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Positioning Patronage: Lanyer's *Salve Deus Rex Judæorum* and the Countess of Cumberland

in Time and Place

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Abstract: This article places the composition and publication of Aemilia Lanyer's *Salve Deus Rex Judæorum* within the context of particular periods in the life of Margaret Russell, Countess of Cumberland and her daughter, Anne Clifford, Countess of Dorset. Lanyer's use of mirroring, shared discourse, possible worlds and reconstruction of memory all relate to these periods and were designed engage the interest of Russell and Clifford. Through the identification of the period of the women's stay in Cookham in 1604 Lanyer's poetic strategies directly appealing to Russell can be identified. Lanyer's decision to publish her verse collection in 1610 was also influenced by events in the lives of Russell and Clifford, providing insight into Lanyer's canny understanding of patronage in the period.

Keywords: Patronage, Religion, Marriage, Law, Early Modern Politics

Aemilia Lanyer's verse collection *Salve Deus Rex Judæorum* has long been recognized as a text that participates in the complex patronage practices in early modern England. The extensive dedicatory material makes up nearly a third of the text, while Margaret Russell, the Countess of Cumberland, is privileged throughout Lanyer's poetry with addresses to her continually punctuating the text.<sup>1</sup> Helen Smith, in her discussion of early modern dedications explains how they existed as "sites of rhetorical play, peritextual structures designed to constrain and direct the reader, and elements of the complex system of patronage that drew together social, political, and religious, as well as literary, life."<sup>2</sup> These dedications often alluded to intricately constructed relationships that were fragile but also contained potential advantages for both patron and artist. Ernest Gilman portrays these relationships as constructed of interconnected artistic ambitions and positions,<sup>3</sup> while Smith describes patronage in the period as a "network of associations."<sup>4</sup> In early modern culture it was understood that the successful suitor was one who was able to construct a convincing affinity with a prospective patron. Spenser's well known criticism of Stephen Gosson in his letter to Gabriel Harvey in October 1579 confirms that the importance of this common sympathy

within a patronage relationship was well understood. He wrote to Harvey: “Such follie is it, not to regard aforehand the inclination and quality of him to whom we dedicate our books.”<sup>5</sup> Spenser suggests here that a successful suit needed more than creative genius to attract the interest of a patron. To gain even the most limited advantages of patronage it was essential to carefully construct a text that would strengthen the writer’s affinity with the patron either through the creation of a new bond or the building upon an existing relationship.

Aemilia Lanyer, in the verse collection *Salve Deus Rex Judæorum* attempts to develop her relationship with Margaret Russell and her daughter Anne Clifford by engaging with the pressing personal interests and concerns of these two women at particular periods in their lives. Lanyer constructs within her poem a narrative of shared intimacy, evoking that “faire night,” when she and Russell stood together in the fading light of a summer sun in a “Paradice” of “pleasant groves, hills, walks and stately trees.” It was here, Lanyer reminds Russell, that she requested Lanyer to write “praisefull lines of that delightful place.”<sup>6</sup> Later, in the “Description of Cooke-ham” that ends Lanyer’s book Lanyer reinforces this narrative of intimacy with Russell, whom she credits with inspiring her poem of Christ’s passion. Here she claims that from Russell’s desire “did spring this worke of Grace” (130:12). In another place Lanyer identifies the locus of creativity as emerging from her own desire: “His Death and Passion I desire to write, /And thee to reade, the blessed Soules delight” (62: 271-272). This merging of the desires of patron and supplicant heightens the intimacy of the poem and sites the women’s mutual religious fervor within a shared and transformed memory.

Evidence suggests that it was not out of character for Russell to encourage writers to produce religious works. This can be seen in Russell’s response to a letter by Anthony Sherley<sup>7</sup> who asked for her assistance to rehabilitate himself in the eyes of the government. Russell is careful not to encourage Sherley’s political hopes. Instead, she tells him

I much desire the finishing of this great work begun by you, to the great good of Christendom that might enlarge the Glory of Christs Church & advance your excellent minde to be famous to Posterity.<sup>8</sup>

This letter suggests that Russell viewed authorship, especially on matters related to her Christian beliefs, as an activity that could aid individuals in both spiritual development and worldly honor. Religious works claiming to have been inspired, commissioned, or encouraged by Russell are fairly common. Thomas Tymme presented Russell with a manuscript gift book of a translation of Dudley Fenner's *Sacra Theologia Sive Veritas* (1585). The prefatory remarks to this work infer it was a commissioned work: "I have sente you good Mistress Clifford, your booke translated and written in the best manner I can."<sup>9</sup> Other writers who dedicated religious works to Russell include Henry Lok, William Perkins, Robert Hill, and Thomas Lodge.<sup>10</sup> Given Russell's interest in the composition of religious works there is no reason to doubt Lanyer's claim that the Countess encouraged her to write, however this encouragement does not suggest any particular intimacy between the two women.

Because of the lack of any evidence of a relationship between the two women beyond Lanyer's poem, it has been assumed that they were only slightly acquainted.<sup>11</sup> Instead it appears that Lanyer was attempting to create possibilities, what John Garrison describes as the production of "possible selves," through which Lanyer offered Russell a more intimate relationship with her. This offering contains the promise of service that at the same time invites some form of reciprocity.<sup>12</sup> In order to accomplish this goal of greater intimacy Lanyer developed shared discourses that are religious, social, and political—grounding these in a particular time and place in an attempt to create a space for herself within Russell's life.<sup>13</sup> This formational process can be seen in the central poem of the book, *Salve Deus Rex Judæorum*. Here Lanyer directly addresses Margaret Russell with the marginal notes in the

printed text reinforcing Russell's primacy within these early stanzas. Lanyer writes, "To thee great Countess now I will applie/My pen, to write of thy never dying fame" (51:9-10), and quickly asks pardon for her delay in fulfilling Russell's request that she write "Those praisefull lines of that delightful place/As you commaunded me in that faire night" (51-2: 18-19). Here Lanyer draws upon the functioning of memory attempting to, as Kate Chedgzoy suggests, "deploy personal and cultural memory" in order to "fashion patronage."<sup>14</sup> Lanyer does this through a process of selective retrospection, which allowed for a multitude of pasts to be brought into the present through the cognition of potentialities based on a reconfiguring of memory. Andrew Hiscock describes this as a "revisiting of experience" through which the acknowledgement of the limitations of memory also provided opportunities for writers to "supplement its silences and legacies" with "narrative creativity."<sup>15</sup> Lanyer reinscribes her recollections of a particular time and place, their shared time at Cookham, with alternative possibilities constructing a space and a relationship through which the very real despair of Russell's time there is transformed into a story of transcendent Christian victory.

Through this transformation Lanyer could expect to enhance the affinities essential to a patronage relationship by forming a meta-textual moment through which the content of the poem and Russell's own life are conflated through the evocation of a memory.<sup>16</sup> By considering more specifically the actual time and place of this moment a more dynamic relationship between poet and patron, and between the real and the imagined, emerges. An examination of the manuscript evidence reveals with reasonable accuracy the period when Lanyer and Russell resided at Cookham.<sup>17</sup> A consideration of the state of Margaret Russell's personal life during this particular period provides useful insights into Lanyer's creative methods as she took possession of shared memories, inserting herself into the intimate spaces of Russell's distress. Lanyer's creative interventions in the events of 1604 also suggest a possible motive for the publication of *Salve Deus Rex Judæorum* in 1610.<sup>18</sup>

The existing evidence suggests that Margaret Russell and her daughter Anne Clifford resided at Cookham from late August to late October 1604. Copies of five letters from Margaret Russell written at Cookham in September 1604 survive. Three of these are to her estranged husband, George Clifford the Earl of Cumberland, who was at Skipton Castle in Yorkshire and also at times in Carlisle. Another letter is to Henry Howard, Earl of Northampton, and a fifth letter Russell wrote to Thomas, Lord Erskine. Three of the letters are dated “Cookham in Berkshire September 1604” but do not specify a day. One of the letters to George Clifford and the letter to Erskine, are dated “the end of” September 1604. These letters show that Margaret Russell was resident at Cookham for most of September in this year.<sup>19</sup> However, it is unclear when she arrived, which could have been any time after a letter she wrote to George Clifford on 15 August 1604—which she sent from Bedford House, London.<sup>20</sup>

The length of Margaret Russell’s stay at Cookham during October of 1604 must be left as a matter of conjecture because the next extant letter we have from her is dated “about the begin of November 1604” from “Austin Friars House in London.”<sup>21</sup> However, the imagery employed in Lanyer’s poem, “The Description of Cooke-ham” indicates that Russell and Clifford left Cookham as winter approached, that is sometime in October.<sup>22</sup> This evidence suggests the community of women Lanyer writes about in “The Description of Cooke-ham” was together for up to ten weeks that late summer and early autumn of 1604. Many have considered that this stay at Cookham could have occurred anytime in the first decade of the seventeenth century, up to Anne Clifford’s marriage in February of 1609. However, a detailed chronology based on several documents reveals that it is highly unlikely that either Margaret Russell or Anne Clifford resided at Cookham after the 1604 visit.

