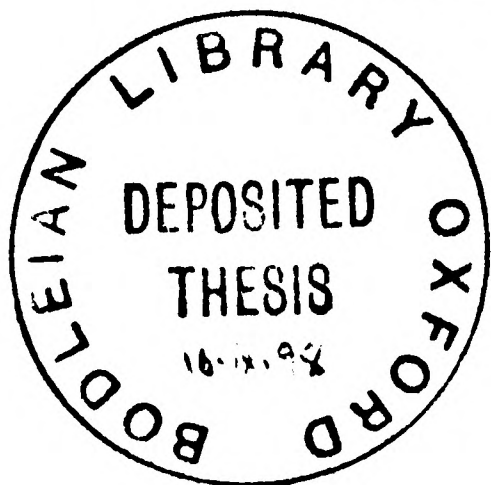


The Literary Career of George Gascoigne:

Studies in Self-Presentation



TAM MARTI QVAM MERCVRIO:·



Thesis presented for the degree of D.Phil., ^{HT}
Trinity Term 1995/6 [i.e. 1997]

Gillian Austen
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*"I suppose you are assembled here, supposing to reape the fruite of my travayles:
and to be playne, I meane presently to presente you with a Comedie called
Supposes, the verye name whereof may peradventure drive into every of your
heades a sundry Suppose, to suppose the meaning of our supposes ... But
understand, this our Suppose is nothing else but a mystaking or imagination of
one thing for an other ..."*

Supposes, The Prologue or Argument

Abstract.

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The Literary Career of George Gascoigne: Studies in Self-Presentation.

My thesis seeks to offer a reinterpretation of George Gascoigne's literary career by interrogating the means by which he manipulated his self-presentation in print. The Introduction defines the context for this study by outlining the received version of his career, that of the prodigal who underwent a moral reformation in 1575 and wrote only moralistic works thereafter. I question Gascoigne's inclusion with the Drab poets by suggesting that his more courtly personae co-existed with his predominant self-presentation as repentant prodigal.

The subsequent discussion falls into a broadly chronological structure. Chapter I surveys the range of self-presentations and authorial voices in the early works and concludes with a discussion of Gascoigne's first publication, the anonymous *A Hundreth Sundrie Flowres* (1573), in which they were presented as the work of several authors. Chapter II examines Gascoigne's publications in 1575, conventionally considered the turning point in his career, with the *Posies* and the *Glasse of Government*, his Prodigal Son play. These are set against his anonymous publication of the *Noble Arte* in June and his performances before the Queen at Kenilworth in July.

Gascoigne gave his presentation manuscript of *Hemetes* to Elizabeth as a New Year gift in 1576. Chapter III examines all of Gascoigne's literary activity in that year, as he continued to develop a portfolio of moralistic titles but also published his account of the *Princely Pleasures*, continuing the series of anonymous courtly publications. Late in the year, Gascoigne travelled to Paris and then Antwerp, and on his return published an anonymous account of the sacking of that city, the *Spoyle of Antwerpe*. Chapter IV discusses Gascoigne's New Year gifts in 1577, the year of his death. These are a second presentation manuscript for Elizabeth, the *Grief of Joye*, and a presentation letter to Sir Nicholas Bacon.

This thesis contains approximately 100,000 words.

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Throughout my time in Oxford I was given a home by Lincoln College and I would like to record my gratitude for the comprehensive support it provided, and my thanks to the staff there, who became a second family. In particular, Ms. Joy Makin and Mrs. Anne Turton helped me out of many a fix; Mrs. Gill Hicks, Jo, and Sue have been kindness itself; and Cheffie, Patrick, and Richard gave me benefit of the best college kitchen in Oxford.

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Finally, I would like to remember two special friends. Bill Bayton (d. December 1992) and Len Hutson (d. September 1994) are greatly missed.

For Grandad

"The Literary Career of George Gascoigne:
Studies in Self-Presentation"

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List of Short Titles.

- Cunliffe J. W. Cunliffe, ed., *The Complete Works of George Gascoigne*, vol. II (Cambridge University Press, 1910)
- DNB* *Dictionary of National Biography*
- HPT* *History of Parliament Transcripts*
- Index of Dedications* Franklin B. Williams, *Index of Dedications and Commendatory Verses in English Books before 1641* (London, 1962)
- Nichols John Nichols, *The Progresses and Public Processions of Queen Elizabeth*, 3 vols. (London, 1823)
- OED *Oxford English Dictionary* (second edition)
- Pension Book* R. J. Fletcher, ed., *The Pension Book of Gray's Inn, 1569-99* (London, 1901)
- Pigman G. W. Pigman III, *George Gascoigne, A Hundreth Sundrie Flowres* (Oxford University Press, forthcoming)
- Prouty C. T. Prouty, *George Gascoigne, Elizabethan Courtier, Soldier, and Poet* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1942)
- Register* Joseph Foster, ed., *Register of Admissions to Gray's Inn* (London, 1889)
- STC *Short Title Catalogue*
- Tilley Morris P. Tilley, *A Dictionary of the Proverbs in England in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1950)
- Weiss Adrian Weiss, "Shared Printing, Printer's Copy, and the Text(s) of Gascoigne's *A Hundreth Sundrie Flowres*", *Studies in Bibliography*, 45 (1991): 71-104

A Note on Editions Cited.

I was fortunate enough to be given, by G. W. Pigman III, a pre-publication proof of the text of his forthcoming edition of *A Hundreth Sundrie Flowres* (Oxford University Press), which uses the 1573 text as copy-text and incorporates the changes in the revised edition, the *Posies*. Even without notes it has been invaluable for its clarity, which makes the relationship between the two texts absolutely apparent.

I cite the Pigman edition throughout for *A Hundreth* and the *Posies* although I also refer to Gabriel Harvey's copy of the *Posies*, bound with the *Steele Glas/ Complaynt of Phylomene* (Malone 792), which is in the Bodleian. For the remaining works I have cited the second volume of J.W. Cunliffe's *Complete Works of George Gascoigne* (Cambridge University Press, 1910), and an original edition of the *Noble Arte of Venerie*, which Cunliffe excludes.

"The Literary Career of George Gascoigne: Studies in Self-Presentation."

Introduction.

This thesis seeks to offer a reinterpretation of the literary career of George Gascoigne and to challenge the model of the reformed prodigal which Gascoigne himself proposed and which his biographer, Charles T. Prouty, accepted intact in his *George Gascoigne, Elizabethan Courtier, Soldier, and Poet* (Columbia University Press, 1942). This authoritative full-length biography was generally well-received.¹ It was followed later in the year by Prouty's edition of *A Hundreth Sundrie Flowres* (University of Missouri Studies, Vol. 17, No. 2), a volume designed to supersede B.M. Ward's edition of 1926, which is especially notable for its extraordinary excision of the prose passages of *A Discourse of the Adventures passed by Master F.J.*² Prouty's edition was welcomed "with reservations" by more than one commentator.³ It relies rather too heavily on the monograph which it complements, and - like Ward's - suffers from the absence of the plays. None the less, Prouty's combined project was undoubtedly of great importance in consolidating the literary reputation of George Gascoigne, the repentant and reformed prodigal.

¹ It was reviewed by Jean Robertson, *MLR*, 38 (1943), 139-40; H.E. Rollins, *MLN*, 58 (1943), 317-19; Virgil B. Heltzel, *MLQ*, 3 (1942), 480-82; Leicester Bradner, *JEGP*, 42 (1943), 120-21; E.K. Chambers, *English*, 4 (1943), 125-26.

² B.M. Ward, *A Hundreth Sundrie Flowres, from the Original Edition* (London: Frederick Etchells and Hugh Macdonald, 1926). This edition also suffers from Ward's theory that the work was composed by several authors.

³ John Leon Lievsay, *MLQ*, 5 (1944), 369-71; D.C. Allen, *MLN*, 58 (1943), 634-65; Leicester Bradner, *JEGP*, 42 (1943), 586-87; and in the *TLS*, 19 Sept. 1942, pp. 462, 463, 464.

Prouty's work is seminal, but it was flawed by its neglect of *The Noble Arte of Venerie or Hunting*, which Jean Robertson first claimed for the Gascoigne *oeuvre* late in the same year.¹ Charles and Ruth Prouty subsequently developed Robertson's claim in an article which tried to identify part of the original additions as a masque or device which was written for, but not performed at, Kenilworth.² The Proutys argued that the *Noble Arte* was published anonymously because: "whereas [Gascoigne] could and would acknowledge the highly moral *Glasse of Government*, he evidently did not think it well to put his name to so light and trivial a work as *The Noble Arte* ... When we think of his other writings from this time on, all highly moral or designed to please Queen Elizabeth, we may conclude that such a secular work as *The Noble Arte* should not have occupied as serious a reformer as George Gascoigne!"³ But they did not concede that this new attribution actually severely compromises the model of the reformed prodigal.

Prouty's achievement must not, however, be underestimated. He provides an immense amount of detail and a coherent version of the biography; Chambers was surely right when he wrote that the years Prouty spent in the archives to establish what remains in the official records of Gascoigne's life was "a work which need not be repeated".⁴ I have mostly accepted Prouty's dating, and have relied on his opinion of Gascoigne's

¹ Jean Robertson, "George Gascoigne and *The Noble Arte of Venerie and [sic] Hunting*", *MLR* 37 (1942), 484-85, published in October. In her review of Prouty's biography, Robertson suggests that "Gascoigne's interest in hunting seems to have escaped Mr Prouty's notice", *MLR*, 38 (1943), p. 139.

² Charles and Ruth Prouty, "George Gascoigne, *The Noble Arte of Venerie* and Queen Elizabeth at Kenilworth", in *Joseph Quincy Adams Memorial Studies*, ed. James G. McManaway, *et al.* (Washington: Folger Shakespeare Library, 1948), pp. 639-64.

³ Charles and Ruth Prouty, *ibid.*, p. 652.

⁴ E.K. Chambers, *ibid.*, p. 126.

translations as, being no linguist, I am simply not qualified to comment on them. I have resisted the temptation to dwell on the experimentation, the literary "firsts", but analyse instead the model of himself that Gascoigne has successfully left to posterity when his contemporaries clearly were not convinced. This centres specifically on his cultivation of a number of poetic personae by which he sought to manoeuvre within the literary marketplace.

My first chapter is concerned with Gascoigne's formative years at Gray's Inn, a period of some fourteen years to 1569, during which he wrote most of the material which was collated in his first publication in 1572/3, *A Hundreth Sundrie Flowres*. The remainder of his life, just seven years, includes a publishing career which lasted only three years. A biographical structure is retained, despite the overarching difficulty with such an approach, which lies in seeing through (piecing together) the many layers of fiction with which Gascoigne habitually elaborated his several representations of himself. My chronological structure exposes the simple fact that Gascoigne's self-presentation as repentant prodigal in the *Posies* and *Glasse of Government* in 1575 co-existed with his more courtly self-presentations. For 1575 was also the year of Gascoigne's woodland characters: the woodman of the *Noble Arte*; the Savage Man, Audax, and Sylvanus at Kenilworth; and perhaps Hemetes the Heremyte at Woodstock. The structure is necessarily uneven: the early work (apart from the *Complaynt of Phylomene*) probably only survives because it was published in *A Hundreth*, so that the work of approximately fourteen years is discussed in Chapter I. The three subsequent chapters

each cover the literary activities of a single year, which I hope will emphasize the uneven shape of Gascoigne's career in print. My main theme, Gascoigne's self-presentation, explores how he exploits the new possibilities offered by print to manipulate the construction of a number of versions of "George Gascoigne" in his work. More than simply a proliferation of poetic personae, this shifting mode of self-presentation is characterized by courtly evasions. As he notes in a 1575 marginal note to "Dan Bartholmews dolorous discourses": "These thinges are mistical and not to bee understoode but by Thauthour him selfe" (p. 341).¹

Such a reconsideration of Gascoigne's literary career challenges his inclusion in the so-called "Drab" school of poetry, which set the terms for discussion of his work at mid-century. This line of discussion was unwittingly opened by Ivor Winters in an article in *Poetry* (1939), a revised version of which was published in his book *Forms of Discovery*.² Winters' view celebrates the apparent earnestness and directness of Gascoigne's moral assertions, and groups him with Wyatt, Googe, Raleigh, and others as "practitioners of the plain style", which Winters links with the native English tradition of poetry.³ But C.S. Lewis developed this idea of a discernible contrast between the plain and petrarchan styles to distinguish between "Drab" moralistic

¹ Aptly noted by G.W. Pigman III in his edition, *George Gascoigne, A Hundreth Sundrie Flowres* (Oxford University Press, forthcoming), Textual Introduction, p. 16. Hereafter Pigman.

² Ivor Winters, "The Sixteenth-Century Lyric in England: A Critical and Historical Reinterpretation", in *Poetry*, 53 (1939), 258-72, 320-35, and *Poetry*, 54 (1940), 350-51; reprinted in *Elizabethan Poetry: Modern Essays in Criticism*, ed. Paul Alpers (New York: Oxford University Press, 1967), pp. 93-125; and reprinted with additions in Ivor Winters, *Forms of Discovery* (Chicago: Alan Swallow, 1967), pp. 1-52.

³ Winters, *Forms of Discovery*, p. 27.

writers (Churchyard, Raleigh) and the "Golden" courtly poets (Sidney, Spenser), in *English Literature in the Sixteenth Century*.¹ Although Lewis expressly set Gascoigne apart from the "Drab Age", calling him a "transitional poet", this notion of "drabness" became the definitive classification of Gascoigne's work: both Winters and Lewis, influenced by Prouty's biography, had thoroughly accepted the model of moral reformer, founded on the sequence of moralistic titles Gascoigne produced during 1575 and 1576.

The acceptance of Lewis's view was far from universal: in 1962, Winters offered a stinging critique of Lewis's hypothesis, in which he strongly objects to "reducing literature to schools", rejecting the perceived superiority (in Lewis's view) of the petrarchans.² Winters did not, however, succeed in rescuing Gascoigne from the Slough of Drabness: John Buxton commended his "directness of expression" and "preference for simplicity and brevity", and noted "Gascoigne's usual disarming candour", views which were echoed influentially the same year by Douglas L. Peterson.³ Throughout the latter part of the 1960s, Gascoigne continued to feature in histories of English versification as one of the chief exemplars of a native school of alliterative, plain-style,

¹ C.S. Lewis, *English Literature in the Sixteenth Century, Excluding Drama* (Oxford, 1954, reprinted 1973), the third volume of the *Oxford History of English Literature*. "What sets him at times above the Drab poets and brings him to the verge of the Golden quality is his grace and melody. He is only a minor poet ... If he had followed, instead of anticipating (however faintly) the Golden poets, he would be nothing. As things are, he is like the first streak of dawn" (p. 270).

² Winters' case against Lewis is "English Literature in the Sixteenth Century", appended to *The Function of Criticism: problems and exercises* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1962, copyrighted 1957), pp. 190-200.

³ John Buxton, *A Tradition of Poetry* (London: Macmillan, 1967), pp. 47, 48, 50; Douglas L. Peterson, *The English Lyric from Wyatt to Donne. A History of the Plain and Eloquent Styles* (Princeton University Press, 1967), pp. 120-63.

moralizing poetry. In 1969 Fred Inglis grouped Gascoigne with the Lord Vaux, Nashe, and Raleigh, as the "Plain Blunt Men", misreading (for example) the jokey, flippant "Lullaby of a Lover" as Christian Stoicism and praising it for its "sternness of feature".¹ Quoting part of the "Lullaby", Inglis notes that Gascoigne is not "always as sombre as these two stanzas ... though he mostly offers cold comfort".² Hunter followed this with a paper at the English Institute but the debate seems to have passed.³ Observations like these surely attest to the success of Gascoigne's adopted personae: his moralistic voices are plausible, so that his "directness" of expression is ultimately as persuasive as his indirection.⁴

The received model of Gascoigne, the prodigal who undergoes a moral reformation as a result of his experiences in the wars in Holland, originates with the prefatory material he added to the revised edition of *A Hundreth*, the *Posies*. There, one of the first claims he makes is that "whatsoever my youth hath seemed unto the graver sorte, I woulde bee verie loth nowe in my middle age to deserve reproch ..." (p. 359).⁵ One of the difficulties posed by the extreme brevity of Gascoigne's publishing career is that it is

¹ Fred Inglis, *The Elizabethan Poets: The Making of English Poetry from Wyatt to Ben Jonson* (London: Evans, 1969), p. 50.

² Inglis, *ibid.*, p. 51.

³ G.K. Hunter, "Drab and Golden Lyrics of the Renaissance", in *Forms of Lyric: Selected Papers of the English Institute*, ed. Reuben A. Brewer (New York: Columbia University Press, 1970), pp. 1-18.

⁴ Richard Lanham argues that the plain style is as much a style as the ornate, and may be seen as being *less* candid, in *The Motives of Eloquence*, but Roger Pooley warns against being too dismissive: "Gascoigne's poetry can be said to have an honest plainness, not only because he makes us aware that he is choosing it out of the gamut of styles, and playing it off against them, but also because he brings out the relationship between author and audience which is one of the main components of rhetorical awareness", in "George Gascoigne: An Advocacy", *Poetry Nation Review*, 10 (1983), 57-8, p. 57.

⁵ All page numbers in the text refer to the Pigman edition of *A Hundreth* unless otherwise marked.

easy to designate "later" works as though they are of a different period, when in fact they are rarely separated by more than a couple of years, but this is encouraged by Gascoigne's representations. Having established the paradigm of the older and wiser man, he offers himself as a negative example: "So even in the worst sorte, I might yet serve as a myrrour for unbrydled youth, to avoyde those perilles which I had passed" (p. 361). This "Gascoigne", the reformed prodigal, was entirely accepted by Prouty and has been followed in subsequent accounts of his career.¹

This model was further developed by Richard Helgerson in *The Elizabethan Prodigals*, where Gascoigne is presented as "both the first Elizabethan prodigal and one of the most uncompromising of the mid-century enemies of prodigality".² Helgerson builds his model on Gascoigne's biography, including the rash of ostensibly moral works which appeared in and after 1575, but then narrows his focus to the *Glasse of Government*, a work which (unsurprisingly) fits his discussion of the writer as repentant prodigal. Examining the relationship between fact and fiction in Gascoigne's work, he argues that because of certain internal consistencies in the poems (and particularly the use of the sobriquet "The Greene Knight" in both "The Fruite of Fetters" and "*Dulce bellum inexpertis*"), "we make the assumption, which most "naive" readers would have made

¹ For example, A.W. Lyle suggests that: "The main problem facing the modern reader of George Gascoigne is how to reconcile the lighthearted, erotic, courtly verse of "the Green Knight" (as he called himself in his youth [i.e. 1574/5]) with the grimly moralistic sermonising of the older man [1576]", in James Vinson, ed., *The Renaissance Excluding Drama* [Great Writers' Student Library] (London: Macmillan, 1983), p. 83.

² Richard Helgerson, *The Elizabethan Prodigals* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976), p. 57.

anyway and with much less fuss, that when the "Author" speaks in the first person singular, he speaks for Gascoigne because he *is* Gascoigne."¹ However, he adds the caveat that such "hints" are "perhaps insufficient to allow a simple equation of Gascoigne with his characters or a direct attribution of their experience to him".²

Helgerson sees the later work (meaning work from the following two years) as a "recital of precept" which "proves his submission to the severest conventional wisdom".³ He reads Gascoigne's repentance as a hardening of the paradigm of the reformed prodigal and talks of the "archetypal design" of his life, without setting these authorial representations against those which do not fit the pattern. He notes the irony of gaining preferment by expressing the sentiments of *contemptus mundi*, but neglects Gascoigne's other activities, and accepts the moral works at face value. Helgerson does not recognize that Gascoigne may simply have been appropriating, in a quite pragmatic way, an available model which could serve to rehabilitate him by generating a plausible and acceptable public persona. This is not to assert that his moralizing was necessarily insincere; even Elizabeth, sincere Protestant though she was, used the Church in ways which were politically expedient. It is impossible not to conclude that although he finds sufficient matter in the autobiographical utterances in the prefaces and the *Glasse of Government* to support the model of the repentant prodigal, Helgerson might have found sufficient evidence elsewhere in his work to include Gascoigne in his subsequent

¹ Helgerson, *ibid.*, p. 45.

² Helgerson, *ibid.*, p. 46.

³ Helgerson, *ibid.*, pp. 47-49, *et passim*.

volume, *Self-Crowned Laureates*.¹

Only two critics have sought in print to challenge the received view of Gascoigne as a repentant prodigal. In the most recent selected edition of his work, *The Green Knight* (1982), Roger Pooley follows Prouty for the biography and accepts Gascoigne's repentance as sincere. But he argues that, in the work as a whole, "Gascoigne's most enduring character is "Gascoigne", not to be confused with the historical figure who may often be observed sending him up from an ironic distance", and so draws attention to the way he "tries out different roles".² The theatrical metaphor is telling, and is perhaps the most helpful model for Gascoigne's literary career, which produced so many "Gascoignes" that they comprise a full cast of characters. More recently, an article by Richard C. McCoy attempts to prove a diminution of poetic autonomy as the poet moved closer to royal patronage.³ McCoy argues that Gascoigne's reformation thus illuminates "the contradictions of that peculiar process which Stephen Greenblatt has called "Renaissance self-fashioning" ... Gascoigne's career is fascinating because we can see him proceed from autonomously fashioning himself to being formed inescapably by a role which had once been provisional".⁴ (This assumption that the role overtook the player is not persuasive; Pooley's sense of Gascoigne as ironic observer of his own role-playing is, however, convincing.) McCoy argues that the revision of the

¹ Richard Helgerson, *Self-Crowned Laureates* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983).

² Roger Pooley, ed., *George Gascoigne, The Green Knight. Selected Poetry and Prose* (Manchester: Carcanet New Press, 1982), p. 22.

³ Richard C. McCoy, "Gascoigne's *Poemata Castrata*: The Wages of Courtly Success", *Criticism*, 27 (1985), 29-55.

⁴ McCoy, *ibid.*, pp. 32-33.

Posies was inadequate and dates Gascoigne's effectual reformation from the banning of that volume in 1576.¹ Although McCoy does, then, subscribe to the view of Gascoigne as repentant prodigal, he challenges the received version of his career by dating his apparent reformation in 1576.² Finally, the inconsistencies in the received version were noted by R.W. Maslen, who observed that "the first part of his career keeps threatening to undermine the gestures of penitence in his later works ... his reformation would seem to be a fragile one".³

It is clear that a more copious model is required for Gascoigne's career, which can accommodate the variety of personae he presents and the many instances where Gascoigne is clearly working to his own agenda or offering his own apologia. It is the very pragmatism of this agenda, if it may be so called, which has made it so difficult to track the irregular development of Gascoigne's representations of himself, but which - above all - accounts for the inconsistencies in the self-presentation he most frequently proposes under his own name in print, the repentant prodigal. This model was one which Gascoigne succeeded in leaving to posterity even though, as I shall suggest, his contemporaries were not convinced. Such a reinterpretation of his career demands a redefinition of the reformed prodigal he offered his readers in the prefaces to the *Posies*

¹ "Elizabethan orthodoxy required a more abject surrender, and Gascoigne complied with such works as *The Droomme of Doomesday*. For the remainder of his short literary career, he cranked out works which were either grimly moralistic or insipidly occasional," McCoy, *ibid.*, p. 32.

² McCoy identifies its use in such early poems as the Gray's Inn sequence "Gascoignes Memories", which dates from 1564-5, and points out that "a turbulent decade of reckless exploits still awaited the young man who claimed he had "determined to abandone all vaine delights", *ibid.*, p. 32.

³ R.W. Maslen, "A Study of the Works of John Lyly and his Predecessors in the Context of Changing Attitudes to Fiction in Elizabethan England", Oxford D.Phil. Thesis, 1990, p. 165.

in 1575.¹ The "Drab" model, by excluding its more courtly aspects, does not allow for the more playful and ambiguous aspects to Gascoigne's self-presentation. It is not that the model of the reformed prodigal is wrong, but that it is only one of his poetic personae, which include the Greene Knight, the gardener, "*Gascoigne the Satyricall writer*", Phylomene, "*Petrarks heire*", Bartholmew, Sylvanus, Dewe Desert, the Savage Man, and others, as well as the "Sundrie Gentlemen" of *A Hundreth*. These comprise a full repertoire of self-presentations, many of which have much in common with the historical Gascoigne and some of which bear his name. Each may be seen to represent a gambit, a manoeuvre to try to attract the attention or favour of a potential patron, just as the model of the reformed prodigal serves the same agenda by a parallel route.

The interplay of playfulness and seriousness in such role-playing in the public life of the period is now well accepted.² Most pertinent to this study are Stephen Greenblatt's analyses of the careers of More, Wyatt, and Spenser in *Renaissance Self-Fashioning* and Lisa Jardine's excellent interrogation of Erasmus's manipulation of print in *Erasmus, Man of Letters*.³ Jardine examines the prodigious output of Erasmus in light of the letters and prefatory matter which show that he habitually lived in printers' and

¹ See Chapter II, section i.

² See esp. M.A. Screech's analysis of Erasmus's *Moriae Encomium*, in *Ecstasy and the Praise of Folly* (London: Gerald Duckworth, 1980); the text is available as *The Praise of Folly*, tr. Betty Radice (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1971, rev. ed. 1993).

³ Stephen Greenblatt, *Renaissance Self-Fashioning from More to Shakespeare* (Chicago and London: Chicago University Press, 1980), pp. 115-156, *et passim*; Lisa Jardine, *Erasmus, Man of Letters. The Creation of Charisma in Print* (Princeton, N.J., and Chichester: Princeton University Press, 1993).

friends' houses and finds that the image of the lone scholar is a self-presentation devised by Erasmus particularly with a view to posterity and his contemporary public image.¹ Jardine shows how the portraits of Erasmus which accompany some of the works were also carefully devised to show a heroic, monumental version of the scholar working alone in his study.² This is especially relevant to Gascoigne, who produced a number of self-portraits both in print and manuscript, just as he manipulated his textual identity. Indeed, in an age when personal identity was largely constituted by external considerations - birth, religion, patronage - Gascoigne is notable for the variety of identities he adopts. This is not an investigation of any psychological sense of interiority, *pace* Anne Ferry; the very notion of such pervasive role-playing sustains a distinction between the role and individual inwardness.³ But the fudging of the boundaries between fact and fiction in the period has complicated analytical issues such as the distinction between history and story, news and exemplum, autobiography and fiction, to the extent that Gascoigne's prose fiction, *Master F.J.*, can be set beside Thomas Whythorne's *Autobiography*, which uses similar devices and also mixes poems with a prose commentary.⁴

¹ Jardine, *ibid.*, pp. 175-89.

² "I am suggesting that Erasmus ... provides the brief for the painter in all its detail", Jardine, *ibid.*, p. 47.

³ Anne Ferry, *The "Inward" Language: Sonnets of Wyatt, Sidney, Shakespeare, Donne* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1983), esp. pp. 1-30, where she defines the late sixteenth-century shift in the sense of self.

⁴ See Chapter I, section ii, for a discussion of critics' suspicions that *Master F.J.* is autobiographical. For Whythorne see *Thomas Whythorne, The Autobiography*, ed. James M. Osborn (Oxford, 1961); Rudolph Gottfried, "Autobiography and Art: An Elizabethan Borderland", in *Literary Criticism and Historical Understanding: Selected Papers from the English Institute* (London, 1967), pp. 109-34; and David R. Shore, "Whythorne's *Autobiography* and the Genesis of Gascoigne's *Master F.J.*", *JMRS*, 12 (1982), 159-78.

The range of self-representations in *A Hundreth Sundrie Flowres* reveals an uncontrolled proliferation of poetic personae throughout the 1560s. The move into print in 1572/3 attempts to impose some degree of control by connecting the miscellaneous personae into a larger, over-arching fiction of how the volume came to be published. But it was not until 1575 and the appearance of *The Posies of George Gascoigne Esquire* that any unified (author-itative) poetic identity was proposed.¹ It is no coincidence that the "George Gascoigne" who appears there is a fully-fledged performance of the repentant prodigal, or that this was the "Gascoigne" who appeared in all the moralistic titles which followed.

That Gascoigne was not a model citizen is apparent from the many extant legal records which mention him. He was evidently guilty of much misdealing as regards money and property, including taking advantage of a rather simple-witted gentleman, and attempting to defraud his own stepchildren of their inheritances.² He may have been guilty of worse transgressions; he was certainly also accused of non-fiscal offences. The most intriguing evidence of this is the well-known defamatory letter sent to the Privy Council apparently in 1572, "Against George Gascoyne y^t he ought not to be Burges".³ It is clear from the terms of the letter that Gascoigne had been returned as burgess for Midhurst in Sussex, a fact which Prouty ascribes to the patronage of Lord Montague, who shared the gift of Midhurst with Sir John Peachy, as a reward for

¹ See Chapter II, section i.

² Prouty describes his relations with John Gostwick (pp. 40-3) and with his stepchildren, the Bretons (p. 96).

³ PRO S.P. Dom. 12/86, 59.

to the right honorable the Lordes of the Privy
Council



extreme objections why George Gascoyne ought not to be admitted
to be a Burgesse of the Parliament

First he is indebted to a greates number of persons for the w^{ch} cause he hath
absented him selfe from the Citie and hath lurked at villages nere unto the
same Citie by a longe time, and nowe beinge returned for a Burgesse of
Middelsexe in the Countie of Essex dothe shew his face openly in the
despite of all his Indictures.

Item he is a defamed person and noted as well for many Lances as for other
great Injuries

Item he is a Common Rymer and a deviser of Landroves & Rasquilles
agaynst the Kings persons of greates callinge

Item he is a notorious Infiamer and especially noted to be bothe a
wicked and godlesse person

For the w^{ch} causes he is not meete to be of the Downfall of Eng^{land}
Countie of Parliament

Figure 1. Anonymous letter to the Privy Council, "Agaynst George Gascoyne y^e he ought not to be Burges" (1572)

writing a masque for his heir's wedding.¹ Charging him with a diversity of offences from indebtedness to manslaughter and "other greate Cryemes", of being "a Common Rymer" and "a notorious Ruffiane", "a spie, an Athiest [*sic*] and godlesse person", it seems to have been written by his creditors. The leading accusation is of his indebtedness and it protests at Gascoigne's parliamentary immunity, on the strength of which he has reappeared in London and "doethe shewe his face openlie in the despite of all his creditors" (see Figure 1).

Although it is undated, commentators have accepted the decision by the PRO to collate the defamatory note under the date May 1572, as Prouty admits, "without a shred of authority".² Prouty argues that Gascoigne was elected in a by-election in the winter of 1572-3 following his contribution to Montague's heirs' wedding in the autumn of 1572. The choice of candidates in the Commons for the Parliaments of 1571 and 1572 was an especially sensitive issue in the aftermath of the Northern Revolt.³ There is some evidence that the Privy Council was inclined to direct the wielding of parliamentary patronage more closely than usual: the first Lord Howard, lord lieutenant of Surrey, was in 1572 instructed to ensure a "good choice of knights and burgesses" for the county and each of the important magnates was allocated an area of electoral responsibility.⁴ The need for uncontroversial candidates would have meant that the simple device of a defamatory letter would probably be sufficient cause to prompt

¹ Prouty, pp. 61ff.

² Prouty, p. 61.

³ Christopher Haigh, *Elizabeth I* [Profiles in Power] (London and New York: Longman, 1988), p. 60.

⁴ HPT i 252.

Gascoigne's sponsors to change their minds and find a safer substitute.

Despite his doubts about the date of the letter, Prouty accepted the given date of May 1572 and used it as the foundation for his theory that Gascoigne's departure for Holland was prompted by his fears of an investigation by the Privy Council.¹ This argument is greatly flawed by lack of evidence to support it. Not only is there no evidence to support the date, there is no evidence that Gascoigne was at any point threatened with such an investigation.² Moreover, his movements during the spring of 1572 are obscured by the veil of fiction with which Gascoigne concealed himself, his habitual blurring of art and reality. The strategy seems to have succeeded. The years 1572/3-3/4 form a crux in the biography. By Prouty's own argument, the given date of May 1572 is inherently flawed: if Gascoigne left England on 19 March and was away for most of the following two years, it could hardly belong to May, especially as it describes him openly "showing his face" around London. It is also not consistent to argue that the letter defaming him belongs to May; that the masque for which the election as burgess was supposedly a reward was not until the autumn; and that the election itself was not until the winter of 1572-3. But Prouty is not alone in falling foul of Gascoigne's obfuscations during this two-year period. A.B. Feldman conflates "*Dulce bellum inexpertis*" and "Gascoignes voyage into Holland. Ann. 1572", seemingly unaware that

¹ C.T. Prouty, "Gascoigne in the Low Countries and the Publication of *A Hundreth Sundrie Flowres*," *RES*, 12 (1936), 139-46; pp. 65ff in the biography.

² Prouty admits that the matter (if there was one) was not taken much further or it would appear somewhere in the parliamentary records, p. 65.

he is discussing two (and probably three) separate tours of military service.¹ Indeed, Gascoigne's movements during 1572/3 have remained mysterious, attracting attention because of the printing of *A Hundreth* (his first known publication) apparently during his absence in Holland that year.

That Gascoigne's intentions for *A Hundreth* changed during the printing of the book is the one factor which is universally accepted. One possible revision of Prouty's account of Gascoigne's movements this year has been suggested by Adrian Weiss in his close analysis of the bibliographical evidence the volume provides.² By reconstructing Henry Bynneman's printing schedule for the year Weiss postulates a timetable for the printing of *A Hundreth* which spans January to August and includes the sharing of the task with Henry Middleton.³ Weiss has Gascoigne actually composing *Master F.J.* and the "Devises of Sundrie Gentlemen" from late January to the middle of May.⁴ But he argues that: "Gascoigne neither was involved in the printing of the book nor saw any printed sheets. Thus Gascoigne's absence during the entire printing operation is the key to perceiving the relationships between the sharing situation of the printing and the bibliographical facts produced by the piecemeal evolution of the texts and the modifications in Gascoigne's overall plan for the book during the eight-month period."⁵

¹ A.B. Feldman, "English Playwrights in the Netherland Wars", *N&Q*, 198 (1952), 530-33; "Playwrights and Pike-Trailers in the Low Countries", *N&Q*, 198 (1953), 184-87.

² Adrian Weiss, "Shared Printing, Printer's Copy, and the Text(s) of Gascoigne's *A Hundreth Sundrie Flowres*", *Studies in Bibliography*, 45 (1992), 71-104. Hereafter Weiss.

³ Hazlitt first suggested the possibility of shared printing, in *The Complete Poems of George Gascoigne* (London: Roxburghe Library, 1869-70, 2 vols), vol. I, pp. vii-viii.

⁴ Weiss, p. 91.

⁵ Weiss, p. 98.

Weiss agrees with Prouty that Gascoigne returned to England in the autumn, but argues that there is "printing and textual evidence" against his departure for Holland on 19 March. He believes that this is a false date, given and emphasized by Gascoigne to conceal his escape to the continent, suggesting that Gascoigne left soon after Dutch ports were reopened to English shipping in January, and goes on to argue that: "Flight to avoid investigation and possible prosecution is a *prima facie* admission of guilt ... The published date would serve as testimony that he had been in England all the while even though the Privy Council's agents could not find him ... In the final analysis, this date is a fiction like everything else in *A Hundreth* ... the printing and textual evidence can be trusted to show that Gascoigne was gone before printing began in late January."¹

Revising both positions, Gascoigne's most recent editor, G. W. Pigman III, argues that Weiss is mistaken in accepting Prouty's theory of a flight to Holland, which he argues "is the real fiction".² Furthermore, he separates the two issues of the defamatory letter and Gascoigne's departure for Holland, arguing that "in all likelihood, the anonymous letter did not have anything to do with Gascoigne's return to Holland in March 1573".³ Pigman goes on to cite evidence from the *History of Parliament Transcripts* to support his view that "this letter, which asserts that Gascoigne was elected a burgess for Midhurst, must have been written before the opening of Parliament, 8 May 1572".⁴ Indeed, although the dates of the corroborative documents are similarly tenuous, the

¹ Weiss, p. 97n.

² Pigman, p. 12.

³ Pigman, p. 13.

⁴ Pigman, p. 12.

letter does seem to be tied to the year 1572 by circumstantial evidence. There are extant two Crown Office lists of Members of Parliament, one tentatively dated to the week before the opening of the session, on which Gascoigne's name does not appear. On the second, probably compiled at approximately the same time, his name has been crossed out and Thomas Holcroft's inserted.¹ The fact that 1572 was the only year in which Holcroft sat as burgess for Midhurst is the only incontrovertible aspect of the dating of the letter; it certainly belongs to 1572, though not necessarily to the month of May.²

Where Prouty believed that Gascoigne read proof until his departure for Holland in March, and Weiss argues that he left in January and saw no proof, Pigman suggests that Gascoigne might have read some early proof. His strongest evidence is one almost certainly authorial correction in *Supposes*, which occurs early in the schedule determined by Weiss, so that he tacitly accepts that Gascoigne was present in London in January to correct proof for one of the first items off the press.³ Moreover, he offers new evidence of Gascoigne's movements in the spring of 1572/3. He notes that Gascoigne is recorded as having been present at the funeral of Reginald Grey, Earl of Kent, which took place at St Giles' in Cripplegate on 17 April 1573.⁴ Pigman suggests that Gascoigne did leave on 19 March but returned in time for the funeral, and adds that "for all we know he might have personally delivered "Gascoignes Voyage into

¹ Pigman, pp. 12-13; HPT i 261.

² Parliament sat from 8 May to 3 June 1572. It was not reconvened until 8 February 1574/5.

³ Pigman, p. 13.

⁴ Pigman, p. 13. See also HTP ii 224.

Holland" to the printer".¹ Accepting Gascoigne's own statement in that poem that he left in March, Pigman postulates a rapid return in April for the funeral, and suggests that "Gascoigne may have assisted at the printing of the first part of his book, but he was certainly out of the picture towards the end of the production, to judge from the confusion surrounding the last work in the collection [*Dan Bartholmew of Bathe*]"²

To summarize, Weiss argues that Gascoigne was out of the country from January, dates the publication of *A Hundreth* in August, and accepts Prouty's theory of Gascoigne's return to England in the autumn of 1572. Pigman argues for Gascoigne's departure for Holland on 19 March, but postulates a rapid return for the Earl of Kent's funeral in April. He agrees with Gascoigne's absence from London in the summer of that year and implies that, if he did return in the autumn, it was after the book had been printed. None of these arguments really allows for Gascoigne's presence around London in May 1572/3 for long enough that his creditors would think it worthwhile to protest to the Privy Council about his liberty. There is, however, further evidence that Gascoigne was indeed in London again after the Earl of Kent's funeral. An entry in Thomas Cromwell's diary dated 9 June that year notes that Gascoigne was "brought in" to the House of Commons to give evidence in a debate concerning his father.³ (This also confirms that Gascoigne did not take his seat in the Commons.) It seems clear that Gascoigne was present in England for more of the year than has been supposed, but

¹ Pigman, p. 13.

² Pigman, p. 14.

³ Trinity, Dublin, *Thos. Cromwell's Journal*, ff. 59-60; cited in HPT i 261.

that he was trying to give the impression of a prolonged absence during the summer of 1572. He may have been absent from London for most of the printing of *A Hundreth*, but without new evidence this must remain "Another misterie".

Furthermore, as Pigman suggests, Gascoigne's nomination as burgess was not probably connected with his (minor) contribution to the celebrations of Lord Montague's heir's wedding in November 1572/3, as Prouty argued. It was not commissioned by Montague, as the title is designed to suggest, but by a group of young bloods who required a device to complement (or justify) their new Venetian costumes. Not only was this a much more impromptu contribution than Prouty supposed; after 1566, when Members had to take the oath of Supremacy, Montagu was, it seems, far less interested in obtaining the election of his own nominees.¹ Although there were exceptions to this, in 1571 and 1584 onwards, his involvement in Gascoigne's nomination may have been overstated.²

Although the new evidence seems to support the given date of the defamatory note, this must remain open to question. It is tied with some certainty to 1572/3 because it describes Gascoigne as having been elected as burgess, and the only corroborative evidence for this is the Crown Office list which carries his name, deleted in favour of Thomas Holcroft. It is of interest especially because it generates an unauthorized

¹ For Montague's loss of interest in nominees for Midhurst see HPT i 260.

² HPT claims that he "was nominated, almost certainly by Lord Montague, with whom he is known to have had later contacts", though it fails to note what these might be (HPT i 261). Pigman notes his attendance at the wedding of another Montague child in 1566, p. 12n.

version of Gascoigne. It is a highly motivated text, and as unlikely to be objective as any of his own representations. Its leading and most elaborate accusation is of his indebtedness; this is no help in dating anything after 1561, but strongly suggests that these anonymous detractors were probably his creditors, as Prouty believed.¹ The note against Gascoigne bears a generic resemblance to that more notorious accusation against Christopher Marlowe, the Baines Note, delivered either three days before or three days after his murder in 1593.² Charles Nicholl situates this document in context of Marlowe's covert government employment and his connections with unsavoury characters of the very type Gascoigne is associated with (by his own admission).³ Of the note against Marlowe, Nicholl points out that: "this document ... tells us nothing for certain except that Richard Baines wished to accuse Marlowe of heresy. That is all we can be sure of: its motive, which is to incriminate ... One has to take the "Note" more as performance than as a text. It is neither a lie, nor the truth, but a carefully tailored representation ...".⁴

The note against Gascoigne is a single sheet 11.8" x 17", folded once and then twice before it was endorsed. It may have been carried, folded, for some time, since it is rubbed on two sides. Its accusations are designed to be sensational; its leading charge

¹ Prouty, p. 63.

² Charles Nicholl, *The Reckoning. The Murder of Christopher Marlowe* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1992), pp. 46-7.

³ In "Gascoignes Voyage into Holland" he claims friendship with Roland Yorke and William Herle is identified as another chief companion in a marginal note added in 1575; see pp. 324, 328. Also Prouty, pp. 63-4.

⁴ Nicholl, *ibid.*, pp. 310-11.

of indebtedness is considerably embroidered by what may or may not have been scurrilous rumour. But it is in the light of Gascoigne's own later performance as "*Tam Marti quam Mercurio*" that I want to look briefly at two of the charges made against him, one concerned with his identity as writer and one with his concealed identity as intelligencer.

"Item he is a Common Rymer and a deviser of slaunderous Pasquillis against divers personnes of greate callinge." If the note does indeed belong to 1572, this charge has to refer to works circulated in manuscript. It is possible that Gascoigne's early work, as collated in *A Hundreth*, is not complete, and that some pieces may have been lost because they were in manuscript.¹ Or there is a possibility that *A Hundreth* was not his first venture into print at all, but that antecedent anonymous work has simply not been attributed. As a general rule, however, Gascoigne's *oeuvre* (including the *Noble Arte*) is well established, and corroborated by George Whetstone's elegy.² It is perhaps debatable whether works circulated in manuscript would represent a serious problem for "divers personnes of greate callinge", but the curious aspect of this charge lies in the fact that his creditors could know about works with such restricted circulation. This may suggest other enemies. Of all his works, possibly the most likely candidate in terms of its potential for slander is *Master F.J.*, although it is Gascoigne himself who

¹ It is plain that Gascoigne would have had the early version of *The Complaynt of Phylomene* available for printing with the rest of his earlier works in *A Hundreth*, if he had so chosen. See Chapter III, section ii.

² See George Whetstone, "A Remembraunce of the well employed Life, and godly end of George Gascoigne Esquire" (1577), in Edward Arber, ed., *George Gascoigne's The Steele Glas, &c. 1576* [English Reprints] (London: Alex Murray, 1868), pp. 15-29.

signals it as contentious in the prefatory letters to the *Posies*.¹ By Adrian Weiss's schedule, this was in process of composition in the spring of this year, so the response may have been immediate - or, to conspiracy theorists, pre-emptive.² In 1575, it is this work which Gascoigne singles out for especially defiant apology. But it seems improbable that if a manuscript version of *Master F.J.* circulated and caused offence he would be suffered to publish it subsequently, in two versions.³

The second of these two charges addresses one aspect of the "Tam Marti" part of Gascoigne's activities: he is accused of spying, in which Prouty argues he only became active after his departure for Holland with William Herle and Rowland Yorke on 19 March that year.⁴ Indeed, Gascoigne's friendship with these two is the main evidence to support the idea that he was involved with Walsingham in such a role. Clearly he was later, in 1576, but Prouty only admits that he "may have had some understanding with Walsingham" in the summer of 1572/3.⁵ But it is entirely possible that Gascoigne was involved in some sort of intelligence operation after his return to Holland on 19 March, on the evidence Prouty gathers. There is an intriguing gap in Gascoigne's movements, since although he was ahead of the main body of English soldiers (who arrived a few days before 25 May), "we know nothing of his whereabouts until the siege of Ramykins

¹ See Chapter II, section i.

² Weiss does, however, also date the "Devises" as being composed in this year, when many of them belong to the 1560s.

³ See esp. Paul Salzman, *An Anthology of Elizabethan Prose Fiction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987), p. xiii, and my Chapter II, section i.

⁴ Prouty identifies these two as "Ruffians" and Gascoigne acquires this identity by association, pp. 63-4.

⁵ Prouty, pp. 64-5.

at the beginning of August 1573".¹ He was openly suspected of espionage in Delft in 1573, when he received a letter from a certain lady at the Hague, as he describes in "*Dulce bellum inexpertis*".² Interestingly, the story Gascoigne gives to justify this is that he had given her his portrait, which she was returning. Her letter was sent after the Hague had been taken by the Spanish on 30 October; their military success also threatened Delft (now under siege) and Leyden. It remains a possibility that he was acting as a double-agent.³ It would have been especially audacious to show the letter to Orange as he did, but Gascoigne evidently had reasons (or orders) to stay put. He had refused the chance to escape Delft by boat:

I could not leave that Prince in such distresse,

Which cared for me and yet the cause much lesse (p. 422)

He may have had a brief to observe Orange, just as we know he was sent to observe French movements in Paris in 1576.⁴ On that occasion, Gascoigne managed to leave a besieged Antwerp and return to London without further adventures.

Gascoigne was again openly suspected of double-dealing when he and his fellow captain, Sheffield, were held captive for four months at Leyden but were conspicuously well-treated by the Spanish. He complains of being suspected by both the Dutch and the "common sorte" (their own men), in case they had been bribed to the Spanish cause,

¹ Pigman, p. 14n; see also Prouty, p. 65.

² Stanzas 122-28, pp. 422-23.

³ Curiously, he cites Spanish sources for some of his observations in Antwerp.

⁴ See Chapter III, section iii.

and of being resented by the Spanish because they were so well looked after.¹ Where all these facts are well known they have not been allowed to affect the profile of Gascoigne the moralist: his shadier activities during 1572/3 are grouped with his youthful mistakes. But given the nature of some of the gaps and inconsistencies in the established biography it is a strong possibility that Gascoigne's military activities were indeed complementary to more covert business. The charge of spying highlights further anomalies in Prouty's biography: if the note belongs to May 1572 either Gascoigne was present in London after his departure on 19 March, as Pigman's new evidence suggests, or he had been suspected of spying before that date, or his covert activities in Holland were somehow noted and sent back (in this unlikely form) to the Privy Council. It seems entirely possible that Gascoigne left London only briefly in March, or that he travelled between London and the Low Countries a number of times that summer; but he could have been active in some capacity on Walsingham's behalf at any time before this date. There is no way of knowing and the evidence Gascoigne offers is designed to confuse. "Another misterie."

The development of Gascoigne's literary career has to be seen against the background of this broader quest for employment and patronage: his literary activity is designed to display other skills, both practical ones like languages and memory, military experience, or hunting, and more courtly ones like singing and versifying, dancing, and possibly tilting. Above all, the mastery of courtly indirection which Gascoigne learned

¹ "*Dulce bellum inexpertis*", stanzas 183-84, pp. 433-34.

during his early association with the court and Gray's Inn served both the practical and literary aspects of his activities. None of his circumstances were unique, but his literary profile is distinctive. Although he did a number of translations, his range of literary activities was far wider than a Drant, a Studley, or a Neville. Like Churchyard, Googe, and others, Gascoigne was "*Tam Marti quam Mercurio*", which was not an automatic distinction: Turbervile's appointment as captain caused an outcry because he was perceived as being too bookish.¹ Gascoigne did not write for print like Churchyard, who produced an immense succession of works throughout his long career by which he hoped to gain a patron, though the series of moralistic titles in 1576 might be seen as a foray into that style of publishing. It was not, apparently, a very successful strategy, for Churchyard at least, who complained in 1588 that:

I have sixteene severall bookes printed presently to bee bought (albeit they are but trifles) dedicated in sundrie seasons to severall men off good and great credite, but to be plaine not one among them all, from the first day of my labour and studies, to this present yeere and hower, hath anie waye preferred my sutes, amended my state, or given mee anie countenance²

Although he may have overstated the case, Churchyard's career seems to have been no less precarious than Gascoigne's; he had already presented himself as a pedlar with a pack of old goods:

Wherefore, albeait I shall shewe but a bondell of drie devises, I must open my fardell, & make sale of sutche stuffe, as my hedde hath been stuffed withall ...³

¹ The Privy Council sent a letter to the Justices of the Peace in Dorsetshire protesting against Turbervile's selection; quoted by John E. Hankins, *The Life and Works of George Turbervile* [University of Kansas Publications; Humanistic Studies, 25] (Lawrence, Kansas: University of Kansas, 1940), p. 8.

² Epistle dedicatory to Raleigh, *A Sparke of Frendship and Warne Goodwill* (London: T. Orwin, 1588), sig. A3.

³ Thomas Churchyard, epistle dedicatory to the Earl of Surrey, in *A light Bondell of livly discourses called Churchyardes charge* (London: John Kyngston, 1580), sig. *3v-4.

Churchyard was eventually awarded a pension by Elizabeth, but not until 1593.¹ Nor was Gascoigne as well-connected as Barnabe Googe, whose status as ward of Burghley gave him an automatic entree to the highest levels of influence.² But Gascoigne did have an influential relative by marriage in Sir Nicholas Bacon. Rather like Turbervile, Gascoigne used his literary talents to display his talents and create opportunities, although Gascoigne took this further by deliberately cultivating an alternative, more serious, moralistic persona in the moralistic titles. In 1575, his quest coincided with Turbervile's on Barker's project to have the *Noble Arte of Venerie* and the *Booke of Faulconrie* translated.³ For all his enthusiasm for print, Gascoigne was not interested in a mass readership: print was simply another means (like works in manuscript or performance) to attract the attention of those in positions of influence. Perhaps like Dyer, Gascoigne was a willing participant in courtly entertainments, though he also had Churchyard's willingness to publish an account. This was primarily a quest for employment rather than literary fame, though he seems to have aimed at both. Gascoigne's consciousness of Chaucer and Petrarch in particular suggests his awareness of posterity, and serious literary ambition is evident in the two presentation manuscripts at least, but of necessity this was generally less his concern than the immediate present.

In the following chapters I try to look at all Gascoigne's works - in manuscript,

¹ See Chapter III, section i.

² See William E. Sheidley, *Barnabe Googe* [Twayne's English Authors Series] (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1981), pp. 18-26; and Judith M. Kennedy, ed., *Barnabe Googe. Eclogues, Epitaphs, and Sonnets* (Toronto, Buffalo, London: University of Toronto Press, 1989), pp. 3-17.

³ See Chapter II, section ii.

performance, and print - in light of what emerges of his literary career and especially his self-presentation. Because these are my main concerns I have not dwelt on his best-known works: the *Supposes*, widely discussed as a source for Shakespeare's *The Taming of the Shrew*; his prose fiction, *A Discourse of the Adventures passed by Master F.J.*, which has a notable position as one of the earliest prototypes in English for the novel; or "Certayne Notes of Instruction", which has an undisputed position as the first critical essay in English and is the only one of these which offers a clearly identifiable self-presentation.¹ Similarly, I do not discuss Gascoigne's best-known short poem, "Gascoignes Wodmanship", which is widely written on and has been discussed in terms of his self-presentation by Jonathan Crewe.² I follow a broadly chronological order so that to some extent a textual biography will emerge; this seems especially apt in this period as so much of the work is accompanied by autobiographical matter in the prefaces. But this should be seen as the vehicle for the creation of the "author", a textual identity which need not be identical with the historical author, despite having many characteristics in common with him.

Although there was only one agenda - Gascoigne's quest for preferment - the profile of the George Gascoigne which emerges in the printed work which bears his name is very different from the succession of more courtly personae (the Savage Man, Sylvanus,

¹ See Chapter II, section i.

² Jonathan Crewe, in *Trials of Authorship. Anterior Forms and Poetic Reconstruction from Wyatt to Shakespeare* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), pp. 118-39. Daniel Javitch also touches on this aspect of the poem in "The Impure Motives of Elizabethan Poetry", *Genre*, 15 (1992), 225-38, pp. 231ff.

"*Chi tropo abbracia*", "*Petrarks heire*") which emerges from the work in manuscript and performance. Ultimately, his wit and versatility succeeded in attracting the attention of the greatest patrons of the 1570s. At the time of his death, Gascoigne's career was in the ascendant.¹ He had proved himself useful to the most influential individuals in the country: to the Earl of Leicester as an *improvisatore* at Kenilworth and a cover for the publication of Sir Humfrey Gilbert's *Discourse of a Discovery*; to Burghley and Walsingham as an intelligencer in the Low Countries; and, most promising of all, he had made a persuasive bid at New Year to become Elizabeth's poet.

¹ See Chapter IV.

Chapter One. 1555-73: The Gray's Inn Years and the Move into Print.

(i) The Gray's Inn Years: Early Poems.

*"Beleeve me Lordings all, it is a Poetes parte,
To handle eche thing in his kinde, for therein lieth his arte"¹*

Gascoigne's connection with the Inns of Court provided him with both an entree to courtly circles and his first and most important literary forum. He was admitted to Gray's Inn in 1555.² None of Gascoigne's literary work survives in authorial manuscript, but many of the miscellaneous poems collected in *A Hundreth Sundrie Flowres* (1573) belong to the late 1550s and 1560s, and had almost certainly been circulated in manuscript in courtly and Inns of Court circles long before the decision was taken to print them.³ It is therefore necessary to use *A Hundreth* for texts of the miscellaneous early verse, which occur in the section described as the "Devises of Sundrie Gentlemen".⁴ Accordingly, the following discussion does not rely on the sequence in which these early poems were arranged for print.⁵ While this suggests the necessity of caution in making assumptions about the early verse, Gascoigne was not a

¹ "The opinion of the auctor himself after all these commendations", in the *Posies*, p. 385. All page references are to the Pigman edition.

² *Register*, fol. 502.

³ He refers to them as "suche Posies and rymes as I have used in my youth" in the *Posies*, p. 364. It is possible that some of the works were published as pamphlets before the collected edition of 1573, but if this was the case, no record has survived.

⁴ Most of these early poems were republished, under a new organization, in the 1575 edition, the *Posies*.

⁵ For this discussion, see Chapter I, section ii.

great reviser of his work, tending towards the mode of revision which may change the odd word rather than rewriting.¹

George Gascoigne, the elder son of minor gentry in rural Bedfordshire, came to Gray's Inn direct from Cambridge, where he claims to have been tutored by Stephen Nevykson, a noted advocate of the Reformed religion.² Although Gascoigne's birthdate has long been uncertain, recent evidence suggests a date of 1534, so that he would probably have been twenty-one years old when he was admitted to Gray's Inn.³ Gascoigne arrived in a London which had barely recovered from the exceptional turbulence of the preceding two years. Mary had survived both Wyatt's Rebellion in 1553 and the rebellion of the subsequent summer, but the fires at Smithfield were now at their most fierce.⁴ The young man arrived in an uneasy city with, presumably, his religious views in place and going against the mainstream. He represented Bedford Borough in the 1557-8 Parliament, whilst his father represented the county.⁵ As Prouty

¹ Nevertheless, even this modest style of revision can be significant; for example, with minimal changes he expunged the anti-Catholic sentiments from his "Councell given to Bartholmew Withipoll" (69) in the *Posies*. The third "P" which he warns against is changed from "Papistrie" to "piles and pockes" and the next ten lines are adjusted to suit the change. Gascoigne's revisions are clearly laid out in the Pigman edition; see pp. 295-9.

² Gascoigne's claim occurs in a new item in the *Posies*, "*Dulce bellum inexpertis*", stanza 199 (p. 436). See also Prouty, pp. 14-18, 28. *DNB* has it that Nevykson lived "obscurly at home under Queen Mary", although he was not actually ordained until after the accession of Elizabeth. Prouty concludes that Gascoigne was at Cambridge "between 1547 and 1555", p. 17.

³ Mark Eccles argues for 1534 in "Brief Lives: Tudor and Stuart Authors", *SP* 79 (1982), 1-133, p. 55. The *DNB* suggests ?1525. For his discussion of the birthdate (proposing 1539) see Prouty, pp. 287-89.

⁴ Susan Brigden, *London and the Reformation* (Oxford: 1991), *passim*.

⁵ Prouty, p. 18. See also HPT ii 171. Those patrons and dedicatees who cannot be accounted for by a connection with the Inns of Court may have been made through Gascoigne's parliamentary experience, however brief. For example, Lewis Dyve of Bromham was a member of Parliament for Bedford (like Gascoigne's father) and so the connection was probably made either there or through the gentry network in Bedfordshire.

has it, Gascoigne was actually present in the House when the news of Mary's death was announced.¹ He served on behalf of his father as an almoner at Elizabeth's coronation² and went on to represent Bedford Borough again in the 1558-9 Parliament.

Like many of his contemporaries, on the accession of Elizabeth Gascoigne was soon seduced by the proximity of the court and the ostensibly quicker and easier rise to power and affluence which it seemed to offer. He began, by his own account, to sell his inheritance piecemeal in order to finance his lifestyle.³ He sought a traditional remedy to his financial difficulties in marriage to a well-to-do widow, Elizabeth Bacon Breton on 23 November 1561. Unfortunately, the said widow had already married one Edward Boyes, and the marriage aggravated Gascoigne's problems rather than solved them. One early poem which can be dated fairly securely to this time is "Eyther a needelesse or a bootelesse comparison betwene two letters" (39),⁴ which clearly refers to Gascoigne's rivalry with Boyes:⁵

Take dooble *G.* for thy most loving letter,
And cast of *B.*, for it deserves no better. (p. 254)

The poem was printed only in *A Hundreth*; when Gascoigne revised the collection in 1575 he excised it. This may have been because his rivalry with Boyes had attained a certain notoriety: Henry Machyn records in his diary for 30 September 1562 a street

¹ Prouty, p. 18.

² Prouty, p. 19.

³ The most clearly dateable evidence of this is in the "Memories" (written in 1565). See next section.

⁴ Numbers of poems refer to the Pigman edition.

⁵ Prouty dates Gascoigne's marriage to Elizabeth Bacon Bretton Boyes as 23 November 1561 and discusses his rivalry with Boyes (p. 26ff). His Appendix III discusses the legal records of the marriage, pp. 293ff.

fight between the two men and their retainers.¹ It would not have been helpful to remind readers of the *Posies* of his marital problems. It seems that the couple had to repeat the wedding ceremony at some point between May 1563 and November 1566, following intervention by the Lord Mayor of London to protect the rights and property of Elizabeth's children against their new stepfather, who was suspected of cheating them.²

Gascoigne was involved in almost continuous litigation from this time onward; he was still involved in legal action over the Breton lands late in 1576.³ He would not have been resident at Gray's Inn throughout the period but his association with Gray's Inn lasted, presumably, until 1569 when there was an order made that "Master Gascoigne" should pay his debts or "be put out of the fellowship of the house".⁴ Although such threats were not uncommon, it is almost certain that he would have been unable to pay his debts, since he was at the time already avoiding the legal action of some of his many creditors.⁵ He is also recorded as having been in Bedford Gaol in 1570, which suggests that he would not have been able to pay his debts and retain membership of the

¹ "The sam day at nyght be-twyn viii and ix was a grett fray in Redcrosse stret betwyn ii gentyllmen and ther men, for they dyd mare one woman, and dyvers were hurt; thes wher ther names, master Boyssse and master Gaskyn gentyllmen", in *The Diary of Henry Machyn*, ed. J.G. Nichols [Camden Society Reprints 42] (London: Camden Society, 1848), p. 293.

² Prouty, pp. 293-304.

³ See Chapter III, section iii, for Gascoigne's letter to Lord Burghley from Paris, 7 October 1576. There is no evidence that the suit was settled at the time of his death in October the following year.

⁴ At the pension of 13 June, one "Mr Fysher" was ordered "to pay his debts to the house before the end of term or forfeit his chamber. Mr Gascoigne to do likewise before the Feast of St. Bartholmew or "be put out of the fellowship of the house", in *Pension Book*, vol. I, p. 3.

⁵ Prouty, pp. 45ff.

honorable society.¹ It is regrettable that the Gray's Inn archive was largely destroyed by fire at the end of the seventeenth century, so that there are no manuscript records extant of the period of Gascoigne's association.²

The training offered by the Inns of Court in the period encompassed most courtly pursuits; it is to be suspected that the dramatic productions were as important as the moot courts in oratorical training. The Inns were noted for their political awareness and for producing many of the first humanist translations.³ The display of wit was at a premium, and the cultivation of courtly skills such as acting, dancing, singing, musical composition, and the playing of instruments was encouraged. Indeed, according to an editorial note in *A Hundreth*, Gascoigne may have set several of his short poems to music, as well as a number of the "anonymous" poems presented in the "Devises":⁴

These good Morowe and good nyght, together with his Passion, his Libell of divorce, his Lullabye, his Recantation, his De profundis, and his farewell, have verie sweete notes adapted unto them: the which I would you should also enjoy as well as my selfe. For I knowe you will delight to heare them. As also other verie good notes whyche I have for dyvers other Ditties of other mens devyse whiche I have before rehersed. (p. 289)

Unfortunately, there is no record remaining of these musical settings, nor any other clues as to whether they would have been designed to be sung *a capella* or to the lute.

¹ Prouty, pp. 46-7. Gascoigne was held as a result of legal action brought against him by his father, Sir John Gascoigne, and Prouty argues that the entries in the Chancery decrees which record the imprisonment are "the final evidences of financial ruin" (p. 46).

² All that remain are the *Books of Orders, 1569-1800* (5 vols), *Admission Books, 1581-1889* (11 vols), and *Ledgers, 1586-1800* (3 vols). See D.S. Bland, *A Bibliography of the Inns of Court and Chancery* [Selden Society Suppl. Series 3] (London: Selden Society, 1965).

³ The seminal study is C.H. Conley, *The First English Translators of the Classics* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1927); Marie Axton gives an excellent exposition of the literary-political milieu, in *The Queen's Two Bodies: Drama and the Elizabethan Succession* (London: Royal Historical Society, 1977).

⁴ This appears in *A Hundreth* only.

The atmosphere at the Inns of Court is reflected in a number of the miscellaneous poems: the social aspiration, for example, evident in the poem "Written to a gentlewoman who had refused him and chosen a husband (as he thought) much inferior to himself, both in knowledge byrth and parsonage" (8), or the farewell by a lover "being disdaynfully abjected by a dame of high calling, who had chosen (in his place) a playe fellowe of baser condicion" (27). Although both titles (prose introductions) were given by the narrator "G.T.", according to the fiction by which *A Hundreth* was published, both poems rate the social wrong worse than the emotional.¹ Similarly, the sequence "Gascoignes Memories" (58-62), which describes a rigorous challenge set as an initiation into a particular literary clique, shows Gascoigne trying to position himself among his peers on his return to Gray's Inn in 1565.²

As well as their legal studies and authorized literary activities, the young men of the Inns of Court devoted much time to bets and challenges, game-playing and riddles, often with an amorous agenda or with flippant overtones. The third poem of the anonymous "Devises" is the product of just such a courtly challenge: "Two gentlemen did roon three courses at the ryngge for one kysse, to be taken of a fayre gentlewoman being then present, with this condicion: that the winner shold have the kisse, and the loser be bound to write some verses uppon the gayne or losse thereof" (3). Another item is simply entitled "A Ryddle" (43). The evasions and obfuscations of courtly courtship are explored in the remarkable sequence "Certaine verses written to a

¹ See Chapter I, section ii, for my discussion of the fiction by which *A Hundreth* was published.

² See next section.

Gentlewoman whom he liked very well" (15-20), which describes an adulterous love affair, from the first tentative glances to eventual disillusionment.

Again, it is possible to detect the challenge and response structure in the exchange between the poet and the lady. The poet writes some amorous verses in one of the lady's books, "Thou with thy lookes on whom I looke full ofte" (15), to which she allegedly responded by adding a witty riposte (16):

Looke as long as you list, but surely if I take you looking, I will looke with you. (p. 230)

This is followed by a prose link which describes "a supper in hir company, where were also hir brother, hir husband, and an old lover of hers by whom she had bin long suspected". The reader is not long left in doubt who this amorous poet is:

Nowe, although there wanted no delicate viands to content them, yit their chief repast was by entreglancing of lookes. For G.G. being stoong with hot affection, could none otherwise relieve his passion but by gazing. (p. 231)

The woman looks at "G.G.", her old lover watches them, and her brother tries to get her attention, but:

most of all hir husband beholding the first, and being evill pleased with the second, scarce contented with the third, and misconstruing the fourth, was constreyned to play the fifth part in froward frowninge.

The narrator clearly relishes the game of secret looking, which so complements the founding conceit of the verses.¹ At the end of the meal, "G.G. knowing that after supper they should passe the tyme in propounding of Riddles, and making of purposes:

¹ The full prose exposition seems likely to have been included in the version which circulated in manuscript; it is an integral part of the sequence because of its elaboration of the notion of looking.

contrived all this conceit in a Riddle as followeth" (p. 231). This is perhaps the courtly suit *par excellence*: adulterous, coded, witty, and complicated by its status as a public secret - exactly the kind of situation Gascoigne was to elaborate in "Dan Bartholmew of Bathe" and *Master F.J.*¹

From the miscellaneous early poems presented in *A Hundreth*, it is clear that in the 1550s and 1560s Gascoigne was experimenting with poetic voices and identities and that he was happy to write on his own behalf and on others'; it may well be that the talent for extemporization which was to serve him so well was something he developed during his time at Gray's Inn in the poems he wrote for his friends and peers there.² Indeed, in the revised edition of 1575, the *Posies*, Gascoigne exploits this to admit that most of his early poetry "hath beene written in pursute of amorous enterpryses".³ Far from denying responsibility for writing so many love poems, Gascoigne claims to have written many of them for others, changing his posy as he did so:

if ever I wrote lyne for my selfe in causes of love, I have written tenne for other men in layes of lust ... by that it proceedeth, that I have so often chaunged my Posie or worde. For when I did compile any thing at the request of other men, if I had subscribed the same with mine owne usuall mot or devise, it might have bewrayed the same to have beene of my doing.⁴

Indeed, some of the titles of the poems are explicit about being written for someone else: "A letter devised for a young lover" (41), or "The absent lover (in ciphers) disciphering his name" (48), which begins:

¹ See Chapter I, section ii.

² See especially Chapter II, section ii.

³ "To al yong Gentlemen", p. 366.

⁴ "To the Readers generally", pp. 370-71.

L'escu d'amour, the shield of perfect love (p. 262)

This was written for Sir John Scudamour, whom Prouty identifies as a friend of Gascoigne's.¹ Similarly, "He wrote (at his friends request) in prayse of a Gentlewoman, whose name was Phillip, as followeth" (22), based on Skelton's *Phyllip Sparow*,² clearly signals that its agenda belongs to someone else. Despite these disclaimers, it is clear that some of these poems (even in the "anonymous" section) were indeed written on his own behalf, as is witnessed by the use of his own initials in "Certaine verses", the "looking" sequence (15-20), or "Eyther a needesse or a bootelesse comparison" (39).

The sheer range of poetic voices in the early verse is remarkably wide, from lovers in all conditions (abject to ardent), to poems written in the person of a woman (25, 28, 38).³ There are also both serious and flippant variants on the model of the repentant prodigal, which becomes so important in 1575 with the *Posies* and the *Glasse of Government*. It is clear that this was a pragmatic and piecemeal approach to poetic identity: Gascoigne does not try to achieve a unified poetic persona in the early verse. It has not, then, been possible to disentangle a distinctive concern with one particular self-presentation in Gascoigne's early work.⁴ (It is likely, though, that the eponymous

¹ Prouty, p. 119. This poem is crucial in Ward's theory of the multiple authorship of *A Hundreth* in his edition and was initially challenged by Fredson T. Bowers, "Gascoigne and the Oxford Cipher", *MLN*, 52 (1937), 183-86.

² John Skelton, *Here after foloweth a litle boke, of Phyllip Sparow* (London: R. Copland for R. Kele, ?1545). Gascoigne's version is even more overt in its sexual puns.

³ Puttenham's criticism of the opening lines of "A loving Lady being wounded in the spring time" (25) is discussed by Carol Replogle, in "Not Parody, Not Burlesque: The Play within the Play in *Hamlet*", *Mod.Phil.*, 67 (1969), 150-59, pp. 156ff.

⁴ See Chapter I, section ii for my discussion of the posies.

poems in the attributed section like "Gascoignes Anatomie", "Gascoignes Good Night", "Gascoignes Good Morrow" and others in *A Hundreth* would have carried his name in manuscript; it is only in the *Posies*, where it would be superfluous, that the authorial name in these titles is dropped.)¹ Although the posies with which the poems are subscribed may indicate different phases of an evolving identity they were probably not so well orchestrated: he had a range of devises at his disposal and so used them. It was only in 1575, also in the *Posies*, that he adopted the motto "*Tam Marti, quam Mercurio*" ("[Dedicated] as much to Mars as to Mercury")² and he did not vary from it in his named works thereafter.

It is notable, however, that the model of the repentant prodigal which becomes Gascoigne's predominant self-presentation in his later work is already evident in four clusters of imagery in the verse collected in the "Devises". These are: versions of the repentant prodigal; the humanist topic of youth versus age; the tendency to blame youth for indiscretions; and the motif of repentance, although in practice they are often mixed. All are demonstrably dateable to *ante* 1573 and in some cases appear in works dated as early as 1565, ten years before Gascoigne made any attempt to bring together a coherent self-presentation as a repentant prodigal. But little account has been taken of this mixture in the early verse: although Prouty notes the "Memories" (1565) as

¹ This raises the possibility that poems published in the anonymous sections may have been known as his if they carried Gascoigne's name in the title, which would have been changed for the purposes of publication in 1573. The "Good Morrow" and the "Good Night" are discussed by Roy T. Erikson, in "Two Into One: The Unity of Gascoigne's Companion Poems", *SP*, 81 (1984), 275-98.

² My thanks are due to Professor Pigman for his translations.

