

Chapter Four The Masques

Lanyer's Involvement

Lanyer's startling beliefs -- democracy, gender equality, and the virtue of women -- are carefully articulated and re-articulated throughout the *Salve Deus*, making it clear that her work is most accurately read as political allegory rather than as pious religious narrative; it is an ideological *mythos* devised in tortuous layers of metaphor, emblem, context, and form. Lanyer re-examines and reorganizes the elements of scriptural history in the *Salve Deus* in order to produce an alternate reading of scriptural events. More significantly, as she does so, Lanyer incorporates a plethora of nonscriptural elements, the emblems of pagan ideals, which allow her to create a vision of a better world for which Renaissance England had scant context. It is through the intercession of these numerous powerful pagan goddesses that Lanyer finds entry into the masculine world of political thought and opinion.

Her use of pagan allegory as safe entry into the dangerous territory of ideological discourse was not original. Encouraged by monarchs who enjoyed seeing themselves clothed in the fabled attributes of legendary gods, the practice of figuring royalty as assorted classical *personae* was common in panegyric works of Renaissance poetry,

prose, and drama. Perhaps most influential on Lanyer was the use of classical mythology in the court masque.

Lanyer would certainly have been aware of Anna of Denmark's interest in the masque, and would also have been aware of the queen's resistance to James's dismissive, patriarchal attitudes. Barbara Lewalski claims that the Danish queen had a "desire to assert her own value and importance" as something more than the womb that gave birth to Prince Henry,¹ a desire which gave rise to oppositional attitudes and gestures, notably the queen's participation in a series of court masques, characterized by Lewalski as "subversive entertainments."² The masques pivoted upon reversals of physical verity and inversions of natural order. They presumed gender and ideological inversions as well. For a dozen years, James I did not seem to perceive what everyone else perceived, including French Ambassador Beaumont; namely, that through her masques, his wife was "having the laugh" on him.³ This implicit ridicule of the king was obvious enough to make Dudley Carleton uncomfortable, evinced by his tongue-in-cheek mention of the Queen's display of gender during *The Vision*, which suggests that exposure of her female "feet and legs" -- covered in male military buskins -- was just such an inversion of natural order.⁴ By 1605, the royal couple maintained separate households; the Queen's court ("the feminine common welthe," suggests Lewalski) was, by the time

Lanyer wrote *Salve Deus*, a "separate and competing locus of interest and power."⁵

Several of Lanyer's other dedicatees participated in the Queen's masques, including Margaret Clifford, Countess of Cumberland and mistress of Cooke-ham. Reference in the *Salve Deus* to "beauteous Dorsets former sports" in which Lanyer "did alwaies beare a part"⁶ indicates that Lanyer may have, at least during one season in her adult life, participated on some level in or been present for, the rehearsal of a masque of some kind.⁷ Her use of the word "sports" seems to indicate as well that Lanyer was aware of the subversive nature of the royal masques. The queen's public and dramatic resistance to patriarchal oppression may have encouraged Lanyer's own oppositional attitudes and gestures; it may have led her to believe that her ideology would have been embraced by royal and aristocratic patronesses.

Lanyer's father, Baptiste Bassano, would have been a participant in most, if not all, court entertainments during his tenure as a musician in Elizabeth's court. It is probable that through her father, Lanyer had been exposed to numerous masques and masque-like entertainments throughout her childhood. The surreal theatrics of her work, most apparent in "The Authors Dream to the Ladie Marie," strongly suggest their influence. It may be supposed, for example, that Lanyer was present at Elizabeth's court for the arrival

of the young Mary Sidney in the early summer of 1575, and that she took part, in some measure, in the "nineteen days of merrymaking, which included "accidental" encounters with allegorical personages on bridges or in holly bushes . . .":

When Mary entered the park with the Queen, she would have seen that "one of the ten Sibills . . . cumly clad in a pall of white sylk, pronounced a proper peozi in English ryme and meter" A concert welcomed them to the inner gate and to a twenty-foot-wide bridge with seven pillars. At each of the pillars, a mythological figure welcomed the Queen: Sylvanus, Pomona, Ceres, Bacchus, Neptune, Mars, and Phoebus⁸

