French philosophy and English politics in Interregnum poetry

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Abstract
This essay offers a historical context for the influence of epicurean philosophy in mid-seventeenth century so that the ideological nature of poetry during the Interregnum becomes more clear. I begin by discussing the epicurean tradition in France from Michel Montaigne to Pierre Gassendi that had been maturing for half a century. This late Renaissance secular tradition, sometimes referred to as a new humanism, has too often been misinterpreted as the consequence of neo-stoicism rather than neo-epicureanism. Prominent French libertins (epicurean free-thinkers) greeted the defeated cavalier's after their decisive defeat at the battle of Marston Moor in the summer of 1644. Rather than continuing to live in their enemy's England, many cavaliers gathered around Queen Henrietta Maria's court-in-exile in Paris for a decade and a half. The libertins befriending the English included many French aristocrats and intellectuals including Gassendi himself whose neo-epicurean philosophy had Christiaized ancient epicureanism. English royalists began thinking and writing as new humanists, and some began translating epicurean, lucretian and Gassendian texts. A number of these royalist writers published epicurean influenced poetry and other texts in the London press from mid 1640s through the 1650s. The puritans, in charge of the English government during the Interregnum generally saw these texts as an ungodly literary invasion. Andrew Marvell, a kind of Poet Laureate to the Cromwell Protectorate, wrote a likely satire in response to royalist epicurean verse, which was not published until after his death. Yet To His Coy Mistress is generally regarded as having been written in the early 1650s. Today the poem is being read in the cavalier carpe diem tradition, indeed almost defines the genre. Our naive reading of what is most likely Marvell’s finest satire would surprise Marvell, if he knew how we have wrenched it out of its cultural context as a puritan response to royalist epicurean ideology.

Introduction

From 1525-33 Martin Luther repeatedly charged that Desiderius Erasmus was an epicurean. The differences of opinion were over such issues as how immortal was the soul, how determining was divine providence, and how free was the human will, all questions that Epicurus had answered on the other end of the continuum from Luther. Luther thought Erasmus' positions on these
protestant litmus test issues too catholic, too ungodly, and therefore ‘epicurean’. Luther extended the term ‘epicurean’ to its traditional incorrect connotation of a pursuit of sensual vice -- which misrepresented both Erasmus and Epicurus. Frustrated with the continuing imputation, Erasmus finally tried a bold tactic that took Luther by surprise: he defended the epicurean pursuit of pleasure, reasoning that since the pursuit of virtue is surely the greatest pleasure in life, then all good Christians must be epicureans. A century later occurred a parallel to the Erasmus story: English puritans repeatedly charged, for much the same reasons as Luther had assailed Erasmus, that the Caroline court and courtiers were epicurean. Subsequently, puritan military victories in the Civil War exiled the English court and most of its former courtiers to France, where they had leisure and occasion to learn enough about epicurean science and ethics to defend it, and systematically to adapt it to their ideology. During the 1640s, English cavalier poets gathered around Henrietta Maria's court-in-exile willingly wedded a French epicureanism they had only flirted with in England before the War. Neo-epicurean royalist literature began invading the London press in a cultural offensive against the puritan Commonwealth. In 1660, the godly saw restored to Whitehall a monarch and court who were proud and public about their French epicureanism.

This essay investigates the European roots and transmission of epicurean ideas, whose swift rise to cultural dominance in Restoration England Richard Kroll has recently traced. Kroll corrects the common view that epicurean materialism and empiricism began after 1660. ‘I do not see the shift from essentialist to nominal epistemologies taking place first in the middle of the Restoration ... The period of gestation, I argue throughout, is 1640-1660.’ But aside from Gassendi, Kroll does not link English epicureanism to earlier currents of European thought. He also dismisses the possibility that epicureanism carried a mid-seventeenth-century political signature, and therefore fails to explore the implications of the strong royalist affiliations of early English translators of epicurean texts, such as Walter Charleton, John Evelyn and Thomas Stanley. Nor does Kroll notice the transmission of Gassendian epicureanism by royalist poets almost a decade before Charleton published his first English edition of Gassendi in the mid-1650s. I will argue that the cutting edge of English epicureanism in the 1640s and early 1650s was to be found in the poetry written by William Davenant, Abraham Cowley and Margaret Cavendish, all of whom were members of Henrietta Maria's exiled royalist court. These English royalists (already familiar with a little epicurean philosophy from the pre-war Caroline court) found in Paris a tradition of libertin thought, which had for some time used epicurean ideas to counter religious dogmatism, enthusiasm, hypocrisy and intolerance. Many cavaliers soon adapted French epicureanism for use against puritan providentialism and as a way of legitimizing the sensuous pleasures of church and court ritual, art, music, sports and drama, which the Commonwealth suppressed.
I. French Humanism from Montaigne's Epicurean Ethics to Gassendi's Christianized Epicureanism

As Kroll recognizes, the European thinker most clearly identified with the epicurean revival of the mid-seventeenth century was Pierre Gassendi. Gassendi’s achievement had been to baptize epicureanism by reconciling it with catholic theology, thereby making it possible to espouse epicurean ideas openly without necessarily inviting scandalous imputations of vice and atheism. Gassendi was not, however, the first French thinker to draw extensively on epicurean thought. Behind him lay a rarely acknowledged tradition of epicurean ethical thought going back to Michel de Montaigne and his early seventeenth-century followers. Montaigne's extensive use of epicurean ideas and sources has been noted by most twentieth-century students of his work, including those expert in Hellenistic philosophy, as well as by Blaise Pascal in the mid-seventeenth century. Montaigne's epicurean interests, however, have not adequately been appreciated by Anglo-American historians of philosophy and politics. For example, Richard Popkin restricted his discussion of the influence of Montaigne to the tradition of scepticism. And, more recently, Richard Tuck, in his otherwise admirable Philosophy and Government, 1572-1651, assimilates Montaigne to a ‘new humanist’ sceptical and neo-stoic tradition, whose other exponents included Justus Lipsius, Paolo Sarpi and Pierre Charron. Tuck's view effectively isolates Gassendi and other mid-century epicureans from their cultural roots, making their thought appear to be a radical departure from, rather than a culmination of, more than a half-century of intellectual experimentation.

One reason the epicureanism of Montaigne and libertin thinkers has sometimes been underestimated is that they rarely proclaimed it openly, in the way that Lipsius, for example, advertised his allegiance to stoicism and taciteanism, since epicureanism was still associated with atheism and hedonism. Indeed, the extent of a text's epicureanism becomes clear only when one reads carefully for philosophic nuances that divided epicureans from stoics and other schools, and extrapolates from suggestive quotations and paraphrases embedded in the text. Montaigne encourages such reading. ‘Neither these stories nor my quotations serve always solely for the use I derive from them. They often bear, outside of my subject, the seeds of a richer and bolder material, and sound obliquely a subtler note, both for myself, who do not wish to express anything more, and for those who get my drift’ (1:40, pp. 184-5). Elsewhere he writes: ‘At all events, in these memoirs, if you look around, you will find that I have said everything or suggested everything. What I cannot express I point to with my finger. “But if you have a penetrating mind / These little tracks will serve the rest to find”’ (111:9, p. 751).
Montaigne's concluding couplet is a quotation from Lucretius, the Roman poet whose epic, De Rerum Natura, provides at once the most complete and most compelling exposition of Epicurus' ideas to have survived from antiquity.\(^\text{20}\) In the three volumes of the Essays, Montaigne quotes a minimum of 454 verses from De Rerum Natura, according to one source.\(^\text{21}\) If one also counts paraphrases, more than a sixth of Lucretius' epic (over 1,200 lines) appears in the Essays.\(^\text{22}\) Montaigne borrows substantially more from Lucretius than from any other source, and this epicurean intertext constituted a remarkably unconventional presence in literature of the late sixteenth century.\(^\text{23}\) After Lucretius, the ancient writer most frequently quoted by Montaigne is another epicurean poet, Horace. For example, in the short essay entitled 'That to Philosophize is to Learn to Die' (1:20), Montaigne mentions Christ, Mohammed and Alexander once, all as having died young, quotes Cicero twice, Horace eight and Lucretius sixteen times. The thirty Lucretian lines used in the essay assert the mortality of the soul and the absence of any reward or punishment after death, and argue that annihilation is nothing to fear.\(^\text{24}\) In his essay, 'Of Books' (11:10), Montaigne identifies four Latin poets as of 'the first rank by far': Virgil (Montaigne admired particularly the poetry of the young, more epicurean, Virgil), Lucretius and two more Roman epicurean poets, Horace and Catullus.\(^\text{25}\)

Since Montaigne also quotes stoics and adherents of other schools, his essays now appear philosophically eclectic. But from the standpoint of Montaigne's contemporary reader what would have been shockingly new about Montaigne's writing was not its traces of stoicism, nor its extreme scepticism, but the elevation of Epicurus, Lucretius and other epicurean poets, and the full and sympathetic exposition given their ideas -- ideas Montaigne often pointedly favors over stoic doctrines. In essay 11:11 (p. 307) he writes: 'For truly, in firmness and rigor of opinions and precepts the epicurean sect in no way yields to the Stoic' In the next essay (11:12) he adds: 'How insolently the Stoics rebuke Epicurus because he holds that to be truly good and happy belongs only to God, and that the wise man has only a shadow or semblance of it! How rashly have they bound God to destiny.'

On central moral and epistemological issues Montaigne's views differ sharply from those of stoicism, while coming close to those of Epicurus. Stoics separated the soul from the body, reason from passion, whereas Montaigne, like the epicureans, insisted on unifying these stoic dichotomies.\(^\text{26}\) Montaigne's characteristic emphasis on individual self-interest is also more epicurean than stoic, for in Roman stoicism the height of virtue consists in serving the cosmopolis. Epicureans, however, forgo public duty because they assume that in a vicious civilization it will rarely coincide with individual happiness. The private sphere needs to be protected from the superstitions, fears and greed that dominate public life, so that an epicurean can pursue a self-interested calculus of pleasure and pain.\(^\text{27}\) Since, for epicureans, neither providence nor supernatural justice exist, and events are determined by chance and material laws, there is no reason to seek moral meaning outside one's self. Montaigne's message throughout the Essays is
that the individual can find self-knowledge and sufficiency within, whereas the claims to reason of religion and philosophy are doubtful and ultimately unnecessary to a good life. So, for Montaigne, Native Americans or Turks can therefore be as moral as any Christian, and perhaps more so.

