ELIZABETHAN PROSE FICTION

LANGUAGE, RHETORIC, AND REALITY
IN
ELIZABETHAN PROSE FICTION

By

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ABSTRACT

Elizabethan prose fiction has been virtually ignored for a long time. The question of rhetoric in this fiction is an extremely complex issue, and studies which have examined this aspect are usually stylistic analyses that fragment the works by dissecting isolated passages for stylistic data concerning an author's manipulation of particular schemes and tropes. This approach has often tended to ignore the possibility that larger ideals and attitudes may underlie the use of rhetorical figures (i.e. *elocutio*) in particular passages. While this dissertation does not attempt to resolve the problems of the relationship between rhetorical training in the grammar schools and Elizabethan fiction, or between the English vernacular rhetorics and Elizabethan fiction, it offers some idea about what these writers thought about rhetoric beyond its status as ornamentation. This thesis tries to discover what these writers thought about the possibilities of rhetorical training -- that is, about its moral status as an art of persuasion. In my view, the major writers of Elizabethan prose fiction dramatize the abuses of verbal skills; they explore some of the techniques of deception, distortion and manipulation that are afforded by rhetorical training. The subject-matter of this fiction is largely concerned with

verbal methods of persuasion that manipulate and distort, that rely on false logic and dishonesty; these writers are concerned with rhetorical attempts to change the face of the "real" world in order to justify a particular idea, action, or belief. My thesis explicates the prose fictional works of Gascoigne, Lyly, Sidney, Nashe and Deloney with this theory in mind. As well as suggesting the ways in which rhetoric is handled as a subject in a variety of fictional contexts, my thesis also explicates the rhetorical strategies which these authors themselves use to involve their reader in evaluating rhetoric.

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INTRODUCTION

Rhetoric is the art of effective expression; rhetoric is the art of persuasion. It is defined by Aristotle in his Rhetoric as "the faculty of discovering the possible means of persuasion in reference to any subject whatever" (I. i. 14. 1355^{b}). Rhetoric presupposes a speaker and a listener, or a writer and a reader; it is concerned with the speaker's or writer's attempts to affect an audience. If we characterize the essential aspects of rhetoric in this fashion we can "stretch rhetoric," according to a recent student of the subject,

> to include almost the entire area of human discourse, since most of our speech and writing (even much of our soliloquizing) is directed to an audience, however small. The concern of rhetoric becomes nothing less than the whole complex business of communication through language, the intricate network or relationships which connects a speaker (or writer) with those he addresses.[1]

Rhetoric has often been questioned on moral grounds: depending on the rhetorician's character and intentions, a knowledge of rhetorical skills and devices can be used to advance good or evil. All the seminal commentators on rhetoric -- Plato, Aristotle, Cicero, Quintilian, the anonymous author of the Rhetorica ad Herennium -- recognize that the skills and techniques of rhetoric can foster deceit, disguise truth, distort fact, and persuade through false

reasoning. "If it is argued," writes Aristotle,

> that one who makes an unfair use of such faculty of speech may do a great deal of harm, this objection applies equally to all good things except virtue, and above all to those things which are most useful, such as strength, health, wealth, generalship; for as these, rightly used, may be of the greatest benefit, so, wrongly used, they may do an equal amount of harm.
> (Rhetoric, I. i. 13. 1355b)

Cicero, as well, realizes that rhetoric can be abused, but he insists that

> men ought none the less to devote themselves to the study of eloquence although some misuse it both in private and in public affairs. And they should study it the more earnestly in order that evil men may not obtain great power to the detriment of good citizens and the common disaster of the community. (De Inventione, I. iv. 5.)

Quintilian, in his Institutio Oratoria, anticipates a similar objection:

> There follows the question as to whether rhetoric is useful. Some are in the habit of denouncing it most violently and of shamelessly employing the powers of oratory to accuse oratory itself. "It is eloquence" they say "that snatches criminals from the penalties of the law, eloquence that from time to time secures the condemnation of the innocent and leads deliberation astray, eloquence that stirs up not merely sedition and popular tumult, but wars beyond all expiation, and that is most effective when it makes falsehood prevail over truth." (Book II. xvi. 1-2)

Quintilian, like Aristotle and Cicero before him, concludes that "although the weapons of oratory may be used either for good or ill, it is unfair to regard that as an evil which can be employed for good" (Book II. xvi. 10). The

author of the *Ad Herennium* writes that "it is a fault to disparage an art or science or any occupation because of the faults of those engaged in it, as in the case of those who blame rhetoric because of the blameworthy life of some orator" (II. xxvii. 44).

According to these authorities rhetoric is a neutral tool, concerned not with the quality or morality of argument but with the techniques of argument. It can yield -- in the hands of different men -- a wide range of varied and often contradictory effects. It is this unlimited variety of uses and effects that has engendered the many senses of the term: rhetoric as stylistic ornament or elegance of language; rhetoric as bombast or ostentatious expression ("mere rhetoric"); rhetoric as specialized modes of discourse or jargon ("legal rhetoric," "sexual rhetoric"); rhetoric as lies and deception; rhetoric as a literary-critical term ("the art of communicating with readers -- the rhetorical resources available to the writer of epic, novel, or short story as he tries, consciously or unconsciously, to impose his fictional world upon the reader"[2]).

But what does rhetoric mean in the sixteenth century, particularly as it may concern Elizabethan prose fiction? First, it is an integral part of the educational system. That rhetoric becomes the dominant discipline in Tudor grammar schools, has been shown by studies of the curriculum

and pedagogic theory. Scholars like T. W. Baldwin have demonstrated the massive influence that rhetorical training in Latin exerted on vernacular expression.[3] "Rhetoric," as far as the educational system was concerned, is a body of teachable rules and methods by which a student could learn to communicate eloquently and effectively. One can assume that the intensive rhetorical training which these writers of Elizabethan fiction likely received in the grammar school would influence what they wrote later. Second, in the later sixteenth century, a number of English vernacular rhetorics appear that tend to stress one aspect of the study of rhetoric: that is, eloquence, style, or ornament.[4] The obvious concern with style and ornament in Elizabethan fiction is easily perceived, and one might wish to view this concern as a reflection of the growing emphasis of style in the later English rhetorics. The point is that "rhetoric" becomes more closely associated with an ornamented expression or a highly embellished prose style (as it has several times earlier in its history).

At any rate, the influence of rhetorical training in the grammar school on Elizabethan fiction has not yet been written; neither has the study of some relationship between the vernacular rhetorics and the fiction. This dissertation does not attempt to provide answers to these difficult questions about rhetoric in the sixteenth century. Instead,

I have tried to offer some idea about what these writers thought about rhetoric beyond its status as ornamentation. I have tried to discover what they thought about the possibilities of rhetorical training -- that is, about its moral status as an art of persuasion. In my view, the major writers of Elizabethan prose fiction dramatize the abuses of verbal skills; they explore some of the techniques of deception, distortion and manipulation that are afforded by rhetorical training and verbal skill. This study, then, examines those "negative" aspects of rhetoric -- against which Aristotle, Cicero and others warn us -- as they are illustrated and dramatized in Elizabethan prose fiction. I am concerned with verbal methods of persuasion that manipulate and distort, that rely on false logic and dishonesty. I am interested in rhetorical attempts to alter what is true and factual, in attempts to change the face of the "real" world in order to justify a particular idea, attitude, action or belief. This study argues that many writers of fiction in the sixteenth century have very similar interests, and that their fiction often probes the question of rhetorical abuse. All rhetorical subterfuge incorporates one essential quality: a discrepancy between language and the objects, things, or "reality" that language pretends to describe. The rhetorical falsification of "reality" takes many forms -- euphemism, sophistry, propaganda are a few of them. My subject is the

rhetorical falsification of "fact" or "reality" as a phenomenon of Elizabethan prose fiction. Although the major writers of fiction in this period are extremely interested in rhetorical dissembling as a feature of human communication (some writers are themselves guilty of rhetorical fraud in their own fiction), this feature of Elizabethan prose fiction has not yet received much scholarly attention.

Since the terms "rhetoric" and "reality" are a potential cause of confusion they require definition. This thesis uses three different senses of the word "rhetoric": rhetoric as persuasion; rhetoric as a type of language or as a mode of discourse (i.e. "the rhetoric of courtly love," or "the legal rhetoric of Sidney's characters"); rhetoric as a narrative technique (i.e. the narrative manipulations of the reader that cause him to read a text in a certain manner). By "rhetoric" I do not mean stylistic ornamentation or an obsessive use of schemes and tropes. Each time the term appears, the context of the discussion is clear enough to allow the reader to determine which of the three senses is implied. The term "reality" (or "fact") refers to the various norms -- physical, ethical, linguistic, stylistic -- that are established by the author to represent the real world or a true state of affairs within the work of fiction itself. But the true state of affairs or reality is not always made obvious to the reader of Elizabethan prose fiction. Norms

must be discovered before one can evaluate the relative rhetorical status of a character or narrator. My dissertation, therefore, is not only about rhetoric as subject in Elizabethan fiction, but equally, about the rhetorical strategies which these writers use to involve their reader in evaluating rhetoric itself. This will become evident from my reading method and interpretive process in each chapter.

Most of the authors under consideration realize that man often copes with his world and deals with others by changing the appearance of reality through rhetorical means. As an aspect of Elizabethan prose fiction, rhetorical dissembling can be investigated under two categories: intentional and unintentional verbal distortion. In the case of intentional distortion, the face of reality is rhetorically altered for a particular purpose (e.g. excuses, justification, personal advantage), and this purpose varies from character to character, and from work to work. What is ultimately shown to be objectionable about the "negative" aspects of rhetoric is that they tend to inculcate the notion that truth is whatever is said effectively. This is not a new objection. St. Augustine (and Plato before him) worried that a man may think "that because he hears a thing said eloquently, it is true."[5] Certainly our experience of modern advertizing techniques illustrates a

closely related issue. At the bottom of this fear lies the realization that language shapes our perceptions of reality. Language is not merely a vehicle for conveying perception, it is also, to a large extent, a determinant of perception. George Orwell made a similar statement three decades ago: "But if thought corrupts language, language can also corrupt thought."[6] What concerns me about intentional rhetorical dissembling are two things: deliberate attempts to pass off rhetorical tricks of persuasion as matters of fact, and the influence of diction on cognition and perception.

But this takes into account only the intentional efforts to manipulate the face of the real world through rhetoric. The rhetorical transformation of reality is often an unconscious act, prompted by human weakness, human fear, or psychological need. For many reasons man is often guilty of the verbal manipulation and the rhetorical falsification of reality in an attempt to make his world correspond to the needs of his psyche. Language, as it seems to me, not only enables man to interact with his world by describing it, but can also protect man from his world by disguising it. Humans often use language to buffer, defend or shield themselves against the unpredictable and sometimes hostile truths of human experience. In this sense the rhetorical distortions and manipulations are self-deceptive, but perhaps necessary to the comfort and survival of the

human psyche. As we will see, many of these writers dramatize both kinds of distortion in their fiction in order to investigate how and why a gap between language and reality is created. The only difference between intended rhetorical deflection and unintended distortion is the object of persuasion: in the first instance it is "you" or "they"; in the second it is "I" or self. Euphemistic utterance like "passed on," "passed away" or "expired," in no way prevents death, but it may help to minimize our confrontation with death. If we cannot bear to call a spade a spade, we can sometimes overcome our anxiety by calling it a heart.

The writers who are the subject of this dissertation show a central interest in these two kinds of rhetorical distortion -- in some cases self-conscious, in others intuitive. The rhetorical trickery which allows man to play hide-and-seek with his universe is not peculiar to characters in Elizabethan prose fiction, nor to twentieth-century advertizing; it is a characteristic trait of man's language at all times in history. Classical rhetoricians testify to this fact; St. Augustine does also; so do Lawrence Sterne, Joseph Conrad, George Orwell, and Henry James. As I have already indicated, my interests are not primarily concerned with Renaissance or Elizabethan theories of rhetoric as they are embodied in Elizabethan fiction -- this is a tremendously complex issue, and lies well beyond the scope of this thesis.

I am interested in forms of intentional and unintentional rhetorical distortion; so are Gascoigne, Lyly, Sidney, Nashe and Deloney. What makes sixteenth-century prose fiction a profitable area of research (aside from its relative obscurity), is that these authors use (Gascoigne and Deloney to a lesser degree) a highly ornate prose style as vehicles for their fictions. And although some of these writers cultivate a highly-groomed, stylistically ornate prose, they are not blind to the properties and possibilities of rhetoric as I have portrayed them here; they do not merely rely on certain aspects of rhetoric (i.e. stylistic) to write their stories, they are also writing about rhetoric -- about its qualities, its uses, its abuses. And as we shall see later on, some of these writers dramatize rhetorical trickery, others use it.

Elizabethan prose fiction has been virtually ignored for a long time. One of the reasons for this is that the modern reader objects to the wealth of stylistic ornamentation. "Euphuism" and "arcadianism" have bad reputations as overly-ornamented and almost unreadable styles. But the objections that many readers have to the stylistic perversity of Elizabethan fiction might decrease if they realized to what extent most of these authors distance themselves from their own embellishments. There are very few works of early fiction that do not rely on stylistic embellishment as

learned and imitated by the schoolboy from classical models, and, as codified and catalogued in the sixteenth century by Richard Sherry (Treatise of Schemes and Tropes, 1550), Thomas Wilson (The Arte of Rhetorique, 1553), Henry Peacham (The Garden of Eloquence, 1577), Abraham Fraunce (The Arcadian Rhetorike, 1588), and George Puttenham (The Arte of English Poesie, 1589). But the fact that many of these works treat rhetoric (i.e. the art of persuasion) as an important subject-matter is seldom noticed. The only critic that I know of who recognizes this is Richard Lanham: "Thus the rhetorical style, when it attains self-consciousness in the Elizabethan period, tends in its literary use to become not merely the means of fiction (style construed in its narrow sense), but the subject of the fiction as well. . . . The rhetorical component can . . . fairly claim to be an opaque style, an object, rather than an implement of vision."[7] It is of course profitable to analyze a particular writer's cleverness in manipulating the individual devices -- the schemes and tropes -- of rhetoric, but this may not reveal much about the writer's larger purposes. It is often the case that such studies of rhetoric in Elizabethan prose fiction leave us with the impression that these writers have a greater interest in ornament than in thought. I do not believe this is so. Rhetorical dissembling, as I have outlined it here, explains a great deal of what is important to these writers,

and a great deal of the humor in Elizabethan prose fiction. The narrative rhetoric of these writers, as we will see, provides an alternative to the shady rhetorical forays of their characters.

Before I proceed to a chapter summary, I should like to indicate very briefly the pattern of this thesis and its methodological bias. The format in each chapter is the same: a plot summary of the work is included at the outset of the section; this is followed by a review and appraisal of critical scholarship; my own argument examines the work in light of intentional and unintentional rhetorical distortion, and also attempts to resolve major critical "problems" and controversies.

My approach has two features:

1) The nature of my interest necessitates a close textual and verbal analysis. Hence, the usefulness of the plot summaries. Because my discussions involve detailed examination of certain words, phrases, and types of verbal constructions, a general familiarity with the story-line enables the reader to recognize the location of the example and its narrative context without my having to disrupt the argument to provide partial descriptions of plot. (The plot summaries have another aim too: to provide the interested non-expert with a brief, easily digested paraphrase of the whole.)

2) The nature of rhetoric, both as narrative technique and the available means of persuasion, obliges one to recognize the importance of the reader -- his experience of reading, his response, and the author's rhetorical manipulations of the reader. The importance of the phenomenology of reading, reader-response, and the "role" of the reader has been expressed most coherently by Walker Gibson, "Authors, Speakers, Readers, and Mock Readers," College English, 11 (1950), 265-69; Wayne C. Booth, The Rhetoric of Fiction (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961); John Preston, The Created Self: The Reader's Role in Eighteenth-Century Fiction (London: Heinemann, 1970); Walter J. Ong, "The Writer's Audience Is Always A Fiction," PMLA, 90 (1975), 9-21; Stanley E. Fish, Self-Consuming Artifacts: The Experience of Seventeenth-Century Literature (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1972); and Wolfgang Iser, The Implied Reader: Patterns of Communication in Prose Fiction from Bunyan to Beckett (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1974).

CHAPTER ONE. George Gascoigne

This chapter examines The Adventures of Master F.J. (1573) and illustrates how the author uses euphemism as a technical and thematic principle. Gascoigne is interested in the euphemistic alteration of reality motivated by

emotional and physical needs. His characters rely on the rhetoric of courtly-love to hide the physical and moral facts of their adultery and sexual desire from themselves and others. His major characters -- F.J. and Elinor -- effect the rhetorical evasion of an unpalatable truth through euphemism. The last section of the chapter examines Gascoigne's implied moral norm, and suggests a re-interpretation of The Adventures as moral satire.

CHAPTER TWO. John Lyly

Both Euphues: The Anatomy of Wit (1578) and Euphues and his England (1580) are considered in this chapter. Lyly dramatizes his characters' attempts, through rhetorical manipulation and distortion, to impose absolute meaning, order and truth in an uncertain world. His characters constantly use supposed "facts" about the natural world ("unnatural natural philosophy") to explain the nature of reality and to justify their behavior. Analogies and similes that explain the human world in terms of the natural world are shown ultimately to be rhetorical and epistemological crutches. Lyly dramatizes his characters' failure to make their rhetoric epistemologically adequate through their inconsistent (and sometimes contradictory) application of analogies and similes, and through situational irony. Lyly's point is that his characters confuse rhetorical amplification (simile,

comparison, analogy) with proof. The final section explores the possible connections between Lyly's irony and what Hiram Haydn calls "the counter-Renaissance."

CHAPTER THREE. Thomas Nashe

My reading of The Unfortunate Traveller (1594) argues that Nashe's interest in rhetoric involves the relation of diction to perception and cognition, and of the reader to the text. Nashe's rhetorical guile is intended to challenge and break down his reader's sense of what the physical world looks like, of cause and effect, of narrative decorum and propriety. The uncertainty and confusion that The Unfortunate Traveller fosters in the reader is attributed to Nashe's wilful rhetorical distortions of physical reality, the human form, and ideas of similarity and dissimilarity. The technical foundation of Nashe's bizarre verbal equations are "unorthodox" similes and metaphors. What Nashe's work demonstrates is that our language shapes our perceptions of reality. To dramatize this fact, he arbitrarily imposes a strange and unfamiliar world on his reader through rhetorical means; the reader is made to perceive a world that is very different from, and often repugnant to, his "ordinary" understanding of reality, but it is a reality nonetheless. The reader comes to realize -- through the ambivalence of his response -- that unorthodox verbal accounts of the world can

change one's response to reality and alter one's perception of it. Rhetorical distortion, for Nashe, is not only technique, but subject; the relationship of language to reality is shown to be an arbitrary one -- rhetorically imposed and re-ordered at will. The chapter ends with a reply to critics who argue that The Unfortunate Traveller lacks coherence, unity and a consistent attitude. I view the rhetorical manipulations and verbal aberrations as Nashe's vision of the essential grotesqueness of the world.

CHAPTER FOUR. Sir Philip Sidney and Thomas Deloney

Sidney and Deloney are considered together because there is not enough material to warrant separate chapters. Although Sidney's and Deloney's interest in rhetoric may be of a different kind and less intense than in the other writers, the rhetorical aspect is important in both the Old Arcadia (written sometime between 1577 and 1580) and in Jack of Newbury (1597). Sidney, like Gascoigne, dramatizes his characters' dislocation of language and rhetoric from the reality it purportedly describes. He shows how humans can fool themselves and deceive others through a rhetorical falsification of fact: what the characters portray continually as neoplatonic "love" is shown finally to be "lust." Sidney also questions whether human language can ever be a true or accurate reflection of reality. Because of human

imperfection, the answer is no.

Deloney's interest in rhetoric is not so clinical. Unlike all the other writers he is interested in rhetorical deception as a technical resource only, and not as a subject. When we read Jack of Newbury it becomes evident that Deloney is advancing a particular social and economic cause -- namely, the virtue and importance of the rising middle class in sixteenth-century England. The historical fabrications and rhetorical duplicity are geared toward obtaining the reader's sympathy for and agreement with Deloney's social biases. His importance to a rhetorical study of this kind lies in the fact that he is writing propaganda. I analyze his rhetorical techniques of disguise and persuasion.

NOTES TO INTRODUCTION

[1]Peter Dixon, Rhetoric (London, 1971), pp. 2-3.

[2]Wayne Booth, The Rhetoric of Fiction (Chicago, 1961), Preface.

[3]See T. W. Baldwin, William Shakspere's Small Latine & Lesse Greeke, 2 vols. (Urbana, Ill., 1944).

[4]See Edward P. J. Corbett, Classical Rhetoric for the Modern Student (2nd ed.; New York, 1971), pp. 608-12. Some of the more valuable studies on the development of theory and practice are Richard McKeon, "Rhetoric in the Middle Ages," Speculum, 17 (1942), 1-32; William G. Crane, Wit and Rhetoric in the Renaissance (New York, 1937); Donald L. Clark, "Ancient Rhetoric and English Renaissance Literature," Shakespeare Quarterly, 2 (1951), 195-204; Samuel Howell, Logic and Rhetoric in England, 1500-1700 (Princeton, 1956); Lee Ann Sonnino, A Handbook to Sixteenth-Century Rhetoric (London, 1968); Walter J. Ong, Rhetoric, Romance, and Technology: Studies in the Interaction of Expression and Culture, chapters 2-7. The increased attention given to style in the last half of the sixteenth century (sometimes to the exclusion of the other four arts -- invention, arrangement, memory, and delivery), has been traced very carefully by Howell, who calls it "stylistic rhetoric" (see especially pp. 116-137).

[5]St. Augustine, On Christian Doctrine, trans. D. W. Robertson (New York, 1958), p. 121.

[6]George Orwell, "Politics and the English Language," in Shooting an Elephant and Other Essays (London, 1950), p. 97.

[7]Richard Lanham, "Opaque Style in Elizabethan Fiction," Pacific Coast Philology, 1 (1966), 26.

NOTE: pages 19 to 23 have been omitted
because of revision

CHAPTER I

GEORGE GASCOIGNE AND F.J.

Introduction to "The Adventures"

George Gascoigne's The Adventures of Master F.J. was originally published in 1573 as part of a literary miscellany called A Hundreth Sundrie Flowers.[1] It remains one of the more readable and more popular works of Elizabethan fiction, although the modern reader is more likely to have read the 1575 version re-named The Pleasant Fable of Ferdinando Jeronimi and Leonora de Valasco. The later version was part of a general revision of the Flowres which was published in 1575 under the new title The Posies of George Gascoigne.[2] The differences between the two versions are not at first glance profound: the setting and character names are shifted from "the north partes of this Realme [England]" (51) to "the pleasant country of Lombardy [Italy]";[3] the beginning and ending of the 1575 version are altered somewhat; and, some of the allegedly pornographic episodes are expurgated.[4] Since these alterations seem to be a response more to public objection than to any internal change in artistic intention I will exclude from my discussion the revised version of 1575 for the sake of argumentative expediency, and accept the 1573 version as a more independent (and therefore more reliable)

embodiment of Gascoigne's artistic intent.

Although the changes in the 1575 version do not substantially alter what is a relatively simple account of the rise and fall of an adulterous affair, yet for the interested reader who might approach Gascoigne there is one crucial difference between the two versions which may alter considerably the manner in which the reader apprehends the tale. This is the existence in the 1573 version of an identified first-person narrator who reports the story as he has received it from F.J., who comments on the material and characters that he presents, and who therefore shapes the reader's perception of events in a manner more direct than the continuous narration of the third-person omniscient point of view in the later version. I will consider the implications of this difference later in more detail. The point here is that this difference explains why the accidental choice of anthologies or editions by the reader plays a significant role in his estimation of Gascoigne's relative merits as a writer of prose fiction. It is therefore important that the potential reader of Gascoigne's fiction is aware that there are a variety of versions -- 1573, 1575, and editions that print an incomplete 1573 version -- the choice of which might significantly change the reader's response.

A proper understanding of The Adventures of Master F.J. depends first on an awareness of the narrative framework that is set up in the three letters which preface the story proper, and it is the omission of these three letters in some modern anthologies that constitutes the incomplete 1573 version. These three letters -- 'The Printer to the Reader' (47-48), 'H.W. to the Reader' (49), and 'The letter of G.T. to his very friend H.W. concerning this worke' (50-51) -- give to the fiction a "history" of how and why it was published, how G.T. came to be the narrator of his friend F.J.'s experiences and the general editor of F.J.'s poems. The Printer first informs us that the entirety of A Hundreth Sundrie Flowres, including The Adventures, was happily printed by him at the request of H.W. And in H.W.'s letter to the reader we learn that H.W. had received from his friend G.T. "a written Booke, wherein he had collected divers discourses & verses, invented uppon sundrie occasions, by sundrie gentlemen" (49). Because these works were, "(in mine opinion) right commendable for their capacity" (49), H.W. had decided to publish them in spite of G.T.'s insistence "that I should use them onely for mine owne particuler commoditie" (49). H.W. then describes the contents of the Flowres; hopes that F.J., the other authors, and his friend G.T. will not disown him for his decision to publish the collection; and, informs us that

in the event that the volume should not be well received, he has taken the precaution to "cover all our names" (49). G.T.'s letter to H.W. is a further explanation of the genesis of the volume:

> I have thought good (I say) to present you with this written booke, wherein you shall find a number of Sonets, layes, letters, Ballades, Rondlets, verlayes and verses, the workes of your friend and myne Master F.J. and divers others, the which when I had with long travayle confusedly gathered together, I thought it then Opere precium, to reduce them into some good order. (50-51)

G.T. asks H.W. not to make them public since he (like H.W.) does not want to fall out with his friends who have written the various works.

The fictional history of the narrative framework as it concerns The Adventures, then, is explained in this manner: F.J. had an amorous experience that at different times was the occasion of fourteen poems; these poems, along with a general explanation of the events surrounding them, were shown to G.T. by his friend F.J.; G.T., who

> found none of them, so barreyne, but that (in my judgement) had in it Aliquid Salis, and especially being considered by the very proper occasion whereuppon it was written (as they them selves did alwayes with the verse reherse unto me the cause y[t] then moved them to write) I did with more labour gather them into some order, and so placed them in this register. (51)

The collection was then shown by G.T. to his friend H.W., who decided to risk the wrath of his friend by having the volume published. The Adventures of Master F.J., then, is

a collection of poems by F.J. that are arranged, ordered and explained by narrative prose links in which G.T. reports the "occasion" of the poem as he remembers F.J.'s explanation of events. G.T.'s unique role as editor and narrator, as well as the three prefatory letters taken as a whole, have several important implications for our understanding of The Adventures. I will consider these implications after a brief paraphrase of the story itself, and after an examination of the status of critical commentary.

After the prefatory letters, we are swiftly guided into the story proper by G.T. the narrator's incisive opening sentence:

> And to begin with this his history that ensueth, it was (as he declared unto me) written uppon this occasion. The said F.J. chaunced once in the north partes of this Realme to fall in company of a very fayre gentlewoman whose name was Mistress Elinor, unto whom bearinge a hotte affection, he first adventured to write this letter following. (51)

And G.T. presents F.J.'s first communication to the older married woman, a letter full of the rhetorical excesses of the courtly-love convention. F.J. is the young and inexperienced courtier-lover, and Elinor affects a demure and fashionable rejection of the young lover's passion. Undaunted, F.J. persists and, not much later, Elinor relents: meeting in a garden, and alone for the first time, they exchange verbal pleasantries; the conventional mistress-servant relationship is proffered and accepted; and, managing

to receive "the zuccado des labros" (55) where he had expected only a "humble congé by Bezo las manos" (55), F.J. hurries off to his room to write (by this time) his second poem describing his amorous emotions.

To this point, the others in the castle -- the lord, Elinor's unmarried sister-in-law Frances, Elinor's husband, and other minor characters -- are completely unaware of Elinor's new affection, which by this time has transcended the conventional nature of the mistress-servant relationship and has become ardent infatuation. The force of this new love causes Elinor to fall "one day into a great bleeding at the nose" (56). Hearing of this, and dissembling his previous acquaintance with Elinor, F.J. inquires of Frances the name of the invalid and offers to cure the nosebleed if she will take him to Elinor's chambers. This she does, to the satisfaction of both F.J. and Elinor, and F.J. manages to stop the bleeding.

This kindness at the hands of F.J., and the fact (as we learn from G.T.) that Elinor's current lover -- her secretary -- has absented himself temporarily, now causes Elinor's affections to grow warmer. And the first portion of the tale charts the gradual but certain progress of F.J. and Elinor toward the bedroom, or, more precisely, toward "the hard floore" (69) of a "gallery neere ajoyning to hir chamber" (68). F.J. is not unaware of Elinor's essentially

promiscuous behavior, for Frances has already informed him of her past lovers, "and furthermore, did both instruct and advise him how to proceede in his enterprise" (66). Frances becomes an increasingly important figure in the tale, advising F.J. on how best to succeed in his "enterprise," warning him of Elinor's inconstancy, and generally serving as guide and confidante to F.J.'s career as a lover. She secretly watches their sexual rendezvous in the gallery, and after F.J. has retired to his chamber and falls into exhausted sleep, she steals his "naked sworde" (70) presumably as a prank.

Later that day, the company appears for dinner. The frolics of the previous night have produced a new poem by F.J., and Elinor enters "with a coyfe trymmed _Alla Piedmonteze_, on the which she ware a little cap crossed over the crowne with two bends of yellowe Sarcenet or Cipresse, in the middest whereof she had placed (of hir owne hand writing) in paper this word, _Contented_" (72). Frances proposes that they go out riding, which causes some tension and embarrassment for F.J., who cannot locate his sword. Frances hints that she knows of both the rendezvous and the sword in her relation of a supposed dream that she had; Elinor is not much concerned with either F.J.'s sword or his anxiety; F.J., however, "as one that estemed the preservation of his Mistresse honor no lesse then the obtayning

of his owne delightes" (73), is concerned, and takes it out on his servant. Elinor later finds a way of returning the sword to F.J.

F.J. reaches the pinnacle of his erotic success, and his sexual encounters with Elinor are the occasion of many poems celebrating the beauty of his mistress and the physical delights that he takes in their adultery. Elinor's hitherto absent husband enters the scene, becomes great friends with F.J., and hunts with him. And the loss of his bugle during the hunt prompts F.J. to loan him his own horn, and becomes the occasion of an ironic and bawdy poem about the cuckold.

From this point, F.J.'s joys "began to bend towardes declination" (79), and the first phase in the descent is the return of Elinor's secretary. He no sooner arrives but F.J.'s suspicions of Elinor (caused by Frances' information) and his own jealousy of the secretary, cause him to fall ill. In spite of Frances' ministrations of good cheer and Elinor's professions of love, F.J. cannot rid himself of his doubts, and G.T. the narrator interrupts the tale to present a brief story of Suspicion (82-84) as a narrative rendition of F.J.'s psychological state. The women of the castle return later to cheer the ailing F.J. with the sort of _questioni d'amore_ that had been employed when Elinor

was recovering from her nosebleed. Pergo, "an old courtier, and a wylie wench" (87), makes F.J. "moderator of these matters" (87) and poses the first question for F.J. to evaluate. Pergo's story is autobiographical, and she tells F.J. that she was loved for seven years by a man whom she despised; then she suddenly grew to love the man and loved him for seven years although he had learned by this time to hate her; an additional seven years had passed in which neither had any great desire to see the other. Now that they were finally considering marriage, Pergo's question to F.J. is who has suffered more, and who has been more cruel. The verdict is carried against Pergo, much to her dissatisfaction, and Elinor adjourns the company to allow F.J. some rest, but not before she has had an opportunity to whisper "in his eare, saying: Servaunt, this night I will bee with thee" (90).

True to her word, Elinor appears in his chamber "About ten or eleaven of the clock . . . in hir night gowne" (90), and after verbal assurances of her love and affection tries to make F.J. confess the cause of his illness. Overcome by her professed fidelity and perhaps influenced by the fact that she "gan gently strip of hir clothes" (91) and had slipped into his bed, "F.J. as one not maister of him selfe, gan at the last playnly confesse

howe he had mistrusted the chaunge of hir vowed affections: Yea and (that more was) he playnly expressed with whom, of whom, by whom, and too whom shee bent hir better liking" (92). This apologetic accusation does not sit well with Elinor, however, and although F.J. "sought by many faire wordes to temper hir chollerike passions, and by yeelding him selfe to get the conquest of an other" (92), they do no pacify the offended Elinor, who refuses to grant any "suche curtesie unto such a recreant" (92). Angered by this new tack and presumably overcome by his erotic expectations, F.J. rapes her, and "tooke some better rest towardes the morning, than hee had done in many nights forepast" (92). F.J. does not worry unduly, reasoning that Elinor will get over it soon and they will resume their affair where they left off.

Following this episode, Elinor renews her interest in her secretary, and refuses to pay any further visits with Frances to F.J.'s sick-bed. Frances is aware of her sister-in-law's renewed affair with the secretary, and although she does not yet enlighten the rapidly recovering F.J., she continues to visit him and keep him in good cheer. We are also told by G.T. that Frances in fact bears a "harty affection towardes _F.J._" (96) herself.

A second round of _questioni d'amore_ is instigated, and this time it is Frances' turn to relate the story.

She tells of an adulterous situation in which a husband suddenly gains proof of his wife's affair with his friend. After many months of leaving small pieces of money in the bedroom after each time he has had "knowledge of hir" (98), the wife asks her husband what is causing this peculiar habit, and after much cajoling he admits that "I do give thee every time that I lye with thee a slip, which is to make thee understande thine owne whordome: and this reward is sufficient for a whore" (99). After the wife's hysterical promises of renewed fidelity, the husband has mercy and forgives her; she in turn makes her lover promise never to tempt her again, and the three resume a perfectly happy relationship once more. Frances' question to F.J. is which one has suffered the most -- the lover, the wife, or the husband. F.J.'s sympathies go to the husband, the company begins to depart, F.J. prepares himself for sleep, and Frances offers to "trim up your bed in ye best maner that I may, as one who would be glad as she to procure your quiet rest" (101). F.J. thanks her and declines the offer.

The following day F.J. leaves his chamber and decides to find out for himself what the status of his relationship with Elinor really is. Coming into her chamber he discovers Elinor and some other company in conversation. She pretends to ignore him for awhile and, after F.J. has "used such vehemence as she could not well by any meanes

refuse to talke with him" (102), she pretends to favor him again "& thenceforth to pleasure him as occasion might serve" (102). The "occasion," of course, never arises, and F.J. composes his twelfth poem dealing with her evident avoidance of his passion. He goes to see her a second time, finding Elinor with her secretary, Pergo and others, and this time she flaunts her dislike of F.J. in mocking laughter. After conferring with Frances and assuring her that he will "drinke up mine owne sorowe secretly, and . . . bid them both a Dieu" (104) if what he suspects is in fact true, he returns to Elinor a third time. On this occasion he happens to find the secretary taking his leave of Elinor in such terms that suggested "that one was very loth to departe from the other" (104). F.J. confronts her "with this despitefull trechery" (104), and Elinor brazenly admits: "And if I did so (quod she) what than?" (104). F.J. writes his final poem about this rejection, bids his farewells to Frances, and departs -- no longer the naive lover, but a wiser and more cynical man.

F.J. and the Critics

Critical commentary on The Adventures of Master F.J. is generally astute. Although a certain amount of critical confusion has been engendered by attempts to read The Adventures as a thinly disguised autobiographical event

or contemporary scandal,[5] more recent commentary has tended to view these biographical and topical suppositions as tenuous and not directly concerned with the literary values of The Adventures. Another critical red-herring popular in earlier comments about Gascoigne's fiction is the notion -- promulgated largely by C.T. Prouty and L. Bradner -- that The Adventures "has the added distinction of being not only the first novel, but indeed the first psychological novel."[6] This type of proposition degenerates too easily into dogmatic arguments, and furthermore, presupposes a satisfactory definition of the genre which at best is only arbitrary.

While these opinions indicate only the weaknesses of what are indeed impressive pioneering studies, there exists a substantial quantity of first-rate criticism which enlarges one's understanding of The Adventures on a number of different levels. One can characterize the recent trends of criticism by extrapolating four issues that seem to have interested scholars most.

The most common view of The Adventures is that it is a satire of courtly love, a satire which is embodied in the inexperienced and naive attitudes of F.J. W.R. Davis states that

> If the action exhibits in its style all the traits catalogued in a handbook of courtly love, the language in which it is couched is the casual Neoplatonic-Petrarchan mode common to Renaissance courtly poetry. All of the clichés are there. . . . Bold and bawdy action and high Platonic talk exist side by side in Gascoigne's book to show how fully love has degenerated into lust.7

L.F. McGrath, likewise, sees in The Adventures an intention

> to exploit ironically the various conflicts inherent in the role of the Renaissance courtier-lover; he sought to accomplish this end by ironically juxtaposing the sensual consequences of the courtly love convention with the Platonic idealizations of the Italianate poetic conventions.[8]

F.B. Fieler agrees:

> Gascoigne discovered that by maintaining throughout the discourse a satiric comparison between the ideals of courtly love and the facts of reality he could comment in a fresh and original way upon the oft-told tale of a young man in love and at the same time tell his story in a highly amusing and detached fashion.9

Although a recognition of the satiric aspects of The Adventures is demonstrated in every study of the tale, some critics have emphasized more specialized interests. One of them is a consideration of the narrative role and function of G.T., aspects of which have been formulated by scholars such as R.P. Adams, L. Bradner and P.S. Schott.[10]

A third issue involves responses to C.T. Prouty's comment that "The interpolated stories are a structural weakness. They are too long and have only a vague relation to the affair."[11] This evaluation of the three interpolated stories -- G.T.'s tale of Suspicion, Pergo's story, Frances'

story -- has been refuted by C.W. Smith and Richard Lanham in defences of the work's thematic and structural unity:

> the three inset stories reveal the real theme of the fable, which is not, as Prouty would have it, "the straightforward seduction of another man's wife," but rather the destruction of moral perception by untempered passion. The larger story of F.J. as well as the three inset stories all hold this theme in common, and the three sub-stories, which also concern love relationships between men and women, are microcosms of the larger story.12

F.J.'s fourteen poems have not gone unnoticed either. M.R. Rohr Philmus has recently argued the thematic relevance of the poems:

> the inset poems are the center of the _Adventures_, just as in the context of the fictional framework they are the _raison d'être_, literally the occasion, for the "editor's" prose linkages that comprise the narrative. . . . Contrary to the rather odd view, now apparently standard, that F.I.'s poems, although admittedly uneven, invariably follow Petrarchan conventions, the sequence as a whole unfold's F.I.'s active exploration and ultimate rejection of precisely those conventions. As a reasonably attentive reading will show, Petrarchism is the datum that goes through a process of modification, recedes, becomes marginal, and finally disappears.13

This summary provides an indication of the prevailing critical climate and critical interests that inform Gascoigne scholarship. I should hasten to add that these four topics usually overlap. But oddly enough, there is yet another area of interest that is acknowledged, in one way or another, by most critics. Yet it is only discussed in

general terms, and usually under some other topic. I am referring to a considerable self-consciousness about language that is evident throughout *The Adventures*. In fact, the thing most remarkable to the reader of *The Adventures of Master F.J.* is Gascoigne's keen awareness of the comic pretensions of certain rhetorical modes in human language, and his obvious interest in the "euphemistic" quality of human utterance. This self-consciousness has been recognized most recently by Richard Lanham, although he too formulates his statement in general terms:

> Thus the rhetorical style, when it attains self-consciousness in the Elizabethan period, tends in its literary use to become not merely the means of fiction (style construed in its narrow sense), but the subject of the fiction as well. *F.J.*, then, is to a large degree a tale about the language used in a successful love affair. The rhetorical component [i.e. courtly love jargon] can, planted amidst a context of pretty straightforward narrative prose, fairly claim to be an opaque style, an object, rather than an implement, of vision.14

There are two distinct levels of language in *The Adventures*, an understanding of which forms the basis for any statement about the satiric or ironic dimensions of the work. There is, to oversimplify the issue, "a context of pretty straightforward narrative prose" used mainly by G.T. the narrator to link the poems and to explain the event, and, there is a "rhetorical component" (the language of courtly love) used primarily by F.J. to win the affections of Elinor. The

juxtaposition of these two levels of language, of course, gives rise to irony and satire, since the applicability of F.J.'s language as an accurate description of events is constantly undermined by the greater perspective of G.T.'s position as narrator. But let me provide a prospectus for the argument that will follow, since what I have said so far is not particularly new but intended to illustrate the general terms of the problem.

The Adventures is an examination of a disparity between human language and an implied physical reality or ethical norm which that language attempts and fails to describe. Considered as such, the work is not merely a depiction of the failure and inadequacy of the language of the courtly-love convention, it is also concerned, at a deeper level, with the rhetorical tendencies and limitations of human language produced by human need. The Adventures of Master F.J. is a humorous account of the "euphemistic" creation of reality by verbal means.

Distance and Differentiation

"The writer's audience," according to Walter J. Ong, "is always a fiction. The historian, the scholar or scientist, and the simple letter writer all fictionalize their audiences, casting them in a made-up role and calling on them to play the role assigned."[15] This, in many

respects, applies to the reader of The Adventurers, and it is in this attempt to make the reader aware that he has to play the role in which Gascoigne has cast him, that one can see Gascoigne's obvious interests in language -- as a self-conscious user of language, and as a thoughtful author who writes about the use of language. As suggested earlier, the three prefatory letters and G.T.'s role as editor and first-person narrator-reporter have several important ramifications, and the effect of "casting" the reader in an objective role is the most important of them.

What the fictional history of the prefatory letters accomplishes is to distance the reader from the events of F.J.'s experience and from the story itself. The three letters implant firmly in the reader's mind the fact that he is reading a story about a story, and this recognition of a difference between the frame and the context which the frame presents, allows the reader to apprehend the story proper with the objective perspective that Gascoigne intended. It is not only the fact of the framework's presence which ensures this level of reader participation, there are also several statements in the framework which prepare the reader for events to come and which indicate quite plainly the manner in which the reader is to apprehend the tale. In the first letter -- 'The Printer to the Reader' -- we are informed that "He that would take example

by the unlawfull affections of a lover bestowed uppon an unconstant dame, let them reade . . . the discourse in prose of the adventures passed by master F.J." (47-48). In the second letter -- 'H.W. to the Reader' -- the reader is told that the volume contains, among other things,

> manie trifling fantasies, humorall passions, and straunge affects of a lover. And therin (although the wiser sort wold turne over the leafe as a thing altogether fruitless) yet I my selfe have reaped this commoditie, to sit and smile at the fond devises of such as have enchayned them selves in the golden fetters of fantasie, and having bewrayed themselves to the whole world, do yet conjecture y[t] they walke unseene in a net. (49)

Both letters are addressed to the reader, and as such, they place us above and beyond the event; we are not to become emotionally sensitive to the rise and fall of a human career, but rather, like H.W., we are "to sit and smile at the fond devises of such as have enchayned them selves in the golden fetters of fantasie." In the use of the prefatory letters Gascoigne has instructed his reader how to understand and apprehend The Adventures: we are to discover for ourselves the irony and humor of "fond devises" and "fetters of fantasie," and to do this the reader is provided with the distancing perspective of the framework and the objective reminders of G.T. the narrator.

