heroic escapade. Waller frames his account of Charles's deliverance from a violent storm in the Bay of Biscay through multiple references to the heroes of classical Greece. 'Th' heroic Prince's courage ... [and] love' draw comparisons with Aeneas, Priam, Jason, and Theseus in a representation which is both mythologised and romanticised.[13] Cowley's second poem on Charles's return from Scotland (published in *Sylva* in 1636)

[11] ll. 1-8.

[12] Text from Edmund Waller and John Denham, *The Poetical Works of Edmund Waller and Sir John Denham*, with a memoir and critical dissertation by Rev. George Gilfillan (Edinburgh: James Nichol, 1897). All further references to Waller's works will be to this edition.

[13] l. 108.

turns to ancient history for heroic comparisons. His speaker enumerates a series of heroic figures from classical history, including Caesar and Alexander, and contends that the virtues of all such heroes were marred by imperfections: only Charles exemplifies the man 'where all virtues mingled flow'. This is an eminence which renders the English king 'most like the Deitie', and enables him, like his father (and Pliny's Trajan), to reign 'with equall ballance .../'Twixt Mercy and *Astrea* [Justice]'.[14]

The rhetoric of individual heroism and glory permeates the Restoration constructions of Charles II, as do paeans to the restored monarch's merciful and pacific nature. The conventions which Philips and Dryden inherited and which Waller and Cowley had helped to establish may account to some extent for the 'remarkable uniformity, almost unanimity' which Nevo finds in the poets' response to Charles's return.[15] To emphasise continuity between reigns and the perpetuation of an enduring tradition is central to Royalist politics and poetics, and the events of the 1640s and 50s had rendered this task even more crucial. By invoking and reiterating the poetic discourse of the early Stuart period, the panegyrists of Charles II were able to affirm the restored king's legitimacy and rhetorically to eclipse the unfortunate hiatus that had occurred between the new king's assumption of the throne and the previous Stuart government.

But while they drew on the conventions of earlier Stuart panegyric, the poets who heralded Charles II's return also modified those inherited traditions. Historical events had created a context of political and personal uncertainty to which the panegyrists of the Restoration had necessarily to respond, and while they made every attempt to erase the political significance of the Interregnum, both the Wars and the experience of the Protectorate had a profound influence upon the ideals enshrined in their panegyrics, especially upon the matters of kingly mercy and the monarch's claim to heroic virtue. This chapter examines Philips' construction of the ideal monarch in the

[14] ll. 35, 54 & 51-52.

[15] Nevo, *Dial of Virtue*, 141.

light of the political pressures created by England's civil upheavals. It compares her construction with those of her male and female peers, with special emphasis on the panegyrics of Waller and Dryden, because of their dominant positions within the world of Restoration arts and letters. Dryden's 'Astraea Redux', in particular, provides us with something of a definitive model against which to read Philips' representations of Charles II. Not only is 'Astraea Redux' considered one of the finest examples of the genre, Dryden himself came to represent the leading literary voice of the period. To examine how Philips' constructions of kingly virtue compare with Dryden's is to gain a sense of how her own public poetic voice accords with the spirit of the new age.

The emphasis on the king's capacity for mercy, characteristic of early Stuart panegyric, acquired a particularly pertinent significance at the outset of this new age as Charles returned to govern a nation which, in the wake of civil rebellion and regicide, had more than a usual need to express its obedience and to entreat royal forgiveness. While the Declaration of Breda appeared to proclaim the king's clement intentions towards his people by granting 'a free and general pardon ... to all our subjects of what degree or quality soever', the reach of this clemency was potentially limited by an ominous clause giving the future Parliament the right to 'except' any person from that pardon.[16] Many of the panegyrists of Charles's Restoration had personal reasons to invoke the king's mercy. Waller, for example, had led a life of political double-dealing throughout the Interregnum. Involved in a (foiled) plot in favour of the Royalist party in 1643 for which he was initially banished from England, he seems later to have developed an acquaintanceship with and admiration for Oliver Cromwell, to whom he was distantly related.[17] In 1655 he composed an enthusiastic celebration of Cromwell's

[16] Charles II, *The Letters of King Charles II*, ed. Sir Arthur Bryant (New York: Funk and Wagnalls, 1968), 84.

[17] In his life of Waller included in Waller and Denham, *Poetical Works*, George Gilfillan records that the poet was sentenced to death for his part in this plot, but that this sentence was commuted to a fine of £10,000 and banishment for life. He was permitted to return to England, thanks to the intercession of a brother-in-law, in January 1652, from which point his acquaintance with Cromwell began. (See pp. xii-xviii.)

virtues in a lengthy panegyric, 'To my Lord Protector, of the Present Greatness, and Joint Interest, of His Highness, and this Nation' (which, so the story goes, Charles II observed was a better poem than the one Waller later addressed to him). Dryden, who seems to have held a minor position in the Cromwellian government, was conspicuously silent in literary terms during the 1650s but produced a tribute to Cromwell, 'Heroique Stanzas to the Glorious Memory of Cromwell', shortly after the Protector's death.[18]

Philips' too, in spite of the good Royalist connections she had fostered during the Interregnum, had some cause to be apprehensive about the consequences of the king's return for her immediate family. As we have seen, she had composed, shortly before the Restoration, an extremely respectful elegy in memory of her Cromwellian step-father, Sir Philip Skippon. Her husband, James, had also been active on Cromwell's behalf during the Wars and the Protectorate. In the 1650s he was one of Cromwell's Commissioners under the Act for the Propagation of the Gospel in Wales, and he also represented Cardiganshire and Pembrokeshire in successive Cromwellian Parliaments.[19] In his biography of Philips and in his edition of her poems, Thomas alludes to a number of political difficulties faced by James following the Restoration, including an accusation that, in 1654, he had served as a member of the High Court of

[18] In their Commentary on the 'Heroique Stanzas', the editors of the 1956 University of California edition of Dryden's works note that 'available evidence suggests that [Dryden] took employment in Cromwell's government, possibly as secretary to his cousin Sir Gilbert Pickering, from 1656 until the downfall of Richard Cromwell in May 1659' (187). The editors also record that Dryden was taunted for his poem in praise of Cromwell for years after the Restoration (189). See John Dryden, *The Works of John Dryden: Poems 1649-1680*, ed. Edward Niles Hooker and H. T. Swedenberg, Jr. (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1956), 187 & 189. All references to Dryden's poems will be to this edition.

[19] In his biography, *The Matchless Orinda*, Souers describes James Philips as 'a zealous supporter of the [Cromwellian] government [who] with his brother Hector ... gained a reputation as a commissioner of sequestration in hunting out the Royalists who tried to evade the importunities of Parliament' (27). Souers cites nothing in support of this description, however. In his 'Biographical Note' in *Poems*, Thomas suggests that James was a very influential politician in his locality, and quotes a James Phillips (no relation) describing him as 'the bayard of South Wales Puritanism, a man without fear or reproach' (5).

Justice that had sentenced a prominent Royalist to death.[20] Philips' correspondence with the courtier Sir Charles Cotterell, which dates from the early 1660s, shows that she was actively using her royalist connections to assist James's recovery from these difficulties. The appeal for peace and mercy which so profoundly marks Philips' two Restoration panegyrics arguably, therefore, owes as much to personal anxiety as to poetic tradition.

Waller's 'To the King, Upon His Majesty's Happy Return' and Dryden's 'Astraea Redux' mark both men's attempts, as poets of public affairs, to make the transition from one political regime to another, and both are surely looking to their own future success, as well as the happiness of the country as a whole, when they salute Charles II as a model of self-restraint and loving clemency. Interestingly, Waller seems prepared to indulge in some rhetorical sport with the notion of the king's mercy and the people's safety in the opening of his poem:

> ... if your grace incline that we should live,
> You must not, sir! too hastily forgive.
> Our guilt preserves us from th' excess of joy,
> Which scatters spirits, and would life destroy.[21]

In spite of the witty conceit, however, these lines betray a palpable degree of anxiety, centred in the conditional 'if' of 'if your grace incline that we should live'. Waller's understanding of the constitutional underpinnings of British monarchy grants an absolute power to the reigning king. Charles II, as Waller's speaker avers towards the end of the panegyric, has 'pow'r unbounded' and merely 'a will confined'.[22] The safety of the nation is indeed contingent, therefore, upon the inclination of its king. Given this uncertainty, Waller goes on to restate not only the people's 'striv[ing] for grace' to 'expiate their sin' but also Charles's distaste for bloodshed and vengeance. The king is

[20] See 'Biographical Note' (*Poems*, 15) and *Katherine Philips*, 34.

[21] ll. 11-14.

[22] l. 104.

praised for his 'patience' and his 'Piety', he is commended for being 'to others kind', and he is reminded that he has both his 'foes to pardon, and [his] friends'.[23]

Dryden's 'Astraea Redux' begins with a lamentation for the lack of peace suffered by England in recent years and closes with an address to the king as a prince of peace who meets the 'penitence and sorrow' of his subjects with 'Goodness' and 'Mercy'.[24] Invoking both Charles's 'earthly' and 'Heav'nly Parentage', Dryden demonstrates that the new monarch's inheritance is 'mildness', a quality which will secure the restored king's reign, for in these new times, 'mildness', once so fatal to Charles I's crown, has been transformed from a political liability into a political virtue.[25] Charles's glory is that he finds 'Revenge less sweet than a forgiving mind'.[26] In the context of such clemency, the 'tears of joy' shed by the people for their king, are sufficient to 'Work out and expiate [their] former guilt', and Dryden's speaker can confidently proclaim the inauguration of 'times whiter Series ... Which in soft Centuries shall smoothly run'.[27]

Waller and Dryden's assertions of Charles's abhorrence of bloodshed and vengeance form part of a broader construction of the monarch as a Christian-stoic hero, a construction which aptly places the king within a long tradition of English noble greatness. Waller acclaims Charles as the country's 'Much suffering monarch!' and praises his 'tried virtue'. Like Job, his speaker affirms, Charles is 'patience-crown'd'.[28] In 'Astrea Redux', Dryden transforms the Interregnum into a time of testing for the future king:

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[23] ll. 74, 57, 109, 103 & 90 respectively.

[24] ll. 255 & 265 respectively.

[25] ll. 257-258.

[26] l. 261.

[27] ll. 275 & 292-293.

[28] l. 55.

How Great were then Our *Charles* his Woes, who thus
Was forc'd to suffer for Himself and us!
Toss'd by Fate, and hurried up and down,
Heir to his Fathers Sorrows, with his Crown.[29]

Charles, like the true stoic, is seen to suffer the unkind blasts of Fortune 'Unconquer'd', and to find in the inner life both a source of fortitude and higher truth: 'As Souls reach Heav'n while yet in Bodies pent,/So did he live above his Banishment'.[30] Such language also invites comparisons with the fortitude and sufferings of Christ. Indeed, Waller makes this comparison explicit with his assertion that the exiled Charles endured his hardships and cared for his people as Christ did: 'Like your Great Master, you the storm withstood,/And pitied those who love with frailty show'd'.[31]

On the whole, Dryden chooses not to dwell on the potentially passive and interior nature of Christian-stoic fortitude; instead, he is keen to demonstrate the stirring and dramatic nature of the exiled king's fate. The Interregnum is 'Charles his too too active age'. England's monarch has not been raised in a age 'lost in sleep and ease' which will 'No action leave to busy chronicles'. He has been bred in a time 'govern'd by the wild distemper'd rage/Of some black star infecting all the skies', and while such wild times may themselves have been unwelcome, they have had the happy consequence of producing a formidable, warrior king, who, like a 'Lyon ... now will forraign Foes assail'.[32] The final movement of 'Astraea Redux' develops such imagery and expectations further, portraying Charles as the king, not only of England, Scotland and Ireland, but of the whole known world. The restored monarch enjoys control of the seas and of trade, and he commands the humility and respect of Holland, Spain and

[29] ll. 49-52.

[30] ll. 55 & 59-60.

[31] ll. 93-94.

[32] ll. 105-118.

France.[33] Waller, too, predicts Charles's thunderous presence in Europe as part of a construction which, like Dryden's, attempts to balance the king's passive virtues with more active qualities:

> This giant isle has got her eye again.
> Now she might spare the ocean, and oppose
> Your conduct to the fiercest of her foes.
> Naked, the Graces guarded you from all
> Dangers abroad; and now your thunder shall. [34]

The construction of the ideal king in Philips' two Restoration panegyrics shares much with Dryden's and Waller's representations. Like her male counterparts, Philips places a premium upon peace and mercy, and urges reconciliation between monarch and people. Dryden's assertion in 'Astraea Redux' that Charles finds 'Revenge less sweet than a forgiving mind' is strikingly similar to Philips' conviction in 'Arion on a Dolphin to his Majestie in his passadge into England' that 'Revenge to [the king] no pleasure is' (37). This declaration characterises the whole portrayal of Charles in 'Arion on a Dolphin'. In the opening lines of the poem, the serenity of Charles's voyage home, described as 'Swift as desire, and calme as peace' (4), is offered by the speaker, Arion, as a prediction of the future reign and its 'splendid smoothnesse' (8). Later such predictions become assertions. Charles is a pacific man, the speaker insists, who cannot be persuaded into acts of aggression: 'Revenge to him no pleasure is,/He spar'd their bloud who gap'd for his' (37-38). Ten lines further on, Arion invokes the king as one who pardons his foes and whose example will inaugurate peace, not only in Britain, but throughout the world:

> He onely liv'd with such successe,

[33] ll. 298-323.

[34] ll. 24-28.

That the whole world would fight with lesse.
Assistant Kings could but subdue
Those foes which he can pardon too.
He thinkes no slaughter trophyes good,
Nor lawrells dipt in subjects blood;
But with a sweet resistlesse Art
Disarmes the hand, and wins the heart;
And like a God doth rescue those
Who did themselves and him oppose. (49-58)[35]

Having constructed this paragon of pacific clemency, Arion then urges the king onward to his kingdom and his throne, instructing him to 'in your mercy brighter shine/Then in the gloryes of your line' (61-62).

In 'On the numerous accesse of the English to waite upon the King in Holland' (which, on the evidence of its central subject, would seem to have been written before 'Arion on a Dolphin'), Philips constructs the king's forgiving and conciliatory nature less directly, but with greater ingenuity, through allusion to the Biblical story of Jacob and Joseph. The allusion invokes the commonplace royalist conceit of the paternal relationship between king and people, but it also suggests how that relationship has been perverted by recent historical events. The English who are rushing to Charles's side in Holland are likened to the elderly Jacob seeking reunion with the son he thought was dead, and Charles is cast as the young Joseph, denied both father and homeland by the unnatural jealousies of his brothers (otherwise the 'close Fanatique[s]' of the Parliamentary party to whom Philips' speaker refers in line 15):

So when Old Jacob could but credit give
That his prodigious Joseph still did live,
(Joseph that was preserved to restore
Their lives, who would have taken his before)
It is enough (sayes he) to Egypt I

[35] Could Philips' 'Assistant Kings' be an oblique reference to Cromwell and his son Richard?

Will go, and see him once before I dye. (21-26)

The analogy suggests a complex web of duty, love, and obedience between monarch and people, modelled on the 'natural' ties between father and son, and brother and brother. This enables Philips to construct the recent rebellion as an 'unnatural' event, a breach in familial relations whose resolution is demanded by the powerful forces of nature and duty. The perversion of such bonds by the chaos of civil rebellion are implied in the analogy's inversion of the usual paternal relationship between king and subject; here England is the father who has failed in his duty of care towards his son-king. Since England ultimately comprehends the unkind brothers as well as the loving and repentant Jacob, both the clemency of the king and love of the loyal English will be required to heal the division in the family politic. Genesis, chapter 45 describes Joseph weeping upon his brothers' necks and declaring himself their preserver and nourisher.[36] These details (and, therefore their significance) would have been familiar to Philips' Bible-literate contemporaries. But just in case Charles doesn't get the message, Philips' speaker drives it home still further, extrapolating the implications of the analogy in pointed parenthesis.

In 'Arion on a Dolphin', Philips, like Dryden, casts Charles's period of exile as a trial of virtue, and her account also suggests, with its emphasis on the king's 'illustrious sufferings' and rejection of revenge, the example of Christ's self-command and compassion. In attesting to Charles's afflictions during the Interregnum Philips' speaker places a particularly marked emphasis upon the passive nature of the stoic ideal. The beleaguered monarch is 'compell'd' to 'bow in foreigne climes' (17-18); he is 'expos'd', 'pursu'd', 'betraid', 'beseiged', and 'provok'd' (19, 22, 31, 32). His response to these injuries is simply to suffer quietly: 'Nor ever man resisted thus', the speaker

[36] Joseph tells his brothers, 'Thou shalt dwell in the land of Goshen, and thou shalt be near unto me ... And there will I nourish thee ...' (Gen. 45. 10-11). Gen. 45. 14-15 reads: 'And he fell upon his brother Benjamin's neck, and wept ... Moreover he kissed all his brethren, and wept upon them ....' (Text from the Authorised King James Version, 1611.)

declares (33). The inherent passivity of this construction is underscored by the poem's invocation of heaven as the young king's active defender: 'Then heaven, his secret, potent friend,/Did him from Drugges and Stabbes defend' (23-24). Heaven's guard over Charles signifies, of course, the divine nature of monarchy, and marks the exiled king, even in his adversity, as God's sanctified representative on earth. But the poem's crediting 'potent' celestial powers with the defence of the king effectively denies such active courage to Charles himself and therefore undermines the king's own instrumentality.

Philips' emphasis upon stoic virtue as essentially passive is quite different from Dryden's understanding of the same kind of virtue in 'Astraea Redux'. Though Dryden agrees with Philips in seeing Charles's Interregnum struggles as the triumph of stoic fortitude over adverse Fortune, the flavour of such fortitude in Dryden's representation is undeniably vital and even macho. Dryden's speaker praises Charles's 'manly courage' (courage, in other words, that belongs to his human maleness, not to God) as the young king takes his 'wounds ... like Romans, on his breast,/Which by his Vertue were with Lawrells drest'.[37] Whereas the emotive force and focus of Philips' portrayal centres on the vocabulary of suffering, the energy of Dryden's construction lies in the heroic action demanded by such adverse fortune, action which is crowned with the laurels due to a victorious warrior. Philips' Charles rejects laurels ('He thinkes no slaughter trophyes good,/Nor lawrells dipt in subjects blood' {53-54}), and her speaker demonstrates a considerable disinclination to see the king as a Roman-style hero:

> Charles and his mighty hopes you beare:
> A greater now then Caesar's heare;
> Whose veines a richer purple boast
> Then ever Hero's yet ingrosst. (9-12)

The same doubtful attitude towards the notion of the classical hero can be found

[37] ll. 57-58.

in Philips' Coronation poem, 'On the Coronation'. While 'On the Coronation' takes the form of an epigram rather than a panegyric, it is relevant to this discussion for its contribution to Philips' construction of the monarch.[38] The poem devotes a considerable amount of space to the infamous and much narrated story of Charles's hiding from his pursuers in an oak tree after his defeat at the Battle of Worcester. Philips draws an analogy between the now sacred status of the oak (for its part in preserving the king) and the sacred trees of the faiths of times long past:

> In Ancient times, when men did heaven revere,
> The shady groves theyer Artless Temples were,
> Which by some Hero had delighted in,
> By after ages they have hallowed binne;
> Our Prince, preserved from Rebellion's Stroke,
> Did then more truly consecrate the Oake. (17-22)

The playful humour of Philips' conceit involves a diminution of the (nameless and generic) hero in comparison with the greater honour of an hereditary prince. Her 'some Hero' smacks of dismissiveness, if not contempt. The poem suggests that the oak as a symbol of consecrate divinity is more legitimate than any former symbol of virtue can be because a king has sanctified it, and '... Oaken wreaths henceforth shall only crowne / All that in Warr or peace can win renowne' (25-26).

Philips' rather negative interpretation of the concept of 'Hero' in her poems to Charles II may well be informed by poetic representations of Cromwell from the 1640s and 50s. In spite of the fact that Stuart panegyric traditionally allowed for the celebration of the king as a hero, the idea of individual, autonomous heroic action had, as we have seen, become a problematic one for Royalist discourse in view of both the

[38] It is worth noting that 'On the Coronation' exists only in one manuscript source - Bodleian Library, Oxford, MS Locke e. 17 - dating from the third quarter of the seventeenth-century. (Thomas, *Poems*, 47.) Catherine Cole Mambretti first published the poem and ascribed it to Philips in '"Fugitive Papers": A New Orinda Poem and Problems in Her Canon', *Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America*, 71 (1977), 443-52. I see no reason to argue against the ascription.

pro- and anti-Cromwellian literature that had been produced during the Interregnum. Panegyrists of the revolution and the Protectorate appropriated for Cromwell the legacy of the heroes of ancient Greece and Rome, celebrating him as a mighty military champion and accomplished statesman. In Dryden's 'Heroique Stanzas', Cromwell is remembered as having been 'Like that bold *Greek* who did the East subdue', and this heroism is invested with the qualities of tireless action and energy: Cromwell, 'made to battails such Heroick haste/As if on wings of victory he flew'.[39] In Marvell's 'First Anniversary' this kind of energy is the foundation of the new state: as Protector, Cromwell 'the force of scattered time contracts,/And in one year the work of ages acts'. Marvell contrasts such vigorous endeavour with the slothfulness of hereditary kings, who 'strive' only to leave matters to their sons since 'one thing never was by one king done'.[40] His critique perhaps deliberately invokes (and casts a slur upon) the passive, retired ideal of noble virtue developed by Royalist sympathisers in opposition to pro-Republican valorisations of individual ambition and and heroic conquest. Marvell's 'Horatian Ode' offers a much more ambiguous portrait of Cromwell than the 'First Anniversary', carefully balancing individual heroism with the forces of providence, and optimism about the new regime with respect for the old. Nevertheless, its Cromwell is a type distinct from the usual representation of the Stuart monarch: he is 'the Wars' and Fortune's son,/March[ing] indefatigably on', a 'forward youth' not 'in the shadows sing[ing]' but 'Urg[ing] his active star' 'through adventurous war'.[41] For conservative writers like Cowley (as I noted in the previous chapter), Cromwell's spurious heroism represented nothing more than the treasonous lust for power of an ungodly and dangerous social climber. Personal ambition is anathema to the stability of traditional institutions and order; true virtue rests in stillness and calm and true heroism is to suffer quietly and await the inevitable restoration of order. The complex tone of the 'Horatian

[39] 'Heroique Stanzas', ll. 50-52. Dryden's 'bold Greek' is Alexander.

[40] 'First Anniversary', ll. 13-14; ll. 21-22.

[41] 'Horatian Ode', ll. 113-114; 1-3; 11-12.

Ode' suggests that Marvell too had something of an ambivalent attitude to the man who was 'cast[ing] the kingdoms old/Into another mould'.[42] Certainly, his Cromwell, 'burn[ing] through the air' like 'three-forked lightning' rending 'palaces and temples', is no appropriate successor to an hereditary king.[43]

Though he does not absolutely reject the hero in his Restoration panegyric (he was after all responsible for portraying Charles I as a hero), Cowley's attitude towards active heroic valour in 'Upon his Majestie's Restoration and Return' comes very close to that of Philips. In the fourth stanza of his poem, Cowley names Cromwell directly, associating his legacy with the destructive action of tempests and hurricanes.[44] Later, in stanza thirteen, Cowley rewrites the meaning of heroism, and consequently denies Cromwell the name of hero:

> So when the wisest *Poets* seek,
> In all their liveliest colours, to set forth
> A Picture of Heroick worth,
> (The Pious Trojan, or the Prudent Greek)
> They chuse some comely Prince of heavenly Birth,
> (No proud Gigantick son of Earth ...)[45]

Choosing his classical examples carefully, Cowley centres heroism in piety and prudence. Cromwell's designation as a 'proud Gigantick son of Earth' not only contrasts his common origin with Charles's royal divinity, it also alludes to his sin of ambitious over-reaching. Such ambition, grotesque as the giants of classical legend, is no true heroism; Charles, the real hero, is, significantly in Cowley's moral scheme, singled out for his 'comeliness'. Like Philips, Cowley emphasises Charles's passive

[42] Ibid., ll. 35-36.

[43] Ibid., ll. 13 & 21-22.

[44] St. 4, ll. 3-8.

[45] St. 13, ll. 1-6.

suffering and defends his king, during his adversity, with '*Arms* from *Heaven*' since 'No *human Metal* is of Force t'oppose/So many and so violent blows'.[46] Finally, towards the close of the poem, Cowley invokes General Monk, rather than the king, as the epitome of virtuous military heroism: 'Who's that *Heroick Person* leads [the Restoration] on ...?' he asks, referring to Monk, and he goes on to proclaim the General, in spite of his earlier description of Charles as a type of Aeneas or Ulysses, as the most worthy subject for a new *Iliad* or *Aeneid*.[47]

Dryden's and Waller's appeals to Charles II's military and political hegemony in Europe are, like the valorisation of manly, active heroism, also reminiscent of Cromwell's idealised construction by the panegyrists of the Protectorate. In 'To my Lord Protector', for example, Waller makes an extended eulogy to Britain's increasing influence over the world, thanks to Cromwell's judicious management of war and international policy. Cromwell is invoked as 'the world's protector', and Britain as the giver of law to Europe, as well as commander of the oceans and the wealth of the new world.[48] Dryden, in the 'Heroique Stanzas', follows suit. He praises Cromwell's leadership and authority in international politics, recording the respect paid to him by Holland, France and Spain; he rejoices in Britain's control of trade in the Indies; and he declares that Cromwell made the British '*Freemen* of the *Continent*'.[49] This kind of language was not an innovation on the part of Cromwell's panegyrists. It was present in early Stuart panegyric verse and had been learnt from Pliny's oration to Trajan. Cowley, for example, in the early 1630s, makes the same claims for Charles I as panegyrists made for Cromwell:

> This noise at home was but Fate's policie,

[46] St. 14, ll. 3-4.

[47] St. 18, ll. 1 & 16-23.

[48] See ll. 33-44 & 99-108.

[49] See stanzas 20-31.

To raise our Sp'rits more high.
So a bold Lyon, ere he seeks his prey,
Lashes his sides, and roars, and then away.
How would the Germain Eagle feare,
To see a new Gustavus there?
How would it shake, though as 'twas wont to do
For Jove of old, it now bore Thunder too!
Sure there are actions of this height and praise
Destined to Charls his days.
What will the Triumphs of his Battels be,
Whose very Peace it self is Victorie?[50]

It does seem likely, however, that Dryden and Waller were consciously appropriating something of the glories of the Protectorate for their vision of Britain under the new Stuart king.[51] Certainly Dryden's account of Charles II's international prestige in 'Astraea Redux' echoes his praise of Cromwell's achievements in the 'Heroique Stanzas'. Dryden, after all, had practised such rhetoric under the Protectorate; Cromwell had been the man whose life had first inspired his heroic pen, and the Charles II of 'Astraea Redux' certainly owes much to the Cromwell of the 'Heroique Stanzas'. Furthermore, unlike Cowley's hopes for military heroics under Charles I,

[50] 'On his Majestie's Return out of Scotland' ("Miscellanies", 1656), stanzas 7 & 8.

[51] They also borrowed from the stock of Royalist rhetoric for their constructions of Cromwell. In the 'Heroique Stanzas', Dryden, whose politics, even in 1659, were far more conservative than Marvell's, attempts to marry his retrospective glorification of Cromwell's personal (revolutionary) heroism with elements of a more traditional discourse of rule and government. Thus the familiar tropes and conceits of Stuart panegyric weave their way through Dryden's construction of the Protector. In the tenth stanza for example, Dryden denies that Cromwell was ambitious and ascribes his rise to power as the 'unsought rewards' of approving heaven: '*Dominion* was not his Designe' (37-40). Cromwell is also made to inherit the *rex pacificus* role of James and Charles: 'He fought to end our fighting,' Dryden's speaker avers, and 'Peace was the Prize of all his toyles and care' (47, 61). And finally, he is bestowed with the Stuart talent for softening awe-inspiring power with paternal affection for the people: his face 'Did Love and Majesty together blend' (72). A similar attempt to insert Cromwell into the traditional political order is made by Waller in 'To my Lord Protector'. Waller's Cromwell demonstrates both 'power and piety', he represses ambition, and he 'heal[s]' England 'with the acts of peace' (124, 12, 110). More strikingly still, Waller positions Cromwell explicitly within a line of patriotic English monarchs: Edward III, the Black Prince, and Henry V (69-72). Though such kings have little to do with the legacy of the Stuarts, Waller's use of them signifies his conservative need to normalise Cromwell as a figure of supreme power and to diminish the radical or revolutionary implications of the Protectorate.

Dryden's invocation of Charles II's heroic exploits seem (from a post-Restoration perspective) to characterise something of the attitude of the age or at least of the age's literature. It is an attitude which Dryden formalises in his dedication of *The Conquest of Granada* to the Duke of York in 1672:

> Heroique Poesie has always been sacred to princes, and heroes. ... 'Tis indeed, but justice, that the most excellent and profitable kind of writing, should be addressed by Poets to such persons whose characters have ... been the guides and patterns of their imitation ... . [T]hat kind of Poesy, which excites to vertue the greatest men, is of greatest use to humane kind.[52]

Philips was familiar with the panegyric's conventional appeal to patriotic visions of military glory under a fearless king, and she duly invokes the same in the closing lines of 'Arion on a Dolphin' where Charles is figured as the enemy of Catholicism (and therefore, by implication, all anti- or un-English interests) and England as the dominant world nation:

> Th'united world will you allow
> Their Cheife, to whom the English bow,
> ... Discover'd Rome will hate your crowne,
> But she shall tremble at your frowne:
> For England shall (rul'd and restor'd by you)
> The suppliant world protect, or else subdue. (65 - 74)

The timbre of these final lines, however, is quite at odds with the portrait of Charles II which precedes them. In the context of Charles's idealised passivity, they come as something of a surprise, and mark an abrupt change of mood and direction. There has been no balance of passive and active heroism in the long passage which Philips devotes to Charles's construction and nothing which prepares the reader for the king's

[52]John Dryden, *Works*, vol. 11, 3.

political aggression. The passage reads as a conflict between Philips' observance of the conventions of panegyric and her philosophy of kingly virtue. Indeed, rather than being interested in her country's potential as a world power, Philips is more engaged with a nostalgia for its past. In lines 13 and 14, her speaker invokes the memory of the martyred Charles I and explicitly allies the new king with the legacy of his father. Charles II is envisaged, 'Sprung from a father so august,/He triumphs in his very dust'. There are two possible referents for the masculine pronoun at the beginning of line 14: Charles I and Charles II. Just who is triumphing here, then, is open to debate. Although the panegyric is ostensibly celebrating the restoration of Charles II, it is possible to read line 14 as a celebration of Charles I's victory through the person of his son, an assertion which collapses the new king onto the old and shows Philips, as a nascent spokesperson for the new regime, looking back to a mythologised past in order to construct that new regime.

Once again Philips' construction bears comparison with Cowley's. In the twelfth stanza of 'Upon his Majestie's Restoration and Return' Cowley addresses Charles II directly and affirms that 'Thy *Royal Father's* come at last'; he goes on to offer the new king's exile as a form of 'Martyrdom' comparable to that suffered by his father.[53] Cowley's allusions to the martyred Charles I in this stanza are accompanied by Christological references to Charles II's afflictions. In an elaborate conceit, Cowley imagines the restored king as a medallion upon one side of which God has stamped 'The *Image* of his *suffering Humanity*'.[54] Charles in his exile, in other words, is a type of Christ. The nostalgic and Christological aspects of Cowley's representation work together. Following his execution, Royalist eulogy and propaganda had swiftly and successfully made of Charles I an image of the suffering Saviour. The frontispiece engraving to the hugely influential *Eikon Basilike* portrayed Charles on his knees in prayer accepting a crown of thorns in exchange for his earthly crown of gold. The text

[53] St. 12, ll. 11-12.

