# John Lyly's *Anatomy of Wit* as an Example of Early Modern Psychological Fiction

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*Abstract: John Lyly developed the prose style that would become known as euphuism, named after the main character in his* Euphues: The Anatomy of Wit *(1578) and* Euphues and his England *(1580). The term 'euphuism' signifies the use of paradoxical and self-correcting language, while its spokespersons express a great deal of self-doubt and contradiction. We can conjecture that Lyly intended his ironic, detailed examination of 'wit' to dissect both the intellect and its often-inconsistent manoeuvrings, revealing a cynical view of human behaviour. In this article, I re-read* The Anatomy of Wit *in the context of a larger body of what I call proto-psychological fiction. I argue that certain early modern texts, of which Lyly's is a strong example, share tropes and motifs that indicate the author's interest in the workings of human psychology avant la lettre, and more specifically, of a pessimistic strain of thought that is critical of self-awareness and doubtful of our ability to be guided by reason.*

The terms 'psychology' and 'psychological' often appear when discussing the development of early modern literary self-fashioning.[1] But what exactly do we mean by the representation of 'psychology' — especially in literature, rather than in moral philosophy or religious texts — four hundred years before Freud? How does a fiction author from the early modern period write in a mode that is more inclined, we might say, to the inner workings of the psyche, long before the advent of free indirect

discourse, or realism, or many of the other elements that contributed to the 'rise' of the novel genre?[2] One Elizabethan author who begins to depict consciousness in literature is John Lyly, whose prose romances have been called the forerunners of the psychological novel in England.[3] Lyly developed the prose style that would become known as euphuism, named after the main character in his *Euphues: The Anatomy of Wit* (1578) and *Euphues and his England* (1580).[4] As I will define in more detail later, the term 'euphuism' signifies the use of paradoxical and self-correcting language, while its spokespersons express a great deal of self-doubt and contradiction. 'Wit', in turn, had, from the eleventh century on, the connotation not only of humour, but also the 'seat of consciousness or thought or the mind' and of human understanding and reason.[5] We can conjecture that Lyly intended his ironic, detailed examination of 'wit' to dissect both the intellect and its often-inconsistent manoeuvrings, revealing a cynical view of human behaviour. In this article, I re-read *The Anatomy of Wit* in the context of a larger body of (what I will now call) proto-psychological fiction. I argue that certain early modern texts, of which Lyly's is a strong example, share tropes and motifs that alert us to the presence of the author's interest in the workings of human psychology *avant la lettre* (that is, before the term became widely used in the nineteenth century), and more specifically, of a pessimistic strain of thought that is critical of self-awareness and doubtful of our ability to be guided by reason.

Philosophers, religious figures, and historians have written of the nature of human passions since antiquity, and the inclination has often been quite dark: 'the heart is deceitful above all things', according to Jeremiah 17.9.[6] The Greek imperative to 'know thyself' was born out of a pessimistic paradox; the Greeks were keenly aware that 'self-searching is most commonly the offspring of self-distrust and misgivings'.[7] The Greek view of the self was inherently plagued by doubt, manifested in the amorality and arbitrariness of the gods, and the instability of appearances. Thus, Herodotus and Thucydides present the inherent irony and inconsequence of heroic speeches that appeal to pathos and which cause devastation, and of logical and sound

arguments that fail to convince anyone. These authors viewed the very cosmos, the order of things, as an ironic *mise en abyme* (infinite regression), filled with tragicomic characters who are poor readers of themselves, of each other, of their environments, and of signs from the gods.[8]

We tend to think that from antiquity on, the workings of the mind and heart were relegated to the study of self-governance via religious texts and moral philosophy. But there was also an exploration of the passions (and their relationship to reason) in literary form, or what G. K. Hunter calls 'the rhetoric of the divided mind', which has its origins in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, in his amatory writings (*Amores, Ars Amatoria*, and the *Remedia Amoris*), and in the fictional *Heroides* (letters by languishing or abandoned women), which had a profound impact on European literature from the Middle Ages through to the eighteenth century.[9] In the early modern period, we can make a short list of European fictional texts that are much less interested in plot than in analysis, or the mining of the recesses of the human psyche. In Italian, we can count Boccaccio's *The Elegy of Madonna Fiammetta* (1343–4). In France, we have, for example, the *nouvelles*, or tales, of Marguerite de Navarre in the *Heptaméron* (1558) and Madame de Lafayette's *The Princess of Clèves* (1678). In England during this time, authors like George Pettie, John Lyly, and Robert Greene became increasingly engaged in what Helen Moore describes as 'the exploration of complex emotion and motivation, and the articulation of desire'.[10] Lyly's *The Anatomy of Wit* embodies this concept of the 'divided mind'.

