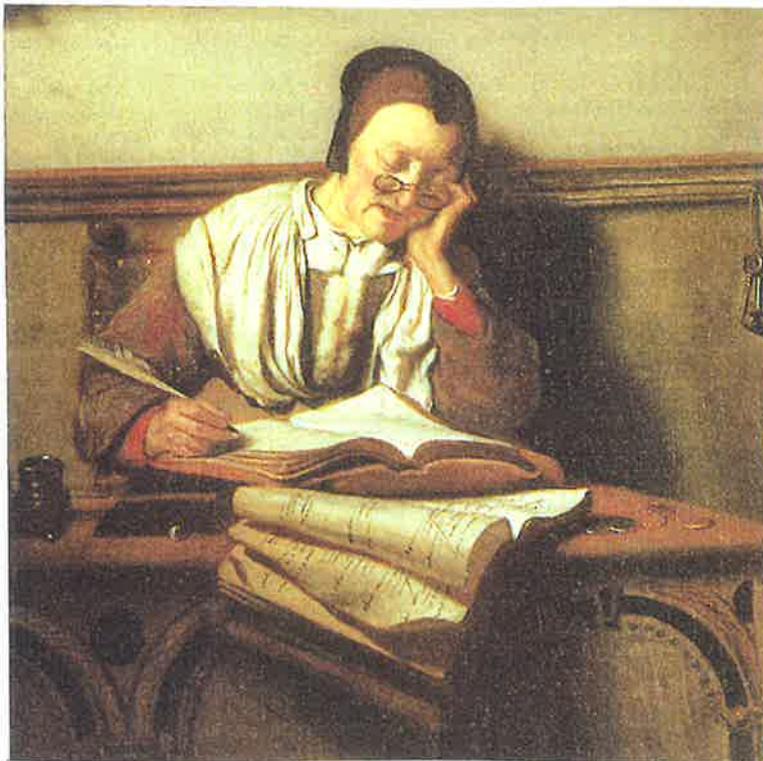




# Inhabited Space:

Writing as a Practice in Early Modern  
England;

Margaret Hoby, Eleanor Davies, Katherine Philips.



Thesis presented for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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## Errata

- p.66 For the word “occupant(s)”, read “occupants”.
- p.78 In footnote 18, for the reference “Aleen & Unwin”, read “Allen & Unwin”.
- p.105 Remove the word “along” from the sentence reading, “John Dod, in the book *Seven Godlie and Fruitful Sermons* (1614) produced along with Richard Cleaver, reasserts the relationship between self-surveillance and piety”.
- p.106 Italicise the word “Christian” in the sentence, “The relationship continued to develop throughout the seventeenth century with texts such as John Beadle’s 1656 tract, *The Journal or Diary of a Thankfull Christian*, in which the author promotes the virtues of maintaining a spiritual record”.
- p.186 Replace the word “it’s” with “its” in the sentence, “Yet in it’s assertion that ‘I thinke that I have also the Spirit of God’ (Cope, *Prophetic Writings* 56), the tract does place emphasis on Davies’s personalisation of her relationship with the vocation of prophecy, what Teresa Feroli calls a ‘simple, yet powerful, assumption of authority’ (359)”.
- p.192 For “parliamentary banquet house”, read “parliamentary banqueting house”.
- p.208 For “educative”, read “educational”.
- p.252 In footnote 60, only one pair of quotation marks should appear before the quote, “As she was of noble birth and a ‘person of honour’ in the eyes of the Privy Council, she was thought to merit more privileged treatments than were the common people, although she lacked the means to pay for her care”.
- p.254 For “denouncement”, read “denunciation”.
- p.288 The quotation from Cicero in footnote 71 is from, *The Letters to His Friends*. Trans. W. Glynn Williams. Cambridge, Ma.: Harvard UP, 1926-54. II. iv. 1.
- p.289 A space should appear between the comma after the word “text” and before the italicised word “*The*” in the sentence, “William Fulwood’s text, *The Enemy of Idleness* (1568) – a conglomeration of translated French material, rhetorical protocols drawn from Erasmus, and formatting principles – was the first such manual published in England”.
- p.408 The phrase “to fully establish” should be replaced with “fully to establish”.

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## Abstract

This thesis examines texts by Margaret Hoby (1571-1633), Eleanor Davies (1590-1652), and Katherine Philips (1632-1664) using the theoretical writings of French historian, Michel de Certeau. Arguing that a direct application of Certeau's work to early modern English texts has been rare, the thesis examines the texts in question--a diary, religious prophecies, and personal letters--with regard to Certeau's idea of "heterology". The thesis outlines the broad arc of Certeau's thought and how it might usefully interpret the practices of the women at the centre of this project.

The Introductory section outlines the project's methodology. The issue of the analyst's speaking position is addressed, as is how Certeau's idea of heterology informs his writings on historiography and the practices of writing and reading. I argue that my project problematises Certeau's work in relation to the subject, yet does not invalidate the use of it.

Section One explores the relationship between the sparsely descriptive diary of Margaret Hoby (1571-1633) and Certeau's ideas of "place/space" and "strategy/tactic". I argue for Hoby's creation of privatised, personal spaces within a power matrix that seeks her subordination to various cultural hierarchies.

Section Two is concerned with reading the religious tracts of Eleanor Davies (1590-1652). This chapter analyses Davies's writings in light of Certeau's work on mystic and possessed writing and the idea of writing as a "strategic" practice. I argue that Davies's prophecies demand the reader's submission to their linguistic pattern, thereby reproducing *in extremis* what Certeau asserts to be the broader claim of writing per se.

Section Three is concerned with the letters of Katherine Philips (1632-1664). I focus on the relationship between the letters and discourses of courtesy and epistolary writing prevalent within Restoration court culture. I argue that Philips's letters attempt to determine the reading process conducted upon them in order to gain her admission to centres of cultural power.

The project concludes with a discussion of the effectiveness of Certeau's theories for interpreting the subjects and texts considered.

Twenty of Philips's letters discussed in detail during the thesis are appended to the project.

## DECLARATION

This work contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university or other tertiary institution and, to the best of my knowledge and belief, contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference has been made in the text.

I give consent to this copy of my thesis, when deposited in the University Library, being available for loan and photocopying.

Paul Lobban  
April 2001

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Some of the material contained in this thesis has appeared in other forms. Sections of the Introduction have appeared as "Reading Practice: Certalian Hermeneutics and the 'Problem Text'" *altitude* 1.1 (2000): [www.adelaide.edu.au/English/altitude.htm](http://www.adelaide.edu.au/English/altitude.htm). Some of Section One has appeared as "Little Freedoms: Margaret Hoby's Diary and the Spaces of the Early Modern Household" *Antithesis* 9 (1998): 97-110.

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### NOTE ON THE TEXT

This thesis employs the documentation style outlined in Joseph Gibaldi, *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*. 5th ed. New York: Modern Language Association of America, 1999. Throughout this work, when referring to Michel de Certeau by his surname, I use the appellation, "Certeau", rather than "de Certeau". In doing this I follow the usage employed by Jeremy Ahearne in his book, *Michel de Certeau: Interpretation and its Other*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 1995, and MLA style guidelines (Gibaldi 94).

Where primary texts are referred to or quotes taken from them appear in secondary texts, they have their full references listed in footnotes but are not listed in the Works Cited (Gibaldi 227-28). I have retained all original spelling, punctuation, and emphases from early modern sources. Where appropriate I have noted the presence of original emphases in quoted texts.

All quotes from Lady Margaret Hoby's diary retain the punctuation first employed in *Diary of Lady Margaret Hoby, 1599-1605*. Ed. Dorothy M. Meads. London: George Routledge, 1930. This system is retained in *The Private Life of an Elizabethan Lady, The Diary of Lady Margaret Hoby*. Ed. Joanna Moody. Phoenix Mill: Sutton, 1998. All quotes from the diary are from Moody unless otherwise stated. Quotes from Lady Eleanor Davies's texts are taken from the original publications or, where attributed, from *Prophetic Writings of Lady Eleanor Davies*. Ed. Esther S. Cope. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1995. Extracts from the poems and letters of Katherine Philips are taken from, *The Collected Works of Katherine Philips*. Ed. Patrick Thomas. Vol. 1. The Poems. Essex: Stump Cross, 1990., and *The Collected Works of Katherine Philips*. Ed. Patrick Thomas. Vol. 2. The Letters. Essex: Stump Cross, 1992. In the interests of clarity, all references to these editions give the editor's name rather than the author.

*This thesis is dedicated to the memory of my father*

What birds plunge through is not the intimate space  
in which you see all forms intensified.  
(Out in the Open, you would be denied  
your self, would disappear into that vastness.)

Space reaches *from* us and construes the world:  
to know a tree, in its true element,  
throw inner space around it, from that pure  
abundance in you. Surround it with restraint.  
It has no limits. Not till it is held  
in your renouncing is it truly there.

- Rainer Maria Rilke

that which has passed will return no more, and its voice is lost forever

- Michel de Certeau, *L'Absent de l'histoire*.

Does someone hear our chatter?  
A lover's laugh, a bleeding calf,  
A dog out in the harbor.

- Will Oldham.

*Tempus edax rerum*

## Introduction

### "haunted itineraries": Writing on the Past



Speculative writers (as I am) are not bound to comprize all particular cases within the latitude of the subject which they handle.

- Sir Henry Wotton, *The Elements of Architecture*. 1624. 45.

This geography of haunted itineraries has perhaps only subjective coherence.

- Michel de Certeau, "Mystic Speech" 95.

## "the question of the real": Introduction.

This study focuses closely on three English women whose lives span the turbulent period from 1571 to 1664. In the course of such a project there is a temptation to produce a narrative of each woman's life that fills in the gaps in the historical record and re-produces a sense of the "actual person" in question. In a way this reflects what Barthes calls "narrative *luxury*", an extension of the tendency he detects within realist or historical texts to lavish "futile" details "thereby increasing the cost of narrative information" (Barthes, "The Reality Effect" 141). It is an impulse that seeks to produce fully-constituted, multi-dimensional subjects as the end-result of my study; a historiographical, perhaps even hagiographical fantasy.

In this introductory section I will outline the primary methodological issues facing me as I attempt to analyse the texts of these three early modern English women. Initially I will outline the way in which I seek to negotiate the debates over academic speaking positions, especially the way in which these debates affect my ability to write on and about early modern English women from my position as a male postgraduate on the cusp of the twenty-first century. In doing so I will introduce the work of Michel de Certeau, which traverses the fields of historiography, theology, linguistics, and cultural studies and forms the principal theoretical foundation of my analysis.

While the creation of a fully-narrativised and agentic historical subject might be a convenient analytical device for rationalising and systematising the scattered traces of the past, it is also a symptom of a prevailing meta-discourse of history that is at once useful for understanding the past yet prone to re-produce that past in its own image. As this study progresses, I hope to make clear that my object is

not the creation of three fully-formed and forcefully agentic individuals, but rather the play of different interpretative perspectives on a series of unalterably fragmented and partial historical traces. Rather than the fiction of complete personalities, this thesis seeks the possibilities within their necessary incompleteness. This kind of approach is informed by the central proposition of Certeau's work, that subjects are not wholly determined by their environments. This applies both to the historical subject negotiating her cultural and material environment and the interpreter reading the text amidst a network of methodological and interpretative assumptions. In both fields, Certeau's hermeneutic stresses the fluid, uncontrolled processes which constitute the praxis of living, writing, and reading amongst the broad cartographic intentions of systems and structures.

Whilst much of Certeau's own work is focused on early modern Europe, Catholic France and Spain for the most part, the translation of his theories to specifically English circumstances has been conducted primarily through the filter of contemporary Anglo-American critical methodologies. New historicism and cultural materialism have formed the central planks of contemporary Anglo-American, and by extension Australian, early modern studies over the past twenty years. In particular, Certeau's work has made a significant contribution to the emergence and development of new historicist methodologies. Certeau's concern with the intersection of particular practices with prevailing cultural discourses resonates with new historicism's method of portraying "the text as practice": "the critic focuses on the material effects and circumstances produced by the text and in which the text is produced" (Colebrook 28). Indeed, Claire Colebrook remarks that new historicism's general "reluctance to

theorise" derives in part from its "debt to theorists, like de Certeau and Foucault, whose work in many ways problematised the primacy and possibility of any general philosophical discourse" (24).<sup>1</sup> Certeau's "heterological" perspective seeks to indicate the presence of alterity within hegemonic discourses, focusing especially on individual or small-scale activities:

all of Certeau's work as a historian was centred on the precise, careful analysis of the practices by which men and women of past times appropriated, each in his or her own way, the codes and the places that were imposed on them, or else subverted the accepted rules to create new formalities.

(Chartier, *On the Edge of a Cliff* 45-46)

Denise Albanese argues that Certeau provides a position from which the genealogy of historical and ideological practices can be traced. In effect, Certeau illuminates the implicit effects of historical writing:

what is ideological is, like what is historical,  
based on available evidence [...] [and] if

---

<sup>1</sup>Colebrook's starting point for this examination is Greenblatt's assertion in "Towards a poetics of culture." that new historicism is " a practice rather than a doctrine, since as far as I can tell (and I should be the one to know) it's no doctrine at all"(1): see Stephen Greenblatt, "Towards a poetics of culture." *The New Historicism*. Ed. H. Aram Veerer. New York: Routledge, 1989. 1-14. Certeau's presence in Greenblatt's work over the past twenty years is appreciable: See Stephen Greenblatt, "Loudun and London." *Critical Inquiry* 12.2 (1986): 326-46.; *Shakespearean Negotiations: The Circulation of Social Energy in Renaissance England*. Berkeley: U of California P, 1988.; *Learning to Curse: Essays in Early Modern Culture*. New York: Routledge, 1990.; *Marvelous Possessions: The Wonder of the New World*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991. Jürgen Pieters also traces Certeau's influence on Greenblatt, producing the same list shown here, but adds that this discursive connection is perhaps supplemented by a geographical proximity between the two thinkers: "It may be interesting to keep in mind that de Certeau was a visiting lecturer in California from 1978 to 1984" (64, fn. 1): see Jürgen Pieters, "Gazing at the Borders of *The Tempest*: Shakespeare, Greenblatt and de Certeau." *Constellation Caliban: Figurations of a Character*. Ed. Nadia Lie and Theo D'haen. Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1997. 61-79.

historicist work must be based on available evidence, like the ideology that structures rationality, it also determines what counts as that evidence in its very modality, its presumptions about a past quiescent enough, compliant enough, to comfortably be ventriloquized in discourse.

(Albanese 191)

For Albanese, Certeau's genealogical elaboration of historiography is of "value" to early modern cultural studies because it "forces us to pause in our scripting of the past, and to notice that we, too, are speaking power without knowing it" (191). Claire Colebrook's synopsis of new historicist practices reflects this Certalian influence. Colebrook argues the focus of new historicism is not in viewing texts or cultures as "dependant upon or distinct from history" but in examining "the way in which social forces produce such boundaries between reality and text, or history and culture" (24). Certeau's attention to practices and their effects is reflected in a conception of the subject that is always provisional and incomplete. Jürgen Pieters suggests that Greenblatt and Certeau share a perception of "the self and the other not as stable, fixed entities but as indissolubly interlocked, in a state of constant dialectical interplay, permanently negotiating the borders which divide and bind them together" (70-71). This resonates with Colebrook's observation that new historicist practices do not assert the objective existence of a "cultural domain" which is produced by or produces "history". Rather, "the cultural/aesthetic domain is an area of contestation where various forces (aesthetic, political, historical, economic, etc.) circulate" (Colebrook 24).

It is not my intention to trace the various connections between Certeau's work, and that of other continental thinkers such as Foucault and Bourdieu, and contemporary Anglo-American critical discourses. Rather, it is to point out that Certeau's work has been incorporated into the study of early modern English culture but only as a component of broader, composite theoretical approaches. In terms of Certeau's "direct" application to early modern English texts, by which I mean a specific utilisation of Certeau's writings to examine a text or texts, there are relatively few examples. Eric Wilson's 1995 article, "Plagues, Fairs, and Street Cries: Sounding Out Society and Space in Early Modern London", specifically cites Certeau's ideas of "place" and "space" to analyse the soundscape of early modern London. Using pamphlets and popular literature as his primary texts, Wilson sets out to examine "the phenomenon of the city through the phenomenology of sound" (4). Wilson's methodology draws directly from Certeau's ethnographic and sociological work in *The Practice of Everyday Life*. Denise Albanese and Jürgen Pieters each seek to analyse contemporary Anglo-American critical discourses, especially Greenblatt's application of new historicism, in light of Certeau's influence upon and value to these positions. Pieters uses Certeau's work in *The Writing of History* in combination with Greenblatt's work on the new world, particularly in *Marvelous Possessions*, to provide an analysis of *The Tempest* in relation to the development of writing "as an instrument of power, a means to fix and produce reality" (74). Albanese's book seeks to "demonstrate how the literary becomes the exotic other of the scientific" (1), a project encompassing a wide diversity of cultural practices that "takes its inspiration" from Certeau's contention in *The Writing of History* "that the modern world produces itself through othering,

through discursive and material mechanisms that effectively bifurcate regions of culture, the better to legitimate some and delegitimize others" (2). In this sense, Albanese's book is methodologically influenced by Certeau's heterological perspective. I would claim the same for my own project.

Apart from these broad examples, I am aware of no direct application of Certalian models to early modern English examples. Of particular significance is my project's engagement with a broad range of Certeau's work, not just his historiographical studies in *The Writing of History* and *The Mystic Fable*. My study does use these texts in detail, of course, but it also has a sustained and crucial engagement with Certeau's work on spatial and textual practices in *The Practice of Everyday Life*. Adding to this study's uniqueness is its focus on three individuals and their specific practices of writing. Although Certeau's work pays attention to the "microphysics of power" (Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* xiv), I am not aware of a large study undertaking to examine specific individual practices, especially those situated in early modern England, using Certeau's models across the range of his writings. My project affords the opportunity to evaluate the effectiveness of Certeau's work in this context.

In the course of each section I elaborate on the specific theoretical concerns I consider pertinent to the subject in question. In Section One, I explore the relationship between the sparsely descriptive diary of Margaret Hoby (1571-1633), kept between 1599 and 1605, and Certeau's ideas of "place/space" and "strategy/tactic". Reading the diary as a form of "spatial text", I trace the development of the concept of privacy in concert with adjacent developments in Protestant spirituality, particularly the Puritan impulse towards an individuated relationship

between subject and God. Contextualising the diary within various cultural discourses of feminine and religious obligation, I argue for Hoby's creation of privatised, personal spaces within a power matrix that seeks her subordination to hierarchies of gender, religion, and socio-economics. Furthermore, Hoby's ability to produce these transient spaces, these "little freedoms" (Lobban, "Little Freedoms" 108), is only possible through the existence of these dominant power structures without which she has no pre-existing spatial or conceptual apparatus within and on which to operate.

Section Two is concerned with reading the religious tracts of Eleanor Davies (1590-1652). Davies's tracts, written in an often dense and obscure style, were printed between 1625 and 1652, with the majority printed during the 1640s. Beginning with three pieces written in 1633 which precipitated an appearance before the Court of High Commission, and a subsequent period of imprisonment, this chapter proceeds to analyse Davies's writings in light of Certeau's work on mystic and possessed writing during the Counter-Reformation in France and Spain. Whilst drawing on work that attends to a religious tradition antithetical to Davies's, my concentration on Certeau's project here is motivated by its attention to the issue of writing as a "strategic" practice. Combining Certeau's historiographical and theological work with his examination of writing as a mode of "accumulation" and "consolidation", this chapter places Davies's writing within its historical milieu. This approach argues that whilst Davies's texts are highly personalised and extremely critical of prominent political and cultural figures, especially Charles I and William Laud, they do not reject the socio-political basis of the system that persecutes her. Drawing on Certeau's analysis of the practice of writing, particularly within religious

contexts, the chapter contends that Davies's stylistic and methodological complexities are exorbitant examples of the fundamental premise of writing itself. Rather than attempting to produce a radically resistant or dissenting text, Davies's prophecies are acutely elliptical works that, apart from having a deep political investment in the prevailing social structure, demand the reader's submission to their linguistic pattern, thereby reproducing *in extremis* what Certeau asserts to be the broader claim of writing per se. In this sense her writings rely upon the inculcated power of the Word to sanction their claims and subjugate their readers to specific and ultimate meanings supplied through the person and intent of the author.

Section Three is concerned with the letters of Restoration poet and playwright Katherine Philips (1632-1664). Philips's letters cover a six-year period toward the end of her life during which she attained a degree of fame within court circles, as well as the wider public, through the performance of plays translated by her as well as an edition of poems published, apparently without her permission, in 1664. These poems, published "legitimately" after her death, secured her reputation as an archetypal female writer of the period through their pastoral metaphors and neoplatonic themes of love and female friendship. The majority of the letters considered in this chapter are written to Sir Charles Cotterell, Master of Ceremonies to Charles II. The chapter focuses on the relationship between the letters and concurrent discourses of courtesy and epistolary writing operating within the court culture of the 1660s. Tracing Philips's affiliation with Royalist and aristocratic groups, the chapter analyses the deployment of courtesy tropes and gestures of deference within her letters and asks with what purpose were these documents written and what meanings did they

solicit from their intended readership? Again elaborating on Certeau's models of writing and reading, the chapter argues that Philips's letters attempt to determine the reading process conducted upon them in order to facilitate her admission into the centres of cultural power she desired to join. In this case, as with Eleanor Davies, writing is pursued precisely for its ability to establish meaning and to secure particular subject positions. For Philips, courtesy and epistolary practices are means by which she can use the social influence of elite culture in order to join it whilst at the same time disguising the pragmatic methods she employs to do so. In effect, by writing what her readers want to read, Philips attempts to negate the volatility of reading, the quality Certeau emphasises in his examination of it, and thereby pre-determine an interpretation most profitable for her.

### **Speaking Positions.**

Before I examine the elements of Certeau's work relevant to this project, I will first canvass the issue of methodological self-reflexivity and its place within my work. In his survey of the current state of historiographical studies, Alun Munslow argues that;

no one today seriously advances the idea that we can reconstruct the past by the close scrutiny of evidence viewed as scattered bits of past reality, most historians still maintain the only avenue to the past is through its traces. The contention is now regularly put, however, that at best all historical methodology can do (through its treatment of the evidence - inference to the best explanation) is help us create a preferred,

socially useful and ideologically plausible reality  
effect.

(94)

Such methodological reflexiveness seeks to discern between the objects of analysis and the analysis itself. In historiographical terms this argues that "history is a discourse about, but different from, the past" (Munslow 133). I support such reading practices and will conduct this examination with deliberate regard for the critical approaches I follow. Yet self-reflexivity is more than a gesture to be acted out as routinely as the practices it seeks to acknowledge. There are ethical concerns that must be addressed as attentively as those of method. Self-reflexivity, in and of itself, is no more effective or virtuous as a critical device than any other.

To address the past and its traces involves having to consider speaking about and even on behalf of absent others. This has been a contested issue for some years as the political implications of criticism--that it always proceeds from a position of particular interest--have become part of the broader critical discourse. In this thesis there are a number of issues relating to such an argument. I am separated from the objects of my study by several hundred years, which involves having to contend not only with long-dead individuals but also their cultures and methods of conduct, including their style and practice of writing. I am also separated by gender, an issue affected by temporal and cultural divisions as well as contemporary critical and political debates. Linda Alcoff, writing from a feminist social science perspective, makes a broad statement on how the contemporary argument surrounding the ability to speak about or on behalf of others has been conducted:

There is a strong, albeit contested, current within  
feminism which holds that speaking for others--

even for other women--is arrogant, vain, unethical and politically illegitimate. Feminist scholarship has a liberatory agenda that almost requires that women scholars speak on behalf of other women; yet the dangers of speaking across differences are becoming increasingly clear.

(97-98)

These concerns would seem to be amplified in my instance because of my position as a man writing about women. Simon Shepherd's foreword to his 1985 collection of early modern tracts by women, *The Women's Sharp Revenge*, articulates this dilemma:

I am a male editor of some female pamphlets, a man muscling in on what women have made. I am aware of the argument that someone needed to bring this writing to light sooner rather than later, but in this patriarchal society I am a man in a controlling position and thus perpetuate part of that society.

(7)

Here, self-reflexivity becomes almost paralyzing as it asserts that a particular critical practice is complicit in a network of exclusive and oppressive discourses, especially patriarchy. This patriarchal network of control reflects the condition of (traditional) critical thought in which speaking about or on behalf of others indicates a desire to assimilate alternative voices into the dominant discourse: "the practice of speaking for others is often born of a desire for mastery, to privilege oneself as the one who can champion a just cause and thus achieve glory and praise" (Alcoff 115-16). Yet self-reflexivity does not prevent this assimilation from occurring, it only makes it known.

That self-reflexivity should be the gesture that allows such an ethical critical position to emerge is perhaps indicative of the European intellectual tradition from which these debates flow. Ian Hunter suggests that "a particular model of the person--as the self-reflective agent of all social conducts and capacities--is deeply imprinted on our political and moral thinking" (*Rethinking the School* 32). Arguing that the early modern period saw the emergence of government as the effective management of a state's resources, including its citizenry, Hunter posits that improvements in the "moral and economic capacities" (*Rethinking the School* 34) of the population became central to the development of mass education. Informing this concern with self-improvement is the focus on individual spirituality brought about by the Reformation and Counter-Reformation: "whether through Protestant piety or Catholic spiritual direction--the churches undertook a massive campaign to enable their lay members to concern themselves with their own spiritual well-being" (*Rethinking the School* 34). The effect of the Protestant perception of the individuated self in relation to the women considered in this study will be discussed in more detail in Sections One and Two. In relation to the construction of a self-reflexive critical perspective, Hunter argues this is the result of the transmission of the particular values of Christian pedagogy, broadcast firstly from the pulpit and eventually the classroom: "those through which individuals mastered the arts of self-problematisation and self-concern, and in so doing acquired the means of relating to themselves as the reflective 'subjects' of their thoughts and actions" (*Rethinking the School* 37). This self-problematising subject has been a central figure in the development of pedagogical and critical discourses in the subsequent

centuries. Noel King notes that Hunter's work has, in part, focused on the idea that:

contemporary critical writing has come to conceive of itself as an intensely self-interrogating activity, one involving a systematic problematising of text and self [...] all the various critical claims for textual openness and difference, all beliefs in unfixings of the text, must be seen as a series of personalising projects, so many exercises in self-problematisation and self-stylisation.

(5-6)

According to King, Hunter has suggested that such practices, in which the text is perceived as opaque and to some degree impenetrable to the reader, constitute "the problematisation of self and text or, more accurately, self *via* text" (6. Original emphasis.). In such readings the critical enterprise has always been constituted to some degree by the critic's desire to know him or herself.<sup>2</sup> This desire to know the self, and its limits, can be seen operating behind much of the discussion that is to follow. Indeed, how the self comes to know its relation to the discourses surrounding and informing it is a connecting thread running through all the subjects in this study.

Yet knowledge of my own speaking position, and what informs it, does not exonerate me from the responsibilities of that speech. Neither should it become immobilising because I think the principles at stake are "beyond my jurisdiction" as (twentieth century, male, postgraduate) analyst. David Simpson observes that the "rhetoric

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<sup>2</sup>This debate is much larger than the snapshot I provide here and I do not claim my sketch of the field to be comprehensive: see Noel King, "Occasional Doubts: Ian Hunter's Genealogy of Interpretative Depth." *Southern Review* 26.1 (1993): 5-27.

of localization" that informs so much contemporary criticism, and is visible in the debates over who should speak for whom, "often reflects a category confusion between ethics and epistemology, between questions about what we ought to do and questions about what we can know" (131). I want to briefly examine examples of this localising rhetoric to sketch the contours of my own critical disposition before returning to Simpson's argument.

Part of the practice of self-reflexive criticism involves a recognition, and acknowledgment, of one's speaking position and then attempting to consider this as a constituent element in one's analysis. As hinted at in the extracts from Alcoff above, however, the (western, male, penetrative) interpretative models characterising academic inquiry can be read as immediately compromising any possibility of an equitable or just engagement with "other" voices. This is Shepherd's complaint. How this effect might be ameliorated has been an important methodological concern of my own project. Elspeth Probyn's tripartite model of "local, locale, and location" seeks to establish a methodology for observing the interpretative process and "raises epistemological questions of what constitutes knowledge: of where we speak from and which voices are sanctioned" (178). This model is a convenient exemplar of the way in which the issue of self-reflexive criticism is dealt with and how knowledge might be produced amidst the complexities and complicities of interpretative practice.

Probyn is concerned to discover how knowledge is produced, and what might be excluded from this process. Arguing that "in creating our own centers and our own locals, we tend to forget that our centers displace others into the peripheries of our making" (176), Probyn deploys the categories "local, locale, and location" in order to trace these

displacements. The arm of this model I want to focus on here is "location". Whilst Probyn asserts that "locale" refers to "a place that is the setting for a particular event", and "local" as "that directly issuing from or related to a particular time", she defines "location" as:

the methods by which one comes to locate sites of research. Through location knowledges are ordered into sequences which are congruent with previously established categories of knowledge. Location, then, delineates what we may hold as knowable and, following Foucault, renders certain experiences 'true' and 'scientific' while excluding others. Thus, the epistemology that this suggests most often works to fix the subaltern outside the sanctified boundaries of knowledge, determining the knowledge of the subaltern as peripheral and inconsequential (not fitting in with prearranged sequences). I want, therefore, to question the hierarchical ordering of knowledge.

(178)

From my point of view, this refers to the way in which the history of early modern English culture, and particularly the role of women in that culture, has been conducted. This intellectual tradition necessarily informs my own approach as it has coloured the methods I now seek to use. In gendered terms, Probyn's assertion that location "describes epistemological manoeuvres whereby categories of knowledge are established and fixed into sequences" (184) underlines a longstanding practice of masculine "muscling in" on women's writing by editors and critics in accordance with prevailing historiographical and cultural

priorities. These priorities, as Probyn explains, have come to exist through the construction of a chronology of sanctioned experience. Following a reading of Foucault's *The Order of Things*, Probyn contends:

it is what governs statements and the ways in which they govern each other that is of importance. It is therefore through a process of location, of fixing statements in relation to other established statements, that knowledge comes to be ordered. It is through this process that the knowledges produced in locale are denigrated as local, subaltern, and other.

(185)

The disavowal of women's writing on its own terms, the "necessity" of its re-evaluation by (male) editors and scholars, has been one of the issues to be addressed in the past two decades by new historicism and feminism. In a feminist assessment of new historicist practices, Helen Buss argues that Stephen Greenblatt's famous desire to "speak with the dead" is insufficient for a feminist historical practice, asserting that these "famous 'dead'" constitute "men's historical and literary traditions"(86). In contrast, Buss suggests that women's historical and literary traditions are far less apparent or established:

We hardly know who our dead are: what could they possibly say that was not conditioned and structured by their place inside the gender system that silenced them or allowed them to speak only in the limited and oppressive public scripts allowed to women?

(86)

Yet the interrogation of incumbent perspectives and methodologies is not enough, for, as Probyn asserts: "The researcher, male or female, is never outside the cultural, political, and economic conditions that allow for only certain questions to be formulated" (183).

To attempt to enter this frame of reference with a set of altered perspectives and "objective" insights is, under this model, futile. Particularly since I am attempting to read texts across the fundamental chasm of gender which, without wanting to be reductively essentialist, necessarily positions me at a certain distance from the texts, their pre-existing historical displacement notwithstanding. The function of gender within the "sequences of knowledge" arranging this field of endeavour illustrates the wider critical position I proceed from. By way of example I want to survey an exchange between Robert Scholes and Jonathan Culler regarding the process of "reading like a woman". Culler's piece, "Reading as a Woman" attempts to deal with the issue of feminist interpretation within a pre-existing masculinist critical environment and contends that feminist criticism asks the question "how should we read? what kind of reading experience can we imagine or produce? what would it be to 'read as a woman'?" (63). Culler's piece is centred on the issue of "experience" and whether a definitively female experience is possible and/or necessary to an ability to "read as a woman":

To ask a woman to read as a woman is in fact a double or divided request. It appeals to the condition of being a woman as if it were a given and simultaneously urges that this condition be created or achieved. Reading as a woman is not simply [...] a theoretical position, for it appeals to a sexual identity

defined as essential and privileges experiences associated with that identity.

(Culler 49)

For Culler, experience is central to this process but has at the same time a "divided, duplicitous character: it has always already occurred and yet is still to be produced--an indispensable point of reference, yet never simply there" (63). Scholes argues that Culler's anxiety about experience comes from an inability to discard it, despite passages like the one just quoted. Analysing this passage, Scholes argues that Culler, and Derrida, deal with the issue of feminine experience by turning it into "a question of essence, which [they] can then subject to the deconstructive formula, demonstrating that there is no such thing as a purely, essentially feminine creature" (Scholes 212).<sup>3</sup> Arguing that there is no difference between "reading about an experience and having an experience" (212) in Culler's argument, Scholes contends that Culler cannot subsequently rid himself of the notion of experience as a defining element in reading practice. The thrust of Scholes's argument is that the notion of 'essence', or, more explicitly, 'experience', is fundamental to the process of interpreting texts, especially when gender issues are involved. Scholes sees Culler and Derrida as trying to establish that "it is the trace of femininity that inevitably is inscribed in something defined as *not* feminine", but this reasoning gives "the trace a positive status as a place or locus of the feminine" (Scholes 216. Original emphasis.). This trace manifests as a 'feminine voice' available to male readers which assists their reading. Scholes points out, however, that

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<sup>3</sup>For the specific reference Scholes relies on here see: Jacques Derrida, "Deconstruction in America: An Interview with Jacques Derrida." Trans. James Creech. *Critical Exchange* 17 (1985): 1-33.

Derrida's accommodation of this feminine voice is, by his own admission, limited: "listening to the degree I can to a certain feminine voice" (Derrida qtd. in Scholes 217).<sup>4</sup> In response to this Scholes asks;

Why does he need to suggest that he hears this voice less well than he hears other (presumably masculine) voices? What can it be other than his own membership in the class of males, with all that implies in the way of experience? At some level the concept of *experience*, which was earlier dismissed and replaced by the more docile and vulnerable concept of *essence*, is returning to trouble this text also.

(Scholes 217. Original emphasis.)

The problem becomes "is there any difference between reading *as* a woman and reading *like* a woman? [...] can John read *as* a woman or only *like* a woman? If neither John nor Mary can really read *as* a woman, and either one can read *like* a woman, then what's the difference between John and Mary?"(217. Original emphasis.). Scholes sees an essential difference which cannot be occluded by the textual convolutions of Culler's argument:

I think no man should seek in any way to diminish the authority which the experience of women gives them in speaking about that experience, and I believe that women should be very wary of critical systems that deny or diminish that authority. [...] We are

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<sup>4</sup>This quote is also taken from "Deconstruction in America: An Interview with Jacques Derrida.". Unfortunately, Scholes does not cite the page number for this extract and I have been unable to obtain the article.

subjects constructed by our experience and truly carry traces of that experience in our minds and on our bodies. Those of us who are male cannot deny this either. With the best will in the world we shall never read as women and perhaps not even like women. For me, born when I was born and living where I have lived, the very best I can do is to be conscious of the ground upon which I stand: to read not as but like a man.

(Scholes 217-18)

Scholes's refutation of Culler's position seems to lead him to a point not unlike Shepherd's Foreword; a self-conscious admission of his gender's significance to his interpretation of the (female) text. Yet it is a position that accepts the limitations of a particular perspective. Whether such a move is useful, or possible, returns me to David Simpson's contention that much contemporary critical work of the kind examined above contains a confusion between ethics and epistemology.

Simpson's analysis of this critical method interrogates the assertions of those such as Alcoff, and the terms of the debate conducted between Scholes and Culler, in which discourses are politically quarantined from each other for fear of interpretative imperialism or contamination. For Simpson, such regulatory gestures belie not just a category confusion but, more seriously, the potential for ethical dereliction:

The awareness that we are not supposed to speak for others, who are supposed to speak for themselves, is an ethical awareness [...] It is quite different from an argument that says that we cannot know others in

ways that are not always already forms of ourselves; or (another version) that there are no forms of ourselves that are also forms for others. This second, epistemological argument raises enormously difficult questions, for which we arguably do not even have objectifiable resolutions. But it is quite different from the lazy, self-affirming gesture that is so often made to follow from it, which says that we *must* not speak for or as the other.

(133. Original emphasis.)

In this argument, self-reflexivity must make decisions about its own practice. Regardless of Simpson's perjorative characterisation of certain critical practices, his contentions make clear the necessity of self-reflexive practices to pay attention to how they examine their objects.

Joseph Pugliese takes this idea further when he analyses self-reflexive practices in post-colonial criticism. Pugliese sees in post-colonial criticism a valorisation of "self-conscious" practices that screens the fact that many of these practices continue to be appropriative and exploitative: "as though the self-consciousness [...] of one's practice were sufficient guarantee of not re-instating colonising traces (of the will to power) and unconscious desires (for mastery)" (352). Indeed, in the very act of "self-consciousness" Pugliese reads an imperialist construction of the Western self, the critic, as the supremely self-aware creator of History, a discourse to which all other cultures will eventually subscribe. As such, the renunciatory gesture of "self-consciousness" in effect underwrites the critic's authority: "the self-conscious subject scripts him/herself as fully in possession and control of all aspects of the decolonising practice" (353). For Pugliese, self-reflexivity should accept

its ethical responsibilities and examine the difficulties of its own critical imperatives rather than assuming that in producing a meta-language of self-awareness it "escapes the ongoing operations of neo-colonial investments" (353). An ethical form of self-reflexive action acknowledges the existence of the other (and its speech) as prior to my own discursive constructions of it and "make[s] my cultural activity possible" (Pugliese 354). Acknowledging the other's primary, agentic function in the creation of the critic's discourse underwrites Pugliese's article and activates a potentially invigorating and ethical engagement between critical and object knowledges. In this model, self-reflexivity acknowledges Simpson's epistemological boundary but profits from it in an enhanced awareness of other but also of self.

Such a position accepts limitation and incapacity as part of the interpretative process. Criticism that embraces this provisionality recognises, as Pugliese contends, "that my will to knowledge/power, and its desire for mastery, is already hollowed out by an other who speaks/writes otherwise than the contracts of my reflexive discursivity and the codifications of my rule of language/law" (354). In their article, "The politics of text and commentary", Bob Hodge and Alec McHoul outline two "disciplinary formations of the text-commentary relation" (189)--"mastery" and "liberty"--which provide models for alternative approaches to research:

The first disciplinary formation coheres around the notion of commentarial dominance over, and colonization of, the object text. The second formation is characterized by a more 'humble' gesture by which the commentary allows the object text the position of dominance--to 'speak for itself'.

(189)

The "mastery" model is that which has characterised traditional academic inquiry in the west. It constructs the object text as consisting of certain, specific meanings legible only through the discourse of (sanctioned, institutional) critical interpretation: "The text is brought into a position of discipleship: of being an accomplice to the discourse of commentary, whether willing or unwilling" (Hodge and McHoul 191). The text and the university student share a similar position in that they are both isolated within institutional networks where the apparent "freedom" of their (commentarial/pedagogical) environments obscures their actual confinement "to an obsolete and historically retrograde 'tradition'" (191). These are the sequences of knowledge acting to privilege "famous dead men". The alternative to "mastery" is "liberty", a practice characterised by a desire to let the object text speak "for itself". Although constructed in opposition to the dictates of commentary, extreme libertarian criticism withdraws completely from the object text: "The discourse of commentary 'learns its place': confines its own writing to its own domain; cuts itself off from any ultimate, genuine or authentic relation with the text" (Hodge and McHoul 202-03).

In response to this apparently arid choice between a superimposed mastery or a perpetually disengaged liberty, Hodge and McHoul contend a third option which "would be a more self-conscious

mode of textual commentary (where the term 'commentary' itself might now be shown under erasure--as a negation of commentary in which the problems of commentary necessarily persist)" (205). Asserting that text and commentary form a *différend*, there being "an extreme agonistic relation between *discourses*" (Hodge and McHoul 200. Original emphasis.), Hodge and McHoul suggest that both text and commentary are susceptible to "the insertion of texts and practices of commentary that challenge the *différend* itself" (207). This challenge confronts the fundamental premise that text and commentary are insuperably different. Hodge and McHoul's version of such a "post-commentarial" writing is *fictocriticism*, a practice I do not intend to pursue in this project. But in general their objective for post-commentarial criticism is a practice of "writing in the spacing of differences, compounding textual enigmas and indeterminacies" to "open up the space of a positive and self-reflective politics" (Hodge and McHoul 206). As Pugliese's article demonstrates, the rhetoric of self-reflexivity needs to be supported by an ethical and perhaps even delimiting practice of interpretative provisionality. Hodge and McHoul's models for post-commentary outline ways in which an interpretative process that sees and hears the other's voice/text might be formulated.

These examples demonstrate a current within contemporary critical discourse that seeks to recover forms of knowledge and expression that have been elided or ignored by established discourses of critical inquiry. Common to all is the desire to disrupt conventions, whether in knowledge or methodology, and thereby allow the other to be heard: "working between and among sanctioned categories of knowledge jostles the sequencing of location [...] rendering possible the emergence of submerged knowledges" (Probyn 185). My project is

concerned not just with the mode of its own production but with the way this self-awareness affects this production. Central to this approach is an attentiveness to meanings and activities that may otherwise be dismissed as trivial or insignificant. It is this desire to reveal what has been ignored by or invisible to prevailing systems of knowledge that makes the work of Michel de Certeau important to my project.

### **Michel de Certeau, Heterology, and Historiography.**

My project has its primary theoretical grounding in the work of Michel de Certeau. Reading across a range of his writings, I utilise his multi-faceted concept of "heterology" as a way of interpreting the texts at issue in this study. His work in the discipline of history, as will be seen, combines many of the elements with which I have expressed concern in the section above, namely self-reflexivity and an interest in recovering abandoned or submerged knowledge. Beyond outlining the contours of his theoretical approach, I also highlight potential inconsistencies between the Certalian model and my own project. In particular, the apparent opposition between the Certalian focus on "modes of operation or schemata of action" (*Practice of Everyday Life* xi) and my concentration on three individual subjects, their specific contexts, and the various methods by which they create spaces within prevailing patterns of power.

In *The Practice of Everyday Life*, Michel de Certeau summarises part of his interpretative project thus:

I am trying to hear these fragile ways in which the body makes itself heard in the language, the multiple voices set aside by the triumphal *conquista* of the economy that has, since the beginning of the

'modern age' (ie., since the seventeenth or eighteenth century), given itself the name of writing.

(131)

Here we find the major themes of Certeau's oeuvre: the rediscovery of the excluded (whether they be persons, discourses, or both) and their methods of operation within the established systems of control and/or knowledge. Boundaries are important to this process as they constitute the limit between Same and Other on which ideas of excluded and included knowledge are based. The paradox of the boundary underwrites what Ahearne describes as a "basic heterological law" in Certeau's work: "the operation which draws up a limit to familiar space insinuates by the same movement foreignness into that space" (*Michel de Certeau* 21). As a boundary is drawn the unknown is admitted (to). This double movement is a constitutive element of what I will try to discern as a Certalian "effect", an effect that initiates recurrent heterological convergences between "Same" and "Other". Certeau's heterological project can perhaps be usefully understood as "an alternative to, but not as a compromise between two impossible positions [...] the impossibility of the infinitely other; and the impossibility of an other that is not infinitely other" (Buchanan, "What is Heterology?" 489). The "effect" manifests in Certeau's radical reviewings of disciplines of inquiry and the multiplicity of perspectives enabled through these destabilising techniques.

Certeau continually reconstitutes the image of the boundary. This persistent representation of the limit figuratively inscribes the instability of the object of inquiry in the Certalian interpretative universe. Ahearne argues that "the 'same' and the 'other' are themselves not stable entities in Certeau's thought, but must always be

differentially and positionally defined" (*Michel de Certeau* 18). The instability of the border transforms it from a limit to a rupture, or, more precisely, into a limit *and* a rupture. It is a definition that signifies the undefined. In his chapter, "Spatial Stories", in *The Practice of Everyday Life*, Certeau argues for the necessity of boundaries to the process of elaborating the stories so central to the validity and integrity of a cultural/interpretative enterprise. Beginning in the early modern period with the judicial conciliation of property disputes based on stories of how the land was apportioned, Certeau contends that these fragmented narratives are compiled in order to "mark out boundaries": "they shed light on the formation of myths, since they also have the function of founding and articulating spaces" (*The Practice of Everyday Life* 122-23). Further, Certeau argues that:

By considering the role of stories in delimitation, one can see that the primary function is to *authorize* the establishment, displacement or transcendence of limits, and as a consequence, to set in opposition, within the closed field of discourse, two movements that intersect (setting and transgressing limits) in such a way as to make the story a sort of 'crossword' decoding stencil (a dynamic partitioning of space) whose essential narrative figures seem to be the *frontier* and the *bridge*.

(*The Practice of Everyday Life* 123. Original emphases.)

The story acts as a founding mechanism which "creates a field that authorizes dangerous and contingent social actions" (*The Practice of Everyday Life* 125). Existing on all levels from the individual to the

state, the story, or "narrative activity", "is continually concerned with marking out boundaries" (*The Practice of Everyday Life* 125). These boundaries are characterised by their contact with an alien exteriority, others. Using the language of "frontiers" and "bridges", Certeau argues that the story "'turns' the frontier into a crossing". Through its "accounts of interaction", the story acts as the bridge which at once overcomes and punctures the boundary: "It liberates from enclosure and destroys autonomy" (*The Practice of Everyday Life* 128). The bridge, in transgressing limits, represents "the 'betrayal' of an order" (Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* 128). Yet in the act of revealing "the possibility of a bewildering exteriority", the bridge also "allows or causes the re-emergence beyond the frontiers of the alien element which was hidden inside the limits" (Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* 128). In effect, the bridge makes apparent the co-existence of same and other within and beyond "settled" bodies of knowledge and belief: "Within the frontiers, the alien is already there, an exorcism or sabbath of the memory, a disquieting familiarity [...] as though delimitation were the bridge that opens the inside to the other" (Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* 129). This is precisely the function of Certeau's thought, to delimit and to extend, to infuse the familiar with the unfamiliar through a process of engagement which in its act of self-definition admits the other as the essential guarantee, and an interior element, of itself.

This hermeneutic model is reflective of Certeau's attitude towards the analytical project in general. In his essay on Freud's *Moses and Monotheism*, Certeau describes his analysis of Freud's fragmented text as "putting the *ersatz* of my history (a connected series of known

facts) in the place of this writing" (*The Writing of History* 311).<sup>5</sup> Certeau's examination returns Freud's work "to a linearity which betrays it" (*The Writing of History* 311). For Michael Beehler, Certeau's self-conscious observations "[provide] us with a meta-commentary that accounts for the function of the 'other' within the positivities of scientific and historiographic rhetoric, describing the repressed 'other' [...] that 'returns' to these discourses as what has always already been there in them" (152). Such observations seem to confirm this writing's "honesty and [apparent] clairvoyant lucidity" but, in effect, "foreclose the possibility of change and the thinking of a different future: that is, the future as the site of the unforeseeable 'itself'" (Beehler 153). Beehler's criticisms recall Pugliese's contention that "in the instant of disavowal", post-colonial gestures of self-reflexivity ensure "the surreptitious return of a seemingly forfeited investment" (353). Yet Beehler pursues Certeau's examination of his own practice, arguing that instead of allowing the foreclosure of difference through determinative writing practices, Certeau insinuates an unforeseeable alterity into these practices.

At the conclusion to his examination of *Moses and Monotheism*, Certeau notes that "we must speak with discretion about what we do not know" (*The Writing of History* 347). For Beehler, this aside can be read as a recapitulation of the totalising practices outlined above:

If we speak about what we do not know--even if  
we speak circumspectly, with caution and

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<sup>5</sup>This citation is originally contained Michael Beehler's, "Speaking for Nothing: Michel de Certeau on Narrative and Historical Time." *Signs of Change: Premodern, Modern, Postmodern*. Ed. Stephen Barker. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1996. 152.

discretion--do we not in fact bring what we do not know into the realm of what we do know, since, by so speaking, we explain that we know that we do not know, and thereby determine and delimit our lack of knowledge?

(153)

There appears no space in this argument for other experiences "not already qualified by being foreseen" (Beehler 153). Yet Beehler finds a rupture contained in Certeau's imperative that "we *must* speak" (153. Original emphasis.). This call to action preceeds us, leaving its trace in our practices. The capacity for a totalising anticipation of alterity is an inherent risk in the interpretative process, but is "what must be said if something else is to be understood" (Certeau, *The Writing of History* 326).<sup>6</sup> Alterity is revealed at the very centre of those writing practices that seek the containment and consolidation of knowledge.

It is only thanks to this speaking--itself the trace of a call that infinitely precedes it--that this 'something else' takes place as the extra, excessive trace of *that which has yet to take place*, of the unforeseeable itself, and of that which remains 'to be understood' in some unspecified future.

(Beehler 154. Original emphasis.)

The self-reflexivity of Certeau's hermeneutic reveals the paradox of knowledge: that within the circumscription of discourses and discursive practices lies the always unknown immanence of otherness.

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<sup>6</sup>See Beehler 154. In Beehler's text this quote is mistakenly attributed to *Heterologies*.

Certeau's heterological project is not confined to the interior methodologies and techniques of analytical discourses. Indeed the importance of these operations is that they destabilise entire discourses. Of particular interest to this inquiry is the effect of this approach on the operation of historiography as it reads and interprets textual fragments from past cultures. Certeau's re-drawing of disciplinary boundaries as porous verges through which texts, voices, movements, and readings enter and exit facilitates a renewed perspective on the process of inquiry, one that embraces difference and eschews rigid totalities.

### History.

Certeau employs images of loss when he discusses the relationship between history and its explication:

Like Robinson Crusoe on the shore of his island, before 'the vestige of a naked foot imprinted upon the sand', the historian travels along the borders of his present; he visits those beaches where the other appears only as a *trace* of what has *passed*. Here he sets up his industry. On the basis of imprints which are now definitively mute (that which has passed will return no more, and its voice is lost forever), a literature is fabricated.

(*L'Absent de l'histoire* 8-9 qtd. in Ahearne, *Michel de Certeau* 10. Original emphases.)<sup>7</sup>

For Certeau, historiography occupies a unique place amongst the human sciences. In Mark Poster's words, it is a "sustained, permanent

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<sup>7</sup> See Michel de Certeau, *L'Absent de l'histoire*. Mame, 1973. All quotes from this text are taken from Jeremy Ahearne, *Michel de Certeau: Interpretation and its Other*. Cambridge: Polity, 1995.

ambiguity" in which "a 'real' past is taken for granted, another 'real' past is represented in texts, and a 'real' present is effaced from their production" ("The Question of Agency" 96). This overlaid structure of corroborating "realities", in Certeau's argument, serves to support a conception of historiography as a form of unmediated re-representation of the past which is quarantined from contemporary interpretative techniques by its ideological neutrality: history is just history. The effect of such a model of understanding is that it "substitutes a representation of a past for elucidation of present institutional operation (sic) that manufactures the historian's text. It puts an appearance of the real (past) in place of the praxis (present) that produces it, thus developing an actual case of quid pro quo" (Certeau, "History: Science and Fiction" 205). The relation between history-as-practice and the past provides historians with an imperative to occlude the practices of representation since there is a claim to "truth" at the centre of this discursive matrix:

History claims to be a discourse about truth; it conducts a relationship with what it posits as its referent (the past 'reality' to be recalled and understood), which can in principle be verified. Thus historians need to ponder the truth status of historical discourse--and they need to think of that truth status not as something that emerges from the past, rising intact to the surface in archival materials, but rather as the result of establishing relations among data arranged by the operation of knowing[.]

(Chartier, *On the Edge of a Cliff* 45)

Ahearne discerns Certeau's distinction between "reality", which is "an effect of historiographical discourse", and the "real" which "refers to

that which resists direct symbolization, and which strains all representations and systems of knowledge", so that "historiographical discourse is not so much detached from 'reality' (it produces 'reality' through processes of interpretation) as *involved* in a 'real' which it can alter but cannot fully contain" (*Michel de Certeau* 23. Original emphasis.). Certeau describes the realignment of "reality" that occurs in the re-presentation of historical materials through the historiographical process: "One thus passes from a historical reality (History, or *Geschichte*) 'received' in a text to a textual reality (historiography, or *Histoire*) 'produced' by an operation whose norms are fixed in advance" (Certeau, "Une épistémologie de transition: Paul Veyne" 1324 qtd. in Chartier, *On the Edge of a Cliff* 45).<sup>8</sup>

The way in which "historical interpretation has often tended to erase its relation to the techniques on which it is founded" (Ahearne 13) can be linked to the effect described by Certeau by which the "fiction of knowledge" is based on a "lust to be a viewpoint and nothing more" (Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* 92). Historians, in order to protect the fiction of the past's unmolested retrieval by "History", must sustain their discipline's procedural and theoretical codes or risk seeing it dissolve. Certeau argues that history constantly operates on the edge of this disaster as a product of its perpetual negotiations between the present and the past, Same and Other:

If history leaves its proper place--the *limit* that it posits and receives--it is broken asunder, to become nothing more than a fiction (the narrative of what happened) or an epistemological reflection (the

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<sup>8</sup> Chartier provides the reference for this article: Michel de Certeau, "Une épistémologie de transition: Paul Veyne." *Annales ESC* 27 (1972): 1317-27. My quote is taken from Chartier's text.

elucidation of its own working laws). But it is neither the legend to which popularization reduces it, nor the criteriology that would make of it merely the critical analysis of its procedures. It plays between them, on the margin that separates these two reductions[.]

(Certeau, *The Writing of History* 44. Original emphasis.)

The cohering oscillation at the axis of historical inquiry returns us again to Certeau's dynamic border zones and his re-worked vision of the kinds of history possible. Central to Certeau's new historical method is an acknowledgment of the situatedness of the historical enterprise. Situating the production of the representation within a specific temporal, institutional, political, and personal locale, or place, is, for Certeau, essential to a renewed historiography: "It is in terms of this place that [historiography's ] methods are established, its topography of interests can be specified, its dossiers and its interrogation of documents are organized" (Certeau, *The Writing of History* 58). The illusion of technical transparency and methodological neutrality must be dissolved in favour of a practice which acknowledges its own procedures and the operations effected on archival materials that bring about historical texts:

making history always demanded elucidation of the relation between the discourse of knowledge and the body social that produced that discourse and in which it was inscribed [...] Hence the sharply focused reflections on the discipline [...] which saw history

simultaneously as a place and as a practice, as science and as writing.

(Chartier, *On the Edge of a Cliff* 46)

From these interventions into the practice of historiography, Certeau's work provides an alternative form of theoretical schemata that guides an analyst, with one eye on the archive and one on the historiographical processes deployed upon it, toward the tenuous relationships between past and present, text and Text, in the Barthesian sense of a "methodological field" ("From Work to Text" 157), which constitute history writing. It is in this sense that the texts examined in this study work to elucidate Certeau's writings, the idea that the archive can reveal difference, indeed a multiplicity of differences, through a broadened historiographical perspective. The texts under consideration here literalise the "traces" that Certeau speaks of in his historiographical writings--texts that are opaque, coy, fragmented, and deeply invested with the rhetorical gestures of religious belief and/or the imperatives of class structure. The combination of these factors produces an effect described by Certeau as a "*trace of what has passed*" (Certeau, *L'Absent de l'histoire* 8-9 qtd. in Ahearne, *Michel de Certeau* 10. Original emphasis.), a half-presence which cannot manifest all it signifies and remains beyond the totality of the historian's experience:

The violence of the body reaches the written page only across absence, through the intermediary of documents that the historian has been able to see on the sands from which the presence of that left behind has been washed away, and through a murmur that lets us hear--but from afar--the unknown immensity which seduces and menaces our knowledge.

(Certeau, *The Writing of History* 3)

The text materialises the "menace" of the other, unknown knowledge through its innate alterity--something born of its temporal and cultural distinction.

Certeau's thought is not contained within disciplines and his writings on historiography relay ideas to and from other projects within the broad ambit of his inquiries. All of his work displays a commitment to "introduce fragments of alterity in to the established edifices of written knowledge, and thereby to alter our conceptions of this knowledge" (Ahearne, *Michel de Certeau* 18). In historiographical writing this translates into a self-reflexive writing practice, but also a concern for elements in the text that receive little attention within the established arenas of historical research. The detailed examination of the panoramic views of history is repeated in his analysis of the ways in which cultures and societies are structured and, more importantly, how the members of these cultures operate within (and around) these structures. In *The Practice of Everyday Life*, Certeau utilises the metaphor of sight, a common trope in his work, to argue that his project seeks to identify "[t]he ordinary practitioners [...] 'down below', below the thresholds at which visibility begins" (93). Further to this, Certeau injects alterity, as a form of "heterological genome", into the subjects

who constitute the base level of these systems of control and knowledge, claiming that "the subject is constructed as a stratification of heterogenous moments" (Certeau, "History: Science and Fiction" 218). It is this comprehensive mapping of alterity through the regulatory structures of culture and knowledge, into the very being of the culturally/intellectually constituted subject, which delivers Certeau's cross-disciplinarity its potency. The Certalian "effect" is that which utilises heterology, the discourse "on the other", as its hermeneutic tool to destabilise the apparent monoliths of knowledge into which it is introduced and enable multiple readings to emerge. Texts read in these ways reveal nuanced, insinuated presences within their grain which extend beyond mere representation of "facts" and point towards barely-traced practices within systems of regulation: "Escaping the imaginary totalizations produced by the eye, the everyday has a certain strangeness that does not surface, or whose surface is only its upper limit, outlining itself against the visible" (Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* 93).

### **Reading.**

The liberatory perspectivism of Certeau's interpretative project is initiated in the reading process. Certeau's metaphors emphasise seeing or accessing that which is conventionally invisible or inaccessible; a perspective which underpins renewed attention being focused on apparently sealed off, or unproductive, historical texts. Certeau's model of reading operates in accordance with the major themes of his work by stressing a mobile, creative resourcefulness on the part of the reading subject. In later chapters this mobility will be explored in relation not just to written texts (as is the case with Eleanor

Davies and Katherine Philips) but in terms of the physical and conceptual spaces of the subjects under analysis (Margaret Hoby).

Certeau's regard for reading suggests a particular stance in relation to the text; an insinuating presence which re-forms, or simply constitutes the textual object in an enunciative act. Discerning an "economy of writing", a system in which writing has occupied a position of power through its construction of the myth of self-creation, Certeau asserts that reading--as an interpretative, critical act--has been the franchise of specific classes.

Successive economies of writing have for Certeau consistently occulted the act of reading as a specific operation. The ordinary reader has become nothing but the passive wax upon which competent interpreters, social engineers or machines write.

(Ahearne, *Michel de Certeau* 166)

Certeau's contention that "the text becomes a cultural weapon, a private hunting reserve, the pretext for a law that legitimizes as 'literal' the interpretation given by *socially* authorized professionals and intellectuals (*clerics*)" (*The Practice of Everyday Life* 171. Original emphasis.) constitutes the scene in which he illuminates the praxis of reading as it operates at the seemingly effaced level of the reader.

Working within these "scriptural economies", readers employ creative, even subversive, processes upon texts (as well as texts playing upon them) according to their own priorities or desires. Jeremy Ahearne stipulates three reading models postulated by Certeau, these being "re-employments", "metaphorization", and "insinuation". Common to all three is a mobile, dexterous reader "poaching"

meanings, inferences, even unconnected internal associations from the texts as they pass over them. Certeau engages the language of spatiality to render visible the praxis of readers: "An initial, indeed initiatory, experience: to read is to be elsewhere" (*The Practice of Everyday Life* 173). He baldly states, "reading has no place"; the reader's place,

is not *here* or *there*, one or the other, but neither the one nor the other, simultaneously inside and outside, dissolving both by mixing them together, associating texts like funerary statues that he awakens and hosts, but never owns. In that way, he also escapes from the law of each text in particular, and from that of the social milieu.

(Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* 174. Original emphasis.)

This model of reading as *poesis*--Certeau speaks of a "common poetics" emerging "like bubbles rising from the depths of the water" (*The Practice of Everyday Life* 172)--seeks to demonstrate that, in Ahearne's terms, one can live with sanctioned, literal readings "without necessarily being taken or identifying with them" (*Michel de Certeau* 170).

### **Writing.**

For Certeau, writing is a "'modern' mythical practice" (*The Practice of Everyday Life* 133) that has structured European thought over the past four hundred years. Writing reflects the accumulative and controlling practices of institutions and institutionalised knowledges that seek to define themselves as separate from their environments (and able to regulate their meanings in that wider world):

I designate as 'writing' the concrete activity that consists in constructing, on its own, blank space (*un espace propre*)--the page--a text that has power over the exteriority from which it has first been isolated.

(*Practice of Everyday Life* 134)

For Certeau, three elements are instrumental to the practice of writing; the blank page, the text, and the meaning of the text. The process of self-creation through writing is enabled, for Certeau, through the initial establishment of the blank page: "a space of its own delimits a place of production for the subject" (*The Practice of Everyday Life* 134). This space is "autonomous" and distinct, enabling an exercise of the will within its own field. In this fashion a text, Certeau's second element, is created in which "[l]inguistic fragments or materials are treated (factory-processed, one might say) in this space according to methods that can be made explicit and in such a way as to produce an order" (Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* 134). Writing enables the subject to create her own, controllable field of meaning:

on the blank page, an itinerant, progressive, and regulated practice--a 'walk'--composes the artefact of another 'world' that is not received but rather made.

(Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* 134-35)

The third feature of Certeau's idea, the 'meaning' of the text, refers to the way in which the productivity of writing, that is, its distinction from the 'proper order', is directed back towards that order to demonstrate an effect upon it:

the 'meaning' ('*sens*') of scriptural play, the production of a system, a space of formalization,

refers to the reality from which it has been distinguished *in order to change it*.

(Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* 135. Original emphasis.)

This is in contrast to the process of reading. Certeau asserts that readers "are travellers; they move across lands belonging to someone else, like nomads poaching their way across fields they did not write" (*Practice of Everyday Life* 174). Their roaming across texts is a form of "silent production":

the drift across the page, the metamorphosis of the text effected by the wandering eye of the reader, the improvisation and expectation of meanings inferred from a few words, leaps over written spaces in an ephemeral dance.

(Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* xxi)

Reading produces its own meanings in spite of the intentions of writing. Where writing controls its own place and accumulates its knowledge, reading takes from this knowledge what it wants or needs without regard to the totality amassed in front of it.

The conjunction between writing and reading, especially with regard to historical texts, is marked by a degree of uncertainty and insubstantiality. In a description of a recreated nineteenth-century village, Certeau refers to it as a "fascinating presence of absences whose traces [are] everywhere" (*The Practice of Everyday Life* 21). As is the case throughout Certeau's work, there is an emphasis on the production and reception of writing and this extends to the tenuous "half-presences" of historical records: "the writer stands alone to *(re)make a world out of relics*" (Certeau, "Writing vs. Time" 44. Original emphasis.). Writing is

a process that is not delimited by the context in which it occurs but is indicative of a writing-subject whose individuality is traced through her discursive trajectories:

Like tools, proverbs (and other discourses) are *marked* by uses; they offer to analysis the *imprints of acts* or of processes of enunciation; they signify the *operations* whose object they have been, operations which are relative to situations and which can be thought of as the conjectural *modalizations* of statements or of practices; more generally, they thus indicate a social *historicity* in which systems of representations or processes of fabrication no longer appear only as normative frameworks but as *tools manipulated by users*.

(Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* 21. Original emphases.)

This scene recalls the mastery/liberty model posited by Hodge and McHoul inasmuch as both examples deal with an established and unequal power relation between students/texts and institutionalised (and sanctioned) readers/teachers. Certeau is concerned with the re-drafting of this relationship and creating new spaces for reading that have no investment in prevailing discourses of control and accumulated knowledge.

### **Certeau and the Subject.**

Of particular importance to my project is the relationship between Certeau's heterological model and the specific circumstances of the three women at the centre of this study. In particular, how can

Certeau's interpretative framework be used to examine the texts, and by extension the lives, of Margaret Hoby, Eleanor Davies, and Katherine Philips?

I compose the question in this fashion because it brings the identities, or subject positions, of these women into the analytic frame, something that is apparently inimical to the Certalian project. Instructive on this point is Mark Poster's chapter, entitled "Michel de Certeau and the History of Consumerism", from his book, *Cultural History and Postmodernity*. Poster emphasises his interest in "the question of the resisting subject as a theoretical and political issue but also as it relates to the writing of history" (109). This sub-section will elaborate the relationship between Certeau's work on the Subject, with specific reference to Poster's reading of it, and my own analysis in order to outline the theoretical underpinnings of this study.

Central to Poster's examination of Certeau's work on the Subject, particularly with regard to historiographical writing, is the delineation of the Subject as it appears in the dominant discourse of history. Certeau's analysis of historiography reveals the practice of history writing as one which objectifies the past whilst obliterating the present: "the unacknowledged performative of history writing [...] is the inscription of the other as the past, but an other that is thereby known and domesticated" (Poster, "Michel de Certeau" 119). Part of this "domesticating" project is the construction of a historical Subject "centered in rational calculation" (Poster, "Michel de Certeau" 121), the "familiar autonomous individual who is the presumed agent of modern society" (Poster, "Michel de Certeau" 132). Certeau outlines his own opposition to this figure on the first page of *The Practice of Everyday Life* when he argues that his study is to be concerned with "the

ways in which users--commonly assumed to be passive and guided by established rules--operate" (xi). This will involve the articulation of "everyday practices" rather than the "fundamental subject":

The examination of such practices does not imply a return to individuality. The social atomism which over the past three centuries has served as the historical axiom of social analysis posits an elementary unit--the individual--on the basis of which groups are supposed to be formed and to which they are supposed to be always reducible.

*(The Practice of Everyday Life xi)*

For Certeau, the Subject is not constituted as the rational, self-realised agent of history but rather its identity is "fleeting and heteronomous": "each individual is a locus in which an incoherent (and often contradictory) plurality of [...] relational determinations interact" (Poster, "Michel de Certeau" 121; *Practice of Everyday Life xi*). Indeed, Poster points out that Certeau's statement of theoretical intent specifically seeks to avoid trying to define the nature of the Subject at all. Instead, Certeau claims his analysis concerns "modes of operation or schemata of action, and not directly the subjects (or persons) who are their authors or vehicles" (*The Practice of Everyday Life xi*). For Poster, this excision of the individual Subject and the argument's removal to the level of "objective logics, not subjective intentions" ("Michel de Certeau" 121) marks out a specific theoretical and methodological trajectory in Certeau's work:

In this way, de Certeau attempts to avoid the trap of defining a type of practice that constitutes subjects in their identity, that constructs at a metaphysical level

an agent--such as Robinson Crusoe or the Proletariat or the reasonable person of the judicial system--who will provide the historian with a foundation or ground for his/her narrative.

(Poster, "Michel de Certeau" 121)

By focusing on "practices" instead of "individuals", Certeau seeks to "bring to light the models of action characteristic of users whose status as the dominated element in society (a status that does not mean that they are either passive or docile) is concealed by the euphemistic term 'consumers'" (*Practice of Everyday Life* xi-xii). In effect, as Begoña Arantxaga argues, Certeau "is less interested in demonstrating agency in everyday practices than in analyzing them as spaces of social transformation":

these practices may or may not give rise to specific discursive configurations, but they are often accompanied by disruptions and gaps in dominant discourses that open the space for subtle transformations in social and personal meanings.

(19)

Yet the Subject, Certeau's consumer, does not disappear from the field of view. Rather, Certeau concentrates on the way in which Subjects, who are "caught in the nets of 'discipline'" that structure society, "reappropriate the space organized by techniques of sociocultural production" (*The Practice of Everyday Life* xiv-xv). Consumption in this model is the manner in which Subjects react to and use (or avoid) the totalising power structures that order their environments.

Underwriting this theory of consumption are the twin concepts of "strategies" and "tactics" that articulate what Poster describes

as "the moments of the turning or twisting of subject positions by consumers of technologies of power" ("Michel de Certeau" 123). The tactic/strategy idea seeks to emphasise the relative position of the Subject within totalising power structures and how the Subject is able to capitalise on its apparent powerlessness. Certeau claims the "tactic" to be "a calculated action determined by the absence of a proper locus" (*The Practice of Everyday Life* 37), by which he means "a calculus which cannot count on a 'proper' (a spatial or institutional localisation), nor thus on a borderline distinguishing the other as a visible totality" (*The Practice of Everyday Life* xix). The tactic has no place and is always trespassing on that of the other, yet this placelessness is, in Certeau's estimation, its best advantage:

A tactic insinuates itself into the other's place, fragmentarily, without taking it over in its entirety, without being able to keep it at a distance. It has at its disposal no base where it can capitalize on its advantages, prepare its expansions, and secure independence with respect to circumstances [...] because it does not have a place, a tactic depends on time--it is always on the watch for opportunities that must be seized 'on the wing'. Whatever it wins, it does not keep. It must constantly manipulate events in order to turn them into 'opportunities'.

(*Practice of Everyday Life* xix)

The spirit of such tactics is best caught in Certeau's claim that "[the] weak must continually turn to their own ends forces alien to them" (*The Practice of Everyday Life* xix). The tactic stands in opposition to the "strategy".

A strategy assumes a place that can be circumscribed as *proper* (*propre*) and thus serve as the basis for generating relations with an exterior distinct from it (competitors, adversaries, "clientèles", "targets", or "objects" of research). Political, economic, and scientific rationality has been constructed on this strategic model.

(Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* xix. Original emphasis.)

Strategies possess their own place and are able to distinguish it, and hence themselves, from others. The Subject "brings a repertoire of practices into a space that was designed for someone else [...] [and] inscribes a pattern into space that was not accounted for in its design" (Poster, "Michel de Certeau" 124).

### **Limitations, Problems, and What Can Be Done.**

The way in which engagements between individuals and their environments occur is central to my project. The individuals of Certeau's studies and the women considered in my work do not live in a cultural void. These subjects are necessarily affected by the "nets of 'discipline'", whether they be engaging in a tactical re-employment of a strategic discourse or not. As a result, much of what I examine in this study will focus on the apparently "complicit" cultural practices of these women that represent sites of "social transformation": Margaret Hoby is shown to use the master discourse of Protestant piety as a means of establishing a privatised sphere of (meta)physical personal space, Eleanor Davies re-inscribes the authority of Scripture on her individualised prophetic writing, and Katherine Philips utilises the

tropes and gestures of courtesy and epistolary writing in order to gain access to the influence of the Restoration court. In each of these instances, the subject's activity is enhanced rather than obstructed by the prevailing institutions with which they interact. To use my own example as a postgraduate student; the site of the academic institution, for all of the methodological and cultural regulations that constitute its "sequences of knowledge", is still the place in which I am able to produce this work. The institution enables individual practices to flourish as they transform its regulations and taxonomies of knowledge through heterological interaction. The strategy/tactic model elaborates the most fundamental of Certeau's ideas; that no discourse is immutable just because it says it is. Hence, what might appear to be inconsistent practices of complicity with strategic interests are, I argue, sites of production where the subject engages with and often profits from a discourse that does not envisage such appropriative activity but is unable to stop it.

The particularity of the subject is important to Certeau. The construction of a historical subject whose identity is wedded to larger discourses of rationality and stability, who can be relied upon to perceive of herself and her world according to certain immutable principles, treats this subject as a mere reflection of the culture in which she lives. In his historiographical and sociological writings, Certeau is careful to ensure that his analysis is distinguished by an attention to self-reflexiveness and specificity that eschews totalising gestures and definitions: "To capture the 'signifying practices' of consumption adequately, one needs a concept that can follow the nonlinear trajectories of the everyday" (Poster, "Michel de Certeau" 123). For Poster, Certeau's focus on the "small gap between the world arranged by

the hegemonic powers and the practices of individuals" reinforces "the unsutured nature of the social, the impossibility of the full colonization of daily life by the system [...] the ubiquitous eruption of the heterogeneous" ("Michel de Certeau" 125). This particularity, mediated through the concept of tactics, creates a "logic [...] that begins to make everyday practices intelligible from the side of the individual agent" (Poster, "Michel de Certeau" 132), a logic that insists on this particularity throughout any analytic exercise:

the study of the agent's point of view need not assume as attributes of the agent those qualities that need to be investigated as historical constructs, how the desire for consumption, for example, may be understood as a complex tactic of a situated individual, not as a fixed aspect of human identity.

(Poster, "Michel de Certeau" 132)

The refusal to consider subjects as reflections of larger historical discourses also needs to pay attention to the specific details of the historical period under consideration. Poster, whose attention is directed towards the history of consumption, points out that Certeau's analysis of consumption is incomplete.<sup>9</sup>

[It] does not periodize different types of tactics, for example, those of modern society, of early modern society, and perhaps of postmodern society.

Historical categories must have periodized variations

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<sup>9</sup>Indeed the idea that Certeau's life's work was left unfinished is a familiar trope of critics, some of whom see in themselves the possibility of "somehow bringing it to fruition" (Buchanan, "What is Heterology?" 483) where others seek to manifest the traces left behind at his death: see Luce Giard, Introduction to Volume 1: History of a Research Project. *The Practice of Everyday Life Volume 2: Living and Cooking* Ed. Luce Giard. Trans. Timothy J. Tomasik. Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 1998. xiii-xxxiii.

before they can be appropriated for particular investigations.

(Poster, "Michel de Certeau" 132-33).

Poster's concern with the apparent lack of historical specificity in Certeau's model is extended to include the failure of Certeau's model to explain how the concept of tactics can be represented without committing the historiographical errors described above. Poster asks how a history of consumption informed by tactics can avoid "the historian's failing of denying their own conditions of production, presuming the real as referent, and discursively producing the real as an unintended effect of their writing?" ("Michel de Certeau" 133). Similarly, Claire Colebrook argues that Certeau's "theory of practices is an attempt to think the other of theory" but that his "description of the alterity of practices seems to already grant practices a form of meaning which could not place them in an order different from that of writing or history" (135-36). Colebrook argues that "formal continuity and memory" are not possible without some "order or conceptualisation" (136). As such, Certeau's appeal to folk-tales, anecdotes, and myths, forms that represent "an identifiable other" (Colebrook 135) of reason and history, "still grants these practices a meaning; they are still repeatable and recognisable" (Colebrook 136). These forms, then, reflect the features that Certeau would notionally allocate only to strategic practices, "they must have a certain order or identity and cannot be purely singular" (Colebrook 136).

Certeau's emphasis on the "mute 'efficacy' of practices" (Colebrook 136) to signal a disruption in strategic orders of knowledge suggests that there is a positive answer to Colebrook's rhetorical question: "Can we think a pre-representational event of the past?" (136).

The extent to which Certeau's tactics are already complicit with strategic knowledge (writing), and thereby knowable, remains largely unresolved:

The paradox on which de Certeau's theory seems to depend--the representation of a 'silence' which disrupts representation--indicates a theoretical need to think the other of theory. De Certeau locates this otherness in the pre-semantic status of the tactic. But if the tactic is to be theorised or conceptualised it cannot remain purely other. To this extent, any *heterology*--any theory of the other--is already a reinclusion of otherness.

(Colebrook 137. Original emphasis.)

Poster provides no answers and, for myself, this problem remains. The extent to which tactical practices occur within the domain of strategic knowledge is a central element in my project. These women operate in particular and personal ways within larger systems of thought and control, yet I do not argue that they are at any time unrecognisable to those systems.

The question of "complicity" remains an important one both in terms of how these women conduct their lives and how I conduct my interpretation of them. Certeau's call for a form of theoretical self-consciousness with respect to the writing of history is repeated in a determination to address my own speaking position. At this point it is worth recalling Hunter's analysis of criticism as a "key instrument for critical work on the self" (King 6). In his claim that "practices of reading are not things that we fail to know or can even attempt to know [...]"

[rather] these practices (of verification or disconfirmation) determine what we call knowledge" (King 12-13), Hunter argues that "inculcated techniques and compulsory actions" (Hunter, "Literary Discipline" 132) form the basis upon which we, as readers, come to apprehend not just texts but ourselves:

The text is the surface of a pedagogy that reads the student and gets him to read himself in the mirror it provides, and in the process secures the internalisation of the disciplinary setting as a conscience and consciousness.

(Hunter, "Literary Discipline" 133)

In this way, Hunter perceives criticism as an "ethical exercise" (King 22). Indeed, King argues that for Hunter "criticism and literature fall within a single zone of being: ethical practices" (23). Criticism acts in concert with literature to produce a hierarchical dynamic that subordinates the reader to the text. Hunter's elaboration of the systems of criticism indicates a moment of meta-criticism on his part, King labels it a "description of the rules of the game" (23), and offers an opportunity to consider the extent to which my relationship to my objects of study is determined in this project. While Hunter's analysis is primarily focused on "aesthetic criticism" (King 23), my project is centred on cultural materials which, though no less calculated than most literary texts, are not "literary" in terms of their form or composition.

Nevertheless, Hunter's assertion that interpretation is founded on the convergence of self-doubt and the text's inevitable opacity, leading to "criticism as a practice of ethical self-problematisation" (King 9), has strong resonances with my project. Regardless of the (non) literary nature of the texts in question, my study

concerns the production of meaning, a production that is, in part, connected to the institutional function of interpretation. This function requires the production of new meanings in order to situate the interpreter within systems of established knowledge and prestige:

novelty demands topoi of improvement, revisions, breaks and subversion: a display of *indignatio* aimed at previous critics; the savouring of that evanescent moment (perhaps only twenty minutes on a conference panel) when the critic's interpretation incarnates innovation, trumping its predecessors simply by being the most recent.

(Bordwell 246)<sup>10</sup>

But as I have argued already, an awareness of a particular critical, or in this case institutional, position does not prevent me pursuing an interpretation. Hunter's work marks the institutional and ethical dimensions of my project; its genealogy of critical practices permits an altered, broader perspective on my interpretative task but does not prevent it. In the same way that I argue for the productivity of the

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<sup>10</sup>Bob Hodge outlines a similar problem with respect to the postgraduate student's location within the university. Just as Bordwell emphasises the importance of novelty to the academic's performance of self, so Hodge describes the centrality of "originality" to the postgraduate (who is, presumably, an aspiring member of the academic profession):

Oppressively central to this idea of the doctorate is some notion of 'originality', seen as an obligation to change the whole field of knowledge in some unidentified way, which is always at risk of being overtaken by some other work, perhaps as yet unpublished, or even worse, known to everyone else other than the candidate, a fact which will be pointed out by a cold, supercilious and omniscient examiner as the reason why all the candidate had thought and written over the previous three or four or probably more years has suddenly been rendered without value.

(35-36)

relationship between the women at the centre of this project and the prevailing cultural discourses of early modern England, so too does my location within a system of critical and institutional practices allow me the opportunity to conduct this research. Indeed, the institutional and methodological awareness that Hunter and Certeau bring to this project allow me to evaluate its success. The use of Certeau's work in my thesis is not without risk and I evaluate the efficacy of my analysis throughout. It is also possible that my interpretation will produce elements of the "reality effect" or the narrativisation of subjects against which Certeau argues. That such relative indeterminacy is present throughout this work is not, I would argue, a sign of methodological or intellectual timidity but a register of the self-reflexivity bearing upon it. It is a practice that seeks to respect the many voices in the text.

Poster's analysis of Certeau's interpretative models is deployed in order to trace the historical construction of consumption as a practice. Consumption is a primary term in Certeau's own work, particularly *The Practice of Everyday Life*. My work does not focus on consumption as Poster defines it, but does take an interest in examining the practices of three women against the broad cultural and social power structures within which they live. Poster claims the great advantage of Certeau's theorisation of everyday practices is that it re-orders the field of analysis:

It provides a starting point for a type of cultural studies that is not predisposed to dismiss the billions of everyday practices in late-twentieth-century daily life but instead willing to discover in this heart of the beast a type of signification that might serve as a path through the thicket of modernity toward some future

space-time conjecture that might call itself postmodern. For historians, de Certeau's position promises to open a field of study that allies itself with other heterogeneous temporalities, those of women, ethnic and racial minorities, children, gays, and lesbians.