This sense of awareness and perspective that the reader shares with Gascoigne, the printer and H.W., can by no means be set aside or forgotten once he enters the world

of the tale itself. This objective attitude toward F.J. and his experiences is maintained and reinforced throughout The Adventures by G.T.'s consistent role as first-person narrator-reporter of events, letters, poems and conversations. One of the technical problems in having a first-person narrator with a limited knowledge of events, is to maintain the integrity of the point of view. That is, G.T. knows only as much as F.J. has told him, and this means that G.T.'s prose links can include only this information. The problem for Gascoigne, of course, is to prevent a careless lapse into an omniscient narrative, for this would greatly weaken G.T.'s thematic function and leave the reader without a sense of distance or perspective. For example, on the night of the rape (but prior to the rape itself) F.J. finds Elinor's demeanor and professions of love so provocative that "Hee swooned under hir arme" (91). The difficulty in describing subsequent actions lies in the fact that G.T. is dependent on F.J. for information regarding the event, but F.J. was momentarily unconscious. It would be natural for Gascoigne to have G.T. slip temporarily into an omniscient account of events to sustain the forward progress of the narrative, but he does not. And if we continue with the same passage we realize that it is precisely this problem which Gascoigne and G.T. are aware of, and it is a problem cleverly resolved without marring the integrity

of the point of view:

> . . . the which when she perceyved, it were hard to tel what feares did most affright hir. But I have heard my friend F.J. confesse, that he was in a happy traunce, and thought himself for divers causes unhappely revived. For surely I have heard him affirme, that to dye in such a passion, had ben rather pleasant, than like to panges of death. It were hard now to rehearse how hee was revived, since there none present, but he dying (who could not declare) & she living, who wold not disclose so much as I meane to bewray. For my friend F.J. hath to me emported, that. . . . (91)

How F.J. was "revived" we never really know, but the reader has a good idea (with all the death and dying). The important thing is that Gascoigne allows G.T. to infer ("I have heard him affirme") and imply ("she living, who wold not disclose so much as I meane to bewray") without disrupting the integrity of G.T.'s point of view. And for the reader this awareness of "I" and "me" means that the narrative perspective and narrative distance which G.T. effects, is maintained.

In fact, one finds that G.T.'s role as reporter is carefully and consistently maintained throughout The Adventures. One does not for a moment forget that G.T. is reporting events and not creating them -- what G.T. says is one thing, and what F.J., Elinor and the others say is another thing: ". . . it was (as he declared unto me) written uppon this occasion . . ." (51); "This letter by hir received (as I have hard him say) hir answere was

this . . ." (52); "I have heard the Aucthor saye, that these were the first verses that ever he wrote uppon like occasion" (52); "My friend F.J. hath tolde me divers times, that imediatly uppon receit hereof, he grew in jealousy . . ." (53); "This letter finished and fayre written over, his chaunce was to meete hir alone in a Gallery of the same house: where (as I have heard him declare) his manhood in this kind of combat was first tryed" (54); ". . . and to make my tale good, I will (by report of my very good friend F.J.) discribe him unto you" (58); "And surely I have heard F.J. affirme in sad earnest, that hee did not onely love hir, but . . ." (75); "Well F.J. tolde me himselfe that it was written by this Dame Elynor" (76). These examples are chosen from many, but they illustrate the point. Gascoigne even goes so far as to have each narrative prose link signed in large letters by G.T.

But I am not here concerned solely with the applied problems, limitations and practical resolutions of narrative voice and point of view. The Adventures of Master F.J. is about the human use of language and its description of events, and G.T.'s role and function as narrator-reporter is to prevent the reader from taking human verbiage for granted. The fact that we are to see a vast difference between F.J.'s courtly-love statement that

> . . . comparing the inequality of my deserts, with the least part of your worthines, I feele a continuall frost, in my most fervent fire. Such is thextremitie of my passions, the which I could never have bene contente to committe unto this telltale paper, weare it not that I am destitute of all other helpe . . . let this poore paper (besprent with salt teares, and blowen over with skalding sighes) be saved of you as a safe garde for your sampler. . . . (51-52)

and G.T.'s more prosaic statement that

> . . . *F.J.* though somewhat abashed with this doubtfull shewe, yet still constant in his former intention, ceased not by all possible meanes, to bringe this Deere yet once agayne to the Bowes, wherby she might be the more surely stryken: and so in the end enforced to yeeld. (53)

-- does not rest in the presence of the juxtaposition itself as an implied task for the reader; it is forced upon us by Gascoigne's use of a self-conscious narrative voice that carefully separates its diction from the language of others. G.T. may inform us "that after long talke shee [Elinor] was contented to accept his proferd service, but yet still disabling hir self, and seeming to marvell what cause had moved him to subject his libertie so wilfully, or at least in a prison (*as she termed it*) so unworthy" (55, my italics), but he is careful to differentiate his language from the character's language. Likewise, the reader learns that "the Dame *Fraunces* seemed to mislike *F.J.* choice, and to lament that she doubted in processe of time to see him abused . . . she thought *F.J.* (*I use hir wordes*) a man in

every respect very woorthy to have the severall use of a more commodious common . . ." (66, my italics), but G.T. does not let us forget who is speaking and who is not. G.T.'s self-conscious use of "I" and "me," then, becomes an intrusive narrative reminder that the habits of expression and the modes of language used by the characters and by G.T. himself are being differentiated one from the other. Our attention is focused not only on "what happens next," but also on "who said what." This kind of consistent narrative prodding keeps the reader aware that The Adventures is to be read not only as a story of adultery, but as a dramatized illustration of different kinds of language and different contexts of language. The reason for this careful emphasis both of language as a means of expression and as an object of study, as we will see, is that very often the event and the verbal apprehension of that event do not tally. And the reason that our role as objective readers is so important is that "an awareness of language, the uses and abuses of language, is essential to a full understanding of the Adventures."[16]

Euphemism and Evasion

The various levels or modes of language, as I have previously indicated, have not escaped criticial discussion. There is the naive F.J.'s language of courtly love and

sentiment, best seen in his poems, or in statements such as this:

> _The cause of myne affection, I suppose you behold dayly . . . then mighty Jove graunt, you may once behold my wan cheeks wasshed in woe, that therein my salt teares may be a myrrour to represent your owne shadow, and that like unto Narcissus you may bee constrayned to kisse the cold waves, wherein your counterfait is so lively portrayed._ (54)

This is part of F.J.'s second letter to the hesitant mistress Elinor. Some time after the rape F.J. wonders why his mistress has not visited his sick-bed, and, considering that she is only temporarily angry with his ungentlemanly behavior, "he contented him selfe," in the words of G.T., "hoping that when his lure was newe garnished, he shoulde easely reclayme hir from those coye conceiptes" (96). The difference between F.J.'s torturous love-conceit and G.T.'s homely metaphor is pronounced and obvious. And critics have been generally quick to point out that the language of courtly love is a handy excuse for lust and adultery by a rather near-sighted and idealistic young courtier, and a worldly and promiscuous woman. Statements about the basic irony of _The Adventures_ read usually like this: there is the idealized language of the courtly code; there is the fact of the event itself, implied through G.T.; there is a discrepancy between the language of courtly love and G.T.'s implied reality, giving rise to both irony and comedy. With this general explication one cannot argue; to substitute

"love" for "lust" is ironic, and in the case of The Adventures, the transformation becomes humorous. But this is as far as the critics reach. They do not concern themselves with the nature of the actual verbal transformations that this irony involves.

1. Debasement of Language

The relationship of F.J.'s and Elinor's language to real events in the story is a peculiar one. The events of The Adventures of Master F.J. indicate a sordid account of Elizabethan lust, promiscuity and adultery, yet nowhere will the reader discover such verbal evaluations. F.J.'s and Elinor's language is, in the simplest terms, a self-deceptive and euphemistic evasion of reality. Their language illustrates an attempt to restructure reality by a verbal alteration of their moral status. Hence, F.J. apprehends his unlawful sexual desire of a married woman in the verbal terms of the courtly-love convention. His "lust" is apprehended and verbally presented as "love." It is this euphemistic quality of language with which The Adventures is largely concerned, and it indicates Gascoigne's awareness of how words shape one's perceptions of experience and how language can create a verbal reality that is, on close inspection, a distortion of fact. Let us consider a few examples.

F.J. and Elinor are engaged, only hours before their first sexual encounter, in intimate conversation. Having been angry and jealous the evening before -- because of F.J.'s attentions to Frances -- Elinor "fell to flat playn dealing" (67) and assures F.J. "y^{t} my mothers youngest daughter, doth love your fathers eldest son, above any creature living" (68). F.J. is mollified by this confession but he is still feeling emotionally injured from Elinor's jealous anger the night before, and he remarks that "it is not yit xx. houres, since without touch of brest she gave him such a nip by the hart, as did altogither bereave him his nights reste, with the bruse therof" (68). Elinor's proposed remedy is amusing, and so is G.T.'s comment:

> Well, servaunt (quod she) content your selfe, and for your sake, I will speake to hir to provide him a playster, the which I my selfe will applye to his hurt: And to the ende it may woorke the better with him, I will purvey a lodging for him, where hereafter he may sleepe at more quiet. This sayd the rosie hewe, distained hir sickly cheekes, and she returned to the company, leaving F.J. ravished betwene hope and dread, as one that cou̅ld neyther conjecture the meaning of hir misticall wordes, nor assuredly trust unto the knot of hir slyding affections. (68)

If F.J. does not understand these "misticall wordes," he does not have long to wait before their true meaning becomes apparent. Elinor applies her "playster" that very night on the gallery floor, and indeed, provides a "lodging for him" that is more suited to his tastes. The language

is euphemism pure and simple: the promise of sexual intercourse is given as a promise "to provide him a playster."

On the threshold of the momentous occasion itself, F.J. in nightgown spreads "his armes abrode to embrace his loving Mistresse" (69) and says: "oh my deare Lady when shall I be able with any desert to countervayle the least parte of this your bountifull goodnesse?" (69). F.J. and Elinor create a verbal universe replete with the moral overtones of courtesy, love, bounty and goodness. By mutual consent, it would seem, their language turns a sordid moment of raw lust into a verbal vision of beatification.

The night of the rape Elinor comes to F.J.'s chamber to find out what has been troubling the ailing F.J., and in the verbal exchange that follows, the reader can see the same attempt to pass off the euphemistic utterance as reality itself:

> My good Servaunt, if thou knewest what perplexities I suffer in beholding of thine infirmities, it might then suffise, eyther utterly to dryve away thy mallady, or much more to augment thy griefs: for I know thou lovest me, and I think also that thou hast had sufficient profe of myne unfained good will, in remembrance whereof, I fall into sundry passions. (91)

Moments later F.J. "swooned under hir arme" (91), and Elinor's "unfained good will" soon exhibits itself -- she strips off her clothes, lies on top of him, "pressing his brest w^t the whole weight of hir body, and biting his lips

with hir friendly teeth" (91). As F.J. comes around, she inquires: "Alas, good Servaunt (quod she) what kinde of maladie is this that so extreemely doth torment thee?" (91). And in true euphemistic fashion, F.J. replies: "Mistresse, as for my maladie, it hath ben easely cured by your bountifull medicines applied: But I must confesse, that in receiving that guerison at your handes, I have ben constreined to fall into an Extasie" (91). His spirits bolstered by their sex, F.J. admits his jealousy of the secretary and his suspicions about Elinor, and, anticipating a further erotic encounter, asks Elinor to "let these fewe wordes suffise to crave your pardon, and doe eftsones powre upon me (your unworthy servaunt) the haboundant waves of your accustomed clemency" (92). Elinor is offended by the tacit accusation of betrayal, and as to F.J.'s sexual advances she "denied flatly, alleadging that shee found no cause at all to use such curtesie unto such a recreant" (92). In this episode it is almost as though the language has no correlation with reality at all. The reader is offered seduction, adulterous sex and rape, yet his verbal cues are "playster," "lodging," "bountifull goodnesse," "good will," "bountifull medicines," "accustomed clemency," "curtesie." It is not the case that the reader has trouble seeing through these euphemistic feints. But they indicate Gascoigne's particular interests in language and rhetoric, and they also

indicate Gascoigne's attempts to make his reader participate in exposing F.J.'s and Elinor's rhetoric for what it is -- euphemistic evasion of sordid fact.

Several decades ago in an essay called "Politics and the English Language," George Orwell commented on the tendency of political language to use euphemistic explanations in order to evade the brutal reality of political policy. "People," he writes, "are imprisioned for years without trial, or shot in the back of the neck or sent to die of scurvy in Arctic lumber camps: this is called _elimination of unreliable elements_. Such phraseology," he continues, "is needed if one wants to name things without calling up mental pictures of them."[17] This is exactly the sort of thing that makes the euphemistic utterances of F.J. and Elinor so deceptive. Any alert reader will recognize their language as euphemistic, but the immoral fact of the event, the "hard core" reality, has been, as it were, "softened" and transformed by evasive language that generates mental images appropriate to an entirely different context. Their euphemisms embody a twofold operation: they ignore the sordid physical reality of the situation, and they offer an alternative verbal "reality" in its place.

In these and like examples, Gascoigne dramatizes the way in which language is used to alter one's apparent

relation to reality. What I have called the "euphemistic quality of language" is the human tendency to alter one's apprehension of experience by using a rhetorical context (in this case, the mistress-servant relationship and the courtly love convention) that accounts for some things but not for others. The rhetorical context of F.J.'s and Elinor's diction may account for the neoplatonic purity of some of their motives, but it does not account for their lust or their adultery. Although this is surely apparent to the experienced Elinor (and later, to the maturing F.J.), their context of language is not altered to include adultery or lust; "lust" and "adultery" are simply ignored because they have no proper place in the rhetorical context of the ideal courtly code to start with. Moral and physical reality, for F.J. and Elinor, are transformed by euphemistic utterance, and they can evade the adulterous reality of their affair by calling it something else: their sex is not "lust," but rather "love;" Elinor's inclinations are not "nymphomania" or "promiscuity," but "curtesie" and "bountie." The evasive tactics of F.J.'s and Elinor's language rest in the tacit assumption that one's verbal description of reality is the same as reality itself. It is a convenient verbal sleight-of-hand for characters who wish to avoid the immoral fact of their actions by calling a spade a heart. And the requirements of character and situation vary:

F.J.'s evasive language is used first to convince himself of his noble role under an ideal code of behavior; Elinor makes shameless use of euphemism to seduce the naive innocent, and to indulge her essentially promiscuous nature without being charged of the crime; later, they both use courtly-love language euphemistically to cover the affair from others in the castle. But as is often the case in such subterfuge, the only people who are not aware of the adultery are the husband, whose wife is involved, and the lord of the castle, under whose roof it occurs; they fool no one else. F.J. and Elinor, in this respect, are like two ostriches, thinking that if they hide themselves in the context of their rhetoric no one will see their "love" for what it really is -- sexual desire.

The rift between the ideals of courtly love and their embodiment in the real world is not merely a physical matter; it is also a verbal matter. In a thematic sense the ideal may be shattered by events, exemplified by ethical misconduct. But in the purely human context of F.J. and Elinor, immorality can be evaded and the ideal can be propped up by euphemism. Gascoigne is as much interested in the failure of an ideal as he is in his characters' verbal evasions of that very fact.

2. Language Norm and Language Parody

It may be objected that an interest in euphemism and its "translation" is to see The Adventures as a "dirty joke." The point is, however, that the story is a dirty joke. It is the euphemistic quality of much of the language that tends to obscure this fact, and it is precisely G.T.'s role and function as narrator to reveal it. Richard Lanham has suggested that "if we read carefully, we see unmistakable evidence that Gascoigne's rhetorical high style is calculated to move the reader in one direction while the plot -- an unpretty, finally stupid case of country house seduction, of lust in action -- is calculated to push him in a diametrically opposite one."[18] This is perhaps true, but it is essential to add that it is through G.T. the narrator that the reader apprehends "plot"; it is in G.T. that the implied physical, ethical and linguistic norms are embodied; it is through G.T., also, that the reader learns how to write a "true" plot summary of events.

If the reader is forever being led by F.J.'s and Elinor's language away from the sordid reality of events, it is G.T. who leads him back. The implied norm can be seen in a number of parenthetic insertions by which G.T. implies the true state of affairs. After Elinor has accepted the mistress-servant relationship (more from vanity than anything else) she finds that "now the coles began to

kindle," and the "flames began to break out on every side" (56). G.T. informs us "that at last the report was spred thorough the house, that Mystres Elinor was sicke. At which newes F.J. tooke small comfort: neverthelesse Dame Venus with good aspect dyd yet thus much furder his enterprise. The Dame (whether it were by sodain chaunge, or of wonted custome) fell one day into a great bleeding at the nose" (56). By a subtle parenthetical qualifcation, G.T. reminds the reader of Elinor's essential nature: perhaps the nosebleed was caused by an emotional-physical change, but on the other hand, it may be a ploy in Elinor's plan of action, a habit that has been used on other occasions with other lovers. Similarly, the same rather snide narrative clue is occasioned by the episode of F.J.'s missing sword. After his outing with Frances and Elinor, F.J. goes "alone unto his chamber to bewayle his owne misgovernment. But dame Elynor (whether it wer according to olde custome, or by wylie pollicie) found meane that night, y^{t} the sword was conveyed out of Mistres Fraunces chamber and brought unto hirs" (74). Elinor's and F.J.'s verbal reliance on the convention of courtly love may portray a true lady, a pure mistress gracefully accepting the proffered devotions of a humble, neoplatonic lover, but G.T. knows otherwise and indicates as much in this type of playful qualification. A similar comic effect is achieved in Marlowe's "Hero and Leander," in which the rhetorical

pose of courtly love is continually undermined by lascivious yearnings and bawdy action. In The Adventures, however, the existence of the traditional courtly-love rhetoric in a bourgeois social context (i.e. a young man's summer vacation at a castle in the north of England) lends a further irony to Elinor's and F.J.'s neoplatonic lingo. They try very hard with their euphemisms to elevate themselves far above their modest social conditions, but G.T. and the reader both know that they are no Hero and Leander.

G.T.'s role as providing a physical, ethical and verbal standard, however, is not only to be found in parentheses, nor is it always this oblique. The impetus of the euphemistic language is undermined in other ways as well. Each time Elinor enters the scene the reader is ready for the idealized jargon that usually ensues. But in juxtaposition to this is a not-so-idealized depiction of the physical accoutrements that accompany this grand verbal landscape. G.T. offers the reader a series of physical cues that draw him toward the promiscuous reality of events as much as F.J.'s and Elinor's language tends to draw him away: "But sodenly, before the musicke was well tuned, came out Dame Elynor in hir night attyre, and said to the Lord . . ." (60); "Supper time came and passed over, and not long after came the handmayd of the Lady Elynor

into the great chamber, desiring F.J. to repayre unto their Mistresse, the which hee willingly accomplished: and being now entred into hir chamber, he might perceyve his Mistresse in hir nightes attyre, preparing hir selfe towardes bed" (68); ". . . it was dynner time, and at dynner they all met, I meane both dame Elynor, dame Fraunces, and F.J. I leave to discribe that the Lady Fraunces was gorgeously attired, and set forth with very brave apparell, and Madame Elynor onely in hir night gowne gyrt to hir, with a coyfe trymmed *Alla Piedmonteze*" (72); "About ten or eleaven of the clock came his Mistresse in hir night gowne" (90); "Thus they passed some time with him untill they were called away unto prayers, and that being finished they went to dinner, where they met Dame Elynor attired in a night kerchief" (94); ". . . & at their retorne she led F.J. into his Mistres chamber, whom thei found lying on hir bed" (102); "And it happened one day amongst others, that he resorted to his Mistresse chamber & found hir (*allo solito*) lying upon hir bed, & the secretary with Dame Pergo & hir handmayd keping of hir company" (103). The euphemistic language of F.J. and Elinor, as we have seen earlier, provided mental images that were irrelevant or misleading, but here G.T. makes sure that his reader has a proper grasp of the situation by providing unambiguous verbal cues that suggest more exactly the actual situation. Elinor may with verbal

poise wander through the rhetorical labyrinths of courtly love, but G.T. would have us know that she owns only one garment, her nightgown, and that her favorite piece of furniture is a bed. That Gascoigne was enjoying himself is evident; he could not resist having G.T. add that Elinor was found "(*allo solito*)" in bed.

If the evasiveness of F.J.'s and Elinor's language is caused by the attempt to explain one context (the sexual one) in the rhetorical terms of a completely different context (the ideals of the courtly code), then G.T. strikes a balance and provides perspective for the reader by taking the same terms and applying them to a more appropriate context. G.T.'s plain prose -- "my homely manner of writing" (105) -- represents the implied verbal norm by which the euphemisms of F.J. and Elinor are properly understood. The euphemistic use of "curtesie," for example, to account for Elinor's sexual eagerness, does not escape the corrective norm of G.T.'s language. The morning after the rape, the

> gentlewomen of the Castle came into Madam *Elynors* chamber, who after their *Bon jour* did all (*una voce*) seeme to lament the sicknes of *F.J.* and called upon the Dames *Elinor* and *Fraunces*, to go visite him againe. The Lady *Fraunces* curteously consented, but Madame *Elinor* first alledged that she hir selfe was also sickly . . . and sayd that onely for that cause she was constrayned to kepe hir bed longer than hir accustomed hower. (93)

Here, the context of Elinor's "curtesie" is thrown in direct

contrast to the context of Frances' "curtesie." The mental images suggested here by the word "courteously" are much closer to the real facts (i.e. Frances' consideration and concern) that the word describes. (In any event, the word is much closer to reality in this instance than it is in the mouths of F.J. and Elinor.) The relationship between word and reality is here strengthened by G.T.'s normative context, and the gulf between word and actual fact in F.J.'s and Elinor's usage is implicitly illustrated and exposed.

Frances and the other women go to entertain the ailing (but now quickly recuperating) F.J., who is appreciative of their goodwill. And so he should be, he says, "having the proofe that I have had of your great curtesies" (94). Later that evening, the lord of the castle generously suggests that they take some dinner to F.J.'s sick-bed. After Frances has cheered the somewhat depressed F.J. with her conversation, "the curteous Dame became his kerver, & hee with a bold spirite gan tast of hir cookery" (95). The implication of these and other examples is clear: as "curtesie" passes from one context to another, its meaning is drastically altered. F.J. and Elinor would like to ignore this fact, but G.T. refuses to let them, or the reader, do so. The Adventures is, after all, more than anything else, a study in the relativity of meaning -- meaning that is wholly dependent upon context. The meaning

of a word (like "curtesie") varies with the context in which it is used. It is this that Gascoigne wants his reader to see; it is this that Elinor's and F.J's euphemisms would deny. F.J. and Elinor insist on some "dictionary" stability of the meaning of "curtesie," but they would deny the relevance of context altogether. It is this verbal hocus-pocus that is exposed by the implied contextual norm of G.T.'s language.

But G.T.'s exposure of F.J.'s and Elinor's rhetorical reliance on the courtly code is not always this clear-cut. "The rhetorical component," in Richard Lanham's terms, may be "planted amidst a context of pretty straightforward narrative prose,"[19] but this accounts only for a portion of G.T.'s prose. Naturally, G.T. represents the implied physical, moral and linguistic norms in his plain "straight-forward" language, but he too uses the euphemism. This is a fact that critics seem to have missed. Consider the following examples. After Elinor's secretary has gone off to London, F.J. intuits some direct relationship between this fact and Elinor's sudden passion for him. In light of this, we learn from G.T. that "he thought good now to smyte while the yron was hotte, and to lend his Mistresse suche a penne in hir Secretaries absence, as he should never be able at his returne to amende the well writing thereof" (58). Let me postpone comment until later, and turn from

F.J.'s "penne" to G.T.'s "penne." Immediately following the rape, G.T. asks us to "let them both sleepe whyles I turne my penne unto the before named Secretary, who being (as I sayd) come lately from London, had made many proffers to renew his accustomed consultations: but the sorrow which his Mistresse had conceyved in F.J. his sicknesse . . . had ben such lettes unto his attempts, as it was long time before he could obtayne audience" (92-93). But the rape has determined Elinor to have nothing to do with F.J.:

> And in very deed, it fell out that the Secretary having bin of long time absent, & therby his quils & pennes not worn so neer as they were wont to be, did now prick such faire large notes, y^t his Mistres liked better to sing faburden under him, than to descant any longer uppon F.J. playne song: and thus they continued in good accorde, untill it fortuned that Dame Fraunces came into hir chamber uppon such sodeyn as shee had like to have marred all the musick. Wel thei conveied their clifs as closely as they could, but yit not altogither w^tout some suspicion given to ye said dame Fraunces. (93)

The reader, it is clear, is not being lectured on chamber-music. Euphemistic utterance is very much evident: "penne," "accustomed consultations," "quils & pennes," "faire large notes," "to sing faburden under him," "to descant," "F.J. playne song," "the musick," "their clifs." G.T., like F.J. and Elinor, plainly uses euphemism, but it is euphemism of another sort and it is used with a wholly different intent. G.T.'s use of euphemistic language here is a comic parody of F.J.'s and Elinor's euphemistic

dissembling elsewhere, except that where their language would evade the reality that it pretends to describe, G.T.'s euphemisms draw attention to it. If their euphemisms, as I have earlier remarked, generate mental abstractions entirely inappropriate (even contradictory) to the physical context, G.T.'s euphemisms posit the physical context of lust right from the start, and the terms of the euphemism itself are merely a humorous amplification of the fact. Far from evading reality, G.T.'s euphemisms make it even more explicit, as any keen student of music -- with a sense of humor -- will soon attest.

G.T. parodies the euphemisms of F.J. and Elinor in other ways as well. Very often he takes a term provided by the courtly code and uses it euphemistically, just as F.J. and Elinor do. But G.T. couples the term with qualifiers that leave no doubt as to its intended meaning. Such a term is "service," an integral part of the mistress-servant relationship. F.J. is not unduly surprised that Elinor does not visit him after the rape. He believes she is only peeved, "nothing doubting but that he should have wonne his Mistres to pardon his presumption, & lovingly to embrace his service in wonted maner" (101). The euphemism here is used ironically, thus it is self-exposing where elsewhere the same euphemism had been a means of verbal disguise. A similar kind of parody is carried out by G.T.

when F.J. swoons before the rape. In this instance, the euphemistic use of "curtesie" is parodied and exposed:

> my friend F.J. hath to me emported, that returning to life, the first thing which he felt, was that his good mistres lay pressing his brest w[t] the whole weight of hir body, and biting his lips with hir friendly teeth: and peradventure shee refrayned . . . to strik him on the cheekes in such sorte, as they doe that strive to call agayne a dying creature: and therefore thought this the aptest meane to reduce him unto remembrance. F.J. now awaked, could no lesse do, than of his curteous nature, receyve his Mistresse into his bed: Who, as one that knew that waye better, than how to help his swooning, gan gently strip of hir clothes, and lovingly embracing him. . . . (91)

"Curtesie" is used euphemistically by G.T. but is so thoroughly surrounded by and immersed in the physical, concrete element of sex -- "lay," "pressing," "brest," "body," "lips," "teeth," "cheekes," "bed," "strip," "embracing" -- that the euphemism is rendered totally and comically transparent.

What happens when G.T.'s language collides with that of F.J. and Elinor can best be seen in the passage describing their first sexual encounter. It is an often-quoted passage, but it deserves to be repeated yet again:

> And when he thought aswell his servaunt, as the rest of the houshold to be safe, he arose again, & taking his night gowne, did under the same convey his naked sword, and so walked to the gallerie, where he found his good Mistresse walking in hir night gowne and attending his comming. The Moone was now at the full, the skies cleare, and the weather temperate, by reason wherof he might the more playnely and with the greater contentation behold his long desired joyes, and spreding his armes abrode to embrace his loving Mistresse, he sayd: oh my deare Lady when shall I be able

> with any desert to countervayle the least parte of this your bountifull goodnesse? The dame (whether it were of feare in deede, or that the wylynes of womanhode had taught hir to cover hir conceites with some fyne dissimulation) stert backe from the Knight, and shriching (but softly) sayd unto him. Alas servaunt what have I deserved, that you come against me with naked sword as against an open enimie. F.J. perceyving hir entent excused himselfe, declaring that he brought the same for their defence, & not to offend hir in any wise. The Ladie being therwith somwhat apeased, they began w^t more comfortable gesture to expell the dread of the said late affright, and sithens to become bolder of behaviour, more familier in speech, & most kind in accomplishing of comon comfort. But why hold I so long discourse in discribing the joyes which (for lacke of like experience) I cannot set out to ye ful? Were it not that I knowe to whom I write, I would the more beware what I write. F.J. was a man, and neither of us are sencelesse, and therfore I shold slaunder him, (over and besides a greater obloquie to the whole genealogie of Enaeas) if I should imagine that of tender hart he would forbeare to expresse hir more tender limbes against the hard floore. Suffised that of hir curteouse nature she was content to accept bords for a bead of downe, mattes for Camerike sheetes, and the night gowne of F.J. for a counterpoynt to cover them, and thus with calme content, in steede of quiet sleepe, they beguiled the night, untill the proudest sterre began to abandon the fyrmament, when F.J. and his Mistresse, were constrayned also to abandon their delightes, and with ten thousand sweet kisses and straight embracings, did frame themselves to play loth to depart. (69)

The collision of euphemistic language with hard reality is here effected by G.T. the narrator. It produces irony, of course, but since the impact is buffered by G.T.'s tongue-in-cheek tone and his own parodic euphemism, we have also a comic effect. In G.T.'s "leering presentation," comments W.R. Davis,

> he strips Elinor down to her shift to reveal the practiced coquette, the "sensual comedienne" possessing at the same time enough hypocrisy, coyness, experience, and clearheaded practicality to shriek "(but softly)." Words such as "courtesy" become in this context euphemisms for four-letter words.20

A final example of G.T.'s dual role as parodist of rhetorical abuse and as representative of linguistic norm, is the rape. F.J. tells Elinor what has been upsetting him -- he is jealous of the secretary and had mistrusted Elinor. He hopes his confession and honesty will clear the way for more enjoyable pastimes. G.T., however, thinks not:

> Now, here I would demaund of you and such others as are expert: Is there any greater impediment to the fruition of a Lovers delights, than to be mistrusted? or rather, is it not the ready way to race all love and former good will out of remembrance, to tell a gilty mynd that you doe mistrust it? It should seeme yes, by Dame Elynor, who began nowe to take the the [sic] matter whottely, and of such vehemency were hir fancies, that shee nowe fell into flat defiance with F.J. who although hee sought by many faire wordes to temper hir chollerike passions, and by yeelding him selfe to get the conquest of an other, yet could hee by no meanes determine the quarrell. The softe pillowes being present at these whot wordes, put forth themselves as mediatours for a truce betwene these enemies, and desired that (if they would needes fight) it might be in their presence but onely one pusshe of the pike, and so from thenceforth to become friends again for ever. But the Dame denied flatly, alleadging that shee found no cause at all to use such curtesie unto such a recreant, adding further many wordes of great reproche: the which did so enrage F.J. as that having now forgotten all former curtesies, he drew uppon his new professed enimie, and bare hir up with such a violence

> against the bolster, that before shee could prepare the warde, he thrust hir through both hands, and &c. wher by the Dame swoning for feare, was constreyned (for a time) to abandin hir body to the enemies curtesie. At last when shee came to hir selfe, shee rose sodeinly and determined to save hir selfe by flight, leaving F.J. with many dispytefull wordes, and swearing that hee should never (eftsoones) take hir at the like advantage, the which othe she kept better than hir former professed good will: and having nowe recovered hir chamber (bicause shee founde hir hurt to be nothing daungerous) I doubt not, but shee slept quietly the rest of the night. (92)

This is the climax to the whole question of language use in The Adventures. F.J. and Elinor began with language and terms generated by the concepts and ideals of the courtly love convention. But the demands of the flesh make the language a euphemistic distortion of the ideals of the courtly code. Far from admitting their adulterous lust, F.J. and Elinor attempt to ignore the fact by a continual euphemistic evasion of context. A spade is somehow presented as a heart. G.T. parodies their euphemistic dissembling but increasingly crowds their verbal evasions with the physical context until the euphemisms themselves burst from the pressure, revealing at once the humorous (if somewhat crude) reality, the futile attempt to disguise, and the great gap between the ideal and the actual -- between language and reality.

3. Regeneration of Language

If through most of The Adventures of Master F.J. the reader has been a spectator to G.T.'s, F.J.'s and Elinor's verbal hide-and-seek, the situation changes as he nears the end of the work. As it becomes more apparent to F.J. that Elinor has grown tired of his "wonted service," and has (because of the rape) given her favors to the newly returned secretary, F.J. and his courtly ideals come slowly and inevitably down to earth. After the rape, Elinor continually refuses to visit F.J.'s sick-bed, and he continues to hope that he might

> recover some favour at hir hands, but it wold not be: so that nowe he had bene as likely (as at the first) to have fretted in fantasies, had not the Lady Fraunces continually comforted him: and by little & little she drove such reason into his minde, that now he began to subdue his humors with discretion, and to determine that if hee might espie evident profe of his Mistresse frayeltie, hee would then stand content with pacience perforce, & give his Mistres the Bezo las manos. (103)

F.J.'s suspicion about Elinor and the secretary are soon confirmed, and "F.J. smelt how the world went about" (104). We find, however, that once he knows (or suspects) what is happening, his language too comes down to earth and is more in line with the facts. M.R. Rohr Philmus has also noticed this shift: "Only towards the end of the narrative, in the prose passages surrounding the last three poems, does the stylistic dichotomy disappear from the Adventures;

F.I.'s style approximates plainness as he learns to 'subdue his humors with discretion'."[21] He realizes finally what G.T. had known all along -- that his "mistresse," his "bountifull" and "curteouse" "Lady" Elinor, is an adulterous whore. And the language in his second last poem recognizes finally that a spade is indeed a spade:

> *With her in armes that had my hart in hold,*
> *I stoode of late to plead for pittie so:*
> *And as I did hir lovely lookes behold,*
> *She cast a glance uppon my ryvall foe.*
> *His fleering face provoked hir to smyle,*
> *When my salte teares were drowned in disdayne:*
> *He glad, I sad, he laught, (alas the while)*
> *I wept for woe: I pyn'd for deadly payne.*
> *And when I sawe none other boote prevayle,*
> *But reasons rule must guide my skilfull minde:*
> *Why then (quod I) olde proverbes never fayle,*
> *For yet was never good Cat out of kinde:*
> *Nor woman true but even as stories tell,*
> *Woon with an egge, and lost againe with shell.*

Language and reality, word and context, once more join hands, and the blind that had previously been erected is knocked over to reveal meaning. In spite of all the language to the contrary, F.J. sees clearly that "*yet was never good Cat out of kinde*."[22]

F.J. is not the only one who grows tired of pretending things are better than they really are. G.T., too, in the last paragraph, confesses his own role as euphemistic parodist, and drops the guise:

> I have past it over with quod he, and quod she, after my homely manner of writing, using sundry names for one person, as the Dame, the Lady, Mistresse, &c. The Lorde of the Castle, the Master of the house, and the hoste: nevertheless for that I have seen good aucthors terme every

> gentlewoman a Lady, and every gentleman domine, I have thought it no greater faulte then pettie treason thus to entermyngle them, nothing doubting but you will easely understand my meaning, and that is asmuch as I desire. (105)

No doubt the verbal prevarications of The Adventures are but "pettie treason," but they inform the work from start to finish and demonstrate not only Gascoigne's keen interest in the use human beings make of language, but also his subtle skills as a writer.

"The Adventures" as Moral Satire

On many occasions I have referred to the physical, ethical and linguistic norms that are implied in The Adventures, mainly through the narrative ministrations of G.T. The physical and verbal norms have been sufficiently set forth, but what of an implied moral standard? W.R. Davis has formulated the nature of the problem:

> It is worth asking . . . whether The Adventures of Master F.J. is a critique of the characters or of the code. Is it that courtly love is a valuable ideal but that these people at Velasco [sic] [the setting of the 1575 version] are unworthy of its real if old-fashioned value? Or that these are normal if imperfect human beings caught up in a false and destructive code?23

L.F. McGrath handles the issue in the same fashion, and chooses Davis' second alternative:

> Through F.J.'s experience, Gascoigne is commenting on the foolishness of a theory that, transcendentalizing love, rendered it inaccessible to man, and on the adulterous practice that made the ideal laughable. He is also implying that an inaccessible ideal must inevitably be perverted when a man tries to put it into practice. . . . If Gascoigne's irony is directed at the perversion of the Platonic code and the hypocrisy it engendered, one might at first assume that the norm by which he was measuring that hypocrisy was Platonic idealism in its true sense. However, Gascoigne is also making the point that it is impossible for a man to implement an ideal in this world.24

And W.R. Davis, too, like most commentators, adopts this reading of the work's satiric directions: "Gascoigne's view is more pragmatic: a code of behavior . . . is created by men and for men; if it ruins a man, it is *ipso facto* wrong, and must be discarded."[25]

If Gascoigne is not upholding the usefulness of the code (although it has been badly battered by his characters), then where lies the implied moral norm? Without exception, the critics point to two features: Frances' tale, and Frances herself. Both W.R. Davis and L.F. McGrath agree that these constitute an expression of the ethical norm in *The Adventures*: "The constant presence of Frances makes us follow the adulterous love affair with the possibility of a better way always in mind."[26] McGrath says:

> This norm of a love that may be accepted and fulfilled on an ethical, experiential level, with an acknowledgement of the seriousness of the responsibility of one individual to another, is suggested briefly and allusively through the tale told by the lady Fraunces (pp. 96-100), and through Fraunces herself.27

Richard Lanham likewise finds

> The only countervailing morality present in F.J. is Frances' tale and, more largely, Frances herself. Her tale is less an assertion of Christian forbearance . . . than a secular (even bourgeois) demonstration of the goodness and stability of a faithful marriage based on mutual love and respect. She herself is in the tale to offer just such a possible marriage to F.J.. . . . Both versions imply that only the sheer perversity of passionate love and its courtly code would make F.J. prefer Elinor to Frances. Frances, representing all the joys of open, frank, yet knowledgeable real affection, stands in clear opposition to the meretricious code Elinor represents. Her tale thus provides an alternate climax to F.J., an assertion of positive value to balance the pure negativism, the sheer loss of F.J.'s affair with Elinor.28

C.W. Smith asserts that "Frances' real role seems to be that of a moral instructor, and if she wishes to influence him [F.J.], she does so largely because she perceives the destructive force of his passion as it eats away his perspective."[29]

The critical commentary on this issue is quoted in detail in order to characterize critical opinion with some precision. To see Frances and her tale as ethical norms, as representing moral alternatives to Elinor and the courtly code, is to advance an argument that is easily

verified by the implications of the text. There are, however, certain aspects to G.T.'s characterization of Frances which are not completely accounted for in this reading, which suggests that a few qualifying remarks are in order.

After Frances has finished her tale F.J. decides that of the three -- the husband, the wife, the lover -- it is the husband who has suffered most, and who has shown the greatest patience, love and mercy. The inherent Christian morality that F.J.'s judgement exemplifies demonstrates a moral standard which is in contrast to F.J.'s adulterous affair with Elinor. The fact that F.J. cannot apply his moral judgement to his own situation is ironic, of course, and it also shows the extent to which his passion has rendered him morally blind and imperceptive. This reading of Frances' tale, and, more importantly, of F.J.'s decision in the matter, poses no problem for the argument that an implied moral standard is inherent in the contrast.

But when one turns to Frances herself as a moral alternative to the promiscuous Elinor, the contrast is not so great, nor of the kind that the critics have usually endorsed. G.T. says of Frances that she was

> a virgin of rare chastitie, singular capacitie, notable modestie, and excellent beauty: and though _F.J._ had cast his affection on the other (being a married woman) yit was ther in their beauties no great difference: but in all other good giftes a wonderfull diversitie, as much as might be betwene constancie & flitting fantasie, betwene womanly countenance & girlish garishnes, betwene hot dissimulacion & temperate fidelitie. Now if any man will curiously aske the question why _F.J._ should chuse the one and leave the other . . . thus may be answered . . . because the one is overcome with lesse difficultie then that other. Thus much in defence of this Lady _Fraunces_, & to excuse the choice of my friend _F.J._ (67)

This passage in itself provides good evidence for the common notion that Frances is the moral antithesis to Elinor, and for W.R. Davis' statement that "the Lady Frances, with her wit, frankness, modesty, and warmth is an ideal of womanhood."[30] But to emphasize the contrast between Frances' moral purity and Elinor's wanton culpability, is to persist in the face of other evidence.

The reader knows from many passages that Frances herself very quickly grows to love F.J. Early in the tale G.T. informs us that Frances sits down to talk with the despondent F.J., "partly of curtesie and affection, and partly to content hir mind by continuance of such talk as thei had commenced over night" (65). During the same conversation, Frances assures F.J. that her personal questions and intimate chat with him are due to "the good will that I beare towards you" (65). Later, G.T. himself removes all doubts as to Frances' emotions, saying that

she "in deede loved him deepely" (80). And when Elinor refuses to visit the recuperating F.J. after the rape, Frances tells him to "be of good comforte, and assure your selfe that here are others who would be as glad of your wel doing, as your Mistresse in any respect" (94). Who those "others" are, would seem to be Frances herself. Finally, after Frances has told her tale and the company prepares for bed, she makes the following offer to the tired F.J.: "Although percase I shal not do it so handsomly as your mistres, yit good Trust [Frances' nickname for F.J.] (quod she) if you vouchsafe it, I can be content to trim up your bed in y[e] best maner that I may, as one who would be as glad as she to procure your quiet rest" (100-101). The sexual innuendoes here are obvious: both Frances and F.J. know full well the ingredients of Elinor's recipe "to procure your quiet rest," and although Frances' love and concern for F.J. are a partial explanation of her motives, she is also, in Elinor's euphemistic terms, offering to "purvey a lodging for him, where hereafter he may sleepe at more quiet" (68). But F.J., whose passionate desire are directed still toward Elinor, "gave hir gret thanks desiring hir not to trouble hirself, but to let his man alone with that charge" (101). It is a euphemistic invitation to sex euphemistically declined.

