“Passing” Time in the Garden.

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The garden serves as a locus of display, performance, and leisure in the Early Modern Period. Literary gardens abound, from Eden and Arcadia to the metaphorical gardens where ideal encounters among real and imagined characters take place. Additionally, literature gives us many ways in which gardens emphasize community, or a lack thereof, and help to disrupt lines between narrative and lyric modes. The display of art works, the creation of follies, topiary, and symbolic plantings provided both literary and artistic metaphors as well as opportunities for heraldic imagery to reinforce family and political relationships. Through performances, conduct, and scripted encounters, gardens were critical places of encounter where users needed to understand the subtle interplay of metaphor and space. The fundamentally changeable nature of landscape as well as changing tastes and ideas have left us little of Early Modern gardens to study except for garden design, drawings, and written descriptions. The imagining of metaphorical gardens and landscapes in drama, poetry, and literature...

Questions for participants to consider: How does the changeable nature of the garden reinforce a sense of futility? How does it promote the notion of seizing the moment? How do the mythological associations so common in literary gardens affect the experience of physical gardens? How does performance within the garden change the meanings (metaphorical, allegorical, religious) of its design, flowers, or plants, and how does the garden itself participate in those performances? How do social encounters within the garden affect men vs. women? How do gardens emphasize gender?
The Description of Cooke-ham

Farewell (sweet Cooke-ham) where I first obtain'd
Grace from that Grace where perfitt Grace remain'd;
And where the Muses gave their full consent,
I should have powre the virtuous to content:
Where princely Palace wou'd me to indite,
The sacred Storie of the Soules delight:
Farewell (sweet Place) where Virtue then did rest,
And all delights did harbour in her breast:
Never shall my sad eyes againe behold
Those pleasures which my thoughts did then unfold:
Yet you (great Lady) Mistis of that Place,
From whose desires did spring this worke of Grace;
Vouchsafe to thinke upon those pleasures past,
As fleeting worldly Joyes that could not last:
Or, as dimme shadowes of celestiall pleasures,
Which are desir'd above all earthly treasures.

Salve Deus Rex Judaeorum

Oh how (me thought) against you thought came,
Each part did seeme some new delight to frame!
The House recei'd all ornaments to grace it,
And would invocate no foulenesse to deface it.
The Walkes put on their summer Livrenes,
And all things else did hold like similars:
The Trees with leaves, with flowers clad,
Embrac'd each other, seeming to be glad.
Turning themselves to beauteous Canopies,
To shade the bright Sunne from your brigher eyes:
The crissall Streams with silver spangles grace'd,
While by the glorious Sunne they were embrac'd:
The little Birds in chipping notes did sing
To entertaine both You and that sweet Spung.
And Philomela with her sundry leyes,
Both You and that delightfull Place did praise.
Oh how me thought each plant, each flower, each tree
Set forth their beauties then to welcome thee:
The very Hills right humbly did descend
When you to tread upon them did intend,
And as you set your steete, they still did rise,
Glad that they could receive to rich a priece.
The gende Windes did take delight to be
Among those woods that were so grac'd by thee.
And in sad murmure uttered pleasing sound.

Title. Cooke-ham: a crown manor leased to the Countess of Cumberland's brother, William Russell of Thornburgh, where the Countess resided periodically until 1665 or shortly after (see Introduction, xxiv, n. 26). See discussion of lawyer's autobiographical claims in this poem, Introduction, xxxv.

Line 2. Grace ... Grace: favor, noble person, god-given virtues.
Line 3. Muses: in Greek myth, nine sisters who represented and bestowed skill in arts and learning, including poetry and music.
Line 5. indite: write.
Line 6. sacred Storie: possibly the story of Christ's passion in the "Salve Deus" poem, or the story of this poem, or a reference to yet another poem.
Line 10. unfold: disclose.
Line 12. works of Grace: this poem.
Line 15. shadowes: reflections, images.

Line 22. similars: comparisions (nature is presented as richly dressed and ready to serve the Countess of Cumberland, lines 21-75).
Line 32. delightfull Place: acknowledges Cookeham in the classical tradition of the lovely or delightfull place, the locus amoenus.
Line 41. and: serious, deep.

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That Pleasure in that place might more abound:
The swelling Bankes deliv'rd all their pride,
When such a Phoenix once they had espedie.
Each Arbor, Bank, each Scate, each stately Tree,
Thought themselves honor'd in supporting thee.
The pretty Birds would oft come to attend thee,
Yet fly away for feare they should offend thee:
The little creatures in the Burrough by
Would come abroad to sport them in your eye;
Yet fearfull of the Bowe in your faire Hand,
Would runne away when you did make a stand.
Now let me come unto that stately Tree,
Wherein such goodly Prospects you did see;
That Oake that did in height his fellows passe,
As much as lofty trees, low growing grasse:
Much like a comely Cedar straights and tall,
Whose beauteous stature faire exceeded all:
How often did you visit this faire tree,
Which seeming joyfull in receiving thee,
Would like a Palme tree spread his armes abroad,
Desirous that you there should make abode:
Whose faire greene leaves much like a comely vaile,
Defended Phoebus when he would assaile:
Whose pleasing boughes d'yeald a coole fresh ayre,
Joying his happinesse when you were there.

Line 44. Phoenix: mythical resplendent and eternal bird; the Countess.
Line 45. Burrough: burrow.
Line 51. Bowe in your faire Hand: the Countess is figured as the goddess Diana.
Line 63. comely vaile: amorous courting.
Line 64. Defended Phoebus: protected against the sun.

Salve Deus Rex Judæorum

Where being seated, you might plainly see,
Hills, vales, and woods, as if on bended knee
They had appeare, your honour to salute,
Or to preferre some strange unlook'd for tree:
All interlaced with brookes and christall springs,
A Prospect fit to please the eyes of Kings;
And thirteene shires appear'd all in your sight,
Europe could not afford much more delight.
What was there then but gave you all content,
While you the time in meditation spent,
Of their Creators powre, which there you saw,
In all his Creatures held a perfet Law:
And in their beauties did you plaine descrie,
His beauty, wisdome, grace, love, majestie
In these sweet woods how often did you walke,
With Christ and his Apostles there to talk;
Placing his holy Witt in some faire tree,
To meditate what you therein did see:
With Moses you did mount his holy Hill,
To know his pleasure, and performe his Will.
With lovely David you did often sing,
His holy Hymnes to Heavens Eternal King.
And in sweet musicke did your soule delight,
To sound his prayses, morning, noone, and night.
With blessed Joseph you did often feed
Your pined brethren, when they stood in need.
And that sweet Lady sprung from Clifford's race,
Of noble Bedford's blood, faire stame of Grace;
To honourable Dorset now espoused,
In whose faire breast true virtue then was hous'd:
Oh what delight did my weake spirits find
In those pure parts of her well framed mind:
And yet it grieues me that I cannot be
Nere unto her, whose virtues did agree
With those faire ornaments of outward beauty,
Which did enforce from all both love and ducie.
Unconstant Fortune, thou art most too blame,
Who caus us downe into so lowe a frame:
Where our great friends we cannot daily see,
So great a difference is there in degree.
Many are placed in those Orbes of state,
Parrers in honour, so ordain'd by Fate;
Never in show, yet farther off in love,
In which, the lowest always are above.
But whither am I carried ir conceit?