("Michel de Certeau" 125-26)

For my purposes, it is not the history of consumption or consumerism that is at issue but other cultural practices specific to these women's lives. Taking up Poster's call for an appropriate periodisation of Certeau's categories, this study reads Margaret Hoby, Eleanor Davies, and Katherine Philips in relation to cultural practices of religion, writing and politics (specifically the court politics of courtesy and favour). All of these discourses play prominent, if not dominant, roles in the cultures these women inhabit.<sup>11</sup> This attention to the situatedness of the subject heeds Poster's assertion that Certeau's tactics "shows how the study of the agent's point of view need not assume as attributes of the agent those qualities that need to be investigated as historical constructs" ("Michel de Certeau" 132). So in relation to the discourses framing this study, religion, writing, and politics "may be understood as [...] complex tactic[s] of a situated individual, not as a fixed aspect of human identity" ("Michel de Certeau" 132).

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<sup>11</sup>Further to this, it is worth noting that across the chronological span of this study the specific cultural structure of English society changes to the extent that the political and religious, not to mention geographical and demographic, world inhabited by Margaret Hoby in 1599 is not identical to that occupied by Eleanor Davies in the 1630s and 40s, or that of Katherine Philips in the formative years of the Restoration. As Christopher Hill notes, in a statement no doubt redolent of the totalising impulse of which Certeau is so sceptical, "[t]he transformation that took place in the seventeenth century [...] is far more than merely a constitutional or political revolution, or a revolution in economics, religion, or taste. It embraces the whole of life" (*A Century of Revolution* 4).

There are certain difficulties that remain with this approach. Poster asserts that tactical practices have an ambivalent political and cultural status. Arguing that Certeau "does not theorize the relation between tactics [...] to the politics of marginal groups", Poster asks how tactics might be differently structured among "dominant versus subordinate positions" ("Michel de Certeau" 133). Certeau, it is suggested, considers "all consumer tactics those of the margin", yet Poster remains unconvinced, arguing further work needs to be conducted in order to "clarify [...] the relation of marginality in consumption and in movements among marginal groups that have explicit protest characteristics" ("Michel de Certeau" 133). For the purposes of this thesis, the issue of marginality is a complex one. For whilst the position of women as a group within early modern society is notionally subordinate, the specific circumstances of individual women, and particularly the three under consideration here, makes this blanket assumption more equivocal. This is particularly so when the concepts of "marginality" and "protest", as introduced by Poster, are considered. Although a detailed analysis of each woman's cultural position forms part of each chapter, it is worth noting at the beginning that the contemporary concept of "protest", that is, a deliberate resistance to existing power formations, is absent from the texts of all three women. Even Eleanor Davies, whose texts rail violently against the personages of the king and senior clergy, does not ultimately seek to undermine established socio-economic and religious structures or question their value. Indeed, it is arguable that her texts act in manifest support of a purist adherence to the principles of these institutions. Similarly, Margaret Hoby and Katherine Philips, separated by over fifty years and markedly different perspectives on the world, do not seek to "protest" or

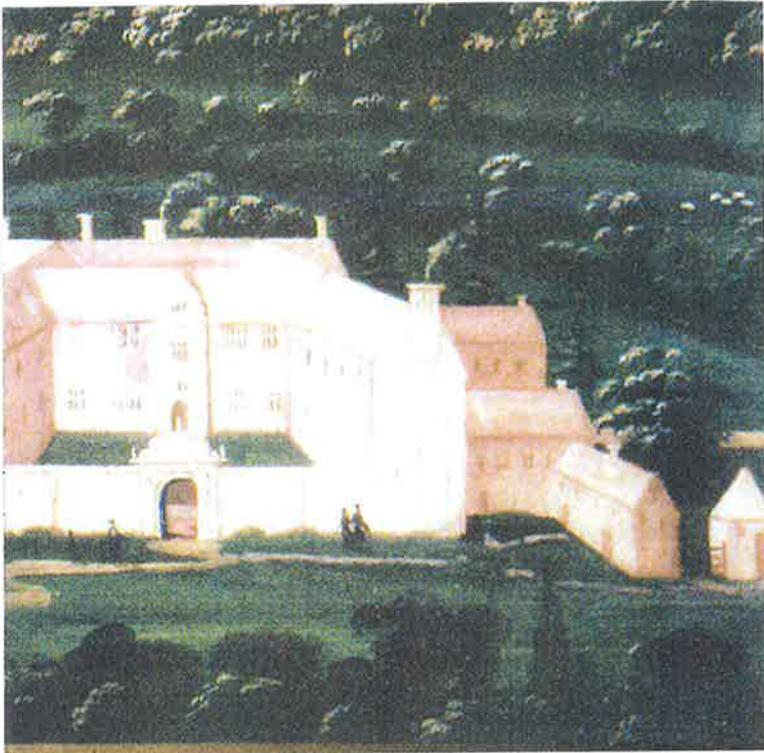
militate against the discourses of religion or courtly influence within which they operate. On the contrary, their complex engagement with these discourses produces a series of cultural spaces--in texts, buildings, and individual perceptions--which are both complicit and appropriative.

The fact remains that for all the mitigation of individualism advocated in an approach based on Certeau, this thesis is focused on three individual women. To this extent a certain *prima facie* inconsistency remains between my stated theoretical model and the methodology employed to use it. Yet I maintain that Certeau's models, although they seek to eradicate the contaminant of self-identical, agentic subjects from the considerations of historiography, have much to offer an analysis of these women. The narrativisation or recreation of their lives and any identities that may have been central to them is not the object. Instead, rather than focusing on these women as receptacles of dominant discourses of religion and politics, my thesis examines the ways in which spaces occur within these discourses as a result of their engagement with them. This engagement is neither wholly complicit nor entirely resistant, and the spaces formed wax and wane as circumstances warrant. These women reflect the Certalian idea of a cultural logic in which subjects participate everyday: "cultural logic is like a menu from which subjects choose already worked out actions according to each individual's perceived needs. Insofar as these actions are adopted and personalized, they form a repertoire" (Buchanan "Introduction" 100). To the extent that these women engage in "tactics" or adhere to the "strategic" objectives of cultural discourses, which are issues more fully discussed in each chapter, I argue that a distinct conclusion is not available, nor appropriate. The complexities of these

lives, and their relationships to the worlds framing them, produce subjects who are constantly creating space for themselves through the practice of writing whilst still seeking sustenance from the prevailing and defining discourses of their society.

## Section One

### "I thought to writt my daies Iournee": Lady Margaret Hoby and the Spaces of the Early Modern Household



However paradoxical this may seem, it is often this *inner immensity* that gives their real meaning to certain expressions concerning the visible world.  
- Gaston Bachelard, *The Poetics of Space* 185.

In the sixteenth century, when they (journals) were beginning to be written, without repugnance they were called a *diary: diarrhea* ...  
- Roland Barthes, *Roland Barthes* 95.

## **The Diarist.**

Margaret Hoby's diary, kept between 1599 and 1605, is the record of a religiously devout North Yorkshire gentlewoman's life on her estate at Hackness. The diary is sparse and limited in its description of events and essentially remains an account book of Hoby's daily routines of prayer and household duties. Over the course of the six years recorded in the text Hoby's entries gradually decline in frequency from daily in the first two years to monthly, and eventually less regularly than even this. Across the course of the diary the form of events recorded also change from a regular list of her chores and prayers to the noting of various national and local events of interest. The years covered by the diary are marked by several prominent national events of which Hoby speaks--such as the trial of the earl of Essex, the death of Elizabeth, and the accession of James I--and, by contrast, a relative stability in her personal life.

Born in 1571 to wealthy Yorkshire landowner Arthur Dakins and his wife Thomasin, Margaret was educated in the household of the earl and countess of Huntingdon. During the course of her education, which was marked by an emphasis on the domestic duties of a landed gentlewoman and an earnest (Puritan) piety, Margaret moved in influential court circles. In this company Margaret met the men who would become, by arrangement, her first two husbands. In 1589 Margaret was married to Walter Devereaux, younger brother to the royal favourite, Robert, earl of Essex. When Devereaux was killed during military action in France with his brother in 1591 a second marriage was hastily arranged. This second match was with Thomas Sidney, nephew to the Huntingdons and younger brother to Philip and Elizabeth. Unfortunately for Margaret, for whom this marriage appears

to have been desirable and happy, Thomas died in 1595. After being widowed twice before the age of twenty-five, Margaret, following protracted negotiations and exchanges of letters between her family and advisers, married persistent suitor Thomas Posthumous Hoby in 1596, a union that lasted until her death in 1633.

The diary, in Joanna Moody's words, does not "waste time detailing the anxieties and concerns that troubled her; events are simply recorded" (xv), which is to say that the text concentrates for the most part on her daily prayer and domestic routines without elaborating the substance of her activities or conversations.<sup>12</sup> Yet for all of its descriptive frugality and unadorned style, the diary does, through repetition and demonstrative emphases, "find suggestive hints of certain preoccupations" (Moody xv). Moody goes so far as to suggest that this "repetitive effect" draws the reader "in to her mind and world", forming a "dramatic narrative" in which domestic detail and personal concern "succeeds in taking us on an imaginative journey into the heart and soul of an industrious Yorkshire lady" (xv). Imagination is important to my analysis of Hoby's diary, but an imagining that seeks to situate the diary and its reading in a specific historical and interpretative context.

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<sup>12</sup>As regards the format of the diary, Suzanne Trill et al, in their brief introduction to selected extracts from the diary, make reference to its "two striking characteristics", namely the large gaps left in the margins of the manuscript and Hoby's "total lack of punctuation" (69). The 1930 edition of the diary, with Dorothy Meads as editor, modernised the punctuation and this system is retained in Joanna Moody's 1998 edition. Trill et al argue that whilst this modernisation "could be said to help the modern reader it also distorts the character of Hoby's text" (69). The extracts Trill et al produce are not punctuated and the effect is somewhat less structured than that reproduced by Meads and Moody. Nevertheless, I have retained the modernised punctuation in all citations from the text. This punctuation, however, is still far from uniform and entries tend to end with either a period, colon, backslash, or, in a significant number of entries, no mark at all. See Suzanne Trill, Kate Chedgzoy, and Melanie Osborne, *Lay By Your Needles Ladies, Take the Pen, 1500-1700*. London: Arnold, 1997. 68-69.

This section will examine the relationship between Hoby and her environment--spatial, material, and cultural--with regard to Michel de Certeau's work on the distinction between "place" and "space". Specifically, I will outline the construction of the household as a space for women in early modern culture and demonstrate the process by which they obtained de facto control of these spaces whilst being denied recognition for their work by the culture at large. The work of women, and Hoby in particular, is read through Certeau's concepts of place and space and the allied ideas of the tactics and strategy. Focusing on Hoby's material effect on her environment, I argue for a reading of the diary that recognises her everyday practices as personally effective utilisations of an otherwise restrictive cultural location. This reading is conducted through an examination of the concepts of "space" elaborated by Certeau in *The Practice of Everyday Life*, as well as supplementary re-readings of his ideas by Ian Buchanan, Brian Reynolds and Joseph Fitzpatrick. The focus on individual practices is then broadened to examine Hoby's Puritanism as a source of individuated identity within early modern English culture. Puritan piety's focus on an individual relationship with God is further pursued by an analysis of the diary as an emergent form of writing in the period. Hoby's capacity to imagine herself as a distinct subject is used to read the diary's descriptions of her movements and activities within and outside the house. I argue that Hoby's engagement with discourses of piety and self-examination central to Puritanism allows her to create personal spaces separable from her other, more public, responsibilities as mistress of the estate. Focusing on the closet and chamber inside the house, and the garden and fields of the wider estate, I argue that Hoby is able to create small, transient spaces for herself within a cultural and material complex that

notionally seeks her subjection to its norms. The relationship between Hoby and her surrounds need not be characterised as oppositional in this study. Rather, it is only through an active acceptance of the primary discourses of early modern English society that Hoby can then appropriate their legitimating authority to produce spaces of her own.

### **"I went about the house": Imagining Margaret Hoby.**

There is a painting of the manor house at Hackness, the one pulled down in 1798 because it obstructed the view from the new Hall, which probably dates from the mid-seventeenth century. It shows a stone, two-storey house with inner and outer courtyards and attached buildings (Winterbotham 12, 15). Descriptions of the house from the mid-sixteenth century attest to the features of the structure:

Hackness lyeth most pleasantly and near unto Scarborough enthroned on all sides with fair woods, hills and dales, pleasant springs, backs, and an abundance of grass, corne, pasture, whereto belongs an old mancion place or manor house in motly reparation and hath Hall, parlour, great chamber, chapel, bedchaulmer and many other lodgings, two kitchins, a butteria, pantry, Brewhouse, barn, Bakehouse, Stables and Gildhouse with all other houses necessarie whereto belongeth a little Garden and Orchard.

(North Yorkshire County Records Office. ZF 4/3/1 circa. 1565)

On Friday the 20th of June 1600, Margaret Hoby, Puritan, country gentlewoman and mistress of the estate of Hackness, recorded in her diary:

After I was readie I praied, then I wrett to Megy Rhodes : after, I went a whill about and so went to dinner : after dinner I talked with som strangers that came to Mr Hoby, wrought, reed a sarmon, and, when I had taken order for thing in the house, I went to priuat examination & praier : then to supper, after to the lecture, and so to bed

(Moody 93)

Both these texts describe the same irrecoverable locale with the same functional economy of language. One describes physical structure and place, the other movement and habitation. They are templates for imagining subjects and spaces and ways of seeing them.

Imagining is the undercurrent that drives a reading of Hoby's text. In her vivid description of the Hackness estate of the late sixteenth century, Moody extrapolates from the diary's frugal renderings to fill in the spaces of the original:

The central hall was a single large apartment for general use by everyone resident in the house, and the dwelling and reception rooms were on the upper floors, their mullioned windows fully glazed. The great chamber or gallery over the hall would have had a wide staircase leading up. Bearing in mind her wealth and status, Lady Hoby may well have had her staircase decorated with the rich carvings characteristic of Elizabethan woodwork [.]

(Moody xxxiv)

Spaces are described and traversed, the diary's hints followed and enlarged in the historian's work. Imagined rooms, people, and voices reverberate in the text and our reading of it.

If this section has an ethics of imagining it probably begins with Gaston Bachelard's remark that "inhabited space transcends geometrical space" (Bachelard 47). There is a relationship between the house, signifying a certain hierarchy of values, and the subject who inhabits that place which acts out a cultural debate between social power and the rhythms of the everyday. This section is primarily about outlining the production of space within a structured and potentially oppressive environment. It is about the habitation, movement, and stillness of the subject who is able to write, to work, to speak, and to pray as Margaret Hoby:

Come what may the house helps us to say: I will be an inhabitant of the world, in spite of the world. The problem is not only one of being, it is also a problem of energy and, consequently, of counter-energy. In this dynamic rivalry between house and universe, we are far removed from any reference to simple geometrical forms. A house that has been experienced is not an inert box.

(Bachelard 46-47)

What I want to suggest is that the house and its occupant(s) react with each other. In the course of lives being produced, the spaces and places of the subject are articulated, or produce themselves, along individual, eccentric directions. The structure of the house, its spaces, can be read through the skeletal framework of the written text. Grids of power (architectural, cultural, economic, gendered) structure the house and

order the behaviour of its spatial subjects. Importantly, these subjects reorder, in various--often unspectacular--ways, the operation of this "power grid" through the very process of their spatial production. This process doesn't necessarily require a self-conscious act, or acts, but effectively occurs because the spatial and the personal, the everyday, react in different ways within the parameters of an individual (culturally-sensitive, religiously observant) life.

The production of spaces within the house can be further elaborated through Brian Reynolds's concept of "subjective territory". Beginning with the precept that "[i]dentity is relational and always formed by sociopolitical mechanisms" (Reynolds 145), Reynolds argues that the "state machinery" of early modern England "was an assembly of sociopolitical 'conductors': mental and physical movers, orchestrators, and transmitters. These included the educational, juridical, and religious structures, as well as the institutions of marriage and family" (145). This sociopolitical scaffold supported the range of activities and behavioural protocols underwriting "the state" and sought to inculcate a prescribed sense of cultural location within the individual subject:

despite all inconsistencies or fissures in the 'conduction' (the dissemination and management) of state order, the state machinery needed to maintain its colonization of the 'conceptual territory' (the range of personal experience) of the populace so that notions of identity would cease to be arbitrary and transitory, and acquire temporal constancy and spatial range for the subsistence of a healthy individual and, by extension, a cohesive

social body. It needed to imbue the subject population, however socioeconomically heterogeneous in actuality, with a state-serving subjectivity, indeed an ideology, that would give this social body the righteous feeling of homogeneity and universality.

(Reynolds 146)

Reynolds labels this "state-serving subjectivity" as "subjective territory", by which he means the "conceptual and emotional boundaries that are normally defined by the prevailing science, morality, and ideology [...] In short, [it] is the existential and experiential realm in and from which a given subject of a given hierarchical society perceives and relates to the universe and his or her place in it" (146-47). This section will demonstrate Hoby's location within prevailing sociopolitical discourses, particularly religion and marriage, and how these form the basis of her own sense of self. Yet tracing the contours of Hoby's socio-cultural identity forms only part of the object of my examination. Following Reynolds's analysis of "subjective territory", which he asserts "schematizes personal conceptualization in spatial terms" (146), this section discerns Hoby's production of self through the production of "space". Pursuing his own concept into the spatial realm, Reynolds and Joseph Fitzpatrick argue that subjective territory "is in effect realized physically (geographically) as well as conceptually and emotionally; physical constraints influence the conceptual and emotional aspects of subjectivity just as they are symptoms and extensions of these aspects" (Reynolds and Fitzpatrick 72). This section proceeds from an analogous premise that space can be transformed "into an instrument that can be used to discipline, to program, and to keep under observation any social

group" (Certeau, "Micro-techniques and Panoptic Discourse" 186).<sup>13</sup> Whilst this section does not seek to assert that the early modern house or its surrounds were deliberate, or at least systematically self-conscious sites of cultural coercion, it does seek to underline the material and conceptual influence of physical place on the subject's production of lived spaces. These spaces are the ultimate focus of my examination, and in tracing them through the flat prose of the diary I pursue the ideas of Certeau and Reynolds to elucidate the obscured practices of the subject within a prescribed socio-cultural matrix. In effect, Hoby's diary offers a reading, or more appropriately, an imagining, of lived spaces; a space produced by the conjunction of movement, time, and text.

### **The Space of the House.**

The early modern household articulated the cultural location of women and their function in that society. Conduct books, such as Robert Cleaver's *A godlie forme of householde government* (1600), actively asserted this functional and symbolic relation between women and the house. Cleaver's particular argument actually posits a spatial dimension to the formation of a woman's identity as a "housewife": "not a street-wife, one that gaddeth up and down, like *Thamar*: nor a field-wife, like *Dinah*, but a house-wife: to shew that a good wife keeps her house" (Cleaver 223 qtd. in Camden 61-62). The connection between women and the house was a strong and important one in early modern culture, and it is not useful to suggest that Hoby's diary resists this; her entry on 11 July 1600 explicitly states "I despached (sic) a litle

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<sup>13</sup>This premise is derived from Certeau's analysis of Foucault's *Discipline and Punish* in "Micro-techniques and Panoptic Discourse: A Quid Pro Quo.": See Michel de Certeau, *Heterologies: Discourse on the Other*. Trans. Brian Massumi. Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 1986. 185-92.

Huswiffrie" (Moody 97). Indeed it is fair to assert that Hoby's life, both in terms of her education and the manner in which she appears to have managed her household, accords with what Mendelson and Crawford label "the archetype of the good woman in post-Reformation Protestant England": "she kept at home, her hands were never idle, she 'never goeth forth but her house was on her back'" (67). The extent to which this connection with the home manifests itself is exemplified in Ludovicus Vives's *Instructiō of a Christen womā* (1529) and Richard Mulcaster's *Positions* (1581), both of which stipulate, as Camden paraphrases;

even the young lady of gentle birth must be trained for the preparation of food. She must be able to prescribe for her family and her servants when they are sick. And in general she must rule the household and the maids, though not the men-servants. Obviously she will have little time for visiting or for outside amusements. She is to leave home so rarely that on these occasions it should seem to her that she is going on a pilgrimage.

(62)

As will be seen in the course of this section, whilst Hoby's life diverges from this prescription in some respects (often markedly), even those aspects that mirror Vives's injunctions are more complex in practice than the bland fulfilment of a cultural expectation. Mark Wigley argues that the connection between women and domestic architecture, cultural and physical, is a central feature of the construction of gendered identity in the Renaissance. Proceeding from Leon Battista Alberti's fifteenth-

century text, *On the Art of Building in Ten Books*, Wigley outlines Alberti's account of the relationship between gender and space:

[Alberti's] fifth book, when discussing the design of 'private' houses, contains an overt reference to architecture's complicity in the exercise of patriarchal authority by defining a particular intersection between a spatial order and a system of surveillance which turns on the question of gender. Women are to be confined deep within a sequence of spaces at the greatest distance from the outside world while men are to be exposed to that outside. The house is literally understood as a mechanism for the domestication of (delicately minded and pathologically embodied) women.

(Wigley 332)<sup>14</sup>

The prevailing discourses of gendered physiology, women as timid and static and men as extroverted and mobile, underwrite Alberti's conception of the house as a socially instrumental device. The house acts to confine women to the environments in which their gender is secured, that is, confined and withdrawn spaces within the (by definition, patriarchal) structure of the house:

As the mechanism of, rather than simply the scene for, this control, the house is involved in the production of the gender division it appears to

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<sup>14</sup> Wigley's references to Alberti are mainly taken from, Leon Battista Alberti. *On the Art of Building in Ten Books*. Trans. Joseph Rykwert, Neil Leach, and Robert Tavernor. Cambridge, Ma.: MIT Press, 1988. For other references to Alberti's work, see footnotes in Mark Wigley, "Untitled: The Housing of Gender." *Sexuality and Space*. Ed. Beatriz Colomina. Princeton Papers on Architecture. New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1992. passim.

merely secure. In these terms, the role of architecture is explicitly the control of sexuality, or, more precisely, women's sexuality, the chastity of the girl, the fidelity of the wife.

(Wigley 336)

This correlation between women and the domestic extends to the grounds of the house. In her analysis of Andrew Marvell's use of nature as a cultural analogy in his poetry, Cristina Malcolmson argues that enclosure is an effective poetic device because it encapsulates the "potential profit to be gained from acknowledging human civilization as a matter of craft rather than part of some 'natural' order" (252). Enclosure is further used to represent the (patriarchal, class-based) control and cultivation of women.

The bodies of women become analogous to and emblematic of the property whose ownership and government were in dispute in England during this period. The imagery of the enclosed garden of England and the enclosed garden of the chaste but generative wife blend in new ways as the literature of the Civil War contests over the nature of a proper 'husbandman' for the country.

(Malcomson 252)

Although referring to a period some decades after the events in Hoby's diary, Malcolmson's article illustrates the extent to which women were culturally located in, constrained by, and represented through the domestic settings of house and garden.<sup>15</sup> Texts such as Cleaver's and

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<sup>15</sup>A more comprehensive discussion of Hoby's domestic routines, wider cultural debates

Alberti's form part of the paradox of early modern patriarchy, which simultaneously emphasised the importance of women to the domestic economy and yet effaced them from any cultural enfranchisement in this sphere.

Felicity Heal has argued that English women's responsibility for the domestic sphere, commented on at the time as amongst the most far-reaching in Western Europe, represented an advantage in the sense that some were able to mobilise this responsibility to act as "their sphere of social action" (Heal 179). With her husband often recorded as absent from the estate, Hoby's responsibility was to manage the household and surrounding lands and the workers thereon. This was not an unusual state of affairs during the period:

Wives were responsible for estate management, while men were away attending to legal business or at court or Parliament. They usually arranged for the collection of rents, supervised the accounts, and oversaw the activities of stewards, all with some confidence.

(Mendelson and Crawford 310)

Yet where J. T. Cliffe finds the involvement of women in these administrative roles as one of the "particularly striking" (72) details of early modern gentlewomen's lives, the entry of 29 August 1599, the first month recorded in the diary, demonstrates clearly Hoby's almost banal recognition of her role as head of the house: "after dinner, I continewed my ordenarie Course of working, reading, and dispossinge of busenes in the House" (Moody 12). The diary makes repeated reference to the daily

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over land enclosure and women's appropriate relationship with their environment is conducted later in the section.

and seasonal chores necessary for the running of the estate. Included in this regime is the treatment of sick tenants, a task falling to gentlewomen because of the perception regarding women's general "nursing expertise" (Mendelson and Crawford 210), which were performed or delegated by Hoby herself.<sup>16</sup> For example:

[Tuesday, 19 February 1600] After privat praier I brak my fast, then dressed my patientes : after, wrett in my sarmon book, and, after I had praied, went to dinner : after, I talked with a neighbour, then wrought a whill and hard Mr Rhodes read : after, I went about the house & oversaw some besenes, dressed my patients, and then went to the lector, after to supper : wret a Letter to my mother : after walked a while, and then went to privat medetation and praier, and so to bed :

(Moody 62)

In the Introduction to her edition of the diary, Joanna Moody outlines a broader list of the activities Hoby observes in the course of the six years recorded:

Apart from reading and writing letters in her private chamber and office, she visited the granary, she worked in the kitchens, she gardened [...] She cooked

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<sup>16</sup>A.W. Sloan notes Hoby's role as lay physician to herself and her tenants, including the entry recording her attempt to operate on an infant with an "imperforate anus": A.W. Sloan, *English Medicine in the Seventeenth Century*. Durham: Durham Academic Press, 1996. 132-33. See also the entry for 26 August 1601 in Moody:

this day, in the afternone, I had had a childbrought to se that was borne at Silpho, one Taillour sonne, who had no fundement, and had no passage for excrementes but att the Mouth : I was earnestly intreated to Cutt the place to se if any passhage Could be made, but, althought I Cutt deepe and seached, there was none to be found.

(161)

gingerbreads and sweetmeats, distilled aqua vitae, preserved damsons and quinces, weighed and spun wool, pulled hemp, mad wax and oil lights, saw to her bees and honey, and checked her linen. Much of her time was spent sewing and embroidering.

(Moody xxxiv)

Her domestic prominence is further illustrated in the entry of 13 May 1600 when Hoby records, "after I had talked a good time with Mr Hoby of Husbandrie and Houshold matters" (Moody 82). The implication here is of a consultative relationship rather than one rooted in the coercive exercise of male authority; the extent to which this de facto power distribution prevailed over the de jure pronouncements of contemporary cultural conventions is at the centre of this section's concerns. For while the domestic economy depended on the pragmatism of women and their managerial skills, the home *was* emblematic of male authority. In his 1624 treatise, *The Elements of Architecture*, Sir Henry Wotton reasserts the apparently manifest connection between the physical, geometric spaces of the house and the formation of--in this case, male--subjectivity in early modern England:

Every mans proper Mansion House and Home, being the Theatre of his Hospitality, the Seat of Self-fruition, the Comfortablest part of his own Life, the noblest of his Sons Inheritance, a kind of private Princedome; Nay, to the Possessors thereof, an Epitomie of the whole World [.]

(Wotton 49)

The effect of this move is to efface the necessary and important presence of women within the early modern economy by denying them a place of

authority within the home indicative of their importance to its success as an economic, social, and cultural site. Wotton's pronouncement underlines the tenuous nature of women's autonomy in early modern England: "no matter how earnestly they argued for companionate models of matrimony, women were aware of an inherent contradiction between the ideal of wedded comradeship and the compulsory nature of wifely subjection" (Mendelson and Crawford 135). The delegation of authority throughout the house proceeds along preordained hierarchical lines. The opening paragraph of Gervase Markham's *The English Housewife* (1615) is a brief encapsulation of this hierarchy and the place of the wife in it. Beginning with his affirmation of the place of the "husbandman" as "the father and master of the family [...] whose office and employments are ever for the most part abroad", Markham asserts;

it is now meet that we descend in as orderly a method as we can to the office of our English housewife, who is the mother and mistress of the family, and hath her most general employments within the house; where from the general example of her virtues, and the most approved skill of her knowledges, those of her family may both learn to serve God, and sustain man in that godly and profitable sort which is required of every true Christian.

(Markham 5)

Women's work is acknowledged here, as elsewhere, but always within the overarching, and disempowering, structure of male possession and authority. Edmund Tilney's *A brief and pleasant discourse of duties in*

*Mariage, called the Flower of Friendshippe* (1568), puts this relationship another way:

The office of the husbände is to bring in necessaries, of the wife, to keep them. The office of the husbände is, to go abroad in matter of profite, of the wife, to tarrye at home, and see all be well there.

(Tilney qtd. in Camden 61)

The separation of spheres in the rhetoric of early modern domestic discourse, whilst ceding "control" of the domestic to women, in effect writes women's identity within a prescriptive masculinist worldview: "The house [...] assumes the role of the man's self-control. The virtuous woman becomes woman-plus-house, or, rather, woman-as-housed, such that her virtue cannot be separated from the physical space" (Wigley 337).<sup>17</sup> This geographical identification of women with "their" space recalls the contemporary cultural association between Elizabeth I, the most prominent woman in England, and her realm; an association reinforced through a confluence of cartography and royal portraiture. The portrayal of Elizabeth as attached to, or even constituting, the geography of England was a feature of several images produced during the course of her reign. Of these, the portrait by Marcus Gheeraerts the Younger, the Ditchley portrait, "shows Elizabeth standing on the map of England; in this iconography, Elizabeth the monarch becomes England the country, or island" (Sanford 64). The vulnerability of England to attack is figured through such images in terms of the vulnerability of the female body, an analogy with particular

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<sup>17</sup>Further elaboration of the cultural expectations of housewives in the period is found in Suzanne Hull's sourcebook, *Women According to Men: The World of Tudor-Stuart Women*. Walnut Creek: AltaMira, 1996. Especially the chapter, "Rules for Wives", 29-52.

resonance for the Virgin Queen. Even in domestic iconography, as Sanford observes, "the emblem of the ideal woman in the Renaissance is the *hortus conclusus*, the enclosed garden" (65). The association of women with the household, that is, as its functional administrators but not its possessors, becomes a figurative reflection of the tenuous (conceptual) relationship with power experienced by women throughout the culture, from the queen down. As a result, power needs to be obtained and exercised through alternative circuits of cultural energy if the primary assumption of early modern culture, patriarchy, is not to be overtly challenged. On the face of it then, women are at once empowered and disenfranchised by the domestic sphere with which they are so readily identified.

This effect is described by Elizabeth Grosz with reference to Derrida's re-examination of the Platonic concept of *chora* and Luce Irigaray's application of this to women's traditional relationship with the domestic space of the house.<sup>18</sup> Grosz argues, working from Irigaray, that women's "containment or mortification [...] of their own notions of spatiality (and temporality)" by men leads to women being placed as "guardians" of men's bodies and spaces:

[women become] the conditions of both bodies and space without body or space of their own: they become the living representatives of corporeality, or domesticity, of the natural order that men have had to expel from their own representations in order to

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<sup>18</sup> Grosz specifically cites two texts by Irigaray in her discussion: *Elemental Passions*. Trans. Joanne Collie and Judith Still. New York: Routledge, 1992., and *An Ethics of Sexual Difference*. Trans. Carolyn Burke and Gillian C. Gill. Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1993. Her discussion of Derrida's work is more broadly treated, concentrating on his work on Plato: See the chapter "Women, *Chora*, Dwelling" in Elizabeth Grosz, *Space, Time and Perversion: The Politics of Bodies*. St. Leonards: Allen & Unwin, 1995. 111-24.

construct themselves as above-the-mundane, beyond the merely material.

(Grosz 122)

Women, in Grosz's argument, are chora in that they are a "precondition of the masculine" (Grosz 122), fulfilling the Platonic idea of chora as "the space in which place is made possible, the chasm for the passage of spaceless Forms into a spatialized reality, a dimensionless tunnel opening itself to spatialization, obliterating itself to make others possible and actual" (Grosz 116). The rhetoric of early modern domestic manuals, as the official ideology of gender in the culture, in conjunction with post-Reformation theology supports this view, if implicitly, in its double-movement to restrict women to the domestic sphere. Indeed, the culture relies on women to address the pragmatic and functional needs of the household, whilst still maintaining that men ruled the domestic scene as rulers of their own, miniature kingdoms. Grosz's reading of the effect of this erasure penetrates to the core of women's displacement--social, economic, architectural, emotional--from their culture's line of vision:

The containment of women within a dwelling that they did not build, nor was even built *for* them, can only amount to a homelessness within the very home itself: it becomes the space of duty, of endless and infinitely repeatable chores that have no social value or recognition, the space of the affirmation and replenishment of others at the expense and erasure of the self, the space of domestic violence and abuse, the space that harms as much as it isolates women.

(Grosz 122. Original emphasis.)

In the instance of Margaret Hoby, aspects of Grosz's statement can be said to be literally true; her diary stands as stark testimony to the often laborious routine of chores required to maintain the household and there is even a "legend [...] of how [Lady Hoby's] end was hastened by [Sir Thomas Hoby's] kicking her downstairs whence the stains made by her blood could never be erased" (Meads 45). To return to Wigley's analysis of Alberti's "law of the household" in his tract *Della Famiglia*, the role of women as the "keepers" of the (male) house is based on the inculcation of the cultural priorities of the house on its occupant and guardian:

The wife assumes [the] burden of internal surveillance as the 'overseeing eye' monitoring the house, which is no more than a nested system of enclosed spaces, each with a lock, from its one locked front door down to the small locked chests at the foot of the beds, which contain the most valued possessions. As the 'guardian of the laws' responsible for this elaborate system, she literally holds all the keys, guarding the house in the same way that her husband guards her [...] The wife learns her 'natural' place by learning the place of things. She is 'domesticated' by internalizing the very spatial order that confines her.

(Wigley 340)

Yet for Hoby there is, in the dogged repetition of domestic detail, a sense in which the subject at the centre of this cultural indoctrination impacts on the environment to which she is apparently subservient. Mendelson and Crawford argue precisely this point:

Given that women ideally belonged to the household, and men claimed public space as their own, both elite and popular cultures recognized that women as women had concerns of their own. If the household was the proper place for women, then the household could sometimes become a female space.

(204)

The text is her trace, the forensic evidence of her existence that records the creation of these women's spaces. Where the dogma of early modern conduct manuals and exhortations can be interpreted too strictly as the proof of female compliance with patriarchal demands, so too perhaps can Grosz's polemic and Wigley's analysis suggest the total erasure of women's lives as a result of such practices. What I want to suggest is that Grosz's words, in relation to the early modern period and Hoby as our particular instance, provide the very material to enable a different reading of this text and its implications. This approach builds on Mendelson and Crawford's contention that a "women's culture" exists in the period as a result, at least in part, of women "demarcating and controlling their own space", including within those spatial zones nominally "controlled" by men, such as the household (203, 205). Mendelson and Crawford's argument is built upon a perspectival alteration in which the way space is seen and used creates an alternative perception of the historical subject's, in this case women's, environment: "From their own viewpoint, women enacted a mapping of space that was different from the normative strictures decreed by men" (205). In effect this makes possible a sense of individual autonomy even within densely structured cultural sites: "the household was a female-dominated milieu, offering women a secure

yet flexible base of operations for their forays into the outside world" (Mendelson and Crawford 205). This idea accepts the impact of process, of women's pro-active involvement on the operation of the household. Mendelson and Crawford cite popular ballads and tales which, in contrast to the prescriptive patriarchalism of elite conduct books, mock the inadequacy of men in women's areas of expertise, such as the kitchen or the hen-house:

Such ballads and tales implied that the household was women's proper realm of authority by virtue of knowledge and skill. In everyday life, women exercised *de facto* control of domestic space and its objects through their work.

(206)

In light of such an interpretation, Grosz's assertion that men's erasure of women in the domestic space is performed in order to "construct themselves as above-the-mundane, beyond the merely material" (Grosz 122) is able to conjoin with the criticism and theorisation of the "everyday" conducted by Michel de Certeau. This conjunction privileges early modern women's practice of living over cultural prescriptions seeking to define them and their spheres of activity. As such, the "reduction" of women to the "merely material" provides the opportunity to conceive of Hoby's text, and the interpretation of it, as excessive to the quotidian banality it is assumed to record. It is the very materiality of the "everyday" which is transformative in Hoby's text. Alice Kaplan and Kristin Ross argue that;

It is in the midst of the utterly ordinary, in the space where the dominant relations of production are

tirelessly and relentlessly reproduced, that we must look for utopian and political aspirations to crystallize.

(Kaplan and Ross 3)

This project concerns a re-imagining of the relation between our subject and the power structures surrounding her. Spaces must be re-imagined in this process, indeed "process" must be privileged as the generator of the subject and her spaces.

### **The Tactics of Space.**

Certeau's model of "the turn"--and the related dyads of strategy/tactic and place/space--is important to my conception of the processes Hoby can usefully employ as tools for her own minor acts of self-determination. Central to the idea of the "turn" is its function as an operation "upon an imposed spatial field" (Ahearne, *Michel de Certeau* 163) which exercises "an aptitude for always being in the territory of the other without possessing it" (Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* 87). In relation to Hoby's life on the estate, and its transcription into her diary, we are confronted with two forms of "spatial field", the estate and the diary. It is important to define Certeau's ideas regarding spatial structure and how it relates to the operation of the individual within larger systems of power. Certeau's models of space and place emphasise the distinction between production, the process of living, and the networks of power and influence which notionally determine how we live. Crucial to the concept of "place" is the "law of the proper", that relation of elements in which each is "situated in its own 'proper' and distinct location, a location it defines. A place is thus an instantaneous configuration of positions. It implies an indication of stability" (Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* 117). By contrast, "space exists

when one takes into consideration vectors of direction, velocities, and time variables":

Space occurs as the effect produced by the operations that orient it, situate it, temporalize it, and make it function in a polyvalent unity of conflictual programs or contractual proximities. On this view, in relation to place, space is like the word when it is spoken, that is, when it is caught in the ambiguity of an actualization, transformed into a term dependent upon many different conventions, situated as the act of a present (or of a time), and modified by the transformations caused by successive contexts. In contradistinction to the place, it has thus none of the univocity or stability of a 'proper'.

(Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* 117. Original emphasis.)

This dichotomy between vested power and transient opportunities for action underwrites Certeau's related dyad of strategy/tactics. The tactic's place is that of the other. Space is produced in the place of the other. Tactics and spaces are generated by subjects operating within strategically defined places. And although, as Buchanan argues, "the practices of everyday life are [...] constrained by the ensemble of possibilities the spatial order offers [...] that does not mean that they must obey the law of place" ("Heterophenomenology" 118).

The distinction in Certeau's work between place and space is fundamental to utilising this spatial model in terms of Hoby's life, her spaces, and her text. Fundamental to these conceptual frameworks is the proposition that Hoby creates her own spaces and is not just

contained by an externally imposed spatial field. As Kristin Ross, in line with Lefebvre (and Certeau), argues, we have a tendency to "think of space as an abstract, metaphysical context, as the container for our lives rather than the structures we help create" (Ross 104). The dynamic spaces of the house are produced. The textual fragments--or "traces"--that record those spaces cannot reproduce them because they exist only in time, not in place. The diary records the spaces which bubble up out of Hoby's environment and then disappear back into it when their moment passes. The "unreadable writings" (Ahearne, *Michel de Certeau* 176) of individual spatial practices which exist "below the thresholds at which visibility begins" (Certeau, *Practice of Everyday Life* 93) are here reduced to the fragmentary text of an individual operating within a complex of organising power structures.

The idea that space is the product of individual or group practices relies on it being a dynamic process, not a static emptiness waiting to be filled. Eric Wilson's representation of the spaces of the early modern city articulates the idea of space as a phenomenon :

Thinking of the [early modern] city not merely as a *location* (or the materialization of a mapped conceptual space that already exists as "there") but rather as a *phenomenon* will foreground from the outset the ways in which the city is not ontologically stable, but rather a *differentially inhabited space*--spoken, touched, traversed, vacated, amplifying, concentrating--variably punctuated by the ensemble of everyday activities, sonic and otherwise, that constitute the city as an ongoing event.

(Wilson 4. Original emphasis.)

In "Heterophenomenology, or de Certeau's Theory of Space", Ian Buchanan analyses Certeau's spatial theory with regard to its connection with Merleau-Ponty's phenomenological conception of the subject and its spaces. Buchanan's fundamental premise is that "our understanding of space must begin with an understanding of the body" (112). Buchanan too insists on the link between space and process, arguing against Frederic Jameson's assertion that (postmodern) space precedes the subject's ability to comprehend and exist within it ("Heterophenomenology" 114). Buchanan follows Certeau's own tendency to use linguistic analogies and argues that Jameson's idea is a "readerly" image of space, essentially a reactive approach with the subject responding to the already-present spaces surrounding it, whereas Certeau's "notion of space is grounded in 'speaking'/'writing' (enunciation)" ("Heterophenomenology" 116). Drawing support from Barthes, Buchanan follows this characterisation with the assertion that Certeau's heterophenomenological concept of space, "rather than create--or induce--particular effects and affects [...] is composed of them" ("Heterophenomenology" 116), an effect in itself analogous to Barthes's contention in "From Work to Text" that "*the Text is experienced only in an activity of production*" ("From Work to Text" 157; "Heterophenomenology" 116. Original emphasis.). The linguistic comparison is something I want to keep in mind during my analysis of Hoby's diary as the link between process and text, the subject's production of space and writing, is important to the re-viewing of Hoby's spaces I undertake. In any event, Buchanan's conception of space is explicitly linked to Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology of the body:

Space is not simply the location of everyday life, it is its product [...] bodies do not exist in space; space is, rather, the means by which bodies are and can be connected. From this it follows that space itself is bodily [...] The most crucial feature of Merleau-Ponty's spatial-subject is its incompleteness [...] Merleau-Ponty's subject is not already constituted, thus he/she is able to adapt to new surroundings by forming new and nevertheless constitutive relations with them.

("Heterophenomenology" 123-24)

The subject's perpetual incompleteness enables ongoing, creative production of spaces as relations are formed and dissolved.<sup>19</sup> Space is formed in the transcendence of perception over the world, which exists prior to perception: "Space is the picture of the world we get from a certain perspective, but it could not be perspectival if it was in itself constitutive of the world. By perspectival then, I mean not the angle of vision but the way of seeing" ("Heterophenomenology" 127). From this premise, Buchanan asserts:

space is a relation, an embodied perception--or, a perspective. It is the product of an encounter between the self and a world, and it is, at the same time, precisely the means by which the subject and the world can be apprehended. [...] Treating space as a perspective cannot put us in touch with space itself,

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<sup>19</sup>Buchanan is careful to detail the manner in which the body and its perceptions are conceived in his reading of Merleau-Ponty. The article argues that perception "demands a unified body, but is not guaranteed by one" ("Heterophenomenology" 126) inasmuch as perception occurs in the moment a single intentionality of purpose is achieved and is not dependant on a pre-existing physiological or psychological apparatus to facilitate it.

but it can put us in contact with a certain way of constructing space. Thus, we cannot read space, but what we can do is discover how it is produced.

("Heterophenomenology" 127-28)

Yet the discovery of space as a product of the subject's relations with the world then presents conceptual dilemmas to the analyst seeking to delineate these spaces as "visible objects".

Our ability to "see" (a metaphor actively engaged by Certeau) the spaces of the Hoby household is contingent upon the reading practice applied to the production of these spaces which are "materially filtered through texts" (Wilson 6). A problematic relationship immediately occurs, however, in this movement to "read" space through the text. Buchanan's reading of Lefebvre asserts that because space is produced and "does not exist out there in the world as an object awaiting analysis", as such, "[s]pace is not [...] a text, and cannot be reduced to a text" ("Lefebvre" 129). Indeed, Lefebvre argues that:

To underestimate, ignore and diminish space amounts to the overestimation of texts, written matter, and writing systems, along with the readable and visible, to the point of assigning these a monopoly on intelligibility.

(Lefebvre 62)

Further, Certeau's reflection on the view from the World Trade Centre underscores the way in which the legibility of space, as produced through the panoptic gaze, is essentially an artificial device contrived to bring what is incomprehensible within the realm of understanding:

The 1370 foot high tower that serves as a prow for Manhattan continues to construct the fiction that

creates readers, makes the complexity of the city readable, and immobilises its opaque mobility in a transparent text.

*(Practice of Everyday Life 92)*

Buchanan, paraphrasing Certeau, pushes this point when he argues that lives "cannot be mapped in this way--cannot be read--or even truly rendered readable by maps (though of course it is only through maps that they can be read): something always slips away" ("Heterophenomenology 119; *Practice of Everyday Life* 121). I would argue that what I am doing here is not "reading space" in the terms that Lefebvre vilifies but making the best of the situation described by Certeau and Buchanan. Consistent with Wilson's contention that the spaces, movements, and sounds of the early modern city (or house, in this instance) have "become traces, and must be treated as such" (Wilson 6), the spaces of Hoby's life have been traced through the medium of the diary; a text. Space has been recorded like iron filings around a magnet; it has been hinted at and illustrated in the shadows of language. The temporality of spaces, the intimate dynamics of this life are gone: "that which has passed will return no more, and its voice is lost forever" (Certeau, *L'Absent de l'histoire* 9 qtd. in Ahearne 10) and there is nothing to be done about this. Yet I am trying to read the text for the production of those spaces, for the creation of Margaret Hoby's life, emphasising the particularity of her spatial and textual production, amidst the intricate and complex network of power relations affecting her. Maps may be unrepresentative, or even unreadable, but they are all that is left to us. Our reading must take this into account, survey its own practices, and proceed knowing the impossibility of its task before it

begins. We must discover, within our own production, a sense of the value of work and space and the life that comes from them.

If the theoretical approach I am using here is to be effective it needs to outline the way in which Hoby, as the subject in question, negotiates the oscillation between place and space; it needs to discern how this subject perceives her own relationship with her environment (cultural and material). In their article "The Transversality of Michel de Certeau", Reynolds and Fitzpatrick attempt to analyse Certeau's place/space binary.<sup>20</sup> In a close reading of Certeau's discussion of the development of cartography, Reynolds and Fitzpatrick describe how maps, which began as elaborations of spaces, gradually become, in Certeau's work, representations of proper places:

if one takes the 'map' in its current geographical form, we can see that in the course of the period marked by the birth of modern scientific discourse (ie., from the fifteenth to the seventeenth century) the map has slowly disengaged itself from the itineraries that were the condition of its possibility.

(Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* 120)

Beginning as itineraries and tours, maps develop towards the geometric and geographic format now current in concert with the rise of scientific, rationalist discourses.

This "objectification" of spatial stories into a cartographic discourse is an important element in Buchanan's analysis of Certeau's spatial theory. Returning to "Walking in the City", Buchanan cites the discussion of the view across New York and its similarity with the view

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<sup>20</sup>Reynolds and Fitzpatrick's analysis derives from Certeau's discussion of panopticism and Foucault in *The Practice of Everyday Life* and *Heterologies*. See Reynolds and Fitzpatrick 63.

accorded to a reader by cartography: "His elevation transfigures him into a voyeur. It puts him at a distance. It transforms the bewitching world by which one was 'possessed' into a text that lies before one's eyes" (*The Practice of Everyday Life* 92). This "concept city" does not reflect that which constitutes the city as a functioning entity in the same way that the map prevents one from seeing the "vivacity" of space that Buchanan claims heterophenomenology is "determined to capture" ("Heterophenomenology" 119). Buchanan argues that Merleau-Ponty's phenomenological concept of space, rooted in the body, underwrites the concept city because from an accretion of those embodied perceptions comes the "comprehensive" perspective of the bird's-eye view: "the city can be seen from above, comprehended as a living map, only because it can also be seen from below, from in amongst the traffic as it were" ("Heterophenomenology" 120). For Buchanan, Merleau-Ponty's distinction between "geometric" and "anthropological" space is "axiomatic" to Certeau's theorising in *The Practice of Everyday Life* in that they substantiate his concepts of place and space, proprietariness and transience:

The distinction and all that it implies is implicit in the contrast de Certeau draws between 'urban *fact*' (anthropological) and the '*concept* of a city' (geometric) [...] On the one hand then, there is the concept of the city [...] which 'like a proper name' enables an unstable and boundless mass to be managed, comprehended even, and on the other there is the experience of the city which is transitory and has 'no readable identity'.

(*Practice of Everyday Life* 94, 95;

"Heterophenomenology" 120. Original emphasis.)

Jameson's assertion that the subject can only navigate their environment through the imaginative deployment of their own concept-city, in Buchanan's view, misreads the nature of space according to Merleau-Ponty and, by extension, Certeau: "it hypostasises the conceptual and all but ignores the lived" ("Heterophenomenology" 120). Yet Buchanan's superimposition of Merleau-Ponty's spatial distinctions onto Certeau's own models is criticised by Reynolds and Fitzpatrick for ignoring the complexity of Certeau's model in favour of a simple binary between an "unauthentic" geometrical model and the phenomenologically produced anthropological model. Reynolds and Fitzpatrick's argument will be discussed in more detail below but, in preliminary terms, their model of place and space, as derived from Certeau, recognises the cross-pollination between the two concepts that occurs in Certeau's discussion of cartography and how the formation of place is dependant on both the production of space and a simultaneous refusal of its specificities. While Buchanan's claims for the embodied production of space are generally consistent with the emphasis on

process as the constitutive element in these models of space, his distinction between space and place fails, in Reynolds and Fitzpatrick's terms, to enumerate the complexities of Certeau's spatial models.

With respect to Hoby's diary and its representation of her world, I examine Certeau's distinction between "maps" and "tours", and how these distinctions might suggest the subject perceives herself within her lived environment. Certeau's discussion of cartographic development begins with stories about space and ends with the scientific map. The spatial story, or "tour", represents a form of spatial representation that both precedes and yet remains contemporaneous with the map in the sense that subjects still relate to their environment by telling stories about it, describing it rather than flattening it onto an apparently objective plane of knowledge. The move to the geometric map involves a totalising of the accreted knowledge present in the various "tours" relating to space and bringing them together "to form the tableau of a 'state' of geographical history"; in effect, the map "pushes away into its posterity, as if into the wings, the operations of which it is the result or necessary condition" (Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* 121). Yet in his elaboration of the development of the map, and the apparent correlation between map/place and tour/space, Reynolds and Fitzpatrick point to an apparent inconsistency in Certeau's enumeration of space and place when he says of maps and "spatial stories":

The difference between the two modes of description obviously does not consist in the presence or absence of practices (they are at work everywhere) but in the fact that maps, constituted as proper places in which to exhibit the products of knowledge, form tables of

*legible* results. Stories about space exhibit on the contrary the operations that allow it, within a constraining and non-'proper' place, to mingle its elements anyway, as one apartment-dweller put it concerning the rooms in his flat: 'one can mix them up'.

(Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* 121. Original emphasis.)

As Reynolds and Fitzpatrick point out, Certeau's emphasis on space as a "practiced place" is apparently contradicted by this insistence on the presence of practices within the realms of both space *and* place (69). How then can maps, if they are associated with the propriety of places, simultaneously contain evidence of practices that seem to define spaces? Reynolds and Fitzpatrick argue that Certeau's example of the apartment-dweller's story illustrates that the distinction between the map and the tour is founded in their respective levels of elaboration. If stories enumerate possibilities "by demarcating the boundaries of what is possible in a given place" (Reynolds and Fitzpatrick 69), then it can be argued that those stories that preceded the creation of maps also provided a sense of spatial possibility:

The omission of references to these stories from revised or subsequent maps eradicates the explicit assumptions that those stories make regarding the possibilities of a particular place; in doing so, those assumptions become *implicit* in the map itself.

(Reynolds and Fitzpatrick 69. Original emphasis.)

As such, a map developed from several stories of the same place, whilst not explicitly referring to any of the stories on its face, implicitly

contains all the knowledge contained in them and can be read from any perspective with an eye to utilising several different features of the place in question. The representation of maps as "objective indicators of place" is belied by their being "founded on spatializing assumptions that affect the way that those mapped places are perceived":

The forgetting of these original spatializations, their erasure from the increasingly geographical (and geometrical) maps, makes it possible for maps to become arbiters of what is 'proper'--makes it possible, in short, for spatial constructions to be perceived as 'places'.

(Reynolds and Fitzpatrick 69)

The heterogeneity of the map, when viewed from this perspective, recalls Mendelson and Crawford's contention that "women enacted a mapping of space that was different from the normative structures decreed by men" (205). Hoby's diary begins to become more than simply a reflection of submissive gestures within a predetermined spatial zone; the creative possibilities of the subject's own spatial processes come into view.

This concern with the construction of apparently objective bodies of knowledge is of particular interest with regard to Hoby's text as I place her diary within a matrix of powerful cultural knowledges and discourses of control, discerning in it individual (spatialising) practices. In his discussion of the formation of maps, Certeau elaborates on the features of the spatial story and I want to cite him here with an eye to my examination of Hoby's text:

From the folktale to descriptions of residences, an exacerbation of 'practice' (*faire*) (and thus of

enunciation), actuates the stories narrating tours in places that, from the ancient cosmos to contemporary public housing developments, are all forms of an imposed order. In a pre-established geography, which extends (if we limit ourselves to the home) from bedrooms so small that 'one can't do anything in them' to the legendary, long-lost attic that 'could be used for everything', everyday stories tell us what one can do in it and make out of it. They are treatments of space.

(Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* 121-22)

The pre-established geography of the estate forms the physical 'place' in Hoby's text: "[e]very building is experienced as a concrete reality" (Markus 4).<sup>21</sup> But surrounding and permeating this geographical site are the multiple discourses of power Reynolds labels "the state". Hoby's negotiation of both these habitats, the physical and the cultural, forms the basis of her spatialising practices and my analysis.

Certeau's models share a concern with the capacity of the powerless to secure, albeit temporarily, autonomy. The house is part of the grid of external power which structures Hoby's life on the estate. Her movements through the house are in accordance with her needs and desires and reflect the "*de facto* control" asserted by Mendelson and Crawford. From a Certalian perspective, Hoby's spatial practices might be usefully imagined as "turns". In essence, Hoby's diary, her spatial

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<sup>21</sup>Markus's text focuses on "the analysis of concrete experience" (13) through buildings. Starting for the most part in the eighteenth century, Markus seeks to discover the "meanings" of buildings through an analysis of the narrative of their material existence. In this sense his study, though interesting, has a different emphasis at its core from the elaboration of social and personal space I am seeking to perform here. See Thomas A. Markus, *Buildings and Power: Freedom and Control in the Origin of Modern Building Types*. London: Routledge, 1993.

practices, form a heterological space. Appropriating the "propriety" of place and the powerplay of strategies, Hoby effects heterological insinuations of her otherness into the cultural matrix about her. Her diary traces these insinuations and it is through this text that we can read the spaces of Hoby's house.

### **"I know the Lord is powerfull": Puritanism and the Subject.**

Hoby's Puritanism has an important bearing on her spatial and textual practices.<sup>22</sup> One of the important insights of Reformation, and especially Puritan, spirituality is the focusing of the relationship between God and humanity to a specific relationship between individuals and the divine. Owen Watkins argues that this change in perspective produced the belief that "individual men and women could achieve a personal relationship with God, and that this relationship could permeate all daily life with the light of eternity" (15). This relationship was defined by the vigour of the faithful's piety. The harnessing together of the everyday and the divine produced, in Watkin's words, an extension of "their range of self-awareness, as the doctrines which they learned became almost simultaneously embodied in personal experience and afterwards articulated through narrative and testimony" (15).

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<sup>22</sup>The definition of "Puritanism" has been contested almost since its inception. In historical discourse the term, as Christopher Hill asserts, has been "an admirable refuge from clarity of thought" (*Society* 15). Hill's own attempt to provide a manageable overview comes at the end of a chapter which outlines the often intense debates over the term during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. In the end, Hill's definition strives not so much for thoroughness as simplicity: "there was in England in the two or three generations before the civil war a body of opinion which can be usefully labelled Puritan. There was a core of doctrine about religion and Church government, aiming at purifying the Church from inside" (*Society* 30): See Christopher Hill, *Society and Puritanism in Pre-Revolutionary England*. London: Panther, 1969. Especially Chapter One, "The Definition of a Puritan", 15-30.

Many women saw the religious life as a self-imposed regime, an all-encompassing lifestyle, a private vocation that transformed every facet of existence, including daily activities, social and familial relationships, and the space in which they lived and worked. For those [...] who could set aside several hours each day for godly exercises, the practice of piety entailed a lengthy routine which included private prayer, the reading of Scripture and other devotional works, several hours of meditation on divine subjects, the scrutiny of one's spiritual condition, the confession of sin, and the keeping of a diary to log one's spiritual progress.

(Mendelson and Crawford 226-27)

This is indicative of the status of religion as the "master-code of pre-capitalist society" (Jameson 39; Shuger 5), and in particular its position as the "primary language of analysis" in early modern England: "It is the cultural matrix for explorations of virtually every topic: kingship, selfhood, rationality, language, marriage, ethics, and so forth" (Shuger 6).

In Hoby's text the direct relationship between her physical and emotional well-being and her piety is drawn repeatedly, as demonstrated in her marginal note to the entry of 22 May, 1600 in which the chronic and debilitating toothaches she often suffered are referred to; "the lord hath freed me a long time from any temptation grievous, though the body haue benn a litle Iustly punished" (Moody 84). Five years later, during a period when Hoby was not keeping her entries either as regularly or as focused on her spiritual routines as previously,

the connection between her health and her faith remained central to her conception of herself and her world: "[13 May 1605] This day I tooke somthinge for my Shoulder, which had a paine in it by reason of Could, wch, I praise god, did me good : afflictions draw one nerer to god" (Moody 214). Andrew Wear points out that one of the ways "Puritans spiritualised illness was to see it as God-given; it was a rod, and God was a father correcting (in the sense of guiding and admonishing as well as punishing) his children" (VI 70). This is particularly borne out by the diary through Hoby's attitude towards her dental troubles. But it is not just her physical ailments which are symptomatic of her spiritual condition. The various, and here unspecified, turns of fate which beset everyday existence are read through her human failings on April 6 1602:

In the Morninge, havinge slept well, I promised to my selfe health & quiatt, accordinge to the nature of man who thinkes the estate present will never alter, but god, who seeth the thoughtes Longe before, doth vsually shewe his Children the vanitie of their Cogetation by sending some gentle Crosse that may pull them from driminge of earthly quiatt : wch I found, I praise god :

(Moody 179)

The faithful's relationship to God was unmediated by the confessional or the superstructure of an episcopal church, purifying the intensity of the connection. In the place of the confessional apparatus the tradition of self-examination was re-located in the textual realm, harnessing the self-expressing potential of literacy, at least amongst those of higher classes such as Hoby, in order to literalise the divine relationship. The diary becomes the link between the everyday and the divine, literalising her occupancy of the house (an activity notionally governed by cultural

discourses of domesticity) through the practice of her faith (another and perhaps the most pervasive cultural discourse of the period).

Yet in the overlapping and meshing of obligations and prescriptions, Hoby is able to write herself a modest, personal space. Akiko Kusunoki observes the paradox of this situation when she argues that:

Coexisting with teachings on the necessity of women's silence and their obedience to male authority was the stress in Puritan thought on the dictates of individual conscience; and this emphasis fostered in women the habit of building a sense of self in relation to God.

(188)

The focus on the self as the repository of the connection with God was mediated through a focus on Scripture and divine texts as the keys to one's sense of self-revelation. Jagodzinski claims this focus on texts and reading meant that in the post-Reformation struggles "the individual person reading became the site of [...] conflict" (24); that conflict being between competing dogmas, Catholic and Protestant, and the inner conflict of the self's relationship with the divine (as determined by the individual's particular sectarian affinities). Moody records that the "self-examination" conducted by Hoby, in line with Puritan doctrine, was designed so that she should look "into herself to increase awareness of her failure" (xli). The metaphors of internal psychological depth underscore a fundamental belief in the ability of the (Puritan) individual to know themselves and, by extension, God.

In assessing herself and finding herself guilty she could then turn to God knowing He loved her and

would show her mercy. Realizing her own incapacity was necessary for her to keep faithful to God; she recognized that faith was freely given by grace, but only to those whom God had chosen to receive it. Her self-examination, therefore, was regarded as a means whereby she could not only check her outward religious observance but also assess signs of her election or damnation[.]

(Moody xli)

The self turns inward to search for signs of its own salvation and in doing so recognises its own individuation; from the world and before God. Stachniewski argues that this emergent individuality, which accompanied a re-structuring of social and economic boundaries during the sixteenth century in England, was deeply unnerving and was "combated by a repressive patriarchy on familial, legal, and political levels", and religious levels as well:

the potentially anarchic view individuals had of themselves as unique could be far from a carefree self-affirmation [...] Self-awareness as an individual was often identical with the pain of exclusion. People were unable to shake their own minds free of the stern patriarchal power which punished impulses to autonomy.

(69-70)

Such a conflict between cultural and personal experiences of self leads to a self-perception characterised by "ambivalence, anxiety, and contradiction" in which a "private language of agonized doubt" underscores a "public language of militant submission" (Leverenz ix, 4,

17 qtd. in Collinson 11). Doubt acts as the mortar of piety. Sinfield observes the way in which reformers conceived of the relationship between humanity and the divine:

We approach God by learning how distant, through our wickedness, we are from him. It is a formula for continual restlessness: the invitation to advance is conditional upon acknowledgment that we are unable, of ourselves, to do so.

(158-59)

The inherent depravity of humankind prevents it from being able to exercise its free will without sin, as such redemption is contained only in the word of God. Reading the word of God reveals the possibility of redemption "and because this activity takes place within the heart of the individual, there is an emphasis on interior illumination and the 'indwelling of the Spirit', rather than on any external ceremonies" (Fox 62). The inherent contradiction of this individuated yet divided subject is that whilst one's identity as a separable person is fundamental to spiritual well-being, that well-being is also rooted in a "denial of ourselves through devotion to God, along with a shedding of the impulses that spring from self-love, such as ambition, a craving for glory, lasciviousness or any other desires of a self-regarding sort" (Fox 62). The effect of this cultural (and perceptual) turbulence on the concurrent discourses of female subservience was that "while persuading women to conform to the ideal of female silence and obedience, Puritan doctrine paradoxically encouraged them to form habits of independent thought and self-expression" (Kusunoki 188). It is from this apparently self-conflicted philosophical position that Hoby's diary emerges.

### **"so I spent some time in writing": The Diary as Self-surveillance.**

The diary tradition emerges from a series of sources constellated around the concept of private devotions, including the medieval Book of Hours, the early Protestant primers, and the Augustinian tradition of self-examination articulated in the *Confessions*. Watkins notes that the link between Puritan religious practice, with its focus on an unmediated personal relationship with God, and a written form of self-surveillance emerged during the sixteenth century: "It quite soon became a recognized practice [...] for confession to be made in writing, usually in the form of a diary" (Watkins 18). Puritanism, in general, advocated writing as a way of promulgating godly works.

The attractiveness of writing did increase for godly reasons. Schoolchildren could combine their writing ability and their religious indoctrination by taking notes at the Sunday sermon. Writing also permitted the taking of notes as one read the Scriptures, so that one could recall the moral without again searching the printed page. It was the ability to write that allowed the godly to produce their daily testaments of struggle, and for separated relatives to encourage each other to labour for (and in) the covenant, an important aspect of puritan written communication.

(Morgan 165)

And although the spread of literacy was restricted to the upper echelons of the culture, and even then disproportionately to men, we find Morgan's description marrying with many of the details of Hoby's diary,

not the least of which is the diary's very existence.<sup>23</sup> Hoby's text stands as an early example of the Puritan diary, indeed of the modern diary as a genre. The form and content of the text places it in a nascent tradition with contemporaries such as Richard Rogers, whose diary of the years 1587 to 1590 expresses in more detail the kinds of themes articulated in Hoby, such as the importance of self-scrutiny to religious observance.

[December 22 1587] at praier heavy and uncheerfull, more than I had been of late. And feared greatly some unsetlednes. But it drove me especially to this consideracion, that, we having some weekes before purposed great watchfullnes over our hartes, me thought I had veary slightly regarded or looked to finde out any, ether olde or new corruptions in my self.

(Knappen 70)

Although for the most part Hoby's style is, to say the least, more prosaic than Rogers's, sentiments such as this are expressed with penitent vigour when the need arises.

[Wednesday, 15 November 1599] [...] I praied and examened my selfe, when I found what it was to want the Contineuall preachinge of the word by my Couldnes to all sperituall exercises : but I beseech the

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<sup>23</sup>In regard to the Puritan advocacy of writing as a means of facilitating their search for God in the self, John Adair notes that the passion for writing down sermons meant that a "Puritan congregation did not merely passively hear the sermon, they devoured it like holy bread. Many brought notebooks so they could write down the text. They looked up the preacher's proof-texts in their own Bibles and folded the pages for discussion after dinner" (92). In an entry from Hoby's diary such as Sunday, 13 July 1600, we find; "After priuat praers I reed and then went to the church : after, I Came home and praied and then dined : after diner I talked of the sarmon, and reed of the bible with some Gentlewomen that were with me : after, I praied, walked, and went to the church again, and after I walked a whill : and so I spent some time in writinge on my sarmon book and prainge ..." (Moody 98). See John Adair, *Puritans: Religion and Politics in Seventeenth-Century England and America*. 1982. Phoenix Mill: Sutton, 1998. Especially the chapter, "Elizabethan Puritans", 84-104.

Lord pardon my severall defectes and restore me to my former Life, for thy mercies sake, with increase of his spiritt, and so much more spirituall Comfort as now is a wantinge[.]

(Moody 36)

In the main, however, Hoby's style is more in keeping with an account book of her devotion. Although it should be noted that as the diary continues her scrupulous noting of events on a daily basis, especially her spiritual exercises, becomes less and less complete until she is making barely one entry a month--despite professions of guilt over her lapses--by the time the diary cuts off in 1605. Of this correlation between the Puritan devotional diary and the account book, Charles Hambrick-Stowe says of New England Puritans that;

The daily record kept as a devotional exercise was related to other ways of marking events over time. New England produced annual almanacs after 1640, a large number of histories, business account books, and travel journals, all of them part of the same mentality that produced diaries and spiritual autobiographies.

(Hambrick-Stowe 190)

Watkins notes that many Puritan writers of the period themselves used the metaphor of the account book and that "the definition of the debit and credit sides may have been sharpened by its relevance to the doctrine of justification by faith" (Watkins 21). The constant exchange between observance and lapse is a feature of conduct books of the period. John Dod, in the book *Seven Godlie and Fruitful Sermons* (1614) produced along with Richard Cleaver, reasserts the relationship between self-surveillance and piety:

If we keep an assises at home in our own soules, and find ourselves guilty, and contemn ourselves, then shall not we be judged of the Lord : but because we deal very partially in our own matters, therefore is the Lord driven to help us, by laying his correcting hand some way or other on us.

(John Dod and Richard Cleaver qtd. in Wear VI 59)<sup>24</sup>

This relationship continued to develop throughout the seventeenth century with texts such as John Beadle's 1656 tract, *The Journal or Diary of a Thankfull Christian*, in which the author promotes the virtues of maintaining a spiritual record:

it is good also to observe and keep a good account of the severall occurences of the Times we meet with [...] It is good to keep an History, a Register, a Diary, an Annales, not onely of the places in which we have lived, but of the mercies that have been bestowed on us, continued to us all our dayes.

(Beadle 10-11)

Hoby too utilises the diary as a form of account keeping on herself, such as on Monday, 10 September 1599 when she notes:

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<sup>24</sup> Wear gives the full reference for this quote as, John Dod and Richard Cleaver, *Seven Godlie and Fruitful Sermons* (London, 1614). 44.

[...] I wrought a litle, and neglected my custom of praier,  
for which, as for many other sinnes, it pleased the Lord  
to punishe me with an inward assalte : But I know the  
Lord hath pardoned it because he is true of his promise,  
and, if I had not taken this Course of examenation, I  
think I had forgotten itt :

(Moody 16)

The diary then was an introspective device which further underscored the personalisation of religious observance, "the practice of piety" (Crawford 75).

This coalescing of a writing and religious practice occurs in a text that presents the reader with stylistic and interpretative difficulties. Hoby's text is difficult because it seems to work against the reader. Indeed it can be asked whether this text is actually written to be read. Helen Wilcox argues that a commonality of purpose can be traced through the majority of women's diaries during the period: "what they share is a discourse of privacy and the absence of an intention to publish" (Wilcox 47). Meads clarifies this perspective by adding to her specific observation of Hoby's diary the element of possible, or perceived, surveillance of Hoby's writing practices: "A perusal of the contents of the diary gives one to think that she may have written with an eye on a possible reader, for we are rarely allowed a glimpse of the living woman" (Meads 47). This assertion relies on the assumption that the diary is typically used as the medium of an inner, 'real', centred self. Where, or what, is this "living woman"? The stress here is on the nature of the diary form as observed from a certain critical perspective, described by Fothergill thus: "most theoretical considerations of diary-writing proceed deductively from the assumption that its defining

characteristic is an unpremeditated sincerity" (40). This sincerity, as Rendall points out, is assumed to be spontaneously rendered on the page by the diarist: "whatever comes into the mouth goes onto the paper, without premeditation, without concern for formal or logical coherence, without guile; in short, without art" (Rendall 58). The anxieties Meads seems to allude to are constellated around the possibility of Hoby's "inner" self, something more complex and vulnerable than the image presented in the diary, being scrutinised by a reader other than herself.<sup>25</sup> Meads elaborates this point when she footnotes an entry towards the middle of the diary when Hoby's diligence in recording her religious exercises seems to have waned.

[*The : 11 : day :*] (11 January 1602)

vnto this day, I praise god, I continewe in  
extraordinarie health : and hard of no newe or  
strange thinge worthy nothings (fn.530)

530. Her diary seems to be no longer part of her religious exercises, as it was in the days of the restraining influence of Mr Rhodes.

(Meads 194, 283)

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<sup>25</sup>The correlation of the diary with an "authentic" interior perhaps extends beyond just the form of the diary and to the manner in which it is produced. Rosemary Huisman, referring to poetry, argues that printing effectively works to "privatize" the handwritten and creates "a new social space for textual production" (129). Whilst her argument is related to an aesthetic practice--poetry--that relied on an exchange between an author and their readership, Huisman's observations on the changing status of handwriting in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries are pertinent to the development of the diary as a vehicle for inner, "real" identity: "Handwriting now became associated with the author, with the notion of the signature and the autograph as authenticating the text" (129).

Richard Rhodes, a young minister who lived in close proximity to the Hoby estate, is a prominent figure in the early, more rigorous, stages of the diary.

*The first day of the week* :28: [28 January 1600]

After priuat praier I went about the house, then brake my fast : after, reed of the bible : after, took a lector and then went to dinner : after dinner I was busy presaruing, and wrought, and hard Mr Rhodes read of Mr Cartwright and Bushoppe of Canterberies booke : after, I took order for thinges in the house and so came to priuat praier and medetation : after I went to supper, then to the lector : after, I talked with Mr Hoby and Mr Rhodes of ordenarie things, and then went to priuat praier and so to bed[.]

(Moody 56)

The concern about a possible reader seems to be focused on the proximity of the observant and authoritative religious minister.<sup>26</sup> The form and motivations of Hoby's diary are important here. Working in a form that had not developed a coherent set of regulatory systems, Hoby acts as "one of the earliest *true* diarists, male or female" (Blodgett 26. My emphasis.). The coalescing obligations of puritan religious observance, emphasising the inward focus of the individual's relationship with God, enabled women to engage in a writing practice which was socially sanctioned but still provided a space (albeit restricted) in which they "assessed their own experiences and the value which they placed upon them" (Crawford 93). To this extent the Hoby diary

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<sup>26</sup>Some mention is also made by Meads, and then by Blodgett, that some of Hoby's vague references to "temptation" may also be allusions to feelings for Rhodes not acted upon by the "not yet thirty" Margaret (Meads 267, fn. 357; Blodgett 166).

operates as a primary text in a genre distinguished by its commitment to a particular religious function and objective: self-scrutiny before God.

The diary is a site of discursive production which is delimited by certain rules of conduct and (self) scrutiny. But in this regulated space, Hoby is able to draw her own lines of approach to the practice of writing. Her movement through this discursive space is not always consistent with the paths elucidated by puritan regulators; the diary form is an unstable locus for a comprehensive surveillance of the self, from the perspective of both the writing individual and the system of belief or behaviour to which that individual adheres and which has initiated the writing practice in the first instance. This uncertain sphere of textuality is an extension of the primary separation of the individual from supervising religious and cultural structures that occurs in the acquisition of literacy. Jagodzinski argues that this isolation of the subject and text, through the process of reading, was a focal point for anxiety amongst those religions struggling for cultural supremacy in early modern England.

Every denomination in England debated the proper method, the proper place, the proper reading audience for the Bible. All disputants, no matter their religious allegiance, recognized that reading Scripture privately placed the reader outside the reach of properly constituted religious authority.

(Jagodzinski 43)

Fothergill, in the process of categorising various diary 'types', classifies the form of diary writing associated with the Puritan and Quaker tradition as the "journal of conscience" (17). Inherent to this particular

form are a set of assumptions about the process and function of diary writing:

it may be argued that the practice of self-examination in moral terms, which is seldom absent from even the most 'secular' diaries, may derive in part from the Puritan equation of serious self-communing with strict examination of conscience.

(Fothergill 17)

Fothergill's point is that working within this particular form of diary writing would have determined the content and tone of Hoby's entries:

if you undertook a diary within this tradition you would begin with already formed ideas of how to go about it, what sort of thing to include, what tone to adopt, and so forth. Instead of proceeding from the writer's own consciousness the structure of the diary is a *donnée* and actually conditions the range of self-perception to be stimulated by it.

(Fothergill 17-18)

Indeed Fothergill quotes some of Hoby's diary to prove his point that her text transmits the impression that "her life appears to consist of nothing but work and godly exercises, which it is the barren function of the diary to enumerate" (19).

This "barren function" is codified, in a sense, during the middle of the seventeenth century in texts such as Beadle's *The Journal or Diary of a Thankfull Christian* which, as Fothergill and Watkins each remark, acts as "a summing up and [re-iteration of] precepts which were already common and had been followed for at least half a century" (Fothergill 17). There is an emphasis in such texts on what Watkins

calls "the ordinary experiences of daily life" (Watkins 23); a documentation of events and experiences that accumulate into an effect, a spiritual process. The notion of "experience" in this context is problematised by the particular dimensions of Puritan belief, whereby the localisation of the relationship between humanity and God in the individual produced a miniaturisation of religious struggle to the confines, and yet limitlessness, of each specific soul. The production of a doctrinally prescribed "experience" determines the features of the diarist's expressions, revelations, and intentions. The diary, as the receptacle of "sincerity" and un-narrativised, "pure experience", is a substantially more complex document if the production of the events being related in it are re-examined as themselves products of specific ideological or cultural operations. Joan Scott's call for historians, and others in this case, to "take as their project *not* the reproduction and transmission of knowledge said to be arrived at through experience, but the analysis of the production of that knowledge itself" (Scott 797. Original emphasis.), seems even more important in the light of this example.

In any event, the diary's transmission of a specific perspective determines the kinds of information contained and emphasised in it. Blodgett further contends that the form and content of the diary, which anticipates a tradition that had not yet been established, derives from the specific conditions of the housebound wife in the period: "The most significant 'model' may have been the female engagement with daily trivia and concern with private life in the absence of an active public life" (Blodgett 26). This then envisions the diary as a direct textual product of the physical and cultural conditions surrounding its writer. The revelations of a "private" document are now contextualised within

the format of that individual's self-construction. As the self is created from discourses of submission to God and a closed-circuit of self-surveillance and spiritual observance, the text reflects this world-view. Privacy is here a cause of the diary's particular perspective and characteristics rather than an effect of them. It might be argued that for a large part of the diary, Hoby's world view, as re-presented through the diary, is in fact a reflection of the (Puritan) world she chooses to be a part of. Only in the diary's later, more sporadic and disconnected entries, when a rigorous system of written self-observance seems to give way to more informal observations of the material environment in which she lives, does the text begin to reflect what is now generally held to be the nature of a diary. Even so, these later entries, whilst not attending to the spiritual and physical routines of her days, still reflect her commitment to the priorities of Puritan worship and the keen self-awareness that accompanied it.

[1 April 1605] [...] at Night I thought to writt my daies  
Iournee as before, becaus, in the readinge over some  
of my former spent time, I funde such profitt might  
be made of that Course from which, thorow two  
much neccligence, I had a Longe time dissisted : but  
they are vnworthye of godes benefittes and especiall  
fauours that Can finde no time to make a thankfull  
recorde of them

(Moody 210-11)

However one might wish to characterise the content of the diary or what it might say about "the real Margaret Hoby", the text itself stands as a visible and legible marker of the self-reflexive impulse within the nominally self-abnegating discourse of the Puritan self, particularly with

regards to women. The implications of this apparent flowering of (female) self-consciousness are appositely observed by Kusunoki: "Puritan women's awakening to their sense of self [...] started in the private sphere--that is, in their personal efforts to examine the self in relation to God" (188). By searching for God, it seems, early modern women find themselves.

### **"I went to priuat examination and praier": Interior Spaces.**

The cultural structure of the (Puritan) household in the early modern period is deeply embedded in its inhabitant's lives. For Hoby it operates through architecture, routine, belief, writing, and individual relationships with the divine: all of which are imbricated in a process of cultural performance. Voices, noises, prayers, footsteps, writing, movement, the configuration of the landscape, and the various oscillations in behaviour during the day are left imprinted on Hoby's text as a form of shadow play tracing the way in which she produces spaces in time. Hoby's diary literalises the transitory position she fills as a woman in this network of power, her spaces do not remain. As an effaced presence in the "official structure" of the house, Hoby's life can be tracked through the trajectories of her text. Certeau's definition of trajectory envisions the particular amidst the configurations of place and strategy:

trajectories form unforeseeable sentences, partly unreadable paths across a space. Although they are composed with the vocabularies of established languages [...] and although they remain subordinated to the prescribed syntactical forms [...] trajectories trace out the ruses of other interests and desires that are

neither determined nor captured by the systems in which they develop.

(Certeau, *Practice of Everyday Life* xviii)

These trajectories are spatial and textual and operate in this instance to create a web of text and space, made necessary by the historical, geographical and cultural alterity of the subject. Our reading practice constructs Hoby's spaces as "a set of practices or operations performed on textual or text-like structures" (Frow 52). Her spaces are literalised in language and mediated to us, the readers, who have only this text to work with. As such, it is the methodology of her diary, the fluctuations of mood and belief, interest and obligation, description and summary, which form the basis of this text and this reading.

[15 August 1600] After privat praier I went about the house and then wrett in my testament : after, I praied and then dined : after, I wrought, hard Mr Rhodes read, and then walked abroad into the feeldes : after, I came home and went to privat examination and praier : after, I went to supper, then to the lecture : after, I sung a psalme with some of the sarvants, lastly, reed a chapter, praied, and so went to bed[.]

(Moody 105-06)

To read an extract such as this is to begin to unfold a series of personal and social transactions. The extract records instances of movement, writing, reading, listening, walking outside, personal reflection and prayer, singing, eating, and preparation for sleep: actions rooted in the structure of the everyday, and consistent with that structure, but mobilised through the particular subject. The oscillation between public and private acts marks a primary division in the forms of actions

undertaken by Hoby, but it is a division which is not always practised in terms of two discrete spheres of activity. Rather, the practice of spiritual observance is perceived as a conglomerate of private and public acts which Hoby, as the effective head of the household, is in charge of transmitting to those in her charge:

Much like needlework or housewifery, feminine piety had evolved into a body of expertise which mothers taught daughters and mistresses their maidservants. Once acquired and perfected, the religious discipline became a storehouse of experience to be shared with female friends, neighbours, and relations in the course of everyday work and socializing. Secular tasks and religious concerns were often combined in the same milieu, as women conversed about godly topics over their sewing.