The reader will also be aware of G.T.'s assertions

about Elinor's jealousy of her sister-in-law. This issue comes up several times, but one example will suffice. Later in the same day that F.J. had stopped Elinor's nosebleed, the lord of the castle "required F.J. to daunce and passe the tyme with the gentlewoman, which he refused not to doe" (60). The "gentlewoman" is Frances, and Elinor watches from the side in acute jealousy as F.J. and Frances talk and dance. The next day, Elinor's jealous ire has given way to her passion, and she decides that "she had shewed hir selfe to earnest to use any further dissimulation, especially perceiving the toward enclination of hir servaunts Hope [F.J.'s nickname for Frances]" (67). The point that is being made here is that Elinor's suspicions and jealousy are justified. That Elinor and Frances are in competition for F.J.'s love, has not gone unnoticed by the critics, but Frances' passive and innocent role in the affair has been exaggerated considerably.

Realizing early that F.J.'s passion for Elinor will not easily be changed, Frances becomes F.J.'s confidante and views F.J.'s imminent adultery with Elinor as an "experiment" (61):

> the Dame Fraunces seemed to mislike F.J. choice, and to lament that she doubted in processe of time to see him abused. The experiment she ment was this, for that she thought F.J. (I use hir wordes) a man in every respect very woorthy to have the severall use of a more commodious common, she hoped nowe to see if his enclosure thereof might be defensible against hir sayd Secretary,

> and such like. These things and divers other of great importance, this courteouse Lady Fraunces did friendly disclose unto F.J. and furthermore, did both instruct and advise him how to proceede in his enterprise. (66)

But her "experiment" has its ulterior purposes as well. Frances suggests that F.J. is too worthy to be usurped by the secretary, but she also hopes that F.J.'s affair with the inconstant Elinor will ultimately prove to him that there is, in Frances' euphemistic phrase, "a more commodious common" available -- namely, Frances herself. And until that realization occurs, Frances is content to act as pimp, as panderess, instructing him and advising him "how to proceede in his enterprise." When F.J. bemoans the fact of Elinor's jealous anger, it is Frances who "caught hold of his lap, and half by force led him by the gallery unto his Mistres chamber: wheras after a little dissembling disdain, he was at last by the good helpe of his Hope, right thankfully receyved" (67). After the rape F.J. declares to Frances

> that ther was some contention hapened betwene his mistres & him: the Lady told him that she was not ignorant therof. Then he desired hir to treat so much in ye cause, as they might eftsones come to Parlee: therof I dare assure you (qd. Mistresse Fraunces,) & at their retorne she led F.J. into his Mistres chamber, whom thei found lying on hir bed. . . . (101-102)

Frances is not only aware that "Parlee" is another euphemism for F.J.'s sexual desire of Elinor, but she is

also willing to do what she can to accommodate that lust.

There is one final passage that ought to cure us of any notions we may have about Frances' moral purity as representing "an ideal of womanhood." On the night of the first sexual encounter, F.J. arises with as much stealth as he can, "& taking his night gowne, did under the same convey his naked sword" (69). Their passion is consummated "untill the proudest sterre began to abandon the fyrmament" (69), and F.J. and Elinor convey themselves to their respective chambers. But not with total secrecy, however:

> And though he were not much perceyved, yet the Ladie Fraunces being no lesse desirous to see an issue of these enterprises, then F.J. was willing to cover them in secresy, did watch, & even at the entring of his chamber doore, perceyved the poynt of his naked sworde glistring under the skyrt of his night gowne: wherat she smyled & said to hir selfe, this geare goeth well about. Well, F.J. having now recovered his chamber, he went to bedde, & there let him sleepe, as his Mistresse did on that otherside. Although the Lady Fraunces being throughly tickled now in all the vaynes, could not enjoy such quiet rest, but arising, toke another gentlewoman of the house with hir, and walked into the parke to take the freshe ayre of the morning. They had not long walked there, but they retorned, and though F.J. had not yet slept sufficiently, for one which had so farre travayled in the night past, yet they went into his chamber to rayse him, and comming to his beds side, found him fast on sleepe. Alas quod that other gentlewoman, it were pitie to awake him: even so it were quod dame Fraunces, but we will take awaye somewhat of his, wherby he may perceyve that we were here, and loking about the chamber, his naked sworde presented it selfe to the hands of dame Fraunces, who toke it with hir, and softly shutting his chamber door againe,

> went downe the stayres and recovered hir owne lodging, in good order and unperceyved of any body. . . . (69-70)

We may view this episode, as R.C. Johnson does, as an example of Frances' sense of humor: "Frances, the representative of honest love, is most human, when giving in to a rather coarse quirk of humor, she steals F.J.'s naked sword after his first seduction, a most obvious phallic symbol."[31] Or we may, as seems more likely, view the incident as a psychological gesture by a sexually frustrated Frances. Frances has watched her rival enjoy the physical love that she herself would have, and since she has been only a spectator to events, the best she can do is to take a phallic memento. (I might point out that this is the one and only example in The Adventures where euphemism -- "naked sworde" -- transcends itself and becomes symbol.) One naturally wonders what "that other gentlewoman" thought of all this commotion in the early hours of the morning.

Frances' role and function as moral norm appears now to be problematic. She may well represent a moral alternative to Elinor, but she is nevertheless, like Elinor, a rather sexual character. True, Frances is not the promiscuous, vain and amoral type that Elinor undoubtedly is, yet she is content to pander to the lust of F.J. (even though it means throwing him into the arms of her rival), and she has a curious voyeuristic and sexual

nature in her own right. R.C. Johnson is close to the truth in his comment that "in Frances we see a paradox which simply must be accepted: she contrasts completely with the debased courtly love tradition, but she cannot make her nobler and more honestly felt emotional love more attractive than the lustful sexuality of Elinor."[32] We should add to this that it is Frances' more honestly felt sexual love that has been denied.

I am not suggesting that Frances does not represent the implied moral norm, but only that she does not represent an _ideal_ moral alternative. Gascoigne is saying that to choose Frances over Elinor is not to choose a specimen of "ideal womanhood" over a nymphomaniac two-timer, it is rather to make the best choice available. This is all one's moral sensibility can do; to turn away, like F.J., in cynicism, because the ideal no longer exists or because it is not present, is to fall into a deeper, more profound moral blindness. There is Elinor's "curtesie," and there is Frances' "curtesie" -- neither perfect, neither ideal, but that is the context in which one's moral sensibilities are obligated to operate. The point that Gascoigne makes -- his implied ethical norm -- is that there is no perfect "curtesie," no ideal code, and no perfect people in the real world of human experience. This implied pragmatism

is illustrated in the ending. F.J. leaves a thoroughly disillusioned cynic; Frances' love is unrequited; and Elinor continues, "*allo solito*." There is no poetic justice in Gascoigne's fictional world.

NOTES TO CHAPTER I

[1]George Gascoigne, _The Adventures of Master F.J._, in _A Hundreth Sundrie Flowres_, ed. C.T. Prouty (1942; rpt. Columbia, Missouri, 1970). All parentehtical page refences are to this edition.

[2]For a discussion of the general relationship between the _Flowres_ and _The Posies_, and of the public charges of obscenity and immorality that caused Gascoigne to revise and expurgate the _Flowres_, see Prouty's _A Hundreth Sundrie Flowres_, Introduction, pp. 9-43, and, Prouty's _George Gascoigne: Elizabethan Courtier, Soldier, and Poet_ (New York, 1942), pp. 49-100.

[3]Robert Ashley and Edwin Moseley, eds., "The Adventures of Master F.J.," in _Elizabethan Fiction_ (New York, 1964), p. 7. This edition prints the 1575 version.

[4]For a list of variants in _The Posies_ see Prouty, _A Hundreth Sundrie Flowres_, pp. 228-231.

[5]See Prouty's Introduction to _A Hundreth Sundrie Flowres_, and L. Bradner's "The First English Novel: A Study of George Gascoigne's _Adventures of Master F.J._," _PMLA_, 45 (1930), 543-552.

[6]Prouty, _George Gascoigne_, p. 201.

[7]W.R. Davis, _Idea and Act in Elizabethan Fiction_ (Princeton, 1969), pp. 98-99, 103.

[8]L.F. McGrath, "George Gascoigne's Moral Satire: The Didactic Use of Convention in _The Adventures Passed by Master F.J._," _JEGP_, 70 (1971), 433.

[9]F.B. Fieler, "Gascoigne's Use of Courtly Love Conventions in _The Adventures Passed by Master F.J._," _SSF_, 1 (1963), 26.

[10]See R.P. Adams, "Gascoigne's _Master F.J._ as Original Fiction," _PMLA_, 73 (1958), 315-326; L. Bradner, "Point of View in George Gascoigne's Fiction," _SSF_, 3 (1965), 16-22; and P.S. Schott, "The Narrative Stance in _The Adventures of Master F.J._: Gascoigne as Critic of His Own Poems," _Renaissance Quarterly_, 29 (1976), 369-377.

[11]Prouty, _George Gascoigne_, pp. 209-210.

[12]C.W. Smith, "Structural and Thematic Unity in Gascoigne's _The Adventures of Master F.J._," _Papers on Language and Literature_, 2 (1966), 103. See also R.A. Lanham, "Narrative Structure in Gascoigne's _F.J._," _SSF_, 4 (1966), 42-50.

[13]M.R. Rohr Philmus, "Gascoigne's Fable of the Artist as a Young Man," _JEGP_, 73 (1974), 14, 15.

[14]R.A. Lanham, "Opaque Style in Elizabethan Fiction," _Pacific Coast Philology_, 1 (1966), 26.

[15]W.J. Ong, "The Writer's Audience is Always a Fiction," _PMLA_, 90 (1975), 17.

[16]Philmus, 28.

[17]George Orwell, "Politics and the English Language," in _Shooting an Elephant and Other Essays_ (London, 1950), pp. 96-97.

[18]R.A. Lanham, "Opaque Style in Elizabethan Fiction," 26.

[19]_Ibid._, 26.

[20]Davis, p. 101.

[21]Philmus, 28.

[22]Prouty's note, p. 258: "_Cat_" is "slang for prostitute. Thus the proverb: never does a prostitute change her nature."

[23]Davis, p. 106.

[24]McGrath, 449.

[25]Davis, p. 106.

[26]*Ibid*., p. 106.

[27]McGrath, 449.

[28]Lanham, "Narrative Structure in Gascoigne's *F.J.*," 46-47.

[29]Smith, 106.

[30]Davis, p. 104.

[31]R.C. Johnson, *George Gascoigne* (New York, 1972), p. 136.

[32]*Ibid*., p. 133.

CHAPTER II

JOHN LYLY AND EUPHUES

Introduction to Euphues

One need only thumb through either *Euphues: The Anatomy of Wit* or *Euphues and his England*[1] to realize that the initial challenge to the critic of fiction is not one of straightforward explication of what the works are "really" about, but rather, of first determining what they are and what they include. In *Euphues* we are confronted with a variety of sections: the story of Euphues and his exploits in Naples with Philautus and Lucilla; 'A Cooling Card For Philautus And All Fond Lovers'; 'Euphues And His Ephebus'; 'Euphues And Atheos'; 'Certain Letters Writ By Euphues To His Friends.' The story of Euphues, from his coming to Naples to his self-imposed exile in Greece, is the narrative section and as such comprises only half the contents. The subsequent sections are either letters from Euphues to his acquaintances, or they are heavily didactic debates and moral treatises from a Euphues now ostensibly reformed. This diversity and variety of form and subject-matter, while not so obviously evident in clearly distinguished sections, is also true of *Euphues and his England*, though to a lesser extent. *Euphues* is not pure

narrative, but a composite form that makes use of tale, debate, letters and treatise,[2] much of which has been traced to courtesy books, classical literature, and educational dissertations. G.K. Hunter recognizes a "principle of variety" in Euphues, and concludes that "Lyly's works are all, more or less, compilations from standard sources, mosaics of references to Humanist authorities."[3] The point is, of course, that the critic ought to avoid a distorted conception of Euphues which is generated by considerations of the narrative section only, ignoring entirely the second half of the work. This radical selectiveness is apparent not only in some critics but in anthologies of Elizabethan fiction as well.

But let me turn to a paraphrase of the two works, and some general commentary on the relationship of the two. The usefulness of such a paraphrase lies in the facts that for many readers Euphues is understood only in terms of the narrative section, and that Euphues and his England has an almost non-existent readership.

Euphues (the name, clearly derived from Ascham's The Scholemaster, means well-endowed with natural gifts, both physical and intellectual) leaves Athens and comes to Naples, where he decides to remain. He is lectured and warned about the temptations of Naples, the waywardness of youth, and the necessity of tempering "wit" with

wisdom and a proper education. This he receives from an old man named Eubulus ("good or prudent in counsel"). As is to be expected, Euphues rejects this advice, mocks Eubulus' abilities as a sage, and enters into a sudden and passionate friendship with Philautus ("self-love"), a Neapolitan youth of his own age. After swearing eternal loyalty and love to one another, the two friends visit Lucilla, assumed by everyone in Naples to be tacitly betrothed to Philautus. The company dines and later entertains itself with a discussion of "whether the qualities of the mind or the composition of the man cause women most to like, or whether beauty or wit move men most to love" (35). Over the course of the next several days, Euphues and Lucilla both recognize a sudden attraction to the other, and both consider (in separate but similar "midnight" soliloquies) the nastiness of pursuing their inclinations, since of course it would involve a betrayal of Philautus. Philautus asks what is the cause of Euphues' sudden moodiness, and is told that a friend of Lucilla's, Livia (who had been present at the dinner), has left Euphues "scorched with the flames of desire" (50). Being a true friend, Philautus promotes the idea by introducing Euphues into the company of Lucilla and Livia more often, and thus makes of himself a convenient stalking-horse for Euphues, who has by this time decided that his infatuation is more

important than his loyalty. Philautus leaves Naples temporarily with Lucilla's father in order to resolve the economic conditions of any marriage to Lucilla, giving Euphues and Lucilla ample time to declare their love to one another, and, as Lucilla would have it, to "wean me from the teat of Vesta to the toys of Venus" (60). Her father and Philautus return only to find an uncooperative daughter and a reluctant bride; she will have neither her father's advice nor Philautus for a husband -- "It is Euphues . . . that hath battered the bulwark of my breast and shall shortly enter as conqueror into my bosom" (72). Philautus writes to Euphues, confronting him with his betrayal and rejecting him as friend. Euphues replies in "gibing terms" (77) and hastens to Lucilla, finding that in his brief absence she has cast him off with Philautus for one Curio, "in body deformed, in mind foolish, an innocent born, a beggar by misfortune" (83). Euphues contemplates his experience, repents his folly and hurries back to Athens after renewing his friendship with Philautus. Lucilla's father appears yet again, and, somewhat grieved by his daughter's latest decision, "conceived such an inward grief that in short space he died, leaving Lucilla the only heir of his lands and Curio to possess them" (89). This, in brief, is the general story-line that makes up the narrative section and the first half of _Euphues_.

The second half begins with 'A Cooling Card For Philautus And All Fond Lovers' (91). As its title suggests, it is a treatise written by a presumably wiser and more temperate Euphues, warning Philautus and all male would-be lovers to heed the lesson of his one and only abortive venture into love. It is in both tone and subject-matter thoroughly misogynous, and portrays the wiles and dissembling nature of "these sirens . . . these tame serpents" (104) in order "to admonish all young imps and novices in love not to blow the coals of fancy with desire but to quench them with disdain" (94).

'Euphues And His Ephebus' (111) follows this, and is a longer treatise giving "a caveat to all parents how they might bring their children up in virtue, and a commandment to all youth how they should frame themselves to their fathers' instructions" (110). It is an unoriginal educational treatise, which again is a product of the contemplations of a now ostensibly wiser and more experienced Euphues. The narrative voice enters occasionally, and at the end of the section effects a clumsy transition: "But he, altering his determination, fell into this discourse with himself: -- 'Why, Euphues, art thou so addicted to the study of the heathen that thou hast forgotten thy God in heaven? Shall thy wit be rather employed to the attaining of human wisdom than divine knowledge?'" (143).

With this shift to matters divine comes 'Euphues And Atheos' (147), an exercise in theological dialogue between Euphues and an imaginary character named Atheos ("godless," "denying the gods"). Euphues finally convinces the young atheist that there is indeed a God because the Bible says there is, throws in a little natural theology for good measure, and with awkward significance renames him Theophilus ("lover of god").

The final section, 'Certain Letters Writ By Euphues To His Friends' (163), brings the reader a little closer to the fictional world of character and event established in the narrative section. There are letters to Philautus, Eubulus and Livia, one from Livia to Euphues, and two short treatises disguised as letters to two characters (Botonio and Alcius) who have no connection at all with the narrative section. These letters, however, advance the story-line only a little: Euphues describes to Philautus Lucilla's shameful behavior which ends in her death; states in his letters both to Philautus and Livia that he suspects Philautus is still not cured of his passions for women; and on the past page, assures Livia that he and Philautus will journey soon to England.

What we have in Euphues, then, is a work that divides itself roughly speaking into two halves: the first

half is a narrative display of character, event and experience; the second half is heavily didactic and full of moralizing, showing a regenerate Euphues applying and sharing the lessons of "one which hath been lewd" (113). Far from being irrelevant or "tacked on," the second half of Euphues is an integral part of the work as a whole, for it shows the major character's attempt to understand, evaluate and learn from his experience. The second half is connected repeatedly to the narrative in terms of how and where Euphues went wrong. The 'Cooling Card' describes the major source of problems, of course, but the 'Ephebus' and 'Atheos' sections, as well, are attempts to explain the folly and wilfulness of Euphues as matters of improper education and a lack of moral seriousness. Euphues feels he has assimilated his experience and now feels qualified to preach to others, especially to Philautus, and this becomes an important linking factor between Euphues and Euphues and his England. But the point here is that the two halves of Euphues create a total vision, and cannot be considered independently. The sections that comprise the second half of Euphues are "relevant," in G.K. Hunter's opinion, because "they belong to and indeed complete the vision of wit and wisdom that is the subject of the book."[4] The nature of "wit" and "wisdom", of course, may be a less straightforward matter than Hunter implies, but

whatever that vision is, one has no right to distort it by ignoring half the book in an effort to fit Euphues into some conception of a "novel," a proto-novel, or even "the first novel." This is but one form of critical distortion. I will examine some others after a paraphrase of Euphues and his England.

Euphues and his England is a much easier object to describe, for it is a less diversified work. Except for 'Euphues' Glass for Europe' (417-449), an exaggerated description of England's physical and moral superiority which comes near the end, the volume concerns itself almost completely with a narrative sequel to Euphues. And a "sequel" it certainly is, not only as a narrative continuation of Philautus' amorous escapades and Euphues' new-begotten didactic role, but as a thematic sequel that further investigates "the vision of wit and wisdom."

The volume begins with Euphues and Philautus on their way to England, and no sooner has the ship left Naples but Philautus, the other passengers, and the reader are subjected to "an old treatise of an ancient hermit, who meeting with a pilgrim at his cell uttered a strange and delightful tale" (206). Euphues, of course, still motivated in all things by "wisdom" gleaned from his previous experience as a lover, is intent only on the moral and didactic lessons that his audience, especially Philautus, will

derive from the tale. And Philautus, "although the stumps of love so sticked in his mind that he rather wished to hear an elegy in Ovid than a tale of an hermit" (206), takes a stoical view of things, and, feeling fatigued, gets himself comfortable since "this tale shall come in good time to bring me asleep" (207). Euphues then presents the story of Cassander, his son Callimachus and the hermit (207-225). It is a tale of the prodigal son variety. Cassander, a wealthy merchant, dies, and instead of leaving Callimachus his fortune, he leaves him a letter in which he assures his son that "wisdom is great wealth" (209). Callimachus, somewhat angered, sells all his father's property and sets out to travel. Before he has gone very far, he encounters an old hermit in a cave. Unknown to Callimachus, this hermit is his uncle, also named Cassander, to whom Callimachus' father had before his death given ten thousand pounds to be transferred to Callimachus after "he had bought wit with the price of woe" (215). The hermit tries to discourage his nephew's wilfulness by citing his own life story -- another prodigal-son tale -- in much the same manner that Eubulus had cautioned Euphues in the earlier work. And like Euphues, Callimachus rejects all advice, travels, experiences great trouble and suffering, and returns much later to admit that the hermit had been right all along. The hermit tells him of his father's

previous arrangements, and Callimachus, "not a little pleased with this tale and, I think, not much displeased with the gold" (225), is ushered out of the scene so that Euphues can preach to Philautus the moral and educational imports of the story. Euphues mistakes Philautus' sea-sickness for love-sickness, and reprimands him for his folly and ingratitude. Philautus insists that he has reformed, falls asleep, and awakes to find that he and Euphues are in Dover.

Journeying to London, they stop at Canterbury and reside for a few days with an old beekeeper named Fidus. After discussion about the political and moral lessons to be learned from the beehive, and some general talk of England and Queen Elizabeth, Fidus tells the story of his own amorous youth (247-285) in response to Euphues' jests about Philautus' melancholy mood. The young Fidus begins with much the same vanity and self-confidence as had Euphues, Philautus and Callimachus before him. He is cautioned and warned by an elder not unlike Eubulus or the hermit, and true to form, the advice is ignored. He enters the court, and using all the courtly affectation he can muster up, attempts to impress and make love to a very proper but wise young virgin named Iffida. After much dinner conversation and _questioni d'amore_, Fidus rudely declares his love and is soundly rejected. Fidus falls

into a love-sickness that appears likely to kill him, but not before Iffida is persuaded to visit him and effect his cure. She explains that although her heart is faithfully engaged to that of an absent Thirsus, she will agree to a friendship with Fidus so long as he ends his suit. Fidus agrees, regains his health, and enjoys the company of Iffida until she learns of Thirsus' death and dies of grief. Fidus forsakes the court, and, coming to Canterbury to raise bees, remains there for good. So Fidus' autobiography ends, and the relevant lessons to be learned by Philautus are happily pointed out by both Euphues and Fidus.

Euphues and Philautus depart for London, the journey giving Euphues ample time to resume his moral and didactic invective against Philautus' amorous proclivities. They arrive, survey the wonders of London and London society, and Philautus promptly falls in love with an English beauty named Camilla. In a lengthy soliloquy he considers the folly of his desires, then succumbs to his passion. Euphues interrupts him to deliver a panegyric on the physical and moral superiorities of English women. Attempting to dissemble his new passion, Philautus accuses Euphues of hypocrisy, arguing that "thy 'Cooling Card' . . . [is] to quench fire in others and to kindle flames in thee" (302). Perceiving Philautus' ulterior motive and his "burning

fever" (304), Euphues answers him angrily and departs in a rage.

The rest of Euphues and his England is largely concerned with Philautus' attempts to woo and win Camilla. With obvious parallels to the story of Fidus and Iffida, Philautus forces his love on Camilla, who loves and is loved by Surius, and is repeatedly turned aside. He expounds his passion to Camilla at a masquerade ball; delivers it to her in letters concealed in pomegranates and sonnets; he even considers using magic to enhance his potential. But his efforts are to no avail. Camilla, like Iffida, is thoroughly constant and faithful to Surius, and responds to Philautus' persistent assaults with patient hostility. She even offers to promote his interests with another young lady of her company named Francis -- "a fair gentlewoman and a wise, young and of very good conditions, not much inferior to Camilla" (356) -- and who, as it turns out, has more than a passing interest in Philautus. Threatened finally with disclosure of his behavior to the world, Philautus angrily quits his suit and in a mood of temporary repentance attempts to renew his friendship with Euphues through a series of letters (363-375). Euphues is gradually convinced that his friend has learned his lesson, and admits him once again into his company. They engage in a lengthy dialogue, analyzing Philautus' experience,

his behavior, and Camilla's response: Euphues chastizes; Philautus defends.

The two friends are invited to dinner by their English acquaintances, at which are included Surius, Camilla and Francis. Later, the company amuses itself in three debates with Euphues as judge. Surius argues with Camilla, Philautus with Francis, and two minor characters with each other. The debates are all concerned with love, and are similar to the evening discussions in Euphues among Lucilla, Livia, Philautus and Euphues (i.e. the differences between male and female attraction and constancy; whether social commerce between the sexes should be avoided in order to prevent youthful folly; whether secrecy or constancy is better in the lover). Euphues evaluates the arguments with tact and common-sense. A few days later he announces his intention to return to Athens "concerning serious and weighty affairs of his own" (410), the nature of which the reader never learns. Pronouncing his farewells to Philautus and the English company, he leaves England, returns to Athens, and delivers to Livia his 'Euphues' Glass For Europe,' for the moral edification of "the ladies and gentlewomen of Italy" (415). This is followed by a letter from Philautus to Euphues, in which are described Camilla's marriage to Surius and Philautus' marriage to Francis. Euphues replies with a moralistic

letter filled with advice on marriage. And so *Euphues and his England* ends, except for one curious item: a narrative hint on the very last page that suggests Euphues may be caught once more in the snares of love.

Compared with *Euphues*, *Euphues and his England* contains obvious evidence of change and development. Whereas Euphues was the major character in the first work, it is really Philautus who has become the central character of the sequel. The narrative voice, too, shows signs of development. Although there is less narrative comment in what is a generally more sophisticated and more integrated story, there is a lighter, more humorous and more confident tone in the narrative voice when it does appear. In fact, a general increase of humor throughout the sequel is one important development. This seems to carry over into the sphere of characterization and dialogue as well. Fidus, for example, and the conversations in which he and the two young travellers engage, illustrate on Lyly's part a more dramatic consideration both of character and dialogue. Fidus is a generous old man, but inclined to misunderstanding and surliness. It is this kind of eccentricity that defines his character more individually than those in *Euphues*. It is also a good example of what in *Euphues and his England* seems to be a willingness on Lyly's part to exploit the humorous potential of his characters.

But while there are many differences between _Euphues: The Anatomy of Wit_ and _Euphues and his England_, one should recognize that the "sequel" is nevertheless a continuation of the same fictionalized problems: what is "wit"? what is wisdom? how does one justify one's behavior? These questions are asked repeatedly, in one or another form, throughout both works, and, as I will later argue, there seems to be some development in the way these questions are resolved in the later work. The emphasis of the narrative, of course, is on the ambiguities and problems encountered in human love and passion, but this is a convenient narrative framework through which more profound ambiguities and problems are examined.

Euphues and the Critics

As stated earlier, a considerable amount of critical commentary has begun with a distorted conception of Lyly's prose fiction, or, through a very restricted and narrow interest in explication, has contributed to a distorted view. This complaint is not new:

> Study of Elizabethan rhetoric often seems to balance upon two "indispensables": some sort of consideration of euphuism, based upon analysis of isolated passages in _Euphues_, and pejorative comment upon John Lyly. Lyly has in fact become a major whipping boy in English literature.5

> John Lyly's reputation, it seems, has suffered unduly for his having written Euphues: The Anatomy of Wit, a work which is often regarded as a kind of aberration, interesting in its manipulations of the English language and important on its influence on contemporary literature but unimportant in itself as a work of literature. Few critics actually deal with the contents of the book, except to trace sources, and those that do generally dismiss the work as being either monstrous or unworthy of real consideration. Even Lyly's admirers have accepted the centuries-old stereotype of him as a moralist writing a purely didactic work in the most peculiar style before Finnegan's Wake.6

The reputation both of Lyly's prose fiction and of "euphuism" has probably discouraged many students of literature from reading either work. It is equally unfortunate that many critics with a vested interest in Lyly or in prose fiction generally, have tended to obscure the intrinsic accomplishments of Lyly's fiction through highly selective, and sometimes obsessive, interest in matters that relate only to single aspects of the fiction, or to aspects that are extrinsic to the works themselves. Critical commentary on Lyly's prose fiction has been dominated largely by two interests: an examination of euphuism and the rhetorical components (i.e. stylistic) that make up Lyly's prose style; and, considerations of sources for Lyly's style and for his ideas and stories. This is necessary groundwork, to be sure, but it often involves an "analysis of isolated passages" that ignores the sense of unity that can be discovered in both works. Furthermore, studies of euphuism and

sources have been written often and most capably.[7]

What is not discussed so frequently is Lyly's use of "unnatural natural philosophy," or supposedly factual observations about natural phenomena. Although this is a major component of euphuism, it is not nearly so popular a subject as rhetorical figures. Of course, Lyly also makes use of historical and classical allusions, but what really distinguished Lyly among his contemporaries and made his euphuism so distinctive was his excessive use of similes and analogies derived from the Renaissance understanding of the natural world and its properties (and this "misinformation," according to S.L. Wolff,[8] was inherited from Aristotle, Aelian, Plutarch, Pliny, and the medieval bestiaries). Euphues, having returned to his chambers after his first visit at Lucilla's, considers that Lucilla may misconstrue his sudden passion for her and reject him:

> Will she not rather imagine me to be entangled with her beauty than with her virtue; that my fancy being so lewdly chained at the first will be as lightly changed at the last; that there is nothing permanent which is violent? Yes, yes, she must needs conjecture so -- although it be nothing so -- for by how much the more my affection cometh on the sudden, by so much the less will she think it certain. The rattling thunderbolt hath but his clap, the lightning but his flash; and as they both come in a moment, so do they both end in a minute.
>
> Aye but, Euphues, hath she not heard also that the dry touchwood is kindled with lime; that the greatest mushroom groweth in one night; that the fire quickly burneth the flax; that love easily entereth into the sharp wit without resistance and is harboured there without repentance? (45)

This kind of reference or appeal to natural "fact" is sure to appear on almost every page of Euphues, and it is very evident (although to a lesser degree) in Euphues and his England as well.

All the characters in both works, including the narrator, make insistent and repeated use of such analogies in order to justify their behavior. The natural world becomes a major repository of proof for the legitimacy of their arguments, their actions, their beliefs, and ultimately, it becomes a rhetorical and epistemological crutch used to impose "truth" and "meaning" on human experience and morality. This ability of the human "wit," reason, or intellect -- call it what we will -- to exploit the natural world for its potential as a meaningful explanation of the human situation and of some notion of "reality," has been commented on by several critics. Since my reading of both Euphues and Euphues and his England is in part a reply to these comments, they are worth recording now. S.L. Wolff and G. Wilson Knight are two of the earlier and more coherent voices on this subject:

> Lyly employed these supposed facts of natural history in a way that is humanistic in a very authentic sense, a way coincident with the Renaissance turn from litterae sacrae to litterae humaniores, from theology to "the humanities" . . . Lyly assumes a necessary parallelism between the nature of things and the nature of man; so that, with him, natural phenomena, supposed or invented, became arguments not of matters divine, but of matters human, of human nature.[9]

> Lyly continually refers human and psychological issues to the natural universe. True morality must be in some sense truth to nature . . . the explicit human-natural reference here is implicit throughout the multitudinous crazy similitudes of Euphues: a desire at once to read the human mind in terms of the living physical universe and see that universe and its properties . . . as a vital extension of the human mind.[10]

More recently, Jonas A. Barish and G.K. Hunter have made similar statements:

> It remains only to mention the thing to which Lyly's exempla always return, that for which they exist, their application to human conduct . . . Lyly peoples creation with bizarre phenomena in order to provide a system of analogies for human behavior.[11]

> Nature no less than man is susceptible of pattern and organization; and when we look through the list of Lyly's similes we find that natural history is most often being drawn on to provide analogues for human behaviour.[12]

What these critics argue, directly or indirectly, is that the persistent habit of thinking in analogical terms illustrates Lyly's belief in a Medieval world-view. G.K. Hunter admits as much in general terms: "It is a world-picture which is entirely Medieval, and the Humanists were, of course, still Medieval in their attitude to the subject-matter of science . . . Lyly [is] completely in the tradition of Medieval moral discourse. It may be that he draws on Humanist compilations rather than those of the Middle Ages, but the Humanists are only doing more efficiently what the Middle Ages had believed was worth doing."[13]

Certainly, Lyly's obvious obsession with natural analogy, parallelism and correspondence furnishes ample evidence for such an argument. And the fact that the narrator and characters in both works use a theory of sympathies[14] to explain man and the world in absolute or ultimate terms of "truth" and "meaning," is an additional indication of the plausibility of this view. But although one might agree with these critics that the constant use of natural parallels and comparisons exhibits an attempt to structure experience in an ultimate way, one must be cautious about propositions suggesting that this entails a whole-hearted acceptance of such a world-view by Lyly himself. My scepticism is generated by a consideration of point of view.

As soon as the reader makes considerations about point of view in a work of fiction, reading becomes immediately a more complex process. Any general commentary which ignores the probable differences among character points of view, narrative point of view and authorial viewpoint, also ignores the fact that there can be several levels of meaning in the work. And unless the reader is alert to the interplay among points of view, and can discover which level of meaning is the normative one, his chances of recognizing the author's fictional aim diminishes.

A rather cavalier attitude toward questions of point of view and its analysis seems, with few exceptions, to be the case in critical commentary about Lyly's prose fiction. What one finds, in fact, in even the most simple scrutiny of the actual deployment of natural analogies by characters and narrator alike, is not some happy combination of the human and natural worlds governed by synonymous and unalterable Order or Truth, but rather a dramatization of the rhetorical failure to make the correspondence epistemologically adequate. What is suggested by both works, in spite of the incessant use of the natural world to explain the human world, is that human interest may be imposed on nature and not received from it, that some absolute human interest (in whatever form) may have no correspondence in nature at all. To say this, of course, is to argue that _Euphues_ and _Euphues and his England_ are somehow ironic.

My argument is that in both works Lyly offers his reader a pervasive irony at the expense of his characters' rhetorical efforts. Euphues and his fellow-characters attempt to rationalize their experiences through an exclusive belief that analogy is a wholesale guide to truth. They are never quite convincing -- either

to the reader or themselves -- and their verbal inconsistencies and rhetorical contradictions form the irony of both works. Also, as I will later suggest, Lyly's mockery of his characters' confidence in the human mind's -- the wit's -- ability to reason, to perceive the inner structures of the psyche and the universe, is very likely a reaction against humanist enthusiasm about man and his reasoning abilities.

The Problem of Meaning

1. Analogy

The only problem in illustrating the use of natural order in Euphues as an argument for some parallel human order, is in selecting a few representative examples from the plethora of similes. It is a correspondence that is assumed by all characters and the narrator, and this assumption produces a horde of natural analogies that are used for a variety of purposes. In his rejection of Eubulus' advice and warning, Euphues illustrates the essential point:

> But why go I about to praise Nature, the which as yet was never any imp so wicked and barbarous, any Turk so vile and brutish, any beast so dull and senseless, that could, or would, or durst dispraise or contemn? Doth not Cicero conclude and allow that if we follow and obey Nature we shall never err? (20-21)

And so it goes: the "truth" of the natural world is necessarily applicable to the "truth" of the human world.

At the beginning of Euphues, the narrator relates Euphues' arrival in Naples, "a court more meet for an atheist than for one of Athens, for Ovid than for Aristotle" (12). To make his point perfectly clear, the narrator piles up comparisons of the natural and human worlds as illustration:

> Here my youth . . . determined to make his abode; whereby it is evidently seen that the fleetest fish swalloweth the delicatest bait, that the highest soaring hawk traineth to the lure, and that the wittiest sconce is inveigled with the sudden view of alluring vanities. (12)

But this is not mere illustration, it is also argument and proof: "whereby it is evidently seen."

The same habit of analogy is seen in Eubulus' counsel to Euphues, in which is argued the necessity of proper discipline and education in the upbringing of a child:

> Did they not remember that which no man ought to forget, that the tender youth of a child is like the tempering of new wax apt to receive any form? . . . The potter fashioneth his clay when it is soft, and the sparrow is taught to come when he is young. As therefore the iron being hot receiveth any form with the stroke of the hammer and keepeth it, being cold, for ever, so the tender wit of a child, if with diligence it be instructed in youth, will with industry use those qualities in his age. They might also have taken example of. . . . (14)

Likewise in other situations, the reader will discover the same appeal to the natural world in order to argue the "truth" and moral validity of a particular action or belief. Euphues replies to Eubulus:

> Put you no difference between the young flourishing bay-tree and the old withered beech? No kind of distinction between the waxing and the waning of the moon? And between the rising and the setting of the sun? Do you measure the hot assaults of youth by the cold skirmishes of age. . . . (21)

And later on, he contemplates his betrayal of Philautus, reasoning that "If Philautus had loved Lucilla he would never have suffered Euphues to have seen her. Is it not the prey that enticeth the thief to rifle? Is it not the pleasant bait that causeth the fleetest fish to bite?" (46). Lucilla's father, Don Ferardo, argues against his daughter's decision not to marry and produce a grand-child:

> Thou knowest that the tallest ash is cut down for fuel because it beareth no good fruit, that the cow that gives no milk is brought to the slaughter, that the drone that gathereth no honey is contemned, that the woman that maketh herself barren by not marrying is accounted among the Grecian ladies worse than a carrion. (71)

Lucilla justifies to Euphues her sudden decision to favor Curio: "The wolf chooseth him for her mate that hath or doth endure most travail for her sake. . . . If brute beasts give us ensamples . . . then am I rather to be excused than accused." (82). In my final example, one can hear the regenerate and reformed Euphues (in the 'Ephebus' section) complain about parents who, seeing that their child has "a sharp wit," force him to rigorous study in order that he may "outrun his fellows." The problem, comments Euphues, is that the child often collapses under such pressure. And, as in all the other examples, the natural world becomes illustration and proof: "Plants are nourished with little rain, yet drowned with much; even so the mind with indifferent labour waxeth more perfect, with much study it is made fruitless" (132).

What we have seen in these examples is an effort to impose "truth," meaning and moral justification on human experience by referring to some parallel "truth" and order in the natural world. Each character (and narrator) uses the human-natural analogy for his own purposes: selfish desire, narrative explanation and expansion, didactic argument, and even with self-deceptive motives. The point is that natural affairs are assumed to be absolutely parallel to human affairs, and absolutely necessary to a truthful and proper understanding of human morality,

knowledge and character.

But what happens when an apparent ambiguity in the sphere of human experience is clearly perceived? Is the human-natural analogy comprehensive and flexible enough to include such a thing? The answer is generally affirmative: "Danger and delight grow both upon one stalk, the rose and the canker in one bud, white and black are commonly in one border" (206). The ambiguity of appearances -- the meaning of words as different from the intent of the speaker -- is recognized and affirmed by Lucilla in reply to Euphues' promises of devotion:

> Aye, but in the coldest flint there is hot fire, the bee that hath honey in her mouth hath a sting in her tail, the tree that beareth the sweetest fruit hath a sour sap, yea the words of men though they seem smooth as oil yet their hearts are as crooked as the stalk of ivy. (65)

Similarly, Philautus relies on apparent contradiction in the workings of nature to explain and make meaningful Euphues' contradictory behavior as a friend:

> I perceive at the last (although, being deceived, it be too late) that musk, although it be sweet in the smell, is sour in the smack; that the leaf of the cedar tree, though it be fair to be seen, yet the syrup depriveth sight; that friendship, though it be plighted by shaking the hand, yet it is shaken off by fraud of the heart. (75)

In a letter to Livia, Euphues agrees that the loose morality of court life could foster a virtuous

individual, although the contradictions of such an idea cause him to hesitate:

> . . . if it be so I like it, and in that thou sayest it is so, I believe it. It may be, and no doubt it is, in the court as in all rivers some fish, some frogs, and as in all gardens some flowers, some weeds, and as in all trees some blossoms, some blasts. Nylus breedeth the precious stone and the poisoned serpent. The court may as well nourish virtuous matrons as the lewd minion. (182)

Even in the 'Cooling Card' Euphues views the inconsistency of his own role as preacher (having been a reprobate) with a confident assertion that points out a corresponding natural inconsistency as witness to his argument:

> The earth bringeth forth as well endive to delight the people as hemlock to endanger the patient, as well the rose to distil as the nettle to sting, as well the bee to give honey as the spider to yield poison. If my lewd life, gentlemen, have given you offence, let my good counsel make amends; if by my folly any be allured to lust, let them by my repentance be drawn to continency. (93)

The use of antithesis and paradox in Lyly's prose style has been demonstrated brilliantly by Jonas Barish:

> . . . things seem to engender their contraries rather than their likenesses. If they do not actually produce their own contraries, they co-exist with them, like the toad with his jewel. Nothing is uniformly of one property. Everything contains within it the seeds of self-contradiction . . . Lyly prefers the kind of natural curiosity that challenges common sense. The contradictions in human feeling must be illuminated by reference to a universe which displays its own kinds of contradictions.[15]

Although Lyly's use of natural paradox, antithesis and contraries may challenge the "common sense" of the modern reader, it would not have troubled an Elizabethan audience:

> The belief that every creature and condition had its antithesis did not unsettle but confirmed his sense of universal design . . . for if Elizabethans were particularly intent upon the antipathies which divided both man and his universal environment, they also recognised that this exactly balanced conflict of opposites was essential to the settled order of the world.[16]

It is this kind of belief that underlies the following qualifications by Euphues:

> The sour crab hath the show of an apple as well as the sweet pippin, the black raven the shape of a bird as well as the white swan. . . . There is a great difference between the standing puddle and the running stream, yet both water; great odds between the adamant and the pumice, yet both stones. . . . Seeing, therefore, one may love the clear conduit-water though he loathe the muddy ditch and wear the precious diamond though he despise the ragged brick, I think one may also with safe conscience reverence the modest sex of honest matrons though he forswear the lewd sort of unchaste minions. (108)

The same logic is evident in the narrator's imitation of the young "wit":

> . . . although iron the more it is used the brighter it is, yet silver with much wearing doth waste to nothing; though the cammock the more it is bowed the better it serveth, yet the bow the more it is bent and occupied the weaker it waxeth. . . . For neither is there anything but that hath his contraries. (26-27)

The point that I want to establish at this juncture is that the opinions and arguments of the characters and narrator are presented as truthful and absolute renderings of human reality, since they can find even their antithetical correspondence and parallel in the natural universe. And if one can find such a corresponding pattern, then one can be confident of sharing the ultimate theological truths of the collective world-view, since "by the equality of moving in the heaven, the course of the sun, the order of the stars, the beautifulness of the element, the sight whereof might sufficiently induce us to believe they proceed not by chance, by nature, or destiny, but by the eternal and divine purpose of some omnipotent Deity" ('Euphues And Atheos,' 150). The logic here is simple: if a character thinks he perceives divine order and meaning in the natural world, then he has a share in the absolute and some understanding of an ultimate reality. This reasoning, as we will see, is often abused, but it is nevertheless the epistemological index to the fictional world-view of the characters in both works.

