Religious Satire in Herrick’s “The Fairie Temple: or, Oberons Chappell”

JOAN OZARK HOLMER

Herrick’s Oberon poems, the “Temple,” the “Feast,” and the “Palace,” have recently provoked increasing critical attention and controversy. Of these three poems, “The Fairie Temple: or, Oberons Chappell” has excited the most wilderment about Herrick’s religious focus, fairy subject, and poetic intention: Katherine M. Briggs and Roger B. Rollin claim anti-Catholic satire; Daniel H. Woodward puzzles over “surprising criticism of [Anglican and some Catholic] ritual...masked...by the seeming frivolity of the fairy subject and the red-herring of Papistical satire”; and Robert H. Deming basically concurs with Woodward but adds pagan ritual to what he calls “a sacrifice poem” that celebrates “a ceremonial universality.”1 Given this controversy some tantalizing questions yet remain to be considered. Why does Herrick use diminutive fairies, particularly a fairy king and a fairy priest-bishop? Why write a poem that focuses predominantly on religious ceremonies within a fairy king’s chapel or the fairies’ temple? Why adopt a sportive tone of good-natured amusement? I suggest that the poem is chiefly a satire of the Puritan view of contemporary Anglican worship as papist and therefore also pagan. The evidence for this ingenious satire rests on Herrick’s unique employment of diminutive fairies, the significance of the religious details and their underlying issues, and his use of some Puritan diction.

Herrick’s comic spirit in the “Temple” both complements his own delight in religious ritual and affords a Horatian perspective on what were bitter matters dividing the Church of England. Herrick uses diminution as a satiric technique to “reduce” hyperbolic Puritan accusations against Anglican ritual by rendering them amusing. As we shall see, this rhetorical strategy of reductionism is matched by an equally clever technique of adopting his opponent’s argument in order to refute it. In addition to the light, quick movement of Herrick’s short lines (iambic tetrameter), certain recurrent literary techniques also contribute to his playful tone, especially assonance (e.g., “Will o’ th’ Wispe”), consonance (e.g., “Priest...Grist”), abundant alliteration (e.g., “No Capitoll, no
Cornish free, Or Freeze, from this fine Friperie"), repeated incongruous juxtaposition of ideas and rhymes for humorous couplets (e.g., "bignes . . . ignis," "Fillie . . . will I," "Wax . . . knacks," "trinket . . . think it," "Cod-piece . . . odde-piece"), and the satiric use of catalog (so many lines devoted to the piling up of so many little things, e.g., "halfe a nut," "Apples-core," "Silk-worms shed"). Most of these verbal features are obvious enough to require no extended comment.

A full appreciation of Herrick's subject, however, necessitates an awareness of the conflict within the Church of England between the Anglicans and the Puritans, especially regarding ritual, and Herrick's own religious sympathies. As the reader will recall, the crux of the controversy lay in Laud's insistence upon the importance of episcopacy and ceremonies. The ceremonies Laud and Charles I espoused for maintaining the external worship of God in "uniformity and decency and some beauty of HOLINESS" the Puritans deemed "superstitious" and idolatrous "innovations," each innovation a hole in the dyke which must be stopped "lest Tiber should drown the Thames." The via media of the Elizabethan Church fell into disrepute as Puritans grew in number against "favouring middle waies of reconciliation, such as halt betwenee God and Baal, betweene Christ and Antichrist, like the Arminians of our time," and the word "Arminian" became a catchword (and often a gibe) applying "to all who maintained the semblance of Romanism." On the other hand, the so-called "Arminians" associated with Charles' court and the Laudian revival saw themselves as devoted Anglicans. The essential differences between Laudians and Roman Catholics, however, were imperceptible from the Puritan viewpoint.

Against this historical background, we can better understand Herrick's own religious sympathies and attitude toward ritual. As Anglican priest, he would be familiar with the issues dividing the Church, and as Royalist, commissioned by the court to write Christmas carols and New Year's songs (see pp. 364-67), Herrick dedicated his book to King Charles' son. He also had two friends associated with Charles' court. During the 1620's Herrick's friend, Endymion Porter, was Charles' groom of the bed-chamber, and Porter's substantial influence as well as John Weekes' friendship probably obtained for Herrick the opportunity to be Buckingham's chaplain on the Isle of Rhé expedition where Buckingham's Laudian practices must have been witnessed first-hand. Herrick's close friend, John Weekes, was also a chaplain on the Rhé expedition, a chaplain to Porter, and later a chaplain to Laud. Herrick was a pious Christian but also an easy living cleric who celebrated the mirthful life, like his friend Weekes (see pp. 132, 233). Herrick's Hesperides, in many ways a testament to his Cavalier spirit, and also his Noble Numbers would offend a staunchly Puritan audience, the one volume judged scurrilous
for its celebration of sack, maypoles, frolicking, and sensuous beauties, the other judged devoid of Calvinist concerns and full of Anglican bias favouring holyday rituals and holiday pastimes. Herrick was a Laudian Anglican regarding both doctrinal and ceremonial issues. Leah Sinanoglu Marcus finds his “pious pieces’ mock Calvinist predestination,” and Herrick even “out-Lauds Laud, carrying the conservative Anglican emphasis on set forms and doctrinal uniformity to its furthest possible limit.” In her analysis of Herrick’s *Noble Numbers* Marcus presents arguments and evidence that support my thesis about the “Temple” in the *Hesperides*. Her essay demonstrates that the content and technique of Herrick’s religious poems must be viewed within a historical context because they are related to contemporary political and religious issues. She contends these poems are remarkably medieval in spirit, and in them Herrick artistically recreates “a lost world — an idealized ‘Merry England’” as a rebuff to Puritans and their “religion of work” and as a defense of Anglican ritual as “a religion of play,” a religion of venerable traditions and rites that unifies the Church but whose endurance Herrick forebodingly saw threatened by Puritan attacks.