It is easy to imagine the six-year old Lanyer's delight, watching as her father, her uncles, and the other musicians tuned their instruments near the entrance to Kennleworth Park, and to imagine her anticipation as she waited with other court children for Queen Elizabeth and her young favorite to arrive. To six-year old Lanyer, the teenage Mary Sidney, arriving in splendor with Her Majesty's entourage, would have been as magical a figure as any of the costumed nymphs or satyrs. From young Lanyer's perspective, Mary Sidney would have been just as much a part of the entertainment. Lanyer's twenty-four years at court would have afforded her ample exposure to masque and masque-like court entertainments like Sidney's celebrated return from Ireland. It is conceivable that whether she participated in the revels or the preparations thereof or only watched from a distance, the eidetic memory of "cumly clad" nymphs and

goddesses appearing and disappearing in the morning mist at Elizabeth's Kennleworth park supplied her with the intense visual images of pagan deity that permeate *Salve Deus Rex Judaeorum* and the feminine paeans which surround it.

Elements

A brief examination of two masque elements is necessary in order to comprehend the significance of Lanier's exposure to the court masque: the first of these is the masque *persona*, which, as Stephen Orgel explains in *The Illusion of Power: Political Theatre in the English Renaissance*, functions as a disguise under which court personages retain their personalities and positions at the same time a costume implies the inner "reality" of that personage's character.⁹ Anna-in-costume during Daniel's *The Vision of the Twelve Goddesses* remains England's sovereign queen with all the implications thereof at the same time she acquires the natural Hellenic virtues of Wisdom and Defense attributed to the mythological Pallas Athena. In her real life personage, she is James I's queen and obedient wife, subservient body to her husband's majestic head. In her disguise *persona*, she is something dangerously more. As Lewalski suggests, the queen's *persona*, "Pallas, the virgin warrior, [carried] associations of female power and militant internationalism that were anathema to James."¹⁰

An understanding of the second element, what Jerzy Limon calls the "sacred space" of the masque, illustrates how the Queen could safely "have the laugh on the king." During the performance of a masque, the banqueting house was transformed into a magical other world, replete with caves, fountains,

and grottos. It became a "sacred space" of living ritual in an ongoing court performance in which monarch and courtier alike became, while retaining their human positions and functional roles, superhuman beings.¹¹ Physically, this "sacred space" was the area in the banquet hall between the actors and the spectators, in front of the stage from the audience's perspective, and in front of the audience (the king) from the masquers' perspective. The performance itself was a synthesis of poetry, narrative, drama, visual art, music, and dance -- which incorporated illusion, occasion, personage, and *personae* in its conception, invited audience participation in its execution, and served as instructional ritual and ceremony.

Stephen Orgel, in *The Jonsonian Masque*, assumes that the world created by the court masque's multi-media fusion of reality and illusion was "a world of self-evident truths, such as that whiteness is better than blackness or good better than evil," and suggests that the function of the masque was to ritualize the Renaissance doctrine that the king in his divine wisdom generates a Golden Age of peace and harmony.¹² In its "sacred space," masquers, disguised aristocracy, arranged themselves artistically among fantastic scenery often created by Inigo Jones, poised between an imaginary world filled with emblems from a pagan past meant to suggest proper behavior, specifically, proper monarchal

behavior, in the Christian present, and the real world of the court. As artistic, religious, and political ideology coalesce in the action of the masque, in Limon's "sacred space" of living ritual wherein king and courtier, for a brief, ephemeral time, exchange position, sovereign, in the presence of supernatural deity, becomes subject; queen and courtier, in the guise of supernatural deity, become sovereign. It is this allegorical role reversal amidst the real and unreal scenery in the banquet hall that allows ideological debate and permits a poet like Daniel, in *The Vision of the Twelve Goddesses*,¹³ to ignore his king and to obliquely instruct his queen in *her* duties of state:

Next war-like Pallas in her helmet drest,
with lance of winning, target of defence,
In whom both wit and courage are expressed,
To get with glory, hold with providence.¹⁴

Daniel's instructions to his queen are subtle, anticipatory of suggested merit, and in that manner, flattering. But masque instruction was not always understated. In the beginning of *The Vision*, Daniel diverts James' power with the heavenly messenger *Iris*, who addresses Queen Anna as "all-directing Pallas, the glorious Patroness of this mighty Monarchie,"¹⁵ and so recognizes what modern scholars such as Lewalski distinguish as "the oppositional other court." Like Lanyer's displacement of male power in the *Salve Deus*, Daniel's displacement of the king in the "sacred space" of masque is less than subtle.

