

'Soe Honny from the Lyon came': The 1657 Wedding-Masques for the Protector's Daughters

In November 1657, as a new session of Parliament approached and Cromwell deliberated with his council over the membership of his new upper house of Parliament, the French ambassador wrote home to remark that the atmosphere in Whitehall appeared to be changing:

there seems to be a different spirit, dances having been held there again during these past days, and the preachers of the older times are withdrawing from it, . . . The subalterns of the army grumble at it; but their superiors being won over, everything will be arranged without any disturbance.¹

Bordeaux perceived change and new promise at a moment that is often overlooked. The dancing accompanied the marriages of the Protector's youngest two daughters. First came Frances, the younger of the two, who after negotiations so prolonged and tumultuous that Mary Cromwell called them 'the greatest confusion and troble as ever poor family can be in', was finally allowed to marry the man she had set her heart on: Robert Rich, the sickly grandson of Cromwell's old ally, the Earl of Warwick.² Mary's marriage, on the other hand, had been arranged by her father. She married Thomas Belasyse, Viscount Fauconberg, whose family was otherwise noted for its continuing devotion to the royalist cause: his father and brother had distinguished themselves in the service of Charles I, and his uncles, Henry Slingsby and John Belasyse, had been in the thick of the disastrous 1655 uprising.³ The Venetian ambassador wrote that 'the union has caused universal amazement'.⁴

The marriages were gossiped about because they were politically and dynastically important. Cromwell's older children had married earlier in his career to humbler spouses, but Frances and Mary were considered sufficiently princessly that rumours repeatedly circulated that they would marry into the European elite, including the persistent linking of Frances with Charles Stuart.⁵ The celebrations for the two weddings featured works by three of the Commonwealth's leading poets. Marvell and Waller wrote 'Two Songs at the Marriage of the Lord Fauconberg and the Lady Mary Cromwell'

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and 'On the Marriage of Mts. Frances Cromwell wth Mr. Rich Grandchild to the Earle of Warwicke' respectively.⁶ The Stationers' Register records an epithalamium for Mary's wedding by Davenant 'to bee sung in recitative musicke' and Henry Herbert mentions a Davenant epithalamium for Frances, which is likely to be a confusion of the former, but no such piece survives.⁷ As far as I know Waller's text has been ignored since its discovery and criticism of Marvell's songs has been limited.⁸ The boldest reading is Sherwood's argument that they constitute a revival of the Stuart court masque; low key, but unmistakably regal.⁹ Such arguments miss the point that icons or cultural forms never can be revived simply. The Protectorate's elite reused cultural materials that past kings had used. Without more drastic social reform it could do little else. But it could not replicate the original ideological import of these materials any more than it could erase the regicide.

Reports of the wedding celebrations agree that Frances' entertainment at Whitehall was grander than Mary's at Hampton Court. William Dugdale writes that Henry Scobell, as Justice of the Peace, tied the knot for Frances and Rich, and there followed festivities attended by nobles including the Countess of Devonshire (Rich's grandmother) and the Earl of Newport, with music provided by a large orchestra and mixed dancing.¹⁰ *Mercurius Politicus* corroborates that the Countess and 'many other persons of high honour and quality' were present, and Frances' marriage certificate lists Cromwell, Warwick, Newport, Robert Lord Rich, and Lord Strickland as witnesses.¹¹ Other accounts mention expensive gifts given by Frances' elder sister Elizabeth Claypole and the Countess of Devonshire.¹² Less is known about Mary's wedding. *Mercurius Politicus* reports the presence of 'many noble persons', but no account that I have found lists any of them.¹³ The Venetian Ambassador says it was conducted 'secretly', with no rejoicing having been seen in the city, perhaps by contrast with the bell-ringing and firing of the Tower guns that accompanied Frances' wedding.¹⁴ Several accounts stress that despite its lavishness, Frances' wedding too was 'private': 'It was very magnificent and sumptuous, attended by parents and friends only, no ministers or other foreigners being invited'.¹⁵ Both weddings restricted access to a greater extent than the court weddings celebrated in the masques of Jonson and Campion.

A hostile description of celebrations at Frances' wedding indicates some of the problems facing the poets:

The Protectour threw about sack posset among all the ladyes to soyle their rich clothes, which they tooke as a favour, and also wett sweetmeates and dawbd all the stooles, where they were to sitt, with wett sweetmeates; and pull'd off Riches his perucque, and would have throwne it into the fire, but did not, yet he sate upon it.

An old formall courtier that was gentleman usher to the Queene of Bohemia, is enterteined among them, Sir Thomas Billingsley, senza barba; and he danced afore them in his cloke and sword, and one of the four of the Protector's Buffons made his lip black like a beard, whereat the Knt. drew his knife, missing very little of killing the fellow.¹⁶