Lines 91-92. Joseph ... and his brethren petitioned him for food during the great famine (Gen. 37:4-25).
Lines 93-95. Lady ... espoused. Anne, Countess of Dorset, the Countess of Comberland's daughter. She was the product of a great family: the Cliffsords, earls of Cliffsord (see her father's side) and the Russell, earls of Bedford (see her mother's side) had married into a third, the Sackvilles, earls of Dorset.
Line 106. degree; social status. Line 107. Orbes of state; political world.
Lines 109-110. Nearer ... conceit. Circumstances may place the high and low near one another, but their devotion is not reciprocally strange: the lower born are more devout than the reverse.

My Wit too weake to conceve of the great.
Why not? although we are but borne of earth,
We may behold the Heavens, despising death;
And loving heaven that is so farre above.
May in the end vouchsafe us entire love.
Therefore sweet Memorie doe thou retaine
Those pleasures past, which will not turne againe.
Remember beauteous Dorset former spors,
So farre from beeing toucht by ill reports:
Wherein my selfe did always bear a part,
While reverend Love preserved my true heart:
Those recreations let me bear in mind,
Which her sweet youth and noble thoughts did finde:
Whereof depriv'd, I evermore must grieve.
Hating blind Fortune, careless to relieve.
And you sweet Cooke-ham, whom these Ladies leave.
I now must tell the griefe you did conceave
At their departure; when they went away.
How every thing retained a sad dismay;
Nay long before, when once an inckling came.
Me thought each thing did unto some frame:
The trees that were so glorious in our view.
Forsooke both flowers and fruit, when once they knew.
Of your depart, their very leaves did wither.
Changing their colours as they grew together.
But when they saw this had no power to stay you.

Lines 112. conceve: consider, understand.
Lines 115. Dorset: Anne's son (see lines 93-95).
Line 120. So ... reports: Anne's activities were blaming, insane fou, in which Lawyer shared (line 121).
Line 128. conceave: develop. Line 131. including: small idea.
They often wept, though speechlesse, could not pray you;
Letting their teares in your faire bosoms fall,
As if they said, Why will ye leave us all?
This being vaine, they cast their leaves away,
Hoping that pite would have made you stay:
Their frozen tops like Ages hozie haires,
Shewes their disaters, languishing in feares:
A swarthy riveld cyne all over spread,
Their dying bodies halfe alive, halfe dead.
But your occasions calld you so away,
That nothing there had power to make you stay:
Yet did I see a noble gratefull minde,
Requiting each according to their kind,
Forgetting not to turne and take your leave
Of these sad creatures, powrelesse to receive
Your favour when with griefe you did depart,
Placing their former pleasures in your heart;
Giving great charge to noble Memory.
There to preserve their love continuallly:
But specially the love of that faire tree,
That first and last you did vouchsafe to see:
In which it pleas'd you ofte to take the ayre,
With noble Dorset, then a virgin faire;
Where many a learned booke was read and skand
To this faire tree, taking me by the hand,
You did repeat the pleasures which had past,

Seeming to grieve they could no longer last.
And with a chaste, yet loving kiss tooke leave,
Of which sweet kiss I did it soone bereave:
Scornful a sencelesse creature should possess
So rase a favour, so great happiness.
No other kiss it could receive from me,
For feare to give bace what it tooke of thee:
So I ingratitude Creature did devoure it,
Of that which you vouchsafe in love to leave it.
And though it oft had giv'n me much content
Yet this great wrong I never could repent.
But of the happiest made it most forlorn,
To shew that nothing's free from Fortunes sone,
While all the rest with this most beauteous yee,
Made their sad consort Sorowes harmony.
The floures that on the banks and walkes did grow,
Crept in the ground, the Grasse did wepe for woe.
The Windes and Waters seem'd to chide together,
Because you went away they know not whither.
And those sweet Brooke's that tannel so faire and clear,
With griefe and trouble wrinkled did appeare.
Those pretty Birds that wonted were to sing.
Now neither sing, nor chirp, nor use their wing
But with their tender feet on some bare spray
Warble forth sorrow, and their owne dismay.
Faire Philomena leaves her mornetfull Ditty,
Drowned in dead sleepe, yet can procure no pitie:
Each arbour, banke, each seat, each stately tree,
Looke bare and desolate now for want of thee;
Turning greene treeses into frostie gray.
While in cold griefe they wither all away.
The Sunne grew weake, his beams no comfort gave,
While all greene things did make the earth their grave:
Each brier, each bramble, when you went away,
Caught fast your clothes, thinking to make you stay:
Delightfull Echo wou'd to reply
To our last words, did now for sorrow die;
The house cast off each garment that might grace it,
Putting on Dust and Cobwebes to deface it.
All desolation then there did appeare,
When you were going whom they held so deare.
This last farewell to Cooke-bare here I give,
When I am dead thy name in this may live,
Wherein I have perfit my noble hest,
Whose virtues lodge in my unworthy breast,
And ever shall, so long as life remains,
Ty'ng my heart to her by those rich chaine's.

To the doubtful Reader

Gentle Reader, if thou desire to be resolved, why I give this
Title, Salve Deus Rex Judeorum, know for certaine; that it was
delivered unto me in sleepe many years before I had any intent
to write in this manner, and was quite out of my memory, until I
had written the Passion of Christ, when immediately it came
into my remembrance, what I had dreamed long before; and
thinking it a significant token, that I was appointed to performe
this Worke, I gave the very same words I received in sleepe as the
fittest Title I could devise for this Booke.
Propaganda in Paradise: The Symbolic Garden Created by the Earl of Leicester at Kenilworth, Warwickshire

The garden at Kenilworth, Warwickshire, is currently being recreated, reflecting the design and planings of 1575. Archaeological work has been completed, and the layout, construction and placement of the main architectural features has finished. Planting began in the spring of 2008, and the white marble fountain which is being carved will be installed in the spring of 2009. The formal opening of the garden will be in 2009. This paper portrays the garden at Kenilworth from a symbolic and cultural point of view and, by exploring contemporary trends, Renaissance theory, and the cultural, social and political climate, another and equally fascinating picture of Robert Dudley the Earl of Leicester's garden is revealed.

Ostensibly, Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester's, garden at Kenilworth, Warwickshire, was to be enjoyed as part of Elizabeth I's entertainments on her Progresses in 1575. However, hidden behind its Renaissance facade, a lost world waits to be discovered: a world of meaning and double meaning with which Leicester imbued his one-acre plot. By looking beneath the outward ostentatious show of classical architectural features, the real spirit of the age emerges, the essence of which was an understanding of Christianity and paganism, mythology, ambiguity, allegory and wit. Leicester's Queen and the Court would have revelled in this additional entertainment which was palpable in his purely theatrical garden. Even more fascinating is the real significance of Leicester's creation which comes to life when, like a vast jigsaw, the last piece of symbolism is put into place. His garden is revealed as a complex canvas for propaganda in ‘Paradis’.¹

Tudor and continental Renaissance garden designs were picked and mixed to suit Dudley's garden, which was on a small scale and without a perfect symmetry. Elizabeth's favourite courtier embraced antiquity in the form of Roman artefacts and medieval emblems and used them symbolically to promote his power and prestige. The Earl of Leicester, a patron of the arts, took this art of symbolism to unprecedented heights or, rather, to hidden depths in his garden paradise at Kenilworth.¹ His creation was one of the first, if not the very first, English classical garden, symbolically laden with its owner's grand ambitions. The gardens of Lord Burghley, Sir Christopher Hatton and the Catholic Lord Lumley at Theobolds in Hertfordshire, Holdenby in Northamptonshire and Nonsuch in Surrey, respectively, were all created slightly later. Although they overlaid their sites with personal symbolism, theirs did not refer to an ambitious agenda.² Significantly, Robert Laneham left his enticing description of the garden to near the end of his long letter to

Burpham Place, Burpham, Arundel, West Sussex BN18 9RH, UK
a friend, Humfrey Martyn; it was the culmination of the wondrous creation, worthy to be called Paradise. Laneham referred to his patron the Earl of Leicester as having 'a right nobl minde' and the garden at Kenilworth, where artefacts, literature and nature were intertwined and overlaid with symbolism, and where every element was controlled by the mechanical and fine arts, was devised to be 'read' by the erudite viewer.

