

Proceedings of the
Third Dakotas Conference
on Earlier British Literature

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Preface

The fourteen papers collected in this volume were presented at the Third Dakotas Conference on Earlier British Literature, which was hosted by the English Department of South Dakota State University on April 27-28, 1995. The "earlier" of the conference title was defined as "prior to 1800," and this broad scope is reflected in the diversity of the collection, which ranges from the imagery of the *Ancrene Wisse* to eighteenth-century gender issues. The papers are arranged chronologically rather than in the order in which they were presented at the conference. Some papers not included here will see publication in other places. These include the presentations by the keynote speakers, Professor Lawrence Manley of Yale University and Dr. Richard Dammers, Associate Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at Illinois State University.

In addition to providing a venue for scholarship on British literature prior to 1800, the Dakotas Conference on Earlier British Literature was founded to foster closer connections between the teachers of earlier British literature within the region, a goal which has been enthusiastically endorsed by the participants. The first Dakotas Conference was held in 1992 at Northern State University in Aberdeen, South Dakota. The Second Dakotas Conference was in 1994 at Dakota State University in Madison, South Dakota, in 1994.

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The Didactic Function of Nuptial Imagery in the *Ancrene Wisse*

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I. Introduction

An important aspect of the *Ancrene Wisse*, a devotional manual originally written for anchoresses in early Middle English prose, is the author's skillful use of biblical themes and ideas. As Geoffrey Shepherd notes, the Bible provides most of the material of the *Ancrene Wisse* and the *Wisse* author interprets the Bible for moral and devotional purposes (Shepherd xxv-xxvi). According to the "Scriptural References" attached to James Morton's modern version of the manual, the author of the *Wisse* uses biblical references on nearly 300 occasions (*Nun's* 327-336).

More importantly, the author uses various images of Jesus Christ (or God). Those images have been noted by commentators such as Geoffrey Shepherd, Rosemary Woolf, Janet Grayson, Dennis Rygiel, and Linda Georgianna. Shepherd, in his comprehensive introduction to *Ancrene Wisse: Parts Six and Seven* (1959), sees the images of Christ as a wooer making promises, a benefactor, protector, and a bridegroom (li). Both Rosemary Woolf and Dennis Rygiel find the theme of Christ as a lover-knight in the *Wisse*: Woolf, in her essay "The Theme of Christ the Lover-Knight in Medieval English Literature" (1962), mentions this theme briefly; Rygiel, in his "The Allegory of Christ the Lover-Knight in *Ancrene Wisse*: An Experiment in Stylistic Analysis" (1976), examines the theme in a more detailed and stylistic way. Janet Grayson, in her *Structure and Imagery in Ancrene Wisse* (1974), allows a lengthy chapter on love (pp. 173-217), where she points out that Christ appears to the soul according to its needs as bridegroom, physician, companion, father, king, and Christ-knight (177). Similarly, Georgianna, in *The Solitary Self: Individuality in the Ancrene Wisse* (1981), defines Christ's images as lover, husband, father, mother, friend, and protector (77), stressing the "carnal" quality of Christ's love.

As Elizabeth Robertson explains, the *Wisse* author is sensitive to the anchoress's psychology and responds "to the highly specialized needs of the female recluse" (110). However, while the commentators agree on the *Wisse* author's use of nuptial imagery, they seem to differ on exactly why the imagery is being used in the manual. This essay examines Christ's nuptial images, focusing on the controversy over its emotional and intellectual effects on the target reader. I believe that the *Wisse* author uses nuptial imagery strictly to serve his didactic

purposes, which is evidenced by the text's overall tone and by the author's allegorical interpretation of the Bible.

The primary source for this study is *The English Text of the Ancrene Riwe: Ancrene Wisse*, edited by J. R. R. Tolkien. In in-text citations, Tolkien's text will be accompanied by the translation into modern English by M. B. Salu.

II. Nuptial Imagery and Its Origin

The relationship between Christ and the anchoress in the *Wisse* is frequently presented in terms of the lover-beloved relationship. Similar to a shy medieval knight seeking the affection of a damsel, the *Wisse's* Christ woos his beloved in a covert way (f.23b.15-21).

Not only is Christ shy, but also he is noble and valiant. The allegory of a king (the wooer) and a lady (our soul) in Part 7 (Of Love) of the *Wisse* effectively shows this quality. Here the author compares the king to God, whose affection for the undeserving human beings led to the sacrificial death of his manifestation, Christ (f.105a.11-17). The king first sent "leattres isealet" (sealed letters), just as God sent the patriarchs and prophets, who were forerunners of Christ, in the time of the Old Testament. Then he sent "leattres iopenet" (open letters). The "leattres isealet" and "leattres iopenet" are metaphors for the Scriptures, for the Old Testament was in the Christian religion "a wrapping up" of the New, and the New Testament an unfolding of the old. The "leattres iopenet" were "wrat wið his ahne blod" (with His own blood wrote), a conceit (based on 1 Col. 2:13-14), in which the Atonement is spoken of as a written legal instrument (Shepherd 55).

The *Wisse* author further presents Christ as bridegroom or husband; the anchoress (or her soul) as bride or spouse (f.31a.6-8). Because the bride is so loved by her bridegroom, she is expected to be faithful and loyal to his love. That is why the *Wisse* author poses a rhetorical question, "Ant hwet gef eni ancre iesu cristes spuse is forschuppet into wuluene. nis þæt mucche sorhe?" (And what if an anchoress, the spouse of Jesus Christ, is transformed into a she-wolf? Is not that a grievous thing?) (f.33a.11-12).

Christ's love in the *Wisse* is on many occasions human and sensual. For instance, Christ shows his love by "embracing" and "kissing" the beloved:

Cogitatiuns beoð fleonninde þohtes. þe ne leasteð nawt. ant teo as seín Beornard seið ne hurteð nawt te sawle. ah þah ha bispottið hire wið hare blake speckes. swa. þæt nis ha nawt wurde þæt iesu hire leofmon þæt is al feier bicluppe hire ne

cusse hire ear ha beo iwesschen. (f.78b.7-11)

"Cogitations" are thoughts which flit through the mind and do not remain, and these, as St Bernard said, do not wound the soul, but they mark it with black specks, so that it is not fit for Jesus, its Beloved, who is all fair, to embrace and to kiss before it has been washed.

The sensual gesture is also seen picturesquely in Part 7 when the author suggests to the anchoress that she should stretch out her love to and touch Jesus Christ:

. . . stretche þi luue to iesu crist. þu hauest him iwunnen. Rín him wið ase mucche luue. as þu hauest sum mon sum chearre. he is þín to don wið al þæt tu wilnest. (f.110a.23-25)

"Stretch out your love to Jesus Christ. You have won Him! Touch Him with as much love as you sometimes feel for a man. He is yours to do with all that you will."

The use of nuptial imagery in representing Christ's love toward the human soul is not wholly the author's own invention. The origin can be found in the Old Testament. The imagery is also common in the Latin Fathers. In the Old Testament, Israelites are called the Bride of God. The traditional prophetic metaphor dates from Hosea (Hos. 1:14-20), where Hosea's whole life is analogous to God's: he loved, and still loves, a wife who has betrayed him; God likewise still loves faithless Israel and, when he has made trial of her repentance, will cherish her again. The wedded love of God for his people is also the subject of the Song of Songs and of Psalm 45. In the New Testament, Jesus speaks of the messianic age as a time of wedding (Mt. 22:1-14; 25:1-13), and for St. Paul Christian marriage is a symbol of Christ's union with Church (Eph. 5:25-33; 1 Cor. 6:15-17; 2 Cor. 11-2).

The Church in the early Christian centuries was still regarded as the Bride of God (or Christ). And in the *Ancrene Wisse* the Bride occasionally represents the Church (Shepherd xlix). But, as Shepherd points out, in the late Middle Ages, the human soul came to be identified with the Bride (xlix).

Some commentators have convincingly explained how the *Wisse* author came to use nuptial imagery. First, Shepherd explains it as a result of the late medieval passionate attachment to the humanity of Christ: "In part, this is a product of that characteristically medieval

mental habit which insisted on expanding the human to measure the divine" (Shepherd xlix).

Rosemary Woolf explains that the popularity of the theme of Christ the Lover-Knight is because of its exceptional fitness to express the dominant idea of medieval piety, that Christ endured the torments of the Passion in order to win man's love. She sensibly claims that in the 12th century the old doctrine of the "devil's rights" was superseded by that of the "satisfaction" theory, and a new emphasis on personal and emotional relationship between God and man developed. And there developed a perfect parallelism between the theological emphasis on Christ's show of love on the Cross and the conception of chivalric conduct in the Arthurian romances, wherein a knight by brave endurance and heroic encounters would save the lady whom he loved from treacherous capture, thereby hoping to gain her favor, or might joust brilliantly in front of her, hoping by his prowess to win her love (Woolf 1-2). Woolf's point is that in the Middle Ages the literary conventions of medieval chivalry enabled the idea of the warrior Christ to fuse with the idea of Christ the lover or bridegroom of the individual soul, thereby making a single theme.

Even in the 12th century, romance literature was not unknown to the cloisters (Grayson 173), and the *Wisse* author, while he condemns romantic love (f.104a.8ff and f.110a.7ff), still uses some of the romantic arguments in secular love. Thus, the author's accommodation of the romance convention provides the otherwise rigorous text with engaging imagery.

III. Nature and Effects of Christ's Nuptial Imagery

For what purpose the *Wisse* author used human and sensual imagery in a devotional book has been a matter of contention among commentators. Generally, they seem to agree that such imagery is designed to appeal to the senses and sensibilities of the intended reader. However, they disagree regarding the nature of sensual love in the *Wisse*. Geoffrey Shepherd and Linda Georgianna deal with this issue in their *Ancrene Wisse: Parts Six and Seven* and *The Solitary Self*, respectively. The former claims the *Wisse's* love is ultimately spiritual in spite of its apparent carnal quality, while the latter claims that it is primarily and intentionally sensual.

First, Shepherd follows St. Bernard's concept of "carnal spiritual love." According to Shepherd, Bernard regarded the sensitive affection for His person as no more than an early step upon the ladder of spiritual love; thus, spiritual love is qualified by "carnal" (Shepherd li-iii). Bernard's explanation of why God wanted human form is

quoted by Shepherd as follows:

I think the chief reason why God wished to be seen in the flesh and converse as man with man, was that He could thereby draw away at first all the affections of men (who, in as much as they are carnal, cannot love other than carnally) towards the saving love of His body, and so gradually lead them on into spiritual love. (qtd. in Shepherd lii)

Shepherd's claim is that the author of the *Wisse* may appear to aim for his charges at little more than this "carnal" spiritual love.

While Geoffrey Shepherd accepts Bernard's concept of carnal spiritual love, Linda Georgianna contends that the *Wisse* author uses Christ's nuptial imagery to arouse an intense and sensual relationship with Christ in the anchoress. Her explanation of the implication of a kiss serves her argument:

The kiss of peace that precedes communion at Mass is described in terms of an imagined, but nevertheless sexual embrace. . . . Though the author asks the anchoress here to "forget the world," what he is actually suggesting is that the anchoress manipulate her human desires for sexual union. (Georgianna 72)

Georgianna's point is that for the *Ancrene Wisse* author, "carnal love"—not "carnal spiritual love" as is argued by Bernard and supported by Shepherd—is what the anchoress most needs. She contends that the anchoress's "reward for having limited her contact with earthly men is that she has complete freedom in imagining an intense and sensual relationship with Christ" (Georgianna 72).

Shepherd's and Georgianna's positions apparently represent conflicting views about the sensual quality of Christ's love in the *Wisse*. My position is on Shepherd's side for the following two reasons.

First, Georgianna's claim is inconsistent with the author's overall tone about fleshly desire. Throughout the manual the author strongly warns against cherishing attachment for a man, for such a feeling shall be from Satan. He even forbids conversing with any man out of a church window. It is obvious that the author uses sensual terms. However, Georgianna goes too far in arguing that the love between Jesus Christ and the anchoress is to satisfy the need of the latter's sexual relationship which cannot be obtained with an earthly husband. It would be hard to justify the anchoress's fantasizing sensual

relationship with Christ as being chaste or pure. To argue that sensuality is not an earthly step on the ladder of higher or spiritual love but a medium for satisfying the sexual need is a misreading of the author's emphasis. Therefore, Richard H. Green's question posed in his review of Georgianna's *The Solitary Self* seems to be legitimate: "But does the author of the AW urge upon his charges a 'carnal' love for Christ which does not rise to spiritual love (p. 74)?" (Green 469). Certainly, sensuality is not in itself the object the author had in mind.

Second, we have to understand that the *Wisse* author follows the tradition of the Song of Songs. The Song, one of the Judeo-Christian canon, is replete with sensuous and erotic imagery, but the church traditionally has read it as a spiritual allegory. The Song's language of love inherently contains spiritual meanings. Thus, when the Song is read as an allegory of God's love of his bride, the Israelites, or as an allegory of Christ's love for his bride, the church, or as a symbol for the intimate experience of divine love in the individual soul, it serves the writer's lofty purpose. Likewise, the *Wisse* can be more fully understood when it is interpreted as more than a romance. The *Wisse* author seems to make strenuous efforts to explain in engaging terms who the person of Christ is. When we consider such an endeavor, we can understand that the author used nuptial imagery, which had been popularly used by his predecessors, to help the reader understand more deeply her position and mission in relationship to God (or Christ).

IV. Conclusion

The anchoress's life was one of penitence and austerity. She lived in strict physical confinement, repenting personal sins and trying to accomplish salvation through prayer and meditation. The author, with a deep affection for and understanding of such anchoresses, provides rules in spiritual matters. On every page of the book one can feel the author's genuine concern for the anchoress. He locates all the possible stumbling blocks for a recluse and provides preventive measures for all the negative situations. He achieves this chiefly by relying on the Bible. Particularly, he uses various images of Christ (or God) for every need of the anchoress. And he most probably does it for edifying purposes. Considering the whole tone of the *Wisse*, the author was interested in showing the person of Christ in graphic detail. Though such a showing may look sensual, the author's underlying sincerity does not allow that. The carnal or worldly attraction to Christ as a human is only the first step of a love which leaves the world behind, moving toward rational and finally spiritual love.

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Woman Helps Dog (-) Bite Victim:
Iconographic Traditions and Dame Sirith's Dog

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The tale opens as Willikin, a prominent clerk of thirteenth-century England, arrives at Margeri's home while her husband is away on business.¹ Margeri greets Willikin warmly, inviting him in and claiming that she will grant whatever it is that he wishes. Having been so eagerly welcomed, Willikin matter-of-factly tells Margeri that he loves her and wants her love in return. Margeri rejects him as strongly as she had earlier greeted him and eventually, Willikin leaves Margeri's home.

He shares his hard-luck story with Dame Sirith, an elderly woman who offers to help him. She arrives at Margeri's home with a dog who she claims had been her daughter who had turned down a clerk's advances and was turned into a dog as a result. Seeing the similarities between her own situation and Dame Sirith's fictitious daughter's, Margeri pleads with Dame Sirith to bring Willikin back to her so that she can appease any potential anger.

The story is called *Dame Sirith*. The author is unknown. The skillful rendering is underestimated and its importance is largely ignored. In fact, George H. McKnight apologizes for including *Dame Sirith* in his anthology of humorous tales claiming that "*Dame Sirith* is perhaps one such as the world would very willingly let die (McKnight xxi). It would be unwise to let the only complete pre-Chaucerian fabliau in English die. It is not an original English tale, since it has origins in Greece and the Orient, but is well told.

It was not the burden of the medieval story teller to create new stories. Instead, the writer was to "present and embellish [stories] with all the arts of rhetoric for the purposes of entertainment and instruction" (Coghill 18). *Dame Sirith* does entertain and enlighten. It is an art work which includes an icon from pictorial and literary works ranging back as far as Homer, using it uniquely to aid readers in understanding the character of the heroine, Margeri. Dame Sirith's dog is the symbol used to represent Margeri's faithful character in the first part of the fabliau and foreshadows her contemptible character at the end. It is the crux of the plot and the solution to the very problem it introduces. When we understand how the dog functions elsewhere in art, we gain greater insight into Margeri's character.

In the beginning of *Dame Sirith*, Margeri demonstrates the quality which has been symbolized by dogs in art for centuries; to wit, the canine characteristic of fidelity. According to the *Oxford Latin*

Dictionary, "fido" is a conjugation of the Latin infinitive "to trust," thus making a powerful connection between the name "Fido" and the noun "fidelity."

As far back as Homer's *The Odyssey*, dogs have been known as faithful companions. Before his journey, Odysseus trained his puppy, Argos, to hunt. After Argos miraculously survives Odysseus' twenty-year absence, he is the first to recognize Odysseus, who is disguised as a beggar when he returns. Argos couldn't stand or bark, "but when he knew he heard / Odysseus' voice nearby, he did his best / to wag his tail, nose down, with flattened ears, / having no strength to move nearer his master" (XVII 389-92). In the ultimate demonstration of fidelity, Argos waited the canine equivalent of 140 years before "death closed / the eyes of Argos, who had seen his master / . . . after twenty years" (XVII 420-22). Argos is one picture of faithfulness, adding to our understanding of Margeri's character.

In a treatise "of moral and domestic instructions" written within a century after *Dame Sirith*, Menagier de Paris repeatedly compares a woman's affections for her husband with a dog's love for its master (Menagier 21). "A greyhound, a mastiff, or a small dog," he claims, "stays close to the one from whom he gets his food. . . . He follows [his master] by rivers, woods, thieves's dens, and battles," and "if the dog is far away from his master, he always has his heart and his eye on him" (53). De Paris offers still another example of "the dog Macaire" who witnessed his master's murder. The dog "did not leave him, but lay down near the dead man, . . . sleeping, drinking, and eating near the corpse—guarding the body of his master" (53-54). As a final example, de Paris discusses the old dog, Niort, who "lay on the grave where his master was buried. The Duc . . . [was] brought there to see the marvel of the loyalty and love of the dog that day and night would not leave the grave of his master" (54-55). He concludes that, like dogs, women also "ought to have perfect and solemn love for their husbands" (55).

Strongly reminiscent of the examples of Macaire and Niort is the aspect of fidelity inherent in the dogs carved at the feet of their sculpted masters on the fifteenth-century tombs of William Canynge, Sir John Beauchamp, and Lord Hungerford. Each stays eternally beside the remains of his master, and all lay uniformly at their respective masters' feet in a pose much like the description of Argos when he saw Odysseus upon his return to Ithaca: their noses are down, their ears are flattened, their gazes are focused longingly and patiently toward the heads of their respective tombs just as Niort and Macaire keep with the remains of their masters.

Similarly, people, canines, and fidelity are cleverly brought together in Book V of Edmund Spenser's *The Faerie Queene*. The text compares the mighty warrior, Talus, with a spaniel as he faithfully stands guard all night outside Britomart's chamber:

Ne lesse did Talus suffer sleep to seaze
His eye-lids sad, but watcht continually,
Lying without her dore in great disease;
Like to a Spaniell wayting carefully
Lest any should betray his Lady treacherously.
(V.vi.26.5-9)

In Jan Van Eyck's revolutionary painting, *Giovanni Arnolfini and His Bride* (1434), the motif of a faithful dog at his master's feet continues. Arnolfini and his bride are pictured just after their wedding, standing at either side of the canvas, gingerly holding hands. In the center foreground stands a terrier symbolizing fidelity literally "between" husband and wife.

Fidelity remains an abundantly clear canine quality throughout all these cited works, and it is the characteristic Margeri displays strongly in the opening scene of the tale. Willikin comes on the scene at Margeri's home to proposition her. She has no idea about the nature of his request, and "her politeness and generosity rest on her ignorance of his intent" (Martin 92). She is "generous almost to the point of absurd naïveté, . . . so that she can not imagine that everyone else in the world is not like herself" (Martin 103, 107).

Willikin, whom we are told is a "modi [courageous] mon and proud" (3), matter-of-factly tells her, "Ich habbe I-loued thee moni yer. . . . Ich wille thy loue" (67, 87). As an educated man in the early fourteenth century, he can afford, by virtue of his gender and social position, to be so forward. Margeri repeatedly tells him that he hasn't a dog's chance. She says plainly, "that woldi don for non thing . . . thau he [Margeri's husband] be from hom on his hernde, / Ich were ounseli, if Ich lernede / To ben a hore" (88, 97-99). She adds assertively "ich am wif bothe god and trewe; / Trewe womon ne mai no mon cnowe / Then ich am" (121-23). Since Margeri remains faithful, Willikin finally turns tail and runs to Dame Sirith, who returns to Margeri with her dog. Margeri becomes convinced that if she does not have an affair with Willikin, she will be physically transformed into a dog. What she fails to understand, however, is that she need not fear transformation into a dog because this dog represents what she already is—a faithful companion to her husband. She is, metaphorically,

already a dog who displays the finest, strongest, and most persistent quality represented by a dog—fidelity.

However, as Margeri is well aware, dogs are often treated by society with contempt, and that is what frightens Margeri into consenting to Willikin's seduction. Had Dame Sirith told Margeri that her daughter had been turned into a unicorn instead of a dog, Margeri may not have been so inclined to submit to Willikin because the unicorn was considered "the most beautiful animal of the middle ages;" it was "a dangerous animal with a single horn which was an antidote to poison" (Clark 143). Dogs, though, are depicted negatively at least as often as they are depicted positively. What an honor it would be for Margeri to be transformed into a unicorn because of her fidelity, in contrast to the horror of being made a mutt.

Because she believes that the dog is Dame Sirith's daughter transformed as a result of fidelity, and that she might suffer the same fate, Margeri consents to Willikin, showing that "a combination of fear and self-love can overcome her major trait, loyalty" (Martin 102). The dog's appearance in *Dame Sirith*, then, marks a pivotal point in Margeri's moral ideals and resolve. She "is seduced. . . . The result is that she becomes the opposite of the loyal wife" (Martin 102). In other words, the specter of despised "fidelity" convinces Margeri to become an infidel, and the same dog which symbolizes Margeri as faithful is now a metaphor for her as contemptible.

Dogs are used to suggest the contemptible in another tradition which dates back as far as *The Odyssey*. By the time Odysseus returns to Ithaca, his once-famous hunting dog is "treated as rubbish now" and "lay at last / upon a mass of dung before the gates" (XVII, 383-84). When Argos was younger, "the young men . . . / hunted wild goats with him, and hare, and deer, / But he had grown old in his master's absence" (380-82). Old and used up, Argos is cast aside as a reproach. He is no longer useful; he remains simply faithful and rejected.

The Bible often discusses dogs, usually in conjunction with pigs, both of which are presented in a most displeasing light. Jesus says in his celebrated Sermon on the Mount, "Do not give dogs what is sacred; do not throw your pearls to pigs" (Matt. VII 6). Likewise, Peter quotes the Proverbs when he criticizes the Old Testament Jews, "of [whom] the Proverbs are true: 'A dog returns to its vomit,' and, 'A sow that is washed goes back to her wallowing in the mud'" (2 Pet II 22).

Finally, Jesus rebukes a Canaanite woman who was pleading for help. He says "I was sent only to the lost sheep of Israel. . . . It is not right to take the children's bread and toss it to their dogs" (Matt.

XV 24,26). Literal interpretation of this passage would indicate that Christ's children and their dogs are mutually exclusive. Ergo, if Margeri were to become a dog, she would no longer be Christ's child. Since Margeri unquestioningly accepts Dame Sirith's dog story, it is safe to assume that she might interpret these passages literally as well, which could exacerbate her dilemma. It is not simply that Margeri "prefers adultery and beauty to loyalty and transformation," as Martin asserts in *A Dame Sirith Compendium* (109), but that behind her preference stands a strong Christian commitment—to remain one of God's children—which nullifies Von Kreisler's assertion that Margeri "looks with a less steady gaze toward the next life than the present worldly one" (385).

Yet another example of the contemptible dog is seen in Peter Paul Rubens' painting *The Garden of Love* (1632), which portrays a brothel in overly-splendid detail. In the lower right-hand corner, nearly completely hidden by the painting's dark color and intense activity, cowers a mixed-breed dog. Its small size, trepidations appearance and near-invisibility strongly suggest that fidelity has little esteem among the many brothel visitors and workers, and the painting invites viewers to note with contempt the spectacle presented before them.

From these examples we can see the picture that Margeri sees of her future self if she remains faithful. Her commitment to her husband and to God is waylaid—not necessarily by her fear of becoming a dog, but by her fear of being perceived as a dog. She submits in fear of being maltreated, not by her husband, but by others, ironically, because of fidelity. She changes, in essence, from "Fido" to "Rover." Fearing social denigration because of her fidelity, Margeri unwittingly chooses to be metaphorically transformed into a dog via infidelity. According to her own definition, she becomes a whore.

Still, readers are able to sympathize with Margeri when they look closely at the situation Willikin placed her in. She was approached by a clerk, a man with an education, with whom she stood her ground as best she could. She submitted to him only when she became aware of the social forces binding her—only when she was forced. The effect of Dame Sirith's ploy is the same as it would be if Willikin told Margeri that if she did not submit to him, he would tell everyone that she did. Either way, it is coercion.

Margeri has very little choice in her decision. If she remains faithful to her husband, God, according to her understanding of him, might perceive her as contemptible. But since she consents, we can assume that her husband will perceive her as contemptible for not remaining faithful.

We must also remember that the same bind would not exist had Margeri approached Willikin. However he would respond to Margeri's advances, no one would view him as contemptible. Were he to decline, he would be perceived as a gentleman. Were he to accept, he would be perceived as a man who was simply sowing wild oats—boys will be boys, after all. Margeri did the best she could under the double-bind circumstances she was placed in.

In spite of all these factors, however, the contrast of Margeri's character from beginning to end of the fabliau are enough for the reader to view Margeri with contempt. Yes, Dame Sirith's dog represents Margeri's contemptibility because of her submission to Willikin, but also because of the contrast between how faithful she was: "Trewer womon ne mai no mon cnowe / Then ich am," and how easily and emphatically she is swayed: "Welcome wilekin, swete thing, / Thou art welcomore then the king" (122-23, 425-26). Margeri's repeatedly sworn loyalty to her husband is "thrown over at the end of the tale, and she and her morality are laughed at" (Martin 106). Willikin returns to take Margeri's fidelity to the dogs while she, having learned the art of deceit, flatters Willikin so that she may retain her "proper form."

From one artistic discipline to another, canines stand on both sides of the canvas: sacred and sinister, holy and profane, but it is a rare thing for the symbol of a dog to be used in both ways within one piece, though one can cite many works in which a dog is used as either faithful or contemptible. Homer achieved the dichotomy in *The Odyssey*, and so did the writer of *Dame Sirith*. Margeri is presented in both lights, and Dame Sirith's dog stands on the line between the two pictures.

The wonderful thing about *Dame Sirith* is the timelessness of both, the symbol of the dog as fidelity, and the stigma of the dog as contemptible. The *Dame Sirith* story is ancient because these perceptions of the dog are ancient. The ancient hearers of the first version of the *Dame Sirith* story could relate to the canine images as well as early fourteenth-century readers could. Throughout the artistically-rendered *Dame Sirith*, in which the dog simultaneously stands on both sides, the poet, as Von Kreisler asserts, "is a highly skilled and creative artist" whose "achievement deserves our recognition and applause" (379-80, 387).

Note

¹The spellings of "Willikin" and "Margeri" vary widely. The spellings adopted here follow Lawrence H. Martin's "A *Dame Sirith* Compendium."

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The Role of Christian Asceticism in Medieval Drama

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The Brome play of *The Sacrifice of Isaac* and the Wakefield play *The Killing of Abel* show their protagonists displaying the same general patterns found at two different points in Christian asceticism. These two modes of asceticism are monastic asceticism, developed by St. Basil, and the directed asceticism of the later Middle Ages.

In order to examine these plays in light of Christian asceticism a framework must first be constructed. The ancients defined asceticism as a way to perfect the external self. St. Paul shifted the direction of perfection towards the inner self, terming it Christian perfection, "the principle of perfection sought by renunciation . . ." (Goodier 44). The most important aspect of this type of asceticism was the voluntary aspect of it. The second mode of asceticism began with St. Basil's development of monasteries. Inspired by God, Basil and St. Gregory of Nazianzus decided to embark upon the ascetic life together. Here is where Basil differs from previous fathers of the movement—he never considered adopting the discipline on his own. As the founder of asceticism as a Christian monastic and communal practice, Basil developed many guidelines. "The fundamental principles were [not] changed; they were changed only in their application. Religious life, surrender of all for God, was still seen and pursued as the secret of happiness. . . . At the same time . . . added [to the] life of solitude and prayer . . . was a life of action . . ." (Goodier 44). These ascetics did not simply retreat from the world, but they also performed charitable works as a part of their devotion, and as an imitation of Christ.

