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PASTORAL INFLUENCES ON ROBERT GREENE'S
SOCIAL VIEWS IN HIS ROMANCES
AND COMEDIES

by

Helen H. Mackay

A Dissertation Submitted to
the Faculty of the Graduate School at
The University of North Carolina at Greensboro
in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
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1977

Approved by

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APPROVAL PAGE

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ABSTRACT

MACKAY, HELEN HONEYCUTT. Pastoral Influences on Robert Greene's Social Views in His Romances and Comedies. (1977) Directed by: Dr. Christopher Spencer. Pp. 262.

Robert Greene, as a professional author and dramatist, was keenly attuned to audience expectations and to the literary trends of his day. One of the most notable of those trends in the 1580's was pastoral, which in England was not so much a genre but an idea which could be incorporated into virtually any other literary form. Furthermore, it was an idea which had intrinsic social implications in that its main thrust usually involved the retreat of an aristocrat to the world of humble folk, especially shepherds. While there the nobles would associate with the shepherds, engaging in the same pastoral pursuits, and accepting a surprisingly equal social exchange. Most authors glibly accepted this as a pretty convention, often even giving it an allegorical thrust. Greene, however, seems to have been attracted to pastoral primarily because of this social leveling, because he used pastoral concepts and, later, forms, as a means of enabling nobles and commoners to mingle freely, and, in so doing, to demonstrate the nature of true nobility. This true, or innate, nobility he saw as independent of social class, as based only upon the "gifts of Nature"-- beauty, virtue, and, most importantly, wit.

Chapter I is concerned with the social frame of reference afforded Greene by the circumstances of his life, as well as

by the social condition of England in his day. It also includes a brief examination of the pastoral mode as it came to Greene.

Chapters II and III are devoted to sixteen of Greene's prose romances from Mamillia (1583) through Never Too Late (1590), showing that almost all of them reflect pastoral ideas or motifs, and that such motifs may be correlated with the development of his social views. Through examining the romances in their chronological order of composition, these chapters postulate a curve beginning with social conservatism in the romances of 1583-87, moving to a more liberal outlook in 1588-89--the years in which he employed pastoral most fully--and finally settling back into a new conservatism in 1590-92, but now with the life of the common man at the center of his work.

Chapters IV and V examine Greene's five comedies, Alphonsus of Aragon, Orlando Furioso, Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay, A Looking Glasse for London and England, and James IV, as well as a generally-accepted attributed play, George a Greene. By fitting the comedies into the framework previously established for the prose, these chapters show that pastoral motifs and social ideas follow the same pattern of correlation as that of the prose.

Chapter VI concludes that Greene was very much a child of his age in his acceptance of its social hierarchy. His major divergence from conservative social views lay in his regard for the commoner as worthy of dignified literary treatment.

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My sincere appreciation goes to each of the five members of my committee for their support and assistance in too many ways to mention. I am particularly indebted to Dr. James Wimsatt and Dr. Russell Planck for their help with matters of literary tradition and history.

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CHAPTER I

ROBERT GREENE AND HIS SOCIAL MILIEU

During the past one hundred years of scholarship on the works of Robert Greene, a few critics from time to time have spoken of the democratic tone of his social views. As early as 1878, his Russian biographer Nicholas Storojenko spoke of the "democratic tendency" which he saw in Greene's Quip for an Upstart Courtier, and which he felt constituted its main departure from its source, the poem "Debate Between Pride and Lowliness."

Where, for instance, shall we find in the poem that love for the working-classes which Greene shows, and the fine indignation against their oppressors which he expresses? The democratic tendency which flows through the whole of Greene's pamphlet throws a new light on several of the characters and episodes.¹

In 1968, David Bevington explored apparent democratic feeling in Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay and George A Greene, saying for example: "George inveighs not only against violation of property rights, but against the very concept of degree. He acknowledges two ranks of society, kings and non-kings."²

¹Nicholas Storojenko, Robert Greene: His Life and Works: A Critical Investigation, trans. E. A. Brayley Hodgetts (Moscow: n.p., 1878), in The Life and Complete Works in Prose and Verse of Robert Greene, M. A., ed. Alexander B. Grosart (1881-1886; rpt. New York: Russell, 1964), I, 143.

²David Bevington, Tudor Drama and Politics: A Critical Approach to Topical Meaning (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 1968), p. 226.

Such statements, however, have usually come in the form of undeveloped assertions, and with regard to only one or two works. No one has explored Greene's social ideas on the basis of his complete corpus. This study attempts to fill this gap by examining Greene's works in their chronological order of composition, as nearly as it can be determined. The journalistic and hortative nature of the coney-catching and repentance tracts of his last two years makes them unfruitful sources for social examination; therefore I have largely omitted them, as well as such experiments as The Royal Exchange and The Spanish Masquerado.

On the basis then primarily of his prose romances and his dramas, the social pattern which develops may be pictured as a curve, beginning with conservatism in 1583-87 seen in a respectful fascination with the aristocracy, moving at approximately the mid-point of his career in 1588-89 to a greater degree of liberalism, and finally hardening back into conservatism from 1590-92 but now with the life of the common man as its center. As a writer of popular prose fiction, sensitive to the changing moods of his clientele, Greene cannot be expected to have the clearly delineated, consistent views of a sociologist; any attempt to show a clear ideological structure falls apart in the face of conflicting evidence. A common theme in many of the romances is marriage across class lines; though the beloved is sometimes revealed at the last moment in traditional romance style

to be a social equal, the choice of a mate has invariably been made without this knowledge. Yet even those who marry across class lines never question that the social hierarchy is proper. The foremost virtue of Greene's low-born heroes and heroines is their contentment with their social station, yet a commoner's innate nobility is often rewarded by social elevation. Lord Lacy marries Margaret, the "keeper's daughter," in a double ceremony which also solemnizes the union of England's future king and queen.

As a child of an age when the doctrine of degree, priority and place was thought to be handed down directly from God, Greene was certainly no democrat in the modern usage of the term, which would in its social sense connote classlessness. The aspect of his writing which has primarily caused it to be labeled "democratic" is his respect for the common man as worthy of literary treatment. Though the majority of the characters in his romances and comedies are noble, the low-born characters are often treated with real dignity. By contrast, the humble characters in Sidney's Arcadia are presented as subjects primarily for farce. There are also farcical characters in Greene's work, such as his clown-shepherds Doron and Carmela in Menaphon, or Mullidor in the epilogue to Francesco's Fortunes. In each case, though, there is at least a hint of dignity in some aspect of their portrayal, as when Doron poetically describes Samela to Melicertus, or when Mullidor stands up to the courtly

Radagon. And other low-born characters are shown as wholly admirable, possessed of the same wit and virtues as the aristocratic figures, as will be more fully demonstrated in later chapters of this study. Many of these appear as heroes or heroines of romances and plays--the smith Perimides and his wife Delia, Margaret of Fressingfield, Friar Bacon, and George a Greene, if this play is authentic. Such characters become one of Greene's trademarks, for even the broad-minded Shakespeare had no hero of humble origin.

Greene seems to be working, or at least stumbling, toward a synthesis between the demands and needs of a whole society as opposed to the demands and needs of the individual. On the social level he found no fault with the hierarchical organization of estates; on the individual level he saw that the demands of social rank often had to be subordinated to higher forces, such as those of love or fortune. He also saw that true nobility was not an external, but an internal matter; the man or woman possessed of beauty, virtue, and, most importantly, wit, belonged to a spiritual aristocracy which lay totally outside the social organization of the temporal world.

The most dramatic way of showing the differences between the two kinds of nobility was to place them in juxtaposition. He did this in Perimides the Blacke-Smith by playing off his frame story of a humble, innately noble

couple against their tales of aristocratic figures. A simpler and more direct way to accomplish the same goal, however, was to provide a common meeting ground in which aristocrats and the lower classes could interact. In his earliest experiments, he achieved this by having an aristocratic character banished or shipwrecked and thus forced to live in humble circumstances for a time. By 1588, though, he had discovered that a literary vehicle already existed which could be employed for such social interaction. Continental writers--Sannazaro, Montemayor, the Pléiade--had produced a large body of pastoral poems and romances, the influence of which was being felt in England, especially through Spenser's Shepherd's Calendar and Sidney's Arcadia. The essential element of the pastoral romance was the retreat or exile of a noble character to the rural world of humble but poetic shepherds. The pastoral tradition had come to be an accepted tool for many other unrelated uses, such as allegory or satire, but Greene was more intrigued by its social implications. Here was a literary form growing in popularity, and eminently suited to provide interrelationships between the classes. Greene's use of pastoral, and his foreshadowing of it in his early work, is a key element in understanding his view of the individual and the social milieu which surrounds him. Greene's use of impulses broadly referred to as "pastoral" is in parallel relationship to the social "curve" suggested above, all of his openly

pastoral work falling in 1588-90, at the peak of his social liberalism. This study contends that his social views are primarily manifested through their interaction with ideals and virtues which Greene examines in a pastoral frame of reference.

Integral to this examination is Greene's concept of the two most powerful forces in his literary world, love and fortune, which he sees as superior to the demands of class structure. These forces are related to the pastoral world in opposite ways. Love, from the origins of pastoral, is an integral part of its vision; it is the value most often gained in the pastoral world. Fortune, on the other hand, is usually regarded as being outside that world, unable to touch the shepherds because they are content with their humble, temperate life. Perhaps a key to understanding the relationship of pastoral to love and fortune is in the Renaissance distinction between the gifts of nature and the gifts of fortune: fortune gives man position and wealth; nature gives beauty, character, and wisdom.³ Greene shows these gifts of nature to be the prerequisites of love, far more important than social position. Nature confers an innate nobility; fortune can confer only the external

³The gifts of fortune and nature are discussed, for example, in John Shaw, "Fortune and Nature in As You Like It," Shakespeare Quarterly, 6 (1955), 45-50, and in Rachel Bromberg, Three Pastoral Novels (Brooklyn: Postar Press, 1970), pp. 51-54.

nobility of social class. The relationship to pastoral lies in the setting; as John Shaw says:

It is in the setting, of course, that the conflict between Fortune and Nature joins with the familiar Elizabethan conflict between the court and pastoralism, between the ideals of the "aspiring mind" and those of the contented shepherd.⁴

In terms of Greene's usage, this means that when characters go out into the woods and fields--whether this is explicitly shown as the pastoral world narrowly defined or whether it simply reflects the pastoral world by characteristics which both have in common--they achieve two things. They enter an area in which the role of fortune is absent or at least lessened, and in which the social classes interact, showing through this interaction, the nature of true nobility. This provides a climate in which even "unequal" love can grow, and it demonstrates the characteristics--beauty, virtue, and wit--which make that love equal in Greene's deeper sense and thus justifiable.

I. Greene's Life

The circumstances of Greene's life do much to explain the fascination which the subject of class held for him, for he lived his entire life along the most tenuous boundary line of England's social structure, the dividing point between the middle class and the lower gentry. His university degrees

⁴Shaw, p. 48.

enabled him to cross that line but could not give him the material support available to those who were gentlemen by birth and therefore landholders.

The apparent biographical facts of Greene's life are sketchy and often questionable. Our knowledge of those facts comes primarily from the posthumous, allegedly autobiographical tracts of 1592--A Groatsworth of Wit, the Repentance of Robert Greene, and Greenes Vision--and from some remarks of his friend Thomas Nashe, his bitter enemy Gabriel Harvey, and his first editor Henry Chettle.⁵

The facts which may be gleaned from more objective sources--church and university records, baptism and burial entries--are scanty and often tantalizing in the questions they raise. Part of the problem is that Robert Greene was an extremely common name, and trying to sort out which "Robert Greene" notations apply to the poet and which do not, can become a hazardous guessing game.

Based on the best hypotheses which scholars have been able to construct, the following data are usually accepted.

⁵The difficulty of ascertaining the facts of Greene's life arises partly because Nashe and Harvey's information appears in the form of a heated literary vendetta; thus both Harvey's attack and Nashe's defense are somewhat suspect as overreactions. The validity of the autobiographical tracts has been questioned because of the suspicious circumstances of their publication. See: Chauncey E. Sanders, "Robert Greene and His 'Editors,'" PMLA, 48 (1933), 392-417; Louis Marder, "Chettle's Forgery of the Groatsworth of Wit and the 'Shake-scene' Passage," Shakespeare Newsletter, 20 (1970), 42; Warren B. Austin, "Technique of the Chettle-Greene Forgery," Shakespeare Newsletter, 20 (1970), 43.

Greene was a native of the city of Norwich in Norfolk county and was baptized there on July 11, 1558. He was the second child of Robert Greene, a saddler of Norwich, and his wife Jane.⁶ He matriculated as a sizar at St. John's College in Cambridge, receiving his baccalaureate degree in 1580 and his master's degree in 1583. He admits that he failed in his early college years to apply himself to his work, and his standing of thirty-eighth in the St. John's class of forty-one students (115th in the University class of 205) bears this out. He improved in the standings of the M. A. candidates, in which he was fifth in his Clare Hall class of twelve, and twenty-ninth in the University class of 129.⁷ He also received an Oxford degree, enabling him to style himself Academiae Utriusque Magister in Artibus.⁸ Beyond this, the only matter of record which seems certainly to apply to Greene was the record of the burial in 1593 of his illegitimate son Fortunatus in Shoreditch, a sleazy area of London which Harvey calls one of Greene's haunts.

⁶ The most complete account of the materials from which these deductions are made is in J. Churton Collins' edition of The Plays and Poems of Robert Greene, 2 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1905), I, 10-14.

⁷ Johnstone Parr, "Robert Greene and His Classmates at Cambridge," PMLA, 77 (1962), p. 540. Collins and E. K. Chambers [The Elizabethan Stage, 4 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1923), III, 323] state that he received the B. A. in 1578.

⁸ Chambers says he received this degree in July, 1588; III, 323.

Turning to the accounts in the "deathbed" pamphlets and in his contemporaries' writing, we learn that he married, probably in late 1584 or early 1585, "a Gentlemans daughter of good account" as he relates in "The Life and Death of Robert Greene Maister of Artes,"⁹ had a child by her and left her to go to London. Of this child and marriage there is no other account. Since his famous last letter to her addresses her as "Doll" her name may have been Dorothy--a name he later applies to the virtuous and forgiving queen in James IV. It has been assumed that their child was a boy since Greene's letter to his wife, printed in Groatsworth of Wit, refers to sending her their son. Sanders suggests though that Chettle, whom he accuses of forging this manuscript, may have written this under the assumption that Greene's illegitimate son Fortunatus was his wife's son.¹⁰ The will of Robert Greene the saddler, written after the poet's death, refers to a grandson "Jarvys Greene" and a granddaughter "Dorothie Greene."¹¹ Since Greene's only

⁹ Grosart edition of The Life and Works, XII, 177. All succeeding quotations from the prose will be taken from this edition and will be credited by parenthetical citations within the body of the text. I have changed the quotations only in the regularization of the long s.

¹⁰ Chauncey Sanders, p. 398.

¹¹ The elder Greene's will is printed in an appendix to René Pruvost, Robert Greene et ses Romans, 1558-1592 (Paris: Société d'Édition "Les Belles Lettres," 1938), pp. 585, 586.

known brother, Tobias, was unmarried and childless at the time of this will, the citation is puzzling, but no conclusions can be drawn from it.

In the "Life and Death of Robert Greene," which if not authentic may be at least based on Greene's notes, he gives some further details about his schooling, travels, and religious experiences. He states that at some point between his matriculation at St. John's and the beginning of his work on the master's degree, he traveled under the influence of "wags as lewd as myself" to Italy and Spain, "in which places I sawe and practizde such villainie as is abhominable to declare" (XII, 172). Some scholars have doubted that he traveled, however, because his notions of geography and his place-descriptions are hazy. In the same account, Greene mentions an early religious experience at "Saint Andrews Church in the Cittie of Norwich" when he was "new come from Italy." If we may trust this account it does provide a biographical link with the late repentance tracts, being the only account of any religious conviction before his last days. The reputation of Italy at this time was so bad¹² that it may explain why Greene connects this early

¹² "Italy was particularly disliked, as a menace to both body and soul. . . . It was reputed to offer facilities for every variety of heterosexual perversion as well as to be the main European stronghold of homosexuality. . . . It was the home of Machiavelli and so of subversive and cynical political attitudes." Lawrence Stone, The Crisis of the Aristocracy, 1558-1641 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1965), p. 700.

repentance with his return from Italy. Two traditions--that Greene was a minister, and that he studied to be a doctor--have been thoroughly discounted by C. M. Gayley,¹³ a judgment reached also by Collins, apparently independently, since he does not cite Gayley.¹⁴

Greene died September 3, 1592, in circumstances known to us only through Harvey's Foure Letters. Harvey declared that Greene died, "not of the plague, or the pockes, as a Gentleman saide, but of a surfett of pickle herringe and rennish wine,"¹⁵ and in extreme poverty:

the Prince of beggars, laid all to gage for some few shillings: and was attended by lice: and would pitifully beg a penny-pott of Malmesie: and could not gett any of his old acquaintance to comfort, or visite him in his extremity, but Mistris Appleby, and the mother of Infortunatus.¹⁶

He goes on to add that Greene owed to the shoemaker and his wife who took him in, the unlikely sum of ten pounds, a veritable fortune to people of that class, and that he requested that his estranged wife pay this debt:

¹³ Charles M. Gayley, Representative English Comedies (New York: Macmillan, 1903), pp. 398-401.

¹⁴ Collins, I, 19-22.

¹⁵ Gabriel Harvey, Foure Letters and certeine Sonnets, especially touching Robert Greene and other parties by him abused (1592), Elizabethan and Jacobean Quartos, ed. G. B. Harrison (1922-26; rpt. New York: Barnes and Noble, Inc., 1966), p. 13.

¹⁶ Harvey, pp. 20-21.

Doll, I charge thee by the loue of our youth,
& by my soules rest, that thou wilte see this
man paide: for if hee, and his wife had not
succoured me, I had died in the streetes.¹⁷

In answer to this account of Greene's miserable end,
Nashe replied:

For the lowsie circumstance of his
pouerty before his death, and sending that
miserable writte to his wife, it cannot be
but thou hyst, learned Gabriell.

I and one of my fellowes, Will. Monox
(Hast thou neuer heard of him and his great
dagger?) were in company with him a month
before he died, at that fatall banquet of
Rhenish wine and pickled hearing (if thou
wilt needs haue it so), and then the inuen-
torie of his apparrell came to more than
three shillinges (though thou saist the
contrarie). I know a Broker in a spruce
leather jerkin with a great number of golde
Rings on his fingers, and bunch of keies at
his girdle, shall giue you thirty shillings for
the doublet alone, if you can helpe him to it.
Harke in your eare, hee had a very faire Cloake
with sleeues, of a graue goose turd greene; it
would serue you as fine as may bee: No more
words, if you bee wise, play the good husband
and listen after it, you may buy it ten
shillings better cheape than it cost him.¹⁸

Most of the critics have accepted Harvey's account with few
reservations, feeling that since Harvey said Nashe "came
neuer more at him [Greene]: but either would not, or happily
could not performe the duty of an affectionate, and faithfull
frend,"¹⁹ that Nashe was in no position to know the truth.

¹⁷ Harvey, p. 22.

¹⁸ Thomas Nashe, Strange Newes, of the intercepting
certeine Letters (1592), in The Works of Thomas Nashe, 5
vols., ed. Ronald B. McKerrow (1904-1910; rpt. Oxford:
Basil Blackwell, 1958), I, 287-288.

¹⁹ Harvey, p. 21.

Probably, however, the truth lies somewhere between the two positions.

Of Greene's personal appearance and character again the only source of information is the accounts of Harvey, Nashe, and Chettle. Harvey writes:

Whiles I was thus, or to like effecte, resolving with my selfe, and discoursing with some speciall frendes: not onely writing vnto you: I was suddainely certified, that the king of the paper stage (so the Gentleman tearmed Greene) had played his last part, & was gone to Tarleton. . . . he they say, was the Monarch of Crosbiters, and the very Emperour of shifters. I was altogether vnacquainted with the man & neuer once saluted him by name: but who in London hath not heard of his dissolute, and licentious liuing; his fonde disguisinge of a Master of Arte with ruffianly haire, vnseemely apparell, and more vnseemlye Company: his vaine glorious and Thrasonicall brauinge: his piperly Extemporizing, and Tarletonizing: his apishe counterfeiting of euery ridiculous, and absurd toy: his fine coosening of Iuglers, and finer iugling with cooseners. . . . his beggarly departing in euery hostisses debt; his infamous resorting to the Banckeside, Shorditch, Southwarke, and other filthy hauntes: his obscure lurking in basest corners: his pawning of his sword, cloake, and what not, when money came short; his impudent pamphletting, phantasticall interluding, and desperate libelling, when other coosening shifts failed: his imployinge of Ball (surnamed, cuttinge Ball) till he was intercepted at Tiborne, to leauy a crew of his trustiest companions, to garde him in daunger of Arrestes: his keeping of the foresaid Balls sister, a sorry ragged queane, of whome hee had his base sonne, Infortunatus Greene: his forsaking of his owne wife, too honest for such a husband: Particulars are infinite.²⁰

These allegations have been given more weight by the deathbed repentance tracts long thought to have been unreservedly

²⁰ Harvey, pp. 18-20.

Greene's own confessions. However even if the confessions are accepted as coming from Greene's notes, there are still no grounds for accepting Harvey's "infinite particulars" as accurate. The repentance tracts deal only in vague generalities, such as:

From whordome I grew to drunkennes, from drunkennes to swearing and blaspheming the name of God, hereof grew quarrels, frayes and continual controuersies, which are now as wormes in my conscience gnawing me incessantly. And did I not through hearty repentance take hold of Gods mercies, euen these detestable sinnes would drench me downe into the damnable pit of destruction; for Stipendium peccati mors. (XII, 174)

There is a large element of the conventional here, both in the particular sins enumerated and in the pattern of sin leading to repentance and salvation. Such dramatic repentances were popular fare of Greene's day. He had already capitalized on the trend in the Blacke Bookes Messenger, which purported to be the final confession of the notorious criminal Ned Browne. Thus little weight can be placed on such assertions as matters of biographical fact.

To counteract Harvey's charges, Nashe wrote:

In short tearmes, thus I demur vpon thy long Kentish-tayld declaration against Greene. Hee inherited more vertues than vices: a iolly long red peake [beard], like the spire of a steeple, hee cherisht continually without cutting, whereat a man might hang a Iewell, it was so sharpe and pendant.

Why should art answer for the infirmities of maners? Hee had his faultes, and thou thy follyes.

Debt and deadly sinne, who is not subiect to? with any notorious crime I neuer knew him tainted; (& yet tainting is no infamous surgerie

for him that hath beene in so many hote skirmishes).

A good fellowe hee was, and would haue drunke with thee for more angels then the Lord thou libeldest on gaue thee in Christs Colledge; and in one yeare hee pist as much against the walls, as thou and thy two brothers spent in three.

In a night and a day would he haue yarkt vp a Pamphlet as well as in seauen yeare, and glad was that Printer that might bee so blest to pay him deare for the very dregs of his wit.

Hee made no account of winning credite by his workes, as thou dost, that dost no good workes, but thinkes to bee famosed by a strong faith of thy owne worthines: his only care was to haue a spel in his purse to coniure vp a good cuppe of wine with at all times.²¹

To this Nashe later adds:

What Greene was, let some other answere for him as much as I haue done; I had no tuition ouer him; he might haue writ another Galataeo of manners, for his manners euerie time I came in his companie. I saw no such base shifting or abhominable villanie by him. Something there was which I haue heard, not seene, that hee had not that regarde to his credite in, which had been requisite he should.²²

Nashe's guardedness in espousing the cause of his friend suggests that there was indeed some fire in the midst of all Harvey's smoke, but his account at least balances the picture.

Chettle's contribution is slight, but helps support Nashe's more balanced view of Greene. In Kind-Hartes Dream he describes five apparitions he saw in a dream. Of Greene's apparition he says:

²¹ Nashe, p. 287.

²² Nashe, p. 330.

With him was the fifth, a man of indifferent yeares, of face amible, of body well proportioned, his attire after the habite of a schollerlike Gentleman, onely his haire was somewhat long, whome I supposed to be Robert Greene, maister of Artes. . . . He was of singular pleasaunce the verye supporter, and to no man's disgrace bee this intended, the only Comedian of a vulgar writer in this country.²³

This statement also provides one of the few extant written comments on contemporary acceptance of Greene's literary and dramatic productions, as do some of the above remarks by Harvey and Nashe. Chettle's reference to Greene's comedies attests to his popularity in the theater. Even Harvey's scornful allusion to "the king of the paper stage" bears this out. The popularity of his prose romances and pamphlets is well documented by the number of editions that appeared, as will be noted in the chapters on the prose. However, his very prolificacy was obviously considered rather disgraceful by his fellow-writers, as may be seen from comments of both Harvey and Nashe. Harvey apostrophizes: "Is this Greene with the running Head, and the scribbling Hand, that neuer linnes putting-forth new, newer, & newest bookes of the maker?"²⁴ To this Nashe replies:

Of force I must graunt that Greene came oftner in print than men of iudgement allowed off, but

²³ Henrie Chettle, Kind-Hartes Dreame (1592), Elizabethan and Jacobean Quartos, ed. G. B. Harrison (1922-26; rpt. New York: Barnes and Noble, 1966), p. 13.

²⁴ Harvey, p. 37.

neuertheless he was a daintie slaue to content the taile of a Tearme, and stuff seruing mens pockets.²⁵

The last phrase makes clear that Nashe's view of Greene's art had changed between 1589 and 1592; in 1589 he had written a preface to Greene's Menaphon, praising it as being true art, worthy of scholars' attention. With Greene's change to lower-class characters, and a journalistic style of writing in his last two years, the more educated and noble part of his audience apparently lost their regard for his work. Today it seems strange that this should have been so; twentieth-century readers tend to value the coney-catching pamphlets more highly than the romances, undoubtedly because a criterion of a story's worth has come to be its realism. To Elizabethan courtiers and scholars, though, stylistic elevation and the presentation of noble characters, worthy of imitation, were far more desirable. The coney-catching tracts, while popular among Greene's middle-class readers, heaped scorn upon him from the higher class. Harvey states:

Yet to some conceited witt, that could take delight to discouer knaueries, or were a fitte person to augment the history of Conny-catchers: O Lord, what a pregnant occasion were here presented, to display leaud vanity in his liuely coullours, & to decipher the very misteries of that base Arte? Petty Cooseners are not woorth the naming.²⁶

²⁵Nashe, p. 329.

²⁶Harvey, pp. 18-19.

While Harvey is specifically referring to Greene's life here, rather than his writing, his opinion is clear: he feels that it would take a base person to enjoy writing about "knaueries." Other readers agreed with Harvey. Sir John Davies thought Greene's underworld pamphlets among works "which have debased literature and corrupted its audience."²⁷

The importance to this study of the scanty information that we have about Greene's life seems to consist in the influence of the three main environments in which his life was spent. His childhood environment was urban, middle class, and apparently religious. His young manhood was molded by the powerful influence of the University. And finally his adult life, the period of his productivity, was passed primarily under the equally vigorous shaping influence of the London of the Elizabethan era.

First, Greene's childhood was spent in the busy industrial community of Norwich, a very large town by English standards of that day. While the average English town had about 5,000 inhabitants, Norwich had about 20,000.²⁸ Because of its numerous industries, especially textiles and livestock, with associated industries dealing in leather, it was also a prosperous town. The Duke of Norfolk's revenues were said to

²⁷ Edwin H. Miller, The Professional Writer in Elizabethan England: A Study of Nondramatic Literature (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 1959), p. 67.

²⁸ G. M. Trevelyan, The Age of Shakespeare and the Stuart Period, Vol. II of Illustrated English Social History (London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1942; rpt. 1951), p. 4.

be nearly equivalent to those of Scotland's king.²⁹ Clive Rouse, in a descriptive work on England's old towns, says that Norwich was also a "people's town where many revolutionary movements towards a wider democracy had their origin."³⁰ In the thirteenth century and again in the fifteenth there were clashes between the townspeople and the nearby Benedictine priory in an attempt to assure to the city certain rights that the Church had pre-empted.³¹ In such a town and in the home of a saddler, the young Greene formed his impressions of the social and economic structure of the England of his day. His father, as a middle-class artisan and shopkeeper, would have been financially independent and thus not affected by the dying feudal system of noblesse oblige. This fact may be reflected in Greene's portrayal of a middle-class couple in Never Too Late (1590). He says that his hero and heroine became "the very myrroures of a Democraticall methode" (VIII, 65) when they supported themselves by taking up the trades of schoolteaching and needlework.

As typical middle-class Englishmen, Norwich's citizens were religious. Rouse speaks of the numerous churches in the

²⁹Lewis Einstein, Tudor Ideals (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1921), p. 150.

³⁰Clive Rouse, The Old Towns of England (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1936), p. 27.

³¹Rouse, p. 39.

town, often adjacent to the market places and other areas of civic business.³² Greene's account of his early religious awakening at St. Andrews Church would perhaps have referred to the preaching of John More, minister of St. Andrews from 1571 through January of 1592. Collins notes that More was "a man of remarkable accomplishments and eloquence who was known as the Apostle of Norwich."³³ Greene says of his parents in The Life and Death of Robert Greene only that they "for their grauitie and honest life [were] well knowne and esteemed amongst their neighbors" (XII, 171), but the piety expressed in his father's will suggests that there was also a strong religious influence in the home.³⁴ These early moral and religious impressions must help account for the high moral plane of his work, with its strange contrast to his adult life.

The second great influence on Greene was his years at the University. Cambridge gave him not only a love for the classics, but also a general humanistic background that went far beyond the concern with classical literature. It instilled in him a respect for the integrity and worth of the individual, a concept opposed to the medieval view of the person as subordinate to the society. However, he also gained at Cambridge an introduction to contemporary intellectual life. Out of

³²Rouse, pp. 18, 38.

³³Collins, I, 18.

³⁴See will in Pruvost, p. 585.

the universities of the 1570's and 80's came the group of young artists, nearly all from middle-class backgrounds, who have come to be called the University Wits--Lyly, Marlowe, Peele, Greene, Nashe. Their influence on Elizabethan literature, especially drama, was powerful and far-reaching. Parrott and Ball rightly noted, however, that the Wits did not constitute a school; their contribution was made in highly individual ways: "there is a vast difference between the courtly comedies of Lyly and the heroic tragedies of Marlowe."³⁵

Finally the university gave Greene the right to be called "gentleman," the significance of which cannot be underestimated. One of Queen Elizabeth's heralds, Sir William Segar, described contemporary rules of social procedure in two books published in 1590 and 1602. He distinguishes between the "Gentleman borne" who must have "his descent from three degrees of Gentry, both of the mothers and fathers side," and those who receive titles in other ways, such as by "profession of armes." He adds: "A scholler also hauing taken degrees of schoole, was not denied the title of Gentry."³⁶ However, to receive a title in this way was to

³⁵ Thomas M. Parrott and Robert H. Ball, A Short View of Elizabethan Drama (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1943), p. 63.

³⁶ Sir William Segar, The Book of Honor and Armes (1590) and Honor Military and Civil (1602) (Delmar, N. Y.: Scholars' Facsimiles and Reprints, 1975), pp. 121, 122.

be placed in an anomalous situation--one was no longer of the middle or lower class, but neither was he quite a part of the higher class. To retain status as a gentleman, he had to avoid manual labor and yet he did not have the means of support available to the gentry. One of the few means of livelihood available to those in this position was authorship. In Francesco's Fortunes Greene reflects this when he writes: "the care of his [Francesco's] parents and of his owne honor perswaded him from making gaine by labour: he had neuer been brought vp to any mechanicall course of life" (VIII, 128); thus Francesco began to write plays. As the university-trained writers drifted to London in the 1580's they became a group without roots, generally characterized by poverty and by a bohemian appearance and way of life which E. H. Miller implies resulted from their desire to be accepted by gentlemen and by their hostility to commoners.³⁷ This social fragmentation may lie behind Greene's early aristocratic romances, as well as his late disillusionment and his literary treatment of the lower classes.

The third major influence on Greene's life and work is the more elusive one of the city of London. Its nature may be felt primarily in the change which occurred in Greene's writing during the decade from 1583-1592. The optimism and

³⁷ Miller, p. 14.

idealism of his early work eventually gave way to a disillusion which permeated the last three years. Much of this no doubt was due to the hardship of London life. Every day Greene was confronted with the social and economic contrasts especially characteristic of the London of the closing decades of the sixteenth century. Before the dissolution of the monasteries by Henry VIII, the poor had been able to alleviate some of their need through the charity afforded by the Church. City authorities attempted to deal with the problem by instituting hospitals, work houses, and programs to provide grain; they were assisted by private donors who endowed schools or public relief projects. But the growth in population was outstripping the provisions being made. Some estimates see as many as 100,000 people within London's walls at this period, with many more in the suburbs.³⁸ The overcrowded conditions, combined with the lack of sanitation, often resulted in devastating epidemics of the plague, in which hundreds died daily. It also led to an increase in crimes of all sorts.

In contrast to this misery London contained the court with all its brilliance and luxury, and the wealthy middle-class merchants who often outstripped even the courtiers in their lavish display. Between its extremes were Greene and his fellow writers, intellectually and culturally the equal

³⁸ Hardin Craig, Introduction to The Complete Works of Shakespeare, ed. Hardin Craig (Chicago: Scott, Foresman, 1951), p. 3.

of the courtiers, but too often on the economic and social level of the struggling lower classes. Some of Greene's bitterness at this inequity slips into the opening of A Quip for an Upstart Courtier when he shows people gathering the flower "thrift" which he equates with wealth. He adds:

Amongst this crue were Lawyers, and they
gathered the Diuell and all, but poore poets
were thrust backe and coulde not bee suffered
to haue one handfull to put amongst their
withered garland of baies, to make them
glorious. (XI, 218)

These contrasts in the distribution of wealth perhaps increased his speculations on the problem of fortune, the mysterious force that seemed to distribute wealth and power with unreasoning abandon. Certainly they must have led to the strangely amoral tone of the coney-catching pamphlets, in which the normally conservative Greene at times seems almost to take a delight in the sly machinations of London's petty thieves and con-men.

Yet notwithstanding its misery, filth, and danger, London was also the intellectual center of England. To its public theaters and to the booksellers' shops in St. Paul's were drawn the aspiring young writers from the provinces. Even when they found poverty and disillusionment there, they stayed on, for its teeming life nourished their need for stimulation, variety, the very tension between diverse impulses that so often results in intellectual growth. Here Greene formed friendships and enmities with the playwrights, poets, satirists who were charting the future of

English literature. This must explain why during the last six years of his life, in which he faced many hardships if we can trust Harvey's account at all, we have no record of Greene's leaving London. Here he had found his spiritual home.

Between Norwich and London, most of Greene's life seems to have been spent in urban surroundings. This fact directly influenced his ideas about social structure, and also his use of the pastoral mode. One of the commonplaces of pastoral is that it only develops in an urban or courtly society, for its basis is the contrast--stated or implied--between the complexities of the town/court and the simplicity of the rural/pastoral world. Furthermore, it was in the city that one could gain, through industry or merchandising, the financial independence needed to break down class barriers. Greene undoubtedly saw in London and Norwich marriages more and more often contracted between the daughters of wealthy merchants and the younger sons of the gentry, giving one a title and the other a handsome dowry. Since social attitudes and pastoral ideals shaped Greene's writing in significant ways, it is necessary to examine each in more detail before demonstrating their relationship to his prose and drama.

II. Class Structure in Elizabethan England

When referring to upper, middle, or lower classes in this study, I will follow Louis Wright's groupings: upper

class--the titled nobility, the landed gentry, and some members of the learned professions; middle class--merchants, skilled craftsmen, and shopkeepers; lower class--peasants, unskilled laborers, and small artisans.³⁹ However these classes were not rigidly structured, but were characterized by a relative freedom of movement. Trevelyan shows that English society, while not based on equality, allowed "freedom of opportunity and freedom of personal intercourse."⁴⁰ This is seen, for example, in the rise of the Cecils. William Cecil, Lord Burghley, Elizabeth's lord treasurer, was descended from a yeoman of Henry VII's retinue. In 1551 Cecil was knighted; in 1571 Elizabeth raised him to the peerage as Baron Burghley; and finally James I gave Cecil's two sons the earldoms of Exeter and Salisbury soon after his coronation. Class distinctions were also often hazy at the lines of demarcation. Mildred Campbell says:

But in many country parishes it would take a sharper eye than the average person possessed to determine, either from their mode of living or the social intercourse carried on between them any appreciable difference between the well-to-do yeomen and their neighbors of the minor gentry.⁴¹

³⁹Louis B. Wright, Middle-Class Culture in Elizabethan England (Chapel Hill: Univ. of N. C. Press, 1935), p. 2.

⁴⁰Trevelyan, pp. 23, 24.

⁴¹Mildred Campbell, The English Yeoman Under Elizabeth and the Early Stuarts (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1942), p. 33.

This movement between classes did not affect the class system itself, however. Stone's apt metaphor best explains the situation: "A class is not a finite group of families, but rather a bus or a hotel, always full, but always filled with different people."⁴² As families moved upward--or downward--they quickly adapted to the new lifestyle, causing very little change in the character of the social fabric. Even those who raised their own estate defended the class system as divinely ordained and necessary to the organization of the commonwealth. This was the official and apparently almost universally accepted theory, although as Rowse says: "the very strength of the emphasis on order and degree may reflect how necessary it was because of the forces that were in motion."⁴³

These forces were widespread, affecting every area of national life. On the religious level the influence of the Reformation was breaking the strength of the Catholic Church which had played a large role in maintaining the feudal system. Calvin's Institutes of the Christian Religion made the individual Christian, rather than the established church, God's basis for determining Christian policy. J. R. Green says:

Every such Christian man is in himself a priest, and every group of such men is a Church, self-governing, independent of all save God, supreme in its authority over all matters ecclesiastical

⁴²Stone, pp. 38, 39.

⁴³A. L. Rowse, The England of Elizabeth: The Structure of Society (New York: Macmillan, 1951), p. 223.

and spiritual. The constitution of such a church, where each member as a Christian was equal before God, necessarily took a democratic form.⁴⁴

Politically, the Tudors were a "bourgeois dynasty," as Wright notes.⁴⁵ Henry VIII had not hesitated to take mistresses or wives from lower estates. Even though Queen Elizabeth attempted to keep a conservative social order with a small strong group of peers at its head, her own great-grandfather had been a London merchant. She knighted very few, and was harsh with those who did, such as Essex, but people continued to get spurious arms at such a rate that she was obliged to have her heralds visit the counties regularly to check on the credentials of the new pretenders to gentility.⁴⁶

Socially, the English middle class had traditionally been strong. As early as the reign of Richard II, a merchant, Michael de la Pole, earned an earldom by wealth derived from trade; and the Cromwells, Cecils, and Walsinghams--the great Tudor ministers, all were of the middle class.⁴⁷ Most of

⁴⁴John R. Green, A History of the English People, 5 vols. (New York: National Library Co., n.d. [1874]), II, 281.

⁴⁵Wright, p. 5

⁴⁶Rowse, pp. 247, 248. Of Essex's knighting of his followers, Rowse says: "Nothing annoyed her [Elizabeth] more in Essex's conduct than his cheapening the order of knighthood by taking advantage of his commands abroad, in Normandy, at Cadiz, in Ireland, to create a large number of new knights" (p. 251).

⁴⁷A. F. Pollard, Factors in Modern History (London: Constable, 1921), p. 40.

the lord mayors and other civic leaders of London in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries were of humble birth.⁴⁸ Pollard notes that there is no true "nobility of blood" in England, for even the younger sons of peers are commoners.⁴⁹

Finally, ideologically, there was a strong belief, at least on the theoretical level, that degree cannot make a man honorable without virtue. As early as Boethius' Consolation of Philosophy, the idea is current that all men in their origin are noble and that maintaining this nobility is contingent upon continuing to reflect the virtues of these noble ancestors (Book Three, Prose Six). Chaucer's Wife of Bath repeats this idea when she says:

Looke who that is moost vertuouse alway,
 Pryvee and apert, and moost entendeth ay
 To do the gentil dedes that he kan;
 Taak hym for the grettest gentil man.
 Crist wole we clayme of hym oure gentillesse,
 Nat of oure eldres for hire old richesse.
 For thogh they yeve us al hir heritage,
 For which we clayme to been of heigh parage,
 Yet may they nat biquethe, for no thyng,
 To noon of us hir vertuouse lyvyng,
 That made hem gentil men ycalled be,
 And bad us folwen hem in swich degree.⁵⁰

Lewis Einstein says that even the courtly Lyly held to this view: "With Lyly we have the modern designation of the word

⁴⁸Wright, p. 11.

⁴⁹Pollard, p. 42.

