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BENSON, NANCY ANDERSON

THE POET AS 'HOMO LUDENS'

City University of New York PH.D. 1979

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1979

THE POET AS *HOMO LUDENS*

by

NANCY ANDERSON BENSON

A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty in English in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, The City University of New York.

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12 July 1979
date

John T. Shawcross
Chairman, Examining Committee

August 12, 1979
date

Allen Mandelbaum
Executive Officer

Angus Fletcher

George M. Ridenour

Supervisory Committee

The City University of New York

Abstract

THE POET AS HOMO LUDENS

by

Nancy Anderson Benson

Adviser: Professor John T. Shawcross

Poetry has frequently been regarded as a source of truth about the universe and the human condition. This study treats poetry as a form of play--pleasurable, serious and humanizing activity--engaged in by poet and reader. The approach is substantially inspired by Johan Huizinga's Homo Ludens: A Study of the Play Element in Culture.

The theoretical framework for a ludic theory of poetry rests upon several clusters of ideas. One such cluster stresses the "playground": the separate world of poetry involving limitations of time and space. The characteristic functions of poetry coinciding with those of play include representation, symbolization, ritualization and transformation by such means as trope, metaphor, rhythm and patterned sound.

A related group of ideas linking poetry and play recognizes the dialectic of certain chosen stringenies, the "rules of the game," and the freedom to improvise within

these limits. The poet chooses a genre because of the peculiar opportunities to "score" (in Robert Frost's term) provided by that particular tradition. He engages in deliberate competition with both his peers and the great practitioners of the past. In the omnipresent sense of an audience, with whom he plays by manipulating expectation and surprise, the poet as performer exploits the gamelike nature of language itself. Thus homo ludens is essentially homo rhetoricus.

Furthermore, the treatment of poetry as play looks to psychological theory in the recognition of poiesis as a predominantly stimulus-seeking activity, the self-actualizing triumph of imagination over necessity, of Eros over Thanatos. Hence the perennial poetic concerns with sex and death, and the poet's patent efforts to achieve timelessness and permanence through his ludic pursuits.

Such principles are applied first to the Elizabethan sonnet as a game inextricably related to the parallel game of courtly love. The exemplar is Samuel Daniel's Delia, which is shown to function allegorically in its dramatized devotion to a poetic vocation. For the sonneteer's elaborate compliments seem to veil a metalinguistic game: the celebration of poetry itself and, more particularly, of the poet's own powers. In the 1590s especially, the sonnet was a coterie game played as much for the attention of other players and a gallery of spectators as for the "Lady" herself.

In the Cavalier love lyric, represented here by Thomas Carew, the undisguised fun of the exercise in wit and the mockery of Petrarchism reflects the growing complexities of sexual relations in a skeptical, scientific age. The consummate skills of Carew, learned from tutelage under Jonson and Donne, are visible in intricately wrought short poems and his lengthy erotic masterpiece, "A Rapture," a compendium of metrical, linguistic, allusive and imaginative games.

The preeminently public genre of satiric verse, which reaches a culmination in Byron's Don Juan, is especially illustrative of ludic agon. The satirical contest is with the absurdities of human behavior and the injustices of institutional practices as well as with the demands of language and the poet's craft. Byron exploits the performance principle in his narrative tones, burlesque strategies and ingenious digressiveness. Don Juan presents the world as game and "show" by a master player/impresario. And the interrelationship of narrator and hero illustrates the play/imitation theories of Jean Piaget. In Byron there is a synthesis of public and private games in which the poet can excel as homo ludens.

To

WILLIAM LEE BENSON

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION: PLAY IN HUMAN LIFE AND CULTURE

Play is in many ways an elusive and ambiguous subject, and the first problem one must confront is a semantic one. In our most common lexical definitions, play is activity natural and proper to the child and the young animal. As part of adult experience, it tends to become mere diversion and amusement, an interlude from the serious, productive pursuits of life, and the antithesis of work. It is, in fact, granted legitimacy in our culture by the labor from which it is an intermission, largely because play is deemed recreative of energy necessary for that labor. Otherwise, play is largely regarded as a nugatory and therefore inferior activity on our Western scale of values. For this reason, a treatment of poiesis as play is, in the words of Philip E. Lewis, "deliberately to risk overthrowing traditional ideas of literature, its components and functions, to risk doing violence to its esthetic sanctity."[1]

In my study of poetry as a form of play, I take this risk not lightly but with substantial justification. Furthermore, I take it in the spirit of play itself as rightly understood, a spirit which cherishes elegance and precision in the enactment of human values. The affinity of poetry and play needs to be explored with sensitivity and comprehensiveness. For the more penetrating views of human play indicate that such assumptions and judgments as those outlined in the preceding paragraph are inadequate to the under-

standing of essential man and his accomplishments. Philosophers have in fact frequently articulated a transvaluation of accepted values in regard to play, redeeming it from the realms of the frivolous, the puerile, and the irresponsible. So Nietzsche speaks in his Ecce Homo: "I know of no other way of coping with great tasks than play."[2] Plato's provocative words in the Laws are often cited by apologists for play:

> God alone is worthy of supreme seriousness, but man is made God's plaything, and that is the best part of him. Therefore every man and woman should live life accordingly, and play the noblest games, and be of another mind from what they are at present . . . Hence all must live in peace as well as they possibly can. What, then, is the right way of living? Life must be lived as play, playing certain games, making sacrifices, singing and dancing, and then a man will be able to propitiate the gods, and defend himself against his enemies, and win in the contest.[3]

In a similar vein, Hegel perceived that play, "because of its disinterested and superlatively lighthearted nature, is the most sublime and only true form of seriousness."[4] An even more suggestive treatment of play for contemporary theorists has been Friedrich Schiller's Letters on the Aesthetic Education of Man, which contains the famous statement: "Man plays only when he is in the full sense of the word a man, and he is only wholly man when he is playing."[5] Schiller makes play the basis of his aesthetics, opening up implications which have never been fully developed. It is my hope to make a contribution toward that end.

For the most encompassing and influential study of the subject one turns to Johann Huizinga, whose Homo Ludens: A Study of the Play Element in Culture, first published in Leyden in 1938, brilliantly argues the most extensive claims for play. Under Huizinga's discerning eye, play is far more than "a mere physiological phenomenon or psychological reflex." Play comes about "when an influx of mind breaks down the absolute determinism of the universe." More explicitly, it is Huizinga's central thesis that play is the very fountainhead of culture. He envisions civilization arising out of play, which is older than culture ("animals have not waited for man to teach them their playing"), and proceeding in the shape and mood of play. Through this "significant function . . . there is something 'at play' which transcends the immediate needs of life and imparts meaning to the action."[6]

Huizinga's analysis of the meaning of play and its contribution to cultural forms in general is indispensable to my pursuit of a ludic theory of poetry and warrants close attention here. We can begin with the fact that play is at the very heart of the archetypal activities of language and myth. "In the making of speech and language the spirit is continually 'sparking' between matter and mind, as it were, playing with this wondrous nominative faculty. Behind every abstract expression there lie the boldest of metaphors, and every metaphor is a play upon words. Thus in giving expression to life man creates a second, poetic world alongside the world

of nature." For fundamentally social purposes as well, play is based "on the manipulation of certain images, on a certain 'imagination' of reality." Myth is a more elaborate transformation or "imagination" of the universe, in which primitive man seeks to understand the phenomenal world by grounding it in the sacred. In mythopoesis one sees the innate tendency of the mind toward personification, a "play function" which bestows personality upon objects and forces of life and nature. "In all the wild imaginings of mythology a fanciful spirit is playing on the border-line between jest and earnest."[7]

In like spirit, Huizinga interprets the sacred rites and mysteries with which poetry is so closely allied, as performances "in a spirit of pure play truly understood." The formal properties of ritual link it inextricably to play: movement, rhythm, tension, solemnity, resolution, rapture. In both ritual and play, participants are transported as it were to another world: both demand a spatial and temporal separation from ordinary life, a closed space delineated either physically or ideally.

> Formally speaking, there is no distinction whatever between marking out a space for a sacred purpose and marking it out for purposes of sheer play. The turf, the tennis court, the chess-board and pavement-hop-scotch cannot formally be distinguished from the temple or the magic circle.[8]

Huizinga is not always consistent in his attitude toward the traditionally accepted dichotomy of play and the serious. On the one hand, he states that the boundaries between the

two realms are much more fluid than is generally believed, and that "genuine and spontaneous play can also be profoundly serious. The player can abandon himself body and soul to the game." On the other hand, Huizinga frequently finds it useful to assume a distinction. "In play we may move below the level of the serious, as the child does; but we can also move above it--in the realm of the beautiful and the sacred." But there is no alienation between play and the sublime for Huizinga, since he maintains that the "play-character . . . may attach to the sublimest form of action." The play-character of ritual is seen in its shows, representations, dramatic performances, and imaginative actualizations of the nature of reality as man has had them "imprinted on his consciousness."[9]

The chief significance of ritual for Huizinga is that it is socially constructive. It is the source of all social institutions in that through its play, society acquires not only its sense of equity and economy, but also its fundamental patterns of government. Rooted in this "primaeval soil" are the great forms of "law and order, commerce and profit, craft and art, poetry, wisdom and science."[10]

It soon becomes apparent that for Huizinga the essence of play is order. "Into an imperfect world and into the confusion of life, it brings a temporary, a limited perfection. Play demands order absolute and serene."[11] Already noted is its need to carve out its own sheltered space, the playground

or hallowed spot. Within this isolated area, special and precise (even arbitrary) rules obtain, which are both absolutely binding and freely accepted. This is the paradoxical nature of play linking it so closely to poetry: that it is both free and bound to laws.

The freedom essential to play stems partly from its voluntary nature (play "to order" is no longer play), partly from its liberation from the pressures and constraints of everyday life, and partly from its "disinterestedness" and "superfluity." A source of pleasure, it becomes a need only to the extent that the enjoyment of it makes it so. A gratuitous activity, it resists any attempt to reduce it to other terms. Like festival, to whose sphere it belongs, play "lies outside the antithesis of wisdom and folly, and equally outside those of truth and falsehood, good and evil." It has neither moral function nor material motives. Realizing the apparent contradictions inherent in his assertions about play, Huizinga poses and answers (at least partially) a pertinent question. "Now, does the fact that it actually becomes culture, detract from its disinterested character?" His answer assumes a rather specialized definition of "disinterested": "No, for the purposes it serves are external to immediate material interests or the individual satisfaction of biological needs."[12]

The interplay of freedom and order is also connected with the ludic principle of repetition, so integral to ritual, play and poetry. Out of play's "movement, change, alternation, succession, association, separation . . . it assumes

fixed form as a cultural phenomenon. Once played, it endures as a new-found creation of the mind, a treasure to be retained by the memory. It is transmitted, it becomes tradition." Now it can be repeated whenever it is deemed desirable, either sporadically, or at fixed occasions, intervals or seasons. Around the ritual spring up "play-communities," which nurture and reinforce the feeling of being "apart together," surrounding themselves with the air of secrecy, the charm of play. In the disguises and masks, the "dressing-up" of their ceremonies, the extraordinary nature of play reaches an acme of expression.[13]

Thus far we have seen most prominently one of the two basic aspects of play with which Huizinga deals--"the representation of something." The other aspect--"a contest for something"--can merge with it to become "a contest for the best representation of something." Huizinga emphasizes the underlying identity of play and contest, beginning with the agon in Greek life. Indeed, as might be expected, he shows play becoming more fervent as the antithetical factor increases. Tension builds with the uncertainty, the chanciness, the risk of "something at stake," whether in individual competition or in the play of groups.[14] Within the rules of "fair play," dangerous aggressive tendencies may be tamed and channeled, but Huizinga does not here invoke psychoanalytic theories such as sublimation.[15] Nor does he give the desire for power or the will to dominate foremost place

in the competitive "instinct." The primary motivation is found instead in the drive to excel, to prove oneself superior in a given area, which is the real meaning of "winning." Such superiority demonstrated in the game provides possibilities for transcendence so that something more than the game as such is at stake. The champion has won esteem, obtained honour, and this honour and esteem at once accrue also to the benefit of the group to which the victor belongs. But what about the destructive potentialities within the agon? Can play be deadly and yet remain play? In asserting the affirmative, Huizinga cites an Old Testament reference in which Abner says to Joab in regard to an impending battle, "Let the young men now arise and play before us."[16] Other literary treatments of deadly playing would include Beowulf, Gawain and Hamlet.

Huizinga acknowledges his considerable debt to anthropological studies of the fundamental antithetical and agonistic structure of archaic communities in the phratriai or moieties, the opposing halves who are distinguished by their respective totems and separated by strict exogamy. This dualistic structure is not merely social but conceptual and imaginative as well, encompassing the entire mental universe of archaic man.[17] The "binary oppositions" of Claude Lêvi-Straus and the Structuralists are, moreover, not only descriptive of a primitive past but also our own conceptual legacy from that past, as our computer technology attests.

Huizinga suggests that the moieties came into existence for the very purposes of ritual contest and games. The sacred feasts and staged contests dramatizing the triumph of good over evil, life over death, also included competitions in esoteric knowledge, for knowledge means magical power.[18] Since "the spoken word has a direct influence on the world-order," Huizinga sees the solving of the riddle as originally a sacred game, and finds in these riddle contests origins of both poetry and philosophy. Both are dominated by a meticulous code of rules allowing for almost infinite variation and both depend upon a circle of initiates who understand the arcane language employed. The agonistic or polemical nature of knowledge is particularly strong in Greek culture, where the game of wits becomes sophistry. Present in the rhetor and sophist are "the two main factors of social play in archaic society: glorious exhibitionism and agonistic aspiration." Huizinga describes the sophist's performance--called epideixis--at which the spectators "applauded and laughed at every well-turned crack."[19]

Among useful discussions of drama, music, dance and the plastic arts, a succinct but fertile chapter of Homo Ludens persuasively argues the ludic foundations of poetry: "All poetry is born of play, the sacred play of worship, the festive play of courtship, the martial play of the contest, the disputatious play of braggadoccio, mockery and invective, the nimble play of wit and readiness." The characteristics of poetic creation are easily identified with those of play:

> It is an activity which proceeds within certain limits of time and space, in a visible order, according to rules freely accepted, and outside the sphere of necessity or material utility. The play-mood is one of rapture and enthusiasm, and is sacred or festive in accordance with the occasion . . . The rhythmical or symmetrical arrangement of language, the hitting of the mark by rhyme or assonance, the deliberate disguising of the sense, the artificial and artful construction of phrases--all might be so many utterances of the play spirit. To call poetry, as Paul Valéry has done, a playing with words and language is no metaphor: it is the precise and literal truth.

Of all the cultural forms with which Huizinga deals, only poiesis is found to maintain an essential play character. Whereas the

> more highly organized forms of society, religion, science, law, war and politics gradually lose touch with play, so prominent in the earlier phases, the function of the poet still remains fixed in the play-sphere where it was born. Poiesis is, in fact, a play-function.[20]

One can hardly overestimate the value of Huizinga's work, which contributes such a substantial nucleus of ideas to a poetics based upon play. This is especially true when one supplements the insights of Homo Ludens, in its central concern with the origins of culture, with Huizinga's fruitful study of late medieval and early Renaissance play-forms in The Waning of the Middle Ages.[21] But for all its expansive network of useful ideas, Huizinga's anatomy of the patterns of cultural interplay mimimizes such factors as vital impulse, surprise, improvisation and suspense. What tends to get lost

is the playfulness of play, by which one means not just lightness and mirth, but what Erik Erikson has identified as "at its best suggesting some virgin chance conquered, some divine leeway shared."[22]

The theologican Hugo Rahner cites play as the province of the divine because it is creativity in its most essential form, the imposition of form on chaos not out of necessity but in an act of inventive freedom. Rahner shows how God's creative acts in the early chapters of Genesis are often described by the Church Fathers in the language of play.[23] The Hindu gods are even more explicitly playful, and out of their play also, the world comes into being.[24]

The equation of play with creativity is essential also to some psychological theories of play. In his fascinating study, Playing and Reality, D. W. Winnicott says that "in playing, and perhaps only in playing, the child or adult is free to be creative." Winnicott presents ontogenetically the premise that Huizinga develops phylogenetically: "Cultural experience begins with creative living first manifested in play."[25] (More discussion of psychological theories of play will follow.[26])

Supplementary to Huizinga as an analyst of the meaning of play for my purposes is Roger Caillois, whose Man, Play and Games [Les jeux et les hommes] not only offers a "sociology of games" but also attempts to provide a basis for a "sociology derived from games."[27] As an interpreter of games, which are in this sense structured activities

engaged in primarily for amusement and stimulation, Caillois' universe of discourse is far more circumscribed than Huizinga's, although Caillois insists upon including activities Huizinga excludes, namely, gambling and lotteries entered in the hope of realizing material gain. Another major difference between the two approaches to play is that Caillois is only minimally concerned in this work with making correlations with other cultural forms, such as the arts. I have found, however, that much of Caillois' work is very suggestive and valuable conceptually for an investigation of the play and game elements in poetry.

In Caillois' exposition, play has the formal qualities of being "free, separate, uncertain, and unproductive, yet regulated and make-believe."[28] Much of this definition directly follows Huizinga, whose work Caillois praises, with some reservations, in a rather careful delineation of the area of inquiry in Homo Ludens: "the creative quality of the play-principle in the domain of culture, and more precisely, of the spirit that rules certain kinds of games--those which are competitive." In contrast to Huizinga, Caillois recognizes that the element of risk necessary to the play spirit is not necessarily dependent upon competition. In the exercise of his skill, the player seeks a degree of doubt and uncertainty such that winning the game itself, overcoming the barriers that make winning difficult, can be pleasing. For an outcome known in advance is incompatible with play, and if the game should be won effortlessly and

unerringly, the player would lose interest. Caillois thus deals perceptively with the aspects of play that not only increase self-esteem but also excite pleasure and delight. Chief in this regard is the exercise of free movement within prescribed limits, the personal style of the performer which is given latitude by the rigidities of the rules. Caillois explains this seemingly paradoxical nature of play as deriving from a continuum stretching between two poles he designates as paidia and ludus. The one extreme is given to "turbulence" and "uncontrolled fantasy" tending to the "anarchic and capricious." The opposite tendency is to bind this "frolicsome and impulsive exuberance" with "arbitrary, imperative, and purposefully tedious conventions, to oppose it still more by ceaselessly practicing the most embarrassing chicanery upon it" as though to make the desired effect uncertain. "This latter principle is completely impractical, even though it requires an ever greater amount of effort, patience, skill or ingenuity."[29] This interaction of paidia and ludus sounds something like a Blakean marriage of Heaven and Hell, a program for devising circumferences for energy. It is, in fact, the program of poetry.

Other analogues (or sources) for Caillois' polarities come readily to mind. Schiller's analysis of the play impulse in his Letters on the Aesthetic Education of Man posits man's desire for the harmony of the "sensuous" and the "formal" instincts: "the union of reality with form, of contengency with necessity, of passivity with freedom, that

fulfills the conception of humanity."[30] Robert E. Neale felicitously translates Schiller's dual instincts as "the discharge of energy" and "the design of experience" in his engaging work, In Praise of Play, Toward a Psychology of Religion.[31] It is easy to see this pair of opposites as also educed from Freud's primary and secondary processes and Nietzsche's Dionysian/Apollonian schema. Since all of these dialectical principles provide an understanding of play as a kinetic process bound by the voluntary submission to a discipline, the application to poetry is irresistible. For poetry embraces fixed codes, self-imposed restrictions, conventions, traditional stances, and linguistic and prosodic structures as well as "invention," improvisation, collisions of planes of signification, combinatory play of diverse semantic and phonetic elements, exploitation of ambiguities, and various modes of displacement such as reordering, exaggeration, and fragmentation. As Coleridge and others have stated, poetry manipulates repetition and novelty, expectation and surprise.

Another signal contribution to play theory is Caillois' classification of games into four fundamental categories, each representing the dominance of competition, chance, simulation or vertigo. He denotes these categories, which cut across the paidia/ludus spectrum, as agôn, alea, mimicry and ilinx, respectively. Agôn is the principle of rivalry and combat emphasized by Huizinga, in which, according to

Caillois, "equality of chances is artificially created, in order that the adversaries should confront each other under ideal conditions, susceptible of giving precise and incontestable value to the winner's triumph." In contrast to such "games of merit" are games of chance, which Caillois subsumes under the heading of alea. Here the player is essentially subject to the "cast of the die" and passively awaits his fate. In mimicry, one becomes an illusory character, acting "as if" one were someone (or something) else. Disguise and mask may be employed, not so much to deceive but, as in carnival masquerade, to inspire ludic awe and exploit the license made available to the participant. Unlike those games bound to precise rules, mimicry is "incessant invention" in the suspension of reality, but it too receives justification from the strictures of convention and the delimitation of space and time. Ilinx is the term Caillois chooses for the type of play closest to the paidia pole and providing a minimum of order and control in the pursuit of vertigo for its own sake. It is "an attempt to momentarily destroy the stability of perception and inflict a kind of voluptuous panic upon an otherwise lucid mind." The aim is to destroy reality by the surrender to "a kind of spasm, seizure or shock."[32]

What especially interests me about Caillois' examination of these four play-attitudes is their relevance to the dynamics of poetry. The essence of play as contest finds expression partly in the poet's agôn with language and the

demands of his craft. Archibald MacLeish has described the poet's "struggle with the meaninglessness and silence of the world until he can force it to mean," an image reminiscent of Herman Melville's figure of Jacob as poet, wrestling with "the angel-art."[33] Agôn is present as well in the poet's sense of engaging in competition with those he considers masters (great poets of the past) and/or challengers (his own contemporaries). This principle seems intrinsic to the concept of genre; witness Milton's use of the pastoral elegy in "Lycidas" as but one example. In poetic play, there tends to be "something at stake" and the sense of an audience; both factors provide the experience of chance, risk, adventure, the testing of one's powers, the exhibition of one's skill, and the search for higher levels of performance.

Somewhat analogous to the tense passivity that awaits the fateful outcome of games based upon alea is the poet's creative receptivity, the sense of being the vehicle for that which is emerging from "Eternity," in Blake's term, or the poet's own preconscious depths. The poetic testimonies of Milton, Wordsworth and Yeats in regard to inspiration come most readily to mind. With the Surrealists, there is a maximum dependence upon the aleatory and an explicit glorification of it. I would also include under alea the apparently more active mode of improvisatory composition such as that employed by the minstrels and troubadours of the Middle Ages. Here there is the retention of sovereignty over the material rather than abdication of sovereignty.

Though perhaps to a lesser extent than agon and alea, the other ludic categories of Caillois are also serviceable. The poetic equivalent of ilinx would seem to be the Platonic "creative madness," the "divine" possession of enthousiasmos, which the Romantics trace to an inner rather than to an outer source. Poetry also offers generous opportunities for mimicry in the manifold masks, guises and disguises which the various poetic conventions provide. All of these ways of playing charted by Caillois will figure in the studies of specific poetic traditions in the chapters to follow.

In addition, there are ludic manifestations to explore which are outside the purview of Caillois. For although he treats games and gaming in a modern sense, his typology excludes other kinds of play and sport designated by the Middle English gomen.[34] Associations with amorous dalliance, intrigue, the chase and the quarry are essential elements in two of the poetic genres which I will scrutinize, the Elizabethan sonnet and the Cavalier love lyric.

The conceptual framework contributed by Huizinga and Caillois finds strong pillars of support in basic theories of human motivation and behavior. In the history of ideas about play upon which I shall draw in later chapters, the work of major anthropologists, psychologists and psychoanalysts will be indispensable. Only a skeleton outline can be suggested here of the large body of theoretical and experimental research in the intrapsychic and interpersonal dynamics of play, but the extent to which an understanding

of poetry is enhanced by such discoveries is an underlying assumption of my study. The pioneer work in this field was done at the turn of the century by the anthropologist Karl Groos in The Play of Man [Das Spiele der Menschen]. Groos deemed play of prime importance to man's mental makeup, in which he included the powers of memory, imagination, attention and reason, since play "acts in all directions, sharpening the intellect, exercising the will, and furnishing occasions for the discharge of emotion." Thus Groos led the way for the cognitive research in play by Jean Piaget and the study of the role of play in psychosocial development contributed by Erik Erikson. Groos stressed the importance of rhythm in inducing a state which makes us "approachable" and open to suggestion, and of the playful experimentation with vocal sounds in the mastery of speech.[35]

Mastery is in fact the key concept in the theory advanced by Groos, as the "pleasure of conquering logical difficulties," and the feeling of power, the "joy-bringing sense of being a cause" with its resulting feeling of freedom, are cited as the chief affects of play. Groos, however, insists upon the autonomy of play as activity enjoyed for its own sake since "all the objects of play lie within its own bounds." Groos also anticipates later interpreters of play by seeing that "rivalry taken in connection with the imitative [is] one of the mainsprings of the advance of culture, and the oppositional force connected with the

fighting instinct . . . is also necessary for the mental development of mankind." With similar perspicacity (and recourse to Schiller?), Groos characterizes play as the principal source of art. "Delight in sensuous pleasure and in regularity, the charm of rhythm, enjoyment of imitation and of illusion, the demand for intense stimuli, the attraction of attempting what is difficult--all these elements connect the spheres of play and art." The specific use of repetition in poetry is found to be particularly ingenious: "the device of bringing the repetition so close on its own heels that the first impression still dwells in the mind when the second demands attention."[36]

Of particular pertinence to my choice of poetic genres to be studied in terms of play and game, Groos makes interesting observations about courtship play, the concomitant pleasure of self-exhibition, and the intrinsically pleasurable play with sexual emotions; nor does he fail to make reference to what he calls "love-play," or sexual foreplay.[37] Here of course are basic themes which are developed in the epoch-making work of Sigmund Freud and his followers.

Freud in fact draws upon Groos for his analysis of Jokes and the Unconscious, a work to which I will refer in several chapters, and extensively in Chapter Seven. In this treatise, Freud suggests that art must essentially be a play activity since it represents a return to the unrepressed impulses of childhood and the pleasure principle. Most psychoanalytic examinations of play assume the basic Freudian

struggle of Id and Ego, where the latter gains strength and ascendancy through ingenious compromises with the former such that instinctual gratification can take a form acceptable to the demands of society. Thus, Ernst Kris speaks of forms of adult play as "regression in service to the ego" and the taking of a "holiday from the Super-Ego."[38] In his volume on The Creative Unconscious, Hans Sachs describes a balancing of the claims of pleasure and inhibition by play's insistence upon unreality. In a definition particularly applicable to theater, play is deemed to embrace "actions bound to forms and surrounding circumstances of such a nature that they can never be mistaken for the real thing, neither by the performer, nor by the audience."[39] It is probably as fundamental a definition as can be generally agreed upon.

In an influential article on "The Relation of the Poet to Day-Dreaming," Freud also shows that the poet, like the child in the play of fantasy, creates his own world characterized not by a lack of seriousness, but by a lack of correspondence to a reality shared by others. Whereas the child hides his pleasurable fantasy form others, the poet displays his fantasies for others' pleasure, breaking down his readers' resistance to the "egotistical character" of the day-dream by displacement and the aesthetics of form.[40]

One of Freud's most brilliant and rebellious disciples, Otto Rank, finds a different motivation in art as he develops an approach closer to Freud's later emphasis on the

opposition of Eros, or the "life instinct," to Thanatos, the "death instinct." I find Rank's theory more persuasive in application to major poetry than the "daydreaming" correlation. In his Art and Artist, Rank identifies the creative urge with the drive toward "eternalization of personality." In a fascinating section on "Game and Destiny," Rank traces the origin of games, as does Huizinga, to cultic festivals which featured mythic representations of the victory of the deity over the powers of darkness and death. Thus, competition for a prize is a late development of a far more hazardous enterprise. "For the original victor in the competition was not content with honor alone; what he won was life, which the defeated rival usually forfeited . . . The game is originally neither a pastime nor a means of enrichment, but a matter of destiny, and that is why it is deeply rooted in cosmological and astral symbols, so that comparatively recent inventions like card-games are entangled with them." Ball games (originally symbolizing the course of sun and moon), labyrinthine board games such as chess, guessing games, and games which turn on one's timely arrival at a definite spot are, similarly, modern enactments of the primitive impulses to gamble with fate or to control the world by imitative magic.[41]

The poet has participated in such impulses through the magic power of the word, and like the actors in the sacred dramas, seems to liberate creative energy through his achieved sense of superiority over the formidable forces

of compulsion and death. A crude example of the use of rhythm and rhyme to enact a kind of mastery over life-threatening situations is the reference in the child's game of "Ring a ring o'roses" to the symptoms and effects of cholera, the Black Death of the Middle Ages.[42] Many poetic genres and conventions have a close connection with the consciousness of death: epic, elegy, tragedy, "eternizing sonnet," the medieval debat, carpe diem, memento mori, the figure of Fortuna and her wheel, the chess game with death, etc. In the terms of the acclaimed contemporary anthropologist Ernest Becker, all cultural fabrications are in some basic way "denials of death": like play, they provide the means of sovereignty over a natural reality of danger and vulnerability.[43]

From Groos through Freud and his followers to the developmental and epistemological psychologists of the present day, the concept of play as a basic means of negotiating between inner and outer world, and the first and paradigmatic achievement of mastery over a potentially overwhelming universe has been paramount. The work of Jean Piaget, Erik Erikson and D. W. Winnicott (among others) traces the child's journey from pure subjectivity to objectivity, the development of cognition itself, and the initiation and growth of the socialization process, to activity involving illusion and play. Winnicott defines the essential playground as an "intermediate area" which is neither inner psychic reality nor the external world,

but is originally located in the "potential space between mother and child" (assuming that there is "good-enough mothering"). It is an illusory space achieved through the "transitional object," the first soft toy or "'not-me' possession," related to but distinct from the "introjected mother's breast." This intermediate area, explains Winnicott, "throughout life is retained in the intense experiencing that belongs to the arts and religion and to imaginative living, and to creative and scientific work."[44]

In his comprehensive work, La formation du symbole chez l'enfant, translated as Play, Dream and Imitation in Childhood, Piaget charts the origin and growth of symbolic usage and its relation to conceptual thought. He finds play and imitation, from the dual processes of "assimilation" and "accommodation," to be integral to the development of intelligence. The infant's repetition of sounds and movements for their own sake is the forerunner of the playful use of repetition to "consolidate" an achievement, to fit it into an expanding repertory of activities. Piaget delineates stages of play in infancy and childhood: sensory-motor play, from the earliest weeks of life; to symbolic or make-believe play, during the ages two to seven; to the playing of games with rules (ages eight to eleven and beyond) that discipline and legitimize the potentially disruptive pleasures of play and move closer to an adaptation to reality. During this latter stage, overt actions are increasingly replaced by covert ones, internal "thinkings about," the rudiments of logic.[45]

If we turn now to the very highest levels of intellectual and imaginative achievement (and the testimony of Einstein, as we shall see, is that they may be virtually identical) we find that the scientist or artist often speaks of "playing around" with a problem. What seems to be indicated here is a kind of creative apperception resembling the child's more evenly distributed (or nonschematized) attention to phenomena, a non-filtering of the "irrelevant," a loosening of the conceptual nets, or the destruction of categorizing "pigeonholes," so that new "chance" combinations of ideas can form. Einstein spoke of "combinatory play" as the essential feature of his most productive thought. Before the "logical construction of these new ideas in words," Einstein experienced the original elements of thought as "visual" and "muscular."[46] Similarly, Henri Poincaré described his visionary experience of mathematical discovery as "the dance of the atoms," in which new creative linkages between entities were made (following intensive conscious work) in a period of relaxed attention.[47] The process is basically metaphoric; the "play-space" of Einstein and Poincaré seems shared with the poets.

These ludic activities appear to fall within the play-sphere "discovered" by the neo-Freudians: the conflict-free sphere of the ego that likes tension, creates adventure, and seeks optimal arousal. For correlative to the emphasis upon play and game as order inducing phenomena (the ludus pole of Caillois), one must not ignore the disorder (paidia)

which the protected and protective playground allows. Morse Peckham has asserted the values of play and art as causing disorientations of perceptual fields through violations of expected patterns, so that new restructurings can occur. Peckham's definition of the games artists play stresses the discontinuities as well as the regularities which occasion the "roles" of poet and reader. "The essence of a game . . . lies in the reinforcement of the ability to face risks, to behave according to rules in unpredicted but familiar situations, and to handle unpredicted, unfamiliar and novel situations by deducing new rules from existing rules." The question to which Peckham addresses himself and provides an affirmative answer is provocative. "Did man create art in order to satisfy a psysiologic need for a more stimulating environment than the order-directed social environment offers?"[48] Byron's lines from Childe Harold seem applicable here:

> 'Tis to create, and in creating live
> A being more intense that we endow
> With form our fancy . . .

The gamelike patterns of social interaction have been the focus of the most creative sociologists and social psychologists. George Herbert Mead introduced the idea of "role-theory" in a brief section of Mind, Self and Society as far back as 1934, showing how children develop a concept of self as over against a "generalized other."[49] And it has been Erving Goffman's conspicuous contribution to analyze social situations in considerable depth as sequences

of contingent moves and dramaturgical mystifications.[50] Goffman's employment of such terms as "staging," "routine," "feinting," "covering moves," "counter-uncovering" and the like can also be suggestive of the poet's technique and relation to his audience, thereby making a useful contribution to the perception of poetry as performance--one of the major thrusts of my study.

Beyond the behavioral sciences, still other fields offer resources for fruitful thinking on my subject. Substantially inspired by Ludwig Wittgenstein, the development of mathematical game theory has become a highly significant analytic tool in various disciplines such as economics and political science.[51] It seems not unreasonable that a similar approach be applied to problems of aesthetics and literary criticism. For the premises are eminently congenial: the game is a model of reality, an abstraction, a particular way of looking at something. Players must act or make certain decisions which lead through a series of exclusions as well as options. As a result of these choices, plus purely fortuitous elements as well, there is a certain outcome, a reward or punishment for the players. The games-analyst is concerned with procedures for gaining an end and therefore with formal structures and abstract patterns such as rules, strategies, moves, etc. But he is no less interested in affective, volitional and conceptual components: objectives, motivations of the participants, the spirit

in which the game is undertaken, notions on the part of players of winning and losing, and factors which maximize and minimize success.[52] A number of these factors have already been alluded to.

For one must inevitably employ such a method, it seems to me, in the differentiation and description of poetic genres. Perhaps those purists who are offended by critical recourse to intention may be at least partially placated by such a theory insisting on the essentiality of deliberate design and the primacy of structure, limits within time and space, and "disinterestedness." We recall that play has been called "superfluous," a "stepping out of 'real' life into a sphere of activity with a disposition all its own," uninvolved with the immediate satisfaction of wants, appetites and material interests.[53] For although play can coexist with other modes of being, according to Eugen Fink, a contemporary European philosopher, the motivation of play does not coincide with that of other human activity. "But the immanent purpose of play is not subordinate to the ultimate purpose served by all other human activity. Play has only internal purpose, unrelated to anything external to itself."[54] One can substitute "poetry" for "play" in Fink's statements with no loss of integrity to either term.

We have already diverged from game-theory and not long after invoking it. It is what Goffman calls a "scaffold," the purpose of which is to be taken down.[55] As useful as

strategic game-theory and role-theory have proved to be in certain ways, they can also blur distinctions between play and reality. In addition, there are usages of ludic terminology which violate the spirit of play as it has been here defined. In this study, the term "game" has indicated freely given obedience to chosen strictures known to be arbitrary and agreed upon. It has included the understanding that things within the play area mean what we order them to mean and no more than that. Essential too is the freedom to enter and leave at certain points in time and space. Play-worlds are worlds set apart and insulated from real life so that they can serve as model-realities.

When, however, Eric Berne describes obsessive-compulsive behavior, distortive of genuine relationships and based upon motives of which neither of the "players" in a "transaction" is conscious, and calls these stereotyped responses "games people play," he is clearly talking about turf which is not playground at all in the sense that Huizinga, Caillois and Fink use it. By "game" Berne signifies that which is sham, a substitute for real intimacy.[56] Berne's purview seems clearly outside even Stephen Potter's "lifemanship," the derivative of "gamesmanship" (also Potter's), in which the "one-upman" is adroit and inventive and knows exactly what he is doing.[57] Such rigid and conflict-ridden patterns as Berne describes are perhaps best characterized as "pseudo-games." They

are pertinent to my study only in the sense that they can provide a subject for poetry, usually in a satiric function, as in Byron's Don Juan.

With the proliferation of "game" theories, the popularity of game as metaphor for all sorts of "real-life" strategems has become so widespread that it is virtually a cliché. Kostas Axelos says that game is today's "master-word," "password," and "watchword."[58] David L. Miller has recently identified the prevailing activity in academia as the "game-game": the "analysis of analyses of serious and play activity."[59] Now it is quite possible that creative criticism can be a legitimate form of play! But as a defense of the purity of true play as against its perversions in various forms of neurotic and destructive behavior, one can recommend the axiom from a recent "little" magazine: "All games are played, but not all games are play."[60]

Much of the fascination of play stems from its essential ambiguity and paradox, an essence which makes it so applicable to poetry. Eugen Fink has explored the ways in which play, despite its vaunted autonomy, can absorb non-play by representing it. "We play at being serious, we play with truth, we play reality, we play work and struggle, we play love and death--and we even play play itself . . . all play magically produces a play world . . . an enigmatic realm that is not nothing, and yet is nothing real." This is the world of poetry, a world possessing its own space

and time while sharing the same spectrum of experience lived in the real world.

> But the space of the play world never merges into the continuum of space that we inhabit in real life. The same is true of time. The play world is not suspended in a purely ideal world . . . [Only in limited instances is poetry daydream, yet] it is never a real thing among other real things, although it has an absolute need of real things as a point of departure.[61]

Poetry orchestrates reality. And poetry perceived as play means, among other things, that it is an end in itself, an adventure, a means of grace and transcendence. In introductory paragraphs to his Defence of Poetry, Shelley presents the child at play with nature, in a creative interaction producing self-delighting sound and motion, as the paradigmatic poet.[62] The implications of this and other evidences of the poet as homo ludens offer themselves for fruitful investigation. Perhaps they can lead toward a poetics based upon play.

CHAPTER I

NOTES AND REFERENCES

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[10]Ibid., p. 5.

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[59]Miller, p. 16.

[60]Back Roads: A Magazine of the Written and Graphic Arts, No. 8 (Fall-Winter, 1976-77), p. 1.

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CHAPTER II

POETRY AS PLAY: AN OVERVIEW IN BRIEF

Many of the most provocative contributions to a theory of poetry as play have come from scholars of Medieval and Renaissance literature. One recalls that the foundations for Huizinga's arguments in Homo Ludens were laid in his study on The Waning of the Middle Ages, where rhetoricians and humanists are compared to the troubadours of yore in their cultivation of literature "in the form of an all round game."[1] Similarly, Ernst R. Curtius introduces his comprehensive treatment of European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages by positing the fabulatory function which frees itself from impulses necessary to life, and finally from the world of religion, to become "free play."[2]

Among the most pleasing and influential products of this fabulatory function are a rich cluster of ideal landscapes, expressed temporally and/or spatially in the myth of the Golden Age, the Edenic and Paradisal visions, the dream of Elysium ("Elizium" in honor of the Virgin Queen), the "green world," Arcadia, the forest of Arden, and the like. All of these loci amoeni are playgrounds, exercises in wish-fulfillment that are lushly and "innocently" erotic, offering an eternal present of unrepressed pleasures. The poetry of love is inextricably linked to these imagined realms.

Other suggestive discussions of poetry in Curtius include a fertile chapter on mannerism as the preference for the

"artificial" and "affected" over the "natural." The mannerist "wants to surprise, to astonish, to dazzle," and can begin either with linguistic form or intellectual content, or both, to accomplish his purposes. Curtius identifies a number of figures, tropes, schemes and other poetic games, such as annominatio (the collocation of homophones and inflectional forms of the same word), the lipogrammatic device (writing poems by omitting one letter of the alphabet), and the pangrammatic affection (having as many successive words as possible begin with the same letter).[3]

Less encompassing but more specifically relevant to my concerns are studies that have focused upon and extrapolated from poetic works organized thematically around play and game. Chief among such poems is Sir Gawain and the Green Knight, which becomes the central text for John Leyerle's most useful disquisition entitled "The Game and Play of Hero." Leyerle pays tribute to the "Gawain genius" who "touched on a deep aspect of the creative imagination when he presented the society of man as organized about a nucleus of game-playing." Few works "signal so clearly as does Sir Gawain that play is an underlying basis of poetry. . . ." Leyerle's discussion is especially pertinent in that he offers a theory of literature based upon game patterns. Thus, a literary game is "a paradigmatic structure defined by its own set of rules." Such structures exhibit regularly occurring elements in patterns widely understood and therefore allowing great scope for individual variation.

> In this process of variation the paradigm of the game tends to be changed and developed, especially by an inventive poet . . . much literature, especially medieval literature, shows paradigmatic structure and individual talent within that structure, a combination that indicates that such work is the result of poets at play with words.

One identifies these games empirically by isolating the elements or "rules" that define the paradigm.[4]

Leyerle has lucidly articulated one of the bases of my approach. As he seeks his paradigms largely in patterns provided by character roles (knight, pilgrim, courtly lover, etc.), I propose to apply this principle concurrently to poetic genres and modes, specifically the Elizabethan sonnet, the Cavalier love lyric, and satiric verse. The "rules" will include conventions such as metrical forms, traditional stances, tropes, conceits, and rhetorical strategems. As Leyerle suggests, the fascination of a particular poetic game to the players lies in its special balance of necessity and freedom, of accepted imperatives and chosen alternatives, which becomes the means of demonstrating their own powers.

A further implication of poetic play, noted in the previous chapter, is the essence of play as contest, a central factor in the theory of both Huizinga and Caillois. There is "something at stake" that impels a poet to seek tension and struggle with the constraints of language, the requirements of genre and the refractoriness of his own creative powers. It is a bout with the unknown. And it is also competition with other players in a similar rela-

tionship to a chosen genre. Richard Lanham points out that the "imitative" poet, as all Medieval and Renaissance poets were by intent, is involved in a contest with his source: "he must outdo it or play his own poem off against it."[5]

Lanham has produced a number of very valuable studies on medieval and Renaissance literature from a ludic perspective, among them examinations of Chaucer, Castiglione, the Renaissance Ovid, Rabelais, Shakespeare (the poems and sonnets), and Sidney.[6] Lanham's version of homo ludens is homo rhetoricus, self-conscious about language, a quintessential actor, whose reality is public and dramatic, and whose emphasis is on mastering the rules and winning the current game.[7] At the heart of rhetorical reality is pleasure in performance, delight in ritual, the sense of style aiming always for effect, and the dependence upon the aesthetic and social self, as distinguished from a "serious" or "central" self. Borrowing Roland Barthes' concept of "opaque" as opposed to "transparent" style,[8] Lanham focuses upon formal interests, the verbal surface rather than content. As few other critics have done, Lanham makes us aware of genres as "gymnasia for the imagination" and of the poet's zest for "ludic scoring." Neither "zealot" nor "trifler," the poet as performer maintains a certain distance from the world he perceives as evanescent as his own metamorphic roles. Lanham makes the interesting observation that the poems which are rhetorical documents often "veer toward mutability" as a theme in the perception that verbal surface is "the only reliable constant."