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For the author of this account, which claims to be based on the testimony of Hatton Rich, the bridegroom's uncle, the amusement arises from clashes between elements of a court divided by class, history and fashionability. Sack posset was traditionally drunk at weddings by the bride and groom, but the Protector's use of it here is boorishly indecorous, although his alehouse practical jokes are interpreted as signs of favour by the glittering ladies. Rich's perucque is a periwig, a new French fashion reflecting the rising prestige of the French court (the writer uses the French word).¹⁷ Billingsly had been appointed a Gentleman of his Highness's Bedchamber when some of the old court's protocols had been reinstated for the Protectorate.¹⁸ He had been an attendant of Elizabeth of Bohemia and the mention of that now-decayed Protestant heroine colours his presentation as an anachronistic figure. This old gallant becomes a parody of the intended revival of courtly entertainment by dancing with sword and cloak like a Jacobean. He has shaved off his beard to fit in with the new fashions, but one of Cromwell's clowns humiliatingly restores it with another practical joke and the dishonoured courtier reacts violently.¹⁹ A decade later Frances' second husband wrote to her that he had bumped into Billingsley and fondly reports that his dress had not changed since her father's time (although he recalls that Billingsley too had then worn a periwig), so there is probably some truth that Billingsley dressed anachronistically.²⁰ Here, however, the anachronism is another illustration of the cultural conflicts at Cromwell's court. The anecdote implies that such jars, which the marriage and entertainment were intended to resolve, are too intransigent to be danced away.

Caricatures of Cromwell that present him in conflict with the pastimes of the elite must be carefully weighed against evidence that Cromwell favoured the toleration of masques under the right circumstances. Lodewijck Huygens accompanied the Dutch ambassadors who visited England in the winter of 1651–52. He describes being taken to a masque (Huygens uses the word 'balet') organised at the house of Lady Newport:

we found a great number of ladies and lords already there, all people of quality but of the King's party . . . When we had been there for about an hour, somebody came to tell us that this evening there was no means of obtaining the protection General Cromwell had promised us, and that without this it would be inadvisable to begin anything for fear of the soldiers who, not long ago on a similar occasion, had entered the house by force, with swords and rifles, and had carried away all they could get, even hats, rapiers, and ladies' muffs. They sent an emissary to the General again but without making any headway. Then it was resolved that the party should be postponed for three or four days to see if, in the meantime, it would be possible to obtain protection. Before we parted, however, we heard two ladies sing some Italian airs. One of them sang very well according to everyone's judgement; the other had a stronger voice but not so good a delivery. When I rode home with Sir Thomas Ingram and two or three ladies, we still met a number of coaches all going there, but in vain. (Later we heard that, soon after we had gone, the soldiers had come and had been very insolent.)²¹

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This account shows Cromwell in a rather different relation to the chaotic conditions of Interregnum entertainments: even when his power was formally quite limited, he was prepared to use his influence to shield private masques from other powers in the republic, yet his blessing could be overridden by other concerns or authorities. When a masque was too risky, it seems ladies might sing to provide safer entertainment; the party's readiness to criticise their performances suggests that such singing was fashionable and competitive. The attempts by Davenant and Flecknoe to secure toleration for a 'reformed drama' reflect and attempt to rationalise a *modus operandi* along these lines. Each proposed to reform drama by moving it closer – superficially, at least – to Italian opera.²² In dedicating one of his patterns 'for a reformed stage' to Elizabeth Claypole, Cromwell's favourite daughter, Flecknoe anticipates her sympathy with 'the nobler and better sort' who would enjoy productions like *Love's Dominion* (1654).²³ *Cupid and Death* appears to have been performed under conditions corresponding with those recorded by Huygens: the 1653 quarto refers to a performance at an unofficial entertainment for the Portuguese ambassador.²⁴ The tendency towards toleration was contested however, and some entertainments at the time of the weddings attempted to prop up the association of private drama and royalist resistance. Thomas Jordan's *Fancy's Festivals* was printed in 1657 after a London performance by 'many civil persons of quality'.²⁵ The text suggests elaborate costumes and scenery were used in performance, but the masque exaggerates its own makeshiftness as evidence of social deterioration. The organs of theatrical production are personified and presented in fugitive disarray. In the first act, Poetry, Truth and Fancy unexpectedly meet each other at the site of performance. Poetry is a refugee because Ignorance is besieging Parnassus, while Truth has not been seen in the city for a while and must seek out corners in which to be spoken.²⁶ The reconstruction of Fancy, Truth and Poetry's proper society is the main theme of the masque. Through a mixture of resourcefulness, coincidence and surreptitiousness, they together shape the masque, and that shaping becomes an act of resistance against the entropy of the times. After several antimasques defiantly refigure courts in occluded places, the last act represents Royalist martyrs dancing at a heavenly, incorruptible court.

I will quote Waller's stanzas in full:

Peace ye lowd Violins, Peace,
 When the Bride begins to charm us with her Voice,
 Rivers their course
 And winds their force
 Suspending listen to the noise.

