

Space in Early Modern English Drama

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The Literary Dramaturgy of Space in the Comedies of
John Lyly

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Abstract

The present dissertation investigates the literary dramaturgy of space in the comedies of John Lyly (1564-1606), i.e. the ways in which various textual elements contribute to the establishment of both local settings and wider worlds within the plays. Previous readings of Lyly's literary dramaturgy have tended to focus on the relationship between the stylistic device of the antithesis and the structure of the dramatic worlds, whereas I argue that deeper insight into the literary dramaturgical techniques of Lyly can be achieved by deploying the conceptual framework of semiotics of drama.

Rather than comparing Lyly's dramaturgy to that of Shakespeare, the dissertation adopts a historical perspective where Lyly's dramatic oeuvre is examined on the background of the dramaturgy of a selection of middle and early sixteenth-century plays. In the final chapter, however, the perspective changes where Lyly's only urban play, *Mother Bombie*, is compared to Shakespeare's *Comedy of Errors*.

Using lists of all the spatialising utterances in a play as my main analytic tool and then sorting these utterances according to certain parameters reveals that when compared to the somewhat mechanical declamatory quality of the spatialising utterances of earlier plays, Lyly's literary dramaturgy of space unfolds more organically from the dialogue and is better integrated with aspects of characterisation. Moreover, to a higher degree than earlier playwrights Lyly allows minor characters to contribute significantly to the spatial dramaturgy of a play in their speeches.

The dramatic worlds of Lyly nevertheless retain aspects of spatial dramaturgy that have not significantly developed from those exhibited by the plays of the previous generation; there are varying degrees of spatial integration and when compared to Shakespeare characters rarely reflect on the possible state of affairs in their worlds, in other words: they are not establishing what in semiotics of drama has been termed 'possible worlds'

In the discussions of both the earlier plays and of Lyly's comedies the theatrical dimension and the interplay between text and performance are central. Although comprehensive, alternative, reconstructions of performances are not introduced in this dissertation, I discuss several scenes where other performance solutions are possible than those usually identified by Lyly scholars.

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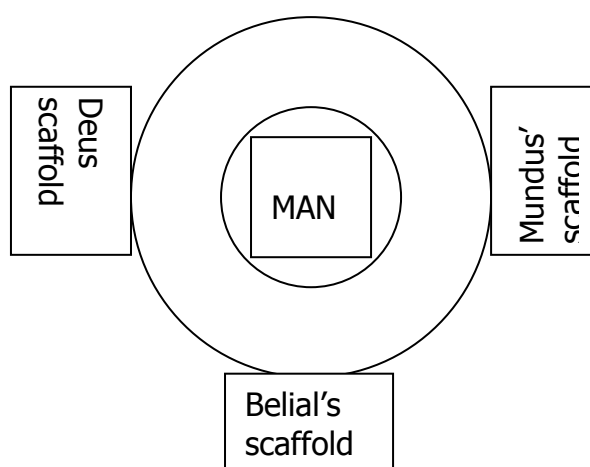
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Chapter I: Problem and Method

1.1. Introduction

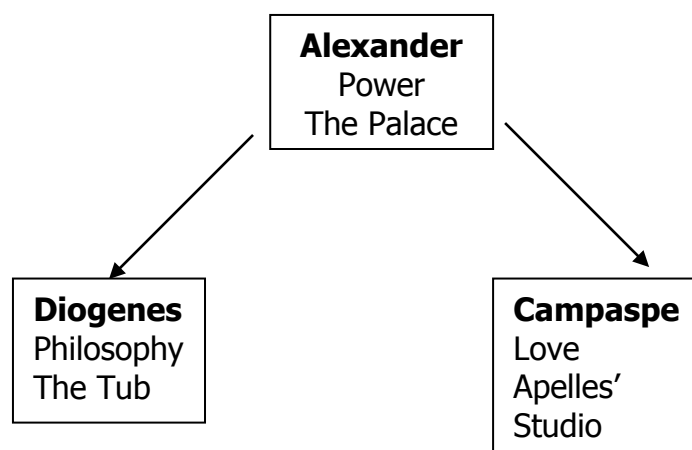
In the early fifteenth – century morality - play *The Castle of Perseverance* (c.1440), the world of the drama is essentially a moral universe where man, *humanum genus*, has ultimately to make a choice between the powers of good and the powers of evil. A rare drawing in the manuscript shows clearly how in the staging area (outdoor) these powers are placed in a circle around man, and, in consequence, how a moral choice also becomes a choice of space and location. To the north is the location of Belial, the devil; to the east we find God, and to the west the world:



One hundred and fifty years later, in John Lyly's court comedy *Campaspe* (1583), an individualised character, the future emperor Alexander the Great, moves about in a distinctly secular setting, the city of Athens. The fixed locations of the world of the play represent, just like in its medieval predecessors, values and moral choices, but the tub and the philosophy of Diogenes, as well as Campaspe in the painter's studio

are part of the here – and – now existence of mortal individuals. Moreover, it is Alexander who initiates his own movements within the city of Athens, not allegorised temptations in the shape of devils or vices:

Possible stage locations in *Campaspe*:



Between the universal and allegorical dramatic worlds of the Middle Ages and their specific and secular counterparts in the late sixteenth – century lies a complex rather than a unilinear process of development where one of the major challenges for dramatists was to place ‘impersonated characters, restricted only by the limitations of the dramatist’s knowledge and that of the society in which he writes’ in a credible and functional sociogeographical context within the dramatic world.¹ As

¹See Elizabeth Burns, *Theatricality: A study of convention in the theatre and in social life* (London: Longman, 1972), p. 163-4. ‘impersonated’ characters thus contrast with the notion of the ‘personified’ characters of the moralities.

late as the 1570s the contemporary and much - used label *Interlude* included plays where allegorical figures could still control the movements of the main character, like for instance Francis Merbury's *Marriage Between Wit and Wisdom*, but decades earlier the term could also be used about plays with a wholly non – allegorical cast.

In relation to the development sketched above, the aim of this dissertation is twofold: First, to establish some of the main features which characterise the dramatists' textual and theatrical use of space in the period of the Interludes. Second, to provide a fairly detailed account of the literary dramaturgy of space in a selection of plays by the Elizabethan court – dramatist John Lyly (1554 – 1609), and thereby to chart how Lyly's uses, but also transcends the dramaturgical techniques of the Interludes.

1.2. *The Problem*

When discussing John Lyly as a playwright in the second volume of the *Works* (1902), E. Warwick Bond concludes that

'Lyly in the matter of Time and Place balances between classical precedent and romantic freedom, obviously aware of the rules and sometimes closely observing them, at others pretending to observe while he really violates, at others frankly disregarding them and claiming licences which the later romantics abandoned.'²

This conclusion reveals clearly what the preceding section in the *Works* has been concerned with in relation to Lyly's treatment of textual and theatrical space: the classical 'unities' of space and time, perceived by Bond to be found both in Aristotle and in Horace.

²John Lyly, *Works*, ed. by E. Warwick Bond, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1902), p. 270.

The impression that Bond is first and foremost concerned with the unities is strengthened when we turn to his introductions to individual plays. He finds that in *Campaspe* (1584), for instance, the 'unity of place' is followed because the play is set in Athens throughout, and he then goes on to present the different changes of locality within Athens as deviations from the rule. We are, in the words of Bond, 'compelled to recognize in Lyly's earliest play four at least of those imaginary scene transfers which marked the pre-Shakespearean stage'.³

In *Galatea* (1585), on the other hand, Bond finds (and I think we are allowed to say to his satisfaction) that the play is constructed according to the rule concerning space and location: 'Clearly the locality is regarded as identical throughout, the scenes imagined being the outskirts of a forest not far from the estuary of the Humber, with a large oak in the foreground' (p. 428).⁴

Galatea and the rest of Lyly's pastoral plays will be examined in subsequent chapters, but I include here the passage from the introduction to the play, along with the other claims he make, in order to present Bond's *general* approach to the spatial settings in the plays of John Lyly. The approach is clearly one-dimensional, based on preconceived notions of rules and propriety, and it fails to take into account not only the structural complexities of the settings themselves, but also the significant links that may exist between character and setting in a tradition of dramatic writing where the dramatic world is created largely by the dialogue. It would be grossly anachronistic, of course, to accuse Bond of not applying methods of analysis and interpretation which were nonexistent at the time. He may, on the other hand, be

³Ibid. p. 312.

⁴ The title of this play has been spelled in different ways, I will henceforth use the spelling of the Revel Plays edition, i.e. *Galatea*.

regarded as an early representative of what I would argue are general trends in 20th century drama criticism: a) to pay relatively little attention to the spatial dramaturgy of pre-Shakespearean texts, and b) even when this aspect is taken into consideration, to avoid both the complexities and possibilities of the issue.⁵

In what follows, it is my contention that many of the significant contributions to the discussion of the dramatic worlds of John Lyly in the post-Bond period belong to an interpretational paradigm based on the central role of the stylistic feature of the antithesis in Lyly's narratives and early plays. I will, then, go on to argue that this paradigm represents precisely the kind of significant, but limited approach described above. Finally, at the end of the chapter I will present the theoretical and methodical basis of the present study, with the proposal that it represents an alternative and also a complementary approach to the standard paradigm.

1.3. *The Paradigm of the Antithesis*

In Lyly's prose narrative, *Euphues; the Anatomy of Wit* (1578), we find the following passage:

It happened this young imp to arrive at Naples, a place of more pleasure than profit, and yet of more profit than piety, the very walls and windows thereof showed it rather to be the tabernacle of Venus than the temple of Vesta. There was all things necessary and in readiness that might either allure the mind to lust or entice the heart to folly- a court more meet for an atheist than for one of Athens, for Ovid than for Aristotle, for a graceless lover than for a godly liver, more fitter for Paris than for Hector, and meeter for Flora than Diana.⁶

⁵ The notion of Lyly as a pre – Shakespearean dramatist is admittedly somewhat problematic, but since most of Lyly's dramatic production belongs to the 1580s, I believe that the label can be defended.

⁶ *Euphues: The Anatomy of Wit and Euphues and His England*, edited by Leah Scragg, The Revels Companion Library, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2003).

The passage demonstrates one of the basic features of the style which came to be termed *euphuistic*: parallelisms reinforced by alliteration as a means of establishing the figure of the antithesis. Antithesis can be defined as a figure 'where contraries are opposed and distinguished': while the voice of the narrator here sets out to characterise a particular location-the city of Naples- he does so in a manner which contributes to the creation of an antithesis between the world of Naples and the world of Athens.⁷ The city of Athens would, according to the narrator, have suited the poet Ovid, creator of the *Ars Amatoria*, better than it would a serious philosopher like Aristotle, and it would certainly have been a more proper setting for the activities of the spring-and-flower goddess Flora than those of the chaste Diana.

Even though an authoritative voice sets forth Euphues' hometown, Athens, as a location which represents opposite values to those of his destination, Naples, Lyly at points in the narrative introduces dialogical passages in which characters negotiate the idea of an antithetical relationship between the two cities. Lucilla leaves no doubt that her father may not be particularly fond of the idea of marrying his daughter to an Athenian:

But suppose that Euphues love thee, that Philautus leave thee, will thy father, thinkest thou, give thee liberty to live after thine own lust? Will he esteem him worthy to inherit his possessions whom he accounteth unworthy to enjoy thy person? Is it like that he will match thee in marriage with a stranger, with a Grecian, with a mean man? (p. 53).

And later, when Philautus discovers that Euphues has betrayed him and wooed Lucilla behind his back, his friend's treacherous behaviour is not only explained with reference to Euphues' individual properties:

⁷This definition can be found in Brian Vickers, *In Defence of Rhetoric*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988), p. 492.

Is this the courtesy of Athens, the cavilling of scholars, the craft of Grecians? Couldst thou not remember, Philautus, that Greece is never without some wily Ulysses, never void of some Sinon, never to seek of some deceitful shifter? Is it not commonly said of Grecians that craft cometh to them by kind, that they learn to deceive in their cradle? (p. 76)

Thus, the clear-cut distinction between Athens, the seat of wisdom and virtue, and Naples, city of lust and vice, breaks down on the individual level. Philautus the Neapolitan turns out to be the embodiment of friendship and faithfulness, while the Athenian Euphues represents immoral wit rather than wisdom. The story does not end here, of course. The relationship between Euphues and Philautus is explored further both in the rest of the *Anatomy of Wit* and in the sequel *Euphues and his England* (1580), where the spatial antithesis between Naples and Athens is replaced by an antithesis between England and the rest of Europe.

The antithesis has long been recognised as one of the central categories of the style of Lyly. In the 19th century the Euphuistic style or Euphuism became the object of a number of critical studies, and in 1905 John Dover Wilson stated that he considered the first part of *Euphues* as 'a most elaborate essay in antithesis'.⁸ However, the really great leap forward came in 1956 with Jonas Barish's seminal study 'The Prose Style of John Lyly'.⁹ Barish explicitly rejected the position adopted by Croll in his 1916-edition of *Euphues*, which he characterised as a climax of the works of the 19th century investigators who saw Euphuism as 'purely a «scheme», that is, a figure of the arrangement of words for an effect of sound'.¹⁰ Barish's

⁸John Dover Wilson, *John Lyly*, (Cambridge: MacMillan and Bowes, 1905), p.15.

⁹English Literary History, vol.23, 1956.

¹⁰Morris William Croll and Harry Clemons (eds.) *Euphues: The Anatomy of Wit and Euphues and his England* (London, 1916), cited in Barish, 1956, p. 15-16.

objectives in the 1956 - study were twofold: to try to correlate certain categories of Lyly's prose style with categories of meaning, and to try to trace the influence of these categories on the plays.

Barish arrived, not so surprisingly, at the general conclusion that Lyly's style is logical, in the sense that it is 'marked by divisions of thought, that it inspects things in order to classify and subdivide them either into antithetic or complementary components' (p. 28). This conclusion comes in the wake of a thorough and highly interesting discussion of the 'antithetical components' of Lyly's style, and it prompts Barish to suggest that for purposes of discussion the material should be divided into three types of antitheses. The first type, which he terms 'weak', is a structure which is 'making an affirmation about something and simultaneously making a denial of its opposite' (p. 18). The example he is using is the 'Athens-Naples' passage referred to above- but without, one may add, going deeply into the various negotiations of the basic antithesis between the two cities.

The second type of antithesis 'proposes alternatives but does not resolve them' (p. 19). For instance we are told, about Euphues first visit to Lucilla, that 'The gentlewoman, whether it were for niceness or for niggardness of courtesy, gave him such a cold welcome that he repented he was come'. According to Barish this type of antithesis tends 'to reflect an awareness of ambiguity of interpretation, a potential doubleness of cause or effect' (p. 19). Finally, the third type is the one which establishes the existence of dual properties in one and the same substance, for example when Euphues is telling the ladies that 'virtue is harboured in the heart of him that most men esteem misshapen'. As Barish points out, this type of antithesis is very common both in Lyly's narratives and the dramas. I would like to add that it is

commonly found in connection with another characteristic aspect of Lyly's style: his use of more or less scientific and reliable nature lore.¹¹

Antitheses of Barish's type 3 are an important category for understanding the relationship between the more general antitheses such as the opposition of the two cities Naples and Athens paralleled by the opposition of individual character. As one who is born and bred in Athens, Euphues partakes of the 'good' properties assigned to that city: piety, godliness, chastity, philosophy. As an individual, however, he is ambiguous; his moral behaviour in the story can even be described as counteracting his own exemplary virtue: he is well shaped, but with wit rather than virtue in his heart.

The significance of Barish's study of Lyly's use of antithesis to my own discussion of the plays is that it has become part of the basis of what I have called the reigning 'paradigm' in contemporary critical discussions of textual and theatrical space. His attempt to correlate categories of prose style with categories of meaning has, I would argue, resulted in the elevation of the antithesis into the single most important textual element to mediate between the spatial setting of the text and the spatial setting of the performance of Lyly's plays. In what follows I will briefly examine passages from central critical works from the nineteen-sixties onward which illustrate how binary structures, ideational and linguistic, contribute to shaping interpretations of the relationship between text and performance in relation to space.

The idea of the antithetical properties of the style being translated into structures of meaning which again is visible in performance has been a point of

¹¹ In the comedy *Campaspe* (1584) for instance, Hephestion tries to convince Alexander that the beauty of women are not to be trusted by comparing them to '[]ermines [who] have fair skins but foul livers' (II. ii. 65).

reference for a number of scholars who address issues which can broadly be grouped as dramaturgical. In 1968, Michael Best published a highly influential study which offered the clearest formulation to date of the antithesis as influencing text and stage dramaturgy. In it he argues that the antithesis can be followed from linguistic structure to structures of meaning to the structuring of the scenography on the courtly and private stages of Greenwich and the private hall-theatres. Discussing *Campaspe*, for instance, he asserts that

We are never in doubt as to the clear moral decision which Alexander must make, for the stage places affection – however warm and however appropriate for the artist – in opposition to asceticism, courage and reason, the necessary qualities of the warrior monarch.¹²

After having examined several of the plays, he arrives at the general conclusion that

The plays benefit from an understanding of the opposing ideas and forces represented by, and acting on the dramatis personae. In the later plays this is achieved quite impressively by the use of the natural opposition of the two sides of the stage, an opposition used with considerable subtlety by a writer accustomed to think in terms of the symmetry of balance and antithesis.¹³

In *The Court Comedies of John Lyly: A Study in Allegorical Dramaturgy* (1969), Peter Saccio adheres to the idea of simultaneity in the fictional world of *Campaspe*:

If persons fail to realize their essences, the world of *Campaspe* falls into disorder. Three disorders take place, linked by the image of the scratched face; they neatly cover the world of the play, for each of them is associated with one of the three houses on the mansion stage.¹⁴

¹² In 'The staging and production of the plays of John Lyly', *Theatre Research*, vol. IX, No 2, 1968, p. 115

¹³ *Ibid.*, p.117, the wording 'later plays' does not refer to the late plays of Lyly, but late as opposed to early Elizabethan court plays in general.

¹⁴ Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969, p. 92.

However, Saccio's notion of 'a fictional world with three loci 'each laden with distinct values' seems to be at odds with Best's idea of symmetry, balance and antithesis.¹⁵ Indeed, Saccio suggests that the idea of the antithesis as the basic unit of meaning is insufficient. Barish fails to take into account what Saccio terms Lyly's basic unit of expression, which is a statement of identity or attribution which can be written on the form *a is b, a does b*. The significance of Saccio's subtle but not too accessible way of conceiving the fictional world of *Campaspe* is considerable. It highlights one of the issues which any examination of the position of the court within the overall fictional world of the plays must consider: if one accepts the model of antithetical structures of meaning and staging, how then do king and court participate in such structures?

In 1982, Leah Scragg explicitly adopts Barish's approach in a study of *Gallathea*: 'it is to the pioneering work of Barish that the scholar must return in search of an initial approach to the workings of Lylian comedy'.¹⁶ More specifically it is Barish's third type of antithesis, which 'asserts the actual co – existence of contrary properties in one phenomenon' which Scragg uses as a theoretical foundation in *The Metamorphosis of Gallathea* and in subsequent studies. Retaining the fundamental significance of the antithesis, she, in an introduction to a 1997 – edition of the play, characterises the fictional world as

A world engaged in a constant process of change, in which everything has the potential to become its opposite and may be viewed, therefore in contrasting ways¹⁷

¹⁵ Best is explicit about the staging of *Campaspe*: 'Alexander and Campaspe would use two houses, Diogenes' tub, which is described as a "cabin"... and Apelles' studio, which is called a 'shoppe', p. 109.

¹⁶ In *The Metamorphosis of Gallathea: A study in Creative Adaptation*, (Washington DC: University of America Press, 1982), p. 4.

¹⁷ From *John Lyly: Selected Prose and Dramatic Work* (Manchester: Carcanet, 1997), p. xvii.

In 1991 Manchester University Press began publishing fully annotated editions of the plays of John Lyly in their Revels Plays series, and in accordance with modern principles of editing early modern plays, these new editions paid considerable attention also to the aspect of dramaturgy and staging. In their 'introductions' to *Campaspe* and *Sappho and Phao* (1991), *Endymion* (1996) and *Midas* and *Galatea* (2000), the editors David Bevington and George K. Hunter fully endorse the ideas of Barish and Best:

'Antithesis is the key not only to Lyly's style and ideas, but also to his use of the physical stage' (Bevington, *Sappho and Phao*, p. 181)

'It should be noted that the pattern of antithesis we find throughout this play provides both actors and auditors with a structure of speech (and breath control) as well as a structure of meaning' (Hunter, *Galatea*, p. 17)

Based on the model, the editors also offer more or less detailed readings of the literary and theatrical dramaturgy, and I would suggest that with the 'introductions' of Bevington and Hunter the antithesis – model is finally established as the 'reigning paradigm' concerning the structure of the fictional worlds of Lyly.¹⁸

In order, then, to reach beyond the limited scope set offered by the antithesis-model I propose to develop the investigation by applying the general notion of 'spatial dramaturgy'. One way of defining dramaturgy is as 'the study and interpretation of plays with special attention to the difficulties plays from another period present for the acting company of today'.¹⁹ The study and interpretation of

¹⁸ Although staging and the antithesis – model is central in the sections dealing with dramaturgy, the editors also focus on issues like act-structure, the impact of the size of the actors and the static quality of Lyly's plays.

¹⁹ In the *NTC Dictionary of Theatre and Drama Terms*, Jonnie Patricia Mobley, ed., (Lincolnwood: National Textbook Company, 1995), p. 45. In English, the term dates from the early 19th century and the basic meaning is simply 'composition of dramas' (OED entry).

plays naturally involve both the dramatic text and possible ways of developing the text into performance, and more recent work in the field of dramaturgy tend to talk about 'dramaturgical models', i.e. an approach where basic dramaturgical concepts are placed in systemic relations rather than just being explored on their own. Simultaneous staging, then, is a manifestation of the model of 'simultaneous dramaturgy', the simultaneous presence on stage of locations or fields of space which represent conflicting values, ideologies etc. Even though the model has its roots in medieval staging practices, some of the most recent and systematic research involving this model has been carried out by Janek Szatkowski on plays by Arnaud.²⁰ Another dramaturgical model which is highly relevant when studying sixteenth – century plays is the dichotomy 'open' and 'closed' dramatic form. In the American avant – garde theatre of the 1960s the borderlines between the world of the spectators and the world of the play were deliberately erased. However, in a historical perspective, this was nothing new. In the Interludes of the late fifteenth and sixteenth century we find many instances of the same flexible use of dramatic space and a willingness to let the spectators get involved in the play in various ways. This is not the only possible meaning of the term 'open' in relation to drama and theatre, but it is perhaps the most relevant concerning the plays of Lyly, situated as they are in time between the Interludes and the rather more closed dramatic worlds of Marlowe and Shakespeare. I wish to argue that the development from the 'open' dramatic worlds of the earlier interludes, presented in detail in the next chapter, to the self-referential, 'closed' dramatic worlds characteristic of the dramaturgy of the

²⁰ For a brief presentation of the work of Szatkowski see Svein Gladsø, Ellen K. Gjervan, Lise Hovik and Annabella Skajen, *Dramaturgi: Forestillinger om teater*, (Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 2005), p. 168.

later sixteenth - century, allowed Lyly and other dramatists to deploy the kind of interactive, spatialising discourse which adds literally another dimension to the dramatic character.

Interactive spatialising discourse permits a character to display an active attitude to his own place in the dramatic world; he ceases to be merely spatially defined and ordered about by other, more central characters, or by characters representing mediating communication systems, such as Vice. In this perspective, then, a more developed character thus becomes a character who is more *of a spatially defined character*.

In recent decades we have seen increased attention to the significance of the spatial dimension in cultural and literary studies, and a number of works explore various issues related to the function of 'space' in culture and social life. Only a few of these engage directly with the specific issue of the relationship between writing and space in the Renaissance, but also more general works from disciplines like philosophy, social studies and linguistics may offer insights which are relevant to the present purpose. In one of the most interesting and significant works devoted to the study of the role of space in drama and theatre, *Reading Theatre* (1977), Anne Ubersfeld suggests that 'The task of the semiologist in the area of theatre is to find within the text the *spatialized or spatializable elements that will provide a mediation between text and performance* (my italics).²¹ Her notion of mediation has as its

²¹Originally published 1977, English translation by Frank Collins, edited by Paul Perron and Patrick Debbeche (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999) Ubersfeld's *Reading Theatre* must be considered as a pioneering study in its field. Scholars like Donahue (1996) and Issacharoff (1989) have subsequently demonstrated the method's applicability in analysis, but I would argue that Ubersfeld is still unsurpassed in the way her work combines in-depth theoretical analysis with practical methods in the field of textual and theatrical space. Chapter IV in *Reading Theatre*, titled 'Theatre and Space' is thus the central text on which my own approach is based.

basic material character utterances which contain such elements, and she divides these into two broad categories: First, everything that 'might have a role in the identification of locality' (place names in the form of common nouns and geographical names). Examples mentioned are 'hell', 'heaven', 'Paris', 'the ramparts'. Secondly, determinants of locality (locatives) like prepositions, spatial pronouns and adverbs (here, there), and phrases (in the palace, in her bed). In addition Ubersfeld emphasises the function of objects mentioned in the text as a significant aspect of its spatial dimension. In the present study, inventories of utterances containing such elements form the basis of interpretation and analysis both in the case of the Interludes and Lyly's comedies.

From the perspective of mediation, such inventories are also the raw materials which allow the construction of *spatial paradigms*, i.e. sets of signs which can be substituted for each other in performance. In the spatial paradigm of *Endymion*, for instance, we find three settings: the palace, the fountain, and the place where Endymion has his long sleep. Such paradigms are established by the dialogue, but can also be represented by various kinds of scenic pieces on stage. However, the inventories also constitute the basis of any attempt to link paradigms to what in the rather opaque terminology of drama semiotics is called 'syntactic structures', a term which denotes the spatialisation of dramatic conflict. Characters are often linked with a certain space, of course, but Ubersfeld is here rather emphasising the complexity and dynamics of such relations. In the words of Ubersfeld, 'In a way, the structure of almost all dramatic stories can be read as a conflict between spaces or as conquest

or abandonment of space' (ibid. 108). She emphasises that dramatic conflicts must be approached in all their complexity, 'not according to a single game of chess, but rather to several games of chess played simultaneously' (ibid).

This a crucial point, of course. We have seen above how what we termed 'the reigning paradigm' in representations of dramatic space in Lyly's plays tends to focus on one antithesis as a mediating structure between style, textual space, and staging. By contrast, the aim of the present study is to approach space as a complex phenomenon requiring attention to the spatial discourse of *all* the characters, including the servants and other characters in the 'comic relief' plots. Only thus is it possible to approach a play as a set of interests and conflicts in which every position has a stake in the spatial dimension of the dramatic world.

The 'Janus-face' of dramatic space, as both a dimension that is created by the discourse along the temporal axis of a play and as an a-temporal structure with its own grammar, requires a degree of eclecticism with regard to concepts and definitions. Terms like 'dramatic world' or the 'world of the play' are common and offer in themselves few problems. In this study the general term 'dramatic world' simply denotes 'a set of physical properties, a set of agents and a course of time-bound events'.²² The notion of a world in drama does of course ultimately involve more complicated epistemological and ontological questions and one such issue is the question of the *extent* of the dramatic world. In most texts it is evident that the characters and, consequently, the action occupy a here-and-now space that can be transferred to the stage, while other areas and events are created only verbally in

²²See Keir Elam, *The Semiotics of Theatre and Drama* (London: Methuen, 1980), p. 99.

the dialogue. This division of the dramatic world may prove significant in analyses. When Midas in Lyly's play by the same title reflects on his own policy towards different countries in his large empire, the effect is to extend considerably the dramatic world outward from his own country, Phrygia; and as the play unfolds this offstage world thus becomes intimately linked to the king's changing desires. Theorists have come up with a number of terms to represent this duality in the dramatic world. Anne Ubersfeld suggests that there are 'two layers to the text: one designed to be performed on stage, and another that merely refers to an imaginary off-stage. She considers this a 'decisively important distinction'.²³ Thomas John Donahue, on the other hand, talks about 'perceptual' and 'verbal space', 'a basic dichotomy [that] is formed between what is perceived by one of the senses – most often visually but sometimes aurally – and what is referred to verbally in the discourse of the characters'.²⁴ Another example is Michael Issacharoff who in his *Discourse as Performance* states that 'The distinction, at any rate, is between what can be perceived and what cannot', and adopts an Aristotelian terminology: 'mimetic' vs 'diegetic'.²⁵ These distinctions all provide insight into the central duality of the dramatic world; for my purposes, however, Donahue's terms might lead to confusion. As stated above, the basic material of analyses is the verbal, spatialising utterances of the characters independent of whether the discourse relates to stage space or or parts of the dramatic world that is situated beyond the stage. Thus, henceforth, as in the example with Midas, the term 'offstage' will be used.

²³ Ubersfeld, 1999, p. 118.

²⁴ in *Structures of Meaning: A Semiotic Approach to the Play Text*, (London and Toronto: Associated University Presses, 1993), p. 84.

²⁵ (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1989), p. 56.

It should be evident from its definition that the term 'dramatic world' is not interchangeable with the term 'setting'. 'Setting' is usually deployed in literature in a rather general sense; in the present context, however, it will be useful to restrict its use. M. Abrams, states that

The overall setting of a narrative or dramatic work is the general locale, historical time, and social circumstances in which its action occurs; the setting of a single episode or scene within such a work is the particular physical location in which it takes place.²⁶

In this definition we observe that Abrams' comprehensive term 'overall setting' comes close to our definition of the 'dramatic world'. His second meaning of the term, on the other hand, as 'particular physical location', is one that can be adopted in the present study, linking up with the notion of 'spatial dramaturgy' presented above.

In addition to the semio-pragmatic perspective on the relationship between dramatic text and performance offered by Ubersfeld and others, I will in what follows also introduce concepts from culture theory and discourse studies. In chapter V Michel de Certeau's distinction between 'place' and 'space' will be used when discussing the dramatic world of the pastoral and I have also found useful material in discourse studies, in particular Vimala Herman's study of dramatic discourse.²⁷

This is a study of the development of dramatic technique in that it seeks to examine the dramatist's methods for placing characters in space as they develop from the semi-allegorical dramatic worlds of the early 16th century to the wholly human characters and settings of the 1580s and 90s. However, techniques and

²⁶In *A Glossary of Literary Terms*, 7th edition, p.284.

²⁷ Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), Vimala Herman, *Dramatic Discourse: Dialogue as interaction in plays*, (London: Routledge, 1995).

methods cannot be separated from the development of the dramatic characters themselves. Spatialising discourse is, as we have seen, simultaneously an achievement of the dramatists' skill and expressions of his characters' attempts to relate to their world. Any attempt, therefore, to go beyond one-dimensional approaches to dramatic space, whether it be in a search for imagined 'unities' as in the case of Bond or in a quest for the antithesis, as for later generations, will not only contribute to an understanding of dramaturgy, but hopefully also contribute to new readings of central characters.

In what follows, chapter II 'Dramaturgy of space in the period of the Interludes' will discuss the relevant conventions of the Interlude tradition and the theatrical context in which Lyly worked. In chapters III - VI, the spatial dramaturgy of Lyly's plays will be investigated in terms of how the spatial dramaturgy evolves from and gives shape to central issues concerning relations between characters and their world. Scholars agree that Lyly wrote, and possibly also produced, a total of eight plays. In the present study, chapter III, 'Princes', will concentrate on the two princes Alexander and Midas in *Campaspe* and *Midas*, and how their respective discourses establish complementary responses to the question of the moral legitimacy of expansion in the wide sense of the word. Chapter IV, 'Lovers', will examine how dramatic space helps to delineate the asymmetric or non-reciprocal emotional relationships between sovereign and subject in *Sappho and Phao* and *Endymion*. In chapter V, 'Shepherds', the focus is on the spatial paradigms of *Galathea*, *Love's Metamorphosis* and *The Woman in the Moon*.

The overall perspective of chapters III – V will be 'backward-looking' in the sense that the main emphasis will be on the development of spatial dramaturgy from

the Interludes. In chapter VI and the final comments, however, an attempt will be made to trace the development forwards, from Lyly to the spatial dramaturgy of early plays of Shakespeare, by comparing the spatial dramaturgies involved in establishing the urban settings of *Mother Bombie* and *The Comedy of Errors*.

Chapter II: Dramaturgy of space in the period of the Interludes

2.1. Introduction

The title of this chapter may seem to suggest that there exists both a defined period of time in which the major dramatic product was termed 'Interludes' and that these interludes form an easily identifiable literary category. Unfortunately, this is not quite the case. The term was in use as early as the fourteenth century (a play about a cleric and a girl, *interludium de clerico et puella*, c. 1300), and even in the mid – sixteenth century, generally recognised as the heyday of the interludes, the term signified a fascinating variety of dramatic products. Peter Happe has recently defined the term 'Interlude' as to include

Rather short plays (admittedly indeterminate in length) which might have been performed in the great halls of palaces and mansions [...] adaptability to different kinds of staging is characteristic of interludes

He adds that these plays share 'a kind of transience or impermanence which is belied by their survival in print', and, furthermore, that interludes 'are rarely of great length or requiring great complexity of performance'.²⁸

In the following sections, most of the plays under discussion fall within the category of 'interlude' as defined by Happe: Henry Medwall's *Fulgens and Lucrece* (1497?), generally recognised as the earliest secular interlude, John Heywood's *The Play of the Wether* (c. 1530), John Pikerlyng's *Horestes* (1560s), Thomas Preston's

²⁸ In *English Drama before Shakespeare*, (London and New York: Longman, 1999), p. 136. Happe's definition reiterates elements from earlier attempts to define the term: E. K. Chambers' mentioned as early as 1903 in *The Medieval Stage* the great halls, the relative shortness of the plays and the 'simple stage apparatus'. It should be mentioned that T. W. Craik added to this in *The Tudor Interlude*, published in 1958, that the term covered a range of theatrical experiences, from amusing, boisterous farces to serious allegorical plays'. Both Happe himself, in his edition of *Tudor Interludes*, 1972, and Marie Axton, in *Three Tudor Classical Interludes*, 1982, includes this aspect of the interludes in their introductory definitions.

Cambises (1560s) and Francis Merbury's *The Marriage Between Wit and Wisdom* (1570s) can all be placed in this category. However, in this chapter I also wish to consider passages from a play which is of a more ambitious scope. The editor of the recent Revels edition of Richard Edwards' *Damon and Pythias*, Ros King, suggests that this play

may be the one surviving example of a strand of English drama which can be thought of as a missing link between Shakespeare and the English medieval tradition. It syncretises elements from four different types of drama: the classical new comedy of Plautus and Terence; the English vernacular morality plays; the tradition of courtly disguising; and the dialectical dialogues of classical philosophy in which different characters argue partial or conflicting aspects of a philosophical problem.²⁹

Even including *Damon and Pythias*, the selection of plays in this chapter should not be thought of as representative of pre – Lylian drama in any scientific sense of the word. Hopefully, however, an examination of passages from them will allow us to gain some insight into dramaturgical techniques which were prominent in the period prior to the purpose-built theatres of the later sixteenth – century.

I wish to argue in this chapter that the textual dramaturgy of space in the period of the Interludes is profoundly influenced by the performance conditions, social as well as physical, under which the travelling groups of players had to operate. The nature of these performance conditions led to what I have chosen to term the 'open' dramatic worlds that we meet in the texts from the period; the consequences being not only the more obvious ones noticed by many critics that it is difficult to discern any borderline between the world of the play and the world of the spectators, but also the existence of dominating characters who act as mediators

²⁹ Ros King, 'Introduction' to *The Works of Richard Edwards: Politics, Poetry and Performance in Sixteenth-century England*, The Revels Plays Companion Library, (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 2001), p. 87.

between players and audience and who in this function appropriate much of the spatialising discourse of the play.

In what follows the discussion is organised according to theme and questions concerning space-defining characters and open dramatic worlds will be central issues. Accordingly, it seems natural to begin by briefly considering some of the physical and social aspects of the performance context that would inevitably also shape the textual worlds of the dramatic products of the period.

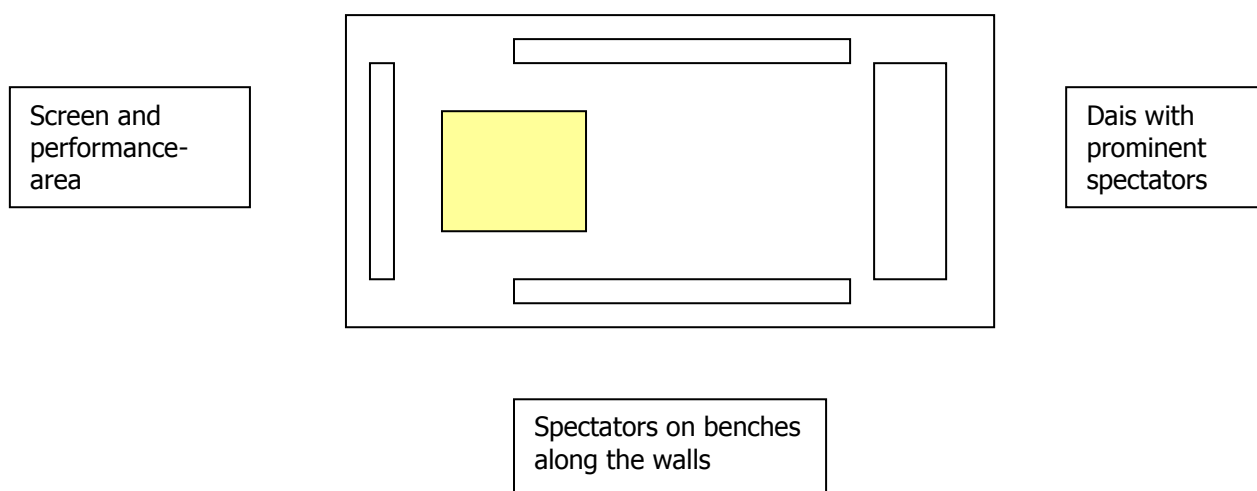
2.2. *Playing in the Tudor Halls*

In *Fulgens and Lucrece* we have a scene where the character Cornelius comes into the playing-area, enters into a dialogue with another character, Fulgens, concerning the possibility of marrying his daughter, and thereafter speaks to the spectators with the following words: 'So may fellows as be in this hall,/and is there none Sirs, among you all/That will enterprise in this geare?' (354).³⁰ A generalised model of the halls where plays like *Fulgens and Lucrece* were performed can be described as a large rectangular room where the main entrance would be at one of the short ends, while at the opposite end the master of the house and prominent guests would be sitting on a raised dais or low platform. In addition spectators would be sitting along the long sides of the hall, and here one would also find the fireplace. Perhaps the most conspicuous feature in the hall was the screen, a more or less elaborate wooden construction with two or three openings placed a few feet into the hall from the main

³⁰ Glynne Wickham (ed.), *English Moral Interludes* (London: Dent, 1976). The play is usually attributed to Henry Medwall (c.1461-1501), Chaplain in the household of Cardinal Morton.

entrance, thus creating a sort of narrow tiring-house between the wall and the screen. With the screen providing opportunities for entrances and exits, the area immediately in front of it was eminently suitable as 'stage'.

III.3 The Tudor Hall



That the torch-lit performances in the great halls at night would in general have been memorable theatrical events for the spectators cannot be doubted, but the question of how the physical lay-out of the hall and the fact that different status groups watched the play from different positions within the hall affected the way the spectators perceived the performance deserve closer consideration. As we saw in the passage from *Fulgens and Lucrece*, and which is equally noticeable in a number of other texts, there is a high degree of direct audience – address in these plays, especially in the beginning when the players make their entrance. In Heywood's *The Play of the Wether* the vice – character Mery Report functions as a sort of go – between or messenger between the mighty Jupiter and a number of people from

different occupations who wants to petition the king for exactly the kind of weather that their group would benefit from. When entering the stage, or should we rather say the hall, Mery Report's first utterance is: 'Brother holde up your torche a lytell hyer!' (98), and I think we are entitled to assume that the brother in question is not a fellow actor, but probably a servant standing by one of the screen entrances.

Similarly, after his first meeting with Jupiter, he leaves the stage with the following utterance: 'Frendes, a fellyshyppe let me go by ye:/Thynke ye I may stand thurstyng amonge you there?/Nay, by God, I muste thrust about other gere' (176-178).³¹

The people around the screen, then, being presumably a mixed group of servants and other low status members of the household, neighbours etc, were the ones who were appropriated into the world of the drama by the utterances of the players, and who in effect took on the function of 'extras' in relation to the high-flyers on the dais. These, on the other hand, were physically somewhat removed from the acting area – observers rather than participants – and their relationship to the performance must have been more similar to that of ordinary theatre audiences at the Blackfriars some decades later when Lyly and the children performed

Campaspe and Sappho and Phao.

The idea of the central position of the screen in interlude – performances has recently been questioned by John Astington, who argues that

In fact, no simple unitary model can easily be made to fit the variety of late – medieval and Renaissance staging in England, whether at the court or elsewhere. Certainly in the time since Southern's book appeared [Richard Southern, *The Staging of Plays before Shakespeare*, 1973] we have come to realise or have been reminded that the staging of plays and entertainments indoors was not necessarily connected with a hall screen. Southern was not

³¹ Citations from Peter Happe and Richard Axton (eds.), *Tudor Interludes: The Plays of John Heywood*, (Cambridge: Brewer, 1991).

incorrect: some plays certainly were presented at the screen end of a hall, whether or not the screen entries were used theatrically.³²

Astington is certainly right in pointing out that there existed 'a variety' of staging in sixteenth – century England, but I would like to suggest that there is one major division which is more significant than the rest, and that is between the staging of court performances and other performances. Indeed, this is actually Astington's main concern: not to discuss varieties of staging in general but to establish the characteristic features of the court performances of the period.

If we take the 'universal model' of the hall performance illustrated above to be fairly representative of performances outside the most exclusive playing venues (which includes the royal court, plus certain performances at the inns of court and the universities), then what sets these more exclusive events apart from the more ordinary hall performances is that

(a) In the palace halls at Greenwich and elsewhere the players would have been expected to provide splendour and excitement, and in general to heighten the visual aspect of their performance. The surviving accounts from the Revels' and the Works' offices - which are fairly abundant from the mid – sixteenth century - indicates for instance that a variety of larger properties were standard in court performances.

These kinds of large properties and decorations, then, were made available to the players, but were financed and constructed by the royal offices.

(b) The palace halls would have been fitted out with large wooden constructions in the shape of a stage and scaffolds and degrees for the spectators to sit on during the performance. In most cases, materials for such constructions were already in storage

³² John Astington, *The English Court Theatre 1558 – 1642*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), p. 88.

with the Works office and could be set up for use on short notice. We know very little about the actual shape of the royal auditoriums prior to the early 1580s and the period of Lyly, but from then on U – shaped auditoriums seem to be the thing.

It seems relevant to conclude that although variants of the technique of addressing the spectators directly, and the ensuing blurring of the borders between the world of the drama and the real world would always be part of the dramaturgical repertoire, there is nevertheless a significant difference in degree between the use of this technique in the period of the interludes and later periods. Furthermore, that this extensive use of direct audience address is directly related to the physical and social performance conditions faced by the travelling groups of players in the period before the permanent theatres were established.

2.3. 'Open' dramatic worlds and space-controlling characters

Even if the idea of blurred borders between the world of the play and the real world can be explained by the actual physical and social performance conditions faced by the players, the question nevertheless remains why the direct audience address, and especially the more 'spontaneous' instances; seemingly immediate, and improvised, parts of the theatrical discourse, is so faithfully maintained in a number of texts.

A possible explanation may be found in the travelling players' need to be in control of the performance situation. The situation in many of these halls must have been unruly, and in no way similar to the quiet and convention-ruled theatres of our own time. Loud voices, people walking about, servants coming and going; factors which would encourage the actors to adopt certain strategies for the purpose of gaining the

attention of the spectators and controlling the mood in the hall. Including examples of such discursive strategies in the texts would in fact provide the travelling groups with a repertoire of ways of dealing with an unknown and perhaps also difficult performance situation. We must assume that in actual life direct audience addresses like those cited above by Mery Report would result in replies from the spectators, and thus an improvised dialogue. However, once having succeeded in focussing the attention of the people in the hall on himself, the experienced travelling player would have no difficulties in handling the situation.³³

The two early plays mentioned above, *Fulgens and Lucrece* and Heywood's *The Play of the Wether* represent perhaps the most prominent examples of the 'open' textual worlds in my selection of Interlude-texts, but later interludes may also exhibit similar features. In line 1-20 of *Horestes* (1560s) we find an excellent example of how in this case the vice is passing through and addressing the audience, thus drawing them into the world of the play, and as late as 1578, in Francis Merbury's *The Marriage between Wit and Wisdom* the vice, *Idleness*, appears with the following utterances

Ah! Sirrah! My masters! How fare you at this blessed day?/What, I ween all this company are come to see a play!/What lookest thee, good fellow? didst see ne'er a man before?/Here is a gazing! I am the best man in the company, when there is no more!/As for my properties, I am sure you know them of old!³⁴

In this play, however, the vice's entrance is not placed at the beginning of the play.

Before *Idleness* enters we have already heard the prologue and witnessed a scene

³³ Glynne Wickham comments that 'it would have been extraordinary if frequent ad lib exchanges were not a common occurrence in the course of performances which relied so heavily upon direct address with its many rhetorical questions and asides', 'introduction' to his edition of *English Moral Interludes*, (London: Dent, 1976), p. xiv.

³⁴ All quotations from Wickham, 1976.

with *Wit* and his parents *Severity* and *Indulgence*. The structure of this late interlude thus seems to present a mixture of old and new elements: a prologue followed by a scene wholly without references to the audience is as modern as anything Lyly comes to present on the scene of the Old Blackfriars a few years later, while the entrance of the vice in the next scene, with his direct audience address, takes us straight back to the earliest days of the interludes.

The idea of the 'open' dramatic world is, as we have seen, closely linked to a dramaturgy which tends to focus on certain characters in their function as links to the spectators. Often, but certainly not always, it was the vice who provided the connecting discourse between players and spectators, and I wish now to consider whether and to what degree in pre-Lylian plays the dramatists use the vice or other vice-like characters to dominate or control the spatial dramaturgy. Going back to Heywood's *Play of the Wether*, we find that the character Mery Report dominates at least two aspects of the spatial dramaturgy of the play. There are few locations in the play, but Mery Report initiates and controls characters' movements between those that can be found, mainly a sort of entrance area (where the supplicants for a particular kind of weather first present themselves) and the throne of Jupiter (where the same people wish to present their petitions).

The first one to arrive is a gentleman, and Mery Report first tells him 'stand ye styll and take a lyttell payne,/I wyll come to you by and by agayne' (240-41), then turns to Jupiter to tell him about the gentleman who is waiting 'in yonder corner'. Jupiter gives his permission for the gentleman to appear before the throne, and once again Mery Report directs the other's movements: 'Now, good Mayster Horner, I pray you come nere [...] Come on your way before the god Jupyter,/And there for your

selfe ye shall be sewer' (256-57). That Mery Reports does not merely follow Jupiter's instructions becomes apparent when a character who is placed lower in the social hierarchy appears; a ranger (a person responsible for forests, parks and chase). In this case Mery Report does not bother to ask Jupiter's permission, he simply denies the character access to the throne:

RANGER God be here! Now Cryst kepe thys company!

MERY REPORT In fayth ye be welcome evyn very skantely.

Syr, for your comynge, what is the mater?

RANGER I would fayne speke wyth the god Jupyter.

MERY REPORT That wyll not be but ye may do thys:

Tell me your mynde, I am an offycer of hys.

(400 – 405)

The simple spatial dramaturgy of the *Play of the Wether* highlights the controlling function of Mery Report: a number of different characters come to what may be termed the palace in and Mery Report leads them to Jupiter's throne or, as we have seen, thwarts a character's ambitions by denying access to the inner area.³⁵ In other interludes the space-creating or space controlling functions invested in certain characters may be less prominent than in the case of Mery Report.

The dramatic world of Johan Pikeryng's *Horestes* (1560s) is much more complex than in Heywood's play, and as a consequence the question of location becomes central. There are in this play three royal palaces, in Crete, Mycenae and

³⁵ The spatial dramaturgy of the play is slightly more complex than this statement may indicate; I will return to the question of the offstage part of the dramatic world of this and other interludes in the next section.

Athens, respectively, and the reader or the spectator need to know *where* the action takes place at any given moment in the play, and preferably also *why* the action shifts from one location to another. Although the vice is one of the central characters in the play (the title-page of the first edition of the play reads *A Newe Enterlude of Vice conteynyn the History of Horestes*), there are actually other, and more peripheral, characters who deliver most of the locating utterances.³⁶ In the first part we learn from a dialogue between two peasant characters, Hodge and Rusticus, in what may perhaps be termed a 'comic relief' scene, that 'Horestes to Crete with Idumeneo did go' (25), Rusticus' utterance thus locating the subsequent dialogue in the main plot between Horestes and Idumeneos. In the middle part of the play there is a messenger character who arrives to inform Clytemnestra and Egistus that

Even now there is aryved in this land/The mightey knight, Horestes, with a
mightey pewsant band/Who purposith for to invade *this Mycoene citie* stronge
(612, my italics)

The reader knows that the action has moved from Crete to Mycenae, and the spectator would have known that the central structure he is seeing on stage is now meant to signify the palace in Mycenae rather the palace in Crete. In the final part of the play another 'messenger' character, this time *Fame*, locates the final scenes by telling vice that 'the Kynges of Grece aryved be/At Nestores towne, that Athens highte, their judgment to decre' (908).