[54] St. 12, l. 18.

itself often put the words of Christ into the king's mouth: 'when Thy wrath is appeased by my death,' Charles entreats God in one of many similar passages, 'O remember Thy great mercies towards [the people], O my Father, for they know not what they do'.[55]

Because of his legacy as a type of the martyred Christ, Philips' allusions to Charles I in 'Arion on a Dolphin' amplify the implicitly Christological nature of her construction of Charles II, which in turn reinforces the essentially nostalgic flavour of her representation of the returned king. A similar value for the past is evident in Rachel Jevon's construction of Charles II in her Restoration panegyric, 'Exultationes Carmen, To the Kings Most Excellent Majesty Upon his Most Desired Return'.[56] Jevon twice invokes the restored Charles as the reincarnation of his executed Christ-like father. Early in the poem he is hailed as 'The living Image of our Martyr'd King,/For us His People freely suffering', and this idea is restated towards the close of the poem where God is praised for having 'Highly Enthron'd Him in His Fathers stead'.[57] Jevon's representation of Charles's trials during the Interregnum makes use of elaborate pastoral and mythical language that is very suggestive of the Caroline masque. Charles, for example, is accompanied in his exile by numerous classical deities - Aeolus, Neptune, Druina - as well as a host of heavenly angels, all of whom attend to his well-being. Philips' use of the figure of Arion, riding upon the back of a dolphin, as her speaker in 'Arion on a Dolphin' similarly evokes the language and imagery of the masques of Charles I's court. Such discourse connects with a past era and is quite different from the rhetoric of manly heroic virtue employed by Dryden and ultimately defined by him as the mode of the new age.

The nostalgia that informs Philips', Cowley's, and Jevon's constructions of the

[55] Knachel, ed. *Eikon Basilike*, 38.

[56] I am grateful to Jane Stevenson at the University of Warwick for bringing this panegyric to my attention and for providing me with a transcript of the poem. Jevon composed parallel Latin and English versions of her ambitious panegyric. The text can be found in the Bodleian Library and now in the Stevenson and Davidson anthology, *Early Modern Women Poets*. Almost nothing is known of Jevon's life.

[57] ll. 17-18 & l. 182 respectively.

king in their panegyrics potentially places the poems in an awkward relation to the new regime which they purport to endorse. In Philips' panegyrics such awkwardness is manifest in other ways too. For instance, both of her Restoration addresses to Charles predate the king's return to England, and neither brings him home to his native soil. In 'Arion on a Dolphin', Charles's progress towards England, though 'Swift as Desire' (4), is, in fact, halted by the poem; his arrival is deferred, fixed by the speaker Arion forever in the moment of anticipation. A distance between monarch and poet/speaker is also established in 'On the numerous accesse'. Although the poem describes (in gloriously exaggerated terms) the migration of the loyal English to the king in Holland following the announcement of a Restoration, it does so from the perspective of an onlooker and not a participant. The speaker refers to the migrating English with the third person pronoun: 'To thee they flock, Thy presence is their home' (3). The apparent fixity of the speaker, who is by default a loyal subject, exists in tension with the theme of the panegyric, which offers the movement of the English migrants as the evidence of their loyalty.

Philips' Coronation poems also manifest an uneasy relationship with the subject they claim to treat. In his biography of Philips, Souers suggests that Katherine was present in London to witness the public parts of Charles's Coronation, including his progress through the city streets to Whitehall on 22nd April. Pepys has left us a very detailed account of these parts of the ceremony, and Dryden's 'To His Sacred Majesty, A Panegyrick on His Coronation' describes the event with the eye of an actual observer, detailing, for example, the responses of the people to Charles's cavalcade, and the sounds of the music and singing that accompanied the king's anointing. Neither of Philips' two poems on the Coronation include any details that would suggest she was an observer of these rites. 'On the faire weather at the Coronacon', focuses, as the title suggests, on the activity of the skies rather than the events of the Coronation itself. The poem attempts to give a positive meaning to the thunderstorm which followed the Coronation ceremony. It succeeds (by casting the thunder as heaven's answer to the

celebratory fireworks on earth), but it has nothing to say about the king, the other dignatories or the ceremony. 'On the Coronation' is similarly silent on these matters. While the speaker begins by invoking the presence of the king: 'Hee comes; whose brows though for a crowne soe fit,/Wounder and virtue have more crowend it' (1-2), less than ten lines later she shifts her attention away from the present occasion to events of the past. The remainder of the poem is devoted to an account of Charles's escape after the Battle of Worcester. The details of this escape had quickly become part of Royalist folklore, and the newly restored Charles apparently loved to repeat the tale, but the story nevertheless reads as a something of a distraction in a poem entitled 'On the Coronation'.

Souers may well be wrong in assuming Philips' witnessed the Coronation procession, or she may have seen it and preferred instead, as lines seven to ten of 'On the Coronation' suggest, to write a contemplation on virtues which far exceed in worth the gaudy show of state pomp and ritual:

> The ceremony dazzels vulgare eyes,
> But he appeared more glorious to the wise
> When hee, in Worc'ter's fatall day secured,
> Was crowned with safty and with clouds immur'd.

Philips' focus upon the inner qualities of the king over the rites and splendours of his place is a perfectly conventional aspect of Royalist rhetoric: the personal virtues of the monarch must always outweigh and therefore justify the otherwise purely fortunate circumstance of his royal birth. But in turning to Worcester to invoke these qualities, Philips draws on the same nostalgia that pervades 'Arion on a Dolphin', and distances the monarch in time in a way that is complementary to the distancing of him in space in both 'Arion on a Dolphin' and 'On the numerous accesse'.

During the Interregnum, Philips had developed an essentially conservative view

of what constitutes heroic virtue, centred on the pacific and passive endurance of sorrow and tribulation and on a strength manifest in resistance rather than action. Her ideal king conforms to this model and, therefore, to the model of his suffering father before him. Dryden's creative, progressive and undeniably masculine version of heroic virtue is absent from Philips' construction of Charles II, and her only appeal to the king's obligatory role as a military giant is unconvincing. Dryden's version of heroism marks the dominant literary genre of the Restoration period, however: the English heroic drama. It is a genre which Philips, in spite of her nostalgic panegyrics, went on to embrace (and, to some extent, pioneer) with her translation of Pierre Corneille's *La Mort de Pompée.*

One final observation about the distance between monarch and speaker as it is created specifically in the poem 'On the numerous accesse' provides a useful link into the following two chapters. Although the speaker of 'On the numerous accesse' is not explicitly gendered, and in spite of the fact that the public voice is conventionally masculine, it is tempting to read the speaker's fixity as a sign of the gendered condition of the poet herself. The speaker's marginality to events - her role as onlooker rather than participant - suggests the position of the seventeenth-century woman with regard to politics and the state. The next two chapters examine how Philips' constructions of female virtue engage with this conventional understanding of a woman's role.

Chapter 4

"Behold her self!": the good woman of the occasional poetry

Following the death of her mother-in-law, Anne, on 1st January 1663, Katherine Philips celebrated her life in a moving epitaph, 'On my honour'd Mother in Law: Mrs Philips of Portheynon in Cardigan=shire' (82). The warm and touching tone of the poem is suggested by the rather elegant opening lines:

> Reader, stay, it is but Just;
> Thou dost not tread on common dust,
> For underneath this Stone does ly
> One whose name can never dy.... (1-4)

In form and sentiment Philips' poem is remarkably similar to Ben Jonson's epitaphs on departed noble women, in particular his 'Epitaph on Elizabeth, L. H.' and 'Epitaph on Katherine, Lady Ogle.'[1] All three poems are written in lines of eight syllables with the clipped shortness of each line suitably conveying a restrained grief and delicacy of tone. In addition to a shared metre, Philips' tribute to her mother-in-law and Jonson's poem on Lady Ogle employ a similar vocabulary of female goodness. Both pay homage to their subjects' virtue, and both position that virtue in the context of domestic life. Jonson's opening couplets address Lady Ogle's 'Children and Grand-children', exhorting them to 'Transmit' the memory of their mother and grandmother to their

[1] The identity of 'Elizabeth, L. H.' is not known for certain. Philips' may have had the opening of this epitaph in mind when she came to compose her tribute to Anne Philips. It begins:

> Would'st thou heare, what man can say
> In a little? Reader, stay.
> Under-neath this stone doth lye
> As much beautie, as could dye: (1-4)

Katherine, Lady Ogle was made Baroness Ogle in 1628. She died in 1629. (Jonson, *The Complete Poems*, 559).

own families and households as the 'volume ... of all faemale glory'.[2] The epitaph goes on to immortalise her as 'The best of Woemen! her whole life/Was the example of a wife!'.[3] Philips likewise measures the meaning of her mother-in-law's life in terms of her conjugal and domestic roles. 'To another matched young' (6), Anne Philips 'Was thirty seaven yeares of her life/A vertuous, prudent, humble Wife' (9-10), and, after the death of her husband, 'An honourable widdow liv'd/Full fower and twenty yeares ...' (14-15). Philips celebrates the marriage between her mother- and father-in-law as a happy and fruitful one, describing their fifteen children as 'fifteen pledges of their Love' (12). The poem also hints, apparently approvingly, at the essentially hierarchical gender relationship that lies within this economy of bliss and fecundity. The more subservient, self-effacing nature of Anne Philips' feminine role is suggested by the epithet 'humble' attached to 'Wife' (10), and illustrated by her exclusive interest in her husband's well-being: she is commended for being a woman who 'ever sought' her husband's 'happiness' (7).

Jonson's portrait of Lady Ogle and Philips' of her mother-in-law subscribe to an ideal of female virtue which was much exalted and tirelessly repeated in the religious and socially prescriptive literature of the period. A recent sourcebook of Early Modern writings on women, edited by Kate Aughterson, includes extracts from an impressive number of prescriptive texts written largely, though not exclusively, by English Protestant or Puritan preachers, and in a variety of genres, from the catechism, to the sermon, to the compendious volume of domestic relationships and duties.[4] The earliest of the texts in Aughterson's anthology is Henry Bullinger's *The Christian state of matrimony* from 1541, the latest (and perhaps the most comprehensive - certainly the most loquacious - of Early Modern conduct manuals) is William Gouge's *Of Domesticall*

[2] ll. 1-8. Text from Jonson, *The Poems*, ed. Percy and Simpson.

[3] ll. 11-12. Ibid.

[4] Kate Aughterson, ed., *Renaissance Woman: A Sourcebook, Constructions of Femininity in England* (London: Routledge, 1995).

Duties which was published in 1622. Both of these texts, and the many similar publications that appeared during the years in between, went through numerous editions.[5] Their readership and popular influence extended well into the latter half of the seventeenth century; their ideals were repeated in the poetry of the period (as we have seen), in Early Modern biographies and autobiographies, in private letters and journals, and in the advice literature composed by parents to their daughters.[6] Though the years from 1540 to the end of the 1600s saw considerable developments and revolutions in religious and political thinking, developments which created profound schisms within the Protestant tradition that writers such as Bullinger and Gouge are affiliated with, the essential model of good female conduct that came out of this tradition remained remarkably consistent. The good woman, the prescriptive literature taught, is, ultimately, a humble and obedient wife; she is subject to the authority and will of her husband; her proper sphere is the conjugal home where she concerns herself exclusively with domestic duties. The much quoted editor ("T. E.") of *The Law's resolution of women's rights* (1632) shows how women's legal status in seventeenth-century England supported and reflected this domestic ideal. '[Women] make no laws, consent to none, they abrogate none,' he writes. 'All of them are understood either married or to be married, and their desires are subject to their husband'. He adds that, 'The common law here shaketh hand with divinity'.[7]

The constructions of exemplary, virtuous women that Philips makes in the

[5] Bullinger's *The Christian State of Matrimony* went through eight editions in the hundred years after its first publication. Aughterson notes that '[his] writing was extremely popular amongst continental and English reforming Protestants' (106). Gouge's *Of Domesticall Duties* went through three editions between 1622 and 1634.

[6] Bridget Hill's anthology, *Eighteenth Century Women* (London: Routledge,1993), shows that, in spite of a growing sense of sisterhood and the appearance of strong proto-feminist writers like Mary Astell (at the beginning of the century) and Mary Wollstonecraft (towards its end), the model of ideal femininity changed very little in the 1700s from the model promoted during the 1600s. If anything, developing notions of 'natural' masculinity and femininity (grounded in new medical understandings of the gendered body) drew the boundaries between acceptable and appropriate male behaviour and female behaviour even more rigidly.

[7] From the text as printed in Aughterson, *Renaissance Woman*, 153.

occasional poems dedicated to female relations and acquaintances, and to the worthy women of important families in South West Wales, tend to subscribe to some degree to the values of the Protestant conduct literature. In the epitaph on Anne Philips, the domestic ideal perhaps plays a larger, and more emphatic, role than it does in Philips' other poems on or to exemplary women, but aspects of the conventional model of femininity may be traced in all of her idealised female subjects. Philips repeatedly pays tribute, for example, to her subjects' 'sweetness'. This quality seems to epitomise the essence of femininity in the seventeenth-century, so ubiquitous is it in the period's eulogies to women.[8] It reinforces the notion of female delicacy and the softness of the female form and nature which underpins many of the conduct text pronouncements on the natural weakness (mental and physical) of women. Philips' elegy for her step-daughter Frances, 'In memory of F. P. who dyed at Acton 24 May. 1660 - 13th of her age' (30), commemorates the girl's 'Sweetness unforced, and bashfulnesse untaught' (58); Elizabeth Ker, the subject of Philips' 'To the Rt Hono: the Lady E.C.' (45), possesses a 'bright sweetnesse' which 'Reclaimes the bad, and softens the austere' (71-72); the elegy 'In memory of the most Justly honour'd Mrs Owen of Orielton' (63) sums up its subject in the final line as 'Prudent and good, noble and sweet' (64), and the speaker of 'In Memory of Mrs. E. Hering' (67) regrets that the 'untimely grave' has entombed Mrs Hering's 'sweetness now, and wonders yet to come' (6).[9] In addition to repeatedly

[8] It is also the term used to describe the essential femininity of Katherine Philips' poetry in the criticism written immediately after her death.

[9] The title of the poem to 'the Lady E. C.' in the professional manuscript of Philips' works prepared for Rosania identifies the subject as 'my Lady Elizabeth Carre'. She was daughter to Robert Ker, first Earl of Ancrum and his second wife, Lady Anne Stanley, daughter of William, Earl of Derby. Thomas notes that Philips' maternal uncle, Clement Oxenbridge, 'appears to have acted as a London agent for the Ker family'. He is first mentioned by Lady Elizabeth in a letter written on 31 August, 1649 (*Poems*, 354). Mrs Owen of Orielton was Dorothy, daughter of Rowland Laugharne, and wife of John Owen. She was the mother of Sir Hugh Owen, the father-in-law and step-father of Anne Owen (Lucasia) (*Poems*, 364-365). The identity of 'Mrs E. Hering' is uncertain. Thomas proposes that she may have been the wife of Capt. John Hering, 'a political associate' of James Philips, 'and a Quaker or Quaker sympathiser' (*Poems*, 367). If Thomas is right, and if Mrs Hering's beliefs were the same as her husband's, the elegy may be another example of Philips' happily incorporating political and religious radicals into her conservative model of virtue.

invoking this conventional female quality, Philips' also pays regular tribute to her married subjects' devotion as wives and mothers. Just as she praised Anne Philips' wifely virtue, so she commends Mrs Mary Lloyd, Anne Owen's maternal grandmother, for 'Justly ... mix[ing] Obedience, Love and Care' in her behaviour towards her husband ('In memory of that excellent person Mrs. Mary Lloyd of Bododrist in Denbighshire, who dy'd the 13th of November 1656, soon after she came thither from Pembrokeshire', poem 31, l. 28). This combination of virtues reflects the primary duties of the Protestant good wife within an ideal conjugal relationship that attempts to reconcile mutual affection with female subjection. Mary Lloyd also appears to epitomise T. E.'s assessment of women's legal identity ('All of them are understood either married or to be married'): she is described as having been 'in either state of Life,/meek as a Virgin, prudent as a wife' (25-26). While no mention is made of Mrs Hering's relations with her husband, the account of her departure from the world is marked by the self-effacing virtues of the seventeenth-century female ideal: 'silent and retir'd, calme and serene', she 'Stol'st to [her] blessed Haven hardly seen' (33-34).

In general, however, Philips' portraits of exemplary women do not remain within the confines of the conduct book model. Her constructions draw on other discourses which tend to problematise, subvert, or broaden the narrow scope of virtue conventionally allowed to modest, domestic femininity. The most important of these are the discourse of nobility, with its language of stoic fortitude and restraint, and the Platonic tropes of divine transcendence. The politics of Philips' use of stoic ideas were discussed in chapter 2 with regard to her representations of male virtue. In that chapter I suggested that all of Philips' portraits of noble virtue conform to a broadly consistent moral norm, regardless of the political allegiance of her subject. This norm also largely disregards gender, and it would have been perfectly possible to have included Philips' good women in the discussion of the politics of her 'great ... immortal man'. (The ideal subject of Philips' 'La Grandeur d'esprit' for example may be read, with the exception perhaps of the references to his military prowess, as a generic figure, with 'man'

standing for 'human'.) Philips habitually admires the stoic constancy of her female subjects. Mrs Hering, for instance, is remembered for having always been 'Indifferent to the world' (22) and for possessing an 'even mind'; 'On all the tumults which the world do fill' she was 'an unconcern'd spectator still' (19-29). Sometimes such virtues are given a politically suggestive context. Mary Lloyd's admired retirement seems distinctly Cavalier in nature, and the world's tumults which incite it particularly contemporary:

> And since she knew the mad Tumultuous world,
> Saw Crowns revers'd, and Temples to ruine hurl'd;
> She in Retirement chose to shine and burne
> As Ancient Lampes in some Egiptian Urne. (87-90)

Similarly, Mrs Owen of Orielton, 'To chosen virtue still a constant Friend', 'unmov'd beheld the angry Fate/Which tore a church, and overthrew a State' (29, 33-34).

However, though Philips' models of male and female nobility are broadly the same, their cultural significance at a time when the binary polarities between male and female, masculine and feminine, were becoming increasingly rigidly defined, are arguably quite different. It means one thing to represent an heroic man as the epitome of an ideology and the pattern for a political order, as Philips does in the poems to Henry Lawes and Francis Finch (urging the former 'our Age to new=create' and praising the latter for 'protect[ing] a vertue' [friendship] and thereby 'sav[ing] a world').[10] It means another to make the same claim for a woman, as she does in her address to Alice, Countess of Carberry (to name one example), where the subject is portrayed as the rescuer of her newly adopted home of Wales, and is credited with 'Worth to recruit the dying world againe' ('To the right Honbl. Alice, Countess of Carberry, on her enriching Wales with her presence', poem 13, ll. 5-8 & 30). This

[10] 'To the truly noble Mr Henry Lawes', l.39; 'To the noble Palaemon on his incomparable discourse of Friendship', l. 28.

chapter examines how Philips' language of stoic nobility interacts with the language of conduct book female virtue, and how both the discourse of nobility and Platonic transcendence enable her female poetic heroes to move beyond the confines of the domestic standard, while still apparently retaining the qualities of a culturally approved femininity. It begins with an examination and comparison of the language of restraint and self-denial which underpins both the stoic notion of virtue and the clerical model of the good wife.

Two immutables of woman's divinely ordained social role repeat themselves across the corpus of Early Modern conduct literature: that she is subject to the authority of her husband (the texts, as I suggested above, are almost exclusively concerned with women as wives), and that this subjection involves and necessitates her confinement - symbolically and, to a considerable extent, literally - to the domestic sphere. When William Whately introduces his wedding sermon, *A Bride-bush*, published in 1617, with the declaration, 'I will make the ground of all my speech, those words of the Apostle *Paul*, Ephes. 5. 23. where he saith, *The Husband is the Wives head*', he is speaking not only for his own text but for the genre of Protestant conduct literature in general.[11] The full text of Paul's dictum upon the status of wives includes the important notion of submission:

> Wives, submit yourselves unto your husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour. Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let wives be to their own husbands in everything.[12]

Submission constitutes the act of resigning one's will to a greater power and authority, of willingly accepting one's subjection. This voluntary act of passivity is much

[11] William Whately, *A Bride-bush, or A Wedding Sermon*, (1617), The English Experience (Norwood, N. J.: Walter J. Johnson, 1975), 1. Whately also speaks, of course, for the whole of Christendom.

[12] Ephesians 5. 22-24. (Text from the Authorised King James Version, 1611.)

emphasised by the clerical writers on wifely virtue. William Gouge,in his *Of Domesticall Duties*, affirms that '*Subjection*' forms 'the generall matter of all' a wife's duties and responsibilities 'under which all other particulars are comprised'. 'Their very opinion, affection, speech, action, and all that concerneth the husband, must savour of *subjection*,' he insists, for a wife who is not 'truly perswaded' of her own inferiority cannot perform her duties as she ought.[13] Whately demands that 'the wives judgement must be convinced that she is not her husband's equall'. Without this conviction, 'there can bee no contentment, either in her heart or in her house'. To assist in the attainment of this contentment, Whately offers the would be good wife the following instruction:

> ... set downe this with thy selfe. *Mine husband is my superior, my better;* he hath authority and rule over mee: Nature hath given it him, having framed our bodies to tendernes, mens to more hardnesse. God hath given it to him, saying to our first mother *Evah, Thy desire shalbe subject to him, and he shall rule over thee.* His will is the tye and tedder even of my desires and wishes. I will not strive against GOD and nature. Though my sinne hath made my place tedious, yet I will conferre the truth, *Mine husband is my superior, my better.*[14]

Whately's appropriation of the female voice here renders his message more compelling and immediate than the more usual third person account of female submission. We hear the good wife repeating the mantra of her subjection, affirming it to be 'the truth' that is decreed by the powerful combined forces of God and nature, and which requires that she relinquish all her own 'desires and wishes'. Her inclination to 'strive against' her given lot is demonstrably futile, since to do so would be to struggle against both the divine order and the order of the natural world. Her autonomy is rendered null and void.

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[13] William Gouge, *Of Domesticall Duties*, (1622), The English Experience (Norwood, N. J.: Walter J. Johnson, 1976), 6, 269 & 270.

[14] Whately, *A Bride-bush*, 36.

The psychological prescriptions that 'tye and tedder' Whately's good wife to the will of her husband have their spatial equivalent. Daniel Rogers, for example, asserts that, 'A chaste wife hath her eyes open, ears watching, heart attending upon the welfare of her family ... this rivets her into the house ...'.[15] Like the 'tye' and 'tedder' employed by Whately, Rogers' 'rivets' admirably conveys the bonds of restraint governing his ideal woman, confining her here to the physical realm of the home. In *A Preparative to Mariage* (1591), Henry Smith proposes some basic etymology to prove that the house is the appropriate place for a wife. He observes that 'wee call the Wife, *Huswife*, that is house wife, not a street wife ... nor a field wife, but a house wife, to shew that a good wife keepes her house'.[16] He emphasises his point with a reference to the classical artist Phidias, who, he tells us, 'when he should paint a Woman, painted her sitting under a Snailes shell; signifying that she should goe like a Snaile, which carrieth his house upon his back'.[17] One important corollary of this domesticity is women's status as private beings, excluded from public affairs. Gouge emphasises that women 'are not admitted to any publike function in Church or common-wealth', although he invites his reader to consider their 'conscionable performance of household duties' 'a publike work' in so far as the raising of children perpetuates the male body politic.[18]

The snail that Phidias uses to symbolise domestic woman turns up with a different symbolic meaning in George Wither's *A Collection of Emblemes, Ancient and Moderne* of 1635. Wither's publication, as its title suggests, brings together an impressive number of emblematic engravings (two hundred in total), each bearing a moral lesson which Wither expounds in accompanying (and often less than graceful)

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[15] Quoted in Anthony Fletcher, *Gender, Sex and Subordination in England 1500-1800* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1995), 120.

[16] Henry Smith, *A Preparative to Mariage*, (1591), The English Experience (Norwood, N. J.: Walter J. Johnson, 1975), 85.

[17] Smith, *Preparative to Mariage*, 80.

[18] Gouge, *Domesticall Duties*, 18.

rhyming couplets. The purport of many of the emblems testifies to the prevalence of stoic themes in the moral and didactic literature of the period. Emblems appear which teach, for example, such stoic truths as 'The Man that hath true Wisdome got,/Continues firme, and wavers not', and 'No Inward Griefe, nor outward Smart,/Can overcome a Patient-Heart'.[19] The snail appears as the central motif in an engraving illustrating the adage, 'When thou a Dangerous-Way dost goe,/Walke surely, though thy pace be slowe'. The engraving depicts the snail crossing a rather precarious looking bridge; in the background a river or harbour is depicted bordering a thriving city. The emblem signifies, according to Wither's verse explication, the necessity of the (stoic) virtues of 'Perseverance' and 'Continuence', and it warns against 'Haste' and 'Rashnesse'. Though the snail's shell, which was the focus of Phidias' symbolic image of the housewife, is of no significance in Wither's snail emblem, the shell of another creature in a different engraving in Wither's collection is, and its meaning provides an interesting comparison with the Phidias painting. The engraving illustrates the motto, 'I beare about mee, all my store;/And, yet, a King enjoyes not more'" and depicts a tortoise, apparently resting contentedly by the banks of a river which leads to a small collection of homely looking buildings clustered around a church. The tortoise, as Wither's verse makes clear, represents the stoic self-sufficient man:

> This *Emblem* is a *Torteise*, whose owne shell
> Becomes that *house*, where he doth rent-free dwell;
> And, in what place soever hee resides,
> His *Arched-Lodging*, on his backe abides.
> ... For which respects, the *Torteise* represents
> That man, who in himselfe, hath full contents;
> And (by the *Vertues* lodging in his minde)
> Can all things needfull, in all places, finde.[20]

[19] George Wither, *A Collection of Emblemes, Ancient and Moderne*, The Renaissance English Text Society (The Newberry Library, Columbia, S. C.: University of South Carolina Press, 1975), 2 & 28.

[20] Ibid., 86. The snail appears again, later in the collection, symbolising a similar self-sufficiency, though this time with an emphasis on being happy with a humble estate (222).

This striking correspondence between contemporary symbolic representations of the domestic woman and the stoic self-possessed man is to be found on the level of language too. Just as the good wife is taught the necessity of submission to the authority of her husband, so the nobly suffering stoic hero learns to submit himself to the demands of fortune or divine providence. The tranquillity of contentment, which Joseph Hall recommends in his *Remedy of Discontentment*, is the reward of the man who has learned meekly to undergo the trials of human existence; it is equally the reward of the quietly submissive wife. As Whately avers, without the wife's true acceptance of her place 'there can be no contentment, either in her heart or in her house'. Neither is the good wife the only member of Early Modern society counselled to restrain her desires. Richard Burton, in his *Anatomy of Melancholy*, encourages the wise man and good Christian to restrain his will and wishes, for 'to desire nothing is godlike'.[21] Owen Fellltham, in *Resolves*, affirms the necessity of the 'restraint of our wills' and declares that 'the *spirituall man* looks on the flourishes of this life with pittie, not desire'.[22]

The socially conservative nature of the stoic ideal was discussed in chapter 2. Perhaps it is not surprising that a discourse which aims to maintain a 'divinely ordered' hierarchy in which one class of men is subject to the superiority of another should also be found in a literature which aims to convince one sex of their divinely decreed inferiority to the other. Out of the hands of the clerics, however, and in the literature of the more rarefied culture of the aristocracy and court, the discourse of stoic fortitude attains an heroic grandeur and illustriousness missing from Christian injunctions to contentment and humility. For example, in Richard Brathwait's text on the conduct of the noble man, *The English Gentleman* (1630), a text which Maren-Sofie Røstvig positions firmly within the tradition of neo-stoic thought, the ideal gentleman is characterised as one who can cheerfully and willingly subdue his own desires. This quality is marked as a peculiarly aristocratic one, however, denoting social greatness. Those men of a truly

[21] Burton, *Melancholy*, 521.

[22] Fellltham, *Resolves*, 332 & 391.

'princely disposition', Brathwait writes, 'esteeme it the most glorious conquest to be subduers of theire own wills'.[23] The language invokes the heroic splendour of aristocratic male power, 'glorious conquest', suggesting an analogy between the control of the will and the kind of military courage traditionally ascribed to the brave nobleman. An important distinction between this ideal and the self-denial required of the domestic good wife is the identity of the higher power to which or to whom the will and desires are subject. In the male-centred stoic philosophy the power often invoked is reason, a virtue which the Christian admirers of stoicism regarded as a defining quality of God and as the divine part of man. In the Protestant tradition of the good woman the authority is, as we have seen, the husband. Standing in Christ's stead, endowed with his own powers of reason, the authority of the husband speaks for woman's irrationality, her weaker understanding. Consequently, while the submission required by the stoic code stands for a dignified strength of character and an admirable demonstration of self-possession, the submission demanded of the good wife necessitates an admission of weakness and the loss of self.

Elements of the glorified stoic ideal usually ascribed to male nobility can be found in Brathwait's representation of the noble woman in his companion volume to *The English Gentleman, The English Gentlewoman,* a text which he dedicated to Lady Arabella Wentworth, the wife of the Earl of Strafford.[24] On fundamentals Brathwait's portrait of the ideal gentlewoman agrees with the clerics' construction of the good wife. He clearly subscribes to the view that women are the weaker sex, more likely than men to be slaves to their imperfect natures, 'subject ... to lapses and recidivations, being left

[23] Richard Brathwait, *The English Gentleman,* (1630), The English Experience (Norwood, N. J.: Walter J. Johnson, 1975), 96. Brathwait, the son of a barrister, matriculated from Oxford as gentleman's son. He went on to study law at Cambridge and then moved to London where he began to write verse and drama. Following his father's death, he settled on his estates in Westmoreland from where he continued to write and publish. During the Civil Wars he appears to have served on the royalist side. *The English Gentleman* is dedicated to Thomas Viscount Wentworth, Earl of Strafford.

[24] Richard Brathwait, *The English Gentlewoman,* (1631), The English Experience (Amsterdam and New York: De Capo Press, 1970). (*The English Gentleman* and *The English Gentlewoman* were republished as a single volume in 1641.)

their owne Guardians'.[25] He makes 'modesty' the watchword of all the good gentlewoman's thoughts and actions, and, whenever marital relations are the theme of his pen, he urges the noble wife to remember her inferiority and to tender her husband his due obedience and reverence. 'Contest not with your *head* for preeminence,' he warns her, 'you came from him, not he from you, honour him then', and he supports this domestic subjection with an unambiguous assertion of women's exclusion from the business of state and church, contending that, 'To discourse of State-matters, will not become your auditory: nor to dispute of high poynts of Divinity'.[26] But Brathwait only rarely speaks of the gentlewoman as a wife; the husband is, indeed, largely absent from his text, and so is Paul's letter to the Ephesians.[27] Brathwait is less concerned with the wifely duties of his subject than with her duties as a noble woman, and what emerges from his text is the portrait of a person rather than a wife, a person who is, admittedly, defined by her sex, but one who is given some measure of autonomy in negotiating her social and sexual circumstances. She appears to stand face to face with God, rather than in the shadow of her Christ-like spouse, and her confinement to the home and to domestic duties is less absolute. Her social status places demands upon her which require her appearance in the wider public realm and her participation in the circles of the governing classes. Brathwait's occasional advocacy for female silence and his repeated emphasis on modesty as 'Woman's chiefest Ornament' is offset by his construction of the gentlewoman as a peculiarly visible creature, an object of emulation for 'Many eyes ... and many hearts'.[28] He balances his estimation of her weakness with harsher descriptions of men as the naturally more immoral sex, and he expresses confidence in the essentially 'vertuous dispositions' with which gentlewomen have been

[25] Ibid., 42.

