

CHAPTER FOUR

CONCLUSION

Having analysed the poems of Robert Herrick and Richard Lovelace in the previous chapters, I would like to draw some conclusion. In my opinion, all of the six *Cavalier* poems are worth analysing. After analyzing the dictions to reveal the theme of each poem, I have discovered a great deal of knowledge on how *Cavalier* poets lived and applied the principle of *Carpe diem* during the reign of King Charles I.

In the first poem, “To the Virgins, to Make Much of Time,” Herrick urges them to get married and have an intercourse while they are young through the theme, which is **“One should live for the moment by urging oneself to get married and have an intercourse because youthfulness lasts briefly.”** In this poem Herrick compares the fastness of human lives with the short time between sunrise and sunset, using the word “sun”. He also uses the word “rosebuds” to symbolize youth since both of them only last for a short time. The word “marry” is also used to represent marriage and also the pleasure of sexual intercourses.

In the second poem, “A Lyric to Mirth,” Herrick persuades people to satisfy themselves with extreme amount of drinking wine, dancing, playing, and singing. The theme is **“One should live for the moment by satisfying oneself with earthly pleasures before death comes.”** In this poem Herrick chooses the words “drink,” “dance,” “kiss,” “pipe,” “play,” and “sing” to represent the earthly pleasures. The phrase “crowned with clusters of vine” is also used to emphasize the satisfaction of drinking wine abundantly.

Through the third poem, “Corinna’s Going A-Maying”, which theme is **“One should urge oneself to always celebrate earthly pleasures without wasting one’s short time,”** Herrick urges people to experience earthly pleasures by joining the celebration. The words “cakes and cream,” “woo’d,” and “green-gown” are used to represent the earthly pleasures of May Day festivities, while Herrick uses the phrases “as fast away as does the sun” and “as a vapour or a drop of rain” to represent she shortness of human lives and how they cannot be returned.

In “To Althea, from Prison,” Lovelace describes an imprisoned man whose freedom of mind and soul cannot be confined by anything. The theme is **“One should live for the moment by celebrating one’s freedom of mind and soul although one is in confinement.”** In this poem Lovelace chooses the words “unconfined wings” and “liberty” to represent his freedom of mind and soul. The phrases “stone walls do not a prison make” and “nor iron bars a cage” are also used to describe how his mind and soul cannot be confined by anything.

The fifth poem, “To Lucasta, Going to The Warres,” is about a man who leaves the safe refuge of his lover to dangers of war because he appreciates honor

more than anything. The theme is **“One should live for the moment by appreciating one’s honor even if one has to sacrifice important things.”** In this poem Lovelace uses the words “arms,” “foe,” and “field” to represent war. The dictions “fly” and “chase” are used to show the fastness of time, and the phrase “lov’d I not honour more” is chosen to describe the importance of honor for the author.

The theme of the last poem, “The Grasshopper,” is **“One should always live for the moment by celebrating one’s freedom and being tranquil in every situation.”** In this poem Lovelace chooses the dictions that show how he applied the principle of *Carpe diem* such as “swing,” “hop,” and “fly” to represent freedom, and the words “sickle,” “green ice,” and “o’erflowing glass” to symbolize the hard situation in one’s life.

The dictions used and the themes revealed have some similarities. The first similarity between Herrick’s and Lovelace’s three poems is shown from the themes. All themes are about the principle of *Carpe diem* or seize the day. The poems show that during the reign of King Charles I, the people of England (especially courtiers and soldiers) lived in the middle of Civil Wars and deadly diseases. They were in the situation where today might be their last day to live. This condition explains the reason why Herrick and Lovelace as *Cavalier* poets believe in *Carpe diem*.

Another similarity is that as Cavalier poets, they really believe that time is limited and the lives of humans are very short so everyone has to make the fullest of their lives. They choose several similar dictions that describe the quick passing

time and humans' short lives such as "youth," "fly," "chase," "run," "decay," "fast," "short," and "dying."

Apart from their similarities, I find a significant difference between both of the authors in the way they apply the principle of seizing the day. On the one hand, all three themes of Herrick's works show that he always urges the readers to make the fullest of our lives by chasing earthly pleasures such as having an intercourse, drinking wine, and celebrating festivities. As a *Cavalier* poet, Herrick spends his time focusing more on the physical satisfactions than inner peace.

On the other hand, Richard Lovelace applies the principle of *Carpe diem* in a very different way. From the themes of his three poems, I find that all of them show how Lovelace always persuades the readers to make the best of our lives by celebrating and appreciating inner feelings and virtues such as freedom of mind and soul, honor, and tranquility. As a *Cavalier* poet who believes in the speed of time, Lovelace spends his time focusing more on the inner peace than physical satisfactions.

Last but not least, I would like to say it is a pleasure to read and analyse these six poems. They have greatly provided me knowledge about the lives of the *Cavalier* poets in the middle of 17th century England, and how each of them differently applies their own concepts of *Carpe diem*. For me, it does not matter which one to choose, either Herrick's or Lovelace's way because both of them are equally good, and I believe what really matters is what we do within our given time. Through their poems, the authors teach me something I will always remember, which is the importance of living for the moment and making the best of it because our lives are short and we should never waste it.