2. Inconsistency

What I have argued so far is not often mentioned by readers of either Euphues or Euphues and his England. And if we look more closely at the text we find that this

one-to-one correspondence between natural and human worlds is only a partial explanation of Lyly's use of natural analogies. On further inspection, the reader finds irregularities and inconsistencies in the use of the human-natural simile that pose some interesting questions about Lyly's artistic and philosophic intentions.

It is frequently the case that a particular human-natural combination is used to argue inconsistent or even contradictory beliefs. On his second visit to Lucilla Euphues comments on woman's "fervency" in love: "For as they be hard to be won without trial of great faith, so are they hard to be lost without great cause of fickleness. It is long before the cold water seethe, yet being once hot it is long before it be cooled" (55). A little later we hear "that hot love is soon cold . . . that scalding water if it stand a while turneth almost to ice" (57). Likewise, we find that contrary attitudes are supported by similar comparisons elsewhere in the text: "Hast thou not read. . . . That he that casteth water on the fire in the smith's forge maketh it to flame fiercer? Even so he that seeketh by counsel to moderate his overlashing affections increaseth his own misfortune" (44-45). This is Euphues' rationale for accelerating his suit with Lucilla. Lucilla later justifies her betrayal of Euphues with a different view: "As for fervent love you know that there is no

fire so hot but it is quenched with water, neither affection so strong but is weakened with reason" (81). And much later in Euphues and his England, Philautus tells Euphues that "All fire is not quenched by water, thou hast not love in a string, affection is not thy slave, thou canst not leave when thou listest" (301). The real demands of a particular character in a particular situation now appear to cause the characters to use certain particulars of the natural metaphor inconsistently, and while this is not an outright denial of a general parallel order, it raises the question of its usefulness.

Moreover, there are many examples in which the characters will use natural comparison in order to argue something which they later deny. A good case in point is Euphues' speech to Lucilla and Livia on the relationship of beauty and virtue:

> The foul toad hath a fair stone in his head, the fine gold is found in the filthy earth, the sweet kernel lieth in the hard shell. Virtue is harboured in the heart of him that most men esteem misshapen. Contrariwise if we respect more the outward shape than the inward habit -- good God, into how many mischiefs do we fall! Into what blindness are we led! Do we not commonly see that in painted pots is hidden the deadliest poison, that in the greenest grass is the greatest serpent, in the clearest water the ugliest toad? (35)

(Certainly this becomes ironic when Euphues later denounces Lucilla's choice of the physically deformed Curio.) But shortly after, the promise of reciprocal love from Lucilla

causes Euphues to reverse this opinion (and this, too, is ironic in view of Lucilla's subsequent betrayal of Euphues):

> Neither can there be under so delicate a hue lodged deceit, neither in so beautiful a mould a malicious mind. True it is that the disposition of the mind followeth the composition of the body; how then can she be in mind any way imperfect who in body is perfect every way? (50)

> I find it now for a settled truth, which erst I accounted for a vain talk, that the purple dye will never stain, that the pure civet will never lose his savour, that the green laurel will never change his colour, that beauty can never be blotted with discourtesy. (67)

The first set of examples showed the contradictory application of a single natural phenomenon (fire, water) to opposite arguments; here, we find the natural world used to argue first one thesis and then its antithesis.

This kind of ambiguity is a regular, not an uncommon, occurrence in both works. There is a situational irony in such inconsistency, but what does this inconsistency say about some necessary parallelism between man and the natural universe? Or more precisely, what is Lyly saying about his characters? There is an obvious and unquestioned belief by the characters in the natural world as a source of meaning and justification, but there are irregularities, inconsistencies and outright contradictions in the method of application. This does not suggest a writer whose material

is out of control, for the logical confusion is pointed at all times. But it does suggest a writer whose intention is ironic, a writer who wishes simultaneouly to illustrate and question his characters' beliefs and convictions. Euphues and his coterie use their analogies as "instant" truth -- analogical rhetoric is precedent, oratorical display, illustration, proof and justification rolled into one. The natural-human equation is used indiscriminately, it is bandied about inconsistently and carelessly, but it remains a major source of insight for the characters in both works. There is only one way to resolve this apparent confusion: the characters may believe in analogy as a reliable form of argument, but Lyly does not. And it is left to the reader to perceive in _Euphues_ and _Euphues and his England_ this succession of confidently -- even pompously -- expressed arguments that are wrong in method. The rhetorical self-confidence of the characters and their inconsistencies are intended, as it seems to me, to be humorous.

3. Analogy versus Enigma

As much as the characters think they are presenting some essential human reality in their use of analogies drawn from nature, there are many passages in which serious doubts about the epistemological adequacy of the analogical

rhetoric are advanced. These statements are put into the mouths of the characters, of course, but there is a noticeable lack of analogies from nature, and the tone of the character's voice is almost one of depression -- as though the character had accidentally stumbled onto an unpleasant solution to a riddle about his own identity. After Lucilla's rejection of him, Euphues begins to realize that the natural abilities and talents which his name suggest -- his "wit" -- have been improperly groomed:

> If wit be employed in the honest study of learning what thing so precious as wit? If in the idle trade of love, what thing more pestilent than wit? . . . there is nothing but through the malice of man may be abused. . . . Doth not law accuse if it be not rightly interpreted? Doth not divinity condemn if it be not faithfully construed? (85)

What is recognized momentarily by Euphues, is that man is prone to irrational behavior, that man may know what is good for him but choose to ignore his knowledge, that man is often guilty of wilful blindness.

In 'A Cooling Card' Euphues emphasizes the uncertainty of "true" love to Philautus:

> If my lady yield to be my lover is it not likely she will be another's leman? And if she be a modest matron my labour is lost. This therefore remaineth, that either I must pine in cares or perish with curses. . . . If I love one that is fair it will kindle jealousy, if one that is foul it will convert me into a frenzy; if fertile to bear children my care is increased, if barren my curse is augmented. (95)

What ought to be a simple and straightforward matter of resolving one's passion in the object of affection, is fraught with meaningless contradiction and ambiguity.

And human desire or aspiration, likewise, is shown to be somehow absurd. In the 'Ephebus' section, Euphues notes that

> Glory is a thing worthy to be followed, but as it is gotten with great travail, so is it lost in a small time. Beauty is such a thing as we commonly prefer before all things, yet it fadeth before we perceive it to flourish. Health is that which all men desire, yet ever subject to any disease. Strength is to be wished for, yet is it either abated with an ague or taken away with age. (123)

Again, we find a problem of meaning that is opaque to human understanding: such-and-such ought to be desired, but somehow it can never be attained.

Old Fidus demonstrates to Philautus and Euphues that the facts of human emotion are not easily subject to human comprehension:

> You see what Love is -- begun with grief, continued with sorrow, ended with death; a pain full of pleasure, a joy replenished with misery, a Heaven, a Hell, a God, a Devil, and what not, that either hath in it solace or sorrow; where the days are spent in thoughts, the nights in dreams, both in danger; either beguiling us of that we had, or promising us that we had not. (285)

The human world, the passage argues, is imperfect, it is filled with paradox ("joy replenished with misery"), and the "either . . . or" quality of experience is never resolved. As a matter of fact, the "either . . . or"

construction is one of Lyly's favorite syntactic devices, and as such it reinforces the uncertainty of the characters' decisions and the ambiguity of their experience.

Although the irrational and the enigmatic are evident in the characters' attempts to comprehend the human psyche and human experience in these examples, yet the reader remembers that elsewhere in the text the irrational and the enigmatic have no place in the natural world: God ordered and patterned the natural universe; everything has its properly defined place; there is no chaos in nature. But there is something meaningless and chaotic in human suffering. On the eve of his first attraction to Lucilla, Euphues seems sensitive to the fact that there are things in human nature and human experience which are unique to man and contrary to nature:

> O ye gods, have ye ordained for every malady a medicine, for every sore a salve, for every pain a plaster, leaving only love remediless? Did ye deem no man so mad to be entangled with desire? Or thought ye them worthy to be tormented that were so misled? Have ye dealt more favourably with brute beasts than with reasonable creatures? The filthy sow, when she is sick eateth the sea-crab and is immediately recured; the tortoise having tasted the viper sucketh _Origanum_ and is quickly revived; the bear ready to pine licketh up the ants and is recovered. . . . And can men by no herb, by no art, by no way procure a remedy for the impatient disease of love? (43-44)

Euphues concludes his complaint with a feeble attempt to find a similar predicament in the natural universe: "Ah well I perceive that love is not unlike the fig-tree, whose fruit is sweet, whose root is more bitter than the claw of a bitter" (44). But the adequacy of the analogy to make sense of the human condition has been challenged; the fig-tree does not suffer because of some contradictory qualities, but Euphues does.

We might look at two other instances in which a character issues the same pained expression about the enigmatic quality of human experience, and more importantly, makes the same futile search for reassuring correspondence in the natural world. The regenerate Euphues comments on the proverb, "Youth will have his course," and the comment becomes a digression on the human paradox:

> We are no sooner out of the shell but we resemble the cocyx which destroyeth itself through self-will, or the pelican which pierceth a wound in her own breast; we are either led with a vain glory of our proper personage or with self-love of our sharp capacity. (113)

But "self-will" is an inappropriate and unintentionally ironic description for natural phenomena that are divinely appointed.

Philautus can imagine what the absent Euphues would say concerning Philautus' unrewarded passion for Camilla, and the imagined response shows the same type of irony:

> But thou art more likely to correct my follies with counsel, than to comfort me with any pretty conceit. Thou wilt say that she is a lady of great credit and, I hear, of no countenance. Aye but, Euphues, low trees have their tops, small sparks their heat, the fly his spleen, the ant her gall, Philautus his affection; which is neither ruled by reason, nor led by appointment. (298)

With a decided lack of conviction, Philautus argues the paradoxical and inexplicable aspects of his emotion by the customary referral to a natural parallel. But the parallel is a false one: unlike the human world, the natural world _is_ ruled by divine reason, and it _is_ led by appointment. The implied natural paradox is also false; there is nothing contradictory about any of the qualities Philautus assigns to his natural exempla.

One can see that the epistemological adequacy of the human-natural reference is being undermined by this type of irony. The characters use their belief in parallel order and truth to good advantage when they are trying to persuade themselves or others of the legitimacy of their actions and desires, but the analogical rhetoric breaks down when confronted with the enigmatic nature of man. Viewed in this manner, the use of the natural world is an enterprise that inclues rhetorical self-deception and manipulation: they attempt to make their emotional decisions and their passions appear rational by depending on analogy. A Renaissance reader would surely be struck by

the classically bad mode of argument which is entailed in their obsession for similitudes as proof.

4. Wit: Analogy and Distortion

After Philautus has been threatened with public exposure by Camilla, he retires his suit in anger and attempts by letters to win back the goodwill of Euphues. He uses the natural world as precedent and argument in order to argue for a renewed friendship, and Euphues replies. The correspondence is interesting:

> Philautus --
>
> Necessary it is that among friends there should be some overthwarting, but to continue in anger not convenient. The camel first troubleth the water before he drink . . . friends are tried before they are to be trusted. (363)

> Euphues --
>
> Thou beginnest to infer a necessity that friends should fall out, whenas I cannot allow a convenience. . . . The camel, sayest thou, loveth water when it is troubled; and I say the hart thirsteth for the clear stream. And fitly didst thou bring it in against thyself (though applied it, I know not how aptly, for thyself), for such friendship dost thou like where brawls may be stirred not quietness sought. (366)

> Philautus --
>
> Friendship should be like the wine which Homer much commending calleth Maroneum, whereof one pint being mingled with five quarts of water yet it keepeth his old strength and virtue, not to be qualified by any discourtesy. Where salt doth grow nothing else can breed, where friendship is built no offence can harbour. (364)

Euphues --

> The wine Maroneum which thou commendest and the salt ground which thou inferrest, the one is neither fit for thy drinking nor the other for thy taste; for such strong wines will overcome such light wits, and so good salt cannot relish in so unsavoury a mouth, neither as thou desirest to apply them can they stand thee in stead. For oftentimes have I found much water in thy deeds but not one drop of such wine, and the ground where salt should grow but never one corn that had savour. (366)

This point-by-point reply is common in both works, but especially evident in Euphues and his England. One can see from this, and from countless other examples, that time and again the natural world and analogies from nature are merely a vehicle for human intention, dependent on the purposes of the point of view and on the rhetorical manipulation of context. Euphues here responds to each of Philautus' analogies and similitudes and turns them inside out, showing that point of view is all. The characters at times recognize, though usually only in others, that some analogous order and meaning is not necessarily inherent, but only perceived: "But so many men so many minds; that may seem in your eye odious which in another's eye may be gracious" (18); "Though all men be made of one metal yet they be not cast all in one mould" (18); "it is the disposition of the thought that altereth the nature of the thing" (22). It is, no matter how one views it, a rhetorical distortion of reality.

The casual assumption by the characters in Euphues that there is, in Wolff's words, "a necessary parallelism between the nature of things and the nature of man," gives way in Euphues and his England to the notion that the verbal and contextual manipulations of the characters are unable to change reality. When Philautus accuses Euphues of hypocrisy and lip-service to an ideal, in order to cover his own erotic penchant, Euphues is quick to point out that "as there is no wool so white but the dyer can make black, no apple so sweet but a cunning grafter can change into a crab, so is there no man so void of crime that a spiteful tongue cannot make him to be thought a caitiff" (314). What Philautus tries to pass off as "fact" is merely the rhetorical manipulation of a certain point of view. Euphues uses an historical example to drive home the argument:

> A stranger coming into the Capitol of Rome, seeing all the gods to be engraven, some in one stone, some in another, at the last he perceived Vulcan to be wrought in ivory, Venus to be carved in jet; which long time beholding with great delight, at the last he burst out in these words: "Neither can this white ivory, Vulcan, make thee a white smith, neither this fair woman, Jet, make thee a fair stone." Whereby he noted that no cunning could alter the nature of the one, nor no nature transform the colour of the other. (314)

Euphues is finally to the point: rhetorical manipulation and distortion do not ultimately change the fact that a spade is a spade. Philautus later uses a similar argument

in reply to one of Camilla's letters: "Many similitudes thou bringest in to excuse youth, thy twig, thy corn, thy fruit, thy grape, and I know not what; which are as easily to be refelled as they are to be repeated" (352). Philautus, too, begins to realize that an apparent flexibility in meaning depends on a certain amount of distortion. Even the devil, like Euphues, Philautus and the other characters, distorts meaning by a selective and manipulated presentation of context:

> The devil, that roaring lion, seeing his prey to be taken out of his jaws, allegeth all Scripture that may condemn the sinner, leaving all out that should comfort the sorrowful; much like unto the deceitful physician, which recounteth all things that may endanger his patient, never telling anything that may recure him. (159)

This problem of meaning becomes so evident that even the characters begin to understand that meaning, "truth" and "reality" can be imposed and forced by the individual through a highly selective argument that manipulates the context for a certain purpose.

And this is, after all, what the subtitle in _Euphues_ is all about: the anatomy of "wit." Wit is illustrated, dramatized, and allowed to expose its characteristics and its limitations. Wit, as Theodore Steinberg observes, is the broad range of possibilities in the human intellect's pursuit of meaning and justification:

> At last we are beginning to get a definition for Euphues' wit, a definition which perhaps explains the previous ambiguities: wit is itself of an ambiguous character. It is, in fact, nothing more than that faculty which is capable of acting on, organizing, and reacting to any field of human endeavor. Since it changes according to the field to which it is applied and the person who is using it, any definition of it must be necessarily ambiguous, as must its uses . . . it is neither good nor evil in itself; its moral worth is dependent on how it manifests itself, or, in this case, how it is applied. . . . In this aspect, Euphues is reminiscent of Machiavelli's Prince. Lyly is not, like the writers of the courtesy books, describing what should be, but is rather, like Machiavelli, describing what is.17

Wit is synonymous with sheer intellectual ability, the human attempt to understand and comprehend its experience of self and the world. Like rhetoric, the nature of wit depends on the user.

So why the irony of inconsistency, manipulation and distortion of the characters' use of human-natural analogy? Because Lyly is suggesting that human intellectuality or wit is not capable of comprehending the ambiguities and irrationality of human experience and human passions in meaningful terms. The wit can merely disguise its epistemological inadequacy by inventing "truth," by using analogy and a belief in parallel order to create rhetorically the illusion of meaning. But this is also to suggest that the rhetorical and intellectual invention of truth and meaning is a necessary illusion -- that man is, in

Nietzsche's terms,

> . . . fundamentally inclined to maintain that the falsest judgements (to which belong the synthetic *a priori* judgements) are the most indispensable to us, that man cannot live without accepting the logical fictions as valid, without measuring reality against the purely invented world of the absolute, the immutable, without constantly falsifying the world by means of numeration. (*Beyond Good and Evil*)

No matter what the demands of the situation, Lyly's characters are only too eager to engage in wilful illusion in order to make life both meaningful and manageable. Euphues tries desperately to convince himself that he is no longer a slave to passion, and in 'A Cooling Card' tells Philautus that the secret to victory over erotic passion lies in an intellectual transformation of reality:

> Be she never so comely, call her counterfeit; be she never so straight, think her crooked; and wrest all parts of her body to the worst, be she never so worthy. If she be well set then call her a boss, if slender a hazel twig. (103)

This does not deny Euphues' irrational human passion (as we will later see), it merely provides a rhetorical method of avoiding it: wit will "wrest all parts" of the world to hide its own imperfections. Lyly, in his own voice, suggests that the rhetorical manipulation of reality to create illusory order is necessary to cover the limitations of human endeavor and human intellectuality:

> Then, Ladies, I commit myself to your courtesies. . . . If you be wrung (which cannot be done without wrong), it were better to cut the shoe than burn the last. If a tailor make your gown too little, you cover his fault with a broad stomacher, if too great, with a number of plights, if too short, with a fair guard, if too long, with a false gathering. My trust is that you will deal in like manner with Euphues: that if he have not fed your honour yet you will excuse him more than the tailor; for could Euphues take the measure of a woman's mind as the tailor doth of her body, he would go as near to fit them for a fancy as the other doth for a fashion. (Lyly's preface 'To The Ladies And Gentlewomen Of England,' 201-202)

The problems -- of meaning, of appearance, of fashion, of human conduct -- are never resolved; they are disguised.

The use of natural "fact" is a smaller aspect of this general tendency of the characters to impose meaning and justification as best they can. The implications of the ironies and inconsistencies suggest that there is a difference between the human situation and the external environment, that there are qualities and characteristics in the human lot which can find no analogous situation or parallel within the natural scheme. The characters seem only sporadically aware of this, and so they force the analogies and parallels past the breaking point. But Lyly leaves the ironies and the loose-ends open to public inspection, because he is dramatizing his characters' deluded rhetorical attempts to make an epistemological theory conform to human requirements. And here lies the

irony in <u>Euphues</u> and <u>Euphues and his England</u>: all the human effort that is expended to make the business of living intellectually intelligible and morally absolute -- and this effort includes the use of the natural world as well as historical and literary allusion, traditional and proverbial codes of right behavior -- is human fiction. "It is the disposition of the thought that altereth the nature of the thing": "thought" and "thing," man and the world, are separate, and only through rhetoric can human "wit" conjure up a bridge.

We may think that Euphues attains to some ultimate human wisdom in his life devoted to study, rational contemplation, and his brief bout with the Scriptures. But Lyly offers the reader a final ironic comment on the prodigal-son tradition: the regenerate Euphues, ostensibly experienced, educated, wise, and the very epitome of reason and right-conduct, has left England for his retreat at Silexsedra not to pursue his self-proclaimed vocation as a philosopher-monk, but to pine over some mysterious love:

> Euphues gave himself to solitariness, determining to sojourn in some uncouth place until time might turn white salt into fine sugar; for surely he was both tormented in body and grieved in mind . . . how Euphues liveth they may guess who are cruelly martyred . . . I, gentlewomen, am indifferent, for it may be that Philautus would not have his life known which he leadeth in marriage, nor Euphues his love descried which he beginneth in solitariness; lest either the one being too kind might be thought to dote, or the other too constant might be judged to be mad. (462)

It is the final irony, and only proves what the narrator knew all along: "This I note, that they that are most wise, most virtuous, most beautiful, are not free from the impressions of fancy" (409). Like the use of analogies, other "human fictions" of truth and meaning (rational, religious, egocentric) are shown to be ultimately meaningless when confronted by the enigmatic qualities of experience.

5. Wisdom

If what I have suggested is palatable as a Lylean vision of "wit," then what is "wisdom"? If, in Merritt Lawlis' estimation, "*Euphues* is a truly intellectual work in that it considers also the limitations of intellectuality,"[18] then what can be said about human judgement that allows man to cope with his imperfections and allows him to survive happily in a world that is often unresponsive or opaque to his imagination's need for meaning? *Euphues* and *Euphues and his England* are not, in the final analysis, pessimistic works.

At the beginning of *Euphues*, the narrator formulates the vision of wisdom which is central to both works: "But it hath been an old said saw and not of less truth than antiquity that wit is the better if it be the dearer bought; as in the sequel of this history shall most manifestly

appear" (11). It is the wisdom of common-sense, experience, and much learning through suffering, that comes to occupy the vital didactic strain of Lyly's prose fiction: "It is commonly said, yet do I think it a common lie, that experience is the mistress of fools; for in my opinion they be most fools that want it" (111).

This type of pragmatic morality and intellectuality becomes more predominant in Euphues and his England, and becomes the usual response to the diverse rhetorical fictions of order and meaning. When Callimachus discovers his inheritance to be a moralizing letter about human conduct rather than his father's vast wealth, he responds:

> Didst thou learn by experience that an edge can be any thing worth if it have nothing to cut, or that miners could work without metals, or wisdom thrive without wherewith. What availeth it to be a cunning lapidary and have no stones? Or a skilful pilot and have no ship? Or a thrifty man and have no money? Wisdom hath no mint; counsel is no coiner. (211)

It is also suggested that perhaps Euphues' rhetorical transformation of reality -- of wresting "all parts of her body to the worst" -- does not indicate wisdom: "They invented as many enchantments for love as they did for the toothache; but he that hath tried both will say that the best charm for a tooth is to pull it out, and the best remedy for love to wear it out" (333). This advice Philautus receives of Psellus, a magician from whom Philautus seeks

help in bringing Camilla to a proper appreciation of his worth. It is yet another "human fiction," in this case, magic. But Philautus soon learns that the only wisdom, the only guide to right conduct, human morality, and meaning, is to be gleaned from one's experience. Grown tired of Euphues' rational, theological, intellectual preaching about the meaning of life and human morality, Philautus finally replies that

> Hungry stomachs are not to be fed with sayings against surfeitings, nor thirst to be quenched with sentences against drunkenness. To love women and never enjoy them is as much as to love wine and never taste it, or to be delighted with fair apparel and never wear it. (380)

The rhetorical transformations of Euphues are no longer valid, and Philautus does not even bother to refer to some parallel exemplum in nature. Significantly enough, his argument, his proof and his examples are now derived only from the _human_ world of experience. And the point is further established by the narrator:

> I must needs conclude with Philautus, though I should cavil with Euphues, that the end of love is the full fruition of the party beloved, at all times and in all places. . . . For they that live by the view of beauty still look very lean, and they that feed only upon virtue at board will go with an hungry belly to bed. (382-383)

But there is an ironic aspect to this vision of human wisdom as well, an irony that the reader comes to expect of Lyly. When Callimachus returns to his uncle's

cave, his ideals demolished by his experience, he puts into crystallized form the essential paradox about human wisdom: "I find too late, yet at length, that in age there is a certain foresight which youth cannot search, and a kind of experience unto which unripened years cannot come" (224). It is, even for Lyly and his characters in the sixteenth century, a problem of "catch-22." The resolution of human wisdom and understanding comes not in "wit," or the dogmatism of a hermit, or even in the use of natural parallel, but in common-sense, suffering and trial-by-error.

6. Conclusion

I have proposed an argument for irony in Lyly's prose fiction by examining a specific rhetorical facet of a larger epistemological concern. The natural world does not provide analogues of absolute meaning or interpretation of the human world; it merely provides vehicles for metaphor and patterns of expression. The rhetorical use of analogies from the natural world, as I have mentioned, is part of a larger tendency to impose "truth" and "meaning" on human experience. The ironies that attend these problems of meaning in _Euphues_ and _Euphues and his England_, should cause us to reconsider Wolff's claim that "Lyly assumes a necessary parallelism between the nature of things and the

nature of *man*." Given the irony, it is more accurate to say that Lyly's characters assume this much. My argument also opens up the potentials of Knight's statement that in *Euphues* we see "a desire at once to read the human mind in terms of the living physical universe and see that universe and its properties . . . as a vital extension of the human mind." This is undoubtedly true, but perhaps now we are in a better position to understand why the characters feel compelled to do so, and to understand the nature of the epistemological paranoia that motivates them. Man's attempt to make his experience of the world objective, comprehensible, and therefore subject to his control, depends largely on his ability to believe (however mistakenly) that his language is also capable of objective description, of structuring experience in ultimate terms. *Euphues* and *Euphues and his England* dramatize such rhetorical attempts, and Lyly asks his reader to discover the doubt and uncertainty that is hidden by the rhetoric.

Lyly and the "Counter-Renaissance"

If we now return to the critical notion that Lyly's two works exemplify "a world-picture which is entirely Medieval," an argument for irony must certainly qualify this statement considerably. The characters of both works, for the most part, do illustrate a belief in a world-view

that was inherited by the Renaissance from the Middle Ages; and, more specifically, they perhaps represent the optimistic strain in Renaissance humanism, particularly in their emphasis on nature, reason and human capacity. Euphues, in particular, dramatizes

> that effort to reconcile philosophy with theology, nature with grace, reason with faith, which had characterized the synthesis of the Scholastic philosophers -- to them [Christian Humanists], Reason most frequently was either equivalent or supplementary to Nature. The two terms were used either interchangeably or in mutual support, to designate divine guidance manifested in the created universe; the norm of the virtuous life; the regulative and purposeful concept of law, divinely and wisely originated, in all departments of life . . . [these humanists were] Primarily optimistic and confident both of the existence of ultimate purpose in the world and of man's capacity to understand much of that purpose and to fulfill his share.19

But with the existence of an insistent irony, we would do better, perhaps, to suggest some relationship between Lyly and what Hiram Haydn calls "the Counter-Renaissance."

The men of the Counter-Renaissance, according to Haydn, were all, in one way or another, reacting against the metaphysical foundations that informed the medieval world-view and its continuation into the Renaissance:

> What unites these otherwise dissimilar thinkers of the sixteenth century is that they share completely an anti-intellectualistic, anti-moralistic, anti-synthetic, anti-authoritarian bias. The central premise of the great synthesis which Thomas Aquinas bequeathed to the later Christian humanists is summarized in Cicero's statement that "True law is right reason in agreement with nature; it is of universal application, unchanging and eternal." This was the cement which had held together a comprehensive and interlocking world order; and it is

> only when we understand that Luther and Calvin . . . Machiavelli . . . Montaigne . . . the new empirical scientists . . . were all attacking this one central principle -- it is only then that we can see clearly that what I have called the Counter-Renaissance is one great ideological revolution, and not the arbitrary uniting of isolated figures.20

Certainly John Lyly never uttered a personal manifesto of this kind, but there are many aspects to his prose fiction that suggest an affinity in thought. Can we not see some similarity between Lyly's vision of a pragmatic wisdom and morality, and Hadyn's description of the Counter-Renaissance notion of "truth"?

> The truths, not the Truth -- for these men were as profoundly relativistic and pragmatic in their way as many of the leaders in intellectual movements of the last century. Machiavelli's "ritorno al segno" might well have been a motto for all of them, in their insistence upon the importance of first-hand experience. . . . They are utterly alike in their rejection of a middleman of received authoritarian truth -- whether a scientific pundit of long standing, the Roman Catholic Church, or a traditionally accepted authority on the nature of the state and the nature of man.21

Is there not also a marked similarity between Lyly's ironic scepticism concerning his characters' traditional beliefs about nature, and the Counter-Renaissance rejection of those same beliefs? Lyly's characters, as well as "The humanist, the classicist, the traditionalist -- saw law and reason operative everywhere in the universe, and particularly in the individual and collective life of man on earth."[22] And like Counter-Renaissance figures, Lyly's

irony seems to suggest "a disbelief in the identity of, or complementary cooperation between, Nature and Reason."[23] We have seen the characters attempt to use a belief in a parallel natural order to explain and justify their beliefs and actions. But we have also seen that this presumed "cooperation" between the natural and human worlds tends to break down when confronted with the ineffable aspects of human experience and human passion.

And as to the limitations of human "wit" and intellectuality in the two works, there is a similar doubt about man's intellectual capacities in Haydn's formulation of the Counter-Renaissance:

> The world-pictures of the various schools contained in the Counter-Renaissance sharply dissent from this optimistic and comprehensibly purposive view. Their protagonists are either skeptical of the existence of any such beneficent and purposeful universal order, or convinced of man's incapability to fathom it.24

This intellectual "incapability" is very similar to the confusion of the characters in passages in which they bemoan their own inner contradictions.

There are indeed many similarities between the implications of Lyly's irony and the philosophic outlook of the Counter-Renaissance. One might agree with Tillyard that "though the general medieval picture of the world survived in outline into the Elizabethan age, its existence was by then precarious."[25] One might agree with Haydn

that the "schizophrenic tendency" that produces so much contradictory thought in many Elizabethan writers may be due to the fact that they "were born and lived in an age when the old universal faiths were no longer tenable in their traditional forms, and yet before new ones had been fully formulated and established to take their place -- before there were adequate symbols to express and compass the new horizons that men were beginning to perceive."[26] But one can only suggest that the irony in Euphues and Euphues and his England is an indication of this general uncertainty. And one can only suggest that the co-existence of a traditional world-view with an ironic attitude toward it, is an indication of a "schizophrenic tendency" in Lyly. This comprehension of Lyly's two fictional works suggests that the philosophic attitudes which the works argue can be related to a larger and more collective impulse to be discovered in the England of Lyly's time. I am not proposing a radically new theory about the English Renaissance in the late sixteenth century; I am only suggesting that Lyly's two works in many respects offer a reflection on the passing of a world-view.

To argue this kind of complexity is not to suggest that John Lyly is a powerful or even profound writer of prose fiction, for the simple truth is that Lyly was not a great storyteller. This may account for his lack of

popularity with today's reader of fiction. But why was *Euphues* so popular when it first appeared (even though its appeal did not last as long as that of other Elizabethan fiction)? This may be the most interesting puzzle of all. My guess is that it was comical to Lyly's educated, courtly reader. His contemporary audience would perhaps see more readily than we do that what the misguided people in *Euphues* pursue is an extreme and perverted form of the humanists' enthusiasm about man and the human mind's ability to reason; the heavy-handed morality of the courtesy books and the Renaissance glorification of man are at once parodied and discarded. The educated reader would have perhaps relished the clever mockery of tradition. He would have undoubtedly appreciated the humor inherent in the characters' foolish belief that analogy is the only form of argument. And finally, "euphuism" was something new, and novelty is sometimes the greatest part of popularity.

NOTES TO CHAPTER II

[1]John Lyly, Euphues: The Anatomy of Wit. Euphues and his England, ed. M.W. Croll and H. Clemens (New York, 1964). All parenthetical page references are to this edition.

[2]See George K. Hunter, John Lyly: The Humanist as Courtier (London, 1962), p. 72.

[3]Ibid., pp. 66-67.

[4]Ibid., p. 51.

[5]Walter N. King, "John Lyly and Elizabethan Rhetoric," SP, 52 (1955), 149.

[6]Theodore L. Steinberg, "The Anatomy of Euphues," SEL, 17 (1977), 27.

[7]For source studies see Ludwig Borinski, "The Origin of the Euphuistic Novel and its Significance for Shakespeare," in Studies in Honor of T.W. Baldwin, ed. D.C. Allen (Urbana, 1958), pp. 38-52; Hunter, pp. 48-50; Violet Jeffery, John Lyly and the Italian Renaissance (Paris, 1928); George B. Parks, "Before Euphues," in Joseph Quincy Adams Memorial Studies, ed. James G. McManaway, Giles E. Dawson, Edwin E. Willoughby (Washington, D.C., 1948), pp. 475-493; William Ringler, "The Immediate Source of Euphuism," PMLA, 53 (1938), 678-686; David S. Toor, "Euphuism in England before John Lyly," DA, 26 (1966), 4642 (Oregon); John Dover Wilson, John Lyly (Cambridge, 1905); S.L. Wolff, "A Source of Euphues," MP, 7 (1910), 577-585. For analyses of "euphuism" and Lyly's prose style see Jonas A. Barish, "The Prose Style of John Lyly," ELH, 23 (1956), 14-35; R. Warwick Bond, "Essay on Euphues and Euphuism," in The Complete Works of John Lyly, ed. R. Warwick Bond, 3 volumes (Oxford, 1902), I, 119-175; C.G. Child, John Lyly and Euphuism (Erlangen and Leipzig, 1894); M.W. Croll and H. Clemens, "The Sources of the Euphuistic Rhetoric," in Euphues: The Anatomy of Wit. Euphues and his England, pp. xv-lxiv; Robert O. Evans,

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[8] S.L. Wolff, "The Humanist as Man of Letters: John Lyly," Sewanee Review, 21 (1923), 24.

[9] Ibid., 25.

[10] G. Wilson Knight, "Lyly," RES, 15 (1939), 147.

[11] Jonas A. Barish, 23.

[12] Hunter, p. 277.

[13] Ibid., pp. 278, 279.

[14] See James Winny, ed., The Frame of Order: An Outline of Elizabethan Belief Taken from Treatises of the Late Sixteenth Century (London, 1957), Introduction, pp. 9-26.

[15] Barish, 21, 23.

[16] Winny, pp. 18, 19.

[17] Steinberg, 33.

[18] Merritt Lawlis, ed., Elizabethan Prose Fiction (New York, 1967), p. 118.

[19] Hiram Haydn, The Counter-Renaissance (New York, 1950), p. 462.

[20] Ibid., pp. xiii-xiv.

[21] Ibid., p. xv.

[22] Ibid., p. 468.

[23] *Ibid.*, p. 468.

[24] *Ibid.*, p. 463.

[25] E.M.W. Tillyard, *The Elizabethan World Picture* (1943; rpt. London, 1966), p. 16.

[26] Haydn, p. 14.

CHAPTER III

THOMAS NASHE AND JACK WILTON

Introduction to "The Unfortunate Traveller"

Thomas Nashe's The Unfortunate Traveller[1] is the most enigmatic work of Elizabethan fiction. One reads it with fascination and delight, yet in many ways it defies literary analysis. In Euphues and The Adventures of Master F.J. we examined the disparity between human language and an implied physical reality or ethical norm which that language attempted and failed to describe. With The Unfortunate Traveller, however, we are on different ground and the rules of Nashe's game are not nearly so simple. Nashe's pen is quick, violent and dazzling, and as soon as we think we have isolated the quintessential Nashe we realize that the material has become something else, that Nashe's prose has shifted gears. A paraphrase of the narrative line will perhaps demonstrate part of this critical dilemma; another problem -- Nashe's prose style -- will be discussed later.

Jack Wilton is the unfortunate traveller, and he begins his autobiography in France in 1513, "About that time" (209) that Henry VIII captured Térouanne and Tournai. Jack is "a certain kind of an appendix or page, belonging

or appertaining in or vnto the confines of the English court" (209), and though he follows the camp in the humble role of page he reassures us that he had some claim to fame:

> Bee it knowen to as many as will paie mony inough to peruse my storie, that. . . . There did I (soft, let me drinke before I go anie further) raigne sole king of the cans and blacke iackes, prince of the pigmeis, countie palatine of cleane straw and prouant, and, to conclude, Lord high regent of rashers of the coles and red herring cobs. (209)

Wilton establishes himself in the reader's mind as the jester, the prankster _par excellence_, and the first few episodes describing his early career are typical of the jest-biography.

An old cider-merchant who "kept a plaine alehouse" (210) in the camp is the butt of Jack's first prank. Wilton tells the merchant that he has "matters of some secrecy to imparte vnto him" (211), and, curiosity gaining the upper hand, the merchant coaxes the "reluctant" Wilton with cup after cup of cider. Jack finally explains that he has accidentally heard a vicious rumor about the merchant which is likely to cause problems for him: soldiers and the King think that "you are a secret frend to the Enemie" (214) and a "myser and a snudge" (215). The innocent merchant is beside himself with fright and begs Jack to help him out of his predicament. Jack advises that the merchant "be liberall: such victualls or prouision as you haue, presently distribute it frankely amongst poore Souldiers" (215).

The merchant complies with this logic, and in his desparate attempt to win back his King's favor, Jack informs us that "the next day I thinke we had a doale of syder, syder in bowles, in scuppets, in helmets; and to conclude, if a man wold haue fild his boots full, ther he might haue had it" (216). Distributing free drink and food, however, does not satisfy the paranoid merchant. He "got him humbly on hys mary-bones to the King" (216) and begs mercy and forgiveness. The ruse is exposed, and Jack is "pitifully whipt for my holiday lye, though they made themselues merrie with it manie a Winters euening after" (216).

"This," Wilton announces, "was one of my famous atchieuements . . . but I haue done a thousand better iests" (217). After several more self-congratulatory remarks, Wilton resumes his narrative and recounts his dealings with "an vgly, mechanicall Captain" (217) who lived off the products of Jack's gambling. When their good fortune leaves, Jack decides it is time also for the Captain to leave. Telling the slow-witted Captain that a plot has been laid for an English spy to enter the French camp and assassinate the French king, Wilton flatters him into thinking that it can actually be done. Jack's flattery, his oversimplification of the task, and his assurance that the Captain will be "made while you liue" (219) if the enterprise is successful, determine the Captain to attempt the deed. He enters

the French camp as an English deserter, acts out the subterfuge until threatened with torture, confesses the plot, and is whipped out of the French camp with a warning to the English king. The Captain is dismissed in turn by his own king for "his trechery" (225) and lack of discretion. "Here let me triumph a while," says Jack, "and ruminate a line or two on the excellence of my wit: but I will not breath neither till I haue disfraughted all my knauerie" (225).

Jack's next victim is a "Switzer Captaine that was farre gone for want of the wench" (225). Wilton poses as a prostitute, accepts drink and money, and disappears, leaving the needy Captain in the lurch.

Jack's final prank is perpetrated on a tight-fisted "companie of coystrell clearkes" (225). He makes "a false alarum in the quarter where they lay, to try how they would stand to their tackling, and with a pittifull out-crie warned them to flie, for there was treason a foote" (226). The clerks flee, leaving their desks and money behind for Jack and his comrades.

At this point the jestbook quality of The Unfortunate Traveller gives way to fictionalized accounts of historical events. Having returned to England, Wilton gives a vivid and gruesome account of the so-called "sweating sicknes" (228) which occurred in 1517. After he has examined the horrific and

humorous aspects of the disease, he leaves England in fear of contracting the illness himself. "[H]earing the King of France and the Switzers were together by the eares" (231) -- a reference to the unsuccessful French campaign of 1515 to recover Milan, which was defended largely by Swiss allies -- Wilton "made towards them as fast as I could, thinking to thrust my selfe into that Faction that was strongest" (231). With the French victory complete, Jack arrives at Münster in time for the Anabaptist rebellion of 1534: "like a Crowe that still followes aloofe where there is carrion, I flew me ouer to Munster in Germanie, which an Anabaptisticall Brother, named Iohn Leiden, kept at that instant against the Emperour and the Duke of Saxonie" (232). In a relatively lengthy passage (232-241) Jack describes the final battle in which the Anabaptists are slaughtered, although he seems merely to be a spectator and not a participant. In the same passage he also takes considerable time and energy to attack and criticize the Anabaptist sect and its religious beliefs, although perhaps I should say that it is Nashe himself who is voicing his opposition to religious folly in general: ". . . let me dilate a litle more grauely than the nature of this historie requires, or wilbe expected of so yong a practitioner in diuinity" (234).

With this battle over, Jack returns toward England. But before he reaches his destination he meets Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey, and becomes his page. Surrey is on his way to Florence, where by an open challenge he will defend the beauty and honor of his beloved Geraldine. Wilton describes the moral excellence of Surrey as poet and Petrarchan lover -- not altogether seriously -- and they proceed first to Rotterdam, where they meet and talk with Erasmus and Sir Thomas More.

Wilton and Surrey leave Erasmus and More "to prosecute their discontented studies, and made our next iourney to Wittenberg" (246). Here, they are witness to "a verie scholasticall entertainment of the Duke of Saxonie" (246). Jack first describes the academic welcome that the university scholars provide, and then the reception that the townspeople offer. The ceremony then moves to the university, where the Duke is entertained by "three halfe penyworth of Latine" (247), a dramatic production of _Acolastus_, and "solempne disputations" (250) among Luther, Carlstadt and others. They leave Wittenberg and agree to change names and status, so Surrey can "take more liberty of behauior" (253). At the Emperor's court Wilton and Surrey view the magic of Cornelius Agrippa, and Surrey has Jack ask "to see the liuely image of _Geraldine_, his loue, in the glasse, and what at that instant she did and with whome she was talking" (254). At this

sight, Surrey feels compelled to compose an "extemporal dity" (254) proclaiming his devotion, and master and page leave for Italy.

In Venice they are entertained by one "Petro de campo Frego, a notable practitioner in the pollicie of baudrie" (255), who leads them to a "pernicious curtizās house named Tabitha the Temptresses" (255). Lady Tabitha and Petro approach Surrey (still posing as a page) and offer to divide the money if he will help them assassinate Jack (disguised as the Earl). He pretends to agree, the conspirators are confronted by Jack, and Tabitha bribes Surrey and Wilton with money to keep the authorities out of it. The money, however, turns out to be counterfeit, and Jack and his master land in jail. Sharing the cell is a married woman named Diamante, and "the cause of her committing was an vngrounded ielous suspition which her doting husband had conceiued of her chastitie" (260). In fits of melancholy, Surrey imagines her to be his Geraldine and he woos her with verse, but Jack achieves the final conquest: "My master beate the bush and kepte a coyle and a pratling, but I caught the bird" (263). A travelling Englishman hears of their plight, and appeals to "Petro Aretino searcher and chiefe Inquisiter to the colledge of curtizans" (264). They are released from jail and Tabitha and her pander are executed. Wilton launches on a digressive

account of Aretino's life and his intellectual acumen, reminds himself that "My principall subiect pluckes me by the elbowe" (266), and picks up his narrative again. Diamante proves to be pregnant by Jack and her husband dies in a nicely-timed famine, leaving Jack and his mistress rich and ready to travel. Jack and Diamante leave for Florence and Surrey follows on his own.