Play ye lowd Violins, Play!
 When the Bride begins to celebrate the Ball,
 With measured pace

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And sprightly grace
 The Nymphs in Dance outshining all.
 Noe less than Venus doth the throng
 Of Stars that round about her bee.
 Faire Venus from the Ocean sprang,
 She from the Prince that rules the Sea.
 Her Beauty and his martial fame
 Are theames for Lasting Song,
 Soe Honny from the Lyon came,
 And sweetness from the strong.²⁷

These stanzas were discovered as an autograph manuscript in a copy of Waller's 1645 poems.²⁸ They leave much to conjecture. There is no external evidence of their performance, so the possibility cannot be discounted absolutely that they constitute a poem written about the entertainment. I shall, however, argue below that Marvell's songs for Mary allude to Waller's analogy of Frances with Venus. Furthermore the transition between stanza forms at line eleven appears to mark stages in the entertainment: the first stanza hushes the orchestra in anticipation of a speech or song by Frances (indicated perhaps by the symbol Waller wrote between the manuscript's stanzas one and two) and the second rouses it for a dance; the third and fourth stanzas reflect on the scene while the dance continues, or after it has ended.²⁹ That the bride sang on her wedding day at first seems improbable. However, Frances took music lessons from John Hingston, and private performances by noble ladies became fashionable in the 1650s, as illustrated in Huygens's journal and by Henry Lawes' songbook prefaces, which praise Lady Dering and the now-married Egerton sisters for their musical skill (Alice Egerton sang in *Comus*).³⁰ In 'A Poem upon the Death of his Late Highness the Lord Protector', Marvell remembers Cromwell listening to Frances sing, albeit privately ('Francisca faire can nothing now but weep, / nor with soft notes shall sing his cares asleep' (lines 245–6)).

Whether Frances speaks or sings in the interlude between stanzas, Nature suspends itself to listen as though she were another Orpheus. The music too is suspended: violins are not normally considered loud instruments, but by addressing them so, Waller emphasises the grandeur of the orchestra (Dugdale notes that Cromwell hired a large orchestra for the occasion), and the imperatives create drama between the parts of the spectacle: the orchestra becomes an unruly competitor to Frances.³¹ Her performance is not part of an organic whole supported by the instruments, or part of a dialogue with the chorus; it is a personal attempt to win over the audience. Frances will dance amid other 'stars', but this too is framed as a competition in which her extraordinary gracefulness justifies her social pre-eminence, and the use of 'ball', a relatively recent word, gives the performance a fashionable edge.³² Waller's first two stanzas make performance individualistic. In *Fancy's Festivals* the

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final dance represents a transfigured royalist aristocracy, but an antimasque of soldiers and politicians struggling for the 'supream places' comically figures social contention in its absence.³³ The Hatton Rich anecdote makes the cultural differences between elements at Cromwell's court animate a similar comic drama. Characteristically, Waller directly addresses the perceived problem of discord in the Protectoral court and elite; he aestheticises contentiousness, making it the organisational principle of the masque, in the foreground of which Frances proves her abilities to a new court.

The problem with getting Frances to display her voice, grace and sprightliness so individualistically is that without making Cromwell do similar tricks – which would be as indecorous as it would be out of character (and probably his capabilities) – the masque threatens to make the sedentary figure of Cromwell seem lumpish by contrast. In recent memory the Caroline masque had been built around a dancing king. A survivor from this world, almost exactly the same age as Cromwell, danced with Frances: Mountjoy Blount, Earl of Newport (a kinsman of Rich) had progressed from 'a popular athletic pinup boy in the early 1620s' (he featured in a series of engravings of young men framed by sporting borders), to a regular masquer under Charles I.³⁴ Blount was evidently up to some kind of dance, but Cromwell had the previous summer become quite frail in health.³⁵ James I had not been a dancer, but aided by an iconographic tradition of praise and a court more complicit than Cromwell's, the Jacobean masque had made the watching monarch a participant.³⁶ Cromwellian iconography was much less stable and the wedding guests were divided more intransigently, and potentially more explosively, than the courtiers of James and Charles (fractious though those courts were).³⁷ They had neither the history together nor the will to form the interpretative community that made the semiotics of the Stuart masque cohere, which is another reason why Frances' performance was relatively limited in this respect (or so it appears from Waller's verses). Waller's solution to these problems is to idealise the contrast of Frances and Cromwell, and his third and fourth stanzas interpret the scene of the bride dancing before her father. In *A Panegyrick to My Lord Protector*, Waller developed the theme of balance between martial strength and peaceable gentleness in Cromwell's actions, but here those qualities are divided between him and his daughter.³⁸ Cromwell is honoured as the martial counterweight to the graceful and courtly bride. Their qualities are forecast as the complementary themes of future song, of which this is a foretaste, and Waller changes to an alternately-rhymed octosyllabic quatrain that emphasises balance in an even metre.

This music binds together different images of the contrast between father and daughter. Venus is a central figure in epithalamia after Catullus, but Waller makes her an image of birth that praises Cromwell's naval success, yet keeps Frances in the foreground.³⁹ This too returns to a theme of Waller's *Panegyrick*, where naval dominion secures the benefits of peace. Here Waller refers to Hesiod's version of the birth of Aphrodite, who was born mature

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from the sea-foam.⁴⁰ This is a deliberately unnatural, ungenetic image of filiality, which by encouraging the audience to imagine Frances born out of sea-spray, as she appears now, melliflously obscures the point that it ostensibly illustrates: she is Cromwell's daughter. Waller idealises the fact that Frances has no lineage to speak of and yet has emerged with the courtly manners her father eschews.

