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Bound Flowers, Loose Leaves: Horticultural Form and Textual Practice in Early Modern English Print

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Abstract

The language of plants saturated the English print marketplace in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, as printers turned out an extraordinary number of instructional manuals on gardening and husbandry, retailing useful knowledge to a growing class of literate landowners and pleasure gardeners. In those same decades, increasing numbers of miscellanies were issued under titles drawn from the world of plants: poetical gardens, devotional nosegays, forests and bowers of practical wisdom. "Bound Flowers, Loose Leaves" examines these parallel trends as part of a single phenomenon. Against the unknowns of a new and expanding market, the horticultural processes evoked by these diverse texts naturalize the anonymous futures of print publication, situating the new adventure of print within that most ancient discipline of risk management: agriculture. This dissertation argues that these vegetable discourses fundamentally shaped how English readers understood the printed book. With remarkable frequency, printed books turned to a botanical idiom to describe their prodigious capacity to scatter, gather, and multiply, especially in the small literary forms of couplets, posies, and sentences. Showing how plant life became fundamental to how the world was imagined and known in print, I argue that the portability of these "handles of knowledge," in Philip Sidney's phrase, drove the production of both figurative language and natural knowledge in early modern England. In readings of popular instruction manuals and miscellanies as well as works by Isabella Whitney, George Gascoigne, Francis Bacon, and William Shakespeare, I show how these practical instructions and poetic figures organize a fictive reading public, imagined as dispersed consumers of scattered textual copies.

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BOUND FLOWERS, LOOSE LEAVES
HORTICULTURAL FORM AND TEXTUAL PRACTICE IN
EARLY MODERN ENGLISH PRINT

Jessica Rosenberg

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BOUND FLOWERS, LOOSE LEAVES: HORTICULTURAL FORM AND TEXTUAL
PRACTICE IN EARLY MODERN ENGLISH PRINT

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2014

Jessica Marion Rosenberg

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ABSTRACT

BOUND FLOWERS, LOOSE LEAVES: HORTICULTURAL FORM AND
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Jessica Rosenberg

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The language of plants saturated the English print marketplace in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, as printers turned out an extraordinary number of instructional manuals on gardening and husbandry, retailing useful knowledge to a growing class of literate landowners and pleasure gardeners. In those same decades, increasing numbers of miscellanies were issued under titles drawn from the world of plants: poetical gardens, devotional nosegays, forests and bowers of practical wisdom. “Bound Flowers, Loose Leaves” examines these parallel trends as part of a single phenomenon. Against the unknowns of a new and expanding market, the horticultural processes evoked by these diverse texts naturalize the anonymous futures of print publication, situating the new adventure of print within that most ancient discipline of risk management: agriculture. This dissertation argues that these vegetable discourses fundamentally shaped how English readers understood the printed book. With remarkable frequency, printed books turned to a botanical idiom to describe their prodigious capacity to scatter, gather, and multiply, especially in the small literary forms of couplets, posies, and sentences. Showing how plant life became fundamental to how the world was imagined and known in print, I argue that the portability

of these “handles of knowledge,” in Philip Sidney’s phrase, drove the production of both figurative language and natural knowledge in early modern England. In readings of popular instruction manuals and miscellanies as well as works by Isabella Whitney, George Gascoigne, Francis Bacon, and William Shakespeare, I show how these practical instructions and poetic figures organize a fictive reading public, imagined as dispersed consumers of scattered textual copies.

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Introduction

What do we say when we say it with flowers? “Bound Flowers, Loose Leaves: Horticultural Form and Textual Practice in Early Modern English Print” argues that, when early modern texts write something with flowers (or with herbs, trees, fruit, or weeds), they are saying something about writing itself. And, through the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, they were writing it with remarkable frequency, volume, and enthusiasm. From the mid-sixteenth century, scores of books were published that described themselves in vegetable terms: nosegays, gardens, bowers, forests, handfuls of wholesome herbs. At the same time, dozens of additional publications directly addressed the world of plants in their subject matter, offering landowners, housewives, and pleasure gardeners advice on cultivation, harvest, distillation, and even profit. For readers and publishers, the language of plants was very hard to avoid, and – I will argue – centrally shaped how the strange matter of the printed book was handled and understood. That is, saying things with flowers in early modern England increasingly meant saying something about the printed word.

Among these horticultural titles and motifs, few distinctions were drawn between practical and poetic genres; verse and instruction alike were advertised as gatherings of small pieces, slips and seeds ready to be taken up and replanted by readers. “Bound Flowers” argues that these widespread botanical figures – practical and metaphorical, medicinal and mythological – fundamentally shaped English understandings of the printed word and the natural world, conceiving both

as composites of small forms, ready for a future of appropriation and use at the hands of a new reading public. The examples in each of the following chapters rely on these small botanical forms to imagine the dispersed and invisible field of their own reception, developing by the same stroke an aesthetic of condensation and mobility, as they claim to capture something of the temporal world in small and transportable pieces of matter. From Isabella Whitney's circulation of slips (Chapter Two) to Thomas Tusser's accumulation of points of husbandry (Chapter Three), these textual practices and the horticultural lexicon in which they are figured bear a specific relationship to print publication. They are closely engaged with the strange matter of the printed book – its multiplicity and dispersal – and with the dispersed economies and geographies in which it is embedded. At this moment in the late sixteenth century, the market for print was expanding, and books were increasingly a commodity form that could be indifferently and untraceably exchanged. The language of horticulture naturalized this field of risk and speculation. Indeed, such a language might be said to play a central role in the establishment of something like a culture of print in England, giving imaginative form to an otherwise invisible social field of reading and consumption.

Though its examples reach from the reign of Henry VIII to that of Charles I nearly a century later, the argument of “Bound Flowers, Loose Leaves” is fundamentally synchronic: through close readings of a variety of Tudor and early Stuart printed books, I uncover a complex of ideas and concepts that shaped how early modern English readers understood the written word and the natural world. This botanical idiom was systematically and richly articulated, and its lexicon and visual repertoire was remarkably

consistent across. Though the final chapter, on Ben Jonson and Francis Bacon, reaches into the mid-seventeenth century and towards textual forms (the essay, the experiment), institutional identities (authorship, natural history), and an epistemological dispensation usually hailed as harbingers of modernity, I am less interested in that teleology than in the resilient miscellaneity of vegetable forms that nonetheless undergirds those apparent developments.

My path through these materials necessarily combines formal and historical approaches. Indeed, the central problems with which I am concerned limn the border between material and immaterial, descriptive and figurative, often challenging any hard and fast boundary between what belongs to history and what to literature. To some degree, this is true of any inquiry into the materiality of texts: these gatherings of rags and ink, and sometimes boards and even calf skin, also gather material and immaterial. Joshua Calhoun has argued that early modern readers were distinctly aware of the plant stuff of which their books were made.¹ My focus here is less on the stuff itself or on particular methods of production than on how readers and publishers understood the matter of the book. I focus therefore on particular forms – like the couplet, the experiment, the miscellany – in part to see how writers and readers understood their composition and their limits, their mobility and flexibility. How, in other words, did botanical forms and horticultural practices seem to operate in and across time? How could they manipulate inheritance, or preserve forms and memories? The answer, I find

¹ Calhoun, “The Word Made Flax: Cheap Bibles, Textual Corruption, and the Poetics of

repeatedly, is through an intense traffic in fragments and small forms – a traffic densely entangled with horticultural practice and habits of thought.

As a theory of textual matter, this rhetorical tendency is on some level deeply immaterial – taking as its governing terms one of the richest symbolic fields in literary, religious, political, and erotic histories. Indeed, the vegetable kingdom often seems an icon of symbology itself – that system of things and images always standing for something other than themselves. The flowers of rhetoric name just that system – the disjunction of value and matter, of vehicle and tenor, intention and extension. The material life and stuff of flowers – of petal, calyx, stamen, bud – is often so radically secondary that we can ignore it entirely, and, in this natural language, let the names of varieties stand as shorthand for less vegetable-bodied concepts, feelings, and notions. Though this disjunction is fundamental and unavoidable, the cut between vehicle and tenor is never so sharp or so clean. But I have not found that plants actually operate this way (that is, this disjunctively or purely symbolically) when they appear in printed books in this period. The plants of sixteenth-century printed collections are not often enclosed in a magic circle and frozen in stone (as Walter Benjamin describes the work of the collector) – rather, they are gathered as objects of use, endowed with powers and qualities that demand interaction and engagement. They contain commands, direct or indirect forms of embodied engagement. These are not merely meditative allegories, placing the reader contemplatively in an imaginary garden, but practical handbooks – full of imperatives and advice on how to handle and manipulate the matter of the text.

These botanical titles thus tie together two different kinds of semiotic work: they purport to describe the kind of thing the book is, as an assemblage or composite; and they

also prescribe certain ways of interacting with it. These metaphors never operate simply by posing an analogy between two separate realms of being. Rather, the language of horticulture, when it works to figure the stuff of a book, always operates prescriptively, demanding certain kinds of behavior, habit, and imitation on the part of the reader. They work less to name a resemblance that already exists than to produce repetition through the reader's corporeal and cognitive engagements.

Every text I consider in the pages that follow is a composite of some kind: whether a gathering of numbered "points," like those offered by Thomas Tusser (Chapter Three); a bundle of sundry slips or lyric flowers, like those assembled by Isabella Whitney and George Gascoigne (Chapter Two); or a forest (or *silva*) of textual matter in prose or verse like those amassed by Francis Bacon and Ben Jonson (Chapter Five.) Such gatherings, even in their sometimes exuberant miscellaneity, fit easily into how we tend to think about the bound, printed book. According to a standard account, these volumes, fix, standardize, memorialize. They seem to repair and regather the Sibyl's lost leaves, just as Dante, gazing into paradise, seems to see them restored: "In its depth I saw that it contains, bound by love in one volume, that which is scattered in leaves throughout the universe" (*Par.* xxxiii, 85-7).

As appealing as such a version of posterity may be, it is not how the texts under consideration here imagine their own futures. Instead, they are more likely to anticipate being dispersed, fragmented, or pieced out – to worry about what might come of them in the hands of unknown readers. And it is this figurative and practical labor of anticipation to which I will return again and again, as authors and

stationers call upon the practical discourses of plants to directly address readers, and to project fantasies of their own consumption, proliferation, and – sometimes – destruction. These texts consistently emphasize the circulation of textual fragments not as whole plants but as slips: borrowings that do not diminish the store of the garden itself. Such a conception relies on an understanding of the resiliency of vegetable life: its ability to take up a productive (even reproductive) future in new locations after relocation or replanting.

Indeed, habits of thought about vegetables have long been future-oriented, woven closely into a lexicon of growth, yield, and harvest. Aristotle's definition of the vegetable soul – as a faculty of growth without ratiocination or will – includes this proliferative and expansive trajectory within it. In relation to circulation, the vegetable world provides a model of matter that resists personal possession – a slip, branch, or bud can be taken from a plant without diminishing the original stock, and these cuttings can then generate copies that may take new root far from their place of origin. As I have suggested, the figure of vegetable multiplicity that accompanies images of the circulating text is in this sense well-suited to the multiplication of copies. It is a source that offers itself liberally without fear of diminishment. This proliferative force thus resolves a basic potential anxiety about the printed book, aligning it with the harmless accumulation of capital, without threatening the progenitor at its source.

At the core of this project is a desire to think differently about the history of reading, an enterprise often frustrated by the historical invisibility of the practice it takes as its object. Instead, I hope to show how the ostensible anxieties associated

with the new anonymity and dispersal of print culture in fact helped drive English literary culture at the end of the sixteenth century. My research thus suggests an alternative to the so-called “the stigma of print” – J.W. Saunders’ influential 1951 diagnosis of why more English noblemen did not publish their poems. While a number of scholars have taken issue with particular historical aspects of Saunders’ claim, the materials I consider here suggest an alternative to the repressive premise behind the “stigma” model. Illuminating an intersection between Foucault’s work on authorship and on the history of sexuality, the cultures around print in fact proliferated texts, figures, and identities. In this context, vegetable life and horticultural technique embody the flexibility of these forms: their open-endedness and accessibility, the possibility of their replication and imitation, their capacity to travel piecemeal, or to regenerate, cure, or nourish in new and unpredictable locations. I show how the texts I consider engage playfully and ambivalently with the politics of publication, with the performance of bringing out or withholding, and with the possibility (and sometimes refusal) of making texts, plants, or properties common or shared. While our usual narratives of English literary culture in this period see reading as an increasingly private practice, and literary production itself as more and more of an authorial domain, “Bound Flowers” examines an alternative tradition: of commonplaces and common ground, slips of both herbs and poetry circulated, shared, altered, and multiplied. The figure of the flower is not merely a convenient emblem for this process; rather, I argue that print culture and horticulture in this period gave rise to interdependent versions of both

nature and literature that, withstanding dispersal, promised to sustain the remote intimacies of public life.

This portability of these small forms holds especially true for poetry, and these vegetable idioms in turn lend themselves especially readily to poetic forms and collections. This is partially a matter of lyric brevity, but its consequences are not only formal. Sidney would claim that verse was best for memory, “the onely handle of knowledge” – a proposition operative both in the portable “slips” of Whitney’s versified *Sweet Nosgay*, and in the rhyming points of advice on husbandry that Thomas Tusser tells his readers to “take in hand.” Francis Bacon illustrates the same principle in prose form with the “short and scattered sentences” that he places at the center of his epistemological program, implying that the mobility of text was as important for the generation and accumulation of natural knowledge as the fixity of print. Tracing the condensed, didactic point through Tusser, Tottel’s *Miscellany*, and Shakespeare’s *Sonnets* (Chapters Three and Four), I argue that the couplets of Shakespeare’s *Sonnets* should likewise be read as verse with a handle. Though formalist critics have long struggled with their detachability and sententiousness, the couplets’ formal autonomy betrays a debt to the tradition of instructional verse we see in Tusser’s *Pointes*, forcing us to look beyond the sonnet’s organic integrity and monumentality, and towards the couplet’s practical and fragmentary work of memory. An essential counterpoint to the post-Romantic terms through which we usually approach the relation of art and nature, the piecemeal botanical poetics I trace throughout emphasizes the artificial and the

fragmentary, resisting the organicism we might otherwise expect to find in both biographical and botanical objects.

The forms in which these texts directly address their readers also play off of generic and cultural expectations of didacticism that we often ignore in our analyses of the literature of early modern England, especially its poetry. Some of the most widely read books of the period were explicitly practical and instructional, however, with a significant portion of those offering advice and how-to on managing and cultivating plants, whether in a field of barley or a kitchen garden of medicinal herbs. William Eamon calls these popular works “one of typography’s most important contributions to sixteenth-century literature.”² Often in the imperative, practical books explicitly commanded the terms of their own reception, telling readers not just how to plant, heal, or cook, but often how to approach the book itself. Such didacticism also relied on expectations of fragmentation and portability, especially of verse. Philip Sidney, in his *Defence of Poesy*, tied the Horatian imperatives of profit and delight to manual portability: “For these indeed do meerly make to imitate, and imitate both to delight & teach, and delight to move men to take that goodnesse in hand.”

With a focus on method and an orientation toward real and imagined readers, instructional manuals demand and cultivate repetition and imitation. Like the fragmentary forms of miscellaneous poetry, such methods – both textual and manual – are fundamentally iterative and iterable. I argue that they in turn demand and generate what we might think of as iterative communities, networks of readers

² William Eamon, *Science and the Secrets of Nature* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1994), 113.

and imitators loosely tied by the echoes between these small forms. One such community is represented in these pages by the Elizabethan Inns of Court, members of which in the 1570s published a remarkable set of miscellanies entitled “gardens” or “flowers,” playing out negotiations of access and inclusion through the openness of figure itself, as they flirted with and amplified the vegetable conceits of other collections. Bacon’s avowed heirs in the Royal Society stands as another such textual and practical community, the specific method of which turned on the repetition – at different sites and by different actors – of artificial technical procedures, performances we now think of naturally as experiments.

All of these forms of repetition – technical, mimetic, figurative – project responsibility and power onto the reader, figuring textual circulation itself as a kind of distribution of agency. This conception relied in part on an understanding of the vital materiality of plants. For early modern English readers, plants and poetry share a common vocabulary of influence and power – forces of generation and transformation able to travel in severed fragments, dispersed to an otherwise anonymous public of readers and replanters. I have described one such example in my dissertation by tracing a language of “vertue” through works of poetry, rhetoric, devotion, and herbal medicine, as it names the power of both plants and books to transform their user. Vegetable matter, like a book, makes demands on its reader; it requires what poets, gardeners, and devotional writers call “right handling” to bring out its latent virtues. As such, this discourse of virtues participates in a broader contestation over the meanings of power – natural, linguistic, and political – and the possibility of its multiplication and operation at sites far from a center or

origin. In this sense, the geographies of circulation imagined by Whitney, Gascoigne, and others participate in a kind of social thought experiment, mapping out a far-flung English public limned by these logics of distributed force. At the same time, discourses of virtue begin to suggest a distinctly literary kind of consumption, in which these exemplary fragments circulate with relative autonomy, cultivating and inciting readers' taste and skillful reappropriation.

In the collections and miscellanies I consider in Chapters One and Two, much of the explicitly botanical material is paratextual, advertised in prefaces and epistles. Though often in prose, these entryways represent a kind of poiesis of the book itself – as a form of making or remaking, they bend the material text towards something less material, cultivating the kind of imaginative reading that opens into the miscellany. In each of the chapters, I am interested in what we might classify as the distinctly literary, and the different kinds of readings such an understanding would enable or demand, especially as a reader navigates the border between the poetic and the rest of the world. Chapters Three and Four consider what borders there may be between reading poetically and reading practically (reading in vain, reading in virtue), but also the borders around the specific poetic unit of the couplet. How does a reader modulate moving between those spaces, but also manage that material/formal unit as it travels through regions that are not necessarily coded as poetic? Books published as gardens – especially those collections I consider in Chapter Two – are engaged in the project of managing those borders, of letting people in or keeping them out. As miscellanies, these gardens figure the poetic as a space that opens with the book,

so claim the materiality of the text as a kind of gateway into that sphere. There is something magical, often, about that interface, but the leap (or cut) between material and immaterial is never a clean one.

The botanical idiom I trace in the following pages encompasses small individual literary forms (slips, seeds, flowers), forms of association (forests, gardens, nosegays), and paths of circulation and multiplication (dispersal, scattering, proliferation.) My own frame, accordingly, will shift between these various perspectives, as I inquire more closely into the relationship between vegetable parts and botanical wholes. In the first two chapters, I survey the kinds of textual assemblage that were conceived and advertised in botanical terms in the late sixteenth century. In the following two chapters, I look more closely at the particular small form of the couplet, tracing its close association with the literature and practice of husbandry. And in the fifth and final chapter, I try to balance a view of the frame of a collection with the concrete small forms within it, as Bacon and Jonson themselves struggle to use the *silva* to balance a whole with its parts, the general with the particular. Just how mobile, each chapter asks, are these vegetable fragments, and how stable are they as they travel?

Chapter One, “The Botanical Cultures of Elizabethan Printed Collections,” looks at the dramatic increase in volumes entitled “gardens,” “bowers,” and “posies” in the last decades of the sixteenth century. I argue that these collections – despite their diverse thematic content – represent a previously unrecognized print genre, tied together not by a common theme but by their formal miscellaneity. Composed of various short poems, prayers, or pieces of advice, these volumes are formally

malleable, offering readers diverse routes through the text. Revising classical and medieval associations between books and flowers, Elizabethan stationers brought out collections that directly engage readers, interpellating them both as skilled and tastefully discriminating readers. The second part of this chapter traces this strategy through the frequent use in these collections of the word “vertue” – a keyword borrowed from practical works that I argue serves to supplement the uncertainties of print publication with the tangible know-how of practical genres. When it appears in herbals, miscellanies, or poetic treatises, “vertue” names a latent force within matter – textual, mineral, or botanical – that can be made operative by a reader’s appropriation or use. It plays a special role, I argue, in how poets and publishers imagined the specific powers of poetic language in the hands of dispersed and distant readers.

Chapter Two, “Behind the Green Door: Enclosure and Disclosure in Gascoigne, Plat, and Whitney,” identifies a subset of these collections: poetic miscellanies assembled by members of the Inns of Court and given the titles of gardens and other floral gatherings, all published within a few years of each other in the 1570s. Each of these collections articulates some anxiety about what scholars have called “the stigma of print,” the resistance of elite poets to publishing their verse. George Gascoigne, Hugh Plat, and other young lawyers premised their poetic collections on the genteel invitation to borrow and recirculate flowers and poetic slips – an intimacy evocative of manuscript coteries, but radically transformed by the anonymity and open-ended address of print publication. I argue that these poets ultimately challenge the repressive premise of

the stigma model, showing instead the advantages of proliferating texts, figures, and identities. The vegetable idiom in these miscellanies stands for something held in common, a sign of affiliation and identification that its handlers perform through the extension and imitation of figurative language. Finally, the chapter shows how Isabella Whitney, in her *Sweet Nosgay* (1573), responds explicitly to the imagery and ideology of these collections, challenging the genteel terms of enclosure by which the Inns operate by exploiting the openness of botanical figure itself.

Chapter Three, “‘Pointes of them selues to be taken in hand’: the force of small forms in Thomas Tusser and Richard Tottel,” traces connections between agricultural labor and rhetorical condensation and in the mid-Tudor publications of Richard Tottel. In 1557, Tottel published two of the century’s best-selling collections of verse: Tusser’s practically-minded *Hundreth Good Pointes of Husbandrie* and *Songes and Sonettes*, the now-canonical miscellany of lyric by Wyatt, Surrey, and others. Despite their conspicuous differences, their poetic and pedagogical projects are united by a reliance on the small textual “point” – brief rhyming lessons that Tusser explicitly instructs his readers to copy and store, as husbandly preparations of a piece with the accumulation of provisions like grain. Comparing the short poems that appear in Tusser’s *Pointes* to those in *Tottel’s Miscellany*, I argue that the portability of the couplet that appears at the end of a fourteen-line sonnet—its invitation to storage and repetition—likewise structures a kind of knowledge that steps out of the passage of calendrical time.

Chapter Four, “Handles of knowledge: the couplet, the graft, and the *Sonnets’* poetics of practical command,” extends this conception of the couplet’s

poetic portability in order to situate Shakespeare's *Sonnets* in the less familiar genealogy of instructional printed books. That the sonnets' layered metaphors of farming and generation draw from practical knowledge of plants is not surprising, but this chapter shows how Shakespeare's distinct stylistic choices also register a debt to practical genres. The textual and agricultural conception of future time identified by Chapter 3 is re-animated in the *Sonnets*, as Shakespeare's poems obsess over the anticipation of their own consumption and survival. I trace the connections between Shakespeare's interest in future provision and the practice and style of husbandry both through the poems' central horticultural figures and through the resonances of a specifically instructional style.

Chapter Five, "A knowledge broken': The Matter of the Forest in Francis Bacon and Ben Jonson," focuses on self-described *silvae*, collections by both authors that echo of the classical genre of miscellaneous, rough-hewn, and often occasional verse. All of these collections turn on small forms of verse and prose that will become increasingly influential through the seventeenth century: the epigram, experiment, and essay. Bacon and Jonson draw on these generic associations when they name their own collections for forests, and in doing so, treat language itself as a kind of supply or furnishing and the text itself as a catalog or storehouse of knowledge. Like the epigrams, commonplaces, and other prose and verse forms collected by Jonson in his *Forrest*, *Under-woods*, and *Timber*, the thousand "experiments" of Bacon's *Sylva Sylvarum* play off generic expectations of occasion, claiming essential relationships to the site and moment of their inception while appearing only in the abstract non-space of the rhetorical forest.

Each of these occasional forms, by virtue of belonging to this forest, maintains a relationship to the site of its origin but also reaches beyond that, speaking universally to new sites and contexts.

All of these miscellaneous gatherings, in one way or another, are both bound and unbound from what Hegel called occasional poetry's "entanglement with life." They are both rooted in the world and remarkably mobile. To Walter Benjamin, as an object enters a collection, it is cut loose from precisely that Hegelian lively entanglement: "What is decisive in collecting is that the object is detached from all its original functions in order to enter into the closest conceivable relation to things of the same kind. This relation is the dramatic opposite of any utility, and falls into the peculiar category of completeness." Thus captured, the object takes on a different kind of being: "It is the deepest enchantment of the collector to enclose the particular item within a magic circle, where, as a last shudder runs through it (the shudder of being acquired), it turns to stone."³ As this metamorphosis suggests, the work of collection is a material and figurative labor, as the thing itself is reclaimed by the essentially poetic laws of the collection. The totality of Hegel's view of life is suspended as the allegorical rule of the collection (with its own miniaturized version of completeness) replaces it. The collections I consider in this dissertation – from the exuberant gardens of 1570s poetic miscellanies to the husbandly accumulations of Thomas Tusser – consistently look more like Benjamin's inhuman fragments than like Hegel's lively, integrated organicism. They are animated, crucially, but by a very different kind of

³ Walter Benjamin, *The Arcades Project* (Cambridge: Belknap, 1999), 204-5.

life: one that grows in fragments, slips, and storable points, conceived in figures that don't fix in time but open to future change, gathered in bundles of herbs and not piles of stones.

What kind of gatherings are these, then? How tightly bound is the vegetable miscellany? The collector for Benjamin operates with some of the sadistic freedom of the allegorist, unbound by circumstance or obligation to the context from which their object of desire emerges. We might think of this as a kind of poetic freedom, but it is also – as its analog appears in these Tudor and early Stuart texts – a readerly license. I have suggested that at the core of the phenomenon I am tracing is the attempt of various texts to anticipate their own reception – that is, to perform the essentially creative work of proleptically narrating histories of reading. Different texts take more or less regulative or permissive relationships to the forms of readers' engagements, but the looseness of these interpellations frequently comes to track the relationship between part and whole. Gascoigne, for example, keys the freedom of his reader to the formal miscellaneity of his text, granting readers "license" to borrow at will from his collection's "sundrie flowres," while the preface to Francis Bacon's natural history promises that the work's "Indigested Heap of Particulars" is intentionally miscellaneous, meant "to vnloose Mens mindes," which are otherwise "bound" to the charms of rhetorical order and method. To be sure, even the articulation of such a scenario binds the reader to some degree in an authorial fiction, even as that fiction precisely disavows that kind of control. Articulating a certain fiction of a text's reception always serves a regulative rule – one that might or might not be

reinforced by the material form of the book, whether the layout of the page or the order or disorder of its parts. While the botanical language I trace throughout this dissertation helps fix these speculative scenarios, it also imagines and actualizes the text as essentially open-ended and indeterminate. A final theme is not the fixity of these forms, but the flexibility of textual virtues, that figural lability so often indexed and performed by the language of plants: the availability of form and figure for reuse, recycling, and resignification.

Coda: Out of Many

On August 20, 1776, having been tasked with the creation of a new national seal, Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Jefferson, and John Adams reported back with a symbol and a now familiar motto: *E Pluribus Unum*.⁴ Though now taken as a lofty call to national cohesion, its origins were quite the opposite: the motto appeared on the cover of *The Gentlemen's Journal or the Monthly Miscellany* (1691-94). There, displayed alongside a bundle of flowers, it was a figure not for unity but for miscellaneity: the magazine invited readers to pluck what pleased them from its delicious variety: “To your motto most true, for our monthly inspection, / You mix various rich sweets in *one* fragrant collection.”

⁴ For an account of the development of the motto, see See Monroe E. Deutsch, “E Pluribus Unum,” *The Classical Journal*, vol. 18, no. 7 (April 1923): 387-407.

THE
BRITISH MAGAZINE
 OR
 LITERARY ENTERTAINMENT
 OF
 KNOWLEDGE AND PLEASURE.
 No I.
 FOR JANUARY 1765.

PRODESSE
 FT
 DELECTARE



PLURIBUS
 UNUM.

MAGAZIN ANGLAIS

OU
 RECUEIL LITTERAIRE
 INSTRUCTIF ET AMUSANT.

No I.
 POUR JANVIER 1765.



AMSTERDAM, MDCCCLXV.



The classic figure for American national identity thus turns ironically on its inverse: the miscellaneous bundle of flowers as a figure for the liberality of selection and recirculation. As my readings throughout “Bound Flowers, Loose Leaves” show, such gatherings can easily turn both ways. These fantasies of circulation cannot help but play out a complex politics of community, as they imagine what a textual community defined not by gathering but by dispersal might look like. The paper gardens, bouquets, and forests of Elizabethan England thus enact a textual and social thought experiment, testing out remote intimacies with distant and invisible readers – a venture that turns on fixing (or figuring) their own materiality. The liberality we see emphasized in many of these gardens may mark them as fantasies of miniature polities given spatial form. In different ways, however, each of the examples I consider – from Isabella Whitney’s take on

property to the ambivalent memorials of Shakespeare's *Sonnets* – ultimately reveals a deep skepticism about the free exchange of flowers and the liberal intimacies such traffic subtends. The freedom of floral circulation, with its utopian kernel of social reorganization and textual and material redistribution, gives way to the demands of obedience, debt, and social constraint. At the same time, the very lability of these floral figures – whether gardens, bouquets, nosegays, or posies – reminds us of the flexibility of textual virtues: however richly figured, these images and their readers are never quite fixed.

Chapter One

The Botanical Cultures of Elizabethan Printed Collections

A Surfeit of Flowers: The Plant World in Print

Between 1560 and 1580, dozens of books were published in England with titles that signalled an affiliation with the world of plants. Some were miscellanies of prose and verse, like Thomas Howell's *Arbor of amitie wherin is comprised pleasant poëms and pretie poesies* (1568) and George Gascoigne's *A hundreth sundrie flowres bounde vp in one small poesie* (1573). Others gathered prayer and scriptural citation, like Thomas Twyne's *Garlande of godly flowers bewtifully adorned as most freshly they flourish in the gardeins of right faithfull Christian writers* (1574) or *A smale handfull of fragrant flowers selected and gathered out of the louely garden of sacred scriptures, fit for any honorable or woorshipfull gentlewoman to smell vnto* (1575), now usually attributed to Nicholas Breton. Some addressed real plants and horticultural practice in their subject matter, while echoing it in their frame, like Thomas Hill's *Gardeners labyrinth* (1577).

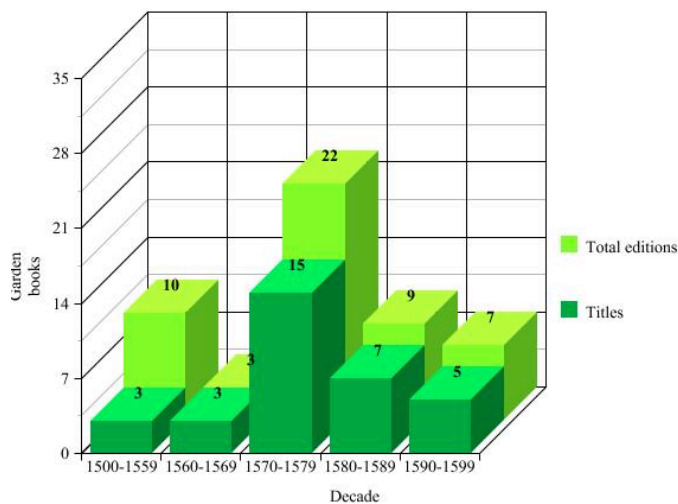
As these examples suggest, the bowers, nosegays, posies, and gardens published in these decades encompass a range of genres; they are bound less by thematic unity than by their very formal looseness. Each of these titles suggests a collection gathered or to be gathered from, a culled or cultivated assemblage of choice pieces.

I will be arguing that this botanical language works both descriptively and prescriptively: to name something about the mixed matter of the printed codex, and to demand and project certain kinds of interactions with readers. In their invocation of the topos of the garden, these works were not breaking new ground. The tradition reaches to classical anthologies and florilegia (both words meaning gatherings of flowers), and the garden was a central topos of both medieval and humanist textual practices. Poets of the 1570s would have been trained in grammar school reading rhetorical flowers, and would have known the miscellaneous *Flores poetarum* gathered and widely circulated for centuries in manuscript, and, more recently, in print.⁵ The eruption of these figures into the rhetoric of late sixteenth-century print culture nonetheless represents a major punctuation mark in this long history. In what I argue is a genre specifically tied to the cultures of print publication, these titles are united by a distinct inflection in how this figurative language operates. Tethering textual form to horticultural function, each of these works turns botanical metaphor in the direction of praxis, showing the reader not just what to imagine but telling them what to do with a text – how to handle the matter of the book.

Between the 1560s and the 1570s, the number of books published with the word “garden” in the title increased at least five-fold, as did the portion of those titles that went through multiple editions. Because it is the most common of the various botanical titles,

⁵ John Brinsley, in his *Ludus literarius: or, the grammar school* (1612) gives the *Flores Poetarum* a central pedagogical role, including in a list of the books in which he finds “great benefit”: “*Flores poëtarum*, to prepare for versifying; to learn to versifie, *ex tempore*, of any ordinary Theame”(121). See also pages 182, 187, 193, and 196. *Ludus literarius: or, the grammar schoole* (London: Printed [by Humphrey Lownes] for Thomas Man. 1612). An example of a London imprint is Octavianus Mirandula, *Illustrium poetarum flores per Octavianum Mirandulam collecti, & in Locos communes digesti* (Londini: Ex typographia Thomae Creed, 1598), STC 17954.

“garden” offers a sample size that is easiest to track, but a similar pattern holds true on a smaller scale for works like “nosegays” and “bowers.”⁶



Source: Short Title Catalog

The figures are even more striking if one takes the “long” 1570s up to 1583. Similar titles covered a range of genres – poetry, prayer books, natural histories, books of wisdom and advice. The common quality of these texts, though, is not similarity of topic or theme but an ensemble of imagined reading practices: they all emphasize the significance of appropriation, fragmentation, and recirculation. Whether works of gardening practice or of lyric poetry, they demand a central – if not coherent – place in

⁶ It is true that we must take these figures with a grain of salt insofar as absolute numbers of publications are concerned; more gardens and bouquets were almost certainly published that have not survived. However, this genre was almost certainly selected *against* in terms of survival rates: nearly all of those found in the STC, and surviving in rare book libraries, are quartos or smaller, and relatively slight overall in terms of numbers of sheets. Surely more published gardens of the late sixteenth century would have, in Isaiah’s words, faded like a flower. Beyond the conspicuous increase in the 1570s, at least two correlations are worth noting. First, though the absolute number of books published in England increased significantly between the 1560s and the 1570s, the increase in garden books is much greater. Indeed, though it’s difficult to speculate with limited data, when we look as far as the beginning of the seventeenth century, the numbers of such collections seems to have a differential relationship to the absolute number of books published – that is, to track the rate of change. The second correlation is perhaps more clear from this data, and significant: both the number of absolute titles and the number of total editions increases in the 1570s. That is, more of these books are being reprinted, and more distinct titles are being published. It is tempting to see the latter as a consequence of the former, as stationers are noticing certain effects in the market and the success of particular books.

the everyday lives and labors of their readers.

Why should so many titles organized around these metaphorical conceits have appeared at the same time? Leah Knight has suggested that these garden books serve to domesticate these new commodities, giving them by thematic association a place in the home alongside other household objects.⁷ While I agree that the common frame of reference plays an important part in how these figures operate, I will argue that the opposite is also true: the vegetable world becomes a source for imagining not just the familiar and homespun, but for projecting fantasies about dispersal and distance, fictions that draw connections between similar copies across far-flung fields of reception and consumption. Considered in the context of a range of other metaphorical titles from the period, we can see that they help to fashion the book into an object – distinguished either by the variety of its contents, its compactness, boundedness, architecture. Throughout, then, these botanical conceits balance remote speculative fictions of circulation with an immediate material imagination of textual form.

The titles I am considering generally fall into two kinds: either fashioning the book as a space that can be entered – like a garden or a bower – or as a bundle or gathering that can be carried around, like a nosegay or bouquet. The simple plural of “flowers” more immediately suggests the latter, as does its singular form, as in Thomas Becon’s *Flour of godly praiers* [ca. 1550]. Given the ambiguities of sixteenth-century orthography, “flour,” “flower,” “flowre,” and “floure” can all mean both the single stem of a plant in bloom and the refined matter we also associate today with the word “flour”:

⁷ Knight, *Of Books and botany: sixteenth-century plants and print culture* (Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate, 2009), 2-5 and *passim*, but see especially Knight’s Introduction as whole (“Published Vertues of the Earth.”)

the finer stuff of a grain, the wheat taken from the chaff. This sense also picks up on a common figurative usage, in which to describe the “flower of” something names the very best of it. For example, in Edward Tilney’s *A briefe and pleasant discourse of duties in mariage, called the flower of friendship* (1568), the word designates its status as an exceptional example. The running title of John Conway’s 1569[?] prayerbook, which reads “The posye of flowred prayers,” suggests more variety overall, gathered into the small octavo’s bordered pages, but also implies that each prayer has been carefully selected and refined. A tension between selection and abundance, between copiousness and brevity – indeed between “flowered” and “flowering” – may be found at the core of many of these botanical gatherings: have they been pre-selected, pruned, and culled? Or are they presenting an abundance of choices, an occasion for the reader to cull their own favorites? Timothy Kendall, for example, in his octavo *Flovvers of epigrammes* (1577) promises that he has already pruned the objectionable bits from his classical sources, especially Martial, though confesses to having let grow his own poetic juvenalia. On the continuum between these two possibilities, the role and responsibility of both author and reader are continually renegotiated.

As titles including words like “flower” and “garden” become more common beginning in the late 1560s, “flower” itself also becomes more likely to appear in the plural, designating less an exemplary culled stem than a gathering or assemblage. When such language appears on these titles, they name how and of what the book is composed, sometimes spatially rendering the book itself as a container, within which however many flowers may be found or gathered. Whether John Northbrooke’s *The poore mans garden, wherein are flowers of the scriptures, and doctours*, (1571), James Sanford’s 1576

translation of Guicciardini, *The garden of pleasure contayninge most pleasante tales, worthy deeds and witty sayings of noble princes [et] learned philosophers, moralized*, or Gascoigne's 1573 *Hundreth Sundrie Flowres*, which goes on to describe the posy into which they have been bound and the sites from which they have been gathered, the titles of each of these volumes indexes something about the materiality of the book itself. They describe the book's own thing-ness, as a composite of smaller pieces, but also help to fashion a particular kind of reader, defining and delimiting the proper kinds of objective and manual relationships with the book.

This interpellative orientation typically fragments the body of a fantasized reader: into hands (to grasp, or extract), nose (to smell, or savor), and, more rarely, bosom (a corporeal vessel in which to hold and carry the book.) Ultimately, the claim made by these texts upon the reader, and upon the scene of reception, turns on two things: first, a discourse of taste and textual use, inherited partially through Horace; and, second, a rhetoric of practicality and manual know-how emerging in close contact with the many instructional books through which horticultural expertise was being circulated in these same decades. This readerly orientation, realized in these two ubiquitous conventions, combines with formal miscellaneity and botanical self-presentation to organize these titles in a genre specifically contingent on and in conversation with print.

The law of genre, in this case, is a necessarily loose one: the nature of such miscellaneous works is their refusal to prescribe an order of approach or to closely govern the reader's response. Indeed, as I will be tracing throughout this dissertation, the strongest affiliations between these various texts often follow from their attempts to pull

out the slackness in the line by which reader and text are loosely bound. In this sense, they all write anticipatory histories of reading. It is the fictive work of this anticipation in which I am most interested here. In this sense, they encounter – from the opposite side of the coin – the same epistemological problems that have nagged historians of reading in the twentieth century. As Roger Chartier has argued, the history of reading must always be “vagabond,” chasing errantly after traces and ghosts.⁸ If modern readers are, in Michel de Certeau’s memorable formulation, “poachers,” then the compulsive attention paid by these botanical titles to enclosure and its breach engages a problem at the core of any attempt to narrate textual consumption.⁹

The full title of George Gascoigne’s 1573 collection captures the textual situation of miscellaneity and dispersal with hyperbolic precision: *A Hundreth Sundrie Flowres bounde up in one small poesie. Gathered partely (by translation) in the fyne outlandish Gardins of Euripides, Ovid, Petrarke, Ariosto, and others: and partly by invention, out of our owne fruitefull Orchardes in Englande: Yelding sundrie sweete savours of Tragical, Comical, and Morall Discourses, bothe pleasaunt and profitable to the well smellyng noses of learned Readers*. The title performs with great efficiency the “sundry-ness” that characterizes many Elizabethan printed books – the condensation from many and sundry to the singular and small(er), the mixture of nations, eras, authors, and genres, the final conversation to a literary language of taste and savor.¹⁰ Gascoigne’s

⁸ Roger Chartier, *The Order of Books* (Palo Alto: Stanford UP, 1994), viii.

⁹ Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* (Berkeley: U of California P, 1984), 174.

¹⁰ On the significance of collection and compilation in this period (especially of bound collections and Sammelbände), see Jeffrey Todd Knight, *Bound to Read: Compilations, Collections, and the Making of Renaissance Literature* (Philadelphia: U of Pennsylvania P, 2013.) On specifically poetic miscellanies published during the reign of Elizabeth, see Elizabeth W. Pomeroy, *The Elizabethan Miscellanies: Their Development and Conventions* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: U of California P, 1973.)

wittily extended vegetable analogy displays the availability of the plant world as an image of diversity and assortment, of the readiness of small pieces to travel and take up root again, but it says nothing about the contents of the work itself – even the Horatian extension to pleasure and profit is contingent upon the noses and taste of the reader. Gascoigne’s collection deploys this botanical language to advertise diversity itself, eventually implicating the reader in the circuits run by the text’s sundry pieces. As we will see, the thread common to Gascoigne’s work and other botanically-named miscellanies is not a formal or thematic pattern, but this wayward ensemble of textual relations and textual histories, and the ongoing tension between gathering and dispersal that accompanies them.

Gascoigne’s title casts a far-flung itinerary for these sundry flowers, from the various sites at which they were gathered to the more local site of the reader’s nose. He and his printer betray an investment not just in the work’s mixed composition but in its differential reception. In Gascoigne’s title, a discourse of literary taste combines with aesthetic variety to animate the scene of the text’s consumption, in the hands – or sometimes the mouth – of a reader. For most Renaissance thinkers on poetics, textual reception and reader response were filtered through the terms established in Horace’s *Ars Poetica*: to profit or delight, “aut prodesse... aut delectare.”¹¹ In Ben Jonson’s translation, “Poets would either profit, or delight, / Or mixing sweet, and fit, teach life the right.” Again, as Jonson renders Horace’s language:

The *Poems* void of profit, our grave men

¹¹ Robert Matz has shown how this duality received from Horace significantly framed Renaissance poetic debates. See his *Defending Literature in Early Modern England: Renaissance Literary Theory in Social Context* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2004), 1-24.

Cast out by voyces; want they pleasure, then
 Our Gallants give them none, but passe them by:
 But he hath every suffrage, can apply
 Sweet mix'd with sowre, to his Reader, so
 As doctrine, and delight together go.¹²

As the *Ars Poetica* makes clear, this dualistic view of reception had long been filtered through a materialist discourse of taste: sweet mixed with sour, as realized at the moment of textual consumption. In publisher Richard Tottel's preface to the *Songes and Sonettes* (1557), the gustatory logic becomes a discourse of taste, socially differentiated and differentiating, as it weeds out discriminating from less discriminating readers.¹³ He asks the unlearned to read more skillfully, and to "purge that swinelike grossnesse, that maketh the swete maierome not to smell to their delight."¹⁴ In this as in other respects Tottel's Miscellany was widely influential, especially on the myriad lyric miscellanies that came out of London print shops in the decades following, many framed within botanical conceits. From Tottel's inaugural salvo on aesthetic distinction, printed miscellanies cannot help but confront this issue of audience. At its basis, this is a way of talking about – almost a requirement that they talk about – their own value, a discourse of aesthetic legitimacy repeatedly grounded in a scene of herbal consumption.

Many of these titles also combine with the visual rhetoric of the title page to help fashion these miscellaneous gatherings and slips into a unified object – giving it, in a

¹² Horace, *his art of poetrie*, trans. Ben Jonson, in his *Works*, vol. viii, ed. C. H. Herford and P. and E. Simpson (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1947), pp. 327, 329.

¹³ This gustatory framework is articulated in J.C. Scaliger's *Poetics* (1560), where he divided epigrams into classes of bitter, sour, salty, or sweet. See Rosalie Colie, *The Resources of Kind: Genre-theory in the Renaissance* (Berkeley: U of California P, 1973), 68.

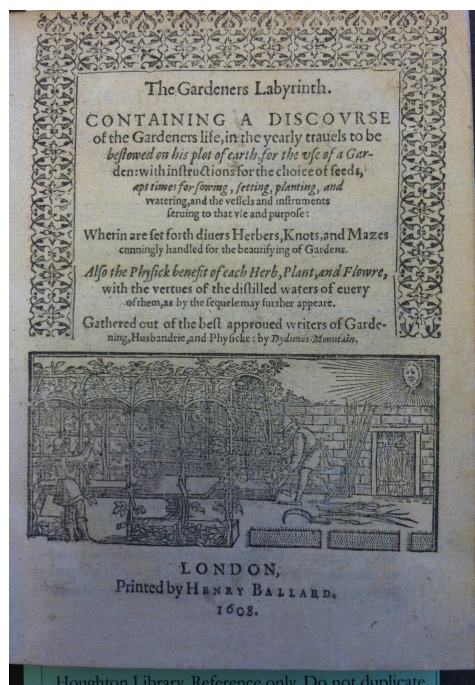
¹⁴ *Songes and Sonettes* ([London]: Apud Richardum Tottel, 1557), To the Reader.

quite practical sense, a commodity form. These garden titles converged with a trend in the same decades to publish books with floral borders enclosing their title pages, and often breaking up and structuring interior pages as well. Visually, such title pages mark off the space of the book as one with an interior and an exterior – a bounded object that could be carried off, or, on the other hand, entered into. Juliet Fleming has argued that these ornamental borders function on a non-referential level, operating not by allusion to any real world of flowers or ornament outside the text but by distinguishing and discriminating the surface of the page.¹⁵ In this sense, it is a misnomer to call them “floral borders,” since they are not signs in this sense. However, I would argue that both real and literary gardens in this period work in a similar fashion: fascinated with their own thresholds, they turn less to the real stuff of matter in a common world than to the prescriptive and regulative functions of inclusion, exclusion, and discrimination.

The title page of Hill’s *Gardener’s Labyrinth*, first published in 1577 and popular through the rest of the sixteenth century, echoes but adjusts the visual logic of contemporary poetic title pages. By the beginning of the seventeenth century, Hill’s manual had gone through more than ten editions. Its title page echoes the distinctive floral borders of the collections I have just mentioned, but goes only half the way there: in the lower half of the page, the ornamental border opens to a woodcut into the garden, like a gate through which the reader can enter that multidimensional world. (It is pictured

¹⁵ Fleming, “How to Look at a Printer’s Flower,” *Word and Image* 22.2 (2006), 165-87; and “Changed Opinion as to Flowers,” in *Renaissance Paratexts*, ed. Helen Smith and Louise Wilson. For an exhaustive treatment of these ornaments and their use, see Francis Meynell and Stanley Morison, “Printers’ Flowers and Arabesques,” *The Fleuron: A Journal of Typography* 1(1923): 1–46.

below in the edition of 1608, but the same visual structure survived decades of republication.) It thus balances the formal self-consciousness of the full border – an ornament that by distinction and division marks off the book as a discrete and admirable object – against the ostensibly worldly reference invoked by the woodcut. This doubleness is echoed in Hill’s title – “The Gardener’s Labyrinth.” The book itself, in other words, is a labyrinth, a piece of garden design to which the gardener-reader is meant to enter. The two roles of this hyphenate figure – gardener and reader – are thus joined in the book’s rhetoric of its own bookishness, bridging the garden inscribed on the landscape and the garden imprinted in the book.



Hill, *Gardener's Labyrinth* (1608)

Many of these titles reflect a tendency towards spatializing metaphor that Walter Ong associates with the phenomenon of print. This follows in part, Ong argues, from a

broad cognitive reorientation associated with the rise of print, but it is also deeply informed by habits of humanist thought and note-taking to spatialize language through the *loci* of commonplacing.¹⁶ The commonness of this language, however, is never given, and its invocation often serves the opposite ideological function. Jenny Mann sees the spatial fixation of humanist gardens as a formative influence on English literary and rhetorical culture in the sixteenth century, providing the ground on which literary culture itself could seem a vagrant or fugitive art. When the spatial logic of classical rhetoric, she argues, becomes indigenized as a “garden” or “field” of eloquence, the legitimacy and illegitimacy of certain borrowings or rhetorical productions are measured against that enclosure. Indeed, for Mann, the literary itself – as opposed to the merely persuasive or rhetorical – is defined by its eagerness to slip beyond the bounds of these enclosures: “As might be expected from such a ‘fugitive’ art as Renaissance poesy, these literary texts are not nearly so concerned to contain the effects of the outlaw figures.”¹⁷

As we will see below, many of these textual practices were central to humanist thinking and pedagogy – in particular forms of note-taking and commonplacing imagined as the labor of a bee sucking honey from flowers and gathering it into cells. Also, following the model of Erasmus, this view of language imagined those flowers as both copious and held in common, available to readers to repeat, internalize, and carry off.

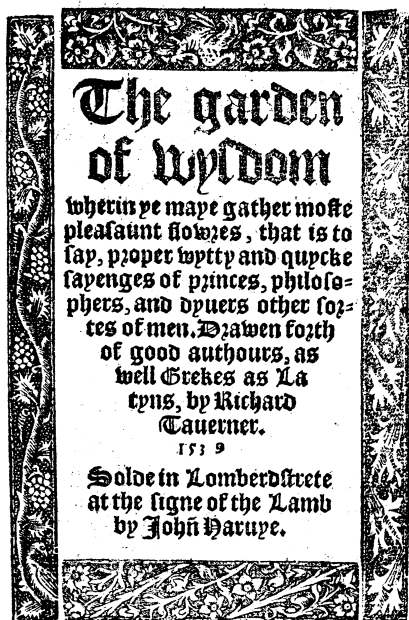
¹⁶ Walter J. Ong, *Ramus, Method, and the Decay of Dialogue* (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1983), 112-118.

¹⁷ Mann thus argues that the importation of rhetoric into England was filtered through this national project, and thus always threatened to have the status of an outlaw, an illegitimate borrowing: “When they ground their translations in the territory of ‘England,’ these manuals localize spatial metaphors already available within the rhetorical tradition. In other words, the ‘forms of nationhood’ depicted in the English handbooks derive from the very rhetorical art they purport to translate” (31). Jenny C. Mann, *Outlaw Rhetoric: Figuring Vernacular Eloquence in Shakespeare’s England* (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 2012), 22; 31.

Meanwhile, for devotional writers who turned to floral metaphors to describe their books, the copiousness of the garden of biblical language – its resistance to diminishment or harm – was the ground of fantasies of textual circulation and borrowing. As a brief and selective survey of these publications and the rhetoric they employ will show, language promises to be something various readers can hold in common precisely because of the fecundity of its origin.

Some of sixteenth century England's most popular humanist books were sold as collections of flowers.¹⁸ At least nine editions of Nicholas Udall's *Floures for Latine spekyng selected and gathered oute of Terence* were published in the sixteenth century, the first in 1534 by Thomas Berthelet (pictured below). Richard Taverner's translation of Erasmus's *sententiae – Flores aliquot sententiarum ex variis collecti scriptoribus*, or, *The flowvers of sencies gathered out of sundry wryters* – went through at least five editions in the decade after its 1540 publication, and, during the same period, Taverner published at least another four editions of his commonplace book, *The garden of wysedome, co[n]teyneyng pleasau[n]t floures, that is to saye, propre and quycke sayinges of princes, philosophers and other sortes of men*.

¹⁸ See also *The floures of ouide de arte amatoria*, published in Latin with an English translation by Wynkyn de Worde in 1513, the earliest of these translations, but known in only one edition.



FLOVRES
FOR LATINE SPE-
KYNGE SELECTED AND
gathered oute of Terence, and the
ſame translated in to Englyſſhe, to-
gether with the expoſition and ſet-
tyng forthe as welle of ſuche la-
tyn woordes, as were thought
nedefull to be annotated, as
alſo of dyuers gram-
matical rules, very
proſytable &
neceſſarye
for the
expe-
dite knowlege in the latine
tongue: Complied by
Nicolas Ddall.

By the end of the 1560s, fewer of these collections of prose flowers issued from the press, though by the 1570s more poetic collections had taken up the generic mantle. Longer prose treatises, meanwhile, leaned on the language of a gathered nosegay or bundle of flowers to describe the role of translator, editor, gatherer, compiler, condenser, and epitomist. John Banister, in *The historie of man sucked from the sappe of the most approued anathomistes, in this present age, compiled in most compendious fourme, and now published in English, for the vtilitie of all godly chirurgians, within this realme* (1578), describes his work as both a “history” and a “posie,” a compendium that uses the techniques of epitome to select and condense: of his sources, he writes, “I refused to bynde my selfe to any peculiar translation, chusing rather to picke a posie of the chiefest flowers from all their Gardens”(A2r). Thomas Digges introduces Edward Hoby’s translation of Matthieu Coignet’s *Politique discourses upon trueth and lying An instruction to princes to keepe their faith and promise: containing the summe of Christian*

and morall philosophie, and the duetie of a good man in sundrie politique discourses vpon the trueth and lying (1586) by promising that “this treatise (conteyning a *Methodicall* abundance of such godlie graue admonitions for all estates) may aptly be compared to a precious Posie of most fragrant flowers (compendiously for that purpose gathered from infinite varietie of forren gardens, *Historicall, Poeticall, Politicke, Morall, Humane* and *Diuine*, grauely, discreetly and Christianly, conferred and applied).”¹⁹ Digges outdoes himself here in advertising the copiousness of the gathering: a methodical abundance, for all estates, a precious posy, compendiously gathered from an infinite variety of gardens. He repeats here, however, a tension that appears in the title itself between that copiousness and the text’s pre-selected brevity: it

¹⁹ Compare also William Bourne, who frames his compendium on seafaring as the simple nosegay of a simple compiler: “although I be but simple (gentle Reader) & a great number of excellent learned men in the Mathematicall Science haue written diuerse booke of Cosmographie and Nauigation, yet notwithstanding I haue written this Regiment for the Sea with a fewe rules of Nauigation, as it were a nosegay whose floures are of mine owne gathering. And albeit the learned sorte of Seafaring men haue no neede of this booke, yet am I assured that it is a necessarie booke for the simplest sort of Seafaring men: for that they shall finde here the names of the circles in the sphere, with the names of diuerse things meete for Nauigation, together with their vses, which the most parte of Sea men do mistake or misse call.” *A regiment for the sea conteyning most profitable rules, mathematical experiences, and perfect knowlledge of nauigation, for all coastes and countreys: most needefull and necessarie for all seafaring men and traouellers, as pilotes, mariners, marchants. [et] c. Exactly deuised and made by VVilliam Bourne.* London: by Thomas Hacket, 1574. STC 3422. As well as John Dee, who, in his 1570 translation of Euclid’s *Elements*, who describes his preface as a sweet nosegay next to the compendious work itself: “I thinke it necessary, orderly, of these to giue some peculier descriptions: and withall, to touch some of their commodious vses, and so to make this Preface, to be a little swete, pleasant Nosegaye for you: to comfort your Spirites, beyng almost out of courage, and in despayre, (through brutish brute) Weenyng that *Geometrie*, had but serued for buildyng of an house, or a curious bridge, or the roufe of Westminster hall, or some witty pretty deuise, or engyn, appropriate to a Carpenter, or a Ioyner &c. That the thing is farre otherwise, then the world, (commonly) to this day, hath demed, by worde and worke, good profe wilbe made.” (Sig B1r). *The elements of geometrie of the most auncient philosopher Euclide of Megara. Faithfully (now first) translated into the Englishe toung, by H. Billingsley, citizen of London. Whereunto are annexed certaine scholies, annotations, and inuentions, of the best mathematiciens, both of time past, and in this our age. With a very fruitfull praeface made by M. I. Dee, specifying the chiefe mathematicall scie[n]ces, what they are, and wherunto commodious: where, also, are disclosed certaine new secrets mathematicall and mechanicall, vntill these our daies, greatly missed*, Imprinted at London : By Iohn Daye, [1570 (3 Feb.)]. STC 10560.

is condensed (a “*summe*”) but still various (containing “*sundrie politique discourses*”); it is abundant, with infinite variety, though still bound in a single precious posy.

This editorial practice has a parallel in devotional works, which generally place more emphasis on the sweetness of the prayers or quotations they draw from the Bible.

The immensely popular *Garden of spirituall flowers* (first published in 1610) thus warned its readers about the power of the posy they were about to collect:

YOU who haue walked in this little Garden, and gathered such flowers as may make a Nosegay smelling sweet vnto your soules, & to expell such stinking weeds of sinne as might bring poyson to the same; be not lesse mindfull to apply the soueraigne salve of these sacred comforts to the vpholding of your soules, then men are vsed to be for the preseruing and curing of their weake and decayed bodyes: and for this purpose, behold the carking care of vworldly men, who to aduance themselues in these outward things, neuer cease to afflict both soule and body, so they may effect what themselues so much desire.²⁰

The sovereignty of this scriptural salve is also its divinity, but its effect is contingent upon the participation of the reader in the garden, to selectively and carefully weed and cull. Arthur Dent, publishing in 1603, emphasized the goodness and infinite productivity of God: “the Lords garden is so large and plentifull of all most sweete and pleasant flowers, that where any one hath gathered a Nosegay most fragrant and delectable, another may come after, and gather another not to be contemned. For the wisdom of God is such an vndrainable fountaine and head-spring, that where one hath drawne much before, another may come happely, and draw as much afterward: yea though thousands doe succede, yet can this fountaine neuer be drawne drie.”²¹ The

²⁰ Perkins, William et al. *A garden of spirituall flowers*. Planted by Ri. Ro. Will. Per. Ri. Gree. M.M. and Geo. Web. LONDON, Printed for *T. Pauier*, and are to be sold at his shop entering into the Exchange. 1610. STC 21206. 2nd part, Sig. C6r.

²¹ Arthur Dent, *The ruine of Rome: or An exposition vpon the whole Reuelation Wherein is plainly shewed and proued, that the popish religion, together with all the power and authoritie of Rome, shall ebbe and decay still more and more throughout all the churches of Europe, and come to an vtter ouerthrow euen in this life before the end of the world. Written especially for the comfort of Protestants, and the daunting of*

nosegay in this rendering is not so much an essential condensation as one of infinitely many made possible by the variety and greatness of God – whose garden could never be diminished by the borrowing of slips or flowers, and the virtues of which, in nosegay or fountain, could never be diminished by time or distance.

In Bishop John Northbrooke's *The Poore Mans Garden* (1571), the preternatural productivity of both the book of scripture and the book of nature justifies a radical social agenda, opposed to the enclosure of land as well as text. The work, which collects useful sentences on doctrine from both scripture and from writings of church fathers, presents itself as an open resource from which even the most indigent readers might borrow freely. Thomas Knell Jr.'s Epistle to the Reader treads a fine line between the metaphorical structure of the work itself and the rhetorical invocation of a virtuous, healing garden as an exemplary case of God's goodness. This introduction opens with a broad cosmological narrative, commencing with God's implantation of healing force into nature itself, thus offering praise both to the natural world and to the textual composition organized in its image. The salvific virtues of herbs – both those gathered within the conceit of the book and those available within a broader theological frame – are literal, in medical terms, and allegorical, in soteriological terms. It is sometimes hard to tell, however, when the referent is the volume itself, when it is theological, or when it takes a polemical turn towards contemporary social and agricultural politics. The last erupts into the Epistle just a few sentences after Knell's cosmological introduction, in an attack on enclosed aristocratic gardens:

papists, seminary priests, Iesuites, and all that cursed rabble. (London: Published by Arthur Dent, preacher of the word of God at South-Shoobery in Essex, 1603.) STC 6640.

But notwithstanding the commoditie be greate, yet for the most part it is priuate, for commonlie those that make faire Gardens, thei do so inclose them with huge walles, and high pales, that none hath the fruit of them but them selues, and in the richer mens Gardens, the more seldome do poore men reape anie pleasure by them. But herein I must, as I haue good occasion, commend the labour of this spirituall Gardener, our deere and painefull brother, Iohn Northbrooke, whose Garden is not onelie painefullie purged and cleansed of all weedes, but well furnished with all maner of moste excellent hearbes and flowers, that maie serue to the comforte of the spirituall senses of the faithfull, and for the curing of all diseases of the minde and conscience infected with the corruption, either of the foule blacke aire of ignoraunce, or pestiferous sayinges and decrees of false doctrine and heresie.

This vain and superfluous enclosure is all the more offensive because of the potential use and healing force of the plants contained therein. Northbrooke, by contrast, has “taken great paines no doubt, in gettingyng out of many Gardens, the most excellent Slippes, Seedes & Plantes, and after that he had brought to passe, that no good hearbe was wanting, that might any thing profit or benefit such as are desirous of their soules health.” Nonetheless, he “neither hath walled it about with great Bricke walles, nor hedged it about with quick thornes, neither paled it in.” Instead, he has “left it open to all maner of men: nay, more then so, that he hath made it a common Garden, he hath onely planted it, and geuen it to the poore, it is a common Garden for the poore, you maie be bolde to call it the poore mans Garden, out of which notwithstanding, both riche and poore, maie gather and receiue, not a poore but a verie fertile and riche commoditie.” Both the social philosophy that Knell articulates here and the salvific promise of Northbrooke’s gathering turn on the prelapsarian kernel of natural productivity. The Epistle begins with this claim: “GOD in the beginning when he created the earth, gaue vertue to the same, to bring foorth euery hearbe of the field, that might beare seede in him selfe, after his owne kinde, without gardening, digging, sowing, plantyng, weedyng, or any other trauayle of man.” In the remaining section of this chapter, I will begin to

unfold the resonance of the name that Knell gives to this primal, implanted force, from which his ensuing textual and social philosophies follow: “vertue.”

Accounting for vertuous language

The second part of this chapter will focus on a single keyword that holds particular sway over how the matter of specifically poetic language is imagined in print: “vertue,” a resonant and agile term in the period naming the latent force and potential uses of different kinds of matter. For early modern writers on rhetoric and poetics, plants and language share this lexicon of power and influence: to sway, turn, convert. In a botanical context, a vertue names the power of an herb to help or hurt, especially medicinally, and it emerges repeatedly as a key tool in the attempts of printed flowers and gardens to describe the kind of work they do in the world. Crucially, a vertue is something that must be handled: the announcement of its presence in a text makes a claim on a reader, calling upon their expert manual engagement – or, as these texts reiterate, their “right handling.” I will only introduce vertue here and sketch out the contours of its use and significance. Specifically, these examples show how such a concept mobilizes the matter of plants to theorize a relationship between reader and text especially well-suited to the circumstances of print publication. When the language of vertue does appear, it accompanies images of textual circulation, and so names that which inheres in the matter of a text even as its forms may fragment or disperse. It will re-appear consequentially in Chapter Two, as both George

Gascoigne and Isabella Whitney lean on this same language to figure the strange matter of their own printed books.

In a field of textual and botanical slips and fragments, natural vertue promises a continuous logic of distribution and textual force. The nature of this force, however, requires skilled management, and “right handling.” The authors I consider ask their readers to interact with the book the way they would with a farm animal or garden herb: drawing profit from each requires skilled husbandry and cultivation. This rendering of expression and use resists the proverbial vanity of flowers, their tendency to wither and fade. Instead, it captures what is essential and resilient about a piece of matter, and as such gives form to the errant itineraries of texts in the print marketplace, offering assurances against the problematic ground traversed by the distributed and multiplied book. Its material consistency and implied moral purposiveness thus seem to respond to what may otherwise appear threatening or transgressive both about poetic language (its superfluity and vanity, and effect on the passions) and printed matter (its fugitive multiplicity, and indifferent transgression of social boundaries.)

Are poets and critics writing metaphorically when they describe the “vertues” of their books? Following on hundreds of years of textual florilegia and rhetorical flowers, the “flowers” of these sixteenth-century collections might fairly be called dead metaphors, idiomatically inert tags for certain linguistic or scribal gestures. They are nonetheless reactivated in these specific elaborations, put in live proximity with the world of plants and their everyday uses. Vertue represents a singular point of suture between metaphorical and direct speech, a channel between two ostensibly distinct rhetorical modes, tying the dead metaphor of rhetorical ornament to the conceptual accounting of

rhetorical force. As a language of force, it is not strictly borrowed from a domestic lexicon of flowers and herbs; it can also name the invisible persuasive force of rhetoric and poetic language. In *The Booke named the Governour*, Thomas Elyot describes the eloquence of sentences that “by a vertue inexplicable do drawe unto them the mindes and consent of the herers”; Sidney, in his *Defence of Poesie*, writes that “the euer-praise woorthie Poesie is full of vertue breeding delightfulness.”²² A language of virtuous force thus enters these printed collections under the colors of botanical conceit, but educes by the same stroke the occult physics of rhetorical force. The most extended and complex reflection on this force may be found in Puttenham’s *Arte of English Poesie*, which gathers a printed treasury of the virtues of figures – a storehouse of matter and force left for the poet to unleash to which I will turn in the final section of this chapter.