(Mendelson and Crawford 228)

The imbrication of secular and religious, public and private, is an essential element of the way in which Hoby produces the spaces in which she lives. As John Morgan describes, the Puritan household of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century engaged in a rigorous regime of "church attendance, reading, prayers, self-examination, family instruction, and conference that formed the household curriculum to lead children and servants to faith" (150). Although we can superimpose Hoby's specific circumstances (as a woman) across Morgan's claims, the contention that "the householder who did not instruct his wife, children and servants denigrated their souls before God" (150) remains valid with respect to the everyday religious and

domestic details recorded in the diary. Childless, Hoby's religious and secular instructions are often focused on her maids, with whom she spends much time working and praying, as on 19 May 1600: "After priuat praere I did read to my wemen" (Moody 83), or 4 July 1600: "after I had sitt a whill with my wemen talkinge of som princeples vnto them, I went to priuat examenation and praier" (Moody 96). This instructive role extends to the promulgation of Puritan doctrine to those of her maids not steeped in the faith already. On Monday, 24 February 1600, Hoby records:

After priuat praier I did eate, then dressed my patients, reed of the bible, and then saluted some strangers : after, praied and then dined : after, I kept Companie tell they departed and, after, reed and talked with a yonge papest maide: and when I had giuen order for thinges in the house, I went to priuat examenation and praier[.]

(Moody 63-64)

As Joanna Moody elaborates, Hoby is here attempting to facilitate the maid's conversion, an action endorsed by government policies determined to undermine the entrenched recusancy of the North, and possibly by personal religious conviction. The maid's religious state, and her mistress's discussion of it, is juxtaposed with Hoby's administration of orders for "thinges in the house"; concerns personal and household, secular and religious, overlap in the performance of Hoby's everyday life.

The house is integral to Hoby's diary. Whilst it appears in almost every entry, its function changes in relation to her particular requirements. Reading Hoby's circulation throughout the house in

Certeau's terms, the production of her space is constantly changing, even in the context of the same (geometric) places, such as particular rooms. This effect is a feature of the chamber, a room variously used as a bedroom, infirmary, prayer room, reception area, and a site of household "business". The room manifests different characteristics according to Hoby's needs and intentions. These changes may be rooted in routines of behaviour, such as prayer or household rituals, but they too are sites in which she can follow her own trajectories.

The process which transforms the structure of place into the (transient) possibilities of space invokes a kind of fluidity that belies the taciturnity of the diary's surface. In the phrase, "about the house", Hoby is imagined, re-formed, envisioned as a subject comfortable with her surroundings. Her self-articulation, not necessarily a conscious political act of self-determination, indeed almost certainly *not*, emerges from the processes of the everyday in which she makes her life. That this subject is already in view constitutes a performed, created space within the effacing systems of power determining that culture's perceptions. It is a demonstration of Certeau's point that the everyday escapes "the imaginary totalizations produced by the eye", that the "ordinary practitioners" live "down below" (*Practice of Everyday Life* 93) the totalising fictions of perspective and panopticism: "Is the immense texturology spread out before one's eyes anything more than a representation, an optical artifact?" (Certeau, *Practice of Everyday Life* 92).<sup>27</sup> The implicit authority of the phrase "about the house" recalls Mendelson and Crawford's point about women creating alternate spaces for themselves within the prevailing power structures nominally

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<sup>27</sup>In *The Practice of Everyday Life*, Certeau's "ordinary practitioners" are the urban populace.

operating for the benefit of men. The diary reveals a network of women, at the centre of which is Hoby herself; directing maids, reading with other women, sharing advice, and performing domestic tasks herself such as sewing and overseeing cooking.

The administration of domestic servants, most of whom are women, converges the domestic duties of the gentlewoman running a household with the creation of a space in which women and women's spiritual and secular concerns are prominent. On 3 August 1600, Hoby records that amongst her routine she "talked and reed to some good wiffes that was with me" (Moody 103), similarly on 11 June 1601, Hoby shares a morning with her maids: "After priuat prairs I went about the house and wrought amonge my Maides, and hard one read of the Booke of Marters" (Moody 151). In addition to everyday events such as this the diary records numerous women visitors to the house as well as Hoby herself visiting women in the district, especially her mother. On Sunday, 28 October 1599, Hoby records that between her attendances at church she "talked wth a women that was to be deuorsed from hir Husbande with whome she liued inceastuously" before then returning to church, after which she "spoke to Mrs Ormstone of the chapter that was read in the morning" (Moody 32). Amid the strict regime of the sabbath, Hoby maintains a network of associations that interweaves the practice of her faith with the concerns and interests of women around her. Her constant contact with her mother extends the geographical spread of this network from the immediate grounds of the estate to her mother's residence in Linton, reinforcing the primacy of Hoby's activities over their physical location. Mendelson and Crawford pursue a similar point when they observe that women's space in the period is produced by the networks of associations and relationships activated

through daily contact rather than the contingent structures of stone, wood, and plaster:

During the daytime, women treated their dwellings as fluid and open expanses, from which they surveyed the passing scene and emerged at will. They also freely resorted to each other's houses, making use of neighbours' dwellings much like a series of linked female spaces. Friends casually entered to eat and drink and chat, borrow domestic implements, give or receive charity, exchange information, visit the sick and dying, or share work and child-care.

(206)

Although this assertion has more to do with urban women of the middling or lower classes, the sense in which it describes a parallel female culture of exchange and (social or emotional) nourishment supports the impressions produced by Hoby's outline of domestic life on the Hackness estate. An entry that is perhaps emblematic of Hoby's familiarity with her surrounds and the extent to which she is central to a network of personal and social practices that make the estate "her" space is that of 25 May 1602: "After my Morninge exercise I wrought tell dinner : and after dinner I walked wt my Mother and Husband to sundrie places about the house" (Moody 180). This entry has the feel of a tour, of Hoby walking with her mother and her husband, two people who occupy positions of either authority or influence over her, and guiding them "about the house", the domain of which she has, practically if not legally, control.

Hoby is one of the effaced details, a subject involved in the "murky intertwining daily behaviours" (Certeau, *Practice of Everyday Life* 93) which are lost in the self-serving reductions of masculinist culture. Her movement through this house initiates a contestatory relation between different spatialised semiotic codes. The cultural and geometric structure of the house is imbricated with Hoby's everyday uses, and in the process it becomes hers. Important to this reading is the concept of privacy as conceived by the culture and engaged with by Hoby. While the creation of a shared "female space" is important to the delineation of Hoby as a subject operating within a specific cultural context, the further delineation of that subjectivity must be pursued through the medium of the culture's emergent conception of privacy; that is, apprehending the subject, in this case a Puritan woman, as individuated. The elaboration of this nascent discourse of privacy is rooted in the most ubiquitous and shared experiences of the culture: religion and domestic architecture.

**"and after went to my Clossitt": The Shape of Privacy.**

The diary represents a textual performance of personal piety. Other examples included spiritual autobiographies, devotional writings and even marginal notes in Bibles (Crawford 82). Crawford explains that piety had its public and private modes and that diaries performed an important role in helping to contextualise and explain peoples' lives within the framework of their beliefs. The actual composition of Hoby's diary, as is the case with other diarists, appears to adhere to the tenets of personal piety by being part of the daily ritual of private self-examination. The practice of private prayer was fundamental to puritan piety. In relation to New England Puritans, Hambrick-Stowe argues that

"secret" or "closet" devotions "lay at the very heart of New England spirituality" (156). Anne Ferry, tracing the metaphors of private prayer in sixteenth-century spiritual writings, argues that translations of important religious texts, such as Augustine's *Confessions*, deployed architectural metaphors as specific tropes of interiority; metaphors which, at least in Hoby's instance, reflect the physical (architectural) environment in which these exercises were conducted (Ferry 46-47).<sup>28</sup> The injunction to withdraw into oneself, and a similar built space in the process, was given scriptural force through the supportive interpretation of Matthew 6:6, which exhorts:

But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet,  
and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father  
which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in  
secret shall reward thee openly.<sup>29</sup>

The architectural specificity of closet and chamber resonates with Hoby's own, less metaphorically charged, descriptions of how she conducted her own "self-examination". (A term which seems to constitute a range of behaviours, from prayer to writing).

This emergent discourse of privacy, closely linked to personal religious practice, provides a point of access to the theorisation of the "oeconomic" architecture of Hoby's environment.<sup>30</sup> Yet the discourse of

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<sup>28</sup>Contextualising her comments on early English translations of Latin texts, Ferry points out that the architectural metaphors are reinforced by translators as a way of demarcating the metaphor, and its impact, from the residual influence of medieval physiology which professed a belief in the existence of "chambers", or cavities, in major organs such as the brain and the heart. Whilst Ferry's point is to illustrate the specifically architectural features of these metaphors, from my perspective the confluence of these two metaphorical traditions only confirms the spatiality of these religious discourses, the sense in which space, in physical and conceptual terms, is fundamental to a text such as Hoby's.

<sup>29</sup>Ferry points out that the term "closet" used in this extract had in fact evolved from the sixteenth-century translation "chamber", and that earlier versions, such as Wycliffe's, had used "couch" (47).

<sup>30</sup>This term, used by Lena Orlin, is, she argues, "the taxonomic term of choice in the

privacy which underpins many of the tenets of Puritanism still conflicts with the physical construction and operation of the early modern house, closet or no closet. Evolution in the form and configuration of early modern housing was characterised by a gradual move away from the communalism of medieval domestic spaces:

the fundamental change is an increase in [room] numbers as rooms changed from spaces that were shared to spaces that are private, and from rooms with more general functions to more specialised ones.

(Cooper 273)

Even so, Rybczynski argues that "[w]ithin the home, however, personal privacy remained relatively unimportant" (Rybczynski 39), reflecting the importance of shared space, necessitated by domestic labour and restricted living areas, to the early modern household. Moody's speculative description of the manor house's interior emphasises this communal aspect: "The central hall was a single large apartment for general use by everyone resident in the house, and the dwelling and reception rooms were on the upper floors" (xxxiv). Of course, Hoby's situation is different from the urban bourgeoisie in that as a country gentlewoman on a rural estate, and remaining childless, the structure of her life was significantly different from an urban housewife or lower class woman who had to engage in paid work to survive.

Nevertheless, her diary entries clearly show that her life was lived, in the main, in a social or public sphere. By "social or public sphere" I include the "domestic" duties of running the household in

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Renaissance, and it embraces such topics as the structure and governance of the household, the relationship of husband and wife, the education of children, and the supervision of servants" (11).

that these tasks were mediated through contacts with others, from domestic servants to tradesmen to estate farmers to visitors: "Women of the upper ranks took their household duties seriously. [...] Wives had duties of hospitality and sociability" (Mendelson and Crawford 307). This "public domesticity" is implicitly acknowledged by the public features of Puritan piety, events such as the "lectors", or religious exhortations, regularly attended by Hoby, the readings from scripture and other, mostly religious, texts of the period performed by the resident pastor, Richard Rhodes, during the early years of the diary, and the ubiquitous "public prayers".

[14 February 1600] After privat prayers I did break my fast, dresse my patients, write in my testament, took a lector, praied, and then dined : after dinner I wrought, talked with some that Came to me, hard Mr Rhodes read, took order for supper, then to publeck praers : after, to privat, and lastly to bed :

(Moody 61)

A godly regime such as this, combining secular and religious elements, worked to give the privately religious housewife a "form of semi-public authority [...] her focus on the inner life of the soul stimulated the life of the group, as her perceptions were shared with other women and her example became a well-known model to be emulated" (Mendelson and Crawford 230). As mistress of the estate, Hoby's piety acts as a binding agent on the relationships she maintains not just with other women, as important as they are, but with the whole range of people with whom she comes in contact. Her piety is a central theme of the inscription on her funerary monument in Hackness church:

Whilst this lay remained in naturall life, she helde a constant religiovs covrse in performinge the dvties required of every faithfvl Child of God, both in their pvblicke and private callings : not only by propagatinge his holy word in all places where she had power, but alsoe by exercisinge her selfe dayly in all other particvler christen dvties, and endevoures to performe the whole will of God through her faithe in Christ ; the frvites whereof were daily reaped in svndry of the faithfull servantes of God, (as well strangers vnto her, as of her own kindred and Allies) whose wantes were largely svpplied by her christian charitie

(Meads 39-40)

At the centre of all this activity is the house and the estate. These are the primary sites of Hoby's "work", those activities which constitute the obligations, pragmatic and cultural, with which she must comply. Her location in the house and its attendant estates, its centrality to her everyday existence, focuses spatial, economic, and cultural discourses on Hoby as a specific (cultural / historical) subject.

Privacy and physical space converge in Hoby's utilisation of particular rooms in the house, particularly the chamber and the study. The concept of private space was beginning to gather a semiotic significance by the time Hoby was keeping her diary. Jagodzinski argues that the concept of "privacy" remained "unsettled" in the early modern mind and was often thought of in negative terms, "as the absence of station, of authority" (23). Yet Viviana Comensoli argues that the semiotic function of private space in the late sixteenth century was

increasingly "as an indicator of status and privilege" (Comensoli 75). This (masculine) privilege attaches to the development of private space as an adjunct to the domination of discourses of domesticity by men. The focus of these discourses of male privilege is the study. Orlin argues that private space was "not an object of the architecture of the period", but that the study developed out of "architectural ambitions to protect and preserve records and objects of value" which also led to the association of the study with the lock and key, thereby creating a unique and exclusive space within the household (Orlin 185):

Closeting himself inside, the householder discovered a space that was unique to him, that accepted his exclusive imprint upon it, that rejected the incursions of others, that welcomed him into the comforting embrace of his proofs of possession, that celebrated an identity independent of relational responsibility, and that put ready to hand the impedimenta of authorship.

(Orlin 186)

The study, or closet, acted as a repository for the subject, a space of retreat from the access granted to them by the public nature of the house. The correlation between the subject and the closet is further borne out by its apparently instrumentalist function as a repository for those objects most precious to the individual: "closets or cabinets were already accepted as the rooms where the owner of a house kept the most precious or favourite of his personal possessions; pictures, medals, and rarities joined naturally with his books and personal papers" (Girouard 174). The link between the study's importance and the role of texts is further elaborated by Jagodzinski when she argues that the gradual commodification of privacy in England can be traced to the religious

upheavals of the post-Reformation period: "these religious controversies eventually ratified the right to individual autonomy in all things (including religion); and that the catalyst for these changes lay in the practice of private spiritual reading" (24). As a result, the correlation between Hoby's Puritanism, its emphasis on personal reflection, mediated through Scripture and a (written) personal spiritual accounting, and the closet and the chamber, as structures of both intimate and public usage, becomes important in determining the production of "private" spaces within the house.

Wigley argues that the study is "the true center of the house" (348). It consolidates male control, that which would seem to be diluted by the apparent "relinquishment" of authority for the domestic to women, in the room wherein the family documents--"the interrelated financial and genealogical records" (348)--are kept: "The whole economy of the household is literally written down at the hidden center of the space it organizes" (348). The closet's position within the house, according to Cooper, had no definitive location (301), although it was generally a "small chamber off the bedroom" (Schofield 81), and indicates, as a general proposition, that the room is the site for a withdrawal from the various modes of public gaze within the domestic scene. As spaces they represent an aspect of the individual that does not desire to be seen or contacted without permission, reflecting "a moral climate that was increasingly concerned with the cultivation of the individual and with the enjoyment of privacy as a good" (Cooper 300). In this model, the study and the closet are spatial literalisations of the householder's legal and cultural ownership. Orlin goes on to add that the owner's ability to lock the study indicates the synonymy between his self and exclusive privacy: "the housewife, in particular contrast,

was to have no room of her own for some generations" (Orlin 187). Wigley supports this contention by claiming that whilst men had access to the locked secrets of the closet and its repository of (written, documentary) power, women were left to "[maintain] a system without access to its secrets" (348). The space, in Wigley's terms, is not just where this private writing is kept but actually enables that writing to be produced: "The private space is the space of private writing. It makes available the new literary form of the *memoir* which began as a record and consolidation of the family but increasingly became a celebration of the private individual" (348). In effect, Wigley's analysis of Alberti's texts claims that the "construction of private space as such cannot be separated from the construction of the ideology of privacy" (349):

The new spaces of everyday life cannot be understood as either the physical consequence of new forms of representation or their condition of possibility. Rather, they are themselves forms of representation. Each shift in the emergence of private space involves transformations of such systems (private correspondence, portraits, the bellcord, the diary, the corridor, the novel, the cabinet). The house is never a self-sufficient spatial device. It requires a multiplicity of systems which are not simply added to a physical form [...] Place is not simply a mechanism for controlling sexuality. Rather, it is the control of sexuality by systems of representation that produces place. The study, like all spaces, is not simply entered. Rather, it is (re)produced. As such, the issue here is not simply

the existence of studies in houses but the ideological construction of the study which is at once the construction of a gendered subjectivity that 'occupies' it.

(Wigley 350)<sup>31</sup>

Yet from Hoby's diary we know she did have access to these rooms and used them as Orlin and Wigley describe. The process of "examination", with which the diary is associated, is repeatedly referred to in the context of her "clositt". As examples, the entry of 27 April 1601 records "then [I] went into my Clositt, and then examened myself and praied" (Moody 145), and on 10 August 1601 Hoby writes, "after, I went to my Clositt, and there reed and praied" (Moody 159). In the spare prose of the diary, Hoby situates herself in Wigley's central place and engages in the economy of writing and reading that purports to generate individual identity within early modern culture. She is making that place her space through the performance of those acts of legitimation recognised as markers of presence within her culture. Her occupancy of the house as a place does not inexorably correlate with dominant discourses of power structuring the domestic site. Instead, her diary, the central repository of private individualism, records her involvement in a large and diverse economy of personal and household-related writing. Over the course of the diary, Hoby records herself as writing her "testament" and her "catechisme", annotating her bible, writing out

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<sup>31</sup>Wigley's use of the terms space and place is positioned in relation to architectural theory and is not formally connected to Certeau's work. In the course of his article, Wigley does argue that space is a contested concept that is connected, to some degree, to cultural practices. It should not be assumed from this, however, that when Wigley uses these terms there is a necessary correlation with Certeau's definitions: See Mark Wigley, "Untitled: The Housing of Gender." *Sexuality and Space*. Ed. Beatriz Colomina. Princeton papers on Architecture. New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1992. 328-89.

sermons, writing her "repeticion", making entries in her "common place" and "table" books, writing letters, engaging in "household writing" as well as miscellaneous "other writing". In the course of one week in August 1600, Hoby records that she twice "wrett of my sarmon book a whill", was "writinge to Mr Hoby", "wrett and praied", "wrett some medetation", and "wrett in my testament" (Moody 105). The entry for 22 October 1599 further illustrates the scriptive and spatial networks within which Hoby conducted her life:

After priuat praier I did write : then I did eate my breakfast : then I went about the house and then I wret out my sermon : after, I praied, and so went to dinner : after dinner I walked about and had a Lector, and then Came to priuat praier and medetation : after, I wret some notes in my testament and then went to supper : after, to the Lector, and then I wret a letter to my mother, and so to bed[.]

(Moody 30)

Similarly, the entry for 23 August 1600 emphasises the importance of writing to Hoby's daily regime of both secular and godly exercises. Yet in this entry we also find the godly mistress of the house attending to her servants, cultivating Mendelson and Crawford's "women's space":

when I had praied I wrett notes in my testement, and, after, I went about the house, wrett :2: letters, praied and then dined : after, I wrough, and talked with my maides of good thinges &, at praier time, I returned to priuat examenation and praier : after, I supped, then I went to publick praers, and, when I

had talked a whill, I went to priuat praers and so to  
bed[.]

(Moody 107)

Again the cultural discourse of female domesticity, with its flattening of the individual woman into a functional instrument without personal requirements, is seen to mask the reality of a woman administering a large household and a rigorous personal faith.<sup>32</sup> The entry of June 28, 1600 has Hoby occupying a range of environments, public and private, whilst attending to matters of both household and personal significance:

After I had praied I spent all the forenone in  
ordringe thinges in my Clositt and sorting of papers :  
after diner I was busie in the house tell 6 a klok, and  
then I went to priuat praier and examenation : after, I  
went to supper, and, when I had walked a whill, I  
went to publecke praier and, not long after, to priuat,  
and so to bed [.]

(Moody 95)

The closet's place as an adjunct to the bedchamber indicates its function as a private place that is regulated by the closing of doors, the turning of locks, and the isolation of the individual in space.<sup>33</sup> Yet this physical isolation is not the extent of privacy in the period. Rather, privacy, like space, is a process determined, at least to some degree, by the behaviour of the individual producing it. As an example, the chamber, another of

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<sup>32</sup>The prevalence of these discourses is nowhere more apparent than in the eulogising funerary inscription quoted in the text above. For all of that text's celebration of conventional acquiescence it also celebrates a vital and active life.

<sup>33</sup>In entries such as 10 August 1601, the distinction between the closet as a place of withdrawal from the heteromorphic spaces of the household appears marked: "After I had praied I was busy seeing some roomes mad handsome for Corne : after, I praied, and dined : in the after none I made waxe lightes, and wrought : after, I went to my clositt, and there reed and praied" (Moody 159).

the most mentioned rooms in Hoby's text, oscillates between privacy and public access depending on circumstances.

The chamber was a more traditionally "public" room than the closet and the name acts as a kind of coverall for several forms of room. The most public of these was the "Great Chamber" which acted as a public space for entertaining visitors and holding general household business and recreation. Yet the more withdrawn "chamber" more often referred to the bedchamber (Howard 118) which itself often saw a "withdraughte", or withdrawing chamber, set between it and the main public halls or chambers (Girouard 94; Cooper 273). This interpellation of rooms between public halls and bedchambers, which further withdrew into closets, sets out a spatial scheme within which the personal privacy of the householder could be arranged and produced. As with the closet, there is an implicit power gradient built in to the chamber's recession within the house. In a discussion of modern public buildings, Markus elaborates a spatial scheme that in many respects reflects the broad social and physical structure of the manor house as a site for public, domestic, and private acts, all of which are able to be accessed by those from outside the household according to the householder's predisposition to grant that access:

In public buildings there is a shallow visitor zone.

Visitors interface with the inhabitants at some spatial barrier which prevents deeper penetration [...]

The inhabitants occupy a zone beyond this which, to the visitors, looks deep and usually has its own access. Depth indicates power [...] The person with the greatest power is at the tip of the tree, reached

through corridors, stairs, outer and inner offices and waiting lobbies.

(14-16)

This passage again recalls the early modern identification of women with their house and the culturally sensitive issue of the stewardship and penetration of that zone by men. When Hoby refers to activities occurring in her "chamber", it appears most reasonable to expect that she is referring to her bedchamber, but this does not necessarily imply a particularly "private" aspect to the room. The diary records several different activities occurring in the chamber, from the almost ubiquitous "I was busie in my chamber", to a place of rest, recuperation and reception of visitors in the same way that a bedroom might be opened to guests visiting the ill in our own culture:

[24 September 1600] After I had praied I tooke some Gentle phesicke, which wrought verie well so that I kept my Chamber, and was vesited by Sir Tho: farfax, my Cossine Stanhope, and Mr Genkins[.]

(Moody 113)

Here the chamber acts as a space of retirement and of access, but only when the occupant/owner grants it.<sup>34</sup> Power is exercised in the granting and denying of access to private spaces. The extent to which access to this room is connected with the personal authority of its inhabitant is demonstrated in the sometimes violent visit of a group of young men to the Hoby house in August 1600.

On August 26-27 1600, a group of young men from the local district, including William Eure, son of the Hoby's neighbours, payed a

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<sup>34</sup>Nicholas Cooper observes, however, that over the course of the seventeenth century the bedchamber lost its identity as a room for general use and became more associated with the occupant's private needs (298).

raucous visit to the Hoby estate and spent a drunken night that ended in confrontation and, subsequently, legal action by Thomas Hoby. The confrontation on the morning of the twenty-seventh centred on Eure's demand that he speak with Lady Hoby in her chamber. The evidence of Hoby's servant, Robert Nettleton, before Star Chamber outlines the sense of impropriety and invasion that surrounded Eure's words as he attempted to gain access to the chamber:

After breakfast the guests made a great noise in the great chamber with hallowing and shouting, and, my lady's chamber being very near, Sir Thomas sent them word that, if they would use some other quieter exercise they should be welcome, for that they did disease my Lady. Thereupon it was answered they would but see my lady and go their ways [...] After, she sent for Nettleton and willed him to tell Mr Eure that she would be willing to see him but not the rest of the company, because she was sickly and kept her chamber.

(Moody 244; Meads 41-42)<sup>35</sup>

The provocative response from the guests was to suggest that they came only "to see my lady and therefore let him send me word what it lies him in and I will pay for it, and will set up horns at his gate and be gone" (Moody 244; Meads 42). It appears that Nettleton was reluctant to pass on this message to his mistress in her chamber. The air of impropriety hanging over the scene is palpable, but he was assured by a colleague that "he were best to deliver it as it was for truth would never

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<sup>35</sup>Moody and Meads take this quotation from the correspondence and evidence relating to the Hoby v. Eure lawsuit as contained in *The Cecil Papers. Calendar of the MS of the most Honourable Marquis of Salisbury*. Hist. MSS Com., 1883-1923 (Moody 239).

shame itself, which he thereupon did in my lady's chamber and in her presence" (Moody 244; Meads 42).

Thomas Hoby's response was to ask the group to leave and forward any requests they had of his wife in writing. What follows is a series of advances and withdrawals by both parties played out in the liminal spaces of the great chamber, withdrawing chamber, and bedchamber:

After this being delivered to Mr. Eure, he being in a little chamber betwixt the dining chamber and my lady's, he said he came to see my lady and would see her ere he went, for they were strong enough to keep that chamber if there came twenty or forty against them [...] Sir William [said] that he and his company were strong enough to keep that little chamber against all the country [...] After this my lady was willing to see Mr. William Eure, who wished the rest of the guests to go forth of that room into the dining chamber, and [a servant] ordered Nettleton to bolt the door after them because my lady would speak only with Mr. Eure. When Nettleton tried to do this, the guests thrust the door open upon him, and took hold of him and threw him against the table end in the great chamber, being about two fathoms in length. And so they went into that little chamber again, and would not afterward suffer him to bolt the door.

(Moody 244-45; Meads 42-43)

After the meeting was concluded the guests left the estate in a flurry of bravado and petty vandalism. Hoby's own description of these events is predictably spare and refers only to the brief encounter with Eure: "After I was readie I spake with Mr Ewrie, who was so drunke that I sone made an end of that I had no reason to stay for" (Moody 108). What is striking in all of this noise and violence is the extent to which Hoby's personal space, the chamber, is respected by the interlopers. Throughout the incident, despite threats and taunts thrown at both of the Hobys, the sanctity of Lady Hoby's space is tacitly accepted in the elaborate approaches made by proxy to her through her servant. The door to the chamber is approached, the middle chamber occupied and its door kept open with force, yet ultimately Eure is allowed to see Hoby only at her discretion, albeit one that is probably influenced by the tumult occurring outside her chamber door. Nettelton's reluctance to convey Eure's presumptuous messages "in my lady's chamber and in her presence" (Moody 244; Meads 42) demonstrates the essential link between subject and space. This room, which had previously received visitors and been the site of household chores, was now, through the operation of the occupant's desires and the (sexually) aggressive approaches of Eure's party, inextricably linked to the safety and integrity of the mistress's body. Comensoli's work on the link between the semiotics of space in the early modern domestic tragedy and (female) sexual fidelity asserts that the "inner chamber" acts as an indicator of sexual privacy which, in the context of the domestic tragedy, can then be deployed as a dramatic device illustrating adulterous betrayal, usually by the wife (74). In Hoby's case these same semiotics of propriety and containment operate, but instead of demonstrating a sexual or physical porousness they work

to illustrate Hoby's control over the spaces of her house/body; Eure is allowed into the room only with Hoby's consent.

Even so, privacy does not remain the exclusive possession of this particular (male) semiotic regime of closed spaces. Hoby's experience of privacy, and her transient occupation of its spaces, occurs within these larger discourses and often uses them to create particularity within her environment's demands for uniformity. Imagining space outside of the geometric boundaries of the locked room, Hoby's experiences of the private are fundamentally linked to her Puritanism. This belief system is encoded with the tenets of withdrawal, self-examination, and the experience of a personal dialogue with divinity. These moments occur within the places of the household, those rooms which are otherwise locales for social intercourse between members of the household, servants and visitors of all ranks. This correspondence between "actual" space and the space of thought is consistent with the development of private rooms during the late sixteenth-century as geometric extensions of the concept of privacy which, at that point in time, "still meant 'secrecy' and pertained to the realm of thought" (Ranum 212). Hoby's diary specifically names rooms in the house, such as the closet, and associates these with specific functions which may change as the situation requires. Some of these changes involve the momentary production of a private space of self-contemplation within the sanctioned discourse of religious observance.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>36</sup>The nature of Puritan belief means the concept of privacy in this period remains ambivalent from a contemporary perspective. For although Hoby's withdrawal to spaces of personal and spiritual contemplation means isolation from the material world, as Ruth Gavison asserts, the "notion of an ever-present, omniscient God exhibits to some extent a willingness to accept, in some context, life with a total lack of privacy" (443). Even so, such a contemporary evaluation does seem to ignore the integral place of God to an early modern (Puritan) individual's conception of self.

**"I went abroad, and was busie in my garden": Exterior Space, Interior Space.**

The diary provides a sense of the mobility of the subject around the house and attendant grounds. Her entries repeatedly name the rooms she occupies and her forays outside forming a bare outline of her movements through her material environment. To return to the mid-sixteenth century description of the manor house and its amenities:

Hackness lyeth most pleasantly and near unto Scarborough enthroned on all sides with fair woods, hills and dales, pleasant springs, backs, and an abundance of grass, corne, pasture, whereto belongs an old mancion place or manor house in motly reparation and hath Hall, parlour, great chamber, chapel, bedchaulmer and many other lodgings, two kitchins, a butteria, pantry, Brewhouse, barn, Bakehouse, Stables and Gildhouse with all other houses necessarie whereto belongeth a little Garden and Orchard.

(NYCRO ZF 4/3/1 c.1565)

It is in the "little Garden" that I now want to meditate on Lady Hoby's diary.

I have discussed Hoby's relation to the heavily structured spaces of the household and the diary's tracing of her movements as a remnant of a productive spatial operation. Her mobility throughout the house, a site of male power and notional control, and her manipulation of various rooms for a variety of (often individual) purposes suggests she is able to initiate a relation to the household as "place" which enables her to produce her own "spaces", spaces which have no

permanence but which are apparently always possible, given appropriate circumstances. Now I want to leave the spaces of closets, chambers and kitchens and follow Hoby's text "outside" to walk in her garden and try to gain a sense of the conjunction of practices occurring there. In doing so I try to "see" the networks of historiographical, personal, and spatial processes which converge in this imagined locale

Implicit in any evocation of the garden in an Elizabethan context is a discussion of, or gesture toward, its historical and cultural significance. In general terms, the garden acts an important symbolic and physical site in the imagination of Elizabethan culture: "And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed. [...] And the Lord God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and keep it" (Genesis 2. 8 & 15). Bacon's essay, "Of Gardens" expressly invokes this originary garden as the opening gambit to his discussion of the topic: "God almighty first planted a garden; and, indeed, it is the purest of human pleasures" (Bacon 57). These Edenic connotations are filtered through horticultural and literary traditions which shape the form and function of the garden by the time Hoby is wandering around her "little" plot.

The medieval garden was traditionally a walled-in and "controlled representation of nature" (Strong 14) whose constituent features (walks, alleys, knots of flowers, fountains) were developed into the highly geometrical and idealised gardens of the Italian renaissance (themselves developed from the rediscovery of classical gardening principles and tastes) which, in turn, were imported to and combined with sixteenth-century English gardening styles. The idealised image of the garden as manipulated nature, an extension of the divine injunction to "replenish the earth, and subdue it" (Genesis 1.28), is

given voice in Bacon's essay in which, in a comparison between architecture and garden design, he claims "men come to build stately, sooner than to garden finely; as if gardening were the greater perfection" (Bacon 57). And it is this manipulability which is scorned in Marvell's "The Mower Against Gardens" where he asserts that "within the Gardens square" (l.5):

Luxurious Man, to bring his Vice in use,  
Did after him the World seduce:  
And from the fields the Flow'rs and Plants allure,  
Where nature was most plain and pure.

(43: ll. 1-4)

This dichotomy between the perfected and the polluted garden follows a medieval conception, extrapolated through poetry, of the garden's essentially divided symbolic import:

During the Middle Ages the poetic treatment of the garden focused more on the dialectics of the garden as a place both of innocence and sinful disobedience resulting in the Fall. This division led to a separation of the garden into the gardens of Charity and Cupidity, depending on which quality of Eden was alluded to.

(Beretta 30)

Late Elizabethan and seventeenth-century poetry on the garden, being contemporary with Hoby's life and text, acts as a site where the cultural logics of the garden are able to be described, debated, or parodied. So Nicholas Breton's, "A Strange Description of a Rare Garden Plot" describes his "garden ground of griefe" (l.1), where he sets out his life and its attendant tribulations using imagery drawn directly from contemporary garden designs and devices:

From this I stept aside, unto the knot of care,  
Which so was crost with strange conceits, as tong  
cannot declare:

The herbe was called Time, which set out all that knot:  
And like a Maze me thought it was, when in the  
crookes I got.

(*The Phoenix Nest* 30; ll. 6-9)

*The Faerie Queene's* parodic description of the Bower of Bliss, with its inflated images of natural and artistic confluence (and conflict), similarly interacts with traditional literary and contemporary horticultural models of the garden:

A place pickt out by choice of best alive,  
That natures worke by art can imitate:  
In which what ever in this worldly state  
Is sweet, and pleasing unto living sense,  
Or that may dayntiest fantasie aggrate,  
Was pouréd forth with plentifull dispence,  
And made there to abound with lavish affluence.

(185: Book 2, Canto xii, Stanza 42, ll. 3-9)

Yet for this section, I am concerned less with the treatment of the garden in early modern poetry than with the image of the garden as it might be applied to my examination of Margaret Hoby's diary. Keeping this in mind, I want to use this mention of Spenser to turn back down this particular literary path before I go too far and consider the physical space of the garden as it manifests in writing of the period. Spenser's poem is a convenient place to do this as his description of the Bower of Bliss operates as a model of the "false paradise" which occupies considerable time and space in Elizabethan considerations of the garden. Ilva Beretta

argues that for all the classical allusions and imaginary flights of fancy operating in early modern gardens, they remained essentially preoccupied with the garden's synonymy with Eden: "first and foremost the garden was conceived as the image of the garden God had created for Adam, and by creating one himself, real or imaginary, man approached the divine creation" (Beretta 114). The garden reminds the occupant of human sinfulness (the garden as *momento mori* is a constant feature of the period) and acts as a form of three-dimensional moral guidebook; a space of reflection on the individual's relation to the grand schemes of divinity. I want to harness this metaphysically abstracted garden to the less glamorous "kitching garden", the source of the household's herbs and spices, in relation to Margaret Hoby, Puritan gentlewoman, and her "little Garden".

Like the house, the garden is also a place implicitly and explicitly ordered by forces, emblematic and physical, over which Margaret Hoby has little control. Indeed it is perhaps her very complicity with some of those forces which enables her to engage in so many activities in the (physical) spatial field of the garden (and beyond). The garden I want to examine is a matrix of quotidian labour and silent self-reflection. These two aspects are simultaneously emphasised upon the same subject in regards to the same spaces, but Hoby is able to accommodate these imperatives and configure herself to move within and between them.

Tracing a first line of sight across Hoby's garden with reference to its "quotidian" elements, there is a reference from the 17th of September 1599 in which Hoby writes that she "read of the arball" (Moody 18). Herbals--books detailing the names, properties, and virtues of plants--proliferated during the sixteenth century and were very

popular in England. Hoby's reference indicates the obligations implicit in her chores as mistress of the estate, which included medical treatment, supervising the kitchen, dispensing advice and recipes for cosmetics, and providing information with which to treat "evil dreams, sleeplessness, melancholy, and clothes moths" (Henry 5), amongst a range of other financial, personal, and housekeeping duties. Thomas Hill's *The Gardener's Labyrinth* (1590) explores the duties and responsibilities of the practical gardener to their plot, including the correct cultivation and usage of their harvest, for a variety of purposes from cookery to perfume. Gervase Markham's *The English Housewife* (1615) elaborates on these duties in terms of detail and specific gender responsibility. Through its listing of the kinds of herbs and vegetables the housewife should be able to cultivate--when they should be planted, harvested, and cooked--Markham asserts that such skills are so integral to her role as wife that "she that is utterly ignorant therein may not by the laws of strict justice challenge the freedom of marriage, because indeed she can then but perform half her vow; for she may love and obey, but she cannot serve and keep him with that true duty which is ever expected" (60). The plentiful garden again echoes Edenic images of abundance, but here they are linked to the labour necessary to achieve it in a post-lapsarian world. It is the imagery of Marvell's "The Garden":

Ripe Apples drop about my head;  
The Luscious Clusters of the Vine  
Upon my Mouth do crush their Wine;  
The Nectaren, the curious Peach,  
Into my hands themselves do reach;

(52: ll. 34-38)

So on 1 November 1603, Hoby records; "at this time we had in our gardens Rasberes faire sett againe, and almost everie Hearbe and flower bare twisse" (Moody 196). As Joanna Moody observes, Hoby's garden would have been designed to provide a practical as well as aesthetic dimension to the house:

There would have been a flower, kitchen and herb garden, as well as an orchard. An important function of Lady Hoby's garden would have been to supply food and herbs for medicinal purposes.

(10, fn. 24)

The garden as place of production is a repeated feature of the diary: [28 August 1599] "about one a clock I geathered my Apeles tell :4:"; [26 May 1600] "after I had dinned, I went abroad, and was busie in my garden all the day allmost.." ; [12 August 1600] "After privat praers I went about the house and was busie tell all most diner time : then I praied : after, I was busie in my Garden..."; (Moody 11,85, 105).

In April 1605 there is a series of entries which documents a period of intensive labour in the garden which is useful as a way of outlining the productive connection between Hoby and her garden. From the 5th to the 13th of April 1605, Hoby's activities seem to be dominated by "work" in the garden: [5 April] "at day I was busie in the Gardin..."; [9 April] "This morninge, after privat prairs, I was busie in the Garden : and after dinner Likewise untill eveninge I was ther [...]"; and on the 13th she surveys the past week with the remark, "from the 9 to the 13, I praise god, I had my health, and was buseed in my garden the most of the day" (Moody 211-2). In the course of this week there is one day in which her "business" invades the other primary routine structuring her time: prayer. On the 6th of April, Hoby records, "This

day I bestowed to much time in the Garden, and thereby was worse able to performe spirituall duties" (Moody 211). Her self-castigating remarks here indicate the balance of spiritual and physical labour upon which she relied for personal stability and well-being. That her duties in the garden should erode her spiritual routines is a source of discomfort to her, as is any impediment to what she believes to be the primary relationship in her life, that between herself and God. This anxiety is not specific to Hoby:

While they prided themselves in running their households smoothly and sparing their husbands from trouble and anxiety, godly women were under no illusions: their work was of secondary importance. Moreover, some wives could find their own spirituality impeded by their worldly roles.

(Mendelson and Crawford 311)

The heavily laden symbolism of the garden, as the site of Hoby's discomfort, indicates the capacity for the physical location to be re-imagined at different moments in accordance with the changing priorities of the subject producing that space.

In specific terms, the garden, as a site, is not inconsistent with the spiritual life Hoby feels is impaired by her work there on April 1605. Whilst the implicit demands for Edenic abundance might work on one level to maintain a productive garden in economic terms, the garden is also a potent image of spiritual contemplation. Eden is also a place of harmony with God, a reflection of the perfection of God's natural balance and the place man can occupy in that equation (either as a crafter of nature or a re-presenter of the abundance and diversity of nature). Eden is not the only garden in the Scriptures either, and these

echoes, from the Song of Songs to the agonies in the Garden of Gethsemane, have their own function in the pious subject's interpretation of their relationship to God. Private spaces are as much mental as physical. Puritanism's attraction to meditative withdrawal here connects with the popular image of the Elizabethan garden as a place of solitude and self-reflection centring around the concept of "melancholy". Richard Rogers advocated that meditation, as a necessary component of "private prayer" (and he notes here, "these two being companions"), should occur "on our chamber privately, or in a field, or some commodious place, that we may the better performe it" (*Seven Treatises* 235; Coffin 58). Similarly, in an outdoor service to the court of Edward VI in 1549, Hugh Latimer, entreating his congregation to consider the agonies of the Garden of Gethsemane, railed, "A goodly meditation to have in your gardens!" (Coffin 58). Withdrawal and privacy are clearly not inconsistent with being "outside". Indeed, Roy Strong asserts that, "[f]or the Protestant the summer house replaced the cloister in which one might seek solitude and dwell on *contemptus mundi* and in which the trees and plants became ladders of contemplative ascent" (Strong 211). Much literature of the late-sixteenth and seventeenth centuries focuses on the benefits of contemplation, especially in the meditative setting of the garden, and its relation to melancholy. Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy* (1621), although claiming withdrawal into natural settings could be a cause of melancholy, also prescribes it as a treatment (Beretta 41):

to walk amongst Orchards, Gardens, Bowers, Mounts,  
and Arbours, artificial wildernesses, green thickets,  
Arches, Lawns, Rivulets, Fountains, and such like  
pleasant places [...] the ever-changing songs of little

birds, bright colours, and the meadow-shrubbery, &c [...] or sit in a shady seat, must needs be a delectable recreation.

(Burton 443)

So we find in Hoby a strong connection between the garden and religious meditation: [24 August 1599] "after the sarmon I presently went to dinner, after which I passed the time in talk with some friends, and then went to privat praier : that don I took the aire in the Coach with Mr Hoby, and so cam in and walked in the garden, medetatinge of the pointes of the sarmon and prainge tell hard before I went to supper"; [29 April 1600] "After I had praied I went about the house, dressed. my patient, walked to Garden and there medetated" (Moody 9, 79).

But Hoby does not just experience her garden as a dyadic oscillation between private meditation and working the garden for the household. She can experience the garden as a nuanced combination of acts which are both complicit with, and yet exceed or evade in some respects, the power structures (symbolic and physical) which seek to order her life. The entry for the 29th of July 1601 indicates a degree of overlap between the activities performed in the exterior spaces of the estate: "After privat praier I walked into the garden : after diner I wrought tell almost night, and then I went abroad with my Maides that were busie pulling hempe : and after I Cam in to privatt examination and praier" (Moody 157). For my purposes this entry provides an example of Hoby utilising the same exterior environment, in the same day, for different ends. The contemplative mode is replaced by the imperatives of the household economy over the course of the day. Further to this blurring of activities performed as part of her experience of the garden, Hoby also records private conversations (although not

their substance) being held there with people close to her, particularly her husband and Richard Rhodes. Her conversation with Rhodes in the garden on the 25th of August 1599 seems typical of their frequent discussions all over the house: "I went to praier and medetation : then I went about the house tell supper time : after supper I talked with Mr Rhodes in the garden, and then to publeck praiers" (Moody 10). Whilst not recording the details of the conversation, this type of meeting is repeated throughout the diary with Rhodes, her husband, and sundry other friends, and not just in the garden.

An intrinsic part of her life seems to be walks "abroad", which may refer to the garden, but also refer to the fields and dales surrounding the house. For example, on 10 June 1600, Hoby records that "I with my Cosi walked into the closes" (Moody 89). "Closes" is a reference to enclosed grasslands "on the other side of the river from the manor house" (Moody 89, n.164). The estate can be seen to be physically divided into gradually larger enclosures within which Hoby navigates along lines of oeconomic and personal priority. A map of the Hackness estate dating from 1725 shows the manor house, the garden and orchard, and a network of fields spreading out around the house and the adjacent village. Joanna Moody summarises the estate thus: "Pastures enclose the hall, its gardens and orchard, and there are abundant woods, planted mainly with oak and ash in Lady Hoby's time" (xxxix). There is a sense in which the hall is located at the centre of a series of exterior "chambers", extending from the intimacy of the garden, through the enclosed fields to the open undulations of the dales. The diary records these locations as sites of recreation and work in a number of different forms: [31 July 1600] "I brak my fast and went abroad to the haymakers"; [6 May 1601] "I went to the dales wher I was,

all after none, seeing som work" ; [20 August 1601] "This day I went, after priuatt prairs, to see workmen stubb firs [cut trees]"; [21 August 1601] "After prairs I walked to some workemen : after dinner I Walked again into our pastur"; [9 September 1601] "After prairs I walked to see some wheat" (Moody 102; 146; 160; 161; 163).<sup>37</sup> The geography of the estate, like the structure of the house, reflects the proprietary rights of the landowner in material as well as conceptual terms. On 25 September 1601, Hoby records her day's travels and in doing so connects the various internal and external chambers of the estate in a routine of overlapping public and private priority; the estate as a whole changing around her as she moves between activities: "After priuatt prairs I kept with Mr Vrpith : and all the after none I was busie, some time at the plowers, and after in the house tell praier time : and then I went into my Clositt" (Moody 165). As the locked doors of the closet or the bedchamber signify the householder's right of singular occupation, so too, on a larger and more culturally visible scale, the division of the estate asserts the landowner's control over the management of the land.

In a wider historical sense, the division and consolidation of the estate reflects the established and culture-wide effects of land enclosure on the shape and control of English agrarian life. Consolidating farming land in the hands of large landowners, whether by coercion or agreement, from late medievalism through to the eighteenth century, as McRae asserts, "the guiding principle of enclosure is the rational apportionment of rights of property over any given piece of land", and specifically the privileging of "individual interests over communal relations" (McRae 42). This fundamental

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<sup>37</sup>Joanna Moody notes that the walk to the dales is approximately 3 kilometres along a stream, one of several similar small dales in the area (146, fn.257).

precept is reflected in the physical and geographical division of "enclosed" land. As Cantor contends, "in practice enclosure nearly always involved the physical demarcation of landholding by hedges, fences, walls and ditches" (28) which reflected in physical terms the new legal and conceptual status of the land as the property of an individual rather than the group.<sup>38</sup>

To enclose land was to extinguish common rights over it, thus putting an end to all common grazing [...] If the enclosed land lay in the common arable fields or in the meadows, the encloser now had complete freedom to do what he pleased with his land throughout the year, instead of having to surrender the stubble or aftermath after harvest to the use of the whole township. On the pasture commons, enclosure by an individual signified the appropriation to one person of land which had previously been at the disposal of the whole community throughout the year. All enclosures, thus, whether they concerned lands in the common fields, in the meadows, or in the common pastures, deprived the community of common rights.

(Thirsk qtd. in Newby 21)<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>38</sup>James Siemon argues that the debate over enclosure was much more complex than just an enduring disagreement over access to land between landowners and tenants. Siemon observes that many arguments against enclosure by landowners for their private benefit simultaneously advocated its use by tenant farmers to increase their own collective productivity. In effect, the debate ceases to be about the practice of enclosure as much as its socio-economic motives. I am unable to elaborate on Siemon's argument further here: See James R. Siemon, "Landlord Not King: Agrarian Change and Interarticulation" *Enclosure Acts: Sexuality, Property, and Culture in Early Modern England*. Ed. Richard Burt and John Michael Archer. Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1994. 17-33.

<sup>39</sup>Joan Thirsk's words are quoted in Howard Newby's, *Country Life: A Social History of Rural England*. Unfortunately, the referencing system used by Newby does not record

In the diary's descriptions of Hoby's peregrinations about the estate we find the assertion of a subjective relationship with its topography analogous to her protean utilisation of the interior of the manor house.

The exterior's integral place within the matrix of locations constituting Hoby's domestic sphere is perhaps best illustrated by her casual aside in the entry of 1 September 1599, in which she records "I walked about the house, barne, and feeldes" (Moody 13). Here the possessory authority of her ubiquitous phrase "I went about the house" is extended to include the ancillary buildings and the fields further out from the manor house. Placed in context, the relationship between the mistress of the estate and her land is one of possession and ownership both legally (she was in possession of land independent from her husband well into their marriage) and cultural terms as the effective administrator and reference point for her tenants. The division of the land marks this ownership, her traversal of these exterior chambers - listed on the 1725 map under names such as "Near Hal Field", "Long Field Close", "House Close", "Hill Close", and "Little Park" - unspectacularly but effectively demonstrates her active utilisation of these places, these proprietary sites, as locations in which she is able to produce her own spaces (Moody 92). This sense of proprietorial familiarity is in contrast to the cultural delimitation of women with respect to the domestic zone. Again, Mendelson and Crawford's assertion of a network of female spaces built around the domestic sphere is bolstered by entries in Hoby's diary which suggest a system of female occupation that is connected to their occupancy and administration of the estate. In particular, Mendelson and Crawford

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which of Joan Thirsk's works he is quoting here. My own attempts to locate the original source for this quotation have been unsuccessful: See Howard Newby, *Country Life: A Social History of Rural England*. Totowa: Barnes & Noble, 1987. 21.

assert that this female sphere extended beyond the container of the house: "Outdoor chores also led to sociable female gatherings [...] [and certain] centres of economic activity, although technically under male jurisdiction, were apt to be colonized by female groups" (209-10). On 8 July 1600, Hoby records that "I was busie, wrought, and after took my Cotch and went into the feeldes, wher I did eate my supper with my Mother and other friendes" (Moody 97). A similar excursion is repeated on 5 September 1600 when Hoby writes, "after I walked into the feeldes with my Mother and others" (Moody 110). These women's trips are repeated in a slightly different capacity, that of the mistress, when Hoby goes out with her servants, as on 15 May 1600, "I walked into the feeldes wth my maides" (Moody 82) and 8 April 1601, "I went wth my Maides in to the Garden" (Moody 142). In these repeated utilisations of the estate's grounds as a space of recreation, work, and administrative authority (the overseeing of workmen), Hoby demonstrates the observation that during "daylight hours, the male ideal of encloistered femininity was irrelevant to most women's behaviour" (Mendelson and Crawford 210).

Of course, these walking journeys are themselves smaller movements within the large and variegated journeys of any subject over the course of their lives, especially one responsible for a sizeable estate. To this end, the largest journeys recorded in the diary are the two made to London during 1603 and 1604-5. Yet my intention here is to draw attention to Hoby's presence outside the house and on the estate, and her use of these exterior peregrinations as opportunities for conversation, counsel, and private contemplation. In this context, her walks through the closes, and further out into the fields, as well as her coach trips around the estate to visit tenants, and even private

recreational journeys, help to impress the significance of her mobility.<sup>40</sup> For example, in the last week of October 1601, Hoby records herself visiting the dales to speak to workmen on several occasions (Moody 168) and references to "going abroad" in her coach, either around the estate or further afield, are numerous, as are the most common references to her moving about the estate, the ubiquitous "I walked abroad". It is a mobility that belies the cultural prescriptiveness of (female) domesticity and leaves its trace in the text designed to watch over and guarantee the integrity of that domestic sphere.

**"for mine owne priuat Conscience": Presence, Dwelling, Space.**

Hoby's spatial practices operate within the vocabularies of the power structures surrounding them. For example, she can use the garden or her chamber as a space of privacy within sanctioned discourses of prayer and piety where discourses of marriage or domesticity might urge her to perform other tasks. The public spaces of the household, the constant mobility and visibility demonstrated through the lists of tasks clogging the diary, is an organising principle in her life. The sanction of Puritan piety endorses withdrawal from public space to contemplate self and God. That she is able to do this, and spend significant periods of time doing so, indicates she is secure enough to know she *can* manipulate her spatial field when it is appropriate to do so. This "privacy" is not dependent on locked doors and rooms. The dichotomy between intimate privacy and public vastness, in physical

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<sup>40</sup> For recreation, on 20 May 1600 she notes she "walked a fisshinge" (Moody 84) - Moody assumes she fished either in the Derwent River or the ponds created by the monks who built the original estate (Moody 84), and on 7 September 1599, in perhaps one of the most unguarded entries of the early, more rigorously self-aware period, Hoby notes "I taked a litle with som of my frendes, and exercised my body at bowles a whill, of which I found good : then I Came home" (Moody 15).

and metaphysical terms, is re-imagined by Gaston Bachelard in a passage which seems to underwrite the potentials of Hoby's mutable garden spaces, and those further out, in the fields and the dales of North Yorkshire:

Immensity is within ourselves. It is attached to a sort of expansion of being that life curbs and cautions arrests, but which starts again when we are alone. As soon as we become motionless, we are elsewhere; we are dreaming in a world that is immense. Indeed, immensity is the movement of motionless man. It is one of the dynamic characteristics of quiet daydreaming.

(Bachelard 184)

Bachelard's "immensity" of daydreaming is suffused with the meditating Puritan's "light of eternity" (Watkins 15). Bachelard's remark that "the dialectics of outside and inside is supported by a reinforced geometrism, in which limits are barriers" (215) indicates the extent to which space is produced, or inhibited, by power and process. Certeau's own conception of the subject's relation to space and place indicates that "the very delimitation of "inside" from "outside", self from environment, produces the effects of power" (Kirby 104). So Hoby is spatially disenfranchised by the operation of early modern culture's proprietary and strategic accumulation of place at the expense of heterogeneous spaces:

by conforming to culture's demand that we have an inside and an outside and make the effort to know their difference, we get caught up in the rationalization that makes the social order work, lose our capacities for

imagination and freedom, and are reduced to orderly, docile subjects.

(Kirby 104-05)

But this disenfranchisement is partly a product of a totalising historical perspective which fails to account for the specificity of the subject's relation to her spatiality. Hoby's relation to the proprietariness of place is ratified by her own appropriative engagement with it. Certeau asserts that proper place names become overdetermined by a multiplicity of individual encounters. Similarly, Hoby's engagement with her environment is cast along her own lines of interpretation and significance until the garden, the closet, and the dales become hybridised sites of imbricated cultural and experiential importance: "a second, poetic geography on top of the geography of literal, forbidden or permitted meaning" (Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* 105). Margaret lived on the estate before she married Sir Thomas and it resonates with a personal emotional logic which undermines any attempt at formally interpreting the diary or its traced movements: "The complications (sic) of an individual social existence (associations, desires, fears), buried in the unreadability of an opaque past, form the basis of his or her appropriation of an objective order" (Ahearne, *Michel de Certeau* 181).<sup>41</sup> As Moody remarks after noting the exhausting list of chores and tasks Hoby deals with, "she must have been familiar with every nook and cranny of her property" (xxxiv). This personalised spatial realm is sketched in the diary through the suggestivity of movement and repetition. Emphases in the record trace a way of life

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<sup>41</sup>The estate was acquired by Margaret's father in 1588 and her marriage to Walter Devereux occurred a year later. By the time the twice widowed Margaret Sidney married Sir Thomas Hoby in 1596, she had lived on the estate for nearly eight years (Moody xix-xxviii).

that incorporates its attendant obligations and expectations without losing a connective and habitative relation to its surrounds.

poetic geography is not a reductively aestheticized or ethereal construct. It represents rather a 'practical' geography in so far as it is a product of the ways in which inhabitants actually put their environments 'into practice'.

(Ahearne, *Michel de Certeau* 182)

To borrow from Mendelson and Crawford, women's culture "re-maps" the spaces of the household:

Like women's demarcation of space and speech, their material culture was strongly linked to their work routine and to the life-cycle events that united them as a sex. [...] Although we can categorize the products of women's skills in the form of lists--clothing and textiles, cookery and gardening and the like--such inventories fail to illuminate the multiple connections between different domains in which women functioned. Nor does a list convey the dynamic quality of female activities, the continual transformation of objects from one form to another.

(Mendelson and Crawford 220-21)

The diary, to be sure, like the list and the map, is unable to render legible the "actual experience" ("Heterophenomenology" 119) of the household and the network of relationships that constantly re-form its social and private spaces. But as a trace, tenuous and illusory as it may be, it enables us to carefully track a life through at least some of its dimensions, respectful of the limits of the text and our reading.

Hoby is momentarily untouchable when she is silent. Sinking under the churning surface of the active household she evades its demands through responding to her own subjective spiritual needs. That these needs themselves unfold within a discourse of religious discipline fails to negate the potential of these submerged trajectories. What I claim for Hoby's text is a momentary re-imagining of spaces of writing and reading text. A reading of the diary that can re-cast intimate and immense spaces through a more attentive consideration of practice as against scene. What I hope this section acknowledges is its own processes of lamination and fabrication implicit in its various attempts to collate and manage the various writings and readings it engages with. Certeau claims that;

the space of the tactic is the space of the other. Thus it must play on and with a terrain imposed on it and organised by the law of a foreign power [...] It operates in isolated actions, blow by blow. It takes advantage of "opportunities" and depends on them [...] It must vigilantly make use of the cracks that particular conjunctions open in the surveillance of the proprietary powers"

(Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* 37)

This is the space of the garden in Hoby's text, it is also the space of the closet, the chamber, the field, and the dale. It is the space of autonomy and freedom. It is also fragmentary, small, endlessly repeated but never sustained, and, as Ahearne remarks, "'always already' [...] erased or altered" (Michel de Certeau 177). These practices do not attempt to effect massive change:

They set out instead to contribute in a necessarily partial way to the opening of new symbolic and conceptual spaces. They suggest how other practices, with their 'foreign' or semi-effaced vocabularies, may insinuate their ways into [...] strategic programmes[.]

(Ahearne, *Michel de Certeau* 159)

Margaret Hoby's diary traces her materiality and the marks of her authorised presence in that culture, but it also traces her evasions of this control and suggests, partially and fragmentedly, that her life exceeds her duties and transcends her environment. In Certeau's terms, Hoby utilises the powers around her, those that define the kind of cultural and social role she can acceptably play, to construct a fragmentary but independent subjectivity. The faceless, or maligned, feminine re-emerges in the masculinist miniature kingdom of the house through the materiality of her work; the tasks assigned and then devalued by men.

I began with images and imaginings, and returning to Moody's seductive recreations of Hoby's days, her assertion that it "is not difficult [...] to imagine Lady Hoby moving around her house and gardens" (xxxv), I find myself agreeing with her, but also acknowledging why and how that imagining occurs. I have made assertions about Hoby's text, her life, and her relationship with her physical and cultural environment. What I want to imagine here are the spaces, the produced spaces of a life, through the lens of a text which is a sanctioned cultural document associated with Hoby as an individualised subjectivity within that culture, an individual before God. Hoby re-emerges from the cultural effacement of patriarchy through a (religious) writing practice which allows her to not only record her relationship

with God but also document her life (the chores obliterated by culture) in terms of its materiality and its daily, personalised processes.<sup>42</sup> In the stillness of Hoby's text, the silences of imagined spaces, something akin to Heidegger's "dwelling" occurs. As this section ends I want to place with Bachelard's "inhabited space", Heidegger's description of space as "something that has been made room for, something that has been freed, namely, within a boundary" (Heidegger 356). For Heidegger "dwelling" is "to be set at peace [...] to remain at peace within the free, the preserve, the free sphere that safeguards each thing in its essence" (Heidegger 351). In this domain "dwelling and building are related as end and means" (Heidegger 348). The interior spaces of her faith recall the metaphor of George Herbert's "The Church-Floor" in which the poet realises an interior structure produced from his relation with the divine; but more than just this, the poem figures the worshipper, the confluence of subject and faith, as the *product* of the relationship:

Blest be the *Architect*, whose art  
Could build so strong in a weak heart.

(109: ll. 19-20. Original emphasis.)

Space is a process and Hoby's spaces, her little freedoms, are facilitated by the house, the estate, and the powers that built them but are not contained by them.

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<sup>42</sup>In this respect, my interpretation of Hoby's text contradicts Patrick Collinson's assertion about the diary in *The Puritan Character*. In that text, Collinson observes that many Puritan texts reveal much about the condition of Puritan subjectivity without necessarily intending to. Remarking that "such sources [...] often escape unwittingly and as it were naively from the conventions that otherwise determine their content and structure", Collinson adds parenthetically: "But Lady Margaret Hoby is careful never to escape!" (8). Rather than found my reading in a distinction between "witting and unwitting" affiliations to conventions, I have argued that Hoby's close observance of institutional practices enables a conception of self separate from, but always wedded to, that institution. It is not so much a matter of "escape" as operating within structures in ways that are personally productive but may also be, and without necessary contradiction, faithful to the institution.

Some thirty years after Margaret Hoby's diary cuts off, Eleanor Davies also begins to write spaces for herself amidst the discourses of religion, law, and gender in England. But whereas Hoby's diary traces a series of lived practices that are insinuated into the fabric of everyday life on her estate, Davies's dense and controversial writings are printed, published, and violently antagonistic towards the cultural figureheads of early modern English society. The next section will trace the spaces of meaning within Davies's texts and the effect of their intersection with prevailing systems of power.

## Section Two

### "confusion signifying": Lady Eleanor Davies and the Spaces of Meaning



Look on these babes as none of mine,  
For they were but brought forth by me,  
But look on them as they are divine,  
Proceeding from divinity.  
- "to my sisters", *Eliza's Babes*. 1652. qtd.  
in Kate Aughterson, ed. *Renaissance  
Woman: A Sourcebook*. 253.

They said I was mad; and I said they  
were mad; damn them, they outvoted me.  
-Nathaniel Lee qtd. in Northrop Frye,  
*Fables of Identity* 163.

**"the burthen of his precious Word": Lady Eleanor Davies.**

On the face of it, Margaret Hoby's diary is a difficult text because it offers so little to the reader. Its spare style and limited range of subjects combine to produce a repetitive, almost numbing text. This section deals with Eleanor Davies (1590-1652) and her prophetic writings, published between 1625 and 1652, which also present certain stylistic and interpretative difficulties. Yet whereas Hoby's text is distinguished by its apparent paucity, Davies's texts are dense, convoluted, complicated, and frequently indecipherable on first reading. Davies is frequently cited as one of the first women prophets of the Civil War period and her often inflammatory writings led to an appearance before the Court of High Commission in 1633 and three periods of imprisonment during the 1630s.<sup>43</sup>

It began on 28 July 1625, when Lady Eleanor Davies heard a voice from Heaven "speaking as through a Trumpet" say to her: "*There is Nineteen years and an half to the Judgement day, and be you as the meek Virgin*" (Cope, *Prophetic Writings* 184; *The Lady Eleanor Her Appeal* 1646. Original emphasis).<sup>44</sup> From this early morning visitation and the publications she produced in its aftermath, Davies formed an at times notorious career as a prophet until her death in 1652. Born in 1590, the youngest daughter of George Audley, Lord Touchet, later Earl

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<sup>43</sup>For Davies as early woman prophet see: Esther Cope. *Handmaid of the Holy Spirit: Dame Eleanor Davies, Never Soe mad a Ladie*. Ann Arbor: U of Michigan P, 1992. 2.; Diane Watt. *Secretaries of God: Women Prophets in Late Medieval and Early Modern England*. Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 1997. 121.; Teresa Feroli. "The Sexual Politics of Mourning in the Prophecies of Eleanor Davies." *Criticism* 36.3 (1994): 339.; Beth Nelson. "Lady Elinor Davies: The Prophet as Publisher." *Women's Studies International Forum* 8.5 (1985): 403.; Christine Berg and Philippa Berry. "'Spiritual Whoredom': An Essay on Female Prophets in the Seventeenth Century." *1642: Literature and Power in the Seventeenth Century*. Ed. F. Bauke et al. Colchester: U of Essex P, 1981. 44.

<sup>44</sup>Throughout this section when referring to tracts contained in Esther Cope's *Prophetic Writings of Lady Eleanor Davies*, I will cite the page number from Cope followed by the title and date of the quoted tract.

of Castlehaven, and Lucy Mervin, Eleanor was raised in England and Ireland. In 1609 she was married to Sir John Davies, then Attorney-General for Ireland, and had three children to him. Lucy, born in 1613, was the only child to survive into adulthood. By way of extant evidence of her early life, Davies appears in a portrait by Isaac Oliver, dated circa 1610, and is recorded as being involved in a law suit before Star Chamber in the early 1620s (Cope, *Handmaid* 24). Yet apart from her appearance in this and other legal and personal records, Douglas's life prior to 1625 avoided the controversy and notoriety with which it was associated thereafter.

Combining scriptural references and citations, personal justification, religious and political polemic, as well as divine foretellings, Davies's writings were part of a period distinguished by a rapid expansion in the number of published radical and prophetic religious texts, especially by women.<sup>45</sup> Even in the midst of this wave of often insurgent writing, Davies's texts stand out for their often volatile "combination of poetic unity and syntactical confusion" (Mack

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<sup>45</sup>For examples see: Christine Berg and Philippa Berry, "'Spiritual Whoredom': An Essay on Female Prophets in the Seventeenth Century." *1642: Literature and Power in the Seventeenth Century*. Ed. F. Bauke, et al. Colchester: U of Essex P, 1981. 37-54.; Patricia Crawford, "Historians, Women and the Civil War Sects, 1640-1660." *Parergon* 6 (1988): 19-32.; Elaine Hobby, "'Discourse so unsavoury': Women's Published writings of the 1650s" *Women, Writing, History 1640-1740* Ed. Isobel Grundy and Susan Wiseman. London: BT Batsford, 1992: 16-32.; Phyllis Mack, *Visionary Women: Ecstatic Prophecy in Seventeenth-Century England*. Berkeley: U of California P, 1992.; Phyllis Mack, "Women as Prophets during the English Civil War." *Feminist Studies* 8.1 (1982): 19-45.; Diane Purkiss, "Producing the voice, consuming the body: Women prophets of the seventeenth century." *Women, Writing, History 1640-1740*. Ed. Isobel Grundy and Susan Wiseman. London: BT Batsford, 1992. 139-58.; Esther Gilman Richey, *The Politics of Revelation in the English Renaissance*. Columbia: U of Missouri P, 1998.; Nigel Smith, *Perfection Proclaimed: Language and Literature in English Radical Religion 1640-1660*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989.; Keith Thomas, "Women and the Civil War Sects." *Past and Present* 13 (1958): 42-62.; Diane Watt, *Secretaries of God: Women Prophets in Late Medieval and Early Modern England*. Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 1997.; Susan Wiseman, "Unsilent instruments and the devil's cushions: authority in seventeenth-century women's prophetic discourse." *New Feminist Discourses: Critical Essays on Theories and Texts*. Ed. Isobel Armstrong London: Routledge, 1992. 176-96.

"Women as Prophets" 32), articulating their intricate web of personal and divine authority with a condensed system of interconnecting personal, national and Scriptural references and cues. The inscrutability of her prophecies is illustrated in the note attending the description of Davies's letter to Laud, "Handwriteing October 1633", in the Calendar of State Papers, which reads: "Lines intended to reflect on Archbishop Laud, but the exact meaning of which is difficult to discover" (Bruce vol.6, 266). Indeed, Davies's biographer, Esther Cope, observes that the tracts can be "cumbersome and delphic even for a genre noted for enigma" (*Handmaid* 4) and remarks of her attempts to analyse the work that it "created a multidimensional world of truth and time that seemed to defy my efforts to impose an analytical framework upon it" (*Handmaid* 5).

My purpose in this section is not to chase Davies's texts for their meaning, to pull apart the intertextual weave and pursue every reference until a coherent structure is revealed. In her comprehensive and lucid biography of Davies, and the attentively annotated collection of tracts produced alongside it, Esther Cope teases out the myriad threads of Davies's writing with a dexterity and completeness that renders any attempt on my part to reproduce it redundant.<sup>46</sup> Rather, this examination is concerned with the forms and methods driving Davies's writing. I seek to do this by reading Davies's texts in the light of Michel de Certeau's analysis of the practice of writing. Within this broad inquiry I will examine Certeau's analysis of religious writing within European Catholicism during the seventeenth century. In

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<sup>46</sup>See Esther Cope, *Handmaid of the Holy Spirit: Dame Eleanor Davies, Never Soe Mad a Ladie*. Ann Arbor: U of Michigan P, 1992., and Esther Cope, Ed. *Prophetic Writings of Lady Eleanor Davies*. New York: Oxford UP, 1995. The collection of prophetic writings contains thirty-eight tracts of the more than sixty produced during Davies's life.

Certeau's studies of mystic writing and of the speech of those considered to be demonically possessed, the emergent figure of the writing and speaking subject becomes discernible. In Davies's writing too, although emerging from an antithetical religious tradition, the figure of the individuated subject is apparent. Our particular subject is not, however, a replication of the opportunistic consumer represented in Certeau's analysis of everyday life. Davies's texts, and the desires that are traced in them, figure an individual striving for a discrete place within the currents of regulation and order structuring her life. In this struggle for a secure identity position, Davies appears to produce texts that borrow the language of piety, a pre-eminent discourse in mid-seventeenth century England, and transforms it into an agitative rhetoric critical of the institutions of religion and government. Yet this "resistant" language can be read quite another way. Certeau's examinations of the practice of writing underscore its integral place in the establishment of institutional knowledge and power in Western culture. Using his concept of writing as a foundation, this section reads Davies's texts as examples of this institutional writing practice rather than as dissident appropriations. This reading argues that the difficulty of Davies's texts is indicative of her attempts to dictate their meanings to potential readers to such an extent that they become almost unreadable; her truth is only legible to those who believe in it, that is, in her. In a sense, Davies's writing is an extreme example of what Certeau claims is the ultimate objective of all writing: the control of meaning. In this way, Davies's apparently, and spectacularly, insubordinate texts can be seen to be so inasmuch as they seek the constitution of a specific and self-directed identity position rather than broad social upheaval.

In this section I return again to Certeau's distinction between "tactical" and "strategic" practices in his discussion of reading and writing, determining that whilst Davies's texts exhibit a radical and unsettling textual surface, their objectives are more ambivalent than simply opposing established forms of political or religious power. Rather, the tracts, whilst opposing certain individuals and practices, do not seek the dissolution of the fundamental institutions of seventeenth century society, namely the monarchy and the English church. Indeed, Davies supports these institutions but only on the terms she stipulates. Davies's texts personalise the arguments surrounding church and state in the 1630s and 40s, re-writing the political and cultural debates of the period as issues turning on her representation of the divine will. In these terms, Davies's writings are disruptive inasmuch as they re-appropriate the legitimacy of Scripture, and writing itself, to largely personal ends (although she views the issues in universal terms). What is ambivalent about this re-employment of dominant discourses is that in re-writing them from her perspective, Davies insists on the absolute legitimacy of these new meanings in the same fashion as the model they purport to supersede. Instead of an

opportunistic and transient re-appropriation of prevailing discourses, Davies's insistence on the truth of her position reproduces these pre-existing discourses with the addition of herself, next to God, at their centre.

The structure of this section is designed to emphasise the importance of Certeau's ideas of writing and reading to my examination of Davies's texts. It also reflects some of the theoretical and practical difficulties that have developed out of my attempts to read and analyse Davies's writing. This is apparent where I have been forced to elaborate

my theoretical position in extended detail in concert with readings of the object texts in order to tease out pertinent strands from the dense weave of Davies's writing. To this end, Certeau's ideas are outlined at the beginning in order to lay the theoretical groundwork for the remainder of the section. I then deal with Davies's biography, to the extent that it informs her writing. I use Davies's trial before the High Commission in 1633 as a point of access to her texts and examine in some detail three of those that caused her to come before the court. In particular, I examine the tracts *Given to the Elector* and "Handwriteing October 1633", and suggest ways in which these texts use the image of the hand as a metaphor for the potential power of the writing process in 1630s England. This is then extended into a discussion of the way in which Davies's texts were received and read in the period, with emphasis on the reception they received from the government and the church. I then follow the official attention paid to Davies as an author with the way in which she constructs her identity as a prophet in the tracts. Specifically, I pay attention to the use of anagrams and plural names and assess these devices in light of Certeau's analysis of religious writing in early modern Europe. Davies's texts are then read alongside a broader discussion of Certeau's work on writing as a practice, in addition to its historical and religious manifestations, to provide an interpretation of their complex style and the author's place in it. I conclude the section by asserting the connections between Davies's compositional style and what Certeau posits to be the characteristic features of writing as a "mythical" or "strategic" practice (*The Practice of Everyday Life* 133, 135). It is these connections, I argue, that actually designate Davies's texts as reproducing a totalising and systematising tradition of separation and codification, the same tradition that

underwrites the institutions that prosecute her, despite the texts' radical appearance and (notionally) oppositional subject matter.

### Writing, Subjects, Power.

Davies's texts are intricately constructed pieces of writing. Her ability to write and her employment of that ability in the complex and controversial pursuit of prophecy figures a certain capacity for self-creation. For Certeau, this capacity is integral to the process of writing itself (see Introduction). Davies's texts form an attempt to isolate her, as a subject, from the discourses of power surrounding and constructing her. They seek to re-work those discourses from her perspective, pursuing the consolidation of writing and at the same time attempting to dictate how any reading of her texts might proceed.

In his examination of possessed and mystic speech in seventeenth century Europe, Certeau discerns the emergence of alternative ways of "speaking the Other".<sup>47</sup> In the mobile, indeterminate "I" of possessed speech or the formalised distortions of the mystic, new connections with otherness are sought against a backdrop of destabilised institutions and discredited practices. Certeau traces these shifts in practice to a broader cultural movement away from the strict Logocentrism of medieval society to the rationalism of the Enlightenment:

The mysticism of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries proliferated in proximity to a loss. It is a historical trope for that loss. [...] At the dawn of

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<sup>47</sup> In the main I will be examining Certeau's treatment of religious writing in *The Mystic Fable: Volume One, The Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*. Trans. Michael B. Smith. Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1992.; *The Writing of History*. Trans. Tom Conley. New York: Columbia UP, 1988.; and *Heterologies: Discourse on the Other*. Trans. Brian Massumi. Manchester: Manchester UP, 1986.

modernity, an end and a beginning--a departure--are thus marked. [...] It is the story of the Christian 'Occident'. It came in, it seems, with the setting sun, but vanished before morning, announcing a day it never knew; the 'retreat of mystics' coincides with the dawning of the century of the Enlightenment. The project of a radical Christianity was formed against a backdrop of decadence and 'corruption' in a world that was falling apart and in need of repair.

(Certeau, "Mystic Speech" 80)

The project of mystic writing in this period is to re-discover a way to speak an Otherness that was silent in the degraded discourses of institutional religious and cultural practice.

The exacerbated thirst of the mystics for 'words of life' to be made 'present' works in Certeau's analysis as a symptom of the seeping discredit of an economy of writing founded on the authority of Holy Scripture. [...] In the breakdown of the religious cosmos once held to be spoken by God, the mystics sought, in Certeau's account, to devise a series of compensatory tactics for 'utterance'. They aspired to find or to 'invent' spaces where the voices they wished to hear might still nevertheless resound, and where the presences they missed might make themselves felt.

(Ahearne, *Michel de Certeau* 116)

Davies's texts fall both within and outside the scope of Certeau's analysis. Coming as they do from a radical Protestant tradition, Davies's

texts are implacably opposed to the doctrinal and ritual prerogatives underwriting Catholic mysticism--her labelling of Laud as a papist and her vandalism of Lichfield Cathedral in 1636 illustrates this dramatically (see below). Yet her texts do seek to iterate an Otherness through a re-figured language that emphasises the basic "truths" of her religious experience, namely the living Word of God in Scripture and prophetic vision. Ahearne suggests the mystics "attempted to turn their own bodies into so many vessels of contact" in order to "convert their own *I* into the site of the Other" (*Michel de Certeau* 116. Original emphasis.). Davies too makes her "I" the fundamental element of her message. Through the use of the various (married and family) names available to her and anagrams, with which she re-forms the names of prophets from her own, Davies makes her self central to an understanding of her prophecies. Davies's "I" is given a form of equivalence with the divine presence she seeks to represent. Without her identity, her name, there can be no message. And yet, Davies's "I", in the first person, is rarely present, almost always appearing in the third person. In the aligning of messenger and message there still remains an absent speaking centre. For all of the (personal and divine) names littered through the texts there is still a facilitating absence through which the dense, conglomerate (Scriptural) textuality of Davies's tracts speak the Other. A play of absences marks these texts. Where at once there are several names and a churning mass of cited, referred and alluded text, an unsettling absence is traced through her writing. This absence is the gap between the unmediated message and the medium, it is the gap in which the subject "writes the Other" and yet the Other speaks.

The space of the writing and speaking subject is the space in which Certeau discerns possessed and mystic speech. As the authorising institutions of the church lose the univocity that underpinned their power, an autobiographical impulse, a conscious subject emerges in the personal pronoun, "I":

it designates both the reason for and the content of the discourse: *why* one writes and *what* one writes. In this way, it compensates for the lack of ecclesial mission. The need to give personal witness intervenes when Church predication loses its value, when the delegating, missionary institution loses its credibility or neglects its duties. The "I" replaces the world as speaker (and the institution that is supposed to make it speak).

(Certeau, "Mystic Speech" 94. Original emphasis.)

Yet central to the function of this figure is its symbolic value, its presence as "an organizing factor" which "marks *in* the text the *empty* place (empty of world) where the *other* speaks" (Certeau, "Mystic Speech" 94. Original emphasis.). The emergence of an writing subject marks an appropriation of speech and writing by the individual and a subsequent personalisation of the experience and utterance of the other. Mystic speech transforms the articulation of this experience into a series of semi-formal techniques, examples of which will be discussed shortly. The collaboration of agency and formality reflects a cultural shift away from universal observance and receptive passivity and towards the penetrative inquiry and dissembling reason of an unfolding modernity. For Certeau, this modernity begins "with the loss of a unitary order and with a process of separation" (Ahearne, *Michel de Certeau* 55):

In place of the metaphysician's and theologian's discourse, which once deciphered the order of all things and the will of their author, a slow revolution constitutive of our 'modernity' has substituted writings ('écritures' or scientific languages) capable of establishing coherences that could produce an order, a progress, a history.

(Certeau, "History: Science and Fiction" 201)

Michael Smith's explanation in his "Translator's Note" to *The Mystic Fable* creates the term *mystics* as a direct response to the formality of practice inherent in the writings dealt with by Certeau. This formality is elsewhere figured "in the development of such terms as 'mathematics' or 'physics', fields of enquiry of increasing autonomy" (Certeau, *Mystic Fable* x), reflecting a correlation between the practices of mystic writers and the emerging discourses of (scientific) reason.

That Certeau's analysis focuses on a Catholic and European scene does not instantly invalidate the validity of his ideas in relation to the fiercely Protestant Eleanor Davies and her milieu. The development of the writing subject within Protestant England, I would argue, follows a similar trajectory in as much as a cultural change occurs during the early modern period, accelerating in the seventeenth century, that focuses attention and power on individuals and their interpretations of the discourses surrounding them. Whilst prevailing discourses of law and religion largely establish the parameters within which subjects shape their interpretations, the particular nature of Protestant spirituality encourages the development of individuated reading and writing practices. These practices are founded on the privatisation of personal and moral identity that underwrites what we

might label "Protestant consciousness".<sup>48</sup> Generally speaking, Protestant spirituality advocates the individualisation of the subject's relation to the divine, so that the "private recesses of the individual anima replace the medieval church as the primary point of contact between God and persons" (Shuger 12). The effect of such an idea is an often painfully experienced self-awareness that manifests in a range of writing practices, from diaries to epistles:

Such writing is not the innocent expression of spiritual anguish, but a self-conscious deployment and cultivation of self-awareness; it is part of a project for actualizing interiority [...] the self-examination, self-consciousness, in protestant practice is not a by-product, or even a characteristic, but the goal; the orthodox god did not just demand self-awareness, he justified it.

(Sinfield 159-60)

The process of self-examination constructs the subject as inherently alive to its own presence and the responsibilities attending that, as mediated through the moral regulation of religious doctrine.

Central to Puritanism's understanding of the relationship to God was the concept of "conscience". Frederick Beiser argues that the role of conscience within Puritan theology, as elaborated by William Perkins in the late sixteenth century, focused the individual relationship between man and God from the general to the individual:

Perkins [...] exhorts the believer to examine himself in the light of his own conscience. This provides

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<sup>48</sup>My argument here traces similar material to that outlined in Section One, yet my focus here is not so much on the spatial formation of individuality as in its formation and development through writing.

him with a reliable criterion of his eternal fate because it is nothing less than the voice of God within him. [...] If, then, we wish to know the judgment of God upon us, then we only have to listen to the voice of conscience within us.

(156)

Perkins's own description of the operation of conscience provides an analogue to Davies's narration of her call to prophecy:

It is (as it were) a little God sitting in the middle of mens hearts, arraigning them in this life as they shal (sic) be arraigned for their offences at the Tribunal seat of the everliving God in the day of judgement. Wherefore the temporarie judgement that is given us by the conscience is nothing else but a beginning, a forerunner of the last judgement.