Gascoigne's first use of the model of the repentant prodigal, he firmly adheres to the idea of a thoroughgoing repentance in 1575 and neglects the many variants on the theme which appear in both anonymous and attributed sections of the "Devises", some of which may belong to the period before 1565.¹

The simple humanist theme of youth versus age provided a foundation for the appropriation of the repentant prodigal, including its use as a means of evading moral responsibility for past mistakes.² Gascoigne's willingness to blame youth for past misdemeanours is evident in several of the attributed poems, and even in the anonymous early poems. In "Written upon a reconciliation betwene two freendes" (2), the poet (writing under the motto "*Si fortunatus, infoelix*") admits he has offended his friend and blames his indiscretion on his youth. Appealing first to scriptural authority, "holy write", for his procedure he writes:

When I consider this, and then the brall,
Which raging youth (I will not me excuse)
Did whilome breede in mine unmellowed brayne ... (p. 218)

It is clear, though, that the poet's appeal to his youth is - despite his disclaimer - a means of excusing himself, a pragmatic appropriation of an available model. Even so, variations on the theme of repentance occur in several guises, mostly lighthearted, throughout the group.³

¹ "At the time of his return to Gray's Inn, in the year 1565, Gascoigne first wrote poems which reveal the repentant sinner", Prouty, p. 81. He does question whether this is genuine or "merely a pose designed to bring favours and rewards", but not whether some of the miscellaneous verse of the "Devises" may date from before that date.

² The opposition of youth and age occurs in items 13, 38, 46, 54, 56, 63, 72, 73.

³ These include nos. 3, 13, 32, 36, 56, 57?, 63, 65?, 67, 77.

The copiousness of the themes associated with youth, prodigality, and variants of penitential themes is remarkable. The repentant prodigal reappears in more sinister guise in "Gascoignes Recantation" (57), a rejection of his amorous works which glances at Chaucer's prose "Retractation" at the end of the *Canterbury Tales*.¹ But the conceit of Gascoigne's retraction is clearly founded on the burnings at Smithfield:

Nowe must I needes recant the wordes whiche once I spoke,
Fonde fansie fumes so nye my nose, I needes must smell the smoke:
And better were to beare a faggot from the fire,
Than wilfully to burne and blaze in flames of vayne desire. (p. 273)

His rejection of love leads to the rejection of his love poetry, and he cites the "Anatomie", the "Araignment", and others which attest to his "wicked heresie":²

All whiche I nowe recante, and here before you burne
Those trifling bookes, from whose leud lore my tippet here I turne,
And hencefoorth will I write, howe madde is that mans mynde,
Which is entyst by any trayne to trust in womankynde. (p. 274)

Self-evidently another flippant work, in context of the arrangement in the printed edition, this may have been less obvious in manuscript circulation. Nevertheless, being presented as a rejection of amorous pursuits by *Gascoigne*, the joke may have been clear. It is a curious and probably very early example of the repentant model: if not the prodigal son, the prodigal lover, recanting as though at Smithfield.

¹ See *The Complete Works of Geoffrey Chaucer*, ed. F.N. Robinson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1974), pp. 265-6.

² He also says "once I soong, I *Bathe in Blisse*, amide my wearie *Bale*", which refers to "A strange passion of another Author" (30) in the anonymous section. This poem was noted as a possible translation of Petrarch's sonnet 134, "Pace non trovo, et non o da far guerra", perhaps via Wyatt's "I finde no peace and all my warr is done" (Tottel 49) by George Watson, in *The English Petrarchans. A Critical Bibliography of the Canzoniere* [Warburg Institute Surveys, ed. E.H.Gombrich and J.B.Trapp] (London: Warburg Institute, University of London, 1967), p. 30.

The "Recantation" includes an appeal to the "Judges", although the judicial aspect of the situation is not developed. But in other poems Gascoigne borrows freely from the law to provide metaphors and structures - often parodic - for poetic inventions which reflect the culture of Gray's Inn.¹ "Gascoignes araignement" (50) describes a trial, at which the poet is called to account for flattery, having been accused by False Suspect. Standing "at Beauties barre", a jury is summoned by "crafte the cryer", who assembles a "packe of pickethankes" to bear false witness:

The Jurie suche, the Judge unjust,
Sentence was sayde I shoulde be trust.

Jealous the Jayler bounde me fast,
To heare the verdite of the bill,
George (quod the Judge) now thou art cast,
Thou muste goe hence to heavie hill,
And there be hangde all but the head,
God reste thy soule when thou art dead. (p. 265)

Faced with the manifest injustice of the trial, the poet falls to his knees to appeal to Beauty, the Queen, for pity. Although she agrees with the verdict of Justice, the judge, she agrees to pardon him if he will be bound to her service:

Yea madame (quod I) that I shall,
Lo faith and truthe my suerties:
Why then (quod she) come when I call,
I aske no better warrantise.
Thus am I Beauties bounden thrall,
At hir commaunde when she doth call. (pp. 265-66)

The final couplet effects a "turn" similar to the technique familiar in sonnets: the whole invention of the trial and legalistic allegory leads, not to Gascoigne's repentance of

¹ A similar use of legal structures and imagery can be found in "Dan Bartholmew of Bathe" (written 1572/3-5) with his "libell of request exhibited to Care" (p. 349) and his "last will and Testament" (p. 353) with its "subscription and seale" (p. 355).

flattery or a rejection of amorous pursuits, but to this flippant and accomplished excuse for a roving eye.

A much less happy poem which draws on legal imagery is "Gascoignes libell of Divorce" (54), a supplication to Death as the judge, to whom Gascoigne appeals for a "divorce" (death) to free him from both his "concubine" (love) and his "wife" ("lingring life"). The founding invention of this rejection of love - unlike the "Recantation" - is based in the processes of the law:

My libell loe behold: wherein I do protest,
The processe of my plaint is true, in which my grieffe doth rest. (p. 269)

Describing how his love has cast him off, and the symptoms he suffers as a result,

"Gascoigne" can take no joy in "lothsome life that crooked croane, although she be my make". He lays out the case and appeals for a favourable verdict:

Be judge then gentle death, and take my cause in hand,
Consider every circumstance, marke how the case doth stande.
Percase thou wilte alledge, that cause thou canst none see,
But that I like not of that one, that other likes not me:
Yes gentle judge give eare, and thou shalt see me prove,
My concubine incontinent, a common whore is love.
And in my wife I find, such discord and debate,
As no man living can endure the torments of my state. (p. 270)

In the prefatory material to the *Posies*, Gascoigne was to protest against literal readings, citing these two of his "legal" poems to prove his figurative purpose.¹ There can be little doubt that his recurrent use of legal imagery and conceits both arises from and alludes to his association with the Inns of Court.

¹ See Chapter II, section i.

That the mixture of genres and topics in the "Devises" ranges from salacious to ascetic, from flirtatious to didactic, is further suggested by the presence of one poem in the anonymous section which alludes to a literary topic related to the theme of repentance, *contemptus mundi*. This is "The careful lover combred with pleasure, thus complayneth" (26), subscribed with the posy "*Spraeta tamen vivunt*".¹ Here, the unhappy lover notes the pleasures of others and concludes:

I passe where pleasure is, I heare some sing for joye,
I see som laugh, some other daunce, in spight of dark anoy.
But out alas my mind, amends not by their myrth,
I deeme al pleasures to be paine, that dwel above the earth.
Such heavy humors feede, the bloud that lends me breath,
As mery medcines cannot serve, to kepe my corps from death. (p. 239)

The lover's rejection of worldly delights is not ascetic but romantic; his emotional state is ascribed to an imbalance of humours, so that there is a medical aspect which qualifies the sentiment, but this offers a version of the rejection of former pleasures (mistakes, indiscretions) prompted not by true penitence but by the failure of hopes and expectations and the practical need to find another means of survival.

Versions of the prodigal appear in the "Devises" in a variety of more and less repentant modes. For example, in the section attributed to him, Gascoigne associates youth with sexual energies, drawing attention to his own amorousness. In "Gascoignes Lullabie" (56), he admits that:

Full many wanton babes have I
Which must be stilld with lullabie. (p. 272)

¹ "Despised things still live" (Pigman). See Chapter I, section ii, for a full discussion of the posies.

These include his "youthfull yeares", in another early version of the repentant prodigal, with its characteristic premature ageing:

First lullaby my youthfull yeares,
It is now time to go to bed,
For crooked age and hoarie heares,
Have wonne the haven within my head.

Here, the model is used to demonstrate a rejection of the physical lusts associated with youth. In turn, he devotes a stanza to his "gazing eyes", his "wanton will", and even his "ware" (penis):

Eke Lullabye my loving boye,
My little Robyn take thy rest,
Synce Age is colde, and nothyng coye,
Keepe close thy coyne, for so is beste ... (pp. 272-3)

But the poem ends with a reawakening, not a sleep:

And when you rise with waking eye,
Remembre *Gascoignes* Lullabye.

The final couplet provides a comic reversal: it promises a resurrection, so that the pose of agedness (impotence) is clearly subverted.¹ If age is equated with impotence, this of course qualifies the age/youth distinction in the model of the repentant prodigal, which assumes uncontrolled energy in the young and wisdom in the old: the rejection of the amorous pursuits associated with youth may be the result of loss of strength, vitality, rather than with a chosen moral stance.

¹ Robert Southey silently excises the stanza in *Select Works of the British Poets* (London: Longman, Rees, Orme, Brown, and Green, 1831), p. 201. Alexander Chalmers marks the omission without comment in *The Works of the English Poets, from Chaucer to Cowper* (London: privately printed, 1810), (21 vols.), vol. 2, p. 483.

Similarly, another less than serious version of the repentant prodigal appears in "Three Sonets in sequence" (42) in the anonymous section. These are based on the *Metamorphoses or The Golden Asse* of Apuleius, a notoriously bawdy and irreverent text which might seem to offer little serious credibility as a text of repentance.¹

Gascoigne depicts Apuleius (whom he reads autobiographically) as a version of the repentant prodigal: like him, Apuleius rejects his home country and learns hard lessons as a result. Born in Africa, Apuleius travels in "*Thessaly*", renowned for its magicians:

As one that held his native soyle in skorne,
In foraine coastes to feede his fantasie.
And such a gaine as wandring wits find out,
This yonker woon by will and weary toyle,
A youth mispent, a doting age in doubt,
A body brusd with many a beastly broyle,
A present pleasure passing on a pace,
And paynting playne the path of penitence,
A frolicke favour foyld with foule disgrace,
When hoarie heares should clayme their reverence ... (p. 256)

The tale of *The Golden Asse* was a very popular text; it had been translated into English in 1566 by William Adlington, which increased its readership, though it was already widely known in its Latin form.²

The "occasion" of the sequence is given as the presentation of a copy of *The Golden*

¹ Robert H.F. Carver notes its problematic status as an exemplary text in "The Protean Ass: The *Metamorphoses* of Apuleius from Antiquity to the English Renaissance" (D.Phil. Thesis, Oxford University, 1991), pp. 3-5. Gabriel Harvey, however, observed that "Even Lucians Tales are spiced with conceite: and neither his, nor Apulieus Asse, is altogether an Asse", in *Foure Letters* (London: 1592), sig. E2.

² Lucius Apuleius, tr. William Adlington, *The .xi. bookes of the Golden asse, with the mariage of Cupide and Psiches. Translated out of Latine by William Adlington* (London: H. Wykes), 1566. See also Carver, *ibid.*, pp. 88ff.

Asse by a man (who calls himself "David") to his lady (whom he has named "Berzabe") and, he says, "You must conferre it with the Historie of Apuleius, for els it will have small grace". In this way, without describing the nature of the text, Gascoigne refers his reader to a less than respectable story.¹ The second and third sonnets summarize the first part of the tale, when Apuleius is seduced by Fotis and then transformed by her into an ass, rather than the owl he had expected to become. The sequence concludes with a "turn" which reorientates the allusion to the present situation:

Yet I poor I,

Who make of thee my *Fotys* and my freend,
In like delights my youthfull yeares to spend:
Do hope thou wilt from such sower sauce defend,
David thy king. (p. 257)

Written under the posy "*Meritum petere grave*",² the speaker of this sequence thus hopes "in like delights my youthful yeares to spend", but to avoid the "sower sauce" of repentance which this kind of sensual prodigality may lead to.

The idea of youthful prodigality was exploited even in an apparently religious context. "Gascoignes gloze upon this text, *Dominus iis opus habet*" (63) turns the pious creed to estates satire. But it takes as its starting point the humanist youth/age dichotomy and, tacitly, the repentant prodigal:

My recklesse race is runne, greene youth and pride be past,
My riper mellowed yeares beginne to follow on as fast.
My glancing lookes are gone, which wonted were to prie

¹ A modern translation is available, tr. Robert Graves and rev. Michael Grant, *The Golden Ass* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1990).

² "To seek reward is a serious matter", or "It is painful to seek a reward" (Pigman). See Chapter 1, section ii.

In every gorgeous garish glasse that glistred in mine eie.
My sight is now so dimme, it can behold none such,
No mirroure but the merrie meane, can please my fansie muche. (p. 283)

Gascoigne's first example claims the sentiment for the Reformed religion. He asserts that God has rejected "pompe and pride" and - in anti-Catholic lines expunged in the revised edition of 1575 - that:

He is not fedde with calves, as in the dayes of old,
He cares but litle for their copes, that glister all of gold. (ll. 23-4)

But the second pair of lines expunged in the revision focus on the rejected rosary prayers of Roman Catholicism and the Reformed emphasis on penitence:¹

He likes no numbred prayers, to purchase popish meede,
He askes no more but penitence, thereof *Our Lorde hath neede*: (ll. 27-8)

He then turns his satirical mirror on English society, noting a decline in magnanimity which he connects with social change and describes in fully-developed estates satire.²

A second religious work, "Gascoignes *De profundis*" (66+67), should have provided a translation of the sixth penitential psalm, "*De profundis clamavi*" (Psalm 130).³ But, perhaps because of "Gascoigne's attempt to compose the [prose] links and to revise the recent poems during the fair-copying process" when publishing *A Hundreth*, the psalm itself was omitted and only its introductory sonnet was printed.⁴ Gascoigne's tendency to write from his own experience, assimilating it into both flippant and moralistic

¹ A total of six lines were expunged (ll. 23-4; 27-8; 33-4). The first two pairs are crudely offensive against Catholicism, the third against the pagan deities.

² It is notable that the emphasis on penitence is removed in the revision, along with the anti-popish sentiments, for it is in the *Posies* that Gascoigne first seeks to establish himself as a repentant prodigal.

³ "Out of the depths I have cried [to thee, O Lord]" (Pigman).

⁴ Weiss, p. 96.

works, is evident in the prose preface to the introductory sonnet. This describes a journey Gascoigne apparently made, from Chelmsford to London, during which:

his minde mused uppon the dayes past, and therewithall he gan accuse his owne conscience of muche time misspent, when a great 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 selfe of his carelesnesse, and thereuppon in his good disposition compiled firste this sonet, and afterwardes, the translated Psalme of *Deprofundis* as here followeth. (p. 290)

Apart from its legend of composition, this introduction is notable for the tacit allegory it carries, of man's unreadiness to face his maker.¹ In this version, repentance is prompted by the downpour during a moment of reflection.

In translating one of the penitential psalms, Gascoigne was working in a recent tradition which can be traced back via Wyatt to Aretino.² Indeed, it has been suggested that as a group, from the Psalter of David, the Penitential Psalms constituted "a dynamic mould, one of the models by which men organise their experience".³ As printed in 1573, Gascoigne's translation, a variation upon the theme of Psalm 130, dwells significantly upon the idea of Mercy:

But thou art good, and hast of mercye store,

Thou not delightst to see a sinner fall,
Thou hearknest first, before we come to call.

¹ The story is corroborated three years later in the *Steele Glas/Complaynte of Phylomene* so that it is dateable to 1562 (see Chapter III, section ii). A similar allegorizing tendency, which also suggests Gascoigne's willingness to appropriate available models, is evident in "Gascoignes voyage into *Hollande, An. 1572*" (77). See also Jane Hedley, "Allegoria: Gascoigne's Master Trope", *ELR*, 11 (1981), 148-64.

² In 1534, Aretino had published *I Sette Salmi de la Penitentia di David*, and Wyatt was to translate the psalms, possibly during his imprisonment in 1536-41; see *Collected Poems of Sir Thomas Wyatt*, ed. Kenneth Muir and Patricia Thomson (Liverpool University Press, 1969), p. 357.

³ Stephen Greenblatt, *Renaissance Self-Fashioning*, p. 117.

Thine eares are set wyde open evermore,
Before we knocke thou comest to the doore.
Thou art more prest to heare a sinner crye,
Then he is quicke to climbe to thee on hye ... (p. 291)

(It is unlikely that this is based on Wyatt's "But thou seeks rather love,/ For in thi hand is mercijs residence").¹ The song takes as its central theme God's willingness to forgive the penitent, "For he hath mercye evermore at hande ... And plenteously hee loveth to redeeme" (p. 292, ll. 72,74) and concludes optimistically, "He wyll soone save, though we repent us late" (p. 293, l. 82).

Gascoigne's familiarity with themes of prodigality and repentance, his appropriation of available roles and models, was flexible enough to embrace another variant, the role of the prodigal's adviser. In a poem dateable to 1572, and so late in this period but still long before his supposed reformation, Gascoigne takes it upon himself to advise another young man who has perhaps shown prodigal tendencies himself, in "Gascoignes counsell given to master *Bartholmew Withipoll* a litle before his latter journey to Geane. 1572" (69):

And for I finde, that fault hath runne to fast,
Both in thy flesh, and fancie to sometime (p. 296; ll. 9-10)

He is modest about his own claims to wisdom:

But shall I say, to give thee grave advise?
(Which in my hed is (God he knowes) full geazon?)
Then marke me well, and though I be not wise,
Yet in my rime, thou maist perhaps find reason. (ll. 13-16)

¹ Wyatt, *ed.cit.*, p. 121, ll. 680-81.

Even so, he has clearly assumed the role of counsellor in this poem, a role he also adopted somewhat scornfully in "Gascoignes counsell to *Douglasse Dive*" (68), which suggests that his appropriation of roles was considerably more fluid than has generally been allowed.

Similarly, in the anonymous poem "Two gentlemen did roon three courses at the ryng" (3), Gascoigne takes on the role of adviser against prodigality, in the course of fulfilling a courtly challenge. The poet declares that his opponent's victory should not inspire him to go to war and goes on to outline a range of betrayals of friends and family for which war may be responsible. One of these is the abandonment of "The native soyle, the parents left and all" (l. 11), which casts the proposition as a quasi-prodigious son figure, reinforced in the nemesis of economic necessity which prompts repentance:

But when bare beggrie bids them to beware,
And late repentaunce rules them to retyre.
Like hyvesse Bees they wander here and there,
And hang on them (who earst) might dread their yre. (p. 219; ll. 13-16)

Repentance may be born of necessity, but the poem moves towards a conventionally moral conclusion; youth is "a golden time" (l. 22) which should not be wasted in idleness:

But my good friend let thus thy youth be spent,
Serve God thy Lord, and prayse him evermore. (ll. 27-28)

The final lines, however, reinforce the pragmatic advantages of conforming to conventional ideals - bookish knowledge, military experience, the avoiding of over-

reaching and the advocacy of peace:

And (for my life) if thou canst roon this race,
Thy bagges of coyne will multiply apace. (p. 220; ll. 33-34)

Less than a pure idealism, then, this advice is compromised by its presentation as a means of attaining worldly wealth: significantly, the moral stance is ambivalent, promising a pragmatic means to approval and preferment.

The sheer range of poetic personae evident in the miscellaneous early verse suggests that Gascoigne was not yet trying to establish a fixed poetic identity. But where Gascoigne explores both serious and flippant variations on the theme of repentance throughout the early poems, he presents himself explicitly as a repentant prodigal in the "Memories" sequence. As has been noted, much of the early verse may have been circulated in manuscript before its publication and several poems are dateable to 1565 or earlier. From this may be deduced the certainty that the repentant prodigal was a familiar model to Gascoigne, the most amenable of the "models by which men organise their experience" as Greenblatt has it, at least ten years before his wholesale adoption of the model in his attributed printed work from 1575 onwards.

"Gascoignes Memories" (1565).

*I not denie but some men have good hap,
To climbe alofte by scales of courtly grace,
And winne the world with liberalitie:
Yet he that yerks old angells out apace,
And hath no new to purchase dignitie,
When orders fall, may chance to lacke his grace.¹*

On the accession of Elizabeth, Gascoigne was drawn into an extravagant life on the periphery of the court.² In just a year or so he had effectively ruined himself by spending his inheritance, selling the leases on farms he would have inherited in due course. His marriage had only added to the succession of law cases against him, since Elizabeth Breton had already married Edward Boyes.³ In 1562, Gascoigne had leased Willington Manor in Bedfordshire from its owner, Sir John Gostwick, as a marital home. Relations between the Gascoignes and the Gostwicks, who were still in residence, were not ideal but "it was to this country home that Gascoigne retired after being "cast off" by the court in 1563".⁴ This first retirement to the country seems to have been shortlived, and in 1564 or 1565 Gascoigne decided to return to Gray's Inn. Prouty gives Gascoigne's reasons for returning at this point as "either the expenditures for [his] various legal difficulties or a dissatisfaction with the living arrangements at Willington, where Gostwick and his wife were also in residence".⁵

¹ "*Magnum vectigal parcimonia*" (60), p. 277.

² Prouty, p. 20.

³ By November 1565 Elizabeth had at least been divorced from Boyes, but by then Gascoigne had run into some difficulty with his legal responsibilities to his stepchildren. Prouty, pp. 35, 293-304.

⁴ Prouty, p. 30.

⁵ Prouty, p. 32.

Gascoigne had been involved in almost continuous litigation for five years and this was to continue during his second period at Gray's Inn. (For example, in 1568 Gostwick was to bring a case against him which claimed that the arrangements at Willington had been effected by fraud.)¹ Despite, or perhaps because of, such difficulties Gascoigne seems to have returned to his old Inn with a renewed ambition. He was made an "ancient" of the society in 1565 and there could have been few better ways of positioning himself to create opportunities for advancement.² It is no surprise, then, that Gascoigne can be seen to be jockeying for position on his return to Gray's Inn. His "Memories" belong to this period and this group of five poems on set themes was designed and entered into as an initiation into a literary clique. The sequence appears in *A Hundreth* in the part of the "Devises of Sundrie Gentlemen" attributed to Gascoigne.³ Its fictive editor, G.T., gives the following legend of its composition:

I have herde master Gascoignes memorie commended by these verses following, the which were written uppon this occasion. He had (in middest of his youth) determind to abandone all vaine delights and to retourne unto Greyes Inn, there to undertake againe the study of the common lawes. And being required by five sundrie gentlemen to wrighte in verse somewhat worthy to be remembred, before he entred into their felowship, he compiled these five sundry sortes of metre uppon five sundry theames whiche they delivered unto him ... (p. 274)

The group also appears in the *Posies*, this time more simply as "Gascoignes Memories, written upon this occasion", after which the legend of its composition is given. It is likely that it had a previous life in manuscript; the structure of the group with its introductory and concluding prose comments on the occasion of composition suggests a

¹ Prouty, pp. 41ff.

² Prouty, p. 32.

³ Gascoigne is the only one of the "sundry gentlemen" actually named; see Chapter I, section ii.

unit, a sequence of poems, which could have been circulated amongst the *literati* of Gray's Inn and perhaps more widely among the Inns of Court and Chancery.

It is clear that the occasion of the sequence is an initiation, a challenge to be met "before he entered into their felowship" rather than a celebration of his return, as Prouty suggests.¹ It was a small clique to which Gascoigne aspired and each poem has been composed with its addressee as much in mind as the theme he has set. It is probable that the group was one of several such modish literary cliques at Gray's Inn, this one apparently dominated by two brothers, Francis and Anthony Kinweltershe. The profile of the Kinweltershe brothers within the closed community of Gray's Inn would have been influenced not only by the presence of three brothers² but also the fact that their father had built lodgings there. The *Pension Book* features a suit brought by one Cotton Gargrave, who had entered the society in 1563, for his term of possession of the accommodation "commonlye called Kyndelmarshes Buyldinges".³ It was not unusual for more than one brother to be a member, or for resident members to be housed in accommodation built by their own family; there was a spate of privately sponsored building throughout the 1550s and 1560s, as the *Pension Book* attests. But the Kinweltershes must have been a substantial presence within Gray's Inn in the mid-

¹ Prouty, p. 32, although he does discuss the sequence as "admission to [a] fellowship" elsewhere (p. 124).

² The third brother, Robert, entered in 1563 (*Register*, fol. 543). There is no evidence that he was associated with his brothers' literary interests.

³ Pension 27 Nov: 14 Eliz: (1571) describes: "the sute of Cottyne Gargrave" who "hath procured the interest of the Kyndelmarshes of the Lodgings that their father buylt in Grayes Inne ... commonlye called Kyndelmarshes Buyldinges," in *Pension Book*, Vol. II, p. 10.

1560s. Although there is no record of their attendance at either University, they seem to have surrounded themselves with Cambridge men. The members of the "felowship" were not all members of Gray's Inn, despite Chalmers' breezy assumption that they were.¹ This was true of Richard Courtop, but John Vaughan may have been at the Inner Temple, whilst there is no evidence that Alexander Neville was associated with any of the Inns of Court.²

It may have been through Francis Kinweltershe that Gascoigne was introduced to the group. His theme begins the sequence and "*Audaces fortuna juvat*"³ was perhaps a supportive choice of theme since Gascoigne was trying to gain admission to a clique dominated by himself and his brother. The other four members' choices of theme are more provocative, as each comments to some extent on Gascoigne's own recent history and especially his mistakes, but he answers in equally bantering style. He concludes each of his responses with the motto "*Sic tuli*" ("I have borne/carried"), declaring his fulfilment of each part of the challenge. But given the confessional nature of some of the poetry it also - as the sequence progresses - seems to refer increasingly to the burden of his own folly and its consequences.

¹ Alexander Chalmers, *English Poets*, vol. 2, p. 449.

² "John Vaughan" appears no less than seventeen times in Venn, *Alumni Cantabrigiensis*, with variant spellings. This J.V. may have been admitted pensioner at Peterhouse, Easter, 1558 and then admitted to the Inner Temple, 1562. Alexander Neville or Nevell matriculated pensioner at St. John's, Cambridge, Michaelmas 1559. There seems to be only the evidence of the "Memories" that he "probably studied law in London" (*DNB*).

³ "Fortune favours the bold" (Pigman).

Francis Kinweltershe had been admitted to Gray's Inn in 1557, two years after Gascoigne.¹ His known literary career dates from after the "Memories", although he does seem to have gained some degree of literary fame. Apart from his collaboration with Gascoigne the year after the "Memories", when he shared the translation of *Jocasta*, he may have been responsible for a translation of Adrien Le Roy's *A briefe and plaine instruction to set all musicke of eight divers tunes in tableture for the lute*.² He also contributed to *The Paradyse of Daynty Devises* (1576) and in Bodenham's preface to *Belverdere, or the Garden of the Muses* (1600), "Francis Kindlemarsh, Esq." appears with Norton, Gascoigne, Atchelow, and Whetstone among deceased authors to whom the compiler gives "due right".³

Francis Kinweltershe's theme, "*Audaces fortuna iuvat*" (translated by Harvey as "Fortune advaunceth hazarders"), comes from Erasmus.⁴ The use of Erasmian adages to set the themes of the poems reflects a topical, if not fashionable, literary interest in proverbs, which had been stimulated by Erasmus in his *Prolegomena to the Adagia*

¹ *Register*, fol. 523. His name appears as "Francis Kindlemarsh", directly after Francis Russell, Earl of Bedford. His two brothers' names appear as "Kindlemarshes".

² *STC* lists this as "Tr. F.Ke. [i.e. Kinweltershe]"; it was printed by J. Kyngston for J. Rowbothome in 1574.

³ Bodenham, preface to *Bel-vedere, or the Garden of the Muses* (London: F.K. for Hugh Astley, 1600), sigs. A5v-A6.

⁴ Harvey also notes "Nothing venture, nothing have", Mal. 792, sig. B7. The proverb can be traced to Erasmus via Taverner, "*Audaces fortuna iuvat*. Fortune helpeth men of good courage. He that feareth yt his matters shall not have good successe: shall never bringe his matters to passe. A coward verely never obteyned the love of a fayre Ladye. Also an other Englishe Proverbe saieth: Spare to speake, and spare to speede", in *Proverbes or Adagies. Gathered out of Erasmus* (1539, 1552), sig. B2). It originates with Seneca; see A. Otto, *Die Sprichwörter und Sprichwörtlichen redensarten* (Leipzig: B.G. Teubner, 1890), *ad fortuna*, 9.

which by 1550 had appeared in more than 90 editions, and by 1599, more than 130.¹ (Some were included in Claudius Holyband's *The French Littleton* (1576), to which Gascoigne contributed a commendatory sonnet.)² Where Kinwelmershe's is an extremely conventional motto it gets an equally conventional response with a sonnet citing Caesar, Menelaus, and Aeneas as archetypal heroic "hazarders". Gascoigne follows the English sonnet form as developed by Surrey, the predominant form in Tottel's *Miscellany*. He was later to articulate its structure in "Certayne Notes of Instruction":

I can beste allowe to call those Sonets whiche are of fouretene lynes, every line conteyning tenne syllables. The firste twelve do ryme in staves of foure lines by crosse meetre, and the last twoo ryming together do conclude the whole (p. 460)

He follows this scheme faithfully in the present sonnet, and indeed in the majority of his sonnets.³ Where each of his classical exemplars receives a quatrain each, the final couplet or "gemell" of the sonnet returns to the theme as set by Kinwelmershe. But Gascoigne makes a significant addition, qualifying its ancient conventional wisdom:

But true it is, *where lottes doe light by chaunce,*
There Fortune helps the boldest to advaunce.

(p. 275, my italics)

This suggests a view of fortune in which the possibility of advancement is not accessed by boldness alone, but is contingent to a large extent on (random) external

¹ In addition there were English translations, such as the one by Richard Taverner, which the Kinwelmershe group may have used. They were also included in Sir Thomas Elyot's *Dictionary* in both Latin and English. By 1559, Elyot's text, as revised by Cooper, contained 303 adages from Erasmus alone.

² Claude Desainliens [Claudius Holyband], *The Frenche Littleton. A most easie way to learne the frenche tongue. Newly set forth* (1576).

³ The dedicatory sonnet he contributed to Holyband is an exception; it follows the semi-petrarchan rhyme scheme ABBA CDDC EFGFEG rather than the English. See John Fuller, *The Sonnet* [The Critical Idiom] (London and New York: Methuen, 1972), pp. 14ff.

circumstances: such heroism is dependent upon the opportunity to display bravery and audacity. With this one exception, the extreme conventionality of the treatment and the form of Gascoigne's response suggests a neutral tone when compared with the other poems in the sequence, which are of a more provocative and bantering cast.

Francis Kinwelmershe's brother Anthony was admitted in 1561, so it is probable that he was his junior by a few years.¹ His theme is more personally challenging, given what is known of Gascoigne's recent history. *Satis sufficit*² could not avoid being provocative, although Gascoigne turns it to account and in fact uses a form of the proverb in the *Supposes* the following year.³ His response to it here is in rhyme royal, which he also defines in "Certayne Notes", concluding "surely it is a royall kind of verse, serving best for grave discourses" (p. 460). Gascoigne opens the first of his seven stanzas with a conventional example of excess:

The vaine excesse of flattering Fortunes giftes,
Envenometh the minde with vanitie,
And beates the restlesse braine with endlesse driftes
To stay the staffe of worldly dignitie:
The begger stands in like extremitie. (p. 275)

The final couplet, in which the last two lines "do combine and shut up the Sentence", is repeated throughout the following stanzas:

Wherefore to lacke the moste, and leave the least,
I coumpt enough as good as any feast.

¹ *Register*, fol. 530. Jasper Heywood was also admitted this year. The admission of Sir Roger North, owner of the contemporary MS of *Jocasta*, is recorded on the same folio. See next section.

² "Enough is enough" (Pigman).

³ "In dede, enoughe were as good as a feast", *Supposes* IV iii 66 (p. 38). Tilley E158 quotes this line in Gascoigne.

"Better leave than lack" is also proverbial,¹ and this technique of piling up closely related adages is typical of the sequence, as is the quotation or paraphrase of the set theme.

Although the response to Anthony Kinwelmershe is in rhyme royal, and could therefore be reasonably expected to be a "grave discourse", ironic and comic interruptions subvert the reader's expectations. Gascoigne first sets up the expectation of a grave discourse by his choice of metre and his serious opening, citing in his second stanza Croesus as his classical exemplar of excess, juxtaposed against the anonymous masses who die of poverty:

By too too much *Dan Croesus* caught his death,
And bought with bloud the price of glittering gold,
By too too litle many one lacks breath
And sterves in streetes a mirroure to behold:
So pride for heate, and povert pines for colde. (p. 275)

His moral stance is emphasized by his use of the mirror, an image he uses exclusively for didactic purposes. But having established what appears to be the moral tone of his work, Gascoigne immediately undercuts its seriousness with a flippant third stanza, introducing a succession of proverbs to overload his verse with contradictory popular wisdom:

Store makes no sore, lo this seemes contrarye,
And mo the meryer is a Proverbe eke,
But store of sores maye make a maladie ... (p. 275)²

¹ Tilley [L172].

² Tilley has "Store is no sore" [S903] and "The more the merrier, the fewer the better cheer (fare)" [M1153].

The sudden surfeit of contradictory proverb lore disrupts the gravity of the moral stance; but the flash of irony evaporates and his fourth and fifth stanzas revert to conventional examples, illustrating the extremes of rich and poor and conquerors and cowards, by which he argues:

So too much and too little, both be vyce. (p. 276)

It is possible to locate the beginnings of his exploitation of literary convention in such manoeuvres, where an unexpected change of tone is not signalled, leaving the reader to identify shifts of meaning. Indeed, Gascoigne emphasizes the responsibility of the reader as his main defence in the *Posies*.¹

Such calculated subversion of generic expectations seems confirmed in this poem by the sixth stanza, a comic irruption which shifts to a surprisingly bawdy register for the supposed gravity of rhyme royal:

If so thy wyfe be too too fayre of face,
It drawes one guest (too manie) to thyne inne:
If she be fowle, and foyled with disgrace,
In other pillowes prickst thou many a pinne:
So fowle prove fooles, and fayrer fall to sinne. (p. 276)

The extraordinary variety of registers Gascoigne incorporates into just seven stanzas is a display of virtuosity, and humour as coarse as this seems defiant given the seriousness of the themes. But this seems only to confirm the "game" which underpins the challenge, the bantering jocularly of the sequence, which is so characteristic of the Gray's Inn milieu. Gascoigne concludes with an ironic seventh stanza, and his pose of

¹ See Chapter II, section i.

weariness suggests some resistance to having been put on the defensive:

And of enough, enough, and nowe no more,
Bycause my braynes no better can devise,
When things be badde, a small summe maketh store.
So of suche verse a few maye soone suffise:
Yet still to this my weary penne replyes.
That I sayde last, and though you lyke it least,
It is enough, and as good as a feast. (p. 276)

The pun of "enough, enough" and the humorous tone of this final stanza reaffirm his unwillingness to submit. Prouty suggests that the significance of the year 1565 and Gascoigne's return to Gray's Inn is that he first writes as the repentant prodigal, but I would add that this was when he began to develop the subversive/submissive techniques whereby he learnt to negotiate external pressures.¹

John Vaughan, whose adage is third in the sequence, had entered Gray's Inn in 1562-3.² His theme, "*Magnum vectigal parcimonia*"³ was, like Anthony Kinweltershe's, calculated to be provocative.⁴ Gascoigne evidently describes his own case, but generalizes it to "such as list in bravery so to bragge" (p. 277). Whilst it is not strictly autobiographical, as it retains the third person narrator and moralizes in a generalized way, the poem gives a graphic description of the penalties of overspending. Its fifty-two lines of narrative didactic verse follow a rhyme-scheme which falls into clusters of five lines - ABABA CDCDC EFEFE etc. - a form he was to describe as a "Verlay" in

¹ Prouty, p. 81. He cites especially "*Sat cito, si sat bene*".

² Vaughan does not appear in *STC* or *DNB*; he entered Gray's Inn in 1562-3 (*Register*, fol. 539), the same year as Nathaniel and Nicholas Bacon.

³ "Thrift is a great income" (Pigman).

⁴ Tilley has "Parsimony is the best revenue" [P61], but his earliest example is James Howell, *Lexicon Teraglotton, an English-French-Italian-Spanish Dictionary*, 1659.

"Certayne Notes".¹ These clusters are not units of sense, although the final two lines do form a couplet.

Gascoigne adopts a vigorous tone from the outset, quoting a proverb in his opening line which contradicts Vaughan's challenge, but immediately demonstrating its foolishness and thereby supporting his challenger's proposition:

The common speech is, spend and God will send,²
But what sendes he? a bottell and a bagge ... (p. 276)

Gascoigne describes the downward spiral which so quickly eclipsed his own material prospects, the myth (for men of his class) that liberality would find its own way to courtly preferment:

I not denie but some men have good hap,
To climbe alofte by scales of courtly grace,
And winne the world with liberalitie:
Yet he that yerks old angells out apace,
And hath no new to purchase dignitie,
When orders fall, may chance to lacke his grace,
For haggard hawkes mislike an emptie hand:
So stiffely some sticke to the mercers stall,
Till sutes of silke have swet out all their land. (p. 277)

Just at the moment of apparent submission to conventional wisdom, however, the description of the lowest point of his own folly, Gascoigne cites another contradictory adage which threatens to subvert Vaughan's theme, with "haggard hawkes mislike an emptie hand".³ The surfeit of proverbial lore in effect gives as much authority to

¹ Gascoigne says he has only ever read one "Verlay" but offers the "Voyage into Holland" as "example of imitation" (p. 461).

² Tilley G247 quotes this line in Gascoigne.

³ Tilley has "Empty hands no hawks allure" [H111].

notions associated with the rewards for liberality as for parsimony; it is the essence of legal training to cultivate the ability to advocate either side of an argument, but the technique may be ironic here.

The satirical thrust of the narrative, however, works mainly against Gascoigne's own recent example. He creates a Langlandesque Davey Debet, who "bids thee welcome to thine owne decay"; much later, he was to create a whole gallery of such figures in his *Steele Glas*.¹ He had evidently learnt a hard lesson himself and draws a cynical moral from it:

Catch, snatche, and scratche for scrapings and for crummes,
Before thou decke thy hatte (on highe) with brooches. (p. 278)

This stringent realism sits oddly with the proverb lore which overloads his concluding six lines:

Remember still that softe fyre makes sweet malte,²
No haste but good (who meanes to multiplie:)³
Bought wytte is deare, and drest with sowre salte,
Repentaunce commes to late, and then saye I,⁴
Who spares the first and keepes the laste unspent,
Shall fynde that Sparing yeldes a goodly rent. (p. 278)

The final couplet restates the sentiment of the proverb, following the rueful admission that "repentaunce commes to late", and concluding with a flourish, with its paraphrase

¹ See Chapter III, section ii.

² Tilley has "Soft fire makes sweet malt" [F280], cf Taverner, *ibid.*, fol. 29v: "Make slowe hast, or haste the slowly ... To this agree the oure Englyshe proverbe ... soft fyre maketh swete malte". It is this phrase which suggests that the group were using Taverner's translation either instead of, or in addition to, a Latin Erasmus.

³ Tilley has "No haste but good" [H199].

⁴ Tilley has "When all is consumed repentance comes too late" [A211] and quotes this line in Gascoigne. See also Chapter II, section i.

of the adage itself.

Alexander Neville was not a member of Gray's Inn, but he was the only one of the five who had already been published when the "Memories" was composed.¹ In 1563, he had published *The lamentable tragedie of Oedipus*, which he claims in the dedication to have translated at the request of some friends who then "wrested it to another effect: and by this meanes blowen it abroade, by over rasshe & unadvised prynting" (sig. A4).² Conley believes it was translated for performance at Cambridge and places Neville as one of the first generation of politicized translators of the classics.³ Furthermore, Neville was a cousin of Barnage Googe and had contributed to his *Eclogs, Epytaphes, and Sonettes* (also 1563), so at this time he would have had the best literary credentials of the group.⁴ Significantly, he exchanged bantering poems with Googe, whose collection includes three pairs of poems and responses between the two cousins; that these carry the name of Googe's interlocutor suggests the importance of the addressee in such playful exchanges.⁵

¹ His chief work was to be an account in Latin verse of Kett's rebellion of 1549, with descriptions of Norwich and its antiquities, *Alexandri Nevilli Angli, de furoribus Norfolciensium Ketto duce, liber unus* (London: Bynneman, 1575). Because his disparaging remarks about the Welsh levies offended the government, a new edition was immediately issued and he published separately a pamphlet admitting his error of judgement, *Alexandri Nevilli ad Walliae proceres apologia* (London: Bynneman, 1576). He went on to publish an elegy for Sidney, *Academiae cantabrigiensis lacrymae tumulo P. Sidneij sacratae. 1587*.

² It was printed in octavo by Thomas Colwell, 28 April 1563, and reprinted in Thomas Newton, ed., *Seneca his tenne Tragedies* (1581).

³ "Neville, a very young man, coming very early in the period, apparently felt some reticence about the experiment of putting a Latin author into current English", Conley, *ibid.*, p. 104.

⁴ It is possible that he was lodging at Gray's Inn illicitly, a practice the authorities waged an ongoing and unsuccessful battle against; the *Pension Book* contains many orders against it. Neville went on to become secretary to, successively, Archbishops Parker, Grindal and Whitgift (Conley, *ibid.*, p. 143).

⁵ These carry titles such as "To Alexander Neville" and "Alexander Neville's Answer to the Same" and are numbered 22 and 22a, 24 and 24a, and 29 and 29a, in Judith M. Kennedy, ed., *Barnabe Googe*.

Neville's theme, "*Sat cito, si sat bene*"¹ is a jibe at the haste with which Gascoigne tried to make his way at court, or at least Gascoigne seems to treat it as such.² A proverb against rashness, it is quoted by Erasmus at the end of "*Festina lente*" ("Make haste slowly").³ The theme delivered, "he compiled these seven Sonets in sequence, therin bewraying his owne *Nimis cito*: [overhastiness: literally, "too quickly"] and therewith his *Vix bene* ["Not well enough"], as foloweth" (p. 278). The use of *Nimis* juxtaposed against *Vix* ["too much/not enough"] is a form of opposition which features heavily in proverbial structures and here Gascoigne uses it to pun on the adage in a display of false modesty.

Gascoigne's response is a corona of seven autobiographical sonnets linked by the simple repetition of each last line as the first of the next, an experimental form in English.⁴ He borrowed the form directly from Petrarch, but leaves the reader to recognize its form - an implicit challenge since it was so new - and calls it simply

Eclogues, Epitaphs and Sonnets (University of Toronto Press, 1989). Kennedy outlines the relationship between Googe and Neville, *ibid.*, pp. 6-8.

¹ "Fast enough, if well enough" (Pigman).

² The adage is memorably invoked by Macbeth, contemplating the murder of Duncan: "If it were done, when 'tis done, then 'twere well/ It were done quickly..." (*Macbeth*, I vii 1-2).

³ "Such people [over-hasty] should have the noble maxim of Cato dinned into their ears: "It is done soon enough if it is done well enough", which St. Jerome mentions when writing to Pammachius in these words: "That word of Cato's is well known, "*sat cito, si sat bene*"...", in Margaret Mann Phillips, *The Adages of Erasmus: A Study with Translations* (Cambridge, 1964), p. 190.

⁴ Robert Sidney began, but did not finish, a "Crown of Sonnets" and in 1595 George Chapman returned to the form with his corona of ten sonnets, "A Coronet for his Mistresse *Philosophie*", published with *Ovids Banquet of Sence* [STC 4985]. Lawrence A. Sasek argues that credit for perfecting the form in English should go to Donne, and that in some ways "Chapman showed less mastery of the form than did Gascoigne, for Chapman's repeated line is sometimes not an organic part of the sonnet it introduces", in "Gascoigne and the Elizabethan Sonnet Sequences", *N&Q*, 201 (1956), 143-4.

"seven Sonets in sequence".¹ Here, his use of the first person to describe his own foolishness makes a convincing performance of candour. His description of his infatuation with the court is a parody of the neoplatonic love at first sight:

In haste post haste, when fyrste my wandring mynde,
Behelde the glistering Courte with gazing eye,
Suche deepe delyghtes I seemde therein to fynde,
As myght beguyle a graver guest than I. (p. 278)

Where the first sonnet articulates his desire, the second describes the haste with which he hoped to advance and the despair he suffered at any delay:

Eche lingring daye did seeme a worlde of woe,
Tyll in that haplesse haven my head was broughte:
Waves of wanhope so tost mee too and fro,
In deepe despaire to drowne my dreadfull thoughte:
Eche houre a day, eche daye a yeare did seeme,
And every yeare a worlde my wyll did deeme. (p. 279)

The disruption of Time which unfolds throughout the sequence is parallel to that experienced by a lover.

The third sonnet describes Gascoigne's arrival at court, the fourth his extravagance and fall, and the fifth his retreat from courtly life. The penultimate sonnet draws the moral:

My haste made waste, my brave and braynsicke barge,
Did floate to faste, to catche a thing of nought:
With leysure, measure, meane, and many mo,
I moughte have kepte a chaire of quiet state,
But hastie heads can not bee settled so,
Till crooked Fortune give a crabbed mate ... (p. 280)

¹ "No well-known Elizabethan poet except Gascoigne employed the term", William T. Going, "Gascoigne and the Term "Sonnet Sequence"", *N&Q*, 199 (1954), 189-91, p. 190. However, William O. Harris sets it in context of experiments with the sonnet form by Arthur Broke, Bernard Garter, and others during the mid-1560s, in "Early Elizabethan Sonnets in Sequence", *SP*, 68 (1971), 451-69.

"Hastie heads" recalls Ascham and the lesson Gascoigne was to articulate again in the *Glasse of Government*. But the admonitory tone gives way to another surfeit of contradictory proverbial wisdom:

So sodaine falles doe hinder hastie joyes,¹
And as swifte baytes doe fleetest fyshe entice,²
So haste makes waste, and therefore nowe I say,³
No haste but good, where wysedome makes the waye.⁴ (p. 280)

The final sonnet for Neville resorts to siege imagery, which occurs repeatedly in Gascoigne's writing subsequent to his experiences in the Netherlands, but this may be its earliest use. The experience of "doughtye Dick", who tries to climb castle walls quickly, is set against that of the snail which climbs slowly but more surely. This faintly absurd comparison is followed by a series of examples which serve only to emphasize the principle of paradox which underlies the adage:

The swiftest bitche brings foorth the blyndest whelpes,
The hottest Fevers coldest crampes ensue,
The nakedst neede hathe ever latest helpes ... (pp. 280-1)

The conclusion of Gascoigne's corona may be found formally wanting, since it lacks the final repetition of the first line which is a principle of the form even at its simplest and, moreover, this final sonnet does not even end with a gemell but concludes over three lines:

With *Nevyle* then I fynde this proverbe true,
That *Haste makes waste*, and therefore still I saye,

¹ Tilley has "Hasty climbers have sudden falls" [C413].

² Tilley has "It is ill catching of fish when the hook is bare" [C190].

³ Tilley has "Haste makes waste" [H189].

⁴ Tilley has "No haste but good" [H199].

No haste but good, where wysedome makes the waye. (p. 281)

But the quotation of contradictory adages is by now a familiar technique, and this repeats from the penultimate sonnet; here, the provocative thrust of the set theme is subverted by Gascoigne's addition "where wisdom makes the way", showing that he knew what conclusion to draw from his experience. The sequence describes a sudden infatuation, a rapid rise and fall: Gascoigne's own account of his experience at court and why he "determined to abandone all vaine delights" and returned to Gray's Inn.

The fifth and final theme was set by Richard Courtop, who had entered Gray's Inn in 1559.¹ Gascoigne's response to his theme, "*Durum aeneum et miserabile aevum*"² is a highly ironic account of his own show trial by the members of the literary clique. It is written in poulter's measure, in loosely rhymed couplets, a form he characterizes ironically in the verse itself as "dogrell rime" (p. 282). Its legal satire and use of stage imagery set the poem very clearly in an Inns of Court context:

Thus is the stage stakt out, where all these partes be plaide,
And I the prologue should pronounce, but that I am afraide. (p. 281)

Having cast himself as a timorous Prologue, the four provocative members of the clique are characterized as the archetypal miracle play figures of tyranny, injustice and betrayal:

First *Cayphas* playes the priest, and *Herode* sits as king,
Pylate the Judge, *Judas* the Jurour verdicte in doth bring,
Vayne tatling plaies the vice, well cladde in rich aray,

¹ There is no record of him in *DNB* or *STC*; he appears in the *Register* as Courthope/Courthorp, fol. 520, p. 28.

² "A hard, bronze and miserable age" (Pigman). It is glossed by Harvey as "A harde World" (Mal. 792, sig. C3).

And pore *Tom Troth* is laught to skorn, with garments nothing gay . . .
(pp. 281-2)

If this reading is right, then Tom Troth might represent Francis Kinwelmershe.¹ There follows a procession of figures from the morality plays: Wantonnesse with her handmaids Decepte, Daunger, and Dalliaunce, with Pride in her pockets and Bawdrie in her brain; Riot and Revell, her allies; followed by the rustic characters Simme Swashe and Climme of the Clough.²

With its full cast of characters the poem is a kind of masque or interlude in miniature; Gascoigne himself calls it a "pageant" and conjures a whole orchestra of morality play figures:

To packe the pageaunt up, commes Sorowe with a song,
He says these jestes can get no grotes, and al this geare goth wrong:
Fyrst pride without cause, why he sings the treble parte,
The meane he mumbles out of tune, for lack of life and hart:
Cost lost, the counter Tenor chanteth on apace,
Thus all in discords stands the cliffe, and beggrie sings the base.
The players loose their paines, where so fewe pens [1575:pence] are sturring,
Their garments weare for lacke of gains, and fret for lack of furring. (p. 282)

There is considerable humour in this portrayal of an impoverished band of players: Sorrow leads the song; Pride-without-cause-why sings treble; Cost Lost is the counter tenor and Beggary the bass. The "discords" in this ragged band are comical, but perhaps reflect the superficial discords within the group, the bantering provocativeness

¹ Tom Troth may be Gascoigne, however, as the name reappears in the *Noble Arte of Venerie* in one of Gascoigne's original additions, "The Foxe to the Huntzman": "If poore Tom Troth might speake, of all that is amyse ..." (sig. N3). See Chapter II, section ii.

² Climme of the Clough was a figure from the Robin Hood ballads. See Margaret Spufford, *Small Books and Pleasant Histories* (London: Methuen, 1981), p. 232.

which characterizes the choices of theme for this initiation.

Gascoigne's concluding lines seem designed to reaffirm the comic potential of the situation by turning the whole initiation into a joke, including another jibe at himself:

When all is done and past, was no part plaide but one,
For every player plaide the foole, till *all be spent and gone*.
And thus this foolish jest, I put in dogrell rime,
Bicause a crosier staffe is beste, for such a crooked time.

(p. 282, my italics)

The image of the crosier staff was suspect, being physically crooked, but it was irreverent of the secular young Gascoigne to appropriate it. This may not be the lightest of humour, but in a community of young men it is a virtue to be robust and this was, after all, an initiation. It can have done the initiate no harm to display vigour and defiance, and Gascoigne does so in a virtuoso display of fashionable, experimental composition.

There can be little doubt that Gascoigne gained admission to the clique. The signs of manuscript circulation in the self-sufficient structure of the sequence with its prose links, combined with the flair with which he rose to the challenge, make this a virtual certainty. The "Memories" may be seen to exemplify what Gascoigne meant by "invention", the quality he was to stress in "Certayne Notes":

what Theame soever you do take in hande, if you do handle it but *tanquam in oratione perpetua*, and never studie for some depth of devise in the Invention, and some figures also in the handlyng thereof: it will appeare to the skilfull Reader but a tale of a tubbe. (p. 455)

This "depth of devise" is often the self-referential aspects of an idea or situation -

Gascoigne goes on to argue that "the occasions of Inventions are (as it were) infinite" - and it seems clear that he treated the challenge laid down by the literary clique as just one such occasion. The sequence is concluded in both editions with characteristically Gascoignesque legend-making, though 1573 has the more hyperbolic version:

And thus an end of these five theames, [wherein hath bene noted, that as the theames were sundrie and altogether divers, so Master Gascoigne did accomplishe them in five sundrie sortes of metre, yea and that seemeth most strange, he devised all these] admounting to the number of .CCLVIII. verses, {devised} riding by the way, writing none of them untill he came at the end of his Journey, the which was no longer than one day in riding, one daye in tarying with his friend, and the third in returning to Greys Inne:¹ [a small time for suche a taske, neyther wolde I willingly undertake the like. The meetres are but rough in many places, and yet they are true (*cum licentia poetica*) and I must needes confesse, that he hath more commonly bene over curious in delectation, then of haughtie stile in his dilatations. And therefore let us passe to the rest of his works.] (p. 282)²

The editorial voice allows Gascoigne the opportunity to comment on his own efforts, which he does ironically, giving himself qualified praise and declaring of the challenge "neyther wolde I willingly undertake the like". In 1573 the achievement is emphasized by G.T.'s hyperbole, but in 1575 it is done anonymously and more economically; this version concludes with a simple statement, following the bare facts of the legend, "and therefore called Gascoignes memories".³

Where the original challenge required him only to write "somewhat worthy to be remembred", Gascoigne evidently enlarged its scope, treating its emphasis on

¹ "... and therefore called Gascoignes memories". See the Pigman edition, p. 282.

² Square brackets indicate the 1573 text which was expunged for the 1575 revision. "Devised" was moved in 1575.

³ Pigman, pp. 290-3. A similar legend of composition on a journey accompanies his translation of "*De Profundis*" in the 1573 edition, but is also cut in 1575. See Chapter III, section ii.

memorability as material for a "fine Invention". As he does not fail to point out, he actually composed and memorized the 258 lines of verse "riding by the way", a total of eight sonnets, a poem in rhyme royal, a moral narrative, and a satire, on five different themes in five different metres. It was a truly remarkable feat even for someone with an Inns of Court training and would have attracted attention within Gray's Inn at least. The structure of the sequence is a virtuoso display of *sprezzatura*; the reader discovers the extraordinary circumstances of its composition only at the end of the sequence. On the first page of the manuscript it would look like the answer to a challenge; the prevalence of gaming and wagers at the Inns of Court is well documented. Only on the final page would come the boast of his feat of composition. The legend might have taken its simpler form in manuscript; the editorial voice in 1573 indulges in hyperbole as part of the characterization of G.T. and the simple form is more striking.¹

As well as its brilliant self-publicity, the sequence incorporates a considerable element of self-justification. It is evident in the way Gascoigne responds to his set themes; he entered into the bantering spirit of the challenges and made a positive decision to be autobiographical and defend his actions, offering the repentant prodigal as a means of facilitating his rehabilitation. That he did so defiantly, and defiantly well, is evident in the ironic/comic irruptions in *Satis sufficit* as much as in the satirical pageant of *Durum aeneum*. The "in jokes" of the "Memories" set Gascoigne in his context as a prodigal returned to the fold of Gray's Inn - not without some challenging moments - but now

¹ See Chapter I, section ii, for the move into print.

anxious to establish his position by aligning himself with an active (perhaps the dominant) literary group there. He seems to have made a flamboyant entry into the Kinweltershe clique and the circulation in manuscript of "Gascoignes Memories" can only have enhanced his reputation. The sequence seems to represent a concerted effort to publicize himself and his talents, even an early bid for poetic fame: above all, he had displayed his wit, perhaps creating a distinctive reputation for invention.

Supposes and Jocasta (1566).

*"I will set a good face on, to beare out the matter"*¹

Gascoigne was to consolidate his literary reputation at Gray's Inn during the following year by translating two plays, both from Italian, for performance in the Hall. Marie Axton assumes that *Jocasta* and *Supposes* formed part of the Christmas revels of 1566 and Katherine Duncan-Jones settles on the period of "New-Year-to-Shrovetide festivities in 1565-6, or those of 1566-7".² But there were also revels at All Hallows, Candlemas, and Ascension Day.³ As Prouty concludes, it is not possible to determine the exact date or occasion of the performances.⁴

¹ Feigned Erostrato, *Supposes*, IV vii 1-2 (p. 42).

² Marie Axton, *The Queen's Two Bodies*, p. 54; Katherine Duncan-Jones, *Sir Philip Sidney, Courtier Poet* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1991), p. 48.

³ A. Wigfall Green, *The Inns of Court and Early English Drama* (New Haven: Yale University Press; London: Oxford University Press, 1931), p. 13.

⁴ Prouty, pp. 157-8. There was no alternative venue.

Prouty suggests that the impulse for the gentlemen of Gray's Inn to produce these plays in 1566 "must have been" provided by the Inner Temple's production of *Gordoduc*.¹ Sackville and Norton's tragedy had been produced at the Inner Temple and at Court in 1561/2 and is notable as the first tragedy in blank verse on the English stage. This would have been something of a literary coup for the Inner Temple. The same kind of friendly rivalry evident among the young gentlemen of Gray's had emerged between the societies by about 1560² and this may account for the choice of an Ariostan comedy, which would also have been avant-garde, introducing as it did the *commedia erudita* to the English stage.³ *I Suppositi* may have been favoured because of its satire on the legal profession.⁴ The decision to translate and produce *Jocasta*, the first "Greek" tragedy on the English stage, may have been part of a combined project to outdo the gentlemen of the Inner Temple by producing a comedy and a tragedy. It may be, then, that the two plays were conceived as a pair; Harvey certainly perceived them as such, noting in his copy of the *Poesies* that they are "A fine Comedie: & a statelie Tragedie".⁵ Two years later, the gentlemen of the Inner Temple responded with *Gismonde of Salerne* (1568).⁶ Gascoigne, however, was apparently content to have demonstrated his proficiency in

¹ Prouty, p. 145. There was also an unauthorized publication in 1565.

² One "L.S." notes this amity arising from rivalry in "*Gesta Grayorum: The History of the Prince of Purpoole, Anno Domini 1594*", *Graya*, XLIV (Supplement), 1956, p. 150.

³ Prouty cites "the *kudos* of Ariosto's authorship" as influencing the choice, p. 160. The prose version of *I Suppositi* had been translated into French by J. P. de Mesmes, who published his parallel text as *La Comedie des Supposez de M. Louys Arioste, en Italien & Francoys* (Paris, 1552).

⁴ See especially David Bevington, *Tudor Drama and Politics* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1968), pp. 269-71.

⁵ Mal. 792, sig. B.

⁶ David Klein discusses this rivalry in *Milestones to Shakespeare: A Study of the Dramatic Forms and Pageantry that were the prelude to Shakespeare*, (New York: Twayne, 1970), pp. 65-70.

both genres; there is no evidence of any further experiments in drama before the *Glasse of Government* (1575).

The focus of the Inns' dramatic endeavours seems to have been the performance rather than the text: *Gorboduc* was published only five years after its performance, and then not under the aegis of the society.¹ Similarly, there is no evidence of any attempt or intention to publish the two Gray's Inn plays this year: when they were published, it was as part of Gascoigne's own (anonymous) collected works.² But his decision to include both Gray's Inn plays suggests that they had been well received.³ Inns of Court dramatic productions were traditionally, and almost invariably, collaborative ventures.⁴ It seems plausible, however, that Gascoigne's manoeuvrings to raise his literary profile since his return to Gray's Inn - most notably with the "Memories" sequence the previous year - had succeeded and his involvement with these two plays reflects his new-found prestige.

¹ The title of the authoritative printed edition, like the pirated first edition, mentions the performance at court, but not the one at the Inner Temple: *Gorboduc. The Tragidie of Ferrex and Porrex, set forth without addition or alteration but altogether as the same was shewed on stage before the Queenes Majestie, about nine yeares past, vz. the xviii. day of Januarie. 1561. by the gentlemen of the Inner Temple* (London: John Day, 1570).

² Similarly, the anonymous publication of the *Princelye Pleasures* (1576) was apparently Gascoigne's own initiative, entirely separate from the original commission, composition, and performance in the summer of 1575. See Chapter II, section ii.

³ See next section on Gascoigne's decision to move into print.

⁴ F.E. Schelling notes that Thomas Hughes "was assisted by no less than six other gentlemen" (including Christopher Yelverton) in writing *The Misfortunes of Arthur* for performance at Gray's Inn in 1587, in *Elizabethan Drama 1558-1642* (London: Constable; Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1908), Vol. I, pp. 105-6.

Again, Gascoigne exploited the opportunity to display his skills; he had studied Italian since his arrival in London and Prouty suggests that it was probably a rather literary version of the language.¹ The *Supposes* is entirely Gascoigne's own translation. A number of elements in Ariosto's comedy might be expected to appeal to Gascoigne and any others responsible for the choice: *I Suppositi* satirizes the law, lawyers, and the legal profession as a whole;² and its disguise-based plot, which would have been familiar already from its source, the *Captivi* of Plautus.³ Beyond this, the conceit of Ariosto's play may be considered to have some personal appeal. Given the evidence in the early poems of Gascoigne's protean approach to identity, the whole notion of "supposing" and "supposes" would have been a congenial theme:⁴

But understand, this our Suppose is nothing else but a mystaking or imagination of one thing for an other: for you shall see the master supposed for the servant, the servant for the master: the freeman for a slave, and the bondslave for a freeman: the stranger for a well known friend, and the familiar for a stranger ... (The Prologue or Argument, ll. 12-17; p. 7)

Prouty's discussion of *Supposes* focuses on the nature and style of the translation and Cunliffe noted that Gascoigne used both the verse and the prose versions of Ariosto's

¹ Prouty, p. 227. He adds that "Italian was probably his best language, for in it he seems most sure of himself". Gascoigne himself tells us that he learned Italian in London in the dedicatory letter to *Hemetes* (Cunliffe, p. 477).

² Gascoigne's Cleander, a doctor of law who is ridiculed as "Mumpsimus" and "Doctor Dotipole", seems to have more of the traits of the pantaloon of the *commedia dell'arte* than his Ariostan model. In performance he could have taken on recognizable characteristics of one of the seniors of Gray's Inn. Harvey's marginalia reveals his sympathy for Cleander.

³ R.W. Bond discusses the Latin elements in Ariosto's play and notes that there is no evidence in *Supposes* of independent study of Ariosto's Latin sources, in *Early Plays from the Italian* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1911), pp. lii-lv; p. lxiii. Susan M. Jordan returns to the topic in "The *Captivi* and Gascoigne's *Supposes*", *Classical Bulletin* 45 (1969), 37-41.

⁴ A.P. Rossiter seems to misunderstand Gascoigne's wordplay in the title: "Gascoigne torments the word with far more equivoques than I have been able to hint, even falling back on *sub* and *ponere* to wrest a bawdy twist from it", in *English Drama from Early Times to the Elizabethans: Its Background, Origins, and Developments* (London: Hutchinson, 1950), p. 131.

play.¹ Beyond this, Gascoigne does seem to achieve a kind of cultural translation, translating the more colloquial elements of his original into London humour - specifically, perhaps, Inns of Court humour, which is what Ariosto's satirical jibing at the legal profession becomes in context of a performance at Gray's Inn.² In the style of the later Elizabethans, Gascoigne facilitates the cultural transfer by adding local detail, regardless of the logistics of geography: the feigned Erostrato goes riding (out of Ferrara) in the fields beyond "Saint Anthonies gate" (II i 67, p. 19), which is also where "master *Casteling*, the jayler" lives (III iv 3, p. 32); and Philogano arrives in Ferrara at "the Aungell", where he leaves his horses (IV iv 21, p. 39). Gascoigne's Prologue is clean and witty, unlike Ariosto's, whose obscene equivoques had caused some surprise to Leo X's guests at its performance in 1518, although the pontiff himself apparently enjoyed the humour.³

There are three texts of Gascoigne's *Supposes*, as printed in the collections of 1573 and 1575 and, posthumously, 1587. There is no contemporary manuscript known. The actual differences in the texts are minimal: the date does not appear in the title in 1573,

¹ Prouty, pp. 159ff. He concludes that it is a free translation which adapts both versions of Ariosto's play and "makes the humour definitely English" (p. 165). See also J.W. Cunliffe, ed., *Supposes and Jocasta* (New York: Belles-Lettres Series, 1906), pp. 109-11. J.B. Charlton discussed the tone of the translation in *Shakespearian Comedy* (London: Methuen, 1938), pp. 78-81; his opinion that Gascoigne's treatment shows a different sensibility to its sources was challenged by Karl F. Thompson, "A Note on Ariosto's *I Suppositi*", *Comp. Lit.*, 12 (1960), 42-46 and this view which neglects Gascoigne's use of the prose version of *I Suppositi* - was in turn challenged by John L. Modic, "Gascoigne and Ariosto Again", *Comp. Lit.*, 14 (1962), 317-19.

² The most recent discussion of the translation is by Robin Kirkpatrick, *English and Italian Literature from Dante to Shakespeare* (London: Longman, 1995), pp. 215-23, 279.

³ Lily B. Campbell, *Scenes and Machines on the English Stage during the Renaissance: A Classical Revival* (New York: Barnes and Noble, 1923), p. 52. Bond, *ibid.*, details the differences between the two prologues, pp. lvii-lix.

but beyond that the only significant difference in the second edition is the addition of marginal notes, which comment on the "supposes" as they occur in the text.¹ The remaining changes are minor.² While the use of prose was in itself a radical innovation, Gascoigne's confidence in his flexible, colloquial prose style is reflected in this minimal revision.³ Because Shakespeare used the *Supposes* as the source of the Bianca sub-plot in *The Taming of the Shrew*, it is one of the best known of all Gascoigne's works.⁴ Of performances of the *Supposes* in Gascoigne's lifetime, however, we know only of the one at Gray's Inn in 1566 advertised in the title of the 1573 printed edition. The audience may have included Sir Philip Sidney (entered 1567)⁵ and the Earl of Oxford (entered 1566).⁶ It was not revived at court, since Gascoigne would have been sure to record the fact. However, one Elizabethan revival of *Supposes* has been recorded, which suggests that it became known beyond the literary circles of the Inns of Court. This formed a part of extended revels at Trinity College, Oxford, in 1582, described in

¹ Joel B. Altman discusses these marginal comments and their impact on the rhetorical process of the play, in *The Tudor Play of Mind: Rhetorical Inquiry and the Development of Elizabethan Drama* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978), pp. 157-161.

² The Pigman edition uses 1573 as a copy text and notes all the changes.

³ As F.E. Schelling noted, "if Gascoigne had the example of Sackville in his adoption of blank verse for tragedy, he certainly appears to have been the first to conceive the practicability of writing comic prose dialogue in English drama", in *Elizabethan Drama 1558-1642* (London: Constable; Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1908), vol. I, p. 105. But J.F. MacDonald notes the important precedent of Ariosto's own prose version in "The Use of Prose in English Drama before Shakespeare", *UTQ*, 2 (1932-3), 461-81, p. 468. Green notes that Gascoigne's *Supposes* is the first comedy in English prose, first comedy in English presented to an intellectual audience, and the first English play with a prose prologue, *ibid.*, p. 147.

⁴ See especially F.S. Boas, *An Introduction to Tudor Drama* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1933); Richard Hosley, "Sources and Analogues of *The Taming of the Shrew*", *HLQ*, 27 (1963-4), 289-308; Cecil C. Seronsy, "'Supposes' as the Unifying Theme in *The Taming of the Shrew*," *SQ*, 15 (1964), 131-45; J.C. Maxwell, "'The Shrew' and 'A Shrew': The Suitors and the Sisters," *N&Q*, 15 (1968), 130-1; John W. Velz, "Gascoigne, Lyly, and the Wooing of Bianca", *N&Q*, 20 (1973), 130-3; and Margeret Lael Mansell, "'Love Wrought These Miracles': Marriage and Genre in *The Taming of the Shrew*", *Ren.Drama*, 20 (1989), 141-67.

⁵ *Register*, fol. 572; Katherine Duncan-Jones, *ibid.*, p. 48.

⁶ *Register*, fol. 563.

the diary of Richard Madox, a Fellow of All Souls who had been elected Proctor on 5 April, 1581. Unfortunately, this does not mention Gascoigne by name, noting only that on 8 January: "we supt at y^e presidents lodging and after had y^e supposes handeled in the hall indifferently."¹

Like *Supposes*, the *Jocasta* was not printed until 1573, when Gascoigne included it in *A Hundreth*.² It was revised for the second edition of 1575, the *Posies*, and reprinted in the 1587 edition.³ A contemporary manuscript of the play, which once belonged to Roger, Lord North,⁴ is now in the British Museum.⁵ North had entered Gray's Inn in 1561, the same year as Anthony Kinweltershe, so it is perhaps not unreasonable to assume that his possession of a manuscript implies that he was associated with the Kinweltershe literary circle.⁶ Gascoigne shared the translation of *Jocasta*, his only known collaboration, with Francis Kinweltershe and Sir Christopher Yelverton who, as a serjeant-at-law, was a more senior member of the Inn.⁷ Even so, Gascoigne

¹ Frederick Boas, *University Drama in the Tudor Age* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1914), p. 161; also noted by E.K. Chambers, *The Elizabethan Stage* (Oxford, 1923), 4 vols., vol. IV, p. 321.

² Weiss suggests that the plays formed the original "book" but that Gascoigne changed his plans during the printing and decided to add the rest of his works (p. 102). Pigman argues the case in detail and concludes that "his original intentions for the volume remain obscure" (pp. 8-14 at p. 11). On the divisional title page to "Hearbes" in his copy, Harvey notes: "The best part, Hearbs: especially, the Comedy, & Tragedy, excellent" (Mal. 792, sig. 2B).

³ Again, the changes in 1575 are minor; the most interesting addition is the marginal notes.

⁴ Roger, second baron North (1530-1600), served in the 1558 parliament of which Gascoigne was a member (*DNB*).

⁵ British Museum MS. Add. 34063.

⁶ *Register*, fol. 530. G.K. Hunter follows Greg to note that "it bears all the marks of being a presentation copy", in "The Marking of Sententiae in Elizabethan Printed Plays, Poems, and Romances", *The Library*, 5th series, 6 (1951), p. 179. Pigman notes that the 1573 text was "set from a manuscript very similar" to North's (p. 3).

⁷ Gascoigne pays tribute to Yelverton in "*Dulce bellum inexpertis*" (*Posies*, 1575): "But hold my tale to *Rugge* and all the rest/ Of good Grayes Inne, where honest *Yelverton*,/ And I *Per se* sometimes yfeere
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managed to dominate the endeavour both at the production stage and later, writing the argument (Prologue) and three of its five Acts.¹ Kinweltershe translated the First and Fourth Acts, while Yelverton wrote (and may have read) the Epilogus.

Gascoigne's two Gray's Inn plays have nearly symmetrical titles, but not quite, and the variation seems significant. The full title of the comedy is:

"Supposes: A Comedie written in the Italian tongue by Ariosto, and Englished by George Gascoygne of Grayes Inne Esquire, and there presented. [1566.]" (p. 5; date added in 1575)

Although it is probable that Gascoigne (like Ariosto) performed his own prologue, it seems that the performance of the comedy was left to the rest of the company of Gray's Inn.² But the possibility of the translators' participation in the performance of *Jocasta* is raised by its full title:

"Jocasta: A Tragedie written in Greke by *Euripides*, translated and digested into Acte by George Gascoygne, and Francis Kinweltershe of Grayes Inne, and there *by them* presented, 1566" (p. 59; my italics).

