

The English Landscape Garden in Andrew Marvell's Five Poems

Shu-hua Chung*

Abstract

Landscape garden is a recurrent theme in the seventeenth century English literature, and a number of poets have made contributions to it. Among them, Andrew Marvell (1621-1678) in his five poems depicts the landscape garden, including the external world in nature and the internal mind of mankind. Focusing upon the landscape garden in Marvell's five poems, "The Garden" (1662), "The Mower, Against Gardens" (1664-1665), "The Damon Mower," "The Mower to the Glo-worms" (1667) and "The Mower's Song" (1668), this paper aims to explore the poet's philosophy of nature, especially his perspective of the relationship between nature and mankind. In these five poems, Marvell reveals his philosophy of nature which is composed of three dimensions—the pastoral, the Biblical and the mythological. He suggests that the philosophy of nature, in the frame of traditional pastoral, tends to be by no means a Dionysian libertinism but rather a Christian contemplation observed in "The Garden." In "The Mower, Against Gardens," he declares that a natural order rather than an artificial decoration in nature is important and deserves attention. The relationship between nature and mankind is illustrated in "The Mower to the Glo-worms" and in "The Mower's Song." The author will apply the landscape theory to the discussion on these five poems and would argue that the relationship between nature and mankind under the plume of Marvell presents an ambivalent phenomenon: hostile but harmonious.

Key words: landscape, garden, nature, philosophy, relationship

* Assistant Professor, Department of Applied Foreign Languages, Tungfang Design University.
Received December 23, 2011; accepted March 8, 2012; last revised March 15, 2012.

安德魯·馬威爾五首詩中的英國地景花園

鍾淑華*

摘要

地景花園是十七世紀英國文學的常見主題，許多詩人對此有所貢獻。其中，安德魯·馬威爾(1621-1678)在五首詩中描繪地景花園，包括自然的外在世界與人的內在心靈。本文集中在馬威爾的五首詩，〈花園〉(1662)、〈割草者，對抗花園〉(1664-1665)、〈割草者〉、〈割草者對螢火蟲說〉(1667)、〈割草者之歌〉(1668)，試探索詩人的自然哲學，特別是他對自然與人之關係的看法。馬威爾在這五首詩中顯露三度空間——田園詩、聖經、神話——自然哲學。他暗示，傳統田園詩架構下的自然哲學絕非是酒神式的放蕩行為，而是基督教的沈思冥想；見於〈花園〉。他在〈割草者，對抗花園〉中聲明，自然秩序而非自然中的人工裝飾，才是重要而值得注意的。自然與人之關係闡明於〈割草者對螢火蟲說〉、〈割草者之歌〉。筆者將應用地景理論以討論這五首詩，而證明馬威爾筆下，自然與人之關係模稜兩可的現象：不僅敵對亦是和諧。

關鍵字：地景、花園、自然、哲學、關係

* 東方設計學院應用外語系助理教授。

到稿日期：2011年12月23日；接受刊登：2012年3月8日；最後修訂日期：2012年3月15日。

Introduction

Landscape is a recurrent theme in seventeenth-century English literature, and many an author has a great contribution to the theme of landscape in a variety of viewpoints. Among those authors, Andrew Marvell (1621-1678) is the one who focuses on the description of garden in respect to the theme of landscape and merits our attention. The English landscape garden under Marvell's plume presents the features of seventeenth-century English garden, along with the contemporary trend, as Roy Strong shows in *The Renaissance Garden in England*, where people were intoxicated with "exotic plants" (112) which make the garden become colorful but grotesque. The garden for which the poet aspires is a natural, solitary and serene one different from the social and formal garden which his contemporaries possess. In description of the garden, the poet also reveals his philosophy of nature, the relationship between nature and mankind, in particular. In his five poems concerning the garden, Marvell exhibits a spectrum: three dimensions--one is the pastoral literary tradition; another is the philosophical tradition of nature and art; the third is the Christian tradition which gives a particular shape and meaning to the other two. On the other hand, in a highly metaphysical vein, he employs the mythological allusion for classical conceits. By close reading of five poems--"The Garden," "The Mower, Against Gardens," "Damon the Mower," "The Mower to the Glo-worms" and "The Mower's Song," I would like to examine the English landscape garden painted by Marvell to explore his philosophy of nature, especially the relationship between nature and mankind. Landscape theory will be applied while discussing these five poems. In this paper, I would like to make an attempt to argue that Marvell's perspective of the relationship between nature and mankind is ambivalent, discordant and harmonious. The harmonious relationship between nature and mankind is paradoxically constructed through the mower's integration into nature after the mower has experienced sexual frustration and destroyed his life.

