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The World's Contracted Thus: The Animation of Microcosmic Space in the Lyric Poetry of John Donne and Andrew Marvell

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The World's Contracted Thus:

The Animation of Microcosmic Space in the Lyric Poetry of

John Donne and Andrew Marvell

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of
the Prerequisite for Honors in
Medieval and Renaissance Studies

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Introduction

In John Donne's intimate aubade, *The Sunne Rising*, his lovelorn speaker tells the sun to stay away from the lovers' bedroom. The sun threatens the all-encompassing experience of love that the two share. The speaker argues,

Thou, o Sunne, art half as happy as us
In that the world's contracted thus
Thine age asks ease, and since thy duties be
To warm the world, that's done in warming us. (25-28)

The speaker has no desire to go anywhere else; instead, the space he shares with his lover serves as world enough for him. He uses this desire to persuade the sun to either run away from the house or shine only on the lovers. In either instance, the speaker asks the sun to recognize that the world has "contracted thus" into a single bedroom.

To talk of contracted worlds is, sooner or later, to talk of microcosms. By the seventeenth century when John Donne and later Andrew Marvell are writing, the microcosm-macrocosm trope was an intellectual construct leftover from the medieval period. The tropes sought to discover connections between the great, unknowable universe in smaller, more tangible objects. One of the favorite microcosmic images was the human body, as Leonard Barkan has analyzed in depth.¹ On a larger scale, linked microcosmic-macrocosmic images could represent an entire philosophy, as E.M.W. Tillyard and others have pointed out in various ways.²

¹ "Only the human body can be the image of a microcosm which is at once objective, infinite, and proportional," Barkan writes of George Herbert's *Man*. "... Out of the desire to simplify man's relation to the cosmos arises the idea that man is a microcosm, a miniature cosmos." (*Nature's Work of Art: The Human Body as Image of the World*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1975; p. 2).

² Tillyard argued that "The Elizabethans pictured the universal order under three main forms: a chain, a series of corresponding planes, and a dance." *The Elizabethan World-Pictures* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1952). (23) Of Donne's relationship to this philosophy

One example of a microcosm from the early modern theater is the Globe Theatre in London. Its name and its shape deliberately mimic the earth, a fact that Shakespeare calls attention to in *The Tempest* with Prospero's reference to the "great globe itself."³ The Globe is a deliberate microcosm of the earthly globe, its actions and events reflecting the actions of the wider world. However, there is a complication in the representational relationship. What happens inside the Globe Theatre is designed to represent the outside world, yet those actions – namely, Shakespeare's plays – have significantly affected and altered the world outside. Shakespearean drama has significantly reshaped cultural narratives around the world and changed the nature of representation in many forms of media. The microcosm has changed the macrocosm; the Globe changed the globe.⁴

Shakespeare's theater illustrates the microcosmic-macrocosmic dilemma and the answer I will argue that Donne and Marvell have offered to it. As a concept, the microcosm remains a quasi-photographic mimetic construct, statically reflecting the greater entity. Yet if the microcosmic entity or space – for example, the Globe Theatre –

or world-picture, he writes, "Donne for all his greatness lacks their assurance; and for him much more than for them [Spenser, Sidney, Raleigh, Hooker, Shakespeare, Jonson] the new philosophy called all in doubt." (101)

³ Prospero: "These our actors, / As I foretold you, were all spirits, and
Are melted into air, into thin air,
And, like the baseless fabric of this vision,
The cloud-capped towers, the gorgeous palaces,
The solemn temples, the great globe itself,
Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve,
And, like this insubstantial pageant faded,
Leave not a rack behind." *The Tempest*, 4.1.148-156. (Oxford University Press: Oxford, New York, Ed. Stephen Orgel, 1987; 1998)

⁴ While this image borrows from the dramatic genre, not a genre examined in this project, the concerns of the *Tempest* share similarities with the poems examined according to at least one critic. Tillyard wrote, "With the general notion of order Shakespeare was always concerned, with man's position on the chain of being between beast and angel acutely during his tragic period; but only in the *Tempest* does he seem to consider the chain itself. Here indeed man is distanced into a more generally cosmic setting. The heavens are more actively alive." (31)

began to transform the outside world, it causes significant problems to the microcosmic-macrocosmic relationship. Either the microcosm must lose or actively destroy its identity as a microcosmic identity because it no longer mirrors the cosmos, or the cosmos must change in reaction to it in order to sustain the conceptual relationship. In this project, I argue that this is precisely what Donne and Marvell do: they challenge the static nature of the trope by turning the microcosm into a mutable, dynamic element, what I call “animated space.” Their poems then explore the consequences, full of pleasure and excitement and danger.

The concept of “animated space” is grounded in my interpretation of the physical or architectural spaces in the poems I consider, such as the Appleton house and estate, and global spaces in Donne such as the “little world” in *Holy Sonnet V*, as quasi-anthropomorphic entities with which the human speakers interact. Sometimes this quasi-anthropomorphic identity means just that, quasi-human; when Marvell’s narrator discusses Appleton House, he speaks of it as if it were a major character, with emotions, desires, and preferences. Other times, as in Donne’s work, the spaces are not described with human characteristics but as responsive entities with varying degrees of agency within the poetic narrative or conceit.

In the poems I will discuss, spaces are *not* remote, fixed, unresponsive, solid, or permanent. The speakers cannot depend on them remaining in the same shape or form throughout the poem; instead, they change, shift, end, and begin. They have defined geographical or structural features, such as a wooded area or four walls, yet these features shift depending on a thought process or reactive mechanisms that are hidden from the

speaker, and for that matter, the reader as well. These spaces are attuned to the thoughts and desires of those who enter their walls.⁵

The term I have applied to these changes, i.e. to the reactions that the spaces undergo, is “geographical metamorphosis.” Broadly, “geographical metamorphosis” any change which a geographical object – land, ocean, garden, even a house – undergoes, especially one that changes its nature. The term could be applied to earthquakes, to soil erosion, to floods, to the appearance of the harvest in the autumn and the debut of rosebuds in May. However, in the specific context of my analysis, I refer to geographical metamorphosis as the changes that these particular spaces undergo within the poetic conceit in response to the actions or characteristics of the narrator and those he describes.

“Metamorphosis” is particularly appropriate because of its Ovidian allusions. Leonard Barkan, Maggie Kilgour, and Kristen Poole have written about seventeenth-century understanding of Ovid in England.⁶ Leonard Barkan argued that metamorphosis becomes “a complicated aesthetics, a seamless web of changing narrative.”⁷ Kilgour

⁵ The best contemporary example I have found of “animated space” appears in J.K. Rowling’s *Harry Potter* novels. The Room of Requirement in Hogwarts Castle is a space that recreates itself depending on the needs and desires of its visitors. Sometimes it is a training room for Dumbledore’s Army in *The Order of the Phoenix* (J.K. Rowling; New York, Arthur A. Levine Books, 2003), other times it is a hiding place for forbidden objects, as in *The Half-Blood Prince* (New York: Arthur A. Levine Books, 2005).

⁶ Leonard Barkan, *The Gods Made Flesh* (*The Gods Made Flesh: Metamorphosis and the Pursuit of Paganism*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1986; 5); Maggie Kilgour, *Milton and the Metamorphoses of Ovid* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012); Kristen Poole, *Supernatural Environments and Shakespeare’s England* (Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011).

⁷ Barkan writes: “Metamorphosis is both punishment and reward, morality and beauty. It is a fact of nature, but at the same time it describes a complicated aesthetics, a seamless web of changing narrative and a structure that takes us from crime (mortal presumption) to punishment (animal transformation) via a route that undoes the power of that punishment.” (*The Gods Made Flesh*, 5).

describes Ovid's significance as "a chain of continuing and metamorphic creativity."⁸ As a rule, the shape-shifting that Ovid's immortals and men undergo occurs because of the desires of others. Daphne becomes a laurel tree because she wants to escape the desire of Apollo and because she pleads with her father the river-god; Pygmalion's beloved statue is breathed into life when he pleads with Venus to counteract the force of nature. While my purpose is not to trace the classical influences of Donne and Marvell, it will perhaps be helpful to the reader to consider the Ovidian description of geographical and natural spaces alongside the analysis of these 17th-century writers: the world as a cosmos inhabited by rivers with daughters and trees who are former lovers, and where marble is so inflamed by passion it melts into flesh.

By creating microcosmic spaces that are fundamentally animated spaces, both poets question the dangers of artificially bounded space, and by extension, the act of representation itself. When one places artificial, conceptual boundaries on space, one risks being wrong. If one is wrong, or corrupt, the spaces one creates can dissolve or threaten to absorb the greater reality around them. Agency, effect, consequence is inescapable: the poets tell us when they represent the world in miniature, either the representation or the reality must undergo metamorphosis. In the act of creating microcosm one changes either the cosmos or the representation of the cosmos. Perfect replication without destruction or change does not exist for either Donne or Marvell. There are no conceptual photographs.

And throughout these microcosmic images, both Donne and Marvell delight in the power and possibilities of the poetic imagination. A bedroom that transforms into the whole universe, a garden that subsumes its speaker into its natural beauty, a series of

⁸ In *Milton and the Metamorphoses of Ovid*, Maggie Kilgour writes about the way "Milton responds also to the fact that Ovid stands for a chain of continuing and metamorphic creativity" (xiv).

memories transformed into a viewing gallery: these are images of clever delight, revealing a joy in poetic possibility in the language these writers employ and in the scenes they create. To animate a microcosmic space is, in part, to revel in the power of animation.

Examining these poems from a spatial perspective is important for several reasons. First, it expands our appreciation of the imaginative and literary prowess of the two poets by paying attention to the often-neglected role that spatial entities play in their work. By recognizing the complexity and reactivity of their spatial constructions, we are further able to appreciate and understand these carefully crafted works of art. Second, by focusing on reactive spaces, we move away from a discussion of spatial instability, as articulated by critics such as D.K. Smith.⁹ I argue that the spaces described in these poems are not inherently instable, i.e., they do not behave erratically. Instead, they act *in response to* the humans who travel through them, creating a personal (or person-based) relationship rather than an impersonal chaos.

Third, and perhaps most significantly, the study of reactive spaces in the work of these poets allows us to extrapolate in part, though not fully, about how both Donne and Marvell describe the way the universe functions. The spaces described – the Appleton House estate, the many “rooms”, the “little world” conceit – are deliberately and explicitly microcosmic spaces, the universe-in-miniature, a cosmos scaled down to size. If those microcosmic spaces are in relationship with the humans who travel through them, then to some degree so is the larger universe that they represent. This suggests a picture of the universe in dialogue with its constituents, changing and morphing depending on the behavior of its human population.

⁹ Smith’s argument will be discussed in Chapter Two as part of the analysis of *Upon Appleton House*.

Donne and Marvell are an unusual choice for a comparison and contrast analysis. They belong to different segments of the seventeenth century, and because of this, in some ways they belong to different Englands. Donne lived under Elizabeth I and James; Marvell witnessed the English Civil War. Donne is the great metaphysical poet, Marvell the political poet; Donne is admired for his dexterity and experimentation, Marvell respected for his use of form. They do not often meet in critical contexts except in literary anthologies. One critic who has considered Marvell and Donne is Donald Friedman who has noted that a “meaningful comparison” can be made between the two poets in that both of them “express an encompassing moral idea by means of a specific image, or by a figure that reverses the roles of microcosm and macrocosm.”¹⁰ However, Friedman predominately uses Donne as a foil for analyzing Marvell’s pastoralism and the relationship between the body and the spirit, not spatial metamorphosis.

Yet Donne and Marvell deserve to be considered together in greater depth, in no small part because they both wrote at the end of an era and the beginning of a new one in English and European scientific understanding.¹¹ With the relics of pre-Copernican thought still in evidence and the upheaval of post-Copernican discovery all around them,

¹⁰ Friedman, Donald. *Marvell’s Pastoral Art* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1970; p. 202). In this instance, he is analyzing “Upon the Hill and Grove at Bilbrough,” which I do not study in this project.

¹¹ Andrew Hadfield emphasizes Donne’s “both-and” approach to the older and newer schools of writing. “In his search for poetic inspiration, Donne seems to have paid close attention to two distinct, albeit inter-related, bodies of poetry: the work produced in the years after the end of the roman republic and the establishment of the empire, and the poetry written by his immediate contemporaries in London. In doing so he styles himself as a metropolitan poet, making a link between the greatest city of the ancient world on the cusp of its expansion and assumption of world domination, and a similar situation in contemporary England.” (“Literary contexts: predecessors and contemporaries.” *The Cambridge Companion to John Donne*. Ed. Achsah Guibbory. Cambridge, UK; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006. Pp. 49-64; p. 49).

these poets witnessed seismic conceptual shifts. Kristen Poole describes the effects of those shifts on theological and metaphysical understandings of the world in the 16th and 17th centuries.

The changing cosmic landscape, and even the increasing precision used in surveying the fields beyond London's bounds, would profoundly transform not only terrestrial and planetary order, but eschatological geography as well... When the cosmos was rearranged, and mapping became a scientific undertaking, this spatial-theological organization was undermined as well.¹²

While Poole pays particular attention to eschatological geography, her observation about the metaphysical disruption caused by scientific developments describes the cultural discussion of seventeenth-century England that Donne and Marvell would have experienced in varying degrees. Both poets will grapple with medieval understandings of the world, challenging the microcosm-macrocosm trope with references to the new science, and yet neither will wholly reject the medieval constructs.¹³

In addition to the historical significance, the poets share surprising similarities in the natures of the spaces they invent. It was these similarities that first attracted me to the task of comparing the two in order to discover what (if anything) lay underneath them. I believe that the model of animated microcosmic spaces that I have constructed provides the link between the two poetic concepts of space. I trust that it may advance the discussion of key questions in the work of Donne and Marvell: the threat of destruction in

¹² Poole, *Supernatural Environments in Shakespeare's England*, p. 4

¹³ Richard Sugg argues that Donne was fundamentally unsettled by these changes in scientific understanding and struggled with the implications for religious faith. He writes, "New discoveries in medicine and astronomy, and the revelation of a whole massive continent, undocumented across centuries of written history, clearly shook educated Christians in his lifetime. And they seem... to have especially troubled Donne, with his all but involuntary desire to admit that an opposite perspective might equally be true... Donne allowed the cultural changes and anxieties of his time to affect him in a way that the Johnsons of the world did not." (*John Donne*, Basingstoke, UK, and New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2007; p. 19)

the erotic relationship, the role of the poetic imagination and the position of man in relation to God, as the spatial perspective reshapes our understanding of these key issues.

Although I am profoundly interested in the history of intellectual concepts like microcosmic analogies and the evolving understanding of the physical and geographical world in the 17th century, my argument in this thesis is not primarily a historical one. Instead I explore ideas and emotions such as erotic desire, religious devotion, and self-examination that transcend historical time. I analyze these concepts from a spatial perspective, or rather, by focusing on the spaces that these poets have created for these concepts in the ambition that by understanding the spaces of these poems, we will understand the heart of them more fully.

The first chapter, “Love and Other Earthquakes,” establishes the key questions and conflicts of this chapter in the context of love poetry. Through the poems *The Sunne Rising*, *The Good Morrow*, and *A Valediction: Of Weeping*, we are introduced to the concept of animated space within Donne’s work. The microcosmic spaces presented are expansive, problematic, challenging, but most significantly of all, they are evolving and reactive. These spaces are domestic and tangible: a bedroom, in the first two instances, and a physical globe model. In Marvell’s *To His Coy Mistress* and *The Gallery*, our understanding of animated space and the microcosmic relationship is expanded. *To His Coy Mistress* describes both love and death as an animated space, preparing us for the concept of God’s geographical nature in Chapter Two. *The Gallery* presents a fascinating and detailed picture of a mental space, animated by the speaker’s love and desire for Clora.

The second chapter, “Holy Houses,” further explores the connection between domestic and animated spaces. The love that animates the domestic space is the love of God and morality, however, rather than the love of a human being. In *Holy Sonnet V*,

Donne connects the cosmic and common by representing a spiritual longing via a metamorphosis of the “little world” into the “house” of the Lord. In *Hymn to God My God*, the domestic changes into the cosmic, as the speaker lies dying on his deathbed and watches as the walls of his room transform into heaven. By emphasizing God’s geographical nature, the poems expand our understanding of the relationship between microcosm and animated space. Microcosms reflect the glory of God, in that small things reflect the grandeur of his mastery; however, the microcosms Donne selects are reactive and dynamic like the God they represent. In Marvell’s epic *Upon Appleton House*, we examine the way morality and the love of virtue (or its opposite) changes reactive space. The house, rather than being an example of sociopolitical instability, reflects a relationship between a family and an estate that is conditioned by the virtue of the Fairfax family members.

The third chapter, “An Expanding Universe,” progresses in the consideration of divinely inspired microcosms, but in these cases, primarily in non-domestic spaces. Travel begets new spatial possibilities, as well as new dangers. Instead of speaking from the comfort and wonder of the house, the speakers of *Goodfriday 1613: Riding Westward*, *Holy Sonnet V*, *On a Drop of Dew* and *The Garden* are profoundly not at home. Some are searching for it; others will despair that home exists. These poems explicate the differences between journeys, as displacements between spaces, and metamorphoses, as changes within space, all the while articulating more deeply God’s geographical nature.

Throughout the poems considered, we will examine space as a multidimensional, multipartite entity that proves both conceptually complex and intellectually rewarding. A second, more whimsical illustration of these concepts is the scenario of a Russian woman

with Russian dolls. The woman exists and her dolls are meant to represent her in miniature. The largest doll contains a smaller doll, which contains a smaller doll. Each doll is in, in effect, a microcosm of its larger host; all the dolls, collectively and individually, are microcosmic representations of the living Russian woman. The fact that the Russian woman is alive is important: she may change her hair, or become pregnant, or gain gray hair. Her dolls, being dead or un-alive, do not change. They are a static representation.

Yet what would happen if the smallest doll came alive?

Imagine the scene: buried within its larger counterparts, the smallest doll begins to move. She decides she dislikes the color of hair and changes it. She stretches out her wooden arms and finds herself uncomfortable in her shell; so she pushes against her larger counterpart. Both her appearance and her movements are changing; in fact, her entire nature has changed with the spark of life. One by one, the dolls come to life, one inside another. These animated representations gain an unpredictable will of their own even as their purpose is to mirror the Russian woman.