⁵⁰Geoffrey Chaucer, "The Wife of Bath's Tale," ll. 1113-1124, in The Work of Geoffrey Chaucer, 2nd edn., ed. F. N. Robinson (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1957), p. 87.

'gentleman.' Though the association between position and virtue did not always correspond, the ideal he held was high."⁵¹ Queen Elizabeth's herald, Segar, stated:

It is not therefore as ignorant persons and vnskilful folke doe surmise, that great riches, or titles of dignitie, do make men honourable, vnlesse they be accompanied with the vertues and perfections aforesayd: for riches (albeit they are a great ornament to illustrate vertue) yet are they not any efficient cause to make men honourable.⁵²

This is not nearly so democratic as it sounds, however, for Segar, with the shortsightedness of his age, simply assumes that those of noble birth are innately virtuous and that the despised nouveau-riche man is by nature "rather notable for his imperfections, then worthy of true Honor." It was this innate virtue that Greene insisted upon giving to the commoner as well, perhaps his most far-reaching departure from the social theory of his day. Greene's inclusion of beauty as one of the characteristics of internal nobility is explained by the theory common in his day that outward appearance was an indication of inner worth; as Segar says:

He [the gentleman professing arms] should be well fauoured of face and comelie: for commonlie GOD and Nature giueth beautie to such persons as are destined to command, and from others borne to obey they haue withholden that fauour.⁵³

⁵¹Einstein, p. 162.

⁵²Segar, p. 209.

⁵³Segar, "Of Honor and Armes," Book V, p. 2.

There were a number of more or less acceptable ways of raising one's station, such as by entering certain professions. William Harrison wrote in his Description of England, Book II (1557):

There are comprised under the title of Gentry all Ecclesiastical persons professing religion, all Martial men that have borne office, and have had command in the field; all Students of Arts and Sciences, and by our Englishe custome, all Innes of Court men, professors of the Law; it skilles not what their Fathers were, whether Farmers, Shoemakers, Taylers, or Tinkers.⁵⁴

Another common way was by taking service under the monarch or by his direct grant. Segar gives a very complete listing of the possibilities in his Of Honour Militarie and Civil, Book 4, Chapter 15. His disdain at the numerous means of acquiring the title of gentleman is clear from the final paragraph of the chapter:

Item, in England whoso studieth liberal Sciences in the Vniuersities, or is accounted learned in the common Lawes, and for the most part, who so can liue idly, and without manual labour, or will beare the port, charge, and countenance of a Gentleman, shalbe called Master (for that is the title which men giue to Esquires and other Gentlemen) and shall be taken for a Gentleman. . . . So doth it appeare, that (in England) the King needeth not to make Gentlemen, because euery man may assume that title, or buy it better cheape, then by suite to the Prince, or by expense in his seruice.⁵⁵

One increasingly common way of raising social estate was by marriage into a higher class. Such marriages were most often

⁵⁴ Quoted in Campbell, p. 34.

⁵⁵ Segar, p. 228.

contracted between the daughters of well-to-do merchants and the sons of the lower gentry, in which case the bride and any children born of the marriage received a title in exchange for the dowry she brought her husband. Segar says: "Item, Nobilitie is oft times gotten by marriage; for if a Gentleman doe marrie a woman of base parentage, she is thereby ennobled."⁵⁶ The opposite case--of a woman of gentle birth marrying a middle-class man--was only slightly less common, even though in such a case the title could not be transmitted. Painter explains the theory in the story of "Ariobarzanes":

The kynge then purposinge to excell Ariobarzanes, mynded by couplynge hym wyth hys Daughter, to make hym his sonne in lawe: whych to a Lady of Royall Linage, appeareth some debacinge of her noble bloud, to be matched with a man of inferiour byrth: the lyke to a Man how honourable so euer he be cannot chaunce, if he take a Wyfe of Degree neuer so Base: for if hee bee borne of Noble and Gentle kynde, hee doth illustrate and aduance the Woman whom he taketh, all be it shee were of the meanest trampe of the popular sorte, and the Chyldren whych be borne of them by the Father's meanes, shalbe Noble and of a gentle kynd: but a woman, although shee be most Noble, if shee bee married to hir inferiour, and that hir husbände bee not so Noble, the chyldren that shall be borne of them shall not receiue the honour of the mother's stock, but the state of the father's lotte, and so shall be vnnoble.⁵⁷

Mildred Campbell points out, however, that in practice such

⁵⁶Segar, p. 228.

⁵⁷The Palace of Pleasure (1566,67), "Done into English by William Painter," 3 vols., ed Joseph Jacobs (New York: Dover Publications, 1966), II, pp. 195-96.

marriages probably did have some influence on a rise in social estate; John Shakespeare's application for a coat of arms listed as support his marriage to Mary Arden, a gentleman's daughter.⁵⁸ These marriages were conventionally deplored in most writing of the day, as for example The Passionate Morrice, in which a character called Honesty complains:

For men wil sooner match their daughters with my yong maister, a rich Coblers Sonne, though they be their heires, then with a Gentleman of a good house, being a yonger Brother. Heerby comes the decay of ancient gentilitie, and this the making of upstart houses.⁵⁹

But some sympathetic portrayals of marriage across class lines were beginning to appear, even in the preponderantly conservative Palace of Pleasure, as for example in the forty-fourth novel of Tome I, "Alerane and Adelasia," in which the emperor's daughter elopes with a simple knight in her father's army. By 1616 Thomas Gainsford could write approvingly:

Citizens in times past did not marry beyond their degrees, nor would a Gentleman make affinitie with a Burgesse: but wealth hath taught us now another lesson; and the Gentleman is glad to make his younger sonne a tradsman, and match his best daughter with a rich Citizen for estate and living.⁶⁰

⁵⁸ Campbell, p. 56.

⁵⁹ Quoted in Wright, p. 211.

⁶⁰ From The Rich Cabinet Furnished with Varieties of Excellent Descriptions (1616); quoted in Wright, p. 32.

Very few such openly sympathetic statements appeared in the latter half of the sixteenth century, however, owing partially perhaps to Queen Elizabeth's concern for maintaining firm class distinctions. In practice these distinctions continued to break down, although not as rapidly as they had under Henry VIII.⁶¹ In theory, however, the policy was necessarily conservative because the actual conditions were anomalous. In an age when a struggle for position was occurring, it was essential, as Rowse says, "to assert one's place in society, as high a place as one could pretend to," which resulted in a "constant . . . insistence upon gentility."⁶² This class consciousness made it imperative to defend the system by which one acquired that gentility.

Against this social background Greene began to write his romances and plays. His own position was just at the boundary line where most of the immigration into upper classes was occurring. Like so many other bright middle-class young men, he attended the University and was thus enabled to acquire the title of "gentleman." Harbage says: "It is impossible to overestimate the effect of a university degree upon an individual's social attitudes in the period under scrutiny."⁶³ To some extent this was because a change in the

⁶¹ See Einstein, p. 156.

⁶² Rowse, pp. 244, 245.

⁶³ Alfred Harbage, Shakespeare and the Rival Traditions (New York: Macmillan, 1952), p. 98.

social composition of the student body was occurring. Until about the mid-sixteenth century very few aristocrats sent their sons to the University, scorning learning as a lower-class pursuit. One such gentleman is reported to have exclaimed:

I swear by God's body, I'd rather that my son should hang than study letters. For it becomes the sons of gentlemen to blow the horn nicely, to hunt skilfully and elegantly, carry and train a hawk. But the study of letters should be left to the sons of rustics.⁶⁴

More and more thinkers, however, were stressing the role of education in training those who were to be leaders of the nation. As increasing numbers of young nobles came to the universities, social stratification resulted. Harbage says: "Confusion in values, and a certain amount of snobbery, are the inevitable products of such a situation."⁶⁵ At Cambridge Greene, surrounded by young aristocrats for the first time, came to see himself as part of a higher class, which he manifested in one way in his early attempts to write with modish elegance for a courtly audience. This social confusion led to a situation in which the university-trained son of a saddler was unable to see the incongruity in his public taunting of the university-trained sons of a ropemaker.⁶⁶

⁶⁴ Quoted in Stone, p. 674.

⁶⁵ Harbage, p. 98.

⁶⁶ In A Quip for an Upstart Courtier Greene touched off one of the most famous literary feuds of all time by slighting Gabriel Harvey and his brothers for their origin as a ropemaker's sons. Harvey replied with the attack on Greene examined above.

From Greene's earliest works there are suggestions of his belief in the dignity of the individual and his right to choose the course of his own life even when this conflicted with the rules of society. Throughout his career he held tenaciously to that position; yet his later works became increasingly conservative in their support of the social hierarchy. The apparent logical inconsistency here may be seen as analogous to the Christian position that there are two realms of human obligation: man's spiritual allegiance is solely to God; his political and social allegiance is to the state. Therefore if a man was a servant within his society, he was nevertheless free before God:

Let every man abide in the same calling wherein he was called. Art thou called being a servant? Care not for it: but if thou mayest be made free, use it rather. For he that is called in the Lord, being a servant, is the Lord's freeman: likewise also he that is called, being free, is Christ's servant.⁶⁷

This is exactly the distinction that Greene makes in his view of man's role in his society--that he is to remain in the estate to which he was born, except in those cases where there is acceptable reason and method for changing that estate. Even a person of the lowest class is as worthy of honor as a duke or earl, if he possesses the qualities which make him truly noble--beauty, virtue and wit. To attempt to rise socially only for the sake of pride would be wrong. Greene illustrates the point with several characters, such as the

⁶⁷ I Corinthians 7.20-22 (KJV).

blacksmith Perimides or the pound-keeper George a Greene, who are innately noble but are contented with their low station.

The problem arises when an individual's rights and destiny conflict with the rules of his society. In this case, Greene's solution is again analogous to the Christian position; when the apostle Peter was commanded by the authorities to stop preaching he replied: "We ought to obey God rather than men."⁶⁸ In Greene's fictional world the superior power which must be obeyed is love. Fortune is also a higher force than society, but it involves no "obedience," no question of judgment on man's part; it is an unreasoning force which arbitrarily changes a person's estate without reference to his worth or lack of worth. Love, however, in its true form, can only be based on worth--on equality of worth in both partners although their social estate may differ. In such a case the law of love is higher than the law of social organization.

III. The Pastoral Tradition

Greene's views of love, fortune, and social estate are interdependent with his concept of pastoral. In the conventions and patterns of thought characteristic of this mode, he discovered a scheme for examining life's central questions under controlled conditions. Although he did not employ the pastoral mode in its narrowly defined sense until 1588, even his earliest work shows traces of pastoral themes and attitudes.

⁶⁸ Acts 5.29 (KJV).

Before examining the ways in which Greene used, or was influenced by, pastoral, it will be necessary to gain an overview of what is meant by the term. The amount of scholarship directed to this slender form attests both to its historical importance, and, in Harry Levin's words, to "the emotional charge that it has single-mindedly and repetitively conveyed."⁶⁹ W. W. Greg, in the study which has become the basis of most pastoral criticism, postulates a reason for this abiding appeal: "the form is the expression of instincts and impulses deep-rooted in the nature of humanity."⁷⁰ While he does not here specify the nature of these "instincts and impulses," he undoubtedly is referring to pastoral's concern with love, art, contemplation--even death, for elegy is a common pastoral form.

Pastoral is a strangely elusive concept. In spite of the most sophisticated efforts of criticism it remains impervious to exact definition. Scholars' definitions touch almost every point of the spectrum between Jeanette Marks' "literature in which shepherds play an important part"⁷¹ and William Empson's "a process of putting the complex into the

⁶⁹ Harry Levin, The Myth of the Golden Age (Bloomington: Indiana Univ. Press, 1969), p. 7.

⁷⁰ W. W. Greg, Pastoral Poetry and Pastoral Drama (London: A. H. Bullen, 1906), p. 2.

⁷¹ Jeanette Marks, English Pastoral Drama: From the Restoration to the Date of the Publication of the "Lyrical Ballads" (London: Methuen, 1908), p. 28.

simple."⁷² Most of the sterility associated with pastoral has resulted from a too-narrow understanding of the form; its stagnation in the eighteenth century is one example. Thomas Purney, generalizing about pastoral in 1717, insisted that it should deal only with ideal sentiments and persons:

But so easy and gentle a kind of Poetry is Pastoral, that 'tis not very pleasant to the busy Part of the World. Men in the midst of Ambition, delight to be rais'd and heated by their Images and Sentiments. Pastoral therefore addresses it self to the young, the Tender, and particularly those of the SOFT-SEX. The characters also in Pastoral are of the same Nature; An Innocent Swain; or Tender-Hearted Lass. From such characters therefore we must draw our Morals, and to such Persons must we direct them; regulating the Lives of Virgins and all young Persons.⁷³

Such a conception must perforce eliminate Theocritus' and Virgil's racy herdsmen, or even the tongue-in-cheek purity of Sidney's princes and princesses.

Most recent critical opinion sees pastoral as a method of gaining perspective on life rather than simply as a rigid structure involving aristocrats play-acting as shepherds. The major action of pastoral is the withdrawal of some character or characters from the active world of everyday pursuits into a simpler, more ideal realm which gives more leisure for contemplation. This contemplative realm is by

⁷² William Empson, Some Versions of Pastoral (1935; rpt. New York: New Directions Publishing Corp., 1974), p. 53.

⁷³ Thomas Purney, A Full Enquiry into the True Nature of Pastoral (1717), The Augustan Reprint Society, Series Two: Essays on Poetry, No. 4 (Ann Arbor, Mich.: Edwards Brothers, 1948), p. 19.

its nature especially conducive to the pursuit of love or of art, activities which require leisure for their fullest development. In the Renaissance this withdrawal took the form of an aristocrat turning temporarily to the simple life of contemplation and closeness to nature best exemplified by shepherds, but occasionally including farmers, tradesmen, outlaws, or hermits. Pastoral attitudes also appear, then and later, in utopias and fantasies, or in work which depicts the innocence of childhood or even insanity.⁷⁴ The pastoral withdrawal is never an end in itself, but is only part of a total circular movement which eventually returns the central character to the active world. Eleanor Terry Lincoln says:

Properly understood pastoral has never avoided the realities of life nor has it been a picture of primitive innocence. The pastoral withdrawal that is central to the genre . . . leads to new knowledge and is followed by a return "to fresh woods and pastures new" where endeavor will be informed by a rigorous experience.⁷⁵

⁷⁴ Empson's seminal work pioneered in suggesting many of these "versions" of pastoral. His lead was followed in considerable depth by Renato Poggioli's important series of studies recently published in book form as The Oaten Flute: Essays on Pastoral Poetry and the Pastoral Ideal (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 1975). Poggioli categorizes, for example, the pastoral of friendship, of mirth, of melancholy, of innocence, of happiness, of the self, of solitude, and of love; see pp. 20-22.

⁷⁵ Eleanor Terry Lincoln, Introduction to Pastoral and Romance: Modern Essays in Criticism (Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice Hall, 1969), p. 3.

In his extended definition of pastoral, Peter Marinelli suggests that the main purpose of the withdrawal is to permit the main characters to have their "problems sharpened by seeing them magnified in a new context of simplicity."⁷⁶ There is not always a problem involved, however; in many pastorals characters virtually stumble into the pastoral world, but while there they gain some new value, especially love. Examples are Sidney's princes in Arcadia, or Spenser's Sir Calidore in Book 6 of The Faerie Queene.

Perhaps the defining note of true pastoral, however, is its polarity between rustic and urban ways of life, or in Empson's terms, between simplicity and complexity.

Michael Squires amplifies this idea:

The portrait of country life functions partly, it is true, to charm the reader for charm's sake, but it functions also to awaken and illuminate the reader's sense of contrast between city and country in order that man's ambition, grown too powerful, can be seen from the perspective of both the cycles of nature and the simpler, more fundamental life of the country.⁷⁷

John Draper says that this contrast was amplified in the Renaissance because its great changes had left an unusually wide cultural gap between the rural population and that of

⁷⁶ Peter V. Marinelli, Pastoral (London: Methuen, 1971), p. 11.

⁷⁷ Michael Squires, The Pastoral Novel (Charlottesville: Univ. Press of Virginia, 1974), pp. 12, 13. This study is primarily of the pastoral novels of George Eliot, Thomas Hardy, and D. H. Lawrence, but it has two valuable introductory chapters defining and tracing the development of pastoral.

the court and city.⁷⁸ Pastoral, in any period, however, and in whatever form it appears, takes the contrast as its keynote. If the main character goes into an unspoiled rural scene and contrasts it favorably with the corrupt society he has left behind, the result is pastoral. If, as often happens, the sophisticated intruder is uncomfortable in his new surroundings and sees the inhabitants of the pastoral world only as subjects for laughter or disdain, the result will be anti-pastoral.⁷⁹ Often the two mix with surprising compatibility, as in the farcical scenes of Sidney's Arcadia.

The nature of the rural-urban/simple-complex contrast requires that the pastoral world itself or some spot within the pastoral world provide the leisure for contemplation. This spot, often called the locus amoenus or the pastoral pleassance, is almost invariably described in ideal terms. Commonplaces of its surroundings are a variety of trees, lush green grass, flowers, a fountain or brook, the sounds of birds and insects, and an inviting seat under the shade of a tree where pastoral songs may be sung to the accompaniment of pan-pipes or lute.

The locus amoenus is one literary descendant of the archetypal garden myth. It is an eclectic version, however,

⁷⁸ John W. Draper, "Court vs. Country in Shakespeare's Plays," JEGP, 33 (1934), p. 223.

⁷⁹ Laurence Lerner makes this distinction in The Uses of Nostalgia: Studies in Pastoral Poetry (New York: Schocken Books, 1972), p. 21.

which incorporates elements of many other related traditions--the earthly paradise, the Golden Age myth, the sacred precinct of the gods in Greek poetry, the garden of love from the courtly love tradition. Bartlett Giamatti, in his study of the paradise myth, comments on two essentials of the earthly paradise, both of which may also be applied to the pastoral place:

The place is remote in space or time (or both), and it involves some ideal of love or harmony. These twin themes, the first "external" and concerned with the place's "geography," the second "internal" and related to its way of life, are found in every account.⁸⁰

Theocritus, the first known writer of pastoral, set his lyrics on the islands of Sicily and Cos, familiar to him from his childhood, but idealized in their presentation in his poems. His great follower Virgil, was the first to use the country of Arcadia as the pastoral land. Arcadia was an actual country in his time, but one which was sufficiently remote to remove it from the reality of known geography. As Thomas Rosenmeyer suggests, this enabled Virgil "to create a country from his imagination."⁸¹ Sannazaro took the trend a step further. His translator Ralph Nash, in an introduction to the Arcadia, writes: "Sannazaro's great achievement--the

⁸⁰ A. Bartlett Giamatti, The Earthly Paradise and the Renaissance Epic (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1966), p. 84.

⁸¹ Thomas G. Rosenmeyer, The Green Cabinet: Theocritus and the European Pastoral Lyric (Berkeley and Los Angeles: The Univ. of California Press, 1969), pp. 232, 233.

imaginative leap that creates something new, in spite of his technique of imitation--is the perception that Arcadia is a country of the mind."⁸² Arcadia is the young poet's subjective experience of withdrawal and devotion to poetry for the purpose of becoming a better poet. Sannazaro's landscapes and experiences have a dream-like quality in which apparent reality and illusion merge imperceptibly.

That Sannazaro's withdrawal was for the purpose of learning to create poetry illustrates Rosenmeyer's second point--the pastoral place must "involve some ideal of love or harmony." Many critics have shown that in the earliest pastoral lyrics, creativity--especially the creation of poetry--was the ideal gained in the pastoral place. Marinelli says that for the poet, Arcadia is a place of solitude where he can clarify "his artistic, intellectual and moral purpose," that the attire of a shepherd comes to stand for a "commitment to poetry and to the exploration of the relative worths of the active and contemplative existences."⁸³ Even from the earliest pastorals, however, the search for imaginative fulfillment was intricately related to love, with poetry often serving primarily as a panacea for the pains of unhappy love. This may be seen in Theocritus, Virgil, Sannazaro, Spenser's Shepherds Calendar, as well as other early pastorals.

⁸² Ralph Nash, Introduction to Arcadia and Piscatorial Eclogues, by Jacopo Sannazaro (Detroit: Wayne State Univ. Press, 1966), pp. 22, 23.

⁸³ Marinelli, p. 45.

When pastoral merged with the courtly romance, love came to play a more and more essential role, often becoming the main value gained in the pastoral world, as it is in Sidney's Arcadia, Montemayor's Diana, or Book 6 of The Faerie Queene, a tradition followed by Greene and Lodge in their pastoral romances. Love had been associated with the paradisaal garden since medieval times, culminating in the Roman de la Rose.⁸⁴ Perhaps an even more ancient association of love with the paradisaal garden comes from the biblical account of the temptation of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, resulting in their fallen sexuality. John Armstrong traces the familiar paradise symbols of snake and tree, showing that "from very early times both snake and tree had important associations with fertility."⁸⁵

These two primary ideals of the pastoral world, love and art, together form a nexus of man's most basic yearnings outside of his simple survival needs. It is perhaps because love and the creative impulse are so vital that man has tended to shroud them in mystical trappings, to give them mythic significance. Always only a step away are magic and other supernatural elements. In the medieval romance magical castles, enchanted swords, love potions, enchanters

⁸⁴ Giametti, pp. 48 ff.

⁸⁵ John Armstrong, The Paradise Myth (London: Oxford Univ. Press, 1969), pp. 32-36.

both benign and malign, and visions were associated with love and the creative endeavor. Similarly even the earliest pastorals, those of Theocritus and Virgil, included a sorceress and her magic rites to kindle love. Sannazaro's lovelorn shepherd Clonico is taken to the enchanter Enareto to drink the water of forgetfulness, a device later picked up by Montemayor to cure his shepherds who have suffered deeply from love. Sidney, perhaps on a hint from the Greek romances of Heliodorus and Achilles Tatius, substitutes for the magic an oracle, a device also used by Greene. Often the supernatural element in pastoral comes from the juxtaposition of mythological figures, especially Pan and the nymphs of woods and streams. Giamatti suggests that these magical episodes deepened the reader's sense of the complexity of life, its "limitless and endless possibility," but also its "fearful flux and mutability."⁸⁶

One of the most common aspects of the supernatural in the Renaissance was Fortune. Fortune was depicted as blind, unreasoning, sometimes malevolent. She offered particular danger to the powerful and wealthy, but could be flouted, if not controlled, by the virtue of contentment. Perhaps the most extensive treatment of these ideas is Boethius' Consolation of Philosophy. The same concepts are characteristics of the Greek Romances, which were highly influential upon

⁸⁶ Giamatti, p. 123.

Montemayor, Sidney, Greene, and other romance-writers.⁸⁷

Fortune became a force outside of man's character or motives, and of dubious relationship to deity, which made sense of random occurrences, otherwise unexplainable phenomena.

The concept of fortune was especially relevant to the themes of pastoral, which glorified the temperate life of renunciation and contentment. Hallett Smith says: "The central meaning of pastoral is the rejection of the aspiring mind. The shepherd demonstrates that true content is to be found in this renunciation."⁸⁸ This was particularly true in the Renaissance when Fortune was popularly seen as the distributor of the external gifts of wealth or social position. Nature, on the other hand, gave one character, intelligence and beauty. People in the pastoral world, blessed with nature's gifts, shunned the uncertain gifts of fortune, protecting themselves from her capriciousness by contentment in their humble surroundings. Charles Crupi, who argues that pastoral episodes in romances and dramas often incorporate the moral teaching of those works, feels that the pastoral world is "explicitly isolated from

⁸⁷ The most thorough treatment of the influence of the Greek romances is that of Samuel L. Wolff, The Greek Romances in Elizabethan Prose Fiction, Burt Franklin Research and Source Work Series # 22 (1912; rpt. New York: Burt Franklin, 1961).

⁸⁸ Hallett Smith, Elizabethan Poetry: A Study in Conventions, Meaning, and Expression, Ann Arbor Paperbacks (1952; rpt. Ann Arbor: The Univ. of Michigan Press, 1968), p. 10.

the world of Fortune,"⁸⁹ an opinion also held by some other scholars.⁹⁰ While it is true that the effects of fortune are greatly lessened, this is primarily because the shepherds have the virtues of contentment and temperance, widely considered the most effective antidotes against fortune. If one considers fortune as a capricious force which can bring calamity of any sort--not just loss of position or wealth--it is clear that fortune is often present in the pastoral world. For example, the mutinous rebels in Sidney's Arcadia, or the brigands in Book 6 of The Faerie Queene, suggest the workings of malevolent fortune, since they capriciously threaten (or in the latter case, destroy) the serenity of the pastoral world. Certainly Greene makes fortune an ever-present danger, even in his most prominently pastoral works.

The doctrine of the gifts of fortune and the gifts of nature puts into words a belief which lies behind the apparently democratic aspects of pastoral. That belief made it possible to ask the question, what is true nobility? Is it the quality conferred by social class or wealth--the gifts of fortune? Or is it an inward nobility shown through a person's beauty, virtue and wit--the gifts of nature? The

⁸⁹ Charles W. Crupi, "Pastoral Elements in Plays from the Elizabethan Public Theaters of the 1590's," Diss. Princeton University 1967, p. 330.

⁹⁰ See, for example, Walter R. Davis, Idea and Act in Elizabethan Fiction (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1969), p. 78.

heralds tried to detour around the question by reiterating the conventional view popularized by Boethius that social class was originally conferred only upon those who possessed this natural nobility, and that both kinds of nobility were thus normally present in the upper classes, apparently by process of heredity. The dilemma presented by a boorish aristocrat or an intelligent and virtuous peasant was never quite resolved. The pastoral process took the aristocrat and the peasant and placed both in an area characterized by nature's simplicity, removed from urban or courtly society. In other words, the pastoral setting gave the gifts of nature prominence and played down those of fortune.

This basic setting, however, could only provide the backdrop for examining the nature of true nobility. Any given author working in the pastoral form imposed his own preconceptions on it. The classical writers Theocritus and Virgil were apparently altogether oblivious to the question of nobility. Theocritus portrayed humble herdsmen, often openly slaves, but he attributed to them a far higher level of learning and sophistication than it would have been possible for them realistically to have. He also gave them, as Rosenmeyer explains, almost complete freedom from the obligations entailed by the master-servant relationship, or from the gods or fortune.⁹¹ However, his shepherds cannot be taken very seriously. While at times they possess the

⁹¹ Rosenmeyer, pp. 98-129.

graces of a courtier, at others their quarrels approach the farcical. Bruno Snell remarks:

The rustic life is made palatable to good society by its acquisition of manners and taste; if there are any embarrassing features left, the poet neutralizes them by making them appear droll, by smiling at them.⁹²

Virgil's shepherds are so obviously covers for himself and his friends that no question of class is appropriate.

The rigid stratification of medieval society carried over into the Renaissance a fervent adherence to the doctrine of degree. Class consciousness characterized most Renaissance writing, and pastoral was no exception. While Sannazaro's shepherds are very polished and courtly, he makes it clear that he (as Sincero) goes to Arcadia as an aristocrat and that beyond a certain point he finds pastoral solitude depressing. In any event, the class consciousness of the Arcadia can only be theoretical, for Sannazaro's Arcadia is obviously a land of his imagination, and the shepherds are ideal beings with no trace of realism about them.

Montemayor retains this idealism in his Diana, but he incorporates a far greater measure of social stratification. The question of the nature of nobility lies at the heart of the work, in the central fourth book. The shepherds and shepherdesses are all talented, virtuous, and handsome, but Felicia, the benign enchantress at the center of the pastoral

⁹² Bruno Snell, "Arcadia: The Discovery of a Spiritual Landscape," in Virgil: A Collection of Critical Essays, ed. Steele Commager (Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice-Hall, 1966), p. 20.

world of Diana, pays special honor to Felismena, the one aristocrat present, seating her in the place of honor. She tells her, in the words of Bartholomew Yong's Elizabethan translation:⁹³

In these love matters I note a certain conclusion, which I find for the most part true, That the generous minde and delicate witte by many degrees excelleth him in affection, that hath not these gifts. Because as love is a vertue, and vertue doth ever choose her being in the best place, it is cleere, that persons of valour and dignitie, are more enamoured, and (as they are properly termed) better lovers, then those of baser condition and estate.⁹⁴

When the shepherds overhear this, they become indignant and the shepherd Sylvanus challenges it with the question: "Wherein good Ladie doth a noble minde and fine witte consist?" Felicia, "because she woulde not give him anie occasion of discontent," replied:

In no other thing but in the proper and sole vertue of him that loves, as to have a lively and quicke witte, a mature and good judgement, a thought tending to high and stately things, and in other vertues which doe arise and flow from them themselves.

⁹³ Yong's translation, not published till 1598, was complete in 1583, and thus might have been accessible to Greene. Since Greene is not known to have been acquainted with Spanish, it seems appropriate to quote from the Yong version, even though I am not suggesting any direct influence, only a climate of opinion.

⁹⁴ Jorge de Montemayor, Diana, trans. Bartholomew Yong (1598), in Judith M. Kennedy, ed., A Critical Edition of Yong's Translation of George of Montemayor's Diana and Gil Polo's Enamoured Diana (Oxford: Clarendon, 1968), pp. 137, 138. The entire passage discussed throughout the remainder of this paragraph comes from these pages.

To this Sylvanus replies:

We imagined (discreete Lady) that you take
valour and vertue to be onely in noble
personages. I speake it to this ende,
bicause he is but poore in the gifts of
nature, that goes to seeke them foorth in
those that gone and past.

Sylvanus feels that only the gifts of nature ennoble, but Felicia, though willing for the sake of harmony to agree, obviously places great importance upon social estate as the repository of these virtues. There is an unspoken language of privilege at work in this passage, punctuated by a patronizing conclusion to the episode:

It pleased not the other Shepherdesse a
little to heare what Sylvanus had saide; and
the Nymphes did laugh, to see how the
Shepherds did blush at Felicia's proposition.

Immediately after this Felicia asks Felismena to take off her shepherdess disguise during the time she is at the palace and to put on rich apparel befitting her station. Walter R. Davis suggests also that Felismena's helping the shepherds with their problems represents "the noblewoman's services" to the lower class.⁹⁵

Sidney's Arcadia is the most unreservedly aristocratic of all the pastoral romances.⁹⁶ There is an impassable

⁹⁵ Walter R. Davis, A Map of Arcadia: Sidney's Romance in Its Tradition, in Sidney's Arcadia (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1965), p. 43.

⁹⁶ In my discussion of Sidney's Arcadia, I use only the Old Arcadia, since the final version seems to be more concerned with heroic ideals than pastoral. Furthermore, Jean Robertson, editor of Old Arcadia, says that the pastoral romances of Greene and Lodge are influenced by the old version

barrier between aristocrat and shepherd. Musidorus is the only aristocrat who wears shepherd's clothing, and that is for the sole purpose of being near the princess Pamela who is kept in the chief herdsman's home. Pamela, though attracted by his natural gifts to this seeming shepherd, is able to control her feelings until Musidorus reveals to her that he is not a shepherd, but a prince:

For indeed Pamela, having had no small stirring of her mind towards him, as well for the goodliness of his shape, as for the excellent trial of his courage, had notwithstanding, with a true-tempered virtue, sought all this while to overcome it; and a great mastery, although not without pain, she had wrought with herself. (p. 98)

Of Pamela's keepers, the herdsman Dametas, his wife Miso, and daughter Mopsa, Sidney says that they were "unfit company for so excellent a creature, but to exercise her patience and to serve for a foil to her perfections" (p. 9). Dametas is characterized as cowardly (pp. 32, 52, 53), hypocritical (p. 34), avaricious (p. 44), braggart (p. 51), suspicious (p. 98), and superstitious (p. 281). While Dametas is a farcical character, the other commoners come off little better. The shepherds as a group show cowardice by fleeing when the lion appears at their pastoral entertainment (p. 46), and the mob who revolt against Basilius are described as base (pp. 123 ff.) and inconstant (p. 131). The only flash

rather than the new: Jean Robertson, Introduction to The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia (The Old Arcadia), by Sir Philip Sidney (Oxford: Clarendon, 1973), pp. xxxvii, xxxviii. The following references to the Old Arcadia will be taken from this edition and will be documented by parenthetical page numbers within the body of the paper.

of sympathy toward any lower class figures comes in the description of the wedding of Lalus and Kala, but even here the tone is condescending, stressing the honesty, sincerity, and charm of country courting (pp. 244 ff.). While many of the upper class characters behave foolishly, their foolishness is treated with a dignity becoming their rank, as may be seen for example in the description of Gynecia's passion for Pyrocles (p. 48).

Sidney's Arcadia gave the pastoral romance an immediate popularity in Elizabethan England, reinforced by the translations, in whole or in part, of the continental romances. The pastoral mode had by this time already developed into a rich and complex tradition, as is obvious from the generic and thematic diversity of Sidney's Arcadia and, for example, Spenser's Shepherds Calendar. It was the pastoral romance, rather than the eclogue, that caught Greene's fancy. There had already been some attempt at pastoral drama in royal masques and entertainments, especially Peele's Arraignement of Paris, but for Greene the line of development to pastoral drama lay through pastoral romance. It was in that field that he began to work.

CHAPTER II

PASTORAL AND SOCIAL ELEMENTS IN THE ROMANCES OF 1583-1587

With the signal exception of René Pruvost's monumental work Robert Greene et ses Romans, Greene's prose has been a generally neglected field, even among Greene scholars. John Clark Jordan has written one of the few book-length studies of Greene, but he works only briefly with individual prose pieces.⁹⁷ More recently Walter Davis has analyzed a number of the romances in his study of a large body of Elizabethan prose fiction.⁹⁸ Many of the shorter critical treatments of the prose deal only with Pandosto and Menaphon, or with the late work. Yet Greene himself felt that his most important work lay in his romances and pamphlets, as did most university men of his day; drama was almost universally sneered at as beneath a scholar's dignity.⁹⁹ The prose is also a vital source for those who seek to analyze Greene's

⁹⁷ John Clark Jordan, Robert Greene (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1915). For example, to Ciceronis Amor, as popular in its day as Pandosto, he devotes only one seven-line paragraph.

⁹⁸ Walter R. Davis, Idea and Act, Chapter 5.

⁹⁹ In Thomas Nashe's famous preface to Menaphon he scorns the "alcumists of eloquence; who (mouted on the stage of arrogance) think to outbraue better pens with the swelling bumbast of a bragging blanke verse" and praises "thy Arcadian Menaphon; whose attire though not so statelie, yet comelie, dooth entitle thee aboue all other, to that temperatum dicendi genus, which Tullie in his Orator tearmeth true eloquence."

ideas, since he was freer to explore thoughts at length in the prose than in drama, which was hedged in by more conventions and limitations. Thus the romances are often the seedbed for ideas and attitudes to be examined and then nurtured or rejected. Most of the themes incorporated in Greene's dramas are clarified or amplified in his prose. Therefore it seems logical to begin a treatment of Greene's social concepts by examining the way these concepts develop through the prose works.

As a professional writer dependent on manuscript sales rather than aristocratic patronage,¹⁰⁰ Greene found his market primarily among the growing literate middle class, although he long persisted in seeing himself as writing for courtly readers. He was a shrewd judge of his audience; G. B. Harrison calls his books "a barometer of popular taste in literature."¹⁰¹ He thus filled his "courtly" romances with bourgeois values such as faithful love and marriage, heroic chastity, patriotism, piety, and considerable praise of the honest English yeoman and lower gentry classes.

E. H. Miller says:

¹⁰⁰ Edwin H. Miller, in The Professional Writer in Elizabethan England: A Study of Nondramatic Literature, says that although Greene dedicated books to numerous patrons, he apparently received patronage from only two noble families, the Portingtons and Cliffords, pp. 113-114. This work is a thorough treatment of the position, problems, and world of the professional writer of Greene's day.

¹⁰¹ G. B. Harrison, "Books and Readers, 1591-4," The Library, 4th Series, 8 (1927), p. 295.

And so it was that middle-class businessmen dominated the Elizabethan literary profession, that middle-class authors accepted (howbeit reluctantly and contemptuously) the hire of these businessmen, and that readers from the same class purchased their wares and imposed to a large extent their tastes upon the new trade.¹⁰²

While we often suspect that the Norwich saddler's son found this a not wholly uncongenial medium, it is no less true that he could not have supported himself by his pen in any other.

Because the publishing practices of the day benefited the bookseller more than the author, Greene was obliged to "yark up" pamphlets (in Nashe's colorful phrase) very rapidly indeed to maintain himself. The payments he received for his work are not known, but Miller has constructed one hypothesis, based on the statement in The Defence of Conny-Catching that one of Greene's pamphlets could be bought for three pence:

Assuming that 1250 copies of each of these tracts were printed, it seems highly implausible that Greene received much more than £2 for each pamphlet. If the stationer sold all the copies, he grossed £15 12s., and his expenses were roughly £7 16s. If Greene obtained £4--a sum equal to the stationer's profit--the sixteenth century was indeed a writer's utopia.¹⁰³

Even by the standards of that day such a sum would not have lasted a very long time, especially for a spendthrift of

¹⁰² Miller, p. 244.

¹⁰³ Miller, p. 157.

Greene's calibre. Thus he resorted to a virtual "assembly-line" technique of writing, by which he bodily lifted large passages from his own former work or the work of others, and skimmed indexes for the popular illustrations from natural history, or even invented his own "scientific" facts. He himself said, "Many things I haue wrote to get money, which I could otherwise wish to be supprest: in seeking to salue priuate wantes, I haue made my selfe a publique laughing stock" (XII, 195). In spite of such tactics, however, his pamphlets were enormously popular: Arbasto (1584) went through five editions by 1626, Pandosto (1588) eight editions by 1636, Menaphon (1589) four editions by 1616, and Ciceronis Amor (1589) nine editions by 1639.¹⁰⁴

The tastes of Greene's middle-class audience undoubtedly molded or reinforced his social views, the primary emphasis of this study. The increase in class fluidity in the latter decades of the sixteenth century, while by no means changing class structure, was still leading to more sympathy for the most common method of changing class--marriage. The idea of the natural rightness of social hierarchy remained strong, however. In 1550 Robert Crowley wrote in The Yeoman's Lesson:

For what doste thou; if thou desyr
To be a lord or gentleman
Other than heape on thee God's ire
And Shewe thy selfe no Christian.

.

¹⁰⁴ Wright, Middle-Class Culture, p. 385.

Have minde, therefore, thyselfe to holde
 Within the bondes of thy degre
 And then thou mayest ever be bold
 That God thy Lorde wyll prosper thee.¹⁰⁵

This view had changed little by Greene's day as a statement of conventional belief. One need only recall Shakespeare's famous lines in Troilus and Cressida from Ulysses' long speech: "Take but degree away, untune that string,/ And, hark, what discord follows!" (I.iii.109-10). Pettie's moral in "Minos and Pasiphae" is the evils of marriage across class lines:

And amongst all y^e inconveniences, which are
 to bee foreseene in this bargaine [marriage],
 there is none more daungerous, then inequalitie
 of estates betweene the parties: for what
 agreement of affections can there bee, when
 the one shall bee of a meane minde, the other
 hautie, the one lowly, the other loftie? . . .
 For the nature of nothings may bee altered
 . . . that which is bred in the boane, will
 not out of the flesh.¹⁰⁶

However, there were already hints of new attitudes appearing in some of the literature of the period. Even the conventional Palace of Pleasure (1566) contains a section of novelle (Tome I, Novels 37-44) dealing with love across class boundaries. While many of these do not express approval, there is a definite sympathy in Novel 39, for example, with the noble lady who takes a lowly lover, who is described as "of very base birth (but in vertue and honest

¹⁰⁵ Quoted in Campbell, The English Yeoman, p. 43.

¹⁰⁶ George Pettie, A Petite Pallace of Pettie His Pleasure (1576), ed. Herbert Hartman (London: Oxford Univ. Press, 1938), p. 210.

condicions more noble then the reste)."107 Similarly, the lady, Gismonda, argues for innate rather than external nobility:

Behold all your gentlemen, and examine well their vertue, their conditions and maner of doinges. On the other part, behold the qualities and condicions of Guiscardo: then if you please to give iudgement wythout affection, you shall say that he is righte noble: and that all your gentlemen be villaines in respecte of him.¹⁰⁸

Other stories deal sympathetically with marriage apparently across class lines, as in Novel 37 (where the wife at last proves to be noble, however) and actual marriage to one of lower estate (though still of the gentry) in Novel 44. These stories are of course only translations from the Italian, but Painter was free to choose what he felt would most appeal to his audience. It would be unwise to read too much democratic leaning into such stories, however, since others in the collection presented the opposite view, such as the fifteenth novel of Tome II. It is even conceivable that the treatment of love across class lines is sometimes a means of making marriage more difficult and thus prolonging the agonies of the lovers for purposes of plotting. The very inclusion of these stories though, when taken with other similar sympathetic treatments, suggests that the theme was gaining popular favor. Even so staid a royalist as Spenser had

¹⁰⁷ The Palace of Pleasure, I, 180.