Lyly borrowed and satirized the character of Euphues from another prose text, Roger Ascham's *Schoolmaster* (1570), whose Euphues resembles more the ancestor of Samuel Richardson's Sir Charles Grandison than Lyly's hero. The name signifies 'well-grown', but the later Euphues is a man whose wit is 'like wax, apt to receive any impression' (*Euphues*, p. 33). Lyly's characters are not straightforward at all about their intentions, and they do not live in pursuit of wisdom and goodness, while Ascham's erudite character is:

> apte by goodnes of witte and appliable by readines of will, to learning, having all other qualities
>
> of the minde and partes of the bodie that must an other day serve learning, not troubled,
>
> mangled or halfed, but sounde, whole, full, and hable to do their office.[11]

Perhaps Lyly's characters are on their way to learning how to be 'whole, full or able', wise and judicious, but in the meantime they are only 'troubled, mangled or halfed' as far as their virtue is concerned. Thus, the motif of 'education' from *The Schoolmaster* is distorted into one of desire for pleasure in Lyly's work. At the beginning of *The Anatomy of Wit*, Euphues is 'more inclined to wantonness, than to wisdom' (*Euphues,* p. 42). This initial folly sets the stage for scenes of dissimulation, duplicitous language, and, most of all, the strategies of characters who think they know what they want, but who discover that they no longer desire their love objects as soon as their love is reciprocated. The narrative strategy of euphuism aids in creating ambiguities and delays, prolonging desire from reaching fulfilment, and achieving ignorance rather than attaining knowledge.

The beginning of *The Anatomy of Wit* has a simple plot: in Naples, Euphues goes in search of wisdom (already an ironic contradiction, as Theodore Steinberg points out, since 'Italy was the center of all corruption')[12] but instead falls in love with Lucilla, who is engaged to Euphues's friend Philautus.[13] Lucilla ends in deceiving them both, and each abandons her. Then the two men must repair their friendship and begin anew their search for knowledge, this time, supposedly, without the interference of women and love.[14] The rhetoric used to narrate this text, however, is far more complex. In *The Anatomy of Wit,* irony and didacticism combine long dialogues, debates, and speeches that constitute a dissection of the passions involved in courtly gallantry and what Salzman calls 'a pervasive rhetorical style' with which characters must 'persuade [themselves] to undertake a particular course of action'.[15] Taking the correct course of action is problematized from the start, however, since Euphues, as Steinberg also points out, is introduced on the very first page as a 'young gallant, of more wit than wealth, and yet of more wealth than wisdom'.[16] Euphuism is

characterized by 'see-saw oppositions' and is a style 'rooted in antithetical balance, promoted by the use of schemes or figures of sound, notably *isocolon* (the repetition of clauses of the same length), *parison* (similarly structured sentences) and *paramoion* (sound patterning, e.g. syllabic repetition, assonance and alliteration)'.[17]

Moreover, these linguistic gymnastics, characterized by symmetry and synchronicity, belie a far less organized mode of thought and behaviour. We see this best in scenes that have to do with love and desire. For example, Lucilla's character undergoes a dramatic course of self-deception and self-persuasion in the novel as her affections move from man to man. At the beginning of the novel, she is engaged to Philautus, but she falls in love with Euphues almost at first sight. Later in the text, her affections move on to a third man, Curio. Lucilla's long speech pondering whether to begin a liaison with Euphues — after he and Philautus abruptly leave her house one evening, Euphues being overcome by a secret love for Lucilla — is exemplary of the manner in which wit works both as a way into a character's consciousness as well as a delaying device. In the first part of Lucilla's speech, she is very much aware of the contradictions of her feelings:

> Ah wretched wench Lucilla, how art thou perplexed! What a doubtful fight dost thou feel betwixt faith and fancy, hope and fear, conscience and concupiscence! O my Euphues, little dost thou know the sudden sorrow that I sustain for thy sweet sake, whose wit hath bewitched me, whose rare qualities have deprived me of mine old quality. (*Euphues*, p. 51)