[26] Ibid., 40 & 90 respectively.

[27] Indeed when Brathwait refers to the good gentlewoman as a bride it is to her marriage with Christ in eternity: this is her 'Nuptiall day' and for this she wears her 'WEDDING GARMENT' (175).

[28] Ibid., 50 & 25 respectively.

'grac'd' by 'nature'.[29] Often this nature is allowed to possess virtues conventionally ascribed to men, such as reason, temperance and valour. 'Be it your glory to improve your Countryes fame,' Brathwait urges his female subject, 'let other Countries admire your Constancy and Civility'.[30]

Constancy is an important stoic attribute, and under the influence of Brathwait's stoicism, the female subject acquires a kind of heroic self-command denied her in the clerical conduct literature. The requirement that she subdue her passions, for example, is represented by Brathwait as a duty to her own divinely given powers of reason, not to the superior status of a husband. Brathwait advises her to 'allay or abate' any 'passionate furies' by 'enter[ing] parley with reason', and rather than prescribing the subsumption of the her will in that of her husband, he urges his gentlewoman to fix her desires upon God and the promise of life eternal, a focus which effectively eclipses the husband as her earthly lord: 'Doe not ... depress your *eyes*, as if they were fixed on earth, nor turne them round, by gazing on the fruitlesse vanities of earth; but on *heaven*, your *haven* after earth'.[31] Brathwait also positions his gentlewoman in the noble and essentially stoic tradition of her class, modelling her after the ideals that belong to her social group rather than her sex. When he ponders this noble virtue as an abstract and absolute condition, rather than a sexually contingent one, he bestows upon his ideal gentlewoman the same qualities which he gives his perfect gentleman:

> Such a noble resolved temper ever accompanies *vertue*, as no prosperous successe can ever transport her, nor any adverse occurrent deject her. She feeds not on the ayrie breath of vulgar applause: her sole ambition is to aspire to an inward *greatnesse*; to be truly *honourable* in the title of

[29] Ibid., 68.

[30] Ibid., 25. Interestingly Brathwait rejects the snail as an appropriate symbol for the good woman. In his address to the 'Gentlewoman reader', he writes of the good noble woman: 'Neither holdes she it sufficient to be onely an House keeper; or Snayle-like to be still under one roofe'. (The pages are not numbered at this point in the text.)

[31] Ibid., 36 & 87 respectively.

goodnesse.[32]

It should be noted that Brathwait's attention to the nature of his gentlewoman's noble character and virtues is always compromised, however, by his attention elsewhere in the text to the sex of his subject. In his chapter on 'Nobility', for example, he places the gentlewoman firmly within the heroic tradition of her lineage, only to go on to deny or to undermine that placing. Asserting at first that 'High and heroike vertues become great houses' and listing the virtues that may be inherited through the bloodline - 'generous bounty', 'pitty and compassion', 'moderation', 'valour', 'wit', 'judgement' - Brathwait makes his gentlewoman the inheritor of all these qualities. However, he then contracts his portrait by going on to 'select such as sort best with your sexe and condition'. The revised list of virtues contains the single quality of modesty, a virtue which does not appear in his original list, but which he repeatedly invokes in his text as the defining characteristic of femininity.[33]

There are many other examples of Brathwait's performing the same manoeuvre of containment and rewriting in *The English Gentlewoman,* but one further one should help to give the flavour of the contradictions and retractions in his text. In his chapter on 'Estimation', in which the author discusses the virtues and conduct for which a gentlewoman is to be truly esteemed, Brathwait searches classical history for examples of chaste and maternal women who might serve as models for his reader. The examples he provides, which include Portia, the wife of Brutus, and Hortensia, the daughter of an orator, famed 'for her motherly care in nursing and breeding', also include women such as Phemone, who 'was the first that ever composed heroick verse', and '*Corinnathia* who exceeded the Poet *Pindarus* in her curious and artful measures', as well as ancient queens and female imperial rulers who excelled in learning and wisdom.

[32] Ibid., 194. The feminine pronoun here may equally happily refer to the gentlewoman herself as well as to the conventionally feminine concept of virtue. The one is effectively collapsed onto the other.

[33] Ibid., 178-180.

But in the paragraph that follows these examples, Brathwait draws back from the implications of such patterns of female greatness and attempts to subsume them within more conventional categories of female excellence. He hails all of them as 'patternes of piety, presidents of purity, champions of chastity, mirrours of modesty' and praises them for being 'tender Nurses, carefull Mothers, reverend Matrons' (108-109).

In spite of this tendency to withdraw from or to write over those elements of his construction which threaten to exceed the accepted boundaries of good female conduct, Brathwait's text allows the noble female reader to glimpse a potentially more expansive and self-affirming concept of female virtue. Braithwait's vision of female greatness is neither unique nor particularly unusual. Concurrent with the female conduct text tradition in the Early Modern period runs the genre of female apologia - texts dedicated to the celebration of virtuous women and of the virtues of the sex in general. Charles Gerbier's *Elogium Heroinum, The Ladies Vindication: or, The Praise of Worthy Women,* published in 1651, is one example of this genre. Dedicated to 'Princesse Elizabeth of Bohemia' as a '*Minerva* in the Temple of Vertue'[34], Gerbier's small volume offers examples from antiquity and more recent times of women renowned for qualities more usually ascribed to the male sex - wisdom, constancy, courage, and piety - and pays lavish tribute to the sex as a whole: '*Woman,* the miracle of the world, and the marvel of marvels'.[35] Of particular pertinence to this discussion of women and stoic virtue are Gerbier's chapters 'Of Constant and Couragious Women' and 'Of Womens abilities to Govern'. The former lists women whose unshakable constancy has enabled them to die a noble and honourable death in defence of their faith and, more commonly, their chastity, but it also commemorates women famed 'for their Courage' and their 'heroick

[34] C[harles] G[erbier], *Elogium Heroinum, The Ladies Vindication: or, The Praise of Worthy Women* (London: 1651). The text is unpaginated at this point. Gerbier also dedicates his text to 'The Countess Dowager of Claire' whom he styles 'The Patroness of all Vertue and Learning', and to 'The Vertuous Accomplish't Lady Anne Hudson', who receives praise for her more feminine virtues of 'modesty' and 'gracious humility' (text unpaginated).

[35] Ibid., from 'The Preface to the Reader' (unpaginated).

acts'.[36] Such figures include the Old Testament women Deborah and Judith, the warrior-queens of antiquity Artemisia and Semyramis, and examples from English history, specifically '*Elphleda*, sister to King *Edward* (before the Conquest)' who fought in battle, 'tamed the *Welch-men*' and 'chased the *Danes*', and Queen Margaret, wife of Henry VI, whom Gerbier notes for her 'more then womanish spirit'.[37] Examples of female autonomy extending to government within the nominally male political sphere are provided in Gerbier's short discourse on 'Women's abilities to Govern'. Though brief - Gerbier lists a number of queens and female rulers, including Semyramis, Zenobia, Queen Mercea, Deborah, and Queen Elizabeth, but provides few details about them - the chapter contains an emphatic affirmation of women's skill in government and goes as far to suggest their superiority to men in this field: 'I need not insist any longer on Womens *abilities* to *govern*; since it clearly appears that they have therein excelled most men'. In defence of this claim, Gerbier goes on to list a number of male rulers whom he describes as 'Monsters'.[38]

Gerbier's examples of 'worthy women' coincide with those offered in an earlier apologia by Thomas Heywood, *Gynaikeoion, or Nine Bookes of Various History Concerninge Women* (1624). Heywood's is a far more ambitious and extensive text than Gerbier's (whose examples, shorn of most of their details, read like a digest of Heywood's work), and unlike Gerbier, who is committed to an uncritical championing of the sex, Heywood includes along with his accounts of women 'illustrated for their Vertues, and Noble Actions' those who have been 'branded for their Vices, and baser Conditions'.[39] His examples of virtuous women encompass classical goddesses, muses, 'illustrious Queenes', 'Amazons, and other women, famous either for Valour or

[36] Ibid., 50 & 53.

[37] Ibid., 68 & 70.

[38] Ibid., 138.

[39] Thomas Heywood, *Gynaikeoion, or Nine Bookes of Various History Concerninge Women* (London: 1624). Quotation from the address 'To the Reader', unpaginated.

Beautie', pious and chaste women, and 'Women every way Learned', including 'Poetesses'.[40] Such examples are counterbalanced by 'Women Incestuous', 'Adulteresses', 'Wantons', and 'Witches', the last of these coming under the category of learned women and coupled in the section heading with 'Poetesses'. Heywood's discourse thus modulates between eulogy and condemnation, and his examples of 'vitious' women, with their particular emphasis on sexual sin and excess, give him scope to reiterate the usual misogynistic anxiety surrounding the female body and its owner's unstable nature. Much of Heywood's language of praise for women also reinforces the conduct text ideal. In his address to the reader, for instance, he introduces his text as one that will appeal to women 'of all Callings: Virgins, Wives, or Widowes' and he contends that 'Wives may reade here of chast Virgins, to patterne their Daughters by, and how to demeane themselves in all Conjugall love towards their Husbands'.[41] The examples of wanton and adulterous women are clearly intended, within the moral scheme of Heywood's volume, to reinforce the boundaries of good female conduct, boundaries which his prefatory material, at least, establishes firmly within the domestic realm.

Nevertheless, Heywood's text contains many examples of women whose virtues have far exceeded the sphere of moral conduct imagined for his readers, including women of antiquity skilled in the arts of war and government, and female philosophers and orators, celebrated for their 'wit and reason'.[42] Philips might have been particularly interested in Heywood's accounts of women acting as brokers of peace between fighting armies. One such example, from early English history, is the unnamed mother of Belinus and Brennus who, with 'noble admonitions and motherlie persuasions' diverted her feuding sons from the brink of war 'that all civill and seditious warre layd

[40] Ibid., from the table of contents, unpaginated.

[41] Ibid., from the address 'To the Reader', unpaginated.

[42] See, for example, pp. 128-130, 145-146, and 370ff.

aside, they entered a friendly and brotherly league'.[43]

Just as Brathwait grants his noble woman certain heroic virtues on the basis of her social status, so Heywood finds that 'the ornaments of great Ladies' are 'noble disposition, bountie, and curtesie' and sets them highest upon a scale of female virtues determined not only by class but also age and marital status. According to this scale 'temperance, sobrietie, and governement [are] things best beseeming matrons', 'married wives, conjugall love and sinceritie', and 'virgins chast life and puritie'.[44] Thus heroic womanhood is best demonstrated by queens and princesses, whose social status brings responsibilities that cannot be met by domestic virtues alone. Heywood reserves his greatest praise for Queen Elizabeth, noting her 'wisedome', 'magnanimitie', 'bountie', and 'temperance', and affirming that 'Of her Wisdome and Government, all the Christian Princes that flourished in her time, can give ample testimonie'.[45]

We might compare Heywood's eulogy to Elizabeth with his account of a woman of antiquity named Aretaphila Cyrenea. She is described as 'a woman of excellent Vertue, exquisit Beautie, singular Wisedome, and in the managing of common-welthes businesse and civill affaires ingeniously expert'.[46] Aretaphila uses these skills to effect her people's release from tyrannous rule, and she is implored by her people to assume the head of their government. She refuses, 'betaking herselfe' instead, Heywood notes approvingly, 'to a solitarie and retired life, spending the rest of her age in spinning, weaving, and the like womanish chares'.[47] Aretaphila's resumption of domestic femininity crowns her virtue; her willingness to rejoin the private sphere (marked, as if to distinguish it from the type of male retirement, by peculiarly female activities), confirms her illustriousness as an assumption of public power could not.

[43] Ibid., 156.

[44] Ibid., 119.

[45] Ibid., 122-123 & 398.

[46] Ibid., 128-129.

[47] Ibid., 130.

This tension between the public and domestic exericise of virtue in exemplary women reflects a central characteristic of another body of seventeenth-century literature concerned with the rehabilitation of the sex's capacity for virtue - the female apologia of the famous 'Querelle des femmes' in France. Given Philips' interest in French literature and her considerable skill in the French language, it is likely that some of these texts were familiar to her. In this literature, of which DuBosc's *La femme héroique* (1645) and Le Moyne's *La gallerie des femmes fortes* (1647) are the most notable examples[48], epithets more commonly reserved for the male sex - 'généreux', 'héroique', 'illustre', and 'fort' - are liberally applied to the new ideal of the 'strong, independent' woman.[49] Such qualities belong to a markedly stoic interpretation of virtue in which heroism is centred in and characterised by fortitude.[50] While the French female apologia celebrate the virtues of women in positions of public power (Ian Maclean notes that the 'Querelle' was in many ways provoked by the examples of real women in power such as Catherine de Medici and Elizabeth I in the late sixteenth-century, and Marie de Medici and Anne of Austria in the seventeenth-century[51]), their examination of female fortitude also tends to settle upon issues of a more private nature. 'Heroic virtue, or *fortitudo,*' notes Maclean,

> ... is more often associated with men at this time ... [and] is often identified with the most manly attribute, courage. When applied to women, the question arises whether chastity, which is considered the most womanly virtue, can be considered a heroic virtue.[52]

[48] Ian Maclean describes these texts as 'the two outstanding feminist works of the time'. *Woman Triumphant*, 79.

[49] Ibid., 77-78.

[50] Ibid., 82-83.

[51] Ibid., 76.

[52] Ibid., 83.

For women outside of marriage - virgins or widows - such chastity, and its defence, can be seen as an active and assertive quality integral to female independence. But within marriage, female fortitude tends only to find expression in loyalty to a husband - in the courage to risk one's life for a husband, or to be faithful to an unfaithful husband.[53]

The exercise of superior virtue and stoic greatness in submission are exemplified by the subject of Sir George Savile, Marquis of Halifax's prose work, 'A Character of Lady Pakington'. Savile's tribute honours a woman whom he clearly considers to be an exemplary individual. 'She had such a habit of patience,' he attests, and 'had no desires of any kind': 'her life ranne like a smooth cleer stream'.[54] Halifax represents her as a model of all virtues: 'She had no Master vertue,' he declares, 'but had them all in perfection'.[55] He also regards her as a kind of androgynous ideal, asserting that she possessed the essential qualities of both sexes: 'the gentlenesse of [the female] ... mixed with a masculine strength in the understanding. All the masculine without the rough part'.[56] But in spite of these excellencies, Lady Pakington's true greatness lies in her ability to submit quietly to the authority of a husband whom Halifax considers something of a dullard and a wastrel, and vastly inferior to his wife. Though Halifax remarks that Lady Pakington 'thought for [her husband] and her selfe too', the focus of his admiration is directed towards her success in conforming to the conventional duties of a wife. 'What a conquest had shee made upon her selfe,' he marvels:

> The tast shee had in finding her power over selfe took away the ill relish of unreasonable commands. ... How much more greatnesse was there in that humility, than in contending with a husband for jurisdiction?[57]

[53] Ibid., 84-85 & 110.

[54] George Savile, *The Works of George Savile, Marquis of Halifax*, vol. 2, ed., Mark N. Brown (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), 464 , 466 & 471.

[55] Ibid., 463.

[56] Ibid., 462.

[57] Ibid., 456-457.

It is clear that Halifax regrets the fact that so admirable a woman should have to submit to the rule of a worthless man. But while he laments this, he finds that society's norms must be accepted, and although his admiration for Lady Pakington enables him to appreciate in her a nobility beyond that of most men as well as women, he concedes that that nobility must find its greatest expression, paradoxically, in submission to a less worthy being.

Lady Pakington's example appears to have been in Halifax's mind when he composed *The Lady's New-year's Gift: or, Advice to a Daughter* (1688). Here the stoic approach to life is offered as the only means by which a married woman might endure the regrettable, but unavoidable, lot that society deals her. In the opening passages of the text, Halifax urges upon his daughter a rule of conduct that might equally be offered to a son. 'Let your method bee a steady course of good life,' he advises, and he teaches that freedom from desires and passions will 'raise you above the little vexations to which others ... will be exposed, and bring you to a temper ... of ... wise resignation'.[58] As the text continues it becomes apparent that Halifax is recommending such stoic resignation for his daughter's easier conformity to her destiny as a wife. Since women generally have no choice in the matter of marriage, 'there remaineth nothing for them to doe, but to make that easie which falleth to their lott'.[59] Consequently he instructs his daughter 'to make your best of what is settled by law and custome'.[60] She is to bear all the faults of her (future) husband with patience and silence, 'endeavouring to make [them] lesse afflicting to you'.[61]

Halifax's regret over the inevitable fate of superior women makes space (albeit tenuously) for the possibility of a different reality. Pondering the obligation upon women to promise obedience to their husbands, Halifax muses that 'it appeareth

[58] Ibid., 367-368.

[59] Ibid., 369.

[60] Ibid., 371.

[61] Ibid., 377.

reasonable, that there might bee an exemption for extraordinary women, from ordinary Rules'.[62] Most of Philips' occasional addresses to her female neighbours and acquaintances are panegyric in nature and make of their subjects, whatever their real condition and character, extraordinary and exemplary models.

In the verse of her male contemporaries there are a considerable number of similarly flattering and ennobling poems addressed to socially significant women, poems which pay tribute to more than just their subjects' beauty and sweetness (though they praise these things too). Jonson, for example, celebrates Katherine, Lady Aubigny's 'even, and unalter'd gait' and claims to value 'the beauties of [her] mind' over her physical attractions.[63] Cartwright finds that Lucy, Countess of Carlisle possesses many 'Inward Vertues' more usually associated with stoic male nobility. He praises her 'Knowledge', her 'equall Temperance', and her 'True perfect Valour'; he affirms that her perfection proves 'there are no Sexes in the Mind' and accounts her 'more truly Valorous' than men; he even imagines her 'dispensing Justice', that prerogative of the male judiciary and of kings.[64] Samuel Daniel begins his address 'To the Lady Margaret, Countesse of Cumberland' with a detailed description of the stoic good man whom he offers as a model for his subject's emulation:

> By whom I see you labour all you can
> To plant your heart, and set your thought as neere
> His glorious mansion, as your powres can beare.[65]

In spite of this somewhat doubtful estimation of her powers, Daniel goes on to praise

[62] Ibid., 370. He backs away from this possibility, however, and concludes that such extraordinary women are, by definition, extremely rare, and that injustice to a few is a small price to pay for the social order instituted and sustained by the rules of marriage.

[63] 'Epistle. To Katherine, Lady Aubigny', ll. 61 & 30. Text from Jonson, *The Poems*, ed. Percy and Simpson.

[64] 'A Panegyrick to the most Noble Lucy Countesse of Carlisle', ll. 35, 40, 42, 44, 58 and46 respectively.

[65] ll. 65-67.

Lady Margaret for possessing the constancy, fortitude and disdain for the temporal world demonstrated by the truly noble man.

These are the qualities with which Philips invests her ideal noble woman. Mary Lloyd has a 'Resigned Soule' and a 'resolv'd ... mind' (70 & 68); Lady E. C. 'act[s] with judgment, and thinke[s] with content' (60); Mrs Owen is 'wise and good' (27); Mrs Hering is 'made up within, resolv'd and fixt' (23). The characterisation of Mrs Hering is a particularly good example of Philips' combining the virtues of domestic femininity with a much more robust and potentially more radical account of her subject's noble stoicism. The poem begins by likening Mrs Hering to a 'choice Plant', delicate in nature, which 'Blossoms and flourishes' under the care of a gardener, only to be brought down by a 'ruder wind' (1-4). The analogy quite conventionally evokes the beauty and fragility of womanhood. The 'Gardiner's care' which nourishes the tender specimen suggests the female need for protection, as well as her deliberate construction to satisfy her (male) benefactor. The implicitly sexual nature of this comparison - presenting Mrs Hering as a beautiful object of desire - is developed in the speaker's description of her subject as 'a lovely prize' who attracts 'all Hearts and eys' (7-8).[66] It is with some surprise then that the reader meets with the strongly stoic account of Mrs Hering's inner virtues in the central part of the poem:

> For thou already had'st with ease found out
> (What others study with such pains and doubt)
> That frame of soule which is content alone,
> And needs no entertainment but its Own.
> Thy even mind, which made thee good and great,
> Was to thee both a shelter and retreat. (13-18)

'Above the world' and 'equally despis[ing]/Both its Temptations and its injurys' (25-26), Mrs Hering becomes a model of right conduct and spiritual wisdom. The speaker is

[66] Although this also recalls Brathwait's expression of the visible and public significance of the ideal gentlewoman (see page 144 above).

confident that her subject's earthly conduct will be rewarded in heaven and vindicated by that reward, and she closes her tribute by invoking Mrs Hering as a 'great example' for public emulation (49-50).

In the poems of her male contemporaries such great and noble women are generally figured as the exception to an inferior, and in some cases, contemptible, female condition. In successfully modelling herself on the stoic wise man, Daniel's Lady Margaret, for example, has gone 'Beyond the feeble limits of [her] kind'.[67] Lady Aubigny, whom Jonson praises for stoic constancy and for being a loyal and loving wife, is figured as 'that rare wife,/Other great wives may blush at'.[68] And while Cartwright is content, in his tribute to the Countess of Carlisle, to find his subject 'the Apex of [her] Kind', in his elegy on Lady Newburgh, he declares that 'I may not call her Woman' since she is innocent of the usual vices of that sex, above whom she 'soar[s]/So high'.[69] In her poem to Lady Elizabeth Ker, 'To the Rt Hono: the Lady E. C.', Philips' also implies her subject's exceptional status as a virtuous woman, but then reconfigures the compliment so as to valorise all of womankind:

> You are so much above your sex, that we
> Believe your life your greatest courtesie:
> For women boast they have, while you will live,
> A patterne and a representative,
> And future mothers who in childbirth groane,
> Shall wish for daughters, knowing you are one. (101-105)

The compliment of being above her sex usually works to isolate the virtuous woman as

[67] l. 70.

[68] 'Epistle. To Katherine, Lady Aubigny', ll. 110-111. Jonson's poem also contains a passage of invective against the usual kind of woman, who, among other follies, 'studies spectacles, and showes' (65), is 'Giddie with change' (67), and wastes away her husbands money and lands 'on poulders, oyles, and paintings' (77). Jonson, *The Poems*, ed. Percy and Simpson .

[69] 'On the Lady Newburgh, who dyed of the small Pox', ll. 21 & 52. The vices described by Cartwright include female vanity and unfaithfulness. The quotation from 'A Panegyrick to the most Noble Lucy Countesse of Carlisle' is from l. 57.

a unique example of female greatness, unrepresentative of the rest of womankind. Maclean notes that even DuBosc's and Le Moyne's ardently 'feminist' works tend to justify the exception rather than making the 'femme forte' the general rule.[70] Philips subverts the implied slight upon women, however, and makes the Lady E. C. not only a 'patterne' for her sex but also its 'representative' and thereby implies that the she is, in her greatness, typical of the true nature of womankind. The lines invoke a community of mutually admiring worthy women - the Lady E. C.'s exemplary life is a 'courtesie' to other women, who boast of her virtues - who anticipate the birth of daughters with as much joy and longing as was usually reserved for sons. Rather than confirming the general degradation of the female sex by her single, shining example, Philips' noble woman raises the worth of her sex. Gerbier's *Elogium Heroinum* is unusual amongst female apologia for agreeing with Philips in this matter. 'Women,' he writes, 'are capable of the highest improvements, unto which Man may attaine: For if some of the Sex ... have been so, it argues that the Sexe is capable, and may still be so.'[71]

The compliment of being a benign and restorative influence on others is one which Philips' bestows on most of her admired female subjects, and their influence tends to go beyond the limits of their own sex. The 'great example' offered by Mrs Hering's virtues is not explicitly confined to women, and in addition to ennobling womankind, the Lady E. C. is also invoked as a pattern for the times in general, able 'To cure the age' (5). The Countess of Carberry (as we have seen) is welcomed as the saviour of Wales, while Mrs Mary Lloyd is represented as a model of virtue in an age of 'brutish fame' (5). Such claims place the virtuous woman into a sphere much larger than that of the domestic and conjugal realm: she becomes a political figure, a model of self-government that holds good for the country at large. In her tribute to Mary Lloyd, Philips makes the connection between personal and political government explicit with a conceit that also reworks a common conduct book analogy between the macrocosmic

[70] Maclean, *Woman Triumphant*, 80.

[71] Gerbier, *Elogium Heroinum*, 11.

state and the microcosmic home. Brathwait makes use of this analogy in *The English Gentlewoman*, where, in his summary sketch of her ideal character at the close of his text, he affirms that, 'Her *household* she makes her *Common-weale*'.[72] This analogy is made, as Brathwait goes on to emphasise, in order to fix '*feminine government*' within the realm of the domestic.[73] Philips' allusion to it in the Mary Lloyd poem functions rather differently:

> And if well order'd Commonwealth must be
> Patterns for every private Family,
> Her house, rul'd by her hand, aw'd by her Ey,
> Might be a pattern for a Monarchy. (37-40)

Mary Lloyd, Patrick Thomas notes in his commentary, was bereaved by the death of her husband in 1637 (Philips' poem refers to his loss in line 57); it is alone, as a widow, therefore, that she rules her house and keeps it in awe. This autonomous rule, Philips' speaker suggests, provides the perfect pattern for governing the state. Having invoked the conduct book adage, Philips' speaker wittily inverts it, and thereby broadens the significance of Mrs Lloyd's admirable powers, implicitly crowning her as the ideal ruler of the land. There is a party political allusion here too. Philips' reference to 'Monarchy' politicises the usually neutral term 'Commonwealth' and contains, perhaps, the hope of a Restoration.[74] (Such a Restoration would have to be modelled on Mrs Lloyd's own firm reign for it to be secure.)

Mrs Lloyd's monarchical sway over her household ties in with what I suggested earlier is Philips' Cavalier construction of her stoic retirement:

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[72] Brathwait, *The English Gentlewoman*. (The text is unpaginated at this point.) Thomas notes the comparison with Brathwait in his commentary on the poem. (*Poems*, 354.)

[73] Ibid.

[74] This 'veiled' expression of Philips' political sympathies is noted by Thomas. (*Poems*, 345.)

And since she knew the mad Tempestuous world,
Saw Crowns revers'd, Temples to ruine hurl'd;
She in Retirement chose to shine and burne. (87-89)

Though it is hard to imagine what other response to civil conflict an elderly woman might make, it is significant that Philips constructs her retirement as a political act and not as the natural or appropriate condition of her sex. Earlier in the eulogy, Mrs Lloyd's fortitude has been described in the context of the depredations of war. Her quiet suffering signifies both a noble self-possession and a loyal adherence to her own and her family's Royalism:

Her life was chequer'd with afflictive yeares,
And even her comforts season'd in her teares.
Scarce for a husband's loss her eyes were dry'd,
And that loss by her children half supply'd,
When Heav'n was pleas'd not those deare props t'afford,
But tore most off, by sickness, or a Sword.
... Litigious hands did her of Right deprive,
That after all 'twas pennance to survive.
Yet she these Griefs had nobly undergone,
Which few support at all, but better none.
Such a submissive Greatness who can find? (55-67)[75]

Philips places the stoic suffering of her own mother-in-law in a similar political context. We are told that 'she had much afflicted been':

Saw many of her children fall,
And publick ruine threaten all;
Yet from above assisted, she
Both did and suffer'd worthily.
She to the Crown and Church adher'd,

[75] Mary Lloyd's grandson, Sir Evan Lloyd, was an active Royalist during the Civil Wars. He compounded for his estate in 1646. See *Poems*, 344-345.

And in their sorrows them rever'd. (16-22)

Like Mrs Lloyd, Anne Philips is shown to have borne these sorrows during the period of her widowhood. Her fortitude is, therefore, that of a single and autonomous individual. Furthermore, Philips' characterisation of her mother-in-law's politics as Royalist, and her religious sympathies as Anglican (21) distinguishes her from the male members of her family. Though her husband, Hector Philips, had died just before the outbreak of hostilities in 1638/9, her son James, Katherine's husband, was, as we know, a loyal servant of Parliament and Cromwell. Anne Philips' loyalty to crown and church thus marks her independence from family and domestic duty, and Philips' inclusion of such loyalties in the epitaph renders her mother-in-law a distinctly political subject, a woman whose relationship to the state and its government forms an important part of her identity.[76]

A number of Philips' female contemporaries who experienced the troubles of the Civil Wars describe their afflictions from the perspective of a nobly suffering stoicism. Ann, Lady Fanshawe spent the bulk of the wars following her Royalist husband from battle to battle, accompanying him in his periods of exile in Spain and France, and, during these travels, conceiving, giving birth to and in many cases, burying, a remarkable number of children. In her memoirs (1676) she casts both her husband and herself as stoic heroes for their steadfast and resigned endurance of their personal and their country's woes:

> Now we appeared upon the stage to act what part God designed us,
> and as faith is the evidence of things not seen, so we upon so righteous
> a cause cheerfully resolved to suffer what that would drive us to, which

[76] In his commentary on the poem, Thomas appears to doubt Philips' honesty about her mother-in-law's faith and politics. 'If this is a true expression of Anne Philips's views during the Civil War and Interregnum it shows that her outlook was ... very different from that of James Philips himself' (*Poems*, 376). I cannot see why Philips would have lied about such things, unless she felt that it could assist James's attempts to appease his Welsh Royalist enemies. If so, the significance of Anne Philips' political identity might be more considerable than I have suggested above.

afflictions were neither few nor small.[77]

Though elsewhere in the memoirs Lady Fanshawe reserves the role of stoic hero for her husband, here she includes herself in the tradition. She partakes of the same suffering and the same noble response. She also regards herself as one of the public players in events, 'appear[ing] upon the stage' along side her military spouse. Margaret Cavendish, whose *A True Relation of my Birth, Breeding, and Life* contains many paeans to her husband the Duke of Newcastle's 'constant and patient suffering' in the cause of his king and country, similarly casts herself as partaking in the idealised stoic fortitude occasioned by political events:

> ... and though Fortune hath been cross, yet we do submit, and are both content with what is, and cannot be mended, and are so prepared that the worst of fortunes shall not afflict our minds, so as to make us unhappy ... for if tranquillity lives in an honest mind, the mind lives in peace ... Patience hath armed us ... .[78]

Cavendish's description of her mother in the same text combines, as Philips' poems on worthy women tend to do, a tribute to the woman's conventional femininity with praise of her courageous response to the political upheavals of the times. Elizabeth Lucas is first portrayed as the appropriately retired, pious woman: '... she made her house her cloyster, inclosing herself as it were therein, for she seldom went abroad, unless to church'.[79] This regime, Cavendish observes, is interrupted by the civil conflict: '... but these unhappy wars forced her out, by reason she and her children were loyal to

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[77] From John Loftis, ed.,*The Memoirs of Anne, Lady Halkett and Ann, Lady Fanshawe* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1979), 113.

[78] *A True Relation of the Birth, Breeding, and Life of Margaret Cavendish, Duchess of Newcastle,* Written by Herself, with a critical preface, etc. by Sir Egerton Brydges (Kent: Lee Priory Press, 1814), 24-25.

[79] Ibid., 14.

the king'. Elizabeth Lucas responds appropriately, rising from her sheltered life to meet the circumstances' demands for nobility and heroism:

> ... but in such misfortunes my mother was of an heroic spirit, in suffering patiently where there is no remedy ... she was of a grave behaviour, and had such a majestic grandeur ... that it would strike a kind of awe to the beholders, and command respect from the rudest.[80]

Cavendish's portrait of her heroic mother blends the ideally stoic response to inimical circumstances with the traits of an innate nobility. Like Philips' ideal women, her politics are held to be significant in terms of her own identity rather than simply that of the family to which she belongs.