During the remaining months of 1604 and most of 1605 Margaret Russell remained in London at Austin Friars, according to her letters. In November 1604 Russell writes to George

Clifford that “in the spring of the year I may go out of Town with my daughter to Sutton in Kent which I have hired & live there sometimes in peace with God & man from this troublesome World.”<sup>23</sup> In December 1604 Russell was still in London, where she wrote to Henry Howard from Austin Friars.<sup>24</sup> The proposed retirement to Sutton Place in the spring of 1605 evidently did not occur and Margaret Russell wrote to Henry Howard in the middle of April 1605 again from Austin Friars.<sup>25</sup> Russell was still at Austin Friars in July when she received a letter from George Clifford.<sup>26</sup> When he came up to London in July 1605 he took Anne Clifford away with him to Grafton House in Northamptonshire while Russell retired to Sutton Place sometime in late August, and certainly by September of 1605.<sup>27</sup> Anne Clifford records that she was with her father during August 1605 and then moved on to Sutton Place where Russell was staying.<sup>28</sup> And while there is no evidence to prove Russell and Anne Clifford did not go to Berkshire during September and October of this year, it is incredibly unlikely that they would leave Sutton Place when Russell had leased it with the express purpose of using it as her country retreat. Also, given that she had received some of the long overdue payments George Clifford owed her, she had no need to trespass on the charity of her brother, William Russell, who leased Cookham. It was the lack of funds which had forced her stay there the year before—a situation that made her unhappy, as her letters from that time show.

By the end of October 1605 George Clifford was dead and Margaret Russell’s financial situation was much improved.<sup>29</sup> Throughout the winter and spring of 1606 Russell was in London beginning what would become the decades-long legal battles concerning the rights of Anne Clifford to inherit her father’s estates in the North. In the summer of 1606 and again in April 1607 Russell was using Sutton Place as her country residence.<sup>30</sup> In the early summer of 1607 Margaret Russell and Anne Clifford were back in London engaged in early negotiations concerning a possible marriage with Richard Sackville,<sup>31</sup> while in July 1607



Margaret Russell and Anne Clifford journeyed north to Westmorland where they remained until they returned to London on 20 October 1607.<sup>32</sup>

Documentary evidence concerning details of Margaret Russell and Anne Clifford's movements during 1608 are sketchy. Certainly they were in London in January, when Anne Clifford performed in Jonson's *Masque of Beauty*, on January 14<sup>th</sup> at Whitehall.<sup>33</sup> In April Margaret Russell was in London at a hearing in the Court of Wards concerning Anne Clifford's claims to her father's northern estates.<sup>34</sup> If the women did leave London during the summer months, as appears to have been their practice, it is most likely they went to Sutton Place in Kent. Margaret Russell continued to hold the lease on this property and used it often during her widowhood before she settled permanently in Westmorland after Anne Clifford's marriage.<sup>35</sup> In February 1609 Anne Clifford married Richard Sackville, Lord Buckhurst, who became the Earl of Dorset two days after the marriage. Lanyer makes clear in "The Description of Cooke-ham" that the events she recounts took place before this marriage and occurred during one particular period—not a series of visits over time. Given this, the short-lived community of women presented in "The Description of Cooke-ham" could only have existed in the late summer and early autumn of 1604. The subject matter, imagery, and focus of the poems in *Salve Deus Rex Judæorum* suggest Lanyer drew upon this period of deep distress in Margaret Russell's life in the construction of her poetry.

This distress has often been sympathetically acknowledged by scholars. However, the complexity of Russell's emotional state, particularly during the autumn of 1604, has not received much attention. The estrangement that arose between Margaret Russell and George Clifford in the late 1590s disrupted what all evidence suggests was a reasonably successful marriage. Letters written to Margaret Russell by George Clifford in the 1580s and 1590s reveal a steady affection and an active partnership despite their regular separations and their

precarious financial situation.<sup>36</sup> Unfortunately, towards the end of the 1590s an estrangement developed between the couple which Anne Clifford attributed to a love affair:

He [George Clifford] fell to love a Ladey of quality, which did by degrees draw and alienate his love and affection from his soe verteous and well discerneing wife, it being the cause of many discontents betweene them for many yeares together. Soe thatt att the length for two or three yeares together before his death they parted houses to her extreame greife and sorrow.<sup>37</sup>

The identity of this woman has remained unknown, though it is possible that she was Lady Lucy Percy who was married to Edward Stanley.<sup>38</sup> George Williamson wrote in his 1920 biography of George Clifford that Clifford's mistress was by "common report" a Stanley and was "comely and ambitious."<sup>39</sup> Unfortunately, Williamson gives no source for this information. However, there is much to suggest that Lucy Percy could have been this "ladey of qualitie." She was reputed to have been a great beauty, was well-known to George Clifford, and died about 1601.

In discussing her mother's reaction to George Clifford's adultery and subsequent separation between them, Anne Clifford wrote "yt went very nere her heart, for shee was a womman full of kynde affections."<sup>40</sup> This great grief is apparent in the letters Margaret Russell wrote from Cookham in September 1604 and provided material upon which Lanyer drew in her verse collection. In a letter to Henry Howard, Earl of Northampton Russell wrote:

I beseech you to make such an end for one as I may not incur the name of cumber too much that you will be pleased to temper matters so for me as that the name of a husbands authority incensed wrongfully against me, may not prevail too much, against mee against all justice & right.<sup>41</sup>

To George Clifford she lamented, “soe as if the kindness of my honourable frends as my brother William Lord Russell & my nephew Edward Earl of Bedford had not been pleased to lend me money I had sunk in my own distresses.” She added, “I have not the happiness to be pleasing to your Lordship, yet that I bee not so unhappy as to be a continual trouble to you.” She signed this letter with “but for my affections which hath been & is true to your Lordship.”<sup>42</sup> In another letter to George Clifford Margaret Russell wrote:

In soe many yeares and soe great a tyme of changes as this new change<sup>43</sup> hath bene your Lordship maye judge of my expences, that if my frends had not bene honorable to me I might have sunke with my owne distress...I assure myself you will supplye accordinge to the last word of your promise and be pleased to answer my brothers request for the rest of the payments.<sup>44</sup>

These letters pertain to Russell’s growing financial humiliation which she believed Clifford was using to inflict even greater pain upon her.

In her letter from Cookham to Thomas Erskine her anger is more raw as she defends herself:

I left not my Lord’s house in passion for all his extreame courses to mee, well known to those that are near about us, but upon a duty to attend our great mistress the Queen when she came first into England which occasion my Lord tooke to dissolve his house, & in a manner to turn me quite off.<sup>45</sup>

To George Clifford she also wrote in September 1604 that the marital strife between them was not only destroying their own reputations, but was also affecting the health of their daughter:

It breeds a greater ill to your Lordship’s daughter, now your only childe by mee, to bee counted to have a mother of that extreme high spiritt that your Lordshipp cannot endure to live withall, nor to afford such allowance as in honour you have

promised without my intercession to his Majesty about it, which brings us both into the mouth of the world, several conjectures & hath made such a deepe impression in this daughter of yours as that it makes her looke very pale and ill, which cause (good my Lord) take away by your favour to us both.<sup>46</sup>

In her letter to Thomas Erskine, mentioned above, she concludes by confiding her desire to “live a private and retyred quiet life.” Russell’s retirement to Cookham may have been motivated by this desire for peace, but the letters she wrote during this time are evidence that the emotional and financial turmoil continued.

