

ABSTRACT

MINOR MOVEMENTS: (RE)LOCATING THE TRAVELS OF EARLY MODERN ENGLISH WOMEN

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This thesis explores seventeenth-century autobiographical records of small-scale travels and physical relocations in the work of Aemilia Lanyer, Anne Clifford, Anna Trapnel, and An Collins. Existing work dealing with women as travelers often focuses on international voyages, especially in the context of imperialism and tourism in the nineteenth century; however, the narratives I focus on here demonstrate that shifts in location need not have been as dramatic as overseas and/or international travel in order to effect transformations in gender identity. Indeed, their more “minor movements,” as I am terming them, while much less far-reaching in geographical scope, nonetheless enabled women to represent themselves as having been radically redefined both as individuals and as members of larger female communities.

(RE)LOCATING THE TRAVELS OF EARLY MODERN ENGLISH WOMEN

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I. Introduction: Minor Movements as Travel

This project is a study of seventeenth-century English women's autobiographical writing which, I argue, constitutes travel writing in its attention to movement and tropes of nation building despite the fact that the writers do not narrate voyages to foreign spaces in a national sense. Travel narratives in general have long been understood in terms of nationhood—the traveler, confronting a foreign space, people, or culture, and defining themselves and their country and culture of origin in response to “the other.” As such, critics have often approached accounts of travel by English men and women as functioning in the service of the British Empire or an imperialist society. Travel narratives are also frequently understood in terms of a shift in identity of the traveler—movement as a transformative experience. Although the texts I work with are not typical travel narratives in the types of movement they undertake, this transformative element is something the writers use to act outside of seventeenth-century feminine norms. The women whose writing I address in this project engage different types of travel experiences and, therefore, deploy the trope of nation building and citizenship in radically different ways. It is important to consider the ways traditional gender roles interact with the travel narrative and the performance of travel, either physical or textual, a subject that critics working from a variety of scholarly perspectives have addressed. In an article titled “Travel as Performed Art,” Judith Adler points out that the practice of “travel” is inherently gendered and that as such, it creates potential subversion of gender ideologies: “Sociological sensitivity to the significance of gender for travel performance will require recognizing ‘engendered’ features of male travel practices and becoming alert to the use of travel as a vehicle for symbolically challenging and evading gender restrictions as well as focusing with greater precision on institutional selection for male or female participation in any given travel style” (1380). Taking a literary approach to this question of gender and travel, Karen R. Lawrence examines both fictional and non-fictional representations of travel in women's writing, exploring “how the genres, plots, and tropes of travel and adventure have been ‘useful’ for British women writers in supplying a set of alternative models for woman's place in society” (18). Lawrence's book, *Penelope Voyages*, is an important theoretical touchstone for my own project, foremost in this idea

that travel performed by women can serve to energize questions of gender roles and open up the space for the female traveler to redefine standard gender scripts. On this foundation, I will examine how these questions of travel surface in autobiographical writing by early modern women. These women narrate travels of shorter distances and different spaces than typical narratives of international travel and adventure, but their movement no less significantly redefines their roles within seventeenth-century society.

Through the (quasi)autobiographical writing of four seventeenth-century English women's writing, I examine the ways in which even minor shifts in women's geographical/physical locations produced significant shifts in female identity and its relationship to larger social and political structures. In Aemilia Lanyer's *Salve Deus Rex Judæorum* (1611), Anne Clifford's *The Memoir of 1603* and *The Diary of 1616-1619*, Anna Trapnel's *The Report and Plea* (1654), and An Collins' *Divine Songs and Meditations* (1653), I locate examples of a trope of significant redefinition of self and gender roles attendant upon (relatively) small physical relocations. My goal is to argue for a broadened understanding of what might constitute "travel narrative" in women's writing at this time in order to recognize the ways women moved outside of and existed within culturally prescribed domestic spaces even without leaving the country. Their movements, although minor, paint a picture of the ways in which some women carved out space for themselves and imagined major changes in social and political structures. Greatly varied in style and purpose, these texts highlight the significance of movement and relocation as part of a larger practice of redefining traditional gender scripts and opening up new ways of thinking and speaking enacted by seventeenth century women as they wrote about their lives and experiences as women.

Thus far, work done on women's travel literature focuses largely on women's role(s) in the projects of imperialism, colonialism and tourism particularly in the nineteenth century. One main issue of concern that arises in a conversation about women and the relatively lengthy voyages that England's imperialist outlook fostered are the implications of sexual impropriety. Regardless of time period, the connection between women and "settled-ness" in a domestic space is equated with "good" (meaning limited to a husband) sexual behavior. Lawrence points to Milton's *Paradise Lost*, where Adam laments Eve's "strange / Desire of wandering" as an example of "explicit

representations of male fears about female wandering,” pointing out that “the implication of errancy couples movement and straying” (15). This iconic moment, the “straying” of Eve, serves to define the domestic space as feminine—a “good” woman will not stray, not even from home—and the masculine space as one of adventure, which Lawrence relates to the Odyssean epic in which Penelope stays home working at the loom while Odysseus wanders and adventures across the earth.¹ As seventeenth-century conduct literature attests, women who were “wandering” were often seen as sexually errant as well, being both disconnected from a stable domestic sphere and quite literally at risk of being the object of sexual violence while on the road, outside the ostensible protection of domestic space. What I hope to demonstrate here is that, in texts that preceded the British imperial project, we already find women in movement. Although the distances they covered were not always as lengthy—in geographical distance or time—as their nineteenth-century counterparts, the act, language and metaphors of travel and movement allowed them to reposition themselves culturally as well as physically and to redefine traditional gender roles embodied by Penelope and Eve. The authors of these “travel texts” produced narratives that represented their shifts in location as central to their project of self-fashioning and the reimagining of citizenship and women’s role within the “nations” they write into being. Women in motion outside the domestic sphere challenge cultural notions of propriety; the very act of relocation makes it possible for women to reimagine their identities in relation to a society that would limit their movement and understand their identity only in relation to patriarchal structures.²

In *Penelope Voyages*, although Lawrence devotes part of the first chapter to the mid seventeenth-century work of Margaret Cavendish, the bulk of the text focuses on women’s writing from later periods. However, in engaging in the discourses of gender

¹ Lawrence further complicates the figure of Penelope in connection with Hermes and in light of Penelope’s role creating texts: “Penelope/Hermes destabilizes these borders and remaps the geography of narrative and narrative theorizing. Weaver and unweaver, constructor and deconstructor, woman as traveler and storyteller might be said to break the law of boundaries” (10).

² See Terence N. Bowers, “Margery Kempe as Traveler” (*Studies in Philology*, Winter 2000), for a detailed discussion of the culturally subversive possibilities generated by women’s travel.

and travel, Lawrence raises many interesting questions not just about gender and travel, but of women's own writing and their fictional and non-fictional representations of travel. Lawrence's project is framed around the question of women's non-active role in traditional paradigm of travel narratives: "In the multiple paradigms of the journey plot—adventure, pilgrimage, exile, for example—women are generally excluded, their absence establishing the world of the journey as a realm in which man confronts the 'foreign'" (1). Lawrence sketches the backdrop for her project around the figures of Penelope and Hermes. Describing Penelope's role in the standard travel narrative, she writes, "Indeed, the plot of the male journey depends on keeping woman in her place. Not only is her place at home, but she in effect is home itself, for the female body is traditionally associated with earth, shelter, enclosure [...] she traditionally provides the point of departure and sometimes the goal for the male journey" (1). In the project of travel and nation-building, this is the standard narrative—the woman, at home in the domestic sphere, anchors and enables travel by men. Women who are not confined to this domestic space are subverting this standard narrative with far-reaching social and political effects. This is not to say that any act of movement engenders radical resistance to dominant ideologies—many women reinforced traditional gender roles and the precepts of the British colonial project, for instance, in their travel writings. To whatever end it was employed, however, the trope of travel and movement seems at the very least to create the possibility for women to act outside the domestic sphere and perhaps the space to voice resistance to those gendered social and political constraints that had a very real presence in their lives. Inhabiting space outside the prescribed feminine realm is an act of subversion of the standard travel narrative, opening up the space for self-fashioning and exploration on different terms. Travel, relocation, and movement allow women to place themselves in a different context and, as we will see, to create different contexts for themselves—to build "nations" or spaces foreign to the patriarchy that governed seventeenth-century culture.

Existing work on early modern travel narratives pays particular attention to nation building—the ways in which "colonial writing can be made to do domestic work" (Scanlan 8)—and issues of gender identity are frequently tied up in this discussion. Several scholars "have recently suggested that English nationhood is an earlier

phenomenon than as has often been argued” (Jowitt 2). For example, Andrew Hadfield and Claire Jowitt take different approaches to a similar question about developing nationhood and women’s place in it in recent books. In *Literature, Travel, and Colonial Writing in the English Renaissance* (1998), Hadfield works to demonstrate “that much early modern travel writing and colonial writing was written, in whole or in part, in order to participate in current pressing debates about the nature of society” (12) and to persuade readers that “travel and colonial writing need to be read in a wider range of contexts than has been hitherto the case” (16). Jowitt’s more recent book, *Voyage drama and gender politics* (2003), looks at the function of allegory in Tudor drama, “focusing on the negotiations between gender and monarchy in geographic drama” (7). Jowitt engages questions of gender representation in texts by male authors and their response to the powerful figure of Queen Elizabeth as part of her argument about the role of colonial “travel writing” in the project of nation building. By focusing our attention almost exclusively on the geopolitical nation, however, I think we are in danger of overlooking other significant uses of travel in the project of building other types of “nations” and communities.

Nation building through travel can, I think, also be located in these texts of small-scale travels in the ways the writers write into being new societies for women, imagine new worlds with new roles for them to occupy. They are, in different ways, exploring through movement what home and domestic space should be. Aemilia Lanyer and Anne Clifford, with their complex relationships to physical space, relocation, and ownership define in their writing new relationships to female authority and community—imagined nations of women and circumstances that might nurture women’s authority and autonomy. In the case of Anna Trapnel, she more explicitly imagines a nation under divine rule, the Fifth Monarchy, as she opposes the shifting political landscape of her reality. In her devotional poetry An Collins examines her own spiritual evolution, but through representations of her own physical illness she models an altered relationship to the domestic sphere. She enacts a break between her physical body and her interior self that shapes her own spirituality and poetic production.

This somewhat disparate collection of texts forms the foundation of this project on travel literature. These works are not easily grouped with traditional travel literature

because the voyages undertaken did not lead to foreign (geopolitically speaking) destinations. However, the paradigms of self-definition frequently applied to the study of travel literature seemed apt tools for opening up these texts; disruptions of domestic space and anxiety over women's errant tendencies surfaced in these texts as they do in more typical travel literature. The women in them *moved*; they moved outside of the domestic sphere, they moved into public life, they moved into physical isolation, they moved from the city to the country, they moved from homes in which they could not claim ownership to homes in which they could, they were moved by internal and external forces, and they moved in and through their texts as writers, recording their own shifts in identity and self-perceptions. Furthermore, they felt and recorded the social impact of and cultural constraint on their "travels." Lawrence writes, "Travel literature, however, by both men and women writers, explores not only potential freedoms but also cultural constraints; it provides a kind of imaginative resistance to its own plot. In flights of the imagination, as well as on the road, home is, of course, never totally left behind [...] travel literature explores a tension between the thrilling possibilities of the unknown and the weight of the familiar, between a desire for escape and a sense that one can never be outside a binding cultural network" (19). Small-scale relocations had significant impact on the lives of the women I study in terms of their lived experience as women in a society that sought to regulate their movement. The texts I examine contain narratives of women's travel which demonstrate that shifts in location need not have been as dramatic as overseas and/or international travel in order to effect similar transformations in gender identity. Indeed, their more "minor movements," as I am terming them, involved everything from travels within England and exile from court society to imprisonment and loss of mobility and subsequent confinement due to illness. While much less far-reaching in geographical scope, these minor "travels" nonetheless enabled women to represent themselves as having been radically redefined both as individuals and as members of larger female communities.

Chronologically, this project takes as its starting point the death of Queen Elizabeth I in 1603 (the details of which Anne Clifford records in her diary) and focuses primarily on the first half on the century, a time when England saw significant and frequent upheavals in social and political structures. The queen's death ended a long and

influential reign by a female monarch, dissolving a court society that gathered around a powerful female figure and refiguring monarchical authority for a nation that, for almost fifty years, had both revered and struggled to answer questions about their queen, who herself had to find ways to balance gender and authority. Religious turmoil in England swelled throughout the first decades of the seventeenth century, culminating in the execution of Charles I in early 1649. There were a large number of women who were particularly active in radical religious sects, and, therefore, entered the public, political realm on “divine authority.” It isn’t surprising that the women whose writing I explore in this project develop narratives exploring the possibilities of radical shifts in their own subjectivities in relation to the dramatic social and political transformations taking place in their society on the every level. Each of the texts engages and reacts to such different social and political pressures in the author’s own time and place. In spite of these disparities, I collect these texts together here because they illuminate each other in important ways. They in no way speak to a monolithic “women’s experience,” but they do point to the cultural norms, pressures, and social constraints that arguably reached beyond individual experience. The writing I look at here represents a diversity of experience, political and religious climate, and type of movement, but, generally speaking, it does not represent a diversity of social class—there simply were very few poor women who had the education and the means to record their own experiences. Thus, these texts do not represent directly the travel experiences of poor early modern women.

The act of traveling, however small, is of primary significance in these texts—the impetus for movement, the mode of travel—and the destinations are both described and constructed in their writing. These writers document their response to the physical shifts and work within the spaces created through movement. These spaces as well as the journeys that open them up are, admittedly, diverse, but this diversity is in part the goal of this project—to multiply the discourses of travel literature in order to examine different types of journeys undertaken by women that move them to confront an “other” of some sort and to re-imagine “home” and their role within it. In effect, through their narratives of relocation and movement, these women participate in different projects of nation building, constructing and enacting in their poetry, journals, and memoirs social

and political structures in which women might occupy very different roles than were available to them in the lived reality of seventeenth-century England. Movement is, literally and figuratively, the means by which these women imagine radical change in women's roles—new hierarchies and power structures, new attitudes towards women's contributions and culture. In the texts I examine here, no matter how short the voyage or how minor the movement, through their narratives of physical relocation the writers find the space to explore major shifts in their own gender identities and in the space women might occupy in society at large.