But as her speech continues, she becomes more and more self-deceived:

> Let my father use what speeches he list, I will follow mine own lust. Lust *Lucilla*, what sayest thou? No no, mine own love I should have said, for I am as far from lust, as I am from reason, and as near to love as I am to folly. Then stick to thy determination, and show thy self, what love can do, what love dares doe, what love hath done. Albeit I can no way quench the coals of desire with forgetfulness, yet will I rake them up in the ashes of modesty: Seeing I dare not discover my love for maidenly shamefastness, I will dissemble it till time I have opportunity. (*Euphues*, pp. 53–4)

Here we see the main themes of proto-psychological fiction: self-deception, error (even a Freudian slip!), dissembling, and the confusion of reason and passion where there is no one suitable guide for behaviour. Lucilla's speech travels from defiance against her father and certainty in her passions (even though she did not mean to say it) to a revision and a reconsideration of her feelings. Although the text is a kind of prose romance, Lucilla does not suddenly realize that she is hopelessly in love with Euphues in a transcendent and everlasting present. Instead, she carefully considers and reconsiders her feelings, and how she will represent them to the world.

Lucilla implies that she is treading a thin line between reason and folly; she is not feeling lust (though her parapraxis indicates that she is deceiving herself), nor is it love that she feels. The closest she comes to admitting her passion is when she says she feels something *near* love. Euphuism (that is, contradictory language) reveals in Lucilla a resistance to admitting her love plainly, even privately to herself. Her promises to hide her love in modesty and 'maidenly shamefastness' are negated by her accidental admission of 'lust' at the beginning of the passage, as well as her admission of feeling the heat of the 'coals of desire'. This speech illustrates that her strategy for seducing Euphues consists of dissembling modesty or shame, devices that allow Lucilla to put off the decision of pursuing Euphues's affections openly. At the same time, they provide the author space to tease out the hidden motivations and secret feelings of his character and to allow her to change her mind several times about whether or not she loves Euphues.

When Lucilla addresses her new lover directly, she first pushes him away, then warms to him, and then recoils again: '[t]he favor Lucilla denies with the one hand, she extends with the other'.[18] In one memorable passage, Lucilla tells Euphues:

> In the coldest flint there is hot fire; the bee that hath honey in her mouth hath a sting in her tail; the tree that beareth the sweetest fruit hath a sour sap […] I would not, Euphues, that thou shouldst condemn me of rigour in that I seek to assuage thy folly by reason […] whensoever I shall love any I will not forget thee. In the mean season account me thy friend, for thy foe I will never be. (*Euphues*, pp. 68–9)

The use of braided opposites (cold and hot, honey and sting, sweet and sour, folly and reason, friend and foe) in Lucilla's speech foreshadows her fickle and ultimately cruel behaviour later on toward the men who love her. Here she does not tell Euphues she is in love with him, but rather projects into some possible future that she *may* love him, were she ever to fall in love. Euphues rightly notices how Lucilla denies and then accepts, flirts and then pushes away by responding on a physical level: he 'was brought into a great quandary as it were a cold shivering to hear *this new kind of kindness* — such sweet meat, such sour sauce; such fair words, such faint promises; such hot love, such cold desire; such certain hope, such sudden change' (*Euphues,* p. 69, emphasis added), that he is unable to move or speak.[19] Again, just as Lucilla only feels that she is 'near' love, her kindness is expressed in alternately seductive and unsatisfying halves, causing Euphues to freeze 'like one that had looked on Medusa's head and so had been turned into a stone' (*Euphues,* p. 69).

Thus, *Euphues'*s style is distinctive for pairing opposites, either in paradoxes ('in the coldest flint there is hot fire') or by contrasting two contradictory courses of action ('she fed him indifferently, with hope and despair, reason and affection, life and death'), where there is no clear moral superior within the pairs. According to Steinberg, 'wit is itself of an ambiguous character. It is, in fact, nothing more than that faculty which is capable of acting on, organizing, and reacting to any field of human endeavor'.[20] Similarly, Raymond Stephanson notes, even the 'apparent ambiguities of human action and feeling are referred to a universe that displays its own kinds of ambiguities' in *Euphues,* and these ambiguities signify an ironic 'dramatization of the characters' failure to make the correspondence epistemologically adequate'.[21] Thus, 'wit' used as a narrative strategy makes characters 'revise' their earlier thoughts, behaviours, and feelings of certainty. Ultimately, it is a discourse of frustration whose rumination and thought is presented to the reader through these opposites. I argue here that characters' minds do not necessarily become intelligible through wit as a mode of deliberation, self-analysis, and self-revision, but rather that a *lack* of system

emerges. This emphasis on a kind of randomness that mirrors the irrational human psyche is another striking feature of proto-psychological fiction in the early modern era.[22]

