

The Lacanian Study of “the Mower Poems”: Mower’s Separation from and Reunion with Nature

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze Marvell’s “the Mower Poems” in terms of Lacanian psychoanalytic theory. The researcher tries to show the resemblance of the triadic relationship of the Oedipus complex in the first three Mower Poems: “The Mower against Gardens,” “Damon the Mower,” “The Mower to the Glowworms”. The main desire of the Mower is toward the reunion with the mother. This desire can also be seen as the death drive, which means returning to the preoedipal stage. In the last poem, “The Mower’s Song”, as the result of the foreclosure, the Mower shows some signs of psychosis. This poem ends with the death of the Mower and his return to nature. This return to, and reunion with, nature can be read as the return and reunion with the mother, and dissolution of the Mower’s subjectivity. The researcher tries to read the four poems as a cycle. It starts from the imaginary stage of union between the Mower and nurturing nature, and ends with his return to nature by his death.

Keywords: Castration, Death Drive, Jouissance, the Name-of-the-father, and Need

Introduction

In “the Mower poems”, one can read the earth or nature as the representative of the mother and the imaginary world of mother-child unity. Nature is always personified as the mother. Mother Nature, also referred to as Mother Earth, is a common personification of nature. Mother Earth is found in many creation myths as “an anthropomorphized earth”. She nurtures humans and in the time of human death she buries humans within herself (Leeming, 401). One can see this personification even in Greek mythology. Gaia in Greek mythology is the mother and wife of Uranus and is known as earth or Mother Earth. In the world mythology Great Mother is a “fertility deity” who produces living things, nurtures them and at death she returns them within herself (422).

In religious belief, the life of human being can be seen as a cycle. This journey begins from the birth of the child and will end by returning to the earth. In the Bible, there are many references to this process. For example in Genesis 3:19 it has been said that “in the sweat of thy face shalt thou it bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art and onto dust shalt thou return”. The same theme can be seen in other verses like Genesis 18:27 and Job 10:9 and ecclesiastes 12:7. So in religion, the earth is related to both birth and death.

For Lacan Nature has a special significance. Lacan recurrently refers to the distinction between human beings and animals or as he refers to the distinction between “human society” and “animal society”. The main distinction between human society and animal society lies on the fact that, human have language while animals have codes. According to Lacan, animal psychology is dominated by the imaginary while human psychology not only has the imaginary but also has the other dimension which is symbolic. Lacan puts the opposition between nature and culture; he refers to the incest taboo as the center of legal structure which differentiates culture from nature. The primordial law which is the prohibition of incest and has a main role in regulating marriage is what superimposes the culture on nature which is based on the law of mating (Evans, 123).

Nature for Lacan is also the representative of the pre-linguistic world that shows itself in literature as a sense of nostalgia. Writers such as Jean Jacques Rousseau always has glorified “the virtue of primitive man and his life before the corrupting influence of language”, it means before the symbolic order. In this idea people are considered to be naturally good (Fink, 24). This idea can also be seen in the phrase such as “noble savage”, the idealization of the concept of uncivilized man who has not been corrupted yet by the influence of the civilization.

In the four “Mower” poems, nature reflects the Mower’s thoughts (especially in the second poem which will be discussed further) and the collection of these poems can be seen as a cycle of the human journey through his alienation with nature which as it has been discussed can be seen as the mother, the desire to return to it as the desire to return to the mother and the nostalgia for returning to the pre-oedipal stage; to the journey which will end by the returning of the Mower to nature and the death of his subjectivity.

Nature and its defilement by Luxurious Man

In “The Mower against Gardens”, the Mower criticizes Luxurious man for tempting the whole world and for bringing into common practice his immoral and wicked behavior (lines 1-2). He destroys “plain and pure” nature by charming the fields, flowers and plants. As Glancy states, “The Mower against Gardens” accuses man after the fall that by taking advantage of his new vice interferes with nature and, “through science, alter the natural colors and scents of the flowers and meddle with natural propagation” (170).

As it has been discussed nature can be seen as the mother, then what Luxurious man is really doing is seducing and defiling the pure and plain mother. The name Luxurious intensifies this idea. In this poem “Luxurious” means voluptuous which has connotation of sensual pleasure. Other connotation for Luxurious is lecherous. Luxurious man separates the Mower from nature by making the garden that is in the shape of square. The garden becomes a barrier that prevents the Mower’s access to nature or the mother and thus by making a garden Luxurious man making a law that prohibits the access of the Mower to the garden.

This act of Luxurious man can also be seen as the beginning of the process of symbolization. As Fink states, the real is a stage in which there are no areas, subdivisions or gaps; it is a kind of undistinguished fabric which is woven in way that there is no space between its threads. The description, which applies to

the child's body as it is applicable to the whole universe; while the symbolic order is a stage therein the real separates into different "separate zones, distinct features, and contrasting structures" (24). The symbolic order draws the smooth real into the symbolic and ruins it by creating gaps and divisions in it (24). Luxurious man by making the garden creates a division in nature that is supposed to be without any zones or divisions. He also brings representation and absence into nature which, if it has been taken as the representative of the real, is the realm of presence and the immediate access.

Symbolic order is the world of signification and "a sign presupposes the absence of the object it signifies" (Eagleton, 144). The Mower in "The Mower against Gardens" desires the world of immediate access and the presence. He detests the artificiality of the symbolic order that Luxurious man brings with himself. Luxurious man duplicates nature by making "the fountain and the grot" (line 31), and deprives the Mower of the original natural fountain and grot. He also makes the statues of fauns and fairies in order to decorate the garden (lines 37-38). This representation all implies the absence of the real objects. Fauns and fairies are mythical creatures. In the lines 35-36, the Mower tells that "And fauns and fairies do the meadows till,/ More by their presence than their skill". The existence and presence of these mythical creatures can only occur in the imaginary order. The Mower believes that he dwells with these fantastical creatures (line 40) and the use of objective form of "we" in (the line 14) shows the resistance of the Mower in accepting the subjectivization by refusing to use the personal pronoun "I" to refer to himself.