Lindley calls masques, "offerings to the monarch, the privileged spectator," but conditions this by explaining that the masque exists between postures "of celebration and offering," and suggests that the panegyric intent of the court masque did not preclude participants therein from using "the opportunity of the masque to express a particular view of events before their sovereigns."¹⁶

Lanyer, acquainted to some degree with court masques, verbally creates in her "little booke" an equivalent "sacred space," a threshold, an area between reality and imagination that allows her to broach taboo subjects in the presence of her betters, that allows her to discuss with the reigning queen and her ladies-in-waiting the desirability of their political, economic, and social downfalls. While Anna and her favorites may have privately complained about the injustices of England's patriarchal system, their ranks, estates, and positions near the queen were dependent upon it. They would not have benefited from democracy.

Appropriating the equivocal character of the masque, Lanyer assigns her dedicatees *personae*, attributing to them in anticipation of suggested merit the qualities and responsibilities of Hellenic goddesses. She creates a "sacred space" in the netherworld of sleep and dream, a threshold, through which she leads her readers to her vision of democracy, equality, and female virtue.¹⁷ Her "little

booke" becomes the banquet hall, to which she has invited ladies of Anna's court. Her sets, created in image and ancient hieroglyph, approximate masque sets made of pulleys and gears and *papier mâché*. She replaces court players like her father with divine musicians, and the Whitehall choir with saints, who "Hallalu-iah sing continually," and, thus, her guests "in sleep the heavenli'st musicke hard."¹⁸

In her first dedication, Lanyer indicates the scope of her impressive Hellenic cast: Juno, Pallas, Venus, Muses, the Sylvan gods, Satyres, Cynthia, nymphs, Phoebe, Apollo, and Jove -- along with the Biblical and court personages, historical and contemporary, who will also be participating: Eve, Christ and his scriptural attendants, Elizabeth I, Anna and her attendants, and the princess Elizabeth. Throughout the dedications, Lanyer expands her cast, adding deity and aspect of deity, dividing and integrating the *personae* in her company, creating as she does so an intricate, graceful, and significant retriulation of meaning. A close look at the second dedication, that "To the Lady Elizabeths Grace," reveals one such subtle network of meaning:

Most gracious Ladie, faire Elizabeth,
Whose Name and Virtues puts us still in mind,
Of her, of whom we are depriv'd by death;
The *Phoenix* of her age, whose worth did bind
All worthy minds so long as they have breath,
In linkes of Admiration, love and zeale,
To that deare Mother of our Common-weale.¹⁹

In the first stanza, juxtaposition and image suggest that the princess Elizabeth arises from the ashes of

Elizabeth I, the mother of England. The princess metaphorically becomes the risen queen, in some sense a daughter of the late queen who is "that deare Mother of our Common-weale." The princess is at the same time, along with "all worthy minds," recognized as England's offspring, a daughter "linked" by virtue of the mirror conceit introduced in the previous dedication to her mother to the image and pattern of female perfection Lanyer has created in her poem. "Looke in this Mirrour of a worthy Mind,"²⁰ instructs Lanyer, inviting Queen Anna to find in her "little booke" the patterned repetition of Eve, Elizabeth, Diana, Athena, Judith, and all the other female heroes Lanyer extols -- images mirrored in mirrors, reflected in Lanyer's "Glasse," which is the *Salve Deus*. In this Manneristic speculum, Princess Elizabeth simultaneously views and becomes part of a grand succession of images, paradigms of womanly virtue reflected one into another by Lanyer's poetic vision. In Lanyer's glass, these reflections simultaneously fuse and refract -- they remain separate at the same time they conflate. Each female hero appearing in the glass brings distinct qualities to Lanyer's vision at the same time each mirrors what is already there. This verbal *trompe l'œil* becomes part of the poet's vast historical model of female virtue.