Lanyer’s verse collection, especially “A Description of Cooke-ham” reinscribes this period transforming it into that private and retired life Russell claimed she sought. Many have commented on Lanyer’s construction of an alternative space, a community of women living in a time and place (and indeed transcending time and place) where virtue is valued, indeed elevated to the divine—a place where these women can escape the betrayals of men and instead live among the apostles in a type of female Christian utopia.<sup>47</sup> Lanyer claims explicitly in “A Description of Cooke-ham” that it is Russell who animates this imagined environment. Russell’s alchemical interests are alluded to here for which she was well known. Anne Clifford, in her biographical description of her mother describes Russell as “a lover of the studdie and practice of alchimy by which shee found out excellent medicine, that did much good to manie. Shee delighted in distilling of waters and other chemicall extractions.”<sup>48</sup> Anne Clifford also records her mother’s alchemical work by featuring Russell’s manuscript book of alchemical distillations, “A written hand Booke of Alkumiste Exstractions of Distillations and excellent Medicines” in centre panel of the Great Picture triptych she commissioned.<sup>49</sup>

Peregrine Lord Willoughby, like Lanyer, identifies in Russell an animating and perfecting wisdom in a letter written around 1600 and explicitly connects this to her alchemical fame:

But noble phylosophying Lady you have learned the art of separation, to draw the spirit from the body and add it to it agayne, things dead to live ... these are not natures affeck but wisdoms workes ... So did Hermis, So did Solomon, So did Ripley,<sup>50</sup> and so did Kelley, And now comes my Lady of Cumberland.<sup>51</sup>

Underlying Willoughby's flattering description of Russell is contemporary discourse concerning alchemy best described in a contemporary edition of Roger Bacon's work. In a 1597 publication of Bacon's *Mirror of Alchimy*, Bacon states that alchemy was the distillation of elixers that when "cast" upon "imperfect bodies, doth fully perfect them in their verie projection." Moreover Bacon quotes Hermes as stating that "*Alchimy* is a Corporal Science simply composed of one and by one, naturally conjoyning things more precious, by knowledge and effect, and converting them by a naturall commixtion into a better kind."<sup>52</sup> In "A Description of Cooke-ham" it is this "comixion" of Russell's wisdom and the Cookham estate that enlivens and invigorates the landscape—and by extension all places where the Countess abides. Lanyer suggests that her poetry makes this transformational wisdom available to the world: "I deliver the inestimable treasure of all elected soules, to be perused at convenient times; as also the mirrour of your most worthy minde" (35:29-30). Here Lanyer draws upon this idea of projection as described by Bacon, her poetry also becoming an alchemical act. Through the intermingling of the base matter of Lanyer's words with the divinely endowed wisdom of Margaret Russell's mind, Lanyer's words are perfected, or become a "better kind". The mirrour becomes the both crucible wherein Russell's divine virtues combine with Lanyer's words, and the device through which these virtues are projected into the world, perfecting it.<sup>53</sup>

This transformational discourse is further enriched through Lanyer's use of the Bride of Christ trope that reveals an understanding of Russell's conceptualization of the relationship between the elect individual and Christ generally, and more particularly the way in which she framed her own relationship with the divine. In April 1600, when George Clifford was still engaged in his extra-marital affair, Russell wrote that she wished "to intreat your Lordship's Christian Love, not as in your affections as a wife to you but as one that may joyfully marry Christ Jesus." She explains that she seeks his pardon for her just condemnation of those "secret wrongs of your Lordship" recognizing these wrongs instead "to bee but as Gods hand ... to make my heart subject to his Holy Will."<sup>54</sup> Here Russell elevates the marriage of the elect to Christ above earthly marriage, as she would again in 1615 when she counseled her daughter Anne. Russell wrote to her daughter: "for in what a state so ever you be in there are and will be some discontentments ...with a husband and without one til we enjoy that most blessed husband Jesus Christ which in his mercy I assure myself."<sup>55</sup> Margaret Russell continued to portray her relationship to the divine as a state of transformation through the joining of the base with the divine in a perfecting distillation. She states in her will:

Esteeming it the necessarie dutie of a Christian to order the things of this life in tyme convenient thereby to prevent the impedimente to heavenlie meditations at the passage from hence to meete the heavenlie Bride-groom our Blessed Saviour which often falleth out by neglect of a provident dispoicion.<sup>56</sup>

These examples reveal Margaret Russell's personal appropriation of the Bride of Christ topos, and her understanding of the relationship between the individual and the divine to be one of a transformational co-joining of the base with the divine that can also be seen in metaphorical appropriations of the alchemical process.

In the sixteenth and early seventeenth century the Bride of Christ topos was most often used by Reformist Protestants as a metaphor that illustrated the relationship between

Christ and the reformist church, though it also featured in treatises concerning the relationship between believer and Christ. Thomas Bentley in his *Monument for Matrones* (1582) uses the discourse of the spouse of Christ to exemplify the relationship between the human soul and God. His treatise is interesting in that it often exhorts Queen Elizabeth to consider her relationship with God in this light, though given her status as the head of the English Church, the conflation of the Bride of Christ and the church is clearly present here.<sup>57</sup> John Downname explained to his readers in 1608: “so inviolable a bond of love and amitie with God, as is between a most loving husband, and his beloved spouse” that the elect individual should approach God “with love and reverence, as unto a gracious husband.”<sup>58</sup> In 1613 Thomas Myriell insisted that the Bride or Spouse of Christ was meant for both men and women, and that the more erotic imagery found in the Song of Songs, the main biblical source for this conceptualization, was but a “shell.”<sup>59</sup> Elizabeth Clarke suggests that this language of the marriage bond to describe the relationship between the individual and Christ would become politically radical later in the seventeenth-century,<sup>60</sup> and it is clear that Lanyer and Clifford both recognized the possibilities in this topos to develop a sense of a particularly female agency connected with the concept of the mystical marriage.

This intimacy between a woman and Christ, which subordinates earthly marriage to a spiritual conjoining with Christ, as seen in Russell’s letters and will, and Lanyer’s development of this idea in her poetry, is unusual at this early date. Russell may have developed her ideas on a mystical marriage with Christ through her reading of Phillippe de Mornay (1600). In her will she bequeathed a copy of de Mornay’s *Fowre Bookes of the Institution Use and Doctrine of the Holy Sacrament* to her niece, Anne Herbert.<sup>61</sup> In this work the receiving of the holy sacrament is described as an act of covenanting “betwixt the faithfull and God, an union with Christ, by the bond of his holy spirit.” De Mornay goes on to explain “that it converteth and chaungeth us into his substance, maketh us flesh of his flesh,

and bone of his bones: and causeth us to live in him and by him.”<sup>62</sup> Through the mystical marriage of a woman with Christ the subsumation of the individual within the spiritual body of Christ paradoxically elevates her above the constraints of her earthly marriage.

Lanyer explores the implications of the mystical marriage for Margaret Russell throughout her verse collection. She begins conventionally enough evoking the discourse of the elect:

This Grace great Lady, doth possesse thy Soule ...

Directing thee to serve thy God aright:

Still reckoning him, the Husband of thy Soule,

Which is most pretious in his glorious sight: (62: 249-254)

Lanyer later calls Russell that “deere Spouse of Christ” (101: 1170), who receives in the heavenly household the “Keyes Saint Peter did possesse/ Which with a Spirituall powre are giv’n to thee” (109: 1369-1370). With this spiritual power she is imagined as presenting sinners reclaimed “unto thy deerest Lover” (111: 1398). Lanyer describes Russell as the “Dowager of All”, which rather than signifying retirement and loss, becomes a term of empowerment that enriches Russell as the co-heire (that is child as well as spouse) of the risen Christ, allowing her to experience “eternal blisse/ That Angels lost” (62: 256-258). This image of Russell as the sanctified matron spouse of Christ is developed further in “The Description of Cooke-ham” emplacing Lanyer’s elevation of Russell in this real and imagined space where Russell is depicted as actively engaged in the life of the spirit where she describes “His beauty, wisdom, grace, love, majestie ... Christ and his Apostles there to talke” (133: 79-81). Here Lanyer transforms what she terms the “sweet Memorie” of their shared sojourn at Cookham (135:117) from a period of grief and humiliation shown in Russell’s letters, to a period of “blisse.” In this way Lanyer affirms Russell’s sacred worth



through a belief in a personal union with the divine, where earthly sorrows and indeed earthly husbands become irrelevant.

However, Lanyer does not simply deny the emotional pain Russell endured while at Cookham. Lanyer integrates the expressions of Russell's distress into the design of her poem. In Russell's April 1601 letter to George Clifford, quoted above, Russell attempts to interpret Clifford's betrayal of her as the means through which she gains a greater understanding of God's will. In a letter to her niece, Anne Herbert, she reiterates this sentiment, claiming that her misfortunes were not to be feared "more than the trials of my Faith and correction for the height of my spirit by which I lose the splendour of this uncertain and worldly glory and be reserved to be partaker of the everlasting joys."<sup>63</sup> In this Russell was engaging in a common Christian discourse, especially prevalent within marital advice literature. Thomas Bentley in his *Fifth Lamp of Virginitie* (1582) suggested just such an attitude of acceptance in a prayer he designed for women when faced with a "a froward and bitter husband"

O Most wise and provident God ... if it be thy good pleasure with frowardnes,  
bitternes, and unkindnesse, yea, the hatred and disdain of my husband, thus to  
correct me for my fault, I most hartilie thanke thee for it.<sup>64</sup>

And while this was a widespread cultural strategy for coping with grief and disappointment, it was a consolatory rhetoric that resonated with Russell during these last troubled years of her marriage, and which those who sought her approval and patronage often employed.