Luxurious Man as the Father of the Primal Horde

In the lines 27-28, the Mower compares Luxurious man's garden to a "green seraglio". Seraglio or Harem in Muslim countries is a part of a palace that has been set apart for the wives and the concubines of the sultan. By this comparison, the Mower compares Luxurious man with a sultan who has accumulated all the women and has blocked the access of others to this space. To enter such a palace, one has to be a female or as the Mower refers to, a eunuch. A eunuch is a castrated man who works as a Harem attendant. One can compare Luxurious man with the father of the primal horde or the primal father. The primal father is the imaginary father who imposes the incest taboo on his sons and the terrifying father who has deprived his daughters of the symbolic phallus (Evans, 63). This father is the father of the second time of the Oedipus complex. According to Lacan, the second time of the Oedipus complex is accompanied by the intervention of the imaginary father. The imaginary father imposes the law on the mother's desire by prohibiting the mother's access to the object of her desire or the phallus and also he prevents the child's access to the mother (Evans, 132). Thus castration can refer to both the castration of the phallic mother and the castration of the subject. Therefore, the word eunuch in "The Mower against Gardens" can be applied to many participants of the Oedipus complex. First, it can be applied to the mother (which in this poem is represented by nature) who has been deprived of her phallus by the imaginary father. Second, it can be applied to the daughter who sees herself already castrated and as Evans states, "blames" the imaginary father "for depriving her of the symbolic phallus or its equivalent a child" (this fact will give rise to penis envy and it also can refer to the fear of castration the boy has experienced (63). In "The Mower against Gardens", the word eunuch can have more than one signification for the Mower. On the one hand it shows that he is aware of the threat of castration and on the other hand it shows that Luxurious man brings with his prohibitive law, the sexual difference. The Mower becomes aware that he cannot enter into the green seraglio while he possesses the imaginary phallus. In this sense castration does not refer to the threat of cutting off the biological organ but a renunciation. For Lacan this renunciation is the renunciation of having or being phallus as the object of the mother's desire and also entering this symbolic garden requires the renunciation of jouissance.

As it has been suggested Luxurious man can be considered as the father of the primal horde. This father accumulates all women for himself (as a sultan gathers all the women in his seraglio, all his wives, his

concubines and even his daughters in his seraglio) to protect them from any threat by the other masculine members of the society and all the women are accessible to him. He knows no boundaries. This father has also the symbolic function “he marks the limit of a man’s manhood” (Fink, 110). The primal father is a law giver who is not included in his own law. His existence makes the desire of transgression in the subject as Fink expresses, “Every man, despite castration ..., continues to have incestuous dreams in which he grants himself the privileges of the imagined pleasure finding father who knows no bounds” (111). The subject must stop his attempt to be “the imaginary phallus for the mother”. It is already impossible for the subject to be the imaginary phallus for the mother. The only thing the subject is able to sustain for himself is “the neurotic illusion that enjoyment would be attainable if it were not forbidden”. The jouissance is basically transgressive since the act of prohibition makes a desire to transgress it (Evans, 94).

Luxurious man by creating a garden and making a prohibitive law for the Mower creates the desire of transgression in the Mower. This desire can be seen as the nostalgic reunion with nature which has been personified as the mother. While whole of the poem can be seen as the ego talk of the Mower in which the Mower complains about the tyranny of Luxurious man as the sultan of the green seraglio, one can also see the desire of the Mower to get access into the garden. He knows that Luxurious man fears to be overthrown by the other tyrant.

As it has been explained, the first poem of the collection of “the Mower Poems” can be seen as the second time of the Oedipus complex. In the second time of the Oedipus complex, as Evans states, the imaginary father comes to separate the mother of the child by declaring the incest taboo; this time is what Lacan calls privation (23). Luxurious man by depriving the Mower of his objects of desire and blocking the Mower’s access to the mother creates a loss in the Mower and makes him the desire of returning to the pre-oedipal imaginary stage of union with the mother. This union can only be possible for the Mower in the imaginary world of fauns and fairies in which he lives in natural and harmonious unity. In “The Mower’s against Gardens”, the Mower sees nature as a “willing nature” or the mother who will dispense to all “a wild and fragrant innocence”.

Nurturing Nature and the Vexing Nature

In the first poem, “The Mower against Gardens”, nature is “plain and pure” (line 4); “a willing nature” which supplies all with a “wild and fragrant innocence” (lines 33-34). In this poem, nature is a place where the fauns and fairies live in it. Fauns are “half-goat, half-man woodland gods associated with lust and drinking” (Ferguson, 483). The Roman equivalence for faun is satyr; using of such rustic creatures which are common in pastoral poetry gives nature an imaginary mythical status. The place where lustful half-animal creatures like fauns can find union with fairies and by their mere presence they till the earth; to till the earth means to prepare and cultivate land for crops. So fauns and fairies by their presence cause the procreativity of earth or nature. In the garden, the act of grafting of Luxurious man is seen by the Mower as dealing between “the barks and trees” which is a proverb and refers to the act of interfering between husband and wife (Greenblatt, 1706). The Mower in this poem sees nature as a pleasant and harmonious place, the idea which is common in all pastoral poems. In pastoral poem, nature is seen as an ideal place to live in.

In the second poem, the Mower has two contradictory views toward nature. Nature in this poem has been dried by the intense heat. The unusual heat has influenced not only the meadows but also it has influenced the life of the Mower and animals. The Mower tries to find a way of escaping from this heat in taking refuge in a “cool cave” or gelid fountain. This experience of the Mower toward nature, his work’s environment, is incongruent with his description of nature when he is comparing himself to a shepherd. In

lines 41-48, he boasts about his status in nature, his imaginary status in the other, and how nature takes care of his needs:

I am the Mower Damon, known
Through all the meadows I have mown.
On me the morn her dew distills
Before her darling daffodils.
And, if at noon my toil me heat,
The sun himself licks off my sweat.
While, going home, the evening sweet
In cowslip-water baths my feet.