THE BOOK AND PRINT MARKET

During the Renaissance the discovery of linear perspective gave a new accuracy to depicting space in a three-dimensional way. Gardens and garden-related imagery became an important subject, illustrated in both classical mythology and allegory, and in topographical views of major sites, both ancient and contemporary. These images, among the first prints sold, were an important part of the newly founded print publishing business and contributed to the growth of the illustrated book market. The earliest print publishing houses were founded in Italy during the first third of the sixteenth century and in the Netherlands by the 1550s. The expansion of these markets was supported, or even perhaps initiated, by an increasing number of tourists to Italy, particularly to Rome. They became familiar with architectural ruins and ancient monuments and with Vitruvius' principles of classical architecture, which were affirmed by Leon Battista Alberti and Philibert de l'Orme (Figure 1). This was demonstrated in the magnificent gardens which were open to the public and in the prints, maps and books with which they returned home.

All this information was vital to the spread of ideas from the Continent to the English courtier garden-makers. References to symbolism were easily available through the flourishing mid-sixteenth-century book and print market. Popular titles included Francesco Colonna's *Hynerotomachia Poliphili* (1499), Thomas Phaer's complete *Aeneid* (1573) and, most importantly, Arthur Golding's 'Englishing' of the classic Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (1567), which was at the heart of the English Renaissance. The first emblem book was *Emblemata* by Andrea Alciati. Published in Italy in many versions from 1531, the English version, published in Lyon in 1551, was followed by Claude Paradin's *Devises Heroïques* (1563) and Geoffrey Whitney's *Choice of Emblemes* (1586). Whitney made his selection from earlier works, especially those that had been printed by Christopher Plantyn in Antwerp. Whitney used eighty-six identical emblems from Alciati and thirty-two identical woodcuts from Paradin. Both Golding's *Metamorphoses* and Whitney's *Emblemes* were dedicated to Leicester; Whitney's fulsome praise of the Earl in his dedication ran to eleven pages (Figure 2). The mottoes and sentiments were altered to suit politics and patrons, whether Italian, French or English. Although *Choice of Emblemes* was not published until 1586, both Leicester and Whitney had strong links with the universities of Oxford and Cambridge and during their acquaintance they may have discussed emblems and symbolism before 1575.

SYMBOLISM AND EMBLEMS

Paolo Giovio's *Dialogo della Imprese militare e amorose* (Rome, 1555) described one of the five essentials given for a desirable *Impresa* (Italian for emblem) as that it 'should not be so obscure as to need a Sybil for its interpreter, nor so transparent that every mean mechanic might understand it'. In an epistle of 1567 Golding wrote to Leicester, his erudite patron, making reference to Ovid's dark and secret mysteries, 'so hid that (saving unto few) they are not to be seen'. The emblem, or symbol with mottoes, was explained by the sixteenth-century antiquarian William Camden as follows: 'An Imprese (as the Italians call it) is a device in Pictures with his Motto or Word, born by Noble and Learned
Personages, to notify some particular conceit of their own.'

Ornaments placed upon any surface, or inlaid so as to form a pattern or device ... by such figures or works as are wrought in plate or stone ... for the adorning of the place having some wittie device expressed with cunning workmanship sometiminge obscure to be perceived at the first, whereby, when with further consideration it is understood, it maie the greater delighte the beholder.

His ornamental definition is clearly illustrated in Leicester's aviary, fountain and obelisks. In addition to the knowledge of symbolism gleaned from print, Leicester's friends, his nephew Philip Sidney and Henry Unton (whose mother was Leicester's sister-in-law) saw the symbolism in continental gardens on their travels. Unton travelled to Venice and Padua in the 1570's. Sidney's travels also took him to Venice and Padua, as well as other countries on his continental tour which he began in 1572. Girolamo Ruscelli was one of Sidney's teachers of the 'Gentle Art' of attaching illustrations to verses and making an emblem complete by motto, device or stanza. A letter from 1572, written whilst he was on the Continent, showed that Sidney had made acquaintances with some of
the emblem-makers and mentions Ruscelli's *Imprese illustri, con esposizione e discorsi* (1566). It is very likely, on his return to England, that Sidney imparted his knowledge to Leicester, Edmund Spencer and Whitney. Sidney returned in 1575, no doubt to help and advise Leicester for his entertainments for the Queen’s visit. The sites seen by Unnton and the Earl’s nephew may also have informed his garden at Kenilworth; a truly English Renaissance creation.

Leicester’s garden illustrated a complex part of Renaissance culture. According to Roy Strong, the pleasure garden was: (1) an expression of man’s ability to subject and tame nature; (2) an attribute of regal and aristocratic magnificence and hence as an index of social status; (3) a living encyclopaedia of God’s creation; (4) a setting for al fresco entertainments and the reception of royalty and hence an aspect of regal power; and (5) a symbolic vehicle with an allegorical intent. In the reign of Elizabeth, allegory was still an important part of life. It was evident in festivals, celebrations and pageants in the countryside. During the entertainments for her at Kenilworth, the Queen was confronted with tritons and nereids, family pages were converted into wood nymphs, and footmen ran through the grounds dressed at satyrs. These pageants were evidence of the national familiarity with classical mythology.

The need for symbolism was heightened in the fourth century when Christianity became the official religion of Rome. Indigenous beliefs and symbols proved difficult to erase and, even into the late sixteenth century in Europe, Greek, Roman, Christian and pagan images co-existed. Flowers of both Christian and pagan symbolism were associated with the Queen. Elizabeth I was identified as the Virgin, the Supreme Head of the Church of England, the Virgo Astraee of Roman and Renaissance literature, Diana, and the Imperial Tudor Monarch.

However, to many Elizabethans classical antiquity was a time of ‘blindnesse’ and ‘superstition’. The customs of classical Rome were particularly disliked; William
Thomas, in his *The History of Italy* (1549), praised the majesty of classical architecture, but condemned the ancient Romans for their pride, bloodshed, rapine and tyranny. From the cult of the Queen to the *theatrum orbis terrarum* of 1570, from sixteenth-century Renaissance artefacts, to antique allegorical texts and suggestive visual sensuality, all found a place in Leicester's small, secluded garden. The interpretation of symbolism changed very little up to the eighteenth century. Despite Anthony Ashley Cooper, 3rd Earl of Shaftesbury's, dismissal in 1713 of all that was illustrated by George Withers as 'magical, mystical, monkish and Gothic', symbolism still flourishes today in garden and landscape settings.

**HIDDEN AGENDA**

To some, it is arguable whether Laneham's description of his patron's garden was a reality and how permanent the garden was intended to be. Laneham's documentation of the symbolic representation of Leicester's political, religious and monarchist affiliation, and his disguised ambitions in those areas, was of the utmost importance. This was intended to be known beyond the walls of Kenilworth. Laneham's well-known letter to Martyn, which described the garden, was, in fact, a brilliant piece of propaganda that was intended to be published, distributed and read by a wider audience.