The contrast between Frances and her father is amplified in the closing image of honey from the lion, an allusion to the riddle that Samson poses the Philistines in Judges 14. Samson kills a lion on his journey to Timnath to arrange his marriage. On his return he finds bees using its carcass for a hive and uses the discovery at his wedding feast as a riddle for the bride's suspicious kinsmen: 'out of the eater came forth meat and out of the strong came forth sweetness'.⁴¹ The riddle is an example of God's providence, and the inscrutability of this image further obscures the relation between Cromwell and Frances while pushing them apart to the antitheses of strength and sweetness. The image is yet more apt because a lion dominates the Protectoral seal. The closure balances Cromwell and Frances, and stately and godly resonances.

Waller's masque makes martial and more peaceful virtues antitheses to be divided between Cromwell and his offspring, where in the *Panegyrick* written two years previously Waller had been able to describe a balance of both in the Protector himself. This shift in the way that Waller idealises political balance does not directly reflect shifts in the quality of Cromwell's authority. In early 1657, Cromwell had stood by while a faction of moderate nobles uprooted the major-generals, who had governed the country as if by martial law since late 1655.⁴² This faction (led by Lord Broghill, an ex-royalist kinsman of Warwick) galvanised Parliament to offer Cromwell the crown. Constitutional reform followed, but he refused the crown, at least partly to appease the army. The nobles pushed for a civilianisation of government, but Cromwell was apparently reluctant to abandon the army politicians whom they had so successfully attacked earlier in the year. By the time of the wedding, the civilian faction, who would have made up the bulk of the wedding party, were 'pittifully out of countenance'.⁴³ So making Cromwell a purely martial lion might have dignified his uneasiness among the dancing courtiers, but it also seems tactless. Waller seeks to refocus the spectators' hopes. The guests' memories of Judges might supply what Waller's couplet elides: Samson's lion is dead. Frances represents what will come after Cromwell, who is a stiff old soldier, but he happily watches his daughter dance like a courtier as his family marry into the nobility. This image promises that as long as no-one rocks the boat, the return to a courtly government will be smooth, bloodless, and probably quite soon.

Marvell develops Waller's tentative revival of the masque to suit a more intimate celebration and a tenser atmosphere. The two conditions were closely

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related. The Venetian Ambassador explains that the wedding was celebrated 'secretly' (no-one seems even to have known the date until *Mercurius Politicus* announced them married) because when Cromwell offered to give Fauconberg and Mary a wedding even more lavish than Frances', Fauconberg delighted Cromwell by saying he could spend the money on more important things.⁴⁴ This explanation smacks a little of face-saving. Fauconberg's three most distinguished kinsmen would have been unlikely to attend such a celebration: Sir Henry Slingsby was under arrest in Hull, John, Lord Belasyse was a founder of the Sealed Knot and a Catholic, and there was renewed friction between Lord Fairfax and Cromwell over the marriage of his daughter Mary (Marvell's former pupil) to the Duke of Buckingham.⁴⁵

Nigel Smith prompts Marvell's readers that the 'use of Platonic elements points up the revival of Caroline masque themes in Protectoral circles'.⁴⁶ A 'Caroline reading' of the first song is certainly possible, and just as Frances' performance presaged a return to a more courtly elite, intricate with Marvell's Platonism is a courtly lexicon of authority. Cynthia is an inhabitant of the realm of pure reason from where she rules clouds and seas and bears responsibilities too great for her to take a consort. But Endymion dissuades her from thinking her estate incommensurable with his by arguing that the way she sorts the clouds resembles how he sorts his sheep, that his ardour for her transcends mortality, that his tears are her responsibility to restrain, that unequal lovers set each other off, and finally, having climbed to the top of mount Latmus, that even though he cannot ascend any higher, she is at liberty to descend to meet him. They meet in a cave, while the chorus sings the moral 'to be honest, valiant, wise, / Makes mortals matches fit for deities'. Thus Endymion's success is more than amatory; his love is also a love of the platonic good and even though he cannot rise absolutely to the realm of pure reason, his devotion to it allows him to meet Cynthia in a space that her light makes both of the earth and of the sky. The platonic cosmos is mapped onto an ideal body politic in which the Cromwells inhabit the spheres of influence in the realm of pure reason. In describing the Protector's approval as his 'serenest influence', Marvell sustains the macrocosm of rule; serene can be both an honorific epithet given to ruling princes and the calm, clear quality of light emitted by heavenly bodies.⁴⁷ Part of Endymion's triumph is to assert a congruence between his condition and the rulers', restoring the ideal that the noble's estate is a microcosm of the Commonwealth. The rival stars are other rulers (alluding to the rumours that Mary and Frances would marry European royalty), but they are fixed in their places and Mary chooses to lower herself to a mere sublunary viscount, which pleases Jove (Cromwell) because he prefers not to marry his progeny 'above the air'.

The allegory literalises Waller's simile of Frances being like Venus, pleasantly excusing the other couple's absence and the fact that Frances, the younger of the two daughters, married before Mary:

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CHORUS Courage, Endymion, boldly woo,
 Anchises was a shepherd too;
 Yet is her younger sister laid
 Sporting with him in Ida's shade:
 And Cynthia, though the strongest,
 Seeks but the honour to have held out longest. (lines 29–34).