Robert Hill, in a dedication to Russell in 1604 offered counselled Russell:

Christ did beare troubles, and was borne out of them: we must have troubles, and shall be borne out of them... they are to be endured with all patience. How Christ did endure them, you may reade in that Treatise: how a Christian must, you may see in this.<sup>65</sup>

Lanyer also portrays Russell's grief as a trial, but transforms it through the adjective "glorious", elevating Russell's pain into something heroic:

Tis He that doth behold thy inward cares,  
 And will regard the sorrowes of thy Soule ...  
 He through afflictions, still thy Minde prepares,  
 And all thy glorious Trialls will enroule:  
 That when darke daies of terror shall appeare,  
 Thou as the Sunne shalt shine; or much more cleare. (53: 49-56)

Here Lanyer engages in the cultural discourse of election that would be well known to Russell, but offers her more than Hill's dour and commonplace sentiments, instead turning submissive patience in the hopes of future joy into present celebration:

Long mai'st thou joy in this almightie love,  
 Long may thy Soule be pleasing in his sight,  
 Long mai'st thou have true comforts from above,  
 Long mai'st thou set on him thy whole delight,  
 And patiently endure when he doth prove,  
 Knowing that He will surely do thee right:  
 Thy patience, faith, long suffring, and thy love,  
 He will reward with comforts from above. (53-4: 65-72)

Lanyer continually offers up this trope of triumph through Christian patience throughout her verse collection. Her depiction of the passion of Christ provides its most powerful expression, but it is also used in the dedications. Garrison suggests that Lanyer employs images of suffering and death to create a "shared experience of mournful sorrow" that is fundamentally tied "to the promise of resurrection."<sup>66</sup> This belief was one that Russell clung to at the most desperate moments in her life. In a letter written to John Layfield in 1591, after

the death of her son Robert, Russell closes with a fervent hope in this comfort and redemption:

What had I Lord God, but extreame sorrow for my sonnes, fear for my lord & assured want of all things by reason of the great debts of my Lord. Oh Heaven & earth cry for mee. O blessed Angels & Saints cry with my tears, you saints in earth, that God for his endless mercy in the blood of Jesus Christ will send his holy comfort the Holy Ghost to comfort & preserve my Lord in Soul and body that he may have victory over his Enemyes and that my desolation may be repaired with his Endless mercies in this world & the world to come Amen.<sup>67</sup>

In her poems Lanyer powerfully sites this promise of the triumph of the resurrection, and the mercies of the world to come, in the body of Christ and grounds it in the reimagined memory of Cookham, once the site of much pain, now reconstructed as the place of election.

Lanyer also seeks to transform the immediate cause of Russell's grief in 1604—her rejection by George Clifford which Russell, and later her daughter Anne Clifford, blamed on his mistress.<sup>68</sup> A discourse concerning George Clifford's affair and his relationship with Margaret Russell became publically established between 1598 and 1604. Russell's supporters sought to comfort her in her humiliation and distress at George Clifford's infidelity through the transformation of what was a pretty usual occurrence in this period—the keeping of a mistress—into a classical tale of betrayal and retribution.

It is unclear who first used the story of Mark Anthony, Cleopatra, and Octavia to represent the Clifford adultery. In 1599 Samuel Daniel published "A Letter sent from Octavia to her husband Marcus Antonius into Aegypt." In his dedication to Russell it is clear he has her suffering in mind:

Yet have I here adventur'd to bestow  
Words uppon grieffe, as my griefes comprehend,

And made this great afflicted Ladie show  
 Out of my feelings, what she might have pend.  
 And here the same, I bring forth, to attend  
 Upon thy reverent name, to live with thee  
 Most vertuous Ladie.<sup>69</sup>

Samuel Daniel was tutor to Anne Clifford in 1598 and would have been well aware of the domestic crisis unfolding in the Clifford household. The lament he gives to his character Octavia could easily have been voiced by Margaret Russell, with many of Octavia's sentiments echoed in Russell's letters throughout her estrangement from George Clifford.

Peregrine, Lord Willoughby also uses these characters to discuss the Clifford affair with Margaret Russell. In a letter dated March 23, written sometime between 1598-1601, he writes: "When all is said that may be Antony was a good felow, Cleopatra, a sunshine Day, and Octavia a ritche clasped boke wherein the secrets of all good wifery is containd." He continues directly identifying Russell as that good wife, Octavia. Willoughby may seem to be trivializing Russell's predicament here. However in another undated letter he treats George Clifford's infidelity with more seriousness advising Russell, "Noble Lady remember there is no such conquest of evill as a mind to think nothing evill." He goes on to admit that "the date is out of my mouth to be a counsellor."<sup>70</sup> Willoughby sat on the Council of the North with George Clifford and while his letters show a fondness for Russell, he was clearly not prepared to go further than tropes and apothegms.

Lanyer's use of the Octavia motif should be seen as part of this discourse concerning the Clifford marriage. However, rather than using it in the descriptive manner of Willoughby or Daniels, she uses it to suggest possibilities—to offer up interpretations designed to please and support Russell. And she imbeds her use of these characters within the larger context of virtue in general and the virtue of Margaret Russell in particular. The three characters make

their first appearance in *Salve Deus Rex Judæorum* in “An invective against outward beauty unaccompanied with Virtue:”

Beautie the cause Antonius wrong'd his wife,  
Which could not be decided but by sword:  
Great Cleopatraes Beautie and defects  
Did worke Octaviaes wrongs, and his neglects.  
What fruit did yeeld that faire forbidden tree,  
But blood, dishonour, infamie, and shame? (60: 213-218)

This passage continues with exempla of the grief visited upon women through beauty, concluding with the image of Russell as the husband and heir of Christ. Through this elision George Clifford is effectively erased from the marital history of Margaret Russell, replaced by her sacred union with Christ through Lanyer’s creative reworking of memory where many pasts—mythic, spiritual, and real—are conjoined to suggest alternative futures. This interplay between this multiplicity of pasts is developed further in a much longer passage from *Salve Deus Rex Judæorum* that ends Lanyer’s depiction of the beauty of Christ’s passion richly represented through the imagery of the *Song of Solomon*.

Here Lanyer claims that: “Great Cleopatra's love to Anthony/ Can no way be compared” to Octavia, and attributes the death of the adulterous couple to God’s avenging hand (111: 1409-1425). In comparing Russell to the wronged Octavia Lanyer writes: “No Cleopatra, though thou wert as faire/As any Creature in Antonius eyes ... Shee sacrificeth to her deerest Love...Shee flies not from him...Shee bears his crosse...Shee love and lives chaste...Shee attends upon him” (112: 1433-1437). As this passage progresses, the referent of the pronoun “she” becomes less clear. While it initially seems to function anaphorically—that is to refer to Octavia mentioned nine lines earlier, as the textual distance between Octavia and the pronoun increases the “she” begins to function cataphorically—referring instead to

Margaret Russell, who is directly addressed in line 1449. This creates indeterminacy in the pronoun that is additionally intensified through the anachronistic Christian references that are more suitably applied, and had appeared previously in the poem, in connection with Margaret Russell. After this two stanza address to Margaret Russell Lanyer proceeds to compare Russell to a number of virtuous women, but the metaphorical distance between the exempla and Russell remains paper thin. Garrison sees this strategy as effective in communicating a “highly iterative progression that is cumulative in nature.”<sup>71</sup> Lanyer invests Russell with the virtue and authority of these exemplary women of the past, transforming Russell into a being of transcendent virtue through which she justly claims her place as Christ’s spouse.

Lanyer used her acquaintance (however slight that may have been) with Margaret Russell in 1604 as a starting point, creating within her poetry possibilities for much greater intimacy. She draws upon her knowledge of Russell’s personal affairs to construct alternatives to humiliation and defeat, and she inserts herself into these alternatives, presenting herself as the servant/companion who mourns the loss of Russell’s enlivening presence—Russell becomes Lanyer’s true North, her “Articke Starr” (129: 1839). In this verse collection Lanyer develops a number of possible affinities between the two in order to interest Russell in a reciprocal relationship, and this potential for service was offered at a particularly crucial time for Margaret Russell. In 1610 Margaret Russell’s determined campaign to win her daughter’s right to inherit the Westmorland and North Yorkshire estates of George Clifford was looking increasingly promising, though anything but secure.

Aemilia Lanyer’s verse collection has often been viewed through Anne Clifford’s defeat in 1617 when the agreement between her husband Richard Sackville and her uncle Francis Clifford placed her rights to the Clifford lands behind the male heirs of Francis Clifford. However, Lanyer’s publication is more appropriately considered in relation to the actual legal situation of the Clifford disputes in 1609 and 1610 when *Salve Deus Rex*

*Judæorum* was probably composed and then brought forth for publication. In these years not only was defeat uncertain, a series of legal decisions, along with the marriage of Anne Clifford to Richard Sackville in 1609, made success a distinct possibility. Thus, reading the publication of Lanyer's poem in 1610 as consolatory is inappropriate. Margaret Russell and Anne Clifford had no need of consolation at that time. Rather what they needed was more pressure to be put upon those in a position to influence the outcome of the inheritance dispute. When read in the context of events in Russell and Anne Clifford's lives in 1609-1610, Lanyer's verse collection appears to be an attempt to support Anne Clifford's claim to the Clifford inheritance.