If Yelverton's greater dignity did not allow him to act, the two translators could have played Eteocles and Polynices, or taken significant roles in the dumb shows.³ The

did rest,/ When amitie first in our brests begonne ... (st. 202, p. 437). His relationship with Kinweltershe is evident in the "Memories".

¹ The dumb shows appear in MS and 1573, the marginal notes were not added until 1575. The motto, "*Fortunatus Infoelix*", could be taken as evidence for his authorship of the "argument", if it were needed, although Harvey notes this was "lately the posie of Sir Christopher Hatton" on the title page of *Jocasta* (Mal. 792, sig. 2F5).

² See the letter from Bernadino Prospero to the Marchesana Isabella dated 8 February 1509 in Campori, *Notizie per la Vita di Lodovico Ariosto* (Modina: 1871), p. 50, cited and partly translated by E.G. Gardner, in *Ariosto, The King of Court Poets* (London, 1906, repr. New York: Greenwood Press, 1968), pp. 325-6.

³ Polynices, who makes his first entrance in Gascoigne's Second Act, declares: "Loe here mine owne citie and native soyle,/ Loe here the nest I ought to nestle in ...". He then describes his surroundings (Gray's Inn Hall) as "the holy sanctuarie, Of Baccus ... where of yore these guiltlesse hands of mine/

production evidently involved a relatively high proportion of the total membership of Gray's Inn, the largest Inn in the period, with 220 members. Although the large roles are few, the list of "Interloquutors" totals seventeen, including the Chorus of four "Thebane dames".¹ But the proliferation of walk-on roles in the dumb shows brings the total required cast to a minimum of 46 even if the extras doubled their parts. With almost one in five members actively involved, of whom a majority would be junior members, it is easy to see that the production represents a major investment of time and energy by young men who lived very much in community.

The full title of *Jocasta* includes the claim that it is "A Tragedie written in Greke by Euripides".² Its actual source, Lodovico Dolce's *Giocasta*, an adaptation from the Greek into Italian is not credited at all.³ Even so, Dolce follows Euripides quite closely, and Boas notes it as "a memorable moment when authentic Greek tragedy even in this pale reflex, stepped upon the English boards".⁴ The title seems also to claim responsibility for the division of the material, with its phrase "digested into Acte by...",

Full oft have offered to our mighty gods" (II i, p. 76). The lines would be delightfully self-referential if spoken by a member of Gray's Inn.

¹ The cast was of course all-male.

² Cunliffe was certain that Gascoigne and Kinwelmershe "did not consult either the original text or the Latin translation", in *Early English Classical Tragedies* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1912), p. 313. Willard Farnham suggests "they betray some misunderstanding" of the Italian "and make some additions", in *The Medieval Heritage of Elizabethan Tragedy* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1963), p. 358. See also Prouty, pp. 143-57.

³ This was first noted by J.P. Mahaffy, *Euripides (Classical Writers)*, (London, 1879), pp. 134-45. Cunliffe notes that Gascoigne and Kinwelmershe used the 1549 Aldine edition of Dolce, in *Early English Classical Tragedies*, p. 311.

⁴ Green also notes the significance, suggesting the translators thought it was Euripides' *Phoenissae*, *ibid.*, p. 146. Emrys Jones suggests the original audience may have been more alert to the unfamiliar "Greek" elements than the Senecan, in *The Origins of Shakespeare* (Oxford University Press, 1977), p. 105-6.

though strictly speaking this does go beyond the translators' task. Dolce's *Giocasta* is divided into the five acts of classical tragedy, but there are no formal scene divisions.¹ Kinweltershe follows Dolce but Gascoigne adds numbers to Dolce's divisions, so that his Acts II and III are each clearly divided and marked as Dumb Show, scenes I and II and Chorus. His Act V is most interesting, since its five scenes are preceded by the dumb show and concluded by the Chorus, a structure which suggests the five Acts of classical tragedy in miniature.

The active political awareness of the Inns has been frequently acknowledged and, as Marie Axton puts it, "Theban legend as dramatic metaphor makes a powerful criticism".² Axton's very brief reference challenged Frederick Boas's argument that because *Jocasta* is a translation of an Italian play, itself a version of a Latin rendering of Euripides, it lacks the topicality of *Gorboduc*.³ In 1566 the succession question was the single most burning issue on the political agenda. Elizabeth had no choice but to recall Parliament since she was in need of funds, but this was the very Parliament she had prorogued in 1563 because of its insistence that she settle the succession. Pressure had been building outside Parliament as the Puritan faction circulated revolutionary pamphlets.⁴ Although such audacity was rare, it was apparently during this session that

¹ Dolce does not number his scenes but prefixes the names of those characters who will appear.

² Marie Axton, *ibid.*, p. 55.

³ "Thus *Jocasta* has nothing of the interest which attaches to *Gorboduc* as a neo-Senecan treatment of a theme from national history, and turned into "a tract for the times", in *Tudor Drama*, p. 35.

⁴ Such as one by Thomas Sampson: "It is not your marriage ... which can help this mischief, for a certain ruin cannot be stayed by an uncertain means ... [But it is] most certain that unless the succession after you be and that in time - appointed and ordered, England runneth to most certain ruin." Cited by Mortimer Levine, *The Early Elizabethan Succession Question, 1558-1568* (Stanford, 1966), p. 167. See 84

Elizabeth learnt that she had to contend with parliamentary opinion even on such weighty - and what she would deem personal - matters.¹

The simple fact that *Jocasta* touches on the succession question and was performed by the gentlemen students of Gray's Inn in the year the clamour against Elizabeth reached its peak makes it topical. If it was performed in September or later, when Parliament was in session, it could be seen as a particularly provocative and politically-motivated production.² (Seven years later, it was described in the contents of *A Hundreth* as: "the wofull tragedie of Jocasta, conteining the utter subversion of Thebes".)³ Axton interprets the figure of Oedipus as representing "a "blind" Elizabeth", to show her "the dangers of her metaphorical marriage with the realm and by implication to urge a real marriage ...".⁴ But there is also a more complex level of signification in the whole sub-textual scheme of the dumb shows, which culminates in the union of spectacle and rhetoric in Gascoigne's Act V.

also Garret, *ibid.*, pp. 279-81; and J.E. Neale, "Parliament and the Succession Question in 1562/3 and 1566", *EHR*, 36 (1921), 497-520.

¹ Interestingly, Lord North's manuscript is dated 1568, the year in which he was sent to Vienna with the Earl of Sussex to invest the Emperor Maximilian with the Order of the Garter. The Archduke Charles was paying suit to Elizabeth and "it is said that North, in the interest of Leicester, sought to discourage the suit by putting forward the opinion that the queen would never marry. But on his return he was commissioned to present her with the archduke's portrait" (*DNB*).

² The 1566 Parliament sat from September through to January. November was a particularly critical period. See Levine, *op. cit.*, pp. 188ff.

³ See title page, verso, in *George Gascoigne. A Hundred Sundry Flowers* (Menston, Yorks.: Scolar Press, 1970).

⁴ Marie Axton, *ibid.*, p. 54.

Jocasta is very much a product of the Inns of Court avant-garde in its choice of subject, its topicality, and its treatment. The chief innovation brought to the play by Gascoigne and Kinwelmershe is the series of dumb shows, which have no source in Dolce but find a near antecedent in Sackville and Norton's play, *Gorboduc*.¹ It is possible that Gascoigne and Kinwelmershe, among other Gray's Inn men, were present when *Gorboduc* was performed at the Inner Temple in 1561. The tacit connection between the two plays is confirmed by Harvey, who notes both "The Myrroure of Magistrates" and "The Tragoedy of King Gorboduc" on the (cropped) title page in his copy of the *Posies*.² *Jocasta* follows *Gorboduc* in its theme of a ruined succession as well as in some significant formal innovations, not least of which is the use of blank verse, for which it has gained its minor place in English theatrical history.³ Although its versification is in places impossibly rigid, Gascoigne's sections have been noted to show "a considerable advance in flexibility" over *Gorboduc*.⁴ For example, he follows Dolce in allowing a break at mid-line:

Po. O deare Citie. *Eteo.* When thou arivest in *Greece*,
Chuse out thy dwelling in some mustie Moores. (II i 568-9, p. 91)

The change of speaker at mid-line is convincingly mimetic.

¹ Dieter Mehl emphasizes the continuity of the dumb show from civic pageantry and Royal Entries but on that basis he argues that the dumb show arrived almost fully-fledged in English drama with its appearance in *Gorboduc*, in *The Elizabethan Dumb Show. The History of a Dramatic Convention* (London, 1965), pp. 8-10.

² Harvey also specifically notes the performance: "The Tragoedy of Kyng Gorboduc: pennid by M.Thomas Sackvil, now Lord Buckhurst, and M.Thomas Norton: as the same was shewin before the Queenes Ma.^{ty} at Whitehall, 1561. by the Gentlemen of the Inner Temple" (Mal. 792, sig. 2F5).

³ J.A. Symonds points out that "the ancients did not rhyme" and the Italians already had a name for blank verse, "*versi sciolti*", in *Shakespeare's Predecessors* (London: Smith Elder and Co., 1900), p. 473.

⁴ Norman Sanders, Richard Southern, T.W. Craik, Lois Potter, eds., *The Revels History of Drama in English, vol. II. 1500-1576* (London and New York: Methuen, 1980), p. 238.

As classical tragedy, the action of *Jocasta* tends to be described rather than enacted - the dumb shows are by far the most "dramatic" element - but rhetorical devices are exploited to increase dramatic tension. Stychomythia is skilfully employed to enact conflict at the rhetorical level. The device is used liberally - it is particularly characteristic of Creon - and features in exchanges between the chief protagonists at the different stages of the story, between Eteocles and Polynices (II i), Eteocles and Creon (II ii), Tyresias and Creon (III i), Meneceus and Creon (III ii) and Antigone and Creon (V v).

The experiments in classical drama which took place at the Inns of Court may have found ideal staging in the structure of the Hall. The carved Screen which disguised the two doors provided a backdrop with integral entrances for the actors.¹ There was a Stage, probably raised, and a "house" between the two doorways to provide a third entrance representing Jocasta's Palace. The action took place, in effect, in front of the city gates and Jocasta's palace. The stage must have been very crowded at times, notably in the first scene of the second Act, when Eteocles enters with his army, bringing the total onstage to 34.² It had to be large enough for a chariot to be drawn on to it, for the Chorus of four to remain onstage throughout, and there must have been a

¹ Alternative forms of staging in such halls are suggested by Lily B. Campbell, *ibid.*, pp. 44, 92-119; Margaret Knapp and Michal Kabialka, "Shakespeare and the Prince of Purpoole: The 1594 Production of *The Comedy of Errors* at Gray's Inn Hall", *Theatre History Studies* [Univ. of Dakota], 4 (1984), pp. 69-81.

² Polynices is onstage with seven followers and Eteocles enters with 24; Jocasta is also onstage and the number may be as high as 38 if her four women are with her (p. 82).

way to enter through the doors from the "house" since so many actors make their entrance from it.

The location is "Thebes" and the doors were marked "*Homoloydes*" (p. 76) and "*Electrae*" (p. 68). Apart from these entrances, most of the theatrical potential of the location was used for the dumb shows, which required a trapdoor or similar device to form both a grave (Second Dumb Show) and a "great Gulfe" (Third Dumb Show). Boas notes that "it is evident that Gray's Inn spared nothing to secure spectacular effects".¹ The dumb shows were perhaps the most important part of the production; certainly, most of the expense went on these masque-like interludes, with their musicians, properties, and special effects. They are emphasized here since they are the only original contributions and because of the scale of the resources devoted to them.

The dumb shows are not only a series of comments on the individual acts, as Dieter Mehl suggests, they also form a counter-narrative to the inexorable movement of the rhetorical tragedy. It seems clear that they were conceived as a sequence, since a scheme or pattern is sufficiently in evidence to suggest either very close collaboration or single authorship. What is more, Mehl raises the possibility that a written "argument" of a sequence of dumb shows was distributed in advance of a play to select members of the audience, so that the subversive counter-narrative could have been very apparent.² The first and fifth dumb shows form a natural pair, since both King Sesostris

¹ Boas, *ibid.*, p. 35.

² Mehl, *ibid.*, p. 11.

and Fortune are drawn on to the stage in a chariot by four noble figures. These would have been visually very similar spectacles. Sesostris, the type of Ambition, is drawn by four kings, but Fortune has two kings and two slaves, whose lots she reverses. The overall scheme demonstrates a movement from raw Ambition to unstable Fortune - the same movement described in Gascoigne's concluding Chorus-sonnet and reiterated in Yelverton's epilogue.

In the first dumb show King Sesostris in a chariot is "drawne in by foure kinges in their Dublettes and Hosen, with Crownes also upon their heades" (p. 61).¹ The description says that this was "Representing unto us Ambition", a theme which recurs in Yelverton's epilogue and applies to the play in relation to Eteocles's ambition, which overcomes his filial and fraternal loyalties and ultimately causes the destruction of Thebes. The dumb show is immediately succeeded by the entrance of Jocasta and twenty followers: the stage is suddenly very full, a bustling court scene for the queen's discussion with her adviser.

The second of the dumb shows requires the most spectacular special effects of the sequence, with its use of a grave and parted fire. The significance of the funeral, "discord by the history of two brethren" (p. 75), would have been quickly apparent with the two processions and the funeral pyre which parts its flames. Such fraternal enmity obviously alludes to Eteocles and Polynices, whose entrance is included at the

¹ Emrys Jones notes the direct influence of this scene on Marlowe's tableau of Tamberlaine in his chariot drawn by two kings in *2 Tamburlaine*, *ibid.*, p. 123.

end of this dumb show and so follows seamlessly from it. But its broader thematic significance is the threat of civil war, the over-riding fear associated with an unsettled succession. The third dumb show enacts the story of Curtius, the exemplar or "type" of loyalty.¹ As cornets sounded, "there opened and appeared in the stage a great Gulfe" (p. 98). The efforts of six gentlemen to fill it with earth, and of "the ladyes and dames that stode by" to fill it with their jewelry, fail. Then "came in a knighte with his sword drawn, armed at all poyntes", who:

after solempne reverence done to the gods, and curteous leave taken of the Ladyes and standers by, sodeinly lepte into the Gulfe the which did close up immediatly, betokening unto us the love that every worthy person oweth unto his native countrie, by the historye of *Curtius* ...

After the dumb show Tiresias enters, led by his daughter Manto. The emblematic significance of this entrance may be related to Time and his daughter, "*Veritas Temporis Filia*", a part Elizabeth herself had adopted during her coronation procession.²

The demonstration of individual self-sacrifice in the third dumb show is subverted by the fourth, which is a battle scene between brothers (a civil war) and so relates not only to Eteocles and Polynices but also to the second dumb show. It opens as "the Trumpets sounded, drummes and fifes, and a greate peale of ordinaunce was shot of" (p. 110), a

¹ Gascoigne was to characterize himself as Curtius for loyalty in the dedicatory epistle to *Hemetes the Heremyte*: "Only employ me (good Quene) and I trust to be proved as dillygent as *Clearchus*, as resolute as *Mutius*, and as Faythfull as *Curtius*..." (Cunliffe, p. 477).

² This was Whitney's fourth emblem, although it was already well known. Conventionally, Time had two daughters, Truth and Justice, and in Act V scene v Oedipus and Antigone allude to this. It was also used by Beaumont and Fletcher in *The Triumph of Time* with Time's other daughter, Justice, and informs both *The Winter's Tale* and the ending to *King Lear*.

moment which surely alludes to *Gorboduc*. There, in the "domme shew before the fifth act", "a company of Hargabusiers and of Armed men all in order of battaile" entered and "after their peeces discharged" menaced each other before they exited.¹ Here, two parties of three knights, each with seven armed men, "drawing their Swords, fell to cruell and couragious combate". It may be that, beyond the wider political significance of the performance, part of the local topical significance can be detected: the gentlemen of the Inner Temple had fired their arquebuses and menaced each other, but the gentlemen of Gray's Inn staged a vigorous mock-battle. The six knights make their attendants stand back while they fight until two on the one side are slain; the one remaining then runs about to draw one of the three apart from the others, and kills him, doing the same in turn with the second and third. Described as the history of "the brethren *Horatii* and *Curiatii*", this signified "the incomparable force of concord betweene brethren, who as long as they holde together may not easily by any meanes be overcome, and once being dissevered by any meanes, are easily overthrowen" (pp. 110-11).

The final dumb show is the moving tableau of Fortune with its remarkable visual similarities to the entrance of Sesostris in the first. She would have been immediately recognizable:

a woman clothed in a white garment, on hir head a piller, doublefaced, the formost face fair and smiling, the other behinde black and louring, muffled with a white laune about hir eyes, hir lap full of Jewelles, sitting in a charyot, hir legges naked, hir fete set upon a great round ball, and beyng drawn in by .iiii.

¹ Sackville and Norton, *Gorboduc* (Menston: Scolar Press Facsimile, 1968), sig. G.
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noble personages, she ledde in a string on hir right hand .ii. kings crowned, and in hir lefte hand .ii. poore slaves very meanelly attyred (p. 122)

This completes the scheme of the dumb shows, although a final tableau is yet to come in the final scene of Gascoigne's fifth Act. First, there was Sesostris, the type of individual ambition; second, fraternal enmity with the brothers' funeral; third, Curtius, the type of individual sacrifice; fourth the battle scene between the two brothers Horatii and Curiatii; and finally "a plaine Type or figure of unstable fortune".

The topicality of the production is confirmed by a close reading of Gascoigne's fifth Act, where rhetoric and spectacle combine. It has already been noted that this Act is "digested" into five scenes, preceded by the final dumb show and concluded by the Chorus, a kind of classical tragedy in miniature. With this model in mind, Gascoigne's fifth act takes on unexpected significance, with the third scene providing the characteristic "turn" of tragedy. The first scene, in which Creon laments the death of Meneceus, essentially repeats the material of the end of Act IV and the only advance in the action is the report that Jocasta and Antigone have gone "into the campe" to try to prevent the combat between Polynices and Eteocles. In the second scene, Nuntius enters to report the deaths of Polynices and Eteocles and the suicide of Jocasta; the impact of events on the beholders is prominent in his description, spectacle being a very important device in this act. Nuntius warns of the imminent arrival of Antigone with the three corpses:

Antigone toke up
The Queene *Jocasta* and the brethren both,
Whom in a chariot hither they will bring

Ere long: and thus, although we gotten have
The victory over our enemies,
Yet have we lost much more than we have wonne. (V ii 195-200, p. 129)

As he articulates this final, crucial paradox, he exits, leaving the Chorus to assume the function of "presenter" (as in Lydgate's "mummings"):¹

O hard mishap, we doe not onely heare
The wearie newes of their untimely death,
But eke we must with wayling eyes beholde
Their bodies deade, for loke where they be brought. (V ii 201-4, p. 129)

The "turn" in the third scene consists of the action freezing into an emblematic, spectacular mode of presentation which consists of the "presenter", the tableau, and the Chorus.² Antigone enters, drawing a chariot bearing the corpses of Polynices, Eteocles, and Jocasta. The visual impact of three royal corpses and a dishevelled princess would have been stunning. Antigone now assumes the role of presenter, and her rhetorical lament on the death of the queen (and her sons) would have paled in comparison with the *tableau* she offers:

Behold, your Queene twixt both hir sonnes lyes slayne,
The Queene whom you did love and honour both,
The Queene that did so tenderly bring up
And nourishe you, eche one like to hir owne,
Now hath she left you all (O cruell hap)
With hir too cruell death in dying dreade,

¹ Especially, for example, "Mumming at London", in which Fortune has a major role. *The Minor Poems of John Lydgate*, ed. Henry MacCracken, *EETS*, 192 (1934), pp. 682ff.

² Dieter Mehl memorably commented that in dumb shows "the tableaux and the dramatic text stand in the same relation to each other as the picture and its explanation in an emblem", in "Emblems in English Renaissance Drama", *Ren. Drama* 2 (1969), 39-52 at p. 47. He noted that his study *The Elizabethan Dumb Show*, had neglected their emblematic significance and went on to remark that: "Plays like *Gorboduc* and *Jocasta* show clearly enough that the most rhetorical plays were at the same time the most emblematic ... these plays appealed just as much to the eyes as to the ears of the audience," in "Emblematic Theatre", *Anglia* 95 (1977), 130-38, p. 131.

Pynning with pensifenesse without all helpe. (V iii 7-13, pp. 129-30)

Antigone addresses the corpses, blaming Wrath - not Ambition or Fortune - for their deaths:

Alas, what wicked dede can wrath not doe? (V iii 26, p. 130)

Oddly, perhaps, her lament is devoted to the spoliation of her marital prospects, but her next speech turns to her father's ill fortune. Oedipus is offstage but Antigone addresses him directly, calling him forth to hear the news since he cannot see it, and his entrance - which marks the beginning of the fourth scene - forms another version of Time and his daughter. Here, it is the daughter, Truth, who summons Time.

The fourth scene is also emblematic, but is more a speaking *tableau vivant* than the fixed picture with commentary of the previous scene. As Antigone addresses Oedipus she moves seamlessly from one *tableau* to another. At her suggestion of the annihilation of the royal line Oedipus enters from a "darksome denne": he too would have been instantly recognizable in this emblematic mode:

Why dost thou call out of this darkesome denne,
The lustles lodge of my lamenting yeres,
O daughter deare, thy fathers blinded eyes,
Into the light I was not worthy of?
Or what suche sight (O cruell destenie)
Without tormenting cares might I beholde,
That image am of deathe and not of man? (V iv 1-7, p. 131)

Here, Truth discovers not Time but Death, by his own admission; the relation of the scene to emblems of Time seems supported, however, by Antigone's reaction to Creon's judgment in the next scene when she chooses to be exiled with him. There, she

refers to Justice, Time's other daughter: "O father, father, Justice lyes on sleepe,/ "Ne doth regarde the wrongs of wretchednesse, "Ne princes swelling pride it doth redresse" (V V 197-8, p. 137). The bier and its load remains onstage throughout this and the ensuing final scene, the Chorus, and the Epilogus.

The whole final scene of Creon's banishment of Oedipus, Antigone's struggle with Creon, and Oedipus's final realization that his fall is complete, therefore takes place against the spectacle of a pile of corpses. Oedipus sums up the wheel movement of Fortune in one succinct couplet, which suggests that his character was being treated as a victim of Fortune more than as one who tried to avoid his fate:¹

"One happy day did raise me to renoune,
"One haplesse day hath throwne mine honour downe. (V v 154-5, p. 136)

After some very moving stage business, with Antigone guiding her father's hands to touch the faces of his wife/mother and their two sons, she offers herself as guide and finds a staff to support him. Oedipus offers himself before his departure to the citizens as the "myrrour of misery":²

Deare Citizens, beholde your lorde and king
That *Thebes* set in quiet government,
Nowe as you see, neglected of you all,
And in these ragged ruthful weedes bewrapt,
Ychased from his native countrey soyle,
Betakes him selfe (for so this Tyraunt will)
To everlasting banishment: but why
Do I lament my lucklesse lotte in vaine? (V v 240-7, pp. 138-9)

¹ This seems confirmed by hints throughout the play, but especially Antigone's speech in the preceding scene, where she blames her father's "lucklesse lotte, the froward frowning fate" (p. 131).

² The phrase occurs in the "Argument".

The "Greek" material concludes with the final acceptance by Oedipus of his fate as he freezes into the final tableau:

"Since every man must beare with quiet minde,
"The fate that heavens have earst to him assignde. (V v 248-9, p. 139)

It is only in this final couplet that Oedipus alludes to his own attempts to avoid his destiny. But such apparently stoic resignation is immediately undercut by the Chorus, with its sonnet describing again the whole cycle from ambition to inevitable fall.

The sequence of spectacles offered in the dumb shows do not follow a providential scheme; indeed, it is almost anti-providential in its movement towards unstable Fortune. Behind the tableau of stoic resignation and humility presented by Oedipus and Antigone is the chariot piled with its gruesome load: it is this composite image which the Chorus indicates as it once again adopts the "presenter" function. This it does in English sonnet form, describing more fully the wheel movement of Fortune:

Example here, lo take by *Oedipus*,
You kings and princes in prosperitie,
And every one that is desirous
To sway the seate of worldly dignitie,
How fickle is to trust in fortunes wheele:
For him, whom now she hoyseth up on hye,
If so he chaunce on any side to reele,
She hurles him downe in twinkling of an eye:
And him agayne, that grovleth nowe on grounde,
And lyeth lowe in dungeon of dispaire,
Hir whirling wheele can heave up at a bounde,
And place aloft in stay of stately chaire,
As from the Sunne the Moone withdrawes hir face,
So might of man doth yeelde dame fortune place. (p. 139)

Such strong emphasis on Fortune's "whirling wheele" undercuts Oedipus's stoicism and echoes the movement of the dumb shows towards the uncertainty of Fortune.

The same "Lo here" formula is used by Yelverton as Epilogus, who adopts the role of presenter, confirming that the chariot remains in place:

Lo here the fruite of high aspiring minde,
Who weenes to mount above the moving skies:
Lo here the trappe that titles proud do finde,
See, ruine growes when most we reache to ryse: (p. 139)

Rather than blaming Fortune, Yelverton's epilogue draws a different moral, blaming Ambition for the tragedy:¹

Cease to aspire then, cease to soare so high,
And shunne the plague that pierceth noble breastes:
To glittering courtes what fondness is to flee,
When better state in baser Towers rests? (p. 140)

Although Ambition plays an important part in the sequence of dumb shows and obviously has some application to Eteocles, it is only of equal importance to the vagaries of fortune. It was too early in the reign to expect the providential history of Spenser; instead, Elizabeth seems to be implicated in the figure of Fortune with her absolute and arbitrary power over the succession. The scheme of the dumb shows moves through individual ambition and fraternal rivalry and, despite individual self-sacrifice, towards civil war and finally anarchy in the form of submission to the whims of Fortune.

¹ This has sometimes been mistaken for its *raison d'être*. For example, "The message of *Jocasta*, as interpreted by Christopher Yelverton in his epilogue, was familiar and Senecan", *Revels History of Drama in English, 1500-76*, p. 244.

In his collaboration with Francis Kinweltershe, Gascoigne can be seen to be engaging enthusiastically with the politicized literary milieu of the Inns of Court. He was evidently creating a reputation at Gray's Inn as a literary man, with the circulation in manuscript of the "Memories" and perhaps earlier poems, and his high profile in the translation of *Supposes* and *Jocasta*. He was still several years from the decision to move into print and there is evidence that he first tried to pursue a courtly route to preferment by entering the system of patronage.

Chapter I. 1555-73. The Gray's Inn Years and the Move into Print.

(ii) The Move into Print: *A Hundreth Sundrie Flowres* (1573).

*"I have thought good (I say) to present you with this written booke, wherein you shall find a number of Sonets, layes, letters, Ballades, Rondlets, verlayes and verses, the workes of your friend and myne Master F.J. and divers others ..."*¹

Gascoigne's decision to move into print with *A Hundreth* seems certain to have been prompted by the need to create a new opportunity for preferment. As Prouty's biography suggests, his fortunes had continued to diminish through the 1560s, after his return to Gray's Inn.² In 1569 he was expelled from Gray's Inn, probably for unpaid debts, although this was not uncommon.³ By 1570, his career reached its lowest point when he was imprisoned in Bedford Gaol in a law suit involving his father.⁴ It is evident that the move into print was part of a concerted effort to generate opportunities for preferment, as it coincides both with his return to Holland in a military capacity and his first moves in the system of patronage, with two poems addressed to Lord Grey of Wilton.⁵ The "Devise of a Maske" for Viscount Montague also belongs to this period, but it is an occasional poem and evidence of any further patronage is doubtful.⁶

¹ "G.T.", letter to "H.W." in the *Discourse*, p. 144.

² "The return to the fellowship of Gray's Inn and life in London was but a brief interlude in the inexorable succession of disasters which reduced the once gay young man to the status of a soldier of fortune in the Dutch wars", Prouty, p. 34. Gascoigne was granted two patents in 1569, but these "seemed of little value", Prouty, p. 46.

³ See Chapter I, section i, "Early Poems".

⁴ Prouty, pp. 45-48.

⁵ Forms of patronage ranged from the "extremely informal" relationship between poet and patron in which poems were "generally written to suit a particular occasion and a known taste" identified by Jan van Dorsten, "Literary Patronage in Elizabethan England: The Early Phase", in *Patronage in the*

It is not known how Gascoigne became known to Lord Grey of Wilton, or what form of patronage he received.¹ Gascoigne's tendency to allegorize from his own experience, a characteristic familiar from the Gray's Inn years, is evident in "Gascoignes voyage into *Hollande, An. 1572*" (77). This overtly autobiographical poem is based in the contrast between youth and age. Gascoigne presents his account of his adventures as an allegory of youthful folly:

This trustie tale the storie of my youth,
This Chronicle which of my selfe I make,
To shew my Lord what healplesse hadde ensewth,
When heddy youth will gad without a guide,
And raunge untide in leas of libertie ... (ll. 13-7, p. 319)

The returned prodigal, prompted by need, is implicit in the alternative theme:

Or when bare neede a starting hole hath spide
To peepe abroad from mother Miserie,
And buildeth Castels in the Welkin wide,
In hope thereby to dwell with wealth and ease. (ll. 18-21, pp. 319-20)

In this way Lord Grey is invited to read the poem as an allegory of the failure of Gascoigne's recent first attempt at preferment through military service.

Renaissance, ed. Guy Fitch Lytle and Stephen Orgel (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1981), p. 192 to the more formal and systematic patronage practiced by the Pembroke family, as identified by Michael G. Brennan, in "The Literary Patronage of the Herbert Family, Earls of Pembroke, 1550-1640", Oxford D.Phil. thesis, 1982. Wallace T. MacCaffrey suggests three main types of patronage: keeperships of castles, parks, and so on (such as Dyer had at Woodstock); offices in service to a Leicester or a Burghley; and places dispensed by Elizabeth herself to those individuals (like Hatton) "with the poise and wit to catch her eye", "Place and Patronage in Elizabethan Politics", in *Elizabethan Government*, ed. S.T. Bindoff *et al* (London, 1961), pp. 103-11. For Leicester's patronage see Rosenberg, *ibid.*, and for Hatton's career, Eric S. Brooks, *Sir Christopher Hatton* (London, 1946).

⁶ Prouty connects the "Devise of a Maske" with the defamatory note against Gascoigne's election as Burgess for Midhurst, and his rapid departure for England. See Prouty, pp. 49ff, and my Introduction.

¹ Prouty, pp. 56ff.

It is significant that both of the poems addressed explicitly to Lord Grey from about this time seek to generate sympathy for the poet. The other, which has gained much critical attention for its self-deprecatory wit and its (self-)presentation of Gascoigne as a failure in his successive attempts to gain preferment, is "Gascoignes wodmanship" (72).¹ Another overtly autobiographical poem, it enumerates Gascoigne's attempts to follow philosophy, law, the court, the military, and asks Lord Grey to train him "into some better trade" (l. 70, p. 314). Playing upon the occasion of the hunt with Lord Grey, Gascoigne presents himself as an inept hunter and poor woodman, a disingenuous pose given the expertise he displays in the *Noble Arte*. "Wodmanship" concludes with the image of the doe heavy with young to represent his failure to make the most of his many opportunities:

And when I see the milke hang in hir teate,
Me thinkes it sayth, olde babe now learne to sucke,
Who in thy youth couldst never learne the feate
To hitte the whytes whiche live with all good lucke. (ll. 145-8, p. 316)

Gascoigne's willingness to blame his youth for his past indiscretions is surely a pragmatic appropriation of a range of available models as well as evidence of his tendency to allegorize from his own experience.

Despite the favour implied by these patronage poems, in 1572/3 Gascoigne seems to have left England again for the Low Countries, covering his movements in an ever more dense veil of mystification.² Most notable of his manoeuvres is the anonymous

¹ For Gascoigne's self-presentation in this poem see Jonathan Crewe, in *Trials of Authorship*, and Daniel Javitch, in "The Impure Motives of Elizabethan Poetry". See my Introduction.

² See my Introduction. Prouty's account is his third chapter, pp. 49-77.

publication of *A Hundreth*, in which the range of self-presentations in Gascoigne's early poems was exploited to support a fictive account of how the collection came to be published during his absence. Because of his anonymity, he was unable to make any assertions *in propria persona* to justify his decision to publish his work. But two years later, when the second edition was published as the *Posies* under his own name, he justified his publication of *A Hundreth* as a means of advertising his skills. There, it is linked to his military service in Holland, and he claims that he allowed the publication because he "thought good to notifie unto the world" his abilities with both pen and sword in the hope of gaining "exercise" or "employment".¹ But this equivalence of military and literary expertise belongs to 1575, not 1573; although *A Hundreth* includes the "Voyage to Holland" in the miscellaneous poems overtly ascribed to Gascoigne, its military persona is only one of his range of self-presentations. In 1575 this persona is enhanced and linked to his new motto, "*Tam Marti quam Mercurio*". Although he adduces the publication (in 1573) as part of his desire (in 1575) to make reparation for "the oversight of my youth", the theme of penitence - prominent in the dedicatory letters in the *Posies*, where this statement is found - does not seem to have informed the compilation of the earlier version.²

Gascoigne's anonymity was probably a courtly attitude, as Prouty suggests.³ But it also sets up a playful challenge to the reader to identify the author: the collection includes

¹ "To the Reverend Divines", p. 362, ll. 15-16.

² See Chapter II, section i.

³ "A gentleman, even though he had the example of Googe, Howell, and Turbervile, could not allow the world to think that he published his poems in order to make money", Prouty, pp. 58-9. The notion of

some works attributed to Gascoigne by name and hints as to his responsibility for some of the anonymous portions. *A Hundreth* was designed to suggest multiple authorship: rather like a miscellany, it includes plays, a prose fiction, long poems, and a variety of short poems ostensibly by several authors in a section entitled "The Devises of Sundrie Gentlemen".¹ That section is especially significant as it is one of the key supports of the fiction of multiple authorship, although it also includes a group of poems ascribed to Gascoigne.

Gascoigne's anonymity and the complex game of identifying the author is a curious departure from the practice of his contemporaries and immediate predecessors.

Alexander Neville's cousin Barnabe Googe had claimed, ten years before, that his first collection of poetry had been published during his absence from the country without his consent, but he still allowed his name to be put to it, despite his close connection with Sir William Cecil, later Lord Burghley.² Googe had of course been followed by Howell and Turbervile, each of whom published one anthology to which they added their names, to demonstrate their fitness for other activities.³ But Googe's book was the first of the single-author Elizabethan anthologies to be printed, and its publication had been

publication being "somewhat discreditable" originates with Ernest Saunders' article, "The Stigma of Print. A Note on the Social Bases of Tudor Poetry", *E in C*, 1 (1951), 139-64, at p. 139; but this was challenged by E.H. Miller, who noted the predominance of middle-class authors who "for better or worse, gave to literature a middle-class foundation", in *The Professional Writer in Elizabethan England. A Study of Non-Dramatic Literature* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1959), p. 6.

¹ So convincing was this that B. M. Ward, in his edition of *A Hundreth*, ascribed the volume to "multiple authorship" (*ibid.*, p. 6, n.26).

² William E. Sheidley, *Barnabe Googe* (New York: Twayne, 1981), pp. 17, 19-26.

³ Like Gascoigne, Turbervile attributes the publication of his collection to "retchlese youth" (sig. *2v), though by his own claims in his dedicatory epistle the earliest extant edition is apparently a revised edition of a first, now lost.

presented as the act of his friend Blundeston, who supported the claim in his own commendatory epistle.¹ This may have been the immediate model for the fictive framework of letters surrounding *A Hundreth*, which was designed to suggest a similar defence, but is attributed to fictive participants: A.B., H.W., G.T., and F.J..

A Hundreth sundrie Flowres bounde up in one small Poesie makes a contradictory claim to the wholeness of the *cento* while advertising the variety of the collection's forms and genres. Gascoigne gathered up a range of material for his anthology, from early poems such as the "Bootlesse Comparison" (ca. 1561) and the "Memories" (1565) to work still in progress, such as "Dan Bartholmew of Bathe". The idea of "sundrie" flowers gives a reason for the diversity - and unevenness - of the work, just as Churchyard's "Chips" provided a cover for his twelve "severall" labours, though in Gascoigne's case its primary function is to support the fiction of plural authorship which is constructed in the prefatory letters.²

The recent bibliographical work by Adrian Weiss, which identified the sharing of the printing between Henry Bynneman and Henry Middleton, has made sense of the structure of *A Hundreth*, showing that the volume as it was printed was not what had

¹ Googe admits, however, that he had "too hastily finished" "Cupido Conquered" because the beginning of it had been given with the rest to be printed; see *Eclogues, Epitaphs, and Sonnets*, ed. Judith M. Kennedy (Toronto, Buffalo, London: University of Toronto Press, 1989), p. 39.

² In 1575, Gascoigne used the same garden metaphor to defend the variety of material in his tripartite *Posies*: "And yet in all this discourse I see not proved, that either that gardener is too blame which planteth his Garden full of fragrant floures: neyther that planter to be disprayed, which soweth all his beddes with seedes of wholesome herbes: neyther is that Orchard unfruitfull, which (under shew of sundrie weedes) hath medicinable playsters for all infirmities", in the epistle "To al yong Gentlemen", pp. 366-67.

been planned.¹ Most significant is the displacement of the prefatory material: in *A Hundreth* as Gascoigne seems to have planned it, the letters ostensibly from the publisher and editor would have preceded that of the printer, and provided a story for the publication of the manuscript as a whole, not just the *Discourse*. As it was planned, the full text of the collection would have been recessed into a framework of letters from H.W., ostensibly the publisher, and G.T., ostensibly the editor. They discuss a manuscript of literary works which G.T. has apparently borrowed from its authors. But H.W. names it *A Hundreth Sundrie Flowres*, not the "devises" as might be expected; there can be no doubt that these two fictive characters are referring to the whole collection and not simply the avowedly miscellaneous verse. As Weiss has shown, because of the confusion caused by shared printing these two letters are placed at the beginning of the *Discourse* rather than at the beginning of the whole volume.² That place is taken by a letter supposedly from the Printer, which has the function of casting doubt on the letters of H.W. and G.T..

The importance of the prefatory letters can hardly be overstated. What is suggested by the letters of H.W. and G.T. is the fictive existence of a young literary circle, one member of which is "F.J.", protagonist of the prose fiction *A Discourse of the adventures passed by Master F.J.*. In his letter, G.T. appears as editor and as an aspiring publisher, on the periphery of the circle, who betrays the confidence of its

¹ Adrian Weiss, "Shared Printing, Printer's Copy, and the Text(s) of Gascoigne's *A Hundreth Sundrie Flowres*", *SB*, 45 (1992), 71-104.

² Weiss, *ibid.*, *passim*.

budding authors by passing the manuscript on to H.W. to be published.¹ The structure of relationships between A.B., H.W., G.T., and F.J. which emerges from these letters problematizes the whole issue of responsibility for both the writing and publication of *A Hundreth*.

A Discourse of the Adventures passed by Master F.J.

When *A Discourse of the Adventures passed by Master FJ* first appeared in print as one of the principal items in *A Hundreth*, there were few models for this kind of fiction in the vernacular. A playful and copious text, it is connected to the prefatory letters from H.W., G.T., and A.B., and the "Devices", which seem to relate it to external reality.² Only Baldwin's *Beware the Cat* predates it in English and it, too, is notable for being a highly mediated text.³ Gascoigne's prose fiction has attracted modern critical attention because of its early position in the development of the novel in English. But on its first publication, according to Gascoigne, it attracted attention because it was read not as fiction but as thinly-disguised, scandalous fact. No speculation about the story was recorded; Gascoigne says of his alleged detractors only that "in talking with .xx. of them one after another, there have not two agreed in one conjecture".⁴ But in the

¹ As narrator of the *Discourse*, G.T. also makes conspiratorial remarks which encourage dangerous speculation about the text's relation to "reality". See next section.

² Adrian Weiss shows that the confusion caused by shared printing (the job was shared between Henry Bynneman and Henry Middleton) led to a disruption of the intended sequence of the copy, *ibid.*, pp. 75ff. The letter from the Printer, A.B., should have been immediately followed by H.W.'s and G.T.'s letters, and so into the narrative.

³ See *Beware the Cat by William Baldwin. The First English Novel*, ed. William A. Ringler and Michael Flachmann (San Marino, Cal.: Huntington Library), 1988.

⁴ "To the Reverende Divines," in the *Posies*, p. 359.

absence of the *Stationers' Register* for 1570-75 there is only Gascoigne's assertion, which occurs in the *Posies*, and some evidence in the revision to suggest that the *Discourse* may have caused offence.

Set in a country house in "the north partes of this Realme" (p. 145), the *Discourse* is the tale of a gauche young man, F.J., and his affair with a married woman, Elinor. The narrative is recessed into the controlling fiction which suggests that the present manuscript - all of *A Hundreth* - has been published without permission of the supposed authors. The prefatory letters ostensibly from the Printer, A.B., the publisher, H.W., and the narrator, G.T., suggest the existence outside the text of a literary circle, with which F.J. is associated. G.T. - who is supposedly F.J.'s friend and confidant - claims to have been given a collection of poems in manuscript, the writings of F.J. and his peers. G.T. has passed the manuscript on to H.W., an established publisher, to have it printed, having taken upon himself the role of editor and commentator on the poems. The relationship between H.W. and G.T. is clearly one in which, although they are in league, the former is the dominant character. Where H.W. refers to G.T. as "my familiar friend", G.T. cites "the stedfast good will, which you have ever hitherto sithens our first familiaritie borne towards mee", so that he takes on characteristics of an aspiring publisher. G.T. seems here to place H.W. as an established literary entrepreneur, and in his attempt to ape him in that role simply reiterates his opinions. His letter to H.W. cites the "exceeding zeale and favour that you bear to good letters":

The which (I agree with you) do no lesse bloome and appeare in pleasaunt ditties or compendious Sonets, devised by green youthful capacities, than they

do fruitfully flourish unto perfection in the ryper workes of grave and grayheared writers. (p. 143)

G.T.'s approval of the "green youthful capacities" and the explicit contrast he draws with the qualities associated with the works of "grave and grayheared writers" is based in the humanist age/youth paradigm. The work is advertised as the product of youth and, when the volume was revised in 1575, Gascoigne was to admit that it had also found its most appreciative readers among the young.¹

G.T. clearly has ambitions beyond his self-appointed promotion of the present manuscript. Part of the effect of the framework of letters and the relationship between H.W., G.T., and F.J. is the supposed transaction by which we lose two other literary works to gain *A Hundreth*. Within the fictive literary circle is a concealed writer, of some experience, whose habit it is to publicise, if not to publish, his works. G.T. claims that if the present manuscript should find its way into print:

I shall not onely provoke all the aucthors to be offended with mee, but further shall leese the oportunitie of a greater matter, halfe and more graunted unto mee alreadie, by the willing consent of one of them (p. 144)

This greater matter transpires to be the opportunity to publish "two notable workes" by the same concealed writer, "The one called, the *Sundry lots of love*. The other of his owne invencion entituled. *The clyming of an Eagles neast*". In G.T.'s literary judgement (which has not so far been tested) these are works "worthy the reading", an opinion he holds merely on the basis of their titles. But he ensures that they will not be

¹ The claim occurs in the epistle "To al yong Gentlemen"; see my discussion of the new prefatory material in the *Posies*, next section.

published because of his violation of trust over the present manuscript, which suggests he might be seen as H.W.'s gull. G.T. even gives hints as to the identity of the writer concerned; it is a member of the F.J. circle, who is to be noted at the moment by his melancholic pose. This is the first example of G.T.'s apparent indiscretion: even as he is trying to cover names and identities he cannot resist giving clues - "you may gesse him by his *Nature*" (p. 144). When the *Discourse* is seen in relation to the extended fiction of the publication of *A Hundreth*, it is one of G.T.'s most important functions to provoke the reader's curiosity and propel the guessing game of the author's identity.

By wittily linking his prose fiction with the extended fiction about its publication, and with the miscellaneous verses in the volume, Gascoigne can be seen to be negotiating what Annabel Patterson has called "the epistemological boundary between history and fiction" - that notoriously imprecise boundary which he habitually blurred.¹ The controlling fiction of the literary circle and the pretence of illicit publication it sustains is the main vehicle of what may be called Gascoigne's "realism game", by which he actively sought to provoke the readers' suspicions that the tale was based on actual events.² The success of Gascoigne's controlling fiction is largely due to the characterization of G.T., and his frequent asides, which encourage the reader to speculate about the text's relation to reality. (Susan C. Staub notes that in the *Discourse*

¹ Annabel Patterson, *Censorship and Interpretation. The Conditions of Writing and Reading in Early Modern England* (University of Wisconsin Press, 1984), p. 235.

² See my conference paper, "Gascoigne's *Master F.J.* and its Revision, or, "You Ain't Heard Nothin' Yet!," in *Narrative Strategies in Early English Fiction*, ed. Wolfgang Gortschacher and Holger Klein [Salzburg University Studies] (Lewiston, New York/ Salzburg, Austria: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1995), 67-85.

G.T. refers to his source, F.J., "no less than seventy times".)¹ His introduction of

Pergo is remarkably indiscreet. She is:

A gentlewoman of the company whom I have not hitherto named, and that for good respects, least hir name might altogether disclose the rest ... (p. 191)

But the conspiratorial narrator is not unusual in renaissance fiction. In the *Decameron*, some of Boccaccio's narrators are just as conspiratorial as G.T..² In Marguerite de Navarre's *Heptameron*, the relation of the fiction to external reality is complicated by including such devices of realism.³ It seems that Gascoigne's readers failed to recognize that G.T.'s gossipy tone was no more than a literary technique.⁴

Similarly, the prevalence of controlling structures in the Italianate experimental fictions is attested by Chaucer's group of pilgrims, Boccaccio's party of nobles in retreat from plague-ridden Florence, and Marguerite de Navarre's group of nobles similarly taking refuge in the countryside. It is perhaps significant that G.T.'s success is so much due to his Italianate courtly aspects.⁵ Gascoigne's controlling fiction is sustained throughout *A Hundreth*, notably in the "Devises of Sundrie Gentlemen", and it was tacitly in the

¹ Susan C. Staub, "'According to My Source': Fictionality in *The Adventures of Master FJ*," *SP*, 87 (1990), 109-35, p. 115.

² On the ninth day, for example, Pampinea begins her story by saying: "I am determined to tell you a pithy little tale showing what happened not long ago to a neighbour of mine ... I don't know if you were ever acquainted with Talano d'Imolese, but he was a person of high repute...", in Boccaccio, *The Decameron*, tr. G.H. William (Harmondsworth, 1972), p. 715.

³ For example, the first story on the second day is of the lady who gets stuck in the privy in the Franciscan house. As its narrator, Nomafide, says: "It was rather a dirty story, but when one knows the people involved, one cannot really object to it", in Marguerite de Navarre, *The Heptameron*, tr. Paul A. Chilton, (Harmondsworth, 1984), p. 157.

⁴ David Margolies notes how the novelistic experiments continued the "oral-influenced style" of such works in translation, in *Novel and Society in Elizabethan England* (London: Croom Helm, 1985), p. 31.

⁵ Arthur F. Kinney gives an excellent account of the *Discourse* and its models, in *Humanist Poetics* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1986).

person of G.T. that Gascoigne was able to present and comment upon his own fiction and its poems. Gascoigne peoples the *Discourse* with plausible figures from the nascent world of literary publishing and the success of its extended fiction is attested by the frequency with which it has been read biographically. But there has been no critical consensus over the identity of the protagonists, nor whether Gascoigne's self-presentation is the narrator, G.T., or the protagonist, F.J.

The sheer range of possible biographical readings is remarkable. Gascoigne was identified as F.J. by F.G. Fleay, who identified Elinor as Elinor Manners, who became Countess of Bath when she married John Bouchier.¹ Similarly, Prouty and more recently Leicester Bradner have adhered to the view that F.J. represents Gascoigne.² Alternatively, Gascoigne has been identified as G.T. by Penelope Scambly Schott³ and others, notably David R. Shore, who claims that G.T. is: "both the voice of the author in his maturity and the spokesman for his literary concerns."⁴ A middle position is held by Richard Lanham, who suggests that "The narrator may have been a mask for Gascoigne, who might himself have acted out F.J.'s story in real life."⁵ Further alternatives include B.M. Ward's identification of F.J. as Sir Christopher Hatton and

¹ F.G. Fleay, "Historical Allusions in Sundry English Poets," *TRHS* II (1884), 119-32. See also F.G. Fleay, *A Biographical Chronicle of the English Drama, 1559-1642* (London, 1891), vol I, p. 239.

² "In my view, a true understanding of the merits of *The Adventures of Master FJ* rests upon the realization that it is an account of actual events, told by one of the chief participants," Prouty, p. 198; Leicester Bradner, "Point of View in Gascoigne's Fiction", *SSF*, 3 (1965), 16-22.

³ Penelope Scambly Schott, "The Narrative Stance in *The Adventures of Master FJ*: Gascoigne as Critic of His Own Poems," *RQ*, 29 (1976), 369-77.

⁴ David R. Shore, "Whythorne's *Autobiography* and the Genesis of Gascoigne's *Master F.J.*", *JMRS*, 12 (1982), 159-78, p. 173.

⁵ Richard A. Lanham, "Narrative Structure in Gascoigne's *FJ*", *SSF*, 4 (1966), 42-50.

G.T. as a young Lord Oxford, with whom he believed Gascoigne was associated.¹ This was elaborated by Brooks, who accepted F.J. as Hatton, and identified Elinor as Elizabeth Cavendish (daughter of Lady Shrewsbury by a former marriage) and the north part of the realm as Sheffield Castle.² Such biographical readings are opposed by critics including Robert P. Adams, who sees it as original fiction, and Paul Salzman, who adduces the style of the revision as supporting evidence.³

Although the story purports to be F.J.'s, G.T.'s complex role dominates the text, and it is his presentation of the narrative which mediates the reader's understanding. The presentation of F.J., like all the characters in the narrative proper, is mediated by G.T.'s style of narration.⁴ But there are no clues to link G.T. with Gascoigne or to suggest that he is one of his self-presentations, even though it is tacitly in the person of G.T. that Gascoigne constructs the narrative which allows him to present and comment upon his own poems. Neither, however, is there much in the text to connect F.J. with Gascoigne, beyond the general characterization as a young poet and one problematic

¹ B.M. Ward, ed., *A Hundreth Sundrie Flowres* (London: F. Etchells and H. Macdonald, 1926 [Haslewood Books]), Introduction.

² E. St J. Brooks, "George Gascoigne and C. Hatton", *TLS* (London), 16 January, 1937, p. 44. He does not identify Fraunces.

³ Robert P. Adams, "Gascoigne's *Master FJ* as Original Fiction", *PMLA*, 73 (1958), 315-26. Paul Salzman argues that the thin disguise of the tale as a translation would seem to support his denials that it relates to actual events, "as a true scandal would only be averted by the complete excision of the narrative," in Paul Salzman, ed., *An Anthology of Elizabethan Prose Fiction* (Oxford University Press, 1987), p. xiii.

⁴ See my discussion of G.T.'s narrative technique, in "'Hir acustomed change": In Defence of Gascoigne's Elinor", in *Actes du Colloque du Centre de Recherche sur l'Imaginaire* (Presses Universitaires de Reims, forthcoming).

clue in the text. This is F.J.'s response to Elinor's question as to who wrote the Tyntarnell he sang:

My Fathers Sisters brothers sonne (quod *F.J.*) (p. 166)

If this is a clue to identity, it would not have been apparent in the first edition; it is only in the *Posies* with the addition of new autobiographical and quasi-autobiographical material ("*Dulce bellum inexpertis*" and "The Fruite of Fetters") that Gascoigne covertly links "F.J." with his other self-presentations.¹ Even so, a strictly autobiographical reading of the *Discourse* requires the tale to be a nostalgic account of a past affair, and it is unlikely that an old affair would be controversial.² According to the letter ostensibly from the Printer in *A Hundreth*, "F.J." is supposed to represent "Freeman Jones" (p. 4), i.e. Everyman. On balance, without more persuasive evidence, it seems unlikely that either G.T. or F.J. was intended as a unified self-presentation; Gascoigne's concern in *A Hundreth* seems to be to generate a number of poetic voices by which he could obscure the issue of responsibility for the publication.

Gascoigne's resistance to narrative closure is reflected in the peremptory way in which G.T. concludes the narrative:

It is time now to make an end of this thriftlesse Historie, wherein although I could wade much further, as to declare his departure, what thanks he gave to his *Hope* etc. Yet I will cease, as one that had rather leave it unperfect than make it to plaine. (p. 215)

¹ See Chapter II, section i, for my discussion of the revision of the *Discourse*.

² Weiss has dated the composition of the *Discourse* in the spring of 1572/3, a date plausible because of the alleged scandal caused by its publication. It seems unlikely that an old story of an affair would be controversial, but we have only Gascoigne's word for the scandal.

There is no clear boundary between the *Discourse* and the poems, and the fiction itself is generically mixed, so that another self-referential aspect of its invention is the way its form mimics that of *A Hundreth*: this is presented as a miscellany within a miscellany.

G.T. goes on to introduce the next section, the "Devises", which he describes as "sundry verses written by sundry gentlemen" and claims that he has added only a title to give the "cause of wryting":

Neyther can I declare unto you who wrote the greatest part of them, for they are unto me but a posie presented out of sundry gardens, neither have I any other names of the flowers, but such short notes as the aucthors themselves have delivered therby if you can gesse them, it shall no waye offend mee. (p. 216)

In this way G.T. sustains the controlling fiction of multiple authorship and characteristically seeks to provoke the reader's curiosity about the identity of the supposed authors of the "Devises". His assurance that "if you can gesse them, it shall no waye offend mee" encourages the reader to "gesse" and confirms that the game of identifying the author(s) - begun in the prefatory letters - is an important subtextual device in the underlying scheme of *A Hundreth*.

The success of the characterization of G.T. may be compared to Spenser's E.K. in *The Shepheardes Calender*, another self-consciously innovative text which incorporates its own gloss.¹ Like G.T., E.K. is responsible for prefatory material which seems to relate to external reality, though it seems clear that E.K. is also a fictional character, used to

¹ As Michael McCanles notes, "It is part of the fiction of *The Shepheardes Calender* that E.K.'s glosses are not part of the fiction. This fiction's success shows it to have been through the centuries a kind of *trompe l'oeil*, since editors, critics, and readers have usually taken it for the real thing". See "*The Shepheardes Calender* as Document and Monument", *SEL* 22 (1982), 5-19, at 5. Professor Pigman suggests that *A Hundreth* was a model for *The Shepheardes Calender*.

generate patronage for Spenser as though indirectly.¹ But in *A Hundreth*, the most significant "evidence" of the existence of the literary circle described by G.T. is the collection of Gascoigne's early short poems from the Gray's Inn period, which is presented as a section entitled "The Devises of Sundrie Gentlemen".

"The Devises of Sundrie Gentlemen."

The section of miscellaneous verse called the "Devises of Sundrie Gentlemen" is connected to the overarching fiction of how *A Hundreth* came to be published. The material included in the "Devises" has been discussed as Gascoigne's early work; what is significant here is its arrangement for print. Given the story G.T. offers, about the group of young writers who have lent him their poems in manuscript, this section is a key element in the sustained fiction of anonymous multiple authorship. G.T. is the editor of the whole volume as well as the *Discourse*, and it is his editorial voice which presents the "Devises" as though they are the work of several authors, of whom the only one named is "Gascoigne". These anonymous "authors" are identified by a range of posies, and by G.T.'s editorial interventions, which signal changes of authorial identity.

¹ E.K.'s dedicatory letter is addressed "To the most excellent and learned both Orator and Poete, Mayster Gabriell Harvey, *his verie special and singular good frend E.K. commendeth the good lyking of this his labour*, and the patronage of the new Poete" (my italics). Spenser, *Minor Poems*, eds. C.G. Osgood, H.G. Lotspeich (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1943), vol. I, p. 7.

There are in all four posies attached to the anonymous parts of the "Devises", suggesting perhaps four anonymous poets, before the section which is devoted to Gascoigne by name. None the less, there are covert indications of Gascoigne's authorship even in the anonymous sections. The first twenty-two poems of the "Devises" are signed "*Si Fortunatus, infoelix*".¹ Within this first group are two sequences of linked poems (10-12 and 15-20), the second of which - the "looking sequence" - gives the clearest indication of the riddling atmosphere of *A Hundreth* and the great game of identifying its author.² The use of Gascoigne's own initials in the sequence ("G.G.") belies the apparent anonymity of the section: the sequence may have been known in manuscript but Gascoigne's initials are retained in print. As the only named poet in the volume (apart from Francis Kinwelmershe, his collaborator on *Jocasta*) such hints seem to push an unwilling Gascoigne into the limelight.

The second group, beginning with the twenty-third poem, is introduced - presumably by "G.T." - as if it were by a different author: "Now to begin with another man ..." (p. 235). The six poems of this group (23-29) are subscribed "*Spraeta tamen vivunt*".³ The next three poems are introduced as "A straunge passion of another author" (30-2) and subscribed "*Ferenda Natura*".⁴ There then follows a larger, fourth group (33-48) which

¹ "If fortunate, unhappy" (Pigman).

² This sequence is discussed in Chapter I, section i.

³ Professor Pigman notes: "*Spraeta tamen vivunt*: despised things still live, although Gascoigne's "Despysed things may live" (29.1) might be preferred." See also Chapter III, section ii, on the *Hemetes* manuscript.

⁴ "Nature must be borne" (Pigman). *Ferenda Natura* is also the name of Bartholmew's lady in "Dan Bartholmew".

are signed "*Meritum petere, grave*".¹ They are carefully introduced: "Now I must desire you with patience to hearken unto the works of another writer, who though he may not compare with the rest passed, yit such things as he wrote upon sundrie occasions, I will rehearse, beginning with this prayse of a Countesse" (p. 245). It may be that this group represents some of the earliest of the miscellaneous poems. One which might be dated is "Eyther a needesse or a bootelesse comparison" (39), which again uses Gascoigne's initials, and which must belong to the period circa 1560-2, when his marriage to Elizabeth Boyes was still in question.² But none of the posies can be convincingly grouped by biographical identity, mood, or even by the attitude they strike.

These first four "groups" of poems are arranged and presented to suggest, in a sequential reading, four separate anonymous authors. Within the terms of the extended fiction Gascoigne has constructed about the publication of the present volume, these four would be members - with F.J. and Gascoigne - of the literary clique which G.T. has befriended. It may be that the posies are meant to suggest an organizing principle for G.T.'s editorship. Gascoigne was to repeat this strategy in 1575 in his translation

¹ "To seek a reward is a serious matter, or, it is painful to seek a reward." Professor Pigman notes: "'Crave reward" in "The greene Knights farewell to Fansie" (ll. 31f) may allude to this: "A fansie fedde me ones, to wryte in verse and rime,/ To wray my griefe, to crave reward, to cover still my crime." The posy clearly declares Gascoigne's desire for patronage but the tone is difficult to determine. Does it suggest annoyance or wounded pride? Harvey, another persistent seeker of patronage, was offended by Gascoigne's directness: "*Meritum petere, vile: capere, generosum. In hoc mundo, non loquendum de meritis, sed virile*". (To seek a reward is vile; to receive one, noble. In this world one should not talk about one's merits but, instead, one should act meritoriously. To boast of one's industry is vain; actually to exert oneself, manly.)"

² Prouty accepts that the poem refers to Gascoigne's rivalry with Boyes but does not hazard a date, p. 123.

(again anonymous) of the *Noble Arte of Venerie*: there, even an original addition like his section on the fox is signalled as "out of another author".¹

It is not until the forty-ninth item of the "Devises" that G.T. introduces Gascoigne's section, despite the presence of his name on both *Supposes* and *Jocasta* before the miscellaneous section. It includes another hint (which might pass for a slip of the pen) of Gascoigne's authorship of the whole collection:

I will now deliver unto you *so many more of Master Gascoignes Poems* as have come to my hands, who hath never been 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. (p. 263, my italics)

The impossibility of using the posies as identifiers becomes apparent only at this point, with the new complication that the only named author in the anthology has "often changed" his own posy, and that even the selection of verse which G.T. has been given includes a variety of posies.² This is the crux of Gascoigne's main problem, which could also have been his main asset: the proliferation of his poetic identities.

Furthermore, four different posies are used in the group of poems overtly attributed to "Gascoigne", although these do not fall into such neat groups as the posies of the "sundrie gentlemen". The first four poems (49-53) are signed in English, "Ever or

¹ See Chapter II, section ii. In discussing this work, Charles and Ruth Prouty described this strategy as "references to fictitious authors", *ibid.*, p. 647.

² Gascoigne justifies his changes of posy in the revised edition: in the general address "To the Reader" in the *Posies*, Gascoigne claims that: "if ever I wrote lyne for myself in causes of love, I have written tenne for other men in layes of lust" (p. 370). See Chapter I, section i.

Never", and this posy recurs later (56; 63; 66-68). The next two (54-55) are signed "*Haud ictus sapio*"¹ and this also recurs later (57; 64-65; 69; 71-77). While these first clusters suggest a similar pattern to the earlier, anonymous section, it is disrupted by the next poem, "Gascoignes praise of his Mystres" (55), which is signed "*Attamen ad solitum*".² This is followed by the "Lullabie" and "Recantation", which would probably have been known in manuscript, like the sequence "Gascoignes Memories" (58-62), which carries the posy "*Sic tuli*" ("Thus I have borne"), indicating his fulfilment of the challenges set by the Kinwelmarshe clique.³ It is another reminder, with the two plays, of Gascoigne's Gray's Inn background and his social status.

The remainder of the Gascoigne section reverts to a mixture of the other three posies, with the notable exception of the jokey "Epitaphe uppon capitaine Bourcher" (70). This has no motto but is subscribed "Finis quod Marmaduke Marblestone", which alludes wittily to Thomas Churchyard and his customary way of signing his poems.⁴ A final new posy is "*Fato non Fortuna*",⁵ used exclusively in "Dan Bartholmew of Bathe", which follows almost seamlessly from the Gascoigne section but is not within it. As

¹ Literally, "struck, I am not wise". Professor Pigman notes: "This presumably means something like I haven't learned from experience (or even punishment). It must be said that there is something strange about taking *haud* (not) with *sapio* instead of with *ictus*, for *haud* almost always negates the word (or phrase) immediately following and usually negates an adjective or an adverb. If "not struck, I am wise" made sense, it might be better Latin - at least better classical Latin."

² "Nevertheless with regard to what is customary" (Pigman).

³ Professor Pigman notes: "*tuli* is the perfect of the same verb of which the gerundive is *ferenda*, as in *Ferenda Natura*."

⁴ For example, *A Mirrour for Man* (c.1552), signed "Finis quod Thomas Churchyard"; *A Farewell cauld, Churcheyardes rounde* (1566), "Finis quod T.Churcheyard"; or *A Discourse of Rebellion* (1570), "Finis Quoth Churchyard". It was an old-fashioned style, popular with Skelton's generation, and Churchyard dropped the habit in later works.

⁵ "By fate, not by fortune" (Pigman).

with "*Sic tui*" in the "Memories", it can be seen to be tailored to a particular purpose, unlike the anonymous posies.

Within the "Gascoigne" section, his self-presentation is diverse but carefully arranged. The section begins with legal conceits ("Araignment"); courtly praise (Bridges/Wilton); a selection of witty conceits variously religious and legal ("Passion", "Libel", "Lullabie", "Recantation"); his amazing feat at Gray's Inn (the "Memories"); a satire ("*Dominus*"); the witty pair of poems, the "Good morrow" and "Good night"; a more serious religious theme ("*De profundis*"); two poems of "councill"; the mock epitaph to Captain Boucher; two poems advertising his relationships with influential friends (the Montague masque and the "Wodmanship"); a sequence of witty epigrams ("Gardnings"); another poem to his patron ("Voyage", addressed to Lord Grey); and finally the unfinished sequence "Dan Bartholmew".

It is perhaps possible to deduce the sequence of thought this arrangement is designed to encourage: the legal poems situate him at the Inns of Court; the courtly poems suggest his aspiration; the best short poems were probably known from manuscript circulation and advertise his reputation as a poet; the "Memories" return to Gray's Inn but also advertise his feat of composition; and so on. The collection includes satire, songs, religious lyric, wise councillor, mock epitaph (a reminder of his military experience), and works like "Wodmanship", which bear the name of his patrons. It has enough variety to suggest considerable versatility, even if the reader believed the fiction that

only these poems are his. When he revised and republished the collection under his own name, Gascoigne was able to make explicit the connection between his literary versatility and his employability:

Wherein as [the worlde] may finde great diversitie both in stile and sense, so may the good bee encouraged to set mee on worke at last ...¹

The "great diversitie" which is most evident, however, is that of poetic voices and personae, both within the "Gascoigne" section and across the whole section of "Devises".

If the posies used in the "Devises" are not fixed identifiers of authorship, mood, or pose, then the proliferation of poetic identities they engender may be problematic. But there is almost as much diversity again if the poetic personae are counted, including poems written in the person of someone else, or on behalf of someone else.² Examples include "A loving Lady being wounded in the spring time" (25); "An absent Dame thus complayneth" (28); "An absent lover (parted from his Lady by Sea) thus complayneth" (37); "A Lady being ... wronged by false suspect" (38); "An absent lover doth thus encourage his lady" (40); "A letter devised for a young lover" (41); "The absent lover (in ciphers) disciphering his name" (= Sir John Scudamour, 48).³ Calculating this way, there would be a larger number of poetic identities, including perhaps four female

¹ "To al yong Gentlemen", p. 368.

² Gascoigne emphasizes that many of his amatory poems were written "for other men" in the "Generall advertisement" in the *Posies*.

³ Prouty, p. 119.

voices. The last item is the clearest indication that he was indeed writing for other people; it has not been possible to identify any others.

Gascoigne's self-presentation in *A Hundreth* is complex because of his anonymity, the various strategies by which he is identified, and the proliferation of poetic personae and voices which are exploited to support the fiction of multiple authorship. The "Devises of Sundrie Gentlemen" seem to belong to four authors as well as a named Gascoigne, but the named section alone offers a range of poetic personae: the repentant prodigal is already evident in the "Memories" and in many of the miscellaneous poems from the 1560s.¹ But as well as the repentant prodigal, his self-presentation includes a variety of lovers, the inept woodman, the cynical soldier ("Voyage"), and the heretic love poet ("Recantation") who may be the "George" who is arraigned for flattery ("Araignment"). Another favoured self-presentation in *A Hundreth* is the poet-gardener: it occurs in the title and in the "Gardnings", and Gascoigne alluded to it in the *Posies*, in which the conceit of the "sundrie flowres" is developed into the Flowres, Hearbes, and Weedes which become the organizing principle in that volume. But especially notable is the final, incomplete sequence of poems in the volume, "Dan Bartholmew of Bathe", which offers yet another prodigal persona.

¹ See Chapter I, section i.

"Dan Bartholmew of Bathe."

This poetic persona is not overtly related to Gascoigne in *A Hundreth* but is (from evidence in the *Posies*) clearly a version of him.¹ "Dan Bartholmew of Bathe" follows the "Gascoigne" section of the "Devises" and, even in its unfinished state as published in 1573, includes the full range of themes associated with the repentant prodigal.² In the first poem in the sequence, "The Reporter" (another characterized narrator, like G.T.) adduces "quicke capacitye", a key term associated with wayward youth, as characteristic of Bartholmew's story (l. 3). Originating with Roger Ascham, the term denotes the kind of intelligence which absorbs lessons quickly but superficially, and is contrasted with the slower mind which has to work harder to learn but is more inclined to retain the lesson.³ Here, it is used as part of the Reporter's denial that the tale is fictional:

To tell a tale without authoritye,
Or fayne a Fable by invention,
That one proceeds of quicke capacitye,
That other proves but small discretion (ll. 1-4, p. 329)

The Reporter then goes on to assert that it is the story of "a deare familiar friend" (l. 23), the eponymous hero, Dan Bartholmew.

¹ "Dan Bartholmew" is connected to "The Fruite of Fetters" and other items, see Chapter II, section i. John E. Hankins suggests that Gascoigne's marital difficulties "furnished the material" for "Dan Bartholmew", in "A Note on Gascoigne's Biography", *Mod. Phil.* 30 (1932), 96-7 at p. 96. See also Prouty, pp. 219-21. But Gascoigne lists "Ferenda Natura", Bartholmew's lady, among the courtly ladies in the *Grief of Joye*.

² See Chapter II, section i, for the revision of "Dan Bartholmew".

³ This idea is exemplified in the *Glasse of Government*. See Chapter II, section i.

This "Dan Bartholmew of Bathe" is a feigned name, borrowed "for this discourse"

(1.36, p. 330), since:¹

... in the end he thether had recourse,
And (as he said) did skamble there in skath:
In deede the rage which wroong him ther, was rathe,
As by this tale I thinke your selfe will gesse,
And then (with me) his lothsome life confesse. (ll. 38-42)

As the sequence progresses, the character this assumed name conceals is presented by the Reporter as a learned man who has "spent/ His pride of youth (untide in links of love)" (ll. 99-100, p. 331) but by himself as one who spent his youth in "pleasures court" (1.14, p. 350). The Reporter continues his introduction by asserting that Bartholmew's bookish learning has not protected him from the dangers of "fairest lookes":

For though he had in all his learned lore
Both redde good rules to bridle fantasie,
And all good authours taught him evermore,
To love the meane, and leave extremitie,
Yet kind had lent him such a qualitie,
That at the last he quite forgat his bookes,
And fastned fansie with the fairest lookes.

For prooffe, when greene youth lept out of his eye
And left him now a man of middle age,
His happe was yet with wandring lookes to spie
A faire yong impe of proper personage... (ll. 43-53, p. 330)

Dan Bartholmew is, then, not a young prodigal but a mature man like Gower's Amans whose conventional, bookish wisdom is no defence against beauty: this lady, "Ferenda

¹ Anne Ferry identifies the technique in English sonnet sequences and traces it to Petrarch, *ibid.*, p. 20. "Bartholmew" may have been suggested by its phonic relationship to "Bath" just as in the "Epitaphe uppon Capitaine Bourcher" (70) "Marmaduke" was probably suggested by "Marblestone".

