

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN
**MAGNIFICENCE AND
HOSPITALITY**

IN THE
DOMESTIC ARCHITECTURE
OF ELIZABETHAN AND
EARLY STUART
ENGLAND



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ABBREVIATIONS

BHO	British History Online
BL	British Library
CSP	Calendar of State Papers
EEBO	Early English Books Online
KJV	King James Version (Bible)
LPL	Lambeth Palace Library
NA	National Archive
NE	Nicomachean Ethics
RIBA	Royal Institute of British Architects
SP	State Papers
ST	Summa Theologica

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INTRODUCTION

This thesis recounts one history amongst many about architecture and the justification of privilege. Architecture requires wealth; it is a product of wealth. Therefore, across classes, architecture can serve as an expression of the wealth an individual or society has. Yet, if there are large discrepancies in wealth within a society, architecture can also serve to materialise these inequalities. As such, architecture can be a sign of privilege, the primary form of which is economic.

However, such economic privileges need to be ideologically sustained; if not, the inequalities which it engenders may lead to social unrest. Architecture also has a role to play in the ideological justification of privilege. When architecture is employed to materialise privilege, it must do so without disturbing the numerous ideological frameworks (e.g. consent, competence, merit, nobility, etc.) which are necessary to justify and sustain such privilege.¹ Frequently therefore, architecture can not only be understood as an expression of privilege, but also as an apology for it. Such architecture seeks to signal that the privilege of a class, institution, or individual is justified due to their responsibility and obligation towards some greater good.

The usefulness of such moral ideas towards the justification of privilege can cast a cynical light on instances of performative morality. Today, this suspicion is frequently voiced in accusations of ‘virtue signalling,’ defined as thinly-veiled attempts to claim and sustain superiority through moral signs. Such signs can be verbal, visual, and indeed architectural – all can be cynically criticised as thinly-veiled social indifference. This criticality generates the means by which moral signs can be questioned and discarded, often as quickly as they are formed. As soon as a sign ossifies as a signal of virtue, it becomes a potential tool for the justification of vice. The misappropriation and corruption of these signs by less-moral agents, or rather, the accusations thereof, render the signals of ‘true virtue’ perpetually

¹ This is ostensibly based on the historiographical position engaging with the Marxist theory of ‘base and superstructure,’ which will be discussed in Section 2.3.1 (Marxist Historiography and the Emergence of Cultural Materialism in Country House Research)

elusive. What emerges is a dialectic which oscillates between the justification and critique of privilege, fuelled by the semiological instability of moral signifiers. To read architectural history with an attentiveness to critiques of 'virtue signalling' may not be as anachronistic as it initially sounds. A wealth of literature, both primary and secondary, has articulated the early modern usage of the Aristotelian virtue of *magnificence* as a means to justify lavish artistic patronage.² Such texts often frame sumptuous acts of architectural patronage as works of altruistic generosity, directed towards the common benefit of the city or country.³ Yet, there were also many who looked upon these virtuous displays with suspicion – not least in Elizabethan and Early Stuart England. One text in particular proves sufficiently demonstrative; a collection of sermons written by the minister Thomas Adams, compiled and published in 1619. On the topic of magnificent buildings, Adams writes:

The Ambitious builder, that erects a Babel for the honour of his owne Maiesty, thinkes all eyes stand amazed at his magnificence. And what are those sumptuous monuments wherein hee so glorieth, but monumentall witnessses of his folly, a little hewne tymber, some burnt and hardned earth?⁴

Contextualised in the early modern discourse on magnificence, Adams' stance is remarkably skeptical. While the anecdotal builder believed that such magnificence signalled he was worthy of honour, Adams sees through the ocular farce. To Adams, like many in Elizabethan and Early Stuart England, the architectural signs of magnificence had been drained of moral substance. They did not symbolise open-handed generosity or altruistic charity, but rather a vain desire for glory. Commenting on Saint Paul's command to 'walk in love' (Ephesians 5:2), Adams expands upon this notion of false signs:

He [Paul] doth not say, talke of it, but walke in it. This precept is for course, not discourse. Love sittes at the doore of many mens lips, but hath no dwelling in the heart. We may say truely of that charitie; it is not at home. A great man had curiously engrauen at the gate of his Pallace, the image of Bountie, or Hospitalitie. The needie Trauellers with ioy spying it, approach thither in hopefull expectation of succour. But still silence or an emptie Echo answers all their cries and knockes: for hospitality may stand at the gate, but there is none in the house. One among the rest (his hungry trust thus often abused) resolues to plucke downe the Image.

² To provide the primary example, see the discussion on Timoteo Maffei's *In magnificentiae Cosmi Medicei Florentini detractores* in: A. D. Fraser Jenkins, "Cosimo de' Medici's Patronage of Architecture and the Theory of Magnificence," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 33 (1970): 162–70. This is also thoroughly discussed in Chapter Two, Section 2.1 (The Aristotelian virtue of Magnificence)

³ And such things in service of the 'honour of God.'

⁴ Thomas Adams, *The Happines of the Church* (London: G.P. for Iohn Grismand, 1619), 13.

With these words; If there be neither meate nor drinke in the house, what needs there a Signe? Great Portals in the Countrey, and coloured Postes in the Cittie, promise the poore Beggar liberall reliefe; but they are often but Images: *Muta & inutila signa*; dumbe and lame signes. For Charitie is not at home: onely the shadow without *spe illectat inani*, giues faire and fruitlesse hopes.⁵

Adams' arresting interrogation, 'what needs there a Signe?' is one which strikes close to the heart of this thesis. Throughout the entire sermon, Adams sustains an ambiguity between verbal and visual signs – both are means by which virtue can be (deceptively) signalled. This key passage will be returned to in greater detail in the final chapter of this thesis. For now, it should suffice to illustrate the core subject matter of this thesis; the signalling of virtue through both making and writing about domestic architecture. Adams' complaint is one which echoes through the ages, voicing a frustration at selfish, ambitious palace-dwellers, who strove to signal nobility through flatulent proselytising and artistic commissions, but ultimately lacking in the moral substance of real virtue. It is a complaint which strongly resonates with the Marxist historiography identifying the country house as a socio-economic phenomenon, which served to justify feudal articulations of privilege.⁶

In such a light, if read too hastily, Adams' complaint may seem to echo the voices of iconoclastic revolutionaries. Adams' account of the poor and hungry, growing weary of mere signals, and resolving to 'plucke downe the Image,' has some tempting parallels with his immediate historical context. This was, after all, the age of Puritan iconoclasm; which also saw the toppling of an increasingly absolutist English monarchy.⁷ Could Adams' voice be the sounding-horn of reformed revolutionaries? Against such a seductive but inaccurate implementation of class struggle, this thesis also emphasises the complex and often ironic historical realities which deviate from theoretical expectations. Adams' biography betrays some of the motivations behind his complaint: in reality, he was far from being a radical and reforming Puritan – in fact, he may well have been the exact opposite. As a minister, Adams was vocally supportive of the establishment church and its episcopacy; he was sympathetic towards monarchical absolutism and strongly advocated the divine right of kings; and he denounced dissenters, radicals, and nonconformists of any kind – especially Puritans.⁸

Adams' complaint, therefore, is not a rallying cry to pluck down the signs of aristocracy and feudal inequality. It actually was the opposite, itself constituting an ideological framework which served to continually justify feudal

⁵ Adams, *The Happines of the Church*, 132

⁶ Kari Boyd McBride, *Country House Discourse in Early Modern England: A Cultural Study of Landscape and Legitimacy* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2001), 4-9.

⁷ Julie Spraggon, *Puritan Iconoclasm during the English Civil War*, Studies in Modern British Religious History, v. 6 (Woodbridge, Suffolk, UK Rochester, NY: Boydell Press, 2003).

⁸ Thomas Adams, *The Works of Thomas Adams*, ed. Thomas Smith, vol. 1 (Edinburgh: James Nichol, 1862), 12.

privileges in the face of an ascendant capitalist class. Adams' voice belonged to a group which may be tentatively termed the 'reactionary anti-capitalists,' who criticised the ethics of capitalism as mere signs, in order to frame the traditional aristocracy as the keepers of true nobility. To this point, a brief digression should be made to explain this dissertation's use of the term *reactionary*. Of course, the term is anachronistic when applied to seventeenth-century England. Its current usage derives from the French *réactionnaires* of revolutionary France who supported the *ancien régime*.⁹ Nevertheless, the term remains useful for categorising the ideological stances which react against the signs or manifestations of 'revolution' loosely-defined. More importantly, Karl Marx elaborated upon the term in defining a group of 'reactionary socialists' whose attachment to an idealised feudalism generated a prototypical form of anti-capitalist thought. Marx dedicates a chapter to *reactionary socialism* in the communist manifesto, writing:

In order to arouse sympathy, the aristocracy was obliged to lose sight, apparently, of its own interests, and to formulate their indictment against the bourgeoisie in the interest of the exploited working class alone. Thus, the aristocracy took their revenge by singing lampoons on their new masters and whispering in his ears sinister prophecies of coming catastrophe. In this way arose feudal Socialism: half lamentation, half lampoon; half an echo of the past, half menace of the future; at times, by its bitter, witty and incisive criticism, striking the bourgeoisie to the very heart's core; but always ludicrous in its effect, through total incapacity to comprehend the march of modern history. The aristocracy, in order to rally the people to them, waved the proletarian alms-bag in front of a banner.¹⁰

This dissertation treats literature like the sermon of Thomas Adams as an expression of this tendency – both reactionary and proto-socialist. Adams' denigration of ostentatious magnificence; his insistence upon charity; and (above all) the traditional practise of *hospitality*, indicates this bias. Steeped in rustic and nostalgic images of Saxon feasting and convivial *noblesse oblige*, Elizabethan and Early Stuart reactionary polemic mobilised the notion of hospitality in order to justify the born privilege of the traditional aristocracy and ruling elite. Adams'

⁹ Frederic Austin, *The Governments of Europe*, Rev. Ed., (The MacMillan Co, 1922), 485.

¹⁰ Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, Manifesto of the Communist Party, with The Library of Congress (New York: The National executive committee of the Socialist labor party, 1898), 44-45. "Um Sympathie zu erregen, mußte die Aristokratie scheinbar ihre Interessen aus dem Auge [62] verlieren und nur [63] im Interesse der exploitierten Arbeiterklasse ihren Anklageakt gegen die Bourgeoisie formulieren. Sie bereitete so die Genugtuung vor, Schmählieder auf ihren neuen Herrscher zu singen und mehr oder minder unheilschwangere Prophezeiungen ihm ins Ohr raunen zu dürfen. Auf diese Art entstand der feudalistische Sozialismus, halb Klagelied, halb Pasquill, halb Rückhall der Vergangenheit, halb Dräuen der Zukunft, mitunter die Bourgeoisie ins Herz treffend durch bitteres, geistreich zerreißendes Urteil, stets komisch wirkend durch gänzliche Unfähigkeit, den Gang der modernen Geschichte zu begreifen. Den proletarischen Bettelsack schwenkten sie als Fahne in der Hand, um das Volk hinter sich her zu versammeln."

sermon insisting upon such hospitality through denouncing ‘mere signs’ is an articulation of this reactionary sentiment.

In emphasising these historical realities which may today seem counterintuitive, this thesis aims to illustrate the complexities of navigating architectural morality. While the theoretical frameworks provided by Marxist historiography are useful as starting points, a more granular analysis of source material reveals the nuances and difficulties of living through these historical contexts. In reality, it is often difficult to distinguish between virtue and ‘virtue signalling,’ and between the revolutionaries and reactionaries. Sometimes, both may intersect; ‘virtue signalling’ can be a product of real virtue. Moreover, a revolutionary banner may be flown for a reactionary cause only a few decades later. Therefore, while the narrative recounted by this thesis engages with a Marxist historiography predicated on class struggle, it also aims to provide enough nuance to extend some sympathy to all the agents within this struggle. To do so, this thesis aims to highlight the historical conditions which have made finding a morally positive position in such a struggle remarkably difficult. The dialectical narrative this thesis recalls is one wherein architecture is repeatedly ‘unmasked’ as a tool used to justify forms of privilege. Thereby it serves to depict truly moral and altruistic architecture as an ideal; one which is both used and misused, and remains as elusive as it is desirable.

0.1 Establishing a Research Scope: Early Modern England, Domestic Architecture, Magnificence, and Hospitality

In order to explore the more granular complexities of virtue signalling and architecture, this thesis delves into one particular dialectical narrative. Its core subject matter is the relationship between magnificence and hospitality in England between 1558 and 1660, researching how both values were used in discourse on domestic architecture. There are several reasons why this historical, geographical, and architectural scope is salient to the assertions made in the opening of this introduction.

Thomas Adams’ sermons are emblematic of why the *English* context proves particularly illustrative to the theoretical position asserted by this thesis. Adams’ ideological position, especially the emphasis on its architectural and moral implications, were necessitated and produced by a very particular set of overlapping changes, crises, and ascendancies in early modern England. To name but a few; the emergence of market capitalism; shifts in the distribution of resources between classes; the commodification of housing; constitutional conflicts between republicanism and absolutism; and transforming typological and stylistic conventions in building; were all perceived as changes which were supported or reacted against in moral literature. The reactionary literature is particularly salient to the discussion of ‘virtue signalling’ because it utilised a

persistent anxiety around architecture's moral semiology, wielding it as a rhetorical weapon.

This was most evident in the moral discourse surrounding *domestic* architecture, particularly those expected to be seats of authority such as, manor houses, palaces, etc. Other architectural typologies such as churches, hospitals, and colleges, were sometimes also seen as expressions of magnificence. However, fluctuations in the relationship between magnificence and *hospitality* played out most vividly in the home, which was expected to be the seat of hospitality. These were buildings which had both a private and a public function; two facets of the domestic which were often in conflict. Besides being residences, these were also seats of power and privilege. As such, they needed to both express and justify these privileges, a social requirement which was often found to be at odds with the increasingly private nature of the house. In particular, moral discourse on country house architecture proved to be particularly important to conservatives, who relied on the loyalty of the countryside more than the cities.¹¹ Another reason why this thesis focuses on domestic architecture is because there was simply more of it happening.¹² Since the English reformation, church-building had dipped, and many believed that even routine maintenance was being neglected.¹³ Hospital-building was yet to see the increase in financial and architectural investment which was to occur after the restoration.¹⁴ As such, throughout the Elizabethan and early Stuart period, domestic architecture was seen as the primary object of architectural patronage in England.¹⁵

Two moral concepts offered means by which to negotiate between public and private requirements of the house. Firstly, there was the virtue of *magnificence*, which had a long pedigree across continental Europe. Secondly, there was the quality of *hospitality*, which was frequently invoked as a particularly English domain of excellence. These two concepts came into contact and conflict in the realm of the home; calling into question how 'private' domestic architecture was intended to contain the house's social role as a seat of power and privilege. Whilst in general terms, magnificence and hospitality could be understood as correlated, this thesis covers how the relationship between the two values in architecture was inverted by reactionary polemicists. In opposing the two values, conservative authors like Thomas Adams used the ocular anxieties of the time to question the compatibility between ostentation and altruism.

¹¹ At least, this was the case during the forthcoming Civil Wars.

¹² Colin Platt, *The Great Rebuildings of Tudor and Stuart England: Revolutions in Architectural Taste* (London: UCL Press, 1994).

¹³ J. F. Merritt. "Puritans, Laudians, and the Phenomenon of Church-Building in Jacobean London." *The Historical Journal* 41, no. 4 (1998): 935-936.

¹⁴ Christine Stevenson, *Medicine and Magnificence: British Hospital and Asylum Architecture, 1660-1815* (London: publ. for the Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art by Yale University Press, 2000), 6, 16.

¹⁵ Malcolm Airs, *The Tudor & Jacobean Country House: A Building History* (Stroud, Gloucestershire: Sutton Pub, 1995), 3-4; Jules Lubbock, *The Tyranny of Taste: The Politics of Architecture and Design in Britain, 1550-1960* (London: Yale University Press, 1995), 43-44.

As such, the scope of this thesis aims to foreground the emergence of an antagonism between magnificence and hospitality in architecture as argued by reactionary polemicists. This was not the only view regarding magnificence and hospitality at the time, but is the most salient in examining the dialectical development of architectural ethics during this period. Indeed, this is a historical period wherein complexity is largely generated by fracture and dissent. As such, to map the full spectrum of positions on any matter would result in more of a taxonomy than a history. One could understand the dialectical effects of dissent as a mitotic, resulting in a 'family tree' of ideas. In such an analogy, this dissertation does not purport to describe the entire tree. In order to chart a historical narrative, this thesis aims only to generally gauge the breadth of the tree's roots, before climbing the genealogical branches towards one point of fruition. As such, the temporal, geographical, and architectural scope of this thesis is defined in order to explain the origins of one significant reactionary complaint affecting domestic architecture.

One cannot discount how dominant a voice this reactionary rhetoric was in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century, in spite of its nature as one amongst many. Its rhetorical tropes can be seen emerging in the writing of Francis Bacon (1561–1626), the speeches and proclamations of James I (1566–1625), and indeed the architectural treatise of Henry Wotton (1568–1639), amongst many. It is also a voice which captures numerous conflicts in England's constitutional state, foreign policy, confessional stance, and economic organisation. It is therefore necessary to contextualise this argument within the dominant political narratives of the Elizabethan and Early Stuart period.

0.2 A Context of Crises: Architecture, Authority, and Wealth in England 1558–1660

The period 1558–1660 was a period of high political intrigue, which forms the backdrop of this thesis.¹⁶ The history of two themes in particular proves particularly salient to the study of building ethics: that of *authority*, and that of *wealth*. The period saw turbulent interconfessional and interconstitutional debates concerning the meaning and distribution of authority. The standard list of dichotomies are well-known; Arminianism versus Calvinism; sacramentalism versus Puritanism; absolutism versus republicanism; royalists versus parliamentarians; and the list goes on. Yet, it is worth recalling that influencing (or even generating) these conflicts in authority, were fluctuations in the distribution of *wealth*. The former wealth of monasteries; the mounting cost of war; struggling Stuart finances; and the growing power of the newly wealthy; were all crucial factors in the high political intrigue of the Elizabethan and early Stuart period. The following

¹⁶ n.b. during this period, England continued to use the Julian calendar. As such, the year started on the 25th of March. This is the calendar year used for the dates mentioned in this thesis, with the exception of dates after 1750, and dates in France and Italy after 1582, when the Gregorian calendar came into use.

section aims to recall the key points in this history, placing them in parallel with the economic factors at play.

This thesis' temporal scope begins partway through the Tudor period (1485-1603), contains the entirety of the early Stuart Period (1603-1649) and the Interregnum (1649-1660), ending on the eve of the restoration of the Stuart Monarchs (1660).

However, before discussing the history of this period in greater detail, one crucial event preceding this primary scope should be addressed, as its consequences echo throughout the following century. This was the English reformation, and the subsequent dissolution of the monasteries by Henry VIII (Tudor, 1491–1547). Whilst popularly recalled as a consequence of the divorce proceedings of the impetuous monarch, the English reformation was primarily spurred by political and economic motivations. *The First Act of Supremacy* in 1534 declared the English monarch as the supreme head of the Church of England, bringing matters of state and church in far closer proximity. It is for this reason that confessional and constitutional concerns will appear recurrently entangled throughout this dissertation. Following this, the *Act against the Pope's Authority* in 1536 definitively ended any papal authority on the nation's religious life. Between 1536 and 1541, the crown dissolved all the monasteries, priories, convents, and friaries in England, seizing and redistributing their wealth. This was no meager amount; monasteries acquired power and wealth largely through landed endowments, and on the eve of the dissolution were estimated to own around a third of the nation's land.¹⁷ All of this landed wealth changed hands as a cause of the dissolution.

After Henry VIII's death in 1547, three of his children ruled in turn. The first two were short-lived, but greatly intensified the political conflict over the confessional identity of the English church. Edward VI ruled for six years, from 1547 – 1553, and his short reign saw the Church of England move closer towards Calvinist Protestantism. His premature death in 1553 saw a brief succession crisis, after which his Roman Catholic sister, Mary I, ascended to the throne. Mary I reigned for five years, between 1553-1558, a period which saw rigorous and violent attempts to reverse the English reformation. This tumultuous prologue is essential in understanding the confessional and economic crises of the following century.

The death of Mary I and the ascension of Elizabeth I in 1558, marks the starting point of this thesis' primary scope. Elizabeth was still of the house of Tudor, and thus her reign technically coincides with the late Tudor period. However, in this thesis, this period will be referred to as *Elizabethan*, whilst the term *Tudor* will be used primarily to refer to her predecessors. The reign of Elizabeth I lasted forty-four years, from 1558 to 1603. Her reign saw earnest attempts to forge

¹⁷ Harriet Lyon, "Remembering the Dissolution of the Monasteries", in Walsham et al, *Memory and the English Reformation* (Cambridge University Press, 2020), 69–70.

compromises between the more-reformed and less-reformed factions of the Church of England, known as the Elizabethan religious settlement. These fragile *détentes* essentially established the boundaries of theological conformity with the ‘establishment church,’ defining a moderate form of Protestantism in accordance with the *Thirty-nine Articles of Religion* (1571) and worship in accordance with the *Book of Common Prayer*. Nevertheless, nonconformity persisted; even as the numbers of recusant Catholics dwindled, the nonconforming Calvinist group later known as the Puritans, began to gain prominence. Additionally, Elizabeth’s long and stable reign also sees a flourishing in English drama, exemplified by the oeuvre of William Shakespeare (1564 – 1616). The Elizabethan period also saw general improvements in housing stock, the debated causes of which will be discussed in the state of the art. Most notably, Elizabeth’s reign sees the construction of the so-called ‘prodigy houses,’ largely intended to host Elizabeth and her retinue during her annual summer ‘progresses’ through the English countryside.¹⁸ The end of Elizabeth’s reign saw the outbreak of war with the Catholic Hapsburg Kingdom of Spain, a remarkably costly conflict which drained the nation’s coffers and forced Elizabeth to sell crown properties in order to fund the war.

In 1603 Elizabeth I died without issue, and so the crown passed to her cousin James VI of Scotland, of the Scottish house of Stuart. James’ ascension to the English throne as James I of England marked the Union of the Crowns, which saw James style himself as the ‘first King of Great Britain.’ It also marked the beginning of the Stuart Era, a period which was to last until 1714, with James’ reign being more specifically referred to as ‘Jacobean.’ James I inherited Elizabeth’s mounting debt, and while he was able to negotiate peace with Spain in 1604, Elizabeth’s sale of crown lands had undermined one of the crown’s main sources of revenue.¹⁹ James’ reign saw crown funds even further depleted. Early in his reign, the royal treasurer confirmed that the costs of maintaining the royal household had increased from £30,000 to an astounding £164,900 since James had ascended.²⁰ There could have been numerous reasons for this. Unlike Elizabeth, James I was married (to Anne of Denmark, 1574–1619) and provided England with a royal family, who were more expensive to maintain than the virgin queen. Moreover, James was a spendthrift, and fiscal open-handedness was largely a product of his self-fashioning as a monarch.²¹ James was remarkably scholarly, and his numerous writings attest to his own formulation of monarchical absolutism.²² To this end,

¹⁸ John Summerson, *Architecture in Britain, 1530-1830* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1958), 27-40. It is Summerson who popularises the use of the term ‘prodigy house’ to refer to those houses built to facilitate Elizabeth’s summer progresses.

¹⁹ Daniel W. Hollis, III, “The Crown Lands and the Financial Dilemma in Stuart England.” *Albion* 26, no. 3 (1994): 419–42.

²⁰ Simon Thurley, *Palaces of Revolution: Life, Death and Art at the Stuart Court* (London: William Collins, 2021), 82-84.

²¹ Elizabeth Maria Taylor, “James I: Monarchical Representation and English Identity” (2020). LSU Doctoral Dissertations.

²² The two best-known are *The Trew Law of Free Monarchies* (1598); and *Basilikon Doron* (1598).

James endeavoured to appear suitably splendid, spending £47,000 on jewels in his first year as king, and thereafter £36,000 annually on fine clothes. Nor could he bear to be seen as niggardly, withholding little in the patronage granted to his closest courtiers.²³ Most importantly to this study, the tenuous state of the crown coffers did not hinder the royal penchant for architecture. Unlike Elizabeth, James and his queen commissioned numerous new buildings for royal use, and his reign saw the rise of Inigo Jones (1573–1652) and the birth of English Palladianism. Jones was appointed Surveyor-General of the King's Works in 1615. In 1616 he began building the Queen's house in Greenwich for Anne of Denmark, and for James he built a new banqueting house for Whitehall Palace (1619–1622). As a result, tensions between James and his Parliament rose as proposals to subsidise crown expenses were continually proposed, and frequently refused after protracted deliberation.²⁴

Interconfessional tumult continued throughout the Jacobean period. James was the primary target of the Gunpowder Plot of 1605, an attempt by English Catholics to blow up the House of Lords. Despite this, James approved a match between his son Charles and the Catholic Infanta Maria Anna of Spain for a substantial dowry of £600,000.²⁵ In 1621, when Parliament petitioned against the match and for stronger enforcement of anti-Catholic laws, James angrily refused and dissolved the parliament.²⁶ The match ultimately failed, and Charles married Henrietta Maria of France, who was Catholic nonetheless.

When James I died in 1625, his younger son Charles I (1600–1649) ascended to the throne. Charles was also unable to resolve the Crown's continual financial issues, and attempted to raise funds through taxation without parliamentary approval. Most substantially, this was through levying 'ship money,' traditionally imposed on coastal towns during war time, Charles extended it inland and during peacetime, without the approval of parliament.²⁷ Charles also used royal prerogative to impose heightened customs duties without parliamentary sanction.²⁸ As his reign continued, distrust between Charles and parliament grew, and Charles called upon parliament less and less, ushering in a period of 'personal rule.'²⁹

This situation was much worsened by cultural polarisations which trickled down from the tense relations between King and Parliament. Described

²³ Thurley, *Palaces of Revolution*, 84.

²⁴ Julian Goodare. "The Debts of James VI of Scotland." *The Economic History Review* 62, no. 4 (2009): 926–52. The 'great contract' to secure more crown funding had been eventually rejected by the parliament of 1610, and the 'addled parliament' of 1614 also denied many of the funds James requested.

²⁵ David Harris Willson, *King James VI & I* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1963), 357.

²⁶ Willson, *King James VI & I*, 423.

²⁷ Simon Mark Healy, "Crown revenue and the political culture of early Stuart England," thesis., (Birkbeck Institutional Theses: 2015), 198.

²⁸ Healy, "Crown revenue," 202.

²⁹ Kevin Sharpe, *Personal Rule of Charles I* (London: Yale University Press, 1995).

as an ‘out-of-touch aesthete,’ Charles I inherited (and sometimes amplified) his father’s penchant for both art and absolutism.³⁰ Under Charles, and greatly facilitated by archbishop Laud, the establishment church saw a greater return to liturgical elaboration, and a heightened architectural interest which focused itself around church chancels.³¹ This was met with widespread public suspicion, not aided by the presence of Roman Catholics in the royal court (such as Henrietta Maria). Rumours of foreign interference and ‘popish plotting’ were utilised by an increasingly Protestant parliament, whose suspicions of both king and episcopacy were championed by a lingering Puritan presence.³²

In 1639, a series of rebellions and religious conflicts around Scotland and Ireland broke out, which the crown needed more funds to suppress. In a desperate attempt to raise funds, Charles ended his personal rule to call parliament, only to be confronted with complaints about the previous decade. In 1642, Charles entered parliament to arrest five members on account of treason, ultimately failing, but further antagonising the parliament and the city of London. By the following week, he had fled northwards to Nottingham, raising his standard at Nottingham castle and beginning the English Civil Wars.

The Civil wars consisted of two battling factions, which calcified many of the confessional and constitutional conflicts of the preceding decades. The royalists supporting Charles were largely reactionary, advocating for ‘traditional’ government of both church and state. They generally supported the episcopate, argued for royal privileges in terms of idealised feudal hierarchies, and relied heavily on rural support. The more-reformed parliamentarians found much support from Puritans, the navy and the cities. Despite their reputation as radical revolutionaries, parliamentary polemic also recalled a ‘traditional’ balance of rights between king and parliament. As such, their position can sometimes be described as ‘reactionary’ or ‘traditionalist’, but this thesis will only use these terms to refer to the royalist faction, who more ostensibly sought to conserve the early Stuart *ancien régime*. The parliamentarians eventually formed a remarkably efficient ‘New Model Army,’ which rose to victory by 1648. This essentially marked the victory of republicanism over absolutism, and the less-radical members of the parliament who had not supported the New Model Army were removed.³³ In 1649, Charles I was tried for treason and beheaded in front of Inigo Jones’ banqueting house.

Charles’ family, including his son Charles, were sent into exile. The parliament then got to work issuing a series of reforming acts; the office of King and the House of Lords were abolished; and England was declared a Republic. This

³⁰ Thurley, *Palaces of Revolution*, 3.

³¹ Kenneth Fincham, “The Restoration of Altars in the 1630s,” *The Historical Journal* 44, no. 4 (2001): 919–40.

³² Caroline M. Hibbard, *Charles I and the Popish Plot* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1983).

³³ G Burgess, “Was the English Civil War a War of Religion? The Evidence of Political Propaganda” *Huntington Library Quarterly* 61 (University of California Press, 1998): 173–201.

marks what is frequently termed as the 'English interregnum,' or 'commonwealth period.' In 1653, Oliver Cromwell (1599-1658), a general of the New Model army, was declared the leader or 'Lord Protector' of the English republic, and ruled in this capacity for six years. This brief period of stability during the 1650's allowed for house building work to slowly resume, especially amongst the newly wealthy.³⁴

Cromwell died in 1658 and his son Richard Cromwell succeeded him as Lord Protector. However, the younger Cromwell was not as well-regarded in the army, and as tensions rose he renounced power nine months later. This was followed by a period of governmental instability, during which the Stuart royals in exile made advances towards the crown. Charles II (1630-1685), despite the beheading of his father, promised tolerance and lenience. He agreed to ensure moderate church policy, and liberty of conscience.³⁵ On these terms, he was invited back by parliament to rule as king, an event known as the Restoration of the Monarchy. This is the point at which the temporal scope of the thesis terminates.

0.3 Literature Review: Marxist Cultural Materialism

The interest in the dynamics of economy outlined in the breathless summary hereabove serves to establish the theoretical framework within which this thesis operates. This thesis builds upon Marxist analysis in the tradition of cultural materialism, while retaining a focus on class dynamics and wealth distribution more typical of classical Marxism. Otherwise stated, this thesis is concerned with the analysis of texts and buildings through the material conditions of their production, in order to describe how both texts and buildings had a reciprocal relationship with the economic realities of Early Modern England. Therefore, despite focusing largely on moral values such as 'magnificence' and 'hospitality,' it emphasises how the virtue of these signals were largely contingent on economic conditions, rather than being transcendent ideals with fixed values. As such, this thesis does depart from a classical Marxist analysis in line with the refinements of cultural materialism; refinements which allow the Marxist framework of analysis to reflect a complex and often contradictory set of historical conditions.

As such, before establishing the thesis within this theoretical tradition, the sizable corpus of secondary literature which distinguishes cultural materialism within the framework of Marxist analysis ought to be reviewed. The following literature review is therefore divided into three parts. Firstly, the general framework as established by Marx and continued within the Marxist historiography during the first half of the twentieth century will be summarised. Then, the subsequent historiographical debates will be discussed, most especially those debates

³⁴ Tim Mowl and Brian Earnshaw, *Architecture without Kings: The Rise of Puritan Classicism under Cromwell* (New York: Manchester University Press: Distributed by St. Martin's Press, 1995).

³⁵ Kenneth Harold Dobson Haley, *Politics in the Reign of Charles II*, Historical Association Studies (Oxford: Blackwell, 1985), 5.

concerning class fluctuation and cultural production. Finally, how the Marxist framework of analysis was refined to address these points through the work of cultural materialism will be summarised.

0.3.1 Classical Marxist Historiography in the Twentieth Century

As outlined in the previous section, the early modern period in England was one of immense social change. While these social changes have been variably discussed in terms of political intrigue, religious reform, or scientific innovation, Marxist historians have long posited that the engine of these shifts was rooted in the melange of socio-economic pressures transforming England's economy. The notion was, of course, introduced by Marx, who suggested that England's growing spirit of primitive accumulation ushered in the birth of capitalism in its most 'classic form.'³⁶ Since then, subsequent generations of Marxist economists and economic historians have highlighted early modern England's significance to the study of feudal decline and capitalist ascension. Two elements of classical Marxist historiography are worth outlining in turn; that of materialism, and the expected historical form of revolution.

Firstly, classical Marxist theory posits an epistemological stance which prioritises *material* production and its distribution. In the preface to Marx's *Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy* (1859), he proposes the framework of a 'materialist conception of history.'³⁷ To this end, he proposes a somewhat architectural analogy for society, consisting of a foundational base with a superstructure built upon it. The *base* formed the 'real' material foundation, consisting of means and relations of production such as economy and class. Built upon this base was the *superstructure*, consisting of all the ideological products of society; such as ethical theory, religion, architecture, law, etc. This superstructure exists largely to justify and maintain the base, which in turn shapes the superstructure.³⁸ Since Marx's articulation of this theory, early twentieth century Marxist historians had used the notion to make claims tinted by materialist epistemology. In such a view, *material* – that is: economy, production, and capital – is more 'real.' As such, to classical Marxist historians of early modern England, constitutional failures, interconfessional tension, and all the other pillars of humanist historiography, were addressed as *symptoms* of the 'real' economic motives for the Civil War.

³⁶ Karl Marx, *Capital* Volume I, trans. Samuel Moore et al. (Progress Publishers, 1974), 6-8. Part VIII: Primitive Accumulation. "In England alone, which we take as our example, has it the classic form..."

³⁷ Karl Marx, N. I. Stone trans., *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy* (Chicago: Charles H. Kerr & Company, 1904), 6-8.

³⁸ Marx, *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, 12 "The totality of these relations of production constitutes the economic structure of society, the real foundation, on which arises a legal and political superstructure and to which correspond definite forms of social consciousness."

Secondly, this materialist conception of history framed *revolution* as a primary engine of social change. Therefore, closely following Marx and Trotsky, the English historian Christopher Hill characterised the Civil Wars as a 'bourgeois revolution'.³⁹ In his essay *The English Revolution, 1640* (1940), Hill proposed the characterisations which would animate this historiography. The *new gentry* were cast as the capitalist bourgeoisie. This was a class of non-aristocratic land-owners, many of whom were recently ascendant through land redistribution, trading, and industry.⁴⁰ Against them were pitched the Crown, the establishment church, and the old aristocracy; who adopted a position Hill characterised as 'reactionary'.⁴¹ In his subsequent publications, Hill worked to strengthen the connections between the bourgeois revolutionaries and the growing Puritan movement, especially in *Puritanism and Revolution* (1958).⁴² Subsequent historians have also contributed evidence to support this Marxist historiography. Richard Henry Tawney has outlined a growth in the numbers and prosperity of the new gentry class, as elucidated in "The Rise of the Gentry, 1558-1640" (1941).⁴³ Following Tawney, Lawrence Stone also attempted to substantiate a decline in resources, power, and prestige of the traditional aristocracy in England during this period in "The Anatomy of the Elizabethan Aristocracy" (1948) and *The crisis of the aristocracy, 1558-1641* (1965).⁴⁴

Nevertheless, Christopher Hill's depiction of the Parliamentary victory during the Civil Wars as the decisive turning point marking the victory of bourgeois capitalists, has been since regarded as overly simplistic by historians both within and without the Marxist tradition. In 1946 the Marxist economist Maurice Dobb published his *Studies in the Emergence of Capitalism*, which emphasised that the decline of feudalism and the rise of capitalism was a remarkably gradual process with numerous phases. This was generally agreed upon in Marxist circles, but the number of phases, as well as the economic causes of this process (if not the upheaval of the Civil Wars), has remained a topic of intense contestation.

³⁹ Christopher Hill, *The English Revolution, 1640: An Essay* (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1976). cap.4. Hill mentions "The most radical achievements of the English bourgeois revolution (abolition of the monarchy, confiscation of Church, crown and aristocratic estates);" Leon Trotsky, *Terrorismus und Kommunismus: Anti-Kautsky* (1920), cap. 4. "In the seventeenth century England carried out two revolutions. The first, which brought forth great social upheavals and wars, brought amongst other things the execution of King Charles I."

⁴⁰ Hill, *The English Revolution*, 6. "The Civil War was a class war, in which the despotism of Charles I was defended by the reactionary forces of the established Church and conservative landlords, and on the other side stood the trading and industrial classes in town and countryside ... the yeomen and progressive gentry"

⁴¹ Hill, *The English Revolution*, 6; 45.

⁴² Christopher Hill, *Puritanism and Revolution: Studies in Interpretation of the English Revolution of the 17th Century* (London: Pimlico, [1958] 2001).

⁴³ R. H. Tawney, "The Rise of the Gentry, 1558-1640," *The Economic History Review* 11, no. 1 (1941): 1-38.

⁴⁴ Lawrence Stone, "The Anatomy of the Elizabethan Aristocracy," *The Economic History Review* 18, no. 1/2 (1948): 1-53; Lawrence Stone, *The Crisis of the Aristocracy, 1558-1641* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1965).

The primary economic causes of feudal decline and capitalist ascendance was the central concern of the Dobb-Sweezy debate of the 40's and 50's, and the Brenner debate of the 70's and 80's.⁴⁵ Nevertheless, the Marxist interest in early modern England has largely departed from these attempts to boil down the socio-political upheavals of the period to a primary economic cause.

0.3.2 The Storm over the Gentry

Another formidable revision to the Marxist historiography was led by Hugh Trevor-Roper, who was largely responsible for a series of debates affecting Marxist historians known as the 'storm over the gentry.'⁴⁶ In "The Elizabethan Aristocracy: an Anatomy Anatomised" (1951), through a statistical examination of landed wealth and revenues, Trevor-Roper challenged the notion of a declining nobility and rising gentry.⁴⁷ Instead, he proposed that the statistical evidence suggested a far lesser disparity in lost revenue between the gentry and aristocracy. If there was such a discrepancy, Trevor-Roper suggests, it would have been between the *old* aristocracy and gentry, and the *new* aristocracy and gentry, those newly entitled riding the wave of fresher economic energy.⁴⁸ As such, there could have conceivably been a decline within the gentry, rather than a rise.⁴⁹

To this, Lawrence Stone published a response titled "The Elizabethan Aristocracy - A Restatement," (1952) wherein Stone clarified that the Marxist articulation of 'the rise of the gentry,' referred primarily to the concentration of national income within the 'new stock,' to the frustration of very large and established landowners and the peasantry.⁵⁰ These emergent landowners formed a social class which became increasingly distinct, ultimately leading to the formation of an anti-monarchical faction by the dawn of the Civil Wars.⁵¹ Whether this emergent group could be referred to as the 'gentry' was a difficult matter. The issue has remained of such prominence, even to architectural historians, that the entire introduction to John Trevor Smith's *World of the Country House in*

⁴⁵ Paul Marlor Sweezy, Maurice Dobb, and H. K. Takahashi, *The Transition from Feudalism to Capitalism: A Symposium* (People's Book House, 1957); T. H. Aston and C. H. E. Philpin, eds, *The Brenner Debate: Agrarian Class Structure and Economic Development in Pre-Industrial Europe*, 1st edn (Cambridge University Press, 1985).

⁴⁶ J.H. Hexter, 'Storm over the Gentry', in *Reappraisals in History* (1961), 117-62

⁴⁷ Hugh Trevor-Roper, "The Elizabethan Aristocracy: An Anatomy Anatomized," *Economic History Review* (1951), 295. 'The over-simplified assumption that the nobility, as a class, were in decline while the gentry, as a class, were rising should perhaps be restated: perhaps both classes were being transformed, at an unequal rate.'

⁴⁸ Trevor-Roper, "The Elizabethan Aristocracy," 294. 'If he had compared the old aristocracy exclusively with the old gentry, or the gentry, as recruited by new members, with the aristocracy similarly recruited, I suspect that the discrepancy would have proved far less. For the older gentry, on their smaller scale, were in the same predicament as the older aristocracy; many of them too were alienating land.'

⁴⁹ Trevor-Roper, "The Elizabethan Aristocracy," 295.

⁵⁰ Trevor-Roper, "The Elizabethan Aristocracy," 320.

⁵¹ Trevor-Roper, "The Elizabethan Aristocracy," 320.

Seventeenth Century England (1999), is devoted to it.⁵² For now, it will suffice to indicate the contours of this historiographical issue; the position this thesis takes in regards to this matter will be outlined in the following section.

The storm over the gentry was not the only opposition raised to more classical Marxist historiography of Early Modern England. Against the hard materialism of Marxist historians, Trevor-Roper emphasised the importance of religious debates leading towards the Civil Wars, and provided arguments against a purely economic diagnosis of the conflict.⁵³ Numerous other oppositions to the Marxist history have been made since, many of which have served to refine the approach of left-leaning historiographies to contain the socio-economic nuances affecting the early modern period. Many of these refinements leading up to the 1970s are less relevant to this dissertation but are outlined by William MacDonald in “English Historians Repeating Themselves: The Refining of the Whig Interpretation of the English Revolution and Civil War” (1972).⁵⁴

0.3.3 Cultural Materialism

In the 1970s there emerged a prominent movement known as ‘cultural materialism’ which sought to refine the Marxist framework in view of the oppositions raised over the first half of the twentieth century. This theoretical framework was largely the work of Raymond Williams, who reformulated classical Marxist materialism in “Base and superstructure in Marxist cultural theory” (1973).⁵⁵ Key to Williams’ reformulation was the mutual effect the base and superstructure have on one another. The superstructure was not a mere reflection of the base, but constituted an active range of cultural processes which could also impact the base alongside justifying and sustaining it. Moreover, the base was to be reconsidered, not as an abstracted and mechanistic economic system, but as consisting of dynamic relations in production which were real, interpersonal, and social. This reality was one which contained contradictions, divergences, and variations, all of which contributed to the dynamism of the base. As such, base and superstructure was articulated by Williams, not as an analogy of society, but of a social *process* which was powered by the mutual instability and change revolving between base and superstructure.⁵⁶

⁵² John Trevor Cliffe, *The World of the Country House in Seventeenth-Century England* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999), cii-ciii.

⁵³ Hugh Trevor-Roper, *The Crisis of the Seventeenth Century: Religion, the Reformation, and Social Change* (Liberty Fund, 1967).

⁵⁴ William W. MacDonald, ‘English Historians Repeating Themselves: The Refining of the Whig Interpretation of the English Revolution and Civil War’, *Journal of Thought* 7, no. 3 (1972): 169-170.

⁵⁵ Raymond Williams, “Base and superstructure in Marxist cultural theory,” *New Left Review*. I.82. (1973): 3-16.

⁵⁶ Williams, “Base and superstructure,” 3-5.

This approach was soon applied to the analysis of early modern English texts by Williams and his followers. Rather than relying on retroactive statistical analysis, Williams used close textual reading to explain the culture and ideology affecting rural-urban economic relationships in *The Country and the City* (1975). The same method of close textual analysis was applied by Jonathan Dollimore and Alan Sinfield in *Political Shakespeare: New Essays in Cultural Materialism* (1985), which attempted to foreground the ideological assertions within the Shakespearean oeuvre which articulated idealised economic and class structures. The pillars of their approach were fourfold: cultural materialists prioritised 'historical context, theoretical method, political commitment, and textual analysis.'⁵⁷ As such, cultural materialism seeks to thoroughly reconstruct a 'superstructural' ideological state of affairs, in order to understand its effects on the dynamics of economy and class.

What emerged from Williams' close analysis of ideology was a threefold understanding of the cultural forces which generate change within the superstructure itself. This is explained in a chapter of Williams' *Marxism and Literature* (1977) titled "Dominant, Residual, Emergent."⁵⁸ Rather than positing a single dominant culture which worked to legitimise the bourgeoisie, Williams proposed that residual elements of culture formed in the past, as well as emergent elements of culture which are newly created, could subvert and dialectically effect ideology as a whole. As such, the points of tension between dominant, residual, and emergent cultures served to dialectically shape the translation of material realities into their ideological expressions.

0.4 Positioning this thesis: Architecture, Hospitality, and Magnificence

In its focus on the contextual study of ideology through close semiological analysis, this thesis is positioned within the historiographical tradition of cultural materialism. Most especially, it borrows the analytical tools and terms from Marxist cultural materialism in order to clearly articulate the ideological function of architecture, magnificence, and hospitality. However, unlike classical Marxist economic histories, this thesis aims to convey a narrative predicated on economic and class structures as they were understood in the early modern period, not as they are reconstructed through retrospective statistical analysis. This is not a wholly new project; this research consolidates and expands upon attempts by previous scholars to reassess architecture, magnificence, and hospitality, through the lens of cultural materialism. The following section will define this position more clearly; firstly by explaining how cultural materialism as a theory of textual analysis has been applied to architecture; secondly through explaining how hospitality can be better understood through the notion of residual and emergent

⁵⁷ Jonathan Dollimore and Alan Sinfield, eds., *Political Shakespeare: Essays in Cultural Materialism* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1985), vii.

⁵⁸ Raymond Williams, *Marxism and Literature* (Oxford New York: Oxford University press, 1992), 121-128.

ideology; thirdly through the pertinence of magnificence to the notion of class struggle; and lastly, the exclusions and omissions from this theoretical position will be made explicit.

0.4.1 Architectural History and Cultural Materialism

Implicit to classical Marxist theory is the notion that the study of architectural culture in isolation from the socio-economic conditions it reflects, is to study a symptom without acknowledging the cause. Yet, the refinements of cultural materialism serve to re-emphasise the agency of architectural production in supporting and articulating economic and class relations. Such a shift was already well underway by the 60's. For instance, the Marxist historian Charles Molesworth analysed the use of moral language in the justification of domestic economic relationships in "Property and Virtue: The Genre of the Country-House Poem in the Seventeenth Century" (1968).

More recently, Raymond Williams' subsequent formulation of cultural materialism has already seen some application in the realm of country house scholarship in the work of Kari Boyd McBride. In *Country House Discourse in Early Modern England: a Cultural Study of Landscape and Legitimacy* (2001), McBride summons Raymond Williams' rearticulation of Base and Superstructure in order to explain the social role of the country house as an object of discourse.⁵⁹ From McBride's reading of Williams, this thesis draws its understanding of domestic architecture as constituting a semiological superstructure intended to justify productive relationship of power. This does not only refer to the formal reality of the domestic architecture itself, but all the 'forms, meanings, and practises' that it contained and which surrounded it.⁶⁰ When contextualised in the social revolutions of early modern England, this highlights the importance and socio-economic salience of domestic architecture; the superstructural function of the country house becomes a weapon wielded in the defense of legitimacy. As such, this thesis draws heavily from McBride's formulation of country house discourse as participating in 'a renewed articulation of traditional justifications for privilege.'⁶¹ In such a view, domestic architecture becomes a lieu of semiological conflicts; where symbols and descriptions portraying idealised economic relationships of production are proposed or disposed of. In the words of McBride, the house becomes 'a sign of legitimacy [...] a representation of a representation, a fungible commodity in an emerging capitalist economy that can be displayed and exchanged.'⁶²

Nevertheless, in being positioned within the discipline of architectural history, this thesis also aims to extend the discourse analysis of McBride towards an analysis of built material itself. As such, it posits that the tools of textual analysis

⁵⁹ McBride, *Country House Discourse*, 3; 6.

⁶⁰ McBride, *Country House Discourse*, 9.

⁶¹ McBride, *Country House Discourse*, 4.

⁶² McBride, *Country House Discourse*, 138.

developed by cultural materialists in order to understand writing as a form of production, can also be applied to architecture inasmuch as it can be understood in semiological terms. This thesis treats both the word and the architectural element as *signs* with equal ideological agency. As such, this thesis moves from the close analysis of text towards the close analysis of architecture. Yet, it must be noted that this position does not frame architecture as an isolated form of symbolic expression of transcendent principles, nor as an ideologically self-referential language within humanist discourse. Rather, this thesis understands a building as encoding the socio-economic or material circumstances of construction, whether real or imagined. This careful understanding of semiology was best articulated by the Marxist architectural historian Manfredo Tafuri in his *Theories and history of architecture* (1980), who wrote that:

Architectur[al] history is the story of the subjection of nature to the constructive activity of the ruling classes. The historical criticism of architecture has, then, as its main object the discovery of this constructive activity. The alliance between history and semiology is only possible from this starting point. Semiology as a 'general science of signs' is an instrument in the hands of the historian – as an ideology it is an instrument of mystification.⁶³

Tafuri's sweeping historiographical approach is evidently made in response to the mystifications of modernist historiography, a historiography which has similarly affected the early modern period. His propositions, therefore, are equally applicable to the study of early modern English architectural thought. A close reading of primary sources reveals that early modern authors did not only discuss building in terms of its affective capacity or its relation to transcendent systems of order, but equally understood many building elements as serving socio-economic functions, such as signalling class relations, justifying wealth, or facilitating poor relief. As such, this thesis uses the close semiological analysis of buildings in conjunction with texts, in order to reconstruct these real and substantial links between architectural history and the economic relations of production. Nevertheless, this thesis also stresses that these links could just as easily serve as an ideological 'instrument of mystification,' which concealed changing or even adverse socio-economic realities. As such, this thesis also serves to stress how contingent and flexuous these semiological links were.

0.4.2 Hospitality: Between Revolution and Reaction

This thesis addresses the notion of hospitality as a notion with both architectural and textual expressions, which participated in both emergent and residual cultures over the early modern period. Indeed, while the notion of 'hospitality' as a protestant virtue has been well discussed in the context of the English reformation,

⁶³ Manfredo Tafuri, *Theories and History of Architecture* (New York: Harper & Row, 1980), 185-186.

the rapidity with which its revolutionary vigour revolved into reactionary rhetoric ought to be emphasised. This often confusing ideological role served by hospitality has been highlighted in Kari Boyd McBride's *Country House Discourse*. She writes:

Country house discourse drew on idealized feudal social and economic relationships, represented most conspicuously through the theory and practice of hospitality, invoking a utopia of medieval nostalgia that stood as a rebuke to all that was new while, paradoxically, accommodating the very change it excoriated.⁶⁴

This thesis broadly agrees with McBride's formulation; hospitality was indeed one of the moral values frequently wielded in discourse to mobilise the authority of the past. McBride emphasises this broader aims of this discourse as constituting:

the cultural work that allowed for the transfer of power from one group to another [...] It was only by connecting what was new to what was known—by giving innovations the imprimatur of age and by painting the *novi homines* with the patina of venerable respectability—that the revolution could be effected.⁶⁵

In such a light, hospitality was an emergent element of culture, accommodating and justifying change (albeit disguised in terms of the old), and negotiating new loci of power. Yet, this thesis posits that McBride's formulation is best understood in light of her careful analysis of the dissolution of monasteries.⁶⁶ To support this, it is worth noting that analyses of hospitality which look at the subsequent era paint it in remarkably reactionary terms.

For instance, the culturally residual element of hospitality is elucidated more clearly in the third chapter of Felicity Heal's *Hospitality in early modern England* (1990). Heal outlines certain changes in the language and symbolism of hospitality over the turn of the seventeenth century.⁶⁷ In reaction to social shifts in the household economy, conservatives lean into moral anxieties of social and moral decay.⁶⁸ The trademark sign of this polemic are complaints of the 'decay of hospitality,' a literary trope which gains remarkable prominence during the seventeenth century.⁶⁹ Heal observes that this sudden preoccupation with tradition and continuity in prescriptive literature reacts against some perceived threat to the old order.⁷⁰ But what was the threat? Could hospitality literature

⁶⁴ McBride, *Country House Discourse*, 2.

⁶⁵ McBride, *Country House Discourse*, 9.

⁶⁶ McBride, *Country House Discourse*, 12-13.

⁶⁷ Felicity Heal, *Hospitality in Early Modern England*, Oxford Studies in Social History (Oxford University Press, 1990), 91-141.

⁶⁸ Heal, *Hospitality*, 93.

⁶⁹ Heal, *Hospitality*, 93.

⁷⁰ Heal, *Hospitality*, 94-95.

really come to react against the upwards social mobility it had justified mere decades earlier?

To make sense of this contradictory nature, this thesis makes recourse to the observations of classical Marxist historians. The much earlier work of Maurice Dobb highlighted the often ironic demographics of the reactionary faction in the century preceding the Civil War. Dobb pointed out that the capitalist doctrines of continuous expansion were 'part of the reason why older and established sections of the bourgeoisie have always become so quickly reactionary and showed such readiness to ally themselves with feudal remnants or with an autocratic regime.'⁷¹ Dobb's observation challenges the easy dichotomies drawn between revolutionaries and reactionaries; it was quite possible for bourgeois revolutionaries (as well as their polemical tools) to be reorientated towards a social cause which can still be described as 'reactionary.' Wealth created by the redistribution of monastic assets, albeit *new* at the time, could easily have been understood as *natural* by the seventeenth century. Therefore, due to the social instability generated by nascent capitalism, both the traditional aristocracy and the recently ascendant could rely on reactionary formulations of hospitality to justify their privilege. It is this deeply paradoxical, dialectically rich formulation of hospitality, which this thesis seeks to expand upon.

As such, this thesis emphasises the reactionary formulation of hospitality in order to bring added historical nuance to the Marxist formulation of revolutionary hospitality. Indeed, there are at least two sides to most discourses; the revolutionary is often confronted with the reactionary. To complicate matters more, what seems revolutionary in one generation, may seem reactionary in the next. Each contains the germ of the other, generating a dialectic powered by rich internal contradictions. Therefore, rather than approaching the dual function of hospitality as a paradoxical vignette, this thesis diachronically narrates the use of the term 'hospitality' over more than a century, in order to better situate its changing function alongside England's changing socio-economic realities.

0.4.3 Magnificence in Class Struggle

Hospitality was not the only moral value wielded in the negotiation of country house discourse. Secondary literature by architectural historians have long framed the virtue of magnificence as an ideology which linked privilege to architectural expenditure. For instance, the virtue of magnificence was framed by Fraser Jenkins and Peter Howard as a rhetorical tool used to justify lavish architectural patronage in renaissance Florence.⁷² Moreover, the traces of magnificence in the

⁷¹ Maurice Herbert Dobb, *Studies in the Development of Capitalism* (Butler and Tanner, 1950), 219-220. The reactionary bourgeoisie are continuously referred to as 'the contradiction.'

⁷² A. D. Fraser Jenkins, 'Cosimo de' Medici's Patronage of Architecture and the Theory of Magnificence', *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 33 (1970): 162-70; Peter Francis Howard, *Creating Magnificence in Renaissance Florence* (Toronto: Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies, 2012).

building works of Lord Leicester in Kent have been proposed by Mary Hazard in “A Magnificent Lord: Leicester, Kenilworth, and Transformations in the Idea of Magnificence” (1987).⁷³ As such, the notion is one which is unavoidable in aiming to study the numerous moral justifications for privilege – it is a notion ripe for study through the lens of superstructural analysis.

However, only a cursory effort has been made thus far to reassess magnificence through the lens of class dynamics. This can be found in David Thomson’s *Renaissance Architecture: critics, patrons, luxury* (1990).⁷⁴ This dissertation draws strongly upon Thomson’s identification of a ‘critique of magnificence’ raised in northern Europe. To this end, Thomson draws the battlelines of the northern European debate over elaborate and sumptuous buildings. He writes:

Two schools of writing are highly informative about theories and attitudes involving architecture and building. The first might be called the ‘magnificence school,’ which comprised writers concerned with the elucidation and defence of a monarch’s right to exceptional material splendour. The second is the ‘anti-courtier school,’ which aimed to alert the public to vain, socially and economically destructive expenditure amongst the old aristocracy and the newly wealthy.⁷⁵

He continues to expand upon the general characteristics of these competing factions at the end of this section. The ‘magnificence school’ he characterises as optimists, whilst the ‘anti-courtiers’ were characterised as pessimists. He continues:

Whether writers of guide books or Aristotelian thinkers, the optimists admired and rejoiced in the spectacular change in the appearance of grand and ever-grander town and country houses. The optimists talk of magnificence. The pessimists eschewed all the very various forms of inducement concocted by the optimists to commend or legitimise the scale, cost or seeming strangeness of these changes. The pessimists were convinced that they were watching what was at the very least a developing ailment, but probably a real disease, which if left unchecked would contribute to major instability in the economy, and call into question traditional, stable relations amongst the haves and the ‘have-less,’ and the unmentioned droves of the ‘have-nothings’. The pessimists brood over luxury.⁷⁶

⁷³ Mary E. Hazard, ‘A Magnificent Lord: Leicester, Kenilworth, and Transformations in the Idea of Magnificence’, *Cahiers Élisabéthains* 31, no. 1 (1987): 11–35. More on this corpus of literature can be found in Chapter Two, Section 2.1 (The Aristotelian virtue of Magnificence).

⁷⁴ David Thomson, *Renaissance Architecture: Critics, Patrons, Luxury*, with Internet Archive (Manchester University Press, 1993).

⁷⁵ Thomson, *Renaissance Architecture*, 28.

⁷⁶ Thomson, *Renaissance Architecture*, 48.

This brooding certainly extended to England, and Thompson continues to note the correlation between the critique of magnificence and complaints concerning the decay of hospitality.⁷⁷ Yet, given the secondary literature concerning hospitality, this casts some doubt on Thompson's assertion that the critiques of magnificence (and lamentations of declining hospitality) were wielded by an exclusively *anti-courtier* school. Felicity Heal has sufficiently illustrated that the early Stuart monarchs themselves, especially James I, personally championed the revival of traditional hospitality.⁷⁸ Moreover, both Mary Ann C. McGuire and Alistair Fowler have sufficiently proven that the country house poem, which often eschewed magnificence and praised traditional hospitality, was a literary genre traded between undeniably courtly political actors.⁷⁹

Once again, this thesis uses a Marxist theoretical framework to offer a means by which to understand these contradictions. To recycle McBride's description of country house discourse, magnificence is similarly turned into a 'sign of legitimacy [...] a representation of a representation, a fungible commodity in an emerging capitalist economy that can be displayed and exchanged.'⁸⁰ As such, it undergoes a dialectical process which is remarkably similar to that of hospitality, whereby its revolutionary role in justifying shifts in the distribution of economic power is watered down by its reduction to a mere semiological representation. This seemingly 'false' signalling is what exposes it to critiques by a reactionary faction. In England, this reactionary faction largely consisted of king and court, those oxymoronic '*haves*' who took the side (at least verbally) of the '*have-less*' to bolster their denouncements of an ascendant capitalist class. In such a way, this thesis uses the analytical tools and terms of Marxist cultural materialism, in order to clarify the seemingly contradictory role played by magnificence the history of class struggle.

However, it is worth noting that by borrowing the tools and terms of Marxist historians, this thesis also inherits many of the formative tensions affecting Marxist recollections of early modern class conflict. As summarised earlier, one particularly pertinent debate to the question of class dynamics was the 'storm over the gentry' initiated by Hugh Trevor-Roper. While Christopher Hill and Lawrence Stone had conflated the 'rising gentry' with a newly-enriched class of bourgeois capitalists, Trevor-Roper used a statistical analysis of individual wealth and revenues to argue that different sections of the gentry and aristocracy both rose and fell.⁸¹ In response, Stone reiterated that the 'rising gentry' referred to the

⁷⁷ Thomson, *Renaissance Architecture*, 38-39.

⁷⁸ Heal, *Hospitality*, 118-119.

⁷⁹ Mary Ann C. McGuire. "The Cavalier Country-House Poem: Mutations on a Jonsonian Tradition." *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900* 19, no. 1 (1979): 93-108; Alastair Fowler, ed., *The Country House Poem: A Cabinet of Seventeenth-Century Estate Poems* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh Univ. Press, 1994).

⁸⁰ McBride, *Country House Discourse*, 138.

⁸¹ See subsection 0.3.2

concentration of national income within the 'new stock.'⁸² Close to the eye of the storm lay conflicting definitions of the term 'gentry.' The matter is one contested throughout both primary and secondary sources. As observed by the lawyer John Selden (1584-1654) 'What a Gentleman is, 'tis hard with us to define. In other Countries he is known by his Privileges; in Westminster Hall he is one that is reputed one.'⁸³ As such, this thesis avoids the epistemological problem faced by economic historians in defining the gentry as a distinct social category, by referring primarily to the *reputation* of the gentry. This thesis does not engage with whether or not these stereotypes overlapped perfectly with 'gentlemen' as defined by the Court of Chivalry, or 'gentlemen' as addressed in subsidy rolls and tax returns, between which sufficient conflict has already been observed.⁸⁴

Indeed, it cannot be contested that the reputation of the gentry as proposed by Marxist historians agrees particularly well with (and is certainly derived from) the persistent early modern stereotypes of the gentry as greedy and vain. The stereotype is articulated best by Godfrey Goodman in 1616, who noted that the gentry 'haue so much improued their estates, ra'ckt their poore tenants, giuen ouer house-keeping, and liue retiredlie, [which] drawes with it far greater charge and expense.'⁸⁵ This was doubtlessly a generalisation. The gentry continued to comprise numerous professional groups: clergymen, doctors, lawyers, and merchants, many of whom worked (by some definition) rather than 'living retiredly.' In spite of this, the gentry were widely reputed to have benefited most from new idle forms of income, such as charging extortionate rent (rent-racking), or industrial speculation. They were also stereotyped as spending their spoils primarily on pleasure. Goodman notes that another stereotypical vanity of the 'Gentrie, is, their needlesse and vnprofitable buildings, especially when Citizens turne Gentlemen.'⁸⁶ Yet, when circumstances demanded architectural expenditures beyond the elaboration of country houses, the gentry were inversely stereotyped as unreliable. Gyles Fleming, for instance, notes that the gentry could not be relied upon for donations towards the repair of St Paul's, announcing in 1634 that 'our Gentry [are] for a great part so vaine, that they never consider of it; nor seldome of any thing so serious: whose contributions it may be, would be more liberall to a Horse-race, than to a Synagogue.'⁸⁷ Numerous other examples of such stereotypes affecting the gentry will be peppered throughout the following chapters.

⁸² Trevor-Roper, "The Elizabethan Aristocracy," 320.

⁸³ John Selden, *Table-Talk: Being the Discourses of John Selden, Esq.* (London: Henry Moseley, 1689), 60.

⁸⁴ Cliffe, *The World of the Country House in Seventeenth-Century England* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999), cii-ciii.

⁸⁵ Godfrey Goodman, *The Fall of Man, or the Corruption of Nature* (London: Felix Kyngston, 1616), 164.

⁸⁶ Godfrey Goodman, *The Fall of Man, or the Corruption of Nature* (London: Felix Kyngston, 1616), 165.

⁸⁷ Gyles Fleming, *Magnificence Exemplified: And, the Repaire of Saint Pauls* (London: Richard Badger for Thomas Alchorn, 1634), 51.

Of course, there were many individuals and case studies which did not conform to these stereotypes. The most prominent speculative developer of the Caroline period, Francis Russell, was indisputably a nobleman; being a member of the peerage as the fourth Earl of Bedford.⁸⁸ Moreover, William Cavendish greatly augmented his fortune through investments in coal mining and land improvement.⁸⁹ He was admitted to the peerage as a baron in 1605, and later as Earl of Devonshire in 1618, over which time he had built up Bolsover Little Castle (c. 1613–1630). No primary sources have been found to suggest whether such forms of passive income and new building were seen as more permissible amongst the peerage, or whether such peers were acting in a manner typical of gentry. Moreover, whether these individual cases amass into a revisionist 'rise of the nobility,' is a statistical analysis better left to economic historians like Trevor-Roper. Whether or not the gentry were economically ascendant, what this thesis affirms is that early modern writers continued to paint the gentry and the newly-enriched with a similar brush, stereotyping them as self-enriching and vain. It is towards this ideological construct of the gentry, rather than to statistical realities, to which this thesis' use of the term 'gentry' primarily refers.

0.4.4 Methodological Omissions

In adopting this theoretical framework, this thesis remains distant from certain other historiographical tendencies. Three examples are worth explicitly stating.

Firstly, this thesis does not utilise a liberal humanist reading to propose a historically transcendent framework of architectural ethics which is semiologically stable. Instead, it stresses that the signification of ethics in texts and building was remarkably contingent on material realities, and that this flexuous reality was acknowledged by many writers and thinkers in early modern England. It is worth noting that this thesis emphasises the ironic corruptibility of magnificence and hospitality because the matter has remained a marked source of confusion for architectural historians. There has persisted a tendency to a liberal humanist reading of reactionary literature urging hospitality, as proof that the ruling classes were pressingly aware of their moral duty to uphold the traditional order, and that the fulfillment of this duty justified the erection of sumptuous private houses.⁹⁰ The resulting historiography is one which aims to justify both sumptuous building and free-market liberalism, through a present-day rearticulation of the theory of magnificence.⁹¹ The premise is a fascinating one, and depends much on

⁸⁸ Dianne Duggan, "'London the Ring, Covent Garden the Jewell of That Ring': New Light on Covent Garden," *Architectural History* 43 (2000): 140–61, <https://doi.org/10.2307/1568690>.

⁸⁹ H. C. G. Matthew and B. Harrison, eds., "Cavendish, William, first earl of Devonshire (1552–1626)," *The Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

⁹⁰ Jules Lubbock, *The Tyranny of Taste: The Politics of Architecture and Design in Britain, 1550–1960* (Yale University Press, 1995). Lubbock has described himself as a speechwriter for the Prince of Wales, and a vocal promoter of New Urbanism.

⁹¹ Lubbock, *The Tyranny of Taste*, 69. on Burghley "How could so sober, prudent, calculating and indeed Puritanical a statesman be seized by such a mania in this one single area of his life? But

a humanist reading of primary sources with a regard towards transcendent ethical principles.⁹² Yet, as tempting as it may be for an architectural historian to justify architecture by any means, this thesis is positioned a fair distance away from this historiographical tendency.

Secondly, this thesis is not conceived as a recovery project aimed towards centering marginalised voices. While the ideological objects of study cite the interests of numerous marginalised groups, such as the poor, pilgrims, foreigners, and widows; it must be conceded that these marginalised groups had little say in the ideologies which represented them. Rather, in parsing a broad corpus of primary sources, this thesis self-consciously studies the function of hegemony; relaying architectural thought as it was frequently conceived by the literate, wealthy, and leisurely. This is not to valorise such hegemonic voices, but also shows how marginalised groups and identities could be invoked in service of ultimately elite interests. Whilst it is indeed conceivable to reconstruct, for example, the voices of the lower classes through local petitions or personal correspondence, this would be (tragically) a wholly separate study from the analysis of the hegemonic ideologies which represented them.

This approach extends in a particular way to the treatment of queer and female agency. The historical period in question sees England's first female monarch succeeded by a notoriously bisexual king, whose respective courts saw a concentration of queer and female presence.⁹³ This was likewise the age of Elizabeth of Hardwick, of Henrietta Maria, of Anne of Denmark, and of George Villiers. Due to the privileged position wielded by these individuals, they too

one not go to the other extreme and deny him and his fellow peers any desire to create places of magnificence and beauty as well. It was not just a matter of putting the poor to any old how, but putting them to such work as provided a 'school for craftsmen whose skills would contribute to the creation of beautiful things: the culture that was created by these means sustained the economy rather than vice versa."

⁹² Lubbock, *The Tyranny of Taste*, 42–47. Lubbock's historiographical claims are three: that accusations of luxury were pitched against London-bound immigration, not architectural ostentation; that Stuart proclamations stopping said immigration was ultimately effective in 'saving hospitality;' and thirdly, that those who built magnificently were fulfilling a vital economic and political function, using Lord Burghley's hospitality as an example: "Over and over again we have been told that country houses are the very epitome of competitive consumption, the most ostentatious of status symbols and the most blatant displays of power and wealth. But competitive consumption is one of those catch-all historical explanations, 'a deus ex machina to be called upon when no other explanation is available', similar to 'the rise of the middle classes' and 'the rise of the money economy' that historians use to bridge over problems that have not been properly examined or resolved. I shall argue, on the contrary, that it is our modern idea of the country house that is incorrect and that the ideal expressed in the proclamations was actually followed to a considerable degree [...] there is no reason why public duty and design must be mutually exclusive; people can, without dishonour, be motivated by both. [...] It was not the product of some uncontrollable lust or competitive desire for magnificence, but the proper behaviour of someone aware of their duty: the behaviour that others were expected to imitate consciously according to their degree"

⁹³ Gareth Russell, *Queen James: The Life and Loves of Britain's First King* (London: Williams Collins, 2025).

were praised as magnificent alongside their heterosexual male counterparts. For instance, the magnificence of Henrietta Maria is also discussed in much greater detail in *Henrietta Maria and the materials of magnificence* (2015). Similarly, Anne of Denmark is praised as magnificent in *Hymens triumph A pastorall tragicomædie* (1615), and the magnificence of George Villiers is praised in Henry Wotton's *A parallel betweene Robert late Earle of Essex, and George late Duke of Buckingham* (1641).⁹⁴ Hospitality was also attributed to women alongside their husbands; Joseph Wybarne explains that 'The Names of Lord and Ladie, as is proued out of the Saxon recordes, were giuen in auncient time, for true hospitality.'⁹⁵

Nevertheless, in neither the realm of magnificence nor hospitality is any advantage offered by femininity; Wybarne is clear in stating that, enabled by a hospitable lord, the lady may be tasked with 'diuiding or distributing Bread allowed by her Lord and husband.'⁹⁶ Indeed, despite the political prominence of queer and female figures, the agency their voices had to steer the bulk of hegemonic discourses seemed remarkably meager. As such, the ideological representation of female and queer characteristics such as effeminacy and buggery, remained overwhelmingly negative.⁹⁷ In Caroline topographical comedies, for example, the feminine was portrayed as lascivious, seductive, and dangerously ambitious.⁹⁸ Perhaps for this reason, Inigo Jones preferred that architecture remained ostensibly 'masculine and unaffected.'⁹⁹ While an archival study of female and queer voices aimed towards the subversion of this dominant ideology is indeed necessary, this thesis is first and foremost aimed towards understanding the ideology in question.

0.5 Central Argument

In building upon the work of Marxist cultural materialism, this thesis approaches both building culture and moralising literature as ideological superstructures which both support, and are shaped by, productive economic relationships. This mode of analysis is particularly pertinent to the values of magnificence and hospitality, both of which were formulated to support certain uses of wealth. As such, both values directly negotiated how privilege was to be articulated

⁹⁴ Samuel Daniel, *Hymens Triumph A Pastorall Tragicomædie. Presented at the Queenes Court in the Strand, at Her Maiesties Magnificent Entertainment* (London: John Legat for Francis Constable, 1615), unpaginated, 'Vnto the glory of your memorie:As being a piece of that solemnitie, Which your Magnificence did celebrate;' Henry Wotton, *A Parallel Betweene Robert Late Earle of Essex, and George Late Duke of Buckingham* (1641), unpaginated. 'The Earl I account the more liberall, and the D[uke]. the more magnificent.'

⁹⁵ Joseph Wybarne, *The New Age of Old Names* (London: John Windet, 1609), 35.

⁹⁶ Wybarne, *The New Age of Old Names* 35.

⁹⁷ Alan Stewart, ed., *Close Readers: Humanism and Sodomy in Early Modern England*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2014).

⁹⁸ Mimi Yiu, "Facing Places in Richard Brome's 'The Weeding of Covent Garden,'" *Early Theatre* 10, no. 2 (2007): 149–58.

⁹⁹ Inigo Jones, *Inigo Jones's Roman Sketchbook*, ed. Edward Chaney (S.l.: Roxburghe Club, 2006), 166.

and justified. In turn, the productive forces of the economic base which they sustained, directly shaped architectural production.

However, the dynamism of England's basic economic framework over the early modern period constantly displaced the ideological and semiological tools that were intended to support it. As such, the gradual shift from feudalism to capitalism destabilised how domestic architecture was intended to articulate both authority and social concern. What emerges can be understood as a dialectical process, where the inherent contradictions of moral signification are constantly drawn out and questioned. To expand: there exists a persistent gap between morality and its signification, between virtue and virtue signalling. Especially during moments of moral panic or perceived ethical decline, there is a tendency to fixate on this discrepancy, and to lament that all ethics have been corrupted by 'mere' aesthetics. As a result, moral signs are discarded like fungible commodities, as priests, politicians, and polemicists scramble to ideologically replace them. This process is the core of this thesis, and so its primary hypothesis is presented as a narrative.

If one was to summarise this narrative in the broadest possible terms without fear of generalisation, it would read as follows. A constant lineage of moral discourse on the virtue of magnificence, originating in antiquity, had persisted in western Europe. This formulation of magnificence was primarily moral, its locus exists within certain political agents by virtue of their nobility.¹⁰⁰ Aristotle's contribution to this discourse was an increased emphasis on the proper use of accumulated wealth and its social impact. This is an emphasis which persists in subsequent writings stretching through to the early modern period. Whilst Aristotle mentioned architecture in passing, there is an increased English interest taken in the architectural implications of magnificence as early as the fifteenth century, similar to Italy and the Low Countries.¹⁰¹ Over the sixteenth century, the magnificence shown through a nobleman's judgement in his architectural charges, gradually came to be imputed upon the fabric of the building itself.¹⁰² As such, magnificence gradually accumulated its own means of architectural expression, one which was ostensibly large, lavish, and sumptuous. This called into question how public-spirited and virtuous such architectural elaboration really was. Amidst the perceived rise in curious architectural elaboration over the Elizabethan period, magnificence was ultimately ineffective in shielding itself against critiques of luxury and ostentation. Along with fine clothing, makeup, and tobacco,

¹⁰⁰ Of course, differing notions of nobility had an impact on the reception of magnificence – whether by Aristotle, Cicero, Aquinas, etc. See: William Harris, *Skelton's Magnificence and the Cardinal Virtue Tradition* (University of North Carolina Press, 1965).

¹⁰¹ "Liber Niger Domus Regis Anglia," in *A Collection of Ordinances and Regulations for the Government of the Royal Household, Made in Divers Reigns: From King Edward III to King William and Queen Mary, Also Receipts in Ancient Cookery* (London: Printed for the Society of Antiquaries by John Nichols, 1790), 19.

¹⁰² This is explained in greater detail in Chapter Two, Section 2.1 (The Aristotelian virtue of Magnificence).

elaborate domestic architecture was decried as a foreign vice disproportionately affecting the *nouveau riche*. Such critiques were often aimed at the burgeoning new gentry, launched by reactionary polemicists who wished to reassert the 'natural' (normally feudal) privileges of the old aristocracy. Yet, there were two moral sides to their polemical trope; as conservatives denigrated magnificence as a poor sign of social concern, they enshrined 'hospitality' in its place. It was hospitality which became a true sign of virtuous and altruistic social concern. Hospitality was not, in their minds, the product of ambitious foreign imitation, but a 'home-grown English virtue.' It compounded the nostalgic imaginary of a rustic medieval age, rooted in a vision of convivial Saxon feasting. Yet, a closer examination of the origins of such reactionary 'hospitality discourse' shows that it, too, was an ideological tool used to justify the accumulation of privilege. Its earlier polemical use served to bolster the legitimacy of English landowners who had profited from the dissolution and redistribution of monastic assets. With this in mind, hospitality also contained the germ of contradiction; it also treaded the fine line between virtue and virtue signalling. This contrary nature bloomed over the sixteenth century, as hospitality began to develop distinct architectural semiologies. Yet, these signals were engineered to avoid all the moral pitfalls of magnificence. While magnificence was superficial, hospitality was pragmatic; while magnificence fed the eyes, hospitality fed the mouth. Reactionary writers articulated spatial semiologies of hospitality which avoided the decorative and ostentatious, while emphasising the utilitarian and phenomenological experience of domestic space. The social impact once sought through tasteful, elaborate, open-handedly expensive architectural patronage, was supplanted by a concern for smoking chimneys, roaring hearths, open doors, and groaning boards. This polemic marked the moral ascendancy of the rustic over the refined; but crucially, it existed largely contrary to trends in architectural production. Indeed, the solidifying spatial imaginary illustrated in this polemic was undoubtedly reactionary in its approach to architecture. It was a means by which to see virtue itself become extinguished in the process of architectural innovation.

Given the dynamics of action and reaction which power this narrative, it should be evident why this narrative moves towards better understanding the reactionary polemical stance. Whilst Raymond Williams stressed the importance of so-called 'residual cultures' on the formation of ideology, the reactionary voice in early modern architectural discourse remains much less studied than the emergent one. Moreover, this was a polemic which was rich in seemingly contradictory dialectical intrigue both then and now. While it is broadly acknowledged that this rhetoric guarded the interests of those who profited off the remnants of the manorial economy, there are certain other less-intuitive traits which this thesis seeks to emphasise. Firstly, despite being wielded by a privileged aristocracy, this rhetoric may be feasibly termed as *anti-capitalist* in its resistance to the first signs of a society increasingly shaped by consumption, speculation, commodified labor, and the pursuit of private accumulation. As such, reactionary objections were frequently raised to numerous habits emerging in the gentry: the increasing

enclosure of arable commons; the raising of rent to generate profit (i.e. rent-racking); accruing capital through charging interest; sumptuary luxury; and most pertinently, the construction of elaborate domestic architecture.¹⁰³ Secondly, as a result, this reactionary rhetoric faced the difficult task of justifying both the crown's right to sumptuous material display, while criticising similar modes of display in the ascendant bourgeoisie. This was a dialectical negotiation which was largely recorded within the discourse on magnificence. Thirdly, the resulting polemic borrowed many of the rhetorical tools used by the opposing faction, and in writing may seem deceptively similar. However, it used these rhetorical tools to tease out the logical contradictions of the opposing faction. To Puritan preaching against superficiality, it argued that mere preaching was also a superficial sign. To the republican dismantling of feudal privileges, it argued that they, too, had neglected the underprivileged. This is particularly evident in the discourse on how hospitality was to be enacted through domestic architecture. Finally, it should be clarified that the reproduction of this polemic was not restricted to the feudal land-owning class, even if it served their interests. Rather, the nostalgic rhetoric it employed proved attractive to a diverse group of authors; songwriters penning broadside ballads; to proselytising clerics; Cambridge academics; and sometimes even more established sections of the bourgeoisie.

0.6 Methodology and Limitations

Three terms define this thesis' primary subject matter; magnificence, hospitality, and domestic architecture. All three constituted ideological signifiers which negotiated the material realities of nascent capitalism. Therefore, the primary object of such research is ultimately *semiological*; including its semantic, aesthetic, and imaginary dimensions. As such, this thesis employs certain methods of engagement with both textual and architectural sources, which works on the scale of the individual word or object, in order to gauge the fluctuating value of such signifiers in relation to historical realities.

There are varied methods by which to infer the meaning and value of a sign from texts. A distinct minority of texts provide explicit meanings and valuations for the signs they use. Dictionaries are perhaps the most obvious example, but moral treatises also provide meanings and moral valuations for a list of terms. While it is tempting to take the definitions and valuations these texts provide, and to impute them on the writing of other authors, this would substantially underestimate the variation in opinion between authors. As such, this thesis seeks to understand signs, not only through how they are *defined*, but also how they are *used*.¹⁰⁴ This method is admittedly more complex, and requires a much larger sample size of

¹⁰³ This is explained in greater detail in Chapter Three, Section 3.3 (Against the Magnificent Country House: Ruinous, Ambitious, and Useless).

¹⁰⁴ This approach is developed in great detail by my colleague Mats Dijkdrent in his thesis on *magnificentia* in fifteenth and sixteenth century Rouen, Antwerp and Nuremberg. He will defend this thesis in the course of 2026-2027.

texts, but it is necessary in order to ensure that the historical understanding of a sign is not monopolised by the voices of those who provide definitions. Therefore, the methodological approach taken in this thesis emphasises the importance of *context* – that is, the *text* which surrounds a word or object when it is used. In order to avoid anachronistic imputations of meaning, this method acknowledges that a sign in isolation often gives very little indication of its meaning, whether as intended or as received. It is through examining its contextual *use*, that the meaning and value being given to a sign can be tentatively inferred.

This is particularly important when examining the words ‘magnificence’ and ‘hospitality.’ Firstly, it is crucial that the textual sources consulted explicitly use those terms, with some allowance for the latin cognates ‘magnificentia’ and ‘hospitalitas.’ Secondly, these words are methodologically approached as a utility, which can be used in numerous ways in different contexts. Therefore, care has been taken not to remove words from the textual contexts which give them significance, often presenting them in-situ within longer excerpts. This allows for more transparency in the inference of value; that is, whether a word is being used in a positive or negative (and virtuous or vicious) sense.

The same reasoning applies to the imputation of meaning and value upon architectural signs. The methodological approach used in examining *architectural* sources is driven by the semiological identification of building qualities and elements. Architectural qualities (scale, material, cost) as well as architectural elements (rooms, doors, furnishings), both as words and as artifacts, are equally treated as *signs*: vessels of meaning which can be used as ideological representations. Therefore, as with any sign, architectural qualities or elements in isolation give very little indication of their meaning or moral value. As such, gauging those meanings also requires architectural qualities or elements to be contextualised within texts. This method avoids anachronistic assumptions of meaning predicated on the formal attributes of architecture or their phenomenological and psychological effects. Rather, it contends that meaning is constructed and ‘perceived into’ architectural qualities and elements in a manner which is contingent on historical realities. This constructed gaze is both driven by, and reflected in, texts.

Therefore, the first stage of research consisted of database building. It consisted of collecting data points indicating the way numerous authors used different signs within their texts. This stage was primarily word-driven, using both moral signs (primarily ‘magnificence’ and ‘hospitality’) as well as architectural signs (e.g. ‘buttery’ ‘staircase’ or ‘hearth’). Both signs consist of words, but more importantly, they equally refer to a moral or architectural structure.

Assembling a significant database requires a remarkably large sample size of texts. Thankfully, assembling different usages of terminology has been much more feasible since the advent of digitised primary sources and text-based search engines. Of the many platforms used, a special mention must be made of Early English Books Online (EEBO), both the ProQuest Platform and the University of Michigan Digital Collections Platform. The bulk of primary sources referenced are available for consultation on EEBO platforms, with a

minority of primary sources being digitised in publicly accessible platforms like Project Gutenberg, Digital Archives, Gallica, and Google Books, or platforms with restricted access such as Gale's *State Papers Domestic*. Without the dedicated work of hundreds of scholars, archivists, and technicians, who contributed to these platforms, the research methods employed by this thesis would have proven impracticable in a lifetime, let alone a four-year period. As such, searchability remains the cornerstone of this thesis' method, and it was equally important to render searchable texts which had not been previously digitised. To this end, Optical Character Recognition (OCR) software was heavily utilised on printed sources, and AI Palaeographic software such as Transkribus by READ-COOP, was used on handwritten sources. The use of these platforms allows shifts in the usage of terms to be tracked across a notably broader range of textual genres than was generally practicable in the past, well exceeding the conventional limits of the architectural treatise.

This is especially crucial in researching the social significance of architecture, as it permits the assembly of a corpus that has a readership spanning various social groups. This concern with the wider public moral perception of architecture is reflected in the methods employed to select texts. Priority is given to texts which are intended for public dissemination: printed volumes, sermons, etc. Most especially, care has been taken to include textual genres that often fall beyond the limits of the architectural treatise. Genres such as plays, songs, phrasebooks, or political pamphlets, record a public understanding of architecture which is oftentimes distinct from the theories of architectural practitioners. This constitutes what this thesis refers to as *architectural thought* – the sum total of perspectives, not only on architecture but *through* architecture, using architectural signs as a conveyor of ideological meaning.

After assembling this database compiling different uses of moral and architectural signifiers in texts, the next stage of research involved sorting the use of key terms into similar groups. This allowed for the most prominent uses of particular signs to come to the fore, as well as mitigated the impact of outlying texts which use signs carelessly, or even anachronistically. Once these groups were assembled, it was possible to closely study the divergences between the most prominent uses of each term. Two types of divergence rose to the fore. The first is temporal: certain signs were used differently from period to period, and this allowed groups to be strung together in a narrative sense to articulate certain semiological trends. However, there were some divergences which were equally distributed throughout temporal periods. These instances of divergence largely signalled broader divergences in ideology. *Ideology* refers to all the superstructural tools which support the relations of production. This definition of ideology has numerous facets, but this thesis focuses on its constitutional, confessional, and architectural dimensions.

These ideological divergences need to be carefully validated. In order to connect them with the use of signs, textual trends needed to be held alongside constitutional, confessional, and architectural developments. Three source types prove valuable to this end: firstly, this thesis relies heavily on secondary

literature which outlines the constitutional and confessional tendencies of the historical period in question, the main corpus of which has been outlined in the literature review; secondly, this thesis relies on authorial biographies as a means to approximate an ideological stance of respective authors; thirdly, this thesis includes within the scope of its research the physical condition of buildings, be it to a lesser extent. As has been mentioned, this thesis places both architectural terms and artifacts in parallel. In doing so, it also notes ideological agreements and divergences between written, built, and represented architectural form. To this end, this thesis examines architectural terms, artifacts, and drawings together, whenever the surviving evidence allows.

This methodology remains nonetheless limited, and this thesis' proposals should be read in light of these limitations. Firstly, and most prominently, it remains impossible to discern the intended meaning of a sign in the early modern period with absolute certainty. Moreover, it remains impossible to reconstruct how a sign was understood by an early modern audience with absolute certainty. While this thesis relies on contextualisation in order to gauge meaning, textual context is often only a tentative indicator of how a sign is defined or valued by the author, and provides no information on how the sign is understood by its audience.

Secondly, a related limitation is a general lack of quantitative information on the reception of texts. Early Modern print runs are generally unrecorded, and even if a publication has a sizable print run, or numerous editions, it is no guarantee that any of the copies were bought and read. The data needed to fill this lacuna is scarce. Catalogues of book ownership and resale cover only a small percentage of volumes. A minority of early modern volumes see contemporary citations, citations generally being reserved for more established and authoritative precedents. Similarly, annotated volumes, whilst extremely valuable to the study of textual reception, are relatively scant, with the bulk of publications not having any annotated copies. With the exception of the aforementioned instances, the surviving evidence of textual distribution and reception is insufficient in discerning a text's broader impact on its contemporary society. As such, occurrences of intertextual influence are largely conjectured from biographical connections or textual similarities.

Thirdly, while many of this thesis' proposals are predicated on a fracturing ideological landscape, there is sometimes insufficient information to locate an author within this ideological landscape with much certainty. There are certain obfuscating factors; firstly, not every author falls neatly into a confessional or constitutional faction. For example, there were numerous means and degrees of compromise between Catholic recusancy and radical Puritanism. Secondly, especially during a period of (violent) conflict, ideological biases are often purposefully concealed. In these instances, suggestive evidence such as book dedications, episcopal or royal patronage, or other forms of income, need to be consulted to make tentative estimations. Thirdly, it is not uncommon for ideologically loaded signs to be used or made by authors unknowingly. Such textual tropes can circulate within literary genres quite freely, without indicating

any partisanship on the part of the author. Given these obfuscating factors, there are numerous points in this thesis where, due to a lack of information, texts are taken as ideological statements *eo ipso*, without conjecturing the ideological biases of their authors.

0.7 Thesis Structure

The structure of this thesis is arranged both thematically and chronologically. Following its central themes of architecture and virtuous display, it narrates the dialectical shift between magnificence and hospitality, and discusses the theoretical foundation of their turbulent relationship. Taken together, these chapters work towards an understanding of building ethics which is informed by the dialectical process which they narrate.

Chapter one sets the scene, outlining the shared aims of two values, magnificence and hospitality, which were by no means natural enemies. Indeed, there were no classical sources, nor authoritative theological works, which explicitly opposed magnificence with hospitality. Yet, these sources also did not articulate a positive relationship between magnificence and hospitality. Therefore, in order to understand how this relationship was understood in early modern England, two types of primary sources are consulted.

The first are moral treatises, which are the obvious starting point for any investigation into early modern ethical thought. However, only three such treatises clearly map a theoretical relationship between magnificence and hospitality. Two things can be gleaned from this; firstly, both magnificence and hospitality are entangled with virtues motivating generosity, such as liberality and beneficence. Secondly, early modern authors struggled to support this interrelation with a coherent corpus of authoritative sources.

As such, a second type of source material will be consulted; these are sources which do not explicitly theorise upon the terms ‘magnificence’ and ‘hospitality,’ but map a correlation between the two virtues in their mutual expression by individuals. These sources, aimed at praising the virtues of an individual, also partially reveal the political and social utility of both terms. Indeed, both ‘magnificence’ and ‘hospitality’ were variously used throughout the Elizabethan and early Stuart period as a justification for economic, social, and political privilege. As such, their primary overlap was their ideological function, which was a place of both correlation and contention.

Chapter two looks with more specificity at the reactionary use of the virtue of magnificence in order to bolster the power of the crown and traditional aristocracy, as well as to delegitimize the radically reforming and socially ascendant. Yet, even within the boundaries of reactionary ideology, there are numerous dimensions of the term ‘magnificence’ which variously emphasised towards different reactionary ends. Firstly, there was the notion of magnificence as a type of liberality localised within the ruling classes. This definition of magnificence was useful in highlighting

the lack of public endowments given by more-reformed Protestants and the ascendant gentry – such as contributions to the building and maintenance of churches, colleges, hospitals, and infrastructure.