On the level of vocabulary, certain verbs, such as to think, to believe, and to dare, as well as verbs of seeing and seeming, illustrate, in proto-psychological fiction, that one character is attempting to produce knowledge about another, to read herself, or to do both. This is opposed to the Aristotelian model, in which nature divulges itself and its differences to impressionable humans, whose role is a 'systematic understander', as Jonathan Lear calls them.[23] For Aristotle, it is 'by looking out to the world that man's soul maps the structure of the world' and in turn, 'he can also look to the world to see the structure of his soul mapped there'.[24] Thus, the drive to know also means the drive to structure, clarify, and diagram; to look at the world inherently involves attempting to begin to understand and map it, to be part of it, to hold it and make it stable. But in proto-psychological fiction, characters who attempt to look within themselves are usually wrong in some way. They are mistaken about their own knowledge, about a belief, or about someone else's motivations, so that characters engage in infinite reciprocities, moving to and fro, unable to alight on any stable truth. We see, for example, a great emphasis placed on dissimulation, deception, self-deception, and mistaken identities, as well as figures of masks and mirrors, in sixteenth-and seventeenth-century literature.[25]

The political danger of being 'seen' without one's mask on is especially dire in the early modern period. While today popular wisdom dictates that we 'follow our hearts' and not be 'so cerebral' about making decisions, the goal of the early modern courtier was to appear as emotionless, as calm as possible, and as *indifferent*. As conduct books from the early modern period testify, there is an inherent social and political danger in *affettazione*, or affectation, as opposed to *sprezzatura* or studied nonchalance. [26] To reveal strong emotions at court, for example, was a sign of weakness and of the inevitability of downfall. Courtiers were expected to be capable

of controlling and hiding their passions and affecting a sense of calm and virtue (and thus, reason) in all matters. In fact, they risked losing their place in it if they did not dissimulate. Since the rigid political structure of the court controlled most forms of communication, watching (which could be remarked upon less than, say, speaking and writing) becomes a standard trope of early modern literature.[27] At the same time, however, Renaissance authors were able to expose the inner turmoil, the self-deception, and the dissimulation of characters through narrative.

The nature of the essay, as half-literary, half moralistic (in the French sense of manners, not morality) treatise on behaviour and thought, manages to expose the folly of human motivation at the same time as counselling how to enact it. Francis Bacon's essay 'On Simulation and Dissimulation' (1597) lays out three 'great advantages' of concealing the truth.[28] 'First', writes Bacon, it is an advantage 'to lay asleep opposition, and to surprise. For where a man's intentions are published, it is an alarum, to call up all that are against them' (p. 227). Another advantage of dissimulation for Bacon is:

> the better to discover the mind of another. For to him that opens himself, men will hardly show themselves adverse; but will fair let him go on, and turn their freedom of speech to freedom of thought. And therefore it is a good shrewd proverb of the Spaniard, 'Tell a lie and find a truth' (p. 227).

Bacon's essay in many ways resembles the *moraliste* writing of seventeenth-century France, like that of Pascal and La Rochefoucauld, but the element of surprise recalls Lady Macbeth entreating her husband to be less obvious and to act like a snake ready to strike:

> Your face, my thane, is as a book where men
> May read strange matters. To beguile the time,
> Look like the time; bear welcome un your eye,
> Your hand, your tongue: look like the innocent flower,
> But be the serpent under.[29]

To see correctly is the goal, but to be seen correctly is dangerous; thus it is desirable to cover up a lie, sometimes, as Gracian and Bacon recommend, with the truth itself.