The English Landscape Garden in Andrew Marvell's Five Poems

With the fruit of landscape literary works, landscape theories flourish and are expounded by a number of scholars in a diversity of perspectives, such as ecology, psychology, philology, architecture, feminism and post-colonialism. Dianne Harris maintains the idea: Landscape is a method of perceiving, "a symbolic system," "a matrix for conveying ideologies" and a method of recognition (191). In Joy Appleton's view, landscape is "a kind of backcloth to the whole stage of human activity" (2). In Anne Whiston Spira's opinion, landscape's deep structure is a milieu where "cultures and languages" evolve as well as "the human community" builds and lives (57). Besides, landscape seems to her, a bridge, can permit her to perceive "pasts" she fails to

experience, to anticipate the possible, to envision, choose and shape “the future” (61). I would echo her landscape idea, landscape is a dimension where human story occurred, is occurring and will occur. Garden is one of landscapes, and many a scholar is devoted to it. For James Elkins, a garden is between “nature” and “culture,” and it is partly random since the growth of plants is partly “unpredictable”. He adds a further insight to our understanding of gardens: “Gardens are involved in “the histories of leisure (the viridarium), of social classes (the locus amoenus), of religious symbolism (the hortus conclusus), of utopia and paradise, of jokes and festivals, of journeys and exploration, and of theater” (70).

Apart from the landscape theory, the English landscape garden in the seventeenth century is actually “an oblique projection” replete with wildness, different from the French landscape garden in the seventeenth century which may be normally thought in “a monothematic fashion” (Elkins 78), with a strong emphasis on order by Louis XIV, such as Parc de Sceaux, a garden outside Paris, where yews are clipped into cones and large trees are sheared into a solid green wall. The English landscape garden in the seventeenth century literature declines to be a sheer description of nature, whereas the English landscape garden in Marvell’s five poems which I want to discuss is often supposed to be the description of internal mind as well as external nature. As for the construction of garden in seventeenth-century England, it has its own features. One of essential features demonstrates that the garden is, “by definition, an articulated boundary” (Stewart 111). Namely, the garden is limited and domestic as well. Therefore, the garden, in a sense, hints at a private sphere where an individual is able to relax himself by way of undertaking personal activities and of expressing personal feelings. In “The Garden,” Marvell pictures garden as a contemplative life where the poet can relax himself and as nature where he can enjoy the beautiful scenery. In the first stanza, the poet presents the phenomenon that it is useless for ambitious people to constantly pursue fame on earth in terms of the images--palm, oak and bays--the emblems of name. People’s fruitless pursuit of fame is also suggested in the last two lines of this poem--“While all flowers and all trees do close / To weave the garlands of repose!”(7-8). These two lines imply that the reputation is vanity since all flowers and all trees are to be woven into the garlands of repose which symbolize, to some degree, the decoration for death. The poet’s denial of aspiration for reputation hints at his pursuit of a prudently passive life-style in contrast to an active life-style. Such a pursuit of passive life style is more private than public, a proof of garden as a private sphere rather than as a public sphere.

Since the garden is, to some degree, identified as a private sphere, Marvell’s picture of garden in the poems not only presents the description of external natural phenomena but also reveals the expression of internal thinking. In the second stanza as in the first stanza of “The Garden,” Marvell uses the plant-image to embody abstract concepts: “sacred plants” are emblematically identified with “Fair Quiet” and “Innocence” as well.

It is obscure where the speaker is, but it is evident that he has a passion for “delicious solitude” (16) which he seeks in vain among busy people in the world but finally finds among the easy plants in the garden. To some extent, it is not the external world but the internal mind that is the place where a man can find serene happiness. In this case, the external natural garden seems a projection of the internal human mind which aspires for a tranquil life. The external natural garden is described as a peaceful place by virtue of the plant-image which closes just like the poet does not open his mind to contact the external world. Within the domestic, the plant-image which is perennial and circulates from birth to death symbolizes “life cycles” (Alexander 866).