Refraction makes juxtaposition in Lanyer's mirror mutable, changing from phrase to phrase, line to line, and stanza to stanza. Eve's position among Hellenistic immortals in the first dedication is not replaced by her position near Christ in "Salve Deus." Both images remain intact in Lanyer's vision, endlessly repeated in and refracted by the poet's glass. Lanyer creates a similar effect with her vocabulary selection, choosing words with equivocal meanings and placing those words pivotally so that all meanings must be considered by her readers. The word "next" in the second stanza of "To the Lady Elizabeths Grace," for example, may be read to mean that after the immortalized Elizabeth I is invited to Lanyer's feast, her namesake is invited:

Even you faire Princesse next our famous Queene,
I doe invite unto this wholesome feast,
Whose goodly wisdom, though your yeares be greene,
By such good workes may daily be increast,
Though your faire eyes farre better Bookes have seene;
Yet being the first fruits of a womans wit,
Vouchsafe your favour in accepting it.²¹

Read another way the word "next" -- because the dedication to the princess Elizabeth directly follows the dedication to Queen Anna -- may be read to mean that after the living queen is invited, Princess Elizabeth is invited. The ambiguous identity of "Our famous Queene" suggests a metaphoric fusion of queens, and of mothers, and of daughters. Which famous queen, the late Queen Elizabeth I, "*Phoenix* of her age," or Queen Anna, "Renowned Empresse, and great Britaines Queene,"²² does Princess Elizabeth follow?

As in the court masque, wherein each heiroglyph is to be read carefully and the meaning of each part of the heiroglyph is to be extracted, so are Lanyer's heiroglyphs to be examined in their retriculation of signification. As a daughter of England, Princess Elizabeth is a daughter of Queen Elizabeth I, mother of England. As the namesake risen from the ashes of *Phoenix* Elizabeth I, Princess Elizabeth is also Elizabeth I. In this verbal fusion, she becomes a heiroglyphic conflation, both mother and daughter to herself. In like manner, Lanyer's book, as "first fruits of a woman's [Lanyer's] wit," may be seen as her own child, a female child, the re-examined Eve, now "attired, / In all her richest ornaments of Honour."²³ Repeated use of the mirror metaphor, by which Lanyer insistently entreats her readers to find worthy images of themselves and patterns of female excellence in herself, in her work, and in each other, coupled with weighted references to mothers and daughters,²⁴ strongly suggests that Lanyer's juxtaposition of these heiroglyphs of female succession was not accidental.

Daniel explains the purpose of this extrapolation of heiroglyph, characteristic of the court masque, in the letter to the Countess of Bedford in his printed version of *The Vision*:

And therefore we took their aptest representations that lay best and easiest for us. And first presented the hieroglyphic of empire and dominion, as the ground and matter whereon this glory of state is built. Then

those blessings and beauties that preserve and adorn it: as armed policy, love, religion, chastity, wealth, happiness, concord, justice, flourishing seasons, plenty: and lastly power by sea, as to imbound and circle this greatness of dominion by land.²⁵

The heiroglyph Daniel describes was composed of courtiers, their costumes, and their positions in the dining hall, and it served to visually convey, instantaneously through an image, the complex idea of empire and dominion illustrated above -- in its entirety and in its composition.

Costumes and props comprised two thirds of that composition (position being the remaining third). Because some of his audience misinterpreted *The Vision* heiroglyphs, Daniel continues to carefully explain their components to the Countess of Bedford:

And to this purpose were these Goddesses thus presented in their proper and several attires, bringing in their hands the particular figures of their power which they gave to the Temple of Peace, erected upon four pillars, representing the four Virtues that supported a globe of the earth.²⁶

Each part of the heiroglyph is important. Just as Daniel costumes his performers and figures their props in *The Vision*,

First Juno, in a sky-colour mantle embroidered with gold and figured with peacocks' feathers, wearing a crown of gold on her head, presents a sceptre . . . ,²⁷

so Lanyer carefully costumes her performers in the lyrical "To all vertuous Ladies in generall": "Put on your wedding garments every one"; "Let all your roabes be purple scarlet white"; "Come deckt with Lillies"; "Adorne your temples with faire Daphnes crowne / The never changing Laurel, alwaies

greene."²⁸ And so she figures their props: "Lamps with oyle of burning zeale"; "palmes of vict'ry"; "Sweet odours, mirrhe, gum, aloes, frankincense"; "simple Doves, and subtill serpents";²⁹ and "this little Booke,"³⁰ Lanyer's "mirroure" of female heroism. As Juno is a heiroglyph of celestial power, majesty, and wisdom in *The Vision*, so is the bride a heiroglyph for the virtuous church; the "purple, scarlet, white" robes, a heiroglyph for the suffering, death, and resurrection of Christ; "Daphnes crowne," a heiroglyph for victorious chastity; and Lanyer's "little Booke" a heiroglyph for her startling ideas.