Interestingly, Elizabeth Lucas, again like many of Philips' poetic subjects, was a widow (her husband having died in 1625). Given the number of widowed women which Philips makes the objects of her praise (Anne Philips, Mary Lloyd, Mrs Owen - half of the poems under consideration in this chapter), it is perhaps appropriate to draw attention to the period's general attitude towards such women. In her study of early modern women in Europe, *The Prospect Before Her*, Olwen Hufton notes that the widow was a particularly problematic figure in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century societies.[81] Firstly she was a woman alone, outside of the guidance and authority of a man. She was also a sexually experienced woman whose carnal appetite posed a potential threat to her moral well-being and to that of others. If she was poor, she risked being a burden upon the public purse; if she was wealthy, she had resources of power and independence at odds with the subjection and dependence conventionally required of members of her sex. Many of the conduct texts address one or more of these troubling

[80] Ibid.

[81] Olwen Hufton, *The Prospect Before Her: A History of Women in Western Europe, Volume One, 1500-1800* (London: Harper Collins, 1995). See in particular Hufton's chapter on widowhood and also pp. 33 & 221.

aspects of the widowed woman. In addition to preaching the necessity of sexual continence (and remarriage in the case of young widows), the clerical writers evince a poor estimation of the widow's powers of business and household management.[82] Gouge, for example, enjoins the husband to nominate 'some faithfull friend ... to be a helper unto' his wife after his death. This is necessary 'in regard of her weaknesse, by reason of her sex, and want of experience to manage such affaires especially as are out of the house'.[83] In spite of his higher estimation of the gentlewoman's reason and self-government, Brathwait's advice to the widow shows a similar lack of faith in her capacity for managing the family's well-being, including the care of any children. A mother's 'too much delicacy in bringing up [her] children,' he warns, 'makes them oft times depraved'. It is necessary, therefore, that the widow appoint 'some discreet and well-disposed person' to care for them. A similarly competent individual (a man, we must assume) is required to attend to household business, 'by whose honest integrity her family might be better mannaged, with more diligence attended, and to the woman lesse occasion of disgrace objected'.[84]

Philips' high praise for her widowed subjects' self-command and household government stands as a corrective to such dismal assessments of the widow's competence and authority. She praises both her mother-in-law and Mrs Owen for the charitable yet careful management of their fortunes. (Anne Philips wishes she had the means to be more generous {27-28}; Mrs Owen is accounted 'Prudent' as well as 'good' {64}.) And in the light of the fiscal and social anxieties attending the widow's independence, Philips' suggestion that Mrs Lloyd's splendid rule over her house might

[82] Thomas Becon, in his *Catechism*, is particularly concerned with the widow's menacing sexual appetite. He exhorts the young widow to remarry as soon as is seemly and convenient, and the old widow to devote herself to spiritual and charitable duties. (Remarriage for the old widow would be inappropriate since she is past childbearing age and would therefore be marrying simply to satisfy her lust.) See pp. 365-366.

[83] Gouge, *Domesticall Duties*, 406.

[84] Brathwait, *English Gentlewoman*, 112-113.

be a pattern for the good government of state reads as rather more audacious and radical than it might otherwise. These portraits of 'femmes soles' are more in tune with the independent 'femmes fortes' of French literature, whose stoic greatness outside of marriage has a greater and broader sphere of influence. Maclean observes that the 'majority of DuBosc's and LeMoyne's heroines are either unmarried or widowed'.[85]

However, tropes of government in Philips' construction of the noble woman also refer to a profoundly spiritual plane that transcends not only the domestic but the earthly in general. In the eulogy to Mrs Owen of Orielton, the speaker, having paid tribute to her subject's fortitude in terms which imply Mrs Owen's political conservatism - 'So she unmov'd beheld the angry Fate/Which tore a church, and overthrew a State' (33-34) - goes on to praise her for having had a rich spiritual life: 'She kept true 'State within' (39). The word "State' carries a number of possible meanings. It may simply imply Mrs Owen's self, her being or condition. In Thomas' printing of the poem, for which the copy-text is Philips' autograph manuscript, the word has an apostrophe before it, suggesting that it is a contraction of 'Estate'. This conveys the sense of property, of personal wealth and goods, wealth which the poem later affirms was used by the charitable widow to relieve the poor (45-48). Philips' contraction also invokes notions of civil power and government, as well as the pomp and ceremonial display that traditionally accompanies it. Just as true self-hood is a matter of the inner life, the poem seems to affirm, so is true wealth and property, power and glory. The stability of this spiritual existence is offered as a counterpoint to the vulnerability of earthly, civil governments, such as the one which Mrs Owen observes overthrown in lines 33 and 34 of the poem. In the context of her strong inner life, Mrs Owen's passivity in the face of civil revolution (she is 'unmov'd') suggests complete disassociation from events as much as it invokes the Cavalier notion of fortitude.

Mrs Owen's spiritual equanimity connects with an important strain of Platonic

[85] Maclean, *Woman Triumphant*, 84.

language in Philips' tribute. Almost half of the poem consists of a meditation on the inevitability of death and the progress of the soul towards its perfection as it is freed from the 'drossy clog' (15) of the body. This meditation is designed to offer solace to the mourners; the speaker urges them to 'grieve no more' since their loved one has attained the highest bliss as a 'happy soule' (25 & 17). Later in the poem, towards its close, the image of a transcendent soul is invoked once again, but this time, apparently, with reference to Mrs Owen's existence on earth. In an enumeration of her virtues, which include nobility, prudence, mercy and friendship, the speaker describes her as one whose care it was 'To use but slight the world, and fix'd above,/Shine down in beams of Piety and Love' (57-58). The instability of the verb tenses in this couplet invite us to read the image as an affirmation of Mrs Owen's divine influence both in life and after death. Mrs Owen's shining beams of love invoke the Platonist's favourite metaphor for the supreme being.

Similar language is to be found in Philips' address to Elizabeth Ker, 'the Lady E. C.'. Her significance as an exemplary model of virtue is asserted from the beginning: the speaker is proud to be presenting Lady E. C.'s 'rich example' to the world, and is confident, as I noted above, that it will 'cure the age' (3 & 5). In addition to a full complement of human virtues, Philips invests her subject with a particularly powerful spiritual energy which renders her godlike. In line 50 she is proclaimed 'A solid body of divinitie'.[86] She is not, in this divine capacity, simply an angelic woman upon whom her worshippers may gaze in adoration. She is figured, rather, as a holy sage, a teacher of spiritual and religious truths whose wisdom, the poem proposes, may enlighten others:

> Religion all her odours sheds on you,
> Who by obliging vindicate her too:
> For that rich beame of heaven was allmost

[86] Such accolades are not exclusively reserved for Philips' female friends and acquaintances, though they more commonly apply to women. Similar compliments can be found in 'To the truly noble Sir Ed: Dering (the worthy Silvander) on his dream, and navy' (ll. 10 & 11) and 'To the truly noble Mr Henry Lawes' (where Lawes's music is accounted divine, ll. 27-28).

In nice disputes and false pretences lost;
So doubly injur'd, she could scarce subsist
Betwixt the hypocrite and casuist;
Till you by great example did convince
Us of her nature and her residence, ...
... Your principles and practise light would give
What we should do, and what we should believe. (39-52)

The religious politics of this tribute, although veiled, are nevertheless apparent. The Lady E. C.'s faith represents the moderate Protestantism of the established English Church which falls 'Betwixt the hypocrite and casuist', that is the Puritan and the Papist. Such is Philips' representation of the Church of England in her religious verse, where such moderation also figures as a means for religious and civil peace. If the Lady E. C. can rescue this faith from the confusion of hypocrisy and conflict, she may, by convincing others of the truth of her convictions, precipitate civil peace. However fanciful and fulsome Philips' praises of her subject are here, they nevertheless construct a rather radical ideal, quite at odds with contemporary prescriptions against women to interfere in or even to 'discourse of' matters of state and religion.

The idea of transcendent female virtue as a benign political force receives its fullest treatment, in Philips' occasional verse, in the poem 'To the Right Honobl. Alice, Countess of Carberry, on her enriching Wales with her presence'. Philips' poem appears to have been written to commemorate the Countess' first visit to Golden Grove in Carmarthenshire, the home of her new husband Richard Vaughan, second Earl of Carberry. In spite of the matrimonial context for the poem, Philips' celebration of the Countess' arrival in Wales makes no mention of her subject's newly acquired marital status or of her conjugal identity. Drawing on some of the conventions of the royal panegyric, the poem welcomes the Countess as a being of miraculous and divine influence whose presence will bring fame and honour to the much neglected Welsh nation. Like a Stuart prince, Alice brings in her wake the glories of an 'eternal spring'

(23), and bestows the beams of daylight (8) upon a land hitherto languishing in 'obscurity' and 'neglected chaos' (6-7). However, Philips' construction of the Countess as a divine being exceeds the usual rhetoric of divine kingship in the royal panegyric. The speaker approaches Alice as a disciple approaches God, sure in the knowledge that her feeble tribute will be acceptable to her addressee, since, 'as the Deity', Alice is satisfied with the act of devotion regardless of its imperfection (12-16). From this the speaker moves to assert emphatically the Countess' divinity - "tis our confidence you are divine' (17) - and to make an extended tribute to her subject as a living god, whose 'shrine' (18) is sought by faithful 'pilgrims' (29). The nature of this worship is ultimately given a political meaning, for in her divinity the Countess is figured as the saviour of a troubled world:

> That so when all mankind at length have lost
> The vertuous grandeur which they once did boast,
> Of you, like pilgrims, they may here obtaine
> Worth to recruit the dying world againe. (27-30)

Though the terms of this tribute are reminiscent of the hyperbole of the courtly love mode, Philips' appeal is not that of a suffering lover to the mortal goddess he had made; here the whole world is ailing and the divine woman is offered as the exemplary influence who might save it. While such praise is indeed extravagant, the context of civil turmoil, invoked in phrases such as 'neglected chaos' and 'dying world', lends the poem's fanciful hopes an urgency and sincerity. The Countess of Carberry is honoured as the source of all 'vertuous grandeur' for 'all mankind'. The poem makes no allusions, apart from the opening 'Madam', to the sex of its subject; none of its constructions of greatness are compromised by gender.

Though the philosophy of stoicism in its classical form was generally hostile to women, the Early Modern discourse of nobility with its emphasis on stoic resolution

and fortitude, allowed a (marginal) place for the wives and daughters of the aristocracy and landed gentry. A few of Philips' idealised women fall into this social category - Alice, Countess of Carberry and Elizabeth Ker, daughter of the Earl of Ancrum - but she appropriates the language of nobility for her admired women regardless of their wealth or social position, and with it she rewrites the meaning of female goodness.[87] Philips is not unique in the period in granting stoic virtues to women - the tradition of female apologia in England and in particular the 'femmes fortes' in France celebrated women of exceptional fortitude and courage. But Philips is unusual in lending such virtues the same heroic and implicitly political and public significance they have in portraits of great men. Philips' good woman, like her male counterpart, stands for the values of the well-governed state. The Platonism of some of Philips' representations of female greatness develops this idea, making of the good woman a symbol of divine and absolute virtue for the emulation of every human being, male and female. The radical possibilities of such Platonic virtue forms the focus of my analysis of the female friendship poems in the next chapter.

[87] Philips also addressed poems to a number of Anglo-Irish noble women during her time in Dublin. These tend to deal with more specific events, such as the celebration of the marriage of the daughter of the Duke of Ormonde in the poem 'To the Lady Mary Butler at her marriage with the Lord Cavendish, Octobr. 1662', and the dedication of the poet's drama translation *Pompey* to the Countess of Cork in the poem *To the Right Honourable the Countess of Cork.* None of these poems is concerned with creating a portrait of female virtue in general. (The small number of poems addressed to daughters of the Earl of Cork and the Duke of Ormonde are written in the style of the friendship poems to Rosania and Lucasia.)

Chapter 5

"Friendship's vast capacity": virtue and the poems of female friendship

> Fearless she acts that friendship she did write
> Which manly Vertue to their Sex confin'd,
> Thou rescuest to confirm our softer mind.
> (Philo-Philippa, 'To the Excellent *Orinda*')

Modern analyses of Philips' writing have tended to focus almost exclusively on her poems of female friendship, and within that focus there has been a tendency to centre discussion around what is now an established critical relationship between her expressions of woman to woman intimacy and the Platonic courtly love poetry of her male peers. Such comparisons have enabled feminist scholars to rescue Philips from her earlier twentieth-century reputation as a rather dull, conventionally pious and critically insignificant poet. They have drawn attention, for example, to her appropriation of male literary codes, her critique of the gender inequality implied in those codes, her adoption of the male desiring voice, and her use of courtly Platonism to express an implicitly passionate and erotic love for other women.[1] But while these discussions have promoted an image of Philips as a radical poet who subtly subverts meanings and literary traditions to serve images of (unacceptable) female autonomy and lesbian desire, the repeated invocations of virtue around which these images of autonomy and desire revolve have retained their association with ideals of female social and sexual passivity and constraint. Kate Lilley, for example, writes that Philips 'places

[1] See, for example, Andreadis, "Sapphic-Platonics"; Lillian Faderman, *Surpassing The Love of Men* (London: The Women's Press, 1985); Isobel Grundy & Susan Wiseman, eds., *Women, Writing, History: 1640-1740* (London: B. T. Batsford, 1992); Hobby, *Virtue of Necessity*; Dorothy Mermin, "Women Becoming Poets: Katherine Philips, Aphra Behn, Anne Finch," *ELH* (summer 1990): 335-55; Arlene Stiebel, "Not Since Sappho".

her own history as one among many parallel narratives of a woman's fate, of desire reined in by the conservative and feminine virtues of submission and conformity to hierarchy and order, to ideals of virtue and chastity'.[2] Elaine Hobby seems to have the same feminine ideals in mind when she argues that Philips' appropriation of the 'conventions of the courtly love tradition' enabled her to 'produce an image of female solidarity (and perhaps of lesbian love) that could be sustained within the tight constraints of marriage'.[3] Arlene Stiebel, writing of the lesbian erotic nature of Philips' female friendship poems, concludes that the emphasis upon chaste virtue in the courtly love tradition enabled Philips to 'mask [the] true meaning' of her poems.[4] Elizabeth Susan Wahl, the most recent commentator on Philips' lesbian erotics, comes to a similar conclusion. Philips' 'longing for an extrabodily, spiritual mingling of souls,' she writes, 'becomes less of an end in itself than a utopian alternative to a world that denies her any other possibilities'.[5]

Such judgments give virtue, and the emphasis that Philips places upon it, a negative and repressive value. A vocabulary of negativity surrounds the critical allusions to it. Lilley writes of 'submission' and 'rein[ing] in'; Hobby makes reference to the 'tight constraints' of marriage; Stiebel's notion of masking connects with the restraint and denial that Wahl perceives to characterise the experience of virtuous seventeenth-century women. And yet for Philips' female contemporary, Philo-Philippa, virtue in Philips' friendship poems meant something quite different. In the quotation from her poem 'To the Excellent *Orinda*' which prefaces this chapter, Philo-Philippa identifies friendship itself as a virtue, one which she associates not with constraining codes of female sexual purity but with the moral strength and bravery of idealised

[2] Lilley, "True State Within", 84.

[3] Hobby, *Virtue of Necessity*, 128.

[4] Stiebel, "Not Since Sappho", 162.

[5] Wahl, *Invisible Relations*, 150.

masculinity. It is a 'manly Vertue' from which men have excluded women. Claimed by women, it gives them access to traditional male qualities, transforming their 'softer mind' with its implicit strength and fearlessness.

This chapter discusses the role of virtue in Philips' female friendship poems from the critical perspective suggested by Philo-Philippa. It explores how and why Philips' emphasis upon the virtue of explicitly chaste friendship might be read as positive and enabling for seventeenth-century women, and it goes on to examine how this concept of virtue connotes ideals that far transcend the confines of a purely sexual discourse. In seeking to distance Philips' idea of virtue from the increasingly exclusively sexual connotations the term carried in relation to women in the long eighteenth century, this discussion draws on a literary and philosophical context for Philips' ideal of friendship that is distinct from the implicitly erotic mode of heterosexual, courtly Platonic love. It places Philips' constructions of friendship and the female friend in the context of what I believe to be two significant influences on the friendship poetry. One of these is the classically informed Renaissance ideal of male friendship, the other is religious Platonism, the importance of which to Philips' understanding of God and virtue has already been argued. Both of these influences have a political dimension. Male friendship in its classical form was explicitly political; the bond between man and man was seen to be, in Aristotle's words, 'the bond of the state'.[6] It retains this significance in the Renaissance, and during the troubled times of England's civil wars it comes to figure a specifically Royalist political stability. Christian Platonism as developed by Cambridge theologians in the 1640s and 50s was at least in part a response to the political disturbances of the times. Henry More positions his poem on the immortality of the soul as a consciously political text, seeing its emphasis on the extrabodily and other-worldly as the best argument for religious tolerance and peace. Philips deploys and adapts these political dimensions in her friendship poetry for state-political as well

[6] Aristotle, *The Nicomachean Ethics*, with an English translation by H. Rackham (The Loeb Classical Library, London: William Heinemann, Ltd., 1962), 453.

as gender-political ends.

Renaissance descriptions of ideal male friendship tend to borrow the language of religious Platonism to express the mystical and sacred nature of the man to man bond. Indeed, on the level of language, there is often little to distinguish both religious Platonism and ideal male friendship from heterosexual Platonic love. All three share a common origin in Plato's philosophy of homosexual love, by which man progresses from love of the physical to love of the soul and eventual union with the divine creator. Earl Miner, writing on Cavalier friendship poetry, observes that in the seventeenth century 'friendship tended to include love'.[7] In the Platonically inspired philosophical prose of Michel de Montaigne and the poetry of Abraham Cowley, 'love' and 'friendship' are identical and interchangeable. The same is true for Philips. Lady Mary Chudleigh, in her essays 'Of Friendship' and 'Of Love', writes of both phenomena in the same terms and illustrates perfect 'Love' with examples of male friendship.[8] All of these writers make a distinction between perfect love and lust, but the former is invariably best exemplified by friendship. The vocabulary of love and friendship also overlaps with that of religion. In the same study of Cavalier poets, Miner quotes part of a letter written by the Royalist James Howell to a male friend, in which Howell speaks of friendship as a religion. 'You know,' he observes, 'there is a peculiar Religion attends friendship ... [and] there belongs to this Religion of Friendship certain due Rites, and decent Ceremonies'.[9] In the poetry of Platonic courtship the language of religion frequently infuses the expression of male desire. William Habington, for example, author of the Platonic poetry sequence, *Castara*, imagines himself as a priest making

[7] Earl Miner, *The Cavalier Mode from Jonson to Cotton*, (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1971), 250.

[8] Lady Mary Chudleigh, *The Poems and Prose of Mary, Lady Chudleigh*, ed. Margaret J. M. Ezell (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993).

[9] Miner, *Cavalier Mode*, 282.

sacrifices at the altar of his love.[10] Cowley, in his poem 'The Wayting-Maide', invokes his beloved's maid servant as a 'Saint' who intercedes between him and his 'Goddesse'.[11] The debt goes both ways: in *Psychathanasia,* Henry More describes the soul's yearning for God as a 'thirsty fierce desire' and he urges 'Vain mortals' to

> ... raise your mind
> Above the bodies life; strike through the skie
> With piercing throbs and sighs, that you may find
> His face. ... [12]

The language is both physical and implicitly erotic and yet it describes the ultimate of spiritual unions.

The shared language of the discourses of male Platonic friendship, religious Platonism, and courtly Platonic love renders the distinction I am making in this study between the first two and the last somewhat slippery. On the other hand, such shared language promotes the possibility of multiple readings of Philips' use of Platonic tropes and ideas. It is not my intention to negate those readings of Philips' friendship poetry which argue her appropriation of the implicitly sexual conventions of Platonic courtly love. It is clear that Philips borrowed much from the love lyrics of men such as Cartwright, Suckling, Lovelace and Cowley and that the appropriation of their conventions enabled her simultaneously to express and conceal an erotically charged passion for other women. But I would like to suggest that the charting of such a passion is not the primary concern of all of Philips' friendship poems. There are a number of abstract meditations on ideal friendship in which the political and spiritual nature of intimacy are more important than the passionate. There are a number of

[10] William Habington, *The Poems of William Habington*, ed. Kenneth Allott (London: University Press of Liverpool, Hodder and Stoughton, 1948).

[11] From *The Mistress.*

[12] *Psychathanasia*, Bk. 3, canto 1, st. 33, ll. 6-9.

addresses to Rosania and Lucasia in which the construction of the female friend as a model of Platonic virtue is marked as a public and political act. The concept of virtue these poems inscribe transcends those models that devolve purely to the female sexual.[13]

In Philips' poem, 'A Friend' (64), a contemplation on the nature of friendship probably dating from the 1650s, the poetic speaker echoes a central tenet of Cicero's philosophy of friendship, asserting that 'none can be a friend that is not good' (36). This maxim was something of a philosophical commonplace in the seventeenth century, although Cicero's *Laelius, De Amicitia*, the treatise from which the precept is taken, was available in English translation, so Philips may have been familiar with the text as a whole.[14] In *Laelius*, Cicero's contention that 'nisi in bonis amicitiam esse non posse' is extrapolated to a celebration of friendship as the best of all relationships, one which issues out of virtue and which is itself a chief proponent of virtue. '... virtue is the parent and preserver of friendship and without virtue friendship cannot exist at all,' avers Cicero's eponymous speaker.[15] A similar declaration of the virtuous nature of friendship is to be found in a work that predates Cicero's discourse by some three hundred years, and was also translated into English in the sixteenth century, Aristotle's

[13] Peter Beal, in his chapter on Philips in *In Praise of Scribes*, suggests that the poet also employed the tropes of friendship as a means of extending her literary 'Society' and acquiring influence in the circles of the social elite. She was not above sending the same poem to different women, changing the name of the addressee in manuscript as it suited her. (See pp. 148-149.)

[14] See note 63 on page 105 above for details of a sixteenth-century translation of *De Amicitia* which may have been known to Philips. Jeremy Taylor also cites Cicero's *Laelius* in his letter-treatise to Philips on the nature and rules of friendship. See Jeremy Taylor, *A Discourse of the Nature, Offices, and Measures of Friendship with Rules of Conducting It, In a Letter to the Most Ingenious and Excellent Mrs. Katharine Philips* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1920), 19-21. Hereafter referred to as *Friendship*.

[15] Cicero, *De Senectete, De Amicitia, De Divinatione*, with an English translation by William Armistead Falconer (The Loeb Classical Library, London: William Heinemann, 1923), 131.

Nicomachean Ethics.[16] Aristotle devotes two chapters in his study of virtue and human happiness to the subject of friendship. 'The perfect form of friendship,' he states, 'is that between the good, and those who resemble each other in virtue'. Friendship 'is a virtue, or involves virtue'.[17] Neither Aristotle nor Cicero clarify exactly what qualities constitute this goodness or virtue. Aristotle makes no attempt to show how it relates to his conclusion elsewhere in the *Ethics* that virtue is a deliberate pursuit of the middle course between excess and deficiency (the famous 'golden mean').[18] Cicero is vague about what he means by goodness, though he is keen to make a distinction between an unattainable, philosophically ideal goodness and that which is reasonably possible in the world. What is clear, however, is that the virtue of friendship and the goodness necessary for it are by and large the exclusive properties of men. Women are excluded from Cicero's treatise by default since he is only concerned with aristocratic, male Romans. Aristotle considers women in relation to marriage, and proposes that the relationship between a husband and wife might be a kind of friendship, although an inferior kind, based on inequality: 'The friendship between husband and wife ... is the same as that which prevails between rulers and subjects'.[19]

The precepts of Aristotle and Cicero underpin Montaigne's contemplation of affectionate relationships in his essay, 'De l'amitié', but he combines their more practical wisdom with the distinctly spiritual and mystical tones of Platonism. Friendship, he declares, is 'spirituall, and the minde [is] refined by use and custome'. In a state of

[16] The sixteenth-century translation is John Wilkinson's, *The Ethiques of Aristotle, that is to saye, Preceptes of Good Behauoute [sic] and Perfighte Honestie, Now Newly Tra[n]slated into English* (London: 1547). It is actually more of a paraphrase in nature than a complete and faithful translation. Again, it's age may make it unlikely that Philips knew the text. A paraphrase by Jérôme de Bénévent was published in France in the early seventeenth century, *Paraphrase sur les dix livres de l'Ethique ou Morale d'Aristote, a Nicomaque: Divisee en deux parties* (Paris: 1615).

[17] Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* (The Loeb Classical Library), 461 & 453 respectively.

[18] Indeed, David Ross, editor of the Oxford World's Classics edition of the *Nicomachean Ethics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), supposes that the two books on friendship constituted a separate treatise and were erroneously included in the rest of the work by Aristotle's early editors.

[19] Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, (The Loeb Classical Library), 495.

perfect friendship, '[our mindes] entermixe and confound themselves one in the other, with so universal a commixture, that they ... can no more finde the seame that hath conjoyned them together'.[20] This is the language of Philips' perfect female friendship: the 'chang'd and mingled souls' of 'To Mrs. Mary Awbrey at parting' (53, l. 13), the 'minds so pure' which revere friendship as a 'bright [Platonic] Idea' in the abstract friendship poem, 'The Enquiry' (58, ll. 5-6). Montaigne is also at pains to distinguish friendship from sexual passion, and in his description of the love of friends as 'a generall and universal heat, and equally tempered, a constant and setled heat, all pleasure and smoothness, that hath no pricking or stinging in it'[21], we recognise the 'pure fire' of Philips' poem, 'Friendship' (57):

> Which burns the clearer 'cause it burns the higher;
> ... With its own heat and nourishment content,
> (Where neither hurt, nor smoke, nor noise is made) (38 & 44-45)[22]

Philips' ideal of spiritual, extrabodily love is also faithfully represented in seventeenth-century English verse by Cowley's account of the friendship between Jonathan and David in his unfinished epic, *Davideis*. Cowley's celebration of the Biblical friends extols their love as a 'bright but not consuming *Flame*' and upbraids misguided man for confusing such a pure passion with 'that *Monster, Lust*'. The affection shared by Jonathan and David is 'Sacred *Love*' such as 'does Heav'n's bright *Spirits* fill'; their 'Joys' are 'without matter', they are 'clear and liquid'.[23]

The ideal of friendship to which Philips lays claim through this shared spiritual discourse is, however, denied her by Montaigne on the basis of her sex. In 'De l'amitié'

[20] Montaigne, *Essayes*, I:27, 147 & 149.

[21] Ibid., 146.

[22] The qualities with which Montaigne invests the flame of friendship coincide with the qualities which Philips celebrates in the 'truly noble' subjects of her occasional poems.

[23] *Davideis*, Bk 2, ll. 85, 84, 110 & 109 respectively.

the exclusion of women from friendship's virtue is made explicit:

> Seeing (to speake truly) that the ordinary sufficiency of women, cannot answer this conference and communication, the nurse of this sacred bond: nor seeme their mindes strong enough to endure the pulling of a knot so hard, fast, and durable. ... this sex could never yet by any example attaine unto it, and is by ancient schooles rejected thence.[24]

'To compare the affection toward women unto [friendship], although it proceed from our owne free choice, a man cannot, nor may it be placed in this ranke,' he declares earlier in the essay.[25] Quite simply, Montaigne is only concerned, as Aristotle is, with woman in relation to man, and with her suitability as a friend of man. But Montaigne's analysis of woman's deficiency goes further. It questions the very nature of her soul - the seat of friendship's divine flame - and denies her access to a relationship which he characterises as holy, a 'sacred bond'. Florio's translation faithfully conveys the inscription of female weakness and inconstancy in Montaigne's text: women lack the *sufficiency* to sustain friendship, their minds are not *strong enough to endure the pulling of a knot so hard.*[26]

English male contemporaries of Philips generally agree with Montaigne that women are deficient in the virtues required for friendship, and like him they tend to consider women only in relation to men, as wives. 'I believe some wives have been the best friends in the world,' declares the Anglican divine Jeremy Taylor in his reply to Philips' question concerning the compatibility between Christianity and 'a dear and a

[24] Montaigne, *Essayes*, 152.

[25] Ibid., 147.

[26] In the original this is 'ny leur ame ne semble assez ferme pour soustenir l'estreinte d'un noeud si pressé et si durable'. Montaigne, *Essais*, Tomes 1 & 2, edited by Maurice Rat (Paris: Editions Garnier Frères, 1962), 201-202.

perfect friendship'.[27] But he goes on to qualify that statement in terms which attest to woman's inferiority: 'I cannot say that women are capable of all those excellencies, by which men can oblige the world; and therefore a female friend in some case is not so good a counsellor as a wise man'. And he concludes: 'A man is the best friend in trouble, but a woman may be equal to him in the days of joy: a woman can as well increase our comforts, but cannot so well lessen our sorrows'.[28] Taylor's reasoning implies the same female weaknesses and imperfections as Montaigne's blunter critique. The physical metaphors in which Montaigne's spiritual ideal is couched construct woman as the physical and spiritual inferior of man. Similarly, Taylor's disqualification of woman from offering aid in times of 'trouble' establishes her physical and moral fragility; she is suited only to the ease (and moral frivolity) of good times. Taylor's woman also lacks some of the 'excellencies' of men. 'Excellencies' is (following Plato) another term for virtues, and one virtue which Taylor specifically denies his woman is wisdom, the goal of all philosophical and spiritual contemplation, as Philips herself asserts in her religious verse.[29] In the poems that constitute the first two books of his *Castara*, William Habington credits his beloved with all the virtues necessary for a chaste and spiritual love. And yet in the third book, which deals with friendship, he is still able roundly to affirm that 'A Friend', 'Is a man'.[30] Even Philips' close acquaintance Francis Finch, author of a treatise on friendship which he dedicated, as if in recognition of their

[27] Taylor, *Friendship*, 59. The declaration gallantly but forcefully effaces the true purport of Philips' inquiry: the appropriateness of her friendships with women. Taylor appears to be familiar with Philips' poetry - if not directly, then by reputation - since he comments, at the beginning of his treatise, that she is 'eminent in friendships' (9). He must therefore know that she is concerned in her appeal to him with the female friendships described in her poetry. Other aspects of Taylor's reply suggest an implicit criticism of Philips' poetic friendships: his censure, for example, of Platonic friendship as 'tinsel dressings ... a thing that pleases the fancy, but is good for nothing else' (30).

[28] Ibid., 59, 10, 60, 61 respectively.

[29] See particularly 'On Controversies in Religion'. Philips also agrees with Taylor that wisdom is a prerequisite for friendship, and she lays claim to it in 'A Friend' (st. 9).

[30] Habington, *Poems*, 99. The quotation represents the first sentence of Habington's prose character sketch of 'A Friend' in its totality. The sketch introduces a series of poems to male friends in which Habington makes a number of apologies for his previous preoccupation with the love of women.

profound union, to 'D. noble Lucasia-Orinda', is forced to conclude, in the very same treatise, that 'There be many can adore one as a *Mistresse*, affect her for a *Wife*, and yet believe her not so proper for all the *Relations of Friendship*'.[31]

Friendships between women are generally not addressed or even considered by these male commentators: the logic of their reasoning is that the female sex *per se* is morally and spiritually incapable of such a bond. Friendship is masculine, a male prerogative. Even when male writers on women allowed them spiritual equality with men, as most of the Protestant conduct book writers of the Early Modern period did, this did not open out the realm of friendship to women. On the contrary, the spiritually rehabilitated good woman was, as we have seen, first and foremost a wife, subject to her husband, by divine ordinance, in thought and emotion as well as word and deed. 'His will is the tye and tedder even of my desires and wishes,' proclaims the good wife of William Whately's *A Bride-bush* (1617).[32] There is no room for friendship with other women in this emotional economy. William Habington agrees. In the prose sketch of the ideal wife which prefaces the second book of *Castara*, he avers that a wife's friendship extends only to her husband, 'and therefore hath neither shee friend nor private servant'.[33]

In Castiglione's *The Courtier*, a text which exerted a considerable influence upon ideals of aristocratic and courtly behaviour in Early Modern England, and which was much valued by Philips, similar doubts as those expressed by Montaigne over the calibre of the female soul are given fuller treatment.[34] The final discourse of *The Courtier*

[31] Quoted by Thomas in his commentary to Philips' poem 'Friendship' (*Poems*, 360).