The difference between the two sisters' courtships becomes part of the play. Fauconberg came to woo an ostensibly unsuspecting Mary after the match had been all but sealed with her father.⁴⁸ The negotiations for the wedding of Frances and Rich had taken over a year, complicated by the hostility of Rich's father and unnamed family members.⁴⁹ Surviving correspondence alludes darkly to escapades that the Countess of Devonshire (who helped the couple) refers to as a 'romance': the couple may have defied their parents with some kind of pre-contract and Rich was apparently in hiding for some of the year.⁵⁰ By contrast (perhaps as a consequence) Mary's courtship was so hurried that she did not have time to write the news to her brother Henry, and apologised after the wedding.⁵¹ Compared to Mary's acquiescent affections, Frances' passion for Rich seems Venus-like indeed. In making an acute sense of responsibility part of Cynthia's coyness, Marvell tactfully praises Mary's dutifulness. Represented as Endymion, Fauconberg re-court Mary as a coy and superior Cynthia in a version of their story that is much more flattering to Mary and makes its awkwardnesses seem like virtues. But this is not escapism: Fauconberg's presumably good-humoured collusion in the fiction (he would have to look pleased when it was sung to him) shows that he shares the ideals of a civilian court and moderate Anglicanism implicit in the nostalgic iconography with which Mary, Cromwell and himself are praised. However, a series of ironies sharply delimit the meaning in this shared idealism.

Marvell's version of the Endymion and Cynthia story is strikingly original. Edward Semple Le Comte's survey of the Endymion myth in English literature shows that Marvell's masque is almost unique in portraying Cynthia as coy.⁵² The story is usually told the other way around, with a love-struck Cynthia descending on the innocent, often sleeping, shepherd. By rewriting a familiar story so boldly, Marvell draws attention to what he is not saying. He characterises Cynthia, like her father, as a serenely disinterested Platonic ruler, but the memory of how the story is usually told forms an ostentatiously suppressed allegory in ironic tension with this characterisation: it catches something of how Cromwell and his officials encouraged Fauconberg's advances. Not so much Mary's, but Cromwell's interestedness is the subtext of Marvell's masque. This dissonance is subtle, but it reminds the audience, including the mildly humiliated Fauconberg, that the reality of the political present is different from the courtly ideals projected here. The masque's fiction that the initiative is entirely Fauconberg's echoes a similar, earlier fiction. A letter from Cromwell's ambassador in Paris shows a complex of initiatives and incentives concealed beneath an idealised protocol of courtship:

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I waited last night on the gentleman [Fauconberg] and told him the advantage his pretensions might receive from his own addresses to the person principally concerned, and assured him of a good reception from the nearest relations. He professed much zeal in the business, but said he expected a clearer invitation, and asked my authority for encouraging him. I said that in these cases custom settled rules of modesty, which straitened my liberty, and I feared I had gone too far when I assured him of welcome, and left the rest to his own merit and application.⁵³

The masque develops the courtly-lover act encouraged by Lockhart. As a shepherd whose merits win a deity, Fauconberg is empowered in several senses. Through its Platonic allegory the masque solemnises not only his marriage to Mary but his access to power. This solemnisation is manifested in revived media that, like Frances' masque, presage a shift of power back to an aristocratic court. But the degree to which the Cromwell-Belasyse alliance was a political coup for Cromwell was the degree to which it was potentially dangerous. As shown above, the marriages and celebrations were widely interpreted as Cromwell throwing his lot in with the nobility in a climate where the increasing courtliness of the Protectoral household was alienating many in the army, yet at the same time the alliance empowered a man whose loyalty was hardly beyond doubt.⁵⁴ Historians have not credited insinuations by Clarendon and Sir Philip Warwick that Fauconberg saw his marriage as an opportunity to further the royalist cause, but such doubts must have occurred to the Cromwellians.⁵⁵ Marvell celebrates Fauconberg's merits, the match that they have won, and the courtly revival that it heralds. Yet Marvell's ironies make that courtly revival subtly utopian.

The images of power set before Fauconberg and the invited members of his family are intersected by dissonant ironic reflections of the moment's *realpolitik*. The climactic meeting place of Cynthia and Endymion is a cave, remembering Plato's cave, only here Cynthia's light makes it bright as the sky and frees Endymion's perceptions from the shadow-bound earthly condition:

ENDYMION The stars are fixed unto their sphere,
 And cannot, though they would, come near.
 Less loves set off each other's praise,
 While stars eclipse by mixing rays.

CYNTHIA That cave is dark.

ENDYMION Then none can spy:
 Or shine thou there and 'tis the sky. (lines 45–50)

This exchange is perfectly poised to sustain the allegory and yet suggest a less high-minded understanding. There is nothing in Cynthia's response to acknowledge Endymion's reasoning; it could be a lingering objection or a bathetic capitulation. Their shared line could symbolise concord or be Endymion hastily rationalising this capitulation, first taking her hint that she wants a place too dark for anyone to see them (a preference that would not only collapse the Platonic allegory, but also reflect ironically on Fauconberg's desire for a modest, 'secret' wedding), then finding a more decorous, Platonic

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rationale. In that bathos the more conventional version of Diana's behaviour is remembered again at the climax of the masque; the match is, in a sense, a capitulation for both the Cromwells and the Bellasyses, who fought one another for a decade in the name of the loftiest ideals. But there is something subtly humiliating about representing Fauconberg in these lines, which read straight or ironically put him in his place. Read straight, Fauconberg is the social climber, marrying above his station; the fighting Bellasyses would consider his acquiescence to the fiction a dishonourable surrender. Read ironically, these lines show Fauconberg tenuously rationalising just such a capitulation in his wife; a discomfiting theatrical reflection.