Macbeth's vacillation in the first act of Shakespeare's play, his need for certainty, his slips and confidences, all work against him, so that his wife sees the need for affecting a sweet and innocent persona in order to be capable of acting in the subsequent scenes of the play. Similarly, as many critics beginning with A. C. Bradley point out, in *Othello* Shakespeare presents two extremes in Iago and the eponymous hero, the ability to dissimulate the truth and the utter *in*ability to conceal one's passions and beliefs, respectively.[30] Even if the goal is not necessarily as extreme as covering up a murder, as in Shakespeare's plays, Gracian's maxim of telling a lie and finding a truth, and the paradox of discovering what is hidden from view in what is obvious, and vice versa, helps us to understand the overall worldview of proto-psychological fiction. Moreover, a reader needs to be comfortable with contradiction in order to interpret Lyly's particular method of what Scragg calls 'destabilization of meaning' (*Euphues,* p. 11) wherein there is '"nothing" constant "but inconstancy"' (*Euphues,* p. 1).

By contradicting and doubling back on what has just been said, wit mediates between strong passions and the analysis that tempers them, delaying decisions and certainty and acting as a medium for deliberation, analysis, and thought. Moreover, wit functions to keep both relationships and speech unconsummated and open-ended. The contradictions that make up euphuism as a mode of speech make for perplexing and counter-intuitive discourse, through which characters vacillate about and debate contrary claims and desires. When a character does make a decision, it usually is an irrational or impetuous one. For example, Euphues ultimately interprets Lucilla's speech above as a lover would, deceiving himself in the belief that her hedging words indicate she truly loves him (he reacts 'to this new kind of kindness' as a true admission of love). Thus, he actively ignores half of the words she speaks: '[i]f my tongue were able to utter the joys that my heart hath conceived, I fear me

thought I be well beloved, yet I should hardly be believed. Ah my Lucilla, how much am I bound to thee' (*Euphues,* p. 70). Euphues deceives himself in his willingness to disregard Lucilla's ambiguity and, furthermore, to mistake her vagueness for a sign of intimacy. And yet, just as Euphues stands stone still, paused in the act of reflecting on Lucilla's words, their intimacy is diminishing.

Even the narrator pauses his story every now and again in an attempt to explicate what Lucilla thinks, further delaying the action of the story. For example, the narrator states:

> truly I know not whether it be peculiar to that sex to dissemble with those whom they most desire, or whether by craft they have learned outwardly to loath that which inwardly they most love: yet wisely did she cast this in her head, that if she should yield at the first assault, he would think her a light huswife: if she should reject him scornfully a very haggard: minding therefore that he should neither take hold of her promise, neither unkindness in her preciseness, she fed him indifferently, with hope and despair, reason and affection, life and death (*Euphues,* p. 74).

Just as Lucilla mistakes folly for reason earlier in the work, here again, she half-rejects Euphues in order to further draw him in to her. Dissecting each possible reaction that her would-be lover could have to different modes of her behaviour, Lucilla chooses neither to yield nor to scorn, neither promise nor unkindness. And yet, Lucilla's 'careful' hedging leads her, in fact, to treat Euphues rather badly, forcing him to endure the extremes of 'hope and despair', and what feel like choices of 'life and death'. Though the narrator claims that he does not know precisely why Lucilla behaves the way she does,[31] it is also unclear to the reader why Euphues responds so positively to Lucilla's ambivalent — and apparently harmful — speeches, and moreover, why he believes that Lucilla is truly falling in love with him.

Eventually Philautus implores Euphues to abandon Lucilla by attempting to use somewhat more logical discourse:[32]

> Couldst thou […] for the love of a fruitless pleasure violate the league of a faithful friendship;
> didst though weigh more the enticing looks of a lewd wench than the entire love of a loyal
> friend? If thou didst determine with thyself at the first to be false, why didst thou swear to be
> true; if to be true, why art thou false? (*Euphues*, p. 77)

Philautus's series of questions to Euphues provides a contrast to the way in which Lucilla's phrases are constructed with intentionally paired opposites. Instead, he untangles the contradictions and asks logical questions about Euphues's motivations (if you swore to be true, why were you false? Why can you not see clearly the difference between lewdness and loyalty?). Thus, he claims to be baffled by Euphues's lack of reason (ignoring the fact that he himself had been in love with the 'lewd wench' at the beginning of the story). Here, Philautus makes a strong argument that critiques losing sight of the 'true' intimacy of friendship:

> If thou wast minded both falsely and forgedly to deceive me, why didst thou flatter and
> dissemble with me at the first; if to love me, why didst thou flinch at the last? If the sacred
> bands of amity did delight thee, why didst though break them? (*Euphues*, p. 77)

Philautus refuses to participate in the dissembling discourse of what a character in Marguerite de Navarre calls 'vicious' love.[33] Nevertheless, Philautus himself still uses a kind of euphuistic rhetoric, even when he is pointing out its follies. He still cannot speak directly; his words are always nuanced. Not surprisingly, during this time, and even after they have reconciled, the two best friends drift farther and farther apart. It turns out that they are not so similar after all, and since Euphues is in search of wisdom and Philautus is more interested in seeking out the pleasures of the court, they decide to separate amicably soon after the conclusion of the drama with Lucilla.