The typically epicurean themes of carpe diem and the pursuit of individual happiness as the highest good are echoed many times throughout the Essays. Montaigne also adopts the epicurean view of pain as an unmitigated evil, rather than as a test of resolve, as a means of interrogation, or as a fearful example to maintain social control, as it was viewed by contemporary stoics and Christians. He inveighs against the official use of torture and painful executions, suggesting that if those in authority consider horrible examples necessary to impress the citizenry, then mutilating a dead body ought to suffice. In addition, Montaigne advances the view that the fortunate events of an individual’s life should not only be enjoyed in the present but also stored in the memory to provide avocatio -- passive mental pleasure - to distract the psyche during periods of illness and pain.

Montaigne’s God resembles the epicurean/lucretian gods: perfect, completely self-fulfilled and devoid of interest in guiding, rewarding or revenging human virtue or vice. The essay ‘Of Repentance’ (III.2) displays a remarkable lack of guilt that is difficult to understand only if we fail to recognize that Montaigne’s God is not the vengeful deity of Calvin or Paul but, as he tells us, a ‘self-satisfied’ deity who -- like epicurean gods -- seems uninterested in punishing humans for being human. Finally, there is a long epicurean tradition of conforming in public to the conventional values, beliefs and behavior of the surrounding society, so that one may be left in peace to discourse privately with free-thinking friends. This comes very close to the view of Montaigne and other ‘new humanists’ -- like Justus Lipsius and Paolo Sarpi -- that individuals should conform to whatever their country’s laws require, while reserving judgement in private and among like-minded friends.

Most of the radical attitudes that Tuck considers characteristic of the ‘new humanism’ are, in fact, much easier to explain as infusions of epicurean rather than of stoic philosophy. These include the attenuation of a sense of public duty in favor of individual self-interest; the ‘moral atheism’ that led to a divorce between religion and morality; and the replacement of an approach to politics grounded in concepts of divinely ordained natural law by one based on a calculus of self-preservation and self-interest. Stoics insisted as firmly as orthodox Christian aristotelians on the existence of natural law, the providential ordering of the universe and the transcendent and absolute nature of moral obligations. Epicurus rejected all these doctrines, and developed a much more radical skepticism and individualism. This epicurean outlook is also more congruent with another characteristic of Tuck’s ‘new humanists’: their preference for Tacitus over Livy as the historian of choice. The tacitean, like the lucretian, world is non-orderly and non providential -- thus non-stoic. Tacitus’ tyrants manipulate fear and greed in a universe where chance
seems as important as causation. Montaigne states that the really compelling reason for his enjoyment of the Annals is that they fit the epicurean emphasis on the private sphere: ‘I know of no author who introduces into a register of public events so much consideration of private behavior and inclinations’ (111:8).

In the two generations after Montaigne's death his scepticism was imitated and extrapolated by the libertins erudits (learned free-thinkers), who generally conformed to conventional beliefs and norms of behaviour in public, while exploring radical and subversive epicurean ideas among private, and often more or less secret, circles of friends. They included the priest Gassendi and the minimist monk Marin Mersenne - both anti-scholastic humanists, scientists and mathematicians - and others such as Francois de la Mothe le Vayer, Gabriel Naude, Leonard Marande, Isaac La Peyrere and Guy Patin. These were not obscure scholars. Le Vayer was tutor to the king's brother, Naude was librarian to both Cardinal Ministers Richelieu and Mazarin as well as secretary to Cardinal Bagni; La Peyrere and Marande were, respectively, secretaries to the prince of Conde and Richelieu. Most libertins erudits held prominent positions in the intellectual world as well - le Vayer was a member of l'academie francaise, Patin was rector of the Medical School of the Sorbonne, and Gassendi was professor of mathematics at the College Royal in Paris. All were members of intellectual circles, which included members of the highest social and political importance. Mersenne, moreover, maintained an indefatigable international correspondence that quickened European science as well as humanism.

Besides these free-thinking savants, there was a much larger number of somewhat less scholarly, but more socially prominent - free-thinking - poets and writers. These libertins, exploring Montaigne's new skeptical epicurean humanism during the first half of the seventeenth century, hardly had to work out a new tradition to express epicurean discourse, since, as we have seen in Montaigne's quotations, there already existed a distinguished classical epicurean literary tradition. Imitating Lucretius, a number of libertins wrote a clear, vigorous verse employing not only epicurean ethics, but also epicurean epistemology, physics, biology and anthropology, characterized by elevation of sensory perception, atomic structure, infinite time and space, universal scientific laws and material causation. Few libertins published their work as they wrote, for they were in personal contact with the audience in which they were most interested -- other libertins. Epicurean ethics and science informed poems and epistles that circulated among high born or highly talented peers within and between groups in taverns, libraries, private homes, or the salons of brilliant femmes savants -- for the inclusion of women and slaves as intellectual friends and equals in epicurean circles had first been practiced in Epicurus’ original community.

Montaigne's interest in epicureanism had centered on ethics rather than science, since, like many other humanists of the late sixteenth century, he regarded all scientific theories with skepticism. By the early seventeenth century, however,
some important figures of the ‘new science’, such as Galileo Galilei and Isaac Beeckmann, became interested in epicurean physics and lucretian epistemology. Their observations and conjectures, together with Brahe’s and Kepler’s work, seemed to corroborate some of the key principles of epicurean/lucretian physics and epistemology (the anti-aristotelian assumption of universality of scientific laws celestially as well as terrestrially, and the assumption that knowledge should be based on sensory perception rather than reason). This corroboration made epicureanism seem even more persuasive as an integrated philosophic system than it had been at the time of its greatest influence in the ancient world, especially since the new discoveries often tended to subvert rival stoic ideas of nature. Stoic science assumed a qualitative universe, a neuma or spiritual essence animated by divine Reason; a plenum without vacuum, perfectly spherical in shape, fundamentally anthropocentric with the earth at its center. Several of these ideas were becoming increasingly untenable by the mid-seventeenth century, and although Descartes, for example, still championed the plenum without vacuum and a divine Reason derived anthropomorphically from the existence of his own thinking, his universe, like Gassendi’s, was quantitative rather than qualitative and had accepted Copernicus’ decentering of earth.

During the 1620s, Galileo, Beeckmann, Mersenne and Gassendi all shifted from an absolutist epistemology to a satisfaction with the tentative and modest, yet cumulative and useful, material knowledge that could be gleaned by the senses. No later than 1628, after his return from a visit to Beeckmann (he was also in communication with Galileo), Gassendi laid aside his plan for further skeptical volumes undermining Aristotle, which had already won him the reputation of arch-skeptic of the early seventeenth century, and began championing an empiricist epistemology based on the epicurean/lucretian model. This new kind of tentative knowledge, ‘mitigated’ or ‘constructive’ skepticism, was a via-media between the uncomfortable extremes of blind faith and radical doubt that had confronted Montaigne. Almost seventy years after Montaigne’s Essays were published, Epicurus’ ethics was finally reattached firmly to its science, providing perhaps the most complete of the several new alternatives to scholasticism, a persuasive and radically materialist paradigm applicable to a whole range of religious, political, moral and scientific issues.

Classical epicureanism, however, had always appeared to conflict with fundamental catholic doctrine, so Gassendi purged parts that were offensively non-Christian. He amended Epicurus’ teaching that the gods had no hand in creation, and attributed to the Christian God the creation of atoms of a ‘finite’ number sufficient to his purpose of composing the world. He also amended Epicurus’ view of divine providence as unnecessary superstition, and instead showed his contemporaries how in studying the laws of nature - God’s working principles -- one might better appreciate His consensual partnership in the unfolding of natural processes. In addition, Gassendi dissented from Epicurus’ assumption that the human soul was mortal. But having made these adjustments, he followed Erasmus
and Montaigne in equating the epicurean search for highest pleasure with the Christian pursuit of faith and virtue. And, like Montaigne, he identified the non-vengeful, non-wrathful, tranquil gods of Epicurus with a gentle and benevolent Christian, if far less active and invasive, God that one worshipped out of faith and love, rather than logic and fear. A French Catholic priest who was also a libertin e rudit, Gassendi freely assimilated ideas that a calvinist or augustinian would have found profoundly subversive of Christianity.

II. Epicurean Influences on Cavalier Poets in Paris at the English Court-in-exile

English writers of the early seventeenth century did not display the sustained and fairly systemic engagement with epicureanism evident among French libertins from Montaigne to Gassendi. We can, however, trace a more impressionistic epicureanism, often fused with Christian platonism and hermeticism, among courtiers close to Henrietta Maria in the 1630s. These courtiers borrowed a mystic amalgam that included a few epicurean ideas wrenched out of context by Giordano Bruno, Nicholas Hill and Nicolas Caussin, which they mixed into a neo-platonic cult of love and ceremony centered on Carlo/Maria as virtuous married lovers. The Whitehall flirtation of the 1630s with epicurean concepts such as atomism, pleasure and infinity tended to be more mystifying than clarifying, more transcendental than materialist: in other words, more Brunian than Montaignean. In 1641, several courtiers and poets close to the queen -- including Henry Jermyn, Sir John Suckling, William Davenant and Lord Newcastle -- organized what came to be called the Army Plot to place Newcastle in command of troops so that he could march on London and save Strafford from execution. The plot was discovered in early May 1641, before it could be carried out. Several of the plotters fled to France, where Suckling died before the Civil War began. In 1644, Henrietta Maria herself arrived in Paris, to establish a court-in-exile (at the Louvre, then at St Germain, and back to the Louvre). There she was served by several key figures from her pre-war entourage, and a number of additional recruits. Her court became a center both of royalist conspiracy and intrigue and of intellectual and literary experimentation.