The third type of asceticism is the type developed in the later Middle Ages. These new ascetics did not make their decision entirely of their own free will. Typically, Jesus would appear in a vision and tell the future saint to abandon his or her possessions and to perform certain penances or ascetic practices. The saint would then follow in the footsteps of the forefathers of asceticism, with one exception—they had not voluntarily chosen the ascetic way of life for themselves. Instead, God directed them towards it, and for love of Him, they followed His command.

No matter which form of asceticism they practiced, ascetics offered their life to God, not only in homage, but also as a propitiation for the sins of the world. This idea of sacrifice has been built upon throughout the ages, and "thus we finally arrive at the following definition [of

sacrifice]: *Sacrifice is a religious act which, through the consecration of a victim, modifies the condition of the moral person who accomplishes it . . .*" (Hubert and Mauss 13). It is important to note that the holocaust itself does not achieve any glorification; it is the one who actually performs the sacrifice who gains the advantage. "We give the name 'sacrificer' to the subject to whom the benefits of sacrifice thus accrue, or who undergoes its effects" (Hubert and Mauss 10). This last statement implies that asceticism is not simply a passive escape from the world, but rather an active pursuit of one's desire. Geoffrey Galt Harpham, author of *The Ascetic Imperative in Culture and Criticism*, agrees, "In the tight sense asceticism is a product of early Christian ethics and spirituality; in the loose sense it refers to any act of self-denial undertaken as a strategy of empowerment and gratification" (xiii). In other words, asceticism can be a synonym for sacrifice, another "strategy for empowerment and gratification." Yet, escaping from the world is simply not enough. The ascetic must actively pursue his or her discipline in order to receive the benefits. Sacrifice requires action, and returns high yields.

Another way of looking at sacrifice is the surrender of a desire, or in Harpham's terms, "a denial of desire." Harpham believes that critics in the past focused too strongly on the denial aspect of asceticism and consequently ignored the importance of desire. "While asceticism recognizes that desire stands between human life and perfection, it also understands that desire is the only means of achieving perfection, and that the movement towards ideality is necessarily a movement of desire" (Harpham 45). Desire, not denial, is really the underlying principle of asceticism. Denial, in the form of sacrifice, is once again the means of achieving the goal. "Asceticism is," Harpham assures us, "essentially a meditation on, even an enactment of, desire" (45). Looking back, one can see that desire has been the goal for all stages of Christian asceticism. The desire sought after by ascetics is the desire for spiritual perfection. This ultimate desire is obtained through the denial of the body and of the outside world. "Asceticism fights fire with fire," says Harpham (46), or as St. Jerome writes, "Desire is quenched by desire" (17:28 in Harpham 46). This perpetual struggle between denial and desire opens the door for temptation, for "in temptation desire is illuminated" (Harpham 47). Temptation presents a choice between obedience and disobedience (to God's wishes), between resisting bodily desire in favor of achieving spiritual desire. The ascetic does not fear temptation, but rather sees it as a test of faith and a tool of perfection. When faced with temptation, the ascetic will resist the impulse to disobey, thus denying fleshly desire,

and move further towards the spiritual desire of perfection. So, "desire is a source of profit as well as of loss," (Harpham 55) just as sacrifice yields high returns in the face of a loss.

The Biblical figure Abel, as seen in the Wakefield play *The Killing of Abel*, is an ascetic character in the mold of St. Basil the Great. His second speech in the plays decries his ascetic nature:

. . . here my sawe:
It is the custom of oure law,
All that wrik as the wise
Shall worship God with sacrifice
(ll. 68-71).

Abel realizes that all who are wise, all who care about pleasing God, should sacrifice to Him. Abel is not unaware of the potential rewards he stands to gain as sacrificer, "then blis withoutten end / Get we for oure service," (ll. 81-82). Harpham's terms of "gratification and empowerment" echo here, for Abel will receive both the gratification of having pleased God and the [spiritual] empowerment that are by-products of sacrifice.

Divine inspiration is the key element in identifying Abel's type of asceticism with that of St. Basil's. As mentioned earlier, Basil gave of himself freely, yet acknowledges God's role in the decision. Abel does the same. Further, St. Basil holds that a true ascetic needs a competent guide. Basil prayed to the Lord in order to receive one. Abel, it seems, already had several competent guides in the personages of his father, Adam, and the elders. Abel makes it quite clear that these men provide him with wise counsel which he follows:

Oure fader us bad, oure fader us kend,
That oure tend should be brend.
.....
Brother, as elders have us kend,
First schuld we tend with oure hend,
And to his lofing sithen be brend.
(ll. 72-73; 101-103)

It appears that these men have not only counseled Abel to perform sacrifices, but they have also guided him as to how to perform them, without making the decision for him. No one forced Abel to sacrifice to the Lord; indeed, he had the choice not to sacrifice, or to sacrifice unworthily as did his brother Cain. Cain's presence brings us to the

final link between St. Basil's asceticism and Abel's. Basil is widely heralded as the founding father of monasticism, and as was stated earlier, he began the first communal asceticism. Abel, too, wants to establish communal asceticism and sacrifice. He insistently asks Cain to join him in sacrifice:

Com furth, brothere, and let us gang
To worship Cod . . .

.....
Bot let us furth togeder go.
Good brother, let us weynd sone
(ll. 74-75; 130-133)

When Cain continues to balk at sacrificing, Abel is surprised, yet he tries again by appealing to Cain's sense of paternal and filial respect:

Dere brother, hit were grete wonder
That I and thou shuld go in sonder;
Then wold oure fader have grete ferly.
Ar we not brether, thou and I?
(ll. 154-157)

As Basil and Gregory entered their sacrifice together, so Abel wished to do with Cain. Unlike St. Gregory, Cain refused. In turn, he becomes angry when Abel's sacrifice of a lamb burns brightly while his offering of grain only smokes. He raises up and kills Abel, thus making the sacrificer the sacrifice.

While Abel's asceticism is identified with St. Basil's, Abraham's can be associated with the asceticism of the later Middle Ages. His ascetic impulse is depicted in the Brome play, *The Sacrifice of Isaac*. As the play depicts a sacrifice, again a sacrificer must be present. According to definition, the sacrificer will be the one who benefits and thus is an ascetic. Abraham is the sacrificer, and ascetic, in this case. The play opens up with Abraham on his way to sacrifice a holocaust, thanking and praising God for all that he has in life. God sends down an angelic messenger to Abraham who says, "Oure Lord comandith thete) for to take/Isaac, thy yowng son that thow lovist best, / And with his blod sacrifice that thow make" (ll. 60-62). Abraham is immediately disturbed by this command because of his great love for Isaac. Abraham has been presented with a classic scenario of desire and denial. He has both an earthly desire, Isaac's life, and a spiritual desire, to please God. In order to achieve his ultimate desire, Abraham

must deny his worldly desire by sacrificing Isaac. He is sorely tempted to spare his son's life, "A, Lord, my harte reysith therageyn! / I may not find it in my harte to smite. / My hart will not now thertoo" (ll. 299-301), but resists the urge to stray from God's command, keeping in mind the ascetic ideal: "[Ascetic] discipline means cost. For this, one must give up, go without, renounce, refuse to be drawn away from his purpose by any allurements" (Black 165). Abraham resolves to himself,

For, thow[gh] my hart woold make ony striffe,
Yit will I not spare, for child nor wiffe,
But don after my Lordys lore.

.....
To don this dede I am full sory,
But, Lord, thin[e] hest I will not withstond.
(ll. 83-85; 293-94)

Further, in the manner of ascetics, Abraham does not mourn his decision once it was made, "So 'welawey!' may be my songe, / Excep[t]e alonly Godys will" (ll. 234-235). For this steadfastness and willingness, Abraham is both spiritually and materially rewarded. He gains God's favor: "My blissing I geffe, w[h]ersoever ye wend" and also gains the life of his son (l. 402).

Abraham embodied the late Medieval conception of asceticism because he did not make the decision to sacrifice on his own, but rather was told to sacrifice by God. As has been discussed previously, it was common for saints to be told by Jesus or God to become an ascetic. Abraham would not be considered unusual, nor would the "quality" of his asceticism be lowered. Further, in several cases the saint hesitated or debated the decision that lay before them just as Abraham did. In the end, though, the saint always chose to follow God's command, no matter what the personal cost, be it family, money, husband or wife. Similarly, Abraham determined to follow God's will even at the cost of his son's life

In *The Killing of Abel*, Abel performs active self-denials. He willingly tithes from the best of his flock, placing his importance not on his possessions and his worldly goods, but on pleasing God. Conversely, Cain's main priority is his wealth; he grudgingly gives his leftovers. As a result of his love for worldly goods, Cain kills his brother and loses his soul.

The audience would have been well aware of the dangers of wealth. The most popular sermons and religious tracts of the Middle Ages

discussed excessive wealth and greed. Penitential manuals described elaborate punishments for stealing and greediness. Even popular poetry such as *Piers Plowman* dealt with the dangers of "mede" (reward) and covetousness.

Furthermore, although the people of medieval England were not familiar with St. Basil himself, they were continually exposed to his type of asceticism through their contact with monasteries. They would have seen Abel's concern for his brother and the tradition of charity as an extension of monastic life and rule. Founders and foundresses such as St. Clare of Assisi and St. Francis of Assisi combined charitable work with lives of devotion and prayer. Both were seen as essential to saving one's soul.

I have shown here today that two medieval plays, *The Killing of Abel*, and *The Sacrifice of Isaac*, displayed characteristics of different stages of Christian asceticism. Both of these plays in turn would have provided more than entertainment for their audiences. They would also have provided instruction in the ascetic lifestyle, a lifestyle the Church encouraged in all. Sacrifice was to be a part of everyday life, whether large or small. Thus, the role of Christian asceticism in medieval drama was an instructional tool for the Church.

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*Mandeville's Travels: A Medieval
Stockpile of Representations*

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In the Prologue of *Mandeville's Travels*, the dynamic author/narrator introduces himself and sets out his agenda: "I Iohn Maundeville knyght, alle be it I be not worthi . . . haue seyn and gon thorgh manye dyuerse londes . . . where dwellen many dyuerse folk . . . of whiche londes and iles I schalle speke more pleynly hereafter" (3; Prol.).¹

In twentieth-century criticism, Mandeville has been described as observant, tolerant, and understanding. Mary Campbell comments on his ability to "humanize the cultures he describes and to depict what he calls 'the other half' as belonging to the same Nature as 'our own'" (9). Donald Howard notes that his "objectivity and tolerance, even to infidels, remain exemplary" (7). Finally, Josephine Waters Bennett tells us that Mandeville "recognizes that these people in strange lands are human beings like himself. His attempts to understand them gives his narrative human interest which vitalizes it and makes his imaginary travel more real than the actual peregrinations of Odoric, or even Marco Polo" (33).

In recent studies of European travel narratives, particularly Victorian accounts of Africa, scholars have analyzed the ways in which seemingly innocent, often "objective" scientific writing, served as an effective agent of imperialism. Mary Louise Pratt, in her essay entitled "Scratches on the Face of the Country; or, What Mr. Barrow Saw in the Land of the Bushmen," describes these information-producing travel accounts as follows: "The explicit project of these explorer-writers, whether scientists or not, is to produce what they themselves referred to as 'information.' Their task, in other words, was to incorporate a particular reality into a series of interlocking information orders" (144). These explorer-writers, who she refers to as the eye/I, tried to make themselves invisible and to sound objective so as "to make those informational orders natural, to find them there uncommanded, rather than assert them as the products/producers of European knowledges or disciplines" (144).

The eye/I of the *Travels*, John Mandeville, though far from invisible, also produces "information." In this paper, I will explore the eye/I that is John Mandeville, discussing how his particular "observance," "tolerance," and "understanding" produced a certain reality, a stockpile of representations. I also will discuss the significance of this eye/I's pronouncement: "I schalle speke."

I. The Eye/I, John Mandeville

Macon Leary, the main character in Anne Tyler's novel, *The Accidental Tourist*, writes travel books for people who hate to travel, people who want to pretend that they have never left home. Leary provides his readers with invaluable information such as which hotels in Madrid have Beautyrest mattresses, and which restaurants in Tokyo offer Sweet'n'Low. He's perfect for the job because he, too, hates to travel; he does, however, love to write: "As much as he hated the travel, he loved the writing—the virtuous delights of organizing a disorganized country, stripping away the inessential and the second-rate, classifying all that remained in neat, terse paragraphs. He cribbed from other guidebooks, seizing small kernels of value and discarding the rest" (Tyler 11).

This twentieth-century travel writer shares much in common with Mandeville. First, they both appear to be fictional characters. While critics have certainly reached no consensus on this issue, there is substantial evidence to suggest that the author of the *Travels* was not, as he tells us, Sir John Mandeville, knight of St. Albans, England, but rather a Frenchman, possibly a physician, Jean de Bourgogne.²

Moreover, while there is nothing to suggest that the author of the *Travels* did not like to travel, it is highly probable that he never left his native Europe.³ Rather, he "cribbed" several genuine itineraries, as well as other sources of medieval, biblical, and classical lore. The primary source for the first half of his travels, the pilgrimage to the Holy Land, was the 1336 account of the Holy Land by William of Boldensele, and Mandeville's descriptions of the East rely heavily on the travels of the Franciscan missionary, Odoric of Pordenone.⁴

A review of his source materials shows that, Mandeville, again like Leary, delighted in organizing a disorganized country, stripping away and classifying, seizing small kernels of value and discarding the rest. The striking difference between the two is their goals. Macon Leary, as represented by his logo of an overstuffed armchair with angel wings, sets out to make the "exotic" seem more like home, be more familiar. Mandeville, on the other hand, sets out to "speke of straunge thinges of dyuerse contreyes."

A closer look at the *Travels*, however, reveals that Mandeville, too, had a preference for the familiar. He classified the people that he encountered into two distinct categories, those who were like him (or had the potential to be), and those who were not. Those who were "too different," or in Mandeville's words, men that "ben as bestes and vnresonable" were discarded; in others he sought small kernels of value, "certeyn articles of oure feith and summe gode poyntes of oure

beleewe" (227, ch. 34).

In her essay on travel writing, Pratt discusses what she terms "the portrait of manners and customs." She describes this mainstay of travel and exploration writing as follows:

The portrait of manners and customs is a normalizing discourse, whose work is to codify difference, to fix the Other in a timeless present where all 'his' actions and reactions are repetitions of 'his' normal habits. . . . 'He' is a *sui generis* configuration, often only a list of features set in a temporal order different from that of the perceiving and speaking subject. (139-140)

This type of discourse abounds in the *Travels*, particularly when Mandeville is describing those people who are "too different." He describes headless people with "here eyen ben in here scholdres, and here mouth is croked as an hors schoo, and that is in the myddes of here brest"; others have "the face alle platt, alle pleyn withouten nese and withouten mouth"; still others "han the lippe aboute the mouth so gret that whan thei slepen in the sonne, thei keueren alle the face with that lippe" (147; ch. 22).

Pratt actually offers Mandeville's description of the isle of the Cynocephales as an example of this type of discourse: "And thei gon alle naked saf a litylle clout that thei coueren with here knees and hire membres. Thei ben grete folk and wel fyghtyng, and thei han a gret targe that couereth alle the body and a spere in here hond to fighte with" (143-44; ch. 21). In stressing the emphasis on the body in this type of discourse, Pratt comments that the "only trace of a face-to-face encounter, real or imagined, in this description is the fact that it begins with the body as seen/scene. Such portraits conventionally do so, commonly with the genitals as the crucial site/sight in the 'bodyscape'" (139).

Descriptions of bestial humans also are common in the *Travels*. In Tracoda, "the folk of that contree ben as bestes and vnresonable and duellen in caves that thei maken in the erthe, for thei haue no wytt to maken hem houses. And whan thei seen ony men passyng thorgh here contrees, thei hyden hem in here caves. And thei eten flessch of serpentes and thei eten but litille, and thei speken nought but thei is hissen as serpentes don" (143; ch. 21). Strange folk oftentimes are associated with serpents, and, importantly, they do not speak.

The *Travels*, however, is much more than a series of silent bodyscapes. Pratt explains that this is typical of travel books in which

"manners-and-customs description is always in play with other sorts of representation that also bespeak difference and position subjects in their own ways" (140). Of course, Pratt is writing about explorations in Africa in the nineteenth century, a time when the eye/I was scanning landscapes for natural resources and commercial enterprises, and the manners-and-customs descriptions were moved to separate chapters, "verbally depopulating" those landscapes. Mandeville was bespeaking difference and positioning himself in a different way.

II. A Resounding Voice

Mandeville's "position," or the particular reality that he was producing, becomes clearer as we shift our focus from the eye/I to the voice of the *Travels*. While the I/eye in Victorian travel writing tries to establish "objectivity" by making itself invisible, the "I John Mandeville" establishes himself as an objective observer by what he tells us. He bolsters his credibility with statements such as, "I wente neuer be that weye to Ierusalem, wherfore I may not wel telle you the manere" (94; ch. 14), and "Of Paradys ne can I not speken propurly, for I was not there" (220; ch. 33). Howard describes the narrative voice as follows: "Almost everything is presented in this general, authoritative voice; it is the flat statement customary in medieval prose and much medieval poetry. The 'I' in such writing is an impersonal Everyman who arranges and records truth" (2).

Moreover, Mandeville often assumes the role of protector, warning the unsuspecting traveller/reader about deceitful practices. For instance, in speaking of buying balm, he warns that "Sarazines countrefeten it be sotyltee of craft for to disceyuen the Cristene men, as I haue seen fulle many a tyme. . . . But yif it lyke you, I schalle schewe how yee schulle knowe and preue to the ende that yee schulle not ben disceyued" (36; ch. 7). In addition to offering "helpful hints" to travellers, Mandeville also asks questions in an effort to clarify the "straunge customes" of others. The silence that follows the answers to his questions has led many critics to view him as broad-minded. Bennett, for example, comments that Mandeville "describes the strange customs of other lands and lets his reader draw what parallels he will. . . . [H]e is content to observe, clearly and simply, with the full, sympathetic, and imaginative understanding which is true charity" (42).

We must never forget, however, that John Mandeville controls both the question and the answer. He's not really asking the Other about his customs, and then reporting the Other's response. The "I John Mandeville" doesn't need to reply to the response, because it was *his* response. Mandeville, in fact, does all of the talking in the *Travels*,

with only two exceptions that I will discuss below. Even the few times when he asks questions of a particular individual, he only reports or re-sounds their answer. As his own constructions, these questions and responses provide much "information" concerning the particular reality that Mandeville is trying to produce.

By far the most prevalent discourse in the *Travels* concerns matters of religion. Mandeville describes the beliefs and religious practices of almost every group of people he encounters. He is particularly interested in similarities between "heathen" and Christian traditions. Of the Great Khan, he states, "And alle be it that thei be not cristned, yit natheles the emperour and alle the Tartaryenes beleueen in God inmortalle. And whan thei wille manacen ony man, thanne thei seyn, 'God knoweth wel that I schalle do the such a thing'" (166; ch. 24).

Moreover, he sincerely praises the pagan people of Bragman, adopting the very open-minded position that "[n]o man scholde haue in despite non erthely man for here dyuerse lawes, for wee knowe not whom God loueth ne whom God hateth" (214; ch. 332). These people, however, are very "Christian" in their beliefs. They believe in the Incarnation of Christ, which was prophesied to them some 3000 years before it came to pass, "but thei knowe not the manere how He suffred His passioun and His deth for vs" (215; ch. 32).

Mandeville also describes certain rituals in very Christian terms, the most notable being the passage in which a son honors his father in a cannibalistic ceremony which sounds of the Christian Eucharist. After a ceremony in which priests cut up the body of the father, offering it piece by piece to the birds that gather above, the son and his friends return home with the father's head, and the ceremony continues:

And whan thei ben at mete, the sone let brynge forth the hede of his fader and thereof he yeueth of the flesh to his most specyalle frendes instede of entremess or a sukkarke. And of the brayn panne he leteth make a cuppe, and therefor drynketh he and his frendes also with gret deuocoun in remembrance of the holy man that the aungeles of God han eten. And that cuppe the sone schalle kepe to drynken of alle his lifytyme in remembrance of his fadir. (225; ch. 34)

Howard comments that this passage "asks us to behold a cannibalism not savage or repugnant but tender, dignified, and pious. . . . Like other passages it makes the customs of the East a distorted reflection of the West, forcing a comparison of the two" (16).

Based on the reactions to cannibalism that were expressed by other

early travellers such as Odoric of Pordenone, as well as the pictures that I have seen accompanying this passage in several later copies of the text, I believe that the "distortion" may have made more of an impression than the piety. Even attributing the most noble of motives to Mandeville, his stress of the similarities between "heathen" and Christian religions sounds more like a call for reform than a call for understanding of difference. Moreover, no matter what tolerance he demonstrates, his belief in the superiority of the Christian religion is never in question.

Indeed, in the Prologue he specifically advocates that Christian men recapture the Holy Land from heathen hands, "For wee ben clept Cristene men after Crist oure Fader. And yif wee ben right children of Crist, wee oughte for to chalenge the heritage that oure Fader lafte vs and do it out of hethene hondes" (2; Prol.). Later in the text, after providing a detailed description of Muslim beliefs, Mandeville says that their beliefs come so close to "oure feith" that they could be rather easily converted by the preaching and instruction of Christian men. Mandeville laments that the Great Khan is not Christian, but he also recounts the tales of a previous Christian Khan, emphasizes the Khan's tolerance of Christian men within his realm, and describes the Khan's custom of bowing to the cross. All bode well for possible reform.

Howard explains that as medieval men learned of a "natural religion," supposedly implanted in all men's reason, some became more curious about infidels and schismatics. This also spurred the spirit of reform. Howard emphasizes, however, that "[f]ew medieval men, however curious about strange lands, doubted that the Church of Rome was the true church and its dogma the true faith; there is not a scrap of evidence that Mandeville entertained such doubts" (9).

In fact, there is substantial evidence that he entertained no such doubts, the most telling of which is that he actually gives the Other a voice to resound Christian superiority. This takes place in chapter fifteen when the Sultan of Egypt, a Saracen, asks for a private consultation with Mandeville. Unlike any other passage in the book, Mandeville relates this conversation by quoting the Sultan directly.

The Sultan speaks at some length about the wickedness, deception, and greed currently practiced in Western Christendom. His conclusion, however, is that when Christians serve God more devoutly, the Saracens will be powerless against them: "For wee knowen wel in verry soth that whan yee seruen God, God wil helpe you, and whan He is with you, no man may ben ayenst you. And that knowe we wel be oure prophecyes that Cristene men schulle wynnen ayen this lond out of oure hondes whan thei seruen God more deuoutly" (101; ch. 15).

When it is time to extol the virtues of the Self, the Other is given a voice. The Other may speak as long as it echoes the dominant discourse. In all other circumstances, it is silent. Interestingly, the only other instance when Mandeville directly quotes a person saying something in his presence is when the philosophers at the palace of the Great Khan are directing the ceremonies at the Emperor's festival. When the philosophers decide that the ceremonies should begin, the halls echo their resounding words: "Maketh pees" (169; ch. 25), translated into Modern English as "Be silent" (Moseley 151). The philosophers then lead the ceremonies until the voice of Mandeville again breaks in to ask "preuily what tho thinges betokened" (169; ch. 25).

We cannot know Mandeville's intentions in writing the *Travels*. He may not have been a Christian reformer. Instead, he may have been a frustrated explorer, a collector of lore, or like Macon Leary, maybe he just loved to write. Whatever his motives, his book had significant impacts. In fact, the *Travels*, written in the mid-fourteenth century, is often referred to as one of the most popular books of the Middle Ages (Newton 12). By 1500, it had been translated into more than nine languages, and with the advent of the printing press, it appeared all over Europe in successive editions.⁵

Campbell notes that "Raleigh, Frobisher, and (apparently) Columbus all read [the *Travels*] earnestly—Frobisher even brought it with him to Baffin's Bay in 1576. Mercator and Ortelius cite Mandeville as an *aucloritas* in their world atlases. Hakluyt included it in the first edition of his *Principall Voyages*" (126). Ultimately, Mandeville probably had more of an impact on European impressions of the people of the East than any other person for more than a century.

What Mandeville said about the Other, what he said the Other said, constituted many people's only "knowledge" of the Other. The eye/I, John Mandeville, free to produce any reality that he chose, tied to no itinerary and no information, created the Other in his own image, and what he didn't like he bestialized or silenced. In this way, he may have been one of the first of many European colonizers, setting an example for later colonial discourse that would use manners-and-customs portraits, objectivity, and silencing to produce their own imperial reality.

While it may not be fair to attribute 600 years of hegemonic "othering" to Mandeville, as a final point, I want to highlight a particular "othering" that occurs in the *Travels* that may indeed have had serious consequences in his own time. I am referring to

Mandeville's treatment of a specific Other, the Jews. As Stephen Greenblatt comments about Mandeville in his book *Marvelous Possessions*, "the Jews of his own time scarcely figure in his account of the Holy Land—it is as if they had vanished, leaving only the ancient textual traces attached to the landscape" (150). It is as if the area had been depopulated of Jews. I was struck by the similarity between Greenblatt's passage and Pratt's discussion of the writings of the African explorer, John Barrow, who doesn't describe his encounters with the Bushmen, but rather his encounters with "traces they have left on the landscape—their scratches on 'the face of the country'" (Pratt 143).

In the second part of the *Travels*, however, Mandeville includes two notable passages relating to Jews. The first is almost a passing comment that he relates after describing the trees that bear poison on the isle of Pathen. He states, "Of this venym the Lewes had let seche of on of here frendes for to enpoysone alle Cristiantee, as I haue herd hen seye in here confessioun before here dyenge. But, thanked be allemyghty God, thei fayleden of hire purpos, but alleways thei make gret mortalitee of poeple" (139-40; ch. 21).

In light of the anti-semitic persecutions that were taking place in Mandeville's Europe, specifically relating to the poisoning of wells, these were very dangerous words for Mandeville to put in the mouth of the Other. As Jeffrey Richards explains in his book, *Sex, Dissidence and Damnation: Minority Groups in the Middle Ages*:

Not just physicians but all Jews were in fact thought to be adept in the use of poison. . . . Given the general state of rotten food, bad water and poor hygiene, exacerbated by famine and shortage, it is small wonder that hysteria should periodically break out, attributing local epidemics to well-poisoning. . . . There was a spectacular case in 1321 when the Jews were accused of co-operating with lepers and Moslems in a plot to poison all the wells in France. . . . The 'Leper Plot' led the parlement of Paris to exact a huge fine of 150,000 *livres* from the Jews, who were subsequently expelled *en masse* by King Charles IV, but not before 160 had been burned at Chinon and 40 had committed suicide in Charlemagne. (102-03)

Richards describes more such accusations made in the late fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Mandeville surely must have realized the highly charged nature of such accusations. Later in the *Travels*,

Mandeville describes how the Jews of the Ten Lost Tribes, called Gog and Magog, have been enclosed within the Caspian hills beyond Cathay. This appears to be a variation of a story in which Alexander enclosed the Mongols.⁶ In a passage that appears to be Mandeville's own fiction, he relates that the people living near those mountains say that when the Antichrist comes, these Jews will escape and destroy Christian men. This will come about by the *power of language*: "And therefore alle the lewes that dwellen in alle londes lernen alleways to speken Ebrew in hope that whan the other lewes schulle gon out, that thei may vnderstonden hire speche and to leden hem into Cristendom for to destroye the Cristene peple" (193; ch. 29).

Mandeville knows the power of language; he also is aware of the power of grouping and silencing. Mandeville in the *Travels* created what Greenblatt calls a "stockpile of representations," which are "a set of images, and image-making devices that are *accumulated*, 'banked,' as it were, in books, archives, collections, cultural storehouses, until such time as these representations are called upon to generate new representations" (6).

As the European explorers of the next centuries set out in search of the New World, I believe that Mandeville's stockpile of representations, his set of images of people who were "bestial," "uncivilized," and "heathen" were dusted off and called upon to legitimize European expansion. Moreover, his image-making devices, his appeal to objectivity and his unilateral control of all discourse, can still be seen today in what Houston Baker refers to as "*ethnography*—a writing of the "Other" out of relationship to his or her native ground and into the sexual, commercial, voyeuristic fantasies of imperialism" (386).