This animation prompts a series of metaphysical questions: are the dolls still dolls? Do they still represent the woman, even though they have been transformed? How long could they stay “alive”? What is the nature of the animation? What effect will their transformation have on the greater reality?

That is, what if the woman herself began to change?

This is what I argue Donne and Marvell have done. The woman in the illustration is in some poems the cosmos; in others, God. The Russian dolls represent the multipartite, multilayered spaces that Donne and Marvell create. These spaces are literal and physical, like the Appleton estate; spiritual and religious, like the space of the Cross in *Goodfriday*

1613; erotic and romantic, like the geography-defying love-space of *To His Coy Mistress*, to name the most significant. Donne and Marvell animated these spaces with varying forms of desire and experience; in the terms of my illustration, they have brought the doll to life.

Chapter One:

Love and Other Earthquakes: The Animation of Microcosmic Space with Desire

*in The Sunne Rising, The Good-Morrow, A Valediction: Of Weeping and To His Coy
Mistress, The Gallery*

Donne's thought that love makes "one little room, an everywhere" marks love as a state that is both expansive and bounded. For these speakers, love happens between two people in a specific place and time. Yet love animates the place, causing the place to lose the restrictions of specificity on an emotional and spiritual level. They are no longer map-bound. In addition, they are also freed from the restrictions of time: they are *everywhen* as well as *everywhere*. This will remain an important conceptual component of animated microcosmic spaces throughout the project.

In the poems analyzed below, love catapults the speakers into spaces that turn and transform, that almost seem to speak back and challenge the humans living within their walls. These moveable spaces reveal much about their speakers: the vast expanse of their desire for the beloved or beloved object, the fear of external forces destroying the space they inhabit with that beloved, the reality of internal destructive forces made possible by the same love they treasure.

The major conflict within the poems is the speaker's struggle against external and internal forces from his position within the animated space. The speaker is located within a microcosmic space that is animated by his love.¹⁴ He desires to stay within that space, since it seems to encapsulate all that is good about existence within four walls. The space reacts to the speaker and to his experiences within it. However, the world outside (often

¹⁴ In Marvell's *To His Coy Mistress*, love itself becomes an explicitly spatial entity.

represented by the figure of the sun) threatens the space and the speaker fears its destruction.

There is an entropic tendency within the animated space, related to its microcosmic nature. It appears impossible to create a static microcosmic space that perfectly mirrors the larger universe. Rather, the speakers' microcosmic spaces change and chafe at the restrictions of the outside world, becoming spaces of fantastic domesticity where the old rules no longer apply. This is in part why the speakers in these poems, not only in Donne's two aubades but also in *To His Coy Mistress*, fear the sun as the harbinger of mortality and spatial restriction: the microcosm is not compatible with the cosmos it is supposed to reflect because it is animated by love and the cosmos is not.

Domestic spaces play a significant role in this discussion, providing the poets with a paradox suited to the expansive and specific nature of love. Domestic spaces are by definition common, connected to everyday experiences and banal particularity. Beds, removed from their sexual significance, are not very exciting. However, domestic spaces are also the spaces of true home: the one place that we, as readers, and the speakers never want to leave.

These poems have been selected and examined together for their considerations of microcosmic space in the context of a human erotic relationship. In *The Sunne Rising* and *The Good Morrow*, the speakers seek to overcome this incompatibility with declarations of power over the outside world or by arguing with the Sun itself, trying to avoid the consequences of that incompatibility. In *A Valediction: Of Weeping* and *To His Coy Mistress*, the speakers acknowledge the destructive possibilities of their animated microcosms and react in different ways. In *The Gallery*, a fascinating and often neglected poem by Marvell, the microcosmic space does not represent the totality of the universe (unlike the earlier

poems) but instead the totality of the speaker's relationship with the cruel fair Clora. This consideration of the role of human desire in animating microcosmic space will prepare us for a later discussion in Chapters Two and Three, when the context becomes one of the relationship between God and man, or man and God's morality.

The Sunne Rising: The Bed as Center

The Sunne Rising is a battle of wills expressed in a battle of places. The wills in question are the will of the speaker, lying in bed with his beloved, and the will of the sun, standing in for the overwhelming pull of the outside world toward mortality and the "mapped" world. The first place in question is the bedroom, definitively bounded within the poem, but in the speaker's experience, an animated microcosmic space that contains all of space and time. The second place is in a sense, all places; the outside world is represented by references to villages, the royal court, even India. The speaker's bedroom challenges the world of the sun, demanding to be separated from that world it is meant to mirror. This poetic conflict introduces us to the serial problem of animated microcosmic spaces in that with all of their possibilities, they are rebel states, unwilling to exist as part of the motherland.

Donne's speaker makes us aware of his location with the first few lines. He is in a house with windows, curtains, walls and bed. "Why dost thou thus, / Through windowes, and through curtaines call on us?" (2-3) he asks, and later: "All here in one bed lay ... This bed they center is, these walls, thy spheare" (20, 30). These are boundaries and sub-boundaries; walls separate the room from the rest of the house; windows present an opportunity to see outside the boundaries of the house; curtains prevent others from

invading those boundaries; the bed, as Donne writes, is the center, a bounded area for sleeping and for sex.

The speaker then describes life beyond the windows through describing the social structures of the outside world. The most important feature of the outside world is its dependence on time (“Must to thy motions lovers seasons run?” 4) which the speaker tries to resist. He calls upon the sun to pay attention to those who do and should live within the constraints of *chronos*. “Sawcy pedantique wretch,” he says, “goe chide / Late schoole boyes and sowre prentices, / Goe tell the Court-huntsmen, that the King will ride / Call countrey ants to harvest offices” (5-8). The characters mentioned – schoolboys, apprentices, huntsmen-courtiers, kings and ants – belong to a different world than the speaker does. The spaces in which they live are public spaces: school, workshops, court, hunting grounds, palaces, and farms; therefore the law of the public world (of the sun and the “rags of time”) ought to rule the people.

While the sun governs the world of public spaces and its inhabitants, the speaker defies that government in the private sphere of the lovers. He believes that the lovers are free from time, or even outside of time. “Love, all alike, no season knows, nor clyme, / nor houres, dayes, moneths, which are the rags of time” (9-10). Love does not obey the same rules. The speaker then asserts his physical superiority to the sun, “Thy beames... I could eclipse and cloud them with a winke, / But that I would not lose her sight so long” (11, 13-14). The sun’s power is limited compared to the power of the two lovers’ sights: the sight of the lover and the eyes of the beloved. Her eyes can “blind” more than the sun, for they can blind the sun itself. Whole cosmic entities are represented there; by staring into the beloved’s eyes, the lover engages time of a different sort, rendering the ragged time experienced by prentices and kings laughably irrelevant.

This ability of the beloved's eyes to reflect the entirety of the cosmos is representative of the Renaissance tendency towards understanding the world through microcosm. As discussed in the introduction, it is a well-documented trend throughout the period to metaphorically represent the created universe in all of its totality, complexity, and mystery, through a smaller, tangible object that nevertheless represents those same qualities in miniature. That object is commonly though not exclusively the human body. There is also a theological tenet to the microcosm: one sees the hand of God revealed in creation, the wonders of the great echoed in the delicate construction of the small.¹⁵ In *The Sunne Rising*, Donne borrows from the microcosmic idea in representing the lovers' bedroom and their love itself: representing the cosmos in total and in miniature.

Becoming bolder, the speaker argues that even geographical rules fail to apply to the private world of the bedroom. "Tell mee / Whether both the'India's of spice and Myne / Be where thou lefts them, or lie here with mee. / Aske for those Kings whom thou saw'st yesterday, / And thou shalt heare, All here in one bed lay" (16-20). Geographical and political entities have undergone a metamorphosis. Instead of remaining fixed according the rule of the Sun and the "timeboundedness" that the Sun represents, these entities shifted and melded. The bed, the room, the house have enfolded the outside world into its own political-geographical construct, reacting to the power of the lovers' passion. Rather than be subject to the laws of time, time and space are subject to human desire.

¹⁵ See Tillyard, *The Elizabethan World Picture* (previously quoted) and Leonard Barkan, *Nature's Work of Art: The Human Body as Image of the World* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1975).

The true scope of the microcosm expands in the next few lines. “She’s all States, and all Princes, I, / Nothing else is. / Princes doe but play us, compar’d to this, / All honor’s mimique, All wealth alchimie” (21-24). The speaker challenges the act of metaphorical comparison. Princes and governments merely re-enact the original scene in the bedroom, a quasi-Edenic conception in that the world’s existence comes from two people lying in each other’s embrace. “Nothing else is” suggests Genesis 1: the lovers have the power to reduce the rest of the world to pre-existence.¹⁶

The lover defends his re-interpretation (or re-designation) of cosmic structure by returning to the centrality of the lovers’ bed. “Thou sunne art halfe as happy’as wee, / In that the world’s contracted thus... Shine here to us, and thou art everywhere / This bed thy center is, these walls thy spheare” (25-26, 29-30). He argues for the renegotiation of the microcosm, compressing and transcending the boundaries of body, house, and universe. In the bed lie the bodies of the lovers, yet that bed is also the center of the sun’s orbit; the walls of the house contain the bed and the lovers, but they are also the sphere of the sun itself, or perhaps, the boundaries of the universe.

The scope of the speaker’s chronological and geographical claims complicates and destabilizes his central microcosmic thesis that the bedroom perfectly encapsulates the universe.¹⁷ In line 26, he declares that “the world’s contracted thus”; the bedroom and by

“In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.” Genesis 1:1-12, KJV

¹⁷ Jeanne Shami writes, “In fact, Donne challenges the microcosm-macrocosm analogy to explain the separations, the discordances, the unhappy alliances that continually beset the relations between the two worlds. The old geography seems inadequate, connecting men in misery rather than in harmony. This leads him to search instead for connections, the evidences of Providence in the world, for metaphors that can make sense of the changing, obviously uncorrespondent world.” (163) Shami, Jeanne. “John Donne: Geography as

extension the home is not only the center of the world, together they are the world. At the same time, he claims that as a lover, his space is outside the physical and chronological laws of the rest of the globe. He is simultaneously claiming to be wholly of the world – a perfect microcosm – and dissimilar to it. He wants to be both like the world and unlike it.

This existence of a desire for dissimilarity suggests that the speaker's home-world and the outside-world are in fact dissimilar. When there is time, time ends. School-boys go to school and then it finishes; prentices complete their apprenticeships and become masters; the King goes hunting and comes back to sleep, and one day, he dies. Death is separation, and the speaker fears separation, even in the form of delineation, and so he tries to escape it.¹⁸ There is tension between representing the world as he wishes it to be – “To warme the world, that's done in warming us, / Shine here to us, and thou art everywhere” (28-29) – and as it is, a world of kings and “schoole-boys” with rhythms and inexorable seasons.

The speaker's microcosm is instead one of animated space, where cosmic entities like the country of India and the rays of the sun are refracted, where the corners of a village bedroom become the confines of the universe. His love reconfigures the spatial, political, and social boundaries. The relationship he shares with his beloved creates a relationship with the space around him, a dialogue with the four walls and the window, who participate in protecting and nurturing the human relationship. Yet he fears the power of the sun, the unreactive, unresponsive object that governs the rest of the world. His strategy is to invite the sun to become part of his animated microcosm. Through addressing it as a quasi-anthropomorphic entity, as “busie” and “unruly,” “sawcy” and

Metaphor” in *Geography and Literature: A Meeting of the Disciplines* edited by William E. Mallory and Paul Simpson-Housley. Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1987. p.161-167

¹⁸ Marvell, in *To His Coy Mistress*, will describe death as displacement.

“pedantique,” the speaker attempts to invite the sun into a relationship. He invites the sun to become reactive and responsive, to be animated by the speaker’s own passion as his bedroom is. We are not given the sun’s decision.

The Sunne Rising presents us with the question: can an animated, microcosmic space survive the destructive pressure of the outside world it is meant to represent? We are not given a definite answer in the way that the speaker of *To His Coy Mistress* will offer (an emphatic no) or the speaker of *The Good-Morrow* (a problematic yes). The question itself is parallel to the explicit concern of the aubade, which is the fear that the lovers’ passion will be destroyed if they leave the bedroom. In both instances, we are left with a defiant lover-speaker and without a definitive answer.

The Good-Morrow: Expanding the Microcosmic Space

The Good Morrow expands upon the possibilities of animated space, perhaps most clearly articulated here of all Donne’s poems. It explores the ways in which a space animated by love, the bedroom, becomes more reactive, more exotic, and more novel than unanimated space, however real that unanimated space might be. The poem plays with scenes of domesticity, of fantasy, of intimacy and of multiplicity, all the while reminding us that each scene is interconnected: “one little room, an everywhere.” When the bedroom space is animated by the lovers’ desire for one another, the space itself becomes the quasi-tangible expression of their desire.

Donne introduces his poem with a picture of fantastic domesticity. His speaker wonders where he was or what he did before he met his beloved. “Were we not wean’d till then? / But sucked on countrey pleasures, childishly? / Or snorted we in the seven

sleepers den? / T'was so..." (2-5). Christopher Nassaar argues that the "sleeper's den" references both Plato's cave and a myth that seven early Christians were forced into a cave, where they defied death and slept for nearly two centuries.¹⁹ Donne places the two unaware lovers ("T'was so") in this space – perhaps quasi-Biblical, quasi-philosophical, or mythological. A "den" where one "snorts" along with the "seven sleepers" is a place of disengagement from reality and prepares us for the bedroom to come.

Dismissing the den with a "snort," Donne moves from the scene of fantasy to one of domesticity. "And now good morrow to our waking soules, / Which watch not one another out of feare" (8-9). It is morning and the lovers wake in bed. The domestic space is no longer the fantastic space of the "seven sleepers den." Lying inside their room-cum-sanctuary, the lovers are alert but not afraid. The lovers see both each other and the space where they have been sleeping, enveloping the construction of the house in the discourse. "For love, all love of other sights controules, / And makes one little roome, an every where" (10-11).

With "everywhere," Donne posits that love has reshaped the structure of the house. The strange, almost-otherworldly combination of the lovers' sexual consummation and their spiritual union has redesigned the space in which both unions were consummated. That space is simultaneously confined ("one little room") and expansive ("an every where.") When later Donne writes, "Let sea-discoverers to new worlds have gone, / Let Maps to other, worlds on worlds have showne, / Let us possesse one world, each hath one, and is one" (12-14), the plurality of worlds in those three lines – "new worlds," "worlds on worlds," "one world," – suggests a dizzying array of possibilities of

¹⁹ Nassaar, Christopher S. "Plato in John Donne's "The Good Morrow." *ANQ*. Lexington: Winter 2003. Vol. 16, Iss. 1; pg. 20-21.

cosmos, both charted and uncharted. Robert Sharp emphasizes that multiplicity in his comment that “the contrast is between both the newness and the multiplicity of these worlds, on the one hand, and the singleness of the world, which the lovers have because they constitute it, all else being excluded.”²⁰ The tension Sharp notes results from the power of love to animate the space. Love animates the lovers’ room, bringing not a select set of possibilities but all possibilities. Love has enacted a geographical metamorphosis: the “little roome” is “an everywhere.”

This renders “everywhere” else worthless to the speaker. By invoking sea-discoverers and maps, Donne invites us to consider the act of discovery and the act of cartography in this “multiplicity of worlds:” the discovering of a new world, and the act of categorizing and ordering that newly discovered space. Within this discourse the lovers reject those who discover new universes and those who chart them, because those two acts – exploration and cartography – are already happening inside the “one little room.” They have no need to chart the globe when they have each other, where the boundary between soul and body, the “you” and the “I,” become murky waters through which the lovers travel.

And yet this same “multiplicity” contradicts the stability of the lovers’ microcosm, only a line or two after as the speaker notes its perfection. Rather than perfectly representing the outside world in compact form, the “one little room” reshapes the architecture of the universe under the lovers’ direction. Geographical exploration signifies revision as well as addition to cartographic conceptualization; when explorers discovered a new island or even a new continent, it changed their understanding of how the globe

²⁰ Sharp, Robert. “Donne’s ‘Good-Morrow’ and Cordiform Maps.” *Modern Language Notes*. Vol. 69 (1954) 493-495. (p. 494-495)

itself was put together. The lovers reference “new worlds” and “own worlds,” “each has one and is one,” suggesting the room is not “an every where” but “everywheres,” a staggering and destabilizing plurality of places. When the speaker challenges cartographical representation (“Let Maps to other, worlds on worlds have showne”) that challenge carries with it an air of defiance. Consequentially, there emerges a question of whether this microcosmic space is able to encapsulate the outside world, as it must by definition, when that outside world changes and expands without limits.

Donne expands upon this question by considering cartographic representation. “My face in thine eye, thine in mine appears,/ And true plaine hearts doe in the faces rest,/ Where can we finde two better hemispheres / Without sharpe North, without declining West?” (15-18) Reminding us of the nature of exploration, Donne asks “Where can we finde...?” The lovers have become hemispheres, two constructed and discovered entities that are both separate (North and West) and curiously united (“My face in thine eye, thine in mine appears”) in body and in soul.²¹ Hemispheres, and their directions (North and South), are also characteristics of maps; characteristics, that Donne notes, that are inherently constricted, qualified, and limited by their defining attributes.

The universe, as it is presently constructed, is rendered unnecessary by being collapsed into the architecture of the room (“one little room, an every where”), which is in turn collapsed into the ambiguous, intermingled structures of the two embodied souls lying in bed. There is tension in the act of discovery and the act of cartography, in how much of the lovers’ room is mapped and unmapped or, indeed, unmappable. That “mappability” or lack thereof persists in the final lines. “What ever dyes, was not mixt

²¹ According to Robert Sharp, here Donne is imagining “cordiform or heart-shaped maps which were the creation of sixteenth-century cartographers and gained currency by inclusion in some of the books of the period.” (493)

equally; / If our two loves be one, or, thou and I / Love so alike, that none doe slacken, none can die” (19-21). The confusion and plurality of worlds in the second stanza become a confused plurality of selves: “our two loves be one, or, thou or I, none or none...” The speaker does not seem to know whether the beloved and himself are a united entity or two entwined but distinct individuals. Are they “thou and I” or a single entity, or are they subsumed into the identity of the space? The world is “unmappable” because it is reactive, animated, prone to metamorphosis. It defies precise definition, just as the lovers themselves will do.