However, the position of “vertue” as a keyword in the *Arte* reflects an important shift in the operation of this analogy: with this emphasis on the *force* of both plants and language, the connection between the two reaches beyond the conventional structure of the metaphor to engage the reader in an active process of repetition and reproduction. The figure itself opens to the possibilities of practice and technology. Invocations of vertue operate *in potentia* and in the imperative, guiding the hands of readers and consumers and demanding their practical engagement with those latent forces within and without the book. The demands upon a reader that vertue implies align it with a number of other practical genres, examples of which were increasing in number and

²² Elyot (1531), 47^v-48^r; Sidney (1595), Ki^v.

influence throughout the sixteenth century and helped centrally to shape the still nascent market for printed books.²³

The gardening writer Thomas Hill describes virtues as being “annexed” to particular specimens, an adjunct property of the plant itself, cataloged and stored in kitchen garden or field, on call to be realized by a skilled herbalist or huswife. The genre of the printed herbal, meanwhile, is presented as a published catalog of the virtues of plants, their virtues and properties annexed and stored according to their names. In fact, as we will see below, virtue plays much the same role in the inventory of rhetorical tropes and figures offered by Puttenham’s *Arte of English Poesie* as it does in herbals, the contents of which are likewise organized by name, description, and virtues – a set of properties emphasized in William Turner’s *Newe herball* of 1551 by the division of each entry under two headings, the first including a description of a plant’s name, location, and form; and the second, its “virtues.”²⁴

Thus “annexed,” virtues become the preliminary but latent stuff of a storehouse – awaiting their consummation into one kind of force or other. The term is crucial, for example, in Friar Laurence’s picture of the compact power of plants as a (sometimes vicious) double-edged sword:

²³ William Eamon describes these how-to books as “one of typography’s most important contributions to sixteenth-century literature” (*Science and the Secrets of Nature* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1994), 113). For recent surveys of cultures and literatures of didacticism, see Natasha Glaisyer and Sara Pennell, “Introduction,” in *Didactic Literature in England, 1500–1800: Expertise Constructed* (Burlington: Ashgate, 2003); and Juanita Ruys, “Introduction: Approaches to Didactic Literature – Meaning, Intent, Audience, Social Effect,” in Ruys, ed., *What Nature Does Not Teach: Didactic Literature in the Medieval and Early Modern Periods* (Belgium: Brepols Publishers, 2008), 1-38.

²⁴ On herbals themselves as a form of gathering, see Knight, *Of Books and Botany*, 47-48. On the complexities of their use (which rarely followed the terms of those gatherings), especially as inflected by gender, see Rebecca Laroche, *Medical Authority and Englishwomen’s Herbal Texts, 1550-1650* (Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate, 2009). For a still authoritative survey, see Agnes Arber, *Herbals: Their Origin and Evolution*. 2nd Edition. (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1938).

O, mickle is the powerful grace that lies
 In herbs, plants, stones, and their true qualities:
 For naught so vile that on the earth doth live,
 But to the earth some special good doth give;
 Nor aught so good, but, strain'd from that fair use,
 Revolts from true birth, stumbling on abuse:
 Virtue itself turns vice, being misapplied;
 And vice sometime's by action dignified.
 Within the infant rind of this small flower
 Poison hath residence and medicine power.²⁵

Friar Laurence here unites the cosmology and compact aesthetics by which virtue operates: its force inheres, condensed even into the slightest vehicle – “within the infant rind of this small flower.” But planting such a small seed (as the Friar does here, just in Act 2) can nonetheless bear bitter fruit, and the operation of virtue is limned by this possibility of danger.

These vegetable and linguistic storehouses are in the background of the texts I consider here, but they more strongly influence their form than their figurative content. That is, the authors of botanically-named collections only very rarely draw on the matter of plants for a metaphorical vehicle; it is uncommon to see a particular example named (like rue or parsley), as we might otherwise expect in an emblematic handling of flowers or herbs. Rather than exploit the world of plants as a thesaurus for figurative language, they more often rely on the image of storehousing itself, drawing on the fantasy that gardens and fields *can be* such a thesaurus, a repository of value and a gathering of virtues readily detached and redispersed, of natural properties freely appropriated. The vegetable world seems to promise an economy of non-dimishment, in which slips and seeds can be borrowed without harm to the original source. In the following chapter, we

²⁵ *Romeo and Juliet*, (2.3.15-24)

will see how George Gascoigne and Isabella Whitney use the language of vertue ultimately to challenge this fantasy of harmless liberality.

In what follows, I will preserve the early modern spelling of “vertue.” This persistent ‘e’, it seems to me, brings the notion further from *vis*, *vir*, and *virtù*, and closer, first, to *veritas* and *verité* (the vertue of a thing being, to some degree, the very thing). More importantly for my interests here, it marks a silent orthographical alliance with the turns of rhetoric. Physical and poetic vertues convert, subvert, invert, divert, and subvert – that is their “mickle” and “powerful grace.” A vertue in this sense acts not just *like* a rhetorical trope, but *as* one (recast in Latinate form through close orthographic contingency if not actual etymology.) As we will see below, both Puttenham and Plutarch consider ornamental language itself to be virtuous. In his rhetorical catalog, the vertue of a figure is that which does the turning, converting, inverting – the germ of its operation and efficacy. These vertues are nonetheless forces *in potentia*. Julia Reinhard Lupton writes that “such thingly virtues are ever ready to flower into use, yet themselves participate in a dormancy that keeps its own measure in the order of being.”²⁶ An expert poet or orator, like a husbandman or gardener, taps into what Lupton calls “those capacities that subsist in things,” inciting them to fill an office that is already properly theirs. In the context of Elizabeth botanical collections, however, it is not the poet who is presumed to wield this artisanal mastery, but the reader. Vertue is always inscribed or implanted in matter prior to its manipulation or handing; there, it serves to model a non-human agency that inhabits textual or vegetable copies,

²⁶ Lupton, *Thinking with Shakespeare: Essays on politics and life* (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 2011), 10.

and is distributed with them. It is thus realized only at the site of reception, as poison or medicine, according to the right or abusive handling of reader or apothecary.

As I have suggested, references to vertue regularly accompany images of textual circulation, and in these cases offer a choice imaginary of the distributed force of the printed book. We find one example in the spiritual semiotics espoused in Thomas Becon's mid-century devotional books, where a practical metaphysics of textual vertue likewise assumes vegetable form. In his dedicatory epistle to his *Flour of Godly Praiers* (1550), Becon extends the rhetorical exemplarity of the "flower" to an herbally infused account of its worldly power.²⁷ The "flour" of godly prayers suggests the very best, wheat refined and winnowed from the chaff, but, in the book's dedication to Lady Anne of Somerset, its sense is also explicitly floral, as Becon elaborates the book's distinctly herbal virtues:

It is a flower, I graunte. Notwithstandynge suche a flower, as if it be ryghtelye vsed, is of synguler vertue and myghtye in operacyon. No euyl ayer can hurte where the sauouer of thys flower commeth. Yea the deuil the world & the flesh *can* not abide the ayer of thys flower, so mighte is the spiritual operacion therof. The flower geueth a smel in the stretes to the soule of the faythefull, as Cimamone and Balme, that hathe so good a sauoure, yea a swete odoure doth it gyue as it wer mirre of the best.²⁸

Vertue's singularity has a spiritual source: the prayers are drawn, Becon boasts, from scripture whenever possible. As he writes, "I haue trauayled to the vttermooste of my power too vse in these prayers as fewe woordes of my owne as I coulde, and to glene oute of the frutieful fyelde of the sacred scryptures." The fruits of the prayers follow transitively from the fruitfulness of scriptural fields, an efficacy that trails in turn not just into Becon's volume but wherever (he seems to be suggesting) copies may be carried,

²⁷ Becon, remarkably prolific, was also the author of a *Nosegay*, which I will discuss below in the context of Whitney's rendition.

²⁸ Becon, [*The flower of godly prayers*], (London: John Day, 1551), Epistle.

as the flower “geueth a smel in the stretes to the soule of the faythefull.” The multiplication of these vertues is represented by the book itself but (“ryghtelye vsed”) realized in the repetition of the prayers it contains. However, the vertuous operation of the prayers – perhaps the archetypal genre of efficacious speech –turns on their very unmanning, the operation therein not of the human scribe but of the Holy Spirit: “what so euer I founde meete for euerye prayer that I made, that whan it is prayed, not manne but the holy Ghost may seme to speake.” The author or collector, like the gardener, merely allows those native implanted vertues to flow forth; he cultivates or enables – as a kind of steward – but does not conceive them.

The vertue of Becon’s *Flour* joins two themes at the center of this chapter: the unmanning of the text – the way in which a botanical logic of vertue endows the text with a nature that is not the author’s; and its material circulation, the realization of a certain mode of textuality as a name and shape are given to that itinerary. Becon’s geography anticipates the “stynking streetes, or lothsome Lanes”(Sig. A6v) through which Whitney describes carrying the *Nosegay* (as we’ll see in Chapter Two), but both invoke botanical dispersal to give the text’s defensive powers a concrete topographical index. Both geographies imbue the physical book – carried in hand, pocket, or satchel – with talismanic force, as vertue abides in the distinctly portable form of the thing itself. The nature of textual vertue is formed and confirmed in these geographical imaginations, as they offer some guarantee of continuity in the face of inevitable textual dispersal. In Becon’s case, the source of his flower’s “synguler vertue and myghtye . . . operacyon” is its scriptural origin, the spiritual force of which does not diminish in this vernacular gathering or its possible future travels. Though poets like Whitney and Gascoigne, along

with others who will figure in subsequent chapters, never claim that the fields from which their works are gleaned are quite so fruitful as scripture, they nonetheless affirm the potential of their vertuous operation. Though none presumes to give voice to the Holy Ghost, allusions to vertue in preface or paratext effect a similar kind of textual unmanning – an effacement of its composition in favor of an emphasis on its innate properties and future operations, those qualities belonging more to iteration than to origin. Part of this analogy is left blank, however: the portable vertue of Becon's text is insured by the voice of the Holy Ghost; there is no such figure behind the workings of vertue for the secular poets who rely on the same metaphor, leaving their works doubly unmanned.

The Reader's Share of Vertue: Plutarch's Botanical Poetics

In the late sixteenth century, the printed book's internal diversity – so often as a composite of sentences, commonplaces, poems, or other small pieces – was paired with a new sense of the potential diversity of its readership. While textual miscellaneity placed a moral and aesthetic demand on the reader (forcing them to ask, What will I pluck? Will I be a spider or a bee?), the possibility of wider distribution posed an epistemological problem for author and publisher: where does the multiplied text go, and what will happen to it there? The spectre of an unknown number of unknown readers, distributed across unknowable distances, has led a number of scholars to describe the marketplace of

print in this moment as a culture of distinct anxiety.²⁹ In this sense, print posed an urgent epistemological problem, setting non-knowledge as the condition of the textual relation. This is partially a matter of quantity (who can say where so many copies are going) and partially a matter of the terms of the exchange, an anonymous trade of coin and commodity from which the book could be carted across any border, social or geographical. Here I am less interested in the experience of “anxiety” as a feeling or affect on the part of any of the authors or publishers discussed in this chapter than in the kinds of poetic invention and rationalization that follow from the attempt to imagine the material book across this epistemological divide. John Kerrigan has argued that the humanist *topos* of the reader’s share was specifically reactivated in late sixteenth-century print, where “an awareness of reader diversity was ... almost a condition of authorship in the expanding market for print.”³⁰ The language of virtues offers one way of managing such a divide: drawing an essential connection between the present text and its future satisfaction in the hands of a reader, virtue conscripts single copies as deputies on assignment in the hermeneutic hinterlands of country or city, closet or lane. What’s more, it carries with it the generic and prescriptive associations of

²⁹ These conditions of absence and a loss of control are hardly unique to the sixteenth century and are, as Derrida has elaborated at length, a condition of writing in general. The situation of the print marketplace does seem to activate these anxieties in new and compelling forms, however, as Wendy Wall (in her work on the voyeuristic text in *The Imprint of Gender: Authorship and Publication in the English Renaissance* (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1993), 169-226.) and Alexandra Halasz (writing on the commodity form of the pamphlet in *The Marketplace of Print: Pamphlets and the Public Sphere in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1997) have both shown. In addition to Kerrigan, Alan Stewart and Susan Staub have elaborated some of the consequences of this textual anxiety for Gascoigne, as I will discuss at greater length below. Gascoigne, according to Kerrigan “was peculiarly alert to the mixed nature of his audience, and to the danger of encountering spiders”(“The Editor as Reader,” in Raven, Small, and Tadmor, eds., *The Practice and Representation of Reading in England* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1996), 112.)

³⁰ Kerrigan, 112.

practical genres like herbals, physicks, and gardening books: all manuals that turn on enabling the reader to expertly manage those worldly virtues.

In this sense, such a strategy reorients (perhaps even inverts) the “voyeuristic” frame that Wendy Wall has described as a response to the same phenomenon, imagining the book not as a feminine opening onto a closed world, but as a centrifugally flung object, landing in the worlds of readers.³¹ Alexandra Halasz argues that a “phobic conception of widely circulated discourses” leads authors of pamphlets to compulsively “imagine unknown and unknowable readers,” what Halasz frames a kind of technique for the management of this anxiety.³² Conjuring a social world of readers and their habits is an imaginary exercise that is also prescriptive – hailing readers and managing their approach to the book, a technique that surely as often produces failed interpellations and disobedient readers.

³¹ Or laps, in the case of Lyly’s *Euphues*. Lyly, in anthropomorphizing the book (or perhaps animal-morphizing it, by its intimate proximity to both lady and lap dog), reverses the terms of this voyeurism. In an address to the ladies and gentlewomen of England at the beginning of *Euphues and his England*, the book seems to become a kind of surveillance device, infiltrating feminine spaces theoretically closed to the author and to male readers: “It resteth Ladies, that you take the paines to reade it, but at such times, as you spend in playing with your little Dogges, and yet will I not pinch you of that pastime, for I am content that your Dogges lye in your laps, so *Euphues* may be in your hands, that when you shall be wearie in reading of the one, you may bée ready to sport with the other: or handle him as you doe your Iunckets, that when you can eate no more, you tye some in your napkin for children, for if you bée filled with the first part, put the seconde in your pocket for your wayting maydes: *Euphues* had rather lye shut in a Ladies casket, then open in a Schollers studie. Yet after dinner, you may ouerlooke him to kéepe you from sléepe, or if you be haueie, to bring you a sléepe, for to worke vpon a full stomacke is against Phisike, and therefore better it were to holde *Euphues* in your hands, though you let him fall, when you be willing to winke, then to sowe in a clout, and pricke your fingers, when you begin to nod.” Lyly’s language here is shamelessly suggestive, as it moves from the lady’s hands, to her pockets, and is then “shut in a Ladies casket” before finally being taken to bed. Though the passage may begin in playful imitation of Catullus, the book moves far beyond the achievements of Lesbia’s sparrow by the end of the first paragraph as it becomes a kind of paper dildo.

³² Halasz, 12-13.

From the perspective of the reader of poetry, these same virtues are elements in a text's composition, latent properties awaiting discovery and extraction.³³ A canonical touchstone for the power of these virtues from the perspective of the reader is Plutarch's essay on reading poetry, which, like Whitney, Gascoigne, Elyot, and Sidney, relies on an herbal logic of force and effect to describe the active participation of the book in the world of the reader. In doing so, the essay relies on some of the artisanal analogies – with the gardener or physician, for example – which, as we will see below, George Puttenham ultimately disavows. Plutarch's analogies of medicinal use emphasize the *pharmakos*-like properties of poetry, its power to be both noxious and curative (powers rendered as “virtues” in Philemon Holland's 1603 translation.)³⁴ Plutarch's essay responds implicitly to attacks on the dangers of poetry much like those alive in the late sixteenth century – whether they impugn it as a mere vanity and waste of time or a dangerous temptation. Throughout the essay, Plutarch's prescription turns on knowing how to manage the internal variety of the text at hand. That is, the reader's share of virtue – when it comes to poetry – is keyed to the copiousness and miscellaneity of the poetic work.

Often, in Plutarch's various medical examples, the antidotes to textual poisons may be found in other segments of the text itself. The solution, therefore, is not to uproot the textual vine but to ensure textual variety. As such, a reader is able to rely on portions

³³ In some of its sixteenth-century articulations, this version of poetic language would be in line with what Thomas Greene calls a “conjunctive semiotics” in *Poetry, Signs, and Magic* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2005).

³⁴ Holland, trans., *The philosophie, commonlie called, the morals vvritten by the learned philosopher Plutarch of Chaeronea* (London: Printed by Arnold Hatfield, 1603.) See also Kerrigan's reading of Plutarch in “The Editor as Reader,” 114-116.

of a work to inoculate themselves against others, just as the expert apothecary knows that the wings and feet of the Spanish fly counter the poisonous effect of its body: “But like as Physicians are of opinion, that notwithstanding the greene Flies *Cantharides* be of themselves venemous and a deadly poison; yet their wings and feete be helpfull and holsome: yea and of vertue to frustrate and kill the malice of the said flies: even so in the Poemes and writings of Poets, if there be one Nowne or Verbe hanging to a sentence that we feare will do harme, which Nowne or Verbe may in some sort weaken the said hurtfull force, we are to take hold thereof, and to stand upon the signification of such words more at large”(28). A poem should be likewise dissected – anatomized but not wasted or destroyed.

Plutarch continues reasoning on this horticultural register by recounting the story of Lycurgus, who erred embarrassingly when he responded to widespread drunkenness by having all of the vines in the realm “cut downe and destroyed.” He should have known that mingling, not uprooting, was the solution: “ he should rather have brought the nymphes (which are the spring waters) neerer, and keepe in order that foolish, furious and outrageous god *Bacchus* as *Plato* saith, with another goddesse that was wise and sober. For the mingling of water with wine, delaieth and taketh away the hurtfull force thereof: but killeth not withall the holsome vertue that it hath.” The same is true of poetry, Plutarch goes on, which “we ought not to cut off, nor abolish,” because we may in the process be amputating some piece of wisdom. The solution to the menace of poetry is found not in its suppression but in the increase of its variety – the collection of more, not less. His conclusive illustration is drawn from the apothecary’s cabinet:

For as the herbe Mandragoras growing neere unto a vine, doth by infusion transmit her medicinable vertue into the wine that commeth of it, and procureth in them that drinke afterwards thereof, a more milde desire and inclination to sleepe soundly: Even so, a Poëme receiving reasons and arguments out of Philosophie, and intermingling the same with fables and fictions, maketh the learning and knowledge therein contained to be right amiable unto yoong men, and soone to be conceived.³⁵

Here, the mandrake infuses the vine with vertue as philosophy infuses poetry with vertue, a mingling of kind effected by proximity. It is curious here that Plutarch turns to the mandrake – a mythical icon of the danger of taking up a root – in an argument against the uprooting of poetry. All of these botanical allusions, however, suggest strong moral consequences. Both of Plutarch’s medicinal examples – mandrake and the beetle *cantharides*, or Spanish fly – are aphrodisiacs, a suggestion that Plutarch is in fact couching in these medicinal analogies a disquisition on the dangers of sexuality in poetry. These implications would easily have been read as such by an early modern reader, for whom both substances were erotic by-words.

Both examples presume a heterogeneous composition of textual matter: a material inference that, we might say, gives ontology to the text while denying it an essence. Plutarch’s prescription is that the text be taken as a miscellaneous store to be used and handled, not as a univocal message, moral, or command. Gascoigne will update this physics according to a more contemporary idiom in his introductions to the *Posies*, comparing the written word to a Paracelsian view of matter: “*Paracelsus*, and sundrie other Phisitions and Philosophers, declare, that in everie thing naturall there is to be founde Salt, Oyle, and Brimstone. And I am of opinion, that in every thing which is written (the holy scriptures excepted) there are to be founde wisdom, follie, emulation,

³⁵ Ibid, 19.

and detraction.”³⁶ This natural philosophical claim may have already been present in nascent form in 1573, which promised to offer any reader *Aliquid salis* – some amount of salt, a reminder of the deep prior entwining of the physics of matter and the physics of literary taste. At this moment in the *Posies*, however, the invocation of Paracelsus alights upon the figure of venom that runs through the work, as it does through Holland’s translation of Plutarch, and as it did in Friar Laurence’s reflections on herbal medicine. Though Paracelsus’s understanding of the composition of matter may have been known to Gascoigne’s readers, the German physician was best known for his related theory of *arcana* – namely, that any substance (however powerfully poisonous) could be curative in the right dosage.³⁷ Matter is not, in itself, harmful or curative; it simply demands, like a poem, the “right handling.”

³⁶ Cunliffe, ed., 16. On the work of authorial inoculation in Gascoigne, see Amina Alyal, “Italian Weeds and English Bodies: translating ‘The Adventures of Master FJ,’” in Mike Pincombe, ed., *Travels and Translations in the Sixteenth Century* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004), 104-119.

³⁷ Paracelsus writes: “All things are poison, and nothing is without poison: the *Dosis* alone makes a thing not poison.... Now since nothing exists which is not poison, why do you correct? Only in order that the poison may do no harm. If I too have corrected in like manner, why then do you punish me? You know that *Argentum vivum* is nothing but poison and daily experience proves it. Now you have this in use, you anoint patients with it, much more thickly than a cobbler anoints leather with grease. You fumigate with its cinnabar, you wash with its sublimate and do not wish people to say it is poison; yet it is poison and you introduce such poison into man.... If man eats it, it becomes human flesh, through a dog dog’s flesh, through a cat cat’s flesh. Thus is it with medicine: it becomes what you make of it. If it is possible to make evil out of good, it is also possible to make good out of evil. No one should condemn a thing who knows not its transmutation and who knows not what separation does.” (Temkin, trans. 23). Jonathan Gil Harris untangles the uses Paracelsian conceptions of poison in early modern political models in “‘Ev’ry poison good for some use’: The poisonous political pharmacy and its discontents” (in *Foreign bodies and the body politic: Discourses of Social Pathology in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1998). Andrew Weeks has related Paracelsian *arcana* to the Lutheran conception of evil: “The notion that poison infects all things appears as the medical or alchemical equivalent of Luther’s sense of the omnipresence of evil. This affinity with the Lutheran worldview is underscored by the fact that Paracelsus does not offer any evidence to prove the presence of poison in all things, but instead appeals to the reader to confess as much: ‘everyone has to confess that this is so’ (*dis muss ein ietlicher bekennen*)” (Weeks, *Paracelsus: speculative theory and the crisis of the early Reformation*, 154). For systematic treatments of Paracelsian influence, see Walter Pagel, *Paracelsus: An Introduction to Philosophical Medicine in the Era of the Renaissance* (Basel: Karger, 1958); Charles Webster, *From Paracelsus to Newton: Magic and the Making of Modern Science* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1982); and Allen Debus, *The English Paracelsians* (London: Oldbourne, 1965).

A keystone of this projection of responsibility onto the reader is the proverbial coupling of the spider and the bee, a borrowing from Plutarch found throughout late sixteenth-century prefaces. Paired with the spider, the bee represents not only the organized gathering and storage of sources into common-placed cells, but the moral management of that textual matter – even, in some cases, its active purification.

Plutarch's influential analogy runs: "like as Bees have this propertie by nature to finde and sucke the mildest and best honie, out of the sharpest and most eager flowers; yea and from among the roughest and most prickly thornes: even so children and yoong men if they be well nurtured and orderly inured in the reading of Poemes, will learne after a sort to draw alwaies some holesome and profitable doctrine or other, even out of those places which moove suspition of lewd and absurd sense"(Holland, trans., 43).

The spider and bee thus become icons of the burden upon the reader to extract virtue from even the most malicious literary example. As I have suggested, these distinctions between good and bad readers turn on their abilities to manage and extract virtues from highly miscellaneous matter; a good reader – both morally and aesthetically – operates not just by pruning but by analyzing, selecting, and purifying.

For Elizabeth poets and publishers, the casting of readers as either spider or bee belongs to a general articulation of readerly ethics. At the same time, it conveniently offers itself up as a ready tactic for authorial defense, dismissing potential detractors as either morally venomous or aesthetically perverse. The spider and bee often appear specifically as tools available for the managed reading of classical texts, an inoculation

against veins of paganism or obscenity. Arthur Golding, warning his readers about potential dangers lurking within his translation of the *Metamorphoses*, recasts the metaphor as a kind of prescription:

Then take theis woorkes as fragrant flowers most full of pleasant iuce
The which the Bee conveying home may put too wholesome use
And which the spyder sucking on too poyson may convert,
Through venym spred in all her limbes and native in hir hart.
For too the pure and Godly mynd, are all things pure and clene.³⁸

The first couplet of these lines (which specifically tell the reader how to take, or receive (*recipe*) the text) is closely echoed by Isabella Whitney's own recipe, as we'll see in Chapter Two, where she helpfully instructs her reader to read just like the figure described as a profitable bee by Golding. Curiously, here, conversion, the *Metamorphoses*' central trope, is assigned to the venomous spider, while the bee merely conveys and "puts to wholesome use" – something that it does once it has conveyed the juice "home," a touchingly pedestrian word in this context, evocative of a domestic scene better suited to the distillation and concoction of an herbalist than the wild classical geographies of Golding's translation. Transformation and transport thus represent two different kinds of reading.

³⁸ Golding, l. l. 163-7. He also issues a second warning: "If any stomacke be so weake as that it cannot brooke, / The lively setting forth of things described in this booke, / I give him counsell too absteine untill he bee more strong, / And for to use Ulysses feat ageinst the Meremayds song" (215-8). Compare also Harington's Ariosto, where he is concerned about leaving readers 'half offended that I have not made some directions that you may finde out, and read them immediately' ... 'I beseech you ... to read as my author ment them, to breed detestation and not delectation. Remember, when you read of the old lecherous friar, that a fornicator is one of the things that God hateth" (ctd Alyal, 115). This close relationship between translation and poison deserves more consideration than I am able to give it here, especially as their connection developed in Renaissance England, and the correlate association of "literary" reading practices with the figure of inoculation, or its failure.

Puttenham's Double Vertue

My final example considers the sense of vertue from the perspective of the creation of poetry. In Puttenham's *Arte of English Poesie*, "vertue" plays an ultimately ambivalent role in the craft of poesy, though a crucial one, especially insofar as the *Arte* is in fact a handbook – a guide or how-to in the production of courtly verse. In Puttenham's depiction of cultural and artisanal production, the poet or maker, a craftsman analogized to gardener or physician, manipulates the vertues of language just as those other artisans manipulate the vertues of natural bodies, whether plant or human. Here, again, the proximity of these poetic discourses to practical genres help shapes the place and sense of "vertue" within them. Ultimately, though, Puttenham expresses a deep ambivalence about this practical outlook – and its management of those material vertues – turning away both from this artisanal view of poetic production and from the possibility of its pedagogical reproduction in his own practical guide.

Puttenham's treatment of poetic ornament, comprising the third, longest, and most significant of the *Arte*'s three books, is bookended by vertue.³⁹ "Of Ornament" begins by classifying all "ornament Poeticall" into "two sortes according to the double vertue and

³⁹ Rebhorn and Whigham describe Book III as "Puttenham's masterwork" ("Introduction," 47), both because of its intricate treatment of trope and figure, and because of his more discursive treatment of style and decorum both in poetry and in court. It is also the most widely cited by contemporary critics, perhaps because of the catalog-like organization of tropes and figures that comprises most of its chapters, enlivened by Puttenham's distinctive style of naming each example. As Jenny Mann has noted, Puttenham invents more than a hundred new titles for figures of speech. On the politics of these vernacular names see Mann, *Outlaw Rhetoric: Figuring Vernacular Eloquence in Early Modern England* (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 2012), 45-6.

efficacie of figures”⁴⁰; later, in a concluding chapter on the nature of poetic creation (or, the poet’s “dissimulation”), “vertue” acts as a flashpoint between art and nature, a keyword enabling formative but ambivalent connections between poet, gardener, and physician. In the intervening pages, many of them comprising a long catalog of figures, the term likewise appears regularly, peppered across descriptions of individual examples, naming what is distinctive and useful in those cases. This important book on poetic ornament is thus framed and perfused with “vertues” – some explicitly botanical or physiological, some explicitly linguistic or poetic, though this division does not easily survive Puttenham’s own distinctions and elaborations.

Throughout much of Book III, “vertue” functions as a term of art in its own right. Figures for Puttenham are themselves vertuous, or, as he treats in detail, more or less efficacious in their operation. Figurative language itself, meanwhile, is defined by its constitutive vertues, as he establishes at the outset of the third book when he names the “double vertue” of poetic ornament. Vertue, in other words, is at the heart of how Puttenham understands the strange matter of poetic language, with its natural activity and openness to human artifice. Especially in the catalog of Book III, figures *have* virtues and readers are being taught to use them. In this sense, the *Arte* operates much like an herbal in form and function – the most important compendia of vertues available to early modern readers, which were increasingly circulated in print through the later half of the sixteenth century. Like an herbal, Puttenham’s catalog of figures is a didactic storehouse of these potential energies, examples to be both admired and learned from, referred to and reused.

⁴⁰ Puttenham, *Arte*, 119.

These connections between gatherings of figures and plants are made more generically explicit by Henry Peacham, who frames his 1577 rhetorical handbook as *The Garden of Eloquence, Conteyning the Figures of Grammar and Rhetorick, from whence maye bee gathered all manner of flowers, Colours, ornaments, exornations, formes and fashions of speech*. Peacham's handbook invites the orator or poet to pluck these instrumental flowers, while Puttenham, perhaps more subtly, structures the third book of the *Arte* similarly as a catalog of ornamental "flowers," with a guide to their properties, vertues, and right handling. The poet nonetheless approaches it as an herbalist does a garden, with an eye to identification, setting or decorum (or seasonability), and the right handling of relevant vertues.

The vertues of a figure are similarly inventoried by Puttenham as part of his rhetorical catalogue. Certainly, the place of the word is not as standardized as it generally is in herbals (Puttenham's aggregation of figures is likewise much less regularized than Turner's herbal, for example); but "vertue" nonetheless acts as a specific term of art, prescribing the use of a figure and its characteristic property. Allegory, which Puttenham calls "the chief ringleader and captaine of all other figures," "has vertue of so great efficacie as it is supposed no man can pleasantly vtter and perswade without it." When he defines it in the next paragraph, it is introduced "properly & in his principall vertue" – a formula that appears at various moments of definition and distinction throughout Book III's catalog of ornament.⁴¹ They are both in this sense inventories of the properties of different kinds of things, accountings of the storehouse of nature and language. Readers, in both cases, are meant to breed and gather more, to take

⁴¹ Ibid, 155.

extractions, and make forceful use of those material capacities. As the example of allegory, “the ringleader,” makes clear, vertue for Puttenham is a language of power: it describes what figures can effect, and allegory, with its “vertue of so great efficacie,” thus takes a hierarchically superior position.⁴²

Vertue is in fact Puttenham’s keyword for how poetic power operates. This “double vertue” of poetic language frames the third book, as I have suggested, and is at the heart of how Puttenham understands “ornament Poeticall.” At the outset of this chapter on the nature of poetic language, Puttenham classifies ornament into what he calls the double vertue and efficacy of figures. As he describes this distinction, however, the meaning of “vertuousness” seems increasingly ambiguous. “This ornament then is of two sortes,” he begins, “one to satisfie & delight th’eare onely by a goodly outward shew set vpon the matter with wordes, and speaches smothly and tunably running: another by certaine intendments or sence of such wordes & speaches inwardly working a stirre to the mynde.” The first was called *enargia* by the Greeks (after *argos*, light); the second, *energia*, after *ergon*, or work, “because it wrought with a strong and vertuous operation.”⁴³ Puttenham thus classifies these two kinds of ornament according to their operation – that is, how they work. The first, through analogy with a visual effect, results in aural stimulation – it “satisfies and delights the ear only by a goodly outward shew set upon the matter with words.” Its workings and its effects are

⁴² We might consider, by analogy, the language of sovereignty as it was used in relation to herbal medicine: according to its particular vertues, an herb was said to be “sovereign” for a given condition if it could effectively counter it or offer a cure. In both cases, a political language of power blurs with an ecological and linguistic account of force.

⁴³ Puttenham’s articulation of this distinction is quite idiosyncratic, and, as Linda Galyon has described, even drawing the distinction was unusual among treatments of rhetoric. More remarkable, perhaps, is the *sonic* lustre he derives by displacing the *argos* of *enargia* from light to sound. See Linda Galyon, “Puttenham’s Enargeia and Energeia: New Twists for Old Terms,” *Philological Quarterly* 60 (1981): 29-40.

external, on the level of the surface. The second works with more depth: “by certain intendments or sense of such vertu & speaches inwardly working a stirre to the mynde.” The first is glorious, the second is strong and virtuous. “Figure,” Puttenham writes, “breedeth them both”, giving either gloss or efficacy. Poetic language, in Puttenham’s depiction here, is a kind of living thing on its own, with generative powers. By the end of this paragraph, however, vertue has become a problem. *Enargia* is defined restrictively; it satisfies and delights the ear *only*, it gives gloss *only*. The language of force and vertue meanwhile – which in the title of the chapter promised a “double vertue and efficacy” – leaves lustre behind and attaches itself to *energeia*. As a term of classification and discrimination, it names the duplicity of language, or of linguistic and poetic performance. But as a property and power, it gives its force only to *energeia* – not to the surface of language but to its forceful substance. This tension is at the heart of Puttenham’s conception of poetic language and of the work of the poet: is it an ornamental performance – a kind of show or luster? Or is it an operation of work and energy – that is, virtuous? What was introduced as a “double vertue” turns out to be a split between ornament’s more and less vertuous functions.

“Vertue” again plays a central role in the chapter that serves as the *Arte*’s effective conclusion, where Puttenham comes closest to making a position statement on the writing of poetry – though our key term here serves under several potentially contradictory guises.⁴⁴ In a discussion of how and when the courtly poet ought to dissemble, he asks where art should appear and where “the naturall is more commendable

⁴⁴ This is the final full chapter before a true final chapter dedicated to the queen, so serves as an argumentative and thematic conclusion.

than the artificiall” – calling upon the debate between art and nature so central not just to Renaissance discourses of poetry but to discussions of teaching and gardening, among other topics.⁴⁵ Puttenham divides the relations between art and nature into four categories, of which I will focus on the first two. First, art may be an “ayde and coadiutor” to nature, a “furtherer of her actions to good effect.” He calls upon the physician and gardener as examples of these “good and cunning artificers.” The art of physic supplies the wants of nature “by helping the naturall concoction, retention, distribution, expulsion, and other vertues, in a weake and vnhealthie bodie.” The gardener, meanwhile, waters, weeds, and “cherisheth” his plants, and “so makes that neuer, or very seldome any of them miscarry, but bring forth their flours and fruites in season.” This kind of engagement is seasonable, following the vertues and inclinations of the materials at hand – “furthering” those “actions” nature already has underway.

But art might also do more with respect to nature’s actions, and, in a more aggressive role, act as “an alterer of them, and in some sort a surmounter of her skill, so as by meanes of it her owne effects shall appeare more beautifull or straunge and miraculous.” The physician, for example, might be able to give his patient long life “many yeares ouer and aboue the stint of his first and naturall constitution.” The gardener, by his own art, might likewise alter the course of nature, and “make an herbe, or flowr, or fruite, come forth in his season without impediment, but also will embellish the same in vertue, shape, odour and taste, that nature of her selfe woulde neuer haue done.” With this alteration, the “embellishment” of vertue brings it beyond itself, to something that

⁴⁵ See Rebecca Bushnell’s discussion of art, nature, labor, and pleasure in *Green Desire*, esp. 84-107, as well as her discussion of botanical analogy in *A Culture of Teaching: Early Modern Humanism in Theory and Practice* (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1996), 73-116.

would have remained unrealized without human intervention. Such operations are “most singular, when they be most artificiall.”⁴⁶ In both cases, then, it turns out that these specialized labors (and their products) are defined by their relations to *vertues* – the ability to tap into, solicit, cultivate, manipulate those same aspects of vegetable and human matter to which the gardener and physician direct their interventions and collaborations. As Puttenham has suggested to this point in the chapter, a poet or orator, working with language’s “double vertue,” likewise engages – furthering or altering – those active capacities.

However, these analogies are not the final word on the poet’s engagement with his virtuous materials. At the chapter’s conclusion, Puttenham breaks from the comparisons with gardeners, joiners, and physicians that have guided him to this point, writing that, despite what the poet shares with these figures, “it is not altogether with him as with the crafts man.”⁴⁷ In each previous example, art is seen to act on and through nature. Yet, the poet or maker that he has been cultivating throughout the handbook, Puttenham asserts, is neither alterer nor coadjutor, but more like nature herself: “in our maker or Poet, which restes onely in deuisse and issues from an excellent sharpe and quick inuention, holpen by a cleare and bright phantasie and imagination, he is not as the painter to counterfaite the naturall by the like effects and not the same, nor as the gardiner aiding nature to worke both the same and the like, nor as the Carpenter to worke effectes vtterly vnlike, but euen as nature her selfe *working by her owne peculiar vertue and proper instinct* and not by example or meditation or exercise as all other

⁴⁶ Puttenham, *Arte*, 254.

⁴⁷ Puttenham, *Arte*, 256.

artificers do”(my italics). The “example or meditation or exercise” Puttenham rejects here is the stuff of pedagogy – that is, the ostensible instructional project of the *Arte* and the promise it offers its reader. The poetic maker likewise casts off the prosthetic yoke of the craftsman’s tools, and, indeed, of analogy itself, as Puttenham dramatically disavows the previous pages of artisanal comparisons and asserts for the poet a radical autonomy – something much closer to the courtly standards of grace and *sprezzatura* than the labor and collaboration of gardening or medicine. That is, Puttenham rejects the pedagogy of practical knowledge but replaces it with – *vertue*, though in another guise. The poet works not *with* nature but *like* nature herself, autonomously “working by her owne peculiar vertue and proper instinct.”

The novel likeness with nature herself is of a different order from the analogies that precede it. Eloquence becomes a vertue in itself – not an arranger or gatherer of found vertues, operating not on or through nature but as *a* nature, with the poet relying solely on his proper organs and faculties (including invention, phantasie, and imagination). Language and utterance now stand as “the vertues of a well constitute body and minde” – a human possession.⁴⁸ Unlike the familiar technologies of gardening and carpentry, this abrupt literary naturalism is not easily reproduced or imitated; there is no method to follow or repeat. Rather, the passage performs the throwing off of method, the rejection of instruction itself – indeed, the rejection of the relational and collaborative approach to literary vertues that the *Arte* has endorsed to this point. In other words, with this final flourish, Puttenham has written off many of the dozens of preceding chapters. The utility or inutility of Puttenham’s *Arte* has been a central question in critics’

⁴⁸ Ibid, 255.

engagement with the work. With its complex structure and rambling style, its frequent undercutting of its own lessons, and its long discourses on courtly decorum, modern readers have wondered whether such a work can be presumed to actually *teach* anything about vernacular poetry.⁴⁹ Since Daniel Javitch's influential reading of the *Arte* as "one of the most significant arts of conduct of the Elizabethan age," scholars have taken its ambition to be as much social as poetic, a project in training young men for the court more than a practical guide to the writing of poetry.⁵⁰ In this context, its lessons on decorum – a kind of habitus Puttenham eventually leaves undefinable – are more important than its lessons on prosody. An attention to "vertue" thus brings this discussion of the *Arte* into conversation with a question that has long nagged scholars of the Puttenham's handbook, in particular, and of instructional books in general. Practical books and manuals of instruction represented a huge portion of material printed in the sixteenth century, and a rhetoric of utility was central to their self-presentation. But, as literary scholars and historians of science and art are increasingly

⁴⁹ In their readings of Puttenham, Derek Attridge and Jonathan Goldberg each take more explicitly deconstructive approaches to this problem of utility, finding, from different angles, a fundamental undecidability at the core of the *Arte*. See Attridge, *Peculiar Language: Literature as Difference from the Renaissance to James Joyce* (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1988), 17-45; Goldberg focuses in part on the demands of the queen: "As Puttenham's *Arte* forever reminds its readers, especially in its chapters on decorum, there are finally no rules for courtiership. The desire of the sovereign remains incalculable" (*Sodomities: Renaissance Texts, Modern Sexualities* (New York: Fordham UP, 2010), 35.) In both cases, the rules for poetry and for decorum are constitutively unstable and indeterminate.

⁵⁰ Javitch, *Poetry and Courtliness in Renaissance England*, 69. See also: Whigham, *Ambition and Privilege: The Social Tropes of Elizabethan Courtesy Theory* (Berkeley: U of California P, 1984); Louis Montrose, "Of Gentlemen and Shepherds: The Politics of Elizabethan Pastoral Form," *ELH* 50:3 (Fall 1983): 433-52; Heinrich F. Plett, "Aesthetic Constituents in the Courtly Culture of Renaissance England," *New Literary History* 14:3 (Spring 1983): 610-11; Jonathan V. Crewe, "The Hegemonic Theater of George Puttenham," *English Literary Renaissance* 16 (1986), 71-85; Rosemary Kegl, *The Rhetoric of Concealment: Figuring Gender and Class in Renaissance Literature* (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1984), 11-42.

wondering: Just how useful were they?⁵¹ How and what do they instruct, and how do readers engage with them

Tellingly, however, it is still to a language of “vertue” that Puttenham turns in this crucial moment. But it is a vertue of the poet’s own possession, not residing in the capacities and rhythms of his materials. If Becon’s invocation of the Holy Spirit unmanned the generation of his text, Puttenham here forcefully re-mans the production of poetry. If his turn from vertuous force disenchanting poetic language, he nonetheless – and by the same stroke – re-enchants the newly vertuous figure of the poet. If, throughout the *Arte* and in herbal practice and textual culture, vertue represented an alternate sovereignty, a capacity proper to things, vegetable slips, or poetic figures, Puttenham has here reclaimed it as the private property and power of the poet. As we have seen, vertue functions at times by metaphor and analogy – drawing comparisons between the work of the poet and the virtuous labor of craftspeople. But it is also a descriptive language of power. By the end of the brief chapter, vertue has broken out of this logic of applied craft and become a proper possession of the poet himself, who now works “by his own vertue,” according to his own sovereign nature. Here, the terms of the analogy shift into the negative: though he may sometimes look like a craftsman, the poet is also *not* like the craftsman, Puttenham writes. Significantly, this represents not just an ideological shift (in terms of what a poet is and the embeddedness of poetry in the

⁵¹On the possibilities and limits of the work of instruction in practical manuals, see especially Pamela Smith’s recent work, including “Why Write a Book? From Lived Experience to the Written Word in Early Modern Europe,” *Bulletin of the German Historical Institute*, 47 (Fall 2010), 25-50; and “Craft Secrets and the Ineffable in Early Modern Europe,” *Secrets and Knowledge in Medicine and Science, 1500-1800*, ed. by Elaine Leong and Alisha Rankin (Ashgate, 2011), 47-66.. For a particular case studies that explores some of these limits, and what other uses such books might serve, see Jennifer Mylander, “Early Modern “How-to Books: Impractical Manuals and the Construction of Englishness in the Atlantic World,” *JEMCS* 9.1 (2009), 123-46.

world) but a generic one as well: the book becomes useless – it has nothing more to teach – at the moment it casts off this prior sense of worldly virtue.

Chapter Two

Behind the Green Door: Enclosure and Disclosure in Gascoigne, Plat, and Whitney

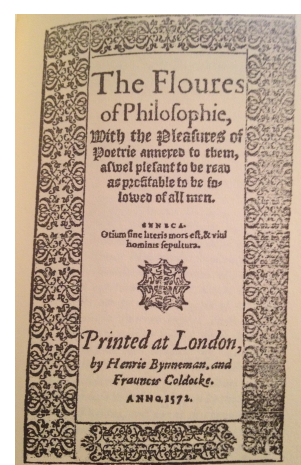
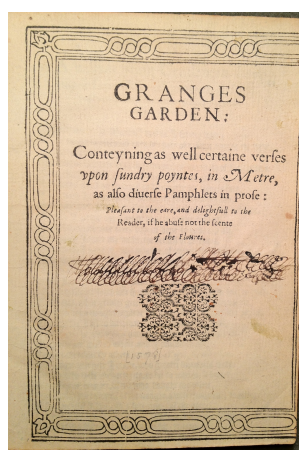
Among the diverse range of botanically-named collections published during Elizabeth's reign can be found a discrete but significant subset of miscellanies from the 1570s: all including poems by young members of the Inns of Court, all named for flowers or gardens, and all drawing on a similar set of rhetorical and visual conventions. The most influential of these was George Gascoigne's 1573 *Hundreth Sundrie Flowres*, which inspired imitations like John Grange's 1577 *Golden Aphroditis*, to which was appended what he or the printer called a poetical garden, Timothy Kendall's *Flouvers of Epigrammes* (1577), Humphrey Gifford's *Posie of Gilloflowers* (1580), and George Whetstone's *Rocke of Regard* (1576), comprised of sections including a "castle of delight," "garden of vnthriftinesse," "arbour of vertue," and "ortchard of repentance." Gascoigne's collection was preceded by Hugh Plat's 1572 *Floures of Philosophie*, which, like all of these other examples, included a mixture of prose and verse, which I will discuss in the latter part of this chapter as the direct inspiration for Isabella Whitney's complex response in *A Sweet Nosgay* (1573). Though next to nothing is known of Gifford's life, we can tie each of the other poets directly to the Inns: Gascoigne was a member of Gray's Inn; Plat of Lincoln's Inn; Kendall of Staple Inn; Whetstone belonged to Furnival's Inn, the Inn of Chancery attached to Lincoln's Inn (and was a close associate of Gascoigne's); and, though we're not sure of his specific

affiliation, Grange is described in his book as a “student in the common lavve of Englande.”⁵² Each belongs to a surge in the membership rolls of the all-male legal societies that occurred during the 1560s and ‘70s. Most of these literary lawyers, like the other Inns of Court poets Barnaby Googe and George Turberville, were born to provincial gentry families, and had spent some time at university before coming to London and contributing to the literary – and literarily very self-conscious – culture of the Inns.

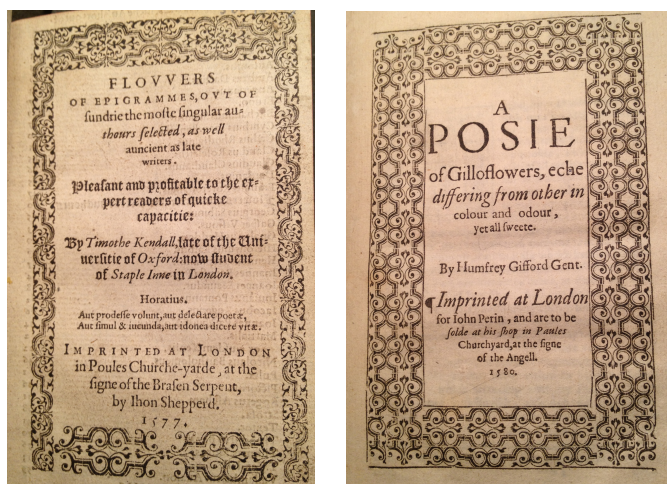
The gardens and flowers of these young lawyers were highly miscellaneous, each containing some combination of verse and prose – some offered proverbial wisdom, others narrative romance – but all included a gathering of lyric poems. The works in question draw from a tight set of rhetorical conventions – from the assortment of material in the volume, to their modes of addressing the reader, to the centrality of answer-poems and other occasional verse explicitly composed in the company of friends. Even the physical forms of the books draw affiliations between them (as may be seen in the images below.) In each case, the connection between the garden and the book turns on a tense tug of war between figures of enclosure and figures of circulation: of plants, poems, and people, whether within the boards of a book, the gates of a garden, or the walls of the Inns themselves. Jessica Winston argues that the poetic production of the Inns in this period works to mold a collective professional identity, a creative and ideological project served by the frequency with which poets respond to one another in

⁵² Most of these identifications are advertised on the works themselves, but can be confirmed in the records of the Inns and elsewhere. Additional biographical information is available in the *ODNB*: A. H. Bullen, ‘Gifford, Humphrey (*fl.* 1580)’, rev. Elizabeth Goldring, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004 ; Emma Smith, ‘Whetstone, George (*bap.* 1550, *d.* 1587)’, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004 ; Matthew Steggle, ‘Grange, John (*b.* 1556/7)’, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004.

allusions and answer-poems, for example.⁵³ The close echoes among the botanically organized collections I am considering represent another way in which such connections are forged, as poets pick up and transform one another's language, signaling affiliation by trafficking in the shared figurative economy of plants. Botanical forms, in these extended (and extendable) metaphors, thus offer a language in which to render the movements of circulation within the friendly gift economy of poetic slips, as they invite readers into the garden to sample and borrow. But they also provide the figurative stuff of these borrowings, helping to limn the contours of this imitative literary community.



⁵³ Winston, "Lyric poetry at the early Elizabethan Inns of Court: Forming a professional community," in Archer, Goldring, and Knight, eds., *The Intellectual and Cultural Worlds of the Early Modern Inns of Court* (Manchester: Manchester UP, 2011), 223-44.



This tension between enclosure and access is a common motif in books with horticultural titles, and, indeed, in the practice and politics of husbandry in the period. Instructional works like Thomas Tusser's *Hundreth Pointes of Husbandrie* (initially published in 1557, but first including an explicit discussion of enclosure in the edition of 1573) and Thomas Hill's various gardening manuals explicitly addressed the history and politics of enclosing land for planting and grazing – a current debate that would have been familiar to these young lawyers. And the physical enclosure of gardens and other plots was an increasingly urgent concern to landowners, including (as we'll see below) the Inns of Court themselves, whose territory at the center of London seemed ever more encroached upon by the growing city around them.⁵⁴

In these collections, botanical figure holds out a promise to resolve an implicit and fundamental tension between the enclosure of the book or garden and the circulation

⁵⁴ On the process and politics of enclosure in this period see Joan Thirsk, "Changing Attitudes to Enclosure in the Seventeenth Century", in *The Festschrift for Professor Ju-Hwan Oh on the Occasion of His Sixtieth Birthday* (Taegu [Korea], 1991), 518-43; and "Enclosing and Engrossing," in Joan Thirsk, ed., *The Agrarian History of England and Wales, Volume IV: 1500-1640* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1967), 200-55; McRae, Andrew. *God Speed the Plough: The Representation of Rural England, 1500-1640* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1996), chs.1, 2, 5 and 6. On the role of enclosure in a specifically literary context in this period, see Stephen Burt and John Archer, eds., *Enclosure Acts: Sexuality, Property, and Culture in Early Modern England* (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1994) and Jennifer Munroe, *Gender and the Garden in Early Modern English Literature* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008), 18-20.

of its pieces. Provided that this was a restricted circulation, the enclosure of the garden and the generative transmission of slips were by no means incompatible: the bibliographical garden and the circulation of texts could be depicted in concert as an idealized version of the homosocial space of the Inns of Court – a space imagined in terms of lack of constraint, free exchange among equals, circulation without friction or loss. At the same time, the unpredictable itineraries of the printed book – who knows in whose hands it could end up? – challenged the cloistered sphere on which these coterie imaginatively depended.

The homosocial world of the Inns of Court, from John Donne in the 1590s to the poetic miscellanies of the 1620s and 30s, depended on manuscript circulation among friends.⁵⁵ But manuscript circulation was not the only mode that these young lawyers of the 1570s pursued: they went into print. By publishing poetry in this way, they potentially risked marring their reputations by what J.W. Saunders called “the stigma of print.”⁵⁶ For these non-aristocrats, however, the danger of meeting social discredit by publishing poetry did not so much threaten a repressive force as it offered an occasion for the production of more verse, often in the form of extended paratextual conceits. As we’ll see below, the elaboration of textual encounters in botanical terms – especially violent images of textual uprooting and waste – responds specifically to the risks associated with this adventure of appearing in print. In this sense, these poets

⁵⁵ On the manuscript circulation and cultures of semi-publicity in the Inns, see Harold Love, *Scribal Publication in Seventeenth-Century England*, 224-9.

⁵⁶ Saunders, J. W. “The stigma of print: A note on the social bases of Tudor poetry” in *Essays in Criticism* 1 (1951) 139-164. Saunders’ thesis has met a number of revisions since its publication. See, for example, Steven May’s argument that it is poetry, not print, that brings discredit in “Tudor Aristocrats and the Mythical ‘Stigma of Print,’” *Renaissance Papers* (1980) 11-18; Wall, *The Imprint of Gender*; Nita Krevans, “Print and the Tudor Poets,” in *Reconsidering the Renaissance* (Binghamton, NY: Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies, 1992), 301-14.

suggest we consider the effect of Saunder's stigma not in terms of censorship or textual suppression, but as a proliferative force in itself, one that reinscribes, thematizes, and multiplies the fantasized violence of print publication.⁵⁷

The breach represented by publication potentially troubles the utopian enclosure represented by the Inns in this view. Though it seems, on the one hand, to extend the optimism of the Inn's constitutional logic outward to a broader sphere (one can imagine a certain hopefulness about this kind of outward and open-ended address), the fact of publication also breaks the terms of friendship that had cemented that logic in the first place. The audience towards which these collections are opening is not just a bigger social network of friends. Specifically, the terms of manuscript friendship are broken by the invitation proffered to a print audience. In turn, as the opening of the printed book towards anonymous and unknown readers comes into conflict with the enclosed world of the Inns of Court, the structure of the botanical metaphor starts to break down. Whitney's *Nosgay*, while explicitly imitating and extending Plat's *Floures*, also offers an implicit reply to the fantasies of circulation imagined by these other collections. While Whitney's reliance on devotional genres has been described as a gesture to help authorize her as a woman in print, this more worldly context for her vision of common, circulating textual matter has not been noted. As I will suggest, Whitney exploits the openness of botanical figures to imitation and transformation – taking them as the same kind of linguistic and material resource that serves the community-delineating purposes of the members of the Inns. In other words, the imaginary terms by

⁵⁷ We might consider this interest in “adventure” in the context of Lorna Hutson's argument that narrative fictions in this period were designed to advertise a masculine mastery of probabilistic forms of emplotment (*The Usurer's Daughter* (London: Routledge, 1994), 116-118.)

which these garden enclosures are built also offer Whitney the figurative tools – here, herbal slips – with which to dismantle them.

Uprooting poems: In and out of the Inns.

Each of the botanical collections within this subgroup shares a set of core rhetorical gestures that straddles this balance between enclosure and dispersal. The first is an image of frictionless circulation and free exchange – embodied in the texts by an open invitation to gentle readers. This version of liberality follows the generic expectations and humanist codes of genteel friendships between men: the image of hospitality and magnanimity, the open invitation to borrow anything, whether language or flowers. In these works, this is specifically keyed to the miscellaneity of the work itself, and the autonomy of those individual, borrow-able pieces. The second gesture is a recurrent image of danger: each of these men, as he addresses his readers, worries about the harm that might come to his garden – how its flowers might be plucked, wasted, consumed, or trampled. These images of destruction extend the floral metaphor to the point of abuse. The tenor in each of these cases is stubbornly ambiguous: What would it mean for a far-flung reader to “waste” the book? Is it a single copy that a reader might consume or dismember? How would that redound against the author – or against the ‘root’ of a text? Precisely what kind of “bad reading” is at stake?

Consider the elaborate paratext in Gascoigne’s *Hundreth Sundrie Flowres*, which includes both a defense of the work’s miscellaneous content and a series of letters narrating the manuscript’s convoluted course to the printing house. The edition of 1573 is

nowhere attributed to Gascoigne (though some individual poems bear his name); rather, the work as a whole is presented as a corporate text, an assemblage of sundry pieces of poetry, prose, and drama, fictionally composed by sundry gentlemen on sundry occasions. “Sundry” is in fact the governing term of the collection as a whole, attached both to its formal miscellaneity and to the social world of its production. The portion of Gascoigne’s introduction ostensibly written by the printer advertises the work’s composite quality according to an aesthetic argument of liberality: the reader is instructed to proceed in whatever order he or she likes, gathering whatever flowers he or she most fancies.

Inviting the reader to approach the work in fragments, Gascoigne promises a piecemeal reading strategy that yields “a greater commoditie than common poesies haue ben accustomed to present.” Gathering flowers in whatever order he likes, a reader “shall not be constreind to smell of the floures therein conteined all at once, neither yet to take them vp in such order as they are sorted: But you may take any one flowre by itselife, and if that smell not so pleasantly as you wold wish, I doubt not yet but you may find some other which may supplie the defects thereof.” Following the book’s mixed formal composition, the injunction to pluck and gather cedes to the singularity of readerly taste. “The worke,” the epistle concludes, “is so vniuersall, as either in one place or other, any mans mind may therevith by satisfied”(A3r). With its “places” and “flowers” in this supplemental relationship, one promises to always supply whichever other has proved defective or unsatisfying, thus offering a sort of insurance policy for textual satisfaction guaranteed by the vigor of the book’s variety.

This aesthetic advertisement, however, is couched within the frame of a moral defense, and Gascoigne slips easily between the two registers and purposes. The printer begins his epistle by addressing the questionable circumstances of its procurement, protesting that he found nothing amiss in the volume other than two or three “vvanton places passed ouer in the discourse of an amorous enterprise”(A2r) – presumably a reference to the *Adventures of Master FJ*, in which (he goes on) the words are “cleanly” even if “the thing ment be somevvhat naturall”(A2v). Second, the printer argues, even such “naturall” moments are not entirely frivolous, since “the well-minded man may reape some commoditie out of the most friuolous vvorkes that are written.” If a reader fails to reap in this way, the burden of failure rests entirely on their shoulders: “And as the venemous spider vvil sucke poison out of the most holesome herbe, and the industrious Bee can gather hony out of the most stinking vveede: Euen so the discrete reader may take a happy *example* by the most lascivious histories, although the captious and harebrained heads can neither be encouraged by the good, nor forewarned by the bad. And thus muche I haue thought good to say in excuse of [s]auours, which may perchance smell vnpleasantly to some noses, in some part of this poeticall poesie”(A2v). The Printer here neglects to place the work at any given point on the spectrum between “holesome herbe” and “stinking vveede”; in fact, the consequences of reading seem to have very little to do with the book itself. If you suck poison out of it, you’re reading like a spider; if honey, then a bee. We might call this the negative portion of the printer’s defense, one which Gascoigne will elaborate and formalize in the 1575 revision, his *Posies*: whatever happens later on, it’s the reader’s fault anyway.

Though this herbal lexicon of scent and savor closely echoes that in the preface to *Tottel's Miscellany*, its use diverges. The *Miscellany* makes demands on those unprepared to properly read the book, asking “the vnlearned, by reading to be more skilfull, and to purge that swinelike grossnesse, that maketh the swete maierome not to smell to their delight.” Its sociological outlook entails (most optimistically) an ideology of assimilation, with the volume itself standing as exemplary model of literary and literate citizenship. While Tottel prescribes a course of purgation to those readers who do not find a smell to their liking, the epistle to *A Hundreth Sundrie Flowres* invites readers to simply move on to another sample they might enjoy more. Turning away from the didactic frame of Tottel's Epistle, the variety of the Gascoigne's work obviates Tottel's more directive suggestion of self-correction and improvement.

The rhetoric that dominates the epistle promises a lack of constraint between text and reader; it compels neither an order of reading, nor a single moral message. The liberality of this relation in turn seems to remove any agency from the book itself, making its bouquet of sundry flowers more like a storehouse from which the reader might pluck at will.⁵⁸ In this sense, Gascoigne relies on two contemporary senses of liberty and liberality – the traditional one of genteel magnanimity, and a newer political sense designating the absence of restraint. The result is a vision of the text in pieces – first, in the arbitrary (or at least non-binding) arrangement of textual parts in the volume, and,

⁵⁸ Compare Golding, who introduces the *Metamorphoses* with a mixture of robust warning and liberal hospitality: “This worthe worke in which of good examples are so many, / This Ortyard of Alcimous in which there wants not any / Herb, tree, or frute that may mans vse for health or pleasure serue, / This plenteous horne of Acheloy which iustly dooth deserue / Too beare the name of tresorie of knowledge,” and hoping “cheefly that it may / Bee lyked well of you and all the wise and lerned sort, / And next that euey wyght that shall haue pleasure for to sport / Him in this gardeine, may as well beare wholsome frute away / As only on the pleasant flowres his rechlesse senses stay.”(sig. B4r).

ultimately, in its centrifugal piecing out by individual readers. The structure of the work does not merely enable but actively demands a set of non-identical readings, of diverse approaches and departures. The “sundrie” of the volume’s title, given hierarchical precedence on the title page above the “posie” that binds the flowers, thus names the scattered origins of its pieces as well as the scattered versions into which it will be sundered in readers’ consumption.

This open-ended invitation has its costs, however, as becomes clear in the series of letters introducing the volume – a compilation including contributions from various figures, including the procurer, conveyor, and printer. These documents, each signed only with initials, tell the story of the contents’ path to press, and register the circulation of poetic slips and scraps within a closed homosocial circle: written by men, compiled by men, and circulated within a community of men like Gascoigne and his fellow-members at Gray’s Inn. As is the case with many of these books, Gascoigne introduces his collection as written slips or leaves lent to an intimate friend, who then delivered them to the printer against the author’s own wishes. This entrusted friend, the manuscript’s initial procurer, notes that in choosing to publish he is counting on public good – the “common commodity” – at the expense of his friendship. He makes the potential loss explicit: “But if it fal out contrary to expectation,” he writes, “I may then (unlesse their curtesies supplie my want of discretion) with losse of some labour, accompt also the losse of my familier friendes.” The premise of this edition – the fiction of frisson it generates with its own publication – is this promise of the loss of friends, a deferred betrayal that can be initiated by any reader who purchases the book. In this sense, the fact of the printed book itself marks the abrupt dissolution of the bonds that generated its

contents – the intimate traffic of manuscript slips within the proverbial enclosed garden of the Inns of Court.

As Gascoigne here makes clear, the vision of liberality that governs the circulation of flowers and slips in these poetic gardens depends on *the splitting of the book*: the picture of unconstrained community it imagines consists in the free circulation of manuscripts among friends. But this closed communal fantasy is articulated in a printed volume. The fantasy, in others words, breaks the terms of the physical substrate of the book and the economic conditions of its commodification and circulation. The act of reading marks the rupture rather than the fulfillment of the work's imaginary contract.

The anonymous and multiple circumstances of the printed book pose a different set of problems for this fantasy of free exchange in Hugh Plat's *Floures of Philosophie* (1572). Here, Plat responds to this invisible field of circulation with a vividly rendered fantasy of exclusion. The poem that frames the end of his collection of flowers is less a farewell to readers than a warning. Those seeking delight or profit ("pleasant hearbes" or "wholsome hearbs") are free to gather: "Of euery thing I graunte him some / That in my grounde doth growe... And him I giue free leaue likewise, / Whome hope of gaine doth bring").⁵⁹ This gentlemanly liberality, however, is couched within a aggressive fantasy of control, in which the garden's (apparently enchanted) hardware actively participates: "...I haue prepared, / A gate both greate and strong, / To some it opes, to some it shuts, / That walkes this way along." This insult to hospitality is the less fearsome of Plat's deterrants:

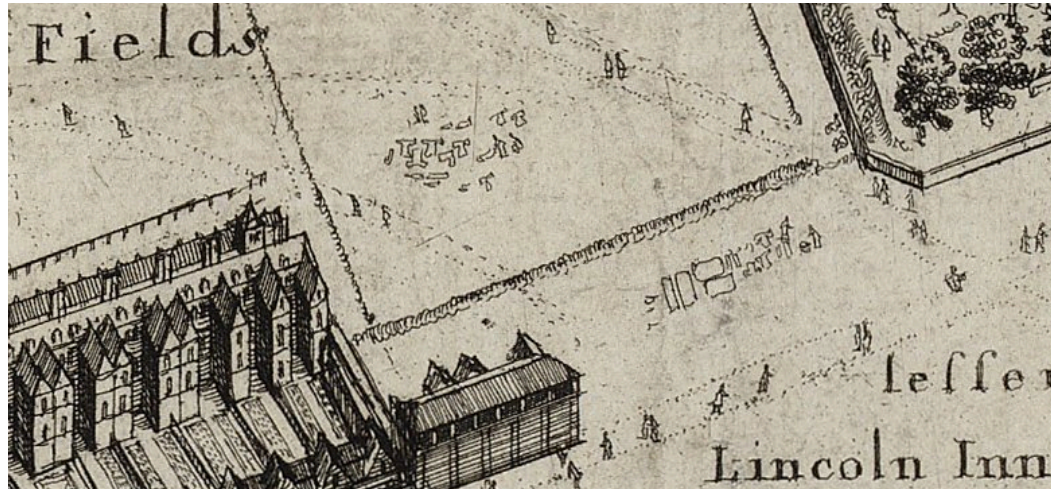
⁵⁹ Plat, *Floures of Philosophie* (London, 1572), M6v, reprinted in Richard J. Panofsky, intro. *The Floures of Philosophie (1572) by Hugh Plat and A Sweet Nosgay (1573) and The Copy of a Letter (1567) by Isabella Whitney* (Delmar, NY: Scholars' Facsimiles & Reprints, 1982), 172.

“A thornie hedge I haue prepared / Al craftie theeues to fraye. / And least that no man durst assay, / For feare of thornie bushe, / And prickles piercing of his fleshe, / Within my grounde to rushe.” And what is a thief, exactly? A caterpillar or worm who might “waste the tree.” Plat thus promises to violently penetrate the flesh of any textual abusers – though this readerly abuse remains inchoate in form, and – whatever form it takes – impossible to track or survey. Who here is he interpellating, who is he warning off? If a reader whose aims are neither pleasure nor profit is a “caterpillar,” what exactly is the tree that they waste?