¹⁰⁸ The Palace of Pleasure, I, 186.

Calidore fall in love with and plan to marry the shepherdess Pastorella, though she is subsequently revealed as his social equal.

These considerations of audience expectation and the exigencies of sixteenth-century publication practices are a necessary background to examining Greene's prose work. It is reasonable to assume, however, that he would have been less influenced by them in the early work than in later years when he had been more thoroughly schooled by experience. Greene's first attempts, therefore, may give especially useful clues to the ideas and ways of interpreting those ideas, which were more instinctive to him.

In the apprenticeship years of 1583-87, Greene was learning his trade, experimenting with new forms and ideas. From the beginning he was fascinated by the theme of the power of love, which appeared in almost all of his work until the last two years of his life. He also adhered to Sidney's dictum that both the pleasing and the useful were to be characteristic of the best literature. His first motto, and the one which became a by-word for his work, was a quotation from Horace, Omne tulit punctum qui miscuit utile dulci: he wins all the prizes who mingles the useful with the pleasant. He therefore gave fictionalized accounts of the biblical stories of Susanna and the prodigal son, as he later would dramatize the book of Jonah. He also began

a series of tales illustrating the seven deadly sins. Yet he soon discovered that his readers were more interested in the aura of wholesomeness than in its actuality; accordingly, his title pages emblazoned morals for which scholars are still searching in the stories. He made use of the frame technique for a similar purpose; the framework took care of the utile, permitting the story to concentrate on the dulci.

In these early romances he also incorporated a number of motifs which may be called pastoral in inspiration if not in a narrowly-defined sense. Foremost among these is the familiar court-country contrast of pastoral. From his first romance through his last known drama, this theme appears. In its purest form it shows the court (or sometimes town) as a place of strife, intrigue, and moral evils such as lust or flattery. Yet because so many of his stories have royal heroes and heroines, a familiar variation uses a country estate, nearby woods and fields, or even a palace garden to suggest the kind of repose and simple natural values associated with country, or, in pure pastorals, Arcadia. Thus when referring to any place characterized by pastoral values of peace, love, contemplation, virtue, and relative freedom from everyday social restrictions, I use in this study the term, "the pastoral world." As suggested in Chapter I, above, the primary value gained in the pastoral world in Greene's work, as well as in most pastoral romances by other authors, is love. The kind of love thus gained is usually seen as a

purer, truer love than "courtly" love." Another common motif which often takes on pastoral associations in Greene's work is disguise. Noble characters dress as pilgrims (palmer), or hermits, symbolic of the contemplative life, or as humble folk, in order to strip them of the outward trappings of the active world. This symbolic divestiture enables them to enter the pastoral world and there either to take on its virtues (an educative process), or to display the true innate nobility which they have all along possessed, and which is thus revealed as independent of social rank. Finally, Greene's view of fortune is bound up with his pastoral vision, in that it is the contentment, the lack of aspiration characteristic of pastoral that provides the only effective antidote against fortune's vagaries, a particularly common theme in the early romances.

I. Mamillia

Greene's earliest known work, Mamillia, Part I, was entered in the Stationer's Register on October 3, 1580, although the earliest extant edition is that of 1583. Mamillia, Part II, entered in the Register September 6, 1583, exists in no edition before 1593, but it is likely that it was published soon after the first part, as Greene concludes Part I by promising further "newes" of the faithless Pharicles: "But as soone as I shal either hear, or learn of his abroad, looke for newes by a speedy Post" (II, 135).

In Part I a handsome young dissembler, Pharicles, simultaneously courts and wins two young women, Mamillia and Publia, who are both friends and relatives. At their discovery of his perfidy he flees to Sicily disguised as a pilgrim. The parallel of this main plot line to that of Euphues needs no discussion, differing primarily only in its reversal of the sexes. Like Lyly, Greene amplifies the plot not through further action, but through the witty and refined discourses and letters of his characters.¹⁰⁹ Part II is no longer under this strong influence of Lyly; while its style is still euphuistic, the form has become almost pure romance and has lost much of the didacticism of the first part. The story opens with Mamillia and Publia's discovery of Pharicles' fickleness and with their respective decisions that they will remain faithful. Since Mamillia is officially betrothed to Pharicles, Publia enters a convent and at her death leaves her fortune to him. Meanwhile Pharicles leads a model pilgrim's life in Sicily until his loneliness compels him to take up his life as a gentleman again. A courtesan, Clarinda, falls in love with him, but after much soul-searching he rejects her. She immediately brands him as a spy and he is given only forty days to live. Mamillia goes in disguise to Saragossa and, Portia-like, pleads Pharicles' case and procures his acquittal, after which they return to Padua and are married.

¹⁰⁹ Jordan has given a comprehensive list of parallels and contrasts in his discussion of Mamillia, pp. 15-19.

In the two parts of Mamillia, Greene employs most of the pastoral motifs described above. In Part I, which is told primarily from Mamillia's point of view, he uses the court-country contrast to introduce the love story, while in Part II, the story of Pharicles' redemption, he uses the pilgrim disguise as a means of educating and thus reforming the hero. As he would in many later plays and romances, he places a number of different kinds of love-relationships in juxtaposition in order to determine the nature of true or ideal love. He demonstrates Platonic love, inconstant love, lust, and finally ideal love, molded and proved by testing.

At the beginning of the story, Mamillia is an attendant in the "Dukes court at Venice," as is a gentleman-friend, Florion. Florion, having learned through an unhappy love-experience the wiles and deceits of life at court, leaves the court; he "made a Metamorphosis of himselfe from a Courtier of Venice, to a Countriman in Sienna" (II, 18). Under his influence Mamillia decides also to leave the court, "and so eschewe the bayte wherein was hidde such a deadly hooke, to abstain from y^t pleasure, which in time would turne to poyson" (II, 18). She therefore returns to her father's estate in Padua, apparently a country estate, since a party later walks through the fields from her home to visit a neighboring friend. This is of course the retreat from a corrupt and complex court into the simplicity of rural life, and it is Greene's own addition; Lyly's hero Euphues had made

the reverse decision--to leave his father's home in order to see more of the worldly life of Italy.

Florion's love for Mamillia is the first of the kinds of love seen in this romance. He is portrayed as falling platonically in love with the beautiful and virtuous Mamillia, won by the contrast she affords to his former unfaithful love, Luminia. Greene states:

He reposed his onely pleasure in her presence, and againe her onely contentation consisted in his company, that they were two bodies and one soule . . . yea the concord of their nature was such, as no soppes of suspition, no mistes of distrust, no floddes of fickle-nes could once foyle their fayth: their friendship was so firmly founded on the rocke of vertue: for this straight league of lyking was not fleshly fancy, but a meere choyce of Chastitie. (II, 15)

Margaret Schlauch completely misinterprets this incident.

She writes:

In Mamillia (published 1583) the heroine is approached, like so many others, by two rival wooers. One of them is a model of constancy, while the other shifts back and forth between Mamillia and her cousin Publia. Surprisingly enough, it is the fickle one who, duly reformed, wins the heroine in the end. The model lover is simply forgotten.¹¹⁰

She disregards the letter which Florion sends to Mamillia, advising her in the matter of choosing her husband. Greene's inspiration for this chaste love may have come from Pettie, who exerted a strong influence on him in other ways.¹¹¹ In

¹¹⁰ Margaret Schlauch, Antecedents of the English Novel, 1400-1600 (London: Oxford Univ. Press, 1963), p. 190.

¹¹¹ C. J. Vincent analyzes Pettie's stylistic influence on Greene in "Pettie and Greene," Modern Language Notes, 54 (1939), 105-111.

"Pigmalion's Friende" Pettie details the platonic love between Pigmalion and Penthea which is so deep that they are constantly together. Yet she is faithfully married and her husband "suspected no evill betweene them, but lyked very well of their love and familiarity together."¹¹² Greene would later explore the same situation in Pandosto and reject it as unrealistic. Even here he shows that this kind of love is not the ideal relationship; it is Mamillia's constant love for Pharicles which becomes the catalytic force in his redemption.

Greene associates the beginning of this ideal love with the pastoral world, for it is in Mamillia's garden and later in the fields surrounding her home that Pharicles, related to the vices of city life, approaches her and finally wins her love. He has, however, been too corrupted by his former life for this to have the appropriate beneficial effect upon his nature. His fickle imagination is immediately caught by the beauty of Mamillia's cousin Publia, and he falls in love with her. He has improved, however, as a result of this contact with the world of simplicity and virtue, for he is now able to feel remorse at his treatment of Mamillia and he determines to maintain some integrity in his love for Publia: "so Pharicles, in amēds of his fleeting fancy towards Mamillia, determined to be alwaies constant with Publia" (II, 135).

¹¹² Pettie, p. 230.

Mamillia decides to combat this faithlessness with constancy: "Yea euen that vnfaithfull Pharicles shall be the saint at whose shrine I meane to doo my deuotion vntil my haplesse heart through extreame sorrow receiue the stroke of vntimely death" (II, 155). She is the first of Greene's heroines who remain faithful in the face of severe tests, culminating in the Margaret and Dorothea of the mature plays. This testing actually strengthens her belief in the power of true love, which she opposes to the contractual marriages customary in Greene's day:

To marrie without the force of fancie, is
to become a seruile slaue to sorrowe. There
must bee a knitting of hearts before a
striking of hands, and a constraint of the
minde before a consent with the mouth, or
else whatsoeuer the flower is, the fruite
shall be repentaunce. (II, 161)

It remains for Pharicles to undergo a transformation which will make him worthy of such a love. As noted earlier, his disguise as a pilgrim has a similar ideological thrust to the retreat into the pastoral world, for a pilgrim is one who takes himself temporarily out of the complexities of life as an act of penance and a means of spiritual renewal.

Walter Davis says:

But his [Pharicles'] acting out of the life appropriate to the disguise as a solitary hermit is presented as an actual purgation rather than a feigned one, and after a period of giving full rein to remorse he emerges as in fact what he had pretended to be: a humble and modest young man worthy of Mamillia's fidelity.¹¹³

¹¹³ Davis, Idea and Act, p. 141.

To see Pharicles' time spent as a pilgrim in this manner is to see the structure of Part II as a repetition of the structure of Part I. In Part I the episode in which Pharicles courts Mamillia in the fields shows the retreat to a less complex world and the value which is gained there--the powerful force of virtuous and faithful love. This episode is followed by a return to the active world, in which the hero's new-found virtue is tested. In Part I Pharicles fails the test; he is carried away by Publia's beauty, and he breaks his faith. In Part II, the pilgrim-episode is likewise a retreat to a simpler world; the value gained here is Pharicles' reformation through penance, and it is clearly shown by his sincere remorse. This is followed as in Part I by a return to the active world, and a testing of his reformation by the wiles of the beautiful courtesan. This time, though tempted, Pharicles passes the test; he rejects Clarinda. All that remains now is to demonstrate to the world Pharicles' changed nature. In a stroke of narrative skill Greene makes the episode which will precipitate that public acknowledgment grow out of Pharicles' rejection of Clarinda, and, though the details are clumsily handled, he reinforces the theme of the power of love by having Mamillia come out of the pastoral world to the city where Pharicles is imprisoned in order to become the means of his deliverance.

Greene's first sympathetic treatment of marriage across class lines also appears in Mamillia. At the end of Part II there is appended a treatise entitled "The Anatomie of Louers

Flatteries" which purports to be letters exchanged between Mamillia and Lady Modesta, a young woman whom Pharicles had met in Saragossa. There is no other connection with the story. In the first letter Mamillia counsels Modesta not to heed the flattering words of false men who pretend to be in love with her. Modesta replies that she is already in love, but with one of whom her friends disapprove because he is poor, and she asks Mamillia's advice as to whether or not to marry him. Mamillia answers that she should follow her own inclination in matters of love and she tells a story as an example of the proper choice. In the story Sylvia is offered the choice between three suitors: an aged but wealthy man, a handsome and wealthy fool, and a poor man who nonetheless has wit. Sylvia accepts the third, feeling that his wit is the most essential quality upon which to base a marriage. The suitor with wit, Petronius, even though poor, is still "a Gentleman by birth" (II, 272), but there is certainly the suggestion of sympathy for a more democratic outlook in the choice of a mate. The story also seems to be a retelling of the famous "judgment of Paris" theme. When faced with a choice between the three goddesses representing beauty, majesty, and wisdom, Paris made an unwise choice of beauty. Greene brings the implications of this question to bear on the choice of a husband: between wealth (majesty or position), beauty, and wit (wisdom), Sylvia makes the correct choice, wit. Wit is the most important of the three characteristics of innate nobility earlier seen as the gifts of

nature. They are usually closely related to Greene's use of pastoral, because it is in the pastoral world that true nobility can be most clearly demonstrated. The two suitors who possess social estate (wealth) are rejected in favor of the innately noble Petronius.

II. The Myrroure of Modestie

Greene's next work, The Myrroure of Modestie, published in 1584, is a retelling of the story of Susanna from the Apocrypha. Its theme is the power of chastity against the evil of lust, but Greene also shows by it that pastoral simplicity can become the means of correcting social injustice. Susanna spurns the advances of two lecherous Jewish leaders who attempt to seduce her, and she is vengefully accused by them of adultery with another man. She is brought to trial and condemned to die but is saved by the advocacy of the child Daniel whose penetrating questions reveal the guilt of the two elders. Greene may have been interested in the story by the fact that Susanna's virtue is not sufficient; it takes the intervention of a child to save her. In his seminal work Some Versions of Pastoral William Empson defines the essential "pastoral process" as "putting the complex into the simple."¹¹⁴ He further sees the "child-cult" as a version of pastoral, most clearly seen in the Alice in Wonderland books, about which he says:

¹¹⁴ Empson, p. 22.

The essential idea behind the books is a shift onto the child, which Dodgson did not invent, of the obscure tradition of pastoral. The formula is now "child-become-judge," and if Dodgson identifies himself with the child so does the writer of the primary sort of pastoral with his magnified version of the swain.¹¹⁵

Through the clear vision of the child-judge Daniel, a complex issue is resolved, virtue triumphs, and the wicked leaders of Israel are overthrown, as George a Greene would later overthrow the usurpers of Edward's throne by his simple directness. The story is of course not original with Greene, but he may have been subconsciously attracted to it not only by the popular appeal of Susanna's chastity, but also by the wise child motif which perhaps influenced his Clesiphon, Nano, and Ned a Barley of the late comedies.

III. Gwydonius

The year 1584 was a busy one for Greene, for in it appeared not only the Myrroure of Modestie, but also Gwydonius, Arbasto, and apparently the first part of Morando.

Greenes Carde of Fancie, more commonly known as Gwydonius, was entered in the Stationer's Register April 11, 1584, and is thought to have been published that same year, though we have no extant edition before 1587. With Gwydonius we are placed squarely in the land of romance. Pruvost notes:

Dans le Myrroure of Modestie et dans Gwydonius, également, la marche du récit est encore

¹¹⁵ Empson, pp. 253-54.

alourdie par le désir d'inculquer une leçon de morale.

[In the Myrrour of Modestie and in Gwydonius alike, the movement of the story is still burdened by the desire to inculcate a moral lesson.]¹¹⁶

However he seems to be referring primarily to the prodigal son opening, for later he qualifies this judgment by adding:

Gwydonius se contente dans toute sa seconde partie, qui est de beaucoup la plus développée, d'être tout simplement un roman. Dans cette seconde partie, il est rare que l'auteur commente les faits et gestes de ses personnages.

[Gwydonius is content in all of the second part, which is by far the more developed, to be simply a romance. In this second part, it is rare that the author comments on the actions and gestures of his characters.]¹¹⁷

The plot of Gwydonius is briefly as follows: Clerophontes, the cruel tyrant of Metelyne, has a beautiful daughter, Lewcippa, and a handsome, but wayward, son Gwydonius. To his father's relief Gwydonius decides to leave home and travel abroad. During a profligate year in the city of Barutta he spends his entire fortune and is left destitute. Too ashamed to return home, he goes to Alexandria, where, concealing his identity, he offers his service to the ruler, Orlanio. He behaves himself so wisely that Orlanio soon makes him companion to his son Thersandro. Meanwhile, Orlanio's beautiful daughter Castania rejects the unwelcome advances of a knight, Valericus, whose station is considerably

¹¹⁶ Pruvost, p. 175. All translations are my own.

¹¹⁷ Pruvost, p. 178.

below hers, and thus precipitates Valericus's desire for revenge. She then falls in love with Gwydonius, whom she considers of even lower birth than Valericus. Gwydonius returns her love, but is quickly prohibited from revealing his true identity by his father's declaration of war against Orlanio. Valericus overhears Gwydonius's laments about his precarious situation and reveals this to Orlanio. Warned by Thersandro, Gwydonius flees. Thersandro meanwhile is sent to Clerophontes to sue for peace. His suit is refused, but while there he falls in love with Gwydonius's sister Lewcippa. After a bloody battle Clerophontes agrees to single combat with a champion from Orlanio's forces, but all are afraid to fight him. When Orlanio offers Castania's hand to anyone who will answer Clerophontes' challenge, Gwydonius, torn between love and filial duty, comes forth to fight in Thersandro's armor. He refuses to take the offensive in the battle until he is able to throw Clerophontes by a wrestler's hold and thus defeat him. The story ends happily with the celebration of the two marriages and peace between the two kingdoms.

Gwydonius is important as Greene's first extended treatment of the subject of love across class lines, which he would later explore in many different versions. In this romance, as in many of the later ones, the question is more theoretical than real, because the reader is aware from the beginning that Gwydonius is really Castania's social equal. Lawrence Lerner, in a chapter entitled "Golden Slumbers: The

Politics of Pastoral," examines the apparent democratic implications of this kind of situation and concludes that the whole thing is "a masterly confidence trick played by court upon country," that "prince loves shepherdess, and is allowed to marry her because she is really a king's daughter."¹¹⁸

One might look ahead briefly, however, to note that Greene does in later work permit marriage between characters of disparate social rank. The outstanding example is in Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay, in which the low-born Margaret of Fressingfield becomes the wife of Lord Lacy. However, Greene is not promoting the abolition of social class. He is concerned rather with the ambiguities inherent in a situation in which the rules of love are placed in opposition to the rules of society, and this concern is on an individual plane rather than on the plane of a suggested restructuring of the hierarchies of society. In other words, he does not ask: Should society permit marriage across class lines? He asks: What decision must Castania make when faced with this kind of situation?

As he had in Mamillia, Greene repeats a situation in this story in order to enable the reader, and Castania, to compare one lover with the other. By knowing Gwydonius's true identity the reader knows at once which lover will win the girl, and why. Castania, however, is forced to make her

¹¹⁸ Lerner, p. 129.

decision based only on what she knows. And the situation here is by no means as clear-cut as it is in most of Greene's stories. Valericus is apparently valiant, handsome, and witty, as is Gwydonius. Both young men are equally sincere in their affection for her, and both court her in the fashionable rhetorical style, which is Greene's main way of demonstrating wit. Not until the end of the story do we or Castania know that Valericus will prove a villain. Furthermore, though we know better, to Castania Valericus' rank is higher than Gwydonius's, though still lower than hers. Castania, both young men, and the entire court, however, know that she is destined to be married to a prince, for Valericus says: "for if it bee true that all speaketh, or at the least suspecteth, thou art lyke by thy louers Parentage to become a great Potentate" (IV, 61). It is not surprising that Castania is confused and unsure what to do when Valericus presents his suit to her. Only one early hint is given as to Valericus' unsuitability. In order to win Castania's love he begins to enter into the social life of her father's court as apparently he had not previously done, preferring the solitude of hawking and hunting alone. Greene notes in passing that through Valericus' efforts to make a brilliant showing, "that whereas before hee was speciallie loued of none, now hee was generallie liked of all: insomuch that for a time there was no talke in the Court but of the Metamorphosis of Valericus minde" (IV, 48, 49).

(Greene would in Ciceronis Amor explore such a "metamorphosis" in more detail.)

Other than this small blot of previous unpopularity, and of course his lower social rank, there is little to suggest that Valericus is not a model suitor. Castania is at first amazed at his forwardness, "musing that hee woulde so farre ouershoote himselfe, as to attempt so vnlikelie a match" (IV, 51). When Valericus persists, Castania comes to feel some degree of attraction to him, and she is unable to frame any reply to him. Greene indeed seems to see little action that she can take, for he states only that "the fates, the destinies" cause her to refuse him. In later work, more under the influence of the Greek romances,¹¹⁹ Fortune comes to play a major part in his plotting, but this seems to be a somewhat different force from the fates as seen here. When Valericus gives up too quickly after Castania's refusal of his suit and plans to seek revenge on her, it is finally clear that she has made the right choice.

Following immediately upon Valericus' boorish behavior after Castania's rejection of him comes a description of Gwydonius in superlative terms. His innate nobility and worth are at once apparent to all. He is described in terms of the ideal Renaissance gentleman:

But leauing him to his dumpes, at last to
Gwydonius, who besides the beauty of his bodie,

¹¹⁹ For Greene's debt to the Greek romance, see Wolff, The Greek Romances in Elizabethan Prose Fiction.

and the bountie of his minde (whereat all Alexandria wondered) had by good gouernment and perfect practise, obtayned such a dexteritie in all things, as in feates of armes no man more forward, in exercise none more actiue, in plaie none more politike, in parle none more pleasant, amongst his auncients. verie wise, amongst the youthfull who more merrie: so that there was no time, person, nor place, whereto aptlie he applied not himselfe. (IV, 64)

When Gwydonius first falls in love with Castania, he knows that she believes him to be "sprong of some poore peasant" (IV, 69), and in despair he goes to the garden to meditate. The dream which he has there, and relates to Castania, presents in symbol Greene's view of the role of love in a world which is filled with dangers to that love. In the dream Gwydonius sees a young woman of superlative beauty sitting on a rock in the ocean. Between them the waves are fierce and threaten destruction, and the only possible access to the girl is by means of a brittle glass bridge which appears to be so fragile that it will shatter at a touch. Gwydonius is awakened as he tries to decide whether to risk his life by venturing onto the bridge or to turn away from the love he might possibly win. In the ensuing discussion between the young people Gwydonius sets forth his view of the force of love as equal to the force of necessity--neither can be constrained by law. He further asserts his faith that supernatural intervention will ensue if the love is true love: "(considering that no hope of wealth, no desire of riches, no greedinesse of gaine, no loue of lucre, but beautie hir selfe

was the victorie I meant to vaunt off)" (IV, 81). Thus even if the bridge shattered, "Jupiter" would perhaps provide a "dolphin" to carry him to the rock. The interpretation seems clear: love, even when denied to a person by social rules or fortune (the glass bridge),¹²⁰ is finally under the control of a power higher than these forces. Love's rules are not position or wealth, but beauty, virtue, and wit, and if these conditions are present one can only venture forth to win the prize. Castania accepts Gwydonius on this basis without knowing that he is also her social equal until the end of the story.¹²¹

IV. Arbasto and Morando

Arbasto: The Anatomie of Fortune (entered in the Stationer's Register on August 13, 1584) and Morando: The Tritameron of Love¹²² are relevant to this study only by their

¹²⁰ That the bridge symbolizes Fortune to Greene is clear from the subtitle of his next work Arbasto, in which he states, "to stay vpon Fortunes lotte, is to treade on brittle Glasse" (III, 173); thus in Gwydonius to depend upon Fortune to gain love is to condemn oneself to almost certain failure.

¹²¹ Two other critical works which have made valuable contributions to the study of Gwydonius are Robert W. Dent, "Greene's Gwydonius: A Study in Elizabethan Plagiarism," Huntington Library Quarterly, 24 (1961), 151-162; and Walter R. Davis, Idea and Act, pp. 141-143. Dent's article examines the passages, all ornamental, which Greene borrows almost word for word from Pettie's Petite Pallace and from his own Mamillia. Davis works with Gwydonius' use of disguise and the various roles he plays, which work together to perfect his character.

¹²² Problems exist in the dating of Morando, as no edition before 1587 is extant, and the first entry in the Stationer's Register is August 8, 1586; but Grosart refers to a "Part Ist, of 1584, in the Bodleian" (III, 44), apparently now lost, and,

exploration of Greene's views on fortune, and on its relationship to love. Neither work is a story, but rather a discourse (or series of discourses in Morando) which is framed by the slenderest of fictional situations.

In Arbasto the narrator is a traveler blown off course, who comes to the temple of Astarte in "Sydon" where he plans to "offer incense to y^e goddesse of prosperitie" (III, 178). There he sees the priest, alternately weeping and laughing as he contemplates a picture of Fortune with one foot "on a polype fish,¹²³ and with the other on a Camelion" (III, 179), to illustrate, as Greene notes, Fortune's "certeine mutabilitie." The priest illustrates what he has learned about fickle fortune by telling the narrator the story of his life as a once-powerful prince who is at first the darling of Fortune. Later Fortune turns and Arbasto experiences ill success in war and love. To Arbasto, his salvation lay in a Boethius-inspired refusal to accept the gifts of Fortune. By living meagerly and obscurely with a contented spirit, one could free oneself from being bound helplessly by the vagaries of Fortune, which gives only to take away.¹²⁴ Arbasto says:

as Jordan notes, since the work is dedicated to the Earl of Arundel, who was committed to the Tower for high treason on April 25, 1585, it is unlikely that the work would have first appeared with that dedication after that date (Jordan, p. 166).

¹²³ The polype fish is later explained by the priest: "she [Fortune] like the Polipe fishe, turneth hirsselfe into the likenesse of euerie object" (III, 184).

¹²⁴ S. L. Wolff examines the sources of Greene's view of Fortune, which he sees as inspired by the Greek romances.

I haue left my pallace, and taken me to a simple Cell: in the one I found often displeasure, but in the other neuer but contentation. From a Prince of the earth, I am become a Priest to the Gods, seeking only by this obscure life to please the[m], and displease fortune: whose picture when I see, I weep that I was so fond as to be subject to such a seruile dame, and I laugh that at last I triumph both ouer mine owne affections, and ouer fortune. (III, 185)

In Pandosto and Menaphon this spiting of fortune would be placed in a pastoral context in the narrow sense of the word, and the shepherd would become the symbol of this lowly life beyond the reach of fortune.

In Gwydonius Castania was unable to love Valericus only because the "fates" did not permit it. The fates here do not seem to be equivalent to fortune, though there is a close connection. In Gwydonius' dream fortune is seen as an insubstantial bridge to love, and one which would be superseded by divine intervention. However, in Arbasto love clearly becomes one of the tools by which fortune can ruin a man or woman. It was beyond Arbasto's control that he loved the unworthy Doralicia and spurned the virtuous, self-sacrificing love of Myrania.¹²⁵ In Morando, the issue is restated in the terms of Gwydonius: Panthia judges the third day's debate on the question of whether men or women are more subject to love;

¹²⁵ Walter Davis suggests that the only point of contact in Arbasto between love and fortune is that both are totally irrational, that love is a "lawless passion which overthrows reason" and that fortune is the "realm of experience" in which this lawless love works, thus demonstrating the total absurdity of life (Idea and Act, p. 144).

her conclusion is:

That loue being no mortall passion, but a
supernaturall influence allotted vnto euerie
man, by destinie charmeth & inchanteth the
minds of mortall creatures, not according to
their wils, but as the decree of the fates
shall determine. (III, 108)

By the time Greene wrote the second part of Morando, appar-
ently not till 1586, he had come to synthesize his views on
fortune far more clearly. He now has a definition: "all
future euentis subiect to casuall inconstancie, because they
hang in suspence, and may fall out contrarie to deliberation"
(III, 129). He has a different emblem from the one in
Arbasto which depicted fortune as merely capricious; Panthia
in Morando returns to the medieval depiction of Fortune with
her horn of plenty and her wheel, suggesting both a more
positive aspect, and also more order, and she still maintains
the image from Gwydonius of brittle glass (III, 133-34).
Greene also sees virtue and wisdom as of more avail to man
than the gifts of fortune, or "prosperitie, which is not
able to perfect a man without vertue"; for Peratio concludes
that "all Fortunes goods without knowledge how to vse them,
are preiudiciall, and the goods of the mind onely firme and
perpetuall" (III, 139). Finally, to the clear statement of
the question whether love is under the control of fortune,
Peratio replies:

I tolde you before that Fortunes chaunces are
accidentall contrarie to deliberation: now
marriage is a friendly vniting of mindes with
a determined election, making choice of the
thing loued, eyther for beautie, riches or

vertue, therefore I thinke hardly brought
within the euent of Fortune. (III, 140)

Morando seems to show that Greene has finally settled in his mind that love is a power higher than fortune, indeed outside its realm altogether. Hereafter, he makes love even more a pastoral aspect of life, i.e., one based only on nature's gifts of beauty, virtue, and wit.

V. Farewell to Follie

Farewell to Follie, entered in the Stationer's Register on June 11, 1587, was apparently not published until 1591. It is a Morando-like series of discourses which seems to have been planned as a treatment of the seven deadly sins. Norman Sanders postulates that Greene grew bored with the subject, began to plagiarize heavily, and finally laid it aside, perhaps to begin writing drama, then published it unfinished later.¹²⁶ The work seems best discussed at this point, however, because many ideas in it show Greene's patterns of thought as he approached the writing of his two pastoral romances.

In the framework story Ieronimo Farneze takes his wife, three daughters, and four young gentlemen to a farm in the country to escape the turmoil of Florence during time of war. The young men are obviously disappointed with this rural solitude:

¹²⁶ Norman Sanders, "Robert Greene's Way with a Source," Notes and Queries, 212 (1967), 89-91.

[The gentlemen] accompanied the old Countie to his house, where arryuing they found a Grange place by scituation melancholie, as seated in the middest of a thicket, fitter for one giuen to metaphusical contemplation than for such yong Gentlemen, as desired sooner to daunce with Venus, than to dreame with Saturne. (IX, 237)

Farneze explains to them the need of occasional retreat from the everyday world, in order to afford solitude for contemplation of philosophical questions:

We Gentlemen, that haue liued pleasantlie at Florence wearing out time with vanitie, may now refine our senses dulled with the tast of sundrie vaine objects, and for a weeke or two betake our selues to this solitarie place, wherein I thinke to finde no other pleasure but a sweete meditation. (IX, 238)

The first discourse is of the folly of pride. To prove his points Peratio tells the story of the pride of King Vadislaus. When an honest noble, Selydes, refuses to flatter Vadislaus, the king has him exiled, confiscates his lands, and sends Selydes' daughter Maesia out to work for her living. Maesia, determining to "make a vertue of necessitie" as Selydes had counseled her, takes service contentedly as maid to a farmer's wife. Vadislaus' pride, meanwhile, grows beyond all bounds, until his nobles recall Selydes and crown him. As punishment Selydes sends Vadislaus out dressed in rags to beg for his living. In his wanderings Vadislaus comes upon Maesia, who counsels him to accept his poverty with patience, but he cannot change. Maesia, to please her father, finally returns to court, but is unhappy at losing the contentment of her life in the country.

While the point of the story is to illustrate the folly and the outcome of Vadislaus' pride, its real interest, both for the reader and for Greene, is in the portrayal of Vadislaus' foil Maesia. She obviously represents far more than the simple opposite of pride, humility. For the first time Greene brings his speculations on fortune as seen in Arbasto into a pastoral framework. When Maesia is first left alone she bewails her "frostie winter of misfortune" (IX, 262), but soon reconciles herself by recalling all of the danger and insecurity of life in a palace which she will now escape. Arbasto-like, she determines:

Silence Maesia, least Fortune hearing thy
complaynts, ioy in hir owne spight, and
triumphe in thy sorrowes: the sweetest
salve of mishappe is pacience, and no
greater reuenge can be offered Fortune,
than to rest content in miserie. (IX, 264)

The iconological significance of clothing to Greene has already been touched upon. Here Maesia effects a complete transformation by changing her clothing:

For that she would keepe a decorum, as well
in hir attire as in hir actions, she put
off hir rich roabes and put on homely ragges,
transforming hir thoughtes with hir apparell,
trauelled from the court into the countrie.
(IX, 265)

With the putting on of the rural costume Maesia is transported at once into the pastoral world; for in the very same sentence Greene describes the farmer's son she encounters as he is going to a "Morice dāce," the typical holiday outing in pastoral literature. (Indeed Greene even inserts a poetic

description of Maesia, a typical device in the pastoral romance.) When Vadislaus is dressed in rags he cannot experience the same result, however, because he refuses to humble his spirit. He receives some comfort by telling himself:

Beest thou neuer so poore in estate, bee
 still a Prince in thought: parentage is
 without the compasse of Fortune, the Gods
 may dispose of welth, but not of birth:
 imagine thy palmers bonnet a princes diadem,
 thinke thy staffe a scepter, thy graie weeds
 costly attire: imaginations are as sweete
 as actions: and seeing thou canst not bee
 a king ouer nobilitie, bee yet a king ouer
 beggers. (IX, 276)

His pride remains unchanged; it only assumes a different clothing. Vadislaus never really enters the pastoral world.

As Vadislaus approaches the farmer's home where Maesia is working at her spinning wheel, she sings one of Greene's loveliest lyrics:

Sweet are the thoughts that sauour of content,
 the quiet mind is richer then a crowne:
 Sweet are the nights in carelesse slumber spent,
 the poore estate scornes fortunes angrie frowne:
 Such sweet cotent, such mindes, such sleep, such blis
 Beggers inioy, when Princes oft do mis.

The homely house that harbors quiet rest,
 the cottage that affoordes no pride, nor care:
 The meane that grees with Countrie musick best,
 the sweet consort of mirth and musicks fare:
 Obscured life sets downe a type of blis,
 a minde content both crowne and kingdome is.
 (IX, 279-80)

While Vadislaus is touched by the song, he refuses to let himself be changed by the power of poetry any more than he

had been by his change of apparel. Indeed when Maesia asks if he is Vadislaus, he replies: "I am . . . the same, I tel thee maide, euerie waie the same, for mishap hath no whit altered my minde," to which Maesia wisely replies: "Then . . . hath fortune done ill, to ioyne in thee both pouertie and pride" (IX, 282). She recognizes that it is impossible to triumph over fortune by fighting against it; the only true victory lies in resignation.

The second discourse is on the folly of lust, and again an illustrative story is told. The story is important to this study only in that it depicts a low-born couple, Maenon and Semyramis, who have the innate nobility later seen in a number of Greene's humble characters. Like Maesia, they have accepted their humble estate with contentment:

There dwelled in the suburbes of the Citie a poore labouring man called Maenon, who was more honest than wealthye, and yet sufficiently rich, for that he liued contente amongst his neighbours: this poore man accounted his possessions large enough, as long as hee enjoyed and possessed his groundes in quiet.
(IX, 298)

Their nobility is evidenced in Greene's usual way, by their beauty, virtue and wit, the latter quality being amply demonstrated by their conversation, in which both allude freely to classical and historical figures (see especially pp. 312-13 and 316-17). Semyramis, though against her will, is made queen and she rules wisely.

The third story, an exemplum of gluttony, also has a low-born character, Rustico, who is spiritually noble, and

who moves facilely in Greene's learned world of allusion (see pp. 341-42), as Maenon and Semyramis had. Because he is thus qualified, Rustico is also given social position; he is eventually made governor of his city. These three characters seem to represent Greene's first tentative exploration of the nature of nobility outside of external, or social nobility. He still seems somewhat uncomfortable with the concept, though, for in both cases he changes their external condition to bring it in line with their worth.

VI. Penelopes Web and Euphues His Censure

The other two works of 1587 are Penelopes Web, entered in the Stationer's Register June 26, 1587, and Euphues His Censure to Philautus, entered September 18, 1587, both of which were published that same year. They are balancing pieces: the framework stories of both are set during the Trojan War. Penelopes Web sets forth the virtues of the model woman by a series of exemplary tales, and Euphues His Censure shows the virtues of a model soldier by the same method. Only one story in Penelopes Web need be mentioned, primarily because it is an extreme version of the patient Griselda theme which is influential in so many of Greene's later stories. Barmenissa, wife of the Soldan of Egypt, is treated cruelly by him and is finally sent out into the streets to make her living when he marries Olynda, a cruel and vengeful woman. Barmenissa accepts all with patience, to the extent

of revealing to them a plot to overthrow them and place her on the throne. She even gives her rival Olynda wise counsel. Olynda's cruelty is finally so obvious that the Soldan exiles her and restores Barmenissa to her former station. During her time of testing, Barmenissa, like Maesia, determines to spite fortune by accepting her poverty cheerfully. She also sings of the perils of high estate and the contentment of the humble life. Finally, the story stresses that a high social rank should include only those who possess innate nobility. The Soldan berates Olynda for her cruelty and presumption by saying:

I speake this Olynda, for that I see the
glorie of a Crowne hath made thee vnworthie
of a Crowne, and Dignitie that ought to
metamorphise men into vertuous resolutions,
hath made thee a very mirror of vicious
affections. (V, 190)

In Euphues His Censure the final story deals with Roxander, a beloved leader of the Athenian forces, who is exiled to prevent his soldiers' trying to make him governor. Roxander, however, knows how to handle fortune; he simply ignores it and is content with whatever it has to offer:

Roxander hauing the sentence of his banish-
ment pronounced, thinking fortune ment to
giue him a check, thought as roughly to
deale with hir, and therefore put vp hir
abuses with patience. (VI, 273)

Perhaps it should also be noted, in view of Greene's later tone of patriotism, that Roxander was intensely patriotic, working to save Athens even though Athens had exiled him. When he was first sentenced to exile, the

Athenian citizens wanted to rise up against the Senate to have the exile revoked, but Roxander refused to permit this, saying:

If it bee for mee (woorthy Cityzens) you haue taken armour in seeking to grace me with your fauour, you pinch me with dishonor: in coueting my liberty, you bring mee within the bondage of infamy: The Senate hath past iudgement against mee in iustice, and I content to brooke the penalty of the lawe with patience: offences must bee punished, and punishments borne with quiet, not with reuenge. Haue I lyued forty yeare a duetifull subiect in Athens, and shall I now by your meanes bee accounted a mutinous rebell?
(VI, 274)

The populace as a whole in a number of Greene's previous stories had overthrown unjust leaders, but Roxander and Barmenissa suggest that Greene feels that a virtuous and wise citizen would not rise up against the state, but rather seek to protect it. In their refusal to permit rebellion they show another character trait possessed by Greene's spiritual aristocracy--the lack of self-seeking aspiration. The issue of social class arises here in a reverse way--both are content to remain in the estate to which their rulers have consigned them.

The years of 1583 through 1587 were a fertile period of exploration for Greene. Most of the ideas which would underlie the mature fiction of 1588-90 and the dramas, were already present in embryo. He grappled with many of life's questions--the sources and effects of love and the mysterious force which he and his age called Fortune, the nature of that perhaps

ultimately indefinable spirit that gives a person validity and dignity--and its relationship to position and reward in the real world. Not surprisingly, perhaps, as a child of that real world he from the first showed a tendency to put all life's good aspects--love, innate human dignity, contentment--into an ideal realm, which is referred to in this study as "the pastoral world." In the next group of romances he would make the connection consciously as he began to use the pastoral mode in its narrowly defined sense.

CHAPTER III

PASTORAL AND SOCIAL ELEMENTS IN THE ROMANCES OF 1588-1590

The fictional works of 1588 through 1590 form a natural grouping within Greene's corpus, because each of them includes some form of pastoral in its narrow sense. These inclusions run the gamut from one pastoral eclogue added to the end of Perimides the Blacke-smith to an entire pastoral romance in Menaphon. Furthermore these pastoral episodes are usually central to the impetus of the work as a whole, illustrating or commenting upon its ideological frame of reference.

Some critics have tied Greene's experiments in the pastoral mode to the influence of pastoral romances being published in the late 1580's. Jordan suggests that the publication in 1587 of Angel Day's translation of Daphnis and Chloe may have provided a major stimulus,¹²⁷ while Greene's biographer Storojenko apparently believes that there was a 1588 edition of Sidney's Arcadia (1590) which inspired Menaphon at least.¹²⁸ Whether from a published edition or a private manuscript, the Arcadia almost certainly

¹²⁷ Jordan, p. 39. Pruvost deals in more detail with the nature of this influence in Robert Greene et ses Romans, p. 302.

¹²⁸ Works, I, 103. Grosart casts doubt upon this date.

influenced Menaphon, although there are no clear traces of it in Greene's other pastoral works.

Whatever the source of the influence, it was a new addition to Greene's work in 1588 which thoroughly syncretized his former impulses toward pastoral modes of thought. Pastoral had been concerned from its beginnings with love, poetry, and the retreat from the mundane world. In addition, it had some intrinsic democratic leanings, although, as Lawrence Lerner has found of similar works,¹²⁹ these were carefully controlled. In Greene's work pastoral's democratic tone mainly provided an environment in which social classes could interact and thus demonstrate the nature of true nobility as opposed to simple external nobility.