This equivocal feeling in the second poem, “Damon the Mower”, and the change of the Mower’s feeling toward nature is the subjective view of the Mower toward nature and is an indicator of his psychological state of mind. In the first poem, nature was taken as the mother. In this poem and the two next one, the love of the Mower is toward Juliana. In contrast to the first poem in which the Mower is the narrator, in “Damon the Mower” there is an unspecified narrator who invites the reader to listen to the Damon’s complaint about his love toward Juliana. The Mower’s relation with Juliana has affected his relation with nature; as the Mower himself confesses to this fact. He finds Juliana as the cause of the intense heat in nature that affects all nature. As he states that:

This heat the sun could never raise,
Nor Dog Star so inflame the days.
It from an higher beauty grow’th,
Which burns the fields and mower both:
Which mads the Dog, and makes the sun
Hotter than his own Phaëthon.
Not July causeth these extremes,
But Juliana’s scorching beams. (Lines 17- 24)

While the Mower is complaining about his love for Juliana, he is trying to attract Juliana’s attention by bringing her unusual gifts. If one looks at this poem as the continuation of the previous one in which the researcher has seen it as the initiation of the process of separation, “Damon the Mower” can also be seen as the continuation of the same process and recognize the triangle of the Oedipus complex in this poem.

Juliana as the Mower’s Love Object

Juliana can be read as the “love object” of the Mower. The love object is the person or the object to which the subject addresses his or her demand for love (Fink, 89). As Fink states, the first love object of the child is the mother (97). In the first poem, the mother in the imaginary world of union is seen as the mother who can satisfy all the needs of the child. According to Lacan the child interprets every act of the mother as a proof of the mother’s unconditional love. Evans expresses, “while the needs which demand articulates may be satisfied, the craving for love is unconditional and insatiable” (36). This unsatisfied demand for love gives rise to desire. The child not only tries to be the mother’s love object but also tries to satisfy the mother’s desire which is ever in motion. In “Damon the Mower”, Damon tries to fathom Juliana’s desire by trying to give her different gifts such as a “snake” which its teeth and sting is removed; “chameleons” which changes their colors and “oak leaves” which is “tipped with honey dew” (lines 35-38); but the Mower fails in his attempts as Juliana shows no interest in these objects, this failure of the Mower can be seen as the cause of his anxiety.

The desire of the mother in the second time of the Oedipus complex can be the cause of the child's anxiety. Desire of the mother is traumatic for the child. When the child finds out that the mother's object of desire is the imaginary phallus, he tries to seduce the mother by having or becoming the imaginary phallus for the mother (Evans, 55). He thinks that phallus is the lost object of the mother, but he finds out that to satisfy the mother's desire he must present her with something real. As Evans states, "anxiety is produced because," the child "can now measure the difference between that for which he is loved by the mother (his position as imaginary phallus) and that which he really has to give (his insignificant real organ)" (11). According to Lacan, the child will understand that he cannot placate the mother's desire; "the mother desires the phallus she lacks ... the subject seeks to become the object of her desire". The subject attempts to be the phallus for the mother and fills the mother's lack; "at this point, the mother is omnipotent and her desire is the law" (Evans, 131). In spite of the fact that this omnipotence may be viewed as threatening from the start, the sense of threat increases when the child confronted with his own sexual drive for the first time. The appearance of the real of the drive presents for the first time, a sign of disharmony of anxiety into "the previously seductive imaginary triangle". The child now realizes that he cannot fool the mother's desire with the imaginary phallus and comes to this realization that "he must present something in the real". Still the child's real organ is frustratingly insufficient. This sense of impotence "in the face of an omnipotent maternal desire" that cannot be satisfied, gives rise to anxiety. The intervention of the real father can only provide a real solution to the child's anxiety (Ibid).

Snake in line 35 can be considered as a phallic symbol, but as the Mower tells this snake is "harmless" and "its teeth and sting" are removed (line 36). The snake that its teeth and sting is removed can be the symbol of an impotent phallus that the Mower wants to present to Juliana. He understands that Juliana shows no interest in this gift.

Introduction of the Third Term, Shepherd as "The Name-of-the-Father"

In "Damon the Mower", the Mower notices that Juliana's desire is toward a third term; that is the shepherd. As Fink states, it is the attention of the mother to the third term that gives him the power to play this function. The Mower clearly sees the shepherd as a rival for Juliana's love and tries to take refuge in the imaginary register to prove his supremacy over the shepherd. To do so, he compares the hay he accumulates by his scythe with the Golden Fleece:

With this the golden fleece I shear
Of all these closes every year.
And though in wool more poor than they,
Yet am I richer far in hay. (Lines 53-56)

The Golden Fleece in line five of the seventh stanza has an allusion to the Mythological story of Jason and the Argonauts. In the story, Golden Fleece is the treasure obtained by Jason and the Argonauts (Cotterell, 165). Although the Mower tries to show that he is superior to the shepherd, and tries to compete with him over Juliana's love, his discourse and the kind of allusion he uses, clearly shows that he knows he is inferior to the shepherd. Shepherd can be seen as the symbolic father who can separate the child from the mother by possessing and being the object of the mother's desire.

In the third stanza, the Mower compares "the sun" god, Helios with his son, "Phaëthon"; the mythological story of Helios and "Phaëthon" can reflect the idea of the supremacy of the father over his son. To show the intensity of the unusual heat caused by Juliana's love, the Mower states that this heat makes the sun "hotter than his own Phaëthon" (line 22). By making a Lacanian reading of the story of the Phaëthon, this research will try to find the unconscious reason behind the using of this special allusion.