We can interpret the grammar of euphuistic rhetoric as a device that creates both inroads and barriers between characters, mirroring the structure of the episodes that draw characters close together and then separates them physically. For example, the first time that Euphues and Lucilla meet, when Philautus takes his friend along to Lucilla's house for dinner, '[t]he gentlewoman, whether it were for niceness or for

niggardness of courtesy, gave him such a cold welcome that he repented that he was come' (*Euphues*, p. 47). Yet, her refusal to 'lend him a friendly look' (*Euphues*, p. 47) encourages Euphues to pursue her all the more:

> Euphues, though he perceived her coy nip, seemed not to care for it, but taking her by the hand […] fed of one dish which ever stood before him, the beauty of Lucilla. Here Euphues at the first sight was so kindled with desire that almost he was like to burn to coals (*Euphues*, p. 47– 8).

Again, this turns out to be a typical move of proto-psychological fiction: the best way to attract a desired lover is to feign rejection and dissimulate indifference. Lucilla knows exactly what strategy to use to captivate Euphues. Euphuism as a discourse, though it is highly mannered, works quite well to explore this romantic strategy that centralizes dissimulation.

Like so many other conduct manuals of this era (even the ones Lyly himself mocked), *Euphues* can be read as a veiled political text that warns of the perils of revealing one's true feelings. Those who have all of their mental faculties must necessarily maintain a strict distinction between appearances and reality to succeed in early modern courtly culture. In this way, Gohlke interprets ambiguous language in *The Anatomy of Wit* in a historical-political context:

> [t]he opposition is consistent between faith and fraud, words and works, mouth and mind […]. In a world where words cannot be trusted, where appearances are deceptive, speech serves both as a barrier and protection, simultaneously aggravating and mitigating the problem to which it responds […]. The ambiguity of the euphuistic rhetoric provides a measure of protection in an ambiguous and potentially dangerous environment.[34]

Read in light of early modern ambiguity and Baroque deceptive appearances, games of hide and seek, and the 'potentially dangerous environment' to which Gohlke refers, when a character ceases to maintain this doubleness, this *sprezzatura*, it is often a mark of madness. That Philautus thinks the bonds of male friendship exempt him and Euphues from the social precept of dissimulation is folly, too. Philautus's inability to speak in anything but euphuistic discourse highlights his error.

By putting off decisions, resisting assurance that a certain course of action is the right one — in short, by remaining ambiguous — the narrative swells with representations of characters' failed readings of the world around them. The pattern of hiding and seeking knowledge serves to delay action and certainty, causing characters to, in turns, draw closer together and then farther apart by long speeches that claim contradictory emotions. In this way, action is almost always inhibited and intimacy almost always fails in *Euphues*. Rather than helping characters find meaning and wisdom, wit at the beginning of the text is an inhibiting force that causes them to over-deliberate their choices and to become lost in rhetoric. *Euphues'*s circular rhetoric and over-analysis underline a kind of fear and uncertainty about the self and the future. It is a rather dark view of human nature, but one that is typical of proto-psychological fiction in the early modern period. *The Anatomy of Wit*, then, comprises an important step in the creation of Elizabethan psychology. Moreover, since Lyly's prose texts clearly influenced Shakespeare's comedies, reading *Euphues* as a work of proto-psychological fiction side by side with these works may help shed more light on the portrayal of ambiguity, self-deception, and irony in the Bard's plays.

# Notes

[1] As Julia Chamard-Bergeron points out, the term 'psychology' emerged in the sixteenth century in certain Protestant universities ('Le moyen d'etre soi: Psychologie morale du roman classique' [unpublished dissertation, University of Chicago, 2013], p. 2). Chamard-Bergeron reports that the word first appeared in a French dictionary in 1704. According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, the earliest usage of 'psychology', in English, meaning the study of the soul, appeared in 1654 in Nicholas Culperer's *New Method of Physick* ('psychology, n.'. in *OED Online* [Oxford: Oxford University Press, September 2015] [accessed 16 October 2015]).