I. Perimides the Blacke-smith

Perimides the Blacke-smith, entered in the Stationer's Register on March 29, 1588, forms a natural link between the earlier exempla and the romances of this period. It continues the form of the framework tale, but now with virtually no didactic intent. Perimides and Delia discuss moral precepts and tell stories, but, as Pruvost notes, the stories do not provide examples of the precepts:

Ces deux histoires n'ont aucune espèce de rapport avec les discours tenus par Perimides et par Delia pour illustrer les avantages de la frugalité et les néfastes effets de jeu.
[These two stories have no relationship to

¹²⁹ Lerner, Chap. 5, "Golden Slumbers: The Politics of Pastoral," pp. 105-129.

the discourses held by Perimides and Delia to illustrate the advantages of frugality and the baneful effects of gambling.]¹³⁰

After a summary of the third story, he goes on to add:

Bien qu'elle conserve un certain lien avec le discours moral qui l'a précédée, il n'y a de cette histoire aucun enseignement à tirer. Et ainsi aucune des trois nouvelles du Perimides n'est un exemplum. Elles mettent bien en scène des personnages qui pour la plupart sont vertueux, constants, et fidèles--aucun en tout cas n'est coupable de graves écarts de conduite--mais il s'agit moins de faire l'éloge de leurs qualités que de provoquer l'admiration pour le caractère surprenant des aventures au terme desquelles, après avoir été cruellement éprouvés, ils retrouvent ou atteignent le bonheur. . . . Les merveilleuses histoires sont contées uniquement pour le plaisir du lecteur, sans arrière-pensée d'édification.

[Although it maintains a certain connection with the moral discourse which preceded it, this tale has no lesson to extract. And therefore none of the three stories in Perimides is an exemplum. They spotlight characters who are generally virtuous, steadfast, and loyal--none in any case guilty of grave errors of conduct--but it is less a question of praising their qualities than of exciting admiration for the surprising nature of the adventures at the end of which, after having been cruelly tested, they recover or attain happiness. . . . These marvelous tales are related only for the reader's pleasure, without any ulterior motive of edification.]¹³¹

Even in the subtitle Greene stresses the "honest and delightful recreation" of the tales more than the "special principles fit for the highest to imitate" (VII, 3).

The tales do, however, work together closely with the framework story, the entire unit becoming Greene's most

¹³⁰ Pruvost, p. 274.

¹³¹ Pruvost, p. 275.

extensive treatment thus far of the issue of social class and its relationship to Fortune. Furthermore, it is clear that in Perimides the influence of pastoral is very strong in Greene's mind, for to the end of the work he appends a pastoral eclogue, supposed to have been written by Perimides to Delia during the period of their courtship, in which he is depicted as the shepherd Coridon, and she as the shepherdess Phyllis.

The real emphasis of Perimides is immediately apparent in the opening paragraph:

There dwelled, as the Annuall records of Egypt makes mention, in the Citie of Memphis, a poore man called Perymedes, whome Fortune enuying from his infancie, had so thwarted with contrarie constellation, that although hee had but his wyfe and him selfe to releue by his manuall labours, yet want had so wrong him by the finger, that ofte the greatest cheere they had, was hungar, and their sweetest sauce content: yet Fame willing to supplie what fortune had faulted with defect, so rewarded poore Perymedes with the glorie of report, that he was not onely loued and liked of all his neighbours, but knowen for his contented pouertie through all the confines of Egypt. (VII, 11)

Greene goes on to list Perimedes' virtues: his industry, his humility, his lack of envy and covetousness, his liberality, his patience, and his love. Delia also is virtuous, "a wife fit for so honest a husband," and though not described in terms of the beautiful Renaissance heroine, she has "a verie pure and perfect complexion." Their life has become a pattern for those of higher estate: "as diuerse men of great calling sought to be carefull imitators of their methode." They are

particularly noted for their temperance: "they satisfied nature with that their labour did get, and their calling allow" (VII, 12, 13); indeed their first discourse begins with a discussion of the evils of excess. Finally, in spite of their humble calling, they are both quite familiar with historical events and classical figures (see pp. 17,22), thereby demonstrating their wit.

Perimides and Delia are never raised to any higher estate socially; they show Greene's first use of lower-class figures who remain lower-class and who yet demonstrate the kind of innate nobility that he sees as true aristocracy. That this had nothing to do with the issue of social class is clear, for Perimides and Delia's foremost virtue is their contentment with their station and their total lack of desire to change it: "poore men should look no hier then their feete, least in staring at starres they stumble" (VII, 22). The story of Perimides and Delia is different from Greene's former portrayals of characters who accepted their bad fortune without complaint. They not only accept their lot, but through their virtues they counteract it, because fame, resulting from those virtues, gives them a position of honor which fortune would have denied them. Greene therefore sees no incongruity in a poor smith's wife possessing papers belonging to the last Pharaoh. Through this innate nobility Perimides and Delia are so far above the aristocrats whom they observe that they pity them. After a holiday visit to the temple Perimides tells Delia that the rich lords present

there were not happy: "I perceived them miserable, & so corrupted in the conceit of their owne wealth, that I cryed out in my thoughtes, these men are poorer then Perimides" (VII, 57). Perimides recognizes that the power of the mind is the key to this kind of nobility:

He onelye is riche, which abandoning all superfluities resteth contented with what Fortune hath fauoured him, his estate not pinched with such pouertie, but he may liue honestlye and vertuouslye: who so resolute in this content maketh not his thoughts and passions subiect to the restlesse desire of gaine, Is vere habetur diues, for wife, the minde is the touchstone of content, and holdeth the ballance that proportioneth quiet or disquiet to Kings. (VII, 58)

This nobility is seen in the terms of social power, as Perimides goes on to say:

For my estate I desire to be no higher then a Smith, as thus spighting fortune by my occupation, hauing my Tongs in my hand as a Scepter, to rule in my shop, and as Mercuries Cadeceus to charme the inconstancie of the vaine Goddessse. (VII, 59)

That is, not only is Perimides spiritually the equal of a king, but he is actually higher, for he has a magical power over Fortune which is denied to even a king. This power is given him by virtue, which is superior to Fortune: "whereas Vertue is not accidentall but sets out her Flag of defiance against Fortune, opposing himselfe against all the conspyring chances of this world" (VII, 61).

It is against this background of the description of Perimides and Delia and of their attitudes toward social class

that their three stories are presented, not to exemplify the vices of gluttony or of gambling which they discuss; all three show lovers, either apparently or actually of different classes, who overcome all social obstacles and adversities of fortune.

The first story is Greene's most extensive experiment up to this point with working in the mode of the Greek romance, which came to him in this case through Boccaccio.¹³² It shows a family separated from each other for many years, its members forced to live in humble circumstances, and their final joyful reunion and return to their rightful position. The theme of marriage apparently across class lines is used just as it was in Gwydonius, the princess falling in love with her father's servant who later proves to be her social equal. Likewise, Mariana's determination to thwart fortune by despising it is typical of Greene's usual comments on fortune. Delia's tale on the second night is the story of Alcimedes, very learned and of good parentage, but very poor. Because Alcimedes was "to poore to make his daughter any sufficient loynter" (VII, 48), Constance's father refuses to permit the marriage. Wealth in this story performs the same function as class, for it is the means of keeping the lovers apart, even when they appear to be ideally suited otherwise. Yet Greene shows the triumph of love after a period of testing,

¹³² Pruvost shows that the source of the story is Boccaccio's sixth novel of the second day in the Decameron; p. 277.

for Constance and Alcimedes later marry.

The third night's tale is the most pertinent of the three to this study. In it Melissa, the daughter of the wealthy and powerful Duke Gradasso, is courted by two suitors, the rich but stupid Rosilius, and the poor but handsome and witty Bradamant. Bradamant's parentage is also considerably lower than Melissa's, so that Gradasso plans to marry her to Rosilius. Gradasso, who has oppressed the poor through usury, is exiled, Melissa and Rosilius with him. Bradamant goes to the land where they are and shortly rises by his wit and superior qualities to be a favorite of the king. Now Gradasso is quite willing to marry Melissa to him. Eventually all return to their homeland, even carrying "the clownish Lord Rosilius" (VII, 84) back with them.

This story is especially noteworthy for the clear choice which is set before Melissa. Of two suitors, one noble and wealthy, but a fool; the other virtuous and wise, but poor and of low estate, Melissa must choose the latter, even in the face of her father's disapproval. Such a clear choice had not been offered since the epilogue to Mamillia, in which there were three suitors. However in that case the issue had been clouded by its proximity to the Judgment of Paris theme, and by the fact that the story had been told only as an exemplum. Perimides' story is exemplary only to the extent that it shows the evils of Gradasso's greed. The courtship seems to be a sincere presentation of a question which

intrigued Greene. At the conclusion of the story Perimides points the true moral: "Thou seest Delia how farre wit is preferred before wealth, and in what estimation the qualities of the mind are in respect of worldly Possessions" (VII, 84-85).

As is true in so many of Greene's stories, it is in a natural, almost consciously pastoral setting that the proper love relationship is achieved. Bradamant and Melissa meet in the woods and further manifest their suitability to each other by playing on the lute and singing, Bradamant of his despair through love and Melissa of her despair because she is not permitted to return that love. There is a decided pastoral emphasis in the sylvan setting, the songs interspersed in the story, and the love so often gained in the pastoral world. The episode forms the decisive link between the other two parts of the story. It is a pastoral interlude which acts as a foil to Gradasso's greed and conniving in the first part, and which gives Bradamant the power of love which will enable him to undergo the test of his virtue, wit, and faithfulness in the last part. While Bradamant also satisfies Gradasso by improving his financial and social position, Greene clearly demonstrates that it is his virtues which make him worthy of Melissa.

To the end of Perimides Greene added some poems as an epilogue, unconnected to the story except by the flimsy link of their being papers which Delia possessed. The last of

these is a simple pastoral eclogue about the wooing and winning of the shepherdess Phyllis by the shepherd Coridon, which is stated to be a poem written by a "clerk" for Perimedes to give to Delia during the period of their courtship. The poem has no contentual importance, but it is significant that Greene places Perimedes and Delia, his exemplars of contentment, in an openly pastoral context by means of this poem. Like so many of the contented characters of his earlier romances, they are colored by the implications of pastoral even before this. The poem only serves the purpose of making the connection specific. The shepherd was to the Elizabethans a type of the life of contemplation. As Hallett Smith observes:

The shepherd is not motivated by ambition or by greed. Free from these two common human passions, he enjoys "content," or the good life. Elizabethan pastoral poetry is essentially a celebration of this ideal of content, of otium. The contemplative state enjoyed a freedom, not only from ambition or greed, but from the vicissitudes of fortune.¹³³

This summary shows the extent to which Greene was being influenced by pastoral ideals even before he began to work within the pastoral genre as narrowly defined. The whole foundation of his portrayal of Perimedes and Delia is their contentment, their moderation, their freedom from the control of fortune, and the leisure which their life affords them to

¹³³ Smith, pp. 8, 9.

engage in telling tales, as much a creation of art as the shepherds' eclogues and singing contests.

II. Pandosto

The stories of Perimides, especially the first with its theme of separation and reunion of a family, provide a natural link to Greene's two great pastoral romances, Pandosto and Menaphon. More critical work has been done on these two works than on any of Greene's other prose. Although most critics feel Menaphon is the better of the two, Pandosto is far better known as a result of Shakespeare's use of it for A Winter's Tale. The diversity of critical opinion concerning Pandosto is shown in the differing opinions of two well-known scholars concerning Shakespeare's adaptation of it. J. J. Jusserand claims that Pandosto is an "unlikely" and "crude" tale, that Shakespeare changed it most by giving some life to the heroes, and "as they had been shaped by Greene they sorely needed it."¹³⁴ F. S. Boas, on the other hand, feels that Shakespeare "could not transform it into a play with unity of motive or of action," and that, "In fact his alterations have gone far to rob the tale of such cohesion as it possessed in its original shape."¹³⁵

¹³⁴ J. J. Jusserand, The English Novel in the Time of Shakespeare (1890), trans. Elizabeth Lee (London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1908), p. 178.

¹³⁵ Frederick S. Boas, Shakspeare and His Predecessors (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, n.d. [1902]), p. 518.

Pandosto is the first of Greene's works that can be called "pastoral" in the narrow sense of the term, although we have already noted pastoral influences as early as Mamillia. The pastoral eclogue at the end of Perimides suggested even more strongly Greene's growing attraction to the genre. The purpose of Greene's use of pastoral in Pandosto has never been completely explored. Pruvost notes that Greene fails to take advantage of the opportunity afforded by his pastoral scenes to appeal "aux yeux et aux sens de ses lecteurs" [to the eyes and senses of his readers].¹³⁶ He feels that description of the Arcadian countryside would have done much to enliven Greene's prose. However, he approves of the farcical scene when the shepherd Porrus brings the infant Fawnia home to his wife: "La pastorale de Greene échappe ainsi à la fadeur et à la mièvrerie qui sont trop souvent l'écueil du genre" [Greene's pastoral thus escapes the insipidity and affectation which are too often the danger of the genre].¹³⁷ Walter Davis, more concerned with the ideological significance of the pastoral episode, is undoubtedly correct in suggesting that Greene uses it as "a possible rapprochement of the high and low by means of an adjustment of appearance and reality."¹³⁸

¹³⁶ Pruvost, p. 304.

¹³⁷ Pruvost, p. 304.

¹³⁸ Davis, Idea and Act, p. 79.

The interpretation of the pastoral interlude must take into account the framing story which takes place in the active world. Even though the love of Dorastus and Fawnia is the heart of the work, the story begins and ends with the title character, Pandosto. Much of the problem of interpreting the story lies with placing too much or too little emphasis on that fact. C. S. Lewis condemns the romance as being "bleached bare of any moral feeling whatever," because Pandosto "remains at the end what he was at the beginning, a bloody and treacherous tyrant."¹³⁹ Walter Davis similarly sees Pandosto's decline as creating "a dark world, where human nature is seen as motivated only by mad desires."¹⁴⁰ Both fail to place sufficient emphasis on the love of Dorastus and Fawnia, which, in Pruvost's words, becomes a means of "effacer les conséquences des fautes et des crimes dont, à la génération précédente, les pères s'étaient rendus coupables ou avaient été les victimes" [erasing the consequences of faults and crimes of which, in the previous generation, the fathers had been guilty or had been the victims].¹⁴¹

The problem of appearance versus reality, only hinted at by Davis above, seems to be the unifying force not only

¹³⁹ C. S. Lewis, English Literature in the Sixteenth Century, Excluding Drama (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1944), p. 423.

¹⁴⁰ Davis, Idea and Act, p. 169.

¹⁴¹ Pruvost, p. 290.

of the pastoral interlude, but of the entire romance. At the beginning Pandosto is happily married to Bellaria and their joy is made complete by the birth of their son Garinter. When Pandosto becomes jealous, it is his failure to discern rightly between appearance and reality that precipitates a crisis which completely destroys this happy situation. From a twentieth-century point of view it is easy to feel that Pandosto had ample cause for his jealousy, when Greene notes that Bellaria often came "her self into his [Egistus'] bed chamber, to see that nothing should be amis to mislike him" (IV, 237). However, the Renaissance view of Platonic love, already noted in Pettie's Petite Pallace and in the relationship between Mamillia and Florion, gave the precedent for Bellaria's attachment to Egistus. Greene even adds that Bellaria's attention to Egistus was a result of her desire to please Pandosto: "willing to show how vnfaynedly shee looued her husband by his friends intertainemēt" (IV, 237). Yet Pandosto, influenced by jealousy, fails to see the reality of chastity and friendship behind the appearance of deception. Since he cannot by rational means come to understand the truth, his error is finally revealed by the supernatural means of the oracle. It is too late, however, to stop the chain of events set in motion by his jealousy.

In the pastoral interlude Dorastus and Fawnia are faced with problems of appearance and reality of a different nature. As he has done previously, Greene uses clothing as a means of

spelling out the point he is making. The problem of the two lovers is one of apparent social disparity. Dorastus is the son of a king, Fawnia seemingly the daughter of a shepherd. Both realize that the world in which they live cannot permit their love. After a conversation in which Fawnia's intelligence is obvious, Dorastus recognizes that she is worthy of nobility by nature: "if her birth were answerable to her wit and beauty, . . . she were a fitt mate for the most famous Prince in the world" (IV, 283). He persists in his questions as a means of further testing that nobility.

Fawnia, realizing that their love is only feasible if they are of the same social level, says she can only love him "when Dorastus becomes a shepheard" (IV, 284). Dorastus knows that such a change in station is impossible in reality, but in desperation decides to try an apparent change by making himself "a shepherds coate." His struggle with himself at this point raises questions in his mind about love and its relationship to class:

Well said, Dorastus, thou keepest a right
decorum, base desires and homely attires:
thy thoughtes are fit for none but a
shepheard, and thy apparell such as only
become a shepheard. A strang change from
a Prince to a pesant: What is it? thy
wretched fortune or thy wilful folly: Is
it thy cursed destinies? Or thy crooked
desires, that appointeth thee this penance?
(IV, 287)

It must be noted that he is not questioning the rightness of social hierarchy, but only trying to determine whether the

origin of his socially impossible love lies in some malevolent supernatural force or in his own "wilful folly." In other words, Greene again asks what initiates love--personal choice or fortune (which lies outside the realm of choice).

Fawnia realizes at once that Dorastus is a shepherd only in the realm of appearance, not reality:

Rich clothing make not princes: nor homely
 attyre beggers: shepherds are not called
 shepherdes, because they we[a]re hookes and
 bagges, but that they are born poore, and
 liue to keepe sheepe; so this attire hath not
 made Dorastus a shepherd, but to seeme like
 a shepherd. (IV, 289)

Since Fawnia cannot accept this, the young couple try still another change in appearance, symbolized by another change of clothing. Dorastus carries Fawnia to a ship where she now changes her shepherd's costume to the elaborate attire which is fitted to the highest social estate: "she had attired her selfe in riche apparell, which so increased her beauty, that shee resembled rather an Angell then a mortall creature" (IV, 298). The young couple think that they are changing reality, not just appearances, by going from one world to another, but the matter is not so simple to resolve. When they are blown off course and forced to land in Bohemia, Dorastus tries another change in appearance--he changes his name and station, saying that "he was a Gentleman of Trapalonia called Meleagrus" (IV, 303). In a stroke of irony, Greene reverses their social estates once more. Pandosto is again fooled by appearances, this time as a result of lust (rather

than jealousy as before). He takes Fawnia to be a noble lady and Dorastus to be of base birth:

No doubt this Ladie by her grace and beauty
is of her degree more meete for a mighty
Prince, then for a simple knight, and thou
like a periured traitour hast bereft her of
her parentes, to their present grieffe, and
her insuing sorrow. (IV, 304)

Upon Egistus' revelation of Dorastus' identity, Dorastus and Fawnia's social positions are again reversed, bringing them back to what they were in the beginning. Now Pandosto berates Fawnia:

Thou disdainfull vassal, thou currish kite,
assigned by the destinies to base fortune,
and yet with an aspiring minde gazing after
honor: how durst thou presume, being a
beggar, to match with a Prince . . . ?
(IV, 314)

However, we are still in the realm of appearance rather than reality, because Fawnia is not a beggar. Through Porrus' revelation, Fawnia is at last restored to her proper social estate.

All of Dorastus and Fawnia's attempts to make adjustments between appearance and reality failed. The implication seems to be that it is not possible in our world to distinguish between appearance and reality, that only by chance, by fortune in Greene's terms, can reality be known. Yet this is not a totally dark world-view, because Greene retains the power of love, which has the innate ability to discern reality. And the reality which can be so discerned goes beyond social reality; it is real reality. Even if Fawnia had not proved

to be a princess, Dorastus had recognized her instinctive nobility in this real sense and had made the proper choice of a wife. He had been quite right in refusing the King of Denmark's daughter, since his father's choice had been based only upon superficial social reality. Fawnia's natural right to be regarded as noble can only be depicted fully in Greene's world by raising her social estate, but in Greene's view the nobility precedes the more superficial social elevation.

Furthermore, love can not only reveal innate nobility, but Greene gives it the even more magical power of changing the prosaic realities of the everyday world, and getting its values into their proper order. Dorastus and Fawnia's love even set to rights a past which had gone awry. That Pandosto commits suicide at the end of the story is not a result of the malevolent working of fortune; it is necessary to cleanse Dorastus and Fawnia's newly restructured world of the jealousy, lust, and enmity which Pandosto represents.

III. Orpharion and Alcida

The other two works written during 1588, Orpharion and Alcida, make use of Greene's usual social themes of love across class lines and contentment with poverty, but they make no new contributions. Both are strongly influenced by the classics, Alcida obviously written under the influence of Ovid's Metamorphoses, and the framework of Orpharion taking place in Jupiter's palace. They also have a number of pastoral touches, particularly in that both open with the narrator's

entrance into a paradise-like place obviously modeled after the pastoral pleasance. Indeed, in Orpharion it is just that, for a shepherd soon appears and pipes for the speaker. He is revealed at the end to be no true shepherd, though, but Mercury, who had come to reveal truths about love to the speaker. Mercury also appeared in shepherd's attire in Alcida to cause the metamorphosis of one of the daughters. The pastoral motif seems simply added on to these stories; it is never integrated fully, and no new use is made of it.

IV. Ciceronis Amor

Alcida had been entered in the Stationer's Register on December 9, 1588; Menaphon, the next work entered, was not listed until August 23, 1589. For a writer of Greene's prolificacy and one whose income depended solely on regular publication, a nine-month hiatus seems unusual. Ciceronis Amor was not entered in the Register, but was published during 1589. Both Grosart's and Jordan's chronologies place it after Menaphon, but neither gives a reason for doing so. The classical framework and bent of Alcida and Orpharion suggest that in 1588 Greene was reading Roman classics. If so he might naturally have been drawn at that time to a fictional treatment of Cicero. Based on intrinsic matters of theme, style, and the apparent progression of Greene's ideas during 1588 and 1589, as well as the otherwise unexplained gap, the work seems to fall most naturally before Menaphon.

Greene's foremost concern in Ciceronis Amor is evident even in his dedications of the work. In the primary dedication to Lord Strange, Greene says:

Then (Right Honourable) if my worke treating of Cicero, seeme not fit for Cicero, as eclipsing the beauteous shew of his eloquence, with a harsh and vnpolished stile: yet I craue that your Honour will vouch of it onely, for that it is written of Cicero. (VII, 100)

In the dedication "To the gentle Readers" he adds: "to discouer mine owne ignorãce, in that coueting to counterfeit Tullies phrase, I haue lost my selfe in vnproper words" (VII, 102). This is more than a simple apology for style; in Ciceronis Amor Greene is investigating the concept of the power of language. In the great sonnet sequences of the next decade, the power of poetry to immortalize would become a common theme. He is not working here with that idea, however; he is concerned with language as shaped by rhetoric. In Mamillia he had experimented with the Euphuistic style, which he used less and less in succeeding work, until he had attained a relatively stripped-down manner in narrative portions of his romances by the time he wrote Pandosto.¹⁴²

¹⁴² For example, Pruvost praises the description of Pandosto's growing jealousy: "Un passage comme celui-ci est aux antipodes des débordements du style euphuiste. Il a au contraire, par comparaison, la netteté, la retenue, l'économie, l'allure rapide et dépouillée, bien que sans secheresse, qui sont parmi les meilleures qualités de la nouvelle italienne." [A passage like this is the opposite of the overflowings of the euphuistic manner. It has on the contrary, by comparison, clarity, control, economy, a rapid and stripped-down style, although without severity, which are among the better qualities of the Italian novel] (p. 307).

He retained a life-long interest in style, however, only learning to vary it more to fit his subject.¹⁴³

In Ciceronis Amor this interest becomes the subject of the story. Greene is so intrigued by the possibilities of rhetoric that he composes some of his poems and letters in Ciceronian Latin and then translates them into English, trying to develop a comparable style. He apologizes for his inadequacy after the "translation" of Lentulus' letter to Terentia written by Tully:

If gentlemen I haue not translated Lentulus letter verbatim worde for worde, let me in mine owne excuse yeelde these reasons, that neither the familiar phrase of the Romaines can brooke our harsh cadence of sentences: nor durst I attempt to wrest Tullies eloquence to my rude and barbarous english.

(VII, 153)

The plot of the story at virtually every key point turns on language: Terentia, the beautiful and virtuous daughter of Consul Flaminius, is dedicated to chastity. The Roman military hero Lentulus, a man of honorable family and admirable personal qualities, falls in love with her through hearing her description. When he appeals to her, she refuses him, but Flavia, one of her friends who is present falls in love with him. Lentulus meets Cicero (Tully), whose eloquence has already made him a hero, and the two become close friends even though Tully is of base birth. Lentulus describes

¹⁴³ A thorough treatment of the decorum of style may be found in Walter F. Staton, Jr., "The Characters of Style in Elizabethan Prose," JEGP, 57 (1958), 197-207.

Terentia to Tully, who composes a letter to her for Lentulus. Tully has, however, now fallen in love with Terentia through Lentulus' description, although he attempts to stifle this passion because of his friendship for Lentulus. When Terentia reads the letter her two friends guess that Tully has written it, and from the eloquence of the letter, combined with the friends' description of Tully, Terentia falls in love with him, although his social station is far below hers. Lentulus falls sick when Terentia replies to the letter that she cannot love him. Piqued with curiosity to see Tully, Terentia, with Flavia and Cornelia, goes to walk in the fields toward his birthplace Arpinatum. Tully soon approaches and hides his own love to plead with her to love his friend Lentulus who is dying for love of her. Terentia, in trying to convey her love to Tully without openly revealing it, is finally overcome with tears of frustration. A messenger comes from Lentulus asking Tully to return to his bedside. As the three girls continue to walk they enter what is obviously a pastoral pleasance, called "the vale of Love," where a shepherd tells them the story of the love of Phyllis and Coridon, both shepherds, but her birth higher than his. The three friends fall asleep and are spotted by the foolish Fabius, son of a Roman senator who has sent Fabius to the country to avoid embarrassment. Fabius falls in love with the sleeping Terentia, and is mentally transformed by this so that he returns to Rome to resume his proper social station.

Tully meanwhile meets Terentia's father and tells him that Lentulus is dying for love of Terentia. Flaminius invites Tully home to dinner to try to persuade Terentia to love Lentulus. She again refuses and openly reveals her love to Tully. When he returns to Lentulus, Lentulus is improving as a result of having read a letter from Flavia in which her love is obvious. Now Tully falls sick, made worse by an angry letter from Terentia. Lentulus, seeing the letter, is cured of his love for Terentia and begins to court Flavia. Fabius goes to sue Terentia for her love, and Cornelia falls in love with him. When he is also refused by Terentia, he determines to challenge Tully to a duel. Lentulus undertakes this quarrel for his friend, and soon all Rome is taking sides on the matter. The Senate, to end this civil strife, calls in Terentia, Lentulus, Tully, and Fabius. Tully makes a speech explaining the situation, and the Senate asks how Terentia could love one of base birth, but the people are won to them and cry "None but Tully!" The story ends with a triple wedding.

The vital role of language in the story is clear from this synopsis. It is through hearing a description of Terentia that both Lentulus and Tully fall in love with her. It is through Tully's eloquence and through Flavia and Cornelia's descriptions of him that Terentia falls in love with him. Flavia's letter to Lentulus causes him to return to health and to begin to love her, while Terentia's letter to Tully untangles the love affair completely and precipitates

the story's end. Tully's eloquence sways the people to demand that his marriage to Terentia be permitted, even though that marriage is socially unacceptable.

Indeed, the only character whom this scheme omits is Fabius. He, however, is initially a fool--one whom language cannot reach. For him, Greene returns to his earlier means of inspiring love--beauty. The power of beauty is made stronger than ever before; it now has the ability to transform: "from a grosse clowne hee became to be a Judge of Beautie" (VII, 186). From beauty an even more powerful force arises, that of love, which completes the transformation:

Loves arrowes thus piercing into the heart of
Fabius whereinto neuer before any ciuill thought
could enter, made such a Metamorphosis of his
minde that not onely his Father & friends, but
all Roome began to woonder at his sodaine
alteration. (VII, 188)

Greene seems to be setting language up as the equivalent of beauty in the ability of both to inspire love and overcome obstacles. Love, with the help of beauty, was able to break down mental barriers and give Fabius the innate nobility which was needed to assume his rightful social estate. Love, with the help of language, is similarly able to break down social barriers and to reveal the innate nobility which gives Tully the right to be recognized by society as worthy of Terentia.

The pastoral episode at the heart of the work is perhaps a key to its total scheme. Pastoral had from its beginning been recognized as an art form especially concerned with

poetry and its power to overcome obstacles. It is at the height of Terentia's despair that she and her two friends enter the pastoral world. The shepherd whom they meet sings to them of the love of Phyllis and Coridon, another pair of unequal lovers; but in his song they overcome the obstacles of inequality and are immortalized through this. Even the name of the area, "the vale of Love," is a monument to their love. The shepherd's song is placed just before the climax of the story, as if to suggest that it is this which strengthens Terentia to confess her love to Tully and to stoutly defend that love before her father and the Senators.¹⁴⁴

V. Menaphon

The same concerns with language and the pastoral mode are evident to an even greater degree in Menaphon, published the same year. It is usually considered Greene's prose masterpiece.¹⁴⁵ It is his only work which is written almost entirely as a pastoral romance. In fact the only other work which comes near to being a pastoral romance is Pandosto,

¹⁴⁴ The only critical discussions of Cicéronis Amor which I have been able to find are those of Pruvost, pp. 333-43, who is mainly concerned with sources; and Davis, pp. 170-71, who treats only the style, although he remarks that Fabius' transformation is Greene's most "searching use of pastoral," p. 76.

¹⁴⁵ Jordan admits that it is not structurally sound, but says that most "present-day readers . . . agree in pronouncing it his most charming novel," p. 41. Walter Davis states flatly: "Menaphon Camillas Alarum to Slumbering Euphues (1589) is Greene's masterpiece," p. 171. Jusserand calls Menaphon "the best of Greene's romantic novels," p. 185. Even C. S. Lewis, who does not admire Greene's prose, says: "There are some admirable poems and more feeling for external nature than Greene had yet displayed," p. 423.

two-thirds of which has nothing to do with pastoral in the narrow sense of the term. While the plot of Menaphon seems to be original with Greene, it is obviously influenced by Sidney's Arcadia. The ingenious love entanglement is a case in point. While Sidney has a young man (disguised as a woman) simultaneously courted by a girl, her mother, and her father, Greene goes him one better and has a woman (disguised as a shepherdess) being courted simultaneously by her disguised husband, father, and son, and also by a shepherd swain. He further follows Sidney in having a king ignore his royal duties to retire to the country, and in designing his plot to show the fulfillment of a highly ambiguous oracle. He includes a much larger proportion of poetry interspersed in the prose than he had in previous works, but his poems are more closely integrated into the story than Sidney's, following naturally from the action at key points of the plot.¹⁴⁶

The concern with language is obvious, as in Ciceronis Amor, even from the introductory material. In the dedication "To the Gentlemen Readers" Greene states:

If Gentlemen you finde my stile either magis humile in some place, or more sublime in another, if you finde darke AEnigmaes or strange conceits as if Sphinx on the one side, and

¹⁴⁶ Pruvost also notes an influence from Heliodorus' Ethiopian History (p. 346), and J. Q. Adams outlines some similarities with the story of Curan and Argentile in Warner's Albion's England, although they do not seem especially striking: Joseph Q. Adams, Jr., "Greene's Menaphon and The Thracian Wonder," Modern Philology, 3 (1906), 317-325.

Roscius on the other were playing the waggess;
 thinke the metaphors are well ment, and that I
 did it for your pleasures, whereunto I euer
 ayemed my thoughts: and desire you to take a
 little paines to prie into my imagination.
 (VI, 7,8)

From Nashe's preface "To the Gentlemen Students of both
 Vniuersities" it is clear that Nashe, on behalf of the
 university-trained writers, is throwing down the gauntlet
 to those who write in inferior modes and styles:

I am not ignorant how eloquent our gowned age
 is grown of late; so that euerie moechanciall
 mate abhorres the english he was borne too, and
 plucks with a solemne periphraasis his vt vales
 from the inkhorne; which I impute not so much
 to the perfection of arts, as to the seruile
 imitation of vainglorious tragoedians, who
 contend not so seriouslie to excell in action,
 as to embowell the clowdes in a speach of
 comparison; thinking themselues more than
 initiated in poets immortalitie, if they but
 once get Boreas by the beard, and the heauen-
 lie bull by the deaw-lap. (VI, 9, 10)

Adding his part to the fray, "Thomas Brabine Gent." (an
 anagram for Thomas Barnaby) writes in a laudatory poem:

Come foorth you wittes that vaunt the pompe of speach,
 And striue to thunder from a Stage-mans throate:
 View Menaphon a note beyond your reach;
 Whose sight will make your drumming descant doate:
 Players auant, you know not to delight;
 Welcome sweete Shepheard; worth a Schollers sight.
 (VI, 31)

Walter Davis suggests that Greene was still smarting from the
 public attack on him in a play,¹⁴⁷ to which Greene refers in
 the dedication to Perimides:

¹⁴⁷ Davis, Idea and Act, p. 172.

I keepe my old course, to palter vp some thing
 in Prose, vsing mine old poesie still, Omne
tulit punctum, although latelye two Gentlemen
 Poets, made two mad men of Rome beate it out
 of their paper bucklers: & had it in derision
 for that I could not make my verses iet vpon
 the stage in tragicall buskins. (VII, 7, 8)

Be that as it may, the concern with style is obvious throughout Menaphon. When the rustic lovers Doron and Carmela sing their comic eclogue to each other ("Thy lippes resemble two Cowcumbers faire,/ Thy teeth like to the tuskes of fattest swine"), Greene smiles at the "farre fetcht Metaphores," apologizing to the reader that "the poore Countrey Louers knewe no further comparisons then came within compasse of their Countrey Logicke" (VI, 139) and goes on to give his own "Sonetto" about love, in the appropriate high style.

Greene lavished poetry on Menaphon, much of it among his loveliest. Of the eighty-eight poems from eleven volumes of novels, fourteen, over one-sixth of the total, are from Menaphon. To some extent this is for generic reasons--poetry is the essence of pastoral--but it also suggests a growing sense of the power of poetry to move. The poems often come at critical points at which they comment on the action with a power that Greene's former technique of heavily ornamented speeches failed to reach. For example, Sephestia's lovely cradle song to her child at the beginning of the story packs her pent-up emotion and despair into the two clean lines of the refrain: "Weepe not my wanton, smile vpon my knee,/ When thou art olde, ther's griefe inough for thee" (VI, 43).

Melicertus' revelation of love to Samela (his wife in disguise) uses cosmic metaphors in an attempt to convey her beauty, with a power that Greene seldom attains. One example is the image of sunset over the ocean:

How oft haue I descending Titan seene
 His burning Lockes couch in the Sea-queenes lap,
 And beauteous Thetis his red bodie wrap
 In waterie roabes, as he her Lord had been.
 (VI, 83)

In spite of all this attention to language, Greene nevertheless appears finally to suggest that language has its limitations and that eventually it must fail. This seems part of a darkening world view which would soon bring on the underworld tracts and repentance pamphlets of his last two years. In Ciceronis Amor, the last work of undivided optimism, Greene manifested a strong faith in the power of love, beauty, and language to overcome all obstacles. But immediately afterwards in Menaphon, even at Melicertus' and Samela's first meeting, language fails. Melicertus addresses Samela in a high-flown artificial style calculated to impress her and she replies to him in like manner, both thus failing to reach the desired meeting of minds:

Samela made this replie, because she heard him so superfine, as if Ephoebus had learnd him to refine his mother tongue, wherefore thought he had done it of an inkhorne desire to be eloquent; and Melicertus thinking that Samela had learnd with Lucilla in Athens to anatomize wit, and speake none but Similes, imagined she smoothed her talke to be thought like Sapho, Phaos Paramour. (VI, 82)

At the end of the story both Samela and Melicertus have lost all belief in the power of language to correct their situation:

Samela was so desirous to end her life with her friend, that shee would not reueale either vnto Democles or Melicertus what she was; and Melicertus rather chose to die with his Samela, then once to name himselfe Maximius. (VI, 142)

In addition, in Pandosto the language of the oracle had been unequivocal, and it had settled the devastating problems of Pandosto and Bellaria's relationship. In Menaphon the oracle is so vague that even when its conditions have been met it takes a dea ex machina to explain them, and thus prevent erring mortals from killing each other.

Along with the decline in the power of language comes a decline in the power of beauty. Greene still retains the contemporary concept of outward beauty as indicative of inward nobility. Samela recognizes that Melicertus is nobler than his shepherd-disguise indicates, for she muses:

But his face is not inchacte with anie rusticke proportion, his browes containe the characters of nobilitie, and his lookes in shepherds weeds are Lordlie, his voyce pleasing, his wit full of gentrie. (VI, 79)

The child Pleusidippus is immediately recognized as noble by his overwhelming beauty. When Agenor, king of Thessaly first sees him, he begins to

measure his [Pleusidippus'] birth by his beautie, contracting him in thought heyre to his kingdome of Thessaly, and husbände to his daughter, before he knewe whence the childe descended, or who was his father. (VI, 97, 98)

However, it is Samela's beauty that inspires the "unequall," or socially improper, love of Menaphon and the incestuous and violent love of her father and her son, thus nearly causing

the deaths of both her and Melicertus.

Along with the decline in the power of beauty comes a similar decline in the power of love. While Samela and Melicertus' love still gives them the power to discern inward nobility, it is unable to save them from being banished at first or from a near-execution later. And the sincere, proper love of Pesana for Menaphon and of Olympia for Pleusidippus is unable to keep them from their improper and base desire for Samela. Greene's final pessimistic comment on love, and incidentally on language, is in the one poem in Menaphon which is an authorial intrusion and therefore has more weight as an expression of his beliefs. Though this poem suggests the conventional lament of the spurned lover, Greene gives it new force by removing it from the usual dramatic context of a love relationship, thus emphasizing it as a general pronouncement upon love. The poem deserves quoting in full:

What thing is Loue? It is a power diuine
That raines in vs: or else a wreakefull law
That doomes our mindes, to beautie to encline:
It is a starre, whose influence dooth draw
Our heart to Loue dissembling of his might,
Till he be master of our hearts and sight.

Loue is a discord, and a strange diuorce
Betwixt our sense and reason, by whose power,
As madde with reason, we admit that force,
Which wit or labour neuer may deuoure.
It is a will that brooketh no consent:
It would refuse, yet neuer may repent.

Loue's a desire, which for to waite a time,
Dooth loose an age of yeares, and so doth passe,
As dooth the shadow seuerd from his prime,

Seeming as though it were, yet neuer was.
 Leauing behinde nought but repentant thoughts
 Of dais ill spent, for that which profits noughts.

Its now a peace, and then a sodaine warre,
 A hope consume before it is conceiude,
 At hand it feares, and menaceth afarre,
 And he that gaines, is most of all deceiude:
 It is a secret hidden and not knowne,
 Which one may better feele than write vpon.
 (VI, 140-141)

This poem is placed in the very strange context of the farcical wooing of Doron and Carmela. Greene notes that "they geerde one at another louingly" (VI, 135), and then Doron goes on to demonstrate his "wit" to Carmela: "Carmela, by my troth, Good morrow, tis as daintie to see you abroad, as to eate a messe of sweete milke in Iuly" (VI, 136). As the paire go on to sing their comic eclogue, love, beauty, and language all take a severe beating. Love becomes a subject for laughter; beauty dips to the level of a complexion as white as a "brinded Cow" and of the "sweate vpon thy face;" and the power of poetry is overturned completely in the parody of the classical love poetry of Greene's day: "Carmela deare, euen as the golden ball/ That Venus got, such are thy goodly eyes." This context, though not without a certain charm, surrounds Greene's definition of love with a comic aura which qualifies even the dignity of despair which it might have had in different surroundings. It imparts a sense of the final rather grim humor of all that Greene had once held most sacred.

The comic scene in turn is placed strategically to

provide an indirect comment on the action surrounding it. Preceding it is the battle between Pleusidippus and Melicertus which would in Greene's earlier work have been heroic. Here though it also becomes a meaningless action, because we already know that Democles' troops will end it before any victory or defeat. After the comic scene comes the climax when Melicertus and Samela stand on the executioner's block. Like love in Greene's poem, the action here is without reason; all its participants are driven by unreasoning passion. The happy ending results from no human effort; it has nothing to do with love or beauty or oratorical power. A prophetess simply appears to announce the fulfillment of the oracle and disappears.¹⁴⁸

In spite of the apparently gloomy view of life so presented, however, Greene is not totally pessimistic. While no reasoning human action has any control over the events of the story, a divine hand is working. Though the characters never realize what they are doing, the plot step by step carries them through the terms of the oracle given at the

¹⁴⁸ Walter Davis also notes the breakdown of reason in Menaphon and compares it to the twentieth-century "absurd": "Menaphon is a highly sophisticated rendering of a rather unsophisticated view of life much like the modern 'absurd.' In it, there is a complete cleavage between intention and result, character and action, apparent fact and real fact, values and reality. Action is spastic and meaningless, moral states of mind--and, in fact, any form of intellection--completely irrelevant. Every action is drenched in irony, for no one really knows anything, least of all what he is doing or who people really are" (p. 178).

beginning. Thus it is quite proper for Greene to end his story with a supernatural visitation which reveals to man the meaning of his own otherwise puzzling actions.