Like Daniel's props, Lanyer's props are also emblematic: "Lamps with oyle of burning zeale," a heiroglyph for the faith of "all vertuous Ladies" waiting to marry Christ; the "palms of vict'ry," a heiroglyph for the conquest of sin and death at the same time it is heiroglyphic of women's victory over the patriarchy in their anointment as priestesses; "Sweet odours, mirrhe, gum, aloes, frankincense," a heiroglyph colapsing the gifts of the Magi into the gifts "all vertuous Ladies" bring to Christ -- their denial of worldliness; "simple Doves, and subtill serpents," a heiroglyph for justice and policy;³¹ and, finally, Lanyer's book -- "this little Booke," the heiroglyph for Lanyer's usurpation of the male act of writing, which contains her ideological confrontation with patriarchal hegemony.

Lanyer's most striking use of masque metaphor is perhaps most apparent in "The Authors Dreame to the Ladie Marie," a dream within a dream. Enthralled, Lanyer wanders "through th'Edalyan Groves," searching for Mary Sidney, and finds her set in Honors chaire" surrounded by the nine muses, who are playing celestial music on "harps and vialls."³² The sweet chords, "Whose harmony had all [Lanyer's] senses drown'd" are interrupted by a clarion call. One of the musicians, "Whose Beauty shin'd like Titons clearest raies,"³³ stood, and

She blew a brasen Trumpet, which did sound
Through al the world that worthy Ladies praise,
And by Eternal Fame I saw her [Mary Sidney] crown'd.³⁴

As *Somnus* in Daniel's *The Vision* arises from out of his cave to invite spectators into his netherworld of sleep, where, in dream they will be visited by representations of Hellenic deity ("figures of the light"),³⁵ apparitions of perfection and benevolence descending from atop Mount Olympus, so the god Morpheus comes to Lanyer, fearing the trumpet blast had awakened her, "studying" whether [she] were awake or no." The god of dreams takes her by the hand and wills her "not from Slumbers bowre to go / Till [she] the summe of all did understand"³⁶ and leads her into an inner dream. Just as Daniel's *Somnus* leads court and courtier out of Pluto's cave of indistinct forms into the clarity of truth, so *Morpheus* will lead Lanyer and her invited guests

from the deceptive temporal world into the unequivocal world of pure and ideal truth.

Daniel explains how the device of *Somnus* functions. As the god of sleep waves his magic wand, he opens a threshold, a crossing place between waking and sleeping, between reality and dream, which allows the spectator to enter into the world of magic at the same time it allows living allegory, such as the queen as Pallas, to enter into the real world of the court. After waking, Daniel explains, *Somnus*

did . . . here use his white wand as to infuse significant visions to entertain the spectators and so made them seem to see there a temple with a Sibylla therein attending upon the sacrifices; which done, Iris (the messenger of Juno) descends from the top of a mountain raised at the lower end of the hall, and marching up to the Temple of Peace, gives notice to the Sibylla of the coming of the Goddesses and withal delivers her a prospective wherein she might behold the figures of their deities and thereby describe them.³⁷

Daniel, through the personification of *Sleep*, creates for himself license to present the supernatural to his audience:

these apparitions and shows are but as imaginations and dreams that portend our affections, and dreams are never in all points agreeing right with waking actions.³⁸

He carefully explains in his authentic post-performance version of the script that anything can happen in dream. Using illusionistic scenery, first introduced into England during James's reign and thereafter characteristic of the court masque, Daniel employed that license to allow visual reversions of the laws of empirical reality. During the performance of a masque,

stars can sing and dance; islands can float like sailboats; huge rocks can open and close, disclosing beautiful palaces, where the bottom of the ocean will uncover mysterious worlds and people will undergo miraculous transformations and metamorphoses, as in Ovid or Kafka...where mythological gods descend to earth...and where it is possible to stop time.³⁹

While Daniel and his successors relied upon mechanisms of intricate pulleys and gears to transcend the principles of physics, Lanyer relies upon a mechanism of intricate juxtaposition of hieroglyph and translocation of context to create her illusionistic scene. As Daniel uses *Somnus* and his wand, Lanyer uses Morpheus' touch to "infuse significant visions to entertain [her] spectators" and so make them seem to see "th'Edalyan Groves," the Graces, and the *Musae*.