In seventeenth-century England, most gardens are permeated with natural scenery, whereas in Marvell's poem, “The Garden,” the garden is formal as well as natural (Drabble 108). Besides, Marvell's garden is full of a variety of colors bearing a symbolic significance, “as his language suggests, a luxurious trap” (Drabble 48). The color of plant-image as a symbol is found in the third stanza. Among the plants, the “green,” Marvell's favorite color, often used as the emblem of hope and of vitality, substitutes for “white” and for “red” which are traditional emblems of lily suggesting innocence and of rose implying passion. In the way of contrasting colors, the poet distinguishes spiritual love from passionate love. By comparison, the fair trees are perennial, while passionate love is ephemeral. The poet's aspiration for the trees symbolizing spiritual love can be visualized and more strongly confirmed in the fourth stanza: “When we have run our passion's heat, / Love hither makes his best retreat. / The gods, that mortal beauty chase, / Still in a tree did end their race” (25-28). Here the poet precipitates passionate love into spiritual love by means of the allusions to mythology: Apollo and Pan chased after the two mortal beauties Daphne and Syrinx: “Apollo hunted Daphne so, / Only that she might laurel grow; / And Pan did after Syrinx speed, / Not as a nymph, but for a reed” (29-32). On the verge of being caught, both of them respectively metamorphosed themselves into a laurel and into a reed, metaphors of perennial love. A circle forms among gods, human beings and trees which are the end of the former two. According to David's *Metamorphoses*, Apollo and Pan suffered from sexual frustration on account of the rejection by Daphne and Syrinx respectively. In contrast to Edmund Waller's “The Story of Phoebus and Daphne Applied” (1601), the last couplet goes: “Like Phoebus thus, acquiring unsought praise, / He catches at love, and filled his arms with bays,” Marvell proposes a great reversal of traditional Petrarchan love poetry; he changes it from Dionysian attachment to Apollonian detachment. Most significantly, Apollo and Pan drive Daphne and Syrinx to metamorphose from the mortal to the immortal, but not the beauties recompense the gods with a laurel and a reed. Paradoxically, extracting the metamorphosis from the mythology, Marvell implies the resurrection emphasized by Christianity, as Margarite Stocker points out:

Wrapped in the classical formula of ‘Gods,’ this introduction to the classical myths of metamorphosis thus underpins the Christological reference of ‘Apollo’ and ‘Pan,’ and signifies the redeeming paradoxes of the passion--the Creator killed, the death that promises resurrection (243).

The poet employs with felicity the metamorphosis as a means of conceit, which is one of the essential characteristics of the metaphysical school, to create a witty version. Such a subtle comparison is a triumphantly remarkable achievement in Marvell’s “The Garden” (Pritchard 383).

Not merely the metamorphosis from human beings to plants presented by comparison but also the growth of plants described by contrast are shown in the fifth stanza of “The Garden”. By virtue of the spatial description of the growth of the five mature fruits, apple, grape, nectarine, peach and melon, Marvell paints the sensuous richness of the garden. His spatial description of the growth of fruits hints at a good order which is essential for the poet to construct the garden. According to Susan Stewart, the garden thereby is connected with other means of ordering life: “codifying and ritualizing social time and space, creating political orders and social hierarchies—including the organization of military order, or structures of force” (111). Paradoxically, the garden is no longer a private sphere but a public sphere where social order is highly emphasized. As a consequence, the mind as well as the garden starts to be open to the external world; namely, the speaker of the poem begins to move from a private sphere to a public sphere. On the other hand, the mature fruits are, in some degree, emblematically identified with mature women, playing “the feminine role” (Craze 175). It seems that the speaker of the poem, by contrast, is luckier than those people who chase after women, for he is conscious that he is surrounded by a variety of women; actually, searching for women to him is a needless trouble. If he gains a perspective on the garden, it would be a sexual vision rather than a spiritual one. It is very special for the poet to put human desires in the garden or in nature, and it is “the triumph of his attempt to impose a sexual interest upon nature” (Empson 64). In this case, the garden is not the “representations” of “history,” “nature,” “painting,” “fiction,” neither “the meeting place of various disciplines” nor the set of “polarities,” but rather, psychologically, the open-ended site of “desire” (Elkins 72-74). In the poem, natural garden haunts human desires, and such a description suggests that there is a man who manipulates all secretly in the serene garden. The situation at this moment seems to become more complicated than the previous time.

The poem displays a garden more human than natural since the speaker ponders over matters and manipulates all there. A garden is metaphorically the “narrative of human life” since human beings brood in garden, from cradle to tomb (Elkins 74). In “The Garden,” besides the description of external world full of a variety of plants, the poet depicts the internal world where he reveals his thought as the sixth stanza shows:

“Yet it creates, transcending these, / Far other worlds and other seas, / Annihilating all that's made / To a green thought in a green shade” (45-48). The garden for which that the poet aspires is a garden of solitude totally different from that of pleasure for which most of his contemporaries pine. So much solitude immediately comes into the mind that it, transcending these counterparts, creates another world to destroy all and transforms them into a green thought in a green garden which is supposed to be a symbol of contemplative life. In such a secure retreat, the mind successfully attains to a genuine serene state. Consequently, the poet's soul is pregnant with freedom as the simile suggested in the seventh stanza--“My soul into the boughs does glide: / There, like a bird, it sits and sings” (52-53). In terms of the description of garden, Marvell imperceptibly reveals his philosophy of leisure and seems to be an “easy philosopher” (Fitter 292). In addition to the plant-image, the light-image in this poem plays an important role. Rather than the white radiance of eternity, the changeable light of this world projects on the bird. It not only hints at human consciousness but also implies that the poet takes a fancy to Greek and Roman philosophy as well as to Christian contemplation to establish his “philosophical and theological position” (Deming 84). Marvell's philosophy of nature is three-dimensional perspective like a spectrum shines so brilliantly in the realm of poetry.