Henrietta Maria was accompanied to Paris by Jermyn (now Lord St Albans), and possibly by Jermyn's secretary, the young poet Abraham Cowley, who had been at the wartime court of Oxford during the previous two years but was certainly in Paris by early 1645. Cowley was amanuensis for the Queen, while he lived with and served Jermyn, probably coding and decoding her correspondence with Charles; he also undertook secret missions into England
as her courier. In 1648 Davenant, the laureate of the Caroline court after Jonson's death in 1637, also moved into Jermyn's apartments. During the Civil War he had proved adept at finding, transporting and organizing artillery and munitions, and was knighted by the king. In 1642-3, as Lieutenant General of Ordinance he served for almost a year under William Cavendish, Lord Newcastle, general in chief of the royalist armies, in the crucial northern campaign, which was decisively defeated at the battle of Marston Moor in 1644. Davenant left, perhaps before that battle (at which he was falsely reported killed), to serve the Queen on special assignment to sell her jewelry privately for money to purchase munitions and return to England with them to resupply the royalist army at Oxford. He crossed the channel and entered England again to carry on secret negotiations between Henrietta Maria and the imprisoned Charles after the war ended.

While living in Jermyn's apartments, after returning from this last mission, he collaborated intensively, from about 1648-50, with another exile, Thomas Hobbes, on his epic poem, Gondibert. Thomas Hobbes had been living in Paris since he fled England while Lord Strafford was being impeached by parliament in November 1640, for fear of being arrested in connection with those proceedings. By the mid-1640s, when Cowley and Davenant had arrived in France to serve the Queen at the court-in-exile, Hobbes had already been living in Paris for several years and, as a well-connected member of Mersenne's and Gassendi’s circle of libertins e'rudits, was thoroughly acquainted with Gassendian epicureanism. By October 1644, Hobbes had read Gassendi’s manuscript of Animadversions in decimum librum Diogenes Laertii, qui est de vita, moribus, placitisque Epicuri (unpublished until 1649), a text that included full discussions of epicurean epistemology, physics and ethics, which Hobbes, apparently understanding Gassendi’s intention in refurbishing epicureanism, called ‘as big as Aristotle's philosophic, but much truer’. Cowley, Davenant and Waller had probably begun learning epicureanism from Hobbes years before Gassendi published. From 1646-8 at St Germain, Hobbes was the prince of Wales's tutor of mathematics while, at the same time, Gassendi was professor of mathematics at the College Royal in Paris.

Lord General William Cavendish, marquis (later duke) of Newcastle, arrived in Paris shortly after Marston Moor. One of the richest nobles in England before the war, he had almost impoverished himself in the royalist war effort. He now offered his services to the Queen. A soldier, courtier and patron of poets (Ben Jonson had been one of them), humanists such as Hobbes, and scientists (including several mathematicians), and friends with Gassendi, Mersenne and Descartes, Newcastle's interest in epicureanism had begun well before the war. His brother, the mathematician Charles Cavendish, as well as Sir Kenelm Digby (interested in combining epicurean atomism with aristotelian philosophy) were also members of his Parisian circle. In 1645, Newcastle married one of the queen's maids of honor at the court-in-exile, Margaret Lucas.
(younger sister of the soon to be cavalier martyr, Sir Charles Lucas, executed after the siege of Colchester in 1648). Shortly after the marriage, she emerged as a poet in her own right. From 1646-8 Newcastle and Margaret lived in Paris near the court-in-exile; their house served as a center for gatherings of English and French writers and intellectuals. We know, for example, that yet another exiled English poet, Edmund Waller, met Gassendi while dining with Newcastle, and his wife, Margaret, along with other guests: Mersenne, Descartes and Hobbes.

Gassendi, while in Paris from 1641-8, lived in the home of his well-to-do libertin friend, Francois Luillier, whose natural son, Chapelle, received tutoring from the master. Chapelle's lifelong friend was Moliere, and he was also friends with the dashing libertin Cyrano de Bergerac. All were likely to have shared informal occasions of intellectual discussion and friendship together, probably in company with other close libertin associates, such as Samuel Sorbiere, who was overseeing the publication of Gassendi's work during this time, and Gassendi's disciple, Bernier, and Bernier's disciple, Charles Saint-Evremond. The latter was, we know, acquainted with Henrietta Maria's Lord Chamberlain, Henry Jermyn, for he wrote in praise of Jermyn's courtly good taste in a 1651 letter addressed to Edmund Waller. Saint-Evremond remained close friends with English royalists, and in the 1660s left Louis XIV's court to spend the last thirty-six years of his life at the English royal court, where his epicurean circle of friends, led by Hortense Mancini, a niece of Cardinal Mazarin, included Edmund Waller and other courtiers from the court-in-exile during the 1640s. Upon his death in 1703, Saint-Evremond was accorded the singular honor of being the first Frenchman to be buried at Westminster Abbey. After the Restoration, Gassendi's editor, Samuel Sorbiere, was honored by election to membership in the English Royal Society. Further investigation of the English and French relationship at the court-in-exile is needed, but the close ties that must have existed between the royalist exiles and their libertin hosts are suggested by the Restoration court's gracious personal acceptance of Sorbiere and Saint-Evremond, as well as its wide adoption of Gassendi's Christianized epicurean philosophy.

William Davenant's preface to Gondibert and Hobbes's 'Answer', published in Paris in 1650, questioned over two millennia of epic tradition by expunging supernatural myths and machinery of the gods to refashion epic poetry into a non-theistic, secular humanist genre resonant with Montaignean/Gassendian epicurean influence. For example, in Gondibert, Davenant rarely related the acts of his characters to any epic supernature. He offered, instead, a secular focus on human actions as material events, with natural causes and consequences, and almost complete attenuation of the traditionally intrusive guidance of events by divine providence. Furthermore, this epicurean absence of providence has been appropriated to royalist ideology in Davenant's representation of war as the chanciest of human endeavours, in
obvious opposition to the typical puritan theistic ideology, evident in Andrew Marvell's 'An Horatian ode', for example, that the New Model army's decisive military victories had proved parliament, and Cromwell, to be God's intended ruler of England. Like Montaigne, Davenant insisted that battles are not won by providential design or as reward for military skill, but through chance: Such ideology not only removed the royalist defeat from appearing the judgement of God but also helped ameliorate the stinging blow to wounded cavalier military pride.

What are your Battles where Ambition tries
Like mighty Murtherers you Honour boast,
Those Tides which avoid the Test of Law,
Ofener by Chance than Valour give Defeats;

Battles, the Worlds confused Lotteries,
Vainly like Gamesters count not what you lost,
Where for the Prize thousands together draw.
But what you won, hiding your base Retreats. (III.vii.97-98)

The focus of Davenant's epic is on the individual self-interest and passionate desires of aristocrats and their relation to one another and to nature - what Davenant in his preface (1. 679) called 'men's business and their bosoms'. The characters of Gondibert are constantly put into situations where they must calculate costs and benefits, compromise, negotiate and balance public duties. For example, should Gondibert marry the king's daughter, Rhodalind, and eventually assume the crown of Lombardy and thus contradict or impede his desire for retirement in the epicurean garden of Astragon's house of science, in love with the pure and natural Birtha? Private revealing and public concealing become issues in Gondibert, as they were in Montaigne's Essays. Montaigne would have approved Davenant's tacitean viewpoint (that of a courtly insider) who separated the private bosom from the public business, so that duty and the interests of state seem until the very end of this unfinished poem far less important than the individual pleasure or pain of love. This emphasis on individual self-interest and the cultivation of a private life separate from public control of political, economic and social institutions must have been particularly appealing to the exiled young king to be, Charles II (Gondibert?) and his courtiers, who were in exile, without a country and without public purpose.

Gondibert, and his young military elite, 'Worship'd the Poets Darling Godhead, Love, / Which grave Philosophers did Nature call' (I.i.68.3-4). Love is 'That sacred vitall heat by which we live' (I.ii.15.4). Davenant's treatment of love was reminiscent of Lucretius' 'Praise of Venus' and of Montaigne's definition of love as both a physical and an emotional desire, a natural need of
both the body and soul in unison, rather than a physical passion that the soul must suppress (as in stoicism) or redirect toward transcendental goals (as in neo-platonism and platonized Christianity). Davenant's phrasing 'Natures Religion, Love' (II.viii.72.1) locates the epicurean pursuit of Love's pleasure in sacred animal instinct. And in 'Thy love's high soaring cannot be a crime' (III.v.26.1) or 'He would not Nature's eldest Law resist, / As if wise Nature's Law could be impure' (II.vii.75.1-2), we can assume that the crime is more likely to lie in resistance to love than in acquiescence to its natural demands.