However, this was not to suggest that the aristocracy, especially the Stuarts, had the means or desire to fund extensive public building programs. Rather, over the turn of the seventeenth century there is also an increasing emphasis on the importance of high birth within the definition of magnificence. This alternative reactionary articulation of magnificence de-emphasized charitable endowments and reaffirmed a social order where class and birth were linked by virtue of nobility. Moreover, it emphasised the King's born entitlement to the possession and display of wealth; a view which had ostensibly architectural manifestations. Indeed, over the course of this chapter can also be observed a gradual aestheticisation of magnificence in reactionary language; one which also comes to be applied to the country house.

The final section of this chapter looks at the aestheticised dimension of the term magnificence as used by antiquarians and traded between courtiers in relation to the country house. As such it illustrates how, even though magnificence was semantically linked to notions of liberality or high birth, it also undertook a heavily symbolic or representative capacity when applied to domestic architecture.

Chapter three outlines how a sustained critique of magnificence occurred over the seventeenth century, with an increasing emphasis on the supremacy of hospitality. Indeed, the aestheticisation of magnificence had exposed magnificence to critiques of superficiality by the iconoclastic reformers. This polemic against magnificence was essentially co-opted by the reactionary faction, most especially in a sustained critique of the magnificent *country house*. Indeed, the aestheticised reactionary understanding of the magnificent country house was the germ of its own critique, whereby the semiological function of magnificence was called into question.

Firstly, the notion of magnificent country houses inherited many well-established anxieties around the social and economic dangers of large-scale house-building projects. Such reckless endeavours were urged against by Christ in St. Luke's gospel, and was frequently reiterated in late medieval didactic literature. Early modern reactionaries used this advice in two ways; firstly they used it to argue that magnificent country houses were proof that the newly wealthy were not capable of maintaining their fortunes or authority throughout generations. Secondly, they used it to advise restraint in magnificent house building amongst the traditional aristocracy, sustaining both the dignity of their mediaeval houses, as well as their generational wealth.

Secondly, magnificent country houses were critiqued by reactionaries as means of political and economic ambition. These objections towards ambition reacted against the impacts of a developing market economy on the distribution of political power. Such complaints were lodged against those who treated their house as an investment; ultimately linked to broader complaints about the accretion of capital. Moreover, such complaints accused the socially ascendant

of using their magnificent houses to garner respect and admiration – essentially using their houses as a tool to augment their weak pedigree.

Thirdly, reactionary rhetoric used the language of pragmatism to denounce the magnificence of country houses. Critiques of uselessness and superfluous built upon many of the semiological anxieties which were articulated during the earlier years of the English reformation. However, rather than replacing signs with words, reactionary discourse claimed to replace signs with *practice*.

This is how hospitality arises as a pragmatic expression of charity, rather than a symbolic one. The final part of this chapter examines texts which explicitly oppose magnificence with hospitality, arguing that the boom in magnificent country houses had extinguished the virtues of true charity. Indeed, one of the key architectural arguments of this reactionary polemic was that stylistic innovation, elaborate craftsmanship, and refined tastes, were all diametrically opposed to traditional provision for the poor and wayfarer. In such a view, high architecture and high housekeeping were incompatible; it was impossible to have a nice house and keep it too.

The fourth and final chapter looks more closely at the reactionary formulation of hospitality. Hospitality was known to have a contentious relationship with elaborate domestic architecture since the aftermath of the dissolution, and reactionary polemicists seized upon the opportunity to wield it to their favour. In their hands, hospitality was shaped into a system of moral semiology which, in writing, rejected the trappings of symbolism. This chapter describes how reactionary texts constructed a negated system of semiology – enshrining waning architectural elements and qualities as signs of a virtue fast declining.

What emerged was a polemic which rejected ocular assessment in favour of multisensory architectural signs. Hospitality wasn't to be seen as much as it was to be felt, heard, smelt, and tasted. This mode of multisensory perception was primarily focused on the 'practical' and 'functional' parts of the house, especially the service areas. They were: the great hall, the chimney, the buttery, the kitchen, and the gates. The main body of this chapter moves through each of these spaces in turn, analysing the moral meanings attached to it in reactionary texts, as well as assessing how well this meaning is aligned with physical artifacts.

CHAPTER ONE

MAGNIFICENCE AND HOSPITALITY CORRELATED

This thesis ultimately narrates the emergence of an English rhetoric whereby magnificence was confronted with hospitality. But to understand the significance of such a rhetoric it is worth sketching out the contemporary literary spheres wherein such an antagonism could not be deemed intuitive. Indeed, the general similarity or correlation between magnificence and hospitality can be seen as the primary engine of the dialectical tension which will be narrated over the following chapters. The notion of some general correlation between magnificence and hospitality has persisted into secondary literature. Both are often mentioned together as the two correlated virtues which defined domestic life in the Early Modern English stately home. For instance Clive Aslet's *The Story of the Country House* (2021) makes explicit a relationship between both magnificence and hospitality:

Hospitality was related to the idea of magnificence. The lord would feed all comers, rich or poor, with an open hand; everybody was welcome at his table which groaned with good things to eat. Such generosity and abundance was not confined to England or James's native Scotland.¹

The role of magnificence and hospitality in preserving a particular relationship between classes, especially within the stately home, is also outlined in Jeremy Musson's *Up and down stairs: the history of the country house servant* (2009). While

¹ Clive Aslet, *The Story of the Country House: A History of Places and People* (Yale University Press, 2021), 57.

outlining the domestic changes that defined the late years of the sixteenth century, Musson observes that the great household:

would rely less and less on large numbers of well-connected attendants, whilst still requiring a degree of comfort, magnificence and hospitality that depended on the skills, labour, and loyalty of others.²

However, while some correlation between magnificence and hospitality has been broadly acknowledged, there has been little scholarship addressing exactly how they were similar while remaining distinct. Thankfully, there was an abundance of ethical treatises in early modern England, many of which organised a panoply of moral virtues into ‘ethical frameworks.’ In serving to clarify the relationship between moral virtues, analysing such frameworks should shed more light on the relationship between magnificence and hospitality as it was understood in early modern England. However, the first section of this thesis shows that the matter is not so straightforward. Of the many moral treatises in circulation around early modern England (most of which mention magnificence), only *three* emerge which map a relationship between magnificence and hospitality. In examining these texts, the reasons for this scarcity becomes clearer. While a relationship between magnificence and hospitality may have been felt in the early modern period, this relationship was difficult to support with a coherent corpus of authoritative sources, and was difficult to articulate within the literary conventions of the moral treatise. Therefore, in order to better substantiate the correlation between magnificence and hospitality, the second section of this chapter turns to less-systematic accounts of both qualities used in the praise of individuals. Three domains of commonality come to the fore, corresponding with three ways both hospitality and magnificence serve to justify privilege. Firstly, they both justify *economic* privilege, showing how ‘good stewardship’ and fiscal responsibility legitimised accretion and management of wealth. Secondly, they justify social privilege, showing how obedience and admiration could be earned through socially-oriented acts of altruism. Thirdly, they justified political privilege in demonstrating how royalty and nobility were disposed to be ‘good rulers’ through the performance of magnificence and hospitality. Taken together, these shared functions between magnificence and hospitality delineate a large domain of correlation – one which will also be revealed as a domain of contestation.

1.1 Hospitality and Magnificence Located in Ethical Frameworks

In order to understand how early modern authors understood the relationship between magnificence and hospitality, the moral treatise would seem like a logical place to start. Indeed, the early modern period saw a few attempts to integrate hospitality and magnificence into systematic ethical frameworks. The term ‘ethical

² Jeremy Musson, *Up and down Stairs: The History of the Country House Servant* (London: Murray, 2010), 50.

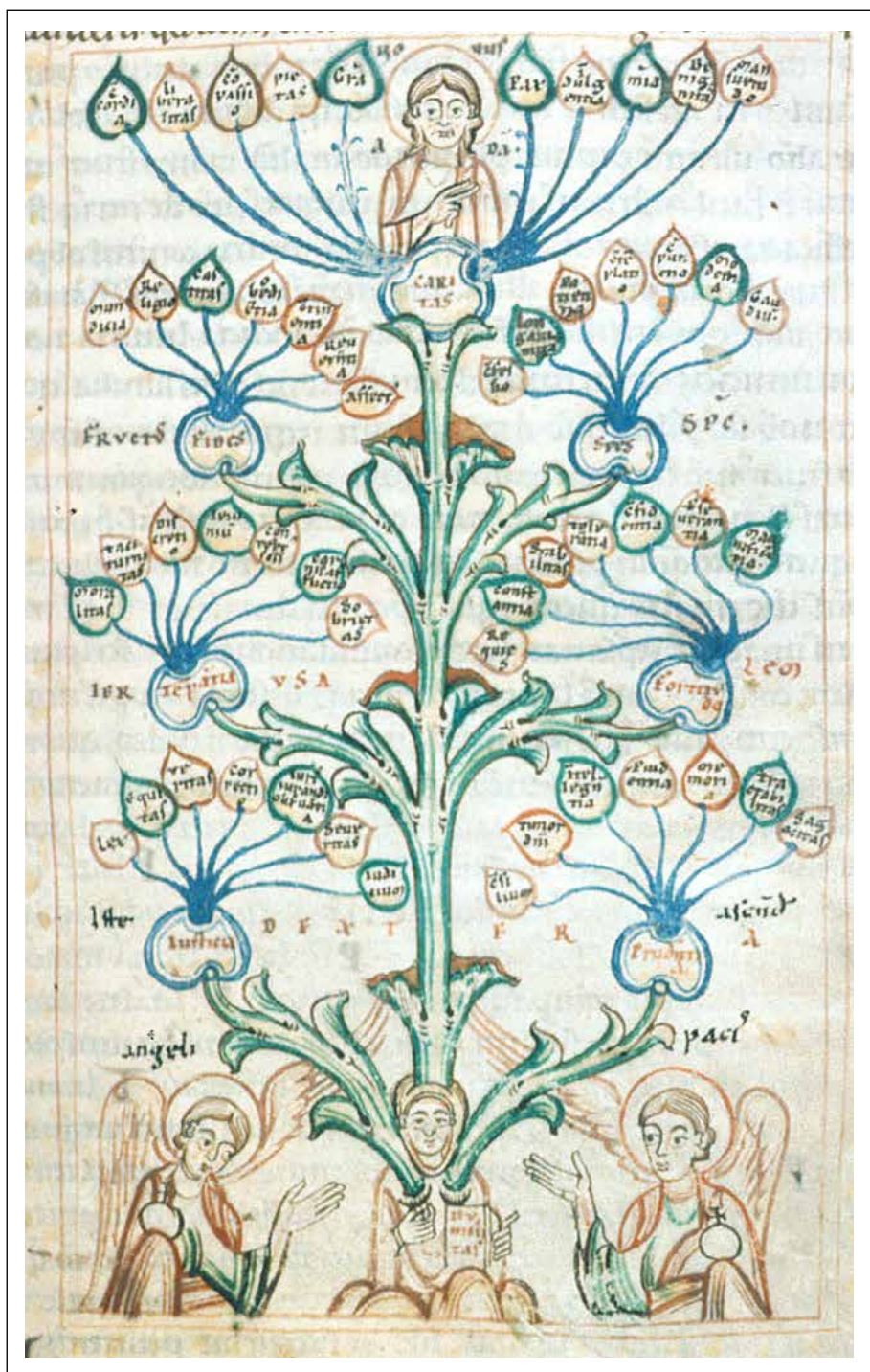


Figure 1.1: "Tree of Virtues," (Tempera on Parchment, c.1140) *Speculum Virginum*, BL Arundel 44, f.29.

framework' does not refer to the various schools of ethical reasoning as they are often surmised in twentieth-century analytic philosophy; e.g. deontological, consequentialist, and virtue-based.³ Rather, in this thesis, the term 'ethical framework' refers to an intellectual tradition which involved the organisation of numerous moral precepts into structured systems. Such ethical frameworks constituted numerous methods and attempts to harmonise between different ethical sources, and to organise the numerous resulting precepts by proposing hierarchies and associations. Although the roots of such a practice stretch into antiquity, it is a well-established convention within moral philosophy by the mediaeval period, most lucidly visualised in the numerous allegorical diagrams of this period.⁴ An early example can be found in the collection of Thomas Howard, the second Earl of Arundel (1585-1646), within a manuscript of the *Speculum Virginum* most likely dating to the twelfth Century (Fig. 1.1).⁵

This type of visualised ethical framework, commonly known as a tree of virtues (*arbor virtutum*), allowed for moral hierarchies, distinctions, and categories to be summarised and visually communicated. The example shown from the Arundel Manuscripts depicts at the base, a female figure, bearing the name *humilitas*. Seven cardinal virtues grow from her: *caritas*, *fides*, *spes*, *temperantia*, *fortitudo*, *justicia* and *prudentia*. It is from *fortitudo* that grows the virtue of *magnificentia*, preceded by *requies*, *constantia*, *stabilitas*, *tolerantia*, *confidentia*, and *perseverantia*. This echoes Cicero's *De Inventione* which states 'Fortitude is a deliberate encountering of danger and enduring of labour. Its parts are magnificence, confidence, patience, and perseverance.'⁶ The fact that the mediaeval example substantially expands upon Cicero's list is noteworthy; these traditional moral frameworks should also be read as means to harmonise between numerous divergent sources of moral philosophy; there is less of a pressing need – as there may be in analytic philosophy – to keep sources separate (e.g. in terms of historical period, Christian or pagan, Platonist or Aristotelian, etc). It is also worth noting that hospitality is not present anywhere in this tree of virtues, not even under *caritas*. Indeed, there is little precedent in the premodern period for hospitality (or at least, *hospitalitas*) being regarded as a virtue. *Hospitalitas* saw some use as a legal measure in the fourth Century Codex Theodosianus, as a means to ensure the use of land for

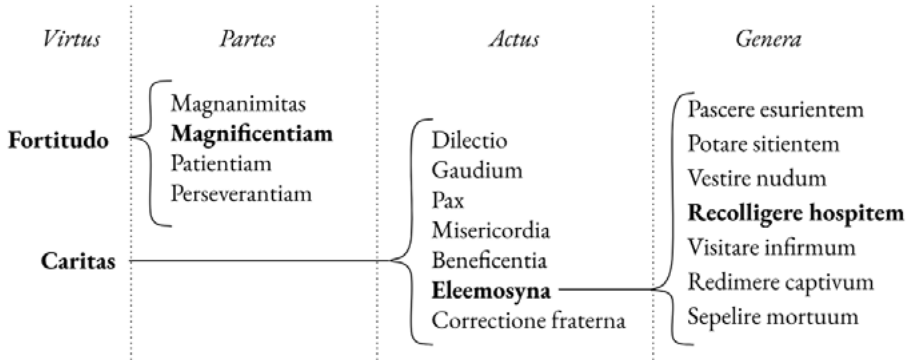
³ Stuart Rachels and James Rachels, *The Elements of Moral Philosophy* (Philadelphia: Temple Univ Press, 1986), 2-4.

⁴ Francis T. Marchese, "Virtues and Vices: Examples of Medieval Knowledge Visualization," In *17th International Conference on Information Visualisation* (2013), 359-365.

⁵ BL Arundel 44, f. 29. Two more examples can be found in the collection of Robert Harley (1661–1724) and his son Edward Harley (1689–1741). E.g. BL Harley 3244, ff. 27v-28 visualises the vices as flying demons, attacking a knight armoured with virtues. BL Harley 3396, f. 118v shows a virtue tree derived from Aristotle's *Ethics* (trans. Leonardo Bruni).

⁶ Cicero, C. D. Yonge trans., *De inventione II*, Liv, 163 "Fortitudo est considerata periculorum susceptio et laborum perpassio. Eius partes magnificentia, fidentia, patientia, perseverantia. Magnificentia est rerum magnarum et excelsarum cum animi ampla quadam et splendida propositione cogitatio atque administratio."

the benefit of passing Roman troops.⁷ Subsequently, *hospitalitas* was used during the early Middle Ages as a means of land distribution and settlement.⁸ However, throughout the following centuries, one may observe a slow creep of *hospitalitas* and its conjugates towards the central trunk of the proverbial *arbor virtutum*. For example, *recolligere hospitem* can be seen as a subset of a subset of a virtue in Aquinas' *Summa Theologica* (1265-1274). The structure of the *Summa* can also be understood as having a tree-like structure, which can be summarised as follows:



Therein, the cardinal virtues are listed the same way they appear in the *Speculum Virginum*. Likewise, *magnificentia* is listed as a virtue subsidiary to the cardinal virtue of *fortitudo*.⁹ Hospitable acts, however, remain distinctly removed from the status of virtue. *Recolligere hospitem* is listed amongst the *septem eleemosynae corporales* (the seven kinds of corporal almsdeed, later known as the corporal works of mercy). These *eleemosynae* are themselves subsidiary acts to the cardinal virtue of *caritas*. Aquinas makes clear that these acts (including *recolligere hospitem*) are not to be regarded as virtues, but rather, manifestations thereof.¹⁰

This very brief overview of premodern moral frameworks serves largely to highlight the significance of the developments during the early modern period. Like the mediaeval *arbor virtutum*, early modern moral treatises aimed to organise moral virtues hierarchically and horizontally. This was most evident in their pages of contents, which would address virtues in turn according to categories, sections, and subsections. As with the *Summa* these frameworks are presented in the following section as schematic frameworks, which are accurate representations

⁷ Bernard Bavant, « Cadre de vie et habitat urbain en Italie centrale byzantine (VIe–VIIIe siècle) », *Mélanges de l'École française de Rome*, n°101 (1989), 465-532.

⁸ Ferdinand Lot, « Du régime de l'hospitalité », *Revue belge de philologie et d'histoire*, tome 7, fasc. 3 (1928), 975-1011.

⁹ Aquinas, *Summ.* II^a-IIae q. 128. Discusses all the parts of fortitudo, and the sources thereof.

¹⁰ Aquinas, *Summ.* II^a-IIae q. 28. This is made clear in his argument against the act of joy being regarded as a virtue 'Respondeo dicendum quod virtus, sicut supra habitum est, est habitus quidam operativus; et ideo secundum propriam rationem habet inclinationem ad aliquem actum...'

of the frameworks structuring these moral treatises. Looking closely at these frameworks should, in theory, allow one to map the typical relationship between the concepts of hospitality and magnificence in early modern ethical theory. However, of the numerous ethical treatises circulating in England, only *three* draw conclusive links between hospitality and magnificence. For their scarcity, these texts deserve closer examination.

The first two texts originate in France and Switzerland respectively, but were soon translated into English with editions printed in London. Their English titles and publication dates were *Politicke, moral, and martial discourses* (1595), and *The abridgment of Christian divinitie* (1650). Both view magnificence and hospitality as subdivisions of a larger virtuous category; either liberality or benefice, indicating that both had a common cause in altruistic generosity. The sole text of English origin, *Christian Hospitalitie Handled Commonplacewise* (1632), divides hospitality into numerous concomitant parts, of which one species is defined as being 'of magnificence.' The uniqueness of the English example most likely comes from its special attention to hospitality, rather than attempting a taxonomy of all virtuous actions. Nevertheless, it also suggests a willingness in English authors to digress from continental examples when hospitality was concerned. In the following section, these three texts will be discussed in turn.

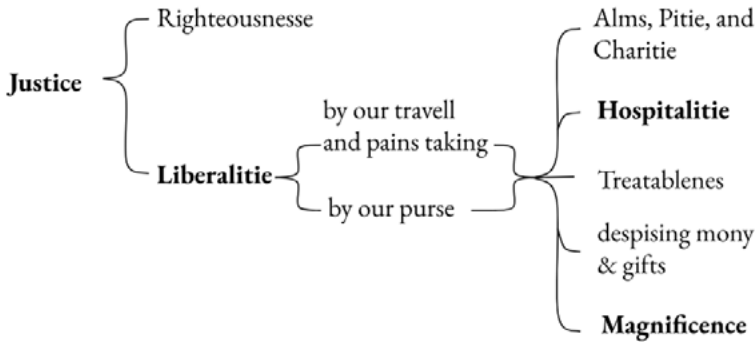
1.1.1 Hospitality and Magnificence as Parts of Liberality

In the book *Politicke, moral, and martial discourses* (1595), hospitality and magnificence are categorised as parts of liberality. The book was originally written by Jacques Hurault, Lord of Veul and Marais, bearing the French title *Trois livres des offices d'Estat, avec un sommaire des stratagèmes* (1588).¹¹ It was translated into English by Arthur Golding in 1595, a prolific translator of Latin and French texts mostly concerning history and theology (most notably, much of the writing of John Calvin).¹² It is evident within this text, as with many moral frameworks, that Hurault is attempting to harmonise between a vast range of sources. For instance, in his chapter on virtue, Hurault discusses various ways virtue might be divided: 'Some divide vertue into two parts, that is to wit, contemplative, and morall' he notes, but then 'there are others which divide all vertues into three' namely, wisdom, justice and temperance.¹³ Hurault ultimately decides upon the latter method, and the scheme he proposes for the subdivisions of justice can be visualised as follows:

¹¹ Jacques Hurault, *Trois livres des offices d'Estat, avec un sommaire des stratagèmes. A la Maiesté Tres-Chrestienne* (Paris: Michel Sonnius, 1588).

¹² Before the *Discourses Politiques*, Golding also translated numerous Protestant texts. E.g.: *A Postil or Orderly Disposing of Epistles* (1570), *A Confutation of the Popes Bull* (1572), *Sermons of Master Iohn Caluin Vpon the Booke of Iob* (1574), *The Sermons of M. Iohn Caluin Vpon Galathians* (1574), *The Lyfe of Iasper Colignie Shatilion* (1576), *The Warfare of Christians* (1576), *The Sermons of M. Iohn Caluin Vpon Ephesians* (1577), *The Sermons of M. Iohn Caluin Vpon Deuteronomie* (1583), *A Woorke Concerning the Trewnesse of the Christian Religion* (1587).

¹³ Jacques Hurault, Arthur Golding trans., *Politicke, moral, and martial discourses*, (London: Adam Islip, 1595), 58.



In placing liberality under justice, Hurault cites Cicero, and although no passage is explicitly referenced, the notion is most likely derived from the first book of *De Officiis*.¹⁴ The notion of liberality is then expanded upon in the following chapter, titled *That a prince ought to be liberall, and to shun niggardship and prodigalitie*. The title evidently presents the virtue of liberality in the Aristotelian sense; that is, as a golden mean between a vice of deficiency and a vice of excess. In this sense, liberality is a type of open-handedness. The liberal prince is liberated from an overwhelming sense of the value of external goods.¹⁵ Liberality is then divided into five branches, including hospitality and magnificence. While Hurault does not explicitly cite sources for these associations, in comparing the language used to make them, parallels with numerous contemporary sources come to the fore. Interestingly, the sources which commonly integrate *hospitality* into liberality were largely theological works, whilst those that integrate *magnificence* into liberality draw from a largely Aristotelian tradition. These distinct textual sources will be suggested in what follows.

Hurault identifies hospitality as a type of liberality in an opening passage which reads:

There is another sort of liberalitie approaching to pitie, which is called Hospitalitie, (for which Abraham & Lot were highly commended, and had the honor to receive angels) when the houses of rich men are open to entertaine honest strangers.¹⁶

¹⁴ Hurault, *Politicke, moral, and martial discourses*, 212. "Thus much in few words concerning iustice, the which Cicero diuideth into two, namely into that which is tearmed by the generall name of Righteousnesse, & into that which is tearmed Liberalitie."

¹⁵ Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, trans. Robert C. Bartlett and Susan D. Collins (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011), IV.1 (1122a24).

¹⁶ Hurault, *Politicke, moral, and martial discourses*, 218.

Although Hurault provides no explicit sources for his placement of hospitality within liberality, the notion was quite famously proposed in Zacharias Ursinus' *Summa Theologicae* (1561), which may be considered an earlier extended version of his *Heidelberg Catechism* (1563), now considered most influential of the Reformed catechisms.¹⁷ Ursinus' *Summa* saw widespread European circulation, including England: it was translated into English by the Bishop of Worcester, Henry Parry, and sold in three subsequent editions of 1601, 1633, and 1645.¹⁸ The English text of Ursinus' chapter discussing the eighth commandment speaks of 'Hospitality, which is one kinde of liberality: namely, liberality and bountifullnesse towards travellers and strangers.'¹⁹ This exact passage by Ursinus is cited in Richard Bernard in *The ready way to good works* (1635), in his definition of hospitality.²⁰ Likewise, Ursinus is cited in Nicholas Byfield's *exposition vpon the Epistle to the Colossians* (1617), wherein hospitality is a branch of liberality, and liberality a branch of Christian love.²¹ John Robinson identifies liberality as a theological grace, and hospitality as the use of the grace of liberality in *The peoples plea for the exercise of prophesie* (1641).²² During the interregnum, John Goldolphin, also marks hospitality as a type of liberality, also within a discussion on the eighth commandment, in *The Holy Arbor* (1651).²³

While the texts above may derive from the Ursinus' *Summa*, there is evidence that the integration of hospitality into liberality had been proposed before in England. An example predating Ursinus' *Summa* can be found in *Sermons very fruitfull, godly, and learned* (1557), wherein the minister Roger Edgeworth declares 'one kinde of liberalitie is hospitalitie [...] It is the bouëousnes & largenes in geuing meat & drinke & lodginge one to another.'²⁴

It is noteworthy that the aforementioned examples are all primarily theological works; the literary trope of the *hospitality of Abraham* is particularly recurrent in the theological writing of this period, even though the word 'hospitality' makes no appearance in Genesis 18.²⁵ Moreover, it is noteworthy that none of the texts above make any reference to magnificence as a similar part of liberality; this is an association which echoes a very different literary corpus.

¹⁷ Lyle D Bierma, *Introduction to the Heidelberg Catechism: Sources, History, and Theology* (Baker Academic, 2005).

¹⁸ Taylor Trenta, "Critical Edition of The Summe of Christian Religion Delivered by Zacharias Ursinua," *University Honors Papers* (2023), 5.

¹⁹ Zacharias Ursinus, *The Summe of Christian Religion* (London: James Young, 1645), 608.

²⁰ Richard Bernard, *The Ready Way to Good Works* (London, Felyx Kyngston, 1635), 358.

²¹ Nicholas Byfield, *An Exposition Upon the Epistle to the Colossians* (London: T. S[nodham. and Edward Griffin], 1617), 36.

²² John Robinson, *The Peoples Plea for the Exercise of Prophesie* (Amsterdam: S.N., 1641), 50-51.

²³ John Godolphin, *The Holy Arbor, Containing a Body of Divinity*, (London: John Field for Edmund Paxton, 1651), 299. "Hospitality, which is one kinde of Liberality..."

²⁴ Roger Edgeworth, *Sermons Very Fruitfull, Godly, and Learned* (London: Roberti Caly, 1557), 257.

²⁵ Or at least, in the Great Bible of 1539, and the Biblia Sacra Vulgata of 1546.

Turning to the integration of magnificence as a type of liberality; the passage in the *Discourses* which identifies magnificence into liberality reads as follows:

We have one other kind of liberalitie belonging to great lords, called Magnificence, which respecteth the greatnesse of expenses: as the building of temples, the making of stately dwelling-houses, of conduits, of bridges, of Theatres, and of other things serving for common use, and the bountifull entertaining of such as come to visit them, as did Lucullus, Pompeius, and Cicero, and also Paulus Aemilius, who tooke great pains himselfe in furnishing and marshalling a feast. And when he was asked why he was so curious in setting foorth a banquet; he answered, That there was a great discretion to be used in the ordering of a feast, as in the ordering of a battle, that the one might become terrible to the enemies, and the other be acceptable to friends.

The association between liberality and magnificence evidently hearkens to Aristotle, who wrote in his *Ethica Nichomachea* that ‘the magnificent man is liberal, but the liberal man is not necessarily magnificent.’²⁶ The notion is repeatedly invoked and interrogated in the Aristotelian moral treatises of the early modern period. For example, John Case’s *Speculum Moraliū Quaestionum* (1583) directly addresses the objection as to why magnificence needs to be distinct from liberality; ‘Quid multis opus est?’²⁷ Similarly, Theophilum Golium opens his discussion on magnificence in the *Epitome Doctrinae Moralis* (1634) with ‘Quomodo differt a Liberatitate?’²⁸ Similar passages can be found in treatises such as William Turner’s *Summa ethicae* (1633) and Edward Brerewood’s *Tractatus ethici* (1640).²⁹

Taken together, it is worth noting the integration of hospitality into liberality, and the integration of magnificence into liberality, come from remarkably different textual genres. The sources which discuss liberality and magnificence generally prioritise *classical* (pagan) sources, and often fit within the genre of ‘moral treatise.’ On the contrary, those texts which discuss hospitality in relation to liberality often prioritised *theological* sources, and constituted sermons, biblical commentaries, or other theological texts. Hurault’s treatise, ostensibly drawing from both classical and theological sources, illustrates a fragile detente where several compromises needed to be made. Indeed, the inclusion of magnificence under liberality was a

²⁶ Aristotle, *Nicomachean ethics* IV, 2, 1122a 24.

²⁷ John Case, *Speculum Moraliū Quaestionum in Vniuersam Ethicen Aristotelis* (Oxford: Joseph Barnes, 1585), 153. “Quid multis opus est? Magnificentia in subiecto, in obiecto, in modo, in fine cum liberalitate convenit. Circa haec tamen eminentibus se gerit, & veluti ad alta, regia, & excelsa volat.”

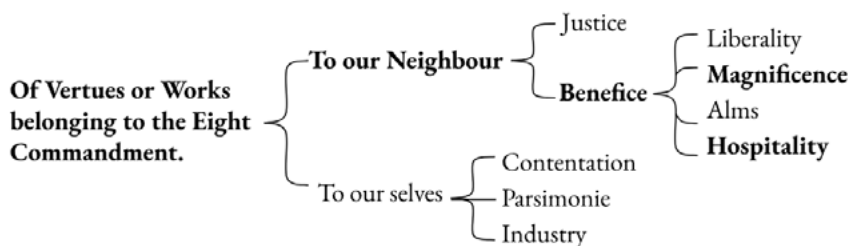
²⁸ Theophilum Golium, *Epitome Doctrinae Moralis, Ex Decem Libris Ethicorum Aristotelis Ad Nicomachum Collecta, pro Academia Argentinensi.*, trans. Simon Grynaeo (Cambridge: Apud Thom. & Ioan. Buck, 1634), 109.

²⁹ Francisco Pavone, *Summa ethicae* (Oxford: William Turner, 1633); Edward Brerewood, *Tractatus ethici* (Oxford: Eduardi Forrest, 1640).

contentious decision on the part of Hurault. It was a departure from Aristotelian orthodoxy which no doubt resulted from the immense number of disparate sources which Hurault attempted to harmonise between.

1.1.2 Hospitality and Magnificence as Parts of Benefice

In *The Abridgment of Christian Divinitie* (1650), hospitality, magnificence, and liberality were all categorised as forms of benefice. The text is an English translation of the *Christianae Theologiae Compendium* (1626) by Swiss reformed theologian Johannes Wolleb.³⁰ It was fairly influential in England; even before the translation of the *Compendium* into English, its traces can be seen in the Westminster Longer Catechism of 1647.³¹ As can be surmised from the title, this text is not wholly dedicated to moral philosophy. However, the second book of the compendium contains a discussion of virtues and works. The moral framework presented therein is not organised according to cardinal virtues as was more common, but uses a more bibliocentric division based on the Ten Commandments. This is notably similar to the structure of Zacharias Ursinus' *Summa Theologicae* (1561). Also like Ursinus' *Summa* both magnificence and hospitality appear in the chapter concerning the eighth commandment; thou shalt not steal:



Like Hurault, Wolleb presents magnificence and hospitality as distinct and equal subdivisions of a virtue. The passage which outlines this is fairly short. Wolleb writes:

Beneficence is, whereby we help our neighbour with our means freely. This virtue is call'd liberality, in lesser gifts; in greater, Magnificence: in relation to the poor, alms: to banished men & strangers, hospitality.³²

³⁰ Johannes Wolleb, *Christianae theologiae compendium: accurata methodo sic adornatum* (Ba-sileae: sumtibus Ioh. Iac. Genathii, 1626).

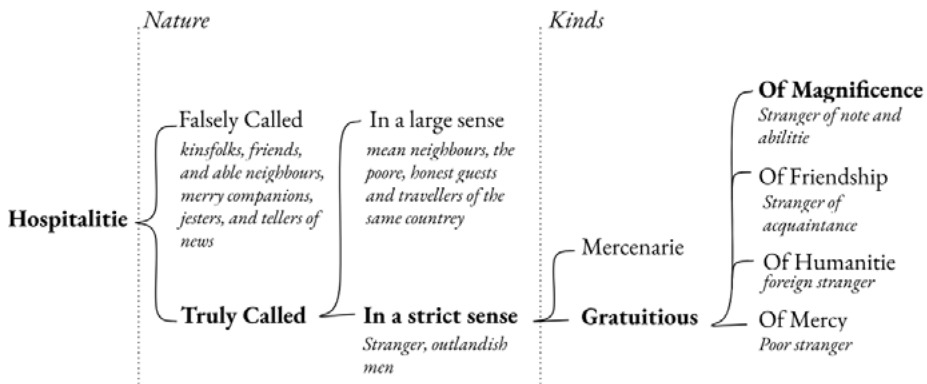
³¹ Donald K. McKim, David F. Wright, *Encyclopedia of the Reformed Faith* (Westminster: John Knox Press, 1992), 398. 'It was infralapsarian on pre-destination and influenced the Westminster catechisms, for example, in bifurcating theology into the knowledge of God and the service of God.'

³² Johannes Wolleb, *The Abridgment of Christian Divinitie: So Exactly and Methodically Compiled, That It Leads Us, as It Were, by the Hand to the Reading of the Holy Scriptures*. (London: Printed by T. Mab and A. Coles, for John Saywell, 1650), 324.

Wolleb divides benefice in two ways; in order of magnitude, and in accordance with the recipient. Because he does not comment on this division any further, it is not clear whether a great gift, given to a stranger, can be counted as ‘magnificent hospitality,’ or if he envisions the four as distinct categories. Also of note is the relatively minor position played by liberality, which was framed by Hurault as the primary virtue containing both magnificence and hospitality.

1.1.3 The Hospitality of Magnificence

The English treatise *Christian Hospitalitie Handled Commonplacewise* (1632), takes a vastly different approach, defining a species of hospitality which was called ‘the hospitality of magnificence.’ The author, Caleb Dalechamp, will reappear numerous times over this dissertation, being the only early modern English author to dedicate an entire treatise to the topic of hospitality. Chapter two is titled “The Nature and Kindes of Hospitalitie,” and within Dalechamp divides hospitality into various subcategories. The manner of division is largely in terms of to whom the hospitable action is directed, and of secondary importance is the manner in which the hospitable action is performed.



By the ‘nature’ of hospitality, Dalechamp largely aims to address what he identifies as a ‘false use’ of the term ‘hospitality.’ Dalechamp’s concern is not wholly unique in the early Stuart period; a ‘false name of hospitality’ was also identified by Joseph Wybarne in 1609, a claim which will be examined in much greater detail in the following chapter.³³ Nevertheless, Dalechamp expands upon this existing concern by identifying the recipients of such false hospitality, which he defines as ‘the keeping of a good table, at which seldom or never any other are entertained then kinsfolks, friends, and able neighbours, merry companions, jesters, and tellers of news.’³⁴ Instead, such entertainment to friends and family would fall

³³ See Chapter Three, Section 3.2 (How can virtue turn into vice? The semiological instability of ethical theory).

³⁴ Caleb Dalechamp, *Christian hospitalitie handled common-place-wise* (Cambridge: Th. Buck, 1632), 7.

under 'good fellowship or some such like thing,' and thus are not vicious per se, but would fall beyond the scope of Dalechamp's treatise. It is worth noting, with the previous text in mind, that Hurault placed the entertainment of friends under the category of 'magnificence.' This is not the case in Dalechamp's text, wherein all the species of hospitality, including the 'hospitality of magnificence,' focuses on the person of the *stranger*. To Dalechamp, hospitality understood in the strictest sense is 'the love that is born unto strangers or outlandish men.'³⁵ Of this true and strictly defined hospitality, Dalechamp differentiates between the mercenary and gratuitous. What is unique to this particular distinction is that it is less predicated on the recipient of hospitality, but on whether such hospitality is a paid service. Mercenary hospitality is when a stranger is allowed to pay less for a service (such as food or lodging) because he is foreign; whilst gratuitous hospitality is completely free.³⁶ Of gratuitous hospitality, Dalechamp proceeds to identify four kinds. He writes:

And this again is either of magnificence, or of friendship, or of humanitie, or of mercy: of magnificence, when a stranger of note and abilitie is entertained with pomp and state: of friendship, when a stranger of acquaintance is familiarly entertained: of humanitie, when a foreiner that comes to see places, and being a stranger is in courtesie invited: of mercy, when a poore stranger is harboured and relieved in his wants.³⁷

There is something of a microcosmic logic to Dalechamp's moral framework: elsewhere, magnificence, friendship, humanity and mercy are habitually described as larger categories of virtue, but here they appear as sub-sub-species of hospitality.³⁸ This is clarified later in Dalechamp's treatise when he notes that Aristotle 'saith in expresse terms, that among the five sorts of private expenses which a magnificent man ought to make for decencie and comelinesse, one is about the receiving of strangers.'³⁹ As such, Dalechamp's 'hospitality of magnificence' refers not only to those actions of magnificence contained within *hospitality*, but also to those actions of hospitality contained within *magnificence*. This reference to a type of hospitality which also formed a part of magnificence would recur in later texts. For example, in a 1666 commentary on the Epistle to the Romans, William Day asserts 'be ye given to hospitality. That is, entertain in your houses kindly [...] That hospitality which is a part of magnificency, and such as the rich shew to the rich, is not the hospitality here meant; but that hospitality is here meant which is a part of mercy and pitty.'⁴⁰

³⁵ Dalechamp, *Christian hospitalitie*, 7.

³⁶ Dalechamp, *Christian hospitalitie*, 7. "This exactly so called hospitalitie is either mercenarie, or gratuitous: mercenarie, when a stranger is kindly and courteously used for his money; when one makes him pay no more, but rather lesse, because he is a stranger: gratuitous, when a stranger is entertained freely and for *grand merci*."

³⁷ Dalechamp, *Christian hospitalitie*, 9.

³⁸ This is especially true for magnificencia and misericordia.

³⁹ Aristotle, *Ethic.* lib. 4. cap. 2.

⁴⁰ William Day, *A Paraphrase and Commentary upon the Epistle of Saint Paul* (London: S. Griffin

In this section, three moral frameworks which place magnificence and hospitality in relation to one another have been compared and contrasted. To wit: Hurault placed both magnificence and hospitality as types of liberality; Wolleb identified magnificence and hospitality as types of benefice, alongside liberality; and Dalechamp identified a 'hospitality of magnificence.'

Although the variation between these texts implies a certain divergence in definition for both terms, what is more concretely substantiated is a nebulous and contentious system of relationships. Instead of focusing on what magnificence and hospitality are *defined as* by charting fixed points of meaning, these moral frameworks try to locate a semantic range through illustrating what magnificence and hospitality are categories of, parts of, distinct from, and joined to. This nebulous system of relations is itself determined by to whom a moral action is performed, in what manner it is performed, to what degree or scale, and in which capacity. The immense amount of variation that can be seen between these three texts, and the broad and eclectic range of sources that they draw from, should be taken as evidence of the magnitude and difficulty of trying to place magnificence and hospitality into a single moral framework. Indeed, such an undertaking was not a straightforward task, as the bulk of authoritative sources, both Christian and pagan, never mention both terms in conjunction. Neither Aristotle, nor Cicero, nor Aquinas, nor Augustine, nor the Bible, chart any degree of relation between 'magnificence' and 'hospitality' (or indeed, *magnificentia* and *hospitalitas*); this is primarily because hospitality is not framed as a moral virtue in any of these authoritative sources. It is perhaps for these reasons that only *three* moral treatises attempting to chart a relationship between magnificence and hospitality could be found. The connection, albeit intuitive, was one which was difficult to sustain using the tools of scholastic or humanistic scholarship.

In light of this, it can be surmised that magnificence and hospitality, for all their similarities, occupied different discursive spheres. Magnificence fits comfortably in the genre of humanist moral treatises, having been framed as a virtue by both Aristotle and Cicero. Hospitality, although similar in regards to its altruistic motives and generous expression, was seen as a more culturally Christian value. If one were to look for a discussion of hospitality in early modern English, the moral treatise may not have been the best place to look. In fact, this is noted by Dalechamp in his introduction to *Christian Hospitalitie*. Dalechamp cites Samuel Ward in his sermon *A coal from the altar* (1615) in pointing out how hospitality had hardly been discussed in moral treatises. He writes:

For so little in our dayes hath been written of this subject, that I may truely say as much of it, as a late worthy Divine affirms of an other: I have oft wondered why poore zeal, a vertue so high in Gods books, could never be so much beholding to mens writings as to obtain a just Treatise, which hath been the lot of many particular vertues of inferiour worth; a plain signe of too much undervalue and neglect.⁴¹

for Joshua Kirton, 1666), 242.

⁴¹ Samuel Ward, *A Coal from the Altar, to Kindle the Holy Fire of Zeale* (London: by H[umphrey]

Thus Dalechamp, urged on by Ward, frames himself as the first author to discuss hospitality along the same terms as magnificence: within the context of a humanist moral treatise. Dalechamp and Ward's puzzlement over how this had not been done before, indicates that a treatment of hospitality on par with magnificence seemed *obvious* in English thought, even if not articulated via moral treatises.

It is worth making a short digression, while introducing *Christian Hospitalitie*, to discuss the political undertones of this publication. One need only scratch the surface of both Dalechamp and Ward's biographies to guess the political motives behind addressing *hospitality* in a moral treatise. In 1616, King James I and VI had made a declaration in Star-Chamber, urging the gentry to 'keep the old fashion of England: [...] to live in the Countrey, and keep hospitalitie; for which we were famous above all the Countreys in the World.'⁴² Dalechamp's *Christian Hospitalitie* seems largely motivated by the King's words, echoing the language of the proclamation throughout, and appending a full transcript of the proclamation at the end of his treatise. Indeed, Dalechamp was a noted supporter of the King and establishment church. Following James's self-fashioning as England's Solomon, Dalechamp published *Vindiciæ Salomonis: sive, Disputatio bipartita de lapsu statuque æterno Regis Salomonis* (1622) a theological defence of King Solomon's salvation; a distinctly high-church position which Dalechamp articulated largely in the language of divine right.⁴³ Samuel Ward, whom Dalechamp cites, seemed to have a similar confessional and constitutional position. Ward stayed loyal to the crown throughout the Civil Wars, resulting in his imprisonment in 1643.⁴⁴

Given the links tying the publication of *Christian Hospitalitie* with a political agenda particular to the Jacobean period, it is likely not indicative of the general English understanding of the relationship between magnificence and hospitality over the early modern period, if indeed there was one. Rather, the usefulness of hospitality and magnificence in Stuart propaganda was largely determined by sources which predated Dalechamp, and also exceeded the genre of the moral treatise. The text therefore urges us to look towards a broader selection of textual genres for more information regarding the relationship between magnificence and hospitality.

L[ownes] for Samuell Macham, 1615), 2.

⁴² Quoted in: Dalechamp, *Christian Hospitalitie*, 125. "proclamation made by King James towards the end of his Speech in Star-chamber the 20 of June 1616."

⁴³ Caleb Dalechamp, *Vindiciæ Salomonis: sive, Disputatio bipartita de lapsu statuque æterno Regis Salomonis: Quâ eius & omnium sanctorum perfeuerantia in fide defenditur* (Excusum per Gulielmum Iones, Impensis Leonardi Greene Cantabrigiensis, 1622). William Carroll Tate, *Solomonic Iconography in Early Stuart England: Solomon's Wisdom, Solomon's Folly*, Studies in British History 63 (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 2001).

⁴⁴ University of Cambridge, "Ward, Samuel (WRT594S)". *A Cambridge Alumni Database*.

1.2 Hospitality and Magnificence Correlated in Praise of Individuals

If indeed the genre of moral treatises did not serve to capture the relationship between hospitality and magnificence in English thought, a clearer image of this relationship can be gleaned through the correlated eulogic or panegyric use of both terms. This occurred across a broad range of textual genres: fictions, histories, plays, sermons, etc. Indeed, magnificence and hospitality were more frequently consolidated in the descriptions of persons, than they were in the abstract and theoretical framework of the moral treatise. A view across these textual examples serves to illustrate how and why such a correlation seemed natural in early modern England. Magnificence and hospitality has certain commonalities which were particularly salient to England's political culture. Key to these commonalities was a shared ability to justify privilege; both magnificence and hospitality were frequently invoked to praise individuals who consolidated economic, social, or political privileges. Indeed, these were three domains in which both hospitality and magnificence overlapped. Firstly, they both served to justify wealth, framing their practitioners as 'good stewards' who had the virtues necessary to manage large fortunes. Secondly, they both served to justify social privileges, framing their practitioners as altruistic and social-minded individuals who cared for the public good. Thirdly, they both were seen as qualities which undergirded noble birth, being typical of royalty and nobility. While these three domains of overlap highlight numerous commonalities between magnificence and hospitality, they were also domains of contestation. Magnificence and hospitality were, to speak idiomatically, in the market for the same job, as will become clearer in the second half of this dissertation. These three domains of correlation (or contestation) will now be discussed in turn.

1.2.1 The Proper Management of Wealth

Both magnificence and hospitality involved expenditure, which was itself indicative of a particular attitude towards wealth. This attitude did not only concern expenditure, but wealth management more generally, including the means by which wealth is gained and retained. Sources which frame both magnificence and hospitality in this light, portray them in relation to a person's fiscal *savoir faire*, which implicitly justified the accretion of wealth.

A well-known early example of such a usage occurs in Sir Philip Sidney's pastoral romance *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia*, fully published around 1593 but originally written around 20 years preceding this date, in an attempt to entertain his sister the Countess of Pembroke.⁴⁵ One important passage praises a fictional character: Kalander, for his management of wealth. Kalander's character is developed very little beyond this – he is introduced early in the work as an old and wise arcadian nobleman, and contributes fairly little to the plot beyond

⁴⁵ Philip Sidney, Albert Feuillerat ed., *The Complete Works of Philip Sidney*. Vol. 4. (London: Cambridge University Press, 1926), unpaginated [Preface to *Arcadia*].

providing lodging to the two main characters Musidorus and Pyrocles. However, this brief character description is followed by a fairly detailed description of Kalander's house, strongly implying that the house in some way reflected the virtues of its owner.⁴⁶ Sidney writes:

Kalander knew that provision is the foundation of hospitality and thrift the fuel of magnificence. The house itself was built of fair and strong stone, not affecting so much any extraordinary kind of fineness as an honourable representing of a firm stateliness. The lights, doors and stairs rather directed to the use of the guest than to the eye of the artificer; and yet as the one chiefly heeded, so the other not neglected; each place handsome without curiosity, and homely without loathsomeness.⁴⁷

In this joint description of hospitality and magnificence, Sidney suggests that something which drew them together was that they both were resultant of wealth. Indeed, both 'provision' and 'thrift' referred to the use of external goods. However, it should be noted that both provision and thrift were not only products of the *spending* of wealth, but also the *retaining* of wealth. 'Provision' could refer both to the fact that Kalander knew to provide for others, but could also mean that he remained well provided for. Likewise, 'thrift' was moving between meanings during this particular period: 'Thrift' in middle English primarily referred to a state of material abundance.⁴⁸ In such a light, Sidney would simply be suggesting that a man needed to be wealthy in order to spend lavishly on hospitality and magnificence. However, this is not what is emphasised in the architectural description which follows; Kalander's house is not just a product of unbridled expenditure, but is withheld from being extraordinarily fine or curious. Indeed, this idea of frugal or discerning expense was increasingly becoming associated with the word 'thrift' during the early modern period.⁴⁹

Later references to the *Arcadia* apply this emerging meaning of 'thrift' onto Sidney's passage. This occurs in a biting political satire by John Davies titled

⁴⁶ This is not a wholly original notion, but is seemingly derived from elite Roman culture. This notion as it is relayed in Vitruvian scholarship is laid out in full within: Marden Fitzpatrick Nichols, "House and Man," *Author and Audience in Vitruvius' De Architectura* (Cambridge University Press; 2017), 83-129. The translation of this notion into English architectural thought is discussed in Shiqiao Li, "Virtue, Moral Sense and Taste" *Power and Virtue: Architecture and Intellectual Change in England* (New York: Routledge, 2007).

⁴⁷ Philip Sidney, *The Countesse of Pembrokes Arcadia* (London: John Windet for William Ponsonbie, 1593), 10.

⁴⁸ "Thrift: Material wealth, prosperity; a state of prosperity; pl. wealth; also, earnings" *Middle English Dictionary*. Ed. Robert E. Lewis, et al. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1952-2001.

⁴⁹ It is difficult not to read Sidney's praise for Kalander's virtues as a means to justify the outcome of his own management of Penshurst palace. Indeed, the reason why Penshurst came to be known (by Ben Johnson's time) as a nobly rustic medieval house, was because Sidney's earlier attempts to modernise the palace had failed. McBride's *Country House Discourse* (p.57) recalls "Sidney's (ultimately ill-begotten) efforts to aggrandize Penshurst. In 1594 he had written 'If I find no meanes for my workmen my building cannot go forwards which will be disgrace to me.'"

A select second husband for Sir Thomas Ouerburie's wife (1616), dedicated to the son of the Countess of Pembroke, to whom Sidney's *Arcadia* was dedicated.⁵⁰ An early passage from this poem seems to make a direct reference to Kalander's ethical maxim, stating:

Provision (soule of hospitalitie)
 To Inne it well, must be the husbands care.
 Magnificence lives by Frugalitie;
 Be sparing, then, to spend; and, spending, spare.
 Beare, and Forheare: forbear least vaine expence
 Of wealth, to beare up thy Magnificence.⁵¹

Apart from the fact that Davies and Sidney moved in the same circles of patronage, the description of provision as the 'soul of hospitality' bears a striking resemblance to Sidney's assertion that 'provision is the foundation of hospitality.' If Davies did indeed read *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia*, it may be taken as evidence that Davies understood 'thrift' in the early modern sense of the word. Indeed, Davies makes more explicit the counterintuitive qualities of Sidney's claim. Sidney, at least through the lens of Davies, emphasises that the measures necessary to *retain* wealth were also necessary for maintaining magnificence and hospitality; One retains wealth in order to spend it, and one spends it sparingly. Sidney's description of Kalander's house – in which use takes precedent over appearances – also reflects this position.

Sidney's description of the fictional Kalander serves as an early example of an individual being praised for both magnificence and hospitality. However, after the turn of the Jacobean period, there is a significant increase in non-fictional individuals who are accorded such praise. However, although detailed descriptions of domestic architecture are rarely appended thereafter, the association with discerning wealth management does not disappear. Such an emphasis on discerning wealth management can also be inverted; that is, the lack of both magnificence and hospitality in an individual can be signalled by the poor management of wealth. This can be seen in *The historie, and lives, of the kings of England* (1615) written by the recorder of the city of Exeter, William Martyn.⁵² In the chapter dedicated to the life of Edward IV, Martyn recalls Edward's generosity to those who remained loyal to him throughout the ongoing conflicts of the War of Roses. However, Martyn proceeds to illustrate how the love of magnificence and hospitality which enabled these bestowments were to decline in the character of the king. He writes:

⁵⁰ The Countess of Pembroke's son was William Herbert, 3rd Earl of Pembroke.

⁵¹ John Davies, *A Select Second Husband for Sir Thomas Ouerburie's Wife, Now a Matchlesse Widow* (London: Thomas Creede and Barnard Allsopp, 1616), unpaginated.

⁵² William Martyn, *The Historie, and Lives, of the Kings of England* (London: William Stansby, 1615).

After this victorie was thus obtained, the King bestowed many rich and princely gifts upon his Lords and Gentlemen, which served him faithfully and valiantly in his warres: and with such familiaritie and kindnesse demeaned himselfe among them, that they were confidently assured of his love. Hee also shared and divided the lands and goods of his slaine enemies among his souldiers, and wonne their hearts by his great bountie. [...] The King in the five last yeares of his raigne utterly changed his former humours. For whereas before that time he had bene bountifull and liberall, loved magnificence and honourable hospitalitie; he now began to be so wretched, covetous, and miserable, that to get money, and to augment his treasure, hee extraordinarily vexed and troubled his subjects, by inflicting upon them the execution of penall lawes; by meanes whereof, hee as quickly extinguished and quenched their heartie love and good affection towards him, as water doth the fire.⁵³

Like Sidney's, this is a use of 'magnificence' and 'hospitality' which is primarily tied to wealth, money, and the distribution thereof. The change in Edward's love for magnificence and hospitality is linked to the almost alchemical mechanisms of humoral theory, which corrupts the king's attitude to wealth. In Martyn's description we also see the common enemies shared by magnificence and hospitality such as greed; covetousness; and exploitativeness.

Both Kalander and Edward IV are praised with the terms 'magnificence and hospitality' because of certain attitudes towards wealth management. Kalander is praised for his exceptional *knowledge* of wealth management, practising both the restraint and generosity needed to maintain magnificence and hospitality. Edward IV is recalled for his *love* of magnificence and hospitality, he shared his wealth out of charity and kindness to the lords and gentleman. Together they show how magnificence and hospitality were qualities which justified wealth, framing individuals as 'good stewards' who were properly disposed to take reasonably and give responsibly.

1.2.2 Public Welfare and Social Concern

In a related sense, both magnificence and hospitality had a public-facing dimension which indicated a level of social concern. The performers of both magnificence and hospitality were seen as catering to the needs of others, or society more broadly; actions which earned them praise, obedience, and admiration. Whether these public-facing actions needed to happen in public-facing buildings was another matter; one in which we see diversions even within the relatively short early Stuart period. The Jacobean period largely inherited a view wherein a lord could be both magnificent and hospitable, but magnificence was largely performed in a public capacity, and hospitality in a private (domestic) capacity. Yet, by the Caroline period, there are some instances of both magnificence and hospitality being performed in the same spaces, both within houses and without, and in

⁵³ Martyn, *The Historie, and Lives, of the Kings of England*, 266; 290.

both public and private capacities. As such, certain Caroline authors seem to dissolve the spatial boundaries delineating magnificence and hospitality, bringing both virtues into even closer proximity – and perhaps even closer contention.

In the early Jacobean period, while there was a distinct social element to both magnificence and hospitality, the spaces and capacities in which they were performed were understood as subtly different. This can be gleaned in the praise directed towards Thomas Sackville, 1st Earl of Dorset. Upon his passing, a funeral sermon was preached on the 26th of May 1608 at Westminster, largely consisting of a list of the late lord's virtues. Throughout, hospitality is linked to domestic management, whilst magnificence was primarily shown through public entertainment. George Abbot, a chaplain to the Sackvilles, declared:

What noble man in our time was more given to hospitalite, and keeping of a great house? [...] For thirtie yeeres of those, his family consisted of little lesse in one place or another, than two hundred persons. But for more then twentie yeeres, besides workmen and other hired, his number at the least hath beene two hundred and twenty daily, as appeared upon checke-rowle. A very rare example in this present age of ours, when house-keeping is so decaied. Who more magnificent than his Lordship in solemne entertainments as (besides other particulars) was manifested not long since abundantly to the world, when his Majesty with the Queen and Prince together with a great part of the Nobilitie, spent divers daies at Oxford.⁵⁴

It is worth noting that Sackville's primary residence was not in Oxford, but was Knole house in Kent. The 'magnificent' entertainment manifested 'to the world' was given at Oxford university, three years before Sackville's death, stretching from Tuesday the 27th to Thursday the 29th of August 1605. Sackville was largely central to the entertainment, being both Lord Treasurer and chancellor of the University of Oxford at the time. The solemnities are well documented, both in Anthony Nixon's *Oxford's Triumph*, and Isaac Wake's *Rex Platonicus*, both written in 1605.⁵⁵ Nixon's account is far more specific as to what constituted the 'solemne entertainments,' and it should be noted that of the three days of entertainment, little mention is made of food or feasting. Rather, the account recalls a lengthy schedule of addresses, salutations, sermons, and orations, with scholarly disputations (and the King's enthusiasm for them) recorded in meticulous detail. Dining is mentioned once, when the King and his retinue:

...rode to New-Colledge to Dinner, being invited thither, by the Right Honorable the Lord Treasurer, Lord Chauncelor of the Uniuersity: who of

⁵⁴ George Abbot, *A sermon preached at Westminster May 26, 1608 at the funerall solemnities of the Right Honorable Thomas Earle of Dorset, late lord high treasurer of England* (London: Melchisedech Bradwood for William Aspley, 1608), 6.

⁵⁵ Anthony Nixon, *Oxfords Triumph in the Royall Entertainement of His Moste Excellent Maiestie, the Queene, and the Prince: The 27. of August Last* (London: Ed. Allde, 1605); Isaac Wake, *Rex platonicus: sive, De potentissimi principis Iacobi Britanniarum Regis, ad illustrissimam Academiam Oxoniensem* (Oxford, England: Excudebat Iosephus Barnesius, 1607).

his Noble minde, and love to learning and her professors, the same day sent to everie Colledge a Bucke, and twenty shillings a peece to be bestowed in Wine, wherewith the Schollers did so thankfully frolicke it, that by exterior meanes they manifested their interior mindes and gratitude for so great favour frō so worthy and Honorable a personage.

The role of magnificence and hospitality in justifying social privilege are immediately evident in this passage. Sackville is deemed 'worthy' of honour through the exchange of love and gratitude between Sackville and his beneficiaries. Yet, a closer look at this passage reveals some differences between the use of the terms 'magnificence' and 'hospitality.' It is worth questioning why the solemnities of James' visit to Oxford were primarily remembered upon Sackville's passing as acts of *magnificence* rather than hospitality. The primary reason may have been because of their relatively public setting, being 'manifested abundantly to the world.' As they were held in the numerous colleges of Oxford, rather than at the Sackville home at Knole, these solemnities do not reflect upon Sackville's capacity for *domestic* hospitality or good housekeeping. Moreover, the question of whether hospitality consisted of entertaining royals was a hotly debated one.⁵⁶ Hosting royalty and nobility yielded numerous political benefits such as courtly favour and reciprocal entertainment, but its moral benefits were less certain.⁵⁷ Such a moral understanding is apparent considering that Sackville's entertainment of royalty and nobility did not greatly contribute to his reputation for hospitality. Indeed, there is no detailed record of his personal entertainment of the King at New College, but more importantly, there is evidence to suggest that Sackville's house was not intended for refined and lavish entertainment towards nobility. Queen Elizabeth I had once ordered Sackville to host the Huguenot (ex) Cardinal Odet de Coligny – but was apparently displeased with the lack of finery afforded him there. Hearing that the Queen had learnt of this, Sackville addressed a letter to her explaining the situation. He wrote:

I brought them in to every part of the house that I possessed, and showed them all such stuff and furniture as I had. And where they required plate of me, I told them as troth is, that I had no plate at all. Such glass vessel as I had I offered them, which they thought too base; for napery I could not satisfy their turn, for they desired damask work for a long table, and I had none other but plain linen for a square table. The table whereon I dine myself I offered them, and for that it was a square table they refused it.⁵⁸

The letter goes on in great detail, elaborating that Sackville only had enough finery (bedsteads, basins, brass, glasses, cushions, etc) for himself and his family. Sackville made no attempt to conceal his frugality in terms of private luxuries, and

⁵⁶ Day, *A Paraphrase and Commentary*, 242.

⁵⁷ Dalechamp, *Christian hospitalitie*, 9.

⁵⁸ Quoted in: Virginia Sackville-West, *Knole and the Sackvilles* (London: William Heinemann, 1922), 36.

Coligny's demands for them are recounted in the letter with some disapproval.⁵⁹ It is noteworthy that recent high-profile misadventure did not negatively affect his reputation for hospitality at his funeral three years later. Although it is unseemly to speak ill of the dead, it remains likely that the hospitality attributed to Sackville was not of the variety directed at other noblemen, but constituted a different category of action altogether. Indeed, Sackville's frugality in terms of private luxuries could be taken to imply that the wealth was divested elsewhere. One may recall the passage by Davies which asserts that the provision necessary for hospitality required one to 'be sparing, then, to spend; and, spending, spare,' of which Sackville proved to be a notable example.⁶⁰ Evidently, what Sackville would have spared in private luxuries, was spent not only on the magnificent provision of bucks and wine to the Oxford scholars, but also on the hospitable maintenance of an unusually large household. The sermon delivered at Sackville's funeral primarily attributes his hospitality to the size of his 'family,' consisting not just relatives, but a wider household of over two hundred people (including all permanent paid staff, but not itinerant paid workmen).⁶¹ This particular reading of hospitality, and indeed 'good housekeeping,' was one which emphasised the social function of the country house; which constituted the provision of employment in the management and maintenance of a sizable retinue of attendants. As such, Sackville's navigation between his public and private affairs is highly illustrative of the relationship between magnificence and hospitality in the early Stuart period. He performed magnificence in a public capacity as Chancellor of Oxford, and performed hospitality as the master of his household.

What can be seen emerging over the early Stuart period is a gradual dissolution in the spatial boundaries which delineated the social concerns of magnificence and hospitality. Two accounts in particular show it became possible for magnificent and hospitable provision to span the public and private realms. Firstly, in *The history of Great Britaine* (1611) by John Speed, the author writes of:

Lord Richard Nevil the great Earle of Warwick, a man esteemed for power a Demy-King, and for magnificence and hospitality matchless: in whose house at London (as some have verified) sixe oxen were spent every day, and most Tavernes in the City full of his meat.⁶²

Indeed, the act of providing meat is one upon which the praise of magnificence and hospitality often intersects.⁶³ Moreover, there is a private aspect to his provision, within his London house, but there is also a public aspect, in his provision for the London taverns. Similarly, it was also possible for magnificent and hospitable provision to occur in a completely domestic setting. For example,

⁵⁹ Sackville-West, *Knole and the Sackvilles*, 36-37.

⁶⁰ Davies, *A Select Second Husband*, 12.

⁶¹ Cliffe, *The World of the Country House*, 146.

⁶² John Speed, *The History of Great Britaine under the Conquests of Ye Romans, Saxons, Danes and Normans* (London: William Hall and John Beale, 1611), 677.

⁶³ Davies, *A Select Second Husband*, 12.

in 1635 a minister wrote to John Popham of Littlecote House 'for Hospitality you have ever bin so mindfull to intertain neighbours and strangers that few great Houses in our parts can contend or compare for free, frequent and magnificent intertainment with your Litle-coate.'⁶⁴ Yet, as will be discussed in chapter three, performing magnificence in one's own home was a risky business, and frequently invited financial ruin. By 1649 it was reported that Popham had 'wasted his estate' on such magnificent hospitality, even if this seems to have had a minimal effect on his descendant's land holdings.⁶⁵

This gradual merging of the spatial boundaries delineating magnificence and hospitality will re-emerge at numerous points throughout the dissertation. Most especially, the notion of magnificence being domestically performed seems to become more common over the turn of the seventeenth century. It is this semantic and spatial overlap which will eventually make the country house contested territory between magnificence and hospitality. Indeed, if both were to be performed within and without the house, they both became even less distinguishable, even mutually interchangeable, as socially-orientated acts of generosity. They also both achieved similar aims; explaining how individuals were 'worthy' of social privileges such as esteem, honour, and praise.

1.2.3 Status and Nobility

It is also evident from primary sources that magnificence and hospitality had a significant overlap in being qualities particular to a certain social class. When assessing the pool of individuals who are praised as both magnificent and hospitable, it is evident that all of them rank amongst the classically-defined 'ruling classes' – being either royalty, nobility or gentry. No record has been found of any person praised as hospitable and magnificent below the rank of a gentleman. Moreover, magnificence and hospitality often had the political function of qualifying such status.

Two examples demonstrating this have already been discussed. William Martyn's history of the reign of Edward IV recalls that the king 'won the hearts' of his supporters through his acts of magnificence and hospitality. Likewise, he lost their love and affection when he abandoned such actions.⁶⁶ This was a depiction of hospitality and magnificence which ostensibly undergirded his Kingly status. Likewise, John Speed recalls how the Earl of Warwick's matchless magnificence and hospitality earned him the reputation of a demi-king.⁶⁷ Indeed, magnificence and hospitality were so entangled with the performance and justification of status that they could augment the rank of an Earl to that of a King.

⁶⁴ Cliffe, *The World of the Country House*, 146.

⁶⁵ Cliffe, *The World of the Country House*, 146.

⁶⁶ Martyn, *The Historie and Lives*, 266.

⁶⁷ John Speed, *The history of Great Britaine* (London: William Hall and John Beale, 1611), 677.

Predictably, this aspect of magnificence and hospitality was used to bolster the legitimacy of the early Stuarts. For instance, on 3 February 1614, Queen Anne of Denmark hosted a wedding party for her lady-in-waiting, Jean Drummond, to Lord Roxborough. The festivities were to be held at Somerset House on the Strand, which had been recently refurbished.⁶⁸ In all, the festivities were said to have cost the queen around £3000, constituting a great feast and a play by Samuel Daniel, which was published the following year. The publication bears the full title *Hymens Triumph, A Pastorall Tragicomædie. Presented at the Queenes Court in the Strand, at Her Majesties Magnificent Entertainment of the Kings Most Excellent Majestie, Being at the Nuptials of the Lord Roxborough* (1615). The dedicatory poem at the opening of the publication reads as follows:

Here, what your sacred influence begat
 (Most lov'd, and most respected Maiestie)
 With humble heart, and hand, I consecrate
 Unto the glory of your memorie:
 As being a piece of that solemnitie,
 Which your Magnificence did celebrate
 In hallowing of those roofes (you rear'd of late)
 With fires and chearefull hospitalitie
 Whereby, and by your splendent Worthines
 Your name shal longer live then shal your walles,
 For, that faire structure goodnesse finishes,
 Beares off all change of times, and never falles.

Here, a particular relationship between magnificence and hospitality can be observed; Anne's magnificence is celebrated *through* the performance of hospitality. Most especially, they both function alongside Anne's 'worthines' in bolstering her name. The architectural language of this praise is also noteworthy; just as Anne completed the renovations at Somerset, so too did her magnificence and hospitality 'finish' the 'faire structure' of her name. Because of this, Daniel guarantees the longevity of her name – as if the structure of Anne's memory rested upon her magnificence and hospitality.

The same language of hospitality and magnificence is used to delegitimize the early Stuarts after the fall of the monarchy. The language used is not dissimilar to that used by Martyn in his account of Edward IV's fall from grace. One particularly pointed account can be found in Francis Osbourne's *Perswasive to a mutuall compliance under the present government, Together with a plea for a free state compared with monarchy* (1652). If Osbourne's political co-operation with the parliamentary regime was not evident in the work's title, his recollection of the reign of James I should firmly determine it as an anti-royalist account. Osbourne recalls:

⁶⁸ Simon Thurley, *Palaces of the Revolution, Life, Death & Art at the Stuart Court* (William Collins, 2021), 64.

King James enters, who never paid Army, built House, or was any way magnificently hospitable, yet scrued the Revenue to a double proportion, sold and gave away inestimable quantities of Woods and Lands, omitting nothing wherein he might poll his Subjects⁶⁹

It is an account remarkably similar to that of Edward IV's, where a King neglects to legitimise his status through the performance of magnificence and hospitality. James is portrayed as falling to greed, which along with his loss of landed authority, served to undermine his status. In a curious way, Osborne's account demonstrates how hospitality and magnificence remained concomitant with royalty in the minds of many, even during England's brief flirtation with republicanism.

In contrasting the means by which magnificent hospitality expressed pre- and post- Civil War conceptions of nobility; the political salience of both qualities is immediately evident. In a sense, this aspect of magnificence and hospitality consolidated the denominators of wealth and altruism in legitimising status. Both qualities served to bolster privileged status by demonstrating a particular dutifulness to the common good which qualified political rule.⁷⁰ During the early Stuart period, magnificence and hospitality could serve to legitimise monarchical privileges; they could convey majesty, and more importantly 'worthiness,' through the performance of virtue. Inversely, the neglect of magnificence and hospitality could call monarchy into question; destabilising a person's entitlement to a privileged status.

1.3 Conclusion

This chapter has had a simple aim; to depict the correlation between magnificence and hospitality as it was understood in Elizabethan and early Stuart England. Yet, the means to this end have been less simple. Two types of textual excerpts have been consulted. The first, articulating 'moral frameworks,' demonstrated that there were few attempts to map a correlation between the two qualities within the conventions of the moral treatise. The reasons for this scarcity may be primarily attributed to the sources which commonly supported humanist scholarship. There were no authoritative sources which addressed both magnificence and hospitality on par with one another. Neither Aristotle, nor Cicero, nor Aquinas, nor the bible, articulated any relationship between magnificence and hospitality. Rather, the

⁶⁹ Francis Osborne, *A Perswasive to a Mutuall Compliance under the Present Government.: Together with a Plea for a Free State Compared with Monarchy* (Oxford: Leonard Lichfield, 1652), 19.

⁷⁰ This is a greatly distilled summary of a complex ideology. The primary source which I think best elucidates the multiple points of view at work in the commonwealth period are the minutes of the Putney debates, held at Worcester College, Oxford, MS 65. It is from here that we see the oft-cited 'every Man that is to live under a Government ought first by his own Consent to put himself under that Government' declared by Thomas Rainsborough, and 'no man hath a right to an interest or share in the disposing of the affairs of the kingdom... that hath not a permanent fixed interest in this kingdom.'

two are generally mentioned separately, in texts of differing domains. Hospitality was found more in devotional texts, biblical commentaries, and sermons; whereas *magnificence* was the stuff of classical scholarship and humanist treatises. Hospitality was only given comparable scholarly importance in Dalechamp's *Christian Hospitalitie* (1632), which claims to be the first moral treatise dedicated to hospitality. Dalechamp's seemingly reactionary motives for writing this text will be addressed in the third chapter of this dissertation.⁷¹ In viewing Dalechamp's text alongside two other moral treatises by Wolleb and Hurault, one is afforded only a vague sketch of the correlation between magnificence and hospitality as both related to 'liberality' or 'benefice.' More clarity was afforded in the second section of this chapter, which examined the less-systematic use of the terms in the praise of individuals. In these sources, three common denominators came to the fore: magnificence and hospitality both signalled the proper management of wealth; they both signalled social concern; and they both signalled status and nobility. These three domains served to reveal the shared political motives behind the use of both terms; both terms were used frequently in order to justify and legitimise economic, social, and political privileges.

This understanding of the political salience of the terms 'hospitality' and 'magnificence' informs the remainder of this dissertation. Indeed, the fracturing social landscape of England in the century prior to the Civil Wars have been a leitmotif throughout this chapter, which has also begun to depict the politicisation of both terms. Indeed, the domain of correlation between magnificence and hospitality was also a domain of contestation; being a lieu in which questions of power and privilege were negotiated, both terms came to be entangled in the interconfessional and interconstitutional polemic of the seventeenth century. In these circles, both magnificence and hospitality were wielded as rhetorical weapons in the battle for wealth and power, whilst themselves being caught in a battle over which had the most rhetorical utility. As such, magnificence and hospitality were indeed correlated when it served the political motives of a rhetorician; but if one of them suffered a loss of rhetorical utility, their interrelationship could just as easily switch from one of correlation to *opposition*.

⁷¹ See Chapter Four, Section 4.3 ('What needs there a Signe?' Against false symbols of hospitality).

CHAPTER TWO

THE VIRTUE OF MAGNIFICENCE

WHAT PRINCES HAVE AND PURITANS LACK

The correlation between magnificence and hospitality was frustrated by the remarkably varied use the term ‘magnificence’ had in interconfessional and interconstitutional polemic. Yet in spite of this diversity, the varied polemical uses of the term were not distributed evenly between polarising factions. In the century leading up to the Civil War, the virtue of magnificence (with its numerous meanings) came to be increasingly invoked by the faction which was partial to absolutism. This has already been noted in a volume edited by Gijs Versteegen and Stijn Bussels, titled *Magnificence in the Seventeenth Century: Performing splendour in Catholic and Protestant contexts* (2021). Whilst the title of the volume highlights the confessional discrepancies affecting magnificence, as was so often the case, these confessional disputes precipitated constitutional ones. The volume analyses how a term which was previously known to bolster classical republicanism, saw a seventeenth-century reformulation to justify the social restrictions necessary to uphold absolutist rule.¹ This dynamic as it unfolded in the English context is

¹ Gijs Versteegen, Stijn Bussels, and Walter S. Melion, eds, *Magnificence in the Seventeenth Century: Performing Splendour in Catholic and Protestant Contexts*, *Intersections: Interdisciplinary Studies in Early Modern Culture*, Volume 72 (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2021) 9-10; Quentin Skinner, *Visions of Politics*, 1st ed. (Cambridge University Press, 2002). Versteegen et. al. argue that the start of the seventeenth century coincides with magnificence becoming far more socially restricted, and was therefore welcome for absolutist aspirations. Yet it also questions how republics used the concept to express power. Quentin Skinner in *Renaissance Virtues* argues that classical republicanism was anti-aristocratic. Thus expressions of magnificence would have been easily identified with corruption. However, for the most part, magnificence is defended in republics by many prominent authors.

directly addressed by Klaas Tindemans in chapter fifteen. Tindemans first outlines a preexisting ‘republican element’ in the term magnificence, which asserts that:

...magnificent expenditures should contribute to the republican quality of that community: liturgies, civic ceremonials, and the like. Magnificence is a part of the ‘social contract’, an element in the reciprocal obligations between citizens and state.²

However, Tindemans outlines how over the turn of the early modern period in England, this ‘republican element’ declines in light of a magnificence predicated on performance and display. He writes:

When the Tudor dynasty, during the sixteenth century, increased the performative qualities of its sovereignty in a visual form, the republican element of this redefined magnificence, insofar as it persisted, became almost invisible, as the official ideology of the monarchy became ever more absolutist.³

Tindemans continues to explain how magnificence, especially its use in the courtly entertainment of the early Stuart regime, was formulated to bolster this element of absolutism in the face of rising republican sentiment.⁴ Whilst Tindemans mostly looks beyond the early Stuart period towards the anti-reactionary literature of the post-Civil War context, this chapter largely agrees with his general characterisation of early Stuart magnificence.⁵ It did indeed become a semiological tool commonly wielded by the absolutist faction. However, as this chapter will demonstrate, this reactionary articulation inherited an already-diverse semantic field with all its complexities. The numerous dimensions of magnificence as they are developed over the sixteenth century could serve to bolster various different aspects of the reactionary project. Some of these uses did not exclude ‘republican sounding’ socially orientated expenditures. However, such uses were held almost ironically alongside an increasingly aestheticised articulation of magnificence, which indicated a certain tension between the various facets of the reactionary agenda.

To discuss this, the following chapter focuses on different dimensions or points of emphasis within the virtue of magnificence as they are developed throughout the sixteenth century; with a view towards their eventual use in reactionary polemic during the early Stuart period. This polemical use of

² Klaas Tindemans, ‘The Libertine Subversion of the Masque: The Case of John Wilmot’s *Lucina’s Rape*’, in *Magnificence in the Seventeenth Century*, ed. Gijs Versteegen, Stijn Bussels, and Walter Melion (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2021), 331.

³ Tindemans, ‘The Libertine Subversion of the Masque’, 331.

⁴ Tindemans, ‘The Libertine Subversion of the Masque’, 329. “The official, magnificent theatricality of the court masque, a mainly power-affirmative genre developed during the reigns of the English and Scottish kings James I and Charles I, before 1642.”

⁵ Tindemans, ‘The Libertine Subversion of the Masque’, 343. Tindemans frames a restoration masque as a ‘way to structure discontent about the reactionary divine justifications of actually repressive government.’

'magnificence' was twofold — the opposing faction would be accused of lacking magnificence, whilst the crown and the old aristocracy would be praised for it. In either scenario, it could be linked to architectural works; but which architectural types, and how it was to be linked (i.e. in terms of function or appearance) would vary greatly. This chapter aims to address each of the dimensions of magnificence which are emphasised and mobilised towards different reactionary ends; looking at their foundations in sixteenth-century discourse; and their effects on architectural thought. To do so, this chapter is divided into three parts. The first briefly introduces the Aristotelian virtue of Magnificence as a distinct reception amongst numerous varieties in early modern England. The second addresses the articulation of magnificence as the liberality of princes, emphasising the altruistic dimensions of magnificence. Turning to architecture, it will also discuss the connection between magnificence and public endowments for building churches and colleges. Such a reception of magnificence was eventually weaponised by a reactionary faction to accuse Puritans of social neglect. The religiously radical responded inconsistently — at times defending their magnificence in secular institutions and infrastructure, at other times rejecting magnificence itself as a mask for idolatry. The third section will look at the articulation of magnificence as an inherited quality, emphasising the centrality of birth, blood, and pedigree. Specifically, it will look towards the eventual use of this magnificence in the Stuart justification of royal privilege, and the crown's entitlement to material splendour. Moreover, this section will analyse how the Stuarts expected buildings to express or perform such magnificence, as an outward expression of their inward nobility. The final section will look at the gradual transposition of this royalist language upon the reactionary description of country houses, with a view towards discerning the architectural qualities of magnificence in domestic buildings.

2.1 The Aristotelian Virtue of Magnificence

There is a wealth of secondary literature which covers the polemical use of a distinctly *Aristotelian* formulation of magnificence in the republican context of Italian city states.⁶ This scholarship covers a notably different temporal and geographical context. However, the notion of an 'Aristotelian' virtue does serve this thesis well, inasmuch as it was contradistinct to numerous other formulations of magnificence which existed in early modern England. The matter is laid out in full by the literary historian William Harris in *Skelton's Magnificence and the Cardinal Virtue Tradition* (1965), where diverging definitions of magnificence can be seen to span an 'Aristotelian tradition' and a 'cardinal virtue tradition.' There were numerous nodes which marked points between these two poles: magnificence was sometimes Thomistic, sometimes Ciceronian, and sometimes only the vague

⁶ Fraser Jenkins, "Cosimo de' Medici's Patronage of Architecture and the Theory of Magnificence," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 33 (1970): 162–170; Louis Green, "Galvano Fiamma, Azzone Visconti and the Revival of the Classical Theory of Magnificence," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 53 (1990): 98–113; Peter Howard, "Preaching Magnificence in Renaissance Florence," *Renaissance Quarterly* 61, no. 2 (2008): 325–369.

‘Christian-Stoic.’⁷ Harris’ identification of a ‘cardinal virtue tradition’ was largely predicated on Cicero’s formulation of magnificence as a part of fortitude as it was reinterpreted and disseminated through scholastic texts.⁸ While Harris notes the prominence of this alternative conception of magnificence during the reign of Henry VIII, the notion lingers into the early Stuart period, at least amongst literate commoners such as tradesmen and artisans. The textual examples which emphasise the association of magnificence with fortitude include: *the path waye to the towre of perfection* (1554), *The vineyarde of vertue* (1579), *Vertue triumphant* (1603), *Two Guides to a Good life* (1604), *Organon reipublicæ* (1605), and *Panacea: or, Select aphorismes* (1630). Upon closer examination, none of these texts, nor their authors can be considered as being on the cutting edge of moral philosophy, indicating that the idea lost some currency following the reign of Mary I.⁹

Ostensibly, this association between magnificence and fortitude had relatively little to do with hospitality; and it had even less to do with architecture. For the purpose of this thesis, it serves primarily to express that the Aristotelian formulation of magnificence was one of many in early modern England. However, at least in the eyes of royalists, it was the Aristotelian formulation which was most ripe for political use.

Aristotle’s formulation of magnificence or *megaloprepeia* can be found in the Nicomachean Ethics (335-322 B.C.E.).¹⁰ The passage in question occurs in book

⁷ William Harris, *Skelton’s Magnificence and the Cardinal Virtue Tradition* (University of North Carolina Press, 1965), 20.

⁸ Harris, *Skelton’s Magnificence*, 17; Cicero, *De inventione II*, Cap. 163. “Fortitudo est considerata periculorum susceptio et laborum perpessio. Eius partes magnificentia, fidentia, patientia, perseverantia. Magnificentia est rerum magnarum et excelsarum cum animi ampla quadam et splendida propositione cogitatio atque administratio.”

⁹ Although the Ciceronian association of magnificentia with fortitude was rarely used by reputable English scholars, it survived in popular moral literature, largely through translations and derivative texts. The most notable conduit was Pierre de la Primaudaye’s *French Academie* (trans. 1586; eds. 1589, 1594, 1618), which presents magnificence as “the first part of Fortitude.” Its formulation was copied—often without attribution—by amateur or anonymous English moralists such as Anthony Nixon (*The Dignitie of Man*, 1612). The association, however, also appears earlier in works independent of Primaudaye, most strikingly in Miles Hogarde’s *Pathwaye to the Towre of Perfection* (1554), where magnificence “staide” the pillar of Fortitude in an overtly Thomistic allegory, and later in Richard Robinson’s *Vineyarde of Vertue* (1579), which repeats the standard list of subordinate virtues from Cicero. Similar restatements occur in minor seventeenth-century compilations (e.g. *Two Guides to a Good Life*, 1604; *Organon reipublicæ*, 1605; *Panacea*, 1630), suggesting that magnificence as a mode of fortitude circulated more broadly in middling devotional and ethical print than in scholastic or humanist philosophy.

¹⁰ n.b. The notion of magnificence being similar to generosity was not unique to Aristotle or his Nicomachean Ethics (335-322 B.C.E.). Before Aristotle, the term was used in Herodotus’ *Histories* (c. 430 B.C.E) in a similar fashion. Therein, the term ‘magnificence’ (or more accurately, *megaloprepeia*) occurs six times; four times it refers to a feast, once a wedding gift, and once the entry of the army of Xerxes. See: Herodotus, with an English translation by A. D. Godley. Cambridge. Harvard University Press. 1920; book 4, chapter 76: ... εὖρε γὰρ τῇ μητρὶ τῶν θεῶν ἀνάγοντας τοὺς Κυζικηνοὺς ὁρτὴν μεγαλοπρεπέως κάρτα, εὖξατο τῇ μητρὶ ὁ Ἀνάχαρσις, ἦν σῶς καὶ book 5, chapter 18: ... τε εἰδοὺ καὶ σφεας ἐπὶ ξείνια καλεῖ, παρασκευασάμενος δὲ δειπνον

IV, wherein Aristotle discusses the moral virtues. Distinct from the intellectual virtues, the moral virtues consist of certain moral dispositions, which are gradually acquired through experience and habituation. Aristotle writes that by 'moral virtues':

..I mean excellence of character; for this has to do with affections and actions [...] and it is in these that there is excess and deficiency, and the intermediate.¹¹

Notably, Aristotle does not group the virtues together under primary 'cardinal' virtues, but discusses around ten moral virtues in the form of a list. Although certain virtues seem more important than others, or are at least discussed in greater detail, Aristotle does not propose any hierarchies between them in the structure of the *Ethics*. Instead, the list takes the form of a single train of thought, each successive virtue coming to mind because of its connection to the former. It is therefore significant that Aristotle comes to discuss magnificence after liberality, since it implies a strong connection between the two virtues, even if they are distinct from one another.

Liberality (*eleutherotes*), in the Aristotelian sense, is sometimes translated as 'open-handedness,' as it refers to the virtue necessary in the context of giving and taking wealth.¹² Helpfully, the exact nature of Aristotelian virtues can often be clarified in analysing the vices it is flanked by, in this case 'avariciousness' and 'wastefulness.'¹³ In this regard, liberality can be understood as the disposition which engenders all acts one would refer to as generous or charitable. From this, Aristotle segues into the key passage on magnificence (*megaloepreia*) which is worth quoting in full:

It would seem proper to discuss magnificence next. For this also seems to be a virtue concerned with wealth; but it does not like liberality extend to all the actions that are concerned with wealth, but only to those that involve expenditure; and in these it surpasses liberality in scale. For, as the name itself suggests, it is a fitting expenditure involving largeness of scale. [...] Magnificence is an attribute of expenditures of the kind which we call honourable, e.g. those connected with the gods-votive offerings, buildings,

μεγαλοπρεπὲς ἐδέκετο τοὺς Πέρσας φιλοφρόνως. ὥς δὲ ἀπὸ δείπνου
book 6, chapter 122: ... ἀνὴρ ἐγένετο: ἐπειδὴ γὰρ ἐγίνοντο γάμου ὥραιαι, ἔδωκε σφι δωρεὴν
μεγαλοπρεπεστάτην ἐκείνησι τε ἐχαρίσατο: ἐκ γὰρ πάντων τῶν Ἀθηναίων τὸν
book 6, chapter 128: ... γὰρ κατεῖχε χρόνον αὐτοῦς, τοῦτον πάντα ἐποίηε καὶ ἅμα ἐξεῖνιζε
μεγαλοπρεπέως, καὶ δὴ κου μάλιστα τῶν μνηστήρων ἡρέσκοντο οἱ
book 7, chapter 57: ... ἔμελλε μὲν ἔλαν στρατιὴν ἐπὶ τὴν Ἑλλάδα Ξέρξης ἀγανρότατα καὶ
μεγαλοπρεπέστατα, ὀπίσω δὲ περὶ ἑωυτοῦ τρέχων ἦζειν ἐς τὸν αὐτὸν
book 9, chapter 82: ... εὖ ἐστρωμέναις καὶ τραπέζαις τε χρυσέαις καὶ ἀργυρέαις καὶ παρασκευὴν
μεγαλοπρεπέα τοῦ δείπνου, ἐκπλαγέντα τὰ προκείμενα ἀγαθὰ κελεῦσαι ἐπὶ γέλωτι

¹¹ NE 1106b16–18. Aristotle, C. J. Rowe, and Sarah Broadie, *Nicomachean Ethics* (Oxford ; New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 141.

¹² Aristotle, *Ethica Nicomachea*, 1119b25 (C. J. Rowe, 141).

¹³ Aristotle, *Ethica Nicomachea*, 1121a10 (C. J. Rowe, 141) .

and sacrifices-and similarly with any form of religious worship, and all those that are proper objects of public-spirited ambition, as when people think they ought to equip a chorus or a trireme, or entertain the city, in a brilliant way. But in all cases, as has been said, we have regard to the agent as well and ask who he is and what means he has; for the expenditure should be worthy of his means, and suit not only the result but also the producer. Hence a poor man cannot be magnificent, since he has not the means with which to spend large sums fittingly; and he who tries is a fool, since he spends beyond what can be expected of him and what is proper, but it is right expenditure that is virtuous. But great expenditure is becoming to those who have suitable means to start with, acquired by their own efforts or from ancestors or connections, and to people of high birth or reputation, and so on; for all these things bring with them greatness and prestige.¹⁴

There are two prominent dimensions in this definition – *doing* and *being* – and it is not immediately evident which is more prominent. On the one hand, magnificence could be qualified by the *act* of great open-handed expenditure and public-spirited ambition. On the other hand, it could be predicated upon the state and status of the actor; here defined as their reputation, high birth, connections, or ancestry.

To some extent, these two dimensions were reflected in the Aristotelian formulation of virtue more generally. In book two, Aristotle defines virtue as ‘a state of character concerned with choice,’ which when choosing, is inclined towards the intermediate.¹⁵ This foregrounds the *state* of the virtuous person; it is *being* virtuous which enables good choices. However, earlier in the same book Aristotle also describes how one is to become virtuous. He writes that ‘by doing just acts we become just; by doing temperate acts, temperate; by doing brave acts, brave.’¹⁶ Here, action is placed before state; it is not the mere being, nor the internal choice, but the external action which produces virtue. When taken together, the notion of virtue is prone to a problem of infinite regress – what came first: the action or the state?

It may be tempting to equate the conflict between action and identity with equivalent conflicts between republicanism and absolutism, especially in regards to magnificence. Yet, it is worth noting that if indeed absolutist formulations of magnificence emphasised the centrality of status, they did not always exclude the ‘republican element’ of liberal actions.¹⁷ To illustrate

¹⁴ NE 1122 . David Ross, *The Nicomachean Ethics Of Aristotle* (London: Oxford University Press, 1925), 85–88.

¹⁵ Aristotle, *Ethica Nicomachea*, 1106b20 “Ἔστιν ἄρα ἡ ἀρετὴ ἕξις προαιρετικὴ [...]” trans. David Ross, rev. J. O. Urmson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980); “Virtue, then, is a state of character concerned with choice, [...] virtue both finds and chooses that which is intermediate.”

¹⁶ Aristotle, *Ethica Nicomachea*, 1103a33 “ἐκ τοῦ γὰρ τὰ δίκαια πράττειν δίκαιοι γινόμεθα, καὶ τὰ σώφρονα σώφρονες, καὶ τὰ ἀνδρεῖα ἀνδρεῖοι.” trans. David Ross, rev. J. O. Urmson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980).