[32] Whately, *A Bride-bush*, 37.

[33] Habington, *Poems*, 55.

[34] In a letter to Charles Cotterell dated April 15 1663, Philips writes, 'I brought the CORTEGGIANO with me into IRELAND, and find it the best Company I ever met with' (*Letters*, 81). Philips' reference to the text as 'the CORTEGGIANO' may suggest that she was reading it in the original Italian. Hoby's translation (1561, with further editions in 1577, 1588, and 1603) was entitled *The Booke of the Courtyer*. I have found no other Early Modern translation that carries the Italian title.

centres on Pietro Bembo's description of the soul's purification as it progresses up through the stages of the Platonic 'stair of love', from the love of beauty in an individual (woman) to love of and unification with the eternal and divine beauty of God.[35] Bembo's enraptured account of the divine vision granted to the pure of spirit initiates a dispute concerning the purity of women's souls and their access to such grace. Signior Gaspare contends that,

> ... women's souls be not so purged from passions as men's be, nor accustomed in beholdings, as Messer Pietro hath said it is necessary for them to be that will taste of heavenly love. Therefore it is not read that ever woman hath had this grace; but many men have had it, as Plato, Socrates, Plotinus.[36]

It is decided by the Duchess, Elizabetta Gonzaga, that Bembo should answer Gaspare's assertion of female inferiority, but, since dawn has broken, she postpones Bembo's reply until that evening. The text ends with Gaspare's contention unchallenged and it leaves woman relegated to a lower spiritual order. In the Platonic context of Montaigne's discussion of the female soul, she is denied friendship. In *The Courtier*, where Platonism transforms an essentially heterosexual desire into spiritual enlightenment, it appears she is excluded from God's grace.

A significant number of literate men in the seventeenth century, including the clerical conduct book writers, would have contested Signor Gaspare's point of view. Charles Gerbier, for example, accords woman 'a Soul endowed with understanding, reason, wit, judgment, will, memory, imagination, and opinion', and he insists that 'they [man and woman] may both lift up their eyes to the contemplation of Nature, and bring their minds raised and as it were inflamed with a divine love.'[37] Owen Fellltham,

[35] Baldassare Castiglione, *The Courtier (Il Cortegiano)*, translated by Thomas Hoby (The Literature of Italy Series, ed. Rossiter Johnson & Dora Knowlton Ranous, [New York]: The National Alumni, 1907), 359.

[36] Ibid., 366.

[37] Gerbier, *Elogium Heroinum*. Quotations from 'The Preface to the Reader' (unpaginated) and pp. 6-7.

in his *Resolves*, is equally eloquent in his defence of woman's spiritual equality. He affirms her soul to be the same as that of man's, and, arguing from his definition of God as a supremely merciful and loving being, he asserts that woman is closer to God than man:

> *Man* in nothing is more like [God], than in being *mercifull.* Yet *Woman* is farre more *mercifull* than *Man* ... *God* is sayd to be *Love;* and I am sure, every where *Woman* is spoken of, for transcending in that *quality.*[38]

Nevertheless, images of women as the more earthly, material and therefore more imperfect of the sexes were also prevalent in the literature of the period. The most vituperative of these are probably found in Jacques Olivier's, *An Alphabet of Women's Imperfections* (1617):

> [woman] you live here on earth as the world's most imperfect creature: the scum of nature, the cause of misfortune, the source of quarrels, the toy of the foolish, the plague of the wise, the stirrer of hell, the tinder of vice, the guardian of excrement, a monster in nature, an evil necessity, a multiple chimera, a sorry pleasure, Devil's bait, the enemy of angels ... [39]

Though few attacks on female nature were as extreme as Olivier's, the debate over women's capacity for spiritual virtue was easily appropriated by male writers during fits of misogyny. 'Hope not for minde in women,' declares John Donne in 'Loves

[38] Felltham, *Resolves*, 101-102.

[39] Olivier's tract is a particularly colourful example of the kind of extreme misogyny which generally received its fair share of detractors. Kate Aughterson notes, however, that the tract was very popular, running through seventeen editions in the hundred years after its first appearance. It was translated into English in 1662 - a telling date given the Restoration backlash against the (perceived) freedoms that women had accumulated under the Protectorate. Aughterson points out that 'several rather worn editions of the original French versions are available in British libraries, suggesting an eager English readership'. (Aughterson, ed., *Renaissance Woman*, 41.)

Alchymie', 'at their best,/Sweetnesse and wit, they'are but *Mummy*, possest'.[40] Cowley, in his poem from *The Mistress* entitled 'Platonick Love', can only reconcile a sense of spiritual intimacy with the female addressee through the suggestion that her soul is masculine: 'In thy immortal part,/Man, as well as I, thou art'.[41] Such sentiments imply the perfection of the masculine; nothing as pure and true as the spiritual self could be feminine.

Philips was aware of the currency of such ideas, and she implicitly invokes them in her own assertion of female spiritual parity in 'A Friend':

> If soules no sexes have, for men t'exclude
> Women from friendship's vast capacity,
> Is a design injurious and rude,
> Onely maintain'd by partiall tyranny. (19-22)

Philips' 'If' speaks loudly to the contemporary debate; it also signals the soul's ungendered condition as the cornerstone of her claim that the realm of friendship belongs to women. Philips' speaker recognises and rejects the notion of the imperfect female soul, and in support of her claim to friendship she seems to turn to newer cultural models of womanhood, arguing that, 'Love is allow'd to us, and Innocence,/And noblest friendships doe proceed from thence' (23-24). The invocation of 'Love' as the defining characteristic of female nature would seem to be an allusion to contemporary courtly Platonism with its tendency to invest women with the qualities of beauty and love. 'Innocence', on the other hand, seems to belong to the Protestant conduct text notion of the ideal, chaste woman. What is interesting about Philips' allusions to these models is that they recognise and always keep in sight the culturally constructed nature of gender identity. Philips' speaker understands that men 'exclude'

[40] ll. 23-24. Text from John Donne, *The Poems of John Donne*, ed. Sir Herbert Grierson (London: Oxford University Press, 1964).

[41] ll. 8 & 9.

women from friendship, and that this exclusion is 'design[ed]'. She knows that the various ideals of femininity are unnatural and patriarchal: Love and Innocence are 'allow'd to' women. Furthermore, Philips herself would have been well aware that neither the ideals of courtly Platonism nor those of the conduct manual allowed space for female friendship. We have seen how the latter confines woman's emotional life to her husband's will. In courtly Platonism she is an object of male desire (more or less spiritual as the mood of the male writer takes him). By attaching 'Love' and 'Innocence' to friendship, Philips' speaker not only strengthens her case against misogynist allegations of women's incapacity for friendship, she also expands the connotations and significance of the virtues which are allowed to women by men.

In laying claim to friendship in this poem, Philips is appropriating for herself and her sex friendship's 'vast capacity'. The virtues which accrue to her as a result are those which are generally ascribed to the more perfect male; some of them have been specifically denied her in the male-authored commentaries on friendship. They include trustworthiness, wisdom, knowledge, discretion, constancy. In the sixth stanza of the poem, Philips' speaker pays tribute to honour. During the Early Modern period, 'honour', like the term 'virtue', increasingly came to signify nothing more than chastity when applied to women. Philips' description of it here has little, if anything, to do with that feminine form. In fact, it is explicitly linked with the classical tradition of male virtue and friendship through the allusion to Cicero which concludes the stanza:

> Essentiall honour must be in a Friend,
> Not such as every breath fanns to and fro;
> But born Within, is its own Judge and end,
> And dares not sin though sure that none should know.
> Where Friendship's spake, honesty's understood;
> For none can be a friend that is not good. (31-36)

There are, however, allusions in the poem to chastity and (sexual) purity.

Friendship is described as 'love refin'd and purg'd from all its drosse' (8). It is 'The next to Angells Love, if not the same,/Stronger then passion is, though not so grosse' (9-10). If absence of sexual desire was demanded of women by seventeenth-century moralists as a tool of women's social subordination, and required of expressions of woman to woman intimacy by cultural prescriptions against same-sex passion, it was also valorised by a Christian culture which gave precedence to spirit over matter, and to the soul over the body. It is not unreasonable to expect that Philips, even given the erotically charged nature of her love for other women, should have shared this value for the extrabodily and other-worldly as an ideal to which to aspire. (Indeed, her religious poems, as we have seen, show that she did.) Such an ideal fuels Montaigne's and Cowley's celebrations of male friendship as a sacred love figured by a pure flame. The language that Montaigne, Cowley and Philips use to evoke the perfect love between friends is the same as that used by Henry More to describe the virtuous love which unites the purified soul of man with God. It is, writes More,

> ... that bright flame that's proper to the just,
> And eats away all drosse and cankred rust
> With its refining heat, unites the mind
> With Gods own spright ...[42]

Philips' insistence on the chaste and extrabodily nature of her love also gains strength as a positive ideal for women when placed in the context of Early Modern perceptions of female physiology.[43] Not only was woman considered a captive to her body, the body in which she was imprisoned was regarded as a particularly unstable, unpredictable one, host to a wealth of disorders and ailments, and a hotbed of

[42] *Psychathanasia*, Bk 1, Canto 1, st. 4, ll. 4-7.

[43] Thomas Laqueur's *Making Sex, Body and Gender from the Greeks to Freud* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1992) provides a detailed and lucid account of Early Modern proto-medical thinking on the female body and its (imperfect) relation to the male. (See particularly chapters 1 through 4.) My summary here is much indebted to Laqueur.

lascivious desires and needs. The Galenic-Aristotelian model of female physiology dominated seventeenth-century anatomical science, and more dominant still were the culturally determined signs that such a physiology was forced to bear. Aristotle both reflected and gave added authority to cultural constructions of sex and gender through his identification of man or maleness with form, and of woman or femaleness with matter. In reproductive terms this meant that the male seed contained and transmitted 'the principle of soul' to the potential human life; the female provided only the matter - physical, bloody, and messy - upon which the male semen acted. Helkiah Crooke paints a particularly unpleasant picture of the female 'matter' in his *Microcosmographia* (1618), describing it as 'the crude and raw remainders of her own aliment'.[44] His vivid language reinforces woman's inescapable tie to the material, to her body in its sexual and reproductive function.

Aristotle's gendering of form and matter forges a link between morality, spirituality and biological sex; female inferiority is inscribed upon the female body. In the Galenic system, female imperfection becomes a necessary component of the one sex theory. The female body is figured as an inverted male body; he is the norm, the standard, she is a deficient copy, something of an aberration. Galenic anatomy also locates the source of all woman's (many) physical, mental and moral weaknesses in her sexual and reproductive organs.[45] The cause and cure of female disorders such as hysteria and greensickness were seen to lie in woman's sexual appetite; lust created the

[44] From an extract in Aughterson, ed., *Renaissance Woman*, 54.

[45] Referring to the influence of these ideas in Early Modern France, Maclean, in *Woman Triumphant*, argues that although the Galenic view of physiology was 'gradually undermined in the course of the sixteenth-century' his notion of the humours (where women are characterised by cold and moist, men by the more perfect hot and dry) continued to prevail 'in the associated question of the action of bodily temperature on the mind' (10-11). He also observes that 'The Aristotelian 'imperfect male' theory is much discussed in the early seventeenth century, and seems still to be at issue as late as 1656 [in Jean Chapelain, *LaPucelle*, Paris, 1656]' (46).

problem, sexual satisfaction (orgasm) could solve it.[46]

Philips' oeuvre articulates an ambivalent attitude towards such views of the female body. In her poem 'Advice to Virgins', her speaker voices a powerful and emphatic repudiation of marriage, that must also be read as repudiation of sex, and an implicit rejection, therefore, of popular notions such as greensickness and hysteria. The poem, which can be found in Jane Stevenson and Peter Davidson's anthology *Early Modern Women Poets*, is a much longer reworking of an early poem by Philips called 'A marry'd state' (poem 130 in the Thomas edition).[47] 'Advice to Virgins' stoutly defends the 'Maiden Life' as the only possible option for a 'happy' and 'Content[ed]' existence (44-45). The speaker enumerates the many and varied horrors that attend upon the married woman's lot, and urges her addressee to deny any sexual desires that may unwittingly assail her and lead to her union with a man. These desires are alluded to as 'wild Nature' (61), a phrase that implies their irrationality and contributes to the poem's assertion that virginity is not only the happier state but the only rational choice. Philips' defence of the single woman's integrity and reason in this poem challenges contemporary ideas concerning the necessity of marriage (and sex) for the good of feminine constitution. Her single woman is granted a sound physical and mental independence which can only be destroyed by marriage. However, in her contemplative poem, 'The World' (72), one couplet suggests that Philips does accept the classical wisdom concerning the imperfection of her sex. The couplet restates the

[46] Something of this attitude is suggested by the humorous and scurrilous verse, 'A Cure for ye Greene Sicknesse' (Bodl. MS. Rawl. poet. 172, fol. 2v):

> A mayden faire of ye greene sicknesse late
> Pitty to see, perplexed was full sore
> Resolvinge how t'amend her bad estate,
> In this distresse Apollo doth implore
> Cure for her ill; ye oracle assignes,
> Keepe ye the first letter of these severall lines.

[47] 'A marry'd state', classified by Thomas as a piece of Philips' juvenilia, is recorded in an autograph manuscript from the papers of the Orielton estate (belonging to the family of Lucasia's first husband, John Owen) and is dedicated to 'Mrs Anne Barlow' and signed 'C. Fowler'. Stevenson and Davidson consider Philips the most likely author of the reworked version on the basis that there is no evidence that the original poem circulated further than its original recipient.

gendered hierarchy of the Galenic-Aristotelian sex model: 'The soule, which no man's pow'r can reach, a thing/That makes each woman Man, each man a king' (37-38). The copy-text for this poem in Thomas' edition is Philips' autograph manuscript. The punctuation, therefore, is hers. The capital 'M' on the second 'Man' would suggest that Philips intends to signify its generic application: 'human', in other words. This would render her 'woman', in this sentence, less than human, less than the male sex which represents humanity in its perfect form. Significantly, Philips lays claim to the 'soule' - Aristotle's male principle - as the means by which women can escape from their inferior anatomy and become 'Man'. The poem simultaneously accepts and seeks to transcend the conventional hierarchy of man/woman.

Images of the disorderly and voracious female body permeate all genres of Early Modern writing: philosophical, proto-medical, moral and literary. The success of the 'naturally' chaste, submissive and domestic woman of the Protestant conduct texts, for example, rested precariously and paradoxically upon the subjugation of the natural whore. Thomas Becon's construction of the good woman as divinely and naturally pure and passive, in his popular conduct manual *The Catechism*, exists in tension with his palpable fear of the sexually aggressive and assertive woman. Becon's portrait of the whore, her punishments, and God's loathing of her, is detailed, graphic and merciless. He cautions his ideal husband against her deadly temptations, and in her impurity identifies her with the Devil.[48] Once again there were male voices that challenged such perceptions of women and condemned those who perpetuated them. Gerbier and Felltham, who, as we have seen, defended the perfection of woman's soul, also argued, contrary to dominant opinion, that she possessed a body superior to man's, in form and beauty. Gerbier interprets the fact of woman's creation after and from Adam as proof of her greater perfection, since Adam was made only of dust and Eve of God made flesh.[49] This reiterates an argument made by Rachel Speght some years earlier in

[48] Becon, *Catechism*, 368.

[49] Gerbier, *Elogium Heroinum*, 4.

her tract *A mouzell for Melastomus* (1617) written in response to Joseph Swetnam's *The arraignment of lewd, froward and idle women* (1615).[50] For Gerbier, this physical perfection in woman assumes a romantic and coyly sexual dimension, a response to female beauty which he struggles to contain in his text. In his chapter 'Of Faire Women', he equates '*Beauty*' - and woman as the apotheosis of beauty - with 'the Image of the Creator', but, detailing the various perfections of the female body, his prose descends into the most common clichés of romantic verse, and he moves abruptly on to consideration of women's 'goodness'.[51] Fellltham's contemplation of woman's physical excellence is unabashed, her beauty constituting the undeniable proof of the perfection of her soul:

> All will grant her *body* more *admirable*, more *beautifull* than *Mans*: fuller of *curiosities*, and *Noble Natures wonders* .... And can wee thinke, *God* would put a *worser soule* into a *better body*?[52]

The (romantic) admiration expressed by Gerbier and Fellltham, and the fears articulated by writers like Becon are manifest in a complex and often paradoxical

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[50] The similarity between Speght's and Gerbier's articulation of this argument suggests that Gerbier might have been working from Speght's tract. Speght writes:

> ... the material cause or matter whereof woman was made was of a refined mould ... for man was created of the dust of the earth, but woman was made of a part of man after that he was a living soul: yet she was not produced from Adam's foot, to be his too low inferior; nor from his head to be his superior; but from his side, near his heart, to be his equal, that where he is lord she may be lady .... (From the extract in Aughterson, *Renaissance Woman*, 273-274.)

And Gerbier:

> ... [God] then created Man, of the dust of the earth; and afterwards, in the terrestrial Paradise, he made a Woman; not of Mans head, lest she should presume to over-top him, nor of his foot, lest she should be vilified by him, but from a rib neare [u]nto his heart, that she might be ever dear and entire unto him ... (4).

(Interestingly, Gerbier's account emphasises the subjectivity of the man.)

[51] Gerbier, *Elogium Heroinum*, 72-81.

[52] Fellltham, *Resolves*, 101.

interplay in the poetry of Philips' male contemporaries. In the rhetoric of courtly Platonic love, the position of the virtuous and semi-divine woman is always vulnerable. Frequently she is an object of lust masquerading as devout adoration; often, the voice of mock compliment or satire lingers beneath the tropes of devotion, and individual poems expose the bogus nature of their own pious discourse:

> Indeed I must confesse,
> When Souls mix 'tis an happinesse;
> But not compleat 'till Bodies too do joyne[53]

Earl Miner comments of the vogue of Platonic love in England that, 'Most seventeenth-century poets simply did not write as if they believed [in it]'.[54] John Cleveland's poem, 'The Antiplatonick', is one of a number of verse complaints against Platonic love. The violence of his protest is sharpened by reference to the flawed physiology of the female sex:

> Vertue's no more in Woman-kind
> But the green-sicknesse of the mind.
> Philosophy, their new delight,
> A kind of Charcoal Appetite.[55]

Cleveland renders the notion of female virtue ridiculous through the invocation of the aberrant and sexually voracious female body. Virtue as a fit of illness is no virtue at all, and images of physical and sexual dysfunction are employed in cruel and ironic parody of the spiritual (and by implication, masculine) pursuit of virtue and philosophy. Woman's morbid cravings (a symptom of greensickness and also pregnancy) reinforce

[53] Cowley, 'Platonic Love', ll. 1-3.

[54] Miner, *Cavalier Mode*, 218.

[55] ll. 25-28. Text from *The Poems of John Cleveland*, ed. Brian Morris & Eleanor Withington (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1967).

her connection with the material. 'Charcoal appetite' suggests earth - low, dirty, soiled. (Philips uses the term 'earthy' to describe the fire of impure love in 'Friendship' {39}.) Furthermore, Cleveland uses these physical disorders to characterise the female mind (and, since the words 'mind' and 'soul' were interchangeable, her spiritual aspect too).

The nature and pervasiveness of such images of women, and the status of the medical, doctrinal and philosophical discourses in which they were rooted, complicate, I think, the assumption on which Wahl's analysis of Philips' 'extrabodily' love seems to rest: that the realm of chaste, spiritual intimacy was a simple and ultimately regressive one for Philips to occupy. Laqueur's study of the relationship between gender, sex and culture finds that the ideological victory of the 'naturally' passionless, morally pure woman over her unstable, sexual and morally compromised counterpart was not really secured in English culture and society until well into the eighteenth century.[56] Philips' repeated emphasis on the purity of her love, the refined nature of its flame, her rejection of 'grosse' corporeality in favour of the communication of souls, constitutes less of a capitulation to a pervasive model of passive femininity than a claim to spiritual equality with men, and to the 'vast capacity' of friendship from which she and her sex had been 'tyrannically' excluded. The claim involves a (necessary) rejection of the pathological female body, a rejection which implies an acceptance of contemporary (patriarchal) conceptions of that body, as well as subscription to a Christian privileging of the spiritual over the physical. In 'The Enquiry' (58), an abstract examination of the nature of friendship, Philips specifically positions her ideal of friendship in the noble and ancient traditions of philosophy and history:

> If we no old historian's name
> Authentique will admitt,
> And thinke all said of friendship's fame
> But poetry and wit:
> Yet what's revered by minds so pure

[56] Laqueur, *Making Sex*, Chapter 5, 149 ff.

Must be a bright Idea, sure. (1-6)

Just who Philips' 'old historian' is is uncertain. It may be Plutarch, whose *Lives* contain a number of accounts of exemplary (male) friendship. It might be Cicero, for although he is not strictly considered an historian, his *Laelius* is, at least in part, a record of the ideal friendship between Scipio and the eponymous speaker.[57] Possibly Philips is using the term generically. What is significant is that she draws on history as a defence for her notion of friendship, and therefore on male models, replete with a particularly masculine concept of virtue. To this defence she joins Platonic philosophy. Line 6, with its reference to 'a bright Idea', alludes to Plato's 'Forms', and offers friendship as a divine archetype, the perfection of which the soul has experienced before its life in the body and which it dimly remembers and strives to regain. Philips could have found the vocabulary of Platonic 'Ideas' in Stanley's *History of Philosophy*, where in Chapter 9 of 'The Doctrine of Plato', 'Ideas' are defined as 'the eternall notions of God, perfect in themselves'.[58] To rediscover such 'Ideas' through transcendence of the sensual and corporeal life is the route of the Platonic acquisition of wisdom and virtue. It is a transcendence that Philips, in her religious verse, valorises as the most important of human duties.

Philips was not the only intelligent, literary, seventeenth-century English woman to admire models of male friendship and to adopt their precepts for her own. In a letter to her future husband, William Temple, dated 15 June 1654, Dorothy Osborne encloses a manuscript copy of 'some Verses of Cowly's'. The 'Verses' are an extract from *Davideis* describing the friendship between David and Jonathan. 'Tell me how you like them,' she instructs Temple, for 'tis I think the best I have seen of his and I like the

[57] Laelius hopes that 'the memory' of his friendship with Scipio 'will always endure' since 'in the whole range of history only three or four pairs of friends are mentioned'. (Cicero, *De Amicitia*, 125.)

[58] Stanley, *History of Philosophy*, 67.

subject because tis that I would bee perfect In'.[59] In her prose essay, 'Of Love', Lady Mary Chudleigh pays tribute to a number of classical, male friendships including the one between Scipio and Laelius. She also devotes more than half the essay to the friendship between Jonathan and David, and writes of the joys and suffering of the two Biblical friends with a striking depth of sympathy and passion. Chudleigh closes her essay with over one hundred lines of verse written in the voice of David, expressing his grief over Jonathan's death. There is no sense that Chudleigh feels that her sex hinders her from full empathy with this love between men, or that such a passion might be inappropriate - or impossible - between women. Yet she has her David deny women the capacity to love as deeply as he and Jonathan (in the same breath as he associates women with the soft emotions of intimacy): 'Not the fair Sex, whom softest Passions move,/Can with such Ardour, such Intenseness love.'[60] And when, in the same essay, 'for the Honour of my own Sex,' she cites a number of women worthy of the title of friend, their friendships are with men, and almost all of those men are their husbands. (This is in spite of the fact that several of her poems celebrate close, intimate, Platonic friendship between women.)[61] Similarly, Dorothy Osborne's interest in the friendship of David and Jonathan is in the context of heterosexual, conjugal relations. By sharing Cowley's account of the friendship with Temple, she seems to be offering it as a model for her relationship with him, rather than for a friendship with another woman.

Something of Philips' claim to the philosophical tradition of male friendship for woman to woman relations can be found in the friendship verse of Anne Finch,

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[59] Dorothy Osborne, *Letters to Sir William Temple*, ed. Kenneth Parker (London: Penguin, 1987), 203.

[60] 'Of Love', ll. 327-328, from Chudleigh, *Poems and Prose.*

[61] It is interesting that Chudleigh backs off from explicitly celebrating this kind of woman to woman friendship in her philosophical essays. She also demonstrates, in both 'Of Friendship' and 'Of Love', a squeamishness or defensiveness about what she describes as 'an indecent Fondness', a phrase which is quite distinct from the conventional rhetoric of purity and refined passion (of which both essays are also full). (See Chudleigh, *Poems and Prose*, 343-362.) It seems possible that Chudleigh was carefully negotiating a Restoration tendency to eroticise all intimate relations, a tendency which Philips, in the mid-1650s at least, did not have to confront.

Countess of Winchilsea, however. In Finch's 'Petition for An Absolute Retreat', dedicated to Catharine, Countess of Thanet, who appears in the poem under the sobriquet 'Arminda', the poet-speaker, Ardelia, is rescued from a lonely 'Oblivion' by the appearance of her friend, Arminda.[62] Arminda's restoring presence is likened explicitly to Jonathan's love for David:

> So, when once the Son of *Jess*,
> Every Anguish did oppress,
> Hunted by all kinds of Ills,
> Like a *Partridge* on the Hills
> .....
> Fate, to answer all thses Harms,
> Threw a *Friend* into his Arms.[63]

Ardelia and Arminda are an exact parallel of the Biblical (male) pair. Finch invokes the example of Jonathan and David once again in her 'Epistle, from Ardelia to Mrs Randolph in answer to her Poem upon Her Verses'. Celebrating the honour of being the object of Mrs Randolf's admiration and friendship, Finch's speaker recalls the intimacy of David and Jonathan, concluding that 'to the love of Jonathan we owe/The Love, which that of Women did surpasse'.[64] Rather than working as a slur on the female sex, here, Finch's allusion to a love greater than that of women retains the Biblical meaning of 'greater than sexual love', and implicitly appropriates that meaning for her relationship with her female friend.[65] Again the poem is a celebration of woman to woman intimacy, for which the male model provides a perfect pattern. It is appropriate that in the same poem the poet-speaker should liken her addressee to

[62] l. 164, Finch, *Selected Poems*, ed. Rogers.

[63] ll. 182-191.

[64] ll. 44-45, Finch, *Selected Poems*, ed. Rogers.

[65] Rogers makes this same point in the Introduction to her edition. See, Finch, *Selected Poems*, xi.

'Orinda' and herself to Orinda's 'glorious Friend'.[66]

The positive and progressive nature of Philips' feminocentric claim to the same virtue that informed male friendship is underscored, I think, by considering it along side her more obviously (to modern thinking) radical critique of marriage. Much has been made of this critique in recent commentaries on Philips' friendship poems. In addition to her championing of the 'Maiden Life' in 'Advice to Virgins', the main premises of Philips' critique of marriage can be found in the poems, 'Friendship' and 'A Friend'. In the former, Philips categorises marriage as a relationship tainted by 'Lust, design, or some unworthy ends', impurities which are, her speaker declares, 'despis'd by friends' (31-32). In 'A Friend' the subject is given stronger treatment: friendship, the speaker avers, is 'Nobler then kindred or then marriage band,/Because more free' (13-14). This critique certainly is, in the context of conduct book ideology, radical: it claims for women an autonomous emotional life beyond marriage, and demands a space for woman to woman relationships. But the terms of the critique are not unique to Philips. They belong, in fact, to Early Modern discourses on male friendship. In 'De l'amitié', Montaigne compares conjugal relationships unfavourably with friendship in very similar terms to those used by Philips in 'A Friend': 'it is a covenant which hath nothing free but the entrance, the continuance being forced and constrained depending elsewhere than from our will'.[67] (Given Montaigne's popularity in England and the ability of Philips to access the essays in either French or English, such similarities may signify direct influence.) The same 'unworthy ends' which Philips finds in the marriage tie are criticised by Francis Finch in the treatise he dedicated to Philips and Anne Owen. Finch observes that conjugal love may only be compared with friendship 'where the Marriage was purely the choice and congruity of the Persons united, without the Byasse of other *Interests* which usually bear a great sway in that Union'. Even then he doubts

[66] ll. 31-32

[67] Montaigne, *Essayes*, 147.

that what exists between husband and wife can really be said to be friendship.[68] Cowley affirms the polluting presence of lust in the marriage relationship in *Davideis*:

> Never did *Marriage* such true *Union* find,
> Or Men's Desires with so glad Violence bind;
> For there is still some Tincture left of *Sin*,
> And still the *Sex* will needs be stealing in.[69]

The language of this critique is commonplace and conventional when it comes from the pen of a man; it is radical when it is articulated by a woman and when a woman is claiming that the marital relationship is inferior to female friendship. By the same token, Philips' discourse of virtue in friendship is radical in appropriating for women - that inferior, corporeal sex - the culturally male qualities of goodness and spiritual purity. It is a discourse which, Philips more than once observes, 'redeem[s] ... the [female] sex'.[70]

There is another redemptive quality of Philips' philosophy of woman to woman friendship to which the friendship poems make repeated allusion: the redemption of the corrupted world. In 'To Mrs. Mary Awbrey at parting', the speaker's celebration of the perfect and indivisible spiritual union which binds her to Mary Aubrey reaches its zenith in an image of the two friends as an ideal example of love and harmony able to reform the world:

> Thus our twin souls in one shall growe,
> And teach the World new love;
> Redeem the age and sex, and show
> A flame fate dares not move (49-52)

[68] Francis Finch, *Friendship*, ([London?], 1654). This extract quoted by Thomas in *Poems*, (360).

[69] ll. 104-107.

[70] 'To Mrs. Mary Awbrey at parting' (l. 51) and 'Rosania shaddow'd whilest Mrs M. Awbrey' (ll. 43-44).

A similar politicisation of ideal female friendship occurs in 'Friendship's Mysterys, to my dearest Lucasia' (17) where the speaker offers the love between Lucasia and Orinda as an example of true religion to 'the dull, angry world'. The first stanza of the poem constitutes an urgent call to a public display of affection, one which would seem both to ratify the relationship itself as something of significance and validity within the world, and to provide a critique of that world through the demonstration of a better pattern of living:

> Come, my Lucasia, since we see
> That miracles men's faith do move
> By wonder and by Prodigy,
> To the dull, angry world let's prove
> There's a religion in our Love. (1-5)

The political significance of male friendship is well attested to in the classical sources. Aristotle notes that it 'appears to be the bond of the state; and lawgivers seem to set more store by it than they do by justice'.[71] In his prologue to *Laelius*, Cicero remarks that friendship seems to him to be a matter 'worthy of general study ... to benefit the public', and Laelius' account of his friendship with Scipio bears this out: Laelius observes that 'if you should take the bond of goodwill out of the universe no house or city could stand'.[72] In the poetry written by the dispossessed courtiers of Charles I's defeated court, male friendship comes to signify the political stability of a lost golden age of Royalist rule. Philips' poem to Francis Finch, 'To the noble Palaemon on his incomparable discourse of friendship' (12), shows that she was aware of the specifically Royalist implications of friendship. In the poem, friendship itself is figured as a royal prince whose 'Crown' Finch, in writing his discourse, has 'restor'd' (18).[73]

[71] Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 453 .

[72] Cicero, *De Amicitia*, 111 & 135.

[73] Significantly this 'prince' is also female.