Notes

¹All quotations from *Mandeville's Travels* (hereinafter referred to as the *Travels*) are from M. C. Seymour's edition of the Cotton text.

²For a detailed discussion concerning the identity of the author, see Bennett 89-216. Bennett concludes that Mandeville was an Englishman; Seymour believes the *Travels* probably was written by a Frenchman, see Seymour xiii.

³Bennett suggests that he may have travelled to the Holy Land, see Bennett 54-68. No one suggests that he travelled to the Far East.

⁴The accounts of Boldensele and Odoric were included in a series of French translations of genuine itineraries compiled by Jean de Long in 1351. Mandeville also "borrowed" from other itineraries in this compilation, as well as information from the travels of Marco Polo (his book began to circulate about 1290), and the medieval encyclopedia of Vincent of Beauvais (c. 1250). See Bennett 14-25 and Seymour xiv-xv.

¹In England alone, five distinct English versions, one French, and four independent Latin versions are known to have circulated in manuscript. See Seymour xiii.

²For a discussion of the Gog and Magog story as it relates to the Mongols, see Charles Burnett and Patrick Gauthier Dalche, "Attitudes Towards the Mongols: The XXII Kings of Gog and Magog From the Court of Frederick II to Jean de Mandeville," *Viator: Medieval and Renaissance Studies* 22 (1978): 162. Also, see Bennett 78-80.

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The Pardoner's Tale and
the Parody of the Resurrection

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It has long been recognized that the central episode of the "Pardoner's Tale," involving the three rioters' encounter with the Old Man who shows them the way to the oak tree and their deaths, has a powerful and mythic quality that resonates far beyond the brief narrative of sin and retribution. The identification of the Old Man has been perhaps the most argued single question in Chaucerian scholarship. One popular way to interpret the Old Man figure is allegorically—indeed, even as contemporary a critic as Marshall Leicester has said that of all Chaucer's tales, the Pardoner's is the most "patently . . . allegorical" or, as he more often calls it, "typological" (79). The most common allegorical reading of the tale identifies the Old Man with St. Paul's *vetus homo*, who must die in order to make way for the new man, or the *imago Christi* (cf. Col. 3.1-10; Ephesians 4.17ff; Rom. 6.1ff). Robert Miller first proposed this interpretation forty years ago in an article in *Speculum*, wherein he also explains how this identification lies behind the Old Man's comments that the reason he has lived so long is that he can find no one "That wolde change his youthe for my age" (l. 724).¹

There is a broad suggestion of the "earthly image" of Adam, the *vetus homo*, the antithesis of the *imago Christi*, or *novus homo*. . . . [T]he Old Man of whom Paul wrote cannot die, and will not die so long as human nature does not change. . . . [T]he *vetus homo* represents a state of spiritual death. . . . [T]he Old Man must be crucified and buried that the New Man may live. The *vetus homo* may die only by the assumption of the *novus homo*. (239)

Another aspect of the tale which has been the subject of detailed and sometimes contradictory allegorical interpretation is the oak tree to which the Old Man directs the three rioters. Carolyn Collette found Old Testament evidence that variously associated the oak with death, with false gods, and with sterility; but James Dean found instead evidence in medieval texts to link the oak with the virtues associated with the classical Golden Age.²

Dean's is a less blatantly allegorical reading of the tale, the method of which he calls "symbolic allegory": in this reading, the Old Man figure is more deliberately ambiguous, being much more than any

single interpretation suggests. "For Chaucer," says Dean, "spiritual allegory is a narrative technique to be used sparingly and to deepen the mystery surrounding characters and situations" (283).

My own interpretation will not be based on considering the Old Man or the oak tree independently, but rather will examine the entire sequence of events of which he is a part. I believe that generally ideas about the Old Man have been skewed by our considering him in isolation rather than in context, and in trying to push a one-to-one correspondence between the Old Man and some scriptural figure.

The mythic power of the Old Man figure is undeniable, but to make him a simple allegorical figure is to read at once too little and too much into him. I submit that a better way to describe the suggestive sequence of the Pardoner's exemplum is not as pure allegory, either physical or spiritual, but rather as figural parody. I suggest that the sort of thing Chaucer is about in the "Pardoner's Tale" is similar to his method in the "Summoner's Tale." Alan Levitan and Bernard Levy have demonstrated how Chaucer's use of the wind and wheel imagery in the "Summoner's Tale" parodies the story of the inspiration of the apostles at Pentecost, and I have written elsewhere about the parody of the Abraham story in that same tale and its relationship to theological ideas of the "children of the flesh" vs. "children of the spirit." With such a technique, it is not necessary, as it may be in allegory, that a character be consistently a type or figure of a character in the biblical narrative: a character's actions may parody those of one figure at one time, and another at a different time. What I believe Chaucer has created in the "Pardoner's Tale" is a figural parody of the story of the resurrection.

It is clear that this story is one describing spiritual death, while the resurrection story is one celebrating spiritual life even beyond death. The parody of salvation is clear from the beginning of the "Pardoner's Tale": the three rioters set off on a quest to find and to kill Death. It is a commonplace of criticism to observe that a Christian audience must know that this quest has already been accomplished, and that Christ's victory over death has already assured the faithful that none need fear Death any longer. As R. A. Shoaf says,

The revelers' words allude, of course, to Hosea 13.14, to which St. Paul himself alludes in 1 Corinthians 15.55: "I will deliver them out of the hand of death. I will redeem them from death. O death, I will be thy death; O hell, I will be thy bite." The cry of the prophet, "O death, I will be thy death," exegesis consistently understands as the triumphant

claim of Christ the Redeemer. (Shoaf 220)³

The rioters, whose consistent swearing has already demonstrated their denial of Christ, ignore the fact of Christ's victory, and their quest becomes a parody of Christ's already successful passion. It is in this context that the central events of the tale, involving the Old Man, can be seen.

In the remainder of this discussion, I want to first consider the parallels between the Old Man episode and the resurrection story, then discuss more specifically the implications of the Old Man figure in this reading, and finally look more closely at how the oak tree figures into the parody.

I. Resurrection

Consider, then, the actual sequence of events: the three rioters come upon the Old Man while they search for death. They verbally abuse him and he pleads with them to do him no harm, explaining that the reason he is so old is that he has found none willing to exchange their youth for his age, and further that he is unable to die. In a scene of haunting power, the Old Man knocks on the earth with his staff, asking his Mother to let him in:

Ne Deeth, allas, ne wol nat han my lyf.
Thus walke I, lyk a resteles kaityf,
And on the ground, which is my moodres gate,
I knokke with my staf, bothe erly and late,
And seye "Leeve mooder, leet me in!
Lo how I vanysse, flessh, and blood, and skyn!
Allas, whan shul my bones been at reste?"

(VI, 727-33)

The rioters, hearing him mention Death, believe that he must be in league with their enemy, and insist that the Old Man tell them where they will be able to find this Death. Pointing to an oak tree, the Old Man tells them that, if they are so eager to find Death, they will find him there. The rioters run to the tree, where they find a great treasure of gold, and we are told that they no longer sought Death.

The story of the resurrection is told in two different ways in John and the Synoptic Gospels. In the synoptics the events are fairly similar: the general outline has the two Maries (Salome is with them in Mark; Joanna in Luke) go to the tomb to care for the body of Jesus. They find the tomb empty, and an angel or angels within ask them

whom they are seeking. When they say that they seek Jesus, they are told that he has risen from the dead.

In John's gospel, when Mary Magdalene arrives at the tomb on Sunday morning, she finds that it is empty. She reports this to Peter and John, who run to the place to see for themselves. They find that the tomb is empty, and they "saw and believed; for as yet [i.e., until then] they did not understand the Scripture, that he must rise from the dead" (Jn. 20.9, Douay). After the disciples have left, Mary sees the risen Christ, who asks her why she is weeping and whom she is seeking. Mistaking him for the gardener, she answers that she seeks her lord. When he calls her by name, she responds with "Rabbuni!" and Jesus tells her not to touch him, "noli me tangere," for he has not yet ascended to his father.

Chaucer need not have had one or the other of these gospel versions in mind to create a parody: it is likely that in common understanding they were combined, as they were in the mystery play cycles contemporary with Chaucer's art. The Easter story had been a main staple of liturgical drama since the *Quem Quaeritis* trope in the tenth century, and Chaucer's familiarity with the mystery cycles is well established through scholarship on the "Miller's Tale" (see *Riverside* notes, 842-47). It is therefore not unreasonable to assume that the version of the Easter story most familiar to Chaucer and his immediate audience may have been a dramatic version.

The Chester cycle gives perhaps the most elaborate version of the story: the three Maries at the empty tomb lament and are told by the angels that Christ is risen. Mary Magdalene expresses doubt as she decides to go to Peter with the news. When she sees Peter she has lost all confidence and tells him someone has stolen the Lord's body. Peter and John run to the tomb to examine it, and Peter takes the opportunity to express his repentance at having denied Christ. Mary Magdalene then meets Christ, who tells her not to touch him because he hasn't yet ascended to his Father, but he tells her to tell his brethren that she has seen him. The Maries then touch his feet, and bring the news to Peter, who dreads meeting with Christ. But Christ meets him and forgives him.

In the Wakefield or Towneley cycle, the three Maries come to the tomb and are told by two angels that Christ is risen. But Mary Magdalene seems to be confused, and weeps over the loss of Christ's body. Meanwhile, the soldiers awake and report to Pilate that Christ's body has been stolen. Christ then appears to Mary Magdalene, who first address him as "gardener," but when she realizes who he is wants to kiss his feet. But Jesus tells her not to touch him, because he has

not yet ascended. The Cornish mystery play of the three Maries has a very similar plot, as does the York play, though York ends before Christ's appearance to Mary.

The parallels between these stories and the "Pardoner's Tale"—the encounter with the man who asks not to be touched, the direction to a particular place to which those directed run—may seem quite coincidental. But consider the contrasts involved: Christ has just rendered Death impotent by rising from the grave, while the rioters are seeking to kill Death, unaware of Christ's victory. Mary directs the apostles to the empty tomb and the promise of eternal life, while the Old Man points the way to spiritual death for the rioters. Christ asks not to be touched because he has not yet ascended to his father; the Old Man does not want to be harmed though he asks to descend into his mother. The Old Man seeks physical death as a release; Christ offers spiritual life to which one, like the Old Man, can come only through physical death. The key question in each scenario is the question "whom are you seeking?" The apostles and Maries, seeking life, find it. The rioters, seeking Death, find it as well.

II. The Old Man

I want to look in a little more detail at the figure of the Old Man, here seen as a parody of the risen Christ. Typologically, of course, the resurrection story is prefigured biblically by the story of the Fall, and St. Paul's *vetus homo* is in I Corinthians 15.45 also called the "old Adam" (as opposed to the "new Adam", i.e., Christ). Thus the events surrounding the Old Man in the "Pardoner's Tale" might suggest (typologically or allegorically) the story of the Fall. If the Old Man suggests Adam, the tree could suggest the forbidden tree of the knowledge of good and evil. The three rioters, spiritual progeny of the Old Adam in their *cupiditas*, repeat his Fall as he points the way.

But I want to move beyond allegory to parody. Significantly, in the resurrection story, Mary Magdalene believes at first that Christ is a gardener. In iconography of the period, Christ is sometimes pictured holding a spade as he speaks with Mary, as he is in the illustration on the border of the illumination of the Resurrection (F. 182v) in the *Tres Riches Heures of Jean, Duke of Berry*. A note in the George Braziller edition of that text says that the spade represents a new tradition and may have been suggested by mystery plays (220).⁴ But consider for a moment the symbolic potential of the gardener with the spade: a seed is put into the ground, and comes to new life with the help of the gardener. Even so as we die, and our bodies are put into the earth, we rise with new life through the gardener Christ—even as Christ himself,

in the context of the resurrection story, has been buried in the earth and yet has sprung into new life.

As gardener, Christ repeats and perfects his earlier figuration in Adam, who was also a gardener, first in Eden, where all things were fruitful, then outside of paradise, where he was forced to labor with difficulty to get the earth to produce fruit—to earn his bread by the sweat of his brow. Now compare this to the Old Man (in one sense a figure of the Old Adam, in another a parody of the New Man Christ): the Old Man of the tale carries a staff, with which he beats the ground but cannot penetrate it (as the New Man Christ can with his spade). Nor can the Old Man die and be buried so that he can achieve new life. The Old Man inhabits a wasteland, where nothing will grow, where the earth will not be fruitful; the Old Man is the parodic opposite of the gardener Christ.

III. The Oak Tree

What, then, does the oak tree suggest in this parody? Paul Olson discusses typological implications which follow from the Old Man as Adam allegory: "In conventional iconology, the skull beneath the tree of the cross reminded the medieval believer that the cross was made of Adam's tree," Olson reminds us. And furthermore, the rioters "find their own deaths near the tree in bushels of gold which substitute for the root of evil" (208).

Olson's suggestion emphasizes that perhaps the important thing about the image is not that this is an oak but rather that it is a tree. The associations of the tree in the garden, Christ's cross, the root of evil, are all a fitting part of the parody being enacted. But there is one significant problem with the oak tree as part of the resurrection parody: in this story, the rioters run to a tree. In the resurrection story, the apostles run to an empty tomb. A tree as opposed to a tomb does not make much sense parodically. That is, unless one contrasts the phallic tree with the yonic tomb.

To begin with, it might be observed that the "Pardoner's Tale" and the "Canon's Yeoman's Tale" are Chaucer's only two narratives with no female characters. Considering the Pardoner's own gender ambiguity, this is a curious lack. But if the female is absent from the "Pardoner's Tale," then she is perhaps conspicuous by her absence. If the rioters' quest to kill Death does parody Christ's victorious resurrection, then the feminine imagery of that story may be suggested by its absence here.

In the "Pardoner's Tale," Death is sought by three men, whose motivations are the aggressive and violent overcoming of the enemy

Death. They want to destroy the one who has killed their fallen comrade. There is no new life, but under the phallic oak they find the gold that leads them to their meeting with Death.⁵

In the resurrection story, Christ (that is, life) is sought by three women, whose motivations are compassionate and life affirming. They want to care for their fallen Lord, and Mary Magdalene mourns because of her separation from Him. Christ rises reborn to new life from the womb-like sepulchre in which he has been buried. Death is conquered through rebirth, through the female symbol of emergence from the womb.

In Jungian psychology, the female or "mother" image appears in such symbols as the garden, or paradise, the earth or the underworld, a cave or well, hollow objects, "and, of course, the uterus, *yonis*, and anything of like shape" (Jung, "Psychological Aspects" 657). All of these appear in the resurrection story: Christ emerges from the earth, from a cave-like tomb in the earth; he appears as a gardener perhaps carrying a spade, and he appears, significantly, to the woman seeking him. Jung says that "the qualities associated with [the mother archetype] are maternal solicitude and sympathy; the magic, authority of the female; the wisdom and spiritual exaltation that transcend reason; any helpful instinct or impulse; all that is benign, that cherishes and sustains, that fosters growth and fertility" ("Psychological Aspects" 657). Significantly, these symbols and the qualities associated with them are absent from the Pardoner's tale: the womb is replaced by the phallus. There is no garden, no penetration of the earth with a spade but only the impotent tapping on the earth with a staff and the barrenness of sterile age without the possibility of death and new life.

What, ultimately, can one make of the parody of the resurrection in the "Pardoner's Tale"? Does it underline the conviction that sin is the parody or perversion of Christ's saving act of grace? Certainly, but that is obvious. Less obviously, the Pardoner's redemptionless Waste Land emphasizes the regenerative power of God's grace, and demonstrates that the act of regeneration requires God to utilize archetypal female as well as male qualities: both power and compassion are needed, both the cross and the tomb, both the spade and the garden. How this all relates to the Pardoner as a character is a subject too large to address in the scope of this paper. But I would contend that it is not, as Carolyn Dinshaw asserts, that the Pardoner, in his own body as well as in his tale, confounds such "binary oppositions . . . as man/woman, surface/meaning, truth/falsehood" (25-26). Rather the Pardoner, whether eunuch or homosexual,⁶ reflects in his tale his own avoidance of the female. As there are no female

characters in the tale, so there are no female characters in the Pardoner's life, and the Pardoner demonstrates the same physical and spiritual sterility in his personal life as are depicted in his tale. But Chaucer knows, and through parody asserts, that the female is necessary for life, for grace, and for rebirth.

Notes

¹The *Riverside Chaucer* gives a useful catalog of the many and varied interpretations of the Old Man figure (905). Most supportive of Miller's reading has been D.W. Robertson, Jr. Robertson elaborates the exegetical interpretation, explaining the tale as a demonstration of how the three sins of gluttony, gambling, and swearing (three aspects, says Robertson, of the sin of *cupiditas*), can "be seen as a progression along the road to spiritual death":

(1) the submission of the spirit to the flesh in gluttony, foreshadowed, as the Pardoner suggests, by the sin of Adam and Eve, (2) the submission to Fortune implied by gambling, and (3) the denial of Christ, which is the "spiritual" implication of violating the second commandment. Hence, the three sins reflect the old pattern of the temptations of the flesh, the world, and the Devil, for submission to Fortune is submission to the world, and the denial of Christ is the ultimate aim of the Devil's temptation. (Robertson 333)

²Collette's argument, more specifically, finds three sorts of Old Testament images: first, the Oak tree is literally a place of death and burial (associated with Deborah [Gen. 35.8], Saul [I Chronicles 10.12], and Absalom II Samuel 18.9-14). Secondly, it is connected with the worship of false gods (Gen. 35.1-4; Joshua 24.26). And finally, particularly in the books of the prophets, the oak symbolically warns against pride, and symbolizes the sterility which is the punishment of that sin (Isaiah 1.29-31; Ezekiel 6.13). Collette concludes that "the setting of the treasure under the oak suggests that this exemplum is essentially allegorical" (43).

Dean explains that medieval writers applied the figurative associations of the oak to man, so that it came to be associated with the virtue and moral strength of mankind in the golden age. That golden age was destroyed when mankind first gave up eating acorns and began to dig for gold, as Dean illustrates quoting lines from Chaucer's lyric "The Former Age":

To grobbe up metal, lurking in derknesse

Alas! than sprong up al the cursednesse

Of covetytse, that first our sorwe broghte

(ll. 29-32)

³Shoaf cites Jerome *In Osee* 3.13 (PL 25.937), as well as Guipert of Nogent and Rupert of Deutz in their commentaries. But Shoaf interprets the three rioters as "a deliberate mockery of the holy Trinity," who fail because of their carnality (220). Hosea remarks that "a burning wind" (identified by the commentators as the devil, or hell, or death) will make a separation between brothers; the sworn brotherhood in the *Pardoner's Tale* is destroyed by the "feend" (220-21). Shoaf concludes that "the Pardoner's allegory . . . is very neat and prim" (221).

⁴The image of Christ with a spade also appears in the fourteenth century

Bohemian manuscript "Noli Me Tangere" illustration in Cod. 485 in the Munich Staatsbibliothek. It seems to have become a traditional depiction in the fourteenth century, because Giotto's "Noli Me Tangere" fresco in the Scoregni Chapel in Padua (ca. 1312), Christ carries a banner or oriflamme rather than a shovel; however, in Botticelli's (late 15th century) panel in the Johnson collection in Philadelphia, Christ has a hoe held over his left shoulder, and G. Della Robbia's late 15th century glazed terra cotta "Noli Me Tangere" in the Museo Nazionale in Florence depicts Christ in the same pose as in Botticelli. In Titian's later "Noli Me Tangere" painting in London's National Gallery, Christ holds a hoe in his left hand.

⁵Indeed, alchemically gold was associated with the Sun, with Sol, and hence with the masculine and with the active principle. Jung comments further on the association of the sun, and hence gold, with Christ:

The metaphorical designation of Christ as Sol in the language of the Church Fathers was taken quite literally by alchemists and applied to their *sol terrenus*. When we remember that the alchemical Sol corresponds psychologically to consciousness, the diurnal side of the psyche, we must add the Christ analogy to this symbolism. Christ appears essentially as the *son*—the son of his mother-bride. (*Aspects of the Masculine* 98)

⁶For the most influential discussion of the Pardoner as scriptural eunuch, see Robert Miller's article already cited. For an important discussion of the Pardoner's homosexuality, see Monica E. McAlpine.

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In this paper, I explore some of the multiple contexts pertinent to reading Gascoigne's poems. I will begin with an introduction to the two printed editions of his poems, the history of which constitutes the first of those contexts. Then I will focus on the particular context of one set of poems.

I. Gascoigne's Two Editions and Their Sources

George Gascoigne had been writing poetry since the middle or late 1550's when he began an association with two environments which fostered literary development: Grey's Inn and Elizabeth's court.¹ Consonant with these environments, Gascoigne's poetry was without exception socially embedded, written out of—and into—a society that valued poems as a kind of cultural currency. His poems were no doubt distributed in manuscript and performed, sometimes sung, as part of after-dinner entertainment. Like his contemporary George Turberville, who describes his literary activity in his "Authors excuse for writing these and other fancies" (1576), Gascoigne wrote poems for others and poems by which he wrote himself into the courtly context, praising a prominent lady or playing off his personal presence against his role as a courtly lover. These conditions are everywhere reflected in Gascoigne's printed verse, and they are especially pertinent to his "The Adventures of Master F.J.," a work which both reproduces and comments on the social milieu of this verse.

By the early 1570's, courtly profligacy, as well as legal problems involving his inheritance and the marriages of his wife, impelled Gascoigne to seek reward and fame as one of the English volunteers in the Low Countries (from early June to late October of 1572). Upon returning, Gascoigne devised a mask for a double wedding and, later that season, had a bad hunting day in the company of Arthur, Lord Grey. This experience provided the occasion for Gascoigne's best poem, his "Wodmanship," in which he uses his lack of success at hunting to inspect his careers—as well as the ability of anyone to order or master his own experience. Furthermore, the positive reception of the mask and "Wodmanship" encouraged Gascoigne to publish a collection of his poems, which he did, anonymously, in 1573, as *A Hundreth Sundrie Flowres*.

Essentially, for this edition Gascoigne gathered his poems into a fictional miscellany, complete with introductory letters which introduce a narrator and explain how a commonplace book got into print. That

miscellany grouped poems by Latin mottos like *Si Fortunatus infoelix* ("If I am fortunate, I am unhappy") and *Meritum petere, grave* ("To seek reward is serious"). These mottos serve as thematic links but also as signatures—each one creates a group of poems presented as if by a single author, a sense corroborated by the titles to the poems. (One, for instance, begins "Now to begin with another man, take these verses written to be sent with a ryng" [*Flowres* 121].) Along with sometimes elaborate titles, these mottos create narrative and social contexts for the poems.²

As Gascoigne gathered and arranged his poems for his first printed edition, he may have hit on the idea of presenting them in fictional author groups for a number of reasons. First, Gascoigne's fiction allowed him to mediate between contemporary qualms about printing poems and his need to display himself by means of print. More particularly, it allowed him to reproduce for readers some of the social complexity of the poetry's original environment and so encourage them to read his poems in context: Marotti calls this an "act of social-narrative articulation" (10). But the contexts Gascoigne creates for his poems in the first edition are not primarily—or even necessarily—autobiographical. By presenting his own poems in anonymous groups, Gascoigne has called attention to the issue of biography as it relates to interpreting his poetry; however, by recontextualizing his poems, Gascoigne is able to disassociate himself from the original circumstances of his poetry, allowing thematic and figurative meanings to become more important. Fictionalizing his poems coincided with his printing them.

Gascoigne, pursued by debt and accused of being a "notorious Ruffiane" and "common Rymer" (Prouty, *Gascoigne* 61), returned to the Low Countries as a soldier while his first edition was still in press, and found this situation when he returned:

It is verie neare two yeares past, since (I beeing in Hollande in service with the vertuous Prince of Orange) the most part of these Posies were imprinted, and now at my returne, I find that some of them have not onely been offensive for sundrie wanton speeches and lascivious phrases, but further I heare that the same have been doubtfully construed, and (therefore) scandalous. (1: 3)

This description is from one of three letters to readers which preface the second edition of his poems, titled *The Posies of George Gascoigne* (1575). The negative reception of his first edition, which seems to

have resulted in its being confiscated, forced Gascoigne to revise his volume in order to explain and defend his work. He does so in *The Posies* in part by adding the letters just mentioned. In addition, three poems are eliminated from the revised edition, a few are completed or added, and "F.J.," the central work in the first edition, is given a new introduction and conclusion which remove it from its suggestive English setting, presenting it instead as a piece of translated fiction. Most importantly, Gascoigne rearranges his poems out of groups that suggest multiple authors and into three large containers: Flowers, Herbs, and Weeds. These categories tend to efface the social contexts of the poems in favor of more objective circumstances suggested by the labels. These new categories, in turn, aim to direct readers' responses: Flowers aim to please and delight, Herbs to heal or improve, for instance.³

This is the first essential context from which to read any of Gascoigne's poems: in a dynamic continuum which likely includes a specific occasion, or at least a specific social *use* for a particular poem, to a recontextualizing or *re-use* of a poem for the fiction created in the first edition, to a second recontextualization, motivated by the negative reception of his poems and by Gascoigne's attempts to make his poetry more clearly understood. As an example, consider the poem titled in the first edition (*Flowres*), "Gascoignes araignement"; it begins,

At beauties barre as I did stande,
When false suspecte accused mee,
George (quod the Judge) holde up thy hande,
Thou art araygnde of Flatterie:
Tell therfore howe thou wylte be tryde?
Whose judgement here wilte thou abyde?
(*Flowres* 144)

This poem, especially because of its witty self-reference to "George," appears to have been devised as a piece of entertainment that plays off the sense of the author's own presence (singing or reciting) with the situation the poem creates for him. This sense of performance is verified a few poems later in the edition, when "Gascoignes Recantation" invokes an audience of "faire Ladies," citing the "Araignment" as one of the poems from which the poet/persona needs to repent. While much of this dynamic is carried over into the first edition, within that edition the poem now functions, along with "Gascoignes Anatomie," "Gascoignes passion," and "Gascoignes Lullabie," as a set of poems which explores and inspects the lover's

situation, and particularly the lover's inability to amend or master himself. This is the theme, especially, of "Gascoignes Lullabie," but it is suggested in his "Araignment" in the last lines, where "George" admits to being "Beauties bounden thrall" (*Flowres* 145).

Finally, in the second edition, the titles of this set of poems are changed so that, for instance, "Gascoignes araignement" becomes "The arraignment of a Lover," and the entire set of poems is moved to the beginning of the volume. Thus the group becomes more completely disassociated from the poet—these titles have the generalized tone of those from Tottel—and it becomes a kind of introduction, not only to the new "Flowers" section but to the edition's poetry as well. The same poem—and groups of poems—function variously in various contexts.

II. "Gascoigne's" Group of Poems

"Gascoignes araignement," because of its conspicuous focus on "George," would seem to offer a counter-example to my argument that as Gascoigne printed his poems, he recontextualized and fictionalized them. Indeed, in the *Flowres* this poem is the second in a large group (27 poems) all identified in their titles as "Gascoignes." The group is introduced, at about the middle of the volume, like this:

I will now deliver unto you so many more of Master Gascoignes Poems as have come to my hands, who hath never beene dayntie of his doings, and therefore I conceale not his name: but his word or posie he hath often changed and therefore I will deliver his verses with such sundrie posies as I received them. And first I will begin with Gascoignes Anatomie. (143)

A number of the edition's issues come to focus in this introductory title. For one, "so many more" suggests (and there are other hints in the edition) that other poems in the edition are also Gascoigne's, even though they have been presented anonymously. Conversely, the passage reinforces the fiction on which the volume is based. We are told the poems which follow are those which "have come into" the narrator's hands and that we will be reading "sundrie" verses. In addition, the group of poems introduced here seems to fulfill Gascoigne's most overt aim for publishing, namely, presenting himself as worthy of employment. Richard C. McCoy interprets Gascoigne's shift at this point in the edition as exclusively presentational: Gascoigne reveals his authorship and even makes use of his

autobiography in order to more effectively "hit the mark with a powerful patron" (40-41). But while Gascoigne is certainly sensitive to his need to present himself for service, there is more going on in these poems than an overt rhetoric of self-assertion.