Herrick’s *Hesperides*, as well as his *Noble Numbers*, abounds with ritual and terminology often thought of as Roman Catholic rather than Anglican, and much of this also appears in the “Temple.” Interestingly, Herrick avoids critical Puritan diction in his poetry except in the “Temple” where his use of such diction is concentrated, for example, “frippery,” “knacks,” “trifle,” “fetuous,” “ducking,” “(much-good-do’t him) reverence,” “formall manner,” “mixt Religion,” “affect the Papacie,” and “part Pagan, part Papisticall.” The full significance of this diction will be examined later, but why would Herrick, given his sympathies, adopt such critical Puritan diction for Anglican ritual if not to comment in some way on the Puritan view of it? Keeping this in mind, let us now turn our attention to Herrick’s use of fairy mythology in the “Temple” and then to an analysis of the dominant motifs and diction that reveal the poem’s meaning.

* * *

Herrick’s use of diminutive fairies is primarily satiric. His fairies parody human beings in every respect; the fairies’ language (11. 41-43), their actions (11. 50-53), their clerical offices (11. 103-08), their items of apparel (11. 98-100), and their concerns (11. 74-77) are all identical to those of humankind. Herrick is clearly in tune with King James’ description of the fairies in his *Daemonology* as mimicking “naturall men and women” in all their actions. Herrick’s fairies also parody human beings in that they appear somewhat superstitious in their worship. Like Herrick’s oxymoron, “fairy saint,” this depiction of superstitious
fairies is humorously incongruous since the fairies themselves are a superstition, but it also befits Herrick’s burlesque of the Puritan view of Anglicans as superstitious.

Herrick plays on the fairies’ popular and literary associations. The fairies might be fallen angels, an English translation of the lesser classical deities, or the ghosts of the dead, but whatever the theory about their nature and origins, medieval and Renaissance popular consensus was that they were at best mischievous, or at worst evil. Herrick sports with this view for the fairies’ insect idols; these insects, while appropriately diminutive, all bear connotations in folklore of mystery, magic, and evil, hence making them suitable choices for Herrick’s satire. Fairies in Elizabethan through Caroline literature, however, often shed the evil reputation they have in folklore, especially in literature designed to compliment the reigning monarch, such as royal entertainments and masques. This predilection for associating contemporary royalty with faerie informs Herrick’s use of a fairy king whose religious ceremonies resemble, as we shall see, those of Charles’ Laudian Anglican court. As the literary stature of fairies becomes less supernatural and more diminutive, their complimentary function is supplemented by a comic and/or fanciful function, depending on tone. Herrick employs both the fanciful and the comic. As in Mercutio’s Queen Mab speech, diminution affords an opportunity to display poetic imagination and wit; Herrick exploits Nature for charming and witty miniature versions of actual religious items, such as the fairies’ altar cloth made of “a thin/Subtile and ductile Codlin’s skin” with “Fringe that... Is Spangle-work of trembling dew” and the fairies’ “Copes and Surplices/Of cleanest Cobweb,” a clever pun on “cobweb lawn,” one of the finest linens available in Herrick’s day. Diminution can also produce humorous incongruities and comic parallels which may provide contemporary satire, as in John Heywood’s The Battle of the Spider and the Flie (1556), thought to be an allegory about either Catholic/Protestant conflict or English civil strife, and John Day’s The Parliament of Bees (1607), a satiric and allegorical description of “the actions of good and bad men in these our daies,” as its title page proclaims. In this same spirit is Herrick’s “Temple.”

There are two sides to the literary tradition associating fairies with religion; one links the fairies with Roman Catholic satire, the other with Puritan satire. The association of fairies with Catholicism is primarily a result of the Protestant Reformation. Protestants claimed that fairies were really invented by subtle Catholic priests for the purpose of cloaking their knavish tricks on the laity and for exacting obedience from them through fear. I propose that Herrick uses these papist-fairy associations to undercut the Puritan conception of Anglicanism as papist and pagan, to “hoist with his own petar” the Puritan argument and thus
render it innocuous. To eyes untutored in the religious conflicts of Herrick’s England, his poem appears to be papistical satire. But if we may assume Herrick’s intended audience to be sophisticated men like the poem’s dedicatee, John Merrifield, then Herrick’s artistic subtlety addresses itself to the discerning reader who will discriminate between the appearance and reality of what is poetically portrayed.

The use of fairies for Puritan satire is a turning of the tables within the Protestant Church and is best illustrated in Bishop Richard Corbett’s “A Proper New Ballad intituled The Faeryes Farewell: Or God-A-Mercy Will.”17 Corbett happily identifies the mirthful fairies with the merry days of English Catholicism, and he negatively credits their disappearance to dour Puritanism. As in Chaucer’s joshing account of the fairies’ disappearance in The Wife of Bath’s Tale (11. 860-80), Corbett uses the idea of the fairies’ disappearance to satirize their successors. Instead of Chaucer’s friars, Puritans are castigated, “Puritanes:/Who live as Change-lings” (11. 14-15), changing England for the worse. Corbett’s ballad is really a defense of the fairies against the Puritan attacks on popular interest in them. In “The Kings Disguise” John Cleveland refers to the Earl of Manchester’s Parliamentary troops as “the changeling rabble, / Manchesters Elves” (11. 31-32), who are “changeling” not only in the sense common to fairy lore but also in the sense of “‘turncoat.’”18 Herrick also uses the fairies in the “Temple” for the purpose of Puritan satire, to undercut Puritan fears regarding Anglicanism. While Herrick’s choice of fairies is aptly suited for depicting a Puritan conception of the court’s Anglican worship as pagan and papistical idolatry, his imaginative and playful attitude toward fairies would horrify Puritans who tried to suppress anything connected with fairies as devilishly pagan and papist. Hence, the “seeming frivolity of the fairy subject” noted by Woodward and Deming is not frivolous but integral to Herrick’s religious parody.