Marvell's three-dimensional philosophy of nature in “The Garden” not merely makes his garden of literature mysterious and vital, but also paradoxically unveils his aspiration for repose. In seventeenth-century England, the garden is a place of “repose” as well as “games” and “relaxation” (Alexander 867). Similarly, in “The Garden,” the poet regards the garden as a place to repose and longs to have a solitary garden to repose. His longing for a garden of solitude is so implicated that he does not point out that “here” is “garden-state” until the eighth stanza: “Such was that happy garden-state, / While man there walked without a mate: / After a place so pure and sweet, / What other help could yet be met!” (57-60). The eighth stanza echoes the second one to repeatedly emphasize the poet's pining for a garden of solitude. By virtue of the Biblical allusion, the poet distinguishes his garden where he wanders alone from Eden where Adam is required to coexist with Eve. A double entendre that living alone in the garden is a double bliss implied in the last two lines—“Two paradises 'twere in one / To live in paradise alone” (63-64). The garden that Marvell pines for is as what Frank Kermode asserts: “This is the Solitude, not the Jouissance; the garden of the solitaire whose soul rises towards divine beauty, not that of the voluptuary who voluntarily surrenders to the delights of the senses” (213-14). It seems probably that the poet transforms his sexual frustration, which is one of frequent themes spread throughout his five poems which I discuss, into a narcissistic individualism; as a consequence, he emphasizes the pursuit of a solitary garden to cure his hurt or agony.

In such a solitary garden, time is endlessly moving and shifting. Such a changeable phenomenon is accounted by the flourishing and the languishing of plants. In the last

stanza of "The Garden," from the perspective of Marvell, although the mutability of time menaces the beautiful garden, the beauty of herbs and flowers, parts of nature, the new dial, paradoxically, measures the passing of time. The poet proposes a special vision in the last two lines: "How could such sweet and wholesome hours / Be reckoned but with herbs and flowers?" (71-72). Donald M. Friedman claims: the herbs and flowers have proved themselves "a real means of conquering time through natural beauty" alongside "the proper setting for contemplation and the approach to wisdom" (100). I would like to assert, the beauty of nature is able to triumph over the mutability of time and death, for the plants in nature are perennial and will revive.

In Marvell's garden, the speaker of the poem contemplates both "the familiar" and "the strange," which paradoxically "lead to peaceful but blank state where thought and landscape seem indistinguishable" (Crane 45). Mary Thomas Crane's observation is true, but I would like to make a further emphasis that such a harmonious relationship between mankind and nature is transient and remains ambivalent since a three-dimensioned philosophy revealed in the poem. Actually, the speaker of "The Garden" is in various states of "suspended amazement," suspended at the moment of "choice between mind and body," presenting "analogy between microcosm and macrocosm, Neoplatonism, mechanism, vitalism, scientific analysis" as sources of "wonder" (Crane 50). In other words, the speaker's "amazement" is a state of "hyper-awareness," through it his mind is engaged with the world but not yet completely becomes a part of it (Crane 50).

As in "The Garden," in "The Mower, Against Gardens," the description of the natural phenomena in the garden to reveal the philosophy of nature is vividly presented. Different from the presentation in the former, the presentation in the latter suggests that the poet not only expresses his relish for nature but also proposes his objection to the mower who destroys nature by means of vicious habits and skills. In the garden, after the mower's abuse, all the natural order is spoiled entirely, and the worst of it is that all the flowers and trees are shown grotesquely and are painted in an exotic style--multiple color in a flower, the mixture between the trees. At that time, exotic plants, especially tulips imported from the Dutch, won the popularity of the contemporaries and had an enormous vogue. All of the plants in the garden become as sophisticated and hypocritical as the mower shows: "He grafts upon the wild the tame, / That the uncertain and adulterate fruit / Might put the palate in dispute. / His green seraglio has its eunuchs too, / Lest any tyrant him outdo; / And in the cherry he does Nature vex, / To procreate without a sex" (24-30). In addition to the graft, the mower's abuse of asexual propagation completely destroys the originally natural order. Marvell subtly uses a conceit to connect the seraglio and the garden, the eunuchs with the asexually produced cherry, to present chaos by the luxurious mower's maltreatment. To some extent, the mower's maltreating the garden may be regarded as a symbolic performance that human civilization desperately destroys nature, the art created by God. In this case, the garden may be viewed as an epitome of the life in

seventeenth-century England. To some degree, by virtue of the description of the abnormal growth of plants in the garden, the poet seems to satirize his contemporaries' crazy pursuit of exotic culture.