Such poems can even be part of "the process by which man can interpose words between himself and death, make of death a pleasure and finally--his self transformed--enjoy it."[9]

All of these ideas will prove eminently applicable to my own study of ludic techniques in poetry. The Elizabethan sonnet and the Cavalier love lyric are variations upon a rhetoric of love and sex which may have helped to engender the specific social fictions built upon the inhering formulas. And the "art of concealing art" central to the game of Renaissance courtier is sprezzatura, defined by Lanham as "a certain carefully rehearsed . . . spontaneous unrehearsedness."[10] Verse satire can also sustain examination as a mode of rhetorical play. In each of the three genres chosen for this study, one passion may masquerade for another.

A twentieth-century poet who verifies and contributes to the approach thus set forth is Robert Frost. In a discussion based upon Frost in The Performing Self: Compositions and Decompositions in the Languages of Contemporary Life, Richard Poirier describes performance in the arts as a "curious" exercise of power.[11] "Performance . . . is made up of thousands of tiny movements, each made with a calculation that is also its innocence. By innocence, I mean that the movements have an utterly moral neutrality and they are designed to serve one another and nothing else . . ." Poirier quotes from a Paris Review interview in which Frost speaks of writing poetry in terms of prowess in an almost sexual, as well as athletic sense.

> What do I want to communicate but what a hell of a good time I had writing it? The whole thing is performance and prowess and feats of association. Why don't critics talk about these things--what a feat it was to turn that that way, and what a feat it was to remember that, to be reminded of that by this? Why don't they talk about that? Scoring. You've got to score.[12]

Poirier goes on to explain that Frost recognizes his ineffectuality as a "performer" to change the shape of society. "His seeming callousness . . . is in part, at least, derived from a feeling about the essential irrelevance of literature to the movements of daily life, much less those of large social organisms." In a letter to another poet, Frost writes in terms that deflate pretensions about the political as opposed to the personal power of the poet.

> You wish the world better than it is, more poetical. You are that kind of poet. I would vote as the other kind. I wouldn't give a cent to see the world, the United States or even New York much better. I want them left just as they are for me to make poetical on paper . . . My whole anxiety is for myself as a performer. Am I any good? That's what I'd like to know and all I need to know.[13]

John Ciardi also confesses that as poet he is playing with "toys that are words, images, rhythms." His game is to make his "toys dance and perform all kinds of attitudes . . . I play the games that let me write poems because I find that writing the poem is a better way of living than not writing it. Because I am happiest when I find myself winning a hard game with myself."[14] The assumption here is that the rules of the game involve rituals of self-interference.

In one of the most cogent contributions to the 1968

Yale French Studies volume later published as Game, Play, Literature, Michel Beaujour aptly characterizes the challenge to the conventional poet: "to produce a structured linguistic object (the poem) on the basis of an accepted or provoked inspiration . . . while he remains the conscious conscientious master of the process." Beaujour reminds us, as did Huizinga and Caillois, that winning a game means "to establish a difference, an inequality, between loser and winner," as well as "to triumph over an obstacle." The main thesis Beaujour argues is that, whereas "straight" poets play in order to "win," the Surrealist plays the game in reverse--"in order to lose." In relying upon automatism, the Surrealist "plays in order to be played with, in order to put himself at the mercy of something of which he becomes the toy." Other useful points include the idea that the poet's chief "opponents" are "two faces of the same coin," namely language and the unconscious, and that the poet "must play with and also against the rules of his language . . . in order to subordinate them to the rules of poetry." These factors follow upon the fact that "once the poet is possessed of the linguistic seed of his 'inspiration' the game consists in finding a way to complete the poem."[15]

This challenge is the subject of Barbara Herrnstein Smith's most useful probing into Poetic Closure: A Study of How Poems End. A poem is like a game in that it is integral and complete, taking place in an "enclosure." Furthermore, it is the result of tensions created and released. Smith's exposition is especially suggestive for the study of the

sonnet. Moreover, her approach to poetic game playing allows for a player who has not heretofore in my discussion been specifically identified--the reader. Like other stylistic and phenomenological critics who stress the reader's participation in the poetic event, Smith maintains that the reader, "as both actor (and director and conductor) and audience . . . responds to his own performance of the poem, a performance which he executes according to his interpretation of the direction given to him by the printed text." Much of the pleasure within the poetic experience, in a literal sense the excitement, stems from the "toying with and teasing of our expectations," the heightening of appetite by the deferral of immediate fulfillment "to make the eventual resolution all the more satisfying." (The paradigm is obviously sexual foreplay. Or was sexual foreplay learned from art?) Smith follows Morse Peckham, Michael Riffaterre and others in seeing the poet's role as breaking down the reader's stock responses and preventing his predictions by violation of the models, "encoding," "foregrounding," and comparable techniques producing "a discontinuity of the experiential process."[16] Similarly, Gérard Genette's emphasis upon the "duplicity" of language in the poetic communication is acknowledgement of the playfulness at the heart of the aesthetic experience. Robert Scholes has stated it thus: "Poetry may be definable precisely in terms of having to supply the missing elements in an act of communication."[17] (This is the correlative of the "metrical contract" Wordsworth describes in the 1800 Preface to Lyrical Ballads.)

J. V. Cunningham's pointed commentary in Tradition and Poetic Structure reflects this same thinking and shares Frost's attitude toward the poet's lack of force in the realm of utility. "Poets . . . are not 'the unacknowledged legislators of the world,' and a good thing it is that they aren't." Cunningham makes an extended and ingenious comparison between poetry and chess, some of which follows.

> The game is repeatable [in chess, by following moves recorded in the standard notation] as the poem is repeatable, and the experiences that properly belong to it are the repeatable experiences. In fact, the game as played and the poem as written constitute a principle of order, a method for discriminating the relevant from the irrelevant among one's immediate experiences as he plays or reads or writes . . . There is a further characteristic. The player at chess in making each move envisages a variety of alternate moves . . . and we in re-playing the same game must do alike if we are to achieve the recorded experience. Similarly the text of a poem consists of what little is left, out of the wide-strewn wreckage of alternative phrases, lines and possibilities of development. No one has read a poem who has not constructed and rejected as he read some of the alternative poems whose non-existence gives timbre and resonance to the text.[18]

A systematic presentation of the ludic basis of poetry would begin with the tricksy nature of language itself, and with evidence from the linguistic structuralists that language is "put together like a game with its large but finite number of underlying structures that permit the vast repertory of combinations representing the totalities of actual practice . . ."[19] One would then rehearse Roman Jakobson's linguistic theory of poetry, which seems to me to outline a fundamentally ludic procedure. "The poetic function projects the principle of equivalence from the

axis of selection [the metaphoric or paradigmatic axis] into the axis of combination" [the metonymic or syntagmatic axis.][20] Certain qualities of speech, "linear" and "diachronic," are thus interposed with "spatial" and "synchronic" qualities.[21] The contrived "couplings," to use Samuel Levin's term, create the unity and memorability that make the moves of Cunningham's "chess game" repeatable and enjoyable.[22]

One would similarly expound at length, in an hypothetical all-inclusive tractatus, on metaphor, personification, irony, puns, and a host of figures as play with words. Principles of "acoustic chiming," the regular recurrence of sound, would be investigated, as would the "tension" or "counterpoint" of meter and speech rhythms. Ultimately one would arrive at the deliberate use of language for purposes of mystification and/or allegory. Thus, Cunningham describes modern poetry's "appeal to the initiate" as "close and secret," having "its private ritual and its air of priesthood . . . It is obscure, and its obscurities are largely calculated; it is intended to be impenetrable to the vulgar."[23] Such coding is a clear form of play, as in the practice that makes poems "to a greater or lesser extent, . . . messages about poetry, and thus about language . . ."[24]

In this chapter's survey of ideas supporting a perception of poetry as a form of play, connections became evident between Renaissance scholarship and that of the twentieth century. But an extremely fertile period of

ludic activity was consequently bypassed, and I would hasten now to suggest the importance of that intervening history of poetic play and its interpreters. Austin Warren and William K. Wimsatt, Jr., have both lucidly represented the English neoclassical poets of the eighteenth century as writing their best poetry under the sanction of the "play principle." Warren cites two aspects of this principle. "On vacation from the vision and the ideal . . . they engaged in the serious fun which an expressionist theory would call being true to themselves . . . The tight frame of logic and meter kept words in their places, but in so doing forced them to exert all the more their interactive energies."[25] This is another expression of the dynamics of play described by Schiller, Caillois, Neale and others and outlined in my preceding chapter. Corroborating Warren's view, Wimsatt calls the Augustans "at their best and at their most characteristic, laughing poets of a heightened unreality . . . The peculiar feat of the Augustan poet was the art of teasing unreality with the redeeming force of wit--of casting upon a welter of unreal materials a light of order and a perspective vision."[26] What is probably the supreme masterpiece of the period is based upon a contemporary card game as described by Wimsatt in his article on "The Game of Ombre in The Rape of the Lock."[27]

Huizinga also pays tribute to the play--and consequent high level of eighteenth-century civilization--beginning with Rococco art. Huizinga agrees that The Rape of the

Lock, "which could only have been written when it was," is the epitome of the play elan in literature.[28]

If the eighteenth century represents the high-water mark of the facultus ludendi, the provenance of Romanticism is a chief beneficiary. Huizinga is perspicacious enough to realize that Romanticism has many faces and voices, but makes bold to state: "If ever a style and a Zeitgeist were born in play, it was in the middle of the eighteenth century." He finds the tendency around 1750 "to retrovert all emotional and aesthetic life to an idealized past where everything is blurred, structureless, charged with mystery and terror" in essence a play-process. "We can actually observe Romanticism being born in play, as a literary and historical fact. Its birth-certificate is provided by the letters of Horace Walpole." Simultaneous with Gothicism, Sentimentalism in European life and literature "can best be compared with the ideal of courtly love in the twelfth or thirteenth centuries. In both cases the entire upper class was edified by an artificial and eccentric ideal of life and love." Poetry as well as novel and drama was a recipient of these trends.

Since such an inquiry as I am attempting must necessarily be limited, I have chosen Byron as one of three poets most revealing of the play spirit. Byron's usefulness to my argument includes two factors in addition to those developed in Chapters Seven and Eight below. One is that he embodies poetic achievements associated with both the Augustans and the Romantics. In this he is unique. And

as a representative of these dual modes of perception and expression, he can provide a kind of balance to the examples from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries which I have also selected for examination. The other reason for my choice of Byron is that as a major poet, as well as a practitioner of what I regard as a ludic genre, Byron can lend substantial credence to the presentation of poiesis as play. Thus he will in due course take his place on the stage occupied prior to his appearance by Samuel Daniel and Thomas Carew to demonstrate the feats of homo ludens.

CHAPTER II

NOTES AND REFERENCES

[1]Huizinga, The Waning of the Middle Ages. Quotation is from p. 329.

[2]Ernst R. Curtius, European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages, trans. Willard Trask (New York: Bollingen Foundation, Pantheon Books, 1953), pp. 8-9. Chapter 10 is on "The Ideal Landscape."

[3]Ibid., Chapter 15.

[4]John Leyerle, "The Game and Play of Hero" in Concepts of the Hero in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, ed. Norman T. Burns & Christopher Reagan (Albany: SUNY Press, 1975), pp. 49-82.

[5]Richard A. Lanham, "Game, Play and High Seriousness in Chaucer's Poetry," ES 48 (1967), 9.

[6]Most of the pertinent essays are in Lanham's The Motives of Eloquence: Literary Rhetoric in the Renaissance (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1976). See also "Astrophil and Stella: Pure and Impure Persuasion," ELR II (1972), 110-116.

[7]Ideas in this and the succeeding paragraph are in The Motives of Eloquence, especially pp. 1-5 and 145-156. Similar points about play and rhetoric appear in Tristram Shandy, The Games of Pleasure (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1973).

[8]See Roland Barthes, "Science vs. Literature," Times Literary Supplement LXVI (28 Sept., 1967), 897-98.

[9]The Motives of Eloquence, pp. 31, 123 and 16.

[10]Ibid., p. 145.

[11]Richard Poirier, The Performing Self (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1971). See especially pp. 86-100. Quotations from Poirier in this and the succeeding paragraph are from pp. 87-88 and 91.

[12]Quoted by Poirier, p. 89.

[13]Ibid., p. 92.

[14]Quoted in Back Roads, A Magazine of the Written and Graphic Arts, 8 (Fall-Winter 1976-77), 86.

[15]Michel Beaujour, "The Game of Poetics," in Game, Play, Literature, 58-67. Quotations are from pp. 66-67, 64-65, and 61.

[16]Barbard Herrnstein Smith, Poetic Closure (Chicago: Univ. Press, 1968). Quotations are from pp. 262, 10 and 14. See also Morse Peckham, Man's Rage for Chaos (New York: Schocken Books, 1967); and Michael Riffaterre, "Criteria for Style Analysis" in Seymour Chatman and Samuel Levin, Essays on the Language of Literature (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1967), pp. 413-431.

[17]Robert Scholes, Structuralism in Literature: An Introduction (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1974), pp. 28 and 161-162.

[18]J. V. Cunningham, Tradition and Poetic Structure (Denver: Alan Swallow, 1960), pp. 12 and 16-17.

[19]Quotation is from Jacques Ehrmann in Game, Play, Literature, p. 160.

[20]Roman Jakobson, "Linguistics and Poetics" in Chatman and Levin, p. 303ff. Quotation is from p. 303.

[21]See discussion in Scholes, pp. 28-30.

[22]Samuel Levin, Linguistic Structures in Poetry (The Hague: Mouton, 1967).

[23]Cunningham, pp. 107-108.

[24]Scholes, p. 31.

[25]Austin Warren, "The Mask of Pope," Sewanee Review 54 (1946), 19-33.

[26]William K. Wimsatt, Jr., "The Augustan Mode," ELH XX (1953), 152.

[27]Wimsatt, "The Game of Ombre, etc.," RES, New Series (April, 1950), 136-143.

[28]Huizinga, p. 186-189. Quotation is from p. 187.

[29]Ibid., pp. 188-189.

CHAPTER III

THE ELIZABETHAN SONNET AND SAMUEL DANIEL

From Castiglione to the present, the life of the courtier in the late Middle Ages and early Renaissance has been characterized in terms of play and game.[1] This has been especially true of the elaborate rituals and highly structured artifice centered in the phenomenon known as courtly love. To what extent this revolutionary development in the history of culture was itself an esthetic or rhetorical invention, and to what extent it generated what is perhaps the greatest literary flowering the world has ever known, can probably never be determined. The social fictions and complex role-playing of chivalry were partly reflected in and partly inspired by the great cycles of romance centered about the figures of Arthur and Roland. And if all of European poetry and deeply influential attitudes it embodies have come out of the songs of the troubadours of Languedoc, as Denis de Rougemont believes, probably this very poetry and song was also in some measure created out of an evolving social consciousness. All that seems certain is that among the forces at work in this vast, burgeoning matrix of ideas and forms was an irrepressible ludic impulse.

It is the intent of this chapter to pursue this impulse in the Elizabethan sonnet. By way of introduction, it seems feasible to attempt a brief comparison between this esthetic mode and two others that seem to have derived respectively

from opposite ends of the play spectrum. The forms are the chivalric tournament and the troubadour lyric. Certainly the latter seems to provide far closer resemblances to the sonnet than the former, but some interesting parallels appear when one reflects upon the play-spaces of all three.

Both tournament and sonnet may offer a challenge to the young man who aspires to acceptance within an elite circle.[2] A means to this end would be such an attention-getting device demonstrating his prowess and skill in the manipulation of certain kinds of symbols. Whether banners, weapons, or words, such symbols can be highly charged as they signify a history of accrued significance. Like the tournament, the sonnet is a performance contrived within a playing field clearly delineated and separated from the routine procedures of ordinary life by limits of time and space. For each, there are rules of play and a code of conduct accepted as binding by the participants for the duration of the action. These rules have grown out of highly developed, ritualized patterns of movement. In the sonnet may be seen a residual dance-form which becomes most visible in the "turn," either after the second quatrain of the Italian form or after the third figure in the English version.[3]

Another link between the tournament and the sonnet lies in their shared service to Eros. Both address themselves to women of the highest station in ostensibly espousing the doctrine that devotion to a particular lady and the influence emanating from her are sources of the highest good. It is

also clear that this is done just as deliberately to win the approval of peers in a world inspired by traditional values of virtu and arete. Following Huizinga's understanding of chivalry, Richard Lanham has observed that both games and genres "fix . . . stylize and thus disarm an area of potential or actual human conflict."[4]

In another way, one can also regard the sonnet as, like the joust, an agonistic enterprise, a struggle with recalcitrant forces that can be forced to grant the sweets of victory if the inhering threats of defeat can be prevented. The intrinsic refractoriness of language and the frequent obstinacy of the mechanisms of the creative process present formidable obstacles to winning at poetic games. The arena of sonnet-making may therefore be entered in an implicitly competitive spirit, in which one pits oneself not only against contemporary rivals but also against the great names of former champions. One is drawn to a game or contest because one has watched others at play, has learned certain procedures from them, and has emulated their skills, pleasures and rewards.

A similar comparison of the sonnet with the troubadour lyric would allow for most of the essential points of likeness rehearsed above, along with the more obvious linguistic and rhythmic features held in common. The role of the mistress, the sense of competition, and the performance principle are among the most important parallels. Like the troubadour lyric the "little song" betrays its musical origins.[5] In itself it becomes an instrument on which certain notes can be played--

plaintive or yearning, hopeful or despairing. In its evocation of Dante, Petrarch, Tasso and Camoens (all writers of epic!), Wordsworth's "Scorn Not the Sonnet" uses musical tropes to call attention to the small "scale" of the sonnet, whose limited range of tones releases powerful energies for melody and harmony.[6]

Improvisatory possibilities latent within the stringencies of all poetic structures are particularly available to the troubadours, as Frederick Goldin has vividly described in his imaginative reconstruction of the mode of composition of these gifted entertainers. Goldin recreates the courtly milieux where the singers may compose their verses on the spot to fit particular situations and reflect the interests of individual patrons. In the courts of Provence, the veiled allusions and sly innuendoes of a Guillaume de Neuf or a Bernard de Ventadorn in the trobar clus and other song types can be encodings or decodings of covert signals exchanged between game-players.[7] The espousal of secrecy and the need for techniques of deception in the game of courtly love help to mold significant elements in these lyrics and in the sonnets as well.[8] For the sonnets, as we shall see, seem to depend upon the shared knowledge among players that the message nearly always contains something other than what a literal interpretation renders.

Thus the troubadours and sonneteers alike exploit the fascination of disguise so integral to many forms of play.

Both also exhibit that freedom within constraints, the interchange between paidia and ludus which makes all but the most rudimentary play possible.[9] But the two lyric forms do not relate to these poles identically. If one imagines a continuum stretching between these poles, the sonnet would occupy a position close to the ludus end of the spectrum (as would the tournament), whereas the Provençal lyric would be placed somewhere between the sonnet and the paidia pole. The palpable difference lies in the greater dependence of the sonnet upon strictly codified rules in regard to such factors as length, meter and rhyme.

In summary, these three offshoots of courtly love (tournament, sonnet and troubadour lyric), like all games, contain elements of tension, uncertainty and chance. In poetic composition, these elements have always arisen from the aleatory contributions of what Hans Sachs (following Freud) calls the "creative unconscious."[10] Each endeavor also offers, although in idiosyncratic proportions, the stimulation of vital energies set in motion and the possibility of self-transcendence, the loss of self in the ekstasis of winning at the game. Thus one finds within the sonnet, as within the tournament and the troubadour lyric, components that correspond closely to each of the fundamental attitudes of play delineated by Roger Caillois: agon, alea, mimicry and ilinx. The six characteristics which according to Caillois define the nature of play are also apparently

present in all three activities, which are (1) freely chosen (2) separate from common life, (3) uncertain as to outcome, (4) economically unproductive, (5) regulated, and (6) based on a fiction.[11]

In order, however, to explore more fully these ludic possibilities in the Elizabethan sonnet (as suggested by its resemblances to other forms of playing), one needs a promising group of specimens for concentrated study. Since the practitioners of the period indulged appetites for their "sugared" confections in "sequences," held together by some suggestion of plot, autobiographical reference or shared theme, the selection of such a body of sonnets rather than an assortment of individual examples would seem desirable.

One would, moreover, tend to select a sequence that is fairly representative of the genre rather than one approaching what Angus Fletcher calls a "transcendental form," a "structure that by design includes more than its traditionally accepted generic limits . . . would allow it to include."[12] One is tempted, for example, to apply the term transcendental to Shakespeare's sonnets. Clearly they are the most stunning virtuoso act of them all in their conceptual leaps and verbal acrobatics as they constantly shift from one perspective to another, exploiting ambiguities and manifest contradictions. Lanham has aptly described them as "tricksy, showoff, prestidigitous."[13] But Lanham also shows the logical inconsistencies to be the deliberate achievement of a degree of profundity unequalled by other sonneteers because they

present a "superposed poetics," the superposition of a rhetorical or playful poetic upon a serious one, or vice versa. Shakespeare "brings to a more precise focus the double poetic that the sonnet sequence as a whole worked within . . . For from Petrarch on, the sonnet sequence combined two extremes, a sublime goal and a game procedure, without reflecting on or perhaps even noting the enormous gap between them. Shakespeare both notes and reflects upon it. He sees that the form draws on two extremes, two opposed theories of motive, and on the two theories of rhetoric and attitudes toward style appropriate to each."[14] In the work selected for purposes of this study, the play-motive and the game-procedure will have obvious precedence over a latent or conventionally invoked sublime goal.

Another distraction one would try to avoid in examining the sonnet sequence as a ludic activity is that of a too intimate biographical connection. The complex relationship between the sonnet writer's personal experience and his art has been integral to the nature of the genre, which has been both a fictive representation and a vehicle for intense feeling.[15] C. S. Lewis has commented judiciously on the difference between Renaissance practice and "Wordsworthian naturalism":

> The sonneteers wrote not to tell their own love stories, not to express whatever in their own loves was local and peculiar, but to give us others, the inarticulate lovers, a voice . . . The poets are never concerned solely to communicate an experience; they are also concerned--usually

> more concerned--to fabricate a novel, attractive, intricate object, a dainty device. They would hardly have understood how a modern can use words like "pretty" and "clever" in dispraise of a poem.[16]

Lewis comes very close here to a theory of play.

Lanham is also discriminating in his analysis of Sidney's Astrophil and Stella. For Lanham, Sidney's sonnets epitomize both the desire to possess a woman and the desire to dramatize his role for agonistic purposes. The poet's feelings are both "sincere" and fabricated. Astrophil and Stella is "an anomalous artifact, half art and half life . . . [Sidney] looks in his heart some of the time. At other times, he looks at the world and draws his strategy from there."[17] The choice is a matter of rhetorical effectiveness. Lanham acknowledges his own debt to Kenneth Burke who, in A Rhetoric of Motives, isolates the concept of "pure persuasion" as opposed to acquisition and advantage-seeking. The "purity" of the motive lies in the aesthetic, self-pleasing quality. Though not existent in any absolute sense, this element depends upon "standoffishness" or "self-interference." Although neither Burke nor Lanham (in this context) has explicitly referred to play, the self-handicapping principle in the pursuit of pleasure is clearly ludic.

> Pure persuasion involves the saying of something, not for an extra-verbal advantage to be got by the saying, but because it likes the feel of a summons. It would be nonplused if the summons were answered.[18]

Again, basic criteria of play have been identified, its non-utilitarian, disinterested, self-subsisting and self-validating character. We remember the definition of Hans Sachs that play is "bound to forms . . . of such a nature that they can never be mistaken for the real thing."[19] The amount of play-content in a work would appear, therefore, to increase with the preponderance of "pure" over "impure" persuasion.

A comparable theory has been advanced by John Stevens, who has outlined a continuum from the "Lover-as-Lover" to the "Lover-as-Poet" to the "Poet-as-Lover" to the "Poet-as-Poet." In distinguishing the two middle terms, Stevens like Lanham and Burke relies upon the motive. The Lover-as-Poet uses words as a tool in the game of love, whereas the Poet-as-Lover uses the game of love as an excuse for making poems. It is the difference between "art for use and art for delight." The Poet-as-Lover is the performer who provides us with the "festival poems" of courtly love.[20] And so my choice of Samuel Daniel as <u>homo ludens</u> is predicated upon the thesis that he is such a poet. Most critics have suspected that <u>Delia</u> is based far more upon literary convention than upon experience of real life.[21] But Daniel has been grossly misread as an insipid and sentimental sonnet-maker, a misapprehension I hope to correct.

In the history of Daniel's poetic reputation there are interesting continuities and modifications. His contemporaries apparently regarded his sonnets as typical

of the genre, neither striking nor undistinguished in execution.[22] When twenty-three of Daniel's sonnets (untitled) entered the public domain in 1591 on the coat-tails of Astrophil and Stella in Thomas Newman's unauthorized edition, Daniel was thrust into the vanguard of the sonnet revival that was to be such a prominent feature of the literary scene of the 1590s. Nor did Daniel's efforts seem to suffer by comparison to Sidney's. In fact, they were clearly enhanced by the association, and Daniel then hastened to capitalize on his modest success by publishing early in 1592 his own augmented collection entitled Delia.[23] The slender volume also contained a 24-line poem in 4 stanzas called "An Ode" and The Complaint of Rosamond in rime royal. There is an artful apology in the Dedication to the Countess of Pembroke that he is "forced to publish" an additional twenty-seven sonnets,[24] "seeing I was betraide by the indiscretion of a greedie Printer, and had some of my secrets bewraide to the world, uncorrected," in order to save these other sonnets from a like fate. There were now fifty sonnets, and future editions (in October of 1592, in 1594, in 1601-02, and in 1611) would retain this number, though there were various eliminations and additions.

Daniel's fellow poets have left evidence of the status he achieved in his own time by virtue of his sonnets. In Sir John Davies' "Orchestra," for example, Daniel enjoys a rank with the greatest poets in the language:

> O that I could old GEOFFREY's muse awake,
> Or borrow COLIN's fair heroic style,
> Or smooth my rhymes with DELIA's servant file.[25]

Drayton called him "the sweet Musaeus of these times."[26] Spenser refers to him as the "new shepherd late upsprung/The which doth all before him far surpass" in his "well-turn'd song," before admonishing him to "rouse the feathers of his low-flying Muse."[27] It was William Browne who gave him the epithet "well-languag'd Daniel."[28]

Along with these and other tributes to his gracefulness of phrase, lucidity of language, and technical mastery of his craft, there are also some disparagements. Ben Jonson judged him as "a good honest man but no poet," and probably had Daniel as his chief target in the following lines:

> They write a verse as smooth, as soft, as creame;
> In which there is no torrent, nor scarce streame,[29]

Daniel was also accused of plagiarism in an age by no means overscrupulous in such matters.[30] Sir John Harington addressed a satirical epigram "Of honest Theft, to my friend Master Samuel Daniel."[31] And in The Return from Parnassus, or The Scourge of Simony of 1606, "Judicio" offers a critique as follows:

> Sweet honey dropping Daniel doth wage
> War with the proudest big Italian,
> That melts his heart in sugared sonneting.
> Only let him more sparingly make use . . .
> Of others' wit, and use his own the more;
> That well may scorn base imitation.
> (I. ii.)[32]

That he was far from unique in this regard has been documented in part by citations of closely modelled "borrowings"

from Daniel's own sonnets by Drayton and Griffin.[33] The latter's Fidessa, Number 15 begins: "Care-charmer sleep," and contains the further echo, "brother of quiet death."[34]

After Daniel's own lifetime, he seems to have been virtually forgotten until a small revival of interest by the first-generation Romantics. Coleridge terms him "one of the golden writers of our golden Elizabethan age . . . whose diction bears no mark of time, no distinction of age," and "who left exquisite specimens of that style which, as the neutral ground of prose and verse, is common to both."[35] Doubtless it was Coleridge who was responsible for the influence of Daniel on Wordsworth. Helen Darbishire argues, as do others, that the later poet learned from the earlier such aspects of style as phrasing, cadence, and the preference for abstractions.[36]

In twentieth-century surveys and critiques of the sonnet sequences, Daniel occupies a firm position, either as "the least of the greats," after Shakespeare, Sidney and Spenser, or as high-man among the lesser lights such as Drayton, Greville and Constable.[37] In the judgment of most commentators, Daniel's strength lies in the gentle, meditative treatment of elegiac themes by means of an elegant craftsmanship. The smoothness of his versification, the liquidity of melodic flow, the precision of his diction, and the harmony of sonorous vowels are the most commonly mentioned prosodic features.[38] Prized qualities which critics have found lacking in Daniel's work are vigor, drama immediacy and intensity. In the most recent edition of his

poems, A. C. Sprague asserts that "in characterizing Daniel's work, one instinctively begins with negatives."[39] William Blissett has summed up Daniel's presumed flirtation with mediocrity by the assessment that he is "the least lofty, insolent or passionate of Elizabethans."[40] In other words, in comparison with Shakespeare and Sidney, Daniel obviously suffers.

From other influential critics, on the other hand, have come hints that Daniel has been unduly neglected. Rosemond Tuve discovered "metaphysical conceits" in material that others had characterized as possessing only "stale" and "prosaic" images.[41] C. S. Lewis called Daniel a "poet of ideas" and, perhaps surprisingly, "the most interesting man of letters of the century."[42] Unfortunately Lewis does not document this judgment in any detail.

Though not a poet of the first rank, Daniel seems to merit closer attention than our critics have paid him. It is curious, though perhaps significant, that the only comprehensive study of Daniel thus far is a farily recent work available only in French: Pierre Spriet's Samuel Daniel: Sa Vie--Son Oeuvre.[43] For the purposes of this study, to pursue play and game elements in poetry, Daniel seems admirably suited. If he is a gifted craftsman rather than an inspired and inspiring man of genius, nevertheless there are indications of subtleties and refinements in his sonnets yet to be suitably recognized. Even more inviting are various clues linking Daniel's Renaissance poetics with the

modern structuralist methods Lanham has identified in another context: "form as content; style as thought; self-conscious personification rather than sincerity; surface rather than depth; conscious, deliberate unreality; the writer as declared poseur.[44] The translation of these features into terms of play and game is not difficult to effect, and Delia amply repays examination from a ludic perspective.

CHAPTER III

NOTES AND REFERENCES

[1]Among the sources for ideas in this paragraph, the most important are: Johann Huizinga, The Waning of the Middle Ages (London: St. Martin's Press, 1948); Maurice Valency, In Praise of Love: An Introduction to the Love-Poetry of the Renaissance (New York: Macmillan Co., 1958); John Stevens, Music and Poetry in the Early Tudor Court (London: Methuen Co., 1961); and Richard A. Lanham, "The Self as Middle Style: Cortegiano" in The Motives of Excellence: Literary Rhetoric in the Renaissance (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1976). Also indispensable, although I find his "Catharist heresy" theory brilliantly wrong, is Denis de Rougemont, Love in the Western World, trans. Montgomery Belgion (New York: Pantheon Books, 1956).

[2]The best treatment in English of the tournament is Richard N. Barber, The Knight and Chivalry (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1950), pp. 59-152. See also Huizinga, op. cit., Chapter 2 and his Homo Ludens (Boston: Beacon Press, 1955), pp. 195-196.

[3]On the origin of verse-forms in dance, see Bruce Pattison, Music and Poetry of the English Renaissance (London: Methuen Co., 1948), pp. 80-81; and Maurice Boura, "Songs of Dance and Carnival" in Italian Renaissance Studies, ed. E. F. Jacob (London: Methuen Co., 1960).

[4]Lanham, "Games, Play and High Seriousness in Chaucer's Poetry," ES 48 (1967), 7.

[5]See Jerome Mazzaro, Transformations in the Renaissance English Lyric (Ithaca: Cornell Univ. Press, 1970), pp. 1-72; also Lisle Cecil John, The Elizabethan Sonnet Sequences (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1938; rpt. Russell & Russell, 1964), pp. 14-15.

[6]See explication by J. Hillis Miller, "The Still Heart: Poetic Form in Wordsworth," NLH II (Winter, 1971), 297-302.

[7]Frederick Goldin, ed., Lyrics of the Troubadours and Trouveres, Introduction to texts (Garden City: Doubleday Anchor Books, 1973), pp. 110-119. See also his "The Array of Perspectives in the Early Courtly Love Lyric" in In Pursuit of Perfection, eds. Joan M. Ferrante & George D. Economou (Port Washington: Kennikat Press, 1975), pp. 5-100.

[8]Stevens makes this point, p. 180ff.

[9]See Chapter 1 of this study, p. 14.

[10]Hans Sachs, The Creative Unconscious: Studies in the Psychoanalysis of Art (Cambridge, Mass.: Sci-Art Publishers, 1942).

[11]Roger Caillois, Man, Play and Games, trans. Meyer Barash (New York: The Free Press, Macmillan Co., 1961), pp. 12-26. See above, Chapter 1 of this study, pp. 12-18.

[12]See Angus Fletcher, The Transcendental Masque: An Essay on Milton's "Comus" (New York: Cornell Univ. Press, 1971), especially the chapter on "Transcendental Form," pp. 116-146. Quotation is from p. 116.

[13]Lanham, The Motives of Eloquence, p. 114.

[14]Ibid., p. 127.

[15]See, e.g., J. M. Purcell, Sidney's Stella (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1934), Chapter 3, "Autobiography and the Sonnet Tradition."

[16]C. S. Lewis, English Literature in the Sixteenth Century (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1954), p. 490.

[17]Lanham, "Astrophil and Stella: Pure and Impure Persuasion," ELR II (Winter, 1972), pp. 110-116.

[18]Kenneth Burke, A Rhetoric of Motives (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1969), pp. 268-269.

[19]Sachs, p. 214.

[20]Stevens, pp. 203-232.

[21]Among critics who take this view is Claes Schaar, "Elizabethan Sonnet Themes and the Dating of Shakespeare's 'Sonnets,'" Lund Studies in English 32 (1962), 36-40. For a dissenting opinion, see Joan Rees, Samuel Daniel: A Critical and Biographical Study (Liverpool: Univ. of Liverpool Press, 1964), p. 20ff.

[22]See Wesley Trimpi, Ben Jonson's Poems: A Study of the Plain Style (Stanford: Univ. of California Press, 1962), p. 110.

[23]See Samuel Daniel, Delia with the Complaint of Rosamond, Scolar Press Facsimile (London: Scolar Press, 1969). Unless otherwise noted, all references will be to this edition. J's, u's and v's have been regularized without comment in my excerpts.

[24]The new sonnets are: 1, 4-8, 10, 12, 22, 31-39, 41-49.

[25]Printed in A. N. Bullen, ed., Some Longer Elizabethan Poems (London: Westminster Press, 1903). See stanza 128.

[26]Michael Drayton, "Endimion and Phoebe" in Works, Tercentenary Edition, ed., J. William Hebel (Oxford: Shakespeare Head Press, 1961), I, p. 155, i. 997.

[27]Edmund Spenser, "Colin Clout's Come Home Again" in Works, ed. E. Greenlaw, C. G. Osgood, F. M. Padelford, et al. (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 1932-1957), VII.

[28]William Browne, Brittania's Pastorals (Menston: Scolar Press, 1969), Book 2, Song 2, p. 37, l. 303.

[29]Ben Jonson, Works, ed. C. H. Herford and P. & E. Simpson (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1925-1951), Vol. 7, p. 585.

[30]See Harold Ogden White, Plagiarism and Imitation during the English Renaissance (New York: Octagon Books, 1965), pp. 76 and 167.

[31]Quoted by Schaar, p. 70.

[32]The Return from Parnassus or the Scourge of Simony, ed., O. Smeaton (London, 1905).

[33]See John, pp. 88-89; also Cecil Seronsky, Samuel Daniel (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1967).

[34]Sidney Lee, ed. Elizabethan Sonnets (New York: Cooper Square Press, 1964), Vol. II, p. 272.

[35]Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Biographia Literaria, ed. John Shawcross (London: Oxford Univ. Press, 1939), pp. 119 and 61.

[36]Helen Darbishire, The Poet Wordsworth: The Clark Lectures (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1950), p. 57; also Seronsky, "Daniel and Wordsworth," SP LVI (1959), 187-213.

[37]See, e.g., J. W. Lever, The Elizabethan Sonnet Sequences (London: Methuen Co., 1956), pp. 150-155; 68-69.

[38]See Hallett Smith, Elizabethan Poetry: A Study in Conventions, Meaning and Expression (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Univ. Press, 1966), pp. 158-159.

[39]A. C. Sprague, ed., Poems and a Defence of Ryme by Samuel Daniel (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Univ. Press, 1930), p. xxix.

[40]William Blissett, "Samuel Daniel's Sense of the Past," ES 38 (1957), p. 49. Blissett is setting up praise for The Civil Wars: "When he finds his muse, it will be Clio," p. 30.

[41]Rosemond Tuve, Elizabethan and Metaphysical Imagery (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1947), p. 419.

[42]Lewis, p. 531.

[43]Pierre Spriet, Samuel Daniel: Sa Vie--Son Oeuvre, Etudes Anglaises 29 (Paris: Didier, 1968). I have learned from Spriet, and have been gratified by his agreements with a number of my own perceptions. Spriet does not, however, except in a very few, limited instances, treat Daniel in terms of play. Nor does he use game-concepts at all. He has been most useful for biographical facts and for tracing of sources.

[44]Lanham, The Motives of Eloquence, pp. 222-223.

CHAPTER IV

DELIA AS A LUDIC FORM

The first of Daniel's sonnets printed in Newman's surreptitious edition of Astrophil and Stella is a set-piece demonstrating characteristics to be found throughout this group and Daniel's own edition of Delia of the following year.[1] In an ostentatious address to the verse itself, "Goe wailing verse," the speaker launches the sonnets with a deliberate echo of Petrarch's "Ite rime dolente."[2] In so doing, he calls attention to the imitative qualities and functions the sonnets bear, though not without his own stamp of individuality. As "wailing verse," it is the proper type for the complaint of the Petrarchan poet-as-lover, though the wailing leads to a somewhat unusual conceit for the genre:

> Go wailing verse, the infants of my love,
> Minerva-like, brought foorth without a Mother:
> Present the image of the cares I prove,
> Witnes you Fathers griefe exceedes all other.

Commenting on Shakespeare's first seventeen sonnets and contrasting them with the sterility of courtly passion, Lanham has observed that "babies do not figure strongly in Petrarchan poetry."[3] Is it mere coincidence that in the first sonnet of Astrophil and Stella, Daniel's mentor has presented himself as "great with child to speak" and uses similar imagery in two other places?[4] Delia's lover is, in contrast, not "helpless in my throes," but possessed of

a sense of fruition. An element of assurance and self-assertiveness is conveyed here by the implicit identification with Jove in his androgenetic potency. And the progeny are significantly engendered from the head.

The language in the rest of the poem is solidly conventional. The second and third quatrains continue the series of exhortations of which the sonnet consists:

> Sigh out a story of her cruell deedes,
> With interrupted accents of dispayre:
> A Monument that whosoever reedes,
> May justly praise, and blame my loveles Faire.
> Say her disdaine hath dryed up my blood,
> And starved you, in succours still denying:
> Presse to her eyes, importune me some good;
> Waken her sleeping pittie with your crying.

What is noteworthy is that an audience is anticipated that will reach well beyond the lady herself. It has been integral to the genre that the illusion of private emotions has been turned into a thoroughly public mode. As C. S. Lewis has remarked, sonnet sequences are "more like an erotic liturgy than a series of erotic confidences."[5]

The word "Monument" here is typical of Daniel's Latinate diction, and conveys not only the sense of visible memorial or record, but also the root meaning of admonishment. We will find the idea of the monument a central one in Delia. The line that follows emphasizes the strong appeal to justice in this sonnet and, as we shall observe, others in the collection. The rhetoric of pleading offers the dual possibilities of self-justification and the request for favors. Indeed, the latter often becomes a tool for the

display of the former. The balance of praise and blame which has been central to the sonnet throughout its history, is overtly espoused. A lover of classical form, Daniel shows a disciple's concern for symmetry and proportion in his verse. Here, parallel constructions carry the flow of the verse through the four divisions of the poem. Each of these divisions begins with an imperative, including the couplet:

> Knock at that hard hart, beg till you have moov'd her;
> And tell th'unkind, how deerely I have lov'd her.

Similar verb forms are found at the beginning of lines 3, 4, 11, 12, and 14 (in the latter, preceeded by "And"); in lines 11 and 13, imperatives also follow the comma-punctuated caesura.

The conceit of the poet-generated, complaining progeny is ingeniously developed. Denied the role of mother, the lady is nonetheless made culpable for neglect: she has "starved" these "infants" because of her "sleeping pittie." The standard accusation that she is "unkind" takes on new emphasis with the word's generic meaning of unnatural as well as unfeeling behavior. The couplet in this sonnet is more successful than is usual in Delia. The penultimate line achieves a climactic emphasis that suggests the movement toward resolution. The tempo is slowed by the successive occurrence of the three accented syllables "hard," "hart" and "beg." In the final line the sense of closure

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is accomplished as the poem's implicit message finally becomes explicit: "And tell th'unkind how deerely I have lov'd her." The rhyme, which echoes "Mother" and "other" of lines 2 and 4 respectively, reinforces the closure and furthers the integration of the couplet with the body of the sonnet.

A conspicuous aspect of Daniel's preferred sonnet pattern, Surrey's three quatrains and couplet instead of the bipartite octave/sestet division of the Italians (and usually Sidney), is the impression of a block-like or stair-like construction of quatrain upon quatrain.[6] Daniel's French models, Desportes, Du Bellay and Ronsard, seem to favor the clean division between quatrains, and their sonnets are usually printed with indentations at the four-line intervals.[7] In Daniel's first edition this same practice holds as a signal to the almost invariable autonomy of the individual quatrain. The sense of individual parts carefully fitted into a whole is extended to line divisions as well. As is the tendency in most of Daniel's sonnets, each of the lines of "Go wailing verse" is end-stopped. Only fifteen of the fifty sonnets of the 1592 edition contain enjambments; there are but eighteen run-over lines in the entire sequence, a remarkably small number.[8] Even a cursory glance at the sequences of Sidney, Spenser and Shakespeare shows that Daniel's lines more consistently aspire to self-containment. Perhaps the more closed-in upon itself a form is, the more it lends itself to the functions of play.

In A Defence of Ryme, Daniel testifies to the pleasurable discipline intrinsic to poetic play:

> is it not most delightful to see much excellently ordered in a small roome, or little, gallantly disposed and made to fill up a space of like capacitie, in such sort, that the one would not appeare so beautifull in a larger circuite, nor the other do well in a lesse.

He goes on to speak with obvious zest for

> limited proportions and rests of Stanzas . . . the apt planting the sentence where it may best stand to hit, the certaine close of delight with the full body of a just period well carried, is such, as neither the Greekes nor Latines ever attained unto.[9]

Despite the stereotyped language which prevails in much of Daniel's poetry, the impression introduced in the opening sonnet of 1591 is that the lady is not really the dominant figure in these pieces. The Minerva analogy, which one would expect to refer to the lady, is reserved instead for the poetry. It is the verse which is associated with purity, power and beauty. And though the poet may represent himself as a victim, he is not a passive sufferer. In its self-conscious reflexiveness, this sonnet is a significant introduction to what Daniel is about. Poetry is the subject of the poem.