According to Hamilton, Phaëthon's mother, Clymene, makes his son aware that his father is the sun-god or Phoebus. Phaëthon goes to his father who swears by the river Styx to give him anything he would request in order to prove his divine sonship. What Phaëthon requests is nothing but to drive the golden chariot of the Helios for a day. His father does his best to speak about its dangers to dissuade Phaëthon from this request, but he insists and at last succeeds to drive the chariot of the sun. When the horses realize that their reins are held by a feeble hand, they ascend to the top of the sky and then rashly descend and set the world on fire. Phaëthon fills in terror and wants to put an end to this torment. Jove or Zeus captures his thunderbolt, hurls it recklessly and strikes Phaeton dead, breaks the chariot into pieces and forces the maddened horses to go down the sea (Hamilton, 180-184).

One can see a symbolic psychoanalytic pattern behind this story. What Phaëthon demands from his father, is to have the symbol of his father's power as a supreme god. The golden chariot can be seen as the signifier of the mother's desire, the signifier that makes the father desirable in the mother's eyes, the "phallus". What Phaëthon really requests is to possess the signifier of the mother's desire. Even though Helios as a father is aware of the danger, he cannot make Phaëthon to renunciate his desire to possess this object. "Renunciation of jouissance" is required for the subject's entrance into the symbolic order (Evans, 94). To have or possess the phallus means for the child to be able to remain as the object of the mother's desire in the imaginary register. The child's encounter with the mother's desire is a traumatic experience and he as a subject should adapt a position with respect to this traumatic desire. This traumatic experience of pleasure and pain is what Freud describes as the sexual uber, a sexual overload, and Lacan calls the jouissance (Fink, 62-63). The sense of jouissance comes from *das ding*, the object of incestuous desire or the mother; "as well as the object of language, *das ding* is the object of desire. It is the lost object which must be continually refound, it is the prehistoric, unforgettable Other- in other words, the forbidden object of incestuous desire, the mother" (Evans 207). As Evans states, "the pleasure principle is the law which maintains the subject at a certain distance from the Thing, making the subject circle round it without ever attaining it. The Thing is thus presented to the subject as his Sovereign Good, but if the subject transgresses the pleasure principle and attains this Good, it is experienced as suffering/evil" (207).

In this scenario, the father is the savior of the child by bringing the law. The father blocks the child's access to this traumatic incestuous object of jouissance, which is the mother (Evans, 150). As jouissance is the excess amount of pleasure, if the father fails in regulating the child's desire, reaching to its object means the death of the subjectivity and annihilation of the space created between the child and his mother. This means the dissolving of the subjectivity. The failure of Helios and the death of the Phaëthon in this story can be seen as the failure of the father in blocking the child's access to the object of desire; but at the same time by bringing this story, the Mower admits that it is only the father who can wheel and regulate the mother's desire. In comparing himself with the shepherd, what the Mower tells about himself is based on an imaginary picture which can be seen as his ego. According to Lacan, ego "arises as a crystallization or sedimentation of ideal images tantamount to a fixed reified object with which a child learns to identify, which the child learns to identify with him or herself" (Fink, 36). This image is constituted in the mirror stage. The mirror in which the child sees himself gives the child a unified idealized picture of himself. The Mower finds this idealized image first, in the mirror of nature as an other, when he tells that he is known through all the meadows. Second, he finds this image in the actual mirror of his scythe as the Mower tells that:

Nor am I so deformed to sight,
If in my scythe I looked right;
In which I see my picture done,
As in a crescent moon the sun. (Lines, 57-60)

In these lines there is an incongruity between what the Mower tries to tell and what actually can be perceived from his words. As Fink states, there are two kinds of discourse: an intentional discourse and an unintentional discourse. An intentional discourse limited to the conscious thoughts. It is what the speaker tries to say that Lacan calls false being of the ego. It shows a kind of resistance toward the thoughts that are revealed by the unconscious (43-44). Lacan introduces two kinds of subject: the “subject of enunciating” and the “subject of enunciation”. The “subject of enunciating” is “the actual person pronouncing a sentence about herself” and “the subject of enunciation” is the subject of the sentence (Habib, 598). The “subject of enunciating” cannot represent himself completely in the sentence he articulates: “there is no sign which will, so to speak, sum up my entire being. I can only designate myself in language by a convenient pronoun”. The pronoun “I” is a substitute for the subject that is hard to grasp (Eagleton, 147).

On the one hand the Mower tries to compare himself with the sun (which if one considers the allusion to the story of Helios in the previous lines can be seen as the comparison of the powerful father) and on the other hand one can understand that this ideal image can only be perceived by looking at the scythe in a special angle. The scythe itself is a curved twisted mirror and cannot provide a true image. So the Mower sees in his scythe what he likes to see. The negative sentence and the use of the adverb, “so”, can be seen as an acknowledgement by the Mower that he is actually deformed, but what he tells is that I am deformed but not so deformed.

Death Drive in the Mower, Desire to Return to the Pre-Oedipal Stage

The presence of death can be seen throughout the last three poems of “the Mower Poems”. Damon is a classic Greek name which means “to tame, subdue” and it was often used as a euphemism for “kill” (Hanks, 89). “Damon the Mower” is the only poem in which the Mower has been addressed by his name, Damon. Damon’s job is in complete accordance with his name. The Mower’s cutting down the grass can be interpreted as killing the grass. As Brackett mentions, falling of the grass has death reference (276). The Mower compares himself with personification of Death in lines 73-80:

While thus he threw his elbow round,
Depopulating all the ground,
And, with his whistling scythe, does cut
Each stoke between the earth and root,
The edged steel by careless chance
Did into his own ankle glance;
And there among the grass fell down,
By his own scythe, the Mower mown.

Such a comparison between the Mower and Death is also visible in biblical texts as Faust refers, beneath the surface meaning, there is a hidden meaning that refers to the biblical phrase “all flesh is grass” (Isaiah 40:6); it refers to “a natural symbol for death” (88). The personification of death as a Mower can also be seen in the image of Death as a man or cloaked skeleton with a scythe known as Grim Reaper (Delahunty, 160). The image of scythe has also a mythological connotation.