What remains so striking is that this vulnerability seems, retrospectively, superfluous. Why would a member of the Inns of Court ever venture into print, when one could easily circulate through manuscript among friends and (ostensible) equals? In a quite unmetaphorical sense, this was a question that the Inns of Court were considering with new urgency in the 1560s and 70s. London was rapidly growing in the later sixteenth century, and, in response to the encroachment of non-members on their lands, the Inns increasingly built up walls around their gardens and upped enforcement of rules about access. Lincoln’s Inn records a payment to their gardener in 1562 to add a lock to the garden gate – a lock that would have been familiar to Hugh Plat, who was a member of that Inn. At the same time, the gardeners were charged with keeping out rogues, bad children, and “sluttish” laundresses – an image that recurs in the Inns’ records from this period, as Paula Henderson has found.⁶⁰ There seems to have been particular difficulty in regulating the expansive Lincoln's Inn Fields, especially when it

⁶⁰ Paula Henderson, “The evolution of the early gardens of the Inns of Court,” in Jayne Elisabeth Archer, Elizabeth Goldring, and Sarah Knight, eds., *The Intellectual and Cultural Worlds of the Early Modern Inns of Court* (Manchester: Manchester UP, 2011), 179-184.

came to laundresses. Indeed, Hollar's map of London from the 1650s suggests that laundresses were never successfully excluded if you look very closely, and small figures can be seen laying out sheets and garments on Lincoln's Inn Fields (below).⁶¹



I do not draw on these descriptions of institutional practices and accounts of the use and enclosure of *actual* gardens to try to offer some explanatory ground for the range of metaphors that appear in these texts. What is crucial about these images is their resistance to any ground – their ability to travel like slips, unrooted, of ambiguous origin and reference. As we saw with Plat, the rooted tree wasted by a caterpillar is an unusually labile signifier: we cannot confidently say in what worldly referent its roots lie. At the same time, it is important to keep in mind that the Inns themselves in this period were engaged in a project of self-definition that enforced itself on the urban landscape, but which was no less fictive or imaginative for that fact. The legal historian Paul Raffield has described the architectural ambitions of the Inns under Elizabeth in similar

⁶¹ A range of other examples may be found in the surviving record books of the various Inns, largely through payments for supplies or to gardeners for enforcing increased security. See F.A. Inderwick, ed., *A Calendar of the Inner Temple Records* v. 1 (London: Published by the Order of the Masters of the Bench and sold by Henry Sotheran and Co.; Stevens and Haynes; Stevens and Sons, 1896), 77, 106, 151, 303, 380, 382; and *The Black Books of Lincoln's Inn* v. 1 (London: Lincoln's Inn, 1897), 89-90.

terms – as an attempt to give form to a fictive and constitutionally imagined corporate body. Raffield finds this kind of creative world-making at work not just in legal texts and in literary production, but in the material forms of these communities, from the architecture of the Inns to their suppertime rituals. As he writes, “the regulation of every aspect of diurnal life was intended to be instrumental in the realisation of an ideal commonwealth,” its citizens brought together by a belief in common law. That utopian impulse, he writes, was “given permanence and visibility in the physical structure of the Inns.”⁶² Along similar lines, Laurie Shannon sees the literary production of the Inns of Court as a social and imaginative experiment in what she calls “horizontal nationhood” – a form of political community organized perpendicularly to the vertical power of the sovereign. “Textual networks of address and exchange,” she writes, “operated as an experimental, quasi-corporate form of alternative polity – what we might even venture to call a “republic-in-waiting.””⁶³ The obsessive images of textual waste and social destruction, however, suggest a more pessimistic underside to this imaginary logic of constitutional expansion and entrenchment – revealing a textual and social imagination that is instead anxious and even sadistic.

John Grange exhibits similar concerns about the enclosed poetic garden he appends to his *Golden Aphroditis* (published in 1577 in evident imitation of Gascoigne, describing its author as, like Gascoigne, Plat, and other flower-poets, a “student in the common lavve of Englande”). Introducing the poems, Grange tries to balance the liberal

⁶² Paul Raffield, *Images and Cultures of Law in Early Modern England: Justice and Political Power, 1558-1660* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2004), 3; 6

⁶³ Shannon, “Minerva’s Men,” 440.

hospitality of the lyric collection with the anxiety inspired by unknown readers. The *Golden Aphroditis* consists of an allegorical prose romance, to which, the title page advertises, is “annexed by the same authour asvvell certayne metres vpon sundry poyntes, as also diuers pamphlets in prose, which he entituleth his Garden: pleasant to the eare, and delightful to the reader, if he abuse not the scente of the floures.” The warning against abuse (and the attendant promise of its possibility) is thus tantalizingly posed at the very outset. At the beginning of this poetical annex, as Grange invites his dedicatee (along with other gentle readers) to freely cull from his lyric garden, he, like Plat, voices an anxiety about waste and destruction. Reader and dedicatee are granted “free liberty at your wisdomes pleasure to croppe ech floure therin.”⁶⁴ Though Grange trusts the gentleness of his noble dedicatee, he is more worried about less generous readers: “But yet, thus much I doe coniecture, that if they were the sweetest floures of all, yet would they be mislyked of some, and, those of the greater sorte, whiche maketh some in deede for feare of their *Zoilus* mouthes to refrayne their learned pen.”⁶⁵ These Zoiluses, to whom Grange alludes three times in these few pages, along with the “curious carping Knights” whom he warns off later, are stock tropes of late sixteenth-century print. As Heidi Brayman Hackel argues, the frequent appearance of Zoilus (infamous for his attack upon Homer) in late sixteenth-century printed prefaces registers anxieties about “unauthorized access” to the book, voicing a perception that an author has somehow lost control over their readership.⁶⁶ They indirectly acknowledge, as Hackel notes, that the

⁶⁴ Grange, sig. N3v.

⁶⁵ *ibid.*

⁶⁶ On Zoilus, see Heidi Brayman Hackel, *Reading Material in Early Modern England: Print, Gender, and Literacy* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2005), 123; David Carlson, *English Humanist Books*, 227 n. 18, who ties it to the Grammarian’s War; on Zoilus and patronage, see Bennett, *English Books and Readers, 1475-*

“bad reader” may be already *inside* the book, forcing readers to question their own access and identity, whether they are included or excluded by these warnings.

In the dedication of his garden, Grange concludes by raising and then dismissing the most horrifying possibility, that his reader might take these young flowers up by the root: “But seing this phrase (*Boni est pastoris tondere pecus non diglubere*) is not vnknownen to your Honour, I lesse regard or feare the pulling of them vp by the rootes, so boldly doe I builde vpon your Honors curtesie.” The Latin sentence (“It is the mark of a good shepherd to shear the sheep, not to skin it”) cuts through the conceit of the garden to vividly project textual harm onto the author’s body, a gentle plea that he not be “skinned” for his poems.⁶⁷ The tenor of this extended metaphor, however, is unclear. What would it mean for the reader of a single copy to harm the roots of the book? The figure of the author is conjured in Grange’s paratext through a remarkable catachresis – projected backwards in the image of uprooting, an otherwise empty vessel defined only by its vulnerability. Grange’s figure of uprooting emerges from a fissure between the condition of the printed book and the social fantasy of male intimacy it imagines. What it means to be the author of a printed book is rendered in a deep ambivalence, given ideational content only in the form of this young plant – the slender spray easily plucked by an ungentle reader. In this case, earlier than scholars

1557, pp. 50-51; 1558-1603, pp. 6-10. As Hackel recounts, Zoilus is usually opposed to patron, portrayed as “physically grotesque,” grouped with and compared to animals and often paired with Momus (123). Sometimes Zoili get their own letters, paired with letters to the gentle reader. For Hackel, this conventionality “points to a central way of organizing the relationship between authors and readers in early modern England.”(124), and marks a shift in attitudes toward readers. The bad reader is no longer excluded from the book; they have already made their way inside: “This new access for the bad reader, whether real or imagined, issues in a heightened guardedness in the prefaces and marginalia in Elizabethan books”(124).⁶⁷ This image, alongside Plat’s threat of flesh-pricking, might profitably be considered in light of humanist education’s corporal practices, especially as these fantasies of violence circulate within this community of educated young men at the Inns.

usually place the establishment of literary authorship as an institution, the figure of the author is generated in this back formation as a subject of (or to) vulnerability – a kind of personification built around the *vulnus* left by a trowel in the soil.

The proverb appears in Erasmus's *Adages* (where it is gathered from Suetonius), a fair justification for Grange's assumption that it is familiar to his patron, and a justification likewise to read Erasmus's exfoliations of this moment (in which he also include the more topically relevant, "And I hate the herbalist who pulls out the herb root and all"⁶⁸). Erasmus writes that the saying may have originated with Tiberius Caesar, who is said to have uttered it as he declined to raise taxes in the provinces. *Deglubere* in Erasmus's gloss is a strikingly violent word, associated not just with the treatment of animals but with the castrating power of women: "*Deglubere* means to remove the skin, and the expression is derived from peasants who say *deglubere* for 'to tear open a shell or pod' and 'to strip the peel from a seed.' Because of this Catullus gave it an obscene sense, saying that a man is 'skinned' by a women; and Fotis in Apuleius says she is accustomed to 'skin men alive.'" Erasmus's following remark, however, might also serve as a gloss for many of the textual strategies I have traced throughout this chapter: "Those who 'shear' therefore strip in such a way that they leave a portion from which growth can occur; those who 'skin,' leave nothing. For fleece that has been shorn grows again; when the skin is torn off there is nothing that you can subsequently remove." It is this reflection that brings Erasmus to the herbal analogue, his disdain for cutting short (nipping at the bud, say) the vegetative faculty of growth – the

⁶⁸ *Adages*, 222. Erasmus attributes this to Alexander the Great: "Alexander, King of the Macedonians titled the Great, expressed the same idea with a different metaphor: when someone proposed to him that much more tax could be extracted from the population, he replied thus: "And I hate the herbalist who pulls out the herb root and all."(222).

closing off of possible futures.⁶⁹ When Jonson echoes this passage from the *Adages* in *Timber*, it is to elaborate a pastoral vision of the character of a prince – one who does not frightfully skin or uproot his subjects, but who cherishes the commonwealth “as his own body.” He also slips quickly from the skinning of the sheep to the image of uprooting, agreeing with Erasmus and Alexander the Great, who “was wont to say, he hated that gardener that plucked his herbs or flowers up by the roots.”⁷⁰

The anxiety about being pulled up – “root and all” — also colludes with the stock figures of the “curious carpers”, repudiated by Grange, Whetstone, and Gascoigne and appearing alongside Zoilus in countless other prefaces as prototypical “bad readers.”⁷¹ In this context, “carping” evokes not just the proximate etymology of slander, but the original sense of *carpere* in Latin – to pluck, cull, or gather plants, flowers, and fruits – or, by extension, to tear off or tear away.⁷² The harm here is not

⁶⁹ The proverb also appears in Elizabeth’s *Sententiae*, where she quotes directly from Suetonius’s *Lives of the Caesars* (in Janel Mueller and Joshua Schodel, eds., *Elizabeth I: Translations, 1544-1589* (Chicago: U of Chicago P. 2009), 366.)

⁷⁰ Jonson (*Timber*) places this principle (and some heavy borrowings from Erasmus) at the center of a discussion of the character of a prince: “A prince is the pastor of the people. He ought to shear, not to flay his sheep; to take their fleeces, not their fells. Who were his enemies before, being a private man, become his children now he is public. He is the soul of the commonwealth, and ought to cherish it as his own body. Alexander the Great was wont to say, he hated that gardener that plucked his herbs or flowers up by the roots. A man may milk a breast till the blood come; churn milk and it yieldeth butter, but wring the nose and the blood followeth. He is an ill prince that so pulls his subjects’ feathers as he would not have them grow again; that makes his exchequer a receipt for the spoils of those he governs. No, let him keep his own, not affect his subjects’; strive rather to be called just then powerful”(p. 41 in *Timber: or Discoveries made upon man and matter*, ed. Felix Schelling, Boston: Ginn & Co., 1892).

⁷¹ Two of the OED’s examples of “carping”’s usage also show “curiosity” in proximate company, vz. senses 4 and 5b.

⁷² The OED suggests that the sense with which we are most familiar (5a. “To talk querulously, censoriously, or captiously; to find fault, cavil”) appears very rarely before the 16th century, when the Old Norse sense (to speak or talk) was inflected (or perhaps overtaken) by the proximity to Latin *carpere*, “to pluck”, which had also come to mean “to slander.” Though the literal Latin sense was in reference to plants, flowers, and fruits, meaning to pluck, cull, gather — *Lewis & Short* shows that it had also come to mean to enjoy or make use of, or, in a negative sense, to gnaw or tear at someone’s character, or, on the other hand, to rob of strength or even consume completely or destroy; it could also mean to break down into parts: “To separate a whole into single parts, to cut to pieces, divide (syn.: dividere, distribuere).”

just to pluck, but to pluck “curiously” – that conflux of singularity and libido so damning to the judgment of any reader.

With these visions of good governance, Erasmus and Jonson give voice to what we might think of as a custodial environmental ethic – the gentlemanly privilege, like the textual access offered by Grange, to freely enjoy a resource without diminishing it. This version of stewardship, as a kind of governmental oversight, closely echoes Julia Reinhard Lupton’s account of husbandry, in which the role of the “animal husband” is to alight upon the virtues of his capons or fruit trees, to bring them to maturity and the realization of their offices – in other words, to have them grow according to their own course. Husbandman and housewife, Lupton writes, both exercise “his or her own virtue or practical knowledge by actualizing the virtues of the natural world.”⁷³ This figure of stewardship evokes a version of “right handling” that interacts with and cultivates those virtues, but does not either pervert or diminish them. The ever-expanding economy it presumes and encourages is the condition of possibility for the fantasy of liberality expressed in the floral utopias these gardens represent.

Finally, this version of stewardship structures an understanding of “good reading” that turns on a non-consumptive version of taste. This position might be reduced to the maxim, “Don’t read like a pig.” Specifically, the image of uprooting alights upon a

⁷³ Lupton, *Thinking with Shakespeare: Essays on Politics and Life* (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 2011). 37. As Lupton writes, the husbandman’s “‘outward and active knowledges’ . . . are closer to the Aristotle of the *Physics*, concerned with the ‘virtues’ of substances, than to the Aristotle of the *Ethics* and the *Politics*, aiming at the exercise of excellence for its own sake in the public sphere. Or rather, what come forward in these household manuals are the strange assonances, still felt in the ancient and the early modern worlds, that link moral virtue, practical knowledge, and the special capacities of things (animal, vegetable, an mineral) across the divide of their enduring difference”(38). The glosses by Erasmus and Jonson provide a remarkable picture of the terms by which these worlds are linked, here, shot through with the force of a single proverb, and contracted to a vegetative ethic of live-and-let-grow.

complex of associations around the figure of the swine as an archetypal bad reader – not only lacking in taste but inclined to violently uproot rather than merely taste or sample. In the preface to Tottel’s Miscellany, it is the swine-like readers who cannot smell the sweetness of the marjoram. A rendering of this proverb is also found on William Ponsonby’s 1593 edition of Sidney’s *Arcadia*, as can be seen below. Swine’s food was in fact a disdainful figure for poetry: Jerome used it to describe the song of the poets and the ornamented language of the rhetoricians. Roger Ascham, in *The Scholemaster*, compared vernacular poetry to dining with swine: “Surely to follow rather the Goths in rhyming than the Greeks in true versifying were even to eat acorns with swine when we may freely eat wheat bread amongst men.” Swines were also notorious uprooters, a crime that subjects them to an exceptional violence in Book XV of Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*, where Pythagoras finds the swine guilty of uprooting corn (here in Golding’s translation):

Whereas there was no sacrificyse beforne,
 The Swyne (bycause with hoked groyne he rooted up the corne,
 And did deceyve the tillmen of theyr hope next yeere thereby)
 Was deemed woorthy by desert in sacrificyse to dye.
 The Goate for byghting vynes was slayne at Bacchus altar whoo
 Wreakes such misdeedes. Theyr owne offence was hurtful to theis two.⁷⁴

The swine is guilty here not just of consuming the grain, but of ruining a *future* year's harvest. The goat likewise has not merely grazed but *blighted* the vines. Indeed, in what Ovid is presenting here as a kind of fable, these moments mark the origins of animal sacrifice – not just for a crime of consumption but for a violence against future reproduction. It is in this sense the kind of consumption that is at stake: a swine’s bad

⁷⁴ Arthur Golding, *The xv. bookes of P. Ouidius Naso, entytuled Metamorphosis, translated oute of Latin into English meter* (London: 1567), fo. 188.

taste cannot easily be severed, I would argue, from its proclivity to uproot, to cut off the harvest of future generations. These examples thus project the opposite of swinelike consumption as the better practice of taste – one that cultivates rather than consumes.



“Some for some”: the ends of circulation in Gascoigne

Gascoigne’s apparent endorsement of this textual and floral liberality meets its limit, however, as a reader discovers delving deeper both into the dangerous vagaries of textual circulation in the prose narrative, *The Adventures of Master FJ*, and reading further into the poems attached in the so-called “Devises of Sundrie Gentlemen.” Alan Stewart and Susan Staub have both explored the force of circulation anxiety in Gascoigne’s works, arguing that the spectre of print circulation marks both editions of Gascoigne’s collections with the imprint of a deeply anxious masculinity (though I would argue, and I think both would agree, that this anxiety also leaves the text bristling with the erotic anticipation of danger.) For Staub, this is symptomatically emblemized in a

narrated scene of voyeurism that epitomizes the voyeuristic imagination of the reading of the printed book, and which, Staub argues, violently rewrites both as scenes of symbolic castration (in the *Adventures*, F.J.'s sword is stolen by a female cousin while he is distracted consummating his romantic pursuit.) Stewart, meanwhile, focuses on the language of "gelding" that Gascoigne borrows from Theodore B za to describe the revisions to his book. As Stewart persuasively argues, the figure of castration actually names the movement into print in the first place, where the printed commodity falls into free circulation – a situation against which, Stewart writes, "Gascoigne produces a nostalgic manuscript fantasy that both insists on and denies its material form: where loose papers (their 'commoditie' personally available to the reader) appear to circulate between men and seduce desirable married women, but where in fact they are petrified in a print narrative, providing 'common commoditie' for all, and 'particular commoditie' for no man."⁷⁵ This "gelding", Stewart argues, aligns lexically and thematically with pruning and plucking, both terms (as we have seen) central to the bibliographical conceits of the flower books of the 1560s and 1570s, and both of which figure centrally in their attempts to imagine possible harm to which the book come in the hands of unknown readers. These imagined injuries are invoked besides textual fantasies

⁷⁵ Stewart, "Gelding Gascoigne," 164. The passage in full may be the best single statement I have found on the perversity of the textual situation of Gascoigne's works: "'The placing of the 'manuscript anthology' to print is therefore supposed to involve the print 'learned Reader' in a highly eroticized homosocial literary exchange, previously the (always supposed) domain of the elite amateur literary circle. But in truth the book is a printed commodity whose circulation cannot be controlled, whose readers are not all men invested in fantasies of literate country-house retreats providing illicit sex with married women. At the moment as print is restructuring 'the relationship between the producer, the consumer, and the textual circulation of sodomy,' Gascoigne produces a nostalgic manuscript fantasy that both insists on and denies its material form: where loose papers (their 'commoditie' personally available to the reader) appear to circulate between men and seduce desirable married women, but where in fact they are petrified in a print narrative, providing 'common commoditie' for all, and 'particular commoditie' for no man.'"

of control – one source helping to inspire the number of enclosed gardens, and the narration of their repeated breaches and transgressions.

The now-familiar invitation to plucking is repeated in a cluster of poems gathered among the “Devises,” each supposedly transcribed from an inscription in Gascoigne’s garden, thus superadding a certain biographical reality effect to the standard textual voyeurism. The first two poems appear in apparent juxtaposition. Both are introduced according to their location: “Gascoignes gardnings, vwhereof vvere vwritten in one end of a close vvalke vvhich he hath in his Garden, this discourse folloving,” and, immediately following, “In that other ende of his sayde close vvalke, vvere vwritten these toyes in ryme.”⁷⁶ Less occasional verse than found poetry, the poems facing each other across this “close walk” are further opposed by the terms with which they are announced: a “discourse” and “toyos in ryme,” a single extended argument and a collection of small pieces.

“Gascoignes gardnings” announces and then elaborates an extended comparison between the garden and the mortal world of humans. The poem is bracketed, beginning and end, by “sundry,” arguably the governing word of the collection as a whole, which anchors the first and last stanzas (and does not appear in the four intervening). In the first, “sundry” is aided by its sidekick, “some,” which, scattered through the fifth and sixth lines, cuts through the thread of its exemplary logic:

The figure of this world I can compare,
To Garden plots, and such like pleasaunt places,
The world breedes men of sundry shape and share,
As herbes in gardens, grow of sundry graces:
Some good, some bad, some amiable faces,
Some foule, some gentle, some of froward mind,

⁷⁶ The poems appear in Gascoigne, *Hundreth Sundrie Flowres* (London, 1573), sig. Cc4^{v-f}.

Subject like bloome, to blast of every wind.

Here, “sundry” is on the side of growth, naming the diversity of qualities and virtues that witness the generative operation of divinity in the world, while the repeated utterances of “some,” effectively sunder both garden and world in the syntax of the poem, piecing its “discourse” into a partitioned list. Both words return in the final stanza, to invoke, in a vivid twist on *memento mori*, the “sundrye wayes” that plants and humans might meet their end: “As for the reste, fall sundrye wayes (God wote) / Some faynt lyke froathe at euery little puffe,/ Some smarte by swoorde, lyke herbes that serue the pot, / And some be weeded from the fyner stuffe,/ Some stande by proppes to maynteyne all their ruffe”(400). Variety has turned, from the generative promise of stanza one, to the scythe of mortal contingency in stanza six.

Gascoigne plays further with the “sums” of these “somes” in the poem that follows. If the terms of this comparison in “Gascoigne’s Gardnings” are largely visual and detached (the poet invokes at the outset the “figure” of the world), and its moral message largely contemplative, the subsequent poem takes the collection’s oft-invoked variety and brings it ready to hand. Its inhabitation of the garden moves, we might say, from the *vita contemplativa* to a *vita activa*, compromising the reader in turn in its attendant earthly and fleshly complications:

If any floure that there is growne,
Or any herbe maye ease youre payne,
Take and accompte it as your owne,
But recompence the lyke agayne:
For some and some is honeste playe,
And so my wyfe taught me to saye.

Gascoigne here closely echoes the invitation of the prefatory materials to cull and gather at will. However, the refrain replaces the principle of liberality espoused there with a primitive tenet of economic liberalism: take whatever you like, as long as you pay for it. The OED lists two senses for the phrase “some and some,” the first meaning piecemeal, and the second (attributed first to this poem and then to what is likely a direct quotation from 1583), as denoting an exchange (like “tit for tat.”) The “some”s of this refrain (repeated in each of the poem’s three stanzas) echo the “some”s of the previous poem, where they mark out the partition of “sundrie” plants and herbs. In the second poem, however, the lexicon of commerce casts a shadow over this sense, so that we also hear “sum for sum”, a quantity exchanged for a quantity, an emphasis less on the piecemealing of the borrowed part than its cumulative (and accumulable) value. While the “some”s of the previous poem partition identity and difference, the lexicon of difference here shifts into a language of sexualized commerce. Its erotic triangulation – of reader/plucker, poet, and poet’s wife – incorporates a three-fold economy: of sexual relations; credit relations (the debt incurred between friends); and commercial exchange (the amount paid by the owner for the book.) In this circuit, however, it is the wife who is the law-giver and the source of precept, the authority able to define “honest play.”

The extensive fictional paratext in *Hundreth Sundrie Flowres* registers the circulation of poetic slips and scraps within a closed homosocial circle: written by men, discovered by men, and circulated within a community of men much like that to which Gascoigne belonged at Gray’s Inn. In the absence of this fiction in the revised *Posies*, Gascoigne adds (as a moral defense) that the vast majority of his poems were written for

other men – a fact he feels the need to assert “because these Posies growe to a great bundell, and thereof also the number of loving lynes exceedeth in the Superlative.” His male friendships, then, excuse his excesses: “I thought good to advertise thee that the most part of them were written for other men. And out of all doubt, if ever I wrote lyne for my selfe in causes of love, I have written tenne for other men in layes of lust.”

In these “toyes in ryme”, however, the circulation of slips is explicitly heterosexualized. To the borrower of flower or herb, obligation is first invoked under the guise of an erotic tit-for-tat, in which even the potential homosocial exchange represented by textual borrowing falls under the shadow of heterosexual desire. This situation echoes the erotic logic governing the circulation of texts in *The Adventures of Master F.J.*, where the central game of seduction-by-sonnet essentially consists of the exchange of sex for paper. As Alan Stewart has shown, the physical exchange of textual slips seems at times to erotically and narratively supersede the lovers’ actual corporeal contact. When, at one point in the narrative, F.J. places a letter directly into Elinor’s bosom, Stewart finds that Gascoigne “urges the reader to invest in an economy where the traffic in letters is considerably more erotic than its declared goal of simple physical contact.”⁷⁷ The voice of the “wife” in the poem, however, does not establish a neutral triangle: she names precisely that principle that punctures the hospitable world of free amity captured so neatly by John Grange, in which sheep are only sheared and herbs never uprooted. Like the women Erasmus uses to exemplify the violence of *deglubere*, the voice of Gascoigne’s wife is the one that demands – if not a pound of flesh – then a slip of skin.

⁷⁷ Stewart, 153.

As Gascoigne's fictive editors understand, the new triangulation represented by print publication always includes the risk of being skinned. A language of adventure, with its uncertain economy of risk and reward, is at the heart of the volume and of Gascoigne's literary enterprise, decorating the title of the collection's most significant piece (*The Adventures of Master F.J.*) and capturing an ingredient of the romance-model with which it is most interested. It first appears however in the epistle from the printer to the reader, and again in G.T.'s introduction to the *Adventures* and the poems, where it names something about publication itself. To 'adventure' to publish something, as A.B. says in the letter from the printer to the reader in *Hundreth Sundrie Flowres*, is not only an economic risk, but, as the publisher intends here, a social one: sent forth into a strange world, it might win praise or blame, good will or (as may have been the case here) ill. H.W., in the fictive exchange prefacing the *Adventures*, likewise sees the circulation of F.J.'s slips as a kind of risk, though one in which what he is wagering is the specific social capital of friendship. In seeing the matter of the printed text, the reader witnesses the absolution of those social bonds. What has been called since J.W. Saunter's 1951 article "the stigma of print" is here framed as something closer to the adventure of print, an apparently electrifying calculus of risk, in which the author ventures his name as the publisher ventures capital.

H.W.'s account of his editorship relies on a rich economic language to describe the stakes of the venture, but his concerns about those stakes are not fiduciary. The premise of the first edition – the fiction of frisson it generates with its own publication – is the promise of the loss of friends, a deferred betrayal such that the physical copy in the hand of the reader is evidence, is a kind of trigger setting off a sequence of social and

affective consequence. Confessing that he has betrayed his friend and “procured for these trifles this day of publication,” H.W. frames possible social outcomes according to a kind of economic wager: “Wherat if the aucthors onely repyne, an the number of other learned mindes be thankfull: I may then boast to have gained a bushell of good will, in exchange for one pynt of peevish choler.”⁷⁸ That “one pynt” is the familiar friend, the “bushell” those anonymous learned minds – the loss of the pint thus written off in favor of a logic of quantity. As he continues, G.T. becomes more explicit about his potential losses: “But if it fal out contrary to expectation that the readers judgements agree not with myne opinion in their commendacions, I may then (unlesse their curtesies supplie my want of discretion) with losse of some labour, accompt also the losse of my familier friendes, in doubt whereof, I cover all our names.”⁷⁹

Publication itself is thus framed as the breach of friendly trust, and the printed book gives the reader voyeuristic access to these closed friendly exchanges specifically *through* their breach and betrayal. The volume’s secrecy – those pseudonyms that allegedly caused so much troublesome speculation after publication – is in service of a set of friendships sundered by the publication of the book, such that the names themselves seem uttered from a past now null and void. The editor and publisher trade the economy of many for the company of a few, accruing losses that undermine not just the liberal fantasy of floral circulation but the social world of the garden from which it came.

Right handling in Gascoigne’s Posies

⁷⁸ Gascoigne, *Hundreth Sundrie Flowres* (1573), 142.

⁷⁹ *Ibid*, 142. “Cover” is a provocative word, suggesting not just obscured anonymity but also including the sense “to restore, recuperate.” Our modern financial sense (to cover someone’s debts) was not in use until 1828 according to the OED, though it follows closely from the recuperative.

The language of botanical virtue comes to play a central role in Gascoigne's revisions to the *Hundreth Sundrie Flowres*, published in 1575 as *The Posies of George Gascoigne Esq.* Drawing on the practical discourses of plants to help sketch out what of the work is in fact circulable and what responsibility falls on the reader, Gascoigne newly divides the collection into "flowers," "herbs," and "weeds," as the work is overhauled and reframed according to a narrative of redemption that turns on the operation of virtue. Ostensibly revising *A Hundreth sundrie flowres* in response to an unspecified scandal, the *Posies* present a fiction in which Gascoigne has already met the discredit of Saunders' stigma. The corrected *Posies* thus purport to redeem both the prodigal poet and his questionable verse. In a departure from the previous edition, the volume is organized according to what seems a firm vegetable taxonomy, in which the different values and virtues of poems according to these three classes of botanical use. Those poems classed as flowers, Gascoigne explains, are more pleasant than profitable, and the herbs, more profitable than pleasant. The compilation's "weeds," at face both unprofitable and unpleasant in fact hold an occult power available to the discerning gatherer capable of discovering and unleashing their virtues as long he "rightly handles" them.⁸⁰ Of course, this is partially an apology for the book: even the worst bits, it suggests, aren't as bad as they look.

The narrative of redemption that Gascoigne stages in the 1575 *Posies* – in which he has reformed the aesthetic and sexual libertinism of the 1573 edition – gives him a central place among the young men Richard Helgerson has identified as "Elizabethan

⁸⁰ *Posies*, 12-13.

prodigals.” Taking their cue from a Prodigal Son narrative popular in Latin school plays, these Elizabethan narratives, Helgerson argues, follow a regular pattern: opening with a scene of moral admonition, a young man errs from that advice and suffers for it.⁸¹ Often this specifically youthful errancy is meant to be read autobiographically. As it does for Gascoigne here – as for Timothy Kendall, Humphrey Gifford, Grange, Spenser and others – the “greenness” of youthful prodigality often enframes the production of poetic juvenilia, excusing it as something that has already been outgrown. Such a narrative, for example, introduces a section of lyric in George Whetstone’s *Rock of Regarde* entitled his “Garden of Unthriftiness” – a reminder of the agricultural economy through which these poetic expenditures are conceived. For Whetstone as for Gascoigne, the production of erotic poetry has itself come to seem a kind of wasteful expense, a weed-like vanity redeemed only by the extraction of its vertue. (Not coincidentally, the following sections in the allegorical progress of Whetstone’s book are called an “arbour of vertue” and “ortchard of repentance.”)

Despite its ostensible break from the earlier edition, the form taken by Gascoigne’s herbal defense actually preserves the emphasis on miscellaneity and the central role of the reader that so forcefully characterizes *Hundreth Sundrie Flowres*. In it, the worth of weeds depends on knowledge of their virtues – a kind of know-how like that being circulated in contemporary herbals and books of physic, one that likewise wrings vertue from what might otherwise fall to vanity or waste. Reading thus becomes a kind of craft knowledge not unlike the right artisanal handling of medicinal herbs, implying through this analogy that there is a correct and skillful way of “handling” the book as an

⁸¹ Helgerson, *Elizabeth Prodigals* (Berkeley: U of California P, 1976), 2-6. On Gascoigne, see chapter three.

object. This strategy also crucially projects moral and aesthetic responsibility onto the reader, resulting in what we might call a floral rhetoric of non-authorship – a tactic that the final and following section of this chapter will trace through Isabella Whitney’s *Sweet nosgay, or pleasant posye* (1573). For both Whitney and Gascoigne, a lexicon of dormant textual virtue names a preservative force residing in the book itself. Their gatherings are therefore not just sweet like honey but medicinal like a simple extracted from herbs. An argument for the text’s “vertue” thus gives it some purposive end, redeeming it from the danger of youthful prodigality and the wastes of poetic production. Against these wastes, virtue stores up and preserves value.

Such virtuosity, however, is not a given – a text must still be rightly handled. The possibility of literary poison shapes Gascoigne’s classification of some poems as “weeds” in the 1575 *Posies*, though it is never quite clear what Gascoigne means by the term. The selections of narrative and verse classed as such offer few clues about their taxonomic placement. Nor does his announcement of the weeds in the introductory epistle go very far towards clarifying the question. The flowers and herbs fall naturally under the expected Horatian pairing of pleasure and profit, but the weeds, as Gascoigne admits, seem to serve neither end: “The third (being Weedes) might seeme to some judgements, neither pleasant nor yet profitable, and therefore meete to bee cast away.”⁸² Brought in under the sign of their own disposal, weeds are haunted by the possibility of vanity and waste. As a supplement to the happy couple of pleasure and profit, embodied respectively by flowers and herbs, it also destabilizes that pairing, questioning the integrity of each specific office and offering a challenge to their

⁸² Cunliffe, 12.

ostensible exhaustion of the uses of poetry. As Gascoigne continues, “But as many weedes are right medicinable, so you may find in this none so vile or stinking, but that it hath in it some vertue if it be rightly handled.” Is this “vertue” pleasant or profitable? Though the quality seems to inhere in the text itself, the burden is placed on the reader’s “right handling” – a tactile and normative interpellation of the readerly encounter.

The example that follows of ill-handling seems evident enough, but it operates by glossing “weeds” as poisons: “Mary you must take heede how you use them. For if you delight to put Hemlocke in your fellowes pottage, you may chauce both to poyson him, and bring your selfe in perill.”⁸³ Gascoigne’s example of good handling, however, does not recommend distillation, as both Whitney and Golding do, but instead counterexemplification: “But if you take example by the harmes of others who have eaten it before you, then may you chauce to become so warie, that you will looke advisedly on all the Perceley that you gather, least amongst the same one braunch of Hemlock might any you.” The vertue a reader might unlock from the hemlock is neither pleasure nor profit but, it seems, suspicion – and not just any taxonomic acumen, but one that casts explicit suspicion on the supposedly stable sections of the work. How can we know that an herb is really an herb? Will we, if reading only herbs, stir parsley into our fellow’s potage? Will reading inevitably result in peril? At the very least, we know that the presence of the “weeds” should not inspire any confidence about the purity or integrity of the sections that precede it.

⁸³ Ibid, 13.

As I noted above, in writing that a weed “hath notsome vertue if it be rightly handled”, Gascoigne echoes Thomas Becon’s warning that the virtues of his flowers are only realized when “ryghtelye vsed.” In both of these cases, the operation of vertue implies some know-how on the part of the reader, while the specific vocabulary of “use” and “handling” (in these examples, as in Lyly, Whitney, and elsewhere) locates the crucial moment in a distinctly material scene of reading. Gascoigne emphasizes the reader’s skill again in a poem responding to the volume’s extensive collection of commendatory verse, which he concludes with the couplet: “Smell every posie right, and you therein shall finde, / Fresh flowres, good hearbes, and holsome weedes, to please a skilfull minde.” The vertuousness of these pieces is itself unquestioned, but its realization depends on “right” and “skilfull” handling by the reader – a method for which, it’s worth noting, Gascoigne prescribes no actual method.⁸⁴ Gascoigne’s vagueness is a central tactic in broad defensive strategy, one that displaces responsibility without offering concrete prescriptions, thus preserving the kind of readerly liberty (indeed, libertinism) that seemed so troubling to putative critics of *Hundreth Sundrie Flowres*. When this same topos is repeated among the many commendatory poems that gird the *Posies*, the translation from authorial disavowal to a ritual of authorial praise is an awkward one. In a commendatory poem by “TB”, this relationship of skill to vertue is reiterated, but the generic demands of praise generate a split figure of textual origin: “We prayse the ground whereon the herbes do grow, / Which heale or helpe our greeues and mortall paine, / Yea, weedes haue worth, wherein we vertue know, / For natures Art nothing hath made in vaine.” T.B. praises the author as

the ground of the collected herbs, but as he shifts to incorporate the lowest element of the collection's taxonomy, the object of praise shifts as well. They grow on the ground, but "natures Art" has endowed them with vertues. Has the tenor of this poem of praise shifted along with the vehicle? Or has the aspect of the textual agent simply relocated, in the same way that Becon attributes his flowered prayers to the voice of the holy ghost?

Within the paratextual logic of the *Posies*, what I called above a floral rhetoric of non-authorship plays centrally into the author's performance of a defensive stance. Some part of Gascoigne's systematic abjuration of responsibility can be ascribed to the circumstances of publication – or, at the very least, the fiction of it.⁸⁵ The *Posies* are a revised (in Gascoigne's words, "gelded") re-edition of the anonymously published *Hundreth sundrie flowres*, which – so the *Posies* tell us – were met with resistance and scandal upon publication in 1573. Gascoigne thus presents "this seconde edition, my Poemes gelded from all filthie phrases, corrected in all erronious places, and beautified with addition of many moral examples"(Preface, iijr), adding his name to the title page and (so it seems) taking responsibility for the work. The narrative of youthful indiscretion, correction, and reform espoused therein helps class Gascoigne among Helgerson's "Elizabethan prodigals," and Gascoigne's apparent personal redemption (as performed in the publication of the book itself) would seem to adhere

⁸⁵ It is unclear what degree or kind of censorship to which the *Hundreth Sundrie Flowres* may have been subjected. Cyndia Clegg, who has most fully treated the question concludes, that it may have been censured for slander but that any explicit sexual content was not at stake (*Press Censorship in Elizabethan England* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1997), ch. 5.). I will in this discussion be relying only on the *Posies* as the vehicle of their own conceited self-presentation, rather than speculating about what censorship they may in fact be responding to.

closely to this pattern. The text itself, however, may seem less than redeemed.⁸⁶ The most radical changes are to the paratext, as Gascoigne removes the elaborate epistolary framing device that narrated the movement of the romance narrative *Adventures of Master FJ* from manuscript slips to printed collection, appending instead a series of three moralizing epistles in prose – the first, dedicated to “To the reverende Divines”, the second to “To al yong Gentlemen, and generally to the youth of England”, and the third “To the Readers generally.” Each epistle mounts a slightly different textual defense, emphasizing in the first his own reform, in the second the responsibility of the reader (and indemnity of the author), and in the third his own inconstancy.

The central part of this defense is presented along with the work’s new vegetable taxonomy in the central letter to “the youth of England,” whom Gascoigne more familiarly calls “lustie youthes, and gallant Gentlemen” in the letter. These young men are the real subjects of these attacks, he suggests, and likewise the core of the *Posies*’ audience. The censorious attack to which the work was subjected, Gascoigne tells them, arose from the perceived danger that “your mindes might heereby become envenomed with vanities.” The figure of venom and poison, which we have seen in Plutarch’s essay and which runs through Gascoigne’s elaboration of his “Weeds,” is repeatedly tethered both to vanity and to a certain style of reading. As Gascoigne writes later in the epistle, those detractors worry “they have justly conceyved that the continuance thereof hath beene more likely to stirre in all yong Readers a venemous desire of vanitie, than to serve as a common myrrour of greene and youthfull

⁸⁶ Helgerson, *The Elizabethan Prodigals*, 44-57.

imperfections.” This “venomous desire of vanitie” is a danger for those young readers who have neglected Plutarchian literary cultivation – those who, we might say, neglected to break off the wings and feet of the Spanish fly. Gascoigne’s riposte, appropriately, is drawn directly from Plutarch (an analogy he repeats from the previous epistle to the reverend divines, where he attributed to something he had “alleged of late by a right reverende father): “Whereunto I must confesse that as the industrious Bee may gather honie out of the most stinking weede, so the malicious Spider may also gather poyson out of the fayrest floure that growes.” The ambidextrousness of the text is the flip side of its heterongeous composition (and, as Gascoigne asserts in his Paracelsian analogy, that of textual matter in general): a reader takes of it what they will, and so whatever they take is their own responsibility. Variety becomes not just a source of pleasure but an argument for authorial exculpation. We can then recognize the significance of the phrasing in the passage above: the venom in the “venomous desire of vanitie” is found in the desire itself, its spider-like approach to the text, which is effectively indifferent to whether it sucks from the fairest flower or foulest weed – finding venemous vanity wherever it chooses to look.

The conceit of the garden figures centrally in this disavowal, completing Gascoigne’s brief of indemnification by posing the author as the agent responsible for cultivation and nourishment, but powerless over any textual deployments unfolding in an indefinite future time. We can easily see Gascoigne’s rhetorical and legal training at work in this herbal landscape:

And yet in all this discourse I see not proved, that either that Gardener is too blame which planteth his Garden full of fragrant floures: neyther that planter to be disprayed, which soweth all his beddes with seedes of wholesome herbes: neyther is that Orchard unfruitfull, which (under shew of sundrie weedes) hath medicinable playsters for all

infirmities. But if the Chirurgian which should seeke Sorrell to rypen an Ulcer, will take Rewe which which may more inflame the Impostume, then is hee more to blame that mistooke his gathering, than the Gardener which planted aright, and presented store and choyse to be taken. Or if the Phisition will gather hote Perceley in stead of cold Endive, shall he not worthily beare the burthen of his owne blame?⁸⁷

The “proof” of “blame,” in other words, has not been demonstrated without doubt; any liability falls on the surgeon and physician who abused gardener’s vegetable materials, and not on the gardener himself, who simply cultivated the vegetable matter, leaving a moral outcome was still dormant and unrealized. This indemnified gardener leads directly into a summary of the *Posies*’ vegetable taxonomy, leaving it difficult to ask what kind of faultless gardener leaves his plot unweeded.⁸⁸

Whitney’s dispersals.

Isabella Whitney’s *Sweet nosgay, or, pleasant posye*, published by Richard Jones in 1573, threatens to realize the nightmares of bad readers that Grange, Plat, and others carefully conjure. Borrowing explicitly from Hugh Plat’s 1572 *Floures of Philosophie*, Whitney culls from and transforms his hundreds of prose *sententiae* into 108 rhyming precepts – removing them in the form of what she calls “slips” and regathering them in a nosegay of her own, with which she leaves the garden and carries through the streets. It is unclear whether Whitney knew Plat directly, though her brother Geoffrey, the emblemist, was associated with the Inns and she may have had some connection to that

⁸⁷ Cunliffe, 12.

⁸⁸ This resistance to pruning and weeding distinguishes Gascoigne’s collection from a several miscellanies apparently inspired by it, published by other members of the Inns of Court in the 1570s and 1580s. Timothy Kendall, for example, promises that he has carefully weeded out potentially noxious examples from Martial’s epigrams before translating and presenting them in his *Flowers of Epigrammes* (1577).

social circle.⁸⁹ Though her bundle of slips is the product of a self-consciousness transgression of Plat's enclosed and gated plot, Whitney emphasizes her adherence to the laws of gentility Plat and Grange have asserted: she is careful not to uproot flowers, and to take only slips, she writes, and offers due credit to their original cultivator, encouraging her readers to do the same.

In this imitation and elaboration of Plat's *Floures*, she articulates a theory of textual engagement of a piece with Michel de Certeau's understanding of readers as poachers: "Far from being writers – founders of their own place, heirs of the peasants of earlier ages now working on the soil of language, diggers of wells and builders of houses – readers are travellers; they move across lands belonging to someone else, like nomads poaching their way across fields they did not write, despoiling the wealth of Egypt to enjoy it themselves."⁹⁰ Against the textual and social enclosure she encounters in Plat's plot, Whitney inhabits the role of such a nomad. Responding to this same passage from de Certeau, Roger Chartier writes that reading, "by definition, is rebellious and vagabond."⁹¹ It has become a commonplace that modern, private forms of reading – the ability of readers to wander and borrow, to read silently and poach with impunity – has made writing its history very difficult indeed: we can rarely find traces of those encounters, nor can the printed matter of a book ever actually govern readerly use,

⁸⁹ The social relation – real or symbolic – between Whitney and Plat is not entirely clear. Richard Panofsky suggests that Whitney's use of Plat is remarkable not so much for the fact of appropriation but because of the social transvestism it represents, an unusual borrowing from refined humanism by a popular pamphleteer. Whitney and Plat may not have in fact been that socially distinct themselves – Plat may have known Isabella's brother, Geoffrey, the emblemist, at Cambridge – but Panofsky argues that the audiences of each publication seems to have diverged: between Whitney's jingling rhymes and earthy satirical humor, published by a printer best known for his popular miscellanies and practical manuals, against Plat's Latin sources and advertised educational pedigree, its glosses and index.

⁹⁰ Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* (Berkeley: U of California P, 1984), 174.

⁹¹ Roger Chartier, *The Order of Books* (Palo Alto: Stanford UP, 1994), viii.

reuse, or abuse. However, this epistemological problem becomes the condition and occasion of Whitney's textual engagements. The story she tells of reading, and the stories she anticipates of her own text's consumption, turn less on a modern version of privacy than on a repeated gesture of privation, as the author closely governs the traces left in her absence.

A similarly vagabond understanding of both reading practices and social identity governs the various pieces of Whitney's text, as I'll argue here. Weaving a fabric of promised and concrete absences, Whitney theorizes and performs a version of telecommunication, made concrete in the *Nosgay* as a repeated gesture of social and linguistic withdrawal. The pairing captures a series of strategies responding to the flowered discourse of enclosure and circulation I have described above. As I discussed there, Plat's *Floures* includes a remarkably forceful threat against any menaces to its enclosure and integrity, one which culls good from bad reader, and which places Whitney, as a visitor to the garden and recycler of his flowers, in an ambiguous situation. Plat's concluding poem, entitled "For whom this booke was made especially, and whom the authour excepteth from reading it," catalogs the dissuasions to malevolent visitors:

For feare of spoyling al my fruite,
 And stealing hearbes away,
 A thornie hedge I haue prepared
 Al craftie theeues to fraye.
 And least that no man durst assay,
 For feare of thornie bushe,
 And prickles piercing of his fleshe,
 Within my grounde to rushe:
 In midst thereof I haue prepared,
 A gate both greate and strong,
 To some it opes, to some it shuts,

That walkes this way along.⁹²

Whether Whitney felt interpellated as one of these thieves, or as a victim of Plat's rhetorical violence, is unclear. The image of spatial enclosure, however, from a compiler whose work is directly gathered out of others', sets a sharp contrast from Whitney's portable handful of borrowed slips. Crystal Bartolovich has argued that, despite his acknowledged borrowings, Plat nonetheless forcefully "underscores the book's status as an enclosure," emphasizing not just the gate and "thornie hedge" cited above, but also leaning heavily on a language of possessive authorship: "The description of my Garden"; "my Marigoldes"; "my garden"; "my fruite"; "my beddes." As Bartolovich notes, Whitney's own language of possession is relatively understated: she only refers to "my Nosegay" or "my flowers" three times, and frequently downplays the value of her own labor in his gathering and collection.⁹³ Has she violated the terms of his invitation, wasting the tree or trespassing the wall? The fact that this question cannot be answered reflects a basic fact of material inscription, that – distant from its author – it not only *can* but *must* be rewritten as a reader uses it, leaving text or author no opportunity to legislate among good or bad readers, or even to monitor their methods of re-use. Whitney's rewriting of Plat proceeds from this non-recognition, from his unconsummated interpellation, and the many forms of invisibility she plays with in the volume are tangled in this ambiguous freedom.

Throughout these framing poems, while reserving these pronouns of possession for his own use, Plat displaces active agency onto the garden and the spaces within it. The

⁹² Plat, in Panofsky, ed., 171.

⁹³ Crystal Bartolovich, "Optimism of the Will": Isabella Whitney and Utopia," *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 39.2 (2009), 407-432; 415.

address to the reader begins its description of the garden with what seems a powerful assertion of authorial power, floating a pun that is soon shot down:

I PLAT at length a pleasaunte plotte
of fragrant flours haue found.

The first line could itself fully describe an author's labors: he has, or is preparing to, plat his plot: to plan, frame, devise a scheme or project (see OED, *v* 4, 1.a.). With the appearance of the present perfect verb at the very end of the next line, however, the illusion of this pun is broken, as the author's name becomes no more a name, and the author's agency in the framing of the plot falls from devising to discovery. This association of Plat with the nominal "plotte" – the bounded space of the garden – rather than the activity of either plotting or platting is sustained throughout the verse epistle. Consistently, it is the space itself that is given causal force, such that the forms of agency it is able to imagine are all territorially specific. We might say that Whitney, by bequeathing force to the vertue of slips rather than to the forms of enclosure, responds by deterritorializing agency.

One of the controlling spaces of Plat's garden is a maze, a description of his unordered *sententiae* that is not entirely unapt. Its swerves and corners, he argues, are designed to manipulate, frustrate, and (he promises) eventually satisfy women's desire:

A maze there is for Ladies all,
with Lordes to walke their fill.
It brings them farre with crooked pathes,
and turnes them straighte againe,
That going much, they thinke themselves
but little grounde to gaine.
Bet yet in fine, to hoaped ende
their restlesse feete aspire,
And open gappe bewraies it selfe,

to fill their long desire.⁹⁴

Whitney seems to have responded negatively to this glimmer of sadism: her address to the reader concludes, “One word, and then adieu to thee, / yf thou to *Plat* his Plot / Repayre: take heede it is a *Maze* / to warne thee I forgot”(A8v). The enjambment here breaks these lines off from the previous, giving them the knowing but supplemental quality of an addition or aside – the rhetorical analog to a scribble of feminist solidarity inside the door of a bathroom stall. More globally, Whitney’s elaboration of “wyll” throughout the collection offers another vision of what women do in gardens (and cities).⁹⁵ Her method of selection lays claim to a liberty at odds with Plat’s enclosure -- “And for my part, I may be bolde, / to come when as I wyll: / Yea, and to chuse of all his Flowers/ which may my fancy fill”⁹⁶ – one which she literally then takes to the streets.

Whitney’s response to Plat consistently emphasizes the virtues of circulation above the territorially-bound powers of spaces. Her first visit, she writes, “I mee reposed one howre,” before being called away by a lack of leisure. She takes a sovereign souvenir, however:

Though loth: yet at the last I went,
but ere I parted thence:
A slip I tooke to smell vnto,

⁹⁴ Whitney (1573), sig. A4v.

⁹⁵ I am indebted here to Bartolovich’s reading of will and imaginative agency in “‘Optimism of the will’: Isabella Whitney and Utopia”(2009).

⁹⁶ It’s also a labor that can be extended by the reader: “And if thy selfe wolde gather more, / then I haue herein bound: / My counsell is that thou repayr[?]: / to Master *Plat* his ground. / And gather there what I dyd not, / perhaps thy selfe may light: / On those which for thee fitter are, / then them which I resighte.” Note that the language of discovery here is a visual one: the reader must commend him “when as thou viewst his toyle”; in the lines above, to discover a new specimen is to “light” upon it. The spelling of “resighte”, meanwhile, preserves a triple pun: Whitney recites, and repeats; she re-sites and resituates the slips, into her own book; and she re-sights them, viewing and reviewing them, endowing the flowers with new visual life in the presentation of her own nosegay.

which might be my defence.
 In styking streetes, or lothsome Lanes
 which els might me infect.⁹⁷

Whitney treats Plat's plot as a commons, such that the borrowing itself institutes what we might now call a usufructual relationship to Plat's property. That is, she enjoys its fruits without consuming its store. Whitney is careful to take only slips, and warns her readers likewise, should they repair to the original garden, not to damage any plants by the root. Indeed, in the epistle to the reader, the rhetorical commonplace of requesting the reader's charitable reception is almost entirely displaced onto Plat's plot, framed as the repository of Plat's labor: "Then pyttie were it to destroy," she writes, "what he with pain did plant." Having invited her reader to visit Plat's garden, she advises on etiquette:

In any wise, be chary that
 thou lettest in no Swine:
 No Dog to scrape, nor beast that doth
 to rauin skylly inclyne.
 For though he make no spare of them,
 to such as haue good skylly:
 To slip, to shere, or get in time,
 and not his braunches kylly:
 Yet barres he out, such greedy guts,
 as come with spire to toote:
 And without skill, both Earb & Flower
 pluck rashly by the roote.⁹⁸

Whitney prescribes both good will and good skill to any reader looking to visit the original – and though the word 'original' is my own insertion here, I think it does help get at the difference between the degrees to which each work is subject to (the rhetorical imagination) of danger. A nosegay cannot be "pluck[ed] rashly by the roote" – like slips

⁹⁷ Whitney, sig. A7v.

⁹⁸ Whitney, sig. A4r.

of paper, these botanical slips have already been copied. The permanent damage of destroying a garden, however, can be vividly and variously imagined, as Whitney displays here, and as we saw in the case of Grange's garden above.⁹⁹ Whitney's concern with the use of her nosegay, on the other hand, focuses on its continuing circulation.

In the epistle, when she imagines the abuse of her own book, Whitney asks the reader to pass it on rather than do it harm, entreating "That thou my Nosegay not misuse, / but leaue it to the rest." In the "Farewell" following the flowers, Whitney's rhetoric becomes more assertive: she claims both her labor and its floral yield as her own, and beseeches the reader not to do them any harm: "I must request you spoyle them not, / nor doo in peeces teare them." Once again, though, the other half of this request aims to insure their continued redistribution: "But if thy selfe doo lothe the sent. / geue others leaue to weare them." The differential taste of her audience is given remarkably neutral treatment here, given the evocation of a displeased or even disgusted reader – a studied indifference to the taste and complexion of her readers that she maintains with some consistency: "I shall no whit be discontent, / for nothyng is so pure: / But one, or other will milsyke / therof we may be sure."¹⁰⁰

Whitney's interest lies instead in the future of her work, in which nosegays are imagined to circulate more like clothing would circulate – literally, here, as the nosegay becomes a garment, worn in the bosom before passed on to second- and third-hand

⁹⁹ Suggestively, Whitney's reasoning here emerges in a locution that blurs the protection of Plat's virtues with the preservation of the virtues of his plot: "So wishing thee, to finde such Flowers, / as may thee comfort bring: / And eke that he which framd the Plot, / with vertues styll may spring. / I thee commend to mighty IOVE, / and thus I thee assure: / My Nosegay wyll increase no payne, / though sicknes none it cure."

¹⁰⁰ Whitney (1573), sig. C5v.

bearers, who in turn “geue others leaue to weare them.” The nature of the harm that Whitney imagines, however, is distinct from the violence she worries might come to Plat’s plantings. It is not so much that they might be uprooted at the origin but that the nosegay itself might be torn “in peeces” – sundered into separate slips, in other words, a violent dispersal closely matching what Gascoigne requests from his readers and what Whitney herself performed in Plat’s garden.

All of these pictures of future textual dispersal are by the same stroke reminders of the absence of the author – vehicles, in the end, for expressing her own dispersal. Wendy Wall has argued that the *Nosgay*, relying on female legacy and mock testamentary traditions, posits a version of female authorship predicated on the erasure or departure of the author herself (from London, or from the mortal coil, an ambiguity that Whitney plays with in the “Wyll.”)¹⁰¹ We might extend this point by noting the extent to which authorial absence and textual dispersal are interwoven throughout the *Nosgay*. This is true as we saw above, where requests not to harm the text are paired with requests to disperse it further. It also plays out in the disbursement of London properties in the “Wyll”:

Now London haue I (for thy sake)
 within thee, and without:
 As coms into my memory,
 dispearsed round about
 Such needfull thinges, as they should haue
 heere left now vnto thee:
 When I am gon, with consience.
 let them dispearsed bee.¹⁰²

¹⁰¹ Wall, *Imprint of Gender*, 283-310.

¹⁰² Whitney (1573), sig. E7v.

Whitney's double use of "dispearced" here (from the Latin *dispergere*, to scatter) does not so much re-appropriate as de-appropriate, scattering rather than re-generating London's purse.¹⁰³ (It is also hard not to hear an echo of "disappeared" in the word's composition.) The doubled dispearcals in this passage, however, introduce a new difficulty, opening up a gap between the time of the poem (in which Is.VV. *has* dispearced, according to the preceding series of performative utterances), and the future time of the will's consummation (let them be dispearced, Is.VV. says, "when I am gon.") This (literal) probationary period, between the subject's utterance of the will and its execution, maps precisely onto the strange temporal disjuncture of reading written poetry. The first dispearcal seems indexed to the time of poetic utterance (the poet has just, at the time of composition, "dispearced round about.") At the time of reading, however, the second condition has been fulfilled: Is.VV. is "gon," pulling the trigger, as it were, on the final illocutionary prescription: "let them dispearced bee."

In the farewell to the reader that follows the 110 flowers, Whitney more vividly imagines the itineraries and geographies of the nosegay, folding them into the trope of her own departure:

Yf he for whom I gathered them,
 take pleasure in the same:
 And that for my presumption,

¹⁰³ Such a reading accords with Bartolovich's commitment to Whitney's radical resistance to traditional hierarchies of ownership. As she argues, "Typically construed as an assertion of female authority, Whitney's redistribution should also be seen as a communalizing gesture – extending cultural possession to everyone – precisely because her female standpoint makes her acutely aware of the structurally excluding norms of property, and thus she realizes that such structures must be dissolved to end generalized oppression. Against the rising tide of enclosure, assertively figured by Plat, she not only reasserts rights in the common, but expands them. This gesture is repeated in the "Wyll" with London, which is redistributed to all rather than being reserved for a patriarchal elite"(415-6).

my Friends doo not mee blame.
 And that the sauour take effecte,
 in such as I doo know:
 And bring no harme to any els,
 in place where it shal goe.
 And that when I am distant farre,
 it worne be for my sake:
 That some may say, God speede her well
 that dyd this Nosegay make.¹⁰⁴

The series of conditions here gradually scales up from the most familiar – a single person, the dedicatee – to “friends,” “such as I doo know,” and, then, most anonymously, “any els, / in place where it shal goe,” before turning back to the author herself – who, in the frame of the book, may be the most distant of all. Given Whitney’s prescription for redistribution – which might be recursively repeated, as the nosegay is handed off from one differently-complected reader to another – these geographies are unknowably far-flung. The effect of its savor follows out this itinerary in this lengthy conditional phrase, holding out the force its effect as it travels further, until relieved by the “God speede” at the end of the syntactical unit. The book itself then seems to stand as a kind of memorial of the credit due to the author, somewhere between a printed forget-me-not and an IOU. Like Gascoigne, Whitney ultimately suggests a limit to the fantasy of free floral circulation with which she began.

In the letters that immediately follow the “Farewell”, the author’s absence (indeed, oblivion) provides the occasion and pathos of correspondence. The recipients of these “Certain familier Epistles and friendly Letters by the Auctor” – Whitney’s brothers, sisters, and cousin – are addressed through the veil of *unfamiliarity*: she complains to G.W. and B.W. of not being able to find them (“Then cannot I once from you heare / nor know I

¹⁰⁴ Whitney (1573), sig. C5v.

how to send”[Sig C5v]; “But none can tell, if you be well, / nor where you doo sojourne”[Sig C6r]. The anxiety of non-knowledge undergirds Whitney’s complaint: “Which makes me feare, that I shall heare / your health appaired is: / And oft I dread, that you are dead, / or somthyng goeth amys”[Sig C6r]. Following these two letters, Whitney places a set of instructions for her sisters still in service – “An order prescribed, by IS. VV. to two of her yonger Sisters seruinge in London.” These too are contingent not only on the general condition of epistolary absence but on her imminent geographical distance: “Good Sisters mine, when I / shal further from you dwell: / Peruse these lines, obserue the rules / which in the same I tell”[C6v]. Instruction here is again predicated on and inspired by the author’s absence.

The significance of these themes and the moral demands they place would not have been unfamiliar to any reader who had actually read the 110 philosophical flowers. The first seven flowers all address the question of absent friends or possessions, beginning with a fairly halcyon perspective: “Such Freendes as haue ben absent long / more ioyful be at meeting / Then those which euer present are / and dayly haue their greetynge”[Sig. B2r]. This silver lining, however, is quickly tarnished, and by Flower 7 the florist is questioning herself: “I saying olde, once out of sight, / and also out of minde: / These contraries, that absent frends / much ioy at meeting finde.”[Sig. B2v]. The simple juxtaposition of these competing proverbs, presented with minimal pathos or framing, not only fills the first flower’s absent friend with potential anxiety; it also undermines the reader’s confidence in any of the hundred subsequent proverbs, which might also have a flatly contradictory, and equally true, truism attached to them. Such an instability might make us question the ability of any of the flowers to travel

independently: are they “true” enough to detach on their own migratory patterns, in commonplace books and students’ memories? How do these other, multiple paths of circulation (the potential flight of individual flowers out of the nosegay) relate to the singular and familiar structures of address Whitney employs? And, especially, why does Whitney never imagine the circulation of individual flowers? While she specifically asks that her nosegay not be torn to pieces, her description of its virtue is always in the singular, and indexed to the nosegay as a whole – a resistance to at least one (fundamental) literary dispersal.

A reader holding the nosegay in her hand knows perfectly well, however, that it is not singular, that other, more or less identical copies are being held simultaneously in other hands, in other rooms or lanes. What kind of thing, then – and, in particular, what kind of gift – is Whitney’s nosegay? Throughout all of these examples of printed nosegays, gardens, and flowers, the botanical lexicon belongs largely to the paratextual parts of the book – that is, its most performative organs: title pages, dedications, epistles, running heads – those parts of the book that announce, advertise, bequeath and betray it. The book, like a nosegay, is presented as a gift to a patron, but, as a commodity produced in multiple copies, it is never only a gift. A bridge between the marketplace and the scene of patronage, these botanical frames perform a complex rhetorical and social labor – a complexity that Whitney explores throughout the *Nosgay*. These conceits announce not just a text’s sources but its status as a physical object, often in terms that ambiguously toe the line between metaphor and literal reference. Think, for example, of Anne Wheathill’s *Handfull of holesome (though homelie) hearbs* (1584), the duodecimo binding of which ergonomically scales the prayer

book's figurative conceit to the literal hand of its reader. Or, compare Nicolas Breton's breathless dedication to Lady Sheffield, where his "simple gift" of a "litle *handful of Flowers*" literally compels her body into the fold of the book.¹⁰⁵ Thomas Elyot defines *fasciculus* not just as a nosegay or a bundle of papers or letters but as "any thyng knytte togyther, whiche maye be borne in a mannes hande." These conceits thus call the text into being in a particular way, but they also call into being a readerly relationship, demanding any number of attendant corporal, interpretive, memorial, or citational practices.

Socially and generically, the nosegay as a composite form operates within a mnemonic system of gift exchange – a world of associations and expectations that emerge especially in amatory contexts, on the one hand, and in devotional genres, on the other. The memorial function stands potentially at odds with a general moral concern about the ephemerality and vanity of flowers, epitomized by the verse from Isaiah: "'All flesh is grasse, the Scripture saith, and vadeth like a flowre."¹⁰⁶ John Lyly, addressing his Gentlemen Readers at the beginning of *Euphues*, brought this commonplace into the sphere of the contemporary marketplace, regretting that "Gentlemen use books as gentlewomen handle their flowers who in the morning stick

¹⁰⁵ He writes: "So reposing a confidence in your noble degree, redy prest to accept the simple gift of a yong and vnskilful husbandman, I am the more bolde to present your Ladyship with this litle *handful of Flowers*, the sent wherof I trust, being gathered in so fruitful a time, wil so reuiue your senses, that your godly industrie wil vouchsafe to plant the roote therof in the *Garden of nobilitie*, which I am assured, being watered with the due vnderstanding of the founten of knowledge, cannot chuse but encrease to a defense [...] godly [...] modest demeanor." Nicholas Breton, *A smale handfull of fragrant flowers selected and gathered out of the louely garden of sacred scriptures, fit for any honorable or woorshipfull gentlewoman to smell vnto. Dedicated for a Newe-yeeres gyft, to the honorable and vertuous lady, the Lady Sheffeeld. By N.B.* (London: Richard Jones, 1575.)

¹⁰⁶ Isaiah 40.6. As given on the title page of *An epitaph, or funerall inscription, vpon the godlie life and death of the right worshipfull Maister William Lambe Esquire founder of the new conduit in Holborne, &c. Deceased the one and twentieth of April, and intumbed in S. Faiths Church vnder Povvles, the sixt of Maie next and immediatly followving. Anno. 1580. Deuised by Abraham Fleming.* Imprinted at London: By Henrie Denham, for Thomas Turner, and are to be solde at his shop at Guild-hall gate, [1580].

them in their heads and at night strew them at their heels.”¹⁰⁷ It is worth keeping in mind that Whitney, though she worries in passing about the possible abuse of her nosegay, does not mention the possibility of it wilting or going obsolete – a concern that was most central to herbalists and apothecaries, for whom the shelf-life of a given virtue in a given form was a standard datum in an herbal or distilling manual.

Once again, a work by Thomas Becon offers a helpful model and counterpoint. *A pleasaunt newe nosegay*, first published in 1542 and reissued in 1543, is the earliest printed nosegay I have located and, like most of Becon’s writing, was aimed to guide the devotion and morality of a wide readership. Upon opening Becon’s book, a reader is immediately introduced to the eponymous gathering named in the title – or, rather, it introduces itself. A poem called “The Nosegay speaketh” appears first on the verso of the title page, prior to the work’s formal dedication to George Whetenhall. Here, the book/nosegay orients toward the reader, claiming familiarity and figuring the scene of reading/consumption as a space of intimate companionship. I reprint it in full here:

The Nosegaye speaketh.

What meanest thou my frende to gather
Floures, which sone perysh and decaye,
Theyr sauours wyll not laste euer
As by experience se thou maye.

For a lytle tyme they seme pleasaunt
But streyght do they vanish awaye,
Lyke thynges, which to vanite graunt
As be experience se thou maye

Leaue therfore thynges transitory
And enhalse godly thynges alwaye,

¹⁰⁷ In *Renaissance Literature: An Anthology*, ed. Payne and Hunter, 430.

Which shall auance the vnto glory
As by experience se thou maye.

Receae me into thy bosome
If thou doste desyre a nosegaye,
My floures are full of delectacion
As by experience se thou maye.

To knowe thy selfe thou mayst learne here
God and thy kynge truely to obeye
And to thy neyghbour to be dere
As by experience se thou maye.

Take me nowd vnto the therfore
Beare me in thy bosome alwaye,
Much pleasure haue I for the in store
As by experience se thou maye.

After three stanzas of commonplace monitory advice, the nosegay abruptly demands in the fourth stanza that the reader incorporate it into their body. The mood of the refrain shifts here as it becomes a promise about the book itself, its store of delectation to be kept in the bosom and realized in future time. The book/nosegay as memento thus offers a solution to the ephemeral vanity of the worldly bouquet evoked by the first stanzas. The final stanza, in turn, maps this guarantee of future savor onto the more immediate future of reading. The store of the book offers a repository of wisdom into which the reader is being summoned and welcomed – one which can in turn be incorporated back into the bosom of the reader. The bosom of the reader is thus ultimately penetrated and re-interpellated as a storehouse of wisdom and delectation, binding and bearing the book/nosegay within it like the contents of a precious treasury. The work itself is a dialogue in which the nosegay is bestowed, and its individual virtues are named, as in an herbal – though here those virtues are charity, patience, and the like.