(Perkins, *Works*, I, 519; Beiser 156)

Davies's call to prophecy is repeatedly drawn in these terms, albeit with more spectacular effects:

Shee awakened *by a voyce from HEAVEN*, in the FIFTH moneth, the 28. of *July*, early in the Morning, the Heavenly voice uttering these words.

"There is Nineteene yeares and a halfe to the day of *Judgement*, and you as the Meek Virgin. These sealed with Virgins state in the Resurrection, when they not giving in Marriage."

(Cope, *Prophetic Writings* 80-81; *The Lady Eleanor, Her Appeale to the High Court of Parliament* 1641. Original emphasis.)

In Davies's laboriously assembled texts there is a conjunction of the Puritan's call to examine their conscience with the imperatives of production and 'godly work'. Between these two stools falls the self-possessed, if not self-examining, verbosity of Davies's writing which draws from both. In the preface to her 1651 tract *The Restitution of Prophecy*, a text that provides a retrospective account of her prophetic career, Davies demonstrates her combination of overlaid style and personal justification:

No spurious *off-spring* of  *Davids*, but the *Son of peace*. This *Oblivions Act*, Messenger thereof. *Be of good cheer, O my people*, (Isai. 40.) *O ye Prophets*, saith your *God*, Tell her, That her *Travel* is at an end; Her *Offence* is pardoned, our *Jubiles deliverance*: Sirs, to be plain, as in the first place, *His Commission*. He first of the *new Prophet*; so his and hers both: She the last of the *old*. Confesseth likewise, or beareth record of his *presence*, *Born in the flesh*; of whose *Kingdom* no end.

(Cope, *Prophetic Writings* 344; *The Restitution of Prophecy* 1651. Original emphasis.)

Patricia Crawford argues that the proliferation of women prophets in the middle of the seventeenth century emerges out of individual exacerbations of injunctions for female piety and private or domestic contemplation, which was, as Davies discovered, often personally hazardous:

When women prayed to God, and sought his blessing through a regime of piety, they won praise from their contemporaries. But if women sought a

more intense relationship with God, or turned to alternative sources of divine aid, they found themselves in dangerous areas where they could be suspected as enthusiasts, prophets, or witches.

(Crawford 115)

In Davies the agency of the writing subject is combined with the Protestant impulse towards self-examination and individual conference with God. The potently intertextual and dislocated texts elaborate writing as a practice with which to assemble spaces for individual declaration within a prevailing culture of control and silence (with respect to women's expression).

Yet although the internally regulated self is nominally constructed to gain unfettered access to the divine--through prayer, self-reflection, and individual interpretation of Scripture--it also institutes a privatisation of subjectivity. One must conceive of oneself as a separate person in order to establish a personal relationship with God. This person is inevitably aware of themselves as more than just a subject before God. They are a subject capable of discerning between all available discourses, religious or otherwise:

The production of self-consciousness in protestantism was a high-stakes, high-risk strategy. In some instances it might set distinctively subtle hooks in the psyche, interpellating docile subjects in a specially intricate way; in other instances its blatant contradictions might allow its constitutive project to become apparent, and hence afford access to an identity sufficiently un beholden to any one ideological pattern to form a feasible ground for

critique and dissidence. Many of the expounders of protestantism aspired to produce acquiescent subjects, and did so. But they also stimulated a restless self-awareness, one that might allow, in some, a questioning of the system.

(Sinfield 165)

Jagodzinski argues that "restless self-awareness" did lead to a secularised, humanist subjectivity. The issue of "private" interpretation of Scripture was progressively rationalised until its inherently human, and fallible, character became the premise for understanding the privatised subject:

All human interpretation is tentative: only the Bible originates with God [...] when 'privacy' is connected with the 'humane', and no church--Anglican, Puritan, or Catholic--can demonstrate the strength of its creeds, the individual believer is left alone, thrown upon his or her own 'private spirit' for sustenance. We have here the potential for the creation of a secular world, a world without God made manifest by a visible church structure (or a stable government).

(48)

The potential is thereby created for the "internalization of presence [to secularise] the sociopolitical, emptying it of ultimate meaning and thus enabling a 'realistic' appraisal of such things as institutional behaviour, hierarchy, power, coercion, and so forth" (Shuger 12). Without proceeding to a more comprehensive, and lengthy, analysis of Protestant subjectivity, I would argue that for the purposes of this study

it is apparent that the primary directives of Protestant religious practice enable the creation of a self-aware subject. This subject internalises the experience of the divine, removing the necessity for the church's mediation, and is encouraged to perceive the world from their particular perspective. Certeau's idea of the emergent "I" of the writing subject in general terms remains viable alongside this model of an emerging Protestant individualism.

Certeau's work deals with continental Catholic practices that have a certain theological and compositional pattern which underwrites their often complex style. Davies's texts, whilst effecting a distorted syntax and refracted meanings, do not fall within the bounds of a (semi) formal linguistic practice in terms of those outlined by Certeau in the European Catholic tradition. Rather, Davies's texts, whilst comparable to the Catholic mystic tradition, also exhibit an affinity with Certeau's description of possessed speech. The deliberate and careful composition of *mystics* seems absent from Davies, in favour of a premeditated but effusive textuality that is constantly labile, always unfinished. Indeed this is one of the defining features of Davies's tracts. Whilst their furious intertextuality and churning surfaces constantly disperse and concentrate meaning throughout the text, the overlaid commentaries, multiple editions and handwritten amendments to published work maintains the texts' provisional status. As if her legitimacy depended on her activity, Davies's texts are always unfinished, always re-worked. Whether it be dedications, amendments or justificatory asides, the overlaid writing, printed and handwritten, on Davies's texts stresses the importance of writing as a practice to a prophet who relied on writing rather than speech as her primary medium. This reliance on text reflects in itself a movement from the

orality of a prior culture and its emphasis on the reception of the Word to an incipient modernity founded in the apparent agency and power of the writing subject.

In very diverse ways, orality is defined by (or as) that from which a 'legitimate' practice--whether in science, politics, or the classroom, etc.--must differentiate itself. The 'oral' is that which does not contribute to progress; reciprocally, the 'scriptural' is that which separates itself from the magical world of voices and tradition.

(Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* 134)

Yet the effect of this scriptural order is a critical focus on the agency of the subject and the continual articulation of that agency through scriptural practice to maintain its appearance of progress.<sup>49</sup> Davies's texts are a thickly overlaid exemplar of this concept. In the volatile religious environment from the 1630s and into the 1640s, in which the interpretation of Protestant theology was under contest, Davies's radical syntax and millenarian message remained, through its very production, within the scope of the perennial Reformation concern that the individual sustain themselves through work. In particular, Puritanism placed much significance on the primacy of work to a godly life: "We teach that only Doers shall be saved, and by their doing though not for their doing" (Thomas Taylor qtd. in Hill *The Century of Revolution* 69). As Hill observes, "puritanism was for doers only", and Davies's

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<sup>49</sup>See *Practice of Everyday Life*:

'Truth' no longer depends on the attention of a receiver who assimilates himself to the great identifying message. It is the result of work--historical, critical, economic work. It depends on a 'will to do' (137).

voluminous textuality suggests an approach to her task permeated with the prerogatives of the Puritan 'doer'.

I will now outline the chronology of Davies's writing and the way in which her texts are constructed.

### **The Call to Prophecy.**

Information on Douglas's religious upbringing is scant. Despite the fervour of her prophecies, the exact nature of Davies's religious position in later life is also unclear. Never a member of a sect or larger movement, Davies's writings provide the only insights into her particular form of Protestantism. They indicate a ferociously anti-Catholic, anti-ritualistic approach to worship, perhaps comparable to Puritanism, that found its most striking illustrations in her attacks on William Laud, and her defacement of altar hangings at Lichfield Cathedral. By way of delineating Davies's religious position, Esther Cope suggests that although her childhood was not spent in a Puritan household, an exposure to Catholicism in Ireland, as well as her brothers' flirtations with Popery, helps explain some of the anger Davies directs at the perceived Arminianism of Laud's tenure and her anxious opposition to the apparently Catholic influences within the court of Charles I (*Handmaid* 12). Yet despite the vitriol and intensity of her tracts, Cope asserts that Davies's essential position on religious issues remained within the mainstream:

Although her religious defiance of episcopal authority and her familiarity with the Bible make it tempting to call her puritan during the 1630s and a sectarian in the following decade, she was generally orthodox in doctrine [...] As a prophet, she focused

upon the interpretation of history and the condition of Britain, not the state of her own soul. Preoccupying herself with the Second Coming, she offered only hints at other aspects of her own beliefs. These, for the most part, were conventional.

(*Handmaid* 13)

Cope's remarks raise the issue of "prophecy" as a practice in seventeenth-century England and Davies's relation to it. For Cope, prophecy took two forms in seventeenth-century culture, the foretelling of specific events regarding individuals and "the explication of divine intentions within history" (*Handmaid* 34), and Davies engaged in both. Beth Nelson elaborates on these categories to an extent in her delineation between prophecy, "a speaking-forth of God's mind about the contemporary world to contemporaries in that world", and "apocalyptic", which is "the visionary un-covering of God's secret plans at work in the totality of history as these culminate in the cataclysmic end of history" (404). For Davies, this last category is inextricably linked to the fate of England as the focal site of history and herself as history's messenger.

Modeling herself on such biblical examples as Daniel, Elijah, and St. John the Evangelist, she identified herself with the British Isles, saw her personal struggles in public conflicts, and devoted herself to correcting and annotating her tracts.

(*Handmaid* 2)

Davies worked across the two modes of prophecy but came to focus almost exclusively on the second category, the fate of England at the approaching end of time. I contend that although the substance of her

prophecies was often inflammatory, her practice of prophecy--though often offensive to gendered codes of behaviour--did not suggest an inherent doctrinal radicalism.<sup>50</sup>

Yet the popular conception of "prophecy" was not necessarily contained to the foretelling of events. In the religious turbulence of pre-Civil War England, prophecy was perceived as a widespread and legitimate discourse that extended to the more benign practice of "preaching the word of God" (Watt 125). Diane Watt places prophetic discourse within the context of a culture-wide religious debate and argues in turn for a broader interpretation of its parameters:

Puritans emphasised the importance of private spirituality, relying on the 'inner light' of individual inspiration, rather than authority and tradition, in order to interpret Scripture. Many people in the seventeenth century believed that through prophecy God communicated directly with His children. To be blessed with the gift of prophecy was an indication of salvation, a sign that an individual was one of the elect.

(Watt 125)

Indeed for Davies, the emphasis for much of her career is not so much on a corporeal or "private experience of the Divine" (Watt 125) as it is on her ability to interpret Scripture and render its meanings in terms of contemporary events and issues: "Lady Eleanor saw herself less as a

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<sup>50</sup>Phyllis Mack argues that a large part of the reason Davies's public persona altered so often throughout her career, oscillating between sage and madwoman, "lies not in the temperament of the real woman, nor in those of the individuals around her, but in the images and stereotypes *about* women that pervaded the culture in which she lived and that helped to mould that temperament into a shape her audiences understood" (18. Original emphasis.): See, Phyllis Mack, *Visionary Women: Ecstatic Prophecy in Seventeenth-Century England*. Berkeley: U of California P, 1992.

sibyl than as a biblical scholar working to decipher and interpret her own divine messages" (Mack *Visionary Women* 91). By this interpretation, whilst the cultural imprimatur for women's prophecy as a public act may be missing, the wider sanction of Protestant spirituality enabled "prophecy", as a general practice elaborating the message of Scripture, to include issues concerning contemporary culture:

Hence prophecy might be described as appearing first of all as a proclamation of one individual's secured salvation and election. This election is subsequently interpreted as an injunction to the prophetic individual to accept responsibility for the public articulation of the divine *logos*, as part of a missionary or revolutionary programme.

(Berg and Berry 41)

Berg and Berry point out that this contest for meaning was not unopposed during the civil turmoil of the 1630s and 1640s, and that "a fierce and bitter debate over the possession of meaning, of the *logos*" (51) took place, especially in relation to women's claims to be able to articulate it. That the debate occurred at all indicates an increasing interest in the concepts of the writing subject and the individuated, pious subject: an interest activated by both ideals being constructed as fundamentally agentic. Though both writing and faith are closely regulated, their emphasis on the individual's active engagement with text (producing and receiving it) makes prophecy, of the type practised by Davies, possible if not always acceptable.

In the early stages of her prophetic career, Davies's profile, especially in royal circles, was enhanced not so much by her written work but by a series of specific predictions regarding the royal family,

senior figures at court, and both of her husbands. After the publication of her first and largely uncontentious tract, *Warning to the Dragon*, in 1625, Sir John Davies burned his wife's book in an apparent attempt to assert his authority over her. Her response to his "sacrifice" of her book was to predict his imminent death: "whose Doom I gave him in letters of his own Name (*John Daves, Joves Hand*) within three years to expect the mortal blow; so put on my mourning garment from that time" (Cope, *Prophetic Writings* 186; *The Lady Eleanor Her Appeal* 1646). Sir John died in 1626 and within three months Davies was again married, this time to Scots noble, Sir Archibald Douglas. In 1627, Henrietta-Maria, familiar with Davies's prophetic reputation, inquired as to whether she would have children, to which Davies replied positively. Later, however, when the Queen gave birth to her first child, Davies sent a message stating "that her Son should go to Christning and Burying in a day" (Cope, *Prophetic Writings* 188; *The Lady Eleanor Her Appeal* 1646), correctly foretelling the sudden death of the infant. Later, Davies would predict the death of other aristocratic children and figures, most notably the death of the duke of Buckingham in August 1628. This prediction provoked distress from the king, who requested she keep away from court, and anger from Douglas:

the Douglas' made her prophecy concerning the duke the subject of a contest to determine who wore "the breeches" in their household. If she proved wrong, she promised that she would abandon prophecy. Her accuracy allowed her to continue and to point to the occasion to confirm her power [.]

(Cope, *Handmaid* 52)

As a result of these aggravations, Davies became increasingly isolated from figures of influence at court. Her relationship with Douglas also became increasingly strained, a prescient signal of which was his burning of her papers. This burning, a further attempt at asserting power over his wife, again drew dire predictions regarding his future from Davies. In 1631, Davies's brother, Mervin, earl of Castlehaven, was tried and executed for sodomy and rape charges involving his wife and servants. Davies defended her brother throughout the sensational proceedings, further alienating her from the prevailing attitudes at court, and continued to defend his actions, and attack his wife and in-laws, for the rest of her life. Part of her efforts to defend Mervin was an intervention on his behalf by Douglas which resulted in a short imprisonment. Soon after release, Douglas was "strooken bereft of his senses" by a seizure which rendered him severely disabled for the remainder of his life: "in stead of speech made a noice like a Brute creature, doubtlesse his heart changed into a Beasts too" (Cope, *Prophetic Writings* 189; *The Lady Eleanor Her Appeal* 1646). Her predictions regarding this second husband were thus realised.

Esther Cope has suggested that Davies's prophetic career can be divided into three phases, the first of which covered the period between her revelatory experience of 1625 and her trip to the Low Countries in 1633.<sup>51</sup> In this first period "she discovered that, although she attracted some public attention, her message was welcome neither at home nor at court" (*Handmaid* 34). It is the movement into the second phase, initiated by a journey towards writing, that is in focus here.

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<sup>51</sup>Cope divides Davies's career into the years, 1625-33, 1633-40, and 1640-52 (*Handmaid* 33-4; *Prophetic Writings* xv). The second phase is characterised by her conflict with authorities and subsequent periods of imprisonment, whilst the third, the "period she wrote most of her tracts" (*Handmaid* 34), is designated as being the cumulative response to the first two stages.

Davies's first pamphlet, *Warning to the Dragon*, published in 1625, is a lucid commentary on chapters 7 to 12 of the book of Daniel. In it Davies interprets strong anti-Catholic themes, and, as Cope remarks, does not produce the densely-packed textual effects which characterise her later tracts "and emphasize the recondite nature of her message" (*Handmaid* 40). Yet in its assertion that "I thinke that I have also the Spirit of God" (Cope, *Prophetic Writings* 56), the tract does place emphasis on Davies's personalisation of her relationship with the vocation of prophecy, what Teresa Feroli calls a "simple, yet powerful, assumption of authority" (359). The early publication date of this tract--Feroli asserts that Davies is "perhaps the only one of the Civil War prophets to launch her literary career prior to the easing of censorship restrictions in 1641" (359)--and the potent assumption of divine sanction underlying it indicate a personal confidence that is, as her career unfolds, increasingly articulated through an individualised prophetic language.

In July 1633, Davies obtained a licence to travel to Belgium and Holland with her ill husband and a small entourage. Davies later explained that the trip's purported purpose was to attend a spa to aid Douglas's health, although her actual intent was to print the texts she could not get published in England: "since none for printing to be had here, inquisition and hold such, among them imprisoned about it formerly, til afterward all as free, *Cum Privilegio* out of date become" (Cope, *Prophetic Writings* 288; *The Everlasting Gospel* 1649). The texts she had printed in Holland, and which attracted official rebuke upon her return to England were, *Woe to the House, Given to the Elector* and *All the Kings of the Earth*. In addition to these published texts, Davies delivered a personal letter to the newly ensconced Archbishop of Canterbury, William Laud. Entitled, "Handwriteing October 1633", the

letter maintains the critical line towards the king and archbishop adopted in the printed texts. Since these texts were the catalysts for the tumult which enveloped Davies's life during the 1630s, I want to begin by examining some of them as representative articulations of the concerns that would drive Davies's prophetic career over the following twenty years.

The three texts printed in Holland in 1633 show the broad arc of Davies's prophetic concerns. As outlined, prophecy encompassed the interpretation of divine purpose in the contemporary world. For Davies, this objective was altered to accord events of personal importance an equivalent status with episodes of national significance:

While the texts of Davies's contemporaries tend to pull outward to a national subjectivity, directing personal guilt into socially conforming applications, Davies's own texts focus impetus on the personal[.]

(Matchinske 142-43)

Whilst the personalisation of a prophetic message is a feature of seventeenth-century prophecy, Davies's texts exaggerate this impulse. Megan Matchinske argues that the focus in Davies's texts on the treatment meted out to the texts as objects and the trials endured by their writer are often the primary subject of outrage as "she frequently replaces society with self" (143).<sup>52</sup> In the texts I will outline below this

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<sup>52</sup>Matchinske's argument is based in part on the idea of "holy hatred", a concept formulated from prevailing notions of subjectivity within (radical) Protestant spirituality. Matchinske argues that the historical moment in which radical prophetic writing occurs is characterised by a confluence of self-regulating Protestant individualism and a re-conceptualising of the body politic as something constituted by the citizenry rather than embodied in the monarch. The concept of "holy hatred", the aggressive posture adopted by prophets towards the sinning and doomed mass of society, conjoins with the emergent discourses of individual and political agency to help form what Matchinske labels "an obedient 'national' (state-centered) subject" (131) by placing the responsibility for personal, spiritual and national security on the individual and then appealing to prevailing notions of guilt and sin to assert influence over the

personalisation of national events is apparent as Davies seeks to impose her own meanings upon the culture around her.

*Woe to the House* is an example of Davies's tendency to correlate personal and biblical events when constructing an argument against her perceived enemies. In *Woe to the House*, Davies attacks the house of Derby with whom she was in conflict on two fronts. Anne Stanley, whose name Davies re-assembles in the anagram "A LYE SATANN", was the countess of Castlehaven and wife of Davies's disgraced and executed brother, Mervin. For Davies, Stanley's testimony to Mervin's trial, outlining his commission of and part in sexual assaults on both her and her daughter, as well as his homosexual encounters with servants, was part of an extensive and malicious web of lies designed to convict her brother and acquire the Castlehaven estate. Also singled out in the tract is Elizabeth Stanley, countess of Huntingdon, Anne's sister, who was the mother-in-law to Davies's daughter, Lucy, and involved in protracted disputes with Davies over the ownership of Sir John Davies's estate, a dispute which led to Lucy being isolated from her mother for some years. In the tract, Davies re-arranges the Countess's name to form the phrase, "THAT JEZEBEL SLAIN" (Cope, *Prophetic Writings* 57). The tract also notes two dates, "Decembris 1626", the date of Sir John Davies's death, and "Aprilis 1631", the month of Mervin's execution. Davies thus establishes, through the use of prominently formatted anagrams and dates, the correlation between these two traumatic events and the women of the house of Derby. The text fleshes out the connection through Scriptural

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conglomerate. Drawing from Foucault, Matchinske claims that in this environment the transition to a secular bureaucratised system is facilitated as the populace becomes preoccupied with regulating their own lives: see Megan Matchinske, *Writing, gender and state in early modern England: identity formation and the female subject*. Cambridge: CUP, 1998. 127-55.

analogy wherein the women are compared to Jezebel, who "wrote letters in Ahab's name, and sealed them with his seale" (Cope, *Prophetic Writings* 57), referring to Davies's claims that both women had lied and benefited from their lies with regard to the disputes between themselves and Davies's family. The tract draws all of its Biblical authority from the Book of Kings, in which the story of Jezebel is told. Indeed the application of Jezebel appears to be for both women and regarding both disputes, illustrating Davies's tendency to let analogies and correlatives slide across subjects in the pursuit of an effective and potent image. So whilst both events seem to be alluded to at different times, the tract concludes with a Scriptural paraphrase that refers to only one person, Jezebel, but is intended as a general indictment on both Stanley sisters and, indeed, the entire family:

And behold the word of God came to Elijah, saying,  
Arise meet Ahab &c. Hast thou killed, and allso  
taken possession, in the place, &c. and the doggs  
shall eat Jezebel by the walls of Izeerel [...]

And when Jehu was come to Izeerel, Jezebel heard of  
it, and she painted her face, and tyr'ed her head, and  
looked out of a window, &c. And he troad her under  
foote.

(Cope, *Prophetic Writings* 58)

The presence of the prophet Elijah, one of the figures with whom Davies's identifies throughout her own prophetic career, aligns the tract with her own apparent authority to speak for the divine will. The tract concludes with another anagram. This time her brother, Mervin Audley, is re-constituted as "M'EVEL VINEYARD", and a short stanza of eulogising verse added before a concluding Scriptural citation (Cope,

*Prophetic Writings* 58). The tract's densely woven argument illustrates, as a starting point, Davies's prophetic technique from here on, particularly in its use of anagrams and scriptural allusion as authorities for its claims, and in its willingness to attack people of Davies's own rank and higher. This issue of class would affect the trajectory of Davies's career through the remainder of her life, both mitigating and exacerbating the difficulties she would face at various times. Beth Nelson, in trying to contextualise Davies's behaviour, asks how Davies "the daughter of the Earl of Castlehaven, the wife of Sir John Davies (the poet and but for his sudden death Lord Chief Justice of England) and the mother of the Countess of Huntingdon, ever [came] to confront as an adversary those persons and institutions upholding the privileges of her class?" (406). The response lies in the texts themselves and their relentless pursuit of justification on their own terms; a justification that Davies's seeks to claim through, amongst other things and characteristically without apparent contradiction, her aristocratic status.

Davies's self-justified tracts sought their most prominent adversaries, namely the king and Archbishop Laud, in the tract *Given to the Elector* and the letter "Handwriteing October 1633". The most prominent of the three tracts, *Given to the Elector*, was revised and reprinted under the same name in 1648 and 1651, in 1643 under the title, *Amend, amend; Gods kingdome is at hand*, and in 1649 as *Strange and wonderfull prophecies* (Cope, *Prophetic Writings* 59). No copies from the original edition of 1633 survive, although the 1648 edition retained the original date of publication. The personal resonance of the original publication date was no doubt powerful, coming as it did in the year in which Davies's prophetic activities came under serious official scrutiny and she began almost a decade of incarceration for her writings. Indeed,

*Given to the Elector* takes up another of Davies's primary concerns, that of the religious custodianship of the English nation under Charles I. Whereas *Warning to the Dragon*, written almost ten years earlier, had referred to the king as "the Great Prince" (Cope, *Prophetic Writings* 6), in the *Dramatis Personae* at the beginning of *Given to the Elector*, in which it explicitly states "Shewing what Affinity between Great Babylon and Great Britain, with significant Names", Davies now describes the king as "*Baby-Charles* bids him beware (whose Anrgr.) *Charles be: Belchaser*" (Cope, *Prophetic Writings* 60). The king has become the Biblical figure, Belshazzar, whose fate is written on the wall in the book of Daniel. Daniel is the prophet Davies believed had spoken to her on that morning in 1625 and with whom she most closely identified. The final attribution of *Given to the Elector* reinforces this connection wherein the author's name, here nominated as Eleanor Audeley, is re-assigned "Reveale O Daniel", her favourite and most famous personal anagram. The challenge to the king embodied in the tract begins with its title. The text is dedicated to Prince Charles of the Rhine, nephew of the English king, and son of the king's sister, Elizabeth. Elizabeth and her husband, Frederick, attempted unsuccessfully to secure Protestant rule in Bohemia and established a court-in-exile in Holland in 1621 which had attracted many English travellers, "including those who were critical of policies at home" (Cope, *Handmaid* 60). Davies's explicit dedication to this branch of the royal family, with its history of Protestant solidarity, as against the English king, his French-Catholic wife, and the new presence of William Laud as Archbishop of Canterbury--whose "emphasis on ritual and ceremony [...] seemed little better than Popery" (Hill *A Century of Revolution* 70)--immediately signalled the tenor of her commentary on the state of affairs in her own

country. Added to this initial semiotic volley is the fact that Davies was forced to leave England to publish because the regime would not permit her to print what she wanted to say.

The main text of *Given to the Elector* consists of a poem. As accompaniment, Davies suggests a popular tune, "Who List a Soldiers Life". In effect, the text re-tells events described in the fifth book of Daniel where the indecipherable "writing on the wall" appears during the feast of Belshazzar, the secret of which writing is revealed only to the prophet Daniel:

But he in whose hand rests thy life  
even breathe thy ways all,  
Thou hast not glorified him  
sent this wrote on the wall.  
God numbered thy Kingdom hath  
ended; the Hand points here,  
In Ballance his weighed thee too,  
the set hour drawing neer.

(Cope, *Prophetic Writings* 66-67)

This text condenses Davies's prophetic project by literalising her appropriation of Daniel in a re-casting of a well-known Biblical narrative, with herself as the divine cipher and Charles as the derelict and sinning king for whom time is limited. The execution of Charles in 1649 on a scaffold outside the parliamentary banquet house further confirmed what Davies anticipated in this text. In her 1651 tract, *The Restitution of Prophecy* Davies refers to the death of the king and the metaphoric echoes of that event with the biblical comparison made in *Given to the Elector*: "Crowned, &c. concluded with *Charles Be*, from his name, attended with his Riotous *Lords, Belshazer* the last (to wit)

*Beheaded, &c. to beware his Banqueting Houses salutation*" (Cope, *Prophetic Writings* 358).

Contributing to her appearance before the High Commission in October, Davies delivered the letter "Handwriteing October 1633" to Laud. In this tract, Davies attacks the new archbishop's perceived Popish proclivities through a short volley of Scriptural allusions and rhyming verse. Making immediate reference to Laud's name, Davies subtracts the 'A' and 'D' leaving the Roman numeral LV (55) to signify Psalm 55, which ends with the avowal: "But thou, O God, shalt bring them down in the pit of destruction: bloody and deceitful men shall not live out half their days; but I will trust in thee". The poem which makes up the majority of the letter reinforces the Psalm's apocalyptic assertions:

God of the Earth. Earth is England.  
Out of Earth, Comes a Beaste,  
breed of the first, by the Sea and  
of Evils not the Least,  
two Horns like to a Lambe, not wilde  
Like Yorke, and Lambeth Looke,  
oathe giveth all as Dragon Milde  
right Hand, bids laye on Booke

Six Hundred Sixtie Six, accounte  
the Beaste, His number tolde  
to fiftie five years, doo amounte  
so many months is olde  
Mark Monethes reade of the man of sinn  
whose Howers last doo run

Six Hundred Sixtie Six beginn  
to counte His Moneth, to Come.

Even so come. Lord Jesus Amen.

("Handwriteing October 1633")

Davies claimed the letter was "to give him [Laud] a taste or warning of his judgment at hand, the hand writing (*Dan. 5*) served on him in his gallery" (*Cope Handmaid* 65; *And Without Proving* 1648). Like *Given to the Elector*, Davies sets herself at the centre of a matrix of prophetic images designed to locate authority figures amongst the doomed and sinning, and Davies herself as the harbinger of divine retribution. Where Charles was anagrammatically denoted as Belshazzar, Laud's name is literally mutilated and transfigured into a Scriptural warning before he is further identified with the deceiving beast of the apocalypse whose destruction is imminent.

### **The Writing Hand.**

Throughout these tracts, with their emphasis on Daniel and Davies's prophetic coupling, the image and potency of the writing hand is prominent. Davies's concentration on communicating her message almost solely through writing--print and script--forms an interpretative centre of gravity around which orbit the interlacing issues of writing as a prophetic and political tool, writing's place within Davies's own symbolic economy, and how Davies is read. The issue of interpretation is central to my conception of Davies's texts as examples of Certeau's idea of writing as "a text that has power over the exteriority from which it has first been isolated" (*The Practice of Everyday life* 134). Davies's texts are exercises in the power of writing as an accumulative practice in

which she, as the producer of the text, seeks to occupy (literally and culturally) an elite position with respect to her readership: "a social hierarchization seeks to make the reader conform to the 'information' distributed by an elite (or semi-elite)" (Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* 172).

The writing hand appears throughout Davies's texts. The flex of muscle and stylus is figured constantly; through metaphor, image, allusion, and the presence of Davies's (metaphorical and literal) hands in the texts. Her hands overlap as amendments and marginal glossaria appear in her handwriting on the surface of her printed texts. One of these marginal notations appears in the 1646 tract, *The Lady Eleanor, Her Appeal*, when alongside a passage describing how "those papers of mine at Saint James received Martyrdom" (Cope, *Prophetic Writings* 190), and the events which befell those who authorised the burning of her books, Davies adds in her own hand, "ould scripsi scripsi", "I wrote, I wrote" (Cope, *Prophetic Writings* 190). For Davies, writing overlays writing. Her texts are never released from an active attachment to the author. Diane Watt argues these amendments reflect a concern that "the word of God spoken through her should be accurately transmitted", and that the corrections and alterations often form the basis for revised editions (134). Indeed, Davies did publish the same tracts several times, often with alterations, and occasionally under different titles, but I would argue that there is more than just accuracy at stake here.

Barthes asserts of writing that "the letter is not painted (deposited) but scratched, incised, hollowed out by the punch or the awl" ("Requichot" 218). There is a physicality about Davies's writing. Her pen is dynamic and dismembering, always touching and altering

the text. In the volatile religious environment of the 1630s and 40s, Davies's radical syntax and millenarian message remained connected to the perennial Reformation concern that the individual sustain themselves through work. The flurry of texts published in 1633 initiate her deployment of the hand as an actual and metaphorical entity. The 1648 republication of *Given to the Elector* crystallises a series of hand metaphors, emphasising the unmediated relationship between the prophet's writing and divine intention. The frontispiece of *Given to the Elector* displays a disembodied hand, presumably Davies's, holding a quill and writing the words, "Mene peres", echoing the message upon Belshazzar's wall narrated in Daniel 5: "MENE; God hath numbered thy kingdom, and finished it. [...] PERES; Thy kingdom is divided" (Daniel 5: 26, 28). The wrist of the hand is tattooed with the word, "Reveale", underscoring not only the revelatory function of the prophet's hand but also echoing the anagram ending the text: "{Reveale O Daniel} Anagr. {Eleanor Audeley}" (Cope, *Prophetic Writings* 68, *Given to the Elector* 1648). Davies's hand is constantly referring, from self to world to God, constructing the text with overlaid meanings.

In *Amend, amend*, printed in 1643, Davies literalises her focal presence in the economy of meaning and belief contained in the narrative in a way she does not attempt in the re-print of *Given to the Elector*. Whereas her affiliation with Daniel is implicit in *Given to the Elector*, in *Amend, amend*, Davies's version of Daniel 5 is altered to emphasise a female interpretative presence. When the mysterious hand inscribes the message on the wall, Davies, diverting from the Biblical narrative, writes:

Thus now, when all at their wits end  
wise men, all those Lords too,

A woman Loe to her they come:  
to Learne what is to doe.

(*Amend, amend 3*)

The woman prophet, whose hand inscribes the story and *acts out* the word of God, is literalised in the text:

Because Davies introduces this woman in stanza 5, she also establishes a numeric link between 'the fingers of the female hand' that write the prophecy before us and the 'hand-maid' who points to Daniel as the revealer of divine secrets. In fact, for Davies, this 'handmaid' and Daniel have the same fingerprints.

(Richey 182)

Davies never negates the centrality of Daniel to the story. The female figure is Belshazzar's queen who, in Davies's version, directs the king's attention towards Daniel and does not prophecy herself. Yet, as Richey observes, Davies interposes a pivotal female figure into the story to underline her own role in the proceedings. The narrative always has its attention turned to its contemporary correlative, and Davies's presence in both is tangible.

This tangible presence is reflected in the overlapped writing that characterises *Given to the Elector*. Whilst the majority of the text is a direct re-publication of the 1633 original, there are clusters of marginal glosses identifying historical events that have borne out the warnings of fifteen years earlier. The conclusion to the text is amended so that the original ending is set against an updated final two stanzas. The original concluding stanzas concentrate the imagery of Daniel's story, focusing

attention on the significance of the prophetic hand and its foretelling of the doomed king's fate:

But he in whose hand rests thy life,  
even breathe thy ways all,  
Thou hast not glorified him  
sent this wrote upon the wall.  
God numbered thy Kingdom hath  
ended; the Hand points here,  
In ballance his weighed thee too,  
the set hour drawing neer.

How light soever by thee set,  
thou as thy weightless Gold,  
His Image wanting found much more  
lighter then can be told.  
Parted, divided thine Estate,  
given to the *Medes* is;  
At Hand, the Hand bids it adieu,  
finish'd thy Majesties.

(Cope, *Prophetic Writings* 66-67)

The divine hand, that which holds the king's and all other life, is also the hand that writes. The hand image slides between metaphysical and physical, a gap which Davies seeks to occupy.

This position as a kind of "hand" resonates with the writing process. In the 1643 text, *From the Lady Eleanor, Her Blessing*, Davies describes herself as "a Writer or Secretary", and claims her prophecies as a contemporary enactment of Daniel's narrative:

concerning the unsealing or interpreting this obscure piece to open *the Vission of Daniel, though no obscure persons of the seed of the KINGS and of PRINCES*. Even in the yeere 1625. undertaken this burthen, following his steps, who declares when HE wrote first in BELCHAZARS first yeere, the last of those *Caldeans* of great Babylon.

(Cope, *Prophetic Writings* 117)

The conclusion of *Given to the Elector* establishes Davies as the bringer of Daniel's message. The amendments to the 1648 edition demonstrate the accuracy and credibility of her earlier claims by recalling the imprisonment of Charles's nephew, the Elector to whom the book was dedicated, the defeat of the Royalist forces at Naseby in 1645 and end with a warning to Charles regarding the future of his reign:

*From Mene Mene, doubled twice  
established even  
Parliaments Writs stoln too on thee;  
and so take their leave, Amen,*

(Cope, *Prophetic Writings* 68; *Handmaid* 141)

The effect of the primary printed amendments to this text is to demonstrate the legitimacy of Davies's prophecies. In doing so, the text not only re-states the original correlation between Davies and the events narrated in Daniel, it re-visits the detail of those events and retrospectively demonstrates their validity. This process is done through marginal commentary, the annexing of the submission she made to Charles in 1633--and the warrant for her arrest he issued shortly afterwards--and extra stanzas added to the poem that makes up the majority of the text. This braiding together of subsequent textual

material with the Biblical allusions and references of the original tract creates a closely woven surface of interpolating texts and time periods. The foretellings of the main text are embellished with the retrospective commentary of the glosses, all of which is ironically set against the impotence of the now powerless royal warrant. Further to this, the final stanza concludes with another warning, projecting the text out beyond itself again, as the original had done.

In addition to the dense weave of printed text, *Given to the Elector* contains handwritten marginalia, notations, and dedications on the frontispieces of the various copies still existing. The overlapping of the handwritten and printed word indicates, as Diane Watt asserts, a concern for the accuracy of her texts (134), but it also demonstrates a desire for a continuing engagement with what Barthes calls the "receptive surface":

Make a loop: you produce a sign; but shift it forward,  
your hand still resting there on the receptive surface;  
you generate a writing: writing is the hand which  
bears down and advances or hangs back, *always in  
the same direction*, in short the hand that *plows* [.]

(Barthes, "Requichot" 219. Original emphasis.)

Multiple layers of text exist on the page simultaneously, each emanating from different sources and times and even from differing sites of inscription (the printed text as against handwritten notes), but all seeking to unify the authority of Davies's message. The writing hand depicted on the frontispiece, which is itself written on, is the hand that holds together Davies's textual cosmos.

The hand that writes upon the wall in *Given to the Elector*, the message that only Daniel can translate, is the same hand that writes

the inflammatory letter to Laud, "Handwriteing October 1633". Where in *Given to the Elector*, Davies embeds her message within a paraphrased Biblical narrative, in the letter she literalises the prophetic text, placing her words, her own hand, "in the place of God" (Goldberg 149). What is recounted in *Given to the Elector* is enacted in the letter. In "Requichot and his Body", Barthes asserts that

History alone institutes the legibility of a writing; as for its Being, writing derives that not from its meaning (from its communicative function) but from the rage, the tenderness, or the rigor with which its strokes and curves are drawn.

(220)

The physicality of Davies's writing, the presence of many texts and different inscriptive marks on the page, is its "Being". It is the furious presence of Davies's writing, and the impulses and desires that drive its production, that distinguishes her work from the mass of similar material being published during the period.

### **"To the happy READER": The Field of Prophecy.**

The interior textual dynamics of Davies's tracts react with the external environment within which they are read and interpreted. The construction of the 'I' in her tracts is a gesture against a submissive negation of the writing self in relation to the divine message, yet that divine message is always accorded primary importance. Whilst the speaking subject of Davies's texts may combine the personal and the divine in an intricate play of pronouns and referential allusions, these texts are read in an interpretative matrix not always prepared or attuned to accept them.

In October 1633, Davies's was brought before the Court of High Commission, a body established in concert with the Reformation of the English church and designed to "suppress movements dangerous to the church" (D. Walker 306). After Davies returned from Holland and delivered her handwritten warning to Laud, the archbishop seized her books and protested to the king. Davies too petitioned Charles in protest at Laud's actions but maintained her inflammatory attitude towards the new archbishop in the text of her appeal:

That the Word of God spoken (a) in the first year of your happy Reign to the Petitioner, upon Friday last early in the morning did suffer: The B. Beast ascended out of the Bottomless Pit, the Bishop (b) of Lambeth, horned like the Lamb, hearted like a Wolf, having seven Heads; viz. Making war seven years, hath overcome and killed them: Certain Books condemned to be burnt,

*(Dragons Blasphemous Charge 3)*

The response to her provocative submission came on the 8th of October when Charles issued a warrant ordering Davies to appear before the High Commission to "answer for presuming to Imprint the said Books, and for preferring this detestable Petition" (*Dragons Blasphemous Charge 4*).

From the available evidence it appears that when Davies attended her trial she did not continue the inflammatory rhetoric that had characterised her texts and precipitated her court appearance. Rather than challenge the authority of the court to judge her, Davies complied with court procedure and confessed under oath to the composition of the texts in question (Cope 69). Indeed, Cope suggests

that, in retrospect, Davies "welcomed [...] the opportunity that her hearing gave her to present to such an august group Daniel's message that the Day of Judgment would come in 1645" (*Handmaid* 69). Davies appears to have been both respectful and articulate in her defence of her actions. A retrospective satisfaction at the opportunity presented by the trial is illustrated in a marginal gloss to her 1651 text, *Dragons Blasphemous Charge*, in which Davies published the salient official documents regarding the 1633 High Commission appearance. The official summary of her appearance before the court reports: "At which day and place the said Lady *Eleanor Douglas* being called for, appeared personally; In whose presence the Articles objected against her, and her Answers made thereunto, were publiquely read" (*Dragons Blasphemous Charge* 8). Next to this passage, Davies added the note:

Her own Answers, &c. by reason Dr. Reeves, His Majesties Advocate, so soon as but opened his mouth, saying, My Lords, I am sorry, I could not utter one word more, seemed stricken with amazement.

(*Dragons Blasphemous Charge* 8)

Yet where Davies performance silenced her prosecutors, it did not persuade the court.

On the 23 October 1633, the day before her sentence was delivered, Laud burned Davies's prophecies before her, an event to which she often returned in later prophetic texts:

in the yeare 1633 [...] the *Beaste hee also ascended then out of the bottomlesse Pit; The son of perdition: [...] by whom the word of God, in the Moneth October 23. was burnd, suffered Martyrdome by a*

Candle *from his owne hand*, at the High Commission board Sacrifiz'd.

(Cope *Prophetic Writings* 96-97; *Samsons Legacie* 1643. Original emphasis.)

That this event was later accorded more significance in Davies's prophetic lexicon than the sentence she received the next day signalled the seriousness with which she approached her texts and their (mis)treatment. In any event, the sentence handed down by the court was severe:

For these her said bold attempts and impostures, tending to the dishonor of God, and scandal of Religion, whereof she was found and adjudged guilty by the Court, she was thought well worthy to be severely punished; and was first fined in the sum of 3000 l. to his Majesties use, ordered to make a publique Submission *in conceptis verbis*, at so many times, and in such places as this Court shall appoint, [...] And she was further committed close Prisoner to the Gatehouse, and ordered there to remain during his Majesties pleasure, who had taken special notice of her and her Cause, and referred the Examination and Censuring thereof into this Court.

(Cope 253-54, *The Blasphemous Charge Against Her* 1649)

Further to these punishments, the court placed express conditions on the terms of her imprisonment, ordering that "the Keeper of the said prison was required and commanded not to suffer her to have any pen, ink or paper to write any thing, in respect that she hath so much abused

her liberty in that kinde already" (Cope, *Prophetic Writings* 254). As Sue Wiseman observes:

The nature of her punishment reminds us that for a woman access to written words depended on a relationship not only to God but to a whole socio-cultural system beginning with the family (which Lady Eleanor, like several other prophets, evaded).

(192)

Davies's reaction to the sentence was apparently immediate. Cope records Lord Scudamore's correspondent reporting that Davies "was not moved at all with anything that was said or done to her", indeed she seems to have answered the court's punishment with an attack of her own, what the correspondent describes as "mad speeches", in which "with a kind of despising the court, she told them they could do her no hurt and that she had the spirit of Elias and many such subtleties" (qtd. in Cope, *Handmaid* 74-75).<sup>53</sup> Whereas during the trial and its attendant interrogations, Davies had followed convention and complied with the rules of the court, upon receiving its censure she apparently altered this acquiescent stance in order to vent her indignation at the tribunal's rejection of her message. Davies's actions here reflect the broad pattern of her prophetic career, which is to operate within a power structure she simultaneously criticises:

Davies's particular problem is that she needs to make herself into an agent in a political discourse which deems her irrevocably subject. In maturing as a writer and a dissident, Davies learns how to

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<sup>53</sup> Cope's reference for this quote is to the *Scudamore MSS*. PRO. C115/M30/8114. Public Record Office, London.

manipulate 'authorities' for the purpose of making the first and most pointed assertion of her prophetic calling--'And I thinke that I have also the spirit of God'--signify in, what for her is, the language of 'realpolitik'.

(Feroli 374)

Her rejection of the official authority of the High Commission, a body drawn from ecclesiastical and secular sources, set the tone for Davies's relations with prevailing powers during the 1630s. With each official castigation, Davies's opposition to those she saw as hindering her mission, most often embodied in the personages of Charles and Laud, grew both more strident and, in Davies's particular fashion, more articulate.

Davies did not, ultimately, make the public submission demanded by the High Commission, nor did she pay the fine imposed. She was, however, confined to the Gatehouse until 1635 and did not write "any thing", or, at least, anything that survives. After her release she travelled to Bath, and then to Lichfield where she was involved with a small group of women living near the cathedral there. At the time, Lichfield Cathedral was undergoing renovations which reflected the High Church proclivities of the Laudian administration. Specifically, there were "hangings of arras behind the altar; the communion-table handsomely railed in; and the table itself set out in the best manner, and the bishop's seat fairly built" (Birch 259; Cope, *Handmaid* 83). Davies and her group set in train a series of protests against these changes which concentrated on disturbing the spatial hierarchy of the cathedral's congregation. Davies and her supporters occupied seats reserved for local female gentry and wives of the clergy,

at one point even engaging in a physical brawl with a member of the congregation (Bruce vol. 12, 219). These disturbances reached their climax when Davies wrote an appeal to the bishop, which has not survived, and then proceeded to the cathedral to further press her dissent:

afterwards [she] went into the bishop's throne and sat there, and said she was primate and metropolitan. She also with a pot of water, tar, and other filthy things, most profanely defiled the hangings at the altar of the cathedral, and said she had sprinkled holy water upon them against their next communion;

(Bruce vol 12, 219)

In reaction to these events, Davies was summarily committed in absentia to Bethlehem Hospital (hereafter Bedlam) by the Privy Council: "Never that was called to appear or *answer* whether *Guilty*, but *surprized* in that sort" (Cope, *Prophetic Writings* 372, *Bethlehem Signifying the House of Bread* 1652). She remained in Bedlam from December 1637 until late 1638, at which time she was transferred to the Tower where she remained until 1640.

Her time in "*Bedlems loathsom Prison*" (Cope 371, *Bethlehem Signifying the House of Bread* 1652) was a reference point in the tracts she published after her release. Like her revisiting of her appearance before the High Commission in later tracts, in which she published the official court records of the trial almost without alteration, Davies used her period in Bedlam as a vehicle for articulating retrospective prophetic and personal justification. Cope suggests that Davies disguised the personal humiliation of this

confinement behind the abstruse phraseology of her tracts, deciding that those who had punished her had declared "the invincible truth [...] madness" (*Apocalypse Chap. 11 2-3*) and had thus exposed themselves as heretics to her cause:

She emphasized this after her stay in Bedlam by putting her own prophecies into language that others would find difficult to understand. Thus, she demonstrated how those who thought her mad were themselves incapable of comprehending what she wrote.

*(Handmaid 95)*

The cycle of dissent and punishment in which Davies's had operated since her journey to Holland in 1633 had produced a specific approach to prophecy and its articulation. As official censure continued to deny her writings validity and punished her actions, so the textual and semantic volatility of Davies's message intensified. The result is the body of work produced in the 1640s that churns with prophetic vigour and personal outrage. The style of these tracts displays a difficult and intricate surface of interconnected and fragmented discourses yet promises clarity to the reader who "believes". It is this discord between writing and reading, confusion and comprehension, which underpins my interpretation of Davies's texts.

### **The Writing Subject.**

Davies's writings, their texture and content, indicate a certain level of educative attainment on her part. Whilst her intimate knowledge of Scripture may not be remarkable for the period, her extensive use of different Biblical translations, an apparent knowledge

of Latin, and her employment of "specialized realms of scholarship and rhetorical techniques" (Cope, *Prophetic Writings* xix), attests to a level of education not necessarily afforded women of the time. Her aristocratic position undoubtedly assisted her in attaining such a level of intellectual accomplishment, yet it was no guarantee. Linda Pollock argues that whilst the education of girls in the upper strata of English society was of considerable importance, the syllabus of that education was somewhat in dispute. The primary objective of female education among the elite was to produce women who "men of the upper ranks wished to marry " (Pollock 244). Davies was clearly the product of a thorough education in the practice of writing and her marriage to Sir John Davies demonstrated it to have been no impediment to that most axiomatic of female duties, marriage. Her proficiency for writing, however, would eventually be the impediment upon which both her marriage to Davies, and the subsequent union with Sir Archibald Douglas, would founder.

Certeau's representation of writing emphasises the agency available to the scriptive subject when they come to write: "An autonomous surface is put before the eye of the subject who thus accords himself the field for an operation of his own" (Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* 134). Certeau develops this image of the field when referring to the creation of the writing subject during the seventeenth century. In this period, as the transcendent authority of God's word (Scripture) declined and an independent, individuated writing subject appeared in its place, the nature of language and its manipulation also changed: "Because of this isolation of the subject, language ob-jectifies itself, becoming a field to be plowed rather than to be deciphered, a disorderly nature that has to be cultivated" (Certeau,

*The Practice of Everyday Life* 138). This situates a writing subject before the "autonomous surface" of the page, yet the identity of this subject is still obscure. Certeau's examination of this subject in relation to the speech of seventeenth-century mystics and the demonically possessed extends the autonomy of the page to the writing subject through the elision of names and a re-configuration of the writing/speaking subject as a conduit for the divine or the supernatural. Davies's writing contains elements of Certeau's model. The reconfiguration of names, Davies's ventriloquism of specific prophets (especially Daniel), and her personal identification with national debates and events all suggest a complementary reading of her prophetic practice with those identified by Certeau. Yet Davies's ultimate refusal to negate her own identity in favour of her message sets her against Certeau's interpretations of mystic and possessed writing and speech. Certeau's models offer much to an analysis of Davies's writing, and I will proceed to elaborate on the positive engagements between them, but Davies resists unproblematic reading along purely Certalian lines.

That a theoretical dissonance should exist is not surprising given the differing cultures at the centre of Certeau's and my own studies. Counter-Reformation Europe and mid-century Protestant England offer images of Western Christianity that differ violently in their interpretation of the Word. Yet the emergent writing subject at the centre of both phenomena may be the figure that binds these two situations together. Even so, this study has also to consider other, specific cultural factors that affect Davies's prophetic activities. Prime among these factors is the extent to which gendered codes of behaviour impede Davies's ability to fulfil her vocation. As Megan Matchinske argues, Davies's gender necessitates an extra, justificatory element be

included in her prophetic activity as a way of establishing herself within the prevailing patriarchy: "Davies's status as a woman in a culture that expects markedly different behaviours from men and women, demands a different twist to her writings and to their authorial claims" (139-40). Davies's construction of an active subjectivity through writing consequently works within and on notions of patriarchal, political, personal, and economic power.

On the frontispiece to her first published tract, *A Warning to the Dragon and all his Angels* (1625), the anagram "A SNARE O DEVIL" substitutes for the author's name, Eleanor Davies (Cope, *Prophetic Writings* 1). At the end of the short opening epistle, another anagram for Eleanor Davies reads, "O A SURE DANIEL" (Cope, *Prophetic Writings* 5). On the next page, above the main text, a further anagram appears, "ELEANOR AUDELEY, REVEALE O DANIEL" (Cope, *Prophetic Writings* 6), and on the final page, above a quotation from Revelation, the name "DANIEL" appears in block letters (Cope, *Prophetic Writings* 56). In the texts that precipitated her trial in 1633 there are further changes of appellation. In *Woe to the House*, no mention of Davies is made at all, although there are abusive anagrams regarding Elizabeth and Anne Stanley, as well as a eulogising anagram of Mervin Audeley. *Given to the Elector* is described as being written by "the Lady Eleanor" (Cope, *Prophetic Writings* 59) and ends with a repetition of the "Reveale O Daniel, Eleanor Audeley" anagram (Cope, *Prophetic Writings* 68). Davies's identity--as designated by her name--slides between appellations as they fit into her own compositional and justificatory designs.

In her last tract, *Bethlehem*, published a month before her death, Davies enumerates her onomastic matrix in a passage which both

disperses her along different genealogical vectors whilst simultaneously unifying her identity in the image of the kingdom:

*Audley of England from whence derives her Antiquity. Touchet of France, the Paternal Name. Castlehaven in Ireland, thence her Precedence alike concerned in each. From the Province of Wales that of Davis: and Douglas of Scotland the Doughty: such a one of the several Nations as intimates no less:*

(Cope, *Prophetic Writings* 374)

This tract is signed off under the compound name, "*Elea: Aud: Touch: Castleha. Da: & Do:*" (Cope, *Prophetic Writings* 374), a list of her titles and names, paternal and married. This armoury of titles is intrinsic to Davies's prophetic method. It provides a series of templates for her anagrams (the names and the re-created words do not always need to match for Davies, and indeed she often changes the spelling of either to suit her purposes) and, as the passage demonstrates, underlines her elevated social status. The patronymic authority of these names is rooted in the same socio-political system that underwrites not only her aristocratic status but the legitimacy of the monarchy. Indeed Teresa Feroli argues that Davies's appeals to the legitimacy of her family name reveal a strategy to assert the primacy of antiquity over the transience of "inherited political titles" (371). In *The Appearance or Presence of the Son of Man* (1650), Davies again traces her lineage over the course of English history and, in suggesting the sanction of ancient birthright, offers a reading of aristocratic legitimacy as parallel to that of the monarch's (Feroli 371):

*Daughter of Audleigh, or Oldfield, in the Saxon Tongue, [also] no created Peership: a Saxon Baron*

afore the Conquest, As unto this day, preferring the act of time Antiquity, before Titles subject to be revers'd; and so far for that beginning and ending, of Kings and House of Lords.

(Cope, *Prophetic Writings* 312)

Yet even as she deploys these identities across her texts, she maintains her claims to be speaking God's word: "Former things are come to passe, and new things I declare unto you; no age so weake, nor sex excusing; when the Lord shall send and will put words in their Mouth. He powreth out his Spirit upon his handmaidens" (Cope, *Prophetic Writings* 2, *Warning to the Dragon* 1625). The submission of the self to the divine message operates coterminously with the promotion of that self's various authorial and authoritative configurations. In the 1648 tract, *Of the general Great Days*, Davies signs her name "The Lady Eleanor Da: & Do." (Frontispiece qtd. in Cope *Handmaid* 138) and similarly in *The Appearance or Presence of the Son of Man* she asserts "I am A. and O. alias Da: and Do: by her first and last marriage so subscribes, that beginning and ending" (Cope, *Prophetic Writings* 312); the abbreviated surnames an allusion to Revelation 8, a favourite of Davies: "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending". In suffusing her name through an authoritative text, Davies establishes the legitimacy of her message and, as Cope describes, reinforces it with a tone "of authority" (*Handmaid* 138): "From him which is, and was, and is to come, the alone peace-maker, his Majesty expressly these the Revelation by his Handmaid interpreted" (*Of the general Great Days* 3 qtd. in Cope *Handmaid* 138). The simultaneous advance and withdrawal of personal identity in the act of disclosing the divine message is characteristic of Davies, as it is to some extent most prophets

(women and men) of the period in that their names are never erased from the record, even if they claim their self is negated in the process of relaying God's message. Yet the complex interplay between personal and divine authority in Davies's texts is directly connected to the way in which her texts are constructed and received.

In the development of his thesis concerning the elements of writing as a practice, Certeau contends that the decline of Holy Scripture as a transcendent, spoken truth comes at the point when it is acknowledged that this "Spoken Word [...] has been altered by textual corruptions and the avatars of history" (*The Practice of Everyday Life* 137). With the dispersal of an identity position rooted in an assimilation with the Holy message, a new identity position arises based on the continuous production of the self through practice:

There is a disappearance of the places established by a spoken word, a loss of the identities that people believed they received from a spoken word. A work of mourning. Henceforth, identity depends on the production, on the endless moving on (or detachment and cutting loose) that this loss makes necessary. Being is measured by doing.

(Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* 137)

What results from this shift in identity perception is the production of a subject who recognises and creates itself through practice, through writing. As the signifiers of self that constituted the universe of the spoken word relinquished the certainty that assured the individual a "place" in the world, that individual was forced to fashion a "space" of its own:

In other words, it is because he loses his position that the individual comes into being as a *subject*. The place a cosmological language formerly assigned to him and which was understood as a 'vocation' and a placement in the order of the world, becomes a 'nothing', a sort of void, which drives the subject to make himself the master of a space and to set himself up as a producer of writing.

(Certeau, *Practice of Everyday Life* 138. Original emphasis.)

It is into this environment that Davies's writing is delivered; the divine truth produced by an act of will on the part of an independent, individuated writing subject.

Davies's attachment to her titles, and the legitimacy she discerns in them, appears to contradict the characteristic negation of self attributed to the possessed or the divinely inspired. Yet Davies's citation of genealogy indicates a pragmatic concern for instituting a space of political and cultural legitimacy from which to conduct her prophetic vocation: "Her self-naming represents her attempt to inscribe her career with historical legitimacy through writing" (Feroli 364). Certeau contends that "[n]ame changes and beginnings by the name are to be found everywhere in the mystics' tradition"--his example is Juan de Yepes' transformation into Juan de la Cruz (John of the Cross)--and that:

In these onomastic substitutions, the new appellation is presented as a program for being, a clear program that takes the place of an earlier, obscure one--it is any "proper" name imposing upon

the subject the duty-to-be of the unknown that is the will of the other; it introduces, through a switch of fathers, a filiation of meaning to replace a filiation by birth.

(Certeau, "The Institution of Rot" 38)

Yet rather than discard her old appellation, Davies accumulates *all* of her names and constantly promotes them in association with the Scriptural figures of whom she claims to be a literal and (meta)physical anagram. The filiations of the flesh are reconfigured to attain an equivalence with the divine project of prophecy. Whilst this might seem to conflict with the thrust of Certeau's contention, and the contrary religious tradition from which Davies's texts emerge makes this unsurprising, there is a certain consistency between the two positions. When Certeau asserts that this re-alignment of names enables a "play of identities in the empty space left by the original name, which is foreclosed, *expired*" ("The Institution of Rot" 38. Original emphasis.), there is a similarity with Davies's style. When Davies embroiders a text with anagrams of her name and that of the prophet Daniel, and signs the text with abbreviated versions of several or all of the names assignable to her by birth and/or marriage, she enables a shift in the signifying potential of these labels. By insisting on the authority of these names as separate (genealogical, Scriptural) and associated (prophetic) figures, Davies manages to uncouple these labels from their strictly defined objects of reference. This is made possible by the presence of the writing subject as a visible and active force within the text. Because writing as practice has swallowed the passive *reception* of (Holy) text and replaced it with the *production* of (allegedly Holy) text, there are two forces within the text, divine and fleshly, message and

messenger, God and the writing subject. Where Certeau asserts that the "I is both figurative and a figure, a symbolic representation" ("Mystic Speech" 94. Original emphasis.), Davies activates a comparable symbolism in "ELEANOR AUDELEY-REVEAL O DANIEL".<sup>54</sup> Although she rarely refers to herself in the first person, Davies is a tangible and intrinsic part of her prophetic tracts. Beth Nelson goes further in her characterisation of Davies's textual persona, claiming that what Certeau would read as symbolic activity is literal:

In her later prophecies 'I' becomes 'she': the interpreter becomes a participant in the scriptural text as it manifests itself in the actualities of England during the 1630s and 1640s [...] her interpretations, which reveal the Holy Spirit's real meaning, are not merely equivalent to Daniel's and John's books: They *are* these books and Lady Elinor, accordingly, *is* Daniel and St. John. Metonymy carries the force of identity.

(406-07. Original emphasis.)

The emergence of the writing subject, the "I", as "the (empty) space in which the discourse of subjectivity and individuality is constructed" (Certeau, "Mystic Speech" 94) is harnessed in Davies's texts and is made concordant with the divine word it seeks to convey. Self and Other mix in the textual void created by the autonomous writing subject, and this mixing is not an accidental or unavoidable co-mingling but a deliberate coupling, an act of will by the subject.

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<sup>54</sup>Of course, Certeau is speaking of the development of mystic writing as it appeared in Catholic Europe and its relation to the production of the speaking and writing subject, not the turbulent doctrinal gyrations of pre-Civil War Protestant England. Still, the presence of the writing subject in divine discourse marks a point of disruption within and convergence between continental and English religious traditions.

### "know ye or be informed": Reading Davies.

As with the play of identities that distinguishes and confuses the way in which Davies's texts are attributed, the compositional style of the texts makes a definitive classification of their structure and content extremely difficult. I return to Certeau's treatment of seventeenth-century mystics, as well as his examination of the dynamics of "possessed" speech during the same period, to illustrate the hybridity of both Davies's approach and the interpretative matrix required to come to some form of position regarding her writing. For Certeau, any analysis of the speech of the possessed and the mystic revolves around discerning a "discourse of the other" (*Writing of History* 246). This "other" is always removed from the experience of the interpreter, whether they be contemporary with the possessed/mystic experience or approach it from a temporal distance:

it involves the possibility of acceding to the speech of the other, which is effectively the problem facing historians: what can we apprehend from the discourse of an absent being? How can we interpret documents bound to an insurmountable death, that is to say, to another period of time, and to an 'ineffable' experience always approached from an outside evaluation?

(Certeau, *Writing of History* 244)

This is a re-statement of one of the central tenets of Certeau's interpretative dilemma: how can we speak of that from which we are insuperably separated? I do not intend to become entangled in the intricacies of this argument here, but it remains a live issue in the

context of this project. In terms of Certeau's approach to the analysis of the possessed and the mystic, whilst they constitute distinct activities, the two discourses converge around their disruptive effect on language and the reaction this produces in centres of authority within their cultures.

In the case of possession, Certeau's examination of the phenomenon includes his case study of the so-called "Possession of Loudun" in 1632 which occurred in the town's convent. Placing the twenty or so nuns involved in the context of the town at that time, Certeau describes a place riven with sectarian tension in which the universal authority of the Catholic church had been challenged by the town's large Protestant community. With the institutional pressures of the Counter-Reformation combining with the apparent reality of "diabolic" Protestant dissent fracturing the professed total authority of Catholicism, the nuns found themselves "caught up in these larger historical processes" (Ahearne, *Michel de Certeau* 76). With only the authorised vocabulary of the Church at their disposal to define the emotional and psychological stresses they were under, the coherence of this institutional language began to rupture, producing a profuse and disturbing flow of dislocated speech.

The dark seething of unavowable intentions--wasn't *that* reality? [...] Many Ursulines [...] fall at this point into despair, pulled down by the indubitable but unreliable experience of doubts and impulses which are intolerable in the language of orthodox fidelity. According to received theological schemes, the nuns can do nothing else except attribute all of this reality to the devil, and recognize him in the infernal

shadow spreading over and dividing their interior landscape.

(Certeau, *La possession de Loudun* 147-48 qtd. in Ahearne, *Michel de Certeau* 77)<sup>55</sup>

This language, as Ahearne asserts, was "developed through a series of encounters with confessors, priests, demonological and spiritual writings, rumour and gossip" (*Michel de Certeau* 77). The production of this language is as important as its reception. Indeed, using a Certalian trope, it might be said that the language's reception by the prevailing orthodoxy *constitutes* its production. The conditions of this reception are therefore important to an understanding of the institutional reaction to this disturbed language.

"Possession" in this model represents a disturbance of an existing social order, including its linguistic structure, from within. The animating feature of possession, as described by Certeau, is the dislocation of the speaking subject and the intrusion of the voice of the other into a structured conceptual and linguistic environment: "Someone else is speaking within me" (Certeau, *Writing of History* 246). When the possessed woman speaks, Certeau argues that the subject, being female, reflects a "behind the scenes" dynamic between "masculine discourse and its feminine alteration" (*Writing of History* 245). Her social locus is displaced by the eruption of another voice for which she cannot be held responsible and which speaks beyond the cultural constraints of the speaking subject from which it emanates: "for the possessed woman the place from which they speak is indeterminate, always giving itself as a 'somewhere else' that speaks in them" (Certeau,

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<sup>55</sup> Ahearne provides the full reference for this quote: Michel de Certeau, *La possession de Loudun*. 1970. Paris: Gallimard/Julliard, 1990. All quotes are taken from Ahearne's text.

*Writing of History* 246). This break between the speaking subject and what is said is fundamentally threatening to the social order into which this language proceeds: "The symptoms of the possessed bore witness to an 'alteration' of the human subject, which threatened in turn to contaminate the propriety of the social order" (Ahearne, *Michel de Certeau* 81). The speech of the possessed creates space within the existing order, space which the proper, strategic forces of the church and state were required to contain in order to maintain their own legitimacy.

This legitimacy is held together with the same linguistic structures that are dispersed and re-ordered by the possessed. Further to that, the cultural environment into which the possessed's words travel is itself ordered by that same matrix of language and authority. So whilst, as Certeau demonstrates, the place from which the possessed speaks is "indeterminate", the place in which that speech is received is not:

The possessed woman's speech is established relative to the discourse that awaits her in *that* place, on the demonological stage, just as the language of the crazed woman in the hospital is only what has been prepared for her on the psychiatric stage.

(*Writing of History* 248. Original emphasis.)

The primary technique of containment employed by those institutions threatened by possessed speech is "a labor of naming or designating that is the characteristic answer to possession in any traditional society" (Certeau, *Writing of History* 246). And this naming process takes place within a cultural context that is comprehensively structured by and for the benefit of those institutions threatened by the intrusion of the other

and charged with its effacement. In essence, the context from which the possessed escapes is that into which it speaks and that which must determine what it says:

The task of doctors or exorcists is one of nomination, which aims at categorizing the interlocutors, confining them in a place circumscribed by these doctors' or exorcists' knowledge [...] Both exorcists and doctors are opposed to the delinquent, heretical, or sick exception, to the abnormal represented by the possessed woman. They are opposed to her escape into fancy, because through it she exiles herself from social language, she betrays the very linguistic topography with which social order can be organized.

(Certeau, *Writing of History* 247)

The existing power structure cannot sanction the otherness represented in the possessed woman's speech, but more than that, its determination to "reclassify the alterity that it meets" speaks of an inability to process it on the same terms with which it was produced. So whilst the reaction of proprietary forces within culture is to "eliminate an exterritoriality of language" through naming and preventing the possessed woman being "located when she presents herself as the statement of something that is fundamentally other" (Certeau, *Writing of History* 247), there remains a central, insurmountable breach between the two parties: "There must always be a gap between what the possessed woman utters and what the demonological or medical discourse makes of it" (Certeau, *Writing of History* 247).

The rupture between the speaking subject and their speech is most fundamentally represented in the possessed's elision of the

personal pronoun, "I". Certeau asserts that the "proper name assigns to the subject a locus in language and therefore 'secures' an order of sociolinguistic practice" (*Writing of History* 256), and that the possessed women evaded this "securing" device when they spoke their possession in the first person: "the possessed woman deviates by offering an uncanniness of the subject ('je est autre', or 'I is other')" (Certeau, *Writing of History* 256). The response to this evasion is for exorcists, the tool of proprietary interests, to extract confessions from the women, "I = x (x designating a determinate name)" (Certeau, *Writing of History* 256), and thus re-attach the subject to the orders of language and knowledge from which those proprietary interests draw their legitimacy. Yet this strategy fails because, as Certeau relates, the women appropriate the taxonomies and linguistic hierarchies that attempt to re-classify them in order to sustain their dislocation from these same complexes of order:

[exorcists] must appropriate this aberration by giving it another proper name taken from a (demonological) list that a society has prearranged for cases of this type. From then on the contract--the very principle of knowledge, of the 'order of things', and thus also of therapeutics--is restored. [...] Urged by the exorcists to fix her name firmly (it is precisely the avowal of a proper name that they want to extort from her) and to pigeonhole herself within their demonological repertory, she finally declares, 'I am Asmodeus': *I = Asmodeus*. But soon afterward she will respond, 'I am Aman'; then, 'I am Iscaron,' etc. [...] The plurality of identifications drawn from the

same onomastic table ultimately denies the possibility of any localization, but without rejecting the (demonological) social code [...] The code remains, but the possessed woman passes through it. She slips from locus to locus, challenging the stability of all proper names through her trajectory; no determinate value can be linguistically attached to 'I' in any stable way.

(Certeau, *Writing of History* 256. Original emphasis.)

The importance of names and naming to Davies's prophetic project, and to the authorities that seek its silencing, will be further investigated later in this section. At this point I will leave a further discussion of Certeau's analysis of possession, and its relation to Davies's writing, until I have also outlined his analysis of mystic speech.

The creation of space through an appropriation of existing (linguistic) structures is a central plank of Certeau's interpretative project. The introduction of an "other-ness" into language through possession is in some ways reflected in the more formal practices of seventeenth-century mystic writers in France and Spain. Where possessed speech erupts from sites of cultural tension or pressure, mystic speech emerges out of an erosion of institutional (religious) authority and the need to articulate a relationship to the divine without necessarily acknowledging that authority.

The different mystic trends, confronted with hidden truths, opaque authorities, and divided or ailing institutions, did not basically set out to pioneer new systems of knowledge, topographies, or complementary or substitutive powers; rather, they

defined a different *treatment* of the Christian tradition.

(Certeau, "Mystic Speech" 81. Original emphasis.)

The underlying project of the mystics was "to recreate sites for effective communication (with an Other or with others)" (Ahearne, *Michel de Certeau* 102). This was against a cultural backdrop that saw "a set of deteriorating frames of reference, the contemporary collapse of confidence in the ontological grounding of language and the ensuing climate of linguistic 'duplicité'" (Ahearne, *Michel de Certeau* 102). Even so, mystic writers operated within the signifying matrix that constituted their cultural milieu, but, as with possessed speech, appropriated that matrix to create alternative modes of expression:

Properly speaking, [mystic language] is not a new or artificial language. It is the effect of an elaboration upon existent language, a labor applied primarily to the 'vulgar' tongues (to which preference is given), but extending also to technical languages. The uses that define it reflect the operations carried out by speakers.

(Certeau, *Mystic Fable* 141-42)

This "formalizing of practices" (Certeau, *Mystic Fable* 142) reflects Certeau's central assertion that the primary feature of *mystics* is its being "a way of using language" (*Mystic Fable* 113). Without seeking to re-trace Certeau's history of *mystics* as a coherent discipline, I will focus on the network of linguistic re-employments at its core.

As with the speech of the possessed, mystic speech is an attempt to articulate the other through a language barely able to convey this presence. The fundamental alterity of the experience with which

language must grapple in turn insists on alterations to the matrix of meaning and signification from which language derives. Certeau elaborates the point with an extended passage from Diego de Jesús's *Apuntamientos y advertencias*, a companion text to the works of John of the Cross, in which the author seeks "to facilitate the understanding of the mystic phrases and the doctrine of Saint John" (*Mystic Fable* 130. Original emphasis.).<sup>56</sup> The passage extracted by Certeau outlines Diego's justification of the linguistic alteration engaged in by the mystics:

[H]ow will we put in order, or bounds, or text, or means in the terms by which we must explain so lofty a thing, wanting what is immense and unsayable to be subject to the ordinary rules, without exceeding the common phrases and guarded terms of the schools of disciplines and masters, of arts and manners that can be taught and known?

(Diego de Jesús, *Apuntamientos* qtd. in Certeau, *Mystic Fable* 139)

Diego's explanation of the necessity of the mystics' linguistic alterations lies in the ineffability of mystic experience and the authority of canonical precedent, as when he argues that:

The mystic has permission (provided that we know that in the substance of what he says he does not contradict the truth), in order to enliven and emphasize, to make its incomprehensibility, and loftiness known with terms that are imperfect, perfect, hyperperfect, contrary or noncontrary,

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<sup>56</sup> Certeau gives the full citation for this text as, Diego de Jesús, "Apuntamientos y advertencias en tres discursos para más fácil inteligencia de las frases místicas y doctrina de las obras espirituales de nuestro Padre." *Obras espirituales*. Alcalá, 1618.

similar and dissimilar, as we have examples of all that in the mystic Fathers.

(Diego de Jesús, *Apuntamientos* qtd. in Certeau, *Mystic Fable* 139)

Because mystic language deals with "very secret things, which concern experience more than speculation" and consists "more in taste and divine savor than in knowledge", the use of "particular and uncommon terms" (Diego de Jesús, *Apuntamientos* qtd. in Certeau, *Mystic Fable* 137-38) is unavoidable. The subordination of language, the signifier, to the divine experience, the signified, produces a "disfigured" linguistic order which produces the divine "presence". This presence is always a form of absence at the same time, not just referentially but metonymically. Language (imperfectly) figures the experience of the mystic in all its inscrutability:

Therefore in matters so lofty and spiritual [...] in which experience triumphs over doctrine; in which he who knows cannot say; in which grace rather than language is mistress, [...] [in which] heavenly experience and suavity are the school and the instruction, in which clarity is harmful, in which obscurity sheds light, in which one need only look at what one sees, which is not all acquired by discourse, but the opportune moment and point toward which the fire of love inclines [.]

(Diego de Jesús, *Apuntamientos* qtd. in Certeau, *Mystic Fable* 138-39)

The language of the mystic appears to seek the "triumph" of experience over doctrine in "vulgar" or technical languages rather than in

doctrinal terms. (To the extent that expressing divine experiences in terms other than those of established religious discourses occurs in *mystics*, it may be understood that all such "other" languages are considered "vulgar".) Using Joan Scott's model, mystic "experience is taken as the origin of knowledge" and "the vision of the individual subject [...] becomes the bedrock of evidence upon which explanation is built" (Scott 777). The context in which their experiences were traditionally received is what mystic speech evades, seeking elaboration in its own particular syntax and significance.

Diego's elaborations on the features of mystic speech and their necessity mark an entry point into its function. In his examination of the specific linguistic features of mystic speech, its technicalities, re-employments and oxymorons, Certeau traces an effect, a "de-naturing" of language designed to produce a certain kind of text and a certain kind of reader:

Diego insisted on the transformation carried out by the author of the text, to which the operation it brought about in the reader would correspond. On both parts, a movement was essential. It was characterized both by a *shift of the subject* within the meaning space circumscribed by words and by a *technical manipulation* of these words in order to mark the new way in which they were being used. In short, it was a practice of detachment. It denatured language: it distanced it from the function that strove after an imitation of things. It also undid the coherence of signification [...] It tormented words, to make them say what they did not say literally, in

such a way that they became, in a sense, the sculpture of the tactics of which they were the instruments.

(Certeau, *Mystic Fable* 140-41. Original emphases.)

The linguistic flux of mystic speech enables a multiplicity of meanings and associations within the text "as if heterogeneous types of space had come to meet in the same setting" (Certeau, *Mystic Fable* 143). This dislocation of text from established meaning is the method by which mystic speech attempts to express the inexpressible.

It makes a hole in language. It roughs out a space for the unsayable. It is language directed towards non-language. [...] In a world taken to be entirely written and spoken, therefore 'lexicalizable', it opens up an absence of correspondence between things and words.

(Certeau, *Mystic Fable* 143)

The formalities and devices of mystic language seek to turn "silence to speech and speech to silence", in an oscillation "between aphasia and glossolalia [...] disruptive verbal artifice and didacticism" (Ahearne, *Michel de Certeau* 112) the presence of the Other, God, is intimated and alluded to.

Mystic speech, like that of the possessed, proceeds from a movement away from the institutional language and practice of religious experience in Counter-Reformation Europe. Both forms seek the presence of the other through a disruption of the proprietariness of (religious) language. And both effect alterations to the conception of the speaking subject, the "I" of their texts. Where the possessed speaker displaces the "I" into a shifting network of displacements and circulations, evading the institutional desire to fix the subject to a

distinct, "lexicalizable" identity, the mystic speaker, in their formal dismantling of language, dissolves the "I" of the subject into the "I" of the Other:

Since the Speaking Word *must* exist even though it may become inaudible, he temporarily substitutes his speaking *I* for the inaccessible divine *I*. He makes this *I* into the representation of what is missing--a representation that marks the place of what it does not replace. Contradictory in nature, therefore, the speaking *I* (or writer) takes up the illocutionary function, but in the name of the Other.

(Certeau, *Mystic Fable* 188. Original emphasis.)

More than just this, however, Certeau suggests that the speaking subject is a kind of primary emptiness, a void, which does not withdraw from some kind of fully individuated, self-possessed position in order to give the Other access. Rather, it is always already constituted by the Other and exists as a response to that presence.

If the subject is an answer in search of what it is an answer to, this inner speaking is called 'the soul'. It is a speaking that does not know what it echoes. A 'moaning', or a 'murmur', whose space is lacking.

(*Mystic Fable* 189)

Certeau argues that a space is required in which the *I* can speak "in the place of (and instead of) the Other" (*Mystic Fable* 188). A space of the imaginary, a fiction of the world, is created to make "a theater of operations possible" (Certeau, *Mystic Fable* 188). In this space language operates to trace that which is invisible and interior:

If one considers the imaginary not primarily a lexicon (an iconic material, things seen or dreamt) but the *spatiality* that specifies all images, as well as the capacity that the imaginary has to produce a *scene* at a distance from the inner, immediate, undeveloped act; if one takes the imaginary to be space and, more than that, to be space-producing, then one can say that for the *voló* and the *I*, it is both their figuration (theater, metaphor, artifact) and their *illocutionary space* (the place of speaking for a speaking that has no place).

(Certeau, *Mystic Fable* 188-89. Original emphasis.)

This is the space of the soul that has no space, an interiority, a "*fiction of the soul*" (*Mystic Fable* 189. Original emphasis.), that allows a detached speaking to take place. Yet the speaking that the soul seeks to articulate in this space is not its own but the reverberation of the Other that already constitutes it:

the soul, transported outside of itself in that borrowed space in which it can mark its movements, is itself but the inarticulable echo of an unknown Subject. In itself, the soul is silent, in that it is formed by being a response to Unknownness: born of an Other and yet separated from that Other that would give it language, it is essentially believing and mute. Therefore, the image that offers the soul a space in which to speak can only be a fiction - an effect and an artificator as Diego de Jesús said, a

'turn' [...] a way of 'turning' silence out from within,  
a 'mystic sentence'.

(Certeau, *Mystic Fable* 189)

Certeau's observation that "the human subject is always constituted by and dependant on what is Other" (Ahearne, *Michel de Certeau* 118) underwrites the contingent status of the speaking subject. This contingency at once enables the kind of unstable subject-positions of the possessed or mystic speaker, and threatens the propriety of an institutional world view that depends on the fixing and subordination of identities to the supremacy of the (authorised) Word.

#### **"capital Trespass and high Offence": Davies's Cultural Reception.**

In the context of Eleanor Davies's writing, Certeau's analysis of possessed and mystic speech offers a series of interpretative models that re-figure the speaking subject in relation to an express desire to articulate an other's words. Yet before I attempt to theorise Davies's writing through Certeau's models, the issue of the institutional and cultural context in which the reception of possessed and mystic speech occurs in Certeau's writing must first be explored. For Certeau, the reception of mystic and possessed speech by "authorised" readers, primarily the church, is important to the kinds of meanings these utterances are deemed to contain. This is also the case for Davies's writings, which are interpreted by the church and the law in ways that drastically affect their wider credibility and the reputation of Davies herself.

Integral to the production of the unsettling voice, the "distorted" text, is the relationship between that text and its readership. In particular, the institutional structures of cultural order and control

that have their power invested in a prevailing network of language and meaning demand a certain fidelity to that system as a guarantee of cultural cohesion and continued control. The cultural and religious changes that occurred in Europe during the Renaissance and the Reformation challenged an existing hierarchy of knowledge and practice. In particular, Certeau notes the de-sacralising of the (divine, Scriptural) Word as the unmediated experience of God's presence and message. The development of writing, and the co-existent development of the writing subject, undermines the authority of the "sacred text" as "the advent of a 'meaning' [...] on the part of a God who expects the reader (in reality, the listener) to have a 'desire to hear and understand' [...] on which access to truth depends" (Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* 137). The creation of the writing subject, who takes the "position" of God (as the hand, the writer, the maker of the word) interposes an individual between the cultural registers of value and meaning and the generation and transmission of ideas. In the Protestant tradition this re-alignment of the relationship between God and the individual provides the writing subject, and this necessarily includes literate women, with a justifiable premise for articulating the nature of this relationship. As discussed earlier, a broad interpretation of the idea of prophecy may include the basic Protestant practices of self-reflection and Scriptural interpretation. On such a reading, Davies's use of Scriptural exegesis as a key to interpreting personal and national events is conceivable even if the substance of her analyses is politically unacceptable, at least during the 1630s.

The religious upheavals in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Europe and the dissolution of doctrinal conformity ruptured the authority of the Word. The institutions that guaranteed the power

of the received Word through a monopoly on its interpretation were destabilised and the spread of literacy, in concert with Protestantism, facilitated the ascendancy of the agentic writing subject. For Certeau, mystic utterance emerged from an environment of "hidden truths, opaque authorities, and divided or ailing institutions", not in order to institute new interpretative structures along lines established by existing procedures but to outline "a different *treatment* of the Christian tradition":

The mystics reinterpretation of the tradition is characterized by a set of procedures allowing a new treatment of language--of all contemporary language, not only the area delimited by theological knowledge or the corpus of patristic and scriptural works. It is ways of acting that guide the creation of a body of mystical writings.