Although the garden in seventeenth-century England is full of exotic and strange plants, the poet still has his own imagination to create the garden for which he pines. The garden is a place exposed to have "dreams and fantasy" (Alexander 868). In "The Mower, Against Gardens," the mower's abusing the garden is not merely a sin but also a crime, from the perspective of the poet. After having accused the mower of the crime, the poet displays his ideal garden by imagination, in contrast with the mower's chaotic garden by destruction: "'Tis all enforced, the fountain and the grot, / While the sweet fields do lie forgot, / Where willing Nature does to all dispense / A wild and fragrant innocence; / And fauns and fairies do the meadows till / More by their presence than their skill. / Their statues polished by some ancient hand, / May to adorn the gardens stand; / But, howsoe'er the figures do excel, / The gods themselves with us do dwell" (31-40). A paradox lurks in the poem: although the mower destroys nature in the garden, his potential talent for getting along with nature is revealed (Taylor 129). Such a contradictory description of the mower's behavior—to destroy nature totally and to integrate into nature potentially--hints that the poet prefers to wild nature retracing to a mythological setting where all is in harmony rather than the garden where the mower spoils the purity and innocence by means of abnormal habits. In terms of the allusion to mythology, through his eyes, the poet envisions that nature is close to mankind and that he longs for a combination of himself and nature.

In "Damon the Mower," Marvell depicts pastoral landscape in his own way which is not completely similar to the traditional way. As far as literature on pastoral landscape is concerned, we can retrace Roman literature which extends way beyond the Mediterranean region and the territory Romans once occupied and is further strengthened by the biblical tradition of pastoralism: "He lets me rest in fields of green grass and leads me to quiet pools of fresh water" (Psalms 23.2). Taking pastoral landscape as a frame, the poet in "Damon the Mower" reveals that the relationship between nature and mankind presents a different feature via the juxtaposition between hurting nature and frustrated love as the first stanza depicts: "Heark how the Mower Damon Sung. / With love of Juliana stung! / While ev'ry thing did seem to paint / The Scene more fit for his complaint. / Like her fair Eyes the day was fair; / But scorching like his am'rous Care. / Sharp like his Sythe his Sorrow was, / And wither'd like his Hopes the Grass" (1-8). Ironically, the mower cruelly mistreats the garden and destroys nature without taking any notice that he should be hurt by his mistress Juliana. Comparatively, Juliana hurts the mower more crucially than he hurts nature: "Not July causeth these Extremes, / But Juliana's scorching beams" (23-24). In the fourth stanza, like the typical lover in a pastoral who pays all of his affection for his best-loved but gains no reward, the mower

suffers from hurt without remedies. As a consequence, the mower's waiting for his best-loved is a long way without ending shown in stanza five: "How long wilt Thou, fair shepherdess, / Esteem me, and my Presents less?" (33-34). The mower's interrogation gets no answer as well as his passionate love for his indifferent best-loved gains no equal reward. Just as the mower brutally damages the grass, so Juliana disparately hurts the mower. Irony is obviously demonstrated in stanza nine: "And with my Sythe cut down the Grass, / Yet still my Grief is where it was: / But, when the Iron blunter grows, / Sighing I whet my Syche and Woes" (69-72). The mower is extremely lack of sympathy and empathy without any conscience until he is strikingly hurt by his best-loved. The mower's suffering from the indifference of his best-loved intrigues him to commit suicide, which is suggested by an understatement revealed in stanza ten: "And there among the Grass fell down, / By his own Sythe, the Mower mown" (79-80). His agony is so deep that mower desires to terminate his life. Paradoxically, his death should become an entry on account of which he can integrate into nature that he has deeply hurt, and his relationship to nature, from now on, starts to change, from hostile to friendly; namely, his suicide suddenly changes his relationship with nature from detachment to attachment.

Change occurs in the relationship between nature and mankind, from hostile to harmonious, whereas change happens in the identification of the mower, from mankind to Death. As far as the identification of the mower is concerned, Marvell presents a multitude of features in a series of mower poems. The mower is identified as Death in the last stanza of "Damon the Mower": "Only for him no Cure is found, / Whom Julianas Eyes do wound. / 'Tis death alone that this must do: / For Death thou art a Mower too" (85-88). Here the poet uses the third person's point of view to echo the first three stanzas to show the mower's change in identification. Changing perspective not merely makes a proof of the mower's changed identification, in a sense, but also is supposed to make a comment: Death is also a mower.