¹⁷ To quote Tindemans, ‘The Libertine Subversion of the Masque’, 331.

this point, the following chapter will look at the presence of both *doing* and *being* magnificent in reactionary polemic. First, the English formulation of magnificence as ‘the liberality of princes’ will be discussed, with a focus on its internal contradictions and architectural implications. Importantly, this section will outline how this notion was integrated into reactionary rhetoric in order to discredit their apparently illiberal opponents. The second section will turn to the matter of magnificence as a state of birth, a stance which de-emphasised acts of liberality. It will then discuss how this state of magnificence was expressed in buildings through the aesthetic language of Stuart propaganda. Finally, this section will turn to how this aestheticised understanding of magnificence came to be traded between conservatives in relation to the country house.

2.2 Magnificence as the Liberality of Princes: Colleges, Churches and Other Public Buildings

Over the early modern period, Aristotle’s definition of magnificence in *Ethics IV* sees increased English engagement and circulation. A key early instance is the selective rephrasing of *Ethics IV* in the *Liber Niger Domus Regis Angliae* (1467–1477), a collection of ordinances which governed the household of Edward IV (1442–1483). The section discussing the ‘house of the King’s magnificence’ (or *domus regis magnificentiae*) reinterprets Aristotle’s definition of magnificence as a list of six ways in which an expenditure may befit a magnificent man: in knowledge, with honour, with delight, with purpose, with abundance, and with excellence.¹⁸ The passage is clearly one positioned to justify the economic privileges of the king; he is to be assigned more resources because he has the nobility to transform them with magnificence.¹⁹ Over the following century, one may see the formative impact of what might properly be called *Aristotelian* scholarship. Around 1490, the scribe and refugee from Constantinople, Joannes Serbopoulos, was employed by Reading Abbey to transcribe a copy of Aristotle’s

¹⁸ “Liber Niger Domus Regis Angliae” *A collection of ordinances and regulations for the government of the royal household, made in divers reigns : from King Edward III to King William and Queen Mary, also receipts in ancient cookery* (London : Printed for the Society of Antiquaries by John Nichols, sold by Messieurs White and Son, Robson, Leigh and Sotheby, Browne, and Egerton’s, 1790), 19.

¹⁹ *A collection of ordinances*, 19. “Certe pot nos magnificentia fieri nisi cum magnis expensis; magnifici quodam est facere multa et magna cum expensis; tales vero rationes valent ut fiat in aliis quasi non superhabundet nec excedant ut etiam in magnis quoque talis vocetur banalis usus quasi. fornace bona sua consumens Ethicorum quarto magnificus ab equali proportionato sumptum opus faciet magis magnificum quod est diu duraturum quia sedet virtute recte studium quod oportet..” [Certainly, magnificence cannot come to be except with great expenses; to be magnificent is, in a certain sense, to accomplish many and great things with expense. Yet such expenditures are regulated in such a way that in other matters he does not appear to overflow or exceed, so that even in great undertakings one might otherwise call it a vulgar use—as if a furnace were consuming its own goods. But in the fourth book of the *Ethics*, the magnificent man, from a proportionate equality, will make an expenditure on a work more truly magnificent when it is enduring, because he abides in the virtue of rightly ordered zeal, as is fitting].

Nicomachean Ethics, which can now be found at New College Library, Oxford.²⁰ Thereafter, numerous paraphrases and commentaries of the Nicomachean Ethics were produced over the sixteenth century.

What can be seen emerging through these sixteenth-century paraphrases and commentaries is a distinct formulation of magnificence as ‘the liberality of princes,’ with the term *princes* understood to refer to the ruling classes more generally.²¹ This was distinct in the sense that it marked two notable digressions from Aristotle. Firstly, Aristotle makes no reference to a *prince* in the sense of ‘one who rules.’ Instead, sufficient wealth, greatness, and prestige are foregrounded, whether or not they were related to political authority. Secondly, in the *Ethics*, the distinction between magnificence and liberality lay not only in the subject, but also in the means and the object. The means of liberality were all the actions concerned with wealth, including how wealth is obtained and retained, whereas magnificence concerns only expenditure.²² The object was also different: liberality concerned *all* expenses, while magnificence was only concerned with *great* expenses.²³ Numerous commentaries over the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries stressed the distinction in subject over the distinctions in object and means; rendering magnificence little more than liberality performed by a prince.

For instance, this can be observed in the writing of Sir Thomas Elyot (c. 1496 – 26 March 1546). Elyot was a member of parliament, diplomat, and well-esteemed writer, with a formidable literary oeuvre which spanned the translation of classics to medicinal treatises. His well-known *boke named the Gouernour* (1537), dedicated to Henry VIII and intended for the education of rulers, establishes magnificence as a liberality for princes. Elyot states:

philosophers, in the description of vertues, haue diuised to set theym as it were in degrees, hauyng respect to the qualitie & condition of the persone, whiche is with theym adourned, as applieng Magnificence to the substaunce and astate of princis, and to priuate persones Beneficence and Liberalitie. [...] Than nedes must Beneficence and Liberalitie be Capitall vertues, & Magnificence procedeth frō them.²⁴

This conception of magnificence as liberality of princes continued into the Elizabethan era. This interpretation is evident, for example, in the anonymously authored moral and political treatise titled *Delectable demaundes, and pleasaunt questions* (1566). Therein, the response to the question ‘What is Magnificence?’

²⁰ MS 240f.137v-138r, New College Library, Oxford.

²¹ Whether this is taken to mean one who rules *alone* (i.e. the king) or rules more generally (i.e. the nobility, etc.) is not made explicit in primary sources and therefore cannot be discerned.

²² Aristotle, *Ethica Nicomachea*, 1122a20 (David Ross, 85) “[Magnificence] does not like liberality extend to all the actions that are concerned with wealth, but only to those that involve expenditure.”

²³ Aristotle, *Ethica Nicomachea*, 1122a23 (David Ross, 85-86).

²⁴ Thomas Elyot, *The Boke Named the Gouernour* (London: Thomas Berthelet, 1537), 130.

is that ‘It is a vertue proper onely to princes...’²⁵ In the following decade, the same formulation can be found in Thomas Roger’s philosophical discourse titled *The anatomie of the minde* (1576). Therein, magnificence is defined as ‘a vertue proper only vnto Princes, priuate persons of this Magnificence cannot be called magnificall.’²⁶ This notion eventually comes to be reflected in more determinedly ‘Aristotelian’ commentaries. The Elizabethan scholar John Case articulates it in the *Speculum moralium quaestionum in vniversam ethicen Aristotelis* (1585).²⁷ He writes:

Magnificence agrees with liberality in its subject, its object, its manner, and its purpose. However, it conducts itself in a way that is lofty and eminent, and as if it soars to high, royal, and exalted things. Alexander, to one who asked for a denarius, gave a city. For the magnificent person indeed gives, but gives greatly: he builds, but builds remarkable things; he accomplishes many things, but all full of dignity and honor.²⁸

It is worth bearing John Cases’ name in mind, for we will shortly be returning to his *Speculum moralium* to discuss its anti-puritan undertones. For now, it should be sufficiently illustrated that there was a distinct conception of magnificence, arising throughout the sixteenth century, which saw magnificence as the liberality of princes. This was not so much an articulation of Aristotelian orthodoxy, as it was a response to the English political context. The dichotomy drawn by Elyot between the *princely* and the *private* is telling; this was didactic content directed towards princes as public figures.²⁹ To many, England remained governed by natural hierarchies, reflected in the distribution of both wealth and authority. In such a context, magnificence was seen as an obligation specifically touching the ruling classes to carry out acts of public generosity. Similar to formulations of hospitality, it articulated the responsibility of wealthy public figures to use their money for the good of society.

2.2.1 Magnificent Public Building and its Decline in Reactionary Polemic

It is not difficult to guess how texts urging princes (i.e. the ruling class) towards magnificent public expenditure would implicate public *architecture*. Here,

²⁵ Anonymous, *Delectable Demaundes, and Pleasaunt Questions, with Their Seuerall Aunswers, in Matters of Loue, Naturall Causes, with Morall and Politique Deuises. Newly Translated out of Frenche into Englishe*. (London: Iohn Cawood for Nicholas Englande, 1566), 83.

²⁶ Thomas Rogers, *A Philosophicall Discourse, Entitled, The Anatomie of the Minde* (London: I[ohn] C[harlewood] for Andrew Maunsell, 1576), 149.

²⁷ John Case, *Speculum Moralium Quaestionum in Vniuersam Ethicen Aristotelis* (Oxford: Joseph Barnes, 1585), 153 “Quid multis opus est?”

²⁸ Case, *Speculum Moralium*, 153. “Magnificentia in subiecto, in obiecto, in modo, in fine cum liberalitate conuenit. Circa haec tamen eminentibus se gerit, & veluti ad alta, regia, & excelsa volat. Alexander petenti denarium dedit urbem. Magnificus enim dat ille quidem, sed magno: extruit, sed insignia: facit multa, sed dignitate & honore plena.” The translation is my own.

²⁹ Elyot, *The Boke Named the Gouernour*, 130.

public architecture is not anachronistically understood as publicly funded or operated building – but more specifically refers to that which served the interest of the *res publica*, being orientated toward the use of church, community or commonwealth. Whilst the only type of public building explicitly mentioned by Aristotle are those buildings ‘connected with the gods,’ the sixteenth century sees an increasing emphasis on funding public building as an exemplary act of magnificence.³⁰ In didactic texts especially, the example of building can be seen taking a more prominent place amongst the actions constituting magnificence. For example, primacy is given to public building in *The counsellor Exactly pourtraited* (1598), which lists ‘building Churches, erecting cities, townes, villages, and doing all things wherby eyther God might be honoured, or their owne good same encreased.’³¹ Likewise, *A paterne of true prayer* (1605) provides a short list of examples: ‘erecting Colleges, Hospitals, making high waies, &c.’³² Various types of public building also continues to feature prominently in the numerous Aristotelian commentaries printed in the universities over the Caroline period, such as Francisco Pavone’s *Summa Ethicae* (Oxford, 1633); Theophilus Golius’ *Epitome doctrinae moralis* (Cambridge, 1634); and Jean Buridan’s *Quaestiones in decem libros* (Oxford, 1637). The lengthiest list is provided by Golium, who mentions temples, galleys, towers, walls, theatres, arcades, and aqueducts.³³

However, this urge towards magnificent public building also had a distinct polemical use. The virtue of magnificence had both progressive and reactionary polemical potential – it could be urged as a new expression of virtue; or veiled in antiquity and bemoaned as a virtue erased by rising evils. The latter can be seen emerging in the discourse of the 1580’s, where a decline in public building is blamed on the indulgent and overly reformed ruling class.

John Case, whose *Speculum moralium quaestionum in vniversam ethicen Aristotelis* (1585) has already been mentioned, articulates such a view. Case was

³⁰ Aristotle, *Ethica Nicomachea*, 1122b (David Ross, 87); The increasing centrality of architecture in sixteenth-century formulations of magnificence is covered in: Mary E. Hazard, ‘A Magnificent Lord: Leicester, Kenilworth, and Transformations in the Idea of Magnificence’, *Cahiers Élisabéthains* 31, no. 1 (1987): 11–35.

³¹ Wawrzyniec Goślicki, *The Counsellor Exactly Pourtraited in Two Bookes* (London: Richard Braddocke, 1598), 112. The english reception of this text is outlined in: Bałuk, T., “De optimo senatore” Wawrzynca Goslickiego I jego oddziaływanie w Anglii [Wawrzyniec Goslicki’s “De optimo senatore” and Its Reception in England’]. Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Jagiellonian University, 1979

³² John Smyth, *A Paterne of True Prayer. A Learned and Comfortable Exposition or Commentarie Vpon the Lords Prayer* (London: Felix Kyngston, 1605), 112.

³³ Theophilus Golium, *Epitome Doctrinae Moralis, Ex Decem Libris Ethicorum Aristotelis Ad Nicomachum Collecta, pro Academia Argentinensi*, trans. Simon Grynaeo (Cambridge: Apud Thom. & Ioan. Buck, 1634), 109. “Quotuplicia sunt illa opera? Vel enim sunt Sacra, quae ad divinum cultum pertinent: ut templa, altaria, sacrificia, imagines, statuae, vestes sacrae, anathemata, & his similia. Vel sunt Profana: atque ea rursum vel sunt Publica, quae ad publicum civitatis usum & ornatum pertinent; ut triremes, propugnacula, moenia, theatra, porticus, aquaeductus, ludi, spectacula, epulae publicae, &c.”

born in 1539, the starting year of the dissolution, and was a chorister in Oxford as the English reformation unfolded around him.³⁴ He remained on the conservative side of the reformation, and his literary traces were regarded as ‘popishly affected’ in the Stuart period.³⁵ This stance can be glimpsed in his nostalgic recollections of public architectural patronage which once defined England’s ruling class. In his *Speculum moralium* (1585), he responds to the question *Quid magnificentia* writing:

This age (alas!) rarely reflects on magnificence. For indeed, very few nowadays think of founding new cities; few of constructing new academies; few of erecting sacred temples; few of constructing new havens for the Muses for their own fame and the benefit of posterity. [...] where now are the Wyckhams? Where are the Waynffletes? Where the Whites? Where now all the magnificent and illustrious men, who have greatly enriched England, the most blessed region, with two very august colleges? Of whom Coryat the poet once sang in this way:

And there are two famous schools known throughout the world,
Oxford, flourishing in studies, my sweet Alma Mater,
A work of the King: and you, the illustrious halls of Cambridge,
Magnificently flourishing, a university sacred to the Muses.
These are truly Corinthian works: these are the expressed examples of true
magnificence (of which we now speak).³⁶

We may also glean in this passage some elaboration upon those who Case deemed as ‘lofty and eminent [...] high, royal, and exalted.’³⁷ Case’s nostalgic recollections included both the royal patronage of colleges (such as Kings in Cambridge), as well as the participation of public figures in constructing academies and the like. The examples he proposes are particularly pertinent; William of Wykeham (1324–1404), once Bishop of Winchester and Chancellor of England, had founded both New College (1379) and Winchester College (1382); William Waynflete (c.1395–1486) succeeded Wykeham as Bishop of Winchester and Chancellor of England, and founded Magdalen College (1458). Both were Catholic bishops and high-ranking officials who used their money to found academies prior to the

³⁴ Hugh Chisholm, ed. “Case, John”. *Encyclopædia Britannica*. Vol. 5 (Cambridge University Press, 1911), 444.

³⁵ Anthony à Wood, *Athenae Oxonienses: An Exact History of All the Writers and Bishops Who Have Had Their Education in the University of Oxford. To Which Are Added the Fasti, Or Annals of the Said University*, ed. Bliss (London: F. C. & J. Rivington, 1813 [1691]), 686.

³⁶ Case, *Speculum Moraliū*, 153. Translation is my own. “...si de statu Athenarum iam tacitus mecum repetens hoc unum quaeram: ubi iam sunt Wyckami? ubi Waynsiet? ubi Whiti? ubi nunc omnes magnifici & illustres viri, qui Angliam beatissimam regionem duobus longe augustissimis gymnasiis perbeaverunt? De quibus olim Coriatus poeta hoc modo cecinit, “Et duos inter totum Gymnasia nota per orbem, Oxonium studiis florens, mihi dulcis Alumna, Regis opustuaque, illustris Rex Cantaber ades, Magnifice storens sacris Academia Musis.” Haec sunt vere Corinthia opera: haec sunt expressa verae magnificentiae (de qua nunc loquimur) exemplaria.”

³⁷ Case, *Speculum Moraliū*, 153.

English reformation. Given Case's nostalgic recollection of the benevolence of the Catholic episcopacy, there is little question as to why he seemed 'popishly affected.'

It is no coincidence that the complaint of decaying magnificence was most commonly made by the less-reformed, who no doubt had a vested interest in pinning the blame of the perceived decline on radically reformed dissenters. This polemic is pitched in more transparent terms by William Vaughan in *The golden-groue moralized* (1600), in a passage which parrots the character and polemic of Case's complaint. On the definition of magnificence, Vaughan writes:

magnificence is a vertue, that consisteth in sumptuous & great expences [...] but in this age it is quite abandoned. They were wont in times past, to patronize and find poore schollers at the Uniuersitie: But now, I pray you, who is so noble-minded? who so vertuous? They were wont to builde Colledges: but now they are readie to pull them downe; and which is more, if any intendes but to build a free-schoole or an hospital (which is as seldome seene as a blacke swanne) wee account him, as they say, one of God Almightyes fooles. [...] Our sonnes at the Uniuersitie spende yeerely in batles, decrements, and bookes, as much as would suffice for the repaying of bridges, high-waies, and such like. Those preachers please our mindes best, which preach fayth, and no good workes. This cheape religion we like.³⁸

The target of this complaint is barely concealed; Vaughan outlines the decline caused by the Protestant emphasis on *sola fides* – both on scholarly endowments and public infrastructure. Vaughan's confessional stance would only become more concrete as decades passed. In his later history titled *The Church Militant* (1640), he described all manner of nonconformists as 'fiends': Lutherans, Wicklevians, Huguenots, Novatians, Schismatics, and Puritans alike.³⁹ This determined conformity assumedly aligned with his constitutional stance. Even though Vaughan died the year Civil War broke out (1640) his brother Henry Vaughan (1587–1659) was widely known as a royalist leader during this period. As such, Vaughan and Case's polemical trajectory can be understood as a reactionary one; which ultimately used the virtue of magnificence, especially in the sense of public building, to question the virtue of the more-reformed.

Whether this reactionary polemic aligned with historical fact was another matter. There remains sufficient historical evidence attesting to benefices awarded by prominent Protestants to colleges around the time both Vaughan and Case were writing. The year before Case's *Speculum moralium* (1585), Sir Walter Midmay had founded Emmanuel College in Cambridge. Midmay had been on the winning side of the dissolution, being stationed as a commissioner for receiving

³⁸ William Vaughan, *The Golden-Groove Moralized in Three Bookes: A Worke Very Necessary for All Such as Would Know How to Gouverne Themselves, Their Houses, or Their Countrey* (London: Simon Stafford, 1600), unpaginated [cap. 38].

³⁹ William Vaughan, *The Church Militant Historically Continued* (London: Tho. Paine for Humfrey Blunden, 1640), 325.

the surrender of the monasteries. His family had gotten remarkably wealthy off the spoils, acquiring a large fortune, and the manor of Moulsham.⁴⁰ Additionally, it was on the site of a Dominican priory that he founded his Emmanuel College. The confessional biases of this establishment were something of an open secret in the face of Elizabethan religious settlement. Returning to court after the grand opening of Emmanuel College, the queen was said to have commented (in words not unbarbed) ‘Sir Walter, I hear you have erected a Puritan foundation.’⁴¹ Moreover, just prior to Vaughan’s complaint, Frances Sidney, Countess of Sussex, had founded Sidney Sussex College in 1596. With a lengthy list of Puritan alumni, the two colleges came to be known as the ‘Puritan colleges of Cambridge.’⁴² It is perhaps for this reason that both colleges seem to completely evade the attention of Vaughan and Case, or perhaps more likely, Vaughan and Case hoped that these colleges would evade the attention of their confessionally moderate readership.

Crucially, the more-reformed response to these accusations was *also* lodged in terms of magnificence. Within these retorts are what may be considered actual traces of magnificence’s capital-R ‘Republican element.’ Such texts argued that there had been no decline in magnificent public endowments since the dissolution, and reacted against reactionary nostalgia by asserting that the Protestant ruling class was as magnificent as ever. Their titles alone are sufficiently illustrative; such texts include Percival Burrell’s *The English Centurion Showing the Unparalleled Bounty of Protestant Charity* (1629) and Thomas Cooper’s *The art of giving: Describing the true nature, and right use of liberality: and prouing that these dayes of the gospell haue farre exceeded the former times of superstition in true charitie and magnificence* (1615).⁴³ The account of magnificent building provided in the latter deserves closer examination, as Cooper positions his treatise as a response to the numerous forms of moral panic which were gripping Jacobean conservatives. In his epistle dedicatory, he directly addresses their manifold anxieties; the consumption of luxury goods; enclosures of common land; competition between tradesmen and merchants; etc.⁴⁴ In hindsight, many of these reactionary concerns were directed at the signs of nascent capitalism; which the optimistically Protestant Cooper

⁴⁰ Sidney Lee, “Mildmay, Walter”. In *Dictionary of National Biography, 1885–1900*. Vol. 37. (London: Smith, Elder & Co, 1894), 388–390.

⁴¹ Lee, “Mildmay, Walter,” 389.

⁴² Davies, Eloise, ‘Beyond the Jesuit College: The Role of Cambridge’s ‘Puritan’ Colleges in European Politics and Diplomacy, 1603–1625’, in Mordechai Feingold (ed.), *History of Universities: Volume XXXVI / 2* (Oxford, 2023; online edn, Oxford Academic, 28 Sept. 2023),

⁴³ Percival Burrell, *Sutton’s Synagogue, or, The English Centurion Shewing the Vnparalleled Bounty of Protestant Piety* (London: T.C. for Ralph Mabb, 1629); Thomas Cooper, *The Art of Giving: Describing the True Nature, and Right use of Liberality: And Prouing That These Dayes of the Gospell Haue Farre Exceeded the Former Times of Superstition in True Charitie and Magnificence*. By Thomas Cooper (London: Printed [by T. Snodham] for T. Pauier, and are to be sold in Iuy Lane, 1615).

⁴⁴ Thomas Cooper, *The Art of Giving: Describing the True Nature, and Right use of Liberality: And Prouing That These Dayes of the Gospell Haue Farre Exceeded the Former Times of Superstition in True Charitie and Magnificence* (London: T. Snodham for T. Pauier, 1615), unpaginated [epistle dedicatory].

aims to put at ease. In his view, expenditure on magnificent public buildings remained vigorous amongst the Protestant ruling class. This was the logical rebuttal demanded by John Case's interrogative 'where now all the magnificent and illustrious men?' Cooper is diligent in writing a list of public charges and endowments which is as protracted as possible, whereby its sheer length serves as the primary apologetic instrument. It therefore cannot be quoted in any other way but at length:

Blessed be God, in Jesus Christ, that hath confounded the false charity of the Papists by discovering the rotten foundation and cruel ends thereof. [...] Hath not these times of the Gospel yielded the supply of four new stately and magnificent Colleges in the Universities, richly endowed for the maintenance of true religion and learning to all posterity? [...] Shall we not ever remember not only how many sinks of Antichrist were converted into hospitals for the cure of the diseased and the nourishing of orphans in the City of London and elsewhere, but also how their revenues have been greatly increased by worthy citizens from time to time? [...] Shall not the memory of Sutton be glorious to posterity for his magnificent College? [...] And can we forget what is now, by God's mercy, even finished—that magnificent building of the University Schools? Surely, if we shall add to these the multitude of new bridges erected substantially in the necessary places of the land from free stone, the building of many gates in the City of London, and more, it will appear that the Gospel of Christ has been most fruitful in good works. Especially if we are wise to distinguish the times, it will be evident that the charges of such great buildings and endowments in these days far exceed those of former ages, even though they may seem of similar bulk and quantity. This is due not only to the fact that the land now abounds with far more people than in former ages—thanks to the long peace our good God has vouchsafed—but also to the rising costs of all things, which have greatly enhanced the expense of such endeavors.⁴⁵

The passage is an exemplary work of Protestant apologetics. Cooper uses the language of magnificence to justify the transfer of property during the dissolution; extols Sutton's 'Puritan college;' and attributes the maintenance of London's infrastructure to the introduction of the (ostensibly Protestant) gospel.

These texts illustrate one polemical use of the term 'magnificence' as it applied to public building endowments as it arose beginning in the 1580's. In this scenario, the less-reformed faction launched an accusation that the overly-reformed had neglected magnificent public buildings, most especially colleges. In response, the more-reformed argued that they *were*, in fact, magnificent. Thomas Cooper argues that much more had been spent by the Protestant ruling class on public building than before, even if in part due to the rising costs of building. Yet, as this chapter and the next will illustrate, this was only one of magnificence's varied polemical uses.

⁴⁵ Cooper, *The Art of Giving*, 88-89.

2.2.2 Church Architecture: Magnificent Maintenance or Vain Idolatry?

If there was a form of public magnificent building which the Puritanically inclined were reluctant to give even lip-service to, it would have been the building of churches. Indeed, as with other forms of public building, the more reformed and the gentry were variably accused of neglecting the magnificent charges necessary for church maintenance. However, when it came to churches, the Protestant response was not to defend their magnificence, but to argue *against magnificence* itself. This was most pronounced over the Caroline period. Magnificence in churches was caught in the mouths of reformers as a form of idolatry; an excuse to abandon truth in the credulous pursuit of signs.

Religious buildings were the primary form of public architecture endorsed by Aristotle. The first examples of magnificent expenses he presents are 'those connected with the gods – votive offerings, buildings, and sacrifices.'⁴⁶ There was also a biblical precedent for the magnificent foundation of religious building: the temple of Solomon. The passage occurs in Chronicles, when God tells King David that his warlike reign had made him an unsuitable edifier for a Jewish temple. David then comes to realise that his son Solomon was better suited for the project. The passage in the King James Translation of 1611 reads 'Solomon my sonne is yong and tender, and the house that is to be builded for the Lord, must be exceeding magnificall, of fame and of glory throughout all countreys.'⁴⁷ The connection between the account of the Solomonic temple in Chronicles and the Aristotelian articulation of magnificence did not just hinge on the word 'magnificall.' It seemed clear to some early modern writers that Solomon's architectural patronage had been a work of Aristotelian magnificence. For instance, the biblical and Aristotelian accounts were conflated by Étienne Molinier in *Les politiques chrétiennes* (Paris 1621). This text was translated by William Tywhit (of whom little biographical information remains) and printed in England under the title *Mirroure for Christian States: Or, A Table of Politick Vertues* (1635). In it, Solomon's words in 2 Chronicles 2:5 are quoted:

Liberality, and magnificence; are two vertues of great splendour in publicke, [...] As the Philosopher hath observed, *The most glorious are those which concerne the service due to the Deitie*. Now, if every great action ought to have an eminent object, what object can be more worthy, or more proportionable to the large expences of magnificence, than the honour due to the Divine Majestie. *The house I will build shall be great and sumptuous, because our God is great and Majesticall* (sayd King Salomon when hee designed the building of that Majesticall Temple, one of the worlds Wonders)⁴⁸

⁴⁶ Aristotle, *Ethica Nicomachea*, 1122b (David Ross, 87).

⁴⁷ 1 Chronicles 22:5 (KJV).

⁴⁸ Étienne Molinier, *A Mirroure for Christian States: Or, A Table of Politick Vertues Considerable amongst Christians.*, trans. William Tyrwhit (London: Thom. Harper, 1635), 250-251. The orig-

Evidently, Molinier uses the biblical citation to reinforce his Aristotelian quotation, not only framing the funding of church building works as an act of magnificence, but also as expected of a king. He was not the only one to do so.

While Tywhit was likely working on the translation of Moliner's formidable volume, Gyles Fleming delivered a sermon in St Paul's Cathedral titled *Magnificence Exemplified and the Repaire of Saint Paul's* (1634). In describing magnificence, Fleming also quotes 2 Chronicles 2:5, stating:

Solomon had a further reason; he thought by the magnificence of his Temple, most fitly to set forth the greatnesse and Majesty of God, who was served in it, "And the house which I build is great, for great is our God above all gods"⁴⁹

The content of the sermon has already been covered in great detail by Anne-Françoise Morel, but there are some contextual points worth highlighting.⁵⁰ Charles I had promised to pay for the West Front of St Paul's Cathedral one year earlier, and in light of this, Gyles' sermon can be read as an endorsement of this royal patronage as an act of Kingly magnificence.⁵¹ However, 1634 also marked the beginning of Charles' desperate attempts to levy ship money to fund struggling crown finances; and so the portico was likely the most he was willing to pay for.⁵² As such, Gyles' sermon also serves to (almost ironically) divest responsibility for restoring the rest of St Paul's onto the wealthier citizens such as merchants and tradesmen.⁵³

For all his attempts to build a platform for (financial) cooperation between the King and the City, the social divisions of the Caroline era can be glimpsed

inal french reads: 'car comme mesme le Philosophe a remarqué, Les despences qui apportent plus de gloire, sont celles qui concernent le service deü à la Divinité; [Honorabiles sumptus sunt maximè qui pertinent ad divino sacrificia. Arist. lib. 4. Eth. cap. 8.] Et si toutes actions grandes doivent avoir vn grand obiet, quel obiet plus digne & plus proportionné aux grandes despences de la magnificence, que l'honneur qu'on doit à la gradeur infinie de la Majesté Diuine? La maison que ie veux edifier sera grande & somptueuse, parce que nostre Dieu est grand & Majestueux, [Domus quâ aedificare cupio magna est, magnus enim Deus noster. Paralip. lib. 2. cap. 2.]' Étienne Molinier, *Les Politiques Chrétiennes, Ou Tableau Des Vertus Politiques Considérées En l'estat Chrestien* (Paris: M. Collet, 1621), 347.

⁴⁹ Gyles Fleming, *Magnificence Exemplified: And, the Repaire of Saint Pauls* (London: Richard Badger for Thomas Alchorn, 1634), 41.

⁵⁰ Anne-Françoise Morel, "Magnificence Exemplified: The Restoration of the Old St. Paul's London," in *Magnificence in the Seventeenth Century*, ed. Stijn Bussels and Walter Melion (Brill, 2020), 220–40, https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004436800_012.

⁵¹ M.E., Morse *The Politics of Art and Religion: Absolutism and Catholic Iconography in Early Stuart England* (University of Florida: PhD. Diss., 2009), 406. Cited in: Anne-Françoise Morel, 'Magnificence Exemplified: The Restoration of the Old St. Paul's London', in *Magnificence in the Seventeenth Century*, ed. Stijn Bussels and Walter Melion (Brill, 2020), 223.

⁵² Simon Mark Healy, "Crown revenue and the political culture of early Stuart England," Thesis, (Birkbeck Institutional Theses: 2015), 198.

⁵³ Fleming, *Magnificence Exemplified*, 51. "yee, the inhabitants of this honourable Citie, ought to shew your selves in it, most forward and exemplary.[...] yee dip your feet in Oile, and abound in wealth and riches, the riches of the whole Land serving but to inrich you."

through the cracks of Fleming's plea. The gentry, for instance, were blamed by Fleming, who stated that he found 'our Gentry for a great part so vaine, that they never consider of it; nor seldome of any thing so serious: whose contributions it may be, would be more liberall to a Horse-race, than to a Synagogue.'⁵⁴ As for who was responsible for the cathedral's current state of disrepair, royalists were anxious to blame the Puritans. Indeed, it is difficult not to see Fleming's sermon as a reiteration of Charles' petition in 1633 requesting financial aid in repairing the cathedral.⁵⁵ In this document, the blame is largely imputed upon Puritans, who had purportedly privatised many of the Church's key sources of revenue.⁵⁶

The stereotype of architecturally neglectful Puritans was one which persisted throughout the Early Stuart period, and largely concerned their patronage of church building (or lack thereof). Much secondary scholarship has been devoted to this polemical trope, which persisted during the Laudian building initiatives of the 1630's.⁵⁷ According to the Laudian minister Robert Skinner, in a sermon preached before Charles I in 1634, the Puritans believed 'God was not interested in any other temples save those of the bodies and souls of his saints.'⁵⁸

The truthfulness of these accusations can perhaps be gauged in the more-reformed position, which included crucial reformulations of magnificence. On the one hand, it was possible to divert the emphasis within the term away from church building. This is evident in the writings of the more moderate Puritan minister John Smyth, who defines magnificence in his *Pattern of true prayer* (1605). He writes:

11. Magnificence: to bestow bountifully vpon Church or Commonwealth, as in erecting Colleges, Hospitals, making high waies, &c.⁵⁹

The stance is similar to the one formulated by Cooper, insisting that Protestant magnificence manifested primarily in 'secular' public buildings. Indeed, like Cooper, Smyth's definition of magnificence seems thoroughly Aristotelian save the obvious omission of religious buildings.

More radical, however, was the notion that magnificence itself was idolatrous. Such a notion was biblically available: the King James Translation of 1611 uses the term only once in the New Testament, and it referred to idolatry. This occurs in the book of Acts, during Paul's ministry in Ephesus, when his preaching against

⁵⁴ Fleming, *Magnificence Exemplified*, 51.

⁵⁵ Morel, 'Magnificence Exemplified,' 224.

⁵⁶ Charles I, *His Majesties Commission, and Further Declaration: Concerning the Reparation of Saint Pauls Church* (London: Robert Barker, 1633), 2.

⁵⁷ Merritt, J. F. "Puritans, Laudians, and the Phenomenon of Church-Building in Jacobean London." *The Historical Journal* 41, no. 4 (1998): 935–60.

⁵⁸ Robert Skinner, *A Sermon Preached before the King at White-Hall, 3 Dec. 1634* (London: John Haviland for John Clarke, 1635), summarised by Merritt.

⁵⁹ Smyth, *A Paterne of True Prayer*, 138.

idolatry causes a stir amongst the craftsmen responsible for making religious goods. In objection, the craftsman Demetrius is quoted as saying:

not only this our craft is in danger to be set at nought: but also that the Temple of the great goddess Diana should be despised, and her magnificence should be destroyed, whom all Asia, and the world worshippeth.⁶⁰

The verse was one in which magnificence was tied to a ‘false religion,’ one which Paul’s preaching against idolatry threatened to destroy. The verse would have undoubtedly resonated with numerous Puritans, whose iconoclasm was largely pitched against the material excesses of ‘popism.’⁶¹

Indeed, the seventeenth century saw continued waves of anti-Catholic sentiment. Under James I, the Anglo-Spanish War was well within living memory, and the language used by the House of Commons during negotiations for the Spanish match (1614-1623) had a distinctly anti-Catholic tinge.⁶² The subsequent presence of the Catholic Henrietta Maria and her retinue in the court of Charles I saw the first outbreak of purported ‘popish plotting.’⁶³ This was, in part, gravened by the ritualist circles which closely surrounded Charles, who echoed the Stuart emphasis on ‘outward signs of inward realities.’ Most prominently, Bishop Laud heavily stressed the necessity of an elaborated ceremonial in conveying spiritual realities such as holiness; a view which has since been labelled Laudian sacramentalism. Many of the attacks launched by the more-reformed (and less-conforming) against ‘magnificence’ should be read against this backdrop; most especially those attacks which constituted the wave of anti-magnificent rhetoric following 1629, the year beginning Laud’s restoration of the altars.⁶⁴ Additionally, many of the authors who took to the pulpit or pen over those years had personally fallen out with Laud, and their attacks on magnificence could equally be understood as attacks on the Laudian sacramentalist project.

Indeed, the Puritan emphasis on *sola scriptura* and *sola fides* stressed the primacy of the abstracted ‘word’ and the inner workings of faith over outwards signs, works, and ceremonies. The term ‘magnificence’ was easily implicated; at the turn of the seventeenth century the nonconformist cleric Robert Cawdrey asserted that human beauty and ‘magnificence’ was nothing else but ‘vaine, brittle, transitorie and ruinous; vnlesse it bee sustained, upholden, and undershored by

⁶⁰ Acts 19:27, (KJV 1611).

⁶¹ Julie Spraggon, *Puritan Iconoclasm during the English Civil War*, Studies in Modern British Religious History, v. 6 (Woodbridge, Suffolk, UK Rochester, NY: Boydell Press, 2003).

⁶² Kathryn Marshalek, “An Unsettled Religious Settlement and the Crisis of the 1620s: English Catholics, Anti-Popery, and the Spanish Match, 1622–4,” *The English Historical Review*, 2025.

⁶³ Caroline M. Hibbard, *Charles I and the Popish Plot* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1983).

⁶⁴ Kenneth Fincham, “The Restoration of Altars in the 1630s,” *The Historical Journal* 44, no. 4 (2001): 919–40.

the heauenly power of the sure and eternall word of God.’⁶⁵ This focus on ‘the word’ was central to Cawdrey’s oeuvre; he could be trusted not to use terms carelessly. We are given some indication of the sense in which Cawdrey uses the term ‘magnificence,’ in his *magnum opus*: the well-known early dictionary, the *Table Alphabeticall* (1609). Therein, he defines magnificence with a single word: *sumptuousnesse*.⁶⁶ In turn, he defines ‘sumptuousness’ as ‘costly, rich,’ suggesting that Cawdrey’s use of ‘beauty and magnificence’ was one which referred to the (visual) effects of expenditure.⁶⁷ It was this ocular and sumptuous magnificence which more radical Protestants sought to distance themselves from.

This particularly Protestant anti-ocular polemic had a predictably turbulent interaction with shifts in church-building culture over the subsequent Caroline period. In 1630, the nonconformist preacher John Brinsley delivered a sermon outlining his thoughts on magnificent building. The occasion was the reconsecration of the parish church of St Andrew, in Flixton, Suffolk, a building ‘possibly not inelegantly finished’ but very small and built of flint.⁶⁸ Brinsley seems to make use of the humble scale of the church to illustrate his point:

Let those Romish Templars who pride themselves so much in the glory of their Temples shew vs their vast and magnificent buildings: their rich ornaments and furniture, their rare, precious and sacred relicks, put them all together, what is all to the glory of Salomons temple, and yet behold a greater then Salomons is here: The glory of the latter house shall be greater then of the former, saith the Lord of Hosts.⁶⁹

And what is it that makes the parish church in Flixton so much more glorious than the temple of Solomon? Whilst Brinsley is careful not to demean the extensive and rapid renovation of the small church in the presence of its executors, he also drafts a distinctly anti-ocular polemic, once again taking aim at the magnificence of the Roman Catholic church. He states:

I might in the first place from this ground take a iust occasion to discouer and taxe that childish superstition of the Church of Rome in their preposterous adornations of their Temples. Let none anticipate my intentions, or through preiudice either mistake my words, or misconstrue my meaning) I haue nothing to say against the decent beautifying of the

⁶⁵ Robert Cawdrey, *A Treasurie or Store-House of Similies* (London: Tho Creede, 1600), 495.

⁶⁶ Robert Cawdrey, *A Table Alphabeticall Contayning* (London: T.S. for Edmund Weauer, 1609), unpaginated.

⁶⁷ Cawdrey, *A Table Alphabeticall*.

⁶⁸ Anne-Françoise Morel, *Glorious Temples or Babylonian Whores*, Brill’s Studies in Intellectual History (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2019), 291.

⁶⁹ John Brinsley, *The Glorie of the Latter Temple Greater Then of the Former Opened in a Sermon Preached at the Consecration or Restitution of the Parish Church of Flixton in the Island of Louing-land in the County of Suffolke; Being Sometimes the Mother Church of the East-Angles* (London: G. Miller for Robert Bird, 1630), 11.

places of Gods publique worship. [...] It is the shame of our nation in many parts of it the houses of God seeme to lie neglected, waste, ruinous, as if neither God nor man dwelt in them, or had any reference to them; we may without any iniurie write vpon the doores of them there is no glory, no beauty, no decency, neither in the outside, nor yet in the inside. I would to God the foule mouthes of the Romanists were not too iustly opened against vs in this quarrell; but yet our negligence is no plea for their preposterousnesse. What is it that they account the greatest glory of their Temples? Stately and goodly edifices, vast and magnificent buildings, built rather for the eye, then the eare; state then vse; Rich and costly furniture, Curious pictures, Images, Crucifixes, Altars, Chalices, Vestments; rare apurtenances, shrines, monuments, relicks. This is the glory which the eyes of the greatest part amongst them are dazled with: Little account in the meane time do they make of this glory of the latter Temple, the Preaching of Christ.⁷⁰

Here, the Protestant emphasis on the ‘word’ is made manifest in an architectural commentary. In such a view, ‘vast and magnificent buildings’ provided mere eye-service, intended to ‘dazzle’ the eyes of the multitudes without substantial faith-building content. It can be questioned how much the actual target of this Brinsley’s sermon were actual Roman Catholics. The year prior to this sermon, a proclamation of Charles I had kicked off Bishop Laud’s campaign to restore church altars in the ‘beauty of holiness.’⁷¹ Moreover, Brinsley had recently been dismissed from his ministerial function in Yarmouth by the same Bishop Laud. In fact, during the preaching of his sermon in Flixton, the corporation of Great Yarmouth which had appointed him, continued to struggle with the bishop on his behalf.⁷² Evidently then, Brinsley had no reason to advertise Laud’s church restoration campaign, and his cautious stance on ‘the decent beautifying’ of churches was likely out of respect for Sir John Wentworth, who had paid for the restoration of the Flixton parish, and remained a supporter of Brinsley over the following decade.⁷³ Indeed, Brinsley’s pointedly anti-ocular polemic may have been directed at the new wave of sacramentalism, which (to a hyperbolic Calvinist) could be painted with the same brush as popery. If so, it would foreshadow an ambiguity which would recur numerous times throughout the duration of Laud’s campaign.

Indeed, over the 1640’s, the *idolatry* of magnificence was to frequently occur in religious literature. Roman Catholicism remained a common target, urged on by

⁷⁰ Brinsley, *The Glorie of the Latter Temple*, 11.

⁷¹ Fincham, Kenneth. “The Restoration of Altars in the 1630s.” *The Historical Journal* 44, no. 4 (2001): 920.

⁷² S. L. Lee, ed., “Brinsley, John (1600–1665).” *Dictionary of National Biography*, vol. 6 (London: Smith, Elder & Co., 1886).

⁷³ Lee, ed. “Brinsley, John,” in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

a second wave of popish plot panic from 1640-1643.⁷⁴ Like Brinsley's sermon, there is a certain ambiguity in the literature outlining these popish plots as to whether the targets of such critiques were actual Catholic powers or less-reformed members of the English establishment church who bore a resemblance to 'papists.' Nonconformist polemicists explicitly denounced the episcopal establishment and Roman Catholicism with the same breath, as occurs numerous times throughout *A learned, usefull and seasonable discovrse concerning the Chvrch of England, and the Chvrch of Rome* (1643). By this stage, the author John Bastwick (like John Brinsley) had personally fallen foul of Bishop Laud, which saw him imprisoned numerous times.⁷⁵ His observations on ceremonialism should thus be read in the context of ritual controversy in the English church. He writes:

The Image of the Samaritan Church comes into my mind: For that also was ancient, splendid, rich in Rites, and shining with Ceremonies; [...] notwithstanding all this, the Author of Salvation, sentenced Her (from his owne mouth) not to be in the state of Salvation. [...] The Roman Church is ancient? Admit it be so: yet is it (withall impious and Superstitious). But, she is brave and Magnificent. Who denyes it? yet is she falne into Idolatry. [...] The very Rites of Pagans, condemned and exploded by the Apostles, he hath revived and obtruded, having painted and varnisht them with new names.⁷⁶

Even after the Civil wars, Protestant texts framing magnificent churches as a veneer for idolatry continued to appear. For example, in 1660 (the year of the restoration) the preacher Henry Wilkinson made mention of temples where '[...] there were a stately Frontispice, and a magnificent structure, but naught within but an ugly Ape, the ridiculous Idol of the people: They are emptinesse it selfe, and can emptinesse fill the soule?''⁷⁷ Moreover, it seemed that the problematically idolatrous reputation of 'magnificent building' had trickled back to also affect the moral and political connotations of the term. A decade later, John Evelyn relayed the work of the French writer Antoine Arnauld, claiming that 'magnificence and liberality' were tools used by the Jesuits, not only to encourage vainglory in the population, but to solicit funds to be spent on ornaments and garments. Evelyn writes:

The Iesuites make use of several Artifices to surprize them with whom they have to do, and especially women. They speak of nothing but magnificence and liberality to those who are vain, telling them that by these vertues they

⁷⁴ Hibbard, *Charles I and the Popish Plot*, 4.

⁷⁵ Frances Condick, "Bastwick, John (1595?-1654)," in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

⁷⁶ John Bastwick, *A Learned, Vsefull and Seasonable Discovrse Concerning the Chvrch of England, and the Chvrch of Rome* (London: for John Wright, 1643), 4.

⁷⁷ Henry Wilkinson, *Three Decads of Sermons Lately Preached to the Vniversity at St Mary's Church in Oxford: By Henry Wilkinson D.D. Principall of Magdalen Hall*. (Oxford: H.H., 1660), 45.

establish reputation, and cite examples to that purpose; and having puffed up their hearers with such vain conceits, they represent their necessities, that they have no Ornaments in their Vestries, and some of the Fathers want shirts to shift them.⁷⁸

This passage is a useful one with which to summarise the developments of the seventeenth century. Indeed, Evelyn's text shows how the negative interpretation of magnificence, with its entangled ocular, architectural, and vainglorious connotations, could be partially attributed to religious disputes. As John Bastwick points out, even amidst a wave of popish plot panic, few moved to deny the 'magnificence' of the Roman Catholic Church, nor their architecture. Yet, it was demeaned as a solely ocular magnificence, one which (as the previous chapter suggested) rose into prominence over the sixteenth century. Therefore, in combination with anti-Catholic sentiment, architectural magnificence itself fell into the firing line, being pulled into the same accusations of idolatry and superstition that were directed against ancient Jewish and pagan rites. Evelyn's text demonstrates how such religious suspicions could even impact the more moral and political dimensions of magnificence; the entire notion of magnificence as a virtue concomitant with liberality could feasibly be framed as a Jesuit plot to extract funds from vain and superficial patrons.

Returning to the broader matter of magnificence as manifested in liberally endowed public buildings, this section has shown how the notion was polemically directed against the more-reformed, and the inconsistency in the more-reformed response. The reactionary offensive was broadly coherent; vain gentry and neglectful Puritans lacked the virtuous magnificence concomitant with princely public building. The accusation questioned how much they deserved to rule as princes, challenging their concern for the common good and dutiful management of wealth. The more-reformed response was less coherent. Beginning in the Elizabethan period, there was a moderate approach taken by John Smyth and Thomas Cooper. They argued that magnificence (while indeed virtuous) was shown more in realms of Protestant excellence, such as founding colleges, maintaining roads and gates, etc. Yet, a more radical counterargument arises during the politically tense early Stuart period, which framed magnificence itself as idolatrous – especially inasmuch as it pertained to church building. As the following chapter will show, this inconsistency over the actual moral value of magnificence was not unique to the more-reformed faction. Yet, for now it should suffice to say that, even as magnificent building was united with liberality in a shared concern for public welfare, benefice, charity, and generosity, it had complex and contradictory polemical uses.

⁷⁸ Du Cambout de Pontchâteau, John Evelyn trans. *The Moral Practice of the Jesuites* (London: for Simon Miller, 1670), 247.

2.3 Born Magnificent? Magnificent Building as an Outward Expression of Inward Realities

There was an equally reactionary understanding of magnificence which de-emphasised the social and charitable dimensions of liberality. Rather, it framed magnificence as a quality of nobility, predicated largely on blood and birth as determinants of class. Such a view is already clearly articulated during the reign of Henry VIII, and has been discussed by William Harris. Harris argues that in Skelton's moral drama *Magnyfycence* (1515-1522), magnificence is portrayed less as an Aristotelian virtue tied to acts of liberality, but as a quality 'especially appropriate to the portrayal of royalty.'⁷⁹ This is evidenced in Skelton's 'emphasis on kingly, rather than merely human, conduct.'⁸⁰ It is not difficult to guess how such a magnificence could be mobilised to affirm the absolutist project in expressing the inherent nobility of the crown and old aristocracy. Indeed, over the turn of the seventeenth century, there is an increasing emphasis on the quality of blood and birth in definitions of magnificence, as the term takes on a prominent role in Stuart propaganda. When it came to how such a magnificence was to be manifested in buildings, it relied more heavily on the expressive or symbolic quality of architecture, rather than any charitable foundation. This reactionary articulation of magnificent building was one which relied on superficial expressions of interior truths, an approach which nonetheless magnified the aesthetic dimensions of magnificent building.

In order to address the notion of magnificent birth, it is worthwhile making a brief digression to its potential origins. Rather than returning to Aristotle's *Ethics*, the art historian Richard Barber has proposed Giles of Rome's *De Regime Principum* (c.1280) as marking a transition point where magnificence shifts from being an active quality to a personal quality.⁸¹ Yet, a closer examination of Giles' text shows that he does not wholly discount wealth as a necessary means, but rather follows Aristotle in emphasising the effects of birth on wealth, and attitudes towards wealth. Giles argues that birth affected moral dispositions towards wealth, as long noble lineages were more effective in distancing individuals from the memory and attitudes of poverty. The key concept is that of *nobility*, which Giles identifies as an inclination of the mind which increases and accrues over the continuation of a pedigree. He writes:

⁷⁹ William Harris, *Skelton's Magnyfycence and the Cardinal Virtue Tradition* (University of North Carolina Press, 1965), 147.

⁸⁰ Harris, *Skelton's Magnyfycence*, 145.

⁸¹ Richard W. Barber, *Magnificence and Princely Splendour in the Middle Ages* (Woodbridge, Suffolk, UK; Rochester, NY, USA: The Boydell Press, 2020), 56. "The crucial difference between Aristotle's definition of magnificence as a virtue and Giles of Rome's text is that the objective of magnificence is transferred from the *impersonal*, performing magnificent deeds, to the *personal*, being magnificent."

The further one progresses through the lineage of descendants, the less there is a memory of their ancestors having been poor. Thus, nobility is always increasing [...] For this reason, as nobility continually inclines the minds of noble individuals toward great deeds, it follows that nobles are even more inclined to be magnificent than their parents. [...] Hence, the Philosopher states in the fourth book of the Ethics that it is fitting for magnanimous and magnificent individuals to be noble and renowned. He argues there that nobles, by virtue of their nobility, are inspired to be magnanimous and magnificent.⁸²

In emphasising the impact of born nobility on not only wealth, but also moral dispositions affecting wealth, Giles exemplifies an approach to magnificence which will be reasserted and redeveloped throughout the early modern period in England as a means to justify the born entitlement to wealth enjoyed by royalty and high nobility.

The English articulation of this reception of magnificence over the turn of the early modern period has been discussed at length by Thomas P. Campbell in *Henry VIII and the art of majesty* (2007). In a study stretching from the mid-fourteenth century to the sixteenth century, Campbell traces the use of magnificence as an articulation of the King's right to material display. Campbell argues that, following the example of the Burgundian court, Edward IV (1442-1483) engages his royal magnificence in the purchase of tapestries.⁸³ By the ascension of Henry VII (1457-1509), Campbell argues that the English court was 'a court that, under the influence of Continental example, had developed magnificence into an art form.'⁸⁴ Campbell's argument, of course, is orientated towards explaining the origins of the sizable royal tapestry collection. Yet, the acquisition of expensive and finely-crafted tapestries was difficult to justify in terms of public-facing charity, themselves doing little to ameliorate the livelihood of the privileged onlooker, much less the throngs beyond the palace walls. In arguing the availability of *magnificence* to justify such expenses, Campbell demonstrates how (at least in the confines of the palace walls) there surfaced early modern articulations of magnificence which de-emphasised the dimension of charity and public benefice.⁸⁵

However, other robust literary evidence from the reign of Henry VIII suggests an even stronger emphasis on princeliness could overshadow the dimension of expenditure altogether. The matter has been discussed at length by William Harris through a close analysis of John Skelton's play *Magnyfycence*

⁸² *De regimine principum*, Book I.IV, Chapter 5

⁸³ Thomas Patrick Campbell, *Henry VIII and the Art of Majesty: Tapestries at the Tudor Court* (London: Yale University Press, 2007), 52-53.

⁸⁴ Campbell, *Henry VIII and the Art of Majesty*, 103.

⁸⁵ Campbell, *Henry VIII and the Art of Majesty*, 351. "[Visiting Hampton court] in 1592 Friedrich, duke of Wurttemberg, commented: 'In short, all the apartments and rooms in this immensely large structure are hung with rich tapestry, of pure gold and fine silk, so exceedingly beautiful and royally ornamented that it would hardly be possible to find more magnificent things of the kind in any other palace.'"

(1515 – 1522).⁸⁶ While the exact date remains a topic of scholarly debate, the play was certainly both written and performed during the reign of Henry VIII, by an author who had served as a tutor to the young King.⁸⁷ The play's plot is centered on its titular character: Magnyfycence, who is a personification of the virtue of magnificence. Crucially then, the play contains no references to building or buying tapestries. Indeed, the spirit in which expenditures are to be made is discussed, but the object of expenditure are hardly ever described. Rather, large-scale expenditure, when mentioned, is portrayed as contributing to the corruption of Magnyfycence.⁸⁸ This curiously passive characterisation of Magnyfycence, quite detached from any material manifestation, has caused Harris to observe that here magnificence is portrayed less as a category of action and more as a 'quality which undergirds princes.'⁸⁹ Indeed, the play's characters are all presented as virtues or vices, all save Magnyfycence himself, who is not definitely affiliated with virtue or vice, but displays the human tendency of being remarkably prone to persuasion. Indeed, for a central character, Magnyfycence is actually quite vaguely characterised. Rather, the way he acts, or indeed, performs his identity, is heavily augmented by those he keeps in his council. Magnyfycence is first found in the good council of Felicity, Liberty, and Measure; but soon a troupe of testy knaves flatter their way into princely favour.⁹⁰ To wit: Fancy, Courtly Abusion, Cloaked Collusion, Crafty Conveyance, and Counterfeit Countenance, all undermine the authority of Measure – who is framed as the court killjoy. Even as actions and performances of 'magnyfycence' shift throughout the play, even bringing him to the brink of destitution, he remains magnificent.

⁸⁶ Harris, *Skelton's Magnyfycence and the Cardinal Virtue Tradition* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1965).

⁸⁷ Although most scholars have accepted 1515-16 as the date, Leigh Winser proposes a date sometime before 1505 [Winser, Leigh. "Skelton's Magnyfycence." *Renaissance Quarterly* 23, no. 1 (1970): 14–25]. Later, Paula Neus proposes a date between 1520 and 1522. [Skelton, Neus, Paula, ed. *Magnyfycence*. Manchester, 1980.] As a result, the political context to which the play responds is also a matter of similar contention. Scholars have interpreted the protagonist of the play as representing either Henry VII or the young Henry VIII, but ultimately the evidence has proven inconclusive, as pointed out by Leigh Winser.^{*} Similarly, the play's antagonists have been frequently understood as representing Cardinal Wolsley, a claim which has since been fundamentally destabilised by William Harris. See: Harris, "Wolsey and Skelton's 'Magnyfycence': A Re-Evaluation." *Studies in Philology* 57, no. 2 (1960): 99–122.

⁸⁸ John Skelton, *Magnyfycence* (London: J Rastell, 1528), unpaginated. Numerous passages by the character Fancy involve convincing Magnyfycence that he deserves to spend more due to his noble status. For example, a passage by Fancy starting on line 285 reads: 'Pluck up your mind, sir; what ail you to muse? / Have ye not Wealth here at your will? / It is but a madding, these ways that ye use / What availeth Lordship, yourself for to kill.' A similar passage, summoning the name of 'largesses' starts on line 386: 'Measure is meet for a merchant's hall, / But Largesse becometh a state royal. / What, should you pinch at a peck of oats, / Ye would soon pinch at a peck of groats.'

⁸⁹ William Harris, "The Thematic Importance of Skelton's Allusion to Horace in *Magnyfycence*," *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900* 3, no. 1 (1963): 9–18.

⁹⁰ Winser, Leigh. "Magnyfycence and the Characters of Sottie." *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 12, no. 3 (1981): 85–94. Many of these garrulous, testy, unscrupulous knaves, seem to be of French origin, as Leigh Winser observes.

Therefore, the central subject matter of the play can be interpreted as the *performance* of magnificence, rather than the virtue of magnificence itself. Indeed, in richness and poverty, in success or failure, the identity of prince Magnyfycence remains fixed. What drives the plot of the play are the ways in which Magnyfycence should act in accordance with God's will. Indeed, the decisive turning point in the play's conclusion occurs when Magnyfycence submits himself to the grace of God, and utters: 'I ask God mercy of my negligence / Under Goodhope enduring ever still, / Me humbly committing unto God's will.'⁹¹ In all, Skelton shows a concern for how magnificence is to be performed; the identity is fixed but the actions which flow from this identity must be regulated. Ultimately, this is a performance which is not necessarily "rich," "with gold," and "costly," and it is clear that at least to Skelton, such propagandistic efforts would not have been considered necessarily concomitant with magnificence. Rather, the inherent magnificence described by Skelton had to be performed with measure, humility, thankfulness, and joy. This indicates that, even within the courtly circles of Henry VIII, material expressions of princely magnificence were a very minor part of the broad range of ways through which princely magnificence was expected to be performed by the nobly-born.

Turning to the granular evidence presented in philosophical treatises and other didactic texts, this articulation of magnificence espoused by the court seems to have cross-pollinated with Aristotelian thought. In such texts, an increased emphasis on the importance of good birth in the qualification of magnificence can be observed throughout the early modern period. For instance, in John Wilkinson's greatly paraphrased *Ethiques of Aristotle* (1547), he writes:

In magnificēce it nedeth not onely that there bee haboundaunce of thynges, but it nedeth therwith for a manne to ordre and spende thynges where it behoueth, for hymself or mē of his stock.⁹²

Here magnificence is clearly stated as having two primary requirements; wealth and *stock*. The magnificent man may be so, not only if he has the necessary means, but also if being magnificent is befitting of his lineage.⁹³ This dual understanding of magnificence moved in parallel with the concept of nobility. For example, in Laurence Humphrey's aptly titled *Of Nobilitie* (1563), he provides the following definition of nobility: 'To conclude, I thus defyne it. The hawtiest, worthiest, and honourablest Nobilitye is that, whyche with the renoume and fame of auncestrye, hath coupled excellent, Chrystyan, and farre spread vertue.'⁹⁴

⁹¹ Skelton, *Magnyfycence*, unpaginated [Lines 2408-2410].

⁹² John Wilkinson, *The Ethiques of Aristotle, That Is to Saye, Preceptes of Good Behauoute and Perfighte Honestie* (London: In the parishe of Christes Church: Richard Grafton, 1547), 33.

⁹³ ed. Robert E. Lewis et al. "Stok" *Middle English Dictionary* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1952-2001) It is worth noting that unlike 'nobility' or 'princeliness,' 'stock' was undoubtedly a question of birth.

⁹⁴ Laurence Humphrey, *The Nobles or of Nobilitye* (London: Thomas Marshe, 1563), unpaginated.

This tendency to emphasise pedigree continued well into the moral treatises of the Caroline period. For example the *Epitome doctrinae moralis* (1634) of Theophilus Golium, a summary of the Nichomachen ethics printed in Oxford, imputes magnificence not only upon those who ‘excel other men in stock (*genere*), or by virtue, or dignity, and authority.’⁹⁵ An even more pronounced emphasis on lineage can be found in *Summe of morall philosophy succinctly gathered* (1632) by William Pemble, a conforming member of the establishment church.⁹⁶ Pemble writes only the following on magnificence:⁹⁷

Magnificence is a Vertue only for great ones.
 The Magnificent must be high above others in
 1. Blood
 2. Office
 3. Vertue⁹⁸

In its brevity, Pemble relays the cyclic logic affecting this early modern notion of magnificence in its most concentrated form. In order to be magnificent, one must be great; and in order to be virtuous, one must be high in virtue. The self-reciprocating logic is one that makes *attaining* magnificence virtually impossible; little allowance is made for social mobility into the ranks of magnificoes. Indeed, direct reference to both wealth and action are notably absent from Pemble’s summary. As such, Pemble’s *Summe of morall philosophy* is perhaps emblematic of the passive magnificence (almost synonymous with royalty itself) that proved remarkably useful for asserting a conservative social order.

Looking at the writings of high-churchmen over the Early Stuart period, one can see how the formulation of magnificence as an inborn quality was mobilised to reactionary ends. Indeed, many authors used magnificence as a means to hold a nostalgic ideal of feudal order in place; one which was rapidly fading from living memory. This is most evident in those texts which tended towards viewing the movements of individuals between classes as exceptions to the natural order or divine plan, and therefore doubled-down on the born aspect of magnificence.⁹⁹

⁹⁵ Golium, *Epitome Doctrinae Moralis*, 110. “Magnificentia solum decet eos, qui non solum opibus honestè acquisitis abundant; sed etiam vel genere, vel virtute, vel dignitate & auctoritate caeteris hominibus antecellunt: ita ut eorum status & conditio etiam possit operi aliquem splendorem adferre.”

⁹⁶ Richard L. Greaves, ‘Pemble, William (1591/2–1623)’, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford University Press, 2004), 283.

⁹⁷ Save that which is already mentioned under liberality, and a table of outlining the two vices of ‘Riotous mispending’ and ‘Sordide Parsimony.’

⁹⁸ William Pemble, *A Summe of Morall Philosophy Succinctly Gathered, Elegantly Composed, and Methodically Handled, by That Learned Scholler and Worthy Diuine William Pemble Mr of Arts and Late Commoner of Mag. Hall* (Oxford: Iohn Lichfield, 1632), 76.

⁹⁹ Kari Boyd McBride, *Country House Discourse*, 4. “during the course of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, many factors impinged on this static definition of lordship, undermining what had seemed a natural and divinely-ordained social structure built on the trinity of birth,

An example of this can be found in a text written by Godfrey Goodman, chaplain to Queen Anne of Denmark, titled *The fall of man, or the corruption of nature* (1616). Within, Goodman resorts to a well-established theological trope; God as the primary source of all magnificence. This renders the subtleties of the previous discussion all the more pertinent, for the inheritable aspect of magnificence is traced back to the continually passive magnificence of God.¹⁰⁰ Goodman writes:

And as it is most manifest in all other kinds of dumbe creatures; so in the bodies of men, there may be a difference of blood: fortes creatur fortibus & bonis, not only in regard that the posteritie doth naturally affect to follow the steppes of their ancestors; as likewise in regard of Gods promise, who will be a father of his elect and of their seede; and according to the truth and certaintie of his owne nature, will continue his gracious mercies from generation to generation; but likewise in regard of the naturall and inbred qualities, arising from the temper and constitution of the seed [...] this doth make much for the dignitie and honour of noble descents. Though otherwise we must not herein presume too farre, for the tribes are now confounded, and we are all the sonnes of Abraham. The fathers vertues are not alwaies intaild to his seede, the blood full often is tainted; and Gods mercie in these daies is enlarged, making no difference or acceptation of persons: for the last age brought foorth a butchers sonne, of as braue and as magnificent a spirit, as if he had been the sonne of Caesar.¹⁰¹

land, and wealth and making the performance of nobility not merely a privilege but a necessity.¹ These disruptions to order—the agrarian revolution, a rising population, inflation, an active land market, the rise of the middle class, nascent capitalism, exploration and colonization, the woman controversy, the emergence of alternative religious, social, and political perspectives and subjectivities—forced both a renewed articulation of traditional justifications for privilege and, at the same time, an accommodation of newness: new titles, new families, new expressions of power.”

¹⁰⁰ A passive, non-operative understanding of divine magnificence — in which God is “magnificent” by nature rather than through works — persisted in English devotional culture well into the sixteenth century. The Vulgate attributes magnificentia to God ontologically (“magnificus in sanctitate,” Exod. 15:11; “sanctitas et magnificentia in sanctificatione eius,” Ps. 95:6), and Aquinas acknowledges this usage before arguing that, although magnificence may be predicated of God as holiness, it remains a distinct virtue in humans because *-ficientia* implies *facere* (Summa II^a-II^ae q.134 a.2). This passive divine sense continued in English vernacular devotion, most clearly in Richard Rolle’s *Emendatio Vitae* (a.1500) and in George Joye’s *Dauids Psalter* (Antwerp 1530; London 1534, 1544), where God is repeatedly called “magnificent” without reference to works or effects. The Douay–Rheims Bible (1582) preserves the Vulgate tradition with sixteen such instances. Even after Protestant translators removed the term from Psalms and liturgical use (Tyndale; the Great Bible; later the *Book of Common Prayer* and KJV), sermons by Thomas Becon (*A New Postil*, 1566), Thomas White (*A Sermon Preached at Paul’s Cross*, 1578), and Thomas Playfere (*The Pathway to Perfection*, 1593) show the continued circulation of a passive, ontological understanding of divine magnificence.

¹⁰¹ Godfrey Goodman, *The Fall of Man, or the Corruption of Nature* (London: Felix Kyngston, 1616), 146; Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, 2.2.134.3. Goodman’s writing has a particular resonance with the conception of magnificence put forth by Thomas Aquinas in two ways. Firstly, his description of the ‘butchers sonne’ as having a magnificent spirit, bears a certain resemblance to the thomistic assertion that even a poor man could be magnificent by virtue of ‘inward choice.’ (ST 2.2.134.a4, Reply to Objection 3 ‘principalis actus virtutis est interior electio, quam virtus

Here, the born noble and the newly noble are respectively portrayed as the rule, and the exception. Indeed, as if relaying a recent curiosity, Goodman recalls of a butcher's son that was magnificent as if he had been nobly born.¹⁰² This, he attributes to a sudden enlargement of God's mercy, even so that the obscure could attain nobility and magnificence. Despite Goodman's generous description of the butcher's son, it remains clear that he saw magnificence as something that was exclusively inherent, and inheritable, by the nobly born. Otherwise stated, magnificence could not be learnt or attained, only granted, and this is stated clearly by Goodman later in the same publication:

If otherwise from base and meane condition they be raised, they shall finde it a great difficulty with the change of their fortunes, to change their owne mindes, and to forget their first selues; they shall hardly learne the art of magnificence.¹⁰³

Here, Goodman states the rule which is circumvented by divine mercy. Magnificence is still seen as marking the difference between the nobly born and the *novi homines*, the rule to which the butcher's son was a notable exception. It is worth noting how widespread the notion of magnificence being predicated on birth appears during the Stuart period, and the virulent political ideas that tinted such assertions. A very similar assertion is made by the English Jesuit Anderton Lawrence, in a text published in the (Catholic) English College of Saint-Omer, in Artois. Bearing the title *The triple cord or a treatise proving the truth of the Roman*

potest habere absque exteriori fortuna. Et sic etiam pauper potest esse magnificus.') This ran contrary to the orthodox Aristotelian assertion that the poor man cannot be magnificent, either for lack of means, or deficiencies in internal disposition.(e.g A translation of the EN from 1600 reads: "Therefore, a poor man who has always had misfortune as a pauper cannot be magnificent: for three things impede him, lack of resources, ignorance of honor, defect of a generous heart: because he does not have wealth, he has never achieved honor, because even if he had achieved honor, he would not conduct himself splendidly or decorously due to the abjection of his spirit.") Moreover, the spirit of the butcher's son is described as 'brave and magnificent,' reminiscent of the Thomistic assertion that magnificence was a species of fortitude.(2.2.128.1) Yet Goodman's conception of magnificence is not wholly Thomistic; whilst Aquinas concedes that moral virtues could also be acquired through practise and habituation, Goodman places far more emphasis on the necessity of divine dispensation in the distribution of magnificence.(2.1.63) To place magnificence under the cardinal moral virtue of fortitude was essentially in agreement with Cicero's *De Inventione*. However the Thomistic baptism of the Ciceronian moral virtues came through the idea that all moral virtues could be both 'acquired' (through practice and habituation) and 'infused' (through the extraordinary workings of divine grace). The implication on magnificence was that it too could be infused, (as was the case with the butcher's son), with God acting as the wellspring of magnificence.

¹⁰² Sebastian Brant, *The Ship of Fools*, trans. Alexander Barclay (Edinburgh W. Paterson, 1874), 187. We cannot be sure which butcher's son Goodman was referring to. While Cardinal Thomas Wolsey (1473 – 1530) was widely reputed to be a butcher's son, a similar notion applying to a bailiff can be found in the widely read 'Ship of Fools' by Sebastian Brant (1458-1521) and translated by Alexander Barclay (1475?-1552) which reads 'Promote a yeman, make hym a gentyl man / And make a Baylyf of a Butchers son.'

¹⁰³ Goodman, *The Fall of Man*, 162.

religion [...] With a discovery of sundry subtile sleights used by Protestants, for evading the force of strongest arguments (1634), the text is ostensibly a work of Catholic apologetics which, in the dedicatory tract, is directed towards the 'Protestant nobility of Great Britain'.¹⁰⁴ Evidently, the nobility in question did not include the *novi homines*, for much scorn is heaped upon those the 'unfortunately borne, as having no regard to true honour and nobility'.¹⁰⁵ Such men were apt to fall into vices of extremity, writes Lawrence, either falling into pleasure and decadence, or puritanically neglecting all forms of bodily contentment and commodity.¹⁰⁶ These are opposed to 'true' nobility, which Lawrence identifies in his dedicatees, writing:

It is true Honour, and celebrity of Name which these men seeke to purchase; Honour by Wisdome, Fortitude, Magnanimity, Magnificence, and other such like Heroicall Vertues, which as so many Potent Princes, create men truly noble. These are They, that gaue splendour to your right Honourable Progenitours, from whome by direct lyne you draw your Nobility.¹⁰⁷

In a similar timbre to Giles of Rome, Lawrence continues to argue that these virtues, including magnificence, are generally passed down from parents to children, and cultivated through long lines of succession. Like Goodman, he cites the gospels, noting what great effort is made to link Christ to the ancient and noble Davidic lineage.¹⁰⁸ It is eventually clear that the political points of this tract flow directly into his apologetic stance; in arguing on the nobility of ancient lineages, Lawrence aims to convince the English nobility of the virtues of their (Catholic) ancestors, as well as legitimise the nobility of the Catholic church and its lengthy apostolic lineage.

In summary, an articulation of magnificence which emphasises blood, birth, and pedigree, can be seen calcifying over the sixteenth and early seventeenth century. Crucially, this was not a magnificence primarily qualified by socially-minded public-facing liberality, but rather by the inherent and passive aspects of nobility. Such an understanding was possibly evident in the Plantagenet court,

¹⁰⁴ Lawrence Anderton, *The Triple Cord or a Treatise Proving the Truth of the Roman Religion, by Sacred Scriptures Taken in the Literall Sense Expounded by Ancient Fathers. Interpreted by Protestant Writers. With a Discovery of Sundry Subtile Sleights Vsed by Protestants, for Euading the Force of Strongest Arguments* (Saint-Omer: English College Press, 1634).

¹⁰⁵ Anderton, *The Triple Cord*, 3.

¹⁰⁶ Anderton, *The Triple Cord*, 4. Either they 'they wholly dedicate themselves and their daily endeauours, to the only gayning and enioying of such pleasures & profits, as may best please the Corporall Senses' or they 'are so greatly taken with the desire and loue of true Honour and Renowne, as that for the gayning or increase therof, all corporall Contents and temporall Cōmodities with greatest scorne they trample & contemne'

¹⁰⁷ Anderton, *The Triple Cord*, 4.

¹⁰⁸ Anderton, *The Triple Cord*, 4. "Euangelists describe at large the Genealogy of Christ our Lord and his B. Virgin-Mother, as also of S. *John Baptist*, thereby to proue that these greatest Herōes, were truly noble in their Progenitors?"

and was made clearly evident during the reign of Henry VIII. Yet, a distinctly reactionary use of the term came to the fore over the early Stuart period, by which time the social consequences of a much decayed manorial economy, and a gentry (and potentially peerage) crowded with newly created titles, was becoming evident. Against this perceived social decay, reactionaries used the notion of born magnificence to assert the privileges of the crown and the traditional aristocracy.

2.3.1 Performing Magnificence in Early Stuart Buildings

The Stuart court embraced the notion of magnificence as an inward identity inherent to the nobly born, and they were not reluctant to externally perform this identity. The externalisation of magnificence's absolutist manifestation is most clearly outlined in Versteegen et. al.'s *Magnificence in the seventeenth century: performing splendour* (2021). The introductory chapter outlines a distinctly absolutist articulation of magnificence which defined it as a performance restricted to princes.¹⁰⁹ Crucially, this was again not a performance predicated on social benefice, but had a clear material dimension. This is discussed more fully in Erin Griffey's *On display: Henrietta Maria and the materials of magnificence at the Stuart court* (2015). Under the Stuarts, magnificence was less performed through moral actions in accordance with divine will, but through appearances which reflected divine favour. The interface with the magnificence of God is a crucial divergence; the godly King and the kingly God were becoming mirror images of one another which were increasingly difficult to discern, both in the religious and political life of England.

The vagueness of the distinction between God and king can be observed in the liturgical cycle of the church. For example, George Joye's translation of Psalm 45, to be sung on the morning of the fourth day of each month, reads:

Let my herte power forthe a pure oracion: that I might rendre my worke
vnto the kynge. [...] Begyrde thy loynes with thy swerde, oh most mighty
prince: stepe forth in thy honour glorie & magnificence.¹¹⁰

The language is unquestionably monarchic in tone; the psalm continues to praise 'Thy seat royal' and 'the sceptre of thy kingdome.'¹¹¹ Joye provides the explanation that this is 'A prayse vnder the laude of the kinge and quene / that is to were of the very kinge cryste and his spouse the chirche.'¹¹² Indeed, this was a vividly painted image of divine magnificence which presented itself in all the glory of kingship. Increasingly, this monarchic image of divine magnificence was perceived as signified in the terrestrial performance of magnificence. An illustrative

¹⁰⁹ Gijs Versteegen and Stijn Bussels, introduction to *Magnificence in the Seventeenth Century: Performing Splendour in Catholic and Protestant Contexts* (Leiden: Brill, 2021), 9.

¹¹⁰ George Joye, *Dauids Psalter, Diligently and Faithfully Tra[n]slated* (Antwerp: Maryne Emperowr, 1534), 67.

¹¹¹ Joye, *Dauids Psalter*, 67.

¹¹² Joye, *Dauids Psalter*, 67.

parallel can be drawn with contemporary developments in sacramental theology, especially the famous addition made to the *book of common prayer* under James I. A key passage reads:

Q: What meanest thou by this word Sacrament?

A: I mean an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace given unto us, ordained by Christ himself¹¹³

Perhaps not coincidentally, magnificence under the Stuarts also takes on a particular timbre as an outward sign of inward realities. This was a form of monarchy where visible signs and symbols, performed almost liturgically, came to constitute the performance of magnificence.

James I and VI had only just ascended to the English throne in 1603 when he delivered a speech to parliament on Wednesday the 21st of March 1609, underscoring the divine nature of his authority, on no uncertain terms. James claimed that ‘Kings are justly called gods for that they exercise a manner or resemblance of divine power upon earth. For if you consider the attributes to God, you shall see how they agree in the person of a king.’¹¹⁴ The expectation upon Jacobean subjects to *see a resemblance*, and for that resemblance to justify the power of the crown, also constituted a self-imposed expectation to maintain that resemblance. This concern with the royal image seems reflected in the sudden leap in crown expenditure upon the ascension of James. Whilst Elizabeth spent around £10,000 on personal adornments each year, James began his reign by spending £47,000 on jewels, and spending around £36,000 per annum on his wardrobe.¹¹⁵

However, James also showed remarkable liberality to those he held in favour. In the first four years of his reign, James dispensed £68,153 amongst his favourites. Yet, there is evidence to suggest that the Stuart performance of magnificence was aestheticised to the extent that such acts of liberality were excluded from its scope. Indeed, James’ advisors believed that such expenditures drained the funds necessary to maintain the material splendour of monarchy, and therefore actually detracted from James’ magnificence. As early as 1608, the Lord Treasurer Robert Cecil began to draft the *Book of Bounty*.¹¹⁶ Its purpose was primarily to codify the dispensation of royal patronage to avoid the diversion of funds otherwise intended to maintain the Stuart monarchs “in no less honor and magnificence than our progenitors.”¹¹⁷ Ostensibly, Cecil believed that James’

¹¹³ *Book of Common Prayer* (1604), unpaginated [the catechism].

¹¹⁴ James I, “Speech to Parliament, 21 March 1609,” in *James I of England*, ed. Frank L. Tomlin (Hanover: Hanover Historical Texts Project).

¹¹⁵ Simon Thurley, *Palaces of Revolution: Life, Death and Art at the Stuart Court* (London: William Collins, 2021), 84.

¹¹⁶ Linda Levy Peck, “‘For a King Not to Be Bountiful Were a Fault’: Perspectives on Court Patronage in Early Stuart England,” *Journal of British Studies* 25, no. 1 (1986): 38. “Robert Cecil, earl of Salisbury, drew up a set of instructions for the dispensation of patronage as early as 1608 that was published in 1610 as the *Book of Bounty*.”

¹¹⁷ Peck, *Consuming Splendor*, 217–18, also see the discussion of the *Book of Bounty* in Linda Levy

magnificence did not consist of open-handed patronage – quite inversely; James' patronage was wasting funds that were required for him to live and appear with the magnificence of a King.

It is worth stressing how much such polemic relied on the interaction between the spiritual and corporeal. During the Jacobean period there was no shortage in moral treatises which stressed the concept of 'magnificence' as a virtuous quality of either the mind or the soul. For instance, Joseph Hall's *Two guides to a good life* (1604) states that 'magnificence is an elevation of the soul, whereby it [...] seeketh to compasse and bring to passe things that are moste rare and excellent.'¹¹⁸ Likewise, it is defined in *Organon reipublicæ* (1605) as 'the cogitation and exployting of great and high matters, with a certaine honorable purpose of mind.'¹¹⁹ The congruence between the inward disposition of magnificence and its outward manifestation was easily co-opted to endorse the Stuart monarchy; it forged a stronger link between Stuart material cultivation and the inward nobility of the King.

The same ocular approach to the performance of magnificence was even more explicitly articulated during the Caroline period. In St Paul's Cathedral on the 14th anniversary of Charles I's inauguration, the 27th of March 1639, the Revd. Henry Valentine declared in a sermon titled *God Save the King* that 'A King is Imago Dei, the bright Image of God, and the most magnificent and conspicuous representation of the Divine Majesty.'¹²⁰ Again, the emphasis on images and representation reveals how Caroline propaganda maintained the Stuart understanding of performance as one where the inherent magnificence of God and King is substantiated and externalised in material form.¹²¹ Material objects, masques, court ceremonial, vestures, were all deemed outwards manifestations of an internal reality.

Turning now to the matter of buildings, these were also approached as material manifestations which signified the inherent, godlike magnificence of the monarch. For instance, Samuel Purchas' sermon at Paul's cross *The kings towre and triumphant arch of London* (1622) illustrates this Stuart emphasis on the entanglement between spiritual magnificence and its external signification. The sermon was preached on August the 5th, the anniversary of the Gowrie conspiracy;

Peck, Northampton: Patronage and Policy at the Court of James I (London, 1982), 28-29.

¹¹⁸ Joseph Hall, *Two Guides to a Good Life The Genealogy of Vertue and the Nathomy of Sinne. Liuely Displaying the Worth of One, and the Vanity of the Other*. (London: W. Iaggard, 1604), unpaginated.

¹¹⁹ Anonymous, *Organon Reipublicæ, or The North Starre of Pollicie, by Which the Course of a Common-Wealth May Be Directed..* (London: T.C. for William Welby, 1605), unpaginated [img. 10, f. 20].

¹²⁰ Henry Valentine, *God save the King: A Sermon Preached in St. Paul's Church the 27th of March 1639 Being the Day of his Majesty's Most Happy Inauguration, and of his Northern Expedition* (London: M. F[lesher] for John Marriott, 1639), 5-6.

¹²¹ William H Greenleaf, "James I and the divine right of kings," *Political Studies* 5, no. 1 (1957): 36-48; Glenn Burgess, "The divine right of kings reconsidered," *The English Historical Review* 107, no. 425 (1992): 837-861.

and so Purchas piously sets out to thank God for James' deliverance from the conspiracy. Purchas' sermon constitutes a protracted exegesis of 2 Samuel 22:51, 'He is the Towre of saluation for his King.' The verse is situated to draw links between the architectural idea of a 'tower' with the increasingly internal matter of salvation. So, in his opening explanation for this metaphor, Purchas stresses this interaction between the sensory and spiritual:

Man is a sensitiue creature, and hath nothing in intellectu, quod non prius in sensu [Nothing is in the intellect which was not first in the senses]: and therefore GOD stoopeth to our infirmities, as in the Sacraments, (which are visible words) [...] to sensuall Man, nothing more sensible and palyne, [...] then heauenly things in borrowed liueries of metaphoricall speech¹²²

The sacramental language used by Purchas, echoing the Jacobean assertion of 'exterior signs of inward realities,' is then applied to magnificent architecture at length. God, like a tower, provides *magnificans salutes* 'magnificent salvation' to men, and in the first section of the sermon Purchas describes this magnificent salvation through entangled architectural metaphors. Primarily, this magnificence is made manifest in the creation of 'magnificent houses,' magnificent vessels such as the world or the body. This metaphorical relationship between house and body drew from medieval literary tropes that persisted well into the early modern period.¹²³ Likewise, Purchas states: 'This *migdol* [house] is *smagdil* [magnificent], a magnificent house, such hee hath built the World, a publike house, and common hall to all mankind naturally.'¹²⁴ He continues: 'He hath made *Thee* also an house, a magnificent house, and though *wee dwell in houses of clay*, but *materiam superauit opus*. This bodie is a naturall house to the soule: the armes, and legs, as our houses; the bellie, breast, and head, as three courts of this goodly Palace.'¹²⁵ All these material signs, or 'naturall houses' are framed as reflections of the greatest house and building; the author of salvation. Purchase concludes the section by reasserting that 'this *naturall* house is *magnificent*' explaining that:

Of God was that symbolically; with God is the supercelestiall; and that diuine, in the Incarnation, and now super-supercelestiall in Glorification, is with God, and is God. All magnificent houses! When God himselfe is the house and building, it must needs bee beyond all names of magnificence: and so wee haue it here, He is the Towre of saluation.¹²⁶

Indeed, all these physical containers for spiritual substances are likened to magnificent houses, and all these magnificent houses serve as an expression of

¹²² Samuel Purchas, *The Kings Towre and Triumphant Arch of London* (London: W. Stansby, 1622), 25-26.

¹²³ Daniel Jütte "Living Stones: The House as Actor in Early Modern Europe" (*Journal of Urban History* 42.4, 2016).

¹²⁴ Purchas, *The Kings Towre*, 26.

¹²⁵ Purchas, *The Kings Towre*, 27.

¹²⁶ Purchas, *The Kings Towre*, 31.

God's salvation. Following this, Purchas moves beyond the abstract, making several references to the architecture of London. He focuses especially on the Tower of London and London Bridge, but also praises the city's expansion 'beyond the walls,' and 'beyond the Thames,' and the beautification of areas like Moorfields and Smithfield.¹²⁷ To this he concludes:

Great prosperities giueth he to his King [...] his Prosperitie, which GOD, magnificans salutes, hath giuen him, and he, to London, is the meane of all thy meanes: [...] Goe about London, and tell her Towres, how many and great prosperities?) marke well her Bulwarks, and consider her Palaces.¹²⁸

Purchas' sermon, for all its ambiguity, serves to illustrate the entanglement between the material and spiritual in royalist language. The convoluted metaphors serve to highlight the indistinction between 'magnificent salvation' and its physical expression in the body and in buildings. In such a light, the magnificence of London became both an expression of James' virtuous rule, and his salvation in the tower of God.

This architectural application of the term 'magnificence' most especially applied to the buildings commissioned by the Stuart monarchs themselves. The dean of the Chapel Royal, Bishop James Montagu, asserted that James' own building works were signs of his magnificence. He did so in the preface to a collection of written works by James I, published in 1616. As was typical of Montagu – who was known for having 'pushed the art of panegyric close to deification' – the preface constituted a lengthy description of the King's virtues.¹²⁹ The preface aimed to laud James' spirit through his person and his external works, especially his writing. The materialistic nature of Montagu's praise is most evident in his approach to magnificent architecture; he writes:

Why doe men bestow so much cost in sumptuous Buildings, but to leaue a Monument of their Magnificence? To what end doe we erect Holy-houses and Hospitalls, but to possesse mens mindes with the Deuotion of our Soules? And shall wee blesse a King, when wee behold him in his Posteritie! Shall wee admire his features, when wee contemplate them in his Pictures! Shall we wonder at his Magnificence, when we gaze vpon it in his stately Edifices! and may wee not as well bee rauished, when wee see his sharpe Wit, his profound Judgement, his infinite Memorie, his Excellent affections in his admirable Writings?¹³⁰

¹²⁷ Purchas, *The Kings Towre*, 90-93.

¹²⁸ Purchas, *The Kings Towre*, 101.

¹²⁹ Graham Parry, *The Golden Age Restor'd: The Culture of the Stuart Court 1603–1642* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 1981), 26.

¹³⁰ James Montagu, *The Workes of the Most High and Mightie Prince Iames*, (London: Robert Barker and Iohn Bill, 1616), unpaginated, [img.13 f. 26].

Bishop Montagu's conception of 'magnificence' was certainly an inward disposition, one lodged amidst the soul and the intellect. However, he stresses that this inward disposition is known through external signs; through the 'outward worke of his hand,' one could access the 'inward operation of his minde.'¹³¹ As to exactly which of James' stately edifices were being referenced; it was most likely the only major English architectural commission by James to date: the earlier banqueting house at Whitehall. This was not the latter rendition by Inigo Jones, but an earlier one designed by Robert Stickells.¹³² From most accounts it seems to have been essentially a timber building faced with brick, and completed in 1608.¹³³ At the time of Montagu's panegyric, the building would have been well-established as the ceremonial hub of the kingdom until it burnt down in 1619.

This earlier banqueting house is also described as magnificent in Captain Thomas Gainsford's *The glory of England* (1618). One particular passage provides a vivid illustration of how James I was seen as consolidating all the possible aspects of nobility; his authority rested on both God and commonwealth; on both born condition and acquired virtue. This very nobility is portrayed as 'bringing forth' the banqueting house, which is a lithified act of majesty. For its complexity, the passage is worth quoting at length:

First, the best manner of gouernment from Gods own mouth, which is monarcal; and philosophicall principles, which is a King; and morall enstructions, which is a distributer of Iustice; and peoples desires, which is an honourable preseruer of Common-wealths: all vnited in one person, from a continuall descent of princely ancestours, gaining the loue and obedience of many nations, by excelling induments of nature, as wisdom, learning, iudgment, peaceable desires, honorable liberality, magnanimity, & such like. And did it please him to add some glorious repairing, or rather magnificent quadrant, to his palace at White-hall, being the principall place of entertainment, and the eye to ouerlooke such a city, as is not in the world, it would come neere our example indeede. For the Kings house in Ierusalem was thirteene yeere a building, and no one thing addes more honour to a nation, then regardable edifices, and eminent workes of Maiesty, being the very fruit of peace, and (as it were) the birth-right of prosperity, whether it bring forth sumptuous structures or adorning monuments.¹³⁴

It is worth noting the ocular language of the passage; while the king's virtues are abstract and inherent, their manifestation in building is clearly a visible one. The work is not only 'glorious' but also a building intended to be looked upon – a

¹³¹ Montagu, *The Workes of the Most High*, [img.13 f. 26].

¹³² Thurley, *Palaces of Revolution*, 91-93.

¹³³ Thurley, *Palaces of Revolution*, 93. The venetian Orazio Busino notes how even the internal columns were made of wood in 1618, and the engraved plate on the latter Banqueting house refers to it as 'scarce made of brick.'

¹³⁴ Thomas Gainsford, *The Glory of England, or a True Description of Many Excellent Prerogatives and Remarkable Blessings* (London: Edward Griffin for Th: Norton, 1618), 246.



Figure 2.1: Paul van Somer I, "Portrait of King James I of England and VI of Scotland"
(Oil on canvas 226.1cm x 149.2 cm, c. 1620) Royal Collection RCIN 404446.

‘regardable edifice,’ not only costly and ‘sumptuous,’ but also one which was ‘adorned.’ This portrayal of magnificence performed through building is very much in keeping with Stuart self-fashioning, and Thomas Gainsford’s apparent familiarity with this reception of magnificence demonstrates the effectiveness of Stuart propaganda.

The new banqueting house designed by Inigo Jones was intended to replace the earlier one which had burnt down. James I was especially enthusiastic about this stylish new commission, marking a distinct break from Elizabethan austerity in the monarch’s architectural expenses. Even before the building had been completed, James had commissioned Paul van Somer, who had only recently moved to London from Brussels, to paint what could be described as a double-portrait of the banqueting house and himself. James seems to have left one of the diamond-glazed window panes ajar, to afford us a better view of the facade’s northern terminus, with coupled and superimposed ionic and composite columns (fig. 2.1, previous page). Van Somer’s depiction, it must be said, is not the most flattering interpretation of Inigo Jones’ vision, but James’ pride in the building saw numerous other modes of expression. The use of Aristotelian ethics in the royal propaganda surrounding this later edifice has already been discussed in detail by Hart and Tucker.¹³⁵ Yet, it is worth reiterating the particular approach taken to the notion of magnificence. An inscription which was intended for the banqueting house, on a tablet above the great door frame on the north wall, reads:

From the guardian spirit to the visiting viewer. James, first king of Great Britain built from the ground up this hall, which strikes the eye by its majesty and speaks most magnificently of the soul of its Lord, razed when scarcely made of brick, but now the equal of any marble buildings throughout Europe, intended for festive occasions, for formal spectacles, and for the ceremonials of the British court; to the eternal glory of his name and of his most peaceful empire, he left it for posterity. In the year 1621.¹³⁶

¹³⁵ Vaughan Hart and Richard Tucker, “‘Immaginacy Set Free’: Aristotelian Ethics and Inigo Jones’s Banqueting House at Whitehall,” *RES: Anthropology and Aesthetics*, no. 39 (2001): 151–67.