Surrey overtakes the happy couple in Florence, only to find Jack still playing the role of Earl. Jack excuses himself, saying, "your name which I borrowed I haue not abused; some large summes of monie this my sweet mistres _Diamante_ hath made me master of, which I knew not how better to imploy for the honor of my country, than by spending it munificently vnder your name" (268). Surrey is charmed into good humor by this explanation, and master and page go to the house where Geraldine was born. Overcome with reverent emotion, Surrey composes a sonnet and scratches amorous epithets on the window to glorify his mistress' beauty and purity. Jack comments:

> O, but when hee came to the chamber where his _Geraldines_ cleere Sunbeames first thrust themselues into this cloud of flesh, and acquainted mortalitie with the purity of Angels, then did his mouth ouerflow with magnificats, his tong thrust the starres out of heauen, and eclipsed the Sun and Moone with comparisons. . . . (270)

The pilgrimage done, Surrey publishes a "proud challenge in the Duke of Florence court against all commers . . . in

defence of his _Geraldines_ beautie" (271). The armor, horses, and shields of most of the combatants are described ironically and irreverently by Wilton -- replete with iconographic significance -- and the contest ensues with Surrey the ultimate victor. Having glorified Geraldine's beauty, Surrey is called back to England, and Jack and Diamante journey to Rome, "the Queen of the world & metrapolitaine mistres of all other cities" (279).

When Jack arrives in Rome, the nature of his narrative shifts yet again. In place of the prankster, the pseudo-historian and the fictional autobiographer, we now find Wilton the sight-seer recording his observations in travelogue form. "I was at _Pontius Pilates_ house and pist against it," he says, "The name of the place I remember not, but it is as one goes to Saint Paules Church not farre from the iemmes Piazza" (280). Jack's new role as travel-guide includes all those things that a sixteenth-century reader might expect to hear: architectural sights, local myths and legends, historical figures, social customs, Italian courtesy, ornamental gardens, art galleries, and so on.

As abruptly as it began, so the travelogue ends. The narrative leads us back into an historical context -- a plague which entered Rome in 1522 -- and then into the fictional, autobiographical context. During this plague ,

Jack informs us, there were two notorious bandits -- Esdras of Granado and Bartol -- who roamed the city, raping, stealing and murdering. It so happens that the house at which Wilton and Diamante are staying is entered by the two villains. Diamante is dragged away from Jack by Bartol, and Wilton finds himself locked in his room. The matron of the house, Heraclide, is wailing over her husband's dead body -- another victim of the plague. Esdras enters the room, and after removing all the valuables, threatens to rape the chaste Heraclide unless she gives herself willingly. Heraclide attempts to reason him out of it with appeals to religion, God, conscience and human pity, but Esdras is determined:

> My owne mother gaue I a boxe of the eare too, and brake her necke downe a paire of staires, because she would not goe in to a Gentleman when I bad her . . . anie kinswoman that I haue, knew I she were not a whore, my selfe would make her one: thou art a whore, thou shalt be a whore, in spite of religion or precise ceremonies. (291)

Heraclide is equally determined, and Esdras rapes her: "On the hard boards he threw her, and vsed his knee as an yron ramme to beat ope the two leaued gate of her chastitie. Her husbands dead bodie he made a pillow to his abhomination. Coniecture the rest, my words sticke fast in the myre and are cleane tyred" (292). Esdras and Bartol leave the house, and Heraclide delivers a lengthy monologue on the sinful event. In utter despair she kills herself, and falls down

on her husband's body. Her husband miraculously awakens -- not having been dead after all -- and Jack is accused of the murder and laid in prison.

Led to the gallows, Jack is about to hang when an exiled English Earl who hears his "saint-like confession" (296) intervenes with new evidence. The Earl, it seems, was in a barber-shop when "all on sodaine in a great tumult and vproare was there brought in one Bartoll, an Italian, greeuously wounded and bloodie" (296). As Bartol dies, he admits that Esdras had raped Heraclide, and, when Bartol had refused to share Diamante with him, he stabbed Bartol. Wilton is let off the hook, and goes to thank his deliverer only to receive a lecture on the bad influence of travel and on the general vice, immorality and treachery of continental Europe (in particular, of Italy). With advice to return to England before it is too late, the Earl leaves and Jack is glad to see him go: "Heeres a stir, thought I to my selfe after I was set at libertie, that is worse than an vpbraiding lesson after a britching" (303).

Jack wanders through Rome looking for his Diamante. Walking at night in a terrible storm, Jack falls into the cellar of a Jew named Zadoch: "I cast vp myne eyes to see vnder what Continent I was: and loe, (O destenie,) I saw my Curtizane kissing very louingly with a prentise" (303-304). Zadoch comes down to find the intruders and charges

both Jack and his mistress with attempted robbery. But instead of having Jack hanged he makes him his bondman, and decides to sell Jack to Dr. Zachary, a fellow Jew, for Zachary's "accustomed yearly Anatomie" (304). As Zadoch brings Jack to Zachary for inspection, they pass under the window of Countess Juliana -- "one of the Popes concubines" (304-305) -- who is so enamoured with Jack's appearance that she determines to have him. Jack is delivered to Zachary, the bargain is struck, and he is locked away in a closet until the day of the dissection.

Wilton interrupts his narrative to characterize Zachary:

> Not the verie crums that fall from his table, but _Zacharie_ sweepes together, and of them moulds vp a Manna. Of the ashie parings of his bread, he would make conserue of chippings. Out of bones, after the meate was eaten off, hee would alchumize an oyle, that hee sold for a shilling a dram. His snot and spittle a hundred times hee hath put ouer to his Apothecarie for snow water. . . The licour out of his shooes hee would wring, to make a sacred Balsamum against barrennes. (306)

Returning once more to his story -- "Spare we him a line or two, and looke backe to _Iuliana_" (306) -- Jack describes Juliana's plot. She sends for Dr. Zachary because the Pope is ill. Zachary prepares a medication and assures the Pope that his illness is nothing serious. Juliana adds poison to the medication, and when the Pope's "Grand-

sublimity-taster came to relish it, he sunke downe stark dead on the pauement" (307). The Pope determines to execute every Jew in Rome, but Juliana begs that they be only banished and their belongings (including Jack Wilton) be expropriated. The Pope agrees, and his edict is "proclaimed throughout _Rome_ . . . that all fore-skinne clippers, whether male or female, belonging to the old Iurie, should depart and auoid pain of hanging, within twentie daies after the date thereof" (307). Juliana's servants go to Zachary's house and "left him not so much as master of an old vrinall case or a candle-box" (307). Jack is removed as well, and is delivered to Juliana's house although he thinks he is being taken to the anatomy session and an ignoble death by bleeding. In anger and fear he reviews his predicament:

> Fie vpon it, a man's breath to bee let out at a backe doore, what a villanie it is! To die bleeding is all one as if a man should die pissing. Good drinke makes good blood, so that pisse is nothing but blood vnder age. . . . To die with a pricke, wherewith the faintest hearted woman vnder heauen would not be kild; O God, it is infamous. (308)

At Juliana's he realizes his misapprehension. To disguise her own lust, Juliana pretends that Jack may be one of Zachary's hirelings, and she promises that "you shall be sifted throughly ere you and I part" (309). And indeed he is.

Jack's narrative returns once more to Zadoch, who has held Diamante all this while, whipping her daily to force her to confess what she and Jack might have stolen. Dr. Zachary arrives, telling him of Juliana's treachery and the Pope's edict. In a fury,Zadoch vows revenge. Zachary suggests they present Diamante to Juliana as a gift to show their good will. They tell Diamante that she is to poison her new mistress at the first opportunity. Juliana is impressed with the gift, and as soon as the Jews leave Diamante reveals their plot and hands over the vial of poison. The poison, Jack informs us, Juliana puts on a shelf in her closet, "thinking to keepe it for some good purposes: as, for example, when I was consumed and worne to the bones through her abuse, she wold giue me but a dram too much, and pop mee into a priuie" (314). Juliana now sets out to avenge herself for Zadoch's and Zachary's double-cross. Zachary escapes, but Zadoch is tortured and executed in a gory and gruesome episode.

Jack and Diamante finally escape when Juliana attends the St. Peter's Day feast, leaving Jack in Diamante's hands. The escape was absolutely essential, says Wilton, for "Nere a sixe houres but the Countesse cloyd me with her companie . . . I was clean spent and done, there was no hope of me" (316). Taking as much money and valuables as they can, Jack and his mistress flee Rome and reach

Bologna. They arrive in time to witness the execution of "one Cutwolfe, a wearish dwarfish writhen facde cobler, brother to Bartol the Italian" (319). Cutwolfe is to be executed for killing Esdras, the man who murdered Bartol. Cutwolfe delivers a lengthy oration, explaining who he is, why he killed Esdras, and how he did it. He views his actions as the epitome of pure and honorable revenge, and dies a painful death at the hands of the executioner. Jack is so "Mortifiedly abiected and danted . . . with this truculent tragedie" (327), that he marries Diamante "and hasted so fast out of the Sodom of Italy, that within fortie daies I arriued at the king Englands campe twixt Ardes and Guines in France" (327).

"The Unfortunate Traveller" and the Critics

What is The Unfortunate Traveller? The question has been asked repeatedly, and partial answers have been offered. "Whatever Nashe intended when he began," writes Agnes Latham, "what he achieved baffles classification. It is sometimes claimed as the first historical novel in English; sometimes as a picaresque romance or an elaborated rogue-pamphlet; sometimes as an Elizabethan penny-dreadful."[2] The question as to what form, sub-genre or literary category Nashe's narrative and subject-matter belong, has troubled critics for some time. Merritt Lawlis

recognizes the essential diversity and variety of The Unfortunate Traveller as the major problem in classification: "What we find is a form so thoroughly mixed that we cannot assign it to any one genre in particular. The Unfortunate Traveller has elements of romance, confession, anatomy, and novel."[3] Even those critics who would examine specific aspects of the work have great difficulty in reaching any agreement. Richard Lanham acknowledges the enigmatic nature of The Unfortunate Traveller and the problems it creates for the literary critic in his summary of recent trends in explication:

> It is commonly called a picaresque novel, but few critics have agreed on just what such an attribution means. It is usually thought to be a satire, but the target remains uncertain. To call it a random collection of jests and stylistic parodies does not seem to do justice to a commonly felt unity of mood and attitude that it shares with the rest of Nashe's prose. The structure of the novel (novel for lack of a better word), if indeed it has one, is still debated; so, too, are the various kinds of topical references embedded in it.4

As my paraphrase of Nashe's plot will have indicated, one of the basic critical dilemmas is the episodic or paratactic quality of the narrative. According to Stanley Wells, "The main weakness of the work is one that Nashe was never able fully to overcome: it lacks any real coherence . . . Nashe proceeds by flashes; he is not capable of sustaining a theme at any length."[5] There is a "story," of course, but it meanders haphazardly through

episodes, descriptions and anecdotes that are seemingly extraneous and irrelevant to the progress of the narrative. Commentators who have approached the work as satire have found to their dismay that Nashe's satire is inconsistent -- Wilton will emphasize Italianate vice and immorality in one passage, and praise Italian courtesy in another; he will launch into moral invective against the Anabaptists and then lament their slaughter. Similarly, Jack Wilton's role as narrator tends to defy classification and easy interpretation: he is alternately prankster, satirist, travel-writer, polemicist, historian, picaro, fictional autobiographer. M. Lawlis views the presence of this polymorphic narrator as a weakness:

> Nashe's bold attempt to mix genres probably is related to (and may be responsible for) the one serious flaw in the narrative structure of The Unfortunate Traveler -- a blurred conception of the narrator-protagonist. . . . He rarely emerges as anyone we can visualize; in fact, from one episode to another he becomes a different kind of person, as though Nashe has forgotten his original conception or has not yet made up his mind.[6]

Most critics have recognized the work's preoccupation with violence and images of violence, yet they have not been able to include this aspect in their interpretive schemes. Clifford Leech refers to Nashe's "basic nihilism,"[7] and R.A. Lanham says that "Literary analysis is helpless. The novel itself provides no standards by which to judge such

savoured, but irrelevant violence."[8] Older views of the work as the first "historical novel" are also based on problematic evidence. That Nashe grounded his fiction in the real, historical world is undeniable, but the most casual glance at his chronology reveals a carelessness that is typical in The Unfortunate Traveller: 1513, 1517, 1515, 1534, 1522, 1520.[9]

If the lack of coherence in plot and character has disturbed some critics, Nashe's prose style presents certain difficulties as well -- difficulties that ultimately may be responsible for the paratactic quality of Wilton's autobiography. Whatever disagreements scholars may have in their reading of The Unfortunate Traveller, the one fact on which all are agreed is that the work's primary appeal and interest lies in Nashe's energetic and imaginative prose style. M. Lawlis comments that "in the end it may be the rhythm of Nashe's language that is his strongest point."[10] "The chief characteristic of Nashe's prose," according to A.K. Croston,

> is its alertness to the possibilities of metaphor. The impression given by reading Nashe is that of an extremely alert mind always conscious of the medium of expression, playing upon it as a complex instrument. Indeed it is no exaggeration to assert that the metaphorical possibilities of language form the essential subject matter of the prose.[11]

David Kaula, as well, claims that the work's "chief distinction lies rather in that stylistic dexterity which Nashe liked to advertise as his particular forte."[12] But Nashe's overwhelming preoccupation with matters of expression and stylistic elaboration seems to be the very reason -- in the opinion of many -- for the work's lack of structural coherence, the lack of a "well-made plot" and a consistent narrator. The excesses of Nashe's language, his outrageous similes and comparisons, his penchant for the verbal elaboration of the trivial, his vitriolic descriptions -- all these stylistic features appear to exist for their own sake, at the expense of form, plot, structure and characterization. S. Wells' complaint that "the extreme elaboration of the style . . . tends to nullify the content"[13] is echoed by R.A. Lanham: "The angrier Jack gets, the more elaborate his language becomes. The more elaborate the language, the more one attends to it and not to the target of the abuse."[14] E.D. Mackerness likewise considers that Nashe has sacrificed narrative "tightness" for stylistic virtuosity:

> . . . his prose, though . . . unequal in quality, is never, to the alert and unprejudiced reader, 'tedious beyond toleration': one is subjected to so many surprises that paragraph never echoes paragraph with anything like regularity. Nashe's facility, however, accounts for his main weakness -- a tendency to diffuseness where compression is really required.15

These types of difficulties with the narrative line, the narrator-protagonist, and the style, have led the majority of critics to negative appraisals of The Unfortunate Traveller as a whole. Nashe's foremost critic and biographer, G.R. Hibbard, is impressed with Nashe's stylistic virtuosity but finds nothing that he would consider to be a consistent expression of attitude:

> Like the chameleon, Nashe changes his colour in a flash, slipping from one way of writing to another in a dazzling display of sheer virtuosity, carried through with such rapid changes of direction and intention that the reader has difficulty in keeping up with them . . . it embodies nothing that can be called a view of life.16

The question of unified expression in The Unfortunate Traveller, of a "view of life," has become the most important critical consideration. S. Wells says that

> It is common in discussing works of literature to seek in them for some organizing principle and to attempt to demonstrate that however discursive they may seem at first sight they have in fact an inner coherence. In this account of The Unfortunate Traveller I have deliberately drawn attention to the disparateness of many of its episodes. It has no organizing principle; it is not a unified work of art.17

Likewise, Fredson T. Bowers considers that for all its charm and wit,

> What The Unfortunate Traveller lacks . . . is a thoroughly consistent point of view and a definite goal. . . . The novel must be consistent in its parts, and add up to a total impression corresponding to the author's fundamental purpose. This The Unfortunate Traveller never completely

> achieves . . . when we finish the work, we examine our minds in vain for any total impression of life communicated by the author. This is a fault, and a serious one in literary judgement.18

R.A. Lanham makes a similar complaint:

> It is fair, if simplistic, to say that the principal question usually asked of The Unfortunate Traveller is "What is it really about?" Inquiries into its form, its structure, the nature and direction of its satire and topical allusion, all return to uncertainty about its final concern. An inexplicable themelessness has been the real problem in almost all Nashe's prose.19

As I have suggested already, The Unfortunate Traveller defies literary analysis in several respects. It is structurally incoherent, we are told; it lacks a unified plot; there is no "vision of life"; the narrator-protagonist, as well as the satire, is inconsistent in direction and tone; the work suffers from an "inexplicable themelessness"; the prose style is excessive and detracts from narrative unity and clarity; there is no "total impression of life". Indeed, Nashe's work is either lacking in "unity" and devoid of a "vision of life," or we had better challenge our conventionally understood notions of these concepts. It is difficult to categorize The Unfortunate Traveller; it is difficult to explain it by means of the traditional terms and concepts of literary criticism. But one must ask if the problem lies in the work or with conventional methods

of literary analysis. Is The Unfortunate Traveller an interesting artistic failure, or is it the case that most of the critical methodology that has been applied is overly restrictive and too rigid? It may be intellectually healthful to bear in mind that "the purpose of criticism is not to set limits to the powers and discoveries of the creative mind, but to observe and not too assertively comment upon their results."[20]

While the general critical response to The Unfortunate Traveller as an artistic whole has been negative, there remain two critics -- David Kaula and Walter R. Davis[21] -- who argue that the work does yield a "vision of life." Kaula agrees that

> Hibbard's emphasis on the weaknesses of The Unfortunate Traveller is certainly justified if it is measured by the criteria usually applied to more recent works of fiction, such as consistency of viewpoint and characterization, and unity of narrative structure. But what this appraisal fails to take sufficiently into account is the feature of the novel which more than any other draws attention to itself and serves, perhaps, as the primary vehicle for Nashe's "view of life": the style.[22]

If the purpose of human verbal systems in The Adventures of Master F.J. and Euphues is to dramatize the unsuccessful rhetorical attempt to give an adequate account of human experience and "reality," then the purpose of Nashe's verbal pyrotechnics is to image the contradictions, the ambiguities, illusions and general chaos of human

experience. Euphues, Philautus, F.J. and Elinor all depend on verbal systems to generate meaning, form, and an understanding of reality -- until their experience of the human predicament finally exposes their rhetorical apprehension of the world as illusory, as a "human fiction." What is challenged and taken to task in The Adventures and Euphues are the assumptions, world-views, rationalizations and attitudes of the characters, and the satire or ironic commentary is effected by the normative standards of a narrator or an implied narrative stance. The careful reader of these two works has the advantage of a superior viewpoint -- he understands and can perceive the discrepancy between the beliefs and values of the characters and those implied by a narrative voice. With The Unfortunate Traveller the case is different. It is not the beliefs and values of character that are challenged and exposed, but rather those of the reader. Nashe exploits not only the literary anticipations of a practiced reading audience, he also exploits the emotional, intellectual and epistemological expectations of his readers. Every anticipated sense of reality, order, cause and effect, and decorum is challenged, violated and broken down. There is no world-view or ideal code to sustain a temporary or momentary belief in an ordered, meaningful world. The universe and human experience in The Unfortunate Traveller are dis-

orderly and ineffable from the beginning. The work's "vision of life" is largely a stylistic statement about a lack of form: there is no inherent form, structure or meaning in the universe, and any humanly imposed form is shown finally to be illusory or inadequate. D. Kaula is generally in agreement with these observations: "He [Nashe] tends to conceive human action not as evolving through a continuum of cause and effect or of past, present, and future, but as violent, fragmentary, and accidental."[23]

What troubles the critics, it seems to me, is that Nashe has not imposed a consistent, a coherent or a recognizable literary structure through which formlessness (or any other idea, for that matter) is explored. But it is not in the narrative, the character, or in the countless parodies that Nashe's "vision" is best seen. Rather it is to be discovered in the unified attitude and mood that his language generates. His wilful distortions of language, his bizarre verbal antics, are all calculated to reflect the problem of form and meaning, to challenge any system of meaning or any concept of "reality" and break it down. And Wilton's alternative to the orderly world-views and ideal codes of The Adventures and Euphues is a universe that is inconsistent, ambivalent and absurd -- a universe that is apprehended not with the intellect but through images which defy the intellect. C.S. Lewis

suggests that

> In a certain sense of the verb 'say', if asked what Nashe 'says', we should have to reply, Nothing. He tells no story, expresses no thought, maintains no attitude. Even his angers seem to be part of his technique rather than real passions. In his exhilarating whirlwind of words we find not thought nor passion but simply images: images of ludicrous and sometimes frightful incoherence boiling up from a dark void. There is that in Nashe which connects him with artists like Bosch and the later Picasso.24

Nashe's "vision of life" in The Unfortunate Traveller becomes for the critic a question of how such a ludicrous and incoherent world is imaged, of how Nashe's verbal, intellectual and narrative distortions are a part of his vision and not necessary weaknesses.

Distortion and Language

1. Word-Play

Nashe's wilful distortions can be seen first on a very simple verbal level, involving verbal manipulation so "innocent" that it may not seem like distortion at all. Recounting his first prank, Jack tells us that just as he is about to inform the old cider-merchant of the supposed rumor, he stops his tale and pretends sympathetic reticence: "O would I had no tong to tell the rest; by this drinke it grieues me so I am not able to repeate it" (212-213). The merchant is "readie to hang himselfe

for the ende of the full point" (213), and he begs Jack "to haue pittie on him" (213) and relieve him of his uncertainty even if it means the worst possible news. Jack complies, informing his reader that "I, beeing by nature inclined to _Mercie_ (for in deede I knewe two or three good wenches of that name), bad him harden his eares . . . and he should haue the inside of my brest turnd outward . . ." (213). What we have here is rather simple word-play: a single word ("_Mercie_") is given two completely different meanings through a rapid shift in context. "_Mercie_" refers first to the narrator's supposed moral disposition, and then to women of dubious sexual dispositions. The speed with which Nashe moves from one context to another, the juxtaposition of the two contexts (i.e. the ostensibly moral v.s. the probably sexual), the multiple use of a single word -- all this results in humor.

In his descriptions of the sweating sickness, Wilton tells us that the disease was so sudden and so vicious that even doctors were helpless: "Phisitions with their simples in this case wext simple fellowes, and knew not which way to bestirre them" (229-230). Here again, the verbal manipulation is slight, and the word-play involves the alternate use of two meanings for a single word. Likewise in his description of the Anabaptist preparation for battle, the same shift is made (somewhat pointedly):

"His ['Iacke Leiden'] Battell is pitcht: by pitcht, I doo not meane set in order, for that was farre from their order, onely as Sailers doo pitch their apparell to make it storm proofe, so had most of them pitcht their patcht clothes to make them impearceable" (233-234). Here, the variable meanings of "pitcht" and "order" are exploited, illustrating Nashe's cleverness and keeping the reader attentive. But it also demonstrates Nashe's keen interest in the shifting meanings of words.

When Jack hears that "the king of France and the Switzers were together by the eares" (231), he hurries to the site of the battle and witnesses a terrible slaughter. "Anie man," he says, "might giue Armes that was an actor in that Battell, for there were more armes and legs scattered in the Field that day than will be gathered vp till Domes-day" (231). As we read this we are required to move from a figurative understanding of "Armes" (i.e. metonymy) to a literal understanding. Perhaps there is nothing here, or in the other examples, that one should wish to call "distortion" -- nothing seems to be threatened, none of our beliefs seems to be challenged, no great effort of the intellect is needed to comprehend -- yet there is something in the rapidity of the contextual shifts and in the occasional irrelevance of the juxtaposed contexts, that makes one wonder if the insistent use of

this kind of word-play indicates something beyond mere cleverness.

After Lady Tabitha bribes Jack with counterfeit gold to prevent him from carrying her murder-plot to the police, Wilton goes to visit a prostitute, "a delicate wench named Flauia Aemilia" (258): "Aie me, she was but a counterfet slip, for she not onely gaue me the slip, but had welnigh made me a slipstring. To her I sent my golde to beg an houre of grace: ah, graceles fornicatres, my hostesse [Lady Tabitha] and shee were confederate" (258). Jack is betrayed and he and Surrey land in jail as counterfeiters. But Nashe appears as interested here in the word-play as in the progress of his plot. Meaning seems always to be in a state of flux.

A final example of this type of verbal manipulation occurs in Dr. Zachary's closet, where Wilton fearfully contemplates the letting of his blood that will be necessary before the anatomy begins: "To die with a pricke, wherewith the faintest hearted woman vnder heauen would not be kild: O God, it is infamous" (308). There is humor here, of course, but there is a form of distortion as well. In each of these examples a common belief is subtly undermined, a belief that I.A. Richards calls the "Proper Meaning Superstition":

> That is, the common belief . . . that a word has a meaning of its own (ideally, only one) independent of and controlling its use and the purpose for which it should be uttered. This superstition is a recognition of a certain kind of stability in the meanings of certain words. It is only a superstition when it forgets (as it commonly does) that the stability of the meaning of a word comes from the constancy of the contexts that give it its meaning.25

Whether or not the reader is guilty of this "superstition" is not important. What is important, is that Nashe's word-play requires the reader to hold in his mind two different contexts simultaneously, as well as divergent meanings of a single word. Most readers will recognize that as words pass from one context to another they change their meanings; they will also realize that stability of meaning depends on a context that remains constant. What the reader must face in The Unfortunate Traveller is the fact that meaning is a rather precarious thing, because the constancy of context is never a guarantee -- no sooner is one context established but Nashe transfers his terms to an entirely different one.

It would be foolish to suggest that in this sort of word-play can be found significant or telling examples of Nashe's distortion of the reader's expectations. We are more likely to read these examples of word-play as indications of Nashe's wit, cleverness and sense of humor. But while shifting contexts and peculiar juxtapositions

may produce delight and humor for the reader at this level, on a larger scale they cause tension, confusion, uncertainty. What I am trying to demonstrate in Nashe's word-play is a habit: here, it is a verbal habit, a habit that explains a great deal of Nashe's humor; elsewhere, the shifting contexts, variable meanings, and peculiar verbal couplings are an intellectual habit, a mode of perception.

2. Simile and Comparison

Nashe's innovative use of simile and comparison (including much of his imagery and metaphor) presents some interesting problems. The following passage in which Jack describes his own physical appearance, is typical of Nashe's unique use of simile and comparison:

> I had my feather in my cap as big as a flag in the fore-top; my French dublet gelte in the bellie as though (like a pig readie to be spitted) all my guts had bin pluckt out; a paire of side paned hose that hung downe like two scales filled with Holland cheeses . . . my rapier pendant like a round sticke fastned in the tacklings for skippers the better to climbe by; my cape cloake of blacke cloth, ouer-spreading my backe like a thorne-backe, or an Elephantes eare, that hanges on his shoulders like a countrie huswiues banskin . . . & in consummation of my curiositie, my hands without glooues, all a more French, and a blacke budge edging of a beard on the vpper lip, & the like sable auglet of excrements in the rising of the anckle of my chinne. (227)

This is peculiar description: the reader must visualize and conceptualize the physical appearance of a man and his fashion in terms of a flag, a gutted pig roasting on a spit, Dutch cheese, a sting-ray, an elephant's ear, a leather apron, and excrement. Apart from its vividness, what can be said about the peculiar relationship between the "thing" described and the terms of the description -- between the "tenor" and "vehicle"? In his useful study of Nashe's imagery, A.K. Croston is alert to the fact that Nashe's use of figurative language is at the heart of the work's zest and appeal, but in passages like the one just quoted he finds inappropriateness and irrelevance:

> Here again, as so frequently has to be noted, the result is mainly that of irrelevance. . . . Occasionally when Nashe is striving to portray physical states with a full sense of immediacy he produces little more than a vague appropriateness . . . [Nashe's] more 'orthodox' imagery . . . is to be contrasted with those images, typical of Nashe, where the 'vehicle' part of the image propagates of its own accord, extending far beyond the original idea. . . . It is admittedly not the method of most successful poetic imagery, where the balance between the two parts is more nicely poised.26

Let me postpone comments on Croston's remarks and examine other passages that may involve the same problem.

Consider the following passage. Dr. Zachary has just informed Zadoch that Juliana has double-crossed them, and that all Jews will have to leave Rome and give up their possessions. Zadoch is enraged:

> Descriptions, stand by, here is to bee expressed the furie of Lucifer when he was turnde ouer heauen barre for a wrangler. There is a toad fish, which taken out of the water swels more than one would thinke his skin could hold, and bursts in his face that toucheth him. So swelled Zadoch, and was readie to burst out of his skin and shoote his bowels like chaine-shot full at Zacharies face for bringing him such balefull tidings; his eies glared & burnt blew like brimstone and aqua vitae set on fire in an egshell, his verie nose lightned glow-wormes, his teeth crasht and grated together, like the ioynts of a high building cracking and rocking like a cradle, when as a tempest takes her full but against his broad side. (310)

Is it the case, as Croston insists, that the "theme is of interest to Nashe chiefly as an excuse for darting imagery,"[27] or is it something else? Croston is rather insistent on viewing this use of figurative language -- although colorful -- as irrelevant, unorthodox, ill-fitted. But Croston's evaluation, in I.A. Richards' terms, makes "the amusing assumption . . . that tenor and vehicle must be linked by their resemblance and that their interaction comes about through their resemblance one to another."[28] What Croston and many other critics are saying is this: "It does not make any sense to compare the physical embodiment of Zadoch's anger with toad fish, brimstone, eggshells, the violent evacuation of the bowels with buckshot, glow-worms, creaking buildings in storms. Therefore, Nashe's use of simile and comparison is 'unorthodox' and unsuccessful from a narrative point of view." But before we dismiss Nashe's "unorthodox"

simile and comparison as irrelevant or unsuitable, we must, as Richards insists, consider other possibilities:

> Have the poets a privilege to alter the nature of things, and at pleasure to bestow attributes upon a subject to which they do not belong? Most moderns would say "Of course, they have!". . . Once we begin 'to examine attentively' interactions which do not work through resemblances between tenor and vehicle, but depend upon other relationships between them including disparities, some of our most prevalent, over-simple, ruling assumptions about metaphors as comparisons are soon exposed.29

If we take "unorthodox" simile and comparison to mean some marked "disparity" between tenor and vehicle, then certainly The Unfortunate Traveller is most fertile in this respect. But is the distortion of tenor by vehicle a capricious one? Is the disparity between tenor and vehicle sheer verbal intoxication? There is in Nashe's similes and comparisons a fundamental element of disharmony that does not seem to be accidental. In the two passages above, one should have to admit that a man's appearance and a disembowelled pig roasting on a spit, or, a man's anger and fire in an eggshell, involve images that resist fusion because the simile requires a conflation of disparates in the reader's mind that he may not be used to. The reader cannot resolve the relationship between such images; he is left only with the juxtaposition itself, with the tension and uneasiness that is caused by an entirely novel realignment of his visual perceptions of physical reality. I.A. Richards points out that "As the two things

put together are more remote, the tension created is, of course, greater."[30]

After the Duke of Saxony has been welcomed by the Wittenberg academics, the townspeople choose their own representative to welcome the Duke on their behalf:

> A bursten belly inkhorne orator called Vanderhulke, they pickt out to present him with an oration, one that had a sulpherous big swolne large face, like a Saracen, eyes like two kentish oysters, a mouth that opened as wide euery time he spake, as one of those old knit trap doores, a beard as though it had ben made of birds neast pluckt in peeces, which consisteth of strawe, haire, and durt mixt together. (247)

After saving Jack from the gallows, the exiled English Earl lectures him on the folly of travel:

> From Spaine what bringeth our Traueller? a sculle crownd hat of the fashion of an olde deepe porringer, a diminutiue Aldermans ruffe with short strings like the droppings of a mans nose. . . . Let his cloake be as long or as short as you will . . . if short, it hath a cape like a Calues tung. . . . (300)

What happens when the physical appearance of a man is conceptualized in terms of a gutted pig roasting on a spit, an elephant's ear, and exrement? What of eyes as Kentish oysters, or fashion as mucous and a calf's tongue? In distortion such as this (and it is certainly distortion), a great deal is challenged and a great deal is altered. The kinds of mental images that must be conceptualized simultaneously involve a distortion of one's anticipated

sense of physical reality and of one's sense of what a narrative prose description "ought" to be like. Nashe's reader must conceptualize two concrete images that have ostensibly little or no connection. What gives to these "unorthodox" similes their impact is their concreteness and activeness. Nashe always turns the static into the active, and, as W.J. Johnson notes, "in place of repetition or redundancy, Nashe presents the reader with metaphorical pictures."[31] In Nashe's use of such comparisons, we are forced to confront our own sense of established order and perceive the physical world from a different perspective. In asking us to "see" Spanish fashion and mucous at the same time -- as well as to ponder some relationship between them -- Nashe is breaking down a common notion of a familiar and ordered physical reality and he is restructuring it as a visually and materially ambivalent entity, but a reality nonetheless. What challenges the reader is not some image of Spanish fashion, nor an image of mucous, but rather the effort to visualize the two images at once and create a relationship.

Nashe's peculiar similes and comparisons do not image an alien or unknown universe, but a "real" world. In The Unfortunate Traveller, however, it is a "real" world presented from a point of view which presupposes certain norms, expectations and beliefs on the part of the reader,

and then distorts those norms. Consider the following. Wilton and Surrey no sooner arrive at Venice but they are befriended by Petro de campo Frego, "a notable practitioner in the pollicie of baudrie" (255):

> The place whether he brought vs was a pernicious curtizãs house named Tabitha the Temptresses, a wench that could set as ciuill a face on it as chastities first martyr Lucrecia. What will you conceit to be in any saints house that was there to seeke? Bookes, pictures, beades, crucifixes, why, there was a haberdashers shop of thẽ in euerie chãber. I warrant you should not see one set of her neckercher peruerted or turned awrie, not a piece of a haire displast. On her beds there was not a wrinkle of any wallowing to be found, her pillows bare out as smooth as a groning wiues belly, & yet she was a Turke and an infidel, & had more dooings then all her neighbours besides. (255)

The situation is clear to the reader: wandering through this whore's dwelling Jack sees that the niceties of appearance and the pretence of religion give the "proper" impression, although Tabitha is a whore and this is a brothel. Even the location of the sexual act itself -- the bed -- reveals no trace of "wrinkles" or "wallowing." An on closer inspection this is verified: the pillows "bare out as smooth as a groning wiues belly." It is in a simile such as this that we can understand how Nashe distorts reader-expectations of what ought to be. It might be asserted, with justification, that to see the unwrinkled, plumped-up pillow imaged as the swollen roundness of a pregnant belly is a remarkable stroke that creates an

imaginable similarity between two very different things -- a pillow and the belly of a pregnant woman. However, it is a "groning wiues belly" which the reader must visualize, and the connotations of marriage ("wiues"), pregnancy, childbirth ("groning") and motherhood are completely at odds with the covert prostitution that Jack is pointing toward. In other words, the appearance of chastity is imaged as the culmination of sex, and the illicit sex of prostitution is imaged in a context of legitimacy, marriage and parentage. A brilliant touch of irony, one might conclude, but the overall effect of the comparison is to distort expectations of consistency and logical relationship. The reader witnesses the re-organization of certain aspects of his experienced reality in such similes, and realizes that they somehow distort and tamper with his experienced perceptions of what things look like, of similarities and contrast, of what one might call "visual decorum."

The manner in which we "see" our ordinary, everyday physical world is constantly broken down by similes and comparisons which require us to visualize and synthesize physical reality in entirely different ways. Early in his autobiography Jack tells us of the "Switzer Captaine that was farre gone for want of the wench" (225). Jack comes

"disguised vnto him in the forme of a halfe crowne wench . . . I had my curtsies in cue . . . for they dyude into the verie entrailes of the dust, and I sympered with my countenance like a porredge pot on the fire when it first begins to seethe" (225). No doubt the professional reader will be somewhat incredulous about the visual fusions and conceptual juxtapositions that he finds himself making in response to the verbal demands of such a comparison. We may understand the semantic relationship that "symper" has with both elements of the simile (i.e. to simmer, to smile in an affected manner), but this does little to justify or explain the imagistic superimposition that the comparison requires. We can guess what Jack might look like disguised as a prostitute; we can image what he looks like affecting wanton smiles and facial expressions; we know what hot porridge looks like. Can we visualize disguise, prostitution and seduction as hot, bubbling porridge cooking over a fire? We can and we do, not because we are accustomed to doing so, but because it is there on the page in front of us. If the reader's expectations about the appearance of physical reality are distorted in such coupling, they are also replaced by new modes of perception, and the basic incongruity which informs most of these juxtapositions tends to defy intellectual analysis and becomes interesting in its own right as a theme.

A final example is taken from Jack's account of the tremendous slaughter that occurred in the battle between the French and the Swiss:

> . . . where I saw a wonderfull spectacle of blood-shed on both sides: here vnweeldie Switzers wallowing in their gore, like an Oxe in his dung, there the sprightly French sprawling and turning on the stained grasse, like a Roach new taken out of the streame: all the ground was strewed as thicke with Battle-axes as the Carpenters yard with chips; the Plaine appeared like a quagmyre, ouerspread as it was with trampled dead bodies. (231)

The reader visualizes a ferocious battle in which wounded and dying men lay mutilated on the ground in pain. The physical contortions of agony and death in the Swiss ranks are imaged as an ox wallowing in its dung; the contortions of the French are seen as a jerking, flopping fish when it is taken out of water. Here, the verbs ("wallowing," "sprawling and turning") represent activities shared by both elements of the similes, and an image of human form and human activity is therefore superimposed on an image of animals, animal dung, gasping fish. But although the elements share some physical similarity in the activities, the extension of the simile -- human entrails equated with ox dung -- is a violent and perverse distortion of the reader's notions of the human form. The final two comparisons of the passage require the reader to visualize similarities in things that again are extremely remote, and the result is some new composite image, for example,

of a human bog or marsh that quakes and trembles underfoot with trampled, dead bodies.

Similes and comparisons of this nature are the rule in Nashe, not the exception. Nashe's similes challenge the way we perceive the physical world, yet they still present a recognizable world. There is nothing new or alien in any of the individual images or elements of physical reality that are used; what constitutes both the distortion of conventional norms and new modes of perception is the juxtaposition itself -- the yoking of facial lasciviousness and hot porridge, of eyes and Kentish oysters, of human gore and ox dung. One's anticipated sense of physical reality is violated and one is forced to "see" differently. But there is tension and uneasiness caused by the strange new juxtaposition, since the reader is left with the feeling that he is watching his ordinary, everyday world giving way to something chaotic, incoherent, distorted and ugly. Logical connection, physical similarity, balance, decorum, beauty -- all these notions are undermined in these similes and comparisons and are replaced by disharmony, ambiguity, deformity and incompatibility. The effect of Nashe's concrete, visual similes can be likened to some aspects of certain surrealist art. To enter a gallery and be confronted with a canvas depicting a clam playing the accordian, and further down the aisle, with a

painting of a sewing-machine and an umbrella together on an operating table, is very similar to what Nashe is doing in his similes and has a similar effect. In both cases, the sudden juxtaposition of familiar images of reality in a peculiar and disturbing context shocks the viewer/reader out of conventional modes of perception and causes him to see a world now very different, strange, and disturbing.

The pictorial analogy can be extended in a different direction as well. Nashe's strange rhetorical gesticulations -- the physical deformation and macabre exaggerations of his similes -- can be taken, I think, as similar in aim and effect to the general features of some Mannerist art in the sixteenth century. On the subject of Mannerism Jacques Bousquet writes: "Far from copying their predecessors of the High Renaissance, the Mannerists are characterized by a frenzied pursuit of new means of expression, delighting in linear distortion, unusual compositions, new color schemes, and unwonted themes."[32] The visual aspects of Nashe's similes and comparisons exhibit similar interests: the bizarre "pictures" which his similes thrust on the reader indicate his search for a new rhetorical "palette" which will at once challenge and enlarge the reader's conventional notions about the shape and color of the world.

<u>Narrative Distortion and Reader Expectation</u>

Nashe's distortion, as we have seen, lies largely in the attribution of uncommon properties to common things, the confrontation of ostensibly unrelated things, and the wilful dislocation of object and context. In the case of comparison and simile, the distortion is primarily a visual one -- the reader's sense of what the world looks like and of how it ought to appear to him is undermined. But imagistic or visual distortion is not the only kind to be found in <u>The Unfortunate Traveller</u>. There are a host of passages and examples which challenge the reader's emotional, intellectual, and occasionally, his moral expectations as well. Dr. Zachary and Zadoch plan their revenge on Juliana, and Zachary finally decides that Diamante will serve their purpose. He tells her:

> So it is, that the pope is farre out of liking with the countesse of <u>Mantua</u>, his concubine, and hath put his trust in me, his phisition, to haue her quietly and charitably made away. Now, I cannot intend it, for I haue many cures in hande which call vpon me hourly: thou, if thou beest placd with her as her waiting maid . . . maist temper poison with hir broth . . . and neuer bee bewraid. (312-313)

As was the case with Nashe's word-play, a simple shift in context here requires the reader to entertain contradictory ideas. Zachary will not be able to commit the murder himself, because he will be too busy curing the sick. The two ideas -- death-dealing murderer and life-giving

doctor -- are placed in ludicrous juxtaposition. Admittedly, this is a light-hearted and humorous example of contextual distortion, but it is typical of Nashe and it indicates the type of intellectual ambivalence and ambiguity that is fostered in the reader's mind.

The reader's response is of course guided and shaped by narrative tone and attitude, and very often Nashe's narrative will guide the reader through contradictory or incompatible responses to a single situation. As Jack slowly proceeds to tell the cider-merchant of the supposed rumor, he stops and states his own pretended sympathy toward the old man:

> Why (quoth I), my selfe that am but a poore childish well-wisher of yours, with the verie thought that a man of your deserte and state by a number of pesants and varlets shoulde be so iniuriously abused in hugger mugger, haue wepte all my vrine vpwarde. The wheele vnder our citie bridge carries not so much water ouer the citie, as my braine hath welled forth gushing streames of sorrow: I haue wepte so immoderatly and lauishly that I thought verily my palat had bin turned to pissing Conduit in London. My eyes haue bin dronke, outragiously dronke, wyth giuing but ordinarie entercourse through their sea-circled Ilands to my distilling dreriment. What shal I say? that which malice hath saide is the meere ouerthrow and murther of your daies. (213)

Jack then tells him of his rumored treason and advises him "in your old daies to be liberall" (215):

> . . . such victualls or prouision as you haue, presently distribute it frankely amongst poore Souldiers; I would let them burst their bellies with Syder and bathe in it, before I would run into my Princes ill opinion for a whole sea of it. The hunter pursuing the Beauer for his stones, hee bites them off, and leaues them behinde for him to gather vp, whereby he liues quiet. If greedy hunters and hungrie tale-tellers pursue you, it is for a litle pelfe that you haue; cast it behinde you, neglect it, let them haue it, least it breede a farther inconuenience. Credit my aduice, you shall finde it propheticall: and thus haue I discharged the part of a poore frend. (215)

In the first case, Jack expresses his pretended empathetic concern and sympathy for the merchant. The conceit which follows emphasizes the sentiment, of course, but the mental picture of a weeping human urinal is a radically unusual means of conveying human concern, and tends to violate or distort any anticipated notion of sympathy. The reader is led by the nose, in this case; it is not the cider-merchant who is the object of the irony, but the reader. The same is true of the second passage. Jack plays his role of the concerned friend by giving the merchant friendly advice on how to redeem his reputation. That Jack's motives are not pure is irrelevant; at this moment he plays a part and wants to convince the cider-merchant of his friendly intentions. The reader cooperates and anticipates the appropriate emotions and sentiments. But the analogy that Jack uses completely undermines our narrative expectations, and we must now conjure up castration and self-dismemberment. The

analogy "works" but it is obscene, violent and cruel, and completely at odds with any image of friendship, human sympathy, or constructive advice. Led by a shifting narrative tone and attitude, the reader must confront the narrative fact that urine and human sympathy, as well as friendly advice and castration, are mental bed-partners -- they are incongruous, they cannot be resolved, but the juxtaposition exists, and any emotional or intellectual expectation that the initial context generates is distorted.