The artifact symbol, Scythe, is the “symbol of the passage of time and death, also of harvesting” (Hall, 83). In one respect, Scythe, refers to the mythological god Cronus who castrates his father, Uranus, with a tool similar to a scythe (so scythe can be seen as a tool for castration and also a symbol for castration). The Romans identifies Saturn, their god of agriculture with Cronus since both of them has a scythe. The

Father Time, Chronos, acquires his scythe from Saturn. In another respect, scythe is the symbol of death since death always carries a scythe in order to put an end to the life (Ibid).

Death is what the Mower considers as a remedy for his pain. As Eagleton states, “the final goal of life is death, a return to the blissful inanimate state where the ego cannot be injured”. The subject struggles “to return to a state before” he was “even conscious” (139). For Lacan death drive is “a nostalgia for a lost harmony, a desire to return to the preoedipal fusion with the mother’s breast. The loss of which is marked on the psyche in the weaning complex” (Evans, 33). It is exactly what the Mower is after. He is after his own death and as death in Lacanian concept refers to the return to the preoedipal stage, it can be considered as the desire of the Mower toward the return to the preoedipal nostalgic realm of unity which he refers to it in the first poem.

As it has been said, death drive is a yearning to the fusion to the mother’s breast. Breast is the child’s first object choice and the child tries to find this encountered object at some later point in time, but as Fink expresses, as there was not such a thing as object or subject in the imaginary period before symbolization, the subject can never constitute the same relation with this lost object, which is the mother’s breast. Fink states that “there never was such an object in the first place, ... the breast is not, during the first experience of satisfaction, constituted as an object at all, much less as an object that is not part of the infant’s body and that is largely beyond the infant’s control” (Fink, 94). The breast becomes an object for the child when the child experiences its absence or loss and the child tries to re-experience the first satisfaction by fantasizing the presence of the breast. He can never experience the same kind of innocence with the actual breast he finds thereafter. This makes the breast to have a real status as the child cannot symbolize this preverbal experience. Breast becomes object (a) for the child; “the reminder of the lost mother-child unity” (Fink, 93). In the poem, the Mower states that:

Tell me where I may pass the fires
Of the hot day, or hot desires.
To what cool cave shall I descend,
Or to what gelid fountain bend?
Alas! I look for ease in vain,
When remedies themselves complain.
No moisture but my tears do rest,
Nor cold but in her icy breast. (Lines 25-32)

In these lines, the Mower tries to take refuge in Juliana’s breast from the hotness of the realm of the symbolic in which desire is always in motion and never can be satisfied. Thus there is always a distance between subject and its object of desire. In this word, he can never attain his object of desire and re-experience the once existed unity between the mother and child or in other words re-experiences the fusion with the mother’s breast. The coldness of Juliana’s breast shows that, this act is not possible. This coldness also can refer to death. The Mower does not accept the symbolic world and the primacy of the father as the one who possesses the phallus. The whole poem is an unusual pastoral poem or, better to say, a rejection of the traditional pastoral poem. In a pastoral poem, as it has been explained in the general background, the main character is a shepherd and the rejection of a genre in which the shepherd who occupies the position of the father in this poem can be seen as the rejection of a symbolic system of meanings.

The glowworms as “the Name-of-the-Father” in “The Mower to the Glowworms”

“The Mower to the Glowworms” begins with the Mower addressing the glowworms in a form of a dramatic monologue. In the dramatic monologue the reader or listener can understand the true intention or the unconscious desire behind whatever the speaker tells. According to Lacan, whatever the subject tells about himself is formed by his ego talk and it is a message to the other sent by the subject. The main addressee of the message is the subject himself. As Fink expresses, not only the words of the subject can be understood as a message, but also the symptoms can be understood “as the message about the subject that are designed for the other” (73). It is the other that interprets this message. This subject which is the subject of interest of the analyst (whether psychoanalyst or literary analyst, a critic) can be posited not only in the subject of the statement, the subjective “I”, but also in all the discourse. As Fink states, this subject is constituted by the message (Fink, 73). Though the sender of the message is the subject himself, he is unable to interpret it. He needs to be heard. The reason behind the Mower’s soliloquies can be seen as his need to be heard by the other. By examining the Mower’s talk, one can designate the true subject of the poem which is nothing but a distance with respect to the other.

In this poem, the castrated the Mower wandering in the realm of the symbolic still has strong desire to return to the preoedipal stage of union. Juliana has become both the object of the Mower’s fixation and at the same time his object of desire; the object that elicits desire in the Mower. Fixation, as Fink expresses, is a traumatic blockage and the only way to overcome such a fixation can be found in the substitution and displacement or in Lacanian words in the metonymical movement from one signifier to another (26). The Mower’s fixation over Juliana can be seen as his fixation over the primordial object of desire which is the mother.

Glowworm, according to Haber, implies a “phallic symbol” (102). In this poem, the glowworms are to be interpreted as the phallic signifier that plays the phallic function “the function that instituted lack” (Fink, 103). By blocking the child’s access to his object of desire, the father constitutes a lack in the child. This lack becomes the cause of the child’s desire as he wants to be the object of the mother’s desire and re-experiences the same kind of pleasure that he had once experienced in the pre-symbolic unity. The role of the father is not guaranteeing the inaccessibility of such an object, but promising that such an object can be refound in the symbolic order. The role of the father is both to maintain the child’s distance from the object of desire and to block the child’s access to the mother. As Evans states, “on the one hand, the superego is a symbolic structure that regulates the subject’s desire and on the other hand, there is this senseless blind imperativeness to it. ... nothing forces anyone to enjoy except the superego” (Homer, 58). Superego is part of the law that governs the symbolic order. The child assimilates the law by identification with the father (Evans, 202). This father is the symbolic father who himself is a part of the law. The child enters this symbolic world of law by assimilating a primordial signifier and as Fink expresses, that primordial signifier is instated through the operation of what Lacan calls the paternal metaphor or the paternal function (Fink, 55). This signifier acts like a compass for the child and if the child does not assimilate this signifier which means the failure of the father, it will end in psychosis. This primordial signifier is nothing more than the signifier of the mother’s desire, the Name-of-the-Father or the No of the Father; the phallus (Fink, 57).