¹³⁶ Gregory Martin. *Corpus Rubenianum: The Ceiling Decoration of the Banqueting Hall*. (London: Harvey Miller, 2005), 21. The full latin inscription, as recorded in the Public Record Office, Work, SP 14/124/130, reads: Loci genius spectator hospiti Oculos Maiestate ferientem, Dominiq[ue] animum Magnificentiss[ime] loquentem, hanc Stratam Vix antea lateritiam, Marmoreis iam PER EUROPAM quibusvis æquandam JACOBUS Mag[ist]r[us] BRITAN[n]iæ Monarch[a] primus abusq[ue] solo extruxit, horis geniali:bu Spectaculis, solennem:ib[us] aulaeq[ue] Britan[n]iæ pompis destinata[m], aeternam nominis eiusdem, et pacatiss[im]i IMP[er]ii gloriam Posteris reliquit Anno MDCXXI. for the reference, see Calendar of State Papers, James I, 1857–1872, vol. CCXIV, p. 331, 1621(2), 130: ‘Latin inscription for the Banqueting House at Whitehall, on its erection after the fire’. Thurley, *Whitehall*, 84, suggests that it may have been intended to be inscribed on the tablet above the great door frame on the north wall.

This is perhaps the most explicit account of a particularly Stuart reception of magnificence; an ocular expression of an inherent state. The notion of a building speaking magnificently of the soul of the King is one rich in semiological implications. It demonstrates the great extent to which the visual magnificence of the banqueting house was predicated on the magnificence of James himself, and indeed, the extent to which this could be attributed to the nature of his soul. The inscription is a noteworthy record that the building was intended, in a literal sense, to communicate the inherent majesty and magnificence of the monarch to passers-by.

This is not the only time a magnificent building is said to attest to James' magnificence. This polemic was repeated by high-church ministers throughout the Jacobean period. At the fifth anniversary of James' succession to the English throne, a sermon is preached at Paul's Cross by the minister Richard Crankanthorpe bearing the full title *A sermon at the solemnizing of the happie inauguration of our most gracious and religious soueraigne King Iames wherein is manifestly proued, that the soueraignty of kings is immediatly from God, and second to no authority on earth whatsoever* (1608). Evidently, Crankanthorpe is willing to cooperate with the Jacobean fashioning of royal authority in divine terms. The sermon was written fairly early in Crankanthorpe's career, long before he had gained renown as an Aristotelian logician.¹³⁷ Nevertheless, the magnificent building plays a particular part in the praise he has for the King:

The happinesse of that day, & of thy wisdom (O gracious King) our Histories and Chronicles shal commend [...] We in this age will speake of thy praise to our Children, & our Children, to their Childrens Children, vnto all generations. And if it were possible that we or our posteritie could bee silent herein, yet the Magnificent and princely buildings and Monumentes, in these two famous and renowned Citties, the very wood and wals of these houses, & stones in these streets, euen with their dumb eloquence, would sing aloud, and sound forth thy Noble praise.¹³⁸

The phrase is ostensibly a reference to Luke 19:39-40, when Christ is greeted with praise upon entering Jerusalem and says 'if these should holde their peace, the stones would immediatly cry out.'¹³⁹ Yet, it would seem that in London, a far wider material palate is imbued with this loquacious potential; from the timber building which continued to constitute a bulk of London's housing stock, to the masonry of 'magnificent and princely buildings and monumentes.'¹⁴⁰

¹³⁷ Andrew Pyle ed., "Crankanthorpe," *Dictionary of Seventeenth Century British Philosophers* (2000), 220-221.

¹³⁸ Richard Crankanthorpe, *A Sermon at the Solemnizing of the Happie Inauguration of Our Most Gracious and Religious Soueraigne King Iames Wherein Is Manifestly Proued, That the Soueraignty of Kings Is Immediatly from God, and Second to No Authority on Earth Whatsoever* (London: W Iaggard for Tho. Adams, 1608), unpaginated.

¹³⁹ Luke 19:39-40 (KJV, 1611).

¹⁴⁰ Richard Crankanthorpe, *A Sermon at the Solemnizing of the Happie Inauguration*, unpaginated.

In sum, this section has interrogated another branch of reactionary polemic which, in describing magnificence, emphasised the centrality of lineage over liberality. The political salience of this aristocratic articulation grew over the early modern period, as conservatives saw an increasing need to bolster a manorial economy that appeared under threat from social mobility and the encroachment of newly ennobled families. This reactionary project was taken on with vigour by the Stuart court, who used magnificence to both bolster their divinely ordained rights and privileges; and to justify their entitlement to external and material signs of those privileges. Building was no exception; the built fabric of London was expected to sing of the King's magnificence. Above all, the crown's own architectural expenditures were imbued with particularly potent semiological potential; the new banqueting house at Whitehall was intended to 'speak most magnificently of the soul of its Lord.'¹⁴¹ The king's magnificent architecture came to be imbued with the almost sacramental quality of being 'outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace,' whether or not they were altruistically conceived.¹⁴²

2.4 Country Houses as Magnificent: the Aestheticisation of Magnificence

Over the Elizabethan and early Stuart period, there are a handful of country houses which are specifically described as magnificent. Yet, there persists a difficulty in estimating exactly why they could be considered magnificent. There are two dimensions of magnificence which should be recalled, both of which have been variably emphasised in reactionary polemic. Firstly, there was the notion of liberality, which implied that magnificent buildings had to be charitably founded and intended for public use. Secondly, there was the notion of royalty, magnificent buildings could serve as an expression of kingly privileges. The issue with country houses was that they were neither. Moreover, the country houses eventually came to be described as magnificent *eo ipso*, not vis-a-vis a magnificent noble patron. Indeed, in the seventeenth century there arose a usage of the term magnificence as a purely superficial quality of houses, resulting from the building's architectural disposition.

Aristotle provides few means by which to decode this usage. Private dwellings were hardly the most forthcoming aspect of Aristotle's definition of magnificence. Aristotle devotes only one line to the matter, The line reads 'μεγαλοπρεποῦς δὲ καὶ οἶκον κατασκευάσασθαι πρεπόντως τῷ πλούτῳ (κόσμος γάρ τις καὶ οὗτος)' with the latter digression boasting a remarkably erratic history of translation.¹⁴³ The authoritative translation by W. D. Ross suggests that Aristotle aims to reconcile the house with the public sphere: 'a magnificent man will also furnish

¹⁴¹ Gregory Martin, *Corpus Rubenianum*, 21.

¹⁴² *The Book of Common Prayer* (1604).

¹⁴³ Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 1123a (ed. J. Bywater, Aristotle's *Ethica Nicomachea*. Oxford, Clarendon Press. 1894).



Figure 2.2: Rod Shelton, "Model of Otford Palace, Kent" on loan to Lullingstone Castle, Photograph by Nick Rushby, 2021.

his house suitably to his wealth (for even a house is a sort of public ornament)' but this is potentially deceptive.¹⁴⁴ Later translations seem to suggest that the house has a demonstrative function in relation to the master: C. J. Rowe and Sarah Brodie provide the translation '(for a household too is a kind of adornment)' whilst H. Rackham suggests '(since a fine house is a sort of distinction).'¹⁴⁵ The orthodox Aristotelian argument, therefore, remains troublingly vague and potentially indiscernible.

Moreover, the English remained unwilling to wrangle the Aristotelian definition of magnificence into a justification for house-building. Quite unlike the Florentine quattrocento, England sees no protracted attempt to justify house-building along the lines of Aristotelian public-spirited open-handedness. House building remains remarkably absent from translations and commentaries on the *Ethics* spanning the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. House building is nowhere to be found in John Wilkinson's 1547 paraphrased translation, nor in John Case's extensive commentary of 1585.¹⁴⁶ The notion is also absent from the Caroline university paraphrases of the *Ethics*: neither Francisco Pavone (1633), nor Jean Buridan (1637), nor Edward Brerewood (1640), make any mention of house building as an expression of magnificence.¹⁴⁷

¹⁴⁴ Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 1123a (W. D. Ross, 1925).

¹⁴⁵ Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 1123a (C. J. Rowe and Sarah Brodie, 2002).

¹⁴⁶ John Wilkinson, *The Ethyques of Aristotle* (London: Richard Grafton, 1547); John Case, *Speculum moralium* (Oxford: Joseph Barnes, 1585).

¹⁴⁷ Francisco Pavone, *Svmmma ethicae, sive, Introductio in Aristotelis & theologorum doctrinam moralem*

Rather, in the sixteenth century, the erection of a magnificent house by a non-royal could pose a significant issue, as there was a particular synchrony expected between the magnificence of the dweller and the magnificence of the house. The notion is raised in the writing of the antiquarian William Labarde in *A Perambulation of Kent* (1570). Labarde recalls a series of events unfolding concerning Otford Palace (fig. 2.2) It was constructed by the Archbishop of Canterbury William Warham (1450 – 1532) as an episcopal residence in the early years of Henry VIII's reign, and the scale of the project was notably commented upon by Erasmus. Looking back on this project, the historian recalls why the palace came to be seized by the King. He writes:

[...] you may espie the reason that moued King Henrie the eight, to take that house by exchange from the Archebishop, namely, because Warham (not contented to continue it a plaine house, fit to withdrawe him selfe vnto for contemplation and prayer) had so magnificently enlarged the same, that it was nowe become méete, to make a Palaice for a Kings habitation and pleasure.¹⁴⁸

Otherwise stated, the magnificence of Otford Palace was more befitting a King than a Bishop. As such, the subsequent surrender of the house to the Crown was a logical consequence. Once again, Henry's appropriation of extensive properties was framed in terms of magnificence. In being an attribute ideally restricted to princes, the performance of magnificence by other political actors could only be rectified by a reallocation of its material products.

Warham was writing in the Elizabethan era, so it can be questioned whether his analysis pertained as much to Henry VIII's age as it did to his own. Indeed, it was during the reign of Elizabeth that we may first see a country house having some bearing on magnificence, but crucially, vis-a-vis its noble edifier. Indeed, Kenilworth castle in Kent, built by Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester, was one of the reasons why Leicester was hailed as a 'magnificent lord' in 1575.¹⁴⁹ This particular case has been discussed at great length by Mary Hazard in *A Magnificent Lord: Leicester, Kenilworth, and Transformations in the Idea of Magnificence* (1987). However, it is worth noting that none of Leicester's contemporaries described Kenilworth itself as 'magnificent.' The praise is reserved for Leicester himself, and

(Oxford: William Turner, 1633), 313-315 [de magnificentia]; Jean Buridan, *Questiones in Decem Libros Ethicorum Aristotelis Ad Nicomachum* (Oxford: L. Lichfield] Hen. Cripps, 1637), 310-317; Edward Brerewood, *Tractatus Ethici: Siue Commentarii in Aliquot Aristotelis Libros Ad Nichomachum* (Oxford: Eduardi Forrest, 1640), unpaginated.

¹⁴⁸ William Labarde, *A Perambulation of Kent Conteyning the Description, Hystorie, and Customes of That Shyre*. (London: R. Hodgkinsonne, for D. Pakeman, 1570), 378.

¹⁴⁹ Robert Laneham, *A Letter, in The Progresses and Public Processions of Queen Elizabeth*, ed. John Nichols (1823, facs. New York.), I, 471. Quoted in: Mary E. Hazard, "A Magnificent Lord: Leicester, Kenilworth, and Transformations in the Idea of Magnificence," *Cahiers Élisabéthains* 31, no. 1 (1987): 11–35.

the gatehouse of Kenilworth is only described as magnificent around a century later in *The antiquities of Warwickshire* (1656).¹⁵⁰

Like the example from Lambarde's *Perambulation* (1570), the antiquarian William Harrison also connects magnificent houses with princely rank in his *Description of England* (1577). Yet, more explicit links are made to architectural quality; the term is one used to describe the change in common building materials across the English countryside. Harrison's account reads:

In times past the use of stone was in manner dedicated to the building of churches, religious houses, princely palaces, bishops' manors, and holds only; but now that scrupulous observation is altogether infringed, and building with stone so commonly taken up that amongst noblemen and gentlemen the timber frames are supposed to be not much better than paper work, of little continuance, and least continuance of all. [...] The ancient manors and houses of our gentlemen are yet and for the most part of strong timber, in framing whereof our carpenters have been and are worthily preferred before those of like science among all other nations. Howbeit such as be lately builded are commonly either of brick or hard stone, or both, their rooms large and comely, and houses of office further distant from their lodgings. Those of the nobility are likewise wrought with brick and hard stone, as provision may best be made, but so magnificent and stately as the basest house of a baron doth often match in our days with some honours of princes in old time.¹⁵¹

One may perhaps detect a hint of enthusiasm about the improving quality of housing in the words of the early antiquarian. For a baron to be lodged in the state of a prince was not so much of an abomination to Harrison as it was to Lambarde, for instance.

It is only two years later that we find a notable instance of a specific country house being described as magnificent, and in a manner remarkably removed from social rank. The praise was levied by William Cecil, first Baron Burghley, one of the age's most prolific builders. In 1579, Cecil was in the midst of building both Burghley House, near Stamford, and Theobalds House in Cheshunt, having just recently completed Cecil house along the strand in London.¹⁵² That year, Cecil had visited the nearly-completed Holdenby House in Northampton, built by Christopher Hatton, the Lord Chancellor. In his later correspondence to Hatton, one is able to glimpse something of Cecil's architectural preferences. Sadly, Holdenby was completely demolished during the Civil War period, so one cannot be sure exactly what Cecil saw. Yet, something of this facade can be gleaned from a survey

¹⁵⁰ William Dugdale, *The Antiquities of Warwickshire Illustrated* (London: Thomas Warren, 1656), 1:247–48.

¹⁵¹ William Harrison, *A Description of England, Extract from the Holinshed Chronicles* (London: Walter Scott, 1577), 115.

¹⁵² Emily Sophia Hartshorne, *Memorials of Holdenby* (London: Nichols & Sons, 1868), 15–16.

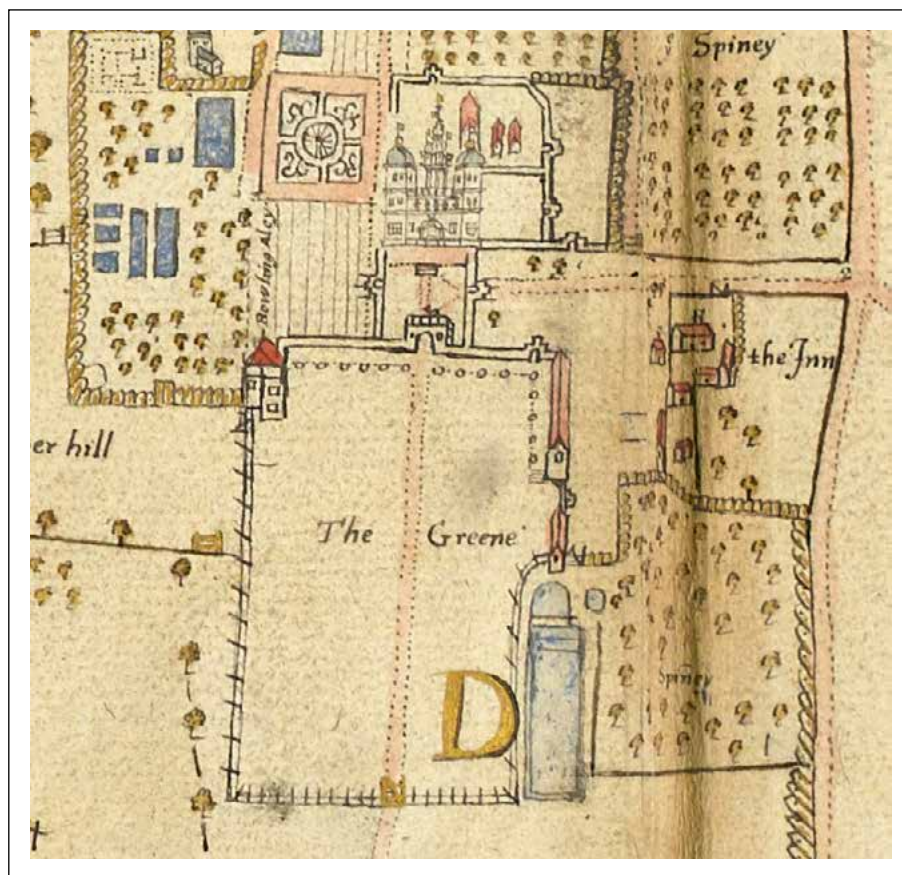


Figure 2.3: Ralph Treswell for Sir Christopher Hatton, "Maps of the Hatton estate" (1585-6), the Northamptonshire Record Office. Also published in: Mark Forrest ed. *Ralph Treswell's Survey of Sir Christopher Hatton's Lands in Purbeck 1585-6* (Dorset Record Society, 2017)

left by Ralph Treswell (fig. 2.3).¹⁵³ Like Theobalds and Burghley house, the house is rigidly symmetrical, and the complex roofline is punctuated by what seems to be a bundled chimney stack, as well as numerous towers terminating in cupolas. Burghley writes to the Lord Chancellor that:

[...] approaching to the house, being by a large, long, straight fairway, I found a great magnificence in the front or front pieces of the house, and so very part answerable to other, to allure liking.¹⁵⁴

Most notably, magnificence is found in the front pieces of the house which are 'answerable to other' indicating a certain proportionality between the numerous elements of the facade. This use of the term 'answerable' to refer to the

¹⁵³ Nikolaus Pevsner, Cherry, Bridget. *Northamptonshire. The Buildings of England* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1973).261–263.

¹⁵⁴ Quoted in: Hartshorne, *Memorials of Holdenby*, 15-16.

proportion of building elements is significant. During this period ‘answerability’ in a building, more commonly refers to the building being proportional to the status of the patron.¹⁵⁵ Burghley’s application of the notion of ‘answerability’ to the relationship between building elements excludes the patron and their status from the proportional calculus of the building. Indeed, Cecil’s localisation of ‘magnificence’ to the front of the house suggests that he was not referring to Hatton’s capacity to spend open-handedly, which was evidenced in all areas of the house both within and without. This was primarily an aestheticised magnificence, one which could be ‘found’ by an onlooker approaching down the fairway.

It is in this aestheticised sense that ‘magnificence’ was frequently evoked to describe the country house by seventeenth-century antiquarians. Its frequency, and the terms’ aestheticisation, seems to increase as the century progresses through the interregnum. It is not difficult to estimate the reasons for this. The ‘high-noon of antiquarianism’ (as it was labelled by W. H. Herendeen) was a response to the political and social tumult of the early Stuart period.¹⁵⁶ In its praxis, such antiquarianism was literally conservative; it sought to record, and thereby conserve, the memories of place and space against the ravages of social upheaval. Those antiquaries who lived to see the Civil Wars invariably took the royalist side: such as William Burton of the *Description of Leicester Shire* (1622), William Dugdale of the *Antiquities of Warwickshire* (1656), and John Philipot of the *Villare Cantianum* (1659).¹⁵⁷ As such, the antiquarian praise of country houses as ‘magnificent’ likely parroted the use of the term in Stuart Propaganda. Pertinently, it was largely directed towards the ancestral seats of loyal royalists. Indeed, this was a compliment largely traded between dedicated reactionaries. A cursory overview of the most prominent examples provides a flavour of the increasingly aestheticised sense in which these compliments were bestowed.

¹⁵⁵ E.g., John Norden, *The Surueyors Dialogue Diuided into Five Bookes*. (London: Simon Stafford, 1607), 162-163. “Baylie. That is it, and a stately house it is indeede. Sur It seemes to be a large and loftie cage, if the Bird be answerable. Baylie. What meane you by that? Sur. I meane, that a Titinus may harbour in a Peacockes cage:[163] and yet the cage maketh her not a Peacocke;” Henry Slingsby, *The Diary of Sir Henry Slingsby: Of Scriven, Bart., Now First Published Entire from the Ms.*, ed. Daniel Parsons (London: Longman, Rees, Orme, Brown, Green, and Longman, 1836), 45-46. “others having build’d it, selleth it, as he who selleth his horse to defray y^e charges of it ; others, conceit’d of their invention, are not at rest till they vent it ; & not finding answerable are weary of it, & will chuse to live any where rather yn there;” Balthazar Gerbier, *A Brief Discourse Concerning the Three Chief Principles of Magnificent Building* (London: S. N. 1662), 30 “And as there is a necessary Magnificence to be exprest on the Front and inside of Princely Buildings, answerable to their greatness; so is it absolutely necessary, that the Architect be possest with a Soul as great as the Player in the French Play.”

¹⁵⁶ W. H. Herendeen “William Camden: Historian, Herald, and Antiquary” *Studies in Philology*, Spring, 1988, Vol. 85, No. 2 (University of North Carolina Press, 1988), 192-193.

¹⁵⁷ “Burton, William (1575-1645)” *Dictionary of National Biography* (London: Smith, Elder & Co. 1885-1900); John Hutchinson, “John Philpot” *Men of Kent and Kentishmen* (Canterbury: Cross & Jackman, 1892), 107; “Dugdale, William” *Dictionary of National Biography* (1885-1900), 137.

At the start of the seventeenth century in 1602, Richard Carew made no use of the term magnificence in his *Survey of Cornwall* (1602).¹⁵⁸ Later, translating William Camden's *Brittania* for a 1637 edition, Philemon Holland uses the term twice to describe country houses. Of Sheffield Manor Lodge it is written that 'George Talbot Earle of Shrewsbury built with that magnificence, as beseemeth so great an Earle.'¹⁵⁹ Once again, mention is made of 'Holdenby house, a faire patterne of stately and magnificent building maketh a faire glorious shew, which Sir Chistopher Hatton [...] built upon the lands and inheritance of his great grandmother.'¹⁶⁰

William Dugdale also uses the term fourteen times in his *Antiquities of Warwickshire* (1656), but like Camden, only uses it twice in regards to a country house. He gives this praise to Leicester's Kenilworth Castle, calling upon the reader to 'witness that magnificent gatehouse towards the north' (fig. 2.4).¹⁶¹ Also, he recalls 'that magnificent Fabrick, called by the name of Audley-end' (fig. 2.5).¹⁶²

It is within John Philipot's *Villare Cantianum* (1659) that the term 'magnificence' is most liberally bestowed on country houses. The work was published after Philipot's eventful royalist escapades during the Civil Wars, having followed Charles I to Oxford, and thereafter being captured by parliamentarians in 1645 and imprisoned, dying shortly thereafter. It is for this reason that the *Villare Cantianum* was posthumously published by his son Thomas.¹⁶³ Philipots uses the term fourty times in his survey of Kent, but only a few need to be consulted to gauge his use of the term. A certain 'Mr. Tho. Baker' is complimented for the visual beauty of his house; having 'raised that Magnificent Pile within the Park, which now charmes with so much Delight the eyes of the Spectators.'¹⁶⁴ Similarly ocular praise is given to Tunstall Estate, the seat of Sir Edward Hales who had been ejected from Parliament in 1648 for being hostile to the parliamentary New Model Army.¹⁶⁵ Hales 'lately hath begun to erect, upon the ancient Foundation, a Frabrick of that stupendious Magnificence, that it at once obliges the eye to Admiration and Delight.'¹⁶⁶ The 'Manor of Heyton' is where 'Sir Edward Dering Knight and Baronet [...] raised that elegant

¹⁵⁸ Richard Carew, *The Survey of Cornwall. Written by Richard Carew of Antonie, Esquire* (London: S. S[tafford] for Iohn Iaggard, 1602).

¹⁵⁹ William Camden, *Britain, or A Chorographickall Description of the Most Flourishing Kingdomes, England, Scotland, and Ireland, and the Ilands Adjoyning*, trans. Philemon Holland (London: F. K[ingston] R. Y[oung] and I. L[egatt] for George Latham, 1637), 551.

¹⁶⁰ Camden, *Britain*, 508

¹⁶¹ Dugdale, *The Antiquities*, 1: 247–248.

¹⁶² Dugdale, *The Antiquities*, 1: 802.

¹⁶³ "Philipot, Thomas" Dictionary of National Biography (1885-1900), 163. "Philipot published as his own in 1659 his father's 'Villare Cantianum.'"

¹⁶⁴ John Philipot, *Villare Cantianum, or, Kent Surveyed and Illustrated* (London: William Godbid, 1659), 98.

¹⁶⁵ Willis, Browne *Notitia Parliamentaria, Part II: A Series or Lists of the Representatives in the several Parliaments held from the Reformation 1541, to the Restoration 1660* (London, 1750), 229–239.

¹⁶⁶ Philipot, *Villare Cantianum*, 343.



Figure 2.4: For Robert Dudley, Gatehouse of Kenilworth Castle (Kenilworth, Kent, c.1570), Photograph by the author, 2024.



Figure 2.5: For Thomas Howard, Audley End (Saffron Walden, Essex, c.1613-14), Photograph by the author, 2023.

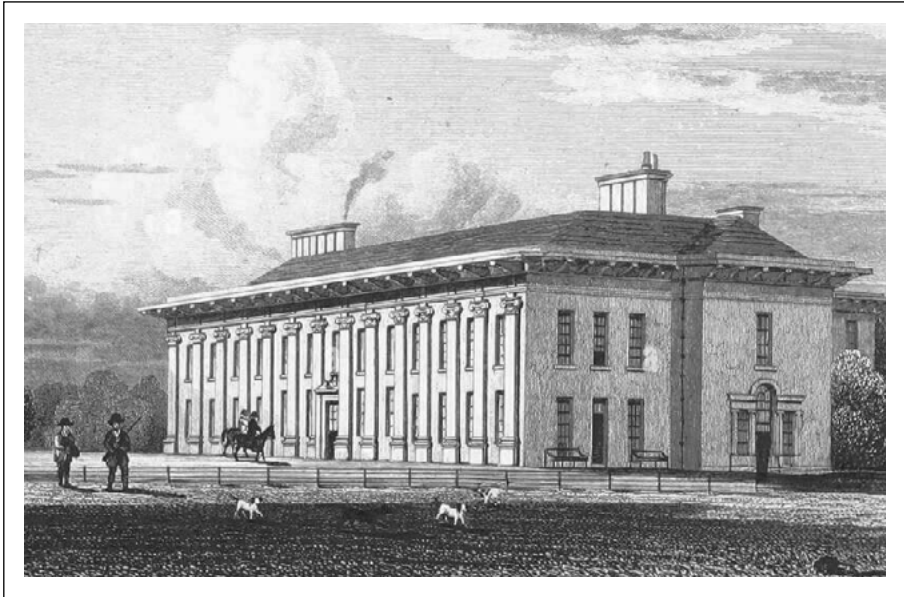


Figure 2.6: John Preston Neale engraved by T. Barber, "Lees Court, Kent" (Engraving, 32.8 x 21.9 cm, 1824). Published in: J. P. Neale, *Views of the Seats of Noblemen and Gentlemen in England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland* (London : Sherwood, Jones and Co, 1824), BL HMNTS 10362.b.2, 4.

Structure, as eminent for its Magnificence and Beauty, as it is for its Contrivance and Curiosity.¹⁶⁷ To the seat of Sir Thomas Floyd, the praise is primarily directed at the size of the building. Floyd had famously defended monarchy as the best form of government in his *The picture of a perfit commonwealth* (1600) but at his house he had also 'much took off from the Obscurity of this Seat, by adding an additional Magnificence, by making the ancient Fabrick swell into the Dimensions not onely of a stately but an elegant Pile, by an augmentation of Building.'¹⁶⁸ Lastly, the Royalist deputy lieutenant Sir George Sondes was said to have 'upon the old Foundation of Leeze-Court, erected a Pile so set out with all the cunning and Pomp of Magnificence, that it is scarcely to be outrivalled by a fabrick of that bulk, in any part of the English nation' (fig. 2.6).¹⁶⁹

In assessing the evidence in seventeenth-century antiquarian accounts, we can see the emergence of a distinctly aestheticised articulation of magnificence. It occurs with remarkable frequency in those anxious antiquarian histories of the interregnum, as reactionary royalist writers facing an uncertain future, scrambled to document a fading past. Notably, the houses described were not magnificent due to any charitable foundation, nor were their patrons royal. However, the lords of those seats praised as magnificent, were overwhelmingly royalist. The

¹⁶⁷ Philipot, *Villare Cantianum*, 276.

¹⁶⁸ Philipot, *Villare Cantianum*, 69.

¹⁶⁹ Philipot, *Villare Cantianum*, 316. In the eighteenth century, the design of Lees court was attributed to Inigo Jones; but in the twentieth century the blame was shifted to John Webb.

term seems to have been traded between royalists to affirm themselves as ‘true nobility,’ the loyal and unwavering old guard. It was this nobility which their large and beautiful houses were intended to lithify, in a manner which mimicked the Stuart propaganda they were ostensibly receptive to.

2.4.1 Why are Houses Magnificent? Materials, Appearances, and Interiors

Some architectural specificities can be conjectured in assessing this use of the term magnificence as it applied to the country house. Broadly assessing the aforementioned textual excerpts, there seem to be three distinct architectural focal points of magnificence which have different periods of prominence; the construction material, the outward face of the house, and the interior.

A strong association between magnificence and building material can be seen in William Harrison’s account in his *Description of England* (1577), which noted that the houses of English barons had increased in stateliness and magnificence for being made of stone.¹⁷⁰ This was not an isolated occurrence; over the Elizabethan and the early Jacobean period, houses being built of brick and stone (especially marble), are frequently described as magnificent. The notion could be attributed to Polydore Virgil, in book three of his *Georgica*, where his account of architectural origins tells of a technological progression from clay, to brick, to stone, and finally to cut marble. Of the latter material, a 1546 English translation of Virgil by Thomas Langley reads: ‘Marble was vsed in buyldyng at Rome of riche men to shew their süptuouse magnificence.’¹⁷¹ This narrative of architectural material metamorphosis would have resonated with its early modern readership, for at the time of Langley’s translation, much of England’s housing stock was undergoing a notable metamorphosis from timber to masonry.

Two examples have already been examined which praise houses for magnificence in close proximity to defining their materials. The first is the fictional house described in Sidney’s *Arcadia* (1593). The house belonged to the nobleman Kalander, who ‘knewe that prouision is the foundation of hospitalitie, and thrift the fewel of magnificence. The house it selfe was built of faire and strong stone [...]’.¹⁷² The second is the inscription intended for Inigo Jones’ Banqueting house, which ‘speaks most magnificently of the soul of its Lord, razed when scarcely made of Brick, but now the equal of any marble buildings throughout Europe.’¹⁷³ Indeed, during the Jacobean period, the continual transformation of England’s housing stock from timber to masonry came to be written into the building proclamations touching London, and magnificence served as a key rationale. In 1615, James I and VI reinforced previous decrees insisting upon the erection of

¹⁷⁰ Harrison, *A Description of England*, 115.

¹⁷¹ Virgil Polydore “Georgics” *An Abridgement of the Notable Woorke of Polidore Vergile*, ed. Thomas Langley (London: Richard Grafton, 1546), 69-71.

¹⁷² Philip Sidney, *The Countesse of Pembrokes Arcadia. Written by Sir Philip Sidney Knight*. (London: John Windet for William Ponsonbie, 1593), 4.

¹⁷³ Martin. *Corpus Rubenianum*, 21.

houses in brick. With typical boldness, he compared himself to Augustus Caesar writing:

as it was said by the first Emperor of Rome, that he had found the city of Rome of bricks, and left it of marble, so that we whom God hath honoured to be the first King of Great Britain, ought be able to say in some proportion, that we found our city and suburbs of London of sticks, and left them of bricks, being a material far more durable, safe from fire, beautiful and magnificent.¹⁷⁴

The magnificence inherent to masonry did find a tentative affirmation in the synthesising moral literature of the time. The anecdote concerning Augustus coincidentally appears in the second chapter of Giovanni Pontano's *De magnificentia* (1498).¹⁷⁵ It also appears in the Scottish philosopher Walter Donaldson's discourse on magnificence in his *Synopseos Philosophiae Moralis* (1604).¹⁷⁶ Yet the Jacobean interpretation did not attach magnificence to the moral act of building, nor the spirit in which the act was performed, nor the inherent nobility of the king, but to the material itself. Masonry, for its durability and beauty, could literally lithify the quality of magnificence.

Moreover, in being a largely ocular, aesthetic usage, such a magnificence seemed to be primarily concentrated on the exterior, outward facing parts of the building. As was mentioned earlier, the magnificence of Holdenby house is concentrated on the 'front or front pieces of the house.'¹⁷⁷ Similarly, it is the outward facing gatehouse of Kenilworth which Philipot describes as magnificent.¹⁷⁸

However, the tone seems to shift significantly after the restoration in 1660, whereafter there is a gradual movement of visual magnificence into the interiors of houses. Much of this can be attributed to changes in living style amongst the nobility, where the need for display slowly began to creep into the primary rooms of the interior. In 1624 Henry Wotton described the chimneypiece as a potential interior expression of 'magnificence,' but one which he seemed not to approve of. In his *Elements* he writes of ornamental plasterwork that:

the Italians applie it to the manteling of Chimneys, with great Figures. A cheape piece of Magnificence, and as durable almost within doores, as harder Forms in the weather [...] beeing in trueth a piece of polite and

¹⁷⁴ James I. *A Proclamation for Buildings*, (London: Robert Barker, 1615).

¹⁷⁵ Giovanni Pontano. Pontano G., "De magnificentia", *I libri delle virtù sociali*, ed. Francesco Tateo (Roma: 1999) 165–222.

¹⁷⁶ James I. *A Proclamation for Buildings*, (London: Robert Barker, 1615) "Constantine founded Byzantium, which he named Constantinople, as recorded by Nicephorus in book 7, chapter 48. Augustus Caesar, who, after greatly improving and securing the city of Rome, often boasted with reason: "I found Rome a city of bricks, I leave it a city of marble."

¹⁷⁷ Quoted in: Hartshorne, *Memorials of Holdenby*, 15–16.

¹⁷⁸ Philipot, *Villare Cantianum*, 316.

ciuill discretion, to conuert euen the *conduits* of soote and smoake, into *Ornaments*.¹⁷⁹

The demeaning tone Wotton adopts concerning the ornamental plaster chimneypiece seems to frame it as a foreign curiosity. Wotton's reluctance to condone the practice, albeit magnificent, is perhaps an indication that 'magnificence' was not generally expected of the domestic interior even during the Early Stuart period. Moreover, as will be argued in chapter four, Wotton was privy to a reactionary polemic which was notably reluctant to admit magnificence indoors, largely for the sake of rustic hospitality.¹⁸⁰

As such, it was not until the restoration that the courtier Sir Balthazar Gerbier actively condoned the expression of magnificence in both the front and interior of houses. He writes in his *Brief Discourse Concerning the Three Chief Principles of Magnificent Building* (1662) that there is 'a necessary Magnificence to be expressed on the Front and inside of Princely Buildings.'¹⁸¹ To this end, he prescribes a 'large, magnificent, commodious, and well-set Staircase' specifying that 'Noble, magnificent, and commodious Staircases, must in the first place participate of a Nobleman's manner of Pace and Attendance.'¹⁸²

Despite the chronological sparseness of these scattered references to magnificence in the interior of houses, we are afforded slightly more specificity when the textual examples are held up against the architectural examples. Indeed, scholars have long noted the increase of 'formal rooms' in the country house over the seventeenth century. Felicity Heal writes of the early Stuart period that:

In addition to the great chamber and parlour there were now often separate dining-chambers in large establishments, with drawing-rooms, distinct winter and summer parlours, and small banqueting-houses which might or might not be part of the house itself.¹⁸³

This increase in formal rooms essentially shifted the ceremonial centre of the house into increasingly private spaces. However, despite the private nature of these spaces, they retained much of the material splendour expected of a ceremonial nexus, a phenomenon noted by Mark Girouard.¹⁸⁴ This meant that any lavish decorations therein were not intended for public appreciation, but rather for the social peers who were invited inside. The close of the interregnum would see

¹⁷⁹ Wotton, *Elements*, 86.

¹⁸⁰ See the discussion on Wotton in Chapter Four, Section 4.6.4 (Kitchen).

¹⁸¹ Gerbier, *A Brief Discourse*, 30.

¹⁸² Gerbier, *A Brief Discourse*, 11.

¹⁸³ Felicity Heal, *Hospitality in Early Modern England*, Oxford Studies in Social History (Oxford University Press, 1990), 154.

¹⁸⁴ Mark Girouard, *Robert Smythson and the Elizabethan Country House* (London: Yale University Press, 1983), 59. 'The family and their guests ate on formal occasions in the great chamber . . . It, rather than the hall, was now the ceremonial centre of the house, and it was accordingly decorated with suitable splendour.'

magnificence leak from the facade of the building into an enfilade of parlours, drawing rooms, powder rooms, salons, and the like.

2.5 Conclusion

This chapter has analysed numerous articulations of the virtue of ‘magnificence,’ and shown how all of them were variably used in reactionary polemic. Magnificence was understood as both an action, marked by large-scale, public-spirited expenditure; and an identity, anchored in nobility, lineage, and pedigree. Both aspects proved useful in affirming the interests of the crown, establishment church, and old aristocracy, as well as denigrating parliamentarians and the overly-reformed. When magnificence was defined as the foundation of colleges and the repair of churches, the Puritanically inclined were denounced as neglectful. When magnificence was defined as the outward expression of divinely granted privileges, the Stuart monarchy was upheld as its shining example.

Notably, over the course of this chapter, magnificence can be seen drifting from its altruistic dimensions as the Elizabethan and early Stuart Periods unfold. Gradually, royal articulations of magnificence as a means to justify material splendour increasingly prioritised social prestige over social welfare. As such, a greater emphasis came to be placed on the *semiology* of magnificence; it became a representation of nobility; a representation of virtue; or a representation of divine right; which, to the opposing faction, had all the ringings of idolatry. This process of aestheticization culminated in the description of country houses during the seventeenth century. In the writings of numerous reactionary antiquarians, magnificence was attributed to the ocular appeal of numerous houses, with no mention of their owner’s nobility, nor any pretense of public-mindedness. In short, over the seventeenth century, the term magnificence became available as a *sign* irrespective of moral substance. In propagating this change, the reactionary faction exposed magnificence to a host of critiques, which will be discussed in the following chapter.

Yet, in regarding the contents of this chapter in full, one more crucial observation must be made. It is evident that there are far more primary sources (and therefore much more to be said) regarding magnificence as it pertained to public buildings and royal commissions. In comparison, primary literature providing theoretical insights into how magnificence applied to country houses is remarkably scarce – and as such, the analysis has had to primarily rely on passing uses of the term ‘magnificence’ in antiquarian literature. This is a finding in itself. As available as the term was, the English were less inclined to justify their country houses in terms of magnificence. Indeed, when held against the full range of authoritative classical sources, the application of magnificence to private dwellings was a scarce occurrence, and a remarkably difficult rhetorical manoeuvre given the overwhelmingly public nature of magnificence. As such, if one sought to morally justify the frequent domestic rebuildings and house building booms of the early modern period, magnificence was not the most useful polemical tool; at least in comparison to hospitality.

This chapter has only focused on those articulations of magnificence which framed it as a virtue; a positive quality to be supported. This is with the sole exception of the Puritan articulations of 'idolatrous magnificence', which played upon Protestant ocular anxieties in order to question the superficiality of magnificence. However, to complicate matters further, this negative and ocularskeptical reception of magnificence was not solely the domain of radical reformers; it was also eventually co-opted by the reactionary faction towards their own ends. This will be the primary focus of the following chapter.

CHAPTER THREE

REJECT MAGNIFICENCE, EMBRACE HOSPITALITY

Confusingly, reactionary polemic was also found to rely on the critique of magnificence: a critique which applied primarily to the architecture of the country house. Such a critique of magnificence has been discussed before, wielded by Puritans who denounced magnificence as a guise of idolatry. However, in the hands of royalists, magnificence was criticised as a modern luxury which signalled all the new vices of capitalism; largely affecting the more-reformed *novi homines*. Such texts frame magnificent house-building as useless, wasteful, and as lithifying the social ambitions of malevolent men on the make. They argued that, instead of being magnificent, country houses should be hospitable; thus placing the two values in dialectical opposition to one another.

It is difficult to tell when this polemic takes on a properly reactionary tone until the decades immediately preceding the Civil War. Yet, the evidence shows that the rhetoric employed by royalists drew from numerous tropes which had existed over the preceding century, slowly co-opting it towards increasingly political ends. Indeed, in the second half of the sixteenth century, rather than being a balanced Aristotelian virtue, there began to emerge an aspect of excess within the word ‘magnificence’ itself. To summarise the most plain examples, Laurence Humphrey in *Of Nobilitye* (1563) dedicates a section to arguing ‘agaynst excesse and ouermuch magnificence’ wherein he complains of the ‘superfluous magnificence’ of ‘farre greater gluttons.’¹ Likewise Barnabe Barnes in

¹ Laurence Humphrey, *The Nobles or of Nobilitye* (London: Thomas Marshe, 1563), unpaginated

1606 complained of exceeding sumptuousnesse and ouergorgeous magnificence in building' and John Speed complained in 1611 of 'that magnificent gluttonie, (the natural vice of these our Nations).'² This generally negative portrayal of excessive magnificence persisted well into the restoration. Concerning the repair of St Pauls after the great fire, Christopher Wren notes that 'amongst the many propositions [...] some may possibly aim at too great a magnificence.'³

The following chapter will discuss the theoretical foundations and key dimensions of this vicious magnificence, as well as analysing its polemical utility in early Stuart reactionary literature. At the outset, it is worth noting that a suspicion around the concept of magnificence has been sporadically referred to in secondary literature, and some effort has been made to conjecture its primary causes. However, the critique of magnificence had numerous sources, as well as numerous key themes. It was, to some extent, made available by early modern Aristotelian ethical models, wherein vice and virtue remained dangerously close. Yet, it was not self-generated from Aristotelian discourse alone. There were three key tropes in this polemic, which drew from distinct traditions and sources. Firstly, there were well-established concerns drawing from a biblical tradition which warned against the dangers of large-scale building. Large-scale buildings, especially houses, posed both financial and social risk; especially if the edifier ran out of money. In such a light, building was a potential source of ruin, which saw inheritances wasted through poor fiscal management. Secondly, there were concerns over ambition, directed at magnificent houses as a tool of upwards social progression. Overly magnificent builders were seen as attempting to augment their nobility by purchasing admiration, honour, and worship through ostentatious building. The critique was generally levelled at the socially ascendant – the newly-enriched and newly-titled – who posed major threats to the old ruling class. Thirdly, magnificent building was criticised as useless. This rhetoric drew from typically Protestant concerns about ocular display. However, instead of contrasting the image with the word, it contrasted the appearance of the country house with its intended function. The house was to be inhabited rather than used as a bucolic retreat, but this inhabitation also came with idealised feudal obligations. This point is expanded upon in the final section of this chapter, which looks at how magnificence was frequently pitched against hospitality in country house discourse. In such texts, magnificence failed to signal open-handed social responsibility, and so reactionary polemicists turned to the notion of *hospitality* for the ideal practices and performances of domestic altruism.

[f312r].

² Barnabe Barnes, *Four Bookes of Offices Enabling Privat Persons for the Speciall Service of All Good Princes and Policies*. (London, 1606), 58; John Speed, *The History of Great Britaine under the Conquests of Ye Romans, Saxons, Danes and Normans* (London: William Hall and John Beale, 1611), 530.

³ Christopher Wren, *Wren's "Tracts" on Architecture and Other Writings*, ed. Lydia M. Soo (Cambridge New York Melbourne: Cambridge university press, 1998), 48.

3.1 State of the Art: Why Criticise Magnificence?

The critique of magnificent architecture, as well as some of the reasons behind it, have been sparsely addressed in secondary literature. Several historians of early modern architecture have pointed out that the built manifestations of magnificence were difficult to discern from certain vicious behaviours. For instance, David Thomson in *Renaissance Architecture, Critics, Patrons, Luxury* (1993) observes that the suspicion of magnificence was often articulated in terms of ‘luxury.’⁴ He describes the motives for this articulation matter in terms of socio-economic inequality. In pitching the ‘magnificence school’ against the ‘anti-courtier’ school, he makes reference to broader class tensions in northern Europe between the ‘haves’ and ‘have nots.’⁵ In such a light, magnificence was the domain of the wealthy, and the critique of magnificence as ‘luxurious’ could be broadly attributed to the Christian critique of wealth, such as the long shadow cast by the Franciscan spirit of poverty.⁶ Yet, Thomson’s historiographical position was equally connected to historiographical trends in the twentieth century which increasingly understood the sin of luxury as ‘magnificence in the wrong place,’ as briefly summarised by Annette Condello in *The architecture of luxury* (2016).⁷

Concerning the houses of the English gentry more directly, Nicholas Cooper in *Houses of the Gentry* (1999) observes that magnificence was suspected of drifting away from notions of social concern, towards a means to earn admiration. He writes: ‘there is a significant reaction from the Aristotelian precept that the magnificent man builds out of a sense of public duty: once praiseworthy, magnificence is coming into question.’⁸ The notion is one which can be easily linked to the Marxist historiography concerning the century preceding the Civil Wars. For example, in the introduction to *The Country House poem* (1994), Alastair Fowler summarises historiographical intrigue that has surrounded the objection to ostentatious houses: ‘Charles Molesworth and Raymond Williams rehearse a Marxist scenario of oppression by landlords – enclosure, rack-renting, the ‘household economy put on a business footing’ [...] ostentation constituted the social problem estate poems addressed.’⁹ Given that the critique of ostentatious

⁴ David Thomson, *Renaissance Architecture: Critics, Patrons, Luxury* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1993), 1. “Two social ideals have been at war in Western thought for over two thousand years. They are whether private property on the grand scale is a natural right and trust, or an evil which has evolved as men and women have become more inclined to luxury.”

⁵ Thomson, *Renaissance Architecture*, 1.

⁶ Thomson, *Renaissance Architecture*, 1; Dana Bultman, “Waste, Exclusion, and the Responsibility of the Rich: A Franciscan Critique of Early Capitalist Europe,” *Religions* 13, no. 9 (2022): 818.

⁷ The notion seems to have originated with Sigmund Freud, quoted in: Annette Condello, *The Architecture of Luxury*, Ashgate Studies in Architecture (London New York: Routledge, 2016), 4; who in turn quotes: Richard Hill, ‘Architecture, Luxury and ethics’, *Architecture and its Ethical Dilemmas*, 2005, 131; who quotes: John Sekora, *Luxury: The Concept in Western Thought, Eden to Smollett*, 1977.

⁸ Nicholas Cooper, *Houses of the Gentry: 1480-1680* (New Haven, Conn: Yale University Press, 1999), 169.

⁹ Alastair Fowler, ed., *The Country House Poem: A Cabinet of Seventeenth-Century Estate Poems*

houses was linked to these varied social concerns, it is surprising that the critique of ostentation as it applied to *magnificence* is hardly ever discussed by the Marxist historians named by Fowler. Although the term ‘magnificence’ seems less prevalent in early modern English architectural discourse compared to trecento and quattrocento Florence, it was far from wholly absent. The following chapter aims to demonstrate that the English political context presents a robust case for the critique of magnificence. Discussing the critique of magnificence in England allows English discourse to be positioned relative to a crucial and contested concept circulating around renaissance Europe. Most especially, it highlights the often contradictory complexities affecting a pan-European historiography which pitches the ‘magnificence school’ against an ‘anti-courtier school.’ This is not in order to place English discourse in an exceptional position, but rather to portray it as a lieu where criticisms developed in places like Florence had a remarkably complex afterlife.

To illustrate this point further, it is worth making a brief return to the secondary literature concerning Florence. The core premise of such scholarship is that *magnificence*, at some point during the renaissance, came to be used as a rhetorical means by which the material (and architectural) splendour of leading citizens could be justified. The notion is immediately similar to McBride’s notion of the country house as a tool for the justification of privilege, but Italian histories focused much more closely on the notion of magnificence. The most influential work in this historiography is Fraser A.D. Jenkins in the article *Cosimo de’ Medici’s Patronage of Architecture and the Theory of Magnificence* (1970), but while the title addresses both Cosimo de Medici and his architectural patronage, neither are credited for the ‘theory of magnificence.’ Rather, it is the archbishop Timoteo Maffei who appears as the principal theorist in Jenkins’ paper, most especially in the publication of *In magnificentiae Cosmi Medicei Florentini detractores* (1454-1456). The work takes the form of a dialogue between Maffei and a ‘detractor,’ and for this reason, Jenkins defines the text as a defense launched by Maffei against Cosimo’s critics.¹⁰ According to Jenkins, Maffei reframed Cosimo’s architectural patronage as works of public-spirited altruism, arguing that his privileges or ‘greater benefits’ were made materially explicit by necessity, in order to glorify the city of Florence.¹¹ This argument extended to the construction of Cosimo’s urban palazzo, in which Maffei argues that ‘Cosimo has considered not what may be appropriate to himself but to Florence, such a great city and of such a size.’¹²

(Edinburgh: Edinburgh Univ. Press, 1994), 9. Fowler cites Molesworth (1968); Hibbard (1956); and R. Williams (1973). Against this assertion, Fowler also outlines a group of revisionist scholars that frame the complaints against the ostentatious wealthy as poorly linked to economic reality, such as Hugh Trevor-Roper (1951) and McClung (1977).

¹⁰ A. D. Fraser Jenkins, “Cosimo de’ Medici’s Patronage of Architecture and the Theory of Magnificence,” *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 33 (1970): 166.

¹¹ Jenkins, “Cosimo de’ Medici’s Patronage,” 166-70.

¹² Timoteo Maffei, *In magnificentiae Cosmi Medicei Florentini detractores* (1454-1456). Translated in: Peter Francis Howard, *Creating Magnificence in Renaissance Florence*, *Essays and Studies* 29

However, in consulting the translation of Maffei's text provided in the annex of Peter Howard's *Creating magnificence* (2012), Maffei's text can also be subjected to an alternative reading; one which is not so much a defense of Cosimo against a detractor; but a defense of a particular view of magnificence, against another. Indeed, it is worth noting that Maffei's detractor does not primarily aim his barbs at Cosimo, but rather, at the virtue of magnificence itself. It must be stressed that at no stage of the discussion are detractor and Maffei debating whether or not Cosimo is magnificent – he is regarded by both parties as such. Rather, Maffei and the detractor are arguing whether magnificence is *virtuous* or not, by which Cosimo is necessarily implicated. In such a light, Maffei's text portrays two theories of magnificence in conflict with one another, not a single theory of magnificence mobilised against the criticism of an architectural patron. One particular line of questioning by the detractor is worth quoting in full:

it is hardly fitting for a religious man and one preaching morals like you [...] Because you ought to be upbraiding men of this kind much more since they seem to have more understanding of a certain luxury than of religion [...] The title of Magnificence, to which you attribute so much, is seen by Christians to imply vice rather than, in itself, virtue.¹³

Maffei's detractor confronts the magnificence of the pagan Aristotle with an appeal to Christian values. Indeed, the Christian religion did not lack the tools with which to confront the trappings of riches – but such critiques most likely reflected pressing political realities as well. This impression is strengthened by the specificity with which Maffei addresses the text to 'Florentine detractors' which indicates that it was, at least in part, a reflection of real polemics against expensive architectural patronage. Such polemics did indeed exist in Florence: Giovanni di Filippo Cavalcanti (1381 – c.1451) reports the grumbling of certain Florentine citizens, who sourly noted that 'Cosimo is paying [his buildings] by emptying other people's pockets under his own name [...] who could not build magnificently spending money that isn't his?'¹⁴ Just like Maffei's detractor, Cosimo's works are unquestionably regarded as magnificent, but doubt is cast upon whether this magnificence is virtuous. A similar account is recorded by Pius II (1458-1464) in his *Commentaries*, which recalls some dissatisfaction with the power communicated through Cosimo's buildings.¹⁵ The existence of such texts strongly suggest that Maffei's detractor is likely the reflected image of a real political rhetoric; one which criticised magnificence.

The pertinence of this to the English case is worth elaborating upon. The particular receptiveness of the northern European political climate to the critique of magnificence has been outlined by David Thompson in the chapter

(Toronto: Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies, 2012), 142-143.

¹³ Maffei, Howard trans., "In magnificentiae Cosmi Medicei." *Creating Magnificence*, 141.

¹⁴ Nele De Raedt, "Injured Residences : Fame, Reputation and Self-Preservation in Renaissance Italy," PhD Thesis, (University of Ghent, 2019), 136.

¹⁵ Pius II, *Commentarii* (1614), quoted in: Jenkins, "Cosimo de' Medici's Patronage," 165.

“Magnificence versus luxury in northern Europe.”¹⁶ The salience of this critique to the political debates in northern Europe should not be understated. If indeed Maffei typified the ‘republican element’ of magnificence central to the propaganda of the Florentine republic, the critiques of his detractor would have a particular resonance with the language of reactionary absolutism. Crucially therefore, we find evidence that a critique of Cosimo’s ‘republican’ magnificence was also sustained in seventeenth-century England. This occurs most notably in the well-distributed *Anatomy of melancholy* (1621) by Robert Burton, which explicitly criticises Cosimo’s patronage of architecture as a tool of social ambition.¹⁷ It is unlikely that Burton had access to Maffei’s text, so the rhetorical similarity between Burton and the detractor is remarkable. It demonstrates how magnificent building as a justification of privilege proved a common target between many who confronted the republican project. Burton’s text, and other examples, will be discussed in greater detail later in this chapter when dealing with the issue of ambition.

Importantly, Burton’s critique of magnificence, as well as the numerous other English examples, were not primarily pitched in terms of ‘luxury.’ As such, the following chapter also aims to extend David Thomson’s characterisation of the sixteenth-century northern European critique of magnificence as an anti-courtier response to luxurious building. This chapter argues that what can be seen over the late sixteenth and seventeenth century in England more specifically, is a dialectical reversal of this polemic. Rather than being a critique of the material products of economic and social inequality, a critique of magnificence emerged in England which was decidedly reactionary; arguing for fiscal austerity, pragmatic traditional values, and against increasing social mobility. Most importantly, it was not anti-courtier, but freely invoked in courtly circles as a defense of their own traditional privileges.

3.2 How can Virtue Turn into Vice? The Semiological Instability of Ethical Theory

Given the numerous political motivations for a critique of magnificence, there remained the question of how this was to be done within the parameters of ethical scholarship. The way this was articulated was not dissimilar to concerns around ‘virtue signalling.’ In early modern England there was a keen awareness that virtuous terms could be equally used to justify vicious behaviours.

The foundations of this notion can be found in antiquity. The possibility of virtue becoming vice was actually hard-wired into the moral framework of Aristotle’s *Ethica Nichomachea*. Aristotle’s formulation of virtue placed it on a fine balance, which was remarkably semantically tenuous. Morals could be visualised along a continuous gradient ranging from ‘too much’ to ‘too little.’ In the centre, there was a defined category of actions which could be deemed a

¹⁶ Thomson, *Renaissance Architecture*, 28–48.

¹⁷ Robert Burton, *The Anatomy of Melancholy* (Oxford: John Lichfield and James Short, 1621), 523.

golden mean, and on either side of this mean, there were theoretical boundary points where actions could no longer be praised as virtuous, but were rather to be denounced as vicious. The danger, therefore, was that if these boundary points were not properly defined, one ran the risk of calling a vicious action by a virtuous name. The misapplication of the term ‘magnificence’ was already complained of by Plato in *The Republic*, when he criticised the costly rites being used to initiate youth, claiming that ‘they euphemistically denominate insolence ‘good breeding,’ licence ‘liberty,’ prodigality ‘magnificence’ [megaloprepeian].’¹⁸

The objection that Magnificence could actually be vicious is mentioned in Aquinas’ *Summa Theologica*. One of the objections in Quaestio 134 is that ‘magnificence observes not the mean, but the extreme. Therefore it is not a virtue.’ Aquinas responds to this objection that, ‘It is true that magnificence observes the extreme, if we consider the quantity of the thing done: yet it observes the mean, if we consider the rule of reason.’¹⁹ The same objection is echoed by the detractor in Maffei’s *In magnificentiae Cosmi Medicei Florentini detractores*. The detractor claims that ‘According to the opinion of philosophers and theologians, any moral virtue resides in the mean. Therefore, magnificence, since it has positioned itself at the extreme, seems to have been set well apart from any reckoning of virtue.’²⁰

In closely examining the English use of the term ‘magnificence’ it seems clear that the same moral ambiguity applied. Magnificence as a term had the peculiar quality of being able to slide into vicious excess, while still retaining the same name. This curious semantic phenomenon is explicitly observed by Thomas Elyot in *The boke named the Gouernour* (1537). Elyot suggests that magnificence may not be a primary virtue because the term may also refer to a vicious action. He writes:

Beneficence and Liberalitie be Capitall vertues, & Magnificence procedeth frō them, approaching to the extreme partes, and may be turned into vyce, if he lacke the brydell of reason. But Beneficence can by no meanes be vicious, and retayne styl his name.²¹

The implication was that the term ‘magnificence’ was too confusing to be encouraged as a capital virtue because, unlike the terms ‘beneficence’ and ‘liberality,’ it could apply equally to virtuous or vicious behaviour. Elyot’s observation indicates that by the 1530’s there were already scruples about the

¹⁸ Plato, *The Republic*, trans. Paul Shorey (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1935), 8:560e. ‘ἐγκωμιάζοντες καὶ ὑποκοριζόμενοι, ὅβριν μὲν εὐπαιδευσίαν καλοῦντες, ἀναρχίαν δὲ ἐλευθερίαν, ἀσωτίαν δὲ μεγαλοπρέπειαν.’

¹⁹ Thomas Aquinas, Fathers of the English Dominican Province trans., *The Summa Theologiae of St. Thomas Aquinas, Second and Revised Edition* (Westminster: Canonici Surmont, 1920), 2:2:134:1:2.

²⁰ Peter Francis Howard, *Creating Magnificence in Renaissance Florence*, Essays and Studies 29 (Toronto: Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies, 2012), 141.

²¹ Thomas Elyot, *The Boke Named the Gouernour* (London: Thomas Berthelet, 1537), 130.

moral legitimacy of the term ‘magnificence,’ and that these scruples affected magnificence more than other virtuous terms. This was because the term ‘magnificence’ had the unusual capacity to refer to an action which exceeded the mean. Such a usage is confirmed in Laurence Humphrey’s *Of Nobilitye* (1563) in the third book concerning virtue. Humphrey writes:

agaynst excesse and ouermuch magnificence [...] wherein consisteth the meane of all thinges, and comelines it selfe, and as it were a certaine honour of life, and temperate refrayning ryot, and superfluous magnificence. [...] Wherein, fault maye growe two wayes. Eyther in quantitie: or qualitie. Quantitie meane I, when in sumptuousnes, and magnificence they exceed meane. For, it happeth manye times, they feede not so muche theyr bellies, as eyes.²²

In the rest of the treatise, Humphrey frequently uses the term ‘magnificence’ to refer to a vice of excess, one most particularly endemic to ‘gluttons, and quaffers emonges the commen sorte.’ Indeed, to Humphrey, ‘overmuch magnificence’ was not a sign of true nobility. Rather, Humphrey writes, ‘Nobilitye is that, whyche with the renoume and fame of auncestrye, hath coupled excellent, Chrystyan, and farre spred vertue.’²³ Although this stance seems remarkably similar to the rhetoric used by Stuart reactionaries, it is worth holding this assertion alongside Humphrey’s constitutional and confessional position. Humphrey was himself a product of Elizabethan settlement; as a strong Protestant he had been stubbornly against the use of authorised vestments during the ‘vestiarian controversy,’ but ultimately softened his stance when the queen commented that his doctor’s gown and habit ‘became him very well.’²⁴ He was ultimately supportive of the Queen and her court; and had a balanced constitutional stance. As such, he dedicates *Of Nobilitye* to Elizabeth, writing that she, ‘treadynge the steppes and pathes of her auncestoures, fyndeth the entry [to virtue] open.’²⁵ As such, Humphrey’s text is one which cannot rightly be placed along the confessional and constitutional fault lines of Stuart England, but certainly provides the blueprint of the polemic used by later, more polarised reactionaries.

Indeed, in the seventeenth century, the semantic ambiguity inherent to virtuous terms (like magnificence) was fleshed out as a lieu of moral panic. The notion was largely utilised by conservatives and royalists; for instance it was articulated by King James I in this *Basilikon Doron* (1603), a treatise on government intended for the education of his son. James writes:

²² Humphrey, *The Nobles*, unpaginated [img. 156].

²³ Humphrey, *The Nobles*, unpaginated [img. 5].

²⁴ Albert Frederick Pollard, “Humphrey, Lawrence” *Encyclopædia Britannica*, Vol. 13 (11th ed, 1911), 891.

²⁵ Humphrey, *The Nobles*, unpaginated [img. 5].

And as I saide of Iustice, so say I of Clemencie, Magnanimitie, Liberalitie, Constancie, Humilitie, and all other Princelie vertues; *Nam in medio stat virtus* [For in the middle standeth virtue]. And it is but the crafte of the Diuell that falselie coloureth the two vices that are on either side thereof, with the borrowed titles of it, albeit in very deede they haue no affinitie therewith.²⁶

James' writing on virtue foregrounds a semantic instability which made the 'titles' of virtue remarkably prone to misappropriation. In stressing that virtuous terms could just as easily disguise vicious deeds, this anxious notion is one poised to criticise the moral justifications articulated by an opposing faction. As John Donne notes in 1625, if virtue was conceived in terms of mediocrity, "we may quickly exceed mediocrity, even in the praise of Mediocrity."²⁷ Yet, the clearest articulation of the semantic anxiety underpinning Stuart moral panic is provided by Joseph Wybarne.

In Wybarne's writing can be observed a thoroughgoing suspicion of the 'new' which underpinned most reactionary rhetoric. Little is known of Wybarne's early life, save that he was the third son of Percival Wybarne, a Prebendary of Westminster with Puritan leanings.²⁸ Yet, whilst Wybarne inherited his father's profession, he reacted against his father's Puritan nonconformity.²⁹ He was instituted as vicar of the Church in Sedbergh on the 17th July 1613, a community which had proven resistant to Calvinism over the previous decades.³⁰ By that time, he had already published his single known major work: *The New Age of Old Names* (1609). This didactic treatise painted a critical view of contemporary semiology; the 'new age' was one of moral degradation and widespread vice which masqueraded behind 'old names,' referring to familiar signs and signifiers for virtue. Wybarne opens his treatise with a discussion of semantics, describing the flexuous and imperfect relationship between 'names' and 'things'.³¹ He then bemoans his age as one wherein political and moral issues are caused by the confusion of signifiers or 'names'.³² His framework is largely Aristotelian, writing 'In briebe,

²⁶ James I and VI, *Basilikon Dōron Or His Majesties Instructions to His Dearest Sonne, Henry the Prince* (Edinburgh: Robert Walde-graue, 1603), 86-87.

²⁷ John Donne, Evelyn M. Simpson and George R. Potter eds., *The Sermons of John Donne*, 10 vols. (Berkeley, 1953-1962), 6:307.

²⁸ "Wybarne (or Wiborne), Joseph, Fl. ca. 1590," *Westminster School's Archive & Collections*.

²⁹ Theresa M. DiPasquale, "Anti-Court Satire, Religious Polemic, and the Many Faces of Anti-christ: An Intertextual Reading of Donne's 'Satyre 4' and Spenser's 'Faerie Queene,'" *Studies in Philology* 112, no. 2 (2015): 280.

³⁰ Richard Cann, 'The Sedbergh Historian', Vol VI, No 1, Summer 2010, 14-19. Cann notes the misadventures of the radical Giles Wigginton in the 1580's, who was removed for his radical views, attempted to set up a more reformed rival congregation, and then was arrested in 1587.

³¹ Joseph Wybarne, *The New Age of Old Names* (London: John Windet, 1609), 1-2. "CHAP. I. That nothing is knowen but Names [...] NOw then it is certaine, that as it is in the fable of the Foxe, which licked onely the outside of the glasse, but could not come to the pottage, so we know names, but not things."

³² Wybarne, *The New Age of Old Names*, 13. "Hauing sufficiently to the vnlearned, and superficially to the iudicious de|clared, that our knowledge is onely of Names, it remaineth that we manifest

it is largely confirmed by Aristotle, in the fourth Booke of his *Metaphysickes* [...] that all error proceedeth from indistinction of Names, not much unlike the halucination, or error of the sight in the *Arte Opticke*.³³ Yet, Wybarne's application of this metaphysical theory is decidedly reactionary. Throughout the treatise there are two dichotomies which are frequently conflated: 'old / new' and 'true / false.' It is evident that Wybarne views the *old* age and *old* names as 'true,' the familiar way virtues were named in the past was accurate. Inversely, the *new* age was one where the names and signs of virtue were used deceptively, and their signs could no-longer be trusted. He applied this conservative framework in his description of magnificence, using it to bemoan numerous 'new' vices. This occurs in chapter seven, and it is worth quoting at length:

New Names of Liberalitie and Magnificence

Liberality and Magnificence, differs as a Pike and a Pikerell, the former being conversant about ordinary benevolence; the latter about sumptuous workes, but as I take it, this distinction is not so much found in the thing, as in the flattery of writers. The first Gangren of this vertue, is the false name of *hospitalitie*, whereby men fill the full onely, maintaining either Instruments of recreation, otherwise lawfull: as Horse, Hauke, Hound; or of meere pompe, as multitude of seruants without office, or of importunacy, as valiant Vagrants, or of mutuall flatterie, as men that can re-invite them: meane while, the labouring, the impotent, the sicke, the imprisoned, the necessarily wandring; the learned and ministeriall poore are neglected.

The Names of Lord and Ladie, as is proued out of the Saxon recordes, were giuen in ancient time, for true hospitality: for Lord was written Laford, now Lafh is that which we call loafe, but signifieth bread in generall: not the forme onely. Hee therefore was a La-forde, or a Lord, that afforded bread: this terme Ladie was written Laphdian, that is a woman, diuiding or distributing Bread allowed by her Lord and husband: The name remaines, the thing is abolisht, for either housekeeping is neglected, or the rich onely feasted. Thus did not the Patriarkes, nor the Grecians, and Romanes, so famous for Hospitalitie, other Nations greatly contemne vs, though with a greater pride bending on the other side to couetous solitarinesse.

Another poyson of pretended liberalitie, is the Phrensie of building, a thing well Painted by many, but yet in the end it prooueth a rotten poste. The Bricklayers of Babel, and the Kings of Egypt that made the Pyramides by the labour of the Israelites, doe partly shew us, what bad successe these glorious Titles did purchase: the manifold terrors of Caine, the builder of the first Citie; the curse of him that built Iericho, the madnesse of Nabuchadonoser, who built Babel for his owne glorie, doe testifie sometimes the ruine, often the infelicitie, always the vanitie of the doers.³⁴

errors which come by Names, for so this new Age of Old Names will be detected."

³³ Wybarne, *The New Age of Old Names*, 24.

³⁴ Wybarne, *The New Age of Old Names*, 34.

The text is one which ultimately condemns what one may call ‘virtue signalling,’ bemoaning the use of the term ‘magnificence’ to justify malevolent behaviour. Following the trend in moral literature over the early seventeenth century, Wybarne chooses not to distinguish between magnificence and liberality; they both ultimately constitute the same category of action. Yet, this name of ‘liberality / magnificence’ has been corrupted by its use to justify certain malevolent behaviours. Firstly, there is what he calls ‘false hospitality.’ Wybarne observes that the terms ‘liberality / magnificence’ are frequently used to perpetuate the neglect of housekeeping, in favour of noble entertainment. The notion is one that places the contemporary use of magnificence on a collision course with ‘true hospitality.’ Secondly, and more immediately pertinent, is the use of the term ‘liberality / magnificence’ to support ‘the Phrensie of building.’ Wybarne observes that numerous contemporaries praised liberal and magnificent building, but that this was concomitant of vice more than virtue. He notes that so-called magnificent buildings and ‘glorious titles’ were often undertaken to pursue glory, but were actually signs of three pressing social issues. The first is ‘ruin,’ the squandering of resources and the loss of legitimacy; the second is ‘infelicity,’ a state of dissatisfaction or unhappiness affecting the patron; and thirdly ‘vanity,’ the useless self-aggrandisement which so-called magnificent building ultimately entailed. These three points as they were raised by Wybarne’s contemporaries will be discussed shortly in much greater detail.

One may observe in early modern England a continued awareness of the term ‘magnificence’ as a semiologically unstable ethical object. Early in the sixteenth century, Thomas Elyot proposed that this more directly affected the term ‘magnificence’ than other ethical signals, and resulted in a loss of legitimacy for the term. By the time of Wybarne, less than a century later, there is an explicit admission that the term ‘magnificence’ had been misappropriated to justify socially damaging behaviours, such as excessive building. The latter point is particularly crucial but, like many of these ethical treatises, Wybarne’s text maintains a theoretical tone. Apart from his concern about ‘false magnificence’ causing a decline in housekeeping, we are otherwise afforded little specificity about which buildings are particularly vicious. Yet, in examining a broader scope of didactic literature, one may observe a concern about country houses moving to the fore.

3.3 Against the Magnificent Country House: Ruinous, Ambitious, and Useless

It was not only the early modern ‘frenzie’ of country house building, but also the continued use of the country house as a sign of political legitimacy, which made it a primary target of critique against magnificence. Three literary tropes can be seen emerging in the literature criticising the magnificent country house; those of ruin, ambition, and uselessness. These tropes drew from numerous extant sources

in reaction to overlapping socio-economic developments; and over the turn of the seventeenth century, can be seen to take on a decidedly reactionary tone.

Warnings of *ruin* were mobilised to react against the loss of both wealth and legitimacy that large-scale building had caused numerous members of the English ruling class, as recalled by numerous antiquarians. Over the turn of the seventeenth century, blame was placed more squarely on the burgeoning gentry, stereotyping them as bad stewards who often spent more than their pedigrees or revenues would allow. In the decades immediately before the Civil War, numerous royalists urged their sons not to follow the gentry in their ruinous building endeavours. Sons were urged not to waste their inheritances on house-building; fiscal austerity was the best way to sustain fortunes – at least as far as building houses was concerned.

This was closely entangled with concerns around magnificent houses as *ambitious*. Indeed, when built by successful *novi homines*, conservatives suspected that house building itself was a contrived means to purchase fame and fortune. The concern is one which could be more broadly applied to the critique of nascent capitalism; such reactionaries feared a society where having and spending money could earn the sort of political authority and agency which was previously only available through inheritance. In their eyes, magnificent house building was becoming a commodity in this ‘unnatural’ economy of power.

Finally, there were critiques of the *uselessness* of magnificent building. Not only did this stress the importance of country houses being frequently occupied, but it also commented on the ideal function of the country house. Here the increasingly aestheticised understanding of magnificence is directly confronted with pragmatism; but this was a pragmatism which increasingly recalled the house’s idealised function in the mediaeval manorial economy. This notion will lead to the next section, which will discuss the dichotomy established between magnificence and hospitality in reactionary polemic.

3.3.1 Magnificent Houses and Financial Ruin

Throughout the early modern period there were repeated cautions against magnificent house building as a potential source of ruin. The language of these passages seems to be a rearticulation of biblical principles, but were increasingly directed to caution against the loss of wealth and legitimacy which building could bring. Most especially, rearticulations of the biblical caution acted as a critique of the penchant for magnificent house building which had gripped the middling *nouveau riche*. The language of such passages largely echoed the words of Christ from the Gospel of Luke; serving as a warning to those who had conceived grand building projects:

Which of you disposed to bilde a toure sytteth not doune before and counteth ye cost whether he have sufficient to performe it? lest after he hath layde ye foundation and is not able to performe it all yt beholde it

beginne to mocke him sayinge: this man beganne to bilde and was not able to make an ende.³⁵

The warning is repeated by Sebastian Brandt, in his famous *Das Narrenschiff* (German ed. 1494). One of the fools described by Brandt is he who takes on 'foolish building initiatives,' Brandt elaborates in the Latin edition of 1498, widely distributed throughout northern Europe, that:

They are ridiculed by all with noise and laughter
Magnificent buildings, lofty works,
Few have attempted in ancient times:
as Lucullus could have done.³⁶

The passage is illustrated with an engraving depicting a foolish patron with nothing but an empty coffer on his counting-table. The workmen are leaving the site, one turning back to point at the patron in mockery or accusation. Behind them, the building remains unfinished, with a single stone suspended on a crane hanging in the air.³⁷ Apart from the widespread popularity of Brandt's publication, there is evidence to suggest that the image was one fairly present in the early modern English imagination. For example, Shakespeare emphasises the importance of good planning with the same allegory of ruinous building, writing in *King Henry IV* (c.1597) that:

When we mean to build, we first survey the plot, then draw the model;
And when we see the figure of the house, Then must we rate the cost of the
erection; Which if we find outweighs ability, What do we then but draw
anew the model In fewer offices, or at last desist To build at all?³⁸

While the aforementioned examples follow the biblical precedent more closely in their discouragement of building more generally, there were two crucial augmentations to this literary trope which could be found in texts of the same period. Firstly, there emerged a more central focus on *house building*, and secondly,

³⁵ *Tyndale Bible* (1526). Luke 14:28-30.

³⁶ Sebastian Brant, *Stultifera Nauis Narragonice*. (Basili[ae]: Bergman de Olpe, 1498), unpaginated [f.26r]. "De fatuis aedificandi incoeptibus. [...] A cunctis irridentur strepitu atque cachinno Magnificas aedes, opera et sublimia, pauci Tentarunt veteres: potuit fecisse Lucullus." It is perhaps worth noting that there is no reference to magnificence or Lucullus in the English edition of 1508, which is largely a poetic re-writing of Brandt original. In any case, Lucullus is perhaps an odd classical reference to insert, given that according to most accounts Lucullus was able to finish his projects without falling into ruin. The moral objections to his villas largely concerned the effects of luxury both on his less-worthy imitators, and the grumblings of the general public, as elaborated upon in Condello, *The architecture of luxury* (2016).

³⁷ 'Hanging in the air' was also a literary trope used throughout the early modern period to describe ungrounded projects, many of them the fruit of an ambitious imagination.

³⁸ William Shakespeare, ed. Barbara A. Mowat and Paul Werstine, *King Henry IV, Part 2* (New York: Washington Square Press, 2005), 1:3.

the blame was more squarely imputed upon a certain middling social class who were building beyond what their status and revenues could feasibly support. It is unclear whether these augmentations were uniquely responsive to the *English* context, as the concern with extravagant houses amongst the middling classes seems to have arisen in France around the same time, which were subsequently disseminated in England.

For instance, the thought is famously articulated in the writing of the Huguenot captain François de La Noue, who wrote his *Discours politiques et militaires* (1587) while in Catholic captivity. The year La Noue completed his work, a French edition was printed in Basel, and an English edition in London; followed by broader European dissemination over the following decades.³⁹ Within, La Noue praises the sumptuous houses of the wealthier nobility, but strongly discourages the imitation of such works in the middling classes. He writes:

I suppose it is not much about threescore yeeres since that Architecture was restored in France, where before men lodged but grossely. But since that the faire fruites of this arte hath bene reuealed, many haue endeououred to put them in practise. If none but great or rich men had employed onely the abundance of their Crownes vpon such workes, it had not bene to be reprobued, considering they were ornaments both to towne and countrie. But after their example the meane wealthie persons, yea euen the poore haue coueted to set hand to the worke, and as it were at vnwares haue bene forced to doe much more then they thought for: and that not without repentaunce. [...] So as it were vpon spite one at an other, we haue a multitude of goodly houses made and that oftentimes with the losse of the reuenues, which are fallen to other men, through that vehement passion that vrged them to heape vp stone vpon stone. How many haue there bene that hauing begunne stately buildings, haue left them vnperfect, as hauing learned to bee wise in the midst of their follie In euery Prouince wee see but too many examples. [...] such a one hath builded a house fit for a Lord of 25000 Franckes rent, whose heire hath not found about seuen or eight hundred, and being ashamed to lodge his pouertie so stately, hath sould it to buy an other more fit for his liuing. And him that would not so sell, to bee driuen to feede vpon small loues, as wee say, and when his friends came to visite him, to entertaine them with discourses of Architecture.⁴⁰

La Noue's complaint directed squarely at 'meane welatie persons' frames his critique as one which indicated both the misappropriation of status symbols, and the habitually poor stewardship of wealth. Overly large houses would deplete middling fortunes; resulting in either the eventual sale of the property,

³⁹ It was printed in La Rochelle in 1590, and Frankfurt on Main (in German) in 1592 and 1612.

⁴⁰ La Noue, trans. Edward Aggas, *The Politicke and Militarie Discourses of the Lord de La Nouue*, (London: Thomas Orwin, 1587), 106-107.

or the shameful neglect of hospitality, both of which entailed a ruinous loss of legitimacy. The complaint was tied to magnificence. La Noue continues to recall the ‘insupportable magnificence’ or *magnificence insuperable* of the Lord Marshall of S. André, an anti-Catholic courtier, who through the scale and furnishing of the chateau of Vallery drove his children into usury.⁴¹ Indeed, to build in contradiction to natural hierarchies would necessitate similarly unnatural means of subsistence – a theme which will reoccur in the texts of this type.

La Noue’s critiques of the building activities of the ‘médiocrement riches’ transposed perfectly to fit the building activities of the English gentry. This notion can be seen arising in the writing of Godfrey Goodman, chaplain to Queen Anne of Denmark. Goodman’s biographical details, and his staunch defense of traditional aristocracy and other tenants of the royalist cause, have been outlined in the previous chapter.⁴² In Goodman’s *The Fall of Man, or the Corruption of Nature* (1616), he also recycles the language of Luke’s gospel in order to launch an attack on the ruinous building blamed upon the gentry class. The passage is a continuation of Goodman’s critique of the obscurely born, where he states ‘if from base and meane condition they be raised [...] they shall hardly learne the art of magnificence.’⁴³ Extending this to the matter of buildings, he writes:

A second vanitie in our Gentry, is, their needlesse and vnprofitable buildings especially when Citizens turne Gentlemen [...] sometimes they build, when they cannot keepe, and commonly they are ouertaken with their owne buildings; the imperfect worke standing at a stay, for want of money to pay the workemen; while the neighbours, and passengers smile at their indiscretion and improvidence.⁴⁴

There is little room for doubt as to what the political undertones of Goodman’s text may be. Magnificent building had become a vice in the hands of England’s gentry, who were not to be trusted with enlarged estates. Not only was their fortune recently contrived, but the habits and dispositions of the new gentry would inevitably result in their fortunes declining. Goodman notes of the gentry’s expensive houses that ‘the vnthriftie and prodigall heire is sooner allured to the sale; and in his sale, hath seldome relation to their charge in the building.’⁴⁵ Ultimately, the fate of these magnificent buildings symbolised the rising and falling of the newly enriched, depicting them as unstable vessels for political authority.

⁴¹ Noue, *The Politicke and Militarie Discourses*, 106-107.

⁴² See Chapter Two, Section 2.3 (Born Magnificent? Magnificent Building as an Outward Expression of Inward Realities).

⁴³ Godfrey Goodman, *The Fall of Man, or the Corruption of Nature, Proued by the Light of Our Naturall Reason* (London: Felix Kyngston, 1616), 162.

⁴⁴ Goodman, *The Fall of Man*, 165.

⁴⁵ Goodman, *The Fall of Man*, 166.

Following Goodman's text, the notion of ruinous house-building is frequently recited by conservative thinkers. For example, Robert Burton in *The Anatomy of Melancholy* (1621) denounces 'riot in building,' specifying 'those phantasticall houses, turrets, walks, parkes, etc' as the most frequent causes of political and economic ruin.⁴⁶ This type of building project 'brings in debt, want and beggery, hereditary diseases, consumes their fortunes, and ouerthrowes the good temperature of their bodies.' Similar advice was also delivered from the pulpit; in a sermon praising King James, the minister Samuel Purchas delivers advice directed toward building enthusiasts; 'hearken you that loue buildings' he proclaims in his sermon *The kings towre and triumphant arch* (1622), 'how many build themselves out of doores?'⁴⁷

Likewise, the trope of the wasteful heir as outlined by Goodman was one frequently recalled in the conservative antiquarian histories from around the turn of the seventeenth century.⁴⁸ One particular salient example is recalled by John Stowe in his *Survey of London* (1603). Stowe writes of how the Paulet family, endowed by the dissolution, slumped into threat of ruin only one generation later:

This great house [...] was builded by the said Lord Treasurer in place of Augustine Friers house, cloyster, and gardens, etc. [...] his sonne and heyre Marques of Winchester sold the Monuments of noble men there buried in great number, the paving stone, and whatsoever (which cost many thousands) for one hundred pound, and in place thereof made fayre stabling for horses. He caused the Leade to be taken from the roofes, and laid tile in place, which exchange prooved not so profitable as he looked for, but rather to his disadvauntage.⁴⁹

The account was most likely influenced by negative stereotypes continually affecting the Paulter family, the heir contemporary to Stowe being well known for his prodigious lifestyle.⁵⁰ Stowe's recollection depicted a family which was caught in wasteful cycles of consumption, frequently demolishing the work of the previous generation and selling the fragments for a net loss.

It was perhaps in response to such concerns, that numerous conservative figures throughout the seventeenth century would urge their sons against excessive building. For example, Sir William Wentworth in 1604 warned his son Thomas to 'avoid superfluity in building, for that is a monument of a gentlman that wanted

⁴⁶ Burton, *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, 61.

⁴⁷ Samuel Purchas, *The Kings Towre and Triumphant Arch of London* (London: W. Stansby, 1622), 31.

⁴⁸ A fuller list of antiquarian examples can be found in: Anne M. Myers, "Loss and foundations: Camden's Britannia and the histories of English architecture" *Literature and Architecture in Early Modern England* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2013).

⁴⁹ John Stow, *The Survey of London* (London: For Nicholas Bourn, 1633), 1.176–177.

⁵⁰ G. E. Cokayne, *Complete Peerage of England, Scotland, Ireland, Great Britain and the United Kingdom, Extant, Extinct or Dormant*, vol. VIII (Exeter: William Pollard, 1898), 174.

discrecion and iudgment. Let your house be too litle for a daie or twoe, rather then too greate for a yeare.⁵¹ In 1634, while Thomas was serving King Charles as Lord Deputy of Ireland, he would repeat this advice to his cousin Michael, warning 'If you builde a new howse [...] itt is a matter whearin you may shew a greate deale, and a great wante of discretion.'⁵² Thomas would continue to advise King Charles throughout the Civil Wars, before being ultimately condemned to death by parliament in 1641.⁵³ In a similar vein, the royalist Henry Slingsby would discourage his son from building altogether.⁵⁴ In 1634 he notes in his diary that 'I shall ever disuade my son from affecting building, unless it be wth great moderation.'⁵⁵ He continues to urge against 'ye vanity of building, since I have observ'd how it hath done so ill wth many : some after having laiden ye foundation of an house, have faint'd under it, & so left it ; others having build'd it, selleth it [...]'⁵⁶ Similar precautions continue into the restoration; Josiah Dare notes in *Counsellor Manners, his last legacy to his son* (1673) 'content thy self (my Son) with that House I shall leave thee, without any alteration [...] we have here at home an English Proverb, That he who often doth dip his fingers in Mortar will lose his Nails.'⁵⁷

To conclude, it may be asked why the notion of magnificent house building being ruinous was taken on so enthusiastically by the royalist faction. There were numerous ways in which it served their political goals; Goodman's text in particular aligned with reactionary stereotypes which framed the gentry as irresponsible and affected. The *nouveau riche* in particular, who 'from base and meane condition' were recently raised, lacked the estates and pedigree necessary to manage their charges sustainably.⁵⁸ Additionally, the polemic also served to dissuade established royalists from overly ambitious buildings. On the one hand, this may be because the traditional aristocracy inherited substantial medieval seats and had less need for additional buildings. However, it could equally be due to a decline in wealth and revenues amongst the traditional aristocracy in the decades leading up to the Civil War, as argued by Lawrence Stone in *The Crisis of the Aristocracy* (1965). It was perhaps for this reason that reactionary polemic so fervently praised the magnificence of the King in his sumptuous architectural patronage, while urging their sons not to engage in anything of the sort. This was the polemical detente

⁵¹ John Trevor Cliffe, *The World of the Country House in Seventeenth-Century England* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999), 4.

⁵² Cliffe, *The World of the Country House*, 4.

⁵³ Empey, Mark (2021). "Power, Prerogative, and the Politics of Sir Thomas Wentworth in Early Stuart England and Ireland". *The Historical Journal*. 65 (2): 275–296.

⁵⁴ Sir Henry Slingsby would fight for Charles I during the Civil Wars. See: Royle, Trevor (2006) [2004]. *Civil War: The Wars of the Three Kingdoms 1638–1660*, 385.

⁵⁵ Sir Henry Slingsby, Daniel Parsons ed., *The Diary of Sir Henry Slingsby: Of Scriven, Bart., Now First Published Entire from the Ms* (London: Longman, Rees, Orme, Brown, Green, and Longman, 1836), 45.

⁵⁶ Slingsby, *The Diary of Sir Henry Slingsby*, 45.

⁵⁷ Josiah Dare, *Counsellor Manners, His Last Legacy to His Son* (London: Edward Gough, 1673), 62.

⁵⁸ Goodman, *The Fall of Man*, 162.

which allowed the source of their legitimacy to be architecturally lithified, while avoiding the personal risk of financial ruin themselves.

3.3.2 Magnificent Houses as a Tool for Social Ambition

It was likely evident, even to the most passing observer, that the building of magnificent houses did not invariably lead to ruin. There were ostensibly cases when the rise of fortunes happened alongside the erection of houses – and against such occurrences were lodged the objections to *ambition*. The term did not simply mean biting off more than one could chew; it referred to upwards aspiration through England's social hierarchies. To numerous critics, the magnificent architecture of the socially ascendant was a manifestation of calculated political opportunism, a well-documented phenomenon especially in the Elizabethan court. The historian Mark Girouard summarises this general air of ambition which lingers throughout the sixteenth century, writing:

The typical figure of the age is not the country gentleman, at ease in his study among books and busts of the philosophers, but the lawyer on the make, the dangerous and magnificent courtier, on whom no man could rely.⁵⁹

Girouard's pointed use of the term 'dangerous and magnificent' is illustrative; when framed as a form of ambition, magnificence could indeed be dangerous. Crucially, the notion of magnificence as a moral virtue did not disqualify it from accusations of ambition. The disruptive potential of *virtue* as a political currency has already been noted in the book *Country house discourse in early modern England* (2001) by Kari Boyd McBride. McBride has observed how the 'natural and divinely-ordained social structure built on the trinity of birth, land, and wealth [...] was challenged by the definition of nobility in terms of *virtue*.'⁶⁰ This generally disruptive impact that an increased emphasis on *virtue* could have on social order is particularly relevant to this study. In numerous ways, magnificence inherited the disruptive qualities of virtue as a whole, most especially magnificence in building, whereby citizens and newly-titled courtiers could claim as much honour, admiration, and power, than those of ancient lineages. Thus, there emerged a rich polemical corpus of texts, stretching from the sixteenth to seventeenth centuries, which reacted against this potential for buildings to contribute to ambition.

This corpus has been partially alluded to in secondary literature. The notion as it pertains to London has been already analysed in great detail by Anne M. Myers in *Literature and architecture in early modern England* (2013). In particular, the chapter titled "Strange anthologies: the alchemist in the London of John Stow" focuses on the critique as presented by Ben Johnson, where political

⁵⁹ Mark Girouard, *Life in the English Country House: A Social and Architectural History*, Nachdr. (New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, 1994), 4; 5.

⁶⁰ McBride, *Country House Discourse*, 77-104.

ambition is described as having the same unnatural mystique as alchemy.⁶¹ Central to Myer's analysis is the notion of 'projection,' a triple-entendre referring not only to the alchemical projection of lesser substances into gold, but also the projection of individuals upwards in the social hierarchy, and crucially, the engagement in building projects.⁶² In the urban context, these anxieties are largely directed at the burgeoning real estate market, and the emergence of speculative developers determined to attain both power and fortune through building tenements.⁶³ In the countryside however, building manor houses was generally less lucrative; the currency of power it offered was less that of capital gain, and more that of fame and admiration. Therein, the role of the discourse on magnificence within the wider discourse on ambition and virtue become evident. The particularly skeptical understanding of ambitious magnificence in the context of the country house has been hinted at very briefly by Nicholas Cooper, who noted in *Houses of the Gentry* (1999) that magnificence became an object of suspicion when used to garner praise.⁶⁴ Indeed, there emerged in the sixteenth century the concern that, if magnificence was indeed a virtue, it could nevertheless be a thin veneer for a desire to attain fame, admiration, and honour.⁶⁵

As with the threat of ruin, these concerns around architectural ambition were not conjured from the ether. Rather, they too relied on authoritative references from antiquity. The inherent potential of large houses to bolster an owner's reputation was already noted by Cicero in *De Officiis*, which saw a continued dissemination throughout the sixteenth century. Most notably, in book one Cicero makes prescriptions as to the proper relationship between the house and the owner's honour. Three of his precepts are translated in a 1616 edition by John Brinsley as:

[Firstly,] That a mans honour is to be set out by his house, and not to bee wholly sought from his house. That the maister is not to looke to be graced by his house, but his house by him. A second precept for such buildings is this, That a man therein haue regard not only of himself, but also of others. [...] A third precept is, that in such buildings a measure be kept for sumptuousnesse and magnificence, Because thereby otherwise ariseth much euill, euen by the example.⁶⁶

⁶¹ Anne M. Myers, *Literature and Architecture in Early Modern England* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2013), 92-96.