George Clifford's death in 1605 benefitted Margaret Russell in many ways. Emotionally, Clifford's deathbed repentance, movingly expressed in a letter Clifford wrote to Russell, restored her dignity after several years of humiliation.<sup>72</sup> Materially, Russell's situation was also much improved. The Westmorland estates were now at her disposal as part of her jointure, which had been assured by an act of Parliament in 1593. Richard Spence, in his detailed discussion of Margaret Russell's management of her jointure estates, notes that her management resulted in much higher revenue from Westmorland than George Clifford had ever achieved.<sup>73</sup> Russell used this increase in her finances to fund a legal battle challenging George Clifford's will which left the bulk of the Clifford lands in the north to his brother, Francis Clifford, though he did arrange for Anne Clifford to receive a large marriage portion of £15,000.<sup>74</sup> The great Clifford lawsuit of the early seventeenth century was actually a number of strategic legal actions begun after the death of George Clifford. The case is complex but a brief summary of the main issues is useful in placing Lanyer's poetry and her decision to publish in 1610 within the context of this legal conflict.

Margaret Russell based her challenge to Clifford's will on her belief that the Skipton estate in Craven and the Westmorland estates were entailed on the Crown. What this meant

was that these estates had to descend to the heirs of the body of the previous owner. Should this person have no heirs of his (or her) body, then the estates had to return or revert, to the Crown. This was a potentially potent position for Russell to argue from, as it concerned the rights and privileges of the King. Anne Clifford describes how Russell amassed a large collection of documents from various offices “to prove the right title which her only childe the Lady Ann Clifford now Countess of Pembroke, had to the inheritance of her ancestors.”<sup>75</sup> Russell’s instincts in beginning the search, and her success in finding documents that proved the Clifford lands in Westmorland and Skipton were held from the Crown, were key to legal successes in 1609.

The first legal success was the recognition that George Clifford held the Westmorland estates directly from the crown. According to a statute from Henry VIII’s reign<sup>76</sup> entails to the Crown could not be removed by fine and recovery, the strategy George Clifford had employed to release the lands to his brother. The judges thus, in the Easter term of 1609, recognized that Anne Clifford’s rights to the Westmorland property were tied to the rights of the Crown. And while this did not mean the matter was at an end, it certainly meant that Anne Clifford’s claims to the Westmorland estates could go forward. In 1609 or early 1610 the same finding was reached in regards to the honour of Skipton, including Skipton Castle, though George Clifford’s other land holdings in Yorkshire were seen as properly descending to his brother.<sup>77</sup> The result of these legal successes was that Anne Clifford’s claims were acknowledged as having legitimacy and that further court scrutiny would focus on the exact nature of her claims and the options open to the courts in deciding between the competing claims of Anne and Francis Clifford.

It is important to recognize the implications of these decisions. For Margaret Russell, they vindicated her much criticized actions in disobeying her husband’s dying request that she not take the matter to court. In 1607 Francis Clifford went so far as to write to Robert



Cecil, Earl of Salisbury complaining that Margaret Russell's actions were a malicious contradiction to her husband's desires: "I perceave her myned and malice to contradicte whatsoever her husband most desired alters or abates litle or nothinge."<sup>78</sup> Russell was well aware this criticism. She protested in a letter to Edward Bruce, Lord Kinloss: "let me be passionate & as violent as my enemies by malice would make me seem to bee yet lett my cause bee as it is indeed the Kinges & the states & let me not be rejected by his majesty."<sup>79</sup> Because of the legal decisions of 1609 and 1610, Margaret Russell could confidently assert that she was not only defending the rights of her daughter, but also the rights of the Crown, even in defiance of King James himself.

In this context it is reasonable to consider that one of Lanyer's motivations in publishing *Salve Deus Rex Judæorum* in 1610 was to support Margaret Russell, and thus receive some form of patronage. Her verse strongly advocates for the virtue of women, and thus challenged prevailing cultural attitudes that considered the rights of women to be of less value than competing male rights. Kevin Sharpe suggests that early in the seventeenth century Aristotle and the Bible were powerful texts that communicated cultural conceptions of the good citizen and the ethical community.<sup>80</sup> Scholarship on Lanyer has revealed how she engaged with these norms and, at least within her texts, offered up an alternative which subverted accepted norms especially with regards to gender. Audrey E. Tinkham discusses how Lanyer challenged the Aristotelian limitation of citizenship to the male.<sup>81</sup> She suggests that in so doing, Lanyer appropriated classical political theory for women, a message Margaret Russell would certainly have found supportive. Lanyer even more forcefully reshapes biblical narratives in order to communicate the spiritual superiority of women.<sup>82</sup> Lanyer's text recites the narratives of a number of exemplary women, with the final poem reaching its height in praise of Margaret Russell, who is presented as the living embodiment

of the most virtuous of women employing the Bride of Christ topos as has already been discussed.<sup>83</sup>

In this way Lanyer's verse collection, through the employment of classical and biblical imagery, entered into the wider social discussion concerning the cultural appropriateness of Margaret Russell's claims for Anne Clifford's inheritance as they entered into the next round of legal actions at the end of 1610. That this role may have been envisioned for this text is suggested by the presentation copy given to Prince Henry and provides a compelling rationale for Lanyer's decision to publish *Salve Deus Rex Judæorum* in 1610. Susanne Woods describes the presentation copy as "bound in vellum with gilt borders and devices on the four corners and the encircled ostrich feather emblem of Prince Henry also in gilt, in the centre of the front and back binding."<sup>84</sup> This treatment of the text indicates that the book was meant as a gift. Gift-giving strategies of the period between subjects and princes were never neutral, but always contained nuanced messages that communicated the desires of the gift-giver. In the case of Lanyer's poetry, a desire to elevate Margaret Russell and thus her claims for Anne Clifford's inheritance rights would be well understood. The gift book, asserting a form of intimacy between the reader and the writer/gift-giver, often functioned as a supplication.<sup>85</sup> This work, so supportive of Margaret Russell and the virtues of women more generally, communicates on a variety of levels in ways that could interest or influence Prince Henry. Both Lanyer and Russell stood to benefit if Lanyer's poetry secured some measure of goodwill from the Prince.<sup>86</sup>

Certainly, Prince Henry could be expected to be a most attentive observer of Anne Clifford's lawsuit, as his own legal rights were now joined with those of Anne Clifford.<sup>87</sup> The Prince's growing friendship with Richard Sackville may also have contributed to an interest in the case. Shortly before Sackville and Clifford's rather hurried marriage in 1609 Prince Henry asked his father, James I, for Sackville's wardship. Sackville was not yet 20

and was very concerned that his father might die before he reached the age of 21, which would have made Sackville subject to the Court of Wards. That Henry asked to be allowed to sue for Sackville's wardship should Sackville's father die speaks of a growing intimacy, born out by the letter Henry wrote to his father. The prince explained that "a friend of his [Sackville's], moved me, that, in case his father should die, I would sue unto your Majesty for his ward, desiring rather to fall into my hands than of another." Henry excused himself to his father for the request saying, "and though it be a thing unusual to me, yet I am the bolder by reason of the young nobleman's towardliness."<sup>88</sup> Later, Anne Clifford would write that Sackville enjoyed the same "noble exercises" as Henry, "of whome hee was much beloved."<sup>89</sup> Some suggestion of the the deep affection, and perhaps more worldly hopes, Sackville had for Henry may be seen in the mourning hyperbole Sackville wrote after Henry's death: "our Rising Sun is set ere scarce he had shown, and that all our glory lies buried."<sup>90</sup>

Anne Clifford and Richard Sackville were much at Court during the first years of their marriage and were prominent in the celebrations when Henry was created Prince of Wales. In the court masque *Tethys' Festival* by Samuel Daniel (performed in June 1610 and published shortly thereafter) Anne Clifford was given the role of the nymph of the river Aire, the river which flows past Skipton Castle. With this gesture Daniel metaphorically asserted Anne's right to her paternal inheritance, creating a visual metaphor which connected her with the nourishing waters of this Yorkshire river. The message Daniel clearly wished to convey at Court, and in front of the royal entourage including Prince Henry, was that Anne Clifford and the land of her inheritance were one—she was the rightful and thus life-giving owner of the barony.<sup>91</sup> Daniel's boldness in this portrayal of Anne Clifford reveals that he believed this was a message that would be well received by the young prince, and much appreciated by

both Margaret Russell, long his patron, and Anne Clifford, once his student but now the Countess of Dorset.