Herrick’s originality in granting his fairies a religion complete with detailed ceremonies has heretofore escaped critical notice. The poem’s main preoccupation is religion, but according to all folklore accounts and literary records, fairies are never presented as having a formalized religion.19 Fairies may be the objects of worship but never the worshipers themselves. While almost every other conceivable aspect of fairy lore, including their apparel, their food, their sundry habitats and activities, has been studied, Herrick’s idea of a fairy religion is original. His idea may appear purely fanciful, but the description that follows is not mere fancy, but a curious wedding of fantasy and Anglican ritual.20

* * *

The “Temple” offers two vital clues to its meaning, that the fairies “much affect the Papacie” (1. 110) and that they have a “mixt Religion”
(1. 23). Everything in the poem is an elaboration upon these two basic themes. Herrick uses the verb “affect” in only one other poem where it also means to “favour” (see p. 70). The use of this verb, then, suggests similarity but cautions against any exact identification. A “mixt Religion” best describes the pure nature of neither Catholicism nor Puritanism, but rather the Puritan view of the via media of Anglicanism which keeps much of its Roman heritage and at the same time claims to be a reformed church. It is the Roman heritage to which the Puritans objected so vehemently, hurling at the Anglicans the very same traditionally Protestant accusations so often leveled against the Catholics. The fairy religion is also described as being “part Pagan, part Papisticall” (1. 25). The so-called “pagan” aspect may be accounted for in one of the chief motifs of the poem — idolatry, idolatry being a typical Puritan accusation directed against Anglicans for imitating Catholics in their ceremonies.

The poem’s religious issues and ceremonies may be divided into several categories for examination, namely the emphasis on the sanctity and beauty of the church itself and its altar, the theme of idolatry, the function of the clerical figures, and the religious paraphernalia. The sense of sanctity of the church itself as a place of worship is manifested primarily in the temple’s artfulness and decoration and provides a diminutive version of Laud’s “beauty of holiness.” The very path leading to the chapel is “enchac’t” with glass and beads (1. 1). The beads, a substitute for precious stones, anticipate rosaries that appear later in the poem as “Beads of Nits,” and the glass reminds one of the decorated glass windows which Laud used and Puritans condemned as “‘a little brittle superfuity.’”

The outer structure of Oberon’s royal chapel is the “Halcion’s curious nest” (1. 4), “curious” meaning that the architecture of the temple is elaborately contrived in an artful manner. Given that this chapel is for Oberon’s “holy rest” (1. 3), Herrick’s choice of the halcyon is most appropriate since this bird’s nest upon the sea is supposed to herald calm winter weather and peace. The “Halcion’s curious nest,” however, is most significant for its political symbolism since the halcyon is the bird associated with Charles I by Aurelian Townshend and Thomas Carew to compliment Charles’ reign of peace in the 1630’s. Townshend’s masque, Albions Triumph, performed by Charles and his lords on 8 January 1632, celebrates the reign of peace in England associated with “those Princes... whose Olive Branches stand for Bayes,” claims that Englishmen may now lay to rest their arms, travel safely, and eat and drink well, but also jubilantly asks a rhetorical question: “Why should this Ile above the rest,/Be made (great Gods) the Halcions nest?” Thomas Carew in his poem, “In answer of an Elegiaccall Letter upon the death of the King of Sweden from Aurelian Townsend, inviting me to
write on that subject,26 proclaims that “shrell accents” (1. 2) and “loude allarum” (1. 3) are now unsuitable for this English poet’s “past’rall pipe” (1. 52) and “rurall tunes” (1. 90), and he attributes England’s “peace and Plenty” — her “Halcyon dayes” — to her “good King” (11. 47-48; 96). While the rest of Europe was embroiled in war, English poets and courtiers were congratulating themselves and Charles on the reign of peace in England.

The very emphasis on the temple’s exterior artifice, as well as the specific references to classical architecture (11. 20-21), relates the fairies’ temple to Charles’ and Laud’s programme of church restoration. Charles’ love of art and his religious devotion rendered him a great advocate, like Laud, of repairing churches. Some Puritans, on the other hand, felt “that it was more agreeable to the rules of piety to demolish such old monuments of superstition and idolatry than to keep them standing.”27 Under Laud’s influence Charles issued a royal commission in 1631 to raise money for the repair of St. Paul’s, arousing Puritan ire for financial as well as religious reasons.28 In the eyes of antiprelatical Puritans, the money raised for this project was similar to paying sacrifice to a pagan idol. Although Herrick says nothing specifically about church restoration, the fundamental principle behind that primarily Anglican movement — a conviction that the house of God should look beautiful — justifies the decor that pervades the “Temple.” Herrick includes, for example, a highly decorated altar cloth (11. 60-67) and the pleasant odor of frankincense (1. 140) just as he celebrates them elsewhere in his poetry.

Also noteworthy are the references to “Capitoll,” “Cornish,” and “Freeze” (11. 20-21) indicating classical influence on the architecture of the fairies’ temple. In seventeenth-century England such neo-Classicall influence, especially for chapels and churches, was strikingly innovative, introduced by Charles’ chief architect, Inigo Jones, not only for the Queen’s Chapels at St. James’s Palace and Somerset House but also most notably for St. Paul’s Cathedral. With Jones’ classical manner for the Queen’s Chapel at St. James’s (1623-25) “a monumental note is sounded; the building is seen to be not a house but a temple,” and the first new Protestant church built in England for many years, St. Paul’s, Covent Garden (1631), was also designed as “a temple,” albeit a plain one in Tuscan style.29 Jones’ renovation of the exterior of St. Paul’s in a neo-classical manner included cornices and friezes, with the most memorable feature being the grand Corinthian portico on the west end.30 Both the idea and the order of this great porch reflected the influence of two Roman temples, and although neither was “Rome’s Pantheon” (1. 8), the sense of a “Temple of Idolatry” (1. 6) could easily be conveyed to a Puritan’s imagination by this as well as the other examples of Jones’ neo-Classicism. The cause of St. Paul’s reconstruction became unpopular
for a number of reasons, one of which involved the use of fines: Laud and the High Commission Court fined people of high rank for personal scandals and diverted this money to the repair of Paul's. This may illuminate Herrick's reference to "Pardons and Indulgences" (11. 114), perhaps a play on how Puritans would view this matter in light of their belief in Laud's Romanism.\(^{31}\)

Herrick lavishes particular attention upon all aspects of the altar (11. 54-73), which for Anglicans was the central structure within the church, as the pulpit, which Herrick omits, was for the Puritans.\(^{32}\) Herrick's creation of the altar out of "a little Transverse bone" (1. 57) like the one used in the game "Cockall" (1. 59) playfully reduces the importance of the altar's shape and material by associating the altar with a game like dice played with a sheep's knuckle-bone. At the same time, the bone itself recalls the idea of altar relics as does the fact that the temple itself is "girt with small bones, instead of walls" (1. 10). The altar cloth (11. 60-67) is highly decorated, made of apple-skin linen "in little Seale-Work Damasked" (1. 63) and with shining dew for fringe all around. Indeed, this kind of adornment is designed to make this altar truly a "fetuous board" (1. 68). This elegant altar cloth is very similar in concept to actual altar cloths made from velvet with gold fringe or set with pearls then in use in Anglican churches, which aroused Puritan anger.