The placement of the nosegay in the bosom, bearing with it sweetness and delectation, takes its biblical cue from a verse in the Song of Songs: “When the king sitteth at the table, he shall smell my Nardus: a bundell of myrre is my loue vnto me, he wyll lye betwixt my brestes: a cluster of Camphire in the vineyards of Engaddi is my loue vnto me”(Bishop’s Bible, 1.10). The gloss in the Bishop’s Bible reads, “So long as *the* Church foloweth Christe, she shall not erre from the true fayth of saluation.” The storage of the myrrh in the bosom thus becomes a figure for the enduring faithfulness of the church – a token of future insurance that echoes other nosegays under consideration in this chapter. The “bundell” or bouquet, *fasciculus* in the Vulgate, is sometimes glossed as a nosegay in the sixteenth century. *Fasciculus* itself is a provocatively double word: Thomas Elyot’s dictionary notes that it may be a pamphlet or a bundle of letters, or “a grype, or thyng bounden together. It is also a nosegay, or any thyng knytte togyther, whiche maye be borne in a mannes hande.”¹⁰⁸ (We are left to presume some isomorphism of scale between a standard ‘handful’ and the ‘bosomful’ of the Canticles.) This bundle is described as a nosegay in Henry Finch’s 1615 gloss (“Christ’s dwelling in her heart by faith, which maketh her both gracious, and sweete as a nosegay of mirrh in a weomans bosome,”)¹⁰⁹, and, on the title page of *The godly garden of Gethsemani furnished with holsome fruites of meditation and prayer, vpon the blessed passion of Christ our Redeemer*, the verse in full rendered into a

¹⁰⁸ *The DICTIONARY of syr Thomas Eliot knight* (London: Thomas Berthelet, 1538). STC 7659. Compare also Thomas Cooper’s *Thesaurus linguae Romanae & Britannicae* (1578), which may be taking its direct cue from Elyot: “Fasciculus, pen. cor. Diminutiuum. *A gripe or handfull bounde together.* vt, Fasciculus epistolarum. Cic. *A bundell of letters.* Librorum fasciculus. Hor. *A fardell or little packe of bookes.* Colligare in fasciculos manuales. Pli. *To bind in handfuls.* ¶Fasciculus. Cic. *A poesie: a nosegay or any thing borne in the hande to smell to.*”

¹⁰⁹ Henry Finch, *An exposition of the Song of Solomon: called Canticles Together with profitable obseruations, collected out of the same. Perused and published by William Gouge, preacher of Gods Word in Black-Friers, London* (London: Printed by Iohn Beale dwelling in Aldersgate streete, 1615), sig. C3r.

couplet: “A nosegay of myrrh is my true loue to me: / Betvvne my brestes his
dvvelling shalbe.” Within, the book itself is introduced as both the fateful garden of
its title and as the Solomonic nosegay:

Meaning by the myrrhe, whiche for the bitternesse thereof was geuen Christ to drinke in
his extreme thirst, and which for the swéete smell agayne, serued amongst other thinges
to annoynt his body in the sepulchre: That she reioyced in nothing more then to gather hir
selfe a posie of the bitter paynes and sorowes that Christe suffered for hir and hir
faythfull children.¹¹⁰

Drawing on a long spiritual tradition, recusant texts, like this one, are more likely to
emphasize the bitterness of the myrrh – a typological resonance with the draft of
myrrh before the crucifixion (Mark 15:23), to be held close as a reminder of the
passion.¹¹¹ In all of these translations and elaborations, the bundle/nosegay/bouquet
signals, first, an endurance in future time as a reminder: the bridegroom, like the
bundle of myrrh, *will lie, will abide* (*inter ubera mea commorabitur*); and, second, an

¹¹⁰ The bitterness of the verse occasions a prescription for ongoing meditation and prayer: “And let vs
holde alwaies in our breast, and kéepe in memory by continuall meditation, all the grieuous tormentes and
troubles which our sauour suffered for the redemption of y^e worlde, that therby we may learne and knowe
the length & the breadth, the height & depth of that moste healthfull trée and Crosse of Christ, which of his
great mercy I beséeche him graunt both thée & me good Reader.”

¹¹¹ Bernard’s commentary on this also emphasizes the memorial and devotional importance of the nosegay:
“And I, brethren, from the beginning of my conversion, in order to store up the merits which I knew to be
wanting in me, took care to gather up this bundle of myrrh and to place it in my breast, a bundle gathered
together out of all the anguish and sorrows of my Lord. And indeed, among all these sprigs of sweet-
smelling myrrh I have been careful not to leave out that myrrh which he drank upon the cross nor that with
which he was anointed in the tomb. For by the first he took upon himself the bitterness of my sins; and by
the second he proclaimed the future incorruption of my body. I shall proclaim the memory of the abunant
sweetness of this myrrh as long as I live; unto eternity I shall not forget these mercies, for in them I have
been made to live”(Bernard, *Sermones in Cantica*, 43.3, PL163.994). Cited in Auerbach, *Literary
Language and Its Public in late Latin Antiquity and the Middle Ages*, trans. Manheim (Princeton: Princeton
UP, 1993), 74. Auerbach describes the centrality of this verse to Cistercian mysticism. See also Anne
McGovern-Mouron, “‘Listen to me, daughter, listen to a faithful counsel’: The *Liber de Modo Bene
Vivendi ad Sororem*,” in Denis Renevey and Christiania Whitehead, eds., *Writing Religious Women:
Female Spiritual and Textual Practices in Later Medieval England* (Toronto: U of Toronto P, 2000), 81-
106; 92. For another English Catholic example, see Matthew Kellison. *A myrrhine posie of the bitter
dolovrs of Christ his passion, and of the seaven vvords he spake on the crosse, composed by Ch. M.* Printed
at Doway : By L. Kellam, anno 1639. STC 17129. Kellison writes: “It is the duty therefore of euery
Christian to labour and endeauour with all diligent carefulnesse to liue well, that at the day of iudgement,
he may speed well. *bene viuere*, that is, *liue well*, shoulde bee the delightsome poesie, & sweete perfumed
Nosegay of euery christian: thus liue wel, that thou maiest die wel, and after death eternal|ly speed well,
obtainyng that blessednesse, *Blessed are they that die in the Lord*. “(Sig. C2r)

intimate relation to the body of the reader, in which the generic conceit of the nosegay and the physical form of the book blur together.

When they appear in textual miscellanies, nosegays often carry a typological affinity with the book itself, performing in emblematic miniature the complications of a mixed bibliographical situation. This was the case with Becon's speaking nosegay, in which the metaphorical bundle of flowers becomes the voice of the book. The first poem following an address to the reader in Clement Robinson's miscellany *A Handefull of pleasant delites* (1584), is presented as a nosegay, and similarly does double duty as textual content and textual epitome, as text, paratext, and metatext. A catalog of the emblematic flowers of which it is composed, the poem stands in as the bouquet itself (a bundle of flowered verses) and an account of its presentation to a lover: "A Nosegaie alvvaies sweet, for Louers to send for Tokens, of loue, at Newyeres tide, or for fairings, as they in their minds shall be disposed to write." Most famous for its close echoes in Ophelia's floral inventory, Robinson's nosegay compiles a gathering of emblematic flowers: "*Lauander* is for louers true," "*Rosemarie* is for remembrance," "*Violet* is for faithfulness." The poem closely follows the commonplaces systematized in writers like Bellot, but places them within an ambiguous frame. It begins:

A Nosegaie lacking flowers fresh,
to you now I do send.
Desiring you to look thereon,
when that you may intend:
For flowers fresh begin to fade,
and *Boreas* in the field,
Euen with his hard coniealed frost,
no better flowers doth yéeld:
¶ But if that winter could haue sprung,

a swéeter flower than this,
 I would haue sent it presently
 to you withouten misse:
 Accept this then as time doth serue,
 be thankful for the same,
 Despise it not, but kéepe it well,
 and marke ech flower his name.¹¹²

This New Year's gift of winter flowers is (like Shakespeare's sonnets) more black than green – a compensatory gesture that turns out to *overcompensate* for the barrenness of the season with a display of semantic and erotic constancy (in contrast to the ephemerality of regular flowers). The negative construction of the first sentence, however, seems to undersell – or even undermine – this appeal: “A Nosegaie lacking flowers fresh, / to you now I do send.” The opposite of “fresh” is not “immutable” (the virtue where the poem's apology eventually lands) but “rank,” leaving open the threat that the offering is more bitter or rotten than sweet – a possibility that quietly haunts the poet's address to an absent lover in the lines that follow.

As the first poem in the volume, it takes on the implicit additional responsibility of welcoming the reader into the book, an overlap of office reinforced by the close association between “nosegay” and the titular “handful.” The trace of this double address, in which the reader (the recipient of the book) is also hailed as the poem's second-person subject (the recipient of the nosegay), subtly queers the poem's floral and bibliographical economy. Consider the following lines, for example, in the voice of the book, or uttered in the style of Becon's personified nosegay:

*Peniri*all is to print your loue,
 so deep within my heart:
 That when you look this Nosegay on,

¹¹² Robinson, *A Handefull of pleasant delites* (London: Richard Jones, 1584), sig. A2r.

my pain you may impart,
 And when that you haue read the same,
 consider wel my wo,
 Think ye then how to recompence,
 euen him that loues you so.¹¹³

The nosegay, like a book, is a mnemonic device – one that recalls, when breathed in or looked into, not just affection for an absent friend, but – conspicuously here – the debt incurred by the gift itself. The erotic compensation is one obligation marked on the nosegay's gathering of chits, but less tangible are the obligations to an author publishing in a mixed idiom of patronage and commodity circulation. Whitney taps into a similarly mixed economy when she asks her distant readers to give her some credit, hoping:

And that when I am distant farre,
 it worne be for my sake:
 That some may say, God speede her well
 that dyd this Nosegay make.¹¹⁴

For Whitney, this backwards relay of credit is predicated (naturally) on her own absence, the condition under which her nosegay might be borne in the bosom as a reminder of the debt she is due.

This request for good will does not rely on a standard system of patronage or of the exchange of gifts – here, she hopes to gather good will from all those dispersed marks who may have encountered her book, whether they bought it themselves or whether it was relayed to them by a friend to whose complexion it was ill-suited. This compensatory accounting of good will starts to resemble a pyramid scheme, the usurious production of good will by good will. The gift economy in which the nosegay operates thus echoes the

¹¹³ *ibid.*, sig. A3v.

¹¹⁴ Whitney (1573), sig. C5v.

commons of Plat's garden, in which however many copies might be taken without damaging the original. However, the plurality of the this textual commons – the ability to borrow and multiply without diminishing the source – pins Whitney's nosegay into a central paradox: traditionally, a nosegay is itself singular, as textual genre or as a bundle of clipped flowers, a gift to be presented to a lover or patron. A gift so multifariously available, however, is hardly a gift at all.

The dedication to Mainwairing is not the only staged presentation of the *Nosgay* that appears in the text. The problem of presenting the print commodity as a gift is brought out again in a letter to her brother in the "Certain familiar epistles," where Whitney seems to be regifting the nosegay:

Receave of me, and eke accept
 a simple token heare:
 A smell of such a Nosegay as
 I do for present beare
 unto a vertuous ladye, which
 tyl death I honour wyll.
 The losse I had of service hers,
 I languish for it styll.¹¹⁵

Though the nosegay has already been presented to Mainwairing and to the reader, Whitney further complicates its distribution here: she offers the smell to her brother, while the nosegay itself seems to be on its way to the "vertuous ladye," her former employer. By emphasizing smell, Whitney is sharing what isn't a finite commodity; the nosegay is not depleted by the participation of additional noses. Lorna Hutson argues that Whitney here invokes the awkward place of the printed book within a traditional gift economy: "Whitney's ingenious use of the metaphor of scent (which might be taken to express the inability of a 'nosegay' to be depleted or devalued by being shared) actually

¹¹⁵ *ibid.*, sig. C6r.

has the effect of making us more aware than before of the extent to which giving in print corresponds to the creation of a *fiction* of a relation constituted through the reciprocal exchange of benefits which elicits from readers the benefits of ‘credit’ as an author.”¹¹⁶ Hutson argues that this problem is symptomatic of the dedication of printed books in general, in which the dispersal of multiple copies, she writes, “disrupts the conceptual *direction* of the flow of benefits from donor to dedicatee.”¹¹⁷ In other words, the fact that there is no “real gift” since there is no “real book” makes the performance of this fictional relation redound instantly credit back on the author.

The elasticity of flowers and of scent thus frames a vision of textual consumption that enjoys without consuming or wasting. As Whitney is cannily aware, however, this fact does not exempt these borrowings from the logic of property. There is thus some awkwardness in her dedication of the work to Mainwairing, where Whitney’s conventional humility about the value of the gift being presented is compounded by the more unusual admission that its components were stolen from somewhere else. Comparing herself to a pauper offering a handful of water, Whitney seems to be framing the gift as an offering drawn from an “open source” – which, like her borrowed slips, seems more like a resource than a possession. She writes:

to acquit your curtesies, I come to present you like the pore man which having no goods, came with his handes full of water to meett the Persian Prince withal, who respecting the good wyll of the man, did not disdayne his simple Guift: even so, I being willinge to bestow some Present on you, by the same thinking to make parte of amendes for the much you have merited, to performe the dutie of a friend, to expresse the good wyll that should rest in Countrie folke & not having of mine owne to discharg that I go about (like

¹¹⁶ Hutson, 126.

¹¹⁷ As Hutson goes on, “The gesture of giving or accrediting *in print* is thus constantly in danger of cancelling out, by anticipation, the temporality of reciprocity, and reversing itself to become an improvisation or fiction of credit instantaneously accruing to the author as the professed ‘friend’ of the dedicatee”(124). Hutson: this effect of print is “one of the themes of [Whitney’s] book, taken as a whole”(124)

to that pore Fellow, which went into an others ground for his water) did step into another garden for these Flowers.¹¹⁸

It is hard not to be struck here by the dispossession of the gift in the moment of its presentation. By analogy with the poor man's handful of water, we expect Whitney's handful of flowers to be a gesture without substance, a mark of good will but not an exchange of goods. But then, in the moment of parenthetical delay before her own admission, the water is turned to something borrowed from ground that *does* belong to someone else: it is not only a simple gift but a *stolen* simple gift, by someone who, like Whitney, has no ground of their own. (We should not underestimate, at this period of land enclosure, the significance of the hoarding and control of water.) As much as she relies on the logic of unconstrained circulation that characterizes the gardens of Grange and (on the surface) Gascoigne, Whitney is distinctly aware that she is not actually invited inside, and that her distribution of those slips must always be a *redistribution* – reminding us that, as a borrower (in case we doubted for a second), she is also always a thief.

¹¹⁸ Whitney (1573), sig. A4r.

Chapter 3

“Pointes of them selues to be taken in hand”: the force of
small forms in Tusser and Tottel

1557 was a busy year for Richard Tottel. A charter member of the Stationers Company at its incorporation under royal charter on May 4, the printer and publisher, still less than a decade out of his own apprenticeship, ran a busy shop with four apprentices working under him along with several journeymen. Much of their business was engaged with the printing of books of common law, for which Tottel had won a lucrative patent in 1553, and which insured a steady income from the growing body of law students around the Inns of Court.¹¹⁹ At the same time, Tottel was bringing out an increasing number of publications that involved more economic risk: works on husbandry, philosophy, medicine, and, especially, books of poetry, which he hoped would find an audience, perhaps among the same clerks and lawyers who were already regular customers.¹²⁰ During the summer of 1557, a visitor to his shop at the sign of the Hand and Star, near the Temple Bar, might have seen, along with the

¹¹⁹ As H.J. Byram argues, Tottel had established himself and was making significant contributions to the Company in a very short period, a sign perhaps that he had inherited financial means from his father, a wealthy landowner and alderman in Exeter. His connections with prominent lawyers around the Inns of Court, especially Rastell and the Cholmeleys, may have also contributed to his success, putting him in a position not only to win his patent on legal publications but also to capitalize upon Mary's ascension in 1553, when a number of Protestant printers abandoned their shops. For more on Tottel's life and career, see Byram, and DNB.

¹²⁰ As I will discuss at greater length below, these publications are doubly “speculative” in the sense developed by Zachary Lesser: namely, to designate the way in which early modern publishers speculated both economically, making a wager on the success of a book, and hermeneutically, as to a work's sense and significance. See *Renaissance Drama and the Politics of Publication* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2004), 26-51. I do not mean to suggest that Tottel's legal publications were entirely unspeculative – a topic which deserves further consideration in another venue. As an example, though, consider the enthusiastically self-promoting preface to his 1556 edition of the Magna Carta and other laws: “sithens I toke in hand to serve your uses, *yt* imperfections have ben suplied, the price so eased as the scarcenes no more hindreth but that

usual array of legal publications, two books of Henry Howard's blank verse translation of the *Aeneid*, the *Works* of Thomas More (from manuscripts preserved by William Rastell, a friend of Tottel's), an edition of William Baldwin's *Treatyce of Moral Philosophy*, Thomas Tusser's *Hundreth Good Pointes of Husbandrie*, and a collection of courtly verse published with the title, *Songes & Sonettes written by the ryght honorable Lorde Henry Haward late Earle of Surrey, and other*.

Amidst this range of titles, two unassuming and, at first glance, incongruous quartos would prove Tottel's most successful ventures. Tusser's *Hundreth good pointes of husbandrie* and the miscellaneous *Songes & Sonettes* went on to become the two most reprinted books of non-scriptural verse of the sixteenth century, with Tusser's *Pointes* beating out the 11 editions of Tottel's *Miscellany* with 16 of its own. (There would be nearly 25 in total by the end of the seventeenth century.)¹²¹ First issued at the end of Mary's reign, the many editions of both collections drew readers and spurred imitators through the end of the reign of Elizabeth. *Songes & Sonettes* made the Henrician courtly lyric of Wyatt and Surrey available in print to generations of readers and new poets, enabling and inspiring the myriad sonnets written later in the sixteenth century. The lyric collections discussed in the previous chapter all follow in the

ye have them as chepe (notwithstanding the common dearth of these times) as when thei were most plentiful, the print much 'pleasanter to the eye in the bokes of yeres than any y' ye have ben yet served with, paper and margine as good & as fayre as the best, but much better and fairer then the most, no small number by me set forth newly in print y^t before were scant to be found in writing, I nede not my self to report it."

¹²¹ There are indications that both works were popular soon after publication: in 1561-2, O. Rogers was fined by the Stationers Company for printing an unauthorized edition of the *Pointes* (Arber 1184). In all, *Songes & Sonettes* was issued in three separate editions in the span of two months in the summer of 1557: first, on June 5 (STC 13860), with two additional issues following on July 31 (STC 13861 and 13862). Remarkably, the two latter editions share no sheets in common, leading W.W. Greg to argue that they were simultaneously printed – an indication that Tottel was responding to significant demand. W. W. Greg, "Tottel's Miscellany," *The Library* s. 2-V, no. 18 (1904): 118-123.

path it opened up, echoing not just the range of first collected there but its titling conventions and the layout of poems on the page. For all of his importance in the early history of the Stationers Company and as a printer of legal and literary titles, Tottel's name now survives largely as the canonical title to that important poetic collection – first formally called “Tottel's Miscellany” in John Payne Collier's limited reprint of 1867, and nearly universally referred to as such since Edward Arber's edition published with that title in 1870.

Tusser's *Pointes* in many ways feel like an interlopers in these proceedings. Both ostentatiously plain and rhetorically ambitious, in dialogue with poetry of the wits but engrossed in earthier matter, Tusser's *Pointes* seem now to have had an ambiguous place in the print marketplace. Even among his grouping of so-called “Drab Age” poets, C.S. Lewis wondered whether, in Tusser, he had found “one of those works before which the literary critic hesitates, doubtful whether his commission extends so far.”¹²² Sir Walter Scott, in other respects a great fan of the *Points*, was perhaps more harsh, admitting that “the poetry of Tusser is obviously the least recommendation of his work.”¹²³ Contemporary critics, though they frequently turn to Tusser's *Pointes* for data on the everyday life of the early modern household, have not been much kinder. John Thompson, in his *Founding of English Meter*, gives Tottel's Miscellany a central place in the epochal event of the book's title, but explicitly excludes

¹²² Lewis nonetheless finds some reason to return: “It is doubtful whether his work is to be treated as literature. If we complain that his ‘anapests’, though at first a relief from the eternal fourteener, prove in the end only a variety of torment, may it not be replied that we are absurdly judging as poetry what were only meant to be mnemonic jingles? Yet we cannot so leave them. The truth is that, after Wyatt, Tusser is the most readable of all the Drab versifiers. The pleasure, no doubt, results partly from our nostalgia for the land and for an age which, if not much softer than our own, was hard in different places”(262)

¹²³ Grigson, 320.

Tusser, whose works, he writes, “provide chiefly metrical curiosities.”¹²⁴ While the Miscellany marks the place where “the iambic metrical pattern makes its first unequivocal and dominant appearance in print in modern English,” Tusser’s rambling anapests merit no place in the mid-century iambicization of English poetry. They seem, somehow, out of the time of literary history. In his thoughtful consideration of oral cultures in early modern England, Adam Fox confirms this stance, writing that in Tusser’s “couplets we hear the language of the countryside, abounding with old saws which were probably ancient when he chanced to weave them into the fabric of his text, so providing some of their earliest recordings.”¹²⁵ Tusser appears here not only in his usual subliterate guise, but as an anti-author, and, metaphorically, a failed husbandman – a kind of hunter-gatherer who “chances” upon text already generated by the countryside. Once again, Tusser seems ancient and out of time, a visitor from some place outside of realm of English literature.

These rumors of Tusser’s rudeness may have been started by the poet himself. In a verse preface to the second edition, of 1570, Tusser makes explicit an oppositional relationship to the relative polish of the *Songes & Sonettes*:

What lookest thou here for to haue?
Trim verses, thy fansie to please?
Of Surry (so famous) that craue,
Looke nothing but rudenesse in these.¹²⁶

The preface continues in the distinctive anapests that run through the whole work, distinguishing its own wares from compendia of “graue sentences” (“Such Chaucer hath twentie and ten, / Ye thousanes to pleasure thy minde”) and from “tearmes painted with

¹²⁴ John Thompson, *The founding of English metre* (London, : Routledge and K. Paul, 1961), 1-2.

¹²⁵ Adam Fox, *Oral and Literate Culture in England* (Oxford: Clarendon, 2000), 152.

¹²⁶ Tusser (1570), sig. A2r.

rethorike fine” (“Of makers of Englishe looke that, / But neuer in me nor in mine.”)¹²⁷

The prudential thrift of Tusser’s work is advertised as a distant alternative to the “trim” fancy in which the *Songes and Sonettes* are clothed, its yeomanly emphasis on labor a stark contrast to the courtly *sprezzatura* represented by Wyatt and Surrey. Tusser himself here presages the opinion of Walter Scott that he is worth more in substance than in form.¹²⁸ Nonetheless, by printing the preface, Tottel is engaging in a version of what Zachary Lesser has called, in reference to publications of a half century later, “dialogic publishing.”¹²⁹ Though Tusser is not strictly in a debate with Wyatt, Surrey, or Chaucer, these stanzas place his points – however oppositionally – in their orbit, in a complementary relationship with those other collections as distinct members of the same cultural field.

If we take Tottel as a reader who saw in Tusser as in Surrey a promise of profit, these generic and formal contrasts comes to seem less stark. It was in his non-legal publications that Tottel was taking the greatest financial risk and the strongest interpretive role. In all of these speculations, it seems that he was betting on the couplet: his catalogue is shot through with these small, rhyming units, in some cases likely in his own translations. Tottel’s predilection for small verse forms – and the couplet in particular – extends across genres, from legal to poetic and philosophical. As a common stylistic strain, the ubiquity of the couplet ignores generic distinctions between literary

¹²⁷ It is impossible to say if the verses are Tusser’s or his editor or publishers, though the distinctive anapests align them with the points that make up the bulk of the volume. In either case, they suggest some broader familiarity with the contours of Tottel’s catalogue and the market of print verse in general.

¹²⁸ We might consider this within the context of Philip Sidney’s later claim in the *Defence* that philosophical poetry is “wrapped within the fold of the proposed subject, and takes not the free course of his own invention.”

¹²⁹ Zachary Lesser, *Renaissance drama and the politics of publication: readings in the English book trade* (Cambridge University Press, 2004), 112-156.

and non-literary works, between useful and useless language. Rather, the small literary forms found through Tottel's publications – and the specific conjunctions between Tusser's *Pointes* and the *Songes & Sonettes* – spur us to rethink distinctions between poetry and practical knowledge in Tudor print culture. As I will argue in this chapter through readings of the *Pointes*, *Songes & Sonettes*, and William Baldwin's *Treatyse of Moral Philosophy*, all of these works use the rhetoric of instruction and the visual resources of the page to manage and modulate their own consumption.

Though it is not often read as such, Tottel advertises *Songes & Sonettes* as – at least in part – a pedagogical collection. It was published, he writes in the epistle, “to the honor of the Englishe tong, and for profit of the studious of Englishe eloquence.”¹³⁰ In 1555, Tottel had published Richard Sherry's handbook of tropes and figures with a similar phrase on the title page: *A treatise of the figures of grammer and rhetorike profitable for al that be studious of eloquence, and in especiall for suche as in grammer scholes doe reade moste eloquente poetes and oratours*.¹³¹ The same phrase later appeared in the long title of Henry Peacham's 1577 *Garden of Eloquence*, which described itself as “very profitable for all those that be studious of eloquence.” All of these examples may be imitating Thomas Wilson's much reprinted treatise on rhetoric, published in 1553 with the full title, *The arte of rhetorique for the vse of all suche as are studious of eloquence, sette forth in English, by Thomas Wilson*, but the common idiom also suggests that we should take seriously the power of

¹³⁰ Unless taken from a particular printing by Tottel, quotations from the Miscellany are taken from Ryder's edition: *Tottel's Miscellany (1557-1587)*, 2nd Ed., ed. Hyder Edward Rollins (Cambridge: 1965).

¹³¹ Sherry, *A treatise of the figures of grammer and rhetorike profitable for al that be studious of eloquence, and in especiall for suche as in grammer scholes doe reade moste eloquente poetes and oratours* (London: in aedibus Ricardi Totteli, 1555), title page.

Songes & Sonettes as a pedagogical tool and thesaurus of rhetorical practice for its readers. Indeed, as the materials I consider in this chapter will suggest, these two aspects – the force of instruction and the form of the storehouse – work in collaboration. When Tottel paints himself in the collection’s epistle to the reader as liberator of these “small parcelles” of verse from “the vngentle horders vp of such treasure,” the connection of form to political and aesthetic function is essential: the smallness of the “parcelles” opens them up to redistribution to the “studious.”

The conceit of Tusser’s husbandry likewise turns on its aggregation of these small units: in the first edition of 1557, each instructive point is four lines, a single lesson broken into two couplets. In later editions, single, shorter couplets count as “pointes in themselues.” According to Tusser’s stated intentions (and those of many of his contemporaries), the metrical point is the form best suited for memory, repetition, and storage. His sage jingles are catchily efficient. The *Pointes* share this gnomic and pedagogical weight with a range of small textual forms widely circulated in early modern England, both verse and prose: proverbs, epitomes, *sententiae*, epigrams. Any sixteenth-century school boy would have learned grammar, style, and basic moral lessons from the *Distichs of Cato*, a collection of moralizing Latin verses, and would have known and likely imitated Erasmus’s *Adagia*, either in Latin or in one of the Englished editions.¹³² The great halls of estates and the more humble sitting rooms of

¹³² According to T.W. Baldwin, the *Distichs* were “almost universally” required in the second form, and sometimes in the first. Thomas Whitfield Baldwin, *William Shakespere’s small Latine & lesse Greeke*. (Urbana, University of Illinois press, 1944), 595. Thomas Berthelet published a collection of *Dicta sapientia* [1527?] from Erasmus, printed in Latin and in English translation, and in 1539 Richard Taverner translated 178 adages from Erasmus’s collection, in the same year that he published a collection of translations from Erasmus’s apothegms. Desiderius Erasmus, *Prouerbes or Adagies with Newe Addicions Gathered Out of the Chiliades of Erasmus by Richard Tauerner. Hereunto Be Also Added Mimi Publani*

yeoman farmhouses were inscribed with posies, like those suggested by Tusser first in the edition of 1570 and (at greater length) in later issues of the *Fiue hundreth pointes of good husbandrie*.¹³³

This is not a context in which the couplets appearing in various stanzaic forms throughout the *Songes & Sonettes* are usually read, and it is my hope that the juxtaposition with Tusser's prudential earnestness will defamiliarize that most familiar of verse appendages: the final couplet that appears first in the sonnets of Thomas Wyatt, a nearly unprecedented genetic mutation in the history of the sonnet form that became the characteristic feature of its English instantiations. No scholarly consensus exists as to why such a mutation should have occurred: literary historians have noted the proximity of the Italian strambotto, and the likely influence of the rhyme royal stanzas so popular in English poetry of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.¹³⁴ Though she does not intend to offer an etiology of the final couplet, Rosalie Colie has tracked its role within sonnets against the parallel generic work of the epigram, arguing that sonnet and epigram acted as countergenres that developed in parallel according to a gustatory logic of gall, vinegar, salt, and honey.¹³⁵ Colie's account of the relationship of the epigram to the sonnet turns centrally on a quality she calls "pointedness," the power of an epigram to prick the attention or imagination of the reader.

(Imprinted at Lo[n]don: In Fletstrete at the sygne of the whyte Harte [per Richardum Bances] Cum priuilegio ad imprimendum solum, 1539).

¹³³ Juliet Fleming, in her discussion of early modern English graffiti, notes several cases of precepts from Tusser that have survived on English walls. Juliet Fleming, *Graffiti and the writing arts of early modern England* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001). 29-31, 171, n. 4.

¹³⁴ See for example Patricia Thomson, *Sir Thomas Wyatt and his background* (Stanford University Press, 1964).

¹³⁵ These "metaphorical larder terms" are J.C. Scaliger's (Colie, 68).

This sharpness is often a matter of what we are more likely to call simply “wit,” or, in the Latin of the rhetoricians, *argutia*.¹³⁶

Spurring us to reread the distinctive conclusion of the “English sonnet” within the ubiquitous circulation of these small forms, the propinquity of Tusser’s points to Tottel’s miscellany is less counterintuitive than it initially seems. An attention to these formal continuities reveals the *Songes & Sonettes* to be more useful than a traditional conception of lyric may allow and Tusser’s *Pointes* to be less practical than it is usually taken to be. The context for these connections has been illuminated by recent scholarship on Tudor literary culture. Re-tellings of the fortunes of the sonnet between Surrey and Sidney -- the period during which the works at the center of this chapter flourished -- have emphasized both its didactic quality and its prosodic instability.¹³⁷ By following the particular uses of “sonnet” as a term through the 1560s and 1570s, Cathy Shrank has found that these poems are often not fourteen lines, often not in pentameter, and -- significantly for our purposes here -- not necessarily about love. As Gascoigne writes, sonnets “serve as well in matters of love as of discourse”(U2v), and, as Shrank confirms, collections immediately in the wake of Tottel’s were more likely to use the sonnet form for “sober reflection or even blatant

¹³⁶ English writers on poetics do not in fact commonly use “pointedness” to describe this quality, turning instead to “sharp,” “quick,” “witty.” (In French, both Marot and Sebillet use “*aigu*.”) Michael Spiller, in the context of an argument about the origins of the sonnet, does make the connection to pointedness, arguing that “the sonnet is always, inescapably, a ‘pointed’ form, even before it becomes explicitly associated with the epigram”(The *Development of the Sonnet* (London: Routledge, 1992), 11).

¹³⁷ Recent interest in the poets of this period begins by turning to Yvor Winters’s redemptive view of Googe, Turberville, Greville, and Gascoigne, in explicit opposition to their dismissal by C.S. Lewis, on which see Shrank, as well as Shannon, “Minerva’s Men,” in Shrank and Pincombe, eds., *The Oxford Handbook to Tudor Literature* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2009), 437-454.

didacticism.”¹³⁸ According to Richard Panofsky, the voice of the early Elizabethan poet most closely resembled “that of the schoolmaster exhorting or reminding possibly wayward youths.” Though Shrank has modified this claim to accommodate the playful ways in which mid-Tudor poets inhabited and undermined such expectations, this didactic persona was nonetheless the baseline against which these variations were defined.

The sonnet itself had an ambiguous identity in the second half of the sixteenth century. George Gascoigne prefaced the definition of the sonnet in his 1573 “Certayne notes of instruction” by complaining that “some thinke that all Pomes (being short) may be called Sonets, as in deede it is a diminutive worde deriued of *Sonare*,” before correcting them: “but yet I can beste allowe to call those Sonnets whiche are of fourteen lynes, euery line conteyning tenne syllables. The first twelue do ryme in staues of foure lines by crosse meetre, and the last two ryming together do conclude the whole.”¹³⁹ As Gascoigne complains here, “sonnet” often meant nothing more precise than a brief lyric; its use was frequently invoked to echo the title and capitalize in some way on the success of Tottel’s collection (the title of which thus may have meant something more like “Short poems and also shorter poems.”)

The “good lessons” explicitly named in the 1570 edition of the *Pointes* do not place Tusser’s work at a great distance from these “sonnets,” either sociologically or stylistically. Nonetheless, Tusser’s prefatory verses paint the generic distinction between himself and Surrey as one that breaks down along lines of temporality and use. Against

¹³⁸ Shrank, “‘Matters of Love as of Discourse’: The English Sonnet, 1560-1580,” *Studies in Philology* 105.1 (200), 30-49; 35.

¹³⁹ Gascoigne, “Certayne Notes of Instruction,” in G. Gregory Smith., ed., *Elizabethan Critical Essays* v.1 (Oxford: Clarendon, 1904), 55.

the presentism of fancy and ornament, Tusser's points are meant to be kept. They offer not pleasure in the present moment but utility in a future time of need. He thus opens the book by making promises for the future:

What lookest thou then at the last?
 Good lessons for thee and thy wife?
 Then kepe them in memorie fast,
 From youth, to the last of thy lyfe.

What looke ye for more in my booke?
 Things nedefull in tyme for to come?
 Else misse I of that I do looke,
 If pleasant thou findest not some.¹⁴⁰

From these first pages, the book's orientation is towards future time, looking forward not only to its future reading (as Shakespeare will in the sonnets) but towards its future use, extracted and relocated for "fast keeping" in the memory (mental or material) of the reader. In the edition of 1573, the second line of the latter quatrain is changed to "Points nedefull in time for to come," a hint of how Tusser sees the distinctly utilitarian time of the point – that is, as a crucial tool in the husbandman's toolbox, to be kept, maintained, and even increased in preparation for "tyme for to come." The practice of husbandry anticipates and absorbs these future readings.

In the decades following its initial publication, Tusser's verse was praised not merely for its usefulness but as the exemplar in its own genre – a kind of English national georgic.¹⁴¹ In the preface to his translation of Heresbach's *Four Books of Husbandry*,

¹⁴⁰ Tusser, *Hundreth pointes* (1570), sig. Aii^r.

¹⁴¹ The cultural status of English georgic in the sixteenth century has been a matter of some scholarly debate, turning largely on the social value of labor. Specifically, Alastair Fowler and Andrew McRae have both countered Anthony Low's claim that English georgic arrived belatedly in the seventeenth century due to aristocratic prejudice against labor. (Though from different perspective: Fowler, by providing another theory of genre; and McRae, by offering a broader historical and social account of husbandry and its literature.) Most work on English examples of georgic have focused on Spenser, who, though he skipped

Barnaby Googe, likely one of the “makers of Englishe” alluded to in the prefatory poem, wrote that Tusser’s works “in my fancie, without any presumption, compare with any of the Varros, Columellas, or Palladios of Rome.” William Webbe, writing in 1586, placed the writers of georgics alongside those of eclogues, naming Tusser as his only native exemplar in the genre and describing the *Pointes*, in the same breath as references to Hesiod and Virgil, as “a peece surely of great wytt and experience, and withal very prettilye handled.” It was largely within this generic framework that Tusser’s works seem to have happily survived the sixteenth century.¹⁴²

This context also shapes the considerations of form and function at the heart of this chapter. When Barnaby Googe translated pieces of Virgil’s *Georgics* for inclusion in the *Foure Bookes of Husbandry*, he took chunks of two or four lines and rendered them in pentameter couplets. In the edition of 1577, these lines are indented and printed in italic, visual signs of their ancient authority and invitations to extraction and application.¹⁴³ These earliest renderings of Virgil’s text into English reveal a basic truth about how it was seen and used: Virgil’s most explicitly didactic work, his verses on husbandry seemed well suited to extraction and distribution, to condensation into small couplet-sized lessons and atomistic circulation. Tusser was likely familiar with Virgil’s work on husbandry from school, though it is less likely that he was familiar with Hesiod’s *Works and Days*, the calendrical structure of which was closer to

this turn of the Virgilian rota, gave labor a central place both in the *Shepherdess Calender* and in the *Faerie Queene*.

¹⁴² Robert Schuler attributes these classifications to “primitive genre theory, along with a healthy Elizabethan chauvinism”(7).

¹⁴³ For example, the following: “Some sortes there are, that of the seede are sowne, / And some that sette of rootes, to seedes are growne.” *Fovre Bookes of Husbandry, collected by M Conradus Heresbachius, Counsellor to the high and mighty Prince, the Duke of Cleue: Conteyning the whole arte and trade of Husbandry, vvith the antiquitie, and commendation thereof. Nevvelly Englished, and increased, by Barnabe Googe, Esquire* (London: Richard Watkins, 1577), fo. 70v.

his own work. Andrew Wallace has argued that the *Georgics* themselves carried a special pedagogical weight for their sixteenth century readers, standing both as a model of method and labor and as a source for metaphors of didactic cultivation.¹⁴⁴

It is partially within this generic context that the couplet in Tusser generates an expectation of utility and carries the interpellative weight of instruction – a poetics of practical command that the exuberantly miscellaneous form of later editions toys with and manipulates. As we will see, Tusser’s rhetoric of utility ultimately seems to break loose from the likelihood (or even possibility) of actual use, the proliferation of points outgrowing the practical functions of thrift and efficiency. How would a husbandman or his wife remember or store not only hundreds of points but also their brief “abstracts” – dimeter couplets introduced in the edition of 1573 that, though compellingly pithy, are too abbreviated to contain sufficient information for practical application?

Such developments reveal a fundamental tension between condensation as an effect of style and condensation as a strategy for use. In her discussion of the meanings of epitome, Chloe Wheatley has argued along similar lines that the “compressed economy” of lyric becomes its own compulsion. These small rhyming forms are not only

¹⁴⁴ Wallace argues that the “sixteenth-century educators seem to have prized Virgil’s didactic poem as a statement about the mechanics of instruction.” “‘Noursled up in life and manners wilde’: Spenser’s *Georgic* Educations,” *Spenser Studies* XIX (2004): 67; Peter Mack, “Ramus Reading: The Commentaries on Cicero’s Consular Orations and Vergil’s *Eclogues* and *Georgics*,” *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 61 (January 1, 1998): 111-141. Virgil, according to Ramus, did not describe the science of agriculture systematically (“totam et integram”), but rather “only gathered the flowers” (“sed florum tantum decerpit”) – a distinction which exempts the poet from some of Ramus’s dichotomous scrutiny (Mack, 133). From a different perspective, David Scott Wilson-Okamura has recently argued that the central principle for which the *Georgics* stood among Renaissance readers was not labor (as per the motto canonized in the poem, that “*labor omnia vincit*”) but variety – variety of erudition, of style, of form, and also of the abundant products of nature. The joint emphasis on the miscellaneity of nature and of rhetoric will become more relevant in the discussion of later editions of Tusser below.

mnemonically useful, she writes, but are also “the product, like tiny books, of a fascination (or obligation to work) with forms that express much in little. We need to broaden our understanding of lyric to define it not only as a luxury item, an artifact of conspicuous courtly consumption, but also as a mode of literary expression that could articulate in a highly economical fashion all sorts of experiences.”¹⁴⁵ The magical condensation achieved by these small forms is neither a courtly performance of laborless grace, nor a tool whose value is limited to its utility.¹⁴⁶ In Tusser’s *Pointes*, I will argue, as in the *Songes & Sonettes* and its mid-Tudor imitators, the drive of this fascination is often its own end, one that jostles playfully and awkwardly against the practical text.

In making this suggestion, I diverge from the perspective of most scholars who have engaged with Tusser at any length. Andrew McRae, for example, who has written the most extensive and considered treatment of early modern English husbandry literature, has argued that the readership putting the *Pointes* through 16 editions in the sixteenth century consisted of yeoman farmers looking for immediate, practical advice. Because very few copies of the *Pointes* survive in aristocratic libraries or in inventories of books of sixteenth-century university students, McRae argues, someone else must have been buying those many editions of Tusser, and those someones were likely yeoman farmers whose libraries are less likely to survive or be recorded. These are the consumers, according to McRae, who actually need Tusser’s advice, and

¹⁴⁵ Wheatley, 29.

¹⁴⁶ On the politics and aesthetics of these miniaturizations see Patricia Fumerton’s argument for the relation of the sonnet to the miniature in *Cultural Aesthetics: Renaissance Literature and the Practice of Social Ornament* (Chicago: Chicago UP, 1993), 67-110; and Susan Stewart, *On Longing: Narratives of the Miniature, the Gigantic, the Souvenir, the Collection* (Durham: Duke UP, 1993), 37-69.

the form of the point is secondary to this purpose – an efficient oral delivery service for small parcels of information. Like Lewis and Fox, McRae argues that these small forms are best suited to memory – the stated position of Tusser’s own prefatory advertisement. Even the abstracts introduced by the edition of 1573 seem to support the work’s strictly utilitarian function (and the assumptions about the social class of its readers that goes along with it): “While Tusser’s only description of this strategy says nothing about its purpose, it is unquestionably consistent with an attempt to fix information in the minds of the illiterate or semi-literate. It suggests that the book was intended for the use of small farmers unaccustomed to books rather than the entertainment of the gentry: an impression further supported by the occasional presentation of information in lists, and an ingenious system used in some later editions by which information in the ‘husbandry’ section which is also relevant to ‘huswiferie’ is marked in the margin by a pilcrow”(McRae, 46).¹⁴⁷

The work of style in Tusser, when viewed within the context of Tottel’s other publications, seems to me to be significantly more complicated. My goal in this chapter is not to make an empirical claim about Tusser’s readership or the actual sales and circulation of Tottel’s other publications. Rather, I am more interested in the way that editions of the *Pointes* depict their own future reading and application, the ambiguous ways in which they register the hermeneutic hand of Tottel as speculative reader and publisher. As Zachary Lesser has argued, early modern English publishers were engaged in a double labor of speculation: as financial adventurers, risking capital on a product with unknown profitability; and as hermeneutic speculators, readers whose textual

¹⁴⁷ Laura Stevenson has argued the opposite – namely, that Tusser’s simplicity is a pose – an ornament of style rather than an attempt to curry ‘simple’ readers.

interpretation aimed to project the response of future readers and consumers. Richard Tottel's engagement with both forms of speculation is visible to us: as a financial risk-taker in this range of literary publications; and as a speculative reader, as we can see in his various editorial interventions – including the metrical changes and remarkable titles he contributed to the *Songes & Sonettes*, and the expansions and verse summations with which he enlarged Baldwin's *Treatise*.¹⁴⁸ Tusser's *Pointes*, through their direct address to readers, explicitly confect an ideology of their own consumption, their transportation into the hands and onto the walls of their readers – readers who, in “real life,” can only ever be ambiguously interpellated by this instructive mood. Through the incitements of visual and prosodic form, and the force of lyric or pedagogical address, *Songes & Sonettes* likewise interpellates an imaginary reader into a speculative textual future – textual communities of the couplet, we might say, hailed as consumers and redistributors of these small poetic forms.

What is a point?

The sense of the “points” in Tusser's title plays off of a diverse and dynamic semantic field. The most basic sense of a point is a prick, a small hole or *punctum*, from which we take the familiar geometric sense: a minimal point within a broader compass.

Tusser's points merge this compactness of form with the force of its impact: they may be

¹⁴⁸ Hyder Rollins suggested that Tottel was responsible for the editorship of the Miscellany in his edition of 1928 (2nd. Ed., 1965), and it has been more recently and very persuasively defended by Steven May (2009), who gives a particularly convincing account of how Tottel might have been in a position to make such expert metrical revisions. Collier, despite giving Tottel place in the title, suggested that Thomas Churchyard may have been the editor, while G.F. Nott suggested John Harington. Arber confidently suggested Nicholas Grimald, who had a standing relationship with Tottel (as editor of Cicero's *De Officiis*) and whose poems appear in the collection.

small, that is, but they make an impression. In the mnemonics of Tusser's system, each point in that more abstract sense – each moral or practical lesson – takes the form of a rhetorical point: two or four lines of rhyming verse, the pithy sharpness of which pricks the memory, embedding it in the reader's (or listener's) recollection. In the first edition, the countable points each comprise two couplets, printed as a four-line stanza and quarantined from the preceding and subsequent examples by another line of negative space. In all of these cases, a "point" brings together several senses of the word: it is a pedagogical point, one that points out, like a guiding index finger, prompting obedience or imitation in a reader or student; but its sense also encompasses the small points of grammar and rhetoric, the marks of punctuation that parcel out finite units of language, distinguishing them in a series or in a hierarchy. As I hope to show, this convergence of form and pedagogical function haunts both Tusser's couplets and Tottel's other short forms.

In a range of contexts, "point" names a unit within a series: a rhetorical segment of argument, a point of law, one lesson among others. The mathematician Robert Recorde, in his *Pathvway to knowledg* (1551), defined the basic geometrical unit in two ways: theoretically, as "A Poynt or a Prycke, ... named of Geometricians that small and vnsensible shape, whiche hath in it no partes, that is to say: nother length, breadth nor depth"; and practically, as "that small printe of penne, pencyle, or other instrumente, whiche is not moued, nor drawn from his fyrst touche, and therefore hath no notable length nor bredthe."¹⁴⁹ A line, in turn, is just "great numbere of these prickes," a

¹⁴⁹ Both quotations and diagrams appear on Recorde, *Pathvway to knowledg, containing the first principles of geometrie, as they may moste aptly be applied vnto practise* (London: Reynold Wolfe, 1551), sig. A1r.

concept that Recorde practically assembles by a reliance on the autonomy of the individual unit, as emphasized in the illustration of both terms.



Tusser's points are not only minimal discursive units but points in time, compact lessons sequentially distributed across the span of the year. Interpellating a reader or listener as the subject of the prick, these points imply its imperative force: a point is something to obey, to learn, to internalize.

Throughout the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, when it appears in a book's title or paratextual material, a "point" has no particular relationship to verse, but rather stands as a basic unit of pedagogic instruction or moral persuasion. In 1574 and 1577, respectively, Barnaby Googe and Reginald Scot both refer to "points" of husbandry, a usage likely inspired by Tusser but in specific reference to lessons rendered in prose, rather than the small verse units for which Tusser was known.¹⁵⁰

The earliest English printed book with the word "point" in the title may be John Rastell's 1520 morality play, "A new iuterlude and a mery of the nature of the .iiij. elementes declarynge many proper poyntes of philosophy naturall / and of dyuers straunge landys." As is the case with Tusser's points of husbandry, published 37 years later, Rastell's "proper poyntes" here denote the particular lessons conveyed by the form in question, finite elements in a continuous sequence of discourse.¹⁵¹ This prescriptive force of "point"

¹⁵⁰ Reynolde Scot, in his 1574 work on hops, introduces a piece of advice in his Epistle as "a point of good Husbandrie, (in apparence base and tedious, but in vse necessarie and commodious, and in effect pleasant and profitable." Googe: "Cato affyrmeth the first point of husbandry, to be to prepare the ground well, the second, to plowe it well, and the thirde, to doung it well"(fo. 21r).

¹⁵¹ Compare, for example, the *Mirror for Magistrates*, in which the "chiefest point" of a prince's office is described as "obedience to god and to his ordinaunces" and the "second point of a princes office" is "to

has a strong affinity with the Anglo-Norman sense of “pointer,” to prescribe or decree.

¹⁵² Points are, from this angle, prescriptive and legislative. As imperative judicial units, they make an explicit claim on the reader, bringing a deictic orientation into the inertia of the linguistic object. A point is thus oriented both towards a reader and towards a telos; a piece of language that gets things done in the world (in large part through this engagement with an obedient reader), a point resists pointlessness.

In the genre of print culture in which the word “point” is most central, it takes on an explicitly pedagogical role. A search through the English Short Title Catalogue finds a preponderance of titular “points” on books of catechism. Edward Dering’s “*A briefe & necessary catechisme or instruction*” (first published in 1572) promises in its subtitle, for example, that it is “*verye needefull to bee knowen of all housholders, whereby they maye the better teach and instruct their families, in such pointes of Christian religion as is most meete.*” Gervase Babington’s exposition of the Commandments (1583) describes itself as being “*especially for them that (beeing not otherwise furnished) are yet desirous both to see themselues, and to deliuer to others some larger speech of euery point that is but briefly named in the shorter catechismes.*” These uses on title pages reflect the sense of the word in a verse from the Epistle of James as rendered in the Bishops’ Bible: “Whosoeuer shal kepe the whole lawe, and yet fayle in one poynt, he is gyltie of all”(2.10).¹⁵³ A corpus of law is comprised of these

prouide for the impotent, nedy, and helpelesse”(ff. 175; Shore’s wife). Likewise, in George Gascoyne’s *Certayne notes of instruction*, “points” stands in as a synonym for those instructive units named in the title.

¹⁵² See *The Anglo-Norman Dictionary*. <http://www.anglo-norman.net/D/pointer2>.

¹⁵³ The language used in the Bishops’ Bible to guide readers in the order of proceeding is also suggestive in the context of Tusser’s use of “point”: as one heading in the prefatory material describes, “The order howe the rest of holy scripture beside the Psalter, is appoynted to be read.” Unlike the pointing of the psalms, the temporality of this appointment is keyed not so much to the metrical line as to the liturgical calendar.

small prescriptive points – normative units each demanding precise obedience and marking out those who fail to obey.

In these pedagogical settings, the point's condensation drives much of its mnemonic and didactic force. Charcke describes a catechism as “a briefe doctrine framed for youth and the ruder sort, containing in it the summe of the doctrine of the Law and Gospell, or of Christian Religion.”¹⁵⁴ Launcelot Andrewes, in 1641, would describe catechesis as “a contracting of the whole sum,” a pulling together into small form of a more expansive body of knowledge – language reminiscent of the way that William Baldwin a century earlier described his own hermeneutic apparatus, as I will discuss below. A parallel range of epitomizing practices is central to humanist pedagogy, and was instilled in and practiced by students from a young age.¹⁵⁵ In all of these cases, the smallness of the point as a unit – its punctual well-boundedness – grounds its ability to point out, its prescriptive or imperative force. It is just this convergence of the two – of form and force – that is at stake both in Tusser and in the epigrammatic turn of the sonnet, a convergence that I will continue to trace in the readings that compose the remainder of this chapter.

The visual punctuation of verse on the page – whether the break of a line or the shape of a stanza, or a change in typography or the indentation of the couplet –

¹⁵⁴ *A short and fruitfull Treatise of the profit and necessite of Catechising*, sig. B2v.

¹⁵⁵ See for example Kastan, “Size Matters”; and Chloe Wheatley on the central generic place of epitome in the teaching and circulation of historical knowledge in early modern England. On the maxim, see Jeff Dolven, *Scenes of Instruction in Renaissance Romance* (Chicago: Chicago UP, 2007), 99-134; Peter Mack, *Elizabeth Rhetoric: Theory and Practice* and “Humanism, Rhetoric, and Education,” in Donna B. Hamilton, ed., *A Concise Companion to Renaissance Literature* (Blackwell, 2006); and for an overview of Cato and the epigram in humanist teaching and Renaissance literary culture, Mary Thomas Crane, “*Intret Cato*: Authority and the Epigram in Sixteenth-Century England,” in Lewalski, ed., *Renaissance Genres* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1986), 158-188; and Richard Halpern, “A Mint of Phrases: Ideology and Style Production in Tudor England,” in *The Poetics of Primitive Accumulation* (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1991), 19-60.

collaborates with typographic pointing to make a point a point: completed by a full stop, or point, and broken by the space between lines and stanzas. Studies of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century punctuation have generally traced out a division between grammatical and rhetorical pointing – that is, between punctuation that distinguishes between the structural components of a sentence or paragraph, and punctuation that indicates how a text should be delivered aloud – where a speaker should pause, or give emphasis, or inflect their voice.¹⁵⁶ By such a metric, poetry is more intensely pointed than prose. This is true visually on the page, where we see each line of a poem meeting its point before breaking, and aurally, where the metrical pointing of a poem or a psalm gives each verse its cadence and intensity. Enjambment, that distinctly poetic effect, is a period that passes over a point, a rhetorical unit that breaches the horizon of the line. “Point,” like “period,” thus designates both the quantity of verse and the mark and site of its terminus. A serial collection of points or small poems, like these publications of Tottel, does not only collect small examples; it simultaneously repeats and reenacts these endings.

As Malcolm Parkes notes in his history of punctuation, the visual layout of a poem on the page is its first layer of punctuation, binding the language of a poem and giving it point and shape. Throughout most of the 1557 editions of both Tusser’s *Pointes* and the *Songes & Sonettes*, the basic stanzaic units are made autonomous islands within the continuous sea of the book. Printed in blackletter, flush left, each stanzaic block of text visually literalizes the “small parcelles” advertised by Tottel in his preface to the *Miscellany*. This is a distinct contrast to some other examples of didactic small verse

¹⁵⁶ Cf. Ong, “Historical Backgrounds of Elizabethan and Jacobean *Punctuation* Theory,” and Vivian Salmon’s different view in “English Punctuation Theory, 1500-1800.”

forms, such as William Lily's "epigramma" (or "Carmen ad discipulos de moribus"), an imitation of the Distichs of Cato, which was printed in 1521 with breaks between metrical lines, as the Distichs normally were, but with no empty space left between epigrams. Pilcrowes in the left margin are given the duty of marking the beginning of a new saying.¹⁵⁷ In this context, the line breaks between points in Tusser are a typographic luxury; the formal autonomy of the points that drives the choice to use 25% more paper by adding a blank line to each four line point. In a field in which it is still debated whether the punctuation of printed texts can ever be taken as more than the whim of a compositor, the visual punctuation of Tusser's pages represents a meaningful instance of the conspicuous consumption of space.¹⁵⁸

The marking off of a couplet within a longer unit of verse – its frequent indentation by the end of the sixteenth century in sonnets, ballads, and rime royal stanzas – represents another mode of visual punctuation. We have become accustomed to having the distinction of the couplet announced for us by its typographical indentation – a practice that did not in fact become widespread until the sonnet sequences of the 1590s. It is in the earlier period I am considering here, however, that we first see this visual demarcation of a sonnet's concluding couplet. Indeed, as I'll discuss below, the first indented couplets in print may well have appeared in several sonnets included in various editions of Tusser's *Pointes*.¹⁵⁹

¹⁵⁷ Rebecca W Bushnell, *A culture of teaching: early modern humanism in theory and practice* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1996).

¹⁵⁸ On the limits and possibilities of reading into printed early modern punctuation, see D.F. McKenzie, "Shakespearian Punctuation – a New Beginning." *RES* n.s. X (1959), 361-70; Sherman, "Standing Upon Points."; Vivian Salmon, "English Punctuation Theory, 1500-1800."

¹⁵⁹ The traditional layout of Petrarch's sonnets in print – aligning the first lines of each quatrain and tercet to the left, and indenting the others – did effectively leave the final two lines indented, but only to the effect of grouping with the tercet as a whole. Wyatt's manuscripts follow this pattern, and this tradition may have

In classical verse, the first line of a lyric stanza was typically brought to the left margin with the following lines indented, while elegiac meter was traditionally laid out with hexameter lines flush to the margin and pentameter lines indented, so that they alternated, creating a sort of serrated edge (a pattern we see echoed in poems of heroic couplets in *Songes & Sonettes*). Dante's tercets were eventually laid out similarly, with the first line of every three to the left and the next two indented. By the time that Petrarch's sonnets appear in print, the quatrains and tercets were arranged similarly, with the the first line of each quatrain and tercet at the left margin and the following lines indented. Manuscripts of Thomas Wyatt's sonnets follow this layout, punctuating quatrain and tercet even when the rhetorical periods of the verse itself do not. Tottel's "small parcelles" break from this visual tradition, rendering each poem, as Parkes notes, as "a simple stichic structure."¹⁶⁰

Tusser's sense of "point" draws not only on the force of the point as a periodic mark within the progress of discourse, but on the intuition that it is also a hierarchical one. To point at something is to draw attention to it, to demand that a reader draw her attention to it.¹⁶¹ In this sense, the numbered and pilcrowed points of Tusser's edition share something with the typographic and hermeneutic function of the manicule: the imperative to "note me", or "remember me," or "repeat me." Like the other examples of

influenced the indentation of the couplet later in the sixteenth century. It's difficult to say, though, whether the unit of the final couplet in the poems of Wyatt and Surrey altered the way that the layout of the Petrarchan tercet signified – that is, whether the indentation seemed to punctuate a unit of two or three lines.

¹⁶⁰ In this account, I am following Parkes, 99-101.

¹⁶¹ My use of 'her' is advised: beginning in the edition of 1570, Tusser uses pilcrows to mark that particular points within the calendrical progression are directed to housewives, thus discriminately rationing and redirecting his readers' attention according their gender. In these editions, however, these points are thus not among those that are numbered – they literally don't count. Formally identical but finally inconsequential, they therefore have a liminal place within the economy of the point that governs the volume.

“gnomic pointing” described at greater length by G.K. Hunter (including marginal quotation marks, fleurons, asterisks, italics) these marks direct the attention of the reader towards what is worth remembering – those points, in Tusser’s phrase, to be taken in hand. The seriality of Tusser’s maxims, however, results in a sharp contrast to this economy of readerly attention, potentially undermining the hierarchical function of gnomic pointing. How do you pick what to extract from a work that might be dismissed – fairly – as one damned point after another?

In their invitation to replication and dispersal, the small parcels of verse we see in Tusser’s *Pointes* and in Tottel’s other publications pose a challenge to the closure of lyric form and of the book itself. It is significant, in this sense, that the small forms at issue here are couplets and not merely small sentences – couplets are closed within themselves, but for that same reason challenge the integrity of the stanza to which they belong. Rhyme offers one way in which a poetic period may be metrically “shut up,” as Puttenham would write¹⁶² – a version of the spatial enclosure of verse that is sometimes visually realized on the printed page, especially in what is – to modern readers – the familiar indentation of the sonnet’s final couplet, which Heather Dubrow names among the “hints of dispersal” to which the printed sonnet is subject.¹⁶³ These hints are also invitations and incitements to a reader, with either their memory or

¹⁶² Puttenham shares with George Gascoigne this spatial language. Gascoigne, in his “Certayne Notes of Instruction” (1575) describes the structure of the rime royal stanza in these terms: “the first and thirde lines do aunswer (acrosse) in like terminations and rime, the second, fourth, and fifth, do likewise answere eche other in terminations, and the two last do combine and shut up the Sentence.”

¹⁶³ Dubrow writes: “often the couplet both visually and semantically functions as a base to the column and a basis for drawing together the potentially scattering units, again allowing poets to practice what the treatises on stanzas preach” (173). The column, however, may not hold: “in instances where one or both lines of the couplet are indented, especially if the second line is not capitalized, the base may seem far less reliable, and the visual effect can be that of a column whose base is apparent but insecure. The column may even appear to be threatening to topple over, its *rime* potentially *sparse*, its customary function as an icon for restraint hence toppled as well.”

commonplace book at the ready, to repeat and recirculate this small form. By marking the autonomy of a piece of language, they mark its availability for transport and transfer.

“Couplet”, in the prosodic sense we use it today, was not available to Tottel, Tusser, Wyatt, or Surrey to describe the paired rhymes they all produced. The *Oxford English Dictionary* gives no usage prior to Sidney’s 1590 *Arcadia*: “In singing some short coplets, whereto the one halfe beginning, the other halfe should answere.” George Puttenham did occasionally refer to “couples” of verses, but the sense seems not to have had the specific prosodic weight we give it, or that was accorded “distich,” which Puttenham and other sixteenth century writers on poetics would have used in this context.¹⁶⁴ “Distich” would have been familiar to any English schoolboy from the collection of brief hexameter precepts attributed to Cato, ubiquitous in both medieval and humanist classrooms. Formally distinct and brief enough for memory, the distich was the apparently natural verse form for sententious morals meant to be extracted and kept.

Within a longer poem or poetic collection, such transportability had ambivalent consequences. For Puttenham, the closure offered by a rhyming distich potentially

¹⁶⁴ For Puttenham, “couple” is a word that refers to pairing together, evoking more vividly the bond of affiliation rather than the objective unity of the single couple(t). The closure of each perfected stanza leaves no verse, as he writes, “uncoupled”: “Now ye may perceiue by these proportions before described, that there is a band to be giuen euery verse in a staffe, so as none fall out alone or vncoupled, and this band maketh that the staffe is sayd fast and not loose: euen as ye see in buildings of stone or bricke the mason giueth a band, that is a length to two breadths, & vpon necessitie diuers other sorts of bands to hold in the worke fast and maintaine the perpendicularitie of the wall.” In his language, it is the interlacing of these concords that gives the staffe unity and resilience. In a similar vein, Dubrow (167) argues that Puttenham’s discussion of the “cross couplet” shows the normalization of the couplet as a unit. However, while Puttenham does with some frequency use the participial version of such a concept – verse are, for example, “cross coupled” – I have been able to find a case where the diminutive noun appears. Such a distinction is significant in part because it represents the reification of a relationship – coupling – into a discrete small form – the *couple*t – that seems to internally bear its own stylistic value.

undermined the unity of a stanza, and he counts it among the several ways in a staffe might “fall asunder and seeme two staues” – a defect with which he faults Chaucer, who “shut vp the staffe with a *disticke*, concurring with none other verse that went before, and maketh but a loose rime, and yet bycause of the double cadence in the last two verse serue the eare well inough.” In Puttenham’s discussion of the distance between aural concords, this “good-enough” sound of the distich stands for “the most vulgar proportion of distance of situation.” Skelton, with Chaucer and Gower, was likewise faulted for “being in deede but a rude rayling rimer & all his doings ridiculous, he vsed both short distaunces and short measures pleasing onely the popular eare.” Such verses, in both cases, are less strongly bound to the poem as a whole.¹⁶⁵

As this problem of seriality and detachment makes clear, in these expansive and miscellaneous collections the condensation of the point is not the whole story. The flip side of the point’s finitude is its (apparently inevitable) predilection for unbounded replication. This is one version of the central humanist paradox noted by Terence Cave – that Renaissance obsessions with *copia* and *brevitas* are not competing but complementary, a rhetorical case of hybrid vigor that generated thousands upon thousands of pages of writing and provided a rhetorical and ideological touchstone for a generation of scholars and their students. In the case of Tusser, the generativity of the

¹⁶⁵ According to Dubrow, Drayton, Gascoigne, and Puttenham all emphasize the restrictive and cohesive force of stanzaic form; they “insistently redefine malleability as modularity, thus rendering it a source of, not a threat to, the unity of the text. That insistence is probably a response to not only the general dangers of fragmentation but also a more local and reflexive peril: lyrics in general were prone to be reconstructed, even cannibalized, and rearranging stanzas was, as Marotti has shown, one particularly common type of scribal change”; “this prosodic unit often encompasses both protean shape-shifting and its reactive restraint, but with the latter typically dominating in both theory and practice”(166); “asserts dominion and mastery”(169) Heather Dubrow, *The challenges of Orpheus: lyric poetry and early modern England* (Johns Hopkins UP, 2008). See also Ernst Haublein, *The Stanza (The Critical Idiom)* (London: Routledge, 1978).

bounded point represents a special case of the rhetoric of property. His instructions for his readers are, without fail, to thrive: to grow and keep more of one's "own," to make the household "thrive," enriching it with more and more of these small things. His instructions for how to read his own book follow the same logic, and he frames the point itself within just such a rhetoric of thrift: "Thinges thriftie, that teacheth the thriuing to thriue: / teache timely to trauas, the thing that thou triue. / Transferring thy toyle, to the times truly tought: / that teacheth the temperaunce, to temper thy thought." The repetition of versions of "thrift" here – along with declensions of teaching and temper – intensifies and directs the echoes within the entirely alliterative poem. Tusser's points, the "thinges thriftie", teach thrifty people how to thrive (that is, to achieve that which they (con)trive.) Thriftiness thus seems a property transferable from linguistic unit to reader, a literary object lesson that models the reader in its image.

In 1557, "thrift" and "thriving" had not yet split into the separate senses of vitality and penuriousness with which we are familiar today. For Tusser, it designated the kind of good fortune you made for yourself: the fact or condition of thriving and prosperity, of growing and amassing many small things. Tusser instructs his readers to keep his points as property, to invest in them for the future. As he asks in the prefatory poem,

*What looke ye for more in my booke?
 Poyntes needeful and meete to be knowne?
 Then dayly be suer to looke,
 To saue and to be suer thine owne* (ff. 5).

Tusser's style follows from a principle of moral and economic thrift – an aesthetic strategy that subtends an ethics of reading and of housekeeping, both founded on a marriage of brevity with copiousness.

The first edition of the *Hundreth good pointes* begins with a brief Latin motto that seems to capture precisely this rhetorical problem: “*Concordia parvae res crescunt, discordia maximae dilabuntur.*”¹⁶⁶ The distich immediately precedes the first numbered point, its mode assuredly transformed from subjunctive to indicative, as they set off on their pattern of increase. This may not have been quite the sense of *res* that Tusser (or Tottel) had in mind with the epigrammatic superscription: the maxim usually circulated in political contexts, such that it might be translated to suggest that “Small *states* grow in times of peace”¹⁶⁷ – a sentiment that would have been provocatively à propos in that turbulent mid-Tudor moment. In its place, however, the maxim rather offers a benediction on the householder: that his small things, if he reads well and follows instructions, should grow. Its blessing, in this epigraphic perch, seems to extend to the book itself – whose small things would grow in the following pages from one to one hundred and beyond.¹⁶⁸ And the little book itself would go forth and multiply over the coming decades. The image of growth alights upon a vibrant imaginary world in this agricultural context, in which the growth of small things names precisely the business of cultivation with which husbandmen are engaged.