II. Aemilia Lanyer: Arrival and Departure in *Salve Deus Rex Judæorum*

In the work of Aemilia Lanyer, movement and space are intricately tied to significant shifts in women's identity. By depicting minor movements in which women are virtually the only actors,³ Lanyer explores, creates, and glorifies women's community and powerful female individuals. Critics frequently consider Lanyer a proto-feminist because of the ways she explicitly promotes and values women's contributions, culture and history in *Salve Deus Rex Judæorum*, dated 1611, her only known publication. From what little is known about her, she seems to have existed on the periphery of the noble/court community in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries—daughter to a court musician, reported mistress of Queen Elizabeth's Lord Chamberlain, personal friend of and perhaps the recipient of patronage from Margaret Russell, Duchess of Cumberland. In her published work Lanyer takes advantage of her connections to Margaret Clifford (born Margaret Russell)⁴, a powerful noblewoman and patroness of the

³ As Susanne Woods points out in her introduction to the poem, "The book's only acknowledgement of masculine authority is the title page's description of Lanyer as 'Wife to Captaine Alfonso Lanyer Servant to the Kings Majestie'"(xxxix).

⁴ I will continue to refer to Margaret Clifford as "Russell" first to avoid confusion with her daughter, Anne Clifford, and secondly because, like her daughter, she gives some indication that she identifies primarily with her family by birth rather than marriage. Upon her death she requests to be buried on her (Russell) family lands, with her brother, instead of with her husband's family. Her daughter, grieved by this decision, writes, "I took that as a sign that I should be disinherited of the inheritance of my forefathers" (87),

arts, and the women in her circle. Actively pursuing patronage, Lanyer is the first woman to publish an original collection of poetry in England and to claim poetry as her profession. In the oft cited “Eves Apologie” (84)⁵ passage of *Salve Deus* she works rhetorically to lift the burden of sin laid on women in the traditional Christian narrative. Lanyer’s claims and description of a female community and culture seem to more obviously encompass a broader sense of common gender concerns than other women writers of her day. In her poetry she focuses on major scriptural female figures and rewrites in no small way contemporary views of women’s virtue and nature. Among the many dedications to wealthy, powerful women beginning her text, she also writes one “To all virtuous Ladies in generall” (12). Through her writing, Lanyer resists and rewrites the social and political landscape and writes into being a world that values women’s contributions, culture and community. In rewriting the standard narrative of travel by setting women in motion whose destination is a “foreign” female community, Lanyer imagines and demands that we imagine a world of feminine authority, female alliances, and women’s culture. This demand is particularly vivid in the country house destination of Cooke-ham. “The Description of Cooke-ham” is the final poem of *Salve Deus* and is likely the first country house poem written in English. The space of the country house is figured as a site of female authority that, if not completely outside the domain of patriarchal power, is in tension with and opposition to it. Creating, lauding, and occupying the country house “nation,” Lanyer acts to disrupt cultural notions about women’s limitations and the roles they are fit to occupy by textually situating the women in her poem as citizens of a sovereign nation of virtuous women.

Other critics have noted an emphasis in Lanyer’s work on the creation of female community and a female system of patronage,⁶ but what hasn’t yet been explored is the ways in which this female community was constructed in hindsight, through a complex discourse of movement, presence and absence. Lanyer figures herself as moving away

and decides to bury her mother at Appleby (Clifford lands) upon discovering that her mother’s will allows her to have final say in the matter.

⁵ All references to Lanyer’s work come from *The Poems of Aemilia Lanyer* edited by Susanne Woods. Oxford University Press, 1993.

⁶ See Barbara Kiefer Lewalski, “Re-Writing Patriarchy and Patronage” *The Yearbook of English Studies* Volume 21 (1991): 87-106.

from that community, both literally and figuratively, and mourning its loss. It is in absence from it that she honors and recreates it in her poetry. Lanyer writes her “Description of Cooke-ham” at a remove of time and space from the title location. By recreating that community at Cooke-ham in textual form, Lanyer is constructing the space in abstraction, as an idea, and thereby opening it up to a larger number of women. The concept of movement forms a structural and thematic foundation in the poem as the poet reflects on her journey to and from Cooke-ham. While there are powerful motifs of female community throughout Lanyer’s poem, I will focus primarily on the opening dedications and the final country house poem, “The Description of Cooke-ham” as they most vividly portray the impact of movement on that female community. The dedications serve as a sort of theoretical foundation for the poem—gathering women together around a metaphorical feast—and the country house poem, which is presented as autobiographical, is her most vivid enactment of the ideal female space.

Salve Deus begins with an invitation to movement in the form of an invitation to a Passover feast.⁷ Poetry is Lanyer’s offering to her “guests” as she writes, “For here I have prepar’d my Paschal Lambe, / The figure of that living Sacrifice” (7, l.85-6). The “invitations” are contained eleven dedications—to various noblewomen, “To all vertuous Ladies in generall,” and “To the Vertuous Reader”—forming, with twelve female “guests,” a feminine image of the Last Supper.⁸ The language of invitation is explicit in the dedications that open the collection. Writing to Princess Elizabeth she says, “Even you faire Princesse next our famous Queene, / I doe invite unto this wholesome feast” (11, l. 8-9); and to the Countess of Kent, “Come you that were the Mistris of my youth [...] / Vouchsafe to grace this holy feast, and me” (18, l.1-6). The thrust of the dedications, then, is one of movement—a gathering of women around a textual feast—made even more significant by its exclusively female guest-list and imagined readership as well as its themes of feminine value and virtue. In her prose dedication “To the Vertuous Reader,” Lanyer writes,

⁷ For further discussion of the Passover motif in the poem, see Lynette McGrath, “Metaphoric Subversions: Feasts and Mirror in Aemelia Lanyer’s *Salve Deus Rex Judaeorum*,” *Literature, Interpretation, Theory (LIT)* 3 (1991): 101-13.

⁸ There are eleven dedications in the original edition, but later editions were published without Lanyer’s dedication to the disgraced Arabella Stuart (Woods xlviij).

As also in respect it pleased our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, without assistance of man, being free from originall and all other sinnes, from the time of his conception, till the hours of his death, to be begotten of a woman, borne of a woman, nourished of a woman, obedient to a woman [...] All of which is sufficient to inforce all good Christians and honourable minded men to speake reverently of our sexe, and especially of all virtuous and good women” (49-50).

Lanyer highlights the moment in the Christian tradition when all things good—“the Saviour” himself—came from a woman untouched by man. Instead of typical references to the moment in Eden when Eve is held responsible for bringing sin into the world, in no uncertain terms, Lanyer promotes the value of women’s contributions and chastises those who make unjust claims against women’s moral strength, worth and virtue.

The central dedication in this opening section is “To the Ladie Margaret Countesse Dowager of Cumberland” (34), Margaret Russell, the woman with whom she claims the most personal intimacy. In her exploration of the connections between Lanyer and Russell, Barbara Lewalski writes,

The many addresses to and praises of Margaret Clifford [Russell] throughout the volume identify her as the book’s primary patron and audience; they testify to some formal patronage in the past, and to Lanyer’s sense of her as the best present hope. However exaggerated, there is clearly some basis for Lanyer’s claim that she lived (however briefly) with the Countess and her daughter [Anne Clifford] at Cookham. (“Re-writing” 100)

Woods notes that we do not know if the dedications were successful in their aim of securing patronage because, although she lived until 1645, there is no evidence that her work was ever published again or indeed that she wrote again (Woods xxvii).

In the final section of *Salve Deus* Lanyer returns most strongly to movement as a means of engendering female community and solidarity. The title poem describing Christ’s Passion and the role of biblical women⁹ is followed by a 210-line poem in

⁹ The centerpiece of the collection, the title poem, describes Christ’s Passion in such a way that incorporates strong assertions about the role of women—their particular

pentameter couplets titled “The Description of Cooke-ham,” historically significant because it “predates by five years the poem usually cited as founding a tradition of country house poems in seventeenth-century England, Ben Jonson’s ‘To Penshurst’” (Woods xxxix).¹⁰ Cooke-ham was a property held by Margaret Russell’s brother and she occupied the house occasionally during the years she was apart from her estranged husband. Lanyer’s poem emphasizes the significance of place, not so much in homage to the house, but in its attention to the state of the natural world around the house and to the community of women that she found there. The world of the estate is defined by its mistress, Margaret Russell, and her daughter, Anne Clifford. In the poem, Cooke-ham is exclusively a women’s world—the estate and nature itself physically embraces and longs for their life-giving presence, representing this world of women and female community as a natural state of being.

Abstract movements of inspiration and removal through time and space structure the poem. The world of Cooke-ham, in Lanyer’s construction of it, cradles an Edenic paradise for the women that they move into and out of again, presumably to return to a world dominated by patriarchal authority. Lanyer figures the country house in her poem as a feminine space—not a domestic space, but a place of learning and virtue and a place that sustains and depends on female authority. The country house poem tradition in English, as established by Jonson’s poem, Lewalski argues, “Established the terms of the genre that celebrates patriarchy: Robert Sidney’s Penshurst is a quasi-Edenic place whose beauty and harmony are centered in and preserved by its Lord, who ‘dwells’ permanently within it” (“Re-writing” 104). In Lanyer’s version of the tradition, the women are afforded anything but permanence; however, the poem finds value in impermanence and movement as the genesis for its creation. The powerful central figure of Cooke-ham is a

religious and moral virtue, a rejection of misogynistic readings of the Eve story (in section titled “Eves apologie”), and a sense of solidarity and worth in female community to the exclusion of non-biblical men.

¹⁰ Lanyer’s poem was certainly published, if not written before Jonson’s “To Penshurst.” At any rate, critics have noted that Lanyer seems to have knowledge of the Classical tradition of country house poems by Horace and Martial and so is working in the “Augustan tradition of contrasting an idyllic natural order with a fallen human civilization” (Woods xl). Lewalski also comments on the tradition Lanyer echoes in “Cooke-ham”: “The controlling topos is a valediction to a place, recalling such classical sources as Virgil’s First Eclogue” (“Re-writing” 104).

woman who is portrayed as a powerful and virtuous monarch. Lanyer addresses her patroness, referring to her as “you (great Lady) Mistris of that Place” (11), and describes the whole work as her Lady’s commission—“From whose desires did spring this worke of Grace” (12). The female community found at Cooke-ham, at least in Lanyer’s text, comes from this moment, this movement of “springing” forth out of desire. Her desire figures as a minor movement—the textual community realized in Lanyer’s text finds its genesis as a shift the countess’ psyche. In another abstract minor movement, Lanyer herself has moved away from the time and space of Cooke-ham, writing the poem years after she is supposed to have visited it. The poem is the product of these minor movements—Russell’s desire, which propels the poem(s) into being, and Lanyer’s departure from the Edenic space of Cooke-ham. It is their movement away from Cooke-ham, their removal from paradise that inspires her to write and inspires Russell to request that she write. In an early dedicatory digression in “Salve Deus” she apologizes for the delay in carrying out her lady’s desire that she memorialize Cooke-ham: “And pardon (Madame) thought I do not write / Those praisfull lines of that delightful place, / As you commaunded me in that faire night” (51-52, l.17-19). In the first lines of her country house poem that follows “Salve,” the poem is framed in terms of departure: “Farewell (sweet *Cooke-ham*) where I first obtain’d / Grace from that Grace where perfit Grace remain’d; / And where the Muses gave their full consent, / I should have power the virtuous to content” (130, l.1-4). It is this sense of hindsight that re-emphasizes movement—in this case removal—as the impetus for a reimagining an environment as a paradise for women shaped by virtue and learning in a world that nurtures and reveres their authority. This series of complex relocations through space and time, where even inspiration is figured as a minor movement, illuminates the ways this trope opens up the possibilities of creating of creating new female identities and new ways of imagining women’s community and relationships. Lanyer’s poem, by means of removal from the Eden of Cooke-ham, constructs an imagined nation of female citizens, valuing their matrilineal ancestral connections and promoting each other’s interests.

The poem is structured around three minor movements—the women’s arrival, tenure, and departure—explored in rich pastoral imagery.¹¹ Lanyer is inspired, moved, to write *Salve Deus* while at Cookham, but through time it is also her removal, the farewell, that move her to write, to recreate the space in text. Rather than a static space in which a Lord reigns supreme, movement is essential to Lanyer’s country house paradise and the Edenic female community it nurtures. In the poem’s broad structural movements, coming, dwelling, leaving, springing forward, holding back, returning in memory are the most important elements. Movement, albeit minor physical relocation, is a key element in the representation of this positive feminine space. In the anticipation of their Mistress’ arrival, “The Trees with leaves, with fruits, with flowers clad, / Embrac’d each other, seeming to be glad, / Turning themselves to beauteous Canopies, / To shade the bright Sunne from your brighter eies” (131, l.23-26). As Lewalski notes, the house itself plays a small role in this country house poem (“Re-writing” 104); instead, nature, the world outside the house itself, is there to support and serve the great lady—the trees are honored to support her (132, l.46), the birds attend her (132, l.47), the “little creatures” come to play but flee when they see “the Bowe in [her] faire Hand” (132, l.49-51), even the hills bow down under her foot (131, l.35). By placing women, the woman she honors here, in a natural setting, Lanyer implies that the natural order of the world responds to women and women’s authority, resisting and subverting traditional ideology about gender and power, as she does throughout the work.

During her tenure at Cooke-ham, Russell’s religious virtue and spirituality are also connected intimately with the natural world. After describing Russell looking out over “A Prospect fit to please the eyes of Kings” (133, l.72), she writes, “What was there then but gave you all content, / While you the time in meditation spent, / Of their Creators powre” (133, l.75-77). Nature, then, is the entrance into a spiritual state of being; it belongs to a realm not of ownership or material wealth, but of true authority and

¹¹ See Kari Boyd McBride’s for an analysis of the significance of Lanyer’s entrance into the pastoral tradition. In order to establish herself in a vocation that traditionally rendered women as objects rather than subjects, she argues, “Lanyer’s use of the pastoral departs significantly from this patrilineage, implying that, if the pastoral were to serve to authorize female poetic voice, the relationship of female to male within the generic conventions would have to be altered and the cultural assumptions upon which the genre rested would have to be rethought from within the genre itself” (88).

spiritual wealth. Then Lanyer introduces biblical figures as her lady's companions in this natural setting: "In these sweet woods how often did you walke, / With Christ and his Apostles there to talke; / Placing his holy Writ in some faire tree, / To meditate what you therein did see" (133, l.81-84). Similar interactions take place with Moses, David, and Joseph. These biblical figures represent the only "male" interactions in the poem, and these are of a divine origin—not mediated through church authority or patriarchal dogma, but direct fellowship, in and through nature, with the poet's great lady.