In the middle of the altar "doth stand/Something for Shew-bread" (11. 68-69), another allusion to the "Holy-Grist" (1. 51) which enhances the "holiness" of the communion bread by comparing it with Jewish showbread, that is, holy bread as distinguishable from common bread. Herrick's hint of holiness here probably reflects the Anglicans' veneration of the Eucharist, which was more intense than the Puritans' because the former emphasized more the "sacramental" nature of the Eucharist while the latter stressed more the "communal" aspect of the Lord's Supper.\(^{33}\) Since Jewish showbread is traditionally unleavened bread, Herrick suggests the fairies' bread is is unleavened, and he may well intend a reference to contemporary controversy over whether leavened or unleavened bread should be used for communion. Although the Book of Common Prayer (1552 and 1559) allowed either usage (with a preference for the older practice of using the unleavened wafer), the Puritans favoured leavened bread, thereby hoping to avoid any superstitiousness regarding the bread.\(^{34}\) The Old Testament priestly associations conveyed by this reference to showbread would also be unwelcome to Puritans.\(^{35}\) According to some of the early patristic writers, such as St. Cyril of Jerusalem, the Jewish showbread could be interpreted as a type of the Eucharist,\(^ {36}\) and this tradition of the early Church may well underlie Herrick's association of the "Holy-Grist" and "Shew-bread."

The motif of idolatry in the "Temple" is most apparent in the open-
ing references to statuesque insect idols, suggested again in the passage on the fairy saints and the mention of the "Lady of the Lobster" (1. 131) at the end. The term "idol" in Puritan jargon meant "...not onely a certaine representation, and an image of some fained God, but also of the true Jehovah" so that arch-Puritans objected to any artistic attempts to depict images of God, the apostles, or the saints. In the poem, idolatry involves the use of images and paintings of saints. Indeed, the images which the Anglicans were fond of erecting for pious decoration were regarded by the Puritans as idols, as a return to the habits of Catholic and pagan worship. Herrick’s designation of image decoration as “Fripperie” (1. 21) resembles a Puritan accusation since they classified Romish-tainted things as “Babylonish,” “baggage,” “trappings,” and “the multitude of trumperies.” Herrick himself, however, contradicts this Puritan misinterpretation in his own sanction of images in “Devotion makes the Deity”: “Who formes a Godhead out of Gold or Stone, / Makes not a God; but he that prays to one” (p. 117).

The introduction of a number of saints (11. 26-37) and their “curious Calendar” (1. 37) is wholly appropriate for the Anglicans who had their own church calendar of saints as opposed to the Catholic calendar. The whole question of veneration of saints was a delicate issue, and the Puritans never completely understood the Anglican distinctions. The Puritans severely condemned veneration of canonized saints as pagan idol adoration and reserved the term “saints” to refer to themselves as God’s elect. In his list of fairy saints Herrick does not intend a one-to-one identification of fairy and real saints, but only humorously suggests a similarity. At the same time, the mocking abbreviation of saints’ names sounds like a satiric Puritan tactic which Herrick has undercut in his humorous monosyllabic, diminutive names for fairies. The saint most revered in the fairy religion is the "Lady of the Lobster." Even though the celebrant’s reverence (11. 129-34) seems a bit extreme, his attentions to her are in accord with Laudian Anglican reverence for Mary, and in Herrick’s own Noble Numbers no less than five poems honour the Virgin Mary. However, here Herrick is probably exaggerating the special attention due to this diminutive representative of Our Lady, since the Puritans would have described any such Anglican devotion in the most hyperbolic manner, considering it pure popery. In his poetry Herrick significantly does not use “saints” in the Puritan sense of the elect, but he frequently employs the term, both in serious and playful contexts, with an approving attitude towards its older, more traditional associations reflected in the “Temple,” with, for example, the calendar (pp. 169, 199), shrines (pp. 112, 211, 249), canonization (pp. 169, 188, 199), and a more liberal concept of sanctity than the Puritans’ strict election (pp. 168, 204, 209, 294, 314, 387, 394).
Regarding the actual clerical figures in the poem, the celebrant-priest and the two assisting priests, nothing seems to be at variance with Laudian practice. In offering the "Holy-Grisk," the priest does not genuflect as a Roman Catholic priest must do, but he does bow. The bowing to the altar (1. 136), the "ducking in Mood, and perfect Tense" (1. 52), was all very controversial in Herrick's time. Herrick's satiric diction, "ducking" and "(much-good-do't him) reverence" (1. 53), mimics the Puritans' condemnation of such ceremonial gestures as "apish cringing" and "ducking," but he lightens it with his playful rhyme of "Tense" with "reverence." Laud offended all the London Puritans by his use of ceremony and his habit of bowing towards the altar, which he rigidly enforced, when he consecrated the church of St. Catherine of Cree in January 1631 (DNB, XI, 629-30). Of the two assisting priests who squeak and pule (11. 40, 43) their admonitions to the entering laity, the first is presented as "a little-Puppet-Priest" (1. 39) which satirically describes both his diminutive size and his involuntary, mechanical behaviour, behaviour that the Puritans found characteristic of Anglicans in their blind obedience to traditions. Although the chief celebrant and his two assistants are really the only clergy presented as actively employed within the temple, the list of other orders (11. 103-08) is Herrick's humorous take-off on the Puritan resentment of orders among the Anglicans. Another matter arises with the priestly warnings against impurity and profanation (11. 41-43); these warnings are appropriate for the Anglican belief in the holiness of the church itself, to which belief the Puritans strongly objected, but of which Herrick approves, advocating elsewhere the same phrases, "Hence, hence profane" (p. 366) and "pure hands" (p. 127), that appear in the "Temple." Herrick does not use Latin but rather the vernacular for these warnings, and, similarly, his reference to 'Will o' th' Wisp... alias call'd here Fatuus ignis" (11. 30-31) draws attention to the Latin-English saint name and to the change from Latin to English brought about by the Reformation.