Natura", begins to "kindle coles where earst had bin no flame" (l.105, p. 332). His susceptibility is all the more culpable since, according to the Reporter, he cannot blame it upon his youth. Nonetheless, in "His libell of request exhibited to Care" (p. 349) later in the sequence, after the vaunting verses and his disillusionment when she betrays him, Dan Bartholmew admits that his youth was not the ideal it has been presented as:

I must confesse O noble king to thee,
That I have bin a Rebelle in my youth,
I preast always in pleasures court to be,
I fled from that, which *Cupide* still eschuth,
I fled from Care, lo now I tell the truth,
And in delights, I loved so to dwell,
Thy heavenly house, did seeme to me but hell.
Such was my rage, the which I now repent,
And pardon crave,
My soule to save,
Before the webbe of weary life be spent.¹ (ll. 12-22, p. 350)

Despite what the Reporter has said of his age, Dan Bartholmew appropriates the model of the repentant prodigal to facilitate his rehabilitation, and it becomes plain that this was a means to rehabilitate himself with Care. In the next (untitled) poem in the sequence (8, p. 351), Bartholmew suggests that his repentance has satisfied Care, who has seen his submission and will take pity on him:

What greater glory can a *Keysar* gaine,
If madde moode move his subjects to rebell,
Than that at last (when all the traytours traine,
Have trod the path, of deepe repentance well,
And naked neede with *Cold* and *Hunger* both,
Hath bitten them abrode in forren land,
Whereby they may their lewde devises loth.
When harebraind hast, with cold advise is scande)
If then at last, they come upon their knee,

¹ Bartholmew's "rage" may be compared to Gascoigne's "madnesse" of youth, the "frantike fansie" he describes in "To al yong Gentlemen" (p. 367).

And pardon crave with due submission ... (ll. 1-10, pp. 351-2)

He suggests that it is this glory which will prompt Care to grant his request and take his life; and that he will help him to "rule the rage wherein I do remaine" (l. 16), and his symptoms begin to abate. But once again the pattern of the returned prodigal informs the image of the penitent: the need, the "forren land", and the kneeling posture are all authentically scriptural.¹

In the next poem in the sequence, "His last will and Testament" (9), the theme of repentance recurs in the instructions Bartholmew leaves for his funeral, but it shifts rather suddenly to a more satirical register; following a list of wry instructions, he adds:

Let almes of *Love* be delt, even at the Chauncell dore,
And feede them there with fresh delays, as I have ben of yore:
Then let the yongest sort, be set to ring *Loves* bells,
And pay *Repentance* for their paines, but give them nothing else ...
(ll. 45-9, p. 354)

In context, this is self-evidently flippant and disrupts the otherwise sombre mood of the sequence; it evolves into a blatantly satirical theme as he bequeaths his "privie Tythes, as kysses caught by stealth" to the Vicar, "to please his gredie will" (ll. 59,61) and makes "wet eyes and wayling words" his "Executors" (l. 67). The poem concludes with "The Subscription and seale" (p. 355). The combination of legal and anti-clerical satire makes this a surprisingly sharp irruption in what would otherwise be an irreverent but conventional petrarchan love narrative.

¹ The scriptural model of the Prodigal Son is discussed in Chapter II, section i.
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The tenth poem in the sequence returns to the question of Dan Bartholmew's age, but this time it is his youth which is emphasized. Addressing the lady, Bartholmew complains that:

It was thy will, that I should dye in youth,
Thou hast thy will my yeares are yet but grene. (ll. 23-4, p. 355)

While this contradicts the Reporter's statements of Bartholmew's age, it exploits the association of love with youth, and the poet-lover goes on to appropriate the religious idea of penance for amatory purposes:

Thy penance was that I should pyne in paine,
I have performed thy penance all in wo ... (ll. 25-6)

Here, Dan Bartholmew fulfils the amatory version of repentance. It is not a serious moralistic statement but a reminder of the torments of love, couched in a traditional mixture of religious and amatory language. It is followed by a witty, fourteen-line sonnet, "His Farewell" (11), which adopts an elevated tone appropriate for a death scene. But this is subverted by the final couplet, which turns the conceit into a sexual pun:

Alas how welcome were this death of mine,
If I had dyde betweene those armes of thine. (p. 356)

Nowhere does Bartholmew repent of his love (or his folly), even though he plays on the idea of "penance" in terms of the way his lady torments him.

That the sequence was not printed as it was planned is evident from the heading to "The Reporter" (3), which precedes "The reporters conclusion unfinished" (12), headed with

the note: "This should have bin placed in the dolorous discourse, before the Supplication to Care in in *Folio*. 430" (p. 336). Who was responsible for this is not known; it would seem likely to be an authorial correction, except that Gascoigne's movements are impossible to determine. By his own story, he was out of the country by the time this portion of the text was printed.¹ This is suggested by the final endnote, which follows "The reporters conclusion unfinished" (12), which breaks off abruptly in mid-line in the tenth stanza:

I have not (hitherto) recovered a full ende of this discourse, the author thereof being more curious in deliverie of the same, than he hath bene heretofore in any other of his doings ... (p. 358)

This note from the fictive editor, G.T., concludes the volume. It is another clue designed to encourage speculation, a final mystery for the reader. From the evidence in *A Hundreth* it is not possible to identify Dan Bartholmew as another of Gascoigne's self-presentations, although it is clear that this is the case from the revised and completed version which appears in the *Posies*. But even in this truncated form it is plain that Dan Bartholmew is another prodigal, one who perhaps is older and should be wiser, but who still falls into the trap of amorousness and lives to repent his folly.²

The sheer range of poetic personae evident in *A Hundreth* suggests that Gascoigne was not yet trying to establish a fixed poetic identity. The repentant prodigal is perhaps the most interesting of the personae he adopts, as it was to become his favoured self-

¹ See my Introduction.

² See Chapter II, section i.

presentation in print in the revised edition, the *Posies*. In the present volume, however, Gascoigne presents himself explicitly as a repentant prodigal only in the "Memories" sequence and explores both serious and playful variations on the theme throughout the miscellaneous early verse. This includes a mixture of flippant and even bawdy personae (those of the "Lullabie" or "Phyllip Sparrow") and is even extended, in the work of 1572/3, to an apparently middle-aged prodigal like Dan Bartholmew. But, whether he is a figure of the author or not, Gascoigne's most conspicuous prodigal in *A Hundreth* is Master F.J. who - in this first edition - ends his adventures both unrepentant and unreformed.¹

¹ See Chapter II, section i, for the revision of the tale.

Chapter II. 1575: The Repentant Prodigal and Princely Pleasures.

(i) The Repentant Prodigal: *The Posies of George Gascoigne* (February) and *The Glasse of Government* 26 April).

*"although I have bin heretofore contented to suffer the publication thereof, only to the ende men might see my Methode and maner of writing: yet am I nowe thus desirous to set it forth eftsoones, to the ende all men might see the reformation of my minde ..."*¹

The year 1575 is conventionally accepted as a turning point in Gascoigne's career, the year of his repentance and moral reformation. This allegedly followed his return to England from the wars in Holland, when he found that the anonymously published *A Hundreth Sundrie Flowres* had caused a scandal. But on close examination of the evidence - which lacks the Stationers' Register for the period 1570-76 - it is plain that this version of events originates with Gascoigne himself, in the prefatory material to the revised edition of his collection, *The Posies of George Gascoigne Esquire*. There, he found it expedient to present *A Hundreth* as the product of his youth, offering instead a new and expurgated edition as the work of an older, wiser, and morally-reformed man.

Gascoigne's reformation is apparently supported by the publication of *The Glasse of Government*, his Prodigal Son play, at about the same time. But there is some evidence that Gascoigne's favoured self-presentation in print failed to convince his

¹ "To the Reverende Divines", p. 363.

contemporaries.¹ On the one hand, he did not confine himself to one self-presentation, but changed his poetic persona with the alacrity of a habitual shape-shifter. (By contrast, Churchyard, who was similarly disappointed in the early part of Elizabeth's reign, seems to have maintained a consistent self-presentation throughout his long career.) On the other, the repentant prodigal was an amenable and readily available model for errant youth, one of the most widely disseminated cultural models in the sixteenth century.

The parable of the Prodigal Son in Saint Luke's gospel (15:11-32) provided an ideal didactic model for use in educating young men; but it also offered a model for the rehabilitation and forgiveness of young men who had transgressed. The parable does not emphasize the Prodigal Son's repentance, since that is inspired by need, nor his reformed lifestyle, since that is not required but assumed in the reconciliation with his father; it is the reconciliation itself which is the key point. And it was that element of reconciliation - the possibility that the worst transgressor may be forgiven if he repents and turns to God - which had become most prominent in the Christian tradition.² Saint Augustine may have had the Prodigal Son in mind when, in his *Confessions*, he admits that he led a prodigal existence until his thirty-second year, when he found his spiritual

¹ See especially my discussions of the *Steele Glas/Complaynte of Phylomene* and the letter to Sir Nicholas Bacon.

² See Alan R. Young, *The English Prodigal Son Plays: A Theatrical Fashion of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* [Salzburg Studies in English Literature. Jacobean Drama Studies 89] (Salzburg: Institut für Anglistik und Amerikanistik, Universität Salzburg, 1979).

enlightenment.¹ In this version of the model, to a greater extent than in Luke's parable, both sincere penitence and a reformed life are needed to ensure reintegration.

The model continued to be widespread in the Reformed religion. Both Calvin and Luther published sermons on the need for penitence, and the Lutheran emphasis on salvation by faith (rather than by works) facilitated the acceptance of penitence alone as a prerequisite for salvation.² In particular, the translation of the Penitential Psalms as a group, which originated with Aretino, had been introduced into this country by Wyatt and transposed to a Protestant context.³ As Stephen Greenblatt has shown, the remarkable "inwardness" of Wyatt's persona in his version of the Penitential Psalms co-exists with the outgoing and critical persona he adopted in the Satires.⁴ Where this can be justified as a kind of *decorum* in adopting poetic personae apt for each genre, that there were pragmatic benefits to the strategy is evident from Greenblatt's analysis. To an even greater extent, Gascoigne was evidently aware of the tactical advantages of a paradigm which allowed for the rebellious prodigality of youth and raised expectations of a rehabilitation which forgave all transgressions.⁵

¹ Other saints' lives, for example those of Saint Ignatius and Saint Jerome, followed the same pattern.

² In the prefatory material to the *Posies*, one of the defences Gascoigne offers to justify his publication of *A Hundreth* and the *Posies* is that previous writers have been content to publish their juvenilia. He then cites as his main example - somewhat audaciously - Theodore Beza, Luther's successor at Geneva, who had published risque verses in his youth (p. 361).

³ Piero Aretino, *I Sette Salmi de la Penitentia di David* (Venice, 1536, first publ. 1534). Wyatt's additions and treatment of his sources are noted in detail in *Collected Poems of Sir Thomas Wyatt*, ed. Kenneth Muir and Patricia Thomson (Liverpool University Press, 1969), pp. 356ff.

⁴ Greenblatt, *Renaissance Self-Fashioning*, pp. 115-56.

⁵ At the end of *Supposes*, Cleander offers Erostrato to Damon, calling him "this young man whiche youthfully and not maliciously hath committed this amorous offence" (V x 4-5; p. 57).

Humanism had also adopted the model - both Hoffman and Melancthon wrote works on penitence - but the Prodigal Son is also related to a much older paradigm, the contrast between youth and age. Curtius traces the topos of the boy and old man to "late Antiquity", and shows how the "polarity youth-age" was reconciled in the *puer senex*, the youth with the wisdom of an old man.¹ The classical model of the old man and the boy received a new impetus with the spread of humanism, with its emphasis on and practical involvement in pedagogy. The model is implicit in Erasmus's *Colloquies*, and is pervasive in his work, for example in the letters of counsel he wrote to the children of Sir Thomas More. The teaching of Cicero's treatise addressed to his son, the *De officiis*, as a text for boys in schools further disseminated the model of the wise old man and the green young scholar.² In this model, a certain degree of error was permissible in youth.

It is this "polarity youth-age" which Gascoigne turns to account in his own repentance: his past mistakes are attributed to "greene youth", his current wisdom to his advancing age. The fact that this wisdom has been gained in just two years is not emphasized, although the military service of those years is: it may be that the undoubted hardships of military life would normally have been accepted as an intensive learning experience.

¹ Ernst Robert Curtius, *European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages*, p. 98. Although the *puer senex* is the opposite of the Prodigal Son the model adheres to the same values: youth is associated with folly and immaturity, and age with wisdom, which is what makes the "wise youth" so remarkable and praiseworthy. The young Christ, for example, was credited with a philosophical wisdom beyond his years.

² See, for example, *Marcus Tullius Ciceroes thre bokes of duties to Marcus his sonne, turned oute of latine into english*, by Nicolas Grimald, ed. Gerald O'Gorman (Renaissance English Text Society/Folger Books, London and Toronto: Associated University Presses, 1990).

Gascoigne's "reformation" in 1575, the self-presentation as a repentant prodigal which dates from this year, was a pragmatic appropriation of a widely available paradigm which was first proposed in the *Posies* and apparently supported by *The Glasse of Government*.

Finally, it is also significant, though not strictly within the confines of this study, that the repentant prodigal was a model which was to become a cliché of the next generation of Elizabethan writers. Richard Helgerson's study suggests this, with its chapters on Gascoigne, Greene, Lyly, Lodge, and Sidney.¹ Nashe was to satirize it in *The Anatomy of Absurdity*² and his riotous youth Jack Wilton undergoes a token repentance at the end of *The Unfortunate Traveller*. But there is also evidence of a degree of cynicism about the model much earlier in the period. Barnabe Googe, in his Eighth Eclog, describes a persistent sinner who plans to repent only in old age, decks himself in expensive clothes at court, and goes on to try his fortunes in the wars.³

(i) *The Posies of George Gascoigne Esquire.*

The reasons for the revision of *A Hundreth* just two years after its first publication remain obscure. The revised edition, the *Posies*, was published by Richard Smith and

¹ Helgerson, *ibid.*, *passim*.

² "Young men think it a disgrace to youth to embrace the studies of age, counting their fathers fools whiles they strive to make them wise, casting that away at a cast at dice which costs their dads a year's toil ... so that their revenues racked, and their rents raised to the uttermost, is scarce enough to maintain one's ruffling pride which was wont to be many poor man's relief," in Nashe, *The Unfortunate Traveller and other Works*, ed. J.B.Steane (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1972, 1985), p. 471.

³ See Judith M.Kennedy, ed., *Barnabe Googe, Eglogues, Epitaphs, and Sonnets* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1989), p. 76.

printed by Henry Bynneman, who had also been partly responsible for *A Hundreth*.¹

The full title, *The Posies of George Gascoigne Esquire. Corrected, perfected, and augmented by the authour. 1575*, suggests a new level of confidence.

The most obvious physical difference in the revised edition is organizational: the material is divided into three sections, "*Floures to comfort, Herbes to cure, and Weedes to be avoyded*" (p. 371). This is close to Googe's generic division in *Eclogs, Epitaphes, and Sonets*, which Judith M. Kennedy has compared to the practice of Clement Marot and Theodore Beza; all three authors presented collections of juvenilia with protestations of reluctance and divide them by genre.² The structure of the new "posies" allowed Gascoigne to include almost all of the material from the first edition; its redistribution into sections with different restorative and recreational claims was designed to sidestep the censor. The substantive differences between the two editions are the addition of three prefatory letters, twenty commendatory verses, and two short poems by Gascoigne responding to the commendations; changes to the headings of many of the short poems; the revision of the *Discourse*; the completion of "Dan Bartholmew of Bathe"; and the addition of "*Dulce bellum inexpertis*" (28), another sequence of poems, "The Fruite of Fetters" (29-32), and the essay "Certayne Notes of Instruction". The two plays are virtually untouched, and only three poems from the first

¹ Sidney Thomas has argued that Smith still owned the rights when the *Whole woorkes* was pirated by Abel Jeffes in 1587 with no mention of him, in "Richard Smith: Foreign to the Company", *The Library*, 3 (1948), 186-92. The relationship between Smith and Jeffes (if any) - is not known, although Jeffes had been apprenticed to Bynneman.

² Kennedy, *ed. cit.*, p. 19.

edition are actually excluded from the second.¹

The prefatory matter is an important new addition: it sets an entirely different tone to the shambolic incompleteness of *A Hundreth*, establishes a direct address to targeted readers, and addresses both his potential patrons and his peers. The two prefatory epistles and the "generall advertisement" are the formal equivalent of the fictive prefaces to *A Hundreth*, but in this volume they are properly arranged. The two main prefatory epistles each target a particular social group, the "reverende Divines" and "al yong Gentlemen", so that Gascoigne addresses representatives of both sides of the humanist age/youth paradigm.² The "generall advertisement" is just that, a catch-all address to readers outside those groups. These are followed by a series of commendatory verses, ten in English, one from the Printer, one in Latin, one in French, six in Latin, and Gascoigne's own "opinion" and his "ultimum vale" (pp. 385-6). The overall effect created by the new prefatory material and the reorganization of the contents of the first edition is of a more substantial work which comes strongly recommended.

Although the first new preface is addressed "To the reverende Divines", it is doubtful

¹ These are: "A translation of Ariosto allegorized" (1); a sonnet which was evidently controversial in some way, since it is headed "This Sonet of his shall passe (for me) without any preface (21); and "Eyther a needesse or a bootelesse comparision betweene two letters" (39), which refers to his Gascoigne's marital rivalry with Edward Boyes. All were in the anonymous portions of the "Devises" in *A Hundreth*.

² The epistles are dated "this last day of Januarie. 1574" and "the second of Januarie. 1575", which Greg suggests was the result of carelessness about the day on which the new year began.

whether any cleric or dignitary would be expected to read a volume of short, secular literary works. (Sir Thomas Bodley, for example, specifically excluded such works from his library.)¹ A tightly-controlled rhetorical display, in its preamble it becomes clear which model Gascoigne is adopting to explain his past mistakes and attempt a rehabilitation:

My reverende and welbeloved: whatsoever my youth hath seemed unto the graver sort, I woulde bee verie loth nowe in my middle age to deserve reproch ... (p. 359)

He does not align himself with either side of the "polarity youth-age", to borrow Curtius's phrase, but places himself in "middle age" only two years after the youthful indiscretions of *A Hundreth*.² Ten years before, he had found the repentant prodigal a convenient model in the "Memories" on his return to Gray's Inn; here, he offers a fully developed performance of his reformed prodigal persona.

Gascoigne, although he is not entirely serious in either epistle, does sustain a respectful tone in this purported letter to the "reverende Divines". He opens the epistle proper with a declaration of his intentions in writing this preface:

Right reverend: I have thought it my part (before I wade further in publishing of these Posies) to lay open before your grave judgementes, aswell the cause which presently moveth mee to present them, as also the depth and secrets of some conceytes, which (being passed in clowdes and figurative speeches) might percease both be offensive to your gravitie, and perillous to my credite. (p. 359)

What is presented as a desire to comply with the "grave judgementes" of his elders is

¹ Given his remarks about their banning of light works, it is possible that Gascoigne was addressing members of the court of High Commission.

² Curtius, *ibid.*, p. 98.

actually an argument to defend the act of publication against the detractors of the first edition. Gascoigne says that it is almost two years since "the most parte of these Posies were imprinted", during which time he has (he claims) been in Holland. He has returned to find that "some of them have not onely bene offensive for sundrie wanton speeches and lascivious phrases, but further I heare that the same have beene doubtfully construed, and (therefore) scandalous".

Gascoigne justifies his publication of *A Hundreth* by linking it with his military service in Holland, and claims that he allowed the publication because:

being busied in martiall affayres (whereby also I sought some advauncement) I thought good to notifie unto the worlde before my returne, that I coulde as well persuade with Penne, as pearce with launce or weapon: So that yet some noble minde might be incoraged both to exercise me in time of peace, and to emploie mee in time of service in warre. (p. 362)

In the *Posies*, his first named publication, this persona is epitomised in his new motto, "*Tam Marti quam Mercurio*", which he uses for the first time. Significantly, he did not change it, whether for printed or manuscript works, and it may have become a fixed identifier as it does not appear in his subsequent anonymous printed works.

Gascoigne emphasizes the mixture of moral and amorous works in the *Posies*, but adopts an increasingly flippant tone as he describes his unwillingness to separate them:

bicause I had written sundry things which coulde not chuse but content the learned and Godlye Reader, therefore I hoped the same should serve as undoubted prooffe, that I had layde aside vanities, and delighted to exercise my penne in morall discourses, at least the one passing (cheeke by cheek) with the other, muste of necessitie persuade both the learned, and the light minded, that I coulde aswell sowe good graine, as graynes or draffe. (p. 361)

Significant here is the shift from the "hope" that the work might persuade the "Godlye Reader" of his reformation (which here includes the rejection of "vanities") to the admission that the mixture might "at least ... persuade both the learned, and the light minded" of his skill across the genres. His final point finds further justification for the mixture in the work in the appeal to readers on both sides of the youth-age paradigm:

Lastly, I persuaded my selfe that as in the better sort of the same I shoulde purchase good lyking with the honourable aged: So even in the worst sorte, I might yet serve as a myrrour for unbrydled youth, to avoyde those perilles which I had passed. (p. 361)

Even here, where he tries to appeal to the "reverende Divines", Gascoigne is unwilling to lose his appeal to a younger and more flippant readership and offers himself as a negative example for youth.

Although he frames this letter with apparently devout sentiments, and is mostly respectful to his readers throughout it, Gascoigne does not sustain an entirely serious tone. He strays towards flippancy when he asserts his belief that it is "not unpossible" to write "both compendiously, and perfectly" in English,¹ being even more playful than Sidney in his theorizing:

I have more faulted in keeping the olde English wordes (*quamvis iam obsoleta*) than in borrowing of other languages, such Epithetes and Adjectives as smell of the Inkhorne. (pp. 360-1)

To mix Latin with such an assertion is clearly ironic, and in any case it bears only limited relation to his practice. In his rejoinder to this point, he repeats the joke when

¹ He returns to this subject later in the volume in "Certayne Notes".

he admits that he is "sometimes constreyned for the cadence of rimes, or *per licentiam Poeticam*, to use an ynkehorne terme, or a strange word" (pp. 361-2). Indeed, when he refutes the allegation that where the good reader will gain from the work, the bad will embrace its worst aspects he is overtly flippant, as though he has begun to tire of the pretended seriousness of the epistle:

Whereunto I can none otherwise answere, but that he who will throw a stone at everie Dogge which barketh, had neede of a great satchell or pocket (p. 362)

In the second part of the epistle Gascoigne adduces a second major consideration which has moved him "most earnestly to sue for this second edition or publishing of the same". This is the furore he claims was caused by "the fable of *Ferdinando Jeronimi*, and the Ladie *Elinora de Valasco*, the which in the first edition was termed The adventures of master F.J." (p. 362). Here he dares the reader to call his bluff and accuse him of revising the *Discourse* by relocating it in Italy. He remarks on the scandalous interpretations he claims were current, but undercuts his categorical denial that it was based on real events by basing it on the fact that he did not use the real names:

Alas, alas, if I had bene so foolishe as to have passed in recitall a thing so done in deede, yet all the world might thinke me verie simple if I woulde call John, John, or Mary, Mary. But for the better satisfying of all men universally, I doe here protest unto you (reverend) even by the hope of my salvation, that there is no living creature touched or to be noted therby (p. 363)

Given that the Printer in the first edition had identified "F.J." as "Freeman Jones", and that within a few lines of introducing the characters in the revised version, the narrator reverts to their English names, this assertion cannot be taken seriously. Finally,

Gascoigne claims that in the *Posies*, "all men might see the reformation of my minde" (p. 363). Advertising his "earnest zeale in Gods service", he challenges his readers to put him to the test by employing him and concludes "this plaine Epistle, written for my purgation" with a pious farewell.

The epistle addressed "To al yong Gentlemen, and generally to the youth of England" deals with similar concerns but adopts a style more suited to its readership. Gascoigne designates himself a little bombastically as "Esquire by birth, and Souldiour by profession" (p. 364). He opens with a reminder of his recent absence, referring to "this my native Countrey", which surely has shades of the braggart soldier. (His tone bears comparison at moments with Nashe's Jack Wilton.) He starts briskly; here he is clearly addressing his peers and not his potential patrons or the censors:

I have here (as you see) published in print suche Posies and rymes as I used in my youth, the which for the barbarousnesse of the stile may seeme worthlesse, and yet for the doubtfulnesse of some darke places they have also seemed (heretofore) daungerous.

Gascoigne introduces his argument with a description of "a yong man well borne" and the perils such a youth will face; again, the youth-age paradigm is explicit, as well as the model of himself as a reformed prodigal. Such a man "shall hardly passe over his youth without falling into some snares of the Divell, and temptations of the flesh",

But a man of middle yeares, who hath to his cost experimented the vanities of youth, and to his perill passed them: who hath bought repentance deare, and yet gone through with the bargaine: who seeth before his face the tyme past lost, and the rest passing away in post: Such a man had more neede to be well advised in his doings, and resolute in his determinations. For with more ease and greater favour may we answere for tenne madde follies committed in grene youth, than one sober oversight escaped in yeares of discretion.

Here, then, he is explicit about the greater ease and favour accorded to youthful follies; addressing his peers, he refers overtly to the paradigm which tacitly offered a means of rehabilitation.¹ Going even further, Gascoigne cites as Lycurgus's view, "if an olde man perceiving a yong man to commit any dishonestie, did not rebuke but suffer him: the aged shoulde be chastised, and the yong man should be absolved" (p. 364). This makes the misconduct of the young the direct responsibility of the old and may be seen flippantly to shift the blame for the mistakes of youth from the condition of youth itself to the failure of the moral supervision of the old.

This second epistle is a bantering counterpart to the first; although the persona is the same - the reformed prodigal of middle years - the tone is entirely different. Here, Gascoigne presents himself as a man of experience both amatory and military, and almost brags of his potential as a negative example. His expansive address to "my lustie youthes, and gallant Gentlemen" (p. 365) proclaims his confidence in such company; in this letter to his peers he is more willing to blame wrong reading, attributing the alleged controversy about *A Hundreth* to the readers' "supposes" and "common judgements". Here, he characterizes three types of reader who had been offended by his first book: "curious Carpers, ignorant Readers, and grave Philosophers." That both epistles stand as prefaces to this revised edition suggests that the overtly respectful tone of the epistle to the "reverende Divines" is undercut by this last reference, as well as by

¹ The point is couched differently to the "reverend divines": "For if I shoulde nowe at this age seeme as careles of reproche, as I was in greene youth readie to goe astray, my faultes might quickly grow double, and myne estimation shoulde bee worthie too remayne but single", p. 359.

the flippant overall tone of the second epistle.

In this epistle, Gascoigne reveals that "the first Copie of these my Posies hath beene verie much inquired for by the yonger sort" (p. 366), from which it seems clear that *A Hundreth* had found its most appreciative readership amongst the young. He also admits that the "grave Philosophers", knowing that most of the work has been written "in pursute of amorous enterprises", have:

justly conceyved that the continuance thereof hath beene more likely to stirre in all yong Readers a venemous desire of vanitie, than to serve as a common myrroure of greene and youthfull imperfections.

Given that he considers this a just suspicion, Gascoigne's repeated emphasis on the responsibility of the reader is disingenuous; it serves to absolve the author of responsibility, while admitting that the text is "more likely" to have an adverse effect than a salutary one on its readers.

According to this epistle, and the definition Gascoigne gives of the division of his material, it should be possible to make clear distinctions between his "three sundrie sortes of Posies":

"Floures ... (beeing more pleasant than profitable) ... [Hearbes] (being indeede morall discourses, and reformed inventions, and ... The third (being Weedes) might seeme to some judgements, neither pleasant nor yet profitable, and therefore meete to bee cast away. But as many weedes are right medicinable, so may you find in this none so vile or stinking, but that it hath in it some vertue if it be rightly handled. (p. 367)

But the scheme is not so self-evident in practice: for example, it is surprising to find

Supposes and "The Shield of Love" in the "Hearbes".¹ The division of material is apparently undercut by the mixture of works in each section, which seems to confirm that it may have been a simple formal device to distract the censors' attention from the restrained nature of the revision.

Throughout the second part of the epistle, Gascoigne demonstrates the capacity of a good "invention" by applying his gardening metaphors to his theme of the responsibility of the reader for the interpretation of the text: the author is a gardener, and the reader variously a "Chirurgian" or "Phisition" (p. 367) who has responsibility for gathering the right herbs. But tacit in the conceit is how easy it would be to mistake "Sorrell" for "Rewe", or "hote Perceley" for "cold Endive"; indeed, he warns humorously against the consequences of such a mistake:

Mary you must take heede how you use them. For if you delight to put
Hemlocke in your fellowes pottage, you may chaunce both to poyson him, and
bring your selfe in perill.

He returns to the idea of negative example - "if you take example by the harmes of others who have eaten it before you" (p. 368) - and as he moves towards his conclusion he insists on this point: "I assure you, my yong blouds, I have not published the same to the intent that other men hereafter might be infected with my follies forepassed."

The responsibility of the reader is the most consistent part of his defence of publication

¹ Professor Pigman notes that the division is "often perplexing in practice", citing the presence of "*De profundis*" in the Flowers and other inconsistencies, including "*Dominus iis opus habet*" (63), which occurs in both flowers and weeds, *ibid.*, p. 8.

in this second epistle. Gascoigne has already claimed, in his swaggering tone:

To speake English it is your using (my lustie Gallants) or misusing of these Posies that may make me praysed or dispraysed for publishing of the same. (p. 367)

That the republication of his youthful works was not the most convincing way to demonstrate his reformation is suggested by his denial that he has published them for "anie vaine delight". But he goes on to reiterate the responsibility of the reader and his own potential as a negative example:

bicause I have (to mine owne great detriment) mispent my golden time, I may serve as ensample to the youthfull Gentlemen of England, that they runne not upon the rocks which have brought me to shipwracke. Beware therefore, lustie Gallants, howe you smell to these Posies. And learne you to use the talent which I have highly abused. Make me your myrrour. (p. 368)

These epistles, then, comprise Gascoigne's first fully developed performance as the repentant prodigal. His persona does not belong to either side of the age-youth paradigm, but sits between them, as a man of "middle yeares". Following these two epistles to particularized readers is the catch-all "To the Readers generally a generall advertisement of the Authour". The absence of Gascoigne's name in this letter is striking: the generalized address is matched by the generic self-reference as "Authour". Gascoigne adopts a third tone or voice and begins with the Pauline dictum, "All that is written is written for our instruction" (p. 369).¹ Not only does this claim scriptural authority, it provides the most general justification possible for the work in hand. Furthermore, in describing St. Paul, Gascoigne signals his own practice:

hee coulde (as it were) transforme himself into all professions, therby to winne

¹ Romans 15: 4, also quoted by Chaucer in his "Retractacions".

all kinde of men to God ... he became all things to all men, to the ende that hee might thereby winne some to salvation. (p. 369)

Gascoigne's activity is parallel, though not the same: where he seems to claim that he wants to lead "all kind of men" to virtue, the conversion he clearly intends is to correct reading - both virtuous reading and appreciative reading of Gascoigne.

As in the two preceding epistles, Gascoigne emphasizes the mixture of the work, but this time with another emphasis:

Wherein as there are many things morall, so are there also some verses more sauced with wantonnesse than with wisdom. And as there are some ditties which may please and delight the godly and graver sort, *so are there some which may allure the yonger sort unto fond attempts. But what for that?* (p. 369, my italics)

The strategy advertises the work's mixture but does not refer overtly to the readers' responsibility; instead, there is the casual admission that the mixture does include work which might lead the young astray. Indeed, the humanists' acceptance of Terence is adduced to justify the inclusion of such items:

Hath *Terence* bene forbidden to be read, because his Comedies are rehearsals of many madde pranks played by wanton youthes? No surely. (pp. 369-70)

In fact, there had been widespread discomfort among humanist schoolmasters about using Terence in the classroom, and this had been one of the main causes of the emergence of the Prodigal Son plays in the Low Countries.¹ But the point momentarily shifts the focus from the responsibility of the reader to that of the censor.

¹ See next section.

Gascoigne returns to the notion of mixture, applying it to "every thing which is written (the holy scriptures excepted)" to assert that:

as I never yet saw any thing so clerkly handled, but that therein might be found some imperfections: So coulde I never yet read fable so ridiculous but that therein some morallitie might be gathered. (p. 370)

He concludes his defence of publication with another disingenuous assertion of the responsibility of the readers:

Nowe if any (misgoverning their owne wittes) doe fortune to use that for a Spurre, which I had heere appoynted for a Brydle, I can none otherwise lament it, but to say that I am not the first which hath bene misjudged. (p. 370)

As a "generall advertisement" this notice is effective; it offers several defences of publication and gives extensive opportunities to advertise the copiousnes of the work, the mixture of moral and amorous items in the collection.

The addition of this substantial prefatory material provides a framing device of great significance, comprising the epistles to the "reverende Divines" and "al yong Gentlemen", the general advertisement, the series of commendatory verses, and Gascoigne's own "*ultimum vale* to Amorous Verse" (p. 386). This is followed by the substance of the posy, little changed from *A Hundreth*, but formally arranged and divided into Flowres, Hearbes, and Weedes. At the end of the "Weedes", but not credited as part of the section, is "Certayne Notes of Instruction". Because it falls outside the section it can be seen as a tailpiece, or end of the framework. This essay, a disquisition on the forms and principles of English versification, is notable for its anonymity and its use of fictional devices and (presumably) fictive characters.

The apparent moves in the title of the new edition to gather up the disparate "Sundrie Flowres" and present three discrete "Posies", and the parallel gathering up of the poetic personae of the "Sundrie Gentlemen" into a unified "George Gascoigne", are undercut by the prefatory material. In his prefaces, Gascoigne can be seen to present himself not as a single "Authour", but again in an number of personae: the almost-submissive reformed prodigal, the bantering young gentleman, the pragmatic author. At the end of the threefold posies, there is also the friend of Edouardo Donati in "Certayne Notes".

In the *Posies*, the key presentational strategy by which the move from plural to single authorship is consolidated is the change of the headings of many of the shorter poems. In *A Hundreth* the headings of the "Devises of Sundrie Gentlemen" continually create and disrupt narrative sequences; it is possible to distinguish at least four changes of person in the sequence of headings but the ambiguous use of "lover" and "he" is designed to confuse.¹ Gascoigne is conspicuous in this section by being the only one of the gentlemen to be named. The headings which, presumably, were designed by Gascoigne in 1573 to advertise his talents and simultaneously conceal his advertisement of them had in 1575 only to be modified to consolidate his self-presentation.

The new edition is a far more carefully executed volume and there is evidence that Gascoigne took the opportunity to make aesthetic changes. Many of the miscellaneous verses are presented in *A Hundreth* under headings like Tottel's, which are allowed to suggest model love situations. For example, in *A Hundreth*, "The lover being

¹ See Chapter I, section ii.

disdaynfully abjected by a dame of high calling, who had chosen (in his place) a playe fellowe of baser condicion: doth therefore determine to step a side, and before his departure giveth hir this farewell in verse" (sig. 2P3v). In the *Posies* this becomes more emphatically, "Farewell with a misscheife, written by a lover being..." (sig. S5). Similarly, the poem entitled "The absent lover (in ciphers) disciphering his name, doth crave some spedie relief as followeth" (sig. 2S4) in *A Hundreth*, appears in the *Posies* as simply - or cryptically - "The shield of love.&c." (sig. 2F3v).¹ But the most significant revision is that of the story of "Master F.J.", which had - according to Gascoigne - been the most controversial item in *A Hundreth*.

The Revision of *Master FJ*.

The revised version of the *Discourse* which appears in the *Posies* is entitled *The Pleasant Fable of Ferdinando Jeronimi and Leonora de Valasco, translated out of the Italian riding tales of Bartello*. It dispenses with the prefatory material of the *Discourse* so that the reader is placed more effectively in the defined fictive realm of fable; the removal of the framework of letters from H.W., G.T., and the Printer in effect silences the open-ended discourse of 1573. The extended fiction is lost and events are relocated in Italy, which was to become the conventional distance to avoid the censor.

The "fable" purports to be a translation from the Italian, which fudges generic boundaries. The revision is an attempt to assimilate the unruly *Discourse* into the

¹ All changes are noted in the Pigman edition.

closest existing genre, the Italian *novelle* (as translated by William Painter in 1566 and 1567 and Sir Geoffrey Fenton also in 1567; Pettie did not publish until 1576). But the translation from Italian was already controversial, as is evidenced by Roger Ascham's attack in *The Scholemaster*:

These be the enchantementes of *Circes*, brought out of *Italie*, to marre mens manners in England: Much, by example of ill life, but more by preceptes of fonde bookes, of late translated out of *Italian* into English, sold in every shop in London, commended by honest titles the soner to corrupt honest manners...¹

While Gascoigne gives his story the "honest title" of a fable, it is surely not without a sardonic glance at Ascham's diatribe. Significantly, neither Painter nor Fenton uses the term "fable", and Gascoigne shows considerable reluctance to meet the expectations of that genre or even to comply with the customary presentation of the translation, with its prefixed synopsis. The "fable" would be the more familiar genre, and so would present itself as a preferable vehicle for subverting generic expectations.

The revised narrative opens with a detailed attempt to provide an Italian habitation and a name: "In the pleasant Countrie of *Lombardie*, (and not farre from the Citie of *Florence*) ..." (p. 141n). While this could be seen as an attempt to enhance the fictiveness of the work, that this was not Gascoigne's concern is evident from the subsequent comment on the names of these Italians:

And bicause I do suppose that *Leonora* is the same name whiche wee call *Elinor* in English, and that *Francischina* also doth import none other than *Fraunces*, I will so entitle them as to our owne councitriemen may be moste perspicuous. (p. 141n)

¹ Roger Ascham, *English Works: The Scholemaster*, ed. W.A.Wright (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1904), p. 229.

Having gone to some lengths to establish a nominally Italian context for the narrative, this reversion to the original names resists its relocation. It is impossible not to suspect that Gascoigne is making mock of his readers' suspicions, especially in the light of his remark about covering names in the epistle "To the reverende Divines". It would not be uncharacteristic of Gascoigne to indulge in a double bluff of this kind, but it is even more characteristic of him to encourage speculation that this is what he could be doing.

Most of the revision consists of strategic cuts, although some considerable impact is made by its minute additions. The most significant of these comes early in the narrative in the form of a marginal note: "The ayre of that Countrie did (by all likelyhood) seeme colder to him than the streetes of Venice" (p. 145n). It is a mock attempt at local detail which is left hanging as an interpolated remark and denied the authority of proper inclusion in the main body of the text. As it is the only such addition it is clearly not a part of Gascoigne's rewriting procedure, but stands beside the text to signal its status as a revision. A single, more integrated addition of local detail is to be found much later, in Frances' inset story, where the coins left by the cuckolded husband are translated into Italian money: they become a piece of money which was then "in *Italie* called a *Caroline*" rather than "a piece of mony which then was fallen to three halfpence: and I remember they call them Slippes" (p. 281).

With the loss of G.T. as a fully characterized narrator, many of his remarks concerning the personal transmission of the text are also inevitably lost. But these cuts also have an

impact on the portrayal of F.J.; the Venetian is, aptly enough, a more seasoned lover. In 1573, after the "Fayre Bersabe" verses, G.T. remarks that "I have heard the Author saye, that these were the first verses that ever he wrote uppon like occasion" (p. 146). In 1575 this is cut so that Ferdinando is not, apparently, seeking to be deflowered by his lady, and one of the more likeable aspects of F.J. - his eager, clumsy naivete - is lost and his opportunism becomes merely cynical. Many of G.T.'s remarks are cut simply to accommodate the pretended translation. For example, the description of Elinor's Secretary is in the *Discourse* prefaced by the remark "to make my tale good, I will (by report of my very good friend *F.J.*) discribe him unto you" (p. 153). In 1575 this becomes, "and to make my tale good, I will (by the same words that *Bartello* useth) discribe him unto you" (p. 153n). But of course even in such a minor change the effect of the change is not simple: much of the humour of the description in the *Discourse* is derived from it being reported in the jealous lover's words. Not only is this humour lost but the claim to use "the same words" as the Italian's is ironic, for these are in English, which in a more covert way also draws attention to the text's status as a revision.

Apart from the massive reorientation of the narrative which is the result of the removal of the epistolary framework, the most telling change consists of the removal of G.T.'s conspiratorial remarks, which are essentially devices to enhance his characterization in the *Discourse* but also problematize its relation to the real world.¹ The introduction of

¹ See Susan C. Staub, "GT's constant assertions of the truth of the narrative serve more to parody the historical pose than to assume it", *ibid*, p.119.

Pergo is made far less provocative; she is still introduced as a "gentlewoman of the company I have not hitherto named" (p. 191), but "and that for good respects, least hir name might altogether disclose the rest..." is cut. Her fictiveness in 1575 is unqualified: "This dame had stufte in hir, an old courtier, and a wylie wench, named *Pergo*" (p. 191) compared with the earlier "... wylie wench, whome for this discourse I will name *Pergo*, least hir name natural were to brode before, and might not drinke of all waters".

Some of the cuts may suggest external censorship, but they are not extensive. The only complete episode to be cut is F.J.'s experience hunting with Elinor's husband, with its sonnet "As some men say there is a kind of seed" (pp. 179-80), so losing the force of irony of the supposed omission of works too much "sauced with a taste of glory" (p. 178). The whole episode of the rape is severely abridged, and so does not have the space to explore its literalization of metaphor, although such metaphors as are used are consistent, as before.¹ Unsurprisingly, the full description of the rape is cut; one interesting deletion is "when shee came to hir selfe" (p. 198), so that the revised version loses any suggestion that Elinor may have enjoyed the experience. The rape is thus a more serious event, though typically there is no corresponding emphasis on the moral aspect, which is passed over as silently as before.

¹ See my full discussion of the rape in "'Hir acustomed change': In Defence of Gascoigne's Elinor", *Actes du Colloque du Centre de Recherche sur l'Imaginaire* (Presses Universitaires de Reims, forthcoming).

Where the *Discourse* is left with a number of loose ends, the revised narrator does "wade much further" in tying up the consequences of the action, confining the open-ended, self-referential discourse of 1573 within the enclosed, defined parameters of the fable. But the high moral stance is undercut by the meting out of penalties: the apparently virtuous Fraunces sickens and dies, with not even an allusion to rewards to be expected in heaven; the foolish and dissolute Ferdinando returns to Venice and remains simply foolish and dissolute; and only the apparently vicious character, Elinor, flourishes, living "long in the continuance of hir acustomed change" (p. 216). Although the moral is made explicit it is clearly not serious. In a fable, whatever its original language, the purported moral value is valorised over the aesthetic, so that Gascoigne here deliberately subverts generic expectations.

A close comparison of the two texts seems to suggest a response in the *Fable* to some form of external pressure, although this must remain uncertain. The main interest of this revised version, however, is to be found outside the text of the *Fable* itself. The realism game is not lost: it simply becomes more subtle. Despite the apparently firmer hermeneutic boundaries of the *Fable*, there are other texts in the *Posies* which call its relation to reality into question, as did the three letters which prefaced the *Discourse*. These are the completed version of "Dan Bartholmew" and the new sequence "The Fruite of Fetters", which are encoded autobiography, and are connected in turn to "*Dulce bellum inexpertis*", which is overtly autobiographical.

"Dan Bartholmew of Bathe."

The *Posies* includes the completed version of "Dan Bartholmew of Bathe". Its additions are to what was "Dan Bartholmewes Triumphes", which is now retitled "Dan Bartholmew His first Triumphe" and followed by "Dan Bartholmew his second Triumphe". "Dan Bartholmewes (*sic*) his third Triumphe" is not a new addition, as it had been included in *A Hundreth* as the second of a pair of poems, "The Lover declareth his affection, together with the causes thereof" (34) and "Another shorter discourse to the same effect" (35). These are, in 1573, subscribed with the posy "*Meritum petere, grave*", which introduces the only anomaly in the otherwise consistent use of the posy "*Fato non Fortuna*" in "Dan Bartholmew". Although when it is added to the sequence in 1575 it adopts that posy, the implicit link with the pair of poems in the anonymous portion of the "Devises" provides another mysterious level of subtext.

The poem is completed by the addition of exactly fifty full stanzas to finish the "reporters conclusion" (p. 387) plus the four stanzas of the "Lenvoye". Of a more curious nature is the addition of marginal notes which serve to complicate the text's relation to external reality. These seem gratuitously provocative: beside the "Dolorous Discourse" (sig. e8v; p. 341) appears the note: "These/ thinges are/ mistical and/ not to bee/ understoode/ but by/ Thauthour/ him selfe". In the same section the note "Another misterie" appears on sig. f2, and twice on sig. f2v (p. 343).¹ Gascoigne was once again willing to provoke speculation about the relation of the narrative to external

¹ The only other added marginal note serves simply to gloss an unfamiliar word: "Askaunces" (sig. e7v) is glossed, as in the *Fable* (sig. 2N8v), "as who sayeth".

reality despite the furore he claims was caused by *A Hundreth*.

Authorial revision of the published verses may be inferred from the intensive adjustment in the third stanza of the "reporters conclusion":

I am that man whome destenies ordeine,
To beare each grieffe that groweth on the mold,
I am that man which prove unto my paine,
More pangs at once than can with tong be told,
I am that man (hereof you may be bold)
Whome heaven and earth did frame to scoffe and scorne,
I, I am he which to that ende was borne. (1573: sig. 2I2, p. 357)

In 1575 this becomes:

I was that man whome destinies ordeine,
To beare eche grieffe that groweth on the mold,
I was that man which *proved to* my paine,
More panges at once than can with tongue be told,
I was that man (hereof you maye be bold)
Whome heaven and earth did frame to scoff and scorne,
I, *I was* he which to that ende was borne. (sig. g1, my italics, p. 357n)

It is tempting to assume, as Prouty, Ward, and John Hankins did, that Dan Bartholmew is a version of Gascoigne and that the change of tense is evidence of a change of personal perspective.¹

The most significant change in the completed version is from the tragic to a happy ending, when the lovers are reunited at the end of "The continuation of the reporters conclusion" (p. 387) but the Reporter clearly signals the tale of the Greene Knight - the new sequence "The Fruite of Fetters" - as a sequel to his own. He fears, he says, that

¹ See Chapter I, section ii.

Bartholmew will love again:

And who so doubteth that causeles thus I faint
Let him but reade the greene Knights heavy plaint. (ll. 391-2, p. 396)

The following stanza, which makes an even more extraordinary connection between "Dan Bartholmew" and the Greene Knight, as well as other texts in the *Posies*, is discussed in the next section.

It is clear, though, that "Dan Bartholmew" in its new form is part of a wider subtextual mystery. The reporter's conclusion is subscribed "*Finis. quod Dixit et Dixit*"¹ and is followed by "Lenvoye", which is addressed to one "Syr *Salamanke*". The enthusiasm of this new character is credited with the Reporter's willingness to have the sequence printed, and a hint is given as to another possible story of how an incomplete version came to be printed in *A Hundreth*:

Syr *Salamanke* to thee this tale is tolde,
Peruse it well and call unto thy minde,
The pleasaunt place where thou dydst first behold
The refull rymes: remember how the *Winde*
Dyd calmely blowe: and made me leave behinde,
Some leaves thereof ... (ll. 421-6, p. 397)

The mystery may never be solved; the Reporter has presented himself as Bartholmew's friend, but now acquires another friend whose flattery about the quality of his verse has prompted him to publish it:

Thine onely prayse dyd make me venture forth,
To set in shewe a thing so litle worth. (ll. 440-1, p. 398)

¹ "Which he said and said", or even "he said what he said"; Professor Pigman suspects another mystery.

The Reporter then commends "these leaves" to his friend, with the injunction to "correct" them, just as Gascoigne himself had corrected the *Posies*; his reference to "our sect" (l. 445) suggests that, like him, "Syr Salamanke" is another writer. The proximity of the Reporter and "Syr Salamanke" is like that of the Reporter and Dan Bartholmew. It may be that all these characters are part of Gascoigne's repertoire of self-presentations; it is even possible that "Syr Salamanke" is somehow related to the "Greene Knight".

The Greene Knight: "*Dulce bellum inexpertis*" and "The Fruite of Fetters".

The only substantial new literary items in the *Posies* are two poems which may be assumed from internal evidence to have been written during or since Gascoigne's tour of duty in the Low Countries: "*Dulce bellum inexpertis*" (p. 398) and "The fruite of Fetters: with the complaint of the greene Knight, and his Farewell to Fansie" (p. 439). Although the *Posies* was avowedly the work of one writer, the game of identifying the various protagonists was there for readers who looked for it. "*Dulce bellum inexpertis*" is an overtly autobiographical account of Gascoigne's military service between the publication of *A Hundreth* and the *Posies*, and is the only new material in the volume which serves to justify his new posy, "*Tam Marti quam Mercurio*". In it, Gascoigne tells us that he earned the sobriquet "The Greene Knight", which is also the name of the protagonist of "The Fruite of Fetters", which is encoded autobiography and connected to "Dan Bartholmew". Similarly, the successive failures the Greene Knight describes (in love, at court, the country, and so on) call to mind those described by Gascoigne *in*

propria persona in "Gascoignes Wodmanship". The two new poems are thus connected, but not overtly: it is left to the reader to make the association.

Although "The Fruite of Fetters" is an entirely new item in the *Posies*, it is clear from references in "Dan Bartholmew" that it is connected with the earlier sequence. The Greene Knight has loved three times: his first lady was Cosmana; the second, Ferenda Natura, Dan Bartholmew's lover; the third, with whom he is now preoccupied, is "Petronell". (In fact, he says that his love for Ferenda Natura grew out of the ashes of his grief for Cosmana, which posits another, untold, love narrative anterior to the present items in the autobiographical cycle.) The Reporter in "Dan Bartholmew" refers to "The Fruite of Fetters" as a sequel to his own tale; he goes on to describe the Greene Knight's tale in terms which are designed to raise levels of speculation by making Bartholmew identical with the Greene Knight:

Bartello he which writeth ryding tales,
Bringes in a Knight which cladde was all in greene,
That sighed sore amide his greevous gales,
And was in hold as *Bartholmew* hath beene.
But (for a placke) it maye therein be seene,
That, that same Knight which there his griefes begonne,
Is *Batts* owne Fathers Sisters brothers Sonne. (pp. 396-97)

As well as connecting Dan Bartholmew and the Greene Knight, these lines make a connection with the *Fable*; the revised version is attributed to this otherwise unknown Italian author, Bartello. Furthermore, in both editions of his story, F.J. himself uses exactly this coded nomenclature when Elinor asks who is responsible for the Tyntarnell: "My Fathers Sisters brothers Sonne (quod *F.J.*)" (p. 166). If Dan

Bartholmew and the Greene Knight are the same, and the Greene Knight is made to sound like F.J., then clearly a sub-text is being constructed by which the alert reader may identify all these personae with Gascoigne himself.

Like Bartholmew and F.J., the Greene Knight is a prodigal, but he is one who is in the throes of penitence: his colour is green "because my greeves are alway fresh and greene" (p. 447, l. 211), but the narrator's tone is far from tragic when he abruptly concludes "The complaint of the greene Knight":

What ende he had God knoweth, *Battello* writes it not,
Or if he do, my wittes are short, for I have it forgot. (ll. 217-8)

Similarly, in the "Epilogismus" (33, p. 453), the narrator makes rather caustic observations about the sincerity of the Greene Knight's repentance, his rejection of amorous pursuits in the "Farewell to Fansie", and suggests that the story has not reached its ending:

See sweete deceit, that can it self beguile,
Behold selfe love, which walketh in a net:
And seemes unseene, yet shewes it selfe therewhile,
Before such eyes, as are in science set.
The Greene knight here, leaves out his firelocke peece
That Fansie hath not yet his last farewell. (pp. 453-4)

The "firelocke peece" is the coded reference for another of the Greene Knight's ladies, Petronell; his protestations are, then, severely compromised by the narrator of his tale, so that he, too, is hardly convincing as a repentant prodigal.

This is confirmed by evidence external to the *Posies* which seems to corroborate the

identities of all these prodigals. It is possible to identify the Greene Knight's Petronell in *The Grief of Joye*, a courtly work for a courtly audience, which only some of the contemporary readers of the *Posies* would have been aware of or able to interpret. This presentation manuscript (which dates from New Year 1577) seems to identify "Petronell" as Petronella de Alquemada, someone the speaker of the *Grief of Joye* claims as "my *Petronell*" (Cunliffe, p. 531). She is clearly distinct from Ferenda Natura, who also appears in the succession of court ladies, and has two hyperbolic stanzas addressed to her.¹ More provocative still, this Ferenda addresses the speaker of the *Grief of Joye*, calling him *Bartholmew*:

O *Bartholmew*, (saithe Shee) where bee thy wytts,
And where be the skylle, w^{ch} went to guyde thy penn? (Cunliffe, p. 530)

Although Gascoigne tacitly identified himself as both Bartholmew and the Greene Knight, nowhere does he suggest that he is F.J. or G.T.. The connection between F.J. and these autobiographical texts is simply that - like the *Fable* - "The Fruite of Fetters" is presented as a translation of Bartello. The actual evidence for any connection beyond this is tenuous: a verbal echo in the titles of 1573, and a provocative quotation from F.J. in "Dan Bartholmew" which seems to identify Bartholmew and the Greene Knight. But by these means Gascoigne connected his fiction with a cluster of autobiographical works, both overt and covert. Whether there was any basis in reality must remain uncertain: what is definite is that, by means of these connections, he sought to provoke the reader into a literal reading of the *Fable*, which goes against his own categorical

¹ The second of these stanzas surely gives many clues as to her identity, even though it still eludes us; even the Proutys were unable to identify Ferenda Natura. See Prouty, pp. 265-6.

denials. If the work is in fact entirely fictional, it seems that Gascoigne enjoyed the realism game despite the risks it incurred.¹

"Certayne Notes of Instruction."

Another significant new addition in the *Posies*, placed right at the end of the volume after the "Weedes" and outside that section, is "Certayne notes of Instruction concerning the making of verse or ryme in English, written at the request of Master *Edouardo Donati*" (p. 454). This essay on the principles of English versification is one of Gascoigne's best-known works, largely because of its status as first critical essay in English, which has not (to date) been contested. But the presentation of these "notes of instruction" in the form of a letter to a (presumably) fictive Italian gentleman involves a degree of characterization in the speaker of the letter. Gascoigne says that he studied Italian in London in the dedicatory epistle to the *Hemetes* manuscript, observing that it was "lately lerned", and Prouty suggests that this was a literary form of the language.² It is entirely plausible that Gascoigne might have known an Edouardo Donati in the course of his language instruction or by some social contact which ensued from it, but the name suggests a degree of fictionalization: Edouardo Donati might translate as "Edward Given", perhaps another form of "Freeman Jones", the Everyman who is

¹ While there is no external record of the offence caused by the 1573 edition, there is partial documentation of the fate of the *Posies* and the apparent failure of Gascoigne's efforts to make the collection acceptable. On 13 August 1576 "half a hundred of Gascoignes poesies" were "receyved into the hall of R. Smith", although it has not yet been possible to establish why this was. Also seized on that date were 225 copies of *A Handfull of Delights* (STC 21105) from Richard Jones and 220 of "restorities to love" (untraced) from Henry Kyrkham. This may suggest the nature of the commissioners' attention on that date.

² Gascoigne refers to "suche Italyan as I have lerned in London", Cunliffe, p. 477; see also Prouty, p. 227.

supposed to be F.J.

The author of this letter is tacitly identified as the "George Gascoigne Esquire" who has now claimed the *Posies*, but his tone is remarkably courtly for the reformed self-presentation he offers in the prefatory letters. He opens with a gracious display of social obligation which provides the rationale for the attempt to articulate principles of English poetry:

Signor Edouardo, since promise is debt, and you (by the lawe of friendship) do burden me with a promise that I shoulde lende you instructions towards the making of English verse or ryme, I will assaye to discharge the same, though not so perfectly as I would, yet as readily as I may:

But this essay is at least as playful as Sidney's. Gascoigne suggests that his Italian reader should eschew polysyllabic vocabulary on the grounds that "the more monasyllables that you use, the truer Englishman you shall seeme, and the lesse you shall smell of the Inkehorne" (pp. 457-8).¹ Similarly, he makes statements such as "eschew straunge words, or *obsoleta et inusitata* ..." (p. 458), which are so obviously self-contradictory that it is safe to presume Gascoigne has his tongue in his cheek.

Indeed, even in laying out his fictive opening, Gascoigne subverts the whole purpose of laying down any "instructions" when he observes that:

therwithall I pray you consider that *Quot homines, tot Sententiae*, especially in Poetrie,

and goes on to disclaim any expertise of his own, which is surely an extension of the

¹ This is very similar to the jokes in the epistle "To the Reverend Divines" on the same subject (see, for example, pp. 361-2).

modesty topos:

wherein (neverthesse) I dare not challenge any degree, and yet will I at your request adventure to set downe my simple skill in such simple manner as I have used, referring the same hereafter to the correction of the Laureate. (p. 454)

This final observation is "Another misterie": having established that he will offer rules drawn from his own experience and practice Gascoigne makes what might be a bitter reference to an unknown (and unidentifiable) "Laureate". If he had some rival to whom he could refer as "the Laureate" this raises questions about the rival's identity, what form of laureation is under discussion, who would be expected to recognize the allusion, and so on. It might refer to the poetic rival who appears in the Italian device in the *Hemetes* manuscript, which was produced later in the year, who has also proved unidentifiable.¹

It is notable that Gascoigne returns only briefly to the fictive framework of the epistolary form in his conclusion. It is a summary dismissal of the significance of his own assertions, but one may suspect that it is slightly disingenuous:

I woulde stande longer in these traditions, were it not that I doubt mine owne ignoraunce, but as I sayde before, I know that I write to my freende, and affying myself thereupon, I make an ende. (p. 462)

Once again, as he had done in the letters in *A Hundreth* (or as he was to do throughout the volume of *Steele Glas/Complaynt of Phylomene*) Gascoigne finds the insistence upon the reader's known identity a pragmatic advantage. Here, it enables him to play down the significance of what he would have known was a new kind of writing in

¹ See Chapter III, section i.

English, perhaps trying to deflect anticipated objections. This is a more courtly voice than the mostly earnest one which characterizes the "George Gascoigne Esquire" of "To the reverende Divines" or the bombastic one of "To al yong Gentlemen", or even the low-key practical tone of the "generall advertisement". But the presence of this fourth letter at the end of the volume serves to add another aspect to the fully-fledged performance as reformed prodigal created in the prefatory letters to the *Posies*: as the supposed friend of Edouardo Donati, Gascoigne finally slips behind a ludic mask which is neither certainly fictional nor certainly fact.

It seems, then, that Gascoigne's new self-presentation as a reforming, moralistic writer in the prefatory letters in the *Posies* was not as thoroughgoing a rejection of his former representations as might first appear. Indeed, he adds to his cast of personae a new, self-deluding repentant prodigal, the Greene Knight. Offering "George Gascoigne Esquire" in print for the first time, it would have been an expedient moment at which to experiment with a Prodigal Son play, and not a little witty to make his new persona the theme of a new work. Around the same time as the *Posies*, then, Gascoigne published the *Glasse of Government*.

(ii) 26 April 1575: *The Glasse of Government*.

*"The first suppose and grownd of al the supposes"*¹

Gascoigne's repentance and moral reformation in 1575 is apparently supported by the

¹ Marginal note added to *Supposes* in the *Posies*, p. 9.

publication of the *Glasse of Government*. This work, a rare English example of the Dutch Prodigal Son play, first received critical attention as a representative of a genre cultivated by Continental humanism.¹ The genre originated in humanist pedagogy, being developed by schoolmasters like Gnaphaeus as an alternative to the bawdy and pagan Terentian comedies then used to teach Latin. Gascoigne deviates from his apparent models in several respects, but most notably in the severity of his conclusion: there is no reconciliation or forgiveness for his two prodigals and he apparently "submits to the severest conventional wisdom", as Richard Helgerson puts it.² But Linda Bradley Salamon argues that the play has less in common with its supposed continental models than with English humanism, in particular Ascham's *The Scholemaster* (first published 1570) and Elyot's *Boke named the Governour* (1531).³ Prouty assumed that Gascoigne encountered the genre in the Low Countries and clearly accepted without question the sincerity of Gascoigne's personal reformation and the relationship between the subject of the play and the author's own life. He suggested that the play "was in a form little favo[u]red in England, and we may better understand its composition if we relate it to the poet's life".⁴ Richard Helgerson's discussion of the Prodigal Son as a model for writers of the period is flawed only by its insistence on

¹ The seminal study of the genre remains C. H. Herford, *Studies in the Literary Relations of England and Germany in the Sixteenth Century* (Cambridge, 1886); this was followed by R. W. Bond, *Early Plays from the Italian* (1911, 1967); see also Alan R. Young, *ibid.*, *passim*.

² Richard Helgerson, *The Elizabethan Prodigals* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976), p. 49.

³ Linda Bradley Salamon, "A Face in *The Glasse*: Gascoigne's *Glasse of Government* Re-examined", *SP*, 71 (1974), 47-71.

⁴ Prouty, p. 172. See also esp. pp. 87, 180-88. Cunliffe, editor of Gascoigne's *Complete Works*, notes in the second volume which includes *The Glasse of Government*, that: "His repentance, which is sometimes painfully reiterated ... was evidently sincere," *ibid.*, vol. II, p. vi.

applying the paradigm to all of Gascoigne's career.¹ Finally, Alan Young's discussion sets it in context of the pervasive cultural influence of the model of the Prodigal Son.²

There can be no doubt that Gascoigne's play is a study of prodigality and that it supports the model of the repentant prodigal which he had presented in the prefatory matter in the *Posies*. But it may have been simply expedient to publish a Prodigal Son play at this time; certainly, Gascoigne did not reject the opportunities which came his way this year which did not fit this self-presentation. The dedication to Sir Owen Hopton is an insert, which suggests that this was an extremely versatile manoeuvre; there may have been other dedicatees.³ It may also be significant that it is possible to identify so much influence from Ascham's treatise on education, as Salamon does, since it had been published only five years previously: Gascoigne may have been deliberately alluding to this model of English humanist education theory in order to demonstrate his understanding (and acceptance) of its tenets.⁴ Indeed, C. S. Lewis accounted for the play's non-dramatic form by pointing out that it is very like an Erasmian colloquy,⁵ the humanist pedagogic tool *par excellence*.

¹ See my Introduction.

² Young, *ibid.*, pp. 128-40.

³ Prouty speculates somewhat vaguely about Gascoigne's reference to "sundrie great curtesies" performed by Hopton, p. 87.

⁴ By contrast, Nashe was to mock the genre in *The Unfortunate Traveller* when his Jack Wilton describes a performance of *Acolastus* at the University of Wittenberg before the Duke of Saxony: it "was so filthily acted, so leathernly set forth, as would have moved laughter in Heraclitus ...", in *An Anthology of Elizabethan Prose Fiction*, ed. Paul Salzman (Oxford University Press: World's Classics, 1987), p. 243.

⁵ C. S. Lewis, *English Literature in the Sixteenth Century*, p. 269.

It is well accepted that Gascoigne was intellectually of the type of "quick wit" whom Ascham criticized: quick to learn, this flashy kind of mind was less able to absorb and retain its lessons than the slower wit which had to work harder. The first posthumous reference to Gascoigne in print, E.K.'s gloss in Spenser's *The Shepheardes Calender*, notes that "gifts of wit and naturall promptnesse appeare in hym abundantly".¹

Several critics have struggled to justify Gascoigne's severe conclusion in the *Glasse*, given that the "naturall promptnesse" of the prodigals is so close to Gascoigne's own. But even the severity of Gascoigne's ending may be related to the expediency of the publication, the apparent need to demonstrate his reformation. That the quick-witted sons receive no forgiveness or rehabilitation may indeed suggest absolute submission to the "severest conventional wisdom", as Helgerson argues, but demonstrating this in a work of literature is not the same as doing so in life.

The *Glasse of Governement* may, then, be considered as a part of Gascoigne's strategy to rehabilitate himself. It is of a piece with the *Posies*, in as much as that volume seeks to create the model of Gascoigne the repentant prodigal, and the *Glasse* seeks to consolidate it. This was the "George Gascoigne" whose name first appeared in print.

¹ See Prouty, p. 4, who also notes that E.K.'s remark was repeated by Webbe in 1586 in his *Discourse of English Poetrie*.

Chapter II. 1575: The Repentant Prodigal and Princely Pleasures.

(ii) Princely Pleasures (I).

The Noble Arte of Venerie or Hunting (16 June).

In the summer of 1575 Gascoigne paused temporarily in his quest to create a convincing reformed persona in print when more courtly opportunities arose. These were two commissions, one from the printer Christopher Barker to translate a French book on hunting, the other from the Earl of Leicester to write a masque for his festivities at Kenilworth Castle in July. Both works were specifically designed for a noble and courtly audience or readership: the translation is *The Noble Arte of Venerie or Hunting ... Translated and collected for the pleasure of all Noblemen and Gentlemen* ... Gascoigne's contribution to this book, which was published anonymously, was once thought to be restricted to his commendatory verse, despite Hazlitt's inclusion of eleven of its poems in his edition of *The Complete Poems* (1870).¹ Hazlitt evidently believed that Gascoigne's involvement was greater than is acknowledged in the text.

Until the publication of Jean Robertson's article in 1942,² the *Noble Arte* was commonly attributed to George Turbervile because of its association with his *Booke of*

¹ None the less, Cunliffe excluded the work from his edition, printing only the commendatory verse which bears Gascoigne's name. References here are to the original edition (STC microfilm).

² Jean Robertson, "George Gascoigne and *The Noble Arte of Venerie and [sic] Hunting*", *MLR*, 37 (1942), 484-5.

Faulconrie, also published by Christopher Barker in 1575.¹ The two volumes are often bound together, and there is ample evidence that they were designed as companion volumes; beyond parallels in the illustrative material and hints in the translator's letters, the title of *The Booke of Faulconrie or Hauking, for the onely delight and pleasure of all Noblemen and Gentlemen...* similarly has a particular social class as its target readership. The translator of the *Noble Arte* refers to Barker's combined project when he commends his "friend (the Printer)":

... who to his great costs hath sought out asmuche as is written and extant in any language, concerning the noble Artes of Venerie & Falconrie: and to gratifie the Nobilitie and Gentlemen of this land, hath disbursed great summes for the Copies, translations, pictures, and impressions of the same (sigs. A2-A2v)

Furthermore, when he describes the rivalry between the two sports, he asserts the superiority of hunting, only to be contradicted by a marginal note, "The Falconer sayth no" (sig. A3). This suggests that there was at least a friendly level of co-operation between Barker, Gascoigne, and Turbervile.²

Where Turbervile, unlike Gascoigne, added his name to his text, it would seem likely that such a courtly subject would better suit his public profile: he had published both his translation of Mantuan's eclogues and his first collection of poems, *Epitaphs*,

¹ The misattribution may originate with Robert Burton, who directs his reader to Turbervile's book of hunting (*Anatomy*, pt III, sn 2, mem 1, subs 1). When the only modern edition of the *Noble Arte* was reprinted in the Tudor and Stuart Library it was issued as *Turbervile's Booke of Hunting. 1576* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1908). In the first edition of *STC* (1926) it was attributed to Turbervile, but it was reassigned to Gascoigne in the second edition (1976).

² There could also have been a loose connection via their patrons: Turbervile's patron Anne Russell was the daughter of Francis Russell, Earl of Bedford, with whom Gascoigne had had some dealings. See Chapter III, section ii, on the *Droomme of Doomesday*.

Epigrams, Songs and Sonets in 1567 shortly before a trip to Russia, after which he published *Poems describing the Places and Manners of the Countrey and People of Russia, Anno 1568* (now lost) and became, according to Anthony a Wood, "esteemed a most accomplished gentlemen".¹ The courtly attitudes of Turbervile's metrical epistles in the Russian book (preserved in Hackluyt's *Voyages*, 1589) and his anthology are consistent with the authorship of a book on hawking in a way which contrasts with Gascoigne's efforts to disassociate himself from his courtly aspirations and excesses. Gascoigne, while happy to seize upon any opportunity to further his career, was probably reluctant to claim his translation by name because it would compromise the self-presentation of the repentant prodigal which he had begun to construct that year in his printed work.

For modern critics, the *Noble Arte* was a late addition to Gascoigne's oeuvre and Prouty did not take account of it in his biography.² Alerted, however, by Jean Robertson's article to Gascoigne's responsibility for the *Noble Arte*, Charles and Ruth Prouty developed the discussion to speculate that Gascoigne had added a second masque which had been intended for performance at Kenilworth.³ They could find only one reason for Gascoigne's anonymous publication of the *Noble Arte*: "he evidently did not

¹ Anthony a Wood, *Athenae Oxonienses*, ed. P. Bliss (3rd ed., 4 vols., 1813), vol. I, p. 627. Indeed, his biographer John E. Hankins notes that "it did not increase his reputation as a soldier or practical man of affairs", in *The Life and Works of George Turbervile*, p. 13.

² Jean Robertson notes the omission in her review of Prouty's biography, *MLR*, 338 (1942), 139-40. See my Introduction.

³ Charles and Ruth Prouty, "George Gascoigne, *The Noble Arte of Venerie*, and Queen Elizabeth at Kenilworth", *Joseph Quincy Adams Memorial Studies* (Washington: Folger Shakespeare Library, 1948), 639-664. See my Introduction.

think it well to put his name to so light and trivial a work as *The Noble Arte!*"¹ While the Proutys were keen to claim the work for Gascoigne, they failed to acknowledge that the model of the "serious reformer" simply cannot accommodate "trivial" work published anonymously. Even so, their conclusion explicitly admits a new persona to the cluster around which Prouty's biography is organized: "Not only was he courtier, soldier and poet; as well he was a true *amateur* of venery."² The inconsistency was never resolved.

To condemn the work as entirely "light and trivial", as the Proutys do, neglects the fact that this was a work of great interest to many at court. It was certainly not appropriate for a "serious reformer" or moralist, one who had rejected the court and its excesses, but it was a practical manual which identified a niche in the literary marketplace. The subject was undoubtedly fashionable, and concerned with leisure, but as a sport for nobles this was more virtuous than other forms of chase. Indeed, Elizabeth's own passion for hunting is well attested and it was to be her daily pastime at Kenilworth in July. The date of the translator's letter, 16 June 1575, confirms the proximity of this publication to Gascoigne's efforts to gain courtly favour there the following month. Gascoigne may have received his commission to write a masque for Leicester by this date, or it could have been the publication of the *Noble Arte* which attracted Leicester's attention: for months before his entertainments he had men scouring the country for novelties and luxuries which would appeal to the Queen. The two works (one text, one

¹ Charles and Ruth Prouty, *ibid.*, p. 652.

² Charles and Ruth Prouty, *ibid.*, p. 664.

performance) would together have represented a prime opportunity to attract the notice of the Queen and her inner circle. But it is clear that this was not allowed to compromise the reformed persona Gascoigne was building in print: both the *Noble Arte* and his edition of the Kenilworth festivities (March 1576) were published anonymously, just as *A Hundreth* had been.