Throughout the inheritance dispute Margaret Russell and Anne Clifford used a number of strategies. Key to these strategies was the inclusion of the rights of the Crown in the legal actions. Margaret Clifford was well aware, as shown in a letter she wrote to Sir Cuthbert Pepper, attorney for the Court of Wards, that the court must be pleased to hear her arguments because they included the rights of the Crown.<sup>92</sup> By joining Anne Clifford's rights with Crown rights Margaret Russell hoped to gain some support from James. James's antagonism to Russell's claims and lawsuit was likely influenced by Robert Cecil, the Earl of Salisbury and the most powerful man in the early Jacobean court. In July 1610 Cecil married his daughter to Henry Clifford, Anne Clifford's cousin and the next heir after his father Francis Clifford to the Clifford estates according to George Clifford's will.<sup>93</sup> James went so far in 1608 as to grant to Francis Clifford the reversion of the Crown, relinquishing Crown interests in the Skipton and Westmorland estates. Anne Clifford wrote that the purpose of this grant was "to defeat the said Lady Anne Clifford of her just Right thereunto,"<sup>94</sup> though the legality of this move was brought into question. Given James's hostility, Russell's attention turned to Prince Henry who was beginning to take on an adult role in government, and who had a clear interest in maintaining the rights of the Crown in the Clifford lands. By arranging the marriage of Anne Clifford to Richard Sackville in 1609, one of Henry's favorites, Margaret Russell could expect Henry's interest in Anne Clifford's claims to increase,<sup>95</sup> while the literary and visual productions of Daniel and Lanyer's (along with others) would keep Anne Clifford's rights literally in front of the eyes of important royals and aristocrats. Viewed in this light, Lanyer's text can be seen as very useful in Russell's battles to secure Anne Clifford's inheritance.<sup>96</sup> This illustrates the reciprocal nature of early modern patronage. Daniel remained a continual and staunch supporter of Russell and Clifford,

producing work that attempted to intervene in the public discourse in order to support them. In 1610 Lanyer also inserted herself into this discourse.

*Salve Deus Rex Judæorum* presents a compelling case for the virtue of Margaret Russell and the rights of Anne Clifford to a specific and highly influential audience (especially Prince Henry) through the presentation copies, and to the wider public through sales of a book that would appeal to an audience hungry for religious texts. In both cases, Russell and Anne Clifford would benefit should Lanyer's poetic skills prove effective. Thus, from the point of view of these women the publication of Lanyer's poetry was timely coming as it did in late 1610 when, along with their successful court battles and Anne's marriage, it was looking increasingly likely that the Westmorland and Skipton inheritance could be won for Anne Clifford. At the same time Lanyer, born and married into families of Court musicians who well understood patronage strategies, also had her own family interests in mind in 1610.

Lanyer's dedicatory prefaces have long troubled scholars. Katherine R. Larson suggests that Lanyer lacked "experience with negotiating court hierarchies."<sup>97</sup> Others have described Lanyer's approach as strangely conflicted.<sup>98</sup> The overwhelming focus on Margaret Russell throughout the work has led many to conclude that Lanyer sought Russell's patronage. Given the vast number of lines referring to Russell, the marginalia that continually foregrounds her, and the reverential tone focused on her in this verse collection, such a supposition is not unreasonable. However, for a woman of Lanyer's background and reported ambition for social advancement, Margaret Russell was a poor choice of patron in 1610-11. Russell's abiding interest and most of her financial resources were focused on the lawsuit for her daughter, and her household remained modest. Lanyer herself notes that Russell, at the time the verse was composed, lived in retirement (58: 161-162). Russell spent much time at Sutton Place in Kent and appeared to be unwelcome at Court. Evidence of

Russell's banishment from the Court can be found in her letter to Lodovic Stuart, Duke of Lennox in 1606, where she asks: "therefore my most worthy Lord bee my mediator to His Majesty, lest I be inforced to follow the Court & stand by the Kings Horses in his going out as I did by his [blank] when I was last there."<sup>99</sup> In addition Russell's quiet retirement would have little space for Lanyer's husband, Alphonso. Erica Longfellow convincingly argues that Lanyer sought patronage not just for herself but also for her husband, who was also actively pursuing patrons in London.<sup>100</sup> Also in 1611 Margaret Russell was preparing to retire even further from London, to her jointure estates in Westmorland. She wrote to Francis Russell, her nephew: "my intended journey into Westmorland from London was stay'd in 1611 meerly by the persuasion of my son in law the Earl of Dorset." By the summer of 1613 Russell was in the North.<sup>101</sup> Her will, written in 1616 suggests she kept a modest household, with her waiting gentlewomen chosen from northern gentry families. And while certainly a patron like Margaret Russell could have helped a woman of talent in many ways through her wide network of familial and social connections, it is more likely that Lanyer was keen to gain the patronage of Anne Clifford and Richard Sackville, Earl and Countess of Dorset. Their connections to the court and their newly formed household would have been a much more advantageous place for both Aemilia and Alphonso Lanyer.

In 1609 the Dorsets were in a position to set up a lavish establishment commensurate with their position and ambitions. A catalogue of their household from 1613 to 1624 gives a flavor of this establishment with its numerous household officers and large staff, including six waiting gentlewomen.<sup>102</sup> Places in such households were highly sought after, and the example of Alphonso's brother Nicholas showed the kinds of opportunities that were available in a young nobleman's house. Nicholas Lanier was already established in the entourage of William Cecil, Viscount Cranborne (son to Robert Cecil, Earl of Salisbury).<sup>103</sup> It may also be that Alphonso hoped to accompany Richard Sackville on his planned trip to the

Continent in early 1611, hoping to follow his brother Nicholas Lanier who was already in Europe in 1610 with the young William Cecil.<sup>104</sup> We know that another man, John Packer, sought permission to accompany Sackville on his tour as a spiritual advisor.<sup>105</sup> Richard Sackville's continental tour was an opportunity for gentlemen to join an aristocratic party with access to the Courts of Europe. Many were keen to take advantage of this opportunity, and it is reasonable to believe that Alphonso Lanier, a musician with European connections like his brother, would see this as an opportunity for advancement in the household of a leading nobleman favored by Prince Henry.<sup>106</sup> This was also an opportunity for Aemilia Lanyer to enter a household that could provide her with opportunities for social advancement. During her husband's absence, Anne Clifford could be expected to maintain a female household on a much grander scale than the temporary one at Cookham in 1604. Also, it is clear that Margaret Russell was concerned about the composition of Anne Clifford's household during Sackville's absence. She asked Sackville to ensure that "in your absence no friend or Ally of hers or yours shall resorte to her to diswade her against the religioun wherein she was brought up," and also that no one should attempt to dissuade Anne Clifford from pursuing her inheritance. Margaret Russell continues, "yet her disposition being solitarie & her Cause more by your absence, & there never wants cunning witts to take advantage of grieved affections."<sup>107</sup> Given Russell's concerns, Lanyer could reasonably hope her verse collection would find favor with Margaret Russell. Its effusive praise of Russell, its theme of divinely empowered female virtue, and the portrayal of religious beliefs that were in keeping with Russell's would have advertised Lanyer's suitability for the Dorset household during Sackville's absence. This household, with the Dorsets' increasingly intimate Court connections, was an ideal place for Aemilia and Alphonso Lanyer to further their ambitions. Finally, while Lanyer's verse collection constantly praises Margaret Russell, Lanyer pointedly tells Anne Clifford in her prefatory poem: "To you I dedicate this work of

Grace/This frame of Glory which I have erected” (41:1-2). Anne Clifford is the only woman in the prefatory poems to whom Lanyer actually states she dedicates her work.

In this context it becomes possible to consider the reverential and extensive treatment of Margaret Russell in Lanyer’s verse as being directed mainly at Anne Clifford, (with of course the dual purpose of displaying her worthiness to Russell). This makes some of the more exaggerated claims for Margaret Russell’s divine status more understandable, and even suggests an interesting inter-textuality between Lanyer’s poetry and Anne Clifford’s biographical texts. In many ways *Salve Deus Rex Judæorum* can be read as describing the apotheosis of Margaret Russell within the context of the Passion of Christ. It claims a special and particular divinity for Russell throughout the poems. Tina Krontiris, commenting on the lavish nature of Lanyer’s praise of Russell, wrote that Lanyer “constructed a mythologized portrait of her subject. The Countess is presented as a pious, almost saintly person...superior to them [the parade of pious women] in faithfulness, devotion, chastity, moral purity, and spiritual strength.”<sup>108</sup> Certainly Lanyer’s elevated praise of Russell strikes modern readers as exaggerated and even slightly heretical. However, the praise of Russell was perfectly pitched for Anne Clifford, whose own writing demonstrates a sincere belief in her mother’s divinity. Anne Clifford wrote that her mother “was lyke a Seraphim in her ardent love and affection towards the most divyne Trinity towards all goodness, and good folcks.”<sup>109</sup> A seraphim was believed to be the highest of the nine ranks of angels and was especially noted for being capable of intense love. Anne Clifford has the word “seraphim” emphasised in bold face in her manuscript. Here, because this statement is phrased as a simile one cannot quite claim that Anne Clifford believed her mother was divine. However, in subsequent passages it becomes evident that Anne Clifford did believe her mother had direct and preternatural access to divinity. She asserts that her mother “had a kinde of a profettick spirritt in her” and recounts a prophesy that came to her mother in 1590 in a dream that concerned the lands of