Finch is also praised for rescuing friendship from the derision and scorn of the 'Politician' and 'souldier' (11-12), figures who, in the context of the poem's restored prince, would seem to be marked as Parliamentarian.[74] In spite of these shared partisan politics, Philips' evocation of friendship in 'To the noble Palaemon' is quite different in nature from the often jovial, boisterous, drinking-orientated celebration of male companionship in the Cavalier friendship poetry.[75] Philips represents friendship as a 'vertue' (28) which is explicitly divine in nature - it is 'Men's (and Angells) bliss' (8) - and which is consequently the foundation of all happiness and of the world itself. By rescuing friendship, Finch 'save[s] a world' (28).

The relationship between friendship and a divinely ordained world order, hinted at in the poem to Francis Finch, is developed more explicitly and in greater detail in Philips' abstract meditations on friendship. We have seen that Philips, in the poem 'The Enquiry', declares friendship to be a Platonic 'Idea', an archetype of the divine. In 'A Friend' and 'Friendship', she places her ideal of chaste love in the context of a Platonic cosmology, prefacing her analysis of perfect friendship, in both poems, with an account of the loving universe from which friendship derives its being. In this universe love figures as the very essence of heaven and represents the presence of the divine in all created life; it is 'The being and the Harmony of things' ('A Friend', l. 2). Consequently, love is the highest of virtues in humankind: "tis the noblest argument to prove/A beauteous mind, that it knows how to love' ('Friendship', ll. 15-16). Love stamps 'heaven's mintage on a worthy soule' and the affections felt between humans are simply 'streams' borrowed from heaven's 'fountaine' of love ('Friendship', ll. 18 & 14).

[74] In the same lines Philips speaker also invokes as an enemy of friendship the scoffing 'gallant'. Could this be a reference to the disingenuous male Platonic lover who seeks access to his mistress's body under pretence of admiring her soul? References to 'pretended' friendship, and to friendship operating as a 'mask' and a 'plot' surround the invocation of the 'Politician', 'souldier' and 'gallant'. In the case of the latter these terms seem to offer a critique of courtly love poetry. (See ll. 9-14.)

[75] See for example Herrick, 'To Live Merrily, and to Trust to Good Verses' and 'The Hock-Cart, or Harvest Home'; Lovelace, 'The Vintage to the Dungeon. A Song'; Thomas Randolph, 'Ode to Mr. Anthony Strafford to Hasten Him into the Country'.

Philips' language of divine love closely resembles the language of Pico della Mirandola's neo-Platonic *Commento sopra una canzona de amore da H. Beniveni* as translated by Thomas Stanley. In this 'Platonick Discourse upon Love' we learn, as Philips avers, that 'One Light flowing from God, beautifies the Angelick ... and the Sensible World' and that love flows 'from the Fountain of divine goodnesse into our Souls'.[76] This is the same Platonically inspired philosophy that informs Philips' concept of God and creation in the religious poems, and its sum is a profound belief in the fundamental harmony and unity of all things. Like More's Christian-Platonic deity, Pico's God is 'a pure uncompounded Unity' in whom 'there is no Discord'.[77]

Such a philosophy readily lends itself to Royalist complaints against the disorder and chaos precipitated by the Parliamentarian rebellion against the King. Cowley seems to be invoking it for such purposes in his paean to love in *Davideis*:

> 'Tis thou that mov'st the *World* through ev'ry Part,
> And hold'st the vast Frame close, that nothing start
> From the due *Place* and *Office* first ordain'd.
> By *Thee* were all things *made*, and are *sustain'd*.[78]

But in Philips' friendship verse, as in her religious poems, divine Platonic love underlies a political philosophy whose ideals are predominantly those of reconciliation and pacification, rather than partisan loyalty. While God and God's love figure as the agents of peace and unity in the religious poems, in the friendship poems those roles are given to virtuous female friendship and the idealised female friend.

Philips regularly constructs the love between female friends as divinely given. In

[76] Stanley, *History of Philosophy*, 118 & 114. Stanley's translation of Pico is appended to his account of Plato's philosophy in his *History of Philosophy*. It was also printed 'privately for his friends' in a collected edition of his works in 1651. See *The Poems and Translations of Thomas Stanley*, ed. Galbraith Miller Crump (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1962).

[77] Ibid., 101.

[78] Bk. 2, ll. 44-47.

'To Mrs. Mary Awbrey at parting', she echoes Montaigne's claim (again, perhaps consciously) that his friendship with La Boetie was founded 'by some secret ordinance of the heavens',[79] by asserting of Orinda and Rosania's love that "Twas sacred sympathy was lent/Us from the quire above' (9-10). The same assertion is made of the love between Orinda and Lucasia in 'Friendship's Mysterys, to my dearest Lucasia', where the two women are shown to be 'design'd to agree' (6). The very title of 'Friendship's Mysterys' suggests friendship as a sacred rite, while in 'To the excellent Mrs A. O. upon her receiving the name of Lucasia, and adoption into our society. 29 Decemb 1551' (25), the Society of Friendship is imagined as 'A Temple of divinity' (20). In a poem which laments the loss of perfect intimacy with Rosania, following her marriage to William Montagu, 'To Rosania (now Mrs Mountague) being with her, 25th September. 1652' (42), Philips represents the realisation of perfect intimacy, and its subsequent loss, in terms of a momentary union with the divine, the union that is sought by the (Platonic) philosopher in life, and which gives him a brief glimpse of the state of eternal bliss in the afterlife:

> As men that are with visions grac'd
> Must have all other thoughts displac'd,
> And buy those short descents of Light
> With losse of sence, and spirit's flight:
>
> So since thou wert my happiness,
> I could not hope the rate was less;
> And thus the vision which I gaine
> Is short t'enjoy, and hard t'attain. (1-8)

These lines invoke Pico's description of man's ascent to the deity in the 'Platonick Discourse upon Love'. In this account, man moves from 'Desire of sensible Beauty' to the 'Love of Intellectual Beauty ... called Divine Love', until 'Purged from his materiall

[79] Montaigne, *Essayes*, Bk. 1, Ch. XXVII.

drosse, and transformed into spirituall flame ... he mounts up to Intelligible Heaven, and happily rests in his Fathers bosome'.[80] Pietro Bembo describes the same mystical process in *The Courtier*: 'the soul, rid of vices, purged with the studies of true philosophy' finds 'the footsteps of God, in the beholding of whom ... she seeketh to settle herself'.[81] Whereas the foundation of Bembo's ladder of love is explicitly that of love by a man for a beautiful woman, Pico's text, as rendered by Stanley, avoids such specifics. Philips' friendship verse appropriates Pico's abstract 'Celestiall Love' for the expression of woman to woman intimacy. In 'To Rosania (now Mrs Mountague)', the religious Platonic conceits position the beloved female friend as the Platonic divinity with whom union is sought and achieved by the virtuous and pure of soul.

Other poems construct the female friend in similar terms. In 'To the excellent Mrs A. O.', Lucasia is likened to the sun, the Platonists' favourite metaphor for the supreme being and one which Philips uses in her religious poetry. The poem develops Lucasia's affinity with the Godhead by allusion to the brightness of her mind, a conceit which combines the religious metaphor of sun and light with the Platonic notion of God as intellect. Lucasia's transformation into a radiant divinity reaches its climax in the image of the devotees of friendship 'worship[ping]' her 'splendour' (13-16). In the poem, 'Lucasia' (27), the deification of Anne Owen as Lucasia is made more complete and explicit. There she is figured as the being from whom the innocent and wise of the Golden Age drew 'coppys', and from whom they gained their 'Law' (19-20). She is the personification of harmony, and the music of her soul is imitated by the 'spheares and muses' (24). She is the dispenser of life and light, 'one shining orb of Excellence' (32) (in Stanley's translation of Pico it is observed that 'Some attribute the name of Circle to God'[82]). She is the vision granted to the 'Sage' (by whom Philips could mean Plato or Aristotle, or even Mnemon the philosopher-hero of More's *Psychozoia*); she is 'Vertue's

[80] Stanley, *History of Philosophy*, 107.

[81] Castiglione, *The Courtier*, 360-361.

[82] Stanley, *History of Philosophy*, 104.

self personated' (45-46). In short, Lucasia is realised not simply as god-like, or merely angelic: she is presented as the One.

Such tributes to female divinity have been dismissed by some commentators on Philips as 'extravagant'. This is the word used by Patrick Thomas to describe the 'abstractions of [Philips'] philosophy of friendship'.[83] Thomas distinguishes Philips' 'extravagant' Platonism in the friendship poems from the spiritual Platonism of her religious verse.[84] And yet, his distinction draws attention to what I have already observed to be the shared tropic language of religion and love. Though Philips' terms of endearment and complement imitate the lavish courtship of the Platonic male lover who makes of his flesh and blood woman a deity of pure soul, they also draw on constructions of the female form as allegories for divine and spiritual virtues in contemporary Platonic religious tracts. In More's *Platonick Song of the Soul,* for example, the World Soul - the presence of the divine in all created life, and, in More's Platonic trinity, the equivalent of the Holy Spirit - is represented by the female figure, Psyche. Aspects of More's description of Psyche correspond closely with Philips' representation of the deified female friend. Psyche is characterised by an unearthly brightness:

> ... the fire
> Of *AEthers* essence she with bright attire,
> And inward unseen golden hew doth dight[85]

More's speaker is unable to give any clearer account of Psyche's form; as a mortal man he is restricted to detailing only the outer veils in which she is clad: 'For thing so mighty vast no mortall eye/Can compasse'.[86] This construction is similar to Lucasia's

[83] See pp. 353 and 355 of Thomas' commentary in *Poems.*

[84] In his commentary on the poem 'On Controversies in Religion', Thomas remarks that 'Orinda's Platonism here transcends the extravagant abstractions of her philosophy of friendship'. (p. 353)

[85] *Psychozoia,* Canto 1, st. 15, ll. 4-6.

[86] *Psychozoia,* Canto 1, st. 19, ll. 2-3.

apotheosis as a divine figure in 'To the excellent Mrs A. O.'. The third stanza describes her radiant being and the adoration offered by her female disciples:

> Her mind is so entirely bright,
> The splendour would but wound our sight,
> And must to some disguise submit,
> Or we could never worship it.
> And we by this relation are allow'd
> Lustre enough to be Lucasia's cloud. (13-18)

The stanza presents Lucasia's devotees as both her worshippers and her disguise. Through association with Lucasia they form the 'cloud' around her radiance which obscures her light just enough to allow them to worship her safely. The similarities with More's description of Psyche are apparent: a brightness of form too intense for mortal eye, an outer garment - in More the 'plicatures' of Psyche's robes, in Philips a cloud - which enables mortal perception of the divinity.

Such correspondences do not of themselves make Philips' adoration of Lucasia any less 'extravagant', but the deification of the female friend is closely connected to Philips' vision of a redeemed world and a virtuous politics. In Chapter 1, I noted that More regarded his writing of the *Platonick Song* as a conspicuously political act, one which he hoped would convince men of the futility of fighting and of the fundamental unity which underpinned their various brands of Christianity. More's preface to *Opera Omnia* expresses his belief that human faith in the immortality of the soul can be a force of pacification. His Psyche, therefore, represents the means by which peace can be achieved in the world. In 'To Mrs. Mary Awbrey at parting', Philips' speaker, having declared the redemptive powers of woman to woman love, goes on, in the final stanza, to imagine the friends' shared tomb as a site of pilgrimage. It is not, however, a shrine for lovers or friends. Rather it is the locus of a powerful force for political pacification and harmony:

A dew shall dwell upon our tomb
Of such a quality,
That fighting armies, thither come,
Shall reconciled be. (55-58)

With such ideals as the outcome of her elaborate Platonic tributes to Rosania and Lucasia, Thomas is wrong, I would suggest, to make such a clear distinction between the philosophical values of Philips' Platonic religion and those of her Platonic friendship.

If it still seems somewhat fanciful to take Philips' 'extravagant' constructions of friendship and the female friend as a serious expression of political ideology, it might be worth considering them, briefly, along side the consciously political use to which Queen Henrietta-Maria put her Platonic philosophy in the court masques she commissioned, oversaw and performed in during the troubled years of the late 1630s. Charles I's Queen, who is credited with importing the cult of Platonic Love into England from her native France, is commonly dismissed by historians, as well as by her husband's political enemies, as a frivolous and naive young woman, devoted to pleasure and to silly love cults, whose excesses at court compounded Charles's political difficulties and contributed to the rebellion against him. But in a study of Henrietta-Maria's court entertainments, Erica Veevers argues that the Queen was an accomplished and astute political player at court, who used her Platonically inspired masques to promote harmony and equilibrium between competing Catholic and (moderate) Protestant factions surrounding Charles. Veevers' study illustrates the intimate relationship between Henrietta-Maria's religious faith and her cult of Platonic Love. She distinguishes the latter from the scornful parodies to which it was subjected in the propaganda of the Queen's enemies and English courtly love verse, asserting that Henrietta-Maria's version of Platonic love involved a serious and politically significant 'extension of the concept of "Love" beyond the personal, to a principle of universal

peace and harmony approved by "heaven"'.[87] The Queen, Veevers writes, 'made no great distinction between entertainments and "devotions"'; her concept of Platonic love drew on a Counter-Reformation Catholicism which had adopted many of the ideals as well as the language of Renaissance (neo)Platonism.[88]

In the court masques associated with Henrietta-Maria, the language and images of love and religion combine to establish and to celebrate a political order of peace and harmony presided over by the divinely appointed King. In these entertainments it is often the appearance of the principle female character that signifies and initiates the triumph of love and concord over enmity and discord. In Davenant's *The Temple of Love*, Indamora, played by Henrietta-Maria herself, re-establishes the temple of Chaste Love in the island of Britain by the influence of 'her beauties light'.[89] The triumph of Chaste Love represents the triumph of Truth over darkness and lust, and is linked to the pursuit of virtue which wins eternal life. In Aurelian Townshend's masque, *Tempe Restored*, the Queen played the role of Divine Beauty, whose marriage to Reason (played by Charles) establishes peace throughout the land. Veevers notes that 'in the overwhelming splendour of the scene for the Queen': 'the importance of Reason tends to be forgotten ... suggesting that the mere appearance of Divine Beauty is sufficient to attract virtue, free the passions, and bring peace'.[90] The appearance of the Queen as Platonic deity also overshadows the presence of the King in his symbolic role in what was probably the last of the Stuart court masques, Davenant's *Salmacida Spolia*.[91]

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[87] Erica Veevers, *Images of Love and Religion: Queen Henrietta Maria and Court Entertainments* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 3.

[88] Ibid., 2 & 89-92.

[89] References are to the version of *The Temple of Love* that appears in William Davenant, *The Dramatic Works of Sir William D'Avenant*, vol. 1 (1872-1874; reprint, New York: Russel and Russel, 1964). This quotation can be found on p. 291 of that edition.

[90] Veevers, *Love and Religion*, 194.

[91] It was presented by the King and Queen at Whitehall on 21 January 1639. References are to the version of *Salmacida Spolia* in Davenant, *Dramatic Works*.

Bleakly reflecting the increasing intensity of the political troubles outside of the court, the masque opens with 'Discord, a malicious fury' approaching in a storm and seeking to destroy 'the blessings and tranquillity' of the kingdom. Wisdom, represented by the King, thwarts Discord's plans and the Queen is sent from heaven 'as a reward of his prudence'.[92] The Queen's descent from the heavens is described in terms which recall Philips' image of the female devotees worshipping the bright Lucasia in 'To the excellent Mrs A. O.':

> from over her head were darted lightsome rays that illuminated her seat, and all the ladies about her participated more or less of that light, as they sate near or further off[93]

As the Queen descends, the 'seat of Honour' (the throne) in which the King is seated is eclipsed by the Queen's brightness: 'as [the brightness] came near the earth, the seat of Honour by little and little vanished, as if it gave way to these heavenly Graces'.[94]

Though the image of harmony - represented by the eight spheres and the sound of celestial music - upon which *Salmacida Spolia* ends was to prove a hopelessly naive one in the light of the impending rebellion, Veevers' study insists upon the serious political function of the Queen's masques. Henrietta-Maria, Veevers avers, regarded her influence at court as a moderating and pacifying one, and put her cult of Platonic love to the service of such a role. Her elaborate and expensive court entertainments, with their messages of unity and understanding, to which she invited prominent members of opposing religious groups and court factions, should be seen, not as the 'extravagant' whims of a foolish young woman, but as one of the ways in which the Queen enacted her political duties.

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[92] Davenant, *Dramatic Works*, 308.

[93] Ibid., 323.

[94] Ibid.

Philips' Platonic female divinities promise the same social harmony and concord established by the divine women of Henrietta-Maria's masques. In 'Lucasia', the political significance of Philips' tribute to the female friend is made particularly explicit and unequivocal. The poem, 'Lucasia', opens with the speaker's announcement of the specifically political intent behind her writing:

> Not to obleige Lucasia by my voice,
> To boast my fate, or Justify my choice,
> Is this design'd; but pitty does engage
> My pen to rescue the declining age. (1-4)

Pity is a particularly feminine emotion, belonging to the softer breast of the female sex, but the project for which it is commandeered in this poem is far from conventionally feminine. The speaker denies that she is writing for any kind of personal (private) reason or interest. This is not flattery, or boastfulness; this is not some justification of a romantic passion. The purpose of her writing is political and its context is public. The corruption of the times forces the poet to give a copy of the perfect woman to the world in the hope that such a model of virtue might redeem the age:

> How would some brave example check the Crimes,
> And both reproach and yet reform the times?
> Nor can morallity it selfe reclaime
> Th'apostate world like my Lucasia's name. (9-12)

The power is Lucasia's, but it is also the female poet's. Her words, giving permanence to Lucasia's example, will 'rescue the declining age'. Though Philips' description of Lucasia in this poem is replete with the kind of Platonic conceits one might expect to find in an intimate love lyric, the explicitly public and political claims she makes for the female friend extend the significance of the poem - and of female friendship itself -

beyond the secluded intimacy of two.

It is well to remember that, in spite of her careful self-construction as a private poet, Philips enjoyed a considerable public reputation during her lifetime. Nor was her literary public life confined to the renown she acquired by the performance and publication of *Pompey*. Some of the most intimate of Philips' friendship poems circulated widely in manuscript. Beal classifies that circulation as scribal publication, noting the success with which Philips achieved her social ambitions thereby.[95] The passions that Philips' friendship poems chart, and the social import of those passions, functioned within her increasingly wide circle as a shared currency of art and ideology. In the autograph manuscript version of 'Friendship's Mysteries, to my dearest Lucasia', Philips notes that the poem was 'set by Mr. H. Lawes', formerly a musician and composer at the Caroline court. In fact, the poem was printed in Henry Lawes' *Second Book of Ayres and Dialogues* (1655) under the title, 'Mutuall Affection betweene *Orinda* and *Lucatia*'. The poem's conspicuously public and potentially political life - Lawes was at the centre of a Royalist circle of poets and musicians[96] - must influence how we read the apparent intimacy of the text's sentiments. The poem describes the love between Orinda and Lucasia in recognisably conventional courtly Platonic terms. The speaker invokes the exchange of lovers' hearts and the paradoxical Platonic conceits of addition and loss, division and union; her voice is remarkably reminiscent of the speakers of Donne's most intimate love lyrics. Yet the wider significance of the passionate but virtuous friendship documented by the poem is signalled in the first stanza, which, as I have described above, calls for a public display of affection as a demonstration of virtue to a world characterised by dullness and anger. Such a call is wholly in keeping with the

[95] See Beal, *In Praise of Scribes*, 147-149.

[96] Thomas, in his commentary on Philips' 'To the truly noble Mr Henry Lawes' (15), describes Lawes as 'perhaps the most important English composer of his period'. 'Lawes brought together the work of a large number of cavalier poets ... [he] provided a focus which ensured the continuity of the cavalier tradition, and served as a link between writers who might otherwise have become isolated in the political upheavals of the Interregnum'. (*Poems*, 334-335) The DNB also notes Lawes 'intimacy with so many of the best poets of the day' and his setting of their work to music.

poem's manuscript circulation, its transformation by Lawes' setting into a performance piece (implying an audience), and its publication in a collection of other such lyrics.

Though Philips' notion of a politicised female friendship can be read as a rejection of a male-dominated, masculine politics, creating in its place a feminocentric world order, the ideal politics envisioned within this world order are not especially feminine. In the abstract poem, 'A Friend', the virtues of Philips' ideal friendship are those admired by male commentators on male friendship: trustworthiness, wisdom, knowledge, discretion, constancy. Such virtues are commonly deemed by these commentators to be beyond the grasp of female nature; they accrue instead to the perfect male sex and to the exemplary (male) ruler. In 'Rosania shaddow'd whilest Mrs M. Awbrey' (34), the ideal government modelled by the female friend is marked by those virtues which Early Modern culture typically defined as masculine, and Rosania herself is shown to possess qualities which were usually reserved for men:

> Such constancy, such temper, truth and law,
> Guides all her actions, that the world may draw
> From her one Soule the noblest president
> Of the most safe, wise, vertuous government. (53-56)

In spite of the political nature of her discourse, Philips does not seem to be explicitly proposing women's active intervention in the workings of Early Modern English statecraft. The focus of the poems remains on the level of the ideal rather than the real, and the virtuous female friend functions as a perfect pattern whose excellencies men may never attain to in the mundane world. She is the hope of redemption, a symbol of divine transcendence. Seventeenth-century female apologia affirmed woman's possession of all the virtues necessary to good government, and even provided examples of exemplary female rulers, without thereby proposing or implying a need for a revolution in public life. In his commendatory poem on his brother's *Elogium Heroinum*, George Gerbier appears to recognise the 'Worthy Women' of the text 'As

paterns', ideals in the same mould as Philips' female friend.[97] The text's author himself observes that the women of whom he has written possess the rare distinction of having 'attained to [Vertue's] possession ... absolutely'.[98]

In Philips' poem, 'Lucasia', the adored friend exemplifies an archetypal excellence, and unites all various virtues into one exemplary eminence: 'So vertue, though in scatter'd pieces 'twas,/Is by her mind made one rich useful masse' (49-50). But there is one virtue that Lucasia possesses about which Philips' speaker expresses doubt and reservation. This is the virtue of humility. Lucasia, the speaker complains, has too much of it:

> All hath proportion, all hath comelyness,
> And her humility alone excess.
> Her modesty doth wrong a worth so great (57-59)

'Excess', in the generally accepted terms of Aristotle's praise of moderation, is never a good thing. Yet humility is the mark of a good and pious Christian. (More has the philosopher-hero of his *Platonick Song* learn true humility as a precondition for receiving the divine vision.) It is also one of the most important and defining qualities of the good woman in Early Modern conduct literature. Philips' invocation of it here, and her chiding of Lucasia for possessing it in too great a quantity, which on one level can be read as simply a rhetorical exercise in flattery, seems to play with both the Christian and conduct text valorisation of humility. There is humour here: the speaker has constructed Lucasia as a god, and humility, therefore, is probably one virtue which a divine being can do without. But there is also, I think, a more serious critique of the ideally modest woman at work in the poem. Modesty in women leads to female invisibility, self-denial and silence. As a public example of the kind of excellence which

[97] 'To his loving Brother on his Elogium Heroinum, or His Praise of Worthy Women', l. 52. Text in Gerbier, *Elogium Heroinum*, unpaginated.

[98] Ibid., 163.

can 'rescue the declining age' Lucasia, 'Vertue's self personated' (46), must be the very opposite of that kind of ideal. Modesty, therefore, wrongs her: Lucasia is required to be a '*brave* example' (my emphasis).

The same sense of bravery is invoked by Philo-Philippa in her tribute to Philips' ideal of virtuous female friendship: she credits Philips with fearlessness in acting a virtue which is 'manly' and requires courage. Though the terms of Philo-Philippa's analysis of gender are often unstable - the author seems to accept certain naturalised conceptions of sex as well as demonstrating an acute awareness of the cultural construction of gender and the inequalities of power that inform it and are sustained by it - her praise of Katherine Philips' literary achievements is ardently feminist. Unlike Philips' posthumous admirers, Philo-Philippa celebrates Philips as a radical. She recognises in Philips' invocation of virtue a claim to those qualities and realms of action from which men habitually excluded women, and she understands how that discourse challenges conventional gender hierarchies:

> That noble friendship brought thee to our Coast,
> We thank *Lucasia*, and thy courage boast.
> Death in each Wave could not *Orinda* fright,
> Fearless she acts that friendship she did write
> Which manly Vertue to their Sex confin'd,
> Thou rescuest to confirm our softer mind;
> For there's required (to do that Virtue right)
> Courage, as much in Friendship as in Fight.[99]

This chapter has sought to explain and illustrate why Philo-Philippa saw a positive and progressive discourse of virtue in Philips' friendship poetry where so many have since seen – or have claimed to see – nothing more than the virtue of conventional and repressive female (sexual) chastity.

[99] Philo-Philippa, 'To the Excellent *Orinda*', ll. 79-86. Text from *Translations*, 197-204.

Chapter 6

Virtue and the politics of *Pompey*

While Philips' literary importance today rests primarily upon the female friendship poems, in her own day her public reputation centred largely on her verse translation of Pierre Corneille's tragedy *La Mort de Pompée*. The translation demonstrates Philips' continued interest in the subject of virtue and its role in government and political life. Much indebted to Lucan's account of the story of Pompey and Caesar in the *Pharsalia*, Corneille's play dramatises the aftermath of Pompey's execution by the Egyptian king Ptolomy, and Caesar's assumption of power over Egypt and Rome. The play examines different philosophies of virtue and honour as they pertain to conflicting ideologies of power and government. The central conflict revolves around Julius Caesar's potentially tyrannical domination of Rome against the loyalty of Pompey and his wife Cornelia to the ideals of Roman republicanism. Philips' choice of *La Mort de Pompée*, with its stoutly republican hero, would seem an odd one for a poet whose ambitions were clearly aimed at the new Stuart court. Nevertheless, the enthusiastic reception of her play at the London and Dublin courts suggests that no impropriety in the politics of her translation was detected by her contemporaries. The success of *Pompey*, as Philips' version was called, appeared to secure her place within the fashionable world of aristocratic literati.

Philips' translation was completed, apparently at the behest and with the encouragement of several important social and literary figures, during her stay in

Dublin in the early years of the Restoration.[1] Its publication in Dublin in April 1663 and subsequently in London, together with its performance at Dublin's Smock Alley Playhouse, represent the high points of Philips' public career as a poet. Philips dedicated the Dublin edition of *Pompey* to the Duchess of Ormonde, wife of Charles II's Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, but even before it was printed, buoyed by the enthusiastic reception of her efforts by scholarly as well as literary men, she was seeking more illustrious patrons.[2] By the end of January 1663 she had, with Cotterell's assistance, already brought *Pompey* to the attention of the Duchess of York, and when, in early April, she sent Cotterell 'a Packet of printed POMPEY's to dispose of as you think fit', she took pains to see that some of them found their way into the highest court circles.[3] 'Be pleas'd to get one bound and present it to the Dutchess [of York],' she tells Cotterell, 'and if you think the King would allow such a Trifle a Place in his Closet, let him have another'.[4]

Philips' *Pompey* was rivalled by another, concurrent translation, *Pompey the Great*,

[1] In July 1662, Philips accompanied Anne Owen (Lucasia) on her wedding journey from Wales to Ireland. Owen had married Marcus Trevor, a prominent Anglo-Irish gentleman, in May of that year, much to Philips' chagrin. Philips' travels took her first to Trevor's estate in Rostrevor and then to Dublin, the seat of the Duke of Ormonde, Lord Lieutenant of Ireland's court. Her stay was a protracted one. (She finally returned to Wales in July 1663, having devoted some of her time in Dublin to the settlement of legal disputes over Irish lands acquired by her father earlier in the century. These lands had been part of her dowry.) Philips' letters from Dublin to Sir Charles Cotterell record her increasing involvement in the high social and literary circles at Ormonde's court. The letters indicate that Roger Boyle, Earl of Orrery took a keen interest in Philips' progress with *Pompey* from start to finish; he both initiated the Dublin performance and contributed the considerable sum of one hundred pounds towards costume expenses. An epilogue and a prologue for the play were provided respectively by Sir Edward Dering and Wentworth Dillon, fourth Earl of Roscommon, and several musicians under the employ of various lords and ladies were commissioned to write music for Philips' original interacts. (See *Letters*, 74-75.)

[2] In a letter dated 31 January 1663, Philips tells Cotterell that her play has received the approbation of the Bishop of Worcester and Henry Rose, Fellow of Lincoln College, Oxford, in addition to that of Cotterell himself and her various noble acquaintances in Dublin. (*Letters*, 74.)

[3] See *Letters*, 74. Philips' decision to dedicate the London edition of *Pompey* to the Duchess of York involved her in considerable anxieties over the propriety of including a public address to the princess, which etiquette and manners seemed to demand, but which would have had the regrettable result of putting Philips' name into print. Though the letters to Cotterell suggest that Philips resolved her dilemma by agreeing to a one line, anonymous dedication, the 1663 London edition of the play carries no dedication at all.

[4] *Letters*, 77.

produced by a group of male poets in London. The 'Certain Persons of Honour', as the group was referred to on the title page of their printed play, included the likes of Edmund Waller and Sir Charles Sedley. Contemporary opinions as to the relative merits of the rival translations are mixed, but it is evident that *Pompey* garnered Philips the admiration of a number of the period's significant literary and political figures, and positioned her at the forefront of developments in early Restoration drama.[5] Recent criticism has demonstrated *Pompey*'s claim to being the first Restoration heroic drama performed in English.[6] Certainly, it is the work for which Philips was most widely recognised during her lifetime, and the play's combination of (original) musical interacts with elevated dialogue upon such lofty subjects as honour, love and justice represent the stylistic and thematic characteristics of much of the drama of Charles II's reign.

Given the renown that *Pompey* won for Philips in her own lifetime, there is surprisingly little recent critical commentary on the text. Catherine Cole Mambretti's "Orinda on the Restoration Stage" (1985) examines the historical and literary context of the play's Dublin performance and offers a cursory appraisal of its main themes and ideas. Andrew Shifflett's 1997 paper, "'How Many Virtues Must I Hate': Katherine Philips and the Politics of Clemency" represents the only detailed examination of the text itself to date.[7] Both Mambretti and Shifflett are interested in the political significance of *Pompey*'s exploration of virtue, though their conclusions on this matter

[5] Philips' acquaintances in Dublin had nothing but compliments for her achievement, and the letters to Cotterell suggest that *Pompey* was favourably received by the Duchess of York and the king (*Letters*, 74 & 90). However, in the letter dated November 28 1663, Philips complains to Cotterell that 'the Lustre of the other' play has 'obscur'd ... my poor Translation' (117). Thomas suggests this refers to the fact that 'when a London production of Corneille's play in English was first proposed, Philips's text was passed over in favour of the translation by "Certain Persons of Honour"' (118, n. 3). Modern scholars generally consider Philips' translation to be superior to that of her male rivals.

[6] See Catherine Cole Mambretti, "Orinda on the Restoration Stage," *Comparative Literature* 37:3 (summer 1985).

[7] See note above for publication details of Mambretti's paper. Shifflett's essay is published in *Studies in Philology* (winter 1997). Brief commentaries on *Pompey* can also be found in Jacqueline Pearson, *The Prostituted Muse: Images of Women and Women Dramatists, 1642-1737* (New York: Harvester Press, 1988), and Nicholas Jose, *Ideas of the Restoration in English Literature: 1660-71* (London: Macmillan, 1984)

differ considerably. Mambretti, like most commentators on Philips' literary output at this time, assumes that *Pompey* represents an appeal by Philips, on behalf of her husband James, to the clemency of Charles II. She argues that the play's appeal to the king's clemency lies in its 'long speeches pleading for political magnanimity and mercy'.[8] Shifflett challenges this contention. He argues that *Pompey* should be distinguished from the interests of both Charles II and James Philips, and, focussing on Philips' sympathetic portrayal of the republican Pompey and his loyal wife Cornelia, he reads the play as a deliberate, proto-republican critique of the limitations of Charles's Restoration policy of clemency.