The celebrant-priest in the "Temple" appears to be a bishop since his "Silk-worms shed,/ (Like a Turks Turbant on his head)" (11. 137-38) is a diminutive version of the bishop's mitre. Mitres were worn by Anglican bishops for more than a century after Henry VIII's break with Rome. The mitre was hated by the Puritans, along with all other symbols of Romish superstition that reminded them of the increasing pomp of the Anglican bishops and the divine theory of episcopacy. Herrick's introduction of a bishop figure is important given the controversy over episcopacy. The same criticisms of the authority of the Catholic pope and bishops were applied by the Puritans to the Anglican clergy, so that even the Archbishop of Canterbury was sneeringly referred to as the "English Pope... an English Antichrist." Robert Deming suggests
that since a fairy bishop is presiding over the ceremony perhaps this is a major liturgical feast, but the mere fact a bishop is presiding would not necessarily make this suggestion true, even if a “feast” does follow this religious celebration. After due religious observance, Sundays as well as holydays were kept by the Caroline court as days of recreation and revelry. Laud was a great opponent of anything resembling the Puritan observance of the Sabbath. Indeed, there is some likelihood that King Oberon’s attentive bishop, serving in his monarch’s chapel, may be modeled on William Laud, who within a year of Charles’ accession became dean of the Chapel Royal as well as Bishop of Bath and Wells. Certainly the fairy bishop is a Laudian Anglican, and he does attend his monarch’s feast after the service where he says the grace (1. 54). In 1636 Laud himself extravagantly feasted Charles at Oxford and, as H.R. Trevor-Roper states: “On so lavish a scale was everything ordered that men were reminded of the pre-Reformation Princes of the Church and their ceremonial junketings.” Laud certainly advertised his contempt for Puritan ideas in the lavishness of his entertainment. The Puritans did not allow it to pass without comment, and Henry Burton published his Divine Judgment Upon Sabbath-Breakers, in which Laud was attacked “for feasting and profane plays at Oxford.” This anecdote provides some historical context for the suggestion that Herrick’s fairy bishop is modeled on Laud. One gathers that this particular priest is an important figure, since he plays the most dominant role in the “Temple” and also turns up at his king’s side in the “Feast” to say grace; in the “Temple” Herrick employs “he” and “his” only in the first twenty-one lines (which could refer to Oberon) and the last fourteen lines of the poem (which definitely concern the priest-bishop).

One other factor should be considered, the allusion to papal death and succession: “And since the last is dead, there’s hope, / Elve Boniface shall next be Pope” (11. 111-12). With his humorously juxtaposed rhymes of “lye...Papacie” and “hope...Pope” Herrick seems to mimic Puritan fears in designating the Archbishop of Canterbury as an English Pope. In this case the only possible historical allusion would be to the death of Archbishop Abbot in 1633 and to the succession of William Laud. Abbot had been an arch-opponent of Laud. After Charles’ succession, Abbot was nominally the archbishop while Laud wielded the power and possessed his sovereign’s support. Clearly an autocratic prelate is suggested by “Elve Boniface.” Pope Boniface VIII was a lasting symbol for religious despotism, and to the Puritan mind, Laud’s determination to effect uniformity of religious practice could be represented in terms of the absolute authority of Boniface VIII. It is also possible that the “Boniface” allusion might refer to the anti-Lollard position of Pope Boniface IX who in 1395 commanded the Archbishop
of Canterbury to prosecute the Lollards, the forerunners of the Puritans. This hypothesis about the significance of the Boniface allusion in relation to Laud may be further substantiated by the Articles of the Commons accusing Laud of treason when he was brought to trial. Some of the specific charges are that he tried "to introduce an arbitrary and tyrannical government," that he "assumed to himself a Papal and tyrannical power, both in Ecclesiastical and temporal matters" so "that no Pope claimed so much as [he] had done," and that he was guilty of setting up "Popish superstition and idolatry...Popish and superstitious ceremonies," including the communion table positioned altar-wise, coloured glass in his chapel windows, use of images and copes, bowing, etc.\

The longest section in the poem is the passage on the religious paraphernalia (11. 74-128) which includes items of burning contention in the conflict between Laud's "beauty of holiness" and Puritan "godly thorough Reformation." Nearly all the fairies' religious paraphernalia parallel their Anglican counterparts, but I will focus here only on the use of church books, altar rails, candles, vestments, and bells.

The various "Scriptures" (1. 83) for the fairies' "righteous discipline" (1. 84) reflect the Anglican church books, such as that of Common Prayer, which the Puritans denounced. Herrick presents the fairies as typical Anglicans — conscious of "Text" (1. 77), rubric, and precedent. The Anglicans agreed with the Puritans in accepting the Bible as the ultimate criterion of orthodoxy, but they differed on the elements entering into interpretation, particularly the degree to which learning and tradition entered into the Rule of Faith. The Puritans criticized extensive reliance on institutional authority. The Anglicans had their "Rubrick" (1. 75), their "Book of Canons" (1. 78), their "Book of Articles" (1. 80), and their "Book of Homilies" (1. 82). Herrick's adroit rhyming of "lies...Homilies" underscores the fact that the Book of Homilies would not be welcome in Puritan circles, for Puritans wanted vigorous, original sermons rather than institutionalized homilies. The presence of the Book of Articles — a reference to the thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England — among the fairy scriptures rules out the possibility of the fairies' religion being Roman Catholic or Presbyterian.