There was 'a clear link between the collection of antique art and the spread of mythological imagery'. Contemporary artists and sculptors were commissioned to create new works based on classical ideas. Leicester's garden provided a stage for these artefacts and an invented mythology for himself. He used his art as a mirror, portraying himself symbolically as a god in human form: an invention of the civilized world of Greece and Rome. The artefacts in his garden demonstrate that knowledge of classical Rome and his noble ancestry. These credentials advertised his need to be confirmed as Elizabeth I's lasting favourite. In 1575 he suspected that his position was slipping and he felt that the Queen, Court and country should be reminded of his former glory. As Her Majesty had once remarked, 'the bear and the ragged staff is not so soon overthrown'. He also had a desire to achieve great political power as head of the Protestant activist party. However, if none of these ambitions was realized then there was nothing obvious of which Leicester could be accused. The letter could as easily be read at face value; it was, as Laneham enthused, a beautiful garden 'woorthy to be called Paradis'.

**ROBERT LANEHAM — THE LETTER**

There has always been discussion surrounding the authorship of the letter. Some scholars believe it to be an attack on Laneham and Leicester: 'although it records the events faithfully enough, the tone has been read as dripping with satire'. Here, it is accepted to be Robert Langham (usually referred to as Laneham), who had been at court as Gentleman Usher to Dudley. He wrote to the recipient of the letter, Martyn, that whilst in that situation there was time for him to indulge in his favourite pursuit; 'storiez (says he) I delight in; the more auncient and rare, the more like'sum unto me'. Dudley's advocate, Laneham, clearly knew classical and medieval literature, conversed with ambassadors and understood French. For the purposes of examining the symbolism in the garden at Kenilworth, Laneham's observations are accepted and his descriptions are presented chronologically.

**THE GARDEN**

In his letter, after lengthy accounts of the magical entertainments for Elizabeth I and the rare beauty of the castle, Laneham at last came to 'his honorz exquisit appointment of
a beautifull Garden, an akcr or more of quantitee. In July 1575 Elizabeth I arrived at Kenilworth on her Progresses. The Queen, her Court and even the country people were involved in entertainments in woods and on water, with performances that were pagan, classical and allegorical – all of which they appreciated. What is not well known is that the garden, too, was drenched in allegory; every element in the one-acre or more plot, aviary, fountain, obelisks, layout and planting, was overlaid with Renaissance ideals, pagan and classical themes, all of which were just as easily read and understood. Laneham may have suggested that the Earl's garden could be compared to the medieval concept of Paradise, a hortus conclusus celebrated in prose, poetry and painting, but Leicester also erected features in that plot associated with the orderly rule of Rome.

The original etymology of Paradise, to which Laneham likened Leicester's garden, is from two Persian roots: 'around' and 'to mould form', hence 'enclosure, park'. Paradise in antiquity represented the seat of the gods, and to Christians it was the Garden of Eden. Leicester's garden alluded to both the home of the gods, with its allegorical fountain, and Paradise and Eden, where the Virgin dwelt in sixteenth-century art. Many of the still popular medieval and Tudor elements were included in Leicester's garden; however, it also displayed Renaissance features that had been absorbed by French aristocracy and the Court through their stay in Italy and by marriage between Italian and French royalty and nobility. It is not surprising that those vast French gardens displayed pagan and Roman themes, but the fact that they flourished in abundance in a one-acre plot in Warwickshire in the Protestant climate of 1575 is surprising. That garden could be viewed as a room outside that, to some extent, mirrored the collection in house and gallery which might contain Roman art, antiquities, mechanical inventions, animal and mineral rarities, or displays of hera.dry.

**THE TERRACE**

Laneham then wrote about the pleasant terrace, 'of a ten foot hy, and a twelve brode, een underfoot and fresh of fyne grass; az iz also the syde thearof toward the gardein'. Although terraces had existed before that at Kenilworth, Laneham is credited with using the word first in 1575. In France, the first terrace was designed by Philibert de l'Orme at Anet between 1546 and 1552. Although smaller in scale than those in Italy, the arrangements were also square, and part of an overall design linking the gatehouse with the pavilions. In that case, and in many others, the terraces were of hard material. Terraces had been created by Romans for a particular reason and, as with Leicester's, the intention was to view the whole of their domain – the overall landscape, pool and garden, manipulated by man – thus, domination over nature, which emphasized the Earl's power and intellect. Leicester's vast creation also illustrated the Renaissance meaning of nature and man living in harmony. An important reference for Renaissance garden-makers was the humanist ideals of Pliny the Younger. He published nine books of literary letters in the last quarter of the first century AD, two of which describe the gardens of two of his villas, the Laurentian villa near Rome and the Tuscan villa 70 km north of Rome. On the importance of the site of his Tuscan villa he writes, 'My house is on the lower slope of a hill but commands as good a view as if it were higher up."

Along the man-made terrace at Kenilworth, obelisks, spheres and white bears on stone bases were erected at equal distances apart. Laneham immediately plunges his reader into a world of symbolism, just as the Queen and visitors would have been confronted with Leicester's blatant symbolism as soon as they stepped onto the terrace. Leicester's three most important allegorical statements were all too obvious. Obelisks epitomized glory and immortality; they revealed his knowledge of classical and Republican Rome and of
Renaissance ideology. The sphere denoted his heavenly prudence and wisdom; therefore, it suggested his suitability to fulfil his political Protestant ambitions. The white bear, his emblem, was associated with the Arthurian legend of the fourteenth century, and thus was proof of his ancient noble ancestry, and so worthy to be regarded with deferential esteem by Elizabeth I and her Court.

Laneham’s descriptions alone of Leicester’s complex domain cannot convey what Elizabethans would have experienced in that theatrical setting. Churches, cathedrals, statuary, artefacts, woods, water, light, and shade could evoke a magical, mythical and allegorical world that they understood and to which they responded. Leicester’s Kenilworth, formed with great artistry, would have heightened and enchanted all their senses. His expensively contrived landscape and theatrical garden demanded a response that was emotional, sexual and intellectual.

**OBELISKS**

An obelisk was a symbol of eternity and, although they were associated with ancient Egypt, they were identified more with Roman ruins. They were an important motif of Renaissance gardens after they had been excavated, endlessly sketched and re-erected in late sixteenth-century Italian gardens, where their structure was associated with the orderly power of Rome and mortality. Obelisks were seen in print from Colonna’s *Hypnerotomachia poliphili* (1499) to the drawings of Sebastiano Serlio (Figure 3) and Pirro Ligorio c.1540–50. Dudley was in his twenties when his father, the Duke of Northumberland, sent John Shute to Italy in 1550 ‘to view such ancient monuments hereof as are yet extant’. They were written about in Thomas’s *Hist. Italie* (1549). Serlio and Jacques Androuet Du Cerceau also drew Roman sites in the mid-sixteenth century; their work could be seen in print, and was later visible in several gardens in France. However, the antiquarian Ligorio made Roman artefacts extremely fashionable in sixteenth-century garden settings; he created the most inspirational garden, Villa d’Este, between 1560 and 1572. Indeed, in 1568 the citizens of Tivoli near Rome brought legal charges against Cardinal d’Este: one of them was that Ligorio had removed ‘antiquities from churches’.

Obelisks were often used as decoration, particularly in France, in temporary triumphal entrances and to proclaim the glory of the owner. The Egyptian symbols were erased on those occasions. For example, an obelisk bore the arms and devices of Henry II for his entry into Lyon in 1548 (Figure 4). Later, the emblematist Achille Bocchi devised an emblem published in 1574 to *True Glory* employing an obelisk. To read about and see the obelisks first on the terrace confirmed Leicester’s knowledge of history, proportion and perspective, but above all the obelisks spoke of his glory and immortality.