The succeeding sonnet deploys the conceit of its predecessor by initially recasting the "wailing infants" into "offspring" who are "fatall Antheames." Even more explicitly than in its sister sonnet, "If so it hap" is concerned with the designation of an audience. Like those of Sidney, Greville and Constable, Daniel's sonnets probably

circulated in manuscripts among the Pembroke circle.[10] As in any other game, this one depends upon a particular play-community, the circle of initiates who accept the ritualized significance of what is played.

> If it so hap this offspring of my care,
> These fatall Antheames, sad and mornefull Songs:
> Come to their view, who like afflicted are;
> Let them yet sigh their owne, and mone my wrongs.
> But untouch'd harts, with unaffected eye,
> Approch not to behold so great distresse,
> Clear-sighted you, soone note what is awry,
> Whilst blinded ones mine errours never guesse.

The metaphor of neglected children is now transferred to the in-group itself, so close is the relation understood between poets and their work, and a variation of the progeny conceit is introduced:

> You blinded soules whom youth and errours lead,
> You outcast Eglets, dazled with your sunne:
> Ah you, and none but you my sorrowes read,
> You best can judge the wrongs that she hath dunne.

Again, the "wrongs" and "errours" of "afflicted" youth are to be weighed against the "wrongs that she hath dunne":

> That she hath doone, the motive of my paine;
> Who whilst I love, doth kill me with disdaine.

The "motive of my paine" in line 13 is both the cause of his woe and the musical theme (recalling the "fatall Antheames" of line two). The rhetorical pattern has combined the often-used "If . . . then" form with a "Not those . . . but these" strategy.[11] The ironically requisite condition for such shared experience is that only those who are similarly "blinded" can "read" and "judge" properly.

Thus far, we have seen dexterous examples of sonnets-

on-the-sonnet, and others will be frequently noted. In the 1592 Delia, Daniel prefaces these two early sonnets with an equally strategic selection. He has dedicated his own edition to the Countess of Pembroke and recognizes the need for a more tactful, overtly self-effacing opening than "Go wailing verse." The Petrarchan "poet's-pain-lady's-guilt" formula is still the central motif,[12] but its statement is preceded by a graceful compliment:

> Unto the boundles Ocean of thy beautie
> Runs this poore river, charg'd with streames of zeale;
> Returning thee the tribute of my dutie,
> Which heere my love, my youth, my playnts reveale.

The contrast of "poore river" and "boundles Ocean" seems to strike the right note of homage and humble application by the emerging poet to the famous sister of Sidney and literary figure in her own right. The ocean metaphor has long been a convention suggesting the lover's copious tears. Yet this conceit contains within it a muted irony that will surface from time to time within the series. The poems are not only a payment of devotion owed to a person of superior rank, but are in addition a nourishing force, enriching the larger "body" of the mistress into which the poet theoretically dissolves himself. That the poet should actually disappear from his sonnets would be an impossible contradiction of the very nature of the genre. In fact, it is the lady herself, especially in Delia, who becomes a mere backdrop for the histrionic poet. For even less than Sidney's or Spenser's heroines, does Delia possess a personality. Sidney Lee has

called her "a mere shadow of a shadow."[13] The theme of judgement, noted earlier, will be a strong element in the series, and the pleader's prevailing concern will be to make the best case for himself as lover-poet. The persuasion will be aimed at the reader. The pronouns in this sonnet are indicative: twelve in the first person as against five in the second.

This sonnet is an admirable illustration of the subtleties within the best of Daniel's metaphoric structures, the degree of complexity which has been largely overlooked in the usually superficial appraisals of his work. The river, for example, is "charg'd with streames of zeale." Among the multiple meanings of the verb are the sense of being loaded or burdened with something; of being entrusted with something, by way of responsibility, and of being called to account and made liable for payment. The river is aptly "Returning thee the tribute of my duties"; its "tributary" function allows, along with the sense of feeding into the "Ocean," the shift to the financial conceit which will dominate the remaining quatrains.

> Heere I unclaspe the booke of my charg'd soule,
> Where I have cast th'accounts of all my care:
> Heere have I summ'd my sighes, heere I enroule
> Howe they were spent for thee; Looke what they are.
> Looke on the deere expences of my youth,
> And see how just I reckon with thyne eyes:
> Examine well thy beautie with my trueth,
> And crosse my cares ere greater summes arise.

Could Daniel be alluding here to Mary Pembroke's preface to her translations of the Psalms, where she uses an almost

identical metaphor?

> Oh when to this Accompt, this cast up Summe
> This Reckoning made, this Audit of my woe
> I call up thoughts . . .[14]

In Daniel's sonnet, the transition from one metaphor to the other is smoothly accomplished. Like the river, the soul is "charg'd," and the volume of poems is the ledger in which the poet will present his "account," his stories of profit and loss, and justify the "deere" (cherished and heavy) "expences." Delia's eyes are to be reckoned with and will oversee the reckoning. In this summing up, this auditing of the books to strike a balance of debt and credit, the proportion of his "trueth" (as veracity, loyalty, constancy and conformity with ideal standards) will equal her beauty. Indeed, the emphasis on the former will tend to outweigh the latter. For devotion is a costly enterprise, whether to a mistress or to poetry itself. And that Daniel's Muse is an economical one may be defended in another sense: restraint, measure and proportion are terms frequently applied to his verse in the effort to make his lack of intensity a virtue.[15]

There is no lack of development or "flow," however, within this sonnet. The river/ocean imagery is aptly carried by the periodic sentence with which the sonnet begins, and the predominance of the present tense serves to convey the sense of the past extending into the present and future. For the poem moves from the first quatrain's sense of the greatness of the lady's beauty versus the

meager resources of the poet, to the second quatrain's calculation of large payments by the poet, to the third quatrain's demand for a fair and accurate accounting. The latter also contains the request that the lady cancel his "cares" rather than allow them to accumulate.

Aside from the terms of the uncommon financial conceit, the diction is true to form for Daniel in its abstractness--"love," "Beautie," "youth," "dutie"--and in its Petrarchan orthodoxy--"playnts," "sighes," "sweete maide." Also typical is the undistinguished couplet:

> Reade it sweet maide, though it be donne but slightly;
> Who can shewe all his love, doth love but lightly.

We seldon find the aphoristic ending, the "sting in the tail," or witty reversal in Daniel's sonnets. More often they are flat and formulary, offering merely verbal resolutions in a summary statement. Here, "all his love," which can not be shown, seems to balance the "boundless Ocean of thy beautie" in the first line, and the idea of not loving lightly re-confirms his being "charg'd" in the second. Aside from these techniques of closure, the smooth surface of the rhythm effects a kind of distancing and lessening of emphasis, and the feminine endings tend to trivialize what has gone before. These are framing devices which reinforce the sense of separation from reality which play and art maintain.[16]

All of these opening sonnets display Daniel's deft exploitation of the possibilities within the chosen conceits and call attention to themselves and the sonnets to follow

in a calculated manner. We seem to have grounds from the beginning for the perception that these verses are about verse itself, constituting a rhetorical game congenial alike to the Renaissance and our own age. As an end in themselves in their literary opacity, the poems keep our attention on the verbal surface through a special kind of language performance.[17] The self-referential element in the three sonnets discussed thus far is present in some form in twenty-two of the sonnets, a goodly porportion of the sequence.[18] Occasionally the reflexive reference is brief, as in "Then had no censors eye these lines survaide" (17, line 1) and "I must not grieve my Love, whose eyes would reede/Lines of delight, whereon her youth might smyle" (43, lines 1-2). But there is much evidence that the poems are meant to testify, through their ostensible praise of a lady's beauty and virtue, to the essential subject of Daniel's own credentials: his literary merit in his skillful self-presentation as the traditional sonneteer. It is the poet, not the lady, who occupies center stage.

One aspect of this role to be played involves the protestation of the authenticity of one's love and the disavowal of mere rhetorical display in the service of fame. From Petrarch and his imitators, Daniel borrows the requisite disclaimer that he is at all motivated by self-seeking. So Number 4 insists in separate but related arguments on his lack of self-interest.

These plaintive verse, the Posts of my desire,
Which haste for succour to her slow regard:
Bear not report of any slender fire,
Forging a grief to win a fames reward.
Nor are my passions limnd for outward hewe,
For that no collours can depaynt my sorrows:
Delia herself, and all the world may view
Best in my face, how cares hath til'd deep sorrows.
No Bays I seek to deck my mourning brow,
O clear-eyde Rector of the holy Hill:
My humble accents crave the Olive bow,
Of her mild pity and relenting will.
These lines I use, t'unburthen mine owne hart;
My love affects no fame, not steemes of art.

Daniel's fellow poets would easily recognize this sonnet's antecedents and Daniel's bid for association with distinguished company. One model is Petrarch's 230th sonnet, beginning

Non lauro or palma, ma traquilla oliva
Pietà mi manda, e'l tempo rasserena,
E'l pianto asciuga, e vuol ancor ch'i viva.

It is to Desportes, however, that Daniel owes the first line: "Et que mes vers plaintifs, courriers de son merite."[19] But the deft manipulation of sources is only one aspect of sonnet play. The word games so intrinsic to the genre, such as those based on polysemy and phonemic patterns, are used by Daniel with an elegant spareness that makes them particularly effective. In the fourth sonnet, the "Posts of my desire," the messages or their vehicles, also suggest "imposts," thus the underlying theme of tribute or duty. The "haste for succour" and "her slow regard" of line 2 provide a neat antithesis as well as interesting patterns based on repetitions of "s" and "r" sounds. Also recalled by this line is the need for nurture of the "wailing infants"

of the earlier sonnet. The line "Forging a grief to win a fames reward" has a nice neoclassical structure with its assonance and alliteration. The double meaning of "forging" both points ahead to the denial of falsity in "Nor are my passions limn'd for outward hewe," and backwards to "Bear not report of any slender fire." The "Bays" of Apollo, "Rector of the holy hill," are seemingly rejected for Athena's "olive bow," the symbol of peace, "pity and relenting will." (One recalls the earlier Minerva reference.) But the "steemes of art" are obviously the desired prize despite the obligatory claim to the contrary.

The protestation of sincerity is repeated a number of times toward the close of the sequence. The final sonnet is particularly interesting for several reasons, among them the reprise of conceits from previous sonnets. The financial metaphor returns in its initial quatrain:

> Loe heere the impost of a faith unfaining
> That love hath paide, and her disdaine extorted:
> Beholde the message of my just complayning,
> That shewes the world how much my griefe imported.

"Impost" is not only the tax or duty owed by the debtor, but also the top member of a pillar or wall upon which the weight of an arch rests, and thus a most appropriate term for the conclusion of the series. Since it suggests "imposture" as well, it provides a playfully paradoxical context for "faith unfaining." The birth imagery of "Go wailing verse" is recalled in the third quatrain:

> My joyes abortive, perisht at their byrth,
> My carres long liv'de and will not dye without mee.

The second quatrain also begins with familiar vocabulary, "These tributary plaintes fraught with desire," before moving to a new figure expressing standard Petrarchan ideology: "I sende those eyes the cabinets of love." As "cabinets," Delia's eyes are a case for jewels, a small room for the exhibition of treasures, and a summerhouse or bower. The latter meaning leads to another conventional analogy, then antithesis:

> The Paradice whereto my hopes aspire,
> From out this hell, which mine afflictions prove.

Another well-worn metaphor for eyes is used in the immediately preceding sonnet, which again is pointedly self-referential:

> Unhappy pen and ill accepted papers,
> That intimate in vaine my chaste desiers,
> My chaste desiers, the ever burning tapers,
> Inkindled by her eyes celestiall fiers.

In this sonnet, Daniel assumes a stance more typical of the genre, that of the humble, unassuming and resigned sufferer. His is of course a nonsensual attraction, as befits the Petrarchan lover. The generativity conceit reappears with the modest implication that the results are stillborn and with the reaffirmation of the poet's disinterest in fame:

> But sith she scornes her owne, this rests for me,
> Ile mone my selfe, and hide the wrong I have:
> And so, content me that her frownes should be
> To my infant stile the cradle and the grave.
> What though my self no honor get thereby,
> Each byrd sings t'herselfe, and so will I.

One of the most interesting of the sonnets in this vein is 48, where purity of motive is protested with such

emphasis and pointed reference that one suspects some other poet as a target for competitive play.

> None other fame myne unambitious Muse,
> Affected ever but t'eternize thee:
> All other honours doe my hopes refuse,
> Which meaner priz'd and momentarie bee.
> For God forbid I should my papers blot,
> With mercynary lines, with servile pen:
> Praising vertues in them that have them not,
> Basely attending on the hopes of men.
> No no my verse respects not Thames nor Theaters,
> Nor seekes it to be knowne unto the Great:
> But Avon rich in fame, though poore in waters,
> Shall have my song, where Delia hath her seate.
> Avon shall be my Thames, and she my Song;
> Ile sound her name the Ryver all along.

Such phrases as "mercenary lines," "servile pen" and "Basely attending on the hopes of men" could probably apply to many of Daniel's contemporaries, but one wonders whether he has Spenser in mind. Even more suggestive are the claims of the Avon, "where Delia hath her seate," as against the Thames, and the couplet's identification of the poet's song with the river, in what could be an echo of the "Prothalamion." According to Spriet, there were several Avons, one of which flowed past Salisbury, close to Wilton, the seat of the Sidney family.[20] It is a staple Petrarchan strategy to celebrate places and rivers associated with the mistress.[21]

We have seen that success in sonnet-making involves mimicry and pretense in its wealth of repeatable patterns, ploys and procedures. The sonnet perfectly fits John Leyerle's useful definition of a literary game as "a paradigmatic structure defined by its own set of rules."[22] Rather than innovation as a strategy for success, the prac-

titioner develops the ability to choose the most appropriate of the available moves and to combine them as ingeniously as possible.[23] For everything possible for an Elizabethan to say about love and poetry had already been said, and by means of every conceivable ornament, conceit and trope. It is this very circumstance that created the game and set up the rules, the conditions of play, the ritualized constraints which the devoted player enjoys obeying. With his usual clarity, Lanham has spoken to the issue: "The imitative poet is involved in a contest with his source; he must outdo it (transcend the theme) or play his own poem off against it (vary the theme). In either case, the element of contest dominates."[24]

Since following models is an essential ludic element in the sonnet, but like other essentials needs to be disguised or denied, Daniel must insist on the uniqueness of his situation. In what may again be a competitive thrust at Spenser, Daniel's 46 begins:

> Let others sing of Knights and Paladins
> In aged accents of untimely words:
> Paint shadowes in imaginary lines
> Which well the reach of their high wits records;
> But I must sing of thee and those fair eyes.
> Authentic shall my verse in time to come,
> When yet th'unborn shall say, "Loe where she lies,
> Whose beauty made him speak that else was dumb."

The most remarkable word usage in the poem, and perhaps in the entire sequence, is the adjective-turned-verb "authentic." The meaning seems to be that the poet's verse will prove Delia's actual existence and the truth about her

attributes to future generations. But the syntax also seems to link "authentic" with "verse," so that the poetry too is made genuine and truthful. An interesting correlative meaning of the term comes from medieval music theory, where "authentic" relates to the tonic, in contrast with the "plagal," aslant of the tonic. The verse-as-monument theme, used in "Go wailing verse" (and in Shakespeare's consummate 19th sonnet) is strongly reintroduced in "Loe where she lies," a formula found primarily in epitaphs and elegies.[25]

The third quatrain of 46 can now make its awesomely powerful assertion, one of the two or three moments in the sequence when any poet in the language might envy Daniel's mastery of his medium. Again the monumental function comes to the fore:

> These are the arks, the trophies I erect,
> That fortify thy name against old age;
> And these thy sacred virtues must protect
> Against the dark and Time's consuming rage.

In a collection of poems most characteristically evocative of classical and late medieval imagery, "arks" carries Biblical significance not too common in the sonnets. (Perhaps the most comparable instance is the first line of 41, "How long shall I in mine affliction mone," in its echoes from the Psalms.) One remembers two types of ark in the Old Testament: first, the refuge for Noah and his family against the deluge; and second, the chest enclosing the two tablets of stone which contained the Ten Commandments--thus, the Ark of the Covenant. Both types may be conflated

here, as the poet pledges his heroic defense of his lady's name--not against slander, as in the tradition of amour courtois, but against mortality.

Though the opening lines had disparaged the knights of which "others" sing, the poet assumes a knightly role far more heavily fraught than the usual tournament. His battle is no less than "Against the dark and time's consuming rage." The impact of this line is tremendous, though hard to analyze as it conveys a sense of something primal to consciousness, of archaic fears and dreads. A major characteristic of Daniel's verse, never more conspicuous or successful than here, is his ability to seize upon the resources latent within large abstractions, and to give them power. This he accomplishes partly through the selection and modulation of vowel sounds, and partly through a heavily measured cadence. In the line under consideration, every foot contains a long vowel in its second syllable. The strong caesura after "dark" also contributes emphasis. The phrase "time's consúming rage" exemplifies what Henry Wells has termed the "sunken image," a type of image in which Daniel excels.[26] There is a sense of metaphor or of a concrete image although no definite picture crystallizes in the mind. According to Wells, "sunken metaphor opens the imagination to a greater range of receptivity, arouses fear or expectation, gives poignancy, vigor and power."[27] A contrasting type is "decorative imagery," which entails the "greatest restriction of imagination," in such techniques

as pastoral conceits, pathetic fallacies and fantastic personification, "the cool extravagancies of ingenuity."[28]

Because of this patent artificiality, it would seem far easier to justify the term "play" in regard to decorative imagery than to the sunken type. Wells understandably links the latter to "noble, elevated or contemplative passages," and judges Daniel to be a poet of "generous vision" and "rectitude." One would hesitate to dispute such claims, but one must find rather naive Wells' argument that Daniel is not "striving for effect" or status as a poet.[29] He seems, in fact, to be quite concerned with poetic achievement and renown though he takes pains to preserve the persona of the modest, unassuming suppliant.

The truth is that in bestowing immortality upon the name of Delia, Daniel can prevent the death of his own. One of the striking features of the sequence is the prominence given to the "eternizing" or "monumentalizing" conceit over other standard sonnet themes. Eight of the sonnets, or sixteen percent, emphasize this poetic function.[30] When one adds to this number the three additional sonnets (31-33) dealing with transience and the inevitability of decay, one can assume with some confidence that Daniel is working within an area of considerable emotional import to him. Nor does this kind of seriousness preclude play. As Rank, Becker and others have shown,[31] play and game are phenomena in which a defense against death may be integral.

As soon, however, as Daniel opens up the abyss--"the

dark and time's consuming rage"--he must close it again, to maintain the careful balance that will engage the reader without creating anxiety. The couplet therefore neutralizes the threat with a lightness achieved partly through its banality, and partly through the feminine endings and the internal half-rhyme of line 13:

> Though th'error of my youth they shall discover,
> Suffice, they show I liv'd and was thy lover.

It seems significant that all but one of the eternizing sonnets were added by Daniel to the original group. Only sonnet 30, one of the two Italian structures in the sequence, appeared in Newman's edition. Spriet argues convincingly that Daniel was far from dismayed by his 1591 exposure in print, since his sonnets were so well received, and that having found his voice and being fired by success, he set to work with relish to augment the original twenty-three.[32] The aggrieved tone of the unrewarded lover seems to have subsided in most of the new sonnets, to be succeeded by the discreet projection of a new confidence and the celebration of the power of the poet.

The theme of immortality through verse first appears in Sonnet 30.

> I once may see when yeeres shall wrecke my wronge,
> When golden haires shall chaunge to silver wyer:
> And those bright rayes, that kindle all this fyer
> Shall faile in force, their working not so stronge.
> Then beautie, now the burthen of my song,
> Whose glorious blaze the work dooth so admire:
> Must yeelde up all to tyrant Times desire:
> Then fade those flowres which deckt her pride so long.
> When if she grieve to gaze her in her glas,
> Which then presents her winter-withered hew;

> Go you my verse, goe tell her what she was;
> For what she was she best shall finde in you.
> Your firie heate lets not her glorie passe,
> But Phenix-like shall make her live anew.

Daniel introduces the theme in a context traditionally associated with the persuasion to love, as in the poems of the Pleiade, who unlike the Neoplatonist Petrarchists, aspire to sexual fulfillment in love. But, as Spriet discerns, the poet of Delia neither lusts after the flesh, as in Ronsard, nor worships the spirit, as in Bruno, but seems most attracted to the world in the sense of recognition and acclaim.[33] His name will be linked with Delia's by posterity, and it is thus that he and she will triumph over oblivion. A subtle shift from the standard Petrarchan ideology has occurred. It is now Time who is the cruel tyrant: the lady's hegemony is limited indeed. The Phoenix image is similarly transposed, so that it is the lady who will be reborn out of the ashes of her once flaming beauty by virtue of the "fierie heat" of the poems in their un-extinguishable perpetuity.

The next five sonnets, at the very heart of the sequence, comprise a mini-series: "Looke, Delia, how we steeme the half-blown Rose" (31), "But love whilst that thou mayst be lov'd againe" (32), "When men shall find thy flowre, thy glory passe," (33), "When Winter snowes upon thy golden heares" (34), and "Thou canst not dye while any zeale abounde" (35). For Daniel's own purposes, they use classical, Biblical and contemporary continental models to

expand upon the ephemerality of corporeal beauty. Their unity is further emphasized by the "chain" effect, a stylistic device popularized by Daniel, of repeating the last line of one sonnet as the first line of its successor.[34] He had used it earlier, with slight modification, in sonnets 9 and 10.

The provinces of poetry and play clearly appear to overlap in this technique: the exaggeration of order and the repetition of items in a pattern that would not normally occur are prevalent elements in play-theory.[35] One could easily relate the chain-device to the round dances and circle games of folk cultures. All of these phenomena seem to encompass residual enactments of the Frazerian cycle of rebirth-out-of-death, or the myth of eternal return, one of the most persistent responses of the human imagination to psychic yearnings for self-perpetuation.[36] Freud explained the psychoanalytic significance of repetition by the pleasure achieved through the principle of "economy in psychical expenditure." When we are expecting something new and different, and a familiar entity reappears instead and fits so well in its new context, the anticipated effort becomes superfluous and is thus "saved."[37] These assumptions may be reflected in the widely accepted view that play is restorative and restitutive of vital life energies.

Repetition and circularity also seem connected to the control, transformation, and even transcendence of time achieved in play. For play-time is privileged temporal

space carved out of ordinary reality and having the effect of arresting or modifying the linear flow. It is "charmed" time, and one of the most potent techniques of the charm or spell has historically been repetition.[38] In its measured cadence and high incidence of sonorous vowels, Daniel's verse has often been cited for its incantatory quality.[39] The most famous of his sonnets, "Care-charmer sleep" (45), is perhaps the best illustration.

Among the repetitive figures used with particular effectiveness in the chain sonnets is the medieval device of anaphora, which, like other phonetic and syntactic figures, exploits the dialectic between sameness and difference. Daniel employs it with skillful discretion in the first quatrain of 32, a sonnet which reads as a conventional carpe diem exercise, except that the expected erotic implication is muted. Daniel cannot comfortably espouse the optimistic Renaissance paganism of the Pleiade or other Continental poets.[40]

> But love whilst that thou mayst be lov'd againe,
> Now whilst thy May hath fill'd thy lape with flowers,
> Now whilst thy beauty beares without a staine,
> Now use the summer smiles, ere winter lowres.
> And whilst thou spread'st unto the rising sunne
> The fairest flowre that ever sawe the light,
> Now joys thy time before thy sweete be done,
> And, Delia, thinke thy morning must have night,
> And that thy brightness sets at length to west;
> When thou wilt close up that which now thou showest;
> And thinke the same becomes thy fading best,
> Which then shall hide it most, and cover lowest.
> Men do not weigh the stalke for what it was,
> When once they find her flowre, her glory, passe.

Temporal constructions abound in the poem, as indicated by

such words as "whilst," "againe," "now," "ere," "before," "at length," "then" and "once." And tension is set up between the oppositions of summer/winter, morning/night, rising/setting. One does not say carpe diem without also saying memento mori. The penultimate line shows the emphasis and modulation of tempo Daniel achieves with exclusively monosyllabic verses; their effect has been described as that of "the ineluctable character of destiny."[41] The incidence of monosyllabic lines is a very high nine percent in the sequence.[42] The stress on "Men" in line 13 modifies the iambic and echoes the adverbial forms "when" and "then," which are recapitulated in the final line carried over to the next sonnet. The long diphthong in "weigh" contributes to the "weight," the slowing-down already inherent in the constellation of monosyllables.

Daniel makes of the next sonnet, beginning with the echoing line "When men shall find thy flowre, thy glory passe," an adaptation of Ronsard's famous "Quand vous serez vien veille, au soir à la chandelle."[43] There are noteworthy differences, however, between the two sonnets, which show that Daniel was no slavish imitator of his models. In Ronsard's elegiac meditation, the poet renders his own mortality in imagery which looks back to classical literature:

> Je serai sous la terre, et fantôme sans os
> Par les ombres mysterix je prendrai mon repos.

Daniel's version denies the vulnerability of the poet to death; in a tone of firm assurance, his speaker looks ahead,

not only to his imperviousness to time in contrast to the lady, but also to self-vindication.

> When men shall find thy flowre, thy glory passe,
> And thou with careful brow sitting alone;
> Received hast this message from thy glasse,
> That tells thee trueth, and saies that all is gone,
> Fresh shalt thou see in mee the wounds thou madest,
> Though spent thy flame, in mee the heate remayning:
> I that have lov'd thee thus before thou fadest,
> My faith shall waxe, when thou art in thy waning,
> The world shall finde this miracle in mee,
> That fire can burne when all the matter's spent:
> Then what my faith hath beene thyselfe shalt see,
> And that thou wast unkind thou maiest repent,
> Thou maiest repent that thou hast scorn'd my teares,
> When Winter snowes uppon thy golden heares.

The manipulation of the Petrarchan "wounds," "flames" and "golden hairs" produces idiosyncratic variations upon the familiar themes.

We have noted that a strong thrust in Delia is the concern with poetic justice; it is well illustrated here in Sonnet 33, "And that thou wast unkind thou maiest repent." One of the most fascinating discoveries in Daniel is that this concern generates a transposition of the Petrarchan model such that the poet replaces the lady as the object of ethos (his "faith" is exemplary) and the lady replaces the poet as the object of pathos (her beauty will soon fade). This seems to be Daniel's most original contribution to the genre, and another indication of his ludic impulse. For the technique of inversion is a game mechanism, as Henri Bergson's discussion of comic devices asserts.[44]

The justice theme also generates that distinctive dialectic in Daniel between recollection and anticipation.

We have seen this dialectic working in the repeated lines of the linked sonnets which look both backwards and forwards. We have seen it operating thematically and figuratively as well. Delia begins in an emphasis on recollection: the book of accounts that will prove the poet's past payments to have been faithful service; the wailing infants who are living evidence of the lady's cumulative culpability. John T. Shawcross has analyzed the forensic mode of 11, in which the poet is "asking for a positive judgment by the reader of his past actions."[45] A number of the early sonnets pursue this strategy. Then as the series progresses and the eternizing theme comes into prominence, the emphasis shifts to the anticipation that the judgment of the poet's merits will be made by posterity, that the future will bestow the glory withheld by the present. Daniel's persona seems less excited by the lady's attributes than by the poetic values he demonstrates to the world. Delia is not so much the apotheosis of a lady as the flexing of poetic muscles.

The last unit but one of the five sonnets on mutability manifests this idea in an obviously self-conscious, self-referential way.

> When Winter snowes upon thy golden heares,
> And frost of age hath nipt thy flowers neere;
> When darke shall seeme thy day that never cleares,
> And all lyes withred that was held so deere.
> Then take this picture which I heere present thee,
> Limned with a Pensill not all unworthy:
> Heere see the giftes that God and nature lent thee;
> Heere reade thy selfe and what I suffered for thee.
> This may remaine thy lasting monument,
> Which happily posteritie may cherish:

> These collours with thy fading are not spent;
> These may remaine, when thou and I shall perish.
> If they remaine, then thou shalt live thereby;
> They will remaine, and so thou canst not dye.

The sense of closure is very strong here, largely because of the repetitions. The last six lines exemplify as well other closural devices cited by Barbara Herrnstein Smith: parallelisms, summary of major themes, reference to death, the sense of permanence, and the "oracular assertion of verity."[46] Smith discusses repetition itself, "the fundamental phenomenon of poetic form," as a cumulative force for continuation, that must be overcome to effect closure.[47] (Relevant here is the concept of circularity discussed above.) Sonnet couplets are exemplary devices for closure in their "terminal modification" of a structural unity.[48]

Smith's work makes an important contribution to the recognition of structural as well as affective links between poetry and play. She couples poems and games in their shared identity as "enclosures"; both forms are highly organized sequences, separated as if by an implicit frame from an ordinary ground of relative disorder or randomness.[49] We have noted how Daniel prefers to create small, well-proportioned units within the whole, to achieve a well delimited unity. Poetic space is a playground framed by margins and typographical arrangement; "rhythms, lineation and other formal features frame and distinguish representations of personal utterances from nonfictive, historical utterances."[50] Other terms for this playground are stage, theater and arena,

as the poem is seen as a performance, an act within a scene, the imitation or representation of an utterance.[51] Similar ludic opportunities in the poem are enhanced by the tensions created and released as the poem progresses. Expectations are aroused through the metrical givens, the historical precedents, and the direction set in the opening lines. But as Smith points out, and Coleridge before her, the satisfaction of these expectations occurs only through some evasions, postponements or contradictions that toy with or tease our expectations. This approach takes cognizance of the poet-reader interaction as integral to the game. "Art inhabits the country between chaos and cliché."[52] If we translate these parameters as paidia and ludus, we are in even more familiar territory.

Among poetic structures, the sonnet shares with the sestina, the villanelle, the rondel and other specific verse forms, the most explicit kind of frame, the most precise boundaries, and the most stringently observed rules. For these reasons it has been among the most challenging of poetic games. To a large extent the form has determined the content: the units of thought tend to correspond more or less exactly with the external divisions. (In Delia the correspondence is optimal, because Daniel exhibits a highly developed sense of measure and proportion.) J. V. Cunningham has commented upon this influence on the poet's experience of writing and on the final text: "he who would write a sonnet must begin with the idea of the form, and one can almost say . . . that he hopes it will turn out to have a

subject."[53] Another way of describing the sonnet structure, or the relation of its end to its beginning, comes from I. A. Richards, whose analysis of poetic process neatly defines the game of the sonnet: "a poem begins by creating a linguistic problem whose solution by language will be the attainment of its end."[54]

To a large extent, this linguistic problem is set up by syntactical structures that embody the logic of persuasion. Common rhetorical patterns used by sonneteers include comparison and contrast, cause and effect, description of process, and catalogues. Daniel favors the first three and tends to shun the latter, except as an occasional exercise to show his mastery of the blazon. Such an exception is Sonnet 18, "Restore thy tresses to the golden Ore," an adaptation of Du Bellay's L'Olive, 91, which begins: "Rendez à l'or cete couleur, qui dore/Ces blonds cheveux, rendez mi l'autres choses."[55] Daniel also eschews elaborate syllogistic reasoning, for the most part, in favor of simpler progressions of thought by association.

A good example of his method is offered by 35, the last in the chain of sonnets discussed above. It begins with the echo of the preceding sonnet's last line, then shifts to other tactics. With the reflexiveness we have seen so characteristic of the sequence, acknowledgement is made to the reader, whose "zeal" (a favored term in Delia) completes that of the poet in conferring immortality on the lady. But the chief idea advanced in the poem is that of

the poet's worthiness to compete with the master-player of them all. The idea must, however, be deftly proposed through a self-effacing rhetoric that pretends to deny the competition. The pose of humility becomes the means of "scoring."

> Thou canst not dye whilst any zeal abounde
> In feeling harts, that can conceive these lines:
> Though thou a Laura hast no Petrarch founde,
> In base attire, yet cleerely Beautie shines.
> And I, though borne in a colder clime,
> Doe feele mine inward heate as great, I knowe it:
> He never had more faith, although more rime,
> I love as well, though he could better shew it.
> But I may ad one feather to thy fame,
> To helpe her flight throughout the fairest Ile:
> And if my penne could more enlarge thy name,
> Then shouldst thou live in an immortal stile.
> But though that Laura better limned bee,
> Suffice, thou shalt be lov'd as well as shee.

The "linguistic problem" to be solved in the sonnet is posed in adversative clauses: how Delia can be as suitably celebrated as Laura, lacking a proper Petrarch. Though a series of contrasts or oppositions ostensibly grant superiority to Laura's lover, the poet of Delia subtly advances his own merits in an ingenious manipulation of pluses and minuses, until the "problem" disappears.

Several details within the third quatrain deserve notice as a ludic network of recurring images becomes more prominent. The image of flight in regard to fame and aspiration has been anticipated in several earlier sonnets. In 12, his "spotlesse love hoovers with white wings." Number 27 employs a submerged allusion to the Icarus myth: "My desires wings so high aspiring/Now melted with the sunne

that hath possest me." In 28, the poet hopes to "skale the heaven of her hart." In no case does such longing mean carnal passion, and ascension in Daniel also lacks the mystical overtones of the Neoplatonists. It seems to represent instead the desired "high" of poetic achievement. In lines 11 and 12 of the sonnet quoted immediately above, a play on words occurs in "immortal stile" as the noun denotes his mode of expression in language, his mode of acting or performing, and a literal writing or drawing instrument.

The patriotic reference in this sonnet to "the fairest Ile" from the future poet of The Civil Wars find correspondences elsewhere in Delia. Chief among them is 44, identified by commentators as written in Italy during Daniel's sojourn there as aide to Sir Edward Dymoke.[56] Using the popular Renaissance metaphor of the newly discovered principle of magnetism, Daniel conflates the attraction of Delia with that of "my joyfull North . . . faire Albion."[57] The "attractive vertue of her eyes" signifies variously power, influence, excellence and chastity. "Th'eternal volume which her fame compyleth" bears both a metaphoric and a metonymic relationship to "that honour which her beauty wonne," but is also undoubtedly the literal book of poems itself. Among the sonnet's other merits, one admires the skillfully handled assonance and alliteration of the third quatrain.

> Drawne with th'attractive vertue of her eyes,
> My toucht hart tunres it to that happie cost:

My joyfull North, where all my fortune lyes,
The levell of my hopes desired most.
  There where my Delia fayrer than the sunne,
Deckt with her youth whereon the world smyleth:
Joyes in that honour which her beautie wonne,
Th'eternal volume which her fame compyleth.
  Florish faire Albion, glory of the North,
Neptunes darling helde betweene his armes:
Devided from the world as better worth,
Kept for himselfe, defended from all harmes.
  Still let disarmed peace decke her and thee;
  And Muse-foe Mars, abroade farre fostred bee.

The allusion to "Neptune's darling" (whom one wants to identify with Marlowe's Leander) in line 10, is one of the most successful of Daniel's submerged metaphors. It adds a third one-sided love portrayed in the poem: besides the poet and Delia and the poet and Albion, there is Neptune and Albion. Neptune's embrace, dividing Albion from the world, defends "from all harmes" as the poet defends Delia from the dangers of mortality. The poem has moved from images of drawing lovers together to images of keeping foes apart and of the natural divisions created by "better worth." As the natural enemy of Delia is time and death, the natural enemy of Albion is "Muse-foe Mars." If the sonnet expresses the nostalgia of a displaced Englishman and the concern for peace, it may also express the distrust of Italy, identified in English minds with war and treachery.

Similarly in 38, Daniel had portrayed his poet as Leander "striving in these waves:/Poore soule forespent, whose force can do no more." Again, the play of sounds in the latter line is expertly rendered. And again, the "powers" and "vertue" of the eyes of the "lovely maide" are to

"look from the shore" and "wafte him" as a "happy convoy to a holy lande," from which her outstretched hand is to be a "pledge of peace."

Classical and mythological figures are staples of the genre, and to play the sonnet game properly an appropriate representation must be included. Other such figures evoked in Delia include Sisyphus: "The never-resting stone of care to roule" (9); Pygmalion: "O happie he that joy'd his stone and arte" (13); Prometheus: "my Vultur-gnawne hart" (15); "the Hydra of my cares renuing" (16); Narcissus: "chaung'd t'a flowre," in contrast to the turn to flint of Delia's heart by her Medusa's eye (29); and the "wayling Iliades of my tragicke wo" (39). For the most part, Daniel is too elegant a craftsman to load his verse down with erudition. The greatest concentration of mythological allusions is in 18, which exploits the conceit of tracing the lady's attributes to their "sources" and equating her attributes to precious substances. It exemplifies the type of sonnet convention that Shakespeare's 21 and 130 are disavowing.

> Restore thy tresses to the golden Ore,
> Yeelde Cithereas sonne those Arkes of love;
> Bequeath the heavens the starres that I adore,
> And to th'Orient do thy Pearles remove.
> Yeelde thy hands pride unto th'yvory whight,
> T'Arabian odors give thy breathing sweete:
> Restore thy blush unto Aurora bright,
> To Thetis give the honour of thy feete.
> Let Venus have thy graces, her resigned,
> And thy sweete voyce give backe unto the Spheares:
> But yet restore thy fearce and cruell minde,
> To Hyrcan Tygers, and to ruthles Beares.
> Yeelde to the Marble thy hard hart againe;
> So shalt thou cease to plague, and I to paine.

Although such references are usually brief in Daniel, there are notable exceptions. Sonnet 40 presents Delia as Cynthia, and develops the standard conceit of the poet's ocean of tears that attends upon "his Soveraignes course," paying "the impost of his waves." (Similar language has appeared in the first sonnet of the sequence and will re-occur in the last.) The fifth sonnet provides a clever version of the Actaeon myth:

> Whilst youth and error led my wandring minde,
> And set my thoughts in heedeles waies to range:
> All unawares a Goddesse chaste I finde,
> Diana-like, to worke my suddaine change.
> For her no sooner had my view bewrayd,
> But with disdaine to see me in that place:
> With fairest hand, the most unkindest maide,
> Castes water-cold disdaine upon my face.
> Which turn'd my sport into a Harts dispaire,
> Which still is chac'd, whilst I have any breath,
> By mine owne thoughts, set on me by my faire,
> My thoughts like houndes, pursue me to my death.
> Those that I fostred of mine owne accord,
> Are made by her to murther thus their Lord.

In its emphasis on "heedeless waies," the initial quatrain is somewhat reminiscent of Petrarch's third sonnet, commemorating his first view of Laura on Good Friday: "Era il giorno ch'al sol si scoloraro." In Daniel's sonnet, the "suddaine change" wrought by the encounter with the goddess and her casting of "water-cold disdaine" is the metamorphosis of "sport into a Harts dispaire." The hart/heart and chac'd/chaste homonyms offer typical sonnet word-play which Daniel is careful not to vitiate by overuse. The panic of the hunter turned victim, pursued by his own hound-like thoughts, is mimetically rendered by the third quatrain, where three

of its lines are broken into choppy, "breathless" phrases. The story is recapitulated in the couplet, with a possible pun on "accord" suggesting the Latin cordis.

Spriet cites this and the Leander sonnet (38) as examples of the use of images whose origin may have been an emblem.[58] This seems a kind of play in itself and is possibly related to the fact that many of Daniel's images seem only referential and lacking in plasticity. Other examples that may have been inspired by emblems are the previously noted 12, beginning "My spotless love hoovers with white wings/About the temple of the proudest frame"; the labyrinth image of 17: "Since the first looke that led me to this error/To this thoughts-maze, to my confusion tending"; the evocation of Nero in 39: "Who whilst I burne, she singes at my soules wrack/Looking a loft from Turret of her pride"; and the censor in 8, sending the smoke of the poet's sighs to heaven.

This latter sonnet is indicative also of a favorite formal device in Daniel which betrays a ludic method: the use of triple parallels which advance the sonnet's thought and can fit neatly into the slots provided by the quatrains. In 8, the synecdochic images are "hart," "eyes" and "verse," which become, respectively, "sacrifize," "agents," and "advocates." Sonnet 11 is even more ambitious as a carmen correlativum. It begins "Teares, vowes, and prayers win the hardest hart" and concludes:

> Yet will I weepe, vowe, pray to cruell Shee;
> Flint, Frost, Disdaine, weares, melts, and yeeldes
> we see.

A similar pattern obtains in 25, beginning

> Raigne in my thoughts faire hand, sweete eye,
> rare voyce
> Possesse me whole, my harts triumvirat.

The reader would doubtless recall Sonnet 43 of Astrophil and Stella: "Fair eyes, sweet lips, dear heart, that foolish I." But the most elaborate of these triplet constructions is found in 14, where the tone as well as the technique is pleasingly playful.

> Those amber locks, are those same nets my deere,
> Wherewith my libertie thou didst surprize;
> Love was the flame, that fired me so near,
> The dart transpearcing, were those Cristall eyes.
> Strong is the net, and fervent is the flame;
> Deepe is the wound, my sighs do well report:
> Yet doe I love, adore, and praise the same,
> That holdes, that burnes, that wounds me in this sort
> And list not seeke to break, to quench, to heale,
> The bonde, the flame, the wound that festreth so;
> By knife, by lyquor, or by salve to deal:
> So much I please to perish in my woe.
> Yer least long travails be above my strength,
> Good Delia lose, quench, heale me now at length.

The game-properties here seem obvious. What Chatman and Levin say about phonotactic features can be expanded by implication to include this kind of complex order: "poets characteristically assume phonological constraints--like meter, alliteration and so forth--as if the achievement were finer, more complex, more interesting if it were charged with an additional linguistic burden. The extra handicap whets the professional's appetite."[59] Though the term play is not used, essential ludic motives and procedures are aptly described which can appropriately apply to Daniel.

Just as integral to his game, or to his "problem as a

craftsman," as one writer prefers to call it, is the sonneteer's challenge of "making his own pastiche of the conventional Petrarchan motifs."[60] Even a superficial reading of Delia would reveal that Daniel chose from the common stock of themes, stylistic devices, rhetorical strategies, conceits, epithets, comparisons, and images that had been developed largely by the Italians and their French imitators. The standard manifestations of love are recounted, along with a recital of their baleful effects and melancholy pleas for pity. The poet suffers oxymoronically a "living death" and (better) "pleasures horror" (9) from the disdain of his "sweet unkind" (5) and "friendly foe" (24). Delia is the "Cruell Fayre" (8, 10, 20, 27), the tyrant (21, 24, 26, 39) with heart of flint (11, 13, 17, 23). The tears of the poet are distilled by the heat of a sacred flame (21); his heart flies to the sanctuary of the lady's bosom, where she slays it (26); he chides Delia for crediting her mirror (29); he wanders in a maze of "sorrowes never ending" (17); he suffers from sleeplessness (45). Until the last four lines, Sonnet 6 seems merely a rehearsal of typical tropes and topoi:

> Fair is my love, and cruel as she's fair:
> Her brow shades frowns, although her eyes are sunny;
> Her smiles are lightning, though her pride despair;
> And her disdains are gall, her favors honey.
> A modest maid, decked with a blush of honor,
> Whose feet do tread green paths of youth and love,
> The wonder of all eyes that look upon her,
> Sacred on earth, designed a saint above.
> Chastity and Beauty, which were deadly foes,
> Live reconciled friends within her brow;
> And had she pity to conjoin with those,
> Then who had heard the plaints I utter now?
> Oh had she not been fair and thus unkind,
> My muse had slept, and none had known my mind.