The fairies' "neat Railes" (1. 90) refer to the use of altar rails, one of the most hotly contended issues between Anglicans and Puritans which Herrick spoofs with the incongruous rhyme, "Railes...snails." Altar rails began to be used only in the early seventeenth century, at first to safeguard the altar from scandalous Puritan profanations. Puritan antagonism against the use of candles within the church is virulently set forth by Peter Smart in his attack on Bishop Cosin, and the fairies' "formall manner" (1. 93) in placing the candles plays on the Puritans' contemptuous use of "formal," signifying "ceremonious," in their criti-
icism of Anglicans.\textsuperscript{57} The fairies’ “two pure, and holy \textit{Candlesticks}” (1. 94) embody the Anglican conception that candles used at the altar should be made solely of pure beeswax.

Another major point of contention was the wearing of vestments, particularly the cope and surplice, which Puritans called pagan or “babylonish” garments. The fairies do indeed have “curious \textit{Copes and Surplices/Of Cleanest Cobweb}” (11. 98-99) which they wear “for sanctity” (1. 97). Any Puritan’s ire would have been aroused by the suggestion that these garments should possess some holy value or should be important enough to have a special closet (“\textit{Vestarie},” 1. 100). Of course, Anglicans did not think that these garments conferred “sanctity,” but Puritans translated ceremonial value as superstitious value.

The whole question of the ringing of bells (1. 115) was also a sore point, since the Puritans felt that it was reminiscent of papistical jangling. Although bells were prohibited by the Injunctions of 1547, except for one bell before the sermon, Elizabethan Puritans complained that many hand-bells could still be heard in parishes. The ringing of a bell before the daily morning and evening prayers was added to the Prayer Book in 1552, and the fairies’ “Apples-core...with ratling Kernels” (11. 126-27) is just such a bell to summon the faithful to the “\textit{Morn, and Even-Song}” (1. 128) celebrated elsewhere in Herrick’s poetry. Prayer twice a day, unlike the Catholic Church’s more extensive Office and Hours, is a characteristic of the Anglican Church. The apple, always associated with magical or holy properties,\textsuperscript{58} is used twice by Herrick as the substance for religious items — the altar cloth is made of apple skin, and the bell is an apple core. Like the apple, the inclusion of superstitious items for divination, as “chips” and “old shooes” (1. 119), recalls the fact that Puritans often associated Anglican ritual with vulgar conjuration and magical delusion,\textsuperscript{59} but Herrick’s witty rhyme, “bones. \textit{...Fumigations},” keeps the perspective comic.

Thus, the motifs and details in the “\textit{Temple},” controversial enough to help widen the gap between Anglican and Puritan until civil war was inevitable, all belong comfortably within the pale of Anglicanism as Laud interpreted it, but outside the pale of the Church of England as the Puritans conceived their religion after the Reformation.\textsuperscript{60} The anonymous Puritan poem, \textit{Lambeth Faire, Wherein you have all the Bishops Trinkets set to Sale} (London, 1641), provides an interesting contrast to Herrick’s “\textit{Temple}” in tone and treatment of similar subject matter. In his preface to the reader, the author testifies to the current fashion of writing poetry about contemporary religious concerns, and he asserts regretfully that “\textit{Our Bishops should change Caps with Doctor Story.}” The author, obviously a Puritan convinced that the bishops are a “filthy Nest” who have exchanged their Protestantism for Roman Catholicism
symbolized by Dr. John Story, cites much of the same ceremonial with which Herrick invests his fairies, only clearly attributing it to the Caroline divines. As in Herrick’s poem, religious paraphernalia abounds in *Lambeth Faire* – crucifixes, vestments (surplices, copes, caps, hoods), mitres, altar furniture, wax candles, incense, bells – all identified as “Popish ware,” as the Roman relics of the English prelates. There are also derogatory references to the hierarchy of ecclesiastical orders, the variety of church books, festive behaviour on holydays and the Sabbath, boy choirs in churches, the practice of Lenten fasting, the use of candles at matins and even-song, the belief that consecrated externals (such as blessed candles and crucifixes) can exorcise the devil, and the use of “pretty things” (such as pictures in Bibles) as well as pointed allusions to Matthew Wren, Bishop of Ely, and to Laud, the master of the fair who cannot be present because he is imprisoned in the Tower. *Lambeth Faire* fictitiously presents a fair at which the bishops’ “trinkets” are to be sold by the bishops to members of Parliament who, of course, cannot be persuaded to buy any of the bishops’ “knacks,” “babies,” or “toys.”

Herrick’s playful wit, sportive tone, and clever use of faery which capture but also transform these contentious matters contrast sharply with the straight-forward, heavy-handed satire and caustic tone of *Lambeth Faire*. Even though Herrick employs some of the exact Puritan terminology that appears in *Lambeth Faire*, such as “trinkets” and “knacks” with his “friperie” (1. 21) and “trifle” (1. 123) paralleling the other poem’s usage of “babies” and “toys,” and uses Puritan jargon in designating bowing as “ducking” (1. 52), he does so with a lightness of touch within the context of his diminutive fairy realm that undercuts this Puritan diction, rendering it almost innocuous. The “Friperie” is “fine,” the “Puppet-Priest” is “little,” and the altar cloth’s beauty provokes the reader’s imagination with its “Spangle-work of trembling dew” which gleams “like Frost-work glittering on the Snow.” Thus, Herrick burlesques the severity of Puritan accusations in his use of their cant for assessing the Laudian Anglicanism of diminutive fairies. The unfamiliar use of familiar imagery from Nature, such as the ribbon markers made of “trout-flies curious wings” (1. 72) and the mitre made of “Silk-worms shed” (1. 137), are often comic – with Herrick capitalizing on sound-and-sense relationships gained from alliteration and humorous rhymes – and always imaginatively ingenious in clothing actual ritual in fanciful garb.