**SPHERES**

Spheres were a sign of heavenly wisdom. This symbol of the celestial sphere was shown near the Queen’s ear in the Ditchley Portrait and on her sleeve in the Rainbow Portrait, the virtues of her Golden Age radiating through the spheres, showing her involvement in things eternal. The sphere was also an attribute of astronomy, one of the Seven Liberal Arts. The spheres placed on the terrace by Leicester would have suggested his involvement with matters divine and eternal. Symbolically, the sphere denoted heavenly wisdom, but it depended, in typical Elizabethan ambiguity, on what it stood on. A drawing exists of a French Psalter; the writing opposite is attributed to Elizabeth I and probably dates from 1565; because the sketch showed the sphere standing on a Bible, it took on a Protestant connotation. Envisaging the ‘curious bases’ under the artefacts along the Kenilworth
terrace has to be a matter of conjecture, but it is possible that, given Leicester’s ambition to be leader of the Protestant activist party, the bases could have carried a Biblical visual or textual reference, as well as his symbolic and heraldic devices.

**WHITE BEARS**

The bear symbolized boldness and courage; it was also associated with *Mores Occulti* or concealed habits – returning to life when circumstances became favourable.46 Their emblem was said to have originated from the name of Arthgal, the 1st Earl of Warwick, a knight of King Arthur’s Round Table (‘Arthgal’ deriving from ‘Arth’ or ‘Naarth’, signifying a bear). According to legend, one of Arthgal’s descendants slew a knight who had threatened him with a tree torn by its roots – hence the bear and ragged staff (Figure 5).47 It would have suited Leicester to associate himself with an Arthurian legend as he clearly wished to be associated with the attributes of boldness, courage and ancient chivalry.48

The stone obelisks, spheres and bears sat on ‘curiouz bases’, curious being a sixteenth-century term meaning elaborate workmanship. If the obelisks were black, which they often were in antiquity, and coupled with the white bears, they would have reflected Elizabeth I’s colours. White stood for purity and truth; black was the colour of melancholy, but also of constancy in love. Lancham then briefly mentions arbours at
each end, sweetly perfumed by trees and flowers: 'The garden plot under that' had 'fayr alleyz', some of grass and some with sand, 'much gracified by du proporcion of four eeven quarterz'.

FOUR EVEN QUARTERS

The number four conveyed symbolism which originated in ancient religions. The second chapter of Genesis has a description of a garden plan: a fourfold field plot is divided by four rivers. Symbolically the number four is the number of creation, the symbol of nature; there were four evangelists, four elements (earth, air, fire and water) and four seasons, all visualized in the Renaissance as pagan divinities. There were also four cardinal virtues, Justice, Prudence, Temperance and Fortitude, all usually personified by woman and common in Renaissance art. Furthermore, in sixteenth-century art, symbolism and design much could be read into the number four.

Alberti advocated symmetry and was the first to make garden design the domain of the architect. He believed that natural order represented universal order and, thus, natural beauty. Renaissance symmetrical gardens attempted to convey an insight into the eternal construction of its beauty. Leicester might want to have been associated with the Biblical allegory, but it is more likely he wished it known that he was aware of Alberti's theories. Alberti had been influenced by Vitruvius and Pliny, both of whom understood the importance of site and symmetry. Four even quarters were essential because the garden at Kenilworth was not symmetrical.
PORPHYRY PYRAMIDS

In the middle of each quarter Laneham described four imposing 15-foot-tall obelisks rising pyramidally and made of porphyry but, as he hinted, they were in reality painted to imitate the rock referred to by Pliny and popular in Renaissance architecture and tombs. Laneham wrote that they were ‘heaven out of hard porphyry, and with great art and heed (thinks me) thyther conveyd and theer erected’.

An archaeological excavation in the 1970s found a sandstone sphere; the resulting report suggesting that these, and others found in earlier excavations (Philip Ratz in the excavation of 1960) are the ornaments described by Laneham. The site must have revealed secrets early on: in 1872 the Revd Knowles commented ‘that the obelisks were not carved out of one whole piece, nor were they porphyry’. Later, the traveller Paul Hentzner observed diverse pyramids in William Cecil, Lord Burghley’s garden at Theobalds. He wrote of ‘columns and pyramids of wood and other materials up and down the garden’. In the sixteenth century the terms ‘obelisk’ and ‘pyramid’ were used to describe the same artefact. An obelisk represents the world’s apex, the highest point of spiritual attainment and the body of the structure represents man’s ascent through knowledge and enlightenment. The pyramidically shaped columns were topped by orbs 10 inches thick. In classical symbolism an orb is the attribute of Apollo, who represented the rational and civilized side of man’s nature. Leicester could have had no better symbolic artefacts to speak for him, of his spiritual superiority, his enlightenment and his rational character.

There is an interesting illustration in Whitney’s Choice of Emblemes of an obelisk entwined with ivy (Figure 6). The original image is from Hadrian Junius and the motto from Claude Paradis. The object of Junius was to endorse the saying: ‘the wealth of princes is the stay of the people’. Paradis used the device for the Cardinal of Lorraine, who erected an obelisk surrounded by ivy at the gate of his abbey at Cluny, meaning that
his church, like a pyramid, would last for eternity and with his constant steadfastness it would secure 'age-lasting powers'. In the Whitney version the device is altered to praise the Queen as head of the Protestant Church of England, with the hidden suggestion that the entwining ivy represents Leicester's support. The emblem was topped with the motto: 'While thou standest I shall flourish'; another example of Elizabethan ambiguity, it could be applied to Leicester protecting his Queen, the head of the Church, or him protecting the Protestant Church and enabling it to flourish. R. J. P. Kuin suggested in his Introduction to Laneham's letter that Leicester was convinced that his final attempt to achieve the heights of political power would be for him to be made leader of the Protestant activist party.

**HERBS AND FLOWERS**

Laneham then eulogises about the surrounding flowers and herbs. He emphasized the great cost of Leicester's vast array of aromatic plants, their variety, shapes, colours and perfumes.

Unfortunately, there were no details given of the flowers and herbs. Was this because of Laneham's lack of knowledge or was it because plants were not a necessary ingredient of Leicester's propaganda? However, many of the popular plants of that era that would have been at their best in July for Elizabeth I's visit held a symbolic meaning. Numerous plants were associated with the Queen; the eglandine rose, symbolizing purity and virginity, was her most enduring emblem (Plate XII). Lilies and mints were associated with the Virgin Mary and, therefore, the Queen and pansies (not the modern variety but from *Viola tricolor*) were for tender and pleasant thoughts and chastity. Rosemary appeared at both weddings and funerals and so is explained by its link with memory, which it was supposed to strengthen. It was also thought beneficial to head and heart and is, therefore, associated with rational love, a meaning that could be interpreted to apply to either Elizabeth I or Leicester. Leicester could possibly also be identified with the delphinium (trust and truth), hollyhock (ambition) and evergreens: bay, holly, and ivy were associated with immortality.

Some plants, however, could be imagined to be associated with Leicester, such as marigolds for obedience and marriage. As the herbalist John Gerard said: 'some term it the Sun's flower, or the follower of the Sun ... in that the flowers of the same follow the Sun, as from the rising by the South unto the West, and by a notable turning obeying to the Sun' (Figure 7). Leicester's enemies would have been amused if the Earl had used the sycophantically symbolic plant allegorically, because in Gerard's text the sun is male. It has been suggested that 'The importance of the sun was seen in the Accession Day Tilts where it was used in relation to the divine creation of the world that invested the days of Elizabeth's rule with cosmic significance', and this identity was celebrated in prose as 'Rich sun-beams of th'eternal light'. In these contexts the Earl would be seen to be forever following the Queen.