We note the triple oppositions in lines two through four. Leonard Forster has termed the elaboration and exploitation of antitheses the essence of Petrarchism.[61] We also note the "turn," unusual for Daniel, in lines 11-14, which suggests Delia's central role of stimulus or provocatrice. His poetry is made possible by his sufferings at her hand. If he takes pleasure in his pain, this is the rationale: his resulting song will be admired. She is the necessary condition, the creative principle, which has to be embodied in some semi-real, semi-fictional figure so that he can impersonate the Petrarchan lover. Relevant in this connection is a comment made by Ants Oras, who, in discussing Spenser's poetry, could be characterizing the Renaissance sonnet: "much of the matter is there for the sake of the manner: we often feel it to be essentially an element in a demonstration of style."[62] If Delia is portrayed through the game of hyperbole in mock-serious categories long emptied of credible feeling from the point of view of the "real world," one can more readily see the necessity for her invention, wholly or in part. If the poet's performance is stereotyped, so is hers. She is under an inherent obligation imposed by the genre: since "fair," therefore "unkind." But a solution to this problem exists also. The bane is really a blessing since through her he wins notice and acclaim.

And if an exhaustive source-hunt were to reveal not a single original expression in Delia, Daniel would lose no status, for originality is not a proficiency required and

tested by the rigors of the game. Of the skills that are exercised, Daniel demonstrates the mastery of an accomplished player. He shows elegant discrimination in his choices, eliminating some possibilities and highlighting others, according to his needs, preferences and strengths. Omitted, for example, are references to the fabulous animals of the bestiaries, Anacreontic Cupids and their arrows.[63] Ornate diction, involuted syntax, and the "flowers" and "colours" of elocutio are sacrificed or minimized for a more modern style. An important deviation from his Italian models was his selection of the three-quatrain-and-couplet form for which Surrey is given chief credit. It allows at the same time more scope and more clear-cut divisions of thought.

Doubtless taking some pride in an ear for metrical smoothness and phonic harmony, he achieves a mellifluous dignity in his poetic line. A comparative analysis would probably reveal that the linguistic stress corresponds with the ictus to a degree unexcelled if not unparalleled in Renaissance poetry. Yet for the most part he manages to avoid monotony, by varying the iambs with trochees and spondees, particularly before the caesura. His comprehension of the mechanics of English versification is prominently displayed in A Defence: "though it doth not strictly observe long and short syllables, yet it most religiously respects the accent; and as the short and the long make number, so the Acute and grave accent yeelde harmonie."[64] Another technical factor is that he extends a substantial number of

lines with feminine endings, although the 1592 sonnets tend less in this direction. There are sixty-eight of these extra-syllabic lines in the sequence, comprising twenty percent of the total. Sonnet 17, "Since the first looke that led me to this error," consists entirely of feminine rhymes. Perhaps representative of the characteristic tone and rhythm of an early Daniel sonnet, with the long vowels and final participles, is 16, the other sonnet on sleep in Delia. The pace is often slow (some would call it sluggish) from its beginning, "Happie in sleepe, waking content to languish," a virtual translation of Petrarch's "Beato in sogno, edi languir contento" (Rime, 212). The last six lines read:

> But still the Hydra of my cares renuing,
> Revives new sorrowes of her fresh disdayning;
> Still must I goe the Summer windes pursuing;
> Finding no ende not Period of my payning.
> Waile all my life, my griefes do touch so neerely,
> And thus I live, because I love her deerely.

Here the feminine endings seem to increase the resonance of the lines, befitting the nature of the "little song."

Musical tropes comprise the highly self-referential sonnet near the end of the sequence beginning "Like as the Lute that joyes or else dislikes." Sonnet 47 approaches the level of communication Gregory Bateson has termed "meta-linguistic," the transmission of messages where "the subject of discourse is the language."[65] It is an aspect of play, particularly when there are other levels of communication in operation at the same time, as in this sonnet. The popular analogy of poetry to the lute, especially in the

"plaining" verse of the thwarted lover, had been helped into prominence by Wyatt's lyric, "Blame not my lute." Daniel's Sonnet 47 appeared in his brother John Daniel's collection of songs published in 1606: "Songs for the lute, viol, and voice: composed by J. Danyel, Batchelor in Musicke."[66]

> Like as the Lute that joyes or else dislikes,
> As is his arte that playes upon the same:
> So sounds my Muse according as she strikes
> On my hart strings high tun'd unto her fame.
> Her touch doth cause the warble of the sound,
> Which heere I yeeld in lamentable wise,
> A wailing deskant on the sweetest ground
> Whose due reports give honor to her eyes,
> Els harsh my style, untunable my Muse,
> Hoarce sounds the voyce that prayseth not her name:
> If any pleasing realish heere I use,
> Then judge the world her beautie gives the same.
> O happie ground that makes the musique such,
> And blessed hand that gives so sweete a tuch.

John Hollander has commented that not only is the figure of heart-strings virtually a cliché even in the 1590s but that the pun of "touch" is well on the way to becoming one.[67] The latter denotes the playing of an instrument with the fingers and the musical strain so produced, as well as a caress. The "due reports" of line 8 carry meanings of resounding notes, statements concerning fame or reputation, and the presentation of the self for service. His "pleasing realish" involves the sense in old music of a grace or embellishment. Is there a play also on the real/ideal Delia? The "happie ground" indicates the tune itself on which descants are raised, as well as the more general idea of the foundation of his art. These techniques serve to focus attention on the pleasurable resources within language in

its rich complexity of sound and sense, the "self-pleasing" aspects of play.

This sonnet is suggestive not only for its word-play, but also for its corroboration of the significance suggested earlier of the figure of the lady, around whom the sequence purports to revolve. The music is produced by his Muse upon the instrument of the poet's heart-strings, and the Muse is identified with the lady herself. The strings on which she strikes are "high tun'd unto her fame," and give off "reports" of her eyes, her name and her beauty. Throughout the sequence, the idea of the lady and the idea of literary success have been conflated as the poems have tended to turn in upon themselves.

A notable instance is Sonnet 36, which feigns concern about the exposure in print which the poet's eternizing vocation entails. The whole fabric of fin amor depends upon the rule of secrecy, ostensibly for the protection of the lady's reputation, but actually to provide the excitement of the game, a convention as old as Ovid. Although Daniel usually avoids the technique of reversal in a sestet or couplet, he frequently honors the common practice of providing some sense of conflict or rhetorical tension to be resolved in the course of the sonnet. Here the justification for his indiscretion is again the poem-as-monument theme: "entombment" in the poet's lines is a happy alternative to the ignominy of "burial."

O be not griev'd that these my papers should,
Bewray unto the world howe faire thou art:
Or that my wits have shew'd the best they could,
The chastest flame that ever warmed hart.
Thinke nor sweete Delia, this shall be thy shame,
My Muse should sound thy praise with mournefull warble:
How many lives the glory of whose name,
Shall rest in yee, when thine is grav'd in Marble.
Thou maist in after ages live esteem'd,
Unburied in these lines reserv'd in purenes;
These shall intombe those eyes, that have redeem'd
Mee from the vulgar, thee from all obscureness.
Although my carefull accents never mov'd thee;
Yet count it no disgrace that I have lov'd thee.

The meaning of the mistress and her relationship to the poet has been problematic throughout the history of the genre. Donne's dry equation of the mistress with the muse in "Loves growth" could be a derogatory response to Daniel:

Love's not so pure, and abstract, as they use
To say, which have no Mistresse but their Muse.[68]

Even Laura was called a poetic fiction, an idea engendered partly by the multiple puns on her name. Petrarch's reply to his friend Colonna hardly resolved the issue: "You actually say that I have invented the name of Laura in order to have someone to talk about, and in order to set people talking about me, but that, in reality, I have no 'Laura' in mind, except that poetical laurel to which I have aspired, as my long and unwearied toil bears witness . . . On this point, would that your jests were true; O that it were dissimulation and not madness."[69]

The name of Delia may have several sources. A German critic of the last century named Guggenheim thought it borrowed from the first book of elegies by Tibullus.[70] Janet Scott identifies it as a name of Artemis or Diana

derived from her birthplace, the island of Delos.[71] Most scholars have followed Sidney Lee in linking Delia with Maurice Scève's Délie, objet de plus haute vertu, a collection of over five hundred dizains or epigrams of love on the Petrarchan model, but have found no direct imitation of Scève.[72] In French it is an anagram of "l'idée" and in English "ideal," an indication, as John Shawcross points out, that Daniel's concern is not love but achievement as a humanist man of letters.[73] Angus Fletcher notes that a play is made possible on idea as form, since there is "an inherent playfulness in the whole Neoplatonic game of 'idea.'"[74]

To interpret the devotion to Delia thus as the devotion to poetry, the most demanding and capricious of mistresses, seems a credible approach, particularly when we consider the sequence's major preoccupations. Indications are that Daniel is capitalizing on major iconographic trends. In reference to the eternizing conceit in emblem literature, R. J. Clements affirms, "Of all the literary notions encountered in emblem books, this belief that the Muse saves poets from ignominy and death is the most frequent."[75] The ludic defenses against death have been cited in a previous chapter.[76] In regard to this theme, Otto Rank has written at some length about the psychology of the artist, "whose impulse to create arises precisely from this tendency to immortalize himself in his work; so we can be in no doubt as to whose transitoriness it is that the poet

deplores with almost monotonous repetition." Rank sees the muse as a projection of the artist's creative possibilities and a figure identified with the ideological ego of the artist in the same way as the mother is identified with the biological ego.[77] Similarly, Carl Jung posits the feminine "anima" within the male as the archetype of creativity. The artist is seen as having a special "relationship" with his anima.[78]

In the light of these views, Spriet's assessment seems astute: "Au risque de sembler cultiver le paradoxe, on peut puisque affirmer que la chasteté du chantre de Delia est aussi intéressée et aussi egoiste que l'épicuresme de plus sensuel des poètes . . ."[79] Let other poets opt for carnal fulfillment or still others for moral elevation; the lust in Daniel seems to be for literary accomplishment and recognition.

If one reads the sequence as a kind of allegory of the poetic life and recognizes in Delia the powers of which she is an appropriate symbol, it works very well. Plutarch's definition of allegory as "one thing related and another understood" seems not far afield of Bateson's two "peculiarities" of play: first, "the messages or signals exchanged . . . are in a certain sense untrue or not meant"; and, secondly, "that which is denoted by these signals is non-existent."[80]

As represented by Samuel Daniel, the sonnet sequence thus functions at the same time to reveal and to conceal

messages to a coterie of receivers, and where there is such simulation and cultivated tension between opposite tendencies there is play. The Elizabethan sonnet has been found to satisfy a number of other definitions and descriptions of play as well. It fits Huizinga's understanding of the ludic as the representation of something and the contest for something--"the contest for the best representation of something" --in this case, a sympathetic English version of the Petrarchan lover. Both "self-pleasing" and "agonistic," it is an opportunity to "score," to succeed, to fail (Lanham and Frost). It is a "paradigmatic linguistic structure" existing for its own sake and "defined by its own set of rules" (Leyerle). It is a strategy which pits a player against self-imposed obstacles (Michel Beaujour),[81] against his own creative source and against other players past and present. It is a "formal construct of boundaries, procedures, errors and conventions" (Philip Lewis).[82] Sonnet-making is a trial of wits and a test of skills exercised by the attack on a problem posed for arousal of stimulation (Ellis) and for the sheer satisfaction of solving it (Richards). It is a performance (Poirier) in a public arena, an impersonation that calls on a repertory of gestures, poses and utterances. It is "framed interaction" (Bateson) between the poet and the reader which manipulates expectation and surprise (Coleridge and Smith). It is a restructuring of reality into "an enigmatic realm that is not nothing and yet is nothing real" (Eugen Fink).[83]

It is a "system of death denial" (Becker),[84] the acting out of the archetypes of hero and anima (Jung).

If the ludic elements of the sonnet seem established, the particular nature of its game needs further delineation. We must turn to another poetic genre, the Cavalier lyric, to see how these areas of play intersect and/or stand aloof from each other.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

CHAPTER IV

[1]Sonnets 1 and 2 in Newman are 2 and 3, respectively, in Delia.

[2]Rime, CCCXXXIII.

[3]Lanham, The Motives of Eloquence, p. 119.

[4]See also the Dedication, New Arcadia, Albert Feuillerat, ed., The Prose Works of Sir Philip Sidney (Cambridge: Univ. Press, 1962): "I could well find in my harte, to cast out in some desert of forgetfulness this child, which I am loath to father." Vol. 2, p. 9; and W. A. Ringler, ed., The Poems of Sir Philip Sidney (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1962), p. 141:

> Thou paine, the onely guest of loath'd constraint,
> The child of curse, man's weaknesse foster-child,
> Brother to woe, and father of complaint.
> (Certain Sonnets 10, ll. 1-3)

Spriet, who called these to my attention, does not think Daniel knew Astrophil and Stella before composing his own sonnets (p. 237).

[5]Lewis, p. 531.

[6]Only 2 sonnets in Delia are in the Italian form: 28 and 30. Another, "The Slie Inchanter," appeared in Newman, but was eliminated in 1592.

[7]Among treatments of French influence, see Spriet, pp. 222-234; Sidney Lee, Vol. I, liv-lxv; C. Rees, "Some Debts of Samuel Daniel to Du Bellay," MLN 24 (1909), 134-140; L. E. Kastner, "The English Sonneteers and the French Poets," MLR 3 (1908), 268-277.

[8]For enjambments, see Sonnets 1, 4, 7, 10, 12, 21, 25, 30, 35, 37, 39, 40, 46, 48 and 49. There are two run-over lines each in 12, 37 and 46.

[9]Samuel Daniel, A Defence of Ryme against a Pamphlet entituled: Observations in the Art of English Poesie 1603, Elizabethan & Jacobean Quartos, ed., G. H. Harrison (New York: Barnes & Noble, 1966), p. 17.

[10]Spriet expresses this opinion, p. 199.

[11]See Samuel Levin, Linguistic Structures in Poetry (The Hague: Mouton, 1969), pp. 56-57; and Stephen Booth, An Essay on Shakespeare's Sonnets (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1969), pp. 38-39 for discussions of the protasis/apodosis construction.

[12]This formula is discussed by Schaar, pp. 36-40.

[13]Lee, p. lix.

[14]Mary Sidney, Preface to the Psalms, The Poems of Sir Philip Sidney, ed. William A. Ringler, Jr. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1962), p. 268. I am indebted to Spriet for calling these lines to my attention.

[15]See Spriet, pp. 590 and 605.

[16]See discussion of Barbara Herrnstein Smith's work, below, pp. 98-99.

[17]For a discussion of literary "opacity" versus "transparence," see Roland Barthes, "Science vs. Literature," The Times Literary Supplement, 28 September 1967, pp. 410-416.

[18]See Sonnets 1-4, 6-8, 13, 30, 34-37, 39, 43, 44, 46-50.

[19]Phillippe Desportes, Les Amours d'Hippolyte, ed. Victor E. Graham (Geneva and Paris, 1960), no. 34.

[20]Spriet, p. 90.

[21]See Leonard Forster, The Icy Fire, 5 Studies in European Petrarchism (London: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1969), p. 12.

[22]See discussion of Leyerle, above, Chapter 2 of this study, pp. 38-39.

[23]On Renaissance concepts of imitation and originality, see Mazzaro, pp. 73-107.

[24]Lanham, "Game, Play and High Seriousness in Chaucer's Poetry," p. 9.

[25]See Richard Tottel, Songs and Sonnets 1557-1587, ed. Hyder E. Rollins (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Univ. Press, 1965), pp. 135, 160, 167. (Cf. Wordsworth's essays on epitaphs.)

[26]Henry Wells, Poetic Imagery: Illustrations from Elizabethan Literature (New York: Russell & Russell, 1961), p. 30. Again, we are reminded of Wordsworth.

[27]Ibid., p. 86.

[28]Ibid., p. 29.

[29]Ibid., p. 97.

[30]See Sonnets 30, 34-37, 44, 46, 48.

[31]See discussion of theories of Otto Rank and Ernest Becker, Chapter 1 of this study, pp. 21-23.

[32]Spriet, p. 203ff.

[33]Ibid., p. 256.

[34]This device is associated with Welsh poetry and was introduced into English by Lawrence Minot, according to John Erskine, The Elizabethan Lyric: A Study (New York: Gordian Press, 1967), p. 138.

[35]See M. J. Ellis, Why People Play (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1973), p. 18.

[36]Sir James Frazer, The Golden Bough (New York: Macmillan Co., 1922).

[37]Sigmund Freud, Jokes and the Unconscious in The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works, trans. James Strachey (London: Hogarth Press, 1905), Vol. 8, pp. 120ff.

[38]See Paul Radin, Primitive Religion (New York: Dover Publications, 1957), pp. 62-64.

[39]See, e.g., Hallett Smith, p. 158.

[40]He did, however, translate the first chorus of Tasso's Aminta. See Sprague, Vol. 2.

[41]Spriet, p. 271.

[42]There are 33 monosyllabic lines in Delia. Sonnet 25 contains 4 such lines, and a number of sonnets contain more than one: nos. 3, 6, 9, 14, 17, 19, 20, 23, 24, 28, 29, 30, 40, 42, 43, 47, 49.

[43]Printed in The Penguin Book of French Verse, II, 16th to 18th Century, ed. Geoffrey Brereton (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1958).

[44]For an English translation, see Henri Bergson, "On Laughter" in Wylie Sypher, ed., Comedy (Garden City: Doubleday Anchor Books, 1956), pp. 118-119. Bergson also treats repetition as a game device.

[45]John T. Shawcross, "The Poet as Orator: One Phase of His Judicial Pose," in Thomas O. Sloan and Raymond B. Waddington, The Rhetoric of Renaissance Poetry from Wyatt to Milton (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1974), pp. 7-8.

[46]Barbara Herrnstein Smith, Poetic Closure: A Study of How Poems End (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1968), p. 195.

[47]Ibid., pp. 38 and 48.

[48]Ibid., p. 53.

[49]See also John Hollander, "The Metrical Emblem" in Seymour Chatman and Samuel L. Levin, eds., Essays on the Language of Literature (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1967), p. 125.

[50]Smith, p. 89.

[51]See also Richard Poirier, The Performing Self, Compositions and Decompositions in the Language of Contemporary Life (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1971), pp. 86-111.

[52]Smith, pp. 14-19.

[53]J. V. Cunningham, Tradition and Poetic Structure (Denver: Alan Swallow, 1960), p. 33.

[54]I. A. Richards, "How Does a Poem Know When It is Finished?" in Parts and Wholes, ed. Daniel Lerner (New York: Free Press, Macmillan Co., 1963), p. 168.

[55]Joachim Du Bellay, L'Olive, 91, Oeuvres Poetiques, ed., Chamard (Paris, 1931).

[56]See Mark Eccles, "Samuel Daniel in France and Italy," SP XXXIV (1937), 166-167.

[57]On the subject of magnetism in Renaissance poetry, see Mazzaro, p. 46.

[58]Spriet, p. 261.

[59]Chatman & Levin, p. 1.

[60]John p. 4.

[61]Forster, p. 4.

[62]Ants Oras, "Spenser and Milton: Some Parallels and Contrasts in the Handling of Sound"in Chatman & Levin, p. 29.

[63]Spriet, p. 251.

[64]A Defence of Ryme, p. 8.

[65]Gregory Bateson, "A Theory of Play and Fantasy" in Steps to an Ecology of Mind, Part III, Ch. 2 (New York: Ballantine Books, 1972), p. 178.

[66]John Hollander, The Untuning of the Sky: Ideas of Music in English Poetry 1500-1700 (New York: Norton, 1970), p. 131.

[67]Ibid., p. 132.

[68]The Complete Poetry of John Donne, ed. John T. Shawcross (Garden City: Doubleday & Co., 1967), p. 121.

[69]Francesca Petrarch, Songs and Sonnets, trans. Theodor Mommsen (New York, 1949), Familiari II, p. xxxiii.

[70]Spriet, p. 245n. Moses Hadas discusses the series of six poems to Delia by Tibullus in A History of Latin Literature (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1952), pp. 186-188.

[71]Janet Scott, "The Names of the Heroines of the Elizabethan Sequences," RES II (1926), 160.

[72]Lee, p. lii.

[73]Shawcross, "The Poet as Orator," p. 8.

[74]Angus Fletcher, personal communication, August 1978.

[75]R. J. Clements, "The Cult of the Poet in Renaissance Emblem Literature," PMLA LIX (1944), 672.

[76]See above, note 31.

[77]Rank, pp. 57-58.

[78]Carl G. Jung, Two Essays on Analytic Psychology, Collected Works, Vol. 9, Part 1, Bollingen Series XX (New York: Bollingen Foundation, 1959), pp. 188-206. See also Man and His Symbols (New York: Dell Publishing Co., 1964), pp. 193-198.

[79]Spriet, p. 255.

[80]Bateson, p. 183.

[81]See Chapter 2 of this study, p. 43.

[82]See Game, Play, Literature, p. 141.

[83]See Chapter 1, this study, p. 30-31.

[84]Ibid., p. 23. See also, Chapter 8, pp. 243-244.

CHAPTER V

THE CAVALIER LOVE LYRIC AND THOMAS CAREW

As the sonneteers of the 1590s looked to Sidney (and possibly Shakespeare) as setting the standards of play against which they might exercise and exhibit their own ludic skills, so the poets of the Caroline court found their own challenging models of masterly performance. Ben Jonson and John Donne were both coterie poets of major significance in this milieu, generating new energies and reshaping old traditions to new purposes. One finds, moreover, various elements of the performance principle amplified and refined under the first Stuarts. It was an age of fireworks both actual and metaphorical. The striking devices called "metaphysical conceits" are highly wrought, ingenious and sometimes brilliant manifestations of the age's ludic proclivities. The "wit" Samuel Johnson disapprovingly defined as "a kind of discordia concors; a combination of dissimilar images, or discovery of occult resemblances in things apparently unlike," occurrences where the "most heterogeneous ideas are yoked by violence together," can be identified with aspects of play.[1] It is virtually the concept of "bisociation" which Arthur Koestler makes the basis not only of humor but also of all discovery in science and art--the creative act which brings about a fusion of two habitually or previously "incompatible matrices" or "associative contexts." One discovers that an element embedded in one frame of reference belongs also to another.

Although this "bisociation" may come about "accidentally," it is usually the result of "underground games" (the activity of the preconscious mind, like Poincaré's "dance of the atoms"[2]) and the conscious "playing around with ideas."[3]

Some of the theories attempting to account for the "metaphysical" phenomena of seventeenth-century poetry embody concerns of our previous chapter. One critical explanation would have the metaphysical mode connote a sophistication and exaggeration of tendencies already in the tradition of the troubadours and trouvères.[4] Taking a similar approach, counter to the assumption that Donne represents the antithesis to the prevailing poetic currents of the previous three centuries, is the carefully documented, though not always convincing, study by Donald Guss entitled John Donne, Petrarchist.[5] Rosemund Tuve, attributing the metaphysical school to the influence of Ramist logic, argues that there is no clear-cut division between Elizabethan and metaphysical imagery.[6] For others, the continuing continental infusion into native root-structures which helped to produce the self-conscious rhetorical efflorescence of the Elizabethans, culminates by the third and fourth decades of the next century in the characteristics identified as "mannerist," "précieux" and "baroque."[7] The not infrequent perception of the latter as a "decadent" development would seem to result from an unduly solemn, puritanical frame of mind. A more enlightened perspective

reveals the offending "bizarre" and "fantastic" forms of imagery and style to be unusually rich forms of play. The taste for intricately stilized and extravagantly decorative motifs and the indulgence in periphrasis, hyperbole, asyndeton, paronomasia and other forms of logodaedalia--all with precedents going back to the Middle Ages--are unmistakable expressions of the ludic instinct.[8]

For another such expression we turn to dramaturgical theory, since the representative poetry of this period ranks high on the scale of "dramaticality."[9] We will not be concerned with lyrics written for plays, however, beyond paying tribute to the excellence of several songs from Jonson's dramatic works: "Come, my Celia, let us prove," the adaptation from Catullus which seems to transcend its setting in Volpone; the exquisite "Slow, slow, fresh font" and "Queen and Huntress, chaste and fair" from Cynthia's Revels; and the artful plea for nature over art, "Clerimont's Song" ("Still to be neat, still to be dressed") from Epicoene, or The Silent Woman.[10] One would like to investigate in this regard the influence of the rich musical and visual resources of the masque on lyric presentations of love, but must forego this promising topic except for a few brief references.

As important as Jonson is to the drama, it is Donne whose poetic technique is most often characterized in theatrical terms. H. M. Richmond treats typical Donne poems as not only "dramatical lyric statements" but also "dramatic

monologues" and "calculated melodrama."[11] In like manner, Mazzaro finds Donne deploying *personae* who "play at roles," exploiting the possibilities of "multiple egos."[12] This is an important idea which will be developed below. Lowry Nelson uses the term "dramaticality" (with apologies for its awkwardness) to denote two Donnean features: the dynamic relationship between the "three rhetorical members . . . speaker, audience and reader," and the "quality produced by means similar to those used in representing an action--the representation of a complex attitude" in its "evolution."[13] A Donne poem may be inaugurated by a colloquial apostrophe or startling exclamation ("Busie old foole, unruly Sunne"; "For Godsake hold your tongue, and let me love"), and move through a succession of unpredictable shifts in postures and stances, to conclude ultimately with some sense of intellectual resolution and emotional catharsis. The "realism" of this method derives from one's impression of lived experience as a series of scenes, staged situations, roles dooned and doffed, entrances and exits. The *theatrum mundi topos*, an idea from the ancients by no means outdated even yet, was one of the most pervasive metaphors of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.[14]

Incorporating these distinctive and influential features, along with others only barely suggested thus far, is the hybrid genre or subgenre known as the Cavalier love lyric. George Williamson characterized its essence almost half a century ago as leaning in content toward Donne and

in form toward Jonson.[15] Despite the oversimplification, one assents to the idea of the accommodation of a racy and skeptical worldliness about sexual relations to subtle, graceful rhythms, a clear idiom, and simplified syntax and stanza-forms.

For purposes of this study, one can place Donne and Jonson to good advantage on the paidia and ludus sides of the play spectrum, respectively. Joseph Summers has discussed their poetry in a series of analogous contrasts between the styles most typical of each: "extravagance and sobriety, excess and measure, spontaneity and deliberation, immediacy and distance, daring and propriety, roughness and elegance, tension and balance, agility and weight."[16] (If "propriety" and the like seem not very ludic, they are nevertheless "rules of the game.") As Summers acknowledges, these poets are too versatile to remain within such categories. They shared a number of accomplishments which were bequeathed to their general "heirs." Among the prevalent ludic occupations at the elegant court of Charles I and Henrietta Maria were witty conversation and graceful song; the poetry of the Cavaliers succeeded in blending both elements.

It was indeed fortunate that the proclivities of the monarchs themselves were preeminently congenial to the flourishing of the arts.[17] Possessed of unusually cultivated sensibilities of his own, Charles surrounded himself with noted painters, sculptors, architects and musicians as

well as poets, and set about acquiring for his various palaces a treasury of art works that established the royal collection as among the finest in Europe. His French queen, the daughter of Marie de Médicis and herself a woman of considerable charm to whom her husband remained conspicuously devoted, brought with her the influences of an early acquaintance with the salom of Mme. de Ramouillet. With a taste for a kind of frivolity that did not compromise her stately dignity, Henrietta promoted the rituals of gallantry and refinement that epitomized a "court of love." One could make analogies to the game procedures over which Eleanor of Aquitaine and Marie of Champagne had presided in twelfth-century France. Charles' queen also fostered at the court an un-English opulence derived both from her connections with the House of Austria and from an Italianate love for the masque, so that court life took on something of the character of that art-form.

Perhaps the most gifted of the Caroline "courtly makers" was Thomas Carew, identified by Sir Herbert Grierson as "the poetic ornament" of that richly ornamented court. Grierson has described more precisely Carew's relation to his milieu. "In Carew's poems and Vandyke's pictures, the artistic taste of Charles' court is vividly reflected, a dignified voluptuousness, an exquisite elegance."[18] Carew, then, can aptly represent homo ludens in this eminently playful setting. Royal courts tend to the condition of playgrounds because of their enclosure and separateness

from the quotidian, their highly decorative costumes and settings, their ceremonious patterns of activity, and their fiercely competitive atmosphere, however disguised under the mannered forms of polite intercourse. One could add to this list the fabled prevalence of amorous intrigue. If at the court of the first Charles the playing became more and more a desperate attempt to deny the deepening threats to a doomed monarchy, the situation was not unique to that time and place. Perhaps Carew was fortunate to die (by latest reckoning in 1640) before the shadows lengthened over the king he served as courtier and soldier. A Gentleman of the Privy Chamber, he won the post of Sewer in Ordinary ("taster" or honorary steward) to the King. He fought in the ill-fated expedition against the Scots in 1639 in the first Bishop's War, suffering hardships that probably hastened his death at the age of forty-five or forty-six.[19]

Carew seems to have profited considerably from the main strengths of both Donne and Jonson, for he manifests their respective influences, though he never explicitly acknowledges his debts in personal terms. He does, however, compose important and genuinely appreciative poetic statements about each of them. "To Ben. Johnson. Upon occasion of his Ode of defiance Annext to his Play of the new Inne" is a polished, tactful and reasonable response to Jonson's "immodest rage" at the failure of his play of 1629.[20] And

the incisive, lucidly phrased judgments of "An Elegie upon the death of the Deane of Pauls, Dr. John Donne" make this poem one of the most profound critical documents of the day. Though really outside the purview of this study, the elegy is noteworthy not only for its masterful use of language and images:

> Since to the awe of thy imperious wit
> Out stubborn language bends, made only fit
> With her tough-thick-rib'd hoopes to gird about
> Thy Giant phansie, which had prov'd too stout
> For their soft melting Phrases . . .

but also for its poised praise of achievements seemingly quite opposed to some of Carew's own poetic practices:

> The Muses garden with Pedantique weedes
> O'rspred, was purg'd by thee;
> . . . . . .
> thy strict lawes will be
> Too hard for Libertines in Poetrie.
> They will repeale the goodly exil'd traine
> Of gods and goddesses, which in thy just raigne
> Were banish'd nobler Poems, now, with these
> The silenc'd tales o'th' Metamorphoses
> Shall stuffle their lines, and swell the windy Page,
> Till Verse refin'd by thee, in this last Age
> Turne ballad rime, Or those old Idolls bee
> Ador'd againe, with new apostasie.

Louis Martz calls Carew "one of the greatest critics of English literature," an accomplishment that may indicate something about Carew's attitude toward his own craftsmanship.[21]

Scholars have attempted to ascertain whether Carew belongs more to the tribe of Ben or to the school of Donne. K. A. McEuen gives evidence for considering Carew a member of the Apollo Club.[22] R. M. Alden, on the other hand, finds him conspicuously absent from the Jonsonus Virbius

memorial volume of 1638.[23] Most critics identify him as at least partially "metaphysical"; Williamson has consigned him to the "fringe of the Donne tradition."[24] Comments on this question of relative influence almost invariably stress Carew's inferiority to both of these "father" figures. In terming him the "least salient" of Donne's disciples, Barrett Wendell averred that Carew "mostly followed Jonson, yet with something effeminate always weakening the virility of the acknowledged master."[25] Douglas Bush's appraisal seems more judicious, though only slightly more positive:

> Without Donne, Carew's poems would have lost much but . . . without Jonson he would not have been a poet at all. He could use Donne's ideas and phrases and he could give to the poetry of love a half-metaphysical tone and edge, through realistic, cosmic and religious images, but he had very little of Donne's glancing wit, intensity, learning, and intellectual pressure. Carew was essentially--and mainly at second hand--through Jonson--a classical amorist.[26]

Interesting deviations from this general pattern of negative comparison are the opinion of Rufus Blanshard that "in the lyric alone . . . Carew surpassed Jonson in both range and volume," and Alden's statement that in the "matter of unity, as well as of fidelity to lyric movement and melody, Carew doubtless surpassed his master" (Donne).[27]

From Carew's own contemporaries, there are indications of no little popularity among the connoisseurs who handed round his poems in manuscript. Dunlap cites a primary source of the period to the effect that Carew's "sonnets" were in more demand than any other poet's during the decade

of the 1630s.[28] In the commendatory verses of the 1651 edition of William Cartwright's plays and verse is the reference to "melting Carew, who so long/Maintained the Court with many a charming Song."[29] Aurelian Townshend confesses, "I love thy Celia, if shee did infuse/That fire into thee which begott thy muse."[30]

A different note is sounded in the mildly satiric "A Sessions of the Poets" as Sir John Suckling presents a somewhat jaundiced portrait of Carew at the "trial for the bays":

> Tom Carew was next, but he had a fault
> That would not well stand with a laureate;
> His Muse was hard bound, and th'issue of 's brain
> Was seldom brought forth but with trouble and pain.
> And
> All that were present there did agree,
> A laureate's Muse should be easy and free;
> Yet sure 'twas not that, but 'twas thought that his
> grace
> Considered, he was well he had a cup-bearer's place.[31]

Despite the distortions of caricature, Suckling's perception belies the grounds for later dismissals of Carew as merely one of the "Mob of Gentlemen who wrote with Ease," or "an elegant court trifler."[32] The disapproval directed against one who "works" at being a poet, however, is an important indication of long prevalent attitudes: the aristocratic ideal of effortlessness and nonchalance in the tradition of sprezzatura. Carew of course fulfilled the requirements of being an amateur and dilettante (and in the best sense of each of these terms), and would never have been so "professional" as, like Daniel and Jonson, to publish his own

poetry. (Only ten of his poems, mostly commendatory verses, appeared in print during his lifetime, three of them without his name. His one masque, the Coelum Britannicum of 1634, was also anonymous.[33]) Jonson's shocking and amusing publication of his Works in 1616 transgressed the code to which Donne had apologetically alluded four years earlier:

> Of my Anniversaries, the fault that I acknowledge in my self, is to have descended to print anything in verse, which though it have excuse even in our times, by men who professe, and practise much gravitie; yet I confesse I wonder how I declined to it, and do not pardon my self . . .[34]

The fact that Carew took poetry very seriously, as the elegy to Donne testifies, and assiduously applied himself to revising and polishing his own verse has been generally acknowledged by modern critics. As example, let one understated, even begrudging remark suffice: Tucker Brooke's starchy comment that Carew "appears to have given his poems a care that he did not bestow upon his conduct."[35] (Carew's legendary libertinism almost rivals that of a later court poet, the Earl of Rochester; and both reportedly experienced death-bed conversions.[36]) Since authorities on play have granted that the ludic need preclude neither work nor seriousness, as our first chapter indicates, Carew's candidacy as homo ludens is not endangered by the demands of a "hard bound" muse.

With a brief summary, the history of Carew's critical reception can be brought up to date. For the most part, twentieth-century approbation of his work was negligible

until F. R. Leavis's Revaluation of 1947 assigned Carew "claims to more distinction than he is commonly accorded, more than he is accorded by the bracket that, in common acceptance, links him with Lovelace and Suckling." Tracing a succession of wit from Jonson (and Donne) to Pope, Leavis places Carew with Marvell in the direct line, substantial praise indeed.[37] Mario Praz proclaimed some years later that the "time of resurrection has arrived for this poet [Carew], who up to now was known only through a few lyrics included in all anthologies."[38] Praz commended Edward I. Selig's The Flourishing Wreath, first published in 1958, as the first "full-length" study of Carew (179 pages).[39] Though Selig's work is creditable, on the whole it lacks the incisiveness of more recent essays by critics such as A. J. Smith, G. A. E. Parfitt, D. F. Rauber and Bruce King.[40]

Carew's best known, and most ubiquitously anthologized poem and probably the most beautiful blason ever written is the lyric beginning "Ask me no more where Jove bestowes." It can well support analysis in ludic terms but has been so lovingly and knowledgeably explicated in various poetic studies that a lengthy discussion of its technique seems unwarranted here.[41] Bush has succinctly summarized the elements so successfully fused in the lyric as "conventional Petrarchan ideas and images . . . strengthened and ordered by Jonsonian discipline and just touched by metaphysical vibrations."[42] Obvious examples of these three traditions, respectively, include: the catalogue of impossibilities and

what Grierson calls "coroscation of hyperboles"; the symmetry and economy of the iterative phrasing; and the famous reference to Aristotle's concept of formal cause. Richmond has been predominantly interested in the poem's exploitation of a syntactical formula and its sonorous reversal of a convention, whereby "Tell me where . . . " becomes "Ask me no more . . ."[43] One might also point out that this poem has itself been a source of much playful activity in numerous imitations, parodies, adaptations and "answers."[44] And still its pristine excellence remains undisturbed.

One poem not as well known as it should be is "The Spring," the first selection in Thomas Walkley's 1640 edition of Carew's works. Despite (possibly unwitting) resemblances to Ronsard's "Amourette," it stands on its own as a sparkling display of technical virtuosity.[45] Taking an almost hackneyed subject, Carew produces a consummate version of the vernal complaint, whose success here derives to a considerable extent from a structural tour de force that is an unmistakably ludic technique. But the poem should be savored first in its entirety.

> Now that the winter's gone, the earth hath lost
> Her snow-white robes, and now no more the frost
> Candies the grasse, or castes an ycie creame
> Upon the silver Lake, or Chrystall streame:
> But the warme Sunne thawes the benummed Earth,
> And makes it tender, gives a sacred birth
> To the dead Swallow; wakes in hollow tree
> The drowzie Cuckow, and the Humble-Bee.
> Now doe a quire of chirping Minstrels bring
> In tryumph to the world, the youthfull Spring.
> The Vallies, hills and woods, in rich araye,
> Welcome the comming of the long'd for May.
> Now all things smile; onely my Love doth lowre:
> Now hath the scalding Noon-day-Sunne the power,

> To melt that marble yce, which still doth hold
> Her heart congeald, and makes her pittie cold.
> The Oxe which lately did for shelter flie
> Into the stall, doth now securely lie
> In open fields; and love no more is made
> By the fire side; but in the cooler shade
> Amyntas now doth with his Cloris sleepe
> Under a Sycamoure, and all things keepe
> Time with the season, only shee doth carry
> June in her eyes, in her heart January.

The initial "Now," repeated five times throughout the twenty-four lines, establishes the sense of immediacy and of the urgent, quickening power of the new season. The phrase it inaugurates sets the poem in motion, as it were in mediis rebus, and the pursuant pulsing movement of the phrasing across the line divisions helps to develop the inherently musical idea expressed late in the poem that "all things keepe/Time with the season." The long rhythmical units of the wide open couplets combined with punctuated caesurae are characteristic of Carew's nonstanzaic lyrics; when the pentameter line is used, as in this case, something closer to a ruminative speaking voice is heard, rather than the singing voice of his typical tetrameter lines.

The imagery of the first four lines manifests a landscape frozen into art-forms of precious minerals as seen by an eye obviously accustomed to luxuriously glittering interiors. But as "the warme Sunne thawes the benummed Earth," an exuberantly sensuous response to a genial Nature and evocations of a kind of homely pastoralism succeed, which are almost Elizabethan in feeling. Also Elizabethan is the aural imagery of "drowzie Cuckow," "Humble-Bee," and

"quire of chirping minstrels," and the visual appeal of the "tryumph" of the "youthfull Spring." (The masque-like quality of the latter image is equally Stuart.) Since Petrarchan themes are still a hallmark of the established poet, Carew employs them with formality and finesse. The traditional antithesis of heat and cold, of vibrant season and unyielding mistress, are not only ingeniously juxtaposed but are virtually balanced upon the fulcrum of a semicolon in the center of the thirteenth line, as close to the middle of the poem as could be devised:

Now all things smile; onely my Love doth lowre.

If, in fact, the scales are tipped toward the second half of the line by placement of the caesura, the nominative italics and the alliteration, the very concept of the lady's lack of balance and congruence, with which the remainder of the poem is concerned, is all the more effectively rendered.

Within the thermal contrast is an interesting inversion, as coolness must be sought by the happier, more natural lovers who know the heats of love:

> and love no more is made
> By the fire side; but in the cooler shade
> Amyntas now doth with his Chloris sleepe
> Under a Sycamoure,

The poem's inherent symmetry, of which the second and third lines quoted directly above provide conceptual and formal instances, is the expression of a distinctly playful and pleasing poetic method. The culmination of the achieved effect in the chiasmic correspondence of the poem's final line:

June in her eyes, in her heart January.

recapitulates the unifying iconic structure by reversing the order of the seasons which the poem has presented. It is as perfect a poem of its kind as exists in the language.

Another skillful rendering of the conventional complaint also exhibits the logic of balance and proportion. "A Divine Mistris" is one of the approximately fifty poems, almost half of those now ascribed to Carew, which were set to music; many, including this one, were arranged by Henry Lawes.[46] To what extent Carew wrote with this intention in mind is not known. He often titles his poems "Song," and on the whole they possess a syntactic simplicity and clarity that would contribute to their success as musical performances. The shift from song text to purely literary text is still in the process of transpiring during this period. Pattison has described the restrictions on the matter and manner of Renaissance verse imposed by the musical idioms of the madrigal and the air.[47] W. H. Auden's observation is apt: "The poet who would write songs is denied many poetic virtues, but he is also guarded from many poetic vices; he cannot be prolix or private or preachy or obscure."[48] "A Divine Mistris" is a good example of what a Cavalier song can be, in its tone of rueful detachment:

> In natures peeces still I see
> Some errour, that might mended bee;
> Something my wish could still remove,
> Alter or adde; but my faire love
> Was fram'd by hands farre more divine;
> For she hath every beauteous line:
> Yet I had beene farre happier,

Had Nature that made me, made her;
Then likenes, might (that love creates)
Have made her love what now she hates;
Yet I confesse I cannot spare
From her just shape the smallest haire;
Nor need I beg from all the store
Of heaven, for her one beautie more:
Shee hath too much divinity for mee,
You Gods teach her some more humanitie.

Despite one's initial impression that this is mere vers de societé, the poem displays the artful precision of intellectual play that belies its apparent slightness. It is a compliment which is virtually all "argument," with but the barest suggestion of physical description. Again, it is a poem contrived upon antithesis, this time between the natural (and human) and the "divine," beginning with the "errour" of "natures peeces" (probably a double entendre) and the excellence of the lady's "just shape." Although the diction, syntax and rhythm are Jonsonian, the development of thought is more Donne-like. Within the poem's small scope there are four shifts, three of them signalled by the conjunctions "but" (line four) and "yet" (lines seven and eleven), and the ultimate reversal accomplished in the couplet's witty negation of the logic upon which the poem has been based. The lady's perfection is spurious because it is a superfluity--"too much divinity"; she is imperfect in "humanitie," and exhibits, after all, "some errour that might mended bee."

It is D. F. Rauber's thesis that Carew was "the most purely intellectual poet of the early seventeenth century." Since the reader is almost inevitably moved to challenge the statement by arguing the claims of Donne, Rauber hastens

to defend his position by contrasting the two poets. "Donne's intellectual and logical structures are in large measure only [!] the carriers of a passionately felt direct experience" so that Donne "fills his logical forms with a highly charged emotional content." Carew, on the other hand, has passion only "for thought itself and for the logical forms in which abstract thought is expressed."[49] Though Rauber's examples are poems of greater density than "A Divine Mistris," his point may be applicable here, since the intricacies of the poem's argumentative structure far exceed the demands of the genre. To the degree that Rauber is correct in his assessment, he points to a significant element within one of Carew's playful moods: the delicate poising of ideas in various successions of balancing acts for the sheer sake of the design. Other such elements include the readiness to mock himself as well as others and the use of comic hyperbole.

