away by a new insight or imaginative excursion. It was not possible for these seventeenth-century poets to know ahead of time what would be salvageable in a new terrain. They could only predict with some certainty that collisions of received topoi and new conditions would be distinctly unsettling; and there is, indeed, a restlessness, a sense of displacement in the wanderings of their lyric personae in remote sites, and in the new terms of address they employed. For they are poets "on the margin," attempting to decide what to discard as they learn to be new regionalists. Their chapter in the chronological story is of a piece with what is, in the main, a series of abandoned centers and styles. The literary history they enact is not smoothly evolving but highly reactive.

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