(Certeau, "Mystic Speech" 81. Original emphasis.)

The practices of the mystics form a "domain within which specific procedures are followed" in order to create "a new space, with new mechanisms" (Certeau, "Mystic Speech" 81). Whilst *mystics* coalesces as a semi-formal set of practices deployed on language, possession is situated in moments and spaces rather than an evolutionary arc in which new linguistic spaces are nurtured. Even so, possession still operates upon language and develops in response to "a gradual disintegration of the institution of shared meaning represented by the Catholic church" (Ahearne, *Michel de Certeau* 76). In essence, both possessed and mystic speech, whilst sharing different modes of operation and objectives, emerge as destabilising linguistic practices emerging from a crumbling, monolithic interpretative order in search

of new spaces in which to use language as a means to speak (with) an/the Other.

The re-employed languages of the mystic and the possessed seek to create new spaces for expression within an existing (and compromised) system. That system represents the interpretative and disciplinary matrix in which these new languages are uttered. As such, it has a vested interest in controlling and defusing the extent to which these dissenting voices are able to undermine the existing order. The method by which that control is exerted is effectively to reinscribe the legitimacy of prevailing taxonomies of meaning upon reconfigured linguistic and symbolic forms. For Certeau, the replacement of meaning is enabled through naming. As has already been discussed, possessed speech appropriates the logic of naming upon which demonological discourse depends in order to avoid the reinscription of the "proper" name that binds the possessed subject to the power of the institution. In his discussion of the goals and effects of torture, Certeau outlines the logic with which the forms of dissent and control at issue here operate:

The stranger to or rebel against the institution displays an ambition that is intolerable within it (except hypocritically): he assumes, in one way or another, that a discourse--either a political discourse (a revolutionary project), a religious one (a reformist intention), or even an analytical one ("free" expression)--has the power to remake the institution. In opposition to this claim to reconstruct the order of history from a base in "adversarial" speech, torture applies the law of the institution, which assigns

speech the reverse role of being no more than a confession linked to adherence.

(Certeau, "The Institution of Rot" 41)

The article of dissent is also the tool of oppression, of re-inscription. The economy of writing constitutes the law and the law constitutes the subjects who operate within that linguistic economy:

the law constantly writes itself on bodies. It engraves itself on parchments made from the skin of its subjects. it articulates them in a juridical corpus. It makes its book out of them.

(Certeau, *Practice of Everyday Life* 140)

The law makes its inscribed subjects "signifiers of rules" and enables a perceptual complex in which "the reason or *Logos* of a society 'becomes flesh' (an incarnation)" (Certeau, *Practice of Everyday Life* 140). This process is fundamental to the rule of law and the "delinquent" speech of the possessed or the mystic seeks to inscribe the subject with a language other to that which constitutes them in the prevailing system, in effect placing them outside language and outside the law.

The way in which the law responds to the altered language of the possessed or the mystic accords with the objectives it seeks to achieve. The new formations of possessed or mystic utterance do not translate into meaning in an interpretative environment unattuned and unwilling to receive them. The otherness of the possessed/mystic speech is more than the divine absence that precipitates the possessed subject or mystic's alteration of language to conceive it; for the culture that receives the altered language, it is incomprehensible and utterly alien:

[T]herapy in cases of possession essentially consists of naming, of ascribing a term to what manifests itself as speech, but as an uncertain speech inseparable from fits, gestures, and cries. A disturbance arises, and therapy, or social treatment, consists of providing a name--a term already listed in a society's catalogues--for this uncertain speech.

(Certeau, *Writing of History* 247)

Part of the object of re-classification, of assigning names, is to re-assign meaning. The medical, legal and religious assaults upon possessed and mystic speech--all of which are manifestations of "the law"--are about providing meaning, and hence a means of control, to the culture receiving the text of the other. This reminds us of Certeau's assertion that "the possessed woman's speech is established relative to the discourse that awaits her in *that* place" (*Writing of History* 248. Original emphasis.). The language of space and place is employed by Certeau as an indicator of the relative trajectories of the possessed subject and the proprietary culture in which they operate. The possessed subject seeks spaces in which new kinds of language and meaning can operate whilst the latter seeks to assign these "turns" to pre-established places in which institutional knowledges can reduce them to traditionally comprehensible elements. The context in to which the subject and their language speaks, the proprietary structures of meaning and order, will always attempt to "know" that subject and its language in terms the culture will recognise and which will disarm the "threat" of the other present in the subject's unfamiliar discourse.

Certeau claims of the mystics that their very existence "threw open unsettling questions concerning a 'politics of the believable'"

which "set in motion numerous processes of investigation and exclusion" (Ahearne, *Michel de Certeau* 102). Gaining the attention of the institution inevitably leaves traces on the surface of the culture, in the residue of documentation and tabulation left behind by the operation of the law. Certeau asserts that the majority of mystics, "little prophets" and "inspired women" leave very little trace of their existence:<sup>57</sup>

[their] passing is scarcely noted in the archives, and [...] history, acquiescent to the logic of the documents produced by the past, knows [them] only through the censures, trials, or banishment to which they have been subjected.

(*Mystic Fable* 254)

In Davies's case, however, the official record literally forms part of her body of work. In the tracts, *The Blasphemous Charge Against Her* (1649) and *Dragons Blasphemous Charge* (1651), Davies reproduces the court record of her appearance before the High Commission in 1633. In *The Blasphemous Charge Against Her*, Davies opens with an introductory address to "King Charls Prisoner", which recounts the sentence handed down to her and the recompense expected of the imprisoned king:

*Upon a reference from you (1633.) to these your Commissioners, I being Sentenced by them, as upon Record appears, because took upon me to be a Prophetess; first was Fined, and then to make*

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<sup>57</sup>Despite Certeau's reference to "little prophets" here, he does not elaborate on what exactly he might mean by this phrase outside of a catch-all to describe a multitude of marginal practices occurring at the time. Unfortunately, this makes it impossible to discern any worthwhile parallels between what Certeau understands as prophecy and the activities of Eleanor Davies. I am left with the rather more specific and remote practices of *mystics* and possession as models from which to draw my comparisons with Davies's writings.

*publique Submission at Pauls so many times; that Jericho for ever cursed, and farther a close prisoner to continue your pleasure.*

*So be it known, you are hereby required to make a publique acknowledgement of such your capital Trespass and high Offence; and first to Ask me forgiveness, if so be you expect to finde Mercy in this world or the other.*

Jan. 1648

ELEANOR DOUGLAS.

(Cope, *Prophetic Writings* 250. Original emphasis.)

Davies's note is an attempt at the last word, a final comment with which to embellish the earlier document and signal the writer's continued, and vindicated, existence. Davies refusal to concede control over her writing is a refusal to submit. In the same way that the sentence of the High Commission included an order to "make a publique Submission *in conceptis verbis*, at so many times, and in such places as this Court shall appoint" (Cope, *Prophetic Writings* 254) which Davies's never performed, so her writings remain an obdurate refusal to submit to the demands made of her by the dominant institutions in her culture.

Davies's refusal is a rejection of established systems of control and knowledge. It is a refusal of meaning which manifests in space and writing through her actions and subsequent interpretations of those actions. Through her trial in 1633, the events in Lichfield in 1636, and the pattern of her writing from her release from the Tower in 1640 until her death, Davies consistently works in opposition to the mechanisms of order and meaning deployed against her. This work occurs through specific acts of defiance and an ongoing, restless writing that refuses not

only doctrinal and legal injunctions but, more fundamentally, refuses its own capacity to produce a "final word". In this sense, Davies's writing, despite its capacity to "destroy the stability of the text, of language, of meaning itself" (Pickard 6), is always concerned with the integrity of its own definition. As an example, Davies's proclivity for anagrams, although on one level endorsing a fluid approach to language, its manipulation, and interpretation, require specific responses from the reader in order to be effective:

Anagrams depend on a concept of language that can be shared as a bridge between the creator and the reader of an anagram; they depend upon two or more people sharing an identical conception of linguistic usage and convention. The solid state of this concept reifies language, rather than destabilizing it.

(Pickard 10)

Although I will presently discuss in greater depth the ways in which Davies seeks to manipulate the interpretation as well as production of her texts, this example serves to sketch out the often tangled conceptual field in which her writing operates. Sue Wiseman rightly points out that at the centre of such apparent contradictions is the subject's attempts to navigate a course for her writing practices through the network of cultural injunctions arrayed against her:

we can see not only an attempt to manipulate what might generally be called patriarchal codes, but to use the space of religious writing to reinvent models of authority, language and control. Of course, radical Protestant theology and the revival of the new age of

prophecy never quite delivered the potential it had to actually de-gender speaking, and even as they claim the 'free space' offered by speaking with the grace of God female prophets negotiate the material and ideological constraints of their circumstances.

(178)

When Davies submitted to the practice of the court in 1633, she submitted to the structures of meaning relied upon by that institution to classify and interpret her texts and behaviour. Lyotard's description of a *differend* indicates the fundamental imbalance between Davies and her prosecutors: "when the 'regulation' of the conflict that opposes [two parties] is done in the idiom of one of the parties while the wrong suffered by the other is not signified in that idiom" (9). Davies's texts, with their apocalyptic message, defiant tone and character attacks on the king and the archbishop--all of which is written in a furiously snarled text--reflect a version of reality both unacceptable and partially incomprehensible to adjudicating authorities. When Lyotard suggests of the *differend* that the unrecognised idiom of the aggrieved party is an "unstable state and instant of language wherein something which must be able to be put into phrases cannot yet be" (13), the image of Davies's fractured, inscrutable texts come to mind. Megan Matchinske's assessment of Davies's interpretative inconsistency posits that the failure of the authorities to apprehend Davies's message in the terms she frames it derives from her gender position. Matchinske argues that the personal nature of Davies's texts, the transformation of national issues into personality conflicts between herself and specific individuals in power, is in part forced on her because of her position as a woman within early modern English culture. Whereas male prophets are

accorded more "credibility" purely because of their gender, Davies must assert her fundamental right to speak in the first instance, let alone on matters of national importance. Further, whereas male contemporaries are assumed to have the authority to speak in general terms of institutions and beliefs, Davies must narrow her focus to "specific points of masculine control":

She cannot simply fall back on class or religion for support. Hence, though her considerations invariably rely on class dynamics (she writes only of those who share her elite background) and religious affiliation (she depends on a shared puritan platform), her writings are further complicated by an effort to negotiate gender restrictions as well. Davies's enemies are not solely or simply institutional; they are not only of the church or of the state. Rather, they are adversaries who personally respond to her prophecies, negating her authority on the basis of gender.

(Matchinske 145)

Davies's prophecies assert the primacy of her person to the grand scheme she seeks to enumerate. Matchinske contends that Davies's assertion of equivalence between personal and national issues sees her texts afforded "a certain notoriety" but more often they are viewed as "inadequate":

her prophecies do intimidate and threaten her adversaries; they do attribute personal guilt to national cause and mete out punishment accordingly. As gendered texts, however, struggling with issues of

voice and authority in a predominantly masculine genre, Davies's writings realign that anger, positioning it in ways that may seem inappropriate for a readership that demands an absolute hierarchy between individual and state concerns [...] Davies's writings refocus audience obedience from state obligation to an individual acknowledgment of their author that is inappropriate according to most apocalyptic standards of the time.

(154-55)

Matchinske's argument discounts the political or cultural effectiveness of Davies's prophetic style because of its distortion of accepted models of (gendered) prophetic practice. For my purposes, Matchinske's argument seems to miss the point to a degree. Whilst Davies's activities do marginalise her, even within the radical religious movement, my attention is drawn not so much to whether her apparent disregard for feminine and prophetic protocol undermines her effectiveness as a prophet (and I do not know how one might determine that) but what her mode of prophetic writing seeks to achieve. That is, I am not so much interested in how her personalisation of prophetic discourse fails to "work" as what it seeks to do. In a sense, Davies's intense personalisation of prophecy renders any attempt at an "objective" assessment redundant as it has no use or regard for any points of reference, or indices of "success", outside of itself. Matchinske's observation of this point is more valuable than her determinations of Davies's apparent "inappropriateness". The argument surrounding Davies's personalised referentiality is based on the idea that her texts seek to determine the extent to which they are comprehensible

according to a register of value and meaning contingent upon agreeing with her, and, metonymically, the divine message.

The dispute between Davies and her prosecutors does not simply occur at a primary level where Davies is linguistically incapable of articulating her message with the language available to her. Rather, she chooses to construct her texts this way and thus forces her readers into a relationship in which she is dominant. Davies's own response to the apparent difficulty of her texts was to suggest that any deficiency of ability lay in the reader's own worthiness rather than the writer's skill or sanity:

although *pend* somewhat hastily or unperfectly, &c.  
being like the hony: and like the hony gathered out  
of so many parts, I shall the lesse need to excuse it  
unto such as have a ful knowledge of the Scriptures.  
(Cope, *Prophetic Writings* 128, *The Lady Eleanor, Her  
Blessing* 1644. Original emphasis.)

By placing the onus on the reader to be as familiar with Scripture as the text, and thus aligned with the overarching authority of the Word, Davies circumvents the interpretative role of religio-legal institutions whilst still appealing to the central articles of faith within the culture. Rather than being unable to express herself, Davies expresses herself without inhibition but in a medium designed to her requirements. So when Davies submits to the authority of the court, she relinquishes the spaces of her own legitimacy for the place of judgment. This scene is the conflict of discourses Certeau refers to in his discussion of possessed speech. The court establishes Davies's texts in relation to the classificatory and explanatory discourses available to it, the discourses of that place. These discourses are listed in the variously suggested

sentences of the Commissioners, reprinted by Davies from the court record: fines, imprisonment, public submission, excommunication, confinement to Bedlam, denial of writing equipment (Cope, *Prophetic Writings* 251-52, *The Blasphemous Charge Against Her* 1649). Davies is judged in accordance with the discourses of religious and civic order she is found to have breached:

she took upon her (which much unbeseemed her Sex) not only to interpret the Scriptures [...] but also to be a Prophetess [...] these her said bold attempts and impostures, tending to the dishonor of God, and the scandal of Religion [.]

(Cope, *Prophetic Writings* 253-54, *The Blasphemous Charge Against Her* 1649)

Her submission to the court's authority reflects a central feature of Davies's "dissent": its respect for the institutions it attacks. Cope points out that whilst Davies pursued her prophetic activity intensely, she was never aligned with any specific sectarian or radical Protestant group, indeed, "[c]ountering the potentially radical content of her prophecies was her apparent acceptance of existing institutions" (*Handmaid* 166). Consistent with her repeated appeals to her lineage and aristocratic status, Davies operates within the institutional structure of her culture, creating spaces in which she can harness the cultural authority of these institutions without acquiescing to them. As such, her attacks on the authority of the church under Laud and Charles come clothed in the dense language of prophecy and Scripture, with Davies's role as the divine cipher constructed in such a way as to simultaneously identify her whilst privileging the message. When the final lines of *Given to the Elector* assert "At Hand, the Hand bids it adieu,/ finish'd

thy Majesties" (Cope, *Prophetic Writings* 67), the image of "the Hand" figures the ominous form from Daniel, Davies's own writing hand, and the hand of God, all present in the unfolding prophecy:

The polyvalence of the metaphor of Christ as Word allows her to represent herself both as a conduit for the Word of God and as the bearer of God, the producer of ultimate meaning.

(Purkiss 153)

Davies searches for spaces within culture using the symbols and reference points of the culture with which to do it. Phyllis Mack argues that Davies mediates her spiritual authority through a "repertoire" of culturally apposite images which both mitigate the relative social disadvantage of being a woman (both generally and in terms of speaking on or against religious matters and authorities) and enforce the legitimacy of that same imbalance:

she invited her audience to contemplate her as the literal embodiment of a feminine archetype: God's secretary, vessel, handmaid, or bride, as she variously described herself. Her audience, in turn, responded to her largely in terms of her metaphoric qualities, as if they, the auditors, were readers and the prophet was herself a living text.

(*Visionary Women* 23-24)

Davies inverts images of submission into a self-legitimizing, self-empowering discourse of authority. The spaces of her writing exist within prescribed orthodoxies yet, in her own words, are unlimited: "That should it be written at large a Chronicle or a booke as ample as

those tables, of the Mapps of the World could I suppose not contain it" (Cope, *Prophetic Writings* 128, *The Lady Eleanor, Her Blessing* 1644).

The trial of 1633, then, offers an insight into the relationship between the spaces, the re-worked meanings, of Davies's writing and the discourses used to read it. Whilst Davies's texts offer a series of overlapping images and references seeking alternative ways of conceiving of the world, the High Commission reads a text whose combination of inflammatory dissent and illegibility renders it dangerous and criminal. The sentence of the court--consisting of a massive fine, the requirement for public submission, imprisonment, and the denial of writing equipment--attacks Davies's capacity to produce such texts and attempts to force a recanting for that already written. In the same way that Davies's texts attempt to embody themselves in an imbrication of messenger and message, most clearly illustrated in Davies's references to her texts as "Babes" or "dead bodies" and her own body's "textuality"--"As written Son in her Forehead or Frontispiece" (Cope, *Prophetic Writings* 344, 351)--so the court attempts to write itself on her through punishment: "the reason or *Logos* of a society 'becomes flesh' (an incarnation)" (Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* 140). The combination of financial, physical and emotional hardship embodied in the sentence attempts to re-assert the (punitive) power of the very institutions Davies utilises through her texts. It brings into relief her (financially unstable) aristocratic position, her lack of real (legal and political) authority within the culture, denies her the tools of her trade, and seeks to force her to publicly utter this powerlessness. In effect, the punishment aims "to produce an acceptance of a State discourse" (Certeau, "The Institution of Rot" 40). This provides a graphic illustration of Certeau's point regarding

possessed speech that "there must always be a gap between what the possessed woman utters and what the demonological or medical discourse makes of it" (*Writing of History* 247). In a play of texts and discourses underwritten by the creation and exploitation of gaps, fissures and spaces, this primary rift between an individual practice and an institutional interpretation provides the reverse image to the textual and symbolic freedom of Davies's writing. Certeau's assertion regarding the tactic, that it "insinuates itself into the other's place, fragmentarily, without taking it over in its entirety, without being able to keep it at a distance [...] whatever it wins, it does not keep" (*The Practice of Everyday Life* xix) implicitly accepts the vulnerability of the subject to proprietary forces, and in her trial and sentence of 1633, Eleanor Davies experiences the extent of that vulnerability.

Yet this vulnerability to state action does not prevent further incursions into proprietary places. The incidents in Lichfield Cathedral in 1636 represent a further appropriation of proper places, in this instance the spatial arrangement of the cathedral's interior, by Davies and her followers. The cathedral's interior undergoes a series of contestations. Davies's protests are motivated by the bishop's re-arrangement of the place of worship; the positioning of the communion table at the front of the congregation altar-like, the wall hangings. This spatial array prompts Davies and her band to disrupt the established and hierarchised places of worship in this cathedral by sitting where they "should not", confronting other worshippers, occupying the bishop's throne, defacing the wall hangings--all of which contest the spatial authority of the cathedral and, by extension, the doctrinal authority of the church under Laud. The connection between spatial and political power is reinforced by the alacrity with which she

was reported to and condemned by the Privy Council. Her alarming disruption of the semiotics of worship activates the discourse of madness against her. In 1633 she had escaped committal to Bedlam but the language of possession and mania had been used against her in the sentence remarks and was strengthened in a letter from the court to Sir William Boswell, English representative at the Hague, explaining the decision:

a woman too well knowne and wholse devellish  
practizes in her pretended prophecies have drawne  
upon her this weeke a severe censure in the high  
commission court: and might have cast her into  
further danger there being a mixture in them of  
treasonable conceptions, if the judges had not  
thought her possessed of a frantique spirit to be  
conjured out of her by restrayning her libertie and  
disabling her to do hurt.

(qtd. in Cope, *Handmaid* 71)<sup>58</sup>

Here the language of madness and possession operates to explain both her behaviour and her sentence, the imprisonment at the Gatehouse operating in both a punitive and (almost) therapeutic sense.<sup>59</sup> The use of the verb "conjured" also indicates a certain attitude towards the form of treatment the court felt it was providing to Davies, in that it suggests a supernatural element in the subject's behaviour and the means

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<sup>58</sup> Cope gives the reference for this quote as, *State Papers*. PRO. 84/147, fols. 155-156v.

<sup>59</sup>The benevolence of this "therapy" is, however, questionable. Porter remarks that Davies's internment as a result of her rancorous political stance is "an early example of 'psychiatric abuse'" (*Mind Forg'd Manacles* 19). Porter cites Christopher Hill's article, "God and the English Revolution." *History Workshop*. 17 (1984): 19-31, in relation to this assertion. Hill's article, however, makes little reference to Davies other than to remark that she was "slightly eccentric" and was sent to Bedlam for a time after prophesying the king's death (23).

required to treat it. In any event, the committal of Davies to the Gatehouse in 1633 is viewed by the court as a necessary reaction to the instability they perceive in Davies's texts. Again, Davies is interpreted and condemned by the cultural epistemologies that underwrite the legal process in which she participates, the language of the court is the language that is heard: "It is he who is understood, the one who describes the madman according to his own norms; the madman is rejected, excluded from the very norms of language of which he is the object" (Serres 37).

When she again comes under official scrutiny in 1636, Davies is immediately sent to Bedlam. Whereas her texts in 1633 had intimated a "frantique spirit" that had required close imprisonment in the Gatehouse (a secular prison and one generally reserved for aristocratic prisoners, in an apparent concession to Davies's social position (Cope, *Handmaid* 74)), her disruptive behaviour within and vandalism of Lichfield Cathedral appeared to confirm and exacerbate the authorities' opinion of Davies's condition. Foucault's analysis of the classification of madness during the Enlightenment emphasises the integral function of spatiality to its definition and treatment. Serres observes that fundamental to Foucault's conception of madness is exclusion and silence: "The spatial style that expresses the fundamental experience of quarantine becomes the style of the conditions and possibility of this silence" (39). The experience of madness, "the experience of the immediate proximity of all possible points of space" (Serres 40), is delimited through exclusion, "the closed space of internment" (Serres 41): "Madness is identical with the excluded, the distinct, what is closed off in confines, terminals, ends, limits" (Serres 42-43). Foucault's analysis of madness during the Enlightenment is

underwritten by the idea of a "great confinement" in which "[t]hose whose lives affronted bourgeois rationality--beggars, petty criminals, layabouts, prostitutes--became liable to sequestration higgedy-piggeldy with the sick and the old, the lame and the lunatic" (Porter "Foucault" 119). As Porter points out, England had no such policy of undifferentiated confinement at any stage, rather the treatment of madness remained a separate concern from those policies directed towards the criminal and the indigent ("Foucault" 120-21). Porter is careful to point out that in England "the tendency was not to lump but to split" ("Foucault" 121), by which he means that the insane were always accorded a separate space from other disruptive social elements.

Michael MacDonald observes that early Stuart attitudes towards caring for the insane centred on assisting families "bear the burden of harboring a madman" (4), emphasising the local, non-institutional approach that prevailed in England until after the Restoration: "Private institutions to house the insane did not begin to proliferate until the last half of the seventeenth century" (4). Until the spread of these private hospitals, Bedlam acted as the focal point for institutional care for the insane in London. MacDonald notes that despite Bedlam's totemic status in English culture as the locus of madness only a "handful of the insane in a nation of five million souls were cast into an asylum before the English Revolution" and that although "Bedlamites swarmed through the imaginations of Jacobean playwrights and pamphleteers [...] the famous asylum was in truth a tiny hovel housing fewer than thirty patients" (4). The conditions in this hovel were, as Davies's attests, awful: "infected with those *foul Spirits* day and night *Blaspheming*:" (Cope, *Prophetic Writings* 371; *Bethlehem Signifying the House of Bread: or War* 1652. Original

emphasis.). MacDonald argues that patients often "languished there for years, living in squalid conditions without adequate medical treatment" (4), but the status of the asylum as a place of madness alone is not questioned. As an example, Porter cites the parallel development of Bedlam and Bridewell as institutions sustained and developed throughout the "classical period" (the years between 1650 and 1800 nominated by Foucault as the focus of his study) but which never dealt with the same category of inmate; Bridewell remained corrective and Bedlam therapeutic ("Foucault" 121). Indeed, Porter goes further to say that in the classical period Bedlam defined itself not as a site for confinement, nor for enforcing policies of social hygiene, but as a medical institution: "Whatever its grim faults, Bethlem was run, throughout the classical period, as a medical institution, under a physician, for treating those considered, after medical examination, clinically insane" ("Foucault" 121). Patricia Allderidge also suggests that Bedlam, despite a historical reputation for poor treatment of inmates, was in fact "largely geared to the concept of curability" (20). For Davies, imprisoned in the warden's lodgings at Bedlam from 1637 to 1638, Bedlam's environment was neither therapeutic nor, perhaps, intended to be.<sup>60</sup> Whatever the current opinion of the methods employed to effect its cures, there appears no evidence that Davies was ever given therapy for any perceived disorder. Indeed, her stay at the hospital was for the most part spent in rooms in the steward's house which were

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<sup>60</sup>David Russell notes that Davies's period in Bedlam was marked by disputes with the steward, who claimed she repeatedly attempted to escape, and various disciplinary orders being made against her by the hospital's Governors. Her accommodation in the steward's lodgings represents for Russell a concession on the part of the authorities to her social status: "'As she was of noble birth and a 'person of honour' in the eyes of the Privy Council, she was thought to merit more privileged treatments than were the common people, although she lacked the means to pay for her care" (102): See David Russell, *Scenes from Bedlam, a History of Caring for the Mentally Disordered at Bethlem Royal Hospital and The Maudsley*. London: Baillière Tindall, 1997. 100-03.

"reserved for such persons as the Governors should place there" (Minutebook of the Court of Governors of Bethlehem and Bridewell (1636-1638) qtd. in Cope, *Handmaid* 93). That she was moved to the Tower, a place in which "those who were a threat to society" (Russell 101) were imprisoned, a year after being confined would only confirm the punitive, as opposed to therapeutic, object of her detainment.

Yet even in this immediately pre-Civil War period, in which the rationality of medicine as practiced throughout the Enlightenment is absent from the asylum, Bedlam is still a cultural metonym for insanity. The hospital acts as a space in which a distinct condition is isolated and controlled. Davies's sequestration to Bedlam, even with the apparent mitigation of her accommodation being apart from the other inmates, has a specific meaning to early modern English culture: madness. So, when Davies disrupts and threatens the spatial hierarchy of the cathedral, setting herself in the bishop's place and declaring herself "primate and metropolitan", the reaction of authorities is to curtail her activities through confinement and to silence her voice. The spatial logic of madness, madness as a discourse constructed by culture, requires Davies's exclusion to the prescribed space of the hospital as a means of confinement and as a spatial indicator of her status: "From the middle of the seventeenth century, madness was linked with [...] confinement" (Foucault 39). Even with the historical differences between English approaches to madness and those outlined by Foucault, Davies's confinement to Bedlam acts as a cultural signifier; her location identifies her.

Davies's violent reaction to her confinement in Bedlam, articulated in tracts published some years after the event, demonstrates her awareness of the discourse into which she had been drawn by the

courts. Her denouncement of "*Bedlems loathsom Prison*" understands the punitive focus of her confinement, yet her outrage is always coloured with the justificatory rhetoric of her divine vocation: "where was shut up by the space of two years sufficiently published or bruted by that time" (Cope, *Prophetic Writings* 371, *Bethlehem Signifying the House of Bread or War* 1652). The gap between Davies's writing and the discourses used to read it remained, even after the main instigators of her troubles in the 1630s had died and their institutions dissolved. Even during Cromwell's regime, towards which Davies was favourably inclined, there still remained a distance between her praise and the way in which it was received. Cromwell is alleged to have responded to Davies's extravagantly laudatory portrayal of him in the 1651 tract, *The Benediction From the Mighty Omnipotent* with the response, "But we are not all Saints" (Porter "The Prophetic Body" 56). Even within the religious and prophetic discourse in which she situated herself, and saw Cromwell operating from, Davies's particular rendering of language and meaning was still able to create discomfort within those reading it. This conflict of meaning and interpretation, Davies's refusal to submit to discourses counter to her own regardless of their power within the culture, is starkly illustrated in these episodes of dissent and imprisonment. As Cope suggests, Davies's focus on the imperatives of her prophetic mission, imperatives defined and known only to her, cut across the implicit expectation of social conformity on which civic order rests:

A powerful spirit that would not submit to ordinary reason or practical considerations inspired Lady Eleanor's conduct. Whether one called it divine

light, willfulness, or, as the authorities did, madness,  
it followed its own orders, not those of the world.

(Cope, *Handmaid* 91)

The gap between Davies and the "ordinary reason" on which authority relied to maintain control, the gap which sanctioned her designation as "criminal" and "mad", is enabled by the epistemic transformation occurring across early modern culture in which "reason" gains ascendancy over the discourses of religion and superstition. In this change the nature of texts such as Davies's is altered, the discourses employed to define them new. At the centre of the debate is the practice of writing and the nature of the word/Word, concepts central to Davies's own project.

**"Blessed is he that waiteth": The Unfinished Text and the Ignored Writer.**

Although Davies's output is prodigious, suggestive of the agency available to the writing subject, the "work" of this writing is never completed. Davies's texts are re-written, re-published, revised and, even then, printed copies are marked with handwritten notes, dedications and commentaries. The refusal to complete, to set down the stylus and settle on a last word, is, like her actions at the 1633 High Commission trial and the defiant spatial transgressions in Lichfield, a refusal to submit to a reading practice she cannot control. Where discourses of law and religious orthodoxy read Davies's texts as criminal, heretical, treasonous or mad, Davies constantly re-writes, inflecting her texts with a sense of the present, of perpetual contemporaneity, literalising the interpretative act on the page. Her writing is infused with the divine vocation she has accepted and, as

such, has transcended elaboration in favour of inspiration: "She does not occupy the place of reader, though, but of Biblical writer; she is not Daniel the exegete, but the dreaming Daniel whose visions must be interpreted by her own private Gabriel, the reader" (Pickard 13-14). Certeau's conception of reading emphasises its active alteration of the received text. Arguing against the idea of reading, in contemporary times, as the province of "socially authorized professionals and intellectuals" (Certeau, *Practice of Everyday Life* 171), Certeau outlines a model of reading that, in accordance with the prevailing tenor of his hermeneutic approach, insinuates individual, tactical dissonance into the strategic array of interpretative knowledge.

Certeau's portrayal of reading as a wandering, "poaching" activity comes up against the interpretative difficulty of Davies and produces fragments and incoherence. Through constant revision, obscure oracular syntax, and handwritten remarks, Davies repeatedly attempts to determine the meanings drawn from the texts. In a way this represents the end product of her own reading practice conducted on Scripture and history, her wandering eye reproducing a map of her desires and priorities in the cathected textuality of her tracts. These priorities are represented through her writing in terms of their didactic purpose; the "Genral Epistle" to *Warning to the Dragon* (1625) expressly states that her prophecy is "a salve to annoint and open the eyes of the blind, to bring them that sit in darknesse a light" (Cope, *Prophetic Writings* 3). Yet in her later, more obscure tracts, Davies seems to indicate a condition of devout erudition as a requisite to comprehension: "I shall the lesse need to excuse it unto such as have a ful knowledge of the Scriptures" (Cope, *Prophetic Writings* 128; *The Lady Eleanor, Her Blessing* 1644). This echoes Certeau's criticism of

historiography's appropriation of the interpretative processes (and the audience) deployed to read it:

intellectual labor is established within the circle of *writing*: in the history that is being written, by priority the labor ranks the very ones who have written in such a way that the historical work reinforces a sociocultural tautology between its authors (a learned group), its objects (books, manuscripts, etc.), and its (educated) public.

*(Writing of History 65. Original emphasis.)*

Whilst Davies writes in a gap between received meaning and agency, a gap in which she employs her own specific readings of Scripture and history, she simultaneously attempts to enforce a reading practice, and hence an interpretative process, on her readers. For Megan Matchinske this effect derives directly from her reduction of millennial concerns to a personal level, thus making her texts the objects at the centre of national crisis. In effect, Davies forces her readers into acknowledging her validity as the first insight of her writing: "Her texts demand justification at a personal level, in the righteousness of her own assumptions of authority [...] Davies writes prophecies that offer her readers two choices--belief or disbelief in *her* texts" (Matchinske 142. Original emphasis.). Their constant self-referentiality and justificatory re-printings focuses attention on the texts' refusal to move outside of their own scriptive domain. As Matchinske observes, whilst the texts personalise national issues they also fail to address how those concerns can be met by any manner other than validating Davies's own (correct) diagnoses: "In affirming her status as individual, she simultaneously

de-emphasizes the importance of a unified social response from her audience" (142).

The assertion that the texts are comprehensible to those who believe is, in this respect, twofold as it assumes the reader must believe both God and Davies, both of whom speak through the texts and both of whom are identifiable entities in the texts. The issue of interpretation is thus reduced to an endorsement of the author and her intentions. Pickard's point that Davies has "no interest in creating clarity" is founded on the observation that "if the reader possesses the necessary knowledge and interpretative skill to address her writings, then clarity will exist in the reading and be retrospectively (if privately) imposed upon the text itself" (18). I agree with Pickard to the extent that Davies attempts to locate the meaning of her texts in the veracity of her vocation. The private clarity that Pickard describes can only come when the reader accepts the truth of Davies's assertions on her terms. Davies has placed herself at the centre of Protestant reading practice; the individual experience of the Word is modified to the individual, and unquestioning, experience of her words. This is not reading in the Certalian sense, this is the province of writing as an accumulative, strategic project. When the High Commission declared Davies's writings illegitimate for their attempts to "interpret and expound the holy Scriptures, yea, and the most intricate and hard places therein, such as the gravest and most learned Divines would not slightly or easily undertake, without much study and deliberation" (Cope, *Prophetic Writings* 253, *The Blasphemous Charge Against Her* 1649), they effectively repudiated Davies's interpretation of Scripture as against the sanctioned readings of "the gravest and most learned Divines". In her insistence on her version of the truth, however,

Davies repeats this gesture for her readers. The "most intricate and hard places" of her prophecy, of which there are many, are only accessible through her sanction. It is worth recalling Diego de Jesús at this juncture when he argues for the mystic's altering of language by asserting he has permission to use terms "that are imperfect, perfect, hyperperfect, contrary" and so on "provided that we know that in the substance of what he says he does not contradict the truth" (Certeau, *Mystic Fable* 139). In Davies's case, the truth, which is for her and for Diego the truth of the Word, is made dependant on her own representation of it.

Thus when in the margin of *The Lady Eleanor, Her Appeal* Davies writes "ould scripsi scripsi", her assertion, "I wrote, I wrote", is an affirmation of the active hand of the writing subject and an enforcement of her own prophetic hermeneutics. It delivers a form of textual ultimatum to the reader to accept her interpretative matrix or be left with illegibility. As Pickard observes, it is clear that many of Davies's contemporaries, and readers since, have been unwilling to focus the interpretative energy necessary to unpick her prophecies and their messages, as well as her reputation, has suffered as a result. Her refusal to comply with "structural paradigms" has essentially left her isolated and ignored where her Scriptural epitomes are characterised by their interpretability: "Daniel, her basic model, is an elucidating prophet; Eleanor Douglas eschews elucidation, for the most part, in favour of problematizing her subjects" (Pickard 19). In this sense, Davies, rather than engaging in a series of linguistic and expository ruses to create transient, alternative spaces within the complex of early modern culture, establishes a form of "strategic" location for herself. Her reliance on writing, the importance of the physical text to her

message and its transmission, effectively seeks to transform an existing strategic discourse--Scripture--into one bearing her mark.

the 'meaning' ('sens') of scriptural play, the production of a system, a space of formalization, refers to the reality from which it has been distinguished *in order to change it*. [...] It manipulates its exteriority. The writing laboratory has a "strategic" function: [...] The scriptural enterprise transforms or retains within itself what it receives from its outside and creates internally the instruments for an appropriation of the external space. [...] Combining the power of *accumulating* the past and that of making the alterity of the universe *conform* to its models, it is capitalist and conquering. (Certeau, *Practice of Everyday Life* 135. Original emphasis.)

Her obsessive attention to the detail of her texts and the control she exercised over them, including organising their printing and distribution (Watt 134), seeks to harness the legitimising potential of the written word (and Word). In her texts of the 1640s there is a considerable focus on both the injustices meted out to her (and her family) during the 1630s as well as a constant recapitulation of her prophetic successes over the period of her career. These recapitulations, in the form of printed tracts and handwritten notes, seek to maintain Davies's prophetic currency through repetition, thereby sustaining the notion of her enduring relevance. This accumulation of the past acts as a form of buttress against an alternative interpretation of her actions. Certeau's concept of history as a process which establishes the past as an

'other' in order to organise the present further contends that "through the concrete productions of historical texts in the form of writing the West maintains a strategic form of representation--which would be set against the more fluid representational forms of memory, folk tale and anecdote" (Colebrook 134-35). Although not wishing to suggest that Davies engages in a form of formal (and incipient) historiographical process, I do want to suggest that her voluminous textuality is an attempt to exercise control over the interpretation not only of her texts but her life (which for twenty-seven years is, in large part, enacted through her prophetic writings). Yet the irony of this strategy is that her texts have been deemed illegible:

Her fundamentally insurrectionary rhetoric refuses easy interpretation, refuses direct interpretation altogether, and the crucial subjects of her pamphlets were wrongly obscured by her readers in a hasty and only superficially valid literary judgement of Douglas as confined to illiteracy and madness.

(Pickard 19)

The apparent dissidence of Davies's tracts, manifested in her sometimes spectacular clashes with authority, displays a disorienting facade of fragmented and blurred textuality. Yet her writing's insistence on interpretation on its own terms reveals it to be a form of strategic practice deployed against the prevailing orthodoxy but in that orthodoxy's image. In this sense, Davies's writing evades a strict alignment with either of Certeau's models of religious speech whilst being receptive to both to some degree. The syntactical volatility and endlessly provisional condition of her texts are to a degree counterbalanced by the repetitions of theme and trope, suggesting a

kind of formality of technique. This indicates a more spontaneous writing adhering to a kind of compositional pattern. To use Certeau's terms, Davies's texts might be considered a hybrid form of "possessed mystics". The clumsiness of this phrase indicates the extent to which Davies's writings provide a form of limit-case for Certeau's models of religious writing and speech. As discussed at the beginning of this section, the variant religious traditions from which Davies and Certeau's subjects proceed is an obvious source of contradiction that might fatally undermine any attempt to read Certeau's analysis alongside Davies's tracts. As it is, I do not believe Certeau's models of mystic or possessed speech provide comprehensive interpretative frameworks for a satisfactory elaboration of Davies's texts. Yet in a more general sense, and in combination with Certeau's wider elaboration of the historical development of writing in *The Practice of Everyday Life*, Certeau's ideas inform a reading of Davies's work that does not so much "explain" it as trace its contours. Finding in its unstable syntax and intricate construction the attempt to consolidate an identity through writing.

This identity may well be in fact the kind of subject position of which Certeau is critical throughout his career; the agentic individual who strives to establish herself against the backdrop of history. Using Certeau's models of writing, Davies's tracts appear to embody the idea of writing as a place of consolidation and accumulation; a place rather than a space. This is not what was envisaged at the beginning of this project. The tracts seemed to offer opportunities for reading this writing practice as resistant to the emerging institutions and discourses of writing that had begun to structure early modern culture. Certeau's genealogy of writing seemed to offer a paradigm within which Davies's

tracts appeared as tactical, insurgent expressions of individuated appropriation and alteration. And whilst Davies's tracts do appropriate and alter the discourses upon which they are founded, they do not do so with the non-accumulative pragmatism of Certeau's prototypical "ordinary man". Rather they seek to draw from the power of these discourses and re-direct them towards a personal validation. This conclusion, however, does not mean that Davies's texts "fail" some form of Certalian purity test. Just because Davies does not produce the prototypical kinds of resistant, particularised tactics for which Certalian theory is supposed to stand does not mean that her writings, in their spectacular intersections with early modern English culture, do not form "spaces of social transformation" (Arantxaga 19). If Davies's tracts are ultimately about sanctioning Davies as an individuated, empowered, and writing subject, the spaces in which this self-production occurs are created by her writing and the alterations it produces in surrounding discourses. Writing is the adhesive that binds this production together. It is in the constant re-writing of her texts that we see writing's importance to her sense of self, and how that self is dependant on writing as its guarantee of legitimacy. In the continual amendments, asides, and dedications is the veracity of Certeau's assertion regarding Western culture: "Here only what is written is understood" (*Practice of Everyday Life* 134). In the mass of her words, Davies turns this assertion in on herself and seeks to bind her identity to the legitimating power of writing as the primary discourse of her culture. Nearly ten years after Davies's death, Katherine Philips similarly attempts to legitimate herself by attaching her identity to the centres of power and influence, primarily through the agency of writing, operating in the court of Charles II. Although the cultural

scene had changed dramatically since the religious ferment of the Civil Wars, it will be demonstrated that there remained a demonstrable advantage to be gained from attempting to align oneself with prevailing cultural discourses. In Philips's case, rather than the sanction of Scripture, it is the carefully phrased intricacies of epistolary and courtesy theory that are the vehicles through which the written word is activated for personal advancement.

## Section Three

### "When will you come to *Wales*?": Katherine Philips and the Spaces of Longing



A Letter [...] is that wherein is expreslye  
conveid in writing, the intent and  
meaning of one man, immediately to passe  
and be directed to an other, and for the  
certaine respects thereof, is termed the  
messenger and familiar speche of the  
absent.

- Angel Day, *The English Secretorie*.  
1586. 1.

What shall I say, where begin, and when  
make an end of Acknowledgments?

- Orinda to Poliarchus, 6 March 1662.

## Orinda.

The traditional portrait of Katherine Philips (1632-1664) is that of "the matchless Orinda", the self-effacing Restoration poetess who acquired some (reluctant) notoriety in her short life through a translation of Pierre Corneille's *Pompey*, and whose posthumous fame was secured with the publication of her poetry and, later, her letters. Philip Souers, in his 1931 biography, argued that Philips, at least in the early twentieth century, had since ceased to be a major figure in English literary history and had been reduced to "no better than the best of any minor poet of any time" (4). And yet Philips had remained a figure of "continued interest" amongst "students of literature" (4). Part of the reason for her enduring appeal, according to Souers, could be attributed to an invocation in Philips's writing, especially the poems and letters, of "the real":

Indeed Orinda seems more real than almost any other poet of the seventeenth century. Her poems, which were seldom written with an eye to publication, are nearly all of them personal [...] and were usually written for occasions which mark events of biographical importance. Her letters are even more intimate. Those to Poliarchus [...] give a detailed account of the most critical years of her existence, at times almost with the graphic pen of the novelist. And so it is that Orinda herself is the best authority for her own life, and her slender literary remains take on an interest quite apart from their literary worth.

(Souers 4-5)

Over and above the literary merits of her poetry and translations, posterity values Philips for revealing and extrapolating reality during "an interesting and romantic age" (Souers 4).

Both this "reality" and the representation of it, especially in her letters, is the focus of this section. Writing from positions of geographical, cultural and gendered isolation, Philips's letters work within and on a cultural network of textual and spatial proximities and meanings in order to effect forms of social and scriptive movement. The spaces of her texts, the agility of her pen, perform the geographical and cultural advances she aspires to. Circulating through this matrix of cultural signifiers and physical landscapes are the practices of writing and reading, each engaged in a perpetual negotiation with the other from which neither emerges victorious nor withdraws. This section traces Philips's biography and her connections with royalist supporters during the Interregnum and after the Restoration of Charles II. In particular, the section will trace the development of the letter from medieval models through to the late seventeenth century. Epistolary theory will be examined in relation to discourses of courtesy and civility prevalent in the Restoration court. Philips's letters are read in light of these models of writing and deportment and examined in detail for the methods they employ to gain favour with their subjects, in particular Sir Charles Cotterell. The letters to Cotterell are read alongside Philips's growing renown as a playwright and the patronage she requires, and actively seeks, in order to have her work received and accepted at court.

Certeau's contention that "[w]riting accumulates, stocks up, resists time by the establishment of a place and multiplies its production through the expansionism of reproduction" (*The Practice of Everyday Life* 174) is central to my reading of Philips's letters. The letters'

attempts to control the mode and conditions of their own production *and reception* designate them as significant examples of the strategic imperatives of writing as a cultural practice. Roger Chartier argues that the letter, as an "'ordinary', everyday and private writing", represents the "appropriation and use of a form of competence (the ability to write) outside of those places that regulate its acquisition [and establish] a set of institutionalized practices that restrict its exercise" ("An Ordinary Kind of Writing" 2).<sup>61</sup> Philips's letters demonstrate this assertion in order to gain access to those regulatory places. In a sense, her letters reproduce *and* invert the "tactical" characterisation of letters Chartier provides when he argues that they are a kind of "making do that involves forms of knowhow that have been instilled, rules that have been imposed and models that have been supplied" ("An Ordinary Kind of Writing" 3). For Chartier, the relationship between letter-writing manuals and the practice of letter-writing is indicative of the "fundamental tension that articulates strategies of domination, whether physical or symbolic, and the inventiveness of appropriations that governs all the practices of everyday life" ("An Ordinary Kind of Writing" 3). Philips appropriates writing, particularly letter writing, and cultural conventions such as courtesy practices as a way of gaining access to the institutions of power. The spaces of appropriation and individual usages are not produced in order to avoid larger discourses of control and influence but to join them.<sup>62</sup>

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<sup>61</sup>In this discussion, Chartier makes explicit reference to Certeau's elaboration of the practice of writing in *The Practice of Everyday Life*: See Roger Chartier, Introduction: An Ordinary Kind of Writing. *Correspondence: Models of Letter-Writing from the Middle Ages to the nineteenth Century*. Trans. Christopher Woodall. Ed. Roger Chartier, Alain Boureau and Cécile Dauphin. Cambridge: Polity Press, 1997. 2.

<sup>62</sup>Such an appropriation underscores the complexity of reading practices from an analytical perspective, demonstrating that not all readings are resistant or, at least, necessarily antagonistic towards institutionalised power. Chartier's assertion that the

Part of this process is the deployment of writing as a strategic, transformative practice that can isolate and determine its own place, its own meanings. Philips's letters do this through the assiduous deployment of courtesy tropes and the implicit "authenticity" of the letter form as a conduit for displays of the "real" self. In effect, Philips uses the power of writing, an indicator of stability and truth, to try and legitimate her actions. Whilst this section focuses on the letters and their presentation of Philips as an exemplary woman and writer, it also pays attention to Certeau's contention that "the text only has a meaning through its readers" (*The Practice of Everyday Life* 170). Philips may attempt to determine her own representation through writing but its reception and interpretation remain beyond her control.

Philips occupies a potentially peripheral space in the consolidating culture of the Restoration. Her political sympathies lead her to an association with notable royalists during the Interregnum, yet on the return of the monarchy her material circumstances--married to a financially embattled Parliamentarian from the former regime and residing in rural Wales--conspire to separate her from the sources of influence in Restoration society. The postal system, of which she has so much to say in the course of her correspondence, represents the network by which she is able to manifest her presence in places other than those she materially inhabits. Thomas Beebee argues that an assemblage of asymmetrical "power gradients" exist within social structures, and no less so in Restoration England, whereby individuals of differing social standing are led to communicate with each other in

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"practices of appropriation always create uses or representations that are hardly reducible to the wills or intentions of those who produce discourses and norms" ("Texts, Printing, Readings" 171) is, in this context, as applicable to the interpretative project as it is to the object under interpretation.

order to obtain their objectives. As a demonstration, Beebee cites medieval *ars dictaminis* that provide epistolary models on how, for example, "Teachers write to their students, and students to their teachers" (22). For Beebee, drawing on Foucault, these power differentials make "cultures and social interactions dynamic" in the same way that voltage makes electrical current flow: "The social world [...] works in an analogous fashion. Differences of power and information cause postal circulation, which thus becomes a tangible form of the social dynamic" (22).<sup>63</sup> I would agree with Beebee to the extent that Philips's relative social precariousness, in combination with her aspirations, provokes the correspondence examined here, all of which is with members of the social stratum above her and all of whom are geographically adjacent to the physical and perceived locations of power in the culture. Once entered into the circulatory system of postal and social exchange initiated by correspondence, Philips must, if she wishes to gain access to the principal conversation of Restoration society, conduct herself in accordance with the complex of behavioural and scriptive requirements prescribed by epistolary and courtesy theory.

The strategic objectives of Philips's letters, however, are always already undermined by the fluid determinations of the reading process that interprets it. Certeau's work argues that writing is "conservative, durable, and fixed" (Chartier, "Laborers" 50), whilst reading "has no place" (Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* 174). Chartier's elaboration on the autonomy of reading is the foundation for his attempts to trace its history : "reading is not simply submission to

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<sup>63</sup>Beebee also cites Stephen Greenblatt's concept of a "circulation of social energy" as a comparable kind of social effect (Beebee 22, fn.12). Also see Stephen Greenblatt, *Shakespearean Negotiations: The Circulation of Social Energy in Renaissance England*. Berkeley: U of California P, 1988. 12.

textual machinery [...] reading is a creative practice, which invents singular meanings and significations that are not reducible to the intentions of authors of texts or producers of books" ("Texts, Printing, Readings" 156). To read is "to wander through an imposed system" but not to necessarily conform to that system (Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* 169). A reader does not adopt "the position of an author nor an author's position" but rather "detaches them from their (lost or accessory) origin" (Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* 169). Reading combines the fragments of authorship and expression "and creates something un-known in the space organized by their capacity for allowing an infinite plurality of meanings" (Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* 169). The propriety of writing cannot determine the unconfined operation of reading. A text "is ordered in accord with codes of perception that it does not control" and:

becomes a text only in its relation to the exteriority of the reader, by an interplay of implications and ruses between two sorts of 'expectation' in combination: the expectation that organizes a *readable* space (a literality), and one that organizes a procedure necessary for the *actualization* of the work (a reading).

(Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* 170-71.

Original emphases.)

For Certeau, the emancipation of reading is connected to the hierarchisation of interpretation according to strategic imperatives and the desire to expose and evade them. The practices of reading that have developed in western culture, wherein the text has become an enigmatic "treasury" of knowledge to be opened only by authorised or

sanctioned readers and readings, is not a reflection on the reader "but on the *social institution* that overdetermines his relation with the text" (Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* 171. Original emphasis.). In effect, reading is "overprinted by a relationship of forces (between teachers and pupils, or between producers and consumers) whose instrument it becomes"; a process that makes one form of reading the only acceptable one (Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* 171).

Certeau argues that this "overdetermination" of the reading process has constantly re-formed itself as one dominant social institution has been replaced by another (schools and the press in place of the church). Consistent in all this apparent "progress" has been the assertion of a dominant, yet largely invisible, interpretative regime that structures meaning to the advantage of the prevailing order: "social hierarchization [...] conceals the reality of the practice of reading or makes it unrecognizable" (Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* 172). Yet because of the innately amorphous character of reading, its ability to be "reserved in private" by readers away from the scrutinising determinations of social hierarchies, Certeau argues it is always already available to be employed in the pursuit of the multitude of possible interpretations of the legible world:

Reading is thus situated at the point where *social* stratification (class relationships) and *poetic* operations (the practitioner's constructions of a text) intersect: a social hierarchization seeks to make the reader conform to the 'information' distributed by an elite (or semi-elite); reading operations manipulate the reader by insinuating their inventiveness into the cracks in a cultural orthodoxy.

(*Practice of Everyday Life* 172. Original emphasis.)

Even amongst the (semi) elite Certeau describes there are reading practices that do not conform to master narratives. Yet these readings, to the extent that they are conditioned by the imperatives of social hierarchies, "conceal" inconsistencies and seek to sustain the fiction of cultural cohesion and conformity. On the other hand, Certeau argues that non-conformist practices "disseminate" their unorthodox readings "in the networks of private life" (*The Practice of Everyday Life* 172). In both instances reading is portrayed as "an unknown", a practice that produces "on the one hand, only the experience of the *literate* readers (theatricalized and dominating), and on the other, rare and partial, like bubbles rising from the depths of the water, the indices of a *common* poetics" (Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* 172. Original emphasis.). Philips attempts to harness the techniques of that theatrical, dominant 'master' discourse in order to produce a text that is not only legible to but consistent with the prevailing social hierarchisation.

The writing practice Philips engages in, I would argue, attempts to locate the reading practice performed upon it within a set of prescribed meanings so as to produce a more or less predictable interpretation. This interpretation is obtained because the reading

practices that work on these texts are, as Certeau describes, acculturated to accept texts in limited and carefully defined ways. By drawing attention to its own complicity with established power systems within the culture, Philips's writing is, in effect, wedded to the very structure it seeks validity from. The manifold rhetorical techniques governing her letters, each reinforcing a discourse of passivity and forbearance as a route to acceptance and advancement within the existing social structure, seek not only to order the expression of her words but their interpretation as well. The receptivity of the culture to these submissive gestures appears to secure the success of her approach.

### **Correspondence and Correspondents.**

In literary criticism the narrative of Katherine Philips's life has come to be characterised by the trajectory of her curtailed literary career and the exemplariness of her modesty in the face of potential literary fame. This trope of renunciation was a feature of the period following her death and has become a mainstay of contemporary conceptions of her location within (post) Restoration English culture: "she assiduously claimed to be averse to fame; her poetry exalted platonic friendship and country refinement in the politest, most acceptable terms" (Medoff 35). More recent criticism has moved beyond the trope of the self-effacing poet shunning the exposure "forced" upon her by over-zealous, and influential, friends and has asked questions of the substance of her work. Most notably, the debate over the erotics of her female friendship poetry has led to Philips being re-viewed as a founding voice in the production of not just a women's but a lesbian

literary tradition in English.<sup>64</sup> It is, however, another form of desire that will be the focus of this analysis.

Philips was born in London at the beginning of 1631/2<sup>65</sup> and spent her childhood and adolescence in and around Hackney, where she attended school after receiving some early tuition at home. In 1642 Philips's father, John Fowler, died and in 1646 her mother, after a second marriage ended in widowhood again, married the landed and wealthy Sir Richard Philips from Pembrokeshire in Wales (Thomas, *Poems* 4). In 1648, at the age of 16, Philips was married to James Philips, a 54-year-old kinsman of her mother's by now recently deceased third husband (Souers 23). The couple's home was the Priory in the Welsh town of Cardigan. As Souers remarks "[f]or one who had been born and bred in London and who, from her very youth, had been a lover of polite conversation, such a life must have had few attractions. Cardigan itself could have offered little" (24). The marriage, however, appears to have been a happy and companionate one, Philips's poem to her husband, "To my dearest Antenor on his parting" bearing testament to this: "So in my breast thy Picture drawn shall be, / My guide, life, object, friend, and destiny" (Thomas, *Poems* 149, ll. 36-37). The couple had two children, Hector, who died in infancy, in 1655 and a year later,

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<sup>64</sup>Katherine Philips's emergence as a 'vanguard' lesbian writer continues to occupy much critical energy and is not an issue I will seek to pursue in any depth in this analysis. For examples of work in this sphere of Philips scholarship see: Elizabeth Susan Wahl, *Invisible Relations: Representations of Female Intimacy in the Age of Enlightenment*. Stanford: Stanford UP, 1999.; Elaine Hobby, "Katherine Philips: Seventeenth Century Lesbian Poet." *What Lesbians Do in Books*. Ed. Elaine Hobby and Chris White. London: Women's Press, 1991. 183-204.; Celia Easton, "Excusing the Breach of Nature's Laws: The Discourse of Denial and Disguise in Katherine Philips." *Restoration: Studies in English Literary Culture* 14(1990): 1-14.; Hariette Andreadis, "The Sapphic-Platonics of Katherine Philips, 1632-1662." *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 15 (1989): 34-60; Paul Lobban, "Conspire into your Hieroglyphick": *Deciphering the Self in the Poems and Letters of Katherine Philips (1632-1664)*. B.A. (Hons) Thesis, University of Adelaide, 1994.

<sup>65</sup> This form of dating indicates the period in question falls in the months of the new year that overlap between the old and new calendars.

Katherine, who survived to adulthood (Thomas, *Poems* 13). The details of the first decade of her marriage are scant. James Philips, a Parliamentarian, enjoyed political and financial success under the Interregnum regime and the couple appear to have prospered in the years prior to the Restoration. In any event, Katherine Philips, despite her husband's affiliations, was, from the evidence of her poetry and correspondence on the matter, an ardent supporter of the royalist cause. In the event of the king's return to England in 1660, James Philips's political and financial fortunes became uncertain and Katherine's royalist connections were often called upon to aid her and her husband.

Philips's friendships are an important element in any examination of her life as they form the emotional and topical substance of much of her best-known work, poetic and epistolary. Throughout her poetry and correspondence, Philips refers to herself under the pastoral appellation "Orinda", and in turn designates similar epithets to friends who become the subjects of poems or letters. As Patrick Thomas elaborates; "[p]astoral sobriquets were useful in avoiding unwanted attention from the censors as well as protests from those of the poet's subjects who might feel their privacy breached in a matter unbecoming the gentry" (*Poems* 8). Indeed, given the social rank of many of Philips's poetic and epistolary subjects, Thomas's observation that "Orinda probably found it necessary to shield the individuals she wrote to and about before she required a mask for herself" (*Poems* 8) seems credible. At the core of her poetic and epistolary attention, at least for the purpose of this study, are her female friends, Mary Aubrey ('Rosania') and Anne Owen ('Lucasia'), James Philips ('Antenor'), and Sir Charles Cotterell ('Poliarchus'). In addition,

a short sequence of letters to a noblewoman assumed to be Lady Elizabeth Ker (Thomas, *Letters* 1, fn. 2), is addressed to 'Berenice'.<sup>66</sup>

The period of Philips's life under examination here are her final five years from 1658 to 1662. In particular, her correspondence with Sir Charles Cotterell, Master of Ceremonies to the court of Charles II, covering the years 1661 to 1664, in which she achieved notoriety both at court and with a wider audience, will be my primary focus.

The body of correspondence relating to Katherine Philips is concentrated around the figure of Cotterell, whom Philips named 'Poliarchus'. This correspondence, of which we only have Philips's letters and not Cotterell's, covers a variety of topics and is conducted from several locations around the British Isles, most notably Cardigan and Dublin. The letters, published as *Familiar Letters from Orinda to Poliarchus*, went through three editions prior to 1700, and were reprinted again during the eighteenth century (Thomas, *Poems* 32). In addition to the Cotterell correspondence, a sequence of four letters to 'Berenice' was published in 1697 in a collection entitled *Familiar Letters: written by the Right Honourable John late Earl of Rochester, and several other Persons of Honour and Quality* (Souers 241). Another letter to Dorothy Temple, dated 22 January 1663/4, was not published until 1911 (Thomas, *Letters* 137; Souers 219). The tone of much of this extant correspondence reflects the opening sentence of the first letter to Cotterell, dated 6 December 1661:

Tho' I know, most honour'd POLIARCHUS, that  
you delight more in conferring Favours, than in

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<sup>66</sup> Patrick Thomas's introduction to Volume One of *The Collected Works of Katherine Philips, The Matchless Orinda*. Stump Cross: Stump Cross, 1990, at page 8, provides a complete list of Philips's associates and the appellations given to them by her. For the identity of "Berenice" see "Appendix 4: Sir Charles Cotterell and Katherine Philips" in Thomas, *Poems*: 157-95.

receiving Acknowledgments; and tho' the highest I could make, would prove not only unsuitable to my Obligations, and the sense I have of them; but such as in themselves would stand in need of a new Favour, I mean, your Pardon: Yet I cannot satisfie myself with a total Silence, where I ought to say and do so much, notwithstanding that my own Defects, and the Cruelty of fate have allow'd me so small a Capacity of Acquitting myself of either.

(Thomas, *Letters* 13)

The elaborate syntax, accentuated self-abnegation and concurrent praise of her correspondent's qualities mark Philips's letters. It is my contention that this writing operates within a cultural matrix of gender and class hierarchies to represent Philips's interests, both literary and social, within spheres of cultural influence, especially at court. This is not a novel observation, yet what I intend to establish is an interpretative framework within which this veiled rhetoric of self-interest is legible. Specifically, I want to examine how the writing practice exercised in early modern letters, a practice embedded within the didactic apparatus of early modern literacy, produces a textual space in which meaning and intention are contested. Certeau's work on reading and writing informs my assessment of how Philips's letters articulate longing and desire through a carefully constructed epistolary rhetoric that seeks to impel particular, self-interested readings. It is my argument that in the spaces of the letters, in the longing that propels them across the Welsh hinterland and the Irish Sea, Philips's desires are written, read and understood through a veil of cultural and linguistic protocol.

### Early Modern Literacy.

Elaine Hobby observes, in her "groundbreaking" (Goldberg, *Desiring Women* 3) *Virtue of Necessity*, that the "*Letters to Poliarchus* have been read as if they give straightforward access to 'the real Katherine Philips', her personal doubts and fears, and that they can therefore tell us the 'truth' about her identity as an author" (130). This, Hobby asserts, disregards "the fact that all writing is governed by specific conventions, and that in the case of a mid seventeenth-century woman these conventions included the requirement that she apologise for daring to take up the pen, and find ways to excuse her boldness" (130). This contest between the primary assumption of a letter's unencumbered access to a 'real' subject and the conventions of writing in general, and letter writing in particular, constitutes the first post-stop in the journey of Philips's letters.

The development of the letter form during the early modern period is linked to the proliferation and inculcation of literacy during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The expansion of literacy is itself linked to the socio-cultural dynamics of (English) society in the same period. That is, literacy, and its deployment, tends to attach to the imperatives and proclivities of particular strata in society: "Opportunities to learn reading and writing were constrained by social, economic and domestic circumstances while facilities for the dissemination of basic literacy were underdeveloped" (Cressy 17-18). For the purposes of this study my focus will be on the mercantile classes, into which Philips was born, and the gentry and aristocracy, with whom she corresponded and associated.

Aubrey's short account of Philips's childhood, perhaps with an eye to her later literary fame, concentrates on his subject's acquisition of literacy and its attendant virtues:

From her cosen Blacket, who lived with her from her swadling cloutes to eight, and taught her to read: --when a childe she was mighty apt to learne, and she assures me that she had read the Bible thorough before she was full four yeares old [...] wrote out Verses in Innes, or Mottos in windowes, in her table-booke.

(*Aubrey's Brief Lives* 242)

At the age of eight Philips was sent to Mrs Salmon's boarding school for girls in Hackney, one of a number of such institutions teaching "modern languages, music and the other accomplishments of young women in 'polite society' to the daughters of prosperous London merchants and country gentry" (Thomas, *Poems* 2-3). Thomas claims that the atmosphere of such boarding schools fostered the kinds of "sentimental friendships" Philips would nurture during her life, and in her writing, and "formed ideas of the good and the beautiful which had little to do with the reality of the London of the mid-1640s" (*Poems* 3, 4). This apparent disjunction between women's education and the 'reality' of everyday life reflects the wider demarcation of gender roles in early modern English culture.

Linda Pollock argues that the education of girls, whilst often comprehensive and inclusive of vernacular literacy, did not always follow the same classical curriculum applied to boys as it was "the prevailing view of early modern society that only as much education as could be put to good use later should be gained" (241). Whilst this did

not mean a uniform exclusion of classical elements from a girls' education, it did mean a primary differentiation of priorities according to gender. For example, Pollock observes that if Latin was considered essential for a particular child's "future prosperity" then she was taught it (241). This does not in itself necessarily suggest an overt culture of deliberate misogynist oppression. Rather, it reflects a complex of social and cultural attitudes and philosophies on the respective capacities of and prospects for gendered subjects. Annette Patterson describes the process of teaching reading to girls and boys in the sixteenth century, the period that initiated the expansion of (basic) literacy in England, as a project designed to produce a certain kind of subject who exhibited a "personal comportment" that reflected "particular ways of conducting the self" (67). Although it is primarily concerned with the education of boys, I include the following extract from Patterson in full as it canvasses issues of personal development which, although not all applicable to women or to Philips specifically, are designed to produce the ideal subject of early modern culture:

the pedagogies being designed during the sixteenth century aimed at the formation of a different type of person, one who combined piety with a range of other capacities, including generalisable literacy skills in reading and writing specific types of texts related to commercial and legal transactions, and proper pronunciation and fluency (often in several languages) in oratory. In addition, manners, hygiene and guidelines for the proper conduct of the body in secular spaces were explicitly taught as part of the daily routine of the classroom. In combination, these

provided a new set of capacities which enabled people from uncertain social backgrounds to take up public positions alongside the nobility, an integration of different social strata which had to occur if the state was to function productively for the times in which it found itself.

(79)

As we will see in the examination of the letters, Philips exhibits many of these capacities through the primary skill of literacy in concert with her epistolary adroitness.

Certeau argues that the emergence of the subject in the early modern period is directly connected to this development and proliferation of writing as a practice. The erosion of univocity within early modern culture, what Certeau describes as the "devaluation of the statement [...] and a concentration on the act enunciating it" (*The Practice of Everyday Life* 138), focused cultural attention not so much on what was said, but on who could now say it. The imperatives driving the spread of literacy are underwritten by a cultural need to fill the void left after the fracturing of (Catholic) medievalism's totalising narratives.

it is because he loses his position that the individual comes into being as a *subject*. The place a cosmological language formerly assigned to him and which was understood as a 'vocation' and a replacement in the order of the world, becomes a 'nothing', a sort of void, which drives the subject to make himself the master of a space and to set himself up as a producer of writing.

(Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* 138.

Original emphasis.)

The creation of the self-fashioning individual, the agentic historical subject, is dependent on the effective attainment and deployment of language through writing. Writing's capacity to form its own space, to define itself against others, fractures the homogeneity of medieval culture and enables individuals to write their own stories. Writing is a form of work, Certeau describes it as "a field to plowed rather than to be deciphered" (*The Practice of Everyday Life* 138). Rather than receive and absorb language, the subject is now able to *make* language (Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* 138). This transformation creates a new, "bourgeois" power based not on birth but on an ability to manage the practice of writing: "This power, which is essentially scriptural [...] defines the code governing socioeconomic promotion and dominates, regulates, or selects according to its norms all those who do not possess this mastery of language" (Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* 139). Philips's acquisition of literacy and her membership of the mercantile class highlight the extent to which she is affiliated with Certeau's "capitalist and conquering" (*The Practice of Everyday Life* 135) model of

writing: "[Writing] functions as the law of an educational system organized by the dominant class, which can make language [...] its instrument of production" (*The Practice of Everyday Life* 139). The development of the letter further demonstrates the connection between writing, codified here through epistolary theory, and socioeconomic advancement. For Philips, the appropriation of writing, and of epistolary writing in particular, provides contact and engagement with powerful individuals and institutions.

### **Medieval and Early Modern Letters.**

Medieval epistolary writing was codified in the various *ars dictaminis*, or letter writing manuals, that established the rules by which letters were to be composed. The letter-writing manual, produced either as a textbook or a collection of various letters to be emulated, is a constant feature from medievalism to the early modern period and after. The manual is a means of regulating writing, of ensuring that institutions and discourses that have vested interests in the control of language are able to influence how individuals use that language. Letters are, however, somewhat difficult to control in this sense. Whilst medieval epistolary practice emphasises the letter's public and administrative function, the emergence of the idea of an individual, interiorised subject during the early modern period changes the nature of the letter. The movement from public to private means that the letter-writing manuals must reflect this change in emphasis to remain relevant. In doing so, however, they are trying to regulate a private behaviour. Chartier argues that the letter is a form of writing that occurs outside the gaze of those institutions trying to regulate writing. Chartier argues that such writing is "without qualities" or

"authority" and "therefore seems foreign to the drive to accumulate, totalize and dominate which, according to Certeau, characterizes the 'scriptural economy'" ("An Ordinary Kind of Writing" 2). To the extent that manuals attempt to regulate the composition of letters, they are necessarily limited by the letter-writer's decision to acquire, read, and heed them or not. Yet in Philips's case the distinction between conventional and appropriative practices is not clear. Whilst her letters are personal and "private", they still comply with the requirements of epistolary and courtesy theory for a particular purpose. Later in the section I will discuss the implications of Philips's complex style. Before that, however, I will discuss the transformation of the letter from a public to a private document.

The medieval letter, as charted through the *ars dictaminis*, moves away from letters operating as a formal instrument of the church towards the secularised realms of the university and, eventually, into the nascent middle class with the proliferation of lawyers and bureaucrats as the emerging arbiters of social power.<sup>67</sup> Judith Henderson's description of the *ars dictaminis* as "a highly developed and rigidly formulated art of official letter-writing" ("Defining the Genre" 89) reflects its general confinement to the elite strata of medieval society. Alain Boureau argues that the emergence of the city-state signalled the "triumph of the notaries and lawyers over the epistolers" (50), by whom he means practitioners of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries who refined epistolary art to the point where it became the

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<sup>67</sup> It is not my intention to attempt a survey of medieval letter writing methodologies here. In his chapter, "The Letter-Writing Norm, a Mediaeval Invention", Alain Boureau analyses the "mediaeval genealogy of the notion of the letter-writing norm"(25) in some depth. His chapter covers the development of epistolary theory from the epistles of the Gospel through to the complex epistolary techniques used in the emergent Italian city states of the late medieval period: see Chartier, Boureau and Dauphin 24-58.

"emblematic form of development of an urban middle class of intellectuals" (47). The "apogee" of medieval epistolary technique is exemplified in Boureau's description of the work of Boncompagno (c. 1170-1240), whose work encompassed all forms of letter-writing and its cultural application "in order to construct an overall rhetoric of epistolary art" (47). The medieval letter's acute concern with the relation of rank between correspondents and the forms of address employed by the writer reflect its usage within elite strata of medieval culture. It is the vehicle for a form of social reinforcement in which the display of rhetorical dexterity and cultural awareness becomes "the defining features of the letter" (Henderson, "Erasmus" 333).

The *ars dictaminis* was a locus for the production of a variety of discourses: business, government, religion, morality, family relations, eros, all found their embodiment in these manuals.

(Beebee 20)

Essentially, the *ars dictaminis* "applied classical rhetoric to letter-writing, which, with the demise of the classical institutions that had bred the orator, had become the political skill most in demand in the Middle Ages" (Henderson, "Erasmus" 333). Its strict protocols of style and format reflected the form's indebtedness to classical oratorical rhetoric, especially formal Ciceronian rhetorical models. Henderson argues that the "five part division of the letter (*salutatio, exordium, narratio, petitio, conclusio*) was an adaptation of the structure of the oration to written correspondence" ("Defining the Genre" 92).<sup>68</sup> The medieval letter in this form performed "manifold political and

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<sup>68</sup>For this assertion, Henderson cites James East, "Brunetto Latini's Rhetoric of Letter-Writing," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 54 (1968): 241-46.

scholarly uses" (Henderson, "Erasmus" 355) as an instrument of socio-political discourse, operating in a public sphere (inasmuch as it circulated between members of the ruling, literate strata of medieval culture) of philosophical, literary and political exchange.

The early modern letter develops out of the rediscovery of "familiar" Ciceronian epistolary models in the fourteenth century by Petrarch and Salutati.<sup>69</sup> The addition of Cicero's *ad Atticum* (Letters to Atticus) and *Epistolae ad familiares*, with their apparent revelation of the writer's personality and his quotidian concerns divorced from a formal rhetorical framework, to epistolary theory "changed the focus of the letter away from narrow legal and bureaucratic concerns" (Beebee 23).<sup>70</sup> Beebee asserts that through the printed reproduction of these collections:

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<sup>69</sup> See Thomas Beebee, *Epistolary Fiction in Europe 1500-1850*. Cambridge: CUP, 1999. 23; Claudio Guillén, "Notes Towards the Study of the Renaissance Letter" *Renaissance Genres: Essays on Theory, History, and Interpretation*. Ed. Barbara Keifer Lewalski. Cambridge, Ma.: Harvard UP, 1986. 72; Annabel Patterson, *Censorship and Interpretation: The Conditions of Writing and Reading in Early Modern England*. Madison: U of Wisconsin P, 1984. 204.

<sup>70</sup>Even so, Judith Henderson points out that a substantial number of Renaissance letter-writers, especially scholars, were concerned with securing their own livelihoods through patronage and so "wrote letters primarily with the intention of persuading" ("Defining the Genre" 93).

Rome's greatest lawyer replaced the catalog of social categories in the *formulae* as the unifying principle of the letter-writing manuals. In the abstract, this meant that a theoretical "I" was being created as the unifying source of multifarious epistolary discourse. This "I" was a source not so much of thought or of consciousness as of needs and causes. Narration and petition, rather than salutation, now received more attention.

(23. Original emphasis.)

The construction of the familiar letter, as distinct from the formal rhetorical model of medievalism, expanded slowly following the rediscovery of Cicero's correspondence.<sup>71</sup> This neoclassical mode of epistolary practice advocated the plainer forms of Ciceronian letter-writing in contradistinction to the ornate medieval style. This plainer, familiar letter also re-imagined its function, "following classical authorities, as a conversation between absent friends on their own affairs" (Henderson, "Erasmus" 336), thereby providing the letter with access to a private experience of writing and reading, and an attendant association with "real" experience.

Erasmus's *de conscribendis epistolis* (1522) mediated between these opposing traditions by propounding a protean epistolary method which "kept alive the medieval mode of elaborate rhetoric in letters long after a plain bourgeois style appeared" (Whigham 865). Erasmian

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<sup>71</sup>Although humanist letter-writing was a motley of classical and medieval practice, the definitions of the genre in Renaissance treatises were borrowed from classical authorities, especially from Cicero's remark that "letter-writing was invented just in order that we might inform those at a distance of there were anything which it was important for them or for ourselves that they should know": See Judith Henderson, "Defining the Genre: Juan Luis Vives' *De Conscribendis Epistolis*." *Renaissance and Reformation* 7.2 (1983): 97-98.

epistolary theory essentially refused to exclude either of the contesting models in favour of a pragmatic and comprehensive approach which stressed the importance of the circumstances and context of the letter's composition to its style and substance:

Erasmus states that the language of a letter should adapt itself to the addressee and the subject as a *Polypus* does to a particular soil, or as Mercury could appear in any dress--as long as the language is pure, educated, and reasonable.

(Guillén 84)

Henderson further stresses that an Erasmian "ideal of utility, not pure beauty" ("Erasmus" 355) informs this model of the letter, inculcating a rhetorical dimension within a Renaissance humanist imagining of the letter: "Erasmus' synthesis of the classical and medieval traditions under a new definition of letter-writing made his treatise immediately popular" ("Defining the Genre" 98). This composite model produces a multiform cultural object which operates as "an instrument of educational and religious reform" (Henderson, "Erasmus" 355), exemplified in the employment of the *de conscribendis* in English schools as both a model of epistolary style and as a general "prophylactic against bad Latin" (Patterson, *Censorship* 207).

The genealogy of English epistolarity in the sixteenth century reflects a convergence of influences on the letter as a form within the culture. The constitution of an epistolary theory inclusive of the plainness of strict Ciceronianism and the rhetorical structure of medieval precedents permeated English understandings of the letter. The result was a series of similarly didactic manuals devoted to epistolary composition. William Fulwood's text, *The Enemie of*

*Idlennesse* (1568)--a conglomeration of translated French material, rhetorical protocols drawn from Erasmus, and formatting principles--was the first such manual published in England. Fulwood's text employs what John Carey labels the "barren schematization endemic to literary thought in the Renaissance" (54) in that it "divides letters into three categories (Doctrine, Mirth, Gravity) and every letter into three parts (cause, intent, consequence)" (53). This didactic model, and its classificatory technique, are deeply indebted to Erasmus and his medieval antecedents. Part of the prescriptive ethos of this method is the defining of the letter's function. In this respect, the text initiates a determinative project regarding the letter and its function within English society. Fulwood's description of a letter relies on the quotidian and personal concerns of Ciceronian epistolary practice: "An Epistle ... or letter is nothing else, but a declaration, by Writing of the mindes of such as bee absent, one of them to another, even as though they were present" (1621 ed., 1-2 qtd. in Goldberg, *Writing Matter* 249). Implicit in such a definition is the capacity to consolidate a discernible identity position through writing. To conceive of the letter as a space where two (separate and textually fabricated) identities can meet implies that writing and subjectivity are intimately connected. For Certeau, the development of the subject is predicated on the relationship of individuals to language, in particular "the necessity of carving out a position by one's own way of treating a particular area of language" (*The Practice of Everyday Life* 138). Yet the subject's relationship with language is not free from the cultural or economic factors that structure society as a whole. Combined with this sense of mediation between two individuals is a rhetorical structure that determines how one should address the correspondent, as well as what the letter should say and how

it should be said. I want to focus on the negotiation of absence that constitutes the letter's project, together with epistolary rhetoric, especially between correspondents of differing social rank.

### **Rhetoric.**

The strict formal requirements of medieval letters, inherited from the structures of classic oratory, partitioned the letter into five sections, each of which performed a specific compositional role (Henderson, "Erasmus" 333). Of these, the *salutatio*, that section of the letter devoted to addressing the correspondent, "received the most attention in the medieval handbooks that provided formulas for courteously addressing all ranks in the hierarchy of feudal society" (Henderson, "Erasmus" 333). Developing in the twelfth century, this attention to the relative social position of the correspondents acknowledged a complex distribution of power within culture which was mediated through the letter: "[it demonstrated] the potential complexity of a system founded on two scales, one of which was fixed (ranks) and the other mobile (the position of the writer in relation to the recipient)" (Boureau 39). This binary model was further complicated by a "clutch of parallel hierarchies (secular, religious, familial)" (Boureau 39).

This legible display of one's relative social location remained an integral component of the letter into the early modern period. The link between social status and writing, demonstrated here in the letter, illustrates Certeau's assertion that in (early) modern society writing becomes "a principle of [...] social hierarchization" (*The Practice of Everyday Life* 139). Frank Whigham's examination of Elizabethan suitors' letters proceeds on the basis that "[p]ower and privilege in the

Renaissance were organized by a class-stratified patronage system" and that "relations within the system were maintained with a vocabulary codified in courtesy theory" ("Rhetoric" 864). An essential element in such rhetorical gestures is the utilisation of language in the attainment of specific goals. As Certeau remarks, rhetoric embodies both strategic and tactical features because it "describes the 'turns' or tropes of which language can be both the site and the object, and, on the other hand, these manipulations are related to the way of changing (seducing, persuading, making use of) the will of another (the audience)" (*The Practice of Everyday Life* xx). Rhetoric is an example of the tactical activity operating on the territory (language) of the other and Certeau, citing Greek rhetorician Corax, asserts that its primary function has been to "make the weaker position seem the stronger" (*The Practice of Everyday Life* xx). Rhetoric, like tactics, has the power of "turning the tables on the powerful by the way in which [it makes] use of the opportunities offered by a particular situation" (Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* xx). Philips's letters are marked by a visible acknowledgment of the different social standings of writer and correspondent but also by attempts to mobilise this apparent passivity to the writer's advantage. In the earliest letters examined here, the four letters dated between June 1658 and mid-1659 to "Berenice", Philips introduces her often emotional pleas for Berenice's company with formal gestures of deference or thanks. In the first Berenice letter, for example, Philips begins by thanking Berenice for a past favour:<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>72</sup>The editors of *Familiar Letters: Written by the Right Honourable John the late Earl of Rochester, and several other Persons of Honour and Quality* (1697) noted that the final letter, which is undated, "was wrote but a Month before *Orinda* died" (Thomas, *Letters* 12). In his annotations to the letters, however, Patrick Thomas argues that the more likely position is that it followed on directly from the first three letters and that the apparent poignancy of the final letter may have been a contrivance of the editors (12, fn. 4).

Your Ladiship's last Favour from Coll. P----'s was truly obliging, and carried so much of the same great Soul of yours, which loves to diffuse itself in Expressions of Friendship to me, that it merits a great deal more Acknowledgement than I am able to pay at my best Condition, and am less now when my head akes, and will give me no leave to enlarge, though I have so much Subject and Reason [.]