A similar distortion can be seen in Wilton's account of the "sweating sicknes" (228). It is a terrible disease, we learn, and any occupation that caused increased bodily temperature was fatal:

> Felt makers and Furriers, what the one with the hot steame of their wooll new taken out of the pan, and the other with the contagious heat of their slaughter budge and connie-skinnes, died more thicke than of the pestelence: I haue seene an old woman at that season, hauing three chins, wipe them all away one after another, as they melted to water, and left hir selfe nothing of a mouth but an vpper chap. (229)

Here again, a particular tone and attitude is established, only to be undermined by an inconsistent image. In the midst of describing the physical horrors of human suffering and death, Nashe inserts a truly comic image of a melting human chin.

A little later, Nashe laments the "bad name" that the Anabaptists and other deluded sects and individuals

have given to religion in general:

> The name of Religion, bee it good or bad that is ruinated, God neuer suffers vnreuenged: Ile say of it as _Ouid_ said of Eunuchs:
> _Qui primus pueris genitalia membra recidit,_
> _Vulnera quae fecit debuit ipse pati._
> Who first depriued yong boies of their best part,
> With selfe same wounds he gaue he ought to smart.
> So would he that first gelt religion or Church-liuings had bin first gelt himselfe or neuer liued. (238)

This is distortion at its peak. For some five pages Nashe has been lecturing his reader on the profoundly important differences between true and false religion, between true and false faith. The tone is intense and sincere, and the reader has no doubt in his mind that the question of exegesis and authority is a grave one for Nashe. These Anabaptists, Nashe says, have made "the house of God a den of theeues" (238). Then suddenly, the seriousness of the whole argument and the gravity of tone are completely demolished by Nashe's choice of comparison. Suddenly God, religion, and deluded religious sects are lumped together with Ovid, eunuchs and castration. The Ovidian sentiment may express Nashe's indignant attitude toward the Anabaptists, but it also casts a doubtful shadow on the religious sincerity of the context. It is ludicrous, perhaps sacrilegious. How is one to respond to such ambiguity? In such examples the reader is set up, as it were, for Nashe's knockout punch. And, characteristically, Nashe hits below the belt.

After Esdras of Granado's brutal rape of Heraclide, Jack asks of his reader: "Let not your sorrow die, you that haue read the proeme and narration of this eligiacall historie. Shew you haue quick wits in sharp conceipt of compassion" (292). Wilton then endeavors to groom and augment the reader's sense of tragedy by dwelling on the sorry state of the unfortunate Heraclide:

> This woman, this matrone, this forsaken Heraclide hauing buried fourteene children in fiue daies, whose eyes she howlingly closed, & caught manie wrinckles with funerall kisses; besides hauing her husband within a day after laid forth as a comfortles corse, a carrionly blocke, that could neither eate with her, speak with her, nor weepe with her; is she not to bee borne withall though her body swell with a Timpany of teares, thogh her speech be as impatient as vnhappie Hecubas, thogh her head raues and her braine doate? Deuise with your selves that you see a corse rising from his hierce after he is caried to church, & such another suppose Heraclide to be, rising from the couch of enforced adulterie.
>
> Her eies wer dim, her cheeks bloodles, her breath smelt earthy, her countnance was gastly. (292-293)

One could not ask for a more pathetic situation: her fourteen children and her husband are dead from the plague, and now she is robbed and raped. Heraclide then delivers a lengthy monologue and denounces herself, rejecting her purity and innocence as though her beauty had caused the rape, as though the fact that she were female was enough to convict her. In this distressed state of mind she decides that suicide is the only means by which she can rid herself of her guilt and shame, and join her husband -- God

willing -- in heaven:

> Fare-well, life, that hast lent me nothing but sorrowe. Fare-well, sinne-sowed flesh, that hast more weedes than flowers, more woes than ioies. Point, pierce, edge, enwiden, I patiently affoorde thee a sheath: spurre forth my soule to mount poste to heauen. Iesu, forgiue me, Iesu, receiue me. (294-295)

Nashe drags from his reader every emotion that he can in response to the tragic dimensions of the situation: to Heraclide's family sorrows and bereavement, the brutal rape, her self-accusations and guilt, and her suicide, the reader responds with appropriate feelings of sympathy, empathetic horror and remorse, and all that complexity of feeling that one experiences when one witnesses tragedy and great human suffering. What occurs next is typical of Nashe and The Unfortunate Traveller as a whole -- no sooner have the context, tone and reader's response been established but Nashe turns it around completely and involves his reader in attitudes and emotions that are "inappropriate," contradictory, or inconsistent with the initial situation:

> So (throughlie stabd) fell she downe, and knockt her head against her husbands bodie: wherwith he, not hauing been aired his ful foure and twentie houres, start as out of a dreame. . . . Awaking, he rubbed his head too and fro, and wyping his eyes with his hand, began to looke about him. Feeling some thing lie heauie on his breast he turned it off, and getting vpon his legs, lighted a candle. (295)

The tragic moment is dispelled immediately. The element of farce and comedy inherent in the husband's revival -- his "fake" death -- undercuts the tragic quality of the "real" death and the events leading up to it. (There is nothing tragic in tone when Heraclide's husband is finally aware of the scene. He says nothing; he simply runs through the house looking for a murderer. He finds Jack, accuses him, and has him bound. His confusion and false accusation are essentially comic.) As is so often the case in The Unfortunate Traveller, the reader is confronted with ambiguity, inconsistency and tonal contradiction.

Finally, we might examine Cutwolfe's oration to the crowd as he awaits his execution. He explains why and how he murdered Esdras of Granado, and his treatment of Esdras is in one respect parallel to the narrative treatment of the reader in The Unfortunate Traveller. It is an extreme yet effective illustration of how reader expectation is first generated and then exploited. Cutwolfe tells his audience that once he has confronted Esdras he vows that "a miracle may not repriue thee: villaine, thus march I with my blade into thy bowels" (324). Esdras pleads for his life:

> Respite me a little from thy swordes point, and set me about some execrable enterprise. . . . Commaund me to cut all my kindreds throats, to burne men, women, and children in their beds in millions. . . . For thy sake will I sweare and forsweare, renounce my baptisme, and all the interest I haue in any other sacrament. Onely let mee liue howe miserable so euer, be it in a dungeon amongst toads, serpents, and adders, or set vp to the necke in dong. (324-325)

Cutwolfe has no intention of showing mercy; in fact, he admits that "my thoughtes traueld in quest of some notable newe Italionisme" (325):

> The ground worke of it was this: that whereas he had promised for my sake to sweare and forsweare, and commit Iulian-like violence on the highest seales of religion; if he would but this farre satisfie me, he should be dismist from my furie. First and formost, he should renounce God and his laws. . . . Next, he should curse him to his face, as Iob was willed by his wife, and write an absolute firme obligation of his soule to the deuill, without condition or exception. Thirdly and lastly, (hauing done this,) hee shoulde pray to God feruently neuer to haue mercie vpon him, or pardon him. (325)

With the promise of life, Esdras begins his blasphemous oath with enthusiasm. Even Cutwolfe is shaken by his fervor:

> I wonder the earth opened not and swalowed vs both, hearing the bolde tearmes he blasted forth in contempt of Christianitie. . . . My ioints trembled & quakt with attending them, my haire stood vpright, & my hart was turned wholy to fire. So affectionatly and zealously dyd hee giue himselfe ouer to infidelity, as if sathan had gotten the vpper hand of our high maker. (326)

Having completed his side of the bargain, the uncertain Esdras awaits Cutwolfe's pardon. Cutwolfe tells us that

> These fearefull ceremonies brought to an end, I bad him ope his mouth and gape wide. He did so, (as what wil not slaues do for feare?); therewith made I no more ado, but shot him full into the throat with my pistoll: no more spake he after. . . . His bodie being dead lookt as blacke as a toad. (326)

Like the narrator's distortion of reader-anticipation, Cutwolfe sets up Esdras to expect a certain outcome and then violates that expectation. The reader's relationship to the narrative is very similar to Esdras' relationship to Cutwolfe. Like Esdras, the reader is led to expect a comprehensible working-out of cause and effect. But that expectation is seldom fulfilled.

When one considers these examples and many others like them, it becomes apparent that the reader is being confronted with an uncertain moral context and an ambiguous emotional context. Nashe tries continually, through narrative manipulation, to force his reader into intellectual ambivalence, into emotional self-contradiction. The narrative requires us to imagine a context of human sympathy and friendly advice, only to confront us with images of urine and self-dismemberment; we are given the narrator's moral indignation and religious outrage at fanatics and false religion, and at the same moment we must visualize castration. In exampleslike these, the narrative forces

the reader to fuse opposite emotions, disparate images and incompatible attitudes. Our sense of what constitutes beauty or ugliness, comedy or tragedy, cause and effect, and narrative consistency is challenged and shaken rather violently. Out of a context of physical suffering juts a picture of a melting human chin; in the midst of tragic death there is comic revival. Nashe likes to distort and violate his reader's expectations of narrative priority, narrative cause and effect, narrative tone and consistency, and, in so doing, some of our more firmly grounded beliefs about reality and narratives are challenged. In *The Unfortunate Traveller* we never know whether to laugh or cry, to be cheered or disgusted. We find ourselves doing both at the same time, and, like Esdras, we are left in a state of doubt and uncertainty.

Distortion and Vision

When we step back from specific examples of distortion and examine *The Unfortunate Traveller* as a whole, it becomes readily apparent that one thing in particular is continually distorted and violated: the reader's expectations of a familiar, an ordered, a meaningful and comprehensible world. In the case of Nashe's word-play the rapid shifts in context and the juxtaposition of contexts that are unrelated or even contradictory, explain a

great deal of the work's humor and Nashe's verbal virtuosity. But the contextual mechanics of the word-play also demonstrate that language, words and definitions are meaningful only when man provides a context. In order that meaning and information can be communicated, we expect the context to have a certain amount of consistency and stability. This the word-play provides, or the reader would not catch the humor. But at the same time Nashe makes meaning a slippery affair in his chameleon-like shifts of context, for these shifts implicitly challenge the reader's habit of believing that "if a passage [or word] means one thing it cannot at the same time mean another and an incompatible thing."[33]

Likewise, in Nashe's use of simile and comparison, the reader's expectations and beliefs about the physical appearance of the universe are violated. Common notions of likeness, similarity, contrast and dissimilarity are thrown out the window, and the reader now finds himself visualizing a world that equates mucous and human fashion, or hot porridge and lust. The reader is jolted out of customary ways of perceiving the world, and instead of familiar elements of reality located in familiar situations and relationships, the reader is obliged to fuse familiar elements of reality in relationships that are remote, incompatible or perverse.

In narrative inconsistency and ambiguity, the use of incongruous images, situations and narrative tones violates the reader's emotional and intellectual anticipations. As practiced readers we know (or think we know) how to react and respond to narrative portrayals of tragedy, comedy, bathos, pathos, beauty, ugliness, and so on. In other words, we know how to identify narrative tone and anticipate its outcome. But _The Unfortunate Traveller_ confuses us in this respect, and the reader is forced to respond to a situation that is both emotionally and tonally ambiguous. Our expectations of narrative consistency and of cause and effect are tampered with, and the reader finds himself responding with incompatible feelings.

It is no wonder many critics accuse _The Unfortunate Traveller_ of incoherence; it is easier to heap blame on Nashe than it is to examine the uneasiness and peculiar reactions which the work evokes in the reader. In such distortion Nashe challenges his reader's narrative expectations of a familiar, a meaningful, a comprehensible world, and the reader begins to realize that "form," "meaning," "structure" are not solidly established absolutes, but of man's own device. But the demonstration is by implication: if Euphues, Philautus, F.J. and Elinor invent meaning and, through rhetorical means, impose form on the universe, Nashe shows how easily this can be penetrated, broken down, and re-ordered at will.

But if it is the reader's belief in a comprehensible world that is challenged and violated, then what exactly does Nashe's distortion make us "see?" What, then, is the work's "vision of life"? The world, says The Unfortunate Traveller is a ridiculous and strange thing, both tragic and comic, both meaningful and absurd. The various distortions in The Unfortunate Traveller are an expression of an estranged and cock-eyed world, one which sees man and human experience as inconsistent, ambivalent and absurd in exactly the way that Nashe's rhetoric -- the similes, comparisons and narrative manipulations -- is full of contradictions, opposition and incompatibility. Life is a ludicrous business, according to The Unfortunate Traveller, even though man tries so hard to invest it with meaning and significance:

> . . . the sect of Philosophers called Cynikes, who whẽ they saw they were born to no lands or possessions . . . they plotted and consulted with themselues, scorning the very breath or companie of all men; they profest (according to the rate of their lands) voluntarie pouertie, thin fare & lying hard, contemning and inueighing against all those as brute beasts whatsoeuer whome the world had giuen anie reputation for riches or prosperitie. Diogenes was one of the first and formost of the ringleaders of this rustie morositie, and he for all his nice dogged disposition and blunt deriding of worldly drosse and the grosse felicitie of fooles, was taken notwithstanding a little after verie fairely a coyning monie in his cell. (237)

But the world is not only an amusing and ironic spectacle

of human folly. It also has its darker side. Despite man's claim to a meaningful position in an ordered universe he is still a vicious, irrational animal, says Nashe, and capable -- in the name of political and religious whim -- of the most horrendous violence and self-mutilation: "so ordinarie at euery foot-step was the imbrument of yron in bloud, that one could hardly discern heads from bullets, or clottred haire from mangled flesh hung with goare" (241).

Nashe's "vision of life" sees man as a ridiculous figure: small, petty, impotent. Zadoch and Dr. Zachary hear of Juliana's treachery and of the Pope's edict. The vitriolic Zadoch proposes a method of revenge:

> I haue a leg with an issue, shall I cut if off, & from his fount of corruption extract a venome worse than anie serpents? If thou wilt, Ile goe to a house that is infected, where catching the plague, and hauing got a running sore vpon me, Ile come and deliuer her a supplication, and breath vpon her. I knowe my breath stinkes so alredie, that it is within halfe a degree of poison. Ile paie her home if I perfect it with anie more putrifaction. (311-312)

Nashe is not interested in the greatness or dignity of man. In fact, he is not certain man possesses these qualities. Nashe wants his reader to see the other side of the coin, and here in Zadoch's perverse gesture is asserted the demented hostility, the essential ugliness and insanity of the human animal. Zadoch is repulsive, but he is at the same time comical. And for the reader, the difference

between disgust and amusement is never differentiated in _The Unfortunate Traveller_.

Nashe's "vision of life" offers a world in which not a great deal makes sense, a world in which human intention is at cross-purposes with human action, where what "ought" to be is constantly violated by what "is". Wilton introduces the Earl of Surrey as a "Poet without peere" (242), and adds, that "if there bee anie sparke of Adams Paradized perfection yet emberd vp in the breastes of mortall men, certainelie God hath bestowed that his perfectest image on Poets" (242). Being a poet, Surrey is above the world: "their thoughts are exalted aboue the worlde of ignorance and all earthly conceits" (242). As Surrey explains his business on the continent, however, his pompous diction and his inflated idealism break down, and it turns out that he is sick for love of the fair Geraldine, who has not yet granted her full affection. Wilton comments:

> Not a little was I delighted with this vnexpected loue storie, especially from a mouth out of which was nought wont to march but sterne precepts of grauetie & modestie. I sweare vnto you I thought his companie the better by a thousand crownes, because hee had discarded those nice tearmes of chastitie and continencie. Now I beseech God loue me so well as I loue a plaine dealing man; earth is earth, flesh is flesh, earth wil to earth, and flesh vnto flesh: fraile earth, fraile flesh, who can keepe you from the worke of your creation? (245)

Here is the very subject-matter of the work's "vision of life": human experience is of the ambiguities, incongruities and ironies of existence; human experience is of the workings of "fraile earth" and "fraile flesh."

It is this kind of perverse, ironic, violent, bathetic world that _The Unfortunate Traveller_ tries to image, and this is most effectively offered to the reader through images that defy the intellect, and through the various forms of verbal and tonal distortion that we have observed. Nashe's "unorthodox" similes, comparisons, and narrative tricks of tone are a means by which the reader can experience imaginatively these ambiguities, accidents and uncertainties. And the tension and ambivalence that these rhetorical distortions cause in the reader oblige him to admit that his most cherished notions of a transparent, intelligible world are not secure -- that absurdity, ambiguity and chaos are always present. Distortion is not merely a technique in _The Unfortunate Traveller_; it is the subject.

If we must fit this "vision" into a literary concept or explain it by means of technical terms or literary jargon, then there is only one term to describe Nashe's language of distortion: the grotesque. Of course, there is an immediate problem in applying the concept to _The Unfortunate Traveller_, since we cannot take some definition of the term

for granted. Because the grotesque is defined by our response, it is, to a large extent, a matter of opinion and personal taste. Nevertheless, I can characterize commonly accepted explanations of the term in the following quotations, and note how appropriate they are to the examples I have used and to The Unfortunate Traveller as a whole. "In general," states Arthur Clayborough, "the chief idea involved in the various senses of the term grotesque is that of incongruity, of a conflict between some phenomenon and an existing conception of what is natural, fitting, &c."[34] Philip Thomson writes that in some cases "the grotesque writer will deliberately prevent a rational and intellectual approach to his work, demonstrating that the intolerable and inextricable mixture of incompatibles is a fact of life, perhaps the most crucial one."[35] These are very general explanations of the concept, to be sure, but if incongruity and incompatibility are basic ingredients of the grotesque, then certainly The Unfortunate Traveller is well-qualified.

Let us examine more specific aspects of the grotesque, and see how they apply to The Unfortunate Traveller. Lee Byron Jennings' study of the concept sees distortion as a major aspect of the grotesque:

> A far-reaching distortion is revealed in the grotesque products of the imagination; the deepest foundations of our being are interfered with: the stability and constancy of the human form. . . . The grotesque displays something more than the superficial distortion of most caricature . . . it is rather a distortion that penetrates to the bases of our perception of reality. . . . The "original" (the human form in general) is not so much distorted in the strict sense as it is destroyed and rebuilt along new lines. There is a recombining of the elements of experienced reality to form something alien to it; the norms of common life are replaced by an "anti-norm."36

The stability and constancy of the human form is indeed tampered with in The Unfortunate Traveller. We need only think of Jack's description of himself to realize that distortion of the human form is typical in The Unfortunate Traveller. Wilton would have us visualize his human form as a gutted pig roasting on a spit, as an elephant's ear, as Dutch cheese. Likewise, Jack's account of Zadoch's anger (310) or of Vanderhulke's appearance (247) relies on the same destruction of human form, which is then replaced by something that is both human and non-human, both recognizable and unrecognizable; we are left with a figure that is at once man and Kentish oysters, trap-doors, birds' nests, fire in eggshells. Nashe's image of a melting human chin is also a good example of this type of distortion and replacement by the grotesque.

There is also in the grotesque

> a basic incongruity, inherent in the structure of the concrete world presented to us in the scene -- an incongruity that defies further analysis and engages our attention in its own right. If there is a contrast present, it is that between the order in the world of our normal experience and the disorder in the scene that we now observe.37

There are many basic incongruities that defy analysis in The Unfortunate Traveller, and which are at odds with our normal, ordinary expectations of what the concrete world is like. And again, Nashe fuses elements of experienced reality to form the grotesque: Spanish fashion and mucous; lust, sex, seduction and hot, bubbling porridge; human gore and ox dung. When we remember Nashe's verbal equations of urine and human sympathy, of castration and friendly advice, we can see that Nashe is confronting us with a world in which the familiar structure of existence is being undermined and is on the verge of chaos. The reader reacts to such a world with ambivalence, with both uncertainty and amusement:

> The development of these feelings [ambivalent feelings of disgust, amusement, etc.] depends on a really thorough violation of the basic norms of existence (e.g., personal identity, the stability of our unchanging environment, the inviolate nature of the human body, and the separation of the human and nonhuman realms); and the violation must be expressed in entirely concrete terms.38

Let me examine two final passages in <u>The Unfortunate Traveller</u>. The first describes the execution of Zadoch, and the second passage recounts the execution of Cutwolfe. Both are good examples of the grotesque:

> To the execution place was he brought, where first and formost he was stript, then on a sharp yron stake fastened in $\overset{e}{y}$ ground he had his fundament pitcht, which stake ran vp along into the bodie like a spit; vnder his arme-holes two of like sort; a great bonfire they made round about him, wherewith his flesh roasted, not burnd: and euer as with the heate his skinne blistred, the fire was drawen aside, and they basted him with a mixture of Aqua fortis, allum water, and Mercury sublimatum, which smarted to the very soul of him, and searcht him to the marrowe. Then dyd they scourge his backe partes so blistred and basted, with burning whips of red hot wier: his head they nointed ouer with pitch and tar, and so inflamed it. To his priuie members they tied streaming fire-workes: the skinne from the crest of the shoulder, as also from his elbowes, his huckle bones, his knees, his anckles, they pluckt and gnawed off with sparkling pincers: his breast and his belly with seale skins they grated ouer, which as fast as they grated and rawed, one stood ouer & laued with smiths syndry water & Aqua vitae: his nailes they halfe raised vp, and then vnder-propt them with sharpe prickes, like a Tailers shop window halfe open on a holy daie: euery one of his fingers they rent vp to the wrist: his toes they brake off by the rootes, and let them still hang by a little skinne. In conclusion, they had a small oyle fire, such as men blow light bubbles of glasse with, and beginning at his feete, they let him lingringly burne vp lim by lim, till his heart was consumed, and then he died. (315-316)

> The executioner needed no exhortation herevnto, for of his owne nature was he hackster good inough: olde excellent he was at a bone-ach. At the first chop with his wood-knife would he fish for a mans heart, and fetch it out as easily as a plum from the bottom of a porredge pot. He woulde cracke

> neckes as fast as a cooke cracks egges: a fidler cannot turne his pin so soone as he would turne a man of the ladder. Brauely did he drum on this Cutwolfes bones, not breaking them outright, but, like a sadler knocking in of tackes, iarring on them quaueringly with his hammer a great while together. No ioint about him but with a hatchet he had for the nones he disioynted halfe, and then with boyling lead souldered vp the wounds from bleeding: his tongue he puld out, least he should blaspheme in his torment: venimous stinging wormes hee thrust into his eares, to keep his head rauingly occupied: with cankers scruzed to peeces hee rubd his mouth and his gums: no lim of his but was lingeringly splinterd in shiuers. In this horror left they him on the wheele as in hell; where, yet liuing, he might beholde his flesh legacied amongst the foules of the aire. Vnsearchable is the booke of our destinies. (327)

What is remarkable about these two passages is the incompatibility of tone with content, and of vehicle with tenor. In both cases a man is ripped to pieces slowly and methodically; he is tortured and mutilated. But despite the death and incredible violence of both scenes, Nashe presents the executions with a casual, documentary-like, matter-of-fact tone which is completely at odds with the physical horrors and morbid excesses of the execution itself. The reader witnesses a horrifying physical mutilation of the human form, but Nashe's tone and manner of description could just as easily be describing the contents and activities of a Sunday picnic. There is the same incompatibility of tenor with vehicle as well. Instead of reinforcing one image of violence with another, Nashe

informs us that "his nailes they halfe raised vp, and then vnder-propt them with sharpe prickes, like a Tailers shop window halfe open on a holy daie" (316). And we learn of the executioner's brutal skills in the same manner: "At the first chop with his wood-knife would he fish for a mans heart, and fetch it out as easily as a plum from the bottome of a porredge pot. He woulde cracke neckes as fast as a cooke cracks egges" (327). As A.K. Croston points out, "The interest of such a passage lies not so much in the activities of the executioner as in the dexterity with which Nashe finds congruous and incongruous parallels for these activities."[39] And it is this dexterity which introduces the ludicrous to a context which is ostensibly frightening, disgusting, and repulsive. As happens so often in The Unfortunate Traveller, the reader holds in his mind one context and one image (execution, dismemberment, torture, etc.) only to be confronted with another image which is completely incongruous ("a Tailers shop window halfe open on a holy daie"; "a plum from the bottome of a porredge pot"). The effect produced in the reader by such a clash of disparate images and tones is both laughter and horror -- it is the grotesque. There is no respite for the reader in Nashe's world; the narrative does not allow one to indulge oneself in consistent emotions or tones of tragedy, or comedy, or even horror and

disgust. Zadoch's and Cutwolfe's deaths are not tragic or pathetic, they are ludicrous. L.B. Jennings recognizes that in the grotesque "the development of tragedy and pathos is inhibited by the realization that life is, after all, a foolish and ludicrous spectacle, and that man, in his futile insignificance and contemptible helplessness, can make no claim to tragedy."[40]

Wolfgang Kayser has stated that there are three historical periods in which a sense of the grotesque was strongly felt. One of these is the later sixteenth century: "In these periods the belief of the preceding ages in a perfect and protective natural order ceased to exist."[41] Philip Thomson asserts likewise that "It is no accident that the grotesque mode in art and literature tends to be prevalent in societies and eras marked by strife, radical change or disorientation."[42] Perhaps in thinking of The Unfortunate Traveller as a grotesque work, one can view it as a peculiar, if not an extreme, reflection of a disintegrating world-view, rather than as misguided satire or an aborted picaresque novel. Perhaps in Nashe's narrative ambiguity and verbal distortion there is reflected the uncertainties, doubts and scepticism about a universe that is no longer certain. It may be the case that the general chaos and absurdity that is imaged in The Unfortunate Traveller is responsible for its lack of popularity and success in the sixteenth century.[43] For the Elizabethan

reader, _The Unfortunate Traveller_ offers a world in which his sense of normal proportion and propriety do not apply and appear to be constantly undermined; he is, in a sense, alienated. This is no less true for the twentieth-century reader. One cannot help wondering if the unsettling effects of _The Unfortunate Traveller_ do not explain at least part of the modern critical dilemma as well. Because Nashe's distortions, inconsistencies, and ambiguities tend to defy most critical analysis, it is little wonder that charges of "incoherence" and "a lack of unity" have been levelled at the work. But once we apply a concept that embraces the work's distortions and ambiguities -- the grotesque -- then most of the critical problems of description and classification are resolved, and the work's unity of mood and attitude can be more adequately explained. We either comply with the narrative demands of the story, or we require that the work comply with our expectations of a narrative. In the first instance, we will perceive Nashe's "vision of life" as one that grasps the essential grotesqueness of the world; in the second, we will judge _The Unfortunate Traveller_ to be an incoherent work, lacking in unity, and worthwhile reading only because of Nashe's peculiar prose style.

"The key to the grotesque," as F.K. Barasch observes, "is found in imagery."[44] And certainly much of the work's impact lies in the visual and pictorial aspects of Nashe's similes and comparisons. As I suggested earlier, pictorial analogies are useful in explaining the nature of Nashe's outlandish verbal distortions. The analogy also helps explain the paratactic, haphazard quality of Nashe's plot. Nashe does not offer his "vision of life" through an ordered narrative presentation of cause and effect, but rather, he offers his reader a series of unrelated "pictures" or images which are rhetorical variations of the same theme. To read The Unfortunate Traveller is to be led through a picture gallery of the insane, the deformed, the ludicrous -- the grotesque. Nashe's "vision of life" is one that images in concrete terms his sense of mingled amusement and disgust at the preposterous antics of the world; it is one that perceives the universe, man, human experience as essentially grotesque:

> It would seem then that artists and writers of any era, given the freedom or license to express their caprice, invariably produced forms which, in respect to the conventional ideas of their worlds, were irrational and grotesque . . . the artists of different ages, instinctively or consciously, expressed in fantasies of mixed humor and fear, the common perception that the total human experience is beyond logical ordering.45

Perhaps I have given the impression that Nashe's cynicism, the horrific aspect of the grotesque, and the

disgust and revulsion have outweighed his sense of humor. This is not so. Nashe's "vision of life" may be of the grotesque, but it is also a comic vision -- a vision that encompasses the ludicrous essence of human affairs. Nashe is not interested in some concept of "content" or "meaning," since these ideas presuppose a form and structure which The Unfortunate Traveller denies. Nashe is interested in some ludicrous detail or ridiculous gesture that might yield humor or irony: "they vttered nothing to make a man laugh, therefore I will leaue them" (250). The Unfortunate Traveller effects a "counteracting of life's tragedy by life's comedy."[46] Nashe had the insight to perceive the absurdity and incomprehensibility of human experience and life, and he chose laughter, rather than lament, as the anodyne for man.

Rhetoric in The Unfortunate Traveller is a peculiar thing. Nashe's rhetorical manipulations of the reader ultimately teach him an important lesson about rhetoric itself. Nashe's rhetoric causes the reader to confront incoherence and disorder in a fictional world and, by implication, in his own world of real experience as well. The reader comes to realize that not all rhetorical distortion is a bad thing; it can also be a means of instruction and enlightenment.

NOTES TO CHAPTER III

[1]Thomas Nashe, The Unfortunate Traveller, volume 2 in The Works of Thomas Nashe, ed. R.B. McKerrow, 4 volumes (Oxford, 1958). All parenthetical page references are to this edition.

[2]Agnes M.C. Latham, "Satire on Literary Themes and Modes in Nashe's 'Unfortunate Traveller,'" Essays and Studies, n.s. 1 (1948), 85.

[3]Merritt Lawlis, ed., Elizabethan Prose Fiction (New York, 1967), p. 435.

[4]Richard A. Lanham, "Tom Nashe and Jack Wilton: Personality as Structure in The Unfortunate Traveller," SSF, 4 (1967), 201.

[5]Stanley Wells, ed., Thomas Nashe, 2 volumes (London, 1964), I, 8.

[6]Lawlis, pp. 437-438.

[7]Clifford Leech, "Recent Studies in the Elizabethan and Jacobean Drama," SEL, 3 (1963), 274.

[8]Lanham, 214.

[9]This chronology is derived from Robert Ashley and Edwin M. Moseley, eds., Elizabethan Fiction (New York, 1953), notes, pp. 419-436.

[10]Lawlis, p. 440.

[11]A. K. Croston, "The Use of Imagery in Nashe's The Unfortunate Traveller," RES, 24 (1948), 91.

[12]David Kaula, "The Low Style in Nashe's The Unfortunate Traveller," SEL, 6 (1966), 43.

[13]Wells, 13.

[14]Lanham, 210.

[15]E.D. Mackerness, "A Note on Thomas Nashe and 'Style,'" English, 6 (1946), 200.

[16]G.R. Hibbard, Thomas Nashe: A Critical Introduction (Cambridge, Mass., 1962), pp. 178, 179.

[17]Wells, pp. 17-18.

[18]Fredson T. Bowers, "Thomas Nashe and the Picaresque," in Humanistic Studies in Honor of John Calvin Metcalf (Charlottesville, Va., 1941), p. 26.

[19]Lanham, 202.

[20]Philip Wheelwright, Metaphor and Reality (Bloomington, 1962), p. 75.

[21]See W.R. Davis, Idea and Act in Elizabethan Fiction (Princeton, 1969), pp. 210-237. Davis' interpretation owes a great deal to Kaula's.

[22]Kaula, 44.

[23]Ibid., 55.

[24]C.S. Lewis, English Literature in the Sixteenth Century: Excluding Drama (1944; rpt. Oxford, 1973), p. 416.

[25]I.A. Richards, The Philosophy of Rhetoric, (1936; rpt. New York, 1965), p. 11.

[26]Croston, 94, 95.

[27]Ibid., 90.

[28]Richards, p. 106.

[29] *Ibid*., pp. 107, 107-108.

[30] *Ibid*., p. 125.

[31] W.J. Johnson, "Stylistic Development in the Prose of Thomas Nashe," unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Texas, 1967, p. 214.

[32] Jacques Bousquet, *Mannerism: The Painting and Style of the Late Renaissance*, trans. Simon W. Taylor (Munich, 1964), p. 23.

[33] Richards, p. 38.

[34] Arthur Clayborough, *The Grotesque in English Literature* (Oxford, 1965), p. 70.

[35] Philip Thomson, *The Grotesque* (London, 1972), p. 47.

[36] Lee Byron Jennings, *The Ludicrous Demon* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1963), pp. 9-10.

[37] *Ibid*., p. 21.

[38] *Ibid*., pp. 18-19.

[39] Croston, 90.

[40] Jennings, p. 25.

[41] Wolfgang Kayser, *The Grotesque in Art and Literature*, trans. Ulrich Weisstein (Bloomington, 1963), p. 188.

[42] Thomson, p. 11.

[43] *The Unfortunate Traveller* was not immensely popular and went through only two editions. See Hibbard, pp. 178-179.

[44] Frances K. Barasch, The Grotesque: A Study in Meanings (The Hague, 1971), p. 164.

[45] Ibid., p. 164.

[46] Jennings, p. 26.

CHAPTER IV

SIDNEY AND DELONEY

At first glance the inclusion of both Sir Philip Sidney and Thomas Deloney in a single chapter may seem to be curious coupling. After all, what could the lofty prose of either *Arcadia* have in common with the low style and dramatic dialogue of *Jack of Newbury* or *Thomas of Reading*? What could the ponderous moral and legal ambiguities of Sidney's so-called "Arcadian epic" have in common with the jest-book quality of Deloney's middle-class world? If one compares the works in these ways then one should have to reply, "Not a great deal." But in terms of my interest in the verbal and rhetorical manipulation of the face of the "real" world, both Sidney and Deloney are interesting figures. It must be admitted that the works of these two writers do not illustrate the same central preoccupation with language, rhetoric and reality that we have seen in *The Adventures of Master F.J.*, *Euphues*, *Euphues and His England*, or *The Unfortunate Traveller*. This is one reason why I have collapsed into a single chapter my discussion of both writers. Nevertheless, there is in the *Old Arcadia*[1] and in *Jack of Newbury*[2] enough evidence to demonstrate a peripheral interest in the question of language and reality. In fact,

the great difference in the way this issue manifests itself in the Old Arcadia as opposed to Jack of Newbury makes Sidney and Deloney very convenient figures through whom I can round off my investigation into the area of language, rhetoric and reality as it appears in early fiction.

Sidney's "Old Arcadia"[3]

Basilius, the king of Arcadia, retires into the country with his wife (Gynecia) and their two teenage daughters (Philoclea and Pamela) in order to evade the prophecy that Basilius has received of a Delphic oracle. The oracle prophesies that within the year his eldest daughter Pamela will be "stolen" by a prince "and yet not lost" (5); Philoclea "shall with nature's bliss embrace / An uncouth love" (5); Basilius will commit adultery with his own wife; and, a foreign head of state will occupy his throne. Despite the appeals of his right-hand-man, Philanax, Basilius relinquishes his obligations as governor, moves to his country lodgings, keeps Philoclea under close guard, places Pamela under the protection of the doltish shepherd Dametas, and charges Philanax with the government of the state. Into this uncertain political context arrive Pyrocles and Musidorus, heroic young princes. Pyrocles sees a portrait of Philoclea and falls in love with her. He is admonished by Musidorus, who reminds him that he must not

allow his reason to fall prey to his passion. Pyrocles, however, is overcome, and, disguising himself as the Amazon Cleophila, he enters the scene of Basilius' country retreat and ingratiates himself with the royal family. Musidorus catches a glimpse of Pamela and falls in love with her. Disguising himself as the shepherd Dorus, he gains the confidence of Dametas and enters his household as a servant. Cleophila's transvestite disguise, however, complicates his amorous intentions toward Philoclea: as a woman he cannot declare his love to her; Basilius takes him for a woman and falls in love with him; Gynecia sees through his disguise and falls in love with him as well. The whole company (excepting Basilius) goes to view "the pastoral sports" (45) of the shepherds when Philoclea is attacked by a lion and Pamela by a bear. The wild animals are killed by Cleophila and Dorus, and their courage and valor make a further assault on the hearts of the royal family. "The First Book or Act" of the Old Arcadia ends at this point with "The First Eclogues" (56-88), a pastoral exercise in which the participating shepherds provide a dramatic commentary on the theme of unrequited love that has been established in Book One.

Book Two begins with Gynecia, who delivers a lengthy monologue on her adulterous lust for Pyrocles/Cleophila and

the guilt which these desires have produced. Cleophila happens upon her, and Gynecia reveals her love for him. Meanwhile, Philoclea anxiously ponders the guilt-feelings that her lesbian attraction to Cleophila has produced. At Dametas' lodge, Musidorus/Dorus woos Pamela by pretending to court Dametas' daughter Mopsa. He tells of the heroic exploits of the princes Musidorus and Pyrocles. Pamela sees through his transparent device, realizes his true identity, and falls in love with him. Basilius propositions Cleophila directly. Cleophila demures, but feeds Basilius' hopes by requesting Philoclea to act as a go-between. Cleophila reveals his true identity to Philoclea, and vows of love and promises of chaste devotion are exchanged. The royal entourage is threatened by a rebellious mob that has taken exception to Basilius' irresponsible retreat from active government. Pyrocles/Cleophila and Musidorus/Dorus defend the royal family and finally quell the mutiny with rhetorical eloquence. The shepherds in "The Second Eclogues" sing of the dangers of blind passion when the calm rule of reason is ignored. The previous heroic deeds of Pyrocles and Musidorus are recounted for the edification of Basilius and his family.

Book Three begins as Basilius renews his direct suit for Cleophila's sexual favors. Cleophila retires to a cave

to think, and discovers Gynecia bemoaning her unrequited lust. Gynecia threatens to expose Cleophila's disguise unless he agrees to her demands. The scene shifts to Dorus. Dorus plays on Dametas' greed, his wife Miso's jealousy, and Mopsa's vanity, and manages, through an elaborate trick, to get all of them out of the lodge. He flees with Pamela, promising to marry her and make her Queen in his own country. They stop for rest in a grove and Dorus is about to rape the sleeping Pamela when they are attacked "by a dozen clownish villains" (202). Back in the cave, Gynecia now declares her sexual longings outright, and, under threat of exposure, Cleophila pretends acquiescence, but asks her to wait for a more opportune time. Philoclea is jealous and traumatized by the sudden shift in Cleophila's affections toward her mother, not realizing that they are feigned. Cleophila separately promises to satisfy both Basilius and Gynecia in the cave. Basilius and his wife arrive in the dark, each thinking the other to be Cleophila. The "adultery" is committed. While this happens, Cleophila steals into Philoclea's bedroom, and after explanations and renewed professions of love, Philoclea happily relinquishes her virginity. The third eclogue recounts the marriage of the shepherd Lalus to "his beloved Kala" (244), and the other shepherds sing of their honest and chaste love -- an ironic comment on the erotic folly and unchaste lust of the preceding book.

In Book Four Dametas discovers that Pamela is missing, and, going to the royal lodge to rouse Basilius, he finds the two young lovers asleep -- the transformed Amazon now a man, and "as close as a butterfly with the lady Philoclea" (274). Basilius congratulates himself on the fine night he has had in the cave, until he discovers that it has been his own wife who has been the object of his aging sexual capacities. He drinks an aphrodisiac potion that Gynecia had intended for Cleophila, and "dies." Overcome with shame and guilt, Gynecia assumes responsibility for Basilius' "murder" and requests of the shepherds who find her that they try her and execute her. In a public lament the shepherds wail over their King's death. Philanax enters the chaotic scene and has Gynecia imprisoned on the strength of her own admissions. Awaking to find himself locked in Philoclea's chamber without his sword (thanks to Dametas), Cleophila attempts suicide to help extricate his beloved Philoclea from legal and moral culpability. He fails, and Philoclea reasons him out of a second attempt. Philanax enters the bedchamber and has Cleophila imprisoned. Dorus and Pamela, meanwhile, are returned by the rebels who had attacked them in the forest. Philanax imprisons Dorus with Cleophila, and Pamela and her sister are detained together in the royal lodge. Public and political chaos seems imminent now that Basilius is dead: "for already was all the whole multitude

fallen into confused and dangerous divisions" (320). Philanax does his best to maintain the public calm, but with difficulty. The shepherds in the fourth eclogue represent a collective dirge for the death of their King and the despair that has entered their pastoral landscape.

Evarchus, king of Macedon, appears at the outset of Book Five, having come to visit his old friend Basilius. Talking with Philanax and learning the true state of affairs (i.e. domestic chaos, apparent regicide, political turmoil), Evarchus agrees to try the two young couples and Gynecia according to Arcadian law and to act as "protector of Arcadia" (365) until such time as political stability is re-established. With Evarchus as judge and Philanax as prosecutor, the trial proceeds. For her moral lapse, Philoclea is ordered to enter a nunnery for life, and Pamela is denied succession to the throne. Gynecia admits to murdering Basilius herself, and is sentenced to be buried alive with her husband. Cleophila and Dorus are acquitted of conspiracy to kill the king, but both are sentenced to death: Cleophila for defiling Philoclea, and Dorus for abducting Pamela. The true identities of the princes are revealed by a travelling countryman from Dorus' native Thessalia, and everyone present realizes that Evarchus has sentenced his own son and nephew -- Pyrocles and Musidorus -- to death. The crowd begs Evarchus to show mercy but

Evarchus upholds the ideal of justice despite his own grief. Basilius awakens from his drug-induced "death" and asks Gynecia to forgive him for his folly. He pardons the young princes and approves their marriages to his daughters. And all ends well.