Different from the former poems in which Marvell uses a diversity of plant-image, in "The Mower to the Glo-worms," the poet employs a lot of light-image which is shifting and shimmering. Comparatively, this poem is more dynamic than the former poems. In terms of light-image, the poet presents not only external world but also internal mind shown in the beginning of the first stanza: "Ye living lamps" (1), "Ye country comets" (5) and "Ye glo-worms" (9). His usage of "comets" which belong to the field of astronomy as a conceit exhibits one of the metaphysical characteristics. The light-image prevailing in the poem, on the one hand, implies that the mower maintains a hope to obtain love from his mistress while the light is glimmering. On the other hand, the light-image hints that the former may lose it from the latter when the light has extinguished shown in the last stanza: "You courteous fires in vain you waste, / Since Juliana here is come, / For she my mind hath so displaced / That I shall never find my home" (13-16). The mower is enamoured of Juliana so much that the fire of the

glowworms cannot lead him home just like the speaker's soul is dominated by Julia in Robert Herrick's the last stanza of "The Night-Piece, To Julia": "Then, Julia, let me woo thee, / Thus, thus to come unto me; / And when I shall meet/ Thy silv'ry feet/ My soul I'll pour into thee." As Marvell writes a series of "mower" poems, so Herrick writes a number of "Julia" poems, to elaborate the theme of lovesick that the hero fails to get any reward from his mistress though he has a passionate love for her. In addition, just as the former chooses Juliana as his imaginary mistress, so the latter chooses Julia as his fantastic mistress to whom he addresses in his poetry. Both poets inherit from the pastoral tradition that the lover not merely admires his mistress's beauty which intoxicates him temporarily but also complains of her coldness which tortures him eternally.

The hope conceived in the mind of the mower is suggested by the light-image, whereas the low mood of the mower is foreshadowed by the dark-image in the first three stanzas of "The Mower to the Glo-worms". The Mower lovingly describes his lost "innocent existence" and incompletely paints his "idyllic picture"; consequently, the poem becomes "progressively darker as it continues" (Haber 99). I would like to contend that Marvell maintains two contradictory ideas with regard to the relationship between nature and mankind—hostile and harmonious. His garden is presented as an ambivalent feature which is light as well as dark; namely, the two extremes coexist. The light-image shining the garden suggests that hope is visible, but despair lurks behind. The dark-image dimming the garden hints that danger is potential, but security is expectable and provides us with a world which is full of "disturbances, but remains essentially secure" (Haber 100).

Like Marvell's a series of mower poems, "The Mower's Song" presents the relationship between nature and mankind via the mower's damage to nature and his sexual frustration from his cold mistress. In the poem, by virtue of the love between male and female, Marvell expands his imaginative power, in decent melody, offering self-restraint of phrase to present a relationship between nature and mankind. In the first stanza of this poem, notwithstanding though the mower's mind is the genuine image of all these meadows, fresh and gray, the color of the grass, the greenness, seems a reflection of his own optimistic thinking. It is reflected in a mirror, which simultaneously suggests his transient hope and his sorrowful mood oscillating between hope and despair. Greenness in Marvell, usually symbolizing hope as well as vitality, here no longer brings any hope for the mower. Such a denial is strongly proved in the refrain of each stanza: "When Juliana came, and she, / What I do to the grass, does to my thoughts and me." The grass is a metaphor of flesh, so the action of mowing the grass, to some degree, is a self-destruction hinting that the mower extirpates the hope of love and of life as well. In accordance with Joseph H. Summers, the mower's "capacity for self-destruction is clearly implied by the contrast between nature's fecundity and man's harassed and frustrated attempts at love" (148). This refrain not only holds a musical characteristic that seems to

reveal harmony but also makes an implication that the mower can never mow without missing Juliana. Furthermore, the refrain insists that the mower's relation to nature exactly parallels his cruel mistress's relation to him: he mows the grass as much as she hurts him. The incoherence of tense--the interaction between the past tense and the present tense in the refrain--confirms an eternal torture that Juliana always, with her caprice, treats the mower cruelly. On the other hand, the incoherence of tense suggests that the poem is the retrospection of a dead but fond mower-lover; even though he is dead, the image of Juliana is embedded in his memory so profoundly that he cannot drive her shadow from his mind for eternity.