There is similarly a confident affirmation of faith in the divine order which to Greene and his contemporaries was manifested through the social hierarchies of their day. The apparent democratic leaning suggested by Sephestia's having chosen to marry a man of lower estate and to suffer exile for that presumption, is quickly counteracted by her sharp reply to the shepherd Menaphon's wooing. When he tells her the story of the eagle's sheltering the fly, she notes that love is only lust if it has not "respect of circumstance": "for where the parties have no simpathie of Estates, there can no firme loue be fixed," and she goes on to add, "If Queens . . . were of my mind, I had rather die, than perish in baser fortunes" (VI, 61). Yet Menaphon had been clearly introduced as a very personable young man, honored in his country, able to allude freely to classical figures, possessed of many virtues. His early description of the shepherd life is very appealing; he offers his guests "in euerie corner of the house Content sitting smiling, and tempering euerie homelie thing with a welcome" (VI, 53). However Greene makes it increasingly clear by noting "homely" touches, by placing Melicertus as a foil to Menaphon, by showing Menaphon's unfavorable qualities of jealousy and finally of boorishness when he casts Samela out of his house, that he is not

Samela's spiritual equal as Melicertus obviously is.

Even the pastoral world never becomes a place of social freedom. Though aristocrats and shepherds mix freely there, the shepherd society has its own order of degrees. When Menaphon claims the right to go to Samela's rescue it is on the basis of his rank as the King's chief shepherd. Only Melicertus can top this, and that only by finally revealing that he is a gentleman and therefore superior to Menaphon in rank. Samela had said when she assumed her pastoral disguise:

Then, Lamedon, will I disguise my self,
with my cloathes I will change my thoughts;
for being poorelie attired I will be meanelie
minded, and measure my actions by my present
estate, not by former fortunes. (VI, 49)

This never happens in fact. She tells Menaphon she is of "meane" parentage, but when he woos her it is through an allegory of social disparity, showing that he recognizes her nobility. She in turn thinks concerning Menaphon that she "had rather haue chosen anie misfortune, than haue deined her eyes on the face and feature of so lowe a peasant" (VI, 58). Samela never truly enters the pastoral world, at least not in the sense that Maesia did. Though she is depicted as contentedly leading her sheep out to pasture this is only a pretty illusion. The actions of her child that delight her are those in which he lords it over the shepherd-boys as their king. Also there is never any question in Samela's mind that Pleusidippus would have to return to the court for his

education. For a sophisticated adult to live simply and contentedly among shepherds presented no problem to the Renaissance mind, but there was certainly no nonsense about the beneficence to a malleable child of "one impulse from a vernal wood."

Greene's social views also appear clearly in Menaphon through the four marriages with which the story ends. The princess Sephestia's marriage to Maximius, who is apparently of the lower gentry, must be brought for testing into the pastoral world. Maximius-Melicertus has to prove his true nobility by his obvious wit and virtue when compared to the shepherds and also by his heroism in Sephestia-Samela's defense. The other three marriages in Menaphon are as conventional as even Queen Elizabeth could have desired. Pleusidippus, as heir to Democles' throne, is appropriately matched with the Princess Olympia (although there is a trace of social liberalism in the fact that her father makes the match strictly on the basis of his apparent nobility, since he is said to be only a shepherdess' child). Menaphon and Pesana are paired because both are by their learning and virtues above the rest of the shepherds. And finally Doron and Carmela "iumpde a marriage" as representatives of the lower class, seen through Greene's sophisticated lens as comically rustic. The decline of the value of Greene's former ways of testing nobility--beauty, love's clearer vision, and to some extent language--makes the role of the pastoral

world even more important. It is only in this "social no-man's-land," in Davis' apt phrase,¹⁴⁹ that the estates can mingle freely enough to show, by an intricate system of foils, the nature of true nobility.

VI. Never Too Late, I and II

The last of Greene's predominantly fictional works is the two-part didactic framework tale, Never Too Late and Francesco's Fortunes: Or, The second part of Greenes Neuer too late. Neither was entered in the Stationer's Register, but both were published during 1590. It seems more than coincidental that this story is a retelling of Greene's first story, Mamillia, as Davis noticed.¹⁵⁰ Davis, however, fails to see the extent to which this is true. Even the host's story, which forms an epilogue to Part II, is a retelling of the story in the epilogue to Part II of Mamillia. But Davis states:

It [adventure in Never Too Late] consists, in fact mainly of a single inset tale of pastoral love told at an inn to Francesco and Isabel. What is interesting about this inset tale is not only that it bears no relation to the main plot, but also that it contains no ethical meaning. Its sole end is delectation.¹⁵¹

¹⁴⁹ Davis, Idea and Act, p. 79.

¹⁵⁰ "Together the two parts form a plot consisting of the fall and repentance of a fickle lover, much like that of Greene's very first work, Mamillia" (Davis, p. 179).

¹⁵¹ Davis, Idea and Act, p. 180.

The differences between Mamillia and Never Too Late form a summary of the change in Greene's ideas and attitudes over the ten-year period they span.

In concept, structure and plot, the two works are very similar. Both are didactic in intent, as the middle works of the period are not. Both deal with a man who wins the love of a faithful woman, is unfaithful to her, leaves her to go to another town, reforms, has his reformation tested by a courtesan, and finally returns to his first love who has remained steadfast throughout the ordeal. Both also close with an epilogue in which the story is told of a girl who has the choice of three lovers and of her decision.

The contrasts arise predominantly from Greene's changed attitude toward his material. First, although a relatively minor point, this is the first of Greene's stories to be set in England. However, the names of the characters except for Isabel, remain Italian--Francesco, Seigneur Fregoso, Infida-- and the time is that of the legendary king, Palmerin; the locale the cities of Caerbranck, Dunecastrum, and Troynovant. The convention of setting fictional works in Italy was a difficult one to break. The prose works of the next two years, though not predominantly fictional, would all be set in England, showing a growing sense of national pride, reflected also in the patriotic comedies, Friar Bacon, James IV, and George a Greene.

A more suggestive change from Mamillia, indeed from all of his previous work, lies in the change of class of his

characters. For the first time Greene is not using aristocrats in any part of his work. This story treats only of middle-class characters. It is Greene's first attempt at bourgeois fiction. Francesco and Isabel are both said to be the children of gentlemen, but Francesco's parents are poor, and Isabel's father is a country gentleman. Greene also notes of Francesco "that the richest Marchant or grauest Burghmaster would not refuse to graunt him his daughter, in mariage, hoping more of his insuing fortunes, than of his present substance" (VIII, 34). The picture is one of that most tenuous of social boundaries existing between the lower gentry and merchant classes, the area in real life where the most inroads were being made between the classes. Never Too Late has often been called autobiographical, and it might be noted that this was close to Greene's own situation. He, as the university-trained son of a merchant, married the daughter of a country squire.

The structure of the middle class rested upon different economic principles from that of the upper and lower classes, a fact also reflected in Never Too Late. Francesco and Isabel during the first five years of their marriage live a model bourgeois life, in which work has become for the first time a part of Greene's fictional world:

They were counted the very myrrours of a Democraticall methode: for hee being a Scholler, and nurst vp in the Vniuersities, resolved rather to liue by his wit, than any way to be pinched with want . . . therefore he applied

himselpe to teaching of a Schoole. (VIII, 65)

Isabel takes up needlework to assist financially. Indeed one of the first acts of the kindly mayor upon freeing Francesco from prison was to help the young couple find trades which could support them. Margaret Schlauch calls this a typically "English" episode.¹⁵² The emphasis upon the necessity for making a living is a strong indication that Greene is turning away from the romantic mode, giving a more realistic picture of the exigencies of middle-class existence. Setting his plot in the real world of working people was a giant step for him. Never Too Late moved into a new fictional genre; though it had some kinship with former works it was not a romance. Francesco and Isabel's elopement and his ensuing imprisonment at the beginning of the story have some romantic elements, but the episode is probably inserted primarily as a means of showing how much Isabel gives up for Francesco.

Another important contrast with Mamillia and all of the other fictional works is in the attitude toward love. While Greene still clings to the power of virtuous love, such as that of Isabel for Francesco, his main purpose in Never Too Late is not to extol love but to condemn lust. The framework tale makes this point clearly. The palmer's pastoral ode tells of a disillusioned old shepherd who tells a younger shepherd of the vanity of love. The ode has strong

¹⁵² Schlauch, p. 194.

ideological ties to Greene's "What Thing Is Love?" in

Menaphon:

Coy she was and I gan court,
 She thought Loue was but a sport.
 Profound Hell was in my thought:
 Such a paine Desire had wrought,
 That I sued with sighes and teares:
 Still ingrate she stopt her eares,
 Till my youth I had spent.
 Last a passion of Repent,
 Tolde me flat that Desire,
 Was a brond of Loues fire,
 Which consumeth men in thrall,
 Vertue, youth, wit, and all.

(VIII, 18, 19)

The point is sharpened when the palmer goes on to tell of his travels and speaks of the sensuality of both French and German women, saying that "virgins are as rare as black Swans: opportunity is a sore plea in Venus court, able, I tell you, to ouerthrow the coyest she that is" (VIII, 27).

Finally, the host's tale at the close of Never Too Late, Part II, is Greene's farewell to the romance mode which had been his primary genre for ten years. In the tale, a beautiful shepherdess, Mirimida, is wooed by three suitors, representing the three social classes: Radagon, a courtier; Eurymachus, a sympathetically-portrayed "shepherd" of wit and virtue like Menaphon, representing the middle class; and finally the clown-shepherd Mullidor, whose farcical treatment shows that he represents the lower class. Greene presents the manner of courtship of each, then has each write a letter accompanied by a poem to Mirimida, in which his true class is shown by the style and wit with which he writes. Greene's

ending, though growing naturally out of the preceding portions of Never Too Late, still comes as a surprise; Mirimida rejects all three, preferring to retain her liberty. It would not be correct to infer that this is Greene's rejection of love and the powerful impetus toward good that love has implied in all Greene's previous work; the incident must be balanced against Isabel's pure and deep love for Francesco, which, like Mamillia's love for Pharicles, was the effective force in his reformation. However, it cannot be denied that the tale gives a devastating blow to love, especially in view of the fact that one of Mirimida's suitors is obviously an appropriate choice for her. Greene never gives a clear explanation for Mirimida's rejection of Eurymachus. She tells herself that loving Radagon would be aiming too high, and that Mullidor is unacceptable because a fool. In her musing about Eurymachus though, she describes him as having all of Greene's usual virtues: he is content with his station, handsome, witty, faithful in his love, even wealthy; her only reason for refusing him is that marriage--to anyone--has its "inconvenience."

One of the most significant changes from the mature romances of 1588-89 lies in the treatment of the pastoral convention in Never Too Late. The two examples of the pastoral mode are strategically placed. The first one, a pastoral "ode" sung by the palmer, comes at the beginning of Part I; the other, a shepherd-tale told by the host, falls

at the end of Part II. Greene is obviously giving prominence to these two episodes by using them to frame his story of the dangers of love. Renato Poggioli, in his important series of explorations of the nature of pastoral, sees love as essential to the pastoral view of life; he speaks of "the central vision of the Italian Renaissance idyll, according to which any pastoral retreat is a retreat into love, or at least into love's dream."¹⁵³ Love had been a valid, even vital, part of Greene's own previous pastoral poems and episodes. Yet in both of the pastoral episodes of Never Too Late he totally rejects love--even the virtuous and proper love of Eurymachus for Mirimida. This has the effect of forming a renunciation of pastoral in its narrow sense and of the values which pastoral had incorporated. In the inset story framed by these two pastoral pieces, Greene has already left the world of pastoral and moved into the more realistic world of middle-class urban existence. He would leave pastoral and its ideals still further behind in the work of 1591-92 with its antipodal emphasis.

The second part of Never Too Late had begun with an ode by the palmer in which he speaks of the vanity of love and beauty, concluding:

¹⁵³ Renato Poggioli, The Oaten Flute, p. 169. Several of the chapters of this book were published previously as essays in periodicals. This quotation is taken from the chapter "The Pastoral of the Self" which was originally published by Daedalus in 1959.

When these supposes toucht my thought,
 That world was vaine and beautie nought,
 I gan sigh and say alas,
 Man is sinne and flesh is grasse. (VIII, 123)

This heavy-handed moralizing in a fictional setting forms the bridge from Greene's romances to the new style of work which he was undoubtedly already planning. By early 1591 he was working in a journalistic mode, with his exposés of the methods of the London pick-pockets, prostitutes, card sharpers, and horse thieves. However these works are not to the purpose of this study, although they do have traces of pastoral influence in their city-country contrast.

Lawrence Stone perceptively notes of similar seventeenth-century works:

To support this vague romanticizing of country life, there was widespread complaint about the terrible expense of life in the City. In the early seventeenth century there was a spate of plays and pamphlets which described in loving detail the ruin of the innocent countryman in the clutches of the predatory Londoners. . . .

The other great objection to the City was that it was a morally corrupting place, a conviction strengthened by the pamphlets and plays describing the London underworld and the vices and knaveries of the town.¹⁵⁴

Yet the very realism of Greene's tracts renders any similarity to his earlier treatment of the pastoral world impossible. The countryman's innocence has become laughable, not commendable. The very qualities which earlier might have suggested an innate nobility now only make him a gull.

¹⁵⁴ Stone, pp. 393-94.

Greene's romances show that his use of modes of thought here referred to as pastoral was a natural impulse with him, growing out of a frame of reference formed by a combination of the circumstances of his life and his extensive familiarity with diverse literary forms. Most of the suggestions of pastoral seen in his works during the ten-year period from 1580-1590 were already present in embryo in his first work, Mamillia. The pastoral tradition per se seems to have had little direct influence on him, certainly not in the sense it does, for example, on Spenser in the Shepherd's Calendar, in which Spenser consciously uses themes, names, verse forms, and subjects in the mainstream of that tradition. The same anomalous handling of pastoral themes characterizes Greene's dramas, which cover much of this same period of time. Relationships between the romances and comedies show the tenacity with which he clung to the beautiful and ideal realm of the pastoral retreat.

CHAPTER IV

PASTORAL AND SOCIAL ELEMENTS IN ALPHONSUS OF ARAGON,
ORLANDO FURIOSO, AND FRIAR BACON AND FRIAR BUNGAY

From several years' apprenticeship in the prose romance Greene came to the drama. He entered a new field, one facing the current denigration of the public theaters, apparently during a period when his popularity as a writer of romances was climbing rapidly. His reasons for such a move can only be conjectured. He risked (and probably suffered) a loss of intellectual status. Nashe's volley at the stage in his preface to Menaphon had roundly chastised the "alcumists of eloquence; who (moūted on the stage of arrogance) thinke to outbraue better pens with the swelling bumbast of a bragging blanke verse."¹⁵⁵ Harbage speaks of the resentment felt by university men forced to write for the stage: "their immense service to the art of the theatre was rendered unwillingly and sometimes even with a sense of shame."¹⁵⁶

The usual, and probably correct, assumption is that Greene's career as a playwright was motivated primarily by financial need. Acting companies paid better for plays than publishers did for books. Dickinson says:

¹⁵⁵ Thomas Nashe, "To the Gentlemen Students of both Vniuersities," in the Grosart edition of Greene's Works, VI, 4.

¹⁵⁶ Harbage, p. 94.

But though the drama was occupying an increasingly prominent place in the life of the time the professional actors and playwrights were in decided ill-repute. With the managers and with the actors the returns from the stage were sufficient to salve the hurt of the odium under which their profession rested.¹⁵⁷

That Greene turned to play-writing to mend his financial situation is also suggested by material which many scholars consider autobiographical in Francesco's Fortunes (Part II of Never Too Late) and Groatsworth of Wit (if it may be trusted). In both of these the main characters turn to writing for the stage when they have squandered their resources by riotous living. Yet, as Christopher Thaiss rightly notes, Greene had a considerable reputation as a writer of well-accepted prose romances in the late 1580's when most critics judge he first turned to drama; in risking alienating his established audience, he had to consider the possibility of losing the income afforded by his pamphlets. Thaiss thus feels that he turned to drama primarily as another means of communicating with his audience, particularly of celebrating national pride and English ideals.¹⁵⁸

Greene had learned much about the tastes of a public audience in writing his romances. From the beginning he incorporated into his plays themes, character types, and

¹⁵⁷ Thomas H. Dickinson, Introduction to Robert Greene, The Mermaid Series (London: T. Fisher Unwin, Ltd.; New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, n.d. [1909]), p. xiii.

¹⁵⁸ Christopher J. Thaiss, "Robert Greene the Popular Writer," Diss. Northwestern Univ. 1975, pp. 299-312.

situations which he had found to be attractive to his readers. Romantic love, triumphant chastity, supernatural displays, the patient Griselda, the flatterer, the clown, even the multiplicity of incident, all found their way from the romances into the comedies. Indeed Greene's distinctive contributions to the developing Elizabethan drama--his creation of romantic comedy (and, according to Frank Ristine, tragicomedy¹⁵⁹), of the double plot (as distinct from the comic subplot),¹⁶⁰ his introduction of prose into comedy,¹⁶¹ his use of disguise¹⁶²--all grew out of the prose romances.

From the romances, finally, he took his concern with the structure of society, and, as in the romances, he often

¹⁵⁹ Frank H. Ristine, English Tragicomedy: Its Origin and History (1910; rpt. New York: Russell and Russell, 1963), pp. 78-82.

¹⁶⁰ Empson, p. 31. Empson goes on to illustrate Greene's skill in unifying the plots of Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay, pp. 31-34. Kenneth Muir, in Introduction to English Literature (New York: Random House, 1967), also admires Greene's linking of multiple plots (p. 145). In an opposing view Hereward T. Price, in "Shakespeare and His Young Contemporaries," Philological Quarterly, 41 (1962), calls Greene's plot structure "chaotic" and says the double plot in Friar Bacon is only "two stories that bump into one another occasionally" (p. 45).

¹⁶¹ J. F. Macdonald, "The Use of Prose in Elizabethan Drama before Shakespeare," Univ. of Toronto Quarterly, 2 (1933), pp. 476-78. Marlowe had introduced prose into tragedy, but Macdonald notes that Greene applied it to comedy and "did much to establish the conventions that were to govern the use of prose in the comedies of his successors" (p. 476).

¹⁶² Norman Sanders, in "The Comedy of Greene and Shakespeare," Early Shakespeare, Stratford-upon-Avon Studies #3 (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1961), says that Greene, followed later by Shakespeare, often used disguise as a plot device (pp. 43, 44).

focused his ideas by placing them in the context of a pastoral emphasis. In each of the six plays which make up his accepted corpus Greene includes a love interest and some element of the supernatural, both seen in Chapter One as characteristic of pastoral. In four plays he presents lower-class figures dignified in various ways, an easy familiarity between nobles and commoners, and, for occasional scenes, country settings reminiscent of pastoral. As in the romances, the pastoral influence on the plays is not usually predominant. Although Greene came close to writing a true pastoral romance in Pandosto, and even closer in Menaphon, he wrote no pastoral drama. Indeed the only narrowly pastoral episode in any play is a brief scene in Orlando Furioso, and it was taken in part from the source in Ariosto's poem. Rather the influence of pastoral on the comedies is a coloring, a sense of the tension between town and country which is central to all pastoral. It may be suggested by a rustic, a palmer, or by the quietness of a country estate. John Draper sees the court-country contrast as one of Greene's keynotes, later to be employed by Shakespeare:

Of all Shakespeare's early contemporaries Greene seems to have been most conscious of this social disparity: his coney-catching tracts show the raw countryman lost in the intricacies of London; and he was not without real appreciation of rural life.¹⁶³

The court-country contrast of pastoral leads naturally into

¹⁶³ Draper, pp. 225, 226.

comment upon social classes and the nature of nobility. F. S. Boas feels that Greene gave Shakespeare the precedent for mixing social classes, but that Greene's emphasis was more democratic; Shakespeare never has a hero or heroine from the lower classes, while Greene has several.¹⁶⁴ Even Greene's use of prose and poetry in his comedies shows a concern with societal structure and gives him a new tool for demonstrating the innate nobility--or lack of it--in any character. Although his usage is not always consistent, he often achieves sophisticated effects in this way; for example, when the prose-speaking usurer in A Looking Glass repents, thus acquiring the virtue necessary to innate nobility, he begins to speak in verse.

Before an examination of Greene's six comedies individually, it remains to be said that it is impossible to date any of them with certainty. In the Life and Death of Robert Greene, Greene says that after "some short time . . . I became an Author of Playes, and a penner of Loue Pamphlets, so that I soone grew famous in that qualitie, that who for that trade growne so ordinary about London as Robin Greene."¹⁶⁵ This would indicate that he began to write plays very early in his career. However this quotation telescopes a number of years in which he also traveled, married, and apparently

¹⁶⁴ Boas, p. 87.

¹⁶⁵ Works, XII, pp. 172, 173.

produced very little writing of any sort. Among those critics who have attempted to determine a chronology, 1587 seems to be considered the earliest possible date for Greene's first play,¹⁶⁶ at least of those now extant. The order usually agreed upon is Alphonsus of Aragon, ca. 1587, followed by Orlando Furioso perhaps in 1588, and by Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay in approximately 1589. James the Fourth is usually assigned to 1590, and George a Greene (an attributed play, but included by all major editors), at some point after that. Opinion is divided about A Looking Glass for London, written in collaboration with Lodge. Lodge was away from England on voyages during 1588 and 1591-93. Thus the Looking Glass had to precede 1588 or fall between 1589 and 1591. Because of the motif of the low-born flatterer in common with James IV, and because of the greater religious and moral emphasis, similar to that in the prose of 1590-92, I am considering it with the later plays.

Greene's social ideas and use of pastoral, seen in a chronological framework in his prose pieces in the second

¹⁶⁶ A thorough discussion of the early groundwork scholarship on chronology is presented in Dickinson's introduction to the old Mermaid edition of the plays, pp. xxviii-liv. As Dickinson and others have seen, the dating in Collins' edition of the plays is unreliable, as it necessitates the writing of six plays and numerous pamphlets in a little over two years. Supporting the standard chronology is the more recent study of Una M. Ellis-Fermor, "Marlowe and Greene: A Note on Their Relations as Dramatic Artists," in Studies in Honor of T. W. Baldwin, ed. D. C. Allen (Urbana: Univ. of Illinois Press, 1958). She sees Greene as gradually extricating himself and his plays from Marlowe's influence.

and third chapters of this study, if applied to the plays, seem to support the foregoing conclusions about order and dating. Alphonsus, less concerned with social values than the later plays, is nevertheless conservative, as are Greene's earlier prose pieces, and it has less suggestion of direct pastoral influence than any other play. Orlando Furioso with its specifically pastoral scene is not likely to have preceded 1588 when Greene first employed pastoral in its narrow sense in the epilogue to Perimides the Blacke-smith and in Pandosto. Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay, the most pastoral and the most socially liberal of the plays, would almost certainly fall in 1589 with Ciceronis Amor and Menaphon. Similarly the darkening view of James IV and its theme of worthy vs. unworthy love seems appropriate to 1590 when Greene was occupied with Never Too Late. George a Greene's social conservatism and its turning to the life of the common man connect it with the coney-catching pamphlets and Quip for an Upstart Courtier in 1591 and 1592. This chronology reinforces the impression gained from the examination of the prose, that Greene's social views were most liberal around 1588 and 1589, significantly the very years in which he most fully explored the possibilities of pastoral.

I. Alphonsus, King of Aragon¹⁶⁷

Alphonsus, Greene's first known play, is manifestly an imitation of Tamburlaine. Greene apparently sought to capitalize on Tamburlaine's enthusiastic reception by presenting his own version of a ruthlessly ambitious conqueror-hero, but he changed the character of his hero greatly, as Irving Ribner has noted, to have him reflect conventional Elizabethan ideas of the necessity of man's dependence on God and other supernatural forces, and of nobility as a prerequisite for kingship.¹⁶⁸ The latter point is of particular importance to this study. Tamburlaine was represented as a Scythian shepherd rising by his own power to become emperor. While one would expect this theme to be attractive to Greene in light of his theory of innate nobility, this was not the case. His Alphonsus is the rightful heir to a throne which has been treacherously taken from his father Carinus. In Greene's mind this claim does not, however, give Alphonsus an automatic entry to the throne; he must first prove that he has the true nobility which validates his blood nobility.

In order to demonstrate that Alphonsus' nobility springs

¹⁶⁷ Alphonsus, like most of Greene's following plays, pretends to historicity, and may possibly be based on Alfonso V of Aragon, who conquered Naples to become Alfonso I of Naples, and who, in Collins' words, "had relations with Milan and with the Turks." The correspondence ends there, however. Collins summarizes the details, I, 75-76.

¹⁶⁸ Irving Ribner, "Greene's Attack on Marlowe: Some Light on Alphonsus and Selimus," Studies in Philology, 52 (1955), 164, 165.

first from his deeds, Greene has him disguise himself as a common soldier. This disguise precipitates a series of insults to Alphonsus' honor, which, as Werner Senn has shown, often motivate the next phase of action.¹⁶⁹ First, he is addressed by an unknown courtier as "villaine" (peasant) and "common vassal." The courtier Albinus soon proves an ally, however, as he is a former subject still faithful to Carinus, whom he had thought dead. Alphonsus determines to join Albinus, who is attached to the army of King Belinus of Naples. Belinus, at war with the Aragonian usurper, promises the apparently common Alphonsus whatever he wins in battle, "Although it be the Crowne of Aragon."¹⁷⁰ In the first scene of Act II, Alphonsus wins back the crown of Aragon, his only goal at first. When he demands the homage of Belinus as a tributary, Belinus indignantly refuses, calling Alphonsus a "base brat," which elicits the next phase of action. Alphonsus in anger tells Belinus:

¹⁶⁹ Werner Senn, Studies in the Dramatic Construction of Robert Greene and George Peele, Swiss Studies in English #74 (Bern: Francke Verlag, 1973), pp. 72-75.

¹⁷⁰ I.ii.345. All quotations from the plays will be taken from the J. C. Collins edition, which, in spite of its deficiencies, remains the standard: J. Churton Collins, The Plays and Poems of Robert Greene, 2 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1905). All further quotations from the plays will be cited parenthetically in the text, using Collins' scheme of act, scene, and line. W. W. Greg's review of the Collins edition spells out its shortcomings [Modern Language Review, I (1906), 238-251].

'Base brat,' sayest thou? as good a man as thou.
 But say I came but of a base descent,
 My deeds shall make my glory for to shine
 As clear as Luna in a winter's night.

(II.i.495-498)

He now determines to seek Belinus' crown, winning it and that of the Duke of Milan in the next scene, though Belinus and Milan both escape, providing a link to the next phase of the plot. In the first scene of Act III Alphonsus displays the virtue of magnanimity--a mark of the true nobleman--by giving away all three crowns to his three most faithful followers. Again stripped of all titles, he announces his intention of winning for himself the crown of Amurack of Turkey, where Belinus has gone for reinforcements.

In the Amurack episodes there are again slurs on Alphonsus' nobility, the first of which, in Amurack's address to his troops, ironically places Alphonsus lower than Tamburlaine:

Besides the same, remember with your selues
 What foes we haue; not mightie Tamberlaine,
 Nor souldiers trained vp amongst the warres,
 But fearefull boors, pickt from their rurall flocke,
 Which, till this time, were wholly ignorant
 What weapons ment, or bloudie Mars doth craue.

(IV.iii.1443-48)

In an ensuing verbal battle between Amurack and Alphonsus, one of Amurack's allies expresses surprise that Amurack will permit these "dogs," "these beggars brats to chat so frolikelie" (IV.iii.1511). Even at the end of the play when Amurack has learned Alphonsus' parentage, it is difficult for him to accept the truth:

Should I consent to giue Iphigina
 Into the hands of such a beggers brat?
 What, Amuracke, thou dost deceiue thy selfe;
 Alphonsus is the sonne vnto a king:
 What then? then worthy of thy daughters loue.
 (V.iii.1897-1901)

Through such episodes it becomes clear that Greene is forcing his hero, in spite of his social nobility, to take the place of a commoner and prove that he is not only externally, but also internally, fit to be king.

Another contrast with Tamburlaine has been suggested by Norman Sanders, who says that while the first two acts of Alphonsus "slavishly imitate" Tamburlaine, the third act initiates the love interest which becomes the carrying force for the rest of the play.¹⁷¹ The question after the third act is not how Alphonsus will win the crown but how he will win Iphigina's love. Sanders feels that Greene's departure from his model, and in a way which was "totally alien" to its nature, shows that the new material he introduces is "a reflection of his natural manner of writing."¹⁷² This statement is valid, not only in terms of Greene's obvious interest

¹⁷¹ Sanders, "The Comedy of Greene and Shakespeare," pp. 37, 38. Werner Senn qualifies both the "slavish imitation" of the beginning, and the dissimilarity of the end, although he admits there are important differences: "Unlike Alphonsus, Tamburlaine does not debase himself by fighting for a woman; irresistible as he is, he has won Zenocrate's love long before. Consequently she cannot have the importance of Greene's Iphigina as the end and crown of the hero's efforts, and as bringer of peace" (pp. 42, 43).

¹⁷² Sanders, p. 37.

in love, previously examined in his prose, but also because the new elements of the last three acts--love and the supernatural--are also central to pastoral.

A possible clue to the shift in emphasis comes early in the play. Alphonsus, melancholy since his father Carinus revealed to him that they have been treasonably bereft of the throne of Aragon, asks his father's permission to seek revenge. Carinus, who has accepted his fate, counsels his son in the spirit of pastoral to "Bridle these thoughts, and learne the same of me,--/ A quiet life doth passe an Emperie" (I.i.145-46). Alphonsus however reminds his father of the necessity of maintaining one's honor. This demand establishes a major conflict for the play, one which causes much of the inconsistency for which critics have berated it. On the one side is the pastoral vision--the quiet, contemplative life in a classless natural world, in which love and other values of the spirit are predominant. On the other side lies the world of active endeavor where honor, involving by its nature a societal class structure, is the primary goal. In the course of the play both father and son must come to modify their views and accept a world which is a compromise between the two positions.

As the two separate, Carinus, who lives as a hermit, returns to his contemplative life in a "sillie groue" to pray for Alphonsus' success. Alphonsus takes the active approach: "A noble mind disdaines to hide his head,/ And

let his foes triumph in his ouerthrow" (I.i.173-74). Throughout the remainder of the first two acts Alphonsus subdues kings and wins allies with all the gusto, if not the power, of his model, Tamburlaine. Carinus and all pastoral emphasis drop out of sight. Alphonsus is completely absorbed in the world of action.

Act III forms a natural bridge from this world to one in which the pastoral and heroic ideals begin to blend. It opens with the first display of any virtue other than courage in Alphonsus. He gives the three kingdoms he has won to three faithful followers, an act which not only demonstrates his generosity, but also strips him of the social status he has gained in his climb. It is again as a commoner that Alphonsus goes to challenge the powerful Amurack and his allies. Through this action Greene enables Alphonsus to attempt to win Iphigina not on the basis of his royalty, but of his own noble deeds.

The remainder of Act III is devoted to the sorceress Medea and the prophetic dream she sends to Amurack. Medea's presence links Alphonsus not only to the classical tradition, but also to the pastoral. The enchantress appears in Theocritus' Idylls, Virgil's Eclogues, Montemayor's Diana, Ariosto's Orlando Furioso (which has pastoral sections), and Sannazaro's Arcadia, to mention only major pastorals, and Greene would later use similar figures in Orlando

Furioso and Menaphon. This usage was unusual for Elizabethans, as H. W. Herrington says:

Since, according to Elizabethan experience, the only women engaged in magic were of a very vulgar sort indeed, the dignified enchantress was hardly possible except in a conception derived from, and closely molded on, the classics.¹⁷³

Perhaps another link between this incident and the pastoral tradition is a possible allusion to the famous remark in Book Seven of Sannazaro's Arcadia, in which Sincero suddenly bursts out that he can hardly see how even the brute beasts are able to take pleasure in the Arcadian solitudes, much less an aristocrat such as he. In Greene's play Medea asks the exiled Fausta and Iphigina:

Why do you leaue your husbands princely Court,
And all alone passe through these thickest groues,
More fit to harbour brutish sauadge beasts
Then to receiue so high a Queene as you?
(III.iii.999-1002)

The supernatural motif continues into Act IV with Mahomet, embodied in a brazen head, who confirms, as Amurack's dream had foretold, that Alphonsus would defeat Amurack. All of this supernatural machinery, though one of Greene's dramatic hallmarks, is more than simply a "clever exploitation of the resources of the new theatre," as Parrott and Ball

¹⁷³ H. W. Herrington, "Witchcraft and Magic in the Elizabethan Drama," Journal of American Folklore, 32 (1919), p. 465. Robert R. Reed also connects this scene with classical tradition in The Occult on the Tudor and Stuart Stage (Boston: The Christopher Publishing House, 1965), p. 152, but no one seems to have related the enchantress to the pastoral tradition--both classical and post-classical.

call it.¹⁷⁴ In many of the post-classical pastoral romances there was a supernatural aura, which guided and protected the protagonists, such as the intervention of Pan and the nymphs in Daphnis and Chloe, or Felicia and her nymphs' aid to all the sympathetic characters in Diana. Through these influences the gods and the fates worked to protect and assist their worthy devotees.

As if to explore all the ramifications of the supernatural influence, Greene follows these two manifestations with a dream vision to old Carinus in which he sees the success and glory Alphonsus will win. Carinus apparently fears that his son will now spurn him, either from anger that Carinus had at first opposed his plans, or from haughtiness because of his own prestige and Carinus' ragged appearance. He is reassured to learn that Alphonsus' new status has not overcome his virtuous love and respect for his father:

As thus I stood beholding of this pompe,
 Me thought Alphonsus did espie me out,
 And, at a trice, he leauing throane alone,
 Came to imbrace me in his blessed armes.
 (IV.ii.1262-65)

Thus reassured that the blessing of the supernatural powers rests upon Alphonsus, and that Alphonsus has retained the values gained in the pastoral world even while he has gained honor and position in the world of action, Carinus sees the shortcomings of a permanent abode in the pastoral world.

¹⁷⁴ Parrott and Ball, p. 70.

The values of both must go hand in hand. He soon meets the Duke of Milan, one of the usurpers of his former throne, who is fleeing from Alphonsus. Milan has disguised himself as a pilgrim and entered Carinus' pastoral world, but he is unfit to be a part of this world. He can only mourn the loss of his "beds set forth with Ibonie" and their replacement by the "greenish grass," traditionally the shepherd's resting place. His cowardice, treachery, love of luxury, and delight at the remembrance of Carinus' father's murder make Milan not only a villain, but a blight upon the pastoral world. Carinus, prompted by his new knowledge of the necessity of action, now takes his long-unsought revenge by stabbing Milan, and thus bringing the powers of both pastoral and active worlds back into harness before leaving his retreat.¹⁷⁵

Alphonsus, meanwhile, has to face a problem to which his new-found life of action is incapable of showing him a

¹⁷⁵ Werner Senn is troubled by this supposed flaw in Carinus' characterization. He castigates Sanders, who sees Carinus as the most humane character in the play, and Una Ellis-Fermor, who calls him a "good old man." He declares: "Both critics entirely ignore the incident in IV.2 where Carinus viciously and insidiously stabs the Duke of Milan, allegedly in revenge for his part in Carinus' banishment twenty years before, which is here mentioned for the first time" (p. 44). While Greene's craftsmanship in preparing for the incident is weak, as it often is, through haste perhaps, his judgment is sound. For Carinus to have let this evil man go unharmed would have destroyed the balance Greene was trying to achieve between pastoral and heroic, ideal and real. To have persevered in his pastoral refusal to act would have made Carinus a pure stereotype, not a more consistent character.

solution. When he falls in love with Iphigina on the battlefield, he tries to apply the principle of forceful action to win her love. When this strategy fails utterly, he is so disconcerted that his innate virtue also fails and he declares she will either serve him "as a concubine" or die. As Carinus had erred by his dependence solely upon pastoral ideals, Alphonsus errs by depending only on physical force. Carinus, now possessing a properly balanced view, is able to bring pastoral ideals of forgiveness and understanding into Alphonsus' active world to break the stalemate. Alphonsus reaccepts these ideals by embracing his father who is markedly still "in his Pilgrims clothes" (V.iii.s.d.). Carinus' matchmaking shows love as an ideal, not to be won by active endeavor, but by the more lasting values symbolized by pastoral vision. As in so much of Greene's work, true love so gained always leads to social and political stability. Through Iphigina the war ends, treaties are made, and, significantly, Alphonsus gains the crown not fully achieved by his heroic action.

Misled no doubt by Greene's scornful reference to "that Atheist Tamburlan" in the preface to Perimides, Irving Ribner sees the major motivating force in the play as Amurack's and Alphonsus' attitudes toward the gods. He sees Amurack's downfall as a direct result of his cursing Mahomet, and Alphonsus' success as a result of his executing "the

will of the Gods."¹⁷⁶ A careful reading of the play shows however that Alphonsus is no more devout than Amurack (perhaps less so--Amurack calls him a "blasphemous dog" [IV.iii.1488]). Both show evidence of hubris upon occasion. The supernatural scenes show repeatedly that fate has simply determined to raise Alphonsus--we assume because of his innate fitness for kingship--but no suggestion is ever made that it is a reward for his piety. It seems more reasonable to connect this supernatural aid to Alphonsus with that so often afforded the just in the pastoral world.

Alphonsus of Aragon is an awkward first attempt by the young dramatist.¹⁷⁷ The unskillful blank verse is often comic in its effect--"Hyperions coach that well be termed it might" (!)--and in the homely proverbs and figures with which it abounds. For example, one of the graceful Muses of the play's classical induction uses the phrase "When husbandmen sheere hogs." Apparently Cambridge's dons had

¹⁷⁶ Ribner, "Greene's Attack," pp. 166, 167.

¹⁷⁷ T. W. Baldwin goes so far as to suggest that the play is not Greene's: On the Literary Genetics of Shakspeare's Plays, 1592-1594 (Urbana: Univ. of Illinois Press, 1959), pp. 57, 214-231. Other major critics accept Alphonsus as genuine without question. The skimpy bibliographical data on the play are puzzling. The earliest extant copy is 1599, and the author's name on that is given only as "R. G." with no mention of his M. A. as on the other plays, and with no motto. The play was never entered in the Stationer's Register and is not mentioned by Henslowe. Yet that Greene knew something about Alphonsus is clear from his dedication to Gwydonius, published about 1584, in which he alludes to him.

been unable to erase some of the effects of life in a saddler's shop. Weak in characterization, motivation, plot, and heavily imitative, the play nevertheless shows a remarkably developed sense of stagecraft, and a more consistent conceptual basis than it is usually given credit for. It also reflects, as I have shown, many of Greene's most typical ideas.

Greene had not yet found his characteristic stance. The classical induction and epilogue, the many classical allusions, the fact that there is no character of humble birth in the play, suggest that he still sees himself as writing for an aristocratic audience. As his prose changed in character from a courtly to a public tone, his drama followed the same pattern. The political and social conservatism of Alphonsus is in keeping with his view of his audience and with his trend in the contemporary romances. It is the increasing preoccupation with humbler folk that would lead to the plays and romances most typical of Greene.

II. Orlando Furioso

In the latter half of 1587 and throughout 1588 Greene was heavily influenced by Ariosto's Orlando Furioso. In Penelope's Web (entered in the Stationer's Register June, 1587) he includes three stanzas said to have been translated from the poem,¹⁷⁸ and he uses it in some way in all three of the

¹⁷⁸ Charles W. Lemmi, "The Sources of Greene's Orlando Furioso," Modern Language Notes, 31 (1916), p. 440.

romances of 1588, Perimides, Orpharion, and Alcida. All of the character names in Perimides' third night's tale come from the poem, though there is no other obvious correlation with it. Nor do the characters in the tale correspond to their counterparts in the poem; for example, Bradamant, Ariosto's lady-knight, is a man in Perimides, and the old enchantress Melissa of the poem becomes the beautiful young heroine of the tale. In Orpharion the story of Lydia is taken from Ariosto's Canto 34, and in Alcida there is a reference to Angelica and Medor (IV, 33).¹⁷⁹

It thus seems highly probable that Greene also began during 1588 his play based on Ariosto's poem. From the apparent allusion to the Armada in lines 83-88 of the play, most critics consider July 30, 1588, as the earliest possible date.¹⁸⁰ Style and verse technique suggest that the play precedes Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay, which is generally thought to belong to 1589. T. W. Baldwin sets the most likely terminal date for Orlando as the summer of 1589.¹⁸¹ These dates also compare favorably with the dates of Greene's

¹⁷⁹ Lemmi also sees the influence in Alcida and Orpharion.