In *The Vision*, *Iris* precedes Daniel's procession of graces and goddesses, descending from a *papier mâché* mountain into the dreamlike banquet hall as heavenly messenger, vanguard of a supernatural Hellenic invasion.⁴⁰ Lanyer's herald, Bellona, "Goddess of Warre and Wisdome," appears as a clear sky darkens, "And duskie clouds, with boyst'rous winds," foretell of "violent storms."⁴¹ Through this disordered atmospheric threshold -- the crossroad of the "troubled sky" -- comes "bright Bellona," "repleat with Majestie" in Juno's chariot, "drawn by foure fierie Dragons, which did bend / Their course where this most noble Lady [Mary Sidney] sate."⁴² Bellona parks her chariot and descends,

With speare, and shield, and currat on her breast,

and on her head a helmet wondrous bright,
With myrtle bayes, and olive brances drest.⁴³

Wearing heiroglyphs of victory, love, and peace,⁴⁴ the ancient goddess of war enters Lanyer's "sacred space," attended by the Graces and honored by an assemblage of dignitaries, including Queen Elizabeth in the persona of Dictina, "with all her Damsels round about her"; Aurora; Phoebe; Ladie Maie, bringing flowers for all; Art; Nature; Queen Anna in the persona of Minerva; and the ladies of Anna's court, including Mary Sidney, magically transformed into a nymph. As dawn breaks, *Aurora* eclipses *Phoebe*, and the gathered luminaries take Lanyer to the spring of *Pergusa* (Pegasus), where the winged steed encourages them to sing Sidney's newly written psalms. Sidney leads the guests in heavenly songs, while "saints like Swans about [the] silver brook" (which flows from his secret Pierian spring of divine inspiration) "Hallalu-iah sing continually."⁴⁵

In a significant inversion of station, after the singing of Sidney's psalms, "Bellona and her virgins doe attend" the pious writer, who now directs "all by her immortal light."⁴⁶ Mary Sidney, crowned among the pagans at the beginning of this dedication, is apotheosized again at its end, immortalized in her written word, which

. . . fills the eies, the hearts, the tongues, the eares
Of after-comming ages, which shall reade
Her love, her zeale, her faith, and pietie;
The faire impression of whose worthy deed,

Seales her pure soule unto the Dietie.⁴⁷

Goddess becomes attendant; attendant becomes goddess. The Countess of Pembroke, "Crowned with her Makers glory and his love,"⁴⁸ and her soul sealed "unto the Dietie," is united with the Christian God. In the "sacred space" of the *Salve Deus*, Sidney remains Lanyer's mortal would-be patron at the same time she becomes, in a conflation of the text of her psalms and her being, a timeless and holy text herself. "After-comming ages" reading her versions of the psalms will also read in the text of Mary Sidney's soul "her love, her zeale, her faith, and pietie." Fused, "sealed" in "the Dietie," her soul "both in Heav'n and Earth . . . remains."⁴⁹

Appropriating the communicative faculty of the Paraclete, Sidney "fils the eies, the hearts, the tongues, the eares" of future generations with the knowledge of God⁵⁰ -- and at the same time with a knowledge of her own virtues.