Another aspect of his dexterity in logic and argumentation is displayed in "Song: Perswasions to enjoy," an adroit version of the carpe diem theme. The game Carew sets up for himself is to trace out the implications of opposite premises in the playful entertaining of possibilities ("holding between" without commitment).

> If the quick spirits in your eye
> Now languish and anon must dye;
> If every sweet, and every grace,
> Must fly from that forsaken face:
> Then (Celia) let us reape our joyes,
> E're time such goodly fruit destroyes.

Or, if that golden fleece must grow
For ever, free from aged snow;
If those bright Suns must know no shade,
Nor your fresh beauties ever fade:
Then feare not (Celia) to bestow,
What still being gather'd, still must grow.
Thus, either Time his Sickle brings
In vaine, or else in vaine his wings.

Rauber has analyzed in detail the logical intricacies of what might seem at first glance a simple exercise in the convention. In his preliminary discussion of the poem, he cites the tendency of Carew to endow his poetic efforts with "an intellectual quality and value much greater than requied by the theme." Rauber's explanation of this tendency suggests a ludic purpose. "It exhibits the kind of intellectual interest one associates with, say, chess. It is as though Carew had taken carpe diem as a problem and were trying to construct, in an almost geometrical sense, the perfect solution . . . In developing his strategy and in executing it, Carew responds fully; he glows, not with ardor for the woman, but with delight in the flawless functioning of his own mind and in the pure beauty of his solution." The "disjunctive conclusions" of the syllogism, in which each member "must refer to one of the two hypothetical conditions developed earlier" along with other signs in the poem, indicates to Rauber "a wry critical examination of the logical form." Carew is seen to "distort his strong logical pattern by crossing references. In the 'if mortal' section, the flying of the graces from her face is connected with Time's wings' while in the 'if non-mortal' section, the imagery is connected with the sickle."

Rauber continues to connect the technique with a ludic propensity--the witty subversion of the intellect itself. "Here the intellect of the poet is playing ironically with the inability of logical form to contain the complexities and interrelations of real language or of real life. The obviously false condition that the woman's beauty is immortal is treated as fully and as solemnly as the true condition that it is mortal and transitory. Both conditions have the same status and weight. But rhetorically things are quite different; we are never more struck by the fleeting nature of beauty than in the immortality passage."[50]

Rauber's explication may disprove the notion that one cannot sing a complex poem. The courtly "song" wins a large audience because it is one of the most impersonal and contrived of compositions, often based on the standard contrasts of the joys and pains of love. Central to its effect is a ludic distancing such that we believe no more in Celia than in Delia or, for that matter, Corinna. Carew's "Mediocritie in love rejected," also set by Lawes, is on a familiar theme reminiscent of the opening of Jonson's "The Dreame": "Or Scorne or pittie on me take." In cadences of careful proportions themselves, the first stanza rejects the idea of moderation. The lines are uniformly end-stopped, with subtle variation in phrasing and caesurae:

SONG
Give me more love, or more disdaine;
The Torrid, or the frozen Zone,
Bring equall ease unto my paine;

The temperate affords me none:
Either extreame, of love, or hate,
Is sweeter than a calme estate.

In the second stanza, which develops the plea for extremes rather than the mean, for turbulence instead of the center of indifference, the idea is carried through the rush of enjambed lines, until a return to the contained phrasing in the summarizing couplet. Even in the "stormy" lines, however, there is balance, more subtly handled. Danae's "golden showre" of pleasure is matched by the Promethean "torrent" of disdain, as is the possession of Heaven by the release from Hell.

Give me a storme; if it be love,
Like Danae in that golden showre
I swimme in pleasure; if it prove
Disdaine, that torrent will devoure
My Vulture-hopes; and he's possest
Of Heaven, that's but from Hell releast:
Then crowne my joyes, or cure my paine;
Give me more love, or more disdaine.

If there is greater sophistication here than in many of the sonnets of the previous century, there is even less concern with verisimilitude of feeling. With a maximum of condensation and a sharpening of the juxtaposition and correspondence of opposites, cleverness seems the only objective. "Murdring beautie" would be a case in point even without the (by now) inevitable pun on "dye":

Ile gaze no more on her bewitching face,
Since ruine harbours there in every place:
For my enchanted soule alike shee drownes
With calmes and tempests of her smiles and frownes.
I'le love no more those cruell eyes of hers,
Which pleas'd or anger'd still are murderers:
For if she dart (like lightning) through the ayre
Her beames of wrath, she kils me with despaire.

If shee behold me with a pleasing eye,
I surfet with excesse of joy, and dye.

Because of the self-pleasing aspects of symmetrical ordering, Carew goes frequently to Marino for models, but his use of them is idiosyncratic. In his "Lips and Eyes," a version of the Marino sonnet depicting the deadlocked debate, "Lite degli Ocche e della Bocca," Carew employs his own characteristic couplets throughout the poem, eliminating two lines of what Dunlap calls "excrescent concetti" in "his [Carew's] usual care for logical unity." Another Marino poem, addressed "Per la sua Donna," and adapted by Carew under the title "Song: A beautifull Mistris," is amplified somewhat, the better to present the playfully hyperbolic alternatives.[51] This is one of Carew's experiments with various combinations of tetrameter (sometimes pentameter) and dimeter lines; he never repeats the same pattern outside of a particular poem.

If when the Sun at noone displayes
His brighter rayes,
Thou but appeare,
He then all pale with shame and feare,
Quencheth his light,
Hides his dark brow, flyes from thy sight,
And growes more dimme
Compar'd to thee, then starres to him.
If thou but show thy face againe,
When darkenesse doth at midnight raigne,
The darkenesse flyes, and light is hurl'd
Round about the silent world:
So as alike thou driu'st away
Both light and darkenesse, night and day.

Selig's comment on this poem applies to a number of Carew's lyrics.

> As deliberate artifice, the verse-compliment recognizes the deliberate artifice a young lady practices in order to be complimented . . . On one level, the poet observes with humor the difference between the unadorned and the adorned. This is a function of the hyperbolic compliment. But on another level, he accepts with greater self-consciousness than his Elizabethan predecessors the traditional ideal of adornment, not as something artificially encrusted upon reality, but as the only appropriate form for reality to assume. In terms of his poetry, the same principle is in evidence. The hyperbole is not sugar-coating for a theme. It is the theme itself.[52]

The poet's participation in the make-believe is thus on the metalinguistic level of play.[53]

The games of gallantry at Henrietta Maria's court had a distinctive cast which becomes particularly visible also in "Upon a Ribband." The poem's conceit is similar to (and probably borrowed from) "The Funerall" and "The Relique" by Donne, but there is no further resemblance. There is no attempt at the shock value of a phrase like "a bracelet of bright haire about the bone," no twists and turns of logic, no metric "roughness." The purpose of a conceit is usually to identify an unexpected "similitude in dissimilitude," to lead from an image to an idea which the icon represents, and to develop the conceptual implications of the apposite connection. This poem begins as though such intentions obtained. Its smooth lines linked by enjambments and sinuous phrasing foster the impression of a reverential, "metaphysical" statement of the spiritual unity between the poet and his mistress. Such an approach

was the height of fashion at the court, where the queen had introduced the cult of "Platonic love" as interpreted in the "code-book" of French préciosité, Honoré D'Urfé's Astrée.[54] One of the chief topics discussed in the protracted dialogues of this pastoral romance is the superiority of "spiritual" over mere carnal passion, the idea introduced here:

> This silken wreath, which circles in mine arme,
> Is but an Emblem of that mystique charme,
> Wherewith the magique of your beauties binds
> My captive soule, and round about it winds
> Fetters of lasting love; this hath entwind
> My flesh alone, That hath empalde my mind:

As the poem progresses, however, its method is revealed to be not the celebration of a relationship. but the cataloguing or piling up of distinctions for its own sake. Congeries had been for centuries a playful rhetorical device in poetry. Under Queen Henrietta's influence, the jeux partis are revived along with various other conversational games making use of finely discriminating judgments and symmetrical patterns of agreement and dialectic. Carew finds no difficulty in adapting such exacting procedures to verse.

> Time may weare out These soft weak bands; but Those
> Strong chains of brasse, Fate shall not discompose.
> This holy relique may preserve my wrist,
> But my whole frame doth by That power subsist:
> To That my prayers and sacrifice, to This
> I onely pay a superstitious kisse:
> This but the Idoll, That's the Deitie,
> Religion There is due; Here ceremonie.
> That I receive by faith, This but in trust;
> Here I may tender dutie, There I must.
> This order as a Layman I may beare,
> But I become Loves Priest when That I weare.
> This moves like ayre; That as the Center stands:
> That knot your vertue tide; This but your hands:
> That Nature fram'd, but This was made by Art;
> This makes my arme your prisoner, That my heart.

We note the varying caesurae and thus the relative weights given in each line distinguishing "This" from "That."

Question and answer poems are another manifestation of such games. Three of the "Foure Songs by way of Chorus to a play . . ." take this format. The final one, "Incommunicabilitie of Love," concerns the nature of love, "confinde/To one object," and lust, "Loves twinn'd flame, his forked dart." With these echoes of Donne and Ovid, Carew uses the famous sophism known as "Buridan's Ass" to clinch his argument.[55] The cunning irony is that in such a refined piece of discourse, the analogy of predatory appetite proves so apt:

> When two Beauties equall are,
> Sense preferring neither fayre,
> Desire stands still, distracted 'twixt the paire.
>
> So in equall distance lay
> Two fayre Lambes in the Wolfe's way;
> The hungry beast will sterve e're chuse his prey.
>
> But where one is chiefe, the rest
> Cease, and that's alone possest
> Without a Rivall, Monarch of the breast.

The first of this series of songs is a dialogue on the genealogy of jealousy, in which one sees that Carew's proclivities for logic can easily be accommodated to the playful sphere of myth-making. The issue of Beauty and Fear, Jealousy is the sister of both Love and Hate, and spawns Despayre,

> whose race
> Of fruitfull mischiefes drownes the space
> Of the wide earth in a swolne flood
> Of wrath, revenge, spight, rage, and blood.

In another poem apparently written also for a masque or other entertainment, an extravagant and ingenious compliment is paid to the queen herself, half acknowledging and half creating a myth of the feminine role in family and state. It seems to embrace the strain of idealism (in more than one sense) which provided the inspiration for the stately dances and masquerades both abetted and undermined by Carew and his fellow poets. It also projects with some vividness a sexually potent king as model of virility, rather in contrast to the actual chastity and reserve of Charles. The second part of "A New-Year's Gift," and titled "To the Queene," it begins:

> Thou great Commandresse, that doest move
> Thy Scepter o're the Crowne the Love,
> And through his Empire with the Awe
> Of Thy chaste beames, doest give the Law,
> From his prophaner Altars, we
> Turne to adore Thy Deitie:
> He, only can wilde lust provoke,
> Thou, those impurer flames canst choke;
> And where he scatters looser fires,
> Thou turn'st them into chast desires:
> His Kingdome knowes no rule but this,
> What ever pleaseth lawfull is;
> Thy sacred Lore shewes us the path
> Of Modestie, and constant faith,
> Which makes the rude Male satisfied
> With one faire Female by his side;
> Doth either sex to each unite,
> And forme loves pure Hermaphradite.

A similar ideology provides the foundation for the lavish Coelum Britannicum, a masque presented at Whitehall on Shrove Tuesday night, 1633. The masque is closely based upon Bruno's philosophical dialogue, Spaccio de la Bestia Trionfante, published in 1584 with a dedication to Sidney,

but Carew adapted it to his own purposes, "lightening the ethical burden with topical quips."[56] In his opening speech, Mercury addresses the "Bright glorious Twins of Love and majesty," recounting how their "vertuous Court" has become the envy of Jove and Juno, who now repent the "heats of lust," "raging jealousies," and "revengeful fury" to which they were formerly prone. The heavenly monarchs will expiate their guilt by sweeping the skies clean of the stars and constellations which are the shameful reminders of their misdeeds and those of the other inhabitants of Olympus. While ostensibly espousing virtue, Carew serves other purposes as well, as A. J. Smith has perceptively shown, in that court life is mythologized "in terms of erotic play, rendering chivalric valor as sexual virility and beauty as the power to satisfy it."[57] Significant lines are:

> Pace forth thou mighty British Hercules,
> With thy choyce band, for onely thou, and these,
> May revell here, in Love's Hesperides.

The prose descriptions connecting the episodes indicate that the production was one of the most elaborate of Inigo Jones's artistic and mechanical creations.

Moving from a cosmic to a miniature playground, we can examine representative examples of the other end of the spectrum of Carew's complimentary verse in two small pieces of mythic virtuosity. "A flye that flew into my Mistris her eye," probably one of the earlier poems, succeeds because it combines precise artistry with self-

conscious exaggeration and lightness of touch in its reworking of conventional materials. In one sense, the fly is a typical Petrarchan lover, finding a brighter "Sun" in Celia, and alternately "scorcht in flames, and drown'd in dew." Petrarch had in fact used the motif of the butterfly attracted to the light of the lady's eyes and killed by flying into them ("Come talhora al caldo tempo sole," Rime XCLI).[58] But as a common fly is by nature "amorous" (the poet would not say "lecherous" here) this one becomes a "rivall" of the poet, taking liberties with cheek, lip and bosom. The sensuous implications are handled very delicately, however; it is a "she" who "suckt all the incense and the spice." And having imbibed such nectar, she undergoes the poetically logical metamorphosis to a "bird of Paradise," a clever substitution for the usual phoenix. But she also suffers for the fatal attraction and for her hybris. After a fiery, then a watery death,

> Like Phaeton from the Suns spheare
> She fell; and with her dropt a teare:
> Of which a pearle was straight compos'd,
> Wherein her ashes lye enclos'd.
> Thus she receiv'd from Celia's eye,
> Funerall flame, tombe, Obsequie.

In his version of the Petrarch sonnet, Guarini had in "Core in Farfalla" mentioned the lady's tears, but all of the other transmutations are apparently Carew's own inventions. The tone is the remarkable achievement here. It is part tongue-in-cheek flattery, part parody of stock devices, part mock

pathos and part amusement in filigree prettiness; and one does not overlook the pun on "ashes lye." But it also transcends these elements. In its compressed narrative skill exploiting elegant succinctness of diction and elliptical syntax, as well as in its Mercutio-like imagination, the poem resembles the diminutive miracle it depicts, the transformation of trivial material into art. Only a ludic poet with unusual sensibility could have brought it off.

A comparable metamorphosis is the subject of one of the new poems in the 1642 edition, "Upon a Mole in Celia's bosome."[59] In describing the fate of a venturesome bee,

> Who built her amorous spicy nest
> I'th Hyblas of her either breast,

this little poem becomes a bit more graphic in its exploration of the lady's anatomy, using the "mapping of the body" technique which provides the central imagery of "A Rapture." The cause of death in "A rowling file of Balmy sweat" and a swan-like song add touches of burlesque absent in "A flye . . ." The myth here not only accounts for the origin of the mole, but also suggests a reason for the traditional "honey" and "gall" of amorous experience:

> Yet still her shaddow there remaines
> Confind to those Elizian plaines;
> With this strict Law, that who shall lay
> His bold lips on that milky way,
> The sweet, and smart, from thence shall bring
> Of the Bees Honey, and her sting.

Another admirable instance of Carew's mythopoeic

imagination offers an instructive comparison to Daniel's treatment of a similar motif, and points to some of the differences typically separating the two genres. The two poems in question are the lyric entitled "A Looking-Glasse" and Sonnet 29, "O why dooth Delia credit so her glasse," an adaptation from Desportes. The former's reference to the lady's "killing eye" recalls the latter's "murthering eyes," but the singular form suggests a more deliberate, possibly coquettish intent of the look. Each warns the respective lady of the dangers of attending to her own image, but Carew does it more dramatically by addressing his lady in the imperative: "Gaze no more . . ." In mock alarm he cautions that her eye's "native crueltie" may doom her "as it doth all, to dye," whereas Daniel uses a submerged Medusa allusion for a plaintive effect: "I feare your eye hath turn'd your hart to flint." The emphasis in Daniel is on the melodramatic force of her destructive power, as visible in the poet as "The broken toppes of loftie trees declare/ The fury of a mercy wanting storme." But the dual objects of the lady's gaze--herself and the poet--remain separate and uncoordinated. Carew unifies and condenses these ideas, providing a new twist to old conceits by identifying the "glasse" as of the poet's own making, in a fanciful but adroit explanation of its origin. The greater compactness of his triplet tetrameter lines also creates a sense of greater intimacy than the sonnet's more formal effects are composed to achieve. The first three stanzas of the lyric read:

That flattring Glasse, whose smooth face weares
Your shadow, which a Sunne appeares,
Was once a river of my teares.

About your cold heart, they did make
A circle, where the brinie lake
Congeal'd, into a crystall cake.

Gaze no more on that killing eye,
For feare the native crueltie
Doome you, as it doth all, to dye.

The poem now begins to change direction, rather than merely to pursue the implications of a static situation as in the sonnet. In the stanza succeeding those quoted above, as in a climactic line by Daniel, an expected reference to Narcissus is introduced, but Carew turns it to a lighter, more humorous vein, and the conventional responses of lady and poet are then described rather mechanically as if to undercut the pretentious terms previously employed.

For feare lest the faire object move
Your froward heart to fall in love,
Then you your selfe my rivall prove.

Looke rather on my pale cheekes pin'de,
There view your beauties, there you'le finde
A faire face, but a cruell minde.

The ultimate suggestion of Carew's lyric enters the pointedly "cavalier" mode of freer and more intentionally sexual interaction. A return to the imagery of the first two stanzas now enables expanded possibilities, latent from the beginning, to burst upon the metaphorical scene.

Be not for ever frozen, coy;
One beame of love, will soon destroy,
And melt that yce, to flouds of joy.

The "flouds of joy" like the pleasurable exploits of the fly and the bee are indications of the more character-

istic tenor of the Cavalier love lyric and of Carew's best known verse. Carew draws no less than Daniel upon the various literary currents of his own day, and by the 1630s the currents have clearly shifted. The deviations from the Petrarchan heroine provide one of the greatest contrasts between the genres featured in these last two chapters. Carew's Celia and her sisters addressed by the other court poets may play the role of the flinty, icy mistress for a time, but far greater flexibility of response is allowed and expected of them. They have become more overtly "partners in the sexual dance."[60] The frankly physical nature of amatory desire, acknowledged in the sonnet tradition by poets such as Wyatt, Sidney and the Pléiade, becomes the main current of the courtly poetry of the period, the "Platonic" play-acting mentioned above notwithstanding. The significance of this change must be our subsequent concern.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

CHAPTER V

[1]Samuel Johnson, "Life of Cowley," Lives of the English Poets, ed. G. B. Hill (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1905), Vol. I, p. 19.

[2]See above, Chapter 1 of this dissertation, p. 25.

[3]Arthur Koestler, The Act of Creation (New York: Macmillan Co., 1967).

[4]Helmut Hatzfeld, "A Clarification of the Baroque Problem in the Romance Literatures," Comparative Literature I (1949), 115-116.

[5]Donald L. Guss, John Donne, Petrarchist (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1966).

[6]Tuve, op. cit.

[7]See Guss, pp. 81-94; Louis L. Martz, The Wit of Love (South Bend: Univ. of Notre Dame Press, 1969), pp. 94-99; Joseph A. Mazzeo, "A Critique of Some Modern Theories of Metaphysical Poetry," MP L (1952), 88-96; René Wellek, "The Concept of the Baroque in Literary Scholarship," Journal of Aesthetics V (1946), 77-109; Lowry Nelson, Jr., Baroque Lyric Poetry (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1961); and especially Frank J. Warnke, Versions of Baroque: European Literature in the Seventeenth Century (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1972), pp. 1-22. Nelson and Warnke use the term "baroque" in a more general sense than is usual, to denote the time-span between the periods of the Renaissance and neo-classicism.

[8]See Huizinga, The Waning of the Middle Ages, pp. 244ff., and Ernst R. Curtius, European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages, trans. Willard Trask (New York: Bollingen Foundation, Pantheon Books, 1953), Ch. XV, pp. 273-301.

[9]Nelson uses this term rather specifically. See below, note 13.

[10]Providing a kind of annotated index to songs from plays of the period is William R. Bowden's The English Dramatic Lyric 1603-42; A Study in Stuart Dramatic Technique (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1951).

[11]H. M. Richmond, The School of Love, The Evolution of the Stuart Love Lyric (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1964), pp. 293-295.

[12]Jerome Mazzaro, Transformations in the Renaissance English Lyric (Ithaca: Cornell Univ. Press, 1970), p. 158.

[13]Nelson, pp. 17, 88-90 and passim.

[14]See Curtius, pp. 139-141. As one among a superabundance of possible citations, one recalls the motto over the Globe Theater: Totus Mundus agit histrionem. See G. B. Harrison, ed., Shakespeare: Complete Works (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1948), p. 773.

[15]George Williamson, The Donne Tradition, A Study in English Poetry from Donne to the Death of Cowley (New York: Noonday Press, Farrar, Straus and Cudahy, 1930), p. 13.

[16]Joseph Summers, The Heirs of Donne and Jonson (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1970).

[17]On the cultural background of the period, see David Mathew, The Age of Charles I (London: Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1951), pp. 19-39. Also, A. H. Upham, The French Influence in English Literature from the Accession of Elizabeth to the Restoration (New York: Octagon Books, 1965) and Kathleen M. Lynch, The Social Mode of Restoration Comedy (New York: Macmillan Co., 1926; rptd. Octagon Books, 1965).

[18]Herbert J. Grierson, ed., Metaphysical Lyrics and Poems of the Seventeenth Century (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1921), p. xxxvii.

[19]On Carew's service to Charles I, see Rhodes Dunlap, ed., The Poems of Thomas Carew with his Masque Coelum Brittanicum (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1949), Introduction, pp. xxxv-xlii.

[20]Ibid. All titles and quotations from Carew are from this edition. J's and capital U's and V's have been regularized.

[21]Martz, p. 100.

[22]Kathryn A. McEuen, Classical Influence upon the Tribe of Ben (New York: Octagon Books, 1968), p. 3.

[23]Raymond M. Alden, "The Lyrical Conceits of the 'Metaphysical Poets,' SP XVII (1920), 183n.

[24]Williamson, p. 206.

[25]Barrett Wendell, The Temper of the Seventeenth Century in English Poetry (Freeport: Books for Libraries Press, 1967; first pub. 1904), p. 138.

[26]Douglas Bush, English Literature in the Earlier Seventeenth Century: 1600-1660, Oxford History of English Literature, ed. F. P. Wilson and B. Dobree (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1945; rptd. 1959), p. 116.

[27]Rufus A. Blanshard, "Carew and Jonson," SP, LII (1955), 197; and Alden, p. 197.

[28]Dunlap, p. xlvi.

[29]"To the Stationer (Mr. Mosely) on his Printing Mr. Cartwright's Poems," is cited by Dunlap, p. 206.

[30]Dunlap prints the entire poem: "Aurelian Townshend to Tho: Carew upon the death of the King of Sweden," pp. 207-208.

[31]The Works of Sir John Suckling in Prose and Verse, ed. A. Hamilton Thompson (New York: Russell & Russell, 1964), p. 10.

[32]The Poems of Alexander Pope, Twickenham Edition, ed. John Butt (London: Methuen Co., 1931; rptd. 1969), Vol. IV, Imitations of Horace, pp. 203-205; The Complete Works of William Hazlitt, ed. P. P. Howe (New York: AMS Press, 1967), Vol. 6, p. 311.

[33]Dunlap, p. lix.

[34]On the attitude of the period toward "professionalism," see J. W. Saunders, "The Social Situation of Seventeenth Century Poetry" in M. Bradbury and D. Palmer, eds., Metaphysical Poetry (Bloomington: Indiana Univ. Press, 1971), pp. 253-254; cf. John Buxton, Elizabethan Taste (London: Macmillan Co., 1963), pp. 317-318.

[35]Tucker Brooke, The Renaissance, A Literary History of England, ed. A. C. Baugh (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1948), Vol. II, p. 657.

[36]On Carew as repentant sinner, see Dunlap. pp. xxxix-xli.

[37]F. R. Leavis, Revaluation: Tradition and Development in English Poetry (New York: George W. Stewart, 1947; rptd., W. W. Norton, 1963), pp. 15 and 29.

[38]Mario Praz, "Literary Resurrections," ES, XLII (1961), 359-360.

[39]Edward I. Selig, The Flourishing Wreath: A Study of Thomas Carew's Poetry (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1958; rptd., Archon Books, 1970).

[40]A. J. Smith, "The Failure of Love: Love Lyrics after Donne" in Bradbury and Palmer, pp. 41-72; G. A. E. Parfitt, "The Poetry of Thomas Carew," Renaissance and Modern Studies X-XII (1966-68), 56-67; D. F. Rauber, "Carew Redivivus," Texas Studies in Language and Literature 13 (1971-72), 17-28; Bruce King, "The Strategy of Carew's Wit," REL, V (1964), 42-51.

[41]See, for example, Cleanth Brooks, John T. Purser and Robert Penn Warren, Critical Approaches to Literature (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1952), pp. 362-363.

[42]Bush, p. 117.

[43]Richmond, pp. 109-110.

[44]For a twentieth-century example, see Franklin P. Adams, The New Yorker, 12 March, 1938, p. 27.

[45]Pierre de Ronsard, Le Second Livre des Amours, ed. A. von Bever (Paris, 1923), Vol. I, p. 320.

[46]See Dunlap on extant settings, pp. 289-293.

[47]Pattison, pp. 66-78, 141-149, and passim. See also Catherine Ing, Elizabethan Lyrics (London: Chatto & Windus, 1968), passim.

[48]An Elizabethan Songbook, ed. W. H. Auden and Chester Kallmann (New York: Doubleday, 1955), p. xvii.

[49]Rauber, p. 20. (See note 40). I do not feel that Carew is more cerebral than Donne, but agree that he is temperamentally less passionate. Carew has little of Donne's obsession with paradox, which is to a large extent the recognition of a transcendent reality. In light of this point, Carew seems far more "sensuous" than Donne in his [Carew's] delight in the phenomenal world.

[50]Ibid., pp. 23-24.

[51]Dunlap prints both Marino poems, p. 217.

[52]Selig, pp. 29-30.

[53]See above, Chapter 4 of this dissertation, p. 111.

[54]See Lynch, pp. 45-80.

[55]Dunlap, p. 246.

[56]See commentary on the masque, ibid., pp. 273-288. Phrase quoted is from p. 275.

[57]Smith, pp. 53-54.

[58]Carew's sources and his treatment of them is discussed by Paulina Palmer, "From Butterfly to Bird of Paradise," Romance Notes 15 (1973-74), 123-128.

[59]Cf. Richard Lovelace, "A Black Patch on Lucasta's Face," The Poems of Richard Lovelace, ed. C. H. Wilkinson (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1930), pp. 129-130.

[60]Phrase comes from Patrick Cruttwell, "The Love Poetry of John Donne: Pedantique Weedes or Fresh Invention?" in Bradbury and Palmer, p. 22.

CHAPTER VI

CAREW AND THE GAMES OF EROS

In considering the divergent tendencies within the tradition, one searches for fuller explanations of the major patterns thus far manifested in the history of poetic love. One senses that the games of courtly love, from their mysterious origins in the twelfth century through their residual survival five centuries later, seem more than the expression of an aesthetic impulse uniting the "discharge of energy" and the "design of experience."[1] Huizinga has shown how necessary is the "formalizing" of love in times as "ferocious" as that of the Middle Ages: "Love has to be elevated to a rite. The overflowing violence of passion demands it. Only by constructing a system of forms and rules for the vehement emotions can barbarity be excaped."[2] But other psychological and social needs seem also to be finding fulfillment in a process one sees as a manifestation of the dynamics of sexual "foreplay"--the prevention by an act of will of the pursuit of instinctual movements to their immediate end. In a section of his "Contributions to the Psychology of Love," Freud may offer some pertinent hints. Remarking on the difficulties of uniting what he called the two requisite "currents" for a healthy sexual love--"tenderness" and "sensuality"--and in achieving both freedom and total satisfaction, Freud avers

that not only sexual repression but also unrestrained sexual license can be destructive of human happiness. He continues by saying:

> It is easy to show that the value the mind sets on erotic needs instantly sinks as soon as satisfaction becomes readily available. Some obstacle is necessary to swell the tide of the libido to its height; and at all periods of history, whenever natural barriers in the way of satisfaction have not sufficed, mankind has erected conventional ones in order to be able to enjoy love. This is true both of individuals and of nations. In times during which no obstacles to sexual satisfaction existed, such as, may be, during the decline of the civilizations of antiquity, love became worthless, life became empty, and strong reaction-formations were necessary before the indispensable emotional value of love could be recovered. In this context it may be stated that the ascetic tendency of Christianity had the effect of raising the psychical value of love in a way that the heathen antiquity could never achieve; it developed greatest significance in the lives of the ascetic monks, which were almost entirely occupied with struggles against libidinous temptation.[3]

Freud's perception comes, of course, nineteen centuries after Ovid had archly proclaimed the identical principle, and almost two centuries after the Cavalier poets had done the same.[4] Some of the most sophisticated statements of the matter were made by Suckling in his poems "Against Fruition." The "barriers" created by the game-rituals of courtly interaction between men and women may have had some such psychosocial function as "swelling the tide of the libido." The apportioning out of "favors" granted by the mistress over an extended period of time, with the most gradual increases in the degree of intimacy granted,

obviously served emotional and psychical needs beyond mere biological sexuality.

A prevalent contemporary theory voiced (among others) by the Canadian philosopher Herbert W. Richardson states that the function of courtly love manners was "to compensate for the traditional inferior position of women vis-à-vis men" so that "personal equality and intimacy between men and women" could develop. Neither friendship nor love, Richardson reminds us (nor, one might add, the play that enriches both), is possible where there is marked inequality. "Courtly love presumed the notion that men and women are spiritually equal, but it had to create a means to make them socially and sexually equal."[5] The poetry and songs of love exalting a supremely virtuous and "unobtainable" mistress clearly contributed to these means of enjoying love.

But by the seventeenth century, the resources of the tradition we have called Petrarchan had been virtually exhausted. The ideological balance scales had so long been weighted in favor of the lady, with an antithetical tendency as old as Petrarch himself having continually exerted its own counter pressure, that the way was open for dramatic changes in poetic perspective. The masculine principle now demanded equality, if not supremacy. The resources of the Latin elegists Ovid, Tibullus, and Propertius were seized upon as offering newly viable insights into the game of love. Carew's verse mirrors these

changes, sometimes blatantly and sometimes subtly. "A Prayer to the Wind," for example, is closer to the latter pole. In the opening and closing sections, there is the expression not only of hope but also of some confidence that the lady will respond in kind to the poet's passion. The central section delineates the territory of sensuous fantasy we have seen in "Upon a mole . . ." and will find more fully charted in "A Rapture." The trochaic rhythm of the cataleptic lines assumes the tone of an erotic incantation conveying a bit of tongue-in-cheek flattery that does not negate the sense of wistfulness and urgency. Major portions of the poem are as follows:

> Goe thou gentle whispering wind,
> Beare this sigh; and if thou find
> Where my cruell faire doth rest,
> Cast it in her snowie brest,
> So, enflamed by my desire,
> It may set her heart a-fire.
> Those sweet kisses thou shalt gaine,
> Will reward thee for thy paine:
> Boldly light upon her lip,
> There suck odours, and thence skip
> To her bosome; lastly fall
> Downe, and wander over all:
> Range about those Ivorie Hills,
> From whose every part distills
> Amber deaw; there spices grow,
> There pure streames of Nectar flow;
> There perfume thy selfe, and bring
> All those sweets upon thy wing:
> . . . . . .
> Thou canst with thy powerfull blast,
> Heat apace, and coole as fast;
> Thou canst kindle hidden flame,
> And ag'en destroy the same;
> Then for pittie, either stir
> Up the fire of love in her,
> That alike both flames may shine,
> Or else quite extinguish mine.

Noteworthy here is the demand in the final lines for a no-

nonsense resolution of the poet's sexual tensions. There is a cool pragmatism opposed to the waste of unfilfilled libido, a fresh revaluation of values in love. In playing the game of seduction, the Cavalier lover may "pine" if need be, in the spirit of Ovid, but only if the "pay-off" seems assured, and within a reasonable period of time. With great bravado, Suckling advises against it altogether:

> Why so pale and wan, fond lover?
> Prithee, why so pale?
> Will, when looking well can't move her,
> Looking ill prevail?
> Prithee, why so pale?
>
> . . . . . .
> Quit, quit for shame; this will not move,
> This cannot take her;
> If of herself she will not love,
> Nothing can make her;
> The devil take her![6]

But who would know better than these Cavalier poets that if persuasive tactics were not necessary, the game would lose its zest and poets would lose one of their richest opportunities to flaunt their skill and enjoy their own performance? In his pioneer work on play in 1901, Karl Groos observed that without "the modesty of woman, the sexual relation would hardly be a poet's theme."[7]

In the amatory verse of the Caroline period new strategies of persuasion appear along with older methods and metaphors. The inherited conventions may be used as a foil or may be rejected altogether. In Carew's "Secresie protested" the lady is openly wooed by the promise of pleasure in "stolne sweets," urbanely assured of discretion,

and smoothly provided with a graceful excuse by the dependable figure of Amor. The alternate reading that the poem is a pledge after the consummation of love has taken place seems less valid.

> Feare not (deare Love) that I'le reveale
> Those houres of pleasure we two steale;
> No eye shall see, nor yet the Sun
> Descry, what thou and I have done;
> No eare shall heare our love, but wee
> Silent as the night will bee,
> The God of love himselfe (whose dart
> Did first wound mine, and then thy heart)
> Shall never know, that we can tell
> What sweets in stolne embraces dwell.

The concluding lines are a model of gallantry, deftly employing an old conceit probably learned from Donne, who may have borrowed it from Serafino.[8]

> This only meanes may find it out,
> If when I dye, Physicians doubt
> What caus'd my death, and there to view,
> Of all their judgements which was true,
> Rip up my heart, Oh then I feare
> The world will see thy picture there.

Carew's treatment of this conceit is bland in comparison to Donne's exciting display of cynical wit in "The Dampe," and is illustrative of Carew's tendency to raid other poets for materials only to use them in entirely different contexts and for different purposes. It is a critical commonplace that Carew "tones down" Donne's conceits and "smooths out" the roughness of the rhythm. These adaptations stem at least partially from the limitations Carew imposes upon himself: the rules of the games he plays require a polished surface, fluency of cadence and diction distinguished by colloquial ease. A. J. Smith uses an apt

analogy in referring to Carew's "Housman-like determination to perfect the game and to admit only so much of living experience as may be controlled and impersonalized within its terms."[9] Other transformed borrowings from Donne include rhetorical figures used in "To My Mistris sitting by a Rivers side: An Eddy," "The Comparison," and "To my Inconstant Mistris," as well as the famous compass image Carew redeploys in "An Excuse of absence" and "To Celia upon Loves ubiquity." Often the point of view is drastically altered, as in the poem on the "Eddy." Unlike Donne's disapproving analogy in the Elegie beginning, "Oh, let mee not serve so, as those men serve" (number 12 in Shawcross), Carew describes the scene in terms of sweet and mirthful love play, then makes it an <u>exemplum</u> in a solicitation to adultery:

> Be thou this Eddy, and I'le make
> My breast thy shore, where thou shalt take
> Secure repose, and never dreame
> Of the quite forsaken streame:
> Let him to the wide Ocean hast,
> There lose his colour, name, and tast;
> Thou shalt save all, and safe from him,
> Within these armes for ever swim.

As is illustrated here, Carew's consummate practitioner of the arts of seduction is eloquent about the advantages that would accrue to the lady, as he stresses the idea that the game is played for mutual benefit, and that for <u>either</u> party to "win," that is, to accommodate natural drives, <u>both</u> must, contributing jointly to the enterprise. In the parlance of modern game-theory, it is a "non-zero-sum-game,"

and the emphasis on this point distinguishes the Cavalier sensibility.[10] It implies a relationship between men and women that frankly acknowledges sexual appetites as well as social ambitions, and allows for the tactics of negotiation. The variations on this theme provide Carew with some of his most brilliant poetic strategies.

Although the eternizing conceit appears in an elaborate compliment to the Countess of Carlisle, "A New-yeares Sacrifice: To Lucinda," Carew's worldly-wise invitations to love offer inducements centered in the here and now. Many of these poems imply a bargaining situation, like that dramatized in the "proviso scene" of Mirabell and Millamant in Congreve's The Way of the World.[11] A good example is "To a Lady that desired I would love her," in which the ground-rules for the transaction are explored in advance. Just what are the lady's intentions? Her options are rehearsed, and the possibilities evaluated in adroitly phrased alternatives. The infrastructure of the stanza, with its variations in line lengths and its cross rhymes, creates a tension between meter and voice rhythm that supports the sardonically quizzical mood. The tonal inflection of the second stanza's opening phrase is subtly and deliciously pointed.

1

Now you have freely given me leave to love,
What will you doe?
Shall I your mirth, or passion move
When I begin to wooe;
Will you torment, or scorne, or love me too?

2

Each pettie beautie can disdaine, and I
Spight of your hate
Without your leave can see, and dye;
Dispence a nobler Fate,
'Tis easy to destroy, you may create

The next three stanzas crisply continue to derogate the Petrarchan game-rules endorsed by "pettie beauties" and "puling Poets," and the questionable motives and methods of this inferior mode of love. The central stanza here focuses the criticism on aesthetic grounds that seem quite objective and in the lady's best interests: "Blubbr'd eyne" would do her a disservice.

4

Griefe is a puddle, and reflects not cleare
Your beauties rayes,
Joyes are pure streames, your eyes appeare
Sullen in sadder layes,
In chearfull numbers they shine bright with prayse;

Finally, the poet makes his proposition in mellifluous phrasing, attaching in polite but explicit terms the condition that the rewards be reciprocal.

6

I'le make your eyes like morning Suns appeare,
As milde, and faire;
Your brow as Crystall smooth, and cleare,
And your dishevell'd hayre
Shall flow like a calme Region of the Ayre.

7

Rich Natures store, (which is the Poets Treasure)
I'le spend, to dresse
Your beauties, if your mine of Pleasure
In equall thankfulnesse
You but unlocke, so we each other blesse.

The "mine of Pleasure" recalls similar imagery in Donne's "Loves Progress (Elegie 20 in Shawcross) and "The Sunne Rising."

Perhaps the most highly regarded of Carew's invitation poems is "To A. L.: Perswasions to love," whose amusingly specious logic and agile tactical shifts make it a masterpiece of the genre. It begins abruptly with something of a Donnean attack in its bluntness and unexpected disparagement, then quickly reverses the premises in a counter argument.

> Thinke not cause men flatt'ring say
> Y'are fresh as Aprill, sweet as May,
> Bright as is the morning starre,
> That you are so, or though you are
> Be not therefore proud, and deeme
> All men unworthy your esteeme.

In succeeding lines, the pleasure principle is introduced, then an argument from "nature" (as in the previously cited poem) and the audacious imputation of "sinne"

> There to be scarce, where shee hath bin
> So prodigall of her best graces.

The ploy of projecting spurious definitions of the situation is reminiscent of Leander's courtship of Hero in Marlowe's epyllion. Carew heaps one casuistry upon another as his speaker suggests that the lady has been, in Rauber's words, "outwitted by her less gifted sisters in the game of love. Then coldly and [seemingly] without personal interest, the poet observes the fact that she is playing the game badly and losing."[12]

> Thus common beauties, and meane faces
> Shall have more pastime, and enjoy
> The sport you loose by being coy.
> Did the thing for which I sue
> Onely concern my selfe not you,
> Were men so fram'd as they alone

> Reap'd all the pleasure, women none,
> Then had you reason to be scant;
> But 'twere a madnesse not to grant
> That which affords (if you consent)
> To you the giver, more content
> Then me the beggar; Oh then bee
> Kinde to your selfe if not to mee;
> Starve not your selfe, because you may
> Thereby make me pine away;

Again vanity is presented as a trap and her physical attributes treated slightingly as carpe diem finds yet another occasion to assert itself in tones of facile reasonableness.

> Nor yet brittle beautie make
> You the wiser thoughts forsake:
> For that lovely face will faile,
> Beautie's sweet, but beautie's fraile;

The possibilities of pathos are drawn out and climaxed by a beautifully balanced line, such as probably inspired Leavis to place Carew in the ancestry of Pope: "No lilly shall be found nor rose."

After the resources of the theme have been fully exploited, comes a solicitous suggestion that craftily plays upon the fears the poet has so calculatingly provoked. The relation of play to sober realities has been a persistent undercurrent in one's developing consciousness of the ludic impulse in poetry.[13]

> And what will then become of all
> Those, whom now you servants call?
> Like swallowes when your summers done,
> They'le flye and seeke some warmer Sun.
> Then wisely chuse one to your friend,
> Whose love may, when your beauties end,
> Remaine still forme: be provident

> And think before the summers spent
> Of following winter; like the Ant
> In plenty hoord for time of scant.
> Cull out amongst the multitude
> Of lovers, that seeke to intrude
> Into your favour, one that may
> Love for an age, not for a day;
> One that will quench your youthfull fires,
> And feed in age your hot desires.

The rest of the poem continues to plead "gather-ye-rosebuds" wisdom in light of the "wrack" of time and age. There is something amusingly and deliberately ironic in Carew's mockery of conventional moral rules while scrupulously observing such clear-cut metrical bounds:

> Spend not in vaine your lives short houre,
> But crop in time your beauties flower:
> Which will away, and doth together
> Both bud, and fade, both blow and wither.

The double meanings of "crop" and "in time" provide unexpected interest. And although we have by no means exhausted the specific elements deserving of attention in the poem, we will note only that the telescoping of images in the final line has the marvellous effect of today's time-lapse photography in filmmaking.

What one especially admires in Carew's persuasions to love is not alone the effectiveness of the rhetorical manipulation, but also the degree of psychological and social acumen. Essentials of George Herbert Mead's analysis of social activity in terms of games and role-playing, and Erving Goffman's description of "strategic interaction," seem to correspond to aspects of these verses.[14] Mead

perceives that in the game one must become, as it were, any or all of the others implicated in the common activity in order to play one's own part successfully. One images in advance what effect one's actions will have on the other and what the response will be so that one can adapt to this response before it has been made, and even so that it does not _have_ to be made. Blocking or opposing moves are anticipated so that they can be countered. Goffman's description of strategic moves both visible and concealed in game-situations also addresses itself to the "dynamics of interdependence involving mutual awareness." This kind of complex social perception adds to the "dramaticality" of "To A.L.--" and many other seventeenth-century poems. Carew's _personae_, like those of Donne and sometimes Marvell, take the attitude of the other player very closely into account, almost playing that role too, and seeming to modify or adjust their own performances accordingly. In George Herbert's _The Temple_ and in Donne's _Divine Poems_, the "other" whose moves are imagined is God himself as the poet's _agon_ with the Deity is enacted. One may, of course, choose to "lose" to the lover, human or divine, in order to win on a higher level.

The overtly aggressive stance in many of Carew's most distinctive poems seems to enact the gamesmanship implicit in the way aristocratic men and women provide for their erotic needs in a socially approved way. Warnke has shown discerningly how the _dolce nemiche_ of Petrarchan poetry

takes on new significance in the "playful sexual agon" of "Baroque" love poetry. The "pose of hostility has been transformed from one signifying abject complaint to one signifying the cheerful acceptance of combat with a hereditary enemy." As a common expression of "bantering but often tender animosities," and sometimes not so tender, the insult becomes a convention in the poetry of Donne, Carew and Suckling.[15] One debonair example from Carew has already been noted in "To A. L.--."