As it has been mentioned, the glowworms can be seen as the phallus; the central signifier of the symbolic world. The meaning of one’s reality depends on this signifier and one adapts an orientation toward the object of desire by assimilating this central signifier. In stanza three, lines 9-12, the Mower tells that:

Ye glow-worms, whose officious flame
To wandering mowers shows the way,

That in the night have lost their aim,
And after foolish fires do stray;

As the Mower states, Glowworm's main responsibility is to prevent "the wandering Mowers" from straying toward the "Foolish Fires". Foolish fires or "*Ignis fatuus* (Latin), also known as the will-o'-the-wisp; said to draw travelers astray by holding a false light before them; the phenomenon of nocturnal light is caused by the combustion of marsh gas" (Ferguson, 484). Following this light, can cause the wandering Mowers to be drawn into the marshes or in other words, their death. As the Mower tells, the glowworms cannot help the Mower to find his way home or in other words find his way through the symbolic order. Foolish Fires can be considered as The Thing for the Mowers and what drives them toward Foolish Fires is the death drive. That is why the Mower considers the glowworms' flame, "officious" (line 9) which means eager to offer unwanted services and also interfering or meddlesome. It shows that the true desire of the wandering Mowers is toward death or the disintegration of subjectivity. This shows that the glowworms as the primordial signifiers or phallus cannot maintain the distance of the Mower from The Thing, the object of his desire, and as they "portend" (line 5) no death, their service is unwanted in the Mower's eyes. The reason may be found in the fact that worms cannot be a strong symbol for phallus; strong enough to maintain the subject's distance and to help the subject to find a position within the symbolic.

In "The Mower to the Glowworms", nature is seen as a dark confusing place; a place of death. As the time of the poem is the night and there are some references to death, such as the "princes funeral" in line 6 and the implication of the death of the wandering Mowers who by following the "Foolish Fires" will meet their death by becoming drowned in the marshes. The auditory image of the nightingale's songs also adds to the gloomy atmosphere of the poem. What the nightingale is known for, is "its sweet and sad song"; it leads to "one tradition that the bird's song laments the tragic result of wrongful love" (Ferguson, 483). These all are the reflection of the Mower's own psyche and the kind of relation he has with Juliana. The Mower finds himself lost and wandering off in the symbolic order which has no center. This can imply the psychotic structure of the Mower.

By calling the glowworms' light unwanted and implying that it cannot help him in finding his way, means that the Mower has rejected the symbolic castration and the Name-of-the-Father, the phallus, is not integrated in the symbolic universe of the Mower. As the Mower states, Juliana has "displaced" his mind (line 15) and he shall never regain his position in the symbolic register. Psychotic structure implies that there is a hole in the symbolic order, "an element is rejected outside the symbolic order just as if it had never existed" (Evans, 65). As Evans expresses, "Lacan relates the origin of psychosis to an exclusion of the father from the family structure, with the consequent reduction of the later to mother-child relations" (ibid). This father is the Name-of-the-Father, the primordial signifier that should be repressed to form the center of the unconscious. As Fink states, this binary signifier "is the signifier to which all other signifiers represent a subject; should this signifier be missing none of the other signifiers represents anything at all" (74). There is some kind of choice, the choice which Lacan refers to as a paradoxical phrase "forced choice" in accepting or rejecting of this signifier (Fink, 50). The Mower by rejecting the glowworms is creating a hole in the symbolic. The primordial signifier acts as a "point de caption" or upholstery button which helps the process of signification possible (Homer, 42). This causes the Mower to create a very personal version of reality; he constructs a special relation with nature which can be viewed in the poem, "The Mower's Song", the last poem of the collection of "the Mower Poems". The Mower is condemned to drift in the world of signifiers in which there is not any fixed meaning to it.

"The Mower's Song", Return to Nature

While in the previous poems one can see the triadic relations, in the last poem there is no third term to separate the Mower from the mother. This poem ends with the death of the Mower which can be interpreted as the death of the subjectivity or the disintegration of the subject. The Mower returns to nature in this poem.

The sense of nostalgia of the Mower toward nature is apparent from the first lines of the Mower's song. The Mower tells, "my mind was once the true survey/ of all these meadows fresh and gay, and in the greenness of the grass/ did see its hopes as in a glass" (Lines 1-4). This mirror of the other in which the Mower sees himself is an indication of the imaginary stage of unity or more correctly to say, the mirror stage in which the Mower sees his own reflection in the mirror of the other. In this stage there is no distance between the child and his mother and as it has been explained there is no question of subject or object. This process provides a pleasurable experience for the Mower. As Habib states, the coherent and idealized image that is reflected from the mirror, what Lacan calls the "Ideal-I," provides the child's source of joy and pleasure (591). The mirror does not have to be necessarily a real image. According to Tyson, the mirror in the mirror stage can be both, "an actual mirror" or "the reaction of the mother" (27); as Homer states, it can be any "reflexive surface" (24). This image causes the child to misrecognize himself with an image, therefore the child's image gives him an identity based on misrecognition. As mirror is an Other, the child's identity is formed in the Other. The child becomes the subject of the other's gaze (Bertens, 135). The Mower refers to the time that nature was a glass for his thoughts, which refers to the time of preoedipal stage. As Funari expresses, Damon has lost the unity between the mind and his environment. He loses the harmony and unity he had with nature (76).