The Good Morrow presents us with one clear technical advantage for the poet of creating animated space. The space becomes the physical expression of love, much as sex is the physical expression of intangible desire. Yet while the space is metaphorical and obviously so, it is also more than metaphorical. The “one little room” enters the lovers’ personal narrative and becomes the catalyzing agent for their romance. It is the third character, forming part of the pattern we will see throughout the other poems in this analysis. In creating that third character, the poet gains both the power of limitation and the power of multiplicity, just as his characters do while in relationship with their little room.

The poem expands our understanding of the microcosmic question: can one create a conceptual miniature of the universe without changing either the universe or its representation? The space of *The Good Morrow* begins to answer the question by establishing the room as impenetrable. There is no fear of the outside world in this poem; the external pressures of chronology and mortality are considered banished. Yet there is explicit dissonance between the microcosmic and the cosmic, between the “one world” of the lovers and the comparatively banal “new worlds” of explorers. The lovers have

created something new, something dissonant in their microcosmic space and expect that space to survive, even as it challenges the structures of the universe it is designed to represent.

A Valediction: Of Weeping: Discovering the Destructive Metamorphosis

A Valediction: Of Weeping extends our consideration of the role of animated space within the human love relationship. With its reference to faces (“My teares before thy face... For thy face coines them”; 2-3) and its articulation of transformed microcosmic space (“and quickly make that, which was nothing, *All*”; 13) *Of Weeping* shares similarities to *The Good Morrow*. And as we have seen in *The Good Morrow*, *Of Weeping* will present an animated microcosmic space that challenges the universe it reflects. Yet if *The Good Morrow* revels in the powers of animated space, *A Valediction: Of Weeping* probes that very challenge that animated microcosmic space offers to the world outside of it. Donne or his speaker meditates on macrocosms and microcosms within the context of the physical manifestation of grief rather than connubial bliss. Within this context, he explores the consequences of attempting to recreate the universe in miniature. The poem suggests that even animated space cannot escape the possibility of internal destruction, and it may perhaps catalyze that destruction through its very animation.

In the second stanza of the poem, Donne plays with global locations and dislocations. He employs the image of a “workeman,” presumably in a domestic or local workspace, examining the depictions of exotic places that enables one to comprehend the globe in an instant.

On a round ball,
A workeman that hath copies by, can lay
An Europe, Afrique, and an Asia,

And quickly make that, which was nothing, *All*;
So doth each teare,
Which thee doth weare,
A globe, yea world by that impression grow,
Till thy teares mixt with mine doe overflow
This world, by waters sent from thee, my heaven dissolved so. (10-18)

Donne makes a map out of the unmappable, a globe out of a liquid tear. He plays with textures and specifics – “A round ball,” “lay,” “Europe, Afrique, Asia,” with size and scale – “A round ball,” “This world,” “each teare.” The result is a pleasurable confusion in magnitudes, a sense of being extracted from the world and looking at it. It is an experience of being removed from the universe and staring at it from the outside, a sensation recreated in the staring at a representation of the globe on which one’s own two feet stand. There is dislocation in the very act of locating the self, because in that act of locating, one recognizes the dissonance between the reality and the representation.

Within this dissonance and dislocation, Donne presents a “teare” in the form of a “globe, yea world.” He invokes the vertical and the horizontal senses of geography, both “Europe, Afrique, and Asia,” as well as “my heaven.” He fears that “thy teares mixt with mine doe overflow / This world, by waters sent from thee, my heaven dissolved so.” The sea escapes its natural boundary and “dissolves” not only earth but the speaker’s heaven too, in its Biblical undertones.²² The tears of Donne’s speaker and his beloved represent a sadness as large, and overwhelming, as the universe.

Yet if heaven as macrocosm dissolves by the efforts of the tear as microcosm, the sustainability of the micro-macrocosmic structure becomes suspect. That which is smaller both physically and conceptually should not be able to overpower that which is larger both in body and in conception. In the relationship between the “tear” and the “world”

²² The story of Noah will resurface in Donne’s *Holy Sonnet V*, analyzed in Chapter Two.

or “heaven,” the tear exerts agency in overwhelming and dissolving the latter. If this conquest or dissolution is possible in the relationship between the tear and the cosmos it contains, it may also be possible in the secondary analogy, the man-made globe to planet Earth. In “making that, which was nothing, *All*” of “An Europe, Afrique, and an Asia,” does the workman compromise the structural integrity of the globe itself? He does exercise a parallel agency in creating a representation in miniature that the beloved and speaker exercise in creating a tear, and therefore would be liable to the same potential destruction.

Destruction is the quiet ghost haunting the poem, the counterpart and perhaps the complement to the power of “infinite play” in global representation. The workman, in the conceit-within-the-conceit, is able to capture a seemingly infinite globe onto a finite space. With artistry he crafts a globe and imitates God in the early chapters of Genesis; “and quickly make, that was nothing, *All*.”²³ Yet after creation comes the Fall; after the Tower of Babel came the first great diaspora of the human race; and after the speaker’s tears imitate the workman, heaven dissolves. Destruction follows the act of creative representation. The speaker does not desire destruction, as it is desired in Donne’s *Holy Sonnet V*.²⁴ Instead, the destruction is catalyzed by the tears of the beloved (“by waters sent from thee, my heaven dissolved so”). These are the same tears that created “a globe” in the first place. The grief of the beloved both creates and animates the microcosm and overwhelms the same microcosm with its force until the speaker’s very heaven dissolves.

The ostensible purpose or argument of the poem is to describe and proclaim the awesome scope of weeping. We are not told why the lover and his beloved are sad

²³ “And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep.” Genesis 1:2, KJV

²⁴ Discussed in Chapter Two.

(though we can guess it is due to separation— another kind of space), but we are told that their grief manifests itself in a curiously global manner, i.e., in the shape of human tears that can make heaven dissolve. Within this context, Donne implicitly asks us to consider the consequences of creating cosmic analogies on paper and in mind, and what destruction we might incur in the process.

It is important to recognize the correlation between the dangers of reactive space, of cosmic analogies, and the dangers of the love that catalyzes the reaction in the first place. Grief, as Donne and other poets will tell us, is an inextricable part of human love. That process by which another's tears form our personal heaven is the same process by which that heaven can be destroyed. Love carries within itself the seeds of reproduction and destruction, and it can often be hard to tell which is which. From the spatial perspective, that tendency towards reproduction and destruction is the tendency of animated space towards geographical metamorphosis. *Of Weeping* argues that animation causes space to shift, and potentially to be destroyed. Either the microcosm or the cosmos must give way; perfect, static replicas are impossible. The wooden globe or the earthen one must crack.

To His Coy Mistress: Love as Spatial Entity

As we turn to our first consideration of Marvell, we will see a development in animated space. Marvell's animated microcosmic spaces are particular and less abstract than Donne's, changing the nature of the microcosm through particularity. He refigures the entities of love, passion, and death as spatial entities and then probes at their nature through this refiguring. The poet meditates on the potential reactivity of space contrasted against its actual reactivity. In this analysis, I will argue that *To His Coy Mistress* concerned

in almost equal measures with questions of space as with questions of sex (why should the mistress give in?) The famous first line, “Had we but world enough, and time,” guides the reader, and the mistress, to a consideration of death and mortality, the condition of being in waiting for death. However, death is not described – not yet – as a physical rotting, as a loss or theft. Instead death is signified by having too small a space and too short a time.

This prepares us for one of the most popular seventeenth-century love poems for the modern era, and also for a marvelous consideration of reactive space. If we dismiss Marvell’s references to deserts and the Ganges as “mere” metaphor, quick illustrations of his speaker’s proclaimed desire, we miss a rich and rewarding dimension of his work that further entangles questions of sex, life, and death, with the spaces that condition and enable those questions to exist. By choosing a spatial perspective, we will discover that for Marvell, love creates space while the death-space is non-reactive; both are powerful.

Having posited the initial claim of unlimited time and space (“Had we but world enough, and time”), the speaker paints a re-imagined universe where geographical limits bend and react to the desires of the beloved and himself. The first limit is that of geographical scale. The speaker references “Thou by the Indian Ganges’ side” (5); and a line or two later, “I by the tide / Of Humber” (6-7). Casually depositing his beloved one on one side of the planet and himself on the familiar banks of the Humber, the speaker attunes us to the fact that distance – that formidable obstacle to travel and its invitation – is now at his discretion. If he had “world enough,” the entire world would become the theater for their romantic drama, a theater of staggering proportions.

The second limit is that of time, or chronological scale. “I would / Love you ten years before the flood,” he tells the mistress, “and you should, if you please, refuse / Till the conversion of the Jews” (7-10). In this re-imagined universe, the lovers would be able

to set the tempo of their relationship in terms of Old Testament and post-New Testament events. He adds that he would praise each of her body parts in a brief blazon with centuries and eons (“An hundred years,” “Two hundred,” “Thirty thousand,” “an age,” “the last age.”) Time itself becomes a plaything in their hands, no longer subject to the tyranny of clocks and history books; it changes to reflect the modesty and “coyness” of the beloved, and the passionate perseverance of the speaker.

In the next several lines, the speaker clarifies and expands on the role of love in removing these geographical and chronological limits. He says, “My vegetable love would grow / Vaster than empires, and more slow” (11-12). The delicious phrase “vegetable love,” a delight of so many English teachers, and “grow,” suggests the obvious reference to plants; however, the idea of “vegetable love growing / vaster than empires” also encourages us to imagine the powers of this love as spatial and geographic, exceeding the normal limits of the world’s most expansive nations. The speaker adds, “For, Lady, you deserve this state; / Nor would I love at a lower rate” (19-20). The underlying assumption within these lines is that there is some ultimately and inherently valuable quality about having all of time, and all of space. This quality is intrinsically linked to love; love is somehow similar to or perhaps exactly the power to animate space, to enable space to respond, react, and expand. This regenerative metamorphosis, and the role of love in catalyzing the metamorphosis, represents the height and purity of love. And it is regenerative and reactive rather than only expansive (i.e., not solely a metaphor for scale): it “grows” and changes, depending on the mistress’ reaction and the speaker’s increased fervor.

In opposition to the beautifully reactive love-space, death is described as a geographical metamorphosis, one that does exist in the “real” world. “But yonder all

before us lie,” the speaker says, “Deserts of vast eternity” (23-24). “Deserts” complements the “rivers” in the early lines of the poem. Yet in addition to the metaphorical parallelism, we must recognize that Marvell is asking us to imagine death as a change in space: a space without limits, and a space without life (“deserts of vast eternity.”) Instead of being regenerative, the metamorphosis caused by death, and imagined as death, is degenerative. “And your quaint honour turn to dust; / And into ashes all my lust.” The intangible, competing spiritual components of the lovers’ desire – honor and lust – have been transformed into terrestrial elements. These are the elements of aftershock, leftover fragments of once-living things like fire and wood.

This degenerative geographical metamorphosis is grounded in representations of place. “The grave’s a fine and private place, / But none, I think, do there embrace” (27 – 32). The tomb where “worms shall try / That long-preserved virginity” is “a fine and private place,” and yet “private” also connotes the idea of limitation. The grave is neither expansive nor reactive, nor it does allow its human inhabitants to react to one another. Time has conquered all, leaving love behind, wrapped in grave-cloths. This is the real space in which the speaker and his mistress live.

With the true limitations of the lovers’ situation revealed, the speaker presses his case. He progresses beyond the language of history and the images of the future to focus his reader’s emphasis precisely on the present. “Now,” he repeats, “Now, therefore... Now let us sport.” He uses words of unrestraint and immediacy like “instant,” “transpires,” and “devour”; no more hundred and three hundred years. And as he has throughout the poem, the speaker sets his argument in cosmic terms. If the mistress gives in to his amorous advances, the speaker says that they are “defying time,” challenging the

cosmic qualities of the universe as rebels with a cause, if without hope of ultimately winning; sex becomes a martyr's act.

Sex is described as the re-formation of space, an attempt to recreate the imagined universality of the geographical metamorphosis in miniature. Rather than the expansive and total "vegetable love," love becomes confined and total. "Let us roll all our strength, and all / Our sweetness, up into one ball" (41-42). It is no longer the globe, but a "one ball" that contains "*all* our strength, and *all* / Our sweetness." Sex is the microcosmic experience of ideal love available to the lovers in a non-ideal universe that tends irrevocably towards death and decay.

And with sex imagined in this fashion, the speaker sets it as a challenge against that decay. It is not an assertion of power over the forces of death, nor is it a conquest or celebration of the fact that the lovers can animate global spaces with their passion. The "iron gates of life" do not become gates of silk; there is no reconstruction of the boundaries set upon them by time and mortality. Though it is often considered an image with sexual or obstetrical connotations, I read "iron gates of life" in this context as an acknowledgment of the rules and limitations that guard the entryway to the "places" of life, both the place of the living and loving, and the place of the dead. These gates are non-negotiable, no matter how the lovers' passion might seek to recreate the world according to their wishes. This coheres with the stirring final lines. "Though we cannot make our sun / Stand still" is the expression of a heartless sun, a sun without pity and a death without discretion.

By imagining love and passion as animated spaces, Marvell's "vegetable love" offer a spatially considered definition of love itself. Love is an entity that is meant to exist *everywhen* and *everywhere*, unbounded by either space or time, skillfully imagined as an

unrestricted globe that reacts and reshapes according to the wishes of the lovers. It is a microcosmic space, encapsulating the entirety of history and geography, and yet it is a microcosm fundamentally incompatible with the universe. Concurring with Donne's *Of Weeping, To His Coy Mistress* concedes that animated, microcosmic spaces are a lost cause, yet a cause worth losing.

The Gallery: The Complexity of Constructed Space

The Gallery defends the complexities of love-activated spaces in astounding Marvellian particularity. *The Gallery* is perhaps most extraordinary for its recreation of the human mind into the form of a gallery of paintings, a mimetic meditation. The poem belongs in our discussion because of its fascinating animation of *mental* space in this curiously detailed form, and for its emphasis on the power of love and desire in creating the paintings.²⁵ We see the reactivity of this space in that the space imagined is determined by the attitude of Clora towards her lover at various points in time. This is a poem explicitly focused on the creation of space, animated by deeply felt emotions and conflicting experiences. Memory brings the gallery to life, peoples it with images, enables the speaker to reflect and consider the impressions he has of Clora and to imagine himself walking in a space where all the impressions exist simultaneously.

Marvell introduces us to the scenario in the opening stanza. He writes,

Clora, come view my soul, and tell
Whether I have contrived it well.
Now all its several lodgings lie
Composed into one gallery;

²⁵ I am classifying the gallery as a domestic space in the same category as bedrooms and houses in the earlier poems.

And the great arras-hangings,²⁶ made
Of various faces, by are laid;
That, for all furniture, you'll find
Only your picture in my mind. (I.1-8)

The delicious surprise of the opening line (“Clora, come view my soul”) becomes not an invitation into his heart but into the poetic conceit: the speaker invites his beloved to see what he has created out of his desire for her. The fact that the speaker has “created” it is apparent in the second line (“I have contrived it”). This is a constructed mental space with complexities and divergences (“several lodgings,” “great hangings, made / Of various faces”) and memories. Yet the most significant feature of the room is the image of Clora (“Only your picture in my mind”); her images, representations of the speaker’s memories, bring the room to life.

Marvell presents these “paintings” of Clora in various perspectives. The first is of Clora as a psychopathic romantic predator, “an inhuman murderess; / Examining upon our hearts / Thy fertile shop of cruel arts” (II.10-12). The “art” of Clora’s seduction is “cruel.” This causes to ponder our poet’s motives for a moment. The “art” of the speaker’s gallery is unquestioned; it is his desire and his memory that create the mental space, a collection of imaginary artwork. The pictures he presents of Clora are neither flattering nor kind; instead, they reflect a multifaceted memory, the multiple, clashing and overlapping impressions of a woman who flirts with him and then walks away.

²⁶ OED: *arras*, n. **1.** A rich tapestry fabric, in which figures and scenes are woven in colours. Also *cloth of arras*. **2.** A hanging screen of this material formerly placed round the walls of household apartments, often at such a distance from them as to allow of people being concealed in the space between. (“arras, n.”. OED Online. March 2013. Oxford University Press. 18 April 2013
<<http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/10975?redirectedFrom=arras>>.)

The second painting, set in deliberate contrast (“on the other side”) to the first, is a painting of Clora as a lovely maiden, waiting to be wooed. She is “like to Aurora in the dawn,” with “milky thighs,” similar to “roses,” surrounded by “wooing doves” who are “perfecting their harmless loves” (III.18, 20, 22, 23-24). The “harmless loves” of the ornithological members of the scene are just one component of the attractive, unthreatening sexuality presented in this painting. The “harm” returns in the third painting described, that of an “enchantress” (IV. 25). With a hint of Edmund Spenser’s Busirane, Clora-as-enchantress “raves over his entrails” of a “restless lover” in a “cave,” obsessing over her own beauty. The “wooing doves” are now a “greedy vulture.” Clora’s self-obsession destroys both her beauty and those who find themselves under the spell of that beauty, transforming her into an evil, ugly, devouring creature. “Against that” image, the fourth painting presents her as “Venus in her pearly boat,” living in harmony with the sea (V.34).

Each of the paintings affects the speaker. He describes the Clora in each scene in active verbs (“divining,” “slumbering,” “examining”), as if the painted Cloras are still moving, still breathing, still enchanting him. They are. In the penultimate stanza, he describes the effect that her images have on his mind:

These pictures and a thousand more
 Of thee my gallery do store
 In all the forms thou canst invent
 Either to please me, or torment:
 For thou alone to people me,
 Art grown a numerous colony;
 And a collection choicer far
 Than or Whitehall’s or Mantua’s were. (VI.41-48)

Here we discover something extraordinary about the paintings. These images are outside of Clora’s ability to create; they are “in all the forms thou *canst* invent / Either to please

me, or torment.” Clora did not make these images of herself. And yet, neither does the speaker claim authority for the creation of the paintings themselves. He “contrived” the gallery, the mental space which houses the painted memories, but they seem instead to have a life of their own; “For thou alone to people²⁷ me, / Art grown a numerous colony.” The speaker lives as a visitor in his own gallery, living in conversation with the images which enchant (“choicer far”), frighten, and bewilder him.