If the function of locating action largely resides with peripheral comic or messenger figures, what then is the role of the main characters Vice and Horestes' function in relation to the spatial dramaturgy? In the case of Vice, it can certainly be argued that he is the driving force behind the overall structure of locations and

³⁶ All citations from Marie Axton (ed.), *Three Classical Interludes*, (Cambridge: Brewer, 1982)

movements in the play in the sense that he is the one who, by disguising as *Courage*, manages to convince Horestes that the right thing to do is to go to Mycenae and revenge the killing of his father Agamemnon. A closer look at Horestes' utterances in the play reveals not only an absence of elements which contribute to localisation; it is also clear that the spatialising elements in his discourse throughout the play is less than evenly distributed, with a marked concentration in the middle third, with its spatially dynamic situation generated by the battle for Mycenae:

Come on my sodyers, for at home aryved their we be,/Where as we must have our desyare or els dye manfully/The walles be hye, yet I intend upon them first to go/And, as I hope, you sodyers will your captayne eke follow./Yf I dor sake to go before, then fley you eke be hynde,/And as I am, so eke I trust my sodyers for to finde./Come hether harauld; go proclame this mine intent straightaway./To yonder [citie] say that I am come to their decaye (680 – 87)

The energetic projection of thematic force through spatialising discourse in this and a couple of other passages, gives the character of Horestes a presence in the siege and war scenes which is hardly witnessed anywhere else in the play apart from the final scene where he is surveying his new kingdom.³⁷

Beside the vice and various 'messenger' characters, there is a third element in sixteenth – century drama in which the dramatist often invest with a spatialising function: the prologue. In the variety of prologues the most common function in terms of the spatial dramaturgy of the text is to provide information concerning the

³⁷ It is tempting here to relate this kind of battle discourse to late medieval alliterative poems like *Morte Arthure* and *The Siege of Jerusalem*. According to A. C. Spearing, 'Siege warfare, the real focus of the struggle for power in medieval Europe [...] is a central theme of both the *Morte Arthure* and *The Siege of Jerusalem*', *Readings in Medieval poetry*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), p. 134 – 73. So too of course was the ethos of courage and loyalty expressed in Horestes speech. Although it is difficult to point to direct borrowings, the alliterative poems, with their concrete and lively representations of siege and battle situations, could clearly have provided dramatists with a store house of battle discourse.

play's setting; in most cases a single location will be presented, but sometimes even the plot with its accompanying structure of locations will be introduced. In Thomas Preston's *Cambises* (1560s) we learn from the prologue simply that

In Percia there reigned a king who Cirus height by name,/Who did deserve, as I doo read, the lasting blast of Fame,/But he, when Sisters three had wrought to shere his vitall thred,/As heire due, to take the crowne Cambises did proceed.³⁸

The prologue to Richard Edwards' *Damon and Pythias* provides slightly more detailed information:

Lo, here is Syracuse, th'ancient town which once the Romans won,/Here is Dionysius' palace, within whose court this thing most strange was done.³⁹

However, Edwards has given the prologue an additional function, which is to make sure that no one in the audience should entertain for a moment the idea that the court of Dionysus in Syracuse should be seen as the court of Elizabeth in England. There is an absolute division in this case between the world of the play and the real world: 'we talk of Dionysus' court, we mean no court but that'.

Finally, one of the most comprehensive examples of this kind of introductory discourse does not formally belong to the prologue, but is placed immediately after the prologue's efforts to convince spectators and readers that the play they are going to experience is constructed according to the precepts of classical literature. This is Jake Jugeler's first speech in the comedy by the same name, and in this passage Jake presents what amounts to a fairly detailed exposition of its spatial dimension.

³⁸ From *Tudor Plays: An Anthology of Early English Drama*, edited with an Introduction, Notes, and Variants by Edmund Creeth, (New York: Doubleday, 1966)

³⁹ From *The works of Richard Edwards: Politics, Poetry and Performance in Sixteenth – century England*, edited by Ros King, The Revels Plays Companion Library, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2001)

The speech is too long to be quoted as a whole, but a list of its more obvious spatialising utterances should indicate the scope involved:

The gentilman that dwellith here *in this place*

As any is now *within London wall*

It chaunced me right now *in the other end of the next street*

Herbie, at a gentyلمان's place

By the way he met with a freuters wife

Then came he his way/*By an other lane*

*At a corner by a shoops stall.*⁴⁰

Let us now return to the notion of 'interactive spatial discourse' presented in chapter one. What we see in many interludes is clearly that the spatialising discourse is not interactive. Characters do not speak for themselves in the sense of defining and presenting their own position and movements within the dramatic world, and the task of locating action is not evenly distributed. With respect to spatial utterances, relations are asymmetric in the sense that the dramatists often let one or two characters dominate this aspect of the dialogue. The necessity for maintaining links between dramatic and real world through vices and similar characters precludes a more even distribution of spatialising discourse.

2.4. Mimetic and diegetic space in the Interludes

I wish in this section to focus on two interrelated aspects of the dramaturgy of space in the interludes: First, to what extent do we find space which, according to

⁴⁰ From Marie Axton, 1982

offstage world; at least not a world marked by any degree of permanence and solidity.

A similar exercise in verbal virtuosity can be found Heywood's *The Play of the Wether*. Jupiter has ordered Mery Report to 'departe and cause proclamacyon,/Publyshynge our pleasure to every nacyon', i.e. to spread the message that he is willing to receive and listen to peoples' wishes concerning the weather. When Mery Report returns from his mission, it turns out that the range of his travels has been rather limited:

I have ben from Hevyn as farre as heven is hens:
 At Lovyn, at London, and in Lombardy,
 At Baldock, at Barfolde, and in Barbary,
 At Canturbery,at Coventre, at Colchester,
 At Wansworth, and Welbeck, at Westchester,
 At Fullam, at Faleborne, and at Fenlow,
 At Wallyngford, at Wakefield, and at Waltamstow
 (197-203)

Mery Report's rhetorical catalogue continues for another few lines, but it is evident that the journey has been very much an English journey. In fact, as has been noted by the editor, most of the place names in Mery Report's itinerary come from the Essex area which also happens to be an area where John Heywood had family connections.⁴²

The Play of the Wether, then, exhibits a well – established and highly rhetorical convention in the way Mery Report deploys a wider geographical context. This is not quite the whole story of how diegetic space comes across in this play, but the impression of pattern and artificiality is not significantly weakened by the other passages in the play which involves the offstage world. Characters from various

⁴² This kind of rhetorical catalogue is still evident in the copious lines of Marlowe's *Tamburlaine the Great*, but by then the technique functions as amuch more developed method of characterisation.

occupations and social strata come to Jupiter's court to make a plea for the kind of weather that would suit their group and in the process of arguing for a particular kind of weather the gentleman, the merchant, the ranger, the millers and others all tell us something about their world.

The repetitive and additive way in which our image of the offstage world of the play is shaped should not, however, detract from the possible thematic significance of this aspect of the play. Greg Walker links the politics of the *Play of the Wether* to the Parliament of 1529 – 30 (the so-called 'Reformation Parliament'), and suggests that

Evidently the author's hope was that the king would dissolve parliament and pursue the sort of Erasmian reforms in the Church that Heywood approved of and thought the King desired⁴³

If that is the case, then the offstage world of the play is nothing less than contemporary England and identical to the world of the spectators.

The Play of the Wether thus demonstrates a function of verbal space which we will meet again in particular in Lyly's *Midas*: as a setting for character's political considerations and actions. We find the same function exhibited in Thomas Preston's *Cambises* where Cambises, king of Persia, decides to take his army to Egypt, 'them to subdue as captives mine' (18).⁴⁴ The expedition to offstage Egypt leaves the stage to the temporary ruler, Sisamnes, and allows him to make the mistakes for which he is so cruelly punished upon the return of Cambises.

Even though verbal or offstage space has an important function also in *Damon and Pythias*, the political dimension and the opportunities for using spatial

⁴³ Greg Walker, *Plays of Persuasion*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), p. 166

⁴⁴ Quotes from *Tudor Plays: An Anthology of Early English Drama*, edited by Edmund Creeth, (New York: Doubleday, 1966)

paradigms to focus on the contrast between the tyrannical and the good ruler is not really what concerns Richard Edwards in this play. However, as we saw above, the play may be considered as an important link in the development of drama from the Middle Ages to Shakespeare, and I wish in this final section to present a more comprehensive analysis of its spatial dramaturgy. In addition, there is a methodical issue to be taken into consideration; it is important to ensure in the following chapters that the spatial dramaturgy of the plays of Lyly is not compared only to the earliest and 'purest' examples of the Interludes. Such an approach could easily lead to a severely biased view of the development from the Interludes to Lyly.

2.5. *The spatial dramaturgy of Damon and Pythias*⁴⁵

We saw above (p. 12) that the prologue in *Damon and Pythias* established a setting with two stage locations, the palace and the town:

Lo, here is Syracuse, th'ancient town which once the Romans won,/Here
Dionysius' palace, within whose court this thing most strange was done
(35-36)

We have to assume here that prologue is referring to two stage structures simultaneously on stage, but we cannot know for certain what kind of constructions the utterance refers to. It may be 'booth'-like structures being placed in front of the

⁴⁵ The play tells the story of two Greek friends, Damon and Pythias, who come to Syracuse to see the sights. The Sicilian city is ruled by a suspicious tyrant, Dionysius, and soon after their arrival Damon is arrested for spying and sentenced to death. He tries to get a gentleman's agreement with Dionysius that allows him to go back to Greece to settle his affairs before being executed, but Dionysius allows this on one condition only: that his friend Pythias remains in Syracuse ready to be executed if Damon fails to return. Pythias is perfectly ready to sacrifice his own life in order to save his friend, and when Damon returns, the two get into a discussion where each wants to be executed to save the life of the other. Dionysius is impressed by this display of true friendship, and in the end revokes the death sentence altogether.

entrances in the screen wall, or, perhaps less likely, free-standing and three-dimensional 'houses'.⁴⁶ Whatever the method of construction may have been, the significance of these structures lies in the fact that they contribute to a visual presentation of the play's spatial paradigm. An examination of the text reveals that this paradigm in addition to onstage Sicily/Syracusa also includes the offstage sea/Greece, but the dramatist refrains from utilising the spatial paradigm to set up explicit contrasts between Syracuse and Greece. Even though the tyrannical rule of Dionysius is clearly exposed in the play there are, perhaps surprisingly, no utterances in the play which compare the type of government or the degree of freedom in Greece and Syracuse. Within the city of Syracuse, on the other hand, there seems to be, in the spatial division between court and town, at least an attempt on part of the dramatist to underline the contrast between a tyrannical prince and a terrorised population.

Although the uncontested ruler of Syracuse, and with the power to decide over life and death for Damon and Pythias, Dionysius does not emerge as a central space-creating character in the play. Indeed, there is no space-creating or space-controlling character in this play even remotely comparable to for instance Mery Report in *The Play of the Wether*. Spatialising utterances are fairly evenly distributed among the characters which include, in addition to those mentioned above, two 'philosophers', three servants, a 'good councillor', and a collier.

The actual palace, then, of Dionysius, is placed offstage and it is interesting to examine how Edwards handles the dramaturgy of space in the two episodes in

⁴⁶ The editor points to entries in the Revels Accounts for the years 1564-5 which suggest that these structures may have been 'wooden frames, perhaps with cut-out outlines made by the 'carvars', covered with painted canvas' (introduction, p. 33), but King has to admit that these entries are 'far from unambiguous'.

scenes 10 and 15 when the king and his counsellor come on stage. In the first there is no textual indication as to the location of the episode where Dionysius appears with Eubulus and Groano. However, earlier in the scene we saw that Stephano, who was standing with Stephano in the place, ran to the court to find out about Damon and came back again. So what the text seems to indicate is that King, Counsellor and Hangman leave the palace and come to the 'place'. They exit with a somewhat lame utterance by Dionysius; 'Let us depart to talk of this strange thing within'. In the final scene, the 15th, Eubulus enters first and states that he has come 'hither now to understand/If all things are well appointed for the execution of Pythias/The king himself will see it done *here in this place* (my italics). In both cases, a movement of king and courtiers out from the palace rather than other characters coming to the court.

There are in *Damon and Pythias* a few scenes in which we can observe a more imaginative and differentiated use of space than was found in *Cambises*. The first example of this can be found in scene 8, where Carisophus and Damon talk about conditions in Syracuse and Carisophus attempts to trick Damon into making some kind of negative statement about the city. Carisophus at one point advises Damon to 'View *this weak part of the city* as you stand' (84, my italics). This utterance means that the area immediately outside the entrance/exit door to the city is no longer just the neutral 'place'. Through the use of the adverbial phrase above it is imaginatively transformed into a part of the city.

The second example is from scene 11 where Stephano discovers Carisophus *within*:

O cursed Carisophus that first moved this tragedy/But what noise is this? Is all well *within*, trow ye?/ I fear all be not well *within*. I will go see./Come *out* you weasel, are you sucking eggs in Damon's chest? (19-22, my italics)

There are no stage directions except for what is found in the dialogue, but the editor suggests that Stephano is half inside while grappling with Carisophus who is at this point wholly inside. The question is inside what? From the utterances above we understand that Carisophus is within the lodgings of Damon and Pythias, and being caught red-handed trying to steal the belongings of Damon. The development from the previous dialogue between Stephano and Damon to this halfway 'interior' scene is logical if we assume that Stephano and Damon is standing outside the boarding house, but there is nothing in their utterances to suggest this. In addition to the somewhat sudden introduction of a house with an interior space, there is another element which contributes to the weakening of our impression of realism in the representation of fictional space in this scene. After he hears the noise, Stephano suddenly crosses the boundary of the closed fictional world and asks the audience directly whether they think 'all is well within' (20)

In a third example in scene 13 there is an interesting development in that what has so far simply been an exit door to 'the court' is more narrowly defined as the 'court gate'.⁴⁷ This, of course, has a profound effect on our sense of distance in the play. Suddenly the palace is located nearby, and Syracuse emerges as a more closely knit urban structure. The use of the expression 'court gate' alerts us the fact that the word 'court' has a double meaning in *Damon and Pythias*. It signifies the

⁴⁷ In the play's single but extensive comic relief scene Grim the Collier comes to this gate to deliver coal to the court, and much play and foolery ensues when Jack and Will, the lackeys of Aristippus and Carisophus, gets him drunk, shaves him and steals his money. To contemporaries who saw the play, it was not the profound reflections on the nature of friendship which captured the imagination and stayed in memory, but rather this unsavory coalman...

physical aspect of princely power in the shape of a palace, but it also denotes a particular kind of social configuration. The importance of being included in this community is expressed quite succinctly by Aristippus speech in scene 12, where he reports on the negative reactions towards Carisophus after he 'accused Damon to King Dionysius': 'By my own experience, I prove true that many men tell:/To live in court not beloved – better be in hell' (1-2). Once again the dramatist chooses to narrate rather than to explore a central aspect of the court's social life dramatically.

The differentiation of the spatial dimension of the fictional world of Damon and Pythias can be viewed, on the one hand, simply as a consequence of the dramatist's need for incorporating intradiological stage directions in the text. On the other, this element can also be seen as a contribution to the characters' quality of subjectivity in the play. There is a noticeable difference between *Cambises* and *Damon and Pythias* in the degree to which characters locate themselves in relation to the deictic field. According to Vimala Herman,

The various parameters of the deictic field are generally conceptualized in terms of the speaker as origo in the deictic centre with both time and space calculated with respect to it (p. 27)

The characters of *Damon and Pythias* thus almost always deploy a kind of self-referential dialogue where they tell us where they go when they relocate within the fictional world. Carisophus, for instance, participates in seven scenes, and in each one his utterances make it clear not only where he is going but also why. Some examples: 'I go into the city some knaves to nip', 'I will for a while to the court to see/What Aristippus does', 'I am driven to seek relief abroad'. The first two are clearly intradiological stage directions in that they tell which exit door the actor

should use. The third is simply Carisophus' interpretation of his own situation after Damon is released from prison and he is chased away from the court by Eubulus. One cannot but observe that the deictic elements of the dialogue is as yet too mechanical, too less organically integrated in the characters' utterances. Nevertheless, the dialogue of *Damon and Pythias* represents a considerable step forward towards a kind of dialogue in which the verbalization of dramatic space presents a rich and fully integrated element of characters' speech.

Chapter III: 'Princes'

3.1 Introduction

Alexander in *Campaspe* and Midas in the play by the same name are both princes who engage with questions concerning their own social and political roles. One of the central aspects of those roles concerns space: should a prince seek to extend his own territory at all costs, or are there certain principles of legitimacy and inherited rights which ought to be respected in the interaction between princes? The two plays provide very different answers to this question; in *Campaspe*, the social and territorial acquisitiveness of the ruler is interrogated by Diogenes, a character of so extreme opinions that a meaningful interactive discourse on the subject inevitably breaks down. At the end of the play, Alexander's and his advisers' dream of an empire remains unchecked.

In *Midas*, on the other hand, we meet a ruler who has already subjugated large parts of the western world, but who, in the face of certain personal experiences, begins to question his own policy. Unlike Alexander, Midas has a set of advisers who argue different policies, none of which really provide an adequate answer to the challenge of ruling an empire. In the end it is not this extensive discourse of policy, but simply repentance in the face of the superior powers of the gods which seems to restore the necessary moral qualities to the kingdom of Phrygia.

The contrast between the acquisitiveness of the young Alexander and the process of increasing insight and ultimate repentance in the ageing Midas is reflected in the plays' dramaturgies of space. In spite of the recent victory at Thebes, empire as yet exists only as potential, as something that might become a reality, in *Campaspe*. At the same time, however, spectators and readers cannot unlearn the historical knowledge that Alexander subsequently *did* conquer Persia, and, for a few years, was the ruler of an enormous empire. I will argue in this chapter that the historical Alexander, 'the Great', exists as a sub-text in the play, and that the king's sociospatial activities within the setting of Athens can be read as a metaphor for Alexander the empire-builder.

With its multiplicity of locations and wide verbal vistas, the dramatic world of *Midas* differs markedly from the relatively unified world of Athens in *Campaspe*. The structure of onstage locations follows fairly closely the source, the story of Midas in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, but repentance entails remembrance, and remembrance means mentally reconstructing areas and events which were afflicted by morally wrong decisions. In consequence, the spatial dramaturgy of the play incorporates the offstage areas of the dramatic world to a degree which is unique among Lyly's plays. The movement between the various *onstage* settings, from the palace to Mt. Tmolus, and finally, to Delphi thus becomes a moral journey largely due to Midas' monological reflections on his own policy towards other peoples and nations.

3. 2. *Campaspe: textual history and summary*

Campaspe is Lyly's earliest comedy, printed for the first time in 1584, and according to the title page of the first edition of the play, 'a most excellent comedy of Alexander, Campaspe and Diogenes'. Moreover, it was 'played before the Queenes on twelfe day at night by her Maiesties children and the children of Poules'.⁴⁸ In the headline, however, Diogenes is not included, here it is simply called 'A Tragical comedie of Alexander and Campaspe'. The second and third quartos, published in the same year, were close reprints of the first, but it is interesting to note that the title is now reduced to 'Campaspe'. In addition it reads 'newyeares day' rather than 'twelfe day'. In 1591 a fourth quarto was published by William Broome which was a close reprint of Q1, but which maintained the altered title (*Campaspe*). In 1632, Edward Blount included a reprint of Q4 in his *Sixe Court Comedies*, now with three songs and the name of the author added. Since its inclusion in R. Warwick Bond's 1902-edition of the collected works of John Lyly, the play has been re-edited several times; in 1986 Carter Daniel published a modernised-language edition and in 1997 Leah Scragg included the play in her edition of *John Lyly: Selected Prose and Dramatic Work*. However, in my own analysis of the play I will be using the most recent fully annotated edition, George K. Hunter's for the Revels series (1991).

The only developmental sequence of events in the play worthy of the term plot is the story of Alexander's and Apelles' love for Campaspe. The play tells the story of how Alexander falls in love with Campaspe, a prisoner captured after the

⁴⁸ *Alexander and Campaspe by John Lyly 1584*, Malone Society Reprint Series, 1933.

siege of Thebes. He commissions Apelles, the court painter, to paint her portrait, but it turns out that the painter is so captured by the beauty of the prisoner that he falls in love with his model. Campaspe is thus in the position of being able to choose between painter and prince, and she prefers Apelles. In the end, Alexander realises that Eros is more difficult to handle than his other and more earthly opponents, and accepts Campaspe's choice. In terms of setting and space, the 'love-plot' involves two onstage locations: Alexander's palace and Apelles' workshop, and characters' movements between them. Between the second and the third act, Campaspe is moved from the palatial area to the workshop, and in a number of short scenes in acts III and IV the relationship between painter and prisoner develops into a love-affair. In III. iv. Alexander comes to the shop to check whether Apelles has finished the portrait of Campaspe, and true to his nature, the king also attempts to conquer the art of painting.

The dramaturgy of the play is rather more complex than the above summary of the love-plot suggests, and the reason is that the dramatist lets the character Alexander engage with a number of other themes beside love. The theme which arguably exerts the most profound influence on the spatial dramaturgy of the play is the question of Alexander's relationship to philosophy and philosophers. The theme is explored in the early parts of the play where the king calls a number of the greatest of the contemporary philosophers to the palace. One of them refuses to come, however, and the result is that in several scenes throughout the play, Alexander goes to Diogenes to 'recreate' his spirits, i.e. to engage in a dialogue with the philosopher that is both amusing and interesting. Moreover, it should be noted that these dialogues between king and philosopher not only create spatial movements on stage;

they also explicitly thematise the issue of man's need for space in that Diogenes challenges Alexander's policy of conquest.

The advocacy of conquest and territorial expansion in the play belong to Alexander's advisers and friends, and thus to the third of the three distinct locations in the play: the palace or rather the palatial part of the stage. This is the location, we must assume, where Hephestion in II.iii. tries to convince Alexander that he should not fall 'from the armour of Mars to the arms of Venus' (68-9), and where Clitus and Parmenio in IV.iii. comment on the present conditions at court. I will return to the question of whether the palace was represented on stage by a 'house' or another kind of structure, as well as other issues concerning locations and performance later in the chapter, but the textual existence of the three locations is clear enough. In II.iii, for instance, the king enquires why Diogenes didn't turn up at the meeting with the philosophers: 'How happened it that you would not come out of your tub to my palace?' Of the painter's workshop we learn in III.v. that Apelles is worried because Campaspe may prefer to 'sit under a cloth of estate like a queen than in a poor shop like a housewife' (35-6).

3.3. Lyly's Theatre

Before taking *Campaspe* to court, Lyly and the children had rehearsed and probably also performed the play before an audience in their own theatre at the Old Blackfriars. The regrettable fact is that no direct or explicit evidence has survived which can tell us what this theatre, or the theatre at Paul's for that matter, looked

like.⁴⁹ However, records of protracted lawsuits concerning leases etc., provide information about the structure of the buildings of which the theatre was a part. Thus, scholars have attempted imaginatively to reconstruct the theatre on the basis of knowledge of the structure of the rooms in the part of the building which was leased by Farrant in 1576.⁵⁰ Irwin Smith suggests that

The platform at the First Blackfriars was 26 feet wide from east to west by 13 ½ feet deep from north to south; that it was closed off at the back with a scenic wall pierced by an inner-stage aperture perhaps 13 feet wide, and two doors each 4 feet wide: that the inner stage ran back from the scenic wall to a depth of perhaps 7 or 8 feet, and that behind the inner stage the tiring-house ran back for an indefinite distance.⁵¹

He admits that it is only by comparing knowledge of other theatres of the period with the texts of the surviving plays that is known to have been performed at the old Blackfriars that it is possible to say something about the design of this theatre. Although many more must have been performed during the theatre's eight – year history from 1576 to 1584, we know of seven titles today, and of these only three has survived: John Lyly's *Campaspe* and *Sappho and Phao* and George Peele's *Arraignment of Paris*. The 'model' that Smith establishes for the staging in the Blackfriars based on these texts, knowledge of the Blackfriars buildings, and on general theatrical knowledge consists of two elements: there is a raised platform – stage and on that stage locations in the dramatic world are represented both by free-

⁴⁹ The old or first Blackfriars theatre was established by Richard Farrant, deputy Master of the Chapel Children, in 1576, and the children performed there until 1584. The second or 'new' Blackfriars theatre came into existence when James Burbage in 1596 bought the upper frater of the old monastery and converted it into a playhouse. A lot more is known about the new Blackfriars than the old, for a concise presentation see for instance Andrew Gurr, *The Shakespearean Stage* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992, p. 155 – 60.

⁵⁰ Farrant told the owner that he wished to use the rooms for rehearsals, but most likely it was also intended for commercial purposes from the very beginning.

⁵¹ Irwin Smith, *Shakespeare's Blackfriars Playhouse: Its History and Its Design*, (New York: New York University Press, 1964), p. 144.

standing structures (mansions) and by the inner-stage aperture mentioned above. In *Campaspe* the inner aperture would have been used for Apelles' workshop; in *Sappho and Phao* Sappho's bedchamber would have been placed there.

The 'mansions' or 'houses' in use on the private theatres and in court performances have been mentioned in chapter 2 in connection with the allegedly antithetical staging of *Lyly*, but before going on to an in –depth discussion of the textual dramaturgy of *Campaspe* it is necessary to take a closer look at this rather enigmatic aspect of English theatrical history. Unfortunately, it seems that after almost a century of scholarly attention we are still a long way from being able to assign a precise meaning to the term 'house' as it is used in the accounts of the Revels Office. The following quotations from John Astington's study of the Elizabethan court theatre neatly sum up the situation:

My own guess about the early Elizabethan 'houses' is that collectively they probably were not much different from what is later called the tiring house: that is, they were a series of curtained or painted points of entry to the stage, with space at the rear which constituted the Elizabethan 'wings' and dressing room in one.⁵²

Then, after having examined the play *The Knight of the Burning Rock*, he suggest that

If I am right about the staging arrangements for this play then perhaps 'plyer's houses' could on some occasions take the form of a number of isolated structures dispersed around the extent of the playing area.⁵³

Astington, then, ends up by accepting a broad meaning for the term 'house': as both functional booths for the practical needs of the players and as freestanding structures with possibly an added semantical significance.

⁵² John Astington, *English Court Theatre 1558 – 1642*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press,), p. 102.

⁵³ *Ibid.* p. 103.

The occasions when the houses took the form of dispersed structures are the more interesting from the point – of- view of the relationship between text and performance. The entries in the Revels Accounts for the years 1579 – 1585 have been used and discussed a number of times in the hundred years or so since they became available in Feuillerat’s edited collection of Revels’ documents. My own modest contribution to the issue is to suggest that a simple quantification of the information in the accounts for this period might help to structure our way of thinking when focussing on the texts. The accounts list 26 plays, ten of which are untitled, together with their ‘house’ - structures. One example:

A Comodie of Bewtie and Huswyfery shewed before her maiestie at Wyndesor on St. Johns daie at night enacted by the lord of Hundesdons servauntes, for which was prepared newe one Cloth and one Battlement of Canvas,iij. Ells of sacenet and Eight paire of gloves with sondrey other thinges out of this office.⁵⁴

Systematising this material, we find that in 18 plays, or in about 70% of the total, such structures signify ‘a city’, that in 14 plays, or 54 of the total there is, as in the example above, a ‘battlement’, while in just 6 out of 26 plays do they signify a single house, for instance ‘a countrie howse’ in *The Duke of Milayn and the Marques of Mantua* (1579/80) or the ‘senate howse’ in *A Storie of Pompey* (1580/01). In addition the entries mention a ‘wood’, a ‘castle’, a ‘palace’, a ‘well’, two ‘mounts’, and a ‘mountain’. It should also be noted that 18 out of 26 plays are set up with a combination of *two* stage structures, of which by far the most frequent combination is that of ‘battlement’ and ‘city’.⁵⁵ Although, then, one can in principle agree with

⁵⁴ Feuillerat, p. 349.

⁵⁵ A ‘battlement’, according to Chambers, ‘doubtless represented the external view of the walls and gates of a town or a castle’, while a ‘city’ represented ‘some internal town scene, a street or market place’, E. K. Chambers, *The Elizabethan Stage*, 4 vols (Oxford, 1923), vol. 1, p. 231.

Chambers' assertion that 'decorative variety was sought after, these elementary statistics nevertheless show that certain kinds, and also combinations, of locations were more commonly represented by material structures than others.

Regrettably, the accounts do not contain entries with information concerning the staging of Lyly's earliest plays, *Campaspe* and *Sappho and Phao*. Michael Best uses the fact that the staging for 18 out of 26 plays involves two houses to argue that these structures faced each other across the stage, and, moreover, that there were one entry which 'provides concrete evidence that this was so'.⁵⁶ The entry in question concerns 'stuffe deliuerde and woorke donne within thoffice of our Revells', in terms of money 'Six hundrede fowre and thirtie poundes nyne shillinges and five pence ymployed vppon theis playes Tragides and Maskes'.⁵⁷ The entry then lists seven plays,

'...The sevoenthe of Orestes and a Tragedie of the kinge of Scottes, to ye which belonged diuers howses, for the settinge forthe of the same as Stratoes howse, Gobbynys howse, Orestioes howse Rome, the Pallace of prosperitie Scotlande and a gret Castell one thothere side...'.⁵⁸

When comparing the structures mentioned in this entry to the structures functionally required by the text of *Horestes*, it is difficult to see how the entry could possibly refer only to Pikeryng's play. Although it would seem that two structures, one on each side of the stage, is referred to, most scholars, myself included, seem to agree

⁵⁶ Best, 1968, p. 107.

⁵⁷ See Feuillerat, p. 119.

⁵⁸ Ibid. The manner in which Best quotes this entry in his 1968 – article is 'edited' to support his own interpretation "'...a Tragedie of the kinge of Scottes, to ye whiche belonged diuers howses...as...the Pallace of prosperitie Scotlande, and a gret Castell one thothere side...'" Scholars agree that the play referred to here as 'Orestes' is probably John Pikeryng's interlude *Horestes*, based on John Lydgate's *Troy Book*, and performed before Elizabeth in the winter 1567/68.

that the text of *Horestes* requires only one central stage structure, and that is for the middle part of the play where we have the siege of Mycenae. Even if Best should be right about the number of structures and their position one on each side, it is hardly possible to read from this entry that they *face each other* across the stage. On the other hand, a tradition of staging with two main structures on stage could in principle easily be adapted to Lyly's antithetical style of writing. My point is that there are no documentary sources which confirm antithetical patterns of staging; the scholars' point of entry into discussions of staging should be *the specific functional requirements signalled by the text*.

The entries in the Revels Accounts refer to the staging of court performances, and David Bevington suggests that 'Lyly almost certainly designed his productions with the requirements of Whitehall and other palaces in mind, since court performance was the ultimate goal'.⁵⁹ Should we envisage that the performance given before the Queen was identical in terms of staging to a performance given earlier at the Blackfriars? It is hardly possible to hold the view that Lyly and his ensemble at the Blackfriars had the necessary resources of money and labour to copy the full splendour of a court performance. What we can assume, however, is that the company would have rehearsed with the scenic pieces which were functionally required by the text. Diogenes' tub in *Campaspe* and Sappho's bedchamber and Vulcan's forge in *Sappho and Phao* are examples of large structures or houses which almost certainly would have to have been available even at rehearsals in the Blackfriars. From a functional point-of-view, and shaped by the

⁵⁹ 'Introduction' to *Sappho and Phao*, Revels Plays, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1991), p. 182.

literary dramaturgy, the requirements of the two theatres are identical. The notion of functional requirements is attractive also because it accommodates the parallel notion of *added splendour*, of the court performance as a unique event, where the functional requirements of the text would have been complemented by painted backgrounds/and or large properties representing for instance a city, brilliant illumination, gorgeous curtains and all the other elements that is so carefully listed in the Revels Accounts. And, one may add, which would have made certain that for the spectators the occasion became something more than just an evening at the old Blackfriars.

Irving Smith's imaginative reconstruction of that theatre highlights another aspect of performance which is relevant to my discussion of dramaturgical models: the spatial relationship between the audience and players. We have seen that in John Heywood's *The Play of the Wether* the border between the dramatic world and the real world are not sharply drawn, and that the character Mery Report throughout the play interacts with both fellow players and spectators. The text reflects, in the words of J. L. Styan 'the spatial license granted by the Tudor Hall', and which can also be observed, if not to the same degree, in *Cambises* and *Damon and Pythias*.⁶⁰ However, in Smith's reconstruction of the player – spectator relationship in the Blackfriars the openness and 'spatial license' of the Tudor Hall has been replaced by something much more like a modern theatre, with a clear boundary between players and audience, and where the players and the rest of the company were in complete

⁶⁰ J. L. Styan, *The English Stage: A History of Drama and Performance*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. 66.

control of the whole backstage area. One may even get the impression from reading Smith that the spectators sat in rows facing the stage much like we do today.

Smith may or may not be correct in every detail of his reconstruction of the first Blackfriars theatre, but there is no reason to assume that he was fundamentally wrong and that Lyly's theatre actually was very similar to a Tudor Hall. This raises the question of which theatre Lyly wrote for or to be more precise: which theatre is reflected in his literary dramaturgy, the 'closed' dramatic world of the Blackfriars or the more open structures of the halls of Elizabeth's palaces? I would suggest that the answer is slightly more complicated than just assuming that because court performance was 'the ultimate goal', it would be the court halls which exerted the greatest influence on his textual dramaturgy. Lyly clearly developed his plays with the knowledge that the ensemble would have access to large properties financed by the Revels Office, but I believe that he wrote primarily with his own theatre in mind, and that this is what we see in the closed dramatic worlds of his plays.

3. 4. Sources

3.4.1. Setting

The palace, the tub, and the painter's shop, then, largely delimit the spatial setting of Athens in the play, but we cannot automatically assume that this structure represents solely the creative efforts of John Lyly. Alexander, Apelles and Diogenes are historical characters handed down to posterity through the writings of classical authors like Pliny and Plutarch, who also in some cases provided the rudiments of a

spatial setting. In Pliny's story of Apelles, Alexander, and his mistress Pancaspe in the *Natural History* we hear that the painter 'possessed great courtesy of manners, which made him more agreeable to Alexander the Great, *who frequently visited his studio*(my italics).⁶¹ The source thus contains one of the basic dramaturgical patterns of the play; Alexander who moves out from his palace to enter either the space of philosophy (Diogenes) or painting (Apelles).

3.4.2. Alexander

We saw above that the title of the play fairly quickly changed to 'Campaspe'. The change of title as well as the fact that Alexander is on stage in less than a third of the play's scenes, may lead to some doubt as to whether the spatial dramaturgy of the play can really be read as a metaphor for Alexander the empire builder. In what follows, I will examine the Alexander-character and critical reactions to it in some detail. First, the world-creating discourse of the Alexander of the play; secondly, aspects of the historical Alexander as represented in classical and later works; and, thirdly, critical reactions to the Alexander-character of the play.

An inventory of the spatialising utterances ordered according to character, shows quite clearly that the king is the main world-creating character in the play. Alexander has no less than 43 spatialising utterances, and a wide referential range concerning both (a) locations and (b) other characters: (a) Thebes, the city, Athens, court, camp, tub, palace, the world, (b) Clitus, these ladies, these philosophers, Sir

⁶¹ Book XXXV, in the Loeb Classical Library vol. IX (London: William Heineman Ltd, MCMLII), p. 325.

Boy, Apelles, Diogenes, Hephestion, Page, Campaspe, Parmenio. Furthermore, on half a dozen occasions the king initiates movements to another part of the setting: to offstage ('But come, let us go and give release, as I promised, to our Theban thralls', I.iii. 117-19), to Diogenes ('We will go see Diogenes', II.ii. 137), and to Apelles ('Now we will see how Apelles goeth forward', III.iv. 31). Perhaps the best way of recognising the spatialising quality of Alexander's discourse is to compare with the other central characters. In the case of Apelles, the total number of spatialising utterances is 12, and the referential range is significantly less wide than Alexander's: shop, world, window, madam, Psyllus, Alexander. The artist is concerned with his own world; the shop, his servant, his model, and similarly his imperatives initiate movements only within that restricted world: 'Away! In!' (III.v. 12), and 'Come, let us go in' (IV.ii. 49-50). Diogenes has, as one would expect in the discourse of a philosopher, a wider range of references than the painter (tub, palace, Athens, cabin, court, grave), but his total number of references is even lower, just nine. He does not initiate movements between parts of the setting, neither for himself nor for others. In terms of space, at least, the philosopher comes across both statistically and otherwise as the 'antithesis' of Alexander. Finally, Campaspe, the female prisoner, emerges as a character which, while numerically even lower on the scale than Diogenes, in contrast to both painter and philosopher is facing a fundamental choice of spatial setting. She has only four spatialising utterances in the course of the play, but having the freedom to choose between a 'poor shop' and the palace actually endows the character with a subjectivity in relation to space which is absent from all other characters except Alexander.

This rather elementary exercise in statistics has demonstrated, then, that Alexander, while being present in only about a third of the scenes, is nevertheless clearly the character around whom the dramatist has shaped the spatial setting. How does the spatial dynamism and expansiveness of the Alexander in Lyly's play tie in with the character who emerges from the discursive universe of classical and medieval Alexander-literature? The idea of representing Alexander as a character exhibiting a variety of desires, some of which are indicated as being less than pleasant, as we shall see, did not originate with Lyly. Nor is Lyly the only contemporary writer to include such material in his portrayal of the famous king. Even Montaigne, who in his *Essays* in general expresses a boundless admiration for the heroes of antiquity, cannot escape the fact that on some occasions the king had displayed cruelty far beyond the bounds of honourable behaviour even in time of war. In the very first essay, 'We reach the same end by discrepant means', Montaigne retells the story of Alexander's cruelty after the siege of Thebes. Six thousand men were slain 'yet their afflicted valour evoked no pity; a day was not long enough to slake the vengeance of Alexander'.⁶²

Although rarely exemplified by instances of pure terror like the aftermath of the siege of Thebes, presentations of Alexander from antiquity onwards often included the idea of the king as a complex and partly flawed personality. Montaigne's example in the first essay was taken from Quintus Curtius Rufus, a Roman who, based upon earlier Greek sources, wrote *The History of Alexander* probably in the first half of the first century A.D. The image of Alexander as set out by Rufus is

⁶²Michel de Montaigne, *The Complete Essays*, translated by M. A. Screech, (London: Penguin Books, 1991), p. 6.

characterised by progressive deterioration; the king was corrupted by his good fortune, and Rufus does not hesitate to assert that

'[H]ad he been able to maintain this degree of moderation to the end of his life, I would certainly consider him to have enjoyed more good fortune than appeared to be his when he was emulating Father Liber's triumph on his victorious march through all nations from the Hellespont right to the ocean.'⁶³

Lyly, while taking the story of Apelles and Campaspe from Pliny's *Natural History*, seems to have based his Alexander mainly on Plutarch's Alexander-biography in the *Parallel Lives*, written early in the second century A.D. Plutarch does not emphasise the darker aspects of the king's personality, he rather seeks to present the king as a temperate man. We learn that Alexander gives 'a beautiful demonstration of self-control and restraint' in relation to the wife and the daughters of his enemy, Darius, and that he was 'very self-controlled about food', but we do nevertheless get an idea of the complexity of his desires. One example used by Lyly in the play is the passage where Alexander, after a visit to Diogenes, states that 'if I were not Alexander, I would be Diogenes'.⁶⁴

In Arrian's *The Campaigns of Alexander* there is an unassuming but most interesting passage from the point-of-view of reading the character Alexander in Lyly's play. Arrian, who was a military commander under Hadrian and drove the invading Alans out of Armenia in AD 134, tells of Alexander's campaign against the Getae in Thracia that 'the idea of landing on the further side of the Danube suddenly seemed attractive' to the king. According to the editor, Arrian here uses the word

⁶³Quintus Curtius Rufus, *The History of Alexander*, translated by John Yardley with an introduction and notes by Waldemar Heckel, (London: Penguin Books, 1984).

⁶⁴Plutarch, *Greek Lives*, translated by Robin Waterfield, Oxford World Classics, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), p. 323 and 332.

'pothos' for the first time, a term which means 'longing' or 'yearning' and is frequently used by Arrian as well as other Alexander-historians in order to describe the desire to penetrate into the unknown or mysterious.⁶⁵ To penetrate into unknown territory, then, can be seen as both a description of activity in the form of actual military campaigns and as a metaphor for the king's ventures into the spiritual areas of love and philosophy.

Although Montaigne, Lyly, and other Renaissance writers had the opportunity to read and use material directly from the classical histories of Alexander, one should bear in mind that by the end of the sixteenth century the universe of Alexander material had come to include a number of texts from the medieval period. There is no need here for a comprehensive presentation of 'the medieval conception of Alexander', but it is interesting to note that several influential, late-medieval English works illustrate the progress of the didactic criticism of Alexander. In the Monk's tale from *The Canterbury Tales*, Chaucer uses the life of Alexander as an illustration of the inconstancy of fortune, while John Gower's condemnation of Alexander in the *Confessio Amantis* and other works is based upon the contention that he 'yilded to himself'. Thus, in Lydgate's *Fall of Princes* the moral is that the king lets his reason be fettered by wilful sensuality, and the contrast to Diogenes is emphasised: 'Alisaundre with coveitise was blent/The philosophre with lital was content'.⁶⁶

It is likely that Lyly knew, or at least was made to know, that to use Alexander as the main character of a play could activate potentially unwanted sub-textual

⁶⁵Arrian, *The Campaigns of Alexander*, ed. by J. R. Hamilton, (London: Penguin Books, 1971), p. 47.

⁶⁶See George Cary, *The Medieval Alexander*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1956)

material. Whether Lyly intended to have it there all along, or it was a result of the company's presentation before the Master of the Revels we do not know, but the statement in the Prologue at court that 'we, calling Alexander from his grave, seek only who was his love', is evidence that the problems inherent in bringing this multi-faceted character on stage before the Queen were recognised. Modern critics, however, have sought quite a lot more in accounts of Alexander than just who was his love, and what, then, has been the modern critical response to Lyly's play and a character who reflects a variety of historical and textual traditions stretching back more than a thousand years?

3. 5. *Modern critical positions*

In the play's critical history, the Alexander-figure has been among the few elements which has aroused a bit of controversy, and a number of quite divergent readings have been suggested since Bond's 1902-edition. In Saccio, 1969, which includes the most comprehensive study of *Campaspe* to this date, the darker aspects of the king's personality is down-played. On Alexander's relationship to Clitus and Parmenio, advisers to the king, Saccio writes that '[T]heir fear is totally inconsistent with what we know and they know of Alexander [...] we know of Alexander, at least, that he is merciful and respect truth'.⁶⁷ The discourse of Clitus and Parmenio will shortly be discussed in some detail, but I would like to suggest at this point that neither Parmenio nor we know for certain how Alexander will react. He is certainly

⁶⁷p. 32

capable of mercy, as suggested by Saccio, but on at least two occasions, as we shall see, he reveals a propensity for violence which substantiates the fears expressed by Parmenio.

Though more superficial, Joseph Houppert's study of *Campaspe* in *John Lyly* (1975) is interesting mainly because the author argues that Alexander is not the main character in the play, asserting, in my opinion rather over-ingeniously, that the king exists 'for the sake of other characters'.⁶⁸ However, at the end of the chapter, Houppert seems to have doubts and attempts a somewhat confused change of position. From having argued that the king is not the main character, he now accedes that

Lyly's final interest is in Alexander, not the lovers. For this reason, he removes Campaspe and Apelles from the stage at the end, permitting only Alexander and Hephestion to remain. In this sense, at least, the play is Alexander's, but Alexander's victory is not what the play is about (ibid. p. 70-1).

In addition, it would seem that Houppert wavers not only in the question of whether Alexander is the main character or not, but also as to the essential qualities of the king: on the one hand, the king can teach the philosophers 'good government', on the other, both the the king and Diogenes are frauds, 'attractive frauds, but frauds nevertheless' (p. 70).

From the 'blurry' image of the king found in Houppert, G. K. Hunter's presentation of Alexander in his edition of *Campaspe* for the Revels series (1991), brings back to the character some of the clear-cut and heroic quality we saw in Saccio. Hunter hints at the existence of a sinister dimension by pointing out that the 'very arbitrariness of these decisions reminds us [...] that magnanimity cannot be

⁶⁸(Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1975), p. 58.

relied on and that the dilemma of the court artist may then have a crueler conclusion'.⁶⁹ However, Hunter does not develop this perspective further, and the overall impression is that he sees Alexander as generous and magnanimous:

the magnanimity of Alexander allows both responses [i.e. both Apelles' and Diogenes'] to achieve success. In the end the king takes up his true role as military leader; with careless generosity he simply abandons the effort to make Diogenes a court philosopher and, condemning love as unfit for princes, he abandons Campaspe to Apelles' (ibid.).

Michael Pincombe, by exploring what he terms 'the tragi-comical credentials' of *Campaspe*, comes up with an Alexander-figure which is quite different from the ones we have seen so far. Relating the play to earlier efforts in the tragi-comical mode like for instance Richard Edwardes' *Damon and Pythias* (1571), and to the courtly-philosophical scenario, he is able to recast Alexander in the role of the tyrant, while characters like Diogenes and Aristotle come to personify 'Good Counsel' and 'False Flattery', respectively.⁷⁰ Pincombe's reading of the play represents a radical change of perspective and is a significant contribution to the debate on the Alexander-figure in that it focuses on the less attractive aspects of the king. However, there is always a danger when seeing a play in relation to a genre or group of plays that certain features will be overemphasised in order to make it fit a pre-established pattern. I do agree with Pincombe that the dark and potentially tragic dimension of *Campaspe* should not be overlooked, but on the other hand it also seems that his attempts to make the main characters of the play conform to existing types is not entirely convincing on all points. Alexander has a capacity for violence, but the text does not support the assertion that 'nobody will speak plainly with him',

⁶⁹G. K. Hunter, 1991, 'Introduction', p. 12.

⁷⁰See Pincombe, 1996, chapter two, '*Campaspe*: king's causes'.

because that is exactly what Hephaestion is doing in the 'love-debate' in the second act.

My own reading of Alexander, then, I wish to emphasise, is not intended as a traditional character analysis but rather as an attempt to unravel the spatial dramaturgy which supports a particular type of character. From the point-of-view of spatialising discourse the king is, as we have seen, the main character of the play, and his attempts to become a philosopher and to become a lover are examples of a desire which resembles the covetousness mentioned in Lydgate's *Fall of Princes*. In the spatial setting of Athens in Lyly's text, Alexander's expeditions into unknown territory are represented physically and geographically by visits to Diogenes' tub and to the shop of Apelles. Each venture ends with failure and withdrawal; the king is unable to follow the philosophy of Diogenes and 'be' Diogenes, he cannot draw or paint and 'be' Apelles, and most significantly: he is rejected by Campaspe and cannot be her lover. In what follows, I will attempt to demonstrate how the dramatist underlines his specific notions of the king and his desires by the spatial dramaturgy of the play. The presentation will at least partly follow the sequence of scenes in the play, which means that Alexander's relationship with philosophy and philosophers will be discussed before his concerns with Campaspe and Apelles.

3. 6. *The three discourses*

3.6.1. Philosophers

The point of departure for any inquiry into the nature of Alexander's venture into 'the space of philosophy' is to be found in the very first scene of the play. After having met the prisoners from the siege of Thebes, the king reflects upon his own role in the coming period of peace:

Hephestion, it resteth now that we have as great care to govern in peace as conquer in war, that whilst arms cease arts may flourish, and joining letters with lances we endeavour to be as good philosophers as soldiers, knowing it no less praise to be wise than commendable to be valiant (I.i. 94-99).

In this passage, then, marked by the euphuistic tendency towards balanced antithesis, and in a series of paired dichotomies: peace-war, arms-arts, philosophers-soldiers, wise-valiant, Alexander launches a peacetime role for himself and a programme for peacetime government. His closest adviser, Hephaestion, endorses the idea enthusiastically, and sees in the king's statement 'as great desire to rule as to subdue' and, echoing the dichotomy used by Alexander, he also accepts the idea that the roles of soldier and philosopher can be combined 'needs must that commonwealth be fortunate whose captain is a philosopher and whose philosopher is a captain' (I.i. 101-103).

The king's idealistic statement induces both expectations and wonder in the reader/spectator; how is Alexander going to bring about the necessary changes in his own role and in the government of the realm? We shall soon see that in terms of space his project entails moving characters towards his own space in the question of politics, and movements out from the palatial area by the king in the question of

personal life-style and role. However, before the serious aspects of the relationship between Alexander and philosophy are introduced, Lyly includes a comic-relief scene featuring the servants of Diogenes, Plato and Apelles. These merry boys turn topsy-turvy the lofty sentiments from the previous scene of the role of philosophy. To serve a philosopher is, according to Manes, to live '[W]ith fine jests, sweet air and the dog alms' (I.ii. 88). In terms of location the scene with the pages is unlocalised, and no care is taken to spatially integrate it with scene I.i. which, as we know from Alexander's utterance in line 90, 'conduct these honourable ladies into the city', must necessarily be set somewhere outside Athens.

While the location outside the city is used only once in the play, in the third scene of the first act we encounter one of the three main locations in the play, the area of the royal palace. The most renowned philosophers in the kingdom have been invited, or rather ordered, to come to the palace in order to be given an outline of the king's grand scheme. Prior to the actual meeting with Alexander, the philosophers have a conversation among themselves which seems to be intended as an introduction to the main points of their respective philosophies, but which may also, as we shall see, have bearing on how we are supposed to view the king's attitude to their profession. Plato, for instance, argues that Aristotle and Cleanthes 'attribute so much to nature, by searching for things which are not to be found, that whilst you study a cause of your own, you omit the occasion itself' (I.iii. 38-41). When he arrives, however, Alexander makes it clear that he has his own views on the function of philosophy and the role of philosophers. He tells Aristotle, his old teacher, that 'in king's causes I will not stand to scholars' arguments', i.e. in questions concerning government and politics no philosopher except the king himself

has a role. In general philosophers should 'instruct the young with rules, confirm the old with reasons' (I.iii. 91-92). The words of Hephestion from the end of the first scene, of the 'captain as philosopher', have already become a reality; there is no need for any kind of educational process involving the great philosophers of Athens. At this point Alexander seems to be in complete control both of the physical and the intellectual space of philosophy in the city.

The message from the king to the philosophers comes across in a dialogue between Aristotle and Alexander which clearly dramatises a passage in Plutarch where the historian suggests that the relationship between the two gradually deteriorated:

Later, however, he held him in more or less of suspicion, not to the extent of doing him any harm, but his kindly attentions lacked their former ardour and affection towards him, and this was proof of estrangement.⁷¹

Lyly shapes this passage into a balanced, interactive sequence where the king clearly selects Aristotle among the group of philosophers present, but where the regular turn-taking and formal balance of the discourse actually defuse the potential conflict between philosopher and king. However, his almost menacing tone leaves no doubt that meddling with 'king's causes' would entail dire consequences for those involved: '[Let] your lives be answerable to your learnings, lest my proceedings be contrary to my promises' (I.iii. 92-94).

There is one philosopher, though, who refused the king's summon to attend the meeting, and in the final scene of act I the other philosophers, in the words of Plato, go to find 'why he went not with us to Alexander', thus initiating the pattern of

⁷¹See Plutarch, *Lives*, Loeb Classical Library, translated by Bernadotte Perrin, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1919, reprint 1999), p. 244-5.

movements from various locations in the dramatic world to the tub of Diogenes. The reason why is clear enough; Diogenes sees the values of the court and the values embodied in his own philosophy as totally incompatible. Contrary to the professed belief of the king, one cannot combine the role of courtier and philosopher because the court represents a corrupting influence

Aristotle Thou hast reason to contemn the court, being both in body and mind to crooked for the court

Diogenes As good be crooked and endeavour to make myself straight from the court as to be straight and learn to be crooked at court (I.iii. 141-145).