There is a kind of hostility between the Mower and his own imaginary ego which is in the other and shows itself in the hostile relationship between the Mower and nature. The task of the Mower is to cut down the grasses and as it has been mentioned, grass in Christianity is a metaphor for flesh. As Habib states, the dialect of Master and Slave, adds the element of "aggressivity" into the mirroring stage. It assumes a fundamentally conflictual relationship between self and other (590). The Master and Slave depend on each other since the Master takes his identity as a Master from the slave and vice versa; their identity are interdependent with each other, while simultaneously they are the worst enemies with each other; This is exactly like the child during the imaginary order (Homer, 23). As Evans expresses, the child sees its own image as a whole and "the synthesis of this image" that makes a sense of contradiction with the child's sense of discordance with its body, that is a sense of a fragmented body; "this contrast is first felt by the infant as a rivalry with its own image, because the wholeness of the image threatens the subject with fragmentation, and the mirror stage thereby gives rise to an aggressive tension between the subject and the image"; in order to put an end to this aggressive tension, "the subject identifies with the image" (118). Ego, according to Homer, is created by the infant's clash between his own sense of fragmentation and the perfect and unified self that is imaginary. Now this clash is between the child and its image that in the future it becomes in the form of a clash between the subject and the other. The other in one respect is the guarantor of the infant's existence and on the other hand his rival in the future (26). In "the Mower Poems", there is the same clash between the Mower and nature that can be seen between subject and the other. Though the Mower finds his identity in nature, he is the one who cuts down the grass like in line 69 of "Damon the Mower", "and with my scythe cut down the grass"; and he compares himself with death and considers death as a Mower too (Lines 87-88).

The Mower starts to find meaning in natural phenomenon like a psychotic person; he makes a completely subjective and imaginary reality of nature. As Fink declares, if the primal signifier, the Name-of-the-Father is assimilated by the child, every other signifier connects a relationship between themselves and this master signifier; but if this master signifier is not in its place, every other signifier is somehow

unbound. While in psychotic, all these other signifiers have relations among themselves, they do not affect him. Psychotic “may see nothing, or find the purely personal meaning in virtually everything” (75). The Mower as a subject who has repudiated the Name-of-the-Father tries to mean nature in a complete subjective way.

In “Damon the Mower”, he sees nature as the reflection of his own mind which can be affected by the love of Juliana; in the last poem, “The Mower’s Song”, the Mower sees nature as an unfaithful companion. As Funari expresses, the Mower “is ignorant of the full implication of his statement: that is, for him, his intellect has not altered; rather, it is the meadows that have abandoned the “fellowship” between them” (76). The Mower’s lamenting for his loss of unity with nature, “the inability within this interpretation of nature to blur the subjective and the objective easily, becomes an emotional betrayal by his environment”; the moment of Damon’s realization of the lack of harmony between his internal disturbance and the grass (Funari, 79). He interprets the growth of vegetation as a kind of apathy toward himself and as he states, while he is sorrowful, nature grows more luxuriant and each blade of grass has a two flowers on its sides. In this poem, the Mower cannot find the same sympathy that he has experienced in “Damon the Mower”.

He finds nature alienated toward his feeling. He feels that there is a discrepancy between his inner thought and outside world; at the same time, he states that he is lying “trodden under feet” (line 16). This description of himself makes him a part of a nature, as if he is the same kind of vegetation that can be “trodden under feet” like grass. As it has been discussed, grass can refer to human flesh. What the Mower does to the grass is cutting them. The Mower states that “when Juliana came, and she/ what I do to the grass, does to my thoughts and me”. This can be seen as Juliana cutting the Mower’s flesh into limbs. This can both refer to the physical pain and the fear of fragmentation which is related to the mirror stage. This hallucinatory image can also refer to dismemberment; as Evans states, “repudiation of symbolic castration leads to the return of castration in the real, such as in the form of hallucination of dismemberment or even self mutilation of the real genital organs” (Evans, 34).

In the fourth stanza, the aggressivity of the Mower toward nature reaches to its climax:

But what you in compassion ought,
Shall now by my revenge be wrought;
 flow’rs, and grass, and I and all,
Will in one common ruin fall.
For Juliana comes, and she
What I do to the grass, does to my
thoughts and me. (Lines 19-24)

The Mower starts to take revenge from nature and in doing so he takes revenge not only from the grass and flowers but also from himself. The poem, according to Glancy, “compares the cruelty of the Mower’s lover to his cruelty to the grass”. He wants nature’s sympathy because of his suffering and when he sees nature is unwilling to sympathy with him, decides to cut down the grass as Juliana will mow him down (170). This ends in the self-announced death of the Mower as if he committed a kind of suicide; whether this is a real suicide or a symbolic one. It ends in the reunion of the Mower with nature.

The refrain in the last two stanzas has a difference with the refrain in the three first stanzas. While in the three first stanzas, the time is the past; in the last two stanzas, the time of the sentence is present. The repetition of these stanzas can be seen as the return of the repressed object of desire in the mind of the

Mower. Repetition in Lacan's idea is connected to the death drive. As Evans states "repetition is redefined as the return of jouissance, an excess of enjoyment which returns again and again to transgress the limits of the pleasure principle and seek death" (167). The excess of jouissance, as it has been mentioned before, causes pain. Juliana as the object of the Mower's desire, object (a) or Das Ding, has formed a blockage for the Mower that causes the Mower's fixation. The Mower is doomed to return to it constantly. These refrains make the poem more connected to "The Mower to the Glowworms"; as in the last stanza of that poem, the Mower refers to the coming of Juliana. It is mentioned right after, what has been interpreted as the renunciation of the primordial signifier or foreclosure. The barrier that has blocked the Mower's access to the thing has been removed and this has caused the psychotic effect in the Mower such as hallucination of dismemberment and sense of persecution from nature. It has been said that the death drive is the desire to re-experience the sense of unity with the mother that the child has experienced. The Mower's Song can be seen as the end of the Mower's journey. This journey has begun from the union with nature, to the advent of desire, to the unsuccessful castration and foreclosure of the primordial signifier which causes the Mower to lose his mind and this journey has ended by returning of the Mower to the earth. As in the last stanza, he adorns his tomb by meadow. The Mower, as Brackett states, combines with his surrounding, "not only identifying with the pastoral scene, but becoming that scene. In that manner Juliana may do to his thoughts and body what he has done to the grass, striking it down with his scythe" (Brackett, 277). Marvel, according to Haber, self-consciously moves away from traditional pastoral values to reinvent "the paradoxical relationship of separation and connection upon which the classical pastorals relied (98-99). The repetitive refrain shows the movement of the poem "by insisting, from the beginning, on the Mower's destruction of, separation from, and connection to the meadows" (Haber, 111).