Shifting into the final, mournful farewell movement of the poem, Lanyer writes, "And you sweet Cooke-ham, whome these Ladies leave, / I now must tell the grieffe you did conceive / At their departure" (135, l.127-129). She addresses "Cooke-ham" directly, adopting a mediator role as she turns to her reading audience—"I'm going to tell them about what you felt." The grief is not her own, but the grief of the space itself—not a personal grief as much as the grief of a higher power. She describes the natural world withering and dying, the inverse of its bursting forth with life upon their arrival: "The trees that were so glorious in our view, / Forsooke both flowres and fruit, when once they knew / Of your depart, their very leaves did wither" (135, l.133-135). Near the end of the poem, nature is even physically reaching out to restrain them from leaving: "Each brier, each bramble, when you went away, / Caught fast your clothes, thinking to make you stay" (138, l.197-198). This image of briars reaching out and snaring or piercing their clothing is, perhaps, ambiguous, communicating with a sexual overtone the desire to stay in paradise alongside a recognition of its pitfalls. Tearing apart of this community results in a loss of vitality for natural world around Cooke-ham and for the women themselves, but staying might also become a snare from which they would have to disentangle themselves.

Between the time of their sojourn at Cooke-ham and the time Lanyer writes the poem Anne Clifford who was "a virgin faire" (136, l.161) at Cooke-ham becomes "Dorset" through her marriage to Richard Sackville, Earl of Dorset. Clifford, whose own minor movements I explore below, is memorialized in Lanyer's poem at Cooke-ham, in a "pure" state, outside of the patriarchal realm not just through location, but because she was not yet married. It is interesting to note that the three women who constitute this community at Cooke-ham all had particularly difficult relationships with the patriarchal

structures that sought to govern their lives. Russell lived apart from her husband for much of their marriage, Russell and Clifford together were engaged in an inheritance dispute for years, which Clifford continued long after her mother's death, and Lanyer herself was mistress to a powerful man and, because she was going to have his child, was married off to another man to live under circumstances that were far from financially secure.¹² Especially at the time Lanyer must have written this poem, it was clear that the women she memorializes were not thriving in the world outside Cooke-ham, just as Cooke-ham withered and died when they had to depart to return to a world in which women were not the autonomous, virtuous and authoritative figures they were allowed to be in their country house estate Eden.

In the poem, the women do not spend their time in the house, but move out into nature; as such, biblical study, spiritual reflection, learning, and virtue are inscribed onto the natural world—anchored in that significant space that Lanyer immortalizes in her verse. In particular, the Oak tree becomes a site of learning and physical connection and intimacy. Lanyer draws the reader's attention to the tree early on:

Now let me come unto that stately Tree,
Wherein such goodly Prospects you did see;
That Oake that did in height his fellowes passe,
As much as lofty trees, low growing grasse:
Much like a comely Cedar streight and tall,
Whose beauteous stature farre exceeded all (132, l. 53-58)

It becomes, more than the country house, the center of existence at Cooke-ham. She writes, "How often did you visite this faire tree, / Which seeming joyfull in receiving thee, / Would like a Palme tree spread his armes abroad, / Desirous that you there should make abode" (132, l. 59-62). The tree is figured as a throne, from which the poet's great lady survey's her "kingdom"—physical spiritual, and intellectual. From the tree, Russell "might plainely see, / Hills, vales, and woods, as if on bended knee / [...] A Prospect fit

¹² Aemilia Lanyer, christened Aemilia Bassano in 1569, had access to court circles as the daughter of a court musician, but was a "gentle-woman-in-decline" ("Writing Women" 802). She married Alfonso Lanyer, also a musician, in 1592. She brought some wealth to the marriage, but money was always a concern and there is a second-hand claim that Alfonso Lanyer's spending put the family in debt (Woods xv-xviii).

to please the eyes of Kings” (133, l.67-72). Here Lanyer explicitly connects her patroness’ interaction with the natural world in terms of the patriarchal power of the monarchy, which was increasingly absolute in the years following Queen Elizabeth’s death.¹³ The Oak tree again takes a central role as Lanyer, “[g]iving great charge to noble Memory” (132, l.155) to preserve the value of this time and space, elegizes the women’s shared time and space at Cooke-ham and paints the scene of an intimate farewell. It is to the tree that mother and child go and where their alliance is cemented by learning:

But specially the love of that faire tree,
That first and last you did vouchsafe to see:
In which it pleas’d you oft to take the ayre,
With noble *Dorset* [Anne Clifford], then a virgin faire:
Where many a learned Booke was read and skand
To this faire tree. (136, l.157-163)

The Oak tree then mediates the intimacy and affection between Lanyer and Anne, who is a young, unmarried woman in the poem: “And with a chaste, yet loving kisse tooke leave, / Of which sweet kisse I did it soon bereave: / Scorning a sencelesse creature should possesse / So rare a favour, so great happinesse” (137, l.165-168). By “cheating” the Oak out of its favor from its mistress, Lanyer portrays herself as the unintentional recipient of her lady’s favor, mirroring the patronage relationship she is hoping to establish. The scene also emphasizes an intimate, almost erotic connection between the women mediated by the figure of the great oak tree, the tree that embodies Russell’s royal authority, matrilineal connection with her daughter, and erudition.

As Lanyer describes the effect of her theft, she also suggests that the tree is a victim of “Fortune,” just as she is in her social displacement from Russell and Clifford.

¹³ It has been argued that the powerful ideology of patriarchy under James’ rule served to open up space for subversion of patriarchy in reality. In a discussion of the pressures and events that helped foster women’s relatively active position in society in Jacobean England, Lewalski points out that “a larger space for cultural activity was opened to aristocratic women when Queen Elizabeth’s death removed her cultural dominance from the scene while leaving in place a powerful female example,” and that at the same time, although the Queen’s successor promoted a powerful patriarchal absolutist ideology, the power of this ideology “was often undermined in practice by conflicting demands and loyalties” (“Writing Women” 795).

Of the theft of a kiss she writes that she doesn't repent the wrong she's done "To shew that nothing's free from Fortunes scorne" (137, l.176). Earlier, Lanyer laments "Fortune's" effect in her own life: "Unconstant Fortune, thou art most too Blame, / Who casts us downe into so lowe a frame: / Where our great friends we cannot dayly see, / So great a difference is there in degree" (134, l.103-106). Her concern with social connections and movement is emphasized in her bid for patronage in *Salve Deus*. Lanyer sought to overcome social limitations by appealing to powerful women and the community at Cooke-ham. In doing so, she depicts a society not only outside of patriarchy, but outside of those class limitations that kept Lanyer apart from Russell and Clifford in court society. The movement the women enjoy at Cooke-ham is contrasted with the impossibility of social movement and interaction outside of its idyllic boundaries—another sign that movement into this space marks a break from the socio-political climate of the culture at large.

Lanyer, Russell, and Clifford need not have traveled far to reach Cooke-ham, but the space created there—perhaps in reality, but more significantly in Lanyer's text—is one that rewrites traditional views of a woman's sphere. Cooke-ham, as an intellectual, virtuous, intimate female society, is created out of their movement away from the patriarchal order of court life and into a woman-centered space. With its autobiographical feeling, the country house poem represents a community of women as something that existed, but it does not last—they must leave it behind. In her writing, though, she gives her vision of female alliance and community longevity and power not just in "Description of Cooke-ham" but in the text as a whole—an invitation to women to come and be nourished on her representations of women's authority, virtue and cultural and historical worth outside of the traditional context of patriarchal structures and limitations. As the women move to and through Cooke-ham and as the reader moves through Lanyer's proffered "feast" the author deftly uses images of movement to demonstrate a sense of self not defined by traditional gender roles and limited cultural value. In the space they create within their Cooke-ham community, the women are not solely features of a domestic sphere—they are a part of the natural order of things, they are independent spiritual beings, and their interactions are both intellectual and erotic, but always virtuous. Lanyer moves her self and her readers to a position from which women

might recreate and redefine themselves in relation to each other and to cultural structures that might restrain their physical, intellectual and spiritual movement.

III. Anne Clifford: Secondary Kingdoms and a Woman's Authority

After Anne Clifford's death on March 22, 1676 at the age of 86, Edward Rainbow, Bishop of Carlisle delivered a funeral sermon to memorialize and praise the Countess of Pembroke, Dorset, and Montgomery. In the sermon, based on a detailed explication of Proverb 14.1—"Every wise woman buildeth her house" (Acheson 237)—Rainbow expounds on the role of women in relation to their "house" in terms of governance and ownership: "The house is the woman's province, her sphere wherein she is to act, while she is abroad she is out of her territories; she is as a ruler out of his jurisdiction" (243). While the wise woman who builds and manages her house and is expected to have some authority over that space, her authority is not absolute. Rainbow later notes that "the man, as the *primum mobile*, directs the general motion of all" (253). Women, then, are rulers of a sort of secondary kingdom, answering to and essentially guided by a man, whose "employment is commonly more abroad, and without doors" (242-243). In the sermon, it is interesting to watch Rainbow attempt to bend these concepts of gender roles to the service of memorializing Clifford, whose autobiographical writings reveal a woman who is constantly trying to expand the boundaries of her kingdom beyond her husband's home and to insist on having primary and absolute authority over her domain. Insisting that her father's inheritance was rightfully hers, Clifford fought the laws and customs that would have relegated her to ruling a secondary kingdom. In Clifford's work, this site of contention creates tension and compels negotiation through which we can see a socially privileged and powerful woman developing a sense of self and place through her autobiographical writings that does not always line up with the traditional roles of a wife and mother. Her loyalties are often divided, but she remains constant to her claim for authority and ownership of her family's estates. Clifford's protracted legal battle for the right to inherit her father's estate and titles was the defining struggle of her life, and one that her mother was instrumental in

prompting and supporting. From the time she was very young, Clifford faithfully recorded the details of her life experiences and movement, leaving behind a collection of diaries and memoirs, both personal and meant for publication, that document her own perceptions of both the dramatic legal power plays alongside the details of daily life.

In a body of work¹⁴ remarkable for its detailed description of her daily life and secular introspection,¹⁵ Clifford frequently implicates her own minor movements as she works to redefine her self as an empowered property owner. Clifford documents her frequent movement between houses and properties throughout the written records of her life. Her circulation between estates is by no means unusual for women of her era and social class, but in the language she uses to describe her relocations and the significance of places she inhabits that she demonstrates a developed sense of the importance of movement and place in her identity as a woman, wife, mother, and (often most importantly) an heiress. Of her marriages, which made her first Countess of Dorset in 1609 and later Countess of Pembroke and Montgomery in 1630, Lewalski writes that Clifford “did not define herself or her place in society through these marriages and these illustrious titles. Rather, she claimed her true identity from her own family, as the ‘sole Daughter and Heir to my Illustrious Father,’ George Clifford, Earl of Cumberland, and Margaret (Russell), her adored mother and model” (*Writing Women* 125-6). Clifford insisted on defining herself not in relationship to her husbands, but to her own family. She makes this aspect of her sense of self abundantly clear in her unwavering determination to inherit from her father, to take on that authoritative role she thought was due to her, in spite of her recognition of and concern for the competing roles as wife and mother present in her life. I wish to suggest that it is, contradictorily, through the trope of movement and mobility that Clifford defines herself as fixed within her own family and does not strongly identify with her husbands’ families or titles. Clifford’s sense of herself as belonging first and foremost to her own family is cultivated through her

¹⁴ Clifford, Anne. *The Memoir of 1603 and The Diary of 1616-1619*. Ed. Katherine O. Acheson. Petersborough, Ontario: Broadview, 2007. References to Clifford’s work are from this edition. This edition represents a broad selection of her most-cited material.

¹⁵ Clifford’s writings in which secular life is the primary focus are unique for the time period, when it was much more common for women to write spiritual memoirs and reflections.

movement between properties and places and the ways in which they form her life and the ways in which she inscribes her life and heritage onto them in writing. Like Lanyer, Clifford's portrayal of travel and movement is at times an indicator of the possibility of female authority and it is, in Clifford's case, especially the possibility of authority through ownership through which she defines herself and fashions an identity for herself outside of her roles as wife and mother. Clifford paints for us a picture of a real-life journey to a space like the one Lanyer creates in "Cooke-ham"—a sort of "nation," that responds to and embraces female ownership and authority.

Throughout her life, Anne Clifford seems to have been surrounded by powerful and independent women—powerful by virtue of their wealth and social position, but also notable as patrons and intellectuals in their own right. She was a young woman of thirteen when Queen Elizabeth I died in 1603 and she was intimately connected in the circle of noblewomen around the powerful monarch.¹⁶ She begins her "The Memoir of 1603" with the Queen's death, writing that "in so much if Queen Elizabeth had lived, she intended to have preferred me to be of the Privy Chamber, for at that time there was as much hope and expectation of me both for my person and my fortunes as of any other young lady whatsoever" (43). As a young woman of good birth and noble blood, Clifford enjoyed the benefits of a classical education, but she was also exposed to the important contemporary literature of her day.¹⁷ She and her mother lived much of the time separate from her father and her mother, a powerful, intelligent woman, clearly had a powerful influence on her both in her education (as Lanyer memorializes in "Cooke-ham") and in later in her legal claims. In her introductory notes, Katherine O. Acheson writes, "As an aristocratic child and heiress—and as Margaret's daughter—Clifford was raised to take on financial, moral, and social responsibility" (12). In short, Anne Clifford

¹⁶ Although she was young (13 years old) when Queen Elizabeth died, Clifford knew many of the women who populated the Queen's court and was especially close to her aunt, Anne Russell, who "was a member of the inner circle of Queen Elizabeth's court (Acheson 43). Clifford's mother, Margaret Russell, is the main addressee of Lanyer's *Salve Deus*.