The dedication of the *Noble Arte* to Lord Clinton, Master of the Queen's Hart Hounds, suggests another covert manoeuvre in the system of patronage.¹ The prefatory material consists of a letter from the "printer, C. B." (Christopher Barker, though it may have been written by Gascoigne) to Lord Clinton, and a letter from the anonymous "translator" to the reader. The "printer" excuses his boldness, but claims he:

made also diligent searche to knowe what particular personage were meetest to be presented with the same: and being enformed by my friend (the Translator) that the office of the Hart Hounds perteyned unto youre Lordship ... (sig. A-Av)

Even anonymous translation could be privately attributed, and the dedication was probably a way of attracting Clinton's attention to someone so conversant with the art of hunting; significantly, it was Gascoigne who suggested his name. Clinton was not a known literary patron, so that it was specifically his post as Keeper of the Queen's Hart Hounds which attracted Gascoigne's dedication.² Given his office, furthermore, it is virtually certain that Lord Clinton would have been present at Kenilworth the following

¹ Henry Clinton, Earl of Lincoln, "succeeded to the title in 1585 but was styled "Lord Clinton" from 1572", *The Complete Peerage*, ed. H.A. Doubleday and Lord Howard de Walden (London: St. Catherine Press, 1929, 13 vols.), vol. VII, p. 693.

² Clinton's only other dedication was from John Hoskins, in *A sermon upon the Parable of the King that taketh an accompt of his servants* (1609), in which he complains of his nine-year imprisonment and signs off "From the Fleete" (sig. A2v). See *Index of Dedications*.

month.

Despite the textual strategies in the *Noble Arte*, very like those of *A Hundreth*, to suggest a number of sources for the translation - "From the same author", "From another author" - the Proutys demonstrate that there was one French source only, which itself incorporates another text.¹ This was Jacques du Fouilloux's *La Venerie*, which had been printed under royal privilege by "De Marnefz et Bouchetz freres".² When the privilege was transferred to Galliot du Pre, the new printer incorporated portions of Gaston de Foix's *La Chasse* in the new edition of *La Venerie* which he printed in 1573.³ The Proutys conclude that this edition was Gascoigne's source, and they identify further additions to the text which appear to be original compositions by him. Barker's commission, then, was to translate a recent, updated, manual of hunting; it was either Barker or Gascoigne who designated it the "noble art" and thus signalled its target readership. But like du Pre, Barker augmented his source with new woodcuts, and went even further than his French counterpart by commissioning the companion volume on hawking.

The Woodcuts.

The presence of three new woodcuts in the *Noble Arte* which feature scenes with Queen Elizabeth hunting is firm evidence that some of the illustrations were commissioned for

¹ For these strategies in *A Hundreth*, see Chapter I, section ii.

² Charles and Ruth Prouty, *ibid.*, p. 642 n.13.

³ Charles and Ruth Prouty, *ibid.*, p. 642n., give a full account of the printing history of du Fouilloux's *La Venerie*.

the translation.¹ These show an "assembly", where the hunt gathers for refreshment, the report of a huntsman, and the death of the hart. The illustrations were an important part of Christopher Barker's project and there is evidence that the drawings for the woodcuts were executed by Gascoigne himself. The translator's claim in the *Noble Arte*, that the printer "hath disbursed great summes for the Copies, translations, pictures and impressions" (sig. A2v), has already been noted. Furthermore, in the text, the translator makes the specific claim that he has executed two of these drawings himself:

But for the better declaration and lively expressing of all these things, I have here set in portrayture as well an assembly, as also the presenting of a report made by a huntsman to a Prince upon sight of Slot, view, entrie, portes, abatours, fewmishings, and other such tokens (sig. F7v).

This is consistent with Gascoigne's attitude to his translation, whereby he signals his departures from his source; for example, he notes that he has substituted his own version of the English terms of venery for the French of the original.² But of course it also advertises another of his skills, so that in this text he was able to present himself as a keen woodman, a writer/translator, and an artist.

The woodcuts in the *Noble Arte* appear to be from four different sources: there is a group from the original French; another group on the cruder style of the Otter (sig.

¹ The Proutys note that they "bear some relationship to similar cuts in the French work", *ibid.*, p. 663.

² "... because I find that his termes in the French are in many places much different from ours ... therefore I have my parte to set downe such as I my selfe have eyther herd pronounced by olde Huntmen, or founde approved in olde *Trystrams booke*" (sig. P5v).

2A); some in the style of the Fox (sig. N3); and three, more accomplished than those from the French, which feature Elizabeth and are therefore new to the English translation. The title page features a fine etching, which forms a complementary pair with the one on the title page of the *Booke of Faulconrie*. One further piece of evidence that the two translations were companion volumes is the presence in Turbervile's book of one woodcut of the Queen hawking which is almost certainly by the same hand as the three in the *Noble Arte*.¹ Christopher Barker evidently commissioned someone, almost certainly George Gascoigne, to produce contemporary courtly scenes showing Elizabeth enjoying both sports to enhance the appeal of these complementary translations to a noble readership.

While the Proutys suggest that the three original illustrations in *The Noble Arte* are Gascoigne's own they do not admit any technical evidence.² The first, the "assembly" woodcut (sig. F5v), shows Elizabeth seated amongst courtiers and attendants while food and drink are served (see Figure 2). The "reporte of a Huntzman" (sig. F8) shows (probably) the same huntsman offering her the deer's "fewmishings" (droppings) for inspection (see Figure 3); and the "breaking up of the Deare" (sig. I3) shows the chief huntsman kneeling before Elizabeth and offering her a knife (see Figure 4). All

¹ Roy Strong considers the four together, in *Portraits of Elizabeth I* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963), p. 122; but in *The English Renaissance Miniature* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1983) he attributes them to Levina Teerlinc, a "book illustrator and portrait painter in the royal service", pp. 62-4.

² "Although it be pure speculation, we are inclined to wonder if Gascoigne himself had anything to do with the original woodcuts. It is known that Gascoigne did on one occasion draw an emblematic design in a letter to Sir Nicholas Bacon, and we fancy we see a certain resemblance between the huntsman and the portrait of Gascoigne on the reverse of the title page of *The Steele Glas*", Charles and Ruth Prouty, *ibid.*, p. 663.



Figure 2. "Of the place where and howe an assembly should be made, in the presence of a Prince, or some honorable person", from *The Noble Arte of Venerie or Hunting* (1575)



*Figure 3. "The report of a Huntzman upon the sight of an Hart, in pride of greace",
from the Noble Arte*



Figure 4. "... the Englishe manner, in breaking up of the deare", from the Noble Arte

three woodcuts can be seen as celebrating the Queen's woodmanship; Gascoigne seems to have shared her passion for hunting, though his poem "Gascoigne's Wodmanship" belies the confidence with which he addresses his subject in the *Noble Arte*.¹ It is possible that the huntsman in Gascoigne's woodcuts is intended to represent not Gascoigne, as the Proutys suggest, but Lord Clinton. But if it is indeed Gascoigne, the *Noble Arte* provides another three self-portraits and, like the frontispiece to the *Hemetes* manuscript, these are imaginary representations of Gascoigne in favour with the Queen.²

Gascoigne certainly had the technical ability to execute the drawings for these woodcuts, as is witnessed by the frontispiece in the *Hemetes* manuscript, which he prepared towards the end of this year (see Fig. 6). The main challenge with such a complex composition as the "assembly" woodcut would be the organization of the perspective, which is rather like a tapestry. Gascoigne's skill in composition is obvious from the number of perspectival devices he employs in the *Hemetes* frontispiece: the tiled floor; the doorway in the background revealing cloisters receding into the distance; the doorway on the right suggesting further depths. It is a confident scheme, making full use of its pictorial space, just as the "assembly" and other hunting woodcuts do. Evidently by an untrained hand, the technical flaws do not detract from

¹ See Jonathan Crewe's discussion of Gascoigne's self-presentation in this poem and other works in *Trials of Authorship* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), pp. 118-39.

² If they are indeed self-portraits they are Gascoigne's first chronologically; this means that the frontispiece to *Hemetes* may have another level of reference to previous encounters with the Queen. See Chapter III, section i.

this confidence. Minute detail is evident in both: bearing in mind that the drawings for the woodcuts would have to be done in reverse to be transferred to a block, the "assembly" picture is sufficiently well-observed to show the garters on the knees of the two courtiers nearest the Queen, and the Tudor rose on the tunics of the attendants far in the background.

The "assembly" woodcut is a far more elaborate scene than the French equivalent although the Proutys do note parallels between the two.¹ The huntsman, recognizable from the bugle hanging against his tunic, kneels before the seated queen as though accepting his orders for the day's sport. The second new illustration depicts the next important stage in the day's events: the "reporte of a Huntzman upon the sight of an Hart, in pride of greace" shows the queen viewing the deer's fewmets, from which she could, as an experienced woodman, deduce its condition. It is only here, in his descriptions of the royal hunt, that Gascoigne displays any diffidence about his knowledge of the sport: "... I have set it downe in suche termes as I can, desiring all Masters of Venerie and olde huntzmen, to beare with my boldnesse in uttering of my simple knowledge" (sig. F7).

In this second new woodcut, the queen stands on a railed wooden platform with three female attendants and three male courtiers, with the chief huntsman kneeling before her displaying the fewmets on leaves, as described in the text. Elizabeth would then choose

¹ Charles and Ruth Prouty, *ibid.*, pp. 663-4. They reproduce both the English and the French woodcuts.

which of the deer she wished to hunt, and the successful huntsman would return to "his blemishes" (the "markes which are left to knowe where a Deare hath gone in or out ... little bowes plashed or broken, so that they hang downward", sig. Gv). The queen is depicted as holding a small branch, which could perhaps have been one of these "blemishes", though most would have been left *in situ* to indicate the direction the hart had taken.

The third woodcut, the "breaking up of the Deare", shows the successful outcome of the day's hunting: the queen has dismounted from her horse and the huntsman kneels beside the deer offering her a knife, with which she would make the first cut. This is accompanied by a prose substitution by Gascoigne entitled "An advertisement by the Translator of the Englishe manner, in breaking up of the Deare" (sigs. I2v-I4). It includes mention of forfeits for poor woodmanship, if one could not cut out the shoulder cleanly:

If afterwarde he touch the shoulder or any part of the legge, with any other thing than his knyfe, untill he have taken it out, it is a forfayture, and he is thought to be no handsome woodman. (sigs. I3v-I4)

This is a reminder of the importance of skill, the "art" of hunting, and obliquely of the disingenuously inept persona Gascoigne adopted in his earlier poem to Lord Grey.

Finally, brief mention should be made of the single woodcut in the *Booke of Faulconrie* (used twice, under slightly different captions, at sigs. F and G8v) which is almost certainly Gascoigne's (see Figure 5). It features Elizabeth, this time on horseback and



Figure 5. "How to slee the Hearon", from George Turbervile's Booke of Faulconrie (1575)

again with attendants and - aptly for its subject - much of the pictorial space is given to the skies, just as the hunting scenes are filled with trees and woodland. The woodcut shows the killing of the heron, a chase Turbervile describes as "a game of state" and "a noble sport to vew"; again, Gascoigne illustrates Elizabeth participating in the most noble form of the sport. Although the falconers' dogs are markedly different from the hunters', this is because they are spaniels; different breeds of dog were used for each sport. There are identifiable stylistic similarities between the falconry and the hunting woodcuts: the two sets of hatching on the horse's neck in the "breaking up of the deare" match those on the horse's neck in the falconry woodcut, and the face of one attendant on the right edge in both these is very similar. Furthermore, the distinctive profile of the chief huntsman, who appears in all three hunting woodcuts, is very similar to the falconer in the left foreground of the woodcut in Turbervile's book. This could represent an additional gambit, submerged in Turbervile's book, in which Gascoigne creates a covert self-presentation as a falconer as well as a woodman.

The Textual Additions.

In addition to these woodcuts, Gascoigne was responsible for a number of significant textual additions to his source, which are identified and briefly discussed by the Proutys.¹ These are a mixture of poems and prose: "Of the Hunting of an Hare"

¹ The Proutys do not enumerate the individual items but do locate the blocks of text where there is no equivalent in the original. I have tried to restrict my discussion of the original additions to those not described by the Proutys.

(poem), "Of the properties of an Hare..." (prose), and "The Hare, to the Hunter" (poem); "Of the Foxe" and "The Foxe to the Huntese-man" (both poems); "An advertisement of the Translator" (prose account of the hunting of wildcats and martens, practised in England but not in France); "Of the hunting of the Otter", "How to hunt and take an Otter") (both prose) and "The Otters Oration" (poem); "Of the Termes of Venerie" (glossary supplying the English terms rather than the French); "A short observation ... concerning coursing with Greyhoundes" (prose); and "The measures of blowing" (musical settings of the notes used by English huntsmen).

As this list suggests, Gascoigne's treatment of his original is a cultural as much as a linguistic translation; he supplies material on forms of hunting little used in France and substitutes examples of English practice where the information in his source differs from it. The longest original poem is associated with the "assembly" woodcut and is described by the Proutys as a masque intended for performance at Kenilworth.¹ A lively description of the rivalry between the cooks and the butlers (providing food and drink respectively) this may, however, be seen in the light of the mock-trial which concludes the "Memories" sequence as having no real probability of being intended for performance.² But it is interesting for its thinly veiled agenda: "Marke well my wordes, and thanke me then, for thankes I crave in fee" (sig. F6). Like the "Gardnings" and other works in *A Hundreth*, this outlines the role of the reader, the element of exchange which is expected by the poet. It does include verses which address the queen directly,

¹ Charles and Ruth Prouty, *ibid.*, pp. 655-62.

² See Chapter I, section i.

which helped to persuade the Proutys that the poem was performed, but these may be compared to the direct address in manuscript works like *Hemetes* and the *Grief of Joye*, where it is part of the depiction of a fictional solo audience with the Queen.¹

What is evident from the original poems which adopt the voices of the hare, the fox, and the otter is that Gascoigne had no difficulty in following his French source and playing upon the different perspective on hunting of the prey. These poems are further evidence of the ease with which he adopted different poetic voices and personae: in the *Noble Arte* Gascoigne as readily voices the pathos of the hare as the wiliness of the fox, or indeed the robust attitude of the experienced and enthusiastic huntsman. "The Hare, to the Hunter" (sigs. L8v-Mv) is a satirical view of the hunting of such a small and allegedly harmless creature:

Are mindes of men, become so voyde of sense,
That they can joye to hurte a harmelesse thing?
A sillie beaste, whiche cannot make defence?
A wretche? a worme that can not bite, nor sting?
If that be so, I thanke my Maker than,
For makyng me, a Beast and not a Man. (sig. L8v)

Similarly, the Proutys note the satirical viewpoint of "The Otters Oration" (sigs. 2A-2A2) and compare it to that of the *Steele Glas* for its attack upon gluttony.² But the poem concludes with a stanza which condemns hunting as unequivocally as the rest of Gascoigne's additions commend it: "So to conclude, when men their faults can mend,/ And shunne the shame, wherewith they beasts do blot..." (sig. 2A2). This takes on

¹ See Chapter III, section i, and Chapter IV.

² Charles and Ruth Prouty, *ibid.*, p. 649.

additional sharpness when it is considered that the hare was Lenten prey, as is revealed in Gascoigne's poem on the fox.¹

Although the text is peppered with allusions to Gascoigne's personal experience as a huntsman, his treatment of the fox is predominantly literary, drawing on Chaucerian and English folkloric precedent. "Of the Foxe" is a four-line introductory stanza:

Raynerd the Foxe am I, a craftie childe well knowne,
Yea better known than credited, w^t more than is mine own:
A bastard kynd of curre, mine eares declare the same,
And yet my wit and pollicie have purchast me great fame. (sig. N3)

Taking the fox's "wit and pollicie" as his theme, Gascoigne is again satirical in "The Foxe to the Huntzman", attacking poachers, lawyers, and landowners. In the description of the villagers chasing the fox (ll. 13-16) may be seen a minor tribute to Chaucer's *Nun's Priest's Tale*, while an allusion to his own mock-trial at the end of the "Memories" is detectable in the appearance of "poor Tom troth" in the third line, summoned to the bar this time to testify on behalf of "brutish beast" (l.3, sig. N3).²

Even here, in a courtly printed work, Gascoigne mixes his subject matter with traces of a reforming moralistic consciousness:

But shall I say my minde? I never yet saw day,
But every town had two or three, which Rainards parts could play.
So that men vaunt in vaine, which say they hunt the Foxe,
To kepe their neighbors poultry free, & to defend their flockes,

¹ He describes the seasons of hunting: "first the Hare in Lent,/ The Hart in Sommers heate, and me poore Foxe in cold" (sig. N4). "The seasons of all Chaces" are also described in the "Termes of Venerie", where the hare's season is "from Mighelmas till Midsomer" (sig. P7v).

² See Chapter I, section i.

When they them selves can spoyle, more profit in an houre,
Than Raynard rifles in a yere, when he doth most devoure. (sigs. N3v-N4)

Like the hare and the otter, the fox is able to adopt a superior moral stance to mankind, satirizing our supposedly higher intellectual and spiritual faculties. Indeed, the Proutys note a digression on Fortune addressed to "al Princes and Potestates", which Gascoigne holds up as a "mirroure" but does not allow to deflect his primary purpose:

I woulde not have my wordes wrested to this construction, that it were unlawfull to kill a Deare or such beasts of venerie: for so should I bothe speake agaynst the purpose which I have taken in hande ... but as by all Fables some good moralitie may be gathered, so by all Histories and examples, some good allegorie and comparison may be made. (sig. G3)

In what is otherwise a faithful rendering of the French, Gascoigne interpolates material which characteristically undercuts the predominant tone of the work: in this case, challenging the otherwise celebratory attitude of the manual of hunting by adducing the viewpoint of the prey, and applying familiar but uncomfortable allegorical levels of meaning.¹

Gascoigne's prose additions deal largely with forms of hunting not included in his French original, which he signals in his account of the hunting of wildcats and martens,

"An advertisement of the Translator":

I finde in myne Author nothing written either of the wild Cat or of the Marterne, and yet both those are vermine whiche we use here in England commonly to hunt, and in my judgement as necessarie to be hunted as any vermine can be. (sig. N4)

Similarly, the appended essay "A short observation set downe by the Translatour,

¹ Also noted by Roger Pooley, in "George Gascoigne: An Advocacy", p. 58.

concerning coursing with Greyhoundes", opens with the explanation:

Bycause I finde nothing in myne Author particularly written of coursing with Greyhounds, it seemeth unto me, that they have not that kynd of Venerie so much in estimation in France, as we do hold it here in England. (sig. Q2v)

But this apparent impulse to be comprehensive according to English practice is qualified by his comments at the conclusion of the main body of the text:

Thus have I nowe (what out of myne Authour, and what by myne owne experience and conjecture) set downe the natures and hunting of as many chases as I thinke chaseable: yea, and these two last rehearsed, viz. the Wolfe and the Beare, together with the Rayndeare also, I have not thought good to leave out, although they be not in use heere with us in Englande: since they seeme by the description, to be noble chases, and much esteemed in other countreys. (sig. Ov)

Indeed, at the end of his description of the breaking up of the hart, Gascoigne adds some observations on the differences between French and English practice, concluding:

These things of my selfe I have thought good to adde, desiring the reader to take them in good parte. (sig. I4)

As well as a practical manual, then, Gascoigne treats this text as a record of noble woodmanship, whether that of England (as in the woodcuts, and the glossary and "The measures of blowing") or of France, when his original deals with prey not found in England.

More frequently, however, Gascoigne supports his material by reference to his own experience. This suggests that the text was primarily intended as practical instruction, "setting downe rules and precepts" (sig. P5v), a form of writing he had essayed a couple of months previously with "Certayne Notes of Instruction". Most of the references to his own experience are simple statements to support his text, but some are

distinguished by the image they promote of the author as a fearless and audacious huntsman. For example, in describing the hunting of the hart at bay in the water, he says that if the huntsman sees that the animal will not come out of the water,

let him get a boate, or if he can swymme, let him put off his clothes, and swymme to him with a Dagger readie drawne to kyll him ... It hath beene my happe oftentimes to kyll in this sorte verie great Hartes, and that in sight and presence of divers witnesses, and afterwarde I have guided their deade bodyes to the banke swymming. (sig. G3v)

Similarly, in his discussion of the hunting of the fox and badger, he describes a further sport which might be had with the animal above ground, once it is caught:

Being thus taken, put them into a sacke or poke, to hunt with your Terryers in your gardens or close courtes, at your pleasure. He that will be present at such pastimes, may do well to be booted: For I have lent a Foxe or Badgerd ere nowe, a piece of my hose, and the skyn and fleshe for companie, which he never restored agayne. (sig. N2v)

This self-presentation as an energetic and experienced woodman would be especially apt to appeal to the Queen and her inner circle, and offers a far more courtly and practically competent Gascoigne than his previous publications.

These remarkable episodes, as well as emphasizing Gascoigne's own credibility as a huntsman, support his self-presentation as one who is equally skilled writing about hunting or actually doing it: the same equivalence of the *vita activa* and *vita contemplativa* which informs his motto, "*Tam Marti quam Mercurio*". The theme underpins his attitude toward his translation; he augments his text throughout with examples of English practice and assurances that what he describes accords with his own experience, concluding his glossary of the "Termes of Venerie" with the

observation that:

And this is as much as I can presently call to remembrance, eyther by reading or experience, touching the termes of Venerie ... (sig. Q2)

Finally, there is the reference to hunting at night which the Proutys adduced as one of the clues to Gascoigne's authorship. This occurs in the essay "A short observation ... concerning coursing with Greyhoundes" (sig. Q2v) which follows the main text and the "Termes of Venery". Again, this is prompted by the lack of material on the subject in Gascoigne's original, and informed by his own woodmanship. But in this case, the new material concludes with a rather flippant reference to how he has gained his hunting experience:

There is another kinde of coursing whiche I have more used than any of these: and that is at a Deare in the night: wherin there is more arte to be used than in any course els. But bicause I have promised my betters to be a friend to al Parkes, Forrests, and Chaces, therefore I will not here expresse the experience which hath bene dearer unto me, particularly, than it is meet to be published generally. (sig. Q4v)

This seems to suggest that, skilled huntsman though undoubtedly he was, most of Gascoigne's experience was acquired illicitly. There is considerable irony in the assertion that he has promised to be a "friend to al Parkes, Forrests, and Chaces", since his assumed readers were the very landowners this night-time hunting would most offend.

It seems clear that, far from rejecting the courtly means to preferment, Gascoigne continued to pursue that route while he constructed for himself a moralistic persona in print. This would account for his anonymity in this text which, even if it is not as

trivial as the Proutys assert, certainly would not suit the reformed persona he had presented in the *Posies* and the *Glasse of Government*, the foundations of the portfolio of moralistic titles he had begun to develop in print this year. Furthermore, for the following month he was actively involved in the Earl of Leicester's spectacular courtly entertainments at Kenilworth, arguably the single most remarkable example of individual prodigality of Elizabeth's reign.

The Princely Pleasures at Kenilworth Castle (9-27 July).

The summer Progress of 1575 was to be the longest and most memorable of Elizabeth's reign; its main event was the lavish hospitality of the Earl of Leicester at Kenilworth in July. The flexibility of the programme and the inevitable departures from the scripted entertainment are consistent with the looseness and opportunism of the Progresses themselves.¹ Elizabeth's stay at Kenilworth marks a new stage in the development of her iconography, for although her powers of transformation and metamorphosis had been a theme of many earlier entries and pageants, it was the entertainments offered there which, as Jean Wilson puts it, "signal the beginning of the cult of Elizabeth as a supernatural being".² These powers were not only metaphorical, as Wilson points out: during her visit, the Queen also knighted five gentlemen and cured nine commoners of

¹ There was no programme to cover specific areas and the whole project could be abandoned, as appears to have happened in 1562, when the Court remained at Greenwich. See John Nichols, *Progresses and Public Entertainments of Elizabeth I*, London, 1823, vol. I, p. xix. In 1575, this is supported by the Queen's visits to Lichfield and Worcester, when the invitations were only presented at Kenilworth a few weeks before (Nichols, *ibid.*, vol. I, p. xviii).

² Jean Wilson, *Entertainments for Elizabeth* (London: Woodbridge and Co., 1980), p. 22.

the King's Evil. It is not known how or when Gascoigne received his commission to write part of the entertainments for Elizabeth; in April he had published the *Noble Arte* and it is possible that the anonymous translation of a work on a subject so close to Elizabeth's heart had raised Gascoigne's literary profile in courtly circles.¹ Certainly, Elizabeth spent much of her time at Kenilworth hunting in the parks and chase, as well as watching both rustic and courtly entertainments.²

The Kenilworth entertainments are known from two documents of very different character. A third, known only indirectly, is lost. Gascoigne's own account excludes the popular devices and actually consists only of his own contributions and those of the other gentlemen poets. It was published in octavo in 1576 by Richard Jones, though few copies were preserved: by the nineteenth century, only one survived. The full title of the octavo was *The princely Pleasures, at the Courte at Kenelwoorth. That is to say, The copies of all such verses, Proses, or Poeticall inventions, and other devices of pleasure, as were there devised, and presented by sundry gentlemen, before the Queenes Majestie: In the year 1575*. Two points arise from Gascoigne's title. First, this is not the comprehensive account it claims to be: not only does it entirely neglect the popular elements of the entertainment, it consists largely of unperformed matter. Then there is the vagueness about literary genre. The difficulty of defining such an unstable,

¹ Eleanor Rosenberg suggests Gascoigne may have been brought to Leicester's attention by Bedford or Grey, that Leicester may have seen and admired the *Supposes* at Gray's Inn in 1566, or "have been attracted by his later works", in *Leicester, Patron of Letters* (New York, 1955), p. 167.

² See Appendix B for the schedule of the entertainments. Prouty discusses Gascoigne's contributions at pp. 87ff, 177-80.

multi-media form of entertainment is attested by the catch-all phrase, "Poeticall inventions, and other devices of pleasure".

What Gascoigne seems to be presenting is a "true copy" in the sense of an ideal version, with strategic omissions but including his cancelled masque. The "printer's letter" also refers to a third source, *The Pastime of the Progresse*. This is now lost, but it was evidently a more general account, including descriptions of other entertainments given on the same progress. The only surviving copy of Jones's octavo was lost in a fire at the Birmingham Free Library in 1879. The text had, however, been reprinted in 1821 complete with its marginal notes, which Cunliffe omits.¹

The second extant account was printed (presumably in 1576)² as a small black letter octavo: *A LETTER: Whearin, part of the entertainment untoo the Queenz Majesty, at Killingwoorth Castl, in Warwick Sheer, in this soomerz Progress. 1575, iz signified: from a freend officer attendant in Coourt, untoo hiz freend a Citizen, and Merchaunt of London.* This text carries no printer's name, date or colophon, and is also anonymous, though the author signs himself "R.L." and identifies himself in the text as "Laneham", "Langham", and "Ro. La.". The author of the letter had been accepted as Robert Laneham despite the lack of any corroborative evidence until the appearance of two

¹ There were three editions in 1821 (see below), of which two preserve the marginal notes. These were omitted from the edition in the posthumous volume *The Whole woorkes of George Gascoigne*, compiled from existing printed texts by the printer, Abell Jeffes, in 1587.

² Pollard notes that it could have been much later, *pace* Woodstock, in his edition of the Cadman quarto, *ibid.*, p. vi.

articles in 1977 which presented a strong case for authorship by William Patten, who was also present.¹ The most recent editor of the *Letter*, R.J.P. Kuin, has discovered independent external evidence of one Robert *Langham's* existence and cast significant doubts on the theory.² But it remains difficult to attribute so sophisticated a work to a figure like Langham.³ "Langham's" is a more lively, colloquial account than the *Princely Pleasures*, and if it were indeed written by William Patten his characterized narrator is fully plausible. As Stephen Orgel points out, the existence of both texts allows us to see the Kenilworth entertainments - or at least, some parts of them - "from both the author's and the audience's point of view".⁴ It is possible to piece together a more complete version of what was actually presented than Gascoigne alone describes, and highlights the distinction between the performances and the printed versions.

It is by no means clear that by July 1575 Gascoigne was in any sense "Leicester's chief poet".⁵ He collated his own edition of the Kenilworth entertainments and published it anonymously in March 1576. While he includes, and attributes, what may be assumed to be the bulk of the courtly entertainments, he gives as little credit as possible to his

¹ Brian O'Kill, "The Printed Works of William Patten (c.1510-1600)", *TCBS*, 7 (1977), 28-45; and David Scott, "William Patten and the Authorship of Robert Laneham's *Letter*", *ELR* 7 (1977), 297-306.

² R.J.P. Kuin, "The Purloined *Letter*: Evidence and Probability Regarding Robert Langham's Authorship", *The Library*, 7 (1985), 115-125.

³ Michael Leslie discusses Langham's account in relation to the genre of garden eulogies without questioning the author's identity but remarking, "What is ... surprising is to find an English author so sophisticated and at ease writing within it", in "Spenser, Sidney, and the Renaissance Garden", *ELR*, 22 (1992), p. 11.

⁴ Stephen Orgel, *The Jonsonian Masque* (New York: Harvard University Press, 1965, repr. 1981), p. 39.

⁵ H.R. Woudhuysen, "Leicester's Literary Patronage: A Study of the English Court, 1578-1582", Oxford DPhil. thesis, 1981, p. 150.

senior collaborators. These had a great deal of experience of court pageantry between them, which goes unremarked. George Ferrers, one of the best-known authors of *A Mirrour for Magistrates* (1559), was in his seventies and had served Henry VIII and all his successors. Edward VI had given Ferrers the superior title of "master of the king's pastimes" rather than the mere "lord of misrule" (to which he reverted under Mary), but Gascoigne dubs him merely "sometime Lord of misrule in the Court" (p. 94).¹ Similarly, William Hunnis had been in royal service for more than twenty years; as Master of the Children of the Chapel he had extensive experience of writing and producing interludes and pageants, but Gascoigne gives him only his bare title (p. 92). Richard Mulcaster, founding headmaster of the excellent Merchant Taylors' School and guiding force of its dramatic productions, is designated simply "master *Muncaster*" (p. 95). Similarly, John Badger is dubbed merely MA and Bedle, when in fact he was superior bedel of divinity (p. 93). William Patten was known as a historian and had, like Ferrers and Hunnis, been in royal service for more than twenty years, but he too is designated only by his name (p. 95).

It is clear that Gascoigne was, with Henry Goldingham, on the junior side of this group of collaborators.² Furthermore, of Gascoigne's three contributions only the masque of *Zabeta* was commissioned in advance, a fact obscured by the prominence of his works in the volume. His first device, which he performed as the Savage Man, he claims was devised "upon a very great sudden" (p. 102). The farewell, as Sylvanus, was similarly

¹ Page references are to Cunliffe.

² Goldingham is not recorded in DNB.

an impromptu composition, although the claim that it was actually extempore is surely an overstatement.¹ Neither the advance commission nor the two last-minute commissions form part of the dominant Arthurian theme; Gascoigne may have been so minor or so new a courtly contributor that he was perhaps excluded from the "mainstream" of the entertainments. Even so, the publication of the text the following year created an opportunity retroactively to create another "Gascoigne", the Earl of Leicester's poet.

Gascoigne's association with the volume's tacit claim to authorship of the major portion of the *Princely Pleasures* was favoured by its textual history: largely forgotten for two hundred years, it was rediscovered in the early nineteenth century. In 1821, Sir Walter Scott published his bestseller *Kenilworth*, a romance loosely based on Langham's *Letter* and Gascoigne's *Princely Pleasures*. The work was so popular it founded a tourist industry at Kenilworth Castle, whose ivied ruins proved irresistible to the Romantic sensibility. In the year of the publication of *Kenilworth*, the *Princely Pleasures* was rushed out in three editions, one of which is an encyclopaedic history of, and guidebook to, the Castle.² The *Princely Pleasures* was printed a total of six times in the nineteenth century, each edition including some kind of profile of "Gascoigne, the Earl

¹ The devices are discussed below.

² These were in *The British Stage, or Literary Cabinet*, 6 (1821); *Gascoigne's Princely Pleasures* (London: Burn and Co.); and *Kenilworth Illustrated; or, the History of the Castle, Priory, and Church of Kenilworth with a description of their present state* (Chiswick: C. Whittingham), pp. 51-80. Burn's edition lacks the marginal notes of the 1576 edition.

of Leicester's poet".¹ Later critics have not questioned this tradition, or treated with due scepticism the anonymous publication of "Gascoigne's" version of the event. Using both extant accounts, it is possible to piece together the schedule for the entertainments (see Appendix B). Some points arise from such a schedule, most notably the flexibility of the programme. As is clear from the *Princely Pleasures*, at least one courtly device (Gascoigne's) was cancelled and another modified, yet the *Letter* says that the Coventry players repeated their show on the Tuesday. It seems clear that if Leicester had wanted to show *Zabeta*, and Elizabeth to see it, an hour of fine weather could have been found in which to do so. Langham substitutes a substantial account of "even so ridiculous a device as an auncient minstrell", a rustic device which was never performed. Significantly, both accounts lapse from their chronological sequence at the same point to give versions of unperformed devices: in both cases, the evasion seems closely linked to Elizabeth's early departure, traditionally linked with the offence she allegedly took at the marital agenda of Gascoigne's masque.

Opinions vary as to whether, in 1575, Leicester still had any real hope of marriage with Elizabeth. Negotiations were in progress for her marriage to the Duc d'Alencon, but this was, like all such negotiations, as much foreign policy on Elizabeth's part as a serious consideration of a match. Jean Wilson suggests that his efforts this year represent "the final throw in the marriage game", whereas R.J.P. Kuin argues that

¹ The other three editions are: *Kenilworth Festivities: comprising Langham's description of the Pageantry, and Gascoigne's Masques* (Warwick: Merridew, 1825); George Adlard, *Amye Robsart and the Earl of Leycester* (London: John Russell Smith, 1870); and E.H. Knowles, *The Castle of Kenilworth, A Handbook for Visitors* (Warwick: Henry T.Cooke and Son, 1872).

Leicester was trying to distract attention from his secret marriage to Douglas Sheffield.¹ Richard C. McCoy, who argues that Leicester's public courtship of the Queen continued long after he had given up any real hope of winning her, argues that he could not be seen to abandon his quest.² Catherine Bates, however, easily accommodates Leicester's efforts in her argument that "courtship (in every sense) was a highly nuanced and exceptionally complex literary and political procedure".³ Elizabeth had given the estate to Lord Robert Dudley with the title of Earl of Leicester in 1563 and he had spent a reputed £60,000 on extensive additions, though much of this seems to have been geared to defence as well as ornament.⁴ By 1575 Leicester had created one of the three most splendid estates in the country, a magnificent setting for theatrical performance with twenty miles of chase and parks in which to hunt and ride. Complete with its extended Pool, Park and Chase, the topographical variety of the estate offered every amenity for princely pleasures. Leicester could not fail to gain a great deal of kudos from so lavish a display of individual wealth and power. Rewards could be expected, and were in fact granted, but they do not seem to have been of the order of Leicester's expectations.⁵

¹ Kuin, *ibid*, p. 3.

² Richard McCoy, *The Rites of Knighthood. The Literature and Politics of Elizabethan Chivalry* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989), pp. 42-3.

³ Catherine Bates, *The Rhetoric of Courtship in Elizabethan Language and Literature* (Cambridge University Press, 1992), p. 2. She discusses Gascoigne's two last-minute commissions as Leicester's second allegory of Desire, pp. 55-61.

⁴ John Strype notes the defences added by Leicester in 1570, in *Annals of the reformation and establishment of religion*, 3rd edition, London, 1735.

⁵ One long-term benefit derived by the local population was a license, granted the following year, to have a weekly market on Tuesdays and an annual fair on Midsummer Day, reinstating a privilege held by the estate under Henry III (Nichols, *Progresses*, vol. I, p. 447n). Similarly, the "Coventrie show" had its own hidden agenda in the request to overturn the ban on the mystery cycles (see Langham, ll. 640-42).

The Device of the "Savage Man".

Gascoigne had originally been commissioned to write a device for presentation in the woods, and was obviously working with a generous budget, which allowed for both machinery and costumes. But he claims to have devised both of his solo appearances at very short notice. His text introduces his first woodland character, the Savage Man, specifically as an interpreter or expositor of the welcoming devices of the first day:

Now to make some playner declaration and rehersall of all these things before her Majestie on the x. of Julie there met her in the Forest as she came from hunting, one clad like a Savage man, all in Ivie, who seeming to woonder at such a presence, fell to quarelling with Jupiter as followeth. (pp. 95-6)¹

Another widely disseminated figure, there was a long tradition of "wodwoses" and savage men in courtly entertainments; the chronicles are full of such characters.²

Similarly, the first dumb show in *Gorboduc* has "sixe wilde men clothed in leaves", and the figure was familiar in civic pageantry: Machyn notes in his *Diary* celebrations for the Lord Mayor in 1555 which included "iiii talle men lyke wodys alle in gren".³ It was also topical; Thomas Hackett's translation of Thevet's *The New found worlde* includes extensive descriptions of the indigenous peoples.⁴

¹ The *Letter* indicates that the device was given on Monday, 11 July and the third day of the visit.

² See, for example, *Hall's Chronicle* (London, 1809), pp. 509-10, 512, 517, etc.; *The Chronicles of London*, ed. Charles L. Kingsford (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1905), p. 251; even the King of France appeared "arayed lich a wodwous", in John Capgrave, *The Chronicle of England*, ed. F.C. Hingeston (London: 1858), p. 257.

³ Norton and Sackville, *Gorboduc*, sig. A3; Henry Machyn, *ibid.*, p. 96.

⁴ Andre Thevet, tr. Thomas Hackett, *The New found worlde* (Bynne-man, 1568). The explorer describes being "well received of the Indians or wilde men of the Countrey" (sig. F6v). Gascoigne's interest in the new world movement is attested by his involvement in publishing Gilbert's *Discourse*, and Leicester's by his investments in Gilbert's voyages.

Gascoigne's device of the Savage Man draws on the courtly and civic tradition but finds an especially apt setting in the woods, where he could intercept the Queen on her return from hunting. Such a device could have been commissioned on the Saturday evening; Gascoigne claims that the verses were "devised, penned and pronounced by master Gascoyne: and that (as I have heard credibly reported) upon a very great sudden" (p. 102). The talents for improvisation and extemporization he had demonstrated in the "Memories" and the last-minute commission for the Montague wedding were ideal for this courtly situation.

The interpreter's role assigned to the Savage Man, to make "some playner declaration and rehersall of these things", is close to that of the children who were used in royal entries to provide a gloss on the triumphal arches and other allegorical "pageants".¹ But the Savage Man's welcome, couched as an address to Jupiter, seems also to articulate Gascoigne's marginalization, his exclusion from court:

Since I (O wretch therewhiles)
am here by thy decree,
Ordeyned thus in savage wise,
for evermore to be.
Since for some cause unknowen,
but only to thy wil:
I may not come in stately Court
but feede in forrestes still. (p. 96)

It is plain that, like all the other participants, Gascoigne was pursuing his own agenda.

His very costume signals his intentions: as Sylvanus, Gascoigne later provides a gloss

¹ See David M. Bergeron in *English Civic Pageantry* (London: Edward Arnold, 1971), *passim*. It is also close to the "presenter" role discussed in relation to *Jocasta* in Chapter I, section i.

on the Ivy as signifying Ambition.¹

That Gascoigne's device is the first echo dialogue in English raises the question of the manner of its performance.² A similar performance is described in the Second Eclogues of Sidney's *Old Arcadia*, when Philisides performs his song in hexameters. In the fiction, "he began an eclogue betwixt himself and the echo, framing his voice so in those desert places as what words he would have the echo reply unto, those he would sing higher than the rest, and so kindly framed a disputation betwixt himself and it".³ It is possible that Gascoigne performed his by some similar trick of delivery, or even that he had an Echo on hand, perhaps one of the actors of the Earl of Leicester's Men. Indeed, Katherine Duncan-Jones believes Sidney was present at Kenilworth and argues that Gascoigne's performance "may well have stimulated" the composition of his eclogue.⁴ It is possible, then, that Sidney indirectly records Gascoigne's manner of performance.⁵

¹ Ambition is one of the arborified victims of Zabeta's metamorphic powers, and Gascoigne's description suggests a satirical allegory of the system of patronage: "as for that wicked wretch *Ambition*, she dyd by good right condemne hym into this braunch of Ivy, the which can never clyme on hygh nor florysh without the helpe of some other plant or tree, and yet commonly what tree soever it ryse by, it never leaveth to wynde about it, and strayghtly to infolde it, untyll it have smowldred and killed it" (pp. 125-6).

² Joseph Loewenstein discusses this as "a moment of generic instability", in *Responsive Readings: Versions of Echo in Pastoral, Epic, and the Jonsonian Masque* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1984), p. 61.

³ Katherine Duncan-Jones, ed., *Sir Philip Sidney, The Old Arcadia* (Oxford Classics, 1985), p. 140.

⁴ Katherine Duncan-Jones, *Sir Philip Sidney, Courtier Poet* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1991), p. 98.

⁵ Sidney's description of the "Wild Man" at the Iberian Tilts in Book Two of the revised *Arcadia* may allude to Gascoigne: "He came in like a wild man, but such a wildness as showed his eyesight had tamed him, full of withered leaves which, though they fell not, still threatened falling ...", in *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia*, ed. Maurice Evans (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1977), p. 354. See below for the running joke on blindness and sight.

Gascoigne's praise of Leicester is overly extravagant, overturning the conceit of gifts from the gods to arrogate divine generosity to the Earl himself:

And who gave all these gifts?
I pray thee (*Eccho*) say?
Was it not he? who (but of late)
this building here did lay?
Eccho. *Dudley.* (p. 99)

The original gift of the estate is entirely overlooked, and Leicester's ambition leads him to demand grace in what would be a most ungracious manner in any other context:

O *Dudley*, so me thought:
he gave him selfe and all,
A worthy gift to be received,
and so I trust it shall.
Eccho. It shall. (p. 99)

The Savage Man's gloss on the meaning of the fireworks would have been more acceptable to Elizabeth:

What meant the fierie flames,
which through the waves so flue?
Can no colde answers quench desire?
is that experience true?
Eccho. True. (p. 99)

This is the correct pose for the courtly lover, even after fourteen years of cold answers, as Axton notes.¹ Even at their most demanding, the verses are consistent with both McCoy's argument that the quest for Elizabeth's hand had to be pursued regardless of the realities of the situation, and Bates's analysis of courtly rhetoric.

Amid the flattery of both sovereign and patron, the Savage Man's direct address to the

¹ Marie Axton, *The Queen's Two Bodies*, p. 43.

Queen articulates Gascoigne's own quest for preferment. The idea of the civilizing influence of the Queen was not novel, but it receives an interesting twist. Gascoigne's version of the Savage Man hints that he should be seen on the pattern of the reformed prodigal:

Since I, which live at large,
 a wilde and savadge man:
And have ronned out a wilfull race
 since first my lyfe began:
Doe here submit my selfe,
 beseeching you to serve:
And that you take in worth my will,
 which can but well deserve. (p. 100)

The submission of one "at large" to the higher authority of a Tudor queen is a version of the containment of natural forces by a supernatural power, similar to Triton's supposed control over the elements in the water pageant.¹ Here, Gascoigne casts the moment of submission as a reminder of the model of the repentant prodigal he had adopted in the *Posies and Glasse of Government*. In the "wilderness" of the Chase at Kenilworth, the Savage Man is, appropriately, placed outside the limits of civilization - though he is still susceptible to the civilizing influence of the Queen.²

The Queen's higher authority imposes a rich semiotic on the landscape: even in the wilderness, Nature is treated as a text, a transmitter of Elizabeth's fame, which ranges

¹ In the early 1590s when Elizabeth visited his estate at Bedington Sir Francis Carew, a keen arboriculturalist, created a version of perpetual Spring on his estate in the form of a cherry tree, "whose fruit he had of purpose kept back from ripening at the least one month after all cherries had taken their farewell of England". Sir Hugh Platt, *The Garden of Eden* (1594), p. 165; cited in Nichols, *ibid.*, vol. III, p. 441; Wilson, *ibid.*, p. 24.

² Bruce R. Smith discusses the concentric perspective of Jonson's "To Penshurst", with its clear division of parts of the landscape, in "Landscape with Figures: The Three Realms of Queen Elizabeth's Country-house Revels", *Renaissance Drama*, 7 (1977), p. 66.

freely over it:

O Queene (without compare)
 you must not think it strange,
That here amid this wilderness,
 your glory so doth raunge.
The windes resound your worth,
 the rockes record your name:
These hils, these dales, these woods, these waves,
 these fields pronounce your fame. (p. 101)

This is of course not only Elizabeth's fame: it must include both the Lord of the landscape and its inscribed text and the poet-performer who renders the text intelligible. The role assigned to the Savage Man is still closest to that of the child-interpreters of the royal entries, but it moves into the role of Master of Ceremonies when he advertises his masque of Zabeta, planned for "Thursday next".

Langham's description of Gascoigne's performance shows that his character initially made a powerful impression: "rooughly came thear foorth Hombre Salvagio, with an Oken plant pluct up by the roots in hiz hande, him self forgrone all in moss and Ivy: who, for parsonage, gesture, and uttrauns beside, coountenaunst the matter too very good lyking ..." (ll. 344-7). But Gascoigne's device was memorable for another reason, as Langham's account records:

But shall I tell yoo maister Martyn by the mass of a mad aventure? az this Savage for the more submission brake his tree asunder, kest the top from him, it had allmost light upon her highnes hors hed: whereat he startld and the gentlman mooch dismayd See the benignitee of the Prins, az the footmen lookt well to the hors, and he of generositee soon callmd of him self, no hurt no hurt quoth her highnes Which woords I promis yoo we wear all glad too heer, and took them too be the best part of the play. (ll. 389-92)

Despite his awareness of the comic aspect of the incident, Langham's final comment betrays the general tension which accompanied public encounters with the Queen. The incident may well have been the reason for the abridgement of the senior collaborators' device of the liberation of the Lady of the Lake; where it was originally planned that Elizabeth would witness a mock-battle on the water from her barge, in the event the battle was abandoned and Elizabeth stood on the bridge to hear the Lady's oration.¹

Although records are generally so fragmentary for this kind of entertainment, a remarkably full picture of this incident emerges, despite Gascoigne's strategic omission in his account. It is possible to identify in Gascoigne's text the precise moment of his *faux pas*. The Savage Man's gesture would have occurred at the point when he submits to the civilizing influence of the Queen:

Well then if so myne eyes,
 be such as they have beene:
Me thinkes I see among them all,
 this same should be the Queene.
Eccho. The Queene. (p. 100)

Gascoigne's own stage directions read, "Herewith he fell on his knees and spake as followeth". The unfortunate Gascoigne, "mooch dismayd", was at least "soon callmd" and presumably completed his performance.

That the incident immediately followed the Savage Man's reference to his sight explains

¹ Gascoigne gives the abridged version of the device by Ferrers, Hunnis, and Goldingham and follows it with a brief prose exposition of the intended version (p. 105).

the references to his blindness in the interlude of Audax and Sylvester which Gascoigne inserted into the (unperformed) masque of Zabeta. Furthermore, a marginal note in the first edition (preserved in the 1821 reprints) declares that Elizabeth retorted that "the Actor was blind" before everyone composed themselves and the show continued.¹ In what Gascoigne confesses to be an interpolation in the masque, the Savage Man's son, Audax, makes an appeal on behalf of his father (now named Sylvester), against the blindness she has imposed as a punishment, making it plain that there is nothing physically wrong with his father's sight:

And can your Highnesse then,
 condemne him to be blinde?
Or can you so with needeles greefe,
 torment his harmeles minde?
His eyes (good Queene) be great
 so are they cleere and graye ... (p. 111)

Audax plays on the different forms of sight, literal and mythic, so that Sylvester becomes a version of Tiresias, blinded by Hera:

He did not onely see you then,
 but more he did foresee. (p.112)

It seems clear that Gascoigne wrote a cameo role for himself as "Audax" with which he intended to defend himself from criticism after his accident: Elizabeth's natural retort becomes a blindness imposed upon Gascoigne as a punishment. The material for the entertainments was so heterogenous that it could accommodate such disruptions to its programme without compromising its formal coherence, which rests on the thematic integrity of the material rather than any particular unity of design. But the near-accident

¹ The note is placed beside the lines: "Yea since I first was borne,/ I never joyed so much:/ As when I might behold your face,/ because I see none such", in *Kenilworth Illustrated*, p. 60.

ensured that Elizabeth would remember him, and there is some evidence in both *Hemetes* and the *Grief of Joye* that the incident became a running joke between Gascoigne and the Queen.

"The Masque of *Zabeta*".

Gascoigne disrupts the chronological sequence in the *Princely Pleasures* at this point to give the text of his cancelled masque.¹ As the Savage Man, he had predicted that the show would be performed on the second Thursday (p. 101) but the show had already been rescheduled, since Langham's account suggests it was expected on the second Wednesday. On that day there was to have been a banquet at Wedgenall, in a temporary pavilion in the park, "but by meanz of weather not cleerly dispozed, the matter waz countermaunded again. That had her highnes happned this day too have cummen abrode: there was made reddy a devise of Goddes and Nymphes: which az well for the ingenious argument, az for the well handling of it in rime and endighting woold undoutedly have gained great lyking and mooved no less delight." (ll. 864-870). Gascoigne similarly attributes the cancellation to the weather, but not until the end of his published text:

This shewe was devised and penned by M.Gascoigne, and being prepared and reddy (every Actor in his garment) two or three dayes together, yet never came to execution. The cause whereof I cannot attribute to any other thing, then to lack of opportunitie and seasonable weather (p. 120)

¹ Langham also saw fit to change his project at that point, interjecting a protracted account of the unperformed Arthurian device of the "auncient minstrell" and giving an apology later (ll. 1060ff) for the omission of the last seven days of her visit. It was probably wise to do so, if Elizabeth had indeed taken offence.

There is surely a disgruntled note here: inevitably, he *cannot* attribute it to any other thing. It is true that bad weather prevented any outdoor entertainments on Friday the fifteenth and Saturday the sixteenth, but there has always been a strong suspicion that it was the masque's treatment of its matrimonial theme which prompted its cancellation and the Queen's early departure. If it was indeed the subject of *Zabeta* which had so moved the Queen, this ties in with Langham's comments about a sudden flurry of rumours about an imminent departure on that Wednesday: "A this day allso waz thear such earnest talkk and appointment of remooving that I gave over my notyng, and harkened after my hors" (ll. 875-77). But it seems that in this device Gascoigne was writing to Leicester's agenda rather than his own.

Gascoigne's masque is notable for its use of stage machinery: a cloud and a rainbow, each capable of having an actor suspended from it, installed in trees in the forest.

Whoever was responsible for the mechanical illusions, this was an ambitious project for someone whose theatrical experience may have been limited to the two Gray's Inn plays.¹ Diana, at her first appearance, laments the loss of her favourite nymph, Zabeta, seventeen years before. The ambiguity of Juno - goddess of empire as well as matrimony - is exploited to the full. Gascoigne could not have been faulted for the praise he heaps indirectly on Elizabeth in Diana's encomium of Zabeta's qualities:

My sister first, which *Pallas* hath to name,
Envyed *Zabeta*, for hyr learned brayne.
My sister *Venus*, feared *Zabetaes* fame,

¹ The show may have involved the Earl of Leicester's Men, under James Burbage, who had joined the company in 1572. In 1574 Elizabeth had granted a privilege to Burbage and four other servants of Leicester to perform all kinds of stage plays in any part of England (Nichols, *ibid.*, vol. I, p. 489n).

Whose gleames of grace, hyr beuties blase dyd stayne,
Apollo dread to touch an Instrument,
Where my *Zabeta* chaunst to come in place:
Yet *Mercurie* was not so eloquent,
Nor in his words had halfe so good a grace.
My stepdame, *Juno* in hyr glyttering guyse,
Was nothing like so heavenlie to beholde ... (p. 109)

Whereas Arthurian allusion seems to touch the Queen's public self, the catalogue of classical allusion given by the goddess of chastity, who inevitably praises Zabeta for this virtue as well, seems to refer more to the Queen's private self. The two are not entirely exclusive, as Castibula's response suggests:

I yet record, those heavenly giftes which shinde,
Tryumphantly, in bright *Zabetaes* deedes (p. 110)

But praise of Elizabeth's deeds is presented here as the outward manifestation of her inner qualities rather than as the continuation of a tradition of noble rule to be traced back to Uther Pendragon. Gascoigne is clearly writing in the Inns of Court tradition of the legal doctrine of the monarch's two bodies.¹

The text of the masque concludes with the arrival of Iris, who "commeth downe from the Rainebowe sent by Juno: Perswading the Queenes Majestie that she be not caryed away with Mercuries filed speach, nor Dyanaes faire words, but that she consider all things by prooffe, and then shee shall finde much greater cause to followe Juno then Dyana" (p. 117). With Diana as presiding deity it would have been sleight of hand to give the last word to Juno (Iris), but this was the intended conclusion. Iris was to

¹ Axton, *ibid.*, *passim*.

descend from the rainbow to give a final, closed verdict:

Then geve consent O Queene,
to *Juno*es just desire
Who for your wealth would have you wed,
and for your farther hire
Some Empresse wil you make,
she bad me tel you thus:
Forgeve me (Queene) the words are hers,
I come not to discusse. (p. 120)

Responsibility for so provocative an attitude is shifted onto a fictive character, and then further distanced by having it reported by a messenger. With Leicester's manifest presumption - or Gascoigne's version of Leicester's presumption - so much in evidence, the identity of the proposed candidate is hardly a surprise:

I am but Messenger,
but sure she bade me say,
That where you now in Princely port,
have past one pleasant day:
A world of wealth at wil,
you hencefoorth shall enjoy
In wedded state, and therewithall,
holde up from great annoy
The staffe of your estate:
O Queene, O worthy Queene,
Yet never wight felt perfect blis,
but such as wedded beene. (p. 120)

As if the invitation to stay were not clear enough, "the staffe of your estate" is surely none other than the bear and ragged staff, ubiquitous on the Kenilworth estate.

Earlier in the same speech, Iris was to refer to Elizabeth's captivity under Mary and hints at the help she received from the Dudleys then, though making rather large claims for it:

Who brought you out of bryers?
who gave you rule of Realmes?
Who crowned first your comely head,
with Princely Dyademes? (p. 119)

The claim to have crowned Elizabeth is perhaps unwittingly ironic: Leicester's father had crowned Jane Grey, and both lost their comely heads as a result. But the claims made here are all rather heavy-handed, and seem to be repeating the same dangerous arguments of a decade before, when Leicester had more realistic hopes of actually marrying Elizabeth.¹ In 1575, Elizabeth had no need to sit through anything so manifestly "against" her, and all of Leicester's powers of persuasion and the persuasive power of increased expenditure only enticed her to stay a further week.

The Device of "Sylvanus".

On Elizabeth's early departure, Leicester again employed Gascoigne's talent for last minute commissions, in what was probably a damage limitation exercise:

The Queenes Majestie hasting her departure from thence, the Earle commanded master *Gascoigne* to devise some Farewel worth the presenting, whereupon he himselfe clad like unto *Sylvanus*, God of the Woods, and meeting her as she went on hunting, spake (*ex tempore*) as followeth. (p. 120)

Gascoigne's claim that the performance was extemporaneous is self-evidently false, as other parts were involved, and Deepe Desire and a consort of musicians were ready and prepared in the holly bush.² But it was certainly written at short notice, as the Savage

¹ At a masque given before the Spanish ambassador, in 1565, "on the question of marriage, discussed between Juno and Diana, Juno advocating marriage and Diana chastity. Jupiter gave a verdict in favour of matrimony". At the conclusion Elizabeth, seated next to the Spanish ambassador, famously turned to him and said, "This is all against me". *Calendar of State Papers: Spanish 1558-67*, p. 404.

² Langham does not mention the farewell, so that in this case there is nothing to compare it with.

Man's dialogue had been, and belongs to the same iconographic tradition.

Gascoigne turned the opportunity to good effect and, in the guise of Sylvanus, offered himself as guide and narrator:

I will not onely conduct your Majestie in safetie from the perillous passages which are in these Woods and Forrests, but will also recount unto you (if your majestie vouchsafe to hearken thereunto) certaine adventures, neither unpleasent to hear, nor unprofitable to be marked. (p. 121)

After his initial address, Elizabeth continued on her way with Sylvanus as her new footman. Gascoigne succeeded in finding a dignified pose for the jilted Leicester as one of "the great Gods in their Councel chamber", by whom Sylvanus says he has been twice summoned. He has "sene in heaven two such exceedyng great Contraryetes, or rather two such woonderful changes as drawe me into deepe admiration and suddayne perplexitie" (p. 121). These contrasts are the rejoicing at her proposed visit and the despair at her departure. Both moments are claimed to have manifested themselves in nature. The joy at her coming was seen in "sundry manifest tokens here on earth, for even here in my charge, I might see the trees flourish in more then ordinarie bravery, the grasse growe greener then it was woont to doe" (p. 122). Elizabeth's metamorphic powers, literally demonstrated in the knightings and the faith healing, have in Gascoigne's fiction a direct impact on the landscape even at the prospect of her arrival.

At his second summons, Sylvanus has found that Heaven has been transformed into Hell:

There was nothing but weeping and wayling, crying and howling, dole,

desperation, mourning and moane. All which I perceived also here on earth before I went up, for of a trueth (most noble Princesse) not onely the skies scowled, the windes raged, the waves rored and tossed, but also the Fishes in the waters turned up their bellies, the Deere in the woods went drowping, the grasse was wery of growing, the Trees shooke off their leaves, and all the Beasts of the Forrest stode amazed (pp. 122-3)

There is considerable humour in Gascoigne's presentation of Elizabeth's departure as a natural catastrophe, and it would have gained comic impact by its manner of performance:

Surely (gracious Queene) I suppose that this late alteration in the skyes, hath seemed unto your judgement droppes of rain in accustomed māner. But if your Highnesse will beleve me, it was nothing els but the very flowing teares of the Gods, who melted into moane for your hastie departure (p. 123)

In many ways, the prose section of *Sylvanus's* farewell seems the most successful of Gascoigne's contributions to the princely pleasures, with its exploitation of random facts - the rejection of Leicester's hospitality, another change in the weather - and "Gascoigne" in his latest woodland disguise, clad probably in feathers or foliage, jogging alongside the Queen's horse.

Gascoigne is lavish with his compliments, but he sustains a lighthearted tone, even turning to advantage the practical difficulties of this manner of performance. Elizabeth:

stayed her horse to favour *Sylvanus*, fearing least he should be driven out of breath by following her horse so fast. But *Sylvanus* humbly besought her Highnesse to goe on, declaring that if hys rude speech did not offend her, he coulde continue this tale to be twenty miles long. And therewithall protested that hee had rather be her majesties footeman on earth, then a God on horseback in heaven ... (p. 123)

This extravagant compliment is witty, with the projected measure of his narrative given

in land miles. But the fear of censorship is also evident: *if* his speech does not offend her, he *could* continue it.

Gascoigne's own quest for preferment emerges again in his promise (on Leicester's behalf) to entreat Flora, Ceres, and Bacchus to give more of their gifts if she will stay:

To be short, O peerelesse Princes, you shall have all things that may possibly be gotten for the furtheraunce of your delights. And I shall be most glad and tryumphant, if I may place my Godhead in your service perpetually (p. 124)

Turning his discourse "into the rehersall of strange and pitifull adventures", Sylvanus seems to leave the realm of special pleading to return to the conceit of Diana and her nymph, Zabeta, but it is the same agenda concealed as myth. Zabeta is not lost in this version but accompanies Diana, and "her rare giftes have drawne the most noble and worthy personages in the whole world to sue unto hyr for grace" (p. 124). Zabeta is now endowed with Elizabeth's own metamorphic powers as Sylvanus describes:

[the] distresses wherein some of [her rejected suitors] doe presently remayne. I could tell your highnesse of sundry famous and worthy persons, whome shee hath turned and converted into most monstrous shapes and proportions (p. 125)

Zabeta subsumes the metamorphic functions of Elizabeth and the mythic functions of Diana, but this version seems to evoke her darker side. Her lovers (ambitious courtiers) become versions of Actaeon when the natural landscape is revealed to be the product of Zabeta's powers of transformation: the Oak was Constancy, a faithfull follower of hers; his opposite, Inconstancy, was transformed into the poplar; Vainglory became the Ash; Contention became the briar; and Ambition became the Ivy. Offering himself as guide and interpreter of this metamorphosed, metaphorical landscape, Sylvanus goes on to

give as an inset narrative a myth which twins his own quest for preferment dangerously closely with Leicester's:

Well, notwithstanding these examples of justice, I will nowe rehearse unto your Majesty such a straunge and cruell *Metamorphosis* as I think must needes moove your noble minde unto compassion. There were two sworne brethren which long time served hyr [Zabeta], called *Deepe desire*, and *Dewe desert*, and although it bee very hard to part these two in sunder, yet is it sayd she dyd long sithens convert *Due desert* into yonder same *Lawrell* tree. The which may very well be so, consydering the *Etimologie* of his name, for we see that the *Lawrel braunch* is a token of triumph, in all *Tropheis* and given as a reward to all Victors, a dignitee for all degrees, consecrated and dedicate to *Apollo* and the *Muses* as a worthie flower, leafe or braunch, for their due deserts. Of him I will hold no longer discourse, because hee was *Metomorphosed* before my tyme, for your Majestie must understand that I have not long helde this charge, neyther do I meane longe to continue it, but rather most gladly to followe your Highnesse wheresoever you shall become. (p. 126)

In his guise of Sylvanus, Gascoigne can be seen to fashion himself as author in a unique, temporary relationship to Elizabeth, cast as privileged reader. The grounds of the castle form the text on which Gascoigne - perhaps prematurely, since he had given only one performance - inscribes his claim of the laurel as his "due desert".

Gascoigne's request for transformation - laureation - at the hands of Elizabeth is, however, expanded (and qualified) by his desire for preferment in any form. He directs the queen's reading of the landscape, providing a gloss on its natural profusion, but leaving her to supply the story of "Deepe desire" by fulfilling the metamorphosis.

The new personae Gascoigne adopts at Kenilworth - the Savage Man, Audax, and Sylvanus - are all the products of his talent for last-minute composition and improvisation. They are essentially courtly personae, belonging to the outer regions of

that privileged realm, since they each appear in the woods or the Chase. The association with the woods may have been a deliberate choice, advertising Gascoigne's new reputation as a huntsman or "woodman", gained with the publication of the *Noble Arte* and perhaps also alluding to his "Greene Knight" persona. Gascoigne seems to be pursuing his quest for preferment from the margins of courtly life, mixing elements of the repentant prodigal in his presentation of the Savage Man, and exploiting the premature ending of the visit to display his skills before Elizabeth. His opportunism is again evident in the *Hemetes* manuscript, indirectly another product of this Progress, which is based on a device performed at Woodstock only weeks after the Kenilworth festivities. It must have been under Leicester's approval that he travelled on to Woodstock, and Gascoigne may have been drawn into his circle of influence. In March 1576, some eight months later, Gascoigne published his anonymous account of the *Princely Pleasures* with its strategic foregrounding of his own contributions and the following month he provided a cover story for Sir Humphrey Gilbert's *Discourse of a Discovery*, another Leicester project.¹ There can be little doubt that, despite the frustrations of spoilt and cancelled shows, Gascoigne exploited to the full this prime opportunity to display his talents and attract the attention of Elizabeth and her inner circle.

¹ Rosenberg, *ibid.*, p. 170. She also credits Leicester's influence with Gascoigne's commission to travel to Paris and Antwerp.

Chapter III. 1576: "Petrarks heire" and "Gascoigne, the Satyricall wryter".

(i) Princely Pleasures (II).

The Tale of Hemetes the Heremyte (1 January).

"straundge sightes well markt are understode the better"¹

Gascoigne presented the manuscript of *The Tale of Hemetes the Heremyte*, translated into Latin, Italian, and French,² to Elizabeth as a New Year gift in 1575/6.³ It is of considerable interest as an artefact, for each of its versions is written in an appropriate script, the English original in secretary hand, the Latin translation in italic, the French and Italian each in appropriate hands.⁴ While its illustrations are Gascoigne's own it is not known whether he used a professional scrivener or whether he was master of so many hands. Even if he were not, the conceit is his and is an impressive, self-referential example of "fine Invention".

The tale of *Hemetes* was part of one of the devices with which Elizabeth had been entertained during the two days she spent at Woodstock as the guest of Sir Henry Lee,

¹ Prefatory sonnet, p. 473. All page references to *Hemetes* are to Cunliffe, vol. II.

² Prouty argues that his Latin is legal and contemporary, not classical; his French is literal, learnt on military service in Holland; his Italian literary, learnt in London (p. 227).

³ Royal MS 18 A xlviij (British Library).

⁴ My thanks are due to Hilton Kelliher of the British Library for this point.

shortly after her stay at Kenilworth on the summer Progress of 1575.¹ The tale has been preserved in Gascoigne's manuscript² and an edition printed by Cadman in 1585, written on the model of Langham's description of Kenilworth, a letter to a friend.³ Gascoigne was apparently standing close enough to Elizabeth to hear her request that someone write down the day's devices for her; as the narrator of the printed edition notes, as she left, Elizabeth gave "earnest command that the whole in order as it fell, should be brought to her in writing".⁴ The "whole" record was, presumably, the account published by Cadman ten years later, but Gascoigne offered Elizabeth three translations of the hermit's tale, "wherwth I saw yo^r lerned judgment greatly pleased at Woodstock" (p. 477). Elizabeth's interest in it is confirmed by the printed account, which records her dismounting from her horse to talk to the hermit, with whom she "fel into some discourse & praise of his good tale".⁵

Even though there were only two days of entertainments at Woodstock, they were prepared by a number of collaborators. The text for the first day concludes with a

¹ Chambers suggests Lee's concern to produce a modest sequel to Leicester's shows: "Something which would not suggest a competition with the magnificence of his patron, but would not be an anticlimax", in *Sir Henry Lee* (Oxford, 1936), p. 85.

² The English original and Latin translation were also published with Abraham Fleming's translation of a mock encomium by the neoplatonist philosopher Synesius of Cyrene, *A Paradoxe, proving by reason and example, that Baldnesse is muche better than bushie haire, &c.* (1579), though it is claimed that they are "newly recognised in both Latine and Englishe, by the said A.F." in the title.

³ The unique extant quarto of the Cadman edition is incomplete, missing sig. A (the title page and three leaves) and beginning in the middle of a sentence. A.F. Pollard acquired it for the British Museum and published an edition, *The Queenes Majesties Entertainment at Woodstock 1575* (Oxford: H. Daniel and H. Hart, 1903/1910); Cunliffe reprints the whole text in "The Queenes Majesties Entertainment at Woodstocke", *PMLA*, 26 (1911), 92-141 at pp. 92-127. Subsequent page references to the entertainment are to this edition.

⁴ Cunliffe, "Queenes Majesties Entertainment", p. 102.

⁵ Cunliffe, "Queenes Majesties Entertainment", p. 97.

reference to the "devisors" in the plural. The "Song of the Oak" is to be found in a manuscript miscellany attributed "Finis. Mr Dier".¹ Dyer's biographer, Ralph M. Sargent, accepts this absolutely and goes on to argue convincingly that the performance marked the poet's return to favour. He notes that in January 1576 Dyer received from Elizabeth a patent to regulate the tanning of leather - the kind of lucrative monopoly designed to provide a steady income. In Sargent's words, "That Song in the Oak had led to a change in the conditions of life for Edward Dyer. In Elizabeth's commonwealth, a well-turned verse sometimes outweighed great learning, long service or martial daring".² It was precisely such an opportunity that George Gascoigne was trying to create for himself.

Gascoigne's own denial of authorship of the English original of the tale of *Hemetes* was supported by both Pollard and Cunliffe; Yates plausibly suggests the author could have been Sir Henry Lee, the host at Woodstock.³ The tale was part of a device which followed a joust between two knights, providing a showcase role as Loricus for the host at Woodstock, Sir Henry Lee, who was the Queen's Champion and closely associated with the institution of the Accession Day Tilts later in the decade.⁴ Elizabeth would have wanted a copy of the tale because there are topical covert machinations concealed

¹ Preserved in Bodl. MS Rawl. Poet. 85.

² Ralph Sargent, *At the Court of Queen Elizabeth. The Life and Lyrics of of Sir Edward Dyer* (1935, rev.ed. Oxford, 1968), pp. 34-6.

³ Pollard, *ibid.*, p. xvi; Cunliffe, "Queenes Majesties Entertainment", pp. 127, 141; Frances A. Yates, *Astraea. The Imperial Theme in the Sixteenth Century* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1975, repr. 1993), p. 97. For Gascoigne's denial in *Hemetes*, see Cunliffe, p. 477.

⁴ Lee used the name again in 1592 at Ditchley, when he was deliberately alluding to the Woodstock shows of 1575. See E.K. Chambers, *Sir Henry Lee* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1936), p. 91.

in the narrative.¹ As the anonymous narrator in the printed version points out, Hemetes' tale:

showed a great proof of [the author's] audacity, in which tale if you mark the words with this present world, or were acquainted with the devices, you shoulde find no lesse hidden than uttered, and no lesse uttered then shold deserve a double reading over ...²

Another woodland character, the hermit could well have been performed by Gascoigne, as both Pollard and Rosenberg suggest. On this occasion he interrupted a tilt between the "two most valiant knights", one of whom was Lee, to lead them and the lady they fight for to the Queen and then proceeded to tell his tale.³ Just as he had voiced mostly Leicester's agenda as Sylvanus, with his tale of the metamorphosis of Zabeta's lovers, here he may have voiced Lee's and (or) Dyer's as Hemetes. There is certainly no evidence to exclude the possibility. Significantly, the hermit emerges during his narrative as a knight who had loved a shape-shifting lady who turned into "a Tigris, so terrible to behold, as I durst hold her no longer", and was then struck blind on the threshold of Venus's temple.⁴ Hemetes' own quest, which parallels those of Contareus and Loricus, is to regain his eyesight, which may be a continuation of the running joke

¹ Cunliffe suggests that the publication of the account ten years later "gives evidence of a certain amount of permanent interest", "Queenes Majesties Entertainment", p. 131. The *Tale of Hemetes* was published only four years later, in a volume which included a mock-encomium by the neo-platonist philosopher Synesius of Cyrene, *A Paradoxe, proving by reason and example, that Baldnesse is much better than bushie haire* (1579), but this claimed to be "Newly recognised in both Latine and Englishe, by the said A.F."

² Pollard, *ibid.*, p. xvi; Cunliffe, "Queenes Majesties Entertainment", p. 93.

³ "Apparently Leicester arranged matters so that both his proteges [Dyer and Gascoigne] would be called to Elizabeth's attention during the Woodstock festivities, which gave Gascoigne opportunity for public display while Dyer, as befitted his greater dignity, remained obscurely in the background," Eleanor Rosenberg, in *Leicester, Patron of Letters*, p. 169n; see also Pollard, *ibid.*, p. xiii. Chambers suggests Dyer but Sargent considers only his performance in the oak tree.