[2] In the sense of Ian Watt's now-controversial but still influential *Rise of the Novel: Studies in Defoe, Richardson, and Fielding* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2001).

[3] For example, John Dover Wilson, *John Lyly* (Cambridge: Macmillan and Bowes, 1905) retrieved from <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/22525/22525-h/22525-h.htm#CHAPTER_II> [Last accessed 15 October 2015], claims that 'we may truthfully say that his *Euphues and his England* is the psychological novel in germ' (p. 82). Following Madelon Gohlke's 'Reading "Euphues"', *Criticism*, 19.2 (1977), 105–117, I am also interested in what she calls 'the effects characteristic of [Lyly's] style' (p. 103), even though Gohlke does not use the term 'psychological'. We might also recall Northrop Frye's distinction in the *Anatomy of Criticism* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2000), especially pp. 308–12, between the realistic novel as a medium that diagnoses social diseases, and the anatomy, which Frye distinguishes as being concerned with dissection, analysis, and the diagnosis of intellectual diseases rather than social ones. Frye describes Robert Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy*, for example, as a 'creative treatment of exhaustive erudition' (p. 311). The same can be said of Lyly's work.

[4] John Lyly, *The Anatomy of Wit* and *Euphues and His England*, ed. by Leah Scragg (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 2003). All citations from this text will be made in in-line references from this edition.

[5] 'wit, n.' in *OED Online* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, September 2015) [accessed 16 October 2015]. Though the *Oxford English Dictionary* does not ascribe this meaning to Lyly's text (which falls under 'quickness of intellect'), *Euphues* actually embodies both definitions.

[6] Jeremiah 17.9, *King James Version*.

[7] A. O. Lovejoy, *Reflections on Human Nature* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1964), p. 1.

[8] A *mise en abyme*, of course, is a term coined by André Gide to describe the effect of 'infinite regression'. See J. A. Cuddon, *Penguin Dictionary of Literary Terms and Literary Theory* (London: Penguin, 1992), p. 513.

[9] G. K. Hunter, *English Drama 1586–1642: The Age of Shakespeare* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), p. 147. As both Leah Scragg, the editor of the modern-spelling edition of the *Euphues* books, and Jonathan Bate (*Shakespeare and Ovid* [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994]) point out, much of Lyly's discourse on the passions derives from Classical sources. For example, the section entitled 'A Cooling Card for Philautus and all Fond Lovers' (*Euphues*, p. 88) is an adaptation of Ovid's *Remedia Amoris.* The Renaissance paradigm of the erotic, and the motivations behind and manifestations of desire, are inextricably linked to Ovid and the Ovidian tale. Ovid's mythological poems, treatises, and fictional letters served as models for medieval and Renaissance writers to recreate the motifs of desire, extreme emotion, and the relationship between language and feeling in their own poetry, drama, novellas, prose romances, and early novels. The first book-length study of the influence of *The Metamorphoses* on early

modern literature is Leonard Barkan's *The Gods Made Flesh: Metamorphosis and the Pursuit of Paganism* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986). As Cora Fox has noted more recently, in delineating the influence of Ovid's works on Elizabethan England, 'Ovidianism served as a code for emotional expression in the period, and it participated in scripting not just private experiences of the self but public uses of emotional rhetoric' (*Ovid and the Politics of Emotion in Elizabethan England* [New York: Palgrave, 2009], p. 2). Fox's study is part of a growing number of scholarly works dedicated to tracing Ovid's influence — which includes the influence of a more-analytically minded prose — in Elizabethan, Jacobean, and Carolingian England. See also Bate and Helen Moore, 'Elizabethan Fiction and Ovid's *Heroide*', *Translation & Literature* 9.1 (2000), 40–64, both of which I cite later in this article.

[10] Helen Moore, p. 41.

[11] Quoted in J. J. Jusserand, *The English Novel in the time of Shakespeare,* trans. by Elizabeth Lee (New York: AMS Press, 1965), p. 127.

[12] Theodore Steinberg, 'The Anatomy of *Euphues*', *SEL* 17 (1977), 27–38 (p. 30).