Many aspects of “The Fairie Temple” which critics have found baffling may be clarified through an appreciation of the important religious conflict over ceremonies between Anglicans and Puritans which would have elicited Herrick’s sympathetic responses as Royalist and as Anglican priest. We can see how closely the Puritan conception of Anglican wor-
ship parallels Herrick’s imaginative depiction of the fairies’ worship. We can appreciate that perfectly wedded balance of fact and illusion which enables our thoughtful comic poet to use diminutive fairies as the vehicle for his satire of the Puritan view of contemporary Anglicanism as a “mixt Religion,” as Romish (papistical) and idolatrous (pagan). Finally, it is tempting to suggest that Herrick’s original and sophisticated use of fairies in “The Fairie Temple” may well have larger significance for a cult of curious fairy poems which are linked by some stylistic and thematic parallels and written in the early seventeenth century by Michael Drayton, Sir Simeon Steward, and William Browne.

Georgetown University

Notes

1 All references to Herrick’s poetry are to The Poetical Works of Robert Herrick, ed. L.C. Martin (Oxford, 1956), and pagination will be cited parenthetically in my text. See Briggs, The Anatomy of Puck (London, 1959), p. 66; Rollin, Robert Herrick (New York, 1966), pp. 130-32; Woodward, “Herrick’s Oberon Poems,” JEGP, 64 (1965), 276-78; Deming, “Robert Herrick’s Classical Ceremony,” ELH, 34 (1967), 328, 332-33. I find Roman Catholic satire, Anglican criticism, and pagan ritual all red-herrings. These critics also differ in defining Herrick’s tone; Rollin sees it as “essentially good-humored” (p. 132), Woodward as “more playful than rigorously satirical” but also “in a curious way...celebrate[s]...ritual” (p. 278), and Deming as chiefly serious, as “humble piety” (pp. 333, 336).


3 See A. Harold Wood, Church Unity Without Uniformity (London, 1963), p. 63. He argues that it was Laud’s theory of episcopacy that underlay the hot disputations over ceremonies — the bishop’s power to enforce his will on the people (p. 67). For Charles’ adherence to his father’s conviction, “No bishop, no King,” see David Harris Willson, King James VI and I (New York, 1956), p. 207.


6 New, p. 15. John Cleveland sardonically testifies to the erroneous accusations claiming true Anglicans to be Papists in his “The Kings Disguise,” “But since w’are all call’d Papists...” (1. 83), and in his “Epitaph on the Earl of Strafford” where he notes that Strafford was accused of being a Papist, but was actually a Calvinist (1. 6). See The Poems of John Cleveland, eds. Brian Morris and Eleanor Withington (Oxford, 1967), pp. 8, 66, 155. For a compendium of Puritan accusations against Caroline divines for resembling papists, see Vernon Staley, ed., Hierurgia Anglicana (London, 1902), II, 221-40; III, 335-40.


8 Scott, pp. 55, 77; Martin, p. 528.

9 For some examples of Herrick’s Puritan satire, see “Upon Zelot,” “Upon Peason,” “The Christian Militant,” “Upon Jone and Jane” (11. 4-5), “What kind of Mistresse he would have” (1. 4), “To his Booke” (p. 279), and “Upon Glasse. Epig.” where Glasse’s mercenary conversion to “Predicant” (a Puritan hallmark) renders his re-conversion to his original papistry all “the rancker.”

11 Marcus, pp. 109, 112, 114, 124. Her description of Herrick's technique in his religious poems, i.e., adopting his opponent's argument in order to refute it (p. 112), is similar to my own analysis concluded independently of her research, and her observation about the effect of Herrick's figurative miniaturizing (p. 113) complements my interpretation of his literal use of it.

12 See, for example, Herrick's appreciation of frankincense (pp. 128, 361, 368, 396); candles (p. 384), altar, instead of table (pp. 368-69); rich ornamentation (p. 360); priest, instead of presbyter, elder, or minister (pp. 286, 348, 365); surplices (p. 280); stole (p. 286); bell for morning and evening prayer (p. 410); "saints-bell" (p. 209); chalice (pp. 78, 127); Eucharist (p. 381); damask altar cloths (p. 355); beads (pp. 68, 143, 321, 324); holy water (pp. 258, 303, 324, 365); purification rites (p. 366); saints (pp. 112, 168, 199, 294, 314, 344, 379, 394).


15 Latham, pp. 34-36. See, e.g., Ben Jonson's praise of Prince Henry as Oberin in *Oberon, The Fairy Prince* (1611). Faery may be used much like classical mythology, as in, e.g., the representation of Queen Elizabeth by Diana.

16 See Latham, p. 62; King James, p. 74; E.K.'s gloss on Spenser's June eclogue, *The Shepheardes Calendar*, 1. 25; and William Guild, *Ignis Fatuus* (London, 1625). Guild's satire on Catholic "scare" tactics uses *ignis fatuus* or "elf-fire" as another term for purgatory, and this example antedates the illustrations in the *OED*. One of the fairy saints in Herrick's poem is "Saint Will o'th' Wispe.../But alias Call'd here *Fatuus ignis*" (11. 30-31). Although identifiable with "fatuus ignis," the Will o' th' Wisp generally was considered a kind of pixy.


18 *Poems of Cleveland*, eds. Morris and Withington, p. 7 and 89n.

19 See Briggs, *Anatomy of Puck*, pp. 66-67. See also Robert Kirk, *The Secret Commonwealth of Elves, Fauns and Fairies* (1691), ed. Andrew Lang, 2nd ed. (London, 1893), p. 15. Unaware of Herrick's originality in creating this fairy religion, both Woodward (pp. 276, 279) and Deming (pp. 333, 336) argue that he must be examining nature closely to reveal its "mysterious order," "the order of the universe in the 'order found in minutest nature'...in the details and articles of fairy worship."

20 Even in his dedicatory lines, e.g., Herrick puns on "Rare Temples" that John Merrifield has seen (he attended the Inner Temple; see Martin, p. 520) and puns on "Thine," indicating that this poem is dedicated to Merrifield, but also that Merrifield may recognize in this fairy temple something of his own "temple" of worship.


22 See Vernon Staley's *The Ceremonial of the English Church* (London, 1899) and *Hierurgia Anglicana* regarding ceremonies in the Church of England.