The importance of love in motivating the human psyche throughout Gondibert derives not from a conventional platonic ascent up a ladder of ideal forms, but from love's fundamental relationship to all natural material creatures, and thus to animal lust. Davenant subverts the Idealist separation of human emotions and reality from the rest of nature insisting, 'that indefinite Love is Lust; and Lust when it is determin'd to one, is Love ... that Love is the most acceptable imposition of Nature, the cause and preservation of Life, and the very healthfulness, of the minde., as well as of the body' (preface, II.460ff.). This kind of naturalism that locates the roots of human behavior in the world of nature, was one of the key features of the epicurean evolutionary package of ideas, and examples of it abound in Gondibert. Whether or not such human behavior as making war is a natural or unnatural desire must be studied with reference to that need in nature's other creatures before it can be judged properly within the epicurean calculus of human desires.57  'We blush to see our politics in Beasts' (I.ii.41.1), suggests Davenant, because animal behavior, even at its seemingly most vicious, is not merely analogous to that of humans but, as in epicurean science, actually homologous with our behavior. For epicureans there was no separate creation for humans from other earthly beings; all creatures originated from chance concatenations of atoms and evolved upon earth according to the same scientific laws.58  Thus Davenant's naturalism, like Montaigne's, as well as Epicurus' and Lucretius', is anti-anthropocentric. He castigates human pride that 'Thinks [animals were] made t'obey Man's high immortal Minde' (II.v.32.4). Any sanction that can be read into Genesis for the human tyranny over other animals during the First Scriptural Age ended, Davenant insisted, with the Flood, which marked the beginning of the Second Scriptural Age and a New Covenant. As humans, saved in the Ark with other natural creatures, stepped on to dry land:

Each humbled thus, his Beasts led from aboard,
As fellow Passengers, and Heirs to breath;
Joynt Tennants to the World, he not their Lord;
Such likeness have we in the Glass of Death.  (II.vi.69)

Yet it is not the New Covenant between humans and God that interests
Davenant but an epicurean vision of a new naturalist covenant of parity between humans and other creatures. Davenant's narrative of the creation of the world and civilization adds to the skeleton of Genesis the flesh of lucretian evolutionary concepts and images. The Judeo-Christian creator is guided in his work, for examples, by the epicurean concept of a plurality of worlds within an infinite universe. In the beginning was the Word, 'whose swift dispatch in all it wrought, / Seems to denote the Speaker was in hast, / As if more worlds were framing in his thought' (II.vi.59).

The other great motivator of the human psyche in Gondibert is fear. Adapting lucretian sociology to royalist ideology, Davenant, and probably Hobbes, blame 'This false Guide Fear, which does thy Reason sway' (III.v.31-3) for motivating the evils of war ('Revenge is but a braver Name for Fear' (HI.vi.14.1)), fame, power and, specifically, demagoguery and republican institutions of government:

False Fame, thy Mistris, tutor'd thee amiss;  
Who teaches School in streets, where Crowds resort;  
Fame, false, as that their beauty painted is;  
The common Country slander on the Court. (III.iii.44)

Wilde Fear! Which has a Common-wealth devis'd  
In Heav'n's old Realm, and Saints in Senates fram'd;  
Such as by which, were Beasts well civilliz'd,  
They would suspect their Tamer Man, untam'd. (IIIv.31)

And following Lucretius' famous suggestion that a shipwreck or other disaster watched from a position of safety might calm one's fear of death, Davenant states: 'Death at a distance seen, may ease fears pain' (II.ii.49.4), and Gondibert's young warriors are forced, as in Lucretius' last book of De Rerum Natura, on the plague, to face death in order to help them overcome fear of it.59

To Dangers us'd them; which Death's Visards are,  
More uggly then himself, and often chace  
From Batail Coward-life; but when we dare  
His Visard see, we never fear his Face.

Like Lucretius, Davenant suggests that some religions, such as those of native Americans, evolved out of fear of death in the universal strife and, by playing on these fears, perpetuated superstitious fear of God and His unmerciful wrath that created only worse fears:
Wilde Fear! which has the Indian worship made;
Where each unletter'd Priest the Godhead draws
In such a form, as makes himself afraid;
Disguising Mercy's shape in Teeth and Claws. (III.v.32)

Davenant specifies native American religion here, but he is, of course,
suggesting a pitiless double-predestinating puritan God, relentlessly unmoved
by human charity or good works, who has decided the fate of an eternity of
Hell for most people before they are born (note the repetition of the phrase
‘Wilde Fear’ in a theological context that he had used above to describe
Commonwealth politics). A deity of self-satisfied virtue, perfection and
tranquility, the superstitious godly had transformed into a God to be feared.
Religion as a positive institution in Gondibert seems to fulfil a need for
providing customary ceremonies marking betrothals, marriages and funerals.
Whenever the Lombard religion appears in the poem it is high church with ‘The
Rites of Sprinkling, Incense, Lights, and Song’ (II.i,49.2). Davenant concludes
the third and last book of his unfinished epic with the analogy of vast imperial
enterprises that are designed by individual courtiers, just as a tiny bar magnet
can guide a ship, or as (in epicurean physics) mountains are created by
infinitesimal atoms. The imagery of guidance provided here, as throughout
the epic, is of natural causation in a material universe, rather than supernatural
providence. Commendatory poems on Gondibert written by Edmund Waller
and Abraham Cowley, who were thanked in the preface for their support,
corroborated with their praise Davenant's anti-traditional epicurean
reconstructing of the epic genre.

Abraham Cowley's The Mistress, published in London by the
royalist printer Humphrey Moseley in 1647, does for the love lyric
much of what Davenant does for the epic. But Cowley's poetic transmission of
epicurean ideas to England was accomplished several years before
Davenant's. Cowley's epicurean interests are matters of record, and have
been discussed by several of his critics and biographers. We have only to
look at the characteristics of his 1647 Mistress in order to realize that it was no
coincidence that Cowley was in Paris at the court-in-exile for at least two years
prior to publication of his Mistress, and under the influence of Hobbes and of
Montaignean-Gassendian epicureanism. Cowley banished the supernatural
pastoral machinery traditional in earlier cavalier love lyrics. Focusing on the
secular and material rather than theistic, Cowley discusses human emotions as
a naturalist, integrating empiricism and the discourse of mechanical atomistic
science into the love lyric, presenting himself as a free-thinking innovator in
verse torn between public duty and private desire. Original readers of The
Mistress must have been stunned by its poetry of naturalist desires -- ‘No bound
nor rule my pleasures shall endure, / In Love there's none too much an Epicure'
The injoyment -- and material atoms -- ‘Let Nature if she please disperse/My Atoms over all the Universe’ (‘All-over, love’, 16-17). In a lyric such as ‘All-over, love’, Cowley, with Lucretian vigor and drive, adapts a vast epicurean atomistic paradigm to compliment his mistress.

Cowley’s focus, like Montaigne’s before him and Davenant’s after, abandons, in epicurean fashion, any supernatural relations between the lover and the pastoral world of traditional myth and transcendent ideals to concentrate on the individual speaker’s private ruminations on the costs and benefits, the pains and pleasures of love. His speaker’s hopes for love’s pleasures are not providentially guided and successful, but constantly subject to chance and social indeterminacy. And Cowley’s frustrated lover finds self-mocking humor in social exigencies that turn the individual heart’s hopes into vanities, its secret desires into disappointments and public humiliations. Of course, Cowley was influenced by earlier poets in the English lyric tradition; in fact, it would be strange if he were not. There are reminiscences of Spenser, Donne and Jonson in Cowley’s, as in Davenant’s, verse. Yet so epicurean did contemporaries find his poetry that as late as 1697, in A Summary Account of the Life of... Dr. Anth. Horneck, an anonymous writer praises Horneck by liberating him from the influence of Cowley’s Mistress and that of others commonly considered epicurean: ‘You would not find him perusing Lucretious, Spinoza, Machiavel, or Hobbs, nor sporting with Ovid, Virgil, Catullus, Tasso, or Cowley’s Mistress, or our modern Plays.’ In 1670, Cowley was attacked as a writer of ‘lascivious’ verse. He was not, however, a libertine, but a rather moderate Anglican Gassendian who asks above all for the virtuous pleasures of contemplative epicurean retirement, which in fact he enjoyed after the Restoration, ‘Ah, yet, e’re I descend to th’ Grave/May I a small House, and large Garden have! / And a few Friends, and many Books’. Cowley’s fresh epicurean style, compared with courtly poetry of the 1630s was less mystical, hermetic and platonic, and more like the secular humanist clarity of Montaigne and Gassendi.

Apparently Cowley’s contemporaries recognized what he was attempting better than we, for he was almost universally admired as the foremost poet of the mid-seventeenth century. Even Milton ranked Cowley with Shakespeare and Spenser, as one of England’s greatest poets. The first edition (1647) of Cowley’s Mistress sold out immediately and went into a second printing, and for three generations (seventy-five years) after its publication the Mistress was repeatedly reprinted by popular demand. Judging by how many and how frequently the poems of The Mistress were turned into songs, only John Donne rivaled Cowley as the most popular love poet in seventeenth-century England.

In Poems and Fancies, published in London in 1653, Lady Margaret Lucas Cavendish, marquess (later duchess) of Newcastle is conscious of herself as a woman, a royalist, sister of Sir Charles Lucas the hero/martyr of
Colchester, and wife of the Lord General of the royalist armies, now publishing her own poetry in an England governed by a Commonwealth in a counter-statement to the colonial puritan verse of Anne Bradstreet, a Colonial, whose uncle had published her godly poetry in London in 1650. Like Lucretius, Cavendish begins her book with a poem praising the fecundity of nature (entitled: 'Nature calls a Councell, which was Motion, Figure, matter, and Life, to advise about making the World') followed by a number of short poems describing the creation of a mechanical, atomistic universe of infinite size and eternal age (e.g. 'A World made by Atomes', 'The weight of Atomes', 'What Atomes make Life', 'Of Vacuum'). Like Lucretius, she is writing poetry about nature, without humans, laying out the principles of epicurean physics in poem after poem on the qualities of atoms, their behavior in the void, their diverse sizes and shapes, their indestructibility, their swerves and chance combinations, their constant movement in an eternal and infinite universe creating, dispersing, recreating a plurality of worlds of diverse objects and creatures. Critics have generally found Cavendish's poetry strange, but the tradition in which she is writing her earliest published work could not be clearer. The first three or four dozen poems of her volume lay out a materialist physical foundation for further poems treating ethics. Her universe is as devoid as Davenant's or Cowley's of a divine determining presence guiding such events as the creation of the world and evolution of humans. Atoms are occasionally mentioned by Cowley and Davenant in order to establish their own intertextuality with epicurean science, but Cavendish in her first forty poems uses the word 'atom' no fewer than 132 times. Although she is discussing creation in the middle of the seventeenth century, she never mentions Genesis or God. This is bold writing, with far greater application of epicurean physics than anything to be found in Cowley or Davenant. If there were any puritans reading the 'new humanist poetry proceeding from the court-in-exile who had not yet noticed a connection between royalist writing and neo-epicurean science and ethics, after Lady Cavendish's 1653 volume they had no excuse.