¹⁶⁶ Roughly: “In harmony, small things grow. In discord, the biggest things are destroyed.”

¹⁶⁷ Quentin Skinner describes this as “one of the most widely quoted *dicta* on politics throughout the Renaissance,” attributing the source of its authority partially to Sallust. Quentin Skinner, *Visions of politics* (Cambridge University Press, 2002), 23; Gisela Bock and Quentin Skinner, *Machiavelli and republicanism* (Cambridge University Press, 1993), 129.

¹⁶⁸ This implication is intensified if we consider the sense of “concord” we find in Puttenham – namely, the aural concord between words, or rhyme. Though Puttenham uses this sense regularly, the OED lists no other examples. It is suggestive, though, to think that Tusser intends here that his small things grow faster due to the concord of rhyme.

Bridging national politics and household politics, husbandly accumulation and bibliographical augmentation, the motto thus condenses a number of themes that remain entangled throughout Tusser's work.

Tusser's first point seems to gloss the maxim directly: "Where couples agree not is rancor and poysen, / where they two kepe house than is neuer no foyson: / But contrary lightly where couples agree, / what chaunseth by wisdom looke after to see". In the fourth point, he returns to the power of concord: "Prouision thy cator and all shall goe well, / for foysen is there where prouision doth dwell." "Foison" is a provocative word in this context, naming not simply the benefits of a quiet life, but the energy unleashed by the peaceful cohabitation of man and wife. Like the fields or orchards, the properly tended household also yields a fruitful, effusive harvest.¹⁶⁹

Though "foysen" falls out by later editions, this rendering of the potential force and vigor of the household seems in turn to name the book as well – and the foison of the work only increases with later editions. The small things of Tusser's first edition do indeed grow over the course of the coming decades, to 500 points in 1573, and getting longer and longer in subsequent editions, growing from four sheets in 1557, to eleven in 1570, and 25 in 1573. Between 1557 and 1573, the function of numeration in Tusser's title undergoes a fundamental change. A "*hundreth*" good points of husbandry represents a countable quantity: a reader expects to follow the points as they increase from 1 to 100. And, indeed, the printed layout makes this process (however doomed it may be) visible on the page, numbering each point as it comes. When one point in March

¹⁶⁹ Foison thus offers an analogue to the sense of "virtue" as it is used by Isabella Whitney to describe the powers of her own text, and in a physiological context acts as something of a synonym (if not quite as precise.)

does initiate a pause in the process, it only reinforces the temporal parallel between the time of reading and the time of the point – a correlation essentially indexed, in turn, to the agricultural calendar.

When the titular points are increased to 500 in the edition of 1573, the rhetoric of the collection as a whole has changed: *Fiue hundreth points of good husbandry vnited to as many of good huswiferie, first deuised, & nowe lately augmented with diuerse approued lessons concerning hopps & gardening, and other needful matters together, with an abstract before euery moneth, conteining the whole effect of the sayd moneth with a table & a preface in the beginning both necessary to be reade, for the better vnderstanding of the booke.*¹⁷⁰ The work has become less an epitome of household knowledge than a miscellany: like many other publications of Tottel's, the title page emphasizes not the particular uses or pleasure the work affords, but instead its very augmentation. The value in turn seems to lie less in the intensity of the text than its extension. The lessons and points, for their part, are "diuerse" and "needeful," and, throughout, the rhetoric of Tottel's title carefully balances the variety of the text with its use value. The erratic internal numeration of the edition confirms this: a reader opening to a random page finds a sometimes baffling assortment of different numbers, naming chapter, folio, point, abstract, lesson, or, simply, a stanza within a digression on herbs or furniture or Christmas. "Septembers Husbandry," Chapter 12 beginning on Folio 14, includes 79 points (18 of which represent a "dygression to husbandly furniture"), and

¹⁷⁰ The edition of 1570 – which met with enough success to spur Tottel to expand to *Fiue hundreth good points* in 1573 – seems to mark a midway point in this progress: *A hundreth good pointes of Husbandry, lately maried vnto a Hundreth good poynts of Huswifery: newly corrected and amplified with dyuers proper lessons for Householders, as by the table at the latter ende, more plainly may appeare* (London: 1573).

is matched by 80 abstracts, each consisting of one, two, three, or more dimeter couplets. October's husbandry, in turn, consists of only fourteen points; November's, fifteen. In each case, the numbering of both points and abstracts has renewed. The number "500", a reader quickly realizes (if it was not idiomatically implicit), bears no relationship to any countable quantities within the book itself.¹⁷¹

The rhetoric of the long title emphasizes not just this augmentation but the necessity of the text's ever increasing apparatuses. This language is closely echoed in several of Tottel's other publications from the early 1570s. Compare, for example, the title Tottel gives to his enhanced 1574 edition of William Rastell's legal compilation, *A Collection of Entrees. Of Declarations, Barres, Replications, Reioinders, Issues, Verdicts, Iudgements, Executions, Proces, Continuances, Essoynes, and Diuers Other Matters, Newly Augmented & Amended*, which, the title page notes, includes "First an Epistle, with Certaine Instructions Necessary to Bee Redde for the Redy Finding of the Matters in Thys Booke." The editor-publisher is here advertising not just the matter of the text but of its editorial architecture – the value added not by the points themselves but by this very edition.¹⁷² What is gathered in either collection is explicitly named in the short title – entrees or points. Each title goes on, however, to diversify the matter of the book, adding both miscellaneity and structure, which, though it does not participate in the substance of the book, is vigorously defended as a necessary

¹⁷¹ Annotations in a copy at the University of Pennsylvania suggest that these couplets may have incited replication beyond the bound of the author or editor's initial authority: several couplets appear in the margins [in a later hand?]: "*If it was not for the Swallow: / Honey would be as cheap as Tallow.*" (F4r; quotation marks in original); in Latin, beside verses attributed to St. Bernard, "*Hodie mihi, / Cras alteri*" (p. 151); and, on an end leaf, "Hops, Reformation, Baize, and Beer: Came into England, all in a year. 1517". A manuscript in the Folger library described by McRae extends an imitation and repetition of Tusser into its own month-by-month poem on husbandry.

¹⁷² Tottel's greatest legacy outside of literary circles is as an innovator and regularizer of legal citation.

supplement, something more than accidental. This rhetoric thus pitches a bold battle against literary superfluity: none of these additions and augmentations, it pleads, are appended in vain. All of the new husbandly furniture is meet and necessary – it is, to draw on a closely correlated sense of the word, properly (ap)pointed.¹⁷³ The final section of this chapter will return to Tusser’s *Pointes*, to more closely examine the place of these small, utilitarian forms in the calendar and on the page, especially in a group of poems he calls “sonnets.” When they are appointed there, I will argue, they modulate a distinct relationship between present and future time, one closely tied to textual patterns and hermeneutic habits developed in Tottel’s contemporary publications, both moralizing and literary.

Tottel’s other “pythie metres”: William Baldwin’s Moral Philosophy

At the heart of Richard Tottel’s business were young members of the Inns of Court, all of them, from their legal and university educations, accustomed to the uses and pleasures of epitome. Tottel himself innovated a number of citational and condensing methods, and was at one point challenged by the Stationers Company for trying to extend his monopoly on legal texts to their epitomes as well. We should not perhaps be surprised, then, to find rhyming couplets central to many of his literary and moral publications as well. These self-enclosed textual units invite not just learning but commonplacing (or perhaps more precisely, learning in the form of commonplacing and repetition.) As Mary

¹⁷³ point, v.2, definition 2. *Oxford English Dictionary*. Third edition, September 2006; online version March 2011. <<http://www.oed.com.ezp-prod1.hul.harvard.edu/Entry/146614>>; accessed 07 June 2011. An entry for this word was first included in *New English Dictionary*, 1907.

Thomas Crane notes, the production and repetition of these sentences was a central procedure of humanist textual practice in the sixteenth century, generating matter for and shaping the forms of much Tudor literary production.¹⁷⁴

As I have suggested, Tottel's catalog offers a useful case study in this dynamic. A reader interested in its scope observes a number of instances of pedantic or sententious verse. Even if we consider only 1557, in addition to the *Songes & Sonettes* and the *Hundreth Pointes of Good Husbandrie*, Tottel published an unauthorized edition of William Baldwin's *Treatise of Moral Philosophy*, a collection of sayings by classical philosophers, along with brief poetic precepts and verse commentary. Steven May has also observed the presence of two distichs (originally by Claudianus and Horace) in a collection of laws and statutes related to liveries, each printed with the Latin in Italic, and with an English metrical translation following, printed in smaller blackletter. The second, borrowed from Horace, reads :

*Oderunt peccare boni, virtutis amore:
Oderunt peccare mali, formidine paenae.*

The good hate to offende, for that
to Vertue loue they beare.
The yll hate to offende, for that
of payne they lyue in feare. (C2r)

These lapidary units are, in all of these cases, those that lend themselves to (and likely reflect as well the culmination of) a practice of reading as commonplacing. As Crane argues, even the *Songes & Sonettes* – a collection admired for its erotic lyric much more

¹⁷⁴ Crane, *Framing Authority: Sayings, Self, and Society in Sixteenth-Century England* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1993).

than its sententious precept – invites this kind of readerly engagement – proving a well of the commonplace, both of literary form and of moral content.¹⁷⁵

Another 103 of these instances of monitory or sententious verse appear in Tottel's editions of William Baldwin's *Treatise of Moral Philosophy*, brought out by the publisher in 1555, 1557, 1564, 1567, 1571, 1575, and 1579. The *Treatise*, which was essentially a commonplace book collecting pithy maxims alongside brief narrations of the "lives and answers" of their classical authors, had first been published by Edward Whitchurch in 1547 (for whom Baldwin worked as an assistant), and had already gone through 4 editions by the time Tottel tried his hand at an unauthorized and "augmented" edition in 1555.¹⁷⁶ The collection of lives of philosophers and, at ever increasing length through editions, their useful sayings, became the center of a miniature publishing war, as Tottel and Whitchurch's successor, John Wayland, went on to absorb and expand upon the other's editions through the 1560s.¹⁷⁷ Though Baldwin is now best known for compiling and composing much of the *Mirror for Magistrates*, the *Treatise* was in fact his most

¹⁷⁵She writes: "If we go through Tottel's Miscellany and the *Paradise of Dainty Devices* with a notebook in hand, gathering 'matter,' we find that many of the poems are moralizing, and that they carry a uniform moral message, one which denigrates upward mobility, ambition, and imagination"(169).

¹⁷⁶The competition between the two warmed up to a minor publishing war through the 1550s and 1560s: Tottel's first edition was advertised as "nevvelye sette foorth and enlarged by Thomas Paulfreyman, one of the gentlemen of the Queenes Maiesties chapel"(1555), with Baldwin advertising his own next edition as "Newlye perused and augmented by William Baldwyn fyrst auctoure therof" and Tottel escalating his claims of enlargement from that point on: "Newly sette furth, & once more enlarged by Thomas Paulfreyman"(1557); "first gathered and englished by Willia[m] Baldwin, after that, twice augmented by Thomas Paulfreyman, one of the gentle men of the Queenes maiesties chaple, [and] now once againe enlarged by the first author"(1564; "Fyrst gathered [and] set foorth by Wylliam Baudwin, And nowe once againe augmented, [and] [the] third tyme enlarged by Thomas Paulfreyman"(1567); and "First gathered [and] set forth by Wylliam Baudwin, and nowe once againe augmented, [and] ye third tyme enlarged by Thomas Paulfreyman, one of the gentlemen of the Queenes maiesties chappell... Cum priuilegio ad imprimendum solum"(1567).

¹⁷⁷Steven May suggests that Whitchurch and Tottel may have had an ongoing competition. Tottel's 1554 edition (extensively edited) came short on the heels of another edition published by Whitchurch.

reprinted work in the sixteenth century, going through more than twenty editions by 1600. Louis B. Wright places the *Treatise* among the large set of texts he classes as Tudor “handbooks to improvement,” those works that seemed to democratize practical knowledge of profit and social mobility.¹⁷⁸

John Bale called Baldwin an English Cato, an epithet likely inspired not just by the prudential moralism for which the *Mirroure for Magistrates* is remembered, but more specifically tied to the *Treatise*'s preceptive small forms – both the collection of “pyththie metres” collected at the end of the book of proverbs and in the rhyme royal “summes” of prose *sententiae* that appear throughout the volume.¹⁷⁹ Though John King suggests that the pedagogically ubiquitous Distichs of Cato were Baldwin's model for the “Piththie Metres,” these distichs and quatrains represent only a fraction of the verse in the volume. In fact, dozens of seven-line stanzas mark the end of sections through much of the collection, where they stand as “the summe of all” – namely, as verse condensations of the prose *sententiae* that precede them.¹⁸⁰

Though Baldwin wrote in a daunting range of formats, he returned to verse in a range of practical, instructional, and interpretive contexts, displaying a remarkable formal variety. His edition of the Song of Songs, also published in 1547 out of Whitchurch's shop, is less a continuous translation than a collection of small verse forms– and might

¹⁷⁸ The popularity of Baldwin's collection, he imagines, was due in part to “its compact wisdom expressed in neat sententious statements. For the Elizabethans liked their learning spoken trippingly from the tongue”(Wright, 148).

¹⁷⁹ John King describes the *Treatise* as a whole as a “a Renaissance reformulation of this encyclopedia of prudential wisdom” and argues that the “pyththie meters” are directly modeled on the Distichs. I think we should add these other pedagogical poems to that tally. Mary Thomas Crane, *Framing authority : sayings, self, and society in sixteenth-century England* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1993), 169.

¹⁸⁰ Though Baldwin certainly had Protestant sympathies, it is difficult to say precisely where his loyalties lay. While King describes him practicing a moderate “Protestantized Erasmianism”(361), Scott Lucas and Mike Pincombe and have each more recently suggested that Baldwin was far more a radical evangelical Calvinist.

reasonably be considered the first poetic miscellany printed in England. In it, Baldwin incorporates experiments with a range of set verse forms: quatrains, couplets, ballads, strambotti, sonnets.¹⁸¹ His Canticles combine a layering of substance, commentary, and summation similar to that found in the *Treatise*, offering biblical text in translation, the argument, and the metrical “paraphrase.” Baldwin must, then, have been quite familiar with manuscript examples of English verse – a fact likely supported not just by the range of poetic exercises included in the Canticles, but also by the credit due him as the author of the first printed sonnet in English, a prefatory poem to William Langton’s *Physick*. In that dedicatory poem, Baldwin praises Langton’s useful work by turning the structure of the sonnet to his own didactic lesson. As John King has noted, Baldwin here “substitute[s] didactic instruction for traditional sonnet themes of erotic love”¹⁸² – a fact that, within the context of this chapter may seem less jarring than a thematic “substitution.”

Baldwin justifies the amount of verse in his book by alluding both to the mnemonic usefulness of metrical phrase and to the fact that some readers just seem to prefer it. Describing the structure of the work in his opening chapters, Baldwin warns his readers that in the third book, “Of proverbs or piththie sayinges”, whenever “shall thynges be shewed worthy of memory”(1556, B7r), they will be rendered in meter. The third book concludes with a section devoted entirely to verse, which Baldwin introduces

¹⁸¹ On the range of verse, see Sister Francis Camilla Cavanagh, John N King, *English Reformation literature : the Tudor origins of the Protestant tradition* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1982), 363. Note that Baldwin’s stated reason for using meter in this earlier work is distinct: he writes that he renders the canticles in meter because they are, to begin with, canticles, or ballads, and in the dedication to Edward VI notes that he was inspired in part by the success of the metrical psalms. He instructs the reader, however, to take the verse itself as a secondary quality: “in reading note the sentence more than the rime, with the argumentes whiche go before and afr the songes. And reade them orderly, so shall the proces of the matter helpe the muche”

¹⁸² King, 361.

it by writing that “such thynges as I thought most proper, I haue drawn into Metre, and ioyned with them diuers other, by other men doen already: to the entent *that* such as delite in Englishe Metre, and can retaine it in memory better than prose, might finde herein sumwhat according to their desiers: which boke and Meters I submit to the correccion of al fine witted and wel learned men” (STC 1255, M8).¹⁸³ The section consists entirely of 2 or 4 line entries, either a couplet or a pair of couplets, with one exception: Surrey’s translation of Martial’s epigram on the quiet life. The poem is variously titled in the different editions of the *Treatise*, but introduced in the first edition as, ““The thinges that cause a quiet lyfe / written by Marciall”(Q1v). Though its placement varies between editions (sometimes appearing first in the section of verse, and sometimes last), its twelve lines stand out conspicuously among the couplets and quatrains, a long poem given a large and discursive title, visually broken off from the smaller forms either preceding or following. The poem itself is assembled as a composite of points of advice, with Surrey leaning upon the bounded space of the each pair of lines to enumerate the “things” of the title.¹⁸⁴ In some later editions, the title becomes a piece of “how to” literature, an assertion of practical method available to any aspiring to such an end. When it is printed in the *Songes & Sonettes*, the poem is called “The meanes to attain happy life,” a playful doubling of the golden mean

¹⁸³ Curt F. Buhler has traced a number of entries in the *Treatise* back to Caxton’s *Dictes and Sayings of the Philosophers*, a collection based on the thirteenth-century *Liber philosophorum moralium antiquorum*. As Buhler notes, in addition to adding or altering attribution, Baldwin has also in some cases turned a prose adage into verse:

- 1) “Tac sayd he that can not refrayne his Ire hath no power ouir his witte”)b5)
WB: “He that to wrathe and anger is thrall, / Ouer his wit hath no poer at all”(P2v)
- 2) “bettir is a woman to be bareyn than to bere an euill disposid or a wikked childe”
WB: “Better it is for a wife to be barraine / Then to bring foorth a vyle wicked carrain”

¹⁸⁴ Barbara Herrnstein Smith discusses this poem as an example of the problems the form of the list poses to poetic closure (*Poetic Closure* (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1968), 100-102.)

it advocates and the methods it describes. Even in this longer poem, a union of form and didactic function works to, as Sidney puts it, “move men to take that goodness in hand.”

These are not the only pieces of verse in Baldwin’s collection, however. The first poems in the volume actually appear sooner, in the second book (of precepts and counsels), where they stand as summaries of the preceding precepts. As Baldwin writes, at the end of these sections “shal follow sum of their principall sentences, drawn into Metre, to the intente they may be the easeiyer learned, & better kept in minde”(1556, B7r). Broken off from the preceding matter by a pilcrow and the heading, “The summe of all”, they appear in roman type instead of in black letter, where they digest and concisely sum up the preceding pages of sayings. For example, Chapter Four, “Of the worlde, the loue, & pleasures ther of” summarizes its commonplacéd reflections on worldly vanity with the following lines:

The worlde is a region dyuers & variable,
Of God created in the begynnyng
To contayne his creatures of kynde innumerable
Where in eche one shoulde lyue by his wynnyng.
Whose many pleasures are cause of gret sining
Wherfore al that gladly, as vayne do *them* hate,
Shal after this worlde, haue permanent estate. (R1r)

The couplet breaks from a summation of the world and the place of sin to a promise for future time, one that implicitly guides moral behavior. The *summe* both condenses and abstracts from the previous precepts, drawing on the language of those classical counsels

to generalize into a creed that encompasses them but reorients the utterances of Seneca, Pythagoras, and others within an appropriate Christian context.¹⁸⁵



We see a similar process of abstraction and accommodation at work in early editions of the metrical psalms – the wildly popular models that Baldwin had explicitly named as the inspiration and justification for his verse Canticles. Though no copy is currently known of the edition published by Tottel in 1554 (it has not been seen since a Sotheby’s auction in the 1920s), an edition published a year earlier with the same title (from which Tottel is likely drawing his edition) presents each of Sternholde’s psalms with a brief verse abstract beforehand. Like Baldwin and Tusser’s abstracts, these two are printed in roman type, while the matter from which they draw is printed in black letter. The first psalm opens with this abstract, composed in the same meter as the Psalm itself: “Howe happye be the righteous men, / this psalme declareth plaine: / And howe the wayes of wicked man, /. Be damnable and vayne”(A4r). Though the metrical rendering of the Psalms may make them more readily performable, this abstraction serves a different

¹⁸⁵ On the awkward place of classical moral philosophy within a biblical frame, see Gresham and Maslen.

purpose entirely, making their messages ready for retention by readers independent of the text of the psalm itself – indeed, potentially competing with it. Not all abstracts refer to their own work of summation as this one does; some merely offer miniaturized lessons without comment, presenting readers with repeatable and detachable messages. In both cases, these abstractions are not merely condensations of the thing itself, as it were, but instructions on how to approach and read the body of the poem. We might ask whether to be “drawn into” English meter is, by the same stroke, to be drawn away from the original matter – or, to make this process etymologically concrete, to abstract the original substance.¹⁸⁶ As we will see in the case of the *Songes & Sonettes*, the anthologized form of these lyric poems, and of the sonnet in particular, escalates these tensions – negotiating the possibility of abstraction and speculation in the ambivalent work of closure performed by both concluding couplets and Tottel’s titles.

The Miscellany’s “Small Parcelles”

In many ways, the *Songes & Sonettes* seems a less editorially complex collection than those I’ve discussed above: a series of discrete poems, with little editorial apparatus beyond more or less descriptive titles, grouped either by author or, if unknown, under the general heading, “Vncertain auctours.” In many respects, the 1557 miscellany does not break dramatically from the conventions of manuscript poetic collections. The range of verse, including occasional poems, lyrics about love or fortune, general moral advice,

may well simply reflect Tottel's manuscript source (or sources).¹⁸⁷ However, Tottel's titles represent a conspicuous break with traditions of manuscript gathering and circulation – a break that, as I will argue, echoes the paired relations of supplementarity and commentary we have seen in the small, rhyming forms discussed above. Steven May has shown that the titling of poems in manuscript was not standard before the publication of Tottel's miscellany. Rather, the work performed by the titles should point us towards a remarkable expression of the work of conceptual division and speculative abstraction that this chapter is tracking throughout.¹⁸⁸

Some of these titles are classificatory in the way the headings of a commonplace book might be (“Of change in minde,” or “Of dissembling wordes”), while others bear witness to the scene of a poem's actual composition or imagined utterance. Others turn longer poems into condensed moral *sententiae* or precepts (“Manhode auailleth not without good Fortune,” or “That constancy of all vertues is most worthy.”) A significant majority, however, (and especially those to poems by Wyatt and Surrey) describe the situation of a person Tottel calls “the lover,” in whose

¹⁸⁷ On the continuity with manuscript miscellanies, see Marotti.

¹⁸⁸ May notes that, though this wasn't a standard manuscript practice, it was taken up by many manuscripts in the wake of Tottel's publication (May, 430). It is not possible to fully discuss here the other most significant of the volume's changes: its “regularization” of the meter of poems throughout. These changes seem to have been applied especially to those poems by Wyatt, which were less regularly iambic than Surrey's, though we have largely been able to confirm these changes through a comparison with the Egerton manuscript, in which many of Wyatt's poems survive in holograph. Most of these changes bring Wyatt's often irregular verse into a steady iambic pentameter; Rollins writes that they were performed by an editor with a “passion for regularity and modernity” (Introduction, 98). Following Rollins, Steven May has argued that this editor may well have been Tottel himself, who would have been familiar with such “cutting-edge” metrical technique from his 1554 edition of the metrical psalms, and who had printed a similarly iambicized edition of Lydgate's *Fall of Princes*, also in 1554 (with systematic changes to Pynson's earlier edition) – a project which May argues may have served “as something of a dress rehearsal for Tottel's systematic regularizing of metres in his Miscellany three years later” (426). John Thompson has surveyed and classified all of Tottel's changes to Wyatt's satires, showing that most of them work to achieve a regular pentameter line. Also cf. Susanne Woods, *Natural Emphasis: English Versification from Chaucer to Dryden* (San Marino: 1984), who sees Surrey as the founder of this “modern” English line.

voice the poem itself is uttered. Many modern readers have noted the violence of this imposition in cases where Tottel seems to have, we might say, eroticized the poem with the title – making unpolitical, for example, a poem that seems to describe court intrigue by relaying images of political turmoil back to the private experience of the tormented lover.¹⁸⁹

Earlier manuscripts had not generally carried titles to poems. This may be because, as Anne Ferry has suggested, a title seems to suggest public presentation – “an exchange between the titler who introduces the poem and some actual or supposed reader.”¹⁹⁰ Without a title, the fiction of a transaction is suppressed. The distinct voice in which the title is uttered is given visual form in Tottel’s editions of the *Songes and Sonettes*, in which the lines of the poem appear in blackletter and the title, larger, in Roman type.¹⁹¹ We should recall here the typographical distinctions of Tottel’s other publications: glosses, abstracts, and epitomes appearing in roman or italic typeface next to textual substance in black letter. How, in the miscellany, does the change in typeface signal a change in voice? Where does the voice of the title come from? Tottel, in the Preface, has already posited himself as editor – as the one bringing out the sweet marjoram of these poems, wrenching them from the hands of their

¹⁸⁹ For example, “Of others fained sorrow, and the louers fained mirth” (Wyatt’s account about betrayal and insincerity, beginning, “Cesar, when that the traytour of Egypt”) and “How eche thing saue the louer in spring reuiueth to pleasure” (“When Windsor walls.”) On the courtly significance of these poems, and their transformation in Tottel’s volume, see Carlson, “Henrician Courtier Writing,” 151.

¹⁹⁰ Ferry argues that “The prerogative to present the poem, whatever the form of the title given to it, rested at the time first on the titler’s possession of a copy of it. As its owner, he presented it to readers in a title of his own making or one that reproduced the title given it by a previous owner, most often someone other than the poet, from whom he received his copy. The mere act of placing a title in the space above the poem made – and still makes – the added claim to authority that the giver of it must at least have read the poem in order to introduce it to the reader, who is presumed not to know it yet” (*The Title to the Poem*, 12, 14)

¹⁹¹ We might compare Holger Schott Syme’s recent work on the “mimetic strategies” by which speech was represented on the early modern page.

ungentlemanly hoarders. Tottel's editorial role here thus becomes one of explicitly "bringing out" the poem, a position consistent with the suggestion made by both Seth Lerer and Arthur Marotti that much of the Marian appeal of the collection was to court outsiders suddenly given exclusive access to the Henrician court, however belated it may have been in 1557.¹⁹² Marotti argues that the titling of poems recodes these pieces of social verse "as primarily *literary* texts in the print medium." In this process of recontextualization, Marotti argues, the works are severed from the scene of their composition and reception and "lost their vivid particularity of meaning and began to speak a language whose general and abstract terms were a hybrid of poetic conventionality and culture-specific code words."¹⁹³

By positing the editor/publisher as someone who has already read the poem, and who is thus in a position to guarantee and distribute both the poem and its message, the titles in the volume modulate the temporality of speculative publishing. A title frames the poem before the fact of a reader's encounter with it as something already read, offering a kind of insurance or promise of what its point is. They thus offer a counterpoint to the commentary function served by the couplets and other small forms I

¹⁹² Lerer writes that it offered "a glimpse into the workings of aristocratic manuscript assembly, and, in printed form, provided such readers with a model for their own construction of the personal anthology and their own writing of courtly verse"(31-2), while Marotti argues that Tottel's preface "'locates the reader midway between the nobility of Surrey and the commonness of the rude multitude, portraying his own printing of the anthology as an act of sharing what was hoarded – that is, courtly coterie literature -- to the end of satisfying and edifying an educated audience interested in vicarious contact with courtly eloquence and life"(295). Tom Betteridge places this outward movement in a specifically Marian context, writing that a trend in those years saw accorded with an emphasis on "their status as public poetic texts, concerned less with the individual poet and more with such general themes as love or worldly success"(139). More radically, Betteridge argues that the generalizing tendency of the titles accords with impulses within the Marian church: in Tottel's collection, he writes, "linguistic and poetic order is privileged in a way that one can compare to the Marian Church's emphasis on ceremonies as the basis for the proper understanding of scripture. In both cases the effect was to downplay the active role of the individual, reader or believer, and emphasize the generic or social"(139). For Betteridge, this is consistent with an "anti-Reformation" and an "anti-confessional" tendency that downplays the self as reader and writer.

¹⁹³ Marotti, *Manuscript, Print, and the Renaissance Lyric*, 218. His italics.

have traced above. The title is a preemptive, the couplet a retrospective, condensation, one suggesting to the reader an interpretive horizon and possible future. In Tottel's titles, where the voice of editorial presentation is also the voice of abstraction and epitome, the poems in turn become circulable in abstract form, like the fetishized commodity – condensed in miniature, and cut off from deictic reference to their original context. A title must be shorter than the poem it announces, and though it cannot capture the whole matter of the poem it must in some way name its essence (or what becomes, in reading, its essence.) Though I will not attempt to offer a full accounting here of the role of titles in the *Songes & Sonettes*, I hope to show ways in which titles and couplets collaborate and compete to frame the 'message' of a poem. In this, Tottel's edition both resists and plays out the impulse to manufacture a "takeaway," a small piece of wisdom to be redistributed, as if he is performing a complex negotiation with the textual hoarders rebuked in the preface. Owning the message of a poem – projecting it for readers – represents a different kind of textual property from the enclosure of physical manuscripts – one suited, perhaps, to the duplicated world of print publication.

The most famous couplets in the miscellany are those anchoring the 14-line stanzas we now know as sonnets, but these paired rhymes appear throughout the collection in various prosodic guises: serially in heroic couplets, at the ends of rime royal stanzas, at the end of ballads, in medial positions in sonnets by Wyatt, where the adjacent rhymes across quatrains sometimes mean that the break represented by the final couplet is not quite so abrupt or unprecedented. In general, the sonnets by Surrey are much more likely than those by Wyatt to have a fully detachable couplet, one that is neither

semantically or syntactically bound to the line before it (by, for example, enjambement or a relative pronoun.)¹⁹⁴

Many of the poems in the *Songes and Sonettes* fall into an explicitly didactic mold, offering either a model of behavior or a commanding imperative regulating behavior via second-person address. Many of Nicholas Grimald's poems, for example, are addressed to friends, or written in praise of others, while others simply invoke an anonymous apostrophic student. For example, "Marcus Catoes comparison of mans life with yron", spends sixteen lines expounding the titular analogy, before concluding with a four-line point: "Wherfore, my childe, holde twene these twaine the waye: / Nother with to much toyl thy lymys decaye, / In idle ease nor giue to vices place: / In bothe who measure keeps, hee hatg good grace."¹⁹⁵ The poem ends with the entrance of this unannounced apostrophic addressee – "my childe", the kind of archetypal young person who was addressed by so many pieces of advice literature in the period, and who would have been reading Cato's perceptive distichs in school. In all, more than a dozen moralizing poems in the volume endorse and prescribe the happy mean as a moral law, a maxim that perhaps sits awkwardly with the volume's ubiquitous lovers – figures who, in their passionate excess, repeatedly and unthriftilly "waste" and "spend." In those poems, however, the final couplets frequently break off from the

¹⁹⁴ As Berdan shows, "Wyatt's couplet is not complete in itself, whereas Surrey's may be detached as a quotation" (523). And, it is Surrey's name and style that wins out. Though Surrey and Wyatt are given equal billing in the preface, it is Surrey's face that appears on the frontispiece and his name in the title, and it is his name that quickly becomes shorthand for the volume as a whole, named not just by Tusser, as I discussed above, but by Sidney in his *Defence of Poesie*. Rollins makes this argument at greater length, noting as well that in *England's Parnassus*, of 11 quotations from the collection attributed to Surrey, only one is actually attributed to him in the original collection (Rollins, "Introduction," in *Tottel's Miscellany*, vol. 2, 67.) Part of the reason for emphasizing Surrey may have been the sensitivity of the name of the elder Wyatt in the years immediately following the junior Wyatt's quashed rebellion.

¹⁹⁵ *Tottel's Miscellany*, Rollins, ed., no. 135. .

preceding verses much like these final concluding lines in the sententious poem by Grimald, absorbing and moving beyond a particular mimetic or metaphorical conceit in order to assert an encompassing, binding, and often future-oriented conceit – a generic and generalizing movement often in tension with the instructions for reading suggested by the title.

It is in those poems that we would call sonnets, however, that the closural and interpellative force of the couplets is most intense. The first quatorzain to appear is the second poem in the sequence – a poem by Surrey that the miscellany has titled, “Description of Spring, wherin eche / thing renews, saue one- / lie the louer”(shown to the right, on sig. A2v of Tottel’s first 1557 edition.) We see played out here the basic hermeneutic tension between title and couplet. No such figure appears in the first twelve lines of the poem, which give an inventory of the natural world at this moment of annual renewal: the nightingale, hart, buck, adder, and fish have all sloughed off their old garments in favor of new; the swallows and bees are busy with their springtime commerce. Only at the end of the poem does the couplet introduce the first person – the “I” who becomes the third person “lover” of the title. The bulk of the poem, meanwhile, consists of the “description” announced by Tottel’s title, which marks the poem’s inventory and index – the couplet’s “pleasant thinges” -- as the stuff of a verbal picture in a rhetorically specific

Couplet.

To seeke the place where I my self had lost,
 That day that I was tangled in the tosse,
 In semping slack that knittech euer most:
 But neuer yet the trauaile of my thought
 Of better state coulde catch a cause to boast.
 For: if I found sometime that I haue fought,
 Whose iteres by whom I trusted of the port:
 Whi failes do fall, and I aduance right nought,
 As askerd fast: my sp:ites do all resort
 To stand agasid, and stak in more and more
 The deadly harme which she doth take in sport.
 Lo, if I seee, how I do finde my foze:
 And if I seee, I carv with me still
 The venomd shaft, which doth his force restoze:
 By halke of flight and I may plaine my fill
 Unto my self, vnder this carefull song
 Hunt in your hart some partell of my sene.
 For: I alas, in silence all to long,
 Of mine old hurt yet fele the wound but grene,
 Hue on my life: els your cruel wrong
 Shall well appere, and by my death be sene.

Description of Spring, wherin eche
 thing renews, saue onely
 the louer.

The soote season, that bud and blome forth brings,
 With grene hath clad the hill, and eke the vale:
 The nightingale, with fethers new she sings:
 The turtle to her make hath tolde her tale:
 Somer is come, for euery spay now springs,
 The hart hath hong his old hed on the pale:
 The buck in brake his winter coate he flings:
 The fishes here with new repaired scale:
 The adder all her slough away she flings:
 The swift swallow purlieth the flies small:
 The busbyce her hony now she minges:
 Winter is gone that was the flowers bale:
 And thus I see among these pleasant thinges,
 Eke care decapes, and yet my sorrow springs.

Desay

sense: *descriptio* here evokes *evidentia*, setting out or display – in this case a kind of epideictic paean to this idyllic scene.¹⁹⁶ The structure of this list cleanly inhabits the architecture of the poem: each example of renewal fills (and does not breach) a single pentameter line. Indeed, the rhetorical isocolon by which these renewals are enumerated is made concrete in the printed punctuation, as ten lines of the poem⁷ fourteen (including each perch for the eleven exemplary birds, beasts, and fishes) end in the two points of a colon. In all, the poem includes only two semantic units that extend beyond a single line: at the very beginning (“The soote season, that bud and blome furth brings, / With grene hath clad the hill and eke the vale:”(1-2)) and the very end (“And thus I see among these pleasant thinges / Eche care decayes, and yet my sorrow springes.”(3-4).) In the semantic and structural economy of the poem’s index, a thing and a point are exchangeable: those exempla enumerated in the poem are each condensed in a line, uniting finite form and demonstrative substance.

The final couplet seems to render a summation of this inventory: “And thus I see among these pleasant thinges / Eche care decayes, and yet my sorow springes.” Though the “and thus” that marks the break into the couplet promises a summation of these pleasant things, it simultaneously introduces a new object that inverts their logic: in the world outside (“eche thing” that renews, in Tottel’s title), the stuff of nature springs,

¹⁹⁶ See for example Henry Peacham, who in his *Garden of eloquence* (1593) writes: “*Descriptio* is a generall name of many and sundry kinds of descriptions, and a description is when the Orator by a diligent gathering together of circumstances and by a fit and naturall application of them, doth express end set forth a thing so plainly and liuely, that it seemeth rather painted in tables, then declared with words, and the mind of the hearer thereby so drawn to an earnest and stedfast contemplation of the thing described, that he rather thinketh he seeth it then heareth it. By this exornation the Orator imitateth the cunning painter which doth not onely draw the true proportion of things, but also bestoweth naturall colours in their proper places, whereby he compoundeth as it were complexion with substance and life with countenance: for hence it is, that by true proportion and due coloure, cunning and curious Images are made so like to the persons which they represent, that they do not onely make a likely shew of life, but also by outward countenance of the inward spirite and affection”

while in the world inside the couplet, it is sorrow instead who assumes that function. The entrance of the first person into the poem here presents the lyric “I” as, in fact, an eye – a surveyor of the pleasant things of the rest of the poem; like the reader, a spectator to the objects collected in the preceding twelve lines. The couplet, by introducing an off-stage voyeur, rereads the previous lines as pieces of evidence. As Surrey visually processes and abstracts from the rest of the poem, the couplet performs and models a poetic reading practice: it is thus both retrospective, looking back at the index that came before, and proleptic, breaking off from them to look forward to a future reader.

The title of the poem performs two transformations into generic abstraction: first, through the figure of the Lover, transformed from the deictic first person of the couplet into this categorical persona; and, second, through Spring itself, which is never named as such in the poem. Surrey’s inventory occurs emphatically at a moment of temporal break, as the poet repeats forms of “new” or “now” four times throughout the sonnet’s fourteen lines. “Spring” itself occurs at a place of emergence, occurring twice in the poem itself as a present-tense verb. The springiness of the moment evoked in the poem, the balance of sloughing off and taking on, loses this transitional quality in the title: in its nominal form, (as given in “Description of Spring”) a verbal process is reified as a firm seasonal entity – one, to modern ears, in tension with the “somer” named by Surrey in line 5. It is highly suggestive, then, to find that Tottel’s title represents the first usage in the OED for “Spring” as a noun referring to the season, rather than merely a term for a collection of states of emergence and renewal. In other words, the state of emergence described in the body of the poem takes on a new form within the

frame of the Miscellany: spring is, in Tottel's rendering, a noun and not a verb. The entitled poem belongs less to the moment than to the calendar, the common passage of week, month, and season against which a reader could calibrate the poem's point. Once again, the title oversees a translation from deixis to epideixis, a memorial form that survives beyond the context of its immediate utterance and reception.

In the title, however, these two genericizing movements are in conflict: the figure of the lover is depicted strictly as the exception to the universal renewal of Spring. The generic mark of the lover thus enters the collection as an exception to a natural universal – an introduction that soon breaks, following a full stop and a shift from Roman to blackletter, into the voice of the poet/lover. To some extent the lover therefore becomes generic in the same way that the nightingale is, a lasting emblem of a passing moment, of a kind of being rather than a given being. The poem's examples of renewal are themselves proverbial: less empirical than emblematic, the items of Surrey's index comprise the *loci communes* of the *locus amoenus*, drawing on common knowledge of this iconic calendrical moment. But the voice of the lover is also the ground on which the poem itself is uttered – such that the common mark of the lover in the title names precisely the uncommonness of the lover within the world of the poem.

Many of the poems by Wyatt in the miscellany negotiate a different form of common knowledge – that embodied by and condensed in the proverb. Wyatt's engagement with proverbs is most extensively played out in "How to vse the court and him selfe therin, written to syr Fraunces Bryan." Among the longer poems in the collection (at 88 lines of terza rima), "How to vse he court" begins as an epistle to Bryan

before breaking into a dialogue, as if the absent apostrophic addressee suddenly arrives to assert his opinion. Though the poem is usually called “A Spending Hand,” or, simply, Wyatt’s Third Satire, Tottel’s title is significant: the form of the poem – as a composite of proverbs – seems to answer the interrogative posed in the title. Like the happy mean in Surrey’s translation of Martial, Tottel’s “how” offers and displays a method that a reader might repeat and “use.” As many critics have noted, the poem is both about proverbs and largely composed of them. It begins:

A Spendyng hand that always powreth out,
 Had nede to haue a bringer in as fast.
 And on the stone that styll doth turne about,
 There groweth no mosse. These prouerbes yet do last:
 Reason hath set them in so sure a place:
 That length of yeres their force can neuer waste.
 When I remember this, and eke the case,
 Wherin thou standst: I thought forthwith to write
 (Brian) to thee? who knows how great a grace
 In writing is to counsaile man the right.

Most modern editions of Wyatt’s poems set quotation marks around the first two lines and around the proverb contained in the second and third (“on the stone... groweth no mosse”), marking them as distinct from the voice of the poet, the persona able to step outside of earnest proverbial declaration to generically classify those ancient utterances and their lifespan (“These prouerbes yet do last”). The addition of quotation marks is not unreasonable: the manuscript itself was unpunctuated, so an editor is left to make all determinations about the pointing of the verse. As in many of Wyatt’s poems, however, the ambiguity of the declaration is precisely the point. Are these proverbs part of the wisdom needed to, as the title promises, “vse the court and him selfe therin”? Or is it the

use of the proverbs themselves – an affirmation of their prior status and availability for rhetorical exploitation – that Tottel’s title sees expounded in the poem?

In some of the shorter poems by Wyatt included by Tottel, proverbial utterances are pointed according to the closure of verse form: that is, bound to one line or (more likely) two, metrically unified, like the “piththie metres” of Baldwin’s *Treatise*. The closure of these lines, however, by giving an end to the space of proverbial wisdom, potentially give way to some friction between the proverb and the surrounding poem – thus the ambiguity of the quotation marks in modern editions. Critics have noted the unstable status of proverbial knowledge throughout Wyatt’s poems in the miscellany, what Diane Ross calls a “deflation of proverbial language.”¹⁹⁷ Consider for example the classic debate on the meaning of “a rolling stone gathers no moss,” one of the proverbs with which Wyatt opens the long poem to Bryan. Is it an injunction to set down roots – to stop rolling and start gathering moss – or does it endorse the lifestyle of the stone, perpetually on the move and free from obligation? Proverbial counsel is revealed, in this way, as internally ambiguous, and as externally untrustworthy, depending on who is uttering it, or simply an inadequate form of explanation.

Such techniques of what we could call proverbial mischance abound in Wyatt’s poems – that is, cases where the use of proverb is meant not to assert the value of popular wisdom but to mark the poet’s divergence from it. As Ward notes, for example, when Wyatt invokes the proverb “So hawks be taught”, he does it only to exempt himself: “But

¹⁹⁷ “The poem destabilizes the genre of moralistic verse epistle, because the advice it gives runs counter to all homiletic tradition. Yet from a formal perspective the satire develops according to textbook precepts, including the opening and closing use of proverbs. These proverbs, however, can lend the epistle only the outward form of morality” (Ross, 210-211).

in my case layeth no such clause / For with such craft I am not caught.” The poet thus establishes his own exceptionalism while both the proverb and the hawk stand in for the unexceptional masses, still tamed by the law of proverbial truth. This is a gesture repeated throughout the amatory poems in the *Songes & Sonettes*, and we might compare it to Surrey’s “Description of Spring,” in which, though the evocations of verdant countryside cannot claim the morally compelling status of proverb, the categorical names of buck, hart, and turtle dove reach towards the generic much like the proverbial hawk of Wyatt’s poem. Again, in Surrey’s poem, the lover is the exception to the rule. The proverbs become pointed units of verse just as the members of Surrey’s index do in the “Description of Spring.” In these poetic cases it is the utterance of the prescript that similarly sets a limit on its effective jurisdiction. The common law of the proverb or of springtime does not extend to the uncommon person of the poet.

In an eight-line stanza included in the miscellany, “The louer hopeth of better chance,” Wyatt does not so much oppose proverbial utterance as he calibrates poetic utterance against it. The relation of the proverb to future time – and to the future time of reading – is of special interest. Adrian Ward, writing of the Egerton Manuscript copy, has described this poem as an especially extreme “bid to stabilize experience in terms of proverbial categorization,” in which the poem uses the material of proverbs to the exclusion of “subjective expression or narrative development.”¹⁹⁸ I would call this not so

¹⁹⁸ Ward, 462. He goes on: “I would suggest that proverbial language was a significant part of the commonplace material that he drew on in the composition of his lyric poems. One key term like ‘fall’ can function as a signpost to a system of associated sayings, showing how deeply the proverbial is embedded in his verse. Wyatt’s lyric poetry invites the concentration of a proverb or a group of related proverbs into a single word because such compression is appropriate to a poetry characterised by short, pithy statements

much proverbial categorization as proverbial orientation, or even orienteering, in which the proverbial stuff of the poem marks out a set of signposts by which it precariously situates itself amidst real or viable pasts, presents, and futures. When it opens in the Miscellany, the title performs two sharp generic extrapolations. As is so often the case in the collection, the invocation of “the louer”; and, in this case, the activity in which the title announces the lover is engaged: “the lover hopeth,” thus naming an aspirational relation to future time mediated in the poem by the modal ambiguity of the proverb. Like Surrey’s sonnet on spring, the speculative shift in the poem turns to manage future time not by moving forward into the future but by moving sideways into a different kind of temporality, articulated in a different voice.

Wyatt’s poem uses what we might call the “proverbial present tense” against which to calibrate the time of its own utterance. Each of the proverbs comprising the bulk of the poem’s volume turns on a logical and temporal relationship: “He is not dead, that sometime had a fall”(1); “The Sonne returnes, that hid was vnder cloud.”(2); “The willowe eke, that stoupeth with the winde, / Doth rise againe, and greater wood doth binde.”(7-8). Tottel’s usual emendations to the verse (the addition of midline punctuation, the tweaking of meter and phrasing) sharpen the contours of these temporal contrasts, especially against the unpunctuated Egerton copy. One important effect of the printed edition, then, is to standardize the poem’s proverbial machinery: in each of the first two lines, the first four syllables – marked off each time by a concluding comma – state the main, present clause of the proverbial statement (“He is not dead”; “The Sonne returnes”), in each case followed by six additional syllables describing the

which can then be unpacked and explored in order to trace their line of proverbial thought.”

situation from which the sentence's subject has recovered. The pause between these two times of the proverb thus elongates the time of the line at the same time as it condenses its syntax.

Metrically, syntactically, and semantically, the first two and final two lines of the octave are set off from the middle four. The enveloping lines are drawn from proverbs, with third-person subjects set in the proverbial present. Each is marked in Tottel's edition by a medial comma after the fourth syllable, giving each pair a coherent rhythmic structure (one which maps onto syntax) distinct from lines 3-6. The middle four lines of the octave situate the poet vis à vis these proverbial relationships, and are not broken by caesura:

And when Fortune hath spit out all her gall,
I trust, good luck to me shall be alowd.
For, I have seen a ship in hauen fall,
After that storm hath broke both maste, and shroude.

While lines 5-6 claim to have proven the proverbs by first-hand experience, lines 3-4 place the poet (or so he hopes) at the hinge of the comma: inhabiting the fallen state of the past tense, but looking forward to the renewal of the proverbial present.

The message of the proverb is not merely "Someone that had a fall once is not dead" or "The sun that was hidden behind a cloud returns." The "that" clause is not, as we might expect it to be in modern English conversational usage, restrictive, narrowing the scope of the subject of the sentence (ie, only the sun that was hidden behind a cloud returns.) Rather, the pause of the printed edition marks a more complex – and implicit – logical relation of contrast (*despite the fact that it was hidden under a cloud*, the sun returns.) We might say, then, that in the temporal scope of the first two proverbs, that the

poet has experienced the present tense of those first four syllables, and is able to narrate an exemplifying event in the perfect tense (“For, I haue seen...”)

The final couplet meanwhile reiterates and amplifies this theme, but breaks through the merely recuperative logic of the preceding lines: “The willowe eke, that stoupeth with the winde, / Doth rise againe, and greater wood doth binde.” The natural time to which this proverb alludes is not simply of the cycles of fortune, carrying both man and the willow down and then up again. Rather, it is a logic of increase: after a fall, the willow binds *greater* wood: It grows as a result of its suffering. In the context of a lover’s complaint, this sounds almost like a threat.¹⁹⁹ A poetic effect of this threatened increase is that the couplet does not merely condense and reiterate the preceding proverb, but instead breaks off from them to make a promise of novelty in some future time. Thus, though the poet might not express affective or subjective transformation over the course of the poem’s eight lines, the status of proverbial utterance -- its place in the time of the poem -- is transformed. Wyatt is perhaps here reflecting a crux at the heart of what a proverb is. Erasmus, in his Preface to the *Adagia*, defines a proverb as something that merges characteristics we might consider opposed: it must be ancient and common – on everyone’s lips, as it were – while it also produces an impression of novelty and distinctness.²⁰⁰ A proverb must be old and new at once, a piece of language so intrinsically novel that it is surprising no matter how frequently it is repeated. By embedding similarly sententious truths, the poem

¹⁹⁹ Along the lines, for example of Morrissey’s rather sinister 1994 single, “The more you ignore me, the closer I get.”

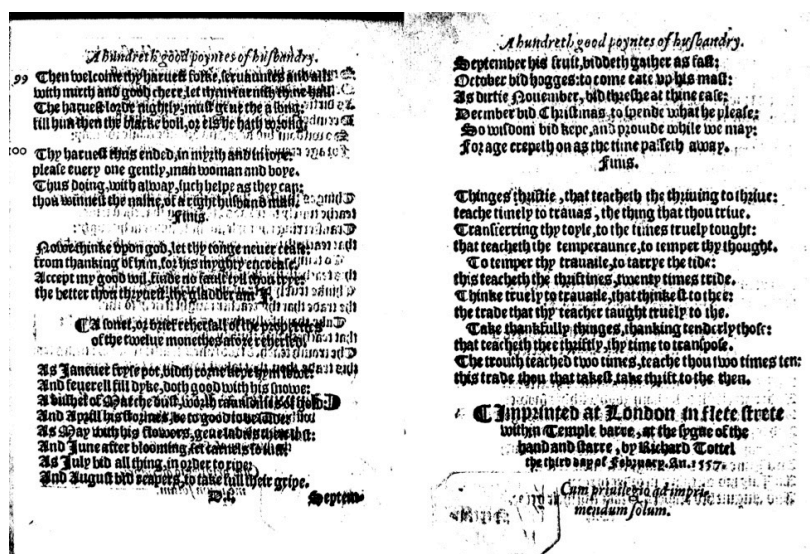
²⁰⁰ It is significant that in this sense that Baldwin’s “pyththie meters of dyuers matters” appear in the book of proverbs and adages in his *Treatyce*. Baldwin’s metrical renderings of these old sayings seem to warrant proverbial – and not just sententious – status precisely because of their quickness, their concrete rendering in pointed literary form. The running head continues above this section, suggesting provocatively that Baldwin classes the pithy meters among the other proverbs.

frames them such that their linguistic novelty is secondary to the bounds of the poem. Meanwhile, the commonplace of the proverb gives the poet access to different modes of proverbial and future time. Here, the proverbial wisdom in which so many of Tottel's publications peddle both mediates and legitimates this turn to the future. The future time of the poem is in fact the present time of the proverb, so that the relation of the poet to proverbial wisdom is in fact aspirational. The poet will only inhabit the "better chance" of the proverbial wisdom once "Fortune hath spit out all her gall."

In Tottel's title, this movement is given the name of "hope": "the louer hopeth of a better chance." Such a title names, as do so many of the "lover" poems, the kind of utterance within: the sort of speech act the poem performs. The future time of the poem, however, is doubled by Wyatt's use of proverbial couplets: each expresses, in proverbial present tense, a confidence about future time, while the placement of the proverb in the final couplet opens up the possibility of a more radical future, one that breaks from the conservative economy of the previous proverbs towards a future of consistent increase. Ending with this accumulative logic, the poet promises to bind greater wood, just as a collection of proverbs like that gathered by Erasmus bound ever greater matter together. Meanwhile, within the context of the collection as a whole, it is Tottel's classificatory title that makes the verse available to a public reader, exchangeable with the other poems nearby as comparable classes of utterance ("The louer blameth," "The louer curseth," "The louer determineth"). Like Tusser's advice, therefore, the *Songes & Sonettes* juxtaposes the stated time of hope, thrift, and good fortune with the textual futures enabled by the material text – memory, commonplacing, graffiti, repetition, imitation.

Tusser's Sonnets

The various editions of Tusser's *Pointes* frame their own lessons and the passage of the year according to a similar process of condensation and abstraction. As we saw in the previous section, and as I will elaborate at great length in the subsequent chapter on Shakespeare's *Sonnets*, this work of abstraction is often tied to the sonnet form – a version of framing thought that captures the temporal world of the quatrains in an epigrammatically portable couplet. This context helps explain the significance of the nonetheless remarkable fact that the first indented couplet in an English sonnet was printed in the first edition of Tusser's *Hundreth Pointes of Good Husbandrie* in 1557. At the end of the book, the progress of the months is followed by a sonnet abstracting their kindly properties, titled "A sonet, or brief rehersall of the properties of the twelue monethes afore rehersed." Each month merits a single verse, with the final couplet providing a summary proverbial lesson, bringing the poem to the fourteen lines we now expect from a sonnet. The properties of the months, in other words, also belong to the individual lines of the poem. Though the poem is just a series of 7 couplets, leaving us perhaps disinclined to group it with the exempla offered by Wyatt and Surrey, the distinction made by its last two lines suggest it sees itself in that same field. The couplet, that is, is not just more of the same, but of a different (extra-calendrical) kind.



This last couplet, which is slightly indented at the left margin, steps out of the time of the calendar in order to make a general claim about the passage of time: “So wisdom bid kepe, and prouide while we may: / For age crepeth on as the time passeth away.” This indentation is an anomaly among contemporary printed 14-line stanzas, and, on the tail of 6 earlier couplets, seems to mark not so much a prosodic break as a semantic – indeed, ontological – one. To my knowledge it represents the first indented couplet in a printed English sonnet. The couplet thus seems to mark an important break in terms of the kind of work the language is doing. While the preceding lines make a series of claims about the properties of each month – truths bound to the cycle of the annual calendar – this couplet applies generally and is generally binding to the reader. It steps out of the time of the calendar in order to capture some truth about calendrical time in the form of a rule. As Dymphna Callaghan has argued, it abstracts out from the temporal year to reach the central prescript of husbandry: the need to thriftily

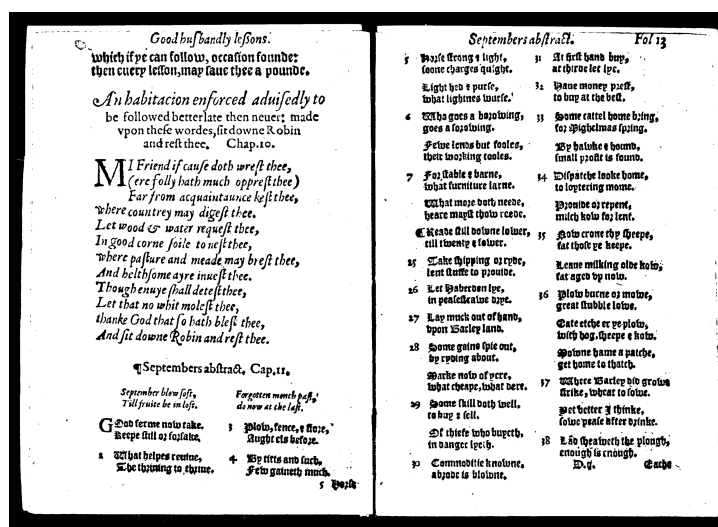
shore up in the present to prepare for the barren winters of both the calendar and old age.²⁰¹

As Callaghan notes, this conceit gives it a basic affinity with Shakespeare's Sonnets 5 and 6, which also describe techniques for preparing against the ravages of winter.²⁰² This reorientation aligns the couplet with the "provision" endorsed in Tusser's opening points, perching the imperative for store at the end of the year, where it encompasses the previous months while gazing provisionally forward. It thus digests the passage of the year, offering a reading of the passage of time itself from this provisional, visionary perspective. As it appears within the volume, the poem is introduced as a double condensation – according to the title, a rehearsal of the rehearsal just completed – extending and complicating the volume's stalled conclusion, which carries on after the hundredth numbered point in the form of an additional point, a *Finis*, this "sonet," another *Finis*, a twelve-line poem in which each word begins with a "T", and, finally, the colophon. Tusser here performs the difficulty of ending which the couplet so often aspires to solve.

In the edition of 1570, the "sonet" has been transformed. The properties of each month have been arranged in a table, where each is rewritten as a dimeter couplet, appearing next to its proper month, each of which is numbered and listed with a pilcrow.

²⁰¹ Callaghan, "Speeding Time," 110-111.

²⁰² Callaghan, "Confounded by Winter: Speeding Time in Shakespeare's Sonnets," in *A Companion to Shakespeare's Sonnets*, ed. Michael Schoenfeldt (Oxford: Blackwell, 2007), 110-111.



The typography is much more complex: the title (“The kindly propertie of euery moneth.”) is first in italic and, on its second line, in blackletter. The couplets themselves are in blackletter, like the points on the previous page, while the names of months, which appear with a number and a pilcrow, are in Roman type [Fig. 4].²⁰³ The modulation of typeface here echoes the work performed by Baldwin’s “summes,” formally registering the work of condensation and commentary and hierarchizing the matter of the page.

What was the sonnet’s couplet has been partially preserved on the previous page, where, amplified to a stanza of three couplets, it helps conclude the full calendar of points instead of their condensed “rehersall” in the sonnet [Fig. 4]. Its title there (a couplet in itself) echoes Baldwin’s “summes of all”:

¶ Of all thing this seemeth the summe,
one going, another to come.

World lasting looke neuer to lin,
yeare ended againe to beginne.
Who looketh to wealth to attaine,

²⁰³ Tusser, *Pointes* (1570), sig. Fii^r.

must trauaile againe and againe.
 Good therefore it is (as I say)
 prouidyng for age, while we may.²⁰⁴

A hundred good pointes of huswifery.
 119 Come carped, let such as be pouze go and cleane,
 and after let cattel go moule it vp cleane.
 Then spare it for pasture till it ouen be past
 to lengthen thy daire no better thou hast.

120 All haruest time, haruest folke, seruaunts and all,
 must make altogether good cheare in thy Hall.
 So fill them the blacke boll of bleeth to their song,
 and let them be mery all haruest tunc long.

121 Once ended thy haruest let none bee beguilde,
 please such as did help thee, man, woman, and childe
 Thus doing (with alway such helpe as they can)
 thou winnest the name of a husbandly man.

Now think vpon God, let thy tong neuer cease,
 in thanking of him for his mightie increase.
 Accept my good will, for a prooffe go and tpe,
 the better thou thyuest, the gladder am I.

¶ Of all thing this seemeth the summe,
 one going, another to come.

¶ Would lasting looke neuer to lin,
 peate ended againe to beginne.
 Who looketh to wealth to attaine,
 must trauaile againe and againe.
 Good therefore it is (as I say)
 prouidyng for age, while we may.

¶ January

*The kindly propertie of
 euery moneth.* fol. 22

- | | | |
|----|-------------|---|
| 11 | ¶ January | I kindly good Januere,
frealeth potte by the tier. |
| 12 | ¶ February | Fill (fenerill) dike,
with what thou dost like. |
| 13 | ¶ Marche | Sparche dust to be folde,
woostly traunfomes of golde. |
| 14 | ¶ Aprill | Sowre Aprill flowers,
do spring the May flowers. |
| 15 | ¶ May | Cold May and a windy,
makes Barnes fat and findy. |
| 16 | ¶ Iune | Calme weather in Iune,
cozne setteth in tunc. |
| 17 | ¶ Iulye | No tempest good Iuly,
least all things looke ruly. |
| 18 | ¶ August | Drye August and warme,
doth haruest no harme. |
| 19 | ¶ September | September blowe softe,
till fruite be in losse. |
| 20 | ¶ October | October good blast,
to shake the Hog mast. |
| 21 | ¶ Nouember | Nouember take haste,
let thy no more faile. |
| 22 | ¶ December | Oh Dirrie December,
fo: Christmas remember. |
- I. ii. Comparing

“Seemeth” here serves a double purpose, naming the visual perspective from the summit of the year, but undermining that promise of closure with the relentless repetitions of worldly time. It is the summit of the year, but also the summation of wisdom that applies to all years and resists their decay, instructing the reader to collect a “summe” of all things – future provision undiminished by the coming and going of months and ages. The term’s multivalence thus leaves it both inside and outside the movement of time. This image of turning excludes the name of fortune, replacing it with the inevitable turn of the year and prescribing prudence – literally, “prouidyng,” looking forward – as an effective hedge against contingency. In his echo of Ecclesiastes 1:4 (“One generation passeth away, and another generation cometh: but the earth abideth for ever”), Tusser prescribes not *askesis* in the face of earthly vanity but accumulation. The year that goes and comes is inventoried in its proper parts on the page that follows,

²⁰⁴ *ibid.*, sig. F1^v.

according to the “kindely properties” of each month – shoring up and tallying the parts of the year itself like pieces of moveable property. This language aligns Tusser’s catalog of the temporal world with genres of natural history writing, which likewise catalog worldly examples according to their names and kindly properties, storing up an ark of exemplary specimens for future reference and use.

An analogous juxtaposition of chronology and prudence appears in the section on huswifery, where it receives similar typographical differentiation. This “description of woman’s age” offers a line for each 14 years of her life (numbered at the left margin by the age it epitomizes), making a series of three rhyming couplets. Beneath these lines is printed “A lesson,” its content condensed in four brief lines of blackletter: “Then purchas some pelfe, / by fyfty & three: / Or buckle thy selfe, / a drudge for to bee.” With considerably less sympathy than in his other lessons, Tusser nonetheless uses this conclusion once again to turn from time’s taking to the subject’s hoarding, a conversion that relies on the accumulation of property to counter the wastes of the mortal calendar. The potential for such a layout is already present, I would argue, even in the sonnets in the *Pointes* that are not printed as such – and here, if we read the four-line lesson as an extension of the lines above, it is metrically indistinguishable from a couplet. In what we might think of as a technological exaggeration of the basic indentation, the compositor has here typographically rendered the passage of time as a series of moments to be ticked off, against which the solidity of the inset “lesson” stands as a piece of provision.

The edition of 1573 continues the break-up and dispersal of the months and their kindly properties: these brief couplets have been redistributed, so that they appear at the

beginning of each month as introductions to a series of equally pithy couplets that condense and introduce the full four-line points that follow. Puttenham's worries about the coupleted poem being torn asunder are here enthusiastically consummated, as the "kindely properties" are restored to their proper months, the final step of their decoupling from the 1557 "sonet" and calendrical table of 1570 edition. Thoughtfully, Tusser opens the book with instructions on how to manage this variety, using language that emphasizes their removal and handling. On the verso of the title page, we read, under the heading "A lesson how to conferre euery abstract with hys moneth":

In euery month, er in aught be begonne,
Read euery month, what auailles to be donne,
So neither this trauel, shal seeme to be lost:
For thou to repent, of this trifeling cost.

The figure of abstract, & month do agree,
Which one to another, relations bee,
The lessons that after those figures do stand:
Be points of them selues, to be taken in hand.²⁰⁵

The passage provides the reader a range of instructions. First, in the heading, "to conferre" each abstract and month: the labor assigned is to bring them back to one another, by the handle as it were, to draw the associations between abstract figure and monthly substance across the pages between them. The "lessons," meanwhile are "points of them selues" to be stored and accumulated for future use – that is, "taken in hand." Tusser prescribes these reading practices under the heading of a prudential economy: a proven method by which the labor of reading will be redeemed and not repented. These abstracted points, which sharpen the points of the points, are lessons that, in turn, generate another lesson

²⁰⁵ Tusser, *Pointes* (1573), sig. Ai^v.

on how to read them. The abstracts thus extend the work begun in the quatorzain of 1557, confirming the distinction we saw first represented in that couplet, unhooking and amplifying its single abstract condensation into an army of miniaturized abstracts.

Though the “Rehersall” of the 1557 edition does not survive in its quatorzain form in later editions, additional poems called sonnets do appear, making similar use of the pointing of the page. The edition of 1570 includes “A sonet to the Lady Paget,” a quatorzain in tetrameters, of three cross-rhymed quatrains and a final rhyming couplet – again indented, though more conspicuously than the previous couplet. The logical organization of the poem proceeds in pairs, every other line beginning with an allusion to “some” plagued by debt in one way or another. The serial images of prodigality are both extended and broken by the turn into the couplet, which offers an image of payment by praise against the ravishings of debt tallied above. The time of the couplet (“while life doth last) also breaks from the preceding census of debtors, extending the poet’s performance of praise into an indefinite future – a debt that, as we saw in Tusser’s yearly “summe” above, cannot be acquitted on earth. In the edition of 1573, the same poem has been reproduced, but arranged by the compositor to fit the whole page [Fig. 8]. The twelve lines are broken in half, and arranged in groups of eight into three staves (following a division into quatrains, but, in these shorter lines, closely echoing the intense efficiency of Tusser’s other proliferating small verse). The couplet however, retains both its lineation and its indentation, standing out as an awkward base to the column teetering above it.

A Sonet to the Lady Paget.

Some pleasures take, and can not giue,
 but onely make poore thanks their shift:
 Some meaning well in det do liue,
 no: cannot tell how els to shift.
 Some knoeke and faine would ope the dooze,
 to learne the vaine good turne to praise:
 Some shew good face, and be but poore,
 yet haue a grace good fame to raise.
 Some owe and giue, yet still in det,
 and so must liue for ought I knowe:
 Some wishe to pay and cannot get,
 but night and day still more do owe.
 Euen so must I for pleasures past,
 still wishe you good while life doth last.

*A Comparison betwene good
 huswifery and euill.*

Comparing together good huswiffe and bad,
 The knowledge of either the better is had.
 1 All huswifery lieth till nine of the clocke,
 good huswifery tyeeth to rise with the Cocks.
 2 All huswifery to oteeth to make her selfe byaue,
 good huswifery looketh what howholde must haue.
 3 All huswifery trusteth to him and to her,
 good huswifery lusteth her selfe for to stir.
 4 All huswifery cares not for this nor for that,
 good huswifery spareth for feare pe wote what.

s III

A Sonet.