¹⁷ In *The Great Picture*, a triptych depicting Clifford's family, Clifford is portrayed among fifty books, identified with titles, "probably the most extensive record of a female-owned library from the period" (Acheson 212). These include Agrippa's *The Vanity of the Arts and Sciences*, Cervantes' *Don Quixote*, Sidney's *Arcadia*, Spenser's *Works*, Chaucer's *Works*, and Ovid's *Metamorphoses*.

was a young woman who had extensive social, financial, and educational advantages and from a young age she was surrounded by a community of women who themselves lived outside of traditional, rigid gender roles in different ways.

Clifford's writing communicates the sense of physical mobility afforded her as a member of a powerful and wealthy family. She circulates throughout a number of different houses and estates as a young adult and as a married woman, recording these relocations in her writing. While she may have had many houses at her disposal in which she could reside comfortably, her language demonstrates a keen awareness of the power of ownership. Seeking authority and absolute ownership over spaces she saw as rightfully hers by blood, she makes a clear distinction between her husband's houses and her own. In her memoir, *Life of Me*, she writes, "And for the most part, while I was his wife, I lived either in his houses and Knole in Kent, or at Bolebrook in Sussex, or in Great Dorset House or in Little Dorset House in London; but Great Dorset House came not to be his 'til the decease of his good grandmother" (229). The circulation, inheriting, and ownership of properties is always at the foreground of her writing, inflected by her personal interests and legal struggles. In order to situate herself in those spaces she claimed as her own, Clifford specifically locates significant events in her life, writing herself onto the places of her family history—a sort of "textual squatting." For example, as she describes her mother's death, which took place in one of the contested properties in Westmoreland, she writes, "And the month following, the 24th day, that blessed mother of mine died, to my unspeakable grief, in that castle of hers of Brougham aforesaid in Westmorland, *in the same chamber wherein my father was born*" (228; my emphasis). She memorializes the place of her mother's death by linking it to the space of her father's birth—a series of events that puts the women (who were not born into, but married into the family) at the heart of the issue of inheritance. The occasion of her mother's death also marks the only time her husband occupied "her" properties (they were not yet hers in the eyes of the law, although she absolutely claims the rights to them and does so without exception in her writing): "[M]y said lord came to me to Brougham Castle in Westmorland for a fortnight or three weeks, and that was the only time that he was in any part of the lands of mine inheritance (228). She maintains her doctrine of separateness in the language of property ownership throughout her writings, and this seems to carry over

to other realms, especially in her marriages, as she seems to acknowledge that her claims to her family property are the primary vow in her life, often choosing them above marital harmony. She describes herself not as a *femme couverte*, subsumed by her husband in name and property, but always separate:

Insomuch as a wise man that knew the insides of my fortune would often say that I lived in both these my lords' great families as the river of Roan or Rodamus runs through the lake of Geneva, without mingling any part of its streams with that lake; for I gave myself wholly to retiredness, as much as I could, in both those great families, and made good books and virtuous thoughts my companions. (225)

Clifford maintains separateness in her marriages because “mingling” would put her husband in the position of “primary mover” and she would find herself in charge of a domestic kingdom rather than have the titles and property handed down to her intact, as they were applied to her father. Because of the nobility and power of her family by birth, Clifford is compelled to claim this separateness and justifies it in terms of her familial heritage, regardless of her gender.

Clifford's claim to her family inheritance is virtually unshakable, but in spite of this solid foundation, Clifford is frequently forced to negotiate her conflicting loyalties and suffers the consequences of her uncompromising stance. Movement in Clifford's writing is most interesting in the ways it forces her to negotiate the tensions between spaces and in doing so highlights the forces that create those tensions—at times she is able to be powerful and authoritative, at other times she is relegated, legally and socially, to a much less powerful and self-possessed position. Clifford finds slippage in the tension and shifts (movement) between roles. She exploits this tension in her own experiences in order to negotiate the limitations placed on her as a woman or at least to subscribe to a calling that trumps traditional gender roles. As Clifford moves frequently between the country and London, between her houses and her husband's, she documents the times she does not have freedom of movement and those times her authority was challenged as a result of her position as a married woman and as a contested heiress. Immediately following her mother's death, both Clifford and her uncle begin making moves that will establish them as masters of the family properties in an effort to secure

their claims. In her *Diary* entries for July 1616, she notes that she “rid into Whinfield Park” and “willed the tenants that were carrying off hay [...] that they should keep the money in their own hands till it were known who had a right to it” and shortly after that she “signed a warrant for the killing of a stag,” and notes that it was “the first warrant [she] had signed of that kind” (95). This move to the lands of her inheritance following her mother’s death marks a time when she takes on the authoritative role she believes is her rightful duty. This brief period of authority is only the beginning of even more difficult legal skirmishes, but in it she demonstrates her willingness and capability to be the authoritative landlord, ruling a domain outside of the domestic sphere, and indeed her joy in that role. Shortly after this she remarks that, things having gone so well for her of late, “so as now I had a new part to play upon the stage of this world” (105). Clifford does not blur the lines between managing an estate and running a household, as Rainbow tends to do in her funeral sermon; rather, she marks it as a “new part” for herself—a new identity. She is out riding, surveying her lands, abroad and still within her jurisdiction.

A sense of exile marks those occasions when Clifford and, earlier in the legal proceedings, her mother retire from public court life in the face of opposition to and censure of their claims. The movement into and out of exile is another marker of the tension and release motif of Clifford’s relocations. At times the exile treads the line between self-imposed and forced upon them, as she writes in *Life of Me*, “Now by reason of those great suits in law my mother and I were *in a manner forced for our own good* to go together from London down into Westmorland” (224; my emphasis). The ambiguity in the highlighted phrase points to the negotiated status of their authority and freedom of movement as it relates to ownership. During the period when Clifford’s legal battle was at its height, there were times Sackville opposed her claim, motivated by his own financial needs, which would have been met if she agreed to give up her suit. He was by no means constant in his opposition, alternately opposing and supporting, generally depending on what was in his own best interests. In her diary from May 1616, she notes that she was told by her husband (who was angry with her for refusal to agree to the “Judges’ Award” (75) a court decision that would divide the property between herself and her uncle) via a messenger that she “should neither live at Knole nor Bollbroke,” essentially facing eviction from her husband’s homes (79). Several days later, her

husband sent for their daughter, Margaret, and about a week after another letter arrived from her husband “to let [her] know that his determination was the Child should go live at Horsely,” separated from her mother (79). Although Sackville does not physically carry out the eviction of his wife in the end, this account demonstrates the power of property ownership, even between married couples; Clifford does not share ownership of her husband’s property or even have equal authority as a parent—she fills her roles as wife and mother by his permission, which can be revoked. She is frequently forced to wait until he sends for her to come to London. At times she writes to him, asking him to allow her to leave the country and join (99). She describes her condition as exile compared to her husband’s enjoyment of society and freedom of diversion:

All this time my Lord was at London where he had infinite and great resort coming to him. He went much abroad to cocking, to bowling alleys, to plays and horse races and was commended by all the world. I stayed in the country having many times a sorrowful and heavy heart, and being condemned by most folks because I would not consent to the agreements, so as I may truly say I am like an owl in the desert. (83)

Clifford bemoans the double standard that has left her sorrowful and in exile “in the country”—her husband is free to go where he pleases and seek pleasure “abroad” and receive the admiration of society while she is relegated to the country, outside of social circles and condemned for making demands on a patriarchal legal system. Instead of happily ruling over the kingdom of her husband’s home, Clifford mourns this role and points out the sense of exile that defines women’s jurisdiction over the domestic sphere. Through this trope of exile Clifford repeatedly points out these issues of self-determination. Resisting the forces that would keep her in a traditional, accepted role for a woman, she feels more acutely the regulations of gender roles that dominated all early modern women’s lives.

Yet another way in which movement figures into Clifford’s writing and experiences is the movement of property from one generation to the next and the ways in which women were systematically overlooked in this transfer of lands and titles. This movement surfaces in Clifford’s concern for female connections and community, as she appeals to other women to garner support for her legal struggles. Public censure clearly

disturbs Clifford, and she knows that support from the right parties will allow her to occupy that positions of authority she was seeking. She notes in May of 1617 that was “desirous to win the love of my Lord’s [Sackville’s] kindred by all the faire means I could,” and reaches out to them by writing letters and sending her sister-in-law “a lock of the Child’s hair” (137). Prior to an important judgment by the king regarding her right to the Clifford inheritance, Clifford writes that the queen “promised [her] she would do all the good in it she could” (111), marking another occasion that Clifford appealed to other women for support. Clifford’s role as a mother was at times challenged by her husband, although she takes that role seriously, noting her daughter’s growth and health in her diaries, but also demonstrating a concern for her daughter’s future. She connects her fate to her daughter’s, believing that whatever harm or good done to her would be passed on to her daughter, the way she and her mother had a shared interest in Clifford’s legal rights. Clifford notes, during a period when things were not going well for her, that her husband and his brother were “hoping by their means to do me and my Child a great deal of hurt [...] fearing my Lord would give all his land away from the Child” (139). She holds a view of inheritance that makes matrilineal connections of primary concern, and she mirrors her mother’s concern that her own daughter be established within her father’s family legacy.

Ultimately, Clifford is able to take over absolute ownership of her family lands, but not until her father’s brother and heirs die, as her father’s will had originally provided. However, within all the tension and release in terms of authority and self-determination that marks Clifford’s narrative, she finds the strength to maintain her conviction in the face of tremendous opposition. At one point the parties involved in the property dispute assemble before the king, Clifford being the only woman and the lone voice in opposition to all the rest:

[M]y Lord and I kneeled by his chair side when he persuaded us both to peace and to put the matter wholly into his hands, which my Lord consented to, but I beseeched His Majesty to pardon me for that I would never part with Westmorland while I lived upon any condition whatsoever. Sometimes he used fair means and persuasions, and

sometimes foul means but I was resolved before so as nothing would
move me. (111)

This astonishing scene seems to be one of the highest tests of her conviction, and she remains unmovable, settled above all on occupying the lands in which she would be in a position of authority in a place that would support and nurture her right to self-determination. Among the shifting ownership of lands and titles and in the tenuous position she occupied—needing to negotiate her right to her determine her own movement and activities both as a woman and as a married woman—she carves out space rhetorically and finds solid ground in her own family's identity, a position from which she can withstand personal and social pressures that would move her in other directions.

Clifford, in her diaries and memoirs, concerns herself with some of the same issues of female authority and community Lanyer invokes in her poetry. With tropes of movement and relocation both women find the impetus to rewrite traditional gender roles and views of women's connections. In Clifford's experiences conditions that impacted her ability to take charge of her life were constantly shifting along with her physical relocations between properties, and in this constant movement she develops and articulates a steady focus on her right to be her father's daughter, to occupy space in which she would be the absolute authority. Clifford enacts in her own life Lanyer's imagined memorializing of Russell as the "Mistris of that Place"—a woman in a space that supports and nurtures her power and authority. Clifford's concerns are, by virtue of her own experiences and the nature of her writing project, very personal, but she also conveys a sense of female connection and community through her obligation to her mother and daughter and in reaching out to a group of women for support. In most areas of her life, Clifford stops short of outright revolt, trying to balance traditional duties of a wife and mother with the role she perceived as rightfully hers, handed down from her father, and in attempting this balancing act, she feels the pain of social and legal regulations of gender roles. Clifford defies traditional notions of women's roles—their relegation to domestic spaces and concerns—imagining and establishing the boundaries of a nation that might garner greater autonomy and a position of great respect and authority for its female citizens. In opposition to the terms of feminine authority, duty and behavior Bishop Rainbow expresses in his funeral sermon for this remarkable

woman, she constantly travels outside of the prescribed domain and eventually finds herself not outside of her jurisdiction, but in the position of authority that she felt she was born to fill regardless of her gender.

IV. Anna Trapnel: Pauline Discourse and an “Ambassadour in bonds”

Anna Trapnel’s Report and Plea records a woman’s 1654 journey from London to Cornwall and the experiences that follow as a result of her divinely inspired minor movement. Published the same year as her journey, *Report and Plea* is a compelling tale that brings together a woman’s experience of travel—a small-scale journey operating within networks of friendship in domestic rather than foreign spaces—with a captivity narrative of sorts. The text, as she indicates in the title,¹⁸ details her journey across England and the series of hardships and oppositions she faced; her subject position as an unmarried, traveling woman is articulated at crucial moments as it intersects with her subject positions as sectarian woman writer, Fifth Monarchist prophetess, preacher, and political dissident. In the pamphlet she defends her right to act and write about religious and public issues in part by defending her right to travel. I suggest that Trapnel articulates her autonomy by adopting and modeling her narrative on Pauline discourse and language. Trapnel’s arguments are contingent upon physical and spiritual movement and she constructs a narrative of her journey, persecution and imprisonment in the biblical typology of Paul’s own travels and captivity. Trapnel’s journey to Cornwall puts her in a position from which she must justify her decision to travel and speak publicly, a position at odds with feminine cultural norms. She justifies her right to travel by constructing an

¹⁸ The title page reads, “Anna Trapnel’s Report and Plea or, a Narrative Of her Journey from London into Cornwall, the occasion of it, the Lord’s encouragements to it, and signal presence with her in it. Proclaiming the rage and strivings of the people against the comings forth of the Lord Jesus to reign; manifested in the harsh, rough, boisterous, rugged, inhumane, and uncivil usage of Anna Trapnel, by the Justices and people in Cornwall, at a place called Truro. Whereto is annexed a Defiance Against all the reproachful, vile, horrid, abusive and scandalous reports raised out of the bottomless pit against her by the prophane generation, prompted thereunto by Professors and Clergie both in citie and country, who have a form of godliness, but deny the power.”

argument for her autonomy that navigates between a traditional woman's role in relationship to the divine (the "bride of Christ"), and Pauline discourses of networks of friendship and captivity by God. Trapnel's Fifth Monarchist political views are explicitly radical in themselves, but, in representing herself as typologically aligned with Paul and by defending her right to travel as a single woman, the text more deeply interrupts and works to destabilize the conventional travel narrative's gender scripts. Trapnel only travels a short distance, but by drawing upon Pauline typology to form her narrative, she is able to create a sense of broader shifts and transformations by modeling her minor movement on his major voyages.