[13] Euphuism, as Henry Morley tells us, evolved when '[t]he fashion of ingenious talk had been brought home to England by the young men traveling in Italy to finish their education […]. Whatever they said must display wit or culture, both at once if possible' (Henry Morley and William Hall Griffin, *English Writers: An Attempt toward a History of English Literature*, 11 vols [London, Paris and Melbourne: Cassel & Company, 1887-95], VIII [1892], pp. 306–7). For a full development of Lyly's style, see Paul Salzman's *English Prose Fiction 1558–1700, A Critical History* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985).

[14] Though, of course, as Bate points out, 'the young man has to learn to reject erotic desire and return to the academy (*Love's Labour's Lost* is a brilliant reversal of this movement), but the book's stylistic prodigality is such that austerity doesn't really stand a chance' (*Shakespeare and Ovid,* p. 33).

[15] Paul Salzman *English Prose Fiction 1558–1700, A Critical History* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985), p. 39.

[16] Theodore Steinberg, p. 32.

[17] Theodore Steinberg, p. 3.

[18] Madelon Gohlke, p. 104.

[19] The narrator's contrasting of sweet and sour anticipate Touchtone's bawdy mockery of Orlando's verses to Rosalind in *As You Like It*: 'Sweetest nut hath sourest rind, / Such a nut is Rosalind. / He that sweetest rose will find / Must find love's prick — and Rosalind' (*As You Like* It, III. 2. 106–9) in The Arden Shakespeare edition, ed. by Juliet Dusinberre (London: Thomson Learning, 2006). Catherine Bates ('"A Large Occasion of Discourse" John Lyly and the Art of Civil Conversation', *The Review of English Studies*, New Series, Vol. 42, [1991], 469–486) writes that '[t]hough Shakespeare did not hesitate to parody euphuism's endless generation of phrases, he could not have written his own witty love-debates — those between Rosaline and Berowne, then Beatrice and Benedick — without the example of Lyly' (p. 33).

[20] Theodore Steinberg, p. 33.

[21] Raymond Stephanson, 'John Lyly's Prose Fiction: Irony, Humor and Anti-Humanism,' *English Literary Renaissance* 11.1 (1981), 3–21 (pp. 6–8).

[22] Randomness was also a favorite topic for Shakespeare. For example, as John Peck and Martin Coyle point out in *A Brief History of English Literature* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), chance brings

Antonio's ship close enough to Prospero's island in *The Tempest* that he can control the weather to conjure up the storm. '[T]he play presents its emphasis on spectacle: how we arrange life into patterns, giving it shape and form, but how, by doing so, we become, paradoxically, even more aware of the randomness of life, its lack of pattern' (p. 71). *The Tempest* thus acts as a mirror for the social uncertainty erupting from the transition from Elizabethan to Jacobean England. Shakespeare 'offers a sense of the deeper movements of change as the sixteenth century yields to the seventeenth […] in dealing with the immediate political anxieties of the Elizabethans' (p. 71). At the same time, 'his plays offer a sense of the moment at which the medieval world, which in retrospect can seem manageable and comprehensible, yields to the baffling complexity of the modern world, with its new impulses and priorities' (p. 71). In a very different way, John D. Lyons (in 'From Fortune to Randomness in Seventeenth-Century Literature,' *French Studies*, Vol. LXV, No. 2 [2011], 156–173) writes about chance, fortune, and randomness in sixteenth and seventeenth century France as a literary concern that mirrors philosophical and religious ideas. Lyons points out that '[m]uch Stoic writing can have the effect of accentuating the apparent ubiquity of accidents, shipwrecks, conflagrations, and sudden death' and '[t]o teach the lesson of resignation and to urge their followers to [practice] the mastery of imagination and passions, neo-Stoics needed to model the serene acceptance of the wise man faced with calamity and contingent events' (p. 158). We see the effects of neo-Stoicism in 'the rise of skeptical thought generally called libertinage or 'free-thought', which was endowed with a great deal of energy by Montaigne's *Essais*, a manual for [Skeptics] and free-thinkers for many decades after the book's publication in 1580' (p. 158). Montaigne's essays served to show that much of life is ruled by randomness, from, as Lyons points out, our changing tastes and opinions, to the fact that governmental, military, and judicial policies are 'the result of chance and subject to it' (p. 159).

[23] Jonathan Lear, *Aristotle: The Desire to Understand