The poem concludes with the image placed at the entrance of the imaginary gallery. It is easy to misread the line, “that at the entrance likes me best,” as “that at the entrance me likes best,” i.e., the speaker’s favorite portrait (VII. 50). However, I believe we should read the line as “likes *me* best” with “me” as object of “likes.” The picture, the image, the memory of Clora *likes* the speaker best. He “was took” by her. The painting, and the memory it signifies, enacts power over the speaker; it has some kind of mystical agency over his emotions and thoughts.

By collating his memories in the form of paintings, the speaker allows for a complex and composite idea of Clora. He acknowledges preference in the form of the entrance picture but does not deny the reality of the others. We may question the objectivity of his memories, of course, but we should make sure to recognize the fact that these contrasting portraits allow for a dynamic experience of Clora as a character. The image of a gallery invites us to “walk” from one stanza to the next, considering each portrait in detail, and then “walk” to the next, without leaving the “gallery” space.

²⁷ From the OED: To provide or fill (a place, esp. a land) *with* inhabitants; to populate; To fill *with* (imaginary people or things); to imagine or represent as peopled. (“people, v.”. OED Online. March 2013. Oxford University Press. 18 April 2013 <<http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/140405?rkey=bKAqhr&result=2&isAdvanced=false>>.)

The gallery construct also suggests that the speaker, and all those who visit his mind, experience these images simultaneously. The speaker could have introduced us to his history with Clora as a sequence of chronologically-contained events, e.g., their first kiss, their first fight, the second time she left him waiting by a haystack. Instead, the “paintings” are presented out of order. Presumably a visitor standing in the middle of this imaginary space could glimpse all of the paintings at once. We can extrapolate that all these images present themselves, adjacent if not overlapping, when the speaker considers the “picture” of Clora in his mind. After all, it is a singular “picture” which he promises resides in his brain in line 8.

The Gallery presents us with an articulate, detailed portrait of what an animated imaginary space is like. It is a room with a specific purpose: the viewing of contrasting memories. More than this, it is a space colored by memory so that the speaker might have a better understanding, a better perspective, or at least a better concept for grappling with his beloved nemesis and the emotions she inspires within him. It is a microcosmic space of the macrocosm of their relationship. Clora’s beauty and her cruelty have led to the creation of a unique space, and the speaker opens the poem by inviting her inside.

Conclusion

For Donne, an animated microcosmic space collapses the structures of the outside universe. Geographical boundaries meld and melt away until “one room” is an “everywhere,” until India is displaced; the intellectual structures of the cosmos are rendered irrelevant. This causes tension when Donne turns to ideas of discovery and cartography (broadly conceived as the organization of discovery), the tension of the ambiguous and mysterious spaces relying on the vocabulary of fixed spatial boundaries.

Marvell is less concerned with the collapse of certain structures in his microcosmic spaces, such as architectural features or geographical boundaries. Instead, Marvell is interested in the possibilities of animated microcosmic spaces to overcome the limitations of distance and of time. The speaker in *To His Coy Mistress* does not wish to move the Ganges to northern Yorkshire, but he does wish to travel between them with ease. He does not seek to overturn empires or collapse political hierarchies, but his love seeks to grow as fast and as vast as such an empire. In a similar vein, the speaker of *The Gallery* does not wish for his mentally constructed gallery to subsume all of the world's art galleries into its walls. Instead, he relies on the possibilities of one place to contain all of his pictorially depicted memories simultaneously, regardless of when or where those memories occurred.

For both poets, there is some ultimately and inherently valuable quality about having all of time and all of space. This quality is intrinsically linked to love; love is somehow similar to or perhaps exactly the power to animate space, to enable space to respond, react, and expand. And for both poets, the tendency towards reproduction and destruction of their imagined spaces is the inevitable tendency of the animated microcosm towards geographical metamorphosis. There is something about a microcosmic space that, once imagined as reactive, makes it become regenerative or degenerative; sometimes, it becomes both. That degenerative, destructive tendency has the possibility to negatively impact the speaker who dwells within the microcosmic space, and so the speaker fears that collapse.

Chapter Two:

Holy Houses:

Virtue as Catalyst of Geographical Metamorphosis in Holy Sonnet V, Hymne to God My God in My Sicknesse, and Upon Appleton House

In the previous chapter, we examined the concept of animated microcosmic space within the context of a romantic relationship. In this chapter, we will attend to the concept in the context of the relationship between God and man. The poems I have selected for specific study for this titanic subject, itself the major concern of many works by both Donne and Marvell, center on the image of a house. In *Holy Sonnet V*, the house is mentioned only once in the final line, but that mention transforms our previous conceptions of the animated space involved. In *Hymne to God My God*, the metamorphosis of the house is the medium of the speaker's search for home. In Marvell's *Upon Appleton House*, the speaker guides us through a particular historical estate while meditating on the relationship between a house and its master.

Domestic space marks the transition between the two contexts. In many of the love poems analyzed, domestic space was valued because of its privacy and its possibilities. Lovers could share private passion unseen behind closed doors, yet that passion animated those doors so that they could lead anywhere – to “worlds on worlds,” from India to York and back again. The use of non-domestic space, such as the references to exotic and foreign lands, served as poetic contrast to the possible banality of a country lass and lad lying together in bed. In the religious or moral poems examined in this chapter, domestic space is valued for its simplicity and “fundamentalism,” i.e., that the home is the fundamental unit of space. Its simple familiarity provides the poetic contrast

to the heavy theological or moral *topoi* of the poem: domestic space unites the cosmic and the common.

Domestic spaces as “centers” lend themselves naturally to microcosmic consideration. Both Donne and Marvell explicitly and implicitly transform the house into a microcosmic space, reflective of the wider universe and, in the theological context, reflective of the universe that the Christian God has created. Marvell’s speaker praises Appleton House as a bastion of peace in a muddied world. Donne’s dying speaker in *Hymn to God My God* will watch his bedroom transform into the rooms of heaven, while undergoing some global shape-shifting in the process. And in *Holy Sonnet V*, Donne will bring our attention to the house only in its final line, causing us to re-examine our preconception about the focal image of the poem.

These microcosmic spaces are animated and prone to change and metamorphosis, similarly to the spaces discussed in the previous chapter. However, unlike those spaces, these are not animated by love. Instead, they are animated by the speaker’s desire for and behavior due to the presence of God. This is expressed as virtuous conduct and good religion (as in *Upon Appleton House*), the acknowledgment of sin and the need for repentance (in *Holy Sonnet V*) and the expectation of reunion with God in paradise (*Hymn to God*). Donne in particular explores the conceit that his Christian spirituality initiates geographical metamorphosis, a metamorphosis evocative or representative of the repentance and transformation that Donne requires in order to be in a right relationship with God.

The major conflicts we will examine in the poems are the struggles of these animated microcosmic spaces to react to external and internal pressures. Donne’s speakers struggle with their own desires for metamorphosis, seeking for complete spatial

(and by extension, spiritual) transformation even at the risk of destruction. Marvell's speaker describes the estate's reactions to virtuous and heretical masters; Donne, in *Holy Sonnet V*, struggles with the desire for spatial destruction, and in *Hymn to God My God*, attempts to find his way to his celestial home while the walls around him transform in the waning hours of life.

Holy Sonnet V: The Desire for Geographical Metamorphosis

In *Holy Sonnet V*, Donne compares two houses: his house, and the house of the Lord. Donne's "house," however, is no house but a "world." He selects the grander, cosmic metaphor for his own spiritual experience rather than describing the space of the celestial, divine experience as a "world." In doing this Donne is able to exaggerate the scale of his individual spiritual drama into something almost unfamiliar, while making God's space inherently familiar.²⁸ In this familiar yet unfamiliar space, Donne expands upon the theme of microcosmic, global destruction, previously examined in *Of Weeping*, as his "little world" seeks its own destruction in order to more completely resemble the world at large. In *Holy Sonnet V*, it is the microcosmic space that is flawed and restricted, and that space will seek transformation by any means possible.

Donne begins by describing himself: he is "a little world," complete, global, encompassing, diverse, complex; but also "little," a tiny planet. That planet is "made cunningly," which begs us to ask the question: made by whom? In the first line Donne recognizes the power of his Maker through the implicit answer to the explicit question.

²⁸ My evaluation of Donne's spatial representation has been influenced by Dorothy L. Sayers' definition of allegory in "The Writing and Reading of Allegory," in *Letters to a Diminished Church* (Nashville and Dallas: Thomas Nelson, 2004. pp.203-240; 205). Sayers writes that "allegory is a distinct literary form, whose aim and method are to dramatize a psychological experience so as to make it more vivid and more comprehensible."

That Maker is a clever one, who made Donne “cunningly of elements,”²⁹ of separate, intermingled, dependent parts, brought to life with an “Angelike spirit” by the power of God. Donne describes himself, in other words, wholly as a divine creation. He is “made,” a work of art, and one made with “Cunning,” and skill, and mystery. Donne describes himself *as* the space: he is the geography that will undergo metamorphosis. Not pausing to marvel at his own creation, he moves on to the problem.

The impetus for geographical metamorphosis is virtue or the lack thereof. Donne writes mournfully that “black sinne hath betraid to endless night / My worlds both parts.” He has been violated by his own violations of God’s law – “black sinne” – and thereby corrupted both his “cunning elements” and his “Angelike spirit,” as we might say, body and soul. This corruption is intolerable, unsustainable, and therefore: “(oh) both parts must die.” The theological statement that “both parts” are corrupted is intriguing, but even more intriguing is the verb: “both parts *must* die.” It is an unusual world that calls for its own apocalypse, yet that is precisely what is happening. Donne, “the little world,” requires his own destruction. “Die” does not tarry long in the poem, however, as the poet gradually reveals the image and what kind of destruction he requires.

When he turns to address the Lord, Donne deliberately frames his divine interlocutor as a geographical authority but not a geographical identity. While Donne is “a little world,” God is not “Great Heaven,” “the Great Sun/Son,” or “the Great

²⁹ According to the OED, the older forms of the adverb mean “with skill, knowledge or wisdom; wisely, cleverly, knowingly; with skillful art,” with first examples dating back approximately to 1385-1400. The OED uses the first example of the meaning “using knowledge to conceal facts or designs, or to deceive or circumvent” in 1603. It seems most likely in this circumstance that Donne intends the first reading of the word. (“cunningly, adv.”. OED Online. March 2013. Oxford University Press. 18 April 2013 <<http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/45868?redirectedFrom=cunningly>>.)

Universe.” In this instance, God’s personhood is clearly identified (“You which beyond that heaven which was most high”), and is attributed actions unfamiliar to geographical entities (“Found”; “write”). Donne is a “world” but God is the world-maker; Donne is *terra* and God is *persona supra terra*. The “You” can be interpreted as an address to explorers or astronomers; however, in this reading, I believe God is the more appropriate object of address as the analysis will show.

Donne appeals to the divine personhood’s past creative achievements, recalling to His attention that He has “Found new sphears, and of new lands can write.” The Lord has a regenerative ability, the power of resurrection, expressed as geographical discovery. “New lands,” especially in the context of a dialogue between heaven and earth as expressed in the sonnet, suggests regeneration. It is this regenerative, creative, resurrective power that Donne requires; the same power previously described as death (“Both parts must die.”) Donne begs God to “Powre new seas in mine eyes, that so I might / Drowne my world with my weeping earnestly.” The “little world” is incapable of producing the proper amount of precipitation, and by extension, the appropriate kind of repentance, to save itself. For that, the “little world” must ask the World-Maker to enact the requisite metamorphosis.

Donne modifies his request, moving from element to element and from fire to water. “Or wash it if it must be drown’d no more,” he says, inviting allusions to the world of Noah in the early chapters of Genesis, a world so dirtied that it drove its Maker to desperate measures of purification.³⁰ Yet in the King James, the earth does not “cry out”

³⁰ “**11** The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence. **12** And God looked upon the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth. **13** And God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled

for cleansing. The agency lies with God, who sees the violence and corruption and decides to clean it. Donne's "little world," however, invites punitive transformation, asking us as readers to either question the request – is it legitimate? – or consider other options. These processes of the self with fire and water mimic both the Christian rituals of baptism, but also demonstrate the inferiority of the human attempts to mimic divine action. It prompts a consideration of the role of mimicry or imitation within this particular animated, microcosmic space. The problem is a failure of mimicry. The "little world" is dissimilar from the universe it is meant to represent and that dissimilarity must be corrected.

Donne explicates the origins and consequences of that dissimilarity. "But oh it must be burnt!" he writes, "alas the fire / Of lust and envie have burnt it heretofore, / And made it fouler" (10-12). Piling contradiction on contradiction, the speaker tells God that the "little world" is charred by "lust and envie," now has been made "fouler," though it was "made cunningly." And now the reason for the geographical metamorphosis becomes clear. It is not that the "little world" needs to change, but that it has already been changed. It has been "burnt" and charred and marred beyond recognition, "betraid into endlesse night" so that that which is meant to live by the light of the Sun no longer knows itself. Divine geographical metamorphosis, as enacted by cleansing fire or water or "death," is required as *counter*-action. The divine workman must correct the work of the amateur, the work that has gone disastrously wrong.

with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth." (Genesis 6:11-13, KJV)

The correction the world requires and desires is to be “burnt” with a “fiery zeale,” specifically, the “zeale / Of thee and thy house, which doth in eating heale” (13-14). This is part of the cosmic reason that Donne requires God, for *he* is a world and the Lord is the world-maker, because God exists outside of His creation. In Donne’s vision articulated here, spaces cannot react responsibly or appropriately, cannot react in sufficient time or measure in order to survive because the space – in this instance, “the little world” – has been corrupted by sin.

In order to be healed, the “little world” must re-enter a right relationship with a greater, purer space; in fact, it must be consumed by love of the perfect space and its Creator. The little world requires “a fiery zeale / Of thee and thy house, which doth in eating heale.” The zeal is both of the Lord and the space of Lord, his House, referencing the Psalmist’s frequently expressed desire to remain in the house of the Lord and Jesus’ statement that He would return to “his Father’s house” to prepare rooms for His disciples.³¹ To live consumed by the “zeale of thy House” is to be healed. This makes the Lord’s house a curious one, in that desire of it causes one to erupt in flames.

The idea of the “house” serves as the final geographical metamorphosis, desired but not achieved within the narrative timeframe of the poem. The word is mentioned only once in the final line of the sonnet, and warrants less description than the “little world made cunningly / of Elements, and an Angelike spirit.” The house is left without “parts.” It is also a word (the *domus* of domestic) for a God who created “heaven which was most high.” If we reexamine the passage where Jesus discusses “his Father’s house,” we find that the concept of the house of the Lord, as expressed in the Gospel of John, is

³¹ John 14:1-3 KJV

multipartite and inclusive. “In my Father’s house there are many mansions,” reads the King James Version, or what contemporary translators often render “many rooms.”³² The “house” of the Lord includes spaces for all those who live in right relationship with Christ and is therefore expansive. The house requires the attention and care of its master, as Jesus goes “to prepare a place for [you].” And it is a place grounded on spiritual belief, as Jesus prefaces this statement with the comforting words, “Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me.”³³

Donne moves from existing as an independent “little world,” marveling at its own complexity, to seeking to have that individuated identity destroyed and recreated with the passion for “thee and thy house.” He has moved from addressing God with the formal “You” as “You which beyond that heaven which was most high” to the simpler “o Lord,” “thee,” and “thy.” He moves from using cosmic images – the “world,” “Angelike,” “heaven,” “new sphears,” “new lands” and “seas” – to using more concrete or domestic language – “burne,” “house,” “eating.” The microcosmic space has undergone a metamorphosis from cosmic to common, from grand to simple, from public to private. Paradoxically, through that metamorphosis the speaker believes he will be more able to reflect the will and intention of the mysterious Creator.

Holy Sonnet V introduces us to a spatially conceived speaker and a spatially conceived God, much as love and death were spatially conceived in *To His Coy Mistress*. Unlike the previous poems, however, the speaker *is* the microcosmic space, his spiritual battle the microcosm of the universal struggle between good and evil. That space is animated by his desire to become aligned with God’s desires, to be re-shaped according

³² John 14:1-3 KJV

³³ *ibid.*

to the master plan and reverse the process of decay already beginning to occur. That desired spiritual metamorphosis is embodied in the spatial metamorphosis described, transforming the intangible work of the soul into the tangible shattering of the globe.

Hymn to God My God In My Sickness: Journeying from Common to Cosmic

Spatially conceived spiritual metamorphosis develops in *Hymn to God My God*, the cry of a dying man awaiting a reunion with God. *Hymn to God* is an exquisite description of the search for home, even as the speaker's earthly home changes shape. Donne offers a dizzying deathbed vision while meditating on the relationship between man and place, expanding our understanding of the relationship between the home and the universe and the possibilities of microcosmic space when animated by spiritual desire.

Donne begins the poem with a consideration of two different kinds of spaces: domestic and celestial. The speaker announces he is “coming into that Holy roome” (1). As we have seen in “The Good-Morrow,” rooms for Donne are spaces prone to re-shaping themselves. Here in *Hymne*, as Donne is imagining Heaven, the infinite celestial space with a completely different set of architectural and geographical limits, he uses the language of human boundaries. He mentions the “dore” of the “Room,” firmly locating his reader in the physicality of the domestic space.

Donne subsequently takes us in two mental journeys in three lines. He writes, “Whilst my Physitians by their love are growne / Cosmographers, and I their Mapp, who lie / Flat on this bed” (6-7). We leave heaven by way of considering the global map,

“cosmographical flat map,” but that map is not in heaven but rather on a bed.³⁴ The “room” and “dore” of the first few lines are no longer celestial but terrestrial, now literally domestic. The home has become a gateway, or perhaps a microcosm, of heaven.

This metamorphosis moves Donne into using cartographical language in the second half of stanza 2 and in 3. He writes, “As West and East / In all flat Maps (and I am one) are one, / So death doth touch the Resurrection.” Donne makes this analogy – West, East, map and the death-bed—elsewhere. In his sermon “Preached on All Saints Day,” he said,

but as in the round frame of the World, the farthest West is East, where the West ends, the East beings, So in thee (who art a World too) thy West and thy East shall joyne, and when thy Sun, thy soule comes to set in thy death-bed, the Son of Grace shall suck it up into glory.³⁵

There is a curious intermingling of intimacy and grandeur in the reconciliation of two cosmic and yet domestic journeys in the sermon quoted and in the poem: the mortal lying on his deathbed, and the sun going to rest. Both have cosmic implications – the movement of a heavenly body, the journey of a soul from earth to heaven – set in domestic contexts – the sun does this daily, the man in his bed just as he has slept every other night of his life, traveling as every man, woman and child travels at some point in his or her life.