Trapnel was in her early thirties when she was launched into the public eye after falling into a prophetic trance on January 7, 1654 during the questioning of a fellow Fifth Monarchist, Vavasor Powell, at Whitehall. From Whitehall, she was taken to nearby lodgings, still singing and praying, where she remained in a prophetic state for twelve days with crowds of people attending her. Trapnel claims to have had no awareness of her physical surroundings while in these trances. She was communing only with the Lord. Her outpourings during this time attracted much attention and were recorded and published as *Strange and Wonderful Newes from White-hall*. The trance-like state in which Trapnel "composed" *Strange and Wonderful Newes* meant that it was documented by a scribe trying to record her extemporaneous prophecies, visions, songs and prayers as they occurred. In contrast, *Report and Plea* is a willful act, something she undertakes by her own hand. In the acts of writing and remembering Trapnel's agency, as she represents it, is mediated by "the Lord." In a short introductory section addressed "To the Reader," Trapnel vows to "relate the Truth without addition: though I cannot (it may be) remember all the passages in order, yet as many as the LORD brings to my minde, I shall relate." She further declares that she is writing this narrative in her own hand and is under no influence "save by the great Instructor, who counselleth with his eye, who beareth me out before men and devils." On the one hand, Trapnel speaks forcefully for her *self* as an agent of truth, determined to contradict "all the reproachful, vile, horrid, abusive, and scandalous reports raised out of the bottomless pit against her" (Title, see note), but she demonstrates here that her agency is mediated through divine authority. As Hinds concludes in exploring this paradox, while the image of an "instrument" stresses

“God’s role as prime mover, the authority, to the exclusion of her own part,” the instrument also bears great power and may even act independently after it has been created and put into service (99). Clearly, issues of agency and autonomy are by no means simple in *Report and Plea* or in Trapnel’s own life. What we see in her writing is an active and fluid definition of personal freedom and agency, often attained not only by claiming to be moved to act by divine forces, but representing herself as a captive of divine will. Living in a time of intense and shifting social, political and religious tensions, Trapnel’s negotiations of her agency in *Report and Plea* demonstrate tactics by which a seventeenth-century woman might generate and sustain a public voice in a society that exhorted women to be silent.

In the terms set out in contemporary women’s conduct literature, Trapnel’s behavior is exceptionally transgressive on several fronts. By traveling—moving outside of the domestic sphere without practical cause—and preaching/prophesying—speaking publicly and forcefully—she is acting against the often-linked exhortations that women ought to remain quiet and stay at home. Henry Smith, advising married women in the late sixteenth century, writes, “Lastly we call the wife housewife, that is housewife, not a street wife [...] but a housewife, to show that a good wife keeps her house: and therefore Paul biddeth Titus to exhort women that they be chaste and keeping at home [...] as though home were chastity’s keeper” (Aughterson 83). Later, he adds, “As it becometh her to keep home, so it becometh her to keep silence” (Aughterson 83). In Thomas Becon’s *The book of matrimony* (1564), he makes the connection between movement and sexual transgression when he writes, “For there is not a more evident token of a light woman or harlot then seldom to tarry at home, and many times causeless to gad abroad” (Aughterson 113). This connection surfaces in Trapnel’s hearing and it again becomes of central concern as she writes about her stay in Bridewell and the “Plea” portion of the document where she is counted among the “ranting Sluts” (38) by the Matron and horrified by an accusation that she “would have men come to [her]” (43). Trapnel is put in a position in which she must defend her reputation in order to continue to fulfill the Lord’s plan for her. Trapnel vigorously defends herself against accusations against her sexual propriety and through her invocation of Pauline narratives of travel she redirects such criticism and recasts it by modeling herself after the male apostle. Identification

with a biblical figure of a different gender is transgressive in its own right, but Trapnel takes this further by employing Paul's travel narrative to authorize and valorize her own unconventional acts of traveling, preaching, and other radical political activities.

In the opening passages of *Report and Plea*, Trapnel aligns herself in word and purpose with the biblical figures of both Paul and Hannah. Their coexistence in her text underscores the ways in which Trapnel negotiates the shifts in her agency and her gender identity brought about by her preaching, prophesying, and traveling. Trapnel tenuously draws the initial comparison between herself and these biblical figures with typical humility and diffidence: "And though I am a poor inferiour, unworthy to be compared with any of the holy men or women reported of in the Scripture; yet I can say with Paul, Through grace I am what I am; and I live, yet not I, but Christ lives in me; and the life that I live, is by the faith of the Son of God, who died and gave himself for a weak handmaid, as well as for a strong Paul" (Preface). As symbols, Hannah and Paul carry with them the gendered differences in their experiences of preaching or being filled by the Holy Spirit. Female fertility and the potency of the Lord mark Hannah's narrative, which Trapnel echoes when she writes that Christ "maketh fruitful, and removes barrenness" (Preface). Looking at her narrative as a whole, however, I suggest that Trapnel relies more heavily on narrative threads and language that map her experiences onto those of the apostle Paul. Paul, as a preacher, traveler and a prisoner, provides a model for her as she tells her own story and reimagines her experiences in a text whose purpose is self-defense. The larger narrative of divinely compelled travel along with the adoption of specific Pauline language ensures that Trapnel's association with the apostle was not lost on her readership. Trapnel's repetition of Pauline language and themes is an essential element in the ways she constructs her own activities in relation to travel and gender.

In writing her account of the journey and imprisonment, Trapnel again sets herself in motion to reach people through the written word. In the introductory section, Trapnel states the purpose of the document: "I shall relate, for the satisfaction of the LORD's friends known and unknown in all parts where the rumor hath run." Trapnel here gestures toward an awareness of her own fame and circle of influence. Her "self," at this point, then, is not limited to her physical body or a particular geographical location.

Writing this text, she is again traveling through space, bringing her voice to the public if not her body. Her physical imprisonment, which was meant to silence her and limit her influence is rendered ineffective. In writing the text, she relives, through hindsight, her travel experience and makes the political importance of a journey past potent in the present. Movement again comes into play in *Report and Plea* in the movement of rumor and text as Trapnel seeks to send her version of events out into the public. She commissions her text to be a carrier of truth, writing, “[T]he Lord my God knows, had there not been so many severall reports passed far and near, I would not have set pen to paper in this kind, but it is that truth may silence falsity” (34). Having traveled outside London and becoming a public figure open to both praise and censure with renown “far and near,” Trapnel’s pen becomes an instrument of truth by which she can send her own words abroad in place of her body. As a result of his extensive travels and friends in far off places, a significant portion of Paul’s writing are epistles, which, like Trapnel’s *Report and Plea*, draw attention to states of absence and presence through text rather than in body. While Paul was physically in prison, he reaches out and is present in his churches textually, just as Trapnel reaches out to send her message out in place of her physical presence and to defend the damage done to her reputation by her journey. Paul implores the Ephesians to pray, “[That] utterance may be given unto me [...] Whereof I am the ambassadour in bonds, that therein I may speake boldly, as I ought to speake” (Eph 6:19-20).¹⁹ Paul’s bonds, man made and of perceived captivity to “the Lord,” authorize his speech; in fact, his state of captivity actually compels him to speak, as it does Trapnel, who says she waits for words to be given to her by the Lord as she speaks and as she writes. Later, involved in negotiations for her release from prison, Trapnel describes this inability to censor herself, captive to speaking what the Lord commands: “I will never ingage to that which lies not in me to perform, for what the Lord utters in me, I must speak” (46).

Trapnel’s construction of her captive self as a seventeenth-century female version of Paul begins with physical images of the apostle’s conversion, recorded in Acts 9. His

¹⁹ All biblical citations are from the Geneva Bible, the translation Trapnel would have been most familiar with as it was the bible written by English dissenters and was the bible of choice for a number of radical religious sects.

conversion is dramatic in its radical reversal of his past behavior—undergoing a transformation from persecutor of the disciples to a “chosen vessel” (Acts 9:15) among them—and in its suddenness. Paul, the founder of the Christian church is made from an enemy of the church. Cast down to the ground on the road to Damascus, Paul is physically debilitated by the Lord and his sight taken from him for three days. In his blind state, without eating or drinking, and communing with God, Paul’s conversion scene bears a strong resemblance to Trapnel’s own trance-like experiences of divine communion. After his conversion, Paul is sent by the Lord on long journeys to establish Christian churches and he is detained in prison on several occasions. In Paul’s letter to the Ephesians, thought to have been written during an imprisonment in Rome,²⁰ Paul refers to himself as “the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles” (Eph 3:1) and “prisoner in the Lorde” (Eph 4:1). While this means, on the one hand, that Paul is in prison because of his religious views, it also implies that he is in the Lord’s prison, that it is the Lord that is holding him captive, not the Romans. In this way, his tenure in “man’s prison” (as Trapnel calls it) is voided, or rendered insignificant, subsumed under the more powerful state of divine captivity.

Trapnel’s captivity narrative is complex, relying heavily on Pauline discourse, but also entering into the secular tradition of captivity narratives as a captive both of divine and human forces (during her capture and imprisonment), which compel her to move against her will. Scholarship on captivity narratives has been primarily defined within the American tradition, but, as Joe Snader argues in *Caught Between Worlds: British Captivity Narratives in Fact and Fiction*, the genre is a product of European nations’ grappling with their entrance into exploration and exploitation of non-European lands and peoples. He writes, “[T]he captivity narrative, like the novel or the encyclopedia, is a genre whose roots stretch back to the European Middle Ages, and whose initial flowering belongs to the early modern vernacular press” (1). The moment of confrontation with the “other,” Snader argues, provides the captive with a potent self-defining moment as they construct themselves in opposition to their captors. Snader points out that the model of

²⁰ While contemporary scholarship has raised serious questions about the authorship of several epistles attributed to Paul, including this one, this does not seem to have been a concern in the seventeenth century. See Goodspeed, Edgar J. “Ephesians and the First Edition of Paul.” *Journal of Biblical Literature* Vol. 7.4 (Dec. 1951): 285-291.

the captivity narrative have also been deployed in captivity situations between Europeans, or even of British captives detained by fellow Britons, especially where religion was concerned, as it is for Trapnel. As she chastises and details the injustices of the court and her treatment in Bridewell, Trapnel portrays the same basic “literary and ideological formulae as British narratives of non-Western captivity; all portrayed the world outside the modern British isles as permeated with subjugation, tyranny, debasement, and transgression” (Snader 4). As part of her political and religious ideology as a Fifth Monarchist, Trapnel figures herself as a citizen of a nation that is about to be—the New Jerusalem—and, by contrast, the world of British courts and government as corrupt and unjust, contrary to the Lord’s will. In contrast, by adopting a Pauline model of captivity by the Lord, her movement and speech are authorized and valorized. Even as she struggles against it, in the Lord’s more perfect captivity he always protects and provides for as she gives up her will to it. As a captive of the Lord, she is justified in breaking social and cultural codes—departing from domestic space and traveling across the country to preach and exercise a political voice.

The impetus of Trapnel’s movement—the intention, person, or power behind it—becomes an important question in the text that is most clearly resolved by her adoption of Pauline discourse. Trapnel’s journey to Cornwall begins with an “invitation from friends,” one that she was reluctant even to consider, being “so strongly bent against that journey” (1). She repeatedly emphasizes the difficulty and personally undesirable nature of going to Cornwall, at times being tempted out of her resolve by one she describes as “Satan.” In Trapnel’s account, it is a challenging journey, one that she would not undertake without a divine edict and one that her friends in London beg her not to attempt. She is a reluctant, albeit ultimately submissive instrument of the Lord who hopes to do some good.²¹ Laying out the circumstances and divine influence that set her

²¹ This is a very different account than the one we glimpse in Nedham’s correspondence with Cromwell in the weeks leading up to her journey. Reporting on her activities since her debut into the public eye at Whitehall, Nedham describes her “twofold design now in hand”: “The one is, to print her discourses or hymns; the other, to send her abroad all over England, to proclaim them, in the name of the Lord, *viva voce*. To this she is daily persuaded by one Mr. Green hill a preacher, and by thousands of the Familist crew, but chiefly by people of Mr. Simpson’s congregation. She is now continually frequented, and doth a world of mischief in London” (Holsutn 288-9).

in motion, Trapnel explicitly maps her situation onto Paul's as she describes a vision she was given of her upcoming journey into Cornwall: "[T]his I saw, and hear this saying, That as sure as Paul in Act.16.9. had a vision appeared in the night: There stood a man of Macedonia and prayed Paul, saying come over into Macedonia and help us; & the Lord said, as truly do I thy Lord call thee to Cornwall by this vision" (3). Trapnel chooses to represent herself in her narrative as (paradoxically) self-possessed, in so far as she is compelled to act only by the Lord, not by other members of her congregation. In her account, she is the persuader of her comrades and is not persuaded by anyone other than the Lord to make "such a journey." Trapnel's journey by coach to Cornwall does not seem to have been extraordinarily difficult or unusual, although it was made more unusual because of her gender. The difficulties of a several day coach journey across England were likely minimal.²² The difficulty of the journey for Trapnel, then, is more fully explained in the social rather than the physical discomfort. Trapnel faced censure from the government for her prophecies, which Nedham describes as "insufferably desperate against your highness' person, family, relations, friends, and the government" (Holstun 289), but she also risked criticism of a different nature, directly related to her gender.

Responding to social and cultural mores of her time, Trapnel feels compelled to defend herself against any suspicion of vagrancy because the figure of a wandering woman quickly becomes metaphorical, conflating errant female sexuality with freedom of movement—the blackest mark on a woman's reputation. As she prepares to wind up her plea, Trapnel mounts one of her most powerful defenses, emphasizing in her language the importance of this particular claim. She writes,

To this day I have a settled habitations, and pay assessments, therefore stand convinced from this day, and hereafter all you Rulers, Clergie, and Peoples in all Places and Countries, that I *Anna Trapnell* am no vagabond,

²² Commenting on the history of coach travel in England in his study of the trope in the development of the novel, Percy G. Adams notes that the carriage is thought to have become so popular by mid-century that "by then governments found it necessary to pass stringent licensing acts and levy taxes that forced many coaches out of Paris and London but aided in the movement for cross-country commercial carriages and better highway systems" (1).

nor Runagate Person, though I have and may sometimes live in the City, and sometimes in the Country, as your selves do, and why should I be accounted a vagabond more then you? (51)

A single woman who would travel into an unknown country where she had no property or family was suspect in a large part because she appeared to be answering to no one, unattached, and dangerously unsettled. Sara Mendelson and Patricia Crawford argue, “In the eyes of society, all masterless women were disorderly by nature and were moreover the stimulus for misconduct in others” (96).²³ Trapnel vehemently defends herself against claims of vagrancy, because it was such a degraded social position for a woman, associated with many other forms of immorality and sinful behavior. Mendelson and Crawford explain, “Women had few occupations which would justify an itinerant existence. Since they were expected either to be in service or at home with their husbands, women’s pleas of being employed on the roads did not impress the justices” (297). Trapnel claims they unjustly treated her as one of these women: “Oh that you did love King Jesus, he would never fail you [...] he would teach you not to use his children as witches, and vagabonds when they come into your parts” (53). The linked epithets, “witches and vagabonds,” points to a feminization of the latter and suggests that Trapnel is clearly differentiating between vagrancy or wandering and the type of movement she is undertaking—moved by the Lord and under the protection of friends.