When Gascoigne responds in the prefatory letters of *The Poesies* to the negative reception of his poems, he suggests that his readers failed to distinguish fact from fiction. He writes, many readers "understande neyther the meaning of the Authour, nor the sense of the figurative speches," adding as an example, "I will not say how much the areignment and divorce of a Lover (being written in jeast) have bene mistaken in sad earnest" (1: 11). Gascoigne then cites examples of poems by Turberville, Surrey, Vaux, and Edwards, in each case suggesting how a literal/biographical reading misses the mark.⁴ John Stephens, focusing on this passage from the prefatory letter, concludes "that the principal speaker of the 'Araignment of a Lover,' . . . who is twice addressed during the poem as 'George,' is not exactly George Gascoigne" (131). Gascoigne, while allowing a suggestive relationship between the poem and himself, transcends biography, at least in part, by presenting his "George" as a negative example.⁵

The best place for developing an understanding of this interplay is "Gascoignes wodmanship," a late poem in this group which is at the same time Gascoigne's most personal and most universal poem. In it, I would suggest, Gascoigne uses his own experience as a pretext for analyzing human experience more generally. Nancy Williams points to this perspective when she argues that Gascoigne "extended the capacities of the short moral poem to address contemporary experience and to analyze the nature of lived experience in ways that are new to English poetry" (118). It is, I would suggest, Gascoigne's use of the persona, along with his persistently complex attitude toward autobiography, which is at the heart of that innovation.

Certainly "Wodmanship" begins as a personal, frankly occasional, poem used as part of a social transaction; that is what its headnote describes:

Gascoignes wodmanship written to the L. Grey of wilton upon this occasion, the sayde L. Grey delighting (amongst many other good qualities) in chusing of his winter deare, and killing the same with his bowe, did furnish master Gascoigne with a crossebowe cum Pertinenciis, and vouchsafed to use his company in the said exercise, calling him one of his wodmen. (*Flowres* 181)

Gascoigne goes on to describe his poor marksmanship, which "he thought good thus to excuse . . . in verse" (*Flowres* 181). But while the poem begins as witty self-satire ("Beleeve me L[ord]. the case is nothing strange / He shootes awrie almost at every marke" ll. 13-14) aimed at soliciting Grey's good will ("favore such a fault" l. 6), Gascoigne's failings, symbolized by his poor marksmanship, are quickly mitigated by a social satire of the various endeavors he has undertaken. At court, he "thought the flattring face which fleareth still, / had bene full fraught with all fidelitie" (ll. 45-46). If there is some dark humor in the self-portrait which follows of Gascoigne as an elaborately dressed courtier, it is not only Gascoigne's foolishness, but also the failing of courtiership which explains Gascoigne's plight. Similarly, if in the next section of the poem Gascoigne is foolish for aiming "to be a souldier in his age" (l. 62), the profession is at least partly to blame:

He cannot climbe as other catchers can,
To leade a charge before himself be led;
He cannot spoile the simple sakeles man,
Which is content to feede him with his bread.
(ll. 73-76)

"He cannot" is repeated three more times in the next five lines, sounding a theme of self-assertion which runs counter to the poem's sense that Gascoigne has missed "almost at every marke" (l. 14). Gascoigne's phrase recalls Wyatt's "I cannot, ll No, no, it will not be" ("Mine own John Pynz" 188) and so the earlier poet's ethic of integrity.

A third perspective on Gascoigne's endeavors is initiated in the next section of the poem:

In *Aristotle* somewhat did I learne,
To guyde my manners all by comelynesse,
And *Tullie* taught me somewhat to discerne
Betweene sweete speeche and barbarous rudenesse.
Old *Parkyns*, *Rastall*, and *Dan Bractens* bookes,
Did lende mee somewhat of the lawless Lawe;
The craftie Courtiers with their gylefull lookes,
Must needes put some experience in my mawe.
(ll. 99-108)

Gascoigne reprises (with the exception of soldiering, his most recent

endeavor) those means he sought to advance himself. But while this reassessment suggests he was not as complete a failure as he first seemed, the repeated "somewhat" points to the limits of each enterprise. Indeed, these lines suggest that Gascoigne's problem lies fundamentally with the inability of any learning to truly order and direct one's life: the law of his heart, no less than his incomprehensible law books, is indeed "the lawless Law." Thus university training, the law, and courtiership are critiqued for their inability not just to help one "shoote streyght at any gaynfull pricke" (l. 110) but for their failure to provide a sound basis for living.

The final section of the poem attempts to resolve the dilemma of success and failure by shifting to a figurative interpretation: "plaine paraphrase" must give way to a spiritual understanding of missing the mark as *hamartia* (the Greek New Testament word for sin). This shift is important for understanding the role of biography in this—and other—of Gascoigne's poems, for it suggests that no one's life can be fully understood from the "plaine paraphrase" of its details. Rather, recalling Jesus's midnight talk with Nicodemus ("You must be born again"), the poem's persona must be understood spiritually, and his lack of success as an injunction to repent: "olde babe nowe learne to sucke" (l. 146). Thus while the poem is intensely personal, and notably occasional, it transcends simple biography by addressing the more universal concern of the need for personal reformation and integrity amid the dizzying complexities of life as a courtier, law student, and soldier. Gascoigne as a subject of his own poems is subsumed by the persona whose concerns are also those of his readers.

"Wodmanship," in this reading, offers a complex view of the self, and one which we need to carry back to the other poems in the group. Perhaps the most powerful connection is that figurative injunction of "Wodmanship"'s last lines ("olde babe nowe learne to sucke"), for it pulls together strands from earlier poems. "Gascoignes Lullabie," addresses "wanton babes" in need of change, his "Memories III" has introduced the subject of the perils of profligacy (in fact, this poem is an earlier version of the middle lines of "Wodmanship"), and "Gascoigne's Good Morrow" and "Good Night" contain injunctions to take seriously the claims of God. "Wodmanship" reflects the concerns raised in these poems, and it interprets them.

In addition, the poems in this group, initiated by the announcement of "so many more of Master Gascoignes Poems" (143), present us with a number of autobiographic moments, many of which are reprised in "Wodmanship." To cite just one example,⁶ Gascoigne has earlier in the group—in the introduction to "Gascoignes *De profundis*"—presented

himself as a penitent, striking a pose consonant with the one on "Wodmanship." He writes:

riding alone between Chelmsford and London, his minde
mused upon the dayes past, and therewithall he gan accuse
his owne conscience of much time misspent, when a greate
shoure of rayne did overtake him, and he beeing unprepared
for the same, as in a Jerken without a cloake, the wether
beeing very faire and unlikely to have changed so: he began
to accuse him self of his carelesnese, and thereupon in his
good disposition compiled firste this sonet, and afterwards,
the translated Psalme of *De profundis* as here followeth.
(164-65)

This is a situation much like the one that occasioned "Wodmanship": Gascoigne finds himself in physical circumstances (caught out in the rain) which suggests to him his moral condition (having "much time misspent"). And his response, a paraphrase of Psalm 130, is in accord with the conclusion of "Wodmanship," for the psalm moves from a cry to God to celebration of his goodness and mercy, ending with the assurance that God "wyll redeeme our deadly drowping state, / He wyll bring home the sheep that goe astraye" (1.62).

As these connections suggest, "Wodmanship" is—here as elsewhere in the volume—emblematic of Gascoigne's concerns and approaches. It provides a model for understanding the entire group of poems Gascoigne identifies as his own in the *Flowres*. And it provides a context—as does the publication history of Gascoigne's two editions—for understanding his poems.

Notes

¹In 1555 Gascoigne was admitted to Grey's Inn, and in 1558, he participated in Elizabeth's coronation ceremonies, an event which his biographer C.T. Prouty suggests probably initiated for Gascoigne the allure of court (Prouty, *Gascoigne* 17, 19-20).

²In the context of the volume, "The Adventures of Master F.J." is presented as the first such author group, its prose portions serving to fill out the narrative context. Indeed, "F.J.," which Gascoigne developed by adding a lively and burgeoning prose narrative to a set of previously written poems, became a model for Gascoigne's design in the rest of the volume.

³The Records of the Stationers' Company indicate that this second edition was also confiscated—it may have been confused with the first—but Gascoigne is already moving away from lyric poetry. His *Poesies* is prefaced with the author's "ultimum vale to Amorous verse" (1: 34), and subsequent to 1575 Gascoigne publishes no

lyrics, turning instead to verse satire (*The Steele Glas*, 1576) and prose tract (*The Droomne of Doomes Day*, 1576), genres in which he was less likely to be misunderstood. He gives up on his audience's ability to read his verse fruitfully.

"For example, Gascoigne writes, 'What shoulde I stande much in reheresall how the L. Vaux his dittie (beginning thus: *I loth that I did love*) was thought by some to be made upon his death bed?' (1: 11). In a different context, George Rowe has argued convincingly that "F.J." is designed to provide a reading lesson, particularly about the importance of fiction. By the end of the work, "Gascoigne's readers should emerge from his work both fully aware of the necessity of imaginatively seeking out meaning in any text before them and wary of viewing literature only as a shadowy account of actual occurrences" (279).

"Stephens argues that this distinction is important since "George's" fatuous submission to Beauty at the end of the poem does not reflect the poet's point of view: readers need to see "George's" failure to correct his behaviour" (132) as a critique of his response to the lover's situation.

"Gascoigne presents himself as courtier/lover in the first set of poems in the group, summarized and epitomized in his "Recantation." "Wodmanship"'s "he shot to be a man of lawe" (l. 21) is the context of "Gascoigne's Memories," where Gascoigne has "(in midst of his youth) determined to abandone all vaine delights and to retourne unto Greyes Inne, there to undertake againe the study of the common lawes" (152). His soldiering is alluded to in an epitaph on a friend who died in the Dutch wars (171) and is made the subject of his later poem "Gascoignes voyage into Hollande" (197).

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The Subplot of *The Taming of the Shrew* and Sidney's *Arcadia*

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In the earlier acts of Shakespeare's *Taming of the Shrew*, Signior Baptista's meek younger daughter Bianca serves as a foil for her shrewish older sister Katherine. Bianca, apparently acquiescent to her father's will, has contrived to marry the real Lucentio while the deluded Baptista concludes arrangements to wed her to the man he takes to be Lucentio, actually the servant Tranio disguised as his own master. After Lucentio's father arrives from Pisa and the knot of misrepresentations has been untangled, a feast to celebrate Bianca's wedding ends with a wager on which new husband, Petruchio, Lucentio, or Hortensio, has the most obedient wife. Bianca as well as the widow who has married one of Bianca's former suitors fail the test, while Kate triumphs and delivers her famous speech on a wife's proper subordination to her mate, in lines which have caused dismay at least since the time of George Bernard Shaw.¹ I won't be considering the argument between "revisionists" and "anti-revisionists" concerning how to read Kate's speech and interpret her behavior.² The question I wish to address is this: how do we connect the Bianca who appears at the end of the play—the one dragged on stage by Kate, petulantly labeling her new husband a fool "for laying [wagering] on my duty" (5.2.129)—with the demure and dutiful Bianca of the earlier scenes?³ Critics in our own time who focus on gender and sexual politics in Shakespeare's plays often give their blessing to Kate's rebellious spirit while disparaging her sister's docile but devious behavior, which is taken to be reprehensibly consistent throughout the play. The language of Germaine Greer is especially fierce, but the idea is common enough: "Lucentio finds himself saddled with a cold, disloyal woman. . . . Bianca is the soul of duplicity, married without earnestness or good will."⁴ Just how ought we to take Bianca's conduct in the last scene? Are we justified in reading backwards, so to speak, and interpreting her earlier behavior in the light of her final appearance? Or is character sacrificed to patterning at the play's end?

I would argue that Bianca's change of behavior has indeed the effect of a jolting transformation rather than a satisfying confirmation of her underlying character. She has not been the "real shrew" all along; rather we have responded to her as the stereotypical romance heroine. But why then does Shakespeare have her act out of character in the final scene? Robert Heilman's analysis of nearly 30 years ago deserves to be quoted at length. For Heilman, Bianca's alteration manifests the

predominance of the genre of farce in this play—her change exhibits "the manipulation of personality in the interest of symmetrical effect."

Shakespeare unmistakably wants a double reversal of role at the end, a symmetry of converse movements. The new Kate has developed out of a shrew, so the old Bianca must develop into a shrew. The earlier treatment of her hardly justifies her sudden transformation, immediately after marriage, into a cool, offhand, recalcitrant, even challenging wife. Like many another character in farce, she succumbs to the habits of the generic form. Yet some modern critics treat her as harshly as if from the start she were a particularly obnoxious female.⁵

My own thesis is that although Bianca's final appearance confronts us with an unsettling change, the shock of a romance characterization suddenly giving way to a display of realistic behavior serves the overall thematic design of the play quite well. Specifically, Bianca's irritable stance and Lucentio's consequent distress compel acknowledgement that *all* couples must eventually confront questions of authority, power, or "sexual politics" within marriage. Such problems have all along occupied the forefront of the relationship between Kate and Petruchio, while concealed or latent in the romantically idealized courtship of Bianca and Lucentio. In the final scene, the romance couple is suddenly thrust into the realm of marital power relations where Kate and Petruchio have already reached a hard-won accommodation.

I want to compare Bianca's transformation with what I take to be yet another intentionally shocking change in yet another lover, when in the original version of Sidney's *Arcadia* the idealized hero Musidorus is so overcome by lust that he is prepared to rape the object of his love, the princess Pamela. It so happens that up to that point the courtship of Pamela and Musidorus and the courtship of Bianca and Lucentio have followed a remarkably similar sequence of steps. Then in both the *Old Arcadia* and *The Taming of the Shrew* our expectations for the stereotypical romance lovers are rudely shattered by the intrusion of reality, just at the point when a conventional and stylized union seems finally to have been achieved. But it will be helpful first to consider briefly the genesis of Shakespeare's subplot.

The accepted source of the Bianca story is Gascoigne's play *The Supposes*, a translation of Ariosto's *I Suppositi*. But a great gap exists between Bianca and Polynesta, her equivalent in the earlier comedy. In *The Supposes*, where unity of time is observed, Polynesta engages

in an exposition-laden conversation with her nurse in the opening scene, but never again appears on stage until the very last scene, in which she speaks not a word.⁶ She is a totally static figure, really nothing more than a background element necessary to the unfolding comic action; her wooing, such as it was, took place two years prior to the time of the play. Her lover Erostrato, posing as Dulipo, his own servant, has had easy and frequent access to her bed. As Richard Hosley has observed, in converting the story "from the retrospective to the progressive mode of drama" Shakespeare eliminates the prenuptial sexual relationship, thereby bringing the play more in line with "the tradition of Renaissance romantic comedy."⁷ The resulting story, which has been extended into weeks worth of more English-style sequential dramatic action, follows a pattern of events bearing nearly as great a resemblance to the adventures of Musidorus and Pamela in Sidney's *Old Arcadia* as to the interactions of Ariosto's comic lovers. I'm not advancing the *Arcadia* as a source for the Bianca/Lucentio subplot, but rather calling attention to how much both stories exemplify the generic conventions (as well as audience expectations) of romantic comedy as these were crystallizing in sixteenth-century Europe.⁸

Though very different in their details, in the abstract the two plots follow the same outline. In both a well-to-do young man visits a new locale with the objective of increasing his virtue. Lucentio, the son of "a merchant of great traffic through the world" (1.1.12) has come with his servant Tranio from Pisa to Padua to study "that part of philosophy . . . that treats of happiness / By virtue specially to be achieved" (1.1.18-20). In Sidney's romance, Musidorus, Prince of Thessalia, has arrived in Arcadia in the company of his cousin Pyrocles. The two are travelling through Greece in order to gain "the most perfect knowledge of" their native country (11).⁹ Up to this point in their travels they have given themselves "vehemently to knowledge of those things which might better [the] mind" (13). But like Lucentio in Padua, once in Arcadia Musidorus falls in love at first sight with the daughter of a father who has forbidden all suitors. Each young man then dons a degrading disguise as a means of access to his beloved. Lucentio, saying "let me be a slave, to achieve that maid" (1.1.219), pretends to be the "pedant" or "schoolmaster" Cambio, "well read in poetry / And other books" (1.2.169-170), and Musidorus adopts the role of the lowly shepherd Dorus. Both tutor and shepherd must then devise ways to reveal their true identities to their mistresses while under the constant observation of a third party. Each uses a communication trick involving learning—specifically, classical language and rhetoric.

"Cambio" simply "misconsters" a Latin passage from Ovid's *Heroides*: "*Hic ibat*, as I told you before, *Simois*, I am Lucentio, *hic est*, son unto Vincentio of Pisa" (3.1.31-32). "Dorus" is much more ingenious, employing rhetorical devices involving repetition or correction to convey that he, the speaker, is in fact the same "Musidorus" whose history he tells in Pamela's hearing:

Arcadia, Arcadia was the place prepared to be the stage of his endless overthrow; Arcadia was (alas, well might I say it is) the charmed circle where all his spirits should forever be enchanted. For here and nowhere else did his infected eyes make his mind know what power heavenly beauty hath to throw it down to hellish agonies. Here, here did he see the Arcadian duke's eldest daughter. . . . (105)

This use (well might I say abuse) of verbal artifice achieves its objective: Pamela also correctly decodes the lover's message, and like her counterpart in Shakespeare's play she then offers him hope. Subsequently a clandestine union is arranged. Lucentio secretly marries Bianca; Pamela entrusts herself to Musidorus and together they flee Arcadia.

At this point the stories diverge, but there is a broader structural similarity in what follows in each. The behavior of one individual in each pair introduces an element of unwonted realism into what had until then been a stereotypical romance plot. My contention is that in both cases the jarring step outside of conventional expectations underscores a tension between idealizing fiction and intractable reality. In *The Taming of the Shrew* it is Bianca who after the wedding injects the realistic element into the relationship, when she is too "busy" to come at Lucentio's request and contentious when forced to comply. In the *Old Arcadia* Musidorus, alone in the forest with his beloved and suddenly overcome with sexual desire, is ready to break his promise of virtuous behavior and rape the sleeping Pamela. As they were preparing to leave Arcadia, Pamela had enjoined Musidorus to respect her virtue: "I have yielded to be your wife; stay then till the time that I may rightly be so" (197). And indeed, the reader, privy to the earnestness and devotion Musidorus has hitherto consistently displayed, could hardly have expected him to behave otherwise. But now, "overmastered with the fury of delight, having all his senses partial against him and inclined to his well beloved adversary, he was bent to take the advantage of the weakness of the watch, and see whether at that season he could win the bulwark before timely help might come"

(201). Fortunately, before Pamela even awakens, his "promise-breaking attempt" (306) is interrupted by the arrival of an outlaw band.

Such a leap out of conventional expectation has troubled many readers of the first version of Sidney's prose romance. Consider the response of C. S. Lewis, who is much happier with the elimination of the discordant incident from the revised version of the narrative, the *New Arcadia*: "We cannot suspend our disbelief in a Musidorus who commits indecent assaults."¹⁰ When Sidney expands his pastoral romance into an epic poem in prose, he is no less interested in exploring the conflicts and contradictions of sexual desire, but instead of having the extremities of pure love and rude passion clash within the romance hero himself, Sidney disperses the varieties of erotic experience among a wide range of additional characters added to the *New Arcadia*. Musidorus's quite unexpected behavior in the *Old Arcadia* is not, however, Sidney's only attempt to dramatize within a single character the conflict between the nobler and the more base elements of erotic longing. A variation of the same theme appears in the sonnet sequence *Astrophil and Stella*, where the lover Astrophil struggles to separate "good love" from unruly "desire," but again and again finds it impossible to do so. The most familiar example is Sonnet 71, where an elaborate affirmation of the platonic, virtuous nature of his love for Stella is overturned in the poem's last line:

So while thy beautie draws the heart to love,
As fast thy Vertue bends that love to good:
'But ah,' Desire still cries, 'Give me some food.'¹¹

The contemporary courtier Astrophil serves as a much more effective vehicle for embodying the conflict than the heavily idealized romance hero Musidorus. But my point is that the shock achieved in the original *Arcadia* by the intrusion of harsh realism into romance narrative is comparable to the subversion of platonic idealism by crude desire in this poem. And my further point is that, while shrewishness is hardly comparable to sexual assault, Shakespeare is making an analogous move with Bianca when he pulls her out of the realm of romance courtship and into the rough and tumble of married life, the arena where the farcically rendered Kate and Petruchio have already achieved harmony, albeit not to every critic's satisfaction. Only at the very end are we asked to recognize that even for the couple spun straight out of romance conventions, the reality of marital power struggles must also be acknowledged before any happily-ever-after can be achieved.

Finally, I wouldn't want to give the impression that there is nothing whatsoever in the earlier Bianca to prepare us for what happens later. We do get glimpses of spoiled behavior, indications that she's accustomed to being her father's pet, signs of willfulness such as when she tells her tutors

I am no breeching scholar in the schools.
I'll not be tied to hours nor 'pointed times,
But learn my lessons as I please myself.
(3.1.18-20)

And at the dining table in the concluding scene, she has, in the words of H. B. Charlton, "acquired a most unmaidenly taste in repartee."¹² Indeed, it would not be difficult for an actress to render Bianca from start to finish as Kate's "horrid little sister."¹³ But I would prefer a Bianca who near the end of the play steps from one realm into another, from the stylizations of romantic comedy courtship into the less sublime realities of married life.

Notes

¹Shaw described the scene as "altogether disgusting to modern sensibility" (Edwin Wilson, ed., *Shaw on Shakespeare* [New York: Dutton, 1961], 188).

²The following studies of *The Taming* are relevant to questions raised in this paper. John C. Bean ("Comic Structure and the Humanizing of Kate in *The Taming of the Shrew*," in *The Woman's Part: Feminist Criticism of Shakespeare*, ed. Carolyn Ruth Lenz, Gayle Greene, and Carol Thomas Neely [Urbana: Univ. of Illinois Press, 1980], 65-78) objects to both the revisionists, who argue that Kate remains untamed, and the anti-revisionists, who "argue that Kate is tamed [in an] old-fashioned farce" (65). For him the play "rises from farce to romantic comedy" (66). Jeanne Addison Roberts ("Horses and Hermaphrodites: Metamorphoses in *The Taming of the Shrew*," *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 34 [1983], 159-171) sees Petruchio and Kate as romance figures, despite the "received view of this play as a realistic farce" (160). She finds that in contrast to the "progressive" metamorphosis of Kate, the transformation of Bianca is "the revelation of terminal stasis" (171). For feminist critic Shirley Nelson Garner ("*The Taming of the Shrew*: Inside or Outside of the Joke?" in *Bad Shakespeare: Revaluations of the Shakespeare Canon*, ed. Maurice Charney [London and Toronto: Associated Univ. Presses, 1988], 105-119), the play should be forthrightly condemned as "bad Shakespeare." Another anti-revisionist, Lynda E. Boose ("Scolding Brides and Bridling Scolds: Taming the Woman's Unruly Member," *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 42 [1991], 179-213), is concerned with "historicizing" the play. She regards Bianca's "surprise role reversal" as an important strategy to manipulate the audience into applauding Kate's submission (194).

³All quotations from Shakespeare are from *The Riverside Shakespeare*, ed. G. Blakemore Evans (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1974).

⁴*The Female Eunuch* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1971), 206.

⁵"The *Taming Untamed*, or, *The Return of the Shrew*," *Modern Language Quarterly*, 27 (1966), 154.

⁶R. Warwick Bond, ed., *Early Plays from the Italian* (New York: Benjamin Blom, 1965), 13-16, 71-73.

⁷Richard Hosley, "Sources and Analogues of *The Taming of the Shrew*," *Huntington Library Quarterly*, 27 (1963-64), 303-304.

⁸H. B. Charlton's discussion of *The Taming* in *Shakespearean Comedy* (3rd ed., London: Methuen, 1945) situates the play in relation to its Italian forebears. He observes of Bianca that she "is never set adrift in the wide ocean of romantic emotion. She is not allowed to go too far beyond the stock from which she springs, the heroine of Ariosto's *Suppositi*" (94).

⁹All quotations from the *Old Arcadia* are from *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia (The Old Arcadia)*, ed. Jean Robertson (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1973). Page references are given in parentheses.

¹⁰*English Literature in the Sixteenth Century* (London: Oxford Univ. Press, 1954), 332. Robert Kimbrough denies that Sidney's words refer to rape: "because of the exalted mock-romantic style of this passage, critics have fallen into the trap of thinking that Musidorus seeks to rape Pamela" (*Sir Philip Sidney* [New York: Twayne, 1971], 79).

¹¹*The Poems of Sir Philip Sidney*, ed. William A. Ringler (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1962), 179.

¹²Charlton, 96.

¹³The phrase is that of the distinguished director Margaret Webster, cited by Heilman, 149-150.

Caught Between the Letter and the Hole in the Wall:
Samuel Daniel's Competing Versions of Renaissance
Historiography

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In 1592, the poet Samuel Daniel was living in London in the household of one of his first patrons, Sir Edward Dymoke. Dymoke was on very bad terms with his uncle, the Earl of Lincoln, and on March 1, 1692, wrote a letter to the Earl's son complaining of the Earl's hostility and threatening to repay it in kind. Dymoke later decided against sending the letter and gave it to Daniel to burn. Daniel, however, put the letter in a hole in the wall of Dymoke's house. Four years later, after an improvement of relations, Dymoke sold the house to the Earl, who discovered the letter as he was pulling down walls for repairs. The Earl was angry enough to start legal action against Dymoke which did not end until 1610 with a very heavy fine.¹

Daniel's difficulties demonstrate the conflicting impulses in his life and work, the struggle between his desire to succeed as courtier and poet, on one hand, and his need to comment on the political problems of the past and present, on the other.² Dymoke's entrusting of the letter to Daniel portrays Daniel as the reliable servant, the lesser courtier to the greater one. This is the Samuel Daniel who shaped his career with some success as a minor courtier: beginning with his stint as tutor to William Herbert, the future Earl of Pembroke, and his service to Herbert's mother, the Countess of Pembroke, Daniel moved on to attract Fulke Greville, Lord Mountjoy, and later Lord Ellesmere, the Lord Chancellor, as his patrons. He tutored Anne Clifford and earned a grateful remembrance from her at the time of his death in the shape of a memorial put up to him at her expense. At the instigation of the Countess of Bedford, he presented James with a celebratory poem during a pause in James' procession southward to be crowned king of England; Daniel soon won his post as licenser of plays, wrote several masques for performance at court, and went on to be appointed groom of the queen's chamber.

However, Daniel's failure to destroy the Dymoke letter as ordered makes this picture of eager service rather more complicated. This incident testifies to a side of Daniel which seems invested less in caution than in exploring the power he could obtain through "historia temporis," whether broadly philosophical, as in his histories, or contemporary and specific to the point of local intrigue, as in the Earl of Lincoln incident. In his histories, this side of Daniel is unwilling to

give up his privilege to know about, meditate on, and comment on the historical, political, and social events of the day, and realizes that such knowledge is dangerous but also empowering. Similarly, in failing to destroy the letter to the Earl of Lincoln and hiding it in the wall, Daniel—whether consciously or subconsciously—retained physical evidence of his access to the secret affairs of his patron, while acknowledging the incendiary nature of such evidence by hiding it. Whether Daniel left the letter there intentionally or by accident is impossible to determine, but the question leads to interesting avenues of speculation as to how a patron could sometimes be at the mercies of servants. Thus, Daniel's life as well as his works record a struggle between his desire to be useful—that is, employable within the dominant paradigm of courtly service—and his desire to be knowledgeable, to undertake serious investigations of the subjects he was writing about and to go beyond conventional platitudes in analyzing the causes and results of the problems he was grappling with.