Yet, fascinatingly, Donne is not only meditating on a journey but a metamorphosis, where the space around him changes even as he prepares to move from

³⁴ David Roberts suggests a further connection between the geographic language and the spiritual significance of the poem when he writes, “The globe, and the rolled-up ‘flat mapp’ of the *Hymn*, had long suggested to the poet a like-ness among branches of Christendom, and the multiplicity of ‘straits’ the different but cognate ways in which men could come to God.” (David Roberts, “Donne, Geography, and *The Hymn to God My God in My Sickness*.” *Notes and Queries*. June 1999, p.256-258; 257)

³⁵ Donne, “Preached On All-Saints Day,” *LXXX, Sermons (45) 1640 (The Complete Poetry and Selected Prose)*.

one space to another. We see this is in the poignant dissociation the speaker experiences between himself and his “home.” “Is the Pacific Sea my home?” he asks, “Or are / the Easterne riches? Is *Jerusalem?*” (16-17) He searches for the homes of Biblical figures, asking, “whether where *Japhet* dwelt, or *Cham*, or *Sem*” (20). He looks for the homes of Noah’s children, themselves undergoing a journey (traveling through the sea) caused by a geographical metamorphosis (the re-shaping of the world via divine flood.) The speaker himself, however, has not left his bedchamber, and so the spatial evolution he describes is not a journey but a metamorphosis. A journey is change between spaces; a metamorphosis is the change within a space. His bedroom undergoes a dizzying metamorphosis, shape-shifting to reflect different parts of the world as the dying man desires to return to God.

Donne then moves between Old Testament and New. He says, “We thinke that *Paradise* and *Calvarei*, / *Christs* Crosse and *Adams* tree, stood in one place” (21-22). Like Russian dolls, one hiding in each other, in typology there is a juxtaposition of time and place, two connected events existing in the same point. Into this juxtaposition walks Donne, asking God to “finde both *Adams* met in me.” This is both a spiritual union and a geographical shift: just as Adam and Christ become one, a commonplace of typological Biblical scholarship, *Paradise* and Calvary become the same scene, melding into one another.

Throughout the poem, Donne melds and meditates on the microcosmic structures: the body, the house, and the universe, each which encapsulate the other and reflect a series of concentric values and fears of destruction. Each can be mapped, and each can be mapped in terms of each other. Donne’s body is a map (“As West in East/ in all flatt Maps (and I am one) are one” 13-14); the terrestrial and celestial globe are

mapped, as seen more obviously in his description of “streights” and the “Pacifique Sea,” “Jerusalem” and “Easterne riches,” the celestial globe in “the Holy roome... the quire of Saints”³⁶ and the juxtaposition of the Cross with the Tree of the Knowledge. Perhaps less obviously, but still present, is the mapping of the house in which Donne lies. He invites us into his bedchamber and by the same language he uses to describe heaven, he describes his house with rooms and doors and bed. He even imagines the objects within his house (“the map”) and himself-as-object within that house.

In this dizzying threefold concentricity, Donne forces his readers to confront the underlying truth: only God reigns sovereign over each. Neither Donne nor his physicians have control over his body, the mysteries of which are mapped but uncontrollable. Lying sick in his bed, Donne is not the master of his own house. And in the universe where Donne finds himself homeless, the only homes he can find are the ones God defined, and only God can invite him there, when He invites Donne to heaven.

Yet it seems that the speaker’s experience of Heaven, and his articulation of the microcosm, is an experience of reactive space catalyzed by his spiritual desire. It is when Donne is ready to die (“Since I am coming to that Holy roome”), when he begins to look for the salvation that he has been promised in Scripture, that his own home is transformed into the planet, and then to heaven. The geographical shift within the poem connects to the spiritual transformation about to occur to the sick man: “As West and East / In all flat Maps (and I am one) are one, / So death doth touch the Resurrection.” He calls attention to the identity of Christ as Resurrected Lord, a god whose death was

meant to bring about the ultimate geographical metamorphosis of a “new heaven and a new earth.”³⁷

Upon Appleton House: The Moral Structure of a Reactive Space

The estate in *Upon Appleton House* is both curiously particular and curiously alive. Unlike all the other spaces discussed in this project, Appleton House is a historical estate in Yorkshire with defined coordinates and definite history. The poem itself is an outlier within my study, as a member of the “country house poem” genre.³⁸ However, like the other poetically conceived spaces, Appleton House is a reactive, animated microcosm that engages its inhabitants and is changed by them in turn. The catalyst for this metamorphosis is spiritual virtue or its perversion.

Upon Appleton House chronicles the changes and landscape, both mythical and real, of the Nun Appleton estate, owned by Sir Thomas Fairfax, a noted Civil War general and Marvell’s patron. Alastair Fowler argues that the very genre of “country house poetry” should be re-titled “estate poems,” noting the importance of estate poems as “tours,” their similarity to “allegorical romances,” and their significance in portraying the master of the house as much as the structure of the house.³⁹ This calling of attention to the relationship between allegorical romance and estate poetry is particularly apt in Marvell’s case, where the reactions between the estate and its lords provide the substance for the majority of the poem. Fowler goes on to note the utility of garden descriptions for “cosmic suggestions,”

³⁷“Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a newearth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.” 2 Peter 3:13 KJV

³⁸ Other commonly accepted generic examples include Ben Jonson’s *To Penshurst* and Aemilia Lanyer’s *A Description of Cooke-ham*.

³⁹ Fowler, Alistair. *The Country House Poem: A Cabinet of Seventeenth-Century Estate Poems and Related Items*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1994. (3)

adding that such descriptions “sought to embody large microcosmic or philosophic ideas,” citing particular examples of “estate as microcosm.”⁴⁰ This understanding of estate poems as microcosmic representations and enterprises is helpful in our consideration of *Appleton House* as a meditation on the nature of microcosm.

The tendency of the Appleton landscape to shift and challenge boundaries has been widely noted.⁴¹ Donald Friedman has described the “concept of metamorphosis” as of “great importance” in the epic.⁴² In more poetic language, Anne Cotterill writes that “The bounds and walls and close-fitting spaces of the house at Nun Appleton fail to hold the narrator as he wanders beyond their confines, over meadow and wood, through fantasy and apostrophe, into ventriloquized moods and prophetic strains.”⁴³ D.K. Smith argues that this tendency to change reflects the wider social issues of the time, writing that Marvell “illuminate[s] within the familiar landscape of Nun Appleton the sense of lurking instability—the potential for strange and sudden transformation—that lies at the very heart of seventeenth-century England.”⁴⁴ While calling attention to the beautiful and haunting “potential for strange and sudden transformation,” Smith overlooks in part the fact that the transformations of Appleton House are not entirely strange and sudden.

⁴⁰ Fowler (4-5).

⁴¹ Matthew Augustine analyzes the possible historical and biographical causes for Marvell’s interest in change and transitions, writing that “He does not long stand in one place or inhabit a single perspective. Marvell’s is a poetry and a psychology of looking in two directions, of standing at the margins, of occupying a position neither outside nor genuinely inside prevailing structures of political identity, of spiritual economy, of erotic desire.” (Augustine, Matthew C. “Borders and transitions in Marvell’s poetry” in *The Cambridge Companion to Andrew Marvell*. Ed. Derek Hirst and Steven N. Zwicker. Cambridge, UK; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011. p.46-65; 47)

⁴² Friedman (214).

⁴³ Cotterill, Anne. “Marvell’s Watery Maze: Digression and Discovery at Nun Appleton.” *ELH*, Volume 69, Number 1, Spring 2002. pp. 103-132; p. 103.

⁴⁴ Smith, D.K. “‘Tis not what once it was, the world,’ Andrew Marvell’s Remapping of the Old World and New in ‘Bermudas’ and ‘Upon Appleton House.’” *Seventeenth Century*. Vol. 21, Issue 2 (2006). Pp.215-248; p. 242.

Instead, they are reactive transformations, made in direct consequence of the character and actions of the human agents in the poem. These transformations are not precisely logical and stable, but neither are they made in a vacuum. To focus on the instability of the transformation is to ignore the agency of the major characters – the narrator, Henry Fairfax and the nymph-like Thwaites, their descendent Maria – and the estate itself, and what the relationship between the estate and its residents signifies for the microcosmic whole. If we accept Smith’s interpretation, then the microcosm depicted is an inherently unstable one, destabilized by the political turmoil and social upheaval experienced by England generally and the Fairfax family in particular. It reflects a wider society, and perhaps universe, that is ready to erupt at any moment.

However, I argue that the microcosm depicted by Marvell is a relational one, of a universe characterized by human virtue and human error, one that is constantly affected by the behavior of its residents that is best described by describing people. This representational scheme borrows and benefits from the larger medieval and early modern tradition of the body-as-microcosm.⁴⁵ It may resemble instability, and perhaps in some instances it is; metamorphosis is frightening and fascinating precisely because it is uncertain. Geographical metamorphosis, when one watches the earth shift beneath one’s literal or poetically imagined feet, is at one level the definition of an earthquake. However, I hope to prove that this does not mean that the world is fundamentally uncertain; rather that the cosmic perspective depicted by Marvell is that our human relation to space is fundamentally reactive. The place changes in reaction to us, as we change in reaction to it.

⁴⁵ As previously noted, see Barkan’s *Nature’s Work of Art* for more analysis of the body-as-microcosm trope.

After praising the design of the house and its simplicity, and offering a paean to those who will come and see and sing its praises in the future (“surely when the after age / Shall hither come in pilgrimage”; V.33-34), the narrator moves on to describe the house as its master, presumably Lord Thomas Fairfax, enters.

Yet thus the laden house does sweat,
And scarce endures the Master great:
But where he comes the swelling hall
Stirs, and the square grows spherical,
More by his magnitude distressed,
Then he is by its straitness pressed;
And too officiously it slights
That in itself which him delights. (VII.49-56)

The picture the narrator paints is that of a relationship between two persons, the Master and the house. The house reacts emotionally to the presence of Lord Fairfax: it “sweats,” “stirs,” “grows spherical,” “by his magnitude distressed,” and “slights... itself.” It behaves like an overeager housekeeper, fussing and fretting that the home is inadequate when the master returns. Yet this is not the housekeeper, but the house itself, and so fussing and fretting are expressed as a geographical metamorphosis. The house itself changes, in the narrator’s imagining of it; it is introduced as “the *swelling* hall,” a building in the act of shape-shifting. While this can be interpreted as a sexually suggestive phrase, in my interpretation I believe it is more important to emphasize that the house finds itself incomplete, too small, too plain to fully accommodate the greatness of its owner. As Curtis Whitaker points out, “The building takes on human characteristics after it is inhabited, not before.”⁴⁶ His emphasis on the human catalytic element of the metamorphosis supports my argument that the place and its person are in relationship,

⁴⁶ Whitaker, Curtis. “Andrew Marvell’s Garden-Variety Debates.” *Huntington Library Quarterly*. Vol. 62, Issue 3/4 (1/1999). pp. 296-311. (307-308)

and that the place is changed directly – physically, structurally, in the poetic conceit – by the presence of its master.⁴⁷

It is important to note that it is in no small part the *character* of the Master to which the house responds. The Master’s “magnitude” causes the house to expand. It is not simply because *a* master is present that the house undergoes its self-improvement, but because it is *this* master, a master of greatness and goodness. His goodness, or perhaps better articulated as contentment, humility, and propriety, is evident in that he is not “by its straitness pressed,” but rather “delights” in those aspects of the house that the house itself finds displeasing. The house contains Lord Fairfax as shells and nests contain the turtles and birds of the second stanza; Fairfax is defined by it, and he is pleased by that definition. Thus one of our opening images of Appleton House is an image of intersecting qualities and relational influences. It is the portrait of a place in dialogue with its significant person, one that imaginatively changes and shifts itself in response to the virtue of its owner. Furthering this point, Marvell’s narrator travels back in time to recount the story of when the land was not occupied by so virtuous an owner.

The narrator tells the mythical history of when the house was originally a convent, kept by “subtle nuns” (XII.94) who attempt to entrap the beautiful Thwaites into joining their ranks. The nuns are deceitful and irreligious, in sentiments perhaps best described as anti-Catholic.⁴⁸ The nunnery itself reflects the characteristics of its inhabitants, described

⁴⁷ Philip Major analyzes one intriguing and more literal consequence of the master’s effect on place when he considers the role of deforestation in the poem. (Major, Philip. “‘To wound an oak:’ The Poetics of Tree-felling at Nun Appleton.” *Seventeenth Century*. Vol. 25, Issue 1 (2010). pp.143-157)

⁴⁸ Friedman writes, “In one way this is a glance at typical anti-Catholic beliefs about the behavior of nuns; but, more important, it is a joke that also includes a truth of English social history. Many of the great estates of England were formed with wealth and land acquired at the dissolution of the monasteries under Henry VIII, and Nunappleton was

as “the gloomy cloister” (XII.89), containing multiple gates and barriers (“gates,” “walls restrain the world without,” “bars,” “gates,” “locks on them the grates”; XII.89; XIII.99, 101, 103, 104). It is a place full of those seeking to isolate themselves from the world, as perversely constrained in their souls as in their home.

When young Henry Fairfax attempts to persuade Thwaites to leave her new prison, he calls attention to the place in which she lives. He says, quite vividly, “Were there but, when this house was made, / One stone that a just hand had laid, / It must have fall’n on her head / Who first thee from thy faith misled.” He calls attention to the act of building the house, much as the narrator calls attention to the lack of “foreign architect” in the opening stanza of the poem. Not a single stone was laid by a “just hand;” the house has been corrupted by those who created it, and remains a corrupting influence because of those who live there.

Fairfax continues,

But sure those buildings last not long,
Founded by folly, kept by wrong.
I know what fruit their gardens yield,
When they it think by night concealed.
Fly from their vices. ’Tis thy ’state,
Not thee, that they would consecrate.
Fly from their ruin. How I fear,
Though guiltless, lest thou perish there. (XXVIII)

Fairfax uses architectural words to describe the morally decrepit situation. He points to the flimsiness and impermanence of “those buildings,” and criticizes the agricultural products of the nuns’ estate (“I know what fruit their gardens yield”). He notes the

one of these. Whatever the convent may represent in the poem, it is always the actual foundation upon which the Fairfax house was established and grew.” (Friedman 221) Similarly, Jenkins argues that the religious symbolism is quite significant because of its effect in framing English history (Hugh Jenkins. *Feigned Commonwealths: The Country-House Poem and the Fashioning of the Ideal Community*. Duquesne University Press: Pittsburgh, PA, 1998; 134).

attraction of Thwaites' "'state" or "estate" and the nuns' "ruin," both concrete and metaphorical. He is afraid that Thwaites will "perish *there*" (italics mine); not "by their hand" or "from sin" but *there*, in the cloister.

Is Fairfax describing the nunnery or the nuns? The answer is, of course, that he describes both in terms of each other. The building and its inhabitants live symbiotically, and to talk of one is to signify something of the other. The problem young Fairfax sees, and that the narrator appears to agree with, is that Thwaites is in the wrong relationship with a wrong house: she is possessed by a prison, rather than appropriately nested in home.

Not content to leave Thwaites in this moral, geographical and architectural quagmire, Fairfax embarks to take her back from the nuns. The narrator pauses before plunging into the breach and notes the importance of this scene, because of the legacy it will leave for the Fairfax family.

Is not this he whose Offspring fierce
Shall fight through all the *Universe*;
And with successive Valour try
France, Poland, either *Germany*;
Till one, as long since prophecy'd,
His Horse through conquer'd *Britain* ride?
Yet, against Fate, his Spouse they kept;
And the great Race would intercept. (XXXI)

Here Marvell pays homage to his benefactor, Lord Thomas Fairfax, a man of tremendous importance during the English Civil War and other English military enterprises.⁴⁹ Fairfax's heir, Marvell's narrator declares, "shall fight throughout all the *Universe*," shall travel to "*France, Poland*, either *Germany*." The marvelous use of the word

⁴⁹ Major (143).

“Universe” as a collective identity for three European countries aside, the narrator explains to us that this pattern of changing man’s relationship to place and thereby enacting the changing of that space is a pattern that will have cosmic implications. The microcosm and the cosmos are neither static nor sealed off but instead react in relationship to each other.

Turning back to the past, the narrator takes us back to Henry and his captive beloved. Fairfax charges the fort, as it were, and when the nuns are deprived of Thwaites and what she entails (her nubile body, her riches, and later their property), the narrator describes that change in terms of place.

... Thenceforth (as when th' Inchantment ends
The Castle vanishes or rends)
The wasting Cloister with the rest
Was in one instant dispossesst.

At the demolishing, this Seat
To *Fairfax* fell as by Escheat.
And what both *Nuns* and *Founders* will'd
'Tis likely better thus fulfill'd,
For if the *Virgin* prov'd not theirs,
The *Cloyster* yet remained hers.
Though many a *Nun* there made her vow,
'Twas no *Religious-House* till now. (XXXIV.269 – XXXV.280)

The narrator asks us to imagine for a moment that we are in a fairy tale, and in some ways we are, archetypically speaking: wicked women steal a young girl and a handsome young nobleman comes to steal her back. As soon as Thwaites is in Henry’s possession, the “wasting Cloister with the rest / Was in one instant dispossesst.” That is, once the virtuous couple gained power in the place, changing their relationship to it, the place itself changes: “’Twas no *Religious-House* till now.” The entire discussion is couched in terms of geographical metamorphosis, a metamorphosis affected by the virtue of those who dwell within it.