The second song begins with a shepherd, Hobbinol, announcing the celebration of the wedding:

HOBBINOL Phillis, Tomalin, away:
 Never such a merry day.
 For the northern shepherd's son
 Has Menalca's daughter won.
 PHILLIS Stay till I some flow'rs ha'tied
 In a garland for the bride.
 TOMALIN If thou would'st a garland bring,
 Phillis you may wait the spring (lines 1–8)

The shepherds' unpreparedness sets up celebrations that promise to be wholesomely improvised and simple in accordance with the Spenserian motto that 'The Courts of Kings heare no such straines, / As daily lull the Rusticke Swaines'.⁵⁶ But the spontaneity of their celebration is heavily ironised: when Phillis attempts to fetch flowers, Tomalin has to tell her what season it is, somewhat undermining her natural authority. Yet from this deflation stems compliment: Mary and Fauconberg have 'chosen such an hour / when she is the only flow'r'. By emphasising their choice in spite of convention – here a confessionalised literary cliché – the couple are as independent-minded as a Protestant couple should be in waiting for the workings of grace to bring them together.⁵⁷ Another compliment, to Cromwell, proceeds from the same deflation, which throws it into relief as a generic innovation:

Fear not; at Menalcas' hall
 There is bays enough for all.
 He when young as we did graze,
 But when old he planted bays. (lines 13–16)

Instead of defining itself in opposition to the court, the pastoral landscape now includes one. This, like the previous compliment, is set off by Phillis's conventionality; the contrast accentuates the originality of this feature in the pastoral landscape; it is a self-conscious generic innovation. Menalcas is a shepherd in Virgil's *Eclogues* who grows up through the sequence, from a young shepherd to a community leader whose song fails to save the other shepherds from displacement. Marvell's Menalcas is perhaps a more successful version of Virgil's

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leader, for whom the conventions are reshaped. Cromwell's pastoral guise dignifies his East Anglian yeoman origins; it implies a rough social parity between him and 'the northern shepherd', Fauconberg's late father. It perhaps also suggests that Cromwell used to be more willing to play at pastoral, and that pastoral is a young person's game. Like Waller, Marvell seems to be glossing a potential awkwardness in how Cromwell fits into the spectacle. But Hobbinol's couplet balances young and old and grazing and planting such that the processes seem organically linked, as if Cromwell's experience as a shepherd makes him a sympathetic prince. That Cromwell is old when he plants bays – representing both military victory and patronage of the arts – invests in the present political configuration a great sense of future growth: the growth of the constitutional settlement and the growth of the dynasty in power.

A concluding entry and chorus focus the organic society projected in Hobbinol's praise of Menalcas. The shepherds comment enthusiastically as the couple enter: Tomalin praises Mary's 'catching' eyes that lead innocent lambs astray; briefly, he makes her sexy as an anti-shepherd, but without the hint of dispraise in the earlier reference to Frances, who as Venus sports with Anchises in the shade, like the bad shepherds in 'Lycidas'.⁵⁸ The shepherds then collect themselves and resolve in a new carol to 'Pay to Love and them their due'. Their commentary on the entry has further differentiated them dramatically, giving their chorus an almost democratic authority. They sing of the social change effected by the marriage: the pastoral community has been suspended about Marina and Damon's unrivalled eligibility, but now they have chosen one another the community can begin to pair off.

the gentle swain

No more shall need of love complain;
But virtue shall be beauty's hire,
And those be equal that have equal fire. (lines 41–4)

These lines answer two traditions of political allegory – the court masque and Spenserian pastoral – that had contested the justice of access to power under the early Stuarts. The couple represent virtue and beauty, symbolism drawn from court masques such as Aurelian Townshend's *Tempe Restored*, where the King and Queen led masquers representing those qualities, and rewarded each with the other.⁵⁹ In Spenserian pastoral, unrequited love often encodes political dissatisfaction.⁶⁰ Here the gentle swain does not need to complain of love any more, because the couple's union realises the reward of virtue promised in masques like *Tempe Restored*. But the authority with which the chorus declares the couple the initiators of a new meritocracy is neither that of the prophetic outsider nor the court masque. The shepherds and nymphs enthusiastically assert the couple's merits with commercial imagery that implies autonomous justice: their chorus resolves to 'Pay to Love and them their due'; 'virtue shall be beauty's hire'. The Stuart masque would typically unite political ideals with personal loyalties; even *The Triumph of Peace* has Dice forsake Jove's Court for her new father Charles's.⁶¹ But Menalcas only

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watches as the shepherds celebrate a political enfranchisement that is just according to their own appraisal rather than by princely fiat.