**FRUIT TREES**

Laneham did, however, name the fruit trees bedecked with their apples, pears and ripe cherries. The apple is traditionally the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge, probably because early Christian artists borrowed the image of the golden tree of the Hesperides. Pears were sometimes seen as the alternative fruit of the fall and Geoffrey Chaucer used this explanation for the pear tree in *The Merchant's Tale*; in the story Damian and May commit adultery in the pear tree. Here, the pear is the fruit of earthly desire and the flesh, one of the weaknesses Christ's sacrifice, was meant to redeem.
Cherries, a favourite of the Queen, were seen in her portraits, in her hair, around her ears, and on her stomacher. They were described as orbs of the sun and one of the myriad fruits of Ceres, the goddess of growth and giver of all increase; she was also sometimes worshipped as the Earth Mother, who was associated with Elizabeth I. In a portrait of 1574 the Queen is shown with untouched and ripe cherries and this has been interpreted as a Eucharistic symbol. Cherries also symbolized heaven and featured in Renaissance paintings of the Madonna and Child. However, in addition, and echoing Elizabethan ambiguity, they could have related to her virginity, as the cherry appeared in a Shakespearean drama as slang for a woman’s maidenhood. In his summing up of the garden, Lantham mentions strawberries, which were also depicted in portraits of the Queen, for example on her stomacher in the anonymous portrait of 1590; they were symbolically the fruit of righteousness.

THE SUMPTUOUS AND BEAUTIFUL CAGE

Lantham then wrote about a square cage, ‘sumptuous and beautiful ... of a rare form and excellency was reyzed: in heyth a twentye foot, thyrty long, and a fouourteene brode’. There were ‘foour great wyndoz a front, and too at each eend, every one a fyve foot wyde, az many mo even above them, divided on all parts by a transum and architrave, so likewise raunging about the cage’. The Roman-inspired building covered with small gold mesh was an aviary (Figure 8). Ligorio produced an etching, published in 1558, in which he had reconstructed Varro’s aviary and the one at Kenilworth resembled both the description and look of Varro’s construction. Such an imposing structure denoted Leicester’s classical knowledge as well as the Renaissance concept of man controlling nature. Under the cornice Lantham describes every part as being beautified with great diamonds, emeralds, rubies and sapphires, ‘poynted, tabld, rok and round’. As he indicated, the stones were not genuine: they may have been made of glass or mosaics, cut in such a way as to maximize the reflected light. Lantham wrote of them: ‘garnisht with their golld, by skilfull hed and hand, and by toile and pensil, so lyvely exprest, az it mought bee great marveil, and pleasure to consider how neer excellency of Art could approach unto perfection of Nature’ (Plate XIII).
This was another instance of Leicester creating an element from the natural world with the 'excellency of art'. It was all part of the richly decorative world of the Elizabethan Court; where life was art and images were interchangeable. We have forgotten that Edmund Spenser's poetic vision was close to a visual reality where diamond-shaped window panes glistened by night and day and where privy gardens contained a wealth of carved, painted and gilded objects. Gold garnish around the green, red and blue stones of Leicester's aviary were to be seen lit by torchlight, sunlight, moonlight and fireworks. Spenser, describing 'a gracious Queene', wrote:

Whose skirts were borded with bright sunny beams,
Glistering like gold, amongst the plights enrold
And here and there shooting forth silver streames,
Mongst which crept litle Angels through the glittering gleames.73

The colours of the glass had symbolic meanings; some of them were pre-Christian and others were adapted for Elizabeth I, but during the sixteenth century their precise meanings became more complex. White was associated with purity, green with youth or hope, red with power, and blue was the symbol of intellect, connected to the sky and infinity.74

Laneham continued with details of the interior of the aviary 'of holes and caverns':

Holez wear thear also and caverns in orderly distauns and facion, voyed into the wall, az well for heat, for coolnes, for roost at nightz and refuge in weather, az also for breeding when tyne iz. More, fayr eeven and fresh hollye treez for pearching and proining, set within, tooward each eend one.75

A cave symbolized the heart of the world, the unconscious entrance to esoteric wisdom. This cage would have met with Francis Bacon's approval: 'For aviaries, I like them not, except that they be of that largeness, as they may be turfed, and have living plants and bushes set in them, that the birds may have more scope and a natural nesting.'76 In Leicester's aviary there were fresh holly trees; the male holly tree was the emblem of eternal life. These wonders were nothing if they were not matched with 'proper grace and use'. Leicester had a collection of birds from England, France, Spain, the Canaries and, significantly, Africa.77 Laneham summed up with the delights of birdsong, an essential ingredient of Renaissance gardens and often considered seductive.
Birds, both mechanized and real in aviaries, were a feature of Italian, French and English gardens of the sixteenth century. The rector of Cheam in Surrey, Anthony Watson, wrote of the pleasures to be had at Nonsuch nearby: 'There many people sit down and, dressed in the gayest of clothes, converse on various topics, listen to the calls of the animals and the songs of the birds.' In the same vein John Stow, in his *Survey of London*, also wrote of birds and nature in his chapter called 'Sports and pastimes': 'in the morning, every man, except impediment, would walk into the sweet meadowes and green woods, there to rejoyce their spirites with the beauty and sauour of sweete flowers, and with the harmony of birds.' By having diverse birds, and some from exotic countries, Leicester emphasized his position as an entrepreneur involved in global trade. Mapping was an Elizabethan passion, not only to record their own land, but also to illustrate expeditions and trade routes. Although Elizabethan maps celebrated their newly founded world, they were however covered with decorative ancient mythical creatures.

**THE FOUNTAIN**

In the center (as it wear) of thos goodly gardein, waz theer placed a very fayr fountain cast into an eight square, reared a four foot hy; from the midst whearof a colum up set in shape of too Atlants joined togetheer a back half; the oon looking East, toother West, with theyr hands upholding a fayr formed boll of a three foot over.

In the sixteenth century the fountain symbolized the heart and was still considered the source of spiritual life and salvation, in this sense an attribute of the Virgin. The Fountain of Life was the source from which the rivers of Paradise flow. It is no wonder that this source of spiritual life was the focal point of Leicester's garden. As well as the Biblical reference, it displayed two Atlantes, back to back, supporting a ball of over 3 feet in diameter. The figures holding the ball have always been referred to as Athletes, from Reginald Blomfield in 1901, to Eleanor Rhode in 1932, to the present day. Lancham actually called the figures 'Athlants'. The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines Atlantes as: 'see Atlas. Name of 1 of "the atlantes"'. The fountain at Kenilworth can be seen in a painting copied from a fresco representing the Castle in 1629. Although lacking some of the elements described by Lancham, it clearly shows a figure of Atlas. Atlantes were popular architectural elements in Renaissance design. They were derived from Atlas, whose role in myth was to support the heavens, sometimes interpreted as supporting the world or the weight of learning. Leicester no doubt wished it to be known to the wider audience that he was the hero to support the spiritual and Elizabethan world (Figure 9).