Scene I.iii, comprising both the segment with Alexander and the philosophers and the segment with the philosophers visiting Diogenes, goes straight to the centre of a major debate in early modern humanist circles: should and could intellectuals function as advisers to the king? The two basic positions in this issue, the 'crucial antithesis' between action and contemplation were formulated in ancient Greece by Platon and Aristotle, and, especially in the case of the 'vita activa', handed down to the Renaissance by translations of Cicero's *De Officiis*.⁷² There is no need in this context to give a comprehensive survey of the sixteenth-century debate on the issue, but I would like to focus for a moment on the famous passage from Thomas More's *Utopia* (1515) where Hythlodæus and the fictional 'More' discuss the possibility of intellectuals giving advice to princes. Hythlodæus is very pessimistic, but 'More' tries to outline an alternative position:

'That is just what I was saying', Raphael replied. 'There is no place for philosophy in the councils of kings'. 'Yes, there is,' I said, 'but not for this

⁷²See for instance James Hankins, 'Humanism and the origins of modern political thought' in Jill Kraye (ed.) *The Cambridge Companion to Renaissance Humanism*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), and George. M. Logan (ed.), 'Introduction' to Thomas More's *Utopia*, Cambridge Texts in the History of Political Thought, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989).

school philosophy which supposes that every topic is suitable for every occasion. There is another philosophy, more practical for statesmen, which knows its stage, adapts itself to the play in hand, and performs its role neatly and appropriately'.⁷³

I would like to think that Lyly, 'University Wit', and grandson of a well-known humanist, knew this passage well and had it in mind when developing the scene with Alexander and the philosophers. Alexander does reject the 'school-philosophy', and his advice to the philosophers come close to being a paraphrase of the fictional More's suggestion that the intellectuals should 'adapt themselves to the play in hand and to play their role neatly and appropriately'.

The first part of Alexander's dealings with the philosophers thus ends on a fairly serious note, with a king who issues a barely veiled threat, and a discourse which has its roots in one of the major cultural topics of the century. Lyly, however, undercuts this serious mood by including in the scene his own version of an episode borrowed from Plutarch; the king's questioning of the gymnosophists (ascetic, naked philosophers) during the India-campaign. In Plutarch, this episode is serious enough, 'Alexander therefore put difficult questions to them, declaring that he would put to death him who first made an incorrect answer, and then the rest, in an order determined in like manner'.⁷⁴ Luckily, the philosophers' answers satisfy Alexander, and we are told that '[T]hese philosophers, then, he dismissed with gifts' (ibid, 409). In the play, the Greek philosophers are under no explicit threat when they answer Alexander's questions, and just as in Plutarch, it all ends happily. Alexander's remark to Hephestion that 'methinks they have answered all well, and in such questions I

⁷³Thomas More, *Utopia*, ed. by George M. Logan and Robert M. Adams, 1989, p. 35-36.

⁷⁴ Plutarch, *Lives*, p. 407.

mean often to try them' (I.iii.112-13), clearly relieves some of the tension of the previous exchange between the king and Aristotle. I would argue, though, that Lyly's change of interlocutors from Indian Gymnosophists to Greek philosophers as well as the kind of questions given to these great philosophers, and Alexander's own comment that 'indeed, strange questions must have strange answers' (103), contributes to the ongoing interrogation of the king's attitudes to philosophy in the play.

Even though Diogenes didn't turn up at the meeting, the king is sufficiently curious about the philosopher to leave the palace area and visit the renowned character in his tub. It is interesting to note that before this meeting takes place in the second scene of act II, Lyly inserts a comic-relief-scene located at the tub and featuring Diogenes and the servants. The philosopher emerges from the first act as the embodiment of moral strength and correct living, and it is as if the dramatist needs to weaken the serious aspect of the character before the king arrives.

Although Alexander is a complex figure, it simply will not do to have the two cast wholly in black and white as the ignorant tyrant and 'Good Council'. In the dialogue between Alexander and Diogenes, the first issue to be introduced is the social and geographical distance between the palace and the tub:

Diogenes. Who calleth?

Alexander. Alexander. How happened it that you would not come out of your tub to my palace?

Diogenes. Because it was as far from my tub to your palace as from your palace to my tub.

Diogenes in this passage challenges the king's notion of the obligation of the subject to read actual distance in terms of social distance, i.e. the man with the lowest status

is the one who ought to carry out the physical journey. In other words, why shouldn't Alexander come to Diogenes? However, to the king the most puzzling and frustrating aspect about the philosopher is his total lack of desires in relation to the outer world. The king cannot even demonstrate his superiority by being magnanimous, because when asked by Alexander what he wants, Diogenes explicitly answers that he wants nothing that the king has. This is of course totally incomprehensible to a man who in his own words 'has the world at command' (II.ii. 161). In the course of their conversation the king reminds the philosopher that his control extends even to the philosopher's body: 'thou shalt live no longer than I will', but we do not get the feeling of menacing reality that accompanied a similar statement to the philosopher in the first act. In the present context this is merely another element in the duel of wit between king and philosopher. When Diogenes retorts that 'I shall die whether you will or no', the subject is not pursued further.

Alexander's final question is a fundamental one: '[H]ow should one learn to be content?' (165). Diogenes' answer goes straight to the core of the Alexander-figure: 'Unlearn to covet', echoing the late-medieval presentation of Alexander as one who with conceit is blent'. Alexander's reaction to Diogenes' advice comes out as rather curious because Lyly here uses a statement made by the king in another context:

'Hephestion, were I not Alexander I would wish to be Diogenes' (167). As G. K.

Hunter has noted in the Revels edition, this utterance can be found in the

Apophtegms of Erasmus nr. 26, in the following passage

Alexander Magnus when he was at the citee of Corinthus, wente unto Diogenes sittynge in his tubbe, and talked familiarelye with hym maie thynges: from whom after that he was departed, to his familiare frendes takynge highe disdeigne and indignacion, that beeyng a kynge, he had dooen so muche honour to such dogge as Diogenes, who would not so much as ones to aryse

up from his tail to do his dutie of humble obeysance to so greate a prince, he saied: Well, yet for all that, wer I not Alexander, I would with all my heart be Diogenes.⁷⁵

The king's reaction to Diogenes' answer, then, comes across as a sort of non-reaction in the context of the play; the discourse comes to a halt in the face of Alexander's inability to give a meaningful reply to Diogenes' uncanny insight into his own psyche.

In spite of Diogenes' less than humble attitude, the king is fascinated by this character who upholds values so different from his own. In act V, scene iv, Alexander once again visits the philosopher, and also on this occasion the issue of land and space crops up in the discourse

Alexander. If thou mightst have thy will, how much ground would content thee?

Diogenes. As much as you in the end must be contented withal.

Alexander. What, a world?

Diogenes. No, the length of my body.

Somewhat surprised, Alexander wrongly interprets Diogenes' answer as an affirmation of his own attitudes to space, that nothing less than control over the entire world is the ultimate aim. When Diogenes tells the king straight out that what he has in mind is not world domination, but the six feet of a grave, we see once more the king's inability to face the philosopher's idea and give it serious consideration. After Diogenes has given his answer '[N]o the length of my body', Alexander once again abruptly terminates their turn-taking by selecting Hephestion

⁷⁵Translated into English by Nicholas Udall (1564), (Boston, Lincolnshire: Robert Roberts, 1877)

as the next speaker, 'Hephestion, shall I be a little pleasant with him?' (60). It seems that the philosopher with his alternative set of values has to be redefined as a jester, a figure fit for the amusement of kings.

I would argue that Alexander's dialogues with the philosophers should be understood as an example of a pattern of expansion and withdrawal which, as we shall see, repeats itself in relation to both art and love. His lofty ideas of intellectuals ruling the state is undermined by his own actions and attitudes, the king does not embrace philosophy in its rich totality, but selects elements consciously and with an eye to his own need for social and political control. With respect to philosophy as providing guidelines for an individual's life, he is unable to grasp the fundamental relevance to his own life of Diogenes' statements on covetousness in the second and fifth acts. In terms of dialogue as interaction, the passages with Alexander and Diogenes demonstrate a fully developed subjectivity in relation to space in both characters. The king and the philosopher represent diametrically opposed, but nevertheless in both cases clearly formulated positions. The difference in power between the two is rather reflected in the fact that it is the king who controls the structure of the discourse; as we have seen it is Alexander who decides when a new topic is to be introduced, and who is free to select the next speaker.

3.6.2. Lovers

Alexander's first meeting with Campaspe takes place outside the city walls as the prisoners from the siege of Thebes are brought to Athens, but nothing in this

scene indicates that the king suddenly falls in love with her. Prior to the king's arrival Campaspe expresses the hope that he will respect her virginity, the underlying fear being, as we shall see, not entirely unfounded. However, the scene sets out to demonstrate Alexander's honourable way of treating female prisoners in general, an attitude which is conveyed by incorporating a version of Plutarch's story of the brave Timoclea.⁷⁶ The discourse between Alexander and Campaspe at this point is limited to his question of who she is, and her reply, that she is his 'humble handmaid [...] born of mean parentage but to extreme fortune' (I.i. 83-85).

Alexander first reveals his emotions to Hephestion in II.ii, and Hephestion reacts negatively to his friend and master's newly found passion. A debate on the topic of love and princes ensues, and it is interesting to note how Hephestion presents his objections in the form of spatial images:

I cannot tell, Alexander, whether the report be more shameful to be heard or the cause sorrowful to be believed. What, is the son of Philip of Macedon, become the subject of Campaspe, the captive of Thebes? Is that mind whose greatness the world could not contain drawn within the compass of an idle alluring eye? [...] Remember Alexander, thou hast a camp to govern, not a chamber (II.ii. 33-69)

Both question and statement argue that the king's infatuation with Campaspe is going to change his conception of his own relationship to the world. Love redirects the king's mind and attention from the wide spaces of territorial rule and conquest to the narrow, cramped spaces of domestic and private concerns. When replying to Hephestion's pleas for a cool head and rational behaviour, Alexander avoids the spatial images introduced by his friend, and merely argues that the emotions and

⁷⁶Lyly's Timoclea demonstrates her courage by verbal defiance, but we know from Plutarch's story that during the fighting in Thebes she had been raped, and had consequently pushed the rapist into a well 'and then hurled a great many stones upon him and killed him', *Lives*, p. 257.

passions of a king are beyond reason: 'Yield, Hephestion, for Alexander doth love and therefore must obtain' (II.ii. 112-13). The consequence of such an attitude in term of space is that in order to 'obtain' the girl, the king must embark on a campaign of conquest akin to his military campaigns, but directed toward the small and private spaces. He leaves no doubt that the parallel includes the possibility of having to invade the bodily space of Campaspe by means of violence: 'why, what is that which Alexander may not conquer as he list?'. Hephestion answers truthfully that the one thing that cannot be conquered is love, and the violent temper of Alexander seems to be defused by this statement. Indeed the play never shows any violent action on part of the king. Nonetheless, his potential for violence is lurking ominously in the background, not only in relation to Campaspe, but also, as we shall see, in relation to characters like Clitus and Parmenio.

After the rather serious debate between Alexander and Hephestion in the second act, Lyly enlivens the mood by a couple of comic-relief scenes, and when we return to the main action in the third act, the possible threat of violence towards Campaspe has partly, though not entirely, been removed by the fact that she no longer spends most of her time in or near the palace. Alexander wants her portrait to be painted by the court artist, Apelles, who, it is made clear, does not reside at court but has his own studio and shop somewhere in the centre of Athens. Towards the middle of the play, then, Lyly is transferring Campaspe to what can be described as a middle position among the three locations in the play (palace, studio, tub). Whether 'middle' also could refer to stage locations will be discussed later; in this context I wish to draw attention to Apelles' studio as a physical manifestation of an attitude which is neither the extreme world-renouncing attitude of Diogenes, the man in the

tub, nor the extremely acquisitive attitudes characteristic of Alexander and the royal retinue.

The shop, then, is the setting of the development of the love-affair between Apelles and Campaspe. However, it is also the setting of yet another of Alexander's 'ventures into the unknown': his attempts to master the art of painting. In his own words: 'Why should not I by labour be as cunning as Apelles?' (III.iv.95). His attempts to explain and physically master the techniques of drawing and painting meet with little success, though, and Apelles offers an explanation, 'Your hand goeth not with your mind' (III.iv. 122). This utterance is personal, and implies considerable insight into the king's personality, but Alexander accepts Apelles' conclusion without taking offence '[N]ay, if all be too hard or soft, so many rules and regards that one's hand, one's eye, one's mind must all draw together, I had rather be setting of a battle than blotting of a board', a conclusion to which Apelles gives his tacit consent. (III.iv. 123-26). The antithesis between battle and 'blotting of a board', an antithesis between activities, prepares for the choice between opposite spatial contexts that Campaspe later has to make.

In the third and fourth act, then, seven out of ten scenes are located at the shop of Apelles. As the numbers indicate, most of these scenes are short, a factor which increases our perception of speed and intensity in the development of the relationship between the painter and the prisoner. We have seen above that Apelles and Campaspe, relatively speaking, have few spatialising utterances in the course of the play, and that most of these, especially in the case of Apelles, relate to his own location, the shop. This is characteristic also of the dialogue which leads up to their mutual declarations of love in act IV, scene iv. However, the question of spatiality

cannot be avoided altogether; Campaspe's choice between prince and painter is also a choice between different spatial contexts, and this dilemma is first put into words by Apelles:

Will she not think it better to sit under a cloth of estate like a queen than in a poor shop like a housewife? And esteem it sweeter to be a concubine of the lord of the world than a spouse to a painter in Athens? (III.v. 35-38).

His concerns are in this case expressed in the course of a soliloquy and not directly to Campaspe; for the moment he feels helpless in the face of Alexander's power, and the only measure he can come up with is to blemish the painting so that more sittings will be needed. Campaspe willingly remains at the shop to sit again, and we know from a soliloquy parallel to Apelles' that she is well aware of the choice she has to make. When she finally concludes in IV.iv, both Campaspe's subjectivity and the interactive character of the relationship between her and Apelles is underscored by the fact that she expresses her choice directly to him in the same terms that he has already used: 'Well, I must be gone; but his assure yourself, that I had rather be in thy shop grinding colours than in Alexander's court following higher fortunes' (IV.iv. 16-18).

In the love plot, Lyly utilises the inside-outside contrast in relation to Apelles' shop. We have already witnessed the conflict between emotion and reason in the debate between Alexander and Hephestion, and we meet the same considerations in Apelles' soliloquy at the end of act three: should he abandon all reason and become the king's rival over the favours of the fair Campaspe? His decision to fight for Campaspe means that the inside of the shop becomes, if not a *locus amoenus*, at least a space in which emotion rather than reason is allowed to rule. Using both the inside and the outside of the shop also has a more practical and theatrical function.

It allows Lyly to operate dynamically in relation to stage configurations. Thus, when Alexander visits the shop in III.iv, Campaspe at first is emerging from the shop with Apelles. After greeting the king, she then goes back into the shop, allowing the king and the painter, and possibly also Hephestion, to occupy the stage without the highly charged presence of the object of the king's desires in the scene where the king tries his hand at drawing. Afterwards, she comes out of the shop again, walks across the stage while the king is watching, admiringly: 'How stately she passeth by, yet how soberly' (III.v. 139). The existence of the shop of Apelles, with its interior dimension, significantly contributes to the maintenance of a certain distance between Alexander and Campaspe throughout the play. The king is never in the situation of having to declare his love in face-to-face interaction, and that way the embarrassment of being the one not chosen is slightly less prominent than it would otherwise have been.

It would not do to have a prince walk off the stage humiliated, but the ending can certainly be read as something quite different from the story of royal magnanimity found in Pliny's *Natural History*. There, Alexander's act of giving away his favourite mistress Pancaspe is presented as an act of magnanimity towards Apelles:

he presented her to him, greatminded as he was and still greater owing to his control of himself, and of a greatness proved by this action as much as by any other victory: because he conquered himself, and presented not only his bedmate but his affection also to the artist.⁷⁷

Pliny's Pancaspe, then, has been the king's mistress and is presented to Apelles as an already conquered province. Being a prisoner, Lyly's Campaspe may also be said to have been 'conquered', but in contrast to Pancaspe she is a subject with feelings

⁷⁷See book XXXV, p. 325.

which not even the great Alexander can dispose of all according to his own fancy. She is not his to give away, and the reality is that although the king could have forced Campaspe to yield to his lust, he is a loser with regard to her love. He has to withdraw from his venture into love just as he has to withdraw from, or rely on the threat of force, in his venture into the realm of philosophy.

3.6.3. Soldiers

We have seen above that textual references clearly establish Alexander's palace as a location in the onstage dramatic world, but in terms of dramaturgy the palace is the most elusive of the three locations which together constitute the major part of the setting. This may sound strange in view of my earlier argument that the king is the major world-creating character in the play. However, as the previous reading has established: Alexander is a dynamic character, with few exceptions more concerned with his expeditions *out from* the palace than with his residence *in* it. The consequence is that the king's spatialising utterances contribute little to our understanding of how he and other characters relate spatially to the palace. There are, of course, certain characters in the play apart from the king who are 'palatial', i.e. who by their function are linked to the palace. Hephestion, the king's friend and closest adviser has already been introduced, and I wish in this section to look briefly at the discourse of two other advocates of war and expansion, Clitus and Parmenio, and to examine how and to what degree the dramatist develops the subjectivity and spatialising discourse of these, relatively minor characters.

We meet the two for the first time in act I, scene i, in a dialogue which occupies the first part of the scene with Alexander and the prisoners. Clitus' first utterance establishes both the temporal deixis and the topic of their conversation:

[P]armenio, I cannot tell whether I should more commend in Alexander's victories courage or courtesy, in the one being a resolution without fear, in the other a liberality without custom: Thebes is razed, the people not racked, towers thrown down, bodies not thrust aside, a conquest without conflict, and a cruel war in a mild peace (I.i. 1-7).

The time is just after the successful siege of Thebes, and although the dialogue between Clitus and Parmenio in this case contain no references to location, we know from Alexander's order to Parmenio later in the scene to 'conduct these honourable ladies into the city' (90), that the location is somewhere outside Athens. At this point in the play, the two are unanimous in their praise of Alexander's qualities as a warlord; the king is evidently a worthy successor to his father, Philip of Macedonia.⁷⁸ In this panegyric mood, Clitus and Parmenio would emerge as quite flat and chorus-like characters had it not been for the fact that their utterances also reveal an awareness of each other's attitudes and discourse, which, as we shall see, literally characterises their dialogues throughout the play.

In the dialogue in I.i. this self-examining discourse is restricted to veiled suggestions that Clitus' attitudes to royal service is not what they ought to be. Their next dialogue, in III.iv., is also unlocated, but the discourse is now focussed on conditions at court. The two have become aware that the king is no longer his usual self; Clitus observes that 'in the morning he is melancholy, at noon solemn, at all

⁷⁸Philip, of course, was a great conqueror. Indeed so much so that according to Plutarch, the young Alexander complained to his friends that 'Boys, my father will anticipate everything; and for me he will leave no great or brilliant achievement to be displayed to the world with your aid', *Lives*, p. 235.

times more sour or severe than he was accustomed' (3-5). Parmenio is clearly reluctant to discuss the issue because kings 'have long ears and stretched arms, in whose head suspicion is a proof and to be accused is to be condemned' (12-13), but Clitus replies that 'between us there can be no danger to find out the cause'. True to character, the two then proceed to seek an explanation for Alexander's changed behaviour within the field which concern them most: war and conquest.

The third, and final, dialogue in IV. iii. concerns the degeneration of court life. Parmenio's outspoken criticism of conditions at court provokes the same kind of cautionary utterances from Clitus that we heard from Parmenio in the previous scene: 'Cease, Parmenio, lest in speaking what becommeth thee not thou feel what liketh thee not; truth is never without a scratched face' (28-30). This time the scene is located; from Parmenio's final utterance 'But let us draw in, to see how well it becomes them to tread the measures in a dance that were wont to set the order for a march', we know that he and Clitus are close to or in the palace.

It seems fair to conclude, then, that although Clitus and Parmenio are not characters with a markedly spatialising discourse, they contribute, by their emphasis on the traditional values connected with Alexander, to our sense of the existence of a 'palatial' location in the play. Moreover, the two emerge as subjects in the play largely because of the way their utterances reveal an awareness of the dangers inherent in criticising the major occupant of that location, Alexander.

One can hardly avoid the conclusion that the discourse of Clitus and Parmenio on the topic of Alexander contributes to a 'deconstruction' of the image of the magnanimous and merciful king, and once this is recognised the critic is faced with the question of *why* the dramatist chose to let these characters express their fears of

being punished for discussing the ruler. Both Clitus and Parmenio are historical characters, of course, and in the case of Clitus, Plutarch reports that he was killed by Alexander for being too outspoken concerning the situation of the Macedonians in the army.⁷⁹ This historical background to the discourse of Clitus and Parmenio in the play is not explored in Hunter's 'introduction' to the Revels edition, but Pincombe suggests that 'neither Clitus nor Parmenio can forget what happened in their earlier inscription in Plutarch: they were both slain by Alexander's hand'.⁸⁰ This is certainly an intriguing perspective on dramatic characters, but the reality is still that it is the dramatist who deploys the discourse of fear. I would like to suggest that although the effect of these passages on our perception of Alexander is undeniable, it may be that it is largely unintentional. Lyly may in the case of Clitus and Parmenio be primarily interested in exploring and presenting a particular kind of relationship between prince and courtier, in this case a relationship which can find no middle ground, but which swings as a pendulum between uncritical adulation and submissive anxiety. Such a reading would also make it easier to understand Clitus' obviously biased presentation of the siege of Thebes in I.i., which contains the glaring untruth that the people of the city was 'not racked'.

3. 7. *Performance*

⁷⁹See Plutarch, *Lives*, p. 372-3.

⁸⁰Pincombe, 1996, p. 29. Parmenio was killed in the wake of his son, Philotas', execution for alleged treachery.

Parmenio's final utterance, 'let us draw in', leads us straight to one of the problem issues concerning the plays literary dramaturgy of space's mediation of a performance solution: was the palace represented on stage by a structure of the kind termed 'house' or 'booth? This question has been answered negatively by both Best and Hunter on the reason that the text does not require a three-dimensional palace structure with possibilities for acting scenes set inside. Still, when Hunter bases his argument on the idea that 'his [Alexander's] supreme power makes him free in space as is neither Diogenes nor Apelles, he is in danger of oversimplifying the scenography. There may have been no physical structure on stage to signify the palace, and it would have been left to the imaginative ability of the audience to 'see' the splendours of Alexander's court; it is nonetheless likely that the king's visits to the shop and the tub would have had a particular 'point of departure' on stage. This would also have been the place on stage where the king met the philosophers and where he conversed with the courtiers.

From a purely functional point of view, then, a 'minimalistic' scenographic solution is sufficient, but on the other hand it seems likely that at least in court performance the location of a great ruler like Alexander would have been marked out in some way. We saw above that the Revels accounts contain entries which mention a structure termed a 'palace', but it is also possible that a structure belonging to the far more numerous category 'city' could have been used to signify a 'palatial' area. This is speculation, of course. However, the one fact that the text does reveal, by Parmenio's utterance, is that there had to be an exit opportunity for the players in the shape of a door or a booth in front of a door which could be constructed in the audience's imagination as the entrance to Alexander's palace.

Both Best and Hunter argue that the text requires two structures on stage signifying the tub of Diogenes and the shop of Apelles, respectively.⁸¹ This certainly seems to be a likely scenographic solution, and I would also agree with their conclusion that Diogenes' tub probably was a structure with an opening at the top, while Apelles' shop, because of the interior scenes, needed to be some kind of curtained structure. However, it seems to me that their conclusions when considering the player's movements in and around these 'houses' rather than their number and their construction details, are less convincing. It is likely that Diogenes' head appearing and disappearing above the rim of the tub would draw laughter from the audience, but I find it difficult to support the idea that Diogenes was never outside tub in the course of the performance. At the beginning of act II, Psyllus tells the other servants 'Behold Manes, where thy master is, seeking either for bones for his dinner or pins for his sleeves' (1-2). Psyllus' utterance seems to indicate some kind of physical activity, and if we look at the passage in Diogenes Laertius where Lyly got the idea for this scene, it reads: 'He lit a lamp in broad daylight and said, as *he went about*, «I am looking for a man»'.⁸² Similarly, in act IV, scene i, where Diogenes has told the people of Athens that he is going to fly in the air, we learn from Manes that the philosopher 'bustles himself to fly', also a physical activity which I propose would require the actor to do more than just pop his head above the rim of the tub.

If we assume, then, that there were three locations on stage with at least two of them represented by 'houses', how would the three be positioned on stage and how would such positioning relate to the themes of the play? Best saw it as likely

⁸¹In Best, 1968, p. 109, and Hunter, 1991, p. 27-33.

⁸²*Lives of Eminent Philosophers* VI. 41. Loeb Classical Library.

that the houses of Apelles and Diogenes were set in opposition across the stage, thus symbolising the most significant antitheses of values in the play. Hunter, (1991), agrees that the basic polarity can be found between the painter and the philosopher:

The values of the workshop are present as an implicit commentary on the different things being spoken. The same is true, of course of the tub of Diogenes, present [...] as an antithetical statement of opposite values' (p. 32)

There are undoubtedly antitheses to be found between the tub and the shop, but I wish to argue that an alternative reading is possible: that the most fundamental antithetical relationship in the play is between the values of Alexander and the values of Diogenes. The opposition between the two, as we have seen, goes straight to the core of the king's desires: his covetousness is without limits. Diogenes, on the other hand, has clearly demonstrated that he aims at total independence from worldly desires.

A scenographic solution based on an antithesis between Alexander and Diogenes can be envisaged as follows: the three loci are placed across the stage with the shop of Apelles occupying the middle position, perhaps drawn a bit back from the other two to allow an uninterrupted space between the palace and the tub. From his vantage point at one end the king would naturally deliver lines like 'we will go and see Diogenes' and 'behold Diogenes talking to one at his tub' (III. iv. 51). Placing the shop between the two extremes may then be seen not only as an effective use of stage space, but as a visual expression of the play as a statement on love. The title of the play is *Campaspe*, and she rejects the love of kings which is 'like the blowing of winds, which whistle sometimes gentle among the leaves, and straightway turns the trees up by the roots' (IV. v. 23-25). That she in equal fashion would reject the

life-style and values of the man in the tub is to state the obvious. It is as if Lyly is saying that 'love thrives in the middle'.

3. 8. *Midas: textual history and summary*

Five years after Alexander had done his best to conquer Campaspe, another prince whose relations with the world are structured upon desires enter the stage in order to entertain the Queen. It has been recognised for a long time that *Midas* was most likely one of three plays given before the Queen in the 1589/90 season, and, from the information provided on the front page of the Quarto, we can be fairly certain that it was the play which was performed on Twelfth Night that year. It was registered in the Stationers' register in the following year, and the first, and only, Quarto-edition was published in 1592. The play was included, with songs added, in Blount's *Six Comedies*, but most twentieth-century editors have based their editions on the Quarto, which is considered as a reliable text. However, scholarly 20th century editions have not been numerous. Apart from Warwick Bond's edition in the *Works*, Anne Begor Lancashire published a fully commented edition in 1969, and in 2000, a new edition by was published with *Gallathea* in the third volume of the Revels series of the plays of Lyly. It is upon the text of the Revels edition that the discussions in this chapter are based.

Midas is the story of the king of Phrygia who, because he does the gods a favour by returning Silenius to Bacchus, is granted the right to choose a gift. Initially the gods' generosity creates a problem for Midas. He is surrounded by councillors who have strong opinions on what his choice ought to be; Mellacrites argues for

gold, Martius for success in war, and Eristus for love. In the end, however, the king is convinced by Mellacrites' argument that gold is the vital factor in achieving success in all aspects of life, and the gift he receives from Bacchus is that everything he touches shall be turned into gold. The result, of course, is disastrous; even the food he eats is transformed into gold. Midas begs Bacchus to be released from this terrible ordeal, and Bacchus tells him that he has to wash of his 'crime' in the river Pactolus, not far from the city of Sardis. On his way back from the river, on the mountain Tmolus, Midas is asked to judge in a musical contest between Apollo and Pan, and once again he makes the wrong choice. By choosing the shrill tones of Pan over the sweet melodies of Apollo the terrible wrath of the latter is awakened, and a suitable punishment befalls the tone-deaf king: 'The Delian god would not allow ears so foolish to retain their human shape; he lengthened them, filled them with bristling grey hairs, and made them movable'. The king of Phrygia has to wear the ears of an ass. Upon his return, Midas attempts to stop this deformity from becoming common knowledge, but to no avail. The reeds, 'stirred by the gentle south wind' reveal the truth about the king's disfigurement. In the end, the only way of getting rid of the ears is to go to Delphi and get the advice of the oracle. As it turns out, the message of the oracle is that the king must radically change the direction of his life and his policy towards other peoples and nations, and this Midas accepts.

3. 9. Sources and background

The onstage setting of Lyly's play follows, with one exception, closely the geography of locations in his most important source: the story of Midas in Ovid's

Metamorphoses. To this structure, i.e. from palace area to the river Pactolus to Mount Tmolus and back again, the dramatist has added what editors usually labels a 'reedy place', the place where the reeds speaks reveal the fact that Midas' so desperately wishes to conceal, his ass's ears, and the visit to Delphi. This last addition was necessary, as we shall see, because the play is something more than just a dramatisation of an ancient myth. It is also a political and moral allegory based on contemporary political events and featuring some of its most central figures. It has long been recognised that *Midas* should be read as an allegorical representation of the Spanish king Philip II (?-1598). Relations with Spain had gradually worsened since Philip sent the Duke of Alva to the Netherlands in 1567 at the head of the main field army of Spain. The presence in the Netherlands of that formidable fighting force was perceived as a threat to English security, and the first of many skirmishes between the two countries occurred in 1568, when a Spanish ship carrying money to Alva's soldiers was seized and its valuable cargo taken to London. The territorial dimension of the conflict was exacerbated by the question of religion. When in 1570 the Pope proclaimed Elizabeth's excommunication and deposition in the bull *Regnans in Excelsis*, the first step on the road to war was taken. However, it was not until 1588 that Philip ordered his Armada to be sent against the English, a venture which, due to the English Navy and favourable weather conditions, ended in total defeat for Spain.

The gradual deterioration of the relationship between England and Spain in the 1570s and 1580s seems to have been accompanied by instances of ridicule of Philip II in text and on stage in England. The Spanish ambassador complains as early as 1562 that he is 'tired of complaining to the Queen of the constant writing of

books, farces, and songs prejudicial to other princes', but an even better example can be found in the Venetian ambassador to Spain Hieronimo Lippomano's letter to the Doge and the Senate in 1586:

But what has enraged him [i.e. Philip] more than all else, and has caused him to show a resentment such as he has never before displayed in all his life, is the account of the masquerades and comedies which the Queen of England orders to be acted at his expense.⁸³

Whether Elizabeth really 'ordered' such performances is open to doubt; there is evidence which suggests that even after the defeat of the Armada the authorities were ambivalent about texts which satirised Philip. In 1589 the Lord Treasurer complained to the Bishop about 'a pamphlet in foolish rhyme making fun of the Spaniard, even of King Philip for defeat'.⁸⁴ As a statement on the Spanish ruler and his policy, then, Lyly's play was just one of many in that turbulent period. We cannot say for certain, as Albright proposes, that *Midas* 'was probably one of the most direct attacks', but what we do know is that the play was meant for court performance and that allegorising Philip as 'Midas' called for careful balance on part of the dramatist. It would not do to present the Queen with an all-out ridicule of a legitimate, European ruler, in particular one who had been married to her half-sister and thus, at least formally, for a few years had been king of England.⁸⁵

The fun and the framework for satire Lyly found in Ovid's myth, but it is also important to recognise that in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance the myth of

⁸³Cited in Evelyn Albright, *Dramatic Publication in England 1580-1640*, The Modern Language Association of America Monograph Series, (London and New York: Oxford University Press, 1927), p. 114-115.

⁸⁴Ibid. p. 215.

⁸⁵Mary Tudor married Philip in 1554. He left England the year before Mary's death, in 1557, never to return.

Midas was given moral and allegorical interpretations which at least partly resemble late-medieval presentations of Alexander the Great. Midas' attitude to gold became an exemplum of avarice; in the words of Sandys: 'Midas is the image of a covetous man: who while he seeks to augment his riches, denies to himselfe the use of his owne, and starves in abundance.'⁸⁶ Midas' judgment in the singing contest, on the other hand, was interpreted allegorically as an instance of spiritual deafness. Sidney, for instance, sees Midas-like ears as a possible punishment for those who

be born so near the dull-making cataract of Nilus, that you cannot hear the planet-like music of poetry; if you have so earth-creeping a mind that it cannot lift itself up to look at the sky of poetry.⁸⁷

The myth and the allegory together have a considerable potential for onstage representation; Lyly could for instance have written and staged some exemplary scene which showed the king's brutal policy before his 'conversion', or he could have made a theatrical 'show-piece' out of the king's bath in Pactolus. However, what we see in the play is that the dramatist rather uses narration than showing everything on stage. I stated above that this play is the one with the most extensive use of off-stage, or verbalised, space in Lyly's oeuvre, and this is due not only to the king's monologues in which he reflects on his own policies and empire. Midas is actually present in only five of the play's fourteen scenes: in 1.1. where he gets the 'gift' from Bacchus, in 3.1. where he reads the advice from Bacchus to go and wash in the river Pactolus, in 4.1., in the singing contest on Mt. Tmolus, and finally, in two scenes in act 5, in the place where the reeds whisper about the king's ears, and at Delphos.

⁸⁶In *Ovid's Metamorphoses Englished, Mythologized, and Represented in Figures* (1626), p. 522-23.

⁸⁷Philip Sidney, *The Defence of Poesy*, edited by Gavin Alexander, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), p. 54.

On the other hand, we never *see* Midas' problems with his newly acquired ability to turn everything into gold; in 2.1. it is Mellacrites who tells us that 'his meat turneth to massy gold in his mouth, and his wine slideth down his throat like liquid gold' (52-55). Likewise, it is not shown on stage that Midas goes to Pactolus and washes in the river. This, and the fact that the king has gone hunting in the woods and has failed to return, is narrated by Martius and Mellacrites in act 3, scene 3. In at least one instance it is relevant to question whether this practice of narration disturbs what would otherwise have been a surprising and effective moment in the theatre; in 4. 4 we are told before Midas comes on stage that he is melancholy since his hunting, and that he wears 'a great tiara on his head'. Even though Midas is the main world-creating character in the play, then, we find that the dramatist, largely through this element of narration, utilises the discourse of other characters like Martius, Mellacrites and the king's daughter, Sophronia, to create the spatial setting of the play. However, I would suggest that to Lyly perhaps the most significant effects of these passages of narration were that they contributed to the economics of the play as a theatrical venture, and that they, by reducing the number of onstage locations, increased the unity of the play.

3. 10. *Modern critical positions*

One can hardly say that Lyly's attempt to unify the world of myth and the world of the allegory in the figure of Midas have in general been highly thought of by modern critics. Among the most negative are Joseph Houppert, who states unequivocally that *Midas* is Lyly's 'least successful play'. While admitting that the play exhibits 'a

universality that takes it well beyond Lyly's own time and space', he believes that 'the problem is rather that the characters are insufficiently motivated'.⁸⁸ Michael Pincombe, on the other hand, finds that Lyly 'cobbles it together from the legends of the Golden Touch and the Ass's ears rather clumsily [...] a curiously half-hearted play'.⁸⁹ Other critics take a less negative attitude; David Bevington in the introduction to the Revels edition summarises Robert Weimann's position on the play as

a conception of *Midas* as prescient drama standing at the very threshold of England's greatest period of dramatic activity, not in any sense the belaboured and confused effort of a dramatist past his prime⁹⁰

However, from the point-of-view of my own investigation, rather than these universal statements for or against the play, it is Bevington's own suggestions concerning 'Lyly's debt to patterns of dramatic structure in the drama of his contemporaries and predecessors' which are interesting. He does not suggest, of course, that *Midas* is a morality play, or, indeed, that it should be categorised as an Interlude, but he finds that

Midas refigures a familiar pattern in that drama of proud and insolent worldly behaviour leading the protagonist, abetted by cynical councillors, into a brief euphoria of illusory happiness and wealth followed by disillusionment, guilt, self-accusation, despair, and eventually a healthy remorse leading to spiritual and moral rehabilitation.⁹¹

Bevington argues convincingly that there are certain structural similarities between Lyly's comedy and earlier plays of the 'morality' tradition, but are these structures the

⁸⁸Houppert, 1975, p. 114-116.

⁸⁹Pincombe, 1996, p. 113.

⁹⁰Bevington, 2000, p. 119.

⁹¹Ibid. p. 121.

products of similar dramatic techniques? In terms of space and setting, Bevington merely ascertain that the setting of *Midas* is of a non-classical kind: 'the sense of place is fluid and unlocalized for the most part' (p. 120). However, our observation of the significance of narration in the play allows the formulation of a more precise topic of investigation in the relationship between *Midas* and the older tradition. We saw in Chapter II that localisation and spatiality based on the narrations of characters with a particular degree of discursive authority, like the Prologue or the Vice, was a characteristic feature in the spatial dramaturgy of the Interludes. Examples include Jake Jugeler's initial monologue in the play by the same name as well as the discourse of Merry Report in Heywood's *Play of the Weather*.

In what follows, then, one of the central questions is whether the narrative element in *Midas* weakens the interactive dialogues in the play and strengthens a more old-fashioned dramaturgy. I propose to investigate this and other aspects of the spatial dramaturgy of the play by focussing, as in the case of *Campaspe*, mainly on the discourses in which the king and his interlocutors (in this case the councillors and his daughter Sophronia) are engaged throughout the play.

3. 11. *Royal reflections and statements*

King Midas' three councillors represent broadly the same issues which in *Campaspe* were represented not only by characters, but also by locations: war and conquest, avarice, and love. However, rather than investigating the relationship between Mellacrites (gold), Martius (war) and Eristus (love) and the king in turn, I wish in the present context to organise the discussion chronologically around the king's major

statements and reflections on his own life and policy. Although Midas in these passages sometimes expresses himself in extensive monologues, this kind of discourse in most instances engage also the councillors in significant exchanges of views on political and personal issues. The first major statement can be found in 1.1. when the king is offered the choice of a gift from Bacchus, and each of the three councillors tries to convince Midas that his suggestion on what to choose is the best. The second statement is delivered in 3.1. when Midas receives Bacchus's advice to go and wash off his ability to change things into gold in the river Pactolus. The third, which is a soliloquy, occurs after the king has failed to deliver the correct verdict in the singing contest on Mt. Tmolus between Pan and Apollo. Finally, we have the king's reflections when he visits the oracle at Delphos in the final scene of the play.

3.11.1. The Choice

Scene 1.1. has two prominent functions in relation to the spatial setting of the play: (1) it introduces what we also in this play may term 'the palatial location', i.e. the home base of both the king and the councillors, and (2) it presents Midas' attitude to the world around him in this early phase of the play. In his edition of the play in the *Works*, E. Warwick Bond furnished this scene with the stage direction 'Garden before Midas' palace', and one can understand why. There is a certain pastoral quality to the words of Bacchus when he offers Midas a reward for having returned Silenius:

All thy grounds are vineyards, thy corn grapes, thy chambers cellars, thy household stuff standing cups. And therefore ask anything, it shall be granted. Wouldst thou have the pipes of thy conducts to run wine, the udders of thy beasts to drop nectar, the trees to bud ambrosia (1.1. 6-11).

Bevington does not retain this stage-direction in the Revels edition, but it seems to me that the emphasis on the idyllic-bucolic aspects of Midas' life in the exposition serves to highlight the dubiousness of his subsequent choice of gift, choosing the dead metal gold over the life-giving and life-sustaining products of nature in fact indicates a serious flaw in the king's character.

At the outset, however, Midas displays humility by asking Bacchus' permission to consult 'lest, desiring things above my reach, I be fired with Phaeton'. The king, then, at this point has no particular preference. What makes him in the end choose the gold? The reason is that Mellacrites, the councillor who argues for gold, is the only one of the three who realises that the king does not wish to choose between gold, love, and conquest. He wants it all, and Mellacrites argues convincingly that while gold is in itself a valuable commodity, you can also use it to buy both love and power. This line of argument, not surprisingly, proves irresistible to the king and decides his choice of gift. However, we should recognise that it is Martius, the councillor arguing for success in war and conquest, who provides the argumentative position which will most engage Midas throughout the play. Martius strongly advice the king to adopt a policy of limitless spatial ambition:

I would wish to be monarch of the world, conquering kingdoms like villages, and being greatest on the earth, be commander of the whole earth: for what is there that more tickles the mind of a king, than a hope to be the only king, wringing out of every country tribute, and in his own to sit in triumph? [...] Command the world Midas; a greater thing you cannot desire' (32-41).

This is an extreme position, of course, but it is evident from Midas' 'program' after he has made the first successful attempts to turn things into gold that it is close to the king's own ideas on how to utilise the gift:

these petty islands neer to Phrygia shal totter, and other kingdoms be turned topsie turuie: I will command both the affections of men and the fortunes[...]Thus shall Mydas be monarch of the world, the darer of fortune, the commander of loue (125-32).

The passage constructs the king's relationship to the rest of the world as being characterised by boundless ambition, but it also specifies an actual geographical reference, 'these petty islands neer to Phrygia', which seems to be of particular importance to Midas. There are no references to 'petty islands' in Ovid's story of Midas. In the *Metamorphoses* Midas is simply dreaming that everything is turning to gold, and 'His heart could hardly hold his golden hopes/When everything was gold'.⁹² The reference to the small islands near Phrygia is in fact the first passage in the play which clearly invites to an allegorical reading, and I would suggest that the spectators had little trouble in understanding these lines as expressing Philip II's ambitions of conquering England.

By the beginning of act II, Midas suffers the consequences for having chosen wrongly, and in a dialogue with the three councillors Sophronia makes it clear where she wants to place those who are responsible:

Let him trust thee, Eristus with thy love, into Italy. Where they honour lusts for a god [...] thee Mellacrites with thy greediness, to the utmost partes of the west, where all the guts of the earth are gold: and thee Martius, that soundest but blood and terror, into those barbarous nations, where nothing is to be found but blood and terror (lines?)

Sophonra's spatialising utterances have the function of extending the geopolitical context that was hinted at in her father's reference to the islands in 1.1, and the dramatist thus extends the offstage space by linking each councillor to a particular

⁹²Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, translated by A.D. Melville, Oxford World Classics, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), p. 252.

area. Two of the three areas referred to by Sophronia would to the highly educated audience at court have been easily identifiable as echoes of contemporary cultural and political discourse. The alleged decadence and negative influence of Italy had been part of literature for decades, not only, as we have seen, in Lyly's own earlier courtly prose, but also in serious writing like for instance Roger Ascham's *The Scholemaster* (1570), where potential students of the world because of the moral dangers involved are advised to read about the country rather than to visit in the course of a Grand Tour. The riches of the lands in the west, the new world, on the other hand, had been known and exploited by the English in the form of raids on Spanish ships for at least two decades before Lyly wrote *Midas*, and it was common knowledge that Philip II's Great Armada and army was financed by the precious metals carried from the Spanish colonies in America.

3.11.2. Repentance

The topic of gold from foreign lands returns in Midas' great speech of repentance in act 3, scene 1. After having read Bacchus' advice that the means for getting rid of the 'Golden Touch' is to cleanse himself in the river Pactolus, the king begins to reflect upon his own infatuation with gold:

I that did possess mines of gold could not be contented till my mind were also a mine. Could not the treasure of Phrygia, nor the tributes of Greece, nor mountains in the East, whose guts are gold, satisfy thy mind with gold? (8-12).

Very soon, however, gold is not the only issue, and the king asks a rhetorical question which we recognise from the dialogue between Alexander and Diogenes in

Campaspe: 'What should I do with a world of ground, whose body must be content with seven foot of earth?'. By way of a number of references to his own policy of brutal imperialism: 'when I call to mind my cruelties in Lycaonia, my usurping in Getulia, my oppression in Sola' (25-26), the king then reaches what we may term the allegorical focus of the play; his policy towards Lesbos.⁹³

Initially his aggressive policy towards the island is explained metaphorically as a wish to 'touch, that I might turn them to gold and my self to glory' (55). The venture was not a success, however, and Midas makes it clear that the island of Lesbos has a formidable defence in its prince, who is 'protected by the gods, by nature, by his own virtue, and his subjects' obedience'. In addition, nature itself protects Lesbos in the shape of 'huge waves' (63). There is a distinct emphasis on loyalty and popular support in the panegyric final section of his speech: 'Do not all his subjects, like bees, swarm to preserve the king of bees? That their loyalty maintaineth-'(66-67). I mentioned above, in chapter II, that even though the ruler of Lesbos is a man (even to the extent of being a bee *king*), we can safely take this passage to be alluding to Elizabeth I of England, and Philip II's failed attempt to conquer the country in 1588. It should be noted that in such a context, loyalty was a deadly serious issue; we know that among Elizabeth's courtiers there was a group, a Bond of Association, who had sworn an oath to 'pursue to the death' everyone who threatened the safety of the Queen.⁹⁴

⁹³John Foxe had presented the English with vivid descriptions of the cruelties of the Catholic inquisitors in Spain, Italy and France in his *Acts and Monuments*, and in 1583 Bartolome de Casas account of the American Indians' sufferings at the hands of the Spanish was translated as *The Spanish Colonie*.

⁹⁴According to the historian Penry Williams, this and other measures were consequences of the so-called 'Throckmorton plot' in 1584. It was Burghley and Walsingham who in October that year

Midas ends his speech with a programme for self-improvement:

I will to the river, where if I be rid of this intolerable disease of gold, I will next shake of that untemperate desire of government, and measure my territories not by the greatness of my mind, but by the right of my succession (69-72).

In act I, scene I, the councillors contributions to the dialogue had been of a formal kind; a disputation rather than a debate in which personal feelings could be expressed. In Midas' speech in 3.1., the councillors have no problems in understanding their king's need to get rid of the cursed gift, but they are not quite as ready to accept his view of territorial conquest as being an illegitimate activity for a prince. It is especially the 'secretary for defence', Martius, who questions certain aspects of the king's new beliefs and policy:

I am not a little sorry that because all that Your Highness toucheth turneth to pure gold, therefore all your princely affections should be converted to dross. Doth your Majesty begin to melt your own crown, that should make it with other monarchies massy? (73-77).

Martius' bold questions initiate a brief, but interesting dialogue between king and councillor where the dramatist touches upon one of the central issues in sixteenth-century political thinking, the idea of England as a state. The historian John Guy sees this idea as a mixture of three ideas: first, England as a defined territory, secondly, England as a monarchical society organised for civil rule, and thirdly, and most interesting in the context of the play: England as a sovereign government which recognised no superior in political, ecclesiastical, and legal matters.⁹⁵ In the play Martius advocates the idea that might should have precedence over right; 'let the

'proposed more stringent measures against Jesuits and other Catholics, together with a Bond of Association', see *The Later Tudors: England 1547-1603* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), p. 300-301.

⁹⁵In John Guy, *Tudor England*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), p. 352.

sharpest sword decide the right of sceptres' (82). Such an idea would have had the whole-hearted support of Alexander and the Midas we met in the first act, but the king by now sees things differently and argues that the essence of kingship is not territory but right of inheritance: 'every little king is a king, and the title consisteth not in the compass of ground, but in the right of inheritance' (84-85). Martius still persists, however, and cannot understand why a title won by conquest should not be as good as anyone else. Even the king's reply that this way of obtaining a title is equal to theft fails to convince him, and he concludes that

If your highness would be advised by me, then would I rob for kingdoms, and, if I obtained, fain would I see him that durst call the conqueror a thief (88-90).

What we have seen, then, is that themes from Midas' long monologue quite naturally are developed in an interactive dialogue between the king and one of his councillors. Through this dialogue Martius is established as a subject rather than as only the one-dimensional representative of a particular ideological position in the play. By the character's reference to his own feelings (in line 73), and by maintaining his challenge to the king's newly found conception of the importance of a policy based on morals, Lyly is in fact gradually placing Martius in a position of prominence among the king's councillors.

As mentioned above, in act 3, scene 3 the king leaves for the river Pactolus and its cleansing bath, but the miraculous events at the river are not presented onstage. At the end of the scene the councillors return to court and report to Sophronia of the happy outcome of the visit. It is noticeable that Sophronia now refers to the group by saying 'But here comes *Martius and the rest*' (my italics), and Martius is also the addressee of her first utterance to the councillors: 'What news,

Martius, of my sovereign and father, Midas?’ (94). He then proceeds to narrate the events at Pactolus and the temple of Bacchus, but he is not Sophronia’s only interlocutor. When she asks the councillors what happened afterwards (after all, Midas has not returned with the others), it is Mellacrites who answers and tells her how Midas, ‘determined to use some solace in the woods’, had been chasing a boar and somehow managed to outride the others and get lost. The position of the councillors vis-a-vis the king and Sophronia in the middle and late parts of the play may perhaps best be described as hierarchic: Martius is the central of the three characters, Mellacrites still contributes the odd utterance, but Eristus has all but disappeared from the action.

Sophronia shudders at the thought of her father in the woods which are ‘full of tigers’, and ‘wild beasts [that] make no difference between a king and a clown’ (117-119). However, whether the human prey in question is a king or a clown is particularly irrelevant in this case, because what happens in the woods is that the king is transformed into a clown.

3.11.3 In the woods

Due to his failure as judge in the singing-contest between Apollo and Pan Midas becomes the unhappy carrier of decidedly clownish attributes: the long and hairy ears of an ass. Towards the end of the scene Apollo, Pan, and the nymphs leave the stage, and the king is left alone to reflect upon the consequences of this unfortunate event. As a soliloquy, this passage is not framed by the kind of interactive dialogue we have seen in the two previous scenes, and Midas’ interpretation of events and the

future are allowed to stand unchallenged. His main concern in the speech is that the news of his long and hairy ears will spread throughout his empire and lead to ridicule, lack of respect, and in the final instance to attempts to re-conquer territory which now belong to the empire. Once again we get specific references to parts of the offstage area of the setting; Midas concludes by expressing his fear that 'these petty-kings of Mysia, Pisidia and Galatia will [...] cast lots for those kingdoms that I have won with so many lives and kept with so many envies' (4. 1. 202-207).

The scene at Mt. Tmolus clearly introduces several pastoral motifs in the play, but I would also suggest that this scene and others contribute to our sense of the existence of a comprehensive green world structure in the play. We have seen already that the first acts are located in the vicinity of a palace. Three of the four scenes in act 4, on the other hand, involve what could be termed 'pastoral' locations or elements: Apollo, Pan and the singing-contest in the woods in 4.1; the 'reedy place' and the shepherds in 4. 2., and also, however, indirectly, in the comic-relief scene with the huntsman in 4. 3. The final part of this three-part structure is the Oracle at Delphi in act 5; Midas' decision to go is made in the first scene of that act, and the actual events at Delphi, as we will see shortly, take place in the final scene of the play. Midas' sojourn into the woods can thus be regarded as part of the same pattern which Lyly had already used in *Gallathea* (1585), and would partly use again in *Love's Metamorphosis* (early 1590s), but which was to attract the attention of the critics mainly by being included in some of Shakespeare's comedies in the 1590s: the main character(s) move from a courtly and/or urban location into the woods and undergo some kind of metamorphosis after which they return to their own world. Such a structure corresponds well with the moral structure of *Midas*: the king starts

out as the embodiment of tyranny and folly, he experiences various transformations which make him consider important political and moral issues, and he ultimately leaves the oracle at Delphos as a better man.⁹⁶

3.11.4. At the Oracle

The situation immediately prior to and at Delphos is rather more complex than the above summary may suggest. Midas' intentions and actions are continually being interrogated by other characters; even before the king's departure for Delphos Martius is expressing strong doubts about the value of visiting the oracle:

Apollo may discover some old riddle, but not give the redress; for yet did I never hear that his oracles were without doubtfulness, nor his remedies without impossibilities. This superstition of yours is able to bring errors among the common sort, not ease to your discontented mind (5. 1. 40-45).