Westmorland and Skipton.<sup>110</sup> Clifford underlined this statement in her manuscript. Further evidence that Clifford believed her mother was a prophetess comes in an annotation to a letter her mother wrote to her on 30 October 1615. Margaret Russell signed this letter from “broam [Brougham] your castill hear after.” Anne Clifford annotated this letter writing: “Which showes that Brougham Castell should be mine Heereaffter.” In 1615 there was no certainty that Anne Clifford would ultimately inherit Brougham.<sup>111</sup>

Anne Clifford also believed that her mother could and did intercede for her and her family from beyond the grave. Clifford claims in her *Great Books of Record* that the adversity she experienced in her two marriages was overcome by “the prayers of my blessed mother.”<sup>112</sup> In another place she gives credit to her mother more fully for the good that befell her later in life:

The numerousnes of my posteritie, and all other benefitts whatsoever I believe were bestowed upon mee for the heavenly goodnes of my deere Mother whose fervent prayers were offered upp with great zeale to almighty God for mee and mine and had such a retorne of Blessings followed them.<sup>113</sup>

When Anne Clifford describes with pride the family of her daughter Margaret, she also gives her mother the credit for their happiness: “So powerfull an influence had her goodness over the destinie of her posterity.”<sup>114</sup> Margaret Russell was unquestionably the most important individual in life and in death for Anne Clifford. In 1610 with the very real possibility of winning the lawsuit before them, an advantageous marriage concluded, and an increasing intimacy with the court of Prince Henry, Anne Clifford would have seen the intent of the divine working through her mother. Lanyer’s confident portrait of Margaret Russell as specially chosen by God to work his will in the world would have been read by Anne Clifford not as hyperbole or mythmaking, but as an accurate portrayal of her mother.

As many scholars have commented, the relationship between writers and the aristocrats to whom they dedicated their work was complex. In the case of Aemilia Lanyer and Margaret Russell this complexity becomes more apparent in the context of the emotionally charged events occurring in the years connected to the production and publication of *Salve Deus Rex Judæorum*. From their brief stay at Cookham in 1604 to the hopeful years of 1609 to 1611, the concerns and desires of Margaret Russell and Anne Clifford provided a rich source of inspiration as well as an opportunity for Aemilia Lanyer. By considering Lanyer's textual responses to the particular concerns and experiences of Margaret Russell and Anne Clifford in the first decade of the seventeenth century a clearer picture emerges of the relationship between Lanyer's *Salve Deus Rex Judæorum* and its two most important dedicatees.

There is no evidence as to what form of patronage, if any, Lanyer received from Anne Clifford or Margaret Russell. Patronage in this period was generally more subtle than a payment for services model. A word in conversation, a suggestion, hospitality, and the implied or explicit permission to use the patron's name in the text could all confer benefits on the writer and yet leave little documentary evidence. Patronage practice can be best characterized as an interpersonal network through which artists and patrons engaged in reciprocal relationships where benefits could be great, and yet the mechanisms through which these benefits were exchanged remains often invisible in the manuscript or print record. And while in the case of men like Ben Jonson and Samuel Daniel much documentary evidence suggests the types of benefits they gained from their patrons—including hospitality, household positions, and greater access to other potential patrons—this only begins to shed some light on the way in which patronage was practiced in the period. While the term “patronage system” is often used, in fact there was no system. Instead patronage was a loosely defined set of practices. Unfortunately in the case of Aemilia Lanyer no evidence of

patronage survives. Yet, the relationship between Russell and Clifford and Lanyer's poetry should not be undervalued because of this. *Salve Deus Rex Judæorum* reveals an understanding of the interests and beliefs held by Russell and Clifford as their own private correspondence and autobiographical texts show. Lanyer appropriated a discourse of intimacy that however exaggerated, reveals an attempt to heighten a pre-existing relationship between the women. She timed her publication in such a way that it participated in the artistic campaign to promote Clifford's inheritance cause amongst elite circles and the general public. The relationship Lanyer attempted to build with Russell and Clifford through her poetry also informed the creative process. Gary Taylor suggests that the competitive nature of the quest for patronage could result in heightened creativity, at least amongst writers unwilling to limit their texts to pragmatic goals.<sup>115</sup> As many scholars have discussed, Lanyer's *Salve Deus Rex Judæorum* is a poetic creation that challenges many cultural positions in subtle and not so subtle ways. Her poetry may have influenced other writers like Ben Jonson,<sup>116</sup> and contributed to the ongoing cultural discussion concerning the nature of the female in relation to divine and temporal authority. The use of Margaret Russell as a unifying trope in the poetry, rather than detracting from its artistic conceptualization, enhances the poem through the production of an exemplum both celestial and also humanized in the depiction of Russell's very real suffering. In this way, Lanyer like many writers of the period, benefited from the vibrant artistic environment of early seventeenth century London, which was to a certain extent made possible by the patronage practices of the day.

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1. Barroll, "Looking for Patrons"; Ng, "Aemilia Lanyer And The Politics Of Praise"; Lewalski, "Re-Writing Patriarchy"; McBride, "Sacred Celebration"; and Hearn and Hulse, *Lady Anne Clifford*.

2. Smith, *Grossly Material Things*, 57.

3. Gilman, *The Arundel Circle*, 152.

4. Smith, *Grossly Material Things*, 54.

5. qtd. in Katherine Duncan-Jones, *Sir Philip Sidney, Courtier Poet*, 232.

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6. Lanyer, *Salve Deus Rex Judæorum*, ed. Susanne Woods , 51:18. References are to page and line. All subsequent references are to this edition and will be included parenthetically in the text.
  7. Sir Anthony Sherley [Shirley] was an adventurer and also a self-styled ambassador to Persia. His loyalty to Queen Elizabeth and his religious affiliations were questioned by the English government.
  8. Russell, Letters, f. 10-12. This letter was in response to Sherley's letter written from Venice on 20 July 1602; SP 12/284, National Archives, Kew. ff. 140-141. All quotations from manuscript sources are transcribed as in the source text. The "u" is silently emended to "v" and abbreviations are silently expanded.
  9. This manuscript was examined by George Williamson and described in his *George Third Earl of Cumberland*, 292.
  10. Lok, *Ecclesiastes*; Perkins, *A Golden chaine*; Hill, dedication; Lodge, *Prosopopeia*.
  11. See Barroll's discussion of Lanyer's relationships with her dedicatees. Erica Longfellow also suggests that Lanyer attempts to build upon the likely slight acquaintance with her dedicatees. *Women and Religious Writing*, 65.
  12. Garrison, "Aemilia Lanyer's Salve Deus," 299. See also Ng, "Aemilia Lanyer." and Longfellow, *Women and Religious Writing* , 65.
  13. Garrison, "Aemilia Lanyer's Salve Deus," 299.
  14. Chedzoy, "Remembering Aemilia Lanyer," 14.
  15. Hiscock, *Reading Memory*, 117.
  16. For useful and wide-ranging discussions on the uses of memory in the early modern period, see Hiscock and Chedzoy.
  17. The house in Cookham was leased to Margaret's brother William Russell. In 1603 he resided there with his family. Clifford, *The Memoir of 1603*, 58.
  18. *Salve Deus Rex Judæorum* was entered in the Stationers' Register on 2 October 1610. It carries a publication date of 1611 on its title-page.
  19. These letters were copied into an eighteenth-century manuscript now the Portland papers, PO/VOL. XXIII, Longleat House Archives, Wiltshire. Acheson has identified the hand in this manuscript as Margaret Cavendish Harley Bentinck (1715-1785). Bentinck was the granddaughter of Margaret Cavendish, whose sister Catherine Cavendish married Thomas Tufton, grandson and heir to Anne Clifford. The letters may have come from the letter book that Anne Clifford mentions in annotations on letters in the Hothfield collection (Letters, WD Hoth, Box 44). The original of some of the letters copied into Bentinck's manuscript can be found in WD Hoth, Box 44.
  20. Russell, Letters, f. 25.
  21. Russell, Letters, f. 29.
  22. The imagery of winter Lanyer employs at the end of "A Description of Cooke-ham" could be rhetorical, but given the evidence of the letters it is likely that the onset of winter is used both as a trope and to evoke a memory designed to build affinity and reinforce the construction of the possible world Lanyer presents in her poetry.
  23. Russell, Letters, f. 29.
  24. Russell, Letters, f. 31.
  25. Russell, Letters, f. 32.
  26. Clifford Letters, George Clifford to Margaret Russell, 20 July 1605.
  27. Margaret Russell continued to use Sutton Place during her widowhood. See Hasted, *History*, 343-367.
  28. Clifford, A., *Great Books*, 203.
  29. Clifford, A., *Great Books*, 91-92.