⁴ Cunliffe, "Queenes Majesties Entertainment", p. 95.

at Kenilworth. Travelling on to the temple of Apollo, he is told that he will regain his sight when "at one time, and in one place, in a countrie of most peace, two of the most valiant knightes shal fight, two of the most constant lovers shal meet, and the most vertuous Lady of the worlde shal be there to look on".¹ It was the fulfilment of the oracle, with the return of Hemetes' sight, which immediately preceded his exit, at which the Queen dismounted and "fel into some discourse" with him.²

Since the English tale is not Gascoigne's, he clearly had another interest in producing such an elaborate manuscript version of it, and it may be that having performed the part in the device it seemed appropriate to make some further display of his skill. Languages were a practical asset: Prouty thinks the Italian is best, being most fluent and idiomatic, but that the French and Latin also reveal a certain degree of skill.³ The focus of this discussion, however, will be on the nature of the manuscript and the impact of the extra-textual material: the illustrations, the prefatory material, and the variety of representations of "Gascoigne" which they generate. Gascoigne created an opportunity to build on the fleeting contacts he had with Elizabeth during the summer, showing off his linguistic skills and - by the addition of emblematic devices - both his draughtsmanship and his wit, in a display of courtly accomplishment. It was in any case an unmistakeable sign of some favour that he was in a position to join in the conventional giving of New Year gifts at court. Significantly, much of the jewelry the

¹ Cunliffe, "Queenes Majesties Entertainment", p. 96.

² Pollard reconstructs the missing first quire to suggest that "about the middle of A4 verso ... the beams of the royal loveliness had restored his sight", *ibid.*, p. viii.

³ Prouty, p. 225.

Queen received at New Year was emblematic, which seems to confirm that such gifts were indeed a form of encoded lobbying.¹

There is a vast literature on emblems and *imprese* in which to seek a definition of the genre of Gascoigne's illustrative devices.² The origins of the emblem book may be traced directly to the Italian lawyer, Andreas Alciatus, whose *Emblemata* founded the genre.³ Recent work by Michael Bath has related the genre to Erasmian adages and the rhetorical art of memory.⁴ But what may be called the emblematic taste manifested itself in many other ways, especially in the Italianate vogue for *imprese* and devices for tournaments which was fostered by the institution of the Accession Day Tilts from the late 1570s, with which Lee is credited.⁵ The *Emblemata* circulated in manuscript for ten years as a collection of epigrams but - as Roy Strong has it - the addition of illustrations by the printer "established the caption-figure-epigram formula".⁶ By this definition, only the frontispiece in *Hemetes* has the full complement of parts; the other three illustrations have only the figure and epigram and so may perhaps be more correctly

¹ Rosemary Freeman, *English Emblem Books* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1948), pp. 49-50.

² See esp. Freeman, *ibid.*; Mario Praz, *Studies in Seventeenth-Century Imagery* (2nd ed., Rome, 1964); Roy Strong, *Art and Power. Renaissance Festivals 1450-1650* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 1984, a revised edition of *Splendour at Court. Renaissance Spectacle and the Theatre of Power*, 1974).

³ Originally published in an unauthorised version by Steyner in Augsburg in 1531 and reissued with authorial corrections by Wechel in Paris in 1534, the *Emblemata* was translated into French, Italian, German, Dutch and Spanish, and went into between 90 and 120 editions in the sixteenth century alone. Its publishing history is detailed in Peter M. Daly, ed., with Virginia W. Callahan and Simon Cuttler, *Andreas Alciatus: Index Emblematicus* (Toronto: Toronto University Press, 1985), 2 vols., vol. I.

⁴ Michael Bath, *Speaking Pictures. English Emblem Books and Renaissance Culture* (London and New York: Longman, 1994), pp. 31-40, 49-51.

⁵ See Yates, *ibid.*, pp. 88-111. Charles Mosely notes that emblematic taste was also "a major source of verbal imagery", in *A Century of Emblems* (Menton, Yorks.: Scolar Press, 1989), p. 16.

⁶ Strong, *ibid.*, p. 23.

viewed as *impresa*.¹ The exact distinction between emblems, *impresa*, and similar devices exercised both the emblematisers and theorists. In practice it may not actually have mattered very much; Michael Bath notes that "accepted theories of metaphor in the Renaissance regularly insisted on the identity of all these figurative modes".² But he also notes that "*impresa*" in Italian means an undertaking, enterprise or intention, from the verb *imprendere*"; and invoking William Drummond's insistence that emblems expressed general moral precepts and *impresa* the aspirations of individuals, he concludes with Drummond that the *impresa* is a form in which "the author represents himself".³ It may, then, be most pertinent to this discussion to interpret the devices in Gascoigne's manuscript as forms of *impresa*. In this way, their relationship to the semiotics of tiltyard devices, so concerned with self-presentation, becomes clear, as does their aspirational agenda. That the occasion of the tale of *Hemetes* was itself a courtly tilting device - to which Gascoigne's tilting-staff in the frontispiece portrait alludes - adds to the depth of its inventiveness and supports the probability that there was some covert agenda.⁴ Indeed, Yates suggests that the emergent cult of Elizabeth, as stage-managed at the Accession Day Tilts by Lee, may have originated at Woodstock.⁵

¹ "In general an *impresa* consisted of "the body", the picture, and a motto, "the soul", both of which were interdependent and expressed the aspirations of the bearer." Roy Strong, *ibid.*, p. 25. Rosemary Freeman, however, argues that the *Hemetes* manuscript includes "three unmistakable emblems", although she admits that the first is incomplete and the second and third have poems instead of mottoes, *ibid.*, p. 52..

² Bath, *ibid.*, p. 66.

³ Bath, *ibid.*, p. 20; citing William Drummond, *The Works of William Drummond of Hawthornden* (Edinburgh: James Watson, 1711, repr. 1970, Olms Verlag, Hildesheim), p. 228.

⁴ "... because the tiltyard was so entirely a world of make-believe, in which the participants dressed up in elaborate costumes and invented fictitious identities for themselves, it became one of the most important places in which the art of the *impresa* was of service," Bath, *ibid.*, p. 21.

⁵ Yates, *ibid.*, pp. 94, 100-1.

By including four emblematic devices in the *Hemetes* manuscript, one for each translation and the impresa-portrait of the frontispiece, Gascoigne created an opportunity to present a number of self-presentations. Beautifully drawn, these illustrations form a coherent scheme in which the frontispiece illustrating his personal motto, "*Tam Marti quam Mercurio*", is the dominant device because of its position and its formal complexity.¹ The other devices express a variety of more or less covert autobiographical references. The natural divisions of the manuscript form the structure which these devices complement: the frontispiece is in English and precedes the dedication and the English original of the tale; the Latin device precedes the Latin translation in its appropriate hand, and so for the French and the Italian; and the whole is concluded by the Epilogismus and an epigraph. This structure is copious enough to accommodate a variety of "Gascoignes" ranging from the moralistic Gascoigne of the dedicatory epistle to the petrarchan courtier depicted in the frontispiece.

The Frontispiece.

Gascoigne's personal motto or posy, "*Tam Marti, quam Mercurio*", is suspended by a disembodied hand from the ceiling of the Queen's presence chamber and Gascoigne enacts it at her feet, offering her the book with one hand and holding a tilting staff in the other (see Figure 6).² The laurel wreath, highlighted in green, is suspended as a halo above his head. The frontispiece is a form of impresa-portrait, since it includes so

¹ This was his unvarying motto in all his named works after the *Posies*.

² Elizabeth Salter and Derek Pearsall list eight types of frontispiece author portrayal in "Pictorial Illustration of Medieval Poetic Texts: The Role of the Frontispiece or Prefatory Picture", in *Medieval Iconography and Narrative: A Symposium*, ed. Flemming G. Anderson et al (Odense, 1980), p. 116.



Figure 6. "Petrark's heire": the frontispiece portrait in The Tale of Hemetes the Heremyte (1 January 1576)

many symbolic devices and was done for a particular occasion, but it is also notable (and unusual) for being a self-portrait.¹ There are a number of levels at which the frontispiece functions: it illustrates his motto and offers another version of "Gascoigne"; it forms a part of the petrarchan framework of the whole manuscript; it is Gascoigne's most explicit bid for laureation; and it suggests a degree of familiarity between poet and monarch.

The frontispiece also bears consideration as a donor image.² These originated in Italy, the convention probably being adopted from frescoes into manuscripts in the fifteenth century, and thence to printed books.³ The earliest example in a printed book shows the publisher, Antico, presenting his work (a music book) to its dedicatee, Pope Leo X.⁴ A similar image, *Palestrina Offering his Masses to Julius III*, is marked by its essential humility; Gundesheimer compares the "hieratic scale of the two figures" with medieval donor and saint images and feudal images of fealty or homage.⁵ But the power relation in Gascoigne's imagined audience with Elizabeth is utterly different. Where Antico and Palestrina keep their eyes averted from their patrons', Gascoigne looks Elizabeth full in

¹ Bath, *ibid.*, discusses the characteristics of impresa-portraits at pp. 10-11.

² See Margery Corbett and Ronald Lightbown, *The Comely Frontispiece. The Emblematic Title Page in England 1550-1600* (London: Routledge Kegan Paul, 1979); Robert K. Root, "Publication Before Printing", *PMLA*, 28 (1913), 427-8.

³ Dr Iain Fenlon of King's College, Cambridge, suggested this sequence of development and proposed the detached fresco in the Vatican library by Melozzo da Forli of a Vatican librarian, Platina, giving a book to Sixtus IV as an example.

⁴ Title page, *Liber quindecim missarum electarum quae per excellentissimos musicos compositae fuerent* (Rome: Antico, 1516). I am indebted to Dr Iain Fenlon for this point.

⁵ Werner L. Gundesheimer, "Patronage in the Renaissance: An Exploratory Approach", in Guy Fitch Lytle and Stephen Orgel, eds., *Patronage in the Renaissance* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, Folger Institute Essays, 1981), pp. 3-23 at p. 14.

the face. Where Antico and Palestrina - publisher and musician - are in the simplest garb, Gascoigne is in full symbolic dress; although he kneels at the queen's feet, his foot is on the cloth of state. Where Palestrina is dominated by the book he holds open for Julius, Gascoigne - with his sword, tilting staff, and laurel halo - proffers his book with dignity. The disembodied hand which suspends his motto from the ceiling suggests a divine presence and this, with the laurel crown, reflects his apparent confidence.

The epigraph to the manuscript confirms the suspicions raised by the conspicuous presence of the floating laurel crown:

Yf god wolde deigne to make, a *Petrarks* heire of me
the coomlyest Queene that ever was, my *Lawra* nedes must be (p. 510)

The *impresa*-portrait seems to express poetic ambition of the highest order, a bid for laureation further to the claims he had made at Kenilworth only five months before. Paolo Giovio records the story of Camillo Querno's laureation as tribute to his skill as an *improvvisatore*, something Gascoigne had amply displayed at Kenilworth.¹ In the present work, he displays practical skills and considerable courtly accomplishment, but his ambition seems to reach beyond the obvious agenda for employment. Not only is Gascoigne the soldier-poet, ready to serve his Queen; he is also Petrarch's heir, and Elizabeth is Laura.

Gascoigne's meticulously-drawn fantasy of a private audience with Elizabeth recalls the

¹ Noted by J.B. Trapp, "The Owl's Ivy and the Poet's Bays. An Enquiry into Poetic Garlands", *JWCI*, 21 (1958), 227-55, p. 227.

images in the *Noble Arte*, which - if the huntsman represents Gascoigne, as the Proutys suggest - may be analogues.¹ It is not only an unmistakably favourable encounter, in which Elizabeth seems to accept both Gascoigne's book and his posturing, but also a far more private encounter than he could ever hope to achieve in life, since there is not an attendant in sight.² That he represents himself with an unbound sword in such a private situation is especially audacious, since it suggests an extraordinary degree of trust between monarch and subject. But there is also - as always with Gascoigne - a pragmatic agenda. The paradoxical union of pen and sword - which originates with Plato - had been revived in the renaissance as part of the ideal of the courtier.³ For example, much of the second book of Castiglione's *Il Cortegiano* exemplifies the interest in the relative merits of the active and contemplative lives, as Count Federico asserts the courtier's "chief profession to be that of arms".⁴ In a literary culture which depended on courtiers and patrons, poets felt a need to demonstrate their "social and political utility", as Robert J. Clements has it in his valuable discussions of the ideal.⁵ The union of pen and sword found its resolution in the authentically Platonic sense that

¹ See Chapter II, section ii.

² He assumes a similar form of intimacy in *The Grief of Joye*, the manuscript he presented at New Year 1577.

³ Castiglione, *The Book of the Courtier*, tr. George Bull (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1967), esp. the First Book, pp. 88-94.

⁴ Castiglione, *ed. cit.*, p. 115. Count Federico goes on to argue for the importance of the "mottoes and ingenious devices to attract the eyes of the onlookers" when participating in public spectacles (p. 116).

⁵ Robert J. Clements, "Pen and Sword in Renaissance Literature", *MLQ*, 5 (1944), 131-41 at p. 131; rewritten as a chapter in *Picta Poesis* (Rome, 1960), at p. 136. Clements includes Gascoigne in an illustrious list of "individuals skilled in letters and war", including Tasso, Cellini, Cervantes, Sidney, Jonson, and Raleigh, in "Pen and Sword", p. 140; *Picta Poesis*, p. 147.

a commonwealth needs a class of leaders who are skilled in both fields.¹ Gascoigne's choice of "*Tam Marti quam Mercurio*" as a motto not only advertises his practical skills in literature and war, it appeals to the highest renaissance courtly ideals.²

Clements argues that the quest for fame was "an actual, practical desire as well as a doctrinary Pindaric or Horatian persuasion".³ It may be that Gascoigne's bid for laureation should be seen in this light; he was not claiming the title of *laureatus* in the sense of a higher degree in rhetoric, as Skelton had, but bidding for a role which would have a pension or wage attached.⁴ The sonnet attached to the impresa-portrait, which describes Gascoigne's agenda most fully, jokily suggests his confusion of the two roles implied in his motto:

Beholde (good Quene) A poett with a Speare
(straundge sightes well markt are understode the better)
A Soldyer armde, with pensyle in his eare
with penn to fighte, and sworde to wryte a letter. (p. 473)

¹ This union of contrasting qualities in the one figure was not uncommon. In 1618, a full-facing bisectioned figure in Henry Godyere's *The Mirrour of Maiestie*, with the left half in an academic gown with a mortarboard and the right half clad in armour, turned the conceit around: "How can a man the feates of armes well doe,/ If not a scholler and a soldier too?" (p. 37).

² Sidney's depiction of the Wild Man at the Iberian Tilts in the *New Arcadia* seems to compliment Gascoigne by allusion to his motto: he is "a knight, though fostered so by the Muses as many times the very rustic people left both their delights and profits to hearken to his songs, yet could he so well perform all armed sports as if he had never had any other pen than a lance in his hand", in *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia*, ed. cit., p. 354.

³ Clements, "Pen and Sword", p. 131; *Picta Poesis*, p. 136.

⁴ Elizabeth's parsimony in this regard is legendary: few poets received a pension, and none in this period. Churchyard acknowledges his in *A Pleasant conceite penned in verse* (1593): "which pleasant conceit I have presumed (this Newe-yeeres day) to present to your Majestie, in signe and token of your gracious goodnesse towards me oftentimes (and cheefly now for my pencyon)", sig. A3. Spenser received one for the *Fairie Queene*, also after 1590; see Herbert Berry and E.K. Timings, "Spenser's Pension", *RES*, 11 (1960), 254-9. Caxton notes that Skelton had just been created "poete laureate in the unyversite of oxenforde" in his preface to his *Boke of the Eneydos compyled by Vyrghyle* (1490), cited by I.A. Gordon, in *John Skelton, Poet Laureate* (New York: Octagon Books, 1970), p. 16.

Gascoigne uses humour as well to indicate his readiness to serve and his doubts as to which is the best career choice:

his gowne haulffe of, his blade not fully bownde
In dowbtfull doompes, whiche waye were best to take
with humble harte, and knees that kysse the grownnde
presenntes hymselffe, to *you* for dewtyes sake

It is clear that his declarations of loyalty are couched to suggest his willingness to take preferment in any form. But the poise which Gascoigne achieves in this self-presentation is one of his most elegant moments.

Gascoigne presents himself as the paradoxical "poett with a Speare", clad half as soldier, half as poet: a living impresa-portrait for his motto. But the sonnet which accompanies the frontispiece concludes by bidding for preferment of any description:

And thus he saith, no daunger (I protest)
shall ever lett this loyall harte I beare
to serve *you* so as maye become me beste
In feilde, in Towne, in Cowrte, or any where./
Then peereles prince, employe this willinge man
In your affayres to do the beste he cann./

There are clearly a number of levels on which Gascoigne's claims are made in this manuscript. The most elevated is the poetic aspiration evident in the illustrative material, and especially the frontispiece, but this is not sustained in the text, which reverts to ordinary claims and familiar personae.

The Dedicatory Letter.

The manuscript is itself paradoxical, for despite its grand petrarchan aspiration it is a

humanistic work; as a set of translations, even one embellished with emblematic devices, it is in the mainstream of humanistic pedagogic practice.¹ Furthermore, its dedicatory letter offers not Gascoigne the petrarchan poet, but "*Gascoigne the Satyricall* writer" (p. 477). He specifically rejects his chief petrarchan persona: this is emphatically "nott *Gascoigne* the ydle poett, wryting tryfles of the greene knyghte" (p. 477). The petrarchan frame formed by the frontispiece and epigraph unequivocally situates the work as part of an act of courtship, but it is the reformed prodigal persona which Gascoigne offers in the dedication.

This "*Satyricall*" Gascoigne is indistinguishable from the moralist responsible for much of the allegorizing of his own experience in early works such as the prefatory sonnet to the translation of *De Profundis*, or the "Voyage into Holland".² Here, he begins with an inset narrative on the properties of thunder as God's "scourge of repentance", heavily laden with proverbial wisdom, which he then reveals to be an allegory: "Shall we then take this Text grossely or litterally as yt standeth? ... God forbyd" (p. 475). He goes on to decipher this metaphorical thunder as another allegory of his own experience: "this allegorycall exposicoun of *Thoonder*, have I pretely pyked owt of myne owne youthfull pranks" (p. 475). The dedication continues in a thoroughly repentant vein. Gascoigne combines the theme of his reformation with his quest for (specifically) royal patronage, venturing into almost mystical realms of flattery:

fyndyng my youth myspent, my substaunce ympayred, my creditt accrased, my

¹ Bath, *ibid.*, notes the relation between Erasmian pedagogy and the emblematic tradition, pp. 34ff.

² Published in *A Hundreth*, these poems are discussed in Chapter I, sections i and ii.

tallent hydden, my follyes laughed att, my rewyne unpyttyed, and my trewth unemployed/ all w^{ch} extremyties as they have of long tyme astonyed myne understanding, So have they of late openly called me to gods gates/ and yo^r ma^{tye} being of God, godly, and (on earth) ovr god (by god) appoynted, I presume lykewyse to knock att the gates of yo^r gracyous goodnes/ hopyng that yo^r highnes will sett me on worke though yt were noone and past before I sought service. (p. 476)

Abandoning this overtly religious vein, Gascoigne reverts to a more pragmatic appeal: "I will saye then that I fynd in my self some suffycyency to serve yo^r highnes" (p. 476). But he goes further in embellishing the penitent model he is proposing. In the private discourse of the presentation manuscript, Gascoigne presents himself as a *reformed* repentant prodigal, by the apparent rejection of the *Posies*:

fforgett (most excellent lady) the poesies w^{ch} I have scattered in the world, and I vowe to write volumes of proffitable poems, wherwth yo^r ma^{tie} may be pleased (p. 477)¹

Gascoigne then reveals his agenda in a direct appeal for employment which deftly invokes the image in the frontispiece to suggest his fitness for service:

Only employ me (good Quene) and I trust to be proved as dillygent as *Clearchus*, as resolute as *Mutius*, and as faythfull as *Curtius*/ Yo^r ma^{tie} shall ever find me wth a penne in my right hand, and a sharpe sword girt to my lefte syde, *in utramque paratum*/ as gladd to goe forwards when any occasyon of yo^r service may dryve me, as willing to attend yo^r person in any calling that you shall pleas to appoynt me/ my vaunting vayne being nowe pretyly well breathed, and myne arrogant speches almost spent... (p. 477)

Playing on his previous contact with the Queen, Gascoigne reminds her that she had spoken to him:

I am yo^r ma^{tes} loyall subject/ borne to enheryte the fredom of yo^r domynyons/ and thearewth all have byn (more then ones) recomforted wth the plesant sownd of

¹ This may be seen as a tacit admission that the revision of *A Hundreth* was not extensive enough; later in the year 50 copies of the *Posies* were confiscated from the publisher, Richard Smith. See Chapter III, section ii.

yo^r cherefull voyce/ so that yo^r highnes hath vouchsafed to knowe me/ and that
(wth the rest) emboldened this enterpryse/ wherin I presume (by contemplacoun)
righte humbly to kysse the delycacy of yo^r imperiall handes/ beseeching
thallmighty to blesse you wth many prosperous newe yeres, and to enable me for
yo^r service according to my desiers ... (p. 478)

Desire is Gascoigne's keyword from *Kenilworth* and it is no coincidence that it reappears in the present work; it was in any case a favoured euphemism of writers from Dyer to Churchyard. What is unusual is that Gascoigne presumes "by contemplacoun", which seems a form of wish-fulfilment; it describes a moment associated with the presentation of the manuscript illustrated in the frontispiece. Or it could be fictionalizing by another name.

The Latin Device.

Spretaque sic vivunt, sic conculcata resurgunt (p. 485)

("Thus despised things live; thus things trodden under foot rise again")¹

Snakes are associated with Mercury because of his caduceus, and here, a snake is trampled down by a disembodied foot: the image seems to suggest an external pressure being brought to bear on eloquence (see Figure 7). But it is clear from the motto that the eloquence is somehow "resurgent". Rosemary Freeman comments of this device: "Alciati would, of course, have added a poem enlarging upon the theme, but, though lacking this, the design has both the matter and the manner of the emblem proper.

Ownerless arms or legs stretching from the sky are as common in the emblem books as

¹ I am grateful to Professor Pigman for his translations.

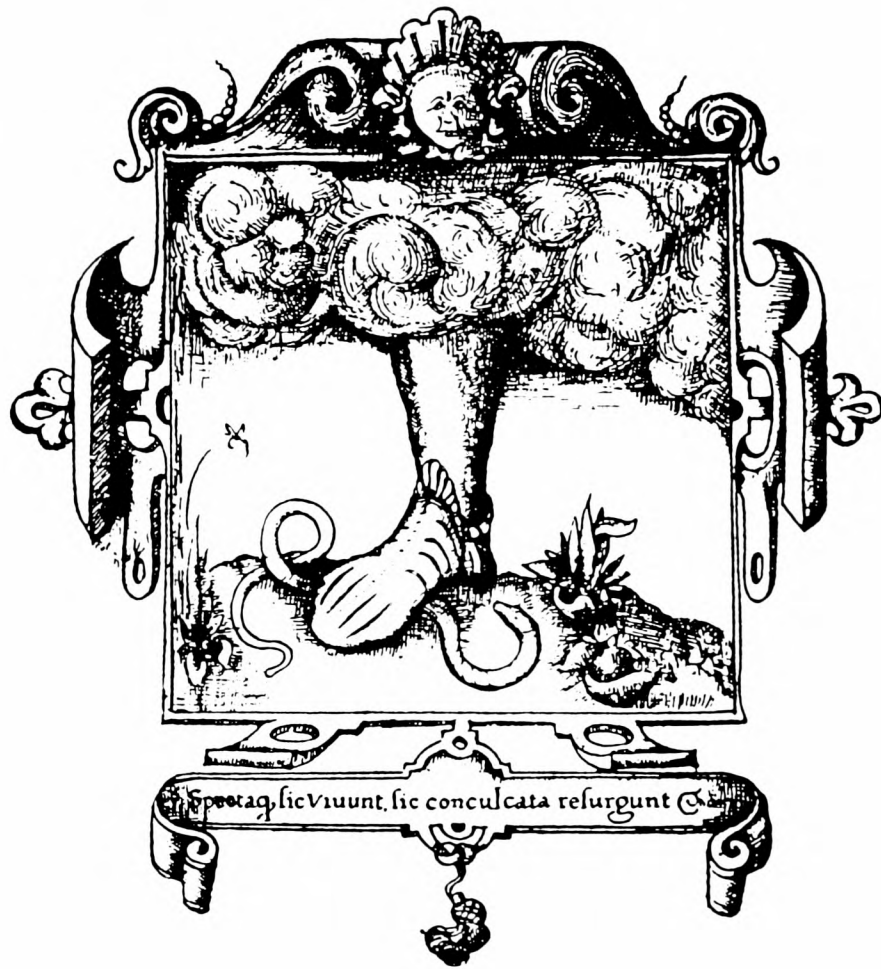


Figure 7. The Hemetes manuscript: Latin device

they are in the Castle of Otranto."¹ Gascoigne may also be commenting on his own struggle for recognition, and the failure of his early attempts to gain preferment. But the image is notable for its optimism; although he presents himself as despised, in this device Gascoigne signals his own imminent revival.

A very similar image is used in one of the poems of the "Devises" in *A Hundreth*, which suggests that Gascoigne may be alluding to one of his own earlier mottoes. One of the group signed "*Spraeta tamen vivunt*" ("Despised things still live"), this poem takes as its occasion a defence of the use of that motto:

This question being propounded by a Dame unto the writer therof, to wit, why he should write *Spreta tamen vivunt*, he aunswereth thus.

Despysed things may live, although they pyne in payne:
And things ofte trodden under foote, may once yit rise again.²

This is virtually indistinguishable from the motto of the Latin emblem, which might as easily be accompanied by the English couplet. This poem speaks in the voice of a rejected lover - "I am now set full light, who earst was dearely lov'd" - who compares himself to Troilus but trusts ultimately to Fortune's wheel to reverse the situation between himself and his detractors, so that he can "laugh at them which laught at me". It seems, then, that in the Latin emblem he draws on one of his own much earlier poetic personae. The cluster of poems signed "*Spraeta tamen vivunt*" may well date from the 1560s, when Gascoigne claims that he wrote poems under many mottoes and

¹ Freeman, *ibid.*, p. 52.

² No. 29 in the Pigman edition, p. 242.

on behalf of many others. In reviving it in the *Hemetes* manuscript, he may be making a covert allusion which Elizabeth was not expected to recognize (he had specifically rejected the *Posies*). It is probable that the posy had originally been a badge of amorous disappointment; Gascoigne now uses it to signal what he presents as his despised state and the imminent revival of his fortunes.

The Italian Device.

*Chi tropo abbracia niente spesso tiene
cosi se vede un huomo ingordo & vile
Contrario a me ma piu di volte avviene
per far mostrar un nuovo & strano stile
pia[n]gendo Io vo pe 'l molto ben bramare
che tiene'l tutto, & niente puo abbraciare./* (p. 494)

He] who embraces too much often holds on to nothing.
Thus a greedy and wretched man is seen [to be]
Opposed to me. But more frequently it happens that
By trying to demonstrate a new and strange style,
I end up weeping from desiring what is very good,
Which [the desiring] holds everything and can embrace nothing.¹

This device continues the autobiographical theme (see Figure 8). The figure in this illustration may bear comparison with Gascoigne's self-portrait in the frontispiece and perhaps the figures in the illustrations to the *Noble Arte*. It may also be significant that the Baker's Boy, one of Gascoigne's self-presentations in the *Grief of Joye*, is also gathering faggots.² "*Chi tropo abbracia*" suggests Gascoigne's over-reaching: the

¹ I am grateful to Professor Pigman for this translation.

² See Chapter IV.

Chi troppo abbraccia niente spesso tiene
così se vede un huomo ingorido & vile
Contrario a me ma piu di volte auiene
per far mostrar un nuouo & strano stile
piuendo io vo pel molto ben bramare
che tiene l tutto & niente puo abbracciare.

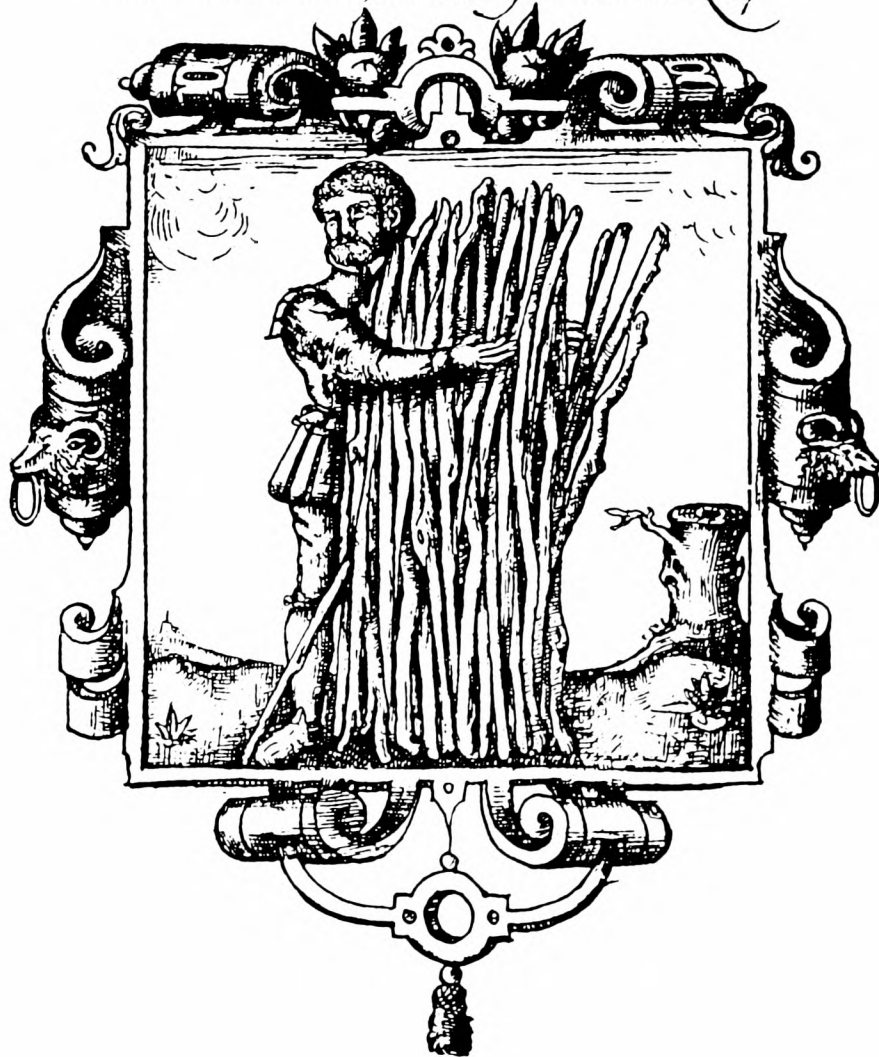


Figure 8. The Hemetes manuscript: Italian device

proverbial form is "*Chi tropo tiene nulla stringe*" (He who pretends to embrace too much often will have nothing)¹ and in his quest for rapid preferment in the 1560s, he had clearly tried to grasp too much and ended up with very little. Furthermore, Gascoigne had already used the proverb with regard to his quick-witted prodigals in the *Glasse of Government*, when the fathers send the sons away:

Did you not perceiue that onely the two elder seemed to grudge and repugne? it is a mervelouse matter, they two are of an excellent capacitie, and able to beare away (in manner) more then can be layd to their charge, but an olde saying hath beene *Chi tropo abbraccia niente tiene*. (IV v, Cunliffe p. 65)

The motto recurs in Whitney, *A Choice of Emblemes* (1586), together with "*Cuncta complecti velle, stultum*" (It is foolish to wish to grasp (or comprehend) everything); underneath is "*Et tutto abbraccio et nulla stringo*" (I embrace everything and catch hold of nothing).²

This would seem to be a self-deprecatory moment, with Gascoigne offering a wryly ironic view of his own activities, his wide-ranging literary experiments, in which he rarely returned to a genre. These experiments representing "*un nuovo & strano stile*" could be his experiments in new genres like the Prodigal Son play, new poetic forms like sonnet sequences and verlays, courtly innovations like the Echo dialogue at Kenilworth, or even his poetic theorizing in "Certayne Notes". The figure in the illustration seems to be struggling with the bundle, which links it with the Baker's Boy

¹ I am grateful for Dr Marco Dorigatti for this point and his comments.

² Whitney's picture is of boys trying to catch bubbles and is accompanied by the poem: "The little boyes, that strive with all their mighte,/ To catch the belles, or bubbles, as they fall:/ In vaine they seeke, for why, they vanishe righte,/ Yet still they strive, and are deluded all:/ So, they that like all artes, that can be thoughte,/ Doe comprehend not anie, as they oughte" (sig. G4).

in the *Grief of Joye*; he also gathers faggots but struggles to hold them.

The French Device.

*Les bons Nouyers sont (pour leur fruits) battuz
des homes ingratz auquelz ilz font profit
mais plus grand bien poursuyue leur merit
car plus fertilz ilz sont & revestuz
Moy malheureux: le mond s'e'sbat dez miens
& suis steril (battu) mon fruict n'est riens. (p. 502)*

(Good walnut trees are beaten (for their fruits)
by ungrateful men to whom they are good value.
However, this perseverance is more profitable to them [the trees],
As then they are more fertile and [verdure-]clad.
Unhappy me: the world frolics with mine
And I am sterile (beaten); my fruit is nothing.)¹

Although Prouty suggests that Gascoigne's French is literal rather than literary, this device is notable for its literary turn of phrase (see Figure 9).² The image in line 4 is from the French literary term, "revestuz de verdure" (lit. "clothed in greenness"). Surrey has "The pleasant plot revested green", and elsewhere, "every tree new garmented", both of which Gascoigne would have found in poems in Tottel.³ The device seems to be concerned with literary endeavour, as with the preceding devices, but it is also densely allusive in other respects.

¹ I am grateful to Dr Denis Renevey for this translation and his comments.

² Prouty, p. 227.

³ The former is from "When Windesor walles sustained my wearied arme", which appears in Tottel's first edition as the eleventh item, entitled "How eche thing save the lover in spring reviveth to pleasure"; the latter is from "When sommer toke in hand the winter to assail", the fifth item in Tottel, entitled "Complaint of a lover, that defied love, and was by love after the more tormented", in *Songs and Sonettes (Tottel's Miscellany) 1557* (Leeds: Scolar Press, 1966), or in *Surrey, Poems*, ed. Emrys Jones (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1964), pp. 24, 10 respectively.



Les bons Noÿers sont (pour leur fruiet) battuz
 dez homes ingratz. auxquels ilz font profit
 mais plus grand bien. poursuyue leur merit
 car plus fertikz ilz sont & reuestuz
 Moy malheureux. le mond se'sbat dez mienz
 & suis steril (battu) mon fruiet n'est rienz.

Figure 9. The Hemetes manuscript: French device

This is the only emblem for which it has so far been possible to establish a definite source. This is the *Emblemata* itself, published originally in Latin and translated into Italian, Spanish, French and German. Each of these translations has a version of the "nut-tree fable" (number 193).¹ Alciatus's motto is "*In foecunditatem sibi ipsi damnosam*" and all but one of the translations follow this sense, "On fertility that is harmful to itself".² It may be one of the most ancient of emblematic images, originating as an epigram; Praz traces it to the *Planudean Anthology*.³ Ovid certainly knew of it, and wrote *The Nux, the Lamentation of the Nut Tree*, based on the image of the walnut tree and its ill-treatment by the community. The "nut-tree fable" was very well-known in the humanistic tradition because of a commentary on Ovid's nut-tree by Erasmus, *Elegia Ovidii de nuce*.⁴ Originally conceived as a gift for John More, young son of Sir Thomas, this was first published by Froben in 1524.⁵ Gascoigne would certainly have known this text from his school days.

What may be most significant in terms of Gascoigne's exposure to the poem is Erasmus's emphasis right at the outset that this poem is: "An Elegy", as it comprises a complaint about past injuries and an entreaty against injuries that still threaten it".⁶ As

¹ So called by Virginia Woods Callahan in "Ramifications of the Nut Tree Fable", in *Acta Conventus Neo-Latini Turonensis* (Universite Francois-Rabelais, 6-10 Sept. 1976), ed. Jean-Claude Margolin (Paris: J.Vrin, 1980), pp. 197-204. Freeman noted the source, *ibid.*, p. 52.

² The emblem appears this form in Geoffrey Whitney's *A Choice of Emblemes* (Leyden, 1586), sig. Y3v.

³ Praz, *ibid.*, p. 26.

⁴ See "Commentary on Ovid's Nut-Tree", tr. A.G.Rigg, in *Collected Works of Erasmus, vol. 29. Literary and Educational Writings 7*, ed. Elaine Fatham and Erika Rummel (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1989), pp. 127-69.

⁵ It was soon republished, at Cologne (1524), Antwerp (1524), and Paris (1533).

⁶ Erasmus, *ed. cit.*, p. 129.

an exercise in judicial (forensic) rhetoric, the theme of Ovid's poem is designed to arouse pity, as Erasmus argues: "Pity is ... accentuated when someone quite undeserving (in fact, someone who has deserved well) suffers unjustly, or conversely when someone inflicts an injury without provocation or repays a good turn by a bad one".¹ Erasmus goes on to argue that, in Ovid, the argument is not serious: "his argument is both contrived and ridiculous, for what he calls injury is in fact beneficial to growth ... Indeed, if the nuts are knocked off with poles, they grow more abundantly in the following year ...".² In fact, this wisdom was proverbial: Tilley has "A woman, a spaniel (an ass), and a walnut tree (nut), the more they are beaten the better they be".³ This was, however, also a common conceit in emblem books applied to vines; by contrast, olive trees were known to become less fruitful if injured.

It is plain that Gascoigne did not simply copy the emblem, although he copies the woodcut. He adds layers of meaning by association with the Ovidian nut-tree and its Erasmian commentary. The image is of one who has deserved well and been ill-treated - the notion of "fruitfulness that does itself harm" reformulates the suggestion in the Italian device that somehow his poetic experiments have caused him difficulty. What is not found in these sources is the sense of being rendered sterile by being beaten, where the speaker is distinct from the tree, with which Gascoigne concludes his motto:

Moy malheureux: le mond s'e'sbat dez miens

¹ Erasmus, *ed. cit.*, p. 129.

² Erasmus, *ed. cit.*, p. 135.

³ Tilley [W644]. A more alliterative variant is "A woman, a whelp, and a walnut tree ...", noted in the West Country.

& suis steril (battu) mon fruct n'est riens.

Not only does the world toy with his poetry, his ill-treatment, he suggests, causes sterility and even the devaluation of his work. The sense of persecution for his poetic fertility may be connected with his reference to his "*Poemata castrata*" in the *Posies*,¹ and seems to have developed into the image of Phylomene a few months later,² but the claim of sterility is belied by the succession of publications and performances for which Gascoigne was responsible during the year. What is clear is that the device was a vehicle for a highly resonant and persuasive rhetorical-visual performance.

The non-textual narrative which emerges from the sequence of devices is, then, first an elaborate and optimistic performance of Gascoigne's own motto, together with the claim to be "a poett with a Speare"; then a device declaring his downtrodden state and imminent revival; a representation of his struggles as a poetic experimenter; and finally an image which resounds with disappointed hopes. With the image of the nut-tree, Gascoigne hoped to arouse pity for his condition, while highlighting his own creative fecundity. As well as the overt demonstration of draughtsmanship and linguistic skills, Gascoigne offers a facility in courtly, coded discourse.

The Epilogismus.

The eighteen lines of the Epilogismus serve to reintroduce the moral imagery of thunder from the dedication, but it is now expressed in the language of the petrarchan

¹ Pigman, p. 361.

² See next section.

lover:

A sighe sometymes maye ease a swellinge harte
as soden blastes, do cleare the clowdye skyes
and teares (liekwyse[]) maye somewhatt ease some smarte... (p. 510)

This is entirely conventional, and much of the verse is devoted to expanding upon the proposition, but it receives a characteristically anxious twist when Gascoigne declares the opposite proposition, that

... sighes and teares, (yf soveraigne grace be greved)
consume the harte, whose lightes they earst relieved

He concludes with an authentically courtly offer of his book, which could serve as the missing script for the donor image in the frontispiece:

Good Quene: I coumpt, this Booke a sighe to be
and every leafe, a teare of trew entennte
which (truthe to tell) do somewhatt comferte me
in hope they maye, be tane as they be ment
but if my Queene, shulde not accept them well
they kyll his harte, wh^{ch} (now) for Joye doth swell.

The humility of the Epilogismus is, however, undercut by what follows. Below the motto, *Tam Marti quam Mercurio*, is the epigraph which completes the petrarchan framework of the manuscript as a whole:

Yf god wolde deigne to make, a *Petrarks* heire of me
the coomlyest Queene that ever was, my *Lawra* nedes must be (p. 510)

Despite the overt moralizing of the dedicatory epistle, and its rejection of "*Gascoigne* the ydle poett, wryting tryfles of the green knight", the *Hemetes* manuscript offers a new petrarchan Gascoigne, this one explicitly situated as "*Petrarks* heire" and making

an apparently serious bid for laureation.

It is impossible to assess with any certainty, however, whether Gascoigne's bid for laureation was entirely serious, coming as it does in a guise complicated by much more mundane claims. He seems content to create the paradox of the petrarchan, courtly manuscript with its moralistic dedication, but paradox is an essentially petrarchan condition. This remarkable artefact works on a number of levels and generates a whole cast of Gascoignes: the "poett with a Speare" (*Tam Marti quam Mercurio*); "Gascoigne the *Satyricall* writer, medytating eche *Muse* that may expresse his reformation" (the moralist); "*chi tropo abbracia*"; the walnut tree; and finally, "*Petrarks heire*".

The success of the manuscript as a New Year gift may be assessed by the state employment Gascoigne received during the following year. In October 1576 he was sent by Walsingham to observe the movements of the Spanish because of the increasing tension in the Low Countries.¹ Meanwhile, he published anonymously in March his account of the *Princely Pleasures, at Kenelwoorth Castle*, in another manoeuvre to capitalize on his participation in the courtly entertainments of the previous summer. But at about the same time, in April, starting with the *Steele Glas/Complaynt of Phylomene*, he went on to add a series of moralistic titles to his portfolio of named publications.

¹ See Chapter III, section iii.

Chapter III. 1576: "Petrarks heire" and "Gascoigne, the Satyricall wryter."

(ii) "Gascoigne, the Satyricall wryter".

The Steele Glas/Complaynt of Phylomene (April).

*"My glancing lookes are gone, which wonted were to prie
In every gorgeous garish glasse that glistered in mine eie
My sight is now so dimme, it can behold none such,
No mirroure but the merrie meane, can please my fansie much"*¹

During the latter half of 1575 and into the following year Gascoigne had been busy with courtly composition and performance and with producing works to build on his contact with the court: in January he had presented the manuscript of *Hemetes* to Elizabeth, and in March he published anonymously his account of the *Princely Pleasures at Kenelwoorth*. But the following month Gascoigne published under his own name *The Steele Glas/The Complaynt of Phylomene*, another moralizing volume, which had been at least a year in the making and which includes his earliest dateable published verse.² It was dedicated to Arthur, Lord Grey of Wilton, who is considered Gascoigne's first and chief patron. Although the "Wodmanship" and "Voyage into Holland" suggest that Gascoigne had received some form of patronage from Lord Grey

¹ "Gascoignes gloze upon this text, *Dominus iis opus habet*" (63), p. 283. The mirror image is pervasive in this early satire.

² There are more than eleven copies extant, according to STC; this is more than any other of Gascoigne's works. Although the *Steele Glas* enjoyed a high reputation, neither poem was reprinted until the nineteenth century, when Edward Arber included *Steele Glas/ Complaynt of Phylomene/Certayne Notes* and Whetstone's *Remembraunce*, with a brief biographical note, in his English Reprints series (1868). They were next included by Hazlitt in his edition (1869) and Cunliffe (1910). See also William L. Wallace, ed., *George Gascoigne's The Steele Glas and the Complaynte of Phylomene: A Critical Edition with Notes* [Salzburg Studies in English Literature. Elizabethan and Renaissance Studies, ed. James Hogg, 24] (Salzburg: Institute fur Englische Sprache und Literatur, University of Salzburg, 1975).
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there is no evidence of any further contact between 1573 and 1576.¹ This volume seems to be Gascoigne's next direct approach to Lord Grey, so that he would have been trying to regain his patronage after a gap of three or four years.² There is ample evidence that the volume had been long planned, and as well as the publication of the *Princely Pleasures*, it coincides with Gascoigne's involvement in the publication of Sir Humphrey Gilbert's *Discourse of a Discovery*: this was essentially a proposal addressed to the Queen and certain courtiers to persuade them to invest in a west-bound expedition to China. The prefatory epistle he contributed to that volume is dated April 12, 1576; only three days, in fact, before the date of the dedicatory epistle to the *Steele Glas*, which he signs off "From my lodging where I marche amongst the Muses for lacke of exercise in martiall employtes".³ It seems that after his recent courtly successes Gascoigne was concerned to sustain the momentum of his career by resuming work on his longer-term project to regain favour with Lord Grey (and subsequently the Earl of Bedford) but was still willing to undertake, at shorter notice, projects like the *Princely Pleasures* and Gilbert's *Discourse*, both of which would have obliged Leicester and brought Gascoigne to the notice of new constituencies of readers.

The *Steele Glas/Complaynt of Phylomene* is an oddly old-fashioned volume, with its pair of neo-medieval poems. Indeed, C.S. Lewis declared that the *Steele Glas* "is

¹ See Chapter I, section ii.

² Prouty discusses the friendship with Grey at pp. 56-7, 65, 91, and the *Steele Glas/Complaynt of Phylomene* at pp. 241-63.

³ Cunliffe, p. 566.

medieval in everything but metre".¹ Further research by Stanley R. Maveety has overturned Lewis's reservation by demonstrating markedly medieval traits in the versification: both striking similarities with the versification of Langland's *Vision of Piers the Plowman* and Gascoigne's general debt in the poem to the native accentual tradition.² Not only does Gascoigne invoke by name the figure of Piers, the version of society he outlines is firmly in the tradition of medieval estates literature, with only a few sardonic modifications.³ Ruth Mohl concludes that the *Steele Glas* is "the Elizabethan poem that most thoroughly adapts the old pattern of the literature of estates, in enumeration of classes, their duties, and their defections", and concludes that "though it names specific faults, it might have been written in the time of Langland or Gower".⁴ Further medieval aspects to the poem have been identified by T.B. Stroup and H.W. Jackson, who discuss its "homiletic" style but place its reforming zeal in the descent of radical Protestantism.⁵

The thoroughgoing medievalism of the satire is matched by Gascoigne's dream-vision,

¹ C.S. Lewis, *English Literature in the Sixteenth Century* (1954), p. 270. Harvey notes "*Speculum mundi*" on the title page (Mal. 792 (2)).

² Stanley R. Maveety, "Versification in *The Steele Glas*," *SP*, 60 (1963), 166-173. *Piers Plowman* was first printed in 1550. See Helen C. White, *Social Criticism in Popular Religious Literature in the Sixteenth Century* (1965); Wallace, however, protests at critics' emphasis on its native elements and focuses on "its debts to Juvenal, Horace, Plutarch, Valerius Maximus, and other Roman writers", *ed. cit.*, p. 7.

³ Gascoigne's catalogue of social abuses also exploits to the full the copiousness of satire. See Mary Claire Randolph, "The Structural Design of the Formal Verse Satire", *Phil. Q.*, 21 (1942), 368-84.

⁴ Ruth Mohl, *The Three Estates in Medieval and Renaissance Literature* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1933), pp. 203, 358, *et passim*.

⁵ T.B. Stroup and H.W. Jackson, "Gascoigne's *Steele Glas* and "The Bidding of the Bedes"", *SP*, 58 (1961), 52-60. It may be significant that, at the end of Hemetes' tale at Woodstock, the hermit exits "loden as it were with beades and other such ornaments of his profession", Pollard, *ed. cit.*, p. xxii.

The Complaynt of Phylomene. This was originally composed in 1562 as a fairly straightforward Ovidian verse narrative, entitled simply "The fable of Philomela". It is not strictly a complaint even after its revision; it is not spoken in the first person, and Gotz Schmitz is inclined to call it a "popular ballad", although she includes it in her study, noting its "apparent inherent bias towards allegory or satire".¹ John Peter notes complaint as part of the "vast medieval literature of reproof" in his study, which also links complaint with satire.² The association of the two forms, exemplified in Gascoigne's book, may be seen as what Rosalie Colie called genre and "countergenre", "its creative dialectic".³ Gascoigne - conscious as he is of writing in a variety of genres - calls the *Complaynt* in its final form "an *Elegye* or sorrowful song" (p. 177).⁴ Gascoigne probably had in mind Cooper's definition of the Latin *Elegia* as "Lamentableness: a lamentable song".⁵ But the choice of the tale of Philomela had powerful precedents among the Ricardian poets. Chaucer had told the story in his *Legend of Good Women*, and in *Confessio Amantis*, John Gower's aged prodigal Amans is told the story of Philomela by his father-confessor, Genius, as a particular warning against Ravine (Rapine), an aspect of Avarice.⁶

¹ Gotz Schmitz, *The Fall of Women in Early English Narrative Verse* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), pp. 46, 51-54, at 53, 46 respectively.

² John Peter, *Complaint and Satire in Early English Literature* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1956), p. 3.

³ Rosalie Colie, *The Resources of Kind* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1973), p. 93.

⁴ The only other work he specifically designates an elegy is *The Grief of Joye*, which is designated "*Certeayne Elegies: wherein the doubtfull delightes of man[n]es lyfe, are displaied*". See Chapter IV.

⁵ Thomas Cooper, *Thesaurus linguae Romanae et Britannicae* (London, 1565), noted by Prouty, p. 252. Interestingly, this was dedicated to Leicester, and Cooper also dedicated work to the Earl of Bedford. See next section.

⁶ In *The Complete Works of Geoffrey Chaucer*, ed. F.N. Robinson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1957), pp. 480-518; John Gower, *Confessio Amantis*, v. 5551ff, in *Selected Poetry*, ed. Carole Weinberg (Manchester: Fyfield Books/Carcenet Press), 2nd ed., 1989, pp. 123-37.

Gascoigne enhanced the tacit allusion to these poetic forefathers in the final revision in 1575-6, which recasts the early verse narrative as a Chaucerian dream-vision, though it is also untypical of this genre in some respects. The dream-vision finds its habitual season in May, but Gascoigne placed his in April so that he could pay double tribute to Chaucer in his opening lines:

In sweet April, the messenger to May
When hoonie drops, do melt in golden showres,
When every byrde, records hir lovers lay,
And westerne windes, do foster forth our floures,
Late in an even, I walked out alone ... (p. 178)¹

Beyond his deliberate medievalizing, Gascoigne follows Surrey in imitating Chaucer; together with his allusions to Gower's *Confessio Amantis* in the *Complaynt* and his tribute to Langland in the *Steele Glas* he places himself more firmly in the native poetic tradition with this volume than any other.²

The volume is notable for including the "only known contemporary portrait" of Gascoigne, a fine woodcut (see Figure 10).³ With its simple lines and the intense stare, the slight misalignment of the eyes, it is almost certain that this is actually a self-portrait, done in front of a mirror.⁴ While he may feature in the woodcuts in the

¹ All page references are to Cunliffe.

² See especially Surrey's sonnet, "The soote season, that bud and blome furth bringes" in *Surrey, Poems*, ed. Emrys Jones, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1964), p. 2. Crewe calls this "allusively invoking Chaucerian pastoral", in *Trials of Authorship* (1990), p. 67.

³ This is Cunliffe's caption in his second volume; Prouty does not note it.

⁴ A French fifteenth-century manuscript of Boccaccio, *Livres des cleres et nobles femmes*, shows a woman painting a self-portrait in this way (Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, MS. Fr.12420, f. 101v). Art historians have connected the rise of the self-portrait in the sixteenth century with improvements in mirror technology which increased the potential for spectacular mannerist effects. See, for example, Parmigianino's *Self-Portrait in a Convex Mirror* (1523-4), which takes self-scrutiny to a thoroughly introspective level; or Gian Gerolamo Savoldo's *Self-Portrait with Mirrors* (formerly known as *Portrait of* 251



Figure 10. "Tam Marti, quam Mercurio": self-portrait from *The Steele Glas* (April 1576)

Gaston de Foix, Louvre). For this last see L. Gelfand, "Girolamo Savoldo in the Cleveland Museum of Art. A Question of Mistaken Identity", *Apollo* (Mar.95), 14-20. Alternatively, Wallace suggests that "the satirist and his contemporary Maecenas, Lord Grey, are looking into a steel glass together", *ed.cit.*, p. 42.

Noble Arte, and had produced a sophisticated self-portrait in the frontispiece to the *Hemetes* manuscript, this was Gascoigne's first self-portrait in a named, printed volume.¹ In this case a self-portrait would form part of his self-referential "fine Invention". Beyond the controlling conceit of the satirical mirror in the *Steele Glas*, the *Complaynt of Phylomene*, newly-cast as a dream-vision, also participates in the notion of reflectiveness. Kathryn R. Lynch emphasizes not only the healing power of the literary vision (as in Boethius and Chaucer, especially) but also the expectations raised by the genre, that it was "an appropriate mode for poetic self-reflection".²

Gascoigne's self-portrait was calculated to demonstrate to Lord Grey his commitment to self-scrutiny and, by inference, to self-improvement or reform and so would have considerable tactical advantages if he was trying to rehabilitate himself in the eyes of his old patron. This would be its pragmatic justification in a volume which comprises a complementary pair of "reflective" poems. But there may also be a particular allusion here: in the final book of *Confessio Amantis*, Gower's prodigal Amans is shown a "wondrous mirrour" by Venus, and the sight of his ageing face prompts his rejection of Love and the promise of his reformation, just before the narrator awakens from his dream. This repentance is reiterated by the narrator, suggesting parallels between the poet and his persona, but it is immediately accepted by Genius:

"...Touchende my confession
I axe an absolucion

¹ See Lisa Jardine, *Erasmus, Man of Letters* (1993), for an excellent discussion of how Erasmus manipulated his self-presentation in print, especially in frontispiece portraits.

² Kathryn R. Lynch, *The High Medieval Dream Vision: Poetry, Philosophy and Literary Form*, Stanford, California, 1988, p. 71.

Of Genius, ere I go."
The prest anon was redy tho,
And seide, "Sone, as of thy shrifte
Thou hast ful pardoun and foryifte;
Foryet it thou, and so wol I." (CA, V, ll. 638-44)¹

The inclusion by Gascoigne of a self-portrait in the present volume would be persuasive evidence of a sincere repentance; it is the very essence of the conceit of reflectiveness that it presupposes moral and spiritual reflection.² But the tacit allusion to "moral Gower" and his awakening would also give compelling moral authority for Gascoigne's immediate forgiveness and rehabilitation.

The self-portrait, above all, gives Gascoigne a prime opportunity for self-presentation.³

This is a mature Gascoigne; his eyes are shadowed, his cheek is lined, and the contemplative set of his mouth is complemented by the slight furrow between his eyebrows. This is a face which could be seen as that of an older and wiser Gascoigne, who is still being made to suffer for his past misdemeanors - even, perhaps, a Gascoigne who has offended more recently, but is now thoroughly reformed and

¹ John Gower, *ed. cit.*, p. 170.

² Edward Lucie-Smith places Rembrandt's self-portraits in "a specifically Protestant tradition ... subsumed by the same doctrine of personal responsibility", in *The Self-Portrait: A Modern View*, ed. Sean Kelly, Edward Lucie-Smith (London: Sarema Press, 1987), p. 13.

³ Writers including Erasmus, Becon, and Skelton had included portraits in their printed works for this purpose: for Erasmus see Jardine, *ibid.*; for Thomas Becon, see his *Worckes* (1560-4, 3 vols., fol., John Day), where the portrait on the title page verso shows him, complete with mottoes, sitting at a desk with an open book, with pen, knife, and ink, and one closed book, in a furred scholar's gown and cap. Skelton had at least two self-presentations: the scholarly Skelton, seated at his desk in works like *Why come ye nat to cowrte?* (?1565), (traced by Edward Hodnett, *English Woodcuts 1480-1535* (London: Bibliographical Society at OUP, 1935), no. 2287) and the courtly standing figure with thistle and laurel marked "Skelton Poeta", though these could co-exist in one volume, as in the *Chapelet of Laurell* (R.Faukes, 1523) (which has another version of the scholarly, seated Skelton). Hodnett traces a number of possible author-portraits: see nos. 83, 142, 927 etc.

repentant.¹ The hint that he is a type of Amans/moral Gower, now awakened and converted to Reason, would strengthen this impression.

There is, however, another level at work here. The image is subscribed "*Tam Marti, quam Mercurio*" and is another illustration of Gascoigne's motto, an analogue to the impresa-portrait in the *Hemetes* manuscript.² The *Steele Glas* self-portrait can be divided down the centre to reveal a martial side, with stern expression and weapons hanging behind, and a courtly side with a shelf of books and an unlaced gorget, reflecting the same division in his symbolic clothing in the *Hemetes* frontispiece.³ It is notable that in the *Steele Glas* self-portrait, Gascoigne emphasizes his possession of an arquebus - a very modern weapon, used by mercenaries in the Low Countries - whereas in the manuscript the weapon is a tilting staff, a chivalric weapon with no practical use outside the court. The arquebus is the single modern feature in the entire volume and serves to remind his reader of his recent experience in service (as he would have it) of his country and his faith. That Lord Grey had shown an interest in Gascoigne's martial experience four years earlier is evident in the "Voyage into Holland", so Gascoigne was making an appeal to their past relationship. The image of himself which Gascoigne disseminated in print was a modern, almost utilitarian version of the soldier-poet, "*Tam Marti quam Mercurio*", only months after his thoroughly courtly version of this self-

¹ One is tempted to ask, with David Brilliant, "But what if the model for a self-portrait were itself a fiction and its mirrored reflection a delusion?", in *Portraiture* (London: Reaktion Books, 1991), p. 145.

² Corbett and Lightbown note the continuity from author-portraits in medieval presentation manuscripts to those included in printed books on the verso of the title page, *ibid.*, p. 43.

³ See Chapter III, section i.

presentation in the *Hemetes* manuscript.

There is, then, evidence that this volume was carefully conceived to serve a particular agenda. Gascoigne presented himself as a mature man, the modern soldier-poet, in his self-portrait and chose two works which would suggest a strongly Protestant poet writing in the native tradition. Lord Grey was a zealous Protestant, and a firm patriot, and the volume is carefully tailored to appeal to someone of his persuasions.¹ Given the care with which Gascoigne situates the pair of works in the native tradition it may be that Lord Grey had a penchant for the Ricardian poets.² Certainly, his later association with the greater medievalist, Edmund Spenser, could support such a conclusion.³

The Steele Glas.

In few published literary works is the reader's identity so insisted upon; Lord Grey is addressed by name throughout the volume, which gives it almost the air of a presentation manuscript. In the Dedicatory Epistle to the *Steele Glas* Gascoigne refers to his past relationship with Lord Grey in eulogistic terms:

you have alwayes deygnd with chearefull looke to regarde me, with affabyllitie to heare me, with exceeding curtesy to use me, with grave advice to directe mee, with apparant love to care for me, and with assured assistance to protect me. (p. 135)

¹ Stroup and Jackson, discussing the relationship between the *Steele Glas* and the liturgical "bidding of the beads", point out that Gascoigne "notably leaves out all reference to the dead, as the more strongly Protestant would", *ibid.*, p. 59.

² Gascoigne was Grey's first protege; his later dedications include John Leland's *Life of Prince Arthure*, tr. R. Robinson (1582); Thomas Sparke, *A sermon preached at Cheanies* (1585); *The Heidelberg Catechism*, tr. Thomas Sparke and John Seddon (1588); Sparke's *An answere to Master J. de Albines discourse against heresies* (1591). See *Index of Dedications*.

³ Spenser was his secretary in Ireland, during the composition of the *Faerie Queene* (1590), and gave Grey a generous tribute among the dedicatory sonnets in that volume (sig. 2Q3).

As at Kenilworth, Gascoigne employs the motif of desire and desert: "if mine abilitie were in any way correspondent too the just desires of my hart, I should yet thinke al the same unable to deserve the least parte of your goodnesse". But in the next few lines this quickly evolves into a telling combination of desert, dread, and desire which suggests some uneasiness on the poet's part. The memory of Grey's kindness

stirreth in me an exceeding zeale to deserve it: and that zeale begetteth bashefull dreade too performe it. The dread is ended in dolours, and yet those dolours revived the very same affection, whiche firste moved in mee the desire to honour and esteme you.

He goes on to admit "the lost time of my youth mispent" but signals the paradigm of the client-patron relationship by calling on Lord Grey's magnanimity:

I seeme to see a farre of (for my comfort) the high and triumphant vertue called *Magnanimitie*, accompanied with industrious diligence.

Encouraged by the former, he says that the latter, diligence, has already begun to "employ my understanding". The sequence of works he went on to publish this year supports the claim.

In attempting a renewal of his relationship with Lord Grey, Gascoigne adopts his now-familiar pose of repentant prodigal:

I have misgoverned my youth, I confesse it: what shall I do then? shall I yelde to mysery as a just plague apointed for my portion? Magnanimitie saith no, and Industrie seemeth to be of the very same opinion. (p. 135)

Gascoigne's conventional repentance has, however, a new urgency and it may be that that he had committed some offence:

Shal I grudge to be reprov'd for *that which I have done in deede*, when the sting of Emulation spared not to touche the worthy Scipio with most untrue surmyses?

(p. 136; my italics)

Although the *Steele Glas* enjoyed a high reputation in later years, the defensive nature of the volume as whole has been noted by Prouty and others:¹

I am derided, suspected, accused, and condemned: yea more than that, I am rygorously rejected when I proffer amendes for my harme (p. 135)

Gascoigne's enemies crop up everywhere, in the commendatory verses and the poem itself as well as the dedicatory epistle, which itself proceeds from his "troubled mind".

Furthermore, there is evidence that Gascoigne considers that others have received preferment which should have been his.² The opening of the *Steele Glas*, with its allusion to Philomela, claims that:

This worthy bird, hath taught my weary Muze,
To sing a song, in spight of their despight,
Which worke my woe, withouten cause or crime,
And make my backe, a ladder for their feete,
By slaundrous steppes, and stayres of tickle talke,
To clyme the throne, wherin my selfe should sitte. (p. 143)

As a transgressor himself, Gascoigne seems to have been uncertain of his credibility as a satirist in relation to Lord Grey, who had known him for some years.³ He resolves this dilemma in two ways: by incorporating a passage on his own shortcomings, and by adopting another poetic persona. The main theme begins with an assertion that he loves the self-scrutiny to which he can subject himself in the steel glass:

And since myselfe (now pride of youth is past)
Do love to be, and let al seeming passe,
Since I desire, to see my selfe in deed,

¹ Prouty, p. 91; Conley, *ibid.*, pp. 87-91.

² This repeats the complaint in the *Hemetes* manuscript. See Chapter III, section i.

³ There is an inevitable irony in a work in which "George Gascoigne flays in bitter verse the aquisition of wealth", as Irving D. Blum puts it, in "The Paradox of Money Imagery in English Renaissance Poetry", *SR*, 8 (1961), 144-54, p. 146.

Not what I would, but what I am or should,
Therefore I like this trustie glasse of Steele. (p. 149)

There follows a passage glossed in the margin as "The aucthor himselfe":

Wherin I see, a frolike favor frounst
With foule abuse, of lawlesse lust in youth ...

This is followed by another marginal note, "He which wil rebuke other mens faultes, shal do wel not to forget his owne imperfections", which sits in the margin beside the lines:

Wherein I see, a quicke capacitye,
Berayde with spots of light Inconstancie:
An age suspect, bycause of youthes misdeedes.
A poets brayne, possest with layes of love:
A *Caesars* minde, and yet a *Codrus* might,
A Souldiours hart, supprest with feareful doomes:
A Philosopher, foolishly fordone.
And to be playne, I see my selfe so playne,
And yet so much unlike that most I seemde,
As were it not, that Reason ruleth me,
I shoulde in rage, this face of mine deface,
And cast this corps, downe headlong in dispaire,
Bycause it is, *so farre unlike it selfe.* (my italics)

This rather long quote suggests a number of points: Gascoigne seems to present himself as someone who was still suspect because of his youthful mistakes, who had a less than ideal reputation as both soldier and poet, and who was unable to present himself as he really was (virtuous, industrious). This self-deprecatory technique recalls his earlier poems to Grey, the "Wodmanship" and the "Voyage". It is followed by a passage in which he describes a vision of "a world, of worthy government"; not, in this case, of self-government but of a fair and stable world where justice reigns and "No man growes riche, by subtilty nor sleight".

Gascoigne also adopts another poetic persona, that of Satyra (another woodland figure), who turns satirist with "the stumps of my reproved tongue" (p. 146).¹ This image for a castrated poet probably alludes to Gascoigne's description of his poetry as "Poemata castrata" in his prefaces to the *Posies* and could be linked with the persecution of which the walnut-tree complains in the *Hemetes* manuscript.² Satyra, an hermaphroditic version of Philomela who denies his/her relation to Gascoigne, betrays the nature of the accusations against him in the process:

I am not he whom slaunderous tongues have tolde,
 (False tongues in dede, & craftie subtile braines)
 To be the man, which ment a common spoyle
 Of loving dames, whose eares wold heare my words
 Or trust the tales devised by my pen.
 I n'am a man, as some do thinke I am,
 (Laugh not good Lord) I am in dede a dame,
 Or at the least, a right *Hermaphrodite* ... (p. 144)

Even in the act of distancing himself from his satirical persona, Gascoigne seems to implicate himself in the charges of his enemies. He had clearly been guilty of, or accused of, profligacy, and was anxious to rehabilitate himself. Stroup and Jackson's analysis of the *Steele Glas* as a sermon, complete with its "bidding prayer" is also suggestive.³ Instituted as part of the reformed religion, the "bidding of the beads"

¹ Thomas Drant defines satire as a "glave" (=sword, from its Arabic etymology), "*Or Satyra, of Satyrus, the mossye rude Uncivile God*". See Mary Claire Randolph, "Thomas Drant's Definition of Satire", *N&Q*, (1941), pp. 416-8, at 416. John Peter points out the etymology is false, *ibid.*, pp. 301-3.

² Prouty cannot be right when he asserts that it refers to "the banning of *A Hundreth* and the seizure of the *Posies*" (p. 244), since the *Posies* were not seized until August. Robert Maslen has suggested that "in taking to moralizing satire, he implies, he has taken to an old-fashioned form of poetry which can have no effect and no offspring", though he muddles the dates of the publication and performance at Kenilworth, in "A Study of the Works of John Lyly and his Predecessors", p. 170.

³ Stroup and Jackson, *ibid.*

allowed considerable flexibility for the preacher to include his own special petitions.¹ It seems that Gascoigne, whilst apparently exhorting the nation to reform itself, was also bidding his beads on his own behalf and petitioning Lord Grey.

In formal terms, although the *Steele Glas* is so thoroughly medieval, it has its revolutionary aspect as an experiment in English blank verse.² Gascoigne advertises his poem specifically in terms of its rejection of rhyme and makes this his main claim to fame. He would not need to highlight the plainness of his verse as a Protestant virtue, since "playne song" was, as Stroup and Jackson point out, the "liturgical music of the commonality".³ Instead, in one of the commendatory verses to the *Steele Glas/Complaynt of Phylomene* volume, entitled "The Author to the Reader", he declares:

To vaunt, were vaine: and flattrie were a faulte.
But truth to tell, there is a sort of fame,
The which I seeke, by science to assault,
And so to leave, remembrance of my name... (p. 140)

Fame is figured as a "stately Towre" which he tries to assault by "rymeless verse" since:

The walles whereof are wondrous harde to clyme:
And much to high, for ladders made of ryme...

Despite his uncertainty as satirist, then, Gascoigne has no self-doubt as versifier; his

¹ This adds a further petitioning aspect to Hemetes's bidding of the beads at Woodstock, see previous section.

² K.W. Gransden notes the self-consciousness of Gascoigne's innovation in *Tudor Verse Satire* (London: Athlone Press, 1970), pp. 27-8.

³ T.B. Stroup and H.W. Jackson, *ibid.*, p. 53.

evident ambition may be seen as parallel to his quest for poetic recognition in the *Hemetes* manuscript; even more than his other experiments, satire in English blank verse was "*un nuovo & strano stile*".¹

By producing a second literary mirror, Gascoigne was again working in a very old tradition. The mirror is one of the most ancient poetic metaphors, and its use as an analogue for poetry itself (often represented as a book) can be traced back to Plato's *Republic*.² Curtius traces it through the Sophist Alcidamus, Aristotle, Terence, and Cicero, and points out that it is also biblical.³ It evolved through many stages and became something of a paradox as both the archetypal symbol of vanity and the medieval *speculum mundi*.⁴ Popular in Italian and English comedy, it became a dominant metaphor in moralistic writing.⁵ Gascoigne had already used the image of the mirror in his short estates satire, "Gascoignes gloze upon this text, *Dominus iis opus habet*" (published 1573, probably written earlier), but it features less in the *Glasse of Government* than the title would suggest, being used only once in the course of the play and once in the epilogue.⁶ It also occurs in the shorter verse and in *Jocasta*, so that this

¹ Alvin Kernan points to "lack of ornament" as a self-conscious characteristic of satirists, in *The Canker'd Muse. Satire of the English Renaissance* (Hamden, Conn.: Archon Books, 1976), p. 3.

² Plato, *Republic*, x. 596. See Herbert Grabes, *The Mutable Glass. Mirror Imagery in Titles and Texts of the Middle Ages and English Renaissance*, tr. Gordon Collier (Cambridge University Press, 1982).

³ Curtius, *ibid.*, p. 336n.

⁴ Curtius calls it "a favourite metaphor of the Latin Middle Ages", *op.cit.*, p. 336.

⁵ M.H. Abrams traces the displacement of the mirror as the dominant poetic metaphor by Romanticism in his *The Mirror and the Lamp: Romantic Theory and the Critical Tradition* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1953).

⁶ Phylomusus declares his intention to memorize the teachings of Gnomaticus, "that in all my life I maye make it a glasse wherein I may beholde my duetie" (II, ii; Cunliffe, p. 35). The Epilogus declares that: "This chrystall glasse I polisht fayre and cleene,/ For every man, that listes his faultes to mend,/ This was my mind, and now I make an end" (p. 90).

was another familiar motif from the early works.

Mirror technology had undergone something of a revolution in the previous century, and Gascoigne's distinctions between types of reflector show a little uncertainty. Where in the *Glasse of Government*, he was content with a "crystal" glass, in his satire Gascoigne asserts the superiority of the mirror made of "steel", in fact an alloy of copper and tin also known as speculum.¹ Mirrors of glass "silvered" on the back had begun to replace those of polished steel in Italy, and in the sixteenth century high quality glass ones were made at Murano, and became one of Venice's chief luxury exports.² Gascoigne's distinctions between types of reflector exploit the symbolic potential of this technological development, but he seems to try to distinguish between three types of glass, "common glasse", "Berral glasse, with foyles of lovely brown", and "chrystal glas" (p. 147). By "common glass" he could mean the potash glass made in the Weald of Kent, though this was not fine enough to be used as mirror glass. But "Berral glasse" and "chrystal glas" were the same, for "barilla" was the soda imported from Spain by glassmakers such as Carre and Verzelini, making Venetian-style *cristallo* in London from about 1572.³ A metal mirror gives the same reversed image as a glass one. Glass may give a brighter image, but it was the quality of the surface (and the

¹ Geoffrey Wills, *English Looking Glasses: A Study of the Glass, Frames and Makers (1670-1820)* (London: Country Life Books, 1965), p. 41.