The essence of any game is in its rules, which generate self-contained values and an autonomous morality. We remember that Huizinga saw play in this sense as order itself and the very foundation of law.[16] Within the game the enforcement of the rules becomes the concern of the dedicated player because without their observance the game cannot continue. Frequently Carew's antagonistic poetic moods, however jocularly presented, dramatize the expert game-player's reproach of the opponent who is perceived as not "playing fair." "A Deposition from Love" is perhaps the best representation of this attitude.

An innovative feature of the poem for Carew is its narrative form for which the poet chooses a similarly uncharacteristic stanza form. Its first eight lines are a divided Poulter's measure whose rhythm imparts an ironic, almost cynical effect. A lady is addressed, whom we initially assume to be the object of the courtship. The speaker begins his recital by outlining the procedures

assumed to obtain in the game: the behavior of the lady, the nature of the obstacles set in the lover's way and the means of overcoming them. The stock images of the beseiged fortress take on sexual overtones that look forward to Freud more than they look backward to Petrarch.

> I was foretold, your rebell sex,
> Nor love, nor pitty knew;
> And with what scorne, you use to vex
> Poore hearts, that humbly sue;
> Yet I believ'd, to crowne our paine,
> Could we the fortresse win,
> The happy lover sure should gaine
> A Paradise within:
> I thought loves plagues, like Dragons sate,
> Only to fright us at the gate.

The next stanza further shows the distance the Cavalier poet has travelled from the conventionally Petrarchan situation. In the first four lines the "pay-off" of the successful conduct of the game is frankly described in terms of the pleasures of erotic dalliance. But the pleasures prove short-lived because the game is unilaterally terminated, and the previous play rendered worthless. Celia, now referred to in the third person, has abrogated her responsibilities to her partner, presumably in her defection to another, and the betrayal is painful:

> But I did enter, and enjoy,
> What happy lovers prove;
> For I could kisse, and sport, and toy,
> And tast those sweets of love;
> Which had they but a lasting state,
> Or if in Celia's brest,
> The force of love might not abate,
> Jove were too meane a guest.
> But now her breach of faith, far more
> Afflicts, then did her scorne before.

One wonders whether the wanton delights described in the first part of the stanza may be the superficial aspects of a deeper involvement of ego. The commitment to a game can be total while it is being played. The concluding stanza returns to the military metaphor for a new twist on the standard lament that includes a double entendre in the third line:

> Hard fate! to have been once possest
> As victor, of a heart,
> Atchiev'd with labour, and unrest,
> And then forc'd to depart.
> If the stout Foe will not resigne,
> When I beseige a Towne,
> I lose but what was never mine;
> But he that is cast downe
> From enjoy'd beautie, feeles a woe,
> Onely deposed Kings can know.

The pathos of the last three lines takes on far greater impact and irony than Carew intended in light of the ultimate fate of Charles.

But what is the intention of the speaker in the poem? Why the seeming discrepancy between the meter and the matter? With critical penetration, Bruce King has interpreted the strategy as a clever form of revenge that is close to satire.

> The poem pretends to elicit sympathy for the rejected lover; however, the originality of the poem is the public disclosure that the poet has sexually enjoyed his mistress, and that she has now given herself to another man . . . Carew's genius is the way the satiric elements of the poem are carefully balanced and controlled by traditional Renaissance conventions, so that what is being said comes as a surprise and draws attention to itself. The second stanza with its bold "But I did enter, and enjoy" is

> meant to shock; that it is understated and put casually only makes the effect greater.[17]

The poem thus encompasses and combines various types of games: strategic-erotic, linguistic-semantic, metalinguistic and rhetorical. And, as with the troubadour lyric, the social intrigue of the court is always sensed as the background informing Carew's poetic maneuvers. King probably does not exaggerate when he suggests that such verses "like newspaper gossip can make or unmake reputations."[18]

Equally aggressive poetic vehicles in which Carew excelled are the related genres of the warning and the threat. A tutelage under Donne is especially obvious in this regard, though the ferocity of attack represented by "The Apparition" is tamed to a measured coolness. One of the more subtle examples of this type is "A cruell Mistris," which could for most of its eighteen lines be taken as a standard complaint. The poet's device is to contrast his "Saint" and "Goddesse" to more reasonable deities and monarchs. Jove, Vesta, the "God of love" and even "Th'Assyrian King" can be appeased by the sacrifices of their worshippers, whereas this lady disdains the poet's ceremonies and "consumes her owne Idolater." But the irony of the final couplet is that the apparent placability of the gods is actually an enlightened self-interest, and the unwise harshness of the lady makes her the loser in the long run. Carew chides his mistress in what can be called an "anti-eternizing sonnet" climaxed by a laconically rendered moral:

Of such a Goddesse no times leave record,
That burnt the temple where she was ador'd.

Returning to the grievance specified in "A deposition from Love," Carew artfully employs a more pointed religious analogy as a weapon in "To my inconstant Mistris." The form of address is proleptic as it anticipates the retribution the lady will suffer for her defection to another.

When thou, poore excommunicate
From all the joyes of love, shalt see
The full reward, and glorious fate,
Which my strong faith shall purchase me
Then curse thine owne inconstancie.

The nature of her punishment and the nature of the poet's reward for his faithfulness are neatly conflated. She will be replaced by a successor with far more to recommend her. We are reminded of New Testament images of the inhabitants of Heaven and Hell having mutual viewing privileges of the opposite contingent's just deserts. And it is all under the playful rubric of a "Song"!

A fayrer hand then thine, shall cure
That heart, which thy false oathes did wound;
And to my soule, a soule more pure
Than thine, shall by Loves hand be bound,
And both with equall glory corwn'd.

Then shalt thou weepe, entreat, complaine
To Love, as I did once to thee;
When all thy teares shall be as vaine
As mine were then, for thou shalt bee
Damn'd for thy false Apostasie.

It is a bit curious that critics have uniformly denigrated the third stanza of the poem entitled "Disdaine returned."[19] The first two stanzas do seem to present a

complete and balanced argument on behalf of "a smooth and stedfast mind," and so forth, in preference to "Rosie cheeke" and "corall lip" without these virtues. The stanza in question, which is generally regarded as a later extension of the original lyric and is often omitted in anthologies, adds the revenge motif. Although it may not lend moral beauty to the poem, the third stanza does contribute a psychologically valid perspective that would guarantee a receptive audience. This is one of the handfull of poems that were published during Carew's lifetime. The concluding stanza reads:

> No teares, Celia, now shall win,
> My resolv'd heart, to returne;
> I have searcht thy soule within,
> And find nought, but pride, and scorne;
> I have learn'd thy arts, and now
> Can disdaine as much as thou.
> Some power, in my revenge convay
> That love to her, I cast away.

One aspect of this lyric which seems to have escaped critical attention is that the initial stanza's synecdochic cheeks, lips and eyes are cited not for their intrinsic value but as stimuli or goads needed by the speaker for his own libidinal and literary purposes. It is the first hint we have seen in Carew of the self-acknowledged poet-as-lover.

> Hee that loves a Rosie cheeke,
> Or a corall lip admires,
> Or from star-like eyes doth seeke
> Fuell to maintaine his fires;
> As old Time makes these decay,
> So his flames must waste away.

The chef-d'oeuvre among Carew's poems of threat, and the most self-conscious poetic statement among his love

lyrics, is the justly praised "Ingratefull beauty threatned," in Richmond's words "one of the peaks of Renaissance creativity."[20] Centuries of sophistication, rather than the actual lapse of four decades, seem to separate this lyric from Daniel's eternizing sonnets, though the basic concept is not dissimilar. Beauty and value do not belong inherently to Celia, but are created by the poet, whose verse endows her with her attributes, promotes desire for her and confers upon her the celebrity in which she glories. (The worth of the prize in many a game depends solely upon what has been invested in it by the players.) Too cool to be scathing, too detached to be contemptuous, the poet stands the Petrarchan ethos upon its head, in the apparent attempt to redress the balance of four centuries of servitude to the haughty mistress. The technique we have previously observed of disparaging a lady's charms by suggesting that she might be merely one of the crowd of "common" or "pettie" beauties that could escape notice, is even more skillfully handled here. Carew varies the metrical stress with subtle modulations to convey a tone of elegant imperiousness designed to render the lady more and more vulnerable. The combination of forthright affronts and insidious ploys planted within subordinate phrases make the poem a game-watcher's delight.

Unlike most of the three-stanza Cavalier lyrics, which present a theme in the first stanza and merely offer varia-

tions in the succeeding two through syntactical parallels, this one develops an argument in sequences of increasingly radical implications. At first, it is only her fame which Celia owes to the poet.

> Know Celia, (since thou art so proud,)
> 'Twas I that gave thee thy renowne:
> Thou hadst, in the forgotten crowd
> Of common beauties, liv'd unknowne,
> Had not my verse exhal'd thy name,
> And with it, ympt the wings of fame.

The next stanza takes away her claim not only to her fatal weapons and most admired attributes, but even her vaunted autonomy, identity and base of operations. One hears insistently the stress on the personal pronouns "I," "mine," "my" at the expense of "thine" and "thy," as the long "i" sounds reverberate. The proprietary "my," used twice with such precision in the fourth line, reduces her status to a fundamental contingency.

> That killing power is none of thine,
> I gave it to thy voyce, and eyes:
> Thy sweets, thy graces, all are mine;
> Thou art my starre, shin'st in my skies;
> Then dart not from thy borrowed sphere
> Lightning on him, that fixt thee there.

Finally, the poet's identity and power as "maker" is taken to its ultimate conclusion and the tacit threat made overt. Since Celia is so completely the poet's creation, he can "uncreate" her, puncturing the mystical camouflage with which such ladies have been able to dazzle men. The poet's role as myth-maker in the tradition has functioned to clothe the naked truth with fictive "vailes" for (it would seem) those who cannot bear very much reality.

Tempt me with such affrights no more,
  Lest what I made, I uncreate;
Let fooles thy mystique formes adore,
  I'le know thee in thy mortall state:
Wise Poets that wrap't Truth in tales,
Knew her themselves, through all her vailes.

The hostile tone of this variety of Cavalier wit makes one acutely aware of the poet's silent accomplice, the third-party listener whose resentments against the blocking of direct sensual gratification are being voiced and elicited. In his Jokes and the Unconscious, Freud has described a similar triadic relationship operative in sexual jokes, a dynamic which, like what we see in these poems of Carew, can be identified as another kind of game-playing.[21] But the central thrust of "Ingratefull beauty threatned" seems to be to expose and thereby reject all the courtly games poets have so long played. The emergent naturalism of the age, a by-product of the rise of scientific consciousness, seems to motivate this strain of Cavalier poetry to render such games obsolete.

A vastly different ludic spirit permeates Carew's masterpiece of erotica, "A Rapture," which invites the listener/reader to enjoy the analogue of play known as fantasy, the activity of "dreaming awake," in the guiltless contemplation of the lineaments of gratified desire. Although the poem is addressed to Celia, and its major sequences bracketed by disparagements of Honour (as "Masquer," "Idoll," and finally "goblin") directed against such scruples as an actual lady might harbor, the heavenly heroine never assumes

enough reality to play the role of palpable audience. She is the faceless, basically anonymous dream-image upon whom fantasies of sexual omnipotence can be engendered. "We will coyne young Cupids," says the poet early on; as Paula Johnson indicates, "the only offspring of these lovers will be the cupididates of ever-renewed desire."[22]

With the autotelic immediacy of the pleasure principle, the poet has begun by demanding "I will enjoy thee now my Celia, come," a peremptory opening that would seem to limit possibilities of titillation. But both space and time are experely manipulated in this graphically suggestive excursion. With a backward glance at Drayton and the Elizabethan milieu, and a catapulting leap ahead to Freudian dream symbolism, the speaker enlists Celia to "flye with me to Loves Elizium." Within its scope of one hundred sixty-six lines, the poet attempts the remarkable feat of sustaining the effect of optimal arousal over an extended period of erotic play. Rhythms of anticipation and satisfaction, activity and rest are represented without the slightest hint of the satiation and tristitia of a post-coital stage. As play creates a temporary transcendence of time in a dilated present, so fantasy can aspire to consummations that both occur and are evermore about to be in the multiple climaxes and releases of an apotheosized now, the erotic sublime.

> Then, as the empty Bee, that lately bore
> Into the common treasure, all her store,
> Flyes 'bout the painted field with nimble wing,
> Deflowring the fresh virgins of the spring,

> So will I rifle all the sweets, that dwell
> In my delicious Paradise, and swell
> My bagge with honey, drawne forth by the power
> Of fervent kisses, from each spicie flower.

The future tense serves the purposes of desire in the first hundred lines and the final twenty, as the "there" and "then" (used ten and five times, respectively) of the playground that is Celia are made as immediate as possible. Topographical and geographical topoi representing a tradition from the Song of Songs through Spenser, Donne and Herrick, are not only sensuously evocative, but are also conceptually expressive of the wish-fulfilling motif of temporary escape from cultural and religious restraints. Such a "holiday from the super-ego" seems at least partially present in all play.[23]

> Then I will visit with a wand'ring kisse
> The vale of lillies and the bowre of blisse
> And where the beauteous region doth divide
> Into two milky ways, my lips shall slide
> Down those smooth alleys, wearing as I go
> A tract for lovers on the printed snow;
> Thence climbing o'er the swelling Apennine,
> Retire into thy grove of eglantine,
> . . . . . .
> Thou like a sea of milke shalt lie displayed,
> Whilst I the smooth, calm ocean invade
> With such tempest, as when Jove of old
> Fell down on Danae in a storm of gold;
> Yet my tall pine shall in the Cyprian strait
> Ride safe at anchor, and unlade her freight.

The pun on pinus can not go unnoticed here. Also significant are the exaggerated proportions of genitalia and related anatomical features which are suggested in a technique common to erotic (and pornographic) art forms.

Both Freudian and Jungian interpretations of dream

symbolism can be educed from Carew's imagery. The landscape of Celia's body evokes representations of the archetypal Great Mother, the earth goddess worshipped in the fertility cults, whereas the image of sailing between "the huge Collosses' legs" and passing "unseene/Unto the blissful shore" seems expressive of the Oedipal wish to challenge the prerogative of the father. There is, in addition, a kind of polymorphous lubricity in the leisurely exploration of these sensuous regions: the alchemical Bee, who can "all those ravish'd sweets distill/Through Love's alembic," is both oral and phallic. The "Dionysian ego" uniting body and world as envisioned by Norman O. Brown seems prefigured here.[24] But lest psychoanalytic jargon impose upon the poem a solemnity it in no wise possesses, let us hasten to emphasize the fun, the indispensable attribute of paidia which ultimately invests the poem with something almost like innocence, despite its self-conscious audacity.

As we have noted, the nature of the poem seems to require the future tense for its fusion (or confusion) or tumescent and orgasmic sequences. The fragility of fantasy can allow only forty-six lines, less than a third of the poem, to the present tense, and in its spatial translation of the optative, "there" never becomes "here." This intervening section also shifts away from Celia herself, first to the designation of what is avoided: the "jealous ears" and "envious eyes" that create risk and danger, the

"midnight arbors" and "dark groves" that are necessary in the real world "To hide our kisses." In the very act of negating these factors, the element of hazard which is thus introduced can lend its own texture of excitement. The intrusion of actuality also motivates the poem's contrasting evocation of the Golden Age as the supreme image of wish-fulfillment:

> All things are lawful, there that may delight
> Nature or unrestrained appetite;
> Like and enjoy, to will and act is one.

Throughout the poem one has been reminded of the chorus from Tasso's Aminta, translated by Daniel in the 1592 Delia. The second strophe reads:

> But onely for that name,
> That Idle name of wind:
> That Idoll of deceit, that empty sound
> Call'd HONOR, which became
> The tyran of the minde,
> And so torments our Nature without ground;
> Was not yet vainly found:
> Nor yet sad griefes imparts
> Amidst the sweet delights
> Of joyfull amorous wights.
> Nor were his hard lawes knowne to free-borne hearts;
> But golden lawes like these
> Which Nature wrote: "That's lawfull which doth
> please."

The rest of the "now" segment is devoted to the "amorous sport" of ladies previously famous (notorious?) for their sexual parsimony and now transformed into exemplars of libidinal fulfillment. In this lush amusement park we find Lucrece turned pupil of Aretine; Penelope indulging "gamesome nights" in lieu of "dull dreams of the lost traveller"; Daphne running to meet the "youthfull sun" and hanging upon

him "like his Delphic lyre"; and Laura, lying "in Petrarch's learned arms, drying those eyes/That did in such sweet smooth-paced numbers flow." In its use of the playful technique of inversion, the passage brilliantly portrays what Huizinga called "the ideal of unchastity."[25]

In her own perceptive but finally unsatisfying discussion of "A Rapture" as "The Dynamics of Fantasy," Paula Johnson's analysis succeeds in identifying some of the poetic pleasures and problems of the poem, but fails in precisely the area her title promises to illuminate. (As the first and as yet only attempt at an explication of the poem to be published, however, Johnson's article is a welcome addition to the small body of Carew scholarship.) Her objections that the poem is "not wholly consistent as either a simultaneous system or a patterned series of events" and that Celia is disconcertingly passive seem jarringly inappropriate.[26] On the one hand, the very nature of the "free play" of fantasy is that it unfolds in an episodic and segmented if not fragmented and erratic sequence, an order outside the laws of ordinary logic. On the other hand, the "secondary process" or ludus pole of Caillois does of course contribute an order and pattern indispensable to poetry. Angus Fletcher includes "A Rapture" among those examples of blason exhibiting "symmetries . . . in the sectioned details of description . . . where each part of the body is given its particular praise."[27] And the argument concerning Celia's passivity, undercut by Johnson's own admission that "a bold

hand" presides over a crucial maneuver in the action, can easily be dismissed. Fantasy is intrinsically "autistic" thinking, a closed system unconcerned with external feedback or interaction with a responsive environment.[28] Johnson's question "What other lady was ever compared to a 'sea of milke'?" seems a curious disregard for one of the poem's most explicit images.

Johnson does, however, recognize that "A Rapture" is a poem "thoroughly enmeshed with poetic traditions, conventions and fashions."[29] Few better examples can be found, at least before the twentieth century, of the modern critical dictum that poems are mainly about other poems. In addition to the pervasive influence of Donne's "Elegies" and their sources, are resonances traceable to such precursors as Catullus, Marlowe and Marino.[30] The game for the reader becomes the identification of the specific allusions and analogues as they present themselves within the deftly woven fabric of the poem. Among the poem's models are Ovid's Amores, Saint-Amant's La Jouyssance and its imitators, voyages to isles of pleasure as in Gerusalem Liberata and The Faerie Queene, and a multitude of literary gardens and earthly paradises. Clever juxtapositions enrich and extend the conceptual and imagistic possibilities. In conflating "The vale of lilies and the bowre of blisse," for example, the poet slyly equates the hortus conclusus of the Song of Songs with the suspect sensuality of Acrasia's

realm, negating in one breath the vast literature of allegorical and typological interpretations with which church and synagogue have sanctified the manifest voluptuousness of the ancient "canticle." John Hollander deems Carew's poem "a mad struggle against Spenser,"[31] and indeed, beyond the Bower of Bliss and the Garden of Adonis are echoes from the House of Busirane ("Be bold, and wise") and hints of the "Epithalamium" ("There no rude sounds shake us with sudden starts"). And extending far beyond Spenser is the agon of truly heroic proportions with a Manichean/Neoplatonic/Christian sexual ethic denigrative of the body's demands. The poem's wickedly ambiguous title invites fantasies centered about the motif of abduction and rape, while invoking at the same time the wealth of mystical writings in a tradition that had never hesitated to appropriate erotic language for its representations of religious transports.

Since a number of Carew's contemporaries found it necessary to condemn the poem publicly, they must have perceived it as more than a "witty exercise" in "kicking over the moral traces" to amuse us as "an accurate portrayal of masculine sexuality," as one modern critic describes it.[32] A scholarly appreciation for the cutting edge of the Cavalier intellect, of which this poem provides valuable evidence, is long overdue. Apollo and Dionysus preside jointly over "A Rapture," and the imaginative connection between sexual prowess and poetic prowess has never been more vividly pre-

sented. Representing Cavalier wit at its height, "A Rapture" stands as a compendium of poetic games on the subject of play itself in some of its most fascinating forms.

If man is humanized by play, as Schiller declares,[33] the extension of ludic activity represented by the Cavalier lyric has made an estimable contribution toward this end, and particularly to man's consciousness of himself as a social being. The complexities of social interaction, and more specifically of relations between the sexes, challenged Carew to develop some of the perspectives and skills integral to the poetic achievements of the Restoration and the eighteenth century. F. R. Leavis placed Carew in the line leading to Pope. And after Pope, where does that line lead but to Byron?

NOTES AND REFERENCES

CHAPTER VI

[1]See above, this dissertation, Chapter 1, pp. 14-15.

[2]Huizinga, The Waning of the Middle Ages, p. 108.

[3]Sigmund Freud, "The Most Prevalent Form of Degradation in Erotic Life," Sexuality and the Psychology of Love, Collected Papers, Vol. VIII (New York: Collier Books, 1963), p. 67.

[4]See Amores, II, xix and III, iv.

[5]Herbert W. Richardson, Nun, Witch, Playmate: The Americanization of Sex (New York: Harper & Row, 1971), pp. 57-58.

[6]Suckling, Aglaura, Act IV, Sc. 2, ll. 15 ff.

[7]Karl Groos, The Play of Man, trans. E. Baldwin (New York: D. Appleton Co., 1901), p. 266.

[8]See Guss, p. 76.

[9]Smith, p. 51.

[10]For the best non-mathematical discussion of this kind of game, see Thomas C. Schelling, The Strategy of Conflict (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Univ. Press, 1960), pp. 83-118.

[11]Bruce King makes this point, p. 50, as does Richmond, pp. 272-273.

[12]Rauber, p. 21. My perspective on the entire poem was sharpened by Rauber's analysis, pp. 20-23.

[13]See above, Chapter 1 of this study, p. 21-23.

[14]George Herbert Mead, Mind, Self and Society (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1934), pp. 150-151; and Erving Goffman, Strategic Interaction (Philadelphia: Univ. of Pennsylvania Press, 1969). The phrase quoted is from p. 137.

[15]Warnke, pp. 98-105. Specific quotations are from p. 104.

[16]See above, Chapter 1 of this dissertation, p. 6.

[17]King, p. 44.

[18]Ibid., p. 43.

[19]See, for example, Dunlap, p. 222, and Selig, p. 56n.

[20]Richmond, pp. 205-206.

[21]Freud, Jokes and the Unconscious, Ch. 3.

[22]Paula Johnson, "Carew's 'A Rapture': The Dynamics of Fantasy," SEL 16 (1976), 150.

[23]Ernst Kris, Psychoanalytic Explorations in Art (New York: Schocken Books, 1967), p. 182.

[24]Norman O. Brown, Life against Death: The Psychoanalytic Meaning of History (Middletown, Conn.: Wesleyan Univ. Press, 1959), Ch. XII, especially pp. 175-176.

[25]Huizinga, The Waning of the Middle Ages, p. 112.

[26]Johnson, pp. 147 and 149.

[27]Angus Fletcher, Allegory: The Theory of a Symbolic Mode (Ithaca: Cornell Univ. Press, 1964), p. 190n.

[28]Eric Klinger, Structure and Functions of Fantasy (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1971), pp. 185-186.

[29]Johnson, p. 147.

[30]Note Donne echoes in ll. 3, 8, 33-4, 75 and 146, among others. There is a reminiscence of Catullus in l. 27 and of Marlowe in ll. 35-36, and more general resemblances to the Garden of Touch in L'Adone throughout the poem.

[31]John Hollander, Class lecture in "Problems in Tudor and Stuart Poetry," City University of New York Graduate Center, March 31, 1977.

[32]For attacks on "A Rapture" see James E. Rouff, "Thomas Carew's Early Reputation," N & Q, 202 (1957), 61-62 and Paul Delany, "Attacks on Carew in William Habington's Poems," SCN, 24 (1968). Quotations are from Robin Skelton, Cavalier Poets (London: Longmans Green, 1960), pp. 11-12.

[33]See above, Chapter 1 of this study, p. 3.

CHAPTER VII

SATIRIC TECHNIQUE AND BYRON'S DON JUAN

In shifting from the neatly hedged playgrounds of Elizabethan sonnet and Cavalier lyric to the unfenced fields of satiric verse, one encounters critical hazards. Marie Claire Randolph has described the nature of the problem. "Fluid and elusive as mercury, the Satiric Spirit almost refuses to be bound by any rigid tenets, but easily flows and fuses itself . . . with other essentially or even temporarily congenial genres . . ." In other words, the satiric spirit is constantly at play, and can accommodate itself to a wide range of specific games. If one is looking for "any sort of identifiable, crystallized form or framework," one will find it only in "formal verse satire," a genre adapted from the Romans by English Renaissance satirists.[1]

Since characteristics of formal verse satire have influenced and interpenetrated other types of satiric poetry in the manner Randolph describes, I will cite some of that genre's most striking manifestations. My objective in this chapter, however, is to indicate essential elements of play and game in the various traditions available to Byron for use in Don Juan.[2]

As we have seen in previous chapters, a major aspect of poetic games is that they are undertaken by the poet to demonstrate his skills for the pleasure of competitive self-assertiveness. Although the rules of poetic satire

may allow far more diversity than those of previously examined games, poetic satire as a whole does present significant schematic continuities. And the reader's rewards for participating in the game are increased when he understands the conventions that the poet plays with and against in creating his poem. I have chosen Don Juan as focus for a ludic view of satiric verse because it is in many ways a culmination of a number of satiric techniques and contains within it some of the highest achievements of English poetic satire. Its very size and relative formlessness allows the satiric spirit a maximum freedom and scope. In other ways as well, Byron seems to push the potentialities of satire toward some sort of ultimate limits. ("My poem's epic . . .") But in taking even such a brief theoretical and historical overview as this one, one is inevitably aware of the many modifications Byron made of traditional poetic resources in order to produce his own version of satire. One must also admit at the outset that at any given moment in Don Juan, Byron's purposes may or may not be satiric; the poem contains other things besides satire. Nor are all of his targets satirized with equal degree and intensity. But in its all-embracing and protean tendencies, the satiric spirit seems to prevail and to absorb a variety of effects and moods. And within this most public of poetic games, Byron maintains the prerogatives of "elite" (that is, personal and private) games to carry out his ludic intentions.

The appropriation of rhetorical strategies has been a major ludic factor in the genres thus far surveyed in my study, and this factor is no less important in the history of satiric verse. The rhetorician's recourse to ethos, pathos and logos corresponds closely to the satirist's tactics of establishing credibility, creating identification with his audience, and offering evidence for his brief.[3] The legal terminology seems appropriate since satire purports to offer judgment. Whether oratorical or conversational, and Byron is conspicuously both, the verse satirist is, in the words of Alvin Kernan, the "most cunning of rhetoricians, highly skilled in all the tricks of persuasions," not only in his imposture but also in his audacious denial of his rhetorical methods. "In point of fact, the claims to blunt, straightforward, and unskilled honesty made by the satirist are so patently false as to be outrageous, for in practice he is always an extremely clever poetic strategist and manipulator of language, who possesses an incredibly copious vocabulary and an almost limitless arsenal of rhetorical devices."[4] Yet, as with the private, lyrical genres, the satirist does not so much persuade in the sense of convincing his audience of the truth of a proposition, as entice them into a coterie, a play-community united and set apart by a shared perspective on the world. "Skewed," "squint-eyed," and "binocular" are among the usual terms ascribed to the satiric perspective. Though his mode is one of dispraise, the satirist practices the

"science of courtship."[5] He "courts" his audience by offering its members the role of co-conspiratorial spies on a ludicrous and/or unjust world. If a more genial disposition be his, he may create an ambiance of intimacy and invite the reader to share a what-fools-we-mortals-be camaraderie. Byron utilizes both possibilities: when Juan is on stage, it is more likely to be the former, and when Byron addresses us directly, it is often the latter.

The nature of the complicity causes the game-contract between a satiric poet and his reader to include a distinctive set of challenges and expectations, a particular balance of belief and unbelief. For the satirist "scores" by enabling his audience to savor both the justice of his presentation and the ingenuity of his maneuvers in the inevitable distortions of the truth.[6] Here the satirist parts company from the mere rhetor. As Jacopo Mazzoni said, "the credible as credible is the subject of rhetoric and the credible as marvelous is the subject of poetry."[7] Don Juan is an excellent demonstration of the fact that the marvels of satire tend to be centered in the satirist's performance itself, so that the role of admiring audience is essential.

Another strong link between satire and rhetoric involves the ludic factor of agon. Possibly born in one of the most archaic of poetic impulses, the use of magic incantation to destroy a human enemy or ward off a natural threat,[8] fully developed satire attains a high level of

sophistication as conflict becomes sublimated to the game of rhetoric. The satirist may be drawn to this game by the extraordinary range of possible speech acts, tones, postures, techniques, fictions, and materials which he may appropriate--conventions derived from rich classical, native and continental sources. When formal verse satire made its very self-conscious debut on the English scene in 1597 with the challenge thrown out by Joseph Hall to his contemporaries:

> I first adventure: follow me who list
> And be the second English Satyrist.[9]

the models for the rivalry thus set in motion were the extant Roman satirists: Horace, Juvenal and Persius.[10] "The game of the Renaissance," says Huizinga, "is the game of living in imitation of Antiquity, which was pursued in holy earnest."[11] A concomitant gratification was found in flaunting one's own virtuosity and stamping upon the verse-form the mark of one's own uniqueness. The overwrought effect most sought after was far closer to the histrionic invective of Juvenal's saturae in their rage against vice, than to the urbanely good-humored arguments against folly of Horace's sermones. But these two styles occupied opposite ends of a spectrum comprising the playground of satiric verse for well over two centuries.

Byron's debts to the masters have been well documented, and only a few citations can suffice here. George Ridenour shows that Byron's assertion of devotion to truth and "pedestrian muses" reflects the ethos and plain style of the

sermones, in which Byron was well tutored by Pope, and that passages of the Dedication of Don Juan are in the manner of Juvenal.[12] Frederick L. Beaty finds the dialogue between Juan and Johnson in the slave market at Constantinople a free imitation of the fifth satire of Persius, though the tone and "dramatic mode of dialectic" is closer to Horace and Pope.[13] Among more general influences of Juvenal one might see Byron's treatment of Gulbeyaz as nymphomaniac empress. Ronald Paulson makes a point about Juvenal that can also apply to Byron: that sexuality is the "most basic symbol for life and human relationships which tend to disintegrate into perversions."[14]

Poetic satire, then, has traditionally employed a persona that alerts the reader to the particular version of the game being played and orchestrates the production. Before the ban on verse satire by Archbishop John Whitgift in 1599, the Renaissance practitioners projected such fastastic characters as the snarling "cynic," the "Tamburlaine of Vice," and the surgeon/physician cutting out, burning or purging offending parts of the culprits. Paulson asks whether the effect of John Marston's lurid mask of "W. Kinsayder" is "really satiric" or whether the satire is "merely" used as a device for entertaining.[15] My answer is that the entertainment value cannot be divorced from the essence of successful satire. From the most refined pleasures of irony to the robust enjoyment of well-directed scorn, derision and opprobrium, the gamut of

satire offers special satisfactions to the reader as well as satirist. Regarding the more flamboyant poses, one frequently harbors a suspicion akin to that of David Worcester, who remarks that the satirists of the 1590s "worked up a lather of indignation that suggests auto-intoxication rather than ethical conviction."[16] There is a peculiar relish, an obvious zest detected in the vituperation of even the soberest satirists, that seems to go beyond the requirements of the situation. Truman Steffan says of Byron that his "abuse and invective may be grounded in conviction, but the gusto of their expression has an end in itself."[17] This gratuitousness partakes of play, as does the ludic factor of ilinx, cited by Roger Caillois as one of the four ways of playing.[18] We find ilinx in the frenzied state usually evoked by mask and trance. Byron's artistic temperament was such that a high emotional excitement seemed to come quite naturally in poetic composition.[19] An answer to Worcester would argue that the presence of ilinx in poiesis need not compromise the integrity of the poet.

During the Augustan period, impersonation seemed to give way to self-dramatization, as the commitment to more subtle displacement, the middle style, conversational diction, and aphoristic wit governed the choices of personae. Maynard Mack classifies the personae used by Pope in his formal satire as the vir bonus, the naif, and the hero or "public defender."[20] The first two are reminiscent of Horace

and the last of Juvenal. Ian Jack emphasizes the importance of the idea of the heroic poem to the Augustans, an idea he finds in the background of most of the period's poetic satire.[21] This significant strand in the tradition leads to Byron's deliberately ambiguous and ironic use of the conventions of epic and the hero in his presentation of "fierce loves and faithless wars." (In his article on "The Game and Play of Hero," John Leyerle has discussed the ludic significance of this "literary form that seems to draw most heavily on man's atavistic delight in eros and thanatos."[22])

Falling historically between Renaissance invective and Augustan ironic wit are the products of what Worcester terms the "age of burlesque": the "low burlesque" of Samuel Butler's Hudibras (whose rhymes often seem Byronic), and the "high burlesque" (though the distinction is not absolute) of the agon with "Dulness" inaugurated by Dryden and carried on indefatigably by Pope.[23] In these versions of satire, all with obvious connections to Byron, the pretense involves an offhand quality, an attitude of jeu d'esprit that can mask a paradoxical seriousness, as the satirist may play the fool or reveal a whimsical aspect of his own personality. But a new element appears in the boisterous mimesis of an action, as the comic and the farcical are allowed full scope in a plot that often parodies that of epic and romance. The crowded stage provides funhouse mirror-images of the game of the world. Worcester

shows the satirist as burlesque artist in terms that aptly describe Byron's relationship to Don Juan. "He must keep the show going and at the same time step out of his part and assure the audience that it is only a show."[24] Byron frequently interrupts his show to take us behind the scenes as he points out the tricks of production. He may explain, for example, why the curtain falls at certain points to end a canto:

> I find this tediousness will never do--
> 'Tis being too epic, and I must cut down
> (In copying) this long canto into two;
> They'll never find it out, unless I own
> The fact, excepting some experienced few;
> And then as an improvement 'twill be shown
> (III, 151)[25]

He may also call our attention to the mechanical necessities of his versification. At one point he apologizes for misquoting a Latin line as "Medio tu tutissimus ibis."[26]

> The "tu"'s too much,--but let it stand,--the verse
> Requires it, that's to say, the English rhyme,
> And not the pink of old hexameters;
> But, after all, there's neither tune nor time
> In the last line, which cannot well be worse,
> And was thrust in to close the octave's chime:
> (IV, 18)

In addition to the endowments of English burlesque poetry, Byron reaped great profit from the Italian medley, or burlesque satire of Ariosto, Pulci and Casti. Pulci is in fact acknowledged as "sire of the half-serious rhyme" (IV, 6). One of the most useful things to Byron about the Italian epic is the fact that the narration is not formally

separated from the story but merges with it. The tradition also allows for an extempore tone, colloquialisms, trivial asides, epigrams and deflation of sentiment. Some of the ways in which Byron made the eminently playful ottava rima stanza completely his own will be recognized in the next chapter.[27]

Two other figures in the native tradition warrant attention, as we must now reverse our course and move backwards towards roots and sources of English satiric verse previous to the introduction of formal verse satire in the late sixteenth century. A possible precursor in the burlesque mode is the early Renaissance poet, John Skelton, to whom Auden finds Byron akin in spirit.[28] And indeed, both exhibit the spirit of play in the kind of gratuitous virtuosity, the sense of sheer superfluity in the piling up of rhymes, lists, and examples, and the exploitation of improvisatory techniques. There is no evidence, however, that Byron knew the poet of "Elinour Rumming," "Colin Clout," and "Why Come Ye Not to Court."[29] (Much in the latter poems is exemplary excoriation of Cardinal Wolsey.)

On somewhat firmer ground, one can cite the example of Chaucer, whom Byron certainly did know. Ronald Bottrall notes Byron's use of Chaucerian digressive techniques and tricks of creating suspense and building up to climax.[30] And in the ludic sphere of irony Chaucer might have offered similarly useful instruction, particularly in how to weave the threads of satire into the comic warp and tragic woof

of narrative. His trenchant and at least latently satiric portrayals of human folly and knavery in The Canterbury Tales is tempered by a tone of genial indulgence similar to the one Byron adopts most consistently in the early cantos of Don Juan.

Another dimension of irony is provided by the fact that Chaucer puts himself into his poems, sometimes as narrator only, as in the Troilus, sometimes as narrator/actor, as in the Tales. To play oneself is in itself a kind of metaphysical game, as Angus Fletcher says in another context.[31] Byron abandoned the Spanish persona introduced in Canto One, to rely almost exclusively on his own public personality. Because this was so inherently theatrical, it could easily sustain the spirit of satire. Ridenour has made the definitive statement of the relation between the "public myth" and the narrative voice in the poem. It is grounded in the fact that

> readers of the poem have from the first been convinced that they were becoming acquainted with a recognizable companion who was ready to take some pains to amuse them. They usually called this companion "Byron" and roughly identified him with some of the more attractive qualities of a famous English poet of that name.[32]

Part of the fun of playing oneself is in the self-deprecation and self-mockery, important devices for both Chaucer and Byron. Moreover, the comic detachment shared by the two poets, albeit from different philosophical positions, enable

them to view the world, in Huizinga's happy phrase, sub specie ludi.

> But ne'ertheless I hope it is no crime
> To laugh at all things--for I wish to know
> What, after all, are all things--but a show?
> (VII, 2)

Byron provides the Romantic version of the medieval contemptus mundi.

As Chaucer and Byron remind us, the borderline between satire and comedy is often indistinct. Laughter is a means shared by both modes for the correcting or purging of anti-social, threatening elements. Laughter is also a release of societal restraints, and because of these links one finds theories of a common origin of comedy and satire attractive. In opposition to such theories, Oscar James Campbell shows Renaissance critics and scholars rearing an elaborate system based upon the etymological confusion of satyra with the rude and licentious utterances of "satyrs" in the Greek vetus comoedia.[33] If confusion it be, it may be inspired in part by Aristotle, who traces the development of the Old Comedy to the "Phallic Songs," which were apparently improvisatory and satiric in nature.[34] The modern anthropological scholars Jane Harrison and Francis M. Cornford have plausibly reconstructed such a development, upon which Robert C. Elliott draws in his study, The Power of Satire: Magic, Ritual, Art.[35] Since the Phallic Songs were performances within a fertility ritual, there are presumed to have been two parts: "the invocation of good through the magic influence of the phallus, and the expulsion of evil by means of the magic power of satire, invective, lampoon--this last

improvised by the Leaders of the Songs. In the apotropaic part of the ritual the satire might be hurled at wicked individuals by name or at evil influences generally . . ."[36]

Whatever its basis in fact or myth, the at least symbolic connection of satire with fertility rites and the comic triumph of life over death, Eros over Thanatos, is intrinsic to great satiric poetry and particularly to Don Juan. Two ludic elements would seem involved here. In the first place, we recall Huizinga's emphasis on ritual as mimetic and highly structured play.[37] This we can identify with the order of the ludus pole projected by Roger Caillois. But with the addition of the improvisatory principle, there is a counter-movement toward the turbulent and spontaneous activity of the paidia pole.[38] Of all poetic modes, satire seems to offer the most dramatic enactment of the dynamic of paidia and ludus, or what Robert E. Neale translates from Schiller as "discharge of energy" and "design of experience."[39] And no satiric work demonstrates the dialectic better than Don Juan.

On the one hand, there is the mobility, inventiveness, versatility and, above all, vitality which the poem projects--the energy available in and through play. In Don Juan, the energy is experienced by the reader in an almost physical apprehension of the surging power and propulsion of the verse rhythms, as the octaves build to their climaxes, pause or fall, then rebuild in a seemingly infinite outpouring of imaginative force. Kernan refers to the poem's

continuous "but then" movement, in which all conclusions are momentary.[40]

The complementary design of experience, through which the energy is channeled, is accomplished in Don Juan in a number of ways, including various verbal and metrical patterns and recurring ideas, metaphors and figures. All of these patterns create a considerable unity out of the deceptive sense of formlessness in the kaleidoscopic succession of events. Michael Cooke has shown, for example, the basic structural similarities in Juan's adventures and the recurring feminine trinities.[41] And Ridenour has made us listen to the ringing of changes on the myth of the Fall.[42]

The choice of nominal hero so ironically rehearsed at the beginning of the poem is by no means the negative solution Byron pretends it is, but is motivated by the dynamic power of Eros which Juan represents. Though much has been made of Juan's "passiveness" as a lover and his lack of resemblance to the libertine seducer of legend, it is his power to arouse passion that is significant. Only a mythic figure could so fully embody the vital principle, the potency, the poem enacts. And by giving the archetypal Don a history, an age of innocence and a series of initiations deeper and deeper into experience, Byron can have it both ways--the acme of winning at satiric games.

The symbolism of sexual prowess functions as in the fertility rituals to oppose forces of sterility and impotence.

The exorcism of these forces is a chief accomplishment of the Dedication.[43] From the suggestive snigger at Southey's inadequacies (see Leslie Marchand's biography concerning line twenty-four)[44] to the scorn let loose against the "intellectual eunuch Castlereagh," Byron's derision is aimed at anti-life forces in literature and politics which he finds fundamentally in collusion. The landlocked and solipsistic Lakers support and are supported by the party of the "cold-blooded . . . miscreant" enslaving and destroying free men. Byron's diatribe here is a performance on the Juvenalian stage, where an obvious ludic feature is the marvelous inventiveness of the insults in the imaginative heights of heroic invective.

In the spirit of fair play, Byron suppressed the Dedication when the poem was to be printed anonymously. Because of the aggressiveness signaled by their verse, satirists have traditionally included disclaimers within their poems protesting their highminded, righteous motives and their innocence of destructive intent. Byron takes on a particular burden of proof in defending himself against charges of subverting "the creed and morals of the land" (IV, 5) and of scoffing against "human power and virtue" (VII, 3). His strategies embrace contradictions characteristic of the poem. On the one hand, he has "nothing plann'd/Unless it were to be a moment merry" (IV, 5). On the other, he places himself in the camp of an impressive

array of models; Dante, Solomon, Cervantes, Swift, Rochefoucault, Fenelon, Luther, Wesley, and Rousseau (VII, 3-4). And, of course, "My poem's epic"--the poetic form historically invested with the greatest moral capital.