Martius has throughout the play been a spokesman for war and conquest; in addition he is now embodying an attitude of sceptic rationality. Moreover, his irreverent comments confirm his prominent position among the king's interlocutors. Although Mellacrites still contributes the odd utterance, it is noteworthy how the interactive dialogues in the main plot of the play now take place between Midas, Martius, and Sophronia.

⁹⁶The episode on Mt. Tmolus is linked to the literary motif of the pastoral singing contest, and it is an interesting fact that by the time of the performance of *Midas* no more than ten years had passed since the Queen herself had been the judge in a similar competition. In Philip Sidney's pageant *The Lady of May*, presented to Elizabeth at Wanstead Garden, the home of Sidney's uncle Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester, on the 1st of May 1579, she was asked to judge in a singing contest between the 'shepherd Epsilus' and the 'forester Therion'. According to the editor, Arthur Kinney, this pageant was resonant with political personal overtones: Robert Dudley had long been the Queen's favourite courtier and a suitor for her hand, and both uncle and nephew were in favour of a more active English support for the Protestants on the continent. The text of the pageant can be found in Arthur Kinney (ed.), *Renaissance Drama, An Anthology of Plays and Entertainments* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1999).

The party's arrival in Delphos is communicated to the spectators by Midas' simple, deictic utterance 'This is Delphos', and the king immediately summons Apollo's oracle. When the oracle fails to reply, Martius once again comments on his king's behaviour: 'Were I Midas, I would rather cut these ears off close from my head rather than stand whimpering before such a blind god' (5. 3. 15-17). In terms of what would be the proper tone between councillors and king, Martius' choice of words is rude in the extreme, of course, and I will shortly go deeper into the broader significance of the attitude of Martius. However, while noticing his councillor's rudeness and characterising him as 'barbarous, not valiant', Midas attention at this point is very much occupied with his own dealings with the oracle, and he presently gets his answer. To Mellacrites and Martius, who, we should remember, do not yet know the story of how the king got his ears, the meaning of the Oracle's answer is difficult to decipher. Mellacrites expresses his bewilderment in fairly polite terms, but Martius once again does not mince words: 'Who would gad to such gods, that must be honoured if they speak without sense, and the oracle wonderet at, as though it were above sense' (37-39).

Midas orders Martius to stop, but he realises that time has come to tell the truth to his daughter and his councillors: 'destiny bringeth me not only to be cause of all my shame, but reporter'. Over the next 31 lines Midas then reconstructs his journeys and experiences from the Pactolus to Delphos in a monologue which in effect also becomes a spatial summary of the offstage setting of the play. At the centre of the speech, however, is his policy towards Lesbos, 'For stretching my hands to Lesbos, I find that all the gods have spurned at my practices, and those islands scorned them' (59-61). He ends his speech by promising to surrender himself to the

gods and to confess vanity, foolish judgment, unjust wars, and unnatural affections. At this point, in the final scene of the play, the reader or spectators would perhaps expect the daughter and the councillors to express understanding and support for Midas' programme of self-improvement, but this is not in fact what happens.

Sophonria's first reaction to her father's speech is to question his sanity:

Is it possible that Midas should be so overshoot in his judgement? Unhappy Midas, whose wits melt with his gold, and whose gold is consumed with his wits! (72-74)

It is clear from the context that her utterance is delivered as an 'aside', but the effect is, I would suggest, nevertheless to question any facile ideas of the finality of what is happening at Delphos. The same effect is further reinforced by the final exchange between Midas and Martius. After the king's conclusion that 'There is no way to nail the crown of Phrygia fast to my daughter's head but in letting the crowns of others sit quiet on theirs' (117-19), Martius cries out in shock and desperation; 'Midas!'. This is Martius' final utterance in the play, and although the king issues a severe warning to the others to 'let none be so hardy as to look to cross me', we know that his most powerful councillor has yet to be convinced of the soundness of the new policy.

Delphos, then, is the 'location of redemption', added by Lyly to the locations of the sources in order to allow Midas/Philip to be forgiven by the gods, and to pledge himself to a new way forward. Needless to say, the institution of kingship as such simply cannot come under attack; the anointed one makes mistakes, but insight and a correction of his course of action follows. The Queen who was present at the performance of *Midas* on January 6th 1590 was after all the same Elizabeth who, just a few years earlier, had regarded the Dutch as rebels against their lawful monarch

and probably also had preferred moderate Spanish rule to Protestant domination in the Netherlands.

My reading of Midas' three 'statements' has revealed that the narrative aspect of these passages does not establish an authoritative discourse; the king's opinions and attitudes are continuously accompanied and questioned by his participation in interactive dialogues with his councillors. It is in this context that we should consider the play's final scene: did Lyly in fact intend to suggest that the actualisation of Philip/Midas' ideas of self-improvement and a change of policy towards other nations should be considered as a possible scenario rather than as a certain reality? That the king's good intentions could very well be undermined by the determination of strong-willed councillors like Martius to continue an aggressive foreign policy? If that is the case, then the play can also be regarded as a plea for vigilance: 'even if Philip lost his Armada, factions in the Spanish government could still be bent on attacking England and we have better be on our guard'. Such advice would most likely have been well received at the court of Elizabeth in 1590.

3. 12. *Staging Midas*

Midas has a comprehensive and complex setting, but, as we have seen, most of it is placed offstage as verbalised space. The locations in the main plot which need in one way or another to be represented on stage are (1) the palace, (2) Mt. Tmolus, (3) the 'reedy place', and (4) the oracle at Delphos. As regards the palace, the problem is almost identical to the one encountered in *Campaspe*: there are no textual indications or functional requirements suggesting that the palace was represented on stage by a physical structure, but if we take into account the status of the location, is

it nevertheless likely that it somehow was marked out in the physical scenography? Bevington, in the recent Revels edition of the play, argues in general for a simple scenography: 'An open and unlocalized stage would seem to suffice for most of the action, even if the understood location shifts at times' (p. 142), and seems also to favour an unlocalised section of the stage for the palace area: 'Seldom do the speakers [who are linked to the court] allude to their location other than in 'Phrygia'(in 3. 3. 32)

I would argue that Bevington's comment concerning the palace fails to mention what is perhaps the most interesting aspect of the spatial dramaturgy involving this location. At least five utterances, one in each act, seems to indicate that there is a movement of characters from an area of action out of doors, in other words *outside* the palace, and to its interior. In 1.1., we can, due to the existence of sticks and stones be fairly confident that the action takes place out of doors. At the end of the scene, then, when the king says 'come, let us in', it is likely that *in* signifies 'into the palace'. Similarly, in 1.2., when Lucio in the first comic relief scene in the play says 'But let us all in, lest he lose the virtue of the gift before we taste the benefit' (140), he appeals to the other servants present to go with him into the palace to observe the king's newly acquired ability in action. Finally, in acts four and five the councillors and Midas are in the 'reedy place', which of course is an out-of-doors location. When Mellacrites in the first instance and Midas in the second both invite the others to go *in* it is difficult not to interpret this as a reference, once again, to the interior of the palace. Read this way, these utterances are intended not merely as signals to empty the stage at the end of a scene. They are part of a deliberate spatial dramaturgy which efficiently and economically constructs the 'palatial

location', and which requires only the existence of a stage door through which the players can go 'into' the palace to function properly.

Perhaps the most interesting scenes from the point-of-view of staging, are those locations that together make up what I have described above as the 'green world' section of the play: (1.), Mt. Tmolus, (2.), the location of the shepherds, and (3.), the reedy place. Although it can never be demonstrated with any degree of certainty, it is an interesting possibility that these scenes would all be played out in or near one 'pastoral' stage location. Before considering this solution, however, I wish to examine possible staging solutions for each location in turn. In scene 4.1., located at Mt. Tmolus, there are no indications in the text that any kind of 'house' or other large physical structure is needed on stage for purely functional reasons. We must assume, on the other hand, that some attention would have been given to the costumes of Apollo, Pan and the Nymphs. The contrast between the two gods is clearly expressed in the text and would have been enhanced by a similar contrast in costume.

The spatial dramaturgy of scene 4.2., with the five shepherds, exhibits what may perhaps be described as a scenographic puzzle. It is quite clear that the shepherds are close to the reeds who whisper the truth about the king's disfigurement. In the course of their comments on Midas, we find the following utterances:

Amintas. Take me with you. But speak softly, for these reeds may have ears and hear us.

Menalcas. Suppose they have, yet they may be without tongues to bewray us.

Corin. Nay, let them have tongues too. We have eyes to see that they have none, and therefore, if they hear and speak, they know not from whence it comes (19-25). The 'reeds', then, can speak and hear but they cannot see, so how are we supposed to imagine them represented on stage? In the Revels edition, Bevington continues to deploy Warwick Bond's stage direction 'reedy place' in this scene, and suggests that the reeds' presence on stage could be arranged 'by means of a specially devised location that could be curtained off from view and periodically discovered to the spectators'.⁹⁷

I do not find Bevington's reconstruction of staging of the reeds entirely convincing. The fact remains that nothing in Lyly's text indicates that the reeds are present as a specific *location*. The reeds are, as Bevington also mentions, *dramatis personae* who deliver the line in 4. 4. 64 and 5. 1. 23 which reveal the secret of Midas' ears: 'Midas of Phrygia hath ass's ears', and may just as well have been represented by two or three boy actors in a properly 'reedy' costume. Such a solution would be more flexible, and there would have been no need for occupying a permanent part of the stage with a curtain.

The only location in the text where a stage structure could have been both functional and at the same time have enhanced the spectators' experience of mystery and the supernatural is the oracle at Delphos. When the oracle, or rather *Apollo His Oracle* begins to speak in 5. 3. 26, one can easily imagine the thrilling experience of hearing a strange voice speaking from inside some kind of 'house' structure, perhaps with the added effect of smoke etc. The introduction of such

⁹⁷Bevington, 2000, p. 143. He finds possible models in the curtained-off lunar bank and the magical fountain in *Endymion*.

effects may also help to make sense of Sophronia's puzzling remark after the oracle's second pronouncement: 'Apollo will not reply'. To the reader, Apollo's message is quite clear both in language and meaning, and I would suggest that it is only if we assume the use of some kind of 'alienation' technique such as a distorted voice, thunder, smoke etc. in performance that Sophronia's utterance makes sense in its present place in line 102.

I argued above that the text reveals an overall spatial structure in the play, and that this structure can be regarded as tripartite on the pattern palace-green world-oracle. Is it possible to imagine a tripartite structure also in the scenography? If we accept the hypothesis advanced above, that the palace was represented by an exit door, and that some kind of three-dimensional 'house' represented the oracle, the idea that a third, generally 'pastoral', location would be kept on stage throughout most of the play, may not be so farfetched after all. Such a location, marked out by painting and props, would then function as a background to various character configurations in the green world-scenes of the play. This would be the place where Apollo, Pan, and the Nymphs would gather for the singing contest, and where the characters who represented the reeds would be standing when they whispered the truth about Midas. We shall never know for certain what Lyly's scenography for *Midas* may have looked like, of course, but although our reconstruction may justifiably be called speculative, it nevertheless meets the functional requirements of the text; it provides the little extra in the way of effects which would fascinate an audience, and it would all in all be both an efficient and economical way for the ensemble to stage the play.

3. 13. *The spatial integration of main-plot and sub-plot in Campaspe and Midas*

My discussions of the two plays have so far been concerned almost exclusively with the settings of the most significant characters and actions in each play, a prioritisation that I believe is justified from the fact that it is the 'drives' and the discourse of the major characters which in effect create the spatial dimension of the text. This does not necessarily mean, of course, that lesser characters, and in particular characters who have a 'comic relief' function, do not belong in the same dramatic world, and setting as the major characters. G. K. Hunter, in what is still the only coherent account of the sub-plots of *Lyly*, states that

Lyly puts at the centre of his action in *Mother Bombie* the group of pert pages who are elsewhere confined to a sub-plot, indeed hardly ever allowed contact with the major characters.⁹⁸

I propose that this statement is too general, and in what follows, I will examine the text in the comic relief scenes of *Campaspe* and *Midas* in order to see how and to what degree the dramatist attempts to link these scenes spatially to the main action.

In *Campaspe*, the first comic relief scene is I.ii, and here we meet Manes, Psyllus, and Granichus, the servants of Diogenes, Apelles, and Platon, respectively. As masters and servants, then, there is a professional relationship between characters in the main plot and these comic relief characters. In addition, there is a thematic relationship between the two lines of action in that the servant satirise and turn topsy-turvy actions and ideas of characters in the main plot. There is, on the other hand, no kind of interaction between masters and servants in this scene, and the discourse of the servants does not provide a specific location. However, in the

⁹⁸In Hunter, 1960, p. 229.

case of *Campaspe*, the relative isolation and absence of locative indications in act 1, scene II cannot be said to be representative. In the next scene of this kind, in act II, scene i, the servants meet Diogenes and engage in a 'battle of wits' with the philosopher. The scene is not explicitly located in the text, but we may, I believe, take it for granted that the servants should be imagined to be near the tub of Diogenes (and would actually have been so on stage). Similarly, in scene III.i., the servant Psyllus interact with his master Apelles; the painter orders Psyllus to 'stay here at the window' (21) while he himself goes into the shop with Campaspe. Psyllus's presence at the shop continues in the next scene, where he is joined by the two other servants. Another link to the main plot is Manes' information to the others that Diogenes intends to fly, and that he, Manes, knows a way to 'come in at his [i.e. Diogenes] back'. In the two final comic-relief scenes which include the servants, there is a dialogue between Apelles and Psyllus in III.iv where Apelles enquires of the servant 'who was here sithence my coming' (6), and in act IV, scene i, the servants are present at 'the place, the day, the time that Diogenes hath appointed to fly' (1-2), with Manes observing that 'they begin to flock; and behold my master bustles himself to fly' (23-24, this is just before Diogenes commences to chastise the Athenians).

In *Campaspe*, then, four out of six comic relief scenes contain interaction between servants and masters, while five out of six such scenes provides, directly or indirectly, a sense of location. This means that the reader or spectator experiences a sense of spatial unity through the fairly even rhythm of alternating plot scenes in the play. Characters belong to the same dramatic world and setting, and they are simultaneously present and engaged in interactive dialogue at least at some of the

locations in the world of the play. This is hardly an example of not being allowed 'contact with major characters'.

In *Midas* we are faced with the same kind of relational and thematic integration of plots that we observed in *Campaspe*. In act one, scene 2, the first of the comic relief scenes in the play, Pipinetta, servant of Mellacrites and Celia informs her fellow servants Petulus and Lucius that 'my master is gone abroad and wants his page to wait on him. My mistress would rise, and lacks your worship to fetch her hair' (119-21). The page and the 'worship' in question being none other than Petulus and Licio. This is also the scene discussed above where the servants talk about Midas and the gold and decides to go in 'lest he lose the virtue before we taste the benefit' (140-42). In 2.2., the same characters appear, and the scene is linked to the development of the main plot by Pipinetta's reference to the king's problem with the gold:

'It is all one as if it were lead with me, and yet as golden with me as with the King. For I see it and feel it not; he feels it and enjoys it not' (2-4).

At the end of this scene we find the only example in the play of interaction and dialogue between masters and servants; the councillors enter, and a witty exchange between the two groups concludes the scene.

What seems to be the case in *Midas*, is that the dramatist rather than seeking to emphasise the spatial integration between the main plot and the comical scenes, actually tries to develop these into a fully developed sub-plot. He does this by incorporating a character from Ovid's *Metamorphoses*: Midas' barber, who was bound sooner or later to discover the ears, of course, and who could not hold on to the secret, but whispered it to the ground. In the play, the barber (in the play called

Motto) gets involved with the servants in a series of comical entanglements which originate in the fact that he has a beard of gold shaved off the king. The servants in the end get the better of the barber by tricking him into revealing Midas' secret, an offence for which the king had promised a terrible punishment. This rather comprehensive sub-plot which comprises two scenes, 3.2. and 5.2., with a total of no less than 361 lines, is spatially separate from the main plot. The scenes are not located, and although the dialogue on a couple of occasions refers to the situation at court there is no interaction between characters from different plots.

The difference in the degree of spatial integration between plots in the two plays can at least partly be explained by the difference in setting. It is easier for the dramatist to devise a functional and convincing presence for servants around locations like Apelles' studio and Diogenes' tub within the relatively unified setting of Athens than in relation to the wide-ranging travels of Midas and his councillors. In a historical perspective, the relationship between main plot and sub-plot is one of the aspects of dramaturgy where attention to the dimension of space could help to establish lines of development from the Tudor Interludes to the Elizabethan drama of the 1580s and 90s. I will return to more comprehensive summary of the characteristics of this development in the final chapter.

3. 14. Conclusion

When Lyly chose anecdotes of Alexander the Great as material for his first play, he engaged with a textual universe which in its comprehensiveness and complexity went far beyond the anecdotes themselves. To engage with a literary tradition on the

magnitude of the Alexander-literature in whatever genre is to open a work up to influences which may negotiate authorial control and intention. Lyly's formulation of his and the company's intention in the prologue to *Campaspe*: 'to ask only who was Alexander's love' thus easily becomes a futile attempt to delimit both the content of the play and the scope of the receiver's interpretations.

I argued in the introduction to this chapter that the spatial dramaturgy of the play could be seen as a significant aspect of a metaphoric representation of the curiosity, acquisitiveness, and ambitions of the historical Alexander, i.e. as that character emerges through the histories and moral evaluations of later authors. Examinations of the number and kind of spatialising utterances in the discourse of the major characters of the play have confirmed that such a reading is relevant. A spatially dynamic character, Alexander relates to his world in the sense that his various movements and spatial reorientations are expressed through language; in interactive dialogues or in more monological passages. If we compare Lyly's Alexander to Johan Pikerlyng's *Horestes*, the difference is striking. Both are characters who are on the move in their respective dramatic worlds: Alexander between different locations within the city of Athens, and Orestes on expedition to reconquer the kingdom of his father. However, where the utterances of Alexander reveal a continuous concern with spatiality in their numerous references to locations and use of deixis, we saw above that the spatialising utterances of Orestes were mainly concentrated to scenes which deal with siege and warfare.

Even though their contribution is modest compared to Alexander's, the rest of the central characters in *Campaspe* play a significant role in the construction of the spatial setting of the play. The restricted referential range of the utterances of

Diogenes and Apelles nevertheless place these characters firmly within their own locations, and perhaps most significant of all: the interactive dialogues between Alexander and the other character do not require the added contributions of narrators, vice-figures and similar functions to establish a meaningful and relevant spatial dimension in the play.

To Midas, an empire is an existing reality and a moral problem. Exactly *why* the king's problems with the gift of being able to turn everything into gold should be accompanied by a change of attitude concerning his policy towards other states is never properly explained. From the point-of-view of psychology one can agree with Houppert that Lyly has left Midas without sufficient motivation. The point is, however, that just as the need to discover and conquer is the fundamental drive of Alexander in *Campaspe*, so is the need for repentance and self-improvement in spite of certain relapses the basic drive of Midas. It is this drive, manifested in reflections over the results of a wrong policy, which creates the offstage setting of empire in the play. We have seen, however, that the king's attitudes and interpretation of events are challenged all the way. This continuous interrogation of the king's monologues in the form of lively, interactive dialogues make them into something different from the authoritative narrative passages found in the interludes, and the final result is a sense of uncertainty: will Midas' resolve hold or will he once again under the influence of the war-mongers at court turn into an Alexander.

Chapter IV: ‘Lovers’; the space of panegyrics in *Sappho and Phao* and *Endymion*

4.1. Introduction

Both the plays in the previous chapter and the plays to be examined in this chapter feature powerful princely characters, but one significant difference between these characters in terms of space is that while Alexander and Midas are active and on the move between different parts of the setting, Sappho and Cynthia are largely confined to a central court location. Their relatively static positions lead to a basic spatial dramaturgy in these plays where the court is at the centre, and the male characters move ‘around’ the female rulers. In *Sappho and Phao* this takes the shape of a pattern where the emotional phases of attraction-rejection, and resignation or resolution, are accompanied by spatial movements from distance to proximity and back again. In *Endymion* we find a more complex pattern due to the fact that the lover spends most of the play sleeping in a lunar bank, but similar spatial movements can be seen in Endymion’s friend Eumenides’ journey to find a remedy for his friend’s inexplicable sleepiness.

The spatial dramaturgy of the plays are thus in principle shaped according to the *relationship* between sovereign and admirer rather than just being a reflection of the personal desires of a prince. I would argue that this emphasis on the relational aspect, along with the less dynamic movements of the female rulers, results in both plays in a spatial structure which closely follows the main emotional structure established by the characters, or in the terminology of Ubersfeld, the actantial model

of the play: a main axis is established between the location of the beloved and the location of the lover, while locations belonging to the 'helper' and the 'opponent' functions flank this main axis. Thus, in the case of *Sappho and Phao* the main axis is established between Sappho's court and Phao's ferry while the helper function is embodied in Sibylla's cave and the opponent, in this case Venus, seeks assistance at Vulcan's forge. This is, of course, a highly schematic and static representation of a play of forces which in the comedy itself is considerably more complex, but it is nevertheless a tool which allows us to approach the spatial dramaturgy of the plays with a set of relevant questions. One such question concerns spatial integration. With these dramatic worlds, where gods and men, and to some extent the heavens and the earth, intermingle with several different locations, does the dramatist seek to integrate the different elements of setting through the spatialising utterances of the characters? And if he does, how does he go about achieving integration?

In the first play in this chapter, *Sappho and Phao* (1584), the setting includes a rare example in Lyly of an area which links two characters and locations, in this case the ferry of Phao and the court of Sappho. In what follows, I wish to investigate how the dramatist can, if 'lover' and 'beloved' are spatially separate at the outset, establish physical contact between the two characters, and a related question: if the setting includes an area which has to be traversed in order to establish such contact, how is this area shaped discursively by the involved characters? Moreover, both *Sappho and Phao* and *Endymion* exhibit characters that change, indeed is transformed, in the course of the play. From a peaceful and content existence at the ferry, Phao is drawn into an emotional turmoil after having seen Sappho, while Endymion must learn both to eschew fleshly desire and to renounce political

ambitions before he can become worthy of Cynthia's love and respect. As in *Midas*, it is important to examine whether the dramatist has linked such changes to certain spatial paradigms.

4. 2. Sappho and Phao: textual history and summary

The play was entered in the Stationers' Register in April 1584 by Thomas Cadman, and published in two Quarto editions later that year. David Bevington, editor of the play in the Revels series, has provided detailed and convincing arguments concerning the right sequence of the early Quartos, and the text that Bond in the *Works* identified as Q1, i.e. the earliest, is now regarded as a reprint of the real Q1. In 1591, when the rights to the play were transferred to William Broome, a third quarto (Q3) was published, and in 1632 the play was among the six comedies by Lyly which were published by Edward Blount; now with songs added. F. W. Fairholt's 1858-edition was based on Blount's text, but subsequent editions have all been based on Q1 or Q2. Apart from Bond, the only 20th century-edition prior to the Revels' can be found in Carter A. Daniel's *The Plays of John Lyly* (1988), but this is not a scholarly and fully annotated edition. In what follows the starting point of the discussion will be Bevington's text in the Revels series which is based on Q1.⁹⁹

Lyly's advice to the Queen in the 'Prologue at the Court' is to 'imagine yourself to be in a deep dream', and even if we at this point do not attempt to pin-point exactly what the dramatist may have meant by this phrase, a summary of the play

⁹⁹For a detailed presentation of the play's textual history, see Bevington's introduction to the Revels edition, (1991), p. 141-150. This volume also includes Hunter's edition of *Campaspe* used in chapter III.

does seem to veer towards the dreamlike rather than the realistic. In I.i, Venus and Cupid arrive at the ferry and Phao takes them across the water to Syracuse. In the course of this trip, Venus transforms Phao's looks into one of exceptional beauty, but this miraculous event is not shown on stage but narrated by the ladies of Sappho's court in act one, scene four. In act two, scene two, it is Sappho who comes to the ferry, and the ferryman and the noble woman fall in love. Sappho asks Phao whether he will forsake his ferry and 'follow the court as a page'. In act three, scene four, we meet Phao in the central location of the play, the court and Sappho's bedchamber. Outside the chamber, Phao meets Venus and Cupid, and Venus now falls in love with the apparition she herself has created. While Sappho is beset by doubt concerning the propriety of her feelings for the commoner Phao, Venus is bent upon getting the fair youth for herself. Venus follows Cupid's counsel, which is to go to Vulcan's forge and acquire new arrows for Cupid's bow, arrows capable of changing the desires of Phao as well as the constancy of Sappho. Cupid first hits Sappho with the arrow which 'strikeeth a deep disdain at that which we most desire' (V.i. 10), but then switches his loyalty to Sappho and strikes Phao with an arrow which makes the ferryman 'loathe only Venus'. After Sappho's victory over Venus and the emotional stalemate engendered by Cupid's arrows, the unfortunate ferryman decides in the final scene to leave Syracuse and Sicily.

If the play had contained nothing except what is indicated in the summary above, the result would have offered the spectators a somewhat meagre theatrical experience. However, Lyly has added to this 'main plot' and its concentration around the ferry and the court, characters and locations which both increase the complexity of the spatial setting and enhance the thematic resonances of the play. On three

occasions throughout the play, in II.i, II.iv, and V.iii, Phao visits Sibylla at her cave to ask her advice, while Venus as we saw above seeks assistance at Vulcan's forge. In Syracuse itself, the two characters Trachinus and Pandion move about in the vicinity of the court, discussing the relative merits of court and university, and the discourse of their pages Criticus and Molus provide the comic relief scenes in the play. Finally, Sappho has in attendance at court a number of young ladies who are concerned with questions of love and the health of their lady. One is in fact tempted to suggest that when Lyly in the 'prologue in Paul's' to *Midas* characterise that play as a 'mingle-mangle' or 'hodgepodge', these terms could just as easily be applied to the dramatic world of *Sappho and Phao*.

4. 3. Sources and background

Differing considerably from *Midas* in this respect, the setting and indeed the whole spatial dimension of *Sappho and Phao* is only to a very limited degree derived from elements in the sources. This is at least partly due to the fact that these sources do not offer the dramatist much in the way of a framework for a setting. Perhaps the most interesting source from the point-of-view of space is Claudius Aelianus' *Varia Historia*. Here we learn that

Some holde opinion that his Phaon was a ferry man, and that he used that trade of life and exercise. So it fortun'd that Venus had occasion to passe over water, whom he not so redely as willingly, toke by the hand, and recuived into his wherry, and carryed her over with as great diligence as he could for his life, not knowing all this while what she was. For which dutifull service at that instance exhibited Venus bestowed uppon him an Alabaster box full of oyntment for her ferrage, wherwith Phaon washing and skouring his skin, had not his fellow in fairnesse of favour, and beutyful complexion

alive: insomuch that the women of Mitylen were inflamed with the love of Phaon, his comlynesse did so kindle their affections.¹⁰⁰

Lyly changes the place from Mytilene to Syracuse, but maintains the characters' movements in that Venus comes to Phao's ferry to be brought across the water to the city in I.i. He then uses the same pattern again in II.ii, when it is Sappho who comes to the ferry.

Whether or not Sappho is a portrait of Elizabeth, and the more general question of whether the play is an allegory of persons and relations at court have been among the critics' favourite topics for a long time. The Sappho of the sources is perhaps not an obvious choice of character to represent the Queen; in Aelian we find for instance that

Plato the sonne of Aristo, numbreth Sapho the Versifyer, and daughter of Scamandronymus amonge such as were wise, lerned and skilful. I heare also that there was another Sapho in Lesbos: *which was a stronge whore, and an arrant strumpet* (my italics).¹⁰¹

In spite of the somewhat ambiguous connotations connected to the name of Sappho in this and other sources, E. Warwick Bond (1902) seems to have no doubts that '[t]his medley of classical suggestions is made to serve the author's main purpose of flattering the Queen by an allegorical representation of the relations between herself and her suitor, the Duke of Alencon'. Bond does not extend the allegorical interpretation to other characters in the play, but he refers, with approval it seems, to a Mr. Fleay who identifies the student Pandion with Lyly himself, and who also

¹⁰⁰From Aelian, *Varia Historia*, translated by Abraham Fleming as *A Registre of Histories* (London, 1576), the excerpt is from book 12. This passage is also cited in a modernised version in Bevington, 1991.

¹⁰¹Ibid. I would also like to quote Pincombe's (1996) characterisation of the Sappho of Ovid's *Heroides*, as a 'excessively lascivious middle-aged woman' (p. 63).

suggests that the Sibyl may be Catherine de Medici.¹⁰² Later critics have, as we shall see, to a varying degree engaged with the notion of a topical interpretation of the play. I believe, however, that it is important at this point to emphasise that no one has yet suggested that the plays' setting or locations form part of a topical allegory in the same way that we saw the island of Lesbos should be read as England in *Midas*.

Our investigation of the play's sources and background thus lends further support to the relevance of the questions raised in the introduction to this chapter concerning links between locations and the role of the 'middle ground'. We saw in *Campaspe* that the setting was unified as a structure of locations within the city of Athens. In *Midas*, on the other hand, a pre-existing narrative provided the dramatist with an integrated structure of locations. The question then naturally becomes whether, in a play where the locations are not at the outset integrated, either by the existence of a unifying entity like a city or by pre-existing narrative structures like in *Midas*, the aspect of authorial design should be considered? My own answer to this question would be yes. The need for spatial integration constitutes a challenge to the dramatist, and a successful response to that challenge involves experience and practice in art of dramatic writing. The place of a play in the author's production is thus a factor which should not be overlooked. However, before attempting to examine these and related issues by close readings of select passages, let us examine how *Sappho and Phao*, and its setting and possible allegorical readings in particular, have been considered by 20th century critics.

¹⁰² *Works*, vol. II, p. 366-67.

4. 4. Modern critical positions

We saw above that Bond (1902) gave unqualified support to the idea that *Sappho and Phao* is intended as an allegory of relations at the court of Elizabeth. On the issue of space (or 'Place and Time', as Bond terms this section) Bond emphasises, perhaps rather surprisingly, the relative unity that characterises this play as opposed to *Campaspe*:

The attempt at continuity of scene within the single act is much more marked in this play than in *Campaspe* [...] neither in this nor any other scene is anything said which requires us to suppose the locality changed within the limits of the scene.¹⁰³

While Bond thus seems to indicate that a certain artistic progression has taken place, G. K. Hunter (1962) finds that *Sappho and Phao* in some ways is 'a less successful play than *Campaspe*' (p. 167). One of the reasons is that '[t]he milieu lacks the definition of Athens in *Campaspe*; the mingling of mythological, allegorical and human characters is only made possible by a setting vague enough not to be noticed' (ibid). However, Hunter does not interrogate the idea that Sappho, 'the chaste and lovable sovereign of the play' is intended as a compliment to Elizabeth, and though he distances himself from Bond's assumption that the play depicts the Alencon-affair, he is clearly fascinated by the possibility of identifying allegorical elements in the text. In his 1969-study of the plays of Lyly, P. Saccio maintains Hunter's slightly negative attitude to the dramaturgy of *Sappho and Phao* and suggests that

Sappho and Phao is not a wholly satisfactory play. Its aesthetic defects arise primarily from the transitional nature of its dramaturgy. It has neither the complex architecture of *Campaspe* nor the beautiful modulation and slow

¹⁰³Ibid. p. 368.

unfolding of *Gallathea*; rather it has an attempt at the former through III.ii, and an attempt at the latter for the rest of the play (p. 168).

In the introduction to the Revels edition of the play (1991), David Bevington gives vent to a more positive assessment of its literary and dramaturgical qualities, and refers to 'the perceptive studies incorporated in the present introduction [which] cumulatively argue for a play of first historical importance and of an excellence demanding only that we approach the play on its own terms'.¹⁰⁴ The main term on which we ought to approach the play is, according to Bevington, that we abstain from a futile search for correspondences between characters and events in the play and character and events at the Elizabethan court. Sappho is not intended as a personal portrait of the Queen, and rather than a topical allegory, the play should be read as an allegory of love. Bevington also conducts a fairly detailed examination of locations and characters' movements, and concludes that

As with medieval and Tudor drama generally, the stage of Sappho and Phao is a composite and flexible world in which the presence of gods and mortals, aristocrats and commoners is spatially enhanced by a sense of multiple perspectives simultaneously perceived and compared [...] [t]he stage represents Syracuse and its environs, just as it stood for Athens in *Campaspe*, and again as in that play many of the scenes require little of our imagination other than to suppose we are in public spaces where contrasting groups of people and of gods alternately appear. (185).

Finally, it should be noted that although Bevington mentions the less elevated and 'royal' aspects of Sappho which appear in certain scenes, and which complicates any reading of Sappho as Elizabeth, it is M. Pincombe (1996) who has most strongly emphasised the ambiguous and multifaceted quality of this character: 'Lyly's Sappho, who is often regarded as a flattering allusion to the queen in the panegyrist mode

¹⁰⁴Perhaps the best example of such a study is Philip Edwards' *Threshold of a Nation: A Study in English and Irish Drama* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1979). The panegyrics of Lyly for the Queen is here almost matched by Edwards' panegyrics for the play.

outlined above, is really just as much a study in the construction of the heroine of romantic love [...]for most of the play she is a comic figure, not a conqueror' (p. 55-65).

Most of the passages above contain interesting views on the literary quality and dramaturgy of Lyly's second play, but if we now turn more specifically to the *spatial* dramaturgy, I would suggest that taken both Saccio's notion of the transitory quality of the play and Bevington's comments on the technique of 'multiple staging' direct our attention squarely to the issue that was hinted at above: the spatial integration of the setting. In what follows, I will examine the discourse of the main characters in detail in order to establish both how they situate themselves in relation to locations and how the dialogue constructs and reflects movements between locations. This investigation will then provide the necessary data for further reflections and conclusions concerning the dramatist's deployment of 'middle ground', as well as his efforts to achieve spatial integration of the setting.

4. 5. Characters and space

4.5.1. Phao

Regarded as a whole, the spatialising discourse of Phao is distributed in a simple, but distinct pattern of utterances throughout the play. The character places himself in relation to the rest of the dramatic world in a soliloquy in act one, scene one in the middle part of the play he has only a few references to locations and movements finally, in the last scene Phao once again extends the perspective and perceives

himself in relation to a wider world. This 'tripartite' pattern is, as we shall have occasion to observe shortly, matched by a reverse pattern in the distribution of the spatialising utterances of Sappho.

Phao's soliloquy in I.i is the passage in the play with the widest range of spatial references, and functions as an introduction to the two loci which both geographically and emotionally decide the direction of Phao's life.¹⁰⁵ Initially, we learn from a series of parallel constructions that Phao is at this point eminently satisfied with his own situation: he is a ferryman, living from and off the water, and he is emotionally content: 'Thy heart's thirst is satisfied with thy hand's thrift, and thy gentle labours in the day turn to sweet slumbers in the night' (I.i. 5-6). He is aware of the existence of the court of Sappho, but he does not regard it as an antithesis to his own situation. Sappho and his own lives are both marked by delight, albeit on different social levels: 'As much doth it delight thee to rule thine oar in the calm stream as it doth Sappho to sway her sceptre in her brave court' (7-9). In the second part of the speech, however, a crucial difference emerges. Phao reflects on the potential dangers facing Sappho as opposed to his own anonymous but safe existence by the waterside: 'Thou needest not feat poison in thy glass nor treason in thy guard. The wind is thy greatest enemy, whose might is withstood with policy' (17). The speech ends with an exclamation which further contributes to the 'deconstruction' of his statement on Sappho's 'delight': 'O sweet life seldom found under a golden covert, often under a thatched cottage'. In the world of Syracuse,

¹⁰⁵His total range of references to locality in the play include 'ferry', 'stream', 'court', 'market', 'covert', 'cottage', 'Syracusa', 'water', 'boat', 'cave', 'world' and 'Sicily'. Of these almost all are included in the first speech in I.i.

then, it is in principle possible to live a happy life both at court and as a ferryman, but the difference is that life under 'a golden covert' demands constant vigilance.

Phao's first speech, then, is marked out as a formal speech act rather than the subjective expression of an individual. The discourse has a proverbial quality, the speaker refers to himself in the second person, thereby setting himself up as an object to be scrutinised as if in a mirror, and, as we have heard, the speaker deploys the rhetoric and commonplaces of the pastoral in order to establish the differences between ferry and court. After the exclamation, however, this sense of distance and formality is broken, and the speaker is abruptly returned to the here-and-now of subjective existence by the arrival of Venus and Cupid: 'But here cometh one. I will withdraw myself aside; it may be a passenger'.¹⁰⁶ The dramaturgy at this point requires an illogical action on part of Phao; why should a ferryman hide himself when potential customers arrive? The ferryman's utterance and move come across as rather clumsy, but the dramatist's reasoning in this case is clear enough: he needs to get Phao out of the way for a short while so that the exposition can continue with a dialogue between Venus and Cupid.

The reason why Venus wants to cross to Syracuse is that she intends 'to yoke the neck that yet never bowed', i.e. to get the better of the proud Sappho.¹⁰⁷ Neither the journey itself nor the momentous event which takes place in the ferry when Venus transforms Phao into a ravishing beauty is part of the onstage action,

¹⁰⁶The editor has here added what seems to be a superfluous stage direction: *He stands aside*. That the actor playing Phao should stand aside is quite clear from the dialogue itself.

¹⁰⁷ We should note that the dramatist does not allow Venus' characterisation of Sappho to stand undisputed; Cupid quotes the opinion that 'she has her thoughts in a string, that she conquers affections and sendeth love up and down upon errands (45-47).

however. From the dialogue between Phao and Venus at the landing we know that the journey is going to take place, of course, and in scene I.iv, in a conversation between the ladies at the court, we learn both that Venus has made Phao 'fair', and that his improved appearance has been accompanied by a change of attitude which the ladies do not find attractive: 'Proud elf, how squeamish he is become already, using both disdainful looks and imperious words, insomuch that he galleth with ingratitude!' (I. iv. 7-9). Reporting Phao's journey and a miraculous transformation rather than showing it neatly parallels the dramaturgy of a similar episode in *Midas* where Martius and Mellacrites narrate the king's journey to the river Pactolus and the ensuing bath, which also involved a transformation: it is cleansing him of the ability to turn everything into gold. We have to await the analyses in the rest of this and the next chapter before it will be possible to state with any degree of certainty whether this way of representing journeys and strange events is a fixed part of Lyly's dramaturgical repertoire. *if* it turns out to be, then it should perhaps be seen as a response to the kind of accusations towards drama and theatre that was voiced by Sidney in *The Defence of Poesy* (c. 1580): 'But if it be so in *Gorboduc*, how much more in all the rest, where you shall Asia of the one side, and Afric on the other'.¹⁰⁸ In other words, it is wrong to ask the audience to believe that a few steps across the stage brings a character from one location to another which one knows is far away. Lyly's solution is certainly one way of avoiding the most blatant instances of this so-called 'foreshortened' scene.

¹⁰⁸ *The Defence of Poesy*, p. 45.

The next scene in which Phao appears is II.i, and one might well ask how it is possible that the ladies at Sappho's court have any knowledge at all of the commoner's state of mind as early as I.iv? After all, no connection of any kind, spatial or otherwise, has as yet been established between Phao and Sappho or between Phao and any other character at court for that matter. The dramatist thus does not provide reasons for the court ladies' knowledge, but the function of their information concerning the ferryman is clear enough: it prepares for Phao's monologue when arriving at Sibylla's cave in the first scene of act two. We are not provided with any textual indication of the whereabouts of the cave in relation to the ferry; Phao is deep in reflections on his own situation, and concludes that he should not complain, but 'crave counsel', and out of the blue Sibylla and the cave appear: 'And lo! Behold Sibylla in the mouth of her cave. I will salute her' (14-15). The same absence of spatial orientation is in evidence when, after their conversation, Phao is about to leave. Just as we did not know where he came from, we do not know at this point where he is going. The ferryman simply says 'I go, ready to return', and from his final lines in this scene we learn that he is not overtly optimistic: 'Alas madam, your prophecy threatened miseries and your counsel warneth impossibilities' (158-59). The conspicuous lack of spatial integration between the cave and the rest of the setting is first and foremost a textual phenomenon; we can fairly certain that the structure which represented the cave remained on stage with other structures representing Vulcan's forge and Sappho's bedchamber throughout the performance, thus inducing a sense of spatial relationships between locations in the theatre audience.

In the text, however, it could be argued that this feeling of a 'nowhere' which accompanies Sibylla's cave rather enhances our sense of the symbolic value of the location. What is the function of this location within the context of the play as a whole? Before it is possible to answer this question with any degree of plausibility, it is necessary to take a look at the other two scenes where Sibylla and her cave appear. Phao's second visit to the cave occurs in II.iv, subsequent to his first meeting with Sappho and the first pangs of love. This time, however, Phao knows where he is going and why:

In these extremities I will go to none other oracle than Sibylla [...] whose sound advice may mitigate, though the heavens cannot remove, my miseries (38-42)

The 'sound advice' offered by Sibylla on this occasion consists of a catalogue of techniques for overcoming the reluctance as well as the resistance of the beloved female object. This is pure Ovidian discourse, of course, and shows that the Sibylla's repertoire includes more than just the prophesying discourse found in the previous scene. She concludes that Phao should 'go dare' and he seems at this point to agree: 'Phao thou canst but die, and then as good die with great desires as pine in base fortunes' (145-46). In spite of Sibylla's advice and his own seeming determination to actively pursue Sappho, we, as we shall see, neither observe nor hear about any initiatives on the part of Phao. When in V.iii Phao visits Sibylla for the last time he says to himself 'Go to Sibylla, tell the beginnings of thy love and the end of thy fortune' (1), and once again there is no indication of point of departure or distance involved. He is immediately there: 'And lo, how happily she sitteth in her cave' (2-3). Phao then relates his sad story and the Sibylla talks about his future in the kind of prophetic discourse encountered earlier.

Critics have rarely engaged fully with the discourse and dramatic function of Sibylla. However, both Hunter and Saccio emphasise the 'Ovidian' aspect of her discourse, indeed in Saccio it is the only aspect mentioned.¹⁰⁹ Hunter, on the other hand, also brings up the Sibyl's 'prophecy' in II.i, and observes, quite correctly I believe, that this speech 'seems to have little or no relevance to the career of Phao as we see it, and t be full of court innuendos'.¹¹⁰ Moreover, Hunter also address the question of the *function* of Sibylla, and finds in terms of space that she 'propels' Phao towards the court. This suggestion is based, presumably, on her advice in II.iv, but I would like to argue that the text does not support this notion; at no point in the dialogue is it indicated that Phao follows the Ovidian advice of the Sibyl. In more general terms, however, one might say that the discourse of the Sibyl informs and initiates the outsider Phao in the somewhat strange culture of the court, and as such sets up a structural symmetry in the play by paralleling the courtier Trachinus' initiation of the scholar Pandion into aspects of the same culture. The parallel to a certain degree also includes spatial relations. Just as the cave of Sibylla is a nowhere-place, neither court nor ferry nor the abode of the gods, so the courtier and the scholar tend to move about in their own landscape within the setting. Needless to say, from the dramatist's point of view this 'education of the outsiders' allowed different opinions and perspectives on the court and its less attractive aspects to come to the surface without, one may add, a too close identification with the voice of the dramatist himself.

¹⁰⁹See Saccio, 1969, p. 168-69.

¹¹⁰Hunter, 1962, p. 176.

Finally, one may speculate whether in fact the pronounced lack of spatial relations between Sibylla's cave and the rest of the setting indicates that this location has no real existence within the dramatic world. In other words, are the visits to Sibylla and her cave parts of a dream? A dream that provides Phao with the guidance we may assume he so desperately seeks after his encounter with Sappho at the ferry? Such an interpretation does perhaps come across as farfetched, but we should bear in mind that this is a play where dreams play a central role on several levels. Lyly advised the Queen in the prologue to imagine herself 'to be in a deep dream', and in act four, scene three, dreams, and in particular the dream of Sappho, provide a theme for the conversation between Sappho and her court ladies. I do not wish to be overtly assertive on this issue, but it at least seems possible that Lyly's general concern with dreams in this play could have influenced sections of the play which at the outset was not explicitly designed as dream sequences.¹¹¹

Whether she is part of the dramatic world or just exists in Phao's dreams, the influence of the Sibyl on the ferryman's decision to approach the court is minor compared to the event referred to above, Sappho's visit to the ferry. Thunderstruck by the beauty of Sappho, Phao answers affirmatively when asked if he will forsake his ferry 'and follow the court as a page' (I.iii. 29-30). This may seem to be the point when the ferryman moves to the court, but if we look at the next scene set at court where Phao is mentioned, he does not seem to be very close to the Queen in terms of space at all. In act three, scene three Sappho is sick, love sick in fact, and very much in favour of the idea that Phao, who is 'cunning in all kinds of simples' should

¹¹¹The possible significance of dreams in the play has kindly been suggested by M. Pincombe in private conversation.

be called for. After Sappho has fallen asleep Mileta 'will go to Phao' (142), and the sense of distance and of time passed heightens our sense of expectation and excitement before their meeting.

However, Phao is *there*, at the centre of the dramatic world of the play, for the duration of one scene only (III.iv), and the brevity of his stay is matched by the lack of discursive connections to the court as a place and a space. In the course of his utterances in III.iv there is not a single deictic marker which establishes a relationship between subject (*I*) and setting (*here*). After an initial dialogue with Mileta, the main part of the scene consists of a 'love-duet' between Sappho and Phao which, beneath the double entendre and circumspect discourse, clearly reveals that Phao has no intention of following the Ovidian advice of Sibylla (or his subconscious?) and force himself upon Sappho. He resigns, realising that the social gulf between them cannot be bridged. Like a comet which sweeps in from the dark depths of the universe and for a short while comes close to the sun, Phao orbits away from the court and out towards the periphery. Unlike a comet, however, he shall not return; there can be no question now of going back to his former peaceful and pastoral existence at the ferry: 'Range rather over the world, forswear affections, entreat for death' (V.iii. 16-17). In the end Phao leaves Syracuse and Sicily.¹¹²

¹¹²Although the emotional background is different, this is also what happens, or rather has happened, in Sappho's letter to Phaon in Ovid's *Heroides*. Phaon has gone, but she knows where he is: 'the fields where you are now, / on the slopes of Typhoeus' Aetna', see Penguin Classics edition, translated with an introduction and notes by Harold Isbell (London: Penguin, 1990), p. 133.

4.5.2. Sappho

Sappho resides at the central location of the play and does in general not move between locations, the one exception being, of course, her visit to the ferry in act two, scene two. In contrast to the coincidental quality of Phao's arrival at cave of the Sibyl, however, the text in this case provides both a motive for her coming to the ferry and a spatial link between that location and the court. She is out 'to take the air', and she knows where to go:

I will cross the ferry, and so the fields, then going in through the park: I think the walk will be pleasant (13-15).

Why does the dramatist deploy this rare specimen of word scenery, and why do we as readers and spectators need to know that there are fields and a park between the ferry and the court? I would suggest that Sappho's presence in the middle-ground can be read in three different, but still interrelated ways. The first is to regard this part of the setting as functional in relation to the cultural context of the performance: the dramatist wishes to make certain that the first meeting between Sappho and Phao comes across a coincidence. The noble lady, who at this point in the play may easily have been perceived by the spectators as a complementary representation of Elizabeth, is not at the ferry because she is pursuing the beautiful youngster rumours have told her about, but because the ferry is part of her walk 'to take the air'. From another point-of-view, the middle ground setting can be seen as an example of a more general attempt on the part of Lyly to create a believable and coherent setting for a story where the major sources, as we have seen, provide very few elements which may assist the dramatist. Such an interpretation is given support by the fact that not only Sappho, but also Trachinus and Pandion enjoy a pleasant walk 'in this

flattering green', but it also raises the question of why Lyly, if he was concerned with the quality of the setting, put so little emphasis on coherence and believability in other parts of it. The lack of integration in relation to Sibylla's cave has already been discussed, and we shall shortly see that the same applies to Vulcan's forge.

A third, and perhaps more intriguing, reading of the middle ground would be to suggest that its significance lies not only in its straightforward functional and dramaturgical aspects, but that it actually represents, in as yet a rudimentary form, one of those semantically significant spatial paradigms that we have met in the green-world of *Midas*, and will encounter again in the pastoral plays.¹¹³ The green world in *Sappho and Phao* is the part of the setting where crucially significant emotional transformations take place. The commoner Phao, who thought himself unable to love, sets his eyes upon Sappho and falls head over heels in love, while the noble Sappho, occupier of the topmost rank on the social ladder of Syracuse, is mesmerised by the beauty of Phao. Although perhaps rather tenuous, there is a link here which should not be overlooked to Sappho and Phaon in Ovid's *Heroides*. The Sappho of the poem, who thinks back on the happier days of her love affair with Phaon, mentally reconstructs their togetherness by visiting place where they were together

I find the forest which so often/was a bower in which we lay, shading us/with heavy leaves [...] he was the gift that enriched that remote place/I see the crushed grasses in the turf,/the sod that took on the impress of our weight./I

¹¹³According to Anne Begor Lancashire, *Sappho and Phao* 'begins in a pastoral vein and is throughout somewhat pastoral although most scholars have not thought so', in 'John Lyly and Pastoral Entertainment', *The Elizabethan Theatre VIII*, ed. by George Hibbard, (Ontario: P. D. Meany, 1982). I find her notion of 'somewhat pastoral' to be conceptually limited. There is an element of nature in the setting of the play, but we find none of the motifs traditionally linked to the pastoral like for instance shepherds and their flocks, singing contests etc. I will return to the issue of Lyly and the pastoral in chapter V.

have reclined and touched the place where/you rested, the grass that once was welcoming/to me has been watered by my tears.¹¹⁴

Lyly may have been inspired and influenced by Sappho's narration in the *Heroides*, but as we have seen he integrates the green world setting with his story in quite a different manner. The fields and park of Syracuse is not the space where the love story between Sappho and Phao is played out; to the degree that there is a love story at all it is set at court.

After her sojourn in the park, Sappho returns to the court. Even though this location can hardly be said to have been given a detailed representation in the text, it is nevertheless there as a physical presence to a much higher degree than was the case with the courts in both *Campaspe* and *Midas*. A survey of Sappho's spatialising utterances shows that she, as opposed to Phao (who is after all supposed to be a page), relates to this court milieu as a physical location and a space. It is especially in act three, scene three that we find the kind of interactive dialogue which includes references to the spatial setting and characters' movements relating to it:

Sappho Ah, who is *there*? [...] Did nobody name Phao before I began to slumber?

Mileta Yes, we told you of him.

Sappho Let him be *here* tomorrow.

Mileta He shall. Will you have a little broth to comfort you?