The discussion of *Pompey* in this chapter adds to the debate over the politics of the play's analysis of virtue. Unlike Mambretti's and Shifflett's studies it is not solely concerned with the politics of the virtue of clemency. Rather, it examines the subject of virtue and noble action in general as it is played out by and explored through the characters in the play. My reading argues that *Pompey*, as Shifflett suggests, is indeed to be distinguished from the concerns of Philips' husband and the restored king, but that, rather than offering a critique of the Restoration regime from a republican perspective, it looks back to the reign of Charles I, and celebrates the virtues which belong to the Royalist mythology surrounding his legacy. The discussion takes into account a number of important contextual influences on Philips' choice of text for translation, as well as upon the final shape of her version of the play. These influences include her political relationship to the Stuart kings, the political purpose of Corneille's original text in France, and the propaganda uses to which Lucan's *Pharsalia* was put during the first half of the seventeenth century in England.

Both the textual and contextual evidence to support the assumption that Philips designed *Pompey* to rescue her husband's ailing political career is rather tenuous. Our

[8] Mambretti, "Orinda on the Restoration Stage," 239. Patrick Thomas agrees with Mambretti's assessment. He suggests that the 'theme [of *La Mort de Pompée*] made it attractive ... to Orinda, who was painfully aware of her husband's precarious position after the Restoration', and he adds the (unsubstantiated) observation that 'Orinda's hope was that the newly restored King would model himself on Caesar' (Thomas, *Katherine Philips*, 40).

best source of contextual evidence comes from Philips' letters to Sir Charles Cotterell, which document her life from the end of 1661 to just before her death in the summer of 1664, and cover the whole period of the writing of *Pompey*. While the letters show that Philips was indeed active on her husband's behalf during this time, they do not support the idea that *Pompey* was part of that activity. Philips was still involved, in 1662, in writing complimentary verses to members of the royal family, and she used Cotterell to get those verses to their addressees, but she was also employing more direct means to help improve her husband's lot. Early letters suggest that she and Cotterell were engaged in a relationship of mutual self-interest in which Philips was using her influence to forward Cotterell's (ultimately unsuccessful) courtship of the widowed Anne Owen (Lucasia), and Cotterell was taking advantage of his position at court to gain clemency from king and parliament for Philips' husband. In Dublin, Katherine was involved in a series of law suits designed to reclaim Irish lands bought by her father before the Civil Wars, lands which had formed part of her dowry and whose reclamation would provide her and James with a useful income. But, in spite of this, her letters to Cotterell from Dublin have very little to say about James, and they say nothing that connects *Pompey* with his interests. The progress and reception of the play dominate Philips' letters from August 20 1662, when she first mentions the Earl of Orrery's encouragement of her attempt, until her departure from Ireland in July 1663. Philips' preoccupation with her work is, however, completely self-interested; her concerns are centred upon the impact of the play on her literary and social reputation.

Whether *Pompey* and its French source represent an appropriate vehicle for appealing to and for flattering Charles II is also a moot point that is hard to sustain when Corneille's subject matter and his treatment of it are examined closely. Commentators on Corneille's heroic tragedies have noted that *La Mort de Pompée* is the first of his works to problematise the whole notion of heroic virtue and good government. Few, if any, of the characters in the play are able to live up to the idealised notions of honour and virtue which inform its world. The figure of Caesar,

whom commentators on Philips have suggested stands, in her version of the play, for the restored English king, is a particularly morally equivocal figure. Any attempt, therefore, to flatter Charles II by likening him to Caesar is extremely problematic. Though Jacqueline Pearson draws attention to *Pompée*'s images of 'a virtuous leader beheaded, a coronation, treason defeated, the restoration of order' as especially pertinent to early Restoration England,[9] these events, with the exception of the execution of the eponymous hero, are represented in ways which resist positive comparison with contemporary political events in England. In fact, Corneille's play examines the mechanics of political and regal power through a lens of moral anxiety and doubt. This, in combination with the play's ironic critique of codes of honour, does not make *Pompée* a celebratory text.

In his study of the plays written by Corneille during the reign of Louis XIII, David Clarke observes that Corneille deliberately resisted the clear representation of ideal political and moral heroes as part of his refusal to be drawn into Richelieu's scheme to appropriate literature as an obedient servant of the state.[10] Though Corneille consciously uses historical subject matter to explore contemporary social and political issues, his stubborn independence from the interests of Richelieu's regime results in what Clarke describes as 'a realism and profundity of political reflection which saves Corneille's plays from being either simple vehicles for propaganda or allegorical illustrations of abstract political ideals'.[11] Clarke's reading of *Pompée* describes a world in which virtue has ceded place to deceit and political opportunism, in which the only figure who might lay claim to unsullied honour is the absent eponymous hero (himself a victim of machiavellian treachery), and in which the traditional symbol of heroic virtue, Julius Caesar, is represented as a complex and ambiguous character whose very

[9] Jacqueline Pearson, *The Prostituted Muse: Images of Women and Women Dramatists, 1642-1737* (New York: Harvester Press, 1988), 122.

[10] David Clarke, *Pierre Corneille: Poetics and Political Drama Under Louis XIII* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992).

[11] Ibid., 36.

triumphs will be built on the crimes committed against his more noble rival. In the light of this assessment, and what Clarke also describes as Corneille's deliberately 'even-handed' and 'shaded presentation of political issues', it seems that *Pompée* is a poor source from which to make successful panegyric.[12]

Seventeenth-century English literary history also had a role to play in complicating the political significance of the story of Pompey and Caesar and in making *Pompée*, therefore, a difficult text with which to appeal to England's restored king. The historical and literary material behind Corneille's tragedy was deeply politicised in England, and had been so from the first signs of collective discontent with the Caroline government in the 1630s. The text that provided Corneille with his basis for *Pompée*, and to which he acknowledges his considerable debt in the address to the reader prefacing his printed work, is Lucan's epic poem of the Roman civil wars, the *Pharsalia*.[13] A number of studies of early seventeenth-century English political thought have identified the influence of the *Pharsalia* upon the development of oppositional, anti-monarchical discourses amongst groups dissatisfied with Charles I's government. Of these, David Norbrook's paper, "Lucan, Thomas May, and the Creation of a Republican Literary Culture", and his chapters on the *Pharsalia* in *Writing the English Republic, Poetry, Rhetoric and Politics, 1627-1660*, are the most instructive on Lucan's appropriation as a poet of the English republican movement. Norbrook describes Lucan as 'the central poet of the republican imagination'[14] and argues that the *Pharsalia* became 'a focus for republican loyalties' during the decades leading up to the English Civil Wars.[15] He notes Thomas Hobbes's unease with the anti-monarchical power of the text as late

[12] Ibid., 34.

[13] Corneille writes that he had recourse to nearly all of the texts on the Roman civil wars, but 'Je me contenterai de t'avertir que celui dont je me suis le plus servi a été le poete Lucain'. See Pierre Corneille, *Théâtre II*, ed. Jacques Maurens (Garnier-Flammarion, Paris: 1980), 504.

[14] Norbrook, *Writing the English Republic*, 24.

[15] Norbrook, "Lucan, Thomas May, and the Creation of a Republican Literary Culture" in Kevin Sharpe and Peter Lake, eds., *Culture and Politics in Early Stuart England* (California: Stanford University Press,1993), 46.

as the Restoration, as well as the many citations from the poem in the writings of the leading republican theorists, James Harrington and Algernon Sidney.[16] Thomas May, the English translator of the *Pharsalia*, whose version of the poem was published in 1627, supported Parliament in the Civil Wars. His translation, which appeared during the 'highly charged' context of England's entry into the Thirty Years' War, contained dedications to 'a group of leading "patriot" peers', most of whom would choose to fight against the Royalists at the outbreak of Civil War.[17] 'For May,' Norbrook writes, 'the Parliamentarians ... were the true heirs of Pompey's spirit'.[18]

In this analysis of Philips' *Pompée*, I intend to argue around the strong republican associations of Lucan's *Pharsalia* and therefore of Philips' *Pompey*. In spite of the difficulties inherent in Corneille's ambiguous examination of political virtue, and the republican tradition associated with Lucan, the fact remains that Philips eagerly sought royal patronage for her play and made every attempt to circulate it at Charles II's court. The 'Certain Persons of Honour' who produced the rival translation likewise aimed at a court audience, although their approach to their source, and their attempts to make of it a pro-Royalist text, differ from Philips' own reading and rendering of Corneille's play. In order to make their source conform to the demands of Royalist eulogy, the 'Persons of Honour' made a number of changes to Corneille's original text, and added two epilogues designed primarily to direct the audience's (political) interpretation of the play's action. The epilogues were written for the performance of *Pompey the Great* at St. James's Palace. One, addressed to King Charles, suggests that his recently restored royal highness might find some sympathy between Pompey's enforced flight to Egypt and his own 'long Retreat' in exile.[19] The second epilogue, addressed to the Duchess of

[16] Norbrook, *Writing the English Republic*, 35-37.

[17] Ibid., 43-45. Norbrook notes that shortly after May's translation was published 'the dedications were cut out' - arguably for political reasons (45).

[18] Ibid., 64. Shifflett draws on the republican tradition of Lucan's poem in England to support his reading of Philips' *Pompey* as a critique of Charles II's Restoration politics.

[19] *Pompey the Great* (London: 1664), 'Epilogue To the King at Saint James's', l. 5.

York, asks that lady to regard Caesar as 'the pattern of [her] Valiant Lord', the Duke of York, 'Whose matchless conduct might our Lions lead,/ As far as e're the Roman Eagle spread'.[20] By associating both the republican Pompey and the (eventual) emperor Caesar with members of the English hereditary royal family, the 'Persons of Honour' demonstrate a wilful desire to neutralise and write over the ideological conflict at the heart of both Corneille's play and its historical source. Their most intrusive revision of the French original also constitutes an attempt to manipulate the text for the valorisation of monarchy. It consists of an addition of four lines to a speech by Cleopatra, in which the Egyptian queen expresses her belief that Caesar will make himself king of the Roman empire.[21] However, in spite of the changes made to Corneille's text, *Pompey the Great* remains an unconvincing and problematic tribute to the Restoration government. Though the play seems to offer Caesar as a representative of monarchical heroic virtue, he retains the moral ambiguity of Corneille's original. Perhaps this is why, in spite of Cleopatra's vision of Rome as a monarchy, the epilogues ally Caesar with the Duke of York and not Charles. Interestingly, the allegories proposed by the epilogues are tentative at best: Charles '*perhaps* might find' some relevance between Pompey's history and his own, and Caesar '*seem'd*'' the model of James, Duke of York (my emphasis). Finally, as if in recognition of the tenuous nature of these connections, the epilogue to Charles pronounces *Pompey the Great* an apprentice work in preparation for a play of the king's 'own Story'. The intended content of this proposed new play – it will be a paean to the new 'Age of Gold' and the 'Glorious Reign' of 'Faith, Peace, and Piety' – suggests how far from ideal is the subject of *La Mort de Pompée* for the purposes of Restoration panegyric.

Unlike her rivals, Philips' prided herself on remaining true to the spirit and meaning of her source text. In her letters to Cotterell, she expresses her umbrage at the

[20] Ibid., 'Epilogue to the Dutchess at Saint James's', ll. 16-18.

[21] Ibid., Act 4, sc. 3, ll, 61-72.

male translators' 'garbling' of Corneille's play, and she also sets out the guiding principles of her approach to translation. On 26 October 1663, Philips, in possession of acts 1, 2 and 4 of *Pompey the Great*, writes to Cotterell that,

> I think a translation ought not to be usd as Musicians doe a Ground, with all the liberty of descant, but as Painters when they coppy, & the rule yt I understood of translations till these Gentlemen [the "Persons of Honour"] inform'd me better, was to write to Corneille's sence, as it is to be supposd Corneille would have done, if he had been an Englishman ...[22]

In the same letter she goes on to denounce her rivals' translation of a number of couplets and individual words, and to express her particular objection to their mangling of the speech by Cleopatra in act 4, in which they have the Egyptian queen voicing her conviction that, under Caesar, Rome will become a monarchy.[23] Such comments suggest that Philips was not involved, as the 'Persons of Honour' were, in a project to flatter or appeal to Charles II. Yet, it is hard to believe that she would have sought the king's readership, and revelled in the royal family's attention, had she regarded her play (intentionally or otherwise) as a politically problematic text.[24]

Given the political nature of Philips' subject matter, *Pompey* invites a political reading. It is not a private text, either in terms of genre or content. My contention that Philips' play is concerned with Charles I and his legacy rather than with the reign of his son rests on two main strands of argument: one textual, the other contextual. The textual argument focusses on the five original interacts which Philips composed after completing her translation of Corneille's text. These were incorporated into the play for the Dublin production and appear in their appropriate places as integral parts of the

[22] *Letters*, 113-114.

[23] Ibid.

[24] This is one of the difficulties with Shifflett's reading of *Pompey* as a text criticising Charles II. Nothing in her letters to Cotterell suggests that, in presenting Charles with her play, she was deliberately seeking an opportunity to criticise him or his policies.

text in the printed editions. Consequently, and in spite of Philips' claims to fidelity to her source, the meaning of her play is shaped by these additions and her final text is therefore quite distinct from Corneille's original work. The contextual argument, which will be examined first, relates to attempts by Royalist writers on the English Civil Wars to appropriate Lucan's story of the wars between Pompey and Caesar for their own cause. This tradition has Pompey standing for established government, and Caesar for the destructive forces of political innovation and individualism.

David Norbrook, who, as I have noted, regards Lucan's reputation in seventeenth-century England as primarily that of a republican poet, nevertheless allows that the *Pharsalia* 'could be made to serve divergent political interests'. 'It was possible,' he writes, 'to glide over the problem of Lucan's republicanism by reading the poem quasi-allegorically, with Pompey as the representative of legitimate authority, whether monarchical or otherwise, and Caesar as a usurper'.[25] One of the Royalist thinkers and writers who chose to do just that was Abraham Cowley. During the early 1640s, following the outbreak of hostilities between the Royalist and Parliamentarian forces, and when Cowley was residing in Oxford with Charles I's displaced court, he began to write what we now know as his unfinished epic, *The Civil War*. The three books of verse describe, in a partisan, propagandist manner, the events of the First Civil War, from the raising of the royal standard at Nottingham in August 1642, to the Battle of Newbury in September 1643. The extent of Cowley's debt to Lucan for the shape and sentiment of his poem is described by Allan D. Pritchard in the introduction to his edition of the work. Of the political relationship between the two texts, Pritchard observes that, 'Lucan's Pompey and Cowley's Charles [I] represent the traditional

[25] Sharpe and Lake, eds., *Culture and Politics*, 50. Montaigne considers that Caesar 'went about to procure his glorie' by 'the ruine of his countrey and subversion of the mightiest state and most flourishing commonwealth that ever the world shall see'. Although in his final assessment of Caesar the Roman's personal virtues weigh heavily in his favour, Montaigne remains critical of his ambitious lawlessness: 'When I consider the incomparable greatnesse and invaluable worth of his minde, I excuse Victorie in that shee could not well give him over in this most unjust and unnatural cause.' (See Bk. 2, Ch. 33, 'The Historie of Spurina' in Montaigne, *Essayes*, trans. Florio.)

values of their nations, opposing tyrannical innovation'. He adds that, 'Charles [I] stands for liberty in Cowley's view, just as Pompey does in Lucan's, since Cowley regards the Puritans and Parliamentarians as the real enemies of liberty'.[26]

Cowley's identification of Charles I with Pompey and legitimate government is also noted by Norbrook who comments that Cowley's 'Civil War' 'amounts to a sustained subversion of the tradition of reading Lucan as it had developed amongst Parliamentarians'.[27] Norbrook ascribes Cowley's failure to complete his intended epic to the unsustainability of this subversion of the *Pharsalia*'s politics, and he considers Cowley's own explanation for the abandonment of the poem of little relevance in the face of the ideological problems presented to the poet by his source material.[28] In a famous passage from the Preface to the 1656 edition of his poems Cowley refers to his '*Three Books of the Civil War it self,* reaching as far as the first *Battel* at *Newbury*', and states that 'the succeeding *misfortunes* of the *party* stopt the work; for it is so uncustomary, as to become almost *ridiculous,* to make *Lawrel* for the *Conquered*'.[29] As Pritchard points out, Cowley's *The Civil War* is propaganda; it is both panegyric and rallying cry, written in praise of the heroic deeds of the king's party, and to urge them on to still greater victories. To do this, Cowley was obliged all along to reshape or reinterpret certain events in the Royalists' favour, but after Newbury the fortunes of the Royalists waned so decisively that to continue a poem celebrating their deeds was beyond the capabilities of even the most fervent propagandist. By the closing passages of Book III of *The Civil War,* Cowley's tone has already become elegiac. While Norbrook argues that Cowley's Charles has more in common with Lucan's Caesar than with Pompey,[30] I

[26] Abraham Cowley, *The Civil War,* ed. Allan Pritchard (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1973), 41.

[27] Norbrook, *Writing the English Republic,* 83.

[28] Ibid., 84-85. See also Norbrook's paper in Sharpe and Lake, eds., *Culture and Politics,* 64.

[29] Cowley, *Complete Works,* cxxviii.

[30] Norbrook, *Writing the English Republic,* 85.

would suggest that - ironically given Cowley's decision to abandon the poem - Charles's defeat in the English Civil Wars would have strengthened his identification with Pompey. Had Cowley not been writing propaganda as events unfolded around him, but had been looking back, like Lucan, upon a period in his country's past, he may well have found an appropriate model in the *Pharsalia* for a critique of the English rebellion, in which Charles, like Pompey, lost his life defending the ancient laws of his country. In fact, later in his career, Cowley drew on his abandoned epic for Book VI of his Latin poem, *Sex Libri Plantarum* (1668), in which he combines panegyric and elegy in praise of the martyred king.[31]

Philips' own poetry suggests that she also associated the history of the Roman republican general with the fate of England's Charles I. In 1651 she wrote a poem in response to the Royalist defeat at the Battle of Worcester, entitled 'On the 3d September 1651' (11). The poem represents the battle as the final, desperate attempt of a dying monarchy to overturn its sorry fortune. In lamenting the fall of 'English Royalty' (11), the narrator of the poem also laments those who must fall with it, observing that greatness must 'dy in State' (20), 'pull[ing] down others too' (14). This calamity is likened specifically to the fall of Pompey, 'who could not fly,/But half the world must beare him company' (23-24). 'On the 3d September' is a complex poem, which, while expressing sympathy for the fate of the English monarchy, frames that fate as a lesson in the futility of earthly greatness. Its Royalism, if the sympathy expressed can be so described, is subtle and vague at most. The reader is invited to contemplate the rise and fall of kings as a symbol of the uncertainty of fortune, and to consider that the quiet, virtuous life is more reliable than 'Crowns and Scepters' (34). The speaker expresses no anguish for the Stuarts specifically, nor does she lament England's political future. However, in spite of its ambiguous attitude towards the Stuarts, Philips' allusion to Pompey demonstrates that she was thinking about the Roman hero as an appropriate symbol for England's defeated monarchy ten years before her translation of Corneille's

[31] *Sex Libri Plantarum*, (London: T. Roycroft for Jo. Martyn, 1668)

tragedy. Though the poem treats of 'Royalty' in general, and does not mention Charles I by name, the shadow of the martyr-king hovers about the poem, an example of the literal death of 'Majesty'.[32]

It is possible then that Philips approached the translation of Corneille's *La Mort de Pompée* with England's own civil conflicts in mind and with a sense of nostalgia for the executed king. This possibility is supported by a close examination of Philips' text, in particular her additional interact material, together with a number of significant choices of vocabulary made at key moments in the translation. (These choices, in which Philips departs from the precise meaning of the original, are arguably all the more significant given the otherwise remarkable accuracy and faithfulness of her translation.)

In the interlude that Philips wrote for the end of act 3 of *Pompey*, the ghost of the eponymous hero appears to his widow Cornelia in a dream, seeking to comfort her with the peace of his celestial existence and with his knowledge of Caesar's future downfall. Though discussions of Philips' translation generally focus on Caesar as the key political and allegorical figure in the play, Philips' interacts tend to emphasise Pompey's role as the moral and political centre of the play's events.[33] In Corneille's original work, Pompée never appears on stage, although critics of the play have remarked upon the substantial presence his figure casts upon the whole of the action. He is, for instance, the subject of the opening debate between king Ptolomie and his advisers, and his assassination sets into motion all of the subsequent action. Clarke observes that 'his ghost haunts the remainder of the tragedy'.[34] Indeed, the moral worth of all of the major (and a number of the minor) characters in the play are

[32] At the Restoration Philips once again draws on the story of Pompey for her panegyric, 'On the numerous accesse of the English to waite upon the King in Holland' (1660). In this poem, Charles II in Holland is likened to Pompey in Africa: the loyal English subjects 'flock' to Charles because, '[His] presence is their home,/ As Pompey's residence made Afrique Rome' (3-4).

[33] Mambretti and Thomas, for example, identify Caesar with Charles II, as does Shifflett, whose reading of the play focusses on the relationship between Cornelia and Caesar in his account of the play's critique of Charles's policy of clemency.

[34] Clarke, *Pierre Corneille*, 254.

measured by their response to the absent hero. Pompée's arrival in Egypt prompts the self-interested machiavellianism of Ptolomie's advisers, and exposes the ignoble weakness of the Egyptian monarch. Cléopâtre demonstrates her capacity for impartial justice by defending the Roman general's right to protection in Egypt. César's political opportunism is first exposed through his (reported) reaction to Pompée's severed head, and the sincerity of the vengeance he claims to seek on Pompée's behalf is consistently questioned and tested by Cornélie, who represents herself as, and is in turn accounted, the living legacy of her husband. Even Pompée's freedman, Philippe, is able to show that a great soul can reside in the body of one meanly born, when he goes to great lengths to give his master's corpse an honourable burial.

In addition to this, Pompée is made present through the language of Corneille's drama. In acts 2 and 3, Cléopâtre's usher, Achorée, describes both the circumstances of Pompée's death and César's reaction to it. Though these descriptions begin in the past tense they quickly shift to the present, and in doing so seem to bring the otherwise absent eponymous hero vividly before the audience. Pompée's pervasive influence over the stage action reaches its culmination at the beginning of act 5, when Cornélie enters bearing his ashes in a small urn. Her impassioned direct address to this urn transforms it into a palpable symbol of Pompée's legacy and continued presence in and over the play.

Philips' decision to bring the Roman general onto the stage in *Pompey* recognises his importance to Corneille's drama, and augments it. Her act 3 interlude transforms the pervasive spirit of Pompée in the original play into a visible presence. Furthermore, Philips' addition works to subvert what critics of Corneille's text have described as the evenhandedness with which the French dramatist treats the rival Roman heroes, by establishing Pompey as the play's moral authority. The song that Philips gives to Pompey's ghost idealises the historical man and validates the ideals for which he stands in the world of the play. It tells of his ascension into a realm of celestial bliss, which, in spite of Philips' classical allusions, is compatible with Christian ideas of heaven, and

confirms for her Christian audience, therefore, Pompey's goodness:

> From lasting and unclouded Day,
> From Joys refin'd above Allay,
> And from a spring without decay.
> I come, by *Cynthia's* borrowed Beams
> To visit my *Cornelia's* Dreams ... (3. 4. 94-98)[35]

Pompey brings with him privileged knowledge of the future. Caesar's 'dayes shall troubled be, and few,' he tells Cornelia, 'And he shall fall by Treason too' (3. 4.113 -114). In death, he reassures his widow, Caesar will be denied the heavenly delights Pompey himself enjoys, though Cornelia will soon know them. The tradition of the ghost in Elizabethan and Jacobean drama should confirm to the Restoration audience that Pompey's spirit speaks the truth and that his knowledge may be trusted. Philips gives him an omniscient perspective upon the unfolding plane of history, infinitely superior to the visions of the mortal characters in the play, all of whom claim to have the gods or fate on their side. In the battle to control and shape destiny, in which Cornelia is embroiled as much as Caesar or Ptolomy, Philips makes Pompey the victor. Her interact constructs historical events as the vindication of his cause, and undermines the temporary victory which the action of Corneille's text gives to Caesar.

What then of Pompey's allegorical relationship to the martyred Charles I? To some extent the relationship is implicit, made possible by the nature of historical events themselves. Cowley recognised two leaders defending the ancient laws of their countries when he wrote *The Civil War*. After 1649 and the execution of Charles I, the parallels potentially become more specific and profound. In her third interact Philips invokes ideas and discourses which are suggestive of the Caroline legacy. Pompey's claim, for example, to have defended the 'Liberty of Rome' unto the death (3. 4. 103 -

[35] In the Stump Cross edition of the play, Philips' interacts are printed as part of the act that precedes them, and the lines numbered accordingly.

108) resonates with claims made by Charles I in the face of his impending execution. At his trial in 1649, Charles repeatedly stated that he was the true defender of his subjects' liberty, asserting before his accusers that 'it is the liberty of the people of England that I stand for'.[36] The interact also draws on a rich vein of Caroline poetic language. The opening lines of Pompey's song, where the Roman general announces his arrival 'From lasting and unclouded Day/ ... And from a spring without decay' (94 & 96), invoke Ovid's description of the Golden Age in *Metamorphoses* as 'a season of everlasting spring'. The classical myth of a lost time of perfect harmony, joy, and virtue had become intimately associated with Charles I in the literature – specifically the panegyric and the masque – produced during his reign.[37] Pompey's blissful heavenly existence recalls this ideal and speaks to the mythology surrounding the poetic representation of legitimate Stuart rule.[38]

Philips' continued interest in the dead Stuart king at this point in history is certainly not unique or exotic. The royal martyr is a recurring and emotive presence in several texts dating from the second half of the seventeenth century. In 1668, in Book Six of his *Sex Libri Plantarum*, Cowley revisited the horrors of the Civil Wars and

[36] Charles I, *The Letters of King Charles I*, ed. Charles Petrie (New York: Funk and Wagnalls,1968), 253-254.

[37] There are numerous examples. Ben Jonson's 'A Song of Welcome to King Charles', for instance, describes the monarch as 'father of our Spring' (l. 8) and Jonson's masque *Chloridia*, performed at court in 1630, contains a eulogy to spring sung by Zephyrus and Spring herself. (See *The Complete Poems*, 332.) John Taylor's 1647 poem, 'The Kings Most Excellent Majesties, Welcome to his owne House, Truly called the Honour of Hampton-Court', represents Charles as a 'bright Phebus' who 'dispells' the clouds of civil turmoil 'with his radiant Ray'; he brings 'Peace' and causes his subjects' eyes to shed 'Aprill drops of pleasure' (ll. 75-77, 83 & 89). (Text from *The Works of John Taylor the Water Poet*, vol. 1 {New York: The Spenser Society, Burt Franklin, 1967}.) See also James Shirley's masque *The Triumph of Peace* (1634) and Davenant's *Salmacida Spolia* (1640) for elaborate celebrations of Charles and Henrietta-Maria as guardians of domestic harmony and concord.

[38] Shifflett interprets Pompey's description of the afterlife as essentially republican, and he cites it in support of his thesis that Philips is using the play to criticise Charles II. Pompey does indeed describe his heavenly abode as a place free of 'Guilty Crown[s]', where Caesar shall never be 'Dictator' (3. 4. 124-125), but such ideas are also common to the Golden Age mythology and do not necessarily imply a republican, oppositional discourse. The poet's desire for such an idyll represents a yearning for the pre-political rather than for a republican polity. Royalist poets, as my discussion shows, drew on the theme regularly.

Charles's death. It would fall to Aphra Behn later in the century to translate this particular book of Cowley's Latin poem into English, an appropriate task for a writer whose own work repeatedly reveals the pervasive influence of the memory of the executed king.[39] In Behn's translation, Cowley's royal martyr appears as 'that Prince of peace,/ (That pious Off spring of the Olive Race)'.[40] The terms of this tribute recall both Charles's father James I and his motto 'Beati Pacifici', as well as Charles's own apotheosis in the *Eikon Basilike*, in which he is portrayed as a seeker of peace and likened to the innocent dove.[41]

Philips' suggestive characterisation of Pompey is not confined to her interact additions; aspects of her generally faithful rendering of Corneille's text also invite comparisons with Charles I's legacy. In the French original, Pompée's death inspires the kind of emotional response that had been excited by Charles's death in all but his most fervent opponents. Philips' translation appears deliberately to intensify the profundity of this reaction. In act 2, scene 2 of her version of the play, she uses language which, compared to the French, heightens the sacrilegious and sacrificial nature of Pompey's death. Pompey's demise is reported by Cleopatra's 'Gentleman Usher', Achoreus. His lengthy speech describes the Roman general's arrival off the coast of Egypt, his meagre reception by king Ptolomy's men, his anticipation of their betrayal, and his noble conduct in meeting his death. Philips reproduces Corneille's text line for line, but certain vocabulary choices attract attention. Cleopatra, for example,

[39] Janet Todd observes of Behn's prose work, *Oroonoko* (1668), for example, that, 'Behind the cruelly killed black Oroonoko, with his European features, his courtly ways and anxiety over his unborn child, is again inevitably the figure of the martyred Charles I'. From the introduction to Aphra Behn, *Oroonoko, The Rover and Other Works*, ed. Janet Todd (London: Penguin, 1992), 18.

[40] ll. 61-62. Behn's translation appeared in *The Second and Third Parts of the Works of Mr. Abraham Cowley ... The Third containing His Six Books of Plants ... Now made English by several Hands* (London: 1689). I have consulted the translation as it appears in *The Works of Aphra Behn, Vol. 1: Poetry*, ed. Todd. Behn's 'pious Off spring of the Olive Race' translates Cowley's 'Carolus ille Pius, propago mitis Olivae', l. 41. Text from Cowley, *Complete Works*, ed. Grosart.

[41] See Knachel, ed., *Eikon Basilike*, 114, 117, 121 & 75. The dove as a symbol is also linked with the olive in the story of Noah and the ark, Genesis, ch. 8, v. 10-11. The olive leaf signifies the retreat of the flood and therefore God's making peace with his creation.

initiates Achoreus' account at the opening of the scene with her question, 'What, is it done, and hath some Treacherous hand/With that Rich blood stain'd our unhappy strand?' (2. 2. 1-2). There is no equivalent in Corneille for 'Treacherous hand'. Cléopâtre ascribes no agent to the deed; she simply asks Achorée if Egypt's 'bords malheureux' are 'déja souillés d'un sang si généreux?'.[42] Philips' inclusion of the idea of treachery in this opening question strengthens both the heinousness of the deed and Cleopatra's condemnation of it.

Subtle manipulations of Achoreus' account of Pompey's end in Philips' version continue the same theme. The perpetrators of the treachery, Ptolomy's loyal advisors, are, for instance, rendered far more ignoble than their counterparts in the French. Corneille's 'satellites' (462) become 'Ruffians' (2. 2. 16). Corneille's term is certainly contemptuous, implying the sycophantry of the Egyptian monarch's men, but Philips' expression casts Ptolomy's men as socially mean, brutish thugs. This idea is restated later in the speech when Achoreus describes the fury of the attack upon Pompey as 'Barbarous' (2. 2. 62). Again there is no equivalent for this adjective in Corneille. Philips takes a third opportunity to portray Pompey's murderers as eminently brutal and low when she renders Achorée's account of Pompée's final breath – 'Qui, de cette grande âme achevant les destins,/Etale tout Pompée aux yeux des assassins' (527-528) – as 'This great Soul fled, his body did expose/To th'greedy Eyes, of his inhumane Foes' (2. 2. 81-82). Inhumanity, greed and barbarity, these are the vices of the common herd. While Corneille focusses on the heartless efficiency of Pompey's murder as a political expedient, Philips draws attention to the immorality of the act, and emphasises the distinction between the assassins' abject baseness and the nobility of their victim. Like the Stuart king in Philips' poem, 'Upon the double murther of K. Charles' (1650-51), Pompey is 'The dying Lion kick'd by every asse' (10).