Deloney's "Jack of Newbury"

Chapter One. John Winchcomb, known to all as Jack of Newbury, is "a broad cloth Weauer. . . . In the daies of King _Henery_ the eight" (5). Jack's master dies and his widow appoints Jack to manage the business affairs. Jack does so well that in three years business "prospered wondrous well" (5). His mistress, the widow -- "a very comely auncient Woman" (5) -- is so impressed with his abilities that she begins to entertain herself with thoughts of marriage to young Jack. Taking her into her confidence she tells him about her various suitors -- of their worth, their stature -- and although Jack praises all of them equally, the widow assures him that "I like better of one nearer hand" (9). Jack realizes that she means him, but decides to play dumb and wait for her to show her hand. Rejecting her suitors at a dinner-party, the widow decides to make her move. In a playful mood she sends Jack to sleep in his dead master's bed, and, suffering from cold feet in her own bed, she slips into bed with Jack in the

middle of the night for warmth and sex. She takes Jack to church the next morning and tricks him into marrying her. Jack is not unwilling. After some petty marital quarrelling, Jack and his new wife settle down and live happily in prosperity until she dies, "leauing her husband wondrous wealthie" (25).

Chapter Two. Jack looks for a new wife, and chooses one of his own servants. The wedding "endured ten dayes, to the great reliefe of the poore" (29), and not long after, Jack takes one hundred fifty lavishly dressed and armed servants to defend King Henry against the invading King James IV of Scotland. The Queen is impressed with this clothier's zeal and patriotism -- Jack had been required to send only six men -- and she gives Jack a gold chain and promises him her favor. The collected army begins its march to Flodden (in 1513), but they learn that James has already suffered defeat at the hands of the Earl of Surrey.

Chapter Three. King Henry has returned from France and comes through Jack's native Berkshire. Jack and thirty armed servants surround an ant hill and wait for the King's approach. When the King inquires about the purpose of the display, Jack informs the royal company that he is the Prince of Ants and is protecting the ants from their dreaded enemy, the idle Prince of Butterflies (a covert reference to Cardinal Wolsey). Amused, King

Henry asks to see this Prince of Ants but Jack refuses, explaining that if he leaves his guard the ants' enemies may come in his absence, just as James had attacked England while Henry was in France. Henry is impressed by Jack's patriotic emblem, and decides to visit Jack's household. The royal entourage is richly entertained, and Jack presents the King and Queen with a golden beehive filled with golden bees and topped with a green tree bearing golden apples. At the bottom of the hive are serpents trying to destroy the hive, but which are being trod under the feet of Prudence and Fortitude. "The King fauourably accepted this Embleme" (38), and, although Cardinal Wolsey is irked by Jack's allegorical ant hill and beehive, Jack's favor with the royal couple is firmly established. The King and Queen accompany Jack through his household, and Jack proudly displays the good order, industry and community of his weavers. As they prepare to leave, the royal couple is confronted by a large group of poor children, who entertain them with various allegorical pantomimes. Moved with sympathy, the King provides for many of these children and his noblemen do likewise. He offers to knight Jack but Jack refuses, preferring to remain a humble clothier.

Chapter Four. The King's fool, Will Sommers, plies his wit with the maids at Jack's spinning wheels, and is outwitted to the delight of everyone but himself.

Chapter Five. Jack gives his servants a tour of his parlor, in which are fifteen pictures of great and famous historical personages. The pictures are intended as emblems of encouragement for the poorest of men, since each of the fifteen men in the portraits had "been aduanced [from humble origins] to high estate and Princely dignities by wisedome, learning, and diligence" (55).

Chapter Six. Because of wars with France and the Low Countries, English merchants are deprived of profitable markets and are first obliged to lower their workers' wages and then to let them go. United in their common distress, Jack and other merchants petition the King. Henry remembers Jack of Newbury and grants their petition, ordering Wolsey (his Lord Chancellor) to make it official. Wolsey also remembers Jack, and, still offended by Jack's allegory, stalls the clothiers until the King's displeasure is risked. Finally their suit is made official, and the clothiers rejoice.

Chapter Seven. Benedick, an Italian cloth merchant who sometimes deals with Jack, becomes enamoured of one of Jack's maidens. His passion is not reciprocated by Jone, and his frustration becomes anger when he learns that John, a kinsman of Jone, has joked about his faulty English and his defects as a suitor. Determined to cuckold John, the Italian plies John's wife with gold and gifts until she

agrees to a rendezvous. Overcome with guilt at what she has promised, she confesses all to her husband. John determines to avenge himself, and invites Benedick to supper, assuring him that his kinswoman Jone has relented and has agreed to spend the night with him. After supper, John leads Benedick to a darkened bedroom, in which John had earlier put a drugged sow. Kneeling at the bed, Benedick declares his love in the highest style that his broken English allows. He crawls into bed with the pig and before too long learns of the jest. He is laughed out of Newbury.

Chapter Eight. A gossipy old maid visits Jack's wife and criticizes her for wasting money by feeding the servants so well. Jack's wife follows the gossip's advice and reduces the quantity and quality of the food for the servants. When Jack learns of this, he chastizes his wife and forbids the gossip to enter his house anymore.

Chapter Nine. Randoll Pert is a draper who owes Jack £500. He goes bankrupt and is imprisoned. When he is released he becomes a poor porter in London, scraping to make ends meet. Jack journeys to London for a meeting -- Jack is now Newbury's Member of Parliament -- and hires Pert to carry his trunk. Pert recognizes Jack (although Jack does not know him) and flees, expecting Jack to have him arrested for the money he owes. Jack's servant catches

up with Pert, Pert reveals himself, and throws himself at Jack's feet. To Pert's surprise, and to the amazement of onlookers, Jack has a scrivener draw up a bill for the £500 to be repaid when Randoll Pert becomes Sheriff of London. Jack then gives Pert money, clothes, and establishes him in a completely outfitted shop. Pert prospers, eventually becomes Sheriff, repays Jack, and dies as an Alderman of London.

Chapter Ten. Knowing that Jack is absent from his house, the gossipy old maid returns to visit, but Mistress Winchcomb is also gone. The gossip is entertained by the servants whom she had earlier tried to deprive of their good meals. In the wine cellar the servants offer toast after toast until the old wench is thoroughly drunk and falls asleep. One of the servants hires "a notable clowne from Greenham" (80) to carry the unconscious woman through the streets of Newbury in his basket, crying: "who knowes this woman, who?" (80). The townspeople laugh at the prank, and the sobering gossip is humiliated.

Chapter Eleven. An unemployed soldier -- Sir George Rigley -- who has recently returned from successful battle in France (the capture of Morlaix, 1522), develops an attraction for Joan, one of Jack's servants. In her attempts to lure Sir George into marriage, Joan finds

herself pregnant. When confronted with the fact, Sir George rejects her and leaves for London. Joan finally reveals her situation to Mistress Winchcomb, who informs Jack. Jack is insulted by Sir George's treachery, and, setting up Joan as a wealthy (but pregnant) widow in London, Jack persuades the needy Sir George to woo her (without recognizing her) and finally to marry her. Sir George is livid when he discovers the fraud, but Jack chastizes him for his own treachery, forgives him, provides Joan with a dowry, and invites the newlyweds to visit at his house for two years. King Henry hears how Jack has dealt with Sir George, and "laughing heartily thereat, gaue him [Sir George] a liuing for euer, the better to maintain my lady his Wife" (87).

Sidney and the Critics

The tremendous increase in studies of Sidney's fiction in the last few years makes a summary of academic trends a very difficult enterprise, even if we exclude all but the Old Arcadia. In fact, evaluations and summaries of recent trends in Sidney criticism have themselves become the subjects of major studies.[4] Although it would be beyond the scope of my argument in this chapter to provide a detailed evaluation of critical commentary on the Old Arcadia, I can provide a summary of the major issues and

approaches of critical interest. (Because a summary as brief as this one must be very selective, I refer the reader to the bibliography for a more comprehensive catalogue of the criticism.)

The Old Arcadia has elicited critical attention of six broadly discernible types. The interrelated problems of genre and authorial intention (i.e. the Old Arcadia as concrete embodiment of Sidney's literary theories) have engaged the efforts of many.[5] The Old Arcadia has been variously praised and dispraised as "a pastoral tragi-comedy in five acts,"[6] "a romantic comedy,"[7] and a "partially anti-pastoral work."[8] And for as long as scholars have been arguing about what genre or genres the Old Arcadia belongs to, they have also argued about Sidney's literary theories and about what kind of work Sidney "thought" he was writing.[9]

Studies of possible and probable sources for Sidney's fiction -- as well as of its influence -- have been legion.[10] A.C. Hamilton has shown recently that Sidney has adopted particular models for the Old Arcadia and has transformed them for his own narrative and thematic purposes to produce a work "radically unlike its sources":

> . . . the major sources of the [Old] Arcadia are Sannazaro's Arcadia, Heliodorus' Ethiopian History . . . and Amadis of Gaul. . . . Such a conjunction of sources in one work is startling: a third-century Greek romance, a medieval "French" book of chivalry . . . and a recent Spanish romance.11

Another critical endeavor has been to find in the Old Arcadia specific examples of allusion. Some critics have examined the work for personal, autobiographical allusion in order to sketch more clearly the relationship of Sidney's life and his fiction. Neil Rudenstine, for example, has offered a persuasive theory "that the Old Arcadia can be legitimately, if only partially, viewed as presenting a series of variations on the themes announced in the Sidney-Languet correspondence."[12] Other critics have used the Old Arcadia and its moral, historical, and political dimensions to isolate particular Elizabethan concepts and beliefs, and to show Sidney's use of traditional themes.[13] Students of Sidney's fiction have also been interested in literary allusion -- mainly classical and mythological -- in order to posit theories about Elizabethan techniques of literary allusion.[14]

The poetry of the Old Arcadia has not been overlooked. The unity and interdependence of the eclogues allows them not only to be considered as essential thematic qualifications of the Old Arcadia, but also as a complete poem -- in itself worthy of study.[15] "In relationship to

the prose text," writes Elizabeth Dipple, "all of the eclogues, although they have the same thematic concerns as the book that precedes them, are distanced ironically from the flow of events in the main plot."[16]

Interest in Sydney's prose style, in his use of oratory and classical rhetorical theory, has been adequate though not overwhelming.[17] R.A. Lanham has cautioned against the vehement objections of many readers to Sidney's "ornate" style, arguing that Sidney's characters "cover his neoclassic trellis with such flowery ornament" so that Sidney can make "a veiled comment on the abuse of easy ornaments by others."[18]

Perhaps the most important issues of interpretation, and certainly the most controversial, have revolved around discussions of the problematic ending and of narrative attitude. At the end of the Old Arcadia Sidney's narrator appears to be sitting on the fence -- the reader's sympathies for Pyrocles and Musidorus have been carefully groomed, yet the desire for justice and for the punishment of legal and moral culpability has been advanced equally. Clifford Davidson argues "that the ending returns the critic to the basic contradiction inherent in the work as a whole;"[19] R.W. Parker refers to it as an "unreconciled conflict between the expectations raised by the comic plot, and the moral themes that plot is asked to develop;"[20] William

Ringler finds "ethical ambiguity" in the final scene;[21] Kenneth Rowe argues that "the Arcadia ends with an effect of ethical confusion."[22] Obviously, the ending of the Old Arcadia has engendered much spirited debate, and most critics have been obliged to include -- in one form or another -- some answer to this problematic ending. Elizabeth Dipple observes that in the ending "Sidney forces his reader into a dual realization -- that the two princes are both virtuous and guilty, to be both rewarded and punished. The natural reward is virtuous marriage to the princesses; the legal punishment is summary execution."[23] Inseparable from this problem is narrative attitude. Richard Lanham has argued persuasively that "the narrator does not remain at a fixed distance either from his characters or from his audience":

> This untrustworthy narrator is one of the real difficulties of the romance. The narrator accepts Euarchus as the all-wise king and moralizes . . . on his countless evidences of wisdom and probity. Yet the same narrator also seems to be in full sympathy with the heroic seductions carried out by the princes. His praise of them is too frequent throughout the romance to need documentation. The reader is bound to think his attitude inconsistent; in the first half of the romance he is all for love, in the second all for justice.[24]

I have tried to indicate in this summary the great wealth of critical studies on the Old Arcadia, and their

diversity. The explosion of interest in Sidney in the last two decades has produced an enormous body of critical commentary that has served to counteract the notion that the Old Arcadia is an unskilled, simple-minded work -- the notion that it is a bizarre, rhetorical monster read and studied only by dust-covered academics. The general move, without exception, has been toward a position that views the Old Arcadia as a carefully designed work -- self-conscious in its complexity, its irony, its satire, its structure. The Old Arcadia has been shown to be a massive work, implementing and fusing several kinds of prose strains: "it is a courtesy book, a book of the governor, a book of characters, a moral and political treatise, a rhetorical handbook, and an enchiridion."[25] The work's major themes likewise embrace a wide range of interests: love versus reason; friendship; political philosophy; and the parallel rupture of Elizabethan concepts of order and justice on the political and personal levels.[26]

Sidney's interest in the relationship of language and rhetoric to reality -- which is more to the point for my purposes -- is seldom examined, though it has not been ignored entirely. In his pioneer study of the Old Arcadia, Richard Lanham has insistently pointed out a "tension between speech and action, a primary one in the romance."[27] Sidney's use of rhetorical ornament, according

to Lanham, "is itself not calculated to convince the reader directly; it is held at a distance and commented on by the author. It is in the author's indirect comment on the tropes and schemes, and not in the tropes themselves, that the irory most often enters."[28] In other words, Sidney's Old Arcadia makes an indirect but important statement about the attempt to make language and rhetoric an adequate description of the world:

> It is the juxtaposition of a rhetorical language moving in one direction and a plot constantly moving in another which gives us our main clue to Sidney's final intention. The language is extremely ornate, always idealistic, crammed with emotional fervor, constantly calling attention to itself. The plot is plain, unobtrusive, moving slowly from sin to retribution. If we strip the idealistic language used by the participants from their behavior, the picture is sordid enough. It seems almost willful misinterpretation to think Sidney unaware of this.29

Lanham's comment may seem equally appropriate to Gascoigne's or Lyly's fictions, and indeed it is. But while Sidney, Gascoigne and Lyly are all conscious of the fact that language and the reality that language attempts to describe are not always the same thing -- especially in a fallen world in which humans try to apply the rhetorical system of some ideal code -- it is Sidney alone who moves beyond an examination of a particular character's ability to speak truly of reality, and who challenges directly the human ability to do so.

Deloney and the Critics

Generally speaking, there have been four kinds of critical interest in Deloney's fiction. There are several studies which attempt to provide a linguistic and stylistic account of Deloney's prose.[30] There is another body of criticism which concerns itself with questions of literary sources and problems of influence.[31] A third approach to Deloney's fiction examines the novels insofar as they can shed light on social, cultural and economic history in the sixteenth century.[32] And finally, several critics have concentrated on narrative techniques, themes, dramatic elements, emblematic symbolism, and structural features of Deloney's work in order to evaluate its artistic merits as fiction.[33]

Of major interest to students of Deloney's fiction is the peculiar admixture of realism and idealism that can be found not only in Jack of Newbury but in Deloney's other fictions as well. That Deloney is a "realist" has been argued by many. His "realism" can be seen not only in his "low" style -- in his "uncanny ability to reproduce the diction and rhythm of common speech"[34] -- but also in the stuff of his subject-matter. Merritt E. Lawlis asks: "Is Deloney a realist? The answer is decidedly 'yes.' . . . Deloney is vivid; he is precise in his details; his

subjects are 'ordinary, contemporary, and everyday' . . . his characters are from the middle and lower classes, and he writes from their point of view."[35] Deloney's constant use of topical allusions and historical events also grounds his fiction in the real world of people, facts and time. And as to Deloney's wealth of copious physical details much has been written:

> We are told that Jack of Newbury wears a pair of breeches made of heavy, durable, kersey cloth; that broadcloth was a finer material; and that country folk often wore "sheep's russet," a woolen material even coarser than kersey. . . . When his characters drink wine, it is rarely just wine -- it is sack or claret or some other particular kind. The tanner, on meeting the widow in the tavern, calls not merely for any song but for "The Beginning of the World." Randoll Pert has on slip shoes, a particular kind of loose-fitting shoes. Jack equips his men not just in coats, but in blue coats faced with sarsenet, a material made of fine silk.36

Although Deloney is unrivalled in his "reportorial realism,"[37] he has no claim at all "to the 'philosophical realism' that centers on a view of life as conditioned by time and space rather than values."[38] Deloney, in other words, may provide us with many realistic details from the actual everyday lives of the middle and working classes in the sixteenthcentury, but his fiction exists for the propagation of certain ideals. Max Dorsinville has recently shown that Deloney's use of allegory and symbol (i.e. the ant hill, the beehive) is a clever inversion of

an aristocratic intellectual tradition (i.e. "the ethical-political relation between the individual and the State, as epitomized in the figure of the Prince") that is used by Deloney to idealize "the middle-class ethos of hard work and material reward."[39] Walter Davis comments that Deloney's technique of reportorial realism is used "as a means to structure an ideal":[40]

> What we see in it [Jack of Newbury] is the construction of a homespun Utopia, first in the image of the perfect home industry, then (through the emblems of anthill, beehive, and household) the image of the perfect commonwealth with all parts working in harmony. . . . To that end, he presents the tradesman's life as an ideal one, his heroes as models of perfection untouched by any but the highest motives.[41]

Merritt Lawlis, too, recognizes that Deloney's fiction perpetrates a "vision of an ideal commonwealth,"[42] and E.D. Mackerness writes that "Deloney's intention throughout Jack of Newbury thus seems to be to demonstrate the extent to which the type of citizen-artificer to which John Winchcomb belonged was able by his lawful exertions to profit the common weal."[43]

What is recognized by these critics is that Deloney relies on reportorial realism and a colloquial prose style to advance a biased point of view. In all his fiction Deloney tries to justify the national and economic importance of the rising middle class. He is not only attempting to gain recognition for the middle class, he is also writing

for the middle class -- through his fiction attempting to give members of his own rank and status a sense of pride, and an understanding of their necessity to the well-being of the commonwealth.[44] In writing fiction that glorifies the industry, virtue, increasing wealth, and growing political prominence of the middle class, Deloney is writing -- as the title of Lawlis' study suggests -- an "apology for the middle class." But he is doing more than this. In his efforts to present middle-class values and expectations in the most persuasive fashion, Deloney relies on narrative manipulation and distortion of social and economic fact, on the rhetorical manipulation of class characterization, and on the dramatic distortion of middle-class virtue. Deloney's fiction is biased communication, and biased communication is another term for propaganda.[45] He wants his reader to believe that the social, economic and political facts of the real world are the way he describes them. But they are not, and this gap between Deloney's fictional propaganda and the reality it pretends to describe has been acknowledged indirectly by several critics. What has not been examined are the rhetorical and narrative mechanics of Deloney's propaganda itself. That Deloney is glorifying the middle class to further its values and importance in sixteenth-century England is evident; but where and how the cleavage between language

and reality is effected and disguised, is a more interesting problem.

What I have suggested in my introduction is that both Sidney and Deloney take an interest in the question of language and its relation to reality. But I must emphasize that the nature of their respective interests is radically different. As we will see, Sidney's interest in the whole question shows a basic epistemological conern: can human language ever be an accurate reflection of the real world? For Deloney, the possible discrepancy between language and object described offers a valuable narrative technique for persuasion and propaganda. In the Old Arcadia, the question of language, rhetoric and reality is one of the work's major themes, while in Jack of Newbury it helps us explicate narrative technique and Deloney's intention. Sidney and Deloney are at opposite ends of the spectrum and together they embrace all the intermediate possibilities that are represented in the works of Gascoigne, Lyly and Nashe.

Language and Reference in the "Old Arcadia"

The question of language, rhetoric and reality in the Old Arcadia appears at first to be a confusing business because the narrator does not represent a rhetorical

standard or a stylistic norm with any consistency. Richard Lanham claims that "The presence of an undependable narrator means that the romance lacks a completely reliable control, for no other character is adequate to this function."[46] Elsewhere he suggests: "We should like to see in the Old Arcadia, I think, not a plain style, but a greater distinction among 'styles,' and a more reliable stylistic norm than Euarchus' relatively plain speech against which to measure them."[47] This is a legitimate complaint but certainly not an important one. Sidney's narrator in the Old Arcadia is often contradictory in tone and attitude, but transparently so. We have little difficulty in differentiating the narrator's sympathetic and comic tone from his more serious thematic cues. That there is a clearly implied physical, linguistic and ethical norm in the narrative voice is easily demonstrated.

One of the narrator's most important functions is to keep before the reader an awareness of how human passion, human folly, or human weakness produce an inevitable rift between language and reality. Near the beginning of the Old Arcadia Pyrocles tries to hide from Musidorus his sudden passion for Philoclea. As Musidorus listens suspiciously to the suddenly-melancholic Pyrocles, the narrator notes that his passion affects his language: "his words interrupted continually with sighs which served as a burden to

each sentence, and the tenor of his speech (though of his wonted phrase) not knit together to one constant end but rather dissolved in itself, as the vehemency of the inward passion prevailed" (16). Human passion may cause physical alterations in one's speech as it does here in Pyrocles, but more importantly, it affects one's apprehension of the real world and in turn one's verbal evaluations. The lusting Basilius raves enthusiastically over a song which Pryocles/Cleophila and Musidorus perform for the royal family at the end of the first eclogue, and the narrator is quick to observe: "What exclaiming praises Basilius gave first to Cleophila's song, and now to this eclogue, any man may guess that knows love is better than a pair of spectacles to make everything seem greater which is seen through it" (88). Later in Book Three the narrator comments more specifically on the effects of passion on perception and language:

> The force of love, to those poor folk that feel it, is many ways very strange, but no way stranger than that it doth so enchain the lover's judgement upon her that holds the reins of his mind that whatsoever she doth is ever in his eyes best. And that best, being by the continual motion of our changing life turned by her to any other thing, that thing again becometh best. . . . If she sit still, that is best; for so is the conspiracy of her several graces held best together to make one perfect figure of beauty. If she walk, no doubt that is best. . . . If she be silent, that without comparison is best. . . . But if she speak, he will take it upon his death that is best. . . . Example of this was well to be seen in the given-over Pyrocles. . . . (230)

The narrator shows us (in examples like these and many others) not only that human passion falsifies one's verbal apprehension of reality, but also that the lovers in the Old Arcadia are totally unreliable as language norms. After Basilius has committed "adultery" with his own wife he proclaims, with smug self-satisfaction, that sex with Cleophila is far superior to sex with Gynecia. In the half-light of the early morning Gynecia listens to her husband's wrongly-bestowed praise, and "heard with what partiality he did prefer her to herself; she saw in him how much fancy doth not only darken reason but beguile sense; she found opinion mistress of the lover's judgement" (276). Passion beguiles not only reason and sense, but language. Here, the rift between language and reality is comically emphasized: what Basilius *thinks* he is describing is not what he is describing at all. And elsewhere, the narrator is careful to point out to the reader that the lover's speeches usually posit their own "reality" to suit the passion: "If she sit still, that is best. . . . If she walk, no doubt that is best." Sidney's narrator clearly distances himself from the verbal outpourings of his impassioned characters, and constantly comments on their inability to speak truly of the real world, on the discrepancy between language and that which it attempts to describe.

The uneasy relationship of language to reality is illustrated not only by narrative comments, but in the progress of Sidney's plot. The pattern that we most often see in the Old Arcadia is the delusive rhetoric of the love-struck characters continually undermined by events. When Pyrocles reveals his true identity to Philoclea, the rhetorical flourish of his suit is as excessive as anything we find in Gascoigne's The Adventures:

> Therefore again I say, I say, O only princess attend here a miserable miracle of affection! Behold here before your eyes Pyrocles, prince of Macedon, whom you only have brought to this fall of fortune and unused metamorphosis; whom you only have made neglect his country, forget his father, and lastly forsake himself! My suit is to serve you, and my end to do you honour. Your fair face hath many marks in it of amazement at my words; think then what his amazement is from whence they come, since no words can carry with them the life of the inward feeling. If the highest love in no base person may bear place in your judgement, then may I hope your beauty will not be without pity. If otherwise you be (alas, but let it never be so) resolved, yet shall not my death be without comfort, receiving it by your sentence. (120)

Philoclea responds to his professions of service, "honour" and "highest love," and quickly admits that she too is overcome, that the love is mutual. But she cautions Pyrocles: "Thou hast then the victory; use it now with virtue, since from the steps of virtue my soul is witness to itself it never hath, and plegde to itself it never shall decline no way to make me leave to love thee, but by making

me think thy love unworthy of me" (121-122). But the Neo-platonic language of Petrarchan convention is quickly seen to be ironic; the language of Platonic love and spirituality is shown by the plot to be a rhetorical cover for simple lust. Having tricked both Basilius and Gynecia into the cave at the same time, Pyrocles hurries to Philoclea's chamber and sees not a sleeping, Petrarchan angel ready to propel him to new spiritual heights, but rather something much different:

> . . . the duke at his parting had left the chamber open, and she at that time lay (as the heat of the country did well suffer) upon the top of her bed, having her beauties eclipsed with nothing but with a fair smock (wrought all in flames of ash-colour silk and gold), lying so upon her right side that the left thigh down to the foot yielded his delightful proportion to the full view, which was seen by the help of a rich lamp. . . . (230-231)

With this sumptuous feast of sensuality before him, Pyrocles lifts "the sweet burden of Philoclea in his arms" and "laid her on her bed again, having so free scope of his serviceable sight that there came into his mind a song" (237-238) ("What tongue can her perfections tell," 238-242) -- an anatomically graphic and sexually suggestive tribute to Philoclea's physical beauties -- indicating further the extent to which verbal professions of intention have dissociated themselves entirely from the deed.

Pyrocles' and Philoclea's emotionally-charged rhetorical exchanges just prior to their love-making do not cover, according to Richard Lanham, the essential conflict between word and act:

> But its purpose [i.e. the rhetorical exchange] is not to reveal the elevated sentiments and delicate palpitations of the lovers. It is exactly the reverse of such a rhetorical chromo. Its exaggerated rhetoric serves as a decorous covering for the real interest of both parties -- satisfaction of physical desire. The extreme indirection of the language would to a reader of the time in no way hide the basic situation of proposition and reply around which the scene is built.48

In this case, as in others in the Old Arcadia, the language of the characters is never an adequate nor accurate account of their intentions, motivations, or actions in the physical world.

The same split between language and reality can be found in Musidorus' amorous progress with Pamela. After long seige Musidorus gains entry into Pamela's heart, and,

> . . . having plainly found there wanted no liking in Pamela, if she might have assurance of his worthiness, he had (still under the colour of asking her whether it were not fit for Mopsa so to do) concluded with her the stealing her away to the next seaport, under vehement oath to offer no force unto her till he had invested her in the duchy of Thessalia. (172)

Like Philoclea before her, Pamela returns Musidorus' love with an insistence on virtuous conduct:

> I have laid in you my estate, my life, my honour, it is now your part to double your former care, and make me see your virtue no less in preserving than in obtaining, and your faith to be a faith as much in freedom as bondage. . . . Your promise you remember, which here by the eternal givers of virtue I conjure you to observe. Let me be your own (as I am), but by no unjust conquest . . . I have yielded to be your wife; stay then till the time that I may rightly be so. (196-197)

"What I am," Musidorus responds, "the gods, I hope, will shortly make your own eyes judges" (197). And again there is an ironic separation of verbal promises of virtue from the psychological realities of physical desire and sexual motivation: Musidorus is prevented from raping the sleeping Pamela only by the arrival of the rebels (201-202). Richard Lanham states that in the case of both Pyrocles and Musidorus "Their real feelings and desires are repeatedly contrasted with the noble emotions they profess. Sidney has made no secret of this contrast. . . . The Neo-Platonism each hero affects is constantly belied by his single-minded concentration on bedding his chosen woman."[49] The expectations which their language generate are constantly at odds with their actions. Not only does passion disable their perception, it gives to their language an uncertain and unreliable referential status. Their actions in the real world go one way, and their heightened rhetoric another.

Sidney's interest in language and rhetoric can be seen also in the trial scene. Through the first three books of the Old Arcadia, the qualities and intentions of

the two princes are implied mainly by the princes themselves in their speech. Hence, many of their escapades are softened and made more dignified in appearance by their dependence on Petrarchan modes of expression. When they are brought to trial the unreliability of their language becomes apparent in the face of legal accusations. We no longer hear of the accidents of love, and of mistresses and service and chaste devotion, but of "murder" and "rape" (387). The self-portraits that Pyrocles and Musidorus foist upon the reader are no longer conceived in the language of idealized romance; the language is not of heroic young lovers attempting to realize their Neoplatonic urges in paragons of virtue and beauty, but a language much better-fitted to the shape of reality: Philanax calls them "disguisers, falsifiers, adulterers, ravishers, murderers, and traitors" (400). And with the one exception of murder, the actions of both princes have been accurately described. Philoclea may have talked of Pyrocles as a "divine soul . . . whose virtue can possess no less than the highest place in heaven" (235), but Philanax views his princely shenanigans in a completely different light:

> . . . in the first exercise of his own determinations far passed the arrantest strumpet in luxuriousness, the cunningest forger in falsehood; a player in disguising, a tiger in cruelty, a dragon in ungratefulness. . . . If he have not every way sought overthrow of human society, if

> he have done anything like a prince, let his naming himself a prince breed a reverence to his base wickedness. If he have not broken all laws of hospitality, and broken them in the most detestable degree that can be, let his being a guest be a sacred protection of his more than savage doings. (390-391)

The puff of smoke from their verbal magic that has until now partially disguised their rhetorical sleights-of-hand, is now blown away, and rape, dishonesty, dissembling, political disobedience, discourtesy and concupiscence are finally called by their proper names.

This is not to say, however, that the accusations of Philanax represent some stylistic standard or language norm in the Old Arcadia. He is only partially correct in his evaluations of the princes' characters and their legal culpability. It is true that Philanax's accusations as prosecutor undermine the rhetoric of Pyrocles and Musidorus, and therefore demonstrate to the reader the extent to which their language has given a false picture of themselves, their actions and the world. But Philanax, too, is motivated by passion, though of another kind. Philanax's passion is his blind devotion to Basilius and his obsession that his king's murder is properly avenged. As he begins his prosecution of Pyrocles he tells Evarchus that the crime "is so manifest, so pitiful evidences lie before your eyes of it, that I shall need to be but a brief recounter, and no rhetorical enlarger, of this most harmful mischief" (386). But a "rhetorical enlarger" he is. Philanax's passion for

revenge blinds him to all extenuating circumstances and mitigating evidence (of which there is considerable, especially in regard to the princes' supposed hostility toward the state), and his prosecution of the princes -- while stating a good deal of truth about them -- becomes finally a rhetorical exaggeration of their criminal faults and an hysterical denunciation of their worth as human beings (cf. 386-391, 399-400). That he is overruled by his passion is indicated even by Philanax himself, though he would like to deny it at the same time: "O woeful Arcadia, to whom the name of this mankind courtesan shall ever be remembered as a procurer of thy greatest loss! But too far I find my passion, yet honest passion, hath guided me" (390). Philanax may appeal to his "honest passion," but it is this same passion that causes him to withhold evidence from Evarchus (i.e. Philoclea's and Pamela's letters to the court), and to distort not only the true picture of events but even his own method of prosecution: "Philanax . . . entered thus into his speech against Musidorus, being so overgone with rage that he forgat in this oration his precise method of oratory" (398-399).

That Philanax's passion obscures his perception which in turn yields language that obscures the true state of affairs, is pointed to by the narrator; because of his overwhelming passion for revenge, Philanax is described

as being "transported with an unjust justice" (287). And after all his own verbal posturing and subterfuge Pyrocles has the nerve to object to Philanax's verbal manipulations of evidence, claiming that they are "promoted with so cunning a confusion as, having mingled truths with falsehoods, surmises with certainties, causes of no moment with matters capital, scolding with complaining" (392) -- and indeed, Pyrocles is right. Having presented his own defence Pyrocles adds: "Here have you the thread to guide you in the labyrinth this man of his tongue had made so monstrous" (393). Both the princes and Philanax have been motivated by passion. Clouded by emotion, desire, and bias, the verbal forays of these characters in the Old Arcadia have at best a partial agreement with the reality they purportedly describe. And Sidney's narrator, as well as the ironic juxtapostion of speech and event, make this rift between language and reality -- between the thrust of rhetoric and the status of action -- an ever-present concern in the Old Arcadia.

In The Adventures of Master F.J. George Gascoigne had contrasted the idealistic lingo of the Petrarchan code with the physical exigencies of sexual desire. A few years later in the Old Arcadia Sidney is doing a similar thing, though with greater thematic complexity. Both Sidney and Gascoigne show the courtly-love convention for what it is

-- a verbal convention and a social pose -- and both writers use an ironic narrator and dramatic irony to ensure that the reader sees through the rhetorical hocus-pocus to the actualities of human passion. But while both writers juxtapose the physical context of lust and human passion with polite, idealistic or euphemistic forms for expressing it, Sidney's interest in language and reality goes beyond the comedy in this irony. The Old Arcadia dramatizes the notion that folly (e.g. Basilius), lust (e.g. the two princes), greed (e.g. Dametas), and other forms of impassioned obsession (e.g. Philanax), cause self-deception and perceptual distortion. In the second eclogue Boulon ("good counsel," "sage") stresses this point in a song about man's endeavors to understand the will of the gods (as Basilius, for example, had earlier endeavored by consulting the oracle):

> Alas, while we are wrapped in foggy mist
> Of our self-love (so passions do deceive)
> We think they [the gods] hurt when most they do assist . . .
> But such we are, with inward tempest blown
> Of winds quite contrary in waves of will:
> We moan that lost, which had we did bemoan. (148-149)

The effects of these "passions" and human weaknesses, as I have illustrated, appear in a character's language as a falsified conceptualization of reality. We have seen similar results in Euphues' attempt to use a rhetorical convention based on a belief in meaning and absolute order

to describe a universe that is experientially meaningless and opaque to human reason.

What distinguishes Sidney's interest in language, rhetoric and reality from Gascoigne's or Lyly's, is that the _Old Arcadia_ directly embraces a more profound epistemological concern that delves into the very heart of the issue: can man know and describe that thing he calls "reality"? For Sidney, as we have seen, any form of irrational human passion rules out both possibilities -- man can neither know nor describe. But reason's lot is no more effective. In the work's most important symbols of human rationality and of human attempts to describe the real world accurately -- the law, court, and judge of the trial scene -- man is shown still to be in a "foggy mist" and unable to see reality clearly enough to describe it: "in such a shadow or rather pit of darkness the wormish mankind lives that neither they know how to foresee nor what to fear, and are but like tennis balls tossed by the racket of the higher powers" (385-386). Hence, the irony of the trial: Evarchus is unknown to his son and nephew, and they unknown to him; no one knows that Basilius has not been murdered; the court does not have all the pertinent facts and evidence. Evarchus too -- who is the human embodiment of reason and human judgement in the _Old Arcadia_ -- proves that what he had earlier said to the Arcadian people

is true not only of himself but of all men: "But remember I am a man; that is to say, a creature whose reason is often darkened with error" (365). This belief in human weakness and human limitation permeates the Old Arcadia, and according to Elizabeth Dipple, accounts for one of the work's major ideas -- "the failure of human beings to approach the data of experience and action and to emerge with that satisfying, harmonic result which the ancient concept of *ius naturale* represents."[50]

Human imperfection also accounts for the lack of harmony between language and reality. This is clear in the final scene. Basilius awakens and arises, realizes that "in all these matters his own fault had been the greatest" (416), and sends for Gynecia

> to recount before all the people the excellent virtue was in her, which she had not only maintained all her life most unspotted but now was content so miserably to die to follow her husband. He told them how she had warned him to take heed of that drink. And so, with all the exaltings of her that might be, he publicly desired her pardon for those errors he had committed. And so kissing her, left her to receive the most honourable fame of any princess throughout the world, all men thinking . . . that she was the perfect mirror of all wifely love. Which though in that point undeserved, she did in the remnant of her life duly purchase with observing all duty and faith, to the example and glory of Greece -- so uncertain are mortal judgements, the same person most infamous and most famous, and neither justly. (416)

This "perfect mirror of all wifely love" is the same woman who, earlier, in a lewd attempt to stimulate Pyrocles, "(under a feigned rage tearing her clothes) she discovered some parts of her fair body, which, if Cleophila's heart had not been so fully possessed . . . no doubt it would have yielded to that gallant assault" (205). The discrepancy between Basilius' embarrassed verbal explanations to the crowd and the real facts of the matter is entirely obvious. And the situation poses the ultimate question about the relationship of language to the world it tries to describe: can man know and describe that thing he calls "reality"? The answer is a clear and unequivocal "No": "so uncertain are mortal judgements, the same person most infamous and most famous, and neither justly." Language and rhetoric in the _Old Arcadia_ are nothing more than idealistic chatter or intentional distortion that are belied by real events. Language and rhetoric, in Sidney's hands, reveal the great distance between the "foggy mists" of human perception and the nature of the thing perceived.

Propaganda in Deloney's "Jack of Newbury"

In 1912 Deloney's first major editor, F.O. Mann, summarizes the contribution of Deloney's fiction in this manner:

> Deloney has no problems of life or conduct to discuss as his modern successors in fiction are apt to have, but simply holds 'the mirror up to nature' without the interposition of himself or his views. Hence, however slightly his characters be sketched they are shown to us in a clear and transparent medium, and his worthies move freely and vividly in the pleasant atmosphere of their own occupations, honest craftsmen of the Elizabethan workshop or good housewives of the Elizabethan home.51

Forty years later E.D. Mackerness insists that "It would be a mistake to conclude that because Deloney writes about shoemakers and weavers he necessarily presents a fair or reliable account of the Elizabethan artisan."[52] Mackerness is right -- Deloney does not simply hold "'the mirror up to nature' without the interposition of himself or his views." With a few brief excursions into industrial and economic history one can easily demonstrate the discrepancy between Deloney's picture of the Elizabethan working world and known fact; and also, in this way, one can suggest some of the narrative tricks that Deloney deploys in order that his readers -- like F.O. Mann -- will swallow the vision whole and digest it uncritically. I realize that the historiographical biases of my sources will be open to question, but I have nevertheless excluded such considerations since they are not directly concerned with my subject proper.

Exactly what kind of business-figure does Jack represent? He is first an employed weaver, then foreman

of his Mistress' enterprise, and finally a successful clothier. But what kind of clothier is he? And how successful? When the father of Jack's second wife-to-be visits Jack to discuss the economic arrangements of the marriage, the old man is treated to a tour of Jack's business operation:

> Within one roome being large and long,
> There stood two hundred Loomes full strong:
> Two hundred men, the truth is so,
> Wrought in theese Loomes all in a rowe,
> By euery one a prety boy,
> Sate making quils with mickle ioie.
> And in another place hard by,
> An hundred women merrily,
> Were carding hard with ioyfull cheere . . .
> Two hundred maidens did abide . . .
> But in that place all day did spin . . .
> Then to another roome came they,
> Where children were in poore aray:
> And euery one sate picking wooll . . .
> Within another place likewise,
> Full fiftie proper men he spies,
> And these were Shearemen euery one . . .
> And hard by them there did remaine,
> Full foure score Rowers taking paine.
> A Dye-house likewise had he then,
> Wherein he kept full forty men:
> And likewise in his Fulling mill,
> Full twenty persons kept he still . . .
> He kept a Butcher all the yeere,
> A Brewer eke for Ale and Beere:
> A Baker for to bake his bread . . .
> Fiue Cookes within his kitchin great . . .
> Six scullian boyes vnto their hands . . . (26-28)

When the dust from this poetic flight has settled, Jack's future father-in-law has witnessed over one thousand men, women and children who are employed by Jack. After the old man has seen Jack's "houshold and familie,"

> then hee was brought into the Ware-houses, some being fild with wooll, some with flockes, some with woad and madder, and some with broad cloathes and kersies readie dyed and drest, beside a great number of others, some stretcht on the Tenters, some hanging on poles, and a great many more lying wet in other places. (28)

We learn later, in Chapter Seven, that Benedick was "a yong wealthie Italian Marchant, comming oft from London thither to bargaine for cloth (for at that time clothiers most commonly had their cloth bespoken, and halfe payd for aforehand)" (61).

From these few textual details the picture is clear enough: Jack is an extremely wealthy clothier and masters enough capital to allow him control over all aspects of the industry; he can afford to hire less fortunate masters and craftsmen to do the actual work in each phase of the cloth-producing industry (i.e. shearmen, weavers, fullers, dyers, drapers, tuckers, et cetera); he is independent of the other trades to the extent that he can strike private bargains with foreign traders and merchants (i.e. Benedick). In his Industrial Organization in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries George Unwin writes that

> The more prosperous masters in each craft could not be prevented from extending their business into the domain of the other crafts. The dyer became an employer of the shearmen, the shearman an employer of dyers; and there were even weavers who gave out their cloth to be finished before they disposed of it to the merchant. The various crafts were, in fact, engaged in a constant struggle as to which of them should secure the economic advantage of standing between the rest and the market.[53]

And John Clapham, in A Concise Economic History of Britain, states that

> The 'clothier that doth put cloth to making and sale', the putter-out, was a recognised member of the highest industrial and commercial grade of society in Elizabeth's labour code. He was classed with the merchants and the goldsmiths; above textile craftsmen whom he might employ -- weavers, fullers, dyers, shearmen; far above the humble weavers of household woollens; very far above the innumerable spinsters. . . .54

Jack Winchcomb, then, is a highly successful "town capitalist"[55] or "contracting clothier"[56] who determines the lives and livelihood of a large number of employees. If an extract from the State Papers of James I in 1615 is any indication, Winchcomb's type represented the highest of four classes of clothiers:

> 1. The riche clothier that buyeth his woolls of the grower in the woolle countries, and makes his whole years provision beforehand, and layes it up in stowre, and in the winter tyme hath it spunne by his owne spinsters and woven by his owne weavers and fulled by his owne tuckers, and all at the lowest rate for wages.57

If we close Jack of Newbury and our history books at this point, Deloney could indeed be said to "hold the mirror up to nature," insofar as Jack represents an historically verifiable economic type. But if we push our investigation one step further, it appears that the kind of material success that Jack and his business enterprise represent depends on various forms of economic exploitation.