17

*A Sonet to the Lady
 Paget.*

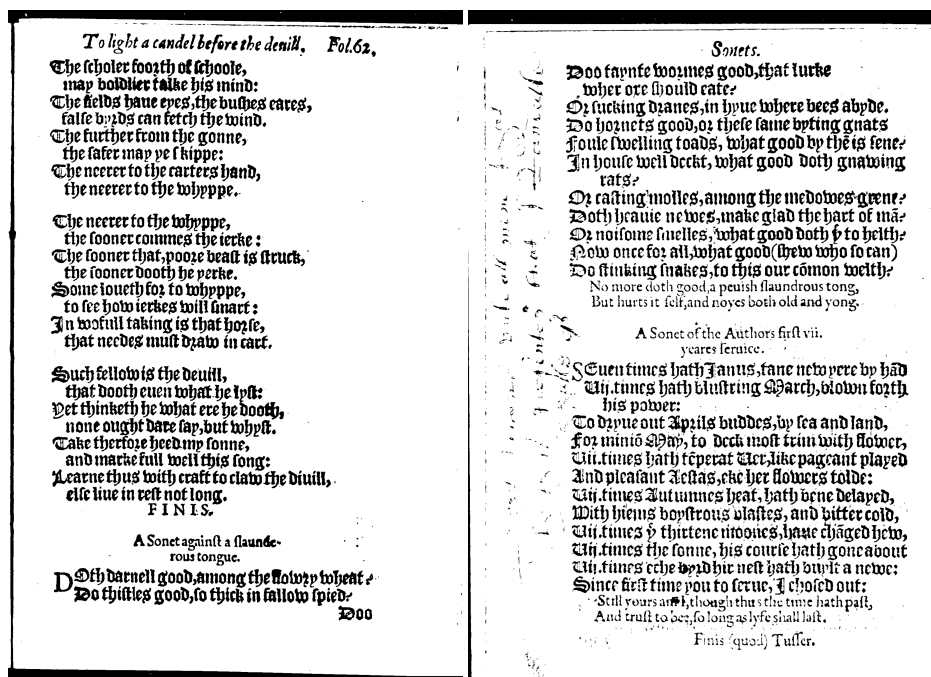
Some pleasures take,
 and can not giue,
 but onely make,
 poore thanks their shift:
 Some meaning well,
 in det do liue,
 and cannot tell,
 how els to shift.

Some knock and faine,
 would ope the dooze,
 to learne the vaine,
 good turne to praise:
 Some shew good face,
 and be but poore,
 yet haue a grace,
 good fame to raise.

Some owe and giue,
 yet still in det,
 and so must liue,
 for ought I knowe:
 Some wishe to pay,
 and cannot get,
 but night and day,
 still more must owe.
 Euen so must I, for pleasures past,
 still wishe you good, while life doth last.

T. i. The

An even more marked typographic turn is evident in two poems called “sonnets” in the 1573 edition, each printed with an indented, rhyming couplet: “A Sonet against a slaundersous tongue” and “A Sonet of the Authors first vii. yeares seruice.” Prosodically, both sonnets follow the notes of instruction published by Gascoigne in the same year, proceeding in iambic pentameter and with cross-coupled lines. In both cases, the special status of the couplet is confirmed not just by its indentation but by its composition in Roman type instead of blackletter. Though it is possible that this sharp typographic break served to keep the second sonnet from running onto the next page, the compositor nonetheless understood the difference between poems to be less important than the internal structural distinctions they shared – that is, between quatrains and couplet. In each case, they are rendered as twelve substantial lines in blackletter, bracketed on either side by a summation in roman type, couplet below and title above.



The turn achieved by the couplet in each case varies: different means of abstraction, deployed to different ends. In “A Sonet against a slaunderous tongue,” the final couplet breaks from the serial exempla of the quatrains, drawing a sententious answer from the preceding rhetorical questions. Moving from species (literally) to genre, the couplet names what these wasteful examples have in common before drawing a moral precept from those natural percepts. The serial instances of cankerous waste might be continued indefinitely (such is the exemplary bounty of nature), were it not for the turn initiated in the eleventh line, as it introduces the final and encompassing example: “Now once for all, what good (shew who so can) /Do stinking snakes, to this our common welth?” (l.11-12). An emblem continuous with the others (continuous with thistles, worms, hornets, rats, and toads), but also substitutes for them (“now once for all”), these stinking snakes begin to climb towards the generality of the couplet by invoking the synecdochal logic of the commonwealth. With the couplet, the

mode thus switches from observation to law. The couplet of “A Sonet of the Authors first vii. Years seruice” likewise marks out a distinction in time: the seven annual cycles of the quatrains are sublated by the move into the couplet, which absorbs and negates the temporal time of the calendar.²⁰⁶ Its examples of annual rites and events – from individual months and seasons, to seasonal weather, moons, and the habits of birds – might be indefinitely extended. The couplet operates by breaking the series, and, like the “Sonet to Lady Paget,” turns this retrospective inventory to a future promise: “Still yours am I, though thus the time hath past, / And trust to bee, so long as lyfe shall last.” Like the couplet of the 1557 “Sonet”, it extracts a rule that legislates throughout the year, protecting its subject from the daily ravages of mutability.²⁰⁷

Each of these sonnets uses the couplet to stage a resolution to a problem of seriality and transience, making good on or closing a catalog of time’s waste and decay with a turn to a new kind of utterance differently bound to present and future. In the sonnet “rehersall” of 1557, the monthly structure of the first twelve lines stakes an implicit limit on their continuation, while the sentiment of the couplet ventures to ideologically contain the mortal stakes of that seriality. In all three later poems, the examples and their “kindely properties” could be infinitely catalogued, or could end with the “et cetera” of the ever increasing natural historical catalogue – a mode of enumeration and description from which the couplet nonetheless turns, acceding to the constraints of

²⁰⁶ Compare, for example, the first poem, by Surrey, in Tottel’s Miscellany: “The sunne hath twice brought furth his tender grene, / Twice clad the earth in liuely lustinesse...”

²⁰⁷ The sonnet is also a play on the convention of the lover’s experience of the passage of time, here with “love” markedly replaced by “author.” Compare, for example, the first poem, by Surrey, in Tottel’s Miscellany (“The sunne hath twice brought furth his tender grene, / Twice clad the earth in liuely lustinesse...”) and Shakespeare’s Sonnet 104.

the sonnet form.²⁰⁸ The closural force of the couplet breaks out of the scrolling temporal progress of the poem to a law of time management within which it – and to which the reader – is bound.

Taken in sum, these poems by Tusser – one of 1557, and two of 1573 – are the earliest print examples I have been able to find of indented couplets at the end of sonnets.²⁰⁹ Their immediate model in this respect, however, is not a Petrarchan or courtly tradition of love poetry, but the pedantic abstraction we see in William Baldwin: a summation in divergent typeface of preceding matter. The couplets, in this sense, are not only detachable but are almost separate poems, close morphological cousins of the monthly abstracts and figures that Tusser instructs his readers are “points of them selues, to be taken in hand.” (And, indeed, in the case of the 1557 poem, it is the sonnet form that is repurposed into those abstracts and figures, like an embryo from which cells have split and multiplied.)

Susan Stewart has argued that miniaturized language always plays with abstraction and closure: “The *multum in parvo* quality of the quotation, the epigram, and

²⁰⁸ On the poetics and semiotics of this problem of closure, see Barbara Herrnstein Smith, *Poetic Closure*; and Roland Barthes, *S/Z*, trans. Richard Miller (New York: Hill and Wang, 1974), esp. 113-114 and 216-217, on enumeration, description, and the “*et cetera* of plenitudes”; as well as Giorgio Agamben, *The End of the Poem: Studies in Poetics*, trans. Daniel Heller-Roazen (Palo Alto: Stanford UP, 1999), 109-115.

²⁰⁹ None of the sonnets of Googe (1563), Turberville (1567), or Gascoigne (1573) have indented couplets. Nonetheless, the indentation of couplets seems to have been broadly established by 1591, when Sidney’s *Astrophel and Stella* and the sonnets in Spenser’s *Ruines of Rome* and *Uisions of the worlds vanitie* were all indented. Even with the couplet’s confirmed visual distinction, composers did not regularly follow this familiar Shakespearean mold. In 1592, the sonnets in Samuel Daniel’s *Delia* were indented, as were the first lines of each quatrain. The printer of Constable’s *Diana*, also printed in 1592, followed the Petrarchan model, with the first lines of each quatrain at the left margin and the next lines indented, but with an alteration marking the exception of the couplet: these last two lines are indented even further than those quatrain lines. (This seems to render concrete a native tweak to an Italianately-inclined collection, in which each poem is titled in Italian (as *Sonnetto Primo*, *Secondo*, etc.)) Turberville’s *Epitaphes, epigrammes, songs, and sonnets* (1567) does however include some pointed couplet conclusions to longer poems, in which the couplets are set off from the preceding verse in italic or roman type (cf. fo. 19r, fo. 29r, fo. 105v, fo. 129r), and, in one case, in brackets (fo. 62r).

the proverb rises as they each take their place as free-floating pieces of discourse, pieces of discourse which have been abstracted from the context as hand in such a way as to seem to transcend lived experience and speak to all times and places.” In this sense, these small forms are “clearly rooted in the ideological; its closure is the closure of all ideological discourse, a discourse which speaks to the human and cultural but not to the natural except to frame it.”²¹⁰ This framing of the natural is performed by Tusser’s turn out of the calendar, just as it is by Tottel’s Baldwin, Wyatt, and Surrey. The rhetorical work of condensation, in its conceit of a law reaching beyond the occasion of its composition, must reframe the relationship of language and the natural world. It is perhaps not a coincidence, then, that in all of the works the rhetorical performance of speculation finds itself in a contest with the passage of time in nature, and of the seasons in particular. These turns away from those quotidian temporalities venture to articulate a law that speaks beyond them, is not bound to the particularity of earthly time or place – what Stewart calls “the closure of ideological discourse.” It also begins to suggest how these formal strategies, in both lyric and instructional contexts, work to construct new relationships to the natural world in the mid-sixteenth century.

This reframing also transforms the relation of the book to its conjectural reader. What I have above called the poetics of practical command rewrites those relationships through a performance of speculation that invokes obedience and instruction, but undermines them at the same time. Tusser’s instructions for planting and gathering may seem straightforward, but, as I suggested, they become impossible to navigate in practice.

²¹⁰ Stewart, 53.

How, on the other hand, would one carry out the law articulated by the proverb in Wyatt's poem discussed above, other than to let go and to let Fortune follow its course? Such a distinction may seem to fall out according to a division between labor, on the part of the husbandman, and grace, on the part of the proverbially virtuosic courtier. Nonetheless, such a distinction still assumes that we know who is reading each text: that Tusser's readers are the yeomen living with the sheep the *Pointes* tells you when to shear, and that the readers of the *Songes & Sonettes* are simply disinterested observers, outsiders admiring a courtly linguistic performance, as Lerer and Marotti have argued – voyeurs of apostrophe rather than recipients of instruction. It is not clear to me that lyric or practical address works so simply in either case, or that the unproblematic utility or iterability of a text follows from its successful interpellation of its legible readership. Rather, it is the illegibility of this readership that seems precisely the point, not just to a contemporary scholar who can never have enough data but to a risk-taking publisher engaged in a speculative venture, and looking out towards an inchoate geography of print circulation. Likewise, it seems to me that it is the failure of textual interpellation that guides the movements of instruction, abstraction, and condensation in each of these works – which, like the mischance and misprision of the proverb in Wyatt's poems, and the foison of rhetorical thrift in Tusser's points, anticipates textual futures of increase, repetition, or transformation.

Chapter Four

Handles of knowledge: the couplet, the graft, and
the *Sonnets'* poetics of practical command

Images of husbandry are shot through Shakespeare's *Sonnets*, and, though found most conspicuously in the first seventeen poems, commonly called the "procreation sonnets," they equip the sequence as a whole with a vocabulary that knits together horticultural, economic, sexual, and literary increase. That the sonnets' layered metaphors draw from practical manuals is not surprising, but, as I will argue here, Shakespeare's distinct stylistic strategies are also shaped by a debt to practical genres. In their attempts to persuade, command, praise, instruct, and exhort, Shakespeare's sonnets are much more likely than their contemporaries to use second-person pronouns and to articulate verbs in the imperative mood.²¹¹ Perhaps most strikingly, the couplets that conclude the sonnets – where these instances of second-person address are most likely to be found – are frequently easily severable from the twelve lines preceding them. Drawing rhetorically and conceptually from the ideology of husbandry, they are indebted to practical "points" like Tusser's, and are structurally bound to the possibility of their extraction and reuse.

This distinctive aspect of the *Sonnets'* style and structure has confounded the poems' readers. John Crowe Ransom begins a 1938 essay on Shakespeare's sonnets by warning that he will not "hold back from throwing a few stones at Shakespeare, aiming

²¹¹Giorgi Melchiori, *Shakespeare's Dramatic Meditations* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1976), 15. David Parker, "Verbal Moods in Shakespeare's *Sonnets*," *Modern Language Quarterly* 30.3 (1969), 331-359.

them as accurately as I can at the vulnerable parts.”²¹² For Ransom and his successors, as often as not those vulnerable parts are Shakespeare’s couplets, which, as Yvor Winters writes, so often fail to “rise to the occasions which they invoke.”²¹³ The structure of more than half the sonnets, according to Ransom, is “seriously defective.”²¹⁴ To many of his midcentury critics, Shakespeare’s couplets seem abrupt, pat, or flat-footed, ill-suited to the lines preceding them and a threat to the organic form of the sonnet. Winters found himself unable to forgive their regular “evasion” and “cliché,” writing that “the element of genius which goes into many of these sonnets raises one’s expectations to the point that one cannot take this sort of triviality with good grace.” He confessed to finding them “more and more disappointing.”²¹⁵ The scandal of the sonnets, for their midcentury readers, was not their disposition of erotic energies, but their repeated failure to find adequate structural closure.

²¹² Ransom, “Shakespeare at Sonnets,” *Southern Review* 3 (1938), 531-553, esp. 531.

²¹³ Winters, “Poetic Styles, Old and New,” in *Four Poets on Poetry*, ed. Don Cameron Allen (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1959) 49. Ransom was hardly the first to take exception with the Sonnets (consider Steeven’s explanation that they were not included in his 1793 edition “because the strongest act of Parliament that could be framed, would fail to compel readers into their service”), but a resurgence of such criticism did follow Ransom’s salvo through the 1940s and ‘50s. Winters, following Ransom’s lead, opens his discussion of the Sonnets by noting that “in the past ten years or so I have found them more and more disappointing.” Among others, we might add the feeling of disappointment expressed by C.L. Barber, Edward Hubler, G. Wilson Knight, and, somewhat more recently, Thomas Greene, whose argument I will return to below. Barbara Herrnstein Smith discusses some of these perceived “closural failings” in *Poetic Closure: A Study of How Poems End* (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1968), 214-220. Helen Vendler’s emphasis on “couplet ties” in her commentary on the sonnets offers a counterweight to these complaints of inorganicism – that is, the closer we look, the better attached they seem (*The Art of Shakespeare’s Sonnets* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap, 1997).)

²¹⁴ Ransom, “Shakespeare at Sonnets,” 533.

²¹⁵ Winters, “Poetic Styles,” 48. Winters finds an absence of both craft and seriousness on the part of the poet, leading to an often superficial engagement with the sonnet form and to a vagueness of language and image, all of which culminates in the irresolution of the couplet: “This weakness is often aggravated by the fact that Shakespeare frequently poses his problem and then solves it by an evasion or an irrelevant cliché: this is more or less the method of the courtly style at its weakest, but the element of genius which goes into many of these sonnets raises one’s expectations to the point that one cannot take this sort of triviality with good grace.”

Jiri Levy and Rosalie Colie have shown that Shakespeare's *Sonnets* often have a firm syntactical break or pause after the 12th line. The couplets, indeed, are frequently syntactically and semantically autonomous, easily detached from the rest of the body of the poem for repetition or storage elsewhere. This is not the *Sonnets*' only distinguishing feature. As Giorgio Melchiori has shown, they are also much more likely to use second-person pronouns than other contemporary sequences, especially in the opening procreation sonnets, where uses of the second person outnumber instances of the first person that usually dominates lyric diction.

I am less interested in the distinctiveness of Shakespeare's *Sonnets* relative to other printed sonnet sequences than I am in the convergence in them (and in the procreation sonnets in particular) of these two specific distinctions: the autonomy of the couplets and the frequency of second-person address. A "point," as I argued in Chapter Four, combines condensation and prosodic boundedness with an imperative mood: it condenses, but it also implicitly or explicitly *points out*, interpellating the reader in its rhetorical and ethical performance. As I will argue here through readings of the first seventeen sonnets in the sequence alongside texts I believe to be their interlocutors, Shakespeare's *Sonnets* engage both the imaginative world of husbandry and the specific poetics of practical command in their complex negotiations with textuality, memory, and desire.

In this, the *Sonnets* reflect not just the rhetorical thrift with which Tusser links husbandry and pedagogy, but associations between pedagogy and generation fundamental to humanist understandings of education. As Rebecca Bushnell has shown, tropes of gardening and images of vegetable cultivation were central to humanist discourses on the

training and development of youth.²¹⁶ It was a commonplace that children should be carefully planted as seeds, and then cultivated, as Thomas Elyot wrote, to “grow and be nourished.” Within and beyond the classroom, humanist practices of imitation were tied to figures of increase, copying, and proliferation.²¹⁷ In the *Sonnets*, Shakespeare structures an orientation to future time through a similar yoking of instruction and reproduction – both through specific rhetorical technologies, like the couplet and direct address, and through images of increase and natural growth.

Shakespeare’s *Sonnets* draw not just on the rich ideological associations of husbandry or on a material knowledge of particular technologies, like perfume-making or grafting. Rather, they specifically reflect poetic techniques of practical instruction – in particular, through their epitomized and detachable couplets, and through their regular use of second-person address. In Tusser’s case, as we saw in Chapter Four, this rhetoric of practicality is no less rhetorical: spurning the ends of actual “practice,” practical condensation becomes a stylistic impulse on its own terms. Like the second-person address of practical instruction or lyric apostrophe, summation and indentation work to mold the reader’s attention. One function of these sums is to modulate the time of reading: the closed form of an end-couplet sonnet generates its own expectations – of development, turn, closure, but also of storage and dispersal. In the procreation sonnets, these expectations are shot through with the techniques of husbandry

²¹⁶ Bushnell, *A Culture of Teaching: Early Modern Humanism in Theory and Practice* (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1996), esp. 73-116.

²¹⁷ See, for example, Cave, *The Cornucopian Text*; Halpern, *The Poetics of Primitive Accumulation*, especially chapter one; David Glimp, *Increase and Multiply: Governing Cultural Reproduction in Early Modern England* (Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 2003), especially chapters one and three; and Daniel Wakelin, *Humanism, Reading, and English Literature, 1430-1530* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2007), 200-1.

and the anxieties about dearth and deprivation that drive them, figures of knowledge and uncertainty precariously balanced between quatrain and couplet.

In his work on the dramatic structures within Shakespeare's *Sonnets*, Giorgio Melchiori traces and ranks the use of different pronouns in sonnet sequences by Sidney, Spenser, Daniel, Drayton, and Shakespeare. His calculations find the first person to be far and away the most common pronomial occurrence, followed by the third person, and finally the second person. Shakespeare represents a remarkable exception: 37.2% of the personal pronouns that appear in Shakespeare's *Sonnets* are in the second person – nearly twice the portion as appear in Sidney's *Astrophel and Stella* (20.5%), Drayton's *Ideas Mirrour* (19.5%), or Daniel's *Delia* (20.7%), and more than twice the percentage in Spenser's *Amoretti* (16.2%). The *Sonnets*' second-person orientation is even more marked in the first seventeen sonnets in the sequence, where uses of the second person outnumber uses of the first person. Why should such a technical statistical distinction matter? Melchiori argues that the first person is the distinct mode of lyric, giving voice to the private experience of a solitary mind.²¹⁸ The preponderance of the second person, he argues in contrast, may suggest an outward orientation on the part of the *Sonnets*, an openness to their social world and their readers. For Melchiori, the *Sonnets*' frequent examples of direct address support and play out the poems' theatricality, embedding them in the social world of performance and dialogue. This grants the *Sonnets* a populist tendency in Melchiori's view, opening their performance of address to a middling audience. With this more frequent use of the

²¹⁸ This position is in some tension with Jonathan Culler's suggestion that apostrophe is the characteristic trope of lyric, though Culler does not explicitly have Renaissance verse in mind (in *The Pursuit of Signs* (London: Routledge, 1981), 149-171). I will elaborate on some of the consequences of Shakespeare's uses of second person below.

second person, “Shakespeare is breaking with the tradition of the sonneteer as a court poet or an aristocrat. He opens a dialogue: rather than contemplating his interlocutors from on high or paying them respectful and detached homage, he involves them in debate. He behaves, that is, as *par inter pares*, or as man to man.”²¹⁹ The work of address in this view is distinctly *unrhetorical*, and seems to make present the social relations that limn and gird the *Sonnets* as live performances.

In this chapter, I am more interested in the way that these instances of address stage a specifically textual encounter – or sometimes its failure. As I have suggested in each of the preceding chapters, this scene of reading and address – the problem of addressing an audience in print – was being played out and tested across a range of genres in early modern English print. As I suggested in the conclusion to Chapter Three, a reading of Tottel’s Miscellany that takes it to perform a version of courtly voyeurism iterates a splitting of its audience, reifying certain expectations we now hold about the poetic and social conditions of courtly lyric – in particular that, as lyric, it is always only overheard, and doubly so when read in a printed book outside the sphere of the court itself. I do not believe that Shakespeare’s *Sonnets* – either in their reliance on the couplet or in their orientation towards a second-person audience – simply perform the opposite, reuniting the literary artifact with its immediate consumers. However, both the second-person address quantified by Melchiori and the detachability of Shakespeare’s couplets open the sonnet’s closed to their future reception. I will try to sketch out below how this problem of readerly relations is taken up as a negotiation of power, both

²¹⁹ Melchiori, 16.

through experiments with the force of verbal command and through reflections on the ambivalent powers of the natural world.

My approach in this chapter follows the lead of several recent readings of Shakespeare's *Sonnets* that have emphasized the connections between *poesis* and craft in early modern England, most centrally Rayna Kalas's discussion of the "frame" and "framing" in Renaissance poetry.²²⁰ For Kalas, the writing of poetry is itself a form of labored craft – a way of framing matter – that is not different in kind from other practices invoked by Shakespeare in the *Sonnets*, like gardening or distillation. All manipulate and form natural matter, shaping bounded concrete objects with material agency in the world. While the poet himself is a craftsman, the language he molds is a material thing, a kind of worldly matter like the clay of a pot or the wood of a table. As we saw, Puttenham's *Arte of English Poesie* broached a similar relation to craft in its negotiations with the virtues of art, nature, and poetic language. At the heart of Kalas' consideration of "enframing" is the question of how much the poet or craftsman transforms the object before them, of how radical the invention achieved by *poiesis* can be. In the botanical terms I have been elaborating, this turns on the resiliency of matter and its virtues across time and space, the reliability of copies and reproductions. As Joel Fineman has argued, the play of similarity and difference underwrites the *Sonnets*' obsessive engagements with both biological and literary repetition – with such echoes showing, in Fineman's reading, "the way a second time calls up its difference from the

²²⁰ Kalas, *Frame, Glass, Verse: The Technology of Poetic Invention in the English Renaissance* (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 2007), *passim*, and on the *Sonnets*, 166-198.

first, the way a copy is unlike the original it remembers.”²²¹ The material continuity of literary artifacts in the world from which they emerge is taken up, I will argue below, in the *Sonnets*’ reflections on memory and in the turns of the couplets themselves. In particular, the similarity and difference of the couplet and the graft as they travel to new readers or husbandman – and the power of poetry or craft to link them together – comes to seem ever more urgently in doubt.

To some degree, an account of the *Sonnets*’ engagement with craft knowledge – most specifically, for my purposes here, with husbandry and gardening – seems to embed it more firmly in its social and material context. The habitus of husbandry, however, is no less tangled in fantasy. While Tusser’s *Pointes* seem naturally embedded in their social and agricultural world, I argued in the previous chapter that a fundamental part of their project is the imaginative projection and thrifty provision for an alternate one – the household, in a utopian form we have in many ways inherited. Nonetheless, a basic generic and ontological difference in how the second person is seen to operate structures most contemporary scholarly engagements with lyric and instructional works in general, and Shakespeare and Tusser in particular. In tracing their textual lives and afterlives, we tend to draw a sharp line on both semiotic and social levels, distinguishing the kinds of reference and dependency we see binding them to the social, political, and natural worlds from which they emerged.

This is the implication that Giorgio Melchiori takes from the Procreation Sonnets’ obsessive concerns with craft technology and everyday techniques of natural manipulation. I agree with Melchiori that the regular second-person address of the first

²²¹ Fineman, *Shakespeare’s Perjured Eye: The Invention of Poetic Subjectivity in the Sonnets* (Berkeley: U of California P, 1986), 270.

seventeen sonnets aligns with their references to craft knowledge to give these poems a distinctive relationship to their readers' everyday world. I am more interested, however, in how these gestures and figures in the sonnets work to invent (and sometimes challenge) such a shared world, not by an allusion to a universal nature (human or vegetable) but by an intertextual reliance on the genres of instruction (represented by works like Tusser's) that helped give ideological and imaginary shape to the lived lives of husbandmen and householders.

In this chapter, I will trace the entwinement of husbandry and the rhetoric of practical instruction with two of the Sonnets' most distinctive formal features: the frequent autonomy of these final couplets, and the unusual frequency with which they directly address their readers (especially in the procreation sonnets.) This context suggests an alternative, vernacular genealogy for the "poetry of statement" that Colie identifies in Shakespeare's couplets, but it also reframes the quotidian pragmatism that Melchiori finds in the *Sonnets*' second person.

In their echoes of Tusser's textual economies, Shakespeare's *Sonnets* broadly interrogate the poetics of address, interpellating, prescribing, and provisioning in a rhetorical performance that leans lyric apostrophe against the ostensibly direct address of practical instruction. In this sense, the work of an instructive mood in the *Sonnets* might trouble or recalibrate the relation between published lyric and its reader. While the address of lyric seems always indirect, an overheard apostrophe, the rhetoric of instruction seems to address its readers directly, interpellating their bodies and daily habits with its practical commands. By knitting together the poetry of praise with the poetry of pedagogy, the *Sonnets* force us to question these distinctions, leaving us

wondering whether the couplets have been merely overheard in a private conversation, or whether the ambiguous futures they invoke immediately implicate us, too, as readers and borrowers.

Much of this is worked out through the material form of the poems and their visual rendering on the page. Like the second-person address of practical instruction or lyric apostrophe, summation and indentation work to mold the reader's attention. One function of these sums is to modulate the time of reading: the closed form of an end-couplet sonnet generates its own expectations – of development, turn, and closure, but also storage and dispersal. In the procreation sonnets, these expectations are saturated with the techniques of husbandry and the anxieties about dearth and deprivation that drive them, figures of knowledge and uncertainty precariously balanced on the empty space opened between quatrain and couplet. For Tusser, such uncertainty and mutability turn his gaze toward future harvests and future uses of his book; his couplets are, he writes, “points nedefull in time for to come,” intended for the reader's piecemeal recirculation and reuse. The *Sonnets* likewise imagine being read in future time – as in the poet's wish, in the couplet of Sonnet 60, that “to times in hope my verse shall stand” – and generate numerous examples of techniques of preservation and increase that might provide for such a future. However, as their affinities with Tusser's piecemeal poetics suggest, one of the expectations generated by Shakespeare's *Sonnets* is not just a future reading, as many individual sonnets make explicit, but of a life *outside the poem*, a future for the couplet that does not belong to – and indeed might threaten – the sonnet itself.

Shakespeare's Couplets

It may seem an irony that Shakespeare should stand accused of so miscarrying the distinguishing feature of the peculiarly English sonnet form that now bears his name. Nonetheless, these confessions of critical disappointment respond to something significant in the poems. Ransom and Winters are disappointed not just by the expectations raised by the name of “Shakespeare” but by the expectations generated in a sonnet’s first twelve lines. Its several movements compacted into the space of fourteen lines, the English sonnet is a finite engine of anticipation, with poet and reader managing the expectations suggested by genre and form along with those generated within the poem itself – of imminent turn, escalation, or resolution. Much of this burden of satisfaction, in and at the end, falls on those final two lines. As we saw in the previous chapter, a rhetorical “point” structures and directs the verse lesson that it delivers; its end (or point, one could say) is well defined. The points to these disappointing sonnets, meanwhile, seem to reach no such telos.

The disproportionate pressure put on the couplet makes the Shakespearean sonnet a distinct challenge. Unlike the Petrarchan form, whose final six lines can counterbalance the eight preceding the volta, the English form can only work with two. As Paul Fussell writes, “the very disproportion of the two parts of the Shakespearean sonnet, the gross imbalance between the twelve-line problem and the two-line solution, has something about it vaguely risible and even straight-faced farcical: it invites images of balloons and

pins.”²²² In the case of Shakespeare’s sonnets, the danger of disproportion is intensified by one of their most distinctive features: the regular syntactical independence of the final two lines, which makes them seem superfluous and easily detached, a part that does not belong to the organic poem.²²³ George Puttenham had effectively anticipated the anxieties of twentieth-century formalists when he *recognized that the couplet itself could incite this piecemeal view of a poem, warning that the closure offered by a rhyming distich potentially undermined a stanza’s unity.*²²⁴ As we saw in the previous chapter, though a couplet closes the stanza, in Puttenham’s view, it simultaneously intensifies the risk of its dissolution. Against those critics who see this autonomy as a failing, Rosalie Colie argues that a common sense of critical disappointment should instead alert us to something fundamental about the *Sonnets*: the rhetorical force of the tradition of epigram in shaping those final lines.²²⁵ As she notes, many of these couplets could as happily pose as free-standing distichs, syntactically complete and semantically sufficient, their short form offering an invitation to piecemeal reuse and repetition. The characteristic fragmentary

²²² Fussell, *Poetic Meter and Poetic Form* (New York: McGraw Hill, 1979), 122. M.M. Mahood makes an analogous point in *Shakespeare’s Wordplay* (London: Methuen, 1957): “The Shakespearean sonnet is not an easy form to handle. In an Italian form of sonnet there is a marked ebb and flow of thought corresponding to two emotional impulses: in that case, despair and resignation. But the final couplet of the English sonnet is too brief to contain the entire counter-statement to the first three quatrains without giving the impression that the poet is trying to wrench the poem back on its course”(103).

²²³ See for example Edward Hubler, *The Sense of Shakespeare’s Sonnets* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1952), 24.

²²⁴ Puttenham shares with George Gascoigne this image of “shutting up” with rhyme. Gascoigne, in his “Certayne Notes of Instruction”(first published in his 1575 *Posies*) describes the structure of the rime royal stanza in these terms: “the first and thirde lines do aunswer (acrosse) in like terminations and rime, the second, fourth, and fifth, do likewise answere eche other in terminations, and the two last do combine and shut up the Sentence.” In Puttenham’s discussion of rhyme, this “good-enough” sound of the distich stands for “the most vulgar proportion of distance of situation,” in which all such verses are less strongly bound to the poem as a whole – an expression of aesthetic disdain towards an august forebear at least as strong as Winters’ or Ransom’s. For Puttenham, these distinctions of taste are explicitly distinctions of class.

²²⁵ Colie, “*Mel and Sal*: Some Problems in Sonnet Theory,” in *Shakespeare’s Living Art* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1974), 70.

quality that Colie so astutely perceives marks the *Sonnets*' allegiance to a different aesthetic dispensation from that of those formalist critics, a source of frustration to readers struggling to find their integrated, organic form.

The conceptual disunity of the sonnet is realized on the material page with striking visual form in the quarto of 1609, where the couplets have been indented and set off from the rest of the poem at the margin – a layout that has now become so standard for sonnets as to be unremarkable. This arrangement, however, did not appear widely in print before the 1590s, and was still not standard by the time of Thomas Thorpe's 1609 edition. Throughout sonnet sequences of the 1590s, concluding couplets are regularly marked as distinct, either by being set out flush to the left or by indentation. In printed examples from the 1590s, however, compositors also mark the internal structure of the twelve lines prior to the couplet: in most cases, either by indenting the first line of each quatrain, or (in an inverse arrangement) by marking each quatrain with hanging indents after the first line. (This is not entirely consistent, however, and varies both with the stationers involved and with the rhyme scheme. See the attached table.) The arrangement followed by Thorpe's 1609 edition, with the first twelve lines undifferentiated and only the couplet marked off by indentation, had become more common through the first decade of the seventeenth century. It was first regularly followed in James VI's *Essayes of an Apprentise* (1582), and can be found in Smith's *Chloris* (1596, though with some irregularities); in *The Passionate Pilgrim* (1599), including the poems by Shakespeare that would be printed again in the 1609 *Sonnets*; in Davies' *Wittes Pilgrimage* (1605); and in Craig's *Amorose Songes, Sonets, and Elegies* (1606). Though Drayton's sonnets were first published in the 1590s with

hanging indents in the quatrains and their couplets flush left, the edition of his *Poems* published in 1605 forgoes this differentiation within the quatrains and marks off only the couplet with a firm indentation. The indentation of the couplets in this sense is not exceptional when Thorpe's volume appears in 1609. The consistency and simplicity of this regular indentation, however, is notable juxtaposed with the varied and variegated layout of the sonnets from the 1590s to which Shakespeare's poems are most often compared.

Coleman Hutchison has recently pointed out the fragmentation of the sonnets in the Thorpe's edition, which breaks many of the poems across multiple pages, arguing that this layout challenges visual closure and distinguishes the quarto from most earlier published sequences.²²⁶ In Hutchison's analysis, powers of memorability and monumentality are associated with those sonnets that appear unbroken on a single page; these whole poems, he argues, are better remembered and more often anthologized. What has gone unremarked, however, is that the spatial distinction of the couplet provides the strongest force of visible fragmentation in the printed book. Every sonnet in the sequence (including the 12-line Sonnet 126, with its indented empty brackets) is broken in pieces by this final indentation, a memorial strategy that works not by preserving the whole but by fragmenting it, freeing the couplet as gloss or condensation to be stored separately and efficiently.²²⁷ The indentation of the couplet

²²⁶ Coleman Hutchison, "Breaking the Book Known as Q," in *PMLA* 121.1 (2006), 33-66.

²²⁷ As Hutchison likewise acknowledges, it is unlikely (and impossible to determine with certainty) that Shakespeare had any hand in these patterns, or in the layout and editing of the volume in general. Debates about the authorization of the 1609 quarto are complex and longstanding, but for this reason not of immediate import to the present argument. Rather, a point to which I will return below, it is of primary interest to this essay that the indentation of couplets registers a real reading – whether by poet, editor, scribe, or (likely) compositor – and, by its physical fact on the page, incites a new reading as it reaches the hands and eyes of a new reader. For a very useful discussion of what is unusual or regular in the 1609

breaks the unity of the sonnet both visually and conceptually, often registering a discursive shift from present to future, or particular to general. It punctuates what precedes, but also often stands in for *the point*, condensing into portable form what Sidney calls the “handle” of the knowledge preceding it.²²⁸

In this sense, the very fact of indentation runs counter to the monumentality and closure that Wendy Wall has attributed to sonnet sequences of the 1590s, many poems in which were rendered on autonomous pages, in formal borders, and with authorial inscription.²²⁹ For both Wall and Heather Dubrow, these fixities of form represent strategies for shoring up the authority of the poet in print against the backdrop of a manuscript culture that routinely broke up, reordered, and recirculated poems.²³⁰ The indentation of the couplet, on the other hand, embeds the printed sonnet firmly within these manuscript practices. It acts as what Dubrow calls a “hint of dispersal,” which by pointing out the autonomy of a piece of language marks its availability for transport and transfer.²³¹ Reinforcing the formal cues observed by

quarto (including other aspects of the layout of the page and rhetorics of authorization), see Marcy L. North, “The Sonnets and Book History,” in Michael Schoenfeldt, ed., *A Companion to Shakespeare’s Sonnets* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2010), 204-222; and Arthur Marotti, “Shakespeare’s Sonnets as Literary Property,” in Elizabeth D. Harvey and Katharine Eisaman Maus, eds., *Soliciting Interpretation: Literary Theory and Seventeenth-Century English Poetry* (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1990), 143-73.

²²⁸ R.W. Maslen, ed., *An Apology for Poetry, or The Defence of Poesy* (Manchester: Manchester UP, 2002), 102.

²²⁹ Wall, *The Imprint of Gender* (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1993), esp. 70-73 on “the fixity of form.”

²³⁰ Dubrow argues that Drayton, Gascoigne, and Puttenham all emphasize the restrictive and cohesive force of stanzaic form; they “insistently redefine malleability as modularity, thus rendering it a source of, not a threat to, the unity of the text. That insistence is probably a response to not only the general dangers of fragmentation but also a more local and reflexive peril: lyrics in general were prone to be reconstructed, even cannibalized, and rearranging stanzas was, as Marotti has shown, one particularly common type of scribal change.... this prosodic unit often encompasses both protean shape-shifting and its reactive restraint, but with the latter typically dominating in both theory and practice”; the form of the stanza “asserts dominion and mastery.” Heather Dubrow, *The Challenges of Orpheus: Lyric Poetry and Early Modern England* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2008), 166; 169.

²³¹ Dubrow sees the indented couplet as a shaky visual foundation to the architecture of the poem: “in instances where one or both lines of the couplet are indented, especially if the second line is not capitalized, the base may seem far less reliable, and the visual effect can be that of a column whose base is apparent but

Colie, these hints are also invitations and incitements to a reader, with either their memory or commonplace book at the ready, to repeat and recirculate the small form. In the *Sonnets*, prosody and visual form thus combine to incite the pieces of the sonnet to “fall asvnder,” opening up couplet and quatrains to divergent textual futures.

As Thomas Greene has shown, the ideology of husbandry is central to Shakespeare’s sequence, where the burden it bears to prepare against future time is often condensed in the couplet – what we might consider the sonnet’s stylistic and conceptual “point.”²³² As we have already seen, Tusser’s points, which compress wisdom on the management of self and household into memorable pairs of rhyming couplets, include themselves in those husbandly preparations: they are to be “taken in hand,” stored, remembered, and repeated. Both provisions themselves and tools of provision, they turn the eye of the husbandman forward to provide against winter, old age, or some other coming dearth. Often, these poetic prescriptions carry a specifically manual connotation, echoing Sidney’s claim that poetry is “best for memory, the only handle of knowledge.”²³³ In other words, the detachability of the couplet that has so troubled Shakespeare’s critics is explicitly prescribed in the *Pointes*, as these small forms encourage repetition, memory, and reinscription. In this sense, they enact a form of memory markedly distinct from the “monumentality” of the whole poem – one that relies on precisely this fragmentary quality to make them available for memory and mnemonic recirculation and repetition.

insecure. The column may even appear to be threatening to topple over, its *rime* potentially *sparse*, its customary function as an icon for restraint hence toppled as well” (Dubrow, *Challenges of Orpheus*, 173).

²³² Thomas Greene, “Pitiful Thrivers: Failed Husbandry in the Sonnets,” in *Shakespeare and the Question of Theory*, ed. Patricia Parker and Geoffrey Hartman (New York: Methuen, 1985), 230-244.

²³³ Sidney, “Defence,” 102.

The final prospective turn of Tusser's 1557 "Sonnet" is closely echoed in the sonnets of Shakespeare, where sums distilled from the passage of days and months are likewise registered in indented, rhyming distichs, visually distinct turns from the time of the calendar to a practical or speculative commentary upon it. This is an important corollary of the couplet's portability: as a traveling piece of wisdom, it must speak to various times and places – carrying with it an abstract of knowledge not bound to the moment or site of its origin. The commentary doesn't belong to the calendar, just as the couplet doesn't fully belong to the sonnet; both are made to travel beyond it.

Though Shakespeare's couplets rarely employ a simple generalization or a turn from example or illustration to an abstract lesson, a significant number of his poems switch modes between the quatrains and the couplet from a figure or series of figures to a prescription or promise. The formal and stylistic tension between a third-person figuration of a process, natural or artificial, and a second-person command or exhortation is likewise at the heart of the rhetorical work performed by Tusser's *Pointes* and in other practical books as they navigate between objective descriptions of method and commands or instructions addressed directly to an unknown reader. These rhetorical techniques thus take up the central question of husbandry instruction – how will a technique or direction translate to the world and time of the reader? Will the reader comply? – and respond, in each case, with rhetorical modes of action and address that are well-suited for such transfer between times, places, and persons. In Sonnet 10, for example, this is voiced as a second person exhortation; in Sonnet 11, a prescription ventriloquized through nature's intentions; and in Sonnet 15, as a promise or threat

articulated in the poet's first person singular. Each of these detachable distichs legislates towards some future time, turning from the quatrains and converting their store to a glimmer of future action.²³⁴ Part of this relation to a future beyond the poem is due to the epigrammatic quality that Rosalie Colie has detailed. That is, they seem tokens or comments easily detached – indeed, one might argue, already detached – from the rest of the poem and able to speak to occasions outside of it. (In this, they share something with the detached proverbial time that Wyatt, for example, frequently invokes.) Often this capacity is enabled by the extended reach of the couplets' verbs beyond the worldly time of the quatrains, into a prospective or provisionary stance.

Like the conclusions of Tusser's sonnets, Shakespeare's couplets are caught up in an anticipatory dynamic of compensation and recuperation, which is initiated in the biological and economic language of the procreation sonnets but continues throughout much of the sequence. The senses of accumulation and condensation captured simultaneously in the "summes" of Tusser and Baldwin exemplify this overlap of rhetoric and economy. Consider, for example, the reparative logics behind the couplets in Sonnets 29, 30, and 34, where the young man becomes a source of value ransoming the quatrains' despair. With these redemptive turns, the couplets state and perform a "summe of all" echoing the condensation, cancellation, and sublation modeled by

²³⁴ These two qualities are differentially distributed across sonnets 5 and 6, which play out between them what is more often the logic of partition within a single sonnet, as 5 extends a conceit (*Those hours... will play, For never-resting time leads, Then were not summer's distillation left...*) which 6 converts to imperative or hortatory advice (*Then let not, Make sweet, Be not*). Sonnet 5 is the first in the sequence without any first or second person pronouns, and the couplet does not so much turn outwards in address, or forwards or backwards in time, as it distills the poem's logic of distillation into a general law, leaving the young man's personal prescription to be inferred from this floral truism about show and substance, and leaving a certain readerly expectation dangling between the two poems.

Baldwin's verse summations and by Tusser's concluding couplets. Seen together, they help show the economic logic of value and substitution at work in these various senses of "sum." In each case, a sum replaces the mutable time of the year with a portable message.

It is precisely this turn away from the subjection to mutability and towards a different kind of utterance – one inessentially tied to its site in the poem – that Thomas Greene blames for the lifelessness of so many couplets. Still the decisive treatment of husbandry in the *Sonnets*, Greene's 1985 essay, "Pitiful Thrivers: Failed Husbandry in the Sonnets," reiterates and rewrites the mid-century sense of critical disappointment with which I began and which we see in Ransom, Winters, and others. Greene argues that the first seventeen sonnets in particular, figuratively embedded as they are in husbandry's calendar of seasonal transformation, exhibit an economic anxiety that far exceeds the real content of any agricultural risk or mortal peril. Against the consuming sense of dread and decay generated in the quatrains, the assurances of the couplet seem to offer themselves as a kind of insurance policy, articulating a promise about future time or recommending a technique for its management.²³⁵ For Greene, these couplets inevitably fail, however, because they "tend to lack the energy of the negative vision in the 12 lines that precede them." The "energy" of that mutability, and the anxiety that attends it, is always in excess for Greene – an affective and cosmic constant unmet by the couplets' best compensatory efforts. Greene continues, "The final affirmation in its flaccidity tends to refute itself; the *turn* fails to reverse the rhetorical momentum adequately, as the language loses its wealth and potency

²³⁵ Greene mentions sonnets 15, 18, 19, 54, 60, 63, and 65.

while asserting them.”²³⁶ Like the language used by Ransom and Winters, this accusation of flaccidity, with its attendant loss of both wealth and potency, takes up the emasculating vocabulary of persuasion elaborated in the sonnets themselves, such that the couplets appear to participate in the linguistic economy of husbandry but share none of its biological force. The plain statement diagnosed by Colie, which she associates with the genre of epigram, here becomes a symptom of the kind of work the couplets are trying to do: in turning from lively substance to abstract condensation, they become metacritical and lifeless.

Part of the problem, Greene suggests, may be the nature of the “affirmation” itself, which voids poetic language of the figurative and associative “energy” that usually drives it – often replacing it with precisely the kind of prescription and prediction we saw at work in Tusser.²³⁷ Shakespeare’s couplets in this sense appear an essentially conservative (and inevitably unsuccessful) gesture, an attempt to give stable form to and bank (or sum up) lasting value from the shifting fortunes the quatrains describe. As Greene writes, “The turn toward restoration can be read as a desperate bourgeois maneuver, struggling to shore up the cosmic economy against the mutability which instigates true verbal power.”²³⁸ For Stephen Booth, this translates into a mode of psychological compensation, as the gnomic simplicity of the couplets provides some readerly comfort, resolving the tension and friction of the quatrains much like the

²³⁶ Greene, “Pitiful Thrivers,” 234.

²³⁷ A term in which I take Greene to be condensing *energeia* and *enargia*, language’s efficacy and its vivacity, as a name for the force of figurative language in general. We might also compare Margreta de Grazia’s observation that “the poet generally reserves figurative language to describe less what he would preserve than the mutations that threaten to destroy it” (“Revolution in *Shakespeare’s Sonnets*,” in Michael Schoenfeldt, ed., *A Companion to Shakespeare’s Sonnets* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2010), 65.)

²³⁸ Greene, “Pitiful Thrivers,” 234. They seem less “bourgeois”, however, if we take them to be staging their own failure, as Greene may actually suggesting here), playing out the resistance of theory or summation to performing the recuperation of its own value.

speeches of political restoration at the end of a tragedy.²³⁹ As we saw, Tusser's sonnets are constructed according to a similar double logic, their first twelve lines generated as if by the foison of the earth (literally and otherwise), while their couplets constrain thriving with thrift: they turn away from worldly plenitude – the vibrant store captured by the distinctly natural historical genre of the catalog – with a change in mode that closes the preceding series through the language and practice of provision. For Greene, this lifelessness is implicitly the danger of criticism itself – of cashing out the mutability of language for a “point” to be taken “for all time.”

Edward Hubler, in *The Sense of Shakespeare's Sonnets* (1952), also identified the problem with the sonnets as a failure of “generation” and “development,” and he likewise turns centrally to the procreation sonnets (with their own interests in problems of generation) to make his point. Too often, Hubler writes, Shakespeare pours his energies into the quatrains “and the couplet fails to share the power in which the quatrains were conceived. In such instances the couplet is poetically, but not intellectually false. It seems, to use Shakespeare's words, to have been begotten in ‘the ventricle of memory... and delivered upon the mellowing of occasion.’”²⁴⁰ The concluding partial citation from *Love's Labours Lost* paints Shakespeare as a bumbling rhetorician, whose language is drawn from an ill-kept store and subjected to an ill-timed performance. As Hubler helps us see here, the occasion of the couplet is always belated:

²³⁹ Stephen Booth, *An Essay on Shakespeare's Sonnets* (New Haven: Yale UP, 1969), 130. Booth writes: “Most of the sonnets become decreasingly complex as they proceed. The effect of the couplet usually is to sum up the poem or draw a moral. Essentially, it offers the reader a sound, simple reason why the poem was written and an oversimplified suggestion of what it was about. The couplet is often gnomic; it is almost always so in tone. It sounds simple and is usually easily grasped. The couplet ordinarily presents a coincidence of formal, syntactical, and logical structure, and it ordinarily gives the impression that the experience of the preceding twelve lines has been a good deal simpler than in fact it has been” (130).

²⁴⁰ Edward Hubler, *The Sense of Shakespeare's Sonnets*, 25. Ellipsis in original.

it comes after the sonnet itself, but it also threatens to be indefinitely repeated, off-site and away from the occasion of its inception.

On the other hand, Hubler argues, Shakespeare was most successful when his *dispositio* followed a strict architecture; he finds every sonnet beginning with “When” structurally successful because this temporal hook leads into a series of logically ordered subordinate clauses. The problems begin when the poet breaks from this mold before reaching the end: “if the pattern did not reach to the end of the sonnet, or if there was no ‘so’ or ‘for’ notion to follow the logical sequence, the couplet, as in the fifteenth sonnet, stood in danger of seeming to be tacked on.” As it happens, the couplet of Sonnet 15 is about tacking on: the insertion of a branch from one tree into the bark of another, for the additive production of future copies. It names and performs an intervention. To Hubler, however, its promise to “ingraft you new,” like the couplet itself, seems an arbitrary technological supplement, a prosthetic afterthought inessentially attached to the poem’s soaring consideration of “euery thing that growes.” The “conceit of this inconstant stay” that it finds there offers a particularly powerful instance of the outsized anxiety diagnosed by Greene. This is also the first site in the sequence where the technical intervention promised by the couplet is performed in the poet’s first person, and where, through the pun on grafting/graffing, the preservatives of husbandry are figuratively tethered to the power of writing – so that the poet’s failure in these lines comes to stand for the failures of poetry in general to follow through on its promises. Grafting is, like writing, a technology of repetition, but the force of the figure is undermined by the repetition and belatedness implied in the literary technology of the couplet itself.

Sonnet 15 represents one case where the couplet promises a technological solution to the problems of the quatrains. In this case, a technological optimism is rendered through the image of engrafting; we might also compare Sonnet 11, where the methodical management of future time is conveyed through the figure of the seal and the attendant concluding injunction, “Thou shouldst print more, not let that copy die.” These technological interventions both appear in the couplets, which perform a sharp break from the previous lines. As tools of art posed against the inexorable sweep of nature, they might easily be seen by a reader like Hubler as lifeless prostheses. In both cases the specificity of the artifice is less an abstraction than a contraction, zooming in from the inconstancy of the cosmos to the precision of manual technique. In a recent essay on Shakespeare’s “preservation fantasy,” Aaron Kunin writes that the “final moves” of many of the sonnets command or suggest a particular technology of preservation – gestures that turn toward future time through the specificity of practical technique.²⁴¹ Such methods likewise instantiate and effect “the repeated disavowal of change in favor of repetition” that Margreta de Grazia has placed at the core of these *Sonnets*’ poetic project.²⁴² The techniques named in the couplets, and – crucially – the formal techniques *of* the couplets, manage these anxieties about time and change, disciplining the forms and deformations of future time.

These two sonnets also turn on one of the procreation sonnet’s characteristic gestures, those moments where Shakespeare evokes the “double time” of loss and decay, probably most precisely rendered in the first line of sonnet 11, “As fast as thou shalt wane so fast thou grow’st” (and compare also the rates of change in sonnet 12: “...sweets

²⁴¹ Aaron Kunin, “Shakespeare’s Preservation Fantasy,” *PMLA* 124.1 (2009), 96.

²⁴² De Grazia, “Revolution in *Shake-speares Sonnets*,” 65.

and beauties do them-selves forsake, / And die as fast as they see others grow”(12.12)). These paired pacings choreograph a kind of cosmic equipoise, the metrical elegance of which here veils the ruthless economy of sacrifice and substitution behind it. The world’s store is finite, these moments suggest; you cannot have your posterity or your perfume and eat it too – a stark contrast to Tusser’s commitment to the premise of increase and incremental accumulation, sanctioned by the fecundity of nature herself. We hear this doubleness again in the “Cheared and checkt” of Sonnet 15 and in the simultaneous movements of the final line’s “As he takes from you, I ingraft you new.”

Both couplets pose their technological interventions within an ambiguous temporal frame. Though the poet claims to engraft “as He takes from you”, the nature of Time is *always* to take, suggesting the possibility that the poet must also *always* be engrafting, keeping pace (as it were) with Time. This problem of pacing and closure is further complicated when we read the couplet through the pun on writing, which seems to initiate the performance of ingrafting in the present moment of poetic utterance, but to continue indefinitely, its lyric iterations keeping pace with the passage of time. We saw this double-time expressed earlier in Tusser’s sonnet of 1557: “So wisdom bid kepe, and prouide while we may: / For age crepeth on as the time passeth away.” A similar double movement shapes the rhyming title under which it was rewritten in 1573: “Of all thing this seemeth the summe, / one going, another to come.” The couplet performs, in the contrast between “summe” and “come,” the tension between the time of accumulation and the cyclical time of the calendar. Each of these cases is complicated by the potential of “as” to signify both simultaneity and similarity – a tension that Fineman ties to the

Sonnets' obsessive play with likeness and difference (or, perhaps more precisely since temporal disidentity is at stake, *différance*.) As Fineman suggests in this context, "In the procreation sonnets the theme of biological repetition regularly invites poetic devices that stress verbal repetition, and these together regularly call up images whose point is to figure these formal relations in ways that embody the immediate experience of temporal loss."²⁴³ As Fineman argues, this unstable textual economy is keyed to the problem of procreation. The play of the couplets themselves – both in their relation to the quatrains, as similar and different, and in the rhyme they contain – extends this pattern of loss beyond the verbal and lexical frame in which Fineman describes it. They repeat and reflect the lines that precede them but also leave them behind. However, as Tusser and others have shown us, the couplets' particular refusal of rhetorical and temporal closure is generally associated not with loss but with storage and accumulation.

This dynamic reaches a climax in Sonnet 126, the 12-line poem generally taken to be the last of the poems addressed to the young man. Ironically, though critics have singled out Shakespeare's couplets as the *Sonnet*'s distinctive defect, many have found more satisfying closure in this unusual poem, a sonnet whose quatrains are couplets and whose couplet is blank. Because of the poem's unusual composition, Sonnet 126 seems almost a joke on the problem of closure: with six couplets, all playing on repetition and paradox, and indented rounded brackets where a final pair of lines would

²⁴³ As Fineman argues, these aren't quite Petrarchan oxymorons, because "relatively consistently and univocally, their equivocations – "still telling what is told" – illustrate the way a second time calls up its difference from the first, the way a copy is unlike the original it remembers" (Joel Fineman, *Shakespeare's Perjured Eye: the Invention of Poetic Subjectivity in the Sonnets* (Berkeley: U of California Press, 1986), 270).

be, it is all couplet and no closure.²⁴⁴ Despite uncertainty about the sequence's ordering, and despite what may be even greater uncertainty about the origin or meaning of these brackets, it has often been confidently considered an envoy to the 125 sonnets that precede it – according to Northrop Frye, “a masterly summary of the themes and images of the beautiful-youth group.”²⁴⁵ Operating like the “soueraine misteres ouer wrack” of line 5, the abbreviated poem seems to condense and detain the mutability of the preceding sequence. The “masterly” poem, in Frye’s term, seems to various critics to husband the preceding poems, summing them up and drawing them into a coherent economy.²⁴⁶

But the ostensible good husbandry of Sonnet 126 begins, like Tusser, with anxieties about the ravages of time. Each of the first three couplets repeats the paradox of temporal give-and-take described above. At the beginning of the poem, the “louely Boy” holds time in his hand, so that, at first, it is the poet on the other side of the temporal comparison (“Who hast by wayning growne, and therein shou’st, / Thy louers withering, as thy sweet selfe grow’st”). Next, it is nature’s power that holds

²⁴⁴ No authoritative explanation of the brackets that appear at the end of Sonnet 126 has ever been offered, though they most likely seem a printing-house intervention or gloss. Benson left the poem out of his 1640 edition entirely, and many editors have omitted the curved brackets (John Kerrigan admits to treating them as accidentals, though “not without regret.”) In his more recent Oxford edition, Colin Burrow strongly defends their inclusion: “Many editors omit the brackets as compositorial. As a part of the typographical effect of Q they should certainly be retained: they highlight the frustrated expectations created by the poem’s form. The curves of the lunulae (or brackets) may graphically evoke both a crescent moon and the curve of Time’s sickle” (Burrow, ed., *The Complete Sonnets and Poems* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2002), 632). For another view, see John Lennard, *But I Digress: The Exploitation of Parentheses in English Printed Verse* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1991), 41-3. Joseph Pequigney sees the parentheses as part of the narrative design of the sequence (*Such Is My Love: A Study of Shakespeare’s Sonnets* (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1985), 206).

²⁴⁵ Northrop Frye, “How true a twain,” in *The Riddle of Shakespeare’s Sonnets* (New York: Basic Books, 1962), 23-54; esp. 39.

²⁴⁶ Its closural force is strong enough that it has been described as explicitly apocalyptic and even as a “metacouplet” “parodying the sonnet form” that takes the 125 preceding sonnets as quatrains. See Duncan-Jones, “Playing Fields or Killing Fields: Shakespeare’s Poems and ‘Sonnets,’” *Shakespeare Quarterly* 54.2 (2003). 127-141; Michael J.B. Allen, “Shakespeare’s Man Descending a Staircase: Sonnets 126 to 154,” *Shakespeare Survey* 31 (1978), 134.

back the effects of time (“As thou goest onwards still will plucke thee backe”), a symmetry to which the poem soon poses a limit. Nature “may detaine, but still not keepe her tresure”: her possession of the young man is itself subject to a debt that comes due. With this progression, the first couplets have followed the temporal and provisional course of husbandry: the poem has shifted from the natural rhythms of growth and decay to the problem of profit. However, in the sonnet’s unsatisfied economy, Tusser’s rewriting of Ecclesiastes – in which the “keeping” of household thrift counters the takings of worldly vanity, just as the young man’s conjectural husbandry should counter the wastes of time – is surrendered. The poem’s concluding *Audite* and *Quietus* extend and complete the economic accounting performed by couplets earlier on in the sequence, freezing the processive give-and-take of the poem’s earlier lines. In this sense the *Audite* of Sonnet 126 seems to demand a long delayed answer to the audit first requested in sonnet 4, where the word is likewise capitalized and italicized: “Then how when nature calls thee to be gone, / What accepable *Audit* can’st thou leaue?” Uncoupled, the lovely boy leaves the blank space that follows, the punctuated white of the page. Rejecting the “comfort of the couplet” suggested by Booth and the bourgeois reparation identified by Greene, Sonnet 126 leaves the lovely boy neither author nor begetter of this economic rendering but its victim; not he, but Nature, is the keeper of this household account. There is no comfort or redemption here.²⁴⁷

²⁴⁷ Greene himself finds Sonnet 126 “slighter” than the poem that precedes it, and prefers the “mutual render” of Sonnet 125 as a satisfying closure to the economic tensions of the Young Man sequence. 126, we might infer, offers less satisfying closure – formally, thematically, and erotically (“Pitiful Thrivers,” 230).

At stake in all of Tusser's "summes" is the latent danger that those thrifty condensations might replace the worldly description or experience that precedes them, in the way that the distillation of Sonnet 54 turns on the "sweet deaths" of the roses from which it draws. To the disappointed critics I discussed above, the autonomy of Shakespeare's couplets seems to threaten something similar – to effect not just the deadening of the sonnet's preceding language but its erasure. In their inorganic relationship to the rest of the poem, the couplets threaten to forget the organic life it seemed to possess. And, in the couplets of 126, the mutable vitality of the lover is eventually cashed in, sacrificed in the payment of a debt. The "thee" of Sonnets 1-125 is thus effectively mourned, the imaginary object of instruction and praise dissolved in an apparently conclusive transaction. The 1609 *Sonnets* thus rewrite the terms of Tusser's pedagogical relationship. In replacing Tusser's foison and thrift with the zero-sum game of temporal decay, the *Sonnets* deprive provision of the optimism with which Tusser had endowed it; like the distilled perfume of Sonnet 5, the abstraction of the sum condenses and preserves language but loses its vitality. The practical work of memory, operating through the repetition of fragments, contains loss in its very performance.

Though empty brackets did not normally in the period designate missing text, they did designate text that was somehow removeable. The parentheses, like the indentation to which they are joined in Thorpe's edition, mark division and divisibility – in the case of Sonnet 126, reiterating the separability of the absent couplet. Richard Mulcaster in his *Elementarie* (1582) wrote that parentheses should "enclose some perfit

branch,” one that “breaketh” the sentence.²⁴⁸ Puttenham called parentheses the “*Insertour*,” used (in arboreal language, again evoking the “tacking on” of Sonnet 15) “to peece or graffe in the middest of your tale an vnecessary parcell of speach.”²⁴⁹ Parenthetical language does not quite belong to the body of text surrounding it. Rayna Kalas reads the empty brackets of Sonnet 126 as the marks of a “non-proprietary” poetics. They draw the reader’s attention to the form of the poem and to the materiality of its paper and ink, placing the poem in a contrapuntal relationship to the play on identity that drives the much of the sequence to this point, and offering “a series of physical properties” that “belong to no one.”²⁵⁰ As I have suggested, these nonproprietary poetics are implied not just by the dramatic emptiness of these typographical markers, but by the visual indentation and formal detachability of couplets throughout the sequence. Their openness and emptiness, at this point, should not be a surprise. But this is also what is strange about the indented parentheses: while indentation marks the significance and utility of a piece of language, parenthesis marks, as Puttenham puts it, “an unnecessary parcell.” Whether by utility or inutility, both kinds of parcel belong only precariously to their surroundings.

Indeed, what may be most remarkable about the compositor’s inclusion of the curved brackets at the end of Sonnet 126 is not the empty space within them but the empty place to their left: the space of the indentation, preserved there in a kind of symbolic and spatial observance. As I have argued, the movement across this white space

²⁴⁸ Cited in Ian Robinson, *The Establishment of Modern English Prose in the Reformation and the Enlightenment* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1998), 189.

²⁴⁹ Puttenham, *Arte*, 140-1.

²⁵⁰ Rayna Kalas, “Fickle Glass,” in Michael Schoenfeldt, ed., *A Companion to Shakespeare’s Sonnets* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2010), 274-5.

performs the work of speculation, turning towards future agricultural and genealogical time but also to the time of the text's reception. The space is not in itself a signifier, but an empty mark that repoints the reader's attention. As a formal invitation to dispersal, the couplet opens to the reader and to its own future recirculation – leaving us, perhaps, to read the curved brackets as a pair of empty quotation marks from which a sentence has already been removed, the open bark from which a branch has been detached. The space of the parentheses thus both satisfies and disappoints: it fills out the expected space of the sonnet, but fails to deliver the closure we want from the couplet. In this sense, we might say Sonnet 126 finally satisfies the disappointment of Ransom and Winters, consummating a reader's sense that the indentation is in fact a hinge on which the couplet might swing, by which the poem itself might be opened or closed.

Pedagogy and Praise

Agricultural instruction is not the only pedagogical context engaged in the *Sonnets*. Scholars have long noted that the first seventeen sonnets in the sequence lean heavily upon Erasmus's "Epistle to persuade a young gentleman to marriage," widely available to Shakespeare and others in Thomas Wilson's translation in his *Arte of Rhetorique* (1553).²⁵¹ The series of poems shares with the epistle two central features: the

²⁵¹ On pedagogical scripts and the connection to Wilson and Erasmus, see Katherine Wilson, *Shakespeare's Sugared Sonnets* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1974), 146-167; for a more extended analysis of some of the stylistic implications of these connections, see Lynne Magnusson, "A Pragmatics for Interpreting Shakespeare's Sonnets 1 to 20: Dialogue Scripts and Erasmian Intertexts," *Methods in Historical Pragmatics: Approaches to Negotiated Meaning in Historical Contexts*, ed. Susan M. Fitzmaurice and Irma

language of horticulture and husbandry woven through both, and the basic conceit of an exhortation to marry. In this sense, they carry a double instructional valence: the imitative scene of the humanist classroom, addressed by Wilson's exemplary Epistle; and the exhortation itself, to produce more by tilling, grafting, and printing. In addition to these two forms of imitation and increase, the modes of practical instruction we see in Tusser's *Pointes* represent a third instructional discourse in the *Sonnets*, which forcefully yoke the lessons of husbandry to their formal condensations and summations – and one which likewise turns on this fantasy of perpetual increase. We saw earlier how the disunity threatened by the couplet seemed to pose a danger to the organic lyric identity of the sonnet; here, another aspect of their identity as lyric is reoriented, as the traditional second person of the poetry of praise is thus given new force via the pedagogical address of instruction.

Wilson's "Epistle," like its Erasmian model, is already practicing a form of double address – to students, as an instructive example of deliberative oration; and, within the fiction of the oration, to the young gentleman of the title. That is, the Epistle is telling you both to marry and to write epistles. (This is not entirely fictional: the young man near marrying age to whom the epistle is addressed likely overlaps at least in social status with the young pupil learning to imitate it.) Though both demand a form of copying, neither can assure the success of that command. There is no guarantee of obedience or mechanism for enforcement – the addressee might turn out to be either reading or copulating simply for pleasure, or refusing to engage in either reproductive

Taavitsainen (Berlin and New York: Mouton de Gruyter, 2007), 167-84. As Margreta de Grazia has suggested, the opening poems in the sequence would thus likely have "evoked the pedagogical context which prepared fair young men to assume the social position to which high birth entitled them." Margreta de Grazia, "The Scandal of Shakespeare's Sonnets," *Shakespeare Survey* 46 (1994), 45.

activity. Like a poem or an engrafted scion, the Epistle can project its own duplication into future time, but even in the production of such an image it cedes control over the circumstances of its own reception.