⁶² Myers, *Literature and Architecture*, 105-108.

⁶³ Theodore Miles, "Place-Realism in a Group of Caroline Plays." *The Review of English Studies* 18, no. 72 (1942): 428-440; Mimi Yiu, "Facing Places in Richard Brome's 'The Weeding of Covent Garden.'" *Early Theatre* 10, no. 2 (2007): 149-58; Gregorio Astengo, "A Landscape of Conflict: Speculators and Books in Early Modern London," *Revista de Arquitectura*, 2021, 146-61.

⁶⁴ Cooper, *Houses of the Gentry*, 169.

⁶⁵ McBride, *Country House Discourse*, 47. Quotes William Langland's *Piers Plowman* "Titles of honour which the world bestowes, / To none but to the virtuous doth belong."

⁶⁶ Marcus Tullius Cicero, trans. John Brinsley, *The First Book of Tullies Offices Translated Grammatically, and Also According to the Propriety of Our English Tongue* (H. Lownes, for Thomas Man: London, 1616), 279-281.

Indeed, one of the reasons to avoid magnificence was that it could be appropriated as a sign of honour, without the virtuous substance to support it. Implicit to this advice was that honour could indeed be sought from a magnificent house; through expensive building a man could feasibly augment his own dignity.

The notion was one which remained pertinent to early modern England. Crucially however, the purchase of dignity was a part of the Puritan preacher's repertoire before being co-opted by reactionary polemicists. In the mid sixteenth century, the Puritan cleric John Foxe mobilised the notion against the flattery of courtiers. He had particularly good reason to do so, having been exiled upon the ascension of Mary I, he had little good to speak of those who curried favour with the Catholic queen. Whilst in exile, he wrote in his *Christus Triumphans* (1556):

Goe too Worldlyng: when the bountifulnes of thy Prince hath enriched thee, euen asmuch, as Man may be of Man, and thou gotten into thy hands that, for which thou hast many yeares with great flattery hauked after, yet what hast thou gotten? [...] thou buildest stately & magnificall Palaces, purchased hygh stile, and title, authoritie, rule, and gouernement, with all other thinges appertaining to the shew of the world: and doest thou make so much accōpt of these trifles, that by and by thou wéenest to haue reached to perfect blisse, and so to shoue néerer to Heauen gates?⁶⁷

The critique was one which was aimed at those who had abandoned their reformed values in order to sustain themselves in the English court. Such courtiers had attempted to cover their dishonour with the bountiful fruits of royal patronage; money, power, and magnificent palaces. Yet, typical of Protestant rhetoric, Foxe denounces these things as mere 'shew.'

However, half a century later, the same objection to the purchase of honour and magnificent houses had been co-opted by a completely different political agenda. Rather than being wielded by staunch reformers and anti-courtiers, it came to be wielded by those who opposed the capitalist profiteering so prevalent amongst the *novi homines*. Early in the seventeenth century, the notion of spending money to seek honour was given added gravity in light of England's changing economy. In response, reactionary authors mobilised the notion of 'purchasing honour' as a critique of the economic shifts marking very early stages of market capitalism. One notable text to do so built directly off the Ciceronian model; in the *Foure Bookes of Offices* (1606), the aging Elizabethan poet Barnabe Barnes writes:

Let them take heed of exceeding sumptuousnesse and ouergorgeous magnificence in building, aboue the proportion of their lands and reuenues, enuironning and answering the same: for it were better, that large demesnes required mansion houses, than that glorious mannors should want meanes tosupport and furnish out their magnificence. [...]

⁶⁷ John Foxe, *Christ Iesus Triumphant A Fruitefull Treatise* (London: Iohn Daye, 1579), 7.

For that person which buildeth a house or towne, and garnisheth it with armes, hangings, and other workes; making euerything more specious therein than himselfe, is not honourable in regard of his riches, but meere scandalizeth them, through his owne imperfections. Such gaynes as usurers, Publicanes, and Iewes of that profession make to liue vpon by the destruction of others, is most abhominable and odious: for so much as it gayneth by coynes. Whereas it is euident, that coynes were not deuised, because they should both beget and beare fruit of themselues, (being a thing hatefull and repugnant to nature) but ordained therefore, that other commodities (by meanes of exchange) should yeeld vs benefite thereby.⁶⁸

Barnes' distinctly reactionary anti-capitalist stance critiques the magnificent house alongside all other forms of capital gains. Barnes' describes how the magnificent house is ornamented with the escutcheons of its edifier, in a bid to augment his name. Yet, in reality, these ocular embellishments are mere deceptions in light of a scandalous truth; for the owner's wealth was obtained through various forms of capitalistic exploitation. The rhetoric was one that addressed social and economic privilege in parallel – both could be capitalistically augmented and signalled by magnificent house building.

A remarkably similar point is raised in *The returne of the knight of the poste from Hell* (1606).⁶⁹ This was a text of mysterious authorship, but sold as a sequel to the immensely popular *Pierce Pennilesse* by Thomas Nashe. The text's full title promises, not only a reply to the letter sent to the devil by Pierce, but also 'some relation of the last treasons,' a clear reference to the gunpowder plot of the previous year, but also indicating the author's intention to address pressing ills in the English body politic. Within the devil's letter, he lists the numerous proud souls that keep hell well-furnished. Amongst them, he mentions:

Fellowes that having parsimoniously, basely and greedily heapt unto themselves great masses of wealth, by usurie, extortion, and all unlawfull exactions, shall in the end with the ticklings of pride have such an itch in their soules, that what with the searching of the old records of gentrye to finde a name that should sound somewhat neare to their predecessors, what with bribing of heraulds to confirme and linke together their genealogies, what with riotous expence to gaine a little vulgar worship amongst their neighbours, what with building princely houses, for the monuments of their magnificence.⁷⁰

The text is one which takes aim squarely at the ambitious capitalist class, who are accused of using their ill-gotten gains to purchase honour. This author is

⁶⁸ Barnes, *Four Bookes of Offices*, 58-59.

⁶⁹ Nash had himself contemplated the continuation of his 'Piers.' Dekker, as the champion of Nash's reputation, adversely criticised this misleading publication in his *Newes from Hell brought by the Divells Carrier* (1606).

⁷⁰ Unknown, *The Returne of the Knight of the Poste from Hell with the Diuels Aunsweere to the Supplication of Pierce Penilesse, with Some Relation of the Last Treasons*. (London: Iohn Windet, 1606), unpaginated.

particularly descriptive of the numerous ways money could pervert the natural transmission of authority; it was a pecuniary ambition which mutilated and distorted the natural order of things. Just as they bought their gentry titles from a corrupt herald, they also purchased the admiration of their neighbours through magnificent house building.

This English resistance towards the purchase of socio-economic power was also applied to the magnificent building activities of Cosimo di' Medici. The English remained constantly aware of the seemingly ill-gotten nature of Cosimo's wealth as a banker. James Stanford wryly notes in *The garden of pleasure* (1573) that Cosimo 'was neuer able to spende and giue so muche for Gods sake, as he found owing him in his booke of account.'⁷¹ Thomas Bromhill in 1658 even proposes '[...]that cosimos wealth was promised by devills.'⁷²

In the seventeenth century, there arose a line of criticism that saw Cosimo's architectural expenditure as a sign of malevolent ambition. Of course, the point was raised much earlier by the detractor in Maffei's *In magnificentiae Cosmi Medicei Florentini*. When Maffei argues that 'in [the construction of] his house, Cosimo has considered not what may be appropriate to himself but to Florence.' The detractor responds that 'he [Cosimo] built so many great buildings except to pursue a degree of immortality for his name and vainglory, which is quite inconsistent with virtue.'⁷³

While there is no evidence of Maffei's text being circulated in England, remarkably similar concerns are reflected in English literature. This suspicion of Cosimo may have been transmitted through Machiavelli's *Florentine History*, which saw a notably controversial circulation around England.⁷⁴ For example, in an English translation of the *Florentine History* published in 1595, it is noted that Cosimo 'compassed possessions both for profit and magnificence of houses, more fit for a King then a private person.'⁷⁵ Whilst Machiavelli seems to make the observation in praise of Cosimo, to English reactionaries, the notion reeked of republican social ambition. This view was most explicitly outlined in the *Anatomy of melancholy* (1621) by Robert Burton, who made no secret of his support for the

⁷¹ James Sanforde, *The Garden of Pleasure Contayninge Most Pleasant Tales, Worthy Deeds and Witty Sayings of Noble Princes [et] Learned Philosophers, Moralized*. (London: Henry Bynneman, 1573), 59.

⁷² T.B., *An History of Apparitions, Oracles, Prophecies, and Predictions with Dreams, Visions, and Revelations and the Cunning Delusions of the Devil* (London: John Streater, 1658), 188.

⁷³ Howard, *Creating Magnificence*, 143.

⁷⁴ The controversies and numerous bans affecting Machiavelli's entire oeuvre are discussed in: Alessandro Arienzo and Alessandra Petrina, eds., *Machiavellian Encounters in Tudor and Stuart England: Literary and Political Influences from the Reformation to the Restoration*, Anglo-Italian Renaissance Studies Series (London: Routledge, 2016); Alessandra Petrina, *Machiavelli in the British Isles: Two Early Modern Translations of The Prince* (London: Routledge, 2019).

⁷⁵ Niccolo Macchiavelli, T.B trans., *The Florentine Historie* (London: Thomas Creede for William Ponsonby, 1595), 173.

establishment church and the Stuart regime.⁷⁶ In the chapter concerning charity, Burton writes:

As Cosmus Medices that rich cittizen of Florence confessed to a neere friend of his, that would knowe of him why he built so many publike and magnificent buildings, and bestowed so liberally on Schollers, not that he loued learning more then others, but to yeternize his own name, [...] Vaine glory and emulation (as to most men) was the cause efficient, & to be a trumpeter of his own name was his sole intent, so to do good that all the world may take notice of it. Such for the most part is the charity of our times, such our benefactors.⁷⁷

In the typically conservative passage which follows, Burton continues to bemoan how such behaviour had caused charity to ‘grow cold’ in modern England. Indeed, Burton’s critique was that ambition and vainglory so often masqueraded behind the facade of charity and benefice. In such a way, ‘magnificent buildings’ could come from vainglorious intentions, in spite of the good they may do. Burton’s text has been well circulated and studied since, and the same critique is echoed almost verbatim in a post-restoration text by Thomas Watson titled *The beatitudes* (1660). Watson writes:

They did not give their alms, but sell them for applause. A proud man casts his bread upon the waters, as a Fisherman casts his Angle upon the waters, he angles for vain-glory. I have read of one Cosmus Medices, a rich Citizen of Florence, that he confessed to a near friend of his, he built so many magnificent Structures, and spent so much on Scholars and Libraries, not for any love to Learning, but to raise up to himself Trophies of Fame and Renown.⁷⁸

These English critiques of Cosimo are worth foregrounding because they demonstrate that what may have functioned as a viable political justification for house-building in the Florentine republic, was easily denounced as dangerous ambition in England. While Maffei frames Cosimo as the exemplar of magnificence; to English reactionaries Cosimo embodied what was wrong with magnificence. Indeed, he may have been a generous patron of art, scholarship, and architecture, but this was marred by the extractive nature of his wealth, and his insatiable ambition.

To conclude, it is once again crucial to hold this reactionary polemical trope alongside the political reality. Indeed, the objection to ambitious building was useful to the royalist political agenda for numerous reasons. Firstly, it attacked

⁷⁶ Adam H. Kitzes, Stewart, A. J. A; Sullivan, G eds., “Burton, Robert” *The Encyclopedia of English Renaissance Literature* (22 September 2017), 5.

⁷⁷ Burton, *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, 523.

⁷⁸ Thomas Watson, *The Beatitudes: Or A Discourse upon Part of Christs Famous Sermon on the Mount*. (Cornhill, London: Ralph Smith, 1660), 220.

the capitalistic foundation of the newfound wealth enjoyed by many of the socially ascendant, highlighting that it was generated by the exploitation of the underprivileged. Secondly, it delegitimised any pretense of altruism that may have been signalled in the houses of the socially ascendant, decrying such buildings as objects of pride rather than charity. This largely contributed to what McBride has termed a 'renewed articulation of traditional justifications for privilege.'⁷⁹ In delegitimising the *novi homines*, such texts ultimately pitched the rise of the capitalist class against the traditional feudal hierarchy of established noble lineages led by the king.

However, while this talk of ambition framed the socially ascendant as the engineers of their own rise, reactionary writers were noticeably reluctant to mention the role the crown had to play. Indeed, in an attempt to alleviate the struggling crown finances, the Stuarts sold a remarkable number of titles to bolster their revenue.⁸⁰ This included titles which were previously hereditary; amongst the profusion, creation, and sale of titles under his reign, King James had notably dispensed the title of Baronet to some 203 gentlemen.⁸¹ As such, the crown itself was partially responsible for the burgeoning gentry. As was so often the case with the early Stuart Monarchs, they could feasibly be accused of disrupting the traditional social hierarchies which they themselves relied upon. Nevertheless, this meant that there was some truth to the reactionary accusation that many of the new gentry had purchased their honour; but the money was not pocketed by corrupt heralds, but by two monarchs in remarkable fiscal precarity. Whether the misattributed blame was a matter of piety or ignorance will, for now, remain a mystery.

3.3.3 Magnificent Houses as Useless

Another critique of magnificence which had a distinctly reactionary flavour was that which pitched magnificence against "real use." The term was purposefully vague; 'use' referred to a nebulous set of building qualities, each tied to different ideas on the end goal of a building. Yet, in the mouths of conservatives, what tied these goals together was a certain sense of nostalgia for 'merry old England.' In this nostalgic view, the authority of nobility in the countryside was anchored in traditional performances of *noblesse oblige*, physically manifested within their country houses.⁸² If the magnificent house was increasingly understood

⁷⁹ McBride, *Country House Discourse*, 4.

⁸⁰ Michael Laccohee Busch, *The English Aristocracy: A Comparative Synthesis* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1984), 8. On the seventeenth century "large numbers of titles were created, a multitude of coats of arms was dispensed [...] and large numbers of suitable estates came up for sale,"

⁸¹ Felicity Heal and Clive Holmes, *The Gentry in England and Wales, 1500-1700* (Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 11; 24.

⁸² McBride, *Country House Discourse*, 2; Kristine Johanson, "Never a Merry World: The Rhetoric of Nostalgia in Elizabethan England," in *Representations of Elizabeth I in Early Modern Culture*, ed. Alessandra Petrina and Laura Tosi (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 210-227.

as a superfluous object of 'outward shew,' this emphasis on usefulness directly confronted an increasingly aestheticised magnificence. Instead, the idealised *use* of the house relied on the master's presence, interior furnishings, and the satisfaction of necessity. Each of these points will be discussed more fully.

To many authors, the end goal of building houses was the presence of the master, and thus 'use' referred to the house being 'used.' This particular aspect of 'use' should be read in light of the growing phenomenon of absentee landlords, with many seeking greater proximity to the court in London. Such literature can also be seen as defending another slightly ironic stance taken by the Crown; the less-peripatetic establishment of the court in Westminster was largely to blame for this citybound migration, but numerous Royal declarations urged the upper classes to return to their traditional posts in the countryside.⁸³ This particular view of 'use' therefore, had a particular synchrony with Stuart policy.⁸⁴

The issue is laid out in full by Godfrey Goodman in *The fall of man* (1616), a text which has already been discussed for emphasising the primacy of ancient lineages. In a similar vein, Goodman encourages the nobility and gentry to remain in their country estates; echoing the Jacobean proclamation of the same year.⁸⁵ However, unlike the Jacobean proclamation, Goodman does not base his argument upon governance and provision in the countryside, but around 'the delight of use.' Goodman turns to the matter near the end of the second part, writing 'let us come to the sumptuous and magnificent buildings.'⁸⁶ He describes a king or nobleman, living in the city and suffering from gout. He has left his country estate to his servant, 'who lookes vpon this beautifull building, as his charge or his trouble, but not as his pleasure.' Meanwhile the master continues to speak wistfully of his country dwelling while living in the city, for 'his gowte will not permit him to trauell, and to enioy these pleasures; or rather he conceiues the platforme, and builds in his own fansie and imagination.'⁸⁷ This state of such sumptuous and magnificent buildings is summarised by Goodman thusly:

whereas the delight should consist in the use, it falles out farre otherwise; and argues rather a giddie minde, desiring employment, together with a

⁸³ James F. Larkin and Paul L. Hughes, eds., *Stuart Royal Proclamations, Volume I: Royal Proclamations of King James I, 1603–1625* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1973). The building proclamations issued in years 1603, 1604, 1614, 1618, and 1622, aimed to reduce overcrowding in the capital.

⁸⁴ Heal, *Hospitality in early modern England*, 119. "the energy with which James pursued his ideals, particularly in the early 1620s when, for three successive Christmasses, he forced the gentry to leave London for their country seats in a whirlwind confusion. Joseph Mead described the departure of 7,000 families and their 1,400 coaches just before Christmas 1622 as a major crisis for the city."

⁸⁵ Quoted in: Caleb Dalechamp, *Christian Hospitalitie Handled Common-Place-Wise in the Chappel of Trinity Colledge in Cambridge* (Cambridge: Th. Buck, 1632), 125. "proclamation made by King James towards the end of his Speech in Star-chamber the 20 of June 1616."

⁸⁶ Goodman, *The Fall of Man*, 188.

⁸⁷ Goodman, *The Fall of Man*, 188.

dreame of ioy, conceiued in the imagination, then any sufficient meanes to giue them contentment: for seldome or never doe they enioy their owne labours, but either tenants suffer them forthwith to decay, or else their charge is continued (being absent) in maintaining their buildings.⁸⁸

Goodman warns how, without use, magnificent building can change from a source of contentment to a fictitious phantasm. Goodman warns of retreating onto one's imagination, relishing the fancies of the mind, and therefore failing to enjoy the corporeal pleasures of a country dwelling. This particularly permissive stance on the corporeal delights of magnificent buildings stresses that magnificence alone is insufficient in justifying a building; it must be paired with actual usage in order to derive the pleasure, delight, and contentment that is proportional to its cost.

If the end goal of building houses was to accommodate activities inside, the notion of 'use' could equally refer to the furnishing of the house. To some extent this was related to the importance of the master's presence, as many objects of furniture would travel from house to house along with the master. However, it also served to emphasise the importance of the interior of houses; rather than looked at, houses were meant to be entered and inhabited. Such an understanding can be gleaned from the Italian language phrasebook *Il Passaggiere* (1612), which parrots many tropes in conservative polemic in its dialogues. Therein the notion of 'use' is employed to defend the lavish interiors of the royal Palace in London. Firstly the character Mister Eutrapelus brings up the topic of ocular magnificence, making reference to 'eyes that haue seene mighty buildings in other places, very rare and magnificent.'⁸⁹ To this, his interlocutor Mister Alatheus responds with a description of Whitehall Palace, which is 'not so fair to outward sight' but 'it is so much the more commodious' as it has a huge number of chambers and rooms, well furnished with tapestries and 'an infinite number of gold and silver plate'. He concludes 'to what great use is an outward beautifull prospectiue?'⁹⁰ Alatheus' defense of Whitehall revolves around all the qualities which were not immediately visible from the exterior; it was ultimately not a mere aesthetic object, but a house to be entered and used.

Perhaps in contrast to the interior splendour of Whitehall, there was also an element of austerity in the notion of use. If the end goal of building was to meet the rudimentary requirements of life, then usefulness served as a threshold at which a building could be deemed functional in maintaining life. Such a pragmatic understanding of architectural 'use' can be found in the diary of the royalist Sir Henry Slingsby of Scriven. In an entry dated to 1639, Slingsby observes that 'A little thing sufficeth nature both for diet & habitation, & those buildings which we aim at, serve more for magnificens than necessary use.'⁹¹

⁸⁸ Goodman, *The Fall of Man*, 165-166.

⁸⁹ Italiano Benvenuto, *The Passenger* (London: Thomas Snodham for John Stepneth, 1612), 470.

⁹⁰ Benvenuto, *The passenger*, 471.

⁹¹ Slingsby, *The Diary of Sir Henry Slingsby*, 45.

Singsby's words reflect an awareness of how little was required to meet the basic necessities of food and shelter; he continues 'Imponit finem sapiens in rebus honestis [wise men set limits to honest work] and much more in the vanity of building.'⁹² This spirit was largely reflected in Slingsby's estates. His small country estate at Redhouse, near Moor Monkton, was built by his father beginning around 1608, and held an inscription above the door reading 'pro termino vitae sic nos nobis' [for our term of life, thus not for ourselves].⁹³ The younger Slingsby seems to have inherited this pressing awareness of the transience of things. To Slingsby, magnificent building was inevitably tied to excess, to go beyond what was useful in sustaining a person during their life. This was not only a dichotomy between interior and exterior, but pervaded all aspects of a houses' design. Indeed, the next year, Slingsby considers renovating the interior of Redhouse to enable a clear vista from one side to the other. However, he quickly banishes the thought from his mind, musing that in seeing 'cleare thro the house [...] I may by this see ye vanity of all worldly things which men do so much rest upon [...] it at last fails him of his end & doth become vain unto him.'⁹⁴ Indeed, Slingsby's notion of 'use' penetrates both interior and exterior. Even in internal arrangements such as the placement of doors, there was a pressing risk of magnificent vanities which exceeded the bare necessities of 'use.'

Reflecting upon the critique of magnificence in reactionary polemic, there are certain key observations which should be made. It is worth re-emphasising that reactionary polemic was an amalgamation of numerous sources which were themselves not necessarily reactionary. Conservative writers, like many writers of the age, drew from the bible and classical antiquity, but were also remarkably effective at co-opting the rhetorical tropes of the opposing faction. For instance, the concerns around purchased honour and the vanity of outwards appearances, were wielded in more-reformed texts before they were mobilised towards reactionary political ends.⁹⁵

The political motives driving conservative objections to magnificent house building were multiple. Primarily, they aimed to delegitimise the socially ascendant capitalist class. If the country house was understood as a symbol of power, reactionaries emphasised that the type of power which many new country houses symbolised was unnatural, unsubstantiated, unsustainable, and extractive. Such *novi homines* were stereotyped as greedy, having amassed such wealth through exploiting the underprivileged, and lacking the responsibility and

⁹² Slingsby, *The Diary of Sir Henry Slingsby*, 45.

⁹³ "Red House and Its Garden," *Yorkshire Gardens Trust*, accessed June 2, 2025. The first record of the building of this house is a contract dated 14 November 1606 between Sir Henry (elder) and the brickmakers who were to produce '200,000 good and hard bricks, 12 good and perfect thacke tiles and 8 score ridge tiles.' The inscription above the door of the house has since been moved to the chapel.

⁹⁴ Slingsby, *The Diary of Sir Henry Slingsby*, 51.

⁹⁵ See Chapter Two, Section 2.2.2 (Church architecture: Magnificent Maintenance or vain idolatry?).

nobility necessary to use and sustain their newfound wealth. This critique of the socially mobile extended to social mobility as a whole; reactionaries were understandably suspicious of the fluctuations in power which threatened the primacy of traditional privileges. Therefore, in a secondary sense, the critique of magnificent houses served to emphasise the fiscal responsibility and natural stability of the king and aristocracy. They were framed as good stewards; not inclined to waste inheritances on architectural superfluities and luxuries; and abounding in charity for the unprivileged. This rhetoric perhaps had a double-purpose; given the declining fortunes of many aristocratic families, an austerity in matters of building was a key way to ensure that such lineages did not fall into ruin.

The fact that numerous reactionary voices emphasised pragmatism and austerity in house-building is worth holding against persistent stereotypes of 'Puritan minimalism.' Stylistic architectural analyses of country houses built during and in the decades preceding the interregnum have concluded that an austere and pragmatic approach to building was to be attributed to the parliamentary faction.⁹⁶ Forty Hall (1629) is perhaps the best-known example, with Nun Appleton (1651), Thorpe Hall (1653), being built during the interregnum.⁹⁷ While these houses may show restraint in their architectural design, the fact that they were built at all testifies *against* a policy of absolute austerity amongst the revolutionary faction. To build a house at all, was a sign that one had the motive and means to build; both of which the socially ascendant had. The desire to enlarge or establish an estate was understandably attributed to the recently entitled because they were unlikely to have inherited a mediaeval manor, and were the most likely to have outgrown their ancestral houses. Moreover, the increased wealth of the recently entitled (with which the titles themselves may have been purchased) equally indicated sufficient means with which to build. As such, to build a house was a sign that the free hand of the market had ostensibly moved in one's favour; as usual, architectural production followed the ebb and flow of capital.

As such, it can be speculated how much the reaction against magnificent houses was a reaction against new architecture as a whole. Looking at the first generation of Stuart country house poems, it is clear that the objects of praise were generally medieval seats which had been little augmented by their owners; Penshurst palace is perhaps the most obvious example, but Welbeck too is praised for being an ancient seat, dating to 'before our modern buildings were our crimes.'⁹⁸ In this regard, if the reactionary critique of magnificence was to have any engagement with architectural design, it would be against all the qualities and expressions of the *new* which magnificence entailed.

⁹⁶ Tim Mowl and Brian Earnshaw, *Architecture without Kings: The Rise of Puritan Classicism under Cromwell* (New York: Manchester University Press), 5; 26; 68; 69; 79; 128; 132; 135; 138.

⁹⁷ Mowl; Earnshaw, *Architecture without Kings*, 132-138.

⁹⁸ Alastair Fowler, ed., "On Welbeck by Richard Flecknoe" *The Country House Poem: A Cabinet of Seventeenth-Century Estate Poems* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh Univ. Press, 1994), 177.

3.4 Magnificence against Hospitality

While the reactionary objection to magnificent houses may have largely pitched against new architecture more generally, this is not to suggest that reactionary polemicists were altogether lacking in architectural vision. Rather, in denigrating magnificence they raised another virtue into its place as a real architectural sign of authority and altruism; this was *hospitality*. As one may recall from the first chapter, hospitality was similar, yet distinct enough, to magnificence, to be framed as a viable alternative. To reactionary writers, hospitality embodied all the things which the aestheticised and ‘pretended’ magnificence had lost. It was not a vain and ruinous expense, but constituted the liberal provision which guaranteed the loyalty of the common man. Rather than being a sign of ambitious *novi homines*, hospitality was a rustic virtue of the old nobility, whose blood supposedly remembered the convivial feasts of Saxon times. Hospitality also seemed connected to the ‘real use’ of the noble house; it was not ostentatious and superficial, but was a virtue seen as rooted in old-fashioned pragmatism.

The primary aim of the following section is simple; to substantially prove the emergence of a polemic opposing magnificence and hospitality over the Elizabethan and early Stuart period. It will do so through three textual excerpts, which contextualise the opposition of these terms within changing economic and political contexts, and show the gradual integration of this opposition in reactionary discourse. The first excerpt comes from Laurence Humphrey’s *The nobles or of nobility* (1563); the second from Thomas Gainsford’s *The Glory of England* (1618), and the third comes from an English edition of William Camden’s *Annales* (1625, originally published in Latin in 1615).

3.4.1 ‘Avoyde magnificēce; kepe hospitalitye’

The first excerpt is taken from a text which has already been sporadically discussed: Laurence Humphrey’s *The nobles or of nobility* (1563). This Elizabethan text is one which cannot rightly be placed along the confessional and constitutional fault lines of Stuart England, but certainly provides the blueprint of the polemic used by later, more polarised reactionaries. Yet, Humphrey was himself a product of Elizabethan settlement; as a strong Protestant he had been stubbornly against the use of authorised vestments during the ‘vestiarian crisis,’ but ultimately softened his stance when the queen commented that his doctor’s gown and habit ‘became him very well.’⁹⁹ He was ultimately supportive of the Queen and her court; and had a balanced constitutional stance. For example, in the epistle dedicatory of *The nobles* that both *being* and *doing* were important components of nobility, writing ‘Nobilitye is that, whyche with the renoume and fame of auncestrye, hath coupled excellent, Chrystyan, and farre spred vertue.’¹⁰⁰ He dedicates the book to

⁹⁹ Albert Frederick Pollard, “Humphrey, Lawrence” *Encyclopædia Britannica*. Vol. 13 (11th ed, 1911), 891.

¹⁰⁰ Humphrey, *The Nobles*, unpaginated [img.5].

Elizabeth, writing that she, ‘treadynge the steppes and pathes of her auncestoures, fyndeth the entry [to virtue] open.’¹⁰¹

Yet, Humphrey did not withhold when attacking certain behaviours that were damaging the legitimacy of the nobility. His view is not one untinted by conservative nostalgia; when he turns to discuss the lifestyle of the nobility, he states that he ‘wil briefelye note the simplicitie of the auncientes, the ryot and excesse of oure Nobles.’¹⁰² This is the section in which Humphrey complains of ‘superfluous magnificence’ and ‘unmeasurable magnificence,’ which has been discussed earlier.¹⁰³ Humphrey continues to correlate this excessive magnificence with a decline in hospitality, writing:

What dignitie, what Nobilitye may be purchased by buyldynge? Yet thys vanitie worke we not (say they) on vaine consideracion but iust cause. Both hospitality growe, iustice more indifferentlye be ministred, Cities more flouryshe, Citesens be linkd in nearer amitie, and the neyghboure poore after relyeued. [...] No sufficiente causes are there, whye these earthlye, frayle, temporall harborowes of our body, wauing with euerye biast, open to al enemies roades, ryfe to al perill, should be decked with such cost, statelines, and magnificēce. These faultes therfore auoyded, be this moderance vsed. Fyrst, hauing of his parentes, a house able to shroude him from showers, and kepe hospitalitye: rashely enlarge it not, (as many that rase, rayse, buylde, alter frome square to round, from roūd to square) but vse it thankfullye.¹⁰⁴

The opening line reveals the specific targets of Humphrey’s critique; those who attempted to augment or ‘purchase’ their nobility through building. To Humphrey, this was a vain pursuit which ultimately existed contrary to the traditional system which ensured the proper administration of justice, community, and poor relief. Those who inherited houses from their parents, he argued, were primarily to keep hospitality rather than to extend and renovate it in the pursuit of superfluous magnificence.

3.4.2 ‘Outward magnificence, voyd of hospitality’

The second excerpt was written by Thomas Gainsford and published in 1618. The title of the text quite accurately describes the tone and content of the work, it reads: *The glory of England, or A true description of many excellent prerogatiues and remarkeable blessings, whereby she triumpheth ouer all the nations of the world with a iustifiable comparison betweene the eminent kingdomes of the earth, and herselfe: plainely manifesting the defects of them all in regard of her sufficiencie and fulnesse of happinesse*. Within, Gainsford takes the reader on a whirlwind tour of the known

¹⁰¹ Humphrey, *The Nobles*, unpaginated [img.5].

¹⁰² Humphrey, *The Nobles*, unpaginated [img.156].

¹⁰³ Humphrey, *The Nobles*, unpaginated [img.138].

¹⁰⁴ Humphrey, *The Nobles*, unpaginated [img.138].

world, paying special attention to the ‘defects’ of each ‘nation’ and comparing them to the better example of England. Indeed, Gainsford’s foremost literary trait is his patriotism, no doubt honed over numerous years of military service from around 1601 to 1614, during which he attained the rank of captain.¹⁰⁵ His scholarly pursuits were largely concurrent with his military exploits; he matriculated at the University of Cambridge in 1582, and frequently wrote while abroad.

For a military captain, Gainsford seemed particularly invested in the goings-on in the royal court. Gainsford himself dedicated all 1619, 1622, and 1629 editions to George Villiers, a rapidly ascendant political player, who in 1619 had been made Marquess of Buckingham, continuing a steady rise through the ranks of the Jacobean court.¹⁰⁶ Gainsford and Villiers may have known one another, as Gainsford does state that his book dedications are not written without ‘primordially acquaintance, secret supportation, or (as wee call it) Court friendshippe.’¹⁰⁷ If Gainsford’s monarchical stance was ever to be questioned, the matter is addressed explicitly in *The Glory of England*, where he writes in no uncertain terms:

The best manner of gouernment from Gods own mouth, which is monarcal; and philosophicall principles, which is a King; and morall enstructions, which is a distributer of Iustice; and peoples desires, which is an honourable preseruer of Common-wealths: all vnited in one person.¹⁰⁸

Therefore, like most reactionary writers, Gainsford was perfectly tolerant of magnificence when it was executed by the King. He cheerfully notes how ‘it did please him [James I] to add some glorious repairing, or rather magnificent quadrant, to his palace at White-hall.’¹⁰⁹ However, the misuse of mere ‘outwards magnificence’ by obscure Italian authors was detestable to him, and most importantly, contrary to hospitality. This opposition between magnificence and hospitality occurs when Gainsford is describing the architecture of Italy, which he recalls in chapter Seven of *The Glory of England*:

As for those ostentous heapes of stone, which transport the slight credulity of the ignorant, to beleeeve that it surpasseth for cities, buildings, and outward magnificence, any countrey in Europe, when you come to

¹⁰⁵ Mark Eccles, “Thomas Gainsford, ‘Captain Pamphlet,’” *Huntington Library Quarterly* 45, no. 4 (1982): 259–270. Thomas Gainsford served in Ireland from 1601 to 1603. In July, 1606, Gainsford rode over the Alps from Geneva to Turin. He was in Constantinople by August 1607. He also fought in the war of Cleves between 1610 and 1614.

¹⁰⁶ “Villiers, George, First Duke of Buckingham (1592–1628), Royal Favourite.” *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*.

¹⁰⁷ Thomas Gainsford, *The True Exemplary, and Remarkable History of the Earle of Tirone* (London: G[eorge] P[urslowe] for Ralph Rownthwaite, 1619), unpaginated [epistle dedicatory].

¹⁰⁸ Thomas Gainsford, *The Glory of England, or a True Description of Many Excellent Prerogatives and Remarkeable Blessings* (London: Edward Griffin for Th: Norton, 1618), 246.

¹⁰⁹ Gainsford, *The Glory of England*, 246.

examine particulars, you shall finde it onely, as we deceive our children, in sugring ouer a little course bread, made in the forme of delicate manchets on the outside. For what saies Tacitus, cities are the men; gouernment, feeding; and obedience of people, subiect to formall orders and handsome ceremonies, and not houses or palaces made of lime and stone, unfurnished of dwellers, voyd of hospitality, and jealous even of one anothers best enclinations, when they are furnished at the best.¹¹⁰

Gainsford's damning judgement of Italian architecture is one which clearly opposes hospitality with 'outward magnificence.' The term is used in a similar way to Wybarne's notion of 'false magnificence;' this magnificence of buildings was a work of ocular deception. It was a purely visual phenomenon that is somehow able to 'transport the slight credulity of the ignorant.' The consequences were twofold; firstly, the concern with outwards, left Italian houses inwardly 'voyd of hospitality.' Gainsford's notion of hospitality seems particularly concerned with feeding; he reinforces the accusation with a culinary simile, where a piece of coarse bread (either stale or made with inferior or adulterated grains) is sugared over to resemble the much finer manchets loaf.¹¹¹ Such critiques of Italian domestic architecture were not uncommon for this period. We find a similar passage in Thomas Coryate's 1611 description of his travels in Italy, where he reports that Italian gentlemen 'keepe no honourable hospitality [...] though they inhabite most beautifull Palaces.'¹¹² Yet, whilst Coryat suggests that this lack of hospitality in Italy was due to legal restrictions on keeping household staff, Gainsford is more inclined to frame the discrepancy as a moral failure.¹¹³

Gainsford's text is particularly demonstrative of how the notion of hospitality was connected with conservative patriotism and English exceptionalism. Indeed, when Gainsford turns to discuss England in comparison, he emphasises England was exemplary 'both for hospitality and the generall blessings of the kingdome, reciprocally imparted to poore and rich.'¹¹⁴ The notion was one which preempted James I's exaltation of 'hospitalitie; for which we *were* famous above all the Countreys in the World.'¹¹⁵ The use of the past tense 'were' is perhaps crucial here. For all of Gainsford's loud praises of England's virtues, the reactionary polemic was one which was undergirded by a certain pessimism. It was so keenly felt that

¹¹⁰ Gainsford, *The Glory of England*, 225.

¹¹¹ Diane Purkiss, *English Food: A People's History* (London: William Collins, 2022), 53. One of the earliest known recipes for fine Manchet bread can be found in: Thomas Dawson, *Good Huswifes Handmaide for the Kitchen* (1594).

¹¹² Thomas Coryate, *Coryat's Crudities: Hastily Gobled up in Five Moneths Travells* (Glasgow: J. MacLehose and Sons, 1905 [1611]), 278.

¹¹³ Coryate, *Coryat's Crudities*, 279. 'I understand that the reason why they so confine themselves within the bounds of frugality, and avoyde that superfluity of expenses in housekeeping that we Englishmen doe use, is, because they are restrained by a certaine kinde of edict made by the Senate, that they shall not keepe a retinue beyond their limitation.'

¹¹⁴ Gainsford, *The Glory of England*, 225.

¹¹⁵ Quoted in: Dalechamp, *Christian Hospitalitie*, 125. "proclamation made by King James towards the end of his Speech in Star-chamber the 20 of June 1616."

all which was good about one's nation was under threat, or already faded away (lest England should become like Italy).

3.4.3 'More magnificent Countrie houses, but the glory of Hospitality greatly decreased'

The final textual excerpt opposing hospitality and magnificence comes from an English translation of William Camden's 1615 historical account bearing the full title *Annales rerum Anglicarum et Hibernicarum regnante Elizabetha*, often hailed as the first historical account of the Elizabethan age.¹¹⁶ The 1625 English translation bears the title *Annales the true and royall history of the famous empresse Elizabeth Queene of England France and Ireland*. The *Annales* followed the success of Camden's *Britannia*, a geographical survey of the history of the British Isles, published in 1586 with six subsequent Latin editions, and translated into English in 1610.¹¹⁷ Camden himself was 64 years old when the *Annales* was first published, and had seen an eventful academic career much aided by aristocratic connections. Camden himself was not an aristocrat, being born to painter-stainer, and although he had studied at the University of Oxford, he never attained a degree.¹¹⁸ Nevertheless, in Oxford he came to be acquainted with Sir Philip Sidney, and later with William Cecil, 1st Baron Burghley, who commissioned the *Annales*. However, it is his *Britannia* which has largely attracted the attention of scholars studying architecture.¹¹⁹ Anne M. Myers' dedicates a chapter of *Literature and Architecture* (2013) to it, and she is anxious to assert Camden's own historiographical approach as one just as detached from humanist classicism as it was from Protestant proselytising.¹²⁰ Such a position extends to Camden's approach to magnificence; he is not anxious to assert it as an Aristotelian virtue, but nor is he keen to decry it as a popish vanity. Camden was, however, a keen participant in the nostalgic antiquarianism that emphasised the primacy of noble blood and land ownership. This reactionary stance is stated in plain terms within *Britannia*, wherein Camden sets out 'to restore Britain to antiquity, and antiquity to Britain; to renew what was old, illustrate what was obscure, and settle what was doubtful.'¹²¹ The following excerpt should be read with such an attitude in mind, for it can be regarded as the driving force behind his suspicion of magnificence,

¹¹⁶ William Camden, *Annales rerum Anglicarum et Hibernicarum regnante Elizabetha*, with Internet Archive (London: William Stansby, 1615).

¹¹⁷ F.J. Levy, "The Making of Camden's *Britannia*," *Bibliothèque d'Humanisme et Renaissance* 26, no. 1 (1964): 70–97.

¹¹⁸ H. C. G. Matthew and B. Harrison, eds., "Camden, William," *The Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

¹¹⁹ William Camden, Philemon Holland trans, *Britain, or A Chorographical Description of the Most Flourishing Kingdomes, England, Scotland, and Ireland, and the Ilands Adjoyning* (London: F. K[ingston] R. Y[oung] and I. L[egatt] for George Latham, 1637).

¹²⁰ Myers, *Literature and Architecture*, 18.

¹²¹ Quoted in W. H. Herendeen: "William Camden: Historian, Herald, and Antiquary," *Studies in Philology* 85, no. 2 (1988): 1999.

and the inverse assertion of hospitality in the *Annales*. Recording the year 1574, Camden writes:

In these times, the superfluity of Apparell so preuailed in England, (by a Vice peculiar to the Nation, which pleaseth it selfe by imitating others) that the ancient fashion fell in such disgrace [...] She commanded therefore, that within 14. dayes, euery one should forme his apparell to the prescribed fashion, if he would not incurre the seuerity of the Lawe, and shee herselfe began this reformation in her Court. But by the malice of time, this Edict, and these Lawes by little and little gave place to this superfluity, which grew to a greater height of insolency, & was immediately traced by the riotousnesse of Feasts, and splendor of Buildings : for since that time, more magnificent, ample, and faire Countrie houses of Noblemen and private men have beene raised up in England, then in any other Ages whereby (truly) the Kingdome was greatly adorned, but the glory of Hospitality greatly decreased.¹²²

Camden's narrative is plain; that vice of imitation so typical of the English, once suppressed by the Elizabethan Sumptuary laws, found an alternative manifestation in the construction of 'magnificent' country houses.¹²³ Concurrently, 'hospitality' was on the decline. Camden's use of the term 'hospitality' is typically nostalgic; for example, he notes how 'the Gentry of Northumberland are generally persons of address and breeding, and preservers of the true old English Hospitality in their Houses.'¹²⁴ In his phrasing, Camden strongly implies that the increase in magnificence and the decline in hospitality were interrelated. Certain contemporary readers certainly read the two as causally related, as is demonstrated in Robert Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy* (1621). Burton's citation states:

A Chorographer of ours speaking obiter of ancient families, why they are so frequent in the North, continue so long, and are so soone extinguished

¹²² William Camden, *Annales the True and Royall History of the Famous Empresse Elizabeth* (London: George Purslowe, Humphrey Lowne, and Miles Flesher, 1625), 346–347.

¹²³ The translation history of the *Annales* reveals that Camden and his translators understood the English term 'magnificence' as quite distinct from the Latin 'magnificentia,' with its strong ethical connotations secured by the ongoing circulation of Aquinas, Cicero, and Aristotle, amongst others. Rather, throughout the translations, the English word became more similar in meaning to 'elegance' or 'neatness', two words which have stronger aesthetic connotations. For example, in the 1615 Latin original, Camden describes the houses of England as being 'elegantia, laxitate, & cultu.'²⁸ In his own 1625 translation, he translates the trio as '*magnificent*, ample, and fair.'²⁹ Then, the later translation of 1635 lists the triad as 'built with *neatnesse*, largenesse, and beautifull shew.'³⁰ The brief appearance of 'magnificence' in the 1625 translation cannot be discounted as a clumsy mistranslation, for even the most careless use of a word exists within certain semantic limits. This translation history, laid out in chronological order, shows how country houses came to be described in increasingly aestheticized terms, while the hospitality that they corrupt remained fixed in translation.

¹²⁴ Camden, *Annales*, unpaginated ['Additions to North-Humberland'].

in the South, and so few; giues no other reason but this, *luxus omniae dissipauit*, riot hath consumed all. Fine cloaths and curious buildings came into this Island, as he notes in his *annalls*, not so many yeares since, *non sine dispendio hospitalitatis* to the decay of hospitality.¹²⁵

This anxious reading may be largely due to the fact that, although the *annales* is a historical account, the issue was not relegated to history. The building boom mentioned has now been estimated to have stretched from 1570 to 1620, peaking during the reign of James VI and I. As such, even more country houses were being built up as Camden and Burton were at their desks than during the period they were reflecting upon.¹²⁶ Far from the unwavering English patriotism of Gainford's *The Glory of England*, Camden's *Annales* reads as an urgent history of English Vice, threatening a continued decay of hospitality.

3.5 Conclusion

This chapter has presented a reactionary approach to magnificence which was in direct contradiction to that described in the previous chapter. While the previous chapter analysed how reactionary literature wielded the virtue of magnificence as an ideal personified in the king and desperately lacking amongst the newly-enriched (often sweepingly referred to as the 'gentry'), this chapter has shown how the same faction accused the newly-enriched of *vicious magnificence*; a modern proclivity which old money was immunised against. How could the similar polemicists pushing the same political agenda have such divergent understandings of architectural magnificence? As this chapter has shown, the primary difference was the object of the *country house*. Indeed, magnificence may have been praiseworthy in the patronage of Kings, or endowments granted to churches, hospitals, and colleges. Yet, the country house, as an increasingly private domestic building, was a contentious object of magnificence. It served the royalist political agenda well to criticise magnificent new houses; not only was it an activity expected from the socially ascendant, but it also stood to symbolise the personal irresponsibility, wastefulness, and vanity of the gentry. Moreover, it played into the typically reactionary denunciation of the *new*: new titles, new styles, new articulations of power, and of course, new money.

Against the newness of magnificent houses was pitched an exaltation of the *old*. Reactionaries cast in this role the quality of *hospitality*. Hospitality was a nostalgic and nationalistic virtue, warmed by the embers of a feudal, less-reformed, vision of the past. This was a vision of Saxon feasting and open-handed chivalry, which continued to course through the veins of England's ancient bloodlines. The opposition between magnificence and hospitality, as articulated by Humphrey, Gainsford, and Camden, was a deeply nostalgic construct. This

¹²⁵ Burton, *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, 61.

¹²⁶ Malcolm Airs, *The Tudor & Jacobean Country House: A Building History* (Stroud, Gloucestershire: Sutton Pub, 1995), 3.

was not hospitality as a neutral expression of generosity, but a politicised ideal deployed to defend an older moral and social order against the perceived threats of novelty, ambition, and foreign influence. Humphrey's *The nobles or of nobilitye* cast hospitality as the proper object of the noble house, a legacy to be preserved rather than altered in pursuit of 'superfluous magnificence,' evoking the stability of an imagined ancestral past. Gainsford's *The Glory of England* sharpened the contrast with patriotic pride, holding hospitality as an English hallmark superior to the hollow 'outward magnificence' of Italian architecture, and warning of decline should foreign models prevail. Camden's *Annales* historicised the opposition, lamenting that the rise of magnificent country houses coincided with the erosion of 'the glory of hospitality,' a loss framed as symptomatic of abandoning ancient customs. Together they articulated a sentiment which would persist throughout the seventeenth century. After the restoration, Ned Ward regretted upon passing upon Northumberland house 'that so noble a palace, which appears so magnificent and venerable, should not have the old hospitality continued withinside.'¹²⁷

As such, over the turn of the seventeenth century, one can observe the magnificent houses' fall from grace, at least within the confines of reactionary polemic. What rose to replace it was the notion of hospitality, which served as an antidote to ostentation and unbridled architectural innovation. Yet, even though it was positioned (in a sense) against architecture – hospitality also developed a distinctive vision of the domestic which was not without architectural connotations. This will be the primary subject of the following chapter.

¹²⁷ Quoted in: Christine Stevenson, *Medicine and Magnificence: British Hospital and Asylum Architecture, 1660-1815* (London: Yale University Press for the Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art, 2000), 17.

CHAPTER FOUR

REACTIONARY HOSPITALITY

4.1 New Nostalgia

Beginning in the second half of the sixteenth century, a distinctly conservative polemic concerning hospitality arose, tinted by an imaginary past which predated the pervasive moral corruption of the Elizabethan age. As this chapter will discuss, this imaginary past was rendered in remarkably high resolution, so much so that seemingly inconsequential architectural minutae were clearly visible. Such a view may be described as 'nostalgic,' inasmuch as the yearning for this imagined past served as a tool with which to denigrate the present. The traces of such an imaginary can be glimpsed in the distinction made by Joseph Wybarne between 'true hospitality' and 'false hospitality.'¹ Wybarne's semantic interrogation is undeniably tinted by a certain nostalgia, which is exposed by the title of his book *The New Age of Old Names* (1609). It is no mere coincidence that all which Wybarne decries as 'false' belongs to the *new* age; and all which he praises as 'true' is also *old*. In each chapter, Wybarne repeatedly describes contemporary instances of semantic misappropriation, where 'old names' are used to disguise the falsehoods of a 'new age.' Embedded in this argument was a nostalgic view upon the 'old age' where things were called by their true names. 'True hospitality,' therefore, was that species of hospitality which was fading from view, which marked the open-handed bounty of an era just passed.

The features of this nostalgic hospitality, and its contribution to reactionary polemic, are the main focus of this chapter. The role this nostalgic imaginary plays in tinting the backwards glance of English reactionaries

¹ Joseph Wybarne, *The New Age of Old Names* (London: John Windet, 1609), 34-35.

throughout history has already been extensively discussed in *Rule Nostalgia* (2022) published by the cultural historian Hannah Rose Woods.² Woods' scholarship also reveals that nostalgia often exceeded a mere fetishisation of the past. There was also an element of radical change, whereby the past is reinterpreted and mobilised in order to propagate disguised forms of the new.³ This is the dialectical process which animates Woods' retelling of the dissolution of the monasteries, framing it as a radical shift fought for with 'weaponised nostalgia'.⁴ Indeed, Henry VIII was known to have justified the dissolution of monasteries as a return to England's natural and original state preceding popish interference.⁵ Yet, as quickly as it emerged, this nostalgic vision was overtaken by a new wave of reactionary nostalgia, mourning the loss of monastic hospitality. As Francis Trigge observed not long after the dissolution 'many do lament the pulling down of the abbeyes, they say it was never a merry world since.'⁶ This was a nostalgia which repainted memories of monastic communities as kind and obliging landlords, who offered indiscriminate hospitality to pilgrims and poor alike. Yet, this too was a means by which to encourage new standards of behaviour in the upper classes. This sequence of events may be understood as the origin point of the nostalgic 'true hospitality' as presented by Wybarne, only slightly modified by dialectical iterations over the remaining sixteenth century.

In this sense, the nostalgic serves as a thin veneer for a definition of hospitality which, in many senses, is an early modern phenomenon. In being framed as a less-superficial justification for privilege than 'magnificence,' the meaning and symbolic expression of hospitality had to be altered in order to avoid the same accusations of ostentation and vainglory which befell magnificence. For example, following the dissolution, there is a refinement of hospitality's semantic scope to focus more on provision for the underprivileged.⁷ More pertinently, there emerges in literature a semiology of hospitality which exists in contradistinction to the ostentatious performance of magnificence. Unlike magnificence in architecture, the signs of hospitality entailed the ascendancy of actions over symbolism; its phenomenology was firmly multisensory as opposed to merely ocular. Moreover, it superseded the material, and stressed the purposive interaction between buildings and subjects. In this way, hospitality presented a 'practical' architectural semiology of virtue which stood as a counterpart to the increasingly aestheticised virtue signalling of magnificence. In this chapter, the mechanisms of such architectural signs will be discussed in full, starting from its origins in the dissolution, and

² Hannah Rose Woods, *Rule, Nostalgia: A Backwards History of Britain* (London: W. H. Allen, 2022).

³ Woods, *Rule, Nostalgia*, 9-10.

⁴ Woods, *Rule, Nostalgia*, 232.

⁵ Woods, *Rule, Nostalgia*, 241-242.

⁶ Alexandra Walsham, *The Reformation of the Landscape: Religion, Identity, and Memory in Early Modern Britain* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 296.

⁷ Felicity Heal, *Hospitality in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), 15-16.

working towards the development of a nostalgic architectural vocabulary in the seventeenth century.

4.2 The Redistribution of Monastic Wealth and its Consequences

In order to understand the new obligations to perform hospitable poor relief placed upon the ruling classes over the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, it is necessary to begin with the dissolution of monasteries (1536-c.1541). The narrative can be succinctly summarised as follows: upon the eve of the dissolution, obligations of hospitality, and the failure to meet those obligations, was largely attributed to religious houses. The dissolution saw the wealth (and concomitant obligations) of these religious houses largely supplanted onto the nobility and gentry. The upper classes needed to justify their profits from the dissolution through the performance of hospitality; otherwise, they risked being accused of filling their private purses with sacred spoils. Nevertheless, during the subsequent reign of Elizabeth, the fortunes of her courtiers were increasingly expended upon entertaining one another, and upon occasion, the royal court.⁸ In reaction to this, the view of 'true hospitality' was gradually refined around the early seventeenth century, in order to bring charitable provision into sharper relief. This overarching narrative can be gleaned through the discourse surrounding how hospitality was to be performed and signified, with architectural semiologies dialectically appearing and compounding throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. This section aims to explain this sequence of events, and its effect on the dialectical refinement of 'hospitality,' in full.

During the high middle ages, religious houses were largely answerable to broader systems of *noblesse oblige* which ideally maintained a decent amount of trust between those who owned land and those who dwelt upon it. Additionally, the obligation to provide food and lodging to strangers and the poor was largely incumbent upon religious houses.⁹ This was in keeping with numerous passages in the Vulgate which urged *hospitalitas* particularly of the episcopacy, and more broadly of the religious.¹⁰ The architectural evidence attests

⁸ The lavish expenditures which this entailed were retrospectively termed as 'magnificent hospitality' by Dalechamp, the like of which did little to compensate for the tenuous state of poor relief. See: Gyles Dalechamp, *Christian hospitalitie handled common-place-wise* (London: Felix Kingston, 1632), 54.

⁹ Woods, *Rule, Nostalgia*, 23.

¹⁰ *Biblia Sacra Vulgata*, ed. Robert Weber (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1969). Hospitality is urged of a Bishop: first in 1 Timothy 3:2, 'Oportet ergo episcopum irreprehensibilem esse, unius uxoris virum, sobrium, prudentem, ornatum, pudicum, hospitem, doctorem...'; and then in Titus 1:8 'sed hospitem, benignum, sobrium, justum, sanctum, continentem..'. Of the religious more broadly: first in Romans 12:13 'necessitatibus sanctorum communicantes : hospitalitatem sectantes'; Hebrews 13:2 'Caritas fraternitatis maneat in vobis et hospitalitatem nolite oblivisci : per hanc enim latuerunt quidam, angelis hospitio receptis'; and finally in 1 Peter 4:9 'Hospites invicem sine murmuratione.'

to the diligence of religious houses in meeting these obligations.¹¹ For example, by the thirteenth century the bishop's palace of Wells had grown to contain four separate dining halls and two kitchens in order to cater to guests from across the social spectrum.¹² Likewise, the prior's house in Ely had three halls for dining: noble pilgrims would dine in the prior's own hall, pilgrims of moderate income in the great hall, and the poor in a hall adjoining the infirmary.¹³

Yet, by the early modern period, such institutions were broadly accused of failing to meet the standards of hospitality that were expected of them. It was commonly suspected that religious houses had fallen into avarice, upsetting the bonds of love and trust that justified their role as landlords. In the years preceding the dissolution (1536-1541), vast amounts of propaganda were published, largely under the patronage of Thomas Cromwell, aiming to attack the legitimacy of monastic institutions.¹⁴ Such attacks mobilised the already-extant vision of an earlier, more unified British society rooted in Arthurian legend.¹⁵ In such a view, clerical corruption was largely responsible for this decline in unity, neglecting the bonds of liberal charity which held society together. For example, a pamphlet titled *A Litel Treatise Ageynste the Mutterynge of some Papistis* (1534) claims:

that the nobilitie and commons of this realme of Englande hadde more riches, and greater plentie of foode and vitale, and lyued in moche more welthe, and more at theyr hartis ease in laful libertie: then lette them consider, that this was before the pope and his clergie were growen so great, so stronge and myghty, and to so huge possessions and riches, as they welde at this daye: for before that tyme they preached the gospelle trewlye, they were meke and lowly spirited, and sufficiencie was to them abundaunce, they were charitable, they were milde and mercifull, and gaue good example, and men gladly folowed them, then reigned loue & liberalitie, then there was peace and vnitie, that causedde great plentie in euery place.¹⁶

The latter section of this passage is noteworthy, as it illustrates a more holistic view of hospitality which was to change over the following century. Unlike the seventeenth-century definition of 'true hospitality' provided by Wybarne, early sixteenth-century texts maintained the vague assertion that the primary aim of charitable action was peace and unity in a Christian community.¹⁷ Such charity

¹¹ Margaret Wood, *The English Mediaeval House* (London: Pheonix House, 1981), 25.

¹² Wood, *English Mediaeval House*, 24 [fig. 8].

¹³ Wood, *English Mediaeval House*, 26 [fig. 9].

¹⁴ G. R. Elton, *Policy and Police: The Enforcement of the Reformation in the Age of Thomas Cromwell* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972); Joseph Block, "Thomas Cromwell's Patronage of Preaching," *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 8, no. 1 (1977): 37-50.

¹⁵ Woods, *Rule, Nostalgia*, 258.

¹⁶ Thomas Swinnerton, *A Litel Treatise Ageynste the Mutterynge of Some Papistis in Corners* (London: Tho. Bertheleti, 1534), img. 14-15.

¹⁷ Heal, *Hospitality in Early Modern England*, 15.

was more firmly tied to its etymological roots in the latin *caritas* (love); it was not simply provision from rich to poor, but a mutual bond of love which tied both nobility to the commons, and the commons to the nobility. In the eyes of Henrican reformers, the amassing of wealth, and the subsequent material splendour of English monasteries, was a clear sign that these bonds of love had been transgressed. In the midst of the dissolution, letters addressed to Cromwell from his informants confirmed the stereotype, affirming that the suppression had effectively redistributed the wealth piled up in abbeys. One such letter by a certain John Marshall reports that 'Abbeys be nothing esteemed or pitied, for the commons say they now perceive more common wealth to grow to them by their suppressing [...] They were but bellymonds and gluttons of the world, and the most vicious persons.'¹⁸

In reality, the wealth which grew in the wake of the dissolution may have been less common than Marshall was willing to admit. The increase in wealth following the dissolution was predictably localised in the upper echelons of society. Most notably, there was a notable influx of economically energetic *novi homines* into the gentry, largely merchants and yeomen, with a handful of families also being admitted into the peerage.¹⁹ Meanwhile, it was feared that the state of the common man remained as tenuous as ever.²⁰ As a result, closely following the dissolution, Protestant accusations of greed and gluttony were simply shifted from corrupt clerics, onto the land-owning classes. It became *their* actions and expenditures which disturb the bonds of love governing intra class-relations: actions and expenditures such as the erection of large houses. A sermon published in 1550 recalls how Thomas Lever, one of the founding figures of the English Puritan movement, took to the pulpit on the fourth Sunday of Lent. In the presence of King Edward VI and his Council, he declared:

..the chiefe cause why the commens doo not loue, trust, nor obey the gentlemē & officers, is, because the gentlemen and officers buylde many

¹⁸ 3 SP 1/143, fo. 81; 150, fo. 187; 152, fo. 59 (LP xiv. I. 295, 839, 1094). Quoted in G. R. Elton, *Policy and Police: The Enforcement of the Reformation in the Age of Thomas Cromwell* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972), 330.

¹⁹ Whether or not this influx caused an overall rise in the power held within the gentry class was famously debated by Hugh Trevor-Roper. Yet, he does agree with his interlocutors upon a general demographic growth. See: H. R. Trevor-Roper, "The Elizabethan Aristocracy: An Anatomy Anatomized," *The Economic History Review* 3, no. 3 (1951): 294-295. "[...] gentry nevertheless rose relatively to the nobility, the explanation would seem to be simple enough: its new economic energy was brought to it largely by merchants and yeomen, and since such men had to become gentry before they could become peers, the casualties among the gentry were more rapidly repaired. This was especially so under Elizabeth, who could not prevent merchants and yeomen from buying their way into the gentry, but who could, and did, prevent all but a handful of commoners from becoming peers."

²⁰ Ian Archer, "The Charity of Early Modern Londoners," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 12 (2002): 242-243.

fayre houses, and kepe fewe good houses. [...] A meane learned person, keping an house in hys paryshe, and beyng of godly conuersacion shal perswade & teach mo[re] of hys parishners with communication at one meale, than the best learned doctor of divinitie keypyng no house.²¹

Indeed, whilst the opposition between house-building and house-keeping is certainly pertinent, what Lever contains within the scope of 'house-keeping' is evidently broader than the hospitable provision of food and shelter for the underprivileged. Instead, at the centre of Lever's prescriptions is the instruction and conversation during mealtimes, which contributes the most to the love and trust between nobleman and commoner. Lever's insistence on teaching over a meal being the primary duty of the landed gentleman as opposed to the religious cleric is revealing, because prior to the dissolution of monasteries, the duties of education, instruction, and provision had previously rested on religious regulars.²² Lever's sermon largely reveals the tenuousness of the Protestant position, as clerics were scrambling to minimise the losses caused by the wholesale closure of monastic schools, hospitals, leper houses, and almshouses.²³ His vilification of 'fayre houses' can be interpreted as a plea to the nobility present in Edward VI's council to take on the duties of the monastic institutions, but to reject their vices — including the propensity towards lavish building. Such domestic building proved to be a particularly sore spot for Protestants; they knew it could easily appear as if the Protestant gentry had simply decorated their houses with the spoils of abbeys, to the detriment of clerical hospitality.²⁴ The minister Laurance Chaderton admits in a 1578 sermon that 'the papistes alwayes cast in our teeth the great and famous hospitalitie of their nobility and cleargie.'²⁵ This is indeed done by the Catholic Bishop Stephen Gardener. Protected beneath the mantle of the Catholic Mary I's reign, he attacked the Protestant minister Thomas Mowntayne saying:

wheras yow have set upe one begarlye howse, yow have pulde downe an C [hundred] prynsly howses for yt; puttyng owte godly, lernyd, and devoyte men that sarvyd god daye and nyghte, and thruste yn ther plase a sort of scurvye and lowsye boxes.²⁶

²¹ Thomas Lever, *A sermon preached ye fourth Su[n]daye in Lente before the Kynges Maiestie. and his honorable Counsell* (London, 1550).

²² James G. Clark, *The Dissolution of the Monasteries: A New History* (London: Yale University Press, 2021), 540–541.

²³ Recent scholarly opinion has swung in favour of describing such monastic institutions as providing real and essential charitable relief, despite Protestant sources claiming otherwise. See: Neil Rushton, "Monastic Charitable Provision in Tudor England," *Continuity and Change*, 2001.

²⁴ There are literal examples of this. For example, the vast pendant vaulted bay adjoining the great hall at Gainsborough Old Hall, Lincolnshire, was said to have been taken from a dissolved monastery.

²⁵ Quoted in: Ian Archer, "The Charity of Early Modern Londoners," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 12 (2002): 226.

²⁶ John Foxe, *Narratives of the Days of the Reformation* (London: Camden Society, 1859), 183.

The overarching criticism was that Protestant ministers and Protestant gentry were doing a much worse job than monastic institutions at providing charitable relief, but were very good at siphoning away the wealth of the commons. Without demonstrable evidence to the contrary, Protestant clergymen were armed with little more than the meager retort that acts of charity only constituted 'outward works.'²⁷ It is unsurprising then, that the first authors to mobilise nostalgic hospitality towards encouraging poor relief were largely Protestant clergymen.²⁸

The emphasis on the underprivileged in Protestant polemic had a distinct reactionary element, which sought to counter the proliferation of lavish entertainments under the guise of hospitality. Indeed, there already existed a Protestant precedent for an increased emphasis on the underprivileged in the act of hospitality: for example, John Calvin defines the term 'hospitality' as only that love 'shown towards strangers' in his *Commentary on Romans 12* (1540).²⁹ However, such an emphasis can also be read as a reaction to the changing nature of courtly entertainment at the time, which saw an increase in lavish entertainment which could feasibly be disguised as hospitality.³⁰ This cultural shift can be observed in typological changes affecting the planning of the greatest houses. Whilst at the start of the sixteenth century, great houses contained numerous portals, entrances, and courtyards through which the poor could be spontaneously provided with food or lodging (even without the house's lord being aware), the increasing compactness of the plan and the reduction of pedestrian access through and around the house meant that any provision had to be more well-planned and choreographed.³¹ This essentially shifted the primary mode of hospitable provision to either well-choreographed poor relief outside the gates, or lavish entertainment between the upper classes.³²

As a result, starting from the reign of Elizabeth, reactionary polemicists make efforts to discern between inter-noble *entertainment* and *hospitality*.³³ Pertinently, lavish entertainment is often relegated to the realm of 'magnificence.' For example, the matter is addressed by Laurence Humphrey

²⁷ E.g. Laurence Chaderton attributes to the 'papistes [...] many outwarde workes,' quoted in: Archer, Ian. "The Charity of Early Modern Londoners," 226.

²⁸ See e.g. Thomas Lever, *A Sermon Preached ye Fourth Sundaye in Lente before the Kynges Maiestie and his Honorable Counsell* (London: John Day, 1550); and Laurence Humphrey, *The Nobles or of Nobilitye* (London: Thomas Marshe, 1563); These preachers' confessional stances can be cleaned from their respective ODNB entries: Lever is described as a founder of the Puritan tendency, and Humphrey as having advanced Protestant opinions.

²⁹ John Calvin, *Romans 12 Calvin's Commentaries* (Edinburgh: Calvin Translation Society, 1844), Romans 12:13.

³⁰ Robert Wybarne, *The New Age of Old Names* (London: John Windet, 1609), 34–35. '[...] the false name of hospitalitie, whereby by men fill the full onely.'

³¹ Jean Guillaume, *Architecture et vie sociale: l'organisation intérieure des grandes demeures à la fin du Moyen Âge et à la Renaissance*, De architectura 6 (Paris: Picard, 1994), 258.

³² Guillaume, *Architecture et vie sociale*, 258. See also the discussion later in Chapter Four, Section 4.6.5 (Gates).

³³ Guillaume, *Architecture et vie sociale*, 258.

in *Of Nobilitye* (1563) not long after the ascension of Elizabeth. Like Calvin, Humphrey defines hospitality as a command 'to be curteous to straungers,' mentioning in particular pilgrims and exiles.³⁴ He continues to bemoan how such hospitality had diminished, while the magnificence of courtly entertainments had increased. He writes:

Howe sumptuous are they, in entreteining Princes, or embassadours?
How excessiue? what glisteringe Nobles? what pompe? What shew?
Whome truly, for the mayntenaunce of theyr dygnitie I commend. But
that unmeasurable magnificēce, muche myslike: whence, what I couet
dymynished, that wyshe I employed on poore pylgrimes, Christes, and
exiles.³⁵

Humphrey's complaint of 'unmeasurable magnificence' is telling. From the mid-sixteenth century there were numerous tactics used by reactionary polemicists to discern or expunge the traces of magnificent *entertainment* from within the semantic scope of hospitality. For instance, in Dalechamp's *Christian Hospitalitie* (1632), he defines a hospitality 'of magnificence, when a stranger of note and abilitie is entertained with pomp and state.'³⁶ More pointed is Wybarne's critique in the *New Age of Old Names* (1609) that the 'gangren of magnificence' could be gleaned in 'the false name of hospitalitie, whereby by men fill the full onely, [...] or of mutuall flatterie, as men that can re-inuite them.'³⁷ In a similar vein, the preacher Richard Bernard repeats in his *Ready way to good works* (1635) that 'hospitality consisteth not in feasting of neighbours, (as it is commonly and falsly conceived) [...] but in a loving entertainment of guests, friends, strangers, acquaintance, or any other poore Saints, which come to our houses.'³⁸ Although it is written almost two decades later than Wybarne's text, the similarity of Bernard's complaint, and the admittance that magnificent feasting remained 'commonly conceived' as hospitable, is some indication that such reactionary polemics were indeed swimming against the tide.

Over the length of the sixteenth century, a dialectical tension between 'true hospitality' and 'false hospitality' ultimately refined a view of hospitality which was less holistic, strongly emphasising the provision of food for the rural poor. Surveying the economic and social shifts which drive this dialectic reveals the internal contradictions underpinning the moralising moans of Protestant clergy. Indeed, the accusations that the upper classes were covering their own luxurious gluttony with the epithet of hospitality ring with reactionary outrage at 'virtue signalling.' Yet, those who verbosely denounce 'virtue signalling' can

³⁴ Laurence Humphrey, *The Nobles or of Nobilitye* (London: Thomas Marshe, 1563), Img. 135.

³⁵ Humphrey, *The Nobles*, Img. 138.

³⁶ Dalechamp, *Christian Hospitalitie*, 54.

³⁷ Wybarne, *New Age of Old Names*, 24–35.

³⁸ Richard Bernard, *The ready way to good works, or, A treatise of charitie* (London: Felix Kingston, 1635), 358.

often feasibly be accused of either signalling virtue themselves, or of denouncing virtue itself by some accident of rhetoric. Indeed, it can be argued that the land-owning classes were responding to numerous mounting pressures, such as a notoriously peripatetic Elizabethan court, and the growing role of splendour in the performance of power.³⁹ Moreover, it can also be argued that the Protestant clergy themselves were scrambling to mitigate the negative impact of the dissolution on the lives of the rural poor, and were themselves unwilling to take on the obligation incumbent upon their Catholic predecessors.⁴⁰ Ultimately, the notion of hospitality which revolves around poor relief is marked by decades of dialectical intrigue, an inheritance which continues to destabilise the semiology of hospitality in the following century.

4.3 'What needs there a Signe?' Against False Symbols of Hospitality

The increasing emphasis on poor relief certainly came to impact the perception of architecture; and yet this semiology of hospitality remained constantly tinted by moral anxieties. If indeed magnificence and 'magnificent hospitality' was a form of 'virtue signalling,' then the new nostalgic hospitality had to be sure not to fall prey to the same ostentatious semiologies. We see this concern with false signs of hospitality articulated in numerous forms throughout the seventeenth century. One text in particular summarises this anxiety with particular efficacy: a sermon preached in St Gregory's (adjoining St Paul's cathedral) by the minister Thomas Adams, titled *The happines of the church* (1619). The section of most interest is a commentary on Ephesians 5:2, wherein Paul recommends the church to 'walk in love.' Adams opens his commentary with the remark 'he doth not say, talke of it, but walke in it,' continuing to mark true charity as distinct from both verbal and architectural signs.⁴¹ He remarks:

A great man had curiously engrauen at the gate of his Pallace, the image of Bountie, or Hospitalitie. The needie Trauellers with ioy spying it, approach thither in hopefull expectation of succour. But still silence or an emptie Eccho answers all their cries and knockes: for hospitality may stand at the gate, but there is none in the house. One among the rest (his hungry trust thus often abused) resolues to plucke downe the Image. With these words; If there be neither meate nor drinke in the house, what needs there a Signe? Great Portals in the Countrey, and coloured Postes in the Cittie, promise the poore Beggar liberall reliefe; but they are often but Images: *Muta & inutila signa*; dumbe and lame signes: [...] The starued soule delights not to heare Charitie, but to feele it. *Oculate mihi sunt manus*: the poores hands haue eyes; what they receiue, they beleeeue.⁴²

³⁹ A tradition which Lubbock notably participates in. See: Lubbock, *The Tyranny of Taste*, 58-59.

⁴⁰ Archer, "The Charity of Early Modern Londoners," 225.

⁴¹ Thomas Adams, *The Happines of the Church* (London: G.P. for Iohn Grismand, 1619), 131.

⁴² Adams, *The Happines of the Church*, 132.

Adams' portrayal of a frustration amongst the commons with a proliferation of false signs, contains a skepticism that moves from the semantic, to the iconographic, to the architectural. These three polemical points are of some significance, as they resound throughout the following century. There is, at first, a complaint against mere 'talke;' to speak endlessly of hospitality but to partake little in it. Secondly, there is a complaint against the engraving of personified virtues, misappropriating signs of charity as ornaments with little ethical reality. Then, Adams moves on to implicate the architectural quality of 'greatness,' specifically in the portals or gates of the house. All three complaints are typical of the early Stuart period, and have a real interface with cultural and material realities. Indeed, the early seventeenth century saw numerous examples of mere 'talke' as well as 'engraved hospitality,' and the critique of the latter persists well into the age of country house poems. Similarly, the critique of the greatness of houses as a false sign of hospitality is repeated most notably in the literary trope addressing the 'mock-beggar,' a term which retains remarkable currency throughout the following centuries. This section will address all three of these points in turn.

Adams' complaints about mere 'talke' takes on increased significance when contextualised in the increasingly fractured confessional landscape of the early Stuart period. While strong invectives towards charity had been central to Protestant polemic since the dissolution, there was a growing suspicion that the most radical reformers were providing little more than lip-service. 'The starved soule delights not to heare Charitie, but to feele it' reminds Adam, and it is difficult not to view it as a thinly-veiled attack on the stereotypically moralising yet parsimonious Puritan. Adams' confessional stance confirms such a reading: across his oeuvre he did little to hide his contempt for radically Protestant nonconformists.⁴³ He has been described as 'A high Tory in church and state, an uncompromising advocate of the divine right of kings and bishops, he is never weary of pouring forth invectives against Papists on the one hand, and those whom he regards as schismatics and sectaries on the other.'⁴⁴ Adams' confessional stance was therefore one which sought the illusive *via media* of conformist Protestantism, a stance remarkably prevalent amongst those who recited the reactionary tropes of nostalgic hospitality. For example, Thomas Lewis of the *Demegoriai* (1600) maintains a calculated silence on topics of controversy, operating quietly within the structures of the established Church.⁴⁵

⁴³ E.g. in *The Happines of the Church*, he denounces anti-episcopal nonconformity on page 69. On page 142 he accuses Puritans of 'Pharisaica Iustitia.' Most pertinently, he notes the loquacious nature of Puritan nonconformity, writing on page 242 that 'Protestants, belieue well, Puritans say well, and Papists doe well: but till they all agree in one, he will be none of them all.'

⁴⁴ Thomas Adams, *The Works of Thomas Adams*, ed. Thomas Smith, vol. 1 (Edinburgh: James Nichol, 1862), 12. In the editor's introduction Adams is described as 'a high Tory in church and state, an uncompromising advocate of the divine right of kings and bishops.'

⁴⁵ Sidney Lee, "Thomas, Lewis (fl. 1587–1619)," in *Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. Leslie Stephen, vol. 56 (London: Smith, Elder & Co., 1898), 194–195.

More ostensibly conformist was Caleb Dalechamp, the author of *Christian hospitalitie* (1632), who was vocally supportive of the episcopacy, noting their Pauline vocation towards special hospitality.⁴⁶ Moreover, Dalechamp was remarkably keen to parrot James I's proclamations urging hospitality, the very existence of which perhaps confirm the separation of such rhetorical invectives from radical nonconformity.

The way this interconfessional distinction played out over the seventeenth century can be gleaned through comparing the exegetical approaches taken to the biblical account of Christ's anointing with precious oils. The episode is recalled in two synoptic gospels; John 12:1-9, and Matthew 26:6-11. Yet, there were some key differences between the gospel accounts, and the choice between them was indicative of certain confessional stances. Those of a Puritan persuasion were more likely to emphasise the account given in Matthew 26:6-11. The passage in the 1611 authorised translation reads as follows:

Now when Iesus was in Bethanie, in the house of Simon the leper, There came vnto him a woman, hauing an alabaster boxe of very precious ointment, and powred it on his head, as he sate at meat. But when his disciples saw it, they had indignation, saying, To what purpose is this waste? For this ointment might haue bin sold for much, and giuen to the poore. When Iesus vnderstood it, he said vnto them, Why trouble ye the woman? for she hath wrought a good worke vpon me. For ye haue the poore alwayes with you, but me ye haue not alwayes.⁴⁷

Especially around the Civil War, numerous Puritan sermons drew attention to Christ's retort as a reminder of the ever-present necessity of charitable actions. Crucially however, the Puritan exegesis always stressed the necessity of wealth disparity and private property in enabling such works of charity. For example, the divine Samuel Clarke uses the verse to necessitate a certain breath in charity, writing in his *Medulla Theologiae* (1659) that 'Others also may stand in need of our charity: For, Mat. 26.11. You have the poor always with you: we must not tie ourselves to relieve one man once onely, nor one alone.'⁴⁸ Yet, addressing this numerousness amongst the poor, he commented 'it pleased God so to order the world that some shall be poor, and others shall have abundance, that he may try the disposition of the later by the former.'⁴⁹ The same view is more clearly articulated by the Puritan preacher Thomas Manton (1620–1677), who preaches:

⁴⁶ Caleb Dalechamp, *Christian Hospitalitie Handled Common-Place-Wise* (Cambridge: Th. Buck, 1632), unnumbered epistle dedicatory. Dalechamp dedicates his treatise to John Williams, Bishop of Lincoln, praising his "frequent and constant hospitality" and reminding that Paul requires bishops to be "given to hospitality."

⁴⁷ Matthew 26:6–11 (Authorized King James Version, 1611).

⁴⁸ Samuel Clarke, *Medulla theologiae* (London: Thomas Ratcliffe for Thomas Underhill, 1659), 245.

⁴⁹ Clarke, *Medulla theologiae*, 246.

Christ saith, Mat. 22.11. Ye have the Poor always with you. A World of Mischief would follow otherwise; if there were no Property, there would be no Justice, whose chief Property is to give every Man his own: there could be no Charity; How can we give, if we have nothing that we can call our own? [...] Superiority and Inferiority is the Bond of human Society; it is God's Wisdom to dispose of the Conditions and Estates of Men, that one should need another, and supply each others Wants and Defects: the Poor need the Bounty of the Rich, and the Rich the Labour and Service of the Poor.⁵⁰

The notion is one which is hard to approach with much generosity through the lens of a Marxist historiography. Through such a view, Manton's proposal is an excellent example of an invective to hollow proto-philanthrocapitalism which does little more than sustain structural inequalities.

This cynical Marxist reading may not be as anachronistic as it may seem; this Puritan exegesis was also viewed as suspiciously hypocritical by more conforming members of the establishment church. Thus, there persisted an opposing exegetical tradition over the turn of the seventeenth century, which strongly emphasised the account of the same episode provided, not in Matthew, but in John 12:1-9. John's account contains virtually the same dialogue as Matthew's, however, 'the woman' with the precious oils is given the name Mary, and the disciple who objects is identified as Judas. Moreover, John points out that 'This he [Judas] said, not that he cared for the poore: but because hee was a thiefe.'⁵¹ Emphasising this crucial narrative detail changed the scriptural passage from one which necessitated charity, to one which denounced hypocrisy. It was an argument most famously articulated by the high-church Lancelot Andrewes in the presence of Queen Elizabeth in 1593. Andrewes declared:

That which we learn of this part is; 1. From Judas, that a good speech may drop out of an evil mouth. [...] And such was Judas here, a charitable careful provision for the relief of the poor. Whom, though the Holy Ghost saith expressly, he cared not for one jot, yet maketh he them his stalking-horse, and pauperibus is the point; that is it he seeketh for, and God knoweth, nothing else. This his sacrilegious wicked humour he covereth under the zeal of the poor; and so, to hide one fault committeth two. First sacrilege, then hypocrisy.⁵²

Not unlike familiar critiques of the capitalist class, Andrewes accuses such hypocrites of using philanthropy as a disguise (a 'stalking horse'), to conceal their true intentions of maintaining pauperism. This was a view which persisted in high-church circles throughout the tumult of the seventeenth century.

⁵⁰ Thomas Manton, *A Fourth Volume Containing One Hundred and Fifty Sermons* (London: J. D., 1693), 84.

⁵¹ John 12:6 (KJV 1611).

⁵² Lancelot Andrewes, "Sermon III," in *The Works of Lancelot Andrewes*, Sermons, vol. 2, ed. James Bliss (Oxford: John Henry Parker, 1841), 38-4.

Lancelot's exegesis is little altered when it is rephrased by Benjamin Calamy in his *Discourse about a Scrupulous Conscience* (posthumously published in 1686).⁵³ Both were evidently thinly-veiled critiques of Puritan exigence; critiquing the theatrical pleas for poor relief as means by which to maintain class disparities in wealth. Calamy leaves no uncertainty as to who he was addressing; targeting those who refused to kneel at communion, were scrupulous of common forms of prayer, critical of ceremonies, disobedient to superiors, covetous, censorious, and uncharitable.⁵⁴ Perhaps Calamy preempted the Marxist critique best when he declared 'hath it not often hapned in the World, that such a mighty Scrupulosity about our Duty hath proved a very successful way of growing great or raising an Estate, by giving Men so fair an opportunity of imposing upon the credulous and unwary?'⁵⁵

Returning to Thomas Adams' crucial question of the need of signs, it is clear that Adams' suspicion of visual and verbal signs is not a product of Puritan iconoclasm; but is in reality the dialectical opposite. Adams' insistence that 'the starued soule delights not to heare Charitie, but to feele it,' and that one must not merely 'talke of it, but walke in it,' actually constituted a criticism of radically reformist polemics urging charity.⁵⁶ The counterintuitive nature of this association was largely utilised by these conservative apologists in their self-fashioning as a confessional *via media*. Ultimately, the rhetorical goal was to draw out the internal ironies and hypocrisies of the opposing faction. It is in this regard that a suspicion of external signs and symbols became integrated into a reactionary rhetoric weaponised by a conformist, high-church, episcopal, largely royalist, faction.

4.4 Architectural Iconography and the Deceptive Signs of Hospitality

The reactionary stance against signalling hospitality extended beyond Protestant preaching; it was a suspicion which applied to both words and images. The suspicion of iconography as it was voiced by Adam, exemplified a view which held great currency amongst the elite tastemakers of the following decades. Adams' suspicion of the curiously carved 'image of Bountie, or Hospitalitie' was one known to be repeated in the upper echelons of the Caroline court. This was evidenced in the courtly Thomas Carew's country house poem *To my friend G. N. from Wrest* (1650), wherein the scope of symbolism is significantly expanded upon. Once again, ornaments on gatehouses are mentioned, as well as cornucopias and other pagan effigies decorated with wheat and grapes. He writes:

⁵³ Benjamin Calamy, *A Discourse about a Scrupulous Conscience* (London: Rowland Reynolds, 1683).

⁵⁴ Calamy, *A Discourse*, 9-10.

⁵⁵ Calamy, *A Discourse*, 10.

⁵⁶ Adams, *The Happines of the Church*, 131-132.

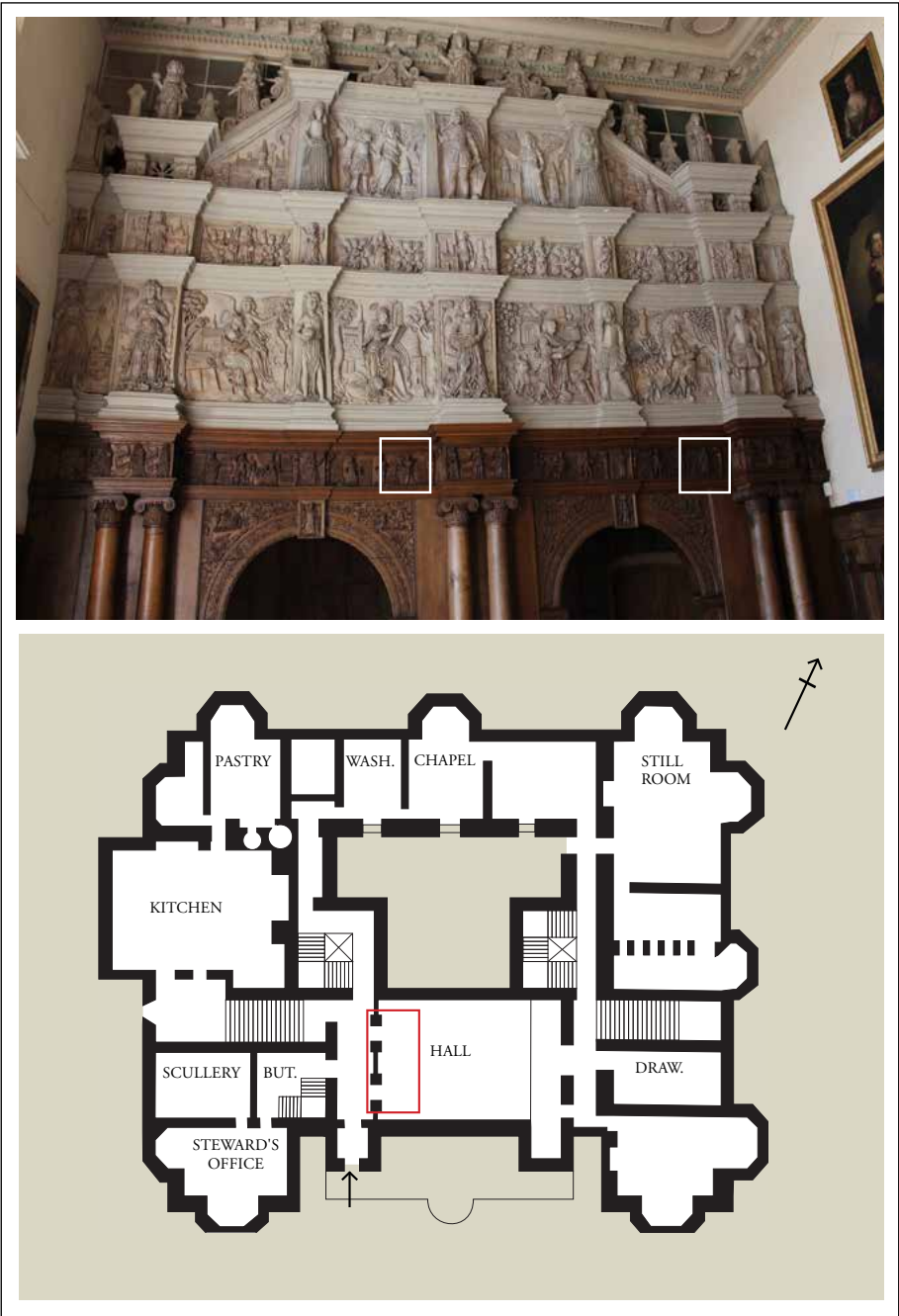


Figure 4.1: Sir Henry Griffith (indet.), The Hall screen of Burton Agnes (East riding of Yorkshire, 1601-1610), Photograph by the author, 2024.

Figure 4.2: John and Robert Smythson, Floor plan of Burton Agnes (1600-1601), redrawn from archival material by the author, 2025.



Figure 4.3: Sir Henry Griffith (indet.), Burton Agnes Hall Screen Two Details: Man giving fish; Caritas and Woman holding a Jar. Photograph by the author, 2024.

Amalthea's Horn of plenty is not in Effigie worn
 Without the gate, but she within the dore
 Empties her free and unexhausted store.
 Nor, crown'd with wheaten wreathes, doth Ceres stand
 In stone, with a crook'd sickle in her hand:
 Nor, on a Marble Tun, his face besmear'd
 With grapes, is curl'd uncizard Bacchus rear'd.
 We offer not in Emblemes to the eyes,
 But to the taste those usefull Deities.
 Wee press the juycie God, and quaff his blood,
 And grind the Yellow Goddess into food.⁵⁷

Carew opposes the symbolic representation of hospitality with a recourse to well established Judeo-Christian invectives against pagan idolatry. The closing lines make reference to the episode recorded in the book of Exodus, when an idolatrous image is ground up by Moses, who forces the Israelites to drink it.⁵⁸ There is significant architectural evidence to suggest that these objections were raised to pre-existing iconographic conventions in English houses. The famously elaborate Jacobean ornamental scheme in Burton Agnes Hall (c.1603-1610) is laden with depictions of charity and hospitality. In the hall screen (fig. 4.1), framing the entrance to the buttery and pantry, can be found a depiction of *caritas*, identifiable as a woman holding numerous children (fig. 4.3).⁵⁹ On the same register is a depiction of a man with a net, handing a fish to a smaller figure (fig. 4.3). Beside him, a scroll unfurls which reads: 'the poore man at home abundantly fed, the stranger unknown also clothed, when his ship did saile, God did not faile [...]'.⁶⁰ Also, the surviving Jacobean gatehouse at

⁵⁷ Thomas Carew, "To My Friend G.N., from Wrest," in *Poems, with a Maske* (London: Printed for H.M., and are to be sold by J. Martin, 1651).

⁵⁸ Exodus 32:20-24 (KJV 1611)

⁵⁹ Asperen, Hanneke van. "Mapping Caritas." Jan Jans, Ed., *Research Lustrum Book*, 2012. Asperen shows that this convention was well established by 1603, it originated in fourteenth-century Italy and was disseminated across Europe.

⁶⁰ The text is poorly carved and my reading may not be wholly reliable.

Burton Agnes also shows four figures crowned with heavy garlands of ripe fruit (fig. 4.4). The bottom two are caryatid terminal figures, while the two above are larger, with the figure on the right holding an open book and standing on a sphere. Although these figures could easily be taken to refer to bounty and hospitality, they are more likely poor copies of the figures of Justitia and Fortitudo which were originally in the Long Gallery (fig. 4.5).⁶¹ Indeed, the figure on the gate retains the sphere and open book of Justitia, but is missing her sword; likewise, the figure of Fortitudo is missing key attributes. What remains are the bountiful crowns of fruit which spill over their heads and onto their shoulders – signs of plenty raised high for passers-by to see.