² Geoffrey Wills cites a John Barrow to confirm the unstable nature of Venetian mirrors, which were made of blown glass, if they exceeded 45"-50"; he says they are "subject to warp, which causes them to be false, hindering them from regularly reflecting the objects". See "From Polished Metal to Looking-Glass", *Country Life*, 124 No.3223 (Oct. 23rd, 1958), p. 940.

³ Production there tended to be of window-glass, for which there was an unprecedented demand in the early 1570s. See Anita Engle's useful study, *Glass and the Elizabethan Period* [Readings in Glass History No.8] (Jerusalem: Phoenix Publications, 1977).

capacity of each material to give a flat, reflective surface) which was in question.

The contrast between the two types of mirror is the basis of Gascoigne's conceit of being and seeming, and he claims to have inherited his glass as part of Gaius Lucilius's bequest:

Who at his death, bequeathed the christal glasse,
To such as love, to seme but not to be,
And unto those, that love to see themselves,
How foule or fayre, soever that they are,
He gan bequeath, a glasse of trustie steele. (pp. 148-9)

Although he claims descent from the father of Roman satire, and his insistence on the distinction between being and seeming, Gascoigne does not achieve Lucilius' declamatory rage. The earlier poem, "*Dominus iis opus habet*", seems more effective at its satirical level. Hazlitt described the earlier poem, with some gusto, as "a bold and clever exposure of the selfish oppression of the lower classes by their superiors".¹

The Complaynt of Phylomene.

This poem returns to the theme of Ovidian metamorphoses which had been so prominent in the courtly context of Kenilworth, but it also represents Gascoigne's return to one of his earliest poems. Prouty argued that Gascoigne was working from a Latin Ovid, which included a commentary by Raphael Regius and an introductory synopsis for each story by Lactantius Placitus, rather than Golding's translation.²

¹ Hazlitt, vol. I, p. vii.

² Prouty, p. 256. D.T. Starnes had suggested Gascoigne's main sources were Golding's translation and the synopsis in Cooper's *Thesaurus* in "Literary Features of Renaissance Dictionaries", *SP*, 37 (1940), 38, 43-44. He defended himself against Prouty in "Gascoigne's *Complaynte of Phylomene*: A
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Gascoigne includes prefatory material which gives a very precise version of how and when the *Complaynt of Phylomene* was composed. The way Gascoigne foregrounds the problems and conditions of composition is entirely characteristic, if unusually complex. He claims to have been reminded of his early "*Co[m]plaint of Phylomene*" when he decided to write the *Steele Glas* and came to use the image of Philomela in his exordium (p. 177). He dates the composition of the early poem as "twelve or thirtene yeares past" in his dedication. In the postscript he is even more precise, giving dates for three main stages of composition and revision: "Aprill, 1562. continuing it a little furder in Aprill 1575 and now thus finished this thirde day of Aprill. 1576" (p. 207). The prolonged planning and execution of the volume connects it with his next publication, the *Droomme of Doomesday*, a similarly long-planned offering to a patron.¹ But what may be most significant about the pattern of the revision is that Gascoigne deferred work on his moral titles in favour of more courtly opportunities: it is clear from this that although he resumed work on the volume in April 1575 his commissions for the *Noble Arte* and performances at Kenilworth delayed the work again.

The *Complaynt of Phylomene* in its earliest form was composed, according to the legend Gascoigne creates in the prefatory letter to Lord Grey, "riding by the high way betwene Chelmissford and London" in 1562 (p. 177). Overtaken by a sudden shower of rain, the poet abandoned *Phylomene*:

Rejoinder", *University of Texas Studies in English*, 7 (1947), 26-41. Leonard Nathanson detected further hints of Gascoigne's use of Golding in "Tamburlaine's "Pampered Jades" and Gascoigne", *N&Q*, 203 (1958), 53-4.

¹ See next section.

I changed my copy, and stroke over into the *Deprofundis* which is placed amongst my other *Poesies*, leving the complaint of *Phylomene* unfinished...

This version of *Phylomene*'s composition is corroborated by the material which introduces Gascoigne's translation of *De Profundis* in *A Hundreth*, where the occasion of the composition, "riding alone betwene Chelmsforde and London", is given in the prose links between the poems. While there is no mention of any composition already in progress, this legend of the composition of the *De Profundis* introduces the idea of Gascoigne's repentance for his youth at a very early stage in his career.¹ If this was indeed 1562, it predates his self-presentation as repentant prodigal in the "Memories" on his return to Grey's Inn, and the poem in its early form would have been available for publication with the other early work in *A Hundreth*.²

Having foregrounded the three stages of the composition and revision of the *Complaynt of Phylomene*, Gascoigne's dedicatory epistle includes a playful challenge to Lord Grey (as specified reader) to detect the different stages by change of style:

And I furder beseche that your lordship wil voutsafe in reading thereof, to gesse (by change of style) where the renewing of the verse may bee most apparantly thought to begin ... (p. 177)

Offered as a puzzle, the several stages in the composition of the work are indeed possible to detect, although the transition is designed so that it cannot be detected "by change of style". The first stage in the composition was evidently "The fable of Philomela" (p. 182), a fairly straightforward verse narrative, though it probably

¹ See Chapter I, section i.

² This raises the possibility of other early works which were not preserved in *A Hundreth*.

excludes some part of the final portion of the poem since Gascoigne says it was unfinished when it was abandoned.

Gascoigne refers to his brief renewed interest in the early poem in April 1575 as simply "continuing it a little furder" (p. 207). It seems unlikely that this would refer to the completion of the full structure as dream-vision, or that he would have had time to write it in the few weeks in April 1575 before he was distracted by his courtly commissions.¹ It is therefore possible tentatively to date the dream-vision framework into which the narrative poem is recessed at the end of the period he gives for composition, in April 1576. I suggest that the poem in its first stage may have ended with the narrative complete but without the exposition of the nightingale's notes, which is signalled by a marginal note, after an abrupt turn in the narrative. As it is only the final note of the nightingale which introduces the figure of Nemesis as speaker of the narrative (Nemesis is not mentioned before) Gascoigne could have had the dream-vision form in mind in 1575, although he may have added Nemesis as the fourth note in 1576, when he came to develop the new structure more fully.

The defensive nature of the *Steele Glas* has been noted. If Gascoigne was defending himself against a particular charge, the nature of his transgression is suggested by hints embedded in the dream-vision framework of the *Complaynt of Phylomene*. The poet-dreamer has fallen asleep leaning on his staff and has a vision of Nemesis, who simply

¹ This may have been as little as ten days, if the date of the dedicatory epistle, 16 April, refers to his resumption of work on *Phylomene*: the date of the dedication of the *Glasse of Government* is 26 April.

recites the fable of Phylomene. Although the motif of the otherworldly journey is missing, the dreamer does undergo a learning experience.¹ Indeed, the clearest indications of the nature of Gascoigne's transgression occurs as the poet-dreamer wakes up:

At last: my staffe (which was mine onely stay)
Did slippe, and I, must needes awaked be,
Against my wil did I (God knowes) awake,
For willingly I could my selfe content,
Seven dayes to sleepe for *Philomelas* sake,
So that my sleepe in such sweete thoughts were spent. (p. 204)

Although he cannot resist the flippancy of such density of sexual puns, Gascoigne quickly draws the moral of his current situation:

But you my Lord which reade this ragged verse,
Forgive the faults of my so sleepy muse,
Let me the heast of *Nemesis* rehearse,
For sure I see, much sense therof ensues.
I seeme to see (my Lord) that lechers lust,
Procures the plague, and vengauce of the highest,
I may not say, but God is good and just,
Although he scourge the furdest for the nighest... (p. 204)

The poet-dreamer's conclusion dwells on the necessity of restraining the flesh, exhorting single men to save themselves for matrimony, and married men to "Be wel content with that which may suffys" (p. 205).

The final ten lines return to Gascoigne's particular transgressiveness and his promises of reform:

Beare with me (Lord) my lusting dayes are done,
Faire *Phylomene* forbad me fayre and flat
To like such love, as is with lust begonne,

¹ Lynch, *ibid.*, p. 47.

The lawful love is best, and I like that. (p. 206)

As Prouty notes, Gascoigne then considers the possibility of transgressing again.¹

Where he has hitherto presented himself as victim, as Satyra (=Phylomene), Gascoigne now makes an astonishing metamorphosis into Tereus:

Then if you see, that (Lapwinglike) I chaunce,
To leape againe, beyond my lawful reache,
(I take harde taske) or but to give a glaunce,
At bewties blase, for such a wilful breache,
Of promise made, my Lorde shal do no wrong,
To say (*George*) thinke on *Phylomelaes* song. (p. 206)

It is unclear whether Gascoigne is apologising for repeated transgressions (and thus a bad reputation) or one particular incident. The slightly flippant "wilful breache/Of promise made" could refer to broken marriage vows, or to a promise that he needs to be reminded of. The odd phrase "I take harde taske" could simply comment on the difficulty of his resolve, or imply an acceptance of conditions imposed, though there is no evidence that Lord Grey had any further interaction with Gascoigne.²

Gascoigne exploited the generic expectations raised by both his homiletic satire and his dream-vision; Lord Grey is implicated in interpreting the (single) allegory concealed in both poems. Gascoigne had clearly transgressed, or was presenting himself as a transgressor. But the poems contain clues as to the specifically amorous nature of his transgression. Although neither poem fits strictly into its genre, Gascoigne can only achieve this confessional cast to the poems because he has what Colie calls "a genre-

¹ Prouty, p. 263.

² The lack of evidence is, however, inconclusive as Gascoigne died during another period of rustication the following year.

system to play against".¹ The character of the *Steele Glas/Complaynt of Phylomene* volume suggests not a zealous moralist but rather the forensic appeal of a poet who has in some way offended - or become estranged from - a valuable patron.

Despite the apparent certainty of self-presentation in the self-portrait on the verso of the title page, Gascoigne's poetic identity tends again towards fragmentation not integration in this volume. The desperate, reformed prodigal Gascoigne presents in the dedicatory epistle to the *Steele Glas* is supplanted by Satyra, who turns his/her steely gaze on him before (s)he deals with society at large. The recessing of different poetic personae in the *Complaynt of Phylomene* carries the fragmentation still further: the poet-dreamer, George, is displaced by Nemesis as narrator, who tells the story of Phylomene, another figure for the emasculated poet. Although both Satyra and Phylomene are evidently versions of Gascoigne, he is both victim and transgressor, and completes his series of metamorphoses with the sudden change into Tereus at the end of the volume. Once again, Gascoigne was content to create a paradox: as both victim and transgressor, censored poet and satirist, he was both victim of the censor's cuts and wielder of the satirical blade.

¹ Rosalie L. Colie, *ibid.*, p. 26.

The Droomme of Doomesday (May).

The *Droomme of doomesday* is the most neglected of Gascoigne's works. Previous commentators, with the notable exceptions of Professors Schelling and Prouty, have avoided commenting on it.¹ Neither the seriousness nor the accuracy of Gascoigne's translation are in question, but Prouty's account of the circumstances of its preparation will be challenged. This text is as much a part of his quest for preferment as his more courtly works and is, like the *Steele Glas/Complaynt of Phylomene*, specifically tailored to suit its dedicatee, in this case the Earl of Bedford. Indeed, it is possible to see these two works, with *A Delicate Diet* (which followed the *Droomme*) as a distinctive cluster of moralistic printed works to which Gascoigne gave his name; they seem to form a line of development in Gascoigne's literary career which is distinct from his more opportunistic approach to more courtly endeavours.

Prouty treated the *Droomme* and *A Delicate Diet* as a pair of works. This was largely because Gascoigne himself suggests the connection: like Gascoigne, Prouty wanted to prove the hypothesis of Gascoigne's moral reformation. But he does not acknowledge that this duplicates the reformation of the preceding year. The choice of genre - moralistic, religious pamphlets - is significant because it represents a conscious choice of a different literary market. In looking for a motivation for the undertaking of such unpalatable work, however, Prouty took the evidence in the prefatory matter of the

¹ Prouty, pp. 269-70, 273-7; Schelling, *Life and Writings of George Gascoigne*, pp. 96-7.

Droomme that Gascoigne suffered an illness at this time to argue that he had a *crise de conscience* which prompted him to renounce the world. Reading with the knowledge of Gascoigne's early death the following year in mind, Prouty assumed that this was a life-threatening, and possibly recurrent illness.¹ He adduces Gascoigne's illness to support the idea of his "sincere moral purpose" in both works; although he is not adopting a particular religious view, "in 1576, his ideas were congenial to the virulent asceticism of Pope Innocent, as well as to St Augustine's strictures on drink".² Prouty goes on to suggest that the illness extended throughout the summer: "If Gascoigne's illness were serious, as it seems to have been by reason of his delay from May to August in completing *A Delicate Diet*, his mind must many times have turned to thoughts of death, and we can only wonder how much consolation he found in the evanescence of physical life and the reality of death which he had affirmed in *The Droomme of Doomesday*."³

The actual evidence for the illness in April/May does not, however, support this. It consists only of a note in the list of printer's corrections and a reference by Gascoigne as he signs his dedicatory letter. The printer's note says that:

whiles this worke was in the presse, it pleased God to visit the translatur thereof with sicknesse. So that being unable himselfe to attend the dayly proofes, he apoynted a servaunt of his to oversee the same. Who (not being so well acquainted with the matter as his maister was) there have passed some faultes much contrary unto both our meanings and desires. (p. 215)

¹ Prouty, p. 98.

² Prouty, p. 270.

³ Prouty, p. 273.

This is interesting for the picture it gives of careful proofing habits, but it clearly states that the illness occurred in the late stages of preparation, as the work was already in the press.¹ This seems to be confirmed by the dedicatory letter, itself a late item in the production schedule, which concludes: "From my lodging where I finished this travayle in weake plight for health as your good L: well knoweth this second daye of *Maye*. 1576" (p. 214).

It is clear from this that Gascoigne's illness (if it was not another fiction) actually occurred in the late stages of preparation of the *Droomme* and that it cannot be seen as the motivation for translating it. Such a work would have taken a number of months, as Prouty notes, so that the decision to undertake such a massive translation must have preceded the illness anyway.² Where Prouty assumes that the *Droomme* and the *Diet* are a combined project, he perceives the four-month delay between their respective publication as requiring the explanation of a prolonged illness. To this may be objected the lack of any clear pattern or rhythm to Gascoigne's publishing activities throughout 1575 and 1576: a four-month delay may suggest any number of external pressures, and the preparation of a work like the *Complaynt of Phylomene* defies any sense of such well-regulated writing and publishing activity. Further evidence of Gascoigne's health later in the summer of 1576 is lacking, except that towards the end of September, he was evidently fit enough to undertake at short notice a commission from Walsingham

¹ This could, of course, be another ruse, like the letter from "A.B." in *A Hundreth*; Gascoigne seems concerned in the dedication of the *Diet* to defend himself against criticism for the shambolic state of that volume. See next section.

² Prouty, p. 91.

which required travelling to Paris and Tours and then on to Antwerp.¹

If, however, mortal illness did not prompt the religious fervour which Prouty postulates then some other motive must be found. This is a very different kind of publication from anything Gascoigne had done before, despite the moralizing of various shorter poems like the "*Deprofundis*".² On an entirely pragmatic level, Gascoigne can be seen to be demonstrating his competence as a Latinist (though this was not, of course, a particularly distinctive skill). It also provides another moral title for the portfolio of "*Gascoigne the Satyricall* writer". But by dedicating it to the Earl of Bedford, Gascoigne further aligned himself with radical Protestant courtiers, building on his previous contacts with Bedford at a time when he was also working on his lapsed association with Lord Grey and had, of course, recently been employed by Leicester. It may be that the nature of this new product can be best understood by looking at the market for which it was intended and the evidence it contains about the circumstances of its production.

In fact, in the dedicatory epistle to the *Droomme*, Gascoigne gives a credible account of what prompted him to undertake the work. It was not a renewal of religious fervour but a pragmatic response to an opportunity to gain favour. He is trying to demonstrate "the fruites of repentaunce", "To be shewed in some seryous travayle which might both perticularly beare witnessse of my reformation, and generally become profitable unto

¹ See Chapter III, section iii.

² See Chapter I, section i.

others" (p. 211), but this reformation is (characteristically) part of a petition for preferment: "my wyll and desire are very earnest to please and profyt all true christians in generallitie, and to purchase the continuance of your comfortable favour in perticularitie" (p. 214). The work must have been a penance in itself. Gascoigne tells an anecdote which dates the origin of the task almost a year before:

Whereunto I was (now almost twelve moneths past) pricked and much moved, by the grave and discreete wordes of one right worshipfull and mine approved friend, who (in my presence) hearing my thryftlesse booke of *Poesyes* undeservedly commended, dyd say: That he lyked the smell of those *Poesies* pretely well, but he would lyke the Gardyner much better if he would employe his spade in no worse ground, then eyther Devenitie or morall Philosophie. Unto which wordes I thought not meete to reply much at that tyme, havyng learned that a rashe answeere should not bee given unto a grave advyse. (pp. 211-2)

This is notable because it offers an apparently externally-generated version of Gascoigne, although because he reports it himself it forms a part of his current self-presentation; whatever his reason for failing to reply before, he finds an apt and grave reason for his delay.

Gascoigne quotes his putative patron: "one right worshipfull and mine approved friend" is clearly Bedford himself, being no more than polite about the revised *Posies*, but actually being critical of Gascoigne's choice of frivolous subjects. Gascoigne had obviously decided to take this overheard remark as a commission, just as he had done with the *Hemetes* manuscript. He rationalises this with considerable skill:

I have of long time thought my selfe bounden by some seryous travayle to declare that those grave and friendly wordes dyd not marche altogether unmarked, through my mynde. (p. 212)

Gascoigne may have been familiar to the Earl of Bedford from Gray's Inn; Francis Russell, second Earl of Bedford, entered the society in 1557, although the difference in their rank may have precluded any close acquaintance. Bedford's elevation to the Privy Council immediately upon Elizabeth's accession would in any case have removed him from Gray's quite quickly. Even if they had not become acquainted at Gray's Inn (or earlier, from their parliamentary duties towards Bedford), the Earl was certainly aware of Gascoigne by 1570, when Chancery Decrees show that the poet brought a writ of "*audita querella*" against him.¹ As Prouty explains the situation, Gascoigne was in jail on a order of debt brought against him by his father, and the dispute with the Earl of Bedford concerned the separate matter of a dispute over land ownership.² The nature of the attachment against him suggests that Bedford had first brought action against Gascoigne and been successful, and that Gascoigne had then reopened the suit. The several legal actions in which Gascoigne was involved in 1570 defied even Prouty's investigations and so their outcome and significance remain, unfortunately, mysterious.

The Earl of Bedford does appear elsewhere in Gascoigne's work.³ He heads the list of the nobility in "*Dulce bellum inexpertis*," one of the additions in the *Posies*. Having been somewhat satirical about worldly status towards the end of that poem, Gascoigne proceeds to apologise to certain prominent courtiers to whom such satire might be offensive:

¹ PRO Chanc. D & O C33/40, fol. 319v, cited Prouty, p. 46n.

² Prouty, pp. 45ff.

³ His wife, the Countess of Bedford, is included in the Second Song of *The Grief of Joye*, as Prouty notes.

And you my Lordes to whom I dueties owe,
And beare such love as best becommeth me,
First *Earle of Bedford*, whome I right well know,
To honour armes ...¹

This is the earliest reference (so far as can be established) to Gascoigne owing "dueties" to Bedford, but clearly suggests some form of indebtedness to him before the end of 1575. The poem is dedicated to Lord Grey of Wilton, Gascoigne's better known patron, who gives way to the superior rank of Bedford and a number of peers, including Warwick ("In whose good grace I covet sore to be")² and Leicester.

What is clear is that Gascoigne had some relationship with Bedford, which was not always the case with those who dedicated works to him; Thomas Cooper remarks on his own possible impudence in dedicating his *Chronicle* to Bedford on absolutely no acquaintance at all.³ By contrast, and despite having been embroiled in the courts of chancery against him, Gascoigne is able to cite favour he has received from Bedford. He says he will not blason "your just desertes in generalitie, or your exceeding favour and bounty towards me in perticularitie" (p. 211), though we have no way of knowing what form this bounty took. He continues:

Let it then please your honor to rest throughly satisfied with this my simple acknowledging of your great goodnes, so much surpassing my smal deserts, that I finde none other meane of discharge but onely to continue your faithful

¹ "*Dulce bellum inexpertis*," stanza 196: Pigman, p. 436.

² Ambrose Dudley, Earl of Warwick, was another popular literary patron, and had a similar number of dedications (30) to Bedford; see *Index of Dedications*.

³ "For all be it I am a person to your honour so unknowen as ye maie well marvaile at my doynge, and thincke my attempte bothe rashe and impudent: yet the reporte of that gentlenesse and favour, that ye have alwaye shewed to them that desyre in any wyse to further learnyng, doth throughly perswade me, that you wyll not onely not mervayle at me, but also take my dooyng in good parte, and gentilly interpret the same." Thomas Cooper, *Coopers Chronicle* (T. Berthelet, 1560), sig. A3v.

servaunt and follower. The which I protest to accomplish unto my lyves end, as well towards your own person & my good Ladie, as to all your posteritie in everie duetifull respecte. (p. 211)

It may be, then, that Gascoigne's translation and dedication of this work was acknowledging a specific debt to, rather than a general reconciliation with, Bedford. It is only after this acknowledgement that Gascoigne goes on to present again the model of the repentant prodigal:

And (my good Lorde) I must needes confesse both unto your honour and to the whole world, that amongst a number of imperfections I finde my selfe giltye of much time mispent, & of greater curiosite then was convenient, in penning and endyghting sundrie toyes and trifles. So that lookyng backe (with inward grieffe) towards the beginning of my reckless race, I fynde that both the tyme, and my duetie doe challenge in me the fruites of repentaunce. (p. 211)

Certainly, the effort involved in translating these weighty Latin works could be sufficient in itself to witness "the fruites of repentaunce". But given the background of legal hostilities between Gascoigne and Bedford, it may be that this work was a conciliatory gesture, like the dedication of the *Steele Glas/Complaynt of Phylomene* volume to Lord Grey. Or it may have been a more speculative manoeuvre, designed to prompt more than just casual patronage.

Frauncis Russell, second Earl of Bedford, a high profile Protestant who had signed the act of accession for Lady Jane Grey and so spent Mary's reign in prison, was in fact a well-known literary patron. Of the thirty volumes dedicated to him, almost exactly one-third were works of overtly religious propaganda, and if to these are added the

collections of sermons and biblical works, the proportion reaches a half.¹ Of the remaining volumes, three were histories and the rest were a mixture of classical translations and medical or political works. On the evidence of the dedicatory epistles themselves, Bedford was well-known not only for his religious zeal but - more importantly still - for his generosity towards authors and translators working in serious genres. His comment to Gascoigne, that "he lyked the smell of those *Poesies* pretely well, but he would lyke the Gardyner much better if he would employe his spade in no worse ground, then eyther Devinitie or morall Philosophie", takes on a more specific promise of encouragement and reward in context of Bedford's profile as a patron.

Several of the dedications to Bedford attest to his generosity, especially those by clergymen. John Bridges, vicar of Herne, refers to an "exhibition" from Bedford by which he lived in Italy "three or foure yeares together" as well as casual generosity at court one Lent at White Hall.² William Alley, bishop of Exeter, says "I perceave my selfe most addict and tyed with the bondes of singular and great benefites flowyng from you".³ Others refer to his reputation as a generous patron. The translator of *Sleidans Chronicle*, Stephen Wythers, cites "the vulgare report of your clemencie and grateful accepting of divers other mens labours in such lyke enterprises" before admitting that

¹ These estimates are calculated from the *Index of Dedications*.

² John Bridges, Vicar of Herne, tr., *An hundred, threescore and fiftene Homelyes or Sermons, uppon the Actes of the apostles, written by Saint Luke: made by Radulphe Gualthere Tigurine* (Henry Denham, 1572), sig. A1.

³ William Alley, *The poore mans Librarie. Rapsodiae G.A. Byshop of Exceter upon the first Epistle of S. Peter, read publickely in the Cathedrall Church of Saint Paule, within the Citie of London. 1560* (John Day, 1571), sig. A3.

the choice of the present work has been prompted by Bedford's previous "thankfull accepting" of another work by Sleidan (Joannes Philipson).¹ Thus Bedford had two of Sleidan's histories dedicated to him because he had generously acknowledged the first. Similarly, his interest in medical science was obviously known to William Ward, who dedicated his translation of Alessio's *Secretes* to him.² A further work by Alessio was dedicated to Bedford several years later, by Richard Androse, citing "the common report of your singuler clemency and marvellous affection towards the advauncement of good letters and godly exercises".³ As nine of the eighteen works dedicated to Bedford before 1576 were overtly religious works, Gascoigne was offering a work which he could be certain - by its genre, at least - would please his erstwhile legal opponent.

If anything, however, Gascoigne's theology as manifested in the *Droomme* seems a little confused and may not have been entirely to Bedford's taste. The first part is the translation of Pope Innocent's *de Contemptu Mundi*, "The Vewe of Worldly Vanities", which espouses an extreme asceticism which might not have appealed to a zealous Protestant like Bedford, who had been involved in so pragmatic an aspect of the religious settlement as the commission to write the new liturgy.⁴ Although the list of

¹ Stephen Wythers, tr., *A briefe Chronicle of the foure principall Empyres ... Made by the famous and godly learned man John Sleidan, and Englished by Stephan Wythers* (R.Hall, 1563), sig. *2.

² William Ward, tr., Alessio (Girolamo Ruscelli), *The Secretes of the Reverende Mayster Alexis of Piemount* (J. Kyngstone for N. Inglonde, 1558).

³ Richard Androse, tr., Alessio, *The fourth and finall booke of secretes* (Henry Denham, 1569), sig. A2.

⁴ The first part, "The Vewe of Worldly Vanities", was recognized as a translation of Innocent's *De Contemptu Mundi* by Schelling, *ibid.*, p. 96. Prouty points out that Henry Kirton translated the same work that year, but that the two translators worked independently (p. 85).

dedications to Bedford include so many religious works, none are from Catholic sources, and many argue directly and explicitly against Roman Catholic teachings. The second part of the *Droomme*, the "Shame of Sinne", as Prouty says, "may be classified as Puritan or Calvinistic, but it does not have those Manichean characteristics which mark "The vewe of worldly Vanities"". ¹ This may have been more acceptable: by the end of his life, Bedford had three translations of works by Calvin dedicated to him. The third part, "The Needles Eye", is not - as Prouty notes - "the rules of a Christian life", which Gascoigne promises, but "a far more lengthy and rambling disquisition than such a subtitle implies...". ² (Prouty also notes that the *Droomme* concludes with a private letter similar to the item which concludes Edward Hake's *Newes out of Powles Churchyard*, 1579.) ³ The collection of pamphlets Gascoigne gathers for his *Droomme of doomesday* is, perhaps, rather a mixed bag theologically speaking.

Nonetheless, the keywords in Gascoigne's dedicatory epistle are authentically Protestant and include (moral) Reformation, Zeal, Duties, and Profit, as well as authentically courtly, including Commoditie, desert, and desire. Gascoigne gave his collection of miscellaneous pamphlets his own title, just as "H.W." was supposed to have named *A Hundreth Sundrie Flowres*. Gascoigne explains the military associations in his choice of title (which was presumably made because he knew "right well" that Bedford was inclined to "honour armes"). He has called the work *The Droomme of doomesday*

¹ Prouty, p. 272.

² Prouty, p. 272.

³ Prouty, p. 273n.

"cheefly bicause [the pamphlets] do all tende zealously to an admonicion whereby we may every man walke warely & decently in his vocacion..." (p. 213). Gascoigne strikes a suitably militant Protestant tone:

Thinking my selfe assured that any Souldier which meaneth to march under the flagge of gods favour, may by sounde of this droomme be awaked, and called to his watch and warde with right sufficient summons. (p. 213)

He goes on to imply his own commitment to a new style of life: "So that the offences ones avoyded, and the mynde fully bent to goe forthwardes in godlynesse, it shalbe hard to withdraw us from performance of our possible duties." But this also suggests "possible duties" he has not yet been given, which he was perhaps hoping would be provided by an erstwhile opponent turned patron.

The *Droomme of doomesday* can, then, be argued to be a further manifestation of Gascoigne's quest for patronage and - by this time - reconciliation with certain courtiers. Although the translation must have taken some considerable time, and may represent a form of penance, it is not a proof of Gascoigne's thoroughgoing repentance. Indeed, there is a lightness of tone evident in Gascoigne's version of how the work came to be undertaken, which does not quite constitute flippancy, but neither does it suggest a serious process of deliberation. Having acknowledged his debt to Bedford and presented himself as a repentant prodigal, he talks of how,

tossyng and retossyng in my small Lybrarie, amongst some bookes which had not often felte my fyngers endes in xv. yeares before, I chaunced to light upon a small volumne skarce comely covered, and wel worse handled. (p. 212)

Gascoigne goes on to describe his original as a torn, damaged pamphlet, taken from

this neglected section of his books:

For to tell a truth unto your honor, it was written in an old kynd of Characters, and so torne as it neyther had the beginning perspicious, nor the end perfect. So that I can not certaynly say who shuld be the Author of the same.

Because the condition of the pamphlets is such that it leaves him unsure of their authorship, he gains license for dedicating a Roman Catholic work like Innocent's *de Contemptu Mundi* to Bedford. Although of course this may have been due to a genuine misapprehension, one senses again the deliberate mystification which characterizes so many of Gascoigne's utterances.

Because of the length of time these translations would have taken, Prouty suggests that Gascoigne was working on them at the same time that he was refurbishing the *Complaynt of Phylomene* and the *Steele Glas* for the volume dedicated to Lord Grey in an attempt to rehabilitate himself with his former patron.¹ Although Prouty does not make the connection, it seems clear that Gascoigne's work during the first few months of 1576 was another part of his sustained effort at this time to secure patronage in some form. It is possible that, as Prouty suggests, the dedication of the *Droomme* to Bedford indicates that Gascoigne had somehow become reconciled with him.² But it may indicate something rather different. If Bedford's remark dated from almost a year before Gascoigne's dedication of May 1576, then it would have been made at a time of high hopes because of Gascoigne's commission from Leicester (whether or not it was formalised, he may have had some expectation) and the recent publication of the

¹ Prouty, p. 91.

² Prouty, p. 92.

Posies, *Glasse of Government*, and especially the *Noble Arte*. The comment itself is actually critical - Bedford would "lyke the Gardyner much better *if*" - but Gascoigne may have disregarded it because so many other opportunities seemed to be offering themselves. As we have seen, these hopes remained unfulfilled: the *Hemetes* manuscript had not yet borne fruit. Almost a year after his performance at Kenilworth, Gascoigne decided to make overtures to Bedford, a well-known patron with well-known tastes, who was also known for his generosity and his religious zeal. Like the *Steele Glas/Complaynt of Phylomene*, the *Droomme* had taken at least a year to come to fruition: both were carefully planned and devised to renew contact with influential allies and to support the moralistic model of Gascoigne.

A delicate Diet, for daintiemouthde droonkardes (22 August).

"Whyles I travayled in Translation, and collection of my Droomme of Doomes daye: and was busyed in sorting of the same (for I gathered the whole out of sundry Pamphlets:) I chaunced at passage, to espye one shorte Epistle, written against Dronkenesse"¹

With the publication of the *Delicate Diet*, Gascoigne can be seen to be adding to his portfolio of moralistic titles and making connections between them. A reader picking up this slim bundle of papers at the bookseller's stall is directed to the *Droomme* by this assertion at the beginning of the *Diet* that the originals were in the same bundle of papers. Having perhaps dispensed with Prouty's assumption of a prolonged illness and accompanying moral crisis, it is possible to see that in the *Diet* no less than the

¹ *A Delicate Diet*, in Cunliffe, p. 455.
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Droomme of Doomesday, Gascoigne is engaged in his usual quest for preferment.

Dedicated to Sir Lewis Dive of Bromham in Bedfordshire, this pamphlet is a more impromptu composition than the *Steele Glas/Complaynt of Phylomene* or the *Droomme of Doomesday*, both of which took over a year to prepare. It seems clear that those two volumes were long-planned, designed to re-establish relations with former patrons by offering a new, reformed, persona. Although the *Diet* also supports this persona, "*Gascoigne, the satyricall wryter*", there is no evidence that it was part of any long-term plan. It seems to be an acknowledgement of past help received, and it may be significant that Dive had been involved in the legal suits in which Gascoigne and the Earl of Bedford had clashed.¹

Gascoigne's dedication to Lewis Dive is especially familiar in tone, and clearly lacks the disparity in rank which existed with Bedford, Grey, or even Hopton; this is "the right Worshipfull his synguler good friend, Lewes Dyve of Broomeham, in the Countie of Bedforde, Esquyer" (p. 453). It is from this dedication that further clues to Gascoigne's self-presentation may be deduced. He begins apologetically:

Syr, you maye possibly condempne me of greate ingratitude, who (having combred the whole worlde with my thryftlesse workes) have never yet remembred to present you with any of them ...

Acknowledging the debt of "your great friendshippe", Gascoigne goes on to try to

¹ Prouty points to Dive's involvement in the 1570 law suit, when Gascoigne was in Bedford Gaol and Dive was one of the counsel assigned him (a form of legal aid); see Prouty, pp. 47, 92-3. He notes that it was Dive's daughter-in-law, Douglas Dive, to whom Gascoigne wrote a poem, and claims that her husband, John, was a close friend of his at this time. The tone of the dedication is certainly friendly, but there is no corroborative evidence; the relationship could have been very informal.

excuse his earlier, frivolous works in *A Hundreth* and the *Posies*, but in doing so he is dismissive of both editions:

when my wanton (and worse smelling) Poesies, presumed fyrst to peark abroade, they came forth sooner then I wysshed, and mucche before they deserved to be lyked. So that (as you maye sithens perceyve) I was more combred with correction of them, then comforted in the constructions, whereunto they were subject.

The date of this letter, the ".10. of August. 1576" (p. 454) may be significant: only three days later, 50 copies of the *Posies* were seized from Richard Smith. It may be entirely coincidental, but Gascoigne's most moral works were issued at a time of continued suspicion. Once again, he reiterates the repentant prodigal: "And too make amendes" for the lost time, he claims, "I have of latter dayes used al my travaile in matters both serious and Morall" (p. 453).

Gascoigne goes on to list his "works or Pamphlets, I esteeme both Morall and Godly," beginning with the *Glasse of Government* and the *Droomme*, which he says he dedicated "to my Lord and Maister" (Bedford). He then cites the *Steele Glas* and the *Complaynt of Phylomene*, "both which," he says, "I dedicated to your good Lord and myne, *the Lorde Greye of Wylton*", which suggests that they were both clients of Lord Grey. Dive was not an habitual patron, as this is the only recorded work dedicated to him.¹ But the purpose of Gascoigne's list is, characteristically, to support the reformation of character he claims. He regrets that he has not yet been able to present Dive with any copies of these works, as he had very few himself, "and yet of those

¹ *Index of Dedications.*

fewe, I had one readie to have sent you, the last time that my Brother *John Dyve* was in the Cittye". The relationship may well have been a family connection or at least one of mutual co-operation and help; Gascoigne refers also to an errand or favour he had evidently been tasked with by the Dive family:

I dyd often reveale, but never prevayled, in the errande which my brother *John* commytted to my sollycetyng when wee last were together (p. 454)

But he makes it clear that he is about to make up for his oversight and present Dive with not only this short temperance tract (chosen to appeal to its dedicatee, described as "a paterne of Sobryetie") but also copies of some of his publications:

This small worke is therefore so much the meeter to bee dedicated unto you: I present it, both for that respecte, and for mine owne discharge: and therewithall the Coppies of the workes before named ...

But the main significance of the bundle of moral works with which Gascoigne presented Lewis Dive is that it forms a complete list of the named moralistic works, with the *Glasse of Government*, the *Droomme*, the *Steele Glas/Complaynt of Phylomene*, and the *Delicate Diet* itself. This seems to confirm my sense that these titles form a distinct portfolio. It also suggests Gascoigne's own selective manipulation of his self-presentation in print: it is clear that when he wanted to present a reformed and serious persona to an old and eminent family friend he exploited the anonymity of the courtly works and simply neglected to declare them. He is jokily dismissive of *A Hundreth* and the *Posies* and does not acknowledge the *Noble Arte* or the *Princely Pleasures*, even though he claims to be offering Dive a complete list of "al my travaile"; what he actually offers are the named, moralistic titles of "George Gascoigne, Esquire".

Chapter III. 1576: "Gascoigne the Satyricall wryter" and "Petrarks heire".

(iii) A Secret Mission: *The Spoyle of Antwerpe* (26 November).

“Since my hap was *to bee present at so pitteous a spectacle, as the sackyng and spoyle of Antwerpe ...*”¹

As the *Spoyle of Antwerpe* is an account of a secret mission and published anonymously, it does not form part of Gascoigne's quest for literary fame. Instead, it forms a part of the more direct quest for preferment which is evident in the presentation manuscripts and courtly performances. The commission from Burghley was evidently an opportunity for Gascoigne to fulfil the promise of service which he had made in the dedication to the manuscript of *Hemetes* at the beginning of the year. Gascoigne had been very active in the following few months, following his anonymous account of the *Princely Pleasures* with the named moralistic titles, the *Steele Glas/Complaynt of Phylomene*, the *Droomme of Doomesday*, and *A Delicate Diet*. But in the *Spoyle*, Gascoigne's return to anonymous publication is not merely a courtly attitude; his secret mission was a sign of great favour and discretion would have been vital to its success. In this pamphlet, Gascoigne attempts a genuine self-effacement, so that his self-presentation is very much behind the scenes and rests as much on the reliability, initiative, and courage he demonstrated to Walsingham, Burghley, and of course Elizabeth, as on the tacit self-portrait of an English gentleman who happened to be in

¹ Gascoigne [anonymously], *The Spoyle of Antwerpe* (London: Richard Jones, 1576), sig. A2. The pamphlet is included by Cunliffe, pp. 586-99; quotation from p. 590.

Antwerp which emerges in the narrative.

The anonymous pamphlet entitled *The Spoyle of Antwerpe* was published late in November 1576. Its authorship was settled by Arber in 1877, when he included both the pamphlet and extracts of the supporting letters which remain in the public records.¹ Five years before, Simpson had reprinted the pamphlet as a possible source for an anonymous play, *A Larum for London*, which he attributed to Marston and Shakespeare.² Greg followed this with his edition of the play in 1913, repeating the claim that it was "based on" Gascoigne's pamphlet, though this is easily dismissed.³ Meanwhile, Cunliffe included the pamphlet in Gascoigne's *Complete Works* (vol. II, 1910), and followed this with an article in which he supported the attribution by establishing links between the *Spoyle* and Gascoigne's other works and his known movements in 1576.⁴ The received version of its publication, as formulated by Cunliffe and followed by Prouty, is as follows.⁵ After several years' manoeuvring to gain royal

¹ Edward Arber, *An English Garner, Ingatherings from our History and Literature* (Westminster: Archibald Constable, 1877), vol 8, pp. 141-63; the material was reproduced in Pollard's selected edition, *An English Garner (Tudor Tracts)* (Westminster: Archibald Constable, 1903, repr. 1964), pp. 419-49.

² R. Simpson, ed., *A Larum for London, or the Siege of Antwerp, together with The Spoyle of Antwerpe by George Gascoyne* [The School of Shakespeare, 1] (London: Longman, Green, and Co., 1872), pp. 1-4.

³ Anon., *A Larum for London, or the Siedge of Antwerpe, With the ventrous actes and valorous deeds of the lame soldier*, ed. W.W. Greg (Malone Society, 1913). Some of the characters appear in both texts, as Greg points out, but there is no Alva in Gascoigne's text, which is historically correct, since Alva left the Netherlands in 1573. In the play, however, Alva is introduced in a macabre resurrection scene, representing the continuation of his policies by his successor. None of the episodes of the play bear any resemblance to the events of Gascoigne's narrative. The only point of contact in the action of both texts is the scene of the humiliation of the English Governor, but even here they diverge radically. In the play, the Governor is brought to the Spanish captain, where Gascoigne makes much of the fact that the Governor and merchants are attacked inside the English House.

⁴ J.W. Cunliffe, "The Spoyle of Antwerpe (1576)", *MLR*, 6 (1911), 88-92.

⁵ Prouty, pp. 93-97. He refers mistakenly to "Dr. Cunliffe's conclusive attribution", p. 93.

employment, Gascoigne was taken on by Burghley as an "intelligencer" and was sent to Paris and then Antwerp in October 1576. Having witnessed the sack of Antwerp he returned to London on 21 November, carrying letters from the English Merchant Adventurers. Gascoigne made his report to the Privy Council, then in the same month his account was published by Richard Jones. Cunliffe suggests that the pamphlet is "substantially Gascoigne's report to the Privy Council", and Prouty believes that the written account and the verbal report would have been identical, though this seems fanciful given the aesthetic ordering of events which it reveals.¹ The haste with which the account was published - and the fact that it is marked "Seene and allowed" - suggests that this was the official version of events, published to counter "thextreme surmises of sundry doubtfull mindes" (p. 590), as the anonymous narrator has it. It appeared originally with a "Modell" or annotated map, though this is missing from both the Bodleian and the British Museum copies.²

The sack of Antwerp was undoubtedly of great political importance in the ongoing wars in the Netherlands; its immediate impact was to precipitate the agreement of the Pacification of Ghent. The fragile unity this created marked the end of the so-called second revolt. Geoffrey Parker argues that: "The central event in the Dutch Revolt was,

¹ Cunliffe, *Works*, vol. II, p. vi; Prouty, p. 97. For the distinction between his written and verbal reports see especially Walsingham's comment in a letter to his nephew: "Books are but dead letters. It is the voice and conference of men that giveth them life, and shall engender in you true knowledge", cited by Conyers Read, in *Mr Secretary Walsingham and the Policy of Queen Elizabeth*, 3 vols (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1925), vol. I, p. 19.

² I have been unable to examine the copies in the Dyce Collection and in the collection of the Duke of Devonshire.

after the capture of the Brill in 1572, the sack of Antwerp in 1576."¹ Antwerp had been one of England's most important links with European trade, and its merchant population was prosperous and well-established, though recent turmoil had somewhat diminished this.² There was an "English Quay", and Gascoigne stayed at "the English House", the official safe house for these merchants. It was a centre for English banking and had held the national stock of gunpowder at mid-century.³ Furthermore, Antwerp was known in its own right as "the metropolis of northern Europe".⁴ The sack of the town by mutineering Spanish troops has been estimated to have cost at least 20 million ducats. The news would have been a great shock to Protestants all over Europe, on the scale of the St. Bartholmew's Day Massacre.⁵ On Saturday 3 November, the Spanish attacked at dawn⁶ and sustained the assault (the "Spanish Fury") for several days. One thousand houses were destroyed and 8000 people died.⁷ As Parker concludes: "The holocaust at Antwerp was one of the worst atrocities of the sixteenth century".⁸ It was to become one of the centrepieces for anti-catholic propaganda for the next decade at least.

¹ Geoffrey Parker, *The Dutch Revolt* (London: Allen Lane, 1977), p. 301.

² G.D. Ramsay, *The Queen's Merchants and the Revolt of the Netherlands* (Manchester University Press, 1986), esp. pp. 50, 185. Parker estimates that most of the total exports of the Netherlands passed through Antwerp, *ibid.*, p. 27.

³ On banking and foreign loans, Beckinsale notes that "after the crisis of 1569-70, Antwerp ... was dry", in *Burghley. Tudor Statesman 1520-1598* (London: Macmillan, 1967), pp. 237-8. On gunpowder, "the main national stock was held in Antwerp and imported as required" (Ashley, *Tudor Office*, 66), cited by Jenny West in *Gunpowder, Government, and War in the mid-Eighteenth Century* (London: The Royal Historical Society/The Boydell Press, 1991), p. 10.

⁴ Parker, *ibid.*, p. 178.

⁵ The general oppression of the people by the Duke of Alva was recorded by Bruegel in his *Massacre of the Innocents* (1565-7), in which the biblical story is converted into exactly contemporary terms.

⁶ Parker, *ibid.* (p. 178), though Gascoigne has ten o'clock in the morning.

⁷ Parker, *ibid.*, p. 178. Estimates vary; Ramsay quotes Gascoigne's 5000, *ibid.*, p. 184.

⁸ Parker, *ibid.*, p. 178.

It seems clear that Gascoigne's trip to Antwerp was made at short notice, in the light of the evidence of *A Delicate Diet*. As Cunliffe pointed out, in its dedicatory epistle, Gascoigne tells Lewis Dive that "soone after Mighelmas (by Gods leave) I wyll see you", so that in the middle of August (the dedication is dated 22 August) he expected to be in England at the end of September and beginning of October.¹ Three weeks later he was in Paris. Gascoigne's presence in Antwerp was no accident, and he admits that there had long been suspicions as to Spanish intentions:

It is then to bee understoode that the sackyng & spoyle of *ANTWERPE* hath been (by all lykelyhoode) longe pretended by the Spanyerds: And that they have done nothing els but lien in wayte continually to fynde any leaste quarrell the put y^e same in execution. (p. 590)

Alva's successor, Luis de Requesens, had died in March and the situation deteriorated rapidly.² The mutiny at the beginning of November was the most dramatic to date of a series of risings by the unpaid Spanish troops, the most recent of which had been in July.³ With the situation worsening, the States-General decided to issue an edict on 22 September, outlawing the mutineers but extending this to all Spanish soldiers, who could now be shot on sight.⁴

It is extremely ironic that there should be more documentary evidence about Gascoigne's secret mission than about any other short episode in his life. This is mainly external corroborative evidence, so that this anonymous text is easier to attribute than,

¹ Cunliffe, "Spoyle", p. 89.

² Ramsay, *ibid.*, p. 183.

³ Parker, *ibid.*, p. 172.

⁴ Parker, *ibid.*, p. 177.

for example, the *Noble Arte*. It is possible to piece together an extraordinarily detailed schedule of his movements over those few weeks:

- Sept. 15: Gascoigne writes to Burghley from Paris declaring his sense of impending crisis¹
- Oct. 7: Gascoigne writes to Burghley from Paris declaring his intention to travel to Flanders the next day²
- Oct. 13: Ambassador Paulet notes that "Gascoigne has departed towards Flaunders"³
- Oct. ?22: Gascoigne arrives at Antwerp⁴
- Nov. 3: Spanish attack the town; the "Spanish fury" lasts for several days
- Nov. 10: Thomas Heton, Governor of the English Merchants, writes two letters from Antwerp to Burghley and the Privy Council (the latter commending Gascoigne's assistance)⁵
- Nov. 12: Gascoigne leaves Antwerp for England⁶
- Nov. 21: Gascoigne arrives in London, reports to Walsingham at Hampton Court and passes on letters including Heton's,⁷ and is paid⁸
- Nov. 25: Gascoigne completes his written account⁹ and it is published before end of the month

It is not possible to assess how strict a commission Gascoigne's was; he clearly had instructions to be in Paris, but on the evidence of the first letter his decision to go on to

¹ PRO *S.P. For.*, Eliz., 70/139, fol. 169.

² PRO *S.P. For.*, Eliz., 70/140, fol. 23.

³ Letter from Ambassador Sir Amyas Paulet to Elizabeth, in PRO *S.P. For.*, 70/140, fols. 182-89.

⁴ In his account he mentions the arrival of the States' forces on "the third" and says: "At this time and .xxii. dayes beefore I was in the sayde towne of *Antwerpe* upon certeine private affaires of myne owne" (p. 592).

⁵ PRO *S.P. For.*, 70/140, 189, 191; extracts in *Cal. S.P. For.*, Nos. 1009 (10 Nov), 1010 (?10 Nov).

⁶ According to his own account, p. 599.

⁷ Walsingham's journal records "Wendnesdaie 21. Mr Gascoigne came out of the Low Countries with lettres", in *The Journal of Sir Francis Walsingham*, ed. C.T. Martin [Camden Miscellany, VI] (Camden Society, 1870), p. 29.

⁸ "Paid uppon a warrant signed by Mr. Secretarie Walsingham dated at Hampton Court xxi^o Novembre 1576 to George Gascoigne gent. for bringinge of Lettres in post for her Majesties affaires from Andwarpe to Hampton Courte, xx^{li}." In extracts from Office Books of the Treasurers of the Chamber prefixed to *Extracts from the Accounts of the Revels at Court, in the Reigns of Queen Elizabeth and King James I*, ed. Peter Cunningham (London: Shakespeare Society, 1842), p. xxxi.

⁹ The pamphlet is dated "the .xxv. day of *November*. 1576" (p. 599).

Antwerp was a recent one. He may have gone on his own initiative, or have had orders to do so, or orders may have arrived between the dates of his two letters. He seems to have dealt directly not with Burghley but with Walsingham, as in both letters he refers Burghley to him. Gascoigne may have had no direct contact with Burghley.¹ It was probably Walsingham who briefed him; it was certainly Walsingham who debriefed him and paid him his reward. Gascoigne's reward of 20 pounds may be compared to those payments recorded in the Declared Accounts of the Lord Treasurer of the Chamber and Master of the Posts.² Of two lists of payments to messengers recorded there, one shows payments to messengers-extraordinary, including Robert Poley, who were employed on delicate affairs, and the shorter list shows payments to regular messengers. (Twelve of Poley's twenty-six trips were to the Netherlands and his payment ranged from 6 to 30 pounds.) Significantly, Walsingham seems not to have had an established intelligence contact at Antwerp.³ But in addition to his mission, Gascoigne either requested permission or was instructed to publish an account of it. His account would have been the first on the booksellers' stalls, although the siege was to be the subject of many pamphlets.⁴

It is highly probable that Gascoigne had already had some experience as an

¹ Marlowe is similarly recorded as one of Burghley's couriers in *S.P. Dom.* (Addenda, 1580-1625), p. 217.

² See Eugenie de Kalb, "Robert Poley's Movements as a Messenger of the Court", *RES*, 9 (1933), 13-18.

³ See "Walsingham's Sources of Intelligence, c. 1580-90", Appendix III in Lawrence Stone, *An Elizabethan. Sir Horatio Palavicino* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1956), pp. 323-4.

⁴ S.M. Pratt notes the "genre of alarm" it inspired, citing three ballads in the Stationers' Register which definitely refer to the 1576 mutiny at Antwerp (and a fourth with an uncertain date), in "Antwerp and the Elizabethan Mind", *MLN*, 24 (1963), 53-60, p. 54n.

"intelligencer" during his previous period in the Low Countries.¹ In the "Voyage into Holland" (77), he promised intelligence from Holland to its dedicatee, Lord Grey:

And I shall well my seelly selfe content,
To come alone unto my lovely Lorde,
And unto him (when riming sport is spent)
To tell some sadde and reasonable worde,
Of *Hollands* state, the which I will present,
In Cartes, in Mappes, and eke in Modells made,
If God of heaven my purpose not prevent. (p. 328)

In the absence of any evidence, it is to be hoped that his maps and models were more accurate than the one produced for the *Spoyle of Antwerpe*. As early as 1572, then, there is definite evidence of Gascoigne providing a verbal report (informally at least) to Lord Grey; the verbal report is apparently more important than the poem ("riming sport").² Furthermore, in "*Dulce bellum inexpertis*" it is possible that Gascoigne also refers to some form of intelligencing for William of Orange.³ There is a period of several weeks unaccounted for in the narrative sequence: in stanza 99, he refers to a period of roaming about,

Where good *Guylam* of *Nassau* badde me be,
There needed I none other guyde but he (p. 418)

There is also, in this poem, the general suspicion surrounding Gascoigne: his alleged affair with a lady in the Hague, which involved the carrying of a letter, and the suspicion of his men because of his generous treatment during his four-month imprisonment.⁴

¹ See my Introduction.

² This poem also exposes Gascoigne's low regard for the Dutch.

³ See my Introduction.

⁴ For the letter, see stanzas 122-8 (pp. 422-3), and for the suspicions surrounding his imprisonment see stanzas 183-8 (pp. 433-4). See also my Introduction.

Gascoigne's Letters to Burghley.

Gascoigne's two letters to Burghley, both from Paris, are dated 15 September and 7 October 1576.¹ The first letter is the result of his observations of French preparations against the Low Countries, and does indeed contain useful intelligence:²

there remayne yett att Challon yn Champaigne, xxv^{ti} Cornettes of Rytters³ w^{ch} the Duke Cassimire brought ynto these partes/ the Duke of Montmorancye, and Anyvers wth Mons. de Sourie (the K. mynyounes and sundrye other gentlemen (to the noombre of 500 the bravest soldyers yn france well apoynted) remayne yn the lower partes of germanye/⁴

Gascoigne hazards an assessment of the political situation, with a forecast of the next move:

my judgement ys unworthy to be delyvred unto yo^r L:/ butt I dare assure yo^r honor thatt the K. and his brother, are frendes ex intimo corde/ yea and that there passeth presently from them both a messenger (or ambassador) or Emyssarye) [sic] towardses Germanye for the levyes of a power/the name of the partye, together wth the circumstances, how I know ytt, & whatt yo^w purposed, shalbe better delyvred when I retorne///

It is clear that Gascoigne's original commission was not only to stay in Paris and observe: he had been en route to the Guise's court at Tours when he heard of the latest developments. It is evident that the trip was loosely planned, with an agenda to observe but to travel about as necessary:

somme extraordynarye yntelligence of this occurente have caused me to depart from Eleannie where I was in my iorney towardses Monsieurs Cowrt at Towres butt now I meane to become an eyed witnessse of the styr^re yn flaundes/ and

¹ W.W. Greg publishes reproductions and transcripts of extracts in *English Literary Autographs 1550-1650, Part 2, Poets* (Oxford University Press, 1925), Plate XXXVII, noting that "by 12 October he had departed towards Flanders, and his name appears as English ambassador to the Netherlands", though he gives no source.

² PRO S.P. For., Eliz., 70/139, fol. 169. Noted by Arber, Greg, Prouty, and Cunliffe.

³ Reiters, German foot-soldiers.

⁴ The Netherlands.

from thence yo^r hono^r shall shortely (god wylling) here of me/

Gascoigne's excitement is also evident; indeed it is almost palpable as he concludes:

I humbly beseche yo^r hono^r to *pardone* my haste/ for I wryte att mydnyght
beyng returned butt this afternoone/ att par^rys the xvth of septembre 1576

These lines, in the extant letter, record his excitement as much as the difficulty of writing quickly with a quill pen by candlelight. The letter includes two breathless postscripts:

maye I beseche yo^r L: to make m^r Secretarye acqueynted wth this my good wyll
to dyscharge my dewtye/ & thatt yn consyderacon of my great haste & lyttle
meane to *performe desyre*/

Desire, the key word from Kenilworth, recurs here as a euphemism for his covert mission. It is evident that, although he had to report to Burghley, Gascoigne wanted his progress conveyed to Walsingham. He concludes with what may seem a casual observation:

Wyne must needes be exessive deare this yeare/ theyr vyneyeardes are destroyed
wth froste & hayle/

But the seemingly casual postscript is probably a coded message. Charles Nicholl, describing how "much intelligence travelled in the expectation of being discovered", notes that "a letter to Sir Robert Cecil in 1591 about a cargo of wines - their vintage, their prices, their readiness for export - is actually a coded report on the disposition and intentions of the Spanish fleet".¹ Similarly, Nicholl notes one Michael Moody (using the alias "Bar: Riche") writing to Robert Poley about "brawn, sturgeon and oysters", which

¹ Nicholl, *ibid.*, p. 105.

were staple imports from Holland, just as wine was from France.¹

The second letter, also addressed to Burghley, is dated 7 October.² Gascoigne first describes the movements of the King and his "Rytters", but hints at intriguing issues as to the financing of the levy:

his Rytters marche and are allreddy beyond Verdune w^{ch} is the dyrect waye towardes the Lowe Contreys/ the moonye w^{ch} was bestowed to make them marche, was bestowed upon credytt/ and I dare assure yo^r honor thatt the Duke of Arskotts agent was one of those w^{ch} became correspondent/ the sayd agent is yesterdaye departed hence yn poste upon a greate sodeyne havynge lyen yn this howse where I host/ more than twelve monethes past/ his secretarye (w^{ch} doth yett remayne here) seemeth to be much perplexed yn such sorte thatt I feare somewhatt be amysse on thatt syde/

Clearly, Gascoigne was very well placed in Paris to observe the movements of this agent and his secretary, and it is reasonable to assume that sharing lodgings with them would have given him an insight into their concerns. He then lists the movements of the King and the dukes of Nevers and Guise, concluding:

these thynges layd together enbolden me to delyver all likelyhoode but yo^r L:/ whereof I trust shortely to understand more/ for to morwe (god wyllinge) I go towardes the lowe contreys/ and meane to spend a moneth, two, or three, (as yo^r honor shall lyke) in those partes/

While there is no mention of the reason for Gascoigne's delay it is plain that he had waited for three weeks until he wrote again; long enough for some return to be made from London, although the tone of the letter does not suggest a reply.

Finally, Gascoigne returns to more familiar and mundane concerns:

¹ Nicholl, *ibid.*, p. 251.

² PRO S.P. For., Eliz., 70/140, fol. 23, also noted by Arber, Greg, Prouty, and Cunliffe.

I have a matter dependyng in the Court of Wards before yo^r honor concerning an accompt for Brettons landes I humbly beseche yo^r honor^s favor theryn for staye of processe until my retorne/ for I meane to spend this wynter (or as long as shalbe thought meete) yn service of my cuntrye/

As in the previous letter, he adds a request to Burghley to refer to Walsingham, this time revealing that there may have been some contingency plan worked out with him before his departure:

I beseche yo^r hono^r to confer^re wth Mr Secretarye who can more att large make yo^w pryvye to myne entent/

Although Gascoigne declares his intention to leave the following day, 8 October, the next corroborative evidence is the letter from Ambassador Paulet to Walsingham, dated 12 October, when he confirms that Gascoigne had left for the Low Countries; from the dates in his account, however, he did not arrive until about 22 October.

The Spoyle of Antwerpe.

Although Gascoigne claims that his is a "true report" (p. 590), its accuracy is severely compromised by the list of "Faultes escaped, to be considered of the Readers: and to be amended, as followeth", which effectively reverses many of the directions given in the text, for example: "for West or Southwest: reade, Easte or Southeaste."¹ Similarly, the accuracy of the "Modell" (the missing map) is undermined by the note at the foot of the short preface, "To the Reader". This also reverses what would seem to be the most obviously "factual" element of the information given:

that the trowpe of Almaynes by the ryvers side, should be footemen. And also that the trowpe next the windemyl should be horsemen. (p. 589)

¹ There are four examples of this kind of reversal, which might be due to haste in printing or be designed to confuse.

The list of corrections pre-empts (and undermines) the claim made of the "Modell", "by view wherof y^e skilfull reader may playnly perceive the execution of every perticularitie" (p. 592).

With even its most apparently factual material compromised before the reader approaches the text, the narrative itself opens with a number of strategies by which Gascoigne (who was of course anonymous) tries to establish his impartiality. He implies that his presence in Antwerp in time for the siege was entirely coincidental: "*Since my hap was to bee present at so pitteous a spectacle...*" (p. 590, my italics).¹ Gascoigne offers his text as both factual ("a true report", "a meane truth") and exemplary (a "profitable example"), a characteristic of news pamphlets at this time.² That he chose to designate the siege a "spectacle" is also of interest, since it places the account in some relation to the popular pamphlets describing wonders and spectacles.³ But it can be seen as a news pamphlet, especially because of the speed of its publication.⁴

The anonymous text claims authority by the writer's presence at the events it describes:

"The Spoyle of Antwerpe. *Faithfully reported, by a true Englishman, who was present*

¹ In the text, the italicised phrase is given in large roman type for emphasis, against black letter.

² Sandra Clark, *The Elizabethan Pamphleteers, Popular Moralistic Pamphlets 1580-1640* (London: Athlone Press, 1983), esp. pp. 89-95.

³ Franco Moretti discusses a number of Elizabethan texts in context of this genre in *Signs Taken for Wonders. Essays in the Sociology of Literary Form* (London, New York: Verso, rev.ed., 1988).

⁴ As Clark notes, "many books of news were entered in the *Stationers' Register* within two or three days of the occurrence of the event", *ibid.*, p. 88.

at the same." It opens with the claim that "I have thought good for the benefit of my countrie, to publish a true report thereof" (p. 590). This is followed by a claim for the value of the episode as a moral example and for its narrator's impartial reportage:

The which may aswel serve for profitable example unto all estates of sutch condicion as suffred in the same: as also, answer all honest expectations with a meane truthe, set downe beetween thextreme surmises of sundry doubtfull mindes (p. 590)

The narrative proceeds with mention of both "the wickednesse used in the sayde towne" as "a sufficient cause of Gods so just scorge and plague", and "the furie of the vanquishers" as being "more barbarous and cruell, then may become a good christian conquerour", confirming the sense of the truth as a "meane", set down between extremes. Despite his claim, "protestyng that neither mallice to the one syde, nor parciall affection to the other, shall make my pen to swarve any jote from truth of that which I will set down & saw executed", the writer's bias is cleverly submerged in increasingly emotive claims of impartiality:

For if I were disposed to write maliciously agaynst the vanquishers: their former barbarous cruelty, insolences, Rapes, spoyles, Incests, and Sacriledges, committed in sundrie other places, might yeeld mee sufficiente matter without the lawful remembrance of this their late stratageme: or if I would undertake to moove a generall compassion, by blazyng abroad the miseries and callamities of the vanquished: theyr longe susteyned injuries and yokes of untollerable bondage: theyr continual broyles in warre: their doubtful dreads in peace: theyr accusations without cause: and contempnations without prooffe: might enable a dome stone to talke of their troubles, and fetche brinysh teares out of the most craggy rocke: to lament and bewaile the burning houses of so neare neighbours. But as I sayd before, mine onely intent is to set downe a plaine truthe ...
(p. 590)

The telling of this truth involves delving initially into the events leading up to the

assault:

to make the matter more perspicuous, I must derive the beeginnyng of this discourse a litle beeyond the beeginnyng of the massacre:

That the cause beyng partly opened, the effect may bee the more playnly seene.

The Spanish are presented as having long intended to attack the town, and having "done nothing els but lien in wayte continually to fynde any leaste quarrell to put y^e same in execution", with their "mallicious and cruell intente" smouldering:

And though it were then smoothly colloured over, and subtilly appeased, by y^e craftie devisers of the same, yet the coles of their choller beyng but raked up in the Imbers of false semblance, have now founde out the wicked windes of wilnesse & wrath: Whiche meetynge together have kindled sutch a flame, as gave open way to theyr detestable devices. (pp. 590-91)

The reluctance of the Antwerp burghers to enter into a martial action is adduced as infuriating the Spaniards so that they fired on the town "and slew certayne innocent soules" (p. 591) on the 19 or 20 October, "Thinking thereby to harden y^e harts of the poore Flemynge, and to make them take [Armes] for theyr just defence."¹ Evading the issue of the length of time between these warning shots and the full attack on the 4 November, when the citizen's barricades were almost complete, the writer's stance shifts again as:

to answeere all objections, I doubt not but it wilbee alledged, that the Castle beestowed the said Canon shot at y^e Towne, because they of the Towne did not shote at the prince of Orenge's Shippes, which lay within syght thereof: But alas it is easy to finde a staffe, when a man woulde beate a dogge.

Neglecting entirely the issue of how provocative such relief to the besieged town would be to its occupying force, he declares that "those Ships did no greater hurt, either to y^e

¹ The text reads "take Caves", but it is corrected in the list of faults (p. 588).

Towne or Castle, then frendly to waft up al maner of Grayne and victualles, for the sustenance of y^e said towne: which even then began to want sutch provision", although he does admit that the blockade imposed by the Spaniards was designed "to the intent y^t *ANTWERPE* might lack provision".¹ He also cites the destruction of a bridge as "A manifeste prooffe of their playne intent to distresse y^e sayd town", but adduces the sack of Maastricht as another example of a town which had not taken part in the wars but had been attacked nonetheless.² Having established the analogy with Maastricht, Gascoigne describes how:

The cheife rulers and people of *Antwerpe* perceiving therby the cruell entent of the Spanyerdes, and doubtinge their Dutche garyson which was of the Counte *Eversteines* regiment (as they were also which betrayed *Maestricht*,) began to abandon the towne, leavyng their houses & goods beehinde them: and sought to withdraw themselves into some place of safer abode. (p. 591)

The flight of the burghers is adduced as the catalyst for the gathering of the States' forces to defend the town. The letter from Thomas Heton, Governor of the English Merchant Adventurers, makes it clear that there was ample warning, and that the merchants' mistake was in trusting to the immunity agreed at diplomatic level.³ This has some bearing on the presentation later in the account of the English merchants being taken by surprise. Those Englishmen who remained must have been especially

¹ The blockade had, from Burghley's point of view, "fouled relations" with both William of Orange and Requesens; see Beckinsale, *ibid.*, p. 138.

² In this respect, the woodcut which appears on the verso of the final leaf of the quarto is significant. Representing Lucrecia at the moment of her suicide, it clearly suggests how Antwerp should be seen, as heroic victim ("spoyle" and "rape" were synonymous). Done for Thomas Berthelet, the woodcut would have been in Richard Jones's stock. It would have been one of the most conspicuous aspects of the unbound book on the bookseller's stall.

³ "Seeing the danger in this towne of Antwerp *such of their society as are here remaining* purposed to have in due time removed both their persons and their goods, but were not suffered to pass out of the town, although they sundry times required to have passport according to the Intercourse and safe conduct" (my italics, spelling modernized), in *PRO S.P. For.*, 70/140, fol. 191.

tenacious, even if they believed themselves immune from direct attack.

Gascoigne then goes into some detail about the defending forces and their commanders, and the entry of the defenders into the town on the third of November, where they built barricades in the five streets which opened onto the castle yard (see Fig. 12). He claims to have witnessed these preparations, which were made "with sutch expedicion that in lesse then fyve howers, those streetes endes, were all reasonably well fortified from the Castle for any sodaine" (p. 592). The Spaniards, meanwhile, had gathered their forces from Maastricht, Liere, and Aelst. On Sunday, 4 November, five thousand Spanish troops gathered at the castle yard. Gascoigne admits that he did not know their leader, but:

Neverthesse I have ben so bould in y^e Model as to set downe the sayd *Dom Emanuell* for their leder: bothe because I think that (their mewtiny notwithstanding) he led them at y^e exployte, and also because, he was slayn amongst them at their entrie. (pp. 592-93)

This hedging kind of certainty is also evident in the prefatory letter "To the Reader", where the author admits that of the five or six hundred Spanish casualties,

I hearde no man of name recoumpted, saving onely, *Dom Emanuell*. Thus muche (for haste) I had forgotten in the treatye, and therefore thought meete to place it here in the beginning: and therewithall to advertise thee, that these outrages and disordered cruelties done to our nation, proceeded but from the common Souldiers: neither was there any of the twelve whiche entred the englishe house, a man of any charge or reputacion. (p. 589)

This seems to be a diplomatic solution to the problem of apportioning blame: if Don Emmanuel was slain at the entry, then he cannot have directed the furious attack on the citizenry, and Gascoigne is especially careful to exempt the Spanish officers from any

responsibility for the attack on the English House. This would seem to be in line with his declared wish in the same prefatory epistle that:

(these extremities notwithstanding) the king, their Maister, will take such good order for redresse thereof, as our countrymen in the end, shall rest satisfied with reason, and the amytie betweene our moste gracious Soveraigne and him, shal remain also firme & inviolate ... (p. 589)

The pronounced anti-Catholic bias in the text is therefore concealed behind the pious hope for peace, as well as by the claims to evenhandedness which open the narrative.

It is not until some way into his account that Gascoigne admits that he "did not see" the order of entry into the Castle of the troops,

Yet as I heard it rehearsed by sundry of them selves, I wil also here rehearse it for a truth (p. 593)

This raises questions of authority and accuracy; is this the eyewitness account it purports to be or is it hearsay? The description of the attacks and manoeuvres which follows is clearly mostly the latter. It may be alleged that this is good news-gathering, but it could also have strategic advantages, given the political sensitivity of the material. Gascoigne's attitude to what may be termed "siege literature" could also be noted: in 1572 he had written the "Devise of a Maske for Viscount Mountacute", in which a young Venetian boy claims to be an eyewitness of the siege of Famagusta. Robert Ralston Cawley has identified the source of this account as a translation by one William Malim of an Italian original.¹ The original was indeed an eyewitness account, written by a Venetian, Count Nestore Martinengo, who had been captured by the Turks

¹ Robert Ralston Cawley, "George Gascoigne and the Siege of Famagusta", *MLN*, 18 (1928), 296-300.
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and enslaved but managed to escape.¹ It was translated into English and French the same year, though the German translation has no date. The English translation was printed by John Day in 1572.² What is significant here is that Gascoigne had no reservations about appropriating a written source and placing it as an eyewitness account. This was very recent history - recent enough to be classed as "news" - but it is readily subsumed into the fiction of the masque. By contrast, Gascoigne offers accounts of the sieges of Ramykins and Middleburgh in "*Dulce bellum inexpertis*" which are actually based on his own observation. Gascoigne, like his contemporaries, would not have viewed the difference between eyewitness account and hearsay in the same way as a modern commentator.

When Gascoigne returns (or turns), eventually, to his own experience, this seems limited to what is in effect an inset narrative, the account of his excursion to the Bource from the English house during the thick of the fighting at the castle. This is signalled to the reader as a change from "credible report" to eyewitness account:

Now I have set downe the order of their entrye, approch, charge, and assault: together with their proceeding in victory: and that by credible report, both of the Spanyerdes them selves, and of others who served in their company: let me also say a litle of that which I sawe executed. (p. 594)³

But the inset narrative which represents Gascoigne's own direct experience of the siege is the most obviously fictive (or aesthetically-formed) moment in the whole account.⁴ It

¹ Count Nestore Martinengo, *L'Assedio et presa di Famagosta* (Verona, 1572).

² William Malim, *The true Report of all the successe of Famagosta* (London: John Day, 1572).

³ It is not clear why he cites the opinions of the Spanish.

⁴ Prouty quotes it in full but does not comment.

begins with a dinner at the English house at the height of the battle, which approximates the kind of set piece banquet of renaissance romance. This dinner is the preface to the inset narrative of his excursion to the Bource. The excursion was prompted by the report brought to those in the English House of a "hote scarmouche" in progress at the "Castleyard". Gascoigne went up to a "high Tower" in the house and saw a number of fires which had broken out "in fower or five places of the towne, towards the Castleyard", which confirmed that the Spanish had indeed "entred within the Trenches".¹ He took his cloak and sword and ventured out "to see the certainty thereof" (p. 594).