Daniel's conflict between prudence and speculation permeates *The Civil Wars*, an epic poem begun in 1595 and based on the struggles between the houses of Lancaster and York. In this poem, the conflict is perhaps most clearly reflected in the different and competing ideas of historiography that Daniel includes in his account of the events from the deposition of Richard II to the reign of Henry VI. In his quest to be an acceptable courtier, Daniel begins his poem by invoking some of the most traditional and politically "safe" reasons for writing a history; this kind of historiography is undertaken as a didactic exercise in piety and morality. At its most traditional, it teaches that the hand of God is everywhere in history; from there, we hear that history shows the rewards of virtues and the punishment of sin and, at its most "historical," that the various forms of political resistance shown to the English kings of the past always brought disaster upon the country.³ This theory of historiography is invoked at the beginning of many sixteenth-century histories, including the mid-century poem, *The Mirror for Magistrates*, the chronicle histories of Hall, Holinshed, and Stow, many of the history plays in the explosion of that genre in the 1590's, and the prose and verse narrative histories of the same time. However, the impact of this theory on the historical texts it introduces has sometimes been grossly overestimated;⁴ much of the time it seems to serve as useful camouflage, hiding from the censors the much more complex and interesting ideas about history that occur within the texts themselves. Daniel also gestures at this tradition at the beginning of the 1609 edition of his work; he writes, "Come sacred *Virtue*: I no *Muse*, but thee, / Inuoke, in this great labour I intend" (I.4.1-2).⁵ He

asks *Virtue* to "rayse up a worke, for later times to see, / That may thy glorie, and my paynes commend" (I.4.6-6). For many critics, this has been convincing enough evidence that Daniel's historiography was of the traditionally didactic kind.⁶

However, Daniel's opening commitment of his history to the cause of virtue is diluted just two verses later when he couples his invocation of *Virtue* with an invocation to "MEMORIE, preserv'resse of things done" (I.6. 12). "Memorie" represents a challenge to the traditional form of didactic history in the shape of another theory of historiography which was gaining an increasing place in contemporary descriptions: telling an accurate and unmoralized story, using the facts at one's disposal to reconstruct the past, but understanding that a previous age was a distinct and different entity from the present. Such histories interested themselves primarily in the secondary and human causes of historical events, and explored political situations without a moral agenda. These new theories of history were entering the field from the researches of the antiquarians, the lawyers, and the clerics, as well as from ancient and continental historians such as Tacitus, Guicciardini, and Machiavelli.⁷ Daniel reveals his affinity for this kind of historiography when he asks *Memorie* for the facts of the Lancaster/York story and claims that his poem is "Unintermixt with fictions, fantasies, / I versifie the troth; not Poetize" (I.6.7-8). Thus, Daniel stakes out newer territories of historiographical thought, and by so doing, sets an intrinsic conflict between moral and objective or political history at the heart of his endeavor.⁸

Daniel found this conflict productive enough to engage with it in all of his historical works. When he finally abandoned *The Civil Wars* to start work on a prose history of England, he carried over this dichotomy into the prefaces to the later history, *The Collection of the History of England* (1626). In his Epistle Dedicatory to Robert Carr, Daniel expresses his hope that James I might see this book through Carr, and reassures the king that he will "tread as tenderly on the graues of his magnificent Progenitors, as possibly I can: Knowing there may (in a kind) be *Laesa Maiestas*, euen against dead Princes."⁹ In making the conservative historiographical move, however, Daniel cannot resist turning it upside down by following it with the dictates of the newer historiographical objectivism:

And as in reuerence to thee, I will deliuer nothing but what is fit for the world to know, so through the whole worke I will make conscience that it shall know nothing but (as faithfully as I can gather it) Truth: protesting herein to haue

no other passion, then the zeale therof. nor to hold any stubborne opinion, but lyable to submission and better information.¹⁰

Making history "fit for the world to know" seems threatened by the turn to "nothing but ... Truth," and "reverence" and "conscience" face each other as antagonists in this dedication. Interestingly, even the final two checks on historiography, "submission and better information," seem to re-state the conflict between the didactic and "realistic" historian, the one subject to the demands of political authority and the other to the demands of factual truth.

Why does Daniel find this dichotomy so productive? First, by invoking the ideal of didactic history, Daniel informs his reader that there is something to be gained by reading this history. However, the old didactic lessons of God and morality are rendered impossible by aspects of political history: evidence that demands that the historian tell both sides of the story, perceptions that success is more based on political acumen and circumstances than on virtue, and understanding of the importance of a historical figure's motives, thoughts, and feelings as the origin of political and historical events. At the same time, some of the goals of political history, such as the motivations of a historical figure, are unrecoverable. Political history, therefore, gives the reader both the sense of the importance of such knowledge and the realization that it is impossible. This dual sense transforms the didactic purpose of history into something much more complex: an acknowledgement that the common ground for past and present in didactic history ceases to be the commonality of God's hand in history and starts to become the realities of political life, including the realizations that legitimacy and political strength are not always united in one person, that deficiencies in leadership will be exploited by others for the increase of their own power, and that political figures are not always in control of the movements they appear to be leading. Daniel tells us that if we truly seek to understand the political life of the present through the filter of history, we must both take with us the political lessons that are common to both past and present, and realize that what is irrecoverable from the past, such as the motivations of historical agents, are vitally important and (relatively) accessible in the present. These need to be pursued, investigated, and analyzed, despite the unwillingness of political leaders to give the political nation access to the *arcana imperii*, "mysteries of state."

Let us return to *The Civil Wars* to see exactly how this works. The dichotomy between history as moralizing tale and history as accurate

recreation is repeated in the dedication to a later edition of the poem, the address to the Countess Dowager of Pembroke in 1609. Early in the dedication Daniel announces that the work was undertaken "with a purpose, to shewe the deformities of Ciuile Dissension, and the miserable euent of Rebellions, Conspiracies, and bloody Reuengements, which followed (as in a circle) vpon that breach of the due course of Succession, by the Vsurpation of Hen. 4."¹¹ This passage suggests moralizing history of the most traditional, didactic, and politically conservative kind (and is consistently cited by critics as fully representative of Daniel's historiography). Luckily for us as readers, it does not accurately reflect the complexity of *The Civil Wars*, a complexity which is augured by the juxtaposition of the paragraph quoted above with the one that immediately follows it. Here Daniel insists, "I have carefully followed that truth which is deliuered in the Historie; without adding to, or subtracting from, the general receiu'd opinion of things as we finde them in our common Annales" (67). Interestingly, Daniel moves quickly from the historian's imperative to report the truth, or the "facts" of the case, to the historian's obligation to report the common view of what happened. This complicates the idea of history as an objective account of the truth, making it both a record of what actually happened and a collection of historical authority built up by subsequent historians and the societies in which they worked. Furthermore, Daniel's insistence that he receives his history from a "general receiu'd opinion of things" highlights the fact that this historical authority may be faulty, that his source may be selective, biased, or lacking in the facts necessary for a complete picture. A little later, Daniel continues his revision of what kind of truth a historian is seeking when he declares, "I knowe, in these publike actions, there are euer popular brutes, and opinions, which run according to the time & and the biass of mens affections: and it is the part of an Historian, to recite them, not to rule them"(67). By allowing himself to report popular sentiment as an aspect of the historian's duty to the truth, Daniel uncovers the radical potential of writing history, sharing the historian's authority with the populace as a whole and giving voice to a body of folkloric history and knowledge. At the same time, he implies the distance of that knowledge from an objective "Truth" by describing it as limited by "the time and the biass of men's affections." Thus, when Daniel returns to the idea of the didactic value of history, his refinements of the concepts of morality and truth allow him to attribute an instructive purpose to history which is far more complex and sophisticated than the feeble-minded cheerleading for the current regime which so many have seen as the didactic goal of sixteenth-

century English histories:

And although many of these Images are drawne with the pencil of mine owne conceiuing: yet I knowe, they are according to the portraiture of Nature; and carrie a resemblance to the life of Action, and their complexions whom they represent. For I see, Ambition, Faction, and Affections, speake euer one Language, weare like colours (though in seuerall fashions) feed, and are fed with the same nutriments; and only vary but in time. (68)

The subject of his history, the political reality of the endless struggle for power, is comprehensible through contemporary concepts of ambition, faction, and affections (that is, bias), which, in turn, achieve their *present* meaning from a process of understanding how they functioned in past societies, a process of historical meditation which is necessarily incomplete and imperfect. In this way, Daniel's history illuminates both past and present, their shared political realities and their differences. It is precisely the incompleteness of the historian's access to the different "complexions" and "fashions" of the past—the fact that ambitions and affections lived also in the minds of those long dead—that demonstrates to him and his readers that the present needs to be subjected to the same kind of analysis. Thus, "didactic" history, stiffened with the imperatives of a more objective and political history, becomes political analysis for contemporary application.¹²

And Daniel's final point in creating the dichotomy between moral and political history is this: that the instructive inconsistencies shaken out by the contrast are left up to the reader to understand, synthesize and use. In this way, Daniel shares the work of doing history with the reader and builds himself a defense against those who would find the messages of his history subversive. In the 1609 dedication, Daniel highlights the part of the beholder of the historical spectacle and gives him or her the power of judgment: "And all these great actions are openly presented on the Stage of the World: where, there are euer Spectators, who will iudge and censure how men personate those parts, which they are set to perform"(68). In the Advertisement to the Reader at the beginning of the *Collection of the History of England* he becomes more specific:

Desirous to deliuer things done, in as euen and quiet an Order, as such an heape will permit, without quarrelling with the Beleefe of Antiquity, deprauing the Actions of other

Nations to aduance our owne, or keeping back those Reasons of State they had, for what they did in those times: holding it fittest and best agreeing with Integrity (the chiefest duty of a Writer) to leaue things to their owne Fame, and the Censure thereof to the Reader, as being his part rather then mine, who am onely to recite things done, not to rule them.¹³

In this mixture of order and chaos, praise and objectivity, belief and fact, fame and censure, Daniel leaves the reader to sort through this fruitful "heape" to find a personal understanding of the uses of history.

Notes

¹Cecil Seronsy, *Samuel Daniel* (NY: Twayne Publishers, 1967) 19.

²Richard Helgerson notes similar difficulties that the Elizabethan "laureates," Daniel among them, encountered between the demands of poetry and those of civil service and how they had to reshape their poetic personae to channel their abilities towards active service of the commonwealth. Richard Helgerson, "The Elizabethan Laureate: Self-Presentation and Literary System," *ELH* 46 (1979) 193-220.

³See F.J. Levy, *Tudor Historical Thought* (San Marino, CA: The Huntington Library, 1967) and F. Smith Fussner, *The Historical Revolution* (London: Routledge, 1962) for the historian's statement of this formula; Lily Campbell, *Shakespeare's Histories* (San Marino, CA: The Huntington Library, 1947) and E.M.W. Tillyard, *Shakespeare's History Plays* (London: 1944) for the literary critic's. Even recent studies offer this version of Tudor historiography; see D.R. Woolf, *The Idea of History in Early Stuart England* (Toronto: Toronto University Press, 1990).

⁴See Henry A. Kelly, *Divine Providence in the England of Shakespeare's Histories* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1970).

⁵All quotations are from Laurence Michel, ed., *The Civil Wars* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1958) unless otherwise noted. Michel uses the 1609 edition of the poem; I have also consulted with the 1595 edition, in keeping with my interest in the 1590's, and will occasionally be quoting from it as well, when it varies significantly from the later edition.

⁶William Blissett, "Samuel Daniel's Sense of the Past," *English Studies* 38 (1957) 49-63, sees Daniel as interested in the ethical significance of English history and mindful of the peaceful blessings of the present. Lawrence Michel and Cecil Seronsy, "Shakespeare's History Plays and Daniel: An Assessment," *Studies in Philology* 52, no. 4 (1955), 549-77, see Shakespeare and Daniel as alike in deploring the evils of civil war and in expressing the ideas of sins past down into succeeding generations. R.B. Gill, "Moral History and Daniel's *The Civil Wars*," *Journal of English and Germanic Philology* 76 (1977), 334-45, discusses Daniel's interest in human and secondary causes in history as deeply rooted in his sense of the providential and moral design of history. Joan Rees, *Samuel Daniel: A Critical and Biographical Study*, describes Daniel as committed to enshrining the Tudor myth into an extensive historical poem. Cecil Seronsy, *Samuel Daniel*, describes

Daniel as morally on the side of legally constituted royalty.

⁹See F.J. Levy, "Hayward, Daniel, and the Beginnings of Politic History in England," *Huntington Library Quarterly* 50 (1987) 1-34, and *Tudor Historical Thought*, chapters 3, 4 and 7; Ferguson, *Clio Unbound*, (Durham: Duke University Press, 1979) chapters 5-9; Fussner, *The Historical Revolution*, chapter 4 and pp. 26-32, and Lorraine Attreed, "England's Official Rose: Tudor Concepts of the Middle Ages," in *Hermeneutics and Medieval Culture*, ed. Patrick S. Gallacher and Helen Damico (Albany: SUNY Press, 1989).

¹⁰Some critics have noted the presence in Daniel's works of a conflict between the traditionally moral and a more objective historicism. See Arthur Ferguson, "The Historical Thought of Samuel Daniel: A Study in Renaissance Ambivalence," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 32 (1971) 185-202. S. Clark Hulse, in "Samuel Daniel: The Poet as Literary Historian," *Studies in English Literature* 19 (1979) 55-69, charts Daniel's sense of historical change and his admiration for the Middle Ages as valuable, but historically distinct, time. May McKisack, "Samuel Daniel as Historian," *Review of English Studies* 23 (1947) 226-43, and William Leigh Godshalk, "Daniel's History," *Journal of English and Germanic Philology* 63 (1964) 45-57, depicts Daniel as striving for historical accuracy.

¹¹P. 78 in *Samuel Daniel: The Complete Works in Prose and Verse*, vol. 4, ed. A. B. Grosart (New York: Russell & Russell, 1963).

¹²Grosart, 78.

¹³P. 67 in Michel's edition.

¹⁴Several critics have already claimed that Daniel's purpose in writing his histories is to convey "political wisdom." See Levy, "Hayward, Daniel, and the Beginnings of Politic History in England"; Woolf, *The Idea of History in Early Stuart England*, chapter 3, and Godshalk, "Daniel's History." However, these critics view this new kind of secular didacticism as a direct descendant of the old providential didacticism, untouched by the development of new techniques of historiography. My argument is that Daniel combines the goals of both objective and "political" history to come up with his understanding of the limitations imposed on the recovery of the past and the simultaneous imperative for that recovery.

¹⁵Grosart, 83.

From Disintegration to Integration: Identity in Beaumont and Fletcher's *Philaster*

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From the very beginning of *Hamlet*, the audience senses that "Something is rotten in the state of Denmark" (1.4.90). In *Philaster*, as in *Hamlet*, a usurping King has wrested the throne from the young prince, and the spirit of the dead king reaches from beyond the grave to spur the rightful heir to action. In addition to similarities of plot, which critics usually compare for superficial reasons, is an element crucial to *Philaster*: the lost identity of the prince due to the usurpation of power. Hamlet's dis-eased state of mind surfaces more because of his father's death than because of his own lack of office; but with *Philaster*, a madness surfaces simply because of the unlawful usurpation of power. This madness, or lost identity, results in a complete disintegration of character for *Philaster*, as well as a disintegration of political and social structures in the entire kingdom. Language loses its potency, truth and lies become indistinguishable, and the weakness of the court becomes displaced by the strength of the country bumpkins of the pastoral eclogue. Death, finally, becomes preferable to life. In effect, the world of *Philaster* disintegrates before the audience's eyes, until at last the gods bring justice and the usurper relinquishes his power to the rightful ruler during the literally eye-opening last scene.

Names have a great deal to do with the identities of the people with whom they are connected in *Philaster*. A name establishes certain ideals—or certain basic elements—for the personalities of the characters from which deviations might be measured. Because the usurping king has already set into motion forces which have brought about changes in characters, the characters and their original identities may no longer match. *Philaster* has lost his rightful place in society; Arethusa has agreed to a marriage which does not please her; Euphrasia/Bellarion has gone under cover; the lords murmur, and the citizens complain.

The very name of the play begins an anticipation which has gone nearly unnoticed since the audience clamored around the stage to see the first performance. Flower names pervade the play and set up an immediate connection not only to the pastoral, but also to classical myth and country folklore. Speculation about the derivation of the title *Philaster* has generally focused on Sidney's *Astrophel and Stella*, as a possible "adaptation of *Astrophel*" (Ashe xvii). Although this does establish a pastoral connection, I believe that there is a more reasonable explanation which encompasses pastoral, classical myth, and country

folklore. The name itself divides into two separate sections: phil (from the Greek *phileo*, or to love) and aster (from the Greek *aster*, or star, and hence the name of a large genus of flowers). The myth of *Arethusa*, which has long been associated superficially with the play, gives another hint at the classical connection. The name *Philaster* could be a corruption of the name of the river-god *Alpheus*, who pursued the mythical *Arethusa* even after her metamorphosis into a fountain by mingling himself to join her in his watery form.

The play's subtitle, *Love Lies a-Bleeding*, sets up a connection with the pastoral from the outset (Ashe xvi). The flower love lies a-bleeding has been described by one critic as "a purplish garden plant" (xvi), but this is an altogether unsatisfactory description. Actually, this plant has a great visual impact which should be noted in connection with the events of the play. An accurate description of the plant is:

A[maranth] caudatus (Love-Lies Bleeding or Tassel-flower) reaches heights of from 3 to 6 ft., growing coarsely and branching freely. Its odd crimson flower-spikes have a texture like that of chenille, and may be either long and drooping or thick and short. (*New Garden Encyclopedia* 28)

The plant also grows much more vividly if planted in bad soil, much like *Philaster* himself does. Thus, the audience forms immediate and ocular expectations regarding the wounding of the lover *Philaster* in the play, and the woundings of *Arethusa* and *Bellarion* provide even more turns of the screw.

The name *Arethusa* also sets up connections to pastoral, classical myth, and country folklore. As *Dora Jean Ashe*, the play's editor, has noted, an *arethusa* is "a bog orchid" (xvi). However, in addition to being merely a kind of flower, this flower links cleverly with the *love-lies a-bleeding*, because the *arethusa* is "rose-purple in color" (*New Garden* 72), though much smaller, evoking a feminine counterpart to the larger *love-lies a-bleeding*. *Ashe* also recounts the myth of *Arethusa's* fountain, and links the myth to *Philaster's* finding of *Bellarion* near a fountain (vxi). This myth, although it does serve as a focusing point for these three characters, has much more to do with *Arethusa* than with *Bellarion* of *Philaster*. *Arethusa*, in classical myth, was pursued by a lover she did not want, yet she failed in her attempt to escape, despite the help of the goddess *Diana*: "But even so, he knew me, / He laid aside his human shape, became a river again, a watery shape, to join me" (Ovid 127). Thus the audience expects the story of a woman hunted by an unwanted and unworthy suitor.

The real name of the page *Bellarion* remains hidden until Act V of the play. From Act 1, scene 1, the audience knows that *Dion's* daughter has gone on "a tedious pilgrimage" (1.1.322), and probably suspects that *Bellarion* may be *Dion's* daughter, especially after Act 2, scene 1, where *Bellarion* first appears and shows more than a page's fondness for *Philaster* in a way few people could miss. Finally, *Bellarion* speaks her own name of *Euphrasia* to *Dion*, her father. Immediately, recognition in the audience would be at its peak. In fact, this particular incident is a "floral" coup de grace—*Euphrasia* is the name of a very special, and medicinal, flower, which has always been quite well known for its healing properties. The flower also goes by the name of "eyebright":

Common name for the genus *Euphrasia*, a large group of low-growing annual herbs of the Figwort family, more or less parasitic on the roots of other plants. It is derived from their former reputed ability to cure blindness. (*New Garden* 460).

Thus *Euphrasia* works a miracle in the last scene and opens the eyes of the previously-blinded audience and characters through the revelation that she is, in fact, *Dion's* daughter, and not a page at all. The audience members who suspected that *Bellarion* was *Dion's* daughter would have the double satisfaction of being correct and of having seen better than the characters throughout the play. The audience could only perceive the discovery of the connection between curative flower and final clear sight as a truly brilliant conclusion. Looking back through the play, the audience would also remember, significantly, that the *euphrasia* feeds upon the roots of other plants, and that is exactly what *Bellarion* does as the page—she shifts from *Philaster's* root to *Arethusa's*, and then fixes firmly to both with her discovery complete. That the *euphrasia* flowers bloom in purple contributes to the *love-lies a-bleeding* motif as well. Names, then, carry both metaphorical and literal images which enhance the viewer's experience of the play and help to establish identity.

During the first scene of the first act, the Spanish prince *Pharamond* appears, to wed *Arethusa* and to take control of the two countries of *Sicily* and *Calabria*. The King has, after recent wars, usurped the throne from *Philaster* since the death of his father. However, instead of banishing or killing *Philaster*, as any Machiavellian leader would who wanted his political office to remain unthreatened, the King allows *Philaster* to "walk abroad" (1.1.30). After the King announces his

intention to make Pharamond his "immediate heir" (1.1.91), Philaster appears for the first time and kneels in "obedience" (1.1.168) before the King. He then begs to speak openly. Given permission, Philaster threatens Pharamond with open rebellion, and warns that the nation will die and vanish into the earth as into a "hungry grave" (1.1.195) if Pharamond takes the throne. Thus, Philaster warns of the impending death of the kingdom.

At these speeches, the immediate reaction of the court becomes that of horror at the lack of judgement that Philaster displays. Pharamond simply says that Philaster is "mad" (1.1.197), and mad "beyond cure" (1.1.197). The King "call[s his] physicians (1.1.206), thinking Philaster "somewhat tainted" (1.1.206). Philaster soon cites the source of his problems, confessing it directly to the King:

If you had my eyes, sir, and sufferance,
My grief upon you, and my broken fortunes,
My [once] great and now nothing hopes and fears,
My wrong would make ill riddles to be laugh'd at.
Dare you be still my king and right me?
(1.1.241-245)

Thus the question of whether or not this usurper can take the office of the rightful king and rule over Philaster comes to the forefront early in the play.

So, too, does the question of the health of the kingdom itself, and the individuals in it; for not only does Philaster suffer this malady, but, according to Dion, "Every man in this age has not a soul of crystal" (1.1.245-50), for "Men's hearts and faces are so far asunder that they hold no intelligence" (1.1.251-2). In other words, the outside does not necessarily signal what the inside contains. The King recognizes this shift in Philaster and begs him to "[b]e more [him]self" (1.1.257). The King also, interestingly, warns Philaster that he will be what the King makes him—"what fashion we will put upon you," he says, "that y'are" (1.1.259-60). Immediately Philaster answers that he is "dead" (1.1.261), and does obeisance to Pharamond since his own name must be "ashes" (1.1.191) if Pharamond rules. In response, the King fears that Philaster may be "possess'd" (1.1.267). But this confession by Philaster of his own wish for death merely coincides with what he fears of the kingdom—that the usurper will negate the laws of the land and his rule will result in the end of the kingdom as Philaster has known it. For this reason, Philaster hears the voice of his "father's spirit" (1.1.268) from the grave, urging him to "be a king" (1.1.270). But the

usurper warns Philaster that he will "Dispossess" him "both of life and spirit" (1.1.278-9). The King, however, did not imprison or kill Philaster in the beginning of his reign, and he does not now. His words are empty threats, for in his very next line, the King "pardon[s Philaster's] wild speech, without so much / As [his] imprisonment" (1.1.280-81). When a good king speaks, his words become law. When this king speaks, his words carry no weight.

After the King departs, Philaster speaks to his would-be subjects, sending them home to "make [their] country a virtuous court" (1.1.301-2). This line becomes extremely significant through the course of the play, because this is exactly what happens—the country becomes the court. Philaster next asks Dion what has happened to his daughter and finds that she has left the court on her "pilgrimage" (1.1.320). Actually, later on the audience discovers that she has left the court, literally to make the *country* her court for a time. Since Philaster has offered the country as an alternative to the court, the country becomes a place where the citizens practice sciences and uphold standards, whereas the court becomes a place where the King's courtesans lack knowledge and standards as well.

The character of Philaster decays from the first act to the fourth, along with the decay of the kingdom. His weakness progresses from the beginning of the play on, though this fact has eluded many critics who notice his flawed nature only in full bloom later in the play:

he is shown . . . to be the reverse of that prince of honour
to which he would lay claim. (Davidson 12)

Certainly Philaster does become less of a man in his actions when he wanders the forest, but he does not start out that way. He will not hide at the start, and give "a stranger prince . . . leave to brag / Unto a foreign nation that he made / Philaster hide himself" (1.2.151-53). Instead, his progression toward weakness happens clearly and carefully.

For the king, an important aspect of society which reveals a steady decay is the loss of the power of language. The political power of the king has a direct correlation to the loss of power in language and to his status as usurper. Such equations were popular at the time with dramatists, including Shakespeare, whose *King Lear* certainly thought of language as a prelapsarian structure where the word and the thing were inseparable. *Philaster*, of course, does not approach the grandeur of *King Lear*, but I believe that many of the same facets regarding the power of the king find their way into this tragicomedy.

At the end of Act 1, Pharamond's evidently depraved character

begins to peek out from beneath his princely mask. At the start of Act 2, he already has propositioned at least two women before he approaches Megra, who quite readily assents to his requests. This lack of morality on the part of Pharamond, a prince who ought to portray princely virtues, results in the dishonor of both himself and Megra. The twist comes, however, when the King hears that the two have plotted this act against his own daughter's honor as the betrothed. The king openly confesses that he has sinned; that the "gods themselves" (2.4.59) have orchestrated this to repay him; and he begs the gods, "if it be your wills, forgive the sin / I have committed" (2.4. 61-2), for the sin will soon "fall" on his "understanding child" (2.4.63). For, of course, the sins of the fathers are visited upon their offspring.

The king knocks upon the very door of Pharamond in an attempt to discover if the rumors are true. Pharamond refuses to admit the king: he "say[s] no: (2.4.108); he will not open the door. This act alone seems an affront to the King's word—Pharamond must, after all, obey the king in his own country! But Pharamond does not, and Megra emerges to prove the allegations true. The king does not threaten Pharamond with any punishment, nor does he even verbally berate him. Instead, he promises to do so at some future time: "Sir, I must dearly chide you for this looseness" (2.4.125), he says.

Soon afterward, Megra complains that the King's "business" (2.4.110) has become "the poor breaking of a lady's honor"(2.4.111). The weakness of the King becomes a strength for Megra, and she turns language on its head, offering a lie for the truth. Her accusation of Arethusa's affair with Bellario becomes, according to Dion, the "strange-found-out antidote to cure her infections" (2.4.190-1). This "antidote" results in a dishonorable name for Arethusa, and a surprising reaction from the king. The king, once again, does not act. He instead sends Megra "to [her] quarter," and promises to "study to forget" what she has done (2.4.180-1). Language has turned in on itself; the king's words do not become law. "Megra's lie achieves a reality of its own, and it is a reality that controls the actions of the major characters" (Radel 137). This occurs wholly in reaction to the king's inefficacy with language. He does not trust his own daughter; instead, he believes a lie offered by a woman known throughout the kingdom for her dishonesty. He does not act; instead, he allows the guilty parties to slink away from justice.

When Act 3 begins, the noblemen decide that Megra's lie must indeed be true, and Dion even promises to swear that he witnessed the very act between Arethusa and Bellario (3.1.34). By the time Philaster arrives, language has turned on itself—that is, a lie has become the

truth. Philaster, however, recognizes the accusation as a lie and attempts to defend the darkened honor of Arethusa with his sword. His words warn that it "is an infectious sin" which in the end must "rob a lady of her good name" (3.1.70-71). Philaster, in fact, continues to say "'Tis false, by heaven, 'tis false" (3.1.96), even after the noblemen insist that they speak the truth. Not until Dion affirms that he "took them, [he him]self" (3.1.114) does Philaster begin to believe the lie. When he does believe, Philaster asks for death. But the noblemen dissuade Philaster from death, and he purposes instead to discover from Bellario just what really happened.

When Philaster approaches Bellario, he tries to persuade the disguised Bellario to admit guilt. Despite Philaster's attempts to "prove" the lie, Bellario remains truthful and proclaims Arethusa's innocence. Bellario recognizes, too, a change that has happened in Philaster's language: "Methinks your words / Fall not from your tongue so evenly . . . (3.1.192-3). Bellario says that death has become preferable to life in a world where people believe lies and where he can no longer serve Philaster. He calls death "a thing we all pursue" (3.1.264).

Soon, the king approaches Arethusa and requests that she dismiss her boy. The king cannot speak the word which defines the crime which Megra accused Arethusa of; instead he says that he "dare not tell [even him]self" (3.2.37). He tells Arethusa, instead, that such behavior is "a new language that all love to learn" which "[t]he common people speak . . . well already" (3.2.40-42). This "new language" includes not only the language of love, but also the language of rebellion.