The apex of this theme, the geographical metamorphosis as influenced by the virtuous master, comes near the conclusion of the poem with the narrator's description of Maria. Maria is the daughter of Lord Fairfax, Marvell's tutorial charge and, according to the narrator, the emblem of all that can be beautiful and good in the world. The narrator in effect concludes the poem by examining how she changes the landscape around her. This is not a comparative description: Maria is not *like* the garden. Rather, she *transforms* the garden. The stanza reads:

'Tis *She* that to these Gardens gave
That wondrous Beauty which they have;
She streightness on the Woods bestows;
To *Her* the Meadow sweetness owes;
Nothing could make the River be
So Chrystal-pure but only *She*;
She yet more Pure, Sweet, Streight, and Fair,
Then Gardens, Woods, Meads, Rivers are. (LXXXVII)

As the stanza reveals, the estate and Maria are not the same entity nor are they reflective entities; i.e., the estate is not a macrocosmic mirror of Maria's own virtue. Rather, the mistress and the gardens are in a dynamic relationship. The gardens *become* more beautiful because of her presence and because of Maria's place within the estate. They transform in reaction to the intangible gift of her presence. The verbs reflect the reactive, relational effect: "to these Gardens *gave*," "on the Woods *bestows*," "the Meadow sweetness *owes*," "could *make* the River be." As Fairfax and Thwaites redeemed the "gloomy Cloister" into a happy home, as her father Lord Fairfax "delights" in his "Swelling hall" and the hall delights in him, so Maria carries on the family tradition of living in relationship with the land she owns. This virtuous relationship enacts the geographical metamorphosis that even the narrator experiences.

Appleton House's status as a microcosmic entity is suggestive both as a country house poem or "estate poem," and because of several lines within the poem itself. As Fowler and others note, country house poems are microcosmic enterprises. In the poem itself, Marvell compares the health of Appleton House to the health of England, which he addresses as "O thou, that dear and happy isle / the garden of the world ere while," and mourns its demise. Appleton House is compared to England and England to the rest of the world, creating a chain of microcosmic entities. In the penultimate stanza, the narrator addresses Maria and, in part, the house, when he says,

'Tis not what once it was, the world
But a rude heap together hurled
All negligently overthrown,
Gulfs, deserts, precipices, stone.
Your lesser world contains the same,
But in more decent order tame;
You, heaven's centre, Nature's lap,
And paradise's only map. (XCVI)

Appleton is a "lesser world," a micro-cosmos, the "map" for Paradise and "heaven's centre."⁵⁰ The key distinction the narrator makes between the "lesser world" and the "rude heap" now passing for the earth is that Appleton House exists "in more decent order tame." In the microcosm, "decent order" keeps the cosmic chaos at bay, preserving a pattern of the way that life is meant to be. The mechanism by which this "decent order" is made possible is the virtuous character of Appleton's owners, Thomas and Maria Fairfax, the "You" of "Your lesser world." Their inherent goodness creates a relationship with their estate that reflects the way that the larger world could be, that the larger world,

⁵⁰ Marvell expresses a similar sentiment in the brief ode, *Upon the Hill and Grove at Bilbrough*, also dedicated to Lord Fairfax. In this ode he writes, "So equal as this hill does bow. / It seems as for a model laid, / And that the world by it was made" (l.6-8). The notable difference, however, is that in *Upon the Hill* the past tense is employed, while Marvell uses the present tense when discussing Maria and Appleton House.

should be: a flowering garden that reacts to, changes with and delights in the good people who govern it. When the nuns used it for perverted religious purposes, the place itself was inextricably entangled in the moral corruption therein.

Upon Appleton House meditates on the strength of the animated microcosmic space to withstand internal pressure, i.e., the virtue of its inhabitants. The universe Marvell describes, or perhaps constructs, is one in which morality determines structure. The places in which we live are highly attentive to our character and integrity, in so much that our integrity can re-shape the walls around us. However, this attunement to moral behavior also makes space liable to corruption; it is precisely the microcosm's greatest strength and its greatest vulnerability. It has no power to resist evil within, thus when evil enters, the space requires a geographical metamorphosis (in this case, one initiated from the outside by Henry Fairfax) to change it.

Conclusion

In *Holy Sonnet V* and *Hymn to God My God in My Sickness*, the spiritual drama lies within the human speaker. It is the narrator's agony, his desire for repentance and for reunion with God that creates the narrative conflict. Yet as in Marvell, the true complexity and nuance of the narrator's experience is expressed through the reactive spaces employed in the conceit of the poem. The strange and sweet pathos of a little world desiring its own destruction in order to be reborn, the dizzying vision of a deathbed transformed into a global map, the healing power of a consumptive passion for the house of the Lord, the permanent healing experience of re-entering a "Holy roome" where God

dwells: these contextualize and shape, react to and refigure the journey of the speaker to an eternal rest. The space encapsulates and expresses the spiritual drama.

Rather than the inward contemplations favored by Donne's speakers, Marvell's speakers and characters are performative, focused on directing their spiritual expressions outwardly. This can result in the human characters appearing more simplistic than the complex, contemplative speakers of Donne's poems. However, like Donne, Marvell uses spaces to articulate his moral vision. Redemption and transformation, complexity and nuance, belong to the reactive space he describes. It is the house that fusses over its own inadequacies, fails to see its own virtues, and changes itself in order to please the Master. The estate has a sinner's past unknown to the human inhabitants; it once played home to a group of Catholic perverts who sought to steal the birthright of the estate's future mistress. Yet the traitor becomes the beloved servant, the place where that same mistress's descendant will come to live. No longer entwined with the sin of the nuns, the estate rejoices in the beauty of Maria and becomes even more beautiful because of her. In this way, the estate enacts the real spiritual drama of the poem, made possible by its reactive nature and displayed through its many geographical metamorphoses.

Both poets choose to characterize the great intangibles of the cosmos – the divinity, as in Donne, or the social experience of God through morality and religion, as in Marvell – through spaces that are both visible in their physicality and invisible in their reactivity. By framing God through a spatial perspective, the speakers highlight God's geographical nature, the tendency of the Christian omnipotent being to reveal Himself to and react with His people through places. These places can be specific, literal, and geographical, such as the Jerusalem of Donne's *Hymn to God My God* and the nunnery-turned-Nun Appleton in *Appleton House*. These places can be cosmic and imaginary,

almost metaphorical, as the “little world” in *Holy Sonnet V* and the expansive room in *Hymn to God My God*, as well as relational and responsive, as is the Appleton estate.

Through creating animated microcosmic spaces, Donne and Marvell reveal the cosmic Creator as more knowable, more conceivable, and all the more wondrous. He meets His people in places.

Chapter Three:

An Expanding Universe:

Travel and Animated Microcosmic Space in Goodfriday 1613; Riding Westward, Holy Sonnet

VII and On a Drop of Dew, The Garden

In the previous two chapters, we have primarily examined poems of domestic space. Donne and Marvell largely choose to center the microcosmic space around the bedroom or the house, that space which is paradoxically both small and all-encompassing, when they consider how to represent the universe microcosmically. In the poems considered for this final chapter, home is an echo, a washed-away footprint, a ghost. Domestic spaces are absent; instead, the speakers and subjects of *Goodfriday 1613*, *Riding Westward*, *Holy Sonnet V* and *On a Drop of Dew* are displaced persons, running to a home they cannot quite reach. In *The Garden*, the speaker finds peace in a non-home, a natural and mental world devoid of human company and instead full of curiously reactive flora.

The consideration of these “travel poems” develops our understanding of the possibilities and dangers of animated space in several ways.⁵¹ These speakers are especially attuned to spatial change when traveling between spaces, since it is both the explicit and the implicit concern. As readers, we are thus more able to identify the nuances of the relationship between the spatial metamorphosis and the spiritual or personal metamorphosis undergone by the speaker himself. Secondly, the speakers experience a desire for *place* in a way previously unseen; they desire a particular place, or

⁵¹ The “travel” in these poems is often expansively defined or defined in the abstract.

perhaps a particular kind of place, that they do not inhabit. This is not desire expressed spatially but spatial desire, which contains within it spiritual desire.

Donne presented the human experience as a cosmic and common journey in *Hymne to God My God*. This understanding of mortality as a displacement between the womb and Paradise conditions and complicates the poems examined here. These speakers search for a shard of paradise, hidden in the desert sands through which they wander. Through considering the relationship between God, man, and the space in between, we learn more about each of these personalities and places.

Goodfriday 1613. Riding Westward: The Divinely Imagined Universe

Goodfriday 1613: Riding Westward engages with metamorphosis in motion. This meditation of a man on horseback during Good Friday will consider several different spaces and how they move: the motion of the soul described as the sphere, the motion of the man on horseback, the motion of God as revealed in the Incarnation and Crucifixion, contrasted against the static image of Christ on the Cross, which the poet transforms into a cosmic image.⁵² As these bodies and ideas move, they also change in their nature for better and for worse. By considering the literal and conceptual spatial metamorphoses of the poem, we gain a finely tuned appreciation for the spiritual metamorphosis enacted in *Goodfriday*.

⁵² This emphasis on spiritual motion in *Goodfriday* recalls the lines of Dante in *Purgatorio* XVIII.31-33: “just so the mind, thus seized, achieves desire, / a movement of the spirit never resting/ as long as it enjoys the thing it loves” (Dante Alighieri, *Purgatorio*; trans. Robert Hollander. The Princeton Dante Project. Princeton University: Princeton, NJ, 1997-1998. <<http://etcweb.princeton.edu/cgi-bin/dante/campuscgi/mpb/GetCantoSection.pl>> Accessed 20 April 2013).

The poem considers three spaces. The first space is the space of the soul, acknowledged and imagined in the opening line. By creating a spatial object animated by the human spirit, Donne enables us to consider more fully what moves and affects that soul. The second space is the space of the cross. Donne uses the image of Christ on the cross to create an image of a God who “spans the Poles,” wrapping the arms of the cross around the entire world. The third space is the space of the world itself, the “real world” entangling with the cross and with the soul. These spaces merge with each other, entangling to create the multipartite space that the speaker experiences in all of its metaphorical, metaphysical, responsive activity. It is through this multipartite space that the speaker travels and searches for God, and the reenacted memory of what God through Christ has done for him.

Goodfriday begins with a spatial premise. “Let mans Soule be a spheare,” says the speaker, “and then, in this, / The intelligence that moves, devotion is” (1-2). The speaker is creating an imaginary space in order to describe one of life’s great intangibles, the human soul. A “spheare” is a multidimensional object, an object of size as well as movement, which he draws our attention to in the second line. Instead of magnetism or gravity, the “spheare” is moved by “devotion.” With these two lines the speaker animates the space: his spheare is physically and metaphysically moved by human fidelity. It is a model of animated, living space.

In the following lines, the speaker broadens our picture of this animated sphere and examines more closely the kind of motion it experiences.

And as the other Spheares, by being growne
Subject to forraigne motions, lose their owne,
And being by others hurried every day,
Scarce in a yeare their naturall forme obey;
Pleasure or business, so, our Soules admit

For their first mover, and are whirld by it. (3-8)

The speaker informs us that his “spheare” has contracted a contagious geographical metamorphosis by close contact with other spheres. This contact has made the spheare “subject to forraigne motions” that was once driven by devotion. The word “forraigne” suggests an almost invasive quality, like a foreign power attempting to conquer a vulnerable island. Yet the geographical object still merits verbs of human action: “obey,” “admit,” involved with “pleasure or business.” “Admit” and “obey” in particular are words signifying relationship, as one admits to or obeys another person or power. In particular, the soules “admit / for their first mover,” allowing pleasure or business to replace devotion as the primary force of motion.

Motion and metamorphosis develop thematically as the poem continues. Donne writes,

Hence is't, that I am carryed towards the West
This day, when my Soules forme bends towards the East.
There I should see a Sunne, by rising set,
And by that setting endlesse day beget;
But that Christ on this Crosse, did rise and fall,
Sinne had eternally benighted all. (9-14)

The words “carry,” “forme bends,” “rising,” “beget,” “rise and fall” all suggest reactive movement. The speaker is passively “carried” towards the West as his soul “bends” towards the East, changing shape, magnetically drawn, almost against his will. The “Sunne,” signifying both the actual sun and the Son of God, is also in a process of metamorphosis. It is “rising” and “setting,” changing as it must for the world to have light and warmth. As in *A Hymn to God My God*, the cosmic and the common unite to keep the

world on its axis. Donne then draws the connection: like the sun, Christ “did rise and fall,” when “Sinne” had corrupted that same world.⁵³

The speaker’s consideration of Christ is conditioned by his own movement. Donne draws our attention to the motion of his speaker in the title (*Riding Westward*) and then again in this key transitional passage. The speaker positions himself in-between space, “carried to the West” physically on a horse, as he “rides” on Good Friday in a specific year (1613) to another destination.⁵⁴ Donne’s choice in particularizing the details of the literal journey emphasizes the multipartite spaces the speaker will continue to confound and experience, both the spiritual and the literal blending in and out of each other as each motion on horseback – turning one’s back, glimpsing the last lights of the sun – becomes a spiritual motion, spatially experienced.

The pain of Good Friday and what it commemorates causes the speaker to be grateful he cannot “see” the Lord on the cross, presenting us with a clearer picture of the

⁵³ According to the OED, “benighted” has both a literal and metaphysical or moral meaning, indicating a sense of motion in being “overtaken.” “1. Overtaken by the darkness of the night; affected by the night (*obs.*). 2. (a) Involved in intellectual or moral darkness. (b) Involved in obscurity.” (“benighted, adj.”. OED Online. March 2013. Oxford University Press. 18 April 2013 <<http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/17727?redirectedFrom=benighted>>.)

⁵⁴ “On the question of choice versus compulsion” in this section of the poem, William H. Halewood argues that “the rider is self-compelled – not a troublesome paradox for the primitive Protestant, who fully provided for it in a self-condemning theology” (Halewood, William H. “The Predicament of the Westward Rider.” *Studies in Philology*. Vol. 93, No. 2. (Spring, 1996) pp. 218-228; 219).

Halewood’s derogatory (“primitive”) language aside, I believe that the “simple answer” he proposes to the question is too simple, both about the theology of the poem and the motion of the reader. Instead, as Richard Strier argues, there are “tensions, constants, and ambiguities within the dominant [tradition]” and worldviews (Strier, Richard. “Going the Wrong Direction: Lyric Criticism and Donne’s ‘Goodfriday, 1613. Riding Westward.’” *George Herbert Journal*; Fall 2005-Spring 2006; 29, 1/2; pg. 13 – 27, 136; 15); those tensions and capabilities for ambiguities, which Strier notes exists in the case of allegorical astronomy, inform the poem’s meditation on personal and conceptual tension in movement.

role natural space plays in mediating the relationship between God and man. Donne writes,

Yet dare I almost be glad, I do not see
That spectacle of too much weight for mee.
Who sees Gods face, that is selfe life, must dye;
What a death were it then to see God dye?
It made his owne Lieutenant Nature shrinke,
It made his footstoole crack, and the Sunne winke. (15-20)

The spectacle has physical existence, “too much weight” for the speaker whose “Spheare” cannot carry the additional burden. He grapples with the paradox of seeing first hand the Lord of life fall victim to death, a sight that then causes death for the imperfect men who are granted it. That sight set off a chain of geographical metamorphoses. These are not the changes that the soul’s “spheare” experiences, but those of the physical world that lives in close relationship to God the Creator. Nature is God’s “own Lieutenant” that “shrinks” to see the Master fall. Earth, God’s “footstoole,” cracked itself in despair, making reference to the earthquake referenced in the Gospel accounts after Christ’s death in Golgotha.⁵⁵ The “Sunne,” a metaphor for the spiritual mechanism by which “endlesse day” will come forth in earlier lines, now “winkes,” losing its power in reaction to the power lost in the crucifixion.

God is very much a God of place in this poem. As the speaker further considers the geographical pain at witnessing the great and holy sacrifice, he returns us again and again to God’s geographical nature. “Could I behold those hands which span the Poles,” he asks, “And tune all spheares at once, peirc’d with those holes?” (lines 21-22). He invites us into the beautiful image of Christ’s hands, forcibly held apart while nailed on a Cross, “spanning the Poles.” The cross becomes a microcosm of the world, and Christ’s hands

⁵⁵ Matthew 27:54, Matthew 28:2 KJV.

are able to hold them together. It is Christ who “tunes all the spheares at once,” making reference to the Renaissance concept of “music of the spheres,” both musician and creator.⁵⁶

The connection between God and place expands in the next few lines. The speaker adds,

Could I behold that endlesse height which is
Zenith to us, and our Antipodes,
Humbled below us? Or that blood which is
The seat of all our Soules, if not of his,
Made durt of dust, or that flesh which was worne
By God, for his apparell, rag’d, and torne? (23-28)

The length of the cross becomes an “endlesse height,” both “Zenith” and “Antipodes” to the Christians the crucifixion will save. The extreme nature of the image, its polarities and its scale, remind us of the staggering importance of the scene the speaker is imagining. However, it also reinforces the idea of the Crucifixion as a physical space into which we enter. By emphasizing the “place-ness” of the cross, its spatial attributes and identity, the speaker re-positions the Cross across the scale of the Universe: a world split by the beams of cosmic betrayal. The space the speaker must face and react to is the space created and inhabited by a dying God.

Throughout this passage, the speaker places before us a picture of a universe in dialogue with its Creator. The “spheares,” souls of the humans He created, are tuned by the hand of the master. Nature mediates God’s relationship to his human creations, and often serves a quasi-anthropomorphic instrument of His will (his “Lieutenant”). The sun is attuned to His moods. And when the sin that moves the spheares requires the death of

⁵⁶ Tillyard talks about the “music of the spheres” and the “cosmic dance” in chapter 8 of *The Elizabethan World Picture*, a concept embedded in ideas about music, movement, microcosm and macrocosm.

that same God to right the world again, the geography explodes – shrinking, cracking, winking, losing light and changing shape.

Yet this destructive metamorphosis is what is required for the speare itself to be re-formed. The speaker asks the Lord in the last few lines,

Burne off my rusts, and my deformity,
Restore thine Image, so much, by thy grace
That thou may'st know mee, and I'll turne my face. (40-42)

The “natural forme” (6) and “Soules forme” (10) have become a “deformity,” a degenerative metamorphosis that requires counteraction through fire. The speaker begs to be altered and specifically he asks to be altered in his “form.” His shape must change if he is to truly align himself with the shape of the God-man on the cross, if “thine Image” will be restored, if that relationship is to be renewed “that thou may'st know mee.” It is in the “turning” of the face, in the transformation of the space, that the speaker will find redemption.