Although the centre of the fighting was at the castle, Gascoigne headed towards the Bource.² There were no citizens abroad, only soldiers, who "neither walked they as men which used traffique, but ran as men whiche are in feare" (p. 594). The citizens stood in their doorways "with such weapons as they had" and, as he passed, Gascoigne asked them what the fuss meant, calling encouragement to them in French. As he proceeded towards the farther side of the Bource, Gascoigne says he "might see a great trowpe comming in greater haste, with their heads as close together, as a skoule of yong frye, or a flocke of sheepe" (pp. 594-5).³ His excursion quickly degenerates into slapstick as this horde:

¹ The junction by the castle yard at which these defences would have been built is clearly visible in the street plan.

² The Bource, the money exchange, had both practical and symbolic importance in the life of Antwerp: under normal trading conditions "ten million florins might change hands" in a day. Parker, *ibid.*, p. 27.

³ The description is a kind of proto-Euphuism.

bare me over backwardes, and ran over my belly and my face, long time before I could recover on foote. At last when I was up, I looked on every syde, and seeing them ronne so fast, began thus to bethinke me. What in Gods name doe I heare which have no interest in this action? synce they who came to defend this towne are content to leave it at large, and shift for themselves: And whilest I stode thus musing, another flock of flyers came so fast that they bare me on my nose, and ran as many over my backe, as erst had marched over my guttes. In fine, I got up like a tall fellow, and wente with them for company: but their haste was such, as I could never overtake them ... (p. 595)

This comic interpolation effectively subverts the claim of this text to be non-fiction: the symmetry with which Gascoigne is run over first on his belly and then his back suggests a considerable degree of aesthetic moulding of whatever his actual experience may have been. Concealed in the slapstick humour is the only tangible clue to his identity: elsewhere, he makes much of his height, and here he cannot resist saying that he got up "like a tall fellow".¹ The long association of comedy with war in literature may be traced to the chapbook tradition, but here it presumably also offered diversionary advantages; the account is "sene and allowed" and therefore had met with official approval.²

In similar vein, the further elements of the narrative which purport to relate to Gascoigne's own direct experience are either comic or heroic and show a degree of aesthetic moulding.³ His return to the English House from the Bource was, he says, "(without vaunt be it spoken) passed through five hundred shotte". At the house, he

¹ Prouty, p. 197.

² The chapbook tradition is discussed by Margaret Spufford, in *Small Books and Pleasant Histories* (London: Methuen, 1981), esp. pp. 219ff.

³ This is rather like the presentation of his own experience in the *Noble Arte*; see Chapter II, section ii.

went to the Governor of the English Merchants, Thomas Heton (though he does not name him) and advised him to bring the merchants inside and close up the gates - at the very moment, it transpires, that the Spanish forces turned the corner into that street. Gascoigne, now in charge of the key and having shut and barred the door, answered the Spaniards through the grate but they shot at it and, of these bullets,

one came very neare my nose, and, pearcing thorowe the gate, strake one of the Marchants on the head, without any greate or daungerous hurt (p. 595)

The attack did not last at this first assault, because:

the heate of the pursute was yet such, that they could not attend the spoyle, but passed on in chase to the new towne: where they slew infinite numbers of people: And by three of the clocke, or before returned victors, having slayne or put to flight all their ennemies. And nowe to keepe promise, and to speake wythout partiality: I must needs confesse, that it was the greatest victory, and the roundlyest executed, that hath bene seene, red, or heard of, in our age... (p. 595)

There follows a considerable digression on the victory as "a thing myraculous" which might seem counter to the pamphlet's value as anti-catholic propaganda, with Gascoigne noting both the valour and good order of the Spanish as well as the lack of foresight and disorder of the defending forces. Not only were the soldiers he met on his excursion running in the wrong direction, the commanders of the States' forces also turned and fled:

To conclude, the County *de Eversteine* was drowned in the newe Towne: the Marquise *de Havrey* and *Champaigne* escaped out of the sayd new Towne, and recovered the Prince of Orenge's shippes ... I heard of none that fought stoutly, saving onely y^e said Counte *de Egmont* (pp. 595-96)

Gascoigne's attribution of the victory to "Providence" returns to the notion of the attack

as "Gods so just ... scourge" (p. 590) for the Antwerp's complacency, which became a standard criticism of the Dutch even among their sympathisers. Thomas Churchyard, in one of his two versions of the siege of Antwerp, *The Miserie of Flaunders*, describes:

The soile and wealthie seate,
where people plenty founde,
wth scarcities scourge is plagued sore,
and made a barraine grounde.¹

The unpreparedness of the town, another of Gascoigne's points, was to become another standard criticism, voiced most eloquently by Barnabe Riche in his *Allarme to England*:

If thou thinkest thy great numbers of untrained men, are sufficient to defende thee, doe but remember what happened to Antwerpe, where they wanted neither men, nor any other provision for the wars ...²

Gascoigne also turns the idea of the scourge on the Spanish, however, "for surely their boasting and bragging of iniquitie, is over great to escape long unskorged" (p. 597).

The digression on the Spanish victory moves seamlessly into a heavily structured passage in which Gascoigne recounts the casualties of the running battle. He begins to detail the cruelty of the Spanish, saying:

These things I rehearce (the rather) because they neither spared age, nor sexe:
time nor place: rich nor poore: person nor countrie ...

What follows is a comprehensive series of oppositions, which concludes:

I refrayne to rehearce the heapes of deade Carcases whiche laye at every Trench

¹ Thomas Churchyard, *The Miserie of Flaunders* (1579), sig. A2.

² Barnabe Riche, *Allarme to England* (1578), p. 41. Riche's central theme, to which he continually returns, is that "where Mars is had in no accompt, no state may long endure", which he uses to offer a warning to England, the "Allarme" of the title. Similarly, the overriding function of the play *A Larum for London* is to provide a warning to London for its complacency. On balance, there seems to be a close resemblance between the stated functions of Riche's text and the play, but no relation between the play and Gascoigne's text, even if it was one of Riche's sources for the material on Antwerp.

where they entred: the thickness whereof, did in many places exceede the height of a man.

The following passage is structured by a series of variations on this key phrase in a fine example of *occupatio*, which provides a pretext for including gory detail: "I forbear also to recount", "I list not to reckon", "I set not downe", "neither doo I complaine", "why should I describe", concluding with another reversal which also allows him to record sensational detail: "But I may not passe over with sylence, the wylfull burning and destroying of the stately Townehouse..." (p. 597). As a rhetorical structure for the description of atrocities, it is extremely effective.¹

The narrative's return to the entry of the Spanish into the English House is prefaced by a short paragraph on its special status as a refuge for English merchants:

We were quiet in the house appointed for the mansion of English Marchaunts, under safe conduct, protection and Placard of their King: having neither medled any waye in these actions, nor by any meanes assisted the estats of the countrey with money, munition, or any kinde of ayde. Yea the Governor and Marchauntes (foreseeing the daunger of the tyme) had often demaunded pasporte of the Kinges governours and officers to depart. (p. 598)

As noted above, it seems likely that it was only the most tenacious of the merchants who remained so long, probably being reluctant to give up their business. The return to the eyewitness account is signalled by this defence, and the abrupt shift back to the narrative in progress:

And all these with sundrie other allegations, wee propounded and protested unto them before they entered the English house ...

¹ A.B. Feldman praises the account for its "utmost tact" and says "There were no excoriations for their crimes", in "Playrights and Pike-Trailers in the Low Countries", *N&Q*, 198 (1953), 184-7, p. 184.
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Despite these verbal defences, the Spanish threatened to fire the house and so were admitted, whereupon they demanded from the Governor a ransom of twelve thousand crowns. The demand was accompanied by threats to the Governor personally, which provided the occasion for further heroic intervention by Gascoigne:

they spared not with naked swordes and daggers to menace the sayde Governour, and violently to present him death because he had not that wherewith to content theyr greedie mindes. I wyll not boast of any helpe afforded by me in that distresse: but I thanke the Lorde God, who made mee an instrument to appease their devillish furies. And I thinke that the Governour and al the company wyll confesse that I used mine uttermost skylle and ayde for the safegarde of theyr lyves, aswell as mine owne. (p. 598)

As Cunliffe notes, Gascoigne does indeed seem to have been of assistance to the Governor, Thomas Heton, who concludes his letter: "The discourse of these tragedies we omit, and refer the same to be reported to your Lordships by this bringer, Master George Gascon; whose humanity, in this time of trouble, we, for our parts, have experimented".¹ Despite the possibility that Gascoigne may have inflated his role in protecting the Governor, he evidently acquitted himself well in what must have been difficult circumstances.

For lack of a ransom, the English were still held as Gascoigne prepared his account for publication. As he says, the Spanish were: "Keeping the sayd Governor & Marchaunts there styl (withoute grante of passeport or safe-conducte" (p. 598). Somehow, he had been able to leave:

In these distresses I lefte them the twelfth of this instant November 1576. when I parted from them, not as one who was hastie to leave and abandone them in

¹ Cunliffe, p. vi; the original is PRO *S.P. For.*, 70/140, fol. 191.

such miserye, but to solycite their ruefull causes here... (p. 599)

How Gascoigne managed to leave the turbulent and besieged town is unclear, though it is plain that he had some secret means of escape, just as he had in "*Dulce bellum imexpertis*".¹ The account concludes: "Wrytten the .xxv. daye of *November*. 1576. by a true English man, who was present at this pytteous massacre. *Ut supra*" (p. 599). It was only thirteen days since Gascoigne's departure from Antwerp, and four days since his arrival in London, so that this was indeed "hot copy". It was entered in the Stationers' Register on the next day, so only five days elapsed between its composition and its printing. The claim of haste in the prefatory letter is obviously genuine, and may account for some of the inaccuracies produced in the printing, though the suspicion remains that some degree of obfuscation was a tactical necessity.

Gascoigne's successful completion of his mission would have been his best recommendation, as he would surely have realized: to please Walsingham, Burghley, and Elizabeth would best serve his quest for preferment. He is, then, at his most restrained in this pamphlet, preserving the tacit self-presentation as a brave English gentleman who happened to be in Antwerp in time to help the English merchants. He had already demonstrated his skill with languages in the *Hemetes* manuscript; had demonstrated his memory, his initiative, and his mastery of courtly indirection at Kenilworth; and had now shown himself capable of fulfilling a loosely-defined mission

¹ See my Introduction.

to observe events and carry letters.¹ While he was creating a plausible self-presentation in print as a moralistic writer, Gascoigne had been building on the opportunities created by his woodland personae to generate an alternative self-presentation as a potentially useful servant for courtly and state affairs. His physical vigour is evident in the journeys he undertook and the energy he displayed in Antwerp; clearly, his recent illness had not been serious, and he could anticipate further advancement based on the success of this mission. The *Spoyle* is perhaps the definitive exemplar of Gascoigne's motto, "*Tam Marti, quam Mercurio*": like the *Noble Arte*, this text displays the practical skills and and physical vigour of the writer. That the mission also drew on his linguistic skills and demonstrated his courage and resourcefulness would also have been a great recommendation of his now proven usefulness to those at the centre of power. His fortunes were at last in the ascendant, and his confidence is apparent in the New Year gifts he prepared for presentation at court in the winter of 1576/7.

¹ Memory was a useful skill for a courier: one James Painter, the Paris post, is thought to have memorized his messages and it is assumed he dabbled in espionage; see Alan Haynes, *Invisible Power: The Elizabethan Secret Services 1570-1603* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1992), p. 18.

Chapter IV. 1 January 1577: New Year Gifts.

(i) *The Grief of Joye.*

*Of curtesie, yet pardone hym which clymes,
To purchase praise, although, he fynd but skornes¹*

The presentation manuscript which Gascoigne prepared for Elizabeth's New Year gift on 1 January 1577, the *Grief of Joye*, is his last known literary production.² For a second year he could join in the exchange of gifts at court, this time with a successful intelligence mission behind him: he had proven his usefulness and this would have been well known to the Queen through Burghley and Walsingham. With this work and his presentation letter to Sir Nicholas Bacon this New Year, Gascoigne returns to his petitioning for further advancement.³ But where the letter betrays an anxious tone, despite advertising his recent royal service, his gift to Elizabeth is marked by its confidence in her favour.

Often considered a moralistic work, the *Grief of Joye* has gained this reputation largely by association with its declared source.⁴ Gascoigne claims in the dedicatory epistle that

¹ *Grief of Joye* (1,5), p. 518. All page references are to Cunliffe but references within the songs are given as "song, stanza" (1,5 = song 1, stanza 5).

² Unless there is some lost work in manuscript or anonymously in print; his last named entry in the *Stationers' Register* is *A Delicate Diet*, though his last known printed work is the *Spoyle of Antwerpe*.

³ See next section.

⁴ Prouty argues that "A complete list of his moral writings would include the *Grief of Joye*", p. 241; similarly, Rosenberg considers it "a didactic text", *ibid.*, p. 172.

it is modelled on Petrarch's *De remediis utriusque fortunae*, although he is evasive about the precise relation of his text to its supposed model:

Towching the *Methode* and *Invention*, even as *Petrark* in his workes *De remediis utriusque fortunae*, dothe recoumpt the uncerteine Joyes of men in severall dialogues, so have I in thes *Elegies* distributed the same into sundrie songes (p. 514)

Gascoigne actually claims no more than that he has taken one aspect of Petrarch's theme and "distributed" it into songs, which may suggest the kind of evasion used in the revision of *A Hundreth* as the *Posies*, with its emphasis on reorganization. But there is little doubt that it is couched to suggest a closer relation, structured as it is by the "even as ... so have I" clause. Despite including the *Grief of Joye* among the moralistic works, Prouty suggested that it is only very loosely related to the Petrarch it claims to be modelled on.¹ Robert Coogan challenged Prouty's view, approaching Gascoigne's text as a kind of scattered paraphrase, and went on in a later article to identify some of the parallels between the *De Remediis* and the *Grief of Joye*.² But there is so little formal similarity between the two texts - a complete lack of structural parallels - that the *Grief of Joye* can be considered as an extremely loose adaptation of some of Petrarch's themes, with scattered interpolations from his source, such as the inset

¹ "Actually Gascoigne's only indebtedness to Petrarch is the idea of a literary treatment of the vanity of all things mortal and the subject of each of his songs," Prouty, p. 264.

² "In stanzas fifteen through thirty-four, Gascoigne paraphrases the major points of *De aetate florida*, *De remediis* (I,i) ... [his] remaining three poems employ dialogues ii, v, xxiii, xxiiii, xv, xvi, xxix, and xxx of the *De remediis* in the same way as his first poem paraphrases dialogue i." Robert Coogan, "Petrarch's Latin Prose and the English Renaissance", *SP*, 68 (1971), 270-85, at p. 285. He developed this in "Petrarch's *De Remediis* and Gascoigne's *Grief of Joye*", in *Elizabethan Miscellany 3*, ed. James Hogg (Salzburg: Institut für Anglistik und Amerikanistik, University of Salzburg, 1981), pp. 32-46, where he gives a detailed analysis of the relationship between parts of the Petrarch and parts of the First Song, concluding that "Gascoigne had at hand the *De Remediis* or notes derived from it when he wrote the argument in his poem", at p. 41.

exemplum of the two young men condemned to death which occurs here in the First Song (1,18).¹

Generically, too, the relationship to Petrarch's text is tenuous at best: Gascoigne offers not a dialogue, but four songs, recalling Cooper's definition of *Elegia* as a "lamentable song".² The *Grief of Joye* is barely in the tradition of *Consolatio*, thematically or formally. Furthermore, its predominant lightness of tone makes it difficult to align with *contemptus mundi* literature. Once again, Gascoigne sets up generic expectations only to subvert them. Of all Petrarch's works, the reputation of the *De remediis* was the longest established in England. It is extant in one fourteenth- and 15 fifteenth-century manuscripts.³ It was exceptionally popular in print also, with four independent editions between 1474 and 1515 as well as its inclusion in the *Opera*.⁴ Although it is not clear whether Chaucer knew it, Lydgate mentions it.⁵ Gascoigne evidently selected the best-known of all Petrarch's Latin works to appropriate its credibility as a moral work for his far more courtly enterprise.⁶ For what Gascoigne offers is not the Stoicism of

¹ Coogan identifies Gascoigne's specific debts to his source in "Petrarch's *De Remediis*", pp. 37-44.

² See the *Complaynte of Phylomene*, which Gascoigne also designates an elegy; Chapter III, section ii.

³ For evidence of manuscripts of the *De Remediis* see F.N.M. Diekstra, ed., *A Dialogue between Reason and Adversity: A Late Middle English Version of Petrarch's "De Remediis"* (Assen: Van Gorcum & Co., 1968), pp. 25-8.

⁴ Coogan, "Petrarch's Latin Prose", p. 272.

⁵ "Francis Petrark, off Florence the cite/ made a book, as I can rehearse,/ Off too Fortunys, welful and perverse," John Lydgate, *The Fall of Princes*, ed. Henry Bergen, (4 vols; London, 1924), vol. I, p. 8 (noted by Coogan, who also lists a series of adaptations and imitations, in "Petrarch's Latin Prose", p. 276). Diekstra also notes Lydgate's apparent familiarity with it but says this appears to be superficial, *ibid.*, p. 28.

⁶ Coogan notes "the exceptional popularity of the *De Remediis*", in "Petrarch's Latin Prose", p. 272, citing Willard Fiske's study, "Francis Petrarch's Treatise *De remediis utriusque fortunae*: Text and Versions", *Bibliographical Notices*, 3 (1888), 1-49. Even Prouty admits the choice was strategic: "The heavy-handed asceticism of *The Droomme of Doomesday* or *A Delicate Diet* would not meet with royal favour as would the glib superficiality of a Petrarchan imitation, particularly one that would enable him to

Petrarch's Latin text, but an ironic look at (loosely) the drawbacks to be found in what are usually considered to be advantageous states, the "uncerteine Joyes of men".¹ The *Grief of Joye* presents itself as a fragment, an unfinished group of four songs on Petrarch's theme. Gascoigne's scheme is highly selective; he chose only four topics, Youth, Beauty, Strength and "Activityes", allowing him to focus on areas where he could make some comment on his own mistakes and draw Elizabeth's attention to his recent service.

The full title of the manuscript is *The Grief of Joye. Certeyne Elegies: wherein the doubtfull delightes of mannes lyfe, are displaied. Written to the Queenes moste excellent Ma^{tie}*.² Although it is clean and fine, it is a less highly wrought artefact than the *Hemetes* manuscript with its illustrations. But, like *Hemetes*, this manuscript functions as an explicit reminder of Gascoigne's contact with Elizabeth during the year. He could not call on any overheard request, as he did before; instead, he makes the ingenious claim that he is presenting the work not because he thinks it is worthy,

but that I might make youre Majestie wnesse, how the *Interims* and vacant howres of those daies which I spent this sommer in your service have byn bestowed (p. 514)

Gascoigne is evidently referring to his trip to Paris and Antwerp; "this sommer"

eulogize the Queen and her court. In spite of his general disillusionment and despair, Gascoigne may still have thought it well to be politic and to convince the Queen of his serious purpose in a poem which had a recognized literary sanction in Petrarch", p. 264.

¹ Coogan, however, believes that "Gascoigne's selectivity further illustrates that he uses Petrarch not only for the Stoic thesis of grief in joy which he has been steadfastly defending, but also for a supply of topics for a satire on the court", in "Petrarch's *De Remediis*", pp. 45-6.

² In the British Library, Royal MS 18 A lxi.

suggests either a vagueness about seasons (deliberate or otherwise), or that he may have been recruited earlier in the year, before there was a specific commission for him.¹ He goes on to claim that "the leaves of this paumphlett have passed with mee in all my perilles", which is surely an imaginative flourish since the manuscript is undoubtedly a fair copy, complete with gold leaf highlight on the Queen's name.² But Gascoigne wanted to give Elizabeth the impression that he had been carrying it throughout his adventures, as another reminder of his service. This is corroborated by a less than subtle reference in the Second Song, "The vanities of Bewtie", where he pictures a battle between the beauties of different nations:

Bella Symona, shoulde be quickly seene,
Yf newes were brought, to *Antwerp* of thes warres/
And from soome landes, where I have never ben ... (2,32)

Furthermore, the manuscript presents itself as a fragment, breaking off in mid-sentence just as "Dan Bartholmew" does in *A Hundreth*.³ Its self-dramatizing conclusion, "*Lefte unperfect for feare of Horsmen*", prompted Prouty to imagine Gascoigne "in the midst of the spoil of Antwerp ... calmly composing rhyme-royal stanzas as a New Year's present for the Queen".⁴ But this is certainly the impression Gascoigne wanted to create: he presents the *Grief of Joye* as the product of the "vacant howres" on his mission, and finishes it by inventing a fictive moment in the crisis at Antwerp at which

¹ See Chapter III, section iii.

² Given Gascoigne's proven reputation for composing works quickly as well as at short notice, it is possible that he did not begin working on it until his return to England at the end of November. Even allowing time to publish the *Spoyle*, he would still have had all of December to work on it. Cunliffe lists eleven "slips of the pen", which may indicate a haste to complete it, p. 585.

³ See Chapter I, section ii.

⁴ Prouty, p. 97.

the work was abandoned. But there is evidence in the First Song that the work is not in fact unfinished, and the scheme is complete in its present form. Gascoigne suggests that his scheme is organized by its association with its first theme, Youth:

Well: somme will saie, I have not soonge of all,
The gallant Joyes, w^{ch} joined are to youthe/
As *Bewtye*, strength, *Activity* with all,/
And many a sweete, w^{ch} youthfull yeares ensewth ... (1,42)

The *Grief of Joye* is, then, structured around this central theme of youth, topic of the First Song, and the following three songs are based on related topics. The ending is a highly-wrought conceit: the work is not the unfinished fragment it purports to be, but a closely planned and highly-polished performance.

The manuscript is a complex document which carries a number of agendas, both poetic and pragmatic. The use of hunting imagery in the opening of the dedicatory epistle would remind Elizabeth of his translation of the *Noble Arte*. One further motif is designed to remind Elizabeth of Gascoigne's past service, in this case at Kenilworth, and probably also Woodstock. This is "blindness", which occurs in the *Grief of Joye* in two forms: as an image of the folly of youth and an image of his bedazzlement by Elizabeth's beauty. It is quite conventional in the former mode,¹ but as an image of bedazzlement it is particularly audacious. It is introduced in context of his responsibility for all "Reprooffe" for the work:

The mazed man, whome bewties blaze hath slaine,

¹ Blindness represents the indiscretion of youth: "For vaine it were, with grave advise to guyde,/ The wilfull blynde, w^{ch} wyll no danger see" (1,33); and "Harde of beleefe/and unexpert withall/ Rashe/ blinde/ yett bolde/ and setteth dang^r light" (1,34).

Dothe goe in greife, and yet perceyves no payne (1,7)

This recalls the "blindness" of which Elizabeth had accused him the previous summer at Kenilworth, when as the Savage Man Gascoigne had made her horse rear; he had then written the interlude of Audax into the masque of *Zabeta*, though he had not been able to perform it. The allusion is confirmed in the Second Song, when Gascoigne refers to the Queen's presence, when he quotes her directly:

Me-thinkes She smyles, and saies thine eies are blynd,/
Or dazled els, with mists of much mistake,/ (2,5)

It will be remembered that a marginal note from the lost original edition of the *Princely Pleasures* records such a comment: "the Queen said the Actor was blind", and I have suggested that this became a private joke, perhaps also revived at Woodstock.¹ It is impossible to know if there are further references to direct contact between Elizabeth and Gascoigne submerged in the text and now unrecoverable, but these are slightly self-mocking, almost flirtatious references to that memorable encounter at Kenilworth. Gascoigne seems to have exploited his mistake there to make himself distinctive, as one who had repeatedly lost and gained his sight as a result of his encounters with Elizabeth, and he demonstrates considerable inventiveness with her own retorted criticism.

In the dedication, Gascoigne offers the *Grief of Joye* as a fragment, submitted for the Queen's approval to move into print with the complete version. He says of his songs

¹ See my discussion of this in Chapter II, section ii.

that he has:

hetherto perfected but fowre of the first/ the which I humbly commend unto your noble sensure and and gracious correction/ And therewithall I proffer in like manner that if your Ma^{tie} shall lyke the woorke, and deeme yt worthy of publication I will then shrinke for no paynes untill I have (in suche songes) touched all the common places of mans perylous pleasures. (p. 514)

It may be that on one level this manuscript is an attempt to advance Gascoigne's suit to be Elizabeth's laureate. If his request for her approval had been granted, he would have been able to place a notice declaring his commission in the preface; he may even have been able to claim he was her poet, adopting a device for the purpose. It seems that this was a gamble; there is no way of knowing how far Gascoigne had advanced in the royal favour as a result of his successful mission to Antwerp. He is certainly in buoyant and confident mood in the *Grief of Joye*, but the letter to Bacon on the same date strikes a familiar desperate note, which suggests that material rewards had not yet been granted.¹ Gascoigne was playing for the highest stakes and he makes the most extraordinary pledge:

But without confirmation of your favorable acceptauns (your Ma^{tie} well knoweth) I will never presume to publishe any thing here after (p. 514)

Though it might be possible to write for manuscript circulation, or to write ornate letters asking for favour despite his protestations here, there would be no chance of renegeing on so specific a pledge and Gascoigne would presumably have been unable to publish again under his own name. But he subsumes his uncertainty into his theme, claiming that:

that being well considered (compared also with the unspeakeable comfort

¹ See next section.

whiche I have conceived in your Ma^{ties} undeserved favor) maie sufficientlie
witnes withowt further triall, that doubtfull greeves, and grevous doubttes, do
often accompany our greatest Joyes./

Indeed, it is possible that this was a serious proposal to produce a much longer work under the Queen's approval; the great advantage of an almost infinite theme like this was that it could generate matter for the poet, until it touched "all the common places of mans perylous pleasures".

The *Grief of Joye* is almost exuberant at times and shows further evidence of poetic ambition. Where in the *Hemetes* manuscript Gascoigne made his claim to be "*Petrarks* heire", here he presents himself as an apprentice who, "Although his skill, be never halfe so good" as his masters', still "deserveth fame,/ Because his masters, were of worthie name" (1,3). He then places himself in both the Italian and English poetic traditions, as:

Chaucers boye, and *Petrarkes* journeyman (1,4)

A no less grandiloquent claim than the one in *Hemetes*, in the *Grief of Joye* Gascoigne positions himself as an apprentice to two of the greatest modern poetic forefathers his age recognized; where he returns to a Petrarchan model in the present work, he had made his tribute to Chaucer in the *Complaynt of Phylomene*.¹ He follows this claim with a neatly-turned compliment to both these masters and Elizabeth herself:

But if some Englishe woorde, herein seme sweet,
Let *Chaucers* name, exalted be therefore,/

Yf any verse, doe passe on plesaunt feet,

¹ For Gascoigne's attitude to Chaucer see M.R.Rohr, "Gascoigne and "My Master Chaucer"", *JEGP*, 69 (1968), 20-31; and for a specific debt in the "Devise of a Maske", W. Todd Furniss, "Gascoigne and Chaucer's *Pesen*", *MLN*, 68 (1953), 115-8.

The praise thereof, redownd to *Petrarks* lore/
Few words to use, yf either lesse or more,
Be fownde herein, which seeme to merite fame,
The lawde thereof, be to my Sovereigns name. (1,6; p. 518)

While Gascoigne transfers praise to Chaucer for his use of language and Petrarch for his metrics, he directs all praise ultimately to Elizabeth.¹ He signs his dedicatory epistle "Youre Ma^{ties} joyfull greeved servaunt". As in *Hemetes*, this is the amorous model of Petrarch, not the moralist, despite Gascoigne's choice of Petrarch's best-known Latin moral work with which to align the *Grief of Joye*.

The Preface offers an optimistic, unrepentant Gascoigne: these three stanzas are structured by *incrementum* to climb towards the highest joy, from "Mownt mynd & muze, you come before a *Queene*" to the final clause of the third, "my *Queene* for to behold" (p. 516). As with the *Hemetes* frontispiece, Gascoigne figures himself in Elizabeth's presence. Where the first and third stanzas are thus heavily structured rhetorically (making skilful use of repetition and *progressio*), the second has as its most notable feature its final couplet:

A thowsand Joyes, my Jollye yowth hath tryed,
yett none but one, could styll with me abyde. (p. 516)

Since he is about to embark on the theme of "The greeves or discommodities of lustie yowth" in his first song, with specific disclaimers about his own conduct, it seems irreverent to refer to "my Jollye yowth" in the Preface, especially as he places this admiration of Elizabeth as the only joy in youth which he has found to be "styll

¹ Gascoigne betrays a conventional modesty in the following stanza (1,7).

permanent". In effect the Preface is a plea against marginalization, against banishment from her presence (the court). But Gascoigne seems to be negotiating from the margins already; in the single-stanza L'Envoie which follows the Preface, he presents himself as someone anxious not to overstep boundaries. It talks of an old tradition:

Queene by your leave, hath bene (yn olden dayes)
A pretye playe/ wheryn the prynce gave chardge,
(So that the pale, were styll kept hole allwayes)
to take the best, and leave the rest att large./ (p. 516)

He concludes with what sounds like a fear of transgressing some invisible boundary:

Queene, by your leave: my muze the best hath fownde,
and yett I hope, the pale ys safe and sownde.

This is puzzling, but may be related to the sense of marginalization which is so strong in his performance as the Savage Man.¹

Throughout the *Grief of Joye*, Gascoigne can be seen to be negotiating an encounter with Elizabeth: not only the imminent encounter of presenting the manuscript (which he had illustrated in *Hemetes*) but the sustained fiction of his performance of his songs which informs it. The manuscript is an accomplished performance, with its complex agenda, but with its four songs it could also have been a performance text.² Gascoigne creates his songs within a fictive context of performance before the Queen. Gascoigne's representations of himself in Elizabeth's presence in the *Grief of Joye* are prefaced by

¹ See Chapter II, section ii.

² Gascoigne certainly had the memory skills to memorize and perform the songs: this is proven in the "Memories", where he composed and memorized a total of 258 lines of verse (p. 282). See Chapter I, section i. The note about the musical settings in *A Hundreth* (Pigman, p. 289) suggests that Gascoigne might have had the musical ability to set the songs.

his appeal in the dedicatory epistle for her "to pardone the boldnes of your servaunt who eftsones presumethe (by contemplation) to kysse your delicate and most honorable handes" (p. 515), the same request he had made in the *Hemetes* manuscript (p. 478).¹

The *Grief of Joye* constructs an intimate, imaginative space in which Gascoigne entertains the queen, a conceit which first emerges at the end of the First Song. He announces the themes of his next three songs, and pauses:

But synce my lute, hath broke the treble string,
Let pawse a whyle, untyll I maie devise,
Some newfownd notes, to chaunt in cherefull wise./
My playnesong tunes, (I feare) to long have bene,
And I wax hoarce, to sing before a Queene. (1,43)

The conceit recurs whenever he invokes Elizabeth: early in the Second Song, on Beauty, he praises "My *Queene*" and declares to his Muse:

Beholde her well (iny Muse) for this is she,
Whose bewties beames, do spredd themselves full wyde ... (2,3)²

It is in this song that Gascoigne constructs a subtextual link to his earlier works: among the list of courtly ladies is "Ferenda Natura", linked here with "my banishment to *Bathe*" (2,23), and so with "Dan Bartholmew". (If this was an autobiographical persona, it seems clear that "Ferenda Natura" was not in fact based on Elizabeth Bretton as Hankins and Prouty suggest.)³ This *Ferenda Natura* addresses the speaker of the *Grief of Joye*, calling him "*Bartholmew*", which apparently supports the autobiographical reference and gives a name to his courtly poet persona. The song

¹ See Chapter III, section i.

² He goes on to defer to the disciplinary model of Elizabeth in 2,5.

³ See Chapter I, section ii.

concludes with a general defence against any omissions, which sustains the fiction of performance:

My lovely ladyes (you whose names I past)
Forgive my guylt/ you came so thicke I feare,
I coulde not commpte all faire/ you ranne so fast ... (2,68)

This direct address suggests that his fictive audience includes all the ladies of the court; this is not the kind of private performance illustrated in the *Hemetes* manuscript, but a performance before (potentially) the whole court.

Gascoigne's full conceit of the performance poet emerges again at the end of the Third Song, when he appeals comfortably for drink, in the style of the old oral poets:

Now he that loves mee, lett hym give me drinke,
I am so dry, that I can sing no more/ (3,36)

Looking comically in the cup for an answer, he exclaims:

I have yt, I/ lett syng yt owt therefore/
"The harts and love, of people more & lesse,
"Are powre (Sau[n]s peere) who so the same possesse.

Elizabeth would probably have enjoyed such boldness; in one of her own poems, a reply to one by Raleigh, she teased him for his fears of losing favour, concluding, "The less afraid, the better thou shalt speed".¹ It was a sophisticated touch to pull such a graceful compliment from his drinking cup and Gascoigne goes on to conclude his song on "The faults of force and strength" by declaring that "the greatest, strongest, stowtest mann,/ That ever yet, sprong owt of Adames seede" (3,37) cannot compare in strength

¹ "Ah, silly pug, wert thou so sore afraid", in MS Petyt 538, vol. 10, f.3, identified by L.G. Black in "A lost poem by Queen Elizabeth I", *TLS*, 23 May 1968, p. 535.

or power to Elizabeth:

Thus whyle I dranke, I lyfte the cup so highe,
That in the bottome sawe I wrytten fayre,
Gascoigne thi Muse is taken withe a lye,
Synce force of love, no fortune can empayre,
And since thy *Queene* dothe sitt in *Trewloves* chayre/ (3,38)

Rather than conclude his song with a toast, which would be another opportunity for a compliment, he says:

No force: I coumpt yt neyther Synne nor shame,
To lye (alight) for love of such a Dame.

In the virtual performance Gascoigne creates, this would be accompanied by a shrug, an informal gesture. It is followed, at the beginning of the Fourth Song, by the parable of the Baker's Boy.

This inset parable tells of a servant's transgression due to over-enthusiasm and the master's forgiveness (4,1-4). The baker sends his boy to gather firewood, but the boy cuts too much and finds he is unable to carry it because the faggots cling together, and he does not bind them.¹ The "reeke" (rick) he makes is too heavy and he falls over.² The baker chides him and makes fun of his foolishness, but "since it was, in service of my selfe", he forgives him. The image conjured by this little tale vividly recalls the device for the Italian translation of *Hemetes*, where a man (Gascoigne) struggles with a

¹ Faggots should be tied with a twist of green hazel. My thanks to Mr Len Hutson.

² It seems significant that "twigs" are also featured in the first song: "I cannot finde, what joy therein doth grow,/ Which is not staynd, wth undertwiggs of wo" (1,37). These may be related to the sinister "Twigg" which is a threat in the twelfth stanza: "To passe with penn, the terror of the *Twigg*,/ Which maie torment the blythest babe that lyves" (1,12). The "Twigg" might be the cane, and so chastisement; similarly, faggots had acquired sinister overtones since the Smithfield burnings.

vast bundle of faggots.¹ Gascoigne explicitly offers the Baker's Boy as a self-presentation:

So (peerelesse prynce) my selfe maye be the Boye,
Whiche sought for styckes, amydd your fagott reeke/
I thought to proyne some grief from everie Joye ... (4,5)

Faced with an allegedly indignant audience of courtiers, Gascoigne says he should have noted:

That vertues marche, in mydest betweene extreames/
And harde yt were the fall of faults to fynde,
Withowt some shake, to fortunes better beames/

The syntax here is difficult, but the sense seems to be a jocular reference to the ever present possibility at court of a fall from grace if "faults" come to light; Gascoigne certainly presents it as a joke:

But laugh (good *Queene*) and (by those glistering gleames
Of your bright eies) I vowe to sing so long,
Tyll all your cowrte be pleased withe my song. (4,6)

He is explicit about his initiative in undertaking the work:

To serve your selfe, I tooke this worke in hand,

And ment to make, butt fewell for youre fyre/ (4,7)

and then declares his attention to be satirical, "to make abuses skand", despite possible objections:

And though my woords, maie move some myndes to Ire,
Forgive me (*Queene*) and I will worke amayne,
Tyll fancies fagotts, piled be agayne./

This seems no more than playful, though it has been read as evidence of serious

¹ See Chapter II, section i.

objections from courtiers who resented the satire. It was surely "fancies fagotts" with which "*Chi tropo abbracia*" struggled in *Hemetes*; here, the Baker's Boy is instructed only to "packe up againe this pelfe" as his only "penaunce", and Gascoigne pledges to continue to work on "fancies fagotts" (presumably his experimentation, the "new and strange style" of the Italian device).¹ He returns to the conceit of the performance:

Thus much I syng, because my playnesong note,
Must yett be herd, much lowder then before,
And I must cleare, my hoarce unpleasent throate,
To make yow view, *somme* vanities yet more. (4,8)

Later in the Fourth Song, Gascoigne describes his own experiences with music in another, more comical, self-portrait:

My wandring mynde, sometyme forgott yt selfe/
And reason ranne, his cowerce so farr awrye,
That ere I wyst, my wyttys were sett on shelve ... (4,20)

He describes how his singing (and perhaps versifying) became compulsive:

I coulde not reade, but I must tune my words/
I coulde not speake, but as yt were by note/
I coulde not muze[, but] that I thought some byrds,
With[in] my brest did rellease all by rote/
I coulde not praye, but eare there past my throte,
Fyve faithfull boones to God for my request,
I soonge the Syxth, and quyte forgot the rest./ (4,21)

Gascoigne sets up a witty, self-referential joke in this fictive performance space: the compulsive singer sings this confession to Elizabeth. He is so at home here that he appeals comfortably for her not to laugh:

Laughe nott (sweete Queene) for I shall not be founde,
The onely man, whiche (sleping in delight,)

¹ See Chapter III, section i.

Hathe alwaies dreamt, on *Musickes* silver sownde ... (4,22)

This type of evidence throughout the work sustains Gascoigne's conceit of a performance. This performative technique is yet another way in which Gascoigne represents himself (by contemplation) in Elizabeth's presence; an alternative, textual version of the private, congratulatory audience he devised in the frontispiece to *Hemetes*.

There is, however, some evidence of an uneasy defensiveness which runs parallel with this happy scenario: there are several references to Gascoigne's former transgressiveness throughout the work. The first nine stanzas of the First Song, "The greeves and discommodities of lustie yowthe", place the present work autobiographically, poetically, and in context of what may be termed Gascoigne's "relationship" with Elizabeth. The tenth then states his theme. He opens by foregrounding the skill his present task demands, claiming comically that his muse is "lame":

The grieffe of joye, in worthy wise to write,
That by the vice, the vertue might be founde,
Requireth skylle, and cunning to endight./ ...
My muse therefore (not causeless) dreadeth blame,
Whose arte and skill, (God knowes) long since were lame. (1,1)

Introducing the theme of his unfitness for his task in this way, he makes his introduction of his theme immediately autobiographical:

The wandring waies, of reckles ranging youth,
Made will forgett, the little skill I had,/ (1,2)

But instead of turning this to some moral reformation, he goes on to claim that his application to "wanton rimes" has affected his style:

And wanton rimes, whereof no frewte ensewth,
Have made my style, (whiche never good was) badde/

He seems, then, to be acknowledging some form of transgression ("wandring waies") which is known to Elizabeth. Significantly, perhaps, it recalls the strategic self-examination of the *Steele Glas*.¹

If this is so, then Gascoigne surely declares himself guilty and unrepentant. Although his reference to "wanton rimes, whereof no frewte ensewth" (1,2) may seem the attitude of moral reflection, "more frewtles were his toyle/ Whome any grieffe, could make repent the deede" (1,9) is unmistakably defiant. (The only such assertion, however, this is not the dominant tone and may be less than serious.) Only a few stanzas into the First Song, Gascoigne declares:

Yet as I maie, (you see) my muze must mynce,
Suche nyce conceiptes, as toomble in my hedd
To please her minde, *who knowes what life I ledde*. (1,8; my italics)

This seems to confirm that Elizabeth knew enough about Gascoigne's past reputation to make him uneasy. Similarly, in the sixteenth stanza, he talks of youth, describing:

"The reckles rage/ the rashe unbridled heate/
"The thirst of luste, to taste unlawfull toyes/

This is shortly followed by an image of a colt, which he applies to the notion of late repentance, the idea that some men might presume on having "Full seventie yeares" in

¹ See Chapter III, section ii.

which to "joye in youth full fast,/ And care in age" (1,20), like Googe's late penitent:

But therewthall, yt woulde be markt likewise,
That as the Colt, which never knewe the bytt,
Dothe soner catche, a knocke in wilful wise,
Then doth the horsse, w^{ch} flyngeth never a fytt,
But is content, to let his rider sitt;
Even so that age, w^{ch} lavish is of breath,
Shall sonest light, upon the darte of deathe. (1,21)

This colt image was noted by Ward because it recurs in the letter Gascoigne presented to Sir Nicholas Bacon on the same date.¹ There, it is an unequivocally repentant image, whereas the tone of the *Grief of Joye*, even in the autobiographical references in the song on Youth, suggests Gascoigne is presuming upon Elizabeth's tolerance for his past waywardness.

In the Second Song, Gascoigne's discussion of Bewtie allows him to refer back to his discussion of youth:

Not I allone, but noombers infinyte,
Of toward yowthes, have roone their race awrye (2,42)

The context here is of "Gallant things" (beautiful women) which naturally attract ambitious young men. Further references support the sense of Gascoigne as his own apologist. The nature of this manuscript is complex indeed, but at one level it operates exactly as the *Steele Glas/Complaynt of Phylomene* volume does in relation to Lord Grey. This could refer to the same transgressive history he apologised for there, or it could simply be another permutation of the repentant prodigal, who was always so

¹ B.M. Ward, "Gascoigne and his Circle", *RES*, 2 (1926), 32-41.

willing to blame his past mistakes on his youth.

The Third Song, "The faults of force and strength", refers to what sounds like a violent incident in Gascoigne's past:

But lo: beholde; my mery daies amydd,
One heady deede, my haughty harte did breake,
And since (full oft) I wisht I had bene weake./ (3,12)

This is clearly some "deede" which involved his physical "force or strength", and which he has regretted. In the next stanza, he admits:

I am (my selfe) to gylty to accuse,/
"But sure the force, of marow and of might,
"Dothe cause oure fleshe, (oft) sett oure sowles but light/ (3,13)

Similarly, in the Fourth Song, "The vanities of Activityes", he mentions the difficulty of keeping the "mynde" within due restraints:

But as the Bell, can hardly holde the hawke,
From soaring sometymes when Shee list to gadd,
Even so the mynde (whiche woontedly doth walke,
In fancies fields, most lyke a lusty ladd)
Can seldome be, so bridled from the badd,
But that delight, maie drawe one foote tofarre,
Whils vayne excesse, the mery meane dothe marre./ (4,12)

This reference to his unruly youth again seems to acknowledge boundaries, even as it crosses them, going "one foote tofarre". But Gascoigne seems confident in his ability to entertain Elizabeth and so gain forgiveness and rehabilitation.

Gascoigne's scheme of four topics was shrewdly chosen, and gave the tactical advantage of allowing a certain degree of self-examination, but it also allowed him to

address other matters. The Second Song, which purports to declare "The vanities of Bewtie", in fact does something far more pragmatic in terms of this imminent rehabilitation. It allows Gascoigne covertly to compliment Elizabeth and most of the ladies of the court.¹ (This is the counterpart, strategically, of his presentation letters to their husbands.)² The Second Song opens with Gascoigne's Muse on the defensive, preparing for physical attack:

MUSE: plaie thy parte/ & fend thy head from blowes/
I see a swarme, w^{ch} coome thee to assayle (2,1)

Although the threat of censorship (the Phylomene image) which follows has already been adduced, it seems clear that this is not the only threat he faces. His enemies are a "swarme":

Behold, beholde, they come, as thyck as hayle (2,1)

Although the pretext here is that his theme (the disadvantages of beauty) seems untenable, it is probable that these enemies represent those detractors who were against him at court. The second stanza defends his theme; the third introduces Elizabeth in unchallenged position:

My *Queene* her self, coommes formost of them all/
And best deserves, that place in ech degree

He then dilates upon her power:

This is the *Queene* whose onely looke subdewed,
Her prowdest foes, withowten speare or sheeld/
This is the *Queene*, whome never eye yet viewed,
But streight the hart, was forst thereby to yeelde/ (2,4)

¹ As Prouty notes (pp. 264, 265); Ruth Prouty deciphers the coded references to the ladies of the court in Prouty, Appendix VI, pp. 325-8.

² See next section.

This is the amorous model of conquest, and the hunting pun in the fourth line (which also plays on the eyesight motif) is a pleasant touch, well calculated to please Elizabeth.

But he was also addressing an all-powerful, disciplinary model of Elizabeth:

And this is she, that bends her mightie mace,
To breake and bruse, thy prowde presumptuous mynde,
Which dares attempt, (with grieffe) for to disgrace,
The joye wherein, most men their pleasure finde ... (2,5)

He then represents his objection to her judgement, couching it as *stychomythia*, making it the opinion of his Muse:

But Princes mindes (somtymes) mistake y^e right./
So meanest thou then, thy theame for to defende/
Well well (my muse) yf thou resolve to fight,
I the advise, some better weapons bend ... (2,6)

Later (2,30-32) his Muse does indeed arm herself and there is a pitched battle between the beauties of different nations. But it is extraordinary to find a statement like "Princes mindes (somtymes) mistake y^e right" in a document intended for Elizabeth's eyes, let alone one designed to compliment her. It was either ill judged or especially acutely judged if like a jester he could be sure of an indulgent reponse.

Gascoigne dwells humorously on the connection between Beauty and Bounty, based ironically on their alliterative relationship, which in effect equates grace with bounty:

Bewty and *Bow[n]tie* beginne with a letter
The first is good, the second lacks no grace,
Where both concurre, tha^t body is not base (2,61)

He goes on to elaborate on this connection with comical diligence:

But take the first aloone, and by it selfe,
And tell me then, how (best) I might it call?

"A stately Toye/ a preciows peece of pellfe/
"A gorgeous gong/ a worthles painted wall/
"A flower (full freshe,) yet redye styll to fall/
"A sore unseene/ A sweete entysing Sowre,
"A pearle skarce worth the pryce/ worse worth y^e powre/

And now (deare dames) what saye yo^u to my muse?
How like you *Reason*, in her foremost ranke? (2, 62-63)

To discourse at such length on the worthlessness of beauty as a subject for his Muse unless it is associated with liberality to the poet is a form of self-satire and Gascoigne pursues it to its logical conclusion. Gascoigne assumed that Elizabeth would not only approve his opinion, but personally favour him for it:

My gracious *Queene* (I trust) will not refuse,
To weighe my wordes: and then to coone me thanke,
Yt seems to mee, the same in her so sanke?
That Shee hath layde, her mighty mace aside
And strookes my heade/ and byddeth God me guyde. (2,63)

This is the most audacious yet of his contemplations of Elizabeth's presence, figuring as it does an intimate gesture, physical contact, a gentle and forgiving demonstration of approval. Gascoigne seems exceptionally confident of Elizabeth's favour; indeed, he asserts now that:

... Shee is wise, and can full well consider ...
That good for badd, is many tymes accused (2,64)

This forms another plank to his defence, but he was obviously pleased with his performance and confident of a favourable outcome. His buoyancy overflows into poetic boastfulness, as he declares his next theme:

Well: synce my Muse, hathe quite her selfe so well,
And satisfied (wth *Reason*) everie Dame (2,65)

Gascoigne is apparently sustained throughout the work by an unshakeable faith in Elizabeth's favour, her approval of his work, and her imminent forgiveness of his past transgressions.

In the *Grief of Joye*, Gascoigne offers in addition to his informal comical self-portraits another explicit self-presentation in the story of the "Bakers boye", which is given in the first five stanzas in the Fourth Song. Towards the end of that song the image recurs with another version of the "reeke" of faggots:

I ment not them, I meane but suche as seeke,
To breake my backe, wth fancies fagott reeke. (4,37)

It is surely "fancies faggot reeke" with which "*Chi tropo abbracia*" struggled in the Italian device in the *Hemetes* manuscript, although it is impossible to reconstruct a context in which this might threaten Gascoigne in January of 1577. But the threat prompts him to take evasive action:

And synce I must, leape lightly and away,
Before the force, of all those faggots fall (4,38)

This comments upon his next move - what was in effect a neatly evasive manoeuvre, his abrupt ending.

Gascoigne's ending is witty, a joke, but one designed to remind Elizabeth of the risks he had taken on her behalf. The work breaks off in the Fourth Song (4,46) in the section on the perils (griefs) of horseriding (a joy):

But ryding is, of nobles muche desired,
And what can be brought in agaynst the same?

Alas alas, my Muze must needes be tyred,
To reckon grieffe in every kynde of game/
But trust me (*Queene*) I am not yet so lame,
But that I can in ryding finde some fault,
As earst I dyd in them which leap and vault./

For sett asyde, the danger of a fall,
(Which so may chaunce, that (woulde wee ride or no,)
Agaynst owre wylles, at last wee must or shall,
When withe a broken legg wee cannott goe)
I can rehearse yett many myschieves mo,
And sundry greeves, thatt &c. &c.

Left unperfect for feare of Horsmen/

There are a number of witticisms in this flamboyant ending, not least of which is its position in the section on horse-riding. It has a satirical edge, with the comment on the preferences of the nobility (and "what can be brought in against the same?").

Gascoigne's tired Muse links not only to the "lame" muse of the first stanza (1,1), but to his performance as Sylvanus at Kenilworth, running alongside Elizabeth's horse.

This may be another reference to direct comments from Elizabeth, since his account claims that she "stayed her horse to favour *Sylvanus*, fearing lest he should be driven out of breath by following her horse so fast".¹ Finally, it has significance as a reminder of his service in Antwerp and the "sundry greeves" he witnessed there; a self-dramatizing conclusion, it seeks to sustain the claim that Gascoigne had carried the manuscript with him, suggesting that he had broken off the work as the "Horsmen" attacked and entered the English House.

¹ Cunliffe, p. 123.

Gascoigne's self-presentation in his second manuscript for Elizabeth is notable for its confidence, its buoyant tone, and the intimacy with which he figures his exchanges with her. His poetic ambition is a little more restrained than in *Hemetes* but he may have been proposing a much larger work which he hoped to publish with the Queen's approval. Moreover, his promise not to publish thereafter suggests a willingness to abandon his moralistic persona, the only named "Gascoigne" in print. His claims to laureation are not central to this encounter but his relationship with Elizabeth (real or imagined) is: he had appeared before her twice at Kenilworth, had perhaps encountered at Woodstock or performed as *Hemetes*, had presented the *Hemetes* manuscript to her, and had now proved himself useful to Leicester, Walsingham, and Burghley.

Although Gascoigne's quest for preferment was a general one, and the overt claim to laureation temporarily on hold, serious literary ambition is evident. In 1575, when he had first made his claim for laureation, he perhaps did not have sufficient literary reputation to support it.¹ The intense literary activity of 1575-6 suggests a concerted effort to advance his literary career: these were performances, manuscripts, and anonymous courtly publications, as well as named moralistic titles, so that he was simultaneously building distinct portfolios of courtly and moral works.² Here, in the *Grief of Joye*, Gascoigne seeks not laureation but another role, with a fully-fledged

¹ He had published *A Hundreth*, the *Posies*, *Glasse of Government*, and the *Noble Arte* (two anonymous courtly titles and two in the penitential mode), and performed in the devices he had at Kenilworth and Woodstock.

² The *Hemetes* manuscript was followed by the anonymous publication of the *Princely Pleasures*, the two long-planned, named volumes, the *Steele Glas/Complaynte of Phylomene* and the *Droomme*, and the more impromptu publication of *A Delicate Diet*.

performance as Bartholmew, Elizabeth's poet. Other minor personae are also represented: he is also the Baker's Boy, building on the Italian device in the *Hemetes* manuscript, and perhaps the unruly colt (1,21). Significantly, perhaps, it was this image which he used in his letter to Sir Nicholas Bacon on the same date.

(ii) Letter to Sir Nicholas Bacon.

Despite his confidence in the *Grief of Joye*, Gascoigne had not abandoned other means of preferment or favour. A letter from "G. le Gascoigne" to Sir Nicholas Bacon, dated 1 January 1577, is extant (see Figure 11).¹ This is clearly a presentation letter, a kind of equivalent of the presentation manuscript.² It has, in the words of the Manuscripts Commission, an "emblem beautifully sketched in ink of a man on horseback and a man about to mount a barebacked colt". Above is the motto, "*Aliquando tamen proficit qui sero sapit*" (He who becomes wise late in the day, eventually, nevertheless, becomes serviceable).³ Nowhere on the manuscript does "*Tam Marti, quam Mercurio*" appear, although it does appear on the *Grief of Joye*, presented on the same day. The letter and manuscript, with their contrasting self-presentations and use of different mottoes, seem to give final proof that Gascoigne cultivated a number of identities simultaneously,

¹ It was listed in the Historical Manuscripts Commission's report on the MSS in the possession of the Marquess of Townshend (1888) and is now held in Norfolk Record Office (Ray. 25). See also Genevieve Ambrose, "George Gascoigne", *RES*, 2 (1926), 163-8, p. 168.

² It is reprinted (modernized) in B.M. Ward, "George Gascoigne and his Circle", *RES* 2 (1926), 32-41, and with original spelling in *The Papers of Nathaniel Bacon of Stiffkey*, ed. A.H. Smith and G.M. Baker (Norwich, 1983), pp. 3-4. Quotations are from Smith and Baker's transcript.

³ My thanks to Professor Pigman.



Before the sturdye colt, will hyde the bytt,
 he beares oftymes, the broont of many blowes /
 But when at laste, he lets his ryder lytt,
 he learnes to rayne, and forward then he goos /
 Some men he coltes: they frilke & flynge at fyrste,
 Yett (onse well broke) such men proue not the worlde.

To the right honorable Sir Cyrolab Bacon Knight, Lord Keeper of the
 great Sealle, good newe yeare and many to gods good pleasure

My verie favorable good Worde:

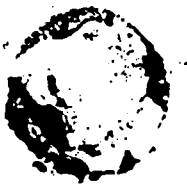
Being lately returned into her Ma^{ties} grace (wherein I hope to recover my decayed estate) I desired to present all my
 lordes and good friends in Court my certayne Emblems for their remembrance, and as I judge, never unpleasant
 nor unprofitable. At leaste my meaninge is thereby to shewe prooffe that my penne shall as well be payfull in morall
 Poetrie, as it hath bene hitherto over curious in expresse of light affections,
 And my resolution beinge such, I could not chuse but professe to the lyke present. An obiecte not altogether
 correspondent to the gravitie of yo^r judgement, and yett worde of any vanitie, nor may in this offende yo^r honorable disposition,
 and in full hope thereof, I have put in hazarde to sende yo^r the same, beseechinge yo^r to understande, I kept my tollist
 twice more longer then was exteem for my credytlie, or for my profitt. I frilke / I flange / I refused the burdell
 of discretion, and ran still at large in the fens of sowdye follies. At laste it hath pleased god to make reason my
 ryder, and he havinge firste corrected me, nexte instructed me, and laste of all encouraged and covered me, I begyne
 to beare the burdell pretely well, and hope so to goe forwarde as I may deserve intende to be well placed in a pynne
 stable.

But my good Lord, my tollisthe and fadisthe twice have longe sytens brought me so oute of fleashe, as withoute
 some speedy provision of good provender, I shall never be able to endure a longe journey. And therefore am enforced
 to nye and braye unto yo^r goodnes: and all other wayes have the keye of her Ma^{ties} (to be honest) beseechinge yo^r righte
 humblye that yo^r will vouchsafte to remember me wth some extraordinary allowance when it shalbe
 God preserve yo^r to the common profit and my perticular comforte this firste of January 1577 and ever

To the right honorable
 Sir Gascoigne

To the Right honorable my very
good Lord the Lord of the
great Seal of England
Henry Capton

George G. 1621



Henry

16

designing each with the dedicatee in mind. Entirely pragmatic, this approach to poetic identity allowed him to be both "Bartholmew" to Elizabeth and the now-tamed unruly colt to his powerful relative, Sir Nicholas Bacon.

The verse which accompanies the motto and illustration expands upon this proverbial sense of the colt, from which "comes a good horse":¹

Before the sturdye colte will byde the bytt,
he beares oftymes the broont of many blowes
But when at laste he letts his ryder sytt,
he learnes to rayne, and forward then he goos
Some men be coltes: they friske & flynge at firste
Yett (onse well broke) suche men prove not the worst:

Ward, who first drew attention to this letter, also points out that it is directly echoed in the First Song of the *Grief of Joye* (1,21).² It is yet another permutation of the reformed prodigal; other proverbs emphasized the unruliness of the colt.³

Gascoigne's letter opens with a clear agenda, referring not only to his recent royal service but to a number of other letters and emblems he has sent to prominent courtiers:

My verie favorable good Lorde,
beinge latelye receavede into Her Majesties service (wherin I hope to recover my decayede estate) I devised to presente all my lordes and good frendes in Cowrte with certayne *Emblems* for their Newyeres gyftes, an exercyes (as I judge) neyther unplesante nor unprofitable.⁴

This letter is, then, only one of a series Gascoigne presented to "all my lordes and

¹ Tilley has "Of a ragged Colt comes a good horse" [C522].

² Ward, *ibid.*, p. 40n.

³ Tilley has "There is no Colt but will break some halter" [C523] and "When you ride a young Colt see your saddle be well girt" [C524].

⁴ Ward, *ibid.*, p. 40.

good frendes in Cowrte " this New Year, though no others are extant. There had been some contact between Gascoigne and Bacon, who was related to him by marriage.

Ward points out that Sir Nicholas Bacon was first cousin to Gascoigne's wife Elizabeth and suggests that in 1562: "Sir Nicholas had evidently been of considerable assistance to them over the trouble with Edward Boyes, and it would seem that after his marriage Gascoigne was on better terms with his wife's relations than his own."¹ But the following sentence is perhaps the most revealing clause in the letter:

Att leaste my meaninge is therby to showe prooffe that my penn cann aswell be paynfull in morall *poetrie* as itt hathe bene hetherto over curious in expressinge of lighte affections.

This confirms that Gascoigne was still trying to counter his early reputation even at this stage in his career; he does not seem to have been very plausible *hitherto* as a reformed prodigal in any of the many guises he adopted.

The model of the reformed prodigal is repeated throughout this letter, developed in the proverbial form of the colt broken by reason:

... I kept my koltish trickes muche longer then was eyther for my credytte, or for my profite. I friskede, I flange, I refused the brydell of discretione, and ran still at lardge in the fenns of sondrye follyes. At laste it hath pleasede God to make reasone my ryder, and he havinge firste corectede me, nexte enstructede me, and laste of all encoragede and coyed me, I begynne to beare the brydle pretelye well, and hope so to goe forwardes as I may deserve inthende to be well placed in a prynces stable.

It is significant that, although the moral sentiment was proverbial, Gascoigne's submission to Reason echoes that of Amans in Gower's *Confessio Amantis*: the

¹ Ward, *ibid.*, p. 41.

presentation letter is essentially a courtly product but Gascoigne draws on the moralistic poetic tradition of printed works. It may be that the comprehensive manoeuvre Gascoigne made on the court's affections this New Year included a variety of representations of himself, or he may simply have replicated the colt emblem. The advantage of equine imagery, especially where it permitted a picture of a man mounting a horse, was that it would inevitably suggest the "Memories" and Gascoigne's early feat of composition to anyone who, like Bacon, was associated with Gray's Inn.

Gascoigne's "reason" (Petrarch's "Ratio") may be most nearly translated as "hardship". The sequence of thought here suggests the process he hopes to go through as an errant seeking a patron: correction, instruction, and finally encouragement. Although he focuses on the need to deserve such favour, it is still the "prynces stable" he hopes for. Even so, the tone suddenly changes as the horse is presented as starving and weak, and a rather desperate note sounds:

But (my good Lorde) my colltyshe and jadishe trickes have longe sithens broughte me owte of fleashe, as withowte some spedye provysione of good provender I shall never be able to endure a longe jorneye, and therefore am enforced to neye and braye unto your good Lordship and all other which have the keye of Her Majesties storehowse, beseachinge righte humblie that you will vouchsaffe to reamember me with some extreaordynarye allowaunce when it fallethe.

It is clear that Gascoigne was once again in urgent straits, though whether his situation was actually worse than usual is hard to assess. He had been paid £20 in November for his trip to Antwerp, a figure worth perhaps £10,000 today, but this should be seen as about four months' expenditure at a gentlemanly rate and Gascoigne was always in

debt.¹ It would be no surprise if he had had to depend on credit to finance his trip to Paris and Antwerp and he would not have made more than a few pounds from the pamphlet. Although the *Spoyle of Antwerpe* and the *Grief of Joye* reflect unmistakable royal favour, this had evidently not yet generated more tangible rewards, and he was forced to make a direct appeal to all his "Lords" for urgent financial help. Unfortunately, nothing else is known of his movements until his death on 7 October at Stalmford, as recorded by George Whetstone.²

Conclusion.

George Gascoigne's literary career is notable for the range of authorial self-presentations it generated. His years at Gray's Inn were characterized by experiments in short poetry, circulated in manuscript. In these early works, his attitude towards poetic identity is playful, even protean: he adopts a number of poetic voices and personae, exemplified in the theme of the *Supposes*. Gascoigne moved into print relatively late in life, in his late thirties, but this was part of a larger career move which also took him to Holland in military service and into the system of patronage with poems dedicated to Lord Grey of Wilton. Even in print, most of his works reveal evidence that they were

¹ These figures are based on the equivalents suggested by Charles Nicholl in his prefatory note ("Acknowledgements"), in *The Reckoning*, unnumbered page.

² See Prouty, pp. 99-100; supported by E.L. Brooks, in "The Burial Place of George Gascoigne", *RES*, 5 (1954), 59; and for a text of Whetstone's elegy, *A Remembraunce of the wel employed Life, and godly end of George Gascoigne*, see E. Arber, ed., *George Gascoigne. The Steele Glas &c. (English Reprints)*, (London: Alex Murray, 1868), pp. 17-29. B.M. Ward offers an alternative hypothesis, suggesting that Anthony a Wood's note in *Athenae Oxonienses* that Gascoigne died in Walthamstow is confirmed by an administration dated December 1578 in Somerset House, in "The Death of George Gascoigne", *RES*, 2 (1926), 169-72.

produced with a particular reader or readership in mind. This reflects his lack of interest in a mass readership, despite his enthusiasm for print: he mostly addresses a targeted readership, often identified in the prefatory material (reverend divines or young men, the nobility) or even named throughout the text (Lord Grey in the *Steele Glas/Complaynt of Phylomene*). In context of the relative novelty of a market for contemporary literature in print, the success of Gascoigne's publications is to be measured not by a sequence of editions of particular works, which might attest to a broad and continued appeal, but by whether his publications actually contributed to his underlying quest for preferment by attracting the attention of a well-placed patron.

Within these terms, Gascoigne's printed works were undoubtedly very successful, though few went to a second edition.¹ How far the strategic cultivation of a distinctive moralistic persona contributed to this is uncertain; it seems likely that it was the publication of the *Noble Arte* which drew the attention of Leicester, who was at the time of its publication actively seeking new diversions for the Queen's entertainment.

Gascoigne received the commission for the masque of "Zabeta" at Kenilworth, but was then able to make himself additionally useful by employing his known talents for extemporising and last-minute composition. He was certainly present at Woodstock, and may have performed as Hemetes the Hermit, adding to his cast of woodland characters. He then exploited this further encounter with Elizabeth in the *Hemetes*

¹ STC considers *A Hundreth, Posies*, and the *Whole Woorkes* [STC 11635, 11636, both 1575, and 11638, in 1587] as successive editions, with the *Pleasauntest workes* as a variant [STC 11639, in 1587]. These aside, only the *Noble Arte* and the *Droomme* went to second editions and both these were posthumous (1611 and 1586 respectively).

manuscript, and built on the connection with Leicester by co-operating over the publication of Sir Humphrey Gilbert's *Discourse*.

Meanwhile, he continued to cultivate the moralistic "George Gascoigne, Esquire" in titles such as the *Steele Glas/Complaynt of Phylomene*, the *Droomme*, and the *Diet*, as part of a longer-term strategy to rehabilitate himself with former friends and allies and erstwhile patrons. Eventually, he received the commission from Walsingham to travel to Paris and evidently acquitted himself well, as he reports in the *Spoyle of Antwerpe*. His second New Year presentation manuscript, the *Grief of Joye*, is a sequence of "songs" in which Gascoigne creates another persona and makes a persuasive bid to become Elizabeth's poet; it is a wonderful, confident performance but his anxiety in the letter to Bacon confirms that his new-found royal favour had yet to be accompanied by tangible benefits.

There is, then, no clear divide in Gascoigne's literary career between his moral and his courtly works: the two aspects co-existed, one being part of a long-term strategy and the other more opportunistic. The model of the repentant prodigal was one with which Gascoigne experimented throughout his early poetry and then appropriated in a full performance in the prefatory material in the *Posies*. In this way, the publication of the *Glasse of Government* may be seen as part of a combined project to present a reformed persona in 1575, rather than as evidence of a moral crisis in the author. This may be called "The first supose and grownd of all the suposes" (p. 9).

Gascoigne apparently planned these volumes, though the commissions to translate the *Noble Arte* and to perform at Kenilworth could not have been anticipated. But when such opportunities arose, Gascoigne demonstrated his versatility and other skills by seizing and exploiting them. The succession of named moralistic works and courtly woodland personae attest to Gascoigne's desire for preferment, just as his covert movements in the Low Countries suggest his willingness to don any guise in order to pursue his hopes. The personae generated in his literary career were, for Gascoigne, gambits by which he hoped to manoeuvre within the system of patronage: he offers not only courtier, soldier, and poet, but also huntsman, intelligencer, moralist, translator, and performance artist.

Appendices.

Appendix A. Chronological List of Gascoigne's Publications.

<i>Date*</i>	<i>Printer</i>	<i>Publication</i>	<i>Dedication</i>
?1572/3	Henry Bynneman and Henry Middleton for Richard Smith	<i>A Hundreth Sundrie Flowres</i>	Anonymous; letters from HW (20 January 1572) and GT (10 August 1572)
Jan/Feb 1575	Henry Bynneman for Richard Smith	<i>The Posies of George Gascoigne</i>	Not dedicated; letters to "the reverende Divines" (last day of February 1575) and to "al yong Gentlemen" (22 January 1575)
April 1575	Henry Middleton for Christopher Barker	<i>The Glasse of Government</i>	Sir Owen Hopton (ded. 26 April 1575, inserted)
June 1575	Henry Bynneman for Christopher Barker	<i>The Noble Arte of Venerie or Hunting</i>	Anonymous (translator's letter, 16 June 1575)
March 1576	Richard Jones	<i>The Princely Pleasures, at Kenelwoorth Castle</i>	Anonymous (printer's letter 26 March 1576)
April 1576	Henry Bynneman for Richard Smith	<i>The Steele Glas/Complaynt of Phylomene</i>	Lord Grey of Wilton (ded. 15 April 1576; 16 April 1575)

May 1576	Thomas East for Gabriel Cawood	<i>The Droomme of Doomes day</i>	Earl of Bedford (ded. 2 May 1576)
22 August 1576	John Charlewood for Richard Jones	<i>A delicate Diet, for daintiemouthde Droonkardes</i>	Lewis Dive of Bromham (ded. 10 August 1576)
26 Novemb. 1576	John Charlewood for Richard Jones	<i>The Spoyle of Antwerpe</i>	Anonymous (dated 25 November 1576)

* Date of publication, taken from title pages, prefaces, and dedications. Where a full date is given, it is of entry in *Stationers' Register*.

Appendix B: Schedules of the Entertainments at Kenilworth and Woodstock.

Kenilworth Castle, 9 - 27 July.

Saturday 9 July: Banquet at Long Itchington, seven miles from Kenilworth. As Elizabeth approached the Castle, a welcome was delivered by a Sybil placed in an arbour (verses by Hunnis). At the Gallery Tower, the device of Hercules as Porter was presented (verses by Badger); the six giant trumpeters up on the battlements. Elizabeth rode along the Tiltyard to Mortimer's Tower, where she was addressed from the Pool by the Lady of the Lake on a moving island (verses by George Ferrers). She passed through into the Base Court, part of which she crossed on the temporary footbridge with seven pillars, verses (by Mulcaster and Patten) read by a Poet, probably Mulcaster. She then passed between Henry VIII's Lodgings and Caesar's Tower into the Inner Court. Fireworks and gun salute.

Sunday 10: Nothing in morning; dancing and music in afternoon; more fireworks at night.

Monday 11: As Elizabeth returned from hunting, Gascoigne met her in the Chase to present his device of the Savage Man. (Gascoigne gives this as "the x. of Julie" (Cunliffe, II, p.96).

Tuesday 12: Music and dancing; Elizabeth went in her barge on the Pool to hear music.

Wednesday 13: More hunting.

Thursday 14: Bear-baiting; an Italian tumbler; firework display at night.

Friday 15: Bad weather.

Saturday 16: Bad weather.

Sunday 17: Service at the parish church; the country bridal and quintain. The Coventry play (but Elizabeth did not see all of it and asked for it to be repeated, which it was on the following Tuesday: Langham, 725ff). Another play in the evening, and a banquet with a masque.

Monday 18: More hunting; on her return, the Queen was greeted by Triton upon a Mermaid in the Pool, the Lady of the Lake, and Arion upon a Dolphin. This was the modified version of the Delivery of the Lady of the Lake (written by Hunnis, Ferrers, and Goldingham). Five knighthoods conferred; nine cured of the King's Evil.

Tuesday 19: Repeat of the Coventry play.

Wednesday 20: Planned banquet at Wedgenall Park cancelled due to bad weather; also the planned masque (*Zabeta*) was cancelled. Langham: "A this day allso waz thear such earnest talk and appointment of remooving that I gave over my notyng, and harkened after my hors" (ll.875-7)

[Langham goes into the cancelled device of the "auncient minstrell" at this point, l.877ff. Gascoigne gives the text of *Zabeta*.]

Langham concludes his record of the visit: "Her highnes tarryed at Kyllingwoorth tyll the Wednesday after, being the .27. of this July, and the nienteenth (*inclusive*) of her Majesties cumming thither.

For which seaven daiz, perceyving my notez so slenderly aunswering: I took it less blame, too ceas and thearof too write yoo nothing at al, then in such matters too write nothing likely." (ll.1057-1062)

?Wednesday 27 July: Gascoigne's farewell as Sylvanus, concluding with the song of Deep Desire in the holly bush.

Woodstock, 29 August - 3 October.

11 September: Oration by Lawrence Humphrey.

On the first day's entertainment:

Greeting by a Sybil

A tilt

Hemetes and his Tale

Banquet in Hemetes' lodging

Presentations by Fayry Queen

Farewell by Caudina

As she left: "The Song in the Oak"

20 September:

The comedy of Caudina and Contarenius

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