Sappho I can relish nothing.

Mileta Yet a little you must take to sustain nature.

Sappho I cannot Mileta, I will not. O, *which way shall I lie*? What shall I do? Heigh-ho. O, Mileta help to rear me up *my bed*; my head lies too low. You pester me with too many *clothes*. Fie, you keep *the chamber* too hot. Avoid it. It may be I shall steal a nap when *all are gone* (71-84, my italics).

Another characteristic of Sappho's spatialising utterances is that many are in the imperative mood; as is evident also from the passage just quoted, she orders other

¹¹⁴*Heroides*, p. 138.

characters about and creates movement within the setting. In III.iii these movements and her own concern with her physical surroundings are brought about by the emotional upheaval she experienced at the ferry, so in that sense it is possible to argue that her sojourn in the green world also influence the spatial dramaturgy of later scenes. Moreover, Lyly's concern with spatiality in the bedchamber-scene is apparent also by the fact that this scene is one of the few in Lyly's plays to contain extradiological stage directions.

After the meeting with Phao in III.iv, Sappho remains in her court for the rest of the play. Perhaps the most interesting aspect of the spatial dramaturgy in the final scenes is how Sappho is able to persuade Cupid to abandon Venus by, among other things, a promise to enter into a close physical relationship with her: 'Thou shalt sit in my lap; I will rock thee asleep and feed thee with all these fine knacks' (V.ii. 22-24). By placing Cupid in Sappho's lap, Lyly seems to come close to the Christian image of Madonna and Child, and this may intuitively make sense if we regard Sappho as a complement to the Queen. However, Michael Pincombe has in a recent study drawn our attention to other and more secular icons which may have inspired this particular scene. It is possible that Lyly knew William Gager's latin play *The Tragedy of Dido*, performed at All Soul's College, Oxford in June 1583. The text seems to indicate that Cupid (in the shape of Ascanious) at some point in the play sits in Dido's lap. Pincombe also suggests that the Madonna and Child icon would have been an inappropriate one in relation to a childless Queen.¹¹⁵ Whatever the source, the fact that Sappho is able to convince Cupid to leave Venus and come into

¹¹⁵See 'The Iconography of Power' in *Ideas and Images of Rulership on the English Renaissance Stage*, Papers in English and American Studies VIII, ed. by Gyorgy E. Szonyi & Rowland Wymer (Szeged: JATEpress, 2000).

her own personal space is a compelling image of the power of Sappho and of her victory over Venus, and Sappho knows it: 'Yea, Venus, what say you to it, in Sappho's lap?' (V.ii. 53).

4.5.3 Venus

Venus, as opposed to Sappho, is a god and has no fixed earthly abode. In the play she is a free-ranging character who moves between the ferry, the court and Vulcan's forge, and I would suggest that the rivalry between Sappho and Venus and in general the difference between these two characters are reflected in their respective spatial dramaturgies. Venus has about the same number of spatialising utterances as Sappho, and also about the same proportion of imperatives, but her utterances are distributed very differently. The pattern in fact resembles that of Phao: most at the beginning and the end of the play, and relatively few in the middle. Venus has one character and one location which are her own, so to speak. She is the only one of the major characters to visit Vulcan at his forge, and in what follows the spatial integration of the forge will be one of the main issues.

However, Venus most comprehensive contribution to the discursive creation of a location clearly comes in the scene where we first meet her; in act one, scene one, in the interactive dialogue with Phao at the ferry. Venus and Cupid need to cross the water to Syracuse, and Venus asks Phao whether he 'keep the ferry that bendeth to Syracuse' (the gods are obviously in need of earthly means of getting from place to place). In the ensuing dialogue, Venus is concerned with, among other things, the dangers of the water:

Venus I fear if *the water* should begin to swell thou wilt want cunning to guide.
Phao These *waters* are commonly as the passengers be, and therefore, carrying one so fair in show, there is no cause to fear a *rough sea*.
Venus To pass the time in thy *boat*, canst thou devise any pastime?
Phao If the wind be with me, I can *angle*, or tell tales; if against me, it will be pleasure for you to see me take pains.
Venus I like not *fishing*, yet I was born of the *sea* (I.i. 59-69, my italics).

I believe that what we observe here and elsewhere in this scene is a conscious attempt on part of the dramatist to compensate for a lack of staging possibilities by a kind of verbal scenery. Representing water on stage may have been difficult, especially with the limited resources available to the company at the Blackfriars, and by deploying this kind of 'water discourse', Lyly at least stimulated the imaginary efforts of the spectators in the right direction.¹¹⁶

We do not meet Venus again until act three, scene four, when she meets Phao who is on his way out from Sappho's chamber. We know the real motive why Venus and Cupid have come to see Sappho, of course, but there is some uncertainty at this point regarding both time and space. How long is it supposed to be since we last met Venus and Cupid, and where have they been in the meantime? The question is relevant because the dramatist cannot possibly expect us to imagine that the two in III.iv come straight from the trip with Phao that took place in I.i. It may seem like pettiness to ask such questions, why not just imagine that Venus and Cupid spent some time in Syracuse before venturing into the court of Sappho? In the face of a multifarious setting like that of *Sappho and Phao*, it is easy to reject observable

¹¹⁶Venus' association with water is a close one, of course. In Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, when Venus' granddaughter Ine flings herself into the water, Venus begs her uncle Neptune to take pity on the poor girl with the following words: 'Take pity on my dear ones, whom you see being tossed about in the Ionian waves. Add them to your company of seagods. *I, too have some influence with the sea, for I was once fashioned from foam, in its divine depths, and my Greek name still recalls that origirl*' (in Book IV, p. 108, my italics).

discrepancies and lack of integration as irrelevant. Why apply such criteria at all to a dramatic 'hodge-podge' world like that of *Sappho and Phao*? It seems to me, however, that by taking seriously all kinds of dramatic worlds and spatial settings it becomes possible to gradually increase the quality of our perception of the development of the dramatist. It may for instance be that the lack of integration between the appearances of Venus and Cupid in I.i and II.iv. is due to lack of experience in the field of dramatic writing.

Until the scene where Venus meets Phao outside Sappho's bedchamber, the opposition to the love between commoner and lady has come from their own innate sense of social positions and propriety. However, after this meeting Venus takes on the function of 'the opposed', and the trip to Vulcan's forge is a result of her new position in the love-scheme. It is Cupid who suggests that they should go to Vulcan to get new arrows 'for nothing can root out the desires of Phao but a new shaft of inconstancy, nor anything turn Sappho's heart but a new arrow of disdain' (IV. ii. 37-40). The move to the forge is motivated, then, and the spatial dramaturgy in this case even includes a transitory utterance from Venus: 'Come Cupid, Vulcan's flames must quench Venus, fires. Vulcan?' (IV.iv. 1-2). We get the impression even from the text that they are approaching the forge, and she calls out to Vulcan. Similarly, after Cupid has been equipped with the new arrows and sent on his way to Sappho's court, Venus will 'tarry for Cupid at the forge'(V.i. 62-63).

One question is never answered, though: where is Vulcan's forge situated in relation to the rest of the setting, and in particular to Syracuse and the court? The question cannot be answered, of course. This is not because Vulcan is a god and as such has his abode in heaven. According to *the Iliad*, Vulcan was thrown out of the

heavens by Jupiter and fell down on the Isle of Lemnos in the Aegean, but even though the god remained on earth, the forge comes across as a no-where location just as the cave of Sibylla. There are no green fields or parks between Vulcan's forge and the court of Sappho.

Venus and Cupid's visit to the forge prepares for a Deus ex Machina-solution to Sappho's emotional dilemma; she is hit with an arrow 'headed with Lydian steel, which striketh a deep disdain of that which we most desire' (V.i. 10). It is an interesting question why Lyly resolved the issue of the lady's love for a ferryman by supernatural means. Why not let Sappho reach the same conclusion, i.e. to reject Phao as a lover, as a result of her own reflections? He has after all presented us with a very convincing portrait of a woman who is aware that she is caught in a terrible dilemma

If he yield, then shall I shame to embrace one so mean; if not, die because I cannot embrace one so mean. Thus do I find no mean (IV.i. 17-19).

Does the Deus ex Machina solution in fact also weaken the complementary function of Sappho vis a vis the Queen, as an exemplum of ruler who in the end finds the right way? These are questions which must be left unanswered, but I would suggest that in this case it is possible to regard Lyly's handling of the emotional process and its ending as a somewhat uneasy coexistence between allegorical and non-allegorical modes of representation. After all, the issue does not include insurmountable problems of the kind faced by Gallathea and Phyllida in *Galatea*, where one of the two girls has to change her sex in order to enter into a relationship with the other.

After having 'tarried' at the forge, Venus enters rather abruptly in V.ii: 'I marvel Cupid cometh not all this while.- How now, in Sappho's lap?' (50-51). From

this utterance we get the impression that while in its first part Venus is still at the forge wondering where Cupid is, in the second she is suddenly *there*, in or near Sappho's bedchamber and able to observe what is going on. No attempt on part of the dramatist here, then, to create a smooth transition between locations. In the end, we find Venus trying desperately to convince Cupid to leave Sappho's lap and come with her, but to no avail:

Venus Come, Cupid, she knows not how to use thee. Come with me,
 you know what I have for you. Will you not?
Cupid Not I.
Venus Well, I will be even with you both, and that shortly.

The relocation of Cupid from the space of Venus to the space of Sappho thus signals both the victory of Sappho and the defeat of Venus.

Trachinus and Pandion

The courtier Pandion and the scholar Trachinus first appear in act one, scene two, and they subsequently appear in two other scenes in the play. To a certain degree the two interact with other characters; they accompany Sappho to the ferry in II.ii and they converse with the court ladies about Sappho's mystical 'sickness' in III.ii. However, their main interlocutors are each other; between them, they represent opposite perspectives on the court and on the relationship between court and university. It is important in the case of the courtier and the scholar not to forget the more obvious function of such characters. The existence of a courtier and a visiting scholar simply reinforces our sense of the court as a location in the play. There are,

after all, very few elements in the text beside the term 'court' itself which marks out Sappho's location as a court.

When we first meet the two, the scene is set somewhere outside Syracuse, witness Pandion's orders to Molus in lines 75-77:

And you, sir boy, go to Syracuse about by land, where you shall meet my stuff: pay for the carriage, and convey it to my lodging

This is the first example in the play of the dramatist's efforts to discursively set up a logically connected setting, but seen in connection with other utterances this one does in fact create some uncertainty as to what this scene is intended to present: Has Pandion been in Syracuse for some time or do we witness his arrival to the city? Trachinus' initial remark to his friend seems to indicate that Pandion has already been in town for some time: 'Pandion, since your coming from the university to the court, from Athens to Syracuse, how do you feel yourself altered, either in humour or opinion?

When Pandion replies that he feels altered, Trachinus launches into a speech which is praising the court as a place which allows one to experience reality rather than to read about it in books. Trachinus' presentation of the contrast between University and Court is a variant of a debate from the first part of *Euphues*: Athens versus Naples, and just as we saw in chapter I that any facile distinctions between the two locations were interrogated, so is Trachinus' discourse of praise immediately subverted by Pandion's assertion that rumours which tell of less attractive aspects to court life may have some truth to them. Lyly is on dangerous territory here, of course, but he avoids any inferences of the Queen's possible involvement with such negative aspects by letting courtier and scholar agree that Sappho's court is marked

by a dual reality: one imperfect, and, in the tree-imagery introduced by Trachinus, brought by 'the easterly wind, which is thought commonly to bring cankers and rottenness' (48-49). The other perfect, symbolised by Sappho, who 'for virtue has no co-partner', and is 'without comparison' (54-56).

Scene I.ii, then, clearly confirms our assertion above that the scholar and the courtier form a structural parallel to Phao and Sibylla in that their discourse allows the dramatist to examine different perspectives on the court. However, the two differ from Sibylla in that their dialogue contributes to the existence of a middle-ground which is clearly linked to the rest of the setting. In II.ii, after Sappho has voiced her intention to go walking through the fields and the park, Trachinus immediately assents 'You will much delight in the *flattering green*, which now beginneth to be in his glory' (16-17). Moreover, in III.i. Trachinus suggests they (in this case himself and Pandion) should 'walk a little *into the fields*, it may be the open air will disclose your close conceits' (44-45, my italics).

After this exit into the fields, we learn nothing more about Trachinus and Pandion in the play. They are not present in the final scenes, and therefore do not participate or even observe Sappho's victory over Venus. The text thus seems to signal that the two are still within the dramatic world somewhere, but the dramatist has not bothered to specify their whereabouts or indeed, considered their presence important to the play's denouement. This is the same spatial dramaturgy that we observed in relation to the philosophers in *Campaspe*; none of them are present when Alexander renounces his claim to Campaspe, but we do not doubt that they are still somewhere in Athens.

4. 6. *Spatial integration of comic relief scenes*

In this respect, the comic-relief characters Criticus, Molus (and to some extent also Calipho), servants of Trachinus, Pandion, and Vulcan, share their masters fate. After their appearance and final song in III.i., the witty and irreverent servants disappear from the play. Prior to this, however, Lyly has made some efforts to integrate the servant in the dramatic space of their masters, and he does so by a simple but quite efficient method. Let us look at the servants' first appearance in I.iii. Lyly prepares for this scene and indicates a shared space by Pandion's utterance to Molus in I.ii (quoted above). We know, then, that at this point masters and servants are together somewhere outside Syracuse, and although the text clearly shows that Pandion orders Molus to go away on an errand, it is in terms of performance the servants who remain and enter into a witty dialogue in I.iii.

Our sense of integrated or shared space is further strengthened when in II.ii Criticus actually participates in the dialogue with Phao at the ferry. Just as in I.iii, the servants then remain in place for their own scene while the master exits. This scene, however, ends with a song and with no indication of where the servants intend to go next. Finally, Lyly repeats the same pattern in III.i. In the end, after having confirmed that he will be following Trachinus into the fields, Pandion tells Trachinus to 'send our pages away' (46). The servants then remain, of course, and enter into a dialogue which links them to the main action by witty references to Syracuse, Venus, and Vulcan, and it all ends with a song, but without 'exit-spatialisation'.

In *Sappho and Phao*, then, Lyly has devised a method for integrating main plot and comic-relief scenes spatially, but as we shall see this is not as aspect of his

spatial dramaturgy which will be further developed in plays to come. As was indicated by *Midas*, the development will rather be towards more comprehensive, but also more spatially segregated, comic sub-plots.

4. 7. Performance

The staging of Sappho and Phao can hardly be said to belong to the critics' favourite topics; in the 1902-edition Bond did not consider questions of staging at all, and among later critics it is only Michael Best (1968), and David Bevington (1991) who have discussed this subject with some degree of thoroughness. Both seem to agree on the number and kind of stage structures that would have been needed to achieve a satisfactory mediation between text and performance. In the words of Best:

One of the houses would have been Sappho's chamber, also curtained for the sake of the interior scenes with Sappho in her bed, the other would have been a cave containing the Sibilla, and perhaps, as I have already suggested, with the use of a *periaktos*, Vulcan as well.¹¹⁷

With the exception of the alleged presence of the *periaktos*, Bevington follows Best's interpretation; also to the extent of emphasising that the stage structures would both have signified antithetical values and, as such, have been placed diametrically opposite each other on stage.

In what follows, I wish to examine possible mediations between text and performance by applying the conceptual division discussed in chapter II, of *required* versus *optional* performance elements. Rather than to replace the model suggested Best and Bevington, my main intention is to emphasise the flexibility of the spatial

¹¹⁷Best (1968), p. 109. See also Bevington (1991), p. 184.

dramaturgy of the text in relation to performance. I would suggest that *Sappho and Phao* exemplify a dramatic text which is performable in quite different theatrical contexts, from the fairly simply equipped stage of the first Blackfriars to the lavish material conditions at court. Our investigation of the characters and the spatial dramaturgy has revealed that there are four distinct textual locations: Phao's ferry, Sibylla's cave, Sappho's bedchamber, and Vulcan's forge. Of these, it is only in relation to the ferry that the text does not signal the need for some kind of stage structure.

4.7.1 Bedchamber

Of the remaining three, perhaps the most obvious case is Sappho's bedchamber. This is, I would argue, the only real interior scene in the whole of Lyly's dramatic oeuvre. There are, of course, other scenes which can be interpreted as interior scenes, as for instance scene IV.iii in *Campaspe*, which Bond, among others thought was set inside Apelles' shop. The scene in Sappho's bedchamber, on the other hand, is unique in that it is the only one where characters relate to parts of an interior as a material reality. The scene is also the only one in the play to be furnished with stage directions outside the dialogue (with the exception of directions for exits and entries), and the reason is precisely that the dramatist needs to indicate in the script how characters should act in relation to an interior.

However, even though this scene in general can be identified as an interior scene, it is important to keep in mind that the stage structure or 'house' in this case most likely does not represent a room in the palace, but Sappho's bed. The bed,

then, would, as signalled by the stage directions, have been represented by some kind of booth-like, curtained structure.¹¹⁸ This inner bedchamber cannot be dispensed in performance, and consequentially does not belong to the optional elements in the play. The room in Sappho's palace where the bed is placed, on the other hand, could not have been spatially defined with any degree of precision; the room would extend to an imaginary and flexible boundary between the palace and the location(s) next to it.

4.7.2. Cave

The other textual location which seems to require some kind of stage structure is Sibylla's cave; this is quite evident from Phao's utterance in II.i, 'Behold Sibylla in the mouth of her cave' (14). The clue here is of course the term 'mouth'. Phao in this case draws the attention of the spectators to a particular physical feature, and we must assume that in order for such an utterance to make sense, there must at least have been some kind of opening visible on stage. It is easy to make the assumption that the opening in question would have been part of a three-dimensional 'house' or 'cave', i.e. a structure with a pronounced interior dimension, but the text is somewhat ambiguous with regard to the use of such a dimension. In act two, scene one, Sibylla is, as we have heard, placed in the opening of the cave and there is no talk of going inside: 'Come *near*. Take a stool and sit down' (23, my italics). In II.iv, on the other hand, the dialogue seems to indicate that the Sibylla is inside the cave when Phao comes along; her questions 'Who is there?' and 'Fair

¹¹⁸It is clear from entries in the Revels Accounts that curtained 'houses' was in use in the years immediately prior to the opening of the theatre in the old Blackfriars, see for instance Best (1968), p. 106.

Phao?' seem more natural placed in the mouth of someone who is unable directly to see the person approaching. Moreover, the notion that she is somehow more inside the cave on this occasion is strengthened when she asks him to 'come *in*' (48).¹¹⁹ Finally, when Phao arrives at the cave in V.iii, he once again draws the attention of the spectators to the physical position of the Sibylla: 'And, lo, how happily she sitteth *in* her cave' (2).

In view of these indications of interiority, is it nevertheless possible to maintain our initial position that the text could accommodate flexible staging solutions? I believe it is. If we once more apply the distinction between required and optional solutions, we cannot escape the fact that some kind of 'cave'-structure is required. However, I would argue that although, as we have seen above, linguistic indications for interiority do exist, they are not really strong enough to require interior action to take place. It is possible to envisage the play being staged at the old Blackfriars with only a small, make-shift structure representing the cave, and, in consequence, with all the discourse between Phao and the Sibylla taking place at the opening or 'mouth', while in court performance the cave could have been full-size, carefully constructed and painted, and with Sibylla and Phao inside, but visible, in scenes II.iv. and V.iii.

¹¹⁹Bevington in the Revels edition at this point suggests that 'the two may confer at the mouth of the cave, understood to represent its interior' (p. 242). He fails to take into account the different deictics of the two passages.

4.7.3. Forge

Browsing through the text, one may easily get the impression that the scenes at Vulcan's forge require both a 'house' and interior scenes in performance. However, a more careful reading reveals that this is not necessarily the case. I would suggest that the forge is the prime example in the play of a location which allows a range of stage solutions, from an elaborate stage structure with possibilities for inside action to a simple property like for instance an anvil on stage. Both these solutions could accommodate Venus utterance in V.i. when she tells us that she is going to tarry for Cupid *at the forge* (my italics), and they also make sense in relation to the exchange between Venus and Vulcan at the beginning of act four, scene four

Venus Vulcan?
Vulcan who?
Venus ho, ho, Venus
 (IV.iv. 3-5)

This passage could have been staged with Vulcan inside some fairly large stage structure, or he could have been engaged in some smith's activity on the open stage, perhaps with his back to the visitor. It is quite obvious that the scene at the forge could have provided an exciting theatrical moment in the play with a large stage 'house' and Vulcan's cyclops inside it, but I tend to believe that this solution would have required the larger resources that a court performance could make available to dramatist and director.

4.7.5 Ferry, fields and park

We saw above that in the text that the location of the ferry was presented as lying adjacent to the fields and the park, and I wish now to consider briefly how this part

of the textual setting may have been integrated into the totality of the stage picture. The ferry itself, or rather the landing, is clearly an onstage location. This is where Phao delivers his monologue in act one, scene one, and where he later in the same scene meets with Venus and Cupid. It is also the place where Sappho, Trachinus and Pandion arrive in II.ii. However, it is equally clear that the boat and the water belong to offstage space. We see neither the journey nor the transformation of Phao when he takes Venus and Cupid across to Syracuse, and the spectator has to imagine that the three go down into the boat when Venus says 'Let us away' and they *exeunt* at the end of I.i. The green world of the play, the fields and the park, is also placed in the offstage part of the dramatic world; we never see Sappho cross the fields and go in through the park. Similarly, in III.i, when Trachinus invites Pandion to 'walk a little into the fields', the two leaves exit while their servants remain on stage into the next scene.

4. 8. *Conclusions*

The spatial setting of *Sappho and Phao* exhibits a multiplicity of locations which form part of a rather loosely integrated dramatic world. The discourse does not bind together the different locations in the play sufficiently for us to gain a sense of the positions of Vulcan's forge and Sibylla's cave in relation to the ferry and city of Syracuse. Is it at all possible in this 'labyrinth of conceits' as Lyly himself labels the play in the epilogue, to identify/establish spatial paradigms which are particularly relevant to the development and transformation of character? It seems that of the four locations in the play it is the cave and the forge that are the least linked to

character changes. Just as the Sibylla and Vulcan themselves are static characters, forever locked in their present occupations and positions, so these locations function merely as 'stations' where characters can pick up information and advice, or as in the case of the forge, materials. The main spatial paradigm of the play, I would argue, is the binary opposition between the court/city of Syracuse and the elsewhere of the play's green world. The significant fact of this green world is not that it, as Lancashire argues, can be considered as a pastoral fragment, but that it is the first example in Lyly's plays of nature being used as a background for dynamic changes in plot and character.

4. 9. Endymion: Textual history and summary

Endymion was registered to 'mystres Broome Wydowe Late Wyfe of William Broome' in the Stationers register in October 1591, and the only quarto edition of the play appeared the same year with a title page which informed the reader that the play had been performed 'before the Queeenes Ma-/iestie at Greenewich on Candlemas day/at night, by the chyl dren of/Paules'.¹²⁰ According to Bevington, the Candlemas Day in question must have been on the 2nd of February 1588, because this is the only Candlemas day between 1580 and 1591 where there is recorded a payment to the Paul's boys. He also suggests that the fact that only one quarto of *Endymion* was ever printed should be taken as an indication of the declining fortunes of Lyly in the

¹²⁰The entry in the Stationer's register and the title page are cited in David Bevington's 'Introduction' to the play in the Revels series, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1996), p. 8.

early 1590s.¹²¹ There is no need here to trace the subsequent textual history of the play in detail. The quality of the first quarto was very good, and in 1628 the play was given pride of place in Blount's edition of six comedies by Lyly, now with songs and dumb-show added. From Dilke's 1814-edition of Lyly's plays onwards, *Endymion* has been regularly included in all the major editions. In what follows, all textual references and quotes from the play will be from the recent Revels edition.

In the introduction to this chapter, I pointed to certain parallels between *Sappho and Phao* and *Endymion* concerning actantial structure and locations. Within this structure, however, *Endymion* is a larger play both in terms of number of lines and characters. Unlike *Phao*, *Endymion* has a faithful friend, Eumenides, and the play opens with Endymion declaring his love for Cynthia to his friend. In both this scene and the following, where we meet Tellus and her lady-in-waiting Floscula, there is a noticeable lack of textual indications as to setting. With the benefit of hindsight it is perhaps possible to place these scenes 'somewhere near the court', but without it, it is actually quite difficult to place these scenes within any meaningful spatial context.

It is soon made evident that there has previously been some kind of liason between Endymion and Tellus, and spurred on by wounded pride and jealousy Tellus decides that she will 'rather use unlawful means than try intolerable pains'(II.i. 87-88); in other words, she will do everything in her power to redirect Endymion's feelings towards herself. In II.iii the first identifiable location of the play is established when Endymion falls asleep at a bank of lunary: 'On yonder bank never grew anything but lunary, and hereafter I will never have any bed but that bank' (10-

¹²¹Ibid. p.1.

11). The irony of these words become evident when the sorceress Dipsas uses her magic powers to put him to sleep not for a few hours, but for no less than forty years. The consequence of Dipsas' action is that there is established a permanent textual and theatrical location where Endymion is sleeping through the major part of the play and gradually grows old, and I will later examine how this location is integrated with the rest of the setting during that period and later.

In act three, scene one, all the central characters (except the sleeping Endymion, of course) are gathered at a location which we must assume is Cynthia's court. She is presented with two opposing views of Endymion, spiteful from Tellus and compassionate from Eumenides, and her reactions to the two versions have significant consequences for the spatial dramaturgy. A third location is established when Tellus for her sharp tongue is banished to 'the castle in the desert', and Cynthia decides to try to find a remedy for Endymion's sleep and dispatches Eumenides, Zontes, and Panelion to Thessaly, Greece and Egypt, respectively. In III.i, then, a major part of the setting is established, and it is now clear that the characters are operating within a distinctly terrestrial dramatic world. The fourth and final location is established when Eumenides on his travels comes across an old man, Geron, and a fountain. At the bottom of this fountain Eumenides finally discovers the remedy which is needed to release Endymion from his enforced and prolonged sleep: a kiss from Cynthia.

In act five, when Eumenides and Geron return to court, Endymion receives the royal kiss, and is transformed into a young man again. Geron turns out to be the husband of Dipsas, and both the sorceress and Tellus avoid harsh penalties in the end; Dipsas by forswearing 'the vile art of enchanting' (269-70), and Tellus by her

willingness to tell the truth and to marry her admirer Corsites, former prison officer at the castle in the desert. Present at these happy moments is also one of the major characters from the play's comic relief scenes, Sir Tophas, and I will present the gist of these comic relief scenes in a later section when discussing the spatial integration between the two lines of action.

4. 10. Sources and background

Edward LeComte writes about Lyly's use of the Endymion-myth that

Lyly has not so much used the ancient myth as the properties of the myth. He borrowed from it the names of two of his three chief characters. He borrowed the long sleep, and Cynthia's kiss. But this inherited material is rearranged and new material introduced.¹²²

LeComte's observations, which seem to be representative of most critics' position on this issue, suggest that the spatial dramaturgy of *Endymion* relates to the sources in much the same way as *Sappho and Phao*; i.e. that only quite rudimentary spatial relationships/structures have been transferred from myth to play. In the case of *Endymion* this would be that the young man spends a long time in the same location, and that it is the moon or Cynthia (in the most common legend Selene) who comes to him. The source material, then, has little to offer the dramatist in the way of pre-existing spatial structures.

There are, as Bevington suggests in his comprehensive introduction to the play, different levels and kinds of allegory that can be brought to bear upon the text of *Endymion* and which in principle could have influenced the development of its

¹²²In *Endymion in England & The Literary History of a Greek Myth*, (New York: King's Crown Press, 1944), p. 72.

spatial structure. In what follows, I will consider briefly the political and religious allegory that many critics claim to find in it, and will return to other kinds of allegory to the extent that it is relevant to a discussion of the play's spatial dramaturgy in later sections. From Halpin's essay *Oberon's Vision* (1847) and till the recent Revels edition (1996), critics and editors have been concerned with a variety of possible allegorical readings of the play's characters and action. E. Warwick Bond, for instance, developed his ideas on the play's allegory in a separate essay included in his 1902-edition, and argued that Endymion and Tellus should be read as The Earl of Leicester and Mary Queen of Scots.¹²³ Although rejecting the idea of Leicester as Endymion 'because Leicester's period of disgrace in 1579 was such an old story in 1588 and because Leicester was a rival of Lyly's patron, the Earl of Oxford', Bevington in the 1996-edition nevertheless supports the idea that Tellus is meant to represent Mary Stewart.¹²⁴ The reason why Tellus as Mary is interesting from a point-of-view of spatial dramaturgy is because the former Queen of Scots was a prisoner in various castles for many years before her execution in 1587 in the wake of the failed 'Babington'-plot. The idea that castles like Tutbury, Chatsworth, and Fotheringay were reshaped in the dramatists mind as 'the Castle in the Desert' is an attractive one; not least because this is the only castle-location in all of Lyly's plays.

However, there is an aspect of this interpretation which is faintly disturbing. At the time of the plays performance at court on the 2nd of February 1588, almost to

¹²³Some kind of 'emotional connection' between these two would have been recognised by the audience because in 1564, in the words of Penry Williams, 'Elizabeth proposed her own domestic ex-suitor' Robert Dudley as husband for Mary Stewart, see Penry Williams, *The Later Tudors: England 1547-1603*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), p. 248.

¹²⁴See the introduction, p. 27-29.

the day one year had passed since Elizabeth signed the warrant for Mary's death (on the 1st of February 1587), and I would suggest that there is reason to doubt whether Lyly would dare to , or indeed be allowed to, present on stage a character who was clearly discernible as Mary, and moreover, who was in fact pardoned by a character, Cynthia, whom no one would fail to recognise as the Queen herself. There is ample evidence, as Bevington points out, that Elizabeth wished to avoid the execution of Mary, and prevaricated as long as possible, but it is quite another matter to suggest that Elizabeth would not have stood by and defended her own and the governments decision afterwards. A political allegory which cast Tellus as Mary Queen of Scots may at least have reopened an emotional wound for Elizabeth, and I would suggest that one should consider carefully whether Lyly could possibly have regarded this topic as proper entertainment for the court on Candlemas 1588.

4. 11. *Modern critical positions*

While plays like *Midas* and *Sappho and Phao* have received their share of negative criticism, *Endymion* seems to be regarded almost unanimously by the critics as one of Lyly's best plays. Houppert bestows upon the play the ultimate praise:

'Endimion is Lyly's *Hamlet*', and adds that

[n]o historical or allegorical approach satisfies more than a few critics; the ending shrouds the play in ambiguity; and there are so many fashionable topics that every man finds something of interest.¹²⁵

¹²⁵Houppert, p. 96.

This favourable attitude, then, results not from the play being easy to interpret, but rather from its complexity and ability to puzzle those very same critics. We have seen above that the topical or political allegory has been a favourite tool with which to approach the play for at least a century and a half, but for the last forty years, i.e. since the publication of Hunter's *The Humanist as Courtier* (1962), allegorical readings have most often been embedded in an overall critical approach which actually intends to refute allegorical readings. This seeming paradox is probably a result of the critics' lack of ability to resist the temptation to present their own contribution towards solving a literary mystery. A fairly typical example can be found in G. K. Hunter's (1962) discussion of the play. He initially finds that Josephine Waters Bennett's allegorical reading 'has much to recommend it' and presents this reading in some detail. Thereafter Hunter goes on to present his own historical objections to Bennetts approach and interpretation, and he ends up inviting the reader to join him in a rejection of allegorical readings:

But quite apart from the plausibility or implausibility of these different identifications, is there not an assumption shared by them all which runs counter to the nature of courtly art as we have described it?¹²⁶

Hunter's own answer and alternative is that there is no need to search for a hidden meaning by assuming that Lyly dramatised a scenario from contemporary politics:

the whole play can be built up in this way as a functional development of a desire to flatter the Queen. Given Lyly's taste for symmetry and fondness for the conventions of courtly love (the conventions of his art) nothing else need be imported to explain the general structure of the play.¹²⁷

¹²⁶Hunter, 1962, p. 189.

¹²⁷Ibid.

Other critics have adopted much the same discursive pattern when discussing *Endymion*, but arrive at a different conclusion concerning the play's focal points of interest. Houppert, 1975, regrets that the play 'has attracted critics who delight in predicating topical parallels between the characters in the play and real personages in the court of Elizabeth', and finds in his own analysis of the play that its 'extremely balanced structure' is controlled by two themes: 'friendship and romantic love are what *Endymion* is all about'.¹²⁸ Pincombe enters into the discussion of possible topical allusion, and suggests that the most likely allusion is to Lyly himself and his involvement in the Verdungus-affair, possibly some kind of parallel to events which took place in 1584 when the dramatist suffered imprisonment due to debt-problems and evidently was released by Elizabeth.¹²⁹ He presents other ideas as well in his chapter on *Endymion*, for instance that the play actually exemplifies resistance to the panegyric mode on the part of Lyly, because it 'tends to suppress the erotic drama that he was really more interested in and more committed to', but like Houppert, Pincombe also offers what we could perhaps term an essentialist statement as a key to unlocking the mystery of the play: 'In fact *Endymion* is built on the triplex Diana'.¹³⁰

None of the critics mentioned so far have been sufficiently concerned with the play's spatial dramaturgy or setting to single out these elements as a separate topic in their discussions. When Bevington wrote the 'introduction' to the Revels edition,

¹²⁸Houppert, 1975, p. 95-96.

¹²⁹Pincombe, 1996, p. 84.

¹³⁰Ibid. p.97. The triplex Diana was the Roman version of the deity, and includes Luna, Diana, and Hecate, goddesses of heaven, earth and, the underworld, respectively.

the very structure of such an introduction required the editor to consider also 'dramaturgy and staging' in a separate section, but the presentation here is very much directed towards issues of staging, and as regards spatial dramaturgy in fact amounts to little more than a reiteration of familiar notions of the central role of the antithesis in text, staging and related topics. Bevington's most interesting statement on the relationship between character and setting, and the world of the play instead occurs in the introduction to the section on allegorical interpretations:

Cynthia is all paradox: growing to completion only to decay, becoming old only to be born anew, always changing and yet eternal, neither a goddess in the fullest sense nor a mere mortal. The play that surrounds her is similarly undefined, in its uncertain sense of place (vaguely on earth or in the heavens), its dreamlike quality, its romantic and magical impossibilities.¹³¹

In this passage we find Bevington echoing studies made by Saccio in the late sixties and early seventies. Saccio characterises the play as 'that mysterious play that has perplexed so many critics of Lyly', but finds the clue to this mystery not in any kind of topical or political allegory. Rather, it can be seen as a Christian allegory incorporating the Four Daughters of God, and where 'in the last scene Cynthia manifests Mercy, Justice and Truth'.¹³² By using Christian Allegory, Lyly could, according to Saccio, suggest 'the divine perfections of the idea monarch and the idea court under her sway' (ibid. P. 185).

Saccio's examination of *Endymion* in the 1969-study is somewhat superficial and leaves out of the discussion significant aspects of the play. I would suggest that

¹³¹Bevington (ed.), 1996, p. 15.

¹³²P. Saccio (1969), p. 177.

Saccio himself realised this.¹³³ In the early 1970s he wrote an essay which dealt with issues that had largely been neglected in the previous study, among them the function of the play's multiple setting.¹³⁴ As the title indicates, Saccio finds that *Endymion* is an odd play; it has 'odd formal characteristics, odd staging, odd handling of character and an odd blend of modes in its action'. Among the play's odd formal characteristics is its spatial dramaturgy:

The curious placelessness of *Endymion* is a matter of stage presentation as well as of fictional locale. *Endymion* is like a dream in which for a time a single vivid object gives us our only sense of place, and often we are in no particular place at all.¹³⁵

It is noteworthy that the discourse used by Saccio and, later, Bevington to characterise the world and the setting of *Endymion* could just as easily be applied to *Sappho and Phao*. With few exceptions, the two plays share the dreamlike quality and the sense of placelessness which is evident in certain scenes. I would also argue, however, that the 'oddity' of the world of *Endymion* should not be exaggerated; the play is in fact structured around a pattern of locations quite similar to that of *Sappho and Phao*. There is the court of Cynthia just as there was a court of Sappho; the 'helper' Eumenides' location in the play is the fountain where he meets Geron just like Sibylla's cave was the helper's location in the earlier play; while in *Sappho and Phao* the opponent Venus went to Vulcan's forge, so Tellus is assisted by Corsites at the Castle in the Desert. Finally, the lunar bank where Endymion sleeps through

¹³³It seems to me that it is one of the few weaknesses of this study that the space and degree of attention allotted to each play varies so much; the discussions of a couple of plays (*Campaspe*, *Gallathea*) occupy most of the book's pages, while several others receive very little attention.

¹³⁴'The Oddity of Lyly's *Endymion*' in *The Elizabethan Theatre V*, ed. by G. R. Hibbard (Hamden, Conn.:Archon, Shoe String Press, 1975), p. 92-111.

¹³⁵*Ibid.* 98-105.

most of the play can be regarded as a sort of parallel to Phao's ferry and the green areas around Syracuse.

I hasten to add that although the two plays share this basic scheme of locations, there are a number of differences in the way the scheme is developed when it comes to the links between setting and character. The most significant of these differences is the role of Cynthia. Hunter argues that

In *Endymion*, in fact, we can see the goddess-sovereign figure, who has dominated Lyly's drama up to this point, retreating into a state of aloofness where she ceases to have much effect on the conduct of the play.¹³⁶

However, in what follows I will argue that concerning the spatial dramaturgy of the play, one of the major differences between *Sappho and Phao* and *Endymion* is the central role of Cynthia. An examination of the spatialising utterances of Cynthia as compared to those of the other main characters in the play reveals clearly the key function of the Moon Goddess in both creating and integrating the play's structure of locations. Contrary to Hunter's assertion, then, I would suggest that what he terms the goddess-sovereign figure in *Endymion* has considerable effect on certain aspects of the play. Due to its larger number of characters, I will in my examination of *Endymion* approach the play from the perspective of location rather than of character. Beginning with the largely unlocated two first acts, I shall then proceed to the lunar bank, the fountain, the castle in the desert, and, finally, to Cynthia's court.

¹³⁶Hunter, 1962, p. 193.

4. 12. *Locations and spatial structure*

4.12.1. 'Beneath the Moon'

Even though, as I have indicated above, the world of *Endymion* is quite logically structured around four locations in the three final acts of the play, it cannot be denied that Lyly's handling of space and setting in most of the two first acts is puzzling to the reader. In his three previous plays, *Campaspe*, *Sappho and Phao* and *Gallathea*, the dramatist is quick to establish some kind of recognisable setting or location; Athens, the ferry, and the community by the Humber in *Gallathea* provide a context in which to place action and a framework for discourse. In *Endymion*, however, spectators and readers are initially introduced to a cosmological distinction. We learn that Endymion's thoughts are 'stitched to the stars' (I. i. 5), and his friend Eumenides is concerned whether Endymion has fallen in love with 'anything above the moon' -in which case his thoughts are ridiculous- or 'allured or enchanted with these transitory things under the moon' (I.i. 8-11), an attitude which deserves to be characterised as senseless, according to Eumenides. It turns out, of course, that Endymion's attention is focussed neither above nor below the moon, but upon the moon itself. So, the dialogue between Endymion and Eumenides does not establish a setting, and there is a concern with the vertical spatial dimension rather than with horizontally delimited space.

However, I would suggest that these easily recognisable elements of what Tillyard termed the 'Elizabethan World picture' do not create any feeling of 'oddity' in the reader or spectator, and that the dialogue between Endymion and Eumenides function quite well without any explicitly provided terrestrial spatial context. The

problem arises when a character named Tellus, meaning 'the earth', comes on stage in the next scene; where can we imagine the action to be set if the earth herself is one of the characters? Are we supposed to imagine these dialogues taking place in the heavens? This feeling of uncertainty as to setting is not relieved until act two, scene two, when Dares, Endymion's page, introduces the first comic-relief scene in the play with the following utterance: 'Now our masters are in love up to the ears, what have we to do but to be in knavery up to the crowns' (I.iii. 1-2). Our sense of being brought 'down to earth' is further stimulated when in the same scene Dares and Samias tell Sir Tophas, the major character in the comic-relief scenes, that they are the pages of Endymion and Eumenides, respectively, and that their masters are 'honourable and warriors' (48-49).

Even if the comic relief scenes in this case links the lofty dialogue of the previous scenes to an earthbound and slightly ridiculous reality, the question still remains why Lyly lets the panegyric discourse of the first scenes appear against such an ambiguous background. The answer to this question may lie in the discourse itself. Helen Hackett places her discussion of *Endymion* in a section titled 'the moon as negative image', pointing out that Endymion's presentation of Cynthia is marked by paradoxes and self-contradictions:

These self-contradictions and paradoxes are equivocal, able to be read either as celebrating the Queen as a divine mystery beyond human comprehension, or as exposing the absurdity of the fiction of the Queen's immutability.¹³⁷

The ambiguous setting of the early scenes, then, can be seen as a fitting background to passages in the play where Elizabeth is eulogized as the moon, but where the

¹³⁷See *Virgin Mother, Maiden Queen: Elizabeth and the Cult of the Virgin Mary* (London: Macmillan Press Ltd., 1995), p. 183.

inconstancy of that celestial body is constantly present as a factor which disturbs the image of the immutability of the Queen.

4.12.2 The Lunary Bank

If the utterances of Darias, Samias, and Sir Tophas in I.iii. are the main indicators of an earthly setting in general, it is Endymion himself who 'discovers' the first location of the play, the lunary bank: 'on yonder bank never grew anything but lunary, and hereafter I will never have any bed but that bank'.¹³⁸ This is the place where Dipsas and Bagoa will shortly arrive to sing the enchantments that turn Endymion's words into prophecy; he shall be transformed into an old man before he has any bed but the lunary bank.

Endymion's deep sleep at the lunary bank is the catalyst which, as we shall see, sets in motion a number of characters' movements which together create the overall spatial setting of the play, but the lunary bank itself is not referred to directly or utilised again as an onstage location until act four, scene one. Tellus, now a prisoner in the Castle in the Desert, persuades Corsites, the prison-officer who is in love with her, to go and try to move Endymion:

Tellus You know that on the lunary bank sleepeth Endymion.

Corsites I know it.

Tellus If you will remove him from that place by force and convey him into some obscure cave by policy, I give you here the faith of an unspotted virgin [...] (IV.i. 59-63).

¹³⁸Lunary is, according to Bevington, 'moonwort or some similar fern, to which magical properties are attributed'. It is known in England today as 'honesty', see Bevington, 1996, p. 111 (note).

Tellus is well aware that this is a 'mission impossible'; the spell that is cast over Endymion does not allow him to be moved even an inch from his original position. However, her intention in this case is not to move Endymion, but rather to avoid being 'encumbered with importunities, oaths, sighs, letters, and all implements of love' from her love-sick admirer, and, in addition, to have a good laugh at the expense of the sweating Corsites (79-88).

Towards the end of the play, then, we approach the lunar bank, as it were, from two directions. Corsites, intent on fulfilling his promise to Tellus, is the first one to arrive, while shortly afterwards Cynthia orders her councillors to accompany her to the bank. Lyly's motive for placing Cynthia by Endymion's side is clear enough: she will eventually be the one who releases him from the sleep and restores his youth, but why did Lyly include the episode with Corsites? When attempting to lift Endymion up from the ground the captain becomes aware, just as Tellus and we expect, that his task is impossible. Suddenly fairies appear, and at this point a stage direction tells us of the dramatist's intentions: *The fairies dance, and with a song pinch him, and he falleth asleep* (between IV.iii. 33 and 34). In addition, the fairies cover Corsites' body with spots:

Fourth Fairy For the trespass he has done/Spots o'er all his flesh shall run
(42-43).

The episode with the fairies, with its song and dance and 'pinching black and blue', undoubtedly makes for some exciting moments in the theatre, but is it also perhaps possible to discern other and perhaps slightly more subtle intentions on part of the dramatist behind Corsites' sojourn at the lunar bank? I would argue that scene with

Corsites draws our attention to the lunary bank as a place of transformation where magical powers are at work.¹³⁹ The scene can thus be perceived both as a reenactment and as a prefiguration of the experiences of Endymion; first by Corsites being put to sleep, and then by his release from the ordeal of the spots by the advice of Gyptes, an Egyptian soothsayer at Cynthia' court. It has been a while since Endymion was put to sleep by Dipsas, and we need to be reminded that extraordinary powers are required to counteract the effects of her spell; powers possessed, as it turns out, by only one character in the play: Cynthia.

Eumenides has not yet returned, however, so for the moment neither Cynthia nor her advisers have any clue as to what the proper remedy for Endymion's affliction may be. Gyptes suggests that the place where Endymion lies should be watched, and it is interesting to note that he uses the term 'grove'; just a few lines earlier Corsites talks about the pretty ladies (meaning the fairies) that 'haunt this green'. We knew already, of course, because of its name, that the 'lunary bank' is a place where plants grow, but the use of terms like 'grove' and 'green' accentuates the lunary bank's status as 'green world', in its dual sense of being both a location in nature and a place where transformations take place. It should be kept in mind that by this time, Lyly had already used the term 'grove' only once before; in *Galatea*. In act three, scene two, where Phillida suggests that they should go 'into the grove'. Moreover, I would also suggest that the predecessors of the fairies which pinch Corsites black and blue can be found in the fairies which Rafe encounter in the woods by the Humber in act two, scene three of the same play. Lyly incorporates

¹³⁹Shakespeare, of course, uses the same elements in *The Merry Wives of Windsor* when Falstaff is pinched by the Fairies in the Windsor Forest. However, here the powers of the forest are in the hands of the people of Windsor, or are they....?

motifs from a pastoral play, then, in a play which belong ideologically and structurally rather with *Sappho and Phao*, and in this way develops the rudimentary green world of that play into a major setting in *Endymion*.

After Eumenides' return, Cynthia once again orders her councillors and servants to accompany her and Eumenides to the lunar bank. Endymion receives the 'kiss of life' from Cynthia, and it is interesting to note how she in this situation takes control over the immediate space around Endymion:

Eumenides Madame, he beginneth to stir.
Cynthia Soft, Eumenides. Stand still.
Eumenides Ah, I see his eyes almost open.
Cynthia I command thee once again, stir not. I will stand behind him.
 (V.i. 30-35)

Similarly, when Endymion has been somewhat revived from his deep sleep: 'Well, Endymion, *arise*. A while *sit down*, for that thy limbs are stiff and not able to stay thee, and tell what hast thou seen in thy sleep all this while' (77-79, my italics). The aloof and mysterious goddess of the moon which was the topic of discourse in the first two acts is now a commanding presence in a distinctly earthly environment. This is even more evident in the play's final scene, when the culprits are brought to justice. Cynthia once again demonstrates her power to order people about by threatening to banish Dipsas 'into the desert amongst wild beasts', but more conspicuous in this scene is the way she controls the discourse of some of the other characters. Tellus in particular gets to feel the impatience of Cynthia when telling her part of the story: 'Say on, Tellus', 'But on, Tellus, let us hear the end', 'Tellus, speak boldly', 'Speak, I say', 'Well, Tellus, proceed but briefly'. Pincombe suggests that these, as well as other similar examples, testify to a wish on part of the Queen to

monitor and censor the speech of other characters, 'in such a way as to ruffle her own dignity and undermine the panegyric image of the court she rules over'.¹⁴⁰

It is certainly true that the 'humanisation' of Cynthia has proceeded far in this final scene, but it seems that in order to unravel all the different threads of this story she has to involve herself fully in the various explanations offered. A careful reading of the scene reveals that even if she throughout functions as the ordering centre of the proceedings, the intensity with which she interrogates Tellus is not present in her interaction with the other characters. The question of whether the panegyric image is undermined is thus a complex one, but at least it seems relevant to question whether Lyly really was concerned with setting up, as Pincombe suggests, a panegyric image of the *court*. He had, after all, been quite critical of aspects of court culture in *Sappho and Phao*. As regards Cynthia herself, on the other hand, it could in fact be argued that in the end this character comes out of the shadow of mutability and fickleness that earlier passages in the play had cast. However, I will return to this and related questions in my concluding remarks at the end of this chapter. Let us now briefly examine how the text constructs the abode of this complex character.

4.12.3. The Court

Compared to the compelling presence of Cynthia in her interaction with other characters in the final scenes, the presence of the court as a location and a physical reality is slight, indeed. There are just two references to 'the court' in the whole play,

¹⁴⁰Pincombe, 1996, p. 95.

both by Cynthia herself; in addition, there is a reference made by Gyptes to 'your palace' in IV.iii. 52. In act four, scene three, we witness another example of Cynthia's control of other characters' spatial movements: 'Pythagoras and Gyptas, you shall yet remain *in my court* till I hear what may be done in this matter' (187-89). While this first reference to a 'court' occurs just after the incidence with Corsites at the lunary bank, the second comes in act five, scene four, when after everything has been resolved, Cynthia upon certain preconditions offer Gyptes and Pythagoras her continued hospitality:

Come my lords, let us in. You Gyptes and Pythagoras, if you cannot content yourselves in *our court* to fall from vain follies of philosophers to such virtues as are here practised, you shall be entertained according to your deserts, for Cynthia is no stepmother to strangers

(V.iv. 299-

303)

In both these instances it may be argued that the reference is more to a social context as to a location. Gyptes' reference to Cynthia's palace, however, is plainly to a physical structure and a location, and I believe it is correct to point out, as Bevington does, that in the face of the evidence it is hardly possible to agree with Saccio that the play is totally without references to 'a palace for Cynthia'.¹⁴¹

Admittedly, though, there is a rather curious absence of references to the royal abode in the discourse of almost all the characters except Cynthia herself and Gyptes. Apart from Eumenides' utterances in act three, scene four, that he 'will go thither', i.e. from the fountain and back to the general area of Cynthia's courts, and in V.i. 178: '[b]ut let us follow and within we will debate', which can be interpreted to mean that he wants to follow Cynthia into the palace, and Panelion's exhortion 'to

¹⁴¹Saccio, 1975, see Bevington, 1996, p. 51.

make haste and bring Tellus before Cynthia, for she was *coming out* after us' (V.iii.14), the other characters do not relate spatially or otherwise to Cynthia's palace. I would suggest that this is at least partly a consequence of the fact that in almost all the scenes involving Cynthia the interior of the palace is offstage, and that she to an overwhelming degree seems to be directing the movements of characters to and from the palace area. In the one scene which can be read as an interior scene, III.i., and where Cynthia herself does not leave the palace—deducible from the fact that she does not command a return—she orders Eumenides, Zontes, and Panelion to go into Thessaly, Greece, and Egypt, respectively, to try to find a remedy for Endymion's sleep. In the other three scenes where she participates, IV.iii, V.i, and V.iv, she is the one who initiates both exits from, and returns to, the palace.

However, the controlling role of Cynthia is not the only possible explanation for the scarcity of references to the court and the palace. It is evident that in *Endymion* the court is not amongst the play's themes in the way that was the case in *Sappho and Phao*; we find no parallel here to the explicit discourse on the respective qualities of court and university that we observed in the dialogue between Trachinus and Pandion above. One way of summing up the position of the court and the palace of Cynthia in the play is to say that if for the first two acts both character and immediate context are remote, in the second part of the play Cynthia actively engages with the other characters while court and palace remains in a state of remoteness.