By reading *Goodfriday* with a spatial perspective, we understand that the poem's various parts form a cohesive and complex whole: its geographical concern in relation to its theological meditation, its cosmic, astronomical images with the sense of a man riding on a horse on a Friday evening. All form a complicated consideration of the way space – spatial objects, physical places, mental constructs signifying spiritual or metaphysical realities – shape the speaker and change him as he rides, and as he searches for God. By affirming and re-affirming Christ's identity in spatial terms, the speaker finds himself able to express the magnitude of the Crucifixion event, and the strangeness of the Christian spiritual experience, one that requires the death of God in order for the life of man to continue. *Goodfriday* presents an animated microcosmic space with complications. The microcosmic space has multiple levels, physical and spiritual spaces bleeding into each

other until they are almost indiscernible. The microcosm is animated by not one desire but two: the desire of the speaker and the desire of God, as expressed in the awful Crucifixion. This is the intervention of the cosmos into the microcosm.

Holy Sonnet VII

As Marvell does in *To His Coy Mistress*, Donne explores death through a spatial perspective in *Holy Sonnet VII*, though in a different poetic context. He describes the physical and spiritual metamorphosis of the body within the larger physical and spiritual metamorphosis of the world on Judgment Day. *Holy Sonnet V* imagined the destruction and metamorphosis of an individual world, a metaphor and construct for the speaker's own spirituality. *Holy Sonnet VII*, on the other hand, does not ask its human speakers to become spatial objects. Instead, the sonnet's human and angelic creatures consider their relationship to the spaces they inhabit, a relationship defined by change and redemption. And as *Goodfriday* considered the geographical shifts implied by the Crucifixion, *Holy Sonnet V* looks ahead to the geographical shifts of Judgment Day and the corporeal and corporeal Resurrection Christians are promised in the New Testament.

The first line of the sonnet calls our attention to spatial perception: how we imagine the spaces around us, and what those imaginings make possible. Donne begins with the memorable lines:

At the round earths imagin'd corners, blow
Your trumpets, Angells, and arise, arise
From death, you numberlesse infinities
Of soules, and to your scattred bodies goe,
All whom the flood did, and fire shall o'erthrow. (1-5)

The wonderful phrase, “The round earths imagin’d corners,” contains conceptual multitudes. Donne acknowledges the “new science”⁵⁷ with the “round”-ness of the physical earth, yet in his speaker’s mind and perhaps in the minds of many men, that earth becomes a space with “corners.” With “imagin’d” in the opening line, we are attuned to the role of the mind in creating or adding to existing spaces. We are also attuned to the possibility of alternate theories: the “imagin’d” coexisting with the “unimagined,” or that reality which is perceived with the five senses. Donne allows for the possibility of hypothetical truths which may or may not be real. This is an intellectual spatial construct defined in its first line by complexity and multiplicity.

The significance of this half-imagined, half-real space becomes apparent in the following lines. The corners become the points at which the angels “blow” and “arise, arise from death.” It is not the angels who arise from death, however, but “you numberlesse infinities / of soules,” the millions of dead Christians who will rejoin their bodies and experience their own resurrection in the “imagin’d space.” The complexity of the space, i.e., its allowance for both real and imagined spaces, creates the possibility for the ultimate metamorphosis to take place: that of the dead coming back to life.

Towards the end of the poem, the speaker focuses on his personal experience of space and transformation. Donne writes,

But let them sleepe, Lord, and mee mourne a space
For, if above all these, my sinnes abound,
‘Tis late to aske abundance of thy grace,
When wee are there; here on this lowly ground,
Teach me how to repent... (9-13)

⁵⁷ For further discussion of Donne’s relationship to “new science,” refer to Richard Sugg, *John Donne*, especially chapters 5 (“New Philosophy”) and 6 (“The New World”). Sugg, Richard. *John Donne*. Basingstoke, UK, and New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2007.

The speaker begs the Lord to “let them sleepe,” and, more to our concern, “let... me mourne a space.” There are several potential overlapping meanings for this phrase. One is that Donne employs the expression “apace,” as in, “a little while.” Another, more interesting reading of the phrase is akin to “let me mourne *this* space.” The spatial concerns in the earlier lines, and the emphasis on redeemed versus unredeemed space, certainly make the latter reading possible, if not probable. If the speaker is mourning “a space,” then why is he doing so? He tells us in the next few lines. He places his own sins conditionally “above all these,” “above” the sins of the thousands of other men who lie in sweet sleep, awaiting their eternal rest. “Above” is a term of spatial reference as well as an indication of magnitude; the speaker conceptualizes his sins as lying on a slightly different plane, indicating their greater moral weight.

Place anchors and directs the speaker’s inquiry throughout the poem. His sin is “above” and yet he asks the Lord what would happen if his sin is so great and his repentance so late that he along with the rest of living humanity are here “on this lowly ground”? The speaker pays such close attention to *where* everyone is, and to the fact that those places can change. The earth acquires imaginary corners in order to allow its inhabitants to transform graveyards into birthing places, reacquainting souls with long-forgotten bodies. Heaven comes down to earth as angels blow their trumpets. A lowly sinner, meditating on the place of his sin, believes that it is “above” the ground and yet he, and his human brethren, are simultaneously tied to the “lowly ground.”

Holy Sonnet VII presents us with an animated microcosmic space with complexity that Marvell strives for in *The Gallery*, as we have seen. However, the space of *The Gallery* was an internal space, a construct for the world of the speaker’s mind. The largely self-contained gallery was concerned with the contradictory views of the beloved. In *Holy*

Sonnet VII, Donne explores a panorama of external, non-domestic space where the complexity lies in contradictory and overlapping visions of the earth's parameters. Within that space, he invites us to realize that the spiritual and physical transformation of resurrection, enacted by Christ and hoped for by Christians, is not only a change of place (in the sense of particular places, heaven or hell) but a change of spaces (in the kind of space it is.) It is to move from the "round earth" to a round earth with "imagin'd" corners, to slip away from a universe when the sense of sin can only be experienced as an intangible emotion and slip into a universe where sin acquires spatial dimensions, thus enabling his speaker to come to grips with it.

On a Drop of Dew

Marvell's often over-looked poem *On a Drop of Dew* examines the grief for paradise lost; it is the analysis of homesickness from a spatial perspective. This meditation on the nature of place belongs in our discussion because of its representation of geographical entities, metaphorically conceived, animated by love. This love is not of a beloved object, or an especially attractive sheath of grass, but rather the love of home and of origins. The poet takes this meditation on a perfect, homesick drop of dew and transforms it into a consideration of the soul's longing for heaven. This desire is not directed to a person or Person, but rather towards a place, expressed through a depiction of spiritually animated, reactive space.

The poet begins by describing the dew in geographical terms and soon considers it as a geographical object animated by desire. The dew is "careless of its *mansion* new," a word suggesting both spatial boundaries (a house with walls) and spatial scale (mansions

representing houses of larger size.)⁵⁸ These concerns – spatial boundaries and spatial scale – continue in the next few lines. “For the clear region where ‘twas born, / Round in itself incloses: / And in its little globe’s extent...” The poet imagines the “region”⁵⁹ where it was born, a space that “incloses” the dew, and progresses to describe the dew as inhabiting or possessing “a little globe.” The drop of dew is a tiny entity, barely noticeable by the human eye. Even still, the poet asks us to consider it as an entity with geographical properties and origins. Having prepared us for this consideration, the geography of the dew important as the drop acquires more characterization in the following lines.

The poet focuses on the dewdrop as a creature characterized by the fundamental desire of place. He writes,

But gazing back upon the skies,
Shines with a mournful light,
Like its own tear,
Because so long divided from the sphere,
Restless it rolls and unsecure,
Trembling lest it grow impure,
Till the warm sun pity its pain,
And to the skies exhale it back again. (11-18)

The dewdrop acquires quasi-human properties, like a desire for purity and an experience of grief. The dew “trembles lest it grow impure,” and become part of the terrestrial

⁵⁸ The OED provides several obsolete or antiquated definitions of “mansion” that prove useful to this reading, including “A residence proved for an ecclesiastic” and “the body (as the dwelling-place of the soul)”. Also as apartments; see John 14:2 (“in my Father’s house are many mansions.”) "mansion, n.". OED Online. March 2013. Oxford University Press. 18 April 2013

<<http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/113651?rskey=zsSo9E&result=1&isAdvanced=false>>.

⁵⁹ In addition to its modern significance of a geographical place, the medieval and early modern use of the word “region” could signify climactic or latitudinal areas. OED definitions include “Each of the portions into which the atmosphere or (in later use) the sea is notionally divided according to height or depth” and “In ancient and medieval geography: each of the bands of the earth’s surface defined by parallels of latitude.” ("region, n.". OED Online. March 2013. Oxford University Press. 18 April 2013 <<http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/161281?redirectedFrom=region>>.)

geography to which it has been unhappily exiled. This exile produces grief (“a mournful light,” “unsecure,” meriting “pity”), and the grief transforms a solitary drop of dew into an animated spatial entity that moves and reacts, “gazing,” “restless,” and “trembling.” In part, this no doubt addresses the natural process of the water cycle. However, by recasting precipitation as a spatial metamorphosis, the speaker prepares us for the metaphorical leap he will make when considering the soul that desires heaven in the following stanzas.

Unlike the human tears in Donne’s *A Valediction: Of Weeping*, the dissolution of the dewdrop is a sought-after result. The distinction between the two is important: in *Valediction*, the “heaven” is dissolved, considered a part of the “globe” created by the lovers’ grief. In *Drop of Dew*, it is the smaller geographical body that seeks to be dissolved and then reunited with the larger geographic entity (“the skies”) from which it came. It seeks to lose itself in order to go home. In this way it is more similar to Donne’s *Holy Sonnet V*, where the “little world” seeks its own destruction in order to be reborn.

This desire for reunion serves as the point of poetic comparison between the lonely drop of dew and the conception of the human soul. “So the soul, that drop, that ray,” says the poet (19). The dew is its own world; so is the soul. Yet the dew longs to reunite with a larger world, or in the modern understanding, perhaps reenter a larger universe where it once found its home. So too the soul seeks to return to heaven; continuing with the water imagery, the poet imagines heaven as the soul’s original “fountain” (20). Like the drop of dew, the soul is active and reactive, “remembering still its former height... / recollecting its own light” (22, 24).

With these lines we are reminded that this is not a poem concerned with persons or personalities but places; what is more, the poet drives us to consider smaller places that

represent larger ones. It “does, in its pure and circling thoughts, express / The greater heaven in an heaven less,” he writes (25-26). The microcosmic spaces are the cornerstone of the poem, with the dewdrop reflecting its cloudy home and the soul reflecting the wonder of its celestial home. Likewise, he calls attention to the reactive nature of both spaces, describing them with the same “coy” another speaker will use in describing a reluctant mistress. “In how coy a figure wound, / Every way it turns away: / So the world excluding round / Dark beneath, but bright above. / Here disdain, there in love” (27-31).⁶⁰ That “love” is the love of a particular place, a love that consumes and reshapes that entity which seeks to return home. Home is “the glories of th’almighty sun” (40).

By inviting us first to consider the desire of a spatial entity for another spatial entity, Marvell prepares us to consider a human soul as a spatial creation. This concept echoes the soul-as-spatial-entity we have seen in Donne’s “little world” in *Holy Sonnet V* and even the erotic “India of spice and myne” in *The Sunne Rising*. Building on this concept, Marvell adds to our understanding of the tensions that exist between microcosms and the larger cosmos they represent. The microcosmic entities he offers (the dew-drop and the soul) only become microcosmic entities after dissociating from the cosmos: the dew-drop leaves the clouds it loves, the soul seeks to return to the paradise it has lost. That dissociation or physical displacement from the cosmos threatens to make the microcosmic entity dissimilar from the cosmos it desires, even as it creates the microcosm. The dewdrop fears becoming “impure” and the soul risks the discoloration of sin. Marvell offers no antidote to this contagion, instead leaving us with the understanding

⁶⁰ Also see: “How loose and easy hence to go / How girt and ready to ascend, / Moving but on appoint below, / It all about does upwards bend” (33-36).

that once they are created, microcosmic entities will begin to metamorphose, even against their animated will.

The Garden

The Garden is a celebration of the perfect place. In it, we discover Marvell's speaker believes that the best relationship to be in is the one he shares with the Garden, not with a woman. The relationship with the Garden produces growth, harmony, and transformation. Here the speaker himself finds himself transformed, experiencing metamorphosis in the geography that makes it possible. Rather than changing space with his mind, the speaker finds his mind changed by the space he experiences. *The Garden* belongs in this chapter because it is non-domestic and non-social but rather is a place that the speaker has discovered. He enters the Garden, a microcosmic space, a space that has the power to envelop – and potentially destroy – the macrocosm from whence he comes.

After dismissing the efforts of his fellow men to seek glory through worldly accomplishments, Marvell's speaker calls out to those qualities that are now his friends.⁶¹ "Fair Quiet, have I found thee here, / And Innocence, thy sister dear!" he says, allegorizing and anthropomorphizing the virtues embedded in the landscape (II.9-10). He continues,

⁶¹ For a more in-depth analysis of the speaker's rejection of human society, see Andrew Barnaby who writes about the social "struggle about words" during the time period (Andrew Barnaby. "The Politics of Garden Spaces: Andrew Marvell and the Anxieties of Public Speech." *Studies in Philology*. Vol. 97, No. 3 (Summer, 2000). Pp. 331-361. University of North Carolina Press. <http://0-www.jstor.org.luna.wellesley.edu/stable/4174674>; p. 332).

Mistaken long, I sought you then
In busy companies of men
Your sacred plants, if here below,
Only among the plants will grow.
Society is all but rude,
To this delicious solitude. (II.11-16)

As Donne did in *Goodfriday* with the “foreign motions” that distract the soul’s true “sphere” from its God-given path, so does the speaker define the “Busy companies of men” as a mistake, an illusion of the peace that he desires. Real truth lies with the virtues he finds in the garden. He greets the virtues as if they were reticent maidens and locates them specifically as spatial entities within a particular space. That is, the virtues were sought in one place (“the busy companies of men”) but were located somewhere else (“among the plants.”) They are also described as “sacred plants,” entities with dimension and possibility for growth.

In stanza 5, the speaker presents his relationship with the natural world as a positive one because of its responsiveness or reactivity to him. He exults in the relationship he shares with the place, declaring,

What a wondrous life is this I lead!
Ripe apples drop about my head;
The luscious clusters of the vine
Upon my mouth do crush their wine;
The nectarene, and curious peach,
Into my hands themselves do reach;
Stumbling on melons, as I pass,
Ensnared with flowers, I fall on grass. (V.33-40)

The vegetation merits active verbs (“drop,” “crush,” “reach”) while the speaker interacts with the fruits and fauna (“about my head,” “upon my mouth,” “into my hands,” “ensnared with flowers.”) Following in the same pattern as Daphne and Syrinx, the speaker transforms to become part of the scenery. This transformation will become most explicit in stanza 7, when the speaker will declare, “Casting the body’s vest aside, / My

soul into these boughs does glide” (50-51). Yet that transformation in truth begins with the sensuous, sexual language he employs in describing his interactions with the garden’s fruits. This is an intimate relationship, one of pleasure and delight and body-to-body contact. The nature of the transformation is important because the speaker does not seem to change into another entity as much as he becomes subsumed or absorbed into the space that surrounds him. He loses his own physical identity and gains the identity of the space he loves, relinquishing the agency afforded him by a body to the space that he enters.

In stanza 6, Marvell unveils the most remarkable articulation of animated space and geographical metamorphosis. He writes,

Meanwhile the mind, from pleasures less,
Withdraws into its happiness:
The mind, that ocean where each kind
Does straight its own resemblance find,
Yet it creates, transcending these,
Far other worlds, and other seas,
Annihilating all that’s made
To a green thought in a green shade. (VI. 41-48)

The mind itself gains a sense of characterization, as it “withdraws” from lesser company just as its owner retreated from “rude society” in the first two stanzas. Rather than withdrawing from tiresome pleasure, it withdraws “from pleasures less... into its happiness.” That happiness is spatial. In its happy state, the mind is no longer a shy person retiring from inferior society but now “an ocean” of complementary natural harmonies. It is the place where “each kind” – though of what, or why, we are not told – searches and discovers that which is similar to it.⁶²

⁶² Jim Swan has written about the role of irony and displacement in “The Garden” in the wider context of Marvell’s Mower Poems, arguing “the repeated theme is one of displacement from an original ‘home’ within the nurturing green world.” (Swan, Jim. “At

Marvell turns our attention to the generative ability of the mind, expanding on the geographical imagery. Here in the garden, the speaker's mind becomes an ocean that can beget oceans and islands and continents. He reacts to the beauty of the garden, enabling his mind to create yet another serene place. The mind surpasses mere cognitive hegemony (the "pairing-up" of kinds) and is a creative place, animated and reproductive, inventing "far other worlds, and other seas." There is a destructive element to the mind's power as well, as it "annihilates" all things in the "real world" (those things that are "made") to a "green thought in a green shade."

The literal, physical world becomes the lesser reality, simplified and reduced to the color of an ordinary leaf. It has undergone a metamorphosis from physical object to cognitive creation, from "made" to "thought." This is tremendously significant, as Marvell has transformed the "real" universe, that which is copied by mental representation of the microcosmic garden, into the mimetic universe, a miniature "thought" in the now-superior reality of the garden's "green shade." Here the garden itself, as a space both literal and animated, becomes the cosmos mimicked by microcosm.

The speaker concludes somewhat pessimistically about the perverted purpose of space. He says, "'Twas beyond a mortal's share / To wander solitary there: Two paradises 'twere in one / To live in paradise alone" (VIII. 61-64). This rather humorous ending reflects the mental metamorphosis described in stanza 6. We are not given any reasons why the absence of a "mate" is particularly felicitous; nor any explanation for why society is so particularly "rude," only that they both are. This suggests that the poem itself is a mental escape, a spatial creation through which the speaker finds repose and

Play in the Garden of Ambivalence: Andrew Marvell and the Green World." *Criticism*. Vol. 17 no. 4 (1975:Fall) p.295 – 307; p. 295).

regains this relationship with place that he cannot share with the humans in his life. Yet in the complex reversal of *cosmos* and microcosm, of reality and representation, Marvell challenges us to consider what kind of space, exactly, the speaker is looking for, and where it might be possible to find it.