III. The Puritan Reaction to Royalist Epicurean Ideology: Andrew Marvell's Satire, To His Coy Mistress, is an Example

It is clear that by mid-century a number of culturally influential royalist writers were consciously, and fairly systematically, working out an epicurean aesthetic and engaging in the organized transmission of epicurean principles as vehicles for anti-puritan ideology. Yet it is often argued that some puritans were also attracted to epicureanism, which -- allegedly -- had not become
politiciized. Lucy Hutchinson and Richard Overton are routinely used as examples of puritans under epicurean influence. Closer analysis shows, however, that neither Hutchinson nor Overton sympathized with epicureanism, the major new philosophy of the royalists. Although Lucy Hutchinson translated Lucretius’ De Rerum Natura into English verse, probably in the 1640s, the more she translated the more she grew to hate epicurean ideas. Hutchinson, in fact, sent her manuscript to Lord Anglesly years after she had translated it to show him Lucretius’ ‘Athiesme’ and ‘impietie’. Hutchinson wanted to ensure that her translation would not fall into the wrong hands after her death and would never be published to spread its ‘pernicious’, ‘execrable’, ‘foppish’ and ‘casuall, irrational dance of attomes’. Her adjectives express the conventional seventeenth-century puritan view of the writing of Lucretius and Epicurus, as well as of the English royalists who espoused their ideas.

In a pamphlet of 1644, published in Amsterdam, Richard Overton cites Epicurus (along with such classical and biblical figures as Democritus, Leucippus and Moses) as one of his authorities for believing that the soul by itself was not an immortal, immaterial form separable from the body. But he was no epicurean in any other sense. On the contrary, Overton embraced the supernatural belief that after death the human body is resurrected to eternal life, and one reference hardly proves that he, like prominent royalists Cowley, Davenant and Cavendish, had adopted the system of Gassendian epicureanism as a new cultural discourse.

After he had left the court-in-exile in the mid-1650s to return to England under the protectorate, Edmund Waller seems to have curried favour with Cromwell. Is his use of epicurean atomism a conceit designed to compliment Cromwell and the godly Commonwealth and, hence, an example of protectorate or republican epicureanism? His poem of 1656, ‘To His Worthy Friend Master Evelyn, Upon His Translation of Lucretius’, begins by thanking John Evelyn for his translation in which Lucretius himself

Comes to proclaim in English Verse
No Monarch Rules the Universe;
But chance and Atomes make this All
In Order Democratical,
Where Bodies freely run their course,
Without design, or Fate, or Force.

But Waller’s new-born democratic metaphor was stillborn. No puritan writers of the day used what may at first appear to be the republican potential of Waller’s citizen ‘Atomes’. Political atomism at mid-century would have
seemed to most people a formula for anarchy that could only have damaged the credibility of any state with which it was associated. It took Boyle and Newton the rest of the century to convince the world that individual atoms, instead of acting chaotically, did indeed behave predictably enough, according to universal laws like those of thermodynamics, and even longer for Enlightenment thinkers to assimilate such ideas into political theory. While republicans, a century later, did place a positive democratic spin on atomism, at mid-seventeenth-century puritan apologists avoided it. One of the weakest links in the epicurean physics was how randomly moving atoms could produce any order. Bacon, writing a generation earlier, had suggested how much more necessary some guiding divinity is to explain the creation of an epicurean universe, with blind atoms swerving freely in the void, than to explain an aristotelian cosmos based on four inherently orderly elements. Within a mid-seventeenth-century context, Waller's image of an 'Order Democratical' of citizen 'Atomes' 'freely' pursuing their individual interests by 'chance' 'without design' by a provident Protector, seems distinctly satiric, and hardly establishes Waller's epicureanism as that of a puritan sympathizer.

However, one puritan's use of the whole system of epicurean science and ethics does seem a serious exception and thus demands more careful investigation - Andrew Marvell in 'To His Coy Mistress' (see the appendix for the text of the poem). Although MarvelPs speaker was first recognized by T. S. Eliot in 1921 as representing 'the savage austerity of Lucretius', the reason for obvious and extensive epicureanism in the poem has never been investigated. A later writer on French libertin poetry, Hugh Richmond, reaffirmed that the speaker of 'To His Coy Mistress' is 'an Epicurean', and specifically likened him to an iconoclastic contemporary libertin poet, Jacques Vallee, seigneur des Barreaux. But in spite of Marvell's solid puritan associations, neither Eliot nor Richmond imagined that his epicurean/lucretian cavalier speaker might be a satiric mask, rather than Marvell's own lyric voice. I wish now to escape from the concept of a monolithic, pro-royalist audience in which the 'Coy Mistress' continues to be read -- even by contemporary poststructuralists and new historicists -- as a witty cavalier lyric in the carpe diem tradition, by arguing that for its puritan audience Marvell's poem would more likely have been read as an anti-epicurean and anti-cavalier satire.

Published posthumously in 1681, 'To His Coy Mistress' was probably written at Nun Appleton House in 1651-3, while Marvell was tutor to the teenage Mary Fairfax, only heir of the parliamentary general, Thomas Fairfax, an amateur poet and biblical translator, and his wife, Lady Anne Vere Fairfax. Well-read, well-travelled and politically aware, the Fairfaxes would have been alert to the political and religious implications of the emergent neo-epicurean discourse in royalist writing. Presumably, the Fairfaxes would have recognized the many references to contemporary cavalier verse embedded in 'Coy
Mistress', but in the heated atmosphere of the time they would have been much less prone than modern critics to treat such references as politically neutral. Marvell's immediate audience at Nun Appleton would more likely have perceived 'Coy Mistress' as a temptation poem written to instruct as well as delight Mary Fairfax, much as Milton's Comus had earlier been written as a temptation masque for the moral edification of the earl of Bridgewater's adolescent daughter and two young sons. If so, Marvell's speaker may have suggested The Great Seducer, the Apocalyptic Antichrist of the last times.

The epicureanism of 'Coy Mistress' is not the christianized Gassendian variety, but a thoroughly pagan philosophy of lustful pleasure asserting the mortality of the soul, while denying the existence of any values apart from physical pleasure, that makes the philosophy of Marvell's speaker more akin to the philosophy of Aristippus than to that of Epicurus or Lucretius. Marvell's seducer construes coyness to be a 'crime' because it impedes his natural desire for sex. He thus goes one step beyond Gondibert's assertion that 'Thy love's high soaring cannot be a crime' (III.v.26.1) by turning lust into a duty. Modern critics have taken this to be Marvell's metaphysical conceit or the speaker's cavalier wit, but such epicurean hyperbole must have struck mid-seventeenth-century puritans like the Fairfaxes as radically subversive doctrine, especially coming from the tutor of their teenage daughter, unless written with satirical intent.

Marvell has his cavalier speaker develop an exageratedly pagan carpe diem argument, while employing images that gesture toward biblical concepts of time, without allowing the speaker any awareness that in doing so he also suggests a possible alternative view to his own. For example, the speaker refers to the first and last of the seven ages of scriptural history (from 'ten years before the flood' until the 'conversion of the Jews'), while his final lines -- 'thus, though we cannot make our Sun/Stand still' -- are spoken without apparent awareness that biblical Joshua had, in fact, made the sun stand still by faith. Modern critics, convinced that Marvell was writing a typical cavalier lyric, have ignored the religious subtext that such images would have generated for scripturally versed readers. To seventeenth-century puritans those images would have served as inescapable reminders that for Christians the world and time do not represent infinite and meaningless matter and void, waiting to swallow us after our brief moment of violent pleasure on earth, but both world and time were designed to begin at the creation and to end in a final, planned, apocalypse of punishment and redemption.

Elsewhere, Marvell's speaker mixes Christian with epicurean images in ways that appear to mock or subvert his seductive message. He expresses a highly materialist view of death through typically Christian imagery of 'dust',...
'ashes' and 'worms [that] shall try / that long preserved virginity'. Not only does this Christian theological subtext have no place in classic epicurean discourse, but it had also been fashioned precisely to counter sensual hedonism by making the flesh appear repulsive. Marvell's speaker seems oblivious of the possibility that it may have the same effect on the lady he is trying to seduce. A somewhat different kind of repulsion is elicited by Marvell's combination of two phrases from Cowley's The Mistress -- 'desarts Solitude' (poem 19, 1. 36) and 'vast Aeternity' (poem 20, 1.21) -- into a terrifying image of death: 'Deserts of vast Eternity'. Although authentically epicurean in its evocation of physical annihilation and an infinite void, the image would hardly appeal to any Christian.

Marvell mocks earlier epicurean love lyrics in his 'An hundred years should go to praise / Thine Eyes, and on thy Forehead Gaze, / Two hundred to adore each Breast: / But thirty thousand to the rest' (13-16), where he parodies Cowley's extravagant calculus of pleasure and expression of epicurean avocatio in 'My Dyet' (11. 18-21) - 'An hundred years on one kind word I'll feast: / A thousand more will added bee, / If you an Inclination have for mee; / And all beyond is vast Aeternity'.

Marvell also mocks the epicurean idea echoed in Cowley, Davenant and Hobbes, that human love is homologous with animal lust. In 'Against Fruition' (11. 27-8), Cowley had compared love to 'a greedy hawk' that 'does over-gorge himself with his own prey'. This claim would have seemed more bizarre to seventeenth-century readers, who assumed that people are essentially different from animals, than it does to moderns raised on Darwin and Freud. But Marvell not only echoes Cowley's metaphor, he amplifies it. In the last stanza, his speaker likens the consummation of love to the activity of 'amorous birds of prey' who 'tear ... pleasure with rough strife'. As we saw, royalist epicureans had related human love to animal lust, ridiculing the conventional dichotomies between body and soul, flesh and spirit, passion and reason, that enabled a denial that the purity of human spiritual love partook in any way of animal flesh or passion. In 'Coy Mistress' this seems to mean that love has been stripped of any higher emotions of tenderness and respect, becoming instead a violent urge to lacerate and consume. Marvell's speaker again seems unaware that such a prospect may not appeal to the woman, or the reader, he addresses.