Despite these seeming oscillations in intention, Byron never hesitates to avail himself of the traditional weapons of the satirist, and the most dependable among them derive from what Freud terms "tendentious wit."[45] Underlying this term is the assumption of an area of mental combat in which wit becomes the means to obtain supremacy. Herbert Spencer had introduced this idea in his aesthetic theories of play and game, but had divorced the satisfaction of wit-combat from the utilitarian purposes of the "business of life." Spencer saw the play of the intellectual faculties in wit carried on "partly for the sake of the pleasure of the activity and partly for the accompanying satisfaction of certain egoistic feelings which find for the moment no other sphere." Play is the discharge of "superfluous" energy, but Spencer offers no explanation of how or why such energy becomes available.[46]

Freud not only describes how "tendentious" or aggressive types of wit, no less than "harmless" wit, have origins in play, but also asserts that tendentious wit is the type from which one harvests the more intense pleasure because of the release of inhibitory psychic energy. In permitting a kind of public revenge upon an opponent, satiric wit offers in Freud's view a therapeutic reprieve from civilization's rules

and scruples. Freud also suggests that the play-pleasure is shared by the hearer of the witticism: "we can assume . . . that the psychic process aroused by wit in the hearer is usually an imitation of the psychic process of the wit-producer." The playing with ideas, which he calls "thought wit," is more tendentious than the comparatively innocent verbal wit, and employs the techniques of false logic, displacement, absurdity, and representation through the opposite. In another system of classification, Freud distinguishes four kinds of tendentious wit: obscene, hostile, cynical and skeptical wit. One is disappointed by the lack of more precise analysis here, but Freud uses these categories to discriminate between the targets of wit. Obscene and hostile wit are directed at individuals; cynical wit hits at institutional values or persons symbolizing them (moral ideals, social norms, religious dogmas); and skeptical wit, about which Freud says very little, undermines presumptuous claims to knowledge and understanding.[47]

Although there are sexual puns in Don Juan (as, for example, in Canto Nine, stanzas forty-five and sixty-nine), Byron suppressed his tendency toward scatological wit, as the famous altered couplet about Inez as Sunday-school teacher testifies.[48] The other three types of wit correspond in varying degrees with moods represented in Don Juan, and I will adopt Freud's terminology (though not all of the implications of the cathartic theory) because of its use-

fulness in assessing Byron's satire. Readers have found palpable hostility in Byron's treatment of Inez as Lady Byron, and of Brougham, Southey and Castlereagh. Unlike his personal enemies, however, as he apparently conceived the first three persons to have been at the time of writing, Castlereagh draws reprobation solely because of his public role as statesman.

The institution most open to cynical wit, is, of course, marriage, since "no demand is more personal than that made upon sexual freedom, and nowhere has civilization attempted to exert a more stringent expression than in the realm of sexuality."[49] Aside from the extended marriage joke offered in the fabliau of Canto One, the greatest concentration of Byron's cynical wit against marriage occurs in early stanzas of Canto Three, of which the following can serve as example:

> Marriage from love, like vinegar from wine--
> A sad, sour, sober beverage--by time,
> Is sharpen'd from its high celestial flavour,
> Down to a very homely household savour.
> (III, 5)

The first line furnishes excellent illustrations of characteristics Freud finds essential to wit: the "economy of psychical expenditure" accomplished in the brevity and compression of the expression, and the technique of the debasing comparison. We recognize as well the finesse of Augustan antithesis and parallelism. And, among the stanza's ludic delights, let us note that in the second line, the alliterative adjectives discordantly chime a descending

scale of vowels that imitates the falling-off of "flavour" being described. One is strongly aware, however, that the institution of marriage itself is not a major target in the poem. Instead, the cynical treatment of marriage can be either the satiric focus for attack upon a far more pervasive hypocrisy and dishonesty, or a wry commentary upon the limits of the human condition, which cannot satisfy man's Blakean cry for "More! more!"

For the chief targets of Byron's cynical wit in Don Juan are the votaries of Thanatos, not Eros: adherents to the cultural norms of heroism and the institution of the military when it wages wars of conquest. Poetic play now exhibits its fullest resources for seriousness as, among other tactics devastating in their pungency and bite, Byron employs mordant parody to indicate the blasphemy of man's reversal of creation and the return to chaos.

> "Let there be light!" says God, "and there was light!"
> "Let there be blood!" says man, and there's a sea!
>
> (VII, 41)

The cantos devoted to the siege of Ismail provide the most acrid satire in the poem, from which Juan himself does not escape unscathed. Infatuation with the hellish game of war produces an ominous moral blindness.

> But Juan was quite "a broth of a boy,"
> A thing of impulse and a child of song;
> Now swimming in the sentiment of joy,
> Or the sensation (if that phrase seem wrong),
> And afterward, if he must needs destroy,
> In such good company as always throng
> To battles, sieges, and that kind of pleasure,
> No less delighted to employ his leisure;

> But always without malice: if he warr'd
> Or loved, it was with what we call "the best
> Intentions," which form all mankind's trump card,
> To be produced when brought up to the test.
> The statesman, hero, harlot, lawyer--ward
> Off each attack, when people are in quest
> Of their designs, by saying they meant well;
> 'Tis pity "that such meaning should pave hell."
> (VIII, 24-25)

Michael Cooke has called Don Juan "satire manqué" because he finds the satiric material in the poem "not impregnated with the animus of satire.[50] Most critics of the poem have thought otherwise of these cantos.

Of the tendentious types of wit applicable to Don Juan, skeptical wit seems the most prominent. It provides the prevailing tone that helps to hold the poem together in all of its multifarious comprehensiveness that makes virtues of ambiguity, startling juxtapositions and blatant contradictions. A predominent ludic method exploited by Byron is to turn his skeptical attitude upon himself, as the narrator, "rattling on," hedging and qualifying, frequently exposes his own lack of knowledge.[51] The disarming intimacy and seemingly uninhibited frankness of his statements, or pseudo-statements, draw the reader into the encompassing net of skeptical irony.

> For me, I know nought; nothing I deny,
> Admit, reject, contemn; and what know you,
> Except perhaps that you were born to die?
> And both may after all turn out untrue.
> (XIV, 3)

In mocking himself, he can show that others are even more deserving of mockery. An admirable instance is the sequence

of stanzas at the beginning of Canto Eleven on metaphysical speculation in general and philosophical idealism in particular. After an octave on Bishop Berkeley ("'twas no matter what he said") comes this:

> What a sublime discovery 'twas to make the
> Universe universal egotism
> That all's ideal--all ourselves: I'll stake the
> World (be it what you will) that that's no schism.
> Oh Doubt!--if thou be'st Doubt, for which some take thee,
> But which I doubt extremely--thou sole prism
> Of the Truth's rays, spoil not my draught of spirit!
> Heaven's brandy, though our brain can hardly bear it.

At least, says Byron, he knows what he is doing. ("Man, being reasonable, must get drunk;" II, 179). Only the arch-Romantic could so definitively deflate the balloon of Romanticism. (He will, of course, blow it up again at his own sweet will.)

Of the types of wit Freud identifies, skeptical wit appears to adopt the lightest mood, to be most playful in the usual sense, because of the abstractness of its targets. Ideas may seem less immediately dangerous than persons or institutions, although the categories of tendentious wit are perhaps not so easily separable as we have assumed. (Further ramifications of Byron's skepticism will be considered in the next chapter.) And skeptical wit, taken to its logical conclusion, can collapse skepticism into its opposite. "He who doubts all things nothing can deny." The speaker in the poem cheerfully admits, in fact boasts, of his contradictions, and in the name of truth. "But if a writer should be quite consistent/How could he possibly

show things existent?" (XV, 87). His muse is "the most sincere that ever dealt in fiction" (XVI, 12), a neatly equivocal statement.

As valuable as Freudian approaches can be in certain respects, they have definite limitations for a full apprehension of play and poetry. The cathartic theory, particularly if used to explain motivation and not merely residual benefits, suggests a compulsion alien to the spirit of play and the psychic process of poiesis. "True play," says Huizinga, "knows no propaganda; its aim is in itself, and its familiar spirit is happy inspiration."[52] Since satire is a mode that presents itself so convincingly "in earnest," there is the strong tendency to equate the display of scorn, indignation, and so on, with the poet's actual subjective state during the period of composition. A corrective view would maintain that although adrenalin may well be activated, it is the chemistry of an excited imagination, and that a ludic detachment is also present, so that, in Suzanne Langer's words, "the illusion of a moral illumination or passional experience" can be created [italics mine]. Although Langer does not employ the term "play," her aesthetic philosophy is eminently compatible with a ludic theory and seems closely related to such theories of Spencer and Schiller. Her chapters in Feeling and Form on poiesis are especially applicable to satire, as she maintains that "all poetry is a creation of illusory events, even when it looks like a statement of opinions, philo-

sophical or political or aesthetic." She also speaks of the poet's use of real personages and events, not for the purpose of leading us away from the poem back into the actual world, but instead to "hold us to the virtual world of the poem." The operative word is "virtual" and what is created is "pure semblance."[53] We remember the words of Sir Philip Sidney: "As for the poet, he affirmeth nothing, and therefore never lieth." Pertinent also is the admission of Pope about the Dunciad:

> For whoever will consider the Unity of
> The whole design, will be sensible,
> that the Poem was not made for these
> Authors, but these Authors for the Poem.[54]

The principal concern of the satirist seems inevitably to be the conversion of his materials into an act of wit. So Byron is continually interjecting his presence and distancing us from his characters and their actions.

Often with the aid of brilliant buffoonery, Byron holds us to the virtual world he has created in Don Juan, continually reiterating and demonstrating the point that it is a world we can not trust or take at face value. Nor indeed can we always take him at face value either. In this respect and many others, of course, his world very much resembles the "real" one. In themselves, the fictions of the poem are meant to arouse our admiration; by design, they also support the spirit of skepticism which permeates the poem. The ludic means by which these purposes are accomplished need to be more fully explored so that some

of Byron's most distinctive contributions to the satiric tradition can be revealed. But, more immediately, an important implication of that tradition requires examination.

For the essence of satire has been venom poured out against those who poison the world with hypocrisy. At the same time, the satirist usually plays the "romantic" in the sense of expressing nostalgia for a perceived past when traditional values were upheld and defended. In this regard, Byron is a most orthodox satirist when, for example, he promulgates his literary commandments, beginning

> Thou shalt believe in Milton, Dryden, Pope;
> Thou shalt not set up Wordsworth, Coleridge, Southey;
> Because the first is crazed beyond all hope,
> The second drunk, the third so quaint and mouthy.
> (I, 205)

Byron says that, in their hubris, the Lakers reject accepted literary standards of style and subject matter. In a later passage of literary criticism, Byron evokes two of his deities by direct address and use of imagery they employed in famous poems of their own.

> "Pedlars," and "Boats," and "Waggons!" Oh! ye shades
> Of Pope and Dryden, are we come to this?
> That trash of such sort not alone evades
> Contempt, but from the bathos' vast abyss
> Floats scumlike uppermost, and these Jack Cades
> Of sense and song above your graves may hiss--
> The "little boatman" and his "Peter Bell"
> Can sneer at him who drew Achitophel.
> (III,]00)

Conventional satiric functions are similarly served when Byron depicts the hypocritical pieties and absurdities of Juan's education, the tyrannous allies of the Regency, the inhumanities of man on the battlefield, and the excesses

of sexual appetite at royal courts. Also well within long-accepted satirical parameters are portrayals of the ubiquitous games by which persons fool themselves and allow themselves to be fooled by others. In the Renaissance, such figures could most often be found in the "cony-catching" pamphlets and the multifarious portrayals of courtly "coxcombs." Though sometimes scathing, Byron's satire in this vein can just as easily be gentle and subtle. A fine example is in the Donna Julia episode, which depicts how the lady falls victim to the machinations of Donna Inez as well as to the enemy within. At a crucial moment, Julia is described with palpable sympathy as well as irony:

> How beautiful she look'd! her conscious heart
> Glow'd in her cheek, and yet she felt no wrong.
> Oh Love! how perfect is thy mystic art,
> Strengthening the weak, and trampling on the strong,
> How self-deceitful is the sagest part
> Of mortals whom thy lure hath led along--
> The precipice she stood on was immense,
> So was her creed in her own innocence.
> (I, 106)

Byron also finds it necessary to trace the sources of human deceit to pretentious systems of thought and belief, a procedure which is again not without precedent. The seventeenth century had produced satires against such groups as the Jesuits and the Puritans. But the Muse of Satire had reserved for Byron the privilege of linking the high-priest of philosophy with the seamiest of professions. The following apostrophe follows soon after the stanza quoted directly above:

> Oh Plato! Plato! you have paved the way,
> With your confounded fantasies, to more
> Immoral conduct by the fancied sway
> Your system feigns o'er the controlless core
> Of human hearts, than all the long array
> Of poets and romancers: --You're a bore,
> A charlatan, a coxcomb--and have been,
> At best, no better than a go-between.
> (I, 116)

The technique of the last three lines is very familiar; the piling up of epithets is probably the oldest satiric game-tactic in existence. But there is more in the stanza than an amusing commentary on Julia's indiscretion: like any philosophical system, Plato's is shown to be untrue to man's actual condition. In a later canto, Socrates wins a kind of ambiguous approval since he left not a system but a method.

> Socrates said, our only knowledge was
> "To know that nothing could be known;" a pleasant
> Science enough, which levels to an ass
> Each man of wisdom, future, past, or present.

The lines that follow reveal something far closer to resignation than glee that uncertainty is the recourse of even the greatest minds:

> Newton (that proverb of the mind), alas!
> Declared, with all his grand discoveries recent,
> That he himself felt only "like a youth
> Picking up shells by the great ocean--Truth."
> (VII, 5)

The Platonic references in the poem exemplify the fact that Byron skews the traditional alignment of satire with man's spiritual claims as opposed to his physical needs, with the soul rather than the body in the age-old <u>débat</u>. In contrast, Juan's fall from sexual innocence is a glandular inevitability:

> If you think 'twas philosophy that this did,
> I can't help thinking puberty assisted.
> (I, 93)

With these treatments of the unreliability and inadequacy of human reason, we again confront the skeptical temper of Don Juan and one of the central critical problems it presents: whether the poem really qualifies as satire in a technical sense. Byron makes his strongest (albeit defensive) statement about the poem rather late in its composition, in a letter to John Murray on Christmas Day, 1822. "Don Juan will be known by and bye for what it is intended--a Satire on abuses of the present states of Society, and not an eulogy of vice: it may be now and then voluptuous: I can't help that."[55] Byron's aim has apparently developed considerably since the letter of August, 1819: "You are too earnest and eager about a work never intended to be serious. Do you suppose that I could have any intention but to giggle and make giggle?--a playful satire, with as little poetry as could be helped, was what I meant."[56]

We will assume that the letter of 1822 is truer to the achievement of the poem as we have it than the earlier statement. But some critics have raised the question: if the poet does not claim allegiance to a particular system of values, can he act in the conventional satiric role as adversary? The speaker in Don Juan asserts at one moment that he has in fact acquired a "deal of judgment," yet at other moments he seems to be undercutting the requisite

stance for making judgments. If his mood is "merely quizzical," as often he presents it to be, then there may be justification for Cooke's view that Byron's satire lacks the appropriate animus. Stuart Curran attempts to deal with this problem in his paper on "Don Juan: A Satire of Satires."[57] It seems initially a clever idea suggested by the title of a fragment, "A Satire on Satire" by Shelley.[58] Curran maintains that Byron exhibits the style and moral concern of satire but not its perspective. The relativity of values and the essential paradoxes and contradictions within the poem turn Don Juan into a "self-consuming artifact" or "a snake with its tail in its mouth."

I see Curran's premise as flawed on two counts. In the first place, it misinterprets and undervalues Byron's use of the skeptical stance as his predominant satiric method. My second objection is that despite this skepticism, the Byronic personality in the poem is by no means so perversely mercurial or totally unpredictable as Curran suggests. Helen Gardner has perceptively identified Byron's values: "we are in no doubt as we read that Byron admires courage, generosity, compassion, and honesty, and that he dislikes brutality, meanness, and above all self-importance, hypocrisy and priggery."[59] And Ridenour's judicious commentary corrects the tendency of some critics to find Byron an utter nihilist. "For while Byron may play with the limitation of any version of truth, including his own, it hardly occurs to him to doubt that kinds of truth are to

be had--on the whole enough for man, it appears. And if his own vision is sometimes awkward and inconsistent, why that is the truth of it. It may be sometimes a near thing, but there is no final collapse into absurdity."[60]

Despite all of his dramatic tergiversations in the poem, one does find a consistent locus from which Byron speaks, an adversarial stance that is unwavering, and clearly identified foes that are opposed. One enemy is hypocrisy in both manners and morals. Another is the false system of values represented by Wellington and other modern warriors. Still another, and perhaps most important, is tyranny in whatever form,

> my plain, sworn, downright detestation
> Of every despotism in every nation.
>
> It is not that I adulate the people:
> Without me, there are demagogues enough,
> And infidels, to pull down every steeple,
> And set up in their stead some proper stuff.
> Whether they may sow skepticism to reap hell,
> As is the Christian dogma rather rough,
> I do not know;--I wish men to be free
> As much from mobs as kings--from you as me.
> (IX, 24-25)

In his agon "with all who war/With Thought," it is largely thought as the freedom to doubt when doubt is the only tenable position in the exercise of moral and intellectual integrity, in the modern existentialist sense. Skepticism becomes, in fact, not just a defense against dogmatism but an offensive weapon against those things which restrict man's rightful use of his freedom. And it is not enough merely to state this opposition; the satiric techniques of

Don Juan enact the contest as well. Self-qualification is one such technique, and so Byron's own enunciation of literary dogma, quoted earlier, is prefaced by a deflating bit of wit.

> If ever I should condescend to prose,
> I'll write poetical commandments, which
> Shall supersede beyond all doubt all those
> That went before; in these I shall enrich
> My text with many things that no one knows,
> And carry precept to the highest pitch;
> I'll call the work "Longinus o'er a Bottle,
> Or, Every Poet his own Aristotle."
> (I, 204)

The levels of play in such a passage are in complex relationship to one another. For in the ostensible act of undercutting the propensity to fictionalize reality, Byron demonstrates the exhilerating transcendence which fictionalizing achieves.

Taking the poem in its (incomplete) entirety, or in most of its major segments, or even in a large majority of its individual stanzas, one finds no essential violation of the satiric spirit in one or another of its many modes. At times the poem transcends satire, as in most of the Haidée episode, though in many of the narrator's intrusions even there it persists unabated. I do not see Don Juan, however, as a "transcendental form" in Angus Fletcher's sense.[61] The very nature of satire has been chameleonic, like Byron himself exceedingly averse to rigidities. For our edification and aesthetic pleasure (but mostly for the latter) it accommodates itself to heroic narrative, autobiography, romance, tragedy and comedy. Don Juan proves

itself to be what Byron claims it is: epic satire. In the following chapter we will observe more specifically how the provinces of satire and play overlap in Don Juan.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

CHAPTER VII

[1]Mary Claire Randolph, "The Structural Design of Formal Verse Satire," PQ, 21 (1942), 373. For much of the theory in this chapter I am indebted to the seminar in "Verse Satire from Skelton to Dryden" taught by John T. Shawcross at the CUNY Graduate Center, Spring 1975.

[2]Although they are also important, the specific influences of satiric drama, the picaresque novel, and other prose forms will not be treated. For discussion of Byron and Restoration drama, see Michael G. Cooke, The Blind Man Traces the Circle (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1969), pp. 135-139. For discussion of Byron's debts to Richard Burton and the eighteenth-century novelists, see Elizabeth French Boyd, Byron's Don Juan: A Critical Study (1945; rpt. New York: Humanities Press, 1958), pp. 54-57. See also Karl Kroeber, Romantic Narrative Art (Madison: Univ. of Wisconsin Press, 1966), pp. 156-167; and M. K. Joseph, Byron the Poet (London: Gollancz, 1964), pp. 185-187.

[3]These concerns of the rhetor are discussed by Rosemond Tuve, Elizabethan and Metaphysical Imagery (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1947), pp. 182-183.

[4]Alvin Kernan, The Cankered Muse: Satire of the English Renaissance (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1959), pp. 4 and 24.

[5]Kenneth Burke speaks thus of the rhetorician in A Rhetoric of Motives (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1969), p. 208. See also Angus Fletcher, The Transcendental Masque (New York: Cornell Univ. Press, 1971), p. 38.

[6]This principle is recognized by Edward W. Rosenheim, Jr., Swift and the Satirist's Art (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1963), p. 15.

[7]Jacopo Mazzoni, "On the Defense of the Comedy" (Selections) in Allan H. Gilbert, ed., Literary Criticism: Plato to Dryden (1941; rpt. Detroit: Wayne State Univ. Press, 1962), p. 370.

[8]The classic presentation of this theory was by Fred Norris Robinson in Studies in the History of Religions Presented to Crawford Howell Toy, ed. D. G. Lyon and G. F. Moore (New York, 1912), pp. 95-130. See also Robert C. Elliott, The Power of Satire: Magic, Ritual, Art (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1960).

[9]The Poems of Joseph Hall, Bishop of Exeter and Norwich, ed. Arnold Davenport (Liverpool: Liverpool Univ. Press, 1969), p. 11.

[10]For discussions of Roman satirists, see Gilbert Highet, The Classical Tradition: Greek and Roman Influences on Western Literature (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1949); and J. P. Sutherland, ed., Critical Essays on Roman Literature: Satire (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1963).

[11]Johann Huizinga, Homo Ludens (Boston: Beacon Press, 1955), p. 177.

[12]George M. Ridenour, The Style of Don Juan (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1960), pp. 14-17.

[13]Frederick L. Beaty, "Byron's Imitations of Juvenal and Persius," Studies in Romanticism, 15 (1976), 347-350.

[14]Ronald Paulson, The Fictions of Satire (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1967), p. 348.

[15]Ibid., p. 92.

[16]David Worcester, The Art of Satire (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Univ. Press, 1931; rpt. New York: Russell & Russell, 1960), p. 45.

[17]Truman Guy Steffan and Willis W. Pratt, eds., Byron's Don Juan: A Variorum Edition, 2nd ed., 4 vols. (Austin: Univ. of Texas Press, 1971), I, 293.

[18]See above, Chapter 1 of this dissertation, p.16.

[19]Steffan-Pratt, I, 98-99 and passim.

[20]Maynard Mack, "The Muse of Satire," The Yale Review, XLI (1951), 80-92.

[21]Ian Jack, Augustan Satire, Intention and Idiom in English Poetry 1660-1750 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1942), pp. 4-5.

[22]John Leyerle, "The Game and Play of Hero" in Norman T. Burns and Christopher Ryan, Concepts of the Hero in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance (Albany: State Univ. of New York Press, 1975), pp. 49-82.

[23]Worcester, pp. 41-70 and 157-162.

[24]Ibid., p. 155.

[25]All quotations are from the Steffan-Pratt Variorum edition (See note 17), Vols. II and III.

[26]See Pratt's note, ibid., IV, 146, on Byron's unconscious [?] error in attributing the quotation to Horace instead of to Ovid.

[27]See pp. 248-251.

[28]W. H. Auden, "A That-There Poet" in Edward E. Bostetter, ed. Twentieth Century Interpretations of Don Juan (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1969), p. 16.

[29]See Philip Henderson, ed., The Complete Poems of John Skelton (London, 1931; rpt. New York: E. P. Dutton, 1965).

[30]Ronald Bottrall, "Byron and the Colloquial Tradition in English Poetry," The Criterion, XVIII (January 1939), 205-210. See discussion of Byron's narrative technique in Ch. 8, this study, pp. 260-267.

[31]Fletcher, p. 13.

[32]George Ridenour, "The Mode of Byron's Don Juan," PMLA, LXXIX (1964), 442.

[33]Oscar James Campbell, Comical Satyre and Shakespeare's 'Troilus and Cresida' (San Marino: Huntington Library, 1938), pp. 24-29.

[34]See Poetics IV, 12.

[35]See note 8. Also, Jane Ellen Harrison, Ancient Art and Ritual (New York: Greenwood Press, 1969), pp. 40-44; and Francis M. Cornford, The Origin of Attic Comedy, ed. Theodor H. Gaster (1934; rpt. Gloucester, Mass.: Peter Smith, 1968), pp. 35-52.

[36]Robert C. Elliott, "The Satirist and Society," ELH, XXI (1954), 238.

[37]See Chapter 1, this dissertation, pp. 4-7.

[38]Ibid., p.14.

[39]Ibid., p.15.

[40]Kernan, pp. 176-181.

[41]Michael Cooke, "Byron's Don Juan: The Obsession and Self-Discipline of Spontaneity," SIR, 14 (1975), 290-292. See also Peter J. Manning, Byron and His Fictions (Detroit: Wayne State Univ. Press, 1978), pp. 178 and 224-227.

[42]Ridenour, The Style of Don Juan. See especially pp. 20-50.

[43]Ibid., pp. 12 and 18.

[44]Leslie A. Marchand, Byron. A Biography, 3 vols. (New York: Knopf, 1957), II, 763n.

[45]See Sigmund Freud, Jokes and Their Relation to the Unconscious, The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works, Vol. 8, trans. James Strachey (London, 1905; rpt. New York: Norton, 1947), especially pp. 90-158.

[46]Herbert Spencer, "Aesthetic Sentiments" in The Principles of Psychology, 3rd ed., 2 vols. (London, 1890), I, pp. 627-648. Quotation is from p. 631.

[47]Freud, pp. 95 and 102-116.

[48]Steffan-Pratt, Vol II, p. 162n.

[49]Freud, p. 110.

[50]Cooke, The Blind Man Traces the Circle, p. 145.

[51]E.g., I, 124 and 179; IV, 18; VI, 17; VIII, 189; XI, 3; XII, 19. For a useful analysis of Byron's beliefs, see E. W. Marjarum, Byron as Skeptic and Believer (1938; rpt. New York: Russell & Russell, 1962).

[52]Huizinga, p. 211.

[53]Suzanne K. Langer, Feeling and Form (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1953), Chs. 13-16. Quotations are from pp. 256, 219 and 255.

[54]The Poems of Alexander Pope, Twickenham edition, ed. John Butt (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1963), p. 433.

[55]Rowland E. Prothero, ed., The Works of Lord Byron: Letters and Journals. 6 vols. (London, 1898-1901; rpt. New York: Octagon Books, 1966), VI, 155.

[56]Ibid., IV, 343.

[57]Stuart Curran, "Don Juan: A Satire of Satires," Byron Society Program, MLA Convention, 29 December, 1978.

[58]The Complete Works of Percy Bysshe Shelley, ed. Roger Ingpen and Walter E. Peck, 10 vols. (New York: Gordian Press, 1965), IV, 65-66.

[59]Helen Gardner, "Don Juan," London Magazine, V (July, 1958), 64.

[60]Ridenour, "The Mode of Byron's Don Juan," 445.

[61]See Chapter 3, this study, p. 58.

CHAPTER VIII

LUDIC MODES OF *DON JUAN*

The satiric play of Don Juan includes three major aspects of the poem to be discussed in this chapter. The first factor is thematic, and involves frequently recurring ludic situations, metaphors, references, and inferences supporting both the plot and the mode of narration. The relationship between the tale and the teller will then be examined as our attention shifts to the all-important character of the garrulous speaker himself. Finally, some specific instances of narrative method will be noted as they are manifested in one of the most expertly rendered episodes of the poem, the first and paradigmatic adventure of Juan and Julia.[1]

The ludic metaphors in the poem represent a sometimes cheerfully disillusioned, sometimes sardonically resigned world-view that sees play and games predominant in human affairs. This world-view is eminently congenial with the poem's inherently skeptical temper, which finds characteristic expression in explicitly theatrical terms and images. Thus, for example, a lie is "but/The truth in masquerade" (XI, 37). This emphasis on theatricality bears out a phenomenological suspicion pervading the poem that things in themselves, like the human perception of the nature of things, are inescapably based on illusion. It is in this spirit that Byron makes his highly self-conscious extravaganza correlative with the Aurora Borealis, the spectacular

and ephemeral light-show that serves as the poem's emblem (VII, 2).

Equivocality takes hold upon the poem from the initial statement of deficiency and desire: "I want a hero." The problem is solved by casting the requisite role with a figure from the pantomime--a milieu later expanded to include drama and opera.[2] Juan is thus from the outset at a greater remove from reality than the typical fictional hero. On a number of other occasions as well, the poet underscores our sense of a Brechtian "epic theater." In Canto Four, for example, Juan and the reader are treated to a scabrous recital by another stage performer in the buffo Raucocanti's malicious commentary on the operatic troupe of which he is a member, a group of sordidly representative types of humanity captive to narcissistic affectation, greed and lust. (These tawdry vagabonds present a kind of miniature ship-of-fools in a satiric tradition going back to Alexander Barclay's 1509 translation into English of Sebastian Brant's Das Narrenschiff.)[3]

In his unerring sense of theater, Byron had always attached great significance to costume.[4] The essential purpose of costume is to invite or command an attitude, a purpose analogous to that of rhetoric. By providing a series of occasions for changes of costume, disguise, and "tailoring" to fit the role, the "epic carnival"[5] of Don Juan offers a constant manipulation of appearances.

There are at least three instances in which the purposes served by the assumption of a costume become explicitly erotic. In the harem escapade of Canto Six, Juan must conceal his identity by dressing in feminine garb, a circumstance leading to the coyly described play involving "Juanna" and "her" bedmate, the "sleepy Venus" Dudù. (The latter's fable of the "Apple and the Bee" offers additional camouflage at a crucial moment.) After his military initiation in the Turko-Russian war, Juan-turned-emissary arrives at Petersburgh resplendent in uniform of scarlet coat, plumed hat, brilliant yellow breeches, and white silk stockings. He is the marvelous product of an army tailor, "That great enchanter," and presents the very image of Eros: "Love turn'd a lieutenant of artillery!" In his dazzling aspect, Juan could also pass for one of the seraphim, but Catherine's lustful eye manages to detect the man who "lurk'd . . . beneath the spirit's dress" (IX, 42-47). (This is another inversion of the traditional spirit-body relationship that sees the spiritual clothed by the physical.) Juan's role in this episode will be basically that of royal gigolo. In the poem's final scene, Juan is taken in by the "Black Friar" impersonation of the Duchess of Fitz-Fulke, whose amorous intentions seem well on their way to a successful culmination as the poem is abruptly cut short. Peter Manning observes that the disguise of the Duchess is "a symmetrical reversal of Juan's transvesture in the harem."[6]

Sartorial elements blend into other aspects of mummery in the poem. The English cantos depict "a brilliant masquerade," a dubious "paradise of pleasure and ennui" that must ultimately pall (XIV, 17). There are infinitely subtle dangers here, for Juan must "steer with care through all that glittering sea/Of gems and plumes and pearls and silks" to find a "proper place." As Juan presents himself to "persons of condition," the narrator ironically exhorts him in Shakespearean theatrum mundi allusions thus:[7]

> "Life's a poor player," "play out the play
> Ye villains!" and above all keep a sharp eye
> Much less on what you do than what you say:
> Be hypocritical, be cautious, be
> Not what you seem, but always what you see.
> (XI, 86)

Whether Juan needs such advice or not, he follows it. An apt pupil of aristocratic fashions, for "to be well dressed/ Will very often supersede the rest," he "was all things to people of all sorts" (XIII, 28; XIV, 31). Success in this milieu requires disingenuousness and calculation: the aspirant to an "heiress or a neighbor's bride" must understand the game.

> Let him take care that that which he pursues
> Is not at once too palpably descried.
> Full many an eager gentleman oft rues
> His haste: impatience is a blundering guide,
> Amongst a people famous for reflection,
> Who like to play the fool with circumspection.
> (XI, 71)

(The couplet indicates something of the complexity of Byron's play with ironies.)

But despite Juan's acquired mobilité, he also maintains

a degree of detachment sufficient to provide a satirical perspective upon which the narrator can draw. Juan's perplexity about the performances of his quintessentially worldly hostess, Lady Amundeville (Byron's onomastics are a form of satiric play in themselves),[8] gives the narrator an opportunity to discourse archly upon the manifold role-playing in "that microcosm on stilts,/Yclept the Great World":

> Juan, when he cast a glance
> On Adeline while playing her grand role,
> Which she went through as though it were a dance,
> Betraying only now and then her soul
> By a look scarce perceptibly askance
> (Of weariness or scorn), began to feel
> Some doubt how much of Adeline was <u>real</u>.
>
> So well she acted all and every part
> By turns--with that vivacious versatility,
> Which many people take for want of heart.
> They err--'tis merely what is called mobility,
> A thing of temperament and not of art,
> Though seeming so, from its supposed facility;
> And false--though true; for surely they're sincerest
> Who are strongly acted on by what is nearest.
>
> This makes your actors, artists, and romancers,
> Heroes sometimes, though seldom--sages never;
> But speakers, bards, diplomatists, and dancers;
> Little that's great, but much of what is clever;
> Most orators, but very few financiers,
> Though all Exchequer chancellors endeavour,
> Of late years, to dispense with Cocker's rigours,
> And grow quite figurative with their figures.
> (XVI, 96-98)

(The technique of the incongruous list is another of Byron's favorite satiric devices, but we note how judiciously it is used here.) As if in anticipation of Erving Goffman, Byron suggests that the self does not exist apart from the presentation of the self in its various roles.[9]

Juan has progressed through a variety of playgrounds exposing him to a multiformity of ludic pleasures and challenges. From the familial home where childish mischief went unchecked, he has experienced the hazardous delights of Julia's boudoir, Haidée's Edenic island, Dudú's voluptuous bed, the battlefield at Ismail, the court of Catherine II, and finally the Amundevilles' house-party at Norman Abbey. Only at the latter does he begin to show awareness of what the narrator has exhibited all along: the ubiquity of games in human society. The seeming anomaly in the above list is of course the masculine domain of the battlefield. All of the other playgrounds are presided over by women capable of providing sensuous gratification. Peter Manning's psychoanalytic reading of the poem, the best of its kind to date, stresses Byron's preoccupation with mother-figures as a means of resolving his Oedipal conflicts and obsessions.[10] Though different from my own, Manning's approach is congruent with the idea of play as mastery to be discussed below.[11]

Concentrated within the English cantos are such references to play and game which point to the ritualized, restrictive, and ruthlessly competitive procedures that lie beneath the elegant facades. The stakes for an eligible bachelor are high, and Juan is drawn into the pervasive pastimes of matchmaking and flirtation, while in the background the sexual dance of "cold coquettes" and dissipated nobles continues its relentless rounds. Juan acquits himself well in the compulsory fox-hunt, but <u>becomes</u> the game in the

ghostly hoax of "her frolic Grace-Fitz-Fulke." We can only surmise about the projected outcome of this caper, or of the hinted fatal passion with Adeline, which might have "sprung from a harmless game of billiards" (XIV, 100).

Byron's game-theory proves almost as suggestively inclusive as his stage-sense. "Good company's a chessboard," and "the world's a game" (XIII, 89). A game has rigid, arbitrary laws which cannot be questioned once play has begun; particular chess pieces can move only in predetermined patterns relative to their status in the game. Another board game offers similar possibilities and risks:

> For good society is but a game,
> "The royal game of Goose," as I may say,
> Where everybody has some separate aim,
> And end to answer, or a play to lay--
> The single ladies wishing to be double,
> The married ones to save the virgins trouble.
> (XII, 58)

The trick of double entendre is indulged twice in the line before the couplet. The game of "Goose" was apparently a parlor game played with dice which dictated advances or retreats from one compartmentalized space to another.[12]

As confining as the procedures of a particular game may be, they have been willingly accepted by the players who enter the play. Following the reference to chess mentioned above, Byron mixes his ludic metaphors by treating the players now as marionettes with some autonomy, so that "the puppets pull at their own strings." On the social as well as the cosmic playground, men are the "sport of circumstances" (V, 17), but Byron's scrupulous habit of qualifying

absolute statements will not make them totally so. Manning has summed up Byron's perception that all man's activities are games. "Even the satiric theme of deceptive appearances in Don Juan is more accurately described as a conflict between different games, because in this poem 'reality' is only an agreed-upon system, and a system, like a game, is a set of rules adopted by the players."[13]

But Byron's game-metaphors also carry a strong implication of the intrinsically aleatory nature of existence, and this is especially true when the explicit application is to his own craft. "Fame is a lottery," and poetry a gamble with the future. There is the gamester's claim that only the titillation of uncertainty keeps him in the competition:

> I think that were I certain of success
> I hardly could compose another line:
> So long I've battled either more or less,
> That no defeat can drive me from the Nine.
> This feeling 'tis not easy to express,
> And yet 'tis not affected, I opine,
> In play there are two pleasures for your choosing--
> The one is winning, and the other losing.
> (XIV, 12)

An earlier passage scoffs at pretentions to a divine afflatus, and denies the urge toward fame and perpetuity with a bravado that is more than somewhat suspect. Poetry is presented as but a flimsy toy.

> You know, or don't know, that great Bacon saith,
> "Fling up a straw, 'twill show the way the wind blows,"
> And such a straw, borne on by human breath,
> Is poesy, according as the mind glows;
> A paper kite which flies 'twixt life and death,
> A shadow which the onward soul behind throws:

> And mine's a bubble, not blown up for praise,
> But just to play with, as an infant plays.
> (XII, 8)

The implied claim in the couplet is that Byron's poetic play partakes of the "innocent," spontaneous and unpremeditated play of the very young child rather than the social interplay learned later in childhood and carried into adulthood as gamesmanship. Such an ontogeny of play (accepted in essence by developmental psychologists such as Erik Erikson and Jean Piaget)[14] provides another recapitulation of the Fall. But the most interesting element in the stanza is the use of the kite metaphor, since Far Eastern symbolism portrays the kite as the soul of its owner, separable from him but tied to him as well.[15]

Many of the flippant but starkly skeptical statements in the poem are expressions also indicative of a strong awareness of death. Byron's various treatments of the theme, including the anaphoric ubi sunt stanzas near the end of Canto Eleven, succeed no less than the Cavalier carpe diem and the eternizing emphasis of the sonneteer in exploiting and dramatizing the consciousness of mortality. (It will in fact suit Byron's purposes to invoke carpe diem as advice to Juan.) The subject can intrude seemingly at any moment, and does so at times with apparent gratuitousness. A passage in Canto Fifteen descriptive of Adeline finds her one for whom "Nature might forego her debt." Taking off in an associative strain which is almost Shakespearean in tone

(at least until the couplet, which is pure Byron), the poet apostrophizes:

> O Death! thou dunnest of all duns! thou daily
> Knockest at doors, at first with modest tap,
> Like a meek tradesman when, approaching palely,
> Some splendid debtor he would take by sap:
> But oft denied, as patience 'gins to fail, he
> Advances with exasperated rap,
> And (if let in) insists in terms unhandsome,
> On ready money, or "a draft on Ransom."
>
> Whate'er thou takest, spare awhile poor Beauty!
> She is so rare, and thou hast so much prey.
> What though she now and then may slip from duty,
> The more's the reason why you ought to stay.
> Gaunt Gourmand! with whole nations for your booty,
> You should be civil in a modest way:
> Suppress, then, some slight feminine diseases,
> And take as many heroes as Heaven pleases.
> (XV, 8-9)

Does such "foregrounding" of death, in whatever artistic form it may take, provide a kind of transcendence over it? Its multifarious literary uses incline one to think so, and this view finds corroboration from other sources. In his impressive anthropological study of human heroism, with its resultant banes and boons, Ernest Becker discusses play as an exercise in human mastery. This perception owes much to the work of Otto Rank, particularly his Art and Artist, and also coincides with psychological interpretations of children's play.[16] With symbols and other resources of imagination, man's play "masters an area of strangeness; it establishes power and control over the deterministic laws of the natural world." Becker challenges the early-Freudian insistence (still accepted as orthodox by those less familiar with Freud's later work) upon sexuality and aggression

as man's primary instincts. "Consciousness of death is the primary repression, not sexuality." Becker finds a strong factor in the play of the artist the sense that "the only secure truth men have is that which they themselves create and dramatize; to live is to play at the meaning of life."[17] One often feels something of this sense in the "versified Aurora Borealis,/Which flashes o'er a waste and icy clime," the landscape of death.[18]

Perhaps for this reason, Robert F. Gleckner calls Don Juan a "grim" and "despairing" poem, "that ultimately depressing fable for our time," a judgment that is true, however, only by implication and not in the poem's actual achievement.[19] Ridenour lets us acknowledge that Byron is also having fun and showing us that life is fun. Ridenour also recognizes as "astonishing" Byron's "poise with which he manages, for the most part, to keep his fragmentary world from breaking up."[20] Perhaps this poise can be identified in no small measure with the mastery attained through play. If the ludic impulse is a function of the life-force, play can provide a means for "swallowing up" the negatives instead of being swallowed by them. And Death is the "Gaunt Gourmand." In defense of Don Juan as "epic of negation," Brian Wilkie ultimately and properly characterizes the nay-saying as an act of courage.[21]

For the central fact of death and the pervasive sense of life provide an essential duality within the poem. As the embodiment of the life force, Juan always eludes the

threats to his existence, though seldom by truly heroic actions. He bounces like a rubber ball with such regularity that if we would invoke Henri Bergson's élan vital, we must also cite the latter's comic principle of "the mechanical encrusted on the living."[22] As has often been said, it is impossible to conceive that Byron could ever have brought the saga to a formal conclusion; we sense that Juan is a kind of alter-ego.[23] An active participant on the seemingly condemned playground that is the world, Juan is free from the consciousness of death; it is a lack, however, which the narrator quite frequently provides. Juan is also lacking in the correspondent self-awareness which would enable him to be the homo ludens that his creator is so essentially.

Among the numerous references to death in Byron's masterpiece of antic disposition, there are at least two occasions when the speaker plays Hamlet. One is early in Canto Nine when the death's-head meditation twice quotes the most famous clauses of the most familiar soliloquy. In the introductory stanzas of Canto Fourteen, just before the stanza on the kite, Byron-as-Hamlet speculates on suicide, then draws away from the abyss with a characteristic disclaimer of profound poetic intentions. Now he plays Fielding:

> But what's this to the purpose? you will say.
> Gent. reader, nothing; a mere speculation,
> For which my sole excuse is--'tis my way;
> Sometimes with and sometimes without occasion
> I write what's uppermost without delay;
> This narrative is not meant for narration,
> But a mere airy and fantastic basis,
> To build up common things with common places.
> (XIV, 7)

Is this swagger in part a playful refutation of the poem's Horatian epigraph, "Difficile est proprié communia dicere?" Part of Byron's game is to pretend that he is "only playing," that is, not being also serious. "Never straining hard to versify," he periodically calls attention to the practiced artlessness he employs. "Carelessly I sing." One principal contributing factor to the sense of the poet's mastery in Don Juan is the improvisatory technique and tone. Though he submits to the metrical givens he has adopted, he can triumph over necessity and impress an admiring audience through the facility and ease of his inventiveness. The necessity, for example, for the repeated rhyme in lines five and six of the Italian octave, a somewhat uncommon requirement in English versification, becomes an occasion to demonstrate his virtuosity. And the couplet's rise to a crescendo or comic collapse to bathos is a histrionic feat inviting our repeated applause. The play-motif is continually played out in the exuberant rhythms and clever rhymes of the verse itself.

But in all of his breezy confidences and persiflage, the speaker has also carefully insured that we will both "believe" and "not-believe" him. It is another of the games Byron plays with us. William J. Calvert has compared Byron in this respect with Swift. "Byron's irony, at its best, . . . succeeds in meaning and not meaning exactly what it says, at one and the same moment. It seems to remark that

the present is a very serious matter, but that it must not be taken seriously. It at once ridicules its subject and ridicules its own ridicule, until the reader is at a loss to determine what the author believes."[24] The point is that Byron is showing us the dangers of unexamined belief, and I must disagree with the idea of the reader's inevitable bewilderment. Neither we nor Byron is that inept, if we are sensitive to the scale of ironies in the poem.[25] It is true, however, as we shall see below, that Byron can trap us momentarily by exploiting our too facile faith in our assumptions. In our pleasantly chastened state, we realize anew the advantages of skepticism.