When Philaster accuses Arethusa face to face, he requests that she dismiss Bellario and begs for "a medicine to restore [his] wits" (3.2.101), because he fears he has "lost 'em" (3.2.102). Once again he calls for death, for both himself and Arethusa. He uses the same words that Antony used with Cleopatra in Shakespeare's play—to "do thus" (3.2.103), to commit suicide, becomes the only hope. Arethusa bemoans the false accusations and prays that the gods give her a "breast / Transparent as pure crystal" (3.2.145-6), so that everyone might see her innocence—the same breast which Dion says does not exist in this age. Because words do not reveal her innocence, because words in fact have betrayed her, Arethusa looks to the gods for salvation. She looks, not surprisingly, to Diana, and wishes the same end Actaeon suffered. Bellario, too, prays that the gods "[r]eveal the truth" (3.2.174), and then "seek[s] out some forgotten place to die" (3.2.175-76). Act 3 closes, then, with the three principal characters calling for the release of death.

All of Act 4 occurs in the wood—or, more accurately, in the country. The King has invited Pharamond to hunt, and has forgiven him: "Come, we have forgotten / Your venial trespass" (4.1.4-5). Not only that, the King says that there is "none [who] dare utter it" (4.1.6). Arethusa soon appears to join the hunt, and the King demands to know whether or not Bellario has left. She answers simply: "You did command, sir, and I obey'd you" (4.1.20). Arethusa actually obeys the king, which is significant because she is the only one who must recognize his personal rather than his political authority over her; after all, she is his daughter.

The fact that the country has become the scene for the play exemplifies the change from the power of the court to the power of the country, especially when the woodsmen act in the same way as the noblemen did at the beginning of the play. The woodsmen stand about, commenting on the people appearing before them, just as Dion, Thrasiline, and Cleremont did previously. The woodsmen, too, make the same judgements as the noblemen did. That the woodsmen's intuition reflects that of the noblemen becomes important when examining the relationship of the noblemen to the citizens, for "[t]he citizens, in fact, except for the serious business of securing the kingdom, are made objects of more or less kindly ridicule" (Adkins 207).

The power of the country not only appears to equal the power of the court; in the country, the king's words deteriorate to mere wind. His daughter must obey his commands; the citizens, by law, are not bound to obey a usurper. In this case, however, the king's demands exceed the power of the noblemen to execute them—the king asks that his servants produce his missing daughter immediately. In fact, the king begs to be told lies, much as King Lear begs Cordelia to expand her speech from nothing to something:

- King: Where is she?
 Cleremont: Sir, I cannot tell.
 King: How's that? Answer me so again.
 Cleremont: Sir, shall I lie?
 King: Yes, lie and damn rather than tell me that.

Immediately afterwards, the King calls attention to the fact that he gives orders and the orders go unobeyed. He cries out, "What, am I not your king?" (4.4.32); but Dion answers that even though he is king, his subjects can only obey when the king "command[s] things possible and honest" (4.4.34). The King rails and says that he must be obeyed; that

even the clouds should remove themselves from the sky if he should command it; he may even "charm down the swelling sea" (4.4.45), if he should wish it. Dion denies that he can do such things with a simple "No" (4.4.47). The king, aghast, questions whether or not "the breath of kings can do this" (4.4.48). Dion still answers no. This lack of power in language for the king results in a tragedy for his kingdom. This becomes clear during the following scene, where language devolves into its reverse even for the elect characters—the lovers' petrarchan wounds transform into actual wounds; "love's wounds become real" (Radel 129).

In the final scenes of Act 4, Arethusa, Bellario, and Philaster join in an unforgettable sequence where the flower love lies a-bleeding comes to life, metaphorical language becomes reality, and Philaster disintegrates into his very opposite. Bellario waits upon the faint Arethusa, and Philaster comes upon them together. Philaster begs that Bellario kill him, then begs the same of Arethusa, but both refuse him (cf. 4.5.50 and 4.5.62). Arethusa, too, asks for death, but only if the next world promises more truth than this one, "no jealousy" (4.5.69). After a moment of preparation for death, during which time a Country Fellow enters, Philaster raises his hand against Arethusa and wounds her. The Country Fellow has been searching for a glimpse of the king when he comes upon Philaster stabbing Arethusa. Immediately the Country Fellow exhibits the characteristics of a prince—he stops Philaster, calls him "craven" (4.5.887), and mocks Philaster speech. He says, specifically, that he cannot "understand" (4.5.97) Philaster's speech, but knows what he does with his sword, and sees the wound in Arethusa's breast. Too, the Country Fellow has the advantage at arms, for although Philaster wounds him, he thinks that the "gods take [the] part" of the Country Fellow (4.5.104). When Pharamond arrives, Arethusa, the one character who has remained virtuous throughout, lies and says that Philaster "has not hurt" her (4.5.115). She also lies and says that she did not know who wounded her, that he was "some dishonest wretch" (4.5.127). The Country Fellow says that "a rogue" (4.5.108, 125) wounded her, and that the rogue was wounded in the process. Pharamond, then, hunts for this unnamed, wounded rogue.

Quickly, lies become preferable to the truth, and in the last scene of Act 4, Philaster reaches the lowest point in his progression toward his opposite. In an attempt to escape detection, Philaster wounds the sleeping Bellario and says that "if she be true" (4.5.22), Arethusa will not betray her attacker by telling the truth about his identity. In other words, to be "true" to Philaster she must tell a falsehood. To avoid being "false" (4.5.22) to him, Philaster warns Arethusa not to tell the

truth and reveal his identity as her attacker. When Philaster speaks to the wounded Bellario, he finds out to his surprise that Bellario is "true to [him]" (4.6.40). At Bellario's request, Philaster leaves and hides himself in the bushes. The audience should have no problem remembering the objection which Philaster first made to hiding himself, as well as his brave words against such actions. But here is Philaster, crawling off into the bushes at the words of his servant, leaving Bellario to confess to a lie.

Dion, Cleremont, and Pharamond quickly find Bellario, who begs only for death rather than torture (4.6.65-6). Philaster, coming to himself, "*creeps out of a bush*" (s.d. 4.6.84) and adjures Bellario *not* to lie and announces "'twas I" bravely. From this point, Philaster realizes that he has not acted as himself; in fact, he realizes that he has been moved by a force outside himself—that he was "disguised" (4.6.130). The king immediately gives the first actual order of the play which his servants do carry out. He orders Philaster and Bellario "to prison" (4.6.135); but Arethusa asks for "death" (4.6.141).

At last, the play begins to turn toward reparation for society. "The fifth act shows all healed of their wounds, misunderstandings righted, and the lovers reconciled; but the tragic complications have only begun" (Ristine 112). At the start of the last act, there is still much to be resolved. In fact, things get worse before they get better for Arethusa and Philaster. While in jail, the two have secretly married, and Bellario leads them to the King in an epithalamic procession, which links again to the pastoral. The King rejects his daughter and new son-in-law, condemning them to death together, while at the same time divorcing himself from authority over his daughter. "I shake all title off / Of father to this woman" (5.3.64), he says. Philaster soon rebukes the king as "tyrant" (5.3.81), yet "forgive[s]" (5.3.99) the usurpation of the throne and finally begs for death:

For myself,
I have so long expected this glad hour,
So languish'd *under you* and daily withr'd,
That by the gods it is a joy to die.
(5.3.101-104) [emphasis added]

Immediately after Philaster acts rightly and forgives the king his sin, news reaches the King that the countrymen have revolted and have captured Pharamond. In fast succession, Dion realizes that he was wrong to blame Arethusa (5.3.123), and also praises the countrymen for their revolt, promising fame for them in "chronicle[s]" (5.3.132)

and "sonnets" (5.3.133).

The king quickly sends for Philaster, screaming that his "wits" leave him (5.3.161). Philaster greets the King, who adjures him to "Be [him]self, / Still sound amongst diseases" (5.4.175). Philaster promises to make the king's "word truth" (5.4.184), and asks for the freedom of Arethusa and Bellario. The king then relinquishes power to Philaster: "Let your own word free them," he says (5.4.187). But Philaster tells the king to "[b]e kingly" (5.4.190); that he "shall bring [him] peace" (5.4.190). Philaster then meets with the citizens to quell the revolt.

The Captain of the citizens questions Philaster as to whether or not the noblemen serve him; for if not, the citizens will do Philaster's bidding for the noblemen (5.4.96-7). Philaster announces, "I am what I was born to be, your prince" (5.4.99). He then leads Pharamond off like a hawk tied to a line and liberally gives money to the crowd in a gesture of magnanimity.

When the King discovers that Philaster has saved the kingdom, he repents of his sin: Philaster forgives the king, but does not forgive Pharamond. He instead sends him packing back to Spain, and sends Megra with him. Naturally, Megra wishes to vindicate herself once again, this time with Philaster, and uses the same lie which she proposed before to the King. This time, the king demands an answer from Arethusa, but Arethusa offers only her words—"believe me" (5.5.43), she says. The king then asks a favor of Philaster; that is, to "swear" (5.5.61) that he will do what he promises. Philaster does so, and once again, words trick him. He had prefaced his agreement with the provision that anything but "the death of her or him" (5.5.63) he would grant, but the King demands the one thing Bellario asked to be spared—his torture. Philaster has struck the last obstacle; and this one he has no power over, for "It stands irrevocable" (5.5.70), it seems.

Now, the magic of Euphrasia, whose name signifies the vision-healing plant eyebright—must work, and the cure for the disease of faulty perception comes quickly from the plant known as the "popular home remedy for inflammation of the eye" (Kresanek 84). Bellario talks aside to Dion and reveals her identity as Euphrasia. Dion, piqued that he did not recognize his own daughter, feels his own "shame" at his former accusations (5.5.133). Bellario, now unmasked as Euphrasia, cures the blindness of the characters and the audience by revealing her chaste love for Philaster, and her own femininity, which proves that Arethusa was as pure as the fountain for which she was named. The country folklore manages to overwhelm the court once again and results in a clever resolution which places Euphrasia in her parasitic but comfortable state at the feet of both Philaster and

Arethusa. The King commands the banishment of Megra, and then relinquishes "this kingdom" (5.5.219) immediately to Philaster and Arethusa, and also bequeaths his worldly goods, after his death, to the couple (5.5.220).

Thus, Beaumont and Fletcher create a clear progression from disintegration because of the usurping king to integration at Philaster's victories over the effects of the king's sin. Though often in a subtle way, Beaumont and Fletcher portray Philaster not as a bumbling prince, but instead as a hero over the forces of chaos. It is true, of course, that despite Philaster's attempts at greatness, the audience still views him satirically. Satire pervades the play, but Beaumont and Fletcher aimed at an intellectually provocative intent rather than simple entertainment for the wealthy courtiers. The attempt at linking the country pastoral to the courtly romance has been done successfully here. The pastoral countrymen come to the rescue of the courtly heroes, and the kingdom finally is whole again when the rightful heir securely takes the throne; even if it must be done with the aid of the country fellows.

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Alchemy of the Pen: A Reading of Jonson's *The Alchemist*

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Ben Jonson's comedy, *The Alchemist*, is a multifaceted satire on religious hypocrisy and the stupidities of gullibility. Interwoven with these themes is a hard look at self-deception. Despite the title, what Jonson attacks is not alchemy, though he uses its conventions, but the abuse of alchemy. Edgar Duncan claims that Jonson possessed a "remarkable knowledge of alchemy, a knowledge greater than that of any other major English literary figure with the possible exception of Chaucer and Donne" (699). It is, therefore, reasonable to assume that this deeper level of satire was at least a subsidiary concern for him.

In its origins alchemy sought spiritual transformation: "The art of the alchemist whether spiritual or physical, consists in completing the work of perfection" by producing the philosopher's stone which will "wholly transmute the imperfect self into spiritual gold" (Underhill 143). Douglas Brown notes, "The alchemist had a place and real status in Elizabethan society because an age of such scientific curiosity and economic aggressiveness could not afford to neglect the possibility of turning base metals to gold" (Mermaid xxiii). I contend that understanding the spiritual level of alchemy illumines a deeper level of satire in Jonson's play.

Jonson alludes to the medical aspect of alchemy in the Argument, as the speaker refers to "the sickness" (l.i). The Plague, as Bryant notes, is "the background of the background" and was to the Jacobean "symptomatic of moral decline" (127). The Prologue's reference to "diseased" spirit echoes the Argument's "hot sickness," and alludes to the true purpose of alchemy—transformation of the soul. Jonson is the alchemist who transforms his characters at will and who, through those characters, points the way to the restoration of order.

These characters may be grouped into two factions: the perpetrators of false alchemy, Subtle, Dol, and Jeremy/Face; and the gulls, Dapper, Mammon, and Druggier. Surly must be grouped with the gulls, for he gulls himself. Lovewit is the man of action, the representative of balance.

Dapper, the first gull, is crassly stupid. Subtle and Face convince him that he will meet with the Queen of Faery, who will give him all he wants. Casting the prostitute Dol as the *soror mystica* and placing Dapper in the site of putrefaction, Jonson parodies both the stupidity of Dapper and the abuses of alchemy: "The fermentation, putrefaction, and sublimation of the metals [are] matched by . . . the

conjoined, harmoniously cooperating hearts of the *artifex* and his *soror mystica*, the fundamental idea being that divinity is entrapped, as it were, in the gross physical matter of the bodies of men and women as well as in the elements of nature" (Campbell 270-71).

In Drugger, the second gull, Jonson satirizes other aspects of alchemy. Drugger is a chemist, a Renaissance pharmacist, for alchemy deals in the chemistry of healing. The formula Subtle gives for the construction of Drugger's shop, shows another misuse of alchemy:

Make me your door, then, south; your broad side,
west;

And, on the east side of your shop, aloft,
Write *Mathlai*, *Termiel*, and *Baraborat*:
Upon the north part, *Rael*, *Welel*, *Thiel*.

(I.iii.63-66)

Brown notes that the italicized words are from Cornelius Agrippa's *De Occulta Philosophia* (29, n65). They are also an illustration of the descent of alchemy from its original intent, as we see in Vaughan's discussion of alchemy: "The magic of Paracelsus disclaims the use of all ceremonies, conjurations, bannings, and blessings, and will rest solely on the power of that faith to which the promise was given." But, Vaughan adds, "Paracelsus could not refuse his faith to the potency of certain magical words, of waxen images, and of pentacula inscribed with magic characters" (Bk.8, Ch.5, 75).

In Act II, Subtle designs a pentaculum for Drugger:

He first shall have a bell, that's Abel:
And, by it, standing one, whose name is Dee,
In a rug gown; there's D and Rug, that's Drug:
And right anenst him, a dog snarling Er;
There's Drugger, Abel Drugger. That's his sign.
And here's now mystery, and hieroglyphic!

(II.vi.19-24)

Not "mystery and hieroglyphic," this is nonsensical fun, a parody on the heraldic use of lions and dragons in alchemic symbolism.

The principal gull, Sir Epicure Mammon, is easily fooled by others because he fools himself. As is frequent with Jonson, the name of a character reveals his nature. According to Bryant,

"Epicure" refers to . . . sensual pleasure, especially eating. . . . Mammon, Aramaic for "riches," was taken by medieval writers as the proper name of the devil of covetousness. . . . After the sixteenth century it was current as a term of opprobrium for wealth regarded as an idol or evil influence. . . . In short, Epicure carries with it a sense of atheism and materialism, just as Mammon symbolizes covetousness, riches, and worldliness. (149)

Revealing his sensuality, Mammon refers to each sense that shall be gratified by his new wealth and power. Flatterers shall soothe his sense of hearing; he shall be fanned with "ten ostrich tails" to gratify the sense of touch; his dishes shall be of "agate, set in gold, and studded, / With" jewels to dazzle his sight; his food shall be the most delicate and the most sensuous, served in "a poignant sauce" redolent with pleasing odors (II.ii.57-87). His goal with the stone is not spiritual, but sexual prowess: He will have "glasses / Cut in more subtle angles, to disperse / And multiply the figures, as I walk / Naked between my succubae" (II.ii.45-48). To be naked is to expose the self; Mammon, however, will not see his true self, but only the reflection he creates.

As Mammon tries to convince Surly to meet with Subtle, he tells his unbelieving friend that he must have faith, not in religion, but in the means to sexual potency: "But taking once a week, on a knife's point, / The quantity of a grain of mustard, of [the elixir] / Become stout Marses and beget young Cupids" (II.i.59-61). We have here another example of Jonson's alchemy of the pen; he has transmuted to bawdy imagery the Scriptural reference, "If you have faith the grain of a mustard seed" (Matt 17:20). In another Scriptural transmutation, Mammon tells Surly, "This day thou shalt have ingots: and tomorrow / Give lords th'affront" (II.i.7-8). An audience versed in Scripture would have heard echoes of "This day thou shalt be with me in Paradise" (Lk 23:43). I suggest that Jonson is not attacking faith, but superstition, that is, faith in the efficacy of externals.

When Subtle's laboratory explodes, Mammon pretends to guilt, "Oh my voluptuous mind! I am justly punished" (IV.v.74). One questions the sincerity of his statement, as, in order to reacquire the goods he has given to the alchemists, Mammon must admit he was gulled. Refusing to do so, he loses it all; more significantly, he refuses

to grow in self-knowledge, to be transformed from his childishness and extravagant sensuality; he remains a gull.

Surly, Mammon's companion, may be the most complex character in the play. His querulousness indicates an excess of bile, or, if the pun may be excused, a bile stone. Unlike Mammon, who fantasizes a sensual world, Surly favors hard-nosed reality. His deception is self-deception. He refuses to be gulled by Subtle and Face, yet he changes himself into a Spanish Grandee on the pretext of deceiving others. Surly will not be transmuted into anything higher; his change is only external.

Bryant claims that Surly "displays no capacity for childlike enjoyment, no capacity for wonder, and no imagination" (123). I suggest that Surly's weakness is not lack of imagination (He has the imagination to work up the Spanish disguise), but lack of action. He knows that the duo are charlatans, but he does not go for the law. He goes through elaborate preparations for his disguise, but does not come back to claim his prize, Dame Pliant.

Surly, cozened by his refusal to be deceived, is a counterploy to Ananias and Tribulation, deceived by their unreasoning adherence to religious formulae. These two are vehicles not only for Jonson's parody on external religion, but also for his continued treatment of perception versus reality as reflected in language. Subtle, the alchemical pot calling the Puritan kettle black, will have nothing to do with Ananias because of his name: "Out, the varlet / That cozened the Apostles!" (II.v.73-4).

Subtle and Face carry on a dialogue which, Partridge notes, parodies the catechism: "Subtle is catechizing Face in the doctrines of their religion to impress Ananias with their piety. Although improvised, the terms were orthodox to alchemists . . . and even the question and answer form was used . . . by Paracelsus in a treatise called *A Short Catechism of Alchemy*" (128).

Subtle knows exactly what sort of religion Tribulation embodies. Tribulation himself is a cozenor, preaching, but not practicing; he, too, is a man of word and not of deed. He cons widows and wives into giving him their legacies; he gorges himself before a fast, and quibbles about such externals as "whether matrons of the holy assembly / May lay their hair out, or wear doublets / Or have that idol, Starch, about their linen" (III.ii.69-82). At the play's end, Lovewit has no patience with Ananias, who comes to reclaim his goods. The Puritan starts his formulaic cant, but Lovewit cuts him off:

Mine earnest, vehement botcher,

And deacon also, I cannot dispute with you,
But, if you get not away the sooner,
I shall confute you with a cudgel.

(V.v.105-08)

Lovewit is the man of action; Ananias can retaliate only with the words of an ineffectual curse.

Subtle and Face also exemplify Jonson's alchemy of the pen. As the purpose of alchemy is to bring all things into harmony, Jonson begins his parody when he introduces the charlatans quarreling. Face argues that he has raised Subtle to his current station. In a very pragmatic sense, Face has alchemized Subtle from a begging rascal to a prosperous rascal. Subtle, in turn, claims that it is he who has transformed Face. Note Jonson's use of alchemy, as Subtle takes Face's arguments and transmutes their language into alchemical jargon: "[I] Sublimed thee, and exalted thee, and fixed thee / I' the third region, called our state of grace" (I.i.68-69). From the beginning of the play Subtle shows that he knows alchemic terms, but not the reality which they represent. He has not transformed Face, but Face has transformed him into a partner in con. Subtle's end is appropriate enough; he leaves in disgrace, over the back fence, as it were.

Surly, speaking of Subtle, tells Mammon that one who would practice alchemy "must be *homo frugi* / A pious, holy, and religious man, / One free from mortal sin, a very virgin" (II.ii.97-99). The audience knows that Subtle is neither frugal, nor honest, nor virginal. After their schemes have gone up *in fumo*, Subtle speaks to Dol in language that is as close as he gets to his own non-transmuted tongue: "My fine flutter-mouse, / My bird o' the night; we'll tickle it at the Pigeons / When we have all, and may unlock the trunks, / And say, this's mine, and thine, and thine, and mine" (IV.i.88-91). Though the speech sounds amorous, a "flutter-mouse" is a bat, a "bird o' the night" possibly an owl, neither of which is complimentary to Dol. Subtle, hardly virginal, would "tickle it" with the prostitute, and, not honest, will keep the loot.

Subtle, explains the alchemic process. Starting with "*materia liquida*, / or the unctuous water," and adding "a certain crass, and viscous / Portion of earth" (II.iii.144-46), the alchemist raises natural material through levels of purification to the state of perfection. The alchemist does better than nature, for he can "produce the species of each metal / More perfect thence, than Nature doth in earth" (II.iii.169-70).

Jonson works here with three levels of meaning. The surface refers to transmutation into gold; the Subtle corollary of that transmutation is the language of transformation to transfer the gulls' property to their own coffers. There is also, at the deepest level, an exact description of the alchemic process as transmutation of the human into the divine as the human passes through stages of spiritual development becoming, like gold, fit for union with the divine (Underhill 149-64).

If Surly is the most complex character in the play, Face is the most transformed, at least externally. In Act IV, he becomes Lungs, the Alchemist's helper; then Captain Face; Lungs again to speak to Mammon; and almost immediately Face once more. At the play's end he resumes "the person of Jeremy, which is the only one that his returning master, Lovewit, will recognize" (Bryant 131). These changes are external; even the change back to Jeremy is effected by merely shaving his beard.

Face can also transform language: He lies profusely to the gulls, and he lies to Lovewit, telling him that the cat had got the plague, and so the house had been shut up. Jeremy persists in his lie, attributing the neighbors' claim of comings and goings to their having drunk too much. Finally he confesses to Lovewit: "It is true, sir, / Pray you forgive me" (V.iii.90-91).

To be fair to Face, he is more honest than the others in that he is not self-deceived. When he puts off his disguise, he can reap his reward. The gulls, who persist in self-deception, lose everything.

Lovewit, a man of action, simply is what he is, a man who does rather than talks. When the plague comes to London, he takes prudent action, and leaves town; when Jeremy mentions the Widow Pliant, Lovewit immediately asks to see her, and marries her. He is also a man who uses language effectively. Suspecting chicanery, he says, "I love a teeming wit, as I love my nourishment (V.i.16). Using that wit, he out-Kastrils Kastril when that would-be quarreler shows up to take his sister, Dame Pliant, home. He confronts the gulls who come with the officer to reclaim their goods: "If you can bring certificate, that you were gulled of 'em / Or any formal writ, out of a court, / That you did cozen yourself, I will not hold them" (V.v.68-70). Understandably, those who cozen themselves are not apt to admit it, and Lovewit ends up with the loot, which he will share with Jeremy:

That master
That had received such happiness by a servant,
In such a widow, and with so much wealth,

Were very ungrateful, if he would not be
A little indulgent to that servant's wit,
And help his own fortune, though with some small
strain
Of his own candour.

(V.v.146-52)

The ending of the play, with the villains going unpunished, has disturbed some critics. Some have called the ending "ethical legerdemain" (Bryant 115). Douglas Brown calls it "an exaltation of Intelligence above Virtue, in which the honest Surly is abashed while the impudent Face triumphs" (Mermaid xix). If one purpose of Jonson's satire was an attack on gullibility, with underlying sallies at the false idea of transmutation, then what we have is not "ethical legerdemain" nor an "exaltation of Intelligence above Virtue," but a demonstration that self-deception is the worst deception of all.

Jonson is the true alchemist who, as he promises in the Prologue, presents "wholesome remedie" for the healing of the diseased spirit. His delightful "anatomy of credulity" (Beaurline 52) is a solid jab in the ribs of pretensions and empty language. If perception is clear, and language used honestly, then the diseased spirit will have found a remedy for the ills which beset it.

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Dalila: Too Complex to Categorize

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Even though John Milton chose to begin his *Samson Agonistes* well after Samson's betrayal at the hands of Dalila—indeed, on the very afternoon of the protagonist's death—the drama still resonates with the psychological and spiritual consequences of Dalila's actions and Samson's reactions. The scenes involving Dalila's visit to the despairing Samson create the centerpiece and turning point of the drama, inviting a closer look at the character of Dalila and her effects on Samson. Milton's Dalila, though often dismissed as a mere temptress, is a truly complex character with weaknesses no greater than Samson's and strengths which ultimately drive Samson's regeneration, allowing him to do God's work.

When one examines the attitude of the chorus toward Dalila, one can easily see why readers so often view her in a purely negative light. The chorus calls her, among other things, "a manifest serpent by her sting" (SA line 997) and laments with Samson the frivolity and disloyalty of all women. In the opinion of the chorus, women most often seem to foil the righteous plans of men: "What pilot so expert but needs must wreck / Embarked with such a steers-mate at the helm?" (SA 1044-45). One must consider the loyalties of the chorus, however, in deciding whether to base one's opinion on their words; they are, William Empson reminds readers, "Israelite patriots" (222). As such, they support Samson completely. In addition, their function within the drama as a whole requires them to excuse Samson's faults; indeed, they seem to do so even after Samson himself has accepted full responsibility for his actions. If the chorus did not perform this function, it would be more difficult for readers to view Samson as the hero and martyr into which he is transformed by the end of the drama (Broadbent 43-44).

Certainly the fact that Samson has chosen to marry Dalila has a major effect on the way readers view her. The Book of Judges, which provides the basis for Milton's account, places Dalila in the less demanding role of Samson's mistress, "one in a series of amatory interests which occupied Samson during the twenty years he judged Israel" (Colony 562). By specifically stating that the two are married, Milton significantly changes his readers' perceptions of both Samson and Dalila. The change is positive for Samson in two ways. First, it helps the reader to forget, or to believe that Samson has somehow transcended, the promiscuity for which he was well-known by his contemporaries in the Book of Judges. Second, it makes his betrayal

at Dalila's hands even more heinous, for in causing her husband's suffering, she breaks her sacred vow to comfort and to serve him (Weinkauff 138).

The negative light shed on Dalila in her role as Samson's wife would have shone even more harshly for readers in Milton's day. While modern readers might accept Dalila's excuses and respect her freedom to act as she chooses, Milton's contemporaries would likely have seen her, as Mary Weinkauff does, as "the antithesis of what a Renaissance wife should be" (135). Although she may, indeed, love Samson as she claims, her love includes too much passion and romance, and too little deference and reverence, to satisfy a Renaissance husband (138). Her refusal to be properly submissive, demonstrated not only in her original betrayal but also in her later defiance and backtalking, stands in direct contrast to her expected role in a Renaissance marriage, in which, "ideally, the wife was never to contradict her husband even when she was in the right" (143). Further, her invitation to Samson to live under her care suggests that she wishes to control her husband, an unforgivable crime for a wife in Milton's day (139).

It would certainly seem that Milton, too, found Dalila lacking in wifely qualities, especially in comparison to his other famous wife, the Eve of *Paradise Lost*. Milton portrays the pre-fall Eve as the perfect companion for Adam; she works with him, yet acknowledges her subordinate status. Perhaps most important, her love for Adam rests on a firm spiritual foundation. The two worship God together at every opportunity, fulfilling the primary purpose of marriage as Milton defined it in *Tetrachordon*: a "mutuall help to piety" (qtd. in Heller 191). Dalila, on the other hand, does not even worship the same god that Samson does; her allegiance to Dagon, in fact, serves as one excuse for her betrayal of her husband (199). Moreover, the primarily physical nature of her expressions of love for Samson suggests that she "cannot comprehend love's most important dimension, spiritual affinity to another" (197). Her apparent lack of spiritual depth also makes her attempt to gain Samson's forgiveness appear insincere, especially in comparison to Eve's situation. While both women cause their husbands' falls, their contrasting reactions demonstrate the differences between proper and improper marriage relationships. Although the post-fall Eve does go through a stage in which she blames Adam, she moves relatively quickly to confess her guilt, to resume her complementary but subordinate position in relation to her husband, and to restore the couple's marital and spiritual harmony (194). Thus, Ricki Heller concludes, "by the time they accept their expulsion from

Eden, Eve has completely recovered her status as an ideal wife, willing to follow her husband with complete trust in his direction" (195). Dalila responds to her role in Samson's fall quite differently, however. While, upon her approach to Samson, she claims to feel repentant and to desire forgiveness, she never makes a totally free admission of her guilt; rather, she insists upon connecting her weakness first to all women's and next to her husband's, seemingly willing to confess her sins only if he will confess his (198). Her complete insubordination and incomplete repentance make her an unfit wife either by general Renaissance standards or by those specific characteristics which Milton suggests in his description of Eve.