Furthermore, the marriage is only an auspicious instance of social change. The chorus's refrain 'Joy to that happy pair, / Whose hopes united banish our despair' at first sounds grandiloquent and authoritative, but the intervening lines develop the sense that it only dispels hopelessness. Damon and Marina release their society from its suspension, but its right-ordering will be piecemeal:

Now lesser beauties may take place,
 And meaner virtues come in play;
 While they,
 Looking from high,
 Shall grace
 Our flocks and us with a propitious eye. (lines 35–40)

The chorus's optimism is less serene than that of the deities that proclaim the transformations in the Stuart masques. As it touches the shepherds' immediate interests, the verse suggests excitement with more rapid rhymes, and the ironic dissonances of the first song might influence how an attentive spectator would interpret their somewhat parochial hopefulness. There, Cromwell's power and interest are figured ironically through a tacit counter-narrative and ambiguities. The irony does not contradict the main narrative so much as throw it into relief as an attractive idealisation of a complex of political and ideological compromises: Fauconberg has great merits, but this fitness for office is subject to political contingencies, not least among them Cromwell's continuing support. The second song reallegorises the alliance as the satisfaction of aristocratic social justice. That Cromwell used to be a shepherd implies sympathy, but not an identity of interests with the shepherds singing the chorus. Their parochialism accentuates Cromwell's apartness: they have the beginnings of democratic authority, but for all its inheritance of masque imagery, the conclusion lacks Menalcas's gesture of endorsement. Waller's masque ultimately writes Cromwell out of its ideal political settlement. There he is a benign military dictator who has secured the nation for the coming generation of politically moderate aristocrats. Marvell similarly looks forward to the fledging of a new political generation, but subtly nuances his representation of these hopes, creating a masque alert to its own greenness.

In 1657 Cromwell was attempting to consolidate his relations with a civilian elite that had developed its own tastes and sense of cultural heritage. Waller and Marvell write masques that are sensitive to the complex of political tensions and hopes that defined these relations, and how these relations might shift in time. Thus to read these texts as celebrations of an Augustus or king in all but name risks effacing the subtlety with which the Protectoral court was represented by its poets.

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Notes

- 1 *The Writings and Speeches of Oliver Cromwell*, ed. W. C. Abbott, 4 vols (Cambridge, MA, 1937–47), IV (1947), 670.
- 2 *A Collection of the State Papers of John Thurloe*, ed. Thomas Birch, 7 vols (London, 1742), V, 146.
- 3 Mark Noble, *Memoirs of the Protectoral-House of Cromwell*, 2 vols (Birmingham, 1787; first edn 1784), II, 388; Geoffrey Ridsdill Smith, *In Well Beware: The Story of Newburgh Priory and the Belasyse Family 1145–1977* (Kineton, 1978), pp. 36–7.
- 4 *The English Civil War: A Contemporary Account*, ed. Edward and Peter Razzell, 5 vols (London, 1996), V, 64.
- 5 Roy Sherwood, *Oliver Cromwell: King in all but Name* (Stroud, 1997), p. 112; Noble, I, 149–50; Charlotte Fell Smith, *Mary Countess of Warwick: 1625–1678* (London, 1901), pp. 136–37.
- 6 *The Poems of Andrew Marvell*, ed. Nigel Smith (London, 2003), pp. 315–18. All subsequent quotations are taken from this edition and line numbers will follow in brackets. Perhaps because of the couple's eminence after the Restoration, Marvell's songs were not expunged from his 1681 folio with the other Cromwell poems (see *ibid.*, p. xiii). Beverly Chew, 'An unpublished poem by Edmund Waller', in *Essays and Verses About Books* (New York, 1926), pp. 29–32 (p. 30).
- 7 *A Transcript of the Registers of the Worshipful Company of Stationers from 1640–1708*, ed. G. E. B. Eyre and C. R. Rivington, 3 vols (London, 1913–14), II, 157; *The Control and Censorship of Caroline Drama: The Records of Sir Henry Herbert, Master of the Revels 1623–73*, ed. N. W. Bawcutt (Oxford, 1996), pp. 264–5.
- 8 But see Donald M. Friedman 'Marvell's Musicks', in Claude J. Summers and Ted-Larry Pebworth (eds), *On the Celebrated and Neglected Poems of Andrew Marvell* (Columbia, 1992), pp. 8–28.
- 9 Sherwood, *Oliver Cromwell*, pp. 115–17.
- 10 Historical Manuscripts Commission, *Fifth Report* (1876), Appendix, p. 177.
- 11 *Mercurius Politicus*, No. 389 (5–12 November 1657), p. 96; Noble, I, 319.
- 12 HMC, *Fifth Report*, Appendix, pp. 177, 183.
- 13 *Mercurius Politicus*, No. 391 (19–26 November 1657), p. 117.
- 14 Razzell, V, 65; *The Clarke Papers: Selections from the Papers of William Clarke*, ed. C. H. Firth, 4 vols (London, 1891–1901), III (1899), 127.
- 15 Razzell, V, 63; see also *The Clarke Papers*, III, 127.
- 16 British Library, Harleian MS 991, p. 23.
- 17 Norman Hartnell, *Royal Courts of Fashion* (London, 1971), pp. 32, 36, 52; C. Willett Cunningham and Phillis Cunningham, *A Handbook of English Costume in the Seventeenth Century*, rev. edn (London, 1972), p. 75, 163.
- 18 Roy Sherwood, *The Court of Oliver Cromwell* (London, 1977), p. 71.
- 19 From 1650 clean shaving was fashionable: Cunningham, p. 71. I can find no other mention of Cromwell employing clowns.
- 20 HMC, *Report of the MSS of Mrs Frankland-Russell-Astley* (1900), p. 32.
- 21 Lodewijck Huygens, *The English Journal 1651–1652*, ed. and trans. A. G. H. Bachrach and R. G. Collmer (Leiden, 1982), pp. 58–9.