These paired purposes in turn characterize the procreation sonnets' two most likely debts to the "Epistle": first, the nature and mode of the instructive exhortation, and, second, the horticultural motifs woven through both texts. The language of horticulture and husbandry offers a regular refrain and ready source of argument throughout Wilson's translation of Erasmus's Epistle. The modes in which it appears, however, vary. At one point, the self-evident duties of the husbandman stand in as a moral analogy:

Now I pray you, if a man had land that were very fat and fertile, and suffered the same for lack of manuring forever to wax barren, should he not, or were he not worthy to be punished by the laws, considering it is for the commonweal's behoof that every man should well and truly husband his own? If hat man be punished who little heedeth the maintenance of his tillage (the which although it be never so well manured, yet it yieldeth else but wheat, barley, beans, and peas), what punishment is he worthy to suffer that refuseth to plough that land which being tilled yieldeth children? And for ploughing land, it is nothing else but painful toiling from time to time, but in getting children there is pleasure which, being ordained as a ready reward for painstaking, asketh a short travail for all the tillage.²⁵²

The husbandman has an obligation to plow productively for the good of the commonweal, just as he has an obligation to produce offspring. The binding ethical principle is continuous. In this passage, the husbandman's land is common and private at once: first, the man "has" land that is fat and fertile. But the passage's source of ethical traction is its allusion to a greater social and political body: "considering it is for the commonweal's behoof that every man should well and truly husband his own."

²⁵² Wilson, 106.

It is not only the husbandman who is called upon as an analogy. Throughout the Epistle, plants themselves model good progenerative behavior:

Old age cometh upon us all, will we or nill we, and this way nature provided for us, that we should wax young again in our children and nephews. For what man can be grieved that he is old, when he seeth his own countenance which he had being a child to appear lively in his son? Death is ordained for all mankind, and yet by this means only nature by her providence mindeth unto us a certain immortality, while she increaseth one thing upon another, even as a young graff buddeth out when the old tree is cut down. Neither can he seem to die that, when God calleth him, leaveth a young child behind him.²⁵³

Nature, like a good husbandman, has already made provisions, providing the victim of old age with “children and nephews” in whom he can narcissistically see himself reproduced. In Wilson’s language, the image of simultaneity we saw in the *Sonnets* is given a positive valence: Nature “increaseth one thing upon another, even as a young graff buddeth out when the old tree is cut down.” But the relationship is not merely simultaneous: one thing increaseth *upon* the other, growing out of it in direct and productive symbiosis. The competition implied in “even as” might help us see a more sinister note in its close echo in the couplet of Sonnet 15.

In the Epistle – a letter extolling the virtues of *human* reproduction – these appearances of managed vegetable life serve a particular argumentative end. Their rhetorical force follows not just from their work as practical analogy – the birds and bees do it this way *too* –but as prescriptive and normative moral exemplar – we really *ought* to do it like the birds and the bees. These patterns are both evidence and norm in a world governed by natural law, a law with as much claim over man as over the stock dove.²⁵⁴

²⁵³ Ibid, 109.

²⁵⁴ Even the sky, extending the cosmic analogy upwards, plays husband to the earth: “And I pray you, hath not God so knit all things together with certain links, that one ever seemeth to have need of another? What say you of the sky or firmament that is ever stirring with continual moving? Doth it not play the part of a husband while it puffeth up the earth, the mother of all things, and maketh it fruitful with casting seed (as a man would say) upon it”(100).

In this nexus of law and nature, Wilson's translation grants a special status to the horticultural practice of grafting. It is, as we saw above, a primary way in which nature "increaseth one thing upon another." In his *New Orchard and Garden*, William Lawson placed it at the center of his horticultural practice, singling it out as "the most curious point of our Faculty: curious in conceit, but indeede as plaine and easie as the rest when it is plainely shewne" – namely, "the reforming of the fruits of one tree with the fruit of another, by an artificiall transplacing or transposing of a twigge, bud, or leafe, (commonly called a *Graft*) taken from one tree of the same, or some other kind, and placed or put to, or into another tree in one time and manner."²⁵⁵ In Lawson's words, grafting is a "reforming" of the fruits of one tree with those of another; this "transplacing" also replaces, however, as the gardener gives the hybrid tree new form and iterates and replicates the forms of individual fruits. Already in this horticultural context, grafting is seen as a kind of inventive craft – marked by its curiosity in conceit and the possibility it holds out of generating new forms.

In the Epistle, however, the term stands for more than the procreative and preservative strategy that natural law prescribes. The grafts in Wilson's Epistle represent a kind of reforming of the mind, naming the way that this prescription takes hold in the first place through divine inscription and incision. In the paragraphs in the *Arte* that immediately precede the Epistle, Wilson describes a central topic of the argument to come, "Nature is a right that fantasy hath not framed, but God hath graffed and given man power thereunto." Technically, we should read this usage of the term according to a secondary definition of the verb in the *Oxford English Dictionary*, one that denotes an

²⁵⁵ Lawson, *New Orchard and Garden* (London: 1618), 33.

inserting and fixing not limited to the scene of horticulture. The *OED* there cites William Turner's description, in the second part of his herbal, of the nature of birds, "whiche Almighty God grafted in them." In either case, however, we are never very far from the world of fruit trees: though more or less divine, these are correlated practices of insertion and inscription, bindings that govern future generation and natural kinds.

In the Epistle itself, the two modes of grafting – of law and of plants – echo and intermingle. At one point, Wilson describes wedlock as that "which the common mother unto all hath graffed in us all, and hath so thoroughly graffed the same in us that not only stockdoves and pigeons but also the most wild beasts have a natural feeling of this thing." "This thing" is reproduction, the impulse for which humans and stock dove are naturally endowed through engrafting – a process, ironically, among horticulture's most ostentatiously artificial methods of reproduction. Through this prosthetic procedure, Wilson renders natural law as an internalized, personal feeling – for birds of the sky as for beasts of the field. The graft doubles, as it does in the final couplet to Shakespeare's sonnet, both as a way of writing and as a way of propagating.

Like Shakespeare, the Epistle shifts rapidly between modes and registers of reference. Later in the same paragraph – within just a few sentences – the word takes on a different sense. Here, it stands instead as an exemplary analogy of the ethical demands placed by the garden upon its cultivator. The Epistle thus extrapolates from the husbandman's duties in the orchard to the subject immediately at hand: "as he is counted no good gardener that being content with things present doth diligently prune his old trees, and hath no regard either to imp or graff young sets because the selfsame orchard (though

it never be so well trimmed) must needs decay in time, and all the trees die within few years, so he is not to be counted half a diligent citizen that being content with the present multitude hath no regard to increase the number.” Being childless makes you a “murderer of your stock”: “whereas you may by honest marriage increase your posterity, you suffer it to decay forever through your willful single life”(114). Indeed, as Wilson suggests, obedience to this natural law is a duty of citizenship – constituting the core of what we might think of as a civic orientation towards the future.

By the time Wilson mentions the practice of imping or grafting young sets, he has already used the language of grafting more than once to describe the inscription of natural law in individual creatures. The term thus becomes both the ground of the law and its worldly exemplar. The juxtaposition of different grafts is not so much a confounding of microcosm and macrocosm as of ethic and metaethic: the language describing what we ought to do has leaked indelibly into the account of why we are bound to it, as nature itself is rendered a cunning artisan or craftsman. Here, the graft is endorsed not so much because it is an art which nature makes (to paraphrase Polixenes), but because it’s an art that nature already practices, and by which nature itself is in turn remade and reproduced.

The engrafting of this natural law, in other words, compels a second engrafting – that of the young gentleman himself for the production of heirs. Obedience to the law entails its repetition, such that, in Wilson’s language, the law-giving form of the graft is yoked to the content it prescribed. It is in engrafted in us that we might engraft ourselves (or, if you prefer, imprinted and implanted in us that we might imprint ourselves and our

loved ones.) Cutting across form and content, this language of vegetable inscription in turn accounts for both the normative force of law and the mode of generation it prescribes – both the reproduction of law and the reproduction of beings. Wilson thus uses grafting to bind two modes of discourse: the magic performed by the jurisdiction of natural law in that case – bringing one mode of being to bear on another – is repeated by the magic of the inscription itself, which binds the imaginative world of metaphor to the material world of textual and sexual practice. Grafting becomes, in short, a name for the operation of power. Like the rhetorical or gnomic point, the graft contains an imperative, naming precisely that which gives it binding force. Rebecca Bushnell has argued that, when horticultural figures like Erasmus and Wilson’s image of the graft recur in sixteenth-century arguments about education, they serve in part to balance the new kinds of power at work in the humanist classroom, which emphasized active imitation rather than passive and violently enforced obedience.²⁵⁶ In this sense, the legally reproductive function of the graft in the Epistle (and, as we’ll see, in both horticultural literature and in Sonnet 15) offers a remarkable epitome and literalization of what Foucault has theorized as the productivity of power.

These twinned problems of command and propagation converge again in the first seventeen poems in Shakespeare’s sequence. The relationship between power and imitation we saw played out in the horticultural language of the Epistle is renegotiated in the lyric space of these sonnets, but once again through the lens of horticultural practice and metaphor. Here, however, nature becomes not an exemplary argument for reproduction but a storehouse of techniques. Giorgio Melchiori takes this technological

²⁵⁶ Bushnell, *A Culture of Teaching*, 73-116; on imitation and force, see also Halpern, *The Poetics of Primitive Accumulation*, chapter one.

turn in the Sonnets' engagement with nature (which occurs, he argues, at the expense of a normative or adulatory relation to the natural world) as a sign of Shakespeare's direct engagement with his social world.²⁵⁷ In this argument, nature is less a reason-*why*-to as a figure-*how*-to. There is a sense then in which, between the two texts, the graft loses its moral exemplarity and becomes a tool. I don't want to overstate this: the engrafting of Sonnet 15 isn't only instrumental, though it seems to me instrumental in complicated and interesting ways. In particular, as Stephen Booth and others have observed, the homophone between "graft" and "graph," and the analogy invoked between engraving onto a tree and onto paper, inaugurates the sonnets' fixation on their own poetic powers of preservation and propagation. With "I engraft you new," the pen becomes the weapon that the poet takes up in the war with time. The graft in this sense figures two kinds of tools, but it doesn't only figure them – it enacts at least one of them. As a doubled and reflexive metaphor, the image of the graft doesn't wear its technological status lightly. Indeed, we might place this observation in the context of Rayna Kalas's recent argument that the modern readings of the sonnets "obscured the prevalence of craft, commerce, and property."²⁵⁸ Rather, she writes, the early sonnets in the sequence fixate upon the "gentle work" of poetic

²⁵⁷ Melchiori writes: The images drawn from nature lose in these sonnets their traditional character of abstract celebration in terms of aesthetic beauty and providential bounty, to be replaced by concern with concrete principles of good husbandry: ploughing (Sonnet 3), the distillation of perfume from flowers (Sonnets 5 and 6), cattle-rearing (Sonnet 6), harvesting (Sonnet 12), grafting (Sonnet 15), the cultivation of flowers and plants (Sonnet 16). Nature is made fertile by means of technical competence and the good management of the property (husbandry, Sonnets 3 and 13), as taught in so many handbooks, from John Fitzherbert's *The Boke of Husbandry* (1535) to Gervaise Markham's *The English Husbandman* (1613) and *Cheape and Good Husbandry* (1614); in other words, it is nature instrumentalized in the interests of the land-owners, not a garden of Eden: the middle-class man from the prosperous agricultural town of Startford-on-Avon, though perhaps as yet not personally involved, could certainly not be ignorant of the current polemic concerning enclosures, a polemic which was the distant prelude of the Civil War (28).

²⁵⁸ Kalas, *Frame, Glass, Verse*, 173.

composition, which is in turn figured as “a kind of productive labor that works like nature in order to work against her, a union that produces poems but not children.”

The couplet, with its frank pairing of the first-person subject with a second-person object (I engraft you new), effectively coopts the deictic “you” into its own figurative work, thus performing a double violence: unilaterally transforming the second person into part of its metaphorical activity and, what’s more, into an image that is itself remarkably violent. As manuals for orchard-keeping vividly describe, grafting meant cutting into the skin of a tree with a pen knife, severing the scion from its original trunk. Unlike Erasmus’s Epistle, and unlike the preceding sonnets, this couplet does not represent a request, a recommendation, or an attempt to persuade. It actually does what it says its doing, without waiting for consent.²⁵⁹ This then would seem to represent a new political and ethical world for the graft. While Wilson’s Epistle urges the young man to become a good citizen to his commonwealth and a good subject to mother nature, the aggressive poetic first person of this couplet simply asserts prerogative.

The governance of the graft

When it appears at the end of Sonnet 15, this metaphor of grafting registers abruptly and violently, and not just because of the dismemberment, incision, and penetration that the practice implies. The graft, in Shakespeare’s image, is a weapon the poet takes up in an ongoing and bruising battle: “And all in war with time for love of you, / As he takes from you, I engraft you new.” Following upon the sonnet’s perspectively

²⁵⁹ In J.L. Austin’s sense, the couplet is illocutionary (in its performance of the deed) while most of those preceding it are perlocutionary (as exhortations.)

virtuosic tour of “every thing that grows,” the image of a hybrid tree may be striking or strange. But the power of the graft to serve a memory function would have been familiar to anyone with experience in an orchard: detaching a limb from one tree and inserting it into the bark of another might transform the tree, but it is a fundamentally conservative procedure so far as the fruit is concerned. By reproducing clonally, and bypassing the vagaries of heterosexual reproduction, nurserymen could insure the propagation of a particularly good apple or pear. As an apparent guarantee of formal continuity, then, grafting already promised a sovereign technology against uncertainty and the ravages of time. Like an idealized form of sovereign power, it could identically reproduce itself in a new location.

The orchardist Ralph Austen describes the process in a way that sheds particular light on the play of natural power and artificial preservation of such distinct interest to the poet of the Procreation Sonnets. In his 1653 *Treatise on Fruit trees*, Austen provocatively gave the name of governance to the principle by which the engrafted scion produces season after season of identical fruit, ideally unaffected by the kind or nature of the stock. “The *Grafts*,” he wrote, “*do governe*, they always bring forth fruit answerable to their owne natures and kinds.” Against those who claim that grafting might produce a hybrid or compound fruit, Austen claims that this is the only reason for the husbandman to graft in the first place: otherwise, “it were to little purpose” – he writes – “to get Grafts from such, or such a good Tree, to have more of the kind.” Austen thus turns to this metaphorical language to solve a problem – the insurance of formal continuity in an otherwise uncertain future – that is also the problem against which the metaphor of grafting struggles in the sonnet.

Crucially, governance does not, for Austen, designate any single positive fact about the world; rather, it has the structure of a future guarantee, the promise of a string of similar fruits. Designating what *will* give the world its shape, governance is a principle whose only work is generative, achieving content only after the fact, by virtue of what it (repeatedly) produces. The form of this practical conceit puts a great deal of pressure on the fruit: it is in the fact and form of the fruit that the relation of governance is confirmed and given content. The double image of the graft in Wilson's translation of Erasmus's epistle operates similarly: the inscription of natural law and the propagation of new generations can go by the same name because they are both in the business of producing new examples, instantiating and re-instantiating specimens.

As determined by this fundamental (and fundamentally abstract) principle of propagation, fruit identity in turn becomes a concept that effaces the material life of any individual fruit, functioning instead along an axis of strictly formal similarity. (That is, it is only ever an identity *between* fruits.) It proceeds, Austen writes, "from the *specific, or distinct intrinsecall Forme*, of each particular Plant, which the God of nature hath fixed in it as a *Law*, which nature never violates, but keeps in all kinds of Creatures." We might say that "governance" – the keeping of this law of form – is a strict rule of metaphor, a power that predictably produces unfailingly similar fruits – wrenching likeness from the contingent conjunction of stock and scion, and projecting identical iterations indefinitely into the future. The "*distinct intrinsecall Forme*" is itself invisible, but generates and guarantees the sensible accoutrements of fruit identity, like color and sweetness.

The spirit of such a guarantee is a far cry from the anxiety about hybridity expressed by Perdita in *The Winter's Tale*, and comes closer to Polixenes' rebuttal that, "over that art / Which you say adds to nature, is an art / That nature makes."²⁶⁰ (This emphasis on continuity rather than on the dangers of hybridity and mixture also distinguishes the image in Sonnet 15 from nearly all references to the practice in Shakespeare's plays, where it is articulated as a distinct threat to inheritance and genealogical continuity.) Austen's version of grafting, which attributes the success of the graft to a rule *in* nature, constitutes governance in opposition to what human art can *add* – an opposition enabling the memorial power on which the couplet to Sonnet 15 draws. In the language of the sonnet, it is this principle of governance that gives the graft some local sovereignty, insuring the immortality of fruit identity over and against the "secret influence" cheering and checking the life span of the tree. Like the couplet of that sonnet, or that of sonnet 11 – with its injunction to "print more, not let that copy die" – governance denotes a regulative fantasy of repetition without difference.

Such a fantasy, however, is never quite so simple (as Joel Fineman has argued at length, and as I discussed briefly above). In the specific context of grafting, the ideality of replication is never far from the spectre of the compound fruit or the hybrid tree. In the sonnet, even the temporal and logical parallel by which grafting is posited as a remedy against time – "As he takes from you, I engraft you new" – forces us to wonder whether a single metaphor can counter the thematic temporal sweep of the rest of the poem. As I suggested above, though the poet claims to engraft "as He takes from you", the nature of

²⁶⁰ *The Winter's Tale*, 4.4.89-91.

Time is to *always* take, suggesting the possibility that the poet must also *always* be engrafting, keeping pace (as it were) with Time. A tension then potentially emerges between the indefinitely repeated action (engrafting *anew*) and the formal preservation or propagation that that action aims to achieve. Will the young man merely be re-ingrafted *still* – insuring the success of that memory function – or is there an adjectival kernel in the sonnet’s final word – “I engraft you *new*” – threatening that, at some point in this open-ended process, something *new* might erupt onto the fair form of that propagated *you*?

The stakes of such a question are particularly high if we take the couplet’s pun on engrafting and engraving – resting crucially on “grafting”’s Greek etymology – to announce the explicit turn of the sequence’s attention to the role that the poet might play in the young man’s preservation and propagation. According to such a metaphor, the sonnets themselves might seem so many well-formed fruits, successively generated from the poet’s pen. But, in the context of the poetry of praise – which is in the business of figuring the beloved -- the possibility that such iteration might introduce alteration poses a mortal danger.

Suggestively, Austen himself turns to divergent models of writing to sketch out the bounds of what the gardener can actually alter. At one point, he denies the claims of a “late author” that written parchment, wrapped around the kernel of a peach stone, will in turn produce fruit that is “written and engraven” – what amounts in effect to a Xeroxification of the peach tree, if you will. This is impossible, he argues, because “the Rind of the Kernel contributes nothing to the *Tree or Fruit*, but opens (as the Husk or shell) to let out the *inner part of the kernel*, the *vegetable vertue*, or *internal form*.” It is

that “inner part” – the “intrinsic form” we saw above – that the gardener cannot directly access but merely encourage to prosper. At another point in the text, however, Austen recommends a different kind of writing: namely, having inserted the graft, to write on the stock, below the incision, “with the point of a Penknife, cutting through the Bark, the form of a Letter, or any other Figure or Character, whereby to know the kinds of fruits.”²⁶¹ Unlike the first kind of writing, which would dictate a form that nature in turn would reproduce, the latter stands as a kind of contract, inscribed with a dead letter (literally, scarred in the bark of the tree). The nurseryman signs this assurance not with his own name but with the name of the fruit – or, indeed, with any arbitrary conventional character. This is precisely the force of governance, in Austen’s formulation, which works by naming what it does before it does it – the performative guarantee of fruit identity precedes the fruit’s substance.

The conceptual structure that Austen has built here depends on a tenuous balance between the wholeness of the tree – the inherence of identity in every part – and the power of each several part. As Austen writes in the context of a comparison with the human soul, “every *twig, graft, and bud*, hath then nature of the whole tree in it, perfectly.” This sort of metaphysics departs from another way of understanding the tree, in which the course of nature in the tree follows the course of the sap, as it moves reliably according to the moon and the seasons. With Austen’s principle of governance, that course is transformed into a series of dispersible and reproducible moments. Crucially, with the governing (and wandering) graft, we are failing to preserve the tree, even as its

²⁶¹ Such a strategy literalizes the transformation of force – the power of reproduction – into property: as he writes, “if any be stolen they may thereby be known, being found again.”

parts, however violently dismembered, remain fully themselves: governance for Austen erases the receiving stock, granting decisive agency instead to the severed branch from which the fruit is generated – a topographically and genealogically unrooted deputy of the tree from which it came.

We can begin to see here how the success of grafting as a memory function turns on a prior violent erasure. As a method of controlled propagation, it may preserve fruit identity, but what reparation is there for the loss of the original stock – the destruction of which is often imagined with alarming vividness in works on horticulture and natural history? Must the fruit forget the stock that bore it in order to keep its identity, to assert the autonomy of its “intrinsic forme”? If organic animation is usually seen to depend on the relation to the tree or body, on attachment or circulation (the free movement of sap or blood, for example), then what are the consequences for the kind of memories figured by grafting – which is, in essence, a detachment? Must grafting, finally, create dead memories? Such a version of memory recalls the ambivalent technologies invoked by Kunin, and the managed and depleted life that Greene mourned in the Sonnets’ couplets.

The emphasis that governance places on the abstract identity of the fruit – its innate form, rather than the being of any particular fruit – therefore gives a certain melancholic flavor to the graft’s memorial function. And this ambivalence speaks directly to an apparent perversity in the poetic fantasy expressed by the concluding couplet of Sonnet 15 – namely, that to preserve the beloved *with* metaphor is to preserve him *as* metaphor. This kind of memorial work might align the graft with Richard Halpern’s reading of Sonnets 5 and 6. Halpern argues that the poems’ “sublimating logic” both

incorporates death – turning “birth into still-birth” – and offers a model of specifically poetic reproduction, “drain[ing] their poetic subject of all corporeal specificity, leaving only a glassy, transparent vehicle of poetic comparison: the young man as perfume bottle.”²⁶² We might, in the context of the inherent seriality of what I’ve been calling “fruit identity,” offer an alternate gloss on this drainage: the image of the graft, instead of a single glassy vehicle, promises a sequential traffic jam of vehicles, of which it is precisely that seriality and persistence that provide evidence of good poetic or horticultural governance.

Nevertheless, this happy ending – or more precisely, the happiness that is this failure to end – is not the whole story for Austen any more than it is for Shakespeare. Almost as soon as he asserts governance as an unfailing law, Austen begins to make concessions, admitting that its authority might not be absolute, as he concedes that there might “some small alteration” or “some small addition” to the grafted fruit according to “the nature of the stock on which it (at present) grows.”²⁶³ This “small addition” comes to take up more and more conceptual space as Austen continues, ultimately undermining his initial firm denial of the possibility of a hybrid fruit, or a “commixture of kinds”. At one point, Austen offers a conjectural experiment that might produce a compound fruit. “If the thing be possible in Nature,” he writes, “the likeliest way that I apprehend is this”: “To graft one fruit upon another, many times over, every yeare a different kind,” and the next year, and the next year, he elaborates, before

²⁶² Richard Halpern, *Shakespeare's Perfume: Sodomy and Sublimity in Shakespeare, Wilde, Freud and Lacan* (Philadelphia: U of Pennsylvania P, 2002), 22.

²⁶³ Austen, *Some Observations*, p. 16.

concluding vaguely, “and thus every yeare to set *graft upon graft* for divers yeares together”²⁶⁴

It is only by figuring this monstrously augmented tree – monstrous both in its internal composition and in its indefinite potential for future accretion of further grafts – that Austen can imagine “some alteration, and commixture in the top branch and its fruit.” Though this augmentation may be simple in concept, its successful completion remains elusive: Austen “[has] it upon tryall,” he writes, “but is not yet come to an issue.” But it is far from clear when such a trial might ever come to an issue: only after “divers yeares”, he writes, might the “top branch and its fruit” undergo commixture. And this vagueness about the time frame – the dependence on a gesture of deferral – seems constitutive of the putative procedure: the “top branch” is itself a shifting signifier, one that moves from scion to scion with every yearly renewal.

The thought experiment is a striking transgression of the logic of governance, in which the sap itself is denied any contribution to the form of the fruit. If an engrafted apple governs when it receives the sap of a crab, surely it would govern even if that sap were equal parts pear, crab, and cherry. Strangely, Austen’s vision of this infinitely grafted tree forces his attention away from the sovereignty of the fragmented branch – its authoritative seat at the scene of production – and turns his gaze towards the whole tree, which, in this dystopic experiment, will have become monstrous, an infinite augmentation of different limbs.

²⁶⁴ Ibid, p. 24.

The metaphorical register, in turn, according to which Austen understands “influence” has decisively shifted: here, the space of the tree is actively imagined as a series of conjunctions past and through which the sap has to flow: “the sap arising and passing through so many kinds of stocks (as before) up into the top branches”, he writes, may “have an influence into the fruit of the *last graft* to cause some commixture.” The “influence into the fruit” is not only, like governance, an abstract principle of influence or sway: it literalizes the *flow* of the sap, which, indeed, flows through the series of grafts and *into* the fruit, informing the fruit as it enters it. There is a point, in other words, at which the distance traveled by the sap is so great that (paradoxically) it cannot be forgotten. It is the conjunctions themselves that are remembered in this putative compound fruit – not the elusive “innate form” stored in the scion. The quandary that Austen faces in the form of this monstrous tree vividly enacts the inevitable problems faced when a procedure of memorialization collides with the memory of that procedure – a collision that might (at another time) be usefully considered in the context of the sonnets, which similarly tarry with the circularity induced by regulative and performative language – and another scene in which the labors behind that desired fruit (as it were) threaten to be not quite forgettable.

Chapter Five

“A knowledge broken”: The Matter of the forest in
collections by Francis Bacon and Ben Jonson

On the title page of Ben Jonson’s *Timber: or, Discoveries*, as it begins about midway through his posthumous second folio, an epigram appears just below the name of the author: “*Tecum habita, ut noris quam sit tibi curta supellex.*” We might translate this, a phrase drawn from Persius’s Fourth Satire, roughly as, “Live with yourself, and you will see how abbreviated your equipment/furniture is.” Or, perhaps more idiomatically, “Try living only with yourself, and you will see how ill-supplied you are,” or even “how slender your store.” It is a provocative line with which to literally underwrite the work’s authorship, evoking the richer store offered by a company of friends at the outset of what is essentially a commonplacéd collection of prose borrowings. Paired with the Englished title of Jonson’s prose *silva*, it echoes a passage from Francis Bacon’s *Advancement of Learning*, which refers to “minds empty and unfraught with matter, and which have not gathered that which Cicero calleth *sylva* and *supellex*, stuff and variety.” Unfraught with that stuff, any attempt at art “is almost made contemptible, and is degenerate into childish sophistry and ridiculous affectation.” In classical Latin, the primary reference of “supellex” was to primarily household utensils or goods, but it eventually took on a more encompassing meaning, one closer to the early modern sense of “furniture” – that is, stuff, equipment, or store. In a humanist context, it often referred the furniture of the mind – that is, that store of verbal wisdom compulsively gathered and commonplacéd for future use. *Supellex* thus plays off of the

“stuff” and “matter” invoked by Jonson’s title and generic association – a primary meaning of timber and *silva*.²⁶⁵

This shared emphasis on the stuff of language – its matter before its form – is not a coincidence. Because of formulations like these, Jonson and Bacon have both been claimed as avatars of an anti-rhetorical tradition – whether as heir and reanimator of a classical plain style (in Jonson’s case), or as progenitor of a scientific and minimalist anti-ornamentalism (on the part of Bacon).²⁶⁶ Bacon’s interest in the substance of language in fact wins him one of the rare moments of praise Jonson offers in *Timber*: “It is well noted by the late L. St. Alban that the study of words is the first distemper of Learning: Vaine matter the second: And a third distemper s deceit, or the likeness of truth; Imposture held up by credulity. All these are the Cobwebs of Learning, and to let them grow in us, is either sluttish or foolish.” Frank Fieler has even suggested that Bacon and Jonson may be the only two seventeenth-century literary figures who endorse composing verse first in prose – in other words, placing sentence before sound.²⁶⁷ As Jonson wrote to Drummond of Hawthornden: “verses stood by sense without either colours or accent.” Later, he claims to have written verse “first in prose,” while Bacon says poetry “may be styled as well in prose as in

²⁶⁵ Some of these associations are discussed in Knight, “Furnished for Action,” 54. On *supellex* and humanism, see Kathy Eden, “Intellectual property and the *Adages* of Erasmus: *Coenobium* vs. *Ercto non cito*,” in *Rhetoric and Law in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Victoria Kahn and Lorna Hutson (New Haven: Yale UP, 2001), 269-84. See also Bruni, in Kallendorf, ed., *Humanist Educational Treatises*: “I would have our writer possess a rhetorical *garniture de toilette*, a fine wardrobe, an abundant stock of domestic furniture, if I may call it that, which she can produce and display as the need arises for every type of writing” (103)

²⁶⁶ The suggestion of “anti-rhetorical positions” does not quite hold up in either case, especially for two figures so intensely trained and invested in rhetorical practice. For an argument against this anti-rhetorical reading of Bacon and the Royal Society, see Vickers; on the derivation of Jonson’s plain style within the lineage of classical rhetoric, see Trimpi.

²⁶⁷ Fieler, Frank B. “The Impact of Bacon and the New Science Upon Jonson's Critical Thought in *Timber*.” *Renaissance Papers* (1960): 84-92; 86.

verse.”²⁶⁸ In both cases, in other words, the texture of language seems to provide a container for material already given – call it, say, data. Once we look further into their particular practices and idioms of collection, however, the situation is not so simple – whether the relationship between a containing form and its material contents, or between a forest and its trees.

Both moreover – and this will be the focus of this chapter – name books after forests. In fact, the choice to associate their respective collections of prose or verse with that proverbially uncultivated space and with the classical genre of the *silva* offers a distinct vantage onto how they approach the material stuff of language.²⁶⁹ Bacon’s literary executor, William Rawley, introduces *Sylva Sylvarum, of A Naturall History In ten Centuries* (1627), by emphasizing precisely the absence of form: “I haue heard his Lordship often say; that if hee should haue serued the glory of his owne Name, he had been better not to haue published this *Naturall History* : For it may seeme an Indigested Heap of Particulars ; And cannot haue that Lustre, which Bookes cast into Methods haue.”²⁷⁰ Jonson, introducing the collection of poems he calls *Under-woods*, similarly stresses his jumbled particulars: “*With the same, leave the Ancients, call’d that kind of body Sylva, or [hyle], in which there were workes of diuers nature, and matter congested ; as the multitude call Timber-trees , promiscuously growing, a Wood, or Forrest.*” “Matter congested,” in Jonson’s phrase, closely echoes

²⁶⁸ AVD., II. Iv. 1.

²⁶⁹ Alastair Fowler considers these part of a seventeenth-century “mannerist vogue for metaphorical genre labels”, and includes Phineas Fletcher, *Sylva poetica* (1633), Herbert, *Lucus*, Herrick, *Hesperides* (1648), and Dryden, *Sylvae: or, The Second part of poetical miscellanies* (1685). Jonathan Kamholtz considers Jonson in the context of the “any Elizabethan poetic collections before Jonson [that] imply a relationship between anthology and topography, connecting books with pleasant, ideal, and often Edenic places” (“Ben Jonson’s Green World.”)

²⁷⁰ Rawley, “To the Reader,” in Bacon, *Sylva Sylvarum* (1627).

Rawley's picture of Bacon's "Indigested Heap of Particulars," and both commit their works to an unmethodical promiscuity.

This formal vocabulary has consequences that are both broadly cosmological and specifically literary. Whether suggesting matter "brought together" or "not yet brought apart," "congested" and "indigested" both specifically invoke the "rude and undigested heap" (*rudis indigestaque moles*) with which Ovid described Chaos before the order of creation at the outset of the *Metamorphoses*. Associating these works with the dark mass of the forest thus aligns them in turn with the primordial chaos that preceded the ordering of the cosmos. This generic link to the stuff of matter draws on the etymological associations of both titles, evoking the specific poetic genre of the *silva*, as well as the classical and post-classical sense of *silva* and its Greek analog, *hyle*. Both terms were used in philosophical and literary contexts to designate the primal and disordered states of matter in general, and could also mean simply "matter," "stuff," or "store."²⁷¹

As these associations with Ovidian cosmic indigestion suggest, *silva* are generally taken to be logically, literarily, and cosmologically prior – the stuff of matter before its formation. The origin of the genre has generally been attributed to Statius' first century collection of Latin poems, though it was repopularized in the Renaissance largely through the scholarship and imitation of Poliziano.²⁷² Poliziano's definition also echoed Ovidian

²⁷¹ See also Bernardus Silverstris's association of *silva* and chaos: "“Congeries informis adhuc, cum Silva teneret / Sub veteri confuse globo priordia rerum” (“when Silva, still a formless chaotic mass, held the first beginnings of things in their ancient state of confusion”). On the Chartrian interest in matter, *hyle*, and *silva*, see Corinne J. Saunders, *The Forest of Medieval Romance: Avernus, Broceliande, Arden* (Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 1993), 22-3.

²⁷² On the influence of Poliziano on later *silvae*, see Van Dam, H. "Wandering Woods Again: From Poliziano to Grotius" in *The Poetry of Statius*, ed. Smolenaars, J., Van Dam, H., and Nauta, R. (Leiden, 2008). The reception of Statius in early modern Europe has been exhaustively treated by Dustin

language in reviving the classical generic designation most associated with Statius:

“*sylva indigesta materia a philosophis appellatur, ea quam Graeci hylen vocant*”

(“*silva* is called by the philosophers raw material, which the Greeks call wood”).

Through this lineage, early modern *silva* came to name textual gatherings, usually of occasional poetry, with several key qualities: the miscellaneity of their contents, the roughness of the verse they contained (or, at least, protestations of its ostensible lack of polish), and its conception in the heat of the moment. All of these qualities seem, on the one hand, to leave it tangled in the scene and circumstances of its conception. But for Bacon, Jonson, and others, the opposite is also true: the raw matter of these forests open them up to re-use. A store of inert and flexible matter, timber does not have the specific and energetic virtues we previously saw at work in Whitney’s slips and Bacon’s nosegay of prayers. The trees that populate these textual forests are both distinctly occasional and remarkably mobile. Previous scholars have discussed the collections by both authors in the context of these generic traditions – in particular, Frans de Bruyn in his work on Bacon, and Alastair Fowler (among others) in his work on Jonson and *silva*. I will be less interested here, however, in how each rewrites the literary traditions they exploit and inherit in using this term. Rather, I would like to focus on a narrower formal question about what these qualities of the *silva* – its rawness, miscellaneity, and occasionality – afford, and how these collections engage the botanical discourses of circulation and assemblage I have discussed in previous chapters.

Mengelkoch in his dissertation, *Papinian Mutability: Statius and Early Modernity* (University of North Carolina Chapel Hill, 2010), especially Chapter One. See also his related article, “The Mutability of Poetics: Poliziano, Statius, and the *Silvae*,” in *MLN* 125.1 (January 2010), 84-116.

In the *silvae* published by Bacon and Jonson, trees have a double temporality. First, they are spontaneous products, unformed and almost raw matter, generated with heat, in the moment: *subito calore effusa*, in a phrase repeated by Renaissance critics. This same rawness, however, opens them up to future use: they are thus *of* a time (the moment of their conception), but also *for* another time. In these works by Bacon and Jonson, a range of terms captures this potential: furniture, supply, matter, timber, *supellex*.

I will be arguing in this chapter that this same temporal doubleness names the crux at the core of both occasional poetry and the Baconian method of induction. In its own way, each of the small literary forms under consideration— essay, epigram, experiment – tries to bridge this fissure, reaching from the occasion of its inception to some future or more abstract moment (the difference between the two, futurity and abstraction, seems conceptually essential but is often impossible to determine.) In previous chapters, we have seen a range of strategies and vocabularies for this particular ambition – from distillation to abstraction, and even, as I argued in the case of Tusser and Shakespeare, the form of the couplet itself. For Bacon and Jonson, the success of such a procedure turns on the energetic collection – congestion or indigestion, we might say – of particulars: of names, qualities, properties, happenings, observations, facts.

Bacon's *Sylva Sylvarum* describes itself as a natural history, composed of 1000 “experiments” grouped into ten centuries. For Bacon, the small literary form of the experiment names a disciplined practice of deferral. The writing of natural philosophy performs the work of collection, dilating time and space to suspend the arrival of a conclusion. The matter of the tree, within this literary scheme, must be patient. It must

hold and bind its matter, and not allow it to be too quickly abstracted or turned to generality.

Jonson's own poems, especially the many epigrams addressed to figures and events since forgotten, may seem to warrant the opposite of his famous praise of Shakespeare, that "He was not of an age but for all time." One of the most succinct diagnoses of this problem comes from Hegel, writing over a century after Jonson to attribute occasional poetry's lack of prestige – its odd *unmemorability* – to its "entanglement in life":

But, conversely, the art of poetry should not seek to maintain an absolutely isolated position in the real world, but must, as itself living, enter into the midst of life.... Poetry's living connection with the real world and its occurrences in public and private affairs is revealed most amply in the so-called *pièces d'occasions*. If this description were given a wider sense, we could use it as a name for nearly all poetic works: but if we take it in the proper and narrower sense we have to restrict it to productions owing their origin to some single present event and expressly devoted to its exaltation, embellishment, commemoration, etc. But by such entanglement with life poetry seems again to fall into a position of dependence, and for this reason it has often been proposed to assign to the whole sphere of *pièces d'occasions* an inferior value although to some extent, especially in lyric poetry, the most famous works belong to this class.²⁷³

In an apparent paradox, occasional lyric epitomizes the "living connection" at the heart of poetic language, but through a too myopic connection to the particularities of life itself loses the power of art. The danger, in Hegel's view, is that such an entanglement becomes a dependence, a failure of aesthetic autonomy and even poetic license. It is precisely praise – a devotion to "exaltation" and "embellishment" of an event – that is the problem, tethering attention and affection too close to the particularity of an object.

This chapter investigates (a) the effect of collection itself on this entanglement, to ask whether the regathering of particulars in the imagined space of the forest in fact

²⁷³ G.W.F. Hegel, *Aesthetics*, trans. T.M. Knox, vol. 2 (Oxford: Clarendon P, 1975), 995-6. I am indebted to the lengthier discussion of Hegel and occasional poetry in Marian Zwerling Sugano, *The Poetics of the Occasion: Mallarme and the Poetics of Circumstance* (Stanford University Press, 1992).

unbinds them from everyday life by rebinding them in the silva itself; and (b) the effect of a figurative process on tightening or loosening these entanglements. Does the metamorphosis into figurative language tighten this worldly entanglement, or does it cut loose the stuff of poetry to travel to new sites, and speak across new barriers? Does figuring textual forms and practices in these botanical idioms in fact perform the universalizing distillation that Hegel might hope, absorbing those particulars more fully into what he would call “the prose of the world”? Is figuration itself a kind of collection? The examples of previous chapters have shown how botanical figuration marks an entanglement in life but also an abstraction from it. The double reference of this botanical idiom in turn crucially shapes reading. It allows texts to speak to new readers and new locations, but also – as importantly – gives them the stuff with which to imagine those encounters, to give speculative but particular form to their own mobility.

It is not then immaterial that the two authors under discussion address the nature of their own textual processes in the most explicitly abstract and methodological terms, nor that both rely on a botanical idiom in those conceptual articulations. Both Bacon and Jonson’s writing on rhetoric and method turn frequently to a biological – and especially botanical – language of growth and generation. In both cases, critics have devoted most of their attention to classifying these figurative schema as alternately conservative or radical. Bacon’s images fall into two largely distinct groups: those evoking rootedness and growth, and those endorsing the scattering of seeds. The first he associates with the progressive growth of natural philosophy (the grounded and engrossing project of *instauratio*); the second refers, both narrowly and ubiquitously, to

the natural historian's actual methods, his scattered sentences and aphoristic style. In an account of the "image-patterns" in Francis Bacon's philosophical writing, Brian Vickers notes the recurrence of images of natural growth – of seeds, roots, trees, and fruits. There is a particular emphasis on images of roots and rootedness in Bacon's writing on natural knowledge – part of an injunction, Vickers argues, not to sever natural history or philosophy from its grounding in experiment and observation. As he writes in the *Novum Organum*: "For what is founded on nature grows and increases; while what is founded on opinion varies but increases not. If therefore those doctrines had not plainly been like a plant torn up from its roots, but had remained attached to the womb of nature and continued to draw nourishment from her," then the sciences from Aristotle would have been barren.²⁷⁴ Or, more concisely: "It is in knowledges as it is in plants: if you mean to remove it to grow, then it is more assured to rest upon roots than slips." Such images seem to suggest a kind of vegetable conservatism – fundamentalism, even – against the figures of dissemination and redistribution we have witnessed in earlier chapters. At the same time, however, images of seeds are also found throughout Bacon's writings, often in reference to his own force or promise as a writer, and the benefits of an aphoristic style (comparing "concise sentences" to seeds, for example): "I bear myself soberly and profitably, sowing in the meantime for future ages the seeds of a purer truth"; Men's minds live on in books because "they generate still and cast their seeds in the minds of others."²⁷⁵

²⁷⁴ Brian Vickers, *Francis Bacon and Renaissance Prose* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1968), 196.

²⁷⁵ Joseph Loewenstein compares this version of the "disseminative text" with Milton's conception of intellectual property in *The Author's Due: Printing and the Prehistory of Copyright* (Chicago: U of Chicago, P, 2002), 174.

If these circulable seeds have something to do with language, then what exactly are the roots to which Bacon refers? The nourishing “womb of nature” for Bacon is something like experiment and observation – what we might think of, in fact, as mobile activities, but which are foundational (grounded and grounding) in Bacon’s narrative of the growth of natural knowledge – that is, to the method itself. In the *Sylva Sylvarum*, the conventional undigested rawness of the classical genre of the *silva* comes to figure for nature herself. To uproot, in other words, is detach from this womb, and to lose nourishment. The “matter” of the *Sylva* (a primary sense of the word in Latin) thus projects onto the “matter” of nature – with the unsophisticated naturalism of the genre blurring the line between subject and physical matter. Bacon asks his readers to slow down with his material – and uses formlessness of his collection as a kind of speed bump, forcing them not to leap to generalities.

What then are the itineraries of this sylvan matter? Does it travel, like Whitney’s slips, or Tusser’s points? Can it speak to multiple occasions, like the knowledge stored in a proverb? As I want to argue here, both Bacon and Jonson engage with the classical genre of the *silva* not just because of its miscellaneity and rawness but because of its close association with occasional verse, and the promise held out by these collections of raw matter to preserve occasion while reaching beyond it. Both question and test how the small forms of the experiment, epigram, essay, and short poem are bound or loose from the occasion of their inception, and, once cut loose, the kind of material they offer for future use.

The Promiscuous Forest

On the model of Statius's *Silvae*, the genre of *silva* was taken to name a collection of short verse forms, often deliberately raw or rough – or, at least according to the poet's self-presentation. As poets of the Renaissance took up this tradition, the *silva*'s most important qualities were its roughness, spontaneity, and miscellaneity. There is some language in Statius for this (the poems were composed, he writes, “*subito calore et uadam festinandi uoluptate*”(in the heat of the moment, a sort of pleasurable haste, 1 Praef 3-4); and he describes the “*libellorum temeritatem*” (the temerity of these little pieces 3 Praef 2-3). But according to Harm-Jan van Dam, it is with Poliziano that

“*uelox, calor, impetus, festinare* and the like enter the Renaissance critical vocabulary of the *silva(e)*.”²⁷⁶ The most influential formulation may have been Quintilian's more critical take, which would later be closely echoed by Scaliger in his poetics:

Diuersum est huic eorum uitium qui primo decurrere per materiam stilo quam uelocissimo uolunt, et sequentes calorem atque impetum ex tempore scribunt: hanc siluam uocant. Repetunt deinde et componunt quae effuderant: sed uerba emendantur et numeri, manet in rebus temere congestis quae fuit leuitas (Inst. 10.3.17)

An opposite fault is committed by people who elect to make a draft of the whole subject as rapidly as possible, and write improvisations, following the heat and impulse of the moment. They call this draft their ‘raw material.’ They then revise their effusions and give them rhythmical structure. The words and the rhythms are thus corrected, but the original triviality of the hastily accumulated material is still there (DA Russell, Loeb 1991)

²⁷⁶ Harm-Jan Van Dam, “Wandering Woods Again,” 46-7.

As Ann Lauinger notes, the “hallmark” of Renaissance commentaries on Statius was the phrase “*subito calore...effusa*”(poured out in the heat of the moment, (51)). This intimacy with the scene and moment of composition helps maintain the association with occasional verse that marked Statius’s classical collection of poetry, and this association with miscellaneous collections of occasional poetry survives throughout the Renaissance. Indeed, Scaliger’s long treatment of *silva* says little about the genre of the collection or miscellany and offers a more general treatment of the poetry of praise – in particular, a long catalog of epideictic forms.

Lauinger has argued that by the Renaissance “*silva*” had come to designate two separate generic traditions: one pedagogical (in which she places Bacon’s *Sylva Sylvarum*) and the other poetic (in which she places Jonson’s *Forrest* and *Under-Woods*.) As she admits, though, in the case of these two figures, these divergent strains might not have been so far apart: the acquaintances might even have discussed their feelings about the genre, or their readings of Statius’ or Poliziano’s famous examples. Lauinger’s distinction poses a deeper historical and formal question: How fast a line should we draw between forests of poetry and prose? Is there such a distance, for example, between Jonson’s sylvan poems and his *Timbers*, which – though gathered in more expansive prose – easily fit generically and thematically in the same breath as *The Forrest* and *Under-Woods*? Ultimately, I will argue in this chapter, Bacon and Jonson are both engaged in a negotiation about repetition and recurrence – in which the stuff of the natural world (in particular, the wood of the forest) plays a central but ambivalent role.

Logics of spatial organization, like the forest, played a central and even governing role in representations of humanist practices of textual culling and gathering. Walter Ong

has explained the popularity of generic forests in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries according to the spatial and typographical mentalities he associates with Agricolan and Ramist rhetoric. Post-Agricolan rhetoric, he argues, developed a notion of language as container – a spatial conception of the field of language strongly reinforced by the cognitive and social influence of print publication. This context lies in the background, he suggests, of the various rhetorical forests found throughout sixteenth- and seventeenth-century English and continental learned books. In particular, Agricola’s emphasis on the *loci* (rhetorical and dialectical places and commonplaces) led to a more generally spatialized imagery, a way of “controlling the profusion of concepts and/or things.”²⁷⁷ Placing both Jonson’s and Bacon’s sylvan titles in this tradition, Ong suggests that a range of “concepts playing around the Latin term *silva*” generate a kind of image cluster that accompanies discussion of the *loci* in rhetorical contexts – “sorting out,” “cutting out,” “arranging.”²⁷⁸ Ong also suggests that the generic and conceptual association with *silva* occasions an associational predisposition between rhetorical invention and figures of hunting, his core example being the famous passage from Thomas Wilson’s *The Rule of Reason* on the hunting out of commonplaces (featuring both rabbits and foxes.) As Ong concludes of Wilson’s image, “In this sylvan setting, invention has become hunting, and Agricola’s forest primeval, converted by Jonson and others into a wood lot, has now been made over into a game preserve. In each case, under one or another guise, we are presented with a model for mental activity providing a spatial field for local motion of various sorts.”²⁷⁹

²⁷⁷ Ong, *Ramus and the Decay of Dialogue*, 118.

²⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 118-9.

²⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 120.

Within Ong's broader argument, these sylvan images belong to a cluster of metaphors that spatialize discourse and the passage of a reader or a rhetorician through it. The rhetorical hunter seeks out content in the forest. This "kind of desperate exuberance of constructs", Ong writes, reflects "simply an unacknowledged but inexorable disposition to represent thought and communication in terms of spatial models and thus to reduce mental activity to local motion."²⁸⁰ In Ong's long narrative of the "decay of dialogue," this represents a turning point: the spatial fixation of the place is also tied to a way of thinking of language in terms of containers: "method" places things in boxes and in rooms, just as we imagine sentences contained in paragraphs, and ideas contained in words.²⁸¹

Through this association of hunting and invention, the rhetorical forest for Ong becomes an open and common locus for borrowing and even pillage. In this conception of language, however, the forest is essentially a neutral place – an unmarked container of available textual matter. For early modern English writers and subjects, however, woods were hardly ever a "common place." As Jenny Mann has argued in a reading of the same passage from Wilson, this spatial logic did not translate naturally to England, where it always carried the taint or promise of illegitimacy.²⁸² In fact, as she shows, spaces like Wilson's rhetorical forest are haunted by outlaw figures like Robin Hood, suggesting that the work of rhetorical borrowing and translation always has something of thievery in it – the possibility or even necessity of trespass. According

²⁸⁰ Ibid, 119.

²⁸¹ Ong writes: "Here the whole mental world has gone hollow. The pre-Agricolan mind had preferred to think of books as saying something, of sentences as expressing something, and of words and ideas as 'containing' nothing at all but rather as signifying or making signs for something. After Agricola the notion of content can serve for and level out all these diversified modes of conceptualization"(121).

²⁸² Mann, *Outlaw Rhetoric*, 1-28.

to Sean Keilen, the primal matter of the forest becomes a figure in the Renaissance for the energy of poetry itself – though one complicated, as he shows, by the complicated legal status of “forest” and “woods” in England, in which access and trespass are highly regulated (not to mention “hunting” and “invention”).²⁸³

The rawness of the small forms implied by the literary genre also alights upon the mythological sense of the forest as something primal: always prior, on the one hand, and uncivilized and unformed on the other. Robert Pogue Harrison has argued that these associations governed ancient, medieval, and Renaissance interest in the space of the forest, rendering it always a formative other, primary and external to civilization and to reason. While an association of the space of the forest with frenzy or unreason seems less relevant here, its status as unformed and always prior significantly informs the kinds of sylvan matter with which Bacon and Jonson are engaged. Woods often represent the inverse of the fields and gardens we have previously seen subject to husbandry and skilled cultivation. In this passage from the *Aeneid*, the hills of Rome are discovered as forests memorable less for the trees themselves than for the absence of skill, repeated in these few lines:

These woodland places
 Once were homes of local fauns and nymphs
 Together with a race of men that came
 From tree trunks, from hard oak: they had no way
 Of settled life, no arts of life, no skill
 At yoking oxen, gathering provisions,
 Practising husbandry, but got their food
 From oaken boughs and wild game hunted down.
 In that first time, out of Olympian heaven,
 Saturn came here in flight from Jove in arms,
 An exile from a kingdom lost; he brought
 These unschooled men [*genus indocile*] together from the hills
 Where they were scattered, gave them laws, and chose

²⁸³ Sean Keilen, *Vulgar Eloquence: On the Renaissance Invention of English Literature* (New Haven: Yale UP, 2006), 134-8.

The name of Latium, from his latency
Or safe concealment in this countryside.

These unschooled men, once scattered in the hills, had no skill, no husbandry. In this moment just before a golden age of civilization, they are untouched by the expert human hands that have recurred in my previous chapters. The unsophistication of the forest presents an explicit counterpoint to the stuff of craft and husbandry as it has shaped both the cultivated garden and the curated book.

Indeed, while woods may be, as Ong suggests, a prototypical site for rhetorical invention and discovery, they are also proverbially dark and unnavigable. This question of navigation is brought to the fore by the fact that Bacon and Jonson do not just fashion gatherings of matter in their collections, but frame geographies – offering narratives of travel and transport across and within them. It seems all the less haphazard, in this sense, that Bacon’s *New Atlantis* was published alongside the *Sylva Sylvarum* in 1627, or that Jonson’s “Forrest” pairs the generic language of trees with the political and ecological reality of the Sidneian woods. Both layerings of semiotic modes and forms of reference recall the semi-utopian strategies of collections considered in earlier chapters.

In Bacon’s case, allegories of natural and textual discovery blend and intermingle between the two works included in the 1627 volume. More editions of *Sylva Sylvarum* were published in the seventeenth century than any of Bacon’s other natural historical writings, but it is rarely read today, in part because of its style and miscellaneous content, while the *New Atlantis* (Bacon’s only attempt at prose fiction, to our knowledge) is now one of his most widely read works. But why should they have ended up together? In the first edition, *Sylva Sylvarum* comprises 284 folio pages, including 1000 experiments

organized into ten centuries, while the *New Atlantis* is given only about 50 folio pages. Following Rawley's own suggestion, articulated in a brief preface to the *New Atlantis*, and on the circumstances of the volume's production, David Colclough has argued that we ought to read the two texts together, not as a happenstance posthumous conjunction bound by printshop convenience.²⁸⁴

New Atlantis begins in the style of other travel accounts of the period, if not *in media res* then *in media mare*: "Wee sayled from *Peru*, (wher wee had continued by the space of one whole yeare,) for *China* and *Iapan*, by the South Sea"(1). The crew (the "we" of the first sentence, who are never further specified) begins with winds from the east and provisions for a full year, but are soon carried astray by powerful winds and run short of victuals. At this point, only several sentences into his narrative, Bacon turns to a biblical topos of tribulation: "So that finding our selues, in the Midst of the greatest Wildernesse of Waters in the World, without Victuall, we gaue our Selues for lost Men, and prepared for Death"(1). Here, the structuring forest of the preceding natural history has been rewritten into a great "Wildernesse of Waters" – an unnavigable field that nonetheless holds out the possibility of discovery. Bacon's travelers, however, hold out hope:

Yet we did lift vp our Harts and Voices to God aboue, who *sheweth his Wonders in the Deepe*; Beseeching him of his Mercy, that as in the *Beginning* He discouered the *Face* of the *Deepe*, and brought forth *Dry-Land*; So he would discouer Land to vs, that we mought not perish. And it came to passe, that the next Day about Euening, we saw with a Kenning before vs, towards the North, as it were thick Cloudes, which did put vs in some hope of Land; Knowing how that part of the South Sea was vtterly vnknowne; And might haue Islands, or Continents, that hitherto were not come to light. (1)

²⁸⁴ David Colclough, "'The Materialls for the Building': Reuniting Francis Bacon's *Sylva Sylvarum* and *New Atlantis*," in *Intellectual History Review* 20.2 (2010), 181-200.

Upon first sight of the island that will provide the utopian setting of the rest of the narrative, this sylvan theme reappears: “And in the Dawning of the next Day, we might plainly discern that it was a Land; Flatt to our sight, and full of Boscage; which made it shew the more Darke.”(2)

Such a narrative of invention and discovery relates its own progressive narrative form to the structure of the sylvan genre and to the navigation of the miscellaneous bound book. This is a theoretical problem but also a literary problem – that is, of style, structure, and intelligibility. As I’ve suggested in the previous paragraphs, we can approach it through the ambiguous pairing of the two works published together by Bacon in 1627. Jonson, likewise, asks us to understand the diegetic trees of the epigrams alongside the timber and underwoods that serve as their generic/conceptual containers. Think, for example, of all of the individual trees in “To Penshurst” – contained generically in Jonson’s “Forrest,” and territorially in, well, Penshurst. Each of these examples suggests a productive modal interference between titular forests and “real” or “narrative” forests. What kind of relationship to the work does this structure? Are we more likely to read one as a “container” for the other, as Ong might suggest? Figure itself in this sense works like the act of collection, but each interferes in turn with the cleanness of the break from “life’s entanglement.” Figures like the forest guide readers through textual organization and through the organization of figure, helping them to narrate both horizontally and vertically. The book itself emerges at that intersection, a bibliographical case of Roman Jakobson’s poetic function, as the axis of metaphorical selection is projected onto the axis of combination and mixture.

Bacon's Sylva

Francis Bacon's *Sylva sylvarum* was published in 1627, a year after Bacon's death at age 65, in a veritable exile from the political power he had enjoyed for much of his adult life. The extensive and fragmentary natural history was edited by his secretary William Rawley, who appended to the latter part of the volume a utopian travel narrative under the title, *New Atlantis: A Vvorke vnfinished. Vvwritten by the Right Honourable, FRANCIS, Lord Verulam, Viscout St. Alban.*

I haue heard his Lordship often say; that if hee should haue serued the glory of his owne Name, he had been better not to haue published this *Naturall History* : For it may seeme an Indigested Heap of Particulars ; And cannot haue that Lustre, which Bookes cast into Methods haue : But that he resolued to preferre the good of Men, and that which might best secure it, before any thing that might haue relation to Himselfe. And hee knew well, that ther was no other way open, to vnloose Mens mindes, being bound ; and (as it were) Maleficiate, by the Charmes of deceiuing Notions, and Theories; and therby made Impotent for Generation of VVorkes; But onely no wher to depart from the Sense, and clear experience; But to keepe close to it, especially in the beginning.²⁸⁵

A reader of the relatively formless gathering of Bacon's experiments is threatened by this darkness and "indigestion," but is also enabled by it. This resistance to the "cast" (however lustrous) of method leaves the work (of the book itself and of natural philosophy in general) provocatively unfinished. Specifically, it gives readers a certain liberty: "he resolued to preferre the good of Men, and that which might best secure it, before any thing that might haue relation to Himselfe. And hee knew well, that ther was no other way open, to vnloose Mens mindes, being bound ; and (as it were) Maleficiate, by the Charmes of deceiuing Notions, and Theories; and therby made Impotent for Generation of VVorkes." The unbinding of mens minds is here a literary, scientific, and political project. In Rawley's language, it is prematurity of judgment that is a kind of

²⁸⁵ Rawley, in *Sylva Sylvarum*, Epistle.

bondage. Instead, the deferral in face of experience – the process of gathering, the looseness of the collection – is what unlooses men’s minds. We might compare this with the discourse around license in the Inns of Court: is the looseness of a gathering conducive to other liberties? How do the ties of power and discipline play out in the readerly relation and textual encounter? Rawley’s language of charms also specifically calls up images of witchcraft, and the spells used by women to make men impotent. Powers of potency and generation – the spontaneity and heat associated with the genre of *silva* from the time of Statius – are given additional significance here. Wilderness is thus a traditional scene of temptation but also the scene of its resistance: by staying in the woods, you refuse the temptations of order, retain the chaos of the cosmos in its primal state before it goes astray.

Here, the associations of *silva* with the primal forest, with what remains rough, raw, and unformed, serve an additional purpose: by ostensibly withholding form and method, *Sylva Sylvarum* leaves itself open to the future. This potentially threatening state of matter is nonetheless one that in its primacy always carries with it the possibility of additional order, the sense of being the first step towards a better ordered future. This was indeed the place of this natural-historical collection within the broader scheme articulated by Bacon in the *Great Instauration*, his plan for the radical reform of natural philosophy. It was an initial labor, one that played a strategic role of deceleration in Bacon’s understanding of how knowledge should be gathered and digested. As he wrote in numerous places, the natural historians and philosophers preceding him were inclined to jump too quickly to conclusions based on the authorities of others. A central part of his elaborate procedure for natural-historical inquiry, therefore, was directed at

epistemological deferral, the refusal to generalize and synthesize. The extensive (and essentially infinite) work of collection undertaken in the *Sylva* therefore represents a strategic dilation, a kind of filling out, an inflation of time and matter to put off the error of premature synthesis and speculation. The other option, as Rawley vividly depicts, is a kind of mental bondage.

Outside the *Sylva sylvarum*, in his more systematic writings, Bacon endorses a range of fragmentary textual practices, most famously the broken aphorisms that make up his *Novum Organum*. As Lorraine Daston and Elizabeth Yale have both described, the practice of a so-called Baconian natural philosophy would turn on scribbled notes and the circulation of manuscript scraps long after Bacon's death, in a model explicitly ascribed to him. Such practices, however, emerge from the literary and practical contexts we have traced in earlier chapters – sometimes in direct and traceable ways.²⁸⁶ In particular, as Deborah Harkness has recently argued, much of Bacon's influential sense of how natural science should operate was lifted, uncredited, from the miscellaneous experiments and secrets collected and advertised by his near contemporary and nearby citydweller, Hugh Plat.²⁸⁷ Though I have not gone into the full range of Plat's activities here, the books of secrets and household advice for which he is best remembered (published in the 1590s) can easily be seen as extensions of the textual habits of fragmentation and gathering he practiced as a young man in his *Floures of Philosophie* (1572, as discussed in Chapter Two.) Indeed, it is these forms of notetaking – as Yale and Daston both suggest – that are also at the core of Bacon's broader

²⁸⁶ Elizabeth Yale, "With Slips and Scraps: How Early Modern Naturalists Invented the Archive," *Book History* 12 (2009): 1-36; Lorraine Daston, "Taking Note(s)," *Isis* 95.3 (2004): 443-8.

²⁸⁷ Deborah E. Harkness, *The Jewel House: Elizabethan London and the Scientific Revolution* (New Haven: Yale UP, 2007), 211-252.

epistemological framework, the inductive method yoking scattered observation to the aggregation of natural knowledge.

Bacon's stated philosophy of prose style often turned on the utility of the aphorism and the fragment, just as natural philosophy depends, in his words, on this "knowledge of scattered occasions."²⁸⁸ In his explicit articulations of their purpose, the "scattered sentences" of aphorism combine two important qualities: concision (a rhetorical minimalism) and an availability for future use. Such sentences are an invitation to continuation and dilation: "Antiquity used to deliver the knowledge which the mind of man had gathered, in observations, aphorisms, or short and dispersed sentences, or small tractates of some parts that they had diligently meditated and labored; which did invite men, both to ponder that which was invented, and to add and supply further"(Adv., Iiv.2, Works III, 283). This openness represents a resistance to a certain kind of encompassing method, placing these textual habits on the side of "probative" rather than "magistral" epistemic practice. Aphorisms, as he writes, "representing a knowledge broken, do invite men to enquire farther; whereas Methods, carrying the shew of a total, do secure men, as if they were at furthest."

In part, Bacon is distinguishing his own project from other (and earlier) versions of natural philosophy, which he suggests excessively defer to authority and leap too quickly from experience or observation to system and method. But he is also marking himself off from figures like Hugh Plat, whose printed gardens and jewel houses likewise offered containers of small-form natural wisdom. Unlike the rough and raw style of the

²⁸⁸ De Augmentis VIII, Works, V, 36. The place of rhetoric in Bacon's method has received exhaustive scholarly treatment. On the role of aphorism in particular, see James Stephens, *Francis Bacon and the Style of Science* (Chicago: Chicago UP, 1975), 98-120; Vickers, *Francis Bacon and Renaissance Prose*, 60-95.

silva, Plat's metaphors emphasize cultivation and even curation – whether a jewel or a flower, his recipes or pieces of advice are advertised as selected, tested, honed. According to Rawley, Bacon is expressly breaking from the Horatian principles that have guided natural history to this point: “For those *Naturall Histories*, which are Extant, being gathered for Delight and Vse, are full of pleasant Descriptions and Pictures; and affect and seeke after Admiration, Rarities, and Secrets.” Bacon's intentions, meanwhile, follow the logic and language of “material”: “But contrariwise, the Scope which his Lordship intendeth, is to write such a *Naturall History*, as may be Fundamentall to the Erecting and Building of a true *Philosophy*.” It is this *architectural* project to which Bacon “taketh *Himselfe* in a sort bound.” While the *Novum Organum* “set downe the Instruments and Directions for the Worke,” Bacon, with the *Sylva Sylvarum*, has “Collected the Materialls for the Building.” A natural history should be built on such a foundation (“material”), and not on the ground of pleasure: “And for the *Vulgarnes* of them; true *Axiomes* must be drawne from plaine Experience, and not from doubtfull; and his Lordships course is, to make Vvonders Plaine, and not Plaine things VVonders; And that Experience likewise must be broken and grinded, and not whole, or as it groweth.”

Bacon's thousand experiments, however, are not mere description or observation, and they frequently wander speculatively into causes. Rawley tries to preempt criticism of what might seem like a betrayal of his core principles:

Further, his Lordship thought good also, to add vnto many of the *Experiments* themselues, some *Glosse* of the *Causes*; that in the succeeding work of *Interpreting Nature*, and *Framing Axiomes*, all things may be in more Readines. And for the *Causes* herein by Him assigned; his Lordship perswadeth *Himselfe*, they are farr more certaine, then those that are rendred by Others; Not for any Excellency of his owne Witt, (as his Lordship is

wont to say) but in respect of his continuall Conuersation with *Nature*, and *Experience*. He did consider likewise, that by this Addition of *Causes*, Mens mindes (which make so much hast to find out the *Causes* of things;) would not think themselues vtterly lost, in a Vast VVood of *Experience*, but stay vpon these *Causes*, (such as they are) a little, till true *Axiomes* may be more fully discovered.

The addition of causes thus has an ambiguous place in the conceit of the volume. They are not strictly limited to the “matter” of the *Sylva*, or the base foundations of Bacon’s epistemic architecture. In fact, as the generating conceit re-emerges in the middle of Rawley’s defense here, it seems that the navigational value of these glosses works against the conceit itself: “by this Addition of *Causes*, Mens mindes (which make so much hast to find out the *Causes* of things;) would not think themselues vtterly lost, in a Vast VVood of *Experience*.” The topos reappears here in narrative rather than material form, evoking the errancy of biblical woods and of the forests of romance. But, as Rawley continues, the metaphor twists again, so that Bacon’s glosses do not so much offer a roadmap as they put a stop to movement altogether: rather than find themselves lost in this wood, readers will instead “stay vpon these *Causes*, (such as they are) a little, till true *Axiomes* may be more fully discovered.” The addition of the glosses, like the formlessness of the matter itself, puts the brakes on associative and ratiocinative velocity. Rawley’s metaphor of the vast wood thus functions awkwardly in this image: the problem he poses with the image, and which the glosses on causes thus seem to solve, is disorientation: so that “Mens mindes (which make so much hast to find out the *Causes* of things;) would not think themselues vtterly lost, in a Vast VVood of *Experience*.” But the orientation Bacon offers is not within or across the wood’s geography, but an orientation to what is immediately before us: to stay “a little” upon these causes. The only solution, it seems, is patience, a kind of letting go: a reader

or natural historian will stay “true *Axiomes* may be more fully discovered.” The greater orientation of discovery, then, occurs at some unknown future moment, introduced only in the passive voice.

Bacon resisted putting “these Particulars into any exact *Method*” because he wanted his readers to continue as he had: “hee conceiued that other men would now thinke, that they could doe the like; And so goe on with a further Collection: which if the *Method* had been Exact, many would haue despaired to attaine by Imitation.” To set these particulars firmly into a method or system might lead to despair. Further collection, on the other hand, follows the opposite course – hope? – with an openness to future experience.