Philosophic terms and discourse in 'Coy Mistress' that are clearly incongruous in a love lyric have simply been suppressed in modern critical discussions, such as the atomism of the Mistress's 'willing soul' that 'transpires at every pore with instant Fires'. Yet Marvell is here making his speaker adhere to mechanistic epicurean theory, which holds that when the fine-grained, heated atoms of the soul become excited through passion, some will escape
through bodily pores and mingle with the air. Numerous images of the material soul exuding hot atoms in moments of passion or excitement can be found in Lucretius' De Rerum Natura.\textsuperscript{88} Other phrases in 'Coy Mistress' are not so much epicureanly unspiritual or mechanical as they are tactless or even comic. In most instances, however, one can find parallels in epicurean philosophy, earlier royalist poetry, or both. Editors are sometimes embarrassed by the speaker's frank reference to 'my lust' (1. 30), which they gloss as 'my love of life' or 'my vigor'. We have seen, however, that both Cowley and Davenant had, indeed, related love and lust. Homologies between human love and the willing souls of other natural creatures was often extended by epicureans even to the plant kingdom. The speaker's ludicrous phrase, 'vegetable love', in line 11, has caused some editors to amend it to 'vegetative love', which seems only slightly less risible. Several royalist epicurean poets had already used similar language, however, without intending humor. Among them was the famous Oxford arminian divine and playwright, William Cartwright, who had written of 'vegetable embraces' in his The Lady Errant, first published in 1651.\textsuperscript{89}

The monologue of Marvell's proposer is built from numerous images that undercut this cavalier's presumed lyrical expression of love. But as a hint to any educated 17\textsuperscript{th}-century reader, the monologue is also structured around false logic. The three propositions, beginning each of the three stanzas, form a hypothetical syllogism -major premise: (if p, then q) 'Had we but World enough and Time,/This coyness, Lady, were no crime'; minor premise: (but not p) 'But at my back I alwaies hear/Time's winged Charriot hurrying near'; conclusion: (therefore, not q) 'Now Therefore, while the youthful hew / Sits on thy skin like morning glew /.../ Now Let us sport us while we may'. The lapse in reasoning here is that the first, or antecedent, term of the major premise (if p, then q) is negated in the minor premise (not p), thereby committing a formal fallacy that invalidates the syllogism. The logic breaks down between the speaker's minor premise and conclusion (not p, therefore not q) because 'not p' has no implications one way or another. As every Renaissance grammar school child learned, nothing logical can be concluded when the minor premise of a hypothetical syllogism negates the antecedent term of its major premise. Mid-seventeenth-century readers trained in logic, who had not yet learned the romantic habit of separating thought from feeling, would have had more difficulty than we do approving the speaker after noting his obviously false reasoning.\textsuperscript{90} It is possible that Marvell's use of an invalid syllogism served an additional, more subtle, purpose. Epicurus and Lucretius were notorious for turning their backs on aristotelian and stoic logic, from which they insisted no useful knowledge could ever arise. Is the poem's incompetent logic part of its epicurean character?

Another philosophical structure built into 'Coy Mistress' lies in its
progression from the mineral and inanimate imagery of rubies and rivers of lines 5-7, through vegetable love, to the animal love of the final stanza, with its ferocious birds. Anyone familiar with the traditional cosmology would have realized that the speaker is truncating the conventional procession up the chain of being. The speaker should next have offered his lady, at least, human love, as Cowley might have, and finally angelic love, as we might have expected of one of Donne's speakers. But human and angelic souls were traditionally spiritual rather than material entities characterized by reason (syllogistic in the case of humans, intuitive in angels), and thus beyond this speaker's epicurean universe. The puritan reader is left to consider the status of a cavalier lover who cannot rise higher in the chain of being than a ravenous hawk. All of these hints would have alerted a mid-seventeenth-century reader to the final incongruity of 'the Iron gates of Life'. Wide open 'Iron gates' were traditionally associated with the portals of death and hell, as opposed to the entrance into immortal life in heaven.

I think the many incongruities in phrasing built into 'Coy Mistress', and its mistaken logic, abuse of literary and philosophic traditions, biblical echoes that subvert the speaker's materialist imagery and call attention to his lack of any spiritual awareness, together with echoes of Epicurus, Lucretius and royalist poets such as Cowley, Davenant and Cartwright, all indicate Marvell's satiric strategy. Although the direct target is cavalier love poetry, the political and theological implications of Marvell's attitude are not far to seek. A satiric 'Coy Mistress' would suggest that, far from having become a philosophy used across the political spectrum, epicureanism by mid-seventeenth century had become a royalist ideology, which puritans felt the need to combat. Like Lucy Hutchinson, Marvell paraphrased Lucretius and other poets of similar views in order to reveal their impiety and ridicule their 'pernicious', 'execrable' and 'foppish' doctrine.

The English court at Whitehall, as it was restored in 1660, brought Gassendian epicureanism with it from the 1640s to 1660 court-in-exile. We have seen that French epicureanism was transmitted first by English literary courtiers who professed the 'new humanism', not only because it lent itself so favorably to anti-calvinist ideology, but also, because this new paradigm was also an ancient one that enjoyed an advantage shared by none of the other empirical, materialist 'new humanisms' -- that of reviving the rich classical tradition of Augustan epicurean literature.

Many Restoration royalists, following the practice of aristocratic French libertins, had adapted epicureanism in ways that favored monarchy and aristocratic privilege. Royalist ideologues who embraced the epicurean paradigm could assume, as had the French libertins, that they embraced the
Horatian vision of a classical Augustan age. In other words, French epicureanism helped restore classical Augustan politics as well as poetics, burying the Interregnum and restoring not only the monarchy but a privatistic retreat among free-thinking circles of friends within gardened estates. At the same time favoring public acceptance of existing religious and state forms promoting a political quietism, and therefore supported absolute monarchy. In short, epicurean poets reconciled citizens to the existing order, as Horace had reconciled Romans to Augustus. The private pursuit of epicurean individualism among an aristocracy represents a political policy useful for princes who want little opposition from their nobility, no matter how often they veer from virtue to raison d'etat. Caesar Augustus found Horace useful as well as amusing. So did Charles II.

Appendix

To His Coy Mistress

Had we but World enough and Time,  
This coyness, Lady, were no crime.  
We would sit down, and think which way  
To walk, and pass our long Love's Day,  
Thou by the Indian Ganges' side  
Should'st Rubies find: I by the Tide  
Of Humber would complain,  
I would Love you ten years before the Flood,  
And you should if you please refuse  
Till the Conversion of the Jews, '  
My vegetable Love should grow  
Vaster than Empires, and more slow,  
An hundred years should go to praise  
Thine Eyes,' and on thy Forehead Gaze,  
Two hundred to adore each Breast:  
But thirty thousand to the rest.  
An Age at least to every part  
And the last Age should show your Heart.  
For, Lady, you deserve this State,  
Nor would I love at lower rate,  
But at my back I alwaies hear  
Time's winged Charriot hurrying near  
And yonder all before us lye
Deserts of vast Eternity,
Thy Beauty shall no more be found,
Nor, in thy marble Vault shall sound
My echoing Song; Then Worms shall try
That long preserv’d Virginity.
And your quaint Honour turn to dust;
And into ashes all my Lust.
The Grave’s a fine and private place,
But none, I think, do there embrace.

Now, therefore, while the youthful hew
Sits on thy skin like morning glew,
And while thy willing soul transpires
At every pore with instant Fires,
Now let us sport us while we may;
And now, like am’rous birds of prey,
Rather at once our Time devour
Than languish in his slow-chapt pow’r,
Let us roll all our Strength, and all
Our sweetness up into one Ball;
And tear our Pleasures with rough strige,
Thorough the Iron gates of Life,
Thus, though we cannot make our Sun
Stand still, yet we will make him run.
NOTES

1 Epicurus was, and still is, conventionally confused with the earlier Greek founder of the Hedonic school of classical sensualists, Aristippus. It would be a mistake, however, to accept this conventional simplification as a criterion of epicureanism, for many non-epicureans were lustful and licentious while not a few Gassendian-epicurean cavaliers pursued virtue pleasurably. This essay will not be concerned with licentiousness, nor will it limit its discussion to atomism, but will view epicureanism as a coherent system of interrelated physical and ethical principles whose texts and critiques were rather widely available to humanists, especially in France, during the later Renaissance.


3 The charges were exaggerated but not wholly fanciful, because there was a pre-war Caroline court flirtation with a few epicurean ideas sprinkled into a matrix of neo-platonism and the cult of royal conjugal love. See Reid Barbour, 'The early Stuart epicure', English Literary Renaissance, 23 (1993), 170-200; Douglas Brooks-Davies, The Mercurian Monarch: Magical Politics from Spenser to Pope (Manchester, 1983), pp. 101-7.


5 Ibid., p. xix.

6 Ibid., p. 187 Kroll is aware of the Newcastle epicurean circle of English and French poets, scientists, and philosophers from the mid 1640s (Kroll, The Material Word, pp. 156-60) but dismisses its obvious royalist political interests to focus on a correspondence that one of its members, William Pell, established with Hartlib and Boyle whose political affiliations were neutral or leaned toward the commonwealth but whose transmission of Gassendian epicureanism during the 1640s and early 1650s were marginal at most; whereas during the same period several royalist members of Newcastle's circle were publishing epicurean verse.

8 Cowley's new style was adopted and adapted from the mid-seventeenth century by writers from Kathrine Philips and John Dryden to Aphra Behn and Alexander Pope. Davenant's experimental 'heroic' form became the genre to extrapolate and explore in poetry and drama after the Restoration.