Conclusion

The researcher has seen the four poems as a cycle and tried to read them from the Lacanian psychoanalytic view. This cycle begins with the world of mother-child unity, a blissful world of plenitude in which all the needs of the subject are attended to by the mother, continues with the separation of the child from the mother by the introduction of the third term, the father, and rejection of the primordial signifier which signifies the desire of the mother and becomes an anchoring point for the subject in the symbolic order. The rejection of such a signifier leads the subject to psychosis and hallucinatory images. This cycle ends with the fulfillment of the main wish of the subject which is returning to the pre-oedipal imaginary state. This wish, alongside with the return of the incestuous object of desire which causes the overwhelming feeling of pleasure and pain, forms the death drive of the Mower.

Nature in the first poem, "The Mower against Gardens" is seen as the mother. Luxurious man separates the Mower from nature by building a garden. Garden is like a barrier that prevents the Mower's access to nature or the mother. It creates a division in nature or the real. Mower's comparison of Luxurious man's garden to a "green seraglio" suggests that Luxurious man can be considered as the primal father that accumulates all the women for himself, as he keep nature for himself. By referring to "the eunuchs," this suggests that only the person can enter to Luxurious man's garden who is a eunuch. This shows the fear of castration in the Mower, that same fear that is supposed to cause the child to renunciate his desire for union with the mother. Luxurious man's prohibitive law creates the desire of transgression in the Mower; the desire of reunion with nature or the mother. Luxurious man becomes the imperative of the law: he dictates the subject to enjoy. The Mower in the first poem sees nature as "plain" and "pure" while in the second poem, he has two opposing view of nature. On one side, nature is scorching by the intense heat that has influenced the life of the meadows, animals and the Mower, and on the other side he speaks about nature positively when he compares himself with the shepherd.

In the second poem, “Damon the Mower”, the Mower’s love object transforms from nature to Juliana; the Mower’s attempt in this poem is to attract Juliana’s attention, to fathom her desire, and becoming her sole object of desire. He does so by giving gifts to Juliana but they do not attract Juliana’s attention. One of the gifts he renders to Juliana is a snake which its teeth and sting is removed. It can be considered as the Mower’s impotent phallus which he wants to present to Juliana but he fails. It can be understood by comparing it with the Lacanian concept of anxiety. As Lacan states anxiety rises when the child finds out that he cannot satisfy the desire of the omnipotent mother by presenting an imaginary object, and he had to satisfy the mother’s desire with a real object, while his real organ is still insignificant. This anxiety resolves by the intervention of a third term. The child finds out that the one who really possesses the phallus is the father, as he is the object of the mother’s desire. In the poem, too, when the Mower realizes that by his impotent, insignificant phallus he cannot satisfy Juliana’s desire, he becomes anxious and the reflection of this anxiety can be seen in nature’s status. The Mower understands that Juliana’s desire is toward the third term who is the shepherd. The Mower at this time understands that the one who really possesses the phallus is the shepherd which in this poem can be considered as the Name-of-the-Father. The Mower’s feeling toward Juliana is equivocal. While Juliana is his cause of anxiety, at the same time the Mower wants to become her object of desire and re-found the lost unity. He tries to find the remedy for his pain but he finds no remedy except death; it shows the Mower’s death drive which according to Lacan is the desire to return to the preoedipal stage of the unity. Juliana’s breast is considered as an object (a) for the Mower that is the only place for him to take refuge; it refers to the Mower’s nostalgia of, and his desire to re-experience, the preoedipal fusion with the mother’s breast.

The third poem is “The Mower to the Glowworms”. In this poem, the glowworms has considered as the phallic signifier or the Name-of-the-Father. The glowworms as the Name-of the-Father are unable to help the Mower to find his way, since Juliana has displaced the Mower’s mind in a way that he cannot find his home forever. Juliana is considered as The Thing (Das Ding) for the Mower and the glowworms as the Name-of-the-Father are unable to maintain a distance between the Mower and his object of desire, Juliana. The cause of this can be seen in the fact that worms cannot be a strong symbol for the phallus in order to keep the Mower’s distance from Juliana. There are many implications of death in the poem such as the prince’s funeral or the Foolish Fires which lead the wandering Mowers to death. This reflects the Mower’s state of mind and his true desire. He finds himself lost in the symbolic order which has no center and this may refer to the psychotic structure of the Mower’s mind. The glowworms’ light is unwanted for the Mower and this implies that the Mower’s true wish is to be drowned in the swamps by going after the Foolish Fires. Foolish Fires like Juliana are the object of the Mower’s desire. This refers to the fact that the Mower has refused the castration and the Name-of-the-Father is not instated in the symbolic universe of the Mower. This creates a hole in the symbolic, and creates a very personal version of reality for the Mower.

In “The Mower’s Song” which is the last poem of the series of “the Mower poems”, Juliana is the Mower’s object of desire which causes the mental disorder in the Mower that is because of the failure of the Name-of-the-Father. The Mower in this poem has a subjective view of nature. He considers the brilliant growth of the plants as a sign of their indifference to him and wants to revenge from them. This shows a kind of inconsistency between the Mower’s thoughts and the outside world. The Mower expresses that, when Juliana came, she does to his thoughts and him, what he does to the grass. The Mower cuts down the grasses and as it was said before, grass can refer to human flesh. This is a hallucinatory image that refers to the Mower’s fear of fragmentation and dismemberment. The Mower decides to take revenge from the grass, flowers and himself. This is a kind of suicide by the Mower that results to his death and his reunion with nature. Recurrent refrain of the poem refers to the return of *jouissance*, the overwhelming feeling of enjoyment which leads to pain. The reunion with Juliana at the

last refrain means reaching to the primordial object of incestuous desire for the Mower. The cycle ends with desolation of the subjectivity for the Mower and his reunion with nature.

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