The rise of an industrial capitalist such as Jack had an adverse effect on several groups. First, the less successful master craftsmen were driven out of independent business endeavors (because of the wealthy clothier's larger, more efficient operation), and were forced to work for the clothier at lower wages.[58] Second, because of this, many apprentices had little hope of becoming masters.[59] Unwin states that the Weavers Act of 1555 carefully set forth "the grievances of the poor weavers and their oppression by wealthy clothiers,"[60] and this is echoed by E.D. Mackerness, who writes that

> in the 'Act Touching Weavers' (1556) we are informed that the wealthier clothiers 'do many ways oppress (the handicraft workers) some by setting up and keeping in their houses divers looms, and keeping and maintaining journeymen and persons unskilful, to the decay of a great number of artificers which were brought up in the said science of weaving, their families and house holds'.61

Indeed, it seems that many poorer masters had difficulty in finding employment with rich clothiers because cheaper labor was to be had in apprentices and unskilled women and children: "there was always a tendency amongst the more prosperous and pushing masters, partly arising from a desire to extend their business and partly from a wish to secure cheap labour, to keep more than the permitted number of apprentices, and even to employ boys who had not

been bound."[62] A third group, the poor, were also put in a position of total economic dependency, subject to the extremely low wages decreed by the rich clothier: "Undoubtedly it [the rise of contracting clothiers] tended to pauperize some of the classes engaged in the cloth industry in the towns. The poor, mostly women and children, employed by the contractor, were in no position to benefit by collective bargaining."[63]

The historical background to Jack's economic success, then, indicates the oppression of apprentices and poorer masters, the unemployment of apprentices and masters because of cheaper labor (i.e. the hiring of poor women and children), and a general tendency to take advantage of the poor for increased production at cheaper costs.[64] E.D. Mackerness observes that "All accounts of the woollen industry at this time agree that employees dependent on masters in a superior social position were extremely poor," and he adds, that in "the case of John Winchcomb, it seems not unfair to conclude that his conspicuous business success . . . depended very largely on the kind of exploitation which the history books reveal."[65]

With a clear picture of the general economic, industrial and social contexts that produced Jack's wealth, we can now examine Deloney's portrait of the rich clothier.

We have seen that Jack belongs to that emerging class of wealthy, independent capitalists whose material success depends on economic opportunism and exploitation. But Jack of Newbury presents an entirely different world. If we examine Deloney's portrayal of the poor and the working class, two things become apparent immediately: Deloney's portrait of the poor is an idealized one, and, Jack's socio-economic role is that of a benevolent father. In his dedication Deloney writes that "the most necessarie Art of Cloathing . . . is the nourishing of many thousands of poore People" (3). The same optimism appears in the dedication of Thomas of Reading: "poore people, whom God lightly blesseth with most children, did by meanes of this occupation so order them, that by the time that they were come to be sixe or seauen yeares of age, they were able to get their owne bread" (267). Deloney not only suggests that the cloth industry prevents poverty, but each time the poor workers are presented in Jack of Newbury they are to be seen happily singing while they work, obviously contented, healthy and beautiful. As Jack shows King Henry and the royal crowd through his household, Deloney tells us that "Then came his Highnesse where hee saw an hundred Loomes standing in one roome, and two men working in euery one, who pleasantly sung in this sort" (40). The men then happily sing "The Weauers Song" (40-42). The

next stop in the tour is "among the spinners, and carders, who were merrily a working" (42):

> The King and Queene and all the Nobilitie heedfully beheld these Women, who for the most part were very faire and comly creatures, and were all attired alike from top to toe. Then (after due reuerence) the maidens in dulcet manner chaunted out this song, two of them singing the Dittie, and all the rest bearing the burden. (43)

These poor workers are not only "faire and comly" and beautifully dressed, but accomplished singers. After their song ("The Maidens Song," 43-47) the King goes to Jack's fulling mills and dye-house,

> where a great many also were hard at worke: and his Maiesty perceiuing what a great number of people were by this one man set on worke, both admired, and commended him, saying further that no Trade in all the Land was so much to bee cherished and maintained as this, which quoth he may well be called The life of the poor. (47)

Deloney's account of "The life of the poor" contains nothing negative -- no disease, no starvation, no hardship. It is true that in Jack of Newbury we see the poor working people only from a distance, but when we do we always get an idealized picture of their lot and their living-standards.

The only exception to Deloney's propped-up idealization is one instance of unintentional irony. After the group of poor children have finished their allegorical mime for the King and Queen, the royal couple "behoulding the sweet fauor and countenance of these children, demaunded

of _Iack_ of _Newbery_ whose children they were? Who answered: . . . these are the children of poore people: that do get their liuing by picking of woll, hauing scant a good meale once in a weeke" (48-49). It is the only true reference to hardship in the work, and it is casually mentioned and immediately forgotten. The difference between Deloney's propaganda and historical fact is vast, as E.D. Mackerness suggests:

> As for the 'poor people' with whom Deloney is sometimes said to have been so much concerned, their life in the cloth trade seems to have been one of continual insecurity and contention. The easy-going, abundant living which is the lot of the virtuous proletariat in Deloney's novels is a pleasant abstraction from known reality. And Deloney hoped his readers would confide in his presentation of it . . . there is never any serious suggestion that poverty might be a possible source of social malaise.66

Deloney's portrait of the rich clothier is also calculated to persuade the reader of Jack's virtue. In Chapter Eight we hear of Jack's great generosity with food "both for his seruants and reliefe of the poore" (69). The story of Randoll Pert (Chapter Nine), too, is intended to reinforce this picture of virtue and charity. Jack also takes a personal interest in his employees' private affairs, as seen in his clever marriage manipulations between Joan and Sir George Rigley (Chapter Eleven). All in all, Deloney's picture of Jack and the poorer working people is one of ideal contentment: Jack feeds his workers

incredibly well, takes a personal interest in their lives, and has a moral conscience about his duty towards the maintenance of the poor. But historical, social and economic records indicate that this group of employees were ill-paid, never secure in their employment, and lived at a very low level of existence.

As for Deloney's portrayal of other working types, the same idealization holds true. Although Deloney never clearly differentiates between masters and apprentices, Jack's art-gallery of rags-to-riches portraits is intended to be an encouragement presumably to both groups:

> I would wish you to imitate the like vertues, that you might attaine the like honors . . . there is none of you so poorly born, but that men of baser birth haue come to great honors . . . such as do leade a virtuous life, and gouerne themselues discreetly, shall of the best bee esteemed, and spend their dayes in credit. (55)

The irony lies in the fact that Jack encourages his servants, apprentices and dependent masters to rise in the world through hard work and virtue, when in fact Jack's employees work in a system which allows them little or no hope of improvement.

Deloney's Jack masquerades as protector and father-figure to the poor; in fact he was exploiting them. When Jack first introduces himself to the Queen, he says: "Most gratious Queene . . . Gentleman I am none, nor the sonne of

a Gentleman, but a poore Clothier, whose lands are his Loomes, hauing no other Rents but what I get from the backes of little sheepe, nor can I claime any cognisance but a wooden shuttle" (31). Middle-class courtesy and modesty aside, Jack's identification of himself with the poor -- in view of his vast wealth, in the light of historical evidence concerning the exploitation of economic inferiors -- is entirely ludicrous, but Deloney intends it to be an effective illustration of virtue, modesty, and conscience. Later, the King offers Jack knighthood, but Jack declines: "I beseech your Grace let mee rest in my russet coat a poore Clothier to my dying day" (49). Deloney's account of the clothiers' petition to the King for improved foreign-trade regulations (Chapter Six) illustrates the same manipulation of a character's social virtues: Jack, we learn, "intended . . . to make a supplication to the King" not because clothiers and merchants were forced to bear considerable losses on account of decreased markets, but rather because "Many a poore man (for want of worke) was hereby vndone with his wife and children, and it made many a poore widow to sit with an hungry belly" (56).

I have sufficiently set forth the aspects of Deloney's departure from known historical, social and economic facts. The distance between language and reality in Jack of Newbury

is vast. In fact, reality is restructured altogether to fit the requirements of Deloney's propaganda. "John Winchcomb," writes Walter Davis,

> is an ideal of good nature, shrewdness, industry, and piety. He is as exemplary a figure as any of Forde's wooden heroes, and never suffers the kind of failure or even embarrassment (or the rise to wisdom consequent on failure) experienced by Pamela, Tom Jones, Pyrocles, Musidorus, Euphues, or F.J. His narrator dotes on him, and never allows any irony to interfere with his loving presentation. Any criticism of Winchcomb's actions is neutralized by being put into the mouths of the envious.[67]

And Jack's dramatic virtue, generosity and social conscience are opposed to the historical information that is available. E.D. Mackerness points out that "A figure like Winchcomb could not have made a considerable fortune merely by acting as Deloney makes him do. Before the dawn of organized stock and share investment, capital did not just multiply itself merely because its owner was virtuous, systematic and careful."[68] Deloney is certainly altering the face of the real world in order to advertize the significance of the middle class, but his propagandist techniques of persuasion do not rely solely on the misleading and fictitious "facts" of his idealization. In his attempt to pass off his fictional world as the real world, Deloney makes use of several narrative tricks which no doubt fostered the immense popularity of his fiction and the notion that he merely "holds the mirror up to nature."

One of the narrative and moral problems that Deloney faced in all his fiction was how to make his virtuous, idealized merchant-heroes rich without them having to get their hands dirty. In Deloney's pretence of portraying the real world he had to reject the fantastic and sudden acquisition of wealth characteristic of the romances, and yet somehow avoid the darker aspects of economic and class exploitation. Deloney manages both through a neat narrative ploy which rests essentially on a trick in point of view. Jack becomes rich by marrying the widow, but his motives are not so pure as they are made to appear. The basic situation is this: Jack wants to marry the wealthy widow of his dead employer not because he loves her but for her money:

> . . . well he perceiued that his Dames affection was great towarde him: knowing therefore the womans disposition, and withall that her estate was reasonable good, and considering beside that he should finde a house ready furnished, seruants readie taught, and all other things for his trade necessarie, he thought it best not to let slip that good occasion, least hee should neuer come to the like. (11-12)

Considering their difference in age, however, he wonders whether they would be able to get along: "hee therefore resolued to be silent rather than to proceed further" (12). But the point is clear: Jack's rather greedy, mercenary motives do not reflect the virtuous, pious or conscientious

character that Deloney wishes to represent. Deloney disguises this fact rather well: by telling the story from the widow's point of view and dramatizing her active (but gradual) seduction of Jack, he emphasizes her sexual motivation and thus draws the reader away from Jack's mercenary impulse. The reader hears continually of how the widow "daily deuised which way shee might obtaine her desire, which was to marrie her man" (13), but Jack's motives are presented so indirectly that the reader can easily overlook his economic covetousness. Thus, with Jack placed in a passive role, his rather crude monetary objectives are over-shadowed by the widow's aggressive affection and Jack is made to appear as the "victim" of her lust. Once he is married to the widow and thus shares her great wealth, Deloney "kills" her off and leaves his hero a rich clothier. Jack may in fact be motivated by greed and ambition, but Deloney's choice of point of view and his manipulations of character-motivation ensure that Jack emerges clean and rich, with his image of virtue more or less intact.

The "passive" hero is not limited to Jack of Newbury. Deloney's idealized middle-class heroes are always passive in his fiction, and if there are money-matters or business efforts that require attention Deloney makes sure that the hero's wife does all the "dirty" work (i.e. Simon Eyre's

rise to wealth in The Gentle Craft, Part I, 139-169) or that it takes place offstage (as is generally the case in Jack of Newbury). Merritt Lawlis writes that in general Deloney "avoids realistic detail whenever he feels that a character would be compromised by it. That is why the tradesmen heroes are almost as idealized as the kings."[69] Deloney's method for maintaining the purity and ideal qualities of his heroes is simple and most effective for his propagandist intentions: he keeps them entirely passive as far as money-matters are concerned, and any activity that occurs is caused by the more colorful characters (mainly women and minor figures) that surround him.[70]

I have discussed Deloney's carefully shaped portrayal of his middle-class heroes, the working class and the poor. We have seen that as historical, economic and social groups they are dramatically distorted by Deloney's propagandist motives. I have so far said nothing about his presentation of royalty or of the nobility, and if we briefly examine this aspect of his fiction it will be seen that the same distortion and manipulation is present. The first thing that must be noted is that on each occasion the King or royalty comes in contact with Jack (or the middle-class heroes of Deloney's other works) the King's language and conversation is decidedly plebeian and free

from the awkward "euphuism" which Deloney elsewhere assigns to the nobility: "God a mercy good _Jack_," says King Henry, "I haue often heard of thee, and this morning I mean to visite thy house" (37). The King's intimacy with middle-class figures like Jack Winchcomb is dramatically stressed by having both talk in as common and unaffected a manner as possible. Once Deloney has established the rhetorical equality of the King and the middle class, it is but a short step to casting the King as an intimate friend of Jack, ready at a moment's notice to advertize the virtues and merits of the rich clothier:

> My Lords, quoth the King, let these mens complaint bee throughly lookt vnto, and their griefe redressed: for I account them in the number of the best Common wealths men. As the Clergie for the Soule, the Souldier for defence of his Countrie, the Lawyer to execute iustice, the husbandman to feede the belly: So is the skilfull Clothier no lesse necessary for the clothing of the backe, whom wee may reckon among the chiefe Yeomen of our Land. (57-58)

In _Thomas of Reading_, likewise, Deloney is careful to have no one less than the King himself deferring to the wants and wishes of his cherished middle class:

> And forasmuch as I doe vnderstand, and haue partly seene, that you the Clothiers of England are no small benefit to the wealth publike, I thought it good to know from your owne mouths, if there be any thing not yet graunted that may benefit you or any other thing to be remoued that doth hurt you. The great desire I haue to maintayne you in your trades, hath moued me hereunto. Therefore boldly say what you would haue in the one thing or the other, and I will grant it you. (284-285)

Throughout his fiction Deloney has King Henry playing the part of public-relations manager for the furtherance of the middle-class hero, and this intimate dramatic relationship of King and middle-class figure is yet another narrative ploy to reinforce an already idealized picture.

If there is a scapegoat in Jack of Newbury it is the nobility. What Deloney's political feelings toward the nobility might have been has not been clearly established. Nevertheless, knights, noblemen and aristocrats in general tend to find themselves the butt of Deloney's humor and sarcasm -- presumably to heighten by contrast the virtues of the middle class. When Jack brings not six but one hundred fifty men to advance to Flodden, onlookers are amazed and impressed, "seeing that the best Nobleman in the Countrie would scarce haue done so much" (31). Organizing his fellow-clothiers to petition the King for improved foreign trade, Jack insists that a fund must be set up "to defray charges: for I tell you. Noble mens Secretaries and cunning Lawyers haue slow tongues and deafe eares: which must daily bee nointed with the sweete oyle of Angels" (57). When the old gossip chastizes Mistress Winchcomb for her generous victualling of the servants, she comments: "You feede poor folkes with the best of the beefe, and the finest of the wheate, which in my opinion is a great ouersight: neither do I heare of any Knight in this

countrey that doth it" (71-72). Finally, there is the episode of Sir George Rigley, the victim of Jack's self-righteous indignation: "Sir, I would you should well know, that I account the poorest wench in my house too good to be your whore, were you ten knights" (86). Once again, through narrative distortion and propagandist dissembling, Deloney clothes the heroes of his middle-class world in gold cloth: the middle-class hero is by implication more patriotic, more generous, more honest, and more virtuous than knight or nobleman, who is deceptive, lazy, takes bribes, and seduces innocent maidens.

When it comes to an idealized portrayal of middle-class importance, wealth, virtue and industry, Deloney has stacked his deck with great care: the poor sing the praises of Jack's middle-class virtues and fatherly benevolence; the prentices and employed masters are grateful for their pleasant working-conditions and their substantial diet; King Henry voices his admiration for the clothier-hero's great contributions to society and national prosperity. The only voice that does not appear _in propria persona_ to tout middle-class glory is God himself, and even He endorses Jack Winchcomb indirectly by granting him great material success: as Jack comes into his fortune by cold-heartedly marrying the widow for her wealth, he says to his former fellow-servants, "by Gods prouidence and your

Dames fauor, I am preferred from being your fellow to bee your Master" (21).

F.O. Mann's statement that Deloney simply "holds 'the mirror up to nature' without the interposition of himself or his views," is itself a testimony to the successfulness of Deloney's propaganda. But uncritical faith cannot hide the fact that Deloney is writing propaganda on behalf of a certain class interest: the middle class. Deloney's so-called "realism" is best qualified by appealing to his intuitive grasp of propagandist narrative techniques. Deloney is probably the best of a new wave of Elizabethan propagandists,[71] and whether or not he was entirely aware of his narrative techniques of persuasion is not important; the fact remains that the successfulness of Deloney's fiction depends, in a very practical sense, on a carefully sustained discrepancy between the language of his fiction and the real world as we know it to be in the sixteenth century -- the world which Deloney's fiction purports to describe. The whole question of language, rhetoric and reality, as far as Deloney's fiction is concerned, takes on a different perspective from that which we have so far observed in early prose fiction. There is indeed a complete rift between language and reality in Jack of Newbury, and this rift is explained by Deloney's propagandist intentions. Deloney seems to recognize that reality can be

shaped through rhetorical and dramatic manipulation. But what separates Deloney from Gascoigne, Lyly, Nashe or Sidney, is that the language of his fiction is intended to disguise his falsified picture of the real world, whereas the language and rhetoric of the other writers are intended to reveal their characters' verbal alterations of the real world. Gascoigne and Lyly may jibe at their characters' verbal and rhetorical attempts to alter the face of the real world; Nashe's Jack Wilton may challenge conventional perceptions of the nature of reality with his grotesque verbal couplings and his narrative antics; Sidney may bemoan the inevitable chasm between human language and the reality it claims to describe; but Deloney seems to have sensed the possibilities of the discrepancy as a technique of narrative persuasion only, as a promising way of passing off a lie as the truth. Verbal distortion and the rhetorical manipulation of the face of the real world to accommodate human desires, attitudes and ideas are for Gascoigne, Lyly and Sydney an important subject-matter; for Nashe they are both technique and subject; for Deloney they are narrative technique only -- a means to an end.

NOTES TO CHAPTER IV

[1]Sir Philip Sidney, The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia: (The Old Arcadia), ed. Jean Robertson (Oxford, 1973). All parenthetical page references are to this edition. If one excludes a consideration of the New Arcadia an old argument arises: does one choose the Old Arcadia because of its completeness, or the New Arcadia on the assumption that it represents a more mature vision? I have decided to examine only the Old since the New Arcadia is incomplete and poses important questions about what Sidney's more mature vision might have been.

[2]Thomas Deloney, The Novels of Thomas Deloney, ed. Merritt E. Lawlis (Bloomington, 1961). All parenthetical page references are to this edition.

[3]Because the discussion to follow will be more generalized and not concerned with establishing an original interpretive scheme, a detailed knowledge of plot is not necessary. Consequently, my paraphrase of both the Old Arcadia and Jack of Newbury will be far more compressed than those in previous chapters.

[4]See Mary A. Washington, Sir Philip Sidney: An Annotated Bibliography of Modern Criticism, 1941-1970 (Columbia, Mo., 1972), pp. 58-103. See also William L. Godshalk, "Recent Studies in Sidney," ELR, 2 (1972), 148-164.

[5]See Elizabeth Dipple, "The 'Fore Conceit' of Sidney's Eclogues," in Literary Monographs, I, ed. Eric Rothstein and Thomas K. Dunseath (Madison, 1967), p. 5; Elizabeth Dipple, "Harmony and Pastoral in the Old Arcadia," ELH, 35 (1968), 321; P. Jeffrey Ford, "Philosophy, History, and Sidney's Old Arcadia," CL, 26 (1974), 32-50; Richard A. Lanham, "The Old Arcadia," in Sidney's Arcadia (New Haven and London, 1965), pp. 398, 404; Kenneth O. Myrick, Sir Philip Sidney as a Literary Craftsman (1935; rpt. Cambridge, Mass., 1965), passim; Robert W. Parker, "Terentian Structure and Sidney's Original Arcadia," ELR, 2 (1972), passim; William A. Ringler, Jr., ed., The Poems of Sir Philip Sidney (Oxford, 1962), pp. xxxvii-xxxviii;

Andrew D. Weiner, "'Erected Wit' and 'Infected Will': A Study of Sir Philip Sidney's Old Arcadia," unpublished doctoral dissertation, Princeton, 1969.

[6]Ringler, pp. xxxvii-xxxviii.

[7]Lanham, pp. 398, 404.

[8]Dipple, "The 'Fore Conceit' of Sidney's Eclogues," 5; Dipple, "Harmony and Pastoral in the Old Arcadia," 321.

[9]See in particular Ford, Myrick and Weiner.

[10]See Michael C. Andrews, "Sidney's Arcadia and The Winter's Tale," SQ, 23 (1972), 200-202; Frederick L. Beaty, "Lodge's Forbonius and Prisceria and Sidney's Arcadia," ES, 49 (1968), 38-45; O. Brückl, "Sir Philip Sidney's Arcadia as a Source for John Webster's The Duchess of Malfi," ESA, 8 (1965), 31-55; John Buxton, "Sidney and Theophrastus," ELR, 2 (1972), 79-82; Jan A. van Dorsten, "Gruterus and Sidney's Arcadia," RES, 16 (1965), 174-177; W.L. Godshalk, "Gabriel Harvey and Sidney's Arcadia," MLR, 59)1964), 497-499; A.C. Hamilton, "Sidney's Arcadia as Prose Fiction: Its Relation to its Sources," ELR, 2 (1972), 29-60; S.K. Heninger, Jr., "The Renaissance Perversion of Pastoral," JHI, 22 (1961), 259-261; David Kalstone, "The Transformation of Arcadia: Sannazaro and Sir Philip Sidney," CL, 15 (1963), 234-249; David C. McPherson, "A Possible Origin for Mopsa in Sidney's Arcadia," Renaissance Quarterly, 21 (1968), 420-428; Kenneth Muir and John F. Danby, "'Arcadia' and 'King Lear,'" NQ, 195 (1950), 49-51; Irving Ribner, "Sidney's Arcadia and the Structure of King Lear," Studia Neophilologica, 29 (1952), 63-68; S.L. Wolff, The Greek Romancesin Elizabethan Prose Fiction (New York, 1912); R.W. Zandvoort, Sidney's 'Arcadia': A Comparison Between the Two Versions (Amsterdam, 1929), chapter five.

[11]Hamilton, 30-31. See also Kalstone for the argument that Sidney inverts many of the concepts and ideals of his sources for ironic and philosophic purposes.

[12]Neil L. Rudenstine, Sidney's Poetic Development (Cambridge, Mass., 1967), p. 41. See also Margaret E. Dana, "Heroic and Pastoral: Sidney's Arcadia as Masquerade," CL,

25 (1973), 320; E.G. Fogel, "The Personal References in the Fiction and Poetry of Sir Philip Sidney," unpublished doctoral dissertation, Ohio State University, 1958; Richard Helgerson, The Elizabethan Prodigals (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1976), pp. 124-155.

[13]See Edwin W. Greenlaw, "Sidney's Arcadia as an Example of Elizabethan Allegory," in Anniversary Papers by Colleagues and Pupils of George Lyman Kittredge (1913; rpt. New York, 1967), pp. 327-337; Alan D. Isler, "The Allegory of the Hero and Sidney's Two Arcadias," SP, 65 (1968), 171-191; Alan D. Isler, "Moral Philosophy and the Family in Sidney's Arcadia," HLQ, 31 (1968), 359-371.

[14]See Walter R. Davis, "Actaeon in Arcadia," SEL, 2 (1962), 95-110; Elizabeth Dipple, "Metamorphosis in Sidney's Arcadias," PQ, 50 (1971), 47-62; Katherine D. Duncan-Jones, "Sidney's Urania," RES, 17 (1966), 123-132.

[15]See Elizabeth Dipple, "The 'Fore Conceit' of Sidney's Eclogues," 3-47, 301-303; A.C. Hamilton, Sir Philip Sidney: A Study of His Life and Works (Cambridge, 1977), pp. 65-67; Alan D. Isler, "Heroic Poetry and Sidney's Two Arcadias," PMLA, 83 (1968), 368-379; Ringler, The Poems, Introduction; Rudenstine.

[16]Dipple, "The 'Fore Conceit' of Sidney's Eclogues," 40.

[17]See D.M. Beach, "Studies in the Art of Elizabethan Prose Narrative," unpublished doctoral dissertation, Cornell University, 1959; Lorna Challis, "The Use of Oratory in Sidney's Arcadia," SP, 62 (1965), 561-576; Albert P. Duhamel, "Sidney's Arcadia and Elizabethan Rhetoric," SP, 45 (1948), 134-150; Brother Simon Scribner, Figures of Word-Repetition in the First Book of Sir Philip Sidney's 'Arcadia' (Washington, D.C., 1948); Lanham, pp. 237 ff., 332-357; Zandvoort, pp. 165 ff.

[18]Lanham, pp. 237, 344-345.

[19]Clifford Davidson, "Nature and Judgement in the Old Arcadia," Papers on Language and Literature, 6 (1970), 364.

[20]R.W. Parker, "Narrative Structure and Thematic Development in Sidney's Original *Arcadia*," *DA*, 28 (1967), 1406A (Columbia).

[21]Ringler, p. 379.

[22]Kenneth Thorpe Rowe, *Romantic Love and Parental Authority in Sidney's 'Arcadia'* (Ann Arbor, 1947), p. 3.

[23]Dipple, "'Unjust Justice' in the *Old Arcadia*," *SEL*, 10 (1970), 93.

[24]Lanham, p. 324. On the question of the ending and the narrator, see also Margaret E. Dana, "The Providential Plot of the *Old Arcadia*," *SEL*, 17 (1977), 39-57, and Rudenstine, pp. 25, 30-35, 42-45.

[25]Hamilton, "Sidney's *Arcadia* as Prose Fiction: Its Relation to its Sources," 32.

[26]See Lanham, pp. 234-235.

[27]*Ibid.*, p. 377.

[28]*Ibid.*, p. 355.

[29]*Ibid.*, p. 373.

[30]See Fred Bowers, "An Evaluative Study of the Transformational-Generative Approach to the Syntactic Description of Thomas Deloney's Prose," unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of British Columbia, 1968; Torsten Dahl, *Linguistic Studies in Some Elizabethan Writings, I. An Inquiry Into Aspects of the Language of Thomas Deloney* (Aarhus and Kopenhagen, 1951); Ole Reuter, "Some Aspects of Thomas Deloney's Prose Style," *Neuphilologische Mitteilungen*, 40 (1939), 23-71.

[31]See Merritt E. Lawlis, *Apology for the Middle Class: The Dramatic Novels of Thomas Deloney* (Bloomington, 1960), pp. 19-24, 33-37; Merritt E. Lawlis, ed., *The Novels of Thomas Deloney*, pp. xvi-xviii; Francis Oscar Mann, *The Works of Thomas Deloney* (Oxford, 1912), pp. xiv-xviii;

Terrence J. Mattern, "Ballad Elements in the Prose Fiction of Thomas Deloney," unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Texas, 1967; Kurt-Michael Pätzold, "Thomas Deloney and the English Jest-Book Tradition," ES, 53 (1972), 313-328; Ole Reuter, "Thomas Deloney's Use of Richard Eden's History of Trauayle in the West and East Indies," in Language and Society: Essays Presented to Arthur M. Jensen on His Seventieth Birthday (Copenhagen, 1961), pp. 141-146; W.E. Roberts, "Folklore in the Novels of Thomas Deloney," in Studies in Folklore, ed. W. Edson (Richmond and Bloomington, 1957), pp. 119-129; Hyder E. Rollins, "Deloney's Sources for Euphuistic Learning," PMLA, 51 (1936), 399-406; Hyder E. Rollins, "Thomas Deloney's Euphuistic Learning and The Forest," PMLA, 50 (1935), 679-686.

[32]See Herbert S. Donow, "Thomas Deloney and Thomas Heywood: Two Views of the Elizabethan Merchant," unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Iowa, 1967; E.D. Mackerness, "Thomas Deloney and the Virtuous Proletariat," Cambridge Journal, 5 (1951), 34-50; Mattern; Larryetta M. Schall, "The Proletarian Tradition and Thomas Deloney," unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Nevada, 1972.

[33]See Walter R. Davis, "Deloney and Middle-Class Fiction," in Idea and Act in Elizabethan Fiction (Princeton, 1969), pp. 238-261; Max Dorsinville, "Design in Deloney's Jack of Newbury," PMLA, 88 (1973), 233-239; Lawlis, Apology For the Middle Class; John D. Smith, "Narrative Technique in the Realistic Prose Fiction of Greene, Nashe, and Deloney," unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Wisconsin, 1968.

[34]Davis, p. 259.

[35]Lawlis, Apology For the Middle Class, p. 8.

[36]Ibid., p. 17.

[37]The term is Davis', p. 258. Davis' definition of the term: "accurate and convincing reflection of the material conditions of contemporary life," p. 260.

[38]Davis, p. 260.

[39]Dorsinville, 238.

[40]Davis, p. 241.

[41]*Ibid.*, pp. 250, 260.

[42]Merritt E. Lawlis, ed., *Elizabethan Prose Fiction* (New York, 1967), p. 554.

[43]Mackerness, 40.

[44]Louis B. Wright has observed that Deloney is not unique in this respect: "There appeared, therefore, throughout the later sixteenth and first half of the seventeenth centuries a considerable literature which had for its aim the expression of the middle-class satisfaction in its own position and good qualities." See Wright's *Middle-Class Culture in Elizabethan England* (1935; rpt. Ithaca, N.Y., 1963), p. 21.

[45]For a coherent discussion of the elements of propaganda -- bias, distortion, manipulation, persuasion -- see Karin Dovring's *Road of Propaganda: The Semantics of Biased Communication* (New York, 1959), p. 5. See also Richard Choukas' *Propaganda Comes of Age* (Washington, D.C., 1965), pp. 11, 30-31, 33, 34. Although all literature is in one sense "biased communication," this is not to say that all literature is propaganda. What distinguishes Deloney's *Jack of Newbury* as propaganda is that its factual errors and historical distortions are intended to foster a glamorous picture of the middle class in the Elizabethan reader's mind. *Jack of Newbury* is propaganda in the same way that advertizing is: lies and misinformation are not important; sales records are.

[46]Lanham, p. 326.

[47]*Ibid.*, p. 356.

[48]*Ibid.*, p. 283.

[49]*Ibid.*, pp. 275, 372.

[50]Dipple, "'Unjust Justice' in the *Old Arcadia*," 85.

[51]Mann, p. xxxi.

[52]Mackerness, 42.

[53]Industrial Organization in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries (1904; rept. London, 1957), p. 96.

[54]A Concise Economic History of Britain: From the Earliest Times to 1750 (Cambridge, 1963), p. 248.

[55]Unwin, p. 91: "the town capitalists who have 'sett aworke the pore people of the same citie, borowes and townes, and of the Countre adjoinying to them dayly, as in spynnyng, cardyng and breakyng and sortyng of wolles, and the handcraftes there inhabytynge as weavers, fullers, sheremen and dyers.'"

[56]Ibid., pp. 93-94.

[57]Extracts from a document in State Papers Domestic, James I, volume LXXX, 13, year 1615, entitled "Reasons to prove the convenience of buying and selling of wool," quoted in Unwin, p. 235.

[58]See Unwin, p. 69.

[59]Ibid., p. 48.

[60]Ibid., p. 92.

[61]Mackerness, 43-44.

[62]Unwin, p. 117.

[63]Ibid., p. 94.

[64]For a general background to the distribution of wealth, the growth of trade, industrial policies, the textile industry, the working-classes in the cloth industry, and the pertinent social history in the sixteenth century, see also L.A. Clarkson, The Pre-Industrial Economy in England: 1500-1750 (New York, 1972), pp. 210-238; T.K. Derry, A Short

Economic History of Britain (Oxford, 1965), pp. 66-105; G.M. Trevelyan, English Social History (1942; rpt. New York, 1947), pp. 92-138; Christopher Wright, The Working Class (London, 1972), pp. 9-17.

[65]Mackerness, 44.

[66]Ibid., 46.

[67]Davis, p. 251.

[68]Mackerness, 46.

[69]Lawlis, The Novels of Thomas Deloney, p. xix.

[70]For a coherent discussion of Deloney's characterization, see Lawlis, Apology For the Middle Class, pp. 68-105.

[71]On this general subject see Louis B. Wright, "Henry Robarts: Patriotic Propagandist and Novelist," SP, 29 (1932), 176-199.

CONCLUSION

Rhetoric as a means of expression, as an aspect of style in Elizabethan fiction, has received much attention. In fact, many critics imply that once the stylistic oddities of early prose fiction have been explained and catalogued, there is not much left to discuss except sources. Throughout this study I have tried to demonstrate that the interest in language and rhetorical self-consciousness that these writers exemplify in their fictions are not simply obsessions with stylistic ornament or verbal embellishment. All these writers are interested -- in one way or another -- in the uses to which rhetoric can be put in man's attempt to describe his world. Moreover, these writers illustrate a particular interest in rhetorical distortion and manipulation. The authors I have considered recognize that rhetoric is a neutral tool; their fictions deal with the possibilities of rhetoric and the abuses of rhetoric.

Near the end of Book Four in the _Old Arcadia_ Philanax struggles to prevent political instability from becoming complete and utter anarchy. Timautus, an Arcadian nobleman of extreme political ambition, slanders Philanax's reputation in the hope of swaying the populace in his own favor. "But . . . my lords," says Philanax,

> let not Timautus' railing speech (who whatsoever he finds evil in his own soul can with ease lay it upon another) make me lose your good favour. Consider that all well doing stands so in the middle betwixt his two contrary evils that it is a ready matter to cast a slanderous shade upon the most approved virtues. Who hath an evil tongue can call severity cruelty, and faithful diligence diligent ambition. (324)

Sidney is completely aware of the fact that men often use rhetorical means to cast reality in an advantageous light. Richard Lanham writes:

> That the _Old Arcadia_ uses rhetoric is common knowledge. That it is also _about_ the use of rhetoric seems to me equally important. We might go so far as to say that . . . the _Old Arcadia_ . . . [shows] that rhetoric . . . is a neutral weapon, lending itself alike to good uses and bad. Cleophila/Pyrocles, for example, calms the rebel mob with the same arts she/he uses in trying to excite the mob to desert Euarchus and rally to the two princesses. Gynecia uses the same language to express her anguish as her husband does to voice his ludicrous infatuation. The many instances of ironic qualification of the speeches, which together create the tension between speech and action, show Sidney aware of the opportunity for deception that rhetorical training offered.[1]

Gascoigne, too, is particularly concerned with rhetorical fraud that is used to cover, disguise and justify behavior that would otherwise be impossible to defend. When F.J. and Elinor arrive in the gallery for their sexual rendezvous, G.T. the narrator epitomizes the nature of their rhetorical collusion by explaining, tongue in cheek, "that of hir curteouse nature she was content to accept bords for a bead of downe, mattes for Camerike sheetes, and

the night gowne of _F.J._ for a counterpoynt to cover them" (69). When the euphemistic rhetoric is swept aside, says G.T., the scene becomes very pornographic; when the rhetorical elegance of sumptuous beds, soft sheets and fancy counterpoint is abandoned with a narrative chuckle, G.T. shows us the world as it really is -- F.J. and Elinor rolling on the floorboards.

The characters in Lyly's works gradually come to realize that the techniques of rhetoric can be used to argue anything at all. What Lyly's irony causes the reader to recognize is that "it is the disposition of the thought that altereth the nature of the thing" (22); it is the rhetorical bias of the speaker that manipulates the face of the "real" world. The rhetorical sophistry of Lyly's characters demonstrates ultimately that rhetoric says more about the user than it does about reality. His characters' epistemological reliance on analogy and simile reveals little about their world, but it reveals a great deal about their uncertainties and their needs.

The rhetorical thrust of the grotesque in _The Unfortunate Traveller_ is to disorient the reader, thereby dramatizing in a practical manner the extent to which our use of language and response to language dictate our perceptions of the world. Nashe's rhetorical distortion makes an important point about rhetoric itself: his

rhetoric of the grotesque mirrors the incongruity, disharmony and deformity of man and his world; man's rhetorical efforts to order and make meaningful his experience of such a ludicrous world are arbitrary and illusory. In Nashe's world, human experience and reality are beyond logical ordering, and, consequently, beyond "orthodox" rhetorical ordering as well. Rhetoric as subject-matter in The Unfortunate Traveller has a unique status. The reader expects Nashe's narrative rhetoric to fall into recognizable patterns of cause and effect, of logical persuasion; Nashe subverts this anticipation at every turn.

If Gascoigne, Lyly, Sidney and Nashe all consider the motivations which lead human beings to transform their world by rhetorical means, then Deloney is a good example of such an effort by an author. In his dedication "To the Courteous Readers" in The Gentle Craft, Part II, Deloney writes:

> Gentle Reader, you that vouchsafe to cast curteous lookes into this rude Pamphlet: expect not herein to find any matter of light value, curiously pen'd with pickt words, or choise phrases, but a quaint and plaine discourse, best fitting matters of merriment, seeing wee haue herein no cause to talke of Courtiers or Scholers. (174)

That he is making an oblique reference to the ornamented styles of Lyly, Sidney and Nashe in particular, is evident. The irony of Deloney's dedication is that his less artificial prose style is no guarantee that his fictions are a more

accurate representation of the world. Walter R. Davis writes that "These facts [i.e. Deloney's propagandist intentions] explain the severe limitations of Deloney's 'realism' and show why, if we seek a realm of slightly more human imperfection than his, we must go, paradoxically but truly, to the artificial fiction of the Euphuists, pastoral romance, and the highly stylized satire of Thomas Nashe."[2] Deloney's interest in rhetorical manipulation is perhaps less visible since his intention is to persuade the reader that his distortions of historical fact and his rhetorically-effected utopia are true. Deloney's propaganda teaches a lesson about rhetoric despite his aim. Jack of Newbury illustrates how rhetorical manipulations and distortions can be used to advance the reality of one's choice.

I have said a great deal about the specious rhetoric of characters and narrators in Elizabethan prose fiction. But what about the status of the rhetoric used by these authors themselves? If rhetoric is an amoral tool -- used by different men for different purposes -- then how do we judge the rhetorical manipulations of the reader that are so much a part of sixteenth-century fiction? Most literary theory in the Renaissance claims that literature is didactic; its purpose, we are told repeatedly, is to teach and delight. In his Defense of Poesy Sidney writes that literature ("poetry" in his terms) "is an art of imitation . . . a

representing, counterfeiting, or figuring-forth -- to speak metaphorically, a speaking picture; with this end, to teach and delight . . . to lead and draw us to as high a perfection as our degenerate souls, made worse by their clay lodgings, can be capable of." The rhetorical manipulation of the reader by writers like Gascoigne, Lyly, Sidney and Nashe, and the reader's response to this manipulation, are major forms of teaching. The didactic value and impact of these works depends very largely on the author's rhetorical encouragement and manipulation of reader response. Literature, Sidney argues, "hath been the first lightgiver to ignorance, and first nurse, whose milk by little and little enabled them to feed afterwards of tougher knowledges." But these "tougher knowledges" -- whether of rhetorical dissembling, epistemological uncertainty, or the limitations of human reason -- are not given outright to the reader as a gift. In most of the works I have discussed, the reader is offered a variety of paradigms by which he can be a bad reader -- he can side momentarily with Pyrocles and Musidorus, or with F.J. and Elinor, or with Euphues. But if he is alert and responsive to his author's rhetorical pulls and pushes, and to the built-in narrative contradictions and clues, presumably he will discover for himself what is needed for reading well. The rhetoric of these writers must

be viewed, then, as didactic in a particular sense; their fiction requires a dialogue between text and reader. For instance, the author might set up a rhetorically fake or perhaps sophistic situation (as these authors do) or a habit of narration, and the reader is immersed in it -- he must sink or swim. If he finds his way and maintains a critical integrity, he is not only taught how to survive the story or poem but, by implication, how to survive the world of actual experience where rhetoric is used in the same seemingly moral but actually insidious ways. In this sense, the rhetorical manipulation of the reader by these writers is "good" rhetoric. It is only when the reader thinks of these works as received texts, and not as a situation to which he must respond -- and through which he must find his way -- that questions of didactic or "good" rhetoric in Elizabethan prose fiction become useless. "Tougher knowledges" are earned, not given.

It is no accident that I resort to certain types of metaphor when I discuss the rhetorical manipulation of the face of the "real" world for particular ends. I have made use of boxing metaphors ("the reader is set up for Nashe's knockout punch," "Nashe hits below the belt"), card metaphors ("stacking the deck," "sleight-of-hand"), and magic metaphors ("hocus-pocus," "enchantment") to characterize the mechanics of rhetorical distortion and

rhetorical deceit. They are, as it seems to me, apt qualifications of a verbal activity that tries to foist -- for whatever purpose -- a false and dishonest account of things on an audience. Rhetorical deception is not new; this dissertation has illustrated that fact. Interest in rhetorical deception is not new either; my arguments have documented in detail the concern of writers three centuries ago. It is especially important that modern man continues to study rhetorical dissembling, given the overwhelming presence of commercial propaganda, the semantic distortions of public officials, the mass media, political commentators, and all those who milk public assent through verbal sham. From the viewpoint of literary criticism, as well, studies of rhetoric in fiction will enable us better to understand the narrative aspects of a genre that often suffers from critical imprecision and vacuity. This study offers methods by which rhetoric as subject-matter can perhaps be examined in the prose fiction of later periods.

I should point out, finally, that I realize that the success of this thesis rests largely on the effectiveness of my own rhetoric. Whether or not it is persuasive rhetoric, the "gentle reader" must decide:

Memorandum, euerie one of you after the perusing of this pamphlet is to prouide him a case of ponyardes, that if you come in companie with anie man which shall dispraise it or speak against it, you may straight crie *Sic respondeo*, and give him the stockado. It standes not with your honours (I assure ye) to haue a gentleman and a page abusde in his absence.

(Thomas Nashe, "The Induction to the dapper Mounsier Pages of the Court," *The Unfortunate Traveller*)

NOTES TO CONCLUSION

[1] Richard A. Lanham, "The *Old Arcadia*," in *Sidney's Arcadia* (New Haven and London, 1965), pp. 327-328.

[2] Walter R. Davis, *Idea and Act in Elizabethan Fiction* (Princeton, 1969), p. 269.

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List of Abbreviations

The following journals are cited several times and therefore appear in abbreviated form.

CL	Comparative Literature
DA	Dissertation Abstracts
ELH	Journal of English Literary History
ELR	English Literary Renaissance
ES	English Studies
ESA	English Studies in Africa
HLQ	Huntington Library Quarterly
JEGP	Journal of English and Germanic Philology
JHI	Journal of the History of Ideas
MLN	Modern Language Notes
MLR	Modern Language Review
MP	Modern Philology
NQ	Notes & Queries
PMLA	Publications of the Modern Language Association of America
PQ	Philological Quarterly
RES	Review of English Studies
SEL	Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900

SP Studies in Philology

SQ Shakespeare Quarterly

SSF Studies in Short Fiction

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