Montaigne (1533-92) published his first two volumes of essays in 1580, the first three volume edition (the Bordeaux edition) in 1588, and the first complete edition posthumously, edited by Marie de Gournay, in 1595.

Pierre Villey's Les sources et dévolution des essais de Montaigne (Paris, 1933), offered a tri phasic theory of Montaigne's philosophic evolution - initial stoic, middle sceptic, final epicurean - which has been discussed ever since it was proposed by almost every Montaigne scholar but without resolution, although almost everyone agrees that all three influences can be seen in the Essays. Debate has centred on the accuracy of Villey's separation of these influences into early, middle and late Montaigne. For more recent literary scholarship, see Hugo Friedrich, Montaigne (Berkeley, 1991), pp. 66ff., who denies that Montaigne was ever a stoic in any serious way: 'Montaigne's "stoicism" is more of a literary than a personal nature. It was a misunderstanding when some contemporaries - the foremost being Ljpsius - saw him as a stoic' Friedrich states that Montaigne's epicurean tendencies, 'are so unmistakable that even in the seventeenth century it seemed obvious to label him an epicurean', and maintains that Essays, 'represents a high point of Renaissance epicureanism -- and we can also suspect that he [Montaigne] owes much more to epicurean writings of antiquity than he admits'.

For example, Max Gauna, The Dissident Montaigne (New York, 1989).

Pascal composed a dialogue opposing the views of the stoic philosopher, Epictetus, to a spokesperson for scepticism and epicureanism represented by none other than Montaigne. Blaise Pascal, 'L'entretien de Pascal avec M. de Saci sur Epictete et Montaigne', in Œuvres de Blaise Pascal (Paris, 1927), vol. XVI, pp. 89-119.

An exception is Nannerl Keohane (pp. 98-116ff.) who discusses Montaigne's epicurean slant on individualism, friendship, public vs private
virtue. It is hard to understand why other historians avoid any discussion of Montaigne's epicurean ethical thought in representing his philosophic and political interests and influence. Perhaps because Montaigne shows almost no interest in science of any kind, including epicurean atomism, and many modern historians of Epicurus, particularly historians of science such as R. H. Kargon, *Atomism in England from Hariot to Newton* (Oxford, 1966), tend to stress his atomism and ignore or oversimplify his ethics, this has led other historians (even those knowledgeable about epicureanism) to conclude that Montaigne only quotes Lucretius and Epicurus but is not interested in their philosophies (e.g. note Jones's (p. 160) discounting Montaigne's interest in epicureanism for this very reason). Montaigne was certainly interested in epicurean ethics but not in epicurean science, which like all other sciences he assumed to be absolutist and unprovable.


22 Friedrich, p. 69, makes this claim and calls Montaigne 'the heaviest borrower from Lucretius in the sixteenth century'. Friedrich refers his reader (n. 34, p. 381) to C. A. Fusil, 'La Renaissance de Lucrece au XVI' siecle en France' (*Revue du XVI' siecle, 1928*) as the source of his accounting.

23 Epicurean ethics was known in Christian humanist circles throughout the Renaissance (except for Lucretius) from texts essentially hostile to it. Stoicism and epicureanism had been rival philosophies since Hellenistic and Roman times, and early Renaissance humanists before Montaigne were usually Ciceronian and pro-stoic. The texts of Cicero (*De finibus*, for example), Seneca, Marcus Aurelius, and Plutarch contain extensive explications and critiques of epicureanism, while Diogenes Laertius was a more neutral explicator in book X of his *Lives of the Eminent Philosophers*. But Poggio Bracciolini's unearthing, in 1417, of Lucretius' lost philosophic epic *De Rerum Natura* brought to humanist consideration an epicurean science and ethics not only brilliantly defended but transformed into some of the finest images and lines in classical poetry. Lucretius' epic was
published in a number of editions in Europe in the sixteenth century, among which Dennis Lambin's authoritative and annotated edition was published in France 1563-4, and an even more fully annotated version in 1570. The first influential French writer to have made open and consistent use of Lucretius in his work was Montaigne, whose first two books of the *Essays* was published only a decade after Lambin's complete edition.

24 Epicurus, ‘Letter to Menoeceus’, pp. 124-7; Lucretius, 3.830ff. Blaise Pascal, *Penseés* (New York, 1965), 63, p. 18., characterizes Montaigne’s epicurean view of the mortality of the soul in these words: ‘His opinions on suicide, on death. He suggests an indifference about salvation, without fear and without repentance’ (see Mont. 111:2). As his book was not written with a religious purpose, he was not bound to mention religion; but it is always our duty not to turn men from it. One can excuse his rather free and licentious opinions on some relations of life; but one cannot excuse his thoroughly pagan views on death, for a man must renounce piety altogether if he does not at least wish to die like a Christian. Now through the whole of his book his only conception of death is a cowardly and effeminate one'


26 Epicureans base ethics not on absolute virtues but on the individual soul's inward calculus balancing competing desires to enable the satisfaction of moderate pleasure within reasonable limits. For example, Montaigne uses almost the same words as Epicurus (‘Letter to Menoeceus’, pp. 127-33) and Lucretius (*De Rerum Natura*, 2.20-36) to assign priority to competing desires ‘Desires are either natural and necessary, like eating and drinking; or natural and not necessary, like intercourse with females; or neither natural nor necessary. Of this last type are nearly all those of men; they are all superfluous and artificial. For it is marvelous how little Nature needs to be content, how little she has left us to desire’ (*Essays*, 11:12). For an example of Montaigne's personal application of the cost/benefit analysis typical of the epicurean calculus of pleasure see his essay ‘On Repentance’, 111:2, which Max Weber assumed to be bourgeois cost accounting invading even the province of pleasure. It had an older pedigree. See Gauna, *The Dissident Montaigne*, p. 199.

28 Since Stoics believe that a reasonable providence determines an essential order of which our souls are a part and that virtues are absolutes derived from nature by logical reasoning, then seeking harmony with providence by rigid adherence to perfect virtue without passion, and indifference to pleasure or pain - i.e. becoming a stoic sage -would seem the best goal for human life. Although Montaigne admires stoic sages and Christian saints, he lets us know that their perfection makes them no likely model for most people to emulate, and certainly not for himself. The resulting epicurean marker is a separation of ethics from any system of absolute virtue. Systems of virtue are all targets of epicurean scepticism, and religions, according to
Lucretius, play on fears of death and are thus part of the discontent of civilization rather than its cure.

29 Montaigne, 111:13 ‘Have you been able to think out and manage your own life? You have done the greatest task of all.’

30 Of the half-dozen objections by the papal censors of Rome to the 1580 edition of the Essays, one of the most noteworthy is their complaint against Montaigne's opposition to cruel executions and torture. See Malcolm Smith, Montaigne and the Roman Censors (Geneva, 1981), pp.75ff.

31 Memories of past pleasures can be stored in the mind to ease psychic and even physical pain with passive mental (catastematic) pleasures during periods of illness or unrest at a later time when chance or natural processes, such as those of physiological aging, have closed the window on the pleasure of good health and perhaps more active (kinetic) pleasures. For example, Montaigne writes: ‘It is one of the chief obligations I have to my fortune that my bodily state has run its course with each thing in due season. I have seen the grass, the flower, and the fruit; now I see the dryness - happily, since it is naturally. I bear the ills I have much more easily because they are properly timed, and also because they make me remember more pleasantly the long felicity of my past life’ (111:2, p. 620).

32 Epicurus, ‘Letter to Menoeceus’, 123-4; Lucretius, 6.58-78. Montaigne in 111:2 writes, for example, ‘As for me, I may desire in a general way to be different; I may condemn and dislike my nature as a whole, and implore God to reform me completely and to pardon my natural weakness. But this I ought not to call repentance, it seems to me, any more than my displeasure at being neither an angel nor Cato. My actions are in order and conformity with what I am and with my condition. I can do no better. And repentance does not properly apply to the things that are not in our power’. ‘If I had to live over again, I would live as I have lived. I have neither tears for the past nor fears for the future.*


34 Popkin, The History of Scepticism, pp.87ff.

35 Marin Mersenne was hub of an important circle of intellectual friendship in Paris, including Hobbes and Gassendi, that could be described as the intellectual center of Europe in the 1640s. Mersenne carried on a voluminous correspondence with scientists and intellectuals across Europe that included Grotius, Descartes and Galileo, he translated and published Galileo's Mechanics, Herbert of Cherbury's De Veritate, arranged Hobbes's De Cive for publication, initiated responses and edited them for the press as Objections to Descartes' Meditations, and published some of La Mothe le
Vayer's work, and wrote influential philosophic and scientific texts of his own.

Some libertins of the first half of the seventeenth century were Theophile de Viau (1590-1626), Jacques Vallee seigneur des Barreaux (1592-1673), Vincent Voiture (1598-1648), Francois le Metel, sieur de Boisrobert (1598-1662), Francois (Tristan) L'Hermit. (1601-55), Claude de Chavigny, baron de Blot l'Eglise (1605-55), Mersenne's and Gassendi's disciple, friend and editor Samuel Sorbiere (1610-70), Charles de Marguetel de Saint-Denis, seigneur de Saint-Evremond (1610-1703), Jean Dehenault (or Hesnault) (1611-82), Henry Le Bret (1617-1710), the comte de Gramant (1619-1707), Cyrano de Bergerac (1619-55), Jean de la Fontaine (1621-95), Francois Luillier and his natural son, Claude-Emmanuel Luillier (called Chapelle) (1626-78), Marc-Antoine Girard de Saint-Avant (1594-1661), Francois Payor, chevalier des Lignieres (1628-1704), as well as Nicolas Vauquelin sieur des Yveteaux, Francois Bernier, Jean-Francois Sarasin and the Cardinal de Retz.