4.12.4. Fountain

Cynthia dispatches Eumenides to Thessaly in act three, scene one, to find out whether the 'enchanters' there might have some remedy for Endymion's sleep, but Lyly clearly wants to represent the fountain as not being very far from the general area where the action has taken place until then. When Eumenides arrives at the fountain in III.iv., Geron tells him that 'you need not for recure travel far' (22), and in IV.ii. Epiton, page to Sir Tophas, states that he 'must needs see if I can find where Endymion lieth, and then go to a certain fountain hard by' (71). So even though Cynthia's action opens up the spatial dimension of the play, these utterances has the opposite effect by contributing towards the preservation of a sense of unity of place.

The dialogue between Geron and Eumenides by the fountain in III.iv. is perhaps the longest uninterrupted dialogue between two characters in all of Lyly's plays (over 200 lines), and is, among other things, the play's central passage on the important theme of friendship vs. love. I wish, however, initially to focus on another aspect of this dialogue: its advanced use of the deictic field, involving two characters relating to an object (the fountain) and to each other in interactive dialogue. It is not easy to choose an excerpt which gives due credit to the scene as a whole in this respect, but if we look at the dialogue immediately after Eumenides' has explained to Geron where he is going and what his task is, we find the following exchange which demonstrate some of the features involved:

Geron You need not for recure travel far, for whoso can clearly see *the bottom of this fountain* shall have remedy for anything.

Eumenides That, methinketh, is impossible. Why, what virtue can there be *in water?*

Geron Yes, whosoever can shed the tears of a faithful lover shall obtain anything he would. Read these words engraven *about the brim*.

Eumenides Have you known this by experience, or is it placed *here* of purpose to delude men?

Geron I only would have experience of it, and then should there be an end of my misery. And then would I tell the strangest discourse that ever yet was heard.

(III.iv. 22-

34, my italics)

We note that a regular rhythm of the personal pronouns I-you establish the participant configuration of the situation; Geron and Eumenides has their attention directed towards each other. The use of place-deictic markers like the adverb 'here' and the demonstrative pronoun 'this' place the fountain in the proximity of the characters, and nouns like 'bottom', 'water', 'brim', and 'fountain' sets up a vertical dimension and partly describes the object. Needless to say, both deictic markers and descriptive nouns function as intradiologic stage directions.

The point about the fountain is that only the faithful friend or lover will be able to see the words written at its bottom:

Eumenides Father, I plainly see the bottom, and there in white marble engraven these words: 'Ask one for all, and but one thing at all.'

Geron O fortunate Eumenides (for so I heard thee call thyself), let me see.

(84-88)

The two are now focussing on an object which is some distance away, and place-deixis is indicated by the adverb 'there'.

Finally, an indication that the distance between the fountain and the palace is greater than the distance between the lunary bank and the palace is the fact that Cynthia never comes to the fountain in person. However, she is present there as sign

and image; Eumenides has problems interpreting the writing he is able to discern at the bottom of the fountain, but Geron assures him that the figure referred to can be no other than Cynthia. The arguments he deploys contain the same paradoxes found above in the discourse of Endymion ('Is she not always Cynthia, yet seldom in the same bigness', 185), but it is interesting to note that this is not the discourse of the Petrarchan lover. The old man rather attempts to argue that changeability has its use, it is functional. Cynthia is always 'waving in her waxing or waning ', but that is because 'our bodies might the better be governed, our seasons the dailier give their increase'. Towards the end of the scene, then, their attention shifts from the fountain to the court of the moon goddess:

Eumenides I will hasten thither, that I may entreat on my knees for succour,
and embrace in my arms my friend.

Geron I will go with thee, for unto Cynthia must I discover all my
sorrows, who also must work in me a contentment.

Eumenides may I know the cause?

Geron That shall be as we walk, and I doubt not but the strangeness of
my tale will take away the tediousness of our journey.

Eumenides Let us go.

Geron I follow.

This passage emphasises the distance to Cynthia's court; Eumenides never went all the way to Thessaly, but still the journey back to the court is long enough to become tedious. However, the emphasis on distance does not quite seem to fit in with Epiton's utterance above, that the fountain is 'hard by' the lunar bank. It would seem that in this case Lyly is not wholly successful in what may be an attempt to achieve a sort of balance between the need to represent Eumenides' quest for a

remedy as a real 'expedition', and a wish to maintain a degree of unity within the dramatic world of the play.

Saccio (1975) suggests that 'the lunar bank and the fountain are the most important elements of the set: they give local habitation to the constancy of our two heroes' (p. 106). I have argued above that the lunar bank is the location where transformations take place, where the 'white' magic of Cynthia fights the 'black' magic of Dipsas. Constancy, it would seem, is perhaps not the quality which most characterise the lunar bank. Similarly, I would suggest that the fountain is more appropriately labelled a 'testing ground' for Eumenides. It is made quite clear in the scene that Eumenides constancy is not sufficient in itself as a guide to the right decision in his choice between Semele and Endymion, lover and friend. A note of desperation creeps into his final plea to Geron for advice: 'What shall I do? Father, thy grey hairs are ambassadors of experience. Which shall I ask? It is only after Geron has given his unqualified advice to choose friendship over love that Eumenides acts.

4.12.5. The castle in the desert

The first reference to this location comes, just as in the case of the fountain, in an order by Cynthia: 'Corsites, carry her to the castle in the desert, there to remain and weave'(III.i. 42-43), and just like there never was any attempt to represent Eumenides' journey to the fountain, so we find that in the next scene Tellus and Corsites have arrived at the castle: '[h]ere is the castle, fair Tellus' (III.ii. 1).

Tellus' stay at the castle is meant as a punishment for her unruly tongue, and an utterance by Corsites makes it clear that the castle is in fact a prison: 'I am sorry so fair a face [...] should here wither in prison' (5). One would perhaps expect that with a character behind bars, the result would be interior scenes, but this is not the case here. Corsites' utterance in line 33, 'let us in', confirms that the dialogue has taken place outside the castle, and prepares for the next exterior scene at this location when she very humanly asks if she can be granted one favour: 'now and then to walk' (35).¹⁴² In act four, scene one, Tellus wonders if Corsites has fallen in love with her; one of the reasons being that with other ladies of great honour the Captain 'hath not suffered them to look out of windows, much less to walk abroad', while she, we must assume, is so allowed and at the moment of speaking outside the walls. Another aspect of prison life is solitariness, and at this point there is a contradiction in the text of IV.i. In line 34-35, Tellus complains to Corsites that she is 'barred of all company', while she at the end of the scene 'will in and laugh with the other ladies' thereby also confirming, of course, that she has been outside.

Applying the terminology of Saccio, the castle in the desert may not figure among the most 'important' locations in the play, but I would suggest that it nevertheless has one highly significant function: it provides the dramatist with a creditable context for displaying Tellus' as a dissembler and weaken our impression of her constancy vis a vis Endymion. There is a tendency in earlier criticism to overlook certain negative aspects of Endymion. We have already seen that Saccio presents him as a 'hero', and according to Hunter (1962), this 'noble gentleman [...]

¹⁴²Does this human touch reflect the dramatist's own experience of being a prisoner?

is betrayed by his very faithfulness and high-minded constancy to the forces of ingratitude, treachery and envy which lurk unseen around the corner'.¹⁴³ Recent criticism, on the other hand, tends to give emphasis to certain text passages which interrogates this somewhat idealised picture of Endymion. Bevington concludes in relation to an exchange between Endymion and Tellus in act two that

As an example of the 'cloaking' of his affections that Endymion professes to use to throw people off from any suspicion of his loving Cynthia, this courtier-like doublespeak is cannily enough motivated, and technically it may rescue Endymion from the charge of actually having sworn his affection to Tellus, but it hardly squares with his insistence to Cynthia in V.iv that he has never led Tellus to believe in his love for her.¹⁴⁴

If we accept this reading of Endymion, it is clear that he lies both to Cynthia and to Tellus, and even if Bevington is right in describing Tellus as 'treacherous, vengeful, malicious, vain, and cynical', her actions can, however misguided and disproportionate, be regarded as reactions to the despicable behaviour of her former lover. Tellus comes across as constant in her love for Endymion, so constant, in fact, that when she is in the castle in the desert the only motive she weaves is 'the picture of Endymion' (V.iv. 264). The scene with Corsites at the castle in the desert acts as a necessary counterbalance to this image of a constant lover who takes revenge only because her pride is hurt.

¹⁴³*The Humanist as Courtier*, p. 185

¹⁴⁴Bevington, 1996, p. 19.

4. 13. *Sub-plot integration*

The sub-plot or comic-relief action in *Endymion*, which takes up about one third of the play's lines (731 out of a total of 2227), involves the pages of Endymion and Eumenides, the braggart Sir Tophas and his page Epiton, and the two court ladies Scintilla and Favilla. We have already had occasion to note that there is a certain degree of spatial integration between the two plots- and further examples will be discussed-but I would like now to examine more generally how and to what degree Lyly also attempts to create a contrast between the world of the courtiers and the world of the pages.

In the course of the six scenes which is dominated by the comic-relief characters, we never once *see* them appearing with characters from the main plot. The one instance in the play where this occurs is in the play's final scene when Sir Tophas is among the group of characters upon which Cynthia bestows her rewards and punishments. Moreover, we find that most of the comic-relief scenes have no specific location; the exceptions in this case are scenes IV.ii. and V.i. which, according to certain passages in the text, must be located at or near the lunar bank. However, this lack of visible interaction between masters and servants does not leave us with the overall impression that they inhabit different worlds; the effect is rather that Lyly by a consciously deployed spatial dramaturgy gives the impression of turning the dramatic world 'inside out' at regular intervals.

Let us look at some examples. In act two, scene two, Dares and Samias enter with the following lines:

Dares Come, Samias, didst thou ever hear such a sighing, the one for Cynthia, the other for Semele, and both for moonshine in the water?

Samias Let them sigh and let us sing.-How say you, gentlewoman, are not our masters too far in love?

(1-5)

The dialogue here leaves no doubt that the pages has been with their masters, and further that they are fully informed of the emotional entanglements involved, but it is important to note that the passage also provides new information concerning Endymion and Eumenides. This is the first we hear of Eumenides' love for Semele, a love which, we have already seen, will force him to face an emotional and moral dilemma at the fountain. The irreverent attitude which the pages in general display towards the love affairs of their masters is in this case expressed in quite elegant imagery: there can be nothing less constant than moonshine in the water.

In III.iii. the pages enter with references to sleep and absence:

Samias Thy master hath slept his share

Dares I think he doth it because he would not pay me my board wages.

Samias It is a thing most strange, and I think mine will never return; so that we must both seek new masters, for we shall never live by our manners.

(77-82)

Once again the two quite overtly exhibit knowledge of the state of their masters, and we, as readers or spectators, experience no difficulties in imagining previous interaction and a shared space between masters and pages. In this scene, however, the impression of continuous contact and interaction between the two groups of characters is further strengthened by the fact that the pages also when they exit indicate that they are going to their masters:

Samias Come Dares, let us not lose him till we find our masters, for as long as he liveth, we shall lack neither mirth nor meat.
(165-

An identical technique is used for instance in I.iii. ('Come. Let us see what our masters do', 117), and V.ii. ('And we to hear what news of Endymion for the conclusion', 123). The impact of this method of letting the entry-and exit discourse of the pages focus on their masters, I would argue, is to create in the mind of the reader and spectator a sense of switched perspectives. The onstage part of the setting in the main plot becomes the offstage part in the comic relief scenes and vice versa. One is tempted to suggest that the reason why Lyly uses this method is that the players need to play more than one character, and that, consequently, these characters cannot be on stage at the same time, but this theory seems to be belied by the fact that in act five, scene one, Dares and Samias mix with the characters in Cynthia's train:

Samias But whist! Here cometh Cynthia with all her train. Let us sneak in amongst them.
(9-10)

It is evident from the ensuing dialogue that 'them' include Eumenides, and we already know that Endymion lies at the lunar bank, so there does not seem to be, at least from a practical point of view, any compelling reason why pages and masters should not have appeared on stage together before this.

Perhaps the explanation should be sought elsewhere, for instance in the great contrast in this play between the emotional, high-strung world of the courtiers and the witty and down-to-earth attitude to life displayed by the pages and Sir Tophas. Lyly seems to wish to emphasise rather than downplay this contrast throughout the play. I suggested above that as regards the setting of the two first scenes, with the

dialogues between Endymion, Eumenides, and Tellus, one could easily wonder whether these characters were in the heavens rather than on the earth. In scene I.iii, however, the first of the comic-relief scenes, there are no such doubts. The scene abounds in references to the natural world: Sir Tophas initially sees Dares and Samias as *larks* or *wrens* (21), Dares characterises Epiton as less than a *mouse*, according to Sir Tophas the *blackbird* is an ugly beast, he demonstrates a musket for the wild *mallard*, and his gear for overcoming the terrible *trout*. Tophas has his attention squarely on the creatures of the earth, and in particular creatures that are small enough to be hunted by a man of his somewhat limited courage. In act two, scene two, the creature which commands his interest is the 'the black and cruel enemy', a black *sheep*, and in both scenes III.ii. and IV.ii. we find passages marked by references to aspects of the natural world. By thus linking Sir Tophas with nature the dramatist creates an image of the comic knight which presents him partly as a coward, but first and foremost as a character whose gaze is directed 'downwards'. Sir Tophas never aspires towards the higher values on the neo-platonic ladder, and the earth-bound discourse of the comic-relief plot sets this character and his world apart from the emphasis on the importance of striving for the realisation of higher values which marks the main plot.

4. 14. *Endymion in performance*

P. Saccio states in his 1973-study of *Endymion* that

The lack of textual reference to stage setting not only creates scholarly uncertainty now: it also reduces the potential significance of whatever set-pieces appeared on the original stage.¹⁴⁵

I wish in this section to argue contrary to this view that a careful study of the text of the play does enable the critic to reconstruct a staging solution which, at least in its general features, is convincing, and which could have functioned quite well at Paul's or at court. This is not to say every trace of scholarly uncertainty can be eliminated; there are one or two issues concerning the staging and performance of *Endymion* on which the text provides very little in the way of clues. I will return to these shortly, but let us begin by establishing which of the locations in the text it is that would seem to require some kind of structure on stage. Best (1968) asserts confidently that

Endimion has two well-defined houses, the castle where Tellus is imprisoned, and the lunar bank [...] [i]n addition to the houses, there would have been the well where Eumenides discovers the cure for Endimion [...] [t]he two doors would have led to the country and to Cynthia's palace.¹⁴⁶

However, we have seen above that the castle in the desert is 'well-defined' only in the sense that there are a few textual references to it; our analysis of the discourse of and the interaction between Tellus and Corsites shows that it is likely that the two are *outside* the castle. There is in fact no need for a 'house' to mark out the location of the castle in the desert, an exit-door representing the entrance to the castle would satisfy all practical purposes.¹⁴⁷

¹⁴⁵See p. 97

¹⁴⁶p. 110

¹⁴⁷Bevington, 1996, plays safe by stating that 'This exit may be into a stage 'house' flanking the central acting area, but it could also be simply a stage door, opposite the door used to signify Cynthia's palace' (p. 52).

The well, or rather fountain, is not defined as a 'house' by Best. I would suggest, though, that this is the stage structure which most completely mediated by the text. The dialogue between Eumenides and Geron at the fountain, with its dexterous use of the deictic field, makes it easy to envisage some kind of cylindrical object, with a rim, which the two can look down into as if towards its bottom. Bevington, 1996, suggests that the fountain may have been curtained off during parts of the performance (it is only used in one scene). This is certainly possible, but he also mentions that 'the fountain could be painted on such a curtain' (p.53), and this I find less convincing. The three-dimensionality signalled by the dialogue between Geron and Eumenides can hardly have been satisfactorily represented by a two-dimensional image.

The lunar bank, on the other hand, is certainly a location where a curtain would have been functional. Endymion is asleep at this location for a long time, and the work needed to prepare the visible signs of his ageing (required by the text in V.i.: 'What, a grey beard? Hollow eyes? Withered body? Decayed limbs?') had to be done away from the eyes of the spectators. In addition to this purely functional device, however, is it perhaps also likely that the lunar bank was somehow marked out as a 'green' location? Although not explicitly required, it seems that the emphasis on the lunar (the ferns) and the reference to 'this green' in the text may indicate that some kind of corresponding scenic decoration was in the mind of the dramatist. One could for instance imagine in this case that ferns painted on the curtain encircling Endymion would have been an effective and cheap device suited to performance at the Paul's playhouse. In court performance, on the other hand, the lunar bank may have been rather more elaborately represented on stage; the

Revels accounts give ample evidence of scenery being created to represent various aspects of the natural world.

The critics are unanimous that Cynthia's palace is an offstage location, in the words of Bevington: 'Still, the lack of more overt gesturing towards an onstage 'palace' may suggest that a door in the playhouse facade is sufficient representation'.¹⁴⁸ I believe that this is a correct supposition with regard to three of the four scenes in which Cynthia appears; these (i.e. IV.iii, V.i, and V.iv.) all end with utterances like 'let, us go in' and 'let us in', and are, consequently, set outside the palace. However, in scene III.i, where Eumenides, Tellus, and Semele appear before Cynthia for the first time, there are no textual indications of movements to or from the offstage palace. One could in fact argue that this is meant to represent an indoor scene, and the assumption may not be so farfetched if one takes into account the possibility that Lyly wished to present Cynthia in this first scene in a setting of indoor, enthroned majesty. To create such an impression, only a throne-like chair would have been needed in the way of properties, and if both this chair and the cylindrical object which was needed for the 'well' in the next scene could easily be moved then we must assume that a dynamic scenography with smooth shifts between the locations of III.i and III.ii need not be hampered.

¹⁴⁸Bevington, 1996, p. 51.

4. 15. Conclusions

I concluded above that *Sappho and Phao* exhibits a rather loosely integrated dramatic world, and this is a statement which includes both locations and the characters that belong to them. We do not know where Sibylla's cave is, and there is no interaction or other links between Sibylla and central characters like Sappho and Venus. The same is the case with Vulcan and his forge; the forge is in nowhere-land and the smith interacts with Venus, but has nothing directly to do with Phao or Sappho. In *Endymion*, on the other hand, any sense of lack of integration or unity emanates solely from the relative paucity and the somewhat confusing quality of textual references to spatial relations between locations. There are no characters in the main plot who does not interact somehow with all the other, central characters. The characters who are linked to the locations of the 'helper' and the 'opposed', in this case Geron and Corsites, are in *Endymion* present at the play's resolution, and consequently, get their share of attention from Cynthia. Moreover, characters do not just happen to come across locations; the reason or motive behind movements in space is always revealed. Corsites takes Tellus to the castle in the desert because Cynthia tells him to do so, he then goes to the lunar bank because of Tellus' alluring proposal etc. Because Lyly in *Endymion* uses the same basic scheme as in *Sappho and Phao*, we can with some degree of confidence conclude that in this aspect, at least, the spatial dramaturgy of *Endymion* reflects an increasing ability on part of the dramatist to let spatialising utterances evolve naturally from passages of interactive dialogue.

Although her movements are restricted to the distance between the palace and the lunar bank, we have seen that it is Cynthia's controlling influence on other characters in acts three, four and five which is the single most significant factor in the way the play's setting develops out of its dramatic discourse. She is humanised in a way which is difficult to reconcile with her initial place as part of a cosmological scheme and as the object of Endymion's 'star-stitched' gaze. It is to be noted, for instance, that Cynthia never refers to herself as the 'moon' in the way that Tellus explicitly refers to herself as the earth 'whose body is decked with fair flowers, and veins are vines' in act one, scene two. The result is ambiguity; an ambiguity which in principle mirrors the ambiguous place of the moon in the Elizabethan cosmological scheme on the borderline between mutability and constancy.

The lunar bank, the green world of the play, can be regarded as a more developed version of the rudimentary green world elements in *Sappho and Phao*, but it is a version which has so to speak been 'filtered' through Lyly's first amalgam of the pastoral and the 'dark forest': the woods by the Humber in *Gallathea*. It is to that play, and others with prominent green world settings, that we now turn our attention.

Chapter V 'Shepherds': the green worlds of *Galatea*, *Love's Metamorphosis* and *The Woman in the Moon*

5.1. Introduction

The term 'green world' easily evokes associations in the readers' minds of woods, pastures and other kinds of natural environments, and the dramatic worlds to be discussed in this chapter are in general green worlds in that sense of the term: the woods of *Galatea*, the seashore of *Loves Metamorphosis* and the groves and thickets of *A Woman in the Moon*. However, as a term deployed within the universe of discourse of literary criticism and cultural studies its function figures more prominently than its evocative qualities. The central aspect of the term green world is not that it is figuring forth nature in words, but that it is a site for transformations. Alexander Leggatt also proposes that 'At its simplest level the other place is a site of freedom, where the restrictions of normal society are suspended and desires can be acted out.'¹⁴⁹

According to Northrop Frye, who introduced the term for the first time in the late 1940s, Lyly, along with Peele and Greene, were the forerunners of Shakespeare's romantic comedies in that these writers create a 'drama of the green world' in which the action

begins in a world represented as a normal world, moves into the green world, goes into a metamorphosis there in which the comic resolution is achieved and returns to the normal world.¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁹ *English Stage Comedy 1490 – 1990: Five Centuries of a Genre*, (London and New York: Routledge, 1998), p. 75.

¹⁵⁰ From *The Anatomy of Criticism: Four Essays*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957), p. 182.

From the point of view of the scholar who wishes to examine the spatial dramaturgy of comedies, this model is attractive because it contains an easily recognizable spatial pattern. The dramatist needs to move characters geographically from one place to 'the other place' and thereby has to represent characters' movements as well as the involved places or areas. Frye identifies this pattern in a number of Shakespeare's romantic comedies, but unfortunately, refrains from enquiring further into how the green world structure originated with and developed from the plays of the University Wits.

In what follows I propose to use the spatial structure of Frye's model as a basis for exploring the green worlds of Lyly. By linking Frye's model to Ubersfeld's notion of fields of space or spatial paradigms it is possible to gain insight into how Lyly semanticizes space in dramatic worlds where 'places' in the sense of distinct loci is less important as organizing principle than in previous comedies. Leah Scragg, editor of *The Woman in the Moon* in the Revels Plays series, states that 'the symbolic presentational platform of Lyly's earlier comedies consequently gives way in his last plays to fluid, largely unlocalized arena.'¹⁵¹ Following de Certeau, one of the overall differences between the dramatic spaces of plays like *Campaspe* and *Sappho and Phao* and the 'green world' plays can also be conceptualized as the difference between 'place' and 'space':

A place is thus an instantaneous configuration of positions. It implies an indication of stability. A space exists when one takes into consideration vectors of direction, velocities and time variables. Thus space is composed of intersections of mobile elements. It is in a sense actuated by the ensemble of movements deployed within it.¹⁵²

¹⁵¹ 'Introduction' to *The Woman in the Moon*, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2006), p. 37. The term 'symbolic presentational' has been borrowed from David Bevington's introduction to *Sappho and Phao* in the same series.

¹⁵² De Certeau 1988, p. 117.

Even though *Sappho and Phao* cannot be classified as a green world – play it did, as we saw above (p. 124), include a green world scene (II.ii) where Sappho falls in love with Phao at the ferry. This is the first green world fragment in Lyly's comedies, but it must have somehow captured the creative imagination of the playwright, because his next play, *Galatea*, belongs among the plays traditionally categorized as 'pastoral'.¹⁵³ Also in *Endymion*, like *Galatea* given before the Queen in 1588, but probably written not long before, we find the green world represented in the lunar bank where Endymion sleeps out his youth. Finally, before the two late plays *Love's Metamorphosis* and *The Woman in the Moon*, Lyly wrote *Midas* which, as suggested above, has a comprehensive green world structure (see p.88). The overall impression, then, is that after *Campaspe* Lyly incorporated green world elements in his remaining plays except the 'urban' comedy *Mother Bombie* which is set in Rochester throughout.

The green worlds of late – Elizabethan plays incorporate elements both from the classical pastoral and from traditions more deeply rooted in European popular cultures. The use of literary models is quite evident in the first scene of *Galatea* which begins with an idyllic, arcadian scene derived from Virgilian eclogue, an example of the *locus amoenus*, or pleasant landscape. However, both the defining features of the genre and, consequently, the nature of Lyly's engagement with the pastoral are difficult to pin down with a high degree of precision. Anne Lancashire argues that

¹⁵³ The date of *Galatea* will be discussed in what follows, but it should be noted that for unknown reasons, the play was not performed until 1588 and published in 1592.

Of all Elizabethan dramatists John Lyly, would seem, at least in quantitative terms, to be the most thoroughly pastoral. Of his eight known extant plays [...] only two, *Campaspe* and *Mother Bombie* have nothing whatsoever to do with the pastoral.¹⁵⁴

Sukantra Chauduri, on the other hand, describes Lyly's use of the pastoral as chiefly consisting in 'mythology and the love-theme *rather than strictly pastoral elements* and still less an ideal of pastoral life'.¹⁵⁵ I believe Chauduri is correct in his assessment of Lyly's use of pastoral conventions, but also that Lancashire's use of the concept is not unique; on the connection between 'green world' and 'pastoral', Harry Berger states that

The desire for a 'green world' – a primeval world of innocence and shepherdlike existence – is a special instance of the second-world attitude, generating the mode of representing and understanding that we call the pastoral.¹⁵⁶

My own use of the term 'pastoral' will be closer to that of Chauduri, seeing pastoral elements as building blocks which may be contributing to the spatial dramaturgy of the green world.

However, the relatively peaceful pastoral landscapes of Vergil were not the only landscapes in classical literature of interest to Lyly. In Ovid there are also instances of the landscape itself turning dark and threatening; perhaps the most prominent can be found in the *Metamorphoses* in the story of Tereus, Procne and Philomela in book VI where the description of the woods provides an eerie

¹⁵⁴ 'John Lyly and Pastoral Entertainment', in *The Elizabethan Theatre VIII*, edited by George Hubbard, (Ontario: P.D. Meany, 1982), p. 22.

¹⁵⁵ *Renaissance Pastoral and its English Developments*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), p. 349.

¹⁵⁶ *Second world and Green world: Studies in Renaissance Fiction-making* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), p. xviii.

background to the subsequent rape of Philomela.¹⁵⁷ In *Galatea*, one of the subplot characters, Rafe, finds himself in a 'dark wood' with owls, adders and hags. In Lyly's comedy, however, the wood is a setting not for serious crime, but rather a fitting background to the pessimistic mood of Rafe. This and similar 'dark' woods in Elizabethan plays also derive from the epic of the Middle Ages with their motif of the wild forest, where according to the historian Keith Thomas 'wild men supposedly stalked the forests of medieval Europe, leading a life of bestial self-fulfillment'.¹⁵⁸ In late-Elizabethan stage drama the merging of these traditions has resulted in a dramatic space which allows for 'amorous licence' and a gentler version of man's potential bestiality to come into play.

5.2. Galatea: Textual history and summary

In April 1585 a play titled *Titirus and Galathea* was entered in the Stationers' register. The author is not named and there is no record of a performance. Six years later, in October 1591, a play titled *Galathea* was entered in the Stationers' register along with *Midas* and *Endimion*. There is no reason, of course, to doubt that the 1591 entry concerns three plays by Lyly. In addition to the titles the entry also mentions that these plays have been performed before the Queen by the Pauls' boys. Critics also agree that it is likely that the 1585 entry refers to Lyly's *Galatea*, but there is one issue which complicates matters: surviving records reveal that the only

¹⁵⁷ 'And then the king drags off Pandion's daughter/Up to a cabin in the woods, remote/And hidden away among dark, ancient trees'

¹⁵⁸ Thomas points out that these notions of the forest survived in various art forms, and in spectacles like George Gascoigne's *Princely Pleasures at Kenilworth*, presented to the Queen in the summer of 1576, creatures like the wild man or 'Silvanus' could indeed be seen in persona in the gardens at Kenilworth, in *Man and the Natural World*, (London: Penguin Books, 1984), p. 134.

year *Galatea* could have been given at court is 1588 and if that is the case, should we assume that a play which may have been written as early as 1584 was not performed until 4 years later? Bond argues in the *Works* that it is unlikely that a play is entered in the Stationers' Register without having been performed, but the editor of the Revels edition, G.K. Hunter, questions this assumption.¹⁵⁹

A clue to the question of performance may be found in the play's paratextual material. The Prologue is obviously written for court performance; the Queen is explicitly addressed in highly panegyric terms. In the play's Epilogue, on the other hand, the Queen is not mentioned and the tone is different. Here 'the ladies' of the audience is admonished to yield to Cupid, 'a conqueror whom ye ought to regard,'. Most likely, this epilogue is not written for a court performance and this is even more plausible when it is compared to an epilogue which we know was intended to be read before the Queen, the 'Epilogue at the Court' from *Campaspe*. In this text we meet the same direct address to 'your Majesty' and the same panegyric tone as in the Prologue to *Galatea*. The evidence of the paratexts, then, point to a solution to the question of performances where one may tentatively conclude that in addition to the 1588 court performance, it is likely that the play sometime in the period 1584-88 was performed in a playhouse outside of court, most likely the playhouse at Paul's. The question remains whether the playtext was revised before the court performance in 1588. However, one piece of evidence which suggests revision is how the text functions as a guide to performance. *Galatea* differs from *Campaspe* and *Sapho* in that it incorporates mid-scene entries indicated as well as some stage directions. In my opinion, it is not likely that this is the version of the play which, according to G.K.

¹⁵⁹ See *Works*, vol II, p. 426 and Hunter's 'Introduction' to *Galatea*, p. 6.

Hunter, was 'written as a third member of a tight sequence'.¹⁶⁰ Bond suggest that the marks of revisions can be observed in the utterances of the character Neptune and the manner in which these seem to point to an earlier version of the part.¹⁶¹

The play opens with the two title-characters from the 1585 entry, Tityrus and Galatea, sitting under 'a fair oak' by the seashore. They are father and daughter, and Tityrus is explaining to Galatea why the tree is called Neptun's oak and why it is necessary to dress her in men's clothes. The great oak marks the place where every fifth year their community has to sacrifice a virgin to Neptune and the monster Agar as a peace offering. The oak and the sacrificial site is the central location in the play and I will return to the question of whether it should be considered its only 'place' as defined by de Certeau. It goes without saying that Neptune is interested in the most beautiful virgins, and in addition to Galatea there is the daughter of Melibeus, Phillida, who also belong to this category. Both fathers dress their daughters in mens' apparel and send them to the woods to avoid being their chosen for sacrifice.

In the vast space of the woods several groups of characters roam about: Galatea and Phillida meet and fall in love with what they at the outset at least believe to be a beautiful youngster of the opposite sex. The goddess Diana and her nymphs are also in the woods, and so is Venus with Cupid, who decides to 'use some tyranny' and make the chaste nymphs of Diana fall in love. However, the woods are not only the space for the play's interconnected love plots. Three shipwrecked brothers find themselves on a seashore in Lincolnshire and subsequently take to the woods to 'see what fortune we may have'. These comic subplot characters, then, roam about in the

¹⁶⁰ 'Introduction', p. 4.

¹⁶¹ Works, vol.II, p. 426-27.

same landscape as the characters of the main plot, but they do not interact until the final scenes when the gods decide to engage the brothers as singers at the forthcoming wedding of Galatea and Phillida. In the meantime, we have witnessed, in a series of short scenes, various complications in the relationship between Galatea and Phillida, the pranks of Cupid and their consequences, the power struggle between Venus and Diana, and the efforts of leaders of the settlement to find a beautiful virgin for the sacrifice to Neptun. As we shall see, many of the play's scenes are not explicitly located and the text conveys a marked sense of uncertainty as to the direction of character movements etc.

5.3. Sources and background

How and to what extent did Lyly's sources contribute to the spatial dimension of the dramatic world of the play? The first scene with Tityrus and Galatea sitting beneath the oak tree is clearly derived from the opening words of Vergil's *Eclogues*: 'Tityre tu patulae recubans sub tegmine fagi' (Tityrus, lying back beneath wide beechen cover).¹⁶² However, the chilling story of the history of the settlement and the sacrifice told by Tityrus to his daughter in this idyllic-pastoral setting does not come from Vergil but from the story of Laomedon or rather 'The first foundation and destruction of Troy' in book XI of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. The story of the destruction of Troy obviously gave Lyly the elements of Tityrus' narrative, and the most significant element from the point of view of dramatic space is that it provided the central location of the play, the settlement by the seashore, in the play signified by the great oak.

¹⁶² Virgil, *The Eclogues*, Translated by Guy Lee, Penguin Classics Edition, (London: Penguin, 1984).

The *Metamorphoses* is also the source for the story of love between two of the same sex and in the play there is a direct reference to Ovid's story of Iphis and Ianthe in 5.3. 155 ('Was it not Venus that did the like to Iphis and Ianthes'). In Ovid's story the two girls do not interact in the woods; in fact there are no woods in the story at all, so where did Lyly get his inspiration to let so much of the action take place in the woods? That the woods in the play are there out of dramaturgical necessity is obvious; Lyly needs a 'dense' environment where characters can hide from danger and observe other characters without being seen. Moreover, in Lyly's major source and inspiration, *The Metamorphoses*, a number of stories which would have been well known to him are set in or at least include sylvan settings. Callisto 'one afternoon, the sun still riding high' finds 'a glade deep in the virgin woods'. She is raped by Jupiter and then 'she loathed the forest glade/The woods that knew'. In the story of Diana and Actaeon the unfortunate hunter 'idly wandering/Through unknown clearings of the forest, found/The sacred grove', and is subsequently transformed into a stag and killed by his own dogs. Finally, the rape of Proserpine takes place 'Not far from Henna's walls' where 'woods crown the waters'.¹⁶³

This is not to suggest that Lyly simply appropriates the woods of the *Metamorphoses*. In these and other stories in the *Metamorphoses* the woods are the settings of violence and desire of a much more serious kind than what we find in *Galatea* and I shall return to the question of whether any trace of the mood of these stories has been transmitted to the pastoral settings of Lyly's gentle court plays. In addition, in the Ovidian woods the central element is more often than not water in

¹⁶³ All citations from Ovid *Metamorphoses*, A new translation by A.D. Melville, Oxford World's Classics, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986).

the shape of 'a pool, limpid and silvery' (Narcissus and Echo), 'a pool, a limpid, shining pool (Salamacis and Hermaphroditus), 'a stream that glided with no eddy' (Arethusa), just to mention a few examples. According to Stephen Hinds,

A suggestive line of work has consolidated this idea of narratological expectation by eliciting a strong figurative collusion in the *Metamorphoses* between landscape and action: on this reading the poem's plots of desire and predation are symbolically reflected and refracted in the very landscape elements themselves.¹⁶⁴

Thus, when the hitherto unbroken surface of the pool in the story of Narcissus is 'ravaged' by Narcissus tears and no longer reflects the beauty of the desired (himself!), the refraction we witness is not only that of his own mirror image in the pool's surface, it is also the 'refraction' of his own metamorphosis into a flower. Pools are certainly not a prominent feature of Lyly's pastoral landscapes, but as we shall see, fragments of the kind of 'figurative collusion' described by Hinds and others can also be found in *Galatea*.

5.4. Modern critical positions

Most critics do not engage directly with the manner in which Lyly establishes his pastoral landscapes, but relevant observations may be uttered in other contexts/lines of argument. Bond, in his introduction to *Galatea*, includes a section on 'place and time' in which he observes that

Clearly the locality is regarded as identical throughout, the scene imagined being the outskirts of a forest not far from the estuary of the Humber, with a large oak in the foreground.¹⁶⁵

¹⁶⁴ In 'Landscape and the aesthetics of place', *The Cambridge Companion to Ovid*, edited by Philip Hardie, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), p. 132.

¹⁶⁵ In the *Works*, vol II, p. 428.

Bond's notion of an 'identical' locality' will be examined in detail in the next section; I wish here merely to suggest that behind his observations of the dramatic world of *Galatea* we can recognize the same concern for the preservation of the Aristotelian unity of place as we saw was expressed in relation to *Campaspe*. Moreover, according to Bond, the woods are 'lying near at hand, as a place to which a retirement may be made, not as actually occupying the stage'. That the woods occupy at least parts of the stage is precisely what Michael Best suggests in 'The staging and production of the plays of John Lyly' (1968) '*Gallathea*, a pastoral play, would have had the sacrificial tree on one side of the stage, and possibly a balancing group of trees on the other'.¹⁶⁶

Peter Saccio, on the other hand, emphasizes separation rather than proximity when discussing *Gallathea* in *John Lyly, a study in allegorical dramaturgy* (1969)

After they are disguised, the girls enter the no-man's land of the woods and are completely out of touch with the sacrifice situation thereafter. They leave the atmosphere of violence and the problem of destiny to engage in their paradoxical courtship.¹⁶⁷

A very different view of the situation in the woods is expressed by Michael Pincombe:

Before long, the play has moved from the pastures of Virgil's political landscapes to the more sinisterly erotic woods and groves of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* [...] And it is through this dark and 'tragic' place that we must pass.¹⁶⁸

To Anne Lancashire, whose general views on the relationship between Lyly's plays and the pastoral we met above, the world of *Galatea* is imperfect rather than dark

¹⁶⁶ *Theatre Research*, vol IX, No 2, p. 109.

¹⁶⁷ (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969), p. 123.

¹⁶⁸ In *The Plays of John Lyly*, p. 130.

and sinister. In her view, this imperfection is caused by the absence of an ordering figure of authority, human and royal, inside the play which can provide a 'satisfying resolution'. What Lancashire suggests then, is that it is the presence of the Queen at the performance which transforms the event into 'the ordered, golden ideal'.¹⁶⁹

Leah Scragg, rather than placing the world of *Galatea* on a scale from flawed to perfect, sees as its most important aspect mutability and finds that 'The landscape, moreover, against which the drama is enacted is presented in a manner that negates all sense of singleness or permanence'.¹⁷⁰ In a subsequent edition of the play she describes the world of Galatea as 'unstable' and 'engaged in a constant process of change'.¹⁷¹

Finally, Jaqueline Vanhoutte, in a study titled 'Sacrifice, Violence, and the Virgin Queen in Lyly's *Gallathea*', presents a fairly sharply defined feminist position and argues that the dark and chaotic conditions of the dramatic world of the play is a result of the 'traitorous irresponsibility' of the male characters. The only way of restoring a healthy community is by some kind of sacrifice to the gods, and Vanhoutte goes on to argue that the real sacrifice in the play takes place when either Gallathea or Phillida has to lay down her sex and gender.¹⁷²

This brief survey does not do justice in any way to these writers' engagement with Lyly's play, but I believe it provides a fair overview of their main perspectives on the dramatic world of *Galatea*. While it would not be correct, then, to say that the critics' response to *Galatea* has been totally devoid of attention to spatial structure, I believe

¹⁶⁹ 'John Lyly and Pastoral Entertainment', p. 48.

¹⁷⁰ *The Metamorphosis of Gallathea: A Study in Creative Adaptation*, (Washington D.C.: University Press of America, 1982), p. 24.

¹⁷¹ 'Introduction' to *Gallathea* in *John Lyly: Selected Prose and Dramatic Work* (Manchester: Carcanet Press, 1997), p. xvii.

¹⁷² *Cahiers Elisabethains*, 49, (1996), pp 1-14.

that what we observe is a tendency to 'schematize', i.e. a reluctance to take into account the total complexity of a play's spatial dramaturgy which is accompanied by a tendency to delimit the discussion to particular features and perspectives.

As an alternative approach, I wish to present a detailed reading of the space-creating discourse of *Galatea* and to examine how the text establishes complex spatial structures. In *Galatea*, Lyly develops what we could perhaps term a 'dramaturgy of concealment'. The expression refers to two kinds of concealment or hiding. First, and most obviously, the dramatic discourse constructs the woods as a setting suitable for the separation of groups of characters for varying periods of time. Secondly, it is clear that Lyly in the case of *Galatea* also uses this kind of setting to make his own task as dramatist easier by placing several dramaturgically challenging moments offstage. I shall argue in this chapter that the offstage area in the play represents the inner 'core' of a setting which can be thought of as being triple and 'concentric' in structure. *Galatea* does in fact exhibit an eminent dramatic economy which cleverly conceals the fact that events which could have provided exciting theatrical moments are not presented mimetically, just referred to in the dialogue.

5.5. The Woods of Galatea

Let us begin by taking a closer look at the different characters and their spatialising utterances. There are four distinct groups of characters in the play: the fathers and the other people in the settlement apart from Galatea and Phillida, the two girls, the subplot characters and finally, Diana and her nymphs. In addition, the gods Neptune, Venus and Cupid also contribute to play's inventory of spatialising utterances. Of these groups it is clear that the people of the settlement and Diana and her train are

linked to their settings, the area around the sacrificial tree and the woods, respectively. Diana and her nymphs dwell permanently in the woods, and the utterances of Diana in particular contain several references to the landscape and pastoral elements: forest (2.1. 50), flock (2.1. 51), woods (3.4.8), brook-side (3.4.9), groves (3.4. 81). Diana's utterances contribute to the establishment of the woods as dramatic space both by the references to landscape elements and by the way her utterances initiate movements of characters within the woods. She has a number of utterances in the imperative mood; she orders 'sir boy' (Galatea) to go with them, she sends one nymph and then another to look for Cupid and she orders Larissa to fetch Cupid in the final act. Diana belongs to the world of the woods and passionate feeling and she does not herself move out of the woods nor does she make others in her train do so.

Galatea, Phillida, and the subplot character Rafe, are the ones who move both within the woods and between the woods and landscape along the coast. A comparison between Phillida and Galatea reveals that Phillida has a greater variation than Galatea in her references to the various sylvan environments (woods, grove, thickets), a reflection of the fact that she is the more active of the two in instigating movements: 'Come, let us in to the grove' (3.2. 62), 'Let us wander into these groves (4.4. 34)', 'Let us closely withdraw ourselves into the thickets' (5.3. 10). However, Rafe is the character in the play who relates most intensely to its spatial dimension. There is a noticeable dynamism in Rafe's sojourn in the woods; he is on the move and taking others with him: 'Come, let us to the woods' (1.4), 'I will follow them' (2.3), 'Come, let us in!' (3.3), 'bring us to him quickly' (5.1). Initially, however, Rafe finds the woods to be a gloomy place:

Would I were out of these woods, for I shall have but wooden luck. Here's nothing but the screaming of owls, creaking of frogs, hissing of adders, barking of foxes, walking of hags (2.3. 2-5)

There is a sort of 'figurative collusion' here in that the landscape is transformed according to the mood of the character. In spite of the dynamic quality of his movements in the woods, Rafe's utterances do not contribute very much to our mental mapping of the world of the play. We are, as readers, unable to place the locations of Rafe's disappointing adventures with the Alchemist and the Astronomer in any meaningful spatial relation to for instance the central location of the play, the beech tree and the settlement. Rather, what we observe is that the setting of the subplot is not structurally integrated with that of the main plot. The same lack of integration can be observed within the subplot itself. The dialogue indicates neither the locations of the laboratories of the alchemist and the astronomer nor the spatial relations between them.

I would suggest that it may be useful at this point and in relation to the issue of the integration of settings, to compare *Galatea* to Torquato Tasso's *Aminta* (1573, printed 1580). The purpose here is not to trace similarities, but rather to let the Italian play offer examples of a dramatic discourse that spatially integrates its pastoral setting in a manner quite different from that of *Galatea*.¹⁷³ In Act four, Scene 2 of *Aminta* we find the following dialogue:

Silvia O Shepherd, can you show the road that leads out to the valley from which those cliffs rise up?

¹⁷³ For a brief introduction to ways Tasso's play may have influenced Lyly, see George K. Hunter's 'introduction' to *Galatea* in the Revels Plays series, p. 8. The edition of *Aminta* used here is a translation by Charles Jernigan and Irene Marchegiani Jones, (New York: Italica Press, 2000).

Ergasto This takes you there, and it is not far away from here (4.2. 185-189)

In her question to *Ergasto*, *Silvia* is using two adverbial phrases to specify the kind of information she is looking for. The first one 'the road that leads out to the valley' gives a sense of both direction and the manner in which they are going to get to their target: They are going to follow a road and the direction of the road is towards the valley. The valley is the location they are headed for, and to further identify this target *Silvia* adds the second phrase: 'from which those cliffs rise up'. In his answer, *Ergasto* points to the road by the deictic marker 'this', but in an adverbial phrase he adds information about distance: 'not far away'.

Another, and even more comprehensive utterance in terms of spatial information, is *Elpino's* story of how *Aminta* survived his attempt to commit suicide. The story commences with a description of the location of *Elpino's* cave: 'I stood before my cave, which lies nearby the valley, almost at the hillside's slope, which makes itself a kind of lap or breast' (5.1. 58-60). In this sentence we find no less than four adverbial phrases containing spatial information: *Elpino's* position in relation to his cave, the position of the cave in relation to the valley, and two further phrases that function to place the cave more precisely in terms of topography.

The total effect of these and similar utterances by the characters of *Aminta* is to establish a pastoral dramatic world with a limited number of distinct locations; the city, the valley, the cave etc which is placed in an integrated whole due to the dialogue's concern with direction, distance and spatial relationships. In *Galatea*, on the other hand, the kind of spatialising utterances cited above is almost non-existent. What we observe in *Galatea* is a discourse which makes only a modest contribution to our sense of the spatial dimension of this green dramatic world, but which

nevertheless succeeds to a certain degree in creating a sense of the depth of the woods and of characters movements from the fringe to the center and vice versa.

Let me emphasize at the outset that the spatial structure of *Galatea* which is going to be discussed in this section should be regarded as a model in the sense that it is not completely identical to either space as it is constructed in the discourse or to space as it would be envisaged by the spectator, but, hopefully, that it embodies the significant spatial features of both. The distinction between three-zone model and complex textual reality is perhaps least prominent regarding the outer zone of the setting of the play. It is quite clear from the dialogue between Tyterus and Galatea in the first scene that the settlement in which they both live is placed not in the woods, but by the seaside. Tyterus' narrative tells, as we have seen, of how the gods cause 'the seas to break their bounds [...] then might you see ships sail where sheep feed, anchors cast where ploughs go' (1.1. 30-34). Moreover, Rafe and his brothers, the characters of the subplot, survive a shipwreck and come ashore at a place which is not *in* the woods and not identical to the settlement of Tyterus and Galatea. This, I would suggest, allows us to talk about an outer 'zone' rather than just a place.

The outer zone is also negatively defined in the sense that we learn of both groups of characters that they leave the outer zone to venture into the woods. Galathea and Phillida leave the settlement by the seaside and hide, disguised in male apparel, in order to avoid being sacrificed, while the Mariner advises his brothers that '[T]here be woods hard by, and at every mile's end, houses, so that if you seek on the land you shall speed better than on the sea' (1.4. 14-17). Rafe, however, is rather more concerned with the opportunities the woods may offer than its safety

and suggests to his brothers that they should 'go to the woods and see what fortune we may have before they be made ships' (1.4. 73-75).

After the expository scenes in the first act, the rest of the play is largely set 'in the woods', but we return to the outer zone in act 4, scene 1, on the day when the sacrifice is supposed to take place, and where we witness the Augur, Melibeus, Tyterus and others discuss their daughters and the problem of finding a suitable candidate for the grisly ceremony.. This story of the settlement and the sacrifice is continued in act 5, scene 2, when the chosen candidate, Hebe, express her distress in a long monologue which tends towards a decidedly tragic mood, but which is quickly redirected in a comic direction when the unfortunate girl begins to lament her own lack of attraction when the monster fails to appear. Finally, the outer zone is the setting of the final part of scene 5.3, when Galatea and Phillida come out from their exile in the woods. At this point, Neptune asks where they are, and Melibeus replies 'in yonder woods; and methinks I see them coming' (5.3. 115).

The existence of a 'middle zone' in *Galatea* cannot in general be deduced from any characteristics in landscape or vegetation since both middle and inner zones are in general situated in the woods. Nevertheless, close attention to the characters' movements as revealed by the dialogue makes it clear, especially in the case of Galatea and Phillida, that they on a number of occasions relocate from outer to inner parts of the same woods. In 2.1. we have the only instance where the dialogue actually indicates a change of environment from the middle to the inner zone: Diana and her nymphs meet the two disguised girls in the *forest*, they are taken prisoner and then led in captivity to be used 'as beagles' in Diana's hunting activities in the *woods*. Other examples of relocation or movement from middle to inner zone include

2.2. where Neptune, overhears Cupid talking about Diana and her nymphs and then decides to 'go into these woods and mark all' (27).

In both these scenes as well as in others which indicate a distinction between an outer and inner zone in the woods, the inner zone is located offstage. When Galatea in 2.4 fervently desires to follow Melibeus, the girl she believes to be a boy, 'into the woods'(14), she leaves the stage and a similar movement can be observed in 3.2. when after Galatea and Phillida have both fallen in love and decided to go 'into the grove and make much of one another'(62), they both exit. In the subplot, the woods figure less prominently in the characters' deictic utterances, but the dramatist nevertheless maintains a significant contrast between the woods in general and certain offstage locations. In 3.3 we meet Rafe in the woods. He has been disappointed in his dealings with the Alchemist; no gold has been forthcoming, and he now decides to try his luck with the Astronomer. However, just as we have never actually seen the Alchemist fiddle with his flasks to create gold, any exciting exercises on part of the Astronomer now takes place offstage. After the Astronomer's promise to 'metamorphose' Rafe's thoughts, and to make him 'hail-fellows with the gods' the two exeunt to offstage (86-87).

What we observe in the spatial setting of *Galatea*, then, is that the play exhibits a structure where the contrast between seaside/outer parts of the woods and inner parts of the woods is correlated with theatrical onstage and offstage. The movements of characters from 'outer' to 'inner' and back again is fundamental to our sense of space in the play; this is the ensemble of movements spoken of by de Certeau which 'actuates' space. Apart from the area around the sacrificial tree there

are no permanent places in the play, and that brings us to the question of how such a placeless world can be represented on stage.

5.6. *Staging Galatea*

We saw above that Michael Best suggests that *Galatea* would have had a group of trees representing the woods on one side of the stage balancing the sacrificial tree on the other. A different view of the staging of the play had been taken by Bond in the *Works*. He writes of the woods that: 'In a majority of cases they are indicated as lying near at hand, as a place to which retirement may be made, *not as actually occupying the stage* (my italics).¹⁷⁴ This view is shared by G.K. Hunter in his introduction to the performance history of *Galatea*: 'Galatea makes very little demand on staging [...] the move from the 'plain fields' to the 'woods' need not be illustrated by anything on stage'.¹⁷⁵

My own analysis above points to the existence of a 'middle zone' between the seashore/outer zone and inner and offstage part of the dramatic world, and I would suggest that, consequently, the most important question concerning the staging of *Galatea* is whether and how this middle zone was represented on stage. In other words, what does the text indicate about the need for stage representation of the area between the sacrificial tree and the inner, offstage parts of the woods? There are at least three scenes where the dialogue reveals that the characters are located in an onstage wood: scene 1.2., where the nymph says to Cupid that 'these woods are to me so well known', moreover, in 2.1, the scene with the meeting between the two disguised girls and Diana and her train is clearly set in the woods, and finally, we

¹⁷⁴ *Works*, vol II, p. 428.