In "The Mower's Song," the mower's brutality is shown when he mows grass to maltreat nature, whereas his softness or weakness is exhibited when he is rejected by his indifferent mistress. Caught in the disappointing situation, the mower's mind languishes, though his life flourishes; his fatal mood is revealed in the fourth stanza: "But what you in compassion ought / Shall now by my revenge be wrought, / And flowers, and grass, and I, and all, / Will in one common ruin fall; / For Juliana comes, and she, / What I do to the grass, does to my thoughts and me" (19-24). It is really difficult for the male or for the female to demonstrate equality and reciprocity in the realm of love though both of them always long for an equal love or a reciprocal reward. The mower sows his seed of love in the mind of Juliana, but in vain, his seed of love is frozen by her coldness. As a consequence, what sprouts up in his mind is an idea of taking revenge on his cold mistress by means of committing suicide, a radical action of self-destruction--"Will in one common ruin fall" (22). As for the wildness of landscapes, most scholars maintain a positive point of view, whereas James Elkins hold a different perspective: "The wilder world of landscapes offers many more complicated problems of control and conceptualization" (82). Being alone in such a garden that provides him with wild phenomena, the lonely mower is apt to have a negative thinking. The mower broods in garden but gains no way; consequently, he would rather destroy himself in the way he cuts the grass than survive without harvesting any fruit of love from Juliana. Actually, such a self-destruction is a self-punishment but not a revenge on his mistress since she is so cold that she cannot take sympathy for his death. Such a deep-rooted sexual frustration caused by his mistress's cruel rejection seriously injures him. Even when he is dead, he fails to efface the image of Juliana. So vivid and fresh is her image that he cannot drive it from his memory at all.

In "The Mower's Song," it is bad for the mower to show his love for his mistress without getting any recompense from her, and it is worst for him to pay much more affection than her when love is unequal. The mower loses his heart to Juliana, but the latter breaks the heart of the former. In the fifth stanza, the jilt, Juliana, despite the mower's fondness, shows her coldness which gradually drives the mower to commit suicide: "And thus ye meadows, which have been / Companions of my thoughts ore

green, / Shall now the heraldry become / With which I shall adorn my tomb” (25-28). The tragic climax is completed when the mower terminates his life, and all of his love for Juliana is buried with him simultaneously and eternally. In the self-destruction of the mower, we are informed that it is possible for him to cure his injury resulting from nature, whereas it is impossible for him to recover his sexual frustration resulting from his indifferent mistress. In “The Mower’s Song,” dealing with the theme of love, Marvell, on the one hand, inherits from the tradition of pastoral poetry where a lovesick man complains of his hard-hearted mistress. On the other hand, he substitutes mower for shepherd in his poem where the mower often plays a tragic role by way of committing suicide to take revenge on his cruel mistress when he ensures that her indifference recompenses him for his love. Meanwhile, by virtue of the action of destroying himself, the mower integrates into nature. Gordon Braden has an articulation: “Neoplatonic philosophy” paradoxically promises that the lover’s “frustrated self-absorption” is the beginning of a “spiritual ascent” (19). I would like to claim, Marvell in the poem proposes a philosophy of nature hinting at the capricious relationship between nature and mankind. At the same time, the poem implies “the dislocation of man from his universe by the impact of frustrated sexual experience” (Nevo 178). Nevertheless, the harmonious relationship between nature and mankind can be attained as long as he absorbs in nature after having experienced the frustrated sexual desire. Such a situation can be observed on two different levels: one is from a “naïve” perspective, displaying a facial meaning, the separation between the lovers; the other is from an experienced perspective, presenting a deep significance, the mower’s conversion from sexual desire to integration into nature, “a displacement of sexual desire,” in Judith Deborah Haber’s term (111).

Conclusion

In the seventeenth-century literature, the landscape garden is a description of natural scenery, whereas in Marvell’s five poems, the garden is an epitome of formal world as well as an enclosure of natural landscape. Marvell not merely depicts the social and grotesque garden which his contemporaries construct but also creates his own garden by imagination, a natural, solitary and peaceful one. His picture of the English landscape garden of the seventeenth century in his poetic realm is often supposed to be the description of internal mind as well as external nature since garden is a private sphere where an individual can undertake personal activities and express personal feelings. Presenting the garden, the poet reveals his philosophy of nature which contains three dimensions--the pastoral, the Biblical and the mythological, like a spectrum sheds a new light on the garden of literature. Under the frame of traditional pastoral, he suggests that the philosophy of nature tend to by no means a Dionysian libertinism but rather a Christian contemplation which can be observed in “The Garden”. Marvell’s garden and

