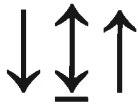


Texts and Contexts

Delight in Disorder

A sweet disorder in the dress
Kindles in clothes a wantonness:
A lawn about the shoulders thrown
Into a fine distraction:
An erring lace, which here and there
Enthrals the crimson stomacher:
A cuff neglectful, and thereby
Ribbands to flow confusedly:
A winning wave, deserving note,
In the tempestuous petticoat:
A careless shoe-string, in whose tie
I see a wild civility:
Do more bewitch me than when art
Is too precise in every part.

Text: Formalist/ New Critical Approaches



Contexts:

Biography

Robert Herrick was born in Cheapside, London, in **1591**, the seventh child of Nicholas Herrick, a prosperous goldsmith. In November 1592, two days after making a will, Nicholas killed himself by jumping from the fourth-floor window of his house. The Queen's Almoner had to be paid a £220 fee for not to confiscate the Herrick estate for the crown as was usually the case with suicides. There is no record of Herrick attending school, although it is possible he attended Westminster School. In 1607 he became apprenticed to his uncle Sir William Herrick as a goldsmith. Herrick entered **St. John's College, Cambridge in 1613**, graduated a Bachelor of Arts in 1617, and Master of Arts in 1620. He became the eldest of the "**Sons of Ben**", **Cavalier poets who idolized Ben Jonson**, mixing in literary circles in London. On April 24, **1623 Herrick was ordained** an Episcopal minister and acted as chaplain to **Buckingham** on the expedition to the Île de Ré. In 1629 he was appointed by **Charles I** to the living of Dean Prior in the diocese of Exeter, a post he reluctantly accepted. There, in Devon, he lived in the seclusion of country life, and wrote some of his best work, never completely ceasing, however, to long for the pleasures of London. In 1647, under the Commonwealth, he was expelled from the priory by the **Protectorate** government for refusing the Solemn League and Covenant, and returned to London. In 1648 Herrick published his major collection, *Hesperides*, consisting of 1200 poems. Included separately in *Hesperides* was the subsection *Noble Numbers*, for the poems with sacred subjects. With the **Restoration of Charles II** in 1660 he was returned to Devon where he died and was buried a bachelor in **1674** at the age of eighty-three.

Pyschoanalytical/ Biog readings:

entered **St. John's College, Cambridge** ---- **Cambridge Platonists** --- attitudes to gender;
buried a bachelor (care must be taken with biographical material!)

Historical/ Social Context:

c.1591-1674 Charles I----Civil War----Protectorate----- Restoration

(Approaches to historical material: **(NEW) HISTORICIST, MARXIST, FEMINIST ETC.)**

Historical context: one example:

'Only freemen be considered as subjects and citizens of the commonwealth, not bondmen who can bear no rule nor jurisdiction over freemen, as they are the goods and possessions of others. And in this consideration we also reject women, as those whom nature has made to keep home and to nourish their family ... (Sir Thomas Smith *De Republica Anglorum* (1583))

Literary Context:

Movement/ Group

"Sons of Ben" (Also Tribe of Ben), Cavalier poets who idolized Ben Jonson

Gerald Hammond	<i>Lovelace Selected Poems</i> (Carcanet 1987)
W.R Keast	<i>Seventeenth Century English Poetry</i> (OUP 1962)
Anthony Low	<i>Love's Architecture</i> (New York UP 1978)
-----	<i>The Reinvention of Love</i> (CUP 1993)
Hugh Maclean	<i>Ben Jonson and his Cavalier Poets</i> (Norton 1974)
Louis L. Mertz	<i>The Wit of Love</i> (Notre Dame 1969)
F.W Moorman	<i>Poetical Works of Herrick</i> (OUP 1921)
John Press	<i>Robert Herrick</i> (Longman 1971)
Robin Sawebay	<i>The Classical Legacy in Renaissance Poetry</i> (Longman

Genre/ Work

Sonnet, lyric (Courtly Love tradition)

Hesperides; Herrick's other work: Upon Julia's Clothes

WHENAS in silks my Julia goes,
Then, then, methinks, how sweetly flows
The liquefaction of her clothes!
Next, when I cast mine eyes and see
That brave vibration each way free,
—O how that glittering taketh me!

Compare contrast with Ben Jonson and group works

Contemporaneous poems by women?

Different readings of this material then and now (see Reader Response as possible frame and critical biblio. above)