¹⁷⁵ Revels Plays edition, p. 20.

have Rafe in the 'dark woods' in 2.3. Scenes 3.1 and 3.2, on the other hand, are ambiguous in that they appear to be set in the woods, but at the same time we hear references to the woods as somewhere else.

One cannot, of course, conclude that the woods would have been represented by properties on the stage merely from the existence of such textual localizing strategies. The issue is whether these and similar utterances signal that the dramaturgy in fact require the presence of properties, for instance in the form of one or more 'trees', i.e. that they are 'intradialogic stage directions' in the full meaning of the term. There are three instances in the play where the dialogue reveals that characters are hidden from and unseen by other characters: in act two, scene two Neptun overhears Cupid's plans to 'use some tyranny in these woods' against the nymphs. In 3.1.70, the two nymphs Eurota and Telusa hide ('withdraw themselves') in order to hear another nymph, Ramia, talk about her love. Finally, we hear Phillida saying to Galatea 'Let us closely withdraw ourselves into the thickets' (5.3). This is not just an ordinary exit, the key word here is 'closely'; Phillida wants the two of them to exit without being noticed by Neptune. Because it is very difficult to imagine that the symbolically laden sacrificial tree could double as 'hiding -tree' it is highly likely that these three instances signal the need for some kind of property for the characters to hide behind.

It is impossible to say with any certainty what kind of property would have been used to facilitate the character configurations above. We know, of course, that various kinds of tree-properties were in use on the public stages, witness for instance the entries in Henslowe's list of properties from March 1598 which includes 'I baye

tree', 'I tree of gowlden appeles' and 'Tantalouse tree'.¹⁷⁶ The entries in the list leads Andrew Gurr to suggest that Henslowe and his players did not bother about 'undifferentiated trees for forest scenes', and it is an interesting question whether this may also have been the case in the private theatres and at court. Concerning *Galatea*, Michael Best, as we saw, proposed that the sacrificial tree may have been balanced by a group of trees on the other side of the stage. I agree with Best in that the sacrificial tree would have been balanced by a some kind of property on the other side of the stage, but I believe that a group of trees would have taken up too much stage space and that what we are looking for here is a rather a single, functional property. In his 'introduction' to the play in the Revels edition, G.K. Hunter mentions the possibility that the property which represented the sacrificial tree could double as the raft on which the brothers Dick, Rafe and Robin, and the Mariner were cast ashore in 1.4. This I consider highly unlikely; there are no intradialogic or proper stage directions calling for a representation of the raft by a property. A better solution is to envisage that the playwright and the producer left it to the spectators to 'imaginatively transfer' these comic relief characters close to the sea somewhere on the Lincolnshire coast a bit of distance away from the settlement of Galatea and Phillida. A single 'woods' property could then represent the woods into which the brothers venture to find their fortune as well as the woods of Galatea, Phillida, Diana and the rest.¹⁷⁷

¹⁷⁶ The full list of Henslowe's properties is easily available in Andrew Gurr's *The Shakespearean Stage 1574 – 1642*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), p. 187-88. See also Werner Habicht, 'Tree Properties and Tree Scenes in Elizabethan Theater', in *Renaissance Drama*, New Series IV, 1971, pp 69-91.

¹⁷⁷ T.W. Craik hints at a similar solution in *The Tudor Interlude* when he writes that 'Certain plays involve the use of a wood in some scenes and not in others [...] a 'house' painted to look like a clump of trees seems to be wanted' (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1958), p. 17. I am less convinced

Henslowe's list also contains a well known entry, 'ii mose banckes', which indicates that green world of the public theatre occasionally was signified on stage by more than just prop trees, but the general conclusion still remains that the dense green worlds of the pastoral plays were staged by relatively simple means. It would seem that that the same held true for plays written for the private theatres; the 'groves', 'thickets' and 'woods' of Lyly's *Galatea* could be represented by the combination of a single property on stage in addition to the sacrificial tree and the offstage as the 'inner woods'. Thus the play's spatial paradigm as set out in the dialogue, of zones from seashore to inner woods, was transcoded into simple, but effective visual representation.

5.7. Love's Metamorphosis: Textual history and summary

Bond begins his section on 'date' in the *Works* with the simple observation that the date of *Love's Metamorphosis* 'is perhaps harder to fix than that of any other play of Lyly' (vol III, p. 295). Indeed, the only certain facts concerning the textual history of the play are that it was entered in the Stationer's Register in November 1600 and published for the first and only time prior to Fairholt's 1858-edition the following year. On the title-page of the 1601-quarto we learn that the play had been 'First playd by the Children of Paules and now/by the Children of the Chapel'. The word 'now' is open to interpretation, but since the text of the entry in the Stationer's register the previous year mention only that the play had been 'playd by the Children of Paules', it is probably the case that the performance by the Chapel children was

by the second part of his proposal, that the characters should be able to 'come out of the woods' from this house, especially if the house is envisaged as a free-standing structure.

fairly recent. The question of the date of the composition of the play has been dealt with in great detail by its most recent editor, Leah Scragg and needs not be repeated here.¹⁷⁸ I merely wish to suggest that when Scragg points to the connections between *Love's Metamorphosis* and *Galatea* and concludes 'with some certainty' that the play was written shortly after *Galatea*, the most likely period is after the revision of *Galatea* for the 1588 court performance, when that play was also fresh in the mind of the playwright. Dating the play to 1588-89 accounts for the echoes of the play in *Midas*, and supports the hypothesis that Lyly was into a 'pastoral' period at the end of the 1580s.

Another interesting aspect of the 1601-quarto is that it includes no paratextual material in the way of prologue or epilogue. Apart from *Love's Metamorphosis*, the only other play by Lyly that is without both prologue and epilogue is *Mother Bombe*, a play that may have been intended for the public stage. Even though the play is characterized as 'courtly', the title-page of the quarto of *Love's Metamorphosis* does not contain information pertaining to a performance before the Queen at court; an event which very likely would have been mentioned to make the play-text attractive to potential buyers. Moreover, the absence of paratextual material reflecting other performances by the Paul's and the Chapel children may be explained by the play changing hands. When the play was published, it was in the repertoire of the Chapel children and the company may have wished to remove material which clearly pointed to earlier performances by Lyly and the Paul's children at their cathedral playhouse.

¹⁷⁸ 'Introduction' to *Love's Metamorphosis*, *The Revels Plays*, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2008).

What the spectators at Paul's would have seen is that the first act introduces and integrates characters from the play's two stories/plots and thus also contributes to the integration of the two parts of its spatial paradigm: Erisichton's farm by the seashore and the woods of the foresters and the nymphs. We meet three foresters and three nymphs of Ceres who throughout the play will be engaged in a process of pursuit, of attachment and rejection, which, in the words of Joseph Houppert, 'are presented with all the formalities of a classical ballet'. We also meet the villain of the piece, Erisichton, who cuts down Ceres' tree, which is the transformed nymph Fidelity. Erisichton is the link to the other story in play, because when he cuts down the tree Ceres inflicts everlasting hunger on him. In order to satisfy his hunger he is forced to sell his daughter, Protea, and the ultimate fate of Protea and her beloved Petulius is the subject of the play's subplot. The god Cupid, who in this play is a mighty god with a temple rather than a mischievous boy with bow and arrows, is the arbiter of the play. Because of their negative attitudes to love, Cupid transforms the nymphs into a rock, a bird and a flower, respectively, and we may assume that this transformation and their transformation back into human shape functioned as something of a theatrical 'showpiece'. Even after being transformed back into human shape the nymphs only reluctantly agree to 'yield' to the foresters' love. This renders the ending 'bittersweet' although Protea gets her Petulius and Erisichton is restored to society, promising to learn again to love.

5.8. Sources and background

Lyly's main source when writing *Love's Metamorphosis* was Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, book VIII, where he found the story of Erisichton and his daughter. It is this story

which provides the most distinct part of the setting of the play, even the indication that Erisichton's farm is near the sea can be found in Ovid: his daughter is appealing to Neptune to save her from slavery and 'stretching her hands/Towards *the sea near by* (my italics). The only location that Lyly adds to the dramatic world is the temple of Cupid and one gets the impression that in terms of setting, at least, the story of the nymphs and the foresters is acted out within the spatial framework inherent in Ovid's story. The dramatist follows his main source, Ovid, closely, then, in the case of *Love's Metamorphosis*, but he also adds elements to the story and makes certain changes in the way dialogue constructs space which need to be considered in the present context.

A fundamental difference between source and play is that the dramatist contracts and decontextualizes the wide world of the myth. This can be observed for instance in act II, scene I, when Ceres orders her nymph Tirtena to go to 'yonder hill' to tell Famine to start gnawing at Erisichtion's bowels. In Ovid the place of hunger is set with geographical precision in 'a freezing place, at Scythia's farthest bound', and we are also told that Ceres' messenger returns to 'Thessaly'. The dramatic world of the play, on the other hand, is not placed within the framework of the ancient world; it is an overall green world without specific geographical references where the characters move between locations of power rather than between named places. Lyly's most significant amendment of Ovid's story of Erisichton and Protea consists of the introduction of Protea's beloved, Petulius, and the dangerous Siren, placing both characters on the seashore where Protea has already met Neptune and the merchant. In Ovid, Protea simply remains standing on the beach, but in the play, scene 4.2. with Protea, Petulius and the Siren is the most complex in the play in

terms of its spatial dramaturgy. Moreover, as with the transformations of the nymphs, the references to the Siren in the dialogue indicate that this character brings to the play some theatrically exciting moments. Protea warns Petulius of the evil intentions of the Siren: 'from the top *of this rock whereupon she sitteth*, will she throw thee headlong into the sea' (my italics). As for the story of the foresters and the transformation of the nymphs, Bond suggests that Lyly's source for the transformation of the nymphs was similar transformations in the *Metamorphoses*. However, Pincombe argues convincingly that Lyly knew Greene's *Alcida* (1588?), where an old woman named Alcida has three daughters who suffer the fate of being transformed into a rose-tree, a marble-pillar and a bird, respectively.¹⁷⁹

5.9. Modern critical positions

Compared to *Galatea*, *Love's Metamorphosis* does not seem to have engaged scholarly imagination to the same degree. However, the play has received complimentary attention from several critics: Bond asserts that *Love's Metamorphosis* 'exhibits an improved skill in dramatic construction – it is better woven than any except *Mother Bombie*, and of more varied interest than any'.¹⁸⁰ Houppert concurs, categorizing *Loves Metamorphosis* as 'Lyly's most exciting comedy'.¹⁸¹ To Pincombe, the play represents Lyly's 'final and most articulate challenge to the cult of virginity'.¹⁸² As is the case with most other comedies by Lyly,

¹⁷⁹ Pincombe, 1996, p. 148.

¹⁸⁰ *Works*, vol. III, p. 297.

¹⁸¹ Houppert, 1975, p. 107.

¹⁸² *Ibid*, p. 149. Pincombe's ideas have been further developed by his then doctoral student Mark Dooley, who in the essay 'The Healthy Body: Desire and Sustenance in John Lyly's *Love's Metamorphosis*' concludes that 'when food and love are combined a healthy body and a healthy mind result and give rise not just to sustenance but to growth and fruitfulness', *EMLS*, 6.2. (September,

apart from the editors of the Revels editions few critics have reflected upon the play's spatial dramaturgy. A notable exception is Peter Saccio who points out that while

In *Gallathea* Lyly temporarily abandons multiple staging for a pastoral setting unified around a single tree...Lyly's second pastoral, however, *Love's Metamorphosis*, returns to the multiple pattern: Cupid's temple confronts the sacred tree of Ceres.¹⁸³

Saccio's model of the multiple pattern in *Love's Metamorphosis* had already been proposed by Michael Best in the 1968-study cited above, but Saccio differs from Best in that Best, as we have seen, seems to argue that also *Galatea* is characterized by simultaneous dramaturgy, and consequently, that this dramaturgy has in fact never been abandoned. Leah Scragg, in her thorough examination of the play's dramatic world in the introduction to the Revels plays edition, synthesizes previous statements on the issue, but interestingly also suggests that the properties/locations in the play

are thus employed by the dramatist in this play not simply to signify mental and physical positions but to evoke wonder and surprise throughout, at once moving the audience to 'inward delight' and enacting the transformatory character of love.¹⁸⁴

These aspects of transformation and transience in relation to the Fidelity-tree and the seashore raises the question of whether it is possible to identify a stable configuration of symbolically presented values in the dramatic world of *Love's Metamorphosis*. Another and related issue is whether the play's spatial paradigm consists of three or two semio-lexical fields ('fields of space') centered on its locations.

2000).

¹⁸³ Saccio, 1969, p. 24.

¹⁸⁴ Scragg, 2008, p. 38.

5.10. *The green world of Love's Metamorphosis*

On the front-page of the 1601-quarto, *Love's Metamorphosis* is labelled as a 'wittie and courtly pastorall'. However, the adjectives are set in much larger type than the generic label, thus the character of the play is emphasised rather than its kind. On closer examination of the text, this impression is confirmed. Even if the play can be located within the tradition of green world entertainments there is little in the way of classical pastoral elements in this play apart, of course, from the fact that it is set in a 'green world'. The discourse of the foresters does not contain a single reference to traditional pastoral activities like for instance tending to the flocks. Although Anne Lancashire argues that the three foresters are 'typically pastoral', they are certainly not shepherds.¹⁸⁵ Both the conversation and the activities of the three resemble much more three well-educated young nobles in fervent pursuit of female company, witness for instance their philosophical discussion of love in act 1, scene 1. This sets *Love's Metamorphosis* apart from the two other plays usually classified as wholly pastoral plays in Lyly's oeuvre, *Galatea* and *The Woman in the Moon*; in both these plays the dialogue contain references to shepherds, and the landscape of the flocks is an integrated part of the dramatic world.¹⁸⁶

If we compare with the spatial dramaturgy of *Galatea* the lack of references to shepherds and flocks is not the only difference between the two plays. Using the simple method of counting the number of references to various sylvan elements (wood, forest, thicket, grove) reveals that while the dialogue of *Galatea* contain

¹⁸⁵ Lancashire p.24.

¹⁸⁶ See for instance Diana's utterance in *Galatea*: '...do your sheepe feed in the Forrest or are you straided from your flocke?' (2.1. 50) or Pandora in *The Woman in the Moon*: 'Come hither Melos I must tell thee news/News tragical to thee and thy flock' (2.1. 154).

sixteen such references in the course of the three first acts, in *Love's Metamorphosis* they number only two. Nor is this the whole picture of how the dialogue constructs the pastoral setting in this play; there are in addition a number of references to single trees in the same acts which taken together contribute significantly to our sense of the setting as a 'green world'. The relative scarcity of sylvan deictics in this play (e.g. 'these woods') can at least partly be explained by the fact that characters do not need to hide from other characters or the gods. Another factor is that Diana, goddess of the hunt and the woods, has been replaced by Ceres, goddess of the crops and the open landscape. The result is a discourse that does not provide us with the same sense of depth and structure in the landscape. This is only partially remedied by the fact that the utterances of the foresters create an impression of movement and speed, witness for instance Montanus in act three, scene 1: 'Though thou hast overtaken me in love, yet I have overtaken thee in running' (40-41). In this case the utterance refers to Montanus himself running after the fair Celia, but he is not the only one to refer to their pursuit of the nymphs in terms which evoke images of birds, speed and flying. Indeed, Houppert's characterisation of Lyly's dramaturgy in this case seems quite appropriate: 'The three foresters and the three nymphs are presented with all the formality of a classical ballet'.¹⁸⁷

In spite of the impression of swiftness, characters do not nearly to the same degree as in *Galatea* signal that they move from one kind of the landscape to another. When characters do move between different areas of the setting of *Love's Metamorphosis*, their intention is more often than not to go to and from one of the locations in the play. Saccio, as we have seen, argues that Lyly in this play returns to

¹⁸⁷ Houppert, 1975, p. 108.

the 'multiple pattern', and in the most basic sense of the term this is undeniably true. There are three locations marked out by various kinds of properties on stage in this play: the Fidelity-tree/the woods, the temple of Cupid and the 'seashore' near Erisichon's farm. Interestingly, the Fidelity-tree is onstage only in the three first acts while the 'seashore' is onstage in act four and five. Consequently, Cupid's temple is the only location that is onstage all through the play. Offstage locations or areas include the woods, Ceres' palace or temple, the Fidelity-tree and Erisichon's place. The abode of Famine should also be considered as part of the offstage world.

When examining the text closely, the impression is that there is a higher degree of spatial integration between the two plots than what we observed in *Galatea*. The key figure here is Erisichon who on the one hand is in contact with Ceres' nymphs and the foresters and therefore comes within the sphere of influence of the mighty god, Cupid, and on the other at least to a certain degree participates in and influences his daughter's activities on the seashore. Promoting division rather than integration, Protea, entreats Neptune for assistance, not Cupid when she is to be sold to the merchant and needs to be transformed into a fisherman, and later when she needs to transform into an old man in order to save Petulius from the Siren,. It is only in the play's final scene, 5.4, that Petulius and Protea stand before Cupid and receive his blessings on their love. Thus, in the text the setting of Protea and Petulius' dramatic experiences constitutes, in spite of the linking figure of Erisichon, a fairly autonomous semanticized space within the overall spatial paradigm of the play. The text also clearly establishes the scene of Erisichon's brutal felling of the Fidelity-tree as a location removed from the events at the

seashore. Protea and Petulius do not witness the felling of the tree, nor do they subsequently comment on the faith of the nymph Fidelity.

Ceres is a central character in being the major opponent to Erisichon and the one who devises the fairly devious method of punishment he must suffer. But is it possible to identify a 'location of Ceres' in the text, a field of space which contributes to the total theatricalization of the opposition between Erisichon and Ceres? After having watched Erisichon ravaging the Fidelity-tree, Nisa suggests to the other nymphs: 'Come let us to Ceres' (1.2. 171). This is part of the final utterance of the first act, and when the second act begins we immediately meet Ceres by the tree. Evidently some time has passed, but we have not witnessed the nymphs arriving at Ceres' 'place', telling her of the events and admonishing her to come and see, in other words: no location of Ceres has been established. This is in fact the only place in the text which hints that somewhere there is an abode of Ceres. Other utterances make it clear that the place of the Fidelity-tree is 'Ceres' grove' (Cupid, 5.1. 45) and in the final scene Erisichon promises Ceres solemnly to 'hallow thy woods' (5.4. 1), pointing to the existence of a sort of dual ownership of the grove and the nearby woods. In his position as farmer-king, Erisichon may have the formal, judicial property rights, but the area is also sacred because of its link to the goddess Ceres; in *The Metamorphoses* Erisichon is well aware that the ancient oak is the 'tree the goddess loves'. This, then, is the spatialization of the conflict between Ceres and Erisichon theatricalized not as a binary opposition between spaces, but as a transgressive attempt by Erisichon to transform an ancient space. If we look at *Galatea*, we see something of the same conflict expressed in Diana's utterances in

2.1 where she obviously considers the pastoral activities of the settlement as encroaching on her hunting grounds ('come ye to mar Diana's pastime?').

Ceres is a powerful goddess, but the real centre of power in the play is Cupid's temple, the existence of which is confirmed by Celia in 1.2: 'to the temple of Cupid she offereth two white doves' (1.2. 65). Celia and the other nymphs as well as the foresters and Ceres gravitate around the temple throughout; the foresters with their petitions for the support of Cupid in their attempts to obtain the love of the nymphs, and on the other hand the nymphs rejecting the love of the foresters and, consequently, are suffering the fate of being transformed by the god. Spatially the relationship between these characters and Cupid can be envisaged as a binary opposition between the 'forest walks' /the woods, the arena of pursuit, frustration, love and rejection on the one hand and the temple area which manifests love as defined by Cupid:

Ceres, lovers are chaste! For what is love, divine love, but the quintessence of chastity, and affections binding by heavenly motions, that cannot be undone by earthly means, and must not be controlled by any man? (2.1. 139-42)

Towards the end of the play this forest-temple paradigm increasingly comes to signify the conflict of wills between Cupid and the nymphs, the foresters having enlisted the support of Cupid in getting their revenge on the nymphs by pledging their loyalty to Cupid: 'You shall yearly at my temple offer true hearts, and hourly bestow all your wits in loving devices', 4.1. 123-24). Due to their attitudes to Cupid and love the nymphs are transformed into non-human species of the nature to which they belong: plant, rock and bird, respectively. Even at the end of the comedy this conflict is not completely resolved; the nymphs yield to Cupid and the foresters only

after threats of being transformed into 'monsters, no less filthy to be seen than to be named hateful' (5.4. 115). It is interesting here to note that the nymphs are not afraid of being transformed back into the natural manifestations of woodland nature they had already experienced. It is only when Cupid in all his wrath threatens with 'unnatural nature' that he is able to impose his will on the nymphs.

Summing up, then, the text establishes three distinct places: the seashore, the temple of Cupid and the Fidelity-tree as well as the generalized space of the woods as the spatial dimension of the dramatic world of *Love's Metamorphosis*. However, intradiological stage directions make it clear that in performance this structure would be simplified. This and other aspects of the staging of the play suggest that *Love's Metamorphosis* along with *The Woman in the Moon* exhibit some of the most challenging scenes in Lyly's dramatic oeuvre from the point-of-view of performance. Leah Scragg has in her introduction to the Revels edition provided readers with an admirably thorough examination of how the play may have been staged, so I will in the next section limit my discussion to a couple of issues which I would suggest deserve further consideration.

5.11. *Love's Metamorphosis in performance*

The first issue can be found in act 2, scene 1. Ceres has seen the sorry remains of the Fidelity-tree and consequently orders Tirtena to go to Famine and command her to 'gnaw on the bowels of Erisichton'. She then says to the nymphs: 'But let us to the temple of Cupid and offer sacrifice' (45). Here the editor inserts the stage direction [*They begin to move to a different part of the stage*]. This is followed by a dialogue between Ceres and the nymphs until, in line 85, Ceres once again states 'Well, let us

to Cupid'. After a few more lines by Ceres on the powers of Cupid, the editor in line 92 inserts the stage direction [*They come to a halt before the temple of Cupid*], before, finally, Ceres in line 93 utters 'This is the temple of Cupid'. The problem here is a classic one in the theatre: how to achieve a believable transfer within the time frame of one scene of characters between stage locations which are far apart in terms of real-life geographical distance? Sidney, in the *Apology for Poetry*, solved the problem by pointing to the alleged Aristotelian unities:

For where the stage should always represent but one place and the uttermost time presupposed in it should be, both by Aristotle's precept and common reason, but one day, there is both many days, and many places, inartificially imagined.¹⁸⁸

The editor's stage direction after line 45 seems to suggest that the players should move very slowly across the stage for the duration of 49 lines of text. This is hardly a satisfactory solution; it is better to treat Ceres' utterance in line 45 as rhetorical and not as a direct command to move. If the players begin to move towards the temple at line 85, after Ceres' second utterance, there is only a few lines of text which need to be delivered while covering the distance to the abode of the god, and the excursion of Ceres and the nymphs can be represented in a more natural tempo.

The second issue I wish to examine here is Protea's puzzling utterance in 4.2. 112: 'Follow me at this door, and out at the other', delivered immediately after she has saved Petulius from the evil designs of the Siren. This is the only instance in the whole play where a character refers to a door, and it is usually, and I believe correctly, interpreted as an intradiological stage direction. Moreover, as the Revels editor observes, the utterance does not refer to 'doors' which is meant to signify

¹⁸⁸ *An Apology for Poetry*, p. 37. The alternative to 'inartificial imagination' according to Sidney is that 'many things may be told which cannot be showed, if they know the difference between reporting and representing', *ibid.* 38.

doors in a house that is part of the dramatic world of the play, but to purely functional stage doors.¹⁸⁹ Both Bond and Scragg assume that Protea's utterance means that the two should leave the stage through the same door and reappear together from another door. However, if the two go out and come in together, one cannot but find Petulius' exclamation after reentering the stage rather puzzling: 'How am I delivered! The old man is vanished, and here for him stands Protea.!' (4.2. 113-14). Why the surprise if he has been with Ulysses/Protea backstage and they enter together? There is also the question of what happens to the Siren; we may assume that she exits after her sorrowful last words 'Sing and die, nay die, and never sing more' (4.2. 111), but the text gives no indication of exactly how and when this happens. Or does it? It may seem a preposterous suggestion, but what if Protea's utterance is not directed to Petulius, but to the Siren? The fact is that Protea's line in 112 follows, and could be a response to, the Siren's utterance in line 111. This would mean that Petulius remains on stage, while the Siren disappears together with Ulysses/Protea and that only Protea returns to the waiting Petulius. This would account very well for his happy and surprised utterance in lines 113-114. Another alternative is that Protea and Petulius exit at the same door, but that they enter again by different doors, thus minimalizing the spectators' sense of the two of them being together backstage. This solution would mean that the Siren leaves the stage quietly, i.e. without exit cues in the text.

In the final part of *Love's Metamorphosis*, and scene 4.2. in particular, and as we shall see, in a similar scene in *The Woman in the Moon*, Lyly's handling of space on stage seems to be striving for a kind of virtuoso effect in dramaturgy

¹⁸⁹ See 'Introduction' note 105, and note 112, p. 109

characterized by a rich selection of properties and effects, and complicated patterns of movements between characters and properties. The problem in *Love's Metamorphosis* is that the text isn't quite up to the task of providing the necessary directions for its own staging. Ashton and Savona list no less than 57 characteristic functions of stage directions, amongst them: indicating movement, place, stage picture and properties, and these can all be provided by both intra-dialogic as well as extra-dialogic directions.¹⁹⁰ Unfortunately, in *Love's Metamorphosis* the lack of intra-dialogic qualities in part of the text is not compensated by the existence of extra-dialogic directions.

5.12. *The Woman in the Moon: Textual history and summary*

The basic facts about the Elizabethan textual history of *The Woman in the Moon* are that the play was entered in the Stationers' register in September 1595 and subsequently published for William Jones in 1597. As to when the play was written, opinions are divided between early and late in the period 1589 -1595, but it should be mentioned that Bond originally believed that *The Woman* was Lyly's earliest play. However, in the *Works* he had reached a diametrically opposite conclusion: he now argues that the play is Lyly's 'latest conception'.¹⁹¹ Bond's belief that *The Woman in the Moon* was Lyly's last play has much to do with his assessment of the quality of the blank verse, but he also sees other qualities in the play: 'my later study of the

¹⁹⁰ Ashton and Savona, 1991, p. 81-90.

¹⁹¹ Vol III, p. 234.

play induces me to class it as dramatically one of the best and most skillfully constructed of all Lyly's efforts.¹⁹²

One may indeed wonder how Bond initially could possibly conceive the idea that this was the dramatist first play; from the point of view of my own concern, dramatic space, act 3 scene 2 of the *Woman is*, as we shall see, a tour de force of spatial dramaturgy.

Although suggesting that the play may be dated well within the period of the suppression of the Pauls' boys, Bond does not argue that *The Woman in the Moon* was written for adult players and the public theatre. G.K. Hunter, on the other hand, does whereas Leah Scragg in the recent Revels edition is concerned about disproving Hunter's arguments in the matter. She concludes upon assessing the evidence that the play may have been written as early as 1590, i.e. before the closure of the Paul's boys, and I will in the section on 'performance' consider some of her arguments, especially concerning text and staging in relation to the use of a 'trap'.¹⁹³

The play tells a story that in it self can hardly be classified as either 'adult' or 'boyish'. Four shepherds in Utopia desperately wants female company and Nature decides to grant their wish by creating a woman named Pandora and provide her with a servant, Gunophilus. However, the shepherds are not allowed to enjoy the company of this lovely female in peace. The planets decide to use their influence on Pandora and the major part of the play is devoted to showing how Pandora interacts with the shepherds and her own servant when under the influence of the various

¹⁹² Ibid. p. 232.

¹⁹³ Scragg does not refer to Hunter's discussion of this problem in *Lyly and Peele* and it is interesting to note that Hunter here argues that the play 'repeats the formulae that had fitted the boys and the court; and does so too well to gain much new vigour from the new milieu', (London: Longmans, Green & Co, 1968), p. 37.

moods which characterize the planets: the taciturn Saturn, the magnanimous Jupiter, warlike Mars, wanton Venus and unreliable Mercury. Pandora marries one of the shepherds, Stesias, but under the influence of Venus she commits adultery with the other shepherds and in the end elopes with Gunophilus. Initially, Stesias is blinded by love and believes his wife's explanations for her rather intensive socializing with the other shepherds, but finally he realizes that he has been fooled and in the final act Stesias wants to kill Pandora. However, Nature and the planets intervene and Pandora gets to choose which one of the celestial bodies she is to be linked to. Her choice is the moon, 'for Cynthia made me idle, mutable/Forgetful, foolish, fickle, frantic, mad/These will be the humours that content me best' (5.1. 314-15). Nature then appoints Stesias to serve Pandora as the Man in the Moon, and the unfortunate Gunophilus, already transformed into a hawthorn, ends up as the bush at the back of the Man in the Moon.

5.13. Sources and background

As has been observed by editors and other scholars from Bond onwards, there are numerous sources which have influenced Lyly when writing *The Woman in the Moon*. However, the primary sources in the sense of being the first presentations of the myth of Pandora are Hesiod's *Theogony* and *Works and Days*. As in most myths, the dimensions of time and time have merely a rudimentary place in the story, but there are nevertheless passages in Hesiod's texts which are interesting from the point of view of translating the narrative of the myth into drama. In line 585 ff. of the *Theogony* we find the following:

Then, when he had contrived this beautiful evil thing in exchange for that good one, he led her out to where the gods and the human beings were, while she exulted in the adornment of the mighty bright-eyed daughter, and wonder gripped the immortal gods and the mortal human beings when they saw the steep deception, intractable for human beings.¹⁹⁴

Here we find obvious dramaturgical possibilities both in the way Pandora is revealed to a mixed group of gods and human, and also in the representation of the reactions of these characters. In Lyly's play it is not the Lame One (Hephaistos) but Nature herself (?) who creates Pandora, but Lyly presents a more elaborate version of the introduction of Pandora, first to Concord and Discord, then to the planets and finally to the shepherds for whom she was created in the first place. It is interesting to note that Lyly in this expository part of the play still largely retains the time-and spaceless quality of the world of the myth; I will subsequently, in the section on the green world of *The Woman*, examine how the action moves from the mythical world of human and divine encounters and to the more complex pastoral world of Utopia.

Besides Hesiod, scholars seem to agree that Lyly was influenced also by contemporary sources, the principal ones being Geoffrey Fenton's *Certain Tragicall Discourses* (1567) and Greene's *Planetomachia* (1585), in addition to perhaps the most interesting one from the point of view of dramatic space: the anonymous play *The Rare Triumphs of Love and Fortune*, performed at court in 1582 by the Earl of Derby's Men, but not printed until 1589. Fenton may among other things have provided Lyly with the idea that it was 'The curious artificer and coninge worke woman Dame Nature' who should be the creator of Pandora, and in Greene's *Planetomachia* the dramatist could find the quarrel between the planets over who

¹⁹⁴ Hesiod, *Theogony, Works and Days, Testimonia*, edited and translated by Glenn W. Most, Loeb Classical Library vol. 57, (Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press, 2006), p. 51.

exerts the most powerful influence on men.¹⁹⁵ Although containing a green world, *The Rare Triumphs of Love and Fortune* is not a pastoral, but rather a romance play. In it, however, Lyly would find a model for a dramaturgy of interaction between men and gods in which the vertical dimension was deployed and where the gods could oversee the activities of the human characters.

5.14. Modern critical positions

According to Bond, in terms of its representation of the dimensions space and time, *The Woman* exhibits 'the same indeterminate treatment, the same hovering between rule and license as in earlier works'.¹⁹⁶ Admittedly, Lyly sets out to observe the Unities, but 'he allows inconsistency to creep in'. Bond here suggests that the permanent presence of the raised platform ('balcony') of the planet-gods in principle sets the play in the same location throughout, but he also have to concede that the text calls for what he terms 'imaginary transfers of scene'. The relationship between the location of the gods and these other locations can then be conceived as a continuous presence 'at different spots in the same neighbourhood'.¹⁹⁷

Michael R. Best adheres to the proposal put forward by Hunter that *The Woman* was intended for the public stage and therefore does not include it in his detailed discussion of the staging of Lyly's plays. Anne Lancashire, on the other hand, argues that the play is intended for court performance and, moreover, that *The Woman in the Moon* is 'the most interesting to examine as a staged court pastoral'.¹⁹⁸ She acknowledges that the play is characterized by 'bitterness' rather than by a pastoral

¹⁹⁵ Excerpt from Fenton taken from Bond, *Works*, vol iii, p. 235.

¹⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 237.

¹⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 238.

¹⁹⁸ Lancashire, 1982, p. 45.

vision of the golden world, but suggests that it can be turned into a visionary golden pastoral by the Queen's presence on stage, complementing the three –level stage already there. Lancashire envisages the Queen in her canopied state chair near the throne of the planetary deities. Thus Elizabeth becomes a contrast not only to the fickle Pandora, she is also a stable element in relation to the sequential appearance of the planets. In the words of Lancashire: 'She is the courtly equivalent of the Christian redeemer [...] the play becomes fully realized only in court performance.'¹⁹⁹ One may object to this interpretation that it overlooks or at least diminishes the significance of the presence of Nature in the play. The actual presence of the Queen would mean there were two characters of command and authority on stage and it would have constituted a challenge for the dramatist to mediate between these. In I.2. 31, for instance, we find Stesias addressing Nature as 'Thou sovereign Queen', and one may question whether Lyly would let a player use these words if the real Queen was present on stage.

Michael Pincombe shares with Lancashire the view that the dramatic world of *The Woman in the Moon* is fundamentally flawed; only for a moment is possible entertain the illusion this is a 'Golden world of innocent beauty'. Pandora is capable of defect from the beginning 'and quickly degenerates into the lustful schemer of moral satire'.²⁰⁰ Pincombe ends his essay with the question of Elizabeth's 'secret presence' as a character in the play and does not consider the possibility of the regenerating presence of the actual queen in performance. Indeed, he tentatively proposes that

¹⁹⁹ Ibid., p. 49.

²⁰⁰ Pincombe, 1996, p. 185.

The Woman in the Moon may never have been performed, either on the public or on the private stage.²⁰¹

By far the most comprehensive discussion of dramaturgy of the play is found in the 'introduction' to the Revels edition of the play. Scragg's main argument is that the play exhibits a spatial dramaturgy that is different from earlier plays. What we see in the *The Woman in the Moon* is a weakening of the symbolic value of the locations in the play: 'The symbolic presentational platform of Lyly's earlier comedies, consequently gives way in his last play to a fluid, largely unlocalised arena'.²⁰² At this point, Scragg refers back to early plays like *Campaspe* and *Sapho and Phao* and refrains from comparing the structure of the dramatic world of *The Woman in the Moon* to for instance *Galatea*, a play that is closer both temporally and generically. The effect, I would suggest, is to upgrade the quality of originality in the play's dramaturgy to an unwarranted degree. Apart from the sacrificial tree, the dramatic world of *Galatea* is equally devoid of distinct locations. However, the relative absence of distinct locations in the *The Woman in the Moon* is part of an overall spatial structure that is unique among Lyly's plays in the way it combines the world of man and the world of the planet-gods.

5.15. *The world of Utopia*

Most of the action in *The Woman* takes place in a pastoral landscape in the land of Utopia, but when the play begins we are introduced to a much more comprehensive universe where Nature herself, her companions Concord and Discord as well as the

²⁰¹ Ibid., xiv.

²⁰² 'Introduction', p. 37.

planets are the major players. This universe 'frames' the plot of Pandora, Gunophilus and the shepherds in the sense that, as already mentioned, the play begins with Nature and the planets, the planets then observe and influence the events in Utopia, and at the end the action returns from the green world of Utopia to the placeless realm of Nature and the planets. In what follows, I will first take a closer look at the 'frame', then examine how the dialogue establishes the pastoral world of Utopia, and finally, I wish to focus on the relationship between 'frame' and pastoral world. How, if at all, does the notion of 'spatial paradigms' contribute to our insight into the spatial dramaturgy of the play?

In act 1, scene 1 Nature descends 'from far above the spheres/to frolick here in fair Utopia' (1-2). Utopia means 'no-place', and in spite of the fact that the above lines seem to indicate that Nature descends from Heaven to Earth there is indeed a pronounced quality of placelessness in this first scene. This impression is not weakened when Nature and her two companions is joined by the four shepherds who come to petition Nature for a female who could be 'A sure and certain means among ourselves to /Propagate the issue of our kind' (41-42).²⁰³ Nature creates Pandora as a gift to the shepherds, but the Planets are critical of this new creation because Nature has given her aspects of all of them. Accordingly, they decide to 'bend their forces 'gainst this earthly star' (134). Beginning with Saturn, the planets are taking turns to influence and supervise the behavior of Pandora throughout the play. Although aspects of the play's staging will be discussed in the next section it is

²⁰³ The no-place quality of the first scene of *The Woman* reminds the reader of another of Lyly's plays in which the moon has a central role, *Endymion*, where Tellus and her companion Floscula discuss Tellus' love for Endymion. In both instances the world of the play is set in relation to the structure of the Ptolemaic universe where only things which belong above the sublunary sphere are immovable and perfect.

important at this point to briefly reflect on how the staging may enhance our sense of the planets' presence as a frame. The original stage directions provide ample evidence that Planets' place on stage is at a level above those of the Utopian characters. When Saturn has made his contribution to 'the ruin of this dame' (231), a stage direction reads: *Saturn descendeth on the stage*, and there are similar stage directions after the sojourns of Jupiter and Mars. The planets, then, sit at a raised platform of some kind above the playing area and come down when a new planet takes his seat above.²⁰⁴

Apart from Jupiter, who in his usual lovesick manner interacts extensively with Pandora, the planets comments on their own influence on Pandora rather than engage in dialogue with the inhabitants of Utopia. One example is Mars who takes over from Jupiter:

Now bloody Mars begins to play his part/I'll work such war within Pandora's breast/(And somewhat more for Juno's fair request)/That, after all her churlishness and pride,/She shall become a vixen martialist' (2.1. 177-182).

After having played his part, Mars exits:

Mars hath enforced Pandora 'gainst her kind,/To manage arms and quarrel with her friends,/And thus I leave her, all incensed with ire,/Let Sol cool that which I have set on fire' (2.1. 237-240).

Moreover, there are instances where planets enter into a dialogue with other planets in the course of the 'changing of the guard', for instance when Sol and Venus debate whether Pandora should be kept chaste or not in the beginning act 3, scene 2.

²⁰⁴ Puzzlingly, there are just one extradiological stage direction which indicate the opposite movement, i.e. that the planets ascend from stage level upwards, and that is when Mercury takes over from Venus at the beginning of act 4: 'Ascend thou winged pursuant of love' (4.1.3). The Revels Plays editor has consequently added several directions to this effect. I will examine this issue further in the next section.

Towards the end of the play interaction between men and planet-gods is again intensified. Stesias has had enough of the adulterous and lying Pandora and, at the plays dramatic climax, wants to kill her. Nature intervenes, however, and now the fates of Pandora, Stesias and Gunophilus are discussed with all the characters including the planets present. This configuration contributes to establishing the same sense of indistinct setting that marked the beginning of the play. We are no longer in the fields and woods of the pastoral world of Utopia.

The pastoral world of the play is established gradually as the amorous exploits of Pandora are inextricably linked to manipulation of peoples' movements. Before that, however, pastoral motifs are deployed by for instance Nature's utterance addressed to the shepherds in the first scene: 'Go hence and tend your flocks' (53), and Stesias' appeal to Pandora 'Command my neat, my flock, and tender kids/Whereof great store do overspread our plains' in 1. 186. The general quality of the dramatic world is thus readily identifiable, but there is no indication whatsoever here of place or locality. The same quality of pastoral placelessness distinguishes two other passages in 2.2 and 3.1 where Pandora under the influence of Mars orders the shepherds to slay the savage boar, and furthermore, under the influence of Sol has chosen Stesias as her 'wedlock mate' and asks Gunophilus to fetch various herbs and spices. However, in act 3, scene 2, Venus takes over from Sol and under this influence Pandora takes up her role as master of the game, moving the poor lovesick shepherds as pawns around the landscape: although being wed to Stesias, when Learchus arrives she sends Gunophilus away to provide for a banquet, then exchanges kisses with Learchus, and sends him away: 'But go no further than thy *bower*, my love'(137). Learchus does as he is told, and then Melos and Iphicles

appear and Pandora wants to make love to them both. She whispers to Melos that they shall meet in the *Vale* (156), and when Iphicles departs, she goes with Iphicles 'into yon *grove*'. The landscape, then, is created and differentiated by Pandora's erotic maneuverings: Learchus to a leafy shelter, Melos to the valley and with Iphicles to a group of trees nearby.

In this phase of the play, then, Pandora is mostly stationary and orders the shepherds about, and the effect of this is the gradual emergence of a sense of location. The sense of a location is also underlined by the existence of a cave in which Gunophilus places Stesias, adding almost a farcical touch to the action when the servant and Pandora tailor their dialogue to suit the jealous husband below. In act 4, the same pattern of Pandora manipulating the shepherds in terms of movements in space is repeated when she swears to be revenged on Learchus, Iphicles and Melos for telling Stesias about her lascivious behaviour. This time the dimension of the landscape is increased as she arranges to meet Iphicles on 'Enipeus' sedgy banks' (4.1. 167). Later the spectators would see Stesias appear and utter 'This is Enipeus' bank', an instance of imaginary transfer because there is nothing in the dialogue which otherwise indicates that the bank is marked out by for instance a property . However, the text is not entirely clear and there is an element of confusion concerning location here because just after Iphicles has been beaten by the vengeful Stesias and exits, Learchus enters and refers to the 'grove' where he is supposed to meet Pandora.

However, our sense of a structure within the pastoral world is heightened in act 4. The following passage reveals why: 'Out of my ground, Learchus! From my land!/And from hence forward come not near my lawns!' (272-4). This emphasis on

the ownership of land coupled with intensity of emotion is a rare occurrence in *Lyly*, but the sentiment is repeated and towards the same character later in the same scene: 'Away from my grove! Out of my land!/Did I not give thee warning' (314-15). Another element in the plot which has a similar function in filling in details/elements of the dramatic world is the decision of Pandora's and Gunophilus' to elope with Stesias' jewels and pearls; they intend to go 'Unto the seaside and take shipping straight' (272-4). In act 5, scene 1, we once more see an instance of imaginary transfer when the two have almost reached their destination and Gunophilus in exasperation utters: 'We are almost at the seaside; I pray thee, rise!'.²⁰⁵ From this point the action moves quickly towards the climax when Stesias is about to kill Pandora, but in terms of space nothing more of interest happens before Nature and the Planets intervene and the quality of undefinable space is restored.

Anne Ubersfeld, when discussing the ways spaces are semanticized finds that there are a distinct number of binary spatial features, amongst them high-low, and that 'the valorization of high, a sign of spiritual (and social) elevation, is linked to a culture and to an image of the heavens as source of value and authority.'²⁰⁶

As we have seen, two of the main points of the method of Ubersfeld are to recognize that space is always semanticized in 'rather complex ways' and that perhaps the most significant aim of literary analysis with regard to space is to identify spaces that are in opposition to each other.²⁰⁷ In what way, then, are the space of the Utopians and the space of the Planets semanticized and how are they in opposition to each other in this play? It is rather obvious that the height created by the scaffold or

²⁰⁵ There is, I would suggest, a non-Eden like quality to this episode, the two act more like city servants who rob their master and then run away...

²⁰⁶ Ubersfeld, p. 116.

whatever construction the planets are placed upon does not semanticize spiritual elevation in this play; the planets are vengeful, amorous etc just like the Utopians. It is equally clear that height does semanticize social elevation and power; gods are far above shepherds on the social ladder and have the powers to influence the fates of the Utopians. However, this elevation is not continuous throughout the play; both in the beginning and at the end of the play gods and shepherds meet and interact at the same level. In other words, there is an opposition between the two levels and perhaps the most telling evidence is that the Utopians never enter this upper space. On the other hand, the opposition is not complete, in the terms of Ubersfeld it is permeable, and the quality of permeability can be observed in the way the Planets descend and enter Utopia.²⁰⁸

Are there other significant binary oppositions in the play besides that between the the gods and the shepherds? It could be argued that the play in addition to the vertical paradigm mentioned above exhibits an onstage-offstage paradigm where the erotic liberty of the offstage woods contrasts with the propriety of Stesias' onstage farm. When Pandora tells her adoring shepherds to meet her in the vale, in the bower and in the grove, respectively, these landscape features are offstage. On the other hand, although the border between onstage and offstage is physically distinct, it is not as if the illicit erotic activities of Pandora are entirely restricted to the offstage part of the dramatic world. She flirts openly with Gunophilus, and probably embraces and kisses Learchus on stage (4.1. 225), thus emphasizing permeability

²⁰⁸ Ubersfeld discusses permeability in connection with J. Lotman's assertion that the border between spaces cannot be penetrated. See Ubersfeld, p. 115.

and weakening the semanticized opposition between the two parts of the dramatic world.

5.16. Text and performance

The Woman in the Moon is clearly among the plays in Lyly's oeuvre that challenges the scholars' ability to unravel the connections between text and staging to the utmost. In view of the fact that the text contains more stage directions than any other play by Lyly, this may be a somewhat surprising assertion, but in spite of extensive didascalia several issues remain where a plausible staging solution has to be established on the basis of textual evidence. As mentioned above, scholars still discuss whether or not *The Woman* was intended for the public theatre rather than the court theatres and in what follows I wish to reexamine the dialogue, and to conclude whether the text requires a trap, i.e. a space beneath the stage which could function as Stesias' 'cave'. Besides, how should we envisage the planets' movements when they in turn ascend to and descend from their seat in the heavens 'above' the level of the stage? A third problem is how the staging of Gunophilus transformation into a hawthorn is accomplished.

First, the question of the cave: the central issue here is whether the text requires a trap or whether the cave could be an onstage 'house'. The situation at this point in the action is that Stesias wishes to watch the shepherds' banquet with his wife unnoticed by the others and in the following passages I have underlined what I consider to be relevant textual elements:

Stesias. Where might I hide me to behold the same?

Gunophilus. Oh, in this cave, for over this they'll sit

Stesias. But then I shall not see them when they kiss.

Gunophilus. Yet you may hear what they say. If they kiss, I'll halloo.

Stesias. But do so, the, my sweet Gunophilus,
And as a strong wind bursting from the earth,
So will I rise out of this hollow vault,
Making the woods shake with my furious words.
(3.2. 191-199)

After Stesias has entered the cave, Gunophilus utters: Were't not a pretty jest to bury him quick? I warrant it would be a good while ere she would scratch him out of his grave (206-8). In line 245 Pandora says to Gunophilus: 'Bring Iphicles and Melos with thee, and tell them of my husband: *descendit ad inferos*', and to Learchus 'My husband is in this cave' (252). Finally, in line 325, Gunophilus gives the signal, and according to the quarto stage direction *He riseth out of the cave*. The word 'riseth', used also in the dialogue with Gunophilus before Stesias enters the cave, firmly indicates a vertical movement rather than a horizontal movement out of a stage house. This, coupled with the other intradiological stage directions like 'from the earth', 'bury him', 'out of his grave' and 'descendit ad inferos' establishes without doubt that the text calls for a space beneath the stage, i.e. a trap of some kind.²⁰⁹

Second, the issue of Gunophilus vanishing into a hawthorn: As punishment for not having served Pandora as Nature wished, Gunophilus is transformed into a hawthorn. From the point of view of staging, Nature's command is difficult to interpret: 'Vanish into a hawthorn as thou stand'st' (5.1. 278). Paradoxically, the order is followed by the stage direction *exit*. The stage direction seems especially curious when Stesias in

²⁰⁹ The question of whether or not a trap would have been available to Lyly at court or at his theatre at Paul's require a comprehensive investigation and will not be pursued here.

line 323 clearly refers to a hawthorn that is still on stage: 'I'll rend this hawthorn with my furious hands'. One possible solution is that one of the exit points is decorated as a hawthorne and that Stesias is close by when referring to 'this' hawthorn. However, this solution still does not fulfill the requirement inherent in Nature's phrase 'as thou stand'st'.

Third, the dramaturgy of the planets: How should we envisage the physical movements and the configuration when one planet leaves the seat and another takes over? There is an inherent possibility that this kind of sequential change could seem clumsy and interrupt the otherwise smooth flow of characters' movements. The sequence is instigated by the planets' agreement that 'Each one in course shall signorize awhile' (1.1. 135). Saturn is the first, and the quarto contains the stage direction *He ascends* in line 1, providing evidence that the planets have to go upwards to the seat where they supervise the action. In what follows, we see that several of the instances of change follow the overall structure of the play and take place at the end or beginning of an act. The change between Saturn and Jupiter coincides with the change from the first to the second act; at the end of act 1 we find the stage direction *Saturn descendeth* (224). Other examples include the change between Mars and Sol from the second to the third act and Luna beginning her period in the seat in act five.

There are exceptions to this practice. The change between Jupiter and Mars takes place in the middle of a scene. Jupiter is in love with Pandora, but the fury of Juno makes him rethink his amorous venture, and he says farewell to Pandora in 2.1.81 and then hides behind a cloud. After an episode with Pandora and the shepherds, Mars enters (162) and addresses Jupiter who descends from the seat. In

the *quarto*, we have the stage direction *He descends* followed a few lines later by the direction *Mars, in his seat*. Mars, then, evidently stands waiting while Jupiter descends, then climbs to the seat himself. Similar instances include the beginning of scene 3.2, when Venus enters while Sol is still in his seat, and the beginning of act 4 when Mercury enters before Venus descends. Except for the exchange between Mercury and Venus, which is very brief, the dialogue between the planets at these moments of change is fairly substantial and relevant, and I would suggest that it is this quality which upholds the natural flow of the play and ensures that the dramaturgy does not come across as clumsy. When Mars takes over from Jupiter he comes also as Juno's messenger, informing Jupiter that 'Thy lovely Juno long hath looked for thee', but also providing an 'aside' interpretation of their relationship to the spectators.

However, in the sequence of changes, there are a couple of instances where the text is less than clear. One is the case of Jupiter's withdrawal in 2.1 when he says farewell to Pandora. Her reply is 'And art thou clouded up?', indicating that Jupiter hides behind clouds and, as a consequence, raising the question of what kind of structure the planets' seat actually is. The utterance seems to require more than just an elevated chair. One possible solution is that the Planets' seat is somehow 'framed' by canvas wings painted as clouds. The second instance is the textually invisible exit of Mercury. After ascending to the seat at the beginning of act 4, Mercury is not heard of again until the gathering of all the planets in the final act. In spite of these textual deficiencies, the general conclusion must be that Lyly has skillfully handled a complex, multileveled dramaturgy and created a play-text that provides on the whole adequate guidance to performance and staging.