¹⁸⁰ It is, of course, possible that the lines are a later insertion, or even that they are imagined, particularly since the King of "the Isles," Brandemart, is an enemy in Greene's play, a strange twist for the patriotic author, and since Brandemart refers to "Albion," a common name for England, as a contrast to his own isles (see l. 77). The specificity of the allusion, however, seems to outweigh the latter possibility.

¹⁸¹ Baldwin, p. 78.

most intensive use of the pastoral mode.

The pastoral influence on Orlando Furioso is both more obvious and more fundamental to this play than it is to Alphonsus. The openness of the pastoral coloring and the related love interest represent a turning toward material more compatible with Greene's temperament. He had tried to imitate Marlovian drama in Alphonsus and had failed, in the opinion of modern scholars and apparently of his contemporaries as well, for there is no evidence that the play was successful. Since he was already successfully using pastoral and love themes in the prose, it was only natural that he employ them to bolster his drama.

The subordination of martial valor to romantic love does not come solely from the pastoral influence. This is a common theme in medieval romances such as the Tristan and Isolde legends or the Arthurian cycle. Waldo McNeir draws many parallels between Greene's Orlando Furioso and medieval romance, showing the great extent to which he was influenced by this material.¹⁸² Yet Greene seems consciously in this play to place love in a pastoral context. Orlando retires to pastoral solitude to "meditate vpon the thoughts of loue" (II.i.549), and he calls on nature in conventional pastoral terms to participate in his love;

¹⁸² Waldo F. McNeir, "Greene's Medievalization of Ariosto," Revue de Littérature Comparée, 29 (1955), 351-360.

Sweete solitarie groues, whereas the Nymphes
 With pleasance laugh to see the Satyres play,
 Witnes Orlandos faith vnto his loue.
 Tread she these lawnds, kinde Flora, boast thy pride.
 Seeke she for shades, spread, Cedars, for her sake.
 Faire Flora, make her couch amidst thy flowres.
 Sweet Christall springs, wash ye with roses
 When she longs to drinke. (II.i.560-567)

Through pastoral devices the villain Sacrepant is able to overcome Orlando's faith in Angelica's love; for surely the pastoral world cannot harbor deceit. Thus Orlando is completely taken in when Sacrepant's man, disguised as a shepherd, tells him:

Know that this Medor, whose vnhappy name
 Is mixed with the faire Angelicas,
 Is euen that Medor that inioyes her loue.
 Yon caue beares witnes of their kind content;
 Yon medowes talke the actions of their ioy;
 Our shepheards in their songs of solace sing,
 Angelica doth none but Medor loue! (II.i.650-656)

Milton would later use the same device in his masque for the Earl of Bridgewater, having his villain Comus disguise himself as a shepherd to win the Lady's confidence. Other details, such as Angelica's banishment in shepherdess' clothes and Marsilius' and Mandricard's otherwise unmotivated disguise as palmers, suggest that Greene is deliberately employing pastoral motifs. An examination of the play shows that this emphasis is not merely for decoration; Greene is again, though often with halting steps, setting up a tension between pastoral and heroic ideals in an attempt to illuminate the position of man caught between the two.

This tension is evident from the opening scene. Angelica's father Marsilius asks each of her five suitors to: "Set

each man forth his passions how he can,/ And let her Censure make the happiest man." These lines show Marsilius' recognition of the pre-eminence of love, both in his indulgent refusal to allow social custom to take precedence over love (Angelica is permitted to choose her own mate) and in his admonition to the suitors to present their "passions." This recognition of love's force is, as has been shown, characteristic of the pastoral romance. The four kings, however, fail to follow Marsilius' instructions. Their speeches are set firmly in the world of active endeavor. Each follows the same two themes: the wealth and beauty of his country, and his own martial prowess. The "passions" of each are summed up in the curt formulaic conclusion: "But leauing these such glories as they be,/ I loue, my Lord; let that suffize for me." Only Orlando speaks at length of his love, and in so doing he downplays his social state ("I am no King, yet am I princely borne") and his heroism ("I list not boast in acts of Chiuallrie,/ An humor neuer fitting with my Minde"). He suggests that noble deeds are best employed in the cause of love:

But come there forth the proudest Champion
That hath Suspition in the Palatine,
And with my trustie sword Durandell,
Single, Ile register vpon his helme,
What I dare doo for faire Angelica.
(I.i.121-125)

Angelica, like her father and Orlando, understands the complete sovereignty of love and its dependence upon the gifts of nature rather than fortune; she politely rejects an

alliance with any of the four kings for this reason:

But Fortune, or some deep inspiring fate,
 Venus, or else the bastard brat of Mars,
 Whose bow commands the motions of the minde,
 Hath sent proud loue to enter such a plea
 As nonsutes all your princely euidence,
 And flat commands that, maugre Maiestie,
 I chuse Orlando, Countie Palatine. (I.i.155-161)

The four kings, unable to understand her reasoning, can only see that she is choosing a husband who is socially inferior to them:

Highly thou wrongst vs, King of Affrica,
 To braue thy neighbor Princes with disgrace,
 To tye thy honor to thy daughters thoughts,
 Whose Choyce is like that Greekish Giglots loue,
 That left her Lord, prince Menelaus,
 And with a swaine made scape away to Troy.
 What is Orlando but a stragling mate,
 Banisht for some offence by Charlemaine,
 Skipt from his country as Anchises Sonne,
 And meanes, as he did to the Carthage Queene,
 To pay her ruth and ruine for her loue?
 (I.i.164-74)

From these lines on, the essential conflict of the play is clear. Social estate, wealth, and martial power, qualities of the world of active endeavor, are pitted against inner worth, love, and beauty, qualities of the pastoral world. On the former side are ranged the four kings and Sacrepant; on the latter Orlando, Angelica, Marsilius, and later Mandricard. The theme is produced through the interplay of these opposing forces, particularly when the characters representing one world attempt to enter the other.

The four kings enable Greene to make several observations about wrong attitudes toward love and other pastoral ideals. Of the speeches made by the kings in the stately

wooing scene, that of the Soldan of Egypt comes closest to fulfilling Marsilius' admonition for each to set forth his "passions." He at least praises Angelica's beauty and its role in inspiring his heroism: "Where I ariud to eternize with my Launce/ The matchles beauty of faire Angelica"

(I.i.27, 28). Yet, ironically, he is the first to forget her love as unworthy of battle; when the other three ask him to join their league against Marsilius he replies:

That when Prince Menelaus with all his mates
Had ten yeres held their siege in Asia,
Folding their wrothes in cinders of faire Troy,
Yet, for their armes grew by conceit of loue,
Their Trophees was but conquest of a girle:
Then trust me, Lords, Ile neuere manage armes
For womens loues that are so quickly lost.

(I.i.227-233)

With this the Soldan drops out of the picture, having displayed a hypocrisy and cynicism which showed him deficient in the virtue prerequisite for Greene's ideal love.

Rodamant and Brandemart, aided temporarily by Mandricard, ally themselves against Marsilius to seek revenge for Angelica's supposed slight to their honor. Their faults are threefold. First they fail to see Orlando's innate nobility, being too concerned with the fact that his station is lower than theirs. Second they make the same mistake Alphonsus did in the previous play; they attempt to win Angelica by force, a fault immediately detected by Marsilius: "Or hope you to make conquest by constraint/ Of that which neuer could be got by loue?" (I.i.216-217). Finally they show cowardice by

fleeing and leaving their unprotected stronghold to be taken by Orlando's band (I.iii), and in attempting to abduct the defenseless Angelica (III.ii). The latter incident also shows their hypocrisy, since they now pretend to be seeking her punishment for wronging Orlando. In the ensuing struggle with the mad Orlando, Brandemart is killed and Rodamant flees.¹⁸³

The fourth king, Mandricard, at first makes the same mistakes as Rodamant and Brandemart, but Greene reserves him for a nobler end. Repenting his rashness in taking arms against Marsilius, Mandricard comes to him disguised as a servant. The courtesy Marsilius displays wins him to his side; Mandricard chides himself:

Thankes, and good fortune fall to such a king,
 As couets to be counted curteous.
 Blush, Mandricard; the honor of thy foe disgraceth thee.
 Thou wrongest him that wisheth thee but well.
 (II.i.777-80)

When Mandricard and Marsilius next appear, they are dressed as palmers. The ideological significance of the palmer disguise has already been discussed in connection with Mamillia, Never Too Late, and Alphonsus. Even though the two kings are in reality at war against Sacrepant, the disguise

¹⁸³ Later Mandricard announces, without explanation, that Rodamant is dead (IV.i.1017) and that Sacrepant has levied his men. This sense of incompleteness may be due to careless cutting by acting companies or perhaps only to poor plotting by Greene. Since Rodamant and Brandemart have identical functions he may in his characteristic haste have confused them or simply lost interest in them.

symbolically aligns them with the forces of peace and contemplation integral to the pastoral world.

Sacrebant, like the four kings, shows himself at cross-purposes with the ideals of pastoral life, but he is more intricately related to pastoral than they. This is clear from his very first speech, in which he shows a disloyalty to his king and an unseemly ambition which, as has been shown, is contrary to the spirit of pastoral,¹⁸⁴ until his death scene when he calls on nature to reverse herself in the conventional terms of pastoral elegy. That his ambition is consciously placed in a pastoral context may be seen from the line, "Sweet are the thoughts that smother from conceit," which, taken in context with the ambitious tone of the passage, ironically recalls Maesia's song of praise to the contentment of lowly life, "Sweet are the thoughts that saour of content." Furthermore, he is completely unable to fit into the pastoral role of lover. In his musing over how to win Angelica he shows a misconception of the nature of love and the proper path to attain it.

But how I might best with mine honor woo:
Write, or intreate,--fie, that fitteth not;
Send by Ambassadors,--no, thats too base;
Flatly command,--I, thats for Sacrebant.
(I.i.297-300)

This becomes even clearer in the actual wooing scene when

¹⁸⁴ This is no doubt a parody of Marlowe's portrait of the ambitious Tamburlaine, as is pointed out by Collins, I, 219, and Ellis-Fermor, p. 143. Yet it is more than just that, for Sacrebant's actions show an unmistakable relation to pastoral.

Sacrepant says:

Then know, my loue, I cannot paint my grief,
 Nor tell a tale of Venus and her sonne,
 Reporting such a Catalogue of toyes:
 It fits not Sacrepant to be effiminate.
 Onely giue leaue, my faire Angelica,
 To say, the Countie is in loue with thee.
 (II.i.443-48)

Sacrepant, in other words, cannot "speak the language" of wit. When Angelica refuses him, he at once shows that he sees love as an unworthy endeavor: "Go to such milk sops as are fit for loue:/ I will employ my busie braines for war."

Sacrepant's most obvious connection to pastoral, however, and his most villainous deed, is his revenge on Angelica by misusing the pastoral pleasance, turning it to his own unworthy ends. Orlando, who has already proved his ability to overcome obstacles presented by the active world (in his overthrow of Rodamant's stronghold), is completely taken in by Sacrepant's stratagem because it is so foreign to the spirit of the pastoral world. Sacrepant's machinations and their relationship to pastoral seem to be the key to interpreting the mad scenes in Orlando Furioso. These scenes are as a whole the weakest element of the play. According to some critics Orlando's madness is often "quite unconvincing,"¹⁸⁵ and "rather primitive and lacking in

¹⁸⁵ Kenneth Muir, "Robert Greene as Dramatist," in Essays on Shakespeare and Elizabethan Drama in Honor of Hardin Craig, ed. Richard Hosley (Columbia: Univ. of Missouri Press, 1962), p. 47.

realism."¹⁸⁶ The disproportionate amount of farce often suggests that the scenes are primarily a way of pandering to audience taste. Louis B. Wright shows that madness was a popular theme on the Elizabethan stage, used not to arouse pity or horror, but to amuse the spectators.¹⁸⁷ In the Alleyn manuscript, assumed by Collins to be the copy from which Alleyn studied for the role of Orlando,¹⁸⁸ the mad scenes are even further expanded than in the printed text, perhaps suggesting interpolations to please the audience.¹⁸⁹

In spite of all these weaknesses, however, the scenes show a surprising consistency of purpose when they are regarded in relation to pastoral. Greene seems to be painting a picture of a pastoral world which has been perverted and overturned by Sacrepant's treachery. Its activities are changed from love and contemplation to hatred and warfare. In lines 671-692 Orlando sees woman not in her usual pastoral role as inspirer of love, but instead as "sprung from blacke

¹⁸⁶ Rolf Soellner, "The Madness of Hercules and the Elizabethans," Comparative Literature, 10 (1958), p. 318.

¹⁸⁷ Louis B. Wright, "Madmen as Vaudeville Performers on the Elizabethan Stage," JEGP, 30 (1931), 48-54.

¹⁸⁸ Collins, I, 215.

¹⁸⁹ A number of critics feel that Greene was consciously parodying this craze for madmen; see Parrott and Ball, p. 71; Bevington, p. 221; and Gayley, p. 410. While there may be elements of parody in the play, as there certainly seem to be in the hyperbolic ranting of Sacrepant, the mad scenes of Orlando seem too naive and too poorly constructed to be consciously sustained parody.

Ates loynes," thus the inspirer of discord. In the next few lines Greene changes Ariosto's simple physical detail of the mad Orlando's tearing a man apart to his destroying the seeming shepherd (Sacrepant's servant) whom he has mistaken for Medor. In addition to providing a rather satisfying kind of poetic justice, this incident enables Orlando to enter "with a leg" which becomes through allusion Hercules' club. While this detail may primarily tie Orlando's madness to the Hercules Furens tradition,¹⁹⁰ it also brings in by connotation the labors of Hercules. For example, Orlando speaks of making a journey to hell. Labor was at the opposite pole from the otium of pastoral.

Furthermore, Orlando in his madness sees the pastoral world as plunged into war: "For Charlemaine the Great is vp in armes,/ And Arthur with a crue of Britons comes/ To seeke for Medor and Angelica" (II.i.717-19). Even his levying of a band of rustic clowns armed with "spits and dripping pans" shows this overturning of pastoral ideals. When Angelica is banished by her father to the pastoral world, though she is dressed as a shepherdess she is never permitted to engage in any of the usual pastoral pursuits. Rather Orlando "knights" her for her supposed defeat of Brandemart. There could be no clearer picture of the confusion of pastoral and active roles.

¹⁹⁰ Soellner categorizes Orlando's madness as within this tradition, p. 318.

The two most important activities of pastoral life, besides love, are music and poetry. In Greene's perverted pastoral world, the mad Orlando appears "like a Poet," but the goal of his poetry is to have Apollo send him "the skirt which Deianyra sent to Hercules,/ To make me braue vpon my wedding day" (IV.ii.1084-85), in other words, to bring about his death. This episode is expanded in the Alleyn manuscript, with more references to strife or war, such as: "Loue! whats loue, villayne, but the bastard of Mars," or "So, Orlando must become a poet./ No, the palatyne is sent champion vnto the warrs."¹⁹¹ The overturned values are even clearer in the music of this strange pastoral place. When a "fidler" plays for Orlando, Orlando seizes the fiddle, which he takes for a sword: "But dost thou think the temper to be good? And will it hold, when thus and thus we Medor do assaile?" (IV.ii.1119-20).

Meanwhile the active world of Orlando Furioso is not in much better shape. Sacrepant, in revolt against Marsilius, has already won a crown, and is pursuing Marsilius and Mandricard; Angelica is condemned to death. It is only supernatural intervention that can bring these two disturbed areas of human life back into their proper alignment. As in many previous pastoral romances, Melissa, a sorceress, accomplishes this by giving Orlando the curative potion which restores his sanity, and by telling him of Sacrepant's guile.

¹⁹¹ Quoted in Collins, I, pp. 271-72.

Like Alphonsus, Orlando proves his innate nobility, and thus his right to Angelica's love and her father's crown, by taking the place of a common mercenary soldier, and in that role defeating Sacrepant and three of the twelve peers of France. In both cases this true nobility is evident to those with whom he fights. Sacrepant tells him, "These words bewraie thou art no base born moore,/ But by descent sprong from some royall line" (V.i.1246-47). The third of the peers declares: "How so ere disguisd in base or Indian shape,/ Oger can well discerne thee by thy blowes;/ For either thou art Orlando or the diuell" (V.ii.1384-86). This fascination with the idea of a commoner (even a supposed commoner) who is able to achieve noble deeds is one of Greene's keynotes, as already seen in his prose. Of the truly lower-class figures in this play, mainly the rustics of the mad scenes, only Orgalio gains any measure of dignity, and that not so much in his own right as through his loyalty to Orlando. While the verse speech assigned to him in Act II, Scene i, would suggest a certain nobility, it is likely that Greene casts the speech in verse only because Orgalio is addressing majesty.

Like Alphonsus, Orlando Furioso retains a basic social conservatism. In Alcida Greene had written, "Angelica forsooke diuers Kings and tooke Medon a mercenary Souldier" (IV, 33). This suggests that the story first interested him for this reason; yet he changes this aspect of his original

to give Angelica a husband more suitable for her rank (although he retains the idea of her rejecting kings for one of lower station). For him it is enough that Orlando take the place temporarily of the "mercenary Souldier," thus showing that station in itself is insufficient. It must be coupled with the kind of integrity displayed when one is stripped of wealth and power. In his next play he would take the final step and show a commoner elevated by marriage to the aristocracy.

III. Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay

As shown in Chapter One, the pastoral retreat is never an end in itself; rather its purpose is to provide leisure for contemplation, art, and love. Strengthened or equipped with new knowledge or values, the hero then returns to the active world to better it. From his earliest work Greene was often concerned with the necessity for bringing active and pastoral forces into a mutually beneficial working relationship, as in Alphonsus, for example. In Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay he presents a picture of the active world as deeply informed by pastoral values of wisdom, courtesy, love and inner nobility. Fressingfield, representing the pastoral world, provides a standard for delineating those values and for educating those who must function productively in the greater world.

Some discussion of the pastoral and active locales in this play is in order, because Greene handles them in a far

more complex way than in his preceding plays or romances. The outside or greater world is represented primarily by the three scenes taking place in the court at London: II.i, IV.ii, and V.iii. Yet the court is distinguished by none of the usual qualities of the active world except by its majesty. Here there is no talk of heroic deeds in battle, no turmoil from anger, greed, or other base passions, and no danger. In this gathering of kings of the major Western powers, the emphasis is on peace, friendship, and celebration. All present show the proper respect for love, and even though it is obvious that Eleanor's marriage to Edward will be a contracted one, it transcends its contractual basis by being based on the proper qualities--beauty, virtue and wit.

Eleanor says of Edward:

The comly portrait of so braue a man,
 The vertuous fame discoursed of his deeds,
 Edwards couragious resolution,
 Done at the holy land fore Damas walles,
 Led both mine eye and thoughts in equall links,
 To like so of the English Monarchs sonne,
 That I attempted perrils for his sake.

(II.i.455-61)

In Act IV, Scene ii, she adds that her love was based on "hearing how his [Edward's] minde and shape agreed." The court's respect for love is also evidenced by its immediate acceptance of a match between Lacy and Margaret, based upon her constancy, beauty, and virginity, with no qualms about her low social estate.

Even more significantly, however, the friendly rivalry which exists between these great rulers is based not on martial

proress, but upon the abilities of their scholars. When Henry offers to send to Oxford for Edward, the Emperor of Germany replies:

Nay, rather, Henrie, let vs, as we be,
 Ride for to visite Oxford with our traine.
 Faine would I see your Vniuersities,
 And what learned men your Academie yields,
 From Hapsburg haue I brought a learned clarke,
 To hold dispute with English orators.
 (II.i.472-77)

Henry, pleased with this idea, offers to reward the German "clarke" Vandermast with "a coronet of choicest gold" if he can outdo the English prodigy, Friar Bacon. With very little exercise of the imagination one can see in this contest the similarity to the traditional pastoral singing match with its friendly rivalry, and prize awarded to the winner.

The patriotism so evident throughout Friar Bacon has often been pointed out by critics.¹⁹² Greene suggests that this ideal pastoral-active society has been attained in England through the integrity and stability of its monarch, who knows how to place values in their proper perspective. This is clear not only from his commendable actions in the play, but also from his words, repeated by Raphe in a comic

¹⁹² See, for example, Emily B. Stanley, "The Use of Classical Mythology by the University Wits," Renaissance Papers (1956), p. 29, where she argues that "the affirmation of the superiority of England, which seems to be, generally, the theme of the play, is underlined and climaxed through the use of classical allusions. The natural attractiveness and force of the rural Englanders, in the person of Margaret, is raised to a level deserving the pride of her fellowcountrymen; and the knowledge and influence of Friar Bacon has proven superior to Germany's intelligentsia."

context. Disguised as Prince Edward, Raphe says: "And vpon that I will lead the way; onely I will haue Miles go before me, because I haue heard Henrie say that wisdom must go before Maiestie" (II.iv.921-23).

By virtue of these potentates' respect for love, innate nobility and art, Greene suggests that with pastoral and active powers in harness (the active is demonstrated by Edward's having won battles in the Holy Land), the greater world is a stable, peaceful, and harmonious sphere. If, then, pastoral values have already been absorbed into the active world, what is the function of the pastoral world in this play? It seems to become a training ground for the young who are on the verge of playing significant roles in the greater world--Edward, Bacon, and Margaret. I refer to Bacon as young because he speaks of himself as "a Frier newly stalde in Brazennose" (I.ii.182); however, regardless of his age, he learns important lessons through his contact with the pastoral world.

The pastoral area of the play lies in Fressingfield and its environs--Framlingham, Harleston, and Beccles. It is described in idyllic terms in the first scene of the play: the hunt with its "loftie frolicke bucks" and "iolly mates," the "tossing of ale and milke in countrie cannes," the "countries sweet content." It is seen on holiday at Harleston Fair with Margaret among the rustic youth:

We countrie sluts of merry Fressingfield
 Come to buy needlesse noughts to make vs fine,
 And looke that yong-men should be francke this day,
 And court vs with such fairings as they can.

(I.iii.355-58)

As in previous pastoral paradises, the weather is eternal spring: "By my troth, Margret, heeres a wether is able to make a man call his father whorson; if this wether hold, wee shall haue hay good cheape, and butter and cheese at Harlston will beare no price"; or, in Margaret's more elegant phrasing: "Phoebus is blythe and frolicke lookes from heauen,/ As when he courted louely Semele." Even the food is the traditionally temperate diet always ascribed to pastoral places: "such poore fare as Woodmen can affoord,/ Butter and cheese, creame, and fat venison." Presiding over all this is Margaret--the shepherdess-like "bonny damsell . . . so stately in her stammell red," the aristocratic Renaissance beauty described by Edward in Petrarchan metaphors ("her sparkling eyes doe lighten forth sweet Loues alluring fire"), indeed, the goddess of the pastoral world:

When as she swept like Venus through the house,
 And in her shape fast foulded vp my thoughtes:
 Into the Milkhouse went I with the maid,
 And there amongst the cream-boles she did shine,
 As Pallace mongst her Princely huswiferie.

(I.i.74-78)

Greene does not stop, however, with this simple presentation of court and country. Lying between the two is a third locale, far more ambiguous than either of these--the town of Oxford. In Oxford Greene incorporates some degree of the strife of the usual active world, though he keeps it on a

comic level. The scene opens with Bacon's beating of his "subsiser" Miles, continues with Warren and Edward's anger at Miles's impudence, and ends with the more serious hint of coming violence between Edward and Lacy. There is a strong undertone of violence even in the language used. For example, when Ermsbie counsels the fool Raphe, who is disguised as Edward, to "see you keepe your countenance like a Prince," Raphe answers: "Wherefore haue I such a companie of cutting knaues to wait vpon me, but to keep and defend my countenance against all mine enemies? Haue you not good swords and bucklers?" (II.ii.515-19). When the group asks Bacon to help Edward, Raphe swaggers: "Why, seruant Ned, will not the frier do it?--Were not my sword glued to my scabberd by coniuration, I would cut off his head, and make him do it by force" (ll. 590-92). In II.iv, when the constable has arrested Raphe and his party of revelers, the violence remains a comic spoof of the usual great world; Raphe says: "Sirra Miles, bring hither the tapster that drue the wine; and I warrant when they see how soundly I haue broke his head, theille say twas done by no lesse man than a prince" (ll. 852-55).

If Oxford contains reflections of the active world, however, it also has strong suggestions of the pastoral domain. A university by its nature is a place of contemplation and leisure to pursue art or wisdom. It has already been suggested that the royal party's progress to Oxford to hear

a scholarly dispute resembles the retreat to the pastoral world to hear the shepherds' eclogues. The frugality of the Oxford scholars' diet adds to this impression of pastoral simplicity.¹⁹³ Bacon teases the kings: "Lordings, admire not if your cheere be this,/ For we must keepe our Accademicke fare;/ No riot where Philosophie doth raine" (III.ii.1315-17). The presence of a benevolent enchanter in Oxford further strengthens its resemblance to previous pastoral places. Finally, Bacon's cell at Brasenose College has, by virtue of his magic "glass," a window to the pastoral world, so that two pastoral scenes actually are staged in Bacon's study.

Oxford thus partakes of the nature of both active and contemplative life. It seems to lie as an intermediate realm between court and country. Walter Davis has suggested that the settings of Renaissance pastoral romances are often triple. His analysis is as follows:

¹⁹³ The consensus of critical opinion seems to be that this incident is a piece of social criticism--the former scholar Greene protesting the treatment of university students. For example, Kerstin Assarsson-Rizzi says: "The poor conditions under which scholars live appear to be the only cause of dissatisfaction with the prevailing order" [Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay: A Structural and Thematic Analysis of Robert Greene's Play, Lund Studies in English #44 (Lund: C. W. K. Gleerup, 1972), p. 124]. This is no doubt true, but the simplicity and temperance of the rural diet is one of the givens of pastoral literature. The analogy is strengthened when Emperor Frederick refers contemptuously to these "cates fit for countrey swaines."

The pattern formed by the subdivisions of this setting may be graphically if roughly imaged as a center with two concentric circles surrounding it, implying a kind of purification of life proceeding inward: from the gross and turbulently naturalistic outer circle, to the refined pastoral inner circle, and then to the pure center of the world.¹⁹⁴

He goes on to posit that the characteristic action of the pastoral romance consists of the hero's movement from "disintegration in the turbulent outer circle" to "education in the pastoral circle," to "rebirth at the sacred center."¹⁹⁵ Greene's use of the three areas in Friar Bacon may be regarded as an interesting variant of this pattern. While the outer world is obviously not "turbulent," a good case may be made for Oxford as the combination of turbulence and education, at least for Edward and Bacon. And Edward's sudden noble denial of his selfish impulses at Fressingfield is little less than Davis's "rebirth at the sacred center." The relationship of the three areas may best be seen by an examination of three major characters.

Werner Senn departs from the usual critical comment, which sees Friar Bacon and Margaret as the foci of this play, in that he regards Prince Edward as the main, and unifying, character. He says, concerning Greene's use of his source:

By transforming her [Margaret's] rich and noble suitor into Prince Edward, son and heir of King Henry III . . . , Greene made a basic alteration

¹⁹⁴ Davis, A Map of Arcadia, p. 35.

¹⁹⁵ Davis, A Map of Arcadia, p. 38.

that essentially modifies the response to the story. All Edward's actions are bound to be judged in the light of the special place he occupies in the social hierarchy.¹⁹⁶

He concludes that one of the play's major themes becomes the "education of a prince and ideal ruler of a commonweal."¹⁹⁷ Edward's character does indeed undergo a change during the first half of the play, and since he is more intimately associated with all three areas of the setting than any other character he is a logical choice to demonstrate their interrelationships.

The education which Edward must gain in Friar Bacon is the knowledge of the nature of true love; that is, in Greene's terms, love based on the natural gifts of beauty, wit, and virtue. It is essential for the continuance of the political stability of England that he arrive at this knowledge before he meets the royal bride whom, unknown to him, his father has chosen for him.

In the first scene of the play we are initially led to believe that Edward already possesses this knowledge. He speaks of Margaret's beauty in the customary language of wit--Petrarchan conceits sprinkled with classical allusions. When Lacy suggests that a lady of the court would be just

¹⁹⁶ Werner Senn, "Robert Greene's Handling of Source Material in Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay," English Studies, 54 (1973), p. 546. Much of the material in this article is incorporated into (or drawn from) Senn's book of the same year: Studies in the Dramatic Construction of Robert Greene and George Peele.

¹⁹⁷ Senn, "Robert Greene's Handling of Source Material," p. 553.

as beautiful and more appropriate to Edward in station, Edward shows what appears to be a noble disregard of social estate: "Ah, Ned, but hadst thou watcht her as my self,/ And seene the secret bewties of the maid,/ Their courtly coinesse were but foolery" (I.i.70-72). To this point only the fool Raphe seems to have divined that Edward's passion is lust rather than love. His insight is obvious when he speaks of the "Abbot" having "more learning than thou to choose a bonny wench" (I.i.47-50). He returns to the idea with his comic suggestion that Edward have Friar Bacon turn him into a "silken purse, full of gold, or else a fine wrought smocke" in order to gain admittance to Margaret's bed. This elicits Edward's open admission of his base intentions:

Lacie, the foole hath laid a perfect plot;
 For why our cuntrye Margret is so coy,
 And standes so much vpon her honest pointes,
 That marriage or no market with the mayd:
 Ermsbie, it must be nigromaticke spels
 And charmes of art that must inchaine her loue,
 Or else shall Edward neuer win the girle.
 (I.i.121-27)

Edward further debases himself by stooping to a perversion of the pastoral world similar to that of Sacrepant in Orlando Furioso. He has Lacy disguise himself as a "farmers sonne, not far from thence" in order to undermine Margaret's possible attraction to any other suitors. Thus by the improper use of supernatural arts and pastoral ideals Edward hopes to win Margaret. He has been impressed by her beauty, which he properly sees as independent of social estate, but he has no

conception of her wit or virtue--in short, her true nobility. He sees her only as a "bonny wench," who is probably in love with a country "clowne" (l. 145), and who may be won by materialistic means. He instructs Lacy to "Buy something worthie of her parentage,/ Not worth her beautie" (ll. 150-151). Perhaps owing to Raphe's suggestion that he be turned into a purse filled with gold, Edward chooses a purse as the appropriate gift, for Lacy tells Margaret: "he sent you this rich purse,/ His token that he helpt you run your cheese,/ And in the milkhouse chatted with your selfe" (I.iii.390-92).

When Edward next appears, the scene has changed to Oxford, and he is apparently dressed as a fool, having changed places with Raphe. Through the shorthand of disguise, Greene enables his audience to see that Edward's princely nature has been debased by his lust, and also that lust reduces a man to the level of a fool. The picture is further filled in when Edward disregards his honor in attempting to draw his sword against Bacon's foolish servant, Miles, and ends by boxing him in frustration. If the costume of a fool is retained in the next scene as it would appear to be, for there would have been no time for the actor to change clothes, it is a marvelous piece of stage business which sheds an entirely different light on the magic glass episode in Bacon's study. The sight of a prince in jester's apparel watching the charming love scene between the obviously noble

placed in him than to permit Margaret's disgrace:

Honour bids thee controll him in his lust;
 His wooing is not for to wed the girle,
 But to intrap her and beguile the lasse:
 Lacie, thou louest; then brooke not such abuse,
 But wed her, and abide thy Princes frowne:
 For better die, then see her liue disgracde.
 (ll. 675-80)

It also shows that when love is based on an innate nobility on both sides, social equality is not a consideration. Earl Lacy has no qualms about making this obviously beautiful, witty, and virtuous country girl his wife:

Margret. What loue is there where wedding
 ends not loue?
Lacie. I meant, faire girle, to make thee Lacies
 wife.
Margret. I little thinke that earles will stoop
 so low.
Lacie. Say, shall I make thee countesse ere I
 sleep? (ll. 734-37)

Finally, it shows that true love always ends in marriage, a belief held in common by Greene and Spenser, both of whom rejected the adulterous aspects of the courtly love tradition. Though dissolute in his personal life, Greene retained till his death a firm conviction that genuine love when it ends in marriage becomes the basis of great personal and social good.¹⁹⁹

There is, however, one problem with this scene as a means of teaching these truths to Edward. The lesson is incomplete; Greene takes pains to demonstrate to the audience

¹⁹⁹ Greene's possible influence on Shakespeare in regard to the treatment of love is explored by Norman Sanders in "The Comedy of Greene and Shakespeare," pp. 34-53.

That death shall make a discord of our thoughts?
 No, stab the earle, and fore the morning sun
 Shall vaunt him thrice ouer the loftie east,
 Margret will meet her Lacie in the heauens.
 (ll. 1014-21)

Edward's sudden repentance, though perhaps not adequately motivated by realistic standards, is shown as a direct outcome of the lesson thus learned, and is thematically effective:

Is it princely to disseuer louers leagues,
 To part such friends as glorie in their loues?
 Leauē, Ned, and make a vertue of this fault,
 And further Peg and Lacie in their loues;
 So in subduing fancies passion,
 Conquering thy selfe, thou getst the richest
 spoile. (ll. 1039-44)

The pattern of the movement of Edward through this play, then, seems to be from court to Fressingfield to Oxford, back to Fressingfield, and finally to reabsorption in the court. He leaves court initially as "the courtier all in green." Green, as one of the traditional Arcadian colors, represents youth, springtime, fresh simplicity. Even though Edward has proved himself in the pursuits of the active world through his conquests, he is not yet proven in pastoral values; indeed he has not even assumed his true identity there, for he says: "I am vnknowne, not taken for the Prince;/ They onely deeme vs frolicke Courtiers,/ That reuell thus among our lieges game" (I.i.133-35). When confronted in the pastoral world with love, he is unable to handle this force and suffers a further identity crisis by changing clothes with the fool. His entry into Oxford is

marked by strife which, though comic, shadows the usual greater world. But Oxford, as previously noted, also has connections with the pastoral world through Bacon and his magic glass. As Edward enters this realm of Oxford, his education in pastoral values begins with the pantomime of love and marriage. It requires a return to Fressingfield to attain his "rebirth" (in Davis' term), which is now seen to be equivalent to honors gained in the active world, for both Edward himself and Margaret compare his conquest of his passion with military conquests. He is now ready to assume his rightful station in the court and to meet his destined bride, through which union, as Bacon predicts, will come great future stability and glory for the entire nation.

The relationship of the three spheres is less clear with Friar Bacon. He remains in Oxford throughout the entire play until the final scene, which takes place at court, yet he is intimately connected with the pastoral world through his magic glass. The nature of the lesson he learns is also harder to pinpoint than in Edward's case. Although in his repentance scene he abjures the use of magic, in the final scene of the play he uses his magic powers to predict England's coming glory. Obviously he feels no compunction about using them in this way, for he has just explained to King Henry that he is sad because he is "Repentant for the follies of my youth,/ That Magicks secret mysteries misled" (V.iii.2062-63). He would not be likely immediately to use the powers which he had just publicly

disallowed. The answer seems to be that he had given up the use of black magic and had brought his supernatural powers into subjection to the harmony of a greater world infused by spiritual, or pastoral, values. Daniel Seltzer, in the introduction to his edition of Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay, similarly sees Bacon's final use of magic as "an ordered control of nature born of Christian contemplation."²⁰⁰

Many critics who have carefully explored Elizabethan attitudes toward sorcery have discovered an ambivalence which complicates an examination of Greene's view of Bacon's magic. Seltzer, for example, points out that while some of Greene's more educated contemporaries saw magic as a legitimate branch of scientific knowledge (with the "magic glass" as a telescope, for example), most of his popular audience would have condemned necromancy as "medling with the diuell," consequently inviting the soul's damnation.²⁰¹ Frank Towne draws a distinction between the benevolent magician, which he says Bacon is, and the "white" magician, which he is not; thus, even though Bacon performs his feats for the good of others, his magic is "black," has bad consequences, and therefore must lead to repentance.²⁰²

²⁰⁰ Daniel Seltzer, ed., Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay, Regents Renaissance Drama Series (Lincoln: Univ. of Nebraska Press, 1963), p. xx.

²⁰¹ Seltzer, pp. xiii-xvi.

²⁰² Frank Towne, "'White Magic' in Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay?" Modern Language Notes, 67 (1952), pp. 9-13. Other studies of note are those of Reed, pp. 102-105; and Herrington, 447-485; Alan S. Downer, The British Drama: A Handbook and Brief Chronicle (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc.,

This ambiguity has led many scholars to posit additional reasons for Bacon's repentance. Kerstin Assarsson-Rizzi feels that Greene makes Bacon's key sin attaching undue importance to his own powers: "In other words, he suffers from pride, attaining the degree of hubris."²⁰³ Seltzer feels that Bacon's magic was primarily a means of testing love, which had to be tested in order to be proven valid, since only love which has been tried and proved can be effective in bringing about social order.²⁰⁴ This view is weak in that the love Bacon's magic helps to test is that of Lacy and Margaret, whereas it is the marriage primarily of Edward and Eleanor that assures the future felicity of England; Bacon's prophecy does not mention any blessings to accrue from the union of Lacy and Margaret. Furthermore, Seltzer's theory fails to account for any of Bacon's feats other than his revealing Margaret and Lacy's love to Edward. Finally, and most commonly, students of the play see Bacon's apparent aid to Edward's lust as the real motivating force behind his repentance,²⁰⁵ although he fails to repent until long after this.

1950), see especially p. 90; and Kerstin Assarsson-Rizzi, p. 122. Waldo McNeir, by contrast, sees Bacon as consciously dignified from his original in Greene's source, placed by Greene in the tradition of the benevolent medieval enchanter, in "Traditional Elements in the Character of Greene's Friar Bacon," Studies in Philology, 45 (1948), 172-79.

²⁰³ Assarsson-Rizzi, p. 39.

²⁰⁴ Seltzer, p. xvi.

²⁰⁵ For example, Sanders, "Comedy of Greene and Shakespeare," p. 50.

Magical aid for a person who wished to inspire love in another was a common theme in legends and romances. Sannazaro's lovelorn shepherd expressed his determination to seek out a witch for help in his unsuccessful love affair. Practicing magicians in the Elizabethan period claimed to have such powers. Robert Reed gives two examples:

But other sorcerers--among them the French courtier Le Mole and Dr. Simon Forman of Elizabethan London--were notorious for making indecent images; the purpose of these replicas was to bring about, by force of sympathetic magic, the culmination of an unlawful sexual affair.²⁰⁶

Some such belief no doubt lay behind Raphe's suggestion that Edward seek Bacon's aid to debauch Margaret, and behind Edward's eager approval of the plan. However, as Werner Senn points out, that Bacon gives him such aid is simply not borne out by the facts of the play.²⁰⁷ Bacon makes clear his disapproval of Edward's plan: "Craue not such actions greater dumps than these?" (II.ii.598). He only shows him Lacy's wooing of Margaret, which begins to prepare Edward, as explained above, to give up this lustful attraction.

Any explanation of Bacon's repentance (i.e., of the "education" he acquires, to use Davis' term) must take into consideration his other supernatural feats in addition to the magic glass displays. These fall into three categories: those

²⁰⁶ Reed, p. 76.