three-dimensional philosophy of nature, to some degree, reveal his aspiration for repose. In “The Mower, Against Gardens,” by virtue of portraying the fashionable phenomena in seventeenth-century England that people took a fancy to exotic culture and inclined to the imported exotic plants, Marvell declares that a natural order rather than an artificial decoration in nature is treasure worthy of attention and admiration. The beauty of nature is able to overcome the mutability of time and death since the plants in nature are perennial and will revive. In regard to Marvell’s philosophy of nature, the relationship between nature and mankind is particularly emphasized. It is illustrated with “The Damon Mower,” “The Mower to the Glo-worms” and “The Mower’s Song” in ambivalent way, changeable as well as harmonious. In Marvell’s a series of mower poems, the relationship between nature and mankind is presented via the mower’s damage to nature and his sexual frustration from his cold mistress. Paradoxically, the harmony between nature and mankind is achieved when mankind fuses himself into nature by way of self-destruction, and such a philosophy of nature is illuminated in “The Garden” and in “The Mower’s Song” as well.

Works Cited

- Alexander, Catherine. “The Garden as Occasional Domestic Space.” *Signs* 27.3 (2002): 857-71.
- Anderson, Linda. “The Nature of Marvell’s Mower.” *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900* 31.1 (1991): 131-46.
- Appleton, Jay. *The Experience of Landscape*. London: John Wiley and Sons, 1975.
- Braden, Gordon. “Beyond Frustration: Petrarchan Laurels in the Seventeenth Century.” *Studies in English Literature: 1500-1900* 26.1 (1986): 5-23.
- Crane, Mary Thomas. “Marvell’s Amazing Garden.” *Environment and Embodiment in Early Modern England*. Ed. Mary Floyd-Wilson and Garrett A. Sullivan, Jr. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007. 35-54. Web. 24 Feb. 2012.
- Craze, Michael. *The Life and Lyrics of Andrew Marvell*. London: Macmillan, 1979.
- Deming, Robert H. *Ceremony and Art: Robert Herrick’s Poetry*. The Hague: Mouton, 1974.
- Drabble, Margaret. *A Writer’s British: Landscape in Literature*. New York: Thomas and Hudson, 1987.
- Elkins, James. “Writing Moods.” *Landscape Theory*. Ed. Rachael Ziady Delue and James Elkins. New York: Routledge, 2008. 69-87. Web. 24 Feb. 2012.
- Empson, William. “Marvell’s ‘Garden’.” *Marvell: Modern Judgements*. Ed. Michael Wilding. London: Aurora, 1970.
- Fitter, Chris. *Poetry, Space, Landscape: Toward a New Theory*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1995.

- Friedman, Donald M. "Knowledge and the World of Change: Marvell's 'The Garden.'" *Andrew Marvell*. Ed. Harold Bloom. New York: Chelsea, 1989.
- Haber, Judith Deborah. *Pastoral and the Poetics of Self-Contradiction: Theocritus to Marvell*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1994.
- Harris, Dianne. "Self and Landscape." *Landscape Theory*. Ed. Rachael Ziady Delue and James Elkins. New York: Routledge, 2008. 187-94. Web. 24 Feb. 2012.
- Jesson-Dibley, David, ed. *Robert Herrick: Selected Poems*. Manchester: Carcanet, 1989.
- Kermode, Frank. "The Argument of 'The Garden'." *Andrew Marvell: Poems*. Ed. Arthur Pollard. London: Macmillan, 1980.
- Marvell, Andrew. *Poems*. Ed. George deF Lord. New York: Knopf, 1993.
- Nevo, Ruth. "Marvell's 'Song of Innocence and Experience'." *John Donne and the Seventeenth-Century Metaphysical Poets*. Ed. Harold Bloom. New York: Chelsea, 1986.
- Pritchard, Allan. "Marvell's 'The Garden': A Restoration Poem?" *Studies in English Literature : 1500-1900* 23.3 (1983): 371-88.
- Spirn, Anne Whiston. "One with Nature: Landscape, Language, Empathy, and Imagination." *Landscape Theory*. Ed. Rachael Ziady Delue and James Elkins. New York: Routledge, 2008. 43-68. Web. 24 Feb. 2012.
- Stewart, Susan. "Garden Agon." *Representations* 62 (1998): 111-43.
- Stocker, Margarita. *Apocalyptic Marvell: The Second Coming in Seventeenth Century Poetry*. Sussex: Harvester, 1986.
- Strong, Roy. *The Renaissance Garden in England*. London: Thomas & Hudson, 1979.
- Summers, Joseph H. "Marvell's 'Nature'." *Marvell: Modern Judgements*. Ed. Michael Wilding. London: Aurora, 1970.
- Taylor, E. W. "Marvell's Garden of Mind." *Andrew Marvell: Poems*. Ed. Arthur Pollard. London: Macmillan, 1980.