5.17. Conclusions

The dramatic worlds of *Galatea*, *Love's Metamorphosis* and *The Woman in the Moon* are all 'green' in the sense of being set in various kinds of natural environments, but I would argue that my analyses in this chapter tend to emphasize variation rather than unity when it comes to the fundamental question of how Lyly structures and semanticizes the green worlds. First, all three plays exhibit structures, however rudimentary, of an outer-inner organization of dramatic space and with character movements which may broadly be described as 'into the woods and out again', but they also exhibit considerable structural variation; witness the fairly prominent concentric inner-outer structure of *Galatea* as compared to the structure of locations in *Love's Metamorphosis* and the semantization of the high-low dimension in the *Woman in the Moon*. Second, two of the three plays, *Galatea* and *Love's Metamorphosis*, have subplots and in both plays do we find that the degree of spatial integration between main plot and subplot is weak, the characters of the different plots move in very different worlds in terms of the spatial dimension and only rarely interact.

What the three plays do have in common, however, is the comprehensive use of the offstage for representing various kinds of sylvan environments like woods, vales, groves, and thickets. In *Galatea* the text calls for some onstage representation of the woods, but even here the inner woods are located offstage, and elsewhere characters clearly *exeunt* to the woods. In *Love's Metamorphosis* there is no reason to assume there is more than one tree onstage, the chopped down tree of the nymph Fidelia, and the pastoral 'landscape of adultery' in *The Woman in the Moon* is mostly situated offstage as well. Placing the woods in the offstage part of the

dramatic world is a necessity for Lyly in terms of available theatrical resources but I believe it is possible to argue that we also observe in these plays a considerable degree of dramaturgical skill in the way the text is designed to reveal its own potential for staging. Although the complex characters' movements and spatiality of *The Woman in the Moon* are orchestrated largely through the deployment of stage directions outside the dialogue, there are in Lyly no narrative stage directions or cues of the kind found in medieval drama and in some of the Interludes.

What happens when characters take to the woods for hiding, or in pursuit of various illicit love affairs? There is little support for the claim that resolution through metamorphosis which characterises the Lylian woods. Rather they are the setting for a range of emotional upheavals; the newfound emotions of Phillida and Galatea, the foresters' somewhat desperate chase after the nymphs, the lovesick shepherds search for Pandora in the vales and thickets of Utopia. With Lyly, Ovidian metamorphosis is the property of figures of authority and locations of power. The link between the gods who decide the fates of other characters and the green worlds of Lyly was already pointed out by G.K. Hunter:

'it was inevitable he should take to showing the gods doing this Gordian work. And the obvious scene where the gods could appear most easily to do this was the pastoral scene.²¹⁰

In full agreement with the other gods and well out of the deep woods, Venus becomes the arbiter of who is going to be transformed into a man, Galatea or Phillida. Cupid, the mighty god of *Love's Metamorphosis*, remaining stationary in his temple throughout the play, transforms the nymphs into various manifestations of

²¹⁰ In *The Humanist as Courtier*, p. 135.

nature. Finally, it is the influence of the planetary gods which transforms the moods of Pandora and the highest authority of the play, Nature, who is responsible for the final metamorphoses of Gunophilus into a thornbush and Stesias into the Man in the Moon.

It is rather obvious that locating the gods in the streets of Athens or Rochester is not an optimal dramaturgy, but then the question remains: which additional artistic considerations made Lyly turn to the green worlds? I would suggest that the answer lies in his needs for new ways of externalizing characters' inner turmoil. The method of representing emotions and spirituality through allegory and personification typical of the moralities and later the Interludes had literally played out its role by the second half of the 1580s. Moreover, the dominant method of structuring the dramatic world of court plays, .i.e. by the use of a set of distinct locations which also represent personal or political positions, does not offer a solution which is capable of satisfying the dramatist's need for a more dynamic way of presenting emotions and characters' minds. This dynamism is a result of the interplay between dialogue and setting; the nymph's negative and evasive attitudes to the foresters' attempts to become their lovers work together with the pursuit along the forest paths like two tones in the same chord.

The example with the nymphs points to what I consider to be another and perhaps the most significant aspect of this issue. In Lyly the green world is very much linked to not only characters' minds and emotions in general, but to the emotions and minds of female characters in particular. The Queen who falls in love with the commoner at the ferry, the two girls who are attracted to one another in the forest, the resistance to love offered by Ceres nymphs and the chaotic mind of

Pandora, these are all examples of how Lyly links the exploration of female characters and the green world of nature.

Chapter VI: 'Citizens': the small town world of *Mother Bombie*

6.1. Introduction

Mother Bombie introduces a dramatic world that differs greatly from those of the green world plays discussed in the previous chapter. Within the setting of the small town world of Rochester there is a structure of locations in the form of characters' dwellings as well as a tavern and a scrivener's office, meaning that the characters and the action throughout the play have to relate more or less explicitly to this rudimentary town structure. Regardless of whether the staging of the town houses in Rochester should be envisaged as a 'Terentian' street, as free standing houses or as a mixture of these staging solutions, a basic question to be answered in this chapter is how Lyly shapes the spatial dramaturgy of this small town setting with its numerous character movements between closely located houses. More specifically, I wish to investigate if and how, the text signals the materiality of the houses, i.e. how the dwellings are represented in the text as physical reality. Closely related to this question is the issue of how Lyly in the text relates characters and houses within different spatial dimensions, like inside-outside, near-distant, to and from. Already in his first play, *Campaspe*, Lyly had introduced an urban setting, the Athens of Alexander the Great, but rather than functioning as dwellings, the 'houses' in *Campaspe* are locations which manifest the psychological or ideological positions of the main characters. A significant question therefore becomes whether the urban locations in Rochester, being houses in the real sense of the word, embody values or

positions in the same way that Lyly's earlier stage 'houses' do. Moreover, *Mother Bombie* is set in Rochester, but the text clearly reveals that Rochester is placed within an overall setting which includes both the citizens' farms and other towns not far from Rochester. We have met this kind of actual geography before in *Galatea*, but in *Mother Bombie* the presence of this element is much more prominent. Finally, upon examining the text of *Mother Bombie*, one finds references to no less than seven houses, a fact which raises two significant questions about the staging of the play. Does the text actually require seven onstage houses for performance or could a more moderate solution function equally well? There is also the question of what kind of stage house is needed. Should we envisage free-standing houses or booths along the back of the stage?

The issues above will be discussed below in the main section of this chapter: 'Houses and characters in Rochester'. First, however, I wish to present some relevant background information and focus briefly on the question of what kind of play this is and the directions taken by post-1900 scholarly attention to it.

6.2. Textual history and summary

Mother Bombie was registered in the Stationers' register to Cuthbert Burby on 18th of June 1594 and there labeled as 'an enterlude'. Later the same year the first Quarto (Q1) was published, also to Burby. Lyly's name is not on the title-page, and although the Quarto exhibits the almost formulaic statement 'As it was sundrie times plaied by/the Children of Paules', one needs, however briefly, to address the question of authorship. The question is especially relevant in the case of *Mother Bombie* because it is Lyly's only 'Roman' play and, moreover, that internal textual evidence for

authorship of the kind presented by R.W. Bond in the *Works* hardly ever constitutes evidence in the strict sense of the term. Perhaps the best indicator that this play is in fact written by Lyly is, as suggested by both Andreadis and Scragg, that it is included in Blount's edition, *Six court comedies* (1632). Blount knew the theatrical scene of 1590s London intimately and it is highly unlikely that he would have made a wrong attribution. It may seem strange that Blount labels the play as a court comedy since there are no other indications that the play was written for or performed at court. However, we can assume that Lyly in the mind of his contemporaries was associated with the court, and we also have the simple fact that forty years is a long time; it may have been forgotten that *Mother Bombie* was never actually performed at court.

What the spectators at the playhouse at St. Paul's saw, was a Terentian type of comedy with considerably enhanced plot complexity. No less than four fathers with, consequently, four servant rascals and four children are involved (in the action). Two of the fathers, Memphio and Stellio, have children which are somewhat deficient mentally, but they both wrongly believe that the other man's child is normal and sole heir to farm and fortune and thus an eminent prospect for marriage to their own child. The two other fathers, Sperantus and Prisius, both have bright and beautiful children who also happen to be in love with each other, but the fathers are against marriage between the two and rather prefer that their children marry the, unknown to them, somewhat dull-witted children of the wealthier men. Not surprisingly, the servants meet up in the tavern and agree to collaborate in a plot that will bring about both the marriage of the two young lovers and the union between children of Memphio and Stellio. After many complications the fathers finally agree to the two marriages, but then suddenly a woman named Vicinia appears who turn out to be

the real mother of the two dull-witted children Accius and Silena whilst her children Maestius and Serena are in reality the children of Memphio and Stellio respectively! The play ends happily, the lovers are united and Memphio and Stellio promise to take care of Vicinia's children also in the future.

What is the function of the title-character, Mother Bombie in all this? She is the one the other characters turn to for advice. The first instance is when Maestius and Serena in 3.1. turn to this 'old cunning woman, who can tell fortunes, expound dreams, tell of things that be lost, and divine of accidents to come' to get to know what is to become of them.²¹¹ At this point in the play they believe themselves to be brother and sister and hence unnaturally in love. Later in the same act Mother Bombie is involved in a long, but witty exchange with the servants who in turn tell her of their somewhat fantastic dreams. Mother Bombie is also the one who at the end 'knows' that Vicinia switched the children and counsels her to confess and be open about what she did all those years ago. Mother Bombie in a sense becomes the centre towards which the other characters are drawn throughout the play, and thereby functions as an integrating and coordinating factor in the play.²¹²

The play also includes a rudimentary subplot involving Dromio, servant of Memphio, a Hackneyman, as well as a sergeant and a scrivener. The action occupies merely a little more than one scene towards the end of the fourth act and unfolds as a follow-up to a fraud committed by Dromio towards the Hackneyman some time earlier. The subplot quickly peters out; in the overall resolution in act five the master

²¹¹ This and all subsequent quotations are from the Revels edition of *Mother Bombie*, edited by Leah Scragg, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2010).

²¹² It would seem seem that Mother Bombie in her function anticipates Bosola in Webster's *The Duchess of Malfi*.

promises to pay the servant's debt and the subplot characters join the rest in the celebratory ending of the play.

6.3. Sources and background

No direct source for *Mother Bombie* has been found, but the play represents Lyly's only engagement with literary material that must have been quite familiar to him from his days as a schoolboy: classical Roman comedy. Teachers of Latin used the comedies of Terence and Plautus to inculcate good language in their pupils and, as we shall see, they also on occasion wrote plays themselves. However, to explain the fact that Lyly turned to Roman or city comedy late in his career as dramatist a wider context than the latin syllabus of his youth needs to be taken into consideration.

First, Lyly was not a pioneer in his attempt to adapt the motifs of Roman comedy to an English setting. The 'schoolmaster-dramatist' Nicholas Udall (1505-56), wrote *Ralph Roister Doister* (1552), and who may also be the author of *Jake Jugeler* (1555), both comedies with plots based on Roman plays and with urban settings.²¹³

Ten years later George Gascoigne issued his English version of Ariosto's *I Suppositi*, *Supposes*, set in Ferrara. While Bond points to the combination of Roman motifs with 'English national types' like the fortune-teller Mother Bombie, and the Hackneyman,²¹⁴ Harriette Andreadis proposes that the influence of Italian *commedia dell' Arte* can be seen in *Mother Bombie*:

Thus the disguise plot through which the lovers sort themselves out into appropriate pairs and by means of which they obtain their fathers' recognition is a

²¹³ *Roister Doister* is based on Plautus' *Miles Gloriosus* and Terence's *Eunuchus*, while the model for *Jake Jugeler* is Plautus' *Amphitruo*.

²¹⁴ See Bond, *Works*, vol. III, p. 167.

staple device in Italian farce which Lyly uses to complicate the basic Roman framework of *Mother Bombie*.²¹⁵

The availability of the original comedies of Terence and Plautus as well as examples of native plays modeled on the Roman originals and Italian plays raise the issue of whether any of these may have exerted a decisive influence on the way Lyly develops dramatic space in *Mother Bombie*. I will return to this question in the final section of this chapter.

6.4. Modern critical positions

Mother Bombie is probably the play by Lyly that has received least scholarly attention, but there are a few contributions which should be considered as relevant to a discussion of the play's spatial dramaturgy and that should be mentioned. Bond, true to his position as champion of the unities, notes that

In the matter of Place Lyly strictly follows his Roman model, Terence. Whatever improbabilities are involved, the stage represents throughout one and the same place [...] nor is there anything in the dialogue requiring an imaginary transfer in the middle of a scene'.²¹⁶

There is nothing incorrect in this statement, but Bond fails to mention the quite substantial part of the dramatic world that is placed offstage in this play. However, this part of the dramatic world does not escape the attention of G.K. Hunter, who points to

that very precise social background which Lyly elsewhere fills in by his many references to Rochester, Ashford and Canterbury. These are quite different from the references to Lincolnshire we noted in *Gallathea*.²¹⁷

In *John Lyly* (1906), John Dover Wilson argues that perhaps the chief point of

²¹⁵ In the 'introduction' to her edition of *Mother Bombie* (Salzburg, 1974), p. 24.

²¹⁶ *Works*, vol. III, p. 169.

²¹⁷ G.K. Hunter, 1962, p. 224.

interest in *Mother Bombie* is the link it forges between dramatists like Udall and Gascoigne and what he terms the later 'realists', people like Ben Jonson and Thomas Dekker. He also characterizes the play as 'an experiment in the drama of realism'.²¹⁸ It is not made entirely clear what Dover Wilson means by 'realism', but in relation to the setting of the play it may be that Hunter subsequently expresses also at least part of what Dover Wilson had in mind:

The action of *Mother Bombie* needs the real world of houses and taverns and distances to the next town, in order that we should understand the relationship between the different people.²¹⁹

A number of scholars have contributed to the discussion of how this 'real world of houses and taverns' should be represented on stage, and this will be the main topic in my subsequent section on the staging of *Mother Bombie*.

One element in the play seemingly cannot be said to be realistic and would appear to be literally out of place in a comedy so close to its Roman models in terms of setting: that is the character of Mother Bombie herself. However, the presence of a good and cunning woman in a small town in England in the late-sixteenth century was not an unusual or unrealistic phenomenon. In fact, in Reginald Scot's *Discoverie of Witchcraft* we hear about 'Mother Bungie', described as 'the great witch of Rochester, and reputed among all men for the cheefe ringleader of all other witches'.²²⁰ Andreadis devotes a considerable portion of her introduction to the issue of magic and witches and concludes that Lyly's Mother Bombie belongs to the category of 'white' witches who do good rather than engage in various black magic activities

²¹⁸ P. 114.

²¹⁹ Hunter, 224.

²²⁰ Cited in Andreadis' introduction to her edition of the play, p.30.

with the intent of harming others. Michael Pincombe, while accepting that Mother Bombie can be characterized as white witch, also attempts to situate Mother Bombie in relation to two previous characters in Lyly's plays who like Mother Bombie are 'seers', i.e. Sibylla in *Sappho and Phao* and Dipsas in *Endymion*. His proposition is that 'Mother Bombie herself acts as a figural link with Lylian panegyric; not by providing materials for an Eliza, however, but rather for her demonic or grotesque opposite: an anti-Eliza'.²²¹

6.5. Houses and characters in Rochester

Materiality can be defined as 'the quality of being physical' and I propose that this is a relevant concept in relation to the houses in *Mother Bombie* because these are houses in the sense of being dwellings where characters live their lives, and which therefore require more of a material presence, not only on the stage which is fairly obvious, but also in the way the text represents these houses.²²² The concept 'materiality' should not be thought of narrowly as in for instance 'building materials'; the quality of being physical encompasses also the dimensionality of a physical structure, the exterior-interior dimension is but one example. However, in the dialogue we do find a few examples of references to what may be termed architectural features. The first occurs in act one, scene one when Memphio refers to the house and daughter of Stellio: 'she is mew'd up and only looketh out at the windows' (69-70). In the second scene Stellio refers to the place of his daughter within the house as follows: 'I have penn'd her up in a chamber, having only a

²²¹ Pincombe, 1996, p. 158.

²²² I touched briefly on the difference between *Mother Bombie* and *Campaspe* as regards 'houses' in the introduction to this chapter. It is worth noting that in *Campaspe* the word 'house' occurs only once and that is in the rather rare compound 'brothelhouse' in act 4, scene 1.

window to look out' (7-8). In addition to chamber and window, we find references to doors: 'Why do you rap so hard at the door?' (Mother Bombie, 3.4. 85). The fact that she mentions the degree of hardness in the knock further emphasizes the materiality of the door and her house in this example. In 5.3., on the other hand, a door indicates the location of a social event: 'Let us have a fit of mirth at Sperantus' door' (Synis 5.3. 1-2).

Another category of utterances which enhance the quality of materiality refers to actions, events or states taking place inside. 'Then let us in that I may furnish thee with some better counsel and my son with better apparell', (Memphio, 1.1. 98-9). In this example Memphio in addition to the usual 'let us in' for *exeunt* specifies what is going to take place inside. The same kind of utterance can be found in the first scene of act 2: 'Let us consult at the Tavern where, after to the health of Memphio, drink we to the life of Stellio' (139-40). Although a more rudimentary example, the utterance nevertheless illustrates the same method of letting an urban physicality emerge from the scripted text.²²³

How then, do action and character movements relate to the houses within the fictional space of the play? First, it is important to recognize that the action never takes place inside any of the houses. Apart from four scenes that remain unlocalized, most of the scenes are revealed by the dialogue to occur in front of or near by a characters house. Change of location follows scenes, as for instance in the first act where the location shifts from Memphio's house to Stellio's and then on to the houses of Prisius and Sperantus according to the progress of the dialogues of the

²²³ A tavern was a part of the setting of *Campaspe* as well. In 2.1. the servants decide to meet up in the tavern.

exposition. Although there are all in all seven houses within the onstage fictional space, in the course of the play the action centers mainly around the houses of Memphio/Stellio, the tavern, and the house of Mother Bombie. In the final scene, 5.3, the action is focused on movements between houses to an hitherto unusual degree as a group of musicians comes to play at the wedding at Memphio's house but are unable to immediately locate the right house.

To what degree is the notion of spatial paradigms useful for our understanding of *Mother Bombie*? There is an interesting and marked contrast in the play between the houses of Memphio and Stellio on the one hand and the tavern on the other. Memphio represents contraction in that he wants Accius to go in all the time. The house is a closed off area where secrets are to be kept, in this case the embarrassing fact that his son is not the brainiest boy in Rochester. Stellio evidently has not been inside Memphio's house for years and vice versa. The servants of Memphio and Stellio clearly know each other, but strangely does not seem to know anything about the other's master and his family, this is evident from their dialogue at the beginning of act 2. The Tavern, on the other hand is not just a place where the servants meet to follow their own belief that 'it is a good thing to plea among pots' (2.1). In 2.5., the masters also meet in the tavern, and Stellio's opinion is representative of the group:

A tavern is the rendezvous, the exchange, the staple for good fellows. I have heard my great-grandfather tell how his grandfather should say that it was an old proverb when his great-grandfather was a child, that it was a good wind that blew a man to the wine (2.5. 3-7).

These men have not drunk together for years, and beneath the jollity lurks still their

different ambitions of fooling each other concerning marriage and, ultimately, property. However, the scene nevertheless highlights the contrast between the closed and private world of the dwellings and the open, including world of the tavern.

The world of the tavern is a male world. There are no women in the tavern and there are in fact no ordinary housewives visible in *Mother Bombie* at all. They belong within the closed world of the dwellings; we learn about the wife of Memphio that he considers her to be an 'arrant scold' and that he deliberately wants to keep her from his project of getting their son married to Stellio's daughter.²²⁴ Of the wives of Stellio, Prisius, and Sperantus the play tells us nothing, and the other female characters in the play can perhaps be characterized as 'marginal' in relation to the respectable bourgeois families of the town. Mother Bombie is the most obvious example, but also the servant girl Rixula and the 'criminal' Vicinia belong to the same category. However, as mentioned above, Mother Bombie's house is not marginal as a location in the play, the action frequently returns to this house. How, then, is the house of Bombie situated in relation to the closed-open contrast between the citizens' houses and the tavern? I would suggest that this dwelling takes up a middle position between the two. People who come to Mother Bombie are not being asked to come inside, but they receive a friendly welcome and they get the assistance they ask for. On the other hand, Bombie is the town's seer and as a white witch she does

²²⁴ The term 'scold' has very negative connotations in early modern culture. Women who were accused of having 'unruly tongues' could be severely punished in sixteenth century communities and the use of torture instruments like the 'bridle' and the 'ducking-stool' is well documented. See Lynda E. Boose, 'Scolding Brides and Bridling Scolds: Taming the Woman's Unruly Member', *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 42:2, (1991), 179-213, and my own 'Affect Not These Strange Trials': Culture and Drama in Early Modern England', in *Contexts of Renaissance Comedy*, edited by Janet Clare and Roy Eriksen, (Oslo: Novus Press, 1997), p. 97-111.

not participate in the town's social life in the common, jolly manner of the male characters. The house of Bombie, then, occupies a central place in the overall design of the fictional world of the play, a perspectival lay-out pointing towards the values of openness and honesty in a community where other and more negative values seem to be predominant.

The text locates Mother Bombie's house as well as the tavern and the dwellings of Memphio and the others within a larger fictional world indicated by place-names. The name of the town itself, Rochester, is mentioned no less than five times by different characters in the course of the play. Rochester belongs to the county of Kent, and the name of the county and its main city, Canterbury, also occur several times in the dialogue. In addition another Kentish town, Ashford, is referred to by Sperantus in 2.5. Why this almost conspicuous emphasis on place names? There is, after all, no other play by Lyly that is similarly concerned with contemporary English geography. The most obvious explanation is that Lyly is deploying an already familiar connection between Rochester and a witch (the witch 'Bungie' mentioned above), of course, but the question remains: to what purpose? If we examine the use and function of these place-names within the dialogue there seems to be no serious, underlying purposes which motivate the characters' use of them. The references to Rochester in act four is embedded in a light, bantering dialogue between the servants, Livia and the Hackneyman and we find the same tone in the utterances which refer to Canterbury and Kent in acts 2 and 4. What we are looking at here is rather Lyly's attempt to set up and link neighbouring and distant offstage to onstage

fictional space in order to establish a fictional world that gives the impression of actuality.

6.6. Staging Mother Bombie

The plays of Plautus and Terence were originally performed on a long and narrow stage where in most plays one or more house facades faced the spectators. The available sources indicate that these houses had doors through which actors could enter and exit and that led into a kind of vestibule. The house facades, then, and the space in front of them more often than not represented a city street, but could even, as in Plautus' *Furens*, represent a stretch of seashore with a cottage.²²⁵

Interestingly, the city street setting incorporated a wider dramatic world, first in that characters could enter from the sides, and were then understood to be coming from the forum or the harbor (and foreign lands). Second, we have the much-debated *Angiportum* which was believed by some critics to have been a side-street or lane running towards the back of the stage between houses, in other words perpendicular to the main playing area. This interpretation of the placing of the *angiportum* has now been abandoned, and it is now seen rather as a street in the offstage part of the city.²²⁶

As mentioned above, the text refers to seven different 'houses' in the part of Rochester in which the play is set. I propose now to investigate two interrelated questions concerning the houses in *Mother Bombie*: the first is whether all the houses that is mentioned in the text needs to be represented on stage, the second

²²⁵ See George E. Duckworth, *The Nature of Roman Comedy: A study in popular entertainment*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1952), p. 82-83.

²²⁶ *Ibid.*, 87-88. It is interesting to note that the *angiportum* was reproduced by Scamozzi at the Teatro Olimpico in Vicenza.

concerns the need for free-standing, three-dimensional house structures on stage, in other words: could the houses in *Mother Bombie* be represented simply by doors in the back wall and booths leaning against the same wall? If we look at the first act the conclusion must be that the text requires separate exit points for at least three of the fathers. When Memphio and Dromio exeunt after the first scene, they go into Memphio's house. Similarly, at the end of scene 1.3 when Sperantus and Prisius order Candius and Livia to go in the fathers follow the children into their respective houses. The evidence for the need for a fourth house belonging to Stellio can be found in act 2, scene 3 when Candius says 'But behold, who is that that cometh out of Stellio's house?' (6-7). This is textual evidence to the fact that here is some kind of entrance to Stellio's house on stage.

In scene 5.3, when the fiddlers appear before the house of Memphio, there are two utterances which may seem to bring in the dimension of upper-lower in the staging of *Mother Bombie*. The three musicians sing before Memphio's house and when the master of the house appears he utters: 'What crowding knaves have we there?' (5.3.86). Subsequently he orders Dromio to get rid of 'these jarring rogues' and Dromio answers 'I go, sir'. The use of 'there' and 'go' would seem to signal distance, and Bond includes the stage direction 'above' in relation to both Memphio's and Dromio's utterances.²²⁷ The dialogue here very easily conjures up images of master and servant looking out of a window above, and the fact that the staging of *The Woman in the Moon* requires a an upper level raises the question of whether Lyly in these late plays somehow had permanent access to a two-storey staging

²²⁷ Dilke uses the more precise stage direction 'Memphio looks out' in addition to 'above', see Bond, vol. III, p. 219, footnote 78.

device. Bond argues that Lyly used a 'central structure': 'The central structure at the back is constantly in evidence; being used for [...] the tavern and Mother Bombie's house and the other dwellings required'.²²⁸ However, differing from *The Woman* where the upper level had an important function as the abode of the planet gods, this episode in the final act is the only time in *Mother Bombie* when the text seems to indicate the need for an upper level. The text does in fact just bring in the element of distance, not the vertical dimension, so I would propose that a solution where Memphio and Dromio stand together in the entrance to the house and the musicians some little distance away could be satisfactory from the point of view of the dramaturgy.

As for the other houses there is first of all ample textual evidence for the need for some kind of stage structure to represent the house of Bombie. That she is actually inside a house when Maestius and Serena arrive in 3.1. is evident both from Maestius question 'Who is within?' and Mother Bombie's reply 'The dame of the house' (lines 33-34). This is of course further emphasized by the example mentioned above in connection with the materiality of the houses: Mother Bombie's question when the servant boys and Rixula come to visit her is: 'Why do you rap so hard at the door' (3.4. 85). That the entrance to the Tavern has to be marked out on stage can be inferred from the fact that in 2.1 the servants *exeunt* into the tavern: 'Tis a pleasant thing to go into the tavern clearing the throat' (Lucio, 164). Although in the following scene it is only Memphio who refers to 'a tavern' explicitly, it is a reasonable

²²⁸ Bond, vol. II, p. 265.

assumption from the text that all four fathers go into the same tavern to look for their servant boys. However, there are no scenes inside the tavern in the play.

Finally, we have the issue of the scrivener's shop, and this part of the scene presents certain difficulties when considered from the perspective of possible intradiological stage directions. At the end of scene 4.2 (ll. 259-63), the text clearly calls for a scrivener:

Hackneyman Well, call the Scrivener

Sergeant Here's one hard by: I'll call him.

Risio A Scrivener's shop hangs to a Sergeant's mace, like a burr to a frieze coat.

Scrivener What's the matter?

There is, as we see, also a reference to a scrivener's shop here and Bond in his edition includes Dilke's stage directions, i.e. after the sergeant's utterance a stage direction which reads *knocks at a door*, and furthermore, the direction *within* when the scrivener says 'what's the matter'. Reading this passage as containing intradiological stage directions for a 'house', then, is not entirely unwarranted, but such a reading does raise the question of whether a separate house for the scrivener is likely from the perspective of dramatic economy. The lines above are in fact the only ones in the entire play that link the scrivener with a house or shop. At the end of scene 4.2., the scrivener, as well as the Hackneyman and the sergeant follow the boys into the tavern, and the result is, as reported by Licio, that 'The scrivener cannot keep his pen out of the pot! Every goblet is an inkhorn!' (5.1. 4-5). In other words, they all get drunk and nothing is done about Hackneyman's complaint. When

the Scrivener at last reappears it is in the final scene where he along with Hackneyman and the Sergeant are included in the play's happy resolution. The most likely staging solution is therefore that there was no separate house or exit point for the scrivener, but that another house or exit point doubled as the scrivener's shop. This may have been done by the simple method of switching or turning signs.

There is no possibility today of reconstructing the original staging of *Mother Bombie* in detail and with a high degree of certainty. However, my examination of the text does not point to the need for free-standing, three-dimensional 'houses' on stage; what the text essentially would seem to require is a 'Terentian' street with a number of exits as 'houses' in or close to the back wall. This is a model akin to what Southern termed 'curtained neighbor compartments' and which can be seen in woodcuts from illustrated late fifteenth-century editions of Terence.²²⁹ The actual number of such 'compartments' is open to discussion, but I would argue that the 'house' of Mother Bombie is centrally placed and permanently visible. As for the others, my analysis above indicates that the textual opposition between the closed and secretive house of Memphio and the open tavern could have been translated into a symbolic stage image with Memphio's house on one side of Mother Bombie's house, being balanced by the tavern on the other side.

6.7. *Mother Bombie, The Comedy of Errors and Menaechmi*

Although *Mother Bombie* may have been written a few years earlier, the date of the

²²⁹ Andreadis mentions the argument that these woodcuts are not historical illustrations, but fails to point out that no one has so far discovered even one single illustration/image of the free-standing, three-dimensional houses that so many reconstructions of pre-Shakespearean performances are based on.

In general, signposting would certainly have been a cheap and effective way of identifying locations like these.

publication of the first quarto, late in 1594, is almost simultaneous with the date of the first recorded performance of Shakespeare's *The Comedy of Errors*.²³⁰ Editors have noted and commented on the influence of *Mother Bombie* on Shakespeare's play, but arguably the most substantial discussion of the relationship between the two plays can be found in G.K. Hunter's *John Lyly: the Humanist as Courtier* (1962).²³¹ With a slight rewriting of a passage from Hunter, I propose that the *Comedy of Errors* is convenient for comparison because it represents Shakespearean comedy at work on materials similar to those of *Mother Bombie*. The 'materials' referred to here is not the literary dramaturgy of space as such in the two plays, but Hunter does offer observations that are relevant to the present discussion of the topic and I shall return to these in due course.

The Comedy of Errors differs from *Mother Bombie* in that it is based upon identifiable sources: the most important are Plautus' plays *Menaechmi* and *Amphitruo*, but as we shall see it is the non-Roman elements added by Shakespeare that are most interesting from the point of view of dramatic space. Both plays are set in overall urban environments, Ephesus and Rochester, respectively, and with the same kind of spatial structure of locations in the shape of 'houses' between which the characters and the action moves. In contrast to the multiplicity of houses indicated by the text of *Mother Bombie*, the number of houses required in *The*

²³⁰ *The Comedy of Errors* was first presented as part of the Christmas Revels at Gray's Inn on the 28th of December 1594.

²³¹ R.A. Foakes in the 1962 Arden Shakespeare edition argues that 'Shakespeare's debt to Lyly, especially in the exchange between the Dromios and their masters, is too general and pervasive, however, to be reduced to a list of borrowings' He nevertheless goes on to list a number of textual echoes and specifies the influence of Lyly concerning the dialogue between masters and servants. In the New Cambridge edition of *The Comedy of Errors*, T.S. Dorsch adheres closely to Foakes' notion of the 'general and pervasive' influence of Lyly, consequently it is surprising to find that Charles Wentworth fails to mention the influence of Lyly on the play in his comprehensive introduction to the Oxford Shakespeare edition. See R.A. Foakes, 'introduction', (London and New York: Routledge, 1962), p. xxxiii-xxxiv and T.S. Dorsch, 'introduction', (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), p 9-10.

Comedy of Errors is just three: 'the Phoenix', the house of Antipholus of Ephesus, his wife Adriana and her sister Luciana, and their servant Dromio (of Ephesus). Second, 'the Porcupine', the house of the courtesan, and finally, the Priory, where the prioress Æmilia resides.

The Priory is the location of the resolution, where the old man Egeon is reunited with both his wife, who turns out to be none other than the prioress Æmilia, and his twin sons, Antipholus of Ephesus and Antipholus of Syracuse. Prior to this happy resolution, we have witnesses a number of errors caused by mistaken identity and the central episode takes place at the Phoenix where Adriana unwittingly is having both dinner and serious marital conversation with her brother-in-law, believing him to be her husband. The comic aspect of this episode is much heightened by the fact that Adriana's real husband, Antipholus of Ephesus, is denied access to his own house by the servants who believe that the master of the house is inside already. The Porcupine, the house of the courtesan, is less central to the action, but we learn from the dialogue that Antipholus of Ephesus goes there after his failed attempt to enter the Phoenix. Moreover, that he intended to present the courtesan with a gold chain that Angelo, unfortunately, gives to the other Antipholus. The only stage activity connected to the Porcupine takes place in 4.1., where a stage direction tells us that Antipholus and Dromio of Ephesus *enter from the Courtesan*.

The world of *The Comedy of Errors* extends beyond the main locations. In the first scene Duke Solinus outlines the strained political relationship between Ephesus and Syracuse and informs the unfortunate Syracusan merchant Egeon that for a Syracusan merely to visit Ephesus is punishable by death. Egeon's response is to tell

the Duke his own sad story of lost children and travels around the Mediterranean in search of them. Thus the scene establishes a wider context for the events in Ephesus. However, also within Ephesus itself Shakespeare's text adds offstage features to the main locations mentioned above. We find the inn called 'The Centaur' where Antipholus and Dromio of Syracuse reside, there is the goldsmith's shop, there is the jail where Antipholus of Ephesus ends up when he refuses to pay for the gold chain and there is that 'melancholy vale/the place of death and sorry execution' behind the ditches of the abbey where Egeon is supposed to be executed in the final scene. Perhaps most prominent of these offstage locations is the harbor. In 3.2. when Antipholus of Syracuse has reached the stage where he wishes to escape from the confusing and frightening city of Ephesus we find references to 'wind', 'shore', 'harbour' and 'bark', and, similarly, in 4.1. a 'bark of Epidamnum'.

The harbor of course is a staple location in Roman comedy and that brings us to the question of how Shakespeare's develops the dramatic world of his main source, Plautus' *Menaechmi* and other sources? First, the structure of locations is simpler in the *Menaechmi*. There are just two onstage locations, the house of Menaechmus the Citizen, and the house of the courtesan Erotium. Shakespeare adds the Priory as an onstage location because he needs the character Emilia and a secluded location where she could live withdrawn and in quiet for many years.²³² The offstage world of the *Menaechmi* comprises just the abode of Senex, father-in-law of Menaechmus the Citizen, and the 'assembly', a political meeting where Meneachmus is held up and thus setting in motion the series of 'errors' in the play. As we have seen, the offstage

²³² Shakespeare's source here is the story of Apollonius of Tyre where the wife of Apollonius, Lucina, is found in the temple of Diana at Ephesus. For a thorough examination of Shakespeare's use of this source, see Whitworth's introduction to the Oxford edition, p. 27-32.

world of *The Comedy of Errors* is more complex, and one of the reasons why this is so is that the play includes two pairs of twins. Working with two pairs of twins the need for plausible reasons for keeping characters out of sight of each other also increases, and one such method of removing a character from the stage is to send him to an offstage location like for instance when Antipholus of Syracuse sends Dromio to the Centaur in act one, scene two.

According to T.S. Dorsch, 'Shakespeare introduced pathos, suspense, beauty, and a love-interest into what he had taken up as a heartless farce'.²³³ Pathos, suspense etc need to be expressed through dialogue, of course, and there is a marked difference between the ways some of the characters speak in the two plays, especially the female characters. The simple and direct discourse of Mulier in *Meneachmeni* contrasts markedly with the complex emotional utterances of Adriana in Shakespeare's play. However, my concern is not with the dialogue as such but rather with how this emotionally rich dialogue affects our sense of space in the play. I would argue that when reading in 2.1 the deep and intimate dialogue between Luciana and Adriana we as readers get a sense that this is an interior scene rather than a conversation in a street. By implication, our sense of the materiality of the town is also enhanced. The impression is strengthened by the fact that we in the previous scene learn from Dromio of Ephesus that the two women are at home in their house waiting for Antipholus of Ephesus. The same effect can be observed in 3.2 in the dialogue between Adriana and Antipholus of Syracuse and in 4.2 in the dialogue between Adriana and Luciana. The fact that Dromio of Syracuse arrives for

²³³ In the 'introduction' to the *New Cambridge Shakespeare* Edition, p.8.

the bail money and Luciana goes to fetch them does not seem to detract from our sense as readers of the 'interior' quality of this scene.

This kind of reader response would not be transformed into a spectator response in the theatre. What the reader experiences as spatial richness, in the theatre comes across as just a dialogue in the street. There are two other scenes in the play which are interesting from the point-of-view of how dramatic space comes across to reader and spectator. The first is 3.1 where Antipholus of Ephesus is denied access to his own house because Adriana wrongly believes that her husband is already inside. For the reader this episode presents no particular problems, the text does not put undue strain on the imaginative efforts of the reader and it would in general seem to function well as intradiologic stage directions. One issue worth mentioning though is whether the text indicates that Adriana should enter 'above' when joining in the slightly chaotic situation at the gate. There is clearly a parallel here to scene 5.3 of *Mother Bombie* where we have the same configuration with Memphio and Dromio inside the house and the musicians outside, and I suggest that the conclusion is the same as when discussing Lyly's play: although the 'above' solution is satisfactory, there is nothing in the text which requires the presence of upper-level staging. The complexity here is theatrical: A heated dialogue ensues between those on the outside and those on the inside of the Phoenix and there are as many as four characters placed out of sight of the audience. The partition or door between the groups has to appear to be hard in order to make the most out of Antipholus' desperate knocking. Various staging solutions are possible here; perhaps the most obvious is to use a hall-screen to represent the house fronts, and to place the

characters in the Phoenix behind the screen. Another, and more creative solution, is to turn a free-standing screen perpendicular to the spectators so that they are able to observe both the people inside and outside the house simultaneously.²³⁴

The second scene is the final scene of *The Comedy of Errors* (5.1). From the point-of-view of dramatic space the scene is odd because it introduces into a Roman street setting a location that has not been mentioned so far in the play, the Priory. This is clearly a fixed location with a door, not an instance of the kind of 'imaginative transfer' that Sidney criticized in the *Apology for Poetry*, and this makes Dromio's utterance in line 37 all the more puzzling: 'This is some priory. In or we are spoiled'. The reason why the Priory has not been mentioned has nothing to do with the location or the building, of course. This is so because Emilia is to be revealed as Egeon's wife in the play's resolution.

The Priory is rather suddenly mentioned in the final scene, but it nevertheless seems to be considered by all the characters as a natural part of the town of Ephesus. Otherwise, one of the most conspicuous features of *The Comedy of Errors* is the degree to which the characters who are new to Ephesus try to give meaning to their experiences there by categorizing them as unnatural, as the work of magicians, sorcerers etc. In the *Menaechmi*, we find the following utterance by the servant Messenio:

This town Epidamnum is a place of outrageous expenses, exceeding in all riot and lasciviousness and, I hear, as full of ribald parasites, drunkards, catchpoles, coneycatchers, and sycophants as it can hold.²³⁵

²³⁴ For these and other examples, see Dorsch's comprehensive discussion of the staging of *Errors*, 'introduction', p. 20-30.

²³⁵ *Menaechmi*, 2.1. 32-36, translated by William Warner (1595). The play is easily available as

This, however, is simply a character referring rumours he has heard; there is nothing in the *Menaechmi* comparable to the numerous constructions of 'possible worlds' that Antipholus and Dromio of Syracuse exhibit in the *Errors*. This series of constructions which continue through the play begin in 1.2. with an utterance by Antipholus of Syracuse that is similar in function to that of Messenio's above in that it refers to a rumour: '*They say* (my italics) this town is full of cozenage/As nimble jugglers that deceive the eye,/Dark-working sorcerers that change the mind' etc. Already by act 2, scene 2 this is no longer something just told by others but their own interpretation of events. The two Syracusans encounter Adriana and Luciana in the street, and the experience of being addressed as husband and servant by two completely unknown women leads Dromio to the following heartfelt *aside*:

This is the fairy land. O spite of spites,/We talk with goblins, owl, and sprites;/If we obey them not, this will ensue:/They'll suck our breath, or pinch us black and blue (180-83).

This, then, is a folkloristic version of Ephesus with some of the same apparitions that Rafe encounters in the forest by the Humber in Lyly's *Galatea*. However, when in 3.2 Antipholus of Syracuse is alone with Luciana, Dromio's negative version is softened by Antipholus' when he perceives Luciana as perhaps a god with powers of metamorphosis: 'Are you a god? Would you create me new?/Transform me then and to your powers I'll yield' (39-40). Luciana may be alluring, but Antipholus' suspicions are not laid to rest entirely. This is expressed later in the same scene when he concludes that they should leave the city: 'I will not harbor in this town tonight [...]

but lest myself be guilty to self-wrong/I'll stop my ears against the mermaid's song' (133-48). In other words, Luciana may well be the one who by her beauty exposes the Syracusans to the dangers of Ephesus. Antipholus and Dromio's negative interpretations of Ephesus culminate in 4.3. when even positive experiences are seen as evidence that the inhabitants are 'Lapland sorcerers' (11). Later in the same scene Antipholus believes that the courtesan, who comes for the gold chain she has been promised by the other Antipholus, to be none other than the devil himself (41-3).

Antipholus and Dromio are outsiders and their responses are conditioned by what they have heard about this city of Ephesus. In Lyly's Rochester, on the other hand, the main characters are essentially 'town-born children' (Risio, 4.2. 245) with a less negative, but also less dynamic conception of their own world. We may assume that when in the dialogue with Livia in 4.1.20-26 Dromio compares the value of Hackney horses and scholars in Rochester, he is referring to some kind of generally accepted view of an aspect of the culture of the town.²³⁶ The dynamism in the relationship between the inhabitants and their town, then, does not consist in a continuous series of shifting evaluations, but rather in a major change from a situation characterized by a dysfunctional social system to a system marked by, in the end, openness and trust between neighbours. In the text, the most prominent sign of the new state of affairs is the willingness of the fathers to open their houses to each other. In the first acts, as we saw above, it is evident that these characters do not consider it natural or even attractive to visit each other's houses. However, in

²³⁶ One may also wonder, of course, whether these utterances hint at an opinion held by Lyly that there was an anti-intellectual climate in the town?

the final scene all the older men open their houses to the rest of the characters for the final celebrations:

Stellio. This day we will feast at my house

Memphio. Tomorrow at mine

Prisius. The next day at mine

Sperantus. Then at mine the last day, and even so spend this week in good cheer (5.3. 428-32).

Here we see that the three men almost compete in their eagerness to be generous and receptive – a new society has been established in keeping with convention.

Chapter VII Conclusions

With the analyses of *The Comedy of Errors* and *Mother Bombie* in chapter six the investigation which began with *The Castle of Perseverance* has come to an end. One of the major dramaturgical challenges for 16th century playwrights was to develop secular fictional worlds inhabited by characters who related to the spaces and places of those worlds, and we should now on the basis of the presented analyses be able to summarize the main features of this process.

As we have seen, the development of such fictional worlds can be traced from the moral/religious space of medieval drama via early Tudor drama to the particular features of the brief but exciting period of Lyly's dramatic production between the early 1580s and the early 1590s. Although some early modern plays have many extradiological stage directions that contribute significantly to our sense of dramatic space, the central elements in drama for establishing space are paratexts like for instance the prologues and the dialogue with characters' utterances. The early interludes, as we have seen, were often characterized by 'open' dramatic worlds where dominant characters function as mediators between the world of the spectators and the world of the play. The dialogue, consequently, was often marked by an asymmetric distribution of spatialising utterances and certain characters like for instance Mery Report in Heywood's *Play of the Wether* and the messenger characters in Pikerlyng's *Horestes* were designated with a disproportionate number of such utterances. These characters are 'controllers' in the sense that they tend to influence other characters' movements, and it is clear that the dialogue we see is not

'interactive' in the sense that characters are equally active and responsive in relating to the spatial dimension of their world. The settings of the Interludes included, just like in subsequent plays, both mimetic and diegetic space, but diegetic space may in the earlier plays be less developed and marked by a more frequent use of rhetorical catalogues as a device for establishing offstage parts of the dramatic world.

The dramaturgy of space in Lyly's plays did not develop directly from the Interlude-model of dramatic space sketched above. An intermediate stage is represented by the closed dramatic worlds of plays like Thomas Preston's *Cambises* (1560s) and Richard Edwards' *Damon and Pythias* (1564?) which exhibit a textual dramaturgy where spatialising utterances are more evenly distributed and a number of characters relate to the setting in which they are placed. Of the two, there is clearly a larger number of spatialising utterances in *Damon and Pythias* and the deictic element in the dialogue is more pronounced than in *Cambises*.²³⁷ The setting that is established through deixis and other spatialising utterances is also more complex than in Preston's play. However, while characters tell us of their movements within the setting and of course often have utterances that function as intradiological stage directions, there is still a somewhat mechanical and declamatory quality to these utterances. They do not seem to be naturally integrated into the rest of the characters' discourse, and may in some instances seem superfluous. One instance is in 1.5 when Stephano in his soliloquy repeats the already known information that they have arrived in Syracuse, Sicily (35) and there is another in 1.10 where Pythias utters 'But do I see Stephano amazed hither to run?' (66) Moreover, spatialising

²³⁷ Printed 1569, but probably written and produced in the early 1560s.

utterances in *Damon and Pythias* may be somewhat lamely constructed as for instance when Damon orders Stephano to attend upon Pythias 'which for a purpose carries at home' (35). The offstage world of *Damon and Pythias* with two main loci, court and city, is more complex than that of *Cambises* where the court is the only offstage location through most of the play. Indeed, it can be argued that from the point-of-view of the text, a single location means that the coordinates needed to construct a mental image of the spatial dimensions of the setting in *Cambises* are simply not available. In *Damon and Pythias*, on the other hand, the existence of 'the court' and 'the city' as well as 'Syracuse and Greece' would seem to constitute spatial paradigms which invite to the exploration of various oppositions, but upon further analysis Edwards does not seem to really engage with these opportunities to utilize the spatial dimension of the play. Finally, it should also be noted that the settings of *The Play of the Wether*, *Cambises*, and *Damon and Pythias* are 'neutral' and not poeticized in the sense that verbal painting is not deployed either as discourse or as a dramaturgical device.

Turning to Lyly, we find also here that the number of spatializing utterances in the dialogue may be unequally divided between characters, but the dominance exhibited by characters like Alexander in *Campaspe* and *Sappho in Sappho and Phao* is not the 'controller' dominance found in the Interludes where for instance Mery Report regulates the interaction between the world of the spectator and the world of the play. The utterances of the central characters in Lyly's plays contribute significantly to the creation of the spatial dimension of the text, but here space unfolds more organically from characterisation as well as theme- and plot

development. One example is *Campaspe*, where I suggest that the spatial movements can be read as a metaphor for the boundless ambition or 'pothos' of Alexander and that the introduction of the green-world fragments in *Sappho and Phao* are linked to the development and transformation of central characters. Indeed, the gradual increase of green-world elements in Lyly's play can be linked to his concern with the exploration of characters, and female characters in particular. However, a comparative examination of the comedies *Mother Bombie* and *A Comedy of Errors* also reveals the limits to Lyly's development of characters-in-space. While we see in *The Comedy of Errors* extensive use of what Keir Elam describes as characters proposing 'in various ways possible states of affairs which do not correspond to the actual state of affairs in the world of the drama as constituted at that point', there can be found just fragmentary deployment of this in Lyly's plays.

While certain central characters are more spatially active and function as *origo* more often than others in Lyly's plays, it is also evident that less powerful characters now become part of the overall localizing strategy of the plays. Participating in various speech events they interact with the central character or with each other and may contribute significantly to the spatial dimension of the play, examples of this are for instance Trachinus and Pandion in *Sappho and Phao*. Added to this we find an increased ability to shape spatialising utterances that are more organically integrated into the speech event and to a lesser degree marked by the mechanical and declamatory quality that could be observed in *Cambises* and *Damon and Pythias*. When Trachinus says to Pandion in 3.1., 'But come, let us walk a little into the fields', this is an utterance that is perfectly natural in this context and between the two

participants in the speech event. It has the quality of being internal to the world of the play.

Deploying complex dramatic worlds with spatial paradigms containing for instance a seashore, the woods and a palatial location as in *Love's Metamorphosis* raises the issue of integration; to what degree is the dramatist able to integrate the different elements spatially in the setting? The question would seem to presuppose that 'integration' is a quality aspect of the literary dramaturgy and that 'integrated' is somehow better than 'not integrated'. One may object that spatial integration is not a necessary quality in each and every play in the sense that the emotional and intellectual impact sought after by the playwright may still be achieved. Of course, in some cases this is a valid argument; to apply 'integration' as a criterion in relation to a setting in which mythology and the classical gods mix with ordinary men is hardly fruitful because such worlds rarely exhibit systems which locate objects via fixed points and 'coordinates'. In other cases, the criterion of integration is clearly relevant. One such example is the lack of spatial integration between the plot of the Mariners and the main plot in *Galatea* where these two groups of characters wander about in the same woods in Lincolnshire but do not meet until near the end of the play. We have seen different degrees of spatial integration between main plot and sub plot characters in Lyly's other plays, and there are also differences between the plays when we consider spatial integration not between plots, but within single scenes. When discussing *Galatea*, the spatializing discourse of Tasso's *Aminta* highlights Lyly's comparatively rather limited use of deictic markers like for instance the adverbs 'here' and 'there' and the pronouns 'this' and 'that'. There are, however,

exceptions; in *Love's Metamorphosis* and *The Woman in the Moon* there are scenes within overall green world settings which display a more developed literary dramaturgy with complex spatial movements.

I began this thesis with the proposition that one needed to look beyond the rhetorical figure of the antithesis when discussing the literary and theatrical dramaturgy of space in Lyly's plays and I believe that the previous chapters have demonstrated that the variety and complexity of his dramaturgical solutions cannot easily be contained within the antithesis framework. The basic method here adopted as the main analytic tool, of listing all spatializing utterances in a play and then sorting these utterances according to certain parameters, would seem to open up alternative ways of reading characters and configurations in the plays, especially when they are linked to notions like 'spatial paradigm', 'space' and 'place'. I have also attempted to reconstruct possible staging solutions from the literary dramaturgy and would certainly suggest that a careful reading of spatialising utterances as intradiological stage directions has yielded new insight into the relationship between text and stage in Lyly's productions. One example is the question of the nature of the stage representations of royal palaces, where my readings indicate that in general it is possible to achieve distinct spatial location of 'the palace' by utilising the notion of a 'near offstage' area established by the combined effect of dialogue elements and an exit point on stage. This is the case in both *Campaspe* and *Midas*. It is nevertheless the case that although these and other new readings of the literary dramaturgy may offer attractive staging solutions, they must still be considered as tentative. The historical evidence does not really allow us to reconstruct the staging

of Lyly's plays with the same degree of confidence that sources like deWitt's drawing confer upon studies of the Elizabethan public theatre.

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