Thomas Carew's description of Ceres 'crown'd with wheaten wreathes' also seems to follow material realities. An example predating Carew's poem can be found in Hardwick Hall (1590–1597), on an overmantle which combines iconography of Ceres with Cybele, possibly based on a print by Hendrik Goltzius (following page, fig. 4.6).⁶² As typical of Ceres, the figure is indeed crowned by fruit and wheat, but atop this sits the mural crown more typical of Cybele. However, the figure stands in a pastoral landscape holding a cornucopia, unlike depictions of Cybele which are often seated, guarded by two lions.

Of course, it cannot be ascertained whether Carew or Adams were making direct references to the examples shown in Hardwick and Burton Agnes. Nor does much evidence remain as to whether the ornamental displays of bounty were necessarily accompanied by a neglect of poor relief. However, both houses had more than adequate reason to signal justifications for their owners' status as much as possible. Burton Agnes was built for 1st Baronet Sir Henry Griffith (1558 – c.1620), a previously hereditary title which had been created and granted to Griffith by King James I in 1603.⁶³ Similarly, Hardwick Hall had been built for Elizabeth of Hardwick, who had gathered an immense fortune through a series of advantageous marriages.⁶⁴ It is for these reasons that both patrons deemed a new building necessary, both engaging one of the leading architectural designers of the time, Robert Smythson.⁶⁵ In such a way, both houses are expressions of the new: new titles, new wealth, new styles, and a new orderliness and grandeur which sat uncomfortably with the iconographic

⁶¹ These figures have been moved to the overmantel of what is now the dining room, but was originally the 'still room' or distillery.

⁶² Michael Bath and Theo van Heijnsbergen, "Paradin Politicized: Some New Sources for Scottish Paintings," *Emblematica: An Interdisciplinary Journal for Emblem Studies* 22 (2016): 43–67, 52.

⁶³ Carus Vale Collier, *The Boynton Family and the Family Seat of Burton Agnes* (Middlesbrough: William Appleyard & Sons, Ltd. Printers, 14 Albert Road, 1914), 74. (cites: Metcalf's Bk. of Kts., 139.)

⁶⁴ Terry Kilburn, *Bess of Hardwick: Myths & Realities* (London: Austin-Macauley Publishers, 2024).

⁶⁵ Mark Girouard, *Robert Smythson and the Elizabethan Country House* (London: Yale University Press, 1983), 291.

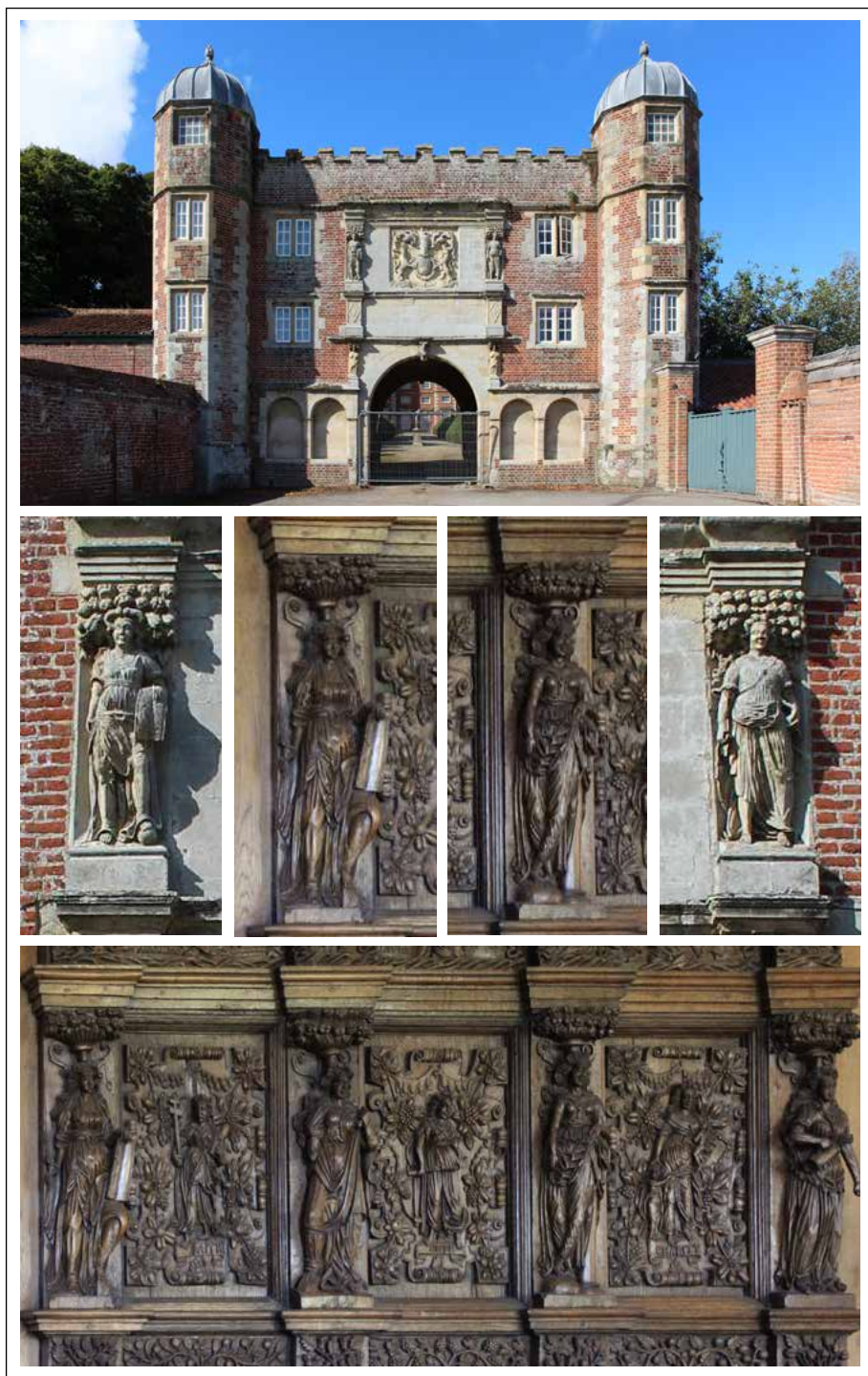


Figure 4.4: Robert Smythson or Sir Henry Griffith, The Gatehouse of Burton Agnes Hall (East riding of Yorkshire, 1601-1610), Photograph by the author, 2024.

Figure 4.5: Robert Smythson or Sir Henry Griffith, Dining room Overmantle of Burton Agnes Hall (East riding of Yorkshire, 1601-1610), Photograph by the author, 2024.

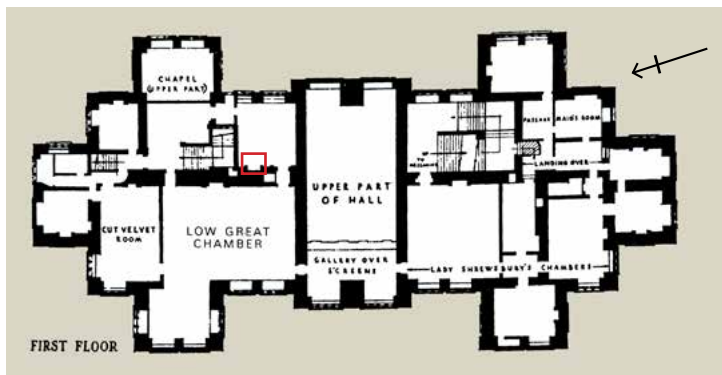


Figure 4.6: Unknown Sculptor, Ceres-Cybele Overmantle at Hardwick Hall (Derbyshire, c.1590–1597), NT 1130377 © National Trust / Robert Thrift.

Figure 4.7: Mark Girouard. Hardwick Hall First Floor Plan. Published in: *Robert Smythson and the Elizabethan Country House* (Yale University Press, 1983), 155.

appeal to rustic virtues.⁶⁶ It is hardly any surprise that this architecture of the *new* provoked reactionary backlash; nor is it surprising that, over the turn of the seventeenth century, architecture itself gathered the potential to falsely signal hospitality.

The ability which the general architectural disposition of a house had to 'signal hospitality' is well-illustrated in the literary trope addressing the 'mock-beggar.' The earliest accounts of the 'mock-beggar' served to crystallise many anxieties surrounding the potential of the architecturally grandiose house to falsely signal hospitality. What made these houses 'mocking' was the display of wealth, without the concomitant largesse which was expected of the wealthy. Such houses were deceptive in *signalling* bountifulness, while actually providing little to the poor or wayfaring stranger. This is the objection to the mock-beggar explicitly outlined in the texts beginning at the turn of the seventeenth century. One of the earliest examples is provided in a sermon by the preacher Thomas Lewis, printed in his *Demegoriai* (1600):

Good-house-keeping, and hospitalitie, are lost through pride & prodigalitie. Before time, honest men contented themselves with an homely hall, and a loouer, no chimney nor parlour, nor vpper chamber, and in such houses the poore founde good reliefe. But nowe our houses haue so enlarged themselues, as if they were so many citties, for height and statelines like Nabucadnezers pallace in Babell: and the manie roomes in them like the streetes of Niniuie, one wrought within another like Dedalus Labyrinth, or the Pyramides in Memphis, and Egypt, that a man being once in them, can hardly finde the way out of them: many halls, and many parlours, & many chimneyes, or shewes of chimneyes: and of many, scarce one or none smoaking. Goodlie mock-beggars.⁶⁷

Lewis was not a particularly well-known preacher, and his use of the term 'mock-beggar,' seems to assume a certain level of comprehension amongst his congregation. Together, these facts imply that Lewis had not originated the term, but he provides the most thorough sketch of this literary trope and its moral rationale at the turn of the seventeenth century. Numerous examples were to follow; each taking pains to describe the largeness and fineness of the building alongside the neglect of provision. Nicholas Brenton's *A merrie dialogue betwixt the taker and mistaker* (1603) describes a 'goodly, faire, & gorgeously built house, which stood as it were a mile from a citie neare adioyning.' When the hungry traveller Dorindo approaches in hope of succour, he is turned away and is taunted by a fool who tells him:

⁶⁶ Heal, *Hospitality in Early Modern England*, 122.

⁶⁷ Thomas Lewis, *Demegoriai Certaine Lectures Vpon Sundry Portions of Scripture* (London: I. R[oberts] for Edw. White, 1600), unpaginated [img. 60].

Sir, you are mistaken, this is a banquetting house, where the gazers are onely fed with conceits, for there is not a chimney that smokes, nor a doore open, it is called Mock-begger, ha, ha, ha.⁶⁸

The fool's description of the fine building as a 'banqueting house' is telling. This was an ostentatious building intended for the genteel entertainment provided between peers, with little concern for those outside the gates. Here, Dorindo is revealed as the 'mistaker,' mistaking the costly appearance of the house as a signal of generosity, when it actually indicated the inverse. A similar assertion is made in Dalechamp's *Christian Hospitalitie* (1632) where he writes that:

[Abraham] was not curious in his dwelling, but courteous in entertaining of strangers: He contented himself to dwell in a tent, yet his doores were open to strangers and travellers: but these are curious and costly in decking and adorning their houses, and negligent and niggardly in harbouring strangers and passengers. Their sumptuous buildings may be called Mock-strangers as well as Mock-beggars: for like the barren figtree in the Gospel, they are seen a farre off, and promise good relief to the hungry passenger; but let him come to them, he shall finde (at the best) many goodly leaves of complemental, but no fruit of reall hospitalitie.⁶⁹

Dalechamp's passage is not remarkably innovative; elaborate building had been associated with the neglect of hospitality well before any mention of the mock-beggar.⁷⁰ The notion of the tent-dwelling patriarch Abraham as the exemplar of hospitality also well predated the mock-beggar.⁷¹ However, what the discourse surrounding the mock-beggar served to highlight was the counterintuitive nature of this association; Dalechamp reminds the reader that, to many, the great house remained a signal of 'good relief to the hungry.' The failure of the mock-beggar therefore, was not due to citybound migration, which was not implicated by Dalechamp nor Brenton, but rather the deceptive nature of noble-looking houses. Indeed, the ballad *Mock-beggars Hall with his Scituation in the Spacious Country* (1633), contains a much-quoted verse which described the fineness of such buildings:

Some Gentlemen and Citizens have
In divers eminent places,
Erected houses fine and brave,

⁶⁸ Nicholas Brenton, *A merrie dialogue betwixt the taker and mistaker* (London: R. Field, 1603), 5–6.

⁶⁹ Dalechamp, *Christian Hospitalitie*, 54.

⁷⁰ See the discussion in Chapter Three, Section 3.4 (Magnificence against Hospitality). Also, see Heal, *Hospitality*, 91–94; Thomson, *Renaissance Architecture*, 38–39.

⁷¹ E.g. Desiderius Erasmus, *The Seconde Tome or Volume of the Paraphrase of Erasmus Vpon the Newe Testament*, trans. John Olde (London: Edwarde Whitchurche, 1549), img 155. 'For hospitalitie is highlye commended before God, in so much that hereby Abraham deserued to receyue vnwares Angels to lodgyng when he thought he had done that good tourne and pleasure vnto men.'

Which stood for the owners graces,
 Let any poor to such a door
 Come, they expecting plenty,
 They there may ask till their throats are sore,
 For Mock-begger hall stands empty.⁷²

This notion of the mock-beggar as a grandiose house is reinforced in the images used in the broadsheet. Although the author of the ballad is unknown, the ballad saw two editions printed by Richard Harper, the first around 1633, and the second between 1639 and 1640.⁷³ The first edition used a woodblock originally cut for the play *Holland leaguer* (1632), which shows the infamous brothel surrounded by a moat (Fig. 4.8).⁷⁴ The second used a much older woodblock, cut for Thomas Malory's *Le Morte d'Arthur* (1498) (Fig. 4.9). It cannot be ascertained how Harper came to acquire both blocks, but the trade and reuse of image blocks between printers was a commonplace occurrence.⁷⁵ Harper's choice is nevertheless significant; both images prominently display large houses. The huge and firmly shut gates of



Figure 4.8: Unknown Engraver, *The Map of Mock-begger Hall* (For Richard Harper, 1635?), Roxburghe 1.252-253. Woodblock reused from: Shackerley Marmion, *Hollands Leaguer* (A.M. for Richard Barnes, 1632), 1.



Figure 4.9: Unknown Engraver, *Mock-Beggars Hall with His Scituation in the Spacious Country* (for Richard Harper, 1640), Roxburghe 3.218-219. Woodblock reused from: Thomas Malory, *Le Morte d'Arthur* (Westmestre: Wynkyn de Worde, 1498), unpaginated [Lib. II].

⁷² Anonymous, *Mock-beggars hall with his scituation in the spacious country* (London: Richard Harper, 1640).

⁷³ Patricia Fumerton, "Remembering by Dismembering: Databases, Archiving, and the Recollection of Seventeenth-Century Broadside Ballads," *Early Modern Literary Studies* 14.2/Special Issue 17 (September, 2008), 21-29.

⁷⁴ Patricia Fumerton, "Remembering by Dismembering," 16 [fig. 9]. Fumerton claims this was a marketing tactic due to the currency of the leaguer affairs which meant 'the re-used image would be especially eye-catching.'

⁷⁵ E.g. Christopher Marsh, "A Woodcut and Its Wanderings in Seventeenth-Century England," *Huntington Library Quarterly* 79, no. 2 (Summer 2016): 245-62.

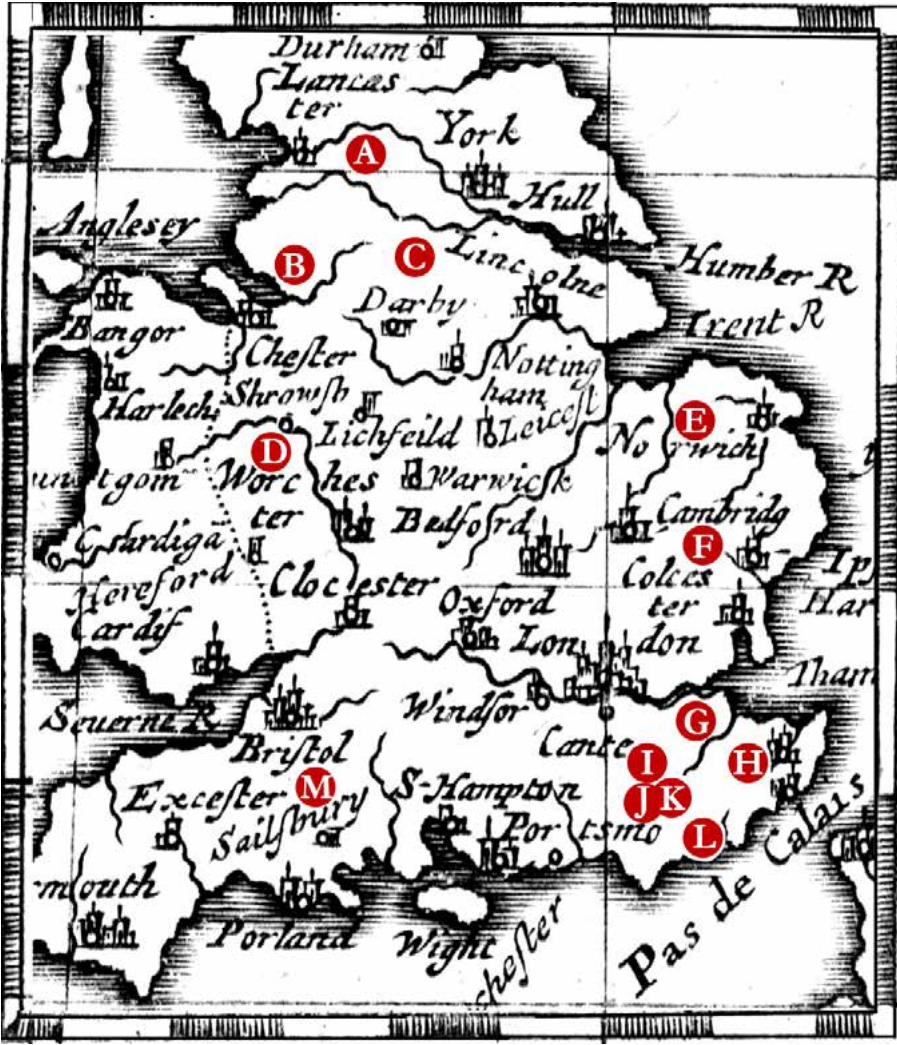


Figure 4.10: Map of properties retaining the name mock-beggar or similar. Adapted from: Robert Modern, *Geography Rectified* (London, 1680), "Map of the British Isles." Edits and tags by author.

MOCK-BEGGAR MAP

A. Mock Beggar Hall (Main Street, Appletreewick, C15), Historic England No. 1157404. B. Leaslowe Castle (Moreton, Wirral, Merseyside, 1593). C. Mock Hall (59 Leeds Road, West Yorkshire) H.E. No. 1134687. D. Mock Hall Farm (Grafton, Shrewsbury) E. Mock Beggar Hall (East Tuddenham, Norfolk, C17) H.E. No. 1169020. F. Claydon Mockbeggars Hall (Paper Mill Lane, Suffolk, C17). H.E. No. 1263022.	G. Mockbeggar Farm (Town Road, Rochester) H. Mockbeggar Farm (Sittingbourne) I. Mockbeggar Farm House (Collier Street, Kent, C17) H.E. No. 1344070. J. Mockbeggar House (Upper Wilsley, Kent C17) H.E. No. 1084793 K. Mockbeggar (Biddenden, Kent) L. Mockbeggar House (Bowlers Town, East Sussex) M. Mockbeggar Farm (Cross Lanes, Ringwood) H.E. No. 1350914

Holland's Leaguer are reinterpreted as the closed gates of mock-beggar hall. Likewise, the splendour of Arthur's Castle in Camelot is presented as the ostentatious mock-beggar. The architectural preoccupation within mock-beggar literature seems to have persisted until the commonwealth period; in a collection of similes titled *Kaina kai palaia* (1658), the author defines the mock-beggar in terms of its architectural elaboration. He describes:

some mockbegger halls, or houses in the Country that are built with lofty Turrets, that are presently in the Travailers eye; and if they draw nearer to view, they find them built with stately Porches, neat Galleries, fine Stair-cases, curious Gate-houses, but not one convenient lodging Chamber, nor any Hospitality at all.⁷⁶

However, this is perhaps the last example of the mock-beggar trope being used to critique ostentatious architecture as a false signal of hospitality. After the restoration in 1660 there seems to be a broad shift in the connotations of the term, away from critiques of architectural elaboration and grandeur, and towards the phenomenon of absentee landlords. In the texts of the later seventeenth century, complaints of citybound migration are more frequently found. For example in *The Examination and Tryal of Old Father Christmas* (1686), little architectural description is made of the Mock-beggar, but Squire Flant of Mock-beggars Hall complains of his master:

As soon as ever Michaelmas Rent is received, to avoid his Impertinences, flips up to London in a Stage-Coach, and there lodges privately till his Jury of Cormorants, call'd the Twelve Days, are past, to save charges.⁷⁷

There is also evidence that the practice of nicknaming empty houses of any proportion as 'mock-beggars' continued into the eighteenth century. For example, Mockbeggar farmhouse in Ringwood, Hampshire county, was only built in the eighteenth century.⁷⁸ Likewise, Leaslowe castle (Wirral, Merseyside) fell into disuse around 1700, and it was only after this period that it earned the name 'Mockbeggar Hall'.⁷⁹ Moreover, the earliest record of Mockbeggar Hall (Mirfield, Yorkshire) being referred to as such was in 1731.⁸⁰ In assessing all the

⁷⁶ John Spencer, *Kaina Kai Palaia Things New and Old, or, A Store-House of Similes* (London: W. Wilson and J. Streater, 1658), 233.

⁷⁷ Josiah King, *The Examination and Tryal of Old Father Christmas: Together with His Clearing by the Jury, at the Assizes Held at the Town of Difference, in the County of Discontent* (London: Printed for Charles Brome, 1686), unpaginated.

⁷⁸ "Mockbeggar Hall," *Historic England*, List Entry No. 1350914, accessed June 23, 2025, <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1350914>.

⁷⁹ "About Us," *Leasowe Castle*, archived April 8, 2012, Internet Archive Wayback Machine, accessed June 23, 2025, <https://web.archive.org/web/20120408205330/http://www.leasowecastle.com/about-us.html>.

⁸⁰ "Mock Hall, Mirfield Ward," *British Listed Buildings*, List Entry No. 101134687, accessed June 23, 2025, <https://britishlistedbuildings.co.uk/101134687-mock-hall-mirfield-ward>.

surviving houses which continue to bear the name ‘mock-beggar,’ (fig. 4.10) it is also evident how many are relatively unextraordinary buildings: of the thirteen examples found, four are unextraordinary farm houses.⁸¹ Additionally, there is a notable cluster of mock beggars in Kent, in close proximity to London. This evidence suggests that later uses of the term ‘mock-beggar’ applied to any abandoned building visible to passers-by. Indeed, in *The Norwich Road* (1901) the travel writer Harper notes how ‘ingenious youths’ had come to nickname Claydon Hall as a Mock-beggar, due to the visibility from the street which marked numerous other properties bearing the jeering moniker.⁸² It may be due to this lasting local habit of nicknaming abandoned buildings as mock-beggars, that the historians of the nineteenth and twentieth century so confidently ascribed the origin of the term to London-bound landlords, even though at its genesis the mockbeggar was more a critique of misdirected architectural semiologies.

Here, a brief historiographical digression should be made for the sake of clarification. The term ‘mock-beggar’ has seen some sporadic analysis in secondary literature; but authors discussing the early Stuart period have often anachronistically imputed the post-restoration understanding of the term onto early Stuart sources. The habit can be traced back to the analysis provided by John Richard Green in *A Short History of the English People* (1874). Green links the term with the phenomenon of London-bound landlords, he writes:

At the close of Elizabeth’s reign, and throughout the reign of James I and the early years of Charles, there was much complaining in the rural districts because the nobles and gentry flocked up to London, leaving their houses empty and neglected, so that where in former times there had been feasting for rich and poor alike, a beggar could not now get a crust of bread: To the houses thus deserted was given the nickname of “Mockbeggar Hall.”⁸³

Since then, the view that the complaints of ‘mock-beggars’ were exclusively targeted at citybound landlords was sustained by William Hills in *Claydon and Mockbeggars Hall* (1937), and later by Felicity Heal in *Hospitality in early*

⁸¹ This could be due to the fact that the only houses which could retain the jeering moniker were those of insufficient fame to cast it off. They are: Mockbeggar Farm (Town Rd, Rochester ME3 8EU); Mockbeggar Farm (Sittingbourne ME9 9LD); Mockbeggar Farm House (Collier Street Tonbridge TN12); Mockbeggar Farm (4 Cross Lanes, Ringwood BH24 3NQ).

⁸² Charles G. Harper, *The Norwich Road: An East Anglian Highway* (London: Chapman & Hall, 1901); Quoted in: David Edleston, *Heritage Statement: Mockbeggars Hall, Paper Mill Lane, Claydon, Ipswich, IP6 0AH. Proposed Orangery Extension* (August 2021). ‘Like the many other places named “Mockbeggar”, it stands well within view of passing travellers and must have induced many a sturdy rogue and vagabond to trudge wearily up the long approach in search of alms, only to find the windows dark, the chimneys innocent of smoke, the place, in fact, deserted of all but fluttering bats and screeching owls, whose shrill notes must have sounded like jeers to the disappointed vagrants.’

⁸³ John Richard Green, *A Short History of the English People*, illustrated ed., vol. 3 (London: Macmillan and Co., 1893), 966.

modern England (1990).⁸⁴ It can be conceded that there was indeed a concern with absentee landlords over the Early Stuart period, most evident in the numerous Caroline and Jacobean proclamations which urged the gentry and nobility to return to their country seats.⁸⁵ However, it should be clarified that the literary trope of the mock-beggar hall did not participate in this critique until the late seventeenth century, and most prior examples remain targeted at false signals of hospitality in ostentatious buildings, irrespective of the presence or absence of the master. Rather, the Mockbeggar hall was a criticism directed at the misleading signs of hospitality in great houses which would *mock* approaching beggars.

In summary, amongst the numerous critiques against false signs of hospitality, one can glean the emergence of some semiological moral panic. Echoing Wybarnes' semantic complaints, reactionary polemicists illustrated a widespread misappropriation of symbols for hospitality. Yet, this indicates an inverse reality. Implicit in this reactionary critique is that these semiologies of hospitality were widely understood by their early modern audience. There must have existed the credulous who regarded the engraved image of *caritas* and expected succour, or who saw the largeness of the house and expected largesse – otherwise there would be little reason to decry such an association as false. Yet while the motives are reactionary, the polemical tools used by these authors are clearly nostalgic, rooted in an imaginary past of rustic buildings and 'homely halls.' Here there arises a tension between the reactionary motive and the nostalgic means; for such texts seem to suggest that large houses should have large hospitality, while with the same breath idealising smaller, rustic houses. The way these tensions are negotiated are fascinating, and can be gleaned in the alternative semiologies of hospitality proposed by reactionary authors. Ultimately, such texts settle on an indifference to scale and design; favouring a host of other phenomenological symbols which will be discussed in the following section.

4.5 True Hospitality as a Multisensory Architectural Experience

Over the seventeenth century, there was a broad effort between authors to prescribe a way of assessing hospitality in houses which exceeded ocular and formal assessment. Indeed, the heavily visual nature of the 'false signs' discussed in the previous section, participated in a broader culture of ocular scepticism; one which already had a notable English pedigree. Indeed, Gabriel Byng in "Lydgate and the Lanterne: discourse, heresy and the ethics of architecture

⁸⁴ William P. Hills, "Claydon and Mockbeggars Hall," *Proceedings of the Suffolk Institute of Archaeology and History* XXIII (1937). 6–17; Heal, *Hospitality*, 8. Hills notes that it was 'invoked whenever the flight to London was condemned.'

⁸⁵ See: Heal, *Hospitality*, 118–119; Kari Boyd McBride, *Country House Discourse in Early Modern England: A Cultural Study of Landscape and Legitimacy* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2001), 93–95; Nicholas Cooper, *Houses of the Gentry: 1480–1680* (New Haven, Conn: Yale University Press, 1999), 249–270.

in early fifteenth-century England" (2022) has described a fifteenth-century effort to counter the effects of ostentatious architecture with an 'ethicised phenomenology of gazing.'⁸⁶ The contours of the early modern iteration have been outlined by Stuart Clark in *Vanities of the Eye: Vision in Early Modern European culture* (2007). The impact of this ocular scepticism on architecture has also been outlined by Lucy Gent in "The Rash Gazer": Economies of Vision in Britain, 1550–1660" (1995). Gent stresses how, while many formal attributes of Italian architecture may have been adopted in England over the seventeenth century, the renaissance paradigms of vision were not as easily absorbed.⁸⁷ To focus on *English* classicism, Gent remarks, is to listen for what is silenced and look for what is invisible.⁸⁸ Indeed, the distrust of physical vision participates in a historically recurring exaltation of an Augustinian spiritual vision, an 'eye of the invisible mind.'⁸⁹ This was an eye which penetrated the superficial nature of things, in order to perceive the world in ways that were multisensory and embodied. This intellectual eye was to be trained on the signs of true hospitality, in the hope that it would ultimately be able to perceive virtue.⁹⁰ This Augustinian notion is laid out in great fullness in a text titled *Heracitus: or, Meditations vpon the misery of mankind* (1625), loosely based on a French original by the Protestant writer Pierre du Moulin, published in 1613.⁹¹ However, the translator Abraham Darcie adds passages which are not to be found in the French original. It cannot be ascertained why these lengthy additions were made by Darcie, and little reference is made to the additions, save the indication that the book has been 'reuiued and augmented here in England' in the epistle dedicatory.⁹² A particularly lengthy addition constitutes the opening of the final chapter titled 'The misery of man's fraile and naturall inclination and of the wickedness and perversenesse that now reigneth in this wretched age,' an indication, perhaps, of Darcie's grimly reactionary outlook.⁹³

⁸⁶ Gabriel Byng, "Lydgate and the Lanterne: Discourse, Heresy and the Ethics of Architecture in Early Fifteenth-Century England," *Word & Image* 38, no. 3 (2022): 296.

⁸⁷ Lucy Gent, "The Rash Gazer: Economies of Vision in Britain, 1550–1660," in *Albion's Classicism: The Visual Arts in Britain, 1550–1660*, ed. Lucy Gent (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), 378.

⁸⁸ Gent, "The Rash Gazer," 390.

⁸⁹ Augustine, *De Genesi ad litteram*, trans. John Hammond Taylor, 2 vols. (New York: Newman Press, 1982), 12.6.15; 12.24.50; 12.26.54; 12.28.56; 12.31.59.

⁹⁰ Karin Schlapbach, "Intellectual Vision in Augustine, *De Genesi ad litteram* 12, or: Seeing the Hidden Meaning of Images," *Studia Patristica* 39 (2006): 239–244.

⁹¹ Pierre Dumoulin, *Heracite Ou De La Vanité Et Misere De la vie humaine* (Sedan: Jean Iannon, 1613).

⁹² Abraham Darcie, *Heracitus: or, Meditations vpon the miserie of mankind*, (London: G. P[urslowe], 1625), unpaginated [epistle dedicatory].

⁹³ Pierre Dumoulin, *Heracite Ou De La Vanité Et Misere De la vie humaine* (Sedan: Jean Iannon, 1613), 133. The added section cannot be found in the french editions of 1613 and 1635. This chapter in the 1613 edition begins with 'Il y a plus, car ce meilleur du monde nay de l'amour de Dieu [...]' (page 95). This occurs halfway through the chapter in Darcie's 1625 English version 'Moreouer the contempt of the world, born of the loue of God [...]' (page 157), indicating that everything before it has been added by Darcie.

Within, Darcie expands upon Du Moulin's notion of discernment through 'the spirituall eye of vnderstanding,' writing:

Many set faire out-side colours vpon their professiō of religious honesty, but beeing strictly lookt into by the penetrating eye of practise and performance, proue seldome di'de in graine. Some glitter like gold in their conuersation, but put once to the Touch, are found but counterfeit Alcumy. Others will needs seeme a substantiall body in integrity of life; but shaken and sifted with the hand of tryall, become but an Anatomy of bones. To giue almes, is thought but a phantasticall ceremony, and to refresh the comfortlesse Lazarus, is deem'd but the maintenance of idle and exorbitant vagabounds. O where is Charity fled? Is she not whipt & foysted out of great mens Kitchens, glad to keepe Sanctuary in straw-cloath'd Cottages? Are not larger beneuolences often distributed at the doore of one russet-clad Farmer, then at ten mighty mens Gates? ⁹⁴

The passage is one which is evidently not original to Du Moulin's text, drawing on numerous well-established English tropes (such as those concerning the kitchen and the gate), which may have been an attempt to recontextualise the text for an English readership. The multisensory language with which Darcie describes the mechanics of the 'eyes of practise,' are certainly in step with the English intellectual climate. Darcie writes on the perception of virtue as if it was an experiment in the future Royal Society; the verity of appearances, especially appearances of hospitality, had to be empirically tested through the whole range of sensory apparatus. The overarching attitude illustrated by Darcie can be seen scattered in numerous ideas which emerge in the country house literature of the seventeenth century. Most evidently, it undergirded the polemical trope whereby the mere visual, brick-and-mortar reality of country house architecture was not alone sufficient; it had to be verified by signs of use and occupation – it was not good enough to have a door, but the door had to be open. All the body's sensory organs: the ears, nose, mouth, and skin, were enlisted to verify the visual display of hospitality through assessing sound, smell, taste, and touch. Each of these sensory assessments will be discussed in turn.

4.5.1 Sound

Sound and noise played an important role in the signalling of 'true hospitality.' The inverse was also true, silence was a reliable indicator of the lack of hospitality, suggesting that a house was either unoccupied, or unwilling to take guests. For instance, the notion is raised around the turn of the century by the satirist Joseph Hall, in a poem opening with the line 'housekeeping's dead:'

So this gay gate adds fuel to thy thought,
That such proud piles were never rais'd for nought.

⁹⁴ Abraham Darcie, *Heraclitus*, 157.

Beat the broad gates: a goodly hollow sound
 With double echoes doth again rebound.
 But not a dog doth bark to welcome thee,
 Nor churlish porter canst thou chafing see;
 All dumb and silent. like the dead of night.⁹⁵

Central to Hall's critique is the acknowledgement that large houses may indeed *look* as if they would be concomitantly bountiful. Yet, the ocular assessment is verified by the acoustic measure. The hollow echo, and the resounding silence which follows, is an indication that all is not as it appears. As has been discussed, the trope of the echoing gate is taken up by mock-beggar literature. For example, when Thomas Adams wrote of the gate proudly bearing the 'image of bountie, or hospitality,' he notes, 'the needie Trauellers with ioy spying it, approach thither in hopefull expectation of succour. But still silence or an emptie Eccho answers all their cries and knockes.'⁹⁶ It was not only the gate which stood trial by acoustic assessment; later in the century the hospitable kitchen was also expected to be noisy and full of activity. William Davenant, in *The first days entertainment at Rutland-House* (1656) makes a point of this. The Londonder remarks to the Parisian:

Noise in your habitations of sleep is not so improper as your dead silence in the very regions of noise, your kitchens, where your Cooks (though by education cholerick and loud) are ever in profound contemplation; that is, they are considering how to reform the mistakes of Nature in the original compositions of Flesh and Fish.⁹⁷

Here Davenant leans on the nostalgic image of the rustic kitchen, churning out hearty, uncomplicated English fare with noisome efficiency. Inversely, little effort is made to describe the kitchen in ocular terms; but the inherent ridiculousness of a visually embellished kitchen was commented upon by another playwright of the 1650's, Thomas Randolph, who mocks an ostentatious house where all the functional spaces are embellished with precious materials. He remarks that 'the Kitchen and Buttery is entire Ivory, the very purity of the Elephants tooth. The Sinke is paved with rich Rubies.'⁹⁸ Indeed, the kitchen recurs frequently as a functional space which was not intended for

⁹⁵ Joseph Hall, *The Works of Joseph Hall, D.D., Successively Bishop of Exeter and Norwich: With Some Account of His Life and Sufferings, Written by Himself* (Oxford: Talboys, 1839), 258. The satirical poem is undated, but Hall stops writing poetry as he takes on greater responsibility in the church of England. The bulk of poetic works were written before 1612, when Edward Denny gave Hall the curacy of Waltham Holy Cross, Essex.

⁹⁶ Adams, *The Happines of the Church*, 132.

⁹⁷ William Davenant, *The First Days Entertainment at Rutland-House, by Declamations and Musick: After the Manner of the Ancients* (London: J. M. for H. Herringman, 1656), 76

⁹⁸ Thomas Randolph, *A Pleasant Comedie, Entitled Hey for Honesty, down with Knavery Translated out of Aristophanes His Plutus* (London: F.J., 1651), 28.

ocular appreciation, and thus its efficacy had to be tested through multisensory assessment.

4.5.2 Smell

The nose also played a key role in the sensory experience of hospitality. The sense of smell was most crucial when it came to assessing the activities of the kitchen, most especially the smell of roasted or boiled meats. The notion is referenced by John Norden in *The Surveyor's Dialogue* (1607), when the surveyor complains of the pollutants caused by many chimneys, the Bailey responds 'Nay truly, I will excuse that fault, the fire is made most in the kitchen.'⁹⁹ To this, the surveyor responds: 'Then it besmoketh not the hall, as old worthe houses did, whose kitchens smoake sent forth cloudes of good meate.'¹⁰⁰ The image is a powerful one: of a hall from which one could smell the odour of roasted or boiled meats billowing in from the kitchen. Inversely, the kitchen with no odour was seen as a sure sign of inhospitality, as commented upon by Edward Gardener in *The triall of tabacco* (1610), a vice he saw as disproportionately affecting the upper classes. He writes of:

... the rich mans kitchen in Cheap-side, which had no fire in it for sixteene yeeres together, that whilest these lustie yonkers and tabaconists eleuate their noses on high, snuffing vp the fume verie gallantly, that their kitchens in the meane space haue beene key-colde.¹⁰¹

Gardener articulates a complaint of misplaced smoke, where the smoke of the pipe had eclipsed the smoke of the kitchen. The literary juxtaposition of the tobacco-smokers nose with a chimney was also a prevalent trope in the early seventeenth century; Joseph Hall makes note of it in his satires, and Abraham Darcie mentions the 'magnifico's' who were 'whiffing more smoke out of their noses then their chimneys.'¹⁰² Here the nose serves as the outlet of vice as well as the detector of virtue; sensitive to the smoke of tobacco or the smoke of the fire.

4.5.3 Taste

The mouth and the sense of taste was also key in verifying hospitality, especially in regards to the act of feeding. It was often explicitly opposed to the eyes; which were mistakenly 'fed' by ostentatious architecture, with no guarantee of real nourishment. The point is raised by Arthur Warren in *The Poore Mans Passions* (1605):

⁹⁹ Norden, *The surveyors dialogue*, 85.

¹⁰⁰ Norden, *The surveyors dialogue*, 85.

¹⁰¹ Edmund Gardiner, *The triall of tabacco* (London: H[umphrey] L[ownes], 1610), img. 22.

¹⁰² Joseph Hall, *The Works of Joseph Hall, D.D.* (Oxford: Talboys, 1839), 258; Abraham Darcie, *Heraclitus: or, Meditations upon the misery of mankinde* (London: G. P[urcell] for Thomas Pauier, 1625), 131.

Observe the single Hospitality,
 All spent to build, and buildings repayre,
 Which should support oppressed misery,
 Great halls, large tables, gold, plate, little meate,
 Feed but the eye, while mouth hath nought to eate¹⁰³

Taste (as in savour) was useful grounds upon which the value of architecture could be questioned. Building was very rarely judged by taste, so it was easily placed in opposition to the material considerations of building. Taste is used to this effect by Thomas Nashe in 1613, who states that ‘Great is their vaine-glory also, that will rather reare themselves monuments of Marble, then monuments of good deedes in mens mouthes.’¹⁰⁴ The trope can be seen reoccurring in the country house poems of the following decades. For example, the country house poem by Robert Herrick dedicated to Sir Lewis Pemberton seems to directly avoid describing the formal disposition of Pemberton’s country seat at Rushden hall, Northamptonshire. Instead Herrick paints a decidedly multisensory image of Pemberton’s hospitality, with a special focus on the food. For example, one line reads:

The wholesome savour of thy mighty chines
 Invites to supper him who dines,
 Where laden spits, warp’d with large ribs of beef,
 Not represent but give relief.¹⁰⁵

The last line, to some extent, rejects the semiology of hospitality altogether. Hospitality was not to be represented, but to be enacted in a direct, embodied manner. To taste, and to eat, was in many ways the most irrefutable indicator of hospitality. It was this gastronomic element which separated the practice of hospitality from many of the conventional considerations of architecture.

4.5.4 Touch

Finally, touch and tactility also plays a distinct role in sensing hospitality. The aforementioned country house poem to Sir Lewis Pemberton notes in its opening stanza the tactile traces of use in the house, dedicating the panegyric to ‘the worn threshold, porch, hall, parlour, kitchen.’¹⁰⁶ Warmth also features in numerous country house poems, especially in reference to the comfort of

¹⁰³ Arthur Warren, *The Poore Mans Passions. And Pouerties Patience* (London: I. R[oberts] for R. B[ankworth], 1605), unpaginated [img. 27].

¹⁰⁴ Thomas Nashe, *Christs Teares over Jerusalem Whereunto is annexed a comparatiue admonition to London* (London: George Eld for Thomas Thorpe, 1613), 112.

¹⁰⁵ Robert Herrick, “A Panegyric to Sir Lewis Pemberton,” in *Hesperides* (London: 1648), ll. 124–128 – the poet’s salt goes “to the worn threshold, porch, hall, parlour, kitchen,”

¹⁰⁶ Peter C. D. Brears, *Cooking and Dining in Tudor and Early Stuart England* (London: Prospect Books, 2015), 15.

lodging. Thomas Carew's poem *To My Friend G.N., from Wrest* (1651) makes reference to the ascendancy of warm fire over cold architecture. He writes:

No sumptuous chimney-piece of shining stone
Invites the stranger's eye to gaze upon,
And coldly entertains his sight, but clear
And cheerful flames cherish and warm him here.¹⁰⁷

Naturally, warmth is a sensation not primarily perceived by the eye, and Carew uses this to good effect to establish a dichotomy between material elaboration and bodily comfort. In Carew's poem the absence of cold ornament is a further indication that hospitable warmth could be expected. Yet, a slightly different polemic is given in the praise directed towards Bolsover castle by Mister Aglionby. In this poem, the architecture is ennobled by the warmth of the fire. Aglionby writes:

Such pillars, floors, stairs, lights, and vaults,
Such marble roofs, all without faults –
And then the chimneys give such heat,
And do the rest so well become.¹⁰⁸

Indeed, there are different levels of anti-ocularity especially between panegyric country house poems. While most of them illustrate hospitality with decidedly multisensory language, sometimes this exists in direct contradiction of visual elaboration, and at other times the ocular beauty of the house is ennobled by the multisensory hospitality.¹⁰⁹

Given this very particular phenomenology being formed around the notion of hospitality, it is not difficult to imagine it as dialectically opposed to magnificence. While both entailed the signalling of open-handed liberality as a justification for privilege, hospitality was poised to respond to the increasing aestheticisation of magnificence by outlining a mode of perception which utilised all the senses in order to gauge moral truth. These authors suggested that the material form of a building was alone insufficient in signalling virtue; rather, virtue was signalled by the signs of occupation and performance which demanded a more fully corporeal assessment. Through the passages discussed above, such texts pose a challenge to architecture and the scope of its consideration. For example: then, as now, architecture concerned the placement and design of doors, but not whether they were kept open. Likewise,

¹⁰⁷ Thomas Carew, "To My Friend G. N., from Wrest," in *Poems, with a Maske* (London: Printed for H. M., 1651), ll. 19–36 [lines 25–28].

¹⁰⁸ Fowler, ed., *The Country House Poem*, 167.

¹⁰⁹ E.g. Ben Jonson, "To Penshurst," in *The Country House Poem: A Cabinet of Seventeenth-Century Estate Poems*, ed. Alastair Fowler (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1994), 167–168. Jonson's poem contrasts rustic hospitality with elaborate architecture, illustrating the multisensory ideal of the country house.

architecture concerned the placement and design of chimneys, but not whether they were kept smoking. When viewed through their own ethical measure, such texts drew attention to the signs of a good life which existed just beyond the reach of architecture, thus challenging the efficacy of building in signifying virtue.

When viewed more broadly, however, there was a glaring internal contradiction in the ways such texts aimed to confront the superficial ocular assessment of virtue. Namely, hospitality could just as easily be performed in a way which signalled virtue, irrespective of whether 'true charity' was involved. Indeed, signalling hospitality through sounds and smells was signalling nonetheless, and numerous historians such as Daryl Palmer in *Hospitable Performances* (1991) have identified a widespread ritualisation in the performance of hospitality, which could arguably have had little impact on the broader issue of wealth disparity.¹¹⁰ In this regard, all the senses could be considered as deceptive as the eyes. The internal ironies of this phenomenological approach were most concentrated when it came to its anti-ocular dimension. Firstly, to look for a lack of ornamentation was to look nonetheless; it can be argued that this seemingly anti-ocular approach almost ironically exalted the mere appearance of architectural rusticity which pressed upon the nostalgic imagination.¹¹¹ Secondly, there was an extent to which performance and inhibition could be visually gauged; one could see open doors and smoking chimneys, the poor fed at the gates, and all the other phenomenological accoutrements of hospitality. Because of these internal tensions, what emerged didn't necessarily enable the anti-ocular assessment of virtue as intended, but in effect, delineated an alternative mode of perception which was equally susceptible to aestheticisation. Indeed, as has been observed, and will be further elaborated, the country house literature of this period was haunted by a panoply of nostalgic images, such as those of Saxon feasting and open-handed inter-class conviviality. Most pertinently, this imaginary had a distinctly architectural dimension; the idealised nostalgic performance of hospitality contained notions of space and the ideal use of spaces. This architectural dimension forms the main focus of the following section.

4.6 Perceiving the Hospitable House

Early Stuart literature concerning the performance of hospitality contained numerous prescriptions as to how the ideally hospitable country house should appear or be experienced. Going room by room through this nostalgic imaginary, a thundering leitmotif is repeatedly encountered. Namely: the ideally

¹¹⁰ Daryl W. Palmer, *Hospitable Performances: Dramatic Genre and Cultural Practices in Early Modern England* (West Lafayette, IN: Purdue University Press, 1992), 23–25.

¹¹¹ See: Felicity Heal, *Hospitality in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), 122; Christine Stevenson, *Medicine and Magnificence: British Hospital and Asylum Architecture, 1660–1815* (London: Yale University Press, 2000), 17. 'Age, rambling capacity, rusticity, the absence of stylishness, signified the way the hospitable house functioned.'

nostalgic house frequently contained spatial accoutrements or performances which had either long since faded from common use, or existed contrary to the typological shifts in domestic architecture which occurred over the early seventeenth century. Indeed, if a historian were only to read these nostalgic pieces of country house literature, they may be forgiven for holding a vision of the country house which was decades or centuries behind the architectural reality. The nostalgic image of the hospitable country house was so present in the imagination of many early Stuart authors that it would have undoubtedly shaped the moral perception of domestic architecture.

Therefore, through comparing the literary imaginary with the built reality, the reactionary nature of a moralising country house literature is laid bare. This period sees the development of a reactionary phenomenology which was engineered to sense the virtue that had gone missing, and the vice which had taken its place. In the works of such authors, the moral senses were trained on phenomenological signals of virtue which were either fading, or had only just disappeared from view. Moreover, numerous 'recent' innovations in country house typology were framed as signals of vice. How present these architectural signs were in the architectural imagination of early Stuart authors should not be underestimated. The Caroline chaplain Donald Lupton is able to provide a sweeping overview of the polemic in his *London and the countrey carbonadoed* (1632), a work largely constituting a single stream of consciousness put to paper in the span of ten days.¹¹² The text is written in two parts; the first addressing London, and the second addressing the countryside. In each part, numerous 'characters' are presented, personifications of things which are typical of each location. The characters of London are primarily its buildings – the tower, St Paul's, the new exchange, amongst many others – are all described as having the characters of people. Turning to the countryside, Lupton presents actual characteristics and people, beginning with hospitality, and moving on to characterise tenants, chaplains, schoolmasters, etc. As such, the text is one which is rich in moral readings of architecture, both in the way buildings are understood through characters, and the way characters are understood through buildings. Naturally, the opening chapter on the second part is of the most interest to this thesis. Lupton characterises hospitality by illustrating a vivid image of the ideally hospitable house, with its 'truly hospitable' lord. It is worth quoting at length:

Hospitality

This true noble hearted fellow is to be dignified and honor'd,
wheresoeuer he keeps house: It's thought that pride, Puritans, coaches
and couetousnesse hath caused him to leaue our Land: there are sixe
vpstart tricks come vp in great Houses of late which he cannot brook:

¹¹² Donald Lupton, *London and the Countrey Carbonadoed and Quartred into Seuerall Characters* (London: Nicholas Okes, 1632).

Peeping windowes for the Ladies to view what doings there are in the Hall, a Buttry hatch that's kept lockt, cleane Tables, & a French Cooke in the Kitching, a Porter that lockes the gates in dinner time, the decay of Blacke-iackes in the Cellar, and blew coates in the Hall: he alwayes kept his greatnesse by his Charity: he loued three things, an open Cellar, a full Hall, and a sweating Cooke: he alwayes prouided for three dinners, one for himselfe, another for his Seruants, the third for the poore: any one may know where hee kept house, other by the Chimnies smoak, by the freedom at gate, by want of whirligige Iackes in the Kitchin, by the fire in the Hall, or by the full furnish'd tables. [...] but now hee's dead, to the grieve of all England: And tis shroudly suspected that hee will neuer rise againe in our Climate.¹¹³

It is telling that the character of hospitality is recounted in largely spatial terms, constituting numerous spatial dispositions and performances which together constituted the nostalgic imaginary. The nostalgic nature of this text becomes clearer in context; it constitutes a summation of numerous literary tropes which arise over the previous decades, reacting to architectural typological shifts which were at times long since established. For example, the 'peeping window' was not a recent invention at all; there are such 'peeping windows' or 'squints,' at the high end of the thirteenth-century great hall in Stokesay Castle (c.1285) (fig. 4.11).¹¹⁴ Likewise, at the high end of the fourteenth-century hall in Penshurst (c.1341) (fig. 4.12), praised by Ben Johnson for its hospitality, there is a similar squint window.¹¹⁵ Later examples can often be found at the low end of the great hall. Such is the case at Ightham Mote, where the squint is now often covered by a large tapestry.¹¹⁶ Also at the low end of the great hall, the squint windows of Great Chalfield Manor (c.1465) (fig. 4.13-14) are carved to resemble faces. The stylistic features of these masked squints reveal that these innovative squints well predated the Stuart period, resembling the hand of a late fifteenth-century mason.¹¹⁷ It is quite likely, then, that Lupton's complaint was not overly concerned with antiquarian accuracy, but was ultimately invested in reframing fairly well-established and ubiquitous architectural elements as signs of recent moral corruption. This is a hypothesis that is reaffirmed as the spatial language of reactionary country house discourse is compared with architectural and performative realities. Of course, the peeping window is not the sole example; Lupton presents what is a culmination of numerous literary tropes which emerged over the early Stuart period. This section aims to juxtapose such nostalgic tropes with historical evidence room-by-room through the country house, in order to outline how reactionary phenomenology aimed to tint the moral perception of real buildings and performances.

¹¹³ Lupton, *London and the Countrey*, 100-102.

¹¹⁴ As observed by the author during a visit to Stokesay on 16 September 2024.

¹¹⁵ As observed by the author during a visit to Penshurst Place on 31st of August 2024.

¹¹⁶ As observed by the author during a visit to Ightham Mote on 26th of January 2024.

¹¹⁷ As observed by the author during a visit to Great Chalfield on 9th May 2023.



Figure 4.11: For Laurence of Ludlow, The Squints at Stokesay Castle seen from the Great Hall and the Solar (Stokesay, Shropshire, c.1285), Photographs by the author, 2024.

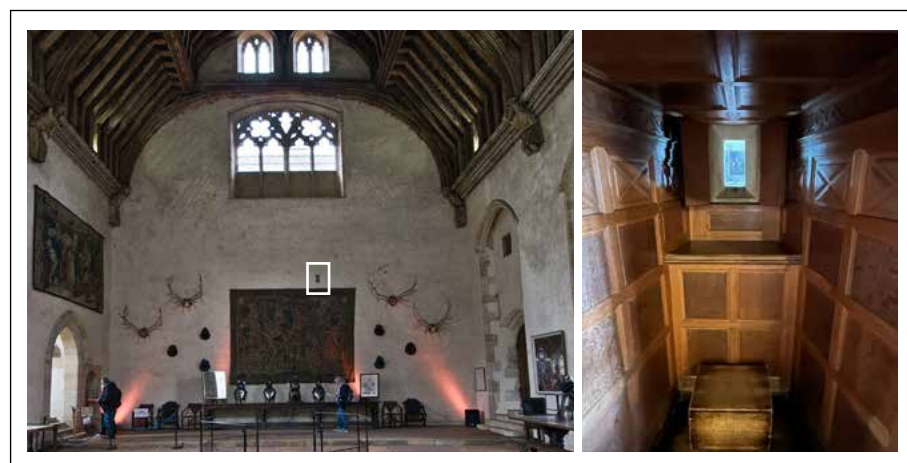


Figure 4.12: For John de Pulteney, Penshurst Palace Great Hall and Squint box from the West Solar (Penshurst, Kent, c.1341), Photographs by the author, 2024.



Figure 4.13: John Chessel Buckler, Great Hall of Great Chalfield Manor (Watercolour, August 1823), NT 539486 © National Trust / David Cousins.

Figure 4.14: For Thomas Tropenell, A Masked Squint seen from Both Sides (Chalfield, Wiltshire, 1465-1480), Photograph by the author, 2023.

4.6.1 The Great Hall

The great hall was the first domestic space where the practice of hospitality was visualised and criticised. The medieval great hall was the place where the 'household of magnificence' and the 'household of provision' came into contact.¹¹⁸ It was, therefore, the place wherein hospitality was most ostensibly performed; where the lord's open-handed liberality was displayed in plain view. This vision of hospitality in its archetypal sense is best evoked in the Great Hall in Gainsborough, Lincolnshire (fig 4.15). Gainsborough Old Hall was built in the 1460s, but saw continual occupation and expansion throughout the sixteenth century. It is therefore noteworthy that the hospitable signs in this hall have survived in a remarkably unaugmented state, albeit well-aided by some reconstructed furnishings. The hall is built of dense packed timbers, not ostentatious stone. On the 'low end' facing east there is a typical triple-door service passage leading to the pantry, kitchen passage, and buttery respectively. On the 'high end' there is a reconstructed shallow dais on which the lord of the house and his family would sit, marked by a reconstructed fabric canopy (fig 4.15). Two reconstructed rows of table-boards furnish the centre of the space, oftentimes ornamented by the English Heritage staff with plate, mock fruit, and bread.

This rustic vision of a vast medieval dining hall, where the house's lord presided over inter-class provision and conviviality, was one which persisted in a greatly romanticised form throughout the early Stuart period. Like Donald Lupton's description of hospitality being signalled by 'a full hall,' conservative writers idealised great halls as bustling with activity; marked by groaning table-boards; servants and strangers relishing hearty simple fare; and importantly, the noble presence of the houses' master.¹¹⁹ In this sense, the hospitality signalled in the hall was broader than just that shown to the poor and the stranger; it harkened back to the hospitable bonds of charity which were expected to bring diverse social classes together in a single space, including that between the lord and his household. The matter was raised by John Selden (1584-1654), a close friend of Ben Johnson's and a well-regarded polymath and politician.¹²⁰ In a section of Selden's *Table Talk* (posthumously published in 1689), Selden discusses a list of subjects in alphabetical order.¹²¹ When confronted with the subject matter of the hall, he comments only the following:

Hall.

the Hall was the Place where the great Lord used to eat, (wherefore else were the Halls made so big?) Where he saw all his Servants and Tenants

¹¹⁸ Felicity Heal, *Hospitality in Early Modern England*, 29.

¹¹⁹ Lupton, *London and the Countrey Carbonadoed*, 101.

¹²⁰ Chisholm, Hugh, ed. (1911). "Selden, John". *Encyclopædia Britannica*. Vol. 24 (11th ed, Cambridge University Press), 600–601.

¹²¹ John Selden, *Table-Talk: Being the Discourses of John Selden, Esq.* (London: Henry Moseley, 1689).

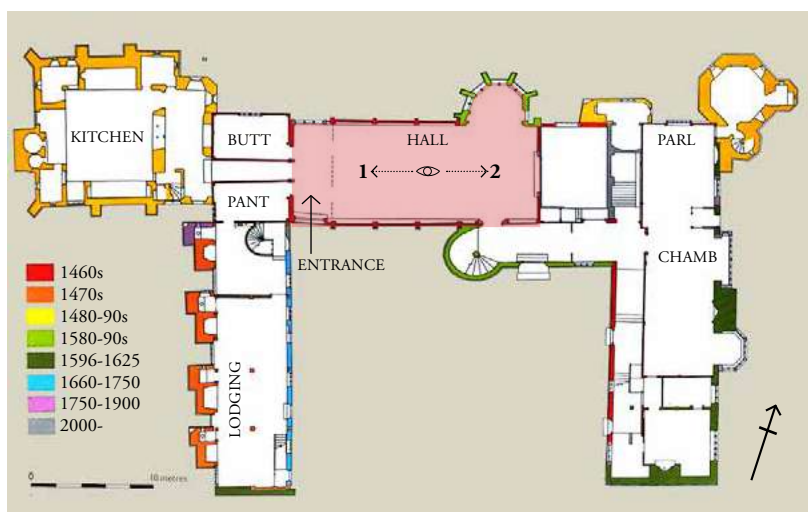


Figure 4.15: For Sir Thomas Burgh, Interior views of Great hall of Gainsborough Old Hall (Lincolnshire, 1460), Photograph by the author, 2023.

Figure 4.16: Kevin Booth, *Gainsborough Old Hall* (English Heritage Guidebooks, 2022), "First Floor Phased Plan of Gainsborough Old Hall" © English Heritage, adapted by the author.

about him. He eat not in private, except in time of sickness: when once he became a thing cooped up, all his greatness was spoiled. Nay the King himself used to eat in the Hall, and his Lords sat with him, and then he understood Men.¹²²

Indeed, the notion of the Hall as a place where the lord received all classes persists throughout the period while Selden is active. Thomas Fuller describes the hall in 1642 as 'a Pandocheum,' which 'ought to lie open.'¹²³ The term '*pandocheum*' itself was taken from the Greek πανδοχεῖον, literally meaning a place that 'receives all,' but is used in the gospels to refer to inns such as the one paid for by the good Samaritan.¹²⁴ Even in 1669, Dudley Lord North described the hall as a place intended to 'draw company together,' for which he bemoaned the lack of fires in newly built halls.¹²⁵ Evidently, numerous seventeenth-century thinkers continued to view the hall in terms of its functional origins as they understood it; marked particularly by Selden's insistence that this involved the physical presence of the house's lord.

There is an evident tension between this nostalgic vision and the architectural and cultural realities surrounding the great hall. In reality, moralising polemicists had complained of the withdrawal of great house owners from their great halls since the late fourteenth century. Indeed, William Langland in the much analysed *Piers Ploughman* (1370) complains of:

Elenge is the hall, each day in the week,
Where the lord nor the lady liketh not to sit.
Now hath each rich a rule — to eat by himself
In a privy parlour for poor men's sake,
Or in a chamber with a chimney, and leave the chief hall
That was made for meals, men to eat in.¹²⁶

Langland's complaint indicates that, at least in some houses, there was already a practice of the lord and lady of the house dining in a private chamber or a parlour. However, Felicity Heal warns against reading Langland's complaint as indicating a broad and general shift.¹²⁷ The houses of the gentry, at least, contain evidence of elaborate canopies constructed over the dais in the hall, the finest examples coming from the early sixteenth century, strongly indicating that many gentry continued to dine regularly in the hall.¹²⁸ Moreover, there is sufficient evidence to indicate that in houses of high-ranking clerics and

¹²² Selden, *Table-Talk*, 62.

¹²³ Thomas Fuller, *The Holy State and the Profane State* (Cambridge: Roger Daniel, 1642), 482.

¹²⁴ Luke 10:34 (Stephanus Textus Receptus, 1550). '[...] ἐπὶ τὸ ἴδιον κτῆνος ἡγάγεν αὐτὸν εἰς πανδοχεῖον καὶ ἐπεμελήθη αὐτοῦ.'

¹²⁵ Heal, *Hospitality*, 167.

¹²⁶ William Langland, *Piers Plowman* (EETS, 28 London, 1869), 147.

¹²⁷ Felicity Heal, *Hospitality in Early Modern England*, 40.

¹²⁸ Heal, *Hospitality*, 41; Margaret Wood, *The English Medieval House* (London: Bracken Books, 1990), 134–136.

nobility the tradition of dining with the entire household (and guests) upon special occasions continued well into the mid-sixteenth century. For instance, upon completing the restoration of the great hall in Lambeth palace in 1565, Archbishop Matthew Parker is recorded to have dined with numerous guests ‘al at diuerse tables through out the hall [...] aswell gentilmen as meane persones.’¹²⁹ Nevertheless, it can be said with some confidence that such inter-class feasting in great houses happened only occasionally by the mid-sixteenth century. The household orders of 1566 for Lambeth palace reveal that, when there was not to be a ‘magnificall and sumptuous feast,’ Parker would dine privately in his dresser or chamber.¹³⁰ Amongst the more demonstrative nobility, it seems to have been accepted to withdraw even during great feasts. The *Black Book of Warwick* (1571) notes that at Michaelmas, Lord Leicester of Kenilworth:

keapt the feast with liberall bountie & great cheare himself sitting in a parlor by himself without any company kept the state & was served with many dishes all covered & upon the knee with assay.¹³¹

The notion Leicester’s isolation ‘kept the state’ is particularly telling. This was not a withdrawal to a simpler, more intimate meal. Rather, the specific recollection of numerous dishes, formally presented and tasted, indicates no lack of splendour in Leicester’s private dining.¹³² Indeed, the withdrawal of nobility from the hall is often understood as indicative of an increasing separation between the ‘family’ and the ‘staff,’ allowing for more formal, ritualised, and luxurious dining in the dining parlour or chamber, while the staff ate in the hall conveniently out of sight.¹³³

There is sufficient evidence to indicate that this ascendant notion of dining in ‘splendid isolation’ was well-established by the 1580’s. While private rooms equipped for dining have been built since the fifteenth century, such as at South Wraxhall and Great Chafeld, these dining spaces became increasingly elaborate during the Elizabethan period.¹³⁴ The Thynne family of Longleat house

¹²⁹ Anonymous, *The Life off the 70. Archbishopp off Canterbury Presentlye Sittinge Englished, and to Be Added to the 69. Lately Sett Forth in Latin. This Numbre off Seuenty Is so Compleat a Number as It Is Great Pitie Ther Shold Be One More: But That as Augustin Was the First, so Mathew Might Be the Last* (Zurich: Christoph Froschauer, 1579), unpaginated [img. 9].

¹³⁰ MS884f 10v-11r (Numbered 88 - “Porters”) “ITEM. that they suffer no man to come into the gates from the time that thy understand that the server be at the dresser for my Lord’s dinner or supp, until the time his Lordship’s dinner and supper be done. ITEM. that the usher, when the lord dyneth a board shall appoint the almoner, server, and cupbearer, and gentlemen waiters for my Lord’s board [...] And that none of the said ushers enter into my Lord’s private chamber without he be admitted by my Lord.”

¹³¹ Thomas Kemp, ed., *The Black Book of Warwick* (Warwick: H.T. Cooke and son, 1898), 38.

¹³² Mary E. Hazard, “A Magnificent Lord: Leicester, Kenilworth, and Transformations in the Idea of Magnificence,” *Cahiers Élisabéthains* 31, no. 1 (1987), 26. Mary Hazard has taken the notion to indicate the ‘decorum of magnificence dining in splendid isolation.’

¹³³ Heal, *Hospitality*, 42; McBride, *Country House Discourse*, 56. Brears, *Cooking and Dining*, 488-489.

¹³⁴ Heal, *Hospitality*, 37; Margaret Wood, *The English Medieval House* (London: Bracken Books,

(1568–1580) were known to dine in the great chamber, which was accordingly decorated as the ceremonial centre of the house. Ostensibly, the chamber took precedence over the hall, wherein the servants and staff, numbering about fifty to a hundred, would dine.¹³⁵ Similarly, the great hall in old Hardwick (1587–1596) was fitted only to cater to staff, whilst Elizabeth of Hardwick and her family would dine in the great chamber (fig. 4.17), known for the tantalising fragments of elaborate stucco-work which still ornament the now-ruined edifice.¹³⁶ Such an arrangement can perhaps be discerned in the spatially suggestive portait of Henry Unton (fig. 4.18), a rare depiction of English dining in the late Elizabethan period. In this image, Unton and his family can be seen dining in Wadley House, Faringdon. They are all seated in a tightly-framed chamber, similar to what can be observed in many Flemish family portraits at the time, where dining rooms were already the norm.¹³⁷ The chamber is clearly up a flight of stairs with a landing. At the bottom of the stairs seems to be a table-board indicating the hall, where the servants would eat after having attended to the family.

Such evidence attests to the fact that the retreat of the nobility, and later the gentry, into private dining-chambers, did not arise from a desire to retreat from the splendid ceremonial which articulated class difference. Rather, it provided a dedicated space where such ritual dining could be performed in accordance with the ‘decorum of magnificence dining in splendid isolation,’ with the staff, common guests and travellers, safely out of view.¹³⁸ The elaborate ornamental schemes of the great chambers in Longleat and old Hardwick, the lavish masques at Wadley House, and the increasing elaboration of plate, all attest to a general preference for curated, refined dining over the Elizabethan period.¹³⁹ This shift can thus be feasibly accounted as one which elected for an aestheticised magnificence, over the convivial rusticity of hospitality, much to the chagrin of moralising reactionaries.

By the seventeenth century this tendency to treat the hall as a ‘staff canteen’ had begun to trickle down the class strata.¹⁴⁰ To provide an example

1990), 62–64.

¹³⁵ McBride, *Country House Discourse*, 56. Cites Girouard " "The family had by now given up the hall as an eating place [...] The family and their guests ate on formal occasions in the great chamber [...] It, rather than the hall, was now the ceremonial centre of the house, and it was accordingly decorated with suitable splendour."

¹³⁶ Peter C. D. Brears, *Cooking and Dining in Tudor and Early Stuart England* (London: Prospect Books, 2015), 489.

¹³⁷ E.g. "Family Portrait of Pierre de Moucheron, Merchant in Middelburg and Antwerp." (unkown artist, 1563) Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam; and, "A Protestant Family during Dinner," (unkown artist, late C. 16) Groeningemuseum, Bruges, Belgium.

¹³⁸ Hazard, "A Magnificent Lord," 26.

¹³⁹ Brears, *Cooking and Dining*, 491. "Dignity, elegance, meticulous manner and calm order ruled in the chamber when meals were served [...]" Also see discussion of increasingly refined tableware in Brears, *Cooking and Dining in Tudor and Early Stuart England*, 428–439.

¹⁴⁰ McBride, *Country House Discourse*, 56. Describes the hall as 'the dining-hall and place of assembly for the servants. The use of this arrangement by the yeomanry will shortly be discussed in the



Figure 4.17: Peter Urnston, “Reconstruction drawing showing Bess of Hardwick entertaining in the Great Chamber c1590,” (1990), J980043 © Historic England.



Figure 4.18: Richard Scarlett (indet.) for Dorothy née Wroughton, Sir Henry Unton (oil on panel, 1596-1606, 740 mm x 1632 mm), NPG 710 © National Portrait Gallery, London. Cropped by the author.

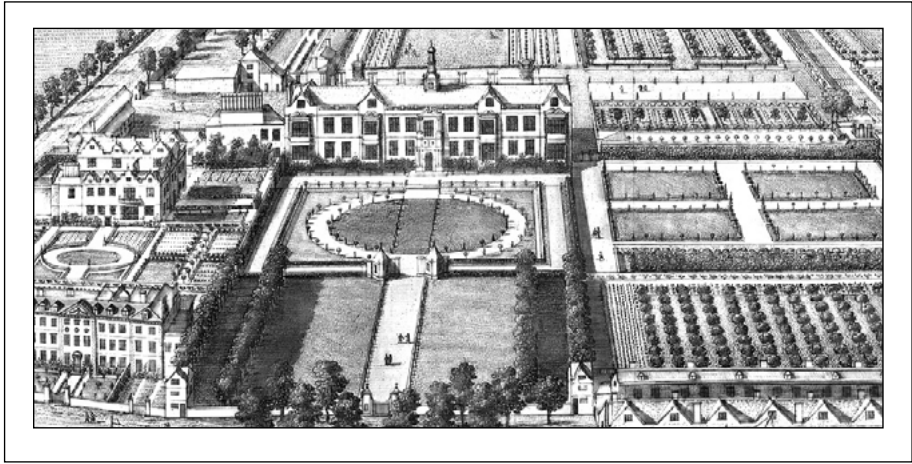


Figure 4.19: Engraved by Joannes Kip after Leonard Knyff, *Britannia illustrata* (London, 1707), 13. "Chelsea House, Middlesex"

from the nobility, the up-to-date and symmetrically-elevated London residence of Lionel Cranfield (first Earl Middlesex) in Chelsea house saw such an arrangement. After coming into Cranfield's possession in 1620, Cranfield implemented a series of modifications in collaboration with Inigo Jones (Fig. 4.19), as well as reiterating the domestic order in a household book dated to January 1621.¹⁴¹ Therein, it is ordered that Cranfield and his immediate family would be served in the dining room, waited upon by a full staff. Only when the dining room was clear of plate and napery, the servants could 'carry ye meate downe' to the hall, where the assembled staff would say grace and eat in 'generall silence.'¹⁴² A hall laid for such an arrangement can be seen in an early eighteenth-century painting of the great hall at Knole (fig. 4.21). While the great hall retained its architectural centrality and grandeur (fig. 4.20), the painting does much to illustrate the austerity and emptiness of the hall's transitional function as a staff canteen. There is no sign of the bustle of visitors; nor the sounds, smells and tastes of inter-class conviviality. On the slightly raised dais at the high end of the hall, in lieu of the house's lord, is a single chair flanked by a wooden bench for the chief officers of the house. In short, the painting depicts a great hall wholly lacking in the signs of hospitality.

The use of the hall as a servant's dining space can also be observed in the houses of the lower gentry and yeomanry. This can be seen in the sketch of the typical, if not slightly idealised 'plain man's country house' as provided by Gervase Markham in *The English Husbandman* (1613). The single pile H-plan includes a dedicated 'dining parlour' on the high end of the hall, which is

writing of Gervase Markham

¹⁴¹ See: *The Furniture History Society Newsletter No. 182*, May 2011. "Lionel Cranfield and the Furnishing of Chelsea House 1620-1625;" MS336 *Household Book of Lionel Cranfield, 1st Earl of Middlesex, at Chelsea, 1622*, (Lambeth Palace Library digital facsimile).

¹⁴² MS3361f32 (LPL) *Household Book of Lionel Cranfield*.



Figure 4.20: Engraved by Joannes Kip after Leonard Knyff, *Britannia illustrata* (London, 1707), 24. "Knowle, Kent." Highlights by author.



Figure 4.21: Unknown Artist "Study of the great hall in Bourchier's day." Published in: Robert Sackville-west, *Knole: A Private View of One of Britain's Great Houses* (Rizzoli, 2022), 27.

noted as being suitable for entertaining strangers, with the 'strangers lodging' lying adjacent to it (fig. 4.22).¹⁴³ However, this dining parlour was neither directly accessed from the kitchen or the buttery, which lay in their traditional positions on the low end of the hall. This transitional arrangement is peculiar, as assumedly food had to be carried through the hall to get to the dining parlour; it can be assumed then, that the Markham continued to imagine the hall as a place where food was served to the staff.

Yet, the house of the nation's principal family was always a few paces ahead. In the Royal household, the ascension of James had seen the royal household greatly tightened, leaving an intimate and efficient staff which had no use of a vast great hall.¹⁴⁴ Consequently, numerous halls were left as reception rooms and passageways. The most obvious sign of this cultural shift in the royal household was in the Queen's house in Greenwich by Inigo Jones, where the cubic entrance hall lacks many of the service-orientated accoutrements which could be expected from earlier great halls.¹⁴⁵ By the restoration in 1660, the bulk of halls being built were ostensibly for circulation. This was primarily indicated by the insertion of large staircases into the hall, as well as the segregation of dedicated 'servant's halls' elsewhere. This was the case in Coleshill, completed by Roger Pratt around 1660 but purportedly according to plans by the recently deceased Inigo Jones.¹⁴⁶ Therein, the servants ate in a dedicated 'servant's hall,' the family in a dining-room, and the hall was almost completely dominated by a double staircase leading up to a landing.¹⁴⁷ A few years later, the grand staircase of Houghton house was also inserted into the great hall.¹⁴⁸ Moreover, the houses in Horseheath (1663–1665), Kingston Lacy (1663–1665), and Belton (1685–1688) all had dedicated dining spaces for servants.¹⁴⁹

¹⁴³ Markham Gervase, *The English Husbandman* (London: T. S. for Iohn Browne, 1613), img. 7.

¹⁴⁴ David N. Durant, *Living in the Past: An Insider's Social History of Historic Houses* (London: Aurum Press, 1988), 43 "Inheriting an expensive and ramshackle medieval household from Elizabeth I, James soon rid himself of archaic officers and superfluous servants, leaving the halls empty."

¹⁴⁵ This is in spite of the house's use as a lodge. As shown in Cooper, *Houses of the Gentry*, 109 ("the lodge"), lodges such as the 1630's example in the Sherborne Estate (Gloucestershire) were still generally served by a buttery at least. However, the hall in the Queen's house shows no sign of being equipped for dining, whether for staff or otherwise.

¹⁴⁶ Alfred Gotch, *The English Home from Charles I to George IV* (London: Batsford, 1930), 56; Colin Platt, *The Great Rebuildings of Tudor and Stuart England: Revolutions in Architectural Taste* (London: UCL Press, 1994), 38.

¹⁴⁷ Gotch, *The English Home*, 53–56 (fig.30).

¹⁴⁸ English Heritage, "Houghton House: History," accessed 10 August 2025, www.english-heritage.org.uk/visit/places/houghton-house/history. States that the Bruce family inserted a grand staircase into the great hall of Houghton House.

¹⁴⁹ I visited these properties. More evidence of the original house layouts can be found in Mark Girouard, *Life in the English Country House: A Social and Architectural History*, Nachdr. (New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, 1994), 136–139 [concerning Belton house]; Sir Roger Pratt, *The Architecture of Sir Roger Pratt, Charles II's Commissioner for the Rebuilding of London After the Great Fire* (B. Blom, 1928) [concerning Kingston Lacy].

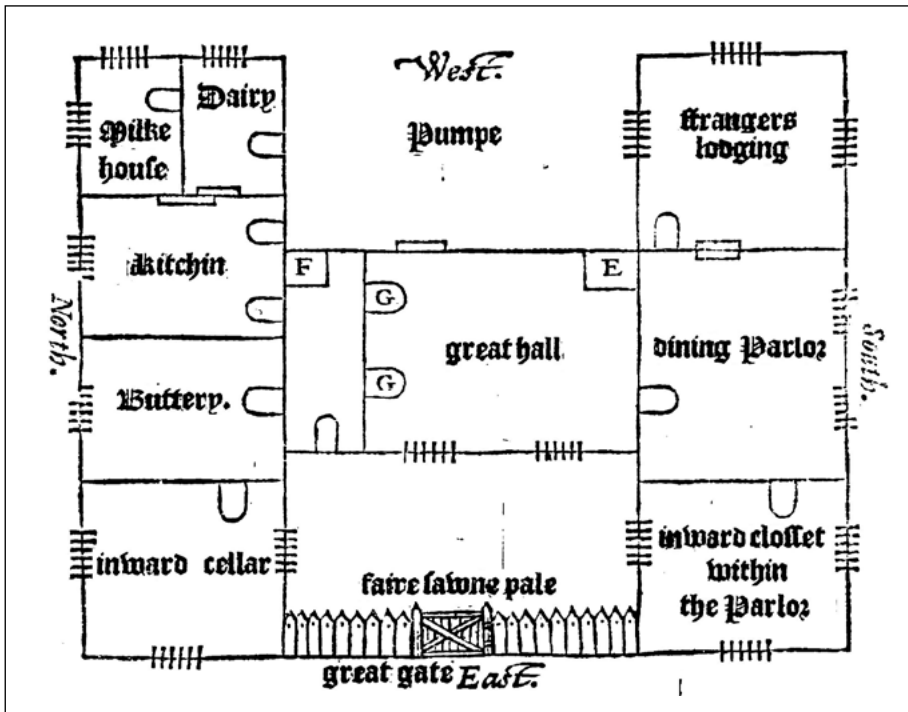


Figure 4.22: Gervase Markham "Sketch Plan of Plain Man's Country house." From: *The English Husbandman. The First Part: Contayning the Knowledge of the True Nature of Euery Soyle within This Kingdome* (London: T. S. for Iohn Browne, 1613), img. 7.

It is clear, then, that by the posthumous publication of Snelden's *Table Talk* (1689) the use of the great hall as a communal dining space where the house's lord came into contact with his household was well beyond living memory. In reality, both the lord and his household had long since ceased to use the hall as a dining space, the hall becoming more akin to a passageway or vestibule. Of course, it cannot be ascertained as to exactly when Snelden made his remarks about the hall, but he undoubtedly lived throughout a period when the hall was predominantly seen as a dining place for servants and common guests. This remarkable discrepancy between the ideals presented in texts concerning hospitality, and the ideals presented in the most current architectural designs is notable. Not only does this tension between text and typology reveal the nostalgic vision which permeates Snelden's image of the hall; it also connects the text to a long tradition of reactionary moralising around the use of the great hall stretching as far back as William Langland in the fourteenth century. Indeed, the withdrawal of the nobility and gentry from their own great halls had for several centuries been a source of moral anxiety, but it is during the seventeenth century that such polemics adopt a more strongly nostalgic tone. To writers like Snelden, Fuller and Dudley, the convivial, fire-warmed great hall was little more

than a literary topos where the imagined societal harmony of a feudal past could be romanticised, while the real practice slipped beyond living memory.

4.6.2 Chimneys

If the reactionary discourse on hospitality found its first architectural fixation in the great hall, the image of the chimney followed closely behind. It is an image which has already been encountered numerous times in the texts previously discussed. The complaints about chimneys were broadly of two species; the first, evident from the 1580's onwards, was the lack of smoke coming from numerous flues. The second, which arose contemporaneously with the stronger anti-ornamental push of the seventeenth century, complained of chimneys being far too ornamental for a functional building element.

The former critique is perhaps better developed and conceptually rich. In essence, the critique of numerous flues but with little smoke was consistent with the suspicion of symbols which arose in the latter half of the sixteenth century. Indeed, the chimney with no smoke exemplified the architectural symbol with no moral substance; but the nuances of this image cannot be fully appreciated without assessing exactly what the chimney symbolised to the early modern onlooker. One passage in William Harrison's *Description of England* (1577) provides a rare glimpse into the architectural tastes of seemingly ordinary village people. Therein, he records the comments of the 'old men' living in his village on the typological changes in domestic houses. The old men seem particularly enthusiastic about the growing number of chimneys.¹⁵⁰ Harrison records:

There are still old men yet dwelling in the village where I remaine, which have noted three things to be marvellously altered in England within their sound remembrance; and other three things are too much increased. One is the multitude of chimnies latlie erected, whereas in their young days there were not above two or three, if so many, in most uplandish townes of the realme (the religious houses and the manor places always excepted, and peradventure some great personages), but each one made his fire against a reredosse in the hall, where he dined and dressed his meat.¹⁵¹

Indeed, it is during the latter half of the sixteenth century where numerous chimneys begin to appear around the countryside in commonplace houses; such

¹⁵⁰ Thompson has misinterpreted this passage in *Renaissance architecture*, claiming the increased chimneys and fires, as well as the subsequent passage of improved bedding and eating vessels were complaints lodged by the 'lower and middle orders,' against the 'contained, jaundiced view of the rich.' Yet, a slightly closer reading of this passage reveals that these village men actually praised the multitude of chimneys; they were counted amongst the three things 'marvellously altered,' not the three things 'too much increased.'

¹⁵¹ William Harrison, *A Description of England, Extract from the Holinshed Chronicles* (London: Walter Scott, 1577), 118-119.

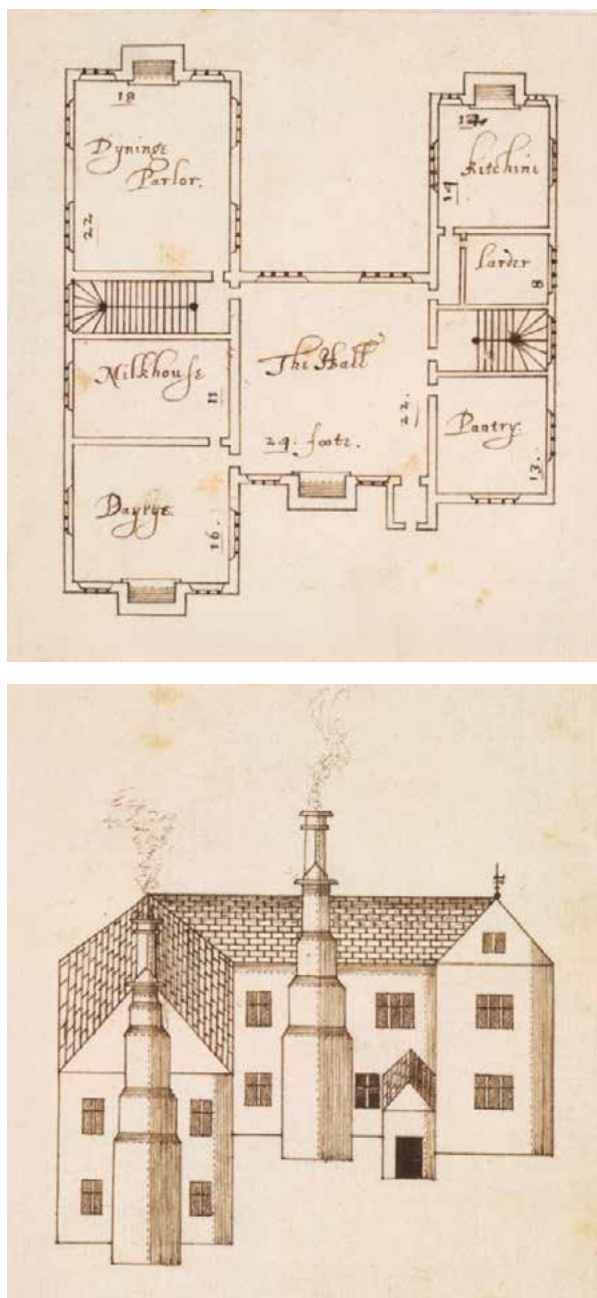


Figure 4.23: John Smythson, "Design for a small house at Twyford: elevation with a plan of the ground floor, which incorporates a dairy, dining parlour and kitchen," (Ink and wash, 1600). RIBA29252, Library Reference SD209/SMY/III/14.

as farmhouses and yeoman's houses.¹⁵² By this period, the bulk of vernacular housing came to have dedicated spaces for cooking as well as a heated hall, requiring two flues at least.¹⁵³ For example, in a design for a small house in Twyford (fig 4.23), the architect John Smythson places a characteristic emphasis on hearths and smoking chimneys. The relatively compact plan has four remarkably large hearths, each equal in size to the kitchen range. Two demonstrative cake-like chimney stacks dominate the front elevation, with deliberate wisps of smoke scribbled in. The drawing is an exemplary record of the increasing dominance of chimneys even in relatively small dwellings, as described by Harrison.

Yet, higher-ranking 'manor places' are exempted from Harrison's account of the growing numbers of chimneys; and for good reason. In the houses of nobility, the shift from cooking in the hall to a dedicated kitchen had already occurred four centuries prior.¹⁵⁴ By the fourteenth century, chimneys had come to appear in bed-chambers, and also in the numerous ancillary household offices which began to appear. This served to draw higher-ranking staff out of the hall into smaller, individually warmed spaces.¹⁵⁵ By Harrison's time, one could expect a noble house to have a chimney in each chamber at least, with even minor offices like pantries having chimneys.¹⁵⁶ By this, it can be gleaned that, by the mid sixteenth century, numerous chimneys signalled much more than just good cooking. Firstly, it signalled the nobility of a house, with a notable discrepancy in chimney numbers remaining between the houses of nobility and those of yeoman.¹⁵⁷ Secondly, it indicated a well-staffed household, with sufficient attendants to provide spontaneous relief. Thirdly, it signalled a multitude of warm, comfortable rooms where guests and strangers could be lodged. This semiotic link between a towering chimney and the provision of hospitality is articulated by Joseph Hall in 1603, when he writes:

Look to the tow'rd chimneys, which should be The windpipes of good
hospitality, Through which it breatheth to the open air, Betokening life,

¹⁵² Peter C. D. Brears, *Cooking and Dining in Tudor and Early Stuart England* (London: Prospect Books, 2015), 213-214.

¹⁵³ Brears, *Cooking and Dining*, 215.

¹⁵⁴ Margaret Wood, *The English Mediaeval House* (London: Pheonix House, 1981), 247. In the early to high middle ages, most great halls had a central hearth used for heat and cooking, with smoke leaving a lantern in the centre of the room. Such an arrangement can still be seen in Ludlow (1066-1085) and Stokesay (1285-1294).

¹⁵⁵ Dresbeck, LeRoy. "The Chimney and Social Change in Medieval England." *Albion: A Quarterly Journal Concerned with British Studies* 3, no. 1 (1971): 27.

¹⁵⁶ LeRoy "The Chimney," 27. "rooms heated by the new system tended to stratify the members of large units such as the royal household by confining clerks and workers to individual rooms with chimneys. The withdrawal of these officials from the central hall to private offices created the possibility of bureaucratic divisions."

¹⁵⁷ E.g.: Brockhampton manor (1425) was a Yeoman's residence and therefore only had three hearths. So too does the typical farmhouse plan provided in Gervase, *The English Husbandman* (1613), unpaginated [img. 7].

and liberal welfare: Lo! there th' unthankful swallow takes her rest, And
fills the tunnel with her circled nest.¹⁵⁸

Hall lays down the ideal, and confronts it with a troubling reality; while the chimney should be a sign of good hospitality, in reality, the flue has remained unused for so long that a swallow has built a nest inside. Thus, the chimney with no smoke implied a misleading semiology: signalling lodginging and provision when, in reality, little was to be found.

There were two main reasons why some chimneys may have had no smoke. Firstly, as with the mock-beggar hall, the trope has been interpreted as referring to houses being left empty or unused.¹⁵⁹ Indeed, while Philip Stubbes is complaining of the vices affecting England in 1583, he writes of 'An-other sorte [who] haue so many houses, that they visit them once in vii. yeer, many Chimnies, but little smoke, faire houses, but small hospitalitie.'¹⁶⁰ However, it is worth noting that this was not always the case; a house still could bountifully provide even when the house's lord was absent. Such a scenario was described by Joseph Hall sometimes in the early seventeenth century:

far from the works that are used nowadays in many places – I mean where the houses are built with a great number of chimneys, and yet the smoke comes forth but at one only tunnel. The house is not built on that manner, for as it hath sundry chimneys, so they cast forth several smokes; and such worthy port, and daily hospitality kept, that although the owner himself useth not to come there once in two years, yet I dare undertake there is daily provision to be found convenient to entertain any nobleman with his whole train, that should hap to call in of a sudden.¹⁶¹

Evidently, absence was not a sufficient excuse to not keep the hearths smoking. In the master's absence, the household could continue fulfilling the duties of countryside hospitality, keeping the lodgings and bellies relatively full.¹⁶²

As such, the second reason why a chimney may not have been smoking was because they were fake. The notion appears with particular force over the turn of the seventeenth century. It was suggested by Thomas Lewis in 1600, when he writes that 'Good-house-keeping, and hospitalitie, Are lost through pride & prodigalitie [...] many chimneyes, or shewes of chimneyes: and of many, scarce one or none smoaking.'¹⁶³ Such fake chimneys appear

¹⁵⁸ Hall, *The Works of Joseph Hall*, 258.