In response to indirect accusations against her propriety raised by her journey into Cornwall, Trapnel rhetorically claims the benefits both of a marriage to the Lord and of the freedom of an unmarried woman while at the same time constructing her friendships as a sort of domestic space in which she can defend her propriety and claim the right to be there in Cornwall or anywhere.²⁴ Rhetorically, Trapnel alternates between arguing on the one hand that the Lord is her master and husband figure and on the other that her status as a single woman gives her the right to seek the company of friends anywhere.

²³ Hinds makes a similar argument about women outside of traditional authoritative structures (43).

²⁴ See Holstun for a discussion of Trapnel’s “public spiritedness” (257-304), the details of her role as a public figure and its implications in the development of a feminist tradition. Gillespie explores Trapnel’s use of domestic space to represent her public speech acts as private and therefore a right protected from government intervention (92-106).

During her hearing Trapnel intentions for her journey are repeatedly questioned —“But why did you come into this County?” (26)—and the questions also belie concerns about her, a single woman, having the freedom to travel without a typical purpose. The justices question whether she has a master or belongs to a place or a people—“But you have no lands, nor living, nor acquaintances to come to in this Country” (26). In the way Trapnel chooses to answer these questions, she directly addresses the issues implicit in their questions of agency and her right to travel through the country where she wishes. She replies, “Why might not I come here, as well as into another county? [...] What though? I had not I am a single person, and why may I not be with my friends anywhere?” (26). When Justice Lobb follows this response by confirming that she is not married, she responds, “Then having no hinderance, why may not I go where I please, if the Lord so will?” (26). After this exchange, another Justice asks her why she made the journey into their country to which she replies, “The Lord gave me leave to come, asking of his leave, whitherever I went: I used still to pray for his direction in all I do: and so I suppose ought you” and when the question is repeated, she answers again, “The Lord moved me, and gave me leave” (26). The Lord moved her soul, influenced her emotionally, but the implication in this case is that her spiritual movement and physical movement are one in the same.

In his description of Trapnel’s social position as a woman “unusually independent of patriarchal authority—a condition she shared with a number of other seventeenth-century women prophets—James Holstun argues that a symbolic action “crucial for Trapnel’s public career” is to claim “church covenant as a metaphorical substitute for marriage” (267-8, 269). For Trapnel and other sectarian women, a metaphorical marriage to God allows a measure of social freedom not granted within a family or human marriage relationship. As Holstun argues, “A single life leaves the door open to vocational experimentation through marriage to God, the congregation, or the Commonwealth” (270). Trapnel uses this idea to live a life of relative independence, which she defends under interrogation. While the case for Trapnel’s adoption of a metaphorical marriage is evident in some of her writing, in this text, her arguments in this particular narrative of travel and persecution seem to depend on her independence as a single woman more heavily than on a metaphorical marriage to the Lord. In her answers

to the justices as she records them in *Report and Plea*, she insists primarily on her ability as a single woman to travel, “having no hinderance” or, husband. While there is no denial of the journey as the Lord’s will, in this passage it is not constructed as his command so much as her freedom and the Lord’s approval. The phrase “gave me leave” does not indicate a command so much as permission granted and she repeats it here twice. Implicit in the phrase is the sense that the journey was her desire, as she says most clearly when she asks, “why may not I go where I please, if the Lord so will?” (26), positioning her own volition (“I please”) before the Lord’s will (“if the Lord so will”). It is her status as an *unmarried* woman during this episode that seems to take precedence. One might argue that it was a wise rhetorical move in her position to base her defense on personal, legal rights rather than divine intervention. This rhetorical move indicates that Trapnel is doing something other than simply claiming a marriage-like relationship to “the Lord” to justify her actions.

Trapnel’s use of a discourse of friendship to legitimate her traveling self resonates with the sense of a network of friends and Christians conveyed in Paul’s letters, but it also underscores some contemporary issues of women’s travel for Trapnel. Part of her claim of independence in the scene of her interrogation also relies on “friends” to legitimate her journey and sojourn in Cornwall. The Lord gives her leave to go, but it is her friends that are key elements in the “space” she creates as she travels. An “invitation from friends” begins the narrative, providing the impetus for her relocation to Cornwall. When this invitation is given, she protests, “There’s a far journey indeed! Do you think I would leave all my friends, to go so far from them?” (1). Later she questions, “Why should I go so far, and among strangers?” (2). Friendship and fellowship with friends is marked as one of her highest priorities from the opening lines; a journey to Cornwall would not only be physically difficult, but it would take her away from her friends and cast her among strangers. Once in Cornwall, however, “strangers” become “friends,” and by the time she stands before the justices, her “friends” are the justification for her journey—“why may I not be with my friends anywhere?” (26)—and they provide the barrier between her and perceived vagrancy by providing ownership over a space by proxy—“Yea, that it’s my chamber while I am there, through the pleasure of my friends”

(28). Friends, for a woman who has made her way across the country for spiritual and political reasons, are both her safe haven and her reason for traveling.

Trapnel often underscores significant gradation between different levels of acquaintance in *Report and Plea*. During her captivity she spends five weeks with friends while waiting for a ship and she details in the influence of the Lord on her relationships with her hosts: “[The Lord] made kindnesse flow from strangers in the Family, and in the Fort; these were strangers, and yet they were fellow Citizens, and I blesse the Lord, they are not now strangers, but acquaintance, and they are a company that are written in my heart” (33). The phrase “fellow citizens” invokes an allegiance toward a state or a kingdom that transcends earthly governments, in line with Fifth Monarchist ideology. Here the notion of “citizenship” overcomes “stranger-hood,” which echoes Paul’s language. Paul makes the insider/outsider metaphor even more present, setting citizenship in opposition to foreignness where foreigners are grouped with strangers: “Nowe therefore ye are no more strangers and forreiners: but citizens with the Saintes, and of the houshold of God” (Eph 2:19). The negotiation and creation of networks between friends and of the creation of divinely mediated friendships is frequently present in Paul’s language as he, like Trapnel, views his friendships as a sort of safe haven, a network of sites that connect and legitimate the arcs of his journeys.

What Trapnel introduces into this equation of networks of friendships and connections of divine citizenship derives from contemporary pressures on her comportment and movement because of her gender. While Paul is in danger because of his religious activities, Trapnel must account for her preaching not only as a political and religious radical, but also as a woman who is exercising a public voice by preaching. Friendship acts as a marker between public and private space for Trapnel. She writes, “I told them I came not into the Countrey to be seen, and taken notice of, but I came with my friends” (28). Because she is there in Cornwall among those she calls friends, she denies that the public spectacle she becomes was part of her intention in the journey. The implication is that being among friends is a private act—one in which the court does not need to intervene. Trapnel creates ideological space in which she can travel and preach and maintain it as a private space, among friends. Katharine Gillespie points to another way Trapnel engages the ideas of space and relocation to navigate the boundaries

between public and private. Gillespie argues that Trapnel defends the sanctity of “private,” domestic spaces from which she engages in the “public” acts of preaching and political critique. In *Domesticity and Dissent*, Gillespie writes,

In order to both speak ‘publicly’ and to protect her ‘privacy,’ Trapnel divorces the notion of a ‘chamber’ from an actual site and relocates it in that ‘space’ of wherever she happens to be. [...] it is both a *property* and a *practice* which is enclosed within Trapnel herself and which, as a result, allows her to ‘gad about’ and to take on the ‘public’ persona of the religious authority under the guise of the traditional feminine identity as the spatially ‘enclosed’ woman. (99)

Gillespie further argues that, for sectarian women, the domestic sphere, a feminine space, provides the platform from which to gain a “public” power. The space Trapnel creates in “gadding about” the country—one in which she is a preaching, public figure—is, in her own narrative, dependent on this notion of friendship as a protected space that she can defend as private.

Trapnel describes herself as being compelled against her own personal desires to make the journey into Cornwall as she writes her narrative, but she makes the journey essentially of her own free will, after accepting the Lord’s will. Leaving Cornwall in the custody of guards, however, she is literally a prisoner “in bonds” (34). In this even more literal “captivity narrative” portion of her *Report and Plea*, Trapnel often makes narrative turns that render the things done to her as her own desires. She resists relocation as a prisoner by transforming her captors into God’s and her own instruments. She recounts that the night before her removal from Captain Landon’s residence she had a dream foretelling her return to London: ‘I saw in my sleep Souldiers come to take me, and I rode towards London with them very joyfully’ (26). By writing that she not only anticipated her arrest and return to London, but went with them “very joyfully,” Trapnel gives herself the upper hand. She writes that she “rejoiced, and said I am not troubled, for I shall see my friends at London” (26). Trapnel emphasizes in this passage that she exists most fully in a spiritual realm, undercutting the significance of her captor’s demand for her body (27). In her terms, she is blessed by her imprisonment with these moments of spiritual communion both with God and with her fellow humans. She also compares her physical

imprisonment favorably with her spiritual imprisonment by Satan, explaining her omission of some of the Lord's blessings during this time: "I omit writing what sweet unfoldings I had therein from the Lord, because I intend if the Lord will give me opportunity to write down the cordialls of the Lord, which I had in my confinement by man, in a book wherein I shall set out Satans prison, the which I was in a year before mans prison [...] the which I lay in [...] about nine weeks, but I have been in mans prison 15 weeks, yet that was to me much easier, then a shorter time in Satans clutches" (30-31).

If anything, moving through the countryside as a prisoner renders Trapnel a much more visible public figure and only heightens her influence, providing more opportunities to preach. Her captivity does not hinder her work, rather, it provides her with a more visible forum in which to preach—she seems to embrace the Pauline role of an "ambassador in bonds" (Eph. 6:20). And as a prisoner, she has no need to defend the location of her preaching—she doesn't need to be shut away in a chamber because her body's location is no longer within her power. Her captors are now the instruments of disseminating her message—they relocate her body and she only needs to concern herself with "spiritual communion." After the soldiers move her to a chair, she writes, "I came not to my capacity to speak a great while, and when I looked up, and saw many men, women and children about me, and sitting on a high wall, right over where I sate, I was amazed to see so many people, and not knowing where I was, but at length I spake to them in Scripture language, the which they listened to, and when I went away, they gave a great shout; the people said, they used to do so at some strange sight" (28). She describes a great crowd of people who follow her after this episode and that her "room was full of people" and she "sate up most part of the night at Foy" relating her experiences to her followers (28). Her journey as a captive is made up of a series of encounters like this one. In almost every situation she is put in by her captors, she meets with opportunity to preach. She meets with detractors and those who jeer at her, but the journey is, in this account, primarily made up of fellowship and spiritual communion with people who come and see her even against the commands of her captors (29). By resigning command of her body over to her captors, Trapnel occupies an altered position in relation to traditional feminine virtue. She no longer has the freedom as a single woman to travel as she wills, but neither is she inhibited by her gender in the ways her

body undergoes geographical movement—that is no longer her concern and she uses this transformation of her freedom to engage more fully in preaching, embracing her role as a public figure by resting more fully on God and, at least textually, temporarily erasing the reality of her body. On the flipside of Trapnel’s disassociation from her feminine body, Trapnel simultaneously uses typical tropes of weakness and lowliness, as she does throughout the text, in such a way that reflects unfavorably on her captors and the government and through which she enumerates her divine connection and influence while she carefully avoids self-aggrandizement.²⁵

Upon returning to London, Trapnel’s “last prison, which was in Bridewell” (38) becomes the site of great physical, emotional and spiritual hardship. A continuation of her experiences as a prisoner, the lack of control Trapnel has over her own person is intensified as she is relocated to a cell against her will. The cell marks the ending point of her journey as a prisoner. In this filthy, enclosed space, Trapnel seems to go through a series of self-examinations which reveal anxieties about her role as a public figure and what her future holds as a result of the public perception of her person. Only by extending the comparisons of Christ’s suffering to her own is Trapnel able to repel the discouraging thoughts and temptations she confronts in Bridewell prison. Her time in Bridewell marked by periods of despair and physical impairment although she relates that overall her prayers were that the experience will be a strengthening one: “I said not, O when will there be an end of this or the other affliction but I often said, and desired a purging out of my corruptions, before a removal of sufferings, that so I might come out more holy and more humble, and more self-denying and self-debasing, and abhorring

²⁵ After an encounter with some Quakers on her captive journey back to London, she writes that “the Lord did their souls good through a worm” (35). Hilary Hinds responds to this passage in particular and identifies the association of the female sectarian author with a “worm” as a common trope. In a detailed examination of these tropes of “self-abnegation” common to the writings of contemporary sectarian women, Hinds points to Trapnel’s use of a passage from I Corinthians that gives those things “foolish,” “weak,” “base,” and “despised” the upper hand over. Hinds argues, “This text further helps to explicate the image of the worm: there too the subject is presented as weak and despised, yet at the same time that picture is subverted by its being invested with the greatest power and authority available, that coming from God. It is this reconciliation of the worldly nothingness with divine usefulness that, as Trapnel says, made her ‘contented’ to enter the public arena, and that surfaces again and again in the tropes used to figure the author in the text, and her relationship to God and to her text” (*GE* 96).

them when I went into prison” (45). In her darker moments, she reflects again on her reputation—she is forced, as at Truro, to defend herself against even more direct accusations of sexual impropriety. Relating another scene of temptation by Satan, she writes, “[T]he Tempter said to me, that I should be a by-word and a laughing-stock while I lived, and that every one would point at me as I went and up & down the streets, when I came out, they would say, there goes a *Bridewell* bird, and then many will gather about thee, to mock and deride thee” (39-40). Trapnel’s anxiety in this moment has to do with being in a place “among harlots and thieves” (39), being equated with them, and being seen, publicly, as one of them, calling into question her sexual reputation. She sees this as her reward for being “so forward for God,” for exercising her public voice, even if she does so by rhetorically materializing domestic space around her, as Gillespie argues. In fact, the space of the prison is the furthest from a domestic space that she occupies—it is, in many ways, the inverse of domesticity to be held in a public space reserved for criminals and those dangerous to society. Prison offers little of the protection of her former shelters, even in the company of friends.²⁶

Trapnel’s tenure in Bridewell resonates with Paul’s experiences and, as a fellow “ambassador in bonds,” she cautiously negotiates the terms of her release. After weeks in prison, Trapnel is concerned that “the Councel never sent for [her], to tell [her] upon what account they imprison me here for” (46). Her insistence on this fact strengthens her own defense of her character, and it echoes Paul’s resistance to the terms of his release from prison in Acts 16. After being beaten and held in prison, the governor sends a message that Paul and Silas are released and ought to “go in peace,” to which Paul responds, “After that they haue beaten vs openly vncodemned, which are Romanes, they haue cast vs into prison, and nowe would they put vs out priuily? nay verely: but let them come and bring vs out” (Acts 16:37). Trapnel herself writes of her release in similar terms: “And the next morning the Keeper of *Bridewell* came, and said, I was free by order from the Councel, and I might go out when I pleased: I told him they should fetch me out that put me in; had they put me among Thieves and Whores, and now did they

²⁶ Trapnel does credit her friends for their work to gain her release and even her “Sister Ursula Adman, who kept [her] company seven weeks of [her] being there” of whom she writes, “She was a friend born for the day of adversity, as Solomon speaks; and indeed she, night and day, shewed her tendernesse to me, and helped to bear my burden” (44).

send for me out without acknowledging the reproach they had brought upon me?” (48). Trapnel again diminishes the power of man’s prison by attempting to take a position of power in negotiating her release as Paul had done.