One of Dalila's more threatening qualities is her combination of blatant sexuality and latent strength. When she appears on the scene, the chorus describes her as "bedecked, ornate, and gay . . . Like a stately ship / of Tarsus" (SA 711-15). So vain is she about her physical appearance that she dons all her finery even to visit a blind man. However, she has not forgotten that Samson cannot be enticed visually; as Laurie Morrow points out, she has "strategically perfum[ed] herself with ambergis so that she may arouse her blinded spouse" (40). She seems intent on gaining Samson's forgiveness through seduction (40). Her feminine charms, though, are not the only powers at her command; rather, they provide a mask for more masculine qualities such as independence and determination, and these strengths provide the real threat to Samson (Guillory 114). The drama suggests a reversal of roles: Dalila, using her feminine weapons with masculine might, has symbolically castrated Samson by cutting off his hair and removing his physical strength, causing him to describe himself in feminine terms (Miller 101). For many readers who recognize in this situation similarities to the tale of Venus conquering Mars or to the image of a phallic woman subduing a formerly strong man, the challenge to male authority inherent in Dalila's role increases the negativity of her characterization (102).

Also contributing to a negative view of Dalila is her questionable honesty. When she comes to speak with Samson, her stated motivations are love and repentance, but many readers doubt her veracity. This doubt is partially due to Dalila's constantly changing demeanor. For instance, when she first approaches Samson, she appears humble and penitent: "with head declined / . . . she weeps / and words addressed seem into tears dissolved" (SA 727-29). Thomas Kranidas is one of many critics who see Dalila's expression of emotion as merely a carefully orchestrated attempt to win Samson's favor; in spite of her "virtuoso submissiveness and sadness" (127), Dalila

deviously controls her words and actions to present a false humility. Kranidas argues, "It is precisely in the strength of her language that her plea of weakness is shown as false. The rhetorical questions, the shallow sententiousness are public devices" (129).

Given the amount of evidence against her, it is no wonder that so many readers see Dalila as merely a selfish temptress, a threat to Samson and to the work he must do for God. Certainly, Dalila has many faults; however, she is much too complex a character to be dismissed as simply evil. In the end, in fact, she is the catalyst for her husband's final triumphant action.

Ironically, the chorus, for all their bias against Dalila, actually contributes to the view of her as a catalyst for positive change in the way they set up her entrance. Before Dalila arrives on the scene, Samson's father, Manoa, visits, leaving his son in a state of utter hopelessness and despair so deep that he even longs for "speedy death" (SA 650). To revive their champion, the chorus wishes for "some source of consolation from above; / Secret refreshings, that repair his strength, / And fainting spirits uphold" (SA 664-66). Soon afterwards, they spot Dalila and announce her approach, not recognizing that she might provide Samson with the renewal he needs. However, she ultimately does just that. "Dalila enters the action not just to remind us of her past role in Samson's life but to create a new stimulus to the progress of his drama" (Colony 568). In this sense, Dalila acts as an agent, rather than as an enemy, of God. In fact, Heather Asals points out, certain elements of Dalila's description suggest that she may have godlike qualities. For instance, the chorus uses the adjective "honied" to describe Dalila's words; this connects her with the story of Samson removing a honeycomb from a dead lion, and thus also connects her to the Word of God (184). A similar metaphor is present in her weeping "like a fair flower surcharg'd with dew" (SA 728), for dew frequently represents the Gospel. Yet another of her characteristics, the perfume she wears, might represent God's Word; fragrance is often associated with the Gospel of grace. In addition, at least one quality of her appearance suggests God Himself, for she wears a veil, as God often did in the Old Testament to temper His brilliance when revealing Himself to His people (Asals 185).

Dalila's status as an agent of God, however, transcends these and lies mainly in her assistance of Samson's spiritual growth. When she comes to Samson in spite of her fear and doubt, she helps him obtain his pardon for her sin against him. Whether he believes her or not, he can learn from her example; her influence is felt by a desire for forgiveness and by a trust that her

Dalila
Richard

husband still feels affection for her in spite of what she has done, represents a powerful act of faith (185). At the same time, though, her lack of emphasis on what she has done—"my rash but more unfortunate misdeed" (SA 747)—does not demonstrate an underdeveloped sense of personal responsibility so much as it illustrates the precedence of faith over works. Before Dalila appears, Samson focuses mainly on the effects of his own wrong actions and, lamenting the cruel punishment brought on by them, sinks into despair. Greatly contributing to this despair is his certainty that, in his weakened and blinded state, he will never be able to perform good deeds, as he believes he must do to be saved. By reminding Samson that faith, not works, brings about the grace of salvation, Dalila renews his hope and allows him to wait faithfully for God's direction (Asals 187-88).

Even more important to Samson's regeneration is his recognition and acceptance of his own sin as well as of Dalila's. Although he at first rejects her claim that his own weakness equalled, and in fact preceded, hers, he eventually admits the truth of her words, saying, "I to myself was false ere thou to me, / Such pardon therefore as I give my folly, / Take to thy wicked deed" (SA 824-26). Thus, Dalila forces Samson to recognize his own sin as well as hers and to forgive them both. This action finally frees him from past failures and prepares him for future success (Colony 572). Accordingly, after Dalila leaves, Samson appears to realize to some degree how she has affected him. Once she has exited, he says, "So let her go, God sent her to debase me" (SA 999). In spite of his incomplete understanding of the reason she was sent, this statement expresses an important transformation for Samson. Joyce Colony explains, "The first half of that remark drains Samson of his past . . . but the balancing clause, 'God sent her,' floods him with new possibilities, for in it he admits God is working in his life again" (573). Without Dalila's healing visit, Samson might never have experienced the rejuvenation necessary for him to respond to his calling.

Presenting Dalila as the villain to Samson's hero also seems quite illogical in light of the fact that her motivations, while sometimes suspect, are often as good as those upon which her husband acts, or better. For instance, Samson scoffs at the fact that Dalila has come to visit him out of love, saying, "But had thy love, still odiously pretended, / Been, as it ought, sincere, it would have taught thee / Far other reasonings, brought forth other deeds" (SA 873-75). Certainly there is some truth in these words, for the society which spawned both Samson and Dalila would have expected her to submit herself to her husband's rule, forsaking country, family, and self to serve only him

(Empson 219). However, Samson's accusation seems a bit hypocritical, coming as it does from a man who admits he has twice married not so much for love as for the chance to infiltrate and destroy his enemies. He also applies a double standard in suggesting that Dalila does not understand the true meaning of love, since vanity has played such a large role in his past actions. His youthful arrogance and his tendency to view women primarily as pawns in his own game suggest that his professed love for Dalila and others is largely self-serving (Colony 571). Thus, while Dalila has certainly not been a model spouse, her husband cannot claim to have been a much better one, and, all things considered, her love for Samson appears no less believable than his for her.

Another of Dalila's assertions which Samson unfairly dismisses is that of political motivation. She argues that, in betraying him, she believed she was acting selflessly by subordinating her need for love to her country's need for protection. Samson rejects this argument, admonishing Dalila: "Being once a wife, for me thou wast to leave / Parents and country" (SA 885-86). With these words, he again judges Dalila by different standards than he applies to himself. After all, if she has placed her politics ahead of her marriage, he has done the same, and had planned to do so from the moment he married her. Once again, the double standard is obvious; as Stella Revard asserts, in "claiming that she should have been faithful to him, he damns her female weakness and excuses his own deviousness" (298). The inconsistency of such reasoning, John Guillory explains, stems largely from the prevailing beliefs of the time. To Samson and to his male contemporaries, women who, like Dalila, took on public roles traditionally reserved for men would have presented a great threat. Dalila sees this fear and challenges it when she excuses her betrayal of her husband as a political act, and her inversion of gender roles both terrifies and infuriates Samson (110-11). Yet, once again, he must accept some responsibility for creating the situation which he now so strongly despises, for in revealing his secret to his wife, he relinquished his power and transported himself from the public to the private sphere (118). Although Samson would like to deny the role he played in his own downfall, careful readers, seeing the inconsistencies in his reasoning, should not allow him to do so. Instead, they should recognize that Samson's flaws cannot be hidden by Dalila's, and they should not accept a reading which casts her solely as the demon of the drama.

Far from being merely a temptress, as she was in the Biblical account, the Dalila of *Samson Agonistes* is a complex character whose

shortcomings are finally balanced by the positive effects she has on Samson's spirit. A simple female villain, no doubt, would not have satisfied Milton, and she certainly would have had a less significant effect on his drama and its protagonist. Through the changes he made to the story from the Book of Judges, Milton avoided making Dalila a static character whose lack of either close involvement with a husband or deep motivation for her actions would have interested neither himself nor his readers. Instead, Milton created "a woman who could do wrong, but would do so with reason" (Revard 293), a character striking enough to become a powerful presence in literature and complex enough to engage readers for centuries to come.

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Gendered Authenticity in Defoe's Fiction

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One notable feature in Daniel Defoe's fiction is that it never claims to *be* fiction. Defoe always insists that he is nothing more than the editor of the title character's "papers" or "memoirs." The Preface to *Roxana* is fairly typical in this regard, where Defoe tells us that Roxana's story

. . . differs from most of the Modern Performances of this Kind . . . in this Great and Essential Article, Namely, That the Foundation of This is laid in Truth of Fact; and so the Work is not a Story, but a History. [But] the Scene is laid so near the Place where the Main Part of it was transacted, that it was necessary to conceal Names and Persons lest . . . the many People yet living . . . would know the Persons by the Particulars. (*Roxana* 35)

The only fiction Defoe acknowledges here is the prudential fiction of concealed identity, where the only purpose is the protection of privacy.

One can, of course, question how seriously readers are supposed to take such editorial assertions. For Defoe's Prefaces operate, at least in part, as advertisements, pointing out the many moral lessons that readers will find in the stories while simultaneously titillating them with suggestions of sexual escapades and criminal activity. The claim to literal truth, then, can be regarded as part of a strategy to make the work stand out in what Defoe the editor acknowledges to be a crowded literary marketplace. But even if they do reflect a certain amount of advertising hyperbole, such statements still suggest the premium Defoe placed on verisimilitude in his fiction. And given that Defoe's title character typically narrates his or her own tale, this challenge of verisimilitude becomes, in effect, a challenge of personal credibility. That is, if readers are to accept Defoe's story as true, we must, first and foremost, accept his narrators as real. In *Moll Flanders* and *Roxana*, this already formidable challenge is complicated by the gender of the narrators. Defoe must engage in a sustained impersonation of a woman narrating her story in a manner that convinces us that she really lived the life she tells of. What this presentation examines is how well Defoe handles this challenge.

Before judging Defoe's performance, however, we must decide on a criteria for making our judgment. Purely subjective assessments would seem an obvious starting point, but my own experience suggests that these vary a good deal. I have taught both works to undergraduate and graduate students, and have asked both groups whether they come to see either Moll or Roxana as a real person. Some have said they do, and praise Defoe's ability to capture a woman's voice and perspective; others insist that they do not, and argue that "a woman would never say that" or "women don't think that way." Such comments—both positive and negative—suggest the enormous influence that the perception of gender plays in establishing narrative authority and authenticity. But they also beg the main question: what exactly is a "woman's voice" or a "woman's perspective"? What does it mean to write or think like a woman?

Defoe himself provides some assistance in answering these questions, for he wrote several nonfiction works which deal with gender roles in eighteenth-century England. In *An Essay upon Projects*, for example, he argues that education should be as much a part of a young woman's upbringing as it is of a young man's. Like his contemporary Jonathan Swift, Defoe wonders why society would ever consider ignorance an "ornament" in women, but a vice in men. And like Swift, he is convinced that the vices commonly associated with women (vanity, superficiality, fearfulness, etc.) are due not to any biological necessity, but simply to the lax and unsystematic education women traditionally have received (Rogers 62-63). In *Conjugal Lewdness*, Defoe is equally critical of traditional gender roles in marriage. He did not believe that a wife must always submit to the wishes of her husband, nor that true love, which he regarded as the only legitimate basis for marriage, could ever flourish when one person's will was constantly subordinated to the other's. The ideal marital relationship, in his view, is one of love, mutual respect, and relative equality (Rogers 64-65). And in *The Complete English Tradesman*, Defoe extends his concept of gender equality in marriage to economic matters, arguing that women should be actively involved in managing the family business. He again rejects a more traditional view, here the notion that a tradesman's prosperity is somehow confirmed by the idleness and financial ignorance of his wife. Defoe's argument for women's active involvement is a pragmatic one: passivity and ignorance make women vulnerable to the sudden death of or desertion by their husbands. Women are the victims in such circumstances, but there is, for Defoe, nothing inevitable about their tragedy. Given adequate encouragement and support from society,

women are fully capable of averting this fate, and, as Defoe concludes, "when once they think fit to rouse up themselves to their own relief, [women] are not so helpless and shiftless creatures as some would make them appear" (qtd. in Rogers 66).

Defoe demonstrates, in these works, a strong belief that the problems women face stem from cultural practices rather than biology, and that the sexes have in most respects equal capacities. Women are as capable of benefiting from an education, as competent at making family decisions, and as much inclined towards commerce and finance as men are. There is, to be sure, a pattern to Defoe's notion of sexual equality, always away from traditionally feminine qualities and towards traditionally masculine ones. He would, it seems clear, prefer that both sexes become more like what men traditionally have been. Still, even that preference suggests that Defoe did not see the human mind as inherently "gendered." Presumably, then, nothing would necessarily prohibit one gender from successfully adopting the perspective of the other. Doing so would simply mean knowing how society has taught the other sex to speak and think.

Unfortunately, all this proves is that Defoe's sexual politics were basically consistent with his literary practice. It does not prove he was right. So was he naive in thinking of the mind as genderless, in thinking that a man could coach himself to think like a woman? The question of the gendered mind is very much a part of current literary critical discussion, and it is helpful, I think, to examine some of the insights critics have developed about the way gender might influence writing and thinking.

Josephine Donovan, for instance, has explored the connection between women's writing in seventeenth and eighteenth century England and the education which many women of that period received. Donovan tells us that "While women of the middle class were often literate in the vernacular, it is only among the aristocracy . . . that an occasional woman received a formal, classical education" (206). Women were generally excluded from the English grammar school system, with its heavy emphasis on the mastery of Classical Latin and appreciation for the Roman rhetorical tradition of Virgil, Horace, and Cicero. This meant that women were largely excluded, as well, from those literary forms which relied on the authority and example of the Ancients. The novel, however, was different. It was not (despite Henry Fielding's claims in *Joseph Andrews*) a classical invention, and so "there were really no classical models or critical rules that one would have to know in order to practice its writing" (209). Its subjects were drawn from the everyday world of bourgeois society, subjects

about which women's knowledge (based not on formal education but on personal experience) was thought to be more than adequate.

Moreover, the stylistic conventions of the novel were closely related to those which had developed around familiar letters and autobiographical writing. Neither of these genres (as practiced in seventeenth and eighteenth century England) employed the "Ciceronian period," that ornate and highly formal prose style that had set the standard in prose for generations of educated men. Instead, novels employed the "plain style," which valued not strict adherence to classical authority nor deference to traditional wisdom, but rather spontaneity and true representation of the mental and emotional states of the writer. One did not need extensive training in Latin to write this kind of prose well; one needed only to be able to write in the vernacular, and to depict accurately whatever was in one's heart and mind. Again, women's education was perfectly adequate for this kind of prose. And as Donovan notes, that it came to be "identified as a female style [of writing] is not surprising" (213).

If we accept Donovan's argument, then, women's writing of this period is partly a preference for certain literary forms (novels, letters, and memoirs), and partly a preference for the "plain" as opposed to the "grand" style in prose. These preferences certainly apply to *Moll Flanders* and *Roxana*, both of which are autobiographical in form and quite informal in style. The problem is that the same preferences are evident in Defoe's other novels, all of which are supposed to be written by men. This is not to dismiss Donovan's criteria as useless. There was, as she observes, a broad cultural shift away from adherence to Classical literary and philosophic authority. That women writers, who were very much "cultural outsiders," would contribute to and benefit from this shift is hard to dispute. But as Donovan herself acknowledges, women were not the only "outsider" group to profit. Religious Dissenters like Defoe also stood to gain from it. Indeed, a preference for the personal and the plain in writing was a prominent feature of Non-conformist rhetoric of the period, where words were to express, in the memorable phrase of Richard Baxter, "what I smartingly do feel in my soul" (qtd in Chernaik 168). So Donovan's criteria may provide some evidence of a feminine voice, but it would not, by itself, provide sufficient evidence.

A different approach focuses on writing not as literary style per se, but as a window to cognitive processes. If women write differently, then perhaps, according to this view, it is because they think differently. There are many versions of this approach, some positing a biological origin to the different mindsets, others a cultural

origin, still others insisting that few differences have been proven to exist at all (Schor, 266-70; Jones 366-68). I wish to describe briefly two contributions to this discussion that seem especially relevant to Defoe. One is Susan Moller Okin's essay "Thinking like a Woman," which takes up the question of whether the moral development of women differs from that of men. Okin rejects the idea advanced by both traditionalists and some feminists that women's morality is the product of female genes or physiology, but she is open to the possibility that women's life experience may lead them to think about moral issues in a way that men generally do not (153-54). She gives qualified acceptance to the findings of psychologist Carol Gilligan, who argues that women speak in a "different voice" morally. This voice tends to value emotional connectedness over personal autonomy, to see relationships in terms of responsibilities rather than rights, and to aspire towards a society that is caring rather than just (155-57). Okin makes clear, however, that the different moral voice of women should not be understood as confirmation of "the age-old judgment that women are more influenced by private attachment and less able to universalize in their moral reasoning" (159). Women's moral thinking may emphasize different ideals and virtues, but one should not see the difference as inferiority.

The other contribution is Nancy Miller's essay "Plots and Plausibility in Women's Fiction." Miller admits that "there are no infallible signs, no fail-safe techniques by which to determine the gender of an author," but she believes that readers can be attentive to differences which stem from gender (342). Miller then discusses two novels—LaFayette's *La Princesse de Cleves* and Eliot's *The Mill on the Floss*—which were criticized for some alleged implausibility in their plots. For Miller, this notion of plausibility, in which a heroine's fate *must* involve romantic love for a male, is not, as some critics of these novels seem to believe, "a universal construct, but a product of a dominant male culture. . . . To read women's literature is to see and hear repeatedly a chafing against the 'unsatisfactory reality' . . . a protest against the division of labor that grants men the world and women love" (307). For Miller, then, one strong sign of a feminine mind at work in a novel is some questioning of the familiar story line in which a woman who gets the man of her dreams must live happily ever after.

These two approaches suggest quite different ideas of the feminine, the former more traditional, the latter more skeptical. Perhaps because they point in different directions, they shed interesting, if ultimately incomplete, light on Defoe's two female narrators. Moll

Flanders spends much of her life scheming to catch and hold a husband, and often claims that marriage is her only goal in life. As she puts it in one instance:

I knew what I aimed at and what I wanted, but knew nothing how to pursue the end by direct means. I wanted to be placed in a settled state of living, and had I happened to meet with a sober, good husband, I should have been as true a wife to him as virtue itself could have formed . . . nay, I should have made the better wife for all the difficulties I had passed through . . . nor did I in any of the times that I had been a wife give my husbands the least uneasiness on account of my behavior. (114-15)

Thus, the happiest fate Moll can imagine for herself is a very traditional one: marriage to a good man. For Nancy Miller, such a sentiment coming from the mouth of a female protagonist would likely be suspect, suggesting not genuinely feminine thinking, but rather a male idea of what a woman should want. Perhaps so. Yet if what Moll wants seems all too traditional, her reason for wanting it is less so: she sees a husband as the surest source of a steady income. Her motivation is pragmatic rather than romantic or sentimental, and she looks at marriage not as a means to psychological fulfillment, but simply as a good investment opportunity. Moreover, when she does finally marry and settle in Virginia at the end of the novel, she is not content with her fate. She soon begins scheming to reestablish contact with her son from an earlier marriage, and does that in part because of the possibility of getting a share of her former husband's inheritance.

Moll is not, then, a thorough-going traditionalist as regards a woman's place, but when she is, the fate she imagines for herself is, at least according to Miller's criteria, only marginally authentic. What about the other criteria? Does Moll think about moral issues in a characteristically feminine way? That way of thinking—to reiterate—values relationships and emotional attachments over personal autonomy, places more emphasis on responsibilities than rights, and sees care, not justice, as the ultimate social good. Moll's thinking on one moral dilemma she faces does indicate at least some of these values. The first time she is in Virginia, she discovers that she has unwittingly married her half-brother. She is revolted, and wants

nothing more than to break off the marriage, yet she waits for almost three years before finally leaving. The reason for the delay (and the source of her dilemma) is consideration of her family's feelings, particularly her husband's. As she says:

when I considered the thing calmly and took my husband as he really was, a diligent, careful man in the main . . . [who] knew nothing of the dreadful circumstances he was in, I could not but confess to myself that my [leaving] was very unreasonable and what no wife that had the good of her family at heart would have desired. . . . [Yet] I looked upon him no longer as a husband, but as a near relation, the son of my own mother, and I resolved somehow or other to be clear of him. (82)

This is a good example of care-based, supposedly feminine thinking: Moll is sure that her decision is right, but is concerned about the effect it will have on those closest to her, and wants to work out a solution which takes their feelings into account. Unfortunately, it is not thinking that Moll consistently practices, especially with regard to her own children. Her various marriages and affairs produce seven or eight children, most of whom she gives up to relatives, apparently without much anxiety. She does at one point say that "to neglect [children] is to murder them; again, to give them up to be managed by those people who have none of that needful affection placed by nature in them is to neglect them in the highest degree" (154). Yet this is precisely what Moll does with her own children. According to either criteria, then, Moll comes off as slightly inauthentic.

What about Roxana? Judged by the standard of her moral reasoning, Roxana's voice is more consistently feminine than Moll's. The moral dilemmas Roxana faces tend to be difficult for her precisely because of the strong emotional attachment she has invested in one side or the other. When she is abandoned by her husband, her poverty dictates that she must seriously consider giving up her children to relatives or to Parish charity. She says, "I was at first, sadly afflicted at the thought of parting with my Children . . . [but] when I consider'd they must inevitably be starv'd, and I too, if I continued to keep them about me, I began to be reconcil'd to parting with them. . ." (52). Sometime later, Roxana must respond to the marriage proposal of her landlord. She firmly believes that though her husband has abandoned her, she is still legally married, and so ought to reject the landlord's

offer. Yet she has a strong sense of gratitude and obligation to him for his kindness to her, and seems genuinely fond of him. In this instance, her emotional attachment triumphs over her sense of religious principle; in others, her sense of principle wins out. The point is, Roxana's thinking is consistently guided by traditionally feminine concerns—emotions, relationships, and a strong sense of responsibility for the welfare of others—to a degree that Moll's is not.

Perhaps the largest dilemma that Roxana faces involves another marriage proposal, this one from a Dutch merchant. The merchant's wealth and position, the help he gave Roxana while she was in France, and his sincere devotion to her make his offer hard to resist. Does he not, after all, represent the chance at living "happily ever after" that all too many fictional women are supposed to want? He might, but she rejects his offer, not because she finds him in any way unappealing, but because she finds the institution of marriage repulsive. She explains her position as follows:

I had, perhaps, differing Notions of Matrimony, from what the receiv'd Custom had given us of it; . . . I thought a Woman was a free Agent, as well as a Man, and was born free, and cou'd she manage herself suitably, might enjoy that Liberty to as much Purpose as the Men do . . . [and] the very Nature of the Marriage-Contract was, in short, nothing but giving up Liberty, Estate, Authority, and every-thing, to the Man, and the Woman was indeed, a meer Woman ever after, that is to say, a Slave. (187)

In questioning the traditional notion of how a woman's life should turn out, Roxana is expressing the kind of skepticism that, for Nancy Miller, would indicate a genuinely feminine voice. Roxana does, of course, come to regret her decision, and ends up marrying the Dutch merchant. Yet even then, marriage proves to be not a happy ending, but rather the beginning of the rapid deterioration of Roxana's life. Thus, whether one employs the more traditional criteria of Okin, or the more radical one of Miller, *Roxana* seems to capture a woman's voice in a more authentic way than *Moll Flanders*.

One should, I think, remain somewhat skeptical about these conclusions. For femininity (even in its literary manifestations) is ultimately not reducible to any criteria. And indeed, one can see in these works what Madeleine Kahn does: not an attempt to definitively describe gender, but rather an "exploration of gendered categories [in

relation] to each other, and to the individual's creation of a coherent self" (3962A). That said, however, I believe there is merit to these criteria. They do apply to Defoe the standard by which he asks that readers judge his work: the standard of verisimilitude and narrative authenticity. Moreover, their application to these works suggests a certain artistic development which seems quite plausible: *Roxana* is a later work than *Moll Flanders* by about two years, and it is also a more accomplished and successful effort at sustained female impersonation. If, then, these are limited tools, they are still helpful in understanding an important feature of Defoe's fiction.

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The Houyhnhnms—A Breed of Benevolent Projectors

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"A Voyage to the Houyhnhnms," Jonathan Swift's last phase in the satiric design of *Gulliver's Travels*, seems, at first glance to offer "the best of all possible worlds," a utopian vision of a culture in which reason alone reigns. But, as Kathleen Williams has pointed out, "If Swift did intend the Houyhnhnms to stand as an ideal contrast [to humankind], he has badly mismanaged the matter" (194). Gulliver, whose admiration for the Houyhnhnms governs his life, becomes a repellent and despicable figure in Book IV, and the Houyhnhnms themselves are sometimes absurd and not admirable. I would argue that it is not Swift's mismanagement but the readers' misunderstanding which has caused the land of "horse sense" to be considered utopian. The world of the Houyhnhnms is imperfect, and why Swift considered it so requires a re-evaluation of conventional views of the text.

The traditional approach to Gulliver's fourth voyage was to accept Houyhnhnmland as a goal humankind desired but could not attain. Arthur E. Case, for example, equates the Houyhnhnms with the unattainable height of civilization and the Yahoos with the unimaginable depth (145). Ricardo Quintana argues that Swift presents the "ideal civilization" as "an emotionless thing" (115). But, the fact that Swift, as noted in his letter to Alexander Pope (September 29, 1725), believed the human being to be *animal capax rationis* rather than *animal rationale* belies such interpretations of Houyhnhnmland as utopia (Swift 584). Swift neither believed people were Houyhnhnms nor should they become Houyhnhnms. Swift's conviction that emotion tempers reason in the human race and that men and women are not intended to be purely rational assures that Houyhnhnmland could never be utopia.

Some critics have rejected Houyhnhnmland on other grounds, as well. Ernest Tuveson sees the irony of reason over-reaching itself in this country of horses and finds "difficult to believe that Swift . . . could seriously have expected us to admire the complete lack of affection in a human sense among the Houyhnhnms" (107). Both Irvin Ehrenpreis and Martin Kallich reject a Houyhnhnm utopia on grounds that these creatures harbor deistic and stoic views against which Swift, a confirmed Anglican, fought (*Personality* 99; 107-124). As William Carnochan suggests in *Lemuel Gulliver's Mirror for Man*, Swift could not wholly believe in his "Utopia" and knew that extremes do meet, that the Utopian vision easily becomes its opposite, that thesis creates antithesis (68, 76).

What these readers of Book IV have failed to see, however,

is that Swift's satire is as consciously political as religious and that Swift's interest in politics cannot be separated from his interest in the new science, a thing which he labelled as "foul Whiggery" (Schwartz 14). In natural as well as social science, the problem for Swift lay not in theory but in application. The "projectors" of the Eighteenth Century were, in Swift's mind, dooming the world to self-destruction (Rossi and Hone 347) and causing an evasion of real duties and moral responsibility (Ehrenpreis, *Personality* 113). The Houyhnhnms embody characteristics of such projectors and, therefore, cannot be utopian figures.