Conclusion

Spatial desire frames and reframes the poetic concerns of both Donne and Marvell in the poems considered. In earlier chapters, we have seen erotic or spiritual desire articulated spatially, as the speaker of *To His Coy Mistress* expresses his erotic desires through describing a place where intercontinental travel is easy and the speaker of *The Good Morrow* describes love creating a room that is “every where.” Yet the spatial desire articulated in this chapter is primarily the desire for a certain space or certain kind of space. The speaker of *The Garden* relishes the delight he discovers in the garden. In *A Drop of Dew*, the dewdrop and the soul both long for the spaces that birthed them, telling us that spatial desire is, at one level or another, homesickness.

Within this spatial desire lies a spiritual desire: a desire for God, or for life as God intended. By calling attention to God’s geographical nature, as the speakers do in *Goodfriday* and in *Bermudas*, both Donne and Marvell focus our attention on the divine Person who works through and in particular spaces. Divine intervention into space, and the desire for that intervention, catalyzes change: God cannot enter a world without changing it, and the desire for that change begins the process of metamorphosis.

This quality has ramifications for the act of creating microcosms itself. There seems to be something God-like in creating a microcosm in the first place, in the act of trying to discover or replicate a cosmos in miniature. In part because of this quality, we

learn that once microcosmic entities begin to undergo metamorphosis, creating a significant disjointedness between the macrocosm and microcosm. This disjointedness creates a complexity that builds upon the multipartite nature of the spaces discussed here. The conceptual constructs of the horseback riding and the Cross in *Goodfriday*, the eponymous garden in *The Garden*, the apocalyptic world in *Holy Sonnet VII* have several layers of literal significance, metaphorical meaning, and conceptual constructedness. The beauty and the wonder of these spaces is that the varying metaphysical, spiritual and literal spaces blend in and out of each other as physical motion and physical space become spiritual motion, spatially conceived.

Conclusion

We have seen the ways in which varying kinds of desire have affected and changed the microcosmic spaces in these 17th-century poems. In many of the poems depicting human love, the speakers articulate their desire for the human beloved through the medium of space. Love is a microcosmic experience, spatially expressed. In a similar vein, those poems that depict divine love rely on spatial constructs to express the complexities of spiritual desire. Alongside and occasionally overlapping these spatial expression of desires, other speakers experience a desire for *place* in a way previously unseen; they desire a particular place, or perhaps a particular kind of place, that they do not inhabit. This is not desire expressed spatially but spatial desire, which contains within it spiritual desire: a desire for home, for origins, for paradise, for God, expressed through a depiction of spiritually animated space.

Throughout these poems, we have come to understand that a journey is change between spaces; a metamorphosis is the change within a space. Desire, whether for God or for another human being, catalyzes both. When speakers embark on a journey, as in Donne's rider in *Goodfriday, 1613*, the journey emphasizes the multipartite spaces the speakers will continue to confound and experience, both the spiritual and the literal blending in and out of each other as each physical motion becomes a spiritual motion, spatially experienced. When the spaces described undergo metamorphosis, we are reminded of the relationship between desire and space; just as the human imagination changes and reacts more quickly than we ourselves understand, so are the spaces we imagine prone to change within themselves.

In these depictions of spatial and spiritual motion, Donne and Marvell offer us a relationship between the universe and the representations of that universe that is dynamic and slightly dangerous. There is a universe in which morality affects structure. The places in which we live are highly attentive to our desire and our character, in so much that our integrity can re-shape the walls around us. However, this attunement to moral behavior also makes space liable to corruption; it is precisely the microcosm's greatest strength and its greatest vulnerability. It has no power to resist evil within, thus when evil enters, the space requires a geographical metamorphosis in order to change it.

What these poems teach us, in a simplified and generalized form, is that the way we understand the universe matters. It seems that when we are faced with the urge to find some way to recreate reality in total and in miniature, when we create microcosms, there are cosmic, global consequences. Our representations of an all-encompassing cosmos are fickle and strange, reactive and mystical, even when we think that we can exert control over them. Yet through living with and reshaping these representations, through their metamorphoses, we will find that our understanding of the universe will change; and sometimes, every so often, our representations can change the universe.

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Appendix of Texts

In order of appearance

The Sunne Rising (John Donne)⁶³

BUSY old fool, unruly Sun,
 Why dost thou thus,
Through windows, and through curtains, call on us ?
Must to thy motions lovers' seasons run ?
 Saucy pedantic wretch, go chide
 Late school-boys and sour prentices,
Go tell court-huntsmen that the king will ride,
 Call country ants to harvest offices ;
Love, all alike, no season knows nor clime,
Nor hours, days, months, which are the rags of time.

 Thy beams so reverend, and strong
 Why shouldst thou think ?
I could eclipse and cloud them with a wink,
But that I would not lose her sight so long.
 If her eyes have not blinded thine,
 Look, and to-morrow late tell me,
 Whether both th' Indias of spice and mine
 Be where thou left'st them, or lie here with me.
Ask for those kings whom thou saw'st yesterday,
And thou shalt hear, "All here in one bed lay."

 She's all states, and all princes I ;
 Nothing else is ;
Princes do but play us ; compared to this,
All honour's mimic, all wealth alchemy.
 Thou, Sun, art half as happy as we,
 In that the world's contracted thus ;
 Thine age asks ease, and since thy duties be
 To warm the world, that's done in warming us.
Shine here to us, and thou art everywhere ;
This bed thy center is, these walls thy sphere.

⁶³ Poems in appendix were taken from The Luminarium Encyclopedia (The Luminarium Encyclopedia Project, ed. Anniina Jokinen, <<http://www.luminarium.org>> Accessed 20 April 2012) and The Poetry Foundation websites (The Poetry Foundation; Harriet Monroe Poetry Institute. Chicago, IL. <<http://www.thepoetryfoundation.org>> Accessed 20 April 2012) for ease of transcription.

The Good-Morrow (John Donne)

I WONDER by my troth, what thou and I
Did, till we loved ? were we not wean'd till then ?
But suck'd on country pleasures, childishly ?
Or snorted we in the Seven Sleepers' den ?
'Twas so ; but this, all pleasures fancies be;
If ever any beauty I did see,
Which I desired, and got,
'twas but a dream of thee.

And now good-morrow to our waking souls,
Which watch not one another out of fear;
For love all love of other sights controls,
And makes one little room an everywhere.
Let sea-discoverers to new worlds have gone;
Let maps to other, worlds on worlds have shown;
Let us possess one world ; each hath one, and is one.

My face in thine eye, thine in mine appears,
And true plain hearts do in the faces rest;
Where can we find two better hemispheres
Without sharp north, without declining west?
Whatever dies, was not mix'd equally;
If our two loves be one, or thou and I
Love so alike that none can slacken, none can die.

A Valediction: Of Weeping (John Donne)

LET me pour forth
My tears before thy face, whilst I stay here,
For thy face coins them, and thy stamp they bear,
And by this mintage they are something worth.
 For thus they be
 Pregnant of thee ;
Fruits of much grief they are, emblems of more ;
When a tear falls, that thou fall'st which it bore ;
So thou and I are nothing then, when on a divers shore.

 On a round ball
A workman, that hath copies by, can lay
An Europe, Afric, and an Asia,
And quickly make that, which was nothing, all.
 So doth each tear,
 Which thee doth wear,
A globe, yea world, by that impression grow,

Till thy tears mix'd with mine do overflow
This world, by waters sent from thee, my heaven dissolvèd so.

O ! more than moon,
Draw not up seas to drown me in thy sphere ;
Weep me not dead, in thine arms, but forbear
To teach the sea, what it may do too soon ;
 Let not the wind
 Example find
To do me more harm than it purposeth :
Since thou and I sigh one another's breath,
Whoe'er sighs most is cruellest, and hastes the other's death.

To His Coy Mistress (Andrew Marvell)

Had we but world enough, and time,
This coyness, lady, were no crime.
We would sit down and think which way
To walk, and pass our long love's day;
Thou by the Indian Ganges' side
Shouldst rubies find; I by the tide
Of Humber would complain. I would
Love you ten years before the Flood;
And you should, if you please, refuse
Till the conversion of the Jews.
My vegetable love should grow
Vaster than empires, and more slow.
An hundred years should go to praise
Thine eyes, and on thy forehead gaze;
Two hundred to adore each breast,
But thirty thousand to the rest;
An age at least to every part,
And the last age should show your heart.
For, lady, you deserve this state,
Nor would I love at lower rate.

 But at my back I always hear
Time's winged chariot hurrying near;
And yonder all before us lie
Deserts of vast eternity.
Thy beauty shall no more be found,
Nor, in thy marble vault, shall sound
My echoing song; then worms shall try
That long preserv'd virginity,
And your quaint honour turn to dust,
And into ashes all my lust.

The grave's a fine and private place,
But none I think do there embrace.

Now therefore, while the youthful hue
Sits on thy skin like morning dew,
And while thy willing soul transpires
At every pore with instant fires,
Now let us sport us while we may;
And now, like am'rous birds of prey,
Rather at once our time devour,
Than languish in his slow-chapp'd power.
Let us roll all our strength, and all
Our sweetness, up into one ball;
And tear our pleasures with rough strife
Thorough the iron gates of life.
Thus, though we cannot make our sun
Stand still, yet we will make him run.

The Gallery (Andrew Marvell)

Clora, come view my soul, and tell
Whether I have contrived it well.
Now all its several lodgings lie
Composed into one gallery;
And the great arras-hangings, made
Of various faces, by are laid;
That, for all furniture, you'll find
Only your picture in my mind.

Here thou are painted in the dress
Of an inhuman murderess;
Examining upon our hearts
Thy fertile shop of cruel arts:
Engines more keen than ever yet
Adorned a tyrant's cabinet;
Of which the most tormenting are
Black eyes, red lips, and curlèd hair.

But, on the other side, th'art drawn
Like to Aurora in the dawn;
When in the East she slumbering lies,
And stretches out her milky thighs;
While all the morning choir does sing,
And manna falls, and roses spring;
And, at thy feet, the wooing doves
Sit pérfecting their harmless loves.

Like an enchantress here thou show'st,
Vexing thy restless lover's ghost;
And, by a light obscure, dost rave
Over his entrails, in the cave;
Divining thence, with horrid care,
How long thou shalt continue fair;
And (when informed) them throw'st away,
To be the greedy vulture's prey.

But, against that, thou sit'st afloat
Like Venus in her pearly boat.
The halcyons, calming all that's nigh,
Betwixt the air and water fly;
Or, if some rolling wave appears,
A mass of ambergris it bears.
Nor blows more wind than what may well
Convoy the perfume to the smell.

These pictures and a thousand more
Of thee my gallery do store
In all the forms thou canst invent
Either to please me, or torment:
For thou alone to people me,
Art grown a numerous colony;
And a collection choicer far
Than or Whitehall's or Mantua's were.

But, of these pictures and the rest,
That at the entrance likes me best:
Where the same posture, and the look
Remains, with which I first was took:
A tender shepherdess, whose hair
Hangs loosely playing in the air,
Transplanting flowers from the green hill,
To crown her head, and bosom fill.

Holy Sonnet V (John Donne)

I am a little world made cunningly
Of elements, and an angelic sprite ;
But black sin hath betray'd to endless night
My world's both parts, and, O, both parts must die.
You which beyond that heaven which was most high
Have found new spheres, and of new land can write,

Pour new seas in mine eyes, that so I might
Drown my world with my weeping earnestly,
Or wash it if it must be drown'd no more.
But O, it must be burnt ; alas ! the fire
Of lust and envy burnt it heretofore,
And made it fouler ; let their flames retire,
And burn me, O Lord, with a fiery zeal
Of Thee and Thy house, which doth in eating heal.

Hymne to God My God In My Sicknesse (John Donne)⁶⁴

SINCE I am coming to that Holy room,
Where, with Thy choir of saints for evermore,
I shall be made Thy music ; as I come
I tune the instrument here at the door,
And what I must do then, think here before ;

Whilst my physicians by their love are grown
Cosmographers, and I their map, who lie
Flat on this bed, that by them may be shown
That this is my south-west discovery,
Per fretum febris, by these straits to die ;

I joy, that in these straits I see my west ;
For, though those currents yield return to none,
What shall my west hurt me ? As west and east
In all flat maps—and I am one—are one,
So death doth touch the resurrection.

Is the Pacific sea my home ? Or are
The eastern riches ? Is Jerusalem ?
Anyan, and Magellan, and Gibraltar ?
All straits, and none but straits, are ways to them
Whether where Japhet dwelt, or Cham, or Shem.

We think that Paradise and Calvary,
Christ's cross and Adam's tree, stood in one place ;
Look, Lord, and find both Adams met in me ;
As the first Adam's sweat surrounds my face,
May the last Adam's blood my soul embrace.

So, in His purple wrapp'd, receive me, Lord ;
By these His thorns, give me His other crown ;
And as to others' souls I preach'd Thy word,

⁶⁴ I have omitted *Upon Appleton House* due to its extensive length.

Be this my text, my sermon to mine own,
“Therefore that He may raise, the Lord throws down.”

Goodfriday, 1613. Riding Westward (John Donne)

LET man's soul be a sphere, and then, in this,
Th' intelligence that moves, devotion is ;
And as the other spheres, by being grown
Subject to foreign motion, lose their own,
And being by others hurried every day,
Scarce in a year their natural form obey ;
Pleasure or business, so, our souls admit
For their first mover, and are whirl'd by it.
Hence is't, that I am carried towards the west,
This day, when my soul's form bends to the East.
There I should see a Sun by rising set,
And by that setting endless day beget.
But that Christ on His cross did rise and fall,
Sin had eternally benighted all.
Yet dare I almost be glad, I do not see
That spectacle of too much weight for me.
Who sees Gods face, that is self-life, must die ;
What a death were it then to see God die ?
It made His own lieutenant, Nature, shrink,
It made His footstool crack, and the sun wink.
Could I behold those hands, which span the poles
And tune all spheres at once, pierced with those holes ?
Could I behold that endless height, which is
Zenith to us and our antipodes,
Humbled below us ? or that blood, which is
The seat of all our soul's, if not of His,
Made dirt of dust, or that flesh which was worn
By God for His apparel, ragg'd and torn ?
If on these things I durst not look, durst I
On His distressed Mother cast mine eye,
Who was God's partner here, and furnish'd thus
Half of that sacrifice which ransom'd us ?
Though these things as I ride be from mine eye,
They're present yet unto my memory,
For that looks towards them ; and Thou look'st towards me,
O Saviour, as Thou hang'st upon the tree.
I turn my back to thee but to receive
Corrections till Thy mercies bid Thee leave.
O think me worth Thine anger, punish me,
Burn off my rust, and my deformity ;
Restore Thine image, so much, by Thy grace,

That Thou mayst know me, and I'll turn my face.

Holy Sonnet VII (John Donne)

At the round earth's imagined corners blow
Your trumpets, angels, and arise, arise
From death, you numberless infinities
Of souls, and to your scattered bodies go ;
All whom the flood did, and fire shall o'erthrow,
All whom war, dea[r]th, age, agues, tyrannies,
Despair, law, chance hath slain, and you, whose eyes
Shall behold God, and never taste death's woe.
But let them sleep, Lord, and me mourn a space ;
For, if above all these my sins abound,
'Tis late to ask abundance of Thy grace,
When we are there. Here on this lowly ground,
Teach me how to repent, for that's as good
As if Thou hadst seal'd my pardon with Thy blood.

On a Drop of Dew: Translated From a Latin Poem (Andrew Marvell)

SEE, how the orient dew,
Shed from the bosom of the morn
 Into the blowing roses,
 (Yet careless of its mansion new,
For the clear region where 'twas born,)
 Round in itself incloses ;
 And, in its little globe's extent,
Frames, as it can, its native element.
 How it the purple flower does slight,
 Scarce touching where it lies ;
 But gazing back upon the skies,
 Shines with a mournful light,
 Like its own tear,
Because so long divided from the sphere.
 Restless it rolls, and unsecure,
 Trembling, lest it grow impure ;
 Till the warm sun pity its pain,
And to the skies exhale it back again.
 So the soul, that drop, that ray
Of the clear fountain of eternal day,
(Could it within the human flower be seen,)
 Remembering still its former height,
 Shuns the sweet leaves, and blossoms green,
 And, recollecting its own light,
Does, in its pure and circling thoughts, express

The greater heaven in an heaven less.
In how coy a figure wound,
Every way it turns away ;
So the world-excluding round,
Yet receiving in the day ;
Dark beneath, but bright above,
Here disdain, there in love.
How loose and easy hence to go ;
How girt and ready to ascend ;
Moving but on a point below,
It all about does upwards bend.
Such did the manna's sacred dew distil ;
White and entire, though congealed and chill ;
Congealed on earth ; but does, dissolving, run
Into the glories of the almighty sun.

The Garden (Andrew Marvell)

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

Fair Quiet, have I found thee here,
And Innocence, thy sister dear!
Mistaken long, I sought you then
In busy companies of men :
Your sacred plants, if here below,
Only among the plants will grow ;
Society is all but rude,
To this delicious solitude.

No white nor red was ever seen
So amorous as this lovely green ;
Fond lovers, cruel as their flame,
Cut in these trees their mistress' name.
Little, alas, they know or heed,
How far these beauties hers exceed!
Fair trees! wheresoe'er your barks I wound
No name shall but your own be found.

When we have run our passion's heat,

Love hither makes his best retreat :
The gods who mortal beauty chase,
Still in a tree did end their race.
Apollo hunted Daphne so,
Only that she might laurel grow,
And Pan did after Syrinx speed,
Not as a nymph, but for a reed.

What wondrous life is this I lead!
Ripe apples drop about my head ;
The luscious clusters of the vine
Upon my mouth do crush their wine ;
The nectarine and curious peach
Into my hands themselves do reach ;
Stumbling on melons as I pass,
Insnared with flowers, I fall on grass.

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

Here at the fountain's sliding foot,
Or at some fruit-tree's mossy root,
Casting the body's vest aside,
My soul into the boughs does glide :
There like a bird it sits and sings,
Then whets and combs its silver wings ;
And, till prepared for longer flight,
Waves in its plumes the various light.

Such was that happy garden-state,
While man there walked without a mate :
After a place so pure and sweet,
What other help could yet be meet!
But 'twas beyond a mortal's share
To wander solitary there :
Two paradises 'twere in one
To live in Paradise alone.

How well the skillful gard'ner drew
Of flowers and herbs this dial new ;
Where from above the milder sun

Does through a fragrant zodiac run ;
And, as it works, th' industrious bee
Computes its time as well as we.
How could such sweet and wholesome hours
Be reckoned but with herbs and flowers!