The arcs and tensions of movement in Trapnel’s *Report and Plea* create fault lines that, as they intersect with seventeenth century attitudes toward women’s travel and public speech, religious debates, and captivity narratives, highlight the ways in which Trapnel constructs a gendered identity for herself in terms of movement and personal agency. Ironically, Trapnel finds the most social and personal freedom to travel and speak publicly by seemingly relinquishing her own will, by giving herself up to a state of captivity. Trapnel’s critique of the injustices leveled against her resonates with the script of captivity narratives to reveal the corrupt and degraded state of society not ruled by “King Jesus.” Then, offering a different view of the nature of captivity, Trapnel forges a strong intertextual connection with the biblical figure of Paul. This connection is most significant, I think, in the ways she privileges it over a feminized discourse of subservience in a divine marriage to justify her transgressions of the social codes of her time. Intertwining the themes of her narrative with Paul’s, she authorizes her travel and her public speech by adopting Paul’s more “masculine” stance in relation to captivity—the Lord compels her both to go to Cornwall and she has no choice but to speak that which he speaks to her. Her volition, her own desires are, by the end of the text, overcome not by her own will, but by divine force—she has no choice in her activities. She becomes an “ambassador in bonds” alongside Paul in her text—reaching out textually and through travel—in bondage to the Lord.

V. **An Collins: Movement Inward and a Church of the Mind in *Divine Songs and Meditations***

In the “biblical culture” of the seventeenth century, the Christian religion was the primary lens through which people understood themselves and the world in which they lived.²⁷ Religious discourse and practice, in its complex relationship with gender roles,

²⁷ As Christopher Hill argues, in the seventeenth century “the Bible was the source of virtually all ideas; it supplied the idiom in which men and women discussed them” (34).

alternately reinforced women's subservient role and provided them with opportunities to subvert those role. There is a great deal of scholarship on seventeenth-century devotional poetry that explores everything from the canonical works by Donne and Herrick as well as the works of women poets and writers such as Mary Sidney, Mary Carey, Anne Bradstreet, and An Collins, whose work is of particular interest in the context of this project. The historical context out of which the genre arose and flourished in the seventeenth century is marked by a great proliferation and regularization of the practice of meditation. Louis Martz argues in *The Poetry of Meditation* that the practice of meditation provides the guiding principles for devotional poetry (1-2). Since devotional writing tends to develop around this idea of private, individual prayer and meditation, the genre seems to have provided women with the ideological space to create texts. In her examination of women's self-representations in devotional writing, Helen Wilcox notes, "At a time when a woman's speaking in public, and writing for readers other than her own children, were severe transgressions of the feminine norm, devotional dialogue licensed an often outspoken representation of the female self" ("My Soule" 10). For women, then, devotional writing was a means of exercising a (more or less) public voice authorized by spiritual authority and finding the means to self-expression through the production of devotional texts.

I hope I have demonstrated thus far in this thesis how fluid, adaptable and pervasive minor movements are in women's writing as they try to create spaces in which they might function outside prevailing social norms and regulations. Turning to An Collins, I realize that this discussion of minor movement must be significantly extended to encompass movement that is mental, spiritual, and metaphorical rather than physical. As an extension of this discussion, however, Collins provides a nuanced and subtle view of the power of movement in women's lives that links up to what Lanyer, Clifford, and Trapnel have begun in terms of understanding women's relationship to travel. An Collins is a perfect example of how even the most minor shifts can provide women with the opportunity to stage major relocations in identity and female subject positions. As far as we know, Collins never undertook a major or even a minor voyage; her autobiographical

Reference to biblical events and figures had particular potency in early modern discourse and provided a cultural common ground.

narratives suggest that the author had more experience with confinement than movement. The realities of Collins' life outside the few details she reveals her small volume of spiritual verse, *Divine Songs and Meditations* (1653), remain a mystery. Of the text itself little is known about the conditions surrounding its entrance into print.²⁸ Collins begins her collection with an autobiographical note: "I inform you, that by divine Providence, I have been restrained from bodily employments, suting with my disposicion, which enforced me to a retired Course of life" (1). The author indicates here that this restraint from physical movement is the most significant factor in the creation of the text and, indeed, in her spiritual identity. Here she marks her departure from "bodily employments" as a loss—one contrary to her natural inclinations. The movement here is negative; she is "restrained" and "enforced." I introduce her work into this project, however, because Collins uses restraint to open herself up to a world defined by theoretical and spiritual motion. In the next phrase, however, Collins exposes the loss of physical ability as a gain: "Wherein it pleased God to give me such enlargednesse of mind, and activity of spirit, so that this seeming desolate condicion, proved to me most delightfull" (1). With the loss of bodily freedom, Collins claims to experience an increased capacity for intellectual energy and "activity of spirit," out of which arises her practice of poetry—a practice that "enflamed [her] faculties" (1). Her language is charged with movement as she converts bodily restraint into the catalyst for mental and spiritual expansions. Whatever Collins' actual experiences with physical movement and travel, the highly charged and complex ways motion figures into her work demonstrate her development of a public voice and an identity for herself outside of feminine norms. In doing so she articulates the rich possibilities of internalizing spirituality through meditation and creating a church of the mind from which to critique the external church structures and to reimagine her role within a spiritual community.

Collins draws on the tradition of devotional writing in order to tell a story about her own life, to represent herself as a subject defined not by her body (with physical

²⁸ In his introduction to the text, Gottlieb writes, "Her book is dated 1653 and published in London, but this still doesn't help us place her exactly: we don't know the circumstances of its publication, at what point in the author's life it was published (or indeed if it was published at or after her death, like the volumes of some other religious poets), when the poems in the volume were written, or where the author lived" (vii).

weakness and gender), but of “higher” mental and intellectual faculties. In a broad sense, devotional writing, as an expression of the practice of meditation and contemplation, is predicated on transformation and spiritual elevation and permeated with the language of low and high states of being and movement between those states. It is, in the early modern period, “almost indispensable as preparation for the achievement of the highest mystical experience” (Martz 16). Collins harnesses this language of movement from one realm to the other and relates it to her bodily condition as a person with physical limitations. The devotional tradition and its discourse of transportation from one realm to another offers her an opportunity to escape the body and be transported to the realms of the mind. In contrasting physical movement—her own limitations and confinement—with her experiences of mental, spiritual, and creative expansion, Collins explores the ways women experience their relationship to their own bodies and articulates the experience of one woman’s relationship between her mind and body in such a way that women aren’t relegated to “base” physicality.

Movement is a powerful trope in religious writing because it connotes spiritual growth and conversion and it also demonstrates a belief in the power of the written word to persuade and reach out to an audience. The physical meaning of the word, moving to action, exists alongside emotional or spiritual movement. Fleshing out the meaning of the word “move,” Wilcox conducts an extended reading of a passage from Mary Sidney’s translation of Psalm 62, part of which reads, “Yet he [God] my fort, my health, my hill, / Remove I may not, move I may.” Wilcox points out the connection between the “rhetorical power” inherent in the author “moving” God and contemporary views about the relationship between the poet and reader: “To ‘move’ was precisely what a Renaissance poet sought to do with words” (“My Soule” 11). Collins frequently employs this trope in her poetry, but it takes on even greater significance as it resonates with autobiographical information that filters through her writing. As a text that is rich with metaphors of movement, *Divine Songs* provides us the occasion to consider Collins’ discourse of movement, wandering, and enclosure as a significant statement on women’s intellectual life and agency in relationship to movement. Even in physical confinement, metaphors of movement occupy a transformative and expressive role in Collins’ work, opening new modes of thinking and agency to her. Collins foregrounds and intensifies

the relationship between the written word and the concept of movement. In *Divine Songs and Meditations*, writing is explicitly linked to movement even more so because Collins' poetry is a manifestation of her minor movement, rather than a record of it; the writing itself is the embodiment of the movement she experiences—in this text she records the spiritual and intellectual movement of her mind in opposition to the restraints on her body. The mortification of the body for the enrichment of the soul is also a common trope in Christian discourse. What becomes remarkable about Collins' deployment of the trope is the way she uses it to support entrance into print publication and her specific insistence on the importance of her own mental activity and movement. She emphasizes that her spirit is not just enriched by physical limitation, but that movement, that which was taken away physically, becomes central to Collins' enactment of her spirituality and self in writing.

Collins locates the most important movement inside the home, inverting standard narratives of travel and movement. It is through movement—not the centrifugal movement of traditional travel narratives, flinging the (male) travelers into foreign spaces far from home but her movement into confinement and into physical pain and limitations—that Collins marks her entrance into intellectual and spiritual motion and through which she legitimates her role as a writer. Collins' discourse of movement intersects with the standard gendered travel narrative in that she is relegated to limited physical movement—she remains, like Penelope, at “home”—but she writes over the standard narrative and claims an experience of greater, more significant movement than physical travel. In the opening passages “To the Reader,” the result of being “restrained from bodily employments” and experiencing a God-given “retired Course of life” followed by “inlargednesse of mind, and activity of spirit” is that she becomes “affected to Poetry, insomuch I proceeded to practise the same” (1). Confinement or limitation gives birth to an increase of spiritual awareness and, significantly, to *practice*. Her spiritual enrichment manifests itself in creation and the activity of writing poetry. Her minor movement into enclosure echoes the movement of many monastic figures before her and provides the space for spiritual reflection and textual production. Collins authorizes her entry into print in terms of her physical limitations. She doesn't credit her ability to write poetry to education or natural ability, but to her divinely enforced

confinement; in this state, she writes that poetry “enflamed [her] faculties, to put forth themselves, in a practise so pleasing” (1). She consistently portrays the limitations on her physical self as the catalyst for her intellectual activity and, in this case, her very ability to write. This dynamic between self and the divine regarding authority and personal ability plays out in many works by women in this period, some of whose work I have already explored in this project.

The author uses this trope of movement to tell a story of her life, but this is not to say that she glorifies movement in all its forms. One poem might excite movement away from a center while another extols the virtue of fixity on “the Rock,” creating a dynamic tension in the work, which in itself generates a sense of movement in the text. The poems by themselves draw out the images of movement and transformation, and these are made all the more powerful inside Collins’ autobiographical framework in which she authorizes her “poet’s voice” by invoking the inability of her physical body. Diane Purkiss points out how this rather common trope of “narratively discard[ing] [...] subject bodies” in women’s writing might serve “to reinforce both women’s physical subjection and the social inferiority which purported to be based on women’s physical weakness” (151). She claims, “Writing out of the body ultimately reproduced the ideology of women’s bodily inferiority, even as it allowed women to construct a more stable sense of self” (151-2). I don’t disagree with this analysis, but I do not see Collins dismissing her physical self from her writing, but locating it as the center from which she shoots out into other realms. Her entrance into “Poetry” is predicated on an “enforced” retirement from active life, but at the same time her body, in its pain and limitations, continually manifests itself in her poetry. She doesn’t position herself simply as a conduit for a divine voice in order to authorize her speech, as other women did at this time (including Trapnel), but she writes very distinctly from her own mind and experiences. As Wilcox notes, “[I]t is her ‘mind,’ rather than her heart or soul, that Collins repeatedly opens to the reader” (“My Hart is Full” 451). In doing so, Collins locates her mind as the site of production for her poetry, even as she gives credit to God.

Collins' movement into confinement, as the impetus for exercising a public voice and entering contemporary theological debates,²⁹ acts to reframe (as Trapnel did) the traditionally private domestic space of her home and perhaps her bed. Whatever her intentions regarding the publication of her verse, she clearly embraces her entrance into textual production and uses it to comment on the world outside of her confinement. She also occupies the tenuous position of being a woman and a poet very differently than does Lanyer, who owns it as her occupation as she openly courts patronage in her work. Collins is less expansive in imagining or creating a community of readers, but she does indicate that she imagines a reading audience, however small. In the second poem of the collection, titled "The Discourse," Collins cautions, "Unto the publick view of every one / I did not purpose these my lines to send, / Which for my private use were made alone" (l. 15-17). She imagines her work being read by friends, writing, "But those that in my love I have preferd / Before all creaturs in this world beside, / My works, I hope, will never dis-regard" (l.8-10). She also imagines "some neare Kindred" reading her poems after her death (l.44). Although she doesn't claim to aspire to fame or renown for her poetry, she does finally go so far as to imagine a stranger reading her work:

And lastly in regard of any one,
Who may by accident hereafter find,
This, though to them the Auther bee unknown,
Yet seeing here, the image of her mind;
They may conjecture how she was inclin'd:
And further note, that God doth Grace bestow,
Vpon his servants, though hee keeps them low. (l.50-6)

Typically, she locates moral and spiritual value in her work rather than artistic or personal, but it is interesting to note here, as Wilcox does ("My Hart is Full" 451), that she refers to her poetry as the "image of *her* mind," (emphasis mine) a phrase she

²⁹ Gottlieb argues that Collins reveals her political engagement in her poetry, and he sees her "frequently allude to political and doctrinal innovation, social disruptions, and winters of discontent that are by no means purely personal matters" (xi). He concludes that "Collins was evidently no believer in and certainly not silenced by the conventional notion that women were unsuited for commentary on public issues and political events" (xii).

frequently revisits. In terms of movement, Collins is, in the beginning of this poem, reflecting on the future movement of her words after they are set down in print. They become a sort of legacy in her description as she imagines readers who might see in her poetry an “image of her mind.”