¹⁵⁹ Cooper, *Houses of the Gentry*, 269

¹⁶⁰ Phillip Stubbes, *The Anatomie of Abuses* (London: John Kingston for Richard Iones, 1583), 105.

¹⁶¹ Joseph Hall, *The Collected Poems of Joseph Hall, Bishop of Exeter and Norwich*, ed. A. Davenport (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1949), 242. Quoted in Fowler, *Country House Poem*, 9.

¹⁶² Heal, *Hospitality*, 83–84. Discusses the maintenance of hospitality in Theobalds during some periods of Cecil's absence, as well as continuing hospitality in Framlingham and Ingatestone during some periods of absence.

¹⁶³ Thomas Lewis, *Demegoriai: Certaine Lectures upon Sundry Portions of Scripture* (London: Adam

in Dalechamp's *Christian Hospitalitie* (1632) where the bad housekeeper is described as 'a mock-chimney, or rather poison of hospitality.'¹⁶⁴ It is once again peculiar that such a moral panic should arise in the seventeenth century, as the use of fake chimneys generally declined over the early Stuart period as rooflines became much simpler.¹⁶⁵ Of the examples of false chimneys known, most of them belong to the latter half of the sixteenth century, such as those added to Framlingham Castle (fig. 4.24) in Suffolk.¹⁶⁶ However, Eastbury manor (1570) displays sixteen chimney flues, but only has nine fireplaces along five principal chimney stacks (fig. 4.25).¹⁶⁷ Montacute house (1598) also has a pair of chimneys which do not service hearths, but have the added benefit of creating a symmetrical roofline.¹⁶⁸ Not without reason, many of the seventy-six chimneys at Burghley house (1555-1587) are also rumoured to be false (fig 1.26).¹⁶⁹ Numerous other examples potentially remain, but identifying false chimneys has remained a generally difficult task for building historians, as numerous chimneys have also been blocked or filled since the twentieth century.¹⁷⁰ Overwhelmingly, these examples of false chimneys have often been anecdotally recounted as ornamental works of ostentation; yet during the Elizabethan period there remained a panoply of architectural ornaments which would have been just as suitable for decoration.¹⁷¹ What made the chimney more powerful than other 'outward gay embellishment,' was its purposivity. Not only did it

Islip, 1600), unpaginated [img. 60].

¹⁶⁴ Caleb Dalechamp, *Christian Hospitalitie Handled Common-Place-Wise* (Cambridge: Th. Buck, 1632), 7.

¹⁶⁵ This is at least true for the most prominent English palladian works; one need only compare the rooflines of Inigo Jones' houses with those of Robert Smythson.

¹⁶⁶ I visited Framlingham and it is quite evident that numerous chimneys with ornamental brickwork sit above pre-existing flint walls and could never have been connected to a hearth. There are, however, chimneys of the same period adjoined to turrets which are more likely to have contained a flue.

¹⁶⁷ This is noted by a National Trust signboard outside the house. Upon closer examination, the five stacks correspond with the five clusters of chimneys; but there are far more flues showing than there are hearths. It remains unlikely that one fireplace had numerous flues.

¹⁶⁸ This was noted to me by the property curator of Montacute, and upon the examination of plans, appears to be true.

¹⁶⁹ The number 'seventy-six' has been frequently recited by tour guides at Burghley, and seems to be contained within the sample tour itinerary. The notion that many of these chimneys were false was brought to my attention by a BBC architectural programme titled 'How we Built Britain,' episode two. Discussing Burghley, the host notes that Cecil "even added false chimneys to show how rich and powerful the family was." Upon examining the elevations and plans, both these notions seem to be true; there are indeed more chimneys than hearths. Yet, it's also possible that fireplaces had been filled in or moved over the centuries, and the matter could do with additional verification.

¹⁷⁰ This was the case on most properties I visited. The team at the Woburn estate were planning on smoking the flues to see which chimney led where- but the complexity of the exercise ultimately proved unfruitful.

¹⁷¹ The *Sissinghurst Castle: Tower Survey Report* (National Trust, 2005), 14, notes that false chimneys were sometimes built as statements of wealth.



Figure 4.24: Unknown patron, View of false chimneys added to the battlement of Framlington Castle (Suffolk, C. 12, Chimneys added C. 16). Photograph by the author, 2024.



Figure 4.25: David Kemp, "Eastbury Manor House, Barking: south elevation," (Digital photograph, 2019) Geograph TQ4583. © Copyright David Kemp, licensed for reuse under Creative Commons Licence.



Figure 4.26.1 Burghley house, "Burghley House Roofline" (Digital photograph, 2019). © Burghley House Preservation Trust Limited.



Figure 4.27: Maxwell Hamilton, “Tudor Chimneys at Hampton Court Palace” (Digital photograph, 2014) Paranomio, licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 3.0 Unported license.



Figure 4.28: Jan Siberechts, “A View of Longleat” (Oil on canvas, 1675, 111.8 cm x 172.7 cm) Private Collection, Public Domain.



Figure 4.29: Robert Smythson, Chimneys and turrets of Wollaton Hall (Nottingham, 1580-1588). Photograph by the author, 2024.

signify wealth and power, but it also served to justify that privilege as ‘windpipes of hospitality’ which held real promise for travellers or the rural poor.¹⁷²

Yet, as can often occur with signals of virtue, there was indeed a level of aestheticisation affecting the chimney which concerned moralising writers. Since the Tudor period, chimneys had often featured ornamental brickwork, with Hampton Court (1514–1520) having the most elaborate and well-known examples (fig. 4.27). By the Elizabethan period, stone chimneys came into vogue, often carved to resemble Tuscan columns as can be seen at Longleat (1567–1580) (fig. 4.28), Burghley (1555–1587) (fig. 4.26) and Wollaton (1580–1588) (fig. 4.29). In the seventeenth century, a fairly delayed reaction to this ornamental quality can be observed. It is complained of by Arthur Warren in *The Poore Mans Passions* (1605):

Double and treble Chimneis mounting faire
Observe the single Hospitality,
All spent to build, and buildings repayre,
Which should support oppressed misery,
Great halls, large tables, gold, plate, little meate,
Feed but the eye, while mouth hath nought to eate.¹⁷³

Warren’s poem is another reminder of the corruptible nature of signs: like great halls, large tables, and plates, chimneys could be reduced to fair and beautiful symbols with little moral substance. Less than a decade earlier, a similar complaint was lodged by John Stow in his *Survey of London* (1598) when he described the state of enclosures outside the city. He writes of:

Towers, Turrets, and Chimney tops, not so much for use or profit, as for shew and pleasure, and betraying the vanity of mens mindes, much unlike to the disposition of the ancient Citizens, who delighted in the building of Hospitals and Almes-houses for the poore.¹⁷⁴

Here, chimneys take on the same ornamental quality as turrets and towers, elements which also once had ‘use and profit,’ but by the seventeenth century had come to be regarded as vestigial decorations. The general narrative is one of semiotic degradation; those architectural elements which were once symbols of simple pragmatism and a well-functioning house, had become signs of luxury which stood in opposition to social harmony. Stow supports his argument with the referral to ‘ancient citizens’ of an unidentified historical period during which the wealthy happily undertook the establishment of hospitals and alms-houses. The vagueness of the appeal is telling; Stow’s nostalgic tales of a more hospitable

¹⁷² Hall, *The Works*, 258.

¹⁷³ Arthur Warren, *The Poore Mans Passions. And Pouerties Patience*. (London: I. R[oberts], 1605), unpaginated.

¹⁷⁴ John Stow, *A Suruay of London* (London: John Windet, 1598), 353.

past served only to exacerbate the present sensation of decline, a moral reality which Stow sees represented in the ostentatious chimney tops.

It is perhaps in the chimney that the semiological representation of hospitality in architecture is at its most dialectically intriguing. Complaints of chimneys without smoke over the sixteenth century had a similar polemical arc to earlier discourse surrounding the mock beggar hall: the upright chimney was thought to be a symbol of hospitality, but could ultimately be deceptive if its moral promises were not kept. However, over the seventeenth century, the moral semiology of the chimney is inverted to become vicious. The masonry chimney comes to be framed as a symbol of luxury and ostentation; a sign of decline from a more hospitable past. It is an inversion of meaning not dissimilar to the semantic shifts in the word 'magnificence,' which first symbolises open-handed liberality, but slowly takes on aesthetic connotations which expose it to critiques of luxury and ostentation.

4.6.3 The Buttery

The buttery may stand as one of the most spatially salient symbols of hospitality which arose over the sixteenth century. Like many other architectural elements which came to symbolise old-fashioned hospitality, the buttery underwent notable typological shifts over the early modern period, which diminished the ostensible performance of provision for the lower classes. For a space which is somewhat neglected in country house scholarship, the buttery had a deeply symbolic role in the moral landscape of the great house, being entangled with the dissolution, and the gradual segregation of classes within the home. Before discussing this in greater detail, a general outline of where the buttery could be found, and what purpose it served, should be provided for a space which is so rarely encountered today outside of university halls.¹⁷⁵ Then, certain conventional shifts affecting the buttery will be discussed in vaguely chronological progression; first, the introduction of the buttery hatch; secondly, the establishment of reduced opening times for the buttery; and thirdly, the hiding of the buttery from the hall, often below stairs. In discussing each of these changes in convention, there will be a special focus on the (negative) moral meaning that was projected upon these developments by conservative authors, and how these semiologies are conveyed through text.

It is worth discussing the general function of the buttery first, before delving into the minutiae of these functional changes in the buttery's use. The physician Andrew Boorde in 1542 described the typical location of the buttery in the floor plan of a great house. Like many such descriptions, Boorde locates all

¹⁷⁵ Butteries remain a common feature in collegiate universities. The most prominent can be found in Christchurch in Oxford, and Trinity and King's in Cambridge. In Durham and Trinity there are also some historic butteries remaining.

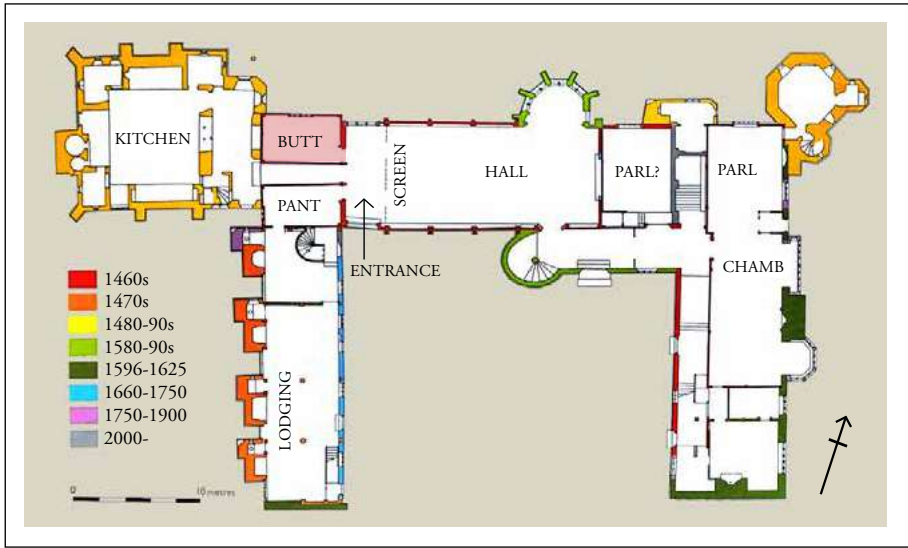


Figure 4.30: Kevin Booth, Gainsborough Old Hall (English Heritage Guidebooks, 2022), "First Floor Phased Plan of Gainsborough Old Hall" © English Heritage

the main spaces on the first floor relative to the great hall, which remained the ceremonial centre of the house. He writes:

Make the hall under such a fashion that the parler be anexed to the head of the hall. And the buttery and pantry to be at the lower end of the hall, the cellar under the pantry, sette somewhat abase; the kychen set somewhat abase from the buttery and pantry, commyng with an entry by the wall of the buttery, the pastry-house and the larder-house anexed to the kychen.¹⁷⁶

The description constituted Boorde's proposal for a healthy house design 'exchewynge thynges that shortneth mans lyfe,' yet Boorde makes few innovations. Once again, such a layout can be seen in an typical form in Gainsborough Old Hall (fig. 4.30), which was built around the same time as Andrew Boorde's text. One would enter the hall on the 'lower end' which by the sixteenth century was often shielded by a screen. The hall would lie to the right, which could be accessed through portals in the screen which were frequently covered by curtains. On the left would be three doors: one leading to the pantry; one leading to a kitchen passage; and one leading to the buttery. In Gainsborough, the buttery door was furthest from the entrance, but typically the buttery and pantry would be switched around; in most houses, the service door closest to the entrance would more often serve the buttery. This layout described by Boorde and exemplified by Gainsborough had a remarkably

¹⁷⁶ Andrew Boorde, *A Compendyous Regyment or a Dyetary of Helth Made in Moutpyllier* (London: Robert Wyer for Iohn Goughe, 1542), unpaginated [img. 11].



Figure 4.31: For Thomas Burgh, Gainsborough Old Hall Buttery (Lincolnshire, 1460), Photograph by the author, 2024.

long pedigree. Since the twelfth century, three service doors on the low end of the hall had indicated the same function; a central door leading to a kitchen passageway, with the flanking doors leading to a buttery and pantry, with the door closest to the entrance most frequently leading to the buttery. This was the case in the hall built in Clarendon Palace (1176-7), an early example which soon trickled into gentry houses over the following century, becoming the dominant model.¹⁷⁷ To list notable early surviving examples, original triple-door service passages remain at Lincoln Palace (1224) (fig. 4.32), Penshurst (1341-1349) (fig. 4.33), South Wingfield (1440-1459) (fig. 4.32), and Gainsborough Old hall (1471-1484) (fig. 4.31).¹⁷⁸ The latter example is particularly illustrative, the three service doors being quite visible from the main body of the hall, and the buttery remaining in a relatively unadulterated state (fig. 4.31). From the fifteenth century onward there was an increasing use of hall screens, which would serve to reduce drafts, as well as cordon off the constant movement around the buttery, pantry and kitchen passage.¹⁷⁹ They created a 'screens passage,' which was increasingly isolated into a sort of vestibule one would enter before turning into the hall. Major houses like Penshurst Place (fig. 4.33) and Hampton Court (fig. 4.34) see hall screens built in the early sixteenth century, both with minstrel galleries.¹⁸⁰

¹⁷⁷ Margaret Wood, *The English Medieval House* (London: Bracken Books, 1990), 124.

¹⁷⁸ Wood, *The English Medieval House*, 128 [Plate XXIII].

¹⁷⁹ Wood, *The English Medieval House*, 139.

¹⁸⁰ The hall screen at Hampton can be dated by the entwined H and A monogram (fig. 4.28.2) on

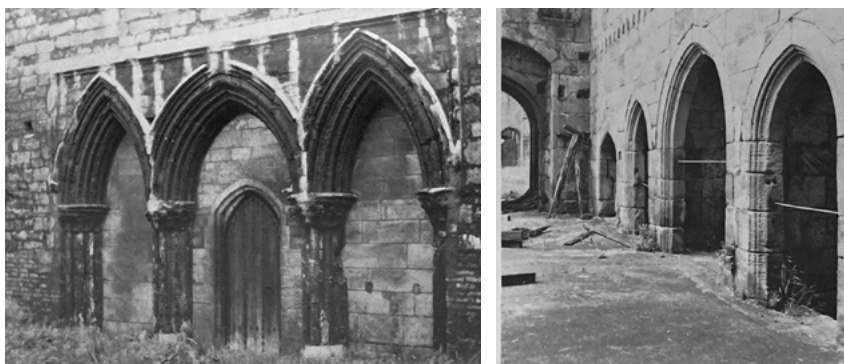


Figure 4.32: Margaret Wood “Service doorways. Lincoln Palace and South Wingfield” Published in: *The English Mediaeval House* (London: Pheonix House, 1981), 129.



Figure 4.33: For William Sidney, The hall screen, gallery, and triple service door at Penshurst (Kent, 1532-1535), Photograph by the author, 2024.



Figure 4.34: For Henry VIII, The hall screen, gallery, and panelling at Hampton court (Greater London, 1541), Photograph by the author, 2024.

As to what happened behind the buttery door, it was generally little to do with butter. The buttery was the office of the yeoman of the buttery, or *botellarium*, the name originating from the large barrels used to store beer known as ‘butts,’ generally believed to have been around 108 imperial gallons.¹⁸¹ For this reason, the buttery was often built towards the north lest ‘the beere will be sower for the Suns smiling on it.’¹⁸² In larger houses, there would be a staircase leading down from the buttery providing direct access to the cellar, where reserved butts of beer could be kept cool. The reason why this space became so symbolic of the performance of hospitality was because in the middle ages, when hospitality was expected of religious houses, the monk butterer would hand out ‘doles’ of bread and ale to pilgrims, strangers, or the poor; a practise which continues, for example, in the hospital of Saint Cross.¹⁸³ In such religious houses, there could be numerous butteries, with one serving a central courtyard or cloister, rather than the great hall, and the other closer to the kitchen. This was the case in Fountains Abbey (thirteenth Century) where there is a buttery by the refectory, directly linking the cloister to a back-gate, and another buttery which seems to serve the kitchen and a small yard.¹⁸⁴ Two butteries can also be seen in the monastery of Austin Friars (twelfth century) which was later converted into a house for Thomas Cromwell after the dissolution (fig. 4.35).¹⁸⁵ One buttery has remained at the opposite end of the courtyard from the hall, while the other serves a kitchen and parlour. This placement of a buttery on the opposite end of a courtyard was remembered in a few early modern domestic plans. Apart from the plan of Thomas Cromwell’s house, which was built from the monastery of Austin Friars, the same placement can also be seen in Ockwells Manor (1446-1450) (fig. 4.36), where the buttery hatch is on the opposite side of a courtyard from the great hall, and accessed by an L-shaped passageway.

As the obligations for hospitality were transferred onto manor houses, the domestic buttery which directly served the great hall became the domestic office which was most associated with the welcoming and relief of strangers. The lowest class of stranger admitted into the house, if they were not of sufficient status to enter the hall, was generally attended to in the buttery where they would be offered a drink.¹⁸⁶ Even those strangers who could eat in the hall

the panelling, meaning it was built while Henry VIII was married to Anne Boleyn: 1533-1536. The screen at Penshurst has been stylistically dated to the early sixteenth in *Penshurst Palace and Gardens* (Jigsaw Publications, 2018).

¹⁸¹ James Lightbody, *Every Man his Own Gauger* (London, for G.C. 1695).

¹⁸² Thomas Fuller, *The Holy State* (London: Roger Daniel for John Williams, 1642), 297.

¹⁸³ *The Hospital of St Cross & Almshouse of Noble Poverty* (official site), accessed August 10 2025, <https://hospitalofstcross.co.uk/visiting-st-cross> hospitalofstcross.co.uk. “The Hospital of St Cross is famous for its unique and ancient tradition of providing the Wayfarer’s Dole – a horn of beer and a morsel of bread given to any visitor who requests it [...] The tradition still continues today,”

¹⁸⁴ *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (9th ed, 1878), “Ground Plan of Fountains Abbey, Yorkshire.”

¹⁸⁵ Dorian Gerhold and Sheila O’Connell, *London Plotted: Plans of London Buildings c.1450-1720* (London: London Topographical Society, 2016), 79, fig.79. “Reconstruction of the ground plan of Thomas Cromwell’s house, by Nick Holder.”

¹⁸⁶ Heal, *Hospitality in Early Modern England*, 30.

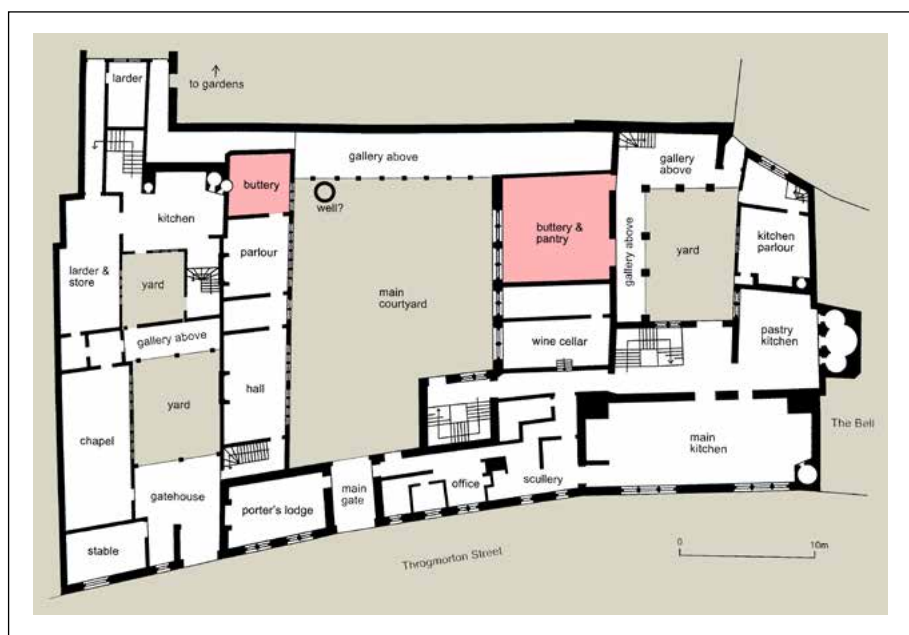


Figure 4.35: Nick Holder "Reconstruction of the ground plan of Thomas Cromwell's house." Published in: Dorian Gerhold and Sheila O'Connell, *London Plotted: Plans of London Buildings c.1450-1720*, (London: London Topographical Society, 2016), 79 [fig. 79].

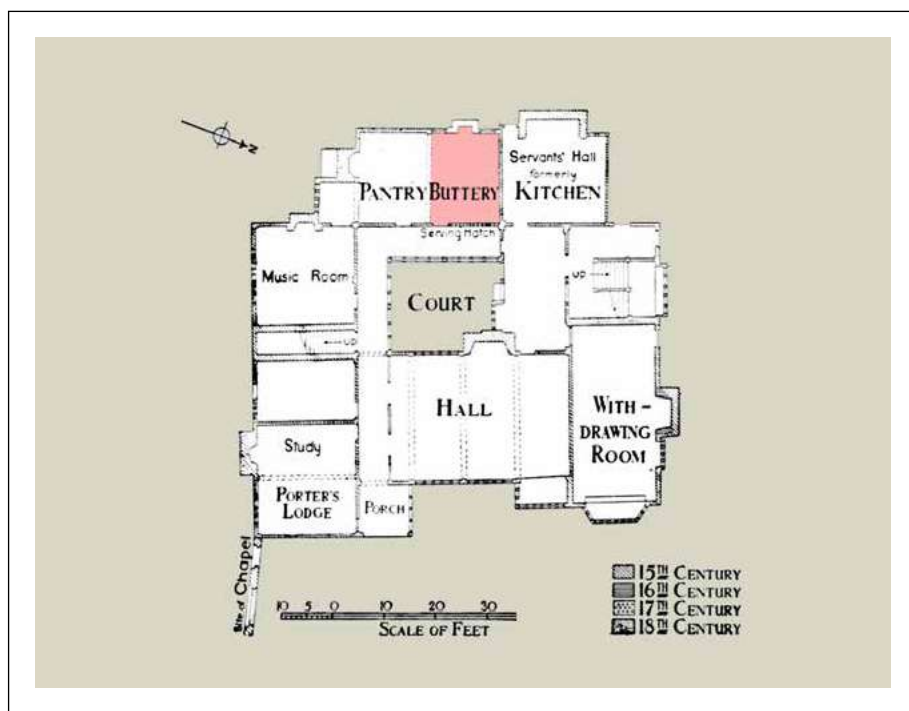


Figure 4.36: William Page "Plan of Ockwells Manor House." Published in: 'Bray with the borough of Maidenhead: Introduction, borough and manors', in *A History of the County of Berkshire: Volume 3* (London, 1923).

would generally retire to the buttery after thanking the Lord or the chief officers after the meal.¹⁸⁷ The prominent place of the stranger in the duties of the butler can be seen in the household orders for Lambeth palace for the year 1566. Therein, the butler is instructed to remain in his office so that he is always ready to be called upon by the usher or by strangers.¹⁸⁸ Moreover, he is strictly forbidden from allowing members of the household from drinking or talking in his office without the archbishop's permission, 'except it be for a stranger for my Lord's honor.'¹⁸⁹ The orders clearly portray the butler as the officer primarily answerable to the needs of strangers; his office being the locus of provision for the lower classes of stranger. This role of the buttery is also portrayed in Shakespeare's *Taming of the Shrew* (1594) when a lord instructs his servants to entertain a travelling group of players by declaring 'Go, sirrah, take them to the buttery / and give them friendly welcome every one / Let them want nothing that my house affords.'¹⁹⁰

However, there are notable developments in the usage of the buttery over the early modern period, most especially in the spatialisation of class difference which its use entailed. One of the more salient design features affecting this division was the use of a buttery hatch. Such a feature is complained of in Humfrey Braham's *Institucion of a gentleman* (1555), who writes:

In the ancient time when curious building fed not the eyes of the way faring man, then mighte he be fed & haue good repast at a gentlemans place so called. Then stooode the buttery dore without a hache [...] This varietie & change from the olde English maner, hath smally enriched gentlemen, but muche it hath empoverished their names.¹⁹¹

The use of such a hatch can be seen in a painting from 1545 depicting the Field of the Cloth of Gold, showing a butler peering out of an open hatch in the temporary palace erected for Henry VIII (fig. 4.37). Yet, Braham's invective against such hatches is once again recognisably nostalgic, as architectural evidence shows that the use of buttery hatches had occurred well before living memory. For instance, there were numerous medieval religious houses which had buttery hatches, the twelfth-century example in Saint Cross having already been mentioned (fig. 4.38).

Buttery hatches had started appearing in the houses of minor gentry and yeomanry in the mid fifteenth century; there may have been such a hatch at Brockhampton House (1425) and the buttery hatch of Ockwells Manor

¹⁸⁷ Heal, *Hospitality in Early Modern England*, 33.

¹⁸⁸ MS884f14v-15r, Item 52 "that the [butler] be always ready in his office, and to retain where he shall be founde to an head officer, if the the ussher for my Lord or strangers."

¹⁸⁹ MS884f13v-14r, item 47.

¹⁹⁰ William Shakespeare, *The Taming of the Shrew*, ed. Barbara A. Mowat and Paul Werstine (Washington Square Press, 1992), i.101-03.

¹⁹¹ Humfrey Braham, *The Institucion of a Gentleman* (London: Thomas Marshe, 1555), unpaginated [img.59].



Figure 4.37: Friedrich Bouterwek, Meeting at the Field of the Cloth of Gold (Oil on canvas, 1845) Deposit from the Musée National des Châteaux de Versailles et de Trianon, MV 6898. [An accurate copy of the original from 1545 in Wolsey Room 4, Hampton Court Palace, RCIN 405794]



Figure 4.38: Anwar Hussein "Camilla Duchess of Cornwall requests the Wayfarer's Dole [at Saint Cross]" (Digital photograph, 2008), *Editorial* n° :79928050 © Getty Images

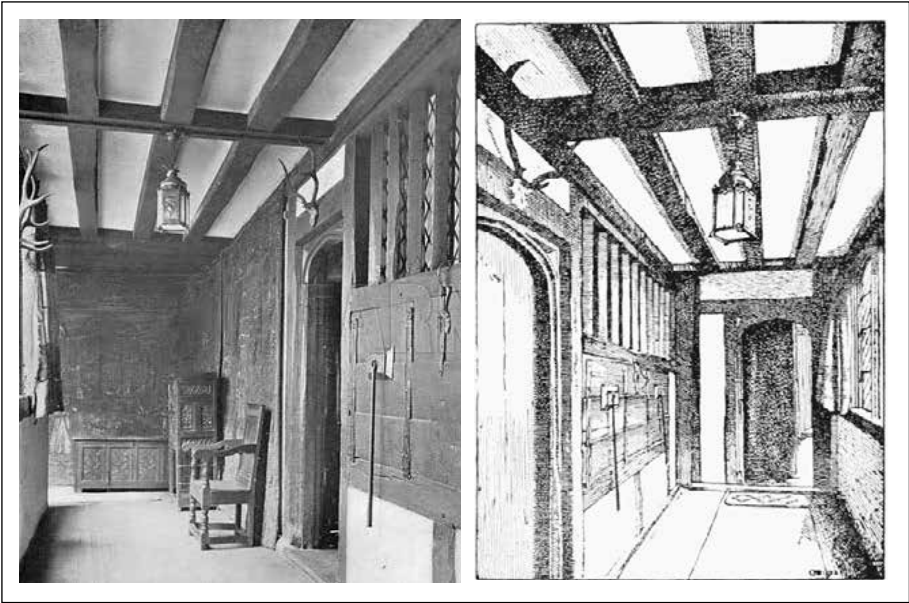


Figure 4.39: Charles Latham (indet.) "The Buttery Hatch [of Ockwells]" (Black and white photograph, 1904). Published in: Charles Latham, *In English Homes*, Vol 1 (London: Country Life, 1904).

Figure 4.40: William Page "Ockwells Manor Buttery Hatch." Published in: 'Bray with the borough of Maidenhead', in *A History of the County of Berkshire: Volume 3* (London, 1923).

(1450) still remains (fig. 4.39).¹⁹² As for more notable houses, the buttery hatch at Haddon Hall (fig. 4.43) also most likely dates from his period. Haddon's example is perhaps most illustrative of the moral implications of Braham's complaint; the opening is a tiny hinged door just large enough to pass through a single trencher of beer. This buttery hatch, like many others, allowed certain strangers to be served without admitting them into the buttery proper. The significance of this spatial barrier is linked to the broader role of spatial boundaries in the performance of hospitality.¹⁹³ In a traditional house where differences in class and office were demarcated by doors and portals, hospitality could be shown by opening those portals, voluntarily facilitating the intercommunication between classes which was central to forging the bonds of *caritas*. The hatch, therefore, signalled a growing reluctance to open the buttery door proper, preferring strangers to consume their beer elsewhere or to linger outside the buttery door.

¹⁹² 'Brockhampton by Bromyard', in *An Inventory of the Historical Monuments in Herefordshire, Volume 2, East* (London, 1932), 32-34. A floor plan of the manor house shows both a door and a hatch leading from the screens passage to the buttery. However, when I visited on September 16 2024, the hatch was no longer extant. It was possibly filled with drywall.

¹⁹³ Heal, *Hospitality in Early Modern England*, 29-33. Describes the 'social geography' of the great house in terms of 'social barriers.'

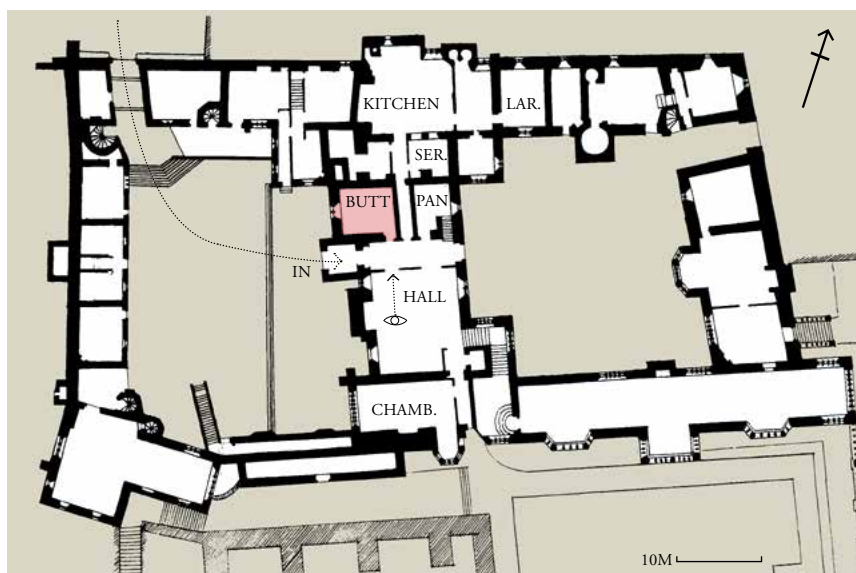


Figure 4.41: Simeon Rayner “Haddon Hall Plan” (Lithograph, 1836). Published in: Simeon Rayner and Henry Duesbury, *The history and antiquities of Haddon Hall : illustrated by thirty-two highly finished drawings: with an account of the hall in its present state* (London : Weale Architectural Library, 1836), pl.6. Redrawn and coloured by the author.

Figure 4.42: Uncertain patron and date [C15 indet.], Great hall at Haddon Hall (Bakewell, Derbyshire, C14-C17), Photograph by the author, 2024.

Figure 4.43: Uncertain patron and date [C15 indet.], Buttery hatch at Haddon Hall (Bakewell, Derbyshire, C14-C17), Photograph by the author, 2024.



Figure 4.44: Robert Smythson, New Hardwick Hall Buttery Hatch (Derbyshire, 1587 -1596), Photograph by the author, 2024.

Figure 4.45: Robert Smythson, New Hardwick Hall Pantry Hatch (Derbyshire, 1587 -1596), Photograph by the author, 2024.

Despite the negative moral connotation, the use of buttery hatches persists throughout the sixteenth century. They were often larger than the example at Haddon, and unlike Haddon were not always inside the buttery door, but could be placed separately. The existing buttery and pantry hatches at new Hardwick hall (1590-1597) take this form (fig 4.44-45), and suggest that, in use, the buttery hatch would not have differed greatly from a modern canteen window. Similar arrangements can be seen in numerous sixteenth century plans from Thorpe's *Book of Architecture*, which show a wide variety in the placement of buttery hatches (fig. 4.46). Thorpe seems to have had a great fondness for placing very prominent buttery openings at the centre of the service wall, facing the axis of symmetry struck by the great hall.¹⁹⁴ His proposal for renovations at Great house in Chelsea (T64) shows such a centrally placed buttery hatch serving the screen passage, with the buttery entered via a side door leading from the kitchen passage.¹⁹⁵ The same arrangement can be seen in the plans T38, T55, and T89, all of which depict unidentified houses. No built examples of a centrally placed buttery hatch with an adjacent side door remains to this day, but Thorpe's emphasis on the buttery hatch – sometimes the only aperture on the service wall – attest to the continuing importance of the buttery aperture

¹⁹⁴ John Thorpe, Summerson ed, *The Book of Architecture of John Thorpe in Sir John Soane's Museum* v. 40 (Glasgow: Printed for the Walpole Society by R. Maclehose, University Press, 1966).

¹⁹⁵ Thorpe, *The Book of Architecture*, T53. In Thorpe's renovation design for the "Great House at Chelsea" (c. 1599) a central buttery hatch serves the screens passage while a side door from the kitchen passage leads into the buttery.

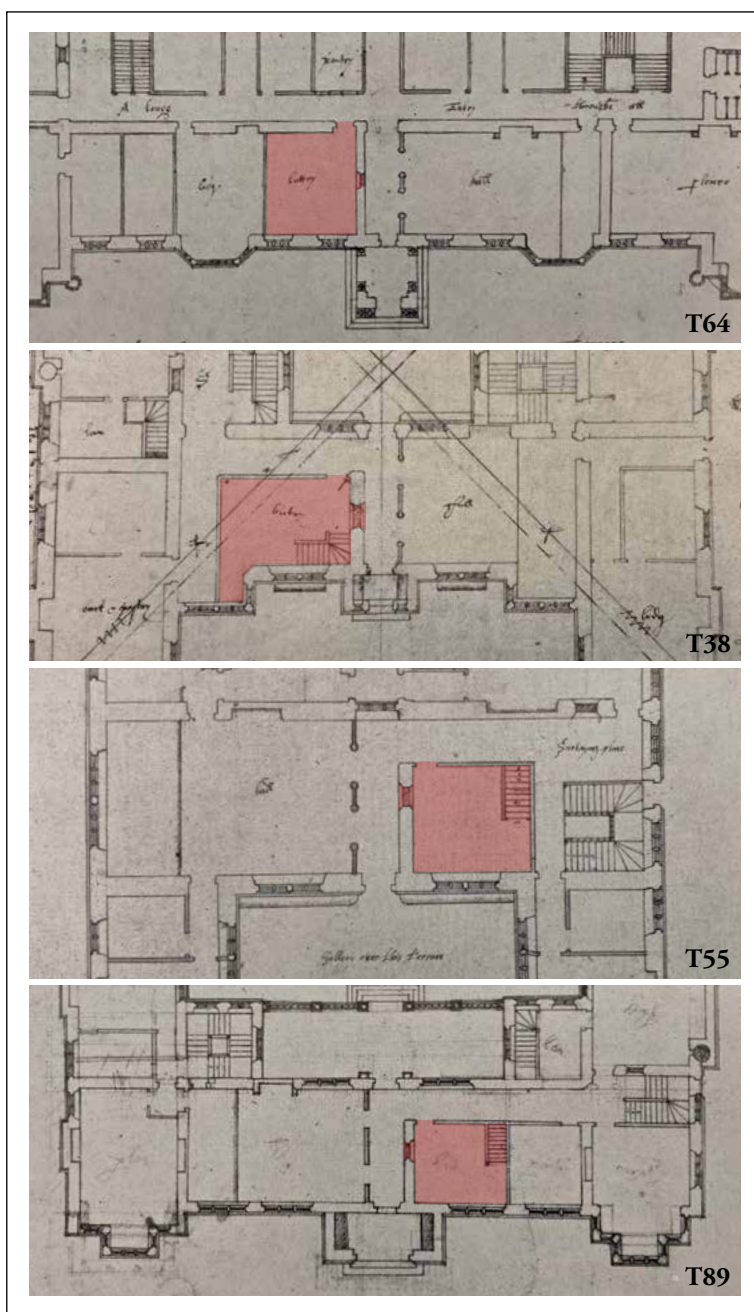


Figure 4.46: John Thorpe, T64; T38; T55; T89 (Ink on paper, c.1590-c.1620). Published in: John Thorpe, John Summerson ed. *The Book of Architecture of John Thorpe in Sir John Soane's Museum* (Glasgow: Printed for the Walpole Society by R. Maclehose, University Press, 1966).

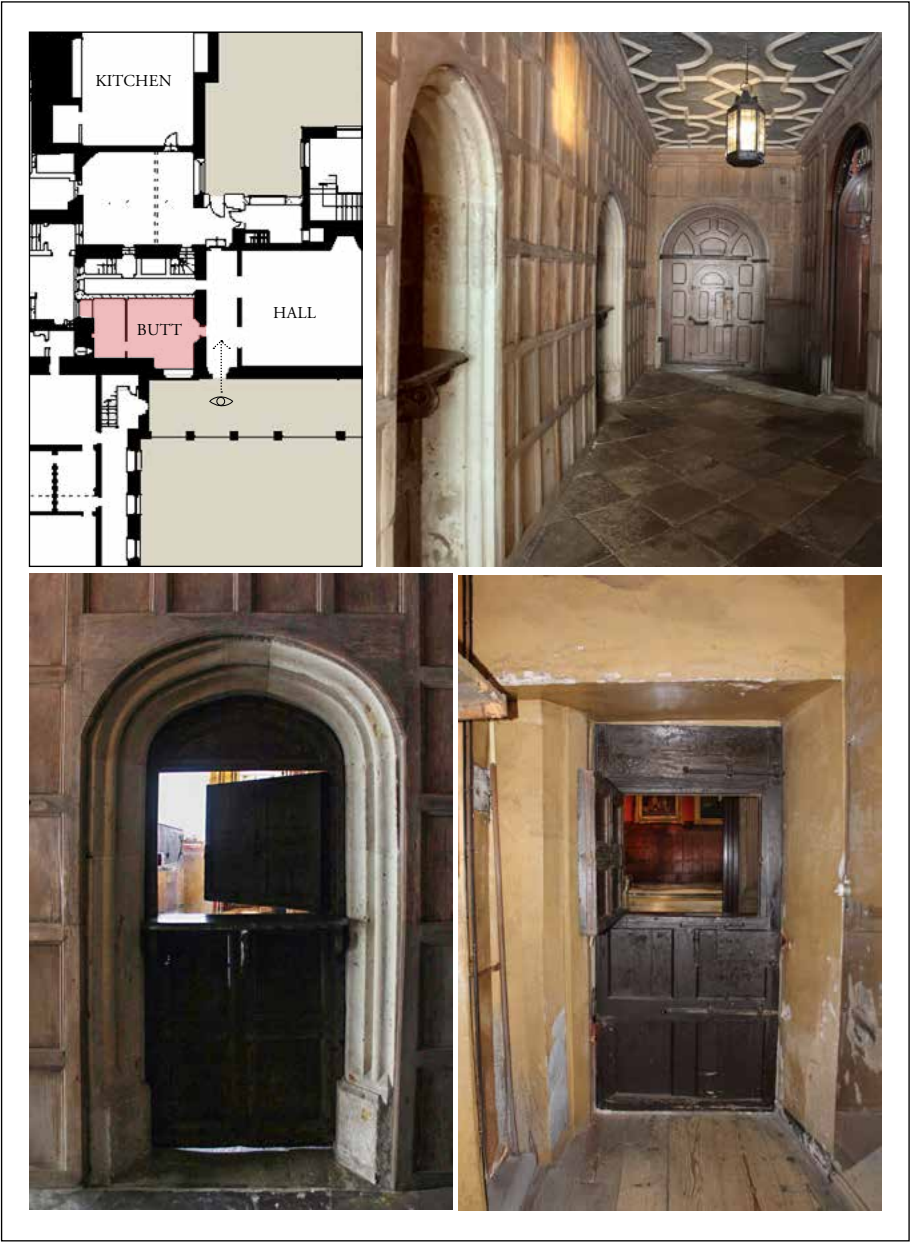


Figure 4.47: National Trust “Oxford Archaeology, Phased typology of Knole” (Technical Drawing, 2007). Published in: Edward Town, *A house 're-edified': Thomas Sackville and the transformation of Knole 1605-1608* (Phd Thesis, University of Sussex: 2011).

Figure 4.48: For Thomas Sackville (indet.), Screens Passage and Buttery Door of Knole (Kent, additions 1605-1608). Photograph by the author, 2023.



Figure 4.49: Unknown Builders, Buttery Doors of Ham House (Richmond, Surrey, 1610–1617), Bolsover Little Castle (Derbyshire, 1611-1617), and Christ Church College (Oxford, 1529–1530) Photographs by the author, 2024.

over the turn of the seventeenth century, sometimes even consolidating the role of the pantry and cellar.¹⁹⁶

Around the late sixteenth century there was yet another innovation upon the buttery door; with the door being split horizontally into two halves like a barn door, with a bar attached to the bottom half. This was yet another means by which to physically close the space inside the buttery from access while still allowing drinks to be served. Yet, while the buttery hatch allowed drinks to be passed through from hand to hand so that a stranger could take a seat elsewhere, the addition of a bar implied that some would be kept standing as they consumed their beer. Such a door and bar can be seen in an engraving of Cowdray house dating to 1780, but the bar was certainly already installed and in use by 1595, when the yeoman of the Buttery at Cowdray is instructed ‘that strangers and comers be served at the bar, and that he give good attendance daily in the house for service of me [and] my wife, and [for] repair of strangers.’¹⁹⁷ Numerous other examples of butteries with split barn doors, serving as both a hatch and a door, arose in the Jacobean period immediately following. Existing examples can be found in Knole House (1605-1608) (fig. 4.47-48), Ham House (1610) (fig. 4.49), Bolsover Little Castle (1612-1616) (fig. 4.49), and perhaps at Christchurch College in Oxford, although the

¹⁹⁶ Nicholas Cooper, *Houses of the Gentry: 1480-1680* (New Haven, Conn: Yale University Press, 1999), 175.

¹⁹⁷ Anthony Maria Browne, 2nd Viscount Montague, “Book of Household Rules,” 1595, in *The Household and Farm Accounts of the Second Viscount Montague* (Cowdray Archives, West Sussex Record Office, Cowdray MS 3/3/1). The rules instruct the yeoman of the buttery “that strangers and comers be served at the bar, and that he give good attendance daily in the house for service of me and my wife, and for repair of strangers.”

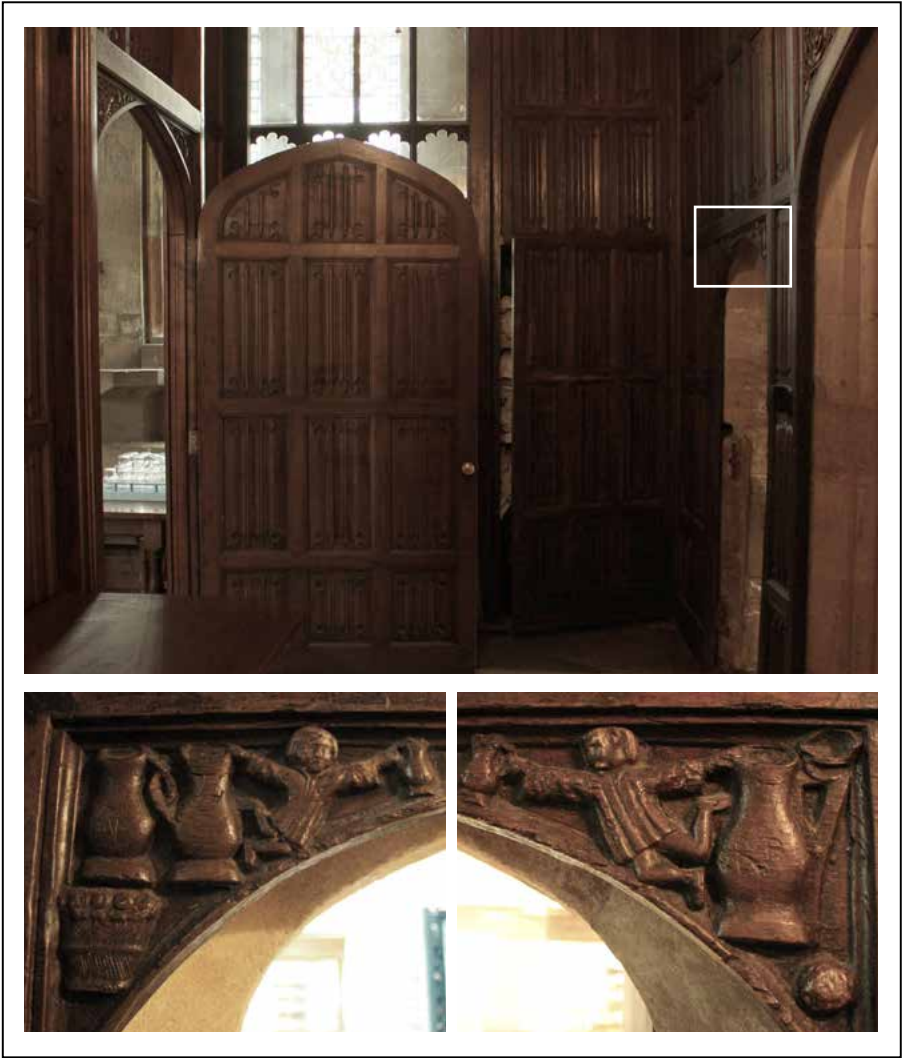


Figure 4.50: Walter Wright (indet.), Buttery doors added in New College with spandrel ornaments (Oxford, C16 indet.), Photograph by the author, 2024.



Figure 4.51: From The Roxburgh Ballads (British Library). Published in: Peter C. D. Brears, *Cooking and Dining in Tudor and Early Stuart England* (London: Prospect Books, 2015), 410.

present split door is difficult to date and has certainly been altered (fig. 4.49). Additionally, sometime between 1566 and 1611 a buttery with a bar was installed at Lambeth Palace, and the household orders were updated in 1611 to refer to this change. It can be seen clearly from these orders how the addition of a bar at Lambeth further articulated class differences between visitors. In 1611 the Yeoman of the buttery is given the following orders:

- » Item 2. That none be permitted to go into the cellar to drinke or give entertainment there to strangers, but by speciall appointment.
- » Item 3. That none of the family but those who serve in the condition and titles of gent[lemen], be admitted to come into the buttery and those that have titles to come in themselves and to bring in their friends or strangers of like qualitie where they shall be tidily used during their abode there, there remaining themselves discreetly but for the time & manner of their stay.
- » Item 4. That those who serve in the function and title of yeomen & under doo drink themselves at the barres and there entertain their friends with discretion and civility.
- » Item 5. That all allowances be duly delivered without diminution and there be such discretion used, that a just moderation may be observed betwixt the excesses of miserie & ryott.¹⁹⁸

It is clear that, at least in the Archbishop of Canterbury's household, there has been a notable change in practice between 1566 and 1611. By the later period, the butler could no-longer bring strangers into the cellar without the explicit permission of the Archbishop or a senior officer. Moreover, it is evident that the buttery was sufficiently equipped and furnished to receive and entertain gentlemen. Usually, the buttery contained portions of bread and beer, with decent vessels and plate sufficient to consume them. This is indicated in the decorated spandrels above the buttery door in New College, Oxford (tentatively dated to the early seventeenth century) which shows two leaping figures dressed in tunics (fig. 4.50). The figure on the left spandrel holds a jug (assumedly of beer) and is surrounded by two intertwined flagons and a bread basket. The figure on the right also holds a jug, and is surrounded by a large black-jack or bombard, with what appears to be a single manchet loaf.¹⁹⁹ In addition to these vessels, the buttery was frequently furnished with a table or a bench and stools. Two woodcuts from the seventeenth century Roxburgh Ballads show what the interior of such a space may have looked like (fig. 4.51). This had become common practise by 1601, when the buttery at Wollaton was furnished with two benches, a square table, and three stools.²⁰⁰ At Lambeth this space was reserved for nobility and gentry. Those below the rank of gentleman, being

¹⁹⁸ LPL MS 884, ff. 29v–30r.

¹⁹⁹ For a fuller description of the different vessels that may be found in a buttery, see: Brears, *Cooking and Dining*, 427–429.

²⁰⁰ Pamela Marshall, *Wollaton Hall: An Archaeological Survey* (Nottingham: Civic Society, 1996), 94. An entire inventory of the house from 1601 is appended to Marshall's survey.

yeomen or lesser, would remain standing outside the buttery at the bar to be served from a hatch.

This evidence greatly clarifies Humfrey Braham's nostalgic recollection of 'the buttery dore without a hatche.'²⁰¹ The buttery hatch, and later on, service at a bar to the fore of the hatch, was largely indicative of an increasing segregation of domestic spaces in accordance with class. Although the provision may not have necessarily been lesser, the increasing reluctance to invite the persons themselves into the spaces of the higher classes entailed a continual spatialisation of class disparity. This can be understood as foreshadowing the developments of the following century, with stronger spatial divisions between family, staff, and strangers.²⁰²

By the time the buttery hatch became a well-distributed convention at the turn of the seventeenth century, there were rearticulated concerns, not about the hatch existing, but about the buttery door and hatch being closed or locked too frequently. To provide an early example; in 1598 an anonymous writer by the initials of I.M. presented a portrait of a perfidious household servant, who repeatedly tells his master that 'he [the master] keepe too many idle fellowes, his Butterie is too open, and his fare too costly.'²⁰³ However, this plea to abandon hospitality was a ploy to sabotage his fellow staff, and to 'creepe into sole credite with his Maister.'²⁰⁴ A closed buttery more prominently appears on Candlemas night 1618, when a masque was staged at Coleorton Hall in Leicestershire. The masque opened with Bob o' the Buttery declaring 'the buttery key is lost!' His lament continues: 'all over England... hospitality down, down, down it falls... And arise it never shall.'²⁰⁵ Similarly, during the Caroline period, Donald Lupton in 1632 complained of 'a Buttry [buttery] hatch that's kept lockt.'²⁰⁶ Instead, gentlemen were urged to keep their buttery doors often open for the sake of hospitality. This is mentioned by Thomas Fuller in *The Holy State* (1642), when he is describing a true nobleman:

In proportion to his means, he keeps a liberall house. This much takes the affections of countrey people, whose love is much warmed in a good kitchin, and turneth much on the hinges of a buttery-doore often open.²⁰⁷

²⁰¹ Braham, *Institucion of a Gentleman*, img. 59 (G iii r.)

²⁰² Jeremy Musson, *Up and down Stairs: The History of the Country House Servant* (London: Murray, 2010), 52.

²⁰³ I. M., *A Health to the Gentlemanly Profession of Seruingmen* (London: W. W[hite], 1598), unpaginated [img. 27].

²⁰⁴ I. M., *A Health*, unpaginated [img. 27].

²⁰⁵ V&A Dyce MS no. 36, Quoted in: Alastair Fowler, ed., *The Country House Poem: A Cabinet of Seventeenth-Century Estate Poems* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh Univ. Press, 1994), 9.

²⁰⁶ Donald Lupton, *London and the Countrey Carbonadoed and Quartred into Severall Characters* (London: Nicholas Okes, 1632), 101.

²⁰⁷ Thomas Fuller, *The Holy State* (London: Roger Daniel for John Williams, 1642), 855-856.

The notion is even repeated well after the restoration; the playwright Thomas Shadwell commented in 1681 that 'For my part, I think 'twas never good days, but when great Tables were kept in large Halls, the Buttery-hatch always open.'²⁰⁸

Unlike the introduction of buttery hatches, however, it is difficult to gauge from the material remains of great houses how often the buttery doors were kept open, and when. It is quite possible that at the start of the sixteenth century, the butteries of religious houses were kept open at all hours. This is recalled with a trace of nostalgia in the unpublished notes for John Stow's *Survey of London* written sometime before 1598. The note recalls the Holy Trinity Priory in Aldgate, which stood before the dissolution, and the hospitality shown in the religious house:

In so moche that as eny man mowght come into theyr church to prayer, so mowght they enter the hall at meale tymes and fill theyr bellies, and at all tymes of the day come to the buttre and sellar and have breade and drinke, or to the kitchen in the fore none and require of the coke a peace of befe, which shuld be given hym roaste or sod on his knife or dagger's poynt, and so to beare it abrode, whither he would for himselfe and his frinds. The liberalite of this house, as I have hard and partely sene, is rather to be wondered at than reviled of them that have not sene the lyke a time prior to the dissolution.²⁰⁹

One is compelled to wonder why the evocative account is omitted from both the 1598 and 1603 editions of Stowe's *Survey*; perhaps he had desired not to offend a Protestant readership with nostalgic recollections of Catholic religious houses. Yet to some extent, Stow was entitled to his reminiscing, given that the dissolution had occurred during his lifetime. As a youth, Stow would walk to Aldgate every morning to collect milk from the nearby Convent of St. Clare, and most likely witnessed the liberality of the Priory of Holy Trinity during this period, before both religious houses were dissolved over Stow's teenage years.²¹⁰ Stow's recollection of all classes of person being admitted into the buttery to receive bread and beer at all times of the day was certainly at odds with general practise at the turn of the seventeenth century. Increasingly, the buttery door and hatch was being kept closed except for during certain appointed hours. The change is clearly visible in the Lambeth palace orders; while the 1566 orders instruct the butler to be ever present in the buttery in case he is called upon by a stranger, the 1611 orders instruct that:

the butler or under butler, be not out of the buttery from 8 of the clock in the morning untill 9, nor from 3 of the clock in the afternoon until

²⁰⁸ Quoted in: William McClung, *The Country House in English Renaissance Poetry* (California: University of California Press, 1977), 34.

²⁰⁹ BL Harley MS, 538, f. 48, quoted in: Stow, C. L Kingsford ed. *A Survey of London* (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1908), 291.

²¹⁰ John Stow was born in 1525 and the dissolution largely occurred between 1536-1540.

7, but that one of them be ever present there to serve all duties, and to answere all calls.²¹¹

At all other times, when the butler or underbutler was not in attendance, the buttery door would be locked.²¹² As such, the buttery would function in a manner quite similar to a canteen, being open during the two standard mealtimes (breakfast and dinner) and otherwise remaining closed. The practise seems to have also occurred in the houses of the gentry turned nobility; Lionel Cranfield's household orders for Chelsea house commands of the buttery that:

Thee doore, and barre must bee keptt shutt, saue at appointed howres, and such as at other tymes shall come must not stand knockinge nor bouncynge, but vpon callinge shall bee lett in, or haue all things conuenient deliuered bountifully drawne forth.²¹³

Cranfield's household orders are somewhat more explicit in commanding that, even when the buttery door was closed, the butler was still to answer if called upon.²¹⁴ Nevertheless, how familiar a stranger would have been with this changing code of conduct can only be estimated. From the numerous complaints about buttery doors being closed, it is clear that they were commonly understood as a sign that no succour would be given.

Whilst the moral critiques of the buttery hatch, or the reduced 'opening hours' of the buttery, were pitched in reaction to changing conventions; there is one symbol of neglecting hospitality which does not directly react to changes in English architectural conventions. This is the 'hidden buttery,' tucked away or concealed below stairs, largely encountered only in literature during the Elizabethan and Stuart period. It is first encountered in the allegorical house of master Avarice and dame Niggardliness, in Nash's *Pierce Penilesse* (1592). Nash described the house of these vices personified thusly:

The house (or rather the hell) where these two earthworms encaptived this beautiful substance was vast, large, strong built, and well furnished, all save the kitchen [...] So likewise of the buttery, for whereas in houses of such stately foundation, that are built to outward show so magnificent, every office is answerable to the hall, which is principal, there the buttery was no more but a blind coal-house under a pair of stairs, wherein (uprising and downlying) was but one single kilderkin of small beer, that would make a man, with a carouse of a spoonful, run through an alphabet of faces. Nor used they any glasses or cups (as other men), but

²¹¹ LPL MS884f 29v-30r, Item 1.

²¹² F30r states that they should leave their keys with the porter 'if any extraordinary occasion shall-require their absence.

²¹³ LPL MS3361f29.

²¹⁴ LPL MS3361f29, item 7. "[...] such as at other tymes shall come must not stand knockinge nor bouncynge, but upon callinge shal bee lett in."

only little farthing ounce boxes, whereof one of them, filled up with froth (in manner and form of an ale-house) was a meal's allowance for the whole household.²¹⁵

There is much semiological anxiety legible in the opening sentences. Nash suggests that houses 'of stately foundation' should be virtuous both inside and out; the 'outward show' of magnificence should signify internal signs of hospitality, signalled by each office being answerable to the main hall. Yet, in the house of avarice and niggardliness, there is a discrepancy between exterior and interior; outward show with little internal substance. This evident lack of hospitality in the interior is signalled in two spaces particularly: the kitchen (which will be discussed in the following section) and the buttery, which is 'no more but a blind coal-house under a pair of stairs.' It is not clear whether Nash means that the buttery was on the ground floor, but tucked below the rise of a set of stairs, or if the buttery was to be found in the basement at the bottom of said stairs. However, the implication that the buttery was not answerable to the hall, strongly suggests that it was at the bottom of a set of stairs and therefore well removed (and invisible) from the great hall. The gesture is particularly significant given the moral weight assigned to it by Nash. Indeed, it is particularly noteworthy that Nash describes the vicious characters of master Avarice and dame Niggardliness through describing their house; it is largely indicative of the semiological potential in architecture to signal both virtue and vice. Most pertinently, it indicated architecture's ability to signal both hospitality, and the lack thereof. In order for Nash to rely upon the notion, the basemented buttery as a symbol of poor hospitality may have already been well disseminated. Even if it was not; it would have seen a notable distribution through this text, which was one of the most popular pamphlets of the Elizabethan era.²¹⁶

Nash's description bears little resemblance to any English home known to have existed by the time of its publication.²¹⁷ Yet, it is quite possible that Nash was not addressing the English home, but was making reference to new conventions coming from Italy. The Italian origins of the basement buttery are strongly suggested by Henry Wotton in his *Elements* (1624) who writes:

²¹⁵ Thomas Nash, *Pierce Penilesse His Supplication to the Diuell. Describing the Ouer-Spreading of Vice, and the Suppression of Vertue* (London: Richard Jones, 1592), 10.

²¹⁶ Harrison, G. B. *Thomas Nashe, Pierce Penilesse, His Supplication to the Divell*. Corwen Press. 1924, unpaginated [introduction].

²¹⁷ Only one built example can be found from the years following. The curiously designed Lyveden New Bield (1604-1605) was planned to resemble a greek cross, and numerous contrivances were evidently made to accommodate this. The buttery seems to have been located in the basement of the east wing; a remarkably large room aligned with the basement, but no trace remains of the stairs by which it was assumedly accessed. As a garden lodge, it is naturally doubtful how much hospitable entertainment Lyveden was intended for; and this may answer for the consolidation of the buttery and cellar.

I haue marked a willingnesse, in the Italian Artisans, to destribute the Kychin, Pantrie, Bakehouse, washing Roomes: and euen the Buttrie likewise, vnder ground; but by the natural hospitality of England, the Buttery must be more visible.²¹⁸

What exactly Wotton was referring to when he described the butteries of Italian houses is unclear. Naturally, Italian houses consumed wine rather than beer, and Andrea Palladio in his *Quattro Libri* (1570) does specify that the 'cantine' should be in the basement, assumedly to preserve the quality of wine.²¹⁹ Yet no direct Italian equivalent for the English buttery really exists, at least as the locus of 'natural hospitality' as described by Wotton. However, between Nash and Wotton, although no butteries were hidden in basements (apart from the thoroughly peculiar Lyveden New Beld), there were some instances of butteries being displaced to less conspicuous locations. For instance, in some of the more audaciously modern designs by John Thorpe, the buttery does not answer directly to the great hall. One such plan very closely resembles a villa by Palladio for Francesco Pisani.²²⁰ While certain elements, especially the elevation, have been 'anglicised' by Thorpe, the buttery curiously faces a spinal corridor, becoming invisible from the hall (fig. 4.52). Likewise, Thorpe's plans for old Campden house (1613) (fig. 4.53) and Dorchester House (-1619) (fig. 4.54) have the same arrangement, and possibly Holland house (1605) (fig. 4.55), although the placement of doors in this plan is potentially unclear.²²¹ Even earlier, the split buttery doors of Ham House (1610) may have also been around the corner of the screen passage, facing the kitchen passage.²²² In all of these cases, the buttery door would have been much less visible from the front

²¹⁸ Henry Wotton, *The Elements of Architecture* (London: John Bill, 1624), 70.

²¹⁹ Palladio *Quattro Libri* (Sienna: Alessandro Mucci, 1790 [1570]), 108. (Lib.II.II.2) "Però lodo, che nella parte più bassa della fabbrica, la quale io faccio alquanto sotterra, siano disposte le cantine, i magazzini da legne, le dispense, le cucine, i tinelli, i luoghi da liscia, o bucata, i forni, e gli altri simili che all'uso quotidiano sono necessari." Also in Cap. 14 (p194) he notes a palace where "che va sotto terra per le cantine e simili usi."

²²⁰ See: Palladio, *I quattro libri dell'architettura*, lib. i cap. 14 p. 52. Also discussed in: John Summerson ed. *The Book of Architecture of John Thorpe in Sir John Soane's Museum* (Glasgow: R. Maclehose, 1966), T34.

²²¹ John Thorpe, *Book of Architecture* (Glasgow: Printed for the Walpole Society by R. Maclehose, University Press, 1966), T62, T96, T93. This may have been a development upon Thorpe's common gesture of placing a central buttery hatch along the screen passages, with the buttery access door facing the kitchen passage. If the buttery hatch was removed, it would leave only a single buttery door facing the kitchen passage which would operate at a hatch, bar, and door. However, it is possible that this omission may be the result of Thorpe's unpredictable drawing conventions.

²²² I visited Ham House on the 8th November 2024. There are two doors along the kitchen passage; the one closest to the hall most likely led to the buttery. It takes the form of a split-barn door; this implies that it also served as a hatch, reducing the need for a hatch leading from the hall. Curiously, however, this buttery door has no bar. There is a bar on the second door down the passage, which is also considerably smaller. The NT staff made reference to a rumour that it was upon this bar that the liveries were paid to staff- however I suspect this was more likely a pantry bar, similar to what can be seen in Knole or Hardwick Hall.

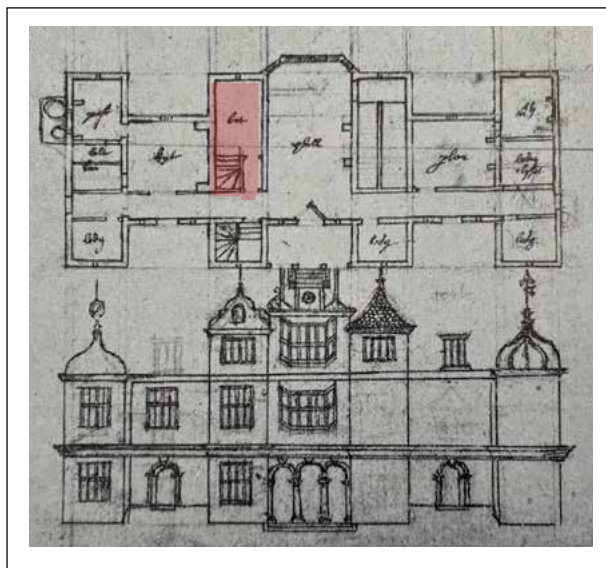


Figure 4.52: John Thorpe, T34i "Ground plan and elevation of a house" (Ink on paper, c.1590-c.1620). Published in: Thorpe, John Summerson ed. *The Book of Architecture* (Glasgow: R. Maclehose, 1966).

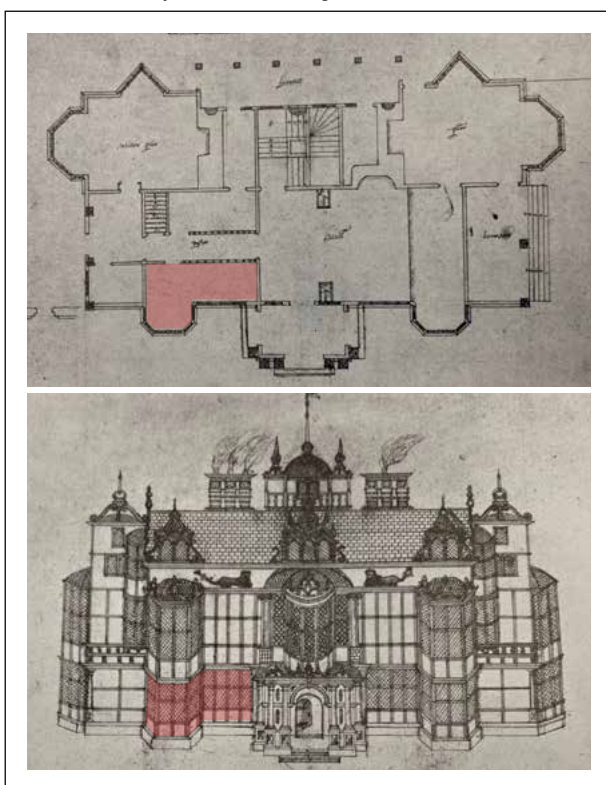


Figure 4.53: John Thorpe, T96 "elevation of a timber-frame house identifiable as Campden House, Kensington" (Ink over pencil on paper, c.1590-c.1620). Published in: Thorpe, Summerson ed., *The Book of Architecture*.

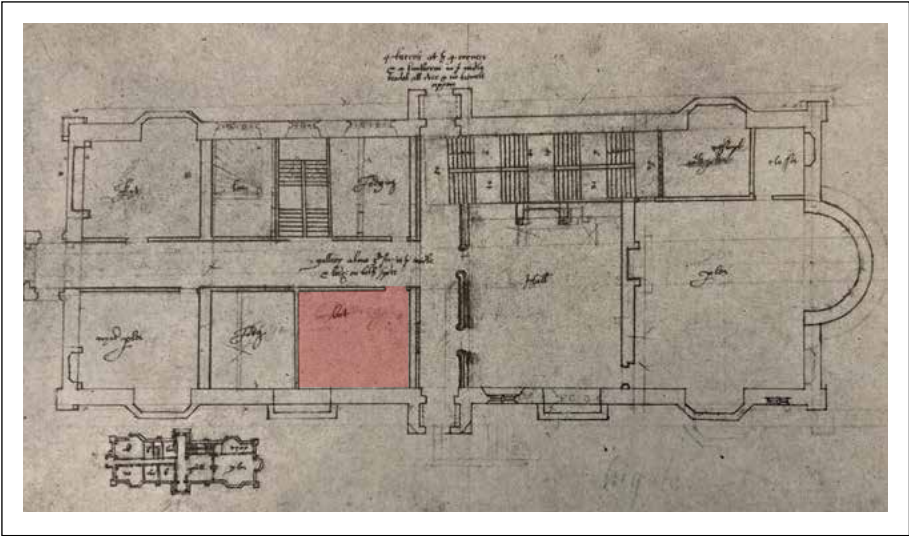


Figure 4.54: John Thorpe, T62 “Ground plan of Dorchester House, which stood at West Hill, Highgate” (Ink on paper, c.1590-c.1620). Published in: Thorpe, Summerson ed., *The Book of Architecture*.

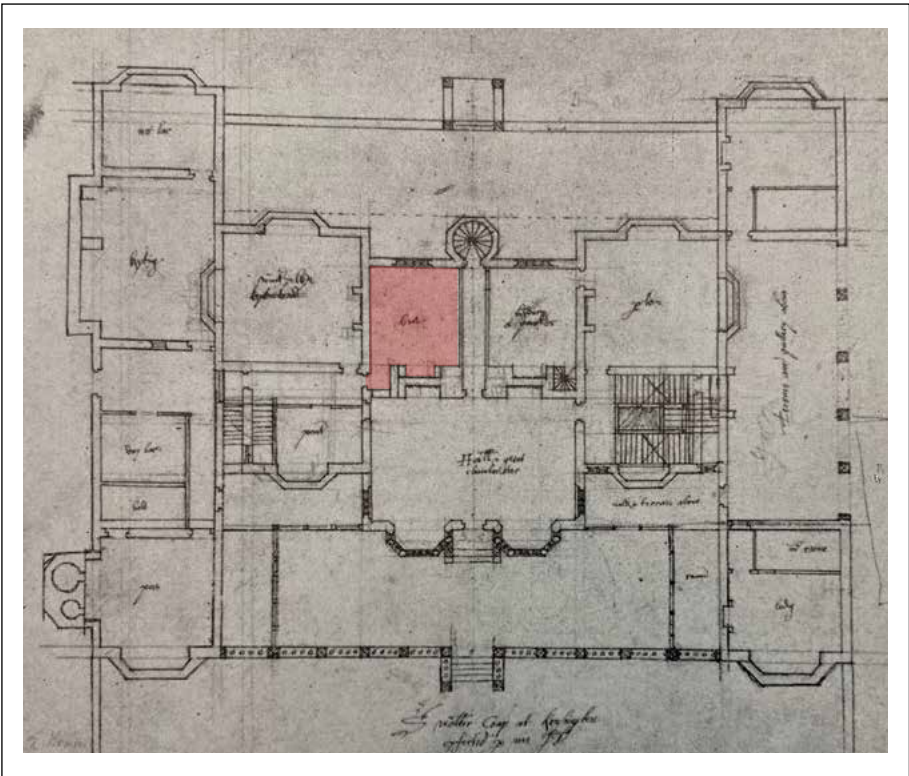


Figure 4.55: John Thorpe, T93 “Ground plan of a house, identifiable as Holland House, Kensington” (Ink on paper, c.1590-c.1620). Published in: Thorpe, Summerson ed., *The Book of Architecture*.

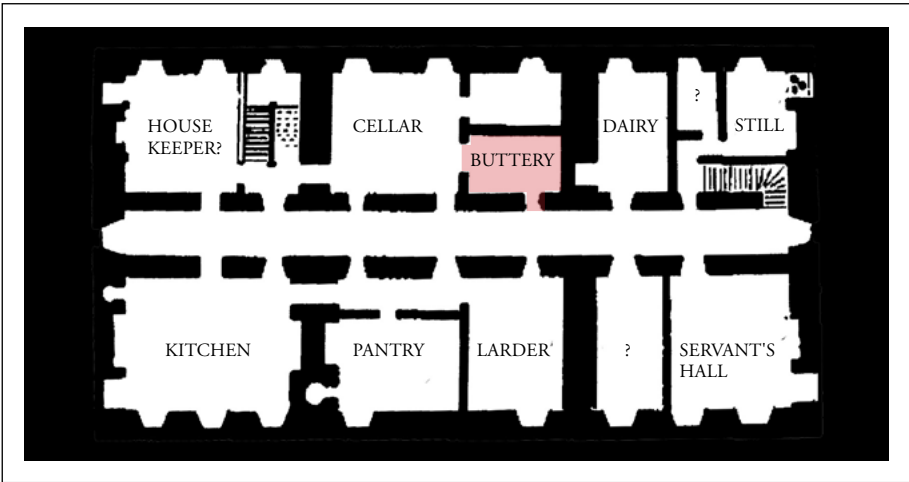


Figure 4.56: Sir Roger Pratt for Sir George Pratt, Basement plan for Coleshill house (Berkshire, c. 1650–62). Reproduced from: Oliver Hill and John Cornforth, *English Country Houses: Caroline 1625–1685* (London: Country Life by permission of the Hamlyn Group: 1966)

door, a gesture which was likely to confuse a stranger entering a house for the first time, if not helped by an usher.

Despite the moral weight given to the clearly visible, ground-floor buttery, the latter part of the seventeenth century did indeed see a concession to the Italian habit of hiding the buttery below stairs. The shift seems to happen quite suddenly over the Caroline period; Coleshill house (1658–62) is a notably early example (fig. 4.56). While Colehill's design is often attributed to Inigo Jones, the displacement of the buttery below stairs was explicitly aligned with the ethos of its main builder Roger Pratt.²²³ In his architectural notebooks (1660) Pratt describes how the ideal placement for convenient offices should be in a half-basement, writing:

[let] the kitchen and all lie together, and the buttery and cellar with theirs, etc. and all these to be disposed of in a half ground storey, with their backcourts, convenient to them; in that no dirty servants may be seen passing to and fro by those who are above, no noises heard, nor ill scents smelt.²²⁴

Evident in this passage is the increasing desire to segregate household staff out of view; a remarkable change in ideals from the beginning of the century when household staff would occupy the great hall of the house as a dining room

²²³ Cliffe, John Trevor. *The World of the Country House in Seventeenth-Century England* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999), 35. "The kitchen, buttery and pantry were usually on the ground floor, though at Coleshill House in Berkshire they were relegated to a basement."

²²⁴ Sir Roger Pratt, *The Architecture of Sir Roger Pratt, Charles II's Commissioner for the Rebuilding of London After the Great Fire: Now Printed for the First Time from His Note-Books* (Oxford: University press for B. Blom, 1928), 27.

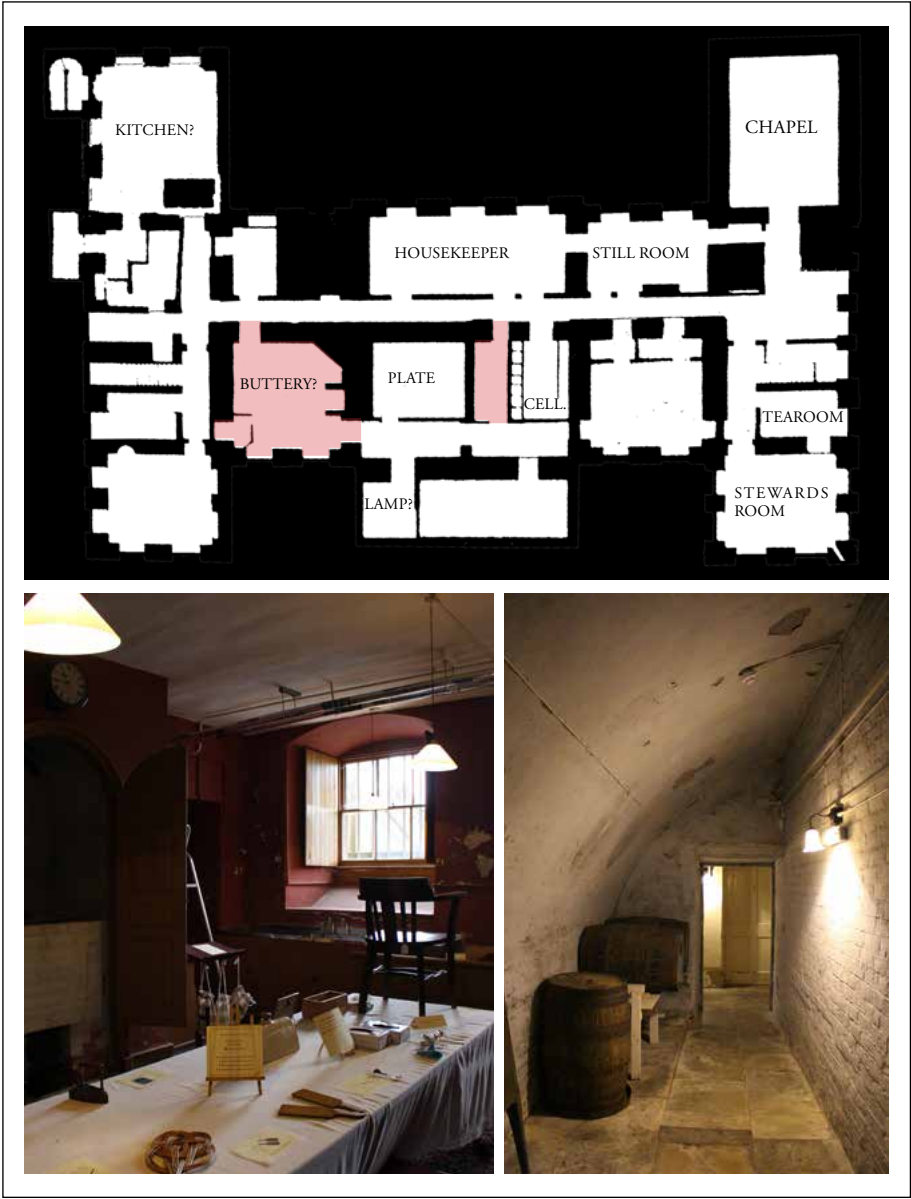


Figure 4.57: William Winde (indet.), Basement plan of Belton house (Lincolnshire, built 1685, now much altered). Redrawn by the author from an evacuation plan by the National Trust, 2024.

Figure 4.58: William Winde for Sir John Brownlow, Butler's pantry of Belton House (Lincolnshire, 1685–1688). Photograph by the author, 2024.

Figure 4.59: William Winde for Sir John Brownlow, Beer cellar of Belton House (Lincolnshire, 1685–1688). Photograph by the author, 2024.

twice a day. Moreover, there is evidently little concern for the accessibility of the buttery; whilst traditionally the buttery was in clear view upon entering the front door, for the benefit of strangers, Pratt's placement of the buttery suggests a notable shift in its usage. In describing the ideal buttery Pratt continues:

Let your buttery be within the common eating hall which is over against the kitchen and have the benefit of a cock and sink to cleanse all things there, as glasses, cups, the floor etc. The pipe of which may have a double neck, and be so placed that as one serves this place, so may the other the cellars that are within it.²²⁵

This is a buttery which acts primarily as a scullery, but also services the servant's eating hall, perhaps for the distribution of drink. The person of the 'stranger' is notably absent from Pratt's description, so too the tables and stools requisite for spontaneous entertainment. The typological shifts described by Pratt, therefore, were a clear indication that the buttery (which became increasingly known as a butler's pantry) had lost its utility as the locus of hospitable entertainment for strangers. The same arrangement could be found in Pratt's Horseheath Hall (1660) and also at Belton House (1685–1687), but centuries of subsequent renovations have left the basements much altered (fig. 4.57–59).²²⁶ It later spread throughout the rest of England, with surviving examples extant at Nostell Priory (1733–1746), and Wimpole Hall (1713–1716), amongst others.²²⁷

In comparing moralising texts with shifts in the architectural and social conventions surrounding the buttery, it is clear that once again, such literature often reacted against changes in convention. The buttery hatch is framed as a symbol of vice by Humphrey Braham well after its first instance had passed from living memory. Likewise, the unlocked and open buttery door was framed as a symbol of hospitality well after conventions to close the door outside of mealtimes had spread through numerous stately houses. The case of the basement buttery, while less engaged with pressing architectural transformations, can also be understood as reacting to a growing affection

²²⁵ Pratt, *The Architecture of Sir Roger Pratt*, 63.

²²⁶ Pratt, *The Architecture of Sir Roger Pratt*, 125. In his memorandum for horseheath Pratt notes: "I. The roomes on grownde at ye ende of ye Chappell, one of them for a Vestry &c. ye other a small wine seller, or chamber for a buttler, porter, or some others; or a small staire may bee carried up there to ye irst story, to come at ve studdy or chamber next ye court." Additionally, Belton's butler's pantry survives intact and is recorded by Historic England list entry for Belton no. 1235523. Along with a small annex to the beer cellar, both rooms are potential locations for the original buttery.

²²⁷ Frances Sands, *Nostell Priory: History of a House, 1730–85* (PhD Thesis: University of York, 2012) 77 'The room usage in most of the basement was directed by Paine, and includes the Servants Hall, the Butler's Pantry, the kitchen, now the Staff Room, the housekeeper's room, now the Pantry, and several bedchambers, now used as National Trust office;" Also, NT 206269 shows a plan for Wimpole. The plan shows the butler's pantry in the basement by 1840.

for Italian conventions to place hospitable offices in basement areas. Yet it is clear with the benefit of hindsight that such reactionary ideas were swimming against the tide. In its use and architectural disposition, the buttery rapidly determinedly diminished in prominence over the seventeenth century; transforming from a place of hospitality shown to strangers of all classes, with pride of place at the screens passage, to a nondescript scullery and storeroom hidden in the basement.

4.6.4 Kitchen

It is not difficult to imagine how the kitchen also became largely symbolic of hospitality. The provision of food was one of the foremost acts of hospitality, and to have food spare and food sufficient was expected of great houses. 'The first foundation of a good house must be the kitchen,' stated Richard Surfleet, in his 1616 translation of Charles Estienne's building manual *L'agriculture et maison rustique* (1564).²²⁸ Indeed, the Elizabethan house was 'planned around the stomach' and so it thus stands to reason that there is some contention in prominence between the hall and the kitchen during the late sixteenth century.²²⁹ While the hall was the ceremonial locus of the country house, the functional locus may well have been the kitchen. As such, the kitchen was expected to demonstrate hospitality. In a phenomenological sense, a noisy, smoky kitchen, warmed by a roaring fire and the odour of meat, gave the sensory signals of 'true hospitality.' Inversely, 'stately buildings [and] cold kitchens' signalled the absence of hospitality, as outlined by Thomas Lewis in *Demegoriai* (1600).²³⁰ The kitchen itself was sometimes the setting for performances of hospitality: John Stow recalled how any might wander into the kitchen of Holy Trinity Priory before noon and be given a piece of beef on the point of his blade to bring to his friends.²³¹ As for architectural semiology, the signs of a hospitable kitchen are laid out in detail by Wotton in his *Elements* (1624). The passage in question has already been discussed in relation to the buttery, but Wotton's comments on the difference between Italian and English kitchens are worth revisiting in full:

I haue marked a willingnesse, in the Italian Artisans, to destribute the Kychin, Pantrie, Bakehouse, washing Roomes: and euen the Buttrie likewise, vnder ground next aboue the Foundation, and sometimes Leuel with the plaine, or Floore of the Cellar: raysing the first Ascent into the

²²⁸ Richard Surfleet, *Maison Rustique, or The Countrey Farme. Compyled in the French Tongue by Charles Steuens, and Iohn Liebault, Doctors of Physicke. And Translated into English by Richard Surfleet, Practitioner in Physicke.* (London: Adam Islip, 1616), 3; Charles Estienne, *L'agriculture et maison rustique* (Paris: Jaques du Puis, 1564).

²²⁹ Mark Girouard, *Elizabethan Architecture: Its Rise and Fall, 1540-1640* (London: Yale University Press for the Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art, 2009), 62.

²³⁰ Lewis, *Demegoriai*, unpaginated [Img. 59 notes].

²³¹ BL Harley MS, 538, f. 48.

house Fifteene Foote or more for that Ende, which besides the benefit of remouing such Annoyes out of sight, and the gayning of so much more roome aboue, doth also by eleuation of the Front, adde Maiestie to the whole Aspect [...] But the Definition (aboue determined) doth call vs to some consideration of our owne Countrie, where though all the other pettie Offices (before rehearsed) may well enough bee so remote, yet by the naturall Hospitalitie of England, the Buttrie must be more visible and wee neede perchance for our Raunges, a more spacious and luminous Kitchin, then the foresaid Compartition will beare.²³²

Wotton, for the most part, is not devoted to moralising; nor are his architectural views exclusively reactionary. However, in this section, Wotton parrots a nostalgic vision of specifically English hospitality, which ran largely contrary to the turn of the tide. This is the only point in the *Elements* at which Wotton quietens his endorsement of Italianate classicism out of concern for a national vernacular, a decision which sits strangely within the architectural views of the time. Basement kitchens had been built in England for half a century before Wotton made this statement; numerous examples had arisen across the country which could not be attributed to Italian influence. Wotton's particular insistence upon 'the naturall hospitalitie of England' was less connected to such architectural developments, and much more reminiscent of Stuart propaganda. As a diplomat, Wotton had learnt the importance of currying favour with James I, who was pushing a nostalgic and nationalistic image of English hospitality at the time.²³³ Wotton's phrasing perfectly mimics the polemic adopted by James on hospitality, despite the fact that it placed him at odds with the architectural thinking of his contemporaries. Most notable amongst them was Inigo Jones, who endorsed the Palladian gesture of basemented services, and was largely responsible for bringing the basement kitchen into the mainstream. Over the following section, this argument will be expanded upon in full.

The basemented kitchen had already seen an English introduction long before Wotton's text. Gaging its popularity was a question of definition; there were numerous kitchens with a floor sunk below ground level, but which did so to allow for greater height and luminosity, often rising two or three levels upwards. The most prominent examples of this were Somerset (1549-1598), Theobalds (1564-1584) (fig. 4.60), Longleat (1568-1580), Hardwick (1587-1596) (fig.

²³² Wotton, *The Elements of Architecture*, 71. Wotton provides as an example the Villa Barbaro (1560-1570) by Palladio, a curious choice given that the principle floor of the Villa Barbaro is raised upon a central entrance stair; the basement is actually the result of a gradual level change; the site sloping downwards away from a fairly level front elevation. See: Ottavio Bertotti Scamozzi, *Le fabbriche e i disegni di Andrea Palladio* (Vicenza: Francesco Modena, 1776), 178: 'Villa Barbaro Maser sezione.'

²³³ Adolphus Ward, *Sir Henry Wotton, a Biographical Sketch* (Westminster: Archibald Constable, 1898), 76; 87-88; 118-119. Outlines how, over Wotton's time as a diplomat, he had long relied on James' favour to win diplomatic positions.

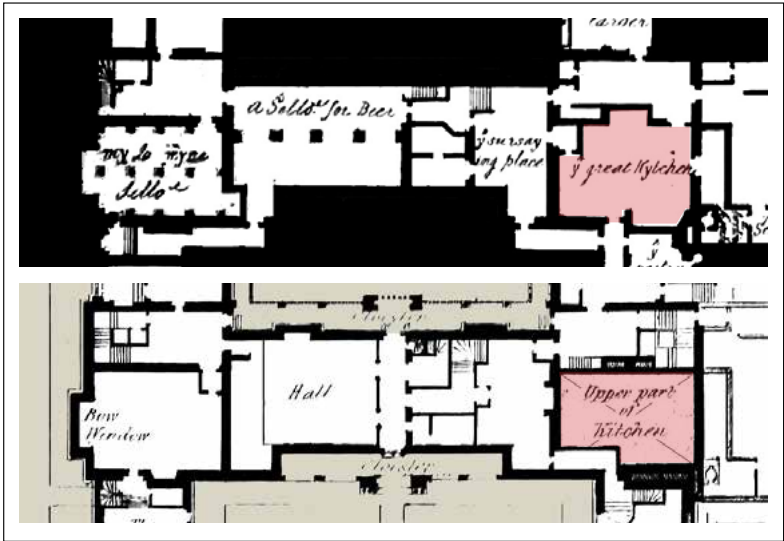


Figure 4.60: Charles James Richardson “Basement and ground floor plans of Theobalds in Hertfordshire.” Published in: C.J. Richardson, *Architectural Remains of the reign of Elizabeth I and James I* (London : C.J. Richardson, 1840), pl.10. Edited by the author.