Throughout this preface, Rawley must tread a line between the distinction and humility of both Bacon and his project – a play on literary and publishing conventions likely intensified by Bacon’s ambiguous social status at the time of his death. Bacon is not ashamed, Rawley writes, “to be a VVork-man and a Labourer; And to digge the Clay, and burne the Brick” in the foundation of this greater work.” But Bacon also has something distinct to add, not by virtue of his own wit (Rawley demures) but because of a certain intimacy: “And for the *Causes* herein by Him assigned; his Lordship perswadeth Himselfe, they are farr more certaine, then those that are rendred by Others; Not for any Excellency of his owne Witt, (as his Lordship is wont to say) but in respect of his continuall Conuersation with *Nature*, and *Experience*.” The intimacy of this “conversation” – the temporal dilation it implies – departs from many of the violent images often associated with Bacon’s experimental philosophy – of the torture of nature,

for example, or the “breaking” and “grinding” of knowledge.²⁸⁹ Instead, Rawley gives Bacon’s engagement with nature the name of a social activity and the formal rhythm of a habit. This is a very different relationship of reader, space, and material than we have seen previously: the form of relation Bacon invites is not borrowing but a kind of visitation, a staying patiently with the material. He wants to keep not only roots but slips. This is in part because the space of the forest is not actually a literary fiction – it maps onto the space of nature. The *Sylva* itself in this sense is also meant to represent a “continuall Conuersation” with nature.

Of course, *Sylva Sylvarum* is not in fact an undigested heap of particulars: it is carefully and numerically organized – if not for that fact easier to read linearly – and, as Graham Rees has shown, individual experiments were carefully crafted and revised in Bacon’s notebooks before appearing in print. Compared to Bacon’s essays, aphorisms, and longer works, relatively little has been written on the style of the *Sylva*’s thousand experiments, perhaps in part because they seem so roughly unformed. The work is organized according to ten centuries, each containing one hundred “experiments.” The experiments vary in length and structure, but each is organized around a kernel of observation of hearsay, and relays an empirical procedure or technique, or a natural-historical observation, sometimes collating divergent or various examples on the same question. Each century has its own ostensible topic, within which individual experiments sometimes wander fairly widely. Ranging prosaically through these topical clusters, individual experiments often read more like essays than like extracts from a

²⁸⁹ See Carolyn Merchant, *The Death of Nature: Women, Ecology, and the Scientific Revolution* (New York: HarperCollins, 2010), and the debate surrounding it.

book of secrets or like rigorous scientific notes, as we might expect them in a lab book today.

Consider Experiment 382, an “Experiment Solitary touching *Winter* and *Summer Sickesses*”: “It is commonly seene, that more as *Sick* in the *Summer*, and more *Dye* in the *Winter*; Except it be in *Pestilent Diseases*, wich commonly raigne in *Summer*, or *Autumne*. The Reason is, because *Diseases* are bred (indeed) chiefly by *Heat*; But then they are Cured most by *Sweat*, and *Purge*; which in the *Summer* commeth, or os prouoke, more Easily: As for *Pestilent Diseases*, the Reason why most *Dye* of them in *Summer*, is because they are bred most in the *Summer*; For otherwise those that are touched are in most Danger in *Winter*”(102). This brief experiment is the same length as many in the collection, though some are significantly longer, and come closer to the form of essays. It never includes a particular observation, but begins with a “common” observation before turning quickly to generalities, an explanation of causes, and radiating out from that to articulate an assessment of risk that might be translated to new cases. Bacon in this case moves quite quickly between different kinds of mobile generalities.

But compare this later experiment, gathered in the fourth century: “Men haue entertained a Conceit that sheweth prettily; Namely, that if you graft a *Late Coming Fruit*, vpon a Socke of a *Fruit-tree* that *commeth early*, the Graft will beare *Fruit Early*, As a Peach vpon a Cherry; And contrariwise, if an *Early-Comming-Fruit* vpon a Stocke of a *Fruit-Tree* that *Commeth late*, te Graft will beare Fruit late; As a Cherry vpon a Peach. But these are but Imaginations, and vntrue. The *Cause* is, for that the Cions ouerruleth the Stocke quite; and the Stocke is but passiue onely, and giueth, Aliment, but no Motions to

the Graft”(Experiment 421, 113). Bacon begins here with a procedure, an account that attributed to some common population that could easily appear as instructions in a book of secrets like Hugh Plat’s. In this spot in its century, it follows a series of eight experiments describing methods for changing the times at which roses bloom (“To make *Roses*, or other *Flowers* come late, is an Experiment of *Pleasure*,” he writes.) Each of those eight experiments begins briefly with a report of a method or a simple description, before offering a cause based on the sun or the movement of sap, along with an explicit prediction or guarantee.

When this movement towards generality appears in 421, it serves to disprove, rather than to guarantee. Indeed, there is no actual experience or experiment at work in 421: merely hearsay that is disproved by opposition to a natural law. Indeed, Bacon does call upon what seems to work literally like a law *in nature*, that the “Cions ouerruleth the Stocke quite.” This law of governance, which we saw systematized by Ralph Austen in Chapter 4, is both mobile – moving with the scion and its travels – and ostensibly universal in its applications. The style of individual experiments, then, is often much less open than Rawley’s preface would have you believe, with the exception of several longer, miscellaneous selections that read more like essays than accounts of techniques. But Bacon does not in general seem to hesitate to leap from a single account or observation to naming a cause or law behind it.

In its claims to openness to future augmentation, the terms of Rawley’s preface accord closely with what Stanley Fish calls “the experience” of reading Bacon’s *Essays* – in particular, his claim that they resist and undermine the conclusions which they begin in order to modulate and fashion certain kinds of mental readiness and openness in the

reader. Training the mind not to “jump and fly” from particulars to great generalities, Bacon’s method in general emphasizes these “short and scattered sentences” – aiming, as Fish describes, “to ‘arouse’ men rather than to ‘force or ensnare’ their judgments.”²⁹⁰ Against critics (especially Anne Righter and Brian Vickers) who see the *Essays* as a formless and unplanned miscellany, Fish sees a unity beyond the miscellaneity of content and attitude: finding “a consistency of experience.” What unites them against these accusations of formlessness is an orientation towards the scene of their reception:

In short, while the dialogues of Plato and the sermons of Donne are self-consuming, Bacon’s *Essays* are merely self-regulating; his words may be, as he terms them, seeds, living not so much in their references as in their effects, but they will flower in other words rather than in a vision, and in words which do have the referential adequacy that is presently unavailable. For all their provisionality the *Essays* are finally objects; they are not used up in the reading but remain valuable as source material for future consultation, for they reflect quite accurately the partial (not irrelevant) understanding of the mind that fashioned them and of the minds that read them.²⁹¹

The *Essays*, in this final reading, make themselves available as store, much like the contents of the *Sylva* aim to do. Their “referential adequacy,” likewise, is future oriented.

The temporal openness and deferral of generality seen as so central by both Rawley and by Fish seems to occur on the level of the collected genre, rather than the individual experiments. That is, their openness to future time inheres more successfully in the multitude –and the ongoing labor represented by multiplicity – than in the implied psychology of these individual examples. The work of collection and invention – and their potentially competing temporal bounds – also frames the relation between the *Sylva*

²⁹⁰ Stanley Fish, *Self-Consuming Artifacts: The Experience of Seventeenth-Century Literature* (Berkeley: U of California P, 1972), 86.

²⁹¹ Fish, 92; 154.

Sylvarum and the *New Atlantis*. The brief letter appended by Rawley to the beginning of the narrative places the *New Atlantis* and the natural history in complementary and competing relationships:

This *Fable* my Lord deused, to the end that He might exhibite therein, a *Modell* or *Description* of a *Colledge*, instituted for the *Interpreting* of *Nature*, and the Producing of *Great* and *Marueilous Works* for the *Benefit* of *Men*; Vnder the Name of *Salomons House*, or the *Colledge of the Sixe Dayes Works*. And euen so farre his *Lordship* hath proceeded, as to finish that Part. Certainly, the *Modell* is more Vast, and High, then can possibly be imitated in all things; Notwithstanding most Things therin are within Mens Power to effect. His *Lordship* thought also in this present *Fable*, to haue composed a *Frame* of *Lawes*, or of the *best State* or *Mould* of a *Common-wealth*; But foreseeing it would be a long Worke, his Desire of Collecting the *Naturall History* diuerted him, which He preferred many degrees before it.

This Worke of the *New Atlantis* (as much as concerneth the *English Edition*) his *Lordship* designed for this Place; In regard it hath so neare Affinity (in one Part of it) with the preceding *Naturall History*.²⁹²

Rawley's introductory note draws a contrast between two versions of literary labor: the "*Fable*" (including "a *Modell* or *Description* of a *Colledge*," and, though unconsummated, "a *Frame* of *Lawes*, or of the *best State* or *Mould* of a *Common-wealth*"); and, on the other hand the *collecting* of a natural history – whose fruits are in those ten centuries bound into the preceding pages. The language with which Rawley describes the direction and distribution of Bacon's attentions is suggestive: his "*Desire* of *Collecting*", Rawley writes, *diverted* him, because it was that labor which "He preferred many degrees before it." This separation of kinds of labor (especially next to the language of degree) reanimates a distinction that Rawley draws in the first Epistle (that at the beginning of the *Sylua Sylvarum*, at the front of the same volume.) This is interesting both because Rawley draws a firm distinction between framing/moulding and collecting, and because this distinction is accompanied by a different relationship to desire. Rawley's point, in the end, is that the *New Atlantis* is incomplete because of the

²⁹² "To the Reader," *New Atlantis*, in *Sylva Sylvarum*, a2r.

dilation of Bacon's process of collection. The ever-expanding openness of the natural history thus also keeps incomplete the model narrative that accompanies it, the process itself deferring and undermining its figurative capture.

Jonson's Forests

"The Forrest," a collection of 15 poems, appears at the center of Jonson's 1616 Folio, just following his *Epigrammes*. On the printed table of contents, it represents a distinct visual break, the first entry after the *Epigrammes* and a series of plays that is not paired with the name of a dedicatee. Such prefatory formality might seem unnecessary, however, given the sequence's suffusion with Sidneian address, admiration, and praise. "To Penshurst," the second poem of the sequence, (following the brief "Why I write Not of Love"), praises the country house (and the family behind it) largely by praising the fecundity and stateliness of its grounds, in which several trees figure centrally – so that the conceit of the collection seems to map quickly onto the real matter (poetically invoked) of these Sidneian woods.

I will return below to how such an association plays out in that miniature miscellany, but I want first to note that this sylvan conceit does not end with the 1616 collection, but is extended and transformed in Jonson's Second Folio. This second gathering of Ben Jonson's works (published posthumously in 1640-1) includes two long sections echoing the title of "The Forrest": *Timber*, a collection of prose sententiae and wisdom, and *Under-Woods*, a poetic miscellany. Each includes its own title page and

imprint, with the latter following immediately upon *Timber*. *Under-woods* begins with a note to the reader on the title's verso describing its relationship to the earlier gathering of poems:

To the Reader.

*With the same, leave the Ancients,
call'd that kind of body Sylva, or
[hyle], in which there were workes of divers
nature, and matter congested ; as the mul-
titude call Timber-trees , promiscuously
growing, a Wood, or Forrest : so am I
bold to entitle these lesser Poems, of later
growth, by this of Vnder-wood, out of
the Analogie they hold ot the Forrest, in
my former booke, and no otherwise.*

BEN. JOHNSON.

Jonson thus announces the affiliation of these three arboreal collections, inviting us to read them together. But critical responses have generally resisted, finding little in common beyond the fact of some miscellaneity – and even then, readers have found much more variety in these lengthier and rougher later collections. Perhaps inevitably, readers have instead diverged according to the circumstances of the different folio gatherings in which the collections appear.

The cluster of these sylvan gatherings does not map easily onto a single familiar vision of Jonsonian authorship. The 1616 Folio is often considered a founding moment of authorial self-presentation and self-possession, and shows the active hand of Jonson in the process of publication. Joseph Loewenstein has written that “the 1616 folio marks a

major event in the history of what one might call the bibliographic ego.”²⁹³ Looking at the organization of the poems within the careful architecture of the whole volume, recent readings of “The Forrest” have seen Jonson’s artful hand in its arrangement and conception, reading it not as an undigested or convenient mass of “stuff” but as a designed arrangement of pieces. The coherence and reach of this ostensible design has implications for how such readings take the relation of the figurative and the literal.²⁹⁴

The situation of the Second Folio, published posthumously in 1640-41, is considerably more complicated. This second edition of Jonson’s works was brought out in two volumes, the first a reprint of the 1616 collection, and the second a more or less miscellaneous gathering of other writings, including several plays, a translation of Horace’s *Ars Poetica*, Jonson’s *English Grammar*, along with *Timber* and *Under-Woods*. The rights to copy for these works were in various hands, having gone through complex trajectories in the decades previous, and so the ultimate publication of the two volumes was the result of complex and questionable editorial circumstances.²⁹⁵

Many of our common ideas about Jonson as a self-fashioned authorial figure derive from the accomplishment and presentation of the First Folio of 1616, leaving the

²⁹³ Loewenstein, “The Script in the Marketplace,” in Stephen Greenblatt, ed., *Representing the English Renaissance* (Berkeley: U of California P, 1988), 265.

²⁹⁴ See for example Kamholtz, Jonathan Z. “Ben Jonson’s Green World: Structure and Imaginative Unity in The Forrest,” *Studies In Philology* 78.2 (Spring 1981): 170-193; Ian Donaldson’s argument in “Jonson’s Poetry,” in *The Cambridge Companion to Ben Jonson*, ed. Richard Harp and Stanley Stewart (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2001) 119-139; Norbrook, *Poetry and Politics in the English Renaissance* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2002), 163-171, on the potentially politically conservative associations of these ideas of order; Newton on “The Forrest” as a miniature, or a “critical collection” (“Making Books from Leaves: Poets become Editors,” in *Print and Culture in the Renaissance*, ed. Gerald P. Tyson and Sylvia S. Wagonheim (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1980.), 246-64.)

²⁹⁵ For useful account of how the second folio was made, see William P. Williams, “Chetwin, Croke, and the Jonson Folios,” in *Studies in Bibliography* 30 (1977), 76-96; as well as Loewenstein, *Jonson and Possessive Authorship*, Afterword.

two decades of Jonson's life and writing following its production a kind of afterthought, or remainder.²⁹⁶ The preface cited above to *Under-woods* seems to encourage such a way of thinking, placing it in explicit relationship to "The Forrest," but lesser, lower, and later ("so am I bold to entitle these lesser Poems, of later growth, by this of Vnder-wood, out of the Analogie they hold ot the Forrest, in my former booke, and no otherwise.") *Timber* itself enters almost as an afterthought, perhaps, with an imprint date on its own title page of 1641. Nonetheless, by explicitly extending this sylvan motif across works and across decades, Jonson extends and affirms some authorial continuity, no matter how divergent the collections themselves – though through a range of images that, in their allusions both to convention and to ecology, seem to undermine the position of that authorial figure.

If the Jonson of the Folios is both an author and an editor/gatherer, we must also acknowledge that the relationship between collecting as an editorial practice and the construction of proprietary authorship functions differently in each case. Jennifer Brady sees these distinctions behind the "doubtful reception" of *Timber*, attributing it to the "disrepute" of the 1640 Folio.²⁹⁷ Differences between the 1616 and 1640 publications,

²⁹⁶ Richard Newton, "Making Books from Leaves: Poets become Editors," *Print and Culture in the Renaissance*, ed. Gerald P. Tyson and Sylvia S. Wagonheim (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1980), 246-64. "Jonson and the (Re-)Invention of the Book," *Classic and Cavalier: Essays on Jonson and the Sons of Ben*, eds. Claude J. Summer and Ted-Larry Pebworth (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1982), 31-55. See also Gants, Bland, Loewenstein, Newton, and Swan.

²⁹⁷ Jennifer Brady, "Progenitors and Other Sons in Ben Jonson's *Discoveries*," in *New Perspectives on Ben Jonson*, ed. James Hirsch (Madison, NJ: Fairleigh Dickinson P, 1997). 16-34. Brady describes the neglect of *Timber* prior to "the reappraisal of Jonson's Caroline period launched in the mid-1980s by Anne Barton and Annabel Patterson, among others.," ascribing this neglect to the Oxford edition's focus on the 1616 *Workes*. The Oxford editors, by writing off the more haphazard 1640 Folio, prefer the "idealized Jonson over his successor, the disenfranchised writer exposed in *Under-wood's* begging poems or represented piecemeal in the fragments of *The English Grammar* or *Discoveries*"(17).

she argues, are not merely circumstantial. Rather, *Timber* (in this later volume) “reflects his growing absorption during his Caroline years with the legacies that poets, scholars, and other humanist founders leave their heirs,” and as such he contents of the second folio contest the textual “monopolist” Jonson had fashioned in 1616, working to imagine a new version of authorial legacy.²⁹⁸

Why is Jonson using trees and forests? To some readers, this has seemed an essentially conservative gesture – a metaphorical and generic deference to genealogy, priority, and hierarchy. To other readers who see a humanist, occasional, or more spontaneous thread in these generic affiliations, Jonson’s use of the genre of *silva* (especially in the works appearing posthumously in the 1640 Second Folio) seems quite radical indeed: a sharp rebuke to his earlier assertions of poetic authorship, an endorsement of miscellaneity and disorder, and an admission and invitation to collective circulation and reuse. In truth, trees appear in a range of guises in Jonson’s oeuvre, and it is not always easy to draw an unambiguous connection between particular diegetic or metaphorical trees and these broader generic structures.

David Norbrook argues that the figure of growth carries with it association of gradual progress and continuity throughout the 1616 Folio: “His conservatism was not simply backward-looking: his organic imagery has strongly positive associations, reflecting a belief that intellectual and political progress was being made. He was a great admirer of Bacon. One of his favourite writers was the sixteenth-century humanist Vives,

²⁹⁸ Brady, 18-19. The role of copy and original, progenitor and heir, she argues, “tends to blur in *Discoveries*. The humanist inhabits both (or all) places, either by turns or at once. Despite their asymmetry, no position is understood to be inherently privileged, since Jonson assumes their necessary complementarity: for him, an author is only as good as his emulators, a copy very conceivably as valuable as the original”(Brady, 19). By publishing fragments of Jonson’s writing, Digby had (Brady suggests) “already challenged his Caroline contemporaries’ ideas of Jonsonian authorship”(18—19).

a friend of More and Erasmus, who used the imagery of natural growth to indivate the possibility of making new discoveries.”²⁹⁹ According to Norbrook, the image of the forest in itself is potentially conservative, evoking a “symbol of political balance established by Magna Carta.”³⁰⁰ Such an argument, however, seems better suited to the formal alignment the 1616 “Forrest” than the more miscellaneously amalgamated matter of *Timber* and *Under-wood*, and this position on the conservatism of Jonson’s trees may be a matter more of that ostentatiously authorizing volume than of Jonson’s relation to trees as such.

In fact, Jonson’s senses of “timber” often seem to undermine a stable notion of authorship or textual form. We can trace this through the ambiguous rawness of the matter itself, and the place that leaves for Jonson’s own hand. The full title of *Timber* reads:

TIMBER:
OR,
DISCOVERIES;

MADE VPON MEN
AND MATTER: AS THEY
have flow’d out of his daily Read-
ings ; or had their refluxe to his
peculiar Notion of the Times.

On the verso is given a Latin gloss under the head “SYLVA.”, with language closely echoing Quintilian’s influential definition of the genre and quoting a Renaissance edition of Statius. It concludes: “*Ità etiam libros suos in quibus varia, & diversa materiæ opuscula temerè congesta erant, Sylva appellabunt Antiqui : Tymber-trees.*” The dozens

²⁹⁹ Norbrook, 168.

³⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 168.

of pages of prose that follow adhere to many of the conventions of printed Renaissance commonplace books, reflecting in print the humanist practices of gathering and copying central to the education and textual habits of so many educated men in early modern Europe.

Jonson includes two images of “flow” in this subtitled gloss. These “discoveries” are occasioned by reading, flowing out of it, or they have some relation (or reflux, flowing back into) an occasion more topical – still filtered though the author, though, so “to his peculiar Notion of the Times.” “Flow” likely invokes the traditional of *silvae*, and the version of spontaneous poetic production the genre was associated with. Quintilian, in his rather critical gloss, described such poets’ “hasty outpourings,” complaining that “while the words and rhythm may be corrected, the matter is still marked by the superficiality with which it was crowded together.”³⁰¹ Julius Caesar Scaliger’s classification of *silvae* as a genre likewise emphasized crowding and flow: “Silvae are poems expressed spontaneously and with warmth (*subito excussa calore*). They derive their name from the multifarious matter, the crowd of things treated, or else from their roughness – for poets ‘used to pour out effusions in an unpolished form and correct them afterwards.’”³⁰²

“Discoveries” is the running title throughout, and has been for many years the standard critical moniker for the collection, which effectively shifts its frame from the “stuff” of timber to the epistemic performance of uncovering and revelation that “discovery” implies. On the first page of text, the work is given yet another title, “Explorata: or, *Discoveries*.” “Explorata” invokes Jonson’s personal motto (“*Tanquam*

³⁰¹ As cited and translated Fowler, “The Silva Tradition,” 164.

³⁰² Ibid, 165.

explorator”) and extends the title’s language of discovery. More subtly, it also plays on the title page’s language of flux: though *explorare* in Latin means, as we expect from the English, “to search out,” it could also mean, “to cause to flow,” possibly via *ex-* (out) and *pluere* (to flow.) Thus, while the plural perfect participle used by Jonson here translates directly as “things ascertained or known”, it also captures the flows evoked on the title page.

As a term describing discursive method and style, “flow” receives more ambivalent treatment within the text itself. The most famous case is likely Jonson’s ambivalent praise of Shakespeare’s style and method: “Hee was (indeed) honest, and of an open, and free nature: had an excellent *Phantsie*; brave notions, and gentle expressions: wherein hee flow’d with that facility, that sometime it was necessary he should be stop’d”(*Timber*, 98). (At another point, he dismisses the “fluxive” arguments of some theologians (104).) More systematically, at a point later in *Timber*, he defends a position of slow and deliberate reading and composition – that is, of diligent and deliberate concoction. As stated, these general principles oppose themselves to the undigested products of flow (a physiological evocation well-established within the scope of Jonson’s stylistic imagination.)

On the title page itself, and throughout *Timber*, the image of flux and movement is in a complex conversation with the language of supply, store, and matter – captured on this title page by the generic affiliation with *silvae* and by the appearance of the word *supellex* in an epigraph. The latter term draws a bridge, I would argue, between the arboreal imaginary of *Timber* and Jonson’s various uses of “furnish” and “furniture” within *Timber*, where it carries the ethically and pragmatically explicit sense of “that stuff

that makes man ready for life.” That is, his furniture. (The association between the two might also be encouraged by the humanist conception of the “seat” of an argument.)

The epigraph also implies the necessity of a collectivity: if you try relying just on yourself, then your store will be slender indeed. So, if the *Timber* of the title promises a storehouse in the pages following, then the epigraph stands in for the gratitude of a borrower and commonplacer – roles fully inhabited by the Jonson behind *Timber*. The timber-trees, in other words, represent a gathering of both sentences and people, some named but more unnamed, background sources of Jonson’s flux and reflux. The notion of such texts (and the textual fragments of *sententiae*) as a *common* storehouse was a humanist touchstone from Erasmus and others, sanctioning and structuring a version of intimate textual traffic among a select group of educated men.³⁰³ Much of the collection itself follows this pattern, openly drawing from classical and humanist sources and opening its own store of wisdom to those who might venture into the forest. The opening pages, in fact, might easily read as a commonplace book, with *sententiae* and reflections gathered by Latin topical headings in the margins.

At the same time, this invocation of a collective behind the store of *supellex* sits oddly with the final part of Jonson’s long subtitle: “or had their refluxe to his peculiar Notion of the Times.” What is the place of this “peculiarity” in the humanist *topos* of the collective forest? How has Jonson – reader, digester, *tanquam explorator* – filtered the flow of the ancient into the modern? The presence of “peculiar” at this point on the title

³⁰³ Kathy Eden, *Friends hold all things in common* (New Haven: Yale UP, 2001).

keeps Jonson's person squarely in the picture of a textual mass that is almost entirely borrowed – that is, fundamentally, collective and impersonal. “Discoveries” and “Explorata” have a similar effect, keeping peripherally visible the agent doing the textual discovering and exploring. “Explorata” has a doubly personal implication, invoking as well Jonson's motto, “Tanquam Explorator” – written in many of his books – a kind of emblem of the ambivalent signature behind this promiscuous reader.³⁰⁴

Such a language of rhetorical and argumentative furnishing is central to the commentary on governance and counsel that Jonson offers at the outset of the collection. He writes, in the very first pages: “In being able to counsell others, a Man must be furnish'd with an universall store in himselfe, to the knowledge of all *Nature*: That is the matter and seed-plot; There are the seats of all Argument, and Invention. But especially, you must be cunning in the nature of Man: There is the variety of things, which are as the *Elements*, and *Letters*, which his art and wisdom must ranke, and order to the present occasion. For we see not all letters in single words; nor all places in particular discourses. That cause seldome happens, wherein a man will se all Arguments.”(*Timber*, 88).

³⁰⁴ Compare Jonson on discovery, peculiarity, ancient and modern, and style (from *Timber*): “Virgill was most loving of Antiquity; yet how rarely does hee insert "aquai," and "pictai"! Lucretius is scabrous and rough in these; hee seekes 'hem: As some doe Chaucerisms with us, which were better expung'd and banish'd. Some words are to be cull'd out for ornament and colour, as wee gather flowers to straw houses, or make Garlands; but they are better when they grow to our style; as in a Meadow, where though the meere grasse and greenesse delights; yet the variety of flowers doth heighten and beautifie....” And just a few sentences earlier: “As Livy before Sallust, Sydney before Donne: and beware of letting them taste Gower, or Chaucer at first, lest falling too much in love with Antiquity, and not apprehending the weight, they grow rough and barren in language onely. When their judgements are firme, and out of danger, let them read both, the old and the new: but no lesse take heed, that their new flowers, and sweetnesse doe not as much corrupt, as the others drinesse, and squalor, if they choose not carefully.”

A counselor, in other words, must be furnished with a lot of seats. *Timber* (as does timber, in a different but not distant context) furnishes many of these seats, and the situation (situatedness) of a seat for Jonson returns to the metaphors of natural discovery, and the scene of a landscape.³⁰⁵ The prince himself, meanwhile, must be treated *as if* he is already furnished, though the counselor is necessarily adding some supplement: “And to the *Prince*, or his *Superiour*, to behave himselfe modestly, and with respect. Yet free from *Flattery*, or *Empire*. Not with insolence, or precept; but as the *Prince* were already furnished with the parts hee should have, especially in affaires of *State*. For in other things they will more easily suffer themselves to be taught, or reprehended: They will not willingly contend”(*Timber*, 88).

The language of furnishing and flow also shapes Jonson as a critic and reader, and it is according to these terms that Montaigne’s essays (which are not in fact so distinct from *Timber*) come under attack for having been “brought to the stake raw”:

Some that turne over all bookes, and are equally searching in all papers, that write out of what they presently find or meet, without choice, by which means it happens, that what they have discredited, and impugned in one worke, they have before, or after extolled the same in another. Such are all the *Essayists*, even their Master *Mountaigne*. These in all they write, confesse still what bookes they have read last; and therein their owne folly, so much, that they bring it to the *Stake* raw, and undigested: not that the place did need it neither; but that they thought themselves furnished, and would vent it (*Timber*, 90).

The range of images in this final criticism is worth reflecting on. It begins with the embodied and gustatory: the stuff of Montaigne and other essayists is undigested, a vivid physiological rendering of Ovid’s *indigesta moles*. They *think* themselves furnished –

³⁰⁵ “A man should so deliver himselfe to the nature of the subject, whereof hee speakes, that his hearer may take knowledge of his discipline with some delight: and so apparell faire, and good matter, that the studious of elegancy be not defrauded; redeeme Arts from their rough, and braky seates, where they lay hid, and over-growne with thornes, to a pure, open, and flowry light: where they may take the eye, and be taken by the hand”(*Timber*, 89; where it follows on advice about counsel.)

that is, that they, on their own, have the *supellex* of the title page – but in this thought they delude themselves. Finally, they “vent” this matter, a word that evokes the flow of the long title, but brings it back to the digestive (ventricular) imaginary that runs through much of Jonson’s criticism (and which Bruce Boehrer has discussed at length).³⁰⁶ We might imagine the vapors of digestion, which, according to Renaissance anatomy, could easily drift upwards and imprint unreliable phantasies on the imagination. It is, in any case, an image of physiological impulsion and overflow. Jonson’s phrasing (“they thought themselves”) cuts sharply to the core of this solecism, that such writers misrecognize both themselves and their matter (or, in the case of Montaigne, confusing the two.) We might still wonder, though, what such a criticism is doing in a work that is itself so apparently undigested.

Timber itself has often been taken as essayistic, and some editors and readers have tried to break it into sections and subsections, such that its progress reads less like an undigested mass than like Bacon’s essays, for example, or, in the case of its most famous section, on poetry, as a prelude to Pope’s “Essay on Criticism.” The format, progress, and style of *Timber* does invite the comparison: many of the paragraphs include topics in the margins that function like the headings of commonplace books, or brief Latin proverbs or mottos on which the English prose serves as a commentary. This latter format makes many individual paragraphs read like essays of Bacon’s, beginning with a proverbial assertion and then winding topically around it. Indeed, more recent readers and editors have often treated the relative disorder of Jonson’s prose as if it were a collection of essays. Swinburne’s long essay on the collection runs through its pieces through

³⁰⁶ Boehrer, *The Fury of Men’s Gullets: Ben Jonson and the Digestive Canal* (Philadelphia: U of Pennsylvania P, 1997.)

reference to individual essays. Felix Schelling's edition of 1892 brings these marginal glosses to the beginning of each paragraph, where they appear in italics (as in the 1641 edition) followed by a full stop and a long dash, and then the full English text of the paragraph.

The difference, however, may be found less in the particularities of the form itself, than in the turns of revision and digestion that Jonson is able to perceive behind the looseness of the form. As Richard Peterson has argued, the language of digestion echoes Jonson's ambivalent praise of Shakespeare (who, writing spontaneously, "wanted Arte"), and reflects his own complex views of revision. At points, Jonson attacks the spontaneity of poetic flow ("The common Rymers powre forth Verses, such as they are (*ex tempore*) but there never come from them one Sense, worth the life of a Day.") This was in explicit contrast with Virgil, who "made a quantitie of verses in the morning, which afore night he reduced to a lesse number." This sentiment is not unambivalent, however. As Peterson notes, however, the *ingenium* of the poet is precisely the ability to pour forth from a store: "*First, wee require in our Poet ... a goodnes of naturall wit. For, whereas all other Arts consist of Doctrine, and Precepts: the Poet must bee able by nature, and by instinct, to powre our the Treasure of his minde.*"³⁰⁷ As Peterson notes, "the liquid metaphor, significantly enough, is Jonson's own addition" to a passage he echoes from Cicero.³⁰⁸

In *Timber*, revision itself stands as a kind of repetition, or *Exercitatio*: "To this perfection of Nature in our *Poet*, wee require Exercise of those parts, and frequent. If his wit will not arrive suddainly at the dignitie of the Ancients, let him not yet fall out with it,

³⁰⁷ *Timber*, ll. 2409-13, Peterson, 137

³⁰⁸ Peterson, 137.

quarrel, or be over-hastily Angry; offer, to turne it away from Study, in a humor; but come to it againe upon better cogitation; try an other time, with labour. If then it succeed not, cast not away the Quills, yet: nor scratch the Wainescott, beate not the poore Deske; but bring all to the forge, and file, again; tourne it a newe” The labor of composition is this repetition – a kind of turning, Peterson argues, with which Jonson plays with “*versus*” as “turn” in Latin. Again, in his translation of Horace, he advises on a friend’s suggested revision: “If you deny’d, you had no better straine, / And twice, or thrice assay’d it, but in vain; / He’d bid blot all; and to the Anvill bring / Those ill-torn’d verses, to new hammering”(ll. 623-8).³⁰⁹

Bruce Boehrer has placed Jonson’s images of digestion and transformation at the center of what he theorizes as an embodied poetics. It is through that very process he argues that some matter comes to seem primary and natural, and some secondary, processed, and digested.³¹⁰ A poet, Jonson writes in *Timber*, aims to “convert the substance, or Riches or an other *Poet*, to [their] owne use Not as a Creature, that swallowes, what it takes in, crude, raw, or indigested; but, that feedes with an Appetite, and hath a Stomacke to concoct, divide, and turne all into nourishment.” By setting up this concept of the raw and the digested, Jonson may in fact be challenging a distinction between art and nature: “one arguable reason why Jonson likes to think of literary invention as a process of digestion is that digestion itself, in Renaissance popular and medical terminology, is a process that both collapses and reinscribes distinctions of the

³⁰⁹ Peterson also suggests that Jonson has in mind Horace’s opinion of two other poets: “his brilliant but ‘muddily flowing’ predecessor Lucilius ... and Horace’s noble tribute to the seething mountain torrent that was Pindar”(Peterson, 132). We might keep in mind the consistent images of flow.

³¹⁰ As Boehrer argues, this is not in fact a distinction between raw nature and digested culture. Rather, as he writes, “it would instead appear to offer a contrast between a cultural material that has by artistic fiat been assigned the preemptive status of natural matter and a cultural process that further refines that matter.”

nature/culture variety.”³¹¹ This complex of digestive metaphors achieves what Boehrer calls a “plane of consistency,” a term he borrows from Deleuze to name the flattening of metaphorical and ontological distinctions, and the abundant multiplicity that replaces them. The digestive process itself, Boehrer argues, performs this pleasurable “somatic unity-in-difference.”³¹²

While my own focus here is not the metaphorical life of the alimentary tract in Jonson’s writings, I have dwelled on this case in part because of the relationship it sets up between formed and unformed matter, but also because it helps us begin to think about the consequences of the confusion that sets in when the same language names the subject of discourse and its form. That is, in these various collections, Jonson uses the generic language of trees to both theorize and organize his own textual practices. When particular trees also appear within them, they are contained within the conceit – a material particular within the generality of the collection – but they are also to at least some degree sublated to the “plane of consistency” that Boehrer attributes to alimentation.

Though this may be a somewhat intractable theoretical question, its consequences come out more clearly in the context of “The Forrest,” where the attachment of trees to real territory potentially conflicts with their belonging in the fantastic literary territory of

³¹¹ Boehrer, 119. He brings the work of these metaphors in Jonson back to Massumi and Deleuze: conductivity of figure>analogy. “The thick flux of Jonson’s conceptual oppositions contributes to a similar end by constantly calling in question the integrity of perception as mediated through self-identity and negation. As a result, Jonson’s *Discoveries* may largely be read as an attempt to mobilize representation against itself, or to move it beyond itself. If, as Nietzsche observed, language is inherently metaphorical, the Deleuzian plane of consistency “is the abolition of all metaphor; all that consists is Real”(Plateaus 69). For its part, Jonson’s use of metaphor, as in the case of the digestive tropes cited above, marks an effort to collapse distinctions between signifier and signified, vehicle and tenor, and enable free movement through the resulting space”(121).

³¹² Ibid, 112.

the gathered *silva*. This tension returns us to the question of occasional poetry's "entanglement with life."

In contrast to the most conspicuous qualities of *Timber* and *Under-woods*, critical responses to "The Forrest" emphasize its design, finding little of the rawness, roughness, and spontaneity often associated with the genre. It seems a gathering in which the hand of the author is carefully present. Alastair Fowler argues that Jonson, in "The Forrest," rewrites the classical genre according to the modern frame of the thematic poetic collection, abandoning Statian spontaneity in favor of a planned, structured sequence. Within this structure, Fowler suggests, Jonson allows the conceit of the genre itself to help generate the particulars of its contents.³¹³ The particular trees within the sequence, in Fowler's reading, thus speak only secondarily to the contexts in which they appear, and (it seems to follow) serve mostly to remind us of Jonson's own literary achievements and allusions. Jonathan Kamholtz suggests that the title of Jonson's "Forrest" turns on this basic doubleness, and "implicitly describes both a genre and a place, artificial diversity and organic growth. The title suggests both verbal fictions and the tangible world. The virtue Jonson celebrates throughout the collection often feels like the same mixed product."³¹⁴

This doubleness – especially in Fowler's more mannerist reading – threatens to be, frankly, awkward in the context of poems of praise addressed to a patron. Is Jonson, in gathering a forest as his own legacy (which would be one way to gloss the practical and

³¹³ Fowler writes: "Jonson overgoes Statius in the device of taking up various senses of *silva* and making them generate topic after topic for the sequence." "The *Silva* Tradition in Jonson's *The Forrest*." In Maynard Mack and George deForest Lord, eds., *Poetic Traditions of the English Renaissance*. New Haven: Yale UP, 1982. 163-180; 174.

³¹⁴ Kamholtz, 176.

ideological function of the 1616 folio), reclaiming these trees as his own kind of distinctly literary properties? When particular trees appear in the “The Forrest,” their implications are often explicitly genealogical. This is true of various lines in “To Penshurst,” especially the Sidney oak – “That taller tree, which of a nut was set / At his great birth where all the Muses met”; and we might also think of the reference to “rais[ing] a noble stem” in the “Epistle to Lady Aubigny” at the end of the sequence. The association between genealogy and trees affirmed throughout the collection echoes a long tradition, of course, but it also gives us a more tactile and – specifically – populated version of the meaning of the title. “The Forrest” is peopled (ironically and fundamentally) with such noble, rooted figures, and it is the work of poetic praise that binds them into this particular collection.

But this returns us to the question of “entanglement with life” with which this chapter began, and the role of metaphor in tightening or loosening that hold – that is, in this case, the kind of transport in or out of everyday life offered by such a quotidian set of figures as these from the botanical world. Jonathan Kamholtz has suggested that Jonson’s occasional poems in fact have a very loose hold on their particular objects, and “seem to float free of the occasions that may have inspired them, and he omits or abbreviates many, if not all, of the typical descriptive and prescriptive elements.”³¹⁵ This quality of Jonson’s poetry seems to place him on the universal side of Hegel’s aesthetic calculus, but it is perhaps one of the basic difficulties and ambiguities in these poems that Wesley Trimpi’s claim about their attachment to particularity also seems to hold true on the level of style. For Trimpi, the enumerative style of Jonson’s epigrams follows a logic

³¹⁵ Kamholtz, 80.

that echoes Baconian induction: “The greater the range of subject matter, the greater the necessity to distinguish and to deal individually with particulars in order to arrive at valid generalizations.”³¹⁶

Each of the genres of short form I have touched on in this chapter – epigram, essay, experiment – is dedicated to the preservation of particularity, and – it seems – the rootedness of those particulars in their world. But, especially through the practice of assemblage that the *sylva* represents, they are also committed the propagation of those particularities, their translation to new times and places. The *sylva* seems to promise a kind of non-space that mobilizes the concrete without uprooting or denaturing it, claiming it as literary property, or natural law, carrying value in a mobile and generalized form. That will to generic preservation, however, is its own very particular fantasy of literary power.

³¹⁶ He concludes, “it is interesting to see how Horace’s method of teaching morality by citing particular was regarded as aesthetically pleasing and emotionally persuasive by the anti-rhetorical tradition and to what extent it is responsible for the power of Jonson’s poems”(Trimpi, 85.)

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pallaces, mountaines, groues, seas, springs, riuers, &c. Whereunto are
annexed other various discourses, both pleasaunt and profitable.
Imprinted at London : For N. L[ing,] C. B[urby] and T. H[ayes], 1600.

Erasmus, Desiderius. *Prouerbes or Adagies with Newe Addicions Gathered Out of*
the Chiliades of Erasmus by Richard Tauerner. Hereunto Be Also Added
Mimi Publiani. Imprinted at Lo[n]don: In Fletstrete at the sygne of the
whyte Harte [per Richardum Bances] Cum priuilegio ad imprimendum
solum, 1539.

Erasmus, Desiderius, and William Watson Barker. *The Adages of Erasmus.*
University of Toronto Press, 2001.

Erasmus, Desiderius, and Dionysius Cato. *Catonis Disticha de Moribus*. Londini: Apud Thomam Marsh, 1577.

Erasmus, Desiderius. *Prouerbes or Adagies with Newe Addicions Gathered Out of the Chiliades of Erasmus by Richard Tauerner. Hereunto Be Also Added Mimi Publiani* (Imprinted at Lo[n]don: In Fletstrete at the sygne of the whyte Harte [per Richardum Bances] Cum priuilegio ad imprimendum solum, 1539).

Eronnelle, Pierre. *The French garden: for English ladyes and gentlewomen to walke in. Or, A sommer dayes labour Being an instruction for the attayning vnto the knowledge of the French tongue: wherein for the practise thereof, are framed thirteene dialogues in French and English, concerning diuers matters from the rising in the morning till bed-time. Also the historie of the centurion mencioned in the Gospell: in French verses. Which is an easier and shortter methode then hath beene yet set forth, to bring the louers of the French tongue to the perfection of the same*. London: Printed [By E. Alde] for Edward White and are to be solde at his shop neere the little north-doore of S. Paules Church at the signe of the Gun, 1605.

Fasciculus florum: or, A nosegay of flovvers, translated out of the gardens of severall poets, and other authours. Some, word for word; some, line for line; and some, in a fuller and larger manner, to the uttermost extent both of the sense and meaning. London: Printed by A[ugustine] M[athewes], 1636.

Fasscicu[lus] florum: or, A nosegay of flovvers, translated out of the gardens of severall poets, and other authours. Some, word for word; some, line for line; and some, in a fuller and larger manner, to the uttermost extent both of the sense and meaning. London: printed by M[armaduke]. P[arsons]. and are to be sold by Robert Wilson at his shop in Grayes-Inne Gate in Holborne, 1638.

Field, Theophilus. *An Italians dead bodie, stucke with English flowers elegies, on the death of Sir Oratio Pallauicino*. London : by Thomas Creede, for Andrew Wise, and are to be sold at his shop in Powles Church-yard, 1600.

Fitzherbert, Anthony. 1565. *La Graunde Abridgement Collect Par Le Iudge Tresreuerend Monsieur Anthony Fitzherbert, Dernierment Conferre Auesq[ue] La Copy Escript, Et Per Ceo Correct: Aueques Le Nombre Del Fueil, Per Quel Facilement Poies Trouer Les Cases Cy Abydges En Les*

Lyuers Dans, Nouelment Annote. London: In ædibus Ricardi Tottell, 1565.

———. *Natura Breuium Newly Corrected, in Englishe: With Diuers Addicions of Statutes, Booke Cases, Pleees in Abatementes of the Saide Writtes, and Their Declaracio[n]s, and Barres to the Same Added and Put in Their Places Moste Co[n]uenient.* London: Imprinted at London in Flete strete, within Temple Barre, at the sygne of the Hande and Starre, by Rycharde Tottell, 1557.

Fitzherbert, John. *The Booke of Husbandrye Verye Profytable and Necessarye for Al Maner of Persons Newlye Corrected and Amendeded [sic] by the Auctor Fitzherbard, Wyth Dyuers Additions Put Thervnto.* [Imprinted at London: in fletestrete betwene the two temples by Richarde Tottell, 1555.

Forester, James. *The Marrovv and Iuice of Tyvo Hundred and Sixtie Scriptures. Or Monas Tessaragraphica, That Is: The Foure Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament, Appointed Euery Sonday to Be Read in Our Church of England, Combined and Brought Vnto One Chiefe Head and Point of Doctrine.* Printed at London: [by Nicholas Okes] for Simon Waterson dwelling at the signe of the Crowne in Paules Church-yard, 1611.

Fortescue, John. *A Learned Commendation of the Politique Lawes of England: Wherein by Most Pitthy Reasons and Euident Demonstrations They Are Plainelye Proued Farre to Excell Aswell the Ciuile Lawes of the Empiere, as Also All Other Lawes of the Worlde, Wyth a Large Discourse of the Difference Betwene the Ii. Gouvernementes of Kingdomes.... And Newly Translated into Englishe by Robert Mulcaster.* London: In Fletestrete, within Temple barre, at the signe of the Hande and Starre, by Richarde Tottell, 1573.

Fulke, William. A goodly gallerye with a most pleasaunt prospect, into the garden of naturall contemplation, to behold the naturall causes of all kynde of meteors, as wel fyery and ayery, as watry and earthly, of whiche sort be blasing sterres, shooting starres, flames in the ayre &c. tho[n]der, lightning, earthquakes, &c. rayne dewe, snowe, cloudes, springes &c. stones, metalles, earthes &c. to the glory of God, and the profit of his creaturs. Londini : [Printed by William Griffith], Anno. 1563.

Garden, Alexander. *A garden of graue and godlie flovvres sonets, elegies, and epitaphs. Planted, polished, and perfected by Mr. Alexander Gardyne.* Edinburgh : Printed by Thomas Finlason, 1609.

- Gardiner, Richard. *Profitable insructions [sic] for the manuring, sowing, and planting of kitchin gardens Very profitable for the common wealth and greatly for the helpe and comfort of poore people. Gathered by Richard Gardiner of Shrewsberie*. Imprinted at London: By Edward Allde for Edward White dwelling at the little North doore of Paules at the signe of the Gunne, 1603.
- Gascoigne, George. *A hundreth sundrie flowres bounde vp in one small poesie*. London: Henry Bynneman, 1573.
- . *The Posies of George Gascoigne Esquire*. Imprinted at London by H. Bynneman for Richard Smith, 1575.
- . “Certayne Notes of Instruction,” in G. Gregory Smith., ed., *Elizabethan Critical Essays* v.1 (Oxford: Clarendon, 1904).
- . *A Hundreth Sundrie Flowres*. Ed. G.W. Pigman. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2000.
- Gerard, John. *The herball or Generall historie of plantes. Gathered by Iohn Gerarde of London Master in Chirurgerie*. Imprinted at London : by [Edm. Bollifant for [Bonham Norton and] Iohn Norton, 1597.
- Gifford, Humphrey. *A Posie of Gilloflowers*. London: [By Thomas Dawson] for John Perin, 1580.
- A Godlie Gardeine : Out of the Which Most Comfortable Herbes May Be Gathered for the Wounded Conscience of Sinners*. London: Printed by J. Beale for R. Bird, 1629.
- Googe, Barnabe. *Eglogs Epytaphes, and Sonettes. Newly Written by Barnabe Googe: 1563. 15. Marche*. Imprynted at London: By Thomas Colwell, for Raffé Newbery, dwelyng in Fleetstrete a litle aboue the Conduit in the late shop of Thomas Bartelet, 1563.
- Googe, Barnabe, and Conrad Heresbach. *Foure Bookes of Husbandrie, Collected by M. Conradus Heresbachius, Councillor to the High and Mightie Prince, the Duke of Cleue: Containing the Whole Art and Trade of Husbandrie, Gardening, Graffing, and Planting, with the Antiquitie and Commendation Thereof. Newly Englished, and Increased by Barnabe Googe, Esquire*. At London: Printed [at Eliot’s Court Press] for Iohn Wight, 1586.

- . *Foure Bookes of Husbandry, Collected by M. Conradus Heresbachius, Counseller to the Hygh and Mightie Prince, the Duke of Cleue: Conteyning the Whole Arte and Trade of Husbandry, with the Antiquitie, and Commendation Thereof. Newly Englished, and Increased, by Barnabe Googe, Esquire.* At London: Printed [by John Kingston] for Iohn VVight, 1578.
- . *Foure Bookes of Husbandry, Collected by M. Conradus Heresbachius, Counseller to the Hygh and Mightie Prince, the Duke of Cleue: Conteyning the Whole Arte and Trade of Husbandry, Vvith the Antiquitie, and Commendation Thereof. Nevvelly Englished, and Increased, by Barnabe Googe, Esquire.* At London: Printed by Richard Watkins, 1577.
- Googe, Barnabe, and Marcello Palingenio Stellato. *The Firste Syxe Bokes of the Mooste Christian Poet Marcellus Palingenius, Called the Zodiake of Life. Newly Translated out of Latin into English by Barnabe Googe.* Imprinted at London: By Ihon Tisdale, for Rafe Newbery, 1561.
- Grange, John. *The golden Aphroditis a pleasant discourse, penned by Iohn Grange Gentleman, student in the common lavve of Englande. Wherevnto be annexed by the same authour asvvell certayne metres vpon sundry poyntes, as also diuers pamphlets in prose, which he entituleth his Garden: pleasant to the eare, and delightful to the reader, if he abuse not the scente of the floures.* London: [printed by Henry Bynneman], 1577.
- Guazzo, Stefano. *The ciuile conuersation of M. Steeuen Guazzo written first in Italian, and nowe translated out of French by George Pettie, deuided into foure bookes. In the first is conteined in generall, the fruites that may bee reaped by conuersation ... In the second, the manner of conuersation ... In the third is perticularly set foorth the orders to bee obserued in conuersation within doores, betwéene the husband and the wife ... In the fourth, the report of a banquet.* London: Richard Watkins, 1581.
- Guicciardini, Lodovico. *The garden of pleasure contayninge most pleasante tales, worthy deeds and witty sayings of noble princes [et] learned philosophers, moralized.* Trans. James Sanford. London: Henry Bynneman, 1573.
- Houres of recreation, or afterdinners, which may aptly be called The garden of pleasure: containing most pleasant tales, worthy deedes, and wittie sayings of noble princes & learned philosophers, with their morals. No lesse delectable than profitable.* Trans. James Sanford. London: Henry Bynneman, 1576.

Hill, Thomas. *A most briefe and pleasaunte treatise, teachyng how to dresse, sowe, and set a garden: and what remedies also may be had and vsed agaynst suche beastes, wormes, flies, and suche like, that noye gardens, / gathered oute of the principallest aucthors which haue writte of gardening, as Palladius, Columella, Varro, Ruellius, Dyophanes, learned Cato, and others manye moe.* Imprinted at London : by Jhon Day for Thomas Hyll, [1558?].

The gardeners labyrinth: containing a discourse of the gardeners life, in the yearly trauels to be bewtovved on his plot of earth, for the vse of a garden. Printed at London: by Henry Bynneman, 1577.

Howell, Thomas. *The Arbor of Amitie : Wherin Is Comprised Pleasant Poëms and Pretie Poesies, Set Foorth by Thomas Howell Gentleman. Anno. 1568.* Early English Books Online. Imprinted at London: By Henry Denham, dwelling in Pater noster Rowe, at the signe of the Starre, 1568

James VI. *The essayes of a prentise, in the diuine art of poesie.* Edinburgh: by Thomas Vautroullier, 1584.

Johnson, Richard. *A crowvne garland of goulden roses Gathered out of Englands royall garden. Being the liues and strange fortunes of many great personages of this land. Set forth in many pleasant new songs and sonetts neuer before imprinted.* London: Printed by G. Eld for John Wright and are to be sold at his shop at Christ Church gate, 1612.

Jonson, Ben. *The works of Benjamin Ionson.* London: William Stansby, 1616.

———. *The vvorkes of Benjamin Jonson. The second volume.* London : printed [by John Beale, John Dawson 2, Bernard Alsop, Thomas Harper, and Thomas Fawcet] for Richard Meighen [Thomas Walkley and Robert Allot], 1640.

———. *Works*, vol. viii, ed. C. H. Herford and P. and E. Simpson. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1947.

Kellison, Matthew. *A myrrhine posie of the bitter dolours of Christ his passion, and of the seaven vvords he spake on the crosse, composed by Ch. M.* Printed at Doway : by L. Kellam, 1639.

Kendall, Timothy. *Flovvers of Epigrammes.* London: [by John Kingston], 1577.

- Langham, William. *The garden of health conteyning the sundry rare and hidden vertues and properties of all kindes of simples and plants, together with the maner how they are to be vsed and applied in medicine for the health of mans body, against diuers diseases and infirmities most common amongst men. Gathered by the long experience and industrie of William Langham, practitioner in phisicke.* Imprinted at London : [By the deputies of Christopher Barker], [1597.]
- Larke, John. *The boke of wisdome otherwise called the flower of vertue. Folowing the auctorities of auncient doctours [and] philosophers, deuiding and speaking of vices [and] vertues, wyth many goodly examples wherby a man may be praysed or dyspraysed, wyth the maner to speake well and wyselie to al folkes, of what estate so euer they bee.* London : In Fletestreate, beneathe the conduyte, at the sygne of S. Iohn Euangeliste, by Thomas Colwell, 1565.
- Lawson, William . *A Nevv Orchard and Garden.* London: For Roger Jackson, 1618.
- Loarte, Gaspar de. *The godlie garden of Gethsemani furnished with holsome frutes of meditacion & prayer: vpon the blessed passion of Christ our redeemer.* [London : W. Carter, ca. 1576].
- Legh, Gerard. *The Accedens of Armory.* [Imprynted at London: In fletestrete within temple Barre at the signe of the hand [and] starre. by Rychard Tottel, 1568.
- Lodge, Thomas, trans. *The flowers of Lodowicke of Granado. The first part. In which is handled the conuersion of a sinner. Translated out of Latine into English, by T.L. doctor of phisicke.* London : Printed by I. R[oberts] for Thomas Heyes, and are to be sold in Paules Church-yard, at the signe of the Greene dragon, 1601.
- Lyly, John. *Euphues and his England.* London: [by T. East] for Gabriel Cawood, 1580.
- Maplet, John. *A Greene Forest, or A Naturall Historie : Vwherein May Bee Seene First the Most Sufferaigne Vertues in All the Whole Kinde of Stones & Mettals: Next of Plants, as of Herbes, Trees, [and] Shrubs, Lastly of Brute Beastes, Foules, Fishes, Creeping Wormes [and] Serpents, and That Alphabetically: So That a Table Shall Not Neede. Compiled by Iohn Maplet, M. of Arte, and Student in Cambridge: Entending Hereby Yt God Might Especially Be Glorified: And the People Furdered. Anno 1567.* Imprinted at London: By Henry Denham, 1567.

Markham, Gervase. *The English husbandman. The first part: contayning the knowledge of the true nature of euery soyle within this kingdome: how to plow it; and the manner of the plough, and other instruments belonging thereto. Together with the art of planting, grafting, and gardening after our latest and rarest fashion. A worke neuer written before by any author: and now newly compiled for the benefit of this kingdome.* London: Printed by T[homas] S[nodham] for Iohn Browne, and are to be sould at his shop in Saint Dunstanes Church-yard, 1613.

———. *Certaine excellent and new inuented knots and mazes, for plots for gardens, by which you may truely learne the art of drawing out any knot, according to the plot of your garden be it neuer so bigg the like not yet published in our language, by any author whatsoever.* London : for Iohn Marriott, and are to bee at his shop in Saint Dunstons Church yard in Fleetstreete, 1623.

———. *Gervase Markhams farwell to husbandry or, The inriching of all sorts of barren and sterile grounds in our kingdome, to be as fruitfull in all manner of graine, pulse, and grasse, as the best grounds whatsoever together with the annoyances, and preseruacion of all graine and seede, from one yeare to many yeares. As also a husbandly computation of men and cattels dayly labours, their expences, charges, and vttermost profits.* London : Printed by M. F[lesher] for Roger Iackson, and are to be sold at his shop neere Fleet-streete Conduit, 1625.

Mascall, Leonard. *A booke of the arte and maner, howe to plant and graffe all sortes of trees howe to set stones, and sowe pepines to make wylde trees to graffe on, as also remedies and mediicnes [sic].* Imprinted at London : By Henrie Denham, for Iohn Wight, 1572.

———. *A booke of the arte and maner how to plant and graffe all sortes of trees how to set stones, and sowe pepins, to make wylde trees to graffe on, as also remedies and medicines.* Imprinted at London : [By Henry Denham and John Charlewood?] for Iohn VVight, 1575.

Melanchthon, Philipp. *A ciuile nosgay wherin is contayned not onelye the offyce and dewty of all magestrates and iudges but also of [sic] all subiectes with a preface concernynge the lyberty of iustice in this our tyme newly collected and gethered out of latyn and so translated in to the Inglyshe tonge by I.G.[London]:* Imprynted by me Robart wyer, for Ihon goodale, [1550?].

Meurier, Gabriel. *The nosegay of morall philosophie, lately dispersed amongst many Italian authours, and now newly and succinctly drawne together*

into questions and answers, and translated into Englishe by T.C. Seene and allowed. Imprinted at London: At the three Cranes in the Vintree by Thomas Dawson, 1580.

Mirandula, Octavianus. *Illustrium poetarum flores per Octavianum Mirandulam collecti, & in Locos communes digesti.* Londini: Ex typographia Thomae Creed, 1598.

More, Thomas. *A Frutefull Pleasaunt, [and] Wittie Worke, of the Beste State of a Publique Weale, and of the Newe Yle, Called Vtopia: Written in Latine, by the Right Worthie and Famous Syr Thomas More Knyght, and Translated into Englishe by Raphe Robynson, Sometime Fellowe of Corpus Christi College in Oxford, and Nowe by Him at This Seconde Edition Newlie Perused and Corrected, and Also with Diuers Notes in the Margent Augmented.* Imprinted at London: by [Richard Tottel for] Abraham Vele, dwellinge in Pauls churchyarde, at the signe of the Lambe, 1556.

———. *The Vvorkes of Sir Thomas More Knyght, Sometye Lorde Chauncellour of England, Wrytten by Him in the Englysh Tonge.* Printed at London: at the costes and charges of Iohn Cawod, Iohn VValy, and Richarde Tottell, 1557.

The mystik sweet rosary of the faythful soule garnished rownde aboute, as it were with fresshe fragraunt flowers, according to the truthe of the Gospel: with fyfthe pagens of the hole lyfe and passion of our lorde Jesu Cryst, with certayn placis of the holy scripture corresponding euery pagen: vnto eche place added a deuoute prayer. Also vnto euery saynge or facte of Cryst, theris correspondent a fayer picture: that the inwarde mynde might fauour the thinge that the vtwarde eye beholdeth. Prynted in Anwerpe : At Martyne Emprowers, 1533.

Nashe, Thomas. *An almond for a parrat, or Cutbert Curry-knaues almes Fit for the knaue Martin, and the rest of those impudent beggers, that can not be content to stay their stomakes with a benefice, but they will needes breake their fastes with our bishops. Risum sum plenus. Therefore beware (gentle reader) you catch not the hicket with laughing.* (Imprinted at a place, not farre from a place [i.e. London?]: By the assignes of Signior Some-body [i.e. Eliot's Court Press?], and are to be sold at his shoppe in Trouble-knaue Stréet, at the signe of the Standish, [1589?]), STC 534

Neville, William. *The castell of pleasure The conueyaunce of a dreame how Desyre went to the castell of pleasure, wherin was the gardyn of affeccyon inhabyted by Beaute to whome he amerously expressed his loue vpon ye whiche supplicacyon rose grete stryfe dysputacyon, and argument*

betwene Pyte and Dysdayne. Enprynted at London : In the Fletestrete at the sygne of the Sonne by Wynkyn de worde, [1530?].

Northbrooke, John. *The poore mans garden, wherein are flowers of the scriptures, and doctours*. London: Printed by John Kingston for W. Williamson, 1571.

Ortulus anime the garden of the soule. Emprynted at Argentine [i.e. Antwerp] : by me Francis Foxe [i.e. M. de Keyser], 1530.

Ovidius Naso, Publius. *The floures of ouide de arte amatoria*. London: Wynkyn de Worde, 1513.

Panofsky, Richard J. intro. *The Floures of Philosophy (1572) by Hugh Plat and A Sweet Nosgay (1573) and The Copy of a Letter (1567) by Isabella Whitney*. Delmar, NY: Scholars' Facsimiles & Reprints, 1982.

Parkinson, John. *Paradisi in Sole Paradisus Terrestris = Or, A Choise Garden of All Sorts of Rarest Flowers, with Their Nature, Place of Birth, Time of Flowring, Names, and Vertues to Each Plant, Useful in Physici, or Admired for Beauty. To Which Is Annexed a Kitchin-Garden Furnished with All Manner of Herbs, Roots, and Fruits, for Meat or Sawce Used with Us. With the Art of Planting and Orchard of All Sorts of Fruit-Bearing Trees and Shrubs, Shewing the Nature of Grafting, Inoculating, and Pruning of Them. Together with the Right Ordering, Planting and Preserving of Them, with Their Select Vertues: All Unmention in Former Hervals*. The 2d impression much corrected and enlarged. London,: Printed by R.N. and are to be sold by Richard Thrale, 1656.

———. *Paradisi in Sole. Paradisus Terrestris. Or, a Choise Garden of All Sorts of Rarest Flowers, with Their Nature, Place of Birth, Time of Flowring, Names, and Vertues to Each Plant, Useful in Physick, or Admired for Beauty*. London,, 1656.

Passe, Crispijn van de. *A garden of flovvers vvherein very liuely is contained a true and perfect discription of al the flovvers contained in these foure followinge bookes. As also the perfect true manner of colouringe the same vvith their naturall coloures*. Printed at Vtrecht : By Salomon de Roy, for Crispian de Passe, 1615.

The passionate pilgrime. By W. Shakespeare. London: Printed [by T. Judson] for W. Iaggard, 1599.

Peacham, Henry. *The Garden of Eloquence, Conteyning the Figures of Grammar and Rhetorick, from whence maye bee gathered all manner of flowers, Colours, ornaments, exornations, formes and fashions of speech.* London: by H. Jackson, 1577.

The garden of eloquence conteining the most excellent ornaments, exornations, lightes, flowers, and formes of speech, commonly called the figures of rhetorike. By which the singular partes of mans mind, are most aptly expressed, and the sundrie affections of his heart most effectuellie vttered. Manifested, and furnished vvith varietie of fit examples, gathered out of the most eloquent orators, and best approued authors, and chieflie out of the holie Scriptures. Profitable and necessarie, as wel for priuate speech, as for publicke orations. Corrected and augmented by the first author. H.P. London: Printed by R[ichard] F[ield] for H. Iackson dvvelling in Fleetstrete, 1593.

Perkins, William et al. *A garden of spirituall flowers. Planted by Ri. Ro. Will. Per. Ri. Gree. M.M. and Geo. Web.* London: Printed for T. Pauier, and are to be sold at his shop entering into the Exchange, 1610.

Plat, Hugh. *Floraes Paradise : Beautified and Adorned with Sundry Sorts of Delicate Fruites and Flovvers, by the Industrious Labour of H.P. Knight: With an Offer of an English Antidote, (beeing a Present, Easie, and Pleasing Remedy in Violent Feavers, and Intermitting Agues) as Also of Some Other Rare Inventions, Fitting the Times.* At London: Printed by H. L[ownes] for William Leake: and are to be sold in Paules Church-yard, at the signe of the holy Ghost, 1608.

Plutarch. *The philosophie, commonlie called, the morals vvritten by the learned philosopher Plutarch of Chaeronea.* Trans. Philemon Holland. London: Printed by Arnold Hatfield, 1603.

Puttenham, George. *The arte of English poesie Contriued into three bookes: the first of poets and poesie, the second of proportion, the third of ornament.* London: Richard Field, 1589.

de la Primaudaye, Pierre. *The French academie wherin is discoursed the institution of maners, and whatsoeuer els concerneth the good and happie life of all estates and callings, by preceptes of doctrine, and examples of the liues of ancient sages and famous men: by Peter de la Primaudaye Esquire, Lord of the said place, and of Barree, one of the ordinarie gentlemen of the Kings Chambe: dedicated to the most Christian King Henrie the third, and newly translated into English by T.B.* London: By Edmund Bollifant for G. Bishop and Ralph Newbery, 1586.

Puttenham, George. *The art of English poesie*. London: by Richard Field, 1589.

The Returne from Pernassus: Or the Scourge of Simony. London: G[eorge] Eld for John Wright, 1606.

Robinson, Clement. *A Handefulle of pleasant delites*. London: Richard Jones, 1575.

———. *A Handefull of pleasant delites*. London: Richard Jones, 1584.

Savile, Thomas. *Adams garden A meditation of thankfulnesse and praises vnto the Lord, for the returne and restore of Adam and his posteritie: planted as flowers in a garden, and published by a gentle-man, long exercised, and happilie trained in the schoole of Gods afflictions*. London: Printed by Thomas Hauland, 1611.

Scot, Reynolde. *A perfite platforme of a hoppe garden and necessarie instructions for the making and mayntenaunce thereof, with notes and rules for reformation of all abuses, commonly practised therein, very necessary and expedient for all men to haue, which in any wise haue to doe with hops*. Imprinted at London : By Henrie Denham, dwelling in Pater noster Row, at the signe of the Starre, 1574.

Shakespeare, William. *Shake-speares sonnets*. London: By G. Eld for T[homas] T[horpe], 1609.

———. *Shake-speare's sonnets*. Ed. Stephen Booth. New Haven: Yale UP, 1980.

———. *The Complete Sonnets and Poems*. Ed. Colin Burrow. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2002.

Sherry, *A treatise of the figures of grammer and rhetorike profitable for al that be studious of eloquence, and in especiall for suche as in grammer scholes doe reade moste eloquente poetes and oratours*. London: in aedibus Ricardi Totteli, 1555

A short instruction very profitable and necessary, for al those that delight in gardening, to know the time and season when it is good to sow and replant all manner of seedes whereunto is annexed diuers plots both for planting and grafting, for the better ease of the gardener. London: Printed by Iohn Wolfe, and are to be sold at his shop ouer against the great south doore of Paules, 1592.

———. [Reprint.] *The orchard, and the garden [con]taining cer[tai]ne necessarie, secret, and ordinarie knowledges in grafting and gardening. Wherein are described sundrie waies to graffe, and diuerse proper new plots for the garden. Gathered from the Dutch and French. Also to know the time and season, when it is good to sow and replant all manner of seedes.* London: Printed by Adam Islip, 1594.

Sidney, Philip. *The Defence of Poesie.* London: William Ponsonby, 1595.

Smith, William. *Chloris, or The complaint of the passionate despised shepheard.* London: Edmund Bollifant, 1596.

Surrey, Henry Howard, Earl of, et al. *Songes and sonettes, written by the right honorable Lorde Henry Haward late Earle of Surrey, and other.* London: Richard Tottel, 1557.

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