But it is a curious result of Byron's antithetical juxtapositions, reversals and anticlimaxes that they tend to undermine the sense of the betrayal of human hopes less than they do the illusion of inconsequentiality. One illustration is that the stanza quoted above, on the poem's "mere airy and fantastic basis," follows without at all negating one of the most rhetorically effective and therefore famous stanzas in the entire poem. The second stanza functions, in fact, to exemplify the idea of the first.

> And if I laugh at any mortal thing,
> 'Tis that I may not weep; and if I weep,
> 'Tis that our nature cannot always bring
> Itself to apathy, for we must steep
> Our hearts first in the depths of Lethe's spring,
> Ere what we least wish to behold will sleep;
> Thetis baptized her mortal son in Styx;
> A mortal mother would on Lethe fix.
> (XIV, 8)

The cadence, syntax and diction, the expert manipulation of

antithesis, and the balance between dramatic pause and sustained statement--all contribute to the oratorical firmness and emphasis. The weight of truth felt in the stanza is not compromised by the Byronic posing and the eloquence of the accomplished actor.

Byron's apprehension of the diverse possibilities within the Italian verse-form, which he had rehearsed in Beppo, shows the genius of the self-conscious (in this sense, ludic) artist as he magnificently exploits ottava rima as a vehicle for his own special talents.[26] Virginia Woolf's tribute to Don Juan is a recognition of the poem's combination of fortuitousness and discipline, paidia and ludus. "It is the most readable poem of its length ever written, I suppose: a quality which it owes in part to the springy random haphazard galloping nature of its method. The method is a discovery in itself. It's what one has looked for in vain--an elastic shape which will hold whatever you choose to put into it. Thus he could write out his mood as it came to him; he could say whatever came into his head . . . Still, it doesn't seem an easy example to follow; and indeed like all free and easy things, only the skilled and mature really bring them off successfully."[27]

From the holographs of Cantos One and Two, especially, Truman Steffan documents the extent of Byron's experimentation in molding the octave to his requirements. In spite of the pose of the "gifted but indolent peer, the gentlemanly man of the world, casually writing for amusement" and

manifesting a "lordly insouciance toward the minutiae of composition," the process of developing the early cantos shows considerable correction and revision as well as inventive dexterity and facility.[28] Byron apparently found the couplet of his stanza often required a little "sweating" after all, particularly in line seven, in order to bring off the seemingly glib climaxes, surprises and bathetic devices.[29] However, once he had mastered the stanza so that it could become completely identified with his own voice, the rest of the poem was written with phenomenal speed.[30]

The sense of the conversational speaking voice had been an important feature in satiric verse since the sermones of Horace, which could include dialogue in the interchange between the speaker and companion, as in the famous walk from Rome to Brindisi.[31] Byron "rattles on exactly as I'd talk/With anybody in a ride or walk" (XV, 19). Wilkie points to the always skillful and accurate use of italics to produce the subtle overtones of speech.[32] Along with the rhythms and colloquial diction, this device insures that we will hear the poem performed. One of the best known descriptions of Byron's talk is from the memoirs of Colonel Stanhope: "His conversation resembled a stream, sometimes smooth, sometimes rapid, and sometimes rushing down in cataracts; it was a mixture of philosophy and slang--of everything--like his own Don Juan."[33]

The stanza not only achieves verisimilitude in its discursive flow and aleatory modes of association, but also becomes a sophisticated instrument in itself, as the speech rhythms push against or retard the metrical norms.[34] Often the rhymes are patently absurd and deliberately strained and the syntax blatantly interrupted as if to demonstrate the mastery of reality by artifice.

> But now at thirty years my hair is gray--
> (I wonder what it will be like at forty?
> I thought of a peruke the other day--)
> My heart is not much greener, and, in short I
> Have squander'd my whole summer while 'twas May,
> And feel no more the spirit to retort; I
> Have spent my life, both interest and principal,
> And deem not, what I deem'd, my soul invincible.
> (I, 213)

Karl Kroeber's analysis of Byron's use of the stanza emphasizes the fact that the rigidities to be obeyed and overridden in such an intricate schema tend to break down and order the "inchoateness" of tone and language. (This is the ludic principle articulated by Robert E. Neale as the harmonious interaction between the "discharge of energy" and the "design of experience.")[35] Kroeber's discussion lays bare some of Byron's most distinctive ludic strategies.

> Byron strives to keep us aware of how difficult it is to write ottava rima. He puns, distorts the rules of grammar, and palms off such rhymes as "fellows-jealous" and then, to make sure we get the point, he apologizes or complains or promises to become serious. By calling our attention to the artificiality of his verse-form, Byron creates a separation between it and his ostensible subject. Byron, one might suggest, identifies his stanzaic form with his own

> personality. The presence of the ottava rima recalls him even in passages of objective narration.[36]

This latter tour-de-force applies also to speeches by characters in the poem's action. In Donna Julia's frantically false but momentarily successful defense of her virtue while Juan lies half-smothered in her bed, we feel the strong presence and hear the histrionic tones of a drama-coach or puppeteer providing her with just the right intonations, inflections, gestures and flourishes. Steffan has called attention to the "three Julias" (before, during and after her affair with Juan) who are "not fully reconciled" but consistent with the cynical judgment of women in the poem.[37] One of the factors providing continuity and making each of the trinity convincing is the sense of the ubiquitous ventriloquist. Behind the effrontery of Julia's exaggeratedly self-righteous performance, for instance, is a concomitant audacity in the suggestive and amusing name-play, particularly in Italian, with which Byron has her attempt to out-face Alfonso.

> "Did not the Italian Musico Cazzani
> Sing at my heart six months at least in vain?
> Did not his countryman, Count Corniani,
> Call me the only virtuous wife in Spain?
> Were there not also Russians, English, many?
> The Count Strongstroganoff I put in pain,
> And Lord Mount Coffeehouse, the Irish peer,
> Who kill'd himself for love (with wine) last year."
> (I, 149)

The double focus on narrator and plot, with the relative weight between the two shifting somewhat throughout

the succession of episodes, offers a kind of complementarity which resembles in some ways the perceptual interplay between figure and ground. The ground is provided by the constant referral of elements within the fable to the narrator's own purported experience and opinions. The prevailing perception of the poem is that "the subject of the poem is Byron and what Byron thinks, not the miscellaneous adventures of Juan."[38] But whatever Byron's own views may be on given subjects, the notions in the poem are often phrased ironically as claiming to offer philosophical, psychological or sociological principles derived from inductively discovered evidence. A prime example of such narrative play is contained within stanzas commenting upon Julia's marriage; the influence of climate upon libido is propounded with comic authority owing much to the final rhyme:

> 'Tis a sad thing, I cannot choose but say,
> And all the fault of that indecent sun,
> Who cannot leave alone our helpless clay,
> But will keep baking, broiling, burning on,
> That howsoever people fast and pray,
> The flesh is frail, and the soul undone:
> What men call gallantry, and gods adultery,
> Is much more common where the climate's sultry.
> (I, 63)

The disquisition on the number fifty somewhat later in this canto is a concentrated illustration of the manipulation of an abstraction in a variety of instances--the essence of one type of word-play which is used so triumphantly.

But although I find it a partially useful analogy, the application of the figure/ground relation soon proves

inadequate to Byron's art in Don Juan because it is too static an image. A more satisfactory model for the relation of action to narration in the poem begins with the recognition of the centrifugal/centripetal polarity which can be seen in constant though erratic motion. Juan makes various incursions into the world, which we are eagerly inclined to follow, while the narrator is perpetually recalling our easily seduced attention to the central locus of his own perspectives. Our sense of a dynamic interdependence calls to mind the epistemological theory of Jean Piaget, who has so authoritatively emphasized the significance of play in cognitive development.

Piaget distinguishes the reciprocal processes of accommodation and assimilation: the one, the projection of the organism into the environment and the adaptation of the ego to that environment; the other, the ingestion and incorporation by the ego of the new situation or experience. Neither mode exists without the other, and cooperation between them is necessary for intelligent operations. But when accommodation is the primary mode, the subject (person) preponderantly modifies his own actions and adapts his interiorized schemas according to the requirements of the external world; this activity of adjustment to models tends to become imitation. Play, on the other hand, begins when assimilation becomes ascendant, and the subject utilizes the resources of the world for his own symbolic purposes, incorporating and conserving these resources through the

expansion of interior schemas. Piaget finds this incorporative play proceeding by "relaxation of the effort at adaptation" and by "exercise of activities for the mere pleasure of mastering them and acquiring thereby a feeling of virtuosity and power."[39] Although Piaget's work is in the field of child development, it is clear that these two activities essential to formal intelligence as well as to creativity continue in various dimensions into and throughout adulthood.

In applying Piaget's prototypic processes to Don Juan, one sees that Juan himself represents the movement toward accommodation in his adventurous forays into experience, gradually learning the "art of living in all climes with ease." We have already observed the changes of costume which facilitate the accommodative acts of imitation. Conversely, the narrator characteristically assimilates reality to himself as center of reference, voraciously absorbing it and insouciantly refashioning it as homo ludens. These appetitive and transformative modes obviously provide the gratification of mastery, recalling "the joy of being a cause" cited by Karl Groos. According to Groos, play begins in the instinctually gratifying impulse to extend the sphere of one's power by the conquest and control of objects which can be "hustled about."[40] William Madden has identified the intellectual and moral shift between 1800 and 1900 as the shift from a dependence upon external order and

à priori sources to an order created from within the self and coextensive with that self.[41] Although *Don Juan* may represent a rare moment in the Romantic period (or any period, for that matter) approaching vital equilibrium between these two *foci*, the tipping of the scales toward the Romantic ego here provides the opportunity for marvelous play.

The almost Rabelesian incorporative capacity of Byron is most obviously exhibited in *Don Juan* in two ways. One is in the poet's ludic delight in luxurious tables, a subject to be examined presently. The other is seen in his insatiability for the facts and details of experience that would not only garnish his fable but also give substance to it. Byron's pride in the historical accuracy of his account was no secret, particularly in regard to the siege of Ismail, and he zestfully reiterated such assertions as "Almost all *Don Juan* is *real* life."[42] Again, play theory is applicable here, for such an appetite for poetically utilizable facts seems to be gratified not by accommodation to the world so much as by appropriation of the world to the poetic ego and the absorption of as much of experience as possible. Indeed, psychoanalytic theories of play have employed an eating model in explaining this assimilation or "digestion" of reality.[43] (We have previously noted the figure of the "Gaunt Gourmand" and the urge to swallow up the central facts of experience before one is swallowed by them.) In Byron's case, the "stocking up of an abundance of odd items"

seems to conserve and concentrate the seemingly limitless supply of poetic energy.[44] In compatible metaphors, Paul West has ascribed the poem's "rag-bag of interesting effects" to "the lyricism of hoarding."[45] One of the bizarre examples from the rag-bag is found in a passage devoted to the treatment of Juan's mysterious illness contracted in service to Catherine: the rather awesome prescription is presented in a convincing combination of Latin terms and apothecary symbols.[46] West's comment on the stanza is apt. "This is the world of objects adapted for ends of fun. It always suited Byron to play collector with things and people."[47]

Fun in Don Juan assumes a variety of forms. Byron's gourmandising imagination is a form of play that reminds us that even the materials necessary for the support of life can become ludic when they are cultivated, elaborated and set apart for pleasure rather than for mere utility.

> Who would suppose, from Adam's simple ration,
> That cookery could have call'd forth such resources,
> As form a science and a nomenclature
> From out the commonest demands of nature?
> (XV, 49)

Byron's satiric use of eating as a form of play and pleasure derives in part from mythic and metaphorical associations:

> all human history attests
> That happiness for man--the hungry sinner!--
> Since Eve ate apples, much depends on dinner.
> (XIII, 99)

(One must note here, in passing, that the many references throughout Don Juan to the delights of various repasts are inevitably shadowed by the horrible meal of the maddened

shipwrecked crew in Canto Two. Here Byron reaches a satiric extreme, a Swiftian intensity, against which all of his lighter satire must be weighed.) If the narrator becomes at times dyspeptic, it can be because of overindulgence or because there is much in an unjust world that is indigestible.

There are two peaks of culinary magnificence in the poem, the banquet scenes of Cantos Three and Sixteen. Like all such epicurean occasions, these festivities are notable for their splendour, richness and, especially, excess. Haidee's marriage feast is the more sensuous in its direct evocation of pungent aromas and succulent appeals to the palate:

> The dinner made about a hundred dishes;
> Lamb and pistachio nuts--in short, all meats,
> And saffron soups, and sweetbreads; and the fishes
> Were of the finest that e'er flowed in nets,
> Drest to a Sybarite's most pamper'd wishes;
> The beverage was various sherbets
> Of raisin, orange and pomegranate juice,
> Squeezed through the rind, which makes it best for use.
> (III, 62)

Other delicacies include more fruits and date-bread, "mocha's berry," cloves and cinnamon. The luxury of the ivory-inlaid table; the filigreed china with the service of gems, gold and silver; the porcelain, crystal and marble; the velvet and damask--all provide the appropriately splendid setting. No less dazzling in their opulent (and no doubt meticulously authentic) Levantine dress are the hostess and host, so soon to be evicted from their elegantly voluptuous paradise. The irony of this section is muted and attenuated so that the pleasure to be derived from the

scene, albeit mortgaged by the knowledge of Lambro's presence, can be enjoyed by the reader for its own sake. There is also a sense here of a kind of Utopian state of genuinely human civilization in which life can be pure play. The love of Juan and Haidée, though it has its regressive aspects for Juan, serves mainly as a norm for fully human love which sets in bold relief the debasements of love depicted in other episodes. This idyll therefore works to fulfill a satiric purpose beyond itself.

In the portrayal of the later Lucullan meal at Norman Abbey, the tone is quite different. Dining as a ludic activity is one of the major preoccupations of the English cantos, where lives of ennui, meaningless and futility are summed up in terms of play and sport that are far from Utopian:

> And having voted, dined, drank, gamed and whored,
> The family vault received another lord.
> (XI, 75)

The "two mighty tribes, the Bores and Bored" are condemned to pass their long days in desultory amusements offered by the hunt, the library, the galleries and the gardens until "the great hour of union/Was rung by dinner's knell." The connotations of "knell" remind us that since the Fall all meals have a somewhat fatal aspect.

In the extended description of the munificent board provided by the Amundevilles, the affectations of the French menu and the gastronomic challenges to the digestive system in the heavy and seemingly endless succession of courses

achieve dimensions of satire absent in the esthetic accomplishment of Haidée's table. In the feast under Lady Adeline's direction, even the vegetables are "all in masquerade," and the "tumult of fish, flesh and fowl" is produced by the guests as well as by the fare. Byron's statement of his intention in the large section of the poem set in England recalls the Roman satura:

> Because my business is to dress society
> And stuff with sage that very verdant goose.
> (XV, 93)

But there is also a clear appreciation for the civility and pageantry inherent in the great social games enacted at the seat of the Amundevilles. The banquet evokes a sense of heroic grandeur, as two of the ludic devices of epic are conflated:

> Great things were now to be achieved at table,
> With massy plate for armour, knives and forks
> For weapons; but what Muse since Homer's able
> (His feasts are not the worst part of his works)
> To draw up in array a single day-bill
> Of modern dinner?
> (XV, 62)

But it is Pope, not Homer, who has inspired this scene, as Ridenour points out.[48]

The contrast between the two banquets, though by no means indicative of extremes within the poem, reminds us that the narrative ego in Don Juan has been nourished by an abundant stock of available materials, which contribute to a complexity of moods, tones, attitudes and impersonations. Through it all, Byron is constantly calling our attention to the fact that it is a poem after all, that it is artifice,

that it is language exulting in the illusory and ludic possibilities of which it is capable--the magic, legerdemain and gymnastics which are so amply afforded for our entertainment. And the Byronic poetic presence never allows our attention to stray from the performance of these skills in which he is so accomplished. It is not the tale that we admire so much as the telling.

The essence of play, according to psychological theory, is that it indulges and promotes means over ends: not that play has no goals, but in play the process is more important than the product.[49] Thus, literary games, like other ludic activities, may employ means in which efficiency is not a value; in fact, nonefficient means may be paramount. The epic is a prime example. Byron's leisurely mode of narrative exposition, making deliberate use of delay and digressive tactics, provides examples par excellence of the situation in which the not-telling of the story is as important as the telling. Richard Lanham has described classical rhetorical play in terms that are applicable to Byron. "The verbal cleverness keeps us at a distance so we can admire. Yet, because it is a game, it draws us in so we can win."[50]

One of the best illustrations of the utilization of these techniques for comic and satiric purposes may be found in the Donna Julia episode. Seventy-two stanzas are required to cover the practically nonexistent action from the time Juan reaches sixteen years and is thrown into

contact with Julia to the fateful six of June when she "whispering 'I will ne'er consent'--consented." By manipulating the narrative momentum of the entire affiar, Byron demonstrates a kind of mastery over time itself.[51] Among the topics which deflect and retard the recital of the meager events of this part of the episode are: Julia's lineage, Alfonso's pedigree, climatal effects on sexuality, the gossip about Alfonso and Inez, the masks which which passions are disguised, the disadvantages of the novice in love, the dubious serenity of a "quiet conscience," the miscalculations of husbands, the shortsightedness of parents, the dangers of summer, the mystique of moonlight, and the immorality attributable to Plato and his influence. Included here among the brilliant permutations of a central theme is the stanza presenting Byron's virtuoso variations on the number fifty. In additional editorial excursions, the speaker cites his own preferences in women, claims a desire to suppress rumors, apologizes for a mistake in French grammar necessitated by the rhyme, explains his fondness for solitude ("a Sultan's, not a hermit's"), fails to remember the number of a pertinent commandment (the seventh), calls attention to his scrupulosity about dates and the reason why, becomes suddenly reticent about his sources of information, and seems to falter in his task at a crucial moment: "And then--God knows what next--I can't go on;/I'm almost sorry that I e'er begun."

The now-indulging, now-withholding game with the reader continues through the ultimate climax of the episode in Julia's bedroom. Immediately after the stanza devoted to the seduction comes an extended meditation on pleasure, itself interrupted by an address to the reader à la Fielding, which teases by archly apologizing for what turns out to need no apology:

> Here my chaste Muse a liberty must take--
> Start not! still chaster reader--she'll be nice hence--
> Forward, and there is no great cause to quake;
> This liberty is a poetic license,
> Which some irregularity may make
> In the design, and as I have a high sense
> Of Aristotle and the Rules, 'tis fit
> To beg his pardon when I err a bit.
> (I, 120)

The confessed "license" is the skillful management of time, beginning with the promise of a saltatory advance of several months to a day said to be uncertain:

> we'll say
> 'Twas in November, but I'm not so sure
> About the day--the era's more obscure.

In the lightly mocking pretence of humility toward Aristotle and his "rules," we see one of numerous examples of Byron's pretensions to mastery of the epic.[52] It is an anticipation of the fuller statement of his claims at the end of the canto. But from the poem's first line expressing the "want" of a hero, through the acknowledged scandals (as well as acts of homage) to the tradition, Byron periodically asserts this mastery in two ways. He shows his superiority in a competitive endeavor and the lordly supersedence of rules not worth his care. This

latter maneuver also contributes to the skeptical posture in the poem by suggesting that such long established conventions, although in his case observed for the spectacular effects and ludic challenges they provide, are only on the level of "mythological machinery."

We are observing the way in which the reader's creative participation in the game of the poem is incited through a repertory of strategems; in the episode under scrutiny, the meandering design of the narration creates the suspension of time and arouses expectations of what is to come. For we are no sooner alerted to the next grand event in the story, to befall on that hazy November date, than we are teased with its postponement: "We'll talk of that anon." In the interim we are treated to one of Byron's most distinctive forms of poetic play and another illustration of his omnivorous incorporative capacity in the wickedly incongruous list of "sweets" that runs for six stanzas in a dazzling display of wit and sentiment.[53] Perhaps the greatest contrasts in this "litany of pleasure," to borrow Cooke's term, are in the following stanza which in itself enacts a fall from innocence to experience:

> Sweet is the vintage, when the showering grapes
> In Bacchanal profusion reel to earth,
> Purple and gushing; sweet are our escapes
> From civic revelry to rural mirth;
> Sweet to the miser are his glittering heaps,
> Sweet to the father is his first-born's birth,
> Sweet is revenge--especially to women,
> Pillage to soldiers, prize-money to seamen.
> (I, 124)

After the succeeding stanza's relish of the "passing sweet" satisfaction of a legacy,

> The unexpected death of some old lady
> Or gentleman of seventy years complete,

the poet acknowledges the agonistic nature of a literary life: "'Tis sweet to win, no matter how, one's laurels/By blood or ink!" Finally, to whet our appetite more directly for the climactic scene ahead, comes the designation of the ultimate sweet of "first and passionate love" in its correlation with the "ambrosial sin" of Adam and Eve: "The tree of knowledge has been pluck'd."

My approach to Don Juan has been stimulated in part by Steffan's impressive documentation of Byron's amplificatory and associative play in the composition of the early cantos.[54] In this middle section of Canto One, the "sport of allusive accumulation" continues apace as a link is made between Adam and Prometheus, whose "unforgiven/Fire" was "filch'd for us from heaven." An occasion is thereby created to reflect upon the problematical creative urge in man, an urge which is attributed to two types of ludic impulse. One stems from man's pleasure in producing "Some new experiment to show his parts." The other ludic endeavor is ironically espoused by the Byronic method already set in motion, of building up only to break down. Pure play has been corrupted by games of crass deception.

> This is the age of oddities set loose,
> Where different talents find their different marts.
> You'd best begin with truth, and when you've lost your
> Labour, there's a sure market for imposture.
> (I, 128)

Thus, in many ways this ruminative interlude between the major acts in the Juan-Julia drama encapsulates the poem's major themes as it divertingly impedes the forward movement of the fable with satiric commentary. The catalogue of pleasures, in their increasingly corrupt manifestations, is followed by an enumeration of the "opposite discoveries" and contrivances of civilization. "One makes new noses, one a guillotine/One breaks your bones, one sets them in their sockets." The Augustan antithetical method reappears a few stanzas later introduced by a typically Byronic pun:

> This is the patent age of new inventions
> For killing bodies and for saving souls.
> (I, 132)

We recall that the crossing of conceptual wires in this kind of word play was identified by Freud as "economy of psychical expenditure." The strategy also reinforces the metalinguistic awareness of the performance possibilities of language when it is made opaque, that is, attended to for its own sake as well as for its referential function.[55] At the same time, a pun demonstrates the instability and undependability of language--another ploy in the skeptic's repertory. Additional satiric touches in this passage anticipate the Turkish cantos, in their ironic references to war as a Malthusian instrument for upgrading the quality of the population and as a way to "benefit mankind" comparable to "Tombuctoo travels, voyages to the Poles."

In the poet's elaborately circuitous route to Julia's

bedroom, following the line of greatest resistance, his exaggeratedly superfluous motions for reaching his end in the gratuitous introduction of obstacles to the unravelling of his tale, one sees the quintessentially ludic disposition. Moreover, Byron slyly suggests that, given the nature of man and the world, one finds the opposing attitude of goal-directed (non-ludic) behavior no more promising a strategy for living.

> Man's a phenomenon, one knows not what,
> And wonderful beyond all wondrous measure;
> 'Tis pity though, in this sublime world, that
> Pleasure's a sin, and sometimes sin's a pleasure;
> Few mortals know what end they would be at,
> But whether glory, power, or love, or treasure,
> The path is through perplexing ways, and when
> The goal is gain'd, we die, you know--and--then--
>
> What then?--I do not know, no more do you--
> And so good night.--Return we to our story.[56]

But the return must not be too peremptory, even now. The scene is set by a description of November days in general and one cloudy night in particular. The final barrier before the farcical crisis is presented in a typically playful intervention that leads to another of Byron's assimilative references. Appropriately it includes his own gustatory tastes:

> There's something cheerful in that sort of light,
> Even as a summer sky's without a cloud;
> I'm fond of fire, and crickets, and all that,
> A lobster salad, and champagne, and chat.
> (I, 135)

When the comic action does begin, the pacing is impeccable; there is not a wasted motion, not an expendable word. The

control is absolute, for a ludic masterpiece has been launched by a supreme storyteller.

Byron's ludic vision is complex and discriminating. As a cosmic plaything, man is Pope's "glory, jest and riddle of the world." Play provides sources of life, power and cultural accomplishments, but the deceptions, empty rituals and destructive contests into which it can degenerate are clear signs of man's fallen state. And the reader's eager complicity in the games of the poem (which sometimes lead straight into the poet's satiric snares), his keen response to the poetic pyrotechnics, strongly suggests that if most literary things _are_ a _show_, it is because showmanship is what _works_. The master satirist may well be a moralist, but he must first of all be _homo ludens_.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

CHAPTER VIII

[1]I am drawing upon Michael Cooke's statement of the structural significance of the episode: "Don Juan builds itself on the pattern of . . . subtle repetition, oblique reflection and intricate variations of the simple single action of the initial Juan-Julia episode . . . the poem's beginning becomes at once perpetual and final." See "Byron's Don Juan: The Obsession and Self-Discipline of Spontaneity," Studies in Romanticism, 14 (1975), 290-291.

[2]For contemporary pantomime versions of the legend, see F. L. Beaty, "Harlequin Don Juan," JEGP, 67 (1968), 395-405. See also Oscar Mandel, ed., The Theatre of Don Juan (Lincoln: Univ. of Nebraska Press, 1963).

[3]See translation by William Gillis (London: Folio Society, 1971). For influence of Barclay's translation on Renaissance literature, see The Cambridge History of English Literature, ed. A. H. Ward and A. R. Wallen, 15 vols. (London: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1964), IV, 156-162.

[4]One recalls Byron's comment on his oriental tales in a letter to Murray, 14 November, 1813: "I don't care one lump of sugar for my poetry; but for my costume, and my correctness on those points . . . I will combat lustily." See Prothero, Letters & Journals, II, 283. Byron also expressed admiration for William Beckford's Vathek in its "correctness of costume" in his note to l. 1328 of The Giaour. One might cite also the portrait in Albanian costume by Thomas Phillips. (See Marchand's biography.)

[5]Steffan-Pratt, I, Part 3 and passim.

[6]Peter J. Manning, Byron and His Fictions (Detroit: Wayne State Univ. Press, 1978), p. 197. Although I came to Manning's insightful study when my own was virtually completed, I found that his concerns with aspects of play and game in some ways paralleled my own. (I am not sure here what Manning means by "symmetrical" [p. 197]).

[7]For Byron's thorough grounding in Shakespeare, see G. Wilson Knight, Byron and Shakespeare (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1966).

[8]See, e.g., the following stanzas: I, 149; XIII, 79-80, 84-87 and 92; and XV, 40-42.

[9]See above, Chapter 1 of this study, p. 26-27.

[10]See especially Manning's Chapter 5, "The Byronic Hero as Little Boy," pp. 177-197. For a pre-Oedipal psychoanalytic view of the mother-child interaction, see D. W. Winnicott, Playing and Reality (New York: Basic Books, 1961).

[11]See pp. 243-244.

[12]F. R. B. Whitehouse, Table Games of Georgian and Victorian Days (London, 1951), p. 7.

[13]Manning, p. 235.

[14]See Erikson, Toys and Reasons: Stages in the Ritualization of Experience (New York: W. W. Norton, 1977); and Jean Piaget, Play, Dreams and Imitation in Childhood, trans. C. Gattegno and F. M. Hodgson (New York: Norton, 1962).

[15]Roger Caillois, Man, Play and Games, trans. Meyer Barash (New York: The Free Press, Macmillan Co., 1961), p. 59.

[16]See pp.253-254 of this chapter; also, Chapter 1, p. 12 for reference to children's play.

[17]Ernest Becker, The Denial of Death (New York: The Free Press, Macmillan Co., 1973). Becker's predominantly appreciative critique of Freud is on pp. 93-124 and passim. Quotations are from pp. 31, 96 and 201.

[18]Cf. the famous lines from Childe Harold [III, 6]:

> 'Tis to create, and in creating live
> A being more intense, that we endow
> With form our fancy, gaining as we give
> The life we image, even as I do now.

[19]Robert F. Gleckner, Byron and the Ruins of Paradise (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1967), pp. 124 and 330.

[20]Ridenour, The Style of Don Juan, pp. 151 and 148.

[21]Brian Wilkie, Romantic Poets and the Epic Tradition (Madison: Univ. of Wisconsin Press, 1965), pp. 223-226. I feel, however, that in general Wilkie overstates the case of Byron's "negation."

[22]For the most accessible English translations of the pertinent Bergson works, see Creative Evolution, trans. Arthur Mitchell (New York: Random House, 1944); and Laughter in Wylie Sypher, ed., Comedy (Garden City: Doubleday Anchor Books, 1956).

[23]Manning compares the relationship of Byron-as-Juan and Byron-as-Narrator to Wordsworth's perception of "two consciousnesses," a younger and an older self, in The Prelude. But Manning also acknowledges the crucial differences between Byron and Wordsworth in this regard, couching it in psychoanalytic terms. "For Wordsworth the traumatic events of youth are hailed as 'spots of time' that disclose a rich meaning to later contemplation; Byron enshrines his trauma in Juan, whose arrest is permanent. Byron's younger and older selves, his 'two consciousnesses' of Juan and the narrator, are nominally discrete, so that childhood experience is denied the positive qualities Wordsworth ascribes to it, and the poem implies a view very different from Wordsworth's belief in the coherent growth of the personality." See pp. 178-180 and passim. I propose another view of the relation between Juan and the narrator in pp. 253ff. of this chapter.

[24]William J. Calvert, Byron: Romantic Paradox (1935; rpt. New York: Russell & Russell, 1962), p. 193.

[25]See Ridenour, "The Mode of Byron's Don Juan," 443-446.

[26]Byron was inspired by John Hookham Frere's use of the form in the Prospectus and Specimen of an intended National Work by "the brothers Whistlecraft" published in September, 1817. See Leslie Marchand, Byron: A Portrait (New York: Knopf, 1970), p. 274.

[27]Virginia Woolf, A Writer's Diary: Being Extracts from the Diary of Virginia Woolf, ed. Leonard Woolf (London, 1925; rpt. New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1953), pp. 3-4.

[28]See Steffan-Pratt, I, Part 1. Quotations are from p. 101.

[29]For Byron on "sweating poesy" see letter to Murray, 6 April, 1819, Prothero, IV, p. 284. See also similar sentiments on p. 341 of that same volume and pp. 16, 120 and 225 of V.

[30]Steffan records that in the period between June, 1822 and March, 1823, Byron completed 10 cantos as well as The Age of Bronze and The Island. See Steffan-Pratt, I, 102-103.

[31]See the Sermones, Book I, 5.

[32]Wilkie, p. 218.

[33]Quoted in Calvert, p. 183.

[34]For analysis of Byron's "virtuoso mastery of the elements of his octave," see Ridenour, The Style of Don Juan, pp. 126-138.

[35]See Chapter 1, this study, pp. 14-15.

[36]Karl Kroeber, Romantic Narrative Art (Madison: Univ. of Wisconsin Press, 1966), p. 147.

[37]Steffan-Pratt, I, 188-189.

[38]Calvert, p. 190. As has been noted in various contexts, Ridenour, Cooke, and Manning all show that the adventures are not all that "miscellaneous." But see Jerome McGann, Don Juan in Context (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1976), pp. 121-127 and passim.

[39]Piaget, pp. 1-4 and 87-104. Quotations are from p. 89.

[40]Karl Groos, The Play of Man, trans. Elizabeth Baldwin (New York: D. Appleton Co., 1901), pp. 95 and 152. See also Chapter 1 of this study, pp. 19-20.

[41]William Madden, "The Victorian Sensibility," Victorian Studies, VII (1963), 93.

[42]Letter to Murray, 23 August, 1821, Prothero, V, p. 346. The material for the Ismail scenes were taken from the Marquis de Castlenau's Histoire de la Nouvelle Russie, as Byron points out in his preface to Cantos VI-VIII.

[43]See, e.g., Robert Wälder, "The Psychoanalytic Theory of Play," Psychoanalytic Quarterly, II (1938), 208-224.

[44]Steffan makes this point, I, 293.

[45]Paul West, Byron and the Spoiler's Art (London: Chatto & Windus, 1960), p. 63. (I shall leave it to the psychoanalysts to pursue the relation between orality and anality!)

[46]Canto X, 41.

[47]West, p. 72.

[48]Ridenour, The Style of Don Juan, p. 35.

[49]Jerome S. Bruner, Alison Jolly and Kathy Silva, Play--Its Role in Development and Evolution (New York: Basic Books, 1976), p. 244.

[50]Richard A. Lanham, The Motives of Eloquence (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1976), pp. 56-57.

[51]Cooke and Manning also make this point.

[52]For Byron's uses of the epic tradition, see Wilkie, pp. 188-226; John Lauber, "Don Juan as Anti-Epic," SEL, 8 (1968), 607-621; Arthur D. Kahn, "Byron's 'Single Difference' with Homer and Virgil--The Redefinition of the Epic in Don Juan," Arcadia, 5 (1970), 143-162; and Donald Reiman, "Don Juan in Epic Context," SIR, 16 (1977), 595ff.

[53]Manning is very useful on this section, pp. 204-205, citing echoes of Goldsmith's The Vicar of Wakefield and Milton's Paradise Lost. I think there may also be allusions to Chaucer's Troilus & Criseyde, Book III, ll. 1219-1246.

[54]Steffan-Pratt, I, 63-85.

[55]See reference to Roland Barthes in Chapter 1 of this study, p. 40.

[56]There is a special irony in these lines when one reflects upon the fact that abandoning the play of poetry and the poem itself for the pursuit of the goal of Greek independence brought fatal consequences, as Byron probably suspected it would.

AFTERWORD

If progression in poetic and social sophistication be visible from Daniel's Delia to Carew's lyrics to Byron's Don Juan (and I would not be comfortable relying upon such an approach), there are continuities as well as divergences. Like the sonnet sequence, Don Juan is, as Hazlittt originally recognized, "a poem written about itself."[1] Carew and Byron share perceptions that make them astute practitioners of "transactional analysis" in the relations between men and women. Despite wide variation in the poetic problems each poet sets for himself, all three poets explore the role of poet-as-lover, and present patterns of play under the mask of passion. Although the differences between the poets are far more important than their superficial resemblances, all verify Suzanne Langer's belief that the poet's thoughts are what happen in the poem, "not a string of occasions in the world."

My study has presented evidence for a theory of poetry as play. To a large extent such a theory depends upon the centrality of rhetoric for an understanding of poetic technique; thus impersonation becomes a significant factor in the strategies of performance. For Daniel and Carew, it is the rhetoric of Eros. Byron leans even more heavily on language as an end in itself, its infinite variety as a tool of poetic prowesss. In all of the poets, but in different degrees, one is reminded of the connection between sexual

and poetic potency. Although Freudian theory would invoke the theory of sublimation, it seems hardly appropriate in this instance: one is not at all sure which is the tenor and which is the vehicle in the metaphor.

Competition is another ludic factor in the poet's self-conscious and aggressively calculated routines upon the literary stage. The very choice of a genre means the choice of certain rivals in an agonistic struggle of which the "anxiety of influence" provides but one of the tensions. One can choose, moreover, as did Byron, to subvert the genre as well as submit to its constraints; the poet's relationship to the genre can become a game in itself. Chance, risk and adventure are the ludic attendants on all significant poetic experiments.

The play qualities discovered in poetry support the findings of the psycho-physiologist Kurt Goldstein, whose seminal studies of the brain prompted his refutation of Freud's late speculation that the aim of all life might be death or release from tension. The basic drive, the only drive by which the life of the healthy organism is determined, according to Goldstein, is "self-actualization," the tendency to actualize as much as possible one's individual capacities, one's "nature." Goldstein gives scientific testimony to support what we know, that poet's throw themselves into the agon of poiesis because they are poets. "Normal behavior corresponds to a continual change of tension of such a kind

that over and over again that state of tension is reached which enables and impels the organism to actualize itself in further activities."[2] In an era when so much reading of poetry has been pursuit of psychopathology, a ludic emphasis reveals the essential "health" within the poetic endeavor.

Reading from a perspective of play, moreover, one recognizes the poet's victory at some deep level over ontological dependence and finitude. In dealing with shared themes of mutability and consciousness of death, each of the poets examined in this study has defied the world of blind necessity. It is the nature of play to strive for the preservation of time in time, for the arrest of time, the conquest of death; there are various ways in which poetry accrues a special kind of permanence. On a basic linguistic level, as Samuel Levin reminds us, poetry has the particular quality of being memorable, of lasting, because it has the property of getting itself reproduced in form as well as impression.[3] This property follows from its game-like structure, the "coding" and "encoding," or in I. A. Richards' figure: "A poem may be regarded as a suitcase which the poet may think he packs and the reader may think he unpacks."[4] Eugen Fink's eloquent assessment of the achievement of play has obvious application to poetry. "In the autonomy of the play action there appears a possibility of human timelessness in time. Time is then experienced, not as a precipitate rush of successive moments, but rather as the one full moment that is, so to speak, a glimpse of eternity."[5] This

dimension of play provides part of that supreme visionary moment in Wordsworth's "Immortality Ode," where the ninth strophe's penultimate line (as well as the ultimate) evokes the experience of the numinous in an archetypal image stirring deeply embedded memories within the psyche:

> Hence in a season of calm weather
> Though inland far we be,
> Our Souls have sight of that immortal sea
> Which brought us hither,
> Can in a moment travel thither,
> And see the children sport upon the shore,
> And hear the mighty waters rolling evermore.

Yet one cannot be too solemn and remain faithful to the spirit of play. Poetic playgrounds are exhilarating loci of attention offering a wide spectrum of games, including those which are logical, phonological, linguistic, associative, disjunctive, competitive, cooperative, and so on. The poet plays against self-imposed challenges for self-pleasing "pay-offs." But he is no less conscious of an audience and of friendly opponents within that audience who can be enticed to play the "non-zero-sum" games he sets up. He may cultivate a certain esotericism, thereby fostering, in Huizinga's words, a "play-community which shall steep itself in its own mystery."[6]

One of the most fascinating outcomes of a focus upon ludic aspects of poetry is a realization of the complex relationship between linguistic and rhetorical games and the social fictions generated and exploited by these games. The phenomenon of courtly love and its correlative genres provide one of the most striking examples of such an inter-

dependence of symbolic structures. The incalculable influence of the pastoral mode is another case in point. Thomas McFarland discusses the motifs of pastoral as intrinsically ludic creations in his book on the pastoral comedies of Shakespeare. The games and rituals of these plays achieve a sense of joy, hope and community.[7] [But when pastoral of a hundred years later casts off its ludicrousness (in a benign sense), its gamelike action of deliberate artificiality, it loses its essential character and our positive response.]

Huizinga writes regretfully that play has declined since the eighteenth century, and that the twentieth century has replaced it with "false play" ("to cover up some social or political design") and "puerilism . . . that blend of adolescence and barbarity . . . rampant all over the world."[8] Fortunately, however, the "eternal play element" is a part of the legacy of American twentieth century poetry. An extension of my study would include the ludic triumphs of Wallace Stevens and e e cummings. Stevens' verbal flamboyance in poems like "Bantams in Pine Woods," "On the Manner of Addressing Clouds," "The Dove in the Belly," "A High-Toned Old Christian Woman," and "Oak Leaves are Hands" celebrates the playful phonic possibilities of language.[9] And the Arabian's "Hoobla-hoobla-hoobla-how" in "Notes Toward a Supreme Fiction" demonstrates that "Life's nonsense pierces us with strange relation." In his lifelong project of the "supreme fiction," Stevens embodies the perspective on the "celestial pantomime" which Huizinga

calls sub specie ludi. Like his "Man with the Blue Guitar," Stevens can strum a jaunty "ai-yi-yi" and twirl the world upon his nose because he understands it as a phenomenological construct. As he says in one of the shorter poems, "The whole of appearance is a toy." The more complex "Esthètique du Mal" describes the play with reality of this modern exemplar of "negative capability."

> And out of what one sees and hears and out
> Of what one feels, who could have thought to make
> So many selves, so many sensuous worlds,
> As if the air, the mid-day air, was swarming
> With the metaphysical changes that occur,
> Merely in living as and where we are.

Few poets have seemed on the surface more eccentric than e e cummings, the poet as graphic artist who increased our awareness of the poem as visual event. In cummings we see "the exuberantly wanton play of verbal and syntactical combinations and breaks, the hieroglyphic juggling with punctuation and types."[10] His "r-p-o-p-h-e-s-s-a-g-r" is not only a "happening" in itself, but is a fitting emblem for a poetic philosophy based upon play.[11] Such oddities fail to disguise the fact, however, that few poets have been so traditional. That grasshopper has a long history, as does the very idea of "shaped" poetry itself. The magnificent "All in green went my love riding" is a medieval tapestry come to life. In cummings' oeuvre, moreover, we see how the literary play of centuries has been continued in our own age in idiosyncratic recapitulations of the sonnet, the Cavalier lyric, and satiric verse as trenchant in social

comment and precise in execution as any in the language.

The fascination with the circus shared by twentieth-century artists in various media is another manifestation of the play spirit. A poem by Lawrence Ferlinghetti almost kinesthetically enacts the poet's vertiginous ascent and perilous progress in an arena sacred to homo ludens.

Constantly risking absurdity[12]
and death
whenever he performs
above the heads
of his audience
the poet like an acrobat
climbs on rime
to a high wire of his own making
and balancing on eyebeams
above a sea of faces
paces his way
to the other side of day
performing entrechats
and sleight-of-foot tricks
and other high theatrics
and all without mistaking
anything
for what it may not be
For he's the super realist
who must perforce perceive
taut truth
before the taking of each stance or step
in his supposed advance
toward that still higher perch
where Beauty stands and waits
with gravity
to start her death-defying leap
And he
a little charleychaplin man
who may or may not catch
her fair eternal form
spreadeagled in the empty air
of existence

AFTERWORD

NOTES AND REFERENCES

[1]William Hazlitt, The Spirit of the Age in The Complete Works of William Hazlitt, ed. P. P. Howe (London, 1930-1934; rpt. AMS Press), XI, p. 75.

[2]Kurt Goldstein, The Organism (Boston: Beacon Press, 1937), p. 175.

[3]Samuel Levin, Linguistic Structures in Poetry (The Hague: Mouton, 1967), p. 60.

[4]Quoted in Seymour Chatman and Samuel Levin, Essays on the Language of Literature (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1967), p. 326.

[5]Eugen Fink, "The oasis of happiness: toward an ontology of play," Game, Play, Literature, ed. Jacques Ehrmann (Boston: Beacon Press, 1971), p. 21.

[6]Huizinga, Homo Ludens, p. 203.

[7]Thomas McFarland, Shakespeare's Pastoral Comedy (Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 1972), pp. 30-32 and passim.

[8]Huizinga, p. 203.

[9]The Collected Poems of Wallace Stevens (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1967). Poems referred to in this paragraph may be found on pp. 55, 59, 75, 165, 272, 326, 366 and 383.

[10]Erich Kahler, The Tower and the Abyss (New York: Viking Press, 1967), p. 117.

[11]e e cummings, Complete Poems 1913-1962 (New York: Harcourt, Brace, Javanovich, 1972). Poems mentioned are on pp. 14 and 396.

[12]Lawrence Ferlinghetti, A Coney Island of the Mind (San Francisco: New Directions Pub. Co., 1968).

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