See, for example, Cyrano de Bergerac, Savinien, Oeuvres libertines, ed. Frederic Lachevre, 2 vols. (Paris, 1921). Cyrano's voyages to the moon and sun, that Lachevre refers to as his Autre Monde, were written in the 1640s. It is likely the manuscripts of his Estats de la lune and Estats du soleil or parts of them were circulated among libertin friends before Estats de la lune was published posthumously in very expurgated form by his friend Henry Le Bret in 1657. The original manuscripts discovered in the nineteenth century show a much more scientifically interesting mind than the well-intentioned but extensively bowdlerized 1657 version had suggested.


Epicurus, 'Letter to Herodotus', pp. 73-^1; Lucretius, 2.1077-89, 5.419-48.


Popkin, The History of Scepticism, pp. 100-3.

See Barry Brundel, Pierre Gassendi: from Aristotelianism to a New Natural Philosophy (Dordrecht, 1987); Jones, The Epicurean Tradition, pp. 166ff.

Accepting Epicurus' principle of an 'infinite' number of atoms must have seemed to detract from God's 'infinite' being and ultimate control of nature and forethought in the creation.

Ibid., pp. 179ff.


Hobbes and Gassendi must have had much to talk of during this period. Although throughout his life and for long after his death Hobbes was considered by his contemporaries an epicurean, he was, in fact, more eclectic than epicurean, since he borrowed much from humanists other than Gassendi, including Grotius and Descartes, and advanced some of his own ideas that were extrapolations and modifications of stoic, skeptic and epicurean philosophies. Just as Montaigne seemed to his own age more epicurean than we read him today, so Hobbes's use of a few epicurean ideas would have appeared to his contemporaries much more unconventional than his use of stoic and skeptic ideas, and thus more of a defining characteristic of his work than we would now judge. Fully to address Hobbes and his philosophy, however, would require another essay, if not a book.


In France, Gassendi was discussed in intellectual circles and his neo-epicureanism widely adapted in literature well before he actually published in 1647 and 1649. However, no Christianized version of epicureanism was well known in England until Walter Charleton published his English translation of Gassendi's *Animadversions* in London in the mid-1650s.


It was Henry Jermyn's long association with the court of Henrietta Maria as her chief courtier, Secretary, and Lord Chamberlain, that had helped him cultivate the model good taste which Saint-Evremond complimented in his 1651 letter to Waller: 'qui renoncant a la Cour, en avoit pone la civilite et le bon gout a la campagne' (L, I, p. 309), as quoted in Michael Moriarty, *Taste and Ideology in Seventeenth-Century France* (Cambridge, 1988), p. 109.

55 The preface and 'Answer' were published in Paris, the first two books of *Gondibert* were published in London, 1651. In the following year, three books of a projected five were published while Davenant was a prisoner in the Tower. Davenant was released in 1654 but never completed *Gondibert*. The text quoted throughout this essay is from William Davenant, *Sir William Davenant's 'Gondibert'*, ed. David F. Gladish (Oxford, 1971).

56 The contradictions between public duty and private desire necessitate concealment, and there are many images of concealing as well as revealing in Davenant's epic. The words 'conceal'd'/reveal'd' are even paired as end rhymes in several stanzas (e.g. III.vi.69.1 and 3; III.vi.Arg).

57 Who cast on more then Wolvish Man his Eie,
Man's necessary hunger judg'd, and saw
That caus'd not his devouring Maledy;
But like a wanton whelp he loves to gnaw. (II.viii.29)

58 Though cruel now as Beasts where they have pow'r;
Chusing, like them to make the weakest bleed;
For weakeynes soon invites you to devour,
And a submission gives you ease to feed. (III.ii.40)

At least animals are guiltless of hypocrisy, which almost all *libertin* writers enjoyed ridiculing in humans:

Through anger, the disease of Beasts untam'd;
Whose wrath is hunger, but in Men 'tis pride,
Yet theirs is cruelty, ours courage nam'd. (II.i.44)

59 To Dangers us'd them; which Death's Visards are
More uggly than himself and often chace
Batal Coward-life:but when we dare
His Visard see, we never fear his Face. (III.iii.108)

60 Davenant must have recalled the Court of Charles I and Henrietta Maria that had flirted with Brunian elitist interpretations of noble courtiers as pure and indestructible atoms.

They look but wrong on Courts who can derive
No great Effects from outward Littleness
Tho' Foolish Scorn they turn the Prospective,
And so contract Courts little things to less.

Man's little Heart in narrow space does hide
Great Thoughts, such as have spacious Empire sway'd
The little Needle does vast Carricks guide,
And of small Atoms were the Mountains made. (III.vii. 106-7).
Cowley and Waller are thanked, though not by name, in the preface lines 837-52, see Davenant, pp. 24-5.

Davenant refers to a 'new' poet of love (which may well be a reference to Cowley's 1647 book of love poems) who may earlier have probed in the direction Davenant himself now follows with regard to love 'Confirm the new by some new Poets light^Who finding Love, thinks he has found the Soule' (Iii. 17.3-4).


Of course other poets, such as John Donne, had used scientific imagery before him, but Cowley's science is more atomistic, more materialist, more epicurean than Donne's.

Cowley, 'Untitled.'

In a pamphlet published in London written by Edmund Elys, who calls himself 'a dutiful son of the church', entitled *An Exclamation to All those that Love the Lord Jesus in Sincerity, Against An Apology Written by an Ingenious Person, for Mr. Cowley's Lascivious and Profane Verses*. See Cowley, *Collected Works*, p. 219.

After the Restoration, Henrietta Maria gave Cowley a grant of land upon which he could retire, garden and write his scientific botanic treatise, like Lucretius, in Latin verse.

Cowley, "The Wish*.


Since Anne Bradstreet (like Lucy Hutchinson) had no intention of publishing her work, and since Bradstreet might have been considered colonial rather than English, Cavendish is usually called the first English woman to have
published her volume of verse.

But perhaps because Cowley and Davenant were less iconoclastic and their work was more closely allied to the Roman ethical epicurean poets such as Horace, and they were also firmly within the English literary tradition from Spenser through Donne and Jonson, they were more likely to influence more profoundly the poetry of their essentially conservative royalist successors.


It is surprising that Overton bothered to cite Epicurus at all, since there were so many Christian sources for the 'mortalist' idea including Ecclesiastes in the Bible, and Luther himself in a commentary on Ecclesiastes whose own belief in the resurrection of both the soul and body at the Last Judgement was so absolute that he was willing to accept the thrust of Ecclesiastes that the soul dies with the body, although for both only a temporary state until the Resurrection - a slip from orthodoxy which seems to have elicited an indirect but harsh reproof from Calvin. See Gauna, *The Dissident Montaigne*, pp. 55-6.

Francis Bacon, 'Of Atheisme', in *The Essays 1625* (Menston, 1971) pp. 90-5, see p. 91.


Leishman cited these lines as Marvellian borrowing rather than mocking, since he does not assume a satirical genre for Marvell's poem. On the other hand, Cowley does borrow' his extravagant calculus of pleasure imagery from an earlier epicurean poet, Catullus.
Davenant had related animal passions and human love in his preface to *Gondibert*, as we saw in the previous section. Hobbes, too, in *On Human Nature* (1650) stated: 'But the name lust is used where it is condemned; otherwise it is called by the general word love: for the passion is one and the same indefinite desire of different sex, as natural as hunger' (ch. 9, sec. 15). And in *Leviathan* (1651), Hobbes had, like Cowley and Davenant, espoused the epicurean idea that the human emotion of love was grounded in animal 'lust'. See Thomas Hobbes, *The English Works of Thomas Hobbes of Malmesbury, Now First Collected and Edited by Sir William Molesworth, Bart*, vol. IV, Scientia Aalen (reprint of the edn. 1840) (1962), pp. 32, 48.

This materialist process results when from a state of combination with the heavy atoms of the body the fine grained, heated atoms of the soul in extreme passion motivate the body's desire and behaviour and become so volatile that some escape, expire, perspire, transpire, or transpire from the body's pores (*caulus or foramina*) to commingle and disperse among the atoms of air. For example, *multaque caecis/corporibus fugiunt e corpore percita plagis* (2.714-15), *vitalis animae nodos a corpore solvit/dispersamque foras per caulas eject omnis* (2.950-1), *'atque animai/diffugiant partes per caulas corporis omnis'* (3.354-5), *'foras manante anima usque per artus/perque viarum omnis flexus in corpore qui sunt, atque foramina'* (3.586-8), *disperitur enim per caulas corporis omnis'* (3.702), *'foraminibus liquidus quia transviat ignis/multaque perfigit'* (6.349-50), *'dispergunt animas per caulas'* (6.557) and also see 3.136-44, 216-72.


The question of why Marvell uses this syllogism as a structural device, and why it is invalid, are only vexing when the poem is presumed to be a lyric. Decades of New Critical angst about whether a reader should consider or ignore the logical structure of Marvell's 'Coy Mistress' can be found in the critical literature. Once it is assumed to be a satire, however, the false syllogism is no longer puzzling, since it, too, tends, as do many other subversions embedded in the poem, to discredit, for puritan readers, the cavalier speaker and his epicurean assumptions.

The first critics to notice Marvell's strange use of tradition here were Anthony Low and Paul J. Pival, 'Rhetorical pattern in Marvell's "To His Coy Mistress"', *Journal of English and Germanic Philology*, 68 (1969), 414-21. Since they assume that the poem is a love lyric rather than a satire, they merely point out Marvell's anomalous use of the chain of Being.

Bruce King suggested satiric intent in 'To His Coy Mistress' on the basis of what he considered a covert christian allegory in the poem built of biblical
echoes. King's suggestion of Marvell's satiric intent has gained few adherents in the last three decades because he offered no evidence of satire except for biblical echoes. Perhaps overturning the traditional cavalier reading of Marvell's most famous poem demands evidence of satire from diverse mid-seventeenth-century discourses in addition to that of theological scripture, such as those of epicurean philosophy, formal logic, interregnum politics and royalist versus puritan ideology and aesthetics.