(Thomas, *Letters* 1)<sup>73</sup>

Philips's thanks are immediately followed by a series of apologetic gestures that reduce her status in relation to Berenice. Where the gratefully received favour expresses Berenice's superior "Soul", it also exposes Philips's civil and physical deficiencies. Philips claims she cannot provide adequate thanks, even in her "best Condition", and compounds her inadequacy by admitting she is further diminished at the time of writing by a headache that "will give me no leave to enlarge, though I have so much Subject and Reason". In this introduction, Philips writes herself as both undeserving and almost incapable of receiving her correspondent's generosity. Although Philips's letters to Berenice are often marked by requests and sometimes emotional demands, her introductory passages are careful to establish a hierarchical relationship between correspondents in which Philips is the (unworthy) supplicant.

As a form of social discourse, courtesy theory is an indicator marking the extent to which English culture has moved away from the static, hereditary structures of medievalism and towards a more fluid

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<sup>73</sup>See Appendix 1.

social order "dominated by those who can convince others that they ought to submit" (Whigham, *Ambition and Privilege* 3).<sup>74</sup> The loss of an "exclusive sense of aristocratic identity" (Whigham, *Ambition and Privilege* 5) presages an emerging social model in which movement "across the gap between ruling and subject classes was becoming increasingly possible, and elite identity had begun to be a function of actions rather than of birth--to be achieved rather than ascribed" (Whigham, *Ambition and Privilege* 5). In his examination of the development of *civilité* in early modern France, Roger Chartier argues that the emergent conduct was different from medieval models of *courtoisie* because it defined what was "proper, universally, for all men" (*The Cultural Uses of Print* 79). Within such a system, where one's relationship to social superiors now contains the possibility of (social and material) advancement, courtesy can be characterised as "the matrix of public image for the ruling class" (Whigham, "Rhetoric" 864). The early modern letter, a combination of "elaborate rhetoric" and a "plain bourgeois style" (Whigham, "Rhetoric" 865), negotiated the social division between supplicant and (potential) patron through a careful discursive elaboration of that breach. This occurs in a formal, legible mapping of social hierarchy on the page as well as its figurative expression in the letter's vocabulary.

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<sup>74</sup>Whigham's example of this cultural transformation is Thomas Wilson's 1560 treatise, *The Art of Rhetorique*. Whigham argues that Wilson's text, although intending to "voice the dominant Elizabethan ideology" (*Ambition and Privilege* 2), implies the possibility of achieving social status higher than the one to which an individual is born. Whigham cites a passage from the preface to Wilson's tract in which the author argues: "For what manne I praye you being better able to maintayne himselfe by valeante courage, then by living in base subjection: would not rather loke to rule like a lord, then to lyve lyke an underlynge" (Wilson 19). In the elaboration of such an idea, Whigham argues that Wilson effectively "uncouples the existing order from transcendent authority and re-founds it on the sheerly formal, learnable, vendible skills of persuasion" (3): See Frank Whigham, *Ambition and Privilege: The Social Tropes of Elizabethan Courtesy Theory*. Berkeley: U of California P, 1984. 1-3.

Following from medieval traditions, early modern letter writers were instructed to acknowledge the relative social ranks of the correspondents in the format of their letter's address. Angel Day's popular and often reprinted *The English Secretary* (1586) articulates this preoccupation:

In accompt of the person, is to be respected, first the estate and reputation of the partie, as whether hee be our better, our equal, our inferiour, next the lightnesse or gravitie, as whether he be old, young, learned, unskilfull, pleasaunt, sage, stately, gentle, sequestred from affayres, busied.

(13)

Supplementing this primary concern about the recipient's social station is the method with which it is represented at its most literal level: as a physical mark on the page. Day devotes much space to the appropriate format of letters, arguing that in "writing to anye personne of accompt, by how much the more excellent hee is in calling from him in whose behalfe the Letter is framed, by so much the lower, shall the Subscription thereunto belonging, in any wise be placed" (27). Goldberg asserts that this method of valorising the recipient through the devotion of page space to their address "offer[s] nothing less than the fine discriminations of a hierarchized society matched by the forms by which the letter is to open and close" (*Writing Matter* 253). In Philips's case, there is little to be analysed in this respect as her letters, for the most part, were published in specially compiled collections without their original formatting. As a result, letter headings in the collections are standardised and numbered and any distinctive terms of address or spaces on the page are eliminated in favour of a uniform presentation.

The rhetoric of supplication operates in concert with this format, particularly the rhetorical tropes of self-deprecation and flattery. Goldberg asserts that the space of the letter, the space in which the "proper signature is located", is constituted by a series of dislocations--of presence, selfhood, sociality, as well as "intention and meaning" (254). I discuss the dynamic of presence and selfhood directly, for the moment I will concentrate on the operation of rhetoric, that medium of "intention and meaning". The tropes of self-abnegation and flattery are ubiquitous within early modern culture and no less so in the letter. In her examination of the Verney family archives, which contain a large store of seventeenth and eighteenth-century correspondence, Susan Whyman posits as a commonplace that "[w]riters were trained to use formulaic clichés in all sorts of letters, including requests for money and thank-you notes" (18). Further, she argues that "letter writing was a self-conscious art and allows us to observe the social code underpinning letter-writing conventions" (17-18). To go back a century, Whigham's analysis of Elizabethan supplicatory letters argues that the social code and the letters that responded to it formed a closed system of mutual reciprocity. In terms of self-abnegation, Whigham claims that the performance of a "witty self-deprecation", in which the reduction of the self is performed through some form of linguistic cleverness, advertised "shared perceptions of value":

The coincidence of self-deprecation and self-praise creates a curious double power in supplicatory prose. The patron receives signals of his or her superior rank and at the same time derives from them evidence that the suitor is a member of the class

worthy of patronage, because to support the suitor is to support oneself.

("Rhetoric" 874)

In addition to the appeal of self-deprecation, the expression of flattery is used to actually limit the ability of the patron to act negatively towards the suitor: "The letter writer understood the force of imposing on the patron a mantle of generosity, the refusal of which disconfirmed the *patron's* status, not the petitioner's" (Whigham, "Rhetoric" 874. Original emphasis.).

It is not only generosity that is implicitly forced on the patron, Whigham produces examples where patrons are lumbered with the qualities of goodness, constancy, eloquence, cleverness, discretion, care, and trustworthiness; all in order "to produce repeated and generous response in the men to whom the virtues are imputed" ("Rhetoric" 875). Further, flattery can be used yet more assertively, "challenging the patron to live up to a standard of behaviour appropriate to role or class" and judging him "not only by an abstract standard but by reference to peers who are seen as competitors. Conspicuous expenditure was a mode of competition for courtly status *within* the ruling class as well as a mode of exclusive class definition" (Whigham, "Rhetoric" 875. Original emphasis.). The characteristic features of the letter in this period mark what Whigham describes as the "confluent languages of humility and display" operating to give "the suitor increased rhetorical power" ("Rhetoric" 878). Yet this rhetoric unfolds within a textual and social space which is mobile and unsettled. The deployment of such rhetorical models is designed to produce certain responses in the reader in order to secure advantage in a competitive social environment. In a very practical way, the rhetoric of supplication seeks to produce "a space

of formalization" which "refers to the reality from which it has been distinguished *in order to change it*" (Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* 135. Original emphasis.). The capacity for writing to secure its own meanings underwrites the supplicatory letter. These meanings are recognised by both writer and reader, producing a set assumptions to make sense of the text:

the explicit indicators by which texts are designated and classified create expectations of the reading and anticipations of understanding. That is the case as well for the indication of the genre, which links the text to be read to other texts that have already been read and which signals to the reader the appropriate 'preknowledge' in which to locate the text.

(Chartier, "Texts, Printing, Readings" 167)<sup>75</sup>

I will now examine how the cultural assumptions underwriting the letter establish it as a repository for the individuated, "real" self. That the self can be credibly represented through writing means the intimacy and exclusivity of communication upon which courtesy and civility rely can be transmitted over distance. In such circumstances, part of the "preknowledge" of the early modern letter is the textual interplay between absence and presence, underwritten by the letter's status as a fragment of the "private" self.

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<sup>75</sup>Chartier's article concentrates for the most part on books and the process of publication, yet his argument provides a more general approach to the study of writing, and reading, in the early modern period: See Roger Chartier, "Texts, Printing, Readings" *The New Cultural History*. Ed. L. Hunt. Berkeley: U of California P, 1989. 154-75.

### "I have sent you inclos'd my true Thoughts": The Allure of the Private.

The generic categorisation of letters is an enduring aspect of epistolary theory during the transition from medievalism to the early modern period. Through the various *ars dictaminis*, an attempt to legislate the various foreseeable and appropriate letters one might write, or learn from by reading, forms a didactic and prescriptive focus across evolving modes of composition and style. Of these, the development of familiar letters, a direct descendant of the Ciceronian form, engages the letter in an ongoing association with the concept of privacy; an association that underwrites our own understanding of the letter as a literary form.

Ronald Huebert tracks the semantic evolution of the word "privacy" from Thomas More to Andrew Marvell, arguing that, "generally speaking, there is a progression from suspicion of hostility to privacy in the earlier texts to acceptance of and even a cherishing of privacy in the later ones" (35). Huebert's analysis categorises privacy into four "semantic clusters" concerned with a lack of public status, the ownership of property, a relation to secrecy, and privacy as a form of interiority. When Huebert speaks of privacy's chronological "progression" through the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries from suspicion to endorsement, he tracks it along the axis of these clusters. Yet it is important to acknowledge the nebulous nature of this "progression". Philippe Ariès plots the trajectory of privacy as a concept in the early modern period and argues that the growth and sophistication of the state, the spread of literacy, and the Reformation (including the changes it wrought within Catholicism) worked to re-organise the structures of daily life where a "triumph of individualism" occurred: "The social 'space' liberated by the rise of the state and the

decline of communal forms of sociability was occupied by the individual, who established himself--in the state's shadow, as it were--in a variety of settings" (Ariès 7). Across a massive range of practices, from the "privatization" of (silent) reading to the increased regulation of physical appearance and function, "the gradual construction of the modern state--not necessarily absolutist but always administrative and bureaucratic--[was] a necessary precondition for defining a private sphere as distinct from a clearly identifiable public one" (Chartier, "Figures of Modernity" 15).<sup>76</sup> Cecile Jagodzinski's examination of the link between privacy and reading in the early modern period supports Chartier's contentions regarding privacy inasmuch as she proposes that "the emergence of the concept of privacy as a personal right, as well as the core of individuality, is connected [...] with the history of reading [...] the reading experience bred a new sense of personal autonomy, a new consciousness of the self" (1). The catalyst for the development of privacy is, in Jagodzinski's analysis, "the widespread availability and accessibility of printed matter" that combined with the growth of an increasingly educated English middle class and the political and religious turbulence to produce "a new way of thinking about the individual person" (2). This development is neither smooth nor conveniently episodic and privacy remains a concept in flux throughout the period. Jagodzinski notes public opposition to an ideal of "individual privacy" appearing in the 1660s, a period in which the dawning of the Enlightenment and a contemporary notion of privacy,

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<sup>76</sup>See, Chartier, Roger, ed. *A History of Private Life*. Trans. Arthur Goldhammer. Passions of the Renaissance. Vol. 3. Cambridge, Ma.: Belknap, 1989: Chartier et al's comprehensive examination of the development of privacy in the early modern period is far too massive for me to represent it satisfactorily in this context. Instead I seek primarily to establish the presence of an identifiable discourse of privacy within early modern culture and explore how the letter draws from and contributes to it.

associated with an authentic interiority, is supposed to be transpiring.<sup>77</sup> Privacy remains a contentious idea in constant exchange with the principles of public life in which identity was vested according to the traditions received from medievalism: "one was most 'real' when performing in public--in the pulpit, in court or Parliament, or even in the local alehouse" (Jagodzinski 4). In this context the letter is ambivalent, a hinge between private and public realms of experience.

The nature of the "privacy" for which the letter comes to represent is itself a contested space. In the introductory poem to the extremely popular *Epistolae Ho-Eliaanae*, "To the knowing reader touching Familiar Letters", James Howell asserts the intimacy at the centre of the letter's potency:

Love is the Life of Friendship, *Letters* are  
The Life of Love, the Loadstones that by rare  
Attraction make Souls meet, and melt, and mix,  
As when by Fire exalted Gold we fix.

(Howell 13: ll. 1-4)

Amongst a long list of the letter's attributes, Howell names its ability to "the Cabinets of Kings unscruce" (l. 13), to reveal hidden plots (l. 25), to outlast the "Vapour" of speech (l. 65) and to "shew the inward Man, as we behold/ A Face reflecting in a Crystal Mould" (ll. 79-80). Yet in the first sentence of the collection's first model letter, Howell approvingly re-asserts the "Ancients" distinction between letters and oratory: "that the one should be attired like a Woman, the other like a Man" (17). Thus an association between femininity and epistolarity is drawn, one

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<sup>77</sup>See Cecile Jagodzinski, *Privacy and Print: Reading and Writing in Seventeenth-Century England*. Charlottesville: UP Virginia, 1999. 3-6.

that has become, in Carolyn Steedman's assessment, a "somewhat low-key assumption of literary history":

that somehow letter writing is just natural to women, that they always have been better at it than men, and that it was 'a sanctioned female activity'.

(121)<sup>78</sup>

Steedman argues that in addition to the access to "the secret crevices of her person" enabled by reading women's letters, whether they be fictional or 'real', consumers of this writing have "also wanted the unforced, the natural, the artless" (121). Elizabeth Goldsmith agrees, arguing that the received wisdom regarding women's epistolary skills was in part due to a belief that their authenticity derived from their lack of formal, classical education ("Authority, Authenticity" 47).<sup>79</sup>

The connection between women and letter-writing is not, however, reflected necessarily in the instructional texts of the period until the middle of the seventeenth century. In Jerome Hainhofer's 1638 translation of Jacques Du Bosque's French text, *The Secretary of Ladies*, a sequence of letters penned by women is produced with the prefatory "Advertisement to the Reader, by a Friend of the Collector", asserting that "There is no colour to say it [letter writing] ill becomes their sexe: for if it be not amisse that they are able to make a

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<sup>78</sup>See also David Bergeron's posing of the question, "Is there something "feminine" about letter-writing?", to which he responds that "a number of people have thought so" before proceeding to discuss the particular association between a "feminine" mode of writing and love letters (26-27).

<sup>79</sup>Carolyn Steedman's article makes reference to this contention in part by citing Frank Kermode's Introduction to *The Oxford Book of Letters* where he says, "Perhaps the eloquence of familiarity comes more naturally to them [women] than it does to men; or perhaps they have, historically, had less occasion to write merely performative letters": see Frank Kermode and Anita Kermode. *The Oxford Book of Letters*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1995. xxi.

complement, you must not think it strange that they can write one" (ix).

The defence of women's letters is pursued by the "Friend":

I will only say that if there bee any who cannot yet consent that Gentlewomen should write, I assure my self this book will convert them: where they shall find so many things of worth, they shall bee compeld to renounce their ignorance or envy for by one of these names I must call the course of their error.

(ix-x)<sup>80</sup>

Yet, as Kim Walker cautions, although these prefatory remarks draw attention to the collection's uniqueness amongst epistolary texts and "while it serves to open up a new literary field to women, it is marked by its attempt to preserve boundaries between masculine and feminine writing" (27). This (re)inscription of scriptive boundaries, in Jonathon Goldberg's view, serves to construct the feminine within a discrete discourse of 'intimate', domestic relations built upon the rising tide of epistolary fiction during the seventeenth century:

The 'intimacy' of the letter will produce female subjectivity as the most circumscribed and delimited space within the artifices of the letter [...] Woman will be constructed as the repository of privacy.

(*Writing Matter* 255)

Given that "the letter manuals serve to instruct on the socially countenanced modes for a self-production that can never be separated from the fictive simulations that structure the real" (Goldberg *Writing Matter* 254-55), annexing women within the passive realms of epistolary

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<sup>80</sup>The page numbers listed do not appear in the text itself.

romances and domestic correspondence effectively circumscribes women with "their own" writing.

The increasing popularity of epistolary fiction throughout the seventeenth century, and the place of women within that movement, can be traced to the latent vulnerability of the private text constituted by the letter. Claudio Guillén argues that the letter's affiliation with the subsequent genres of the novel and the essay arises from its propensity for indiscretion. That is, a "double intentionality of language" operates in the letter. Guillén defines this effect as occurring when the "words of a dialogue are really meant for three, at the very least (and those of a monologue for two)" (100). Speech and the letter are adjacent concepts in the development of epistolary theory, Angel Day insisting that the letter is, literally, the "familiar speech of the absent" (1). The difference in the case of the letter, according to Guillén, is that where the dialogue presupposes "a public space and the directness and enveloping involvement of speech", the letter implies "more often than not, solitude, separation, silence, privacy, or even secrecy" (100). Guillén argues that this presupposed "privacy" is belied in the early modern canon of exemplary epistolary texts by the "relatively open and comprehensive character of letters, of their topics and addresses" (100). Ciceronian and Erasmian letters are the products of public figures concerned with public affairs. Yet the letter format is such that other readers are always countenanced in the epistolary transaction, and indeed the presence of this third reader is heightened as the veneer of privacy surrounding the letter strengthens:

The equivocal triangle, the latent voyeurism that I allude to here--the only innocent participant being the original addressee of the letter--exists or increases

in the exact degree in which the moral or newsworthy epistle becomes so familiar and private as to be lacking apparently in general interest and only be of concern to immediate friends and near relatives. What was intended to be read, in principle, is actually reread; and, most important, reread by others.

(Guillén 100)

From this principle develops both the interest in epistolary fiction and the understanding of the letter as a vehicle for an interiorised identity.

Privacy underwrites the "indiscreet charm of epistolography" (Guillén 101). The nebulous concept of privacy broadly outlined by Ariés, a space that is as much mental as physical, is supplemented by the material conditions in which correspondence operated. The interiorising impetus of Protestantism and the self-fashioning capacity of writing converge in the tenuous document itself; a material object subject to the vagaries of delivery and the capriciousness of (un)official scrutiny. Annabel Patterson's examination of the practice of censorship in the period underlines this point:

In the seventeenth century the issue of confidentiality became central. Personal letters, the most private of all communication except whispers, carried no immunity against censorship. Letters *were* intercepted, and their authors might be dealt with as severely as if they had published a provocative pamphlet.

(208. Original emphasis.)

The document materialises the private "whispers" of the subject and in doing so makes him/her visible to those outside the specific ambit of the letter. In this sense, the private approaches the very verge of the public, and puts itself at risk, through writing.

Underscoring the growing sophistication of epistolary practices, including the development of narrative fiction, is a correlative refinement and codification of reading. Parallel with the development of writing as an accumulative, mythical practice that has an "operational capacity to articulate (to bring together and to repartition) in a strategic and quasi-encyclopedic manner a vast multiplicity of practices" (Ahearne, *Michel de Certeau* 165), modernity has conceived of reading practices as largely reactive activities: "[the public] is moulded by (verbal or iconic) writing [...] it becomes similar to what it receives, and [...] it is *imprinted* by and like the text which is imposed on it" (Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* 167. Original emphasis.). Certeau rejects this model of reading as a fiction of compliance that is promulgated on behalf of strategic interests. For Certeau, sanctioned reading practices, which seek to "tie" specific readerships to "a limited number of 'literal' meanings" (Ahearne, *Michel de Certeau* 168) uphold the priorities of writing and seek to promote only culturally consistent meanings. These meanings are unavoidable but do not constitute the totality of a text's potential. Certeau conceives of reading as a tactical activity, the reader is a poacher, and the strategic imperatives that structure the text "set the terms for more vagabondish or insecure practices of reading" (Ahearne, *Michel de Certeau* 169). The early modern letter is just such a textual space. Repeatedly and closely codified through epistolary manuals and conventions, the letter is nevertheless positioned at the juncture between individual and social

interests and as such open to various forms of compositional and interpretative variation. The complex negotiation of meaning undertaken in the letter, where personal interests are interwoven with cultural and rhetorical discourses, makes it a potent example of Certeau's assertion that reading is "situated at the point where *social* stratification (class relationships) and *poetic* operations (the practitioner's constructions of a text) intersect" (*The Practice of Everyday Life* 172. Original emphasis.).

The postal system in England during the early modern period, as the medium through which letters reached their destinations, embodies the uncertainty of the letter's status as a borderline private/public text. A principal anxiety in Philips's letters is the fallibility of the Post and the threat this represents to her correspondence with Cotterell. I examine her complaints regarding the failure of the post to deliver letters directly. Howard Robinson's histories of the British postal system chart the parallel rise in both the volume of correspondence over the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and the central government's attempts to exercise monopoly control over its delivery.<sup>81</sup> Coterminous with the expansion of government control was the exercise of official surveillance over the contents of the post. A supplement to Patterson's assertions regarding the danger under which potentially seditious "private" mail travelled is Alan Marshall's examination of the techniques with which the Restoration administration of Charles II spied on its population:

The regime used the Post Office to intercept, open and read the mail and the interception, opening and

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<sup>81</sup> : See Howard Robinson, *The British Post Office: A History*. Princeton: Princeton UP, 1948., and *Britain's Post Office*. London: Oxford UP, 1953.

reading of the mail was a well-known phenomenon in the later seventeenth century.

(81)

The confluence of public and private in the letter is traced and overseen by the growth of an official administrative body designed not just to deliver these fragments of private discourse but, when necessary or desirable, to open and read them: "there were two main routes in which the regime proceeded when intercepting the mail: firstly by making specific interceptions and secondly by a more general rifling of the post" (Marshall 82).

This official breach of the letter's apparent privacy is reflected in the forms epistolary fiction manifested throughout the seventeenth century. The publication of Nicholas Breton's *A Poste with a Packet of Madde Letters* in 1602 marked a modification of the epistolary text in England. Rather than the exemplary or didactic textbook of epistolary styles, Breton's book used "the form of the letter-writer as a means of providing his readers with a collection of letters which [were] intended to amuse" (Robertson 26). In effect, Breton's text traded on the perceived authenticity of the letter as a medium for personal experience:

Breton creates the fiction that he has found this 'packet' of letters and seeks only to reproduce them.

The letters create an epistolary novel, or at least short story, for an apparently eager public.

(Bergeron 10-11)

*A Poste with a Packet of Madde Letters* went through fifteen editions between 1602 and 1637 and was soon accompanied by a raft of similar collections.<sup>82</sup> Between government surveillance of the mail and public

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<sup>82</sup>Amongst the imitators Jean Robertson lists such titles as; *A Speedie Poste*, *The*

demand for epistolary narratives, a cultural desire for reading letters was nourished throughout the seventeenth century. The success of Breton's book is reflected, and the concept behind it developed, by the 1645 publication of *The Kings Cabinet Opened*, in which Charles I's personal mail to Henrietta Maria was published after having been intercepted by Commonwealth forces at the battle of Naseby. As Annabel Patterson observes, the royalist defence to this publication was to re-assert the core principles of epistolary theory "which require[d] a separation between private and public discourse" (209).<sup>83</sup> Yet this distinction forms the conditions in which access to other's privacy becomes desirable:

the epistolary novel is authenticated by its intimate character. Its truth (or, more properly, truth-effect) derives in part from the fact that it represents itself as nonfiction and in part from the fact that letters are a strictly private, intimate medium [...] the truth-effect undeniably depends on the dramatization of a private practice.

(Goulemot 386)

Goulemot articulates the interior dynamic of the letter, the tension between competing discourses of knowledge and identity, when she argues that epistolary fiction was "warranted" as truth "only because it is made public" (386). I would extend this contention to all epistolary literature. The cultural fascination with reading other people's letters is played out against a backdrop of nascent discourses of private

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*Prompters Packet*, *Hobsons Horse-Loade of Letters*, *A Flying Post*, and Gervase Markham's 1618 collection, *Conceyted Letters, Newly Layde Open*: see *The Art of Letter Writing*. London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1942. 25-27.

<sup>83</sup>For further discussion of *The Kings Cabinet Opened*, see Jagodzinski 78-86.

individuality which appear to fragment culture into its component subjects. Yet the apparent validation of this individuated social plane comes through public exposure. To return to Goulemot's analysis of epistolary fiction, when an epistolary narrative is played out before a reader its performance of privacy, of "truth", authenticates it.

Even when a letter-writer lies in order to deceive the recipient, the reader knows where the truth lies. He is not deceived; at worst he is an accomplice. Reading places him in the position of the voyeur who glimpses the most intimate of secrets. The reader, who violates the sanctity of private space, always knows more than the protagonists who reveal themselves in their letters.

(Goulemot 387)

In the popularity of Breton and his successors, including the rising tide of "real" correspondence published during the seventeenth century, Goulemot's paradoxical assertion that "the secrecy of private space produces its effect only by ceasing to be secret" (387) is demonstrably supported. The letter, increasingly the totem object of a developing but fluid concept of private individualism, traverses the border between private and public realms of activity. And as the currency of privacy increases, so is its value sustained by a public performance of its authenticity through the letter.

This is nowhere more apparent in Philips's correspondence than in the text annexed to her letter to Cotterell of 29 January 1664.<sup>84</sup> In January 1664 a compilation of poems by Philips was published in London, apparently without her sanction. The publication of the poems

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<sup>84</sup>See Appendices 18 and 19.

came at a point in Philips's career when her profile as a playwright and poet was growing at court.<sup>85</sup> The poems would later make up the collection that would secure Philips's posthumous reputation as a poet. At the time of this initial publication, however, the meticulous care Philips had taken to portray herself as the artless and reluctant woman writer was threatened by the apparently opportunistic release of this edition. The letter is a response to letters from Cotterell and another associate informing her of the collection's publication. In it, Philips thanks Cotterell for the "generous and friendly Concern you take in the unfortunate Accident of the unworthy publishing of my foolish Rhymes, that I know not which way to express, much less to deserve the least part of so noble an Obligation" (Thomas, *Letters* 125). Concerned that the publication would be blamed on her, Philips is extremely careful to distance herself from the "unfortunate Accident" to Cotterell, expressing her dismay in terms that absorb all the blame whilst never admitting responsibility: "I can blame nothing but my own Folly and Idleness for having expos'd me to this Unhappiness" (Thomas, *Letters* 125-26). Yet the injury to her reputation posed by such a mishap extends beyond her relationship with Cotterell, important as that is. As Elizabeth Hageman observes, according "to the ethic of Philips's age, *any* talk about a woman is by definition scandalous" (579. Original emphasis.). Yet at the moment of her greatest apparent vulnerability, Philips makes a request of Cotterell that harnesses the potency of the epistolary format in her defence. At Cotterell's suggestion, Philips agrees to come to London to secure her reputation and supervise the publication of an authorised collection. The letter of the 29th is in part a

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<sup>85</sup>In the analysis of Philips's correspondence with Cotterell that is to follow, I will detail the development of her writing career through her letters.

notice to Cotterell of her coming. As part of the letter, Philips encloses another letter which she describes as "my true Thoughts on that Occasion [the publication] in Prose, and have mix'd nothing else with it" (Thomas, *Letters* 125). Referring to this attached letter, Philips advises Cotterell that "you may, if you please, shew it to any body that suspects my Ignorance and Innocence in that false Edition of my Verses" arguing that "I believe it will make a greater Impression on them, than if it were written in Rhyme" (Thomas, *Letters* 125). The attached letter is a lengthy defense, notionally addressed to Cotterell, in which Philips pleads her innocence to "*that wretched Artiface of a secret consent (of which I am, I fear, suspected)*" (Thomas, *Letters* 129. Original emphasis.).<sup>86</sup> The enclosed letter is an attempt to appeal to a particular set of reading practices amongst the class group with whom she sought to identify. The letters to Berenice and to Cotterell engage Philips in a correspondence codified by rhetoric and courtesy conventions that seeks to elicit specific responses through the deployment of specific cultural tropes. The enclosed letter of January 1664 acts as a kind of "open letter" to the social elite in which the "private" gestures of her personal correspondences are performed for a more general audience. As the personal letters seek to build and maintain intimate friendships, this letter seeks to perform the same function with an entire social group. I want to focus on the symbolic impact of this letter.

An indication of the effect Philips may have sought from this letter is found in its incorporation, alongside the eulogising verses of her admirers, into the prefatory pages of the sanctioned collection of poems published after her death. Drawing on the letter's status as a

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<sup>86</sup>This whole letter is reproduced by Thomas in italics. I have followed this practice in quotations from it and in my reproduction of the letter in the Appendices.

repository for the "private" self, the enclosed text deploys epistolary tropes to establish it as a personal, private document. The implication in the description of the enclosed letter as her "true Thoughts" is supported by its being addressed to Cotterell despite her request that it be shown "to any body that suspects my Innocence". The enclosed letter is composed with an eye to the latent voyeurism that Guillén describes and its performance of privacy is sustained by the fiction of its apparently exclusive address to Cotterell. Further to that, the letter uses, as does all her correspondence, the pastoral names Philips gave to her friends. The performance of intimacy provided by these registers of private conversation lends authority to Philips's defence and allows her the opportunity to justify her position without making an explicitly public announcement. As such, when Philips, in the course of this "private" letter, makes reference to Cotterell's assistance in withdrawing the poems, she is careful to emphasise the long-standing and affectionate relationship between them:

*Your last generous concern for me, in vindicating me from the unworthy usage I have received at London from the Press, doth as much transcend all your former favours, as the injury done me by that Publisher and Printer exceeds all the troubles that I remember I ever had.*

(Thomas, *Letters* 128)

Every opportunity is taken to emphasise such connections in an effort to demonstrate both the presence and constancy of her influential friends. The fiction of privacy is explicitly played out in the letter when Philips rails against the publication of the poems as a personal invasion.

Claiming the publication has forced her into public view, Philips stresses her preference for seclusion and passivity: "*But is there no retreat from the malice of this World? 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*" (Thomas, *Letters* 128). The description of her elevation to published writer renders the experience as psychologically harmful, but implicitly locates some of the harm in the fact that her poems are now available to those who cannot appreciate them:

*'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 [...] to be the sport of some that can, and some that cannot read a Verse.*

(Thomas, *Letters* 129)

Indeed, the self-censuring passages that make up most of the letter go perhaps as far towards promoting Philips's ambitions as a writer as they do in defending the unfortunate publication of the edition in question.

When describing how her poems may have spread from coterie circle to printer's press, Philips deploys a cluster of self-effacing images of herself as a modest, rural woman thrust towards notoriety by the will of her friends. Importantly, she does not express regret at writing the poems, merely their release. In fact, whilst Philips concedes her writing has brought her trouble on this occasion, she does not indicate a desire to stop, or even an ability to stop:

*The truth is, I have an incorrigible inclination for that folly of riming, and intending the effects of that humour, only for my own amusement in a retir'd life; I did not so much resist it as a wiser woman would have done; but some of my dearest friends having found my Ballads, (for they deserve no better name) they made me so much believe they did not dislike them, that I was betray'd to permit some Copies for their divertisement [.]*

(Thomas, *Letters* 130)

For all her expressions of regret, the letter is an aggressive attempt to counter any public perceptions that she engaged in "*employment so far above my reach, and unfit for my Sex*" (Thomas, *Letters* 130) and instead effectively defends both the practice and quality of her writing. Towards the end of the letter, Philips finds a last cause for regret in the fact that the poems in the collection were not checked for errors before they were published. Whilst a large part of her concern is for those friends of hers mentioned in the poems who have had "*their Names expos'd in this impression without their leave*" (Thomas, *Letters* 130), Philips also expresses concern over the apparent integrity of the poems as legitimate literary works:

*some infernal Spirits or other have catch'd those rags of Paper, and what the careless blotted writing kept them from understanding, they have supplied by conjecture, till they put them into the shape wherein you saw them, or else I know not which way it is possible for*

*them to be collected, or so abominably  
transcrib'd as I hear they are*

(Thomas, *Letters* 130)

Amongst the deferential and apologetic rhetoric of the letter Philips insinuates a defence of her writing's legitimacy. Whilst the letter professes dismay and embarrassment in its attempts to disassociate itself from the *publication* of the poems, it never distances itself from the act of writing.

This letter is designed to be a public document but by representing it as a private letter Philips is able to preserve her reputation for modesty whilst defending her writing. The imprimatur of private discourse lends an artlessness and a legitimacy to her remarks. The power of privacy, in this sense, is its apparent affiliation with the "real" person. The letter's ability to convey "true Thoughts" (Thomas, *Letters* 125) figures the power of writing to embody subjectivity. Certeau's argument that writing "has power over the exteriority from which it has first been isolated" (*The Practice of Everyday Life* 134) indicates a capacity for self-production, for the construction of meanings on individual terms. For the letter, the capacity to represent the self enables the text to manifest presence and to project one's influence through time and space. Yet Philips's manipulation of the representational power of writing demonstrates her awareness of the necessity for that writing to accord with prevailing cultural norms. Structuring the letter as a private document allows her to enumerate the legitimating qualities she claims to possess, from modesty to the friendship of prominent people, and which signal her affiliation with and commitment to the social order these qualities support. Where the publication of her poems poses a threat to her

social standing, the letter mounts a defence of her writing, if not this particular publication, but surrounds it with ritualised gestures which signal Philips's apparent cultural acquiescence. This writing seeks to produce only one meaning. In effect, Philips reverses the direction in which the power of writing flows through a "re-employment" of writing practices: "The different functioning of formally identical elements points to the fact that they are actually being 're-employed' (reappropriated, resituated, redefined) in terms of another organizing system" (Ahearne, *Michel de Certeau* 29). Certeau argues that reading is structured so that only elite groups are endowed with the capacity to discern the "real" meanings of texts and these meanings are then authorised and distributed to the populace as "truth" (*The Practice of Everyday Life* 171). Such a "univocal" reading establishes the text as "an efficacious means for social control" (Ahearne, *Michel de Certeau* 168). Philips's letter inverts this model and produces a univocal text that appeals to its readers' sense of their own legitimacy and Philips's cultural precariousness. The liberatory, destabilising possibilities of reading are expressly closed off in order to reinforce the authority of Philips's readership and, in the process, provide the sense of class superiority necessary to "forgive" the "unfortunate accident" of publication. Philips's careful maintenance of her relationship with her correspondents, particularly Cotterell, constitutes a series of attempts to re-employ writing in order to make use of the social norms that notionally circumscribe her.

## "Send me word what the Town and Court say": Katherine Philips's Letters and Longing.

Philips's relationship with Charles's court germinated in her support for the royalist cause during the Interregnum. Part of the "Orinda" narrative underwriting Philips's posthumous celebrity was the "Society of Friendship", a coterie group within which her poetry first circulated and consisting of some notable royalist personalities of the period.<sup>87</sup> Patrick Thomas records that in the early years of Philips's marriage she became involved with "the group of cavalier writers and musicians" surrounding Henry Lawes and had a poem included in the commendatory introduction to the 1651 publication of William Cartwright's *Comedies, Tragicomedies, with other Poems* (Poems 6). The attachment to this circle in London continued after Philips's moved to Wales, and was augmented by relationships developed amongst the rural gentry there (Thomas, *Poems* 13).

With the restoration of the monarchy in 1660, Philips's political and literary proclivities, and the friends who shared these views, were now supported by the new regime: "the royalist coteries which, after years of keeping a low profile [...] found themselves at the centre of court culture" (Thomas, *Poems* 15). David Smith argues that Charles's court, as distinct from the cool aloofness of his father, was "an open and easy-going environment [...] functioning effectively as a political 'point of contact' in which different views could find a hearing" (241).<sup>88</sup> Philips's association with the court, and the royal

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<sup>87</sup>The formation, operation, and even existence of this "society" has been the subject of debate over the past century. Patrick Thomas's "Biographical Note" to the first volume of Philips's collected works provides a brief outline of the genealogy of the critical perception of this group, concluding that it did exist, though perhaps not in the excessively formal or solemn terms asserted by some (Thomas, *Poems* 10-11).

<sup>88</sup>Smith also observes that the court's casualness was reflected in its availability to the public (242), an issue Liza Picard elaborates on in her discussion of the court's place in

favour it could bring, was mediated through her relationship with Charles Cotterell, whose position as Master of Ceremonies placed him at the active centre of Philips's cultural map. Philips's relationship with Cotterell seems to have been already established by the time the first letter in the extant sequence was composed in December 1661.<sup>89</sup> Souers claims that the relationship began "probably about the time of the Restoration" (111). Thomas, however, argues that the relationship may have developed through their mutual friend Anne Owen, whom Philips hoped would marry Cotterell, but may have "dated back to the flight of certain members of Orinda's coterie to Antwerp in 1650" (*Poems* 16). In any case, Cotterell's position at court and his apparent generosity towards Philips provided her with a regular and influential correspondent at the centre of Restoration culture. Souers's observation that the friendship "ripened at once into intimacy" with Cotterell becoming Philips's "*arbiter elegantiarum*" (111) is something I want to return to. The rhetoric of Philips's letters anxiously seeks to maintain the relationship but underpinning this fastidious nurturing of the correspondence is the element of distance, the element that necessitates the use of letters in the first instance. Yet whilst the correspondence with Cotterell constitutes the majority of the extant epistolary material surrounding Philips, the other letters dealt with in this examination, to Dorothy Temple and "Berenice", similarly demonstrate a mediation of desire through the techniques of the letter. These techniques are designed to establish, maintain and deepen relationships between the (geographically and, to an extent, culturally) isolated and anxious

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the everyday life of the restoration capital: see Liza Picard, *Restoration London*. London: Weidenfield & Nicolson, 1997. 213-14.

<sup>89</sup>Patrick Thomas elaborates the background to the relationship between Cotterell and Philips in some detail in an Appendix to his edition of Philips's letters: See "Appendix 4: Sir Charles Cotterell and Katherine Philips" Thomas, *Letters* 157-95.

Philips and members of the gentry, the court and the sanction that their association brings to her and her work.

The rhetorical cross-pollination of the letter in the early modern period accompanies a reorganisation of the terms on which the letter is perceived to operate. Just as the rhetorical component of letter-writing varies according to context, so the purpose of the correspondence and its intended audience changes as well. More precisely, the letter comes to act, in certain circumstances, as a register of "privacy" in terms of the substance and the relationship initiated by the letter. For Certeau, this act of individuation, of separation, is the first feature of writing as a strategic practice. The blank page is where writing begins, it is here that the text and its meanings are inscribed. Here there is a "withdrawal and the distance of a subject in relation to an area of activities" which enables the separation of the world into subject and object (Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* 134). This withdrawal places the individual in the "position of having to manage a space that is his own and distinct from all others and in which he can exercise his own will" (Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* 134). The letter represents the literalising of identity in a written text and this identity is codified by epistolary and courtesy theory just as the body of the subject is caught in the "nets of 'discipline'" (Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* xiv-xv) structuring the culture as a whole. In epistolary practice, the formal, rhetorical mode of medieval epistolers is diluted by the personal imperatives of Cicero's familiar letters, the result being a mutable epistolary practice that specifically understands itself to be engaged in an ongoing attempt to mitigate the (meta/physical) distance between correspondents.

The familiar letter proceeds from an understanding of the relationship between the correspondents to whom it addresses itself. Such a relationship is founded on a specific arrangement of writing and reading practices structured around the absence that the letter attempts to ameliorate. Day's *The English Secretary* asserts of the letter that it "is that wherein is expreslye conceived in writing, the intent and meaning of one man, immediatly to passe and be directed to an other, and for the certaine respects thereof, is termed the messenger and *familiar speche of the absent*" (1. My emphasis.). David Bergeron argues that the "familiar letter" embraces transgressions of rank and expressions of desire within its ambit, reflecting the heterogeneity and subtlety of the early modern concept of what a "familiar" acquaintance meant (Bergeron 9).<sup>90</sup> As such, the "familiar speche" of Day's definition implies a more intimate relationship than that of formal, oratical letters. Indeed in *Epistolae Ho-Eliaanae*, James Howell reads the genealogy of letter-writing as sanctioning an express delineation between epistolary and oratorical production: "It was a quaint Difference the Ancients did put 'twixt a *Letter* and an *Oration*; that the one should be attired like a Woman, the other like a Man" (17). I will address the feminised characterisation of letter-writing shortly, but it is worth pursuing the early modern understanding of the (familiar) letter further. Indeed, Howell re-asserts the relative intimacy of the letter

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<sup>90</sup>Bergeron's brief discussion of the early modern idea of "familiarity" derives in the main from Daryl Palmer's article, "Edward IV's Secret Familiarities and the Politics of Proximity in Elizabethan History Plays.", which observes of "familiarity": "Frequently less than alliance but more than mere recognition, implying but not guaranteeing favor, familiarity existed as one of the subtlest configurations of authority in English history and contemporary Tudor politics" (287). Further, the term "captures simultaneously transgressions of rank and expressions of homoerotic attachment" (287). Whilst certain elements of this definition are not relevant to my enquiry, the ambiguity of the familiar relationship, particularly its ability to work across differences of rank and class, is pertinent. See Daryl Palmer, "Edward IV's Secret Familiarities and the Politics of Proximity in Elizabethan History Plays." *ELH* 61.2 (1994): 279-315.

genre when he charges, "There are some, who in lieu of *Letters*, write *Homilies*; they preach, when they should epistolize" (18). The letter in this mode reflects the amorphous (transgressive) intimacy of familiarity:

Immediacy is mediated, and the letter stands in the place of the face-to-face communication of the messenger, writing structured as the familiarity of speech. One man and another function as bordering absences that meet in the letter.

(Goldberg, *Writing Matter* 251)

So it is that Whigham describes the function of "the letter of *negotium*" to "create a community of author and addressee in pursuit of a specific and local goal" (865). The letter from suitor to patron, although mediated through an epistolary rhetoric of rank and supplication, nevertheless "seeks to bridge the gap between two particular persons and form their community" (Whigham 866). The letter literalises a potential meeting of the correspondents and brings them into a proximity of time and space applicable to them alone, regardless of the wider significance of its contents: "the letters may be intelligible to other readers, but each text is addressed to a particular individual at a particular time" (Whigham, "Rhetoric" 865). The letter is available to public view but establishes a private exchange by virtue of its intentionality, an intentionality that exists on the part of both writer and reader. Writing seeks to manifest presence and control the perception of the self, but reading has to be complicit in this endeavour if it is to succeed. As Certeau argues, reading's uncontrollable drift across the page and propensity for revealing unforeseen associations, wordplays, and tangential meanings gives it "all the characteristics of a

silent production" (*The Practice of Everyday Life* xxi). For the letter's strategies of presence, persuasion, and flattery to have any effect, the reader must be conditioned to accept and respond to certain 'literal' meanings and to ignore, or miss altogether, other, unsettling messages.

The interplay of absence and presence in the letter form underwrites the desires of Philips's letters. In his analysis of the dynamics of the form, Goldberg reiterates this imbrication of (meta)physical proximities extrapolating from Fulwood's assertion in *The Enemy of Idleness* that a letter is "nothing else, but a declaration, by Writing of the mindes of such as bee absent, one of whom to another, even as though they were present" (qtd. in Goldberg, *Writing Matter* 249):

The space of the letter is determined here [...] by structures of absence: the physical absence of writer and receiver from each other, replaced by the presence of the letter to reconstruct that physical space; the absence of the writer, substituted for by the letter (alphabetic marks as well as the epistle); the absence of the receiver, constituted by the marks that are received; the absence of interiority (the mind), recreated (an original simulation) in the space of the letter. The letter thereby is also a mode of presence [...] a fiction of presence that is constituted solely on the basis of absence.

(Goldberg, *Writing Matter* 249)

This mutual complicity in the recreative capacity of the letter, the affirmation of a writing and its specific readings, constitutes the strategic objective of epistolary practices. The implicit (cultural) understanding

between correspondents of the imbrication of absence and presence, their representation and reception through language, underwrite the letter's efficacy. Goldberg argues that the letter's structures are those of the individuals they purport to represent, and vice versa: "Letters, which cover distance, also function in the gap that divides any moment, and their space and modes of presence are how presence is constituted" (*Writing Matter* 250).<sup>91</sup> As such, the definitions outlined in the early modern epistolary manuals, such as Fulwood and Day, construe the letter as a *literal* production of its composer. Both the writer and the letter are made of language. This re-construction of presence, or, more properly, the traversal of presence across physical distance in the letter, surfaces in Philips's letters as an anxiety about distance, separation, silence, and the vulnerability of the post and, by extension, the fragments of self dependant on it.

The space of the letter is a space of self-creation, one that has become increasingly associated with the divulging of a "private", "essential", "true" identity. Goldberg argues that in the early modern period the continued pervasiveness of rhetorical modes of expression, and the prescriptive didacticism of the epistolary theory transmitting this rhetoric, convokes a textual reality in which the writer's identity is produced:

Meaning, familiarity, intention, and the like--all that would constitute presence--are constructed in the letter along rhetorical lines, inscribing the social rhetoric that also writes the domain of presence as

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<sup>91</sup>Goldberg's argument here is indebted to Jacques Derrida's "Signature Event Context." *Margins of Philosophy*. Trans. Alan Bass. Sussex: Harvester, 1982. 307-30. See Jonathan Goldberg, *Writing Matters: From the Hands of the English Renaissance*. Stanford: Stanford UP, 1990. 249 (Goldberg's page numbers for Derrida's text refer to the American edition).

and in the letter. Writing begins with the awareness of the person, not as an individual but rather as a social category.

(*Writing Matter* 252)

The discourses of privacy and identity as disclosed through letters are constructed with and by writing. The individual subject, created by the collapse of master narratives, writes him/herself: "Being is measured by doing" (Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* 137). Just as the format and size of the address figured the social relation between correspondents, so elsewhere does the letter reflect and construct a textualised experience of reality. Implicit in such self-construction is the receptivity of others to the authority of the written self. In fact, the legitimacy of such writing is dependant on readers approaching the work with a specific, corroborative demeanour. Certeau observes that writing is fundamentally vulnerable to the readings conducted on it. Indeed, the text can arguably be said not to exist until it is read; a proposition that undermines attempts to locate all legitimate meaning "in the text" prior to its reading.

[A text] becomes a text only in its relation to the exteriority of the reader, by an interplay of implications and ruses between two sorts of 'expectation' in combination: the expectation that organizes a *readable* space (a literality), and one that organizes a procedure necessary for the *actualization* of the work (a reading).

(Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* 170-71.

Original emphasis.)

This precarious perspective of the text emphasises the effort put into securing meaning on behalf of strategic cultural interests. Ahearne observes that the literal meanings and socio-economic factors that pervade texts also influence readers, meaning there "is no such thing as an unproblematically free or wild reading" (*Michel de Certeau* 169). Even so, the reader is still the repository of an indefinite number of interpretations, sanctioned and resistant, making the codification of reading strategically desirable.

The apparent correlation between the letter and (an "authentic") reality, supported by prevailing epistolary discourses, nourished the explosion in popularity of epistolary literature from the early modern period onwards.<sup>92</sup> When David Bergeron asserts that "as an aggregate, epistles body forth something resembling a gospel about individual persons" (3), Claudio Guillén's observations on the corresponding link between epistles and fiction underline the variegated qualities of the letter:

The author of a real letter may be mirroring and shaping through the written word a particular version of himself, a particular moment of an interpersonal relationship, a particular aspect of his future--and of his correspondent's. This coefficient of creativity and imagination is like an élan that the fictional letter needs only to extend and multiply [...]  
But, in order to achieve this effect, the fictional letter

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<sup>92</sup>See Rosemary Huisman's observation of the "privatization" of handwriting during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and its "authenticating" (129): see Rosemary Huisman, *The Written Poem: Semiotic Conventions from Old to Modern English*. London: Cassell, 1998. Also above, Chapters 1 & 2.

pretends that it is not fiction and thus imitates the conventions of ordinary correspondence.

(85)

But taking this capacity for (self) production a further step backwards, Goldberg's analysis suggests that this ordinary "real" letter is itself a fabrication of the rhetorical proprieties that structure not just the letter, but the socio-cultural discourses of the early modern period. The fiction of presence that accompanies the letter forms part of a wider, discursive culture.

[T]he fictions defined by the generic classifications that embrace the social domain [...] and by the kinds of epistles, which write occasions and persons according to their dictates and frame them within the highly coded openings and closings (in which, to this day, one registers familiarity with 'dear' and signs oneself 'sincerely yours', 'yours truly').

*(Writing Matter 254)*

The fictions sustaining the self, and proliferated through literacy, are reinscribed in the letter as a forum for the mediation and continuation of social discourses. But it also acts as a forum for the modification of those discourses through the manipulation of rhetorical models in order to make a new self, the self that advances upwards through class barriers and remakes itself through writing. The self that can recognise the connection between self-presentation, rhetorical dexterity, and the receptivity of certain (influential) readers. The interpretation of this writing is a negotiation between the prescriptions of rhetoric and the hermeneutics of reading.

Katherine Philips's sense of isolation, both geographical and cultural, is central to her epistolary method. Situating Philips on the map of early modern England figures the journeys of her correspondence and the larger journey of her life. In a strict sense, Philips does not exist on a map of England at all other than as a sense of longing focused on the metropolis of London. Of the fifty-four letters at the centre of this discussion, approximately fifty are written from locations in Wales or Ireland, and all of them travel towards the capital. The letter is founded in absence and works to mediate the longing caused by that absence through the separation and re-constitution of the self in writing; a textual embodiment of the individual's "power over the exteriority from which it has first been isolated" (Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* 134). Metaphysical absence is reflected in the substantial material difficulties experienced by correspondents, including Philips, in the early modern period. Frank Whigham makes the point that the increase in literacy not only promoted an awareness of the existence of places and experiences apart from those of the reader, it enabled the creation of relationships that could be maintained at a distance (867). Yet this increase in "vicarious experience" (Whigham 867) was itself dependent on the material and social conditions in which correspondence was forced to operate. The centralisation of English society around London forced a national focus on the capital that extended from issues of trade and commerce to the more nebulous economies of favour and prestige within which those who sought advancement at court worked. The conditions of travel within England, whether it be of people or their mail, were determined not just by the condition of the road system, described by Joan Parkes as "deplorable in the extreme" (6), but the efficiency of the modes of travel

and/or delivery conducted along it. The postal system, established in a recognisable form during the sixteenth century, relied on the positioning of regular "posts" along the route at which horses could be changed and the journey continued expeditiously. Until its systematic reorganisation during the mid-seventeenth century, the postal system operated inconsistently, with the "speed of the post [...] usually less than the five-to-seven miles an hour required by the official directions" (Robinson, *The British Post Office* 21-22).

The system, until 1635, was limited to the four great roads of the kingdom, and was, moreover, of such an intermittent and shifting character, owing to the exigencies of public affairs and the movements of the Court whence the service issued, that, for many years, no considerable advantage can have been derived from it either by the public, by the postmasters whose salary was increased by the receipts from horse-hire, or by the guardians of law and order.

(Parkes 52)

The vagaries of the post contributed to what Whigham describes as an "amplified [...] sense of separation" (867) for those isolated by distance and experience from the cultural intensity of the metropolis.<sup>93</sup>

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<sup>93</sup> The systemisation of the Post throughout the seventeenth century, although codifying a set of practices and establishing set routes and modes of operation, was still forced to contend with the deficiencies of technology and the contingencies of distance and political disruption endemic to the times. The operation of the postal system in the early modern period, however, is too large an issue to canvas here with any credibility. Howard Robinson's texts, whilst not commenting on the broader cultural effects of the post to any great extent, provide a methodical and detailed examination of the Post's mechanics and its evolution over time and through several regimes: See *The British Post Office: A History*. Princeton: Princeton UP, 1948.; *Britain's Post Office*. London: Oxford UP, 1953.; see also Brian Austen, *English Provincial Posts 1633-1840: A Study Based on Kent Examples*. London: Phillimore, 1978.

For those who sought advancement at court, absence provoked varying degrees of anxiety. Whigham contends that under "Tudor absolutism" a sense of "relational hiatus" was fostered by the dynamics of authority accompanying the figure of the monarch which required persistent attendance in his presence from those seeking to maintain favour at court:

The absent feared at the least a loss, however temporary, of status and influence. To those who were ambitious for courtly fruits, physical isolation from court came to signify 'nowhere' (the reverse of *eutopia*)--nonexistence and insignificance.

(Whigham, "Rhetoric" 867)

The intervening political and cultural changes between the Tudors and the Restoration altered the nature of the monarchy and how it exercised power. Indeed, the changes wrought in the administrative and legal arms of government after 1660 meant a fundamental reconsideration of the nature of monarchical power within English culture:

The abolition of feudal tenures and the sale of nearly all crown lands transformed the nature of the monarchy's power. It was no longer, in the medieval tradition, based on land, on personal relations between King and his rich subjects, or on the crown's ability to inflict economic harm. The court in the sense of the royal household was ceasing to be the centre of real power. Royal patronage henceforth was exercised almost solely through appointment to state offices.

(Hill *The Century of Revolution* 192)

Yet even with the diminishment of hard economic power, the cultural influence of the court remained important to those seeking the imprimatur of royal patronage. In this sense isolation from court remained a source of anxiety. And it is in the context of such anxiety that we read (the absent) Katherine Philips when she writes to her correspondent Sir Charles Cotterell, Master of Ceremonies to Charles II:

*I hope you will use your Endeavours to facilitate my coming to London if you continue in the same Mind that you have often so kindly express'd to me in your Letters [...] I confess I desire with great Earnestness to see you once more, but that Happiness must be procur'd me by your Management and Conduct, or not at all.*

(Thomas, *Letters* 99. Original emphasis.)

Comments such as these reveal the implicit threat to all letters in the early modern period. The capacity of writing to manifest presence at a distance is constantly threatened by the erratic network entrusted to deliver it. For someone like Philips, the fragility of the post endangered her efforts at social mobility; for whilst the delivered letter brought her to the centre of the Restoration court, a lost or inordinately delayed letter, and its accompanying absence, could be read just as legitimately as neglect, incivility, or contempt.

Philips's letters aim to reproduce in the socio-cultural sphere the movement they undertake in the material world. The often hazardous journeys of the letters from the hinterlands of Wales and Ireland towards the centre--London, Cotterell, the court, the royal personages--are emblematic of the journey Philips herself longs to take, not just geographically but culturally. Letters (in a linguistic and

epistolary sense) are the units of exchange in an economy of movement, desire and perception, all of which operates within a rhetorical sphere where reading and writing, indeed the very construction of interpretation, are the indices of value. Philips's letters are not just concerned with what they say and how they say it, they are also concerned with how they are read. In the spaces of desire, the interplay of absence and presence within the letters' exchange, everything--letters, distances, silences--is legible. This economy seeks to create a field of potential meanings which suggests certain possibilities over others, producing reading as a province of composition, a "silent production" (Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* xxi) and delivering Philips's letters--and, by extension, Philips herself--to the centre of culture in the period.

The letters to Berenice demonstrate Philips's perpetual concern to maintain the continuity of her correspondence. The first letter, dated 25 June 1658, begins with a series of formal thanks for favours done for James Philips but at the same time apologises for the inadequacy of the thanks, Philips blaming illness for her being unable to "enlarge" her acknowledgments. Immediately following this apology comes a further qualification of the conduct of the two women's correspondence regarding an element which is similarly beyond Philips's control:

I could be sensible of a very great Kindness and Condescension in thinking me worthy of your Concern, though I visibly perceive most of my Letters have lost their way to your Ladiship. I beseech you be pleased, first, to believe I have written every Post[.]

(Thomas, *Letters 2*)

Philips's anxiety is further developed when, after a short passage in which Berenice is again thanked for personal favours, Philips declares:

And now (Madam) why was that a cruel Question, When will you come to *Wales*? 'Tis cruel to me, I confess, that it is yet in question, but I humbly beg your Ladiship to unriddle that part of your Letter, for I cannot understand why you, Madam [...] should create an Awe upon your own Actions, from imaginary Inconveniences [.]

(Thomas, *Letters 3*. Original emphasis.)

Berenice's apparent failure to declare her intent to come to Wales is construed by Philips as a submission to "*Vulgar Opinion*" (Thomas, *Letters 4*. Original emphasis.) and declares "it were equally ridiculous and impossible to shape our Actions by others *Opinions*" (Thomas, *Letters 3*. Original emphasis.). Philips attempts to convince Berenice of the necessity to deal with adverse opinion as she finds it, but urges her not to let that stand in the way of declaring her intentions: "give Sentence as you see cause; and in that interim put me not off (Dear Madam) with those Chymera's, but tell me plainly what inconvenience is it to come?" (Thomas, *Letters 4*). If her reason is "in earnest" (Thomas, *Letters 4*), Philips will submit to it, but the opinion of others is

not sufficient and, in any case, "the severest could find nothing in this Journey that they could condemn, but your excess of Charity to me" (Thomas, *Letters* 4). The letter ends with Philips lauding Berenice's charity, why Philips does not deserve it, and, remarking on Berenice's asking for their correspondence to continue, Philips remarks "and [I] should beg frequent Letters from your Ladiship with all possible importunity" (Thomas, *Letters* 4).

This first letter is emblematic of the Philips/Berenice correspondence in the way its formalised, cajoling tenor oscillates with a stylised, but forceful anxiety regarding Philips's isolation not just from her correspondent, but from her favour. The impulse that pleases, "When will you come to *Wales*?", that fear of distance and silence, reiterates itself throughout the correspondence. The first line of the second letter, dated 2 November 1658, repeats these concerns: "I have been so long silent, that I profess I am now asham'd almost to beg your Pardon, and were not confidence in your Ladiship's Goodness a greater respect than the best address in the World, I should scarce believe myself capable of remission" (Thomas, *Letters* 6).<sup>94</sup> And again, on 30 December 1658, Philips opens with a fear of communicative exile even whilst she appears to be writing from London:

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<sup>94</sup>See Appendix 2.

I must confess my self extreamly troubled, to miss a Letter from your Ladiship in a whole Fortnight, but I must beg you to believe your silence did not occasion mine; for my Ambition to converse with you, and advantage in being allow'd it, is too great for me to decline any opportunity which I can improve to obtain so much happiness [.]

(Thomas, *Letters* 7)

Following through on these sentiments, Philips asserts she has so much to tell Berenice that if she cannot do so in person she will be the victim of cruelty:

but you will come, and if you find anything in this Letter that seems to question it, impute it to the continual distrust of my own merit, which will not permit me easily to believe my self favoured: *Dear Madam*, if you think me too timerous, confute me by the welcome Experiment of your Company, which really I perpetually long for

(Thomas, *Letters* 8-9. Original emphasis.)

To follow the Berenice letters through to their conclusion is to ascend a chain of metaphors that attempt to figure Philips's concerns with physical absence from her correspondent. Goldberg's assertion that the letter brings together the "bordering absences" of the correspondents (*Writing Matter* 251) is realised in Philips's attention to the fact of separation and how the letter attempts to traverse it. This metaphoric pyramid reaches its apex in the final letter in which the letter texts are imagined as extensions of the correspondents's bodies, specifically their mouths, and the organ of speech delivers not just words but physical

greetings: " I have ventured Papers to kiss your Ladship's Hand, since I received one from it" (Thomas, *Letters* 10). Absent bodies meet in the "simulative space of the letter" (Goldberg, *Writing Matter* 254). Philips's anxieties are manifested as the production of (physical, spatial) presence in the realm of writing. This realm casts their relationship along (rhetorical) lines of social hierarchisation and imagines their disparity, realised spatially, in terms of supplicant and mistress: "I must beg your Ladship to find some occasion that may bring you to *London*, where I may cast myself at your Feet, both in repentance for my own Faults, and acknowledgment of your Goodness" (Thomas, *Letters* 11).

The letters to Cotterell, written some 2 years later, display a similar anxiety on Philips's part over her separation from her correspondent, but have a much less overwrought style. Souers claims that the letters to Berenice are of little interest to scholars because they are "pervaded with a formality that stifles the imagination" and give "no life to the friendship that they commemorate" (242). Indeed, Souers argues that "[a]fter the letters to Poliarchus, they are too affected to be very pleasing" and are quite unlike "the other productions of the free and ingenuous Orinda" (242). Whilst I will later deal more specifically with the stylistic and rhetorical aspects to Philips's letters, I want to continue my examination of her metaphors of distance and absence by reading the letters to "Poliarchus" which please Souers so much.

From the first letter in the sequence, Philips writing to Cotterell from the relative proximity of Acton in December of 1661, her language seems to strain against the barrier of their separation as she attempts to send Cotterell information regarding Lucasia: "But this is an Affair fitter to be discours'd of at more freedom than this distance will allow" (Thomas, *Letters* 14). The distance between the correspondents is

a leitmotif of Philips's letters. This concern is articulated in the letters as a constant desire for the two to meet, expressions of frustration at the vagaries of the post, as well as remarks on the disadvantages of her location in comparison to Cotterell's presence in London, as in her letter from Dublin on 2 May 1663 as she is about to return to Wales: "But oh! I begin already to dread what will become of me, when I return home" (Thomas, *Letters* 85).

Philips's anxiety over their separation is best exemplified in the exasperated passages regarding the postal service between Wales, and to a lesser extent Ireland, and London. Philips's relationship with the post is played out within an overarching conceptual framework that sees the letters as fragments of presence, and so the rhetorical gestures alluding to presence are juxtaposed with anxiety over the failure of letters to arrive. In the letter of 18 March 1662, Philips writes to Cotterell with a mixture of self-deprecatory cleverness and expressions of concern over a death close to him. The letter is a combination of a metaphoric of presence and absence regarding the correspondents and a constant rhetorical deferral to Cotterell's superior social position. In the course of the letter, Philips defers to Cotterell's expressions of friendship by drawing attention to her absence from him through a witty expression of mock-surprise, presumably reminding Cotterell of the pleasures of her conversation: "But how, POLIARCHUS, can you be so infinitely good, as to tell me you miss my Company? Are you in need of the Mortifications you receiv'd by it?" (Thomas, *Letters* 22). The letter continues to focus on the separation of the correspondents and Philips sets her expressions of anxiety at Cotterell's silence around the arrival of the post:

This was our Post-day from LONDON, and I have Letters from several Hands, but none from you, which troubles me on a double account; first, for want of the Satisfaction it would have been to hear from you; and then for fear your Silence was occasion'd by the Disturbance you are in for the Loss of my Lady CORNBURY, whose Death here is much lamented.

(Thomas, *Letters* 23)<sup>95</sup>

This attempt to empathise with Cotterell's presumed distress ends the letter, Philips claiming she should "say no more" at this point "lest my Letters should be as troublesome to you as my personal Conversation, and discourage you from allowing me the Honour of your Correspondence, which I beg of you to believe shall ever be valu'd above all Expression" (Thomas, *Letters* 23). This final sentence recapitulates the letter's primary anxieties, the continuance of the correspondence and the desire for the correspondents to meet again. In this letter, Philips treads a delicate line between familiarity and deference; desiring Cotterell's presence, his words, and yet always clearly withdrawing from this desire as a submissive gesture to his position. The desire for presence, a presence vulnerable to the deficiencies of the postal system, repeats itself throughout the correspondence.<sup>96</sup>

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<sup>95</sup>See Appendix 5.

<sup>96</sup>Throughout the correspondence, Philips refers to the post, and its vagaries, from almost all the locations from which she writes. Writing from Dublin in April 1663, Philips notes that storms on the Irish Sea have held up the delivery of letters; "for 'tis the Unluckiness of this place never to have our Letters regularly from ENGLAND, for three Posts together" (Thomas, *Letters* 77). Elsewhere, the tone of her remarks underscores the frustrations of trying to maintain a correspondence over significant distances with the limited technology of the postal service at that time. For example, 30 July 1662, Dublin: "I received yours of the twelfth after I had written my last, which

In a series of letters beginning upon her return to Cardigan in September 1663, after more than a year in Ireland, Philips's anxiety with the post erupts in a sustained attack on its failures, appeals to Cotterell to both remedy it and to not hold her responsible for the "silences" in their correspondence brought about by it. The letter of 17 September 1663 opens with an uninterrupted barrage of complaint against the quality of the postal service to Wales and betrays something of its importance to Philips at this point in her life:

I take an Opportunity of writing to you by a private Hand, because the Post is so very unsafe, that I fear many of mine, and yours too, which are of ten times more Importance, have miscarry'd:

(Thomas, *Letters* 101)<sup>97</sup>

Immediately the letter is consumed by urgency with its admission that private couriers were needed and that "many" of their letters have perhaps been mislaid. This reference to the loss of Cotterell's mail, accompanied by a concession to its superiority, seeks to draw his self-interest into the issue and also establishes the "fact" that their correspondence is so regular that the failure of the post would necessarily, and significantly, interrupt their epistolary conversation. A litany of postal miscarriages follows her opening complaint in which she details how many of her neighbours have "been undone" by the "Uncertainty and Neglectfulness of the Post" (Thomas, *Letters* 101). In relating this, Philips hopes to enlist Cotterell's support in petitioning the Postmaster-General Daniel O'Neill, "till this Abuse be thoroughly reform'd" (Thomas, *Letters* 101). Indeed, Philips goes so far as to suggest

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will be with you before *Sunday* next" (Thomas, *Letters* 42).

<sup>97</sup>See Appendix 15.

that if Cotterell's personal interventions are not sufficient then he should "acquaint the Duke of YORK with it, who I am sure will not suffer us to be thus abus'd by his Officers, and whose Revenue suffers by it in the main" (Thomas, *Letters* 101). Requests and suggestions are carefully housed in the language of submission so that even the possibility of Cotterell's influence being insufficient is immediately qualified by the potency of his association with a member of the Royal family. The importance Philips places on restoring the postal system is evident in this letter with her complaints regarding it occupying approximately half the text (Thomas, *Letters* 101-02). In her arguments for an improvement in the postal system, Philips is careful to enumerate the greater social good to be achieved: "I must beg you to make so effectual a Complaint, as may not only produce a greater Conveniency and Ease to our Correspondence, but be likewise a Help to the whole Country" (Thomas, *Letters* 101). Yet at the completion of this exasperated outburst, Philips returns to personal concerns and the maintenance of her private correspondence: "Pardon this Trouble on account of the Earnest Desire I have of conversing with you with more certainty, while I am at such a distance from you, as will allow me no other way, which I yet hope will not be for long" (Thomas, *Letters* 101-02). For all the altruism of her earlier submissions, Philips's central concern is that Cotterell's letters should make it to Cardigan and hers should get to London.

These sentiments are supplemented in the next letter, of 25 September. Expressing her desire to come to London, she ends with the observation that "nothing makes me more covet that Happiness [of seeing Cotterell], than because it will enable me to assure you, without the Assistance of our Knavish Post, that I am eternally, &c. ORINDA"

(Thomas, *Letters* 105). And again, on October the 13th, Philips discharges another exasperated complaint:

I have since I came from IRELAND receiv'd from you in all but five Letters, and have written six times to you; and yet the *Trojan* [Philips's brother-in-law, Hector] tells me you have had but two, and are grown so stout that you will write no more [.]

(Thomas, *Letters* 108)<sup>98</sup>

The prospect of Cotterell's "stoutness" at her apparent neglect of him prompts Philips to retort, "But pray where's the Justice of revenging on me the villainous Neglects of the Post?" (Thomas, *Letters* 108). The link between the letters and the personal presence they represent is explicitly addressed when Philips, in consecutive sentences, charges Cotterell with the responsibility of improving the regularity of their correspondence and then "begs" him to follow it through for the sake of their friendship.

Get but that Grievance once redress'd, and you will have no reason to complain of my Silence. Let me beg of you to set about it in earnest; for since I am not like to see you till the Spring, it concerns me much to have the Post restor'd to its former certainty.

(Thomas, *Letters* 108)

Anxiety over the frailty of the postal system spills over in passages such as this. Philips's concern simmers beneath the surface of her letters and in periods of stress, such as a breakdown in communication beyond her control, expresses itself in flashes of frustrated anger.

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<sup>98</sup>See Appendix 16.

On 26 October Philips again writes to Cotterell in an attempt to placate him for the apparent affront of her silence:

Though the Post hath deliver'd you from severall importunitys of mine by his negligence, yet you cañot escape them, till you grow as angry with my writing, as you appear'd to be at my silence [.]

(Thomas, *Letters* 110)

There is a light-hearted feel to this letter as Philips plays with a deferential image, claiming she takes every opportunity to send Cotterell "such troubles as this" whilst waiting for the time when "I be restor'd to a power of doing it more by my company, which I wish more than ever I did any removall in my life, yt I may have the happiness of your most excellent conversation, which I sweare I think at once a Court & an Academy;" (Thomas, *Letters* 110). The analogy of her letters with "importunitys", a common comparison in this correspondence, is here lightly remade into a precocious advance in which the letter's presence is used to presage her own eager attendance on Cotterell in the near future. The comparison of Cotterell's conversation to a "Court & an Academy" combines her submissive relationship, that of subject and student, with the sociable and civil aspects of those two institutions. In such an image, Philips places herself in the spheres of influence she most desires to join via the medium of Cotterell and his (epistolary) converse.

Yet this letter is followed on 13 November by another letter that rather than toying with the idea of their separation, anxiously dwells on it:

Your Silence for a whole Month and more troubles me so much, that I know not what to say to you, nor

how to resolve whether this Misfortune be the Effect  
of your Unkindness, or the Injustice of the Post.

(Thomas, *Letters* 116)<sup>99</sup>

In this letter comes together the central concerns of Philips's letters to Cotterell: absence, silence, and cultural and geographical isolation. The fretful opening is followed by Philips's anxiously accounting for the last letter she received from Cotterell and assuring him that "[s]ince that, I have written several to you, both by Post and private Hands" (Thomas, *Letters* 116). She is, however, unable to say whether any of these attempts have been successful. This doubt leads her to speculate on whether her letters have become over-familiar or disrespectful towards Cotterell: "Sometimes I am melancholy enough to fancy that I gave you too much trouble about our private Affairs, and us'd you with too much Familiarity for you to pardon; and that from hence proceeds this your unusual Silence" (Thomas, *Letters* 116). If this is the case, Philips's assures Cotterell that she has "suffer'd enough by this dumb way of Punishment" (Thomas, *Letters* 116) and pleads with him to write to her, even if it is "to chide, rather than be silent any longer" (Thomas, *Letters* 116). The extent to which silence represents a kind of cultural death for Philips is graphically illustrated in her next passage:

To correspond with you is so great an Advantage to  
me, that I shall not part with it upon easie Terms;  
and therefore you must downright forbid my  
importuning you, before I can learn so much good  
Manners:

(Thomas, *Letters* 116)

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<sup>99</sup>See Appendix 17.

The "advantage" to Philips is in the enjoyment of Cotterell's correspondence, but more importantly it accrues to her a personal political advantage. The influence of a friend in Cotterell's position is clearly important to Philips, situated as she is in the provinces and married to a member of the Interregnum parliament. I will detail specific examples of Cotterell's assistance to the Philipses shortly, but this letter articulates the extreme personal importance of Philips's relationship to Cotterell. In language that echoes the witty phrases of the 26th of October, Philips's again places herself in a submissive relation to Cotterell by way of apology for any perceived wrongdoing.

Yet where the last letter playfully pictured Philips's letters as "troubles" for Cotterell, this letter places the burden of fault in the relationship squarely on Philips: "I still hope that POLIARCHUS has Friendship enough for ORINDA to hold out against all her Weaknesses; and that he would never have given her such convincing Proofs of his being her Friend, if he had not intended to continue so for ever" (Thomas, *Letters* 116). Whilst this sentence searches for an assured tone, it betrays a palpable nervousness. Again Philips's turns to the fallibility of the post, asking Cotterell whether there will be "any Redress in our Post-Grievance?" (Thomas, *Letters* 116) and whether he has seen some mutual friends in London, assuring her correspondent that she "shall hear again from you" (Thomas, *Letters* 116). Despite the bravado of the letter's final third, it concludes with the customary flourish of deferential flattery, yet in this instance Cotterell's silence, which preoccupies the whole letter, stands ominously over her final request:

But chiefly, whether you repent not of your most obliging Concern for one who merits your Goodness so little, and trys it so much, as &c. ORINDA.

(Thomas, *Letters* 116)

The anxieties over distance, the frustration with the Post, and the pleas to Cotterell not to misinterpret silence as affrontery, reflect Philips's desires to maintain the connection with and favour of the court enabled through him. In effect, to contain Cotterell within a carefully delineated field of potential meanings. This sequence of letters comes at a time when Philips's literary career was beginning to unfold. Her translation of *Pompey* had been a success in Dublin and she had successfully had poems of hers presented to members of the royal family, all of which had been facilitated through cultivated relationships with figures such as Cotterell. The threat to this emerging success presented by a fickle Post and geographical displacement provokes Philips to these passages combining anger, exasperation and a constant rhetorical placation whereby her own desires are submerged or elaborately, if subordinately, attached to those of her correspondent. I want to explore the rhetorical and material conditions of these expressions of anxiety, to examine how Philips's concern with the Post is in fact a concern not just for the material object of the letter and its contents but for her own (material and culturally perceived) self.

**'my humble Request that I may constantly hear from you': Writing Desire.**

If we re-read the letters, examining the cultural journeys taken simultaneously with those difficult geographical excursions, the anxiety over distances and the post become enmeshed in broader

discourses of (desired) friendship and fidelity. The "Society of Friendship" with which Philips was involved, whether or not it was formally constructed, reflected the centrality of the concept of "friendship" within certain cultural groups during the period. Perhaps the most important underlying theme of Philips's poetry, and the focus of the majority of scholarship regarding her, has been her friendships with other women and the articulation of these relationships in her poems. Friendship, however, does not begin and end with her poetry or even with the figures of Rosania and Lucasia. Rather, it forms a mode of cultural discourse, a form of presenting the self, through which Philips is able to produce and maintain relationships of political and social advantage.

Friendship is a potent concept in the practice of courtesy throughout the early modern period. Elizabeth Goldsmith contends of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries that "[c]ultural transformations caused by unprecedented social mobility turned everyone's attention to the techniques of personal image-making" (*Exclusive Conversations* 5). The presentation of a "sincere" friendship between supplicant and patron lends the legitimating influence of the private, "real" self to a relationship rooted in social or economic gain. Even so, Lionel Trilling argues that English society, for all the apparent prospects available to the ambitious "gentleman", remained rigidly structured and facilitated an impulse toward falsification: "To a society thus restricted [...] the system of social deference was still of a kind to encourage flattery as a means of personal ingratiation and advancement" (16). It is in this socio-historical context that Trilling charts the rise of the term "sincerity" in English as meaning "the absence of dissimulation or feigning or pretence" (13). Restoration civility descends from this conjunction

between an emergent, "authentic" self and discourses seeking to derive economic and cultural profit from it; what Elizabeth Goldsmith terms "courtly behaviour and private ambition" (*Exclusive Conversations* 5). In his discussion of the discourse of "sociability" that pervaded the Restoration court, Lawrence Klein quotes from the notebooks of the third earl of Shaftsbury:

See with whome this is in common. See the Nation & People yt are the most insatiable in this Way & hunt after Conversations, Partyes, Engagements, Secreycyes, Confidencycyes, & Friendships of this kind, with the greatest Eagerness, Admiration, Fondness. And see in what Place this reigns the most. The Court, & Places near the Court: the Polite World: the Great-Ones. Of what Characters, Life, Manners are commonly that Sort who can never rest out of Company & want ever to be communicating their Secrets. Call this to Mind: and remember that *real Friendship* is not founded on such a *Need*.

(Anthony Ashley Cooper, third earl of Shaftsbury, qtd. in Klein 31. Original emphasis.)<sup>100</sup>

For Shaftsbury, this dissimulating discourse is instrumentalist in its intent. His distinction between the behaviour described and "*real Friendship*" indicates the extent to which the discourses of sincerity and friendship had become categorised according to their ends. By the time of the Restoration, the tension between sociability and sincerity, particularly as it may have been played out in the letter, was both well-

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<sup>100</sup> Klein gives the original reference for this quote as Anthony Ashley Cooper, third earl of Shaftsbury, *Notebook, Shaftsbury Papers*. PRO 30/24/27/10, 176. Public Record Office, London.

established and at the forefront of those seeking to negotiate a form of conduct that respected the social hierarchy without conspicuously seeking to manipulate it. This is the environment in which Philips writes her letters.

The passionate friendships of Philips's poetry come from the confluence of several socio-cultural currents during the Restoration period. More specifically, the poetic modes in which the poems operate are those of the metaphysical love lyric, which had since receded from the mainstream of English literary culture, and emergent discourses of neoplatonic friendship. These discourses come together in poems dealing with intensely intimate relationships between women. The mixture of volatile desire with a "purified", neoplatonic distance between the poet and the object of her affections is perhaps most explicitly illustrated in the poem, "Parting with Lucasia, 13th January 1657/8, A song":

Well! we will doe that rigid thing  
Which makes Spectators think we part;  
Though absence hath for none a sting  
But those who keep each other's heart.

And when our sence is dispossess'd,  
Our labouring Souls will heave and pant,  
And gasp for one another's Brest,  
Since theyr conveyances they want.

(Thomas, *Poems* 136: ll. 1-8)<sup>101</sup>

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<sup>101</sup>See Paul Lobban for a fuller discussion of the way in which Philips's poems, despite their apparent neoplatonism, appropriate "the speaking role in these recast (male, heterosexual) poetic modes", thereby placing her "in the assertive, yet implicitly sexual position occupied traditionally by the male poet" (51): "'Conspire Into Your Hieroglyphick': Deciphering the Self in the Poems and Letters of Katherine Philips

Aside from the emotive metaphors of poems such as this, Philips's focus on the idea of friendship finds further articulation in poems such as "To the noble Palaemon on his incomparable discourse of Friendship", "Friendship's Mysterys, to my dearest Lucasia", "Friendship in Emblem, or the Seale, to my dearest Lucasia", "Friendship", and "A Friend", in which Philips outlines the features of friendship thus:

Friendship is abstract of this noble flame,  
'Tis love refin'd and purg'd from all its drosse,  
The next to Angells Love, if not the same,  
Stronger than passion is, though not so grosse:  
It antedates a glad Eternity,  
And is a heaven in Epitomy.

(Thomas, *Poems* 166: ll. 7-12)

Further, the poem goes on to assert for friendship a position outside conventions of gender and thus within the ambit of all (including and especially female) experience:

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.  
Love is allow'd to us, and Innocence,  
And noblest friendships doe proceed from thence.

(Thomas, *Poems* 166: ll 19-24)

This assertion of gender-inclusiveness derives in part from the obvious imperatives of Philips's poetry; for her to accept the contention that friendship is outside female experience would be to invalidate the

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(1632-1664)." Hons. Thesis. University of Adelaide, 1994.

legitimacy of the emotional spectrum she claims to share with her (female) friends.

Philips's insistence on the viability of female friendship produced a correspondence on the issue with leading divine Jeremy Taylor. Taylor's response was published in 1657 as "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. Katherine Philips". Taylor agrees that a "dear and perfect friendship is authorized by the principles of christianity" (Taylor 32), that women are capable of friendship, but, Taylor concedes, "I cannot say that women are capable of all those excellencies, by which men can oblige the world" (43). Indeed, for Taylor, the best friendship for a woman is that of marriage "because marriage is the queen of friendships, in which there is a communication of all that can be communicated by friendship" (41). What impact this re-assertion of heterosexual marriage conventions over the idea of friendship has on Philips's exploration of exclusively female friendships is not something I seek to pursue here, but her exploration and elaboration of the concept does impact on her cultivation of personal contact through her letters.

The philosophy of friendship Philips aspires to in and through her letters is interwoven with prevailing notions of appropriate social conduct amongst royalists before the Restoration and at court after Charles's return. Whilst I have nominated some of the imperatives sanctioning letter-writing during the period, a coterminous discourse of civility, drawn in large part from continental sources, acts to influence the motive and form of conduct, including writing, at court. These formalised modes of conduct and writing require an equally formalised reading process, making them potent examples of

Certeau's conception of reading and writing as controlled, elite practices. Part of Philips's literary heritage is her apparent position as "an English *précieuse*" (Thomas, *Poems* 7). As Anna Bryson notes, the "cult of preciousity, a highly 'spritualized' code of complimentary courtly love, strongly influenced the court of Charles I" (127-28). George Kennedy describes *préciosité* as a "distinctive women's rhetoric" that developed in France:

As a linguistic movement, *préciosité* encouraged purity of language at the same time that it exploited metaphors to avoid specifically naming anything regarded as unseemly in reference to the body and society [...] the *style précieuse* strongly influenced Corneille and other dramatists and is found in many passages where love and moral virtue are treated in metaphorical language.