56 / Renaissance and Reformation

25 Albion's Triumph (London, 1631 [i.e. 1632]), pp. 19-20.
27 R. Trevor Davies, Four Centuries of Witch-Beliefs with Special Reference to the Great Rebellion (London, 1947), p. 124. See also Staley, Hierurgia, III, 337, 340. Corbett denounces Puritan criticism of church restoration in his poem, "Iter Boreale": "... all the Idolatry / Lyen in your folly, not in th' Imagery." Edmund Waller's poem, "Upon His Majesty's Repairing of Pauls," defends Charles' renovation of St. Paul's against Puritan accusations of popish "innovations" by claiming that Charles' religious intention is "to frame no new church, but the old refine."
29 John N. Summerison, Inigo Jones (Baltimore, Md., 1966), pp. 61, 87, 93.
30 G. H. Cook, Old S. Paul's Cathedral (London, 1955), pp. 82-84; he notes that this portico had "pedestals for ten statues of benefactors in Roman costume, of which only those of James I and Charles I were ever made," and the frieze on the portico bore an inscription attributing the work to Charles who paid for it. Cf. Summerison, p. 104.
31 See "A Romish Recusant" [Thomas Longueville], A Life of Archbishop Laud (London, 1894), pp. 171-72, where the author maintains these fines were not the same thing as the Catholic sale of indulgences for money given for erecting cathedrals.
35 Only the priests were allowed to eat the showbread. In an anonymous Puritan tract (1645) the author accuses the English prelates of having "altar, priest, sacrifice, in emulation of the pomp of Aaron, as if we were still under the veil... ." see Staley, Hierurgia, III, 340.
38 Beek, p. 39; New, p. 74.
40 Puritans usually used "saints" in a compound form or with some negative modifier to refer to canonized persons; see Beek, pp. 43-44, and "saintship," OED, 3. Herrick uses the compound "other-Saints" (I. 33).
41 Grossart was first to suggest the identification in his edition of Herrick (London, 1876), 1, 157-58.
42 See Martin's note (p. 521) suggesting a reference to "Our Lady."
43 Regarding Anglican reverence for Mary as the mother of Christ, see Staley, Hierurgia, III, 170 and n. 2, 171-73; More and Cross, pp. 535-40. John Cosin, Bishop of Durham, expressed his devotion to Mary by burning over three hundred candles on Candlemas in 1628 (More and Cross, p. lxxi; for Puritan reaction, see p. 551).
44 See Laud, Works, IV, 247; Staley, Hierurgia, III, 337; II, 180.
45 Deming also notes this (p. 336). "Turk" became identified with the Pope as Antichrist; see More and Cross, p. 1vi. On the mitre, see Staley, Ceremonial, p. 180 and Hierurgia, II, 240; Corbett's satire, "The Distracted Puritane."
46 Beek, pp. 38-40. John Selden suggests how "Popery" and its derivations might be employed metaphorically by Puritans: "We charge the Prelatical Clergy with Popery, to make them odious, though we know they are guilty of no such thing... ." See Selden, The Table Talk of John Selden, ed. S.W. Singer (London, 1890), p. 120.
Deming, p. 336.

For Puritan condemnation, see Staley, Hierurgia, III, 338, 340.


This line does not seem to be a Roman Catholic allusion because in the three papal elections to be considered (1621, 1623, 1644) no papal candidates or popes are named Boniface. Herrick would also be more interested in the internal affairs of his own church than Rome's. Herrick's "Temple" has never been dated.

Reginald Scot castigates Boniface VIII for devious usurpation of the papal throne in his The Discoverie of Witchcraft (1584; rpt. Carbondale, Ill., 1964), Book XV, Chapter XL, p. 384. Boniface as usurper might possibly be a parallel to Laud's usurpation of Abbot's power while Archbishop.


See Laud, Works, III, 398, 406-07 and also 397, 411; IV, 157 and also 197-208, 244-58, 375, 404-05.

Laud, patterning his chapel furniture at Aberuguille on Bishop Andrewes' own chapel, includes what Prynne termed "'Popish furniture'" (Staley, Hierurgia, I, 93-94; cf. also, pp. xvi, xx-xiii), which we also find in Herrick's "Temple," such as two candlesticks with tapers for the altar (11. 94-96), the basin for oblations (11. 85-90), canister, tun, and chalice (1. 113), rolls of wax (1. 115), and the navicula for frankincense (1. 140).


See New, Anglican and Puritan, p. 41; Davies, Puritans, p. 64.

More and Cross, Anglicanism, p. 551; Beek, Puritan Vocabulary, pp. 10, 52, 99.


For other Anglican ceremonies not commented upon in my text, see the following: the basin for alms and offerings (11. 84-90) — Staley, Hierurgia, I, 48 (citation from Herbert's Country Parson); sacred salt (1. 118) — Thomas, p. 51; and holy oil (1. 117) — More and Cross, pp. iii, 552-53 and C.W. Colt, The Royal Martyr (London, 1924), pp. 57-60. But a very few items seem to be solely of Catholic genesis, such as "Pardons and Indulgences" (1. 114) and perhaps the exorcism of the devil from the friar's codpiece (11. 120-22). However, one should keep in mind that the Puritans sometimes exaggerated their accusations (see Staley's note, Hierurgia, III, 180), and Herrick's inclusion of several apparently Catholic items would suit his satire of Puritan misconceptions. For example, we have earlier considered a possible Puritan context for pardons and indulgences, but this reference may be merely an example of exaggeration not unlike the claim of the Brownists that the Church of England was guilty of the power of indulgences. See Joseph Hall, The Works of the Right Reverend Joseph Hall D.D., ed. Philip Wynter (1863; rpt. New York, 1969), IX, 64, 77. Exorcisms, usually associated with popish magical tricks and opposed by Puritans who favored fasting and prayer, were evidently still being practiced because Canon 72 of 1604 forbade ministers without the bishop's license to cast out devils, and Lambeth Faire (1641) accuses the Caroline bishops of believing in the power of consecrated candles and crucifixes for exorcism. Herrick's reference jocularly refers to exorcism as the fumigation of a lecherous friar. His "The Spell" (p. 258) contains a homely formula for exorcism which lists most of the items appearing in the "Temple" (11. 116-22). These items might also reflect Puritan fears about the presence and possible influence of Henrietta Maria's Catholic circle.