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30. Russell, Letters, f. 42, 44, 46, 48. Anne Clifford also recounts that she resided much at “Sutton, where my Blessed Mother and I lived together a good while whilst I was a Mayde.” *Great Books*, 210.
  31. Sackville, Letter. Malay, “Marrying of Anne Clifford;” Pitcher, “Negotiating a Marriage.”
  32. Clifford, A., *Great Books*, 204-05
  33. Nichols, *Progresses*, 174.
  34. Clifford, A., *Great Books*, 159.
  35. Clifford, A., *Great Books*, 206, 210.
  36. Margaret Russell was involved in business matters during this time aimed at improving their financial situation. See Margaret Russell’s petition to Robert Cecil concerning sea coal, Russell to Robert Cecil, March 1595; Sainsbury, *Calendar*, 122-123.
  37. Clifford, A., *Great Books*, 137.
  38. George Clifford’s half-sister, Margaret Clifford was married to Henry Stanley, fourth Earl of Derby. Edward Stanley was his brother.
  39. Williamson, *George Third Earl of Cumberland*, 264.
  40. Clifford, A., *Great Books*, 148.
  41. Russell, Letters, f. 26.
  42. Russell, Letters, f. 27.
  43. Margaret Russell is here referring to the death of Queen Elizabeth and the arrival of James I.
  44. Clifford Letters.
  45. Russell, Letters, f. 28.
  46. Russell, Letters, f. 25.
  47. Tinkham, ““Owning;”” Larson, “Reading the Space of the Closet;” Malay, *Textual Constructions*, 57-90.
  48. Clifford, A., *Great Books*, 18.
  49. Russell, *Book of Physik*.
  50. Bayer, “Lady Margaret Clifford’s Alchemical Receipt Book;” Archer “Women and Chymistry.”
  51. Clifford Letters. Willoughby to Russell, 26 October 1698-1600.
  52. Bacon, *Mirror*, sig. A3r.
  53. Ng suggests that Lanyer’s use of the trope of mirroring provides her with both the means of praising Russell, while at the same time positioning herself as the one who directs the gaze. Lanyer’s poem thus subtly asserts that for the mirroring of virtue to be effective it must be directed by her discerning hand (443). Garrison extends this discussion seeing the mirror as the “key to the poet’s attempts to create a space for herself within the lives of her dedicatees” (299).
  54. Russell, Letters, f. 12-13.
  55. Clifford Letters, Letter from Margaret Russell to Anne Clifford, 1615.
  56. Russell, Will.
  57. Bentley, *Monument of Matrones*.
  58. Downname, *Lectures*, 272.
  59. Longfellow, *Women and Religious Writing*, 26; Myriell, *Christs Suite*, 5. The identification of Christ as a bridegroom appears in Matthew 25:1-13.
  60. Clarke, *Politics*, 22. An example of the use of this trope for political ends is found in Barington *Marriage of the Lambe* (London, 1640) See Clarke, *Politics*, 181.
  61. Mornay, *Fowre Bookes*; Russell, Will.
  62. Mornay, *Fowre Bookes*, 393.

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63. Russell, Letters, f. 56.
  64. Bentley, *Fifth Lamp*, 75.
  65. Hill, dedication, 145.
  66. Garrison, "Aemilia Lanyer's Salve Deus," 296.
  67. Russell, Letters, f. 9.
  68. Possibly Lucy Stanley as discussed above.
  69. "A Letter Sent From Octavia to her husband Marcus Antonius into Aegypt." This poem, with its dedication to Margaret Russell, (sig. A2r), was first published in Daniel's 1599 verse collection, *The poeticall essayes of Samuel Danyel*. It was published again in Daniel's *Certaine Small Poems* (entered into the Stationer's records in November 1604).
  70. Clifford Letters, Willoughby to Russell, 23 March c.1598-1601.
  71. Garrison, "Aemilia Lanyer's Salve Deus," 301.
  72. Clifford Letters, G. Clifford to Russell, October 1605 the "last letter." Lanyer alludes to the death of Clifford and his lover in her depiction of the divine wrath visited upon Antony and Cleopatra.
  73. Clifford Letters, Russell to Blenkinsop, April 1607.
  74. Spence, *Lady Anne Clifford*, 19.
  75. Clifford, A., *Great Books*, title page.
  76. 32 Henry VIII 36, 3 *Statutes of the Realm* 1509-1545.
  77. For a discussion of these findings see Spence, *Lady Anne Clifford*, 47. For documents detailing these legal actions see Clifford, A., *Great Books*, 95-132.
  78. Clifford, F. Letter to Robert Cecil, 13 October 1607.
  79. Russell, Letters, f. 40-41.
  80. Sharpe, *Remapping Early Modern England*, 152.
  81. Tinkham, "'Owning,'" 57.
  82. White discusses the potent imagery Lanyer offers in opposition to male authority in "A Woman with Saint Peter's Keys?"; 323-41. Loughlin discusses the way in which Lanyer constructs parallels between Biblical figures and Russell in order to position Russell as an inheritor of divine grace in "Fast ti'd unto Them in a Golden Chaine."
  83. Laughlin suggests that through the use of topology, Lanyer constructs a narrative which presents Margaret Russell as the inheritor and perfecter of the virtues of the exemplary Biblical women Lanyer presents (137-138), while Garrison, as discussed above considers how the virtues accrue to the Countess.
  84. Woods, xlvi. I have examined this copy and can confirm Wood's description. However, the contention that the word "Cumberland" in ink on the page preceding the title page is in the hand of Margaret Russell is incorrect. This word is written in very small print, in a hand completely unlike anything found in Margaret Russell's autograph letters.
  85. Frye, *Pens and Needles*; Scott-Warren, *Sir John Harington*.
  86. The survival of another gift book of this text to Thomas Jones, Bishop of Dublin indicates the Laniers were using the publication of *Salve Deus Rex Judæorum* strategically, focusing on the interests of specific patronage possibilities such as Margaret Russell and Anne Clifford as well as seeking more widely to interest patrons. This does not undermine the clear focus the text has on Margaret Russell, but does suggest that the Laniers were familiar with cultural strategies connected with patronage.
  87. It is important to remember that at this juncture Anne Clifford did not have any children. Thus, as Margaret Russell had successfully proved the estates were entailed on the crown, Prince Henry was, after his father, the next heir in line to inherit the vast Clifford estates in the north. This would have provided an opportunity for both James and later Henry to make use of that property in their own patronage practices, as well as enrich the Crown coffers.

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88. Birch, *Life of Henry Prince of Wales*, 139.
89. Clifford, A., *Great Books*, 207.
90. Strong, *Henry Prince of Wales*, 221.
91. Daye suggests that Robert Johnson, possibly a nephew of Aemilia Lanyer; as well as Alonso Ferrabosco, her cousin; and Nicholas Lanier her brother-in-law performed the music for Daniel's masque, "'The power of his commanding trident,'" 23. This opens up the intriguing possibility that Daniel and Lanyer may have encouraged each other in their projects designed to support Margaret Russell and Anne Clifford. Lanyer's Octavian references certainly allude to Daniel's poetic productions.
92. Russell, Letters, f. 49.
93. Robert Cecil was also a close friend of George Clifford's and one of the executors of his will and was therefore obliged to attempt to enforce the will where legally possible.
94. Clifford, A., *Great Books*, 156.
95. The marital strategies related to the inheritance dispute are discussed in Malay, "Marrying of Lady Anne Clifford."
96. A great deal of work has been done on Elizabeth's successful use of the arts to promote a powerful image. See for example Doran and Freeman, *The Myth of Elizabeth*; Petrina and Tosi, *Representations of Elizabeth I*.
97. Larson, "Reading the Space of the Closet," 75.
98. Schnell, "So Great a Difference," 34.
99. Russell, Letters, f. 45.
100. Longfellow, *Women and Religious Writing*, 63-64.
101. Russell, Letters, f. 60. Dorset was soon to leave for his tour of the Continent and probably requested that Russell remain in London to be near her daughter during his absence.
102. Clifford, D. *Diaries of Anne Clifford*, 274-275.
103. Wilson, *Lanier*, 15-23.
104. Price, *Patrons and Musicians*, 175.
105. Owen, *Calendar of the Cecil Papers*, 281.
106. Ben Jonson, a much more prominent artist of the period, accompanied the young Walter Raleigh on his European tour in 1612. Donaldson, *Ben Jonson*, 295.
107. Russell, Letters, f. 57-58.
108. Krontiris, *Oppositional Voices*, 106.
109. Clifford, A., *Great Books*, 150.
110. Clifford, A., *Great Books*, 147.
111. Clifford Letters, Russell to A. Clifford, 30 October 1615.
112. Clifford, A., *Great Books*, 205.
113. Clifford, A., *Great Books*, 214.
114. Clifford, A., *Great Books*, 211.
115. Gary Taylor, *Cultural Selection*, 53.
116. Woods, "Aemilia Lanyer and Ben Jonson," 15-30; Coiro, "Writing in Service."

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