The globe was topped by the Earl's emblem: the bear and ragged staff. From this globe water streamed continually into the fountain, where, although only 2 foot deep, a variety of fish 'pleazauntly' played 'too and fro and round about'. In this confined space fish from the oceans played in water supplied by mechanical pipes. Pliny described 'a small fountain with a bowl surounded by tiny jets which together make a lovely murmuring sound'. The globe was topped by the bear, an animal of the wild, which was turned into cold marble. All this denoted art controlling nature. The Earl would have been well aware of the Renaissance dictum and such a sophisticated construction would have impressed the Queen and her Court.

Lancham then described the eight sides of the fountain:

A one syde, Neptune wyth hiz tridendal fuskin triumphing in hiz throne, trayled into the deep by his marine horsez. On another, Thetis in her chariot drawn by her dolphins. Then Triton by hiz fishez. Heer Protheus hearding hiz sea bulls. Thear Doris and her
doughterz solacing a sea and sandz. The wavez soourging with froth and fome, entermengled in place, with walez, whirlpoolz, sturgeonz, tunneyz, conchs, and wealks, all engraven by exquisit devize and skill. 

Those sculptured images were taken from Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. From about AD1 onwards Ovid worked on the *Metamorphoses*, drawing from Greek and Roman myth and legend, and it is now considered the most witty and ingenious book from antiquity, qualities that were appealing to Elizabethans. On one side was Neptune with his three-pronged fork; the emblem of authority, he symbolized the cosmic power fertilising the sea. On the other side, Thetis in her chariot was drawn by dolphins. Thetis was associated with the wet nurse; water, here, like milk, signified the nurturing of future generations. Dolphins were an attribute of Venus, associated symbolically with the Queen and famously decorating her gown in the portrait of c.1592. The sculptured sides captured frothing and foaming waves mingling with more fish and shells, the latter associated with femininity and sexual passion. The sight of these erotic themes Laneham thought was enough to inflame the mind, writing: "but whoosoo waz found so hot in desyre, with the wreast of a cox waz sure of a coolar'. Water spurted upwards vehemently, and they were ‘moystened from top too to’; thus the fountain, with typical Elizabethan symbolic ambiguity, conveyed both purity and sexuality and was capable of both provoking and cooling desire.

Although the fountain at Kenilworth was drenched in symbolism, it would be too much to suppose that Leicester instigated every theme to reflect his own ambitions and glory. Ovid's *Metamorphoses* was popular in England as well as on the Continent. The fountain base was 'all engraven by exquisit devize and skyll, so az I may think this not mooch inferiour unto Phoebus gatez' Laneham referred here to a passage from *Metamorphoses*, highlighting not only his own learning but, but also more importantly stressing Leicester's fame, which was heightened by his possession of the elaborately carved, glistening marble fountain.

Elizabethans, as Laneham had already observed when describing Leicester's birds, delighted in all the senses. Pliny had written of 'an ornamental pool, a pleasure both to see and to hear, with its water falling from a height and foaming white when it strikes the marble'. Sidney later wrote a charming description in *Arcadia*: 'In the midst of all the place, was a faire ponde, whose shaking christall was a perfect mirrour to all the other

Figure 9. Stylized figures supporting a globe or sphere; from *The Arms of the Earl of Leicester*, a Flemish or Dutch silk woven tapestry (c.1575-88) (see also Plate XIV). © Victoria and Albert Museum, London
beauties, so that it bare shewe of two gardens; one in deede, the other in shadowes." The ragged staff, bowl, pillar and eight-sided fountain were 'all heauen ousit of rich and hard white marbl'. Marble was also symbolically pure. In a valuation of the Castle of Kenilworth in James I's reign and somewhat injured by the fire, is the following item: 'A fountaine of white marble, engraven round about with storie worke with the Queenes seat of freestone both being in the Garden valued at £50.'

It has been suggested that the fountain was carved in Northern Italy and imported in pieces to be re-erected at Kenilworth, an expensive venture. However, Adam White writes that there is no evidence that carved marble components were imported from Italy in the Elizabethan period. It is therefore more probable that it came from the workshop of the Cures of Southwark, where the craftsman William Cure worked from c.1540 to 1579.

A GARDEN WORTHY TO BE CALLED PARADISE

Laneham's lengthy summing up of the Kenilworth garden glorified his patron excessively. In the heat of the summer:

-too fee the plezaunt whiskeing winde above, (from the shady terrace) or delectable coolness of the fountaine spring beneath: Too smell such fragrancy of sweet odourz breathing from the plants, earbs and floourz: Too heer such natuairl melodious musik, and tunez of burdes.  

He continued with a description of just how much of Leicester's grand design and landscape was to be seen: streams, woods and water; 'For both pool and chase wear hard at hand in sight. The deer, the peeppl, that ousit of the East arber, inb the base court, also at hand in view.' He then lists again fruit trees, plants, herbs, flowers, a variety of colours, birds fluttering, fountains streaming and the fish swimming, 'all in such delectabl variete'. And all are entirely delightful to all the senses; it was indeed 'woorthy to be called Paradis'. This entire creation could only have been contrivd by 'a right nobl minde', that of Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester.

Behaviour at court was central to the courtier; Count Baldassare Castiglione's popular book The Courtier (translated into English in 1561) introduced 'chiefe conditions and qualities in a courtier', which amounted to ninety-five ideals, many of which were apposite for the Earl of Leicester, including 'To have in triumphes comele armour, bases, scarfes, trappinges, liversies, and such other thinges of sightlie and meerie and coulours, and rich to beehoude, wyth wittie poesies and pleasant divisies, to allure unto him chefflie the eyes of the people.' Much of the advice was somewhat Machiavellian but could be covered up with sprezzatura, a term coined by Castiglione. This notion was translated by Sir Thomas Hobbs as 'heedlessness'; nonchalance is more accurate. Sprezzare (to disdain) has added an added aristocratic meaning of contempt for being seen as trying too hard.  

The hidden iconography of the garden at Kenilworth and Leicester's ambiguous stance demonstrated Castiglione's concept of a knowledgeable, aristocratic and noble courtier. Leicester had, of course, many enemies, but he was also well educated, a patron of the arts, a discerning collector and was held in high regard on the Continent. In 1564 Henry Kilegrew, a diplomat, wrote to him from Paris that the King and Queen Mother sent their commendations to Dudley — the French court thought him to be a person of power and importance in England. He did have a just claim to have been attributed with a noble mind.

The Earl of Leicester's garden epitomized the ambiguous age perfectly. In England and on the Continent rulers and nobles with religious conviction, whether Protestant or
Catholic, chose to embellish their gardens almost entirely with classical and pagan images. His one-acre plot in the heart of England highlighted this ambiguity. Leicester’s ambitions were focused on his remaining in a powerful relationship with his Queen and on his plans to lead the Protestant activist party. However, these newly conceived ambitions were expressed in beautiful works of art that were ancient in origin. His Kenilworth garden also displayed Renaissance theories in abundance: the struggle between vice and virtue, religion and classical culture. These tensions, realized symbolically, revealed the intricate interplay between art and nature at Kenilworth. Art meant control: both mechanical devices and labour could exert domination over nature, the nature of the wider landscape, water and garden could be manipulated to appear natural, or given order with architectural principles and knowledge of cultivation.