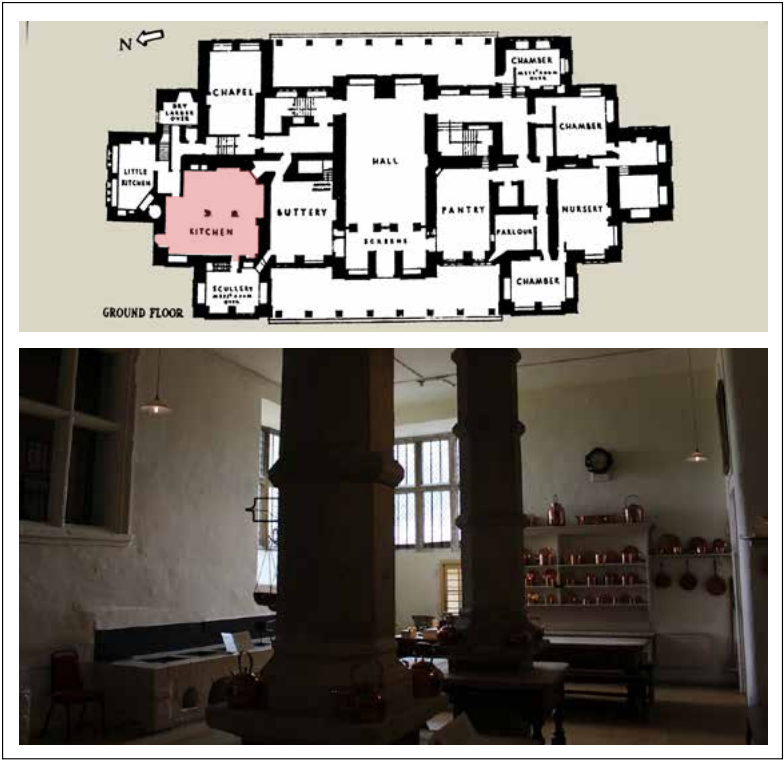


Figure 4.61: David N. Durant and Philip Riden “Basement plan of new Hardwick Hall.” Published in: *The Building of Hardwick Hall. Part 2: The New Hall, 1591–98, Vol 9* (Derbyshire Record Society, 1984), fig.1. Edited by the author.

Figure 4.62: Robert Smythson for Elizabeth of Hardwick, Kitchen of new Hardwick Hall (Derbyshire, 1587 -1596), Photograph by the author, 2024.

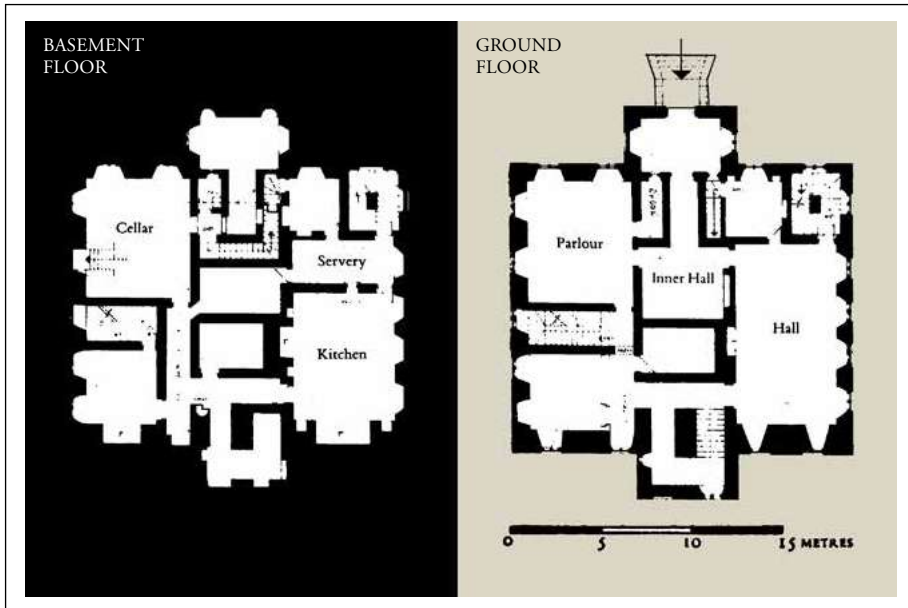


Figure 4.63: Mark Girouard, "Shireoaks Hall 1612 - 1617 A reconstruction of the ground and first-floor plans." Published in: Robert Smythson and the Elizabethan Country House (London: Yale University Press, 1983) fig. 6. Edited by the author.

4.61-62), Charlton (1607-1612), and Wimbleton (1617), all containing kitchens sufficiently spacious so as not to feasibly neglect hospitality.²³⁴ If, however, a basemented kitchen was taken to mean a kitchen wholly contained within a basement floor, examples are considerably rarer. The earliest known example is Whitehall house in Shropshire (1582), most likely the result of the house's very compact lodge plan.²³⁵ Yet, the habit quickly spread to larger houses; Thomas Hewitt, who grew up in Whitehall house, later went on to build another basement kitchen in Shireoaks hall (1617) (fig. 4.63).²³⁶ The trend was also disseminated both by notable architects such as Smythson and Thorpe, and also through the fashionable influence emanating from London. In London, along the Strand, both Great Salisbury house (1601) and Northampton House (1609) have kitchens wholly contained in the basement.²³⁷

²³⁴ The largeness of two kitchens in particular are emphasised in secondary literature. For Somerset house, see: Mark Girouard, *Robert Smythson and the Elizabethan Country House* (London: Yale University Press, 1983), 59. For Wimbedon see: Nicholas Cooper, *Houses of the Gentry: 1480-1680* (New Haven, Conn: Yale University Press, 1999), 137.

²³⁵ Cooper, *Houses of the Gentry*, 308.

²³⁶ Historic England Listing: 1370408 "Shireoaks Hall, Thorpe Lane."

²³⁷ In the case of Salisbury house, no kitchen can be seen in the ground floor plan of 1601. The extremely contained plot suggests that there were county restrictions, necessitating some services to be displaced downstairs. The plans are reproduced in: Manolo Guerri, "Salisbury House in London, 1599-1694.: The Strand Palace of Sir Robert Cecil," *Architectural History* 52 (January 2009): 31-78. This is also the case for Northampton house, where there is also a flight of stairs in lieu of a kitchen passage, strongly suggesting that that kitchen is downstairs. Smythson's 1604

Close to London, Ham Hall (1610) also had a basemented kitchen, and John Thorpe also considered moving the kitchen beneath the winter parlour in Holland House (1605).²³⁸ Besides Thorpe, Robert Smythson also seems to have had a part to play in popularising the basement kitchen; his Barlborough Hall (1583-1584) (fig. 4.62-3) and Chastleton house (1602-1612) (fig. 4.66-68) have wholly basemented kitchens which are placed at the cold and dark northern end of the basement.²³⁹ The latter example survives in part today; being around 270cm high, the space remains dimly lit and poorly ventilated, and one may imagine that lighting the hearth would quickly fill the small space with a suffocating melange of heat, smoke, and moisture (fig. 4.66). Heath Old Hall (1585) also has a wholly basemented kitchen, being a house of fairly compact plan.²⁴⁰

Given that several basement kitchens could be found in most parts of England by the time Wotton wrote his *Elements* (1624), one is compelled to question why the basemented kitchen is still framed as a continental curiosity contrary to traditional English hospitality. In numerous ways, the notion parroted the nationalistic and nostalgic image of hospitality painted by James I only a few years earlier in a speech to Star Chamber on the 20th of June 1616:

But let us in Gods name leave these idle forein toyes, and keep the old fashion of England: for it was wont to be the honour and reputation of the English Nobility and Gentry, to live in the Countrey, and keep hospitalitie; for which we were famous above all the Countreys in the World; which we may the better do, having a soil abundantly fertile to live in.²⁴¹

Wotton may be credited with giving an architectural form to this exceptionalist articulation of hospitality; the polemical form is remarkably similar. James' praise of England's fertile soil is echoed in Wotton's appeal to 'the naturall hospitalitie of England;' and James' denigration of 'idle foreign toyes' is echoed in Wotton's dismissal of 'Italian artisans' and their inventions. This was not an isolated occurrence; the recurring notion of the English vernacular kitchen largely exposed the exceptionalist elements within the reactionary discourse around hospitality. Most of the continent was implicated. Humphrey Braham partially blamed the decline of hospitality on kitchens filled with 'flanders

plan can be found at RIBA29112 (SD201/SMY/I/12).

²³⁸ Thorpe, *Book of Architecture*, T93. The drawing is identified as a proposed renovation in: Nicholas Cooper, "Holland House, Architecture in an Elite Society," *Architectural History* 63 (ed 2020): 37-75.

²³⁹ Pamela A. Sambrook and Peter Brears, *The Country House Kitchen 1650-1900* (The History Press, 2010), 37. Discusses both Barlborough and Chastleton. The plans of Barlborough can be found in: Pete Smith, "Barlborough Hall, Derbyshire," *Architectural History* 61 (2018): 4. The reproduced basement plans come from 1815 and can be found in the Locker-Lampson Collection. The kitchen is identifiable by the large hearth, visible at on the dark northern end of the house.

²⁴⁰ Sambrook and Brears, *The Country House Kitchen*, 37.

²⁴¹ Dalechamp, *Christian Hospitalitie*, 125.

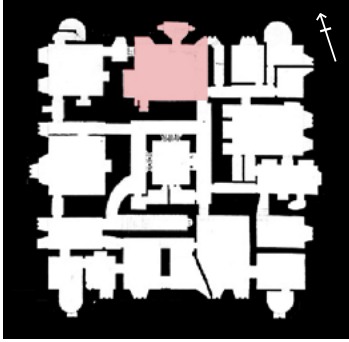


Figure 4.64: Pete Smith, "Lindley, Woodhead & Hurst, plan of basement level of Barlborough Hall in 1815" Published in: "Barlborough Hall, Derbyshire," *Architectural History* 61 (January 2018): 4, edited by the author.



Figure 4.65: Jessica Dallison (indet.), Barlborough Hall Kitchen (digital photograph, 2020). Published in: the *Derbyshire Times* "Take a look inside this 'historically important' Derbyshire Tudor hall" Published 27th Feb

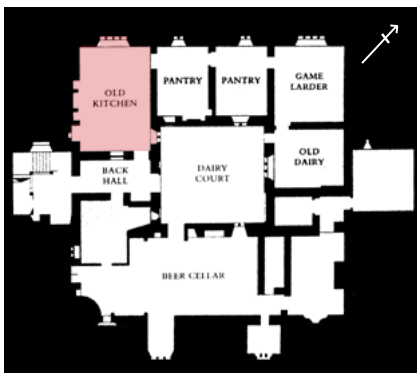


Figure 4.66: Robert Smythson (indet.) for Walter Jones, Chastleton House basement kitchen (Oxfordshire, 1607–1612). Photograph by the author, 2024.

Figure 4.67: Kathryn Ferry, Basement Plan of Chastleton House. Published in: Chastleton House: National Trust Guidebook (National Trust, 2013), i. 2020, 15:30 BST



Figure 4.68: Robert Smythson (indet.) for Walter Jones, Chastleton House north wall (Oxfordshire, 1607–1612). Photograph by the author, 2024.

cookes' charging exorbitant wages.²⁴² Likewise, Donald Lupon blamed the 'french cooke in the kitching,' a notion later repeated by Davenant in his entertainment at Rutland house.²⁴³ As for French architecture, it seems that their kitchens were too meagre for English tastes, as demonstrated in *Maison rustique, or The countrey farme* (1616) which was 'translated reuiued, corrected, and augmented with diuers large additions' by Richard Surflet from a 1564 original.²⁴⁴ One notable addition is made concerning the kitchen, where Surflet expands the kitchen into the 'salette' and appends numerous other specification which read:

His Kitchin shall be raysed two or three steps about the ground, to the end it may be freed of the moisture wherewith the Court aboundeth in Winter: it must also be high built and great, to the end that the floore lying next aboue may not be so subiect to the danger of the fire, and to the end that all his friends and seruants may at all times easily bestow themselues therein. The Ouen shall be set without the roome, hauing the mouth in the inner side of the chimney of the said Kitchin, and lower than the Mantle-tree, not farre aboue the Hearth. At the entrance of the said Kitchin, and in such place thereof as shall be least subiect to the Sunne, and most coole, you shall haue a Dairie-house or small vaulted Roome paued.²⁴⁵

None of these specifications can be found in the French original. Even in describing a fairly rustic countryside house, Surflet feels the need to prescribe a more dedicated and prominent kitchen than the French original suggests. These alterations seem to preempt the qualities which Wotton identified with the English vernacular kitchen; namely that it should be kept above ground and built high and great.²⁴⁶

It should be questioned to what extent these stereotypes were true, as there were several texts from the continent which displayed an overt concern for an ample kitchen. In fact, the concern for an ample kitchen was echoed

²⁴² Braham, *The institucion of a gentleman*, unpaginated [G.iiir].

²⁴³ Lupton, *London and the Countrey*, 101; Davenant, *The First Days Entertainment*, 55.

²⁴⁴ Richard Surflet, *Maison Rustique, or The Countrey Farme. Compyled in the French Tongue by Charles Steuens, and Iohn Liebault, Doctors of Physicke. And Translated into English by Richard Surflet, Practitioner in Physicke Now newly reuiued, corrected, and augmented, with diuers large additions, out of the works of Serres his Agriculture* (London: Adam Islip, 1616).

²⁴⁵ Surflet, *Maison Rustique*, 16. For the sake of comparison, the equivalent french section can be found at: Charles Estienne, *L'agriculture et maison rustique* (Paris: par Jaques du Puis, 1564), 7. It reads "Le logis pour vostre fermier sera bien basti, à costé du portail à main senestre: & prendra iour sur la rue vers l'asserà, nonobstant que ses croisées seront sur la cour au Leuant: son four aura saillie hors le bastiment, & resortira la gueule dans la salette, pres du foyer, & aura la blutterie au dessus. A senestre de l'entrée de ladite salette y aura vn bouge, pour les laistages de la fermière." Interestingly, while the french version also mentions a 'cuisine,' surflet also replaces the french 'salette' with 'kitchen.'

²⁴⁶ Wotton, *Elements*, 70. 'spacious and luminous.'

in a French text well preceding the seventeenth century; La Noue's *Discours politiques et militaires* (1587), where he writes:

When Fryer Iohn of Antomeures (who was one of the pleasantest Monckes of his tyme) entred into any of these so stately houses or Castles, finding but a leane kitchin, he vsed to say. Oh! to what purpose are all these goodly Towers, Galleries, Chambers, Halles and Closets, sith the cauldrons are so colde and the sellers so emptie? By the Popes worthie pantofle, I had rather dwell vnder a small rooffe, and out of my chamber heare the melodie of the spits, smell the sauour of the rost, and see my cubbord garnished with flagons, pots and goblets, then to dwell in these great Pallaces, to take large walkes and picke my teeth feasting after the neopolitaine maner.²⁴⁷

La Noue's text uses polemical tropes which are uncannily similar to those in England; his multisensory language, his elevation of function over appearance, and his love of rusticity all feel remarkably familiar. The text is one which casts doubt on whether the reactionary discourse on kitchens, and indeed hospitality, was exceptionally English at all. La Noue's shared suspicion of Italian habits is also noteworthy; in reality there arose varying schools of thought concerning the approach to the kitchen in Italy over the turn of the seventeenth century. Vincenzo Scamozzi was explicit in specifying an ample kitchen in *l'idea dell'architettura universale* (1616), writing:

The form of kitchens is much better when they are somewhat long and large rather than small, so that they may hold enough and there be space for the various needs. They should be of good height, and vaulted, so that they do not heat up easily, nor that the smoke—whether from the fire or from the things being cooked—be blinding.²⁴⁸

Scamozzi's approach can be seen in his Villa Molin (1597), where the kitchen is not in the basement, but on the ground floor, originally raised by a few steps off ground level. This was not the principal floor, but served as a tall rusticated plinth on which the *piano nobile* could stand.²⁴⁹ Within, it was fully vaulted in order to support the stone floors of the floor above.

²⁴⁷ La Noue, *The Politicke and Militarie Discourses of the Lord de La Nouue*, trans. Edward Aggas (London: Thomas Orwin, 1587), 107.

²⁴⁸ Vincenzo Scamozzi, *L'idea della Architettura Universale*, Lib. III, Cap. XIX. "La forma delle cucine torna molto bene, che sia alquanto lunga, e grande che picciola, acciò siano capaci, e vi sia spatio per le bisogno; di buona altezza, e in volto, acciò che non si riscaldino facilmente, né acciechi il fumo, o del fuoco, o delle cose che si cuceno."

²⁴⁹ Scamozzi, *L'idea della architettura*, 274 [I, Lib. VIII, Cap. XIII] "This building is two storeys in height: the first is raised somewhat above the ground, accessible from all four sides, and laid out in squared bays. There are some ordinary rooms, and the kitchen, pantries, and other domestic offices, all vaulted, so that the entire floor above is securely supported and freely accessible to the masters of the house." ["...e vi sono alcune stanze ordinarie, e la Cucina, dispense, & altre officine della casa, e fatte in volto, affine che tutto il piano di sopra resti sicuro, e libero ad uso de' padro-

So where did Wotton get his ideas about the Italian enthusiasm for basemented kitchens? The most likely source is Palladio's *Quattro Libri* (1570) with which Wotton was notably familiar.²⁵⁰ The language Palladio uses to describe the spaces of necessity is clearly dismissive. He writes in book one:

we ought to put the principal and considerable parts in places most seen, and the less beautiful in places as much hidden [nascoste] from the eye as possible; that in them may be lodged all the foulness [bassezze] of the house. I approve, therefore, that in the lowest part [bassa] of the fabric, which I make somewhat underground, may be disposed the cellars, the magazines for wood, pantries, kitchens, servants' halls, wash-houses, ovens, and such like things necessary for daily use.²⁵¹

In the Italian original, Palladio draws a semantic link between the *bassezza* (baseness) of domestic functions with the *parte più bassa* (lowest part) of the house, rendering natural and necessary the lowness of utilitarian spaces. The approach is materialised, for example, in his Villa Rotunda (1567-1590), a work otherwise similar to Scamozzi's Villa Molin, but where the basement floor is considerably lower, and far less generously fenestrated.²⁵² It was this tendency to 'hide' services which was directly opposed by Wotton, who insisted that the visibility of services was distinctive to the English way of life.

The thought may not only have arisen in opposition to Palladio, but also to the rapidly developing architectural thought of Inigo Jones. Jones and Wotton were close; at least enough for Jones to visit the Veneto on Wotton's recommendation in 1613-1614, during which Jones came into possession of Palladio's *Quattro Libri*.²⁵³ Yet, Jones's annotations within the section dealing with kitchens displays far less concern than Wotton with adapting the Palladian style to English semiologies of hospitality. Jones' annotates a paraphrased translation in his copy of the *Quattro Libri*, writing in the margins:

Best Comparason to a mans boddi. the most butiful partes of mans boddy most exposed to sight so in building . in the Partes vnderground Sellors woodhouses kicchens and all such Places of dayly youse [,] of this

ni."]

²⁵⁰ Wotton was English Ambassador to Venice three times between 1604 and 1624, and he encouraged Inigo Jones to visit the Veneto in 1613-1614. Details of Wotton's mission can be found in his entry in the ODNB (1885-1900). Jones' visit to Wotton is discussed in: Eileen Harris, *British Architectural Books and Writers 1556-1785* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 499-503.

²⁵¹ Quoted in: Sambrook and Brears, *The Country House Kitchen*, 37.

²⁵² I visited the Villa Rotunda on the 14th of July 2024; the kitchen is at the corner of the basement and can be seen through two small windows on the basement floor. The interior is small but vaulted.

²⁵³ Inigo Jones, *Inigo Jones on Palladio: Being the Notes by Inigo Jones in the Copy of I Quattro Libri Dell'Architettura Di Andrea Palladio, 1601, in the Library of Worcester College, Oxford* (Newcastle: Oriel Press, 1970), preface.

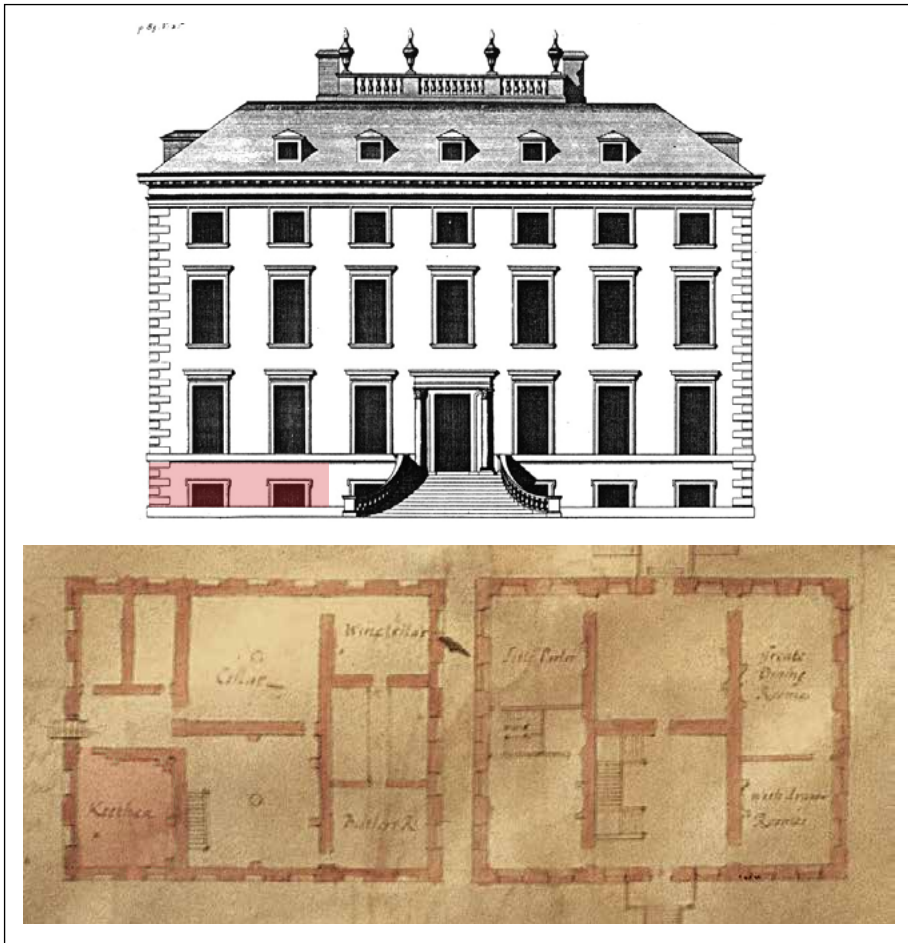


Figure 4.69: Colen Cambell "The Elevation of Chevening House in Kent." Published in: Vitruvius Britannicus, vol. II. (London: Printed and sold by the author, 1717), C. 2, PL. 85.

Figure 4.70: unknown draftsman, Basement and Ground floor plan of Chevening (pencil, ink, and wash on paper), from the archives of the Chevening Estate. Published in: Andor Gomme, 'Chevening: the big issues', *The Georgian Group Journal*, Vol. XIV, 2004, 177.

Commes 2 commodities first the Part aboufe is free secondly by reason of fiers underneath yt is more holsum.²⁵⁴

There is evidence that Inigo Jones put this reading to good use in the following decades. Jones' Chevening House (1617-1630) has a completely basemented kitchen (fig. 4.69-70). It is described in detail by Roger North after the restoration as being served by stairs 'for servants' leading down from the withdrawing room and from the common parlour.²⁵⁵ Similarly, Stoke park

²⁵⁴ Jones, *Notes in I Quattro Libri*, Lib. II. ii [On the division of rooms].

²⁵⁵ Roger North, *Of Building: Roger North's Writings on Architecture* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981), 72. "The design is a room of entrata, where the great staires rise to the summit of the house, and so open to the middle room above also. On each side a room, the right hand is the withdrawing

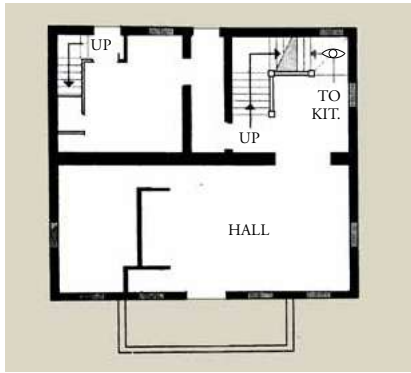


Figure 4.71: Follower of Inigo Jones (indet.), Elevation of Lodge Park (Gloucestershire, 1633–1634). Photograph by the author, 2024.

Figure 4.73: Follower of Inigo Jones (indet.), Kitchen stairs of Lodge Park (Gloucestershire, 1633–1634). Photograph by the author, 2024.

Figure 4.72: National Trust, Ground floor plan of Lodge Park. Redrawn by the author based on plans for the intruder detection system.

Figure 4.74: Follower of Inigo Jones (indet.), Basement kitchen of Lodge Park (Gloucestershire, 1633–1634). Photograph by the author, 2024.

(1629–35) had a remarkably broad basement floor which had ample space for a kitchen along the central axis of the house.²⁵⁶ Ancaster house (1638–1641) also has a wholly basemented kitchen. The habit was also largely taken up by contemporary followers of Jones; William Samwell's design for Ashburnham House (c. 1660) closely follows Jonesian models with its basement kitchen; so too does the architect of Lodge Park (c. 1630).²⁵⁷ The kitchens at Lodge park are especially small, being unvaulted and lit by two narrow windows on the wall opposite the ranges (fig. 4.74). However, this was just as likely due to the general compactness of the house as it was to any diminishing concern about the furnishing of kitchens.

When viewed in the context of typological changes in English kitchen design over the seventeenth century, Wotton's comments could feasibly trigger some moral panic. Wotton's elevation of the large, luminous kitchen as a sign of England's 'natural hospitality,' and his denouncement of basement services as an Italian habit, ran decidedly against the trend charted by the previous forty years of architectural development. It is likely that Wotton reflected the views of a larger reactionary tendency at court, who had every reason to reaffirm traditional 'feudal' values (such as hospitality) in light of a growing anti-monarchical sentiment.²⁵⁸ To such moralising eyes, an innocuous and fairly established gesture, such as the basemented kitchen, could become a sign of political ills floating over from the Venetian republic upon Palladio's *Quattro Libri*, causing the erosion of traditional English values, and a general decay in the relationship between classes.

4.6.5 Gates

As has been mentioned concerning the buttery door, portals between class-based spaces had immense symbolic potential in the early modern imagination. It was frequently asserted during the early Stuart period that unlocked or open gates signalled hospitality, whilst gates which were built strong, high, locked, and closed, symbolised the neglect of hospitality. The trope was laid out in its fullest by the author of *This Worlds folly* (1615), writing under the initials I.H., who recounts:

room, and the left, passing a stair downe to the kitchen, for servants"

²⁵⁶ Colen Campbell, *Vitruvius Britannicus, or, The British Architect: Containing the Plans, Elevations, and Sections of the Regular Buildings, Both Publick and Private, in Great Britain* (London: Colen Campbell, 1715), C. 3, PL. 9. Judging by the location of the main hearth, the kitchen was most likely at the centre rear of the house, but no labels are provided in the plan and little remains of the house today.

²⁵⁷ Albert Edward Richardson, *London Houses from 1660 to 1820. A Consideration of Their Architecture and Detail* (London: B. T. Batsford, 1911, 1911), 25–27. The architect for Lodge park may have been Balthazar Gerbier (d 1663).

²⁵⁸ James O'Neil, "Sir Henry Wotton, Jacobean Diplomat: The Early Career to 1612" (PhD thesis, Loyola University Chicago, 1982), 114–115.

In those Golden Times of yore, Charity was the rich mans Idoll: for they did emulate each other, in supplying the widdowes wants, in comforting the orphans miseries, and in refreshing the trauellers wearines; and it was their earthly Summum bonam to bee open hearted and handed to each hungry stranger; this Inscription commonly engraueed vppon the front of their gates: Porta patens esto, nulli clauderis honesto, O gate, stand ope to all, be shut against none: But in these our moderne dayes, they can cunningly transpose the poynt, and thus peruert the sense: Porta patens esto nulli, clauderis honesto, Stand open (Gate) to none, be shut gainst all. [...] onely to lay the Basis of their Babell-out-brauing Pallaces.²⁵⁹

There are two literary tropes, which are by now familiar, that are worth drawing out as they pertain to the imagery of the gate. The first is the typical dichotomy drawn between architecture and virtue, where the largeness and architectural elaboration of the house and its gate stood contrary to hospitality. The second is this idea of openness, a trope which was also used in the discourse surrounding the buttery door, and insisted on open portals symbolising the *caritas* which traversed class-based spatial divisions. The latter will be discussed in particular detail, as this image of a gate perpetually open for all classes to freely pass through was little more than a fantasy. It was also a piece of semiotic misdirection; poor relief could happen to varying degrees irrespective of the openness of the gates. Indeed, the author's concern with inscriptions and openness stem from a desire for hospitality to be symbolised – whether this symbolism was performed was decidedly another matter. To prove this, the nostalgic image of the open gate needs to be contextualised within the conventional performance of hospitality in the Elizabethan and early Stuart period; this is the primary aim of the following section.

Only one year before the complaint in *This Worlds folly*, the Protestant preacher Thomas Adams gave a sermon in Paul's Cross outlining the 'white devil' of numerous hypocrisies which had gripped England. In it, he complained of 'braue gates, but neuer open; sumptuous par-lours, for Owles & Bats to flie in [...] Would not a lesse house, haue serued thee for better hospitality?'²⁶⁰ The image was an evocative one; and used the symbolism of the gate to good effect. The tall and strongly built gate, when closed, served to definitively shut out the poor and needy. Yet, the verity of this image should be questioned; an overview of the typological changes in gate design reveal that by Adams' time, gates were generally decreasing in prominence.

While late medieval and Tudor courtyard-plan houses often had a gatehouse integrated into volume of the house itself, the gradual decline of the courtyard plan over the sixteenth century saw the gatehouse gradually relegated

²⁵⁹ I. H., *This worlds Folly Or A Warning-Peece Discharged Vpon the Wickednesse Thereof* (London: William Iaggard, 1615), unpaginated [img. 10].

²⁶⁰ Thomas Adams, *The White Devil*, (London: Thomas Purfoot, 1614), 4.

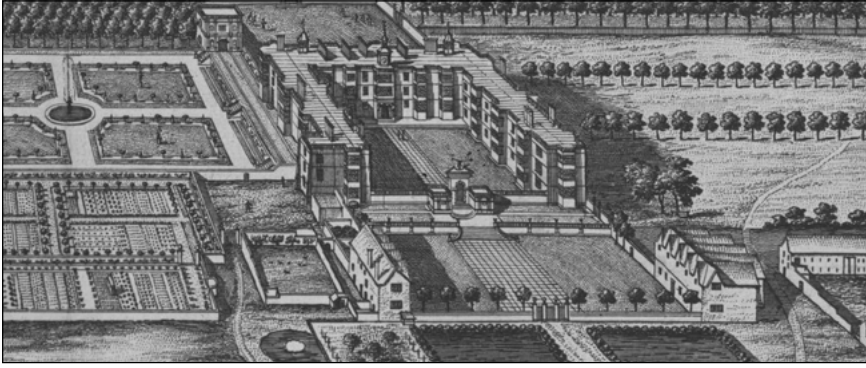


Figure 4.75: Engraved by Joannes Kip after Leonard Knyff, "Temple Newsam the seat of the right honourable Arthur Lord Ingram Viscount." *Britannia illustrata or views of several of the royal palaces as also of the principal seats of the nobility and gentry of Great Britain* (London, 1707), 42.



Figure 4.76: Unknown Artist "Prospect of Burton Constable from the East" (Oil on Canvas, 1685). From the collection of Burton Constable, Photograph by the author, 2024.

to an outer wall or entrance court.²⁶¹ These gatehouses generally shrink in size over the Elizabethan and Stuart period, as the need for fortified country houses gradually decreased.²⁶² During the Stuart period, the demesne immediately to the fore of the masonry gate also came to be enclosed with a smaller gate, demarcating an additional formal lawn or forecourt. This can be seen in depictions of Temple Newsam (fig. 4.75) and Burton Constable (fig. 4.76) from the second half of the seventeenth century. It is assumed that any necessary performances of hospitality outside the house, would occur in this forecourt, where the main gates would serve as a demonstrative backdrop for domestic ceremonial. Moreover, it is assumed that the porter was primarily responsible

²⁶¹ Paula Henderson, *The Tudor House and Garden: Architecture and Landscape in the Sixteenth and Early Seventeenth Centuries* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005), 48.

²⁶² Henderson, *The Tudor House*, 53. "This may be partly explained by greater security, the prevailing atmosphere of confidence that would have been contradicted by a more forbidding entrance"

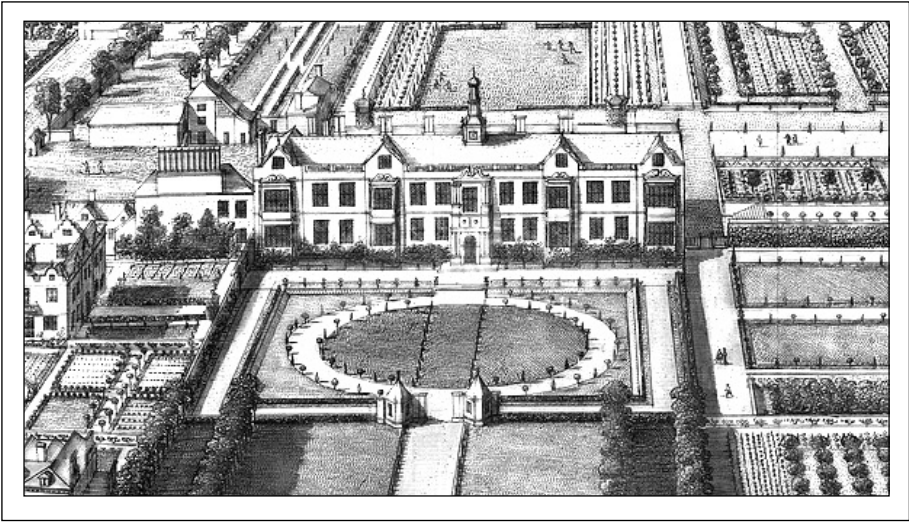


Figure 4.77: Engraved by Joannes Kip after Leonard Knyff, "Chelsea House, Middlesex" *Britannia illustrata or views of several of the royal palaces as also of the principal seats of the nobility and gentry of Great Britain* (London, 1707), 13.

for formal entries through the larger main gates, which had sufficient space for a porter's lodge.

Alongside the increased vestigiality of the gatehouse, there was also a concurrent trend, championed by more innovative Elizabethan architectural patrons (such as the Cecils and Cavendishes), which saw gatehouses disappear altogether.²⁶³ In lieu of a gatehouse, such houses made use of a small pair of porter's lodges flanking a gateway, a habit originating from France.²⁶⁴ For instance, this can be seen in an engraving of Chelsea House, London (fig. 4.77). In reality then, whilst the evocative image of heightening and less-welcoming gatehouses played well into the architectural manifestation of hospitality's decline; it stood contrary to a reality wherein gatehouses were shrinking to retain a primarily ceremonial function, or disappearing altogether.

The nostalgic imagery of the 'open gate' could be equally deceptive. The trope was one which persisted throughout the Elizabethan and Early Stuart period. When listing the signs of hospitality's decline, Philip Stubbes complained in 1583 that 'when any meat is stirring, then lock they vp their gates, that no man may come in,' leaving the poor outside at the mercy of the elements for the two hours of mealtime.²⁶⁵ Likewise, in 1632 Donald Lupton complained of 'Porter that lockes the gates in dinner time' while true hospitality was 'marked by the

²⁶³ Henderson, *The Tudor House*, 53.

²⁶⁴ Henderson, *The Tudor House*, 53.

²⁶⁵ Stubbes, *The Anatomie of Abuses*, unpaginated [img. 69]; he also notes in the second part that "If the poore come to their houses, their gates be shut against them, where they standing frost and snow, haile, wind or raine whatsoeuer, are forced to tary two houres" Phillip Stubbes, *The second part of the anatomie of abuses* (London, R. W[ard] 1583), unpaginated [img. 48].

freedom at gate.²⁶⁶ In reality, the unlocked and open gate was not necessarily any more a sign of freedom than a closed one. For instance, in 1566 the Porter at Lambeth kept the gates open from 4am-10pm in summer, and 7am-9pm in winter, but they were nevertheless ordered not to let any man enter during mealtimes.²⁶⁷ By 1605, the same restrictions remained, except that the Porter was allowed to close the gates 'before dinner, and supper, or beefore prayer.'²⁶⁸ The exception in both cases was if the visitor was of the gentry, in which case, even if the main gate was closed, they could be admitted through a side gate or through the porter's lodge.²⁶⁹ If the visitor's rank was as high as the house's lord, then the great gate would be opened and the visitor invited in by the house's senior officers.²⁷⁰ Therefore, what really determined one's access to the noble house was not the openness or closedness of gates; like so many realities surrounding spatial movement and access, it was dependent on rank. Those of the rank of Baron or higher could generally visit most houses at any hour with little obstruction, whereas, as shall be discussed, the poor were hardly ever admitted.

Indeed, the poor were seldom mentioned in any of the aforementioned domestic spaces. Staff occupied the hall and kitchen, visiting yeoman remained at the buttery bar, and visiting gentlemen could be entertained inside the buttery.²⁷¹ The poor, however, were generally not permitted to enter the house at all, except occasionally at the Christmas feast.²⁷² Instead, the poor were relieved outside the gates, and this had been the case well before the dissolution. Indeed, during the reign of Henry VIII, the monks of Sawley Abbey composed a song titled *The Pilgrims' Ballad*, which lamented the decay of poor relief due to the closure of monasteries.²⁷³ The ballad went:

Alacke Alacke, For the church sake
 Pore comons wake, And no marvell.
 For clere it is, The decay of this
 How the pore shall mys, No tong can tell.
 For ther they hade, Boith ale and breyde
 [...]

²⁶⁶ Lupton, *London and the Countrey*, 102.

²⁶⁷ LPL MS884f 10v-11r.

²⁶⁸ "Copy of an Original Manuscript, Entitled: A Breviate Touching the Order and Governement of a Nobleman's House, with the Officers, Their Places and Charge, as Perticularly Appeareth [1605]," *Archaeologia* 13 (1800): 337.

²⁶⁹ LPL MS884 f10v-11r. "then the porters to come to an hall off[?] and shewe to hym a person is within his lodge to then [tend?] and he maie fellowship hym, and so by hym the matter to be shewen to my lord;" Also see: Heal, *Hospitality*, 32.

²⁷⁰ Heal, *Hospitality*, 32.

²⁷¹ LPL MS884 f29v-30r.

²⁷² Heal, *Hospitality*, 77.

²⁷³ Anthony Fletcher and Diarmaid MacCulloch, *Tudor Rebellions*. 5th ed, Seminar Studies (Hoboken: Taylor and Francis, 2014), 133, 145.

Of our substance, We founde good bate
 At churche men gate, Without checkmate
 Or varyaunce.²⁷⁴

Even in the late middle ages, the poor regularly relied on an almoner to represent them within the house, and to convey food to them at the gate.²⁷⁵ This is potentially what can be seen in fifteenth-century paintings on the walls of the parish of Saint Peter and Saint Paul, Pickering (4.78), where a man emerges from a house to give food and drink to wayfaring strangers, identifiable by their staffs.

These conventions saw an unbroken continuation in the noble household well into the Stuart period. Generally, after each meal, the Almoner was to save all the unfinished scraps of meat, bread and beer.²⁷⁶ Presumably this would have been kept in a dedicated vessel; in the fifteenth century this was typically done with a 'dole cupboard,' of which a substantial collection exists in Haddon Hall (fig. 4.79). By the seventeenth century an 'almes basket' or 'almes table' was more commonly used.²⁷⁷ Additionally, the butler was instructed to keep beer which was 'broken' or stale in clean vessels dedicated for distribution to the poor.²⁷⁸ Regularly, the almoner, sometimes with the assistance of the porter, would process to the gate of the house with these provisions.²⁷⁹ The almoner was to count the number of poor to be fed, being sure to keep the dole from hungry dogs, and then separate portions into clean vessels, apportioning them so that each person present would have a share.²⁸⁰ The gates of the house served as a backdrop for this performance of hospitality, which was evidently carried out not without ceremony.

There was some variance as to the frequency of poor relief at the gates; and this generally changed in relation to the status of the house's owner. The

²⁷⁴ BHO, *Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, Henry VIII*, 11:786. Quoted in: McBride, *Country house discourse*, 29.

²⁷⁵ Heal, *Hospitality*, 33.

²⁷⁶ Chelsea House: MS3361 f32 "hee must also cause ye groome, or almoner, to save all ye broken meate, bread, and beere wholie for ye poore;" Lambeth Palace [1566: MS884 f16v-17r "item 71 And the said almoners to take up the loaves of bread, barrels;" Lambeth Palace [1611]: MS884 f29v-30r "That he [the almoner] go after every dinner in the Hall, the Almes basket filled with the remainder of every table."

²⁷⁷ Lambeth Palace: MS884 f29v-30r makes mention of an 'Almes basket' to be covered and delivered to the buttery after each meal. Chelsea House [1572]: MS3361 mentions 'the almes table.' Moreover, there is a collection of 15th century dole cupboards in Haddon House.

²⁷⁸ Alice T. Friedman, *House and Household in Elizabethan England: Wollaton Hall and the Willoughby Family* (Chicago: University of Chicago press, 1989), 186. The appendix contains the 1572 Willoughby orders stating the butler must 'foresee that his broken beer be safe, and clean kept in sweet vessels for the poor.'

²⁷⁹ LPL MS3361 f32. " hee must cause to bee geven to ye poore at ye gate, once a daie, wth ye porters helpe."

²⁸⁰ Lambeth Palace [1566] MS884 f16v-17r. "item 71 And the said almoners to take up the loaves of bread, barrels, and make a roll of the number of the gate, and diligently keep it from devouring dogs."



Figure 4.78: Helge Klaus Rieder “Frescos in Saints Peter and Paul Church” (Digital photograph, 2017). Creative Commons 1.0 Universal.



Figure 4.79: Collection of Dole Cupboards at Haddon Hall (provenance unknown, dated C15-C14 indet.)

Lord High Treasurer, Lionel Cranfield (1575-1645), saw alms distributed every day outside his gates.²⁸¹ Likewise, the Archbishop of Canterbury George Abbot (1575-1645) would see the poor relieved each day after supper.²⁸² On the other hand, minor gentry and knights would relieve the poor only a few times per week: Sir Francis Willoughby (1547-1596), whose fortune came primarily from coal mining, instructed that the poor would only be relieved at certain 'appointed days.'²⁸³ Sir Hugh Cholmeley (1600-1657) was sufficiently proud that such relief happened multiple times a week, noting that 'twice a week, a certain number of old people, widows and indigent persons were served at my gates with bread and good pottage made of beef.'²⁸⁴ A notable exception to this rule was John Popham (1603-1638), who had inherited the grandiose Littlecote House from his grandfather but did not inherit any of his father's titles before his early death.²⁸⁵ Remaining a relatively low-ranking MP, Popham had an unremarkable political term in the House of Commons, but was well known as a lavish entertainer and spendthrift.²⁸⁶ His open-handedness extended to the poor, in 1635 Popham was praised for how 'daily at your gates breake your bread and open your almes basket to the poore of the Parishes round adjoining, and refresh their hungry bowelles.'²⁸⁷ Predictably, Popham struggled to maintain this level of housekeeping at Littlecote, and despite financial aid from his father and wife, accumulated a debt of around £100,000.²⁸⁸

With this in mind, it is worth interrogating the symbolism behind the open gate as it was framed in reactionary literature. Indeed, the gate was the place most associated with poor relief, and had remained so for centuries. However, the poor were generally not admitted through it, whether it lay open or closed, but were expected to stay there for the distribution of doles. This was the case even for houses famed for hospitality; to Lewis Pemberton's Rushden Hall it is written 'from thy warm love-hatching gates each may take friendly morsels and there stay.'²⁸⁹ As such, the openness of gates did little to reflect that state of poor relief. Its use in reactionary literature therefore is largely symbolic; such literature aimed to foster moral panic by training the ethicised gaze on 'new'

²⁸¹ MS3361 f32 "whr hee must cause to bee geven to ye poore at ye gate, once a daie."

²⁸² MS884 f29v-30r.

²⁸³ MS884 f29v-30r "That he go after every dinner in the Hall[...]"

²⁸⁴ Hugh Cholmley, *The Memoirs and Memorials of Sir Hugh Cholmley of Whitby, 1600-1657* (Woodbridge, Suffolk: Yorkshire Archaeological Society, 2000), 56. Quoted in: Trevor Cliffe, *The world of the country house*, 153.

²⁸⁵ John P. Ferris and Andrew Thrush, *The House of Commons: 1604-1629, The History of Parliament* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), "POPHAM, John (1603-1637), of Houndstreet, Som., and Littlecote, Wilts."

²⁸⁶ John Aubrey, *Brief Lives Chiefly of Contemporaries Edited from MS. Aubrey 6*, ed. Andrew Clark, vol. 2 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1898 [1669-1696]), 159.

²⁸⁷ Trevor Cliffe, *The World of the Country House*, 146.

²⁸⁸ SP16/311/66. Cited in: John P. Ferris, *The House of Commons: 1604-1629*, "POPHAM, John"

²⁸⁹ Robert Herrick, *The Hesperides & Noble Numbers*, Revised ed. Alfred Pollard (London: Lawrence and Bullen, 1898), 183. "A Panegyric to Sir Lewis Pemberton"

and disturbing signs. The closed gate served well as such a sign because, over the turn of the seventeenth century, the gates of noble houses were increasingly locked by the porter during mealtimes. This new practise was easily framed as a sign of the 'decay of hospitality,' but in reality did little to reflect on the state of poor relief. In fact, there remains too little data to indicate any decisive decline of poor relief at the gates of noble houses during the early Stuart period. Rather, there is evidence to suggest that the practice persists well throughout the seventeenth century. As late as 1687 Sir John Norton was praised for having 'plentifully reliev'd the poor at his Gates.'²⁹⁰ As such, the nostalgic image of the gates wide open to welcome all men indiscriminately, was little more than a fiction which served to maintain the impression of a sudden and pressing decline in hospitality, even if the records of practice and performance suggested otherwise.

4.7 Conclusion

This chapter has charted how reactionary writers used a nostalgic image of hospitality to develop an ethicised gaze. This gaze was not that of the merely physical eye, which sought awe and pleasure, and was thus prone to deception by aesthetic signs and outward shows of magnificence. It was a spiritual eye, a mind's eye, described by Abraham Darcie as 'the penetrating eye of practise and performance.'²⁹¹ This gaze, often steeped in ocular skepticism, sought to penetrate the superficiality of architectural display and discern 'true' virtue through a multisensory engagement with domestic building. The hollow sounding gates of the mock-beggar, the smell of roast meats wafting into the great hall, and from cold marble ornaments juxtaposed against the warm fire of the hearth, these authors meticulously detailed the sensory cues that separated genuine hospitality from mere 'virtue signalling.'

However, the 'eye of practice and performance' was an *eye* nonetheless, an eye which could be trained to project moral meaning onto certain architectural elements. This was especially the case over the turn of the seventeenth century, where certain visual cues are increasingly highlighted in moral literature as 'signs of true hospitality.' Numerous have been discussed; the Lord's presence in the great hall; the smoking chimney; the buttery door which was often open and 'stood without a hatch'; the 'spacious and luminous kitchen' kept well above ground; and the open gates.

Yet, one common trait ties most of these literary tropes together: by the time they make an appearance in the literature concerning hospitality, they had already faded from view, if not vanished altogether. This was, in short, because the literature was fundamentally reactionary. All of the architectural features

²⁹⁰ Thomas Manningham, *A Sermon at the Funeral of Sir John Norton* (London: for William Crooke, 1687), 17.

²⁹¹ Darcie, *Heraclitus*, 130.

frequently highlighted stood contrary to broader cultural and architectural trends. Most pertinently, the seventeenth century was a period of increasing spatial segregation between classes; the emergence of the 'upstairs-downstairs' model of domestic life which dominated over the following two centuries.²⁹² This segregation extended to the performance of charitable care. As charity came to consist less of mutual affection and instruction, the poor were relieved from further and further away. In the city, this trend can be seen to lead towards a stronger impetus towards institutionalised care. Related to this was the preference for domestic civility, decorum, and refinement which arose over the seventeenth century.²⁹³ Moralising reactionaries were keenly aware of these trends, and from the architectural casualties of these cultural shifts, they built the nostalgic image of a hospitable and rustic past. Such an image persists well into the restoration period; a particularly demonstrative example from 1681, penned by the restoration playwright Thomas Shadwell, reads:

For my part, I think 'twas never good days, but when great Tables were kept in large Halls, the Buttery-hatch always open, Black Jacks, and a good smell of Meat and March-beer, with Dogs turds and mary-bones as Ornaments in the Hall: These were signs of good Housekeeping, I hate to see Italian fine Buildings with no Meat or Drink in 'em.²⁹⁴

It is perhaps illustrative to imagine the dreamy-eyed Shadwell yearning for a dog turd amidst his otherwise courtly existence, even if his words were laced with a satirical bite.²⁹⁵ Like so many, he attested vision which romanticised a rugged and rustic past in reaction to the increasing refinement of modern life. Written at the end of the period of study, Shadwell's account reveals the persistence and power of an ethicised gaze which was attuned to signs of modern moral decay.

The largely illusionary nature of this nostalgic imaginary should be emphasised. Few were willing to admit that in the real 'old days,' there were large, land-owning religious houses that greatly contributed to relief for strangers and the poor across the English countryside. Moreover, this nostalgic imaginary thinly disguised a program of radical moral change, which responded to new and pressing issues. Firstly, under the guise of traditionalism, it sold a program of charitable relief which filled the new lacuna caused by the dissolution. Secondly, it provided means by which a growing and increasingly ostentatious group of *novi homines* could morally justify their newfound privileges. Lastly, it aimed to address the weakening authority of the upper classes in the countryside,

²⁹² Jeremy Musson, *Up and down Stairs: The History of the Country House Servant* (London: Murray, 2010), 52.

²⁹³ Heal, *Hospitality*, 122; Stevenson, *Medicine*, 17.

²⁹⁴ Quoted in McClung, *The Country House in English Renaissance Poetry*, 34.

²⁹⁵ J.E Luebering, "Thomas Shadwel," in *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 2024. After the Restoration (1660) Shadwell became one of the court wits and an acquaintance of Sir Robert Howard and his brother, Edward. He was to be poet laureate in 1689.

caused not only by London-bound immigration, but also by behaviours which alienated the lower classes, such as rent-racking and enclosures. Indeed, whether or not the literature concerning the decay of hospitality was motivated out of concern for the underprivileged could be questioned, as it approached charitable relief as a means to protect the authority and legitimacy of the old members of the ruling classes against the cultural ascendancy of perceived *novi homines*.

Ultimately, while the texts discussed in this chapter aimed to challenge the efficacy of architecture in signifying virtue by highlighting signals just beyond the reach of the professional architect, they inadvertently delineated an alternative mode of perception that was equally susceptible to aestheticization. The very act of 'looking for a lack of ornamentation' or 'seeing' open doors and smoking chimneys became a new form of aesthetic appreciation, tethered to a romanticized ideal of rusticity and communal conviviality. The recurring imagery of the 'mock-beggar' and the complaints against continental architectural influences underscore a potent, often nationalistic, desire to reclaim a perceived 'natural hospitality of England.' This chapter concludes, therefore, that the ethicised gaze, while deeply influential in shaping moral perceptions of domestic architecture, ultimately served to formalize a nostalgic aesthetic that, despite its anti-ocular intentions, merely redirected the senses towards new forms of virtue signaling.

CONCLUSION

5.1 Narrative Summary: A Troubled Relationship

This study set out to narrate a relationship between magnificence and hospitality as it unfolded in architectural discourse. Throughout the Elizabethan and early Stuart period, the terms ‘magnificence’ and ‘hospitality’ are variously used to refer to moral virtues which legitimise and justify privilege. Most especially, they both sustain inequalities in the distribution of *economic* privilege, framing a particular person or class as particularly well-suited to managing greater wealth due to their fiscal discernment, altruism, taste, generosity, and other forms of merit. While such values may be believably attributed to people, the expression of such values through *architecture* has been historically less convincing. As a signal of virtue, architecture has proven to be a crucial, yet remarkably unstable moral object. This dissertation has illustrated this in most detail concerning the virtue of *magnificence*. Over the turn of the seventeenth century, there are increasingly frequent uses of the term in a manner which strongly de-emphasises the dimension of personal nobility through birth or virtue, and increasingly emphasises the aesthetic performance of magnificence. This is plainly evident in the ocular language used by Stuart propaganda to describe architecture, but the language is also increasingly applied to the country house.

The country house was a particularly dubious object of magnificence, especially when magnificence is defined as a public-facing expression of nobility. Compared to churches, colleges, hospitals, almshouses, roads, and other forms of public infrastructure, the country house had a prominent private dimension. Over the seventeenth century, this private dimension came to be reinforced in spatial segregations between family, staff, and strangers. This process of privatisation had a tense co-existence with the house’s public duties. More importantly, however, the use of the term ‘magnificence’ as it applied to the country house relied heavily on ocular symbolism. If the term had any lasting association with personal

virtue, it was only inasmuch as nobility could be expressed through architectural elaboration, expense, and scale. This heavy reliance on symbolism exposed magnificence to critiques of *mere* symbolism, constituting representations of morality which were misappropriated to justify ostentatious houses.

The fragility of these semantic manoeuvres in the realm of country house discourse essentially caused reactionary polemicists to slander the mangled magnificence they had once espoused. Over the turn of the seventeenth century, there is an increasing impression amongst some reactionaries that the expression of magnificence in country houses was a bad thing. To such reactionaries, the magnificent country house expressed everything that was wrong with the socially ascendant. To them, magnificent country houses reflected the malevolent ambitions of agrarian capitalists, mercantile profiteers, and speculative developers. To them, such houses lithified an unnatural wealth which was built upon exploiting debtors, workers, and rentiers; and sustained through neglecting the poor and wayfaring stranger.

So how was nobility to be undergirded in the realm of the country house? Instead of magnificence, reactionary polemicists prioritised *hospitality*. The notion of country house hospitality was well-aligned with reactionary ideology. It was portrayed as indigenous and decisively premodern; being built upon traditional, Anglo-Saxon, and feudal values. Moreover, hospitality was widely lamented as being in a state of decline; a polemic which had persisted since the dissolution, but given new life when weaponised against a greedy bourgeoisie. The notion proved persuasive; countless textual accounts asserted that the English gentry had forgotten the ways of their ancestors, and abandoned the charity between classes that formed the bedrock of English social life. These nostalgic recollections of 'merry old England' also served to legitimise those who ruled over it; the crown and the other ancient lineages of the old aristocracy. Hospitality undergirded their worthy rule; and antiquarians piously recorded how it was practised and performed in their ancient seats. Unlike the superficiality of magnificence, this 'truly virtuous' hospitality was articulated through a conscious rejection of representation in favour of action. Yet, as with magnificence, the concrete evidence of hospitality also crystallised into a coherent architectural aesthetic; albeit one rooted in nostalgic rusticity as opposed to the refinement and decorum of magnificence. Thus, hospitality also came to be associated with certain external, architectural symbols, which were not necessarily concomitant with 'true virtue.' There could be 'many chimneys, but none smoking;' there could be a gate wide open, while the porter still denied general entry.

5.2 Broader Implications of this Narrative

Even though this narrative focuses on the ideological dimensions of the intrigue between magnificence and hospitality, it nevertheless has implications beyond reflecting the beliefs of a certain historical period. As asserted by Raymond Williams, ideology is intimately entangled with material and productive realities, most especially in the reality it gives to ethicised relations of production. As

such, a study on ideology has implications which ripple out towards numerous domains, many of which are worth explicitly stating. In the section which follows, the implications of this thesis' core narrative on three fields will be discussed. Firstly, this narrative has implications concerning the historiography of English capitalism, most especially in its focus on under-researched reactionary voices and their impact on building culture. Secondly, this narrative also has implications on architectural theory more broadly, primarily concerning the understanding of moralised architectural semiology. Finally, this thesis' narrative also raises points affecting the methods used to study building ethics. Ultimately, these points are more questions than they are answers, but the implications are worth stating as a contribution to this emerging field.

5.2.1 Historiographical Implications: Reactionary anti-Capitalism

This dissertation has largely followed the architectural language within one specific political polemic, which has been variously referred to as reactionary. Such a polemic reacted against numerous shifts (e.g. social, religious, constitutional, etc.) over the Elizabethan and early Stuart period. This dissertation has taken a special interest in the reaction against *economic* changes – primarily, what has been identified as the decline of the manorial economy and the nascence of capitalism. Much can be gleaned from seeing how *architecture* was implicated in this reaction against capitalism, largely because it highlights the entanglement of (early) modern architecture and capitalism; an entanglement which has persisted well beyond the seventeenth century.

Early modern reactionaries understood ambitious house-building as both a cause and effect of market capitalism. There can be little doubt on this matter; the third chapter of this thesis in particular addressed how the critique of magnificent houses was frequently articulated in economic terms. For example, Barnabe Barnes noted how 'overgorgeous magnificence in building' served to 'scandalize' the riches of the builder, by exposing their malevolent economic activities.¹ Such builders were accused of gaining wealth in the manner of usurers and publicans, causing coins to 'both beget and beare fruit of themselves, (being a thing hatefull

¹ Barnabe Barnes, *Foure Booke of Offices Enabling Privat Persons for the Speciall Service of All Good Princes and Policies*. (London: A. Islip, 1606), 58-59. "Let them take heed of exceeding sumptuousnesse and ouergorgeous magnificence in building, aboue the proportion of their lands and reuenewes, enuironning and answering the same: for it were better, that large demesnes required mansion houses, than that glorious mannors should want meanes to support and furnish out their magnificence. [...] For that person which buildeth a house or towne, and garnisheth it with armes, hangings, and other workes; making euerything more specious therein than himselfe, is not honourable in regard of his riches, but meere scandalizeth them, through his owne imperfections. Such gaynes as usurers, Publicanes, and Iewes of that profession make to liue vpon by the destruction of others, is most abhominable and odious: for so much as it gayneth by coynes. Whereas it is euident, that coynes were not deuised, because they should both beget and beare fruit of themselves, (being a thing hatefull and repugnant to nature) but ordained therefore, that other commodities (by meanes of exchange) should yeeld vs benefite thereby"

and repugnant to nature).² Other authors expanded upon the economic activities at play; the enclosure of arable commons, charging high rents, with all forms of 'extortion, and all unlawfull exactions.'³ The primary issue with such economic practices was that they exploited the underprivileged. In the words of Barnes, such builders 'make to live upon by the destruction of others.'⁴

It is noteworthy how all these points are raised in critiques primarily directed at domestic architecture. House-building sat at both ends of wealth extraction; it was both a means to earn capital, and a means to spend it. Through building fences, investment properties, and suburban developments, the rich had the means to get richer. Heirs who were more prodigal than pious had the option of selling their estates, pocketing the money without concern for future generations.⁵ Country houses could additionally earn forms of socio-cultural capital: honour, admiration, authority, what pseudo-Nashe refers to as 'vulgar worship amongst their neighbours.'⁶ As such, in a culture where social power was increasingly associated with wealth, ambitious building works could serve to attain both in parallel. Just as much as buildings could generate wealth, they could also be products of expenditure. Buildings were both bought and built as fungible commodities, and disposed of or abandoned when a change in fashions would demand it. The complaint is perhaps best articulated in the broadside ballad *Mock-beggars hall* (1640). In this ballad, the image of the magnificently-built, but abandoned, mock-beggar hall reoccurs as a refrain, symbolising both the greedy lord and the neglected poor. Select stanzas from this ballad are worth quoting again in full:

In ancient times when as plain dealing	Farm-houses which their fathers built
Was most of all in fashion,	And Land well kept by tillage,
There was not then half so much stealing,	Their prodigall Sons have sold for gilt,
Nor men so given to passion;	In every Town and Village:
But now a days, truth so decays,	To the City and Court they do resort
And false knaves there are plenty,	With gold and Silver plenty;
So pride exceeds all worthy deeds,	And there they spend their time in sport,
While Mock-begger hall stands empty.	While Mock-begger hall stands empty.

² Barnes, *Foure Bookes of Offices*, 58-59.

³ Unknown, *The Returne of the Knight of the Poste from Hell with the Diuels Aunsweere to the Supplication of Pierce Penillesse, with Some Relation of the Last Treasons*. (London: Iohn Windet, 1606), unpaginated.

⁴ Barnes, *Foure Bookes of Offices*, 58-59.

⁵ La Noue, trans. Edward Aggas, *The Politicke and Militarie Discourses of the Lord de La Nouue*, (London: Thomas Orwin, 1587), 106-107; John Stow, *The Survey of London* (London: For Nicholas Bourn, 1633), 1.176-177.

⁶ Unknown, *The Returne of the Knight*, unpaginated.

Young Land-lords when to age they come,	Some Gentlemen and Citizens have
Their rents they would be racking,	In divers eminent places,
The tenant must give a golden sum,	Erected houses fine and brave,
Or else he is turnd packing:	Which stood for the owners graces,
Great fines and double rent beside,	Let any poor to such a door
Or else theyl not contented bee,	Come, they expecting plenty,
It is to maintain their monstrous pride,	They there may ask till throats are sore,
While Mock-begger hall stands empty.	For Mock-begger hall stands empty. ⁷

It is clear, therefore, how the anti-capitalist stance on magnificent houses was related to hospitality. If the magnificent house was built upon greed, it would likewise be sustained by greed. Texts like *Mock-Beggars Hall* demonstrate an understanding of how magnificent ambition and the neglect of hospitality went hand-in-hand as ways of exploiting and neglecting the underprivileged. Most importantly, both were lithified in the ostentatious country house. For these economic ills, the hospitable house was prescribed as the antidote. Unpretentious, ancient, rustic, and coincidentally in the hands of the old aristocracy: these houses mocked no beggars and racked no rents. They were seen as being concomitant with charity, social harmony, and importantly, idealised feudal relationships of production.

This interrelationship between domestic architecture and economic relations has been central to this dissertation. Early modern reactionaries clearly understood the architecture of the house as being fundamentally entangled with certain economic models of production. Indeed, the medieval manor was not merely a reflection of the manorial economy – rather, it actively propagated and participated in production. Likewise, the modern and magnificent country house was variously cast as a means of consumption, a commodity, or as itself a form of capital.

In a broader sense, these observations of early modern reactionaries shed light on the nuanced interrelationship between ‘base and superstructure’ as articulated by Raymond Williams.⁸ Country houses illustrate the ambiguous delineation between base and superstructure; and emphasise the mutual agency that base and superstructure share in shaping material realities. As much as they were culturally conditioned modes of architectural expression, the country house also constituted economic relationships between landowners and land-dwellers, between employers and domestic staff, and between countrymen and foreigners. It is for this reason that, if ethical discourse is understood as an ideological superstructure, it could target both the country house and economic relationships in parallel. The moralising laments of early modern reactionaries illustrate an

⁷ Anonymous, *Mock-Beggars Hall with His Scituation in the Spacious Country, Called, Any Where. To the Tune of It Is Not Your Northern Nanny; or Sweet Is the Lass That Loves Me*. (London: printed for Richard Harper, at the Bible and Harp in Smithfield, 1640).

⁸ Raymond Williams, “Base and superstructure in Marxist cultural theory,” *New Left Review*. 1.82.

understanding that changes in domestic architecture were concomitant with economic change, and articulated their reaction in equally architectural terms.

5.2.2 Theoretical Implications: Architecture and Virtue (Signalling)

Just as reactionary rhetoric stressed both the good and bad relationships between architecture and economic production, it also stressed good and bad relationships between architecture and the notion of a moral semiology. Simply put: there was both good symbolism and bad symbolism. Reactionary writers did not unquestioningly endorse all expressions of virtue which domestic architecture aspired to, nor did they denounce all signals of virtue as concealing malevolent justifications of privilege. Both were possible; beneath the surface of virtue signalling, there could be either virtue or vice. The notion ostensibly served their political agenda; buildings could feasibly express the magnificence of the King or the hospitality of the traditional aristocracy. However, signals of virtue could also serve to conceal inequalities, excuse exploitation, and sustain social indifference. In this regard, reactionary rhetoric took a nuanced approach; it approached domestic architecture with sufficient specificity in order to negotiate between both positive and negative uses of virtue signalling. Reactionary texts tenuously negotiated between signs and no signs; between looking and not looking; and between architecture and not architecture. The way they navigated between these poles will be discussed in turn.

Regarding the propriety of outwards signs of virtue, conservative writers provided – to phrase it plainly – *mixed signals*. When regarding the magnificence of church and state, there was a general tolerance for outward signs. Jacobean additions to the Book of Common Prayer had stressed the importance of ‘outward and visible signs of an inward and spiritual grace,’ and the Banqueting House by Inigo Jones was intended to ‘speak most magnificently of the soul of its Lord.’⁹ However, when addressing the virtue signalling amongst Puritan reformers and ambitious *novi homines*, the tone was remarkably more suspicious. Just as the minister Thomas Adams endorsed the high-church episcopacy and the divine right of James I, he also complained of signalling virtue through preaching and building, proclaiming ‘he doth not say, talke of it, but walke in it [...] what needs there a Signe?’¹⁰

Equally nuanced were the prescriptions as to whether to look at domestic architecture, or not to look. Beyond the limits of reactionary polemic, this thesis addresses a historical period across which there was little agreement on this matter. At the start of this period, in the mid-sixteenth century, Andrew Boorde instructed that houses should ‘be placable to the eyes of all men to see

⁹ Book of Common Prayer (1604), unpaginated [the catechisme]; and Gregory Martin. *Corpus Rubenianum: The Ceiling Decoration of the Banqueting Hall* (London: Harvey Miller, 2005), 21.

¹⁰ Thomas Adams, *The Happines of the Church; or, A Description of Those Prosperous and Happy Times wherein the Government of the Church shall be in the Hands of Our Lord* (London: G. Purslowe for John Grismand, 1619), 32.

& to beholde whan they be a good dystauntce of from the place.’¹¹ Quite to the contrary, Francis Bacon declared in 1625 that ‘houses are built to live in, and not to look on.’¹² Yet, at the end of the period, after the restoration, Roger North asserted that ‘the errors or prejudices in the mind proceed and are seen more or less in all the outward actions, nothing more exposeth them than building. I can shew you a man’s carактер in his house.’¹³ The reactionary rhetoric concerning hospitality seemed to straddle these constantly fluctuating views; advocating for a mode of perception which rejected ocular excitement and visual pleasure; but directed the eyes towards the pragmatic and prosaic elements of domestic life. Rather than attaching symbolic value to figurative ornamentation, or to the classical orders, reactionary literature attached symbolic value to heaving boards, smoking chimneys, open doors, and dog turds on rush floors. Moreover, it desired that what was seen was further verified by *all* the senses - if the eyes were easily deceived, the verity of ‘true hospitality’ had to be confirmed with every form of empirical evidence. Hospitality was evidenced by bodily relief which was entire; the smell of meat, the noisy kitchen, the warmth of the hearth, all culminating in the ultimate Eucharistic sign of charity; food upon the tongue. In such a way, the reactionary literature on hospitality outlined a mode of perception which could frame itself as a dialectical opposite to mere visual pleasure. It encouraged a form of looking which looked beyond the superficial, using the so-called ‘penetrating eye of practice and performance.’¹⁴

As such, the reactionary call for hospitable building also challenged the emerging profession of Architecture writ large. While the work of Smythson and Jones, and the treatises of Shute and Wotton, slowly indicated the emergence of a normative classical orthodoxy, hospitality literature stood to question the value and virtue such changes would bring. There was a clear reactionary suspicion of the ‘italianisms’ championed by architectural aficionados. Basemented services such as kitchens and butteries, as they were designed by Smythson and Jones, were described as signs of avarice and niggardliness which ran contrary to the English way of life.¹⁵ The classical orders as outlined by Shute and Wotton, were seen as signs opposed to real hospitality. For example, hospitality was praised at Wrest park, where ‘No Doric, nor Corinthian pillars grace / With imagery this structure’s naked face.’¹⁶ Similarly, Joseph Hall sees the death of good

¹¹ Andrew Boorde, *The Fyrst Boke of the Introduction of Knowledge*, cap. ii, in *A Compendyous Regyment, or, A Dyetary of Helth* (London: W. Middelton, 1547), unpaginated [Cap ii].

¹² Francis Bacon, *Bacon’s Essays, with Annotations by Richard Whately and Notes and a Glossarial Index, by Franklin Fiske Heard* (Boston: Lee and Shepard, 1868), 437.

¹³ Roger North, *Of Building: Roger North’s Writings on Architecture* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981), 7.

¹⁴ Abraham Darcie, *Heraclitus: or, Meditations vpon the Miseries of the Times* (London: G. Purslowe for Thomas Pavier, 1625), 130.

¹⁵ Henry Wotton, *The Elements of Architecture* (London: John Bill, 1624), 70-71; Thomas Nash, *Pierce Penilesse His Supplication to the Diuell. Describing the Ouer-Spreading of Vice, and the Suppression of Vertue* (London: Richard Jones, 1592), 10.

¹⁶ Thomas Carew, “To My Friend G.N., from Wrest,” in *Poems, with a Maske* (London: for H.M., and are to be sold by J. Martin, 1651). [lines 19–36].

housekeeping in 'some stately Doric frame / Or neat Ionic work.'¹⁷ Instead, the reactionary eye habitually looked at those elements just beyond the architect's agency; the architect could build chimneys, but the eye was trained upon smoke; the architect could place portals, but the eye desired that they lay open; the architect could build halls and chambers; but the eye demanded that they were furnished with friends and strangers.

Across numerous material spheres (e.g. the liturgical, sumptuary, and ceremonial) the Elizabethan and early Stuart period saw both elaboration and iconoclasm. Architecture was no exception: there was curiosity, invention, and decoration, as well as sobriety, continuity, and simplicity. On one hand was the notion that architecture was a tool in the socio-cultural performance of virtue; in such a view, moral truth had to be written onto architecture. On the other hand was the idea that the accoutrements which obscured moral truth had to be stripped away from architecture. What is particularly fascinating about the reactionary rhetoric illustrating hospitable architecture was how it seemed to straddle both; it affirmed the ability of architecture to signal virtue in a demonstrable way; and thus it avoided a wholesale iconoclastic rejection of architectural signs and architectural looking. However, it also pointed out that the central failure of moral semiotics in architecture was that they could easily be misappropriated by less-moral agents as a means of public deception. Therefore, reactionary formulations of virtuous architecture confronted polarising dichotomies with descriptive specificities; the decision was not between signs or silence; but of *which kind* of signs. Nor was the decision between perception and non-perception; but *what type* of perception. This specificity was carried through into the concomitant architectural prescriptions. Consistently, the language used to describe a *hospitable* country house was far more descriptive than that used to discuss the *magnificent* country house. Architectural specificity was the primary tool used by nostalgic literature concerning hospitality to carve out a strongly reactionary stance. As such, reactionary thinkers asserted that domestic architecture had specifically limited means by which to signal virtue. As a rule, architecture has less moral agency than people; for instance, the impact of house-building on Aristotelian ethics was largely confined to its participation in the getting and spending of wealth. In a similar way, reactionary polemicists argued that domestic architecture could indeed signal hospitality, but only inasmuch as architectural elements and spatial delineations served to accommodate and facilitate idealised socio-economic relations of production.

5.2.3 Methodological Implications: How to Study Building Ethics?

As has been surmised, this thesis has primarily focused on architectural ethics through the lens of rhetoric. To this end, this thesis has constantly looked beyond the boundaries of the moral treatise, towards texts which portray or prescribe the

¹⁷ Joseph Hall, *The Works of Joseph Hall, D.D., Successively Bishop of Exeter and Norwich: With Some Account of His Life and Sufferings, Written by Himself* (Talboys, 1839), 258.

performance of ethics in a spatial sense. Diaries, ballads, poems, and especially dramatic works have formed a central part of the researched literary corpus. Not only do dramatic works offer additional insights into how magnificence and hospitality affected the engagement with architectural space, but their dialogic format allowed characterisations to emerge which contextualised and ethically challenged these modes of architectural engagement.¹⁸ As such, this thesis has illustrated how architectural engagement was *rhetorically portrayed* as having a moral value in early modern England.

However, whether this is actually true is a different matter; this thesis has sought to describe rhetorical claims, not to reassert them. This thesis does not purport to claim whether Lord Leicester was really magnificent, or whether Lord Burghley was really hospitable. Rather, this thesis demonstrates that the real ethical motives behind building are remarkably difficult to know and equally difficult to express. For instance, a magnificent building can go from symbolising charity to symbolising prodigality in the span of a single generation, with no change in architectural form whatsoever. Moreover, a reactionary writer may praise numerous houses for their hospitality, but historical evidence may cast doubt on whether such hospitality was performed at all. Indeed, in studying rhetoric, this dissertation has not delved into the statistical analysis of financial minutiae in household accounts in order to substantiate whether reactionaries followed through on their rhetorical promises. For such research, one may turn to the work of scholars like Felicity Heal, who ends *Hospitality in Early Modern England* with the observation that ‘a cynical conclusion may be that open hospitality was something that the English always approved with their lips rather than practised in their lives.’¹⁹ While this remains a very general possibility, it is one which this dissertation acknowledges. Because of the unknowable nature of the ethical motives behind building, it will always be possible that moral motives like magnificence and hospitality may have terminated at the level of rhetoric.

This epistemological limitation does not only affect the study of architectural history, but also the study of architectural thinking and theory more broadly. While the prescriptive study of building ethics is indeed vital, it remains just as difficult to discern the ethical motives behind a building now, as it did four hundred years ago. The findings of this thesis, which highlight the unstable relationship between the appearance of architecture and its ethical motives, suggests that no amount of archaeology can uncover the builder’s heart.

5.3 Summary of Key Research findings

Before outlining how the research contained within this thesis opens up potential avenues for future work, it is worth reapproaching the thesis as a whole one final

¹⁸ This is greatly expanded upon in: Daniel Sik, "Superficial, Ambitious, and Un-English: Characterising Architectural Aficionados in Early Stuart Dialogues" *Temporanea* 6 (2025).

¹⁹ Felicity Heal, *Hospitality in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), 402.

time, this time as the product of research. Indeed, the contents of this thesis constitute the cumulative sum of four years' work, including site visits, archival research, seminars, workshops, conferences, and (of course) reading and writing. While the format and structure of this thesis has presented the findings research as a historical narrative, this does not reflect the manner or order in which these findings occurred. Indeed, as with any research, the process was not as linear as the final product may imply. There were numerous findings which steered the winding path of research as it occurred, six of which will be briefly restated in the following section.

The first finding was that public discourse on London's architecture focused more on *criticism* and restriction than encouraging building. At its initial stages, this research project aimed to find instances where Aristotelian ethical literature affected the culture of public-facing architectural commissions in London. Evidently, this was based primarily on the impact such literature had on the building culture of renaissance Florence, especially urban palazzi. Yet, despite the traceable production and circulation of such moral treatises in England, Aristotelian prescriptions for magnificent buildings seemed to have little effect on London's building culture, at least as it was recorded in literature. It was not only the numerous royal proclamations restricting building which contributed to this culture, although it most likely had an effect. Instead, reading beyond Aristotelian treatises and commentaries, the culture recorded in didactic literature more broadly tended towards cautioning new builders of vanity, waste, and social decay. Such texts spanned a wide range of genres, such as satires, morality plays, princely mirrors, dialogues, and poetry. Behind this research finding was a negative research outcome; the search for a broad cultural impetus towards morally justifying elaborate public-facing building in London was ultimately unfruitful. As a result, the project was re-orientated to focus on so-called 'unmagnificence,' a study of the vices opposed to magnificence (such as niggardliness and vulgarity) as they were invoked in public discourse.

The second finding was that there was a sustained critique of magnificence itself during the early Stuart period. The research into the vices opposed to magnificence yielded an unexpected result: namely that numerous sources were found which treated the term 'magnificence' itself as vicious. Indeed, there emerged a sustained polemic strand that targeted magnificence itself with great moral suspicion. This finding was primarily generated from a close reading of digitised primary sources, it was only afterwards that this textual opposition was contextualised using secondary literature, primarily the pan-European analysis executed by David Thomson.²⁰ However, Thompson's attribution of this polemical stance to reforming commoners who were suspicious of wealth and authority did not seem to immediately apply to the English context. As such, the research was

²⁰ David Thomson, *Renaissance Architecture: Critics, Patrons, Luxury* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1993).

reorientated to investigate the articulations and motives of the English push against the notion of magnificent architecture.

The third finding related directly to this critique of magnificence. The most prominent critiques saw the increase in magnificent buildings as concomitant with a decline in *liberality* and other forms of wealth distribution and social care. This assertion seemed to run directly contrary to the view within Aristotelian literature that magnificence was closely related to liberality. In fact, it was the similarity between the two values that generated their contestation, as writers like Joseph Wybarne suggested that the term 'magnificence' was often used to disguise excessive expenditure on building as a form of liberality.²¹ As such what arose was essentially a dialectical development in the meaning and usage of the term magnificence in relation to how liberality was commonly understood. From this finding, this research's interest in dialectical narratives was derived.

The fourth finding was that it is harder to link ethics to building through the intentions of the builder than through the *ideological perception* of the observer. This was ultimately an epistemological development, which itself was driven by a negative finding. Until this point, this thesis aimed to develop a method which tied ethics and ethical theory to building fabric. This strain of research was ultimately unsuccessful, and the reasons were presented in the early modern ethical discourse itself. Given the widely contested virtue of magnificent building, it became clear that ethical intention in building was just as difficult to discern in the past as it is to the present-day historian. Even if texts presented themselves in which a patron explicitly stated his intention for building; there is no guarantee that his statements were not engineered to conceal an adverse reality; nor is there any means to validate such claims through an archaeological analysis of the built fabric. As such, this research shifted away from using texts to discern inner ethical intention, towards using texts to reconstruct ideological frameworks of ethical perception.

The fifth finding was that, of the numerous expressions of liberality, *hospitality* emerged as the term most linked to spatial realities. More so than similar values like benefice or alms, hospitality had a distinctly architectural articulation in early modern English texts. This most especially applied to the spaces within the country house, which, as a result of this finding, became a primary object of this thesis' research. Yet, even though the articulation of hospitality was decisively architectural, the exact architectural elements it focused on varied remarkably between time periods and authors. For instance, chimneys went from being a sign of real hospitality, to becoming a symbol of ostentation in less than a century; a phenomenon which demonstrated the contingent links between the symbolism of virtue and the changing infrastructure of provision. Moreover, the exact type of symbolism prescribed for hospitality differed immensely for that concerning

²¹ Joseph Wybarne, *The New Age of Old Names* (London: John Windet, 1609), 34-35.

magnificent architecture, often existing on the boundaries of concerns considered architectural. In such a way, the focus on hospitality was a means to reveal how the discourse on building ethics also came to challenge the scope and virtue of architecture itself.

Finally, through a close examination of hospitality literature, it was decided that the rhetoric praising hospitality in lieu of magnificence could be identified as *reactionary*. The primary driver for this finding was an extended research trip hosted by the English National Trust, covering around thirty early modern country houses throughout England. It became evident that there was a wide discrepancy between ideal building practises within hospitality literature, and the actual building practises contemporary to those texts. Consistently, hospitality literature idealised architectural elements which were decades, even centuries, behind conventions evident in built structures. It became clear, therefore, that the images of hospitable country houses invoked in country house poems, for example, did not reflect emergent building practices, but rather seemed to react against it. It was primarily in this view that such rhetorical tropes were identified as 'reactionary.' The socio-economic stance behind this reactionary position, as informed by the historiography of Marxist cultural materialists, was only conceptualised after this finding was made.

5.4 Avenues for Future Research

This curvilinear research process, despite encountering numerous dead ends and negative findings, did leave some avenues unexplored. These avenues were left unexplored either because they were not feasible within the research period, or because I did not possess the requisite expertise to execute them well. For instance, while this thesis has attempted to expand the methods of textual analysis within cultural materialism towards the analysis of buildings, it has retained its focus on concepts determined by ethical discourse. As such, many of the findings contained within this thesis concerning the material expression of ideology, can be extended into more material forms of analysis. This would ultimately consist of broadening this the epistemological and methodological scope of this thesis to involve disciplines such as economics and archaeology.

Firstly, gaging the extent to which discourse on magnificence and hospitality were reflected in actual practises of wealth management in the household requires more thorough economic analysis of archival sources. This would involve sourcing and consolidating household incomes and expenditures from account books, inventories, wage and livery lists, purveyance records, building contracts, credit records or bonds, estate surveys, and other financial records. This data would be able to confirm whether the ideal practises of wealth management affirmed in texts conformed or subverted real practises within the home, and thus give some indication to the economic forces driving the formation of this ideology.

Moreover, this thesis has proposed that the emergence and vestigiality of certain building elements could have had ideological significance to certain people. Yet, confirming the extent to which a particular architectural element was emergent or vestigial requires a much broader morphological analysis of a given element. Additional information could be gleaned from such analysis; for instance, did the buttery hatch emerge first in a particular part of England, or within a particular social group? Researching such a question requires much broader chronological and geographical mapping, with a far larger data catchment than was practicable within the scope of this thesis. Such findings could also reflect upon the changing practices of provision in the early modern household, or provide more chronological or geographic specificity to what is already known.

The scope of this morphological analysis could be broadened even further by archaeological research. The propositions of this thesis, inasmuch as they related to built material, is largely based on what has survived the centuries. Indeed, the reliance on architectural minutiae such as buttery hatches is necessitated by the fact that the larger the scale with which the house is addressed, the more pervasive the impacts of subsequent iterations. The overall disposition and massing of early modern hardly survives the centuries, much less their setting in the landscape which surrounds them. Nevertheless, the accessways to the house, the permeability of the built structure, and the visibility of building elements from both within and without the house, reflect much upon the early modern conception of magnificence and hospitality. Because of this evident lack of data, scholars have had to rely on drawings to reconstruct the vision of values like hospitality; such as Maurice Howard in "Hospitality and Lodging in Sixteenth Century England - The Evidence of the Drawings" (1994).²² A much more rigorous archaeological study, based upon the findings of the past two decades within English stratigraphic and environmental archaeology, would doubtlessly add much to this discussion.

Upon the previous two points on building morphology, a crucial note must be made as to why such data was not considered an essential part of the research scope. This thesis proposes that connections between building and ethical expression were remarkably flexuous and contingent, being as difficult to discern then as they are now. While residual and emergent ethical norms could indeed be ideologically 'perceived into' emergent or vestigial building elements, the building and the ethics were not transmutable. As reactionary texts remind us, ethics did not operate on the level of the symbolic, but needed to be enacted through real works of social care. Even 'functional' architectural elements did not imply their use, there could be 'many chimneys, none smoaking.'²³ As such, this thesis only proposes a moralised 'architectural semiology' so that the very notion can be questioned. To over-emphasise the morphological development of

²² In: Jean Guillaume, *Architecture et vie sociale: l'organisation intérieure des grandes demeures à la fin du Moyen âge et à la Renaissance*, with Centre d'études supérieures de la Renaissance, *De architectura* 6 (Paris: Picard, 1994), 257.

²³ Thomas Lewis, *Demegoriai Certaine Lectures Vpon Sundry Portions of Scripture* (London: I. R[oberts] for Edw. White, 1600), img. 60.

building within the text of this thesis, would be to overstate the links between architectural form and ethical action which this thesis intends to subvert.

Yet, there are also avenues for future research which exist within this thesis' epistemological scope. The most evident consist of expanding the geographical or temporal scope of the research to see how the concept of magnificence interacted with hospitality or other forms of social responsibility in a transhistorical sense. Indeed, England was not culturally isolated from Europe, much less the other countries in the British Isles. As such, it is quite possible that English views on hospitality and magnificence were partly imported from abroad. Firstly, King James I, who vocally urged hospitality in his proclamations, and lauded his own magnificence on the edifice at Whitehall, was a native of Scotland. It was in Scotland that his notion of monarchy was formed and first executed, shaped by the contention his own family had with Scotland's system of ruling clans (if his childhood tutor Buchanan was to be believed).²⁴ In particular, some continuity can be gleaned within James' performance of monarchical magnificence between his early reign in Scotland, and his time in England.²⁵ However, whether this continuity extended to James' use of the terms 'magnificence' and 'hospitality' provides a rich avenue for potential research.²⁶

Likewise, there is evident to suggest that the reactionary rhetoric pitching magnificent architecture against rustic hospitality may have seen much earlier articulations in France or Switzerland. This is suggested most strongly by the *Discours politiques et militaires* (1587) by the protestant François de la Noue.²⁷ The work was printed in Basel but quickly distributed northwards in France and eventually England, an English translation being made by Edward Aggas in 1588.²⁸ Within, la Noue complains of 'd'une affection excessive que plusieurs ont de faire de magnifiques bastimens' which had trickled down the classes over the past sixty years.²⁹ Those affected could not provide the hospitality expected of them, being forced to feed 'qui le venoyent visiter, de discours d'architecture.'³⁰ Instead, he encourages rustic and charitable living: 'j'aimerois mieux habiter sous petit toit, & ouir de ma chambre l'harmonie des broches, sentir l'odeur du rost, & voir mon buffet réparé d'un trophée de flacons, pots, & gobelets.'³¹ La Noue's text pre-dates the

²⁴ Caroline Erskine and Roger A. Mason (eds), *George Buchanan: Political Thought in Early Modern Britain and Europe* (Farnham and Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2012), pp. 14, 16–18

²⁵ John Nichols, *The Progresses, Processions, and Magnificent Festivities, of King James the First* (J.B. Nichols, 1828).

²⁶ I must thank Prof. Giovanna Giudicini for pointing out this connection with her research on the Stuart monarchy in Scotland.

²⁷ François de La Noue, *Discours Politiques et Militaires* (Basel: F. Forest, 1587).

²⁸ François de La Noue, *The Politicke and Militarie Discourses of the Lord de La Noue*, trans. Edward Aggas (London: Thomas Orwin, 1588).

²⁹ La Noue, *Discours Politiques*, 164. 'immoderate affections that sundrie beare unto stately buildings.'

³⁰ La Noue, *Discours Politiques*, 166. '[...] came to visite him, with discourses of Architecture.'

³¹ La Noue, *Discours Politiques*, 166. 'I had rather dwell vnder a small rooffe, and out of my chamber heare the melodie of the spits, smell the sauour of the rost, and see my cubbord garnished with

English conflict between magnificence and hospitality as proposed by William Camden by some thirty years.³² Yet, the broader cultural articulation of this sentiment, and whether this sentiment influenced the imagination of the English reactionaries of the following century, is yet to be thoroughly researched.

Moreover, there is much evidence to suggest that the complex dialectic between magnificence and hospitality in England persisted into the following centuries. A few piecemeal vignettes may indicate the potential of such future research. For instance, Christine Stevenson's *Medicine and magnificence* (2000) is particularly illustrative in describing how public institutions dedicated to hospitality also fell victim to complaints of architectural over-elaboration after 1700.³³ Likewise for domestic architecture, the spatial separation of classes and the elaboration of architecture only continued. One may glimpse a rather apathetic moral approach to this in a letter penned by Horace Walpole to his friend George Montagu in 1763, as he was rapidly expanding his house at Strawberry Hill.³⁴ 'I begin to be ashamed of my magnificence' Walpole piously writes, 'Strawberry is growing Sumptuous in its latter day; it will scarce be any longer like the fruit of its name, or the modesty of its ancient demeanour.'³⁵ Evidently, the apology existed to sustain a contrary reality. No stranger to medieval nostalgia, Walpole's expression of regret upon further distancing his house from its simple and ancient foundations, did little to restrain him from embarking on a third phase of magnificent architectural expansions at Strawberry Hill.³⁶

5.5 Postlogue

As for the state of affairs today, at what feels like the opposing end in the history of market capitalism, new problems emerge under familiar names. After taking some photos for this dissertation in Burton Agnes Hall, I found myself in the town of Beverly for the evening. Having been climbing up and down ladders for most of the afternoon, I was quite hungry. There was little to eat on the streets around Beverly Minster. But thankfully, nestled amongst a row of townhouses, I spied the sign for an inn which advertised: "Traditional English Hospitality—Home-cooked food & cold platters." There was no menu on the door, but hoping for a bit of pie, I entered and asked to see the menu. "We don't serve

flagons, pots and goblets.'

³² William Camden, *Annales rerum Anglicarum et Hibernicarum regnante Elizabetha* (London: William Stansby, 1615), 347.

³³ Christine Stevenson, *Medicine and Magnificence: British Hospital and Asylum Architecture, 1660–1815* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), 16. "criticism of over-elaborate hospitals was not frequently recorded before 1700 [...]"

³⁴ Local Studies Team, "Horace Walpole (1717–1797) and Strawberry Hill – Local History Notes: 18," London Borough of Richmond upon Thames Library Blog, June 14 2020, accessed August 8 2025.

³⁵ Horace Walpole, *The Letters of Horace Walpole, Earl of Orford*, vol. 3 (London: Richard Bentley, 1846), 226.

³⁶ "Horace Walpole (1717–1797) and Strawberry Hill – Local History Notes: 18," London Borough of Richmond upon Thames Library Blog. "The last main addition to the house was made in 1776. This was the Beauclerk Tower, conceived by Chute and designed by James Essex and containing a hexagonal closet."

food tonight,” replied the barman curtly. Much worse for wear, I sat in my car and glumly gnawed at a cheese and onion sandwich from Tesco’s, watching as the sunset splashed the towers of Beverly Minster with magnificent streaks of red and deep orange.

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