²⁰⁷ Senn, "Greene's Handling of Source Materials," pp. 546-47, 551-53.

which are primarily spectacle and harmless, the making of the brazen head, and the wedding prophecy. In the first group are the practical joke on Dr. Burden (which is handled with such exuberant good humor that even Burden cannot hold a grudge for long), the paralyzing of Edward's party's swords (which prevents destructive violence), and the contest with Vandermast, which is done with King Henry's approval for the glory of England. The feat upon which Greene himself places the most emphasis is the making of the brazen head. Most critics see this as simply a piece of stage business, taken from the source, which Greene with his flair for the spectacular could not resist including even though it detracted from the unity of his play. For example, Senn, in his detailed study of the play's structure, says of this scene:

He introduces new matter, again without motivation: the brazen head business, a spectacle that had served in Alphonsus to reanimate the fading interest in a desultory action, has a similar purpose here and is unrelated to any other scene except for a brief mention of this project by Bacon (I.2), another instance of merely literal, material, explicit instead of suggestive dramatic preparation.²⁰⁸

A close reading of the relevant scenes, however, suggests that the brazen head performs the same function for Bacon that the magic glass view of Lacy and Margaret does for Edward. To begin with, the scene is better prepared for than Senn's analysis suggests. Far from including a "brief mention" of

²⁰⁸ Senn, Studies in the Dramatic Construction of Greene and Peele, p. 87.

the head, the entire second scene of Act I is concerned with its making, which is seen as the crown of all Bacon's efforts, the feat on which his future glory will rest. Second, it is clear that making the head involved a more serious kind of magical art than the frivolous preceding spectacular displays. Bungay and Vandermast's debate is the key to the kind of magic involved in these showy feats--the domination of elemental spirits ("the spirites of piromancie or Geomancie" III.ii.1111-12), learned by arduous study. By comparison, the making of the brazen head involves the dangerous use of demons, which is shown first comically--Miles has thoroughly armed himself for his watch--and second seriously, when Bacon says:

Miles, thou knowest I haue diued into hell,
 And sought the darkest pallaces of fiendes;
 That with my magick spels great Belcephon
 Hath left his lodge and kneeled at my cell;

 With seuen yeares tossing nigromanticke charmes,
 Poring vpon darke Hecats principles,
 I haue framd out a monstrous head of brasse,
 That, by the inchaunting forces of the deuill,
 Shall tell out strange and vncouth Aphorismes,
 And girt faire England with a wall of brasse.
 (IV.i.1537-40, 1545-50)

This is the kind of magic for which Bacon later repents when he speaks of "vsing diuels to counteruaile his God" and of Christ's wounds "which by thy magick oft did bleed a fresh" (IV.iii.1841, 1846). Even his immediate reaction suggests a partial learning experience; in his depression over losing his glory, there are glimmerings that he is beginning to realize the sin of aspiration. He says that the supernatural

powers "grudge that a mortall man should worke so much" and adds, "Bacon might best more than a man might boast" (IV.i. 1637, 1640). Greene makes the momentum of this scene carry over into the repentance scene which begins with Bacon's despair over his failure. He refuses to be cheered by Bungay's assurance that his fame will live on, and he instructs Bungay in the same terms he had used to Edward earlier to "sit down" and watch to see "some deadly act shall tide me ere I sleep" (IV.iii.1758). In this manner Greene sets up a chain reaction type of scene--Bacon and Bungay watch the younger Lambert and Serlsby who in turn watch their fathers. The fathers' deaths lead to the sons' deaths, which in turn lead to Bacon's symbolic death--his repentance, in which he abjures his entire life's work--and to his rebirth: "From thence for thee the dew of mercy drops,/ To wash the wrath of his Iehouahs ire,/ And make thee as a new borne babe from sinne" (IV.iii.1847-49). The deaths of the young men provide a demonstration for Bacon of the evil of black magic in the same way that Lacy and Margaret's love showed Edward the evil of his lust.

The application to pastoral is not as clear here as it is in Edward's case. Bacon never leaves Oxford, but it is his "window" to the pastoral world that is instrumental in his rebirth, though the earlier stages of "education" took place solely at Oxford. Through these experiences he learned the proper role of magic, a traditional and acceptable art

in most pastoral literature. Both Sannazaro's Arcadia and Montemayor's Diana had drawn a distinction between black magic and good magic. In Chapter Nine of the Arcadia a love-lorn shepherd Clonico considers going to a wisewoman whom he hopes will help him in his love-predicament. Though she, like Bacon, is apparently benevolent, Clonico describes her magic in a way that relates it to black magic. Another shepherd Opico counsels him rather to visit Enareto, a holy shepherd who has left his flocks to serve Pan, and whose magic is described as white. Similarly, in Diana the good enchantress Felicia's magic is contrasted with the evil charms of the enchanter who causes Belisa's sorrow. In both cases religious contemplation rather than charms is the empowering force behind good magic. Furthermore, pastoral magic is employed only in certain circumstances--those characterized by spiritual, or pastoral values. It is obvious from the Lambert-Serlsby scene that Bacon learns that magic which results in strife is wrong. Less obviously, he may have been permitted to fail with the brazen head not only because it was wrought by black magic, but because the protection it was to provide England was a function of the active world. For example, in Diana, Felicia's nymphs, though they work many feats of magic such as reviving the apparently dead Don Felix, are unable to save themselves from the three Savages' assault. This must be accomplished by the lady-warrior Felismena. Similarly Greene's Melissa in Orlando

Furioso confined her magic to restoring Orlando's sanity so that he in turn could by his martial ability restore order in the active realm. Thus when Bacon gets his magic into the proper pastoral balance, it is quite proper for him to use it for his prediction of the national good to result from Edward and Eleanor's marriage.

Margaret too has a learning experience which is like Bacon's in that she is seen in only two spheres. She moves directly from the center of the pastoral world to the court. She never has any personal experience with Oxford, but at least two incidents connect her with it indirectly: when her betrothal to Lacy is stopped it is by means of spirits sent by Bacon from Oxford, and when her unwelcome suitors (who are represented in Oxford through their sons!) press her for her hand they show qualities of materialism and quarrelsomeness which are associated in this play with the intermediate realm between court and country. As members of the lower gentry and with these unpleasant attributes, they are not truly pastoral figures, although their promises to Margaret often have a pastoral ring, such as Serlsby's "meads inuironed with the siluer streames," and "fortie kine with faire and burnisht heads,/ With strouting duggs that paggle to the ground" (III.iii.1416, 20, 21). Indeed, the two squires resemble Oxford in their ambiguous position between active and pastoral realms. The letter from Lacy may perhaps also be sent from Oxford, for when we first see Lacy back at court he is already boasting of Margaret's "constancy,"

which at this point he could have tested only in that manner, since he had known her but a few days before he and Edward left for Oxford.

As with Bacon, the "sin" for which Margaret repents--her love for Lacy--is immediately afterwards taken up again. She declares: "And now I hate my selfe for that I loud,/ And doated more on him than on my God./ For this I scourge my selfe with sharpe repents" (V.i.1865-67). Yet only a few lines later she is saying:

Off goes the habite of a maidens heart,
And, seeing Fortune will, faire Fremingham,
And all the shew of holy Nuns, farewell.
Lacie for me, if he wilbe my lord.
(ll. 1940-43)

Like Bacon's magic, it is not the love itself which is wrong, but the kind of love. In Margaret's case her love must be tested because it contains traces of aspiration. She herself speaks of "the touch of such aspiring sinnes" (l. 1868). Greene also includes a hint that Margaret, despite her usual charming humility, is developing a measure of unbecoming pride when, after Lambert and Serlsby ask her hand, she pouts:

Shall I be Hellen in my forward fates,
As I am Hellen in my matchles hue,
And set rich Suffolke with my face afire?
If louely Lacie were but with his Peggy,
The cloudie darcknesse of his bitter frowne
Would check the pride of these aspiring squires.
(III.iii.1451-56)

The "aspiring squires" are, of course, considerably above her station. It is the degree to which her love is possibly tainted by aspiration that must be tested. The first part

of the test comes when Bacon interrupts her and Lacy's betrothal. If her love for Lacy had been characterized by pride, she would have shown more concern over the possibility of losing such a prize. Her reaction, though, is one of complete absorption in Friar Bungay's sudden illness. It is Lacy who expresses concern over the interruption: "But, Peggie, what he cannot with his booke/ Weele twixt vs both vnite it vp in heart" (II.iii.774,75). The second and third phases are combined in one scene. Lambert or Serlsby, as well-to-do members of the lower gentry, would have made a fine second choice after Lacy's harsh letter of rejection, had she not been completely and unassumingly devoted to him.

With her love purified by these trials from even the slightest hint of aspiration it is quite proper for her to take it up again and go with Lacy to court. Warren's sarcastic comment on "the nature of women, that be they neuer so neare God, yet they loue to die in a mans armes" cannot be taken as Greene's ironic response to her change of heart. Warren's callousness is depicted in the first scene of the play when he approves the Prince's scheme to seduce Margaret with the comment: "thats a speedy way/ To weane these head-strong puppies from the teat" (I.i.132). Margaret now embodies pastoral values in their purest form, and her move to a welcoming court is symbolic of the court's acceptance of those values.

In William Empson's reading of this play he sees the Bacon and Margaret plots as played off against each other to produce the theme "the power of beauty is like the power of magic."²⁰⁹ The similarities between Bacon and Margaret are especially striking in regard to their relationship to Greene's pastoral frame of reference. Both are lower-class figures²¹⁰ who rise to prominence in the active world, Bacon by his art, Margaret by her beauty. For Bacon, Greene shows that aspiration leading to the wrong kind of magic is bad; for Margaret, that any taint of aspiration would lead to the wrong kind of love. Both are purified by repentance, both repenting for having unlawfully aspired. Both are then absorbed into the greater world as embodiments of pastoral values which maintain a balance with active endeavor to keep

²⁰⁹ Empson, pp. 31-34. Since his suggestion other critics have explored the parallels between the characters of Bacon and Margaret. J. A. Lavin changes the theme to "the power of love is like the power of magic" in his introduction to the New Mermaid edition of the play (London: Benn, 1969), pp. xxii and xxiii. Werner Senn pursues the idea of character likenesses to set up a fruitful study of Greene's use of "repetitions, juxtapositions and contrasts" (Studies in the Dramatic Construction of Greene and Peele, pp. 82, 83).

²¹⁰ While the play does not stress this aspect of Bacon's character, it was a part of his legend, as may be seen in the probable source of Greene's comedy, a sixteenth-century prose romance, The Famous Historie of Fryer Bacon, Containing the wonderfull things that he did in his Life: Also the manner of his Death; With the Lives and Deaths of the two Conlurers, Bungye and Vandermast (1624; microfilm, English Books, 1475-1640 [Ann Arbor: University Microfilms, n.d.]). In the Famous Historie the anonymous author stresses that Bacon was the "sonne to a wealthy Farmer."

that world stable.

As he had so often in his romances, Greene used the pastoral world of Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay to set up social interrelationships which in this case not only demonstrate the nature of innate nobility, but declare that a strong and stable society will draw strength from its acceptance of and respect for such innately noble persons. With his natural conservatism, Greene is careful, however, to demonstrate that aspiration by its nature disqualifies any person from the right to social elevation. In his next plays he would show the evils brought upon a society by the rise to power of those who are characterized by such unseemly ambition.

It has been suggested that the apparent democracy of this play is primarily a folk-lore motif drawn from such stories as the "patient Griselda" cycle.²¹¹ Many critics have pointed out in other connections Margaret's affinities with "patient Griselda."²¹² The similarity, if it exists, is

²¹¹ See, for example, Bevington, pp. 221-22, who adds that Greene gave new life to the tradition by making Margaret worthy of such elevation through her virtues, which become "emblems of England's proud destiny."

²¹² Seltzer, for example, places strong emphasis on her Griselda role, claiming that her seeming realism is only a response to "the theatrical situations which surround her" (p. xviii). Though Senn makes no claims for her realism, he rejects the Griselda stereotype, claiming that Margaret fails to project the moral attributes associated with that tradition ("Greene's Handling of Source Materials," p. 547). Assarsson-Rizzi strikes a middle ground by depicting Margaret as a basically realistic character, but with many affinities to

a very faint one. Since Griselda was chosen for her beauty and industry, but never met her noble lover until her wedding day, no question of love was involved. She was tested for patience and submissiveness, not constancy in love. She had been elevated to her high estate for a number of years and had borne a child before she was tested at all, and her testing took place over a period of several years. While Greene was no doubt influenced by some such traditional material, the influence seems a highly anomalous one, with little that can be focused upon as a common strand of action or thought. It is not likely however that Greene seriously expected his aristocratic audience to accept his play as an admonition to incorporate even innately noble lower-class people into its ranks. Probably the most that he hoped practically to achieve was to declare that the strength of England depended upon the unity and mutual respect of its social strata, each contributing its unique gifts and abilities to the common cause of a state which by such understanding could become a model to other nations in its internal harmony as well as its external might.

conventions such as patient Griselda of the ideal Renaissance beauty (pp. 71-73). Kenneth Muir condemns critics who praise her as three-dimensional, but turn to convention to explain unrealistic behavior; he claims she is merely "an uneasy compromise between two conventions" ("Robert Greene as Dramatist," pp. 49, 50). The dispute points up the peculiar position of Greene's drama as intermediate between conventional and realistic modes.

These first plays move from the conservatism of Greene's early work, expressed both in form and content, to his most liberal statement of the innate nobility of many lower-class people. The exuberance of Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay's espousal of an almost democratic social mobility may not be, however, simply the culmination of a developing view. It undoubtedly is influenced by the exhilaration following the defeat of the Armada, with its consequent expectations of a new and glorious future for England, which Greene envisioned as manifested in its internal social order as well as in its external relationships with foreign powers. The next three plays, though retaining the patriotic aura, would begin to bring this view back into a more conservative balance.

CHAPTER V
 PASTORAL AND SOCIAL ELEMENTS IN
A LOOKING GLASSE, JAMES IV, AND GEORGE A GREENE

Greene's last plays show his experimentation in a wider range of themes, forms, and subjects. A Looking Glasse for London and England, written in collaboration with Thomas Lodge, turns for its inspiration to the medieval morality plays, becoming perhaps the last extant example of that dramatic form in the English Renaissance. The Scottish History of James IV amplifies on the pseudo-history-play form of Alphonsus and Friar Bacon, and in so doing it showed later dramatists how to transmute the Italian novelle into English tragi-comedy. George a Greene, the Pinner of Wakefield, an attributed play, dramatizes a combination of two folk-tale cycles--the legends and ballads of Robin Hood and George a Greene. It also portrays English rustic life with a gusto unparalleled since Gammer Gurton's Needle. As with all Greene's work, these comedies show the professional writer constantly searching for new ways to appeal to his audience, inevitably reflecting its interests, morals, and prejudices. Yet his views of social structure and pastoral ideals remain constants in them as they had in his previous work. They show hints of a hardening of his life-long faithfulness to the doctrine of degree, but George A Greene, if it

is Greene's, balances this with an increasing consciousness of the bluff, shrewd English commoner as the backbone and mainstay of the nation.

I. A Looking Glasse for London and England

Of the entire body of Greene's prose romances and plays, it is hardest to discover any trace of pastoral attitudes in A Looking Glasse for London and England. This is not surprising, of course, in light of what he was trying to accomplish in this Elizabethan revival of the old morality plays. His purpose is clear even from the title. To dramatize the biblical story of Jonah from the point of view of the Ninevites provided an effective scheme for depicting the "sins" of London and England. The didactic purpose took precedence over social examination, while the city setting made incorporation of obvious pastoral touches difficult. Moreover, since the play was written in collaboration with Lodge, it is unwise to be dogmatic about its contributions to understanding the development of Greene's social vision. Yet even in this play, the portrayal of Radagon seems to be touched by the social-pastoral design that I have isolated in Greene's other comedies and romances.

Of those few critics who have attempted to assign scenes to the respective dramatists, the consensus seems to be that Lodge wrote the scenes dealing with usury, legal matters, and marine description, while Greene occupied himself with the

court scenes and the clown scenes.²¹³ About the Jonas and Oseas scenes and speeches there is less unanimity, but these sections are not pertinent to this study.

There can be little doubt that the scenes with the clown Adam are Greene's. Adam and Miles of Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay are almost identically conceived. Both elicit laughter by their parodies of learned dispute. Miles inserts comic Latin phrases and other scholarly terms into Skeltonic doggerel and fancies himself a philosopher: "Well I will watch and walke vp and downe, and be a Perepatetian and a Philosopher of Aristotles stamp," while Adam analyzes the properties of ale in scholarly fashion. There is a striking verbal parallel between Adam's description of the First Ruffian's father as having a "nose Autem glorificam, so set with Rubies that after his death it should haue bin nailed vp in Copper-smiths hall for a monument" (I.ii.201-03), and Miles's reference to the Brazen Head's nose: "You talke of nos autem glorificare, but heres a nose that I warrant may be cald nos autem populare" (IV.i.1574-75). Miles also refers

²¹³ See, for example, Tetsumaro Hayashi, ed., A Looking Glasse for London and England, by Thomas Lodge and Robert Greene: An Elizabethan Text (Metuchen, N. J.: Scarecrow Press, 1970), pp. 15-21, 26; Henry D. Gray, "Greene as a Collaborator," Modern Language Notes, 30 (1915), 244-46; Collins, I, 140-41. Hayashi, for example, assigns to Greene I.i and ii; II.i and iii; III.ii and iii; IV.ii,iii, and iv; and V.iii,iv, and v, though he sees some assistance from Lodge in I.i, III.ii, and IV.iii. Dickinson, in the introduction to the Mermaid edition of the plays, refuses to speculate beyond saying, "The comic portions sound like Greene's work" (p. 11).

twice to "Copper-smiths hall." Both Adam and Miles engage in revelry and drinking with others. Both have a scene with a devil in which they discuss the desirability of ale in hell; Miles is carried away on the devil's back and the pseudo-devil of Looking Glasse offers to carry Adam on his back. The last motif, and many aspects of the character of both, are remnants of the Vice stereotype of the moralities, but both go beyond this. Greene also draws the detail of Adam's eating on a fast day from his source for Friar Bacon, the Famous Historie, in which Miles is caught by Bacon on a fast day eating a "black pudding." Finally, there is a parallel with the romance Perimides, for both Perimides and Adam glorify the smith's trade in similar ways. Perimides says: "for my estate I desire to be no higher than a Smith, as thus spighting fortune by my occupation, hauing my Tongs in my hand as a Scepter, to rule in my shop . . ."214 and Adam says: "a Smith is Lord of the foure elements . . ." (I.ii.219-221).

There are fewer explicit parallels between the court scenes and Greene's other work, but several points of comparison may be made. The first scene of the Looking Glasse is reminiscent of the first scene of Orlando Furioso. Both are marked by a stately formality suggestive of ritual, especially in the speeches of the kings in each, ending with formulaic conclusions; in Orlando: "I loue, my Lord; let that suffize

for me"; in Looking Glasse: "Rasni is God on earth, and none but hee." A curious mistake is common to this scene of Looking Glasse and Friar Bacon; in both Greene alludes to Semele as beloved by Phoebus (L. G., I.i.75,76; F. B., I.iii.359-60, 364-65). As Collins points out, "'she that basht the Sun-god with her eyes' was either Leucothea or Clytie," but not Semele.²¹⁵ There is also a possible verbal parallel between Edward's cynical phrase in Friar Bacon, "marriage or no market with the maid," and Alvida's advice to Remilia that unless she is coy with Rasni, "you marre the market" (II.i.441). While "market," in a figurative sense with love as the commodity, may be a common phrase of the day, there seems to be no quite parallel usage cited in the Oxford English Dictionary. The court scenes of Looking Glasse are often marked by the kind of spectacular display that has been so commonly seen in Greene's previous plays. Remilia is stricken by lightning, an arbor raised out of the ground by magic, Radagon swallowed up by fire, and a hand holding a burning sword brandished from a cloud.²¹⁶ Dickinson sees a similarity of conception between Rasni and Tamburlaine both in their aspiration and their laments over Remilia and

²¹⁵ Collins, I, 291, n., and II, 330, n.

²¹⁶ Hayashi, in his edition of this play, often assigns a scene to Greene on no firmer basis than the inclusion of spectacle. For example, though he generally sees the Jonas scenes as Lodge's, he gives IV.ii to Greene because Jonas "suddenly appears out of the whale's belly on the stage," certainly flimsy evidence (p. 18).

Zenocrate.²¹⁷ This of course could have been incorporated by Lodge as well as Greene, but since Greene had already shown his attraction to the Tamburlaine material in Alphonsus, it may add some weight to the cumulative evidence presented for Greene's authorship of these scenes.

In the court scenes there is at least one new element, which would reappear in James IV, the character of the low-born flatterer. Greene had in previous prose and drama shown low-born people in positions of power, but all had been characterized by dignity and virtue. Radagon of the Looking Glasse is a different breed, however. Through flattery he encourages the king's incestuous love for his sister Remilia, he counsels him to commit adultery with another king's wife, and he leads him into injustice. Worst of all, and the sin for which God strikes him dead, he rejects and curses his parents. Thrasibulus shows the Renaissance horror for this "unnatural" lack of respect: "I waight no hope of succours in this place,/ Where children hold their fathers in disgrace" (III.ii.1073-74). Even Rasni wonders, since Radagon admits Alcon is his father, "Why dost thou then contemne him and his friends?" (III.ii.1133).

The scene in which Radagon rejects his parents is a curious one. The previous scenes involving Alcon and Thrasibulus, I.iii and II.ii, are usually assigned to Lodge,

²¹⁷ Dickinson, p. li.

undoubtedly rightly so, on the basis of parallels between them and Lodge's Alarum against Usurers.²¹⁸ It would seem natural that Lodge would continue his own plot in this scene (III.ii) in which Alcon is spurned by Radagon, but the scene contains some important differences of characterization from the two preceding Alcon scenes that may suggest it was written by Greene. Henry D. Gray also sees it as Greene's, though for different reasons. He feels that Greene in I.i depicted Radagon as a noble villain-hero, and that he was unhappy when Lodge gave him base parentage in II.ii:

Greene's Radagon has given no sign of humble extraction, but Lodge fathered him with the boorish peasant Alcon. Greene forthwith brings his Radagon home and has him utterly deny and disclaim his origin. He gives him a mother and brother who speak in verse, and to Alcon himself Greene gives a certain dignity and reserve wholly different from anything he had shown in Lodge's scenes. . . . And to make a complete finish of his villain-hero, Greene has him swallowed up in flames. There shall be no more Radagon in this play now! In the opening scenes he had given promise of a longer life.²¹⁹

Gray is quite right in noticing the increased nobility of Radagon's family in this scene. He is, however, wrong in his deductions about the change. Far from giving Radagon "no sign of humble extraction," Greene has Rasni tell Radagon in the first scene of the play, which, as previously explained, is almost certainly Greene's, "For from a beggar haue I

²¹⁸ For example, see Hayashi's introduction to his edition of Looking Glasse, pp. 16, 17, and Collins, I, 140-41.

²¹⁹ Gray, pp. 245, 246.

brought thee vp,/ And gracst thee with the honour of a Crowne" (I.i.126-27). What Gray means by Radagon's having "given promise of a longer life" is unclear, because Radagon has no function other than the barest stereotyped role of flatterer and evil counselor. In a play dealing with judgment for sin, it is only to be expected that such a character, who possesses no redeeming features or even life-like attributes, will die.

Greene appears to have consciously planned Radagon as a lower-class person, possessed of intelligence but not virtue, who rises to noble estate. Through him he shows that social elevation when it is not accompanied by innate nobility is an evil which is based on the sin of aspiration, and which, by its nature, is usually upheld by flattery. Furthermore, the kind of flattery involved is of a very serious sort, because it results in sinful actions. The kings of Cilicia, Crete, and Paphlagonia also flatter Rasni (I.i), but in a harmless way. When he proposes actions such as incest and adultery they demur, showing that they possess virtues which Radagon does not; Paphlagonia further demonstrates virtue by his readiness to forgive his adulterous wife. Radagon's flattery, however, leads to Rasni's increasing wickedness. Greene chose to take Radagon's character beyond the sins of aspiration and flattery by showing his attitude toward his family. He had already explored a similar theme in Alphonsus of Aragon. After Alphonsus

attained honor and power, he showed his virtue by his public display of affection for his father, who was dressed in palmer's rags. Alphonsus says:

What, though the fates and fortune, both in one,
 Haue bene content to call your louing sonne
 From beggers state vnto this princely seate,
 Should I, therefore, disdaine my aged sire?
 No, first both Crowne and life I will detest,
 Before such venome breed within my brest.
 (V.iii.1785-90)

By comparison, Radagon says, in answer to Rasni's question about why he scorns his father:

Because he is a base and abiect swaine,
 My mother and her brat both beggarly,
 Vnmeete to be allied vnto a King.
 Should I, that looke on Rasnis countenance,
 And march amidst his royall equipage,
 Embase my selfe to speake to such as they?
 (III.ii.1134-39)

While Alphonsus' father Carinus was in actuality a king whereas Radagon's parents are base, Greene lessens the disproportion by showing that they possess the virtue and wisdom which make them truly noble. In order to do this he is obliged to change markedly the conception of them previously created by Lodge. Lodge's Alcon, though possessed of a kind of common sense which draws a sympathetic response, is a predominantly comical figure marked by the farcical low humor common to Elizabethan clowns. Since his wife is the butt of most of these jokes, we expect little more of her. In Greene's scene, however, she demonstrates a powerful dignity which reaches its climax when she calls for the "eternall powers" to "powre doune the tempest of your direfull

plagues/ Vpon the head of cursed Radagon" (III.ii.1168-73). At this point she virtually assumes the role of the pastoral enchantress invoking magical aid for the just. A clue that Greene's pastoral vision lies behind this scene is in the presentation of the child Clesiphon, who may have formed a model for Shakespeare's later use of the "wise child" motif. Clesiphon shows his virtue in his concern for his mother when she offers to beg for him: "Oh, how my mothers mourning moueth me!" (l. 1025); and his wit in his allusion to Aesop: "He plaies the Serpent right, describ'd in Aesopes tale,/ That sought the Fosters death that lately gaue him life" (ll. 1121-22). His most piercing insight, however, lies in his distinction between court and country values:

Mother, I see it is a wondrous thing,
From base estate for to become a King:
For why, meethinke, my brother in these fits
Hath got a kingdome, and hath lost his wits.
(ll. 1080-83)

Even Alcon is changed from a farcical boor to a rugged commoner possessing the shrewdness and independence which Greene considers characteristic of the English lower classes. Though he continues to speak prose (as Gray notes, "He has been created such a character that he must"²²⁰), he is even allowed an occasional flash of wit, punctuated by a Latin phrase: "haue I taught you Arsmetry, as additioni multipli-carum, the rule of three, and all for the begetting of a boy . . ." (ll. 1161-63).

220 Gray, p. 245.

This scene with its dignified portrayal of the lower classes, taken in conjunction with the portrait of Radagon, reflects Greene's characteristic manner of combining pastoral and social concepts. The inclusion of such material in the uncongenial atmosphere of a morality play shows the strength of the hold which it had in his frame of reference.

The similarities noted above between this play and Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay, Orlando Furioso, and Perimides, all of which can with relative confidence be assigned to 1588-89, suggest that it was written in close relationship to them. Greene's habit of carrying over a motif into his next work may place it in late 1589 or early 1590,²²¹ after these works and before James IV. C. M. Gayley dates it as "before June, 1587, when Philip and Sixtus concluded their treaty against England."²²² His evidence is, however, suspect. He says that since the play does not refer to the Armada, it is not likely to have come after it, and that if it had been in the months immediately preceding it, it would certainly have shown God's impending doom on London in the "first mutterings of the Spanish thunderstorm." The latter idea is more valid than the former. It seems more logical that the

²²¹ T. W. Baldwin agrees with these dates on the basis of different evidence. See On the Literary Genetics of Shakspeare's Plays, 1592-1594, pp. 81-96.

²²² Gayley, p. 406.

play came at enough distance after the defeat of the Armada that the public euphoria had slackened somewhat. The reason for its lack of reference to this event is obvious--it would have undermined the theme of the play, the approaching judgment on England. Hayashi assigns the work to 1586 on the slight basis that Greene did not enter or publish any other book during that year and would therefore have had more time for it then.²²³ He is in error, for Morando was first entered in the Stationer's Register on August 8, 1586, although it seems to have been written in late 1584 or early 1585. Greene's lack of productivity in 1585-86 may be explained by his marriage and subsequent time away from London. In any event, his prodigious output in his most prolific period has been amply demonstrated. Hayashi assumes too much when he says that Greene was too busy in 1590 to have written his share of Looking Glasse.²²⁴ He gives no reason for not considering late 1589.

If the play was written between Friar Bacon and James IV, it becomes a logical step in Greene's developing view of the relationship of virtue to social estate. Alphonsus of Aragon and Orlando Furioso had shown a prince taking the place of a commoner to show that his nobility was spiritual and innate as well as external. Friar Bacon had shown a virtuous commoner

²²³ Hayashi, Introduction to his edition of Looking Glasse, p. 13.

²²⁴ Hayashi, p. 12.

justly raised to the top of the social ladder. If Friar Bacon represents the climax of development, Looking Glasse initiates the downward arch to a more conservative view.

II. The Scottish History of James the Fourth

Though not so widely anthologized as Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay, James IV is usually considered Greene's best play. Kenneth Muir, for example, points to the play's more skillful dramatization, exposition, and verse, its greater independence from contemporary influences, and its success in relating form to function.²²⁵ The play's pretentious title, The Scottish Hystorie of Iames the Fourth, Slaine at Flodden, is deceptive. Greene simply superimposed the historical James IV of Scotland onto the character of the "King of Ireland" Astazio in Giraldi Cinthio's first novel of the third decade in Hecatommithi, which he followed with a high degree of fidelity.²²⁶ By making the title character Scottish rather than English Greene benefited in two ways: he patriotically avoided assigning such weaknesses as Cinthio's king possessed to an English monarch, and he pleased his audience by reflecting its anti-Scottish bias.²²⁷ Perhaps in

²²⁵ Muir, "Greene as Dramatist," p. 50.

²²⁶ The source story is given in translation in an appendix to the Revels edition of the play: Robert Greene, James the Fourth, ed. Norman Sanders, The Revels Plays (London: Methuen, 1970), pp. 133-142.

²²⁷ Treatments of the play's relationship to contemporary attitudes toward Scotland are found in Bevington, pp. 208, 209,

so doing he also deflected a potentially dangerous analogy with a more recent English king whose fleshly appetites no doubt contributed to his grounds for executing the mother of the current monarch.

The only major character of James IV who has no original in Cinthio's novella is Ateukin. Cinthio's version makes the king Astazio solely responsible for the conduct of the affair with Ida and for the decision to murder his wife. Waldo McNeir suggests that Ateukin was based on an Italian adventurer, John Damian, who ingratiated himself with James IV by playing on James's weakness for occult arts.²²⁸ Though this may have given a hint to Greene, his Ateukin soon drops his pretension to magical knowledge. The play's strong ties to conventional moralities,²²⁹ suggested for

and in Ruth Hudson, "Greene's James IV and Contemporary Allusions to Scotland," PMLA, 47 (1932), 652-667.

²²⁸ Waldo F. McNeir, "The Original of Ateukin in Greene's James IV," Modern Language Notes, 62 (1947), 376-381. Johnstone Farr has elaborated on McNeir's theory by pointing out that the historical Damian was primarily an alchemist, whereas Greene makes him an astrologer. He shows that the astrological configurations noted by Ateukin would give James exactly the qualities which he exhibits in the play, and would foretell exactly what happens to him. Thus he feels that Ateukin's prognosis provides additional motivation and character portrayal: "Ateukin the Astrologer in James the Fourth," in Tamburlaine's Malady: And Other Essays on Astrology in Elizabethan Drama (University, Ala.: Univ. of Alabama Press, 1953), pp. 50-56.

²²⁹ A study of the parallels may be found in Ernest W. Talbert, Elizabethan Drama and Shakespeare's Early Plays (1963; rpt. New York: Gordian Press, 1973), p. 310.

example by its framework treatment,²³⁰ have led some critics to regard Ateukin as a Vice figure, with Slipper and Andrew as his "lieutenants."²³¹ While, as Senn points out, the Vice convention may account for such comic digressions as Ateukin's beating his impudent servants, Greene characterizes Ateukin as flatterer and parasite far more than as Vice.²³² He even refers to him occasionally by the type-name "Gnatho." Certainly his repentance at the end is far removed from the Vice tradition.

Though such heterogeneous conventions obviously influence Greene's portrayal of Ateukin, he becomes more than a composite of traditions. Greene's social views reveal themselves in James IV primarily through Ateukin. Like Radagon of A Looking Glasse for London and England, he is a commoner who is raised to noble estate, but who lacks the virtues necessary to make him worthy of that position. While we are not told what initiates Radagon's climb, Greene clearly shows that Ateukin's rise to royal favor begins with aspiration ("And now is my time by wiles and words to rise")

²³⁰ The framing action, which will be discussed in more detail on pp. 233-236, shows a Scottish misanthrope Bohan and the fairy king Oberon watching and commenting on the play proper, which they see as showing the vanity of earthly life and its sins, especially flattery and lust.

²³¹ Senn discusses Ateukin's relationship to the Vice in Studies in the Dramatic Construction of Greene and Peele, pp. 86-89.

²³² Senn, Studies, pp. 124-125.

which immediately and by its nature leads to his encouraging and abetting James's lusts. That Greene resists the temptation to indulge his bent for spectacle through Ateukin's "art" shows the strength of this more realistic examination of one route to social advancement. Ateukin promises he will win Ida for the king through "moly, crocus, and earbes," "charmes and spels," but his contact with Ida is in fact the far more mundane attempt of a would-be pander to overcome her virtuous objections to becoming James's mistress.

Ateukin never quite materializes as a believable character, but the superiority of his portrayal to that of Radagon is obvious. His occasional flashes of life are perhaps indebted to his similarity to Greene himself. Like his creator, he is a scholar, of base estate, and in need of money. With no established income ("For I am poore, nor haue I land nor rent" I.i.375), he is forced to live by his wits. Though there is as much irony in his claim that he is no parasite as there is in his similar denial that he is a flatterer, there is still the suggestion of Greene's unconscious sympathy in the lines: "Your mightnesse is so magnificent,/ You cannot chuse but cast some gift apart,/ To ease my bashfull need that cannot beg" (I.i.345-47). Greene's frustration with a social system that forced scholars to choose between manual labor without degree and poverty as new-made "gentlemen" has already been examined. Perhaps this is why Greene tacks on an unmotivated and unrealistic

repentance scene to his characterization of Ateukin, who is after all an unmitigated scoundrel, and then lets him escape any kind of retribution.

Even when one considers this possible flash of sympathy, however, it is clear that the lower-class characters in this play come off rather badly. Besides the villain Ateukin, there is his hired murderer Jaques whose swaggering bravado and bastardized French combine to make him a fool. Andrew, who becomes one of Ateukin's servants, says he is "by birth a gentleman; in profession a scholler" (I.ii.523). Yet his characterization, even down to his speaking in prose, types him as lower-class in conception. His main function is to flatter Ateukin as Ateukin flatters the king, showing the seeping down of such faults from the higher social strata to the lower. Slipper and Nano, the sons of Bohan in the framework story, also are characterized as lower class, even though Bohan has said he was "borne a Gentleman of the best bloud in all Scotland, except the King" (Induction, ll. 40-41). Bohan's eccentricity and lack of realism prevent this being a viable concept for the remainder of the play, however. Slipper becomes a clown of the same stamp as Adam and Miles of the previous two plays, with the same propensity for ale and for comic philosophizing. When Oberon's "antics" carry him off the stage, there is even the reminiscence of the devil's carrying Miles to hell, although in Slipper's case he is actually being saved from hanging. Greene's presentation

of Bohan's other son, the dwarf Nano, is the closest he comes in this play to presenting a dignified lower-class figure. After his first appearance Nano begins to speak in verse, showing Greene's more elevated conception of him. He seems, however, to be patterned after the "wise child" motif, which was seen in Clesiphon in the last play. Because of his small, but well-shaped, body, the Queen addresses him as "prettie knaue," a common term for a child; his description of how he would defend the endangered Dorothea has the poignant humor associated with a child's similar boast; and his calling for food at the end of the play, though it has the dramatic effect of tempering the increasing melodrama of the reconciliation, is also precisely the child-like touch. He is clearly represented as possessing Greene's usual characteristics of innate nobility; when Oberon gives gifts to Bohan's sons in the induction, he says of Nano: "to the Dwarfe I glue a quicke witte, prettie of body, and a [I] warrant his preferment to a Princes Seruice, where by his wisdome he shall gaine more loue then common" (Ind. 11. 94-97). His beauty, wit, and virtue are amply demonstrated throughout the rest of the play, but the child-like quality remains, so that there is never a question of his being preferred to any higher social status. This handling of the lower classes shows a hardening of Greene's conservatism, an increasing feeling that one best serves society by knowing his place and keeping it with contentment. Indeed, he has Ida remark,

"Each person to his place; the wise to Art,/ The Cobler to his clout, the swaine to Cart" (I.i.213-14).

These characters and the nobles in the play relate to its pastoral and active realms in ways similar to those of Greene's previous work. Yet the pastoral world does not have the same influence for good on the greater world as it has had previously. It is true that Ateukin's repentance and self-knowledge come in the pastoral setting of Ida's country home, and as a result of the ideal love-relationship she and Eustace have formed in that setting. It is further true that James's reformation begins with his learning of Ida's marriage to Eustace. However, in both cases it is realistically the simple fact of the marriage that leads to repentance, not any direct pastoral influence. The play seems to represent a darkening world-view by Greene, a glimmering sense that the ideal world is only a beautiful dream and that in reality it has little effect on the turmoil of the outer world.

Critical consensus places this play in 1590-91. In 1590 were also published the two parts of the prose romance Never Too Late which present a similar situation to James IV, though on a lower social level. A husband forgets his wife for another woman, but finally repents and is restored to his wife as a result of her unflinching loyalty. Both wives defend their husbands in similar ways. Isabella says of Francesco:

Tush quoth she to her selfe, suppose he be falne
 in Loue with a curtizan, and that beautie hath
 giuen him the braue: what shall I vtterly
 condempne him? No, as he was not the first, so
 he shall not be the last: what, youth will haue
 his swindge, the briar will bee full of prickles,
 the nettle will haue his sting, and youth his
 amours: men must loue and will loue, though it
 be both against law and reason.²³³

Dorothea defends James by telling his nobles:

The King is young; and if he step awrie,
 He may amend, and I will loue him still.
 Should we disdaine our vines because they sprout
 Before their time? or young men, if they straine
 Beyond their reach? no, vines that bloom and spread
 Do promise frutes, and young men that are wilde
 In age growe wise. (II.ii.969-75)

There is also a similarity in the use of pastoral conventions in play and romance. The pastoral elements in Never Too Late are not integral to the action, but are simply tacked on for ornament and to some extent for contrast. In the play the pastoral setting is clearly designed to provide contrast, but it has little other influence.

In James IV the interplay between court and country, and between the play proper and its frame, becomes a means of commenting on the human condition. To examine the contemplative versus active aspects of life, Greene created two heroines of equal beauty, virtue, and wisdom, and placed one in a predominantly pastoral setting, the other in the court. As in his previous work, love becomes in each case the means by which all problems are overcome, and domestic and political tranquillity achieved.

²³³ Works, VIII, 96-97.

The two areas are clearly delineated in the first scene of the play. Ida's mother, the Countess of Arran, asks James for permission to "returne vnto my Countrey home." When James asks Ida whether she also wishes to return, she replies diplomatically: "I count of Court, my Lord, as wise men do,/ Tis fit for those that knowes what longs thereto" (I.i.211-12). When he presses her to stay at court, as the proper setting for her beauty, she replies that beauty would afford the best reason for leaving there: "Because the Court is counted Venus net,/ Where gifts & vowes for stales are often set." Thus in the space of a few lines Greene sets up a sharp contrast: the pastoral world is an ideal realm characterized by peace, contentment, and virtue, with its center at Arran, and having Ida as its ruling spirit; the active world is an evil and dangerous world of strife, aspiration, and sins such as lust and flattery, with its center at court, with Ateukin as its ruling spirit. In the latter environment the beautiful and virtuous Dorothea has been placed. Later Sir Bartram reinforces this contrast when he tells Eustace, "And weele ['well-off'; with ironic implication] are they that are about the King,/ But better are the Country Gentlemen" (I.iii.552-53). In the remainder of the play Greene provides an effective balance between the two realms.²³⁴

²³⁴ Sanders points out the effectiveness of juxtaposed scenes in his introduction to the Revels edition of James IV, p. xxxviii.

After the first scene the two areas are kept separate; Ida never returns to the court and Dorothea is never permitted to enter the pastoral world. Even when she flees the court she is not disguised as the usual shepherdess, but as a knight, symbolic of the active world. Greene had earlier placed noble characters dressed in rustic garb in a humble setting to allow them to prove their true nobility. In this play, however, that nobility is simply assumed, and it is so overpowering that it cannot be disguised. Nano tells Dorothea:

What, may a Queene
 March foorth in homely weede, and be not seene?
 The Rose, although in thornie shrubs she spread,
 Is still the Rose, her beauties waxe not dead;
 And noble mindes, altho the coate be bare,
 Are by their semblance knowne, how great they are.
 (III.iii.1411-16)

In her country insulation, Ida is never subjected to any real danger. Sir Bartram implies a sense of danger when he tells Eustace of Ida, "Her face is dangerous, her sight is ill" (I.iii.572), because of the King's infatuation with her. Such danger from the greater world, however, is defused in the face of true love. When Bartram counsels, "But I rid thee to view the picture still,/ For by the persons sights there hangs some ill," Eustace replies, "But how so ere, I feare not entisings;/ Desire will giue no place vnto a King" (I.iii.589-90, 593-94). Thus when Ateukin arrives to proposition Ida, Eustace is already there, and she is armed not only with her virtues, but with ideal love. When Ateukin returns

the second time, it is to find her and Eustace married. Though this would ordinarily pose real danger to Eustace-- and indeed Ateukin muses, "Should I proceed in this, this Eustace must amain be made away" (V.ii.1949-50)--Ateukin is already repentant, thus maintaining the peace and safety of the pastoral world.