(262)<sup>102</sup>

The emphasis in the first Caroline court on a "formality, deference and ceremonial reminiscent of the French and Spanish Courts" (D. Smith 82) was reflected in the modification of conduct associated with court society. In a letter from *Epistolae Ho-Elinae* dated 3 June 1634, Howell remarks:

The Court affords little news at present, but that there is a Love call'd Platonick Love, which much sways there of late; it is a Love abstracted from all corporeal gross Impressions and sensual Appetite, but consists in Contemplations and Ideas of the

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<sup>102</sup>This heavily metaphorical approach is distinctive of Philips's epistolary and poetic works, as will be examined below, and is an important element in the culturally acceptable image of her promulgated, in concert with her writing, after her death.

Mind, not in any carnal Fruition. This Love sets the  
Wits of the Town on work;

(Howell 317-18)<sup>103</sup>

The neoplatonism of preciosity, as well as "the adoption of pastoral personae and the use of semi-emblematic sobriquets" (Thomas, *Poems* 8), are marks of Philips's poetic artifice and appear in her letters and poems during the Interregnum. Thomas argues that the "ideas and ideals of Henrietta Maria's *précieux* court culture were an important cohesive influence among the defeated cavaliers" (*Poems*, 10), and the maintenance of continental models of courtly conduct persisted into the Restoration with the court of Charles II. Lawrence Klein argues that "sympathetic accounts of Stuart travails" read the exile of the young princes to the continent during the 1640s and 1650s as beneficial inasmuch as it enriched "their character and habits by exposure to the courts and other sophistications of the Continent" (38).

Yet the function of these "sophisticated" modes of conduct, centred as they were around "discipline in bodily and interactional comportment", was intimately linked to the competition for advancement played out amongst those at court and in aristocratic or gentrified society in general: "Court sociability grew out of court problematics: the presence of the monarch, the negotiation of hierarchy, and the full-blooded instrumentalism inherent in such a competitive environment" (Klein 36).<sup>104</sup> With the Restoration came the re-

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<sup>103</sup>See also Thomas, *Poems* 7-8 for a brief discussion of this passage and the influence of preciosity under Henrietta Maria.

<sup>104</sup>The development of the discourses of manners, civility, and courtesy in England and Europe is a massive subject that I can only touch upon here. Apart from those works I explicitly refer to, other works integral to an understanding of the topic include: Norbert Elias, *The Civilizing Process, Volume One: The Development of Manners*. Trans. Edmund Jephcott. 1939. New York: Urizen, 1978.; *The Civilizing Process, Volume Two: Power and Civility*. Trans. Edmund Jephcott. 1939. New York: Pantheon, 1983.

introduction of a court society and the codes of civility that attached to it. "Civility" as a term had developed throughout the seventeenth century in England, again deriving much from modes of behaviour refined in the courts of Europe. Rather than standing for a discrete discourse on manners "the use of the term to define correct social behaviour developed out of and alongside some larger and less specialized meanings of the term" (Bryson 49). The etymology of the term, as Bryson observes, includes "the modern concepts of 'civil society' and 'civilization [which] are the key to understanding the significance of 'civility' in the field of manners" (49).

By the time of the Restoration, the conduct of civility and courtliness, "rendered sharp and cynical by the experience of the Civil Wars" (Bryson 260), exemplified the "instrumentalism" Klein described. Bryson notes that Restoration London became the centre for a predominantly unstructured and intensely competitive elite milieu in which "fashions of civility and incivility were set":

In the English court and town, a less regulated struggle for prestige established shifting hierarchies of fashion and 'breeding' only loosely associated with priorities of birth. In these circumstances, aggressive, outrageous, and predatory modes of establishing status could be given full rein.

(Bryson 262)

Philips writes into a world in which favour, a commodity sought through the discourse of civility, is constantly shifting.

The accessible and competitive court of Charles II saw a confluence of Continental and indigenous modes of social conduct and construction. For although the Restoration court exhibited many of the

characteristics of European, particularly French, modes of conduct--manifested most clearly in bodily comportment and the practice of "sociability" through polite manners and witty conversation--the structure of the English nobility was less rigidly hierarchical than found across the channel.<sup>105</sup> Vigarello's observations on the nature of courtly power, although stressing the personal power of the monarch in terms more redolent of France than England, do convey the often amorphous nature of influence in this system:

Rules and order direct behaviour until it is an art. Manners become a theatrical and showy element which is largely privileged. Prestige is never far from pose [...] One must keep one's place. The vagueness surrounding the sovereign's power, and which depends on him, strengthens the importance of appearances, all the more since it is lacking in such power.

(178-79)

Norbert Elias remarks that "in England the king and court did not constitute a power centre overshadowing all others", which meant that "English upper classes [...] did not have a court character to the same degree as the French" (68). Further to that point, Elias claims:

The social barriers between the nobility and leading groups of the bourgeoisie [...] were lower and more fragmentary in England. The specifically English stratum of rich bourgeois landowners, the gentry,

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<sup>105</sup>For more on the development of courtly and civil modes of bodily comportment, see Georges Vigarello, "The Upward Training of the Body from the Age of Chivalry to Courtly Civility." in *Fragments for a History of the Human Body: Part Two*: Ed. Michael Feher, Ramona Naddaf and Nadia Tazi. New York: Zone, 1989. 148-96.

took a no less eager part in competitive prestige building and status-consumption than did the leading aristocratic families.

(68)

As such, "good society" (Elias 96) consisted of a variegated collection of both blood aristocrats as well as successful merchants and rural landowners, or gentry. And although this group was dispersed across the country, the cultural focus of English society on the capital meant that a regular migration of good society to London, "the season", became ritualised during the seventeenth century. This process, and the role of the court in it, is described by Elias:

Here, constituting with their wealth of personal contacts the 'good society' of the country, Society with a capital S, a market of opinion, they mutually passed muster and, in a constant round of social diversions interspersed with the great dramas of the inter-party parliamentary struggles, their individual market value, their reputations, their prestige, in a word their personal social power--in keeping with the code of 'good society'--were exalted, abased or lost.

(96)

Yet power in English society, as Elias observes, was not wholly centred on Society: "it was at most one of the centres of 'good society'" (96). Large aristocratic houses could attract comparable, if not equivalent, influence and the growing power of parliamentary parties also rivalled that of the court and Society (Elias 97). Although in the period in which Philips wrote and conversed with her correspondents the social

structures Elias speaks of were not perhaps as developed as he describes, she did die only four years after the Restoration, her patterns of behaviour trace a practice of attempted insinuation into the prevailing circles of power.

As Patrick Thomas observes, Philips's cultivation of "Frenchified literary friendships" amongst disenfranchised cavalier personalities during the Interregnum was concurrent with her "establishing herself in the thoroughly anglicised world of the Pembrokeshire and Cardiganshire gentry" (*Poems* 10). Through the agency of her poetry, Philips touches upon issues and personalities pertinent to both groups and appears to gain acceptance amongst them. Perhaps the most obvious indicator of her successful negotiation of diverse social currents is the extent to which she is able to maintain and develop relations with the Restoration court whilst being the wife of a member of the Interregnum regime. Although James Philips's record as a member of Parliament during the 1650s does cause the couple some financial and political adversity after the Restoration, Katherine's literary success is nevertheless conducted through a network of influential and supportive members of "good society". Friendship represents another discourse through which the self can be rendered and manipulated to accord with the interests of strategic forces. Philips's negotiation through the difficult political environment of Restoration 'good society' underscores her ability to insert herself into prevailing power structures and take advantage of the opportunities that arise for her to further ingratiate herself into centres of influence.

The medium for these good relations, and the attempts to secure them, is the rhetoric of friendship transmuted through the conventions of the letter. Philips's letter-writing converges epistolary

imperatives with the rhetoric of civility and friendship; a complex of flattery, deference, wit, salutation and supplication. In the letter to Berenice of 30 December 1658, Philips's opening is a frantic collision of anxiety and desired intimacy constructed around the figure of her correspondent:

I must confess myself extreamly troubled, to miss a Letter from your Ladiship in a whole Fortnight, but I must beg you to believe your silence did not occasion mine; for my Ambition to converse with you, and advantage in being allow'd it, is too great for me to decline any opportunity which I can improve to obtain so much happiness [.]

(Thomas, *Letters* 7)<sup>106</sup>

Philips composes her desire to see Berenice in breathless prose, figuring herself as a beggar pleading for Berenice's favour: "all that I can tell you of my Desires to see your Ladiship will be repetition, for I had with as much earnestness as I was capable of, Begg'd it then, and yet have so much of the Beggar in me, that I must redouble that importunity now" (Thomas, *Letters* 7). This sequence climaxes in Philips's earnest assertion that "I Gasp for you with an impatience that is not to be imagin'd by any Soul wound up to a less concern in Friendship then yours is, and therefore I cannot hope to make others sensible of my vast desires to enjoy you" (Thomas, *Letters* 7). The connection between the women is rooted in the discourse of (female) friendship which, according to Philips, is equivalent to a form of private language. Berenice's apparent appreciation of the intensity and dynamics of friendship means Philips's emotive rhetoric is comprehensible and

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<sup>106</sup>See Appendix 3.

appropriate to their (private) conversation. Philips's assumption of familiarity either reflects the tenor of the relationship or, if not, establishes a series of rhetorical "cues" that draws Berenice into such a connection. The letter continues in carefully familiar terms, anxiously re-asserting the solidity of the relationship whilst always positioning Berenice as the superior member: "being Contented to be perpetually in your debt, is the greatest Confession I can make of the Empire you have over me" (Thomas, *Letters* 8). In conventional terms, this letter is "about" an inquiry after Berenice's health and Philips's (often repeated) desire to meet with her. The majority of the text, however, is concerned with the elaboration of Philips's relationship with her correspondent through expressive rhetorical demonstrations of fidelity and desire. Indeed, the letter ends with just such a declaration of (deferential) devotion:

I shall loose the Post if I do not now hasten to  
subscribe, what I am always ready to make good, that  
I am more than any one living, *Your Ladiship's*  
*most faithful, and most Passionate Friend and*  
*Servant, Orinda.*

(Thomas, *Letters* 9. Original emphasis.)

This is the pattern of the four letters to Berenice and provokes Souers's criticism regarding their stifling formality (242).

Yet this formality is consistent with a change in the style and function of the letter during the seventeenth century. Jean Robertson identifies the 1640 publication of John Massinger's translation of Jean Puget se la Serre's *Le Secretaire à la Mode* as a transition point in the development of letter-writing: "From this date to the end of the century letter writing became less an academic accomplishment or frivolous

diversion, and increasingly associated with the teaching of good manners generally and the art of courtship" (39). And whilst Anna Bryson takes issue with Robertson's chronological exactitude, she does endorse the point that de la Serre's text "exemplified a new emphasis on polite aspects of letter-writing within an increasingly well-defined framework of polite discourse in general" (157). In which case, Philips's ornate emphasis on her (submissive) friendship with Berenice reflects not just a desire to cultivate the relationship, but to do so through the medium of polite, courtly rhetoric--thereby establishing her credentials as a literate (potential) member of Berenice's class. Of course, the limited scope of the Berenice correspondence makes the task of determining the extent or effect of this relationship speculative at best. The letters to Cotterell and Dorothy Temple are more instructive as to the advantages, material and emotional, derived from establishing epistolary friendships with influential individuals.

In the letters to Cotterell and to Dorothy Temple, as with the letters to Berenice, Philips is concerned to make her desire to be close to her correspondents explicit. In the letter to Dorothy Temple, dated 22 January 1663/4, Philips employs much of the same supplicatory language used in the Berenice letters six years earlier:

Deare Madam

You treat me in your Letters so much to my advantage, & above my merit, that I am almost affrayd to tell you how exceedingly I am pleas'd with them, least you should attribute yt contentment to ye delight I take in being prais'd, whereas I am extreemly deceiv'd if that be the ground of it, though I confess it is not free from Vanity; & I cannot choose

but be proud of being own'd by so valuable a person  
as you are [.]

(Thomas, *Letters* 137)<sup>107</sup>

Again, the supplication is delivered in terms of Philips's being a possession of her correspondent. Yet in both instances, Philips asserts that her lowly status is made enviable by the esteem with which her possessor is held. So in the letter to Berenice of 30 December 1658, Philips claims "being Contented to be perpetually in your debt, is the greatest Confession I can make of the Empire you have over me, and really that priviledge is the last which I can submit to part with all" (Thomas, *Letters* 8). Similarly, to Dorothy Temple, Philips asserts that the correspondence is "so much to my advantage" that although she does not merit the privilege, she confesses "it is not free from Vanity" (Thomas, *Letters* 137). In both cases, the trope of unworthiness is forced to "confess" to the pleasure underlying it, that is, Philips approaches her subjects with a supplicatory gesture which, in its acceptance by the subject, sanctions the friendship claimed by the letter. Philips then seeks to capitalise on this friendship.

Philips's poetry is permeated with the ideals of neoplatonic love and friendship, ideals that characterised both the court of Charles I and Henrietta Maria, as well as the besieged royalist community of the Interregnum with which Philips became associated. Yet the ideals of friendship were not confined to or defined by the coterie circles in which Philips's poetry was disseminated. Jorge Ardití argues that modes of behaviour associated with the gentry, as opposed to the refinements of the courtier, recommended a more utilitarian definition of friendship based around "a person's capacity to increase his friend's

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<sup>107</sup>See Appendix 20.

wealth, and therefore the wealth of the whole" (175). Arditi's analysis comes from a comparative reading of seminal conduct manuals of the seventeenth century in England and France and the contrasting models of behaviour they advocate, taking into account factors of nationality, religion, and social structure. In England, Arditi argues, the Reformation produced a cultural bias towards "multicenterdness and increased individuation" which led to a "vast secular literature [...] associated with civility" in which "the majority of English manuals defined monarchical privilege in terms of priority, not of divinity, or advocated behaviours that revolved around the service of a whole, rather than the service of a prince" (158). In effect, this meant that continental texts such as Nicolas Faret's *L'honnest-Homme ou, L'Art de Plaire à la Court* (1630), with their emphasis on the primacy of the monarch, did not reflect the English perception of social hierarchy as being constituted by the nobility in total. Arditi's exemplary text in this respect is Henry Peacham's, *The Compleat Gentleman* (1622), which argues that

princes and nobles are at the same level and are often mentioned together as having similar rights and duties, similar value, a similar need to master the fine points of civility--as though when dealing with the essential, their differences disappeared.

(171)

This idea reflects some of Elias's ideas regarding "good society" in English culture inasmuch as it too posits a more collective model of the ruling class as against a powerfully centralised, even personalised, monarchy. As to how this model affects the English perception of friendship amongst the gentry, Arditi suggests that where Faret's model

lauded friendship as " a means to gain access to court [...] [t]o the English writers the value of friendship lies elsewhere: in the help that a friend provides in times of distress and in the counsel he affords in business" (175). In this respect, Philips's letters appear to rely upon the friendships nurtured in her letters as a means of obtaining support from her correspondents.

The rhetoric of friendship found in Philips's letters traverses a path between the deferential, witty rhetoric of courtly civility and the pragmatics of supplication. Whigham argues that supplicatory letters of the Elizabethan period forged "an ideological weld, not by acts of favor or of gratitude, but by peripheral and formulaic assertions of courtesy" (868). So it is in Philips's letters we find attempts to gain favours embellished with the language of friendship and the apparent obligations this placed on the correspondent to respond. When Philips writes to Berenice on 2 November 1658, she couches her request for Berenice's presence in supplicatory terms which, nonetheless, (self-consciously) seek to coerce the desired response. In asking for Berenice to "pardon and pity me" (Thomas, *Letters* 6), Philips seeks her benefactor to fulfil this request by coming to Wales: "to express that you do both, be pleased to hasten hither, where I shall pour all my Trouble into your Bosom, and receive thence all that Consolation which I never in my Life more needed than I do now" (Thomas, *Letters* 6). Her request is followed by an allusion to the capacity of the personal letter to operate as a means of social advancement. Admitting her "Presumption, or rather Distraction to leap from Confessions into Petitions, and those for advantages so much above my merit" (Thomas, *Letters* 6), Philips justifies her requests through the language of friendship and loyalty. The letter, although concerned to portray the

women as friends, is always careful to differentiate between Berenice's capacity to grant favours and Philips's restricted role as the beneficiary of this largesse:

but what is that that the dear Great *Berenice* can deny her faithful *Orinda*? And what is it that *Orinda* would not do or suffer to obtain that sweet and desired Converse, she now begs of you[.]

(Thomas, *Letters* 6. My emphasis.)

The cautious construction of this letter reinforces Philips's observation that the "leap" from confession to petition is not a large one in this correspondence. The rhetoric of friendship is always able to be utilised to the supplicant's potential advantage.

In the letter to Dorothy Temple, Philips, whilst operating within the same rhetorical formalities that characterise the Berenice letters, seeks to cement the friendship she hopes is being created through the correspondence. Again the letter makes explicit reference to the benefits of such a friendship for Philips by way of a compliment to Temple, yet the flattery is also a conspicuous admission of the value of the relationship to Philips. After thanking Temple for a previous favour, Philips proceeds to construct an elaborate image in which Philips's (cultural and geographical) isolation is effaced by Temple's friendship:

[I] must beg you to believe that if my Convent were indeed in Cataya [Cathay], & I a recluse by vow to it, yet I should never attain mortification enough to be able willingly to deny my self the great entertainment of your correspondence which seems to remove me out of a solitary religious house on ye

Mountains and places me in the most advantageous prospect upon both Court & Town, & gives me right to a better place then of either, & that, Madam is your friendship [.]

(Thomas, *Letters* 138)

Temple's (metaphoric) ability to provide "the most advantageous aspect upon both Court & Town" reflects the social legitimacy Philips's seeks from this correspondence. This rhetorical flourish seeks to convince Temple of Philips's enthusiasm for and commitment to a potential friendship. Philips capitalises on the apparent amenability of Temple to such an association by pressing for the correspondence to become more familiar: "that there is but one way of making it more valuable, & yt is by making it less ceremonious & using me with a freedom, that may give me more access into your heart, & this I beg from you with a great earnestness" (Thomas, *Letters* 138). In seeking to make their converse less formal, Philips acknowledges the advantages that will flow from such familiarity but assures Temple that she will not exploit them.

[I] will promise you that whatever Libertys of that kind you allow me, yet I will never so much abuse yt Goodness as to press my own advantages farther then you shall permit or lessen any of the respect I ow you by the less formall approaches yt I desire to make to you, whom though I esteem above most of the ye world, yet I love yet more [.]

(Thomas, *Letters* 138)

Such a self-conscious admission of the social implications of friendships between influential individuals and those seeking their favour seeks to draw upon the authenticity of the letter form as a repository for truth.

The letter operates on different rhetorical levels here, as the supplicant's letter to a potential patron and as the honest thoughts of a private woman. And whilst Philips's admission about the potential profit of the association might appear as an attempt to "transcend" selfish concerns for social advancement, the remainder of the letter reinforces the ultimate importance of gaining favours from those in positions of influence.

In the same letter, whilst referring to the unsanctioned publication of her poems, Philips seeks Temple's support in defending her reputation against allegations she was complicit in the venture. Complaining that she "must never shew my head [...] among any reasonable people again" (Thomas, *Letters* 142), Philips relates how her "private follys" came to be "so unhandsomely exposd" along with the suspicion that "I connived at this ugly accident" (Thomas, *Letters* 142). The prospect of public humiliation, which Philips compares to "being o[n] a Rack" (Thomas, *Letters* 142), leads her to enlist Temple in her defence: "I shall need all my friends to be my Champions to ye Critticall & malicious" (Thomas, *Letters* 142). The burgeoning friendship with Temple, so carefully cultivated earlier in the letter, is here unilaterally consolidated into a bond of service on Philips's behalf. Protestations of innocence are elaborated, as if to provide Temple with a ready-made argument in Philips's defence, and Temple's advice sought on how to best extract herself from her troubles: "I know you have Goodness and Generosity enough to doe me this right in your company, & to give me your opinion too, how I may best get this impression suppressed & myself vindicated" (Thomas, *Letters* 142). The letter ends with Philips so convinced of Temple's solidarity that she explicitly rejects an

elaborately deferential conclusion in favour of a "direct" and personal enumeration of what she desires (perhaps even expects) of Temple:

therefore I will not beg your pardon for troubling you with this impertinent story, nor for so long a Harangue as this; the truth is I would faine by example, if I cañot by importunity induce you to yt freedom which is beggd of you as so necessary to ye happiness of Your most faithfull & most affectionate Servt Orinda.

(Thomas, *Letters* 142)

Compliment and favour form a dyad in which the obligations of courtesy are reciprocated by the apparent obligations of assistance. Of course, assistance is not guaranteed, but Philips's invocation of the ideals of friendship in her desire for a certain informality of conversation, allied to her reputed endorsement of neoplatonic love, meant she was familiar with the rhetoric of courtesy and the methods by which one gained the confidence of social superiors.

#### **Affection, Instrumentalism, and "most generous POLIARCHUS".**

To this point, the letters examined have been limited in their scope and characterised by the formality of supplication and appeals to the ideals of friendship as a way to gain the confidence of the correspondents. In the letters between Philips and Cotterell there is a more extensive and substantial body of writing in which the correlations between the rhetoric of familiarity and friendship and the imperatives of instrumentalism, effectively the controlled dynamic between writing and reading, can be drawn and assessed. At the time when the first extant Philips/Cotterell letter was written the

relationship seems to have been well-established with the tone, although suffused with the complimentary, more familiar than those to either Berenice or Temple. Even so, Philips's vocabulary is still centred around the reciprocity of supplication and favour that seems to dominate social relations, even one apparently anchored in friendship:

Tho' I know, most honour'd POLIARCHUS, that  
you delight more in conferring Favours, than in  
receiving Acknowledgments; and tho' the highest I  
could make, would prove not only unsuitable to my  
Obligations, and the sense I have of them; but such  
as in themselves would stand in need of a new  
Favour, I mean, your Pardon:

(Thomas, *Letters*

13)<sup>108</sup>

The playfulness of Philips's language, toying with the idea of favour and obligation in thanking Cotterell for his previous concession, does not undermine the centrality of their social disparity.

Indeed, at periods in the correspondence, when the vagaries of distance, the post, or other intervening events conspire to strain the relationship, Philips again returns to the image of their unequal social positions and her ultimate vulnerability to his consideration. Writing from Rostrevor in Ireland on 19 July 1662, Philips jokes to Cotterell that;

If your Silence this Week was intended to exempt  
you from the Persecution of my Scribble, you see  
your Design has miscarry'd; and you may believe,  
that not to let me hear from you as I expect, is a  
certain way to provoke me to beg of you not to

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<sup>108</sup>See Appendix 4.

discontinue me the Favour of your  
Correspondence[.]

(Thomas, *Letters* 40)<sup>109</sup>

The joke is close to the bone for just over a year later, on 13 November 1663, following a lapse in Cotterell's correspondence, a fretful Philips anxiously asks whether his reticence is "the Effect of your Unkindness, or the Injustice of the Post" (Thomas, *Letters* 116). Being seen to contemplate the worst option, Philips continues: "Sometimes I am melancholy enough to fancy that I gave you too much Trouble about our private Affairs, and us'd you with too much Familiarity for you to pardon; and that from hence proceeds this your unusual Silence." (Thomas, *Letters* 116). Where the earlier silence provokes (an albeit slightly uneasy) facetiousness, the later gap sees the vocabulary of supplicant and patron, lightly toyed with in the first instance, starkly drawn in the later letter as the possibility of personal and social abandonment emerges. These extracts demonstrate the extreme importance of reading to Philips's efforts; her cautious entreaties constantly monitor Cotterell's responses, seeking out hints of a response that is other than that she desires. In the period between these letters, the correspondence tracks a series of significant events in Philips's life. Most notable, but not alone, is her rise to literary prominence. Cotterell plays a crucial role in the facilitation of these events, and continues to do so after Philips's uneasy letter of the 13th. The exploration, and exploitation, of this relationship through the letters will be the focus of the remainder of this section.

The conceit of courtesy theory, supplemented by the "familiar speech" of the letter, is the nomination of a relationship between

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<sup>109</sup>See Appendix 7.

supplicant and patron. Favour can only be granted to those who have the benefaction of the patron. In return, an apparent affiliation between the parties is shown to be sincere through the supplicant's (re)assertions of fidelity. Whigham argues that part of this process, in the context of Elizabethan suitors' letters, is the need for these expressions of fidelity to the (potential) patron to be constant and to affirm the social relation between the parties: "Each utterance of 'my lord' or 'dame' or 'sir' ratified not only the place of the superior but that of the speaker as enfranchised witness in a coherent social universe" ("Rhetoric" 867). To this end, epistolary convention developed a "topos" for the supplicant to maintain constant contact between parties:

A pretext for communication exists, but expressions of fealty, familiarity, and personal relation dominate. Such statements can be epideictic in two ways: they may draw attention either to an established relation or to one's attractiveness and potential for relation.

(Whigham, "Rhetoric" 867)

Philips's letters continuously assert both her pleasure at the correspondence and the bonds of friendship that exist between them, yet these affiliations are always couched within the conspicuous parameters of their social relation. Courtesy and epistolary theory are strategic forms of writing that Philips adopts, utilising their pre-existing rhetorical and cultural structures as the means through which she attempts to make her own spaces. Moreover, her rhetorical dexterity helps to ensure that those spaces are actually sanctioned by the culture she appropriates to make them. Her utilisation of the discourses of courtesy, epistolarity, and friendship is a recognition of her position as an individual enmeshed in the various networks and discourses that

constitute culture. It also recognises that her capacity to employ language, its production and reception, is perhaps the only means open to her to create those spaces. As Certeau observes, in "the space of a language [...] a society makes more explicit the formal rules of action and the operations that differentiate them" (*The Practice of Everyday Life* xx). The refined language of letters and courtesy articulates the wider social forces organising Restoration culture and Philips's fluency in that language assists her efforts to be accepted into it.

Whigham observes that the strategy of deferment contains two possible elaborations, "vertical deference" and "lateral deference" (*Ambition and Privilege* 132). Vertical deference refers to the conventional relationship between supplicant and superior in which the apparent qualities of the supplicant are deployed in order to render their patron in a beneficial light: "the superior's own reputed identity derives from the character of his dependents so that preferment of others will indirectly depict the self" (Whigham, *Ambition and Privilege* 131). Lateral deference indicates a relationship cast as "the gift of intimacy in friendship" (Whigham, *Ambition and Privilege* 132). This strategy seeks to cast the potential patron in an advantageous light by representing the supplicant as a friend of quality: "Well-chosen friends confer depiction derived from their own worthiness and from their own active reciprocal choice [...] or acceptance [...] of oneself" (Whigham, *Ambition and Privilege* 133).<sup>110</sup>

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<sup>110</sup>Whigham's analysis of these models of deferment is part of a sustained examination of Baldassare Castiglione's influential 1521 text, *The Book of the Courtier*, translated into English in 1561 by Sir Thomas Hoby. My use of these sources should not be interpreted, however, as an assertion that models of courtly behaviour developed in early sixteenth-century Italy are instantly, and uncritically, transferable to the English court of the 1660s. Whilst correspondences are discernible, Philips's cultural and historical milieu are clearly different to those of Renaissance Italy, and indeed Elizabethan England, which forms the setting for Whigham's studies. See Whigham, *Ambition and Privilege* 88-136.

In Philips's letters to Cotterell we see a delicate, and often anxious, negotiation between both these ideals. So it is that on 25 September 1663, Philips writes that she has nothing to add to her last letter other than "my humble Request that I may constantly hear from you, that were Business enough to create you this Trouble, since I esteem that Happiness as the greatest Advantage I could procure for my self" (Thomas, *Letters* 105). Similar sentiments appear on 15 April 1663: "I cannot therefore but thank you from the botom of my Heart for continuing a Correspondence, which I prize above all things, and which gives me the greatest Satisfaction" (Thomas, *Letters* 79). On 30 August 1662, Philips again directly refers to her supplicatory position in relation to receiving Cotterell's letters, yet also makes direct reference to the modes of conduct which necessitate and regulate their correspondence in the first instance:

I will always rather chuse to think it proceeds from my own Misfortune, than from your Forgetfulness of me, whenever I was disappointed in my Expectation of receiving a Letter from you; for could I believe you desirous to put an end to the Correspondence, which I desire so much, I should in Civility forbear extorting it in this importunate manner, and so contribute to a Loss, which I am most unwilling to undergo: When therefore you would be rid of these Troubles, you must downright tell me so, since you see I cannot be brought to understand it by all the Signs your Silence can make.

(Thomas, *Letters* 50)<sup>111</sup>

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<sup>111</sup>See Appendix 10.

Philips's request for a forthright assertion of Cotterell's desire not to continue the correspondence is, again, facetious, as is her rhetorical flourishes regarding her imposition on his time and energy. Passages like this, which playfully simulate the pain of silence and isolation, actually constitute the very correspondence they fear may end, and further, in their inclusion of opening gambits such as this, foster a sense of familiarity and conviviality through these apparently mock-gestures of anxiety. All of which proceeds to create a text that visibly advertises its fundamental preoccupation, that it may cease to exist, in the form of a confidence or private confession, howsoever lightly intended. In the convergence of supplicant and friend, petition and letter, Philips fosters the relationship with Cotterell in familiar or private terms rather than as a purely formal or patronal association.

Philips's emphasis on the personal and private nature of her correspondence with Cotterell manifests itself in a series of specific events in addition to a general practice of positive reinforcement throughout the letters. At the start of the extant correspondence Philips stresses her intimate connection to Cotterell by mediating in his courtship of her friend Anne Owen. At the time of the first letter in December 1661, Cotterell was apparently already courting Owen (whom Philips referred to as either Calanthe or Lucasia) and Philips, aware that Owen had not yet provided a response to Cotterell, skirts around the topic with compliments of Cotterell before finally alluding to the subject:

I know I run the Hazard of losing it [Cotterell's friendship] by entertaining you thus long without sending you News from the Person of whom you most desire to hear; but I had not the vast Reason I

have to write in on my own behalf, yet so great is my  
Regard for POLIARCHUS, that I am loath to send  
him any unwelcome News; and indeed, such is  
CALANTHE's Cruelty, that I have none that is  
pleasing to impart.

(Thomas, *Letters* 14)

Philips is concerned to transmit bad news with an exculpatory qualifier stressing her own concern for Cotterell's feelings in the matter, despite the fact that Owen is the "Lucasia" of many of Philips most impassioned friendship poems. Later in the correspondence, writing from Ireland, Philips betrays some of that passion when describing her anxiety about leaving Lucasia and returning to Wales: "But oh! that there were no Tempests but those of the Sea for me to suffer in parting with my dear LUCASIA!" (Thomas, *Letters* 61). Yet here, Philips is concerned not so much for Owen's happiness as for the feelings of her correspondent. This concern for Cotterell's feelings is qualified by a wider concern that the failed romance will not affect their relationship by association. In the next letter of 9 December 1661, Philips refers to a recent visit from Cotterell and "the great Disturbance you were in when you went hence" (Thomas, *Letters* 17). Patrick Thomas notes that this refers to Cotterell's discovery on that visit "to his chagrin that his suit was not preferred by Anne Owen" (17, fn 1). The affair is finally resolved some six months later when Philips reports on 17 May 1662 that Owen has married. In her letter, Philips's "confesses" that she has delayed in telling Cotterell of the news in the hope that he might hear it from elsewhere and thus be prepared for it. Such an admission signals both a consideration for Cotterell's feelings (and presumably reflects Philips's own

disappointment at the union) and provides Philips with an opportunity to further demonstrate her familiarity with her correspondent:

for tho' I know you have so long expected, and prepar'd yourself for the Blow; yet I am so well acquainted with the Temper of your Soul, as to have cause to believe, that you still have so much left in you *of the Lover, or at least of the Friend*, that you cannot hear of LUCASIA's being marry'd without some Disturbance; which will, I fear, be increas'd, when you know that her going to IRELAND is so hasten'd, that she will, I believe, be there in three Weeks.

(Thomas, *Letters* 34. Original emphasis.)<sup>112</sup>

Philips's sympathy for Cotterell's rejection is strengthened to empathy as she identifies with his apparent emotional condition and claims (intimate) knowledge of the "temper of his soul". This strategy also helps to deflect attention away from any potentially damaging resentment at the suit's failure and onto the constancy of her personal feelings for Cotterell. To the extent that Cotterell is disappointed by the events surrounding Anne Owen, Philips seems determined to counter these feelings as quickly as possible and replace them with assurances of her own loyalty.

In the subsequent relation of the wedding day, Philips clearly does more than just sympathise with the spurned Cotterell, as might have appeared to be the case in earlier letters. Rather than simply take Cotterell's side against Owen, for whom Philips clearly has strong affections, Philips appears to use the letter as an opportunity to confide

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<sup>112</sup>See Appendix 6.

in Cotterell of her own displeasure at the marriage. So, rather than attack one friend through the apparent security of private correspondence with another, Philips uses the letter as a way of joining her own distress to Cotterell's:

thus on *Sunday* last the Ceremony was perform'd to the great Satisfaction of them all: *For I alone of all the Company was out of Humour; nay, I was vex'd to that degree, that I could not disguise my Concern, which many of them were surpriz'd to see, and spoke to me of it; but my Grief was too deeply rooted to be cur'd with Words. Believe me, dear POLIARCHUS, I have wept so much, that my Eyes almost refuse me this present Service;*

(Thomas, *Letters* 34. Original emphasis.)

Philips's distress is represented here as an act of solidarity with Cotterell. Philips's narrative represents the wedding in negative terms, thereby aligning it with Cotterell's own feelings towards it. This letter does not provide many details of the wedding day other than Philips's reaction to it. Philips tells Cotterell that a more detailed letter has been sent to her friend Mary Aubrey, "Rosania", from whom Cotterell can "*know all, and therefore pray defer your Curiosity till then*" (Thomas, *Letters* 34. Original emphasis.). Such a deferral has two effects. The first is to implicitly enmesh Cotterell in the network of close friendships with whom Philips's corresponds and confides. The second is to maintain the present letter's focus on a particular narrative of the wedding. This narrative is centred on the wedding's painful effect on Philips, and by extension Cotterell. Philips's emotional agony is written on her body, her eyes are still barely capable of focusing on the letter she is writing,

and this embodied distress is reproduced in the text. As she attempts to articulate her feelings, she specifically comments on her inability to reproduce the kind of eloquence upon which her letters rely.

I never wish'd my self so much a Philosopher as now, that I might be in a Temper sedate enough to say any thing that might in some measure alleviate your Griefs; But indeed, POLIARCHUS, I am so afflicted my self, that 'twould be in vain for me to offer at the Comfort of another.

(Thomas, *Letters* 34-35)

Her expressive paralysis again signals the intimacy of her relationship with Cotterell. There is an implicit confidence in this gesture, an assumption of shared pain that excuses her rhetorical informality. This shared experience of loss, however, is still reproduced in terms of her own inferiority. In "admitting" her suffering to be partly her own fault, an apparently disbelieving Philips offers the hope that Cotterell has better prepared himself for the news: "As for your Share in this Loss, I hope you prepar'd your self much better to receive it, than I did to suffer mine" (Thomas, *Letters* 35). The next letter, of 4 June 1662, maintains Philips's distress at the match, particularly at the personality of Owen's new husband, Marcus Trevor. After berating Trevor for acting "despotically" towards Owen, Philips concedes: "*But all this is under the Rose, and I would have kept it to my self, did I not repose an entire Confidence in you; for 'tis too late now for us to find Faults*" (Thomas, *Letters* 38. Original emphasis.). Thomas refers to the OED definition of "under the rose" as "*sub rosa, or 'privately, in secret, in strict confidence*" (*Letters* 38, fn. 10. Original emphasis.). This passage again unites the two correspondents as spurned suitors trying to rationalise

their loss, Philips using the letter to express feelings she would have kept to herself as if Cotterell is now, through the agency of correspondence, friendship and the intimacy of presence in the letter, part of her private domain.

This confidence is furthered as Philips accompanies the newlyweds to Ireland, complaining to Cotterell of her grief at the change in relations between herself and Owen. In this letter, dated 30 July 1662, Philips thanks Cotterell for advising her on how she might overcome her despondency. This advice seems to have advocated a form of self-comportment that sought to impose upon the disordered self the harmonious patterns of civility:

[I will] endeavour all I can to follow your Advice, and compose my outward Shew to much more Content and Satisfaction than I feel within: Hoping that in time either Reason or Resentment will cure me of my Passion for the Conversation of a Person, who has so studiously contriv'd my losing it.

(Thomas, *Letters* 42)<sup>113</sup>

For all of Cotterell's advice, however, Philips remains distressed by the marriage and confides to her correspondent that, "I find too there are few Friendships in the World Marriage-proof", criticising Marcus Trevor for having a soul not "particularly capable of the Tenderness of that Endearment" (Thomas, *Letters* 42). The criticisms of Owen's marriage and her "changed" personality are a feature of the letters from Ireland during 1662-3. Philips's comments are often made in response to apparent remarks or advice provided by Cotterell, such as the letter of 20 August which begins:

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<sup>113</sup>See Appendix 8.

You say true, POLIARCHUS, I cannot be in a fit Humour to write any thing in Verse at a time when I expect each hour to be separated from my ever dear LUCASIA. A Blow for which you prepare me with so much Kindness and so excellent a Discourse, that I must needs bear it with greater Resolution, or be very undeserving of the Assistance you give me.

(Thomas, *Letters* 46)<sup>114</sup>

The relationship between them is expanded by the Owen marriage through Philips's confessions and Cotterell's subsequent involvement as a form of emotional adviser. The collapse of Cotterell's suit, which may have been beneficial for Philips in several ways--having the potential for her to profitably maintain the relationships with both Cotterell and Owen--leads to the re-casting of their relationship along less formal lines and more in the vein of a familiar correspondence, albeit one always self-conscious of the social order that founds it.

Apart from the Owen marriage, Philips contrives other ways to "privatise" her relationship with Cotterell. A regular feature of their correspondence is the exchange of letters containing poems or substantive text written in French or Italian. Beginning as translation exercises, the use of foreign languages between the two takes on a further dimension as the letters progress. On 12 April 1662, Philips thanks Cotterell for taking the care "to improve me in the *Italian*, by writing to me in that language" (Thomas, *Letters* 30. Original emphasis.). In the letter of 4 June 1662, after Philips has asked Cotterell to keep her observations of the Owen-Trevor marriage "under the Rose", she then asks him to forward any mail to the address she will

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<sup>114</sup>See Appendix 9.

occupy in Dublin, but asks that if he is to comment on the wedding to do so "in ITALIAN" (Thomas, *Letters* 38). Then again, on 2 May 1663, upon preparing to leave Ireland, Philips concludes a passage in which she laments leaving Owen and the efforts being made by Elizabeth Clifford, Lady Cork to arrange for Philips to travel to London, with the same instruction: "But write not one word either of this, or any thing that concerns CALANTHE, except in *Italian*" (Thomas, *Letters* 85. Original emphasis.). In June 1663, Philips writes another letter asking Cotterell to convince James Philips to permit her to travel to London and requests that the reply to "this Particular" be in Italian as well (Thomas, *Letters* 99). These plans are again mentioned in the final letter from Ireland in which Philips asks Cotterell to re-direct all mail back to Cardigan: "Particularly let me have your Answer in *Italian* concerning what I writ to you in my two last Letters, which I have not now time to repeat; but believe you enough understand me" (Thomas, *Letters* 100. Original emphasis.). The implication appears to be that her letters are under the threat of being read by third parties, whether maliciously or as part of the household routine, and that Cotterell should codify sensitive material by relating it in Italian. This establishment of an exchange of secrets further writes the relationship as a familiar rather than dutiful one. To which end, Philips's repeated complaints about the quality of the postal service, and the occasional necessity to send material "by private hand", underscore the value she places on the intimacy of their correspondence.<sup>115</sup> The privatisation of

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<sup>115</sup>It is interesting to note that after her sustained attack on the quality and security of the post in her letter of 17 September 1663, and the various jibes she has at its expense in the months afterwards, the improvement of the service towards the end of the year provokes a response that is, to some small degree, ironic considering the lengths she goes to with Cotterell to obscure her own correspondence from the eyes of those whom it concerns: "and now the Post is become honest, I expect to hear weekly from you, which

the relationship here also acts to hone Philips's rhetorical appeals to Cotterell's social status, which are largely based on formal models readily applicable to any potential patron, to the point where they can have *no other meaning* outside that shared between them. The familiarity that marks the correspondence is here intensified to include no one other than the correspondents. The latent voyeurism Guillén describes is altered so that the third reader cannot understand the letter, thereby depriving them of its contents but intensifying the gravity of its intimacy. The reading practices attached to these letters then are differentiated between the specified recipient of the letter, who is its only point of reference, and the excluded third parties whose interference warrants the added secrecy and who read its exclusivity as a marker of profound intimacy.

This intimacy is an essential element of Philips's correspondence. It is expressly referred to in the letter of 10 January 1663, when Philips articulates the bond she hopes can be established between the two correspondents. Whilst gently chiding Cotterell for omitting to tell her of a romantic attachment of his, which is apparently revealed as false, Philips remarks that "I verily believ'd you as arrant a Lover as ever you were, till you undeceiv'd me afterwards, and gave me just reason to acquit you of the Unkindness I laid to your Charge, in refusing to make me your Confident" (Thomas, *Letters* 68).<sup>116</sup> Philips continues by wishing Cotterell "the Change or Continuance of your Condition, as may be most conducive to your Happiness", and, more than that, asks that Cotterell "not to refuse me such a share in your Friendship, as may entitle me to the Knowledge of all that concerns

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next to your Friendship it self, is the greatest Obligation you can lay upon" (Thomas, *Letters* 124).

<sup>116</sup>See Appendix 12.

you" (Thomas, *Letters* 68). Like the letter to Dorothy Temple a year later, Philips offers her friendship as a "pure" bond untainted by considerations of favour or profit. Indeed, in this letter she stresses her own practical uselessness to Cotterell and instead represents her friendship as a spiritual bond from which Cotterell can draw succour.

tho' I can never deserve that Confidence, nor assist you in any thing, yet I can be as truly touch'd, and bear as great a part in all your good or ill Fortune, as any Person in the World; which, you know, is not the most inconsiderable use that can be made of a Friend.

(Thomas, *Letters* 68)

The privacy that characterises the Italian letters is an extension of the prevailing sense of intimacy Philips seeks to nurture through the correspondence, a convergence of souls in the enabling field of the letter.

The conceit of intimacy is not maintained for its own sake. The correspondence draws upon the social capital of Cotterell as a prominent member of the court and merges it with the concomitant position of "friend" built up with and by Philips. Although the most spectacular example of Cotterell's patronage helping Philips is the assistance provided in nurturing her literary career, I want to start with a less prominent incident but one that again demonstrates the attempts made by Philips to wed Cotterell's political and social influence to his personal connections to the Philips. In April 1662, James Philips's election as MP for Cardigan was disputed by his opponent and the result overturned (Thomas, *Letters* 31, fn.7). After failing to win back the seat on appeal, James Philips nominated Cotterell to stand in the by-election

and Katherine Philips refers to it in her letter to Cotterell of 18 April 1663. In that letter it transpires that Cotterell had not been informed of his nomination until after he had actually won the seat. By way of explanation, Philips argues that her husband, despite his disqualification, retained the support of the electorate and had nominated Cotterell and in doing so ensured his election (Thomas, *Letters* 82-83). Of their not telling Cotterell, Philips asks that he forgive this omission and accept it as a "Testimony of the eternal Value and Friendship that ANTENOR and ORINDA must ever have for the noble POLIARCHUS", adding that they "hope he will not be angry to be sent into the House without his own Consent or Knowledge" (Thomas, *Letters* 82). The capitalisation of "Value" and "Friendship" in the above passage, even with the intervention of editors, emphasises the relation between the two concepts in this correspondence. Later in the same letter, Philips expressly states the most desirable outcome of this convergence of patron and place: "Since you have this Relation to a place where our little Fortune and Interest lies, I hope it will be a new Tie to our Friendship" (Thomas, *Letters* 83).

Nominating Cotterell to the seat conjoins his rank and his friendship to their material location at the edge of the realm. The distance that lies between Cardigan and London--geographical and cultural--is ameliorated to some extent by this tangible connection between the court, the Parliament, and Cardigan. Staying with this letter, Philips is able to extract a further more immediate and material advantage from what is already a profitable set of associations when she writes: "But now you are a Member of Parliament, woe be to you for Letters; for if possible, I will increase that Persecution, since you will have but half the Inconvenience of them to excuse, I mean the trouble,

not the Charge" (Thomas, *Letters* 83).<sup>117</sup> Referring to the concession that provided MPs with free postage, Philips signals her intention to maintain the correspondence, and all the benefits accruing to it, whatever added advantages may be gained from Cotterell's election. Although no letters of Cotterell's survive, his reaction to his Parliamentary move is indicated in Philips's next letter where she begins: "I should take it unkindly of any one but POLIARCHUS, that could bestow so many unfriendly Compliments on ANTENOR" (Thomas, *Letters* 84). Thomas remarks that this reaction does not mean that Cotterell "was actually annoyed, but that he expressed his gratitude (real or feigned) with rather too much civility" (*Letters* 84, fn. 1). The immediate effect of any tremor of ambivalence from Cotterell in Philips's letters indicates the importance of his reactions to her activities. Philips's cautious jocularitas perhaps signals here, as elsewhere, the underlying insecurity of her position in relation to Cotterell and his connections to the nobility.

Philips seeks to draw upon this association with the court in the progress of her literary career. Her involvement with the coterie of royalist figures during the Interregnum, which was itself part of a wider sphere of royalist literary figures, saw her published as part of the body of commendatory verses prefacing the 1651 collection of Cartwright's work. This early association with influential although culturally disenfranchised royalist figures, as Thomas notes, meant that on the restoration of the monarchy she found herself linked to the "centre of court culture" (Thomas, *Poems* 15). This transformation of political fortunes meant a corresponding expansion in the opportunities for Philips's work to reach a wider audience, which is to say that although

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<sup>117</sup>See Appendix 14.

the audience remained royalist and upper class this stratum of society was now the primary source of power in England. Philips's emergence as a public writer is linked to two incidents, each of which involves the public exposure of her writing and the assistance of Cotterell, or other influential members of the nobility and gentry, to either aid or ameliorate the consequences of publication. The first is the successful stage production of her translation of Corneille's *La Mort de Pompée* (hereafter referred to as *Pompey*) in Dublin in 1663, the second is the apparently pirated edition of Philips's poetry published in London in January of 1664. Each of these publications, tracked through the correspondence to Cotterell, reveals an ongoing process of consultation, mediation, and supplication between Philips and a series of influential figures, especially Cotterell, designed to either promote her work or disassociate her from its unauthorised release.

On her trip to Ireland accompanying the newly married Anne Owen, Philips writes to Cotterell on 20 August 1662 that she has met "Lord ORRERY", by whom she means Roger Boyle, first earl of Orrery, and that "[b]y some Accident or another my Scene of POMPEY fell into his Hands, and he was pleas'd to like it so well, that he sent me the *French Original*" (Thomas, *Letters* 47). This "accident" is the initial event in the narrative that begins Philips's rise to literary success. Consistent with both the rhetoric of her previous correspondence and the concern that she not be seen to be courting attention, Philips seems almost embarrassed by Orrery's interest in her and claims she pursues the translation so as to not place the Lord in the improper position of being *her* suitor:

the next time I saw him, [Orrery] so earnestly  
importun'd me to pursue that Translation, that to

avoid the Shame of seeing him [...] become a  
Petitioner to me for such a Trifle, I obey'd him so far  
as to finish the Act in which that Scene is; so that the  
whole third Act is now *English*.

(Thomas, *Letters* 47)

Philips claims that she completed the Act in an attempt to "undeceive him in the partial Opinion he had of my capacity for such an Undertaking; and not doubting but he would have dispens'd with my farther Trouble therein" (Thomas, *Letters* 47). Contrary to her apparent expectations, Orrery encourages her to complete the play and gives her his own poems in praise of her by way of a "bribe" (Thomas, *Letters* 47-8). Her modest relation of these events to Cotterell is embellished with disclaimers on her ability to perform what Orrery asks or to believe the compliments heaped on her. For example, when Orrery asks that the whole play be translated after reading her rendering of the third Act, Philips writes to Cotterell that Orrery's actions were most probably motivated by a desire "to punish me for having done it so ill" (Thomas, *Letters* 47). In the next sentence Philips refuses to concede any work of hers would make her more proud than the possession of Cotterell's friendship. This is immediately followed by her request for his translation of Habert's *Le Temple de la Mort* to show to Orrery for which, "[to] bribe you yet farther, I will send you mine of POMPEY" (Thomas, *Letters* 48). The two men are played off against each other, Philips apparently displaying her influential acquaintances as satellites in orbit around her, whilst at the same time she is able to display her own talent to both of them. The letter ends with Philips again stepping back from accepting any of the praise directed at her and instead

complimenting Cotterell, as is the custom, but by way of Orrery's opinion of him:

But I have weary'd you as much with this Story, as he has with Commands which I am so unable to perform. He knows you, for he speaks of you with a great deal of Honour and Esteem, and therein, much more than by all his Compliments to me, has not only discover'd his Judgment, but oblig'd, &c.  
ORINDA.

(Thomas, *Letters* 49)

Philips's narrative situates her as the unwitting object of noble desire, propelled onwards by the force of his rank and the depth of his generosity. This scene is related to Cotterell so as to involve him in the circuit of desire and production, linking him to her project by sending him her translation, invoking his presence through a letter.

The invocation of presence and its reflection of the subject's capacity for self-representation through writing is an integral element in the epistolary experience. In the letters regarding her rise to literary prominence, part of the object of Philips's correspondence is to retain Cotterell's affections, and the benefits attached to them, by stressing the material connection formed between them by the letters. As an example, on the 4 June 1662 Philips thanks Cotterell for his letter relating Catherine of Braganza's arrival in Portsmouth "which you have so wonderfully describ'd in Prose, that I doubt very much whether it can be equall'd by any of our Poets in Verse" (Thomas, *Letters* 37). Cotterell's description of the queen's arrival indicates a level of commitment to the correspondence, a desire to invoke the scene in writing so as to vicariously include Philips in the event. Philips's

reference to the inadequacy of commendatory poems to match Cotterell's description is a subtle aside to her own involvement in a collection of verses celebrating the arrival. On 6 September 1662, Philips refers to Cotterell's description of the queen's entrance into London by remarking that "Your Description of the Queen's Entrance is as lively, as that seems to have been glorious" (Thomas, *Letters* 52). The equivalence between Cotterell's descriptive capacities and the queen's presence is mirrored in Philips's earlier claiming in the same letter that Cotterell's generosity reflects the king's benefaction in passing the Act of Oblivion (Thomas, *Letters* 52). The dynamics of Philips's rhetoric establish Cotterell as a vicarious monarch over her realm, again stressing the link between Philips's sense of self and the cultural and symbolic potency of the court. Philips repeatedly ascribes to Cotterell's presence a superior value to her own yet seeks to validate her own position through association with that presence.

As the translation of *Pompey* proceeds throughout 1662, Philips makes sure to involve Cotterell as the junction point between her writing and its reception at court. On 19 October 1662, Philips writes to Cotterell and begins her letter with an extended panegyric on Cotterell's qualities before relating her recent activities, all of which concludes with a reminder that her translation of *Pompey* will soon arrive with him, "which I fear will not be deem'd worthy to breathe in a place where so many of the greatest Wits have so long clubb'd for another of the same Play" (Thomas, *Letters* 55). Philips refers to a rival translation of *Pompey* that was being written by a collection of court wits and which was released after her translation had been published and performed (Thomas, *Letters* 49, fn.13). Her deference to the rival translation, and to the inferiority of her version, are standard tropes a

prudent woman writer of the period would employ. Yet Philips ensures Cotterell's involvement by nominating him as the final arbiter of her writing's quality, and so she ends the letter pleading "I long to know your Opinion of it, which I am sure you will give me with all the Freedom and Sincerity of true Friendship" (Thomas, *Letters* 55). This loaded request, recalling Whigham's observation that "the force of imposing on the patron the mantle of generosity" often meant that refusal "disconfirmed the *patron's* status, not the petitioners" ("Rhetoric" 874), places Cotterell in the position of deciding whether or not to validate not just Philips's translation but the amicability on which the correspondence is apparently founded. Philips locates herself at the (passive) centre of a network of social signifiers that align her with models of modest femininity and Cotterell with the role of patron. This representation of herself is within the prevailing cultural discourses of (female) acceptability and as such can only be received positively by the representatives of those discourses. Such a strategy relies on the fact that reading "is overprinted by a relationship of forces [...] whose instrument it becomes" (Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* 171) and that Cotterell, as with any other reader aligned with the culture's defining discourses, cannot fail but to respond positively to a writing that appears to embody those discourses.

The next letter in the correspondence further involves Cotterell in the proliferation of the translation by seeking his amendment of the text. Before hearing from Cotterell, Philips writes again and asks that he change some of the dialogue, although qualifying that "this and all the rest of it is intirely submitted to your Judgment", and indeed that "had you been near me, my Lord ORRERY should not have seen one line of it, before it had pass'd your File; for till then I can

entertain none but distrustful Thoughts of it" (Thomas, *Letters* 60). This appears to be an attempt to further secure Cotterell's involvement in the project as Philips immediately relates how the play has been distributed amongst the nobility with whom she is associating in Dublin: "There are, tho' much against my Will, more Copies of it abroad than I could have imagin'd" (Thomas, *Letters* 60). Philips is careful not to allow Cotterell to be excluded from this expansion in her profile, declaring of the proliferating copies that "I disclaim them all till I see the Corrections you have made, which I beg of you to send me by the first Opportunity, that I may, before I go hence, correct the other Copies by yours" (Thomas, *Letters* 61). Cotterell is cast here as the rescuer of Philips's reputation, as a writer and a woman, whose superior skills are required to prevent her from embarrassing herself. So when Philips replies to the first of Cotterell's responses to the play, which appear to have been favourable, she cautiously writes "you read the two first Acts of POMPEY with so favourable a Prepossession, as would not give you leave to form a right Judgment of them" (Thomas, *Letters* 62).<sup>118</sup> For all of Cotterell's evident sanction, Philips continues to repudiate her work's merit and insists on Cotterell's intervention as the necessary step before presenting the play to the Duchess of York, who had previously received poems by Philips and whom Cotterell has apparently suggested would be amenable to receiving *Pompey*:

let it receive the last finishing Strokes from your excellent Pen; that it may be a tolerable Offering to be laid at the Feet of that great Person for whom I design'd it; And therefore, since you have encourag'd me to believe that an Address to her

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<sup>118</sup>See Appendix 11.

might be pardon'd, I have taken the Assurance to obey you in writing one of a few lines only, not daring to rob her of her time by any length of reading.

(Thomas, *Letters* 62)

Philips places the task of representing her to the Duchess on Cotterell, claiming "I am so certain of your Good-will towards me, that I cannot doubt, but when you present it to her, you will say much more in my behalf than I have either Courage or Skill to say for my self", and further, that her admiration for the Duchess is such that "the Bounds of my utmost Ambition aspire no higher, than to be able to give her one Moment's Entertainment" (Thomas, *Letters* 62). As such, Cotterell has become the vehicle for Philips's ambition, he mediates her writing and invokes her presence before the royal person. Her cultivation of his readings is shown here to be a prudent preparation for the social elevation of her writing. Having written herself into Cotterell's approbation, Philips now seeks legitimation from those at the centre of court culture. Philips acknowledges the value of her sudden visibility in the royal field of vision when she immediately asks Cotterell to present the play as soon as possible as;

in spite of all I could do to prevent it, so many copies are already abroad, that the particular Respect intended to the Dutchess, will be lost by a little Delay. Besides, the other Translation, done by so many eminent hands, will otherwise appear first, and throw this into everlasting Obscurity; unless it get as much the start of that in Time, as it comes behind it in Merit.

(Thomas, *Letters* 62)

Gestures of humility aside, Philips's letter establishes her writing project as a joint enterprise in the sense that whilst the substantive product is the result of her efforts, its introduction to the "right" audience is dependant upon an association with Cotterell's corrective and endorsing hand. By crediting Cotterell, Philips attaches his credibility to her work and makes its reception at court more likely to succeed before it even arrives there. In effect, she makes Cotterell's reputation depend on the play's success as well and so enlists his intimate knowledge of the court's customs and proclivities to her cause. Thus the culture she seeks sanction from is employed to represent her work to itself.

Over the next two months, December and January 1662/3, Philips's letters reflect this appropriative strategy through constant references to her anxiety at the play's imminent presentation to the Duchess and repeated requests for Cotterell to correct her text. These anxieties culminate in the letter of 31 January 1663 in which Philips reports that her apparent acceptance at court coincides with a minor eruption of activity surrounding the play in Dublin. In this letter, Philips refers Cotterell to additional songs she has composed for *Pompey* and which she has sent to him for approval. Philips links

Cotterell's role as her literary arbiter to the imminent Dublin production by claiming that the additional songs were his idea and are the reason the play has made it to the stage. The letter asks that Cotterell not be "barbarously severe" (Thomas, *Letters* 74) with the songs when he considers them.<sup>119</sup> Philips argues that Cotterell's informing her of the endorsement of the Duchess of York and the Bishop of Worcester, as well as his own support, is the reason the songs exist at all. As a result, Philips's jests with Cotterell that his responsibility for the songs means "you are bound either to suppress or support and protect them, like a true Knight Errant, against all the Pyrates you wot of" (Thomas, *Letters* 74). Philips's attribution of responsibility to Cotterell is extended to insist that the play is only going ahead because of the addition of these songs.

I am sure I have cause to wish I had never made any of them; for I think thay have been the chief reason that has made my Lord ORRERY resolve to have POMPEY acted here, which, notwithstanding all my Intreaties to the contrary, he is going on with [.]

(Thomas, *Letters* 74-75)

This letter's flurry of self-abnegation barely veils Philips's explicit location of herself within a network of influential figures in Irish and English society. Her mention of Orrery's involvement is later supplemented by her (reluctant) observation that "[a]ll the other Persons of Quality here are also very earnest to bring it upon the Stage, and seem resolv'd to endure the Penance of seeing it play'd on *Tuesday* come sevensnight" (Thomas, *Letters* 75. Original emphasis.) Her reporting of her Irish success to Cotterell effectively sustains the endurance of her

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<sup>119</sup>See Appendix 13.

presence at court in London through him. By continually fostering the connection with Cotterell, Philips remains a presence at court. Indeed, at the conclusion to this letter, in which she again complains of the play condemning her "to be expos'd" (Thomas, *Letters* 75), Philips claims Cotterell to be "a Courtier in commending my Prose, yet I profess to you I am not so in declaring my self" (Thomas, *Letters* 76). This final declaration effectively summarises the relationship that has developed between the two; Philips never has to "declare her self" because she has Cotterell to do that for her. By acting as the screen through which Philips's work must pass before entering the court, Cotterell's readings legitimate the play and make it acceptable for further, more exulted consumption. Nowhere is this more clearly demonstrated than in the letter of 8 April 1663, in which Philips, after informing Cotterell some copies of *Pompey* are on their way to him, asks: "Be pleas'd to get one bound and present it to the Dutchess; and if you think the King would allow such a Trifle in his Closet, let him have another" (Thomas, *Letters* 77).<sup>120</sup> Through the agency of Cotterell, and the adaptive capacity of the letter to reproduce a version of the self that is acceptable to the interests he represents, Philips's writing travels from Ireland to the closet of the monarch.<sup>121</sup>

With the publication of *Pompey*, Philips makes the decision not to have her name printed on the text and asks Cotterell to

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<sup>120</sup> It is worth noting that Philips here again asks that Cotterell amend the text before it is presented to the duchess or the king, thereby gaining his imprimatur. Yet she also plays Cotterell off against Orrery when she confesses that she prefers an amendment suggested by Cotterell but that Orrery will not hear of the change "and so it is, to please his Humour, tho' against my Will and Judgment too" (Thomas, *Letters* 78). Her willingness to be pragmatic about the advice she receives, given that Orrery is financing the production of *Pompey* in Dublin, suggests the ideals of friendship are not without their practical limitations.

<sup>121</sup> *Pompey* was presented to Charles II in May 1663. In her letter of the 23rd, Philips remarks: "I thank you for presenting POMPEY to his MAJESTY, and for the favourable Account you give me of his Royal Goodness for that Trifle" (Thomas, *Letters* 90).

endorse her decision. In the letter of 23 May 1663, Philips concedes control of her text to Cotterell but places a qualifier on publication: "I consent to whatever you think fit to do about printing it, but conjure you by all our mutual Friendship, not to put my name to it, nay, no so much as the least mark or hint whereby the Publick may guess from whence it came" (Thomas, *Letters* 90). The text is to be dedicated to the Duchess of York and Philips acknowledges "[I would] rather to seem rude in her Opinion, than so confident both in hers and the World's, as to imagine that any thing I could produce were worthy her Acceptance and Protection, or the Notice or Regard of the Publick" (Thomas, *Letters* 90). Again, a sensitivity to being perceived to be acting outside accepted cultural boundaries provokes Philips into making a self-effacing gesture that simultaneously legitimates her as a (virtuous) woman and secures her writing's success. This act seems more extreme than it perhaps is. Her unwillingness may stem from the unfavourable implications associated with publication; that she might give "the appearance of actively seeking fame" (Medoff 37) would certainly damage her adherence to models of feminine submission and thereby delimit the extent to which her acquiescence to these models aided in her "circumventing common exclusions" (H. Smith 154). Elaine Hobby points out that the absence of her name from the text did not suggest the anonymity Philips optimistically infers in her letter:

The prologue to the play [...] and its epilogue [written by men] both identify the author as female. Given Philips's reputation as a translator, and the fact that she was living in Dublin during the play's much-acclaimed performance there, it is likely that her

identity was common knowledge, at least among those whose opinion of her she valued.

(Hobby 130)

Prudence seems to dictate Philips's actions here. Maintaining good relations with the court, even in the act of apparently erasing her name from the dedication to the Duchess, sustains her deferential posture even when notoriety, in the form of some popular success, seems inevitable. In the same letter of the 23rd, Philips's desire to not gain public attention is once more set against her desire to please the Duchess. She suggests that a plain form of dedication, such as that seen in French texts, be used: "If you think this be proper, let it be so; for I am in a great streight between the Desire I have to appear intirely devoted to the Dutchesse, and not to appear at all in my true Colours to the World" (Thomas, *Letters* 90-91).

It is this desire to maintain at least the appearance of acceptability that determines Philips's responses to her work, even as it acquires widespread acclaim. In the dedicatory poem, "To her royall highnesse, the Dutchesse of Yorke, on her command to send her some things I had wrote", Philips protests:

These humble papers never durst come neare,  
Had not your powerfull word bid them appeare;  
In which such majestie, such sweetnesse dwells,  
As in one Act obligeth and compells.

(Thomas, *Poems* 80, ll. 5-9)

And similarly, in "To the Countess of Roscomon, with a Copy of *Pompey*", Philips opens with:

Great *Pompey's* Fame from Egypt made escape,  
And flies to you for succour in this shape:

A shape, which, I assur'd him, would appear,  
Nor fit for you to see, nor him to wear.  
Yet he says, madam, he's resolved to come,  
And run a hazard of a second doom:

(Thomas, *Poems* 223, ll. 1-6)

The play demands it be written. Philips's disclaimers reduce the author almost to an autonomic vehicle for both the writing and its subsequent success. This neatly aligns her with a desirable feminine passivity in a culture where women writers' reputations were "essentially inseparable" (Medoff 35) from their reputations as women. In her letter of 17 September 1663, Philips remarks to Cotterell that she has read part of the rival version of *Pompey* produced by the court wits and, although she finds some admirable aspects, is not coy about expressing her disappointment with other of its qualities:

I wonder their Verses are any where either flat or rough, which you will observe them not seldom to be; besides, their Rhymes are frequently very bad, but what chiefly disgusts me is, that the Sence most commonly languishes through three or four Lines, and then ends in the middle of the fifth: For I am of the Opinion, that the Sence ought always to be confin'd to the Couplet, otherwise the Lines must be spiritless and dull.

(Thomas, *Letters* 103)

Yet despite this articulate, and sharp, criticism of the rival translation, when Philips comes to conclude the letter she retreats from this forthrightness into the circumspection of manners.<sup>122</sup>

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<sup>122</sup>In the letter of 24 December 1663, Philips refers to a poem of Edmund Waller's

You know me as far from Envy, as those Gentlemen are above it, and therefore will not impute the Freedom I have taken in these remarks to that or any other Passion, but purely to my Opinion, and the Liberty I take of telling it to so intimate a Friend as POLIARCHUS; for after all I really think the worst of their Lines equal to the best in my Translation.

(Thomas, *Letters* 103-04)

Her reading is here literalised as writing and, as such, remains under the scrutiny of Cotterell's gaze. Even if Cotterell is regarded as a benevolent figure, Philips is careful never to stray outside the formal, rhetorical parameters of courtesy in her letters to him. His favour must be retained and any expression of personal opinion, especially one that criticises the abilities of members of Society, must always be recuperated by a final declaration of personal humility and fidelity to Cotterell and his class. In this case, friendship is the discourse that facilitates that recuperation. Friendship is used to secure opinion within the privacy of the correspondence, thereby placing the success of Philips's literary

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presented to the queen on her recovery from illness, the subject of a poem by Philips also presented to the queen. In the letter Philips, in the course of assessing the worth of her own poem, refers to Waller's effort: "Mr. WALLER has, it may be, contributed not a little to encourage me in this Vanity, by writing on the same Subject the worst Verses that ever fell from his Pen. I could be an outrageous Critick upon them, if I were not restrain'd by other Considerations" (Thomas, *Letters* 119). Those "other considerations" clearly include the prospect of incurring Waller's ridicule at court, an example of which was inflicted upon Margaret Cavendish, Duchess of Newcastle and is referred to by Philips in this letter: "I have been told that he once said, he would have given all his own Poems to have been the Author of that which my Lady NEWCASTLE writ of a Stag. And that being tax'd for his Insincerity by one of his Friends, he answer'd, that he could do no less in gallantry than be willing to devote all his own Papers to save the Reputation of a Lady, and keep her from the Disgrace of having written anything so ill" (Thomas, *Letters* 119-20). Philips's reputation is clearly at the forefront of her mind here.

ventures, based as it is on acceptance amongst "people of quality", with Cotterell.<sup>123</sup>

Given Philips's concern with the opinion of Society, the apparently unsanctioned publication of her poems in January 1664 produces a similarly self-abnegating response from Philips as she attempts to distance herself from the scandal. As discussed, this letter harnesses the potency of the letter format, with the pretence of privacy and the "sincerity" associated with it, for the purposes of public denial. The letter's attempts to limit the damage to her reputation, as well as recuperate any damage actually done, constitute the its primary function. Her assertion that Cotterell's "credit in the World will gain me a belief from all that are knowing and civil" speaks not just to this affair, but to her conduct throughout the correspondence. That this letter is produced at all belies Philips's own exhortation to Berenice some five years earlier in which she propounds "it were equally ridiculous and impossible to shape our Actions by others *Opinions*" (Thomas, *Letters* 3. Original emphasis.). Philips's "true Thoughts" reflect a desire on her part to both consolidate a public persona that accords with social conventions surrounding female behaviour and to re-assert her connection with that particular stratum of society she had been cultivating since the 1650s. Germaine Greer asserts that the chronology of events surrounding the pirated publication suggests that Philips may have in fact been responsible for the publication. Greer cites financial difficulties as a motivation, and that the letter from Cotterell that provokes Philips outpouring of justification may have actually been informing her of *his* action to withdraw the collection,

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<sup>123</sup>For a fuller discussion of Philips's criticism of the rival translation and an analysis of both texts, see Philip Webster Souers, *The Matchless Orinda*. Cambridge, Ma.: Harvard UP, 1931. 196-205.

causing her to try to make amends with him: "once it had been made clear to her that her mentors considered publication an injury to herself and her reputation, Philips had no option but to clamour for the book's withdrawal" (160).<sup>124</sup> The implication here is that Cotterell had moved against the publication before Philips could, or had decided she wanted to. Whether Greer's assertions are correct or not, the imperative to secure her good relations with Cotterell and the approval of the nobility in general remained the same for Philips in the aftermath of this incident.

### **"Spell you to all that Read & understand": The Meanings of Letters.**

Certeau claims reading as a timeless, placeless activity equivalent to poaching; readers "move across lands belonging to someone else, like nomads poaching their way across fields they did not write" (*Practice of Everyday Life* 174). The historical narrative of such a practice is inevitably obscured by its very intangibility. Certeau observes that "the story of man's travels through his own texts remains in large measure unknown" (*Practice of Everyday Life* 170). Such conditions render an analysis of early modern reading practices uncertain and vague. As a starting point for thinking historically about reading, Roger Chartier argues that the analysis of reading as a practice requires attention be paid to the conditions in which it occurs:

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<sup>124</sup>Greer claims that the correlation between the pirated poems and the authorised copy is too close for a random publication of poor facsimiles to be the case and that for Philips "the money to be made from the clandestine sale of her verse to a publisher might well have seemed irresistible" (163). She argues that the poems' identification of the personalities behind the pastoral names exposed the coterie, and its private concerns, to public scrutiny. Given the status of many of the persons involved, Cotterell's apparent action to withdraw the collection would seem to be judicious: see Germaine Greer, *Slip-Shod Sybils: Recognition, Rejection, and the Woman Poet*. London: Viking, 1995. 156-64.

To reconstruct in its historical dimensions this process of the 'actualization' of texts above all requires us to realize that their meaning depends upon the forms through which they are received and appropriated by their readers (or listeners). Readers, in fact, never confront abstract, idealized texts detached from any materiality. They hold in their hands or perceive objects and forms whose structures and modalities govern their reading or hearing, and consequently the possible comprehension of the text read or heard.

("Laborers" 50)

Chartier argues that "a history of modes of reading must identify the specific dispositions that distinguish communities of readers and traditions of reading" ("Laborers" 51). Part of such a process is acknowledging the distinctions between the reading practices of different groups, such as "defining for each community of readers the legitimate uses of the book, the forms of reading, and the instruments and procedures of interpretation" ("Laborers" 51). Acknowledging that "the history of reading must be radically distinguished from the history of what is read" ("Laborers" 51) includes an awareness of the processes of our own (academic, historically distant) practices and how we construct the letters as texts. It also means that the conditions and practices of reading prevalent at the time of the letters' composition need to be accepted if we are to see the letters as anything other than components in a broad, totalising narrative of history. Chartier draws two propositions from Certeau's work on reading that are important to my treatment of Philips's letters:

The first reminds us, against all the reductions that cancel out the creative and inventive force of practices, that reading is never totally constrained and that it cannot be recursively deduced from the texts to which it is applied. The second emphasizes that the tactics of readers, infiltrating the 'special space' [...] produced by the strategies of writing, obey certain rules, logics, and models. Thus is articulated the founding paradox of any history of reading, which must postulate the freedom of a practice of which, broadly, it can only grasp the determinations.

("Laborers" 59)

Whilst the form and function of the letters seek certain responses from their readers, the actual practices these readers apply cannot be predicted or secured.

A history of reading remains difficult because it leaves few traces and "slips through all sorts of 'writings' that have yet to be clearly determined" (Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* 170). William Sherman's analysis of early modern reading, centred around a study of John Dee, focuses primarily on "scholarly reading practices" (60), yet does make the point that the "most general principle that emerges from [...] sources is the supreme value early modern writers placed on the application--particularly the political application--of reading" (65).<sup>125</sup> If

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<sup>125</sup>Lisa Jardine and Anthony Grafton, with Chartier in mind, conduct a detailed examination of Gabriel Harvey, who was employed in the household of the Earl of Leicester as a "professional reader", with an eye to revealing "conjunctions of reading practice and application to specified goals" (33), particularly political ones. See Lisa Jardine and Anthony Grafton, "'Studied for Action': How Gabriel Harvey Read his

one reads this comment against Rosemary Huisman's observation that the development of print transformed handwriting, the medium of the personal letter, into a "new social space for textual production" in which, as a private practice, it becomes "associated with the author, with the notion of the signature and the autograph as authenticating the text" (129), Philips's epistolary strategy seems to make sense. This is further supported by Huisman's assertion that written language "which is deliberately not printed, whose circulation can be controlled more easily, becomes the means of elite genres. 'Subjectivity' (and individual status) resides in the handwritten [...]" (129).

Philips's emphasis on the discourse of friendship is substantiated by the legitimising presence of the handwritten, the mark of the authentically personal. The reader comes to these texts with a series of visual cues, the most fundamental of which is the writing's physical presence, which acts as a "clearly differentiated visual object" (Huisman 127).<sup>126</sup> That these semiotic and linguistic tools are used in the pursuit of social mobility suggest Philips's awareness of the potency of employing such tropes of intimacy and personal divulgement with her "superiors". Although Sherman's study does not redress Certeau's complaint that there are virtually no investigations of "ordinary reading" dealing with "its modalities and its typology" (*Practice of Everyday Life* 170), Sherman's observation does relate to Philips's letters inasmuch as it draws our attention to the political and social "application" to which Philips seems to direct her writing. Lisa Jardine

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Livy." *Past & Present* 129 (1990): 30-78.

<sup>126</sup>Huisman's text deals with poetry and the ways in which the composition, style, and visual arrangement of poetry form an interdependent semiotic network in the early modern period. Whilst my focus is on letter-writing, I would argue that the principle on which Huisman bases her argument is applicable to my own project to the extent that both forms of writing are heavily structured and rely on certain visual and perceptual responses from their readers: see Huisman 127-42.

and Anthony Grafton explicitly direct their examination of Gabriel Harvey's readings, traced through notations in texts and other correspondence, towards a particular kind of "purposeful reading in progress" (32). Their context is practices of "directed reading conducted in the circle (and under the auspices) of prominent Elizabethan political figures" (Jardine and Grafton 32). For Jardine and Grafton, such a field of activity presents a unique opportunity to reveal networks of political affiliation and how the participants in these networks utilised the readings of the scholars retained in their service (33). A similar exercise might be possible for Philips's letters if Cotterell's half of the correspondence had survived. Without Cotterell's letters the relationship is represented only through the (self-interested) perspective of Philips's letters and their rhetorical priorities.

Even so, the rhetorical manoeuvring of Philips's letters traces the trajectory of her concerns at particular points in time. Reading the letters as reactive attempts to sustain or regain favour provides a certain insight into the complexity of the association between writing and reading in this (political, cultural, personal) environment. No record of Cotterell's exists to say whether or not the favour Philips covets is seriously diminished, even during the "scandal" of 1664, and Philips's anxieties may simply reflect a rhetorical trope of uncertainty and servility integral to the epistolary etiquette of the culture. Yet Philips's success indicates a complementarity between her writing and the reading (and readers) that receive it. For even if the multitude of evasions and untraceable diversions present in the reading process undermine the strategic intentions of her letters, it appears that her readers were located within the closed circuit of rhetorical and symbolic reference points she writes to. The "ordinary reader", whatever they

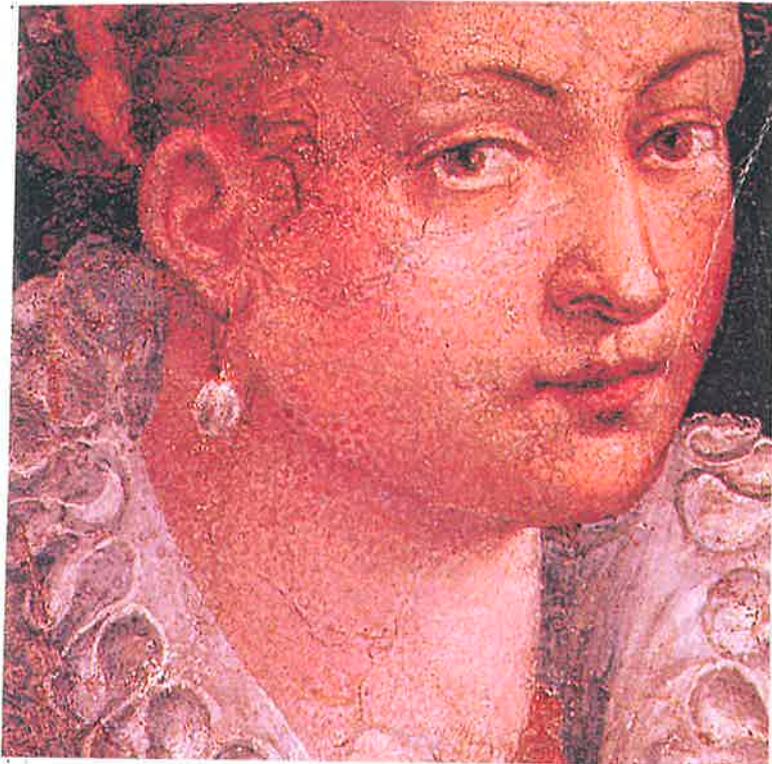
may take from Philips's letters, is not the reader for whom Philips intended her words. This is perhaps best demonstrated in the letter of disclaimer she invites Cotterell to "shew [...] to any body that suspects my Ignorance or Innocence" (Thomas, *Letters* 125). Although this letter is directed at a public audience, and eventually finds itself prefacing the public edition of her poems, its text reveals her prime audience to be "all that are knowing and civil" (Thomas, *Letters* 129). Her resolve "not to appear at all in my true Colours to the World" (Thomas, *Letters* 91) indicates a desire to be located within the dominant constructions of meaning (to) which her letters speak.

Reading perhaps forms the elusive reply to the elaboration of writing practices conducted in this section. To attempt, as Chartier observes, to "inventory and account for a practice--reading--that rarely leaves traces, is scattered into an infinity of singular acts, and purposely frees itself from all the constraints seeking to subdue it" is, at the very least, "a disquieting challenge" ("Laborers" 50). It is the more so here where the readings of both correspondents must be deciphered from one party's heavily rhetorical writings. Yet Philips's letters do provide a complex and skilful model of writing that responds to, and where possible takes advantage of, its cultural parameters. Certeau speaks of the trajectories of individual practices that "trace out the ruses of other interests and desires that are neither determined nor captured by the systems in which they develop" (*The Practice of Everyday Life* xviii) and in Philips's writing these ruses are visible. They do not evade strategic objectives so much as use them as means to achieve an important and precarious end: acceptance. That she writes her plays and has her poems published speaks to her "ways of operating" (*The Practice of Everyday*

*Life* xix) within systems of power that would notionally, and for a variety of cultural reasons, insist on her silence.

Philips's letters are designed to attach her identity as a writer and a woman to the central locus of power and influence in Restoration England. To achieve this she must write herself along multiple lines of conformity to a series of culturally determined paradigms and ensure that her words, the identity she writes, is read by the appropriate people in the appropriate places in the appropriate way. The longing of Philips's letters is the longing for distance travelled and presence manifested, converging in the residences of Society, the jostling for position at court, and the closet of the king. It might be possible to argue that the sudden intervention of death enabled her to be re-assimilated by the culture, her silence allowing the image left at her death to be memorialised. It must be remembered, however, that this image was, in most respects, her own creation; the re-inscription of prevailing norms facilitated the legitimacy her work might never have attained alone.

## "an art of the weak": Conclusions



I inquire into the desire whose impossible  
object [she] represents.

- Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of  
Everyday Life* vii.

Space reaches *from* us and construes the  
world

- Rainer Maria Rilke, "What birds  
plunge through is not the intimate space".

In the course of his elaboration on Certeau's "contribution to cultural studies" (97), Ian Buchanan argues that Certeau's work is interested "not in the production of difference, but in different productions" ("Introduction" 99). By this he means that Certeau emphasises "the modality of practices" ("Introduction" 98) over their products or results. Part of the difficulty with such an approach is that it seeks as its object something that cannot be seen, something that produces nothing but itself "but does not even have itself to show for its efforts":

It is a hidden production because it takes place in fields already defined and occupied by large production-systems [...] which according to a logic of scale tend to swamp the non-systemic with their outputs, and because there is no place where this other production could actually exhibit itself.

(Buchanan, "Introduction" 99)

My thesis has concentrated on three particular examples of such elusive practices and attempted to trace them within the "large production-systems" of early modern England. In this final section I will review the methodological and interpretative objectives outlined in the introduction and determine the value of Certeau's heterological model to my project's cultural and historical specificities.