Finally, Lanyer, wakened by Morpheus, hears another clarion calling for the return of Juno's chariot and signalling the end of her dream. However, having set it all down in her "little booke," her "sacred space," Lanyer does not despair of her vision:

I know I shall enjoy the selfe same sight,
Thou hast no powre my waking sprites to barre.
For to this Lady now I will repaire,
Presenting her the fruits of idle houres.⁵¹

Sidney, "Whose beauteous soule hath gain'd a double life, / Both here on earth, and in the heav'ns above," gains a third

life as well in Lanyer's book. In its "sacred space," she is honored above the earthly and the immortalized Elizabeth I; is crowned by two civilizations, one ancient, one eternal; writes better than her brother; has "her praises [written] in th'eternall booke / Of endlesse honour," by saints; and is invited to Lanyer's feast. At the same time, Lanyer's dream-gained knowledge of Sidney's other-worldly, spiritual self cannot be erased by Morpheus' departure. Lanyer, now awake, can physically visit the mortal Sidney, who remains, by virtue of Lanyer's memory and abilities as a writer, an infusion like the Holy Spirit, and the poet can physically hand her patron the written record of her vision. Employing a verbal recreation of images set free in that "sacred space," as Lanyer subverts physical reality, she subverts several Renaissance realities. Sidney remains the monarch of the Hippocrene -- "For [Lanyer's] cleare reason sees her by that streame, / Where her rare virtues daily are increast"⁵² at the same time the Countess reigns at Pembroke.

Sidney, like Lanyer, has violated the patriarchal restriction against "A Womans writing of divinest things,"⁵³ but she has done so under the pretext of finishing her brother's work. In "The Authors Dreame," Lanyer removes that pretext, not only clearly attributing authorship of the psalms to "The Countesse Dowager of Penbrooke,"⁵⁴ but also

clearly stating that her work, and her character, are superior to her brother's work and character:

And farre before [Philip] is to be esteemd
For virtue, wisdom, learning, dignity.⁵⁵

With the metaphoric coronations of Sidney, Lanyer positions her above past and presently reigning monarchs. It is not James I or even Queen Anna whom the swan-like saints follow, nor do the reigning monarchs direct "all by [their] immortal light."⁵⁶

On her own behalf, Lanyer, in the "sacred space" of her secret spring, presents an argument for democracy and gender equality. At the fountain of inspiration opened by Pegasus, Lanyer's female assemblage by unanimous vote decides that Art and Nature

. . . . should for ever dwell,
In perfit unity by this matchlesse Spring:
Since 'twas impossible either should excel
Or her faire fellow in subjection bring.

But here in equall sov'raintie to live,
Equall in state, equall in dignitie,⁵⁷

Appropriating the character of the masque and incorporating verbally its visual elements, Lanyer creates for herself and for her readers the literary equivalent of the Renaissance banquet hall. Using emblems of pagan ideals, she creates a world of inversion, a vision in which women are asked to examine each other through a feminine, rather than a masculine lens, the "glasse," which is Lanyer's work, and to imagine a world in which they exercise the power of pagan

goddesses and experience the love, not the subjection, of a
Christian God.

Notes

- ¹ Lewalski *Writing Women* 18. Ben Jonson had so characterized Queen Anne in *A Particular Entertainment of the Queen and Prince their Highness to Althorpe, at the Right Honourable the Lord Spencers, on Saterdag being the 25, of June 1603* (London, 1604).
- ² Lewalski *Writing Women* 26-38. The four masques of which Lewalski speaks, *Vision of Twelve Goddesses, Masque of Blackness, Masque of Beauty, and Masque of Queenes*, shift the center of power from King James I to Queen Anne.
- ³ Chambers, *Elizabethan Stage, I*, 325.
- ⁴ Maurice Lee, Jr., ed. *Dudley Carleton to John Chamberlain, 1603-1624: Jacobean Letters*. (New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1972) 55.
- ⁵ Lewalski *Writing Women* 26
- ⁶ "The Description of Cooke-ham" 119-121.
- ⁷ "The details and exact date of the visit are obscure, but it occurred sometime during the first decade of the seventeenth century, and Lanyer credits the visits and the countess with inspiring her to write religious verse" (Woods *DLB* Vol. 121).
- ⁸ Hannay, Margaret P. *Philip's Phoenix: Mary Sidney, Countess of Pembroke*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990) 34.
- ⁹ Stephen Orgel. *The Jonsonian Masque*. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1965) 123.
- ¹⁰ Lewalski *Writing Women* 30.
- ¹¹ Jersey Limon. *The Masque of Stewart Culture*. (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1990) 94-95.
- ¹² Orgel 123.
- ¹³ *The Vision* was published in pirated version in 1604 and shortly thereafter Daniel published his corrected, official version. Both would have been accessible to Lanyer before she wrote *Salve Deus*.
- ¹⁴ David Lindley. *Court Masques: Jacobean and Caroline Entertainments, 1604-1640*. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995) 2-3.
- ¹⁵ Colleagues and former pupils of Allarcyce Nicoll. *A Book of Masques*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967) 36.
- ¹⁶ Lindley 2-3.
- ¹⁷ Lanyer uses the dream vision as vehicle, much as medieval authors did.
- ¹⁸ "The Authors Dreame to the Ladie Marie the Countesse Dowager of Pembroke" 127-9.
- ¹⁹ "To the Lady Elizabeths Grace" 1-7.
- ²⁰ "To the Queenes most Excellent Majestie" 37.
- ²¹ "To the Lady Elizabeths Grace" 8-14.
- ²² "To the Queenes most Excellent Majestie" 1.
- ²³ "To the Queenes most Excellent Majestie" 79-81.
- ²⁴ See "To the Queenes most Excellent Majestie," "To the Ladie Katherine Countesse of Suffolke," "To the Ladie Susan, Countesse Dowager of Kent, and Daughter to the Duchesse of Suffolke," and "The Authors Dreame to the Ladie Marie the Countesse Dowager of Pembroke."