Philips' translation also lends Pompey a divine, or at least a profoundly spiritual,

[42] ll. 447-448 of *Pompée* as printed Corneille,*Théâtre II*. All quotations are from this edition and line references will henceforth appear in the text.

other-worldly significance. This element (which Philips explores to its fullest extent in the third interlude) is once again suggestive of the (Christological) mythology surrounding the memory of Charles I, and it is not to be found in Corneille's original. When Achoreus recounts Pompey's decapitation by the 'vile *Septimius*', he describes the head 'tumbl[ing] on the blushing Deck' (2. 2. 83). This evocative image, which is quite Philips' own, contains the unlikely notion that the boat in which Pompey dies is conscious of the enormity of the crime that has been committed upon its decks. Philips' 'blushing' evokes the spilling of Pompey's blood but it also anthropomorphises the otherwise inanimate vessel, whose miraculous shame seems to articulate the dead man's divinity. The reverent mood continues in Philips' relation of the efforts of Pompey's freedman to give appropriate funeral rites to his master's corpse. In Corneille these efforts are described quite impersonally as the attempt to render Pompée the dignity to which all the dead are entitled: 'ce qu'aux morts on doit rendre' (561). In Philips' text, however, Pompey's freedman is carrying out an act of personal love and devotion:

> He curiously examines every wave,
> For that rich Pledge, which Treason to them gave:
> That those lov'd Bones he piously might burn ... (2. 2. 113-115)

The last of the lines quoted above represent Philips' translation of Corneille's 'Pour lui rendre, s'il peut, ce qu'aux morts on doit rendre'. The tone is distinctly different from the French. It characterises Pompey not only as a man capable of inspiring profound love and loyalty, but as a sacred figure, respect for whom amounts to piety.

In contrast to Pompey, Philips' Caesar remains as complex and ambiguous a character as he is in Corneille's text. There are in fact multiple Caesars in the play. During the two acts that precede his first entrance on stage, each of the other main characters voices their own particular interpretation of his motives, actions and primary

qualities. For Septimius, a Roman now in the service of the Egyptian king, Caesar is the consummate politician, who acts in his own interests and whose power must be submitted to (1. 1. 161ff). For Photinus, another of Ptolomy's advisers, he is the epitome of ambition, swollen with 'Conquest' and 'Rage', who is safe only when at a distance in Rome (2. 4. 19ff). For Cleopatra, of course, he is the passionate lover, the Romantic hero who is daring in war only to please and to serve her. The audience's impression of Caesar is thus fractured and kaleidoscopic, and the overall portrait of the man is further complicated by the questionable honour and interests of those who comment upon him. What value, for example, is to be placed upon the opinion of a Septimius or a Photinus, willing assassins of Pompey and accounted by Cleopatra as 'Souls that are but of Natures Rubbish fram'd' (1. 2. 30)?

There are two characters in the play whose estimations of Caesar can be trusted by the audience above all others, and both exhibit conflicting responses towards the man. One of these characters is Pompey's widow, Cornelia. She is brought into direct confrontation with Caesar three times during the play, and on each occasion she tests and questions the sincerity of his code of virtue. In particular she exposes the self-interest underlying his public defence of her dead husband, until recently his enemy.[43] But in spite of Cornelia's knowledge of Caesar's hypocrisy, and in spite of her repeatedly professed hatred for him, she is forced into several moments of identification with him where she recognises not only his innate claim to nobility as a Roman, but also his several virtues.[44]

The second trustworthy commentator on Caesar is equally unsure whether to praise or censure the Roman hero. Achoreus, servant to Cleopatra, has the role of

[43] '... how easie is that Tear,' she exclaims in response to Pompey's freedman's account of Caesar's professed grief for his dead enemy, 'That's shed for Foes whom we no longer fear!' (5. 1. 85-86).

[44] See, for example, Cornelia's first response to Caesar's professions of respect for Pompey in 3. 4.: 'O Gods! how many Virtues must I hate!' (93); her explanation for revealing Ptolomy's plot to assassinate Caesar (4. 4. 49ff); and her willingness to assume that Caesar must ultimately be motivated by a sense of honour (5. 1. 101ff).

reporting the offstage action, and the theatrical conventions of this role allow the audience to put faith in the accuracy and objectivity of his accounts. Achoreus' description in act 3, scene 1 of Caesar's response to Pompey's assassination is the first reliable eye-witness account of Caesar in the play. It follows the various and varied portraits of him by less objective characters such as Cleopatra and Photinus, and it prepares for Caesar's first appearance on stage in the very next scene. Achoreus' account reinforces Septimius' view of Caesar as the consummate politician. He describes Caesar's reaction to Pompey's severed head in some detail, from Caesar's initial shock to his final expression of anger and grief. The account traces Caesar's developing response moment by moment, drawing attention to the deliberation and calculation informing his reaction. Achoreus' language makes it clear that there is nothing simply honest or transparent about Caesar's conduct:

> *Caesar* seem'd Thunder stricken at this view,
> As not resolv'd what to believe or do.
> Immoveably on that sad Object ty'd;
> He long from us his inward thought did hide,
> And I would say if I durst make a guess,
> By what our Nature uses to express:
> Some such malignant Pleasure he enjoy'd,
> As his offended honour scarce destroy'd.
> But though a while this conflict he endur'd,
> Yet his great Soul it self soon re-assur'd.
> Though he loves Power, yet he Treason hates,
> Himself he Judges, on himself debates.
> Each Joy and Grief at reasons bar appears,
> At length resolv'd, he first let fall some Tears.
> His Virtues Empire he by force regains,
> And Noblest Thoughts by that weak sign explains.
> The horrid present from his sight expell'd,
> His Eyes and Hands he up to Heaven held.
> In a few words their Insolence repress'd,
> And after did in Pensive silence rest. (3. 1. 50-71)

Achoreus identifies both vices and virtues in Caesar, and his account balances the Roman's more ignoble instincts with his apparent regard for the code of honour. Thus his 'great Soul' struggles with his feelings of 'malignant Pleasure' at Pompey's demise, and his love of power is redeemed by his hatred of treason. But in general, Caesar's calculated performance renders suspect even those virtues which Achoreus recognises, and the description of the performance emphasises artifice. Caesar, the audience is told, '*seem'd* Thunder stricken', and, once resolved to grieve Pompey, he expresses that grief in a curiously controlled manner by '*let[ting] fall* some Tears' (my emphases).

In her 1653/54 poem to Francis Finch, 'To the noble Palaemon on his incomparable discourse of Friendship', Philips upbraids 'the Politician' (11) for being an enemy of all the virtues - friendship, truth, honour - which the good hold dear. Caesar, indeed, is credited with many of the traits most derided by Philips in her poetry. In act 2, scene 4, for example, Photinus represents Caesar as the servant of ambition, pride and rage:

> For this Ambitious Man ... through the world,
> Hath War and Slavery together hurl'd;
> Swelled with his Conquest, and a Rage so smart ... (22-23)

Though the audience has good reason, as I noted above, to treat Photinus' assessment of Caesar with circumspection, in the second of her additional interacts (the one which anticipates Caesar's first appearance on stage in act 3), Philips chooses to restate something of his critique. The interact consists of a song performed by 'two Egyptian Priests' in which Caesar is described as the darling of 'Fortune' and a 'resistless' overreacher, whose apparently invulnerable progress through the world brings war and bloodshed in its wake (85-86). To some extent the tone of the song is ambiguous: its declamatory style suggests the celebratory mood of the panegyric, but its language clearly represents Caesar as the antithesis of the kind of virtuous figure habitually

extolled by Philips elsewhere in her oeuvre. The first two lines of the song – 'See how Victorious Caesar's Pride/Does Neptune's Bosom sweep!' – illustrate the discord between language and style. They invite us to envision the glorious arrival of Caesar upon the waves, just as Philips' Restoration panegyric, 'Arion on a Dolphin to his Majestie in his passadge into England' does. But while Charles II comes as an envoy of peace, Caesar brings the chaos of conflict, and is spurred onward by his mighty 'Pride', one of the most persistently maligned vices of the period. In addition to the horrors of war and death, Caesar's progress incurs a reversal in the order of the natural world, creating 'Rivers of Blood ... on the Land,/And Bulwarks on the Sea' (87-88).

Clearly there is a considerable degree of similarity between Philips' representation of Caesar and Royalist representations of Cromwell and the Parliamentarians. Caesar possesses the 'unreasonable ambitions', 'indefatigable industry' and 'boldness' for which Cowley, in 'A Discourse Concerning the Government of Oliver Cromwell' (1661), upbraids England's Protector.[45] In *The Civil War*, which was written before Cromwell had risen to particular prominence, Cowley shapes the whole pack of Parliamentary 'Rebells' in accordance with Lucan's Caesar. They represent the attack on established law and tradition by the ambitious lust for personal power. In *Pompey*, Caesar is twice denounced as a tyrant, once by king Ptolomy, and once by Cornelia.[46] Although Charles I had been condemned to death under the charge of being (among other things) a 'tyrant',[47] the same crime was also alleged against Cromwell by his opponents. Cowley, for example, declares him to be

[45] See Cowley, *Complete Works*, 298, 303 & 304 respectively.

[46] Though originally the word 'tyrant' was not a pejorative term, by the seventeenth century in England and in France it had come almost exclusively to mean one who rules in an oppressive and despotic manner.

[47] The official charge against Charles I at his trial in 1649 included the accusation that had pursued "'a wicked design to erect and uphold in himself an unlimited and tyrannical power to rule according to his will'. The sentence read that 'the said Charles Stuart, as a tyrant, traitor, murderer, and a public enemy, shall be put to death, by the severing his head from his body'. (See the record of the King's trial in Charles I, *Letters*, 241-258).

such in the 'Discourse' cited above.[48] In *Pompey*, the nature of Caesar's tyranny, particularly as it is understood by Cornelia, is closely connected with his assault upon the established constitution of Rome. While he claims to represent the tradition of Roman virtue and honour, Caesar is generally regarded by other characters in the play as a threat to the customary politics and values of his country.

If Caesar possesses the qualities which Philips' poetry suggests she found most repugnant and threatening in personal and political life, Pompey, as he appears at least in his final moments in the account given by Achoreus, possesses many of the virtues extolled in her verse. Pompey's adherence to the established laws of his country, his quiet suffering in death, and his ability, exemplified in the third interact, to rise above the uncertain fortune of the world, are all characteristics shared by the idealised subjects of Philips' occasional poems. In the action of the play it falls to Cornelia to keep Pompey's principles alive, and in defending both his political and personal ethos, she comes to embody many of the same virtues for which he stands.

It is made clear by Cornelia and by the characters with whom she interacts and who comment upon her that she represents Pompey's living legacy. This is a role which Cornelia willingly and unequivocally constructs for herself. During her first appearance on stage in act 3, scene 4, she invokes Pompey as one of a line of loyal Roman men from whom she derives both status and meaning: 'I *Crassus* Widow once, and *Pompey's* now;/Great *Scipio's* Daughter ...' (3. 4. 11-12). Caesar recognises Cornelia's claim to this identity and reaffirms it by repeating it back to her:

> Young *Crassus* Soul, and noble *Pompey's* too,
> Whose Virtues Fortune cheated of their due;
> The *Scipio's* Blood, who sav'd our Deities,
> Speak in your Tongue, and sparkle in your Eyes. (3. 4. 54-57)

Cornelia's commitment to Pompey's principles (and those of her father and first

[48] Cowley, *Complete Works*, 299.

husband) signifies her constant adherence to Rome's legitimate government, and her opposition to Caesar as a political innovator. Caesar wrongly assumes that by acknowledging Cornelia as Pompey's representative, he will be able to extend to her the (ultimately self-interested) clemency and amity he would have extended to the defeated Pompey, in order to secure his own preeminence in Rome. Cornelia disabuses him of this notion and affirms in act 4, scene 4 that she can only honour Pompey's memory by rejecting Caesar's attempts to make her his ally: 'No, *Pompey's* blood must all commerce deny,/Betwixt his Widow and his Enemy' (4. 4. 21-22).

The battle between Cornelia and Caesar is not simply a political one - that is, it is not merely a matter of Republican against Tyrant. It also represents the conflict of two opposing codes of heroic virtue. In her stubborn allegiance to an all but defeated republican polity, Cornelia embodies the virtues of constancy, fortitude and noble suffering. Her great heart is always above her unhappy fortune, and her conscience is inviolable. 'Think not to subject my Will,' she tells Caesar in response to her (temporary) captivity in Egypt, for 'I the Roman Constancy profess' (3. 4. 46 & 43). 'Constancy' here is Philips' own insertion (Corneille's Cornélie asserts only that, 'je suis Romaine'), and it is this attribute, so valued in Philips' occasional poetry, that stands in opposition to Caesar's restless activity and to his chameleon nature.

Cornelia also challenges an important aspect of Caesar's brand of heroic virtue: his instrumentality. When, in act 3, scene 2, Caesar first confronts Ptolomy about Pompey's assassination, it is clear that what most angers Caesar is having had the control of events stolen from him. He denounces Ptolomy's attempts to play God with the Roman state, declaring that the Egyptian king's actions have 'usurp'd the Sovereignty of *Rome*' (3. 2. 32). But while he claims respect for the authority of the Roman senate, his condemnation of Ptolomy emphasises his own authority: '... did I purchase at so high a Rate,' he demands, 'That you should be the Arbiters of Fate?' (3. 2. 25-26). Later in the same scene, he complains that Ptolomy has 'stole the Fruit of all my Wars away' (3. 2. 108). In Corneille, the wars are 'nos guerres' (914) - 'our wars'.

The difference may appear to be slight, but it heightens significantly Caesar's sense of his own supreme agency and of his sway over the progress of history.

If Ptolomy's actions create a wrinkle in Caesar's plans, Cornelia's challenge to his authority negates his instrumentality completely. Cornelia and Caesar first meet after the latter's assumption of control in Egypt. Caesar has secured the city of Alexandria, usurped Ptolomy's powers of government, and ordered that king to make a public sacrifice to the memory of Pompey. But when he encounters Cornelia moments later, she presents him with a view of events in which he is merely a pawn in her own divinely ordained fate:

> But of thy Conquest, *Caesar*, make no boast,
> Which to my single Destiny thou ow'st;
> I both my Husbands Fortunes have defac'd,
> And twice have caused th'whole World to be disgrac'd;
> My Nuptial Knot twice ominously ty'd,
> Banish'd the Gods from the Uprighter Side;
> Happy in misery I had been, if it,
> For *Romes* advantage, had with Thee been Knit;
> And on thy House that I could so dispense
> All my own Stars malignant influence. (3. 4. 32-41)

Cornelia's claims, in this passage, that Caesar owes his success to her peculiar misfortune and that, had Caesar been her husband, he would have been the defeated party in the wars with Pompey, reduce Caesar's achievements to a quirk of chance and negate both his agency and his subjectivity.

Cornelia's assertion of agency brings into play some troubling questions concerning her own claims to moral superiority. In addition to confounding Caesar's sense of instrumentality, Cornelia goes on to affirm her own in terms of her unshakable faith in Caesar's (impending) destruction at the hands of Pompey's sons. She commits herself wholly to forwarding this event, and her thirst for vengeance is

predicated on a hatred for Caesar which she regards as glorious and honourable. 'No extinction or decay, shall be,' she declares in act 5, scene 1, while meditating on Pompey's urn, 'In that revenge which must enoble me' (5. 1. 19-20). However, Cornelia's position is undermined by the fact that history did not support her cause, a fact of which both Corneille's and Philips' audience would have been aware. The audience's knowledge of her true vulnerability at the impassive hands of history and fate problematise her moral position within the play.

Philips seems to have been troubled by Cornelia's uncompromising commitment to revenge, and her additions to *Pompée* attempt to write over it. Corneille establishes Cornélie's passion for vengeance as her dutiful response to the instructions given to her by her husband before his death. These are reported by Achorée in act 2, scene 2, and Philips translates them (faithfully) as follows:

> "Let's but expose, says he, this single head
> "To a Reception we may so much dread.
> "But whilst I only do the shocke sustain,
> "Hasten thy Flight, and my revenge obtain. (2. 2. 23-26)

In *Pompey*, these instructions are effectively superseded by the revelations which Pompey's spirit makes to his widow in the third interact. Here he tells her that all manner of things will be well: Caesar will die, and will also be denied the eternal bliss granted to Pompey and (eventually) to Cornelia. Pompey regards these future events as the justification of his cause; he describes them as his 'Vengeance':

> Nor shall my Vengeance be withstood
> Or unattended with a Flood,
> Of Roman and Egyptian Blood.
>
> *Caesar* himself it shall pursue,
> His dayes shall troubled be, and few,

And he shall fall by Treason too. (109-114)

Such vengeance clearly belongs to the realm of the divine. Pompey has, he declares 'By Death my Glory ... resume[d]' (103). He has been justified by heaven, and he interprets Caesar's ordained downfall, accordingly, as heaven's working in his favour. Pompey's privileged knowledge, and his revelation of that knowledge to Cornelia, override her commitment to revenge through Pompey's sons, and the sense of agency which she has asserted against Caesar. The Roman tyrant will fall, but not by the means suggested by the mortal Pompey, not by Cornelia's attempts to pursue those means. As for Cornelia herself, Pompey's promise that she shall soon be reunited with him in the celestial paradise he now inhabits –

Thy stormie Life regret no more,
For fate shall waft thee soon a shoar,
And to thy Pompey thee restore (III, 118-120)

– teaches her of the ultimate insignificance of the (earthly) struggles in which she is embroiled, and opens up for her an alternative and more meaningful plane of existence.[49]

Philips' reconfiguring Pompey's future vindication as the work of heaven rather than individual volition demonstrates her lack of comfort with the classical code of heroic virtue. (A code which her theatre audience would have been familiar and comfortable with, given the long tradition of revenge tragedy on the English stage.) Pompey and Cornelia are effectively Christianised by Philips' additions. They are also

[49] Shifflett argues that the privileged information revealed by Pompey gives Cornelia a psychological advantage over Caesar, and that this marks Philips' support for the republican values for which Cornelia and Pompey stand. However, if, as Shifflett's reading suggests, Philips' interacts can be understood as developing both the dramatic structure and character psychology as written in her source text, then we would have to conclude that Cornelia chooses to ignore Pompey's revelations. For, in spite of what Pompey has told her, Cornelia continues to adhere to her plans for Caesar's demise at the hands of Pompey's sons.

firmly allied with the mythology of Charles I as a passive, stoic and particularly pious hero.

Philips' attempt to counter Cornelia's passion for retribution exists in conflict with her faithful translation of Corneille's text, for the Cornelia of the source material continues to pursue her plans for revenge, in spite of the knowledge revealed to her by Pompey's ghost. Such conflicts suggest that Philips' additions to her source text are better read as commentaries upon the original action, rather than as integral extensions of it. Indeed, there are also good contextual reasons why we should do so. To begin with, Philips composed the interacts after she had finished translating *Pompée*. Stylistically they are quite different from the source text, and yet it is clear that Philips did not consider them to be the kind of 'unpardonable Liberty' she found the changes and additions made by the 'Persons of Honour' to be. In fact, she speaks enthusiastically about her interacts in her letters to Cotterell, recording their popularity with her noble companions as well as her high esteem of their poetic merits.[50] Given her understanding of the role of the translator as one bound to the meaning and spirit of the source text, it seems likely that Philips regarded her additions as distinct from and somewhat independent of the action of Corneille's play. This idea is supported by the practice of later Restoration dramatists of transferring such musical interludes from one play to another. Songs from Restoration plays also enjoyed an independent life in printed collections such as *Covent Garden Drollery* (London, 1672). Philips' interacts seem to have led a similarly autonomous existence. Her poem, 'To my Lady Elizabeth Boyle, Singing "Since Affairs of the State &c"' (1663) testifies to the popularity of the first of her interacts as a distinct literary piece. Stanzas from the same interact appear in anthologies published later in the century. The second interact song and the verses

[50] See *Letters*, 69 & 72.

sung by Pompey's ghost at the end of act 3 enjoyed similar extra-textual lives.[51] As commentaries, Philips' additions tend to impose a series of moral certainties upon the content of Corneille's play, certainties which Corneille himself deliberately refused to impose. The third interact, as I have argued, constructs Pompey as the play's undeniable moral authority. The final addition reaffirms that view and makes a last attempt to deflect Cornelia's troubling code of virtue.

The addition neatly follows Caesar's call at the end of Corneille's action for tributes to be made to Cleopatra, as the newly restored Queen of Egypt, as well as to the memory of the noble Pompey: 'To her a Throne, to him let's Altars Build,/ And to them both Immortal Honours yield' (5. 5. 57-58). Philips' song begins as a coronation panegyric in honour of Egypt's queen, but it goes on to assess all the main characters in the play and to place them within a hierarchy of values and virtues. First in this hierarchy is Pompey, whose ascension to a world beyond the material renders him greater than any prince: 'He must be Deifi'd' (67). By contrast, Caesar, who inhabits merely the sublunary realm, is dismissed with the comment, 'Let Caesar keep the world h'has won' (87). The song recreates Cornelia as the grieving wife whose excess of sorrow caused Pompey's ghost to leave its celestial abode to comfort her. It makes no allusion to her problematic thirst for revenge, instead it portrays her as a model of stoic fortitude, whose suffering in grief is both 'charming' and 'brave' (78-79). In her patient suffering, Cornelia is assigned a place beside Pompey at the highest seat of glory, far beyond that of princes: her sorrow 'exalts her Honour more,/ Then if she ... Scepters bore' (80-81).

Though it implies a critique of monarchical power, this assertion must be read as

[51] Stanzas from 'Since Affairs of the State' are to be found in *Choice Songs and Ayres for One Voice* (1673) and *Choice Ayres, Songs and Dialogues* (1675). The final eight lines of the second interact are found in two eighteenth-century commonplace books, while the verses sung by Pompey's ghost at the end of Act III appear in a nineteenth-century anthology, *Tixall Poetry*, for which the copy text was a (presently unlocated) seventeenth-century verse miscellany. Pompey's song also appears in an early eighteenth-century commonplace book, and with musical settings in two late seventeenth-century music books (unpublished). One of these music books also contains settings for the fourth and fifth interludes. (See *Translations* for more details of these manuscripts and publications.)

a testament to the supremacy of divine sovereignty rather than as a confirmation of republican politics. Philips' final comment on Cornelia reconciles her to the Pompey of the third interact. Like the idealised subjects of Philips' Interregnum poetry, and like the glorious martyr of the Royalist cause, who also, 'By Death [his] Glory ... resume[d]', Pompey and Cornelia are quite removed from the dross of the material world, and from the spurious notions of heroism and virtue expounded by those whose interests lie in worldly power.

Conclusion

Encouraged, no doubt, by the success of *Pompey*, Philips undertook to translate another of Corneille's verse dramas, *Horace*. At her death in 1664 she had completed the translation of four of the play's five acts.[1] Her *Horace* is, like the main text of *Pompey*, a very faithful rendering of the French original. Its topic resonates with political events in England, with Philips' personal situation vis à vis those events, and with the thematic concerns of her own writing.

The action of the play centres on a war between Rome and Alba, two countries so closely allied by history and blood that the Alban general describes the hostilities between them as a 'Civill war' (1. 3. 56). Embroiled in this conflict, much against their wills, are two female characters, Sabina and Camilla. Sabina is an Alban married to the Roman soldier Horace, brother of Camilla; Camilla is a Roman betrothed to the Alban soldier, Curiace, brother of Sabina. The complexities of their patriotic, romantic and familial alliances in the context of this war force each woman to confront an impossible dilemma of duty between country, love and blood. What Horace expects of them both is absolute allegiance to Rome and the Roman concept of heroic virtue, an ideal which requires the sacrifice of the private interests of family and love to the greater glory of the state and the particularly masculine concept of honour upon which the state is built. Camilla and Sabina's refusal to yield to the demands of this ideal, and their robust defence of love and friendship, form the emotional and dramatic focus of the play and provide the context for its tragic action.

Horace's commitment to his country and its code of honour leads to his murdering Camilla for her denunciation of Rome and what she considers to be its 'Barbarous' notion of noble conduct (4. 4. 42). In act 5 of the play, Horace is exonerated

[1] Philips' translation was completed by Sir John Denham. The play was performed at court in February 1668 and in the following year at the Theatre Royal in Bridges Street. (See *Translations*, 121 and Appendix 4 for more details of Denham's completion and the play's performance history.)

of his crime by the Roman patriarchs and governors who, though revolted by his deed, conclude that the greatness of his military service to the state outweighs the enormity of his offence against his sister and the ties of family. In spite of this exoneration, the play as a whole remains deeply critical of the code of virtue to which Horace devotes himself, and for which he is happy to relinquish the bonds of passion and kinship. Camilla condemns it as 'Brutishness' (4. 4. 46); Sabina accuses both Horace and Curiace of possessing 'Savage hearts' (2. 6. 49); even Curiace, while performing his own patriotic duty assiduously, admits to finding Horace's unwavering dedication to Rome's public and military interests 'somewhat barbarous' (2. 3. 34). These oppositional voices are regarded by Horace as an offensive feminine challenge to the right and might of masculine, public virtue. In act 2, scene 8, just before his battle with Curiace, he asks his father to 'confine' the women 'at home' so that their pleas for love and friendship will not disturb the manly business of the day. Male fear of the dangerous, emasculating power of women and their commitment to private emotion over political duty punctuates the play. Camilla's death at the hands of her so heroically Roman brother is the bloody enactment of the logical extreme of this fear.

The battle lines between opposing codes of virtue in Philips' original writing are never drawn along gender lines in the way that they are in Corneille's *Horace*. (Indeed, I have suggested that her male and female subjects conform to broadly the same model of virtue.) Yet Camilla and Sabina's defence of the virtues of love and friendship against a heroism that they regard as 'Savage' and inhuman marks them as of the same mould as Lucasia and Rosania, friendship's ambassadors in a 'dull' and 'angry' world. And insofar as *Horace* offers a critique of the state that underappreciates the bonds of affection and mistakenly relegates them to a private realm it considers feminine and therefore subordinate, it is a text that accords with Philips' literary defence of love and friendship as essential human virtues and her persistent if subtle politicisation of those virtues as integral aspects of good government and a virtuous state.

Corneille's *Horace* and *La Mort de Pompée* are concerned exclusively with the

(problematic) nature of political virtue, of codes of conduct that operate in a secular realm and structure the sublunary world. Philips' additions to Corneille's text in *Pompey* introduce as commentary upon the terrestrial sphere the realm of the divine and of divine virtue, the perfection of which throws into relief the flawed and partial nature of the human actors' claims to honour, truth and right action. Had Philips lived to complete her version of *Horace*, she may well have made similar additions to that text. To have done so would have been perfectly in keeping with the general tendency of her writing to, as this study has argued, enact a movement from the worldly where virtue is relative, a tool of socio-sexual ideologies, to the celestial or spiritual and an absolute, all-encompassing virtue with the potential to transcend partial categories such as party or gender. Even the state panegyrics, texts which are by definition highly political and historically specific, prefer to mythologise the king and conflate him with an idealised past rather than celebrating a specifically new and future polity.

Of course Philips' discourse of transcendent virtue is itself an ideological construct. It is fundamentally Christian (albeit slightly unorthodox), it is aristocratic (though many of her poetic subjects belong to the middling classes), and it is broadly conservative. Philips' writing is rooted in its political and social moment even as it invokes an alternative to that moment. For all their nostalgia and mythologising, the Restoration and Coronation panegyrics remain public, political texts about a significant event in English constitutional history. *Pompey* draws on a highly politicised and ideologically sensitive classical narrative. The religious poems address contemporary doctrinal disputes directly and adroitly. The female friend is realised in distinction to a divided and conflict-ridden world that is highly suggestive of an England embroiled in civil war, as are the virtuous woman and the good man. And while Philips' ideal subjects share the stoic's distrust of the world and the Platonist's contempt for it, their virtue is frequently figured as a force by which that world might be rescued from degradation and brought closer to the perfection of its divine creator.

This study began with an examination of some of the verse written in praise of

Philips by her contemporaries and their particularly reductive construction of the poet's virtue. In chapter 5, I argued that Philips' only contemporary female eulogist, the mysterious Philo-Philippa, had recognised and celebrated a discourse of virtue in the female friendship poems that radically laid claim to qualities and privileges traditionally monopolised by men. I would like to conclude this study by contending that Philo-Philippa was not alone among Philips' seventeenth-century admirers to find in the poet's virtuous themes something more than and altogether different from the single ideal of female chastity.

In 1667, James Tyrell composed a poem in honour of Philips, 'To the memory of the Excellent *Orinda*', in which the poet's 'Vertue' and 'Wit' are accounted 'high subjects'. The poem declares that Orinda possessed a soul superior to any man's, and it contends that had all of her sex been given such a soul: 'Woman had rul'd the World'.[2] Tyrell's assessment is not without its share of patronising gallantry, but the virtue of which he speaks could hardly be said to be sexual. It is, on the contrary, political: it is the usual property of the sex that rules and governs. A eulogy written by Cowley, 'On the Death of Mrs. Katherine Philips', contains the conventional, patriarchal claim that Philips was and is the only female poet, as well as a rather unpleasantly sexual account of the ravages of smallpox upon the bodies of 'the fairest sex', but, in spite of this, the virtue referred to by Cowley's speaker in the fourth stanza of the poem is of the most divine (and therefore nominally masculine) kind:

> ... Wit's like a Luxuriant Vine,
> Unless to Virtues prop it join,
> Firm and erect towards Heaven bound, ...
> ... Now shame and blushes on us all
> Who our own Sex superiour call;
> Orinda does our boasting Sex out-do,
> Not in wit only, but in virtue too:
> She does above our best examples rise,

[2] See *Translations*, 219-220 for Tyrell's poem.

In hate of vice, and scorn of vanities.
Never did spirit of the manly make,
And dipt all o're in Learnings sacred Lake,
A temper more invulnerable take ...[3]

Here Cowley credits Philips with the virtue of men and philosophers. The reference to the prop of virtue and the vine of wit invokes a common metaphor for male/female, husband/wife relations in which the female partner is seen to cling vine-like to the strong, masculine oak. Allusions to a 'spirit of the manly make' made 'invulnerable' by 'sacred' learning ally Philips with the tradition of the philosopher, and the virtue which she, like the philosopher, studies is one focussed upon divine enlightenment: 'Firm and erect towards Heaven bound'.[4]

References to the celestial realm and its angelic host are common in the seventeenth-century tributes to Philips. One of the epitaphs printed in *Translations* speaks of Philips as 'A Sparkling Angel' in a conceit which represents the poet as a heavenly being whose sojourn upon earth was ended by the discovery of her true celestial nature. What is striking about this conceit is the (unknown) epitaph writer's use of the male pronoun to refer to the angel/Philips. Clearly the writer did not have in mind, as might be expected, the domestic angel of the female conduct literature. In Cowley's ode, 'On *Orinda's* Poems' (1663), the 'Angelical' stands for the ideal, neo-classical union of masculine and feminine qualities in the mind and writing of the poet. Of Philips' verse Cowley avers:

'Tis solid, and 'tis manly all,
Or rather 'tis Angelical,
For as in Angels, we
Do in thy Verses see

[3] For Cowley's poem see *Translations*, 215-218.

[4] Cowley may well, however, be subtly undermining his apparently high praise of Philips with his consciously (?) phallic imagery.