I do not intend to use these concluding remarks to produce a list of definitive results on the objective applicability or otherwise of Certeau's work to early modern English cultural studies. My application of Certeau's work in this project has not been concerned with any broader, systematic theoretical or interpretative engagement. Certeau's influence on contemporary early modern studies, particularly

new historicism and cultural materialism, is already visible in his "emphasis on the critical potential of everyday reading" and the potential for "untheorised, local and aberrant" practices of consumption to "mark a break with accepted practice" (Colebrook 113). There is no clear delineation between "useful" and "useless" theoretical models. Rather, there is a complex interplay of ideas in which Certeau's work finds expression in diverse, composite critical positions. Here, I want to track the issues that drive my engagement with Certeau and the effect they have on the completed project.

I begin in the middle of the project and the discussion of Eleanor Davies. I begin here because the emphasis on the production of writing in my analysis of Davies's texts points to the larger issue of how we read cultural practices for which Certeau's work is extremely valuable. In the discussion of Davies's writings, Certeau's concepts of mystic and possessed speech are cited to help explain the interplay between Subject and the divine Other that occurs in the tracts. The problem of attempting to transpose models developed in relation to Counter-Reformation Catholicism onto radical Protestant prophetic writing is raised in the section and never fully resolved. The nuances of Certeau's theological work, and that dealing with early modern Catholic practices, are not elaborated in my project. In this respect my focus on possession and *mystics* fails to fully establish the theological, cultural, or historical milieu in which these practices, as Certeau outlines them, function. This is because my project seeks not so much to deal with doctrinal issues as scriptural ones. These "scriptural" concerns relate to Certeau's work on the "scriptural economy", the systems of writing that "organize and divide social space, instituting forms of hierarchy and engaging different sections of society in diversely prescribed relations

with each other" (Ahearne, *Michel de Certeau* 53). My attention is directed towards the elaboration of possession and *mystics* as forms of writing rather than as reflections of specific theological positions. In this sense, their application may be seen to be more pragmatic than comprehensive. Yet the elaboration of writing practices, as part of the "cultural logic" of early modern society, reveals the unifying theme of my project: that individual practices form complex, and often elusive, spaces within normative cultural structures.

Davies's writings proceed from a radical Protestant position, one that informs a discourse of individuation that locates identity in a subject's own conscience. Certeau links the development of writing as a mythical practice with the Reformation's focus on Scripture as a renewing force for Christianity.

The myth of the Reformation is that the Scriptures provide, in the midst of a corrupt society and a decadent Church, a model one can use to re-form both society and the Church. A return to the origins, not only those of the Christian West, but also that of the universe itself, to find a genesis giving a body to the *Logos* and incarnating it so that it can once again but in a different way 'become flesh'.

*(The Practice of Everyday Life 144)*

This journey from "one broad order of writing and speech to another" (Ahearne "Introduction" 154), from the Church as the vessel of divinity to the individual's own experience of God, forms a broad theme of my thesis. The individual practices of the women considered in this study reflect their assumption that privatised subjectivity, located within a

network of regulating discourses, underscores the creation of meaning within their culture. That is not to say that my project has sought to privilege these women as fully-formed agents who act to resist oppressive, totalising discourses in the pursuit of individual freedom. Rather, it has sought to trace the practices of these women and to discern the ways in which these practices open up space within the proper order of place. And further, I have sought to show that these practices do not operate in a single, predictable, or even resistant fashion but demonstrate Buchanan's argument that "it is not simply a matter of articulating an elusive set of phenomena by superimposing a grid [...] the practices themselves are conditioned by this grid" ("Introduction" 100).

The analysis of Davies's texts comes to focus on the practices of reading and writing. In the broad arc of Certeau's work, writing and reading operate as part of a series of concepts that elaborate how "power is resisted and co-opted by 'consumers'" (Colebrook 113). Included in this series are the binaries strategy/tactic and place/space, both of which share with reading and writing a focus on the capacity of particular and uncontrollable practices, motivated by unforeseen desires and interests, to evade, re-employ, or outwit strategic discourses of conformity and control. The section devoted to Margaret Hoby's diary underscores the capacity of these individual practices to insinuate themselves into religious faith, one of the central discourses of early modern culture. Yet this section also demonstrates the transience of these practices. Although hinted at in the notations of the diary, Hoby's use of the house and estate, in conjunction with practices of private prayer and self-examination, is a temporal activity that ceases to exist when its performance ends: "[t]here is no place to look for this production [...]"

except where by definition it cannot be seen" (Buchanan "Introduction" 99). Hoby's text points to an absence, the explanation of which brings into focus the interpretative act brought to bear on it. The section relies on an imaginative act to initiate examination, a constellation of cultural and historical discourses is arranged around the silences and absences of the diary to put Hoby and her practices into relief. It is this fleeting and suggestive image of movement that drives the examination, but Certeau's interpretative model sustains what might otherwise be a purely speculative exercise. Rather than insist on the diary's reproduction of a fully-integrated and culturally compliant subject, my reading of the diary emphasises the extent to which Hoby's practices form fleeting but particular spaces and gaps within the strategic places of the early modern household. These spaces are not permanent, nor are they necessarily established in opposition to the existing cultural milieu. Indeed, it is Hoby's location within a series of prescriptive cultural discourses that enables these spaces to come into being. Certeau explicitly argues that a multitude of everyday practices and ways of operating are tactical and enable "victories of the 'weak' over the 'strong' (whether the strength be that of powerful people or the violence of things or of an imposed order, etc.)" (*The Practice of Everyday Life* xix). This capacity to see past the panoptic, cartographic perspective is what enables the reading of Hoby's diary conducted in this project to proceed.

Such a reading of Hoby's diary encompasses more than just Certeau's elaborations of space and place. The inter-relation between reading practices and discourses of historiography also constitute part of the methodology that enables this project. Hoby's diary offers a space in which other ways of seeing can produce other meanings. The focus on

practices seeks not to reproduce Hoby as subversive or even resistant, nor as a "complete" individual oppressed by foreign and hostile forces. Hoby emerges from my reading as engaged in a complex of accommodating and appropriative activities that both comply with and co-opt their surroundings when and as they can. This reading relies on the suggestiveness of movement in the diary. Certeau argues that the "violence of the body reaches the written page only through absence" (*Writing of History* 3), and in Hoby's case the "violence" is the body's habitation of a cultural scene, the house, and its residual appearance in the diary. To read this text in this manner, however, requires an acknowledgment of reading as a creative, uncontrolled act. In this way, the interpretation of Hoby's text must itself yield to the potentialities of reading rather than remain confined within established historiographical discourses. As such, the section on Hoby's diary appeals first to imagination and suggestion to initiate its interpretation rather than to positivist virtues of statistics or accumulated documentary evidence. Both of these elements play a role in the composition of Hoby's cultural environment, but the section relies on a form of reading that is not circumscribed by defined methodologies.

Indeed it is this relation between reading and writing that forms my project's central thesis. In the sections dealing with Eleanor Davies and Katherine Philips, the cultural dexterity Margaret Hoby demonstrates is repeated in texts that vividly demonstrate the potency of Certeau's scriptural models. Luce Giard argues that Certeau's "intellectual itinerancy was [...] centered and unified by the untiring activity of reading and writing", concepts so "inextricably linked for him that they came to constitute an entirely unusual reading/writing (*lire/écrire*) that referred [...] to the status he gave to the appearance of a

'scriptural society' from the time of the Renaissance" (218). Reading and writing are central to my examinations of Eleanor Davies's and Katherine Philips's writings. In both cases writing is deployed along the accumulative lines Certeau describes. Both women, with very different rhetorical lexicons, attempt to fix the meanings of their texts to pre-existing, culturally legitimating discourses. In Davies's case, the mystification of her texts acts as a guarantee of their univocity. Certeau's affiliation of writing with propriety and control provides a model for an interpretation of Davies's densely written and obtuse tracts. Rather than the elucidation of the tracts and the doctrine of their author, Certeau's models of writing and reading provide an opportunity to examine the practices constructing the texts. In this sense, my examination of Davies's writing reflects Colebrook's description of Certeau's tactical model of reading which "aims to describe a field of effects produced by readers rather than uncovering a text's meaning" (Colebrook 114). Davies's correlation between personal vindication and her texts' legibility underscores Certeau's observation that the writing subject is in "the position of having to manage a space that is [her] own and distinct from all others and in which [she] can exercise [her] own will" (*The Practice of Everyday Life* 134). Similarly, Philips's letters reveal her social ambitions through the deployment, in writing, of influential cultural discourses of flattery and deference. Where Davies insists on an equivalence between the reader's acceptance of her legitimacy and the legibility (and credibility) of her texts, Philips employs a seductive, familiar form of writing that seeks to ensure the reader accepts both her and her letters without Davies's apocalyptic ultimatums. Philips's letters are read as attempts to co-opt the language of social hierarchy in order to gain its endorsement. The use of courtesy

tropes and the manipulation of epistolary conventions are designed to produce a standard response, a reading consistent with the values underwriting the initial address. Such an interpretation is opposed to Certeau's suggestion that "the text has a meaning only through its readers" (*The Practice of Everyday Life* 170).

From the evidence available, it appears that the supervising institutions of early modern English culture produced the kinds of readings that the texts considered in this project actually envisaged, if not sought. This is particularly the case for Eleanor Davies and Katherine Philips. Davies's prosecution by the State reflected the hostility her tracts directed towards its figureheads whilst Philips's posthumous fame underscored her acceptance, as a writer and woman of quality, by Restoration Society. The readings conducted on Margaret Hoby's diary, which are generally those by historians and editors, speak to the way in which early modern texts are received in historiographical and academic contexts. In all these circumstances, the practice of reading is brought under scrutiny and its processes examined. Certeau's focus on practices--strategy/tactics, place/space, writing/reading--enables the perspectival alteration necessary to move beyond the established readings that, in their consistency and reinforcing coherence, form part of the text's own construction of power. Colebrook observes that Certeau's emphasis on practices re-arranges the reading process, demonstrating that texts can have a multiplicity of (resistant) readings: "The idea of a text as being accurately or authentically interpreted would not only no longer be an aim of criticism; a tactical approach actually seeks disruption, difference and non-coincidence" (117). Conceived in this way, reading has the capacity to highlight practices, to disrupt the propriety of the text and reveal spaces of alternative meaning. As

Certeau remarks, a "different world (the reader's) slips into the author's place" (*The Practice of Everyday Life* xxi).

Reading underwrites my methodologies and determines the manner in which each of the women examined conduct their lives. Whether the text be the Bible, a patron's letter, or the sparse notations of a diary that seems to offer no point of access to a frustrated postgraduate student, reading is the process by which otherness is distributed and knowledge re-arranged. Yet as Chartier observes, reading is never just the meeting of readers and "abstract, idealized texts detached from any materiality", rather readers "hold in their hands or perceive objects and forms whose structures and modalities govern their reading or hearing, and consequently the possible comprehension of the text read or heard" ("Laborers" 50). This project has sought to demonstrate a series of conjunctions between reading and writing practices that offer the possibility of revealing spaces within prevailing cultural and historical discourses. At the same time, the conduct of this study is always shaped by its relationship with these discourses. Just as subjects appropriating their environment "form a repertoire" (Buchanan "Introduction" 100) of practices from the possibilities available to them in that place, so each "community of readers" proceeds from "the legitimate uses of the book, the forms of reading, and the instruments and procedures of interpretation" (Chartier, "Laborers" 51) available to them. An acknowledgment of my own location in a specific community of readers, with its own priorities and procedures, forms perhaps the most important interpretative act of my thesis.

Ahearne argues that Certeau's conception of reading seeks, in part, to problematise "the ways in which reading is suppressed or standardized, and [...] to uncover the forms of its unsolicited returns"

(*Michel de Certeau* 165). The deployment of Certeau's theory of practices as my project's principal methodology, in and of itself, represents a willingness to review the way in which textual analysis is conducted and to refuse to accept unconditionally the interpretative precedents applied to both the texts in question and the process of studying them. My introductory section contained a discussion on the utility of and difficulties presented by self-reflexive gestures to the analytical process. My concern for an ethical and respectful interpretative method is set against a need, perhaps driven by the economic and programmatic imperatives of academic discourse, to say something. Certeau's model is, at its core, a self-reflexive procedure in that it insists attention be paid to the conditions of its own production. My project's ultimate focus on making visible the "invisible" practices of these women, practices that are invisible only through the agency of particular but dominant interpretative discourses, affirms not only the validity of three dynamic, creative, and resourceful lives but the value of Certeau's heterological perspective as a just and revealing way of seeing. Margaret Hoby, Eleanor Davies, and Katherine Philips employ writing as a practice for living, a way of making spaces in a culture that sought to assign them proper and prescribed places. Michel de Certeau's model for reading what they write enables us, however fleetingly, to see those spaces.

## Appendices

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All letters and letter numbers reproduced from, Patrick Thomas, ed.  
*The Collected Works of Katherine Philips, the Matchless Orinda:*  
*Volume II, The Letters* Essex: Stump Cross, 1990.

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## Appendix 1

I

The Fam'd ORINDA,  
TO THE Honourable BERENICE

YOUR Ladiship's last Favour from Coll. P---'s was truly obliging, and carried so much of the same great Soul of yours, which loves to diffuse it self in Expressions of Friendship to me, that it merits a great deal more Acknowledgment than I am able to pay at my best Condition, and am less now when my Head akes, and will give me no leave to enlarge, though I have so much Subject and Reason; but really if my Heart ak'd too, I could be sensible of a very great Kindness and Condescension in thinking me worthy of your Concern, though I visibly perceive most of my Letters have lost their way to your Ladiship. I beseech you be pleased, fist, to believe I have written every Post; but, secondly, since I came, and then to enquire for them, that they may be commended into your hands, where alone they can hope for a favourable residence; I am very much a Sharer by Sympathy, in your Ladiship's satisfaction in the Converse you had in the Country, and find that to the ingenious Company Fortune hath been just, there being no Person fitter to receive all the Admiration of persons best capable to pay them, than the great Berenice: I hope your Ladiship will speak me a real Servant of Dr. Wilkins; and all that Converse with you, have enrich'd all this Summer with yours. I humbly thank your Ladiship for your Promise of Mr. Boyle's Book, which indeed merits a publick, not View only, but Universal Applause, if my Vote be considerable in things so much above me. If it be possible, oblige me with the sight of one of them, which (if your Ladiship command it) shall be very faithfully return'd you. And now (madam) why was that a cruel Question, When will you come to Wales? 'Tis cruel to me, I confess, that it is yet in question, but I humbly beg your Ladiship to unriddle that part of your Letter, for I cannot understand why you, Madam, who have no Persons alive to whom your Birth hath submitted you, and have already by your Life secur'd to your self the best opinion the World can give you, should create an Awe upon your own Actions, from imaginary Inconveniences: Happiness, I confess, is twofac'd, and one is Opinion; but that Opinion is certainly our own; for it were equally ridiculous and

impossible to shape our Actions by this Principle, that I can speak with some confidence, That none will ever be happy, who make their Happiness to consist in, or be govern'd by the Votes of other persons. I deny not but the Approbation of Wise and Good Persons is a very necessary Satisfaction; but to forebear innocent Contentments, only because it's possible some Fancies may be so capricious as to dispute, whether I should have taken them, is, in my Belief, neither better nor worse than to fast always, because there are some so superstitious in the World, that will abstain from Meat, upon some Score or other, upon every day in the Year, that is, some upon some days, and others upon others, and some upon all. You know, Madam, there is nothing so various as Vulgar Opinion, nothing so untrue to it self, who shall then please, since none can fix it, 'tis a Heresie (this of submitting every blast of popular extravagancy) which I have combated in Persons very dear to me; Dear Madam, let them not have your Authority for a relapse, when I had almost committed them; but consider it without a byass, and give Sentence as you see cause; and in that interim put me not off (Dear Madam) with those Chymera's, but tell me plainly what inconvenience is it to come? If it be one in earnest, I will submit, but otherwise I am so much my own Friend, and my Friend's Friend, as not to be satisfied with your Ladiship's taking measure of your Actions by others Opinion, when I know too that the severest could find nothing in this Journey that they could condemn, but your excess of Charity to me, and that Censure you have already supported with patience, and (notwithstanding my own consciousness of no ways deserving your sufferance upon that score) I cannot beg you to recover the Reputation of your Judgment in that particular, since it must be my Ruine. I should now say very much for your most obliging Commands to me, to write, and should beg frequent Letters from your Ladiship with all possible importunity, and should by command from my Lucasia excuse her last Rudeness (as she calls it) in giving you account of her Honour for you under her own Hand, but I must beg your pardon now, and out-believing all, I can say upon every one of these accounts, for really, Madam, you cannot tell how to imagine any Person more to any one, then I am.

June the 25th,  
Priory of Cardigan

Madam,  
Your Ladiship's  
most faithful Servant,  
and passionate Friend,  
Orinda.

Lucasia is most faithfully your Servant, I am very glad of Mr. Cowley's success, and will concern my self so much as to thank your Ladiship for your endeavour in it.

## Appendix 2

II To the Honourable BERENICE

Dear MADAM,

I have been so long silent, that I profess I am now ashamed almost to beg your Pardon, and were not confidence in your Ladiship's Goodness a greater respect then the best Address in the World, I should scarce believe my self capable of remission, but when your Ladiship shall know more fully then Papers can express, how much and how many ways I have suffered, you will rather wonder that I write at all, then that I have not written in a Week, when you shall hear that my Dear *Lucasia* by a strange unfortunate Sickness of her Mother's, hath been kept from me, fro three Weeks longer than I expected, and is not yet come: I have had some difficulty to be silent to you, but that in earnest my disorder was too great to write: Dear Madam, pardon and pity me, and, to express that you do both, be pleased to hasten hither, where I shall pour all my Trouble into your Bosom, and receive thence all that Consolation which I never in my Life more needed than I do now. You see, *Madam*, my Presumption, or rather Distraction to leap from Confessions into Petitions, and those for advantages so much above my merit; but what is that that the dear Great *Berenice* can deny her faithful *Orinda*? And what is it that *Orinda* would not do or suffer to obtain that sweet and desired Converse, she now begs of you, I am confident my *Lucasia* will suddenly be here to thank you for your Charity, which will by coming express to me, and the Obligation you will put upon her by it, both which shall be equally and constantly acknowledged (if you will please to hasten it) by

*Your faithfully*

*affectionate Friend,  
and humble Servant*

ORINDA.

Nov. 2. 1658

### Appendix 3

#### III To the Honourable BERENICE

I must confess my self extremely troubled, to miss a Letter from your Ladiship in a whole Fortnight, but I must beg you to believe your silence did not occasion mine; for my Ambition to converse with you, and advantage in being allow'd it, is too great for me to decline any opportunity which I can improve to obtain so much happiness; But really the box of Gloves and Ribbons miss'd a conveniency of going, and a Letter that attended them partak'd in the same misfortune; by this time and some days before it, I hope they have reach'd you, for they were sent away above a week ago; and if so, all that I can tell you of my Desires to see your Ladiship will be repetition, for I had with as much earnestness as I was capable of, Begg'd it then, and yet have so much of the Beggar in me, that I must redouble that importunity now, and tell you, That I Gasp for you with an impatience that is not to be imagin'd by any Soul wound up to a less concern in Friendship then yours is, and therefore I cannot hope to make others sensible of my vast desires to enjoy you, but I can safely appeal to your own Illustrious Heart, where I am sure of a Court of Equity to relieve me in all the Complaints and Suplications my Friendship can put up: *Madam*, I am assured you love me, and that being granted, 'tis out of dispute, that your Love must have nobler circumstances then mine, but because the greatness and reallity of it must be always disputed with you, by me there must of necessity remain the obligingness of your Love to weigh down the ballance, and give you that advantage over me in friendship, which you unquestionably have in all things else, and if this reasoning be true (as sure there are all Sciences in Friendship, and then Logick cannot be excluded) I have argued my self into a handsome necessity of being eternally on the receiving hand, but let me qualifie that seeming meanness, by assuring you, that even that is the greatest testimony of my esteem for your Ladiship, that ever I can give; for I have a natural pride (that I cannot much repent of) which makes me very unwilling to be obliged, and more curious from whom I receive kindnesses then where I confer them, so that being Contented to be perpetually in your debt, is the greatest Confession I can make of the Empire you have over

me, and really that privilege is the last which I can submit to part with all, to be just done in acts of Friendship, and that I do not only yeild you in all my life past, but can beg to have it continued by your doing me the greatest favour that I ever I receiv'd from you by restoring me my dear and honoured *Berenice*; this, *Madam*, is but one action, but like the Summ of an Account, it contains the value of all the rest, and will so oblige and refresh me, that I cannot express the satisfaction I shall receive in it; I humbly thank your Ladiship for the assurance you have given me, that you suddenly intend it, and that you were pleased to be accountable to me for your stay till *Christmas*, which being now at hand, I hope you will have neither reason, importunity, nor inclinations to retard the happiness you intend me; Really, *Madam*, I shall and must expect it in these Holydays, and a disappointment to me is the greatest of Miseries: and then, *Madam*, I trust you will be convinc'd of this necessity there is of your life and health, since Heaven it self appears so much concern'd in it, as to restore it by a Miracle: and truly had you been still in danger, I should have look'd upon that as more ominous then the Blazing-Star so much discours'd of; but you are one of those extraordinary Blessings which are the publick concernments, and are, I trust, reserv'd to be yet many Years and Example of Honour and Ornament to Religion.

Oh, *Madam*, I have abundance to tell you and ask you, and if you will not hasten to hear it, you will be almost as cruel as *Arsaces*; but you will come, and if you find any thing in this Letter that seems to question it, impute it to the continual distrust of my own merit, which will not permit me easily to believe my self favoured: *Dear Madam*, if you think me too timerous, confute me by the welcome Experiment of your Company, which really I perpetually long for, and again beg as you love me, and claim as you would have me believe it; I am glad your Ladiship has pitch'd on a place so near me, you shall be sufficiently persecuted with *Orinda*. I know you will pardon me for not acquainting with the News you heard from other hands, when I tell you there is nothing of it true, and the Town is now full of very different Discourse, but I shall tell you more particularly when I have the honour to see you, and till then cannot with conveniency do it. I easily believe *Dous* factious, but in those Disputes I think he discovers more Wit than Wisdom, and your Ladiship knows they are inseperable; I shall loose

the Post if I do not now hasten to subscribe, what I am always ready to  
make good, that I am more than any one living,

*Your Ladship's most Faithful,  
and most Passionate  
Friend and Servant,  
Orinda.*

Decemb. 30,  
1658.

## Appendix 4

### ORINDA TO POLIARCHUS

#### Letter I

THO' I know, most honour'd POLIARCHUS, that you delight more in conferring Favours, than in Acknowledgments; and tho' the highest I could make, would prove not only unsuitable to my Obligations, and the sense I have of them; but such as in themselves would stand in need of a new Favour, I mean your Pardon: Yet I cannot satisfie my self with a total Silence, where I ought to say and do so much, notwithstanding that my own defects, and the Cruelty of Fate have allow'd me so small a Capacity of acquitting my self of either. I am not ignorant that it will signifie but little to tell you, that I am the Person in World most deeply sensible of your Favours; and that I wish with no less Passion, than (for ought I perceive) Impossibility, to be in some way able to deserve the least of them: But if you will oblige so like a God, you cannot be surpriz'd, if you find no other Requital than Thanks, and even these too but very imperfect. I beseech you nevertheless to accept mine with the utmost Zeal and Sincerity with which I can return them; and (what will appear a strange Confidence after this ingenuous Confession) to continue me that friendship, which alone can reward it self in the Nobleness of its own Intentions; and whereto I lay no other Claim than that of your Promise only, which I look on to be a greater Security than an Act of Parliament; as I really esteem the Advantage I reap by it to be a nobler Gift than any that is granted us in *Magna Charta*. I know I run the Hazard of losing it, by entertaining you thus long without sending you News from the Person of whom you most desire to hear; but had I not the vast Reason I have to write it on my own behalf, yet so great is my Regard for POLIARCHUS, that I am loath to send him any unwelcome News; and indeed, such is CALANTHES's Cruelty, that I have none that will be pleasing to impart. But this is an Affair fitter to be discours'd of at more freedom than this distance will allow; and I have besides some other Reasons that make me wish for an Hour's Conversation with you before I come to Town. To Morrow my Uncle TREVOR promis'd to send Sir EVAN's Horses to bring me to

LONDON in LUCASIA's Coach; but till my Brother HECTOR, who is now there, returns, I know not whether I shall accept of that Opportunity. However, if you can be persuaded that it will not be inconvenient for you to take two or three Hours of fresh Air, you will either meet me on the Road, or find me here; and thus we shall both of us have the Satisfaction Sir ROGER in the Play wanted, of not grieving alone. I am so call'd on to conclude, that I can add no more but that I am with as much Integrity as infinite Reason, &c.

Acton, 6 Dec.

1661.

ORINDA.

## Appendix 5

### ORINDA TO POLIARCHUS

#### Letter IV

I had the Honour of receiving your Letter as soon as I came to my own House; and, after all the Preparation you were pleas'd to give me, I had the Patience to read the *English*, and the Pleasure to read the *French* Present you sent me; and, to observe your Method, will treat of the first first; and tell you, that I am extremely pleas'd with your ingenious Contrivance in making a Person, who stands in so much need of your Pardon, be once in a Capacity of forgiving you; and by thus abusing me, putting it to the Trial, whether I have profited by the Example of your Generosity: Yes, Sir, I have, and much more freely forgive your sending me the English, than your interlining the French paper, which I take as the far greater Affront. But the Disappointment of the Expectation you first rais'd, and the being put out of Countenance afterwards, are not difficult to be supported from you, who have heap'd so many Favours on me, that your very Injuries are obliging. But you will expect I should give you my Thoughts of your Present. I had not read the English half through, but I was ready to say of it as LUCASIA did t'other day of a Harper, who play'd horridly out of Tune, *Will not this honest man go to Dinner?* Which all the Company agreed to be the most civil way of turning him out of the Room that ever he had met with. I verily believe there are some deep Philosophical Notions in it, and without doubt the Gentleman Colonel PHILIPS told us of, who had reduc'd all Divinity to Demonstration, and pretended to solve all Controversies in a quarter of an hour, was near a-kin to this Author; but I, you know very well, have been of late so tormented with Disputes on that Subject, that I fairly threw it by, to consider the Countess of SUZA's Elegy, which is indeed one of the finest Poems of that nature I ever read; the Thoughts are great and noble, and represent to the Life the vastness of her excellent Soul; the Language is pure, and hardly to be parallell'd. I return you many Thanks for it, and assure you I will always keep it with a Value worthy of the Author, who must needs be an extraordinary Woman, and of the Sender, who is to me above all the Flights of

Panegyrick. I found my ANTENOR so full of the sense of your Goodness towards him, that in the midst of his Satisfaction it gave him no small disquiet to consider, that he should never be able by any Action of his Life to express his infinite Gratitude for the Care you were pleas'd to take of his Concerns; and indeed I my self am blushing to give you these empty Returns for so many substantial Kindnesses. I would avoid them had I any other way to gain your belief, how much he and I would do and suffer to convince you of the thousandth part of the immense Esteem and Honour we have for you. But how, POLIARCHUS, can you be so infinitely good, as to tell me you miss my Company? Are you in need of the Mortifications you receiv'd by it? They may indeed be proper for this holy time of Lent; otherwise the not being oblig'd to go every day to the Lobby before seven in the Morning, the Enjoyment of your more deserving Friends at Evenings, and conversing with your Books; the not being almost under a necessity of going Abroad in all Weathers to a Dog-hole, to find one who gave you nothing but Importunity and Disturbance, and robb'd you of your Quiet, must needs have afforded you more real Satisfaction. But indeed, Sir, no ordinary Reasons could have prevail'd with me to permit your undergoing so many Hardships on my account; and but that the neglect of my Duty to ANTENOR would have render'd me more unworthy to your Esteem, I could never have prevail'd with my self to have given you so great and so frequent Troubles in his behalf. I find LUCASIA here, notwithstanding all her Threatnings to be gone; but she has stay'd for me so long, that she has but very little time left to stay with me. I deliver'd her your Letter and she says her self, been already so often and so much oblig'd both on her own account and mine. I assur'd her likewise of what you commanded me, and believe she will give you an Answer of it her self. This was our Post-day from LONDON, and I have Letters from several Hands, but none from you, which troubles me on a double account; first, for want of the Satisfaction it would have been to hear from you; and then for fear your Silence was occasion'd by the Disturbance you are in for the Loss of my Lady CORNBURY, whose Death is here much lamented. But I will say no more at present, lest my Letters should be as troublesome to you as my personal Conversation, and discourage you from allowing me the Honour of your

Correspondence, which I beg of you to believe shall ever be valu'd  
above all Expression by, &c.

Cardigan Priory

Mar. 18. 1661/2

ORINDA

## Appendix 6

### ORINDA TO POLIARCHUS

#### Letter X

I have deferr'd writing a Post longer than I ought, that you might first receive from other Hands the News this Letter brings you, that so it might be no News to you; for tho' I know you have long expected, and prepar'd your self for the Blow; yet I am so well acquainted with the Temper of your Soul, as to have cause to believe, that you still have so much left in you *of the Lover, or at least of the Friend*, that you cannot hear of LUCASIA's being marry'd without some Disturbance; which will, I fear, be increas'd, when you know that her going to IRELAND is so hasten'd, that she will, I believe, be there in three Weeks. I thought to have given you a large Account how this Affair came to be spurr'd on so fast, but have not time to tell you any thing now, only that the Importunity of Sir THOMAS HANMER and his Lady; join'd to the pressing Instances of her other Relations here, compell'd her in a manner to Hurry, which I dare say she her self never intended; and thus on *Sunday* last the Ceremony was perform'd to the great Satisfaction of them all: *For I alone of all the Company was out of Humour; nay, I was vex'd to that degree, that I could not disguise my Concern, which many of them were surpriz'd to see, and spoke to me of it; but my Grief was too deeply rooted to be cur'd with Words. Believe me, dear POLIARCHUS, I have wept so much, that my Eyes almost refuse me this present Service: But I will say no more of it now. I am resolv'd to write each Circumstance of this Affair to our Friend ROSANIA, from whom you shall know all, and therefore pray defer your Curiosity till then.* I never wish'd my self so much a Philosopher as now, that I might be in a Temper sedate enough to say any thing that might in some measure alleviate your Grievs: But indeed, POLIARCHUS, I am so afflicted my self, that 'twould be in vain for me to offer at the Comfort of another. As for your Share in this Loss, I hope you prepar'd your self much better to receive it, than I did to suffer mine: *Sono ben altri infelici nell'amore.* And I know you are too wise to need any Consolation from any but your self, and that you had laid in a Stock of

Patience before-hand. Had I done so too, I had sav'd myself much Disquiet; yet when I reflect that all our Regret in this Case is in vain, I begin to be a little satisfy'd, and often repeat to my self these words of Dr. HAMMOND, *When will you begin to trust God, and permit him to govern the World?* You have allow'd my Loss to be greater than your own, and therefore I will expect that Consolation from you, that I am unable to give my self, or you any other way, than by putting you in mind, that I am much more unfortunate than you. As for LUCASIA, why should we be more concern'd for her than she is for her self, or than her nearest Relations? I am now taught by Experience, that 'tis a very thankless Office, to have too much Regard for the Interest of our Friends, when they themselves have a mind to wave it; and we must say of this, as of other Providences,

*Che le Cose del Ciel sol colui vede,*

*Chi serra gli Occhi, e crede.*

Let us do so on this account, and believe that so sweet a Creature cannot be injur'd by any thing that has the least sense of Humanity; nor so much Piety as hers be forsaken by the Divine Providence, May she ever be as happy, as I am otherwise, and as free from all Trouble and Grief, as she soon will be from the sight of mine. I can say no more, my time is so little and my Grief so great; but whithersoever that transports me, tho' even to my Grave, I beseech you get the Victory over yours, and be assur'd that I am to my last Gasp, &c.

Landshipping,

May 17. 1662.

ORINDA.

## Appendix 7

### ORINDA TO POLIARCHUS

#### Letter XII

IF your Silence this Week was intended to exempt you from the Persecution of my Scribble, you see your Design has miscarry'd; and you may believe, that not to let me hear from you as I expect, is a certain way to provoke me to beg of you not to discontinue me the Favour of your Correspondence; of which I know my self to be so unworthy, that every little Omission on your part, alarms me with the Apprehension of having utterly lost it. I am sure you are too generous to alter your Thoughts of me, however, I may have been represented to you, especially till you have better Proofs than the bare Assertion of one, who could know so little of that Affair; *and I dare promise you, that even CALANTHE her self would acquit me of that Imputation: For she hugs her self so much in her Choice, that she will not suffer even the Doctor to have any share in the Glory of having contributed to it; much more therefore will she exclude me, who am far from laying Claim to any: I am very content that it should be wholly attributed to her self and her Uncle, and will never rob them of the Reputation they are like to gain by it. If you are satisfy'd with my proceeding in that Affair, as you have assur'd me you are, I look on my self to be happier than they. But I will tell you something to make you laugh: The Doctor is not so fortunate in his Amours as his Friend, for his Mistress has absolutely refus'd him; and the Jest of it is, she fed him with the best: But in the Town the Buildings and Company are something better. Pray let me know whether ROSANIA be living or not; for but that you and PHILASTER have made mention of her, I should have no reason to think she is, not having heard from her since I came to IRELAND, which is no small Affliction to me. Next Week we go to DUBLIN, and I shall soon after return to WALES; but before that you will receive more Troubles of this nature from, &c.*

Rostreror July 19. 1662.

ORINDA.

## Appendix 8

### ORINDA TO POLIARCHUS

#### Letter XIII

I received yours of the twelfth after I had written my last, which will be with you before *Sunday* next; and than you will acquit me of my Promise to make you smile, for I am confident you will laugh heartily, and I give you leave to make my Brother PHILIPS, CIMENA and ROSANIA Sharers in your Mirth; particularly ROSANIA, to whom you are bound in Justice to give some part of your Diversion; for she tells me you have infected her with your Sighs, for which I could chide you with so good a Grace as the Gentleman that curs'd his Servant for Trouble, that I hasten to thank you for it, and endeavour all I can to follow your Advice, and compose my outward Shew to much more Content and Satisfaction than I feel within: Hoping that in time either Reason or Resentment will cure me of my Passion for the Conversation of a Person, who has so studiously contriv'd my losing it. I now see by Experience that one may love too much, and offend more by a too fond Sincerity, than by a careless Indifferency, provided it be but handsomly varnish'd over with a civil Respect. I find too there are few Friendships in the World Marriage-proof; especially when the Person our friend marries has not a Soul particularly capable of the Tenderness of that Endearment, and solicitous of advancing the noble Instances of it, as a Pleasure of their own, in others as well as themselves: And such a Temper is so rarely found, that we may generally conclude the Marriage of a Friend to be the Funeral of a friendship; for then all former Endearments run naturally into the Gulf of that new and strict Relation, and there, like Rivers in the Sea, they lose themselves for ever. This is indeed a lamentable Truth, and I have often study'd to find a Reason for it. Sometimes I think it is because we are in truth more ill-natur'd than we really take our selves to be; and more forgetful of the past Offices of Friendship, when they are superseded by others of a fresher Date, which carrying with them the Plausibility of more Duty and Religion in the Knot that ties them, we persuade our selves will excuse us if the Heat and Zeal of our former Friendships decline and wear off into

Lukewarmness and Indifferency; whereas there is indeed a certain secret Meanness in our Souls, which mercinarily inclines our Affections to those with whom we must necessarily be oblig'd for the most part to converse, and from whom we expect the chiefest outward Conveniencies. And thus we are apt to flatter our selves that we are constant and unchang'd in our Friendship, tho' we insensibly fall into Coldness and Estrangement; but will not believe it, because we know 'tis ungenerous and base. And thus it is that the thing call'd Friendship, without which the whole Earth would be but a Desart, and Man still alone, tho' in Company, grows sick and languishes, and *Love once sick, how quickly will it die?* But enough of these Speculations. I find there is nothing impossible in this World but for me to grow wise: Yet after all, I had rather lose CALANTHE, as I lose her, than gain her as Mr. Doctor has gain'd her Company. I have a hundred things to say, would this stolen Minute permit: But I shall soon be in a place where I shall have sad Reason to be free from the Fear I am now in, lest she should surprize me, and find what would not please her; tho' I take Heaven to witness, I would neither so, nor say, nor think any thing in her Disparagement, much less that would injure her, for the Empire of the whole World. PHILASTER is with us, and assures you that his sense of your favours and Respects for you, can neither be drown'd in an *Irish Mist*, nor lost in a Bog. he is no better pleas'd with CALANTHE's Change of Condition than my self. CIMENA hears from him, and by that means you may have a better account of the Husband's Behaviour to his Wife, of his Humours and way of Life than I can now send you. *I believe indeed that he loves her very well, but he carries himself to her with such an Air of Sovereignty, and in my Opinion so silly and clownish withal, that I am much surpriz'd that she, who is so well-bred, and her Conversation every way so agreeable, can be so happy with him as she seems to be: for indeed she is nothing but joy, and never so well pleas'd as in his Company; which makes me conclude, that she is either extremely chang'd, or has more of the dissembling Cunning of our Sex than I thought she had.* I have just now receiv'd the Letter you directed to me at CARDIGAN, wherein you give me an account of their MAJESTY's great Goodness to me, for which I return you many Thanks, and particularly for the Alterations you made in the Poem, which I look on as a greater Proof of your Friendship, than all the undue Praises you

give me. But by this time I have certainly tir'd you, unless you are resolv'd that nothing shall do so from, &c.

Dublin, July 30. 1662.

ORINDA

## Appendix 9

### ORINDA TO POLIARCHUS

#### Letter XIV

YOU say true, POLIARCHUS, I cannot be in a fit Humour to write any thing in Verse at a time when I expect each hour to be separated from my ever dear LUCASIA. A Blow for which you prepare me with so much kindness and so excellent a Discourse, that I must needs bear it with greater Resolution, or be very undeserving of the Assistance you give me. I am indeed of your Opinion, and could never govern my Passions by the Lessons of the Stoicks, who at best rather tell us what we should be, than teach us how to be so; they shew the Journey's end, but leave us to get thither as we can. 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 the right to exhort us to study Virtue, because the more we practise it, 'twill prove the more pleasant, more easie, and more worthy of Love. But of this in a little time more at large, when I shall have greater cause, and too much leisure for such Reflections. I will now inform you of my Adventures here. My good Fortune has favour'd me with the Acquaintance of my Lord ORRERY: he is indeed a Man of great Parts, and agreeable Conversation; and has been so extremely civil to me, that were he not a most obliging Person, I am sure he could not

excuse it to his own Judgment. By some Accident or another my Scene of POMPEY fell into his Hands, and he was pleas'd to like it so well, that he sent me the *French* Original; and the next time I saw him, so earnestly importun'd me to pursue that Translation, that to avoid the Shame of seeing him who has so lately commanded a Kingdom, become a Petitioner to me for such a Trifle, I obey'd him so far as to finish the Act in which that Scene is; so that the whole third Act is now *English*. This I the rather did, hoping to undeceive him in the partial Opinion he had of my Capacity for such an Undertaking; and not doubting but he would have dispens'd with my farther Trouble therein. But he no sooner had it, than (I think to punish me for having done it so ill) he enjoyn'd me to go on; and not only so, but brib'd me to be contented with the Pains by sending me an excellent Copy of Verses, which, were I not conscious of my own Unworthyness, would make me rather forget the Subject, than disbelieve the Compliments of his Lordship's Muse. But I have undergone as great a Temptation to Vanity from your Tongue and Pen, as he can give me; and yet I hope neither of you shall ever make me forget my self so much, as to take Pride in any thing, but the having POLIARCHUS for my Friend. I will by my next send you my Lord's Verses, on Condition that in Exchange you will let me have a Copy of your Translation of *Le Temple de la Mort*; his Lordship is in Love with the Original, and you will infinitely oblige me in putting it in my Power to shew him your excellent Version of it. To bribe you yet farther, I will send you mine of POMPEY as fast as I do it; and because this is no great Temptation, I will send you some Translations from VIRGIL by Mr. COWLEY. You will wonder at my Lord's Obstinacy in this Desire to have me translate POMPEY, as well because of my Incapacity to perform it, as that so many others have undertaken it. But all I can say or do is to no purpose, for he persists in his Request, and will not be refus'd. The best on't it is, that having sent him one Act already, I will take day enough for the rest. But I have weary'd you so much with this Story, as he has with Commands which I am so unable to perform. He knows you, for he speaks of you with a great deal of Honour and Esteem, and therein, much more than by all his Compliments to me, has not only discover'd his Judgment, but oblig'd, &c.

Dublin, 8 Aug. 20. 1662.

ORINDA.

## Appendix 10

### ORINDA TO POLIARCHUS

#### Letter XV

I will always rather chuse to think it proceeds from my own Misfortune, than from your Forgetfulness of me, whenever I was disappointed in my Expectation of receiving a Letter from you; for could I believe you desirous to put an end to the Correspondence which I desire so much, I should in Civility forbear extorting it in this importune manner; and so contribute to a Loss, which I am most unwilling to undergo: When therefore you would be rid of these Troubles, you must downright tell me so, since you see I cannot be brought to understand it by all the Signs your Silence can make. 'Tis true, one Letter of yours is worth whole Volumes of mine, and yet I do not write every Post, lest that should deter you from those obliging Returns, that re my only Design in Writing. But if either my Thoughts or Observation could produce any thing worthy your Perusal, I would write to you twice a day if I could; from whence you may be assur'd, I would not omit writing as often as I can, which is now twice a Week, but that I want matter fit to entertain you; and I might very justly plead this in Excuse of Silence at this time, had not PHILASTER copy'd my lord ORRERY's Verses, O told you of in my last, and desir'd me to send them you as his Present; which I the rather do to make you some Amends for the many ill ones I have troubled you with, and to let you see how perfect a Poet my Lord is, who writes with so much Elegancy on so undeserving a Subject: For Fiction, you know, is the proper Employment of the Muses. Let me have your Opinion of them, which, if you send it the next Post after you receive this, may find me here; but much longer, I think, I shall not stay. Above all forget not my Request for your *Temple of Death*. And now I speak of that Poem, what Progress have you made in your Translation from the *Spanish*? Which I very much desire to see; but not so much as I do, that it may one day be my good Fortune to see the Translator, whose faithful Friend and humble Servant I must be while I am ORINDA, or any thing that name signifies.

Dublin, Aug. 30. 1662.

## Appendix 11

### ORINDA TO POLIARCHUS

#### Letter XX

IN yours of the 22nd of last Month, which I receiv'd the 28th, I found so many things, that I must not call Truths, and dare not think barely Complements, that I am at a Loss how to understand them aright: For tho' none has a greater Deference for your Judgment in other things, yet when the Competition comes to be betwixt that and your Friendship and Kindness for me, you must give me leave to believe the first of them to be a little blinded by the latter; and therefore I will say, you read the first two Acts of POMPEY with so favourable a Prepossession, as would not give you leave to form a right Judgment of them. But by this time you have gone through the whole Translation; and if you have not discover'd in it too many Errors for any Correction to redress, you will much oblige me to consider it with more Severity of the Critick, and let it receive the last finishing Strokes from your excellent Pen; that it may be a tolerable Offering to be laid at the Feet of that great Person for whom I design'd it; And therefore, since you have encourag'd me to believe that an Address to her might be pardon'd, I have taken the Assurance to obey you in writing one of a few Lines only, not daring to rob her of her time by any length of reading. Besides, I am so certain of your Good-will towards me, that I cannot doubt, but that when you present it to her, you will say much more in my behalf than I have either Courage or Skill to say for my self. This I desire you to believe, that when you shall speak of the Veneration I have for her Royal highness, you can scarce exceed the Truth; for the Bounds of my utmost Ambition aspire no higher, than to be able to give her one Moment's Entertainment. But if this Trifle be at all presented, the sooner, I think, the better: For in spite of all I could do to prevent it, so many Copies are already abroad, that the particular Respect intended to the Dutchess, will be lost by a little Delay. Besides, the other Translation, done by so many eminent Hands, will otherwise appear first, and throw this into everlasting Obscurity; unless it get as much the start of that in Time, as it comes behind it in Merit. But I refer it wholly to you, and will now

change my Subject, and tell you, that we have Plays here in the newest Mode, and not ill acted; only the other day, when OTHELLO was play'd, the DOGE of VENICE and all his Senators came upon the Stage with Feathers in their Hats, which was like to have chang'd the Tragedy into a Comedy, but that the MOOR and DESDEMONA acted their Parts well. Judge then of the Humour I was in, by what happen'd once to your self, when we saw *The Maid's Tragedy* together. I am most glad that you oblige ROSANIA with your Visits, who, I assure you, is very sensible of that Favour, and sets a high Value on your Friendship. I sent her a copy of POMPEY, which, if she receive it before you have presented one to the Dutchess, I desire none may see but her self. I have no other things to write, but want time at present to say more, but that I am and will be all my Life with the greatest Sincerity, &c.

Decemb. 3. 1662.

ORINDA.

## Appendix 12

### ORINDA TO POLIARCHUS

#### Letter XXIII

YOUR last Letter, most generous POLIARCHUS, gave me several Emotions of Mind while I was reading it ; for at first I verily believ'd you as arrant a Lover as ever you were, till you undeceiv'd me afterwards, and gave me just reason to acquit you of the Unkindness I laid to your Charge, in refusing to make me your Confident. I heard from several Persons that you were carrying on an Amour, and I could tell you the Lady's Name too; but since there is nothing in it, 'twill be best to say no more of it; only that I desire Heaven to direct you either in the Change or Continuance of your Condition, as may be most conducive to your Happiness; and request you, not to refuse me such a share in your Friendship, as may entitle me to the Knowledge of all that concerns you; and to be assur'd besides, that tho' I can never deserve that Confidence, nor assist you in any thing, yet I can be as truly touch'd, and bear as great a part I all your good or ill Fortune, as any Person in the World; which, you know, is not the most inconsiderable use that can be made of a Friend. And should it ever miraculously fall in my Power to serve you or any of yours, I should do it with greater Satisfaction than ever I took in receiving any of your Favours, except only the Promise of your friendship, which I prefer to the greatest Contentments I can propose to my self on this side the Grave. And now, Sir, let me return you my Acknowledgements for all the Trouble you have given your self about POMPEY: the Theft you committed is so much forgiven by LUCASIA, that she thanks you for it; and says she is as glad you met with that copy for her Highness; as she is vex'd that ARTABAN should serve us as he did: She is certain, and so am I too, that ROSANIA will be of her Mind. I humbly thank you for presenting it to the Dutchess, which you must needs have done in a favourable manner and lucky Minute, otherwise it could never have been so acceptable as you tell me it was. I should be extremely glad to hear that she continues to have the same Opinion of it when she has read it through: for I cannot but be apprehensive that her strict Judgment will

discover many Errors, which your Kindness prevented you from observing. Let her Thoughts of it be never so severe, I hope you will not disguise them from me: But you have drawn upon her one Trouble more, for I was so puff'd up with the Honour of her Protection, that I have ventur'd to lengthen the Play by adding Songs in the Intervals of each Act, which they flatter me here are not amiss: And indeed, if I may be allow'd to say any thing of my own Compositions, I do think them not inferior to any thing I ever writ. If you happen to like them, I am confident the Dutchess will do so too; and therefore I will send them to you by the next post (for I have not time to transcribe them now) that you may lay them at her Royal highness's Feet. I have, I fear, done ill to raise your Expectation by commending them my self, but you know that all I write aims at no higher Ambition than to receive the last Correction from you Hand; so that whatever my Thoughts of them are, I submit them wholly to your better Judgment, either to correct them if you think they deserve it, or otherwise to suppress them for ever. I am promis'd to have them all set by the greatest Masters in ENGLAND; but I should be more proud to have one Assurance from POLIARCHUS, that he likes them, than to have them compos'd by WILL. LAWES, were he still alive, and sung by Mrs. KNIGHT. PHILASTER has already set one of them very agreeably, and abundance of People are learning it: But I will give you no more trouble concerning them till next Post, for I must now thank you extremely for altering the Word *Effort*; had I thought on the Turn you have given that Expression, you may be sure I would have us'd no other: I hope you have corrected it in her Highness's Copy. As for the words *Heaven and Power*, I am of your Opinion too, especially as to the latter; for the other may, I think be sometimes so plac'd, as not to offend the Ear, when it is used in two Syllables. I long to hear what becomes of the other Translation of POMPEY, and what Opinion the Town and Court have of it; I have laid out several ways to get a Copy, but cannot yet procure one, except only of the first Act that was done by Mr. WALLER. Sir EDWARD FILMORE did on, Sir CHARLES SEDLEY another, and my Lord BUCKHURST another; but who the fifth I cannot learn, pray inform your self as soon as you can, and let me know it. ANTENOR's Affair that I mention'd to you formerly, and not the Charms of this Place, detains me here still; but indeed never any body found more Civility, Kindness and Respect

from all manner of Persons, especially of the highest Quality, than I do in this Country: I believe no Stranger was ever do well receiv'd among them before. I can add no more, but the needless repetition of assuring you that I will be, as long as I am any thing, &c.

Jan. 10. 1663/3

ORINDA.

## Appendix 13

### ORINDA TO POLIARCHUS

#### Letter XXV

I have received yours of the tenth instant, and thank you for the Assurance it brings of the Continuance of your Concern for me, who can no ways deserve so great a Happiness, but by the inestimable Value I set upon it; but is it under colour of this that you pretend to talk to me at the rate you do both of me Verse and Prose? Or is it your cunning to make me conceal the first from you, and forbear giving you the trouble of the last? For these would be the Effects of this Usage, did not my great Esteem for POLIARCHUS outweigh all my Resentments for an Injuries he can throw upon me. The Friendship that you profess and I expect, ought to engage you to lay aside the Courtier, and tell me frankly your real Thoughts of my weal Performances. I freely forgive you what is past, but on condition that I may prevail with you to banish all Flattery for the future. I sent you the Songs I made for POMPEY, and cannot indeed expect that you should be as barbarously severe to those unworthy Productions as an *Algerine*, because you were the occasion of my daring to trouble the World with any thing more on that Subject, by the Encouragement I receiv'd from you of the Dutchess's Approbation, the Bishop of WORCESTER's, and Mr. ROSE's, but especially of your own; for which reason you are bound either to suppress or support and protect them, like a true Knight Errant, against all the Pyrates you wot of. I am sure I have cause to wish I had never made any of them; for I think they have been the chief reason that has made my Lord ORRERY resolve to have POMPEY acted here, which, notwithstanding all my Intreaties to the contrary, he in going on with, and has advanc'd a hundred Pounds towards the Expence of buying *Roman* and *Egyptian* Habits. All the other Persons of Quality here are also very earnest to bring it upon the Stage, and seem resolv'd to endure the Penance of seeing it play'd on *Tuesday* come sevensnight, which day is appointed for the first time of acting it. My Lord ROSCOMON has made a Prologue for it, and Sir EDWARD DERING an Epilogue: Several other Hands have likewise oblig'd me with both Prologues and Epilogues; but

those I first mention'd will be only repeated; for they are the best writ that ever I read any thing of that kind. You shall have them by the next Post. The Songs are set by several Hands; the first and fifth admirably well by PHILASTER, the third by Doctor PETT, and *Le GRAND* a *Frenchman*, belonging to the Dutchess of ORMOND, has, by her Order, set the fourth, and a *Frenchman* of my Lord ORERRY's the second; so that all is ready, and poor I condemn'd to be expos'd, unless some Accident, which I heartily wish, but cannot foresee, kindly intervene to my Relief. Had not the Duke himself, and all the considerable Persons here hasten'd its being acted, I might have had hopes of preventing it, or at least have delay'd it till I was gone hence; but there was no resisting the Stream, and so it must e'en take its Fortune. But I fear I have tir'd you almost as much with entertaining you continually about it, as they will be with the Representation of the Play: But I have some Design in being thus tedious on this Subject, and mean thereby to revenge my self of you, by convincing you how much you were a Courtier in commending my Prose; yet I profess to you I am not so in declaring my self, &c.

Jan. 31. 1662/3

ORINDA.

## Appendix 14

### ORINDA TO POLIARCHUS

#### Letter XXVIII

Give me leave, Sir, to tell you what I know you have heard from ANTENOR already, that he intreats you to accept of an Election to be Burgess for the Town of CARDIGAN, which he would not mention to you till 'twas past, because he was resolv'd not to expose you to a Repulse; nor had you ever been nam'd, but that he found himself able to carry it for you against the World. You are chosen upon the Poll by 118 Votes, all of them allow'd by our Antagonists themselves to have right to elect. If any of the other Party should endeavour to insinuate that they quietly submitted to it, merely out of respect to you, pray let them know, that you are sufficiently inform'd, they did all they could to oppose you, and that it was carry'd purely by ANTENOR's single Interest. I hope all those who were the greatest Sticklers against him will now be convinc'd, that after all their Contrivances to asperse his Person and baffle the Election, he is not yet the despicable thing in his own Country they would represent him to be. He hopes you will not despise this little Instance, since 'tis all his Misfortunes have left him capable to give, of his Esteem and Gratitude to you; for whom I am certain he has as profound a Respect and Veneration as for any Man living. I know you are not fond of being a Parliament Man; yet since you are elected, so much without your seeking, that I am sure it was not so much as thought of by you; and since it was intended as a Testimony of the eternal Value and Friendship that ANTENOR and ORINDA must ever have for the noble POLIARCHUS, I hope he will not be angry to be sent into the House without his own Consent or Knowledge. The Truth is, ANTENOR and my self always intended it, but were not willing to tell you so, till we saw what Forces our Enemies were likely to muster up against us; and had they been likely to have been too powerful for ANTENOR to cope with, your Name had never been mention'd: But when he saw the Affections of the Town so unanimous for him, he recommended you to them as a Person fit to be their Representative in Parliament; and, as I am inform'd by some who heard

him, made a very handsome Speech in the Face of the Country, and declar'd himself in such a manner as became a Gentleman, who neither could fear his Enemies, nor abandon his Country's Service. Since you have this relation to a place where our little Fortune and Interest lies, I hope it will be a new Tie to our Friendship, and that ANTENOR will by this means have sometimes the Honour of hearing from you, which I know he will value as from the Man whose Acquaintance he most covets. And if any happy Providence make an Overture for our coming near you, he may then contract that Intimacy with you, which next to my own Happiness in your Conversation, which is now become absolutely necessary to the Satisfaction of my Life, is one of my most aspiring Wishes in this World. But now you are a Member of Parliament, woe be to you for Letters; for if possible, I will increase that Persecution, since you will have but half the Inconvenience of them to excuse, I mean the Trouble, not the Charge: And to say Truth, I have mightily consider'd those two Points, have I not? ROSANIA was not so good as her word, in letting me hear from her by the Post you told me I should, and pray tell her I am scarce in Charity with her, for being so very a Recreant, as never to be constant in maintaining a Correspondence, on which she knows I set so high a Value. You see, dear POLIARCHUS, that when I am writing to you, I never know when to leave off: I am sure I have tir'd you with this Scribble, which asks your Patience only till it has told you that no body in all the World is more faithfully your Friend than, &c.

April 18. 1663.

ORINDA

## Appendix 15

### ORINDA TO POLIARCHUS

#### Letter XXXVI

I take an Opportunity of writing to you by a private Hand, because the Post is so very unsafe, that I fear many of mine, and yours too, which are of ten times more Importance, have miscarry'd: but because we have no other way to depend on constantly, I must beg you to make so effectual a Complaint, as may not only produce a greater Conveniency and Ease to our Correspondence, but be likewise a Help to the whole Country; for the Grievance is now become so general, that the Grand Jury at CAMARTHEN have presented Mr. ONEAL, the Post-Master General, for his Misdemeanours in that Office, by which several trading persons have been almost ruin'd; for their Letters either miscarrying, or coming too late to their Hands, has put them to such Streights in their Business, that they have been undone by it. The Persons who keep the Stages on the Roads complain they are not paid; if that be true, who can blame them for being remiss in their Duty? If it be objected that the MILFORD Post will not clear Charges, you may answer, that their own Neglect is the cause of it; for the Country is so discourag'd by the Uncertainty and Neglectfulness of the Post, that they chuse rather, when they have any Business of Moment, to send a Messenger on purpose to LONDON, than trust the Post with it: and this has been often observ'd to be even a more expeditious Method. We had rather pay more for our Letters, than be us'd at the scandalous rate we now are; and therefore, Sir, pray give Mr. ONEALE no rest, till this Abuse be thoroughly reform'd; and if you find no Redress from him, acquaint the Duke of YORK with it, who I am sure will not suffer us to be thus abus'd by his Officers, and whose Revenue suffers by it in the main. Pardon this Trouble on account of the Earnest Desire I have of conversing with you with more certainty, while I am at such a distance from you, as will allow me no other way, which I yet hope will not be for long; for ANTENOR has with great Acknowledgements of your Kindness assur'd me how generously you concern'd your self in his particular Affairs, and not only gave him your Advice, but promis'd your Assistance in

procuring him so advantageous a Post, as might help to disengage his Estate, and countenance our Journey to a Place, which tho' it be my native one, is not so dear to me on that account, as because it will give me an opportunity to converse with some few worthy Friends, of which Number POLLARCHUS may be assur'd he is one of the first. I have already taken the Freedom to tell you, how things stand with us in relation to our Estate, and how just a Desire I had to receive no Satisfaction my self, which must be prejudicial to my dear ANTENOR; that therefore I could not propose to my self any way to recover the Happiness of your Company, unless I had a Prospect at the same time of doing him some Service; for I should never be able to endure the inward Reproach of not having promoted his Interest to the utmost of my Power. His too generous and publick Spirit in the Service of his Country has been so destructive to his Fortune, that he cannot without utter Ruine, leave the little Concern he has here, unless he have a Prospect of such Advantages elsewhere, as may make Amends for his Absence, and help him to get rid of his Incumbrances. Since therefore you and our other Friends give us reason to believe, that I may promote such an end, and since you are pleas'd to promise your generous Assistance, I refer my self wholly to you and my Brother PHILIPS, whom ANTENOR has desir'd to look out for something that might deserve our Endeavours to get it. my Lady CORK told me in DUBLIN, that she would not rest till she had got me to LONDON, and would consult with you how to bring it about; ROSANIA too I'm sure will lend her helping hand, and be content to be troubled with me; so that if you three, together with my Brother, will consult of the Measures proper to be taken in this matter, I'm sure it may be effected. For you know nothing is desir'd here but such a Proposal as may reward and countenance the Journey, which must nevertheless have your Request to colour the undertaking it. ANTENOR is brim full of your Goodness and Friendship to him; he talks of nothing with so much Content, and I can hear of nothing with more. But let me not forget to tell you before I conclude, that I have seen the second and fourth Acts of POMPEY that was translated by the Wits, and have read and consider'd them very impartially; the Expressions are some of them great and noble, and the Verses smooth; yet there is room in several places for an ordinary Critick to shew his Skill. But I cannot but be surpriz'd at the great

Liberty they have taken in adding, omitting and altering the Original as they please themselves: This I take to be a Liberty not pardonable in Translators, and unbecoming the Modesty of that Attempt: For since the different ways of writing ought to be observ'd with their several Proprieties, this way of garbling Authors is fitter for a Paraphrase than a Translation; but having assum'd so great a Licence, I wonder their Verses are any where either flat or rough, which you will observe them not seldom to be; besides, their Rhymes are frequently very bad, but what chiefly disgusts me is, that the Sence most commonly languishes through three or four Lines, and then ends in the middle of the fifth: For I am of the Opinion, that the Sence ought always to be confin'd to the Couplet, otherwise the Lines must be spiritless and dull. I wish you could procure me the third and fifth Acts, for I long to see them, especially the third, which I take to be the most noble and best written in the *French*. I am impatient likewise to hear your Thoughts of that Translation. You know me as far from Envy, as those Gentlemen are above it, and therefore will not impute the freedom I have taken in these Remarks to that or any other Passion, but purely to my Opinion, and the Liberty I take of telling it to so intimate a Friend as POLLARCHUS; for after all I really think the worst of their Lines equal to the best in my Translation. If that Play had tir'd the Spectators as much as my Letter has you, they would have given it but a cold Reception; but you, I know, will pardon all the Troubles that you have created to your self, and encourag'd from her that is more than any body in the whole World, &c.

September 17. 1663.

ORINDA.

## Appendix 16

### ORINDA TO POLIARCHUS

#### Letter XXXIX

I have since I came from IRELAND receiv'd from you in all but five Letters, and gave written six times to you; and yet the *Trojan* tells me you have had but two, and are grown so stout that you will write no more: But pray where's the Justice of revenging on me the villainous Neglects of the Post? Get but that Grievance once redress'd, and you will have no reason to complain of my Silence. Let me beg of you to set about it in earnest; for since I am not like to see you till the Spring, it concerns me much to have the Post restor'd to its former certainty. My Lady CORK is now in Town, and I desire you to wait on her, and use your utmost Eloquence to express the Sense I have of the Merits of that Noble family, and of the infinite Obligations they have laid upon me; and when you think it proper, give my Lady an occasion of expressing her self on the Subject I mention'd formerly, that she would join with you in assisting the Design of my coming to LONDON, and discover if you can, whether she is pleas'd to preserve the generous Intentions of Kindness she so nobly assur'd me of in DUBLIN, as well as in general, as in that particular of which I now speak. Our dear Friend ROSANIA too will, I believe, be in Town as soon as this Letter, and whatever you three resolve on shall be at once my Prescription and Happiness. I have already in several of my former Letters told you all my Thoughts on this matter, and will not at this time repeat any thing but my Wishes that once before I die, Providence will allow me to see POLIARCHUS, ROSANIA, and the noble Family I but now mention'd. This comes to you by a Foot-Post of ours, whose Return, I hope, will bring me an account of you; and if you can send me the third or fifth Act of the new POMPEY, it will much oblige me. The next I write shall give you my second Thoughts of the two Acts I have already, after a most diligent and strict perusal of them; but I would fain have your Sense of the whole, now that you have seen it acted; for I am not to be bias'd or sway'd in my Opinion by the common Judgment of the Town; being of Mr. COWLEY's Mind, that the Creatures of the Theatre are govern'd by

Fortune, as well as all other things. PHILASTER, I hear, is in LONDON,  
his Name, as HUDIBRAS says, being

*Register'd with Fame eternal*

*In deathless Pages of diurnal.*

I expected to have heard from him e'er now. If you have TASSO's  
AMINTA, pray send it to me to read: You may thank your self for  
encouraging by your Commands the Confidence of this Request, after so  
many Favours of the same kind that I have receiv'd already; but how  
much soever I trespass on your Goodness, 'tis always with the inward  
Assurance, that I am to the greatest degree, &c.

Octob. 13. 1663.

ORINDA.

## Appendix 17

### ORINDA TO POLIARCHUS

#### Letter XL

YOUR Silence for a whole Month and more Troubles me so much, that I know not what to say to you, nor how to resolve whether this Misfortune be the Effect of your Unkindness, or the Injustice of the Post. 'Tis certain I have receiv'd but one Letter from you since your return to LONDON, and in that was enclos'd one from my Lady ELIZABETH BOYLE out of IRELAND. since that, I have written several to you, both by the Post and private Hands, but have never had the Satisfaction to know whether you receiv'd them or not. Sometimes I am melancholy enough to fancy that I gave you too much trouble about our private Affairs, and us'd you with too much Familiarity for you to pardon; and that from hence proceeds this your unusual Silence. If so, you may be assur'd that I have suffer'd enough by this dumb way of Punishment, and therefore let me intreat you to write now, even tho' it be to chide, rather than be silent any longer. To correspond with you is so great an Advantage to me, that I shall not part with it upon easie Terms; and therefore you must downright forbid my importuning you, before I can learn so much good Manners: But I still hope that POLIARCHUS has Friendship enough for ORINDA to hold out against all her Weaknesses; and that he would never have given her such convincing Proofs of his being her Friend, if he had not intended to continue so for ever. I promise my self, therefore, that I shall hear again from you, and particularly desire your Answers to these Questions, Whether we shall have any Redress in our Post-Grievance? Whether you have seen the CORK Family, and how you like their Acquaintance? But chiefly, whether you repent not of your most obliging Concern for one who merits your Goodness so little, and tries it so much, as, &c.

13 Novemb. 1663.

ORINDA.

## Appendix 18

### ORINDA TO POLIARCHUS

#### Letter XLIV

I am so oblig'd to you for the generous and friendly Concern you take in the unfortunate Accident of the unworthy publication of my foolish Rhymes, that I know not which way to express, much less to deserve, the least part of so noble an Obligation. PHILASTER gave me a hint of this Misfortune last Post, and I immediately took an Opportunity of expressing to him the great but just Affliction it was to me, and beg'd him to join with you in doing what I see your Friendship had urg'd you both to do without that Request; for which I now thank you, it being all that could be done to give me Ease: but the Smart of that Wound still remains, and hurts my Mind. You may be assur'd I had obey'd you by writing after my old ill rate on the occasion you mention, had you not in your next Letter seem'd to have chang'd your Opinion, advising me rather to hasten to LONDON and vindicate my self by publishing a true Copy. Besides, I consider'd it would have been too airy a way of resenting such an Injury, and I could not be so soon reconcil'd to Verse, which has been so instrumental to afflict me, as to fall to it again already; however, if you still think it proper, I will resign my Judgment and humour to yours, and try what I can do that way. Mean while I have sent you inclos'd my true Thoughts on that Occasion in Prose, and have mix'd nothing else with it, to the end that you may, if you please, shew it to any body that suspects my Ignorance and Innocence of that false Edition of my Verses; and I believe it will make a greater Impression on them, than if it were written in Rhyme: Besides, I am yet in too great a Passion to solícite the Muses, and think I have at this time more reason to rail at them than court them; only that they are very innocent of all I write, and I an blame nothing but my own Folly and Idleness for having expos'd me to this Unhappiness; but of this no more till I hear from you again. I Must now tell you, that the Affliction I am in is very much reliev'd by the Assurances you give me of the continuance of my Lady CORK's Friendship to me, and that neither my Absence nor the Unworthiness have robb'd me of her Esteem. And as I

am of your Opinion, that my coming to Town may probably effect something for ANTENOR, than my stay here; so I think it very adviseable to acquaint you, the *Trojan* thinks he has found out something fir for me to attempt, and that is very honourable and may be compass'd. ANTENOR too approves the Proposition, and begins to resolve upon my Journey, as soon as he can put his Affairs in a Posture for my settling things here, and my Accommodation there; but to quicken him in this, and confirm him in the other, I think it very necessary that in a Letter to him you should repeat the Assurances you have formerly given him, of your generous Friendship, and acquaint him that I ought to hasten to Town as soon as possible, in order to sollicite for him the Affair the *Trojan* has found out; which you may likewise represent as an Advantage easie to be obtain'd, by promising him all the Assistance you have so often assur'd me of, and which he already doubts not but he shall receive from you. Such a Letter from you will be more prevalent with him, than the Persuasions of all the World besides, for her honours no Man so much as your self. nor with so much Justice. You see, Sir, how plain I am with you, and I hope you will by this Freedom measure the Friendship I have for you, and the Confidence I repose in you; for certainly I could never make this Request to any but your self, and yet I must make another to you, that will be little less confident, and that is, that if my Lady CORK continue her Resolution of writing to me, you would prevail with her, as from your self, not from me, to do it in one inclos'd in your next; and therein if she please to express her self after her accustom'd obliging manner, by assuring me of her Friendship, and giving her Opinion that my coming may be advantageous to my self, and will not be unacceptable to her, I will shew her Letter to ANTENOR, who, I believe, will look on it as a new motive for my Journey, and be highly oblig'd by it. Let me know what they say of me at Court and every where else, upon this last Accident, and whether the exposing all my Follies in this dreadful Shape has not frighted the whole World out of all their Esteem for me. I receiv'd last Night a most kind Letter from my Lord ORRERY, wherein he is so partial as to speak of my Translation of POMPEY with Preference to the other: you shall see what he writes when we meet next, which happy Moment I expect with the utmost Impatience; for to use the words of STEPHANO GUASTO, whose *Civili Conversationi* is

a most excellent Book, and has often entertain'd me this Winter with great Delight, *You have render'd my Taste so delicate by the wonderful Charms of your Conversation, that all other Company seems to be dull and insipid.* You cannot therefore much blame me either for my Eagerness to regain that Happiness, or my Tediousness in conversing in this manner with a Person so much valu'd by all the World, and particularly by me to that infinite degree, that I can hardly find the way to that part of my Letter, that must assure you that I am, &c.

Jan. 29. 1663/4

ORINDA.

## Appendix 19

### ORINDA TO POLIARCHUS

#### Letter XLV

Worthy Poliarchus,

*IT is very well that you did chide me for so much endeavouring to express a part the sense I have of your obligations; for while you go on in conferring them beyond all possibility of acknowledgement, it is convenient for me to be forbidden to attempt it. your last generous concern for me, in vindicating me from the unworthy usage I have received at London from the Press, doth as much transcend all your former favours, as the injury done me by the Publisher and Printer exceeds all the troubles that I remember I ever had. All I can say to you for it, is, that though you assert an unhappy, it is yet a very innocent person, and that it is impossible for malice it self to have printed those Rimes (you tell me are gotten abroad so impudently) with so much abuse to the things, as the very publication of them at all, though they had been never so correct, had been to me; to me (Sir) who never writ any line in my life with an intention to have it printed, and who am of Lord Falkland's mind, that said,*

*He danger fear'd than censure less,*

*Nor could he dread a breach like to a Press.*

*And who (I think you know) am sufficiently distrustful of all, that my own want of company and better employment, or others commands have seduc'd me to write, to endeavour rather that they should never be seen at all, than that they should be expos'd to the world with such effrontery as now they most unhappily are. But is there no retreat from the malice of this World? 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, and that our Rivers (though they are babbling) would not have betray'd the follies of impertinent thoughts upon their Banks; but 'tis only I who am that unfortunate person that cannot so much as think in private, that must have my imagination rifled and exposed to play the Mountebanks, and dance upon the Ropes to entertain all the rabble; to undergo the raillery of the Wits, and all*

*the severity of the Wise, and to be the sport of some that can, and some that cannot read a Verse. This is a most cruel accident, and hath made so proportionate an impression upon me, that really it hath cost me a sharp fit of sickness since I heard it, and I believe would be more fatal; but that I know what a Champion I have in you, and that I am sure your credit in the World will gain me a belief from all that are knowing and civil, that I am so innocent of that wretched Artifice of a secret consent (of which I am, I fear, suspected) that whoever would have brought me those Copies corrected and amended, and a thousand pounds to have brought my permission for their being printed, should not have obtained it. But though there are many things, I believe in this wicked impression of those fancies, which the ignorance of what occasion'd them, and the falseness of the Copies may represent very ridiculous and extravagant, yet I could give some account of them to the severest Cato, and am sure they must be more abus'd than I think is possible (for I have not seen the Book, not can imagine what's in't) before they can be render'd otherwise than Sir Edward Deering says in his Epilogue to Pompey.*

----- No bolder thought can tax  
Those Rimes of blemish to the blushing Sex,  
As chaste the lines, as harmless is the sense,  
As the first smiles of infant innocence.

*So that I hope there will be no need of justifying them to Vertue and Honour; and I am so little concern'd for the reputation of writing Sense, that provided the World would believe me innocent of any manner of knowledge, much less connivance at this Publication, I shall willingly compound never to trouble them with the true Copies, as you advise me to do: which if you still should Judge absolutely necessary to the reparation of this misfortune, and to general satisfaction; and that, as you tell me, all the rest of my friends will press me to it, I should yield to it with the same reluctancy as I would cut off a Limb to save my Life. However I hope you will satisfie all your acquaintances of my aversion to it, and did they know me as well as you do, that Apology were very needless, for I am so far from expecting applause for any thing I scribble, that I can hardly expect pardon; and sometimes I think that employment so far above my reach, and unfit for my Sex, that I am going to resolve against it for ever; and could I have recovered those*

*fugitive Papers that have escap'd my hands, I had long since made a sacrifice of them all. The truth is, I have an incorrigible inclination to that folly of riming, and intending the effects of that humour, only for my own amusement in a retir'd life; I did not so much resist it as a wiser woman would have done; but some of my dearest friends having found my ballads, (for they deserve no better name) they made me so much believe they did not dislike them, that I was betray'd to permit some Copies for their divertisement; but this, with so little concern for them, that I have lost most of the originals, and that I suppose to be the cause of my present misfortune; for some infernal Spirits or other have catch'd those rags of Paper, and what the careless blotted writing kept them from understanding, they have supplied by conjecture, till they put them into the shape wherein you saw them, or else I know not which way it is possible for them to be collected, or so abominably transcrib'd as I hear they are. I believe also there are some among them that are not mine, but every way I have so much injury, and the worthy persons that had the ill luck of my converse, and so their Names expos'd in this impression without their leave, that few things in the power of Fortune could have given me so great a torment as this most afflictive accident. I know you Sir, so much my friend, that I need not ask your pardon for making this tedious complaint; but methinks it is a great injustice to revenge my self upon you by this Harangue for the wrongs I have received from others; therefore I will only tell you that the sole advantage I have by this cruel news, is that it has given me an experiment, That no adversity can shake the constancy of your friendship, and that in the worst humour that ever I was in, I am still,*

*Worthy Poliarchus,*

*Your most faithful, most obliged*

*Friend, and most humble Servant*

*ORINDA.*

*Cardigan,*

*Jan. 29. 1663/4*

## Appendix 20

For my highly honour'd Mrs Temple  
att her lodging, at Mr Winn's house  
neare the horse = Shoe in  
St Martins Lane  
London.

Jann: 22th 1663

Dear Madam

You treat me in your Letters so much to my advantage, & above my merit, that I am almost affrayd to tell you hoe exceedingly I am pleas'd with them, least you should attribute yt contentment to ye delight I take in being prais'd, whereas I am extreably deceiv'd if that be the ground of it, though I confess it is not free from Vanity; & I cannot choose but be proud of being own'd by so valuable a person as you are, & one whom all my Inclinations carry me to honour & Love at a very great rate, & you will find by the trouble I last gave you of this kind how impossible it will be for you to be rid of an importunity which you have so much encourag'd & how much your late silence alarm'd one yt is so much concern'd for ye honour you doe her in allowing her to hope you will frequently let her know she hath some room in your particular favour. I hope you have pardon'd me that complaint, & allow'd a little Jealousy to the great passion I have for you, & then I shall with some more assurance come to thank you for this last favour of the 12th: Instant, & must beg you to believe that if my Convent were indeed in Cataya, & I a recluse by vow to it, yet I should never attain mortification enough to be able willingly to deny my self the great entertainment of your correspondence which seems to remove me out of a solitary religious house on ye mountains & places me in the most advantageous prospect upon both Court & Town, & gives me right to a better place then of either, & that, Madam is your friendship, which is so Great a present, that there is but one way of making it more valuable, & yt is by making it less ceremonious & using me with a freedom, that may give me more access into your heart, & this I beg from you with a great earnestness & will promise you that whatever Libertys of that kind you allow me, yet I

will never so much abuse yt Goodness as to press my own advantages farther then you shall permit or lessen any of the respect I ow you by the less formall approaches yt I desire to make to you, whom though I esteem above most of ye world, yet I love yet more; I beleive er'e this you have seen the new Pompey either acted or written & then will repent your partiality to ye other, but I wonder much what preparations for it, could prejudice Will D'avenant when I heare they acted in English habits & yt so a propos, yt Cesar was sent in with his feather & Muff, till he was hiss'd off ye Stage & for ye Scenes, I see not where they could place any yt are very extra=ordinary, but if this play hath not diverted ye Cittizens wives enough Sr W: D: will make them amends, for they say Harry ye 8th & some later ones are little better then Puppett=plays; I understand ye confederate=translators are now upon Heraclius, & I am contented yt Sr Tho: Clarges (who hath done that last yeare) should adorn their triumph in yt, as I have done in Pompey, dor I defy Heraclius, & all his works, having so unfortunately picqu'd Mr Waller, yt he was pleas'd to speak of me with as little Generosity to ye King, as he did once of Sacharissa to ye Parliament, & I feare his displeasure is no whit abated since ye Queen's and Kings so gracious reception of those verses you mention upon her Maties recovery, & though their advantagious opinion might have given me some vanity, yet I'll assure you Madam yours gave me more, & though I never writt any thing with more distrust of my self, yet since you think them worthy so favourable a mention, I will submit my Judgment to yours, & rather think it possible yt I might hit somewhat in them not unluckily then yt you could be unsincere to one you are pleas'd so generously to own; you see how much I depend upon what you say, & therefore you ought in honour never to use me wth complemt. I am glad of the news of the Dutchesses recovery, & the other Victory you mention at court, for though it be but changing one pack of Cards for another, yet time & Inconstancy together may at last fix yt passion where it ought to be. I think the conquerd Rivall has done wisely in the change of her principles, for I wonder all Ladys of her Morallity, are not of a religion, which provides them soe many shorter ways to heaven then repentance, & where at ye wane of their Fortune, they may retire into a Cloyster, & perswade the world yt the shame of their disgrace, is onely the devotion of their Souls, & so make a vertue of necessity. I am much

obligd to any body for enquiring where I am, & indeed if I could give any account what I doe here I should be better satisfy'd, but I am good for nothing every where, & you will have a hard task to prove there is better company, where there is neither ye Conversation of Towns, not ye Innocency of ye Fields, but a certain kind of busy drudgery to the world & faction for that pittiful nothing yt men call preheminece, with the continuall incursions of people yt can neither speak nor hold their tongue, yet I could endure the sight of all this here, rather then be any more embarquée dans un affaire si meschante as ye Combating Gyants, & seeing them devour ye reputations of the Innocent; if I did not consider yt by coming to the place where these things are, I shall be nearer the conversation of some particular excellent friends, (among whom I'll assure you Mrs Temple hath a most eminent room) which may both improve & delight me, & this soe much byasseth my Inclinations yt I cannot but wish Mr Philips his occasions may permit him to give me yt opportunity this Spring, & if they doe, you are sure to be tormented with me soe much, yt I think you are concern'd to wish they may not; but in earnest for ought I perceive I must never shew my head there, or among any reasonable people again, for some most dishonest person hath got some collection of my Rimes as I heare, & hath deliverd them to a printer who I u[nderstan]d is Just upon putting them out, & this hath so extreamly [distu]rb'd me, both to have my private folls so unhandsomly exposd, & ye beleif yt I beleive the most part of ye world are apt enough [to ha]ve, yet I conniv'd at this ugly accident, that I have been o[n] a Rack ever since I heard it & though I have written to Coll: Jeffreys, (who first sent me word of it) to get the Printer punish'd the book call'd in, & me someway publickly vindicated, yet I shall need all my friends to be my Champions to ye Critticall & malicious, yt I am so Innocent of this pittifull design of a Knave to get a Groat, yt I was never more vex'd at any thing, & yt I utterly disclaim whatever he hath so unhandsomly expos'd; I know you have Goodness and Generosity enough to doe me this right in your company, & to give me your opinion too, how I may best get this impression suppressd & myself vindicated; & therefore I will not beg your pardon for troubling you with this impertinent story, nor for so long a Harangue as this: the truth is I would faine by example, if I cañot

by importunity induce you to yt freedom which is beggd of you as so  
necessary to ye happiness of

My D: Deare Madam

Your most faithfull  
& most  
affectionate Servt  
Orinda.

To Mr Temple my humble Service I beg,

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- Page 1. Detail from Johannes Vermeer, *Lady Reading at an Open Window*, 1658. Reproduced from J.M. Nash, *The Age of Rembrandt and Vermeer: Dutch Painting in the Seventeenth Century*. London: Phaidon, 1972. 99.
- Page 60. Detail from *Hackness Hall*. Eighteenth century. Reproduced from *The Private Life of an Elizabethan Lady, The Diary of Lady Margaret Hoby, 1599-1605*. Ed. Joanna Moody. Phoenix Mill: Sutton, 1998. Dustjacket.
- Page 161. Detail from title page of Eleanor Davies, *Given to the Elector*. (1648) Worcester College Library, Oxford, reproduced from Diane Watt, *Secretaries of God: Women Prophets in Late Medieval and Early Modern England*. Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 1997. 130.
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