²⁵ *THE VISION OF THE TWELVE GODDESSES: presented in a Masque, the eighth of January, at Hampton Court: by the Queen's most excellent Majesty, and her Ladies in Evans.*

²⁶ *THE VISION OF THE TWELVE GODDESSES.*

²⁷ *THE VISION OF THE TWELVE GODDESSES.*

²⁸ "To all vertuous Ladies in generall" 8, 15, 17, 22-3.

²⁹ "To all vertuous Ladies in generall" 13, 37, 41, 50.

³⁰ "To all vertuous Ladies in generall" 72.

³¹ 1609 Tuvill Vade-mecum (1629) "Here is Policie without Iustice, a Serpent without a Doue" 127

³² "The Authors Dreame to the Ladie *Marie*" 10.

³³ "The Authors Dreame to the Ladie *Marie*" 13.

³⁴ "The Authors Dreame to the Ladie *Marie*" 16.

³⁵ *THE VISION OF THE TWELVE GODDESSES.*

³⁶ "The Authors Dream" 17-9.

³⁷ *THE VISION OF THE TWELVE GODDESSES.*

³⁸ *THE VISION OF THE TWELVE GODDESSES.*

³⁹ Limon 43.

⁴⁰ "...Iris descends from the top of a Mountain raised at the lower end of the Hall, and marching up to the Temple of Peace...."

"...the three Graces in silver robes with white torches, appeared on the top of the Mountain, descending hand in hand before the Goddesses; who likewise followed three and three, as in a number dedicated unto sanctity and an incorpoeral nature, whereas the dual, *hieroglyphicè pro immundis acciptur*. And between every rank of Goddesses, marched three Torch-bearer in the like several colours, their heads and robes all decked with stars; and in their descending, the cornets sitting in the concaves of the Mountain, and see but to their breasts, in the habit of Satyrs."

⁴¹ "The Authors Dream" 24.

⁴² "The Authors Dream" 25-30.

⁴³ "The Authors Dream" 33-5.

⁴⁴ Venus is often depicted adorned with myrtle, the emblem of love. Athena is often depicted with the olive branch, her symbol as goddess of peace.

⁴⁵ "The Authors Dream" 61-128.

⁴⁶ "The Authors Dream" 157.

⁴⁷ "The Authors Dream" 160-4.

⁴⁸ "The Authors Dream" 166.

⁴⁹ "The Authors Dream" 165.

⁵⁰ See Acts 2:3.

⁵¹ "The Authors Dream" 191-3.

⁵² "The Authors Dream" 207-8.

⁵³ "To the Queenes most Excellent Majestie" 4.

⁵⁴ It is interesting that when speaking of Sidney's writing of the psalms, Lanyer uses calls her "Penbrooke," a spelling she does not use in the poem's title.

⁵⁵ "The Authors Dream" 151-2.

⁵⁶ "The Authors Dreame to the Ladie *Marie*" 157.

⁵⁷ "The Authors Dream" 89-94.