CONCLUSION

Laneham’s letter, ostensibly to a friend, could be read as a delightful, enthusiastic description of the garden and landscape used as part of Elizabeth I’s entertainment in 1575. However, it is very likely that it was intended to be published and distributed to a large audience, many of whom were intended to understand and be sympathetic with the Earl of Leicester’s allegorical hidden agenda. It is also likely that some of the garden was a swift creation; theatrical sets for entertainments, festivals and feasts for nobles and lesser beings were known to be erected quickly, and dismantled within days. 100

Some aspects of the sixteenth century are not only foreign to us in the twenty-first century, but also were buried as long ago as the early seventeenth century for being unsuitable to Puritanical thinking. Whereas we, to a large extent, have passively watched plays, television and film in a somewhat grey past century, Elizabethans were physically involved in bright, reinvented medieval tilts, pagan pageants and gilded, symbolic, mythological gardens. They valued gold and silver objects and gilded every available surface. Leicester owned many objects ‘gilded verie faire’. 101 Extravagant costumes, portraits, textiles and tombs illustrate opulent sixteenth-century taste. 102 Their lustrous gardens, now obliterated and buried, would have been no different. Through Laneham’s report, that canvas of a vibrant garden emerges, rather than the usual perception of an Elizabethan garden principally covered with dull green knots (Plate XIV). The picture that illuminates Leicester’s garden creation is one brimming with riches and ambiguity: magnificent art, classical knowledge, Biblical references, vibrant colour, glitter, shimmering textures, fun, sexuality, an abundance of perfumed flowers and herbs, fruits and foliage, swishing and fluttering movement and symbolism and allegory in text and artefacts. In the Elizabethan age all this inflamed the imagination, rewarded the connoisseur and reached the politically aware. This scenario of Leicester’s creation may seem conjectural, but if one can imagine and inhabit a sixteenth-century nobleman’s way of life with all its ambiguity, political cunning and glorious riches and the dire need for survival, then this interpretation of Laneham’s story is more than plausible. Was Leicester’s garden at Kenilworth really just created for a brief royal visit and only ever meant to last in written form?

REFERENCES

2 John Nichols, The Progresses and Public Processions (London: author, 1823), pp. 426ff. Robert Laneham was Clerk of the Council Chamber Door (gentleman usher to Robert Dudley). The latest edition of Laneham’s letter is Langham/Kuin, A Letter. This refers to him as Langham, as there is a reference to payment to him with this spelling. However, as spelling was not fixed in the sixteenth century and he is commonly known as Laneham, he is referred to thus in this text.
The author has researched further on Kenilworth's garden symbolism since the initial English Heritage commission in 2005. Publication of English Heritage reports on the documentary research and archaeological excavation (which was carried out by Northamptonshire Archaeology in 2005/06) is scheduled for two to three years' time; communication with Brian Kerr, English Heritage Head of Archaeological Projects, February 2008.


6 Lanham wrote to his new, younger friend Martyr, son of a great City merchant and socially superior to Lanham; Langham/Kuin, A Letter, p. 14.


8 Alberti, De re aedificatoria [On the Art of Architecture] (written 1452, fully published Florence, 1485); Vitruvius' work De architectura libri decem (first century BC) was rediscovered at the Abbey of St Gall in 1414 by the Florentine humanist Poggio Bracciolini, and subsequently published as De architectura libri decem (five books on Architecture), the first known edition of which was by Fra Giovanni Sulpitius (Rome: G. Herolt, 1486). New woodcut illustrations, based on descriptions in the text, were added, probably by Fra Giovanni Giocondo, and published in Venice (1511). Philibert de l'Orme's Le Premier Toms de l'Architecture was published in Paris, 1567.


16 Whitney, Choice of Emblems, p. 311.

17 Ibid., p. 324.


24 Symbolic references can be found in Hall's Dictionary of Subject and Symbols in Art (London: John Murray, 2000).


27 Langham/Kuin, A Letter, Introduction.

28 Ibid., p. 3.


30 Nichols, Progresses and Public Processions, p. 421.

31 Langham/Kuin, A Letter, p. 69.

32 Leonie Frieda, Catherine de Medici (London: Phoenix, 2005).

33 Nichols, Progresses and Public Processions, p. 421.

34 Oxford English Dictionary (Oxford:


37 Jacques Androuet du Cerceau, Le Premier Volume des Plus Excellents Bâtiments de France (Paris, 1576); Sebastiano Serlio, Il Primo (Quinto) Libro d’Architettura (Venice, 1547).


40 Strong, Splendour at Court, pp. 30–1.


44 Ibid., p. 201.

45 According to Valerian’s vast Hieroglyphicorum, Also Harold Bayley, New Light on the Renaissance ... (London: J. M. Dent, 1909), p. 44.

46 The Bear and staff were first recorded together as an emblem of Thomas Beauchamp II, earl from 1369 to 1402; Charles Bouteell, Bouteell’s Heraldry, revd J. P. Brooke-Little (London: Frederick Warne, 1970), p. 168.

47 Stewart, Philip Sidney, p. 11.

48 He was shown in a portrait painted for Kenilworth by Zuccaro surrounded by tournament armour, symbolically the dress of the warrior. There is another ancient legend associated with the she bear licking her cub into shape – the origin of the expression still being used today. That metaphor is an apt one for the Renaissance garden-making shaping and controlling nature that otherwise might be formless.

49 Nichols, Progresses and Public Processions, p. 421.

50 Alberti, De re aedificatoria.

51 Nichols, Progresses and Public Processions, p. 421.


55 Whitney, Choice of Emblemes, first pl.

56 Ibid., p. 319.

57 Langham/Kuin, A Letter, p. 94.


60 Strong, Cult of Elizabeth, p. 50.

61 The Heereides were sometimes made to be the daughters of Zeus or Atlas and lived in the gardens of the gods; they were there to guard a tree of golden apples which was planted in the far west of the world. In fact, a tree on its own would not have borne fruit, nor would apples have grown in what Renaissance map-makers considered the Garden of Eden, which they envisaged being next to India; Russell Bowes (http://www.capabilitybowes.com) (accessed January 2008).


63 Thanks to Russell Bowes for his help.

64 In an anonymous portrait of the Queen painted in 1590 (Jesus College, Oxford), she wears a strawberry on her stomacher and a pair of cherries dangles from her wig. Cherries are seen again in her wig in the Pelican Portrait (Walker Art Gallery).

65 For example, Annibale Carracci (1560–1609), The Madonna and Sleeping Child; and Andrea Del Sarto (1486–1530), The Virgin and Child (The Royal Collection, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, London).


67 See note 65.


69 Ibid.


71 Nichols, Progresses and Public Processions, pp. 472–6.

72 Ibid.

73 Edmund Spenser, The Faerie Queene (Ware: Wordsworth, 1999), bk V, p. 631.


75 Nichols, Progresses and Public Processions, p. 473.

Accounts for 1560 show that Leicester paid 6 s. and 2 d. for a singing blackbird; Historical Manuscripts, Calendar of the Manuscripts of the Most Honourable the Marquess of Bath, p. 150.


Revelations 22.1.

A view of this fountain is preserved in the copy made by Brightton in 1716 of a large fresco painting, formerly at Newnham Padox.


Neptune was the Roman equivalent of Poseidon, brother of Zeus.

*Queen Elizabeth* I (c.1592), English School, Hardwick Hall, Derbyshire.

*Langham/Kuin, A Letter*, p. 72.


Archaeologist Brian Dix also found fragments of white marble above the foundation of the fountain, thus confirming Laneham’s description.


*Archaeology at Kenilworth Castle* (London: English Heritage, 2007). The present assumption, however, based on other factors, is that the carving was done in England. Personal communication, March 2008.


He received a commission for a fountain from Nicholas Bacon in 1568, but it has not survived.


Ibid., p. 380.


Strang, *Splendour at Court and Mulryne and Goldring, Court Festivals of the European Renaissance*, p. 9.