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- 22 Their programmes for reform have been discussed comprehensively by Robert Shore, “‘Lawrels for the Conquered’: The Dilemmas of William Davenant and Abraham Cowley in the Revolutionary Decades of the Seventeenth Century” (unpublished doctoral thesis, Cambridge University, 1994), pp. 146–52; also see James R. Jacob and Timothy Raylor, ‘Opera and Obedience: Thomas Hobbes and *A Proposition for Advancement of Moraltie* by Sir William Davenant’, *The Seventeenth Century*, 6 (1991), 205–50.
- 23 Shore, pp. 142–5; Richard Flecknoe, *Loves Dominion* (London, 1654), sigs A3r–A3v.
- 24 Shore, pp. 125–8; Janet Clare, *Drama of the English Republic, 1649–60* (Manchester, 2002), p. 153.
- 25 Thomas Jordan, *Fancy’s Festivals: A Masque* (London, 1657), sig. A1r.
- 26 *Ibid.*, sig. A4v.
- 27 Chew, pp. 31–2.
- 28 *Ibid.*, p. 30.
- 29 The manuscript is written on the flyleaf of a copy of Waller’s *Poems* (1645): Huntington Library, 58691.
- 30 Sherwood, *Court of Oliver Cromwell*, p. 136; Ian Spink, *English Song: Dowland to Purcell* (London, 1974), p. 131; Ian Spink, *Henry Lawes: Cavalier Songwriter* (Oxford, 2000), pp. 94–106.
- 31 HMC, *Fifth Report*, Appendix, p. 177. Cromwell maintained a regular music of eight musicians and ‘two boys brought up to music’: Sherwood, *Court of Oliver Cromwell*, p. 136.
- 32 OED.
- 33 Jordan, sig. A4r.
- 34 HMC, *Fifth Report*, Appendix, p. 177; Timothy Raylor, *The Essex House Masque of 1621; Viscount Doncaster and the Jacobean Masque* (Pittsburgh, 2000), pp. 74–5.
- 35 Antonia Fraser, *Cromwell: The Lord Protector* (New York, 1973), p. 619.
- 36 See, for instance, Samuel Daniel’s *Tethys Festival*, in which the Queen and the Duke of York performed and a trident was presented to the seated King: *Court Masques: Jacobean and Caroline Entertainments, 1605–1640*, ed. David Lindley (Oxford, 1995), p. 58.
- 37 Knoppers, *Constructing Cromwell*, *passim*.
- 38 Edmund Waller, *A Panegyrick to My Lord Protector* (London, 1655).
- 39 Virginia Tufte, *The Poetry of Marriage: The Epithalamium in Europe and its Development in England* (Los Angeles, 1970), pp. 24, 58–69, 186.
- 40 Jenny March, *The Cassell Dictionary of Classical Mythology* (London, 1998), p. 55.
- 41 Judges 14. 14.
- 42 Austin Woolrych, ‘Last Quests for a Settlement 1657–1660’, in *The Interregnum: The Quest for Settlement 1646–1660*, ed. G. E. Aylmer (London, 1972), pp. 183–204 (p. 187); Christopher Durston, *Cromwell’s Major-Generals: Godly Government During the English Revolution* (Manchester, 2001), pp. 206–20.
- 43 Knoppers, *Constructing Cromwell*, p. 121.
- 44 Razzell, V, 65–6.
- 45 Geoffrey Ridsdill Smith, *Without Touch of Dishonour: The Life and Death of Sir Henry Slingsby, 1602–1658* (Kineton, 1968), p. 137; Ridsdill Smith, *In Well Beware*, pp. 36–7; Fraser, p. 640.

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- 46 Smith, *Marvell*, p. 315.
 47 *OED*.
 48 Ramsey, pp. 38–9.
 49 Thurloe Papers, V, 146; HMC, *Frankland-Russell-Astley MSS*, p. 22.
 50 HMC, *Frankland-Russell-Astley MSS*, pp. 21–3.
 51 Ramsey, pp. 41–2.
 52 Edward Semple Le Comte, *Endymion in England: The Literary History of a Greek Myth* (New York, 1944), p. 12.
 53 *CSPD*, 1656–57, p. 386.
 54 *The Picture of the New Courtier, Drawn in a Conference between Mr Timeserver and Mr Plainheart* ([London], 1656), *passim*.
 55 Noble, II, 390.
 56 *Englands Helicon or the Muses Harmony*, ed. John Bodenham (?), rev. Richard More (London, 1614), sig. [A]1r.
 57 James Turner Johnson, *A Society Ordained by God: English Puritan Marriage Doctrine in the First Half of the Seventeenth Century* (Nashville, 1970), pp. 33–6.
 58 Lines 67–8: John Milton, *Poetical Works*, ed. Douglas Bush (Oxford, 1966), p. 144.
 59 Lindley, *Court Masques*, p. 164.
 60 See David Norbrook, *Poetry and Politics in the English Renaissance* (London, 1984), p. 59 ff.
 61 James Shirley, *The Triumph of Peace: A Masque* (London, 1633), pp. 15–16.

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