The term "projector" often creates the mental image of a crack-brained chemist, tinkering in a cluttered laboratory and accomplishing nothing practical. This scientist perpetually fails to make "two Ears of Corn, or two Blades of Grass to grow upon a Spot of Ground where only one grew before" (Swift 111). Such a projector is the physicist, astronomer, or chemist whom Swift saw at work in Gresham College and whom he satirized in the visit to the Academy of Lagado. But, as J. M. Treadwell points out, the term "projector" changed in meaning as the Seventeenth Century came to a close (439-460). The projectors who were at first striving to fulfill a mercantile wish soon gave way to eccentric schemers both at the Royal Exchange and in the Royal Society. In Book III, Swift had already had fun at the expense of these projectors, but in his "Voyage to Laputa," Swift seems to have ignored another type of projector—the benevolent projector.

Samuel Johnson in his *Dictionary of the English Language* provides two definitions of a "projector." The first is "one who forms schemes or designs," as opposed to the second, "one who forms wild, impracticable schemes." Johnson chose no fierce criticism of chemists or astrologers to illustrate his first definition but displayed a good-natured amusement at these individuals who were both novel and diverting. These are the so-called "benevolent projectors" (Treadwell 444) whose primary interest in schemes was not financial gain. The benevolent projectors had high motives and employed designs with the only anticipated rewards being self-approving joy and the accompanying vanity as their schemes "improved" society. On these grounds, the Houyhnhnms are counterparts to the eighteenth-century intellectuals, economists, and social scientists whose friendship and benevolence were supposedly extended for society's sake alone. As Treadwell writes,

Some of these benevolent projectors were

indeed men of wealth and position who profoundly despised the traditional speculative projectors and who offered their own plans from no other motive than the belief that they knew just a little better than their fellows how the complex problems of the nation should be solved. The pride implicit in this sort of projecting is obvious and was one of the two things which opened it to ridicule. The other was the insanity of some of the projects themselves. (445)

Just as Swift abhorred speculative projectors for forgetting humankind in preference for self-gain, so he abhorred benevolent projectors for forgetting humanness in preference to pride, the cardinal sin. While speculative projectors do appear in Chapters 1 through 3 of "A Voyage to the Houyhnhnms," for the remainder of the book Swift's satire concentrates on the Houyhnhnms themselves as benevolent projectors, adding yet another basis on which Houyhnhnmland must be rejected as utopian.

Gulliver himself forewarns the reader of the projector-like attitudes of the Houyhnhnms on his first encounter with these "Brute Beasts." He concludes that with a "Proportionable Degree of Reason, they must needs be the wisest People on Earth" (195). The key phrase here is "proportionable Degree of Reason." The Houyhnhnms never become the wisest people; they never become people at all. The *via media* is not discovered by the Horses who, like benevolent projectors, develop an "inadequate and inhuman rationalism" (Williams 201). Their gestures are "not unlike those of a Philosopher," Swift writes, "when he would attempt to solve some new and difficult Phaenomenon" (195). The "behaviour of these Animals was so orderly and rational, so acute and judicious, that . . . they must needs be Magicians" (195). Gulliver is primed and ready to recognize philosophers and magicians since his latest adventure has been in Laputa, but his first impressions are, in this case, the most reliable comments he will make. He has not yet been deluded by a utopian vision. But, just as Gulliver was enraptured by the apparently utopian world of the Struldbruggs, he soon becomes enraptured by the Houyhnhnms, forgetting his misgivings about these beasts who exhibit projectors' traits.

As Gulliver learns the Houyhnhnm language, he comments that it is similar to High Dutch or German. Throughout *Gulliver's Travels*, Swift has attacked the Dutch for their toleration of Dissenters and their

stand against Anglicanism. This stance alone would provide hints of a non-utopian Houyhnhmland, but the Dutch were also promoters of projects, particularly since Leeuwenhoek had ushered in a new age through the invention of the microscope. Hugo M. Reichard also sees in Swift's selection of the Houyhnhnms' language an indication of a character flaw. Their one language, as opposed to Gulliver's "two or more," smacks of "intellectual misemphasis or reductionism" (51-57), an accusation Swift made against the projectors of his day. Swift did not decry philosophical science; he only detested projecting which resulted in abandonment of moral responsibility and neglect of human concerns (Ehrenpreis, *Personality* 113). The Houyhnhnms prove to do exactly that.

Chapter Three presents at least three instances in which these beasts fulfill Swift's concept of speculative projectors, as well. The cold curiosity and impatience of Gulliver's master are reminiscent of projectors who systematically probed into the secrets of existence, many of which Swift hoped to preserve (Ehrenpreis, *Mr. Swift* 117). The Houyhnhnms also do not have books or literature, a fact appalling to Swift, who viewed the new philosophy (that is, science) as displacing literature as the foundation of culture itself (Rossi and Hone 34). In the reasonable world of the Houyhnhnms, Swift's fear becomes reality. Finally, Gulliver's examination by his master reminds readers of the process used by the King's three scholars at Brobdingnag (82). This careful observation, dictated by scientific method, leads to the logical and indisputable conclusion that Gulliver is a perfect Yahoo, although a similar examination had earlier declared him a dwarfed Brobdingnagian.

Still, like benevolent projectors, the Houyhnhnms consistently display a belief that their lifestyle and government offer the only solutions to the world's problems. What they cannot cope with is anyone who doubts in "the system." Gulliver's respectful challenge to this belief is met with "great appearances of Uneasiness" and a self-righteousness that borders on pride (207). When faced with a more complicated civilization, the Houyhnhnms are at a loss (Rossi and Hone 33), yet they are fascinated by Gulliver's descriptions of "the Desire of Power and Riches; of the terrible Effects of Lust, Intemperance, Malice and Envy" as if their imaginations were "struck with something never seen or heard of before" (211).

Chapter Five presents another criticism of these benevolent projectors and their real-life counterparts. The accusation that Gulliver has said "the Thing which is not" reveals that, like benevolent projectors, the Houyhnhnms "can hardly become attuned to the ways

of men, wherein a rational capability is often made to serve rationally indefensible ends" (Allison 482-3). The Houyhnhnms' inability to conceive of a world dominated by Yahoos puffs them up with a projector's pride in rationality. They convince Gulliver of "a thousand Faults" in himself, of which he had "not the least Perception before" (225). But, their straight-forwardness and frankness are devoid of compassion and lack humanness, as F. R. Leavis notes in his essay "The Irony of Swift":

The clean skin of the Houyhnhnms, in short, is stretched over a void; instincts, emotions and life, which complicate the problem of cleanliness and decency, are left for the Yahoos with the dirt and the indecorum. Reason, Truth, and Nature serve instead; the Houyhnhnms (who scorn metaphysics) find them adequate. (205)

Like the plans of benevolent projectors, their schemes for improvement of the race no longer embody theories of natural philosophy or the question of how many angels fit on the head of a pin. Instead, only the Grand Maxim must be followed: "to cultivate Reason, and to be wholly governed by it" (233). The Houyhnhnms, therefore, laugh at systems of natural philosophy and are vain enough to believe that only their system is reasonable, as Gulliver records:

In the like Manner when I used to explain to him our several Systems of *Natural Philosophy*, he would laugh that a Creature pretending to *Reason*, should value itself upon the Knowledge of other Peoples Conjectures, and in Things, where that Knowledge, if it were certain could be of no Use. (233)

The portrait of the Houyhnhnms continues to leave the reader cold, and the utopian vision fades. They appear as do benevolent projectors, claiming to shape plans for the improvement of humankind but engaging in "frivolous evasions of real duties" (Ehrenpreis, *Personality* 113). The logic of dispersing colts for the continuation of the species and for the greatest benefit to all is undeniable, but in showing "no fondness for their Colts or Foles" (234), the Houyhnhnms reveal the

same lack of intimacy which wealthy benevolent projectors showed toward the "subjects" of their abstract schemes.

Even the visionary schemes of ideal governments offered by the Houyhnhnm Grand Assembly are more fitting for projectors. Not only does the council suggest that Aristotelian spontaneous generation produced the Yahoos but also that the Yahoos are not aboriginal because of the hatred Houyhnhnms bear them (237). The absurdity of such "scientific" reasoning was as contemptible to Swift as were papers delivered before the Royal Society that explained the Bible so as to be consistent with modern scientific thought (Nicolson 131).

Clearly this same council dons the habit of the benevolent projectors when they adopt the scheme of castrating the Yahoos in order to remove a threat to their own existence. The decision is "wholly governed by reason"; "besides rendering them tractable and fitter for Use, [it] would in an Age put an End to the whole Species without destroying life" (238). In "buying into" this plan, Gulliver who was once "horrified at the 'Manner and Use of Castrating Horses among us,'" becomes "if not a hypocrite, at least an opportunist" (Carnochan 75). The Houyhnhnms have developed into the benevolent projectors whose verbalized motives seem reasonable and designed for mutual benefit. Swift and the reader know their schemes are not sound; only Gulliver forgets.

The final projectors' scheme adopted by the Houyhnhnms is the ousting of Gulliver from their land, and Swift carefully weaves his satire into the fabric of Chapter Ten. Even though he wishes to, Gulliver cannot disregard his humanity: "yet in my weak and corrupt Judgement, I thought it might consist with Reason to have been less rigorous" (244). As Gulliver submits to his fate, humbling himself as a miserable and inferior Yahoo, the reader is repelled by the once attractive slogan that "no person can disobey Reason, without giving up his Claim to be a rational Creature" (245). The Houyhnhnms are reasonable in their exile of Gulliver, but they are also merciless (Allison 489). Their action, like that of a benevolent projector, is for their society's sake alone, not for monetary reward or political gain. However, in an effort to aid society, the welfare of the individual is overlooked. In "Concerning Houyhnhnm Reason," Alexander Allison concludes that the Houyhnhnms represent "an absolute rationality which is incommensurate both with the sinfulness of man and with intimations of the divine in man" (492). Where does that leave the rational Houyhnhnm?—a mere "shadow of humanity" (Rossi and Hone 338), and certainly not an ideal for which to strive.

The Sorrel Nag's role in Gulliver's departure seems an

exception to Swift's satiric thrust. Yet, a closer look shows that the Sorrel Nag is merely a servant to fellow Houyhnhnms and continues in this capacity even while helping Gulliver to build a canoe. The tenderness the Nag exhibits is not the "rational benevolence, 'universal to the whole Race,' which the Houyhnhnms officially cultivate" (Allison 491). For the Sorrel Nag, curiosity has elicited empathy but not sympathy.

The Houyhnhnms exhibit their universal but not individual benevolence to the end of Book IV. Still curious to observe a new phenomenon, these projectors attend the launching of Gulliver's raft. Still steeped in pride or snobbery, Gulliver's master does him the "honor" of raising a hoof to be kissed. In spite of their virtues, the Houyhnhnms lack the heights of human behavior to which man has fallen. "Possibly then, the effect is a deliberate one, and the Houyhnhnms, far from being a model of perfection, are intended to show the inadequacy of the life of reason" (Williams 195). Traditional interpretations of Houyhnhnmland as utopia ignore Swift's satiric intent and follow a narrow path, as does a horse with blinders. The Houyhnhnms are a breed of benevolent projectors, proud of their culture, assured of their intelligence, despising inferiors, and planning rationally for the benefit of themselves.

Swift, who conceived of himself as a positive moral and social reformer (Case 145), constructed *Gulliver's Travels* so that Lemuel Gulliver's purpose becomes that of the satirist himself—"the Motive of publick Good" (v), and Book IV ends with Gulliver's well-intentioned desire to reform humankind: "I write for the noblest End, to inform and instruct Mankind, over whom I may, without Breach of Modesty, pretend to some superiority, from the Advantages I received by conversing so long among the most accomplished Houyhnhnms" (257). But, Gulliver has succumbed to the ultimate sin of pride, and the reader smiles wryly at Gulliver, now a benevolent projector himself, who believes he can "make Men wiser and better" (255) through his acquired horse sense. Interestingly, in condemning the Houyhnhnms as benevolent projectors, Swift necessarily includes both himself and his persona Gulliver in that same class of schemers, for "satire is, in its very essence, the wildest of all projects—a scheme to reform the world" (Treadwell 460).

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Education for Women? Get Serious:
A Look at the Argument for Women's Education
in the Writings of Anne Killigrew, Mary Astell,
Mary Pix, and Mary, Lady Chudleigh

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Following the restoration of Charles II to the English throne, the ideas of gender roles and responsibilities of both women and men were brought into question (Ashley 61-72). While women were being educated to some extent, they were still not allowed into the major universities at Oxford and Cambridge. The social roles of women also came under fire at this time. Women were portrayed on stage as either whores, coquettes, or "cold fish." They were criticized for being inconstant and unfaithful, for giving in to the amorous advances of suitors and for refusing to reward an ardent suitor, and for being unable to think rationally or objectively. These charges, either real or imaginary, led to interesting responses from well-known women writers of the period.

The idea of a liberal education for women figures prominently in the works of the four women I'll be talking about today. Anne Killigrew, born in May, 1660, just prior to Charles II's restoration (Cibber 224) became a lady in waiting to James's second wife, Mary of Modena (Morton vi). She is perhaps best remembered not for her own work, but for being the subject of John Dryden's ode "To the Pious Memory of the Accomplish'd Young Lady Mrs. Anne Killigrew."

While her literary reputation has suffered greatly in the last two centuries, Killigrew was the most celebrated female poet in her lifetime (Ezell 70). She is credited by Anthony à Wood, George Ballard, and Theophilus Cibber as having "superior genius" and "a polite education" (Wood 256; Ballard 304; Cibber 224).

One of Killigrew's major emphases is the outer control of the body through an inner control of the mind. Her third "A Pastoral Dialogue" (*Poems* 63) deals specifically with the rational development of the mind. She seeks to explore and explain why both men and women should receive a liberal education.

In this dialogue, several young women are approached by an older man, famous for his own virtue and wisdom as a teacher (Hobby 159). Melibæus serves both as a role model and a mouthpiece for Killigrew's beliefs on love and women's education. As Hobby suggests, this dialogue deals with more than just abandoning love altogether (159), but points to the unequal status of men and women in

love and society at large.

The dialogue opens with Melibæus asking the women to join him in his shady grove. In this opening, Killigrew is suggesting that women should take the active role in their lives. As the women prepare for Melibæus's lesson, two young men approach. One of the women, Alcippe, wants the men to join them and learn about virtue and truth, but Licida says that "Serious Discourse industriously they shun" (28). The women are there to learn; the men simply want to sit at the women's feet (33-39). Since the teacher is male, it is obvious that Killigrew is not criticizing all men, just those who refuse to take life seriously and those who refuse to learn.

After his audience is ready, Melibæus decides to talk about love and the dangers of passion for women (40-47). He insists that love is more dangerous for women and therefore they must be taught to understand this danger and how to avoid it. Killigrew's use of phrases like "softer sex" and far more weak "In mind, as well as Body" suggests that she realizes the current social conventions about women and is, therefore, insisting on more opportunities for women in order to "fix" these problems. Killigrew explains not only the dangers of love, but also the illogical practice of trusting one's own happiness to another. Killigrew expresses a desire for all people, and women in particular, to base their happiness on themselves first and then look for love in others. Killigrew rejects the strong overflow of passion, because it is harmful, and advocates a reliance on reason, intelligence, and control. She does not advocate a withdrawal from love, but an empowerment through control of the passions. She continues to describe the person without control over her or his emotions as being trapped in "Cruel Fetters" with passion being "As Shackles on your captivated Mind" (140-145).

Killigrew's remedy for this situation is rational education. Her advocacy of empowerment through cultivation of the mind is similar to Mary Astell's argument in *A Serious Proposal to the Ladies* (1694) and Mary Chudleigh's in *The Ladies Defence* (1700). This reoccurring argument attests to the presence of a large number of women who were responsive to this idea in Restoration England. Killigrew bases her version of the call for rational education for women on the benefits of reason and control. She says that these benefits can only come through education, but she also insists that her readers integrate this control into their personalities. She develops her view from her belief that God created all people and therefore created women with the same ability to reason and think as men. In Melibæus's speech on education, Killigrew focuses on the empowerment that women receive from

rational education and self-control. Reason allows people to control their actions and experience everything in the right proportions. Killigrew did not reject romantic love, only the uncontrolled expression of passion, and advocates that reason and control become the gate to liberty and freedom from the sexual hypocrisy of her society.

Mary Astell was born in 1668 (Ballard 382). She, much like Killigrew, received a private education under the direction of her uncle, a clergyman, and came to London when she was twenty (Ballard 382). Once in London, Astell became involved with many intellectuals, both male and female (Ezell 82). Although there is no direct evidence that she read Killigrew's poetry, it is quite likely, given Killigrew's high literary reputation at the time, that Astell was familiar with Killigrew's work. In her own work, Astell does credit Katherine Philips (Orinda) and "the more Modern Heroins" as providing examples of literate women (141). Since John Dryden and others favorably compared Killigrew to Philips it is not unlikely that Astell had knowledge of Killigrew's work.

Whether or not Astell knew Killigrew's poem, she addresses many of the same issues in her first printed work, *A Serious Proposal to the Ladies For the Advancement of their True and Greatest Interest*, published in 1694. This essay was highly successful, going through three editions in two years, and it is on this essay that most of her current reputation rests (Perry 63).

A Serious Proposal to the Ladies attempts to accomplish three goals: to explain why women have been denied formal educational opportunities, to justify a liberal education for all women, and to establish colleges or "Protestant convents" for the education of all women. In the first two goals, Astell's work has much in common with Killigrew, while in the third, she offers a more practical means of attaining the desired education than Killigrew puts forth in her pastoral.

The first part of *A Serious Proposal to the Ladies* is addressed specifically to women. Here, Astell is criticizing women for relying on things such as beauty, money, and titles for happiness while denying the cultivation of the mind (139-142). She states in no uncertain terms that she wants to give women a way of overcoming these trivial pursuits. She states that women cannot be held responsible for making foolish kinds of choices, since these are the only choices offered to them. Astell does not believe that women purposely ignore the cultivation of their intellects, but merely do not realize that this cultivation is in their true interest. "Since you can't be so unkind to your selves, as to refuse your *real* interest, I only entreat you to be so wise as to examine wherein it consists; for nothing is of worse

consequence than to be deceiv'd in a matter of so great concern" [her italics] (140). She goes on to stress that education and wisdom provide the best type of life and manner and that only through education and self awareness can people be truly happy (140).

Here, as in Killigrew's pastoral, Astell is stressing the control and the ability of the individual to produce happiness for herself. She says that she does not want "to expose, but to rectifie your Failures" (142). These failures are a direct result of the neglect from their society, a society controlled by men. Astell firmly places the blame for the problems of women on the shoulders of the men in her society. Here, she is again going beyond Killigrew's argument by assessing blame.

Astell seems to agree with Killigrew that the lack of rational ability in women is not something that is natural, but something that is created by society. She condemns men for condemning women without giving them the opportunity or tools to improve themselves (142-43). By saying that God created men and women both as rational creatures and that it is only through socialization that women are made to appear stupid, Astell asserts that women cannot be held responsible for being foolish and irrational.

The only cure for this ignorance is a rational education based on three arguments. The first is an appeal to the families: Astell questions why parents fail to educate both their sons and daughters, since "the Sons convey the Name to Posterity, yet certainly a great Part of the Honour of their Families depends on their Daughters" (144). Astell's second appeal is aimed at those who feel that women are already educated enough. She attacks the position that if a woman can read that is enough. She questions the value of being able to read novels and romances, which she considers to be without form or substance. She goes on to belittle any current attempt at educating women as insignificant since it apparently is not working (147-148). "And now having discovered the Disease and its cause, 'tis proper to apply a Remedy; single Medicines are too weak to cure such complicated Distempers" (149). Instead, she suggests the creation of a type of college or academy where women can be trained in logic, mathematics, sciences, languages, and most importantly, Christian values.

A Serious Proposal to the Ladies created a large response from Astell's reading public. It was extremely popular with a large number of people, both male and female, and "had an enormous impact on contemporary women . . . such women as Judith Drake, Lady Damaris Masham, Elizabeth Thomas, Lady Mary Chudleigh, Elizabeth Elstob,

and Lady Mary Wortley Montagu" (Perry 106). Although this essay proved influential to the lives of other literary women, it did not provide Astell with the monetary contributions to start the type of college she proposed.

Although we have no documented evidence that Mary Pix read either Anne Killigrew's work or Mary Astell's *A Serious Proposal to the Ladies*, it is highly likely that this educated, successful protégé of William Congreve was exposed to one if not both of these women. Pix was born in 1666 and her husband, George Pix, was a London merchant (Steeves xi). Without much forewarning, Mary Pix burst on the English literary stage with her novel, *The Inhumane Cardinal*, and two plays, *Ibrahim, the Thirteenth Emperour of the Turks* and *The Spanish Wives* (Steeves xi-xii). Mary Pix's third play, *The Innocent Mistress*, was performed and published in 1697, the year after the third edition of *A Serious Proposal to the Ladies*. *The Innocent Mistress* deals with the abilities of intelligent women and the consequences of having the "wrong" type of education.

Two of the major women characters in *The Innocent Mistress* present Pix's side of the debate about women's education. But Pix is not as forward with her argument as either Killigrew or Astell and this might have to do with her choice of genre. As a dramatist depending on the whims of public taste, Pix had to appeal to a much wider and varying audience than either Killigrew or Astell. So, instead of directly confronting the issue, she creates two women who differ only in education and shows how one, the woman with intelligence, controls her own life while the other is buffeted by the winds of fate.

The character of Mrs. Beauclair is that of a strong, independent, intelligent woman who is in control of her life. She is described as "an independent woman" and this seems to apply to both economic and social situations. Mrs. Beauclair exhibits many of the attributes that Killigrew desires for women in her poetry and the intelligence Astell advocates. She knows who she is and what she wants and in this play she wants Sir Francis Wildlove. Mrs. Beauclair achieves her goal with the use of her wit and intelligence. Mrs. Beauclair wins not only the heart of the man she loves, but also the right to correct his behavior, to educate him in the ways of virtue and happiness. She is in control of her mind and thus her body. Her future is her own to create. This control is markedly lacking in the other major female character, Bellinda.

Bellinda is the example of a woman who has the wrong kind of education. She has read only romances and plays and, as a result, cannot separate fantasy from reality. Bellinda is the type of woman

that both Killigrew and Astell warned against. Her head is full of nonsense and she is controlled by the events around her instead of being in control of them. She had fled from home because her intended husband did not fit the image of the dashing hero from her romances. Bellinda then becomes victim to the whims of fate. She falls in love with Lord Beauclair, uncle to Mrs. Beauclair, and even after finding out about his wife, cannot leave him. Her love is irrational, and without the mental faculties to handle the situation, she becomes acted upon instead of the actor in her life. She is called a whore by both Spendall and Lady Beauclair and only agrees to leave London when Lady Beauclair threatens to destroy her reputation and Beaumont, sent by her father, comes looking for her. She is still in love with Lord Beauclair, but cannot think of a way to tell him that she is leaving. Once again, Fate intervenes. Lady Beauclair's first husband arrives and Lord Beauclair is free to marry Bellinda. But, here again, Bellinda is waiting for him; she is not an active participant in her own life.

In contrasting these two characters, Pix is attempting to show the benefits of a rational control over the mind and the body. Her endorsement of education for women is less stringent than Killigrew or Astell, but the intelligent action of Mrs. Beauclair and the foolish passivity of Bellinda hints at her support of Killigrew's and Astell's arguments.

This idea of control over one's mind and body though education is a major point in Mary, Lady Chudleigh's *The Ladies Defence or The Bride-Woman's Counsellor Answer'd*. Published in 1700, *The Ladies Defence* is a poetic dialogue between three men and a woman written in response to John Sprint's *The Bride-Woman's Counsellor* (1699). Chudleigh attempts to refute Sprint's charges that women are so weak minded that they should not be allowed an independent thought, control over themselves, or even the care of their children. Chudleigh, heavily influenced by Mary Astell, states that it is men and not nature that make women foolish and that if women were given liberal educations they would not only be better daughters, but better wives, mothers, and human beings as well.

Mary, Lady Chudleigh was born in 1656, making her the oldest of the four authors considered and the last to turn to her pen as a form of public criticism (Ballard 353). According to Ballard and Lady Chudleigh's own admission, her education included only the study of English and so she was "limited" to reading her classics and history in translation (353). Otherwise, her education was probably similar to that of Anne Killigrew and Mary Astell. Again, we have no direct

evidence that she read Killigrew's work, but since both Killigrew and Chudleigh were protégés of John Dryden, it is quite likely that she had knowledge of if not familiarity with Killigrew's poetry. There is no documented evidence that she attended any showings of *The Innocent Mistress*, but as part of London society, she might have. As Ruth Perry suggests, the greatest influence on Mary, Lady Chudleigh was that of Mary Astell, especially *A Serious Proposal to the Ladies* (106-107).

Chudleigh was inspired by Astell's insistence that women should be educated in order to defend themselves against the temptations and evil in current society (Perry 107). Chudleigh's character, Melissa, reminds the three men "that it is *her* life they are talking about" [her italics] (Perry 107). Chudleigh's choice of poetic discussion allows her to give a voice and a face to the speaker in *A Serious Proposal to the Ladies*.

The dialogue takes place between four people: John Brute, a misogynistic husband; William Loveall, who is so sweet that he is almost as condescending and misogynistic as Brute; a parson, modeled on John Sprint; and Melissa. The dialogue begins with John Brute praising the writings of Sprint as a just and right cause, saying that all his earlier sermons were trivial and boring and only when he supports the subjection of women does he become relevant and interesting (1-18). William Loveall then criticizes the parson for wounding the "dear Idols of my Heart" (51). Yet Loveall's defense is so sticky sweet that it becomes patronizing. The Parson then adds his ideas that all women should be obedient to their fathers and husbands for this is their duty and they must "Give up their Reason, and their Wills resign" (60). Melissa answers with an argument similar to Astell's, stating that it is wrong to think that men are perfect mortals and women perfect fools. Melissa continues, showing how men twist the truth to fit their own desires, thus making rage "Noble Bravery," cowards wary and fops genteel and ". . . to each Vice you give some specious Name" (77-89). The Parson then tries to gloss over Melissa's statements by saying she is just a woman and does not know anything and even if she did, she owes perfect obedience to men because of Eve. He continues saying that women should only expect love and a small amount of respect when they have totally given up all control over every aspect of their lives to their husbands (366-474). He then says he will say no more so that he will not tax "poor" Melissa's memory. Melissa answers the Parson by rejecting his stance that women are naturally irrational and foolish, stating that it is men who have forced women to be what they are criticizing and that the only way to counteract this wrong thinking is for

women to stop being foolish and educate themselves against this type of attack. It is in this speech that Chudleigh gives the most eloquent voice to both Killigrew's and Astell's arguments. She is advocating a liberal education based on rational thinking and grounded in the classics. Only with these tools can women be free.

Loveall's reaction to Melissa's speech is quite similar to that of the young men in Killigrew's pastoral. He is afraid, and rightly so, that if women are educated to think rationally they will ignore the wooing of men like himself (565-576). Loveall realizes that smart women are not likely to fall in love with stupid men and that is why women must be denied an education (579-584). Brute puts in his ideas, saying that it should be illegal for women to learn to read (589-604). The Parson suggests that women only be allowed to read pretty things, in order to make them more beautiful to men (605-637). Melissa then turns the tables on the men, much as Astell does on parents, stating that if they truly loved women and wanted what was best for them, as all three said they do, then they would educate their daughters, wives, and sisters.

The question of women's educational opportunities is one that consistently resurfaces throughout the seventeenth-century. While all four authors seem to be advocating a rational, liberal education for women, they all stop at the threshold of complete independence. None of the authors recommends that women be trained to enter the political or economic spheres of their societies. Instead, they stress a control over the mind which leads to a control over the body, and thus control over one's life.

The continuing discussion of the rights of women to education shows that this question did not develop with Anne Killigrew nor end with Mary, Lady Chudleigh, but these four authors, writing in four different genres, highlight the depth and scope of the quest of educational opportunities for women. All four battled against the idea that women were naturally irrational and weak-minded and all saw society, in general, and men, in particular, as the cause for the low esteem with which women were held. While the mutual influences cannot necessarily be documented, the unconscious influence that circulated among women during this time period seems quite strong. Even if Mary Astell never read Anne Killigrew, nor Mary Pix either Astell or Killigrew, they were firing similar shots at the same male world which wanted to deny them and their fellow women access to education and a right to independence. These women were serious.

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