By contrast, even from her coronation, the audience is kept constantly aware of the dangers surrounding Dorothea in the greater world. Her father counsels her:

Liue, Doll, for many eyes shall looke on thee,
 With care of honor and the present state;
 For she that steps to height of Maiestie
 Is euen the marke whereat the enemy aimes:
 Thy vertues shall be construed to vice,
 Thine affable discourse to abiect minde;
 If coy, detracting tongues will call thee proud.
 Be therefore warie in this slippery state:
 Honour thy husband, loue him as thy life,
 Make choyce of friends, as Eagles of their yoong,
 Who sooth no vice, who flatter not for gaine,
 But loue such friends as do the truth maintaine.
 (I.i.153-64)

The presence of Ateukin lurking in the wings gives the audience a sense of impending danger throughout the stately ritual of the first part of the scene, even though they do not yet know his exact role. The swift progression through James's revelation of his love for Ida and Ateukin's "evil-angel" readiness to aid him builds a suspense climaxed at once by Ateukin's planting the first seeds of murder in James's mind:

And if your Queene repine,
 Although my nature cannot brooke of blood,
 And Schollers grieue to heare of murtherous deeds,
 But if the Lambe should let the Lyons way,
 By my aduise the Lambe should lose her life.
 (I.i.368-72)

When Dorothea next appears, even her playful conversation with her dwarf concerns how he would help her if she were "assaild" or "in greefe." In the same scene the king's counselors are discussing the dangers to the commonwealth because of James's "lawelesse and vnbridled vaine in loue,/ His too intentiue trust to flatterers,/ His abiect care of counsell and his friendes" (II.ii.928-30). Their warning to Dorothea, "And if your grace consider your estate,/ His life should vrge you too, if all be true," foreshadows Ateukin and James's immediate decision to murder her. When Sir Bartram warns Dorothea of the plot against her, she expresses the clear distinction between humble and noble estates which is analogous to that between pastoral and active realms in this play:

Oh, what auailles to be allied and matcht
 With high estates, that marry but in shewe!
 Were I baser borne, my meane estate
 Could warrant me from this impendent harme:
 But to be great and happie, these are twaine.
 (III.iii.1391-95)

Greene changes his source slightly in this scene to give an even greater sense of danger to Dorothea's departure from court. In Cinthio's version the queen, Arrenopia, had been well-trained in handling arms, but Greene makes Dorothea highly vulnerable:

Dorothea. What should I weare a sword, to what intent?
Nano. Madame, for shewe; it is an ornament:
 If any wrong you, drawe: a shining blade
 Withdrawes a coward theefe that would inuade.
Dor. But if I strike, and hee should strike againe,
 What should I do? I feare I should bee slaine.
 (III.iii.1428-33)

Even when she is rescued by the kindly Sir Cuthbert Anderson her dangers are not over, for Lady Anderson falls in love with this supposed knight, provoking her husband's jealousy.

The play's happy ending, with its reconciliations and restoration of stability to the kingdom, is not the result of pastoral values. The King of England comes to revenge his daughter by martial prowess, and when he somewhat grudgingly spares her husband, though it results from Dorothea's love for James, it is not the ideal pastoral love relationship such as that of Ida and Eustace. Dorothea's love has been initiated, tested, and proved in the world of active endeavor and danger. It accords with natural law, and her father must accede to it:

Thou prouident kinde mother of increase,
 Thou must preuaile; ah, nature, thou must rule!
 Holde, daughter, ioyne my hand and his in one;
 I will embrace him for to fauour thee.
 (V.vi.2384-87)

Greene binds pastoral and active realms together in James IV through the image of hunting which runs throughout the play. This is an apt choice of metaphors because of its ambiguity. The hunt is often seen as idyllic, an appropriate pastoral pastime--as in Sannazaro's Arcadia when Sincero speaks of how he and his beloved had hunted birds as children, or in Greene's own Friar Bacon when the Prince and his compeers "Stript with our naggés the loftie frolicke bucks,/ That scudded fore the teisers like the wind." Yet in its less pleasant aspect it also involves wounding and killing,

characteristics of the active world. With considerable skill Greene plays on these dual meanings, weaving the hunt like a red thread through the design of the play, giving it idyllic connotations in the Ida scenes and cruel ones in the Dorothea scenes.

The theme may be said to begin with the description of Cupid in the first scene. To Ida he is like a bee, with "a little sting," lurking in flowers, bending "his prettie knees" on "Kinges pillowes," but to James, he is the "Deceitfull murtherer of a quiet minde,/ Fond loue, vile lust, that thus misleads vs men,/ To vowe our faithes, and fall to sin againe!" (I.i.279-81). When James realizes the hopelessness of his love for Ida he says, "Yea, ther's the wound, and wounded with that thoght,/ So let me die, for all my drift is naught" (ll. 295-96). It is also in the first scene that Ateukin sets up the metaphor of the lion killing the lamb who stands in his way.

In the second act Ida and Eustace's lyric courtship returns to the theme of Cupid's "sting" which Eustace compares to Ida's needle as she embroiders. She gaily rejects the comparison:

Ida. Good Lord, sir, no! for hearts but pricked soft
Are wounded sore, for so I heare it oft.

Eust. What reckes the wound, where but your happy eye
May make him liue whom Ioue hath iudged to die?

Ida. Should life and death within this needle lurke,
Ile pricke no hearts, Ile pricke vpon my worke.

(II.i.744-49)

Immediately upon this, Ateukin enters, eliciting the warning

comment from the Countess, "Peace, Ida, I perceiue the fox at hand." Eustace replies in kind, "The fox! why, fetch your hounds & chace him hence." The entire exchange involves the rejection of death, even of a fox, who will only be chased away.

The situation is very different when Dorothea is involved. She and Nano pick up the same metaphor used by Ida for Cupid, the sting of a bee, but now the application is to Dorothea's being "assaild," Nano is the bee, and the sting is "bitter" (II.ii.888-91). For all of the next act the emphasis is on procuring the warrant for Dorothea's death. When the image of the hunt next appears it is heavily laced with irony. Ateukin and the hired assassin Jaques enter the stage simultaneously with a band of huntsmen who clearly, by the stage direction, are meant to suggest hunting's idyllic aspect, for Greene writes:²³⁵ "After a noyse of hornes and showtings, enter certaine Huntsmen, if you please, singing, one way; another way Ateukin and Jaques" (s.d. IV.i). Ateukin, searching for the king to obtain his warrant for Dorothea's death, is told that James is "Euen heere at hand, on hunting;/ And at this houre hee taken hath a stand,/ To kill a Deere" (IV.i.1464-66). Ateukin ironically completes

²³⁵ Sanders argues persuasively that the text for the play was set up from Greene's foul papers, rather than from a stage copy; thus the stage directions should be his own, not the producer's (Introduction to Revels James IV, pp. lvii-lx).

the verse: "A pleasant worke in hand."²³⁶ The comparison between the deer and Dorothea is unmistakable, its poignancy increased by the initial suggestion of merriment.

The following scene immediately transfers the hunting motif to Ida's world with a very different effect. The key to the scene is the heart-hart pun which runs throughout it. First Ida gives Eustace a ring bearing the device of a burning heart, a common emblem signifying extreme ardor. The heart bears the motto O morte dura [Oh cruel death], suggesting in this context the popular idea that love which is not returned will lead to the lover's pining away and death. Realistically, however, such "death" is only a metaphor; as Rosalind says in As You Like It, "men have died from time to time and worms have eaten them, but not for love" (IV.1.107-08). The fanciful idea of death from unfulfilled love is a very different matter from the actual possibility which death is for the assassin-pursued Dorothea.

The play on the meanings of literal and figurative death by wounding continues as a group of huntsmen and ladies enter to congratulate Ida and Eustace on their impending betrothal, and, according to Sanders, "perform a kind of pastoral masque

²³⁶ Werner Senn also sees the symbolism of the deer, Studies in the Dramatic Construction of Greene and Peele, pp. 178-79, as does Sanders in the introduction to his edition of James IV, p. xxxviii. A. R. Braunmuller speaks of the motif of pursuit and wounding in Act IV in "The Serious Comedy of Greene's James IV," English Literary Renaissance, 3 (1973), 337-38.

couched in octosyllabic stanzas."²³⁷ They bring an emblematic gift to the lovers, a "siluer heart with arrow wounded," which is so ambiguous in its presentation that it is unclear whether the gift is a piece of jewelry, or a silver (gray) hart, as a trophy from their hunt. Since most European deer are russet or tan in color, the word "siluer" probably disqualifies the latter possibility. Norman Sanders sees it as a "stricken hart" to which he gives a "healthy erotic connotation,"²³⁸ though his notes on the passage make clear he refers to an ornamental depiction, not an actual animal. Braunmuller also sees the gift as a piece of jewelry, and, like Sanders, retains the emended spelling hart, rather than the quarto's heart.²³⁹ Eustace's immediate reaction might suggest that the gift is a heart pierced by an arrow, for he says, "This doth shadow my lament [depict my present suspenseful state], / With both feare and loue confounded," the fear represented by the arrow and love by the heart. The quarto spelling heart may support this, although Greene obviously wants the audience to apply both meanings, and Elizabethan spelling cannot be relied on for such distinctions. A popular Renaissance emblem was a heart pierced by an arrow, bearing the motto "Love conquers all." Such a

²³⁷ Sanders, Introduction to Revels edition of James IV, p. xliii.

²³⁸ Ibid., p. xxxviii. For clarification, see p. 79, n. 51.

²³⁹ Braunmuller, p. 337, n. 6.

gift would be highly appropriate in view of the unwelcome attentions paid by James to Ida. Indeed if one accepts the emendation followed by most early editors of l. 1499, "Gentle Ida, saire [Scot. sore] beset," additional weight is given to this interpretation, but, as Sanders has shown, the quarto reading "faire beset" is legitimate, in the sense of "well-bestowed in marriage."²⁴⁰ If the gift is a heart, however, Eustace and Ida's later repartee on the stricken hart's eating dictamnum is less intelligible.

The fact that the party are dressed in hunting habits and state that they "haue on hunting beene" would, if we may expect verisimilitude, suggest that the gift is a gray-hued deer, since they have apparently prepared their presentation en route. However, Greene was never one to let the claims of realism interfere with the presentation of an idea. Thus, if the gift is an ornamental depiction of a wounded deer, which seems most likely, the question becomes, in what sense are we expected to take it? That it is meant to be a symbol is clear from Eustace's immediate reaction to it, as well as the hart-dictamnum conversation which concludes the scene. That a wounded deer will naturally seek out the herb dictamnum for healing is a commonplace of the day's natural history. Greene had used the proverb before, as in Gwydonius, where he has Castania's unwelcome lover Valericus write to her: "The Deere beeing stroken, though neuer so deep, feedeth on the

²⁴⁰ Sanders edition, p. 78, n. 27.

herb Dictanium, and forth with is healed."²⁴¹ In terms of the dual image Greene is using in these scenes, as the actual wounding of the deer does not lead to death because a natural cure is available, so the figurative wounding of the lover will not lead to death because the cure lies in the love itself.

The lines which close the scene seem to draw the heart-hart pun to this conclusion, although the corrupt state of the text renders exact interpretation difficult.

Eust. Stay, gentle Ida, tell me what you deeme,
 What doth this hart [Q-hast], this tender heart
 beseeme?

Ida. Why not, my Lord, since nature teacheth art
 To sencelesse beastes to cure their greeuous smart;
 Dictamnum serues to close the wound againe.

Eust. What help for those that loue?

Ida. Why, loue againe.

Eust. Were I the Hart,--

Ida. Then I the hearbe would bee:
 You shall not die for help; come, follow me.²⁴²
 (IV.ii.1522-31)

²⁴¹ Works, IV, 57.

²⁴² Lavin's and Sanders' interpretations in their editions of the play show the difficulty of textual analysis. Lavin's reading of l. 1523 both takes away the need for the passage to refer to the gift and makes sense of Ida's otherwise difficult response "Why not?" He accepts the quarto's hast and changes the comms to make the line read: "What, doth this haste this tender heart beseeme?", i.e., have we acted too hastily for your gentle disposition? Then Ida's response would mean--of course not; even animals know how to seek relief for pain (J. A. Lavin, ed., James the Fourth, The New Mermaids [London: Ernest Benn, 1967]). However, this interpretation is incompatible with Eustace's pressing Ida for an answer to his suit in the first part of the scene, as well as with his obviously still being in suspense in ll. 1507-08. Sanders follows earlier editors in emending both the quarto's hast and heart to hart, and thus interprets the line as Eustace's seeking an emblematic meaning for the gift,

Sanders' use of the long-accepted emendation hart in l. 1523 makes "this tender hart" an intensifying repetition of the previous hart of the same line. One difficulty here is the phrase "this tender hart," since a hart, a male deer after its fifth year,²⁴³ whether silver or real, would be neither literally nor figuratively tender. It seems more likely that the "tender heart" is Ida's, and that Eustace is asking, does this hart--the gift--represent Ida's heart? In other words, he asks her, still seeking a definite avowal of her love for him, if her heart has been wounded by love's arrow. Her answer then would become a witty counter: perhaps my heart has been wounded, but I may find a means of easing its pain. Eustace, seeking a more definite answer, changes the question, applying the symbol to himself--"Were I the Hart,--". Only then does he elicit Ida's frank acceptance of his earlier proposal.

When the first two scenes of Act IV are taken in conjunction, as Greene obviously meant them to be by their juxtaposition and use of the hunting image, the message seems to be that while in her world Dorothea must become the wounded deer (as she does in scene iv), in Ida's world the same image is only a symbol of love, containing its cure

i.e., "What does this hart, this tender hart imply?" (p. 79, n. 51). However, Ida's answer of "Why not?" is then unintelligible.

²⁴³ OED, "Hart," 1.

within itself. The conclusion of the hunting metaphor and the related animal images is given in the play's final scene when Sir Cuthbert Anderson and Dorothea summarize the events of the play as a beast fable (V.vi.2330-58).

Sir Cuthbert also becomes the means by which the play's moral is pointed, significantly in social terms. He characterizes the peerage as the "hands" of the king, "whereby you ought to worke," and those who flattered the king (most of the lower-class characters) as malicious climbers: "For greater vipers neuer may be found/ Within a state then such aspiring heads,/ That reck not how they clime, so that they clime" (V.vi.2414-16).

The means by which the happy conclusion is reached is, in this play as in previous ones, the power of love. Greene takes his pattern from Friar Bacon of presenting an ideal pastoral love-relationship and surrounding it by less perfect examples of love. In James IV the ideal love is that of Ida and Eustace, which serves as a foil to the lustful passion of James for Ida, and of Lady Anderson for the disguised Dorothea. Yet their love is not the key to the harmony and stability achieved by the end of the play. It is the one-sided, but unflinchingly constant, love of Dorothea for James, molded and tested in the crucible of the active world, that enables her to declare at the play's conclusion: "Thus warres haue end, and after dreadfull hate,/ Men learn at last to know their good estate."

This optimistic ending, however, must be weighed against the pessimism of the frame story. Greene's Scottish malcontent Bohan claims that he is presenting the play proper as an entertainment for Oberon, to show, by demonstrating the evils of parasites and lust, why he hates the world. At the play's conclusion²⁴⁴ he reiterates the moral: "Mirke thou my gyg, in mirkest termes that telles/ The loathe of sinnes and where corruption dwells" (ll. 666-67).

The frame story has elicited a variety of critical responses. Collins praises it as a demonstration of two ways of looking at life:

In Oberon we have the germ of a Prospero, in Bohan the germ of a Jaques, in both the embodiment of philosophic contemplation of life. They stand apart from the action--Bohan a world-weary, disillusioned cynic, Oberon the tranquil, cheerful spirit to whom if life and man are dream and shadow they are yet amusing.²⁴⁵

Muir by contrast sees it as "tedious and unnecessary," and insofar as its time scheme and crossover of characters to the play proper, "artistically confusing."²⁴⁶ Sanders was the first to point out the device's value as a means of

²⁴⁴ Although Collins follows the quarto in printing these lines in a group of additional choruses at the end of Act I, it is obvious that the lines beginning with l. 662 in the Collins edition, are intended as the conclusion of the play. Recent editors, such as Sanders and Lavin, print the passage as the concluding chorus to Act V.

²⁴⁵ Collins, II, 83.

²⁴⁶ Muir, "Greene as Dramatist," pp. 50, 51.

maintaining audience awareness of dramatic illusion,²⁴⁷ followed by Braunnmuller, who demonstrates the balance thus created between the opposing views of life in the frame story and inner play.²⁴⁸ Braunnmuller rightly shows the tenuous nature of any conclusion reached in the play:

A Scot, a stoic, a misanthrope living in his tomb, Bohan fairly cries out for satiric attack, and this attack the play's romantic resolution offers when combined with his unmitigated gall. On the other hand, that comic success itself seems tremulous and temporary when viewed in the perspective of Bohan's original design and his final malignity.²⁴⁹

Although this balancing certainly exists, it seems that Greene has weighted the scales, at least slightly, in favor of the pessimistic frame. Lawrence Babb's extended examination of the Elizabethan malcontent points out that Greene's contemporaries expected "wit and wisdom" from the melancholy man:

The melancholy cynic is something of a philosopher, someone well worth heeding, although his thinking is deeply colored by pessimism and misanthropy. His wit and wisdom in combination with his vituperative asperity and his contempt for the world make him a telling satirist.²⁵⁰

²⁴⁷ He explores this idea first in "The Comedy of Greene and Shakespeare" and in more depth in his introduction to the Revels James IV.

²⁴⁸ Braunnmuller, pp. 338-39, 349-50.

²⁴⁹ Braunnmuller, p. 349.

²⁵⁰ Lawrence Babb, The Elizabethan Malady: A Study of Melancholia in English Literature from 1580 to 1642 (East Lansing: Michigan State College Press, 1951), p. 92.

This favorable climate of opinion for Bohan is reinforced by the fact that Oberon, who becomes a kind of Providence-figure, supports and adds to Bohan's views. He tells Bohan in the induction that he is "Oberon, King of Fayries, that loues thee because thou hatest the world" (ll. 72-73), and he confirms Bohan's position by presenting dumb-show scenes from history to show the uncertainty of worldly glory. Even the pastoral ideal represented by the Ida scenes in the play must be balanced against Bohan's totally realistic view of the pastoral world. He says:

I then chang'd the Court for the Countrey, and
the wars for a wife: but I found the craft of
swaines more vile then the knauery of courtiers,
the charge of children more heauie then seruants,
and wiues tongues worse then the warres it selfe.
(ll. 54-57)

The frame story of James IV performs a similar function to the pastoral tale of Mirimida in Never Too Late, Part II.²⁵¹ In both play and romance the main story presents the powerful and constant love of a virtuous woman, which rights all wrongs in the end; yet what Greene gives with one hand he takes away with the other. Mirimida totally rejects the value of love in the romance, Bohan in the play:

The deelee awhit reck I thy loue. For I knowe
too weelee that true loue tooke her flight
twentie winter sence to heauen, whither till
ay can, weelee I wot, ay sal nere finde loue:
an thou lou'st me, leaue me to my selfe.
(ll. 9-12)

²⁵¹ See Chapter III, pp. 133-135 above.

Bohan, who claims to have tried all three of life's realms-- court, country, and city--sees no lasting good in any aspect of life, only in withdrawal and symbolic death. Furthermore, the powerful story of love's triumph which he presents is devalued by his continual references to the inner play as a "jig," putting it on the same level as Oberon's fairy jigs and Slipper and Nano's comic Scottish dance. Thus, in spite of the play's apparent triumph, the prevailing tone is set by the pessimism of the framework, especially that of Bohan's parting words:

Haile me ne mere with showes of gudlie sights;
 My graue is mine, that rids me of dispights;
 Accept my gig, guid King, and let me rest;
 The graue with guid men is a gay built nest.
 (ll. 668-71)

III. George A Greene, the Pinner of Wakefield

George A Greene, the charming little comedy based on a folk-hero and set in an idealized English rustic atmosphere, has consistently posed the most intriguing enigma of Greene scholarship. The anonymous manuscript was apparently first published in 1599, although it had been entered in the Stationer's Register four years earlier. Its earliest mention is in Henslowe's Diary for December 29, 1593, in which it is not marked as a new play. It was not connected with Greene until J. P. Collier reported the discovery of a 1599 Quarto bearing the cryptic hand-written notes:

Written by....a minister who act[ed] th[e] piners
 pt in it himselfe. Teste W. Shakespea[re].
 Ed. Juby saith that y^e play was made by Ro. Gree[ne].

Though Collier has been accused of forging the notations,²⁵² more recent scholarship has assigned them to Sir George Buc, Master of Revels from 1608-1622.²⁵³ If this is correct, the evidence from Juby would be strongly supportive, since he was a prominent actor from 1594-1618. All major editors of Greene's plays have included the comedy, though with reservations.²⁵⁴

While the play seems to inculcate many of Greene's characteristic ideas and thought patterns, it does not have his hallmarks in its form. Its style is very different: the

²⁵² This allegation is attributed to Tannenbaum by the editors of an anthology of Renaissance plays, but they give no source and I have been unable to find the reference. C. R. Baskervill, Virgil B. Heltzel and A. H. Nethercot, Elizabethan and Stuart Plays (New York: Henry Holt, 1934), p. 248.

²⁵³ R. C. Bald, "The Lochrine and George A Greene Title-Page Inscriptions," Library, 15 (1934), 295-305, and Charles O. Pennel, "The Authenticity of the George A Greene Title-Page Inscriptions," JEGP, 64 (1965), 668-676.

²⁵⁴ For discussion of the evidence for and against authenticity, see Dickinson, pp. lii-liv, and Collins, II, 160-163. Jordan takes no position, but recapitulates the major theories to his time, pp. 187-189. T. W. Baldwin rejects Greene's authorship on the basis of the play's plot structure, although he admits that its structure is similar to that of A Looking Glasse for London and England, pp. 530-34. H. D. Sykes assigns the play to Greene on the basis of internal evidence, primarily a rather flimsy framework of verbal parallels: "Robert Greene and George a Greene, the Pinner of Wakefield," Review of English Studies, 7 (1937), 129-136. The position of most scholars is most succinctly stated by G. P. Baker, in "Plays of the University Wits," CHEL, V, 152: "On the other hand, there certainly are resemblances between the play and the dramatist's other work, and though, when taken together, these are not sufficiently strong to warrant acceptance of the play as certainly Greene's, no recent student of his work has been altogether willing to deny that he may have written it."

verse is highly irregular, the language is not as facile and elegant, prose-verse distinctions (one of Greene's contributions to comedy) are almost totally ignored except for the clown scenes which are in prose, and there is a conspicuous dearth of similes--either classical or from natural history. One might account for much of the irregularity by the fact that the play exists only in an obviously mutilated text, perhaps cut for the provinces, but all of Greene's plays, with the exception of Friar Bacon, are known to us only in bad quartos. The more colloquial idiom may also result from his turning to a loose prose style in his late prose, perhaps why many critics have assigned the play to his last years; yet if this be true, another difficulty arises. The play is also distinguished by a hearty optimism and social liberalism more characteristic of Friar Bacon and other works of 1588-89. The prose and drama of the 1590's, as already shown, are characterized by a growing pessimism, didacticism, and social conservatism. The plotting, as Baldwin noted, is also different, lacking primarily the rich multiplicity characteristic of Greene's mature work. The play celebrates George a Greene solely, and every scene (after the first, which is exposition) in which he does not personally appear is structured around his reputation. Even the clown scene, which does not at all resemble Greene's known farce, is presented as a conversation between George and his clown-servant Jenkin. None of the scenes show the kind of thematic juxtaposition

characteristic of Friar Bacon, Looking Glasse, and James IV. Love does not fill its role in the plot as the powerful force which brings about the conclusions of Greene's other plays, but is only another aspect of George's story. Finally, the characterization is different from that of both romances and plays. Bettris, while presented as a charming lower-class girl, never has any spark of life as do Greene's best heroines, nor does she follow any of his favorite conventions for portraying women. Though in virtually all of his romances and other plays female characters are developed in considerable detail, Bettris is only an adjunct of George. George himself is also an anomaly, since Greene has no other comparably-developed male figure. Perhaps these divergencies may, however, be attributed to the mode in which the play was written--the dramatization of a popular ballad cycle. Dickinson's hypothesis may also help account for many of these differences; he says: "Perhaps this play is a unique exemplar of a class of hurriedly-sketched popular plays written by Greene for the provinces and printed from a mutilated stage copy."²⁵⁵

In its overall conception, however, the play invites comparison with Greene's other plays. Its hearty patriotism is the exact keynote of Friar Bacon, and to a lesser extent of James IV. As Muriel Bradbrook says: "The patriotic note

²⁵⁵ Dickinson, p. liv.

is most firmly struck in George-A-Greene the Pinner of Wakefield, where all the characters from the centenarian Musgrove to the infant Ned-a-Barley are aflame with heroism."²⁵⁶ More to the purpose of this study, its social views correspond closely with those of Greene's previously-examined work. There is the same idea of inner nobility, represented by beauty, wit, and virtue, and by pride in and contentment with one's social station. There is a distaste for aspiration, which in this play is seen only in the aristocracy, and an illustration of rewarding innate nobility by social promotion. The court-country contrast also compares with that in other works such as James IV, for the court is a place of treachery, scheming, and lust, while the country demonstrates loyalty, openness, and virtuous love. The view of King James of Scotland is quite similar to that in James IV, as may be seen from his determination to seduce Jane-a-Barley, even at the expense of murdering another. Yet he also has the same willingness to make amends when properly instructed by the virtuous Englishmen--Musgrove, George a Greene, and King Edward. In smaller details, Ned-a-Barley follows the wise child motif first seen in Looking Glasse and suggested above in Nano's portrayal, while the use of mock-supernatural details in the disguised George's "prophecy" and Jenkins' "magic circle" could be a natural development from the

²⁵⁶ Muriel C. Bradbrook, The Growth and Structure of Elizabethan Comedy (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1956), pp. 70, 71.

growing realism of Ateukin's pseudo-magic in James IV.

Finally, and perhaps most intriguing, is the biographical tidbit from Nashe's Strange Newes:

Had hee [Greene] liu'd, Gabriel, and thou shouldst so vnarteficially and odiously libeld against him as thou has done, he would haue made thee an example of ignominy to all ages that are to come, and driuen thee to eate thy owne booke butterd, as I sawe him make an Apparriter once in a Tauern eate his Citation, waxe and all, very handsomly seru'd twixt two dishes.²⁵⁷

This is of course exactly what George does to the traitor Mannering in the play:

What, are you in choler? I will giue you pilles to coole your stomacke. Seest thou these seales? Now, by my fathers Soule, which was a yeoman when he was alieue, eate them, or eate my daggers poynt, proud squire.
(I.ii.125-28)

This may have been a popular episode from the ballads and legends which had grown up around George a Greene, but even if so, the incident at least shows Greene's familiarity with and, probably, interest in the material.²⁵⁸ While one cannot be dogmatic in assigning the play to Greene, its similarity of outlook on pastoral ideals and social structure merit its consideration in this study.

²⁵⁷ Nashe, "Strange Newes," I, 271.

²⁵⁸ This incident does indeed appear in the romance assumed by Collins to be the source of the play, and from which he prints extracts in his introduction to George A Greene. However, a more recent study demonstrates that it is more likely that the play was the source of the romance: Malcolm A. Nelson, "The Sources of George A Greene, The Pinner of Wakefield," Philological Quarterly, 42 (1963), 159-165.

The pastoral world in this play, though idealized, is not the conventional environment of shepherds in Pandosto or Menaphon. It is the more realistic surroundings of the English provinces, with pound-keepers, souse-wives, sempstresses, shoemakers, and wealthy middle-class landowners who want to marry their daughters into the gentry. Yet, brushed as it is by the aura of fairytale and legend, it is also a world in which a king may wander in disguise for his personal delectation, and freely drink with shoemakers, pinner, and outlaws. Its natives are the hardy English yeomen, filled with patriotic loyalty to the king and fiercely independent in the face of threats from anyone less. If lust exists in this world it is not very serious because those prone to it are Madge the souse-wife and Clim the sow-gelder, with no pretense to nobility--external or internal--and the clown is the butt of the joke. If aspiration exists, it is only in the ambition of the none-too-bright Grime for his beautiful daughter who is determined to marry the pinner rather than a wealthier suitor, and even Grime has honor of a sort. He may feast the traitors, but he piously hopes God will "revenge the quarrell of my King" (I.iv.185).

The exemplar and ruling spirit of this world is the fearless, bluff, and intensely loyal pinner,²⁵⁹ George a

²⁵⁹ The word "pinner" means pound-keeper, and from George's activities it is obvious that a most important duty was to keep stray cattle out of the community's wheat fields; as David Bevington points out, the post is not comparable to

Greene. George has the marks of innate nobility Greene ascribes to his humble elite. He is handsome: "For stature he is framde,/ Like to the picture of stoute Hercules,/ And for his carriage passeth Robin Hood" (IV.i.769-71). He possesses wit; even if it is not expressed in Greene's favorite early form of Euphuistic discourse, he is permitted one classical reference, couched as a proverb: "not Hercules against two, the prouerb is, nor I against so great a multitude" (II.iii.478-79). Indeed, he sees true wisdom as that taught by nature, not by courtly learning:

Nay, good my Liege, ill nurturd we were, then:
 Though we Yorkeshire men be blunt of speech,
 And litle skild in court or such quaint fashions,
 Yet nature teacheth vs duetie to our king;
 Therefore I humbly beseech you pardon George a Greene.
 (V.i.1087-91)

His wit is more commonly shown in his use of "policie" to outwit the traitors or his leadership role among his fellow-countrymen. His virtues are many--patriotism, lack of awe for wrongdoers, commitment to duty ("Now, by my fathers soule, were good King Edwards horses in the corne, they shall amend the scath, or kisse the pound" II.iii.464-66), his principled mind ("And as thy thoughts be high, so be thy minde in all accords" I.iv.225-26), and especially his virtuous love for Bettris, whose wish not to marry against

today's pound keeper, but George is "the local official responsible for the safekeeping of livestock and property," thus a "kind of frontier sheriff" (p. 227).

her father's will he respects. His attitude toward love is that appropriate to all true lovers--he is overwhelmed by its power; Wily says of him: "O, what is loue! It is some mightie power,/ Else could it neuer conquer George a Greene" (III.i.541-42). David Bevington discusses in detail George's democratic tendencies, such as his contempt of the aristocracy, or his insistence on his worth as equal to that of any gentleman.²⁶⁰ Yet these attitudes cannot truly be called democratic, for he is only contemptuous when a higher law is at stake, whether one so outstanding as treason or so humble as disregarding the rule to keep horses out of the community wheat enclosure. When he strikes Lord Bonfield, not only is he ignorant of Bonfield's identity, but the blow is in protest of a treasonous statement. George is actually characterized as highly class-conscious. Not only does he reject the king's offer of knighthood, but he sneers at behavior which he sees as lower-class: when he sees the two disguised kings trailing their staves at the shoemaker's command he says, "Robin, they are some pesants/ Trickt in yeomans weedes" (V.i.1040-41). His lack of aspiration is mirrored and complemented by that of Bettris who spurns an earl for the humble pinner. Yet the play recognizes the right and the acceptability of some humble folk to be raised to noble estate, for old Musgrove is knighted and given a castle to augment his small income.

²⁶⁰ Bevington, pp. 224-27.

On the whole the play's social leveling, such as it is, cannot be taken very seriously. Its source lies in the fantasy world of popular romance, the folk tales of those who stole from the rich to give to the poor, or stood up to an earl as an actual yeoman would never do. William E.

Simeone says:

As virtual ruler of Wakefield, George a Greene controls a world where the order of real society is suspended. Until the king comes, George is a sort of lord of misrule, not as a mischief maker, but as a rustic assuming authority to do and say what few rustics would really dare.²⁶¹

If this play is truly Greene's, and if, as most critics assume, it is his last extant comedy, we are faced with a dilemma, for its tone is as optimistic as that of James IV was pessimistic. The source of optimism is also different; whereas before it lay primarily in the power or the love of one virtuous woman, it has here shifted to the broader base of the innate goodness of English commoners. The noble characters of George A Greene come off as badly as did the humble characters of James IV. Perhaps it is too much to expect consistency of the mercurial Greene. While the prose of the last years was generally somber in tone, it contained a healthy share of "merry iests," and often of thinly-disguised

²⁶¹ William E. Simeone, "Renaissance Robin Hood Plays," in Folklore in Action: Essays for Discussion in Honor of MacEdward Leach, ed. Horace P. Beck, Publications of the American Folklore Society, Biographical and Special Series, Vol. XIV (Philadelphia: The American Folklore Society, 1962), pp. 184-199.

delight in the shrewd knavery of London's underworld Robin Hoods and George a Greenes.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

In both his plays and his romances, Robert Greene questions, defines, analyzes the essence of nobility. This concern is a constant theme from his college-age production of Mamillia to A Quip for an Upstart Courtier in the year of his death. Contemporary theory held that social position was given to certain families in the distant past as the proper acknowledgment of their virtues; therefore external, or social, nobility corresponded to innate, or personal, nobility. Proponents of the doctrine of degree assumed that as each generation inherited the family title, they inherited the virtues which were its basis. With the myopic vision common with the pet theories of any age, their adherents simply accepted the doctrine and overlooked equally the boorish aristocrat and the honorable peasant.

Several influences in Greene's life caused him to question these assumptions, albeit tentatively. His ideas took shape in the social limbo of an urban middle-class environment, and matured in the melting-pot of the university, where he no doubt noticed that many of the young nobles he served as sizar were "wags as lewd as myself." The traditional pastoral dichotomy between the corrupt court and the ideal country perhaps solidified these impressions.

Yet Greene was no democrat. The "democratic tendency" seen by Storojenko in A Quip for an Upstart Courtier²⁶² disappears upon examination. In that pamphlet the narrator sees in a dream vision a richly embroidered pair of velvet breeches, representing the nouveau-riche who aspire to aristocracy, and a plain pair of cloth breeches, representing the lower gentry and yeomanry. They quarrel over which of them is of more worth to the commonwealth. To adjudicate the quarrel, a jury of twenty-four is chosen, involving an examination of sixty trades and social levels in England, from the knighthood down to the humblest workmen. Greene's position is clear from the dedication, in which he writes "To the Gentleman Readers" that he is not inveighing against them, true gentlemen, in his portrait of Velvet-Breeches, but only against those who wear the velvet unworthily. He speaks against

the vnworthie person that weares it, who sprang of a Peasant will vse any sinister meanes to clime to preferment, being then so proude as the foppe forgets like the Asse that a mule was his father. For auntient Gentility and yeomanrie, Cloth-breeches attempteth this quarrell.²⁶³

In the course of the debate, Cloth-Breeches looks back to a golden age in which, surprisingly, the estates were rigidly ordered and content to be so:

²⁶² See p. 1, above.

²⁶³ Works, XI, 211.

The world was not so a principio, for when veluet was worne but In kinges caps, then conscience was not a brome man in Kent streat but a Courtier, then the farmer was content his sonne should hold the plough, and liue as he had done before: Beggars then feared to aspire, and the higher sortes scorned to enuie.²⁶⁴

The overall theme of the pamphlet is the evils and excesses incurred by Velvet-Breeches who rises above his station. Yet the common people of various trades, rather than being democratically glorified, are often severely castigated for their "cosenage," or dishonest practices. Even the introduction to the main action makes the point with unmistakable clarity. As the narrator's dream begins, people are eagerly searching for symbolic flowers, the first of which is "heart's-ease," of which the dreamer states: "I learned that none can weare it, be they kinges, but such as desire no more then they are borne too, nor haue their wishes aboue their fortunes."²⁶⁵ Among the most popular flowers being gathered is "time," which allows peasants to rise to be the companions even of princes, or at least to think themselves such, but they soon stumble into a bed of "rue." The condemnation of social climbers is so severe that one wonders how Storofenko could have seen democratic leanings in the Quip.

The problem may be one of definition. It is obvious that Greene is not manifesting "democratic" inclinations in

²⁶⁴ Works, XI, 238.

²⁶⁵ Works, XI, 214.

the modern social sense of the word, which often connotes a classless society. What he does do is to insist that the standard of innate nobility is superior to that of social class. Thus, as the pinner of Wakefield says, "A poore man that is true, is better then an Earle, if he be false" (II.iii.473-74). Judged by this standard, the common man becomes as worthy of respect, and of literary treatment, as the aristocrat. Greene also declares that there are laws superior to the laws of social hierarchy, foremost among them love. When his heroes and heroines find themselves caught between the demands of love and the various restrictions of societal organization, they invariably see love as a higher force which must be obeyed. The one condition is that the beloved be on the same spiritual plane, demonstrated by his or her beauty, intelligence ("wit"), and virtues, thus in conformity to the standard of innate nobility.

It is the contention of this study that pastoral elements contemporaneously being shaped in English literature (including, but not restricted to, shepherd scenes) provided Greene with a frame of reference in which social levels freely mixed. While the pastoral setting seldom appears in its pure, or Arcadian, form in his work, its influence colors many of his settings. Even when the pastoral world does not provide a meeting ground for various classes, it may provide a place in which incorrect views may be righted, as are Edward's in Friar Bacon, or in which an ideal situation is

presented as a foil to a situation gone awry, as in James IV.

The pastoral influence is not sharply focused, but diffused, tending only to add a pastoral texture or coloring to Greene's speculations on love and social relationships. He does not appear to be cognizant of, or interested in, the possibilities of pastoral for allegory or satire. In fact, the classical pastoral tradition, with its characteristic themes and modes, has few reflections in his work, although he was more influenced by the combination of pastoral and romance traditions practiced by the writers of Greek romances--Longus, Heliodorus, and Achilles Tatius--and popularized by Montemayor and Sidney. What gripped his imagination was the general sense of an ideal place of love, peace, and contemplation, with its contrast to the real world of frenzied activity and strife.

The political implications of pastoral as a meeting ground for different classes have been discussed by Laurence Lerner in the fifth chapter of his Uses of Nostalgia.²⁶⁶ Yet most writers failed to explore these implications consciously; the wedding of prince and shepherdess was only a pretty convention to them, with the supposed shepherdess always proving to be a princess in the end. Even though Greene also often equalized the lovers' social rank, his greater awareness of the social implications is clear from

²⁶⁶ Lerner, Chapter V: "Golden Slumbers: The Politics of Pastoral," pp. 105-129.

the noble lover's agonizing over his or her attraction to a "base" person. By contrast, Spenser's Sir Calidore, falling in love with the shepherdess Pastorella, says only that she seemed "So farre the meane of shepheards to excell,/ As that he in his mind her worthy deemed,/ To be a Princes Paragone esteemed" (VI.ix.11). Having thus briefly satisfied himself, he proceeds to court her without any further qualms. Not so with Greene's socially disparate lovers. In the romances, such as Gwydonius or Pandosto, both lovers debate the consequences of "unequal" love at length. Even in the plays, with their demand for swift action, Greene inserts a brief, but conscious, recognition of the social problem. In Orlando Furioso Angelica pleads that the supernatural power of love has caused her to reject four kings for the less noble Orlando. In Friar Bacon when Lord Lacy proposes to the "keeper's" daughter Margaret, she observes, "I little thinke that earles wil stoop so low."

Although many of Greene's supposedly "unequal" lovers prove to be social equals at the last moment, this is not always true. As early as Mamillia, Sylvia chooses a lover with wit over those with beauty or position. In Perimides' third night's tale an even clearer choice is given: of two suitors, one her social equal, but stupid; the other socially inferior, but possessed of wit, the girl must choose the latter. In Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay, Lacy quite properly chooses Margaret who is ennobled by her beauty, wit, and virtue.

Greene seems to have reached his peak of social liberalism in 1588-89 with Perimides, Pandosto, Ciceronis Amor, Orlando Furioso, and Friar Bacon. The three tales of Perimides all illustrate love across class lines, apparent in the first tale, actual in the other two. In Pandosto, Dorastus rightly looks beyond social class to see Fawnia's innate nobility, and in Ciceronis Amor the aristocratic Terentia is correct in choosing the lower-class Tully because of his wit, shown through his eloquence. Though the theme carries over into Menaphon in Sephestia's choice of Maximius, Greene is already growing more conservative, as is shown by his testing of that marriage, and by the other three "equal" marriages which take place, each couple representing one of the three main levels of society. A settled conservatism is apparent in the two parts of Never Too Late, and in James IV and George A Greene.

In the romances and comedies, considered as a whole, Greene shows a sincere love for his country, and finds no fault with its social levels. Indeed, much of this work indicates that a primary virtue is contentment with one's station. Greene seems to feel that external social class is relatively unimportant, except as a means of organizing people to achieve national goals--that is, on a social level. The true measure of a person's worth comes on an individual level. This kind of nobility is shown primarily by his or

her personal qualities of beauty, as an outward manifestation of inward worth; virtues, among which contentment with one's social level is chief; and wit, shown through learned allusions, use of a proper rhetorical style and spiritual insight.

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