The representation and metaphors of movement in *Divine Songs and Meditations* with the greatest impact are those that demonstrate most aptly the author’s representations of her own mental movement and the importance she places on various forms of activity. “The Preface” and the lengthier “The Discourse” begin the collection and do much to establish a narrative frame and theological foundation and to delineate the space in which Collins is moving. Following these is a poem whose full title is “A Song expressing their happiness who have Communion with Christ.” The poem is particularly notable because of its position near the beginning of the collection and its vivid portrayal of mental movement on the part of the author. The poem enacts movement in its description of grace and assurance that those “who have communion with Christ” are not left comfortless. She begins, “When scorched with distracting care, / My mind findes out a shade / Which fruitlesse Trees, false fear, dispair / And melancoly made” (l.1-4). This passage sets up the poem’s overall movement from shade to a symbolic place in the sun. The first stanza, dealing with the overgrowth of sin and despair, moves into the second, where the emphasis is on leaving the “shade”:

Whereof my judgment being certified
My mind from thence did move,
For her concepcion so to provide,
That it might not abortive prove,
Which fruit to signifie
It was conceived by
Most true intelligence
Of this sweet truth divine
Who formed thee is thine,
Whence sprang this inference” (l.17-27).

Collins frames a Christian theological commonplace with a narrative that makes her personal voice and experience central—metaphorizing a shift from one state of mind to

another, from despair to comfort. The author who has shown herself to be at pains to emphasize her confinement and limitation uses the image and language of movement from one “place,” or state of mind, to another.

The next poem in the collection resonates with the previous “Communion with Christ” in its attention to the imagery of the sun and the movement from shade, or “barren” winter, to sun, warmth and fruitfulness. The lengthy title of this, the fourth poem in the text, is “A Song shewing the Mercies of God to his people, by interlacing cordiall Comforts with fatherly Chastisments” (35) and it transforms the spiritual, internal movement of the previous poems into images of celestial and the constant movement of the natural world. The first stanza describes the simile between natural cycles and spiritual awakening:

As in the time of Winter
The Earth doth fruitlesse and barren lie,
Till the Sun his course doth run
Through Aries, Taurus, Gemini;
[...]That what in winter seemed dead,
There by the Sun is life discovered (l.1-10)

The second stanza delineates the second half of the simile, likening the spirit, deadened by a “Winter / Of sharp Afflictions” (l.11-12) to a root buried in the ground, awaiting the warmth of the “Son of Righteousnesse” (l.15). This metaphor of seasonal and celestial cycles serves to naturalize spiritual transformation in which the “Son” is a powerful “warming” (l.17) influence, echoing the previous poem in which affliction and sin were tree and overgrowth, crowding out the sun’s rays. The third stanza contains another simile that relies on metaphors of movement and articulates movement as a spiritual imperative:

And as when Night is passed,
The Sun ascending our Hemisphear,
Ill fumes devouers, and opes the powers
Which in our bodies are, and there
He drawes out the spirits of moving and sence
As from the center, to the circumference;

So that the exterior parts are delighted,
And unto mocion and action excited,
And hence it is that with more delight
We undergo labor by day then by night. (l.21-30)

Almost every line contains a verb of movement and the thrust of the stanza is active—the “spirits of moving and sence” are drawn outward from the abstract “center,” while the repetition of the word “delight” establishes the positive forces of “mocion,” “action,” and “labor.” The image of spirits moving from a contained center into wide expanses of motion recalls the narrative framework of the text and professed physical restraint of the author herself; her confinement to her bed or house is that center from which the intangible *spirits* of movement are released. The sense here is one of expansion that recalls the “inlargednesse of mind” that inspires the text. Using her physical confinement as a starting point for her entrance into “Poetry” and publication, Collins consistently transforms a bodily cause into an effect of the mind and often returns to her emphasis on mental space as the space through which she moves. In the fourth stanza she makes this explicit when she writes, “Then when the Sun that never declines / Shall open the faculties of our mindes, / Stirring up in them that spirituall mocion” (l.35-37). In her discourse of “the mind” Collins is able to open up epistemological space that, in turn, opens up new ways of thinking and speaking to her in writing and publishing poetry that emphasizes the interior movement her mind. She renders her meditative and contemplative life active in verse and, in doing so, internalizes her spirituality—she argues that the sphere in which one ought to be active is mental and renders her physical limitations irrelevant to her spiritual life, one full of motion.

In spite of the positive forces Collins locates in mental and spiritual movement, representations of movement in *Divine Songs* are not always so positive. In one poem in particular, “This Song sheweth that god is the strength of his People,” Collins uses the trope of movement to explore ambiguity in the tension between settledness/domestic space and wandering/foreign space. The first line, which reads, “My straying thoughts, reduced stay,” introduces a word so often associated with feminine movement—“stray”—and the curious word “reduced.” The narrative imagery in the first two stanzas of the poem is striking; her thoughts are straying and they are reduced, or made less, and

provide her with the space to “reweiv [her] mentall store” (l.6) which is compared to a “Cabinet or Chest” filled with jewels from which she chooses the “On jewell [which] may exceed the rest” (l.12). Collins’ “straying thoughts” which are “reduced” here seem to echo her physical “restraint from bodily employments,” which were “suting to [her] dispoicion.” This limitation of movement, as in the beginning of the text, provides a way into deeper reflection and an even greater sense of transformation and spiritual growth. From the treasure chest of her “mentall store” Collins extracts the gem “God is the Rock of his Elect” (l.13) and when she extends her meditation of this “truth,” the first image she draws on is one of foreign lands and travelers. She writes,

God is a Rock first in respect
He shadows his from hurtfull heat,
Then in regard he doth protect
His servants still from dangers great
And so their enemies defeat.

In some dry desart Lands (they say)
Are mighty Rocks, which shadow make
Where passengers that go that way,
May rest, and so refreshing take,
Their sweltish Wearinesse to slake. (l.16-26)

Instead of the rock serving as a foundation, Collins returns to the image of shade and sun that marks the earlier poem “Communion with Christ.” Her use of the image here, however, is a reversal of the former shade of “false fear” and “dispair” and the bright light of divine grace. Here the rock shelters from the scorching sun. Further, within the layers of real and metaphorical images, Collins distances the image of “dry desart Lands” from her own experience with the parenthetical “they say.” With this little phrase, she makes clear that she herself has not seen the deserts—this image comes from her mental rather than her actual physical travels. The conclusion of this poem further praises the stability of the “Rock”:

Therefore my soule do thou depend
Upon that Rock which will not move,

When all created help shall end
Thy Rock impregnable will prove,
Whom still embrace with ardent Love. (l.76-90)

While this poem in particular engages contemporary negative ideas of movement—straying, wandering, danger—the images further emphasize the power of internalizing spirituality.

Even as Collins develops ostensibly negative ideas toward movement in “God is the strength of his People,” she is simultaneously arguing for a movement inward to establish a church of the mind—one that values the activity of the soul and the mind and emphasizes individual connection with God. Gottlieb comments on Collins’ use of the image of the rock and notes that “Collins does not emphasize the traditional association of rock with the establishment of the church (see Matthew 16:18): her stress is on the individual relationship of God and the believer, not mediated by a church” (108). While the idea of an individual relationship with God is no longer wildly radical in Collins’ day, she does exploit the radical potential of self-definition by means of relocation. In her meditation and writing she locates herself in a different context—her church of the mind, so to speak. In an exploration of Margery Kempe’s pilgrimages described in *The book of Margery Kemp*, Terence N. Bowers writes, “More significant is the way she uses travel to recontextualize her life and to place her behaviors and self-concept in a larger frame of reference that challenges the narrow ideological framework in which the English church authorities operate” (15).³⁰ Physical relocation is not available to Collins, so she engages the trope of mental and spiritual relocations in order to reorder value systems that would render her subject position less valuable. The poem that follows “God is the strength of his People” returns to the idea of a warm and nourishing sun. In it she repeats her insistence on the value of her mind and relates it to her confinement in particular:

Yet as a garden is my mind enclosed fast

³⁰ Margery Kempe (ca. 1373-ca.1440) documented her life in *The Book of Margery Kempe*, one of the earliest autobiographies from a British woman. After years of marriage, Kempe seeks to regain her virginity and to become a bride of Christ and she experiences a great deal of resistance from church authorities and others in her community. Bowers argues that she exposes the injustices and inconsistencies in her cultural context by going on pilgrimages and arguing for her liminal social status as normative, thus revealing the limitations of her own social context.

Being to safety so confind from storm and blast
Apt to produce a fruit most rare,
That is not common with every woman
That fruitfull are. (l.26-30)

Moving the reader along with herself into the context of her internal church, Collins deftly writes over cultural definitions of women's productivity by locating fruitfulness within mental production rather than sexual reproduction. She clearly marks the difference between the "fruit" of her production and values one (the "most rare") above the other. The image of the enclosed space also connotes Eden and Eve's culpability. In the very next poem, Collins explicitly connects knowledge and virtue, again revaluing knowledge in a new context. She writes, "So Knowldg doth exquisitly / The Mind adorn, delight and cleare / Which otherwise is most obscure, / Full of enormities impure" (58, l.17-30). Knowledge, the villain in Eden and Eve's temptation, is inserted into a value system nurtured in enclosure and rendered positive and purifying. Like Lanyer, Collins redefines Eve's position in Christian dogma by reclaiming the value of knowledge as a woman. In the church of her mind, Collins does not seek to invent her own value system, but to attain spirituality in close communion with God that works apart from cultural value systems that would repress women's full spiritual potential by limiting them to roles defined by their bodies.

In a cultural environment that ideologically represses women's physical movement, Collins diminishes the power of the body over the mind and enacts an enclosed life as one of movement and freedom. She demonstrates that physical enclosure, culturally prescribed for maintaining women's virtue and chastity, does not necessarily limit the most significant movements. Collins' own mental movement is spiritual and chaste in nature, but in it she is not confined to domestic space; rather, she enters the public realm by putting her voice into print. The ways in which Collins imbeds the language of confinement and movement into her writing puts her in a position of actively challenging commonly held assumptions about the relationship between physical and mental confinement. In moving into enclosure, she secures a space in which she can redefine her role as a woman and rewrite cultural scripts that would determine and limit her movements. Collins experiences her physical limitations, her break from her body, as

great spiritual freedom to produce and explore and in doing so she internalizes and opens up the ways in which women might enter into the spiritual realm. Movement and enclosure are the framing devices of *Diving Songs and Meditations* and through them Collins carves out epistemological space that is both spiritual and self-expressive.

VI. Conclusion: Creating Destinations

The coherence of the trope of minor movements in women's acts of self-representation in the seventeenth century is made all the more apparent because of the diversity of the texts in which it can clearly be seen to function. These texts were written in response to a wide variety of different personal and social pressures, and among these pressures it is striking that the authors represent transformative moments in their lives in the language and narrative structures of travel and understand their roles in relation to movement. Lanyer, Trapnel, and Collins all find an entrance into print through their interest in spirituality albeit from very social different positions. Trapnel and Collins are responding to significant upheavals in the cultural religious context after the Reformation; both engage in cultural commentary but Trapnel is more explicitly involved in a religious/political movement, the Fifth Monarchy. Lanyer's invocation of the Passion poem foregrounds her own identity as a poet, reframes women's role in Christian theology through the Eve myth, and promotes women's connections in an intellectual community. Lanyer and Clifford's biographies intersect as they give secular interests a more explicit voice as they promote the possibility of women's authority in their writing. In Lanyer's *Salve Deus Rex Judæorum* she textually enacts movement by calling her dedicatees together around a Passover Feast and closes the collection with a poem whose primary image is a group of women's arrival to and departure from an Edenic state. Relocating to Cooke-ham, perhaps in reality and certainly in text, is the impetus for her imagination of a nation of women, governed by a female monarch—arguably a foreign space that allows them to restructure and subvert the real cultural forces that govern their lives. This textual creation allows her to redefine traditional gender roles, instilling women with power and virtue. Clifford's more explicitly autobiographical memoirs reveal a woman engaged in a real struggle for authority regarding property inheritance.

She documents her movement between estates, but more importantly, the movement of properties between hands and the importance of ownership. She does not accept the domestic kingdom handed to her as mistress of her husband's estates as her only domain, but struggles for years to inherit her family's lands against patriarchal traditions that disadvantaged women as heirs. Trapnel's text most resembles traditional travel writing, recording her adventures as a servant, or captive, of God called to preach in Cornwall. She defends her transgression of feminine and political norms by invoking Pauline biblical typology, writing over gender roles with a higher calling she is compelled by God to take. She imagines and creates the New Jerusalem in recounting her story and, in doing so, she deploys captivity narrative typology to represent England—particularly its government and church—as foreign and depraved. Finally, Collins' remarkable redefinition of herself as a being of the mind is made possible by her physical limitations and her journey into enclosure. From her unique position, she internalizes her relationship with God to the exclusion of church structures, diminishing the power of a Christian doctrine that would separate women from knowledge and activity.

In a variety of ways, these women demonstrate that even minor movement allows them the space to redefine themselves in relation to their culture at large. These relocations may be very slight physically and geographically or may seem ordinary, but as they are written into texts, they clearly allow for significant redefinition of self in terms of the roles and space women were compelled to fill within a patriarchal society. Within the field of travel writing, the texts I examine here clearly connect to travel narratives that deal with international voyages or even fictional representations of such voyages in their impact on the identity of the travelers and their understanding of their culture of origin. The texts I study in this thesis provide us with the opportunity to examine the ways women were perhaps able to create spaces outside of and in opposition to a dominant patriarchal cultural reality. That physical movement and textual representations of movement allowed them to do this provides us with a rich theoretical foundation from which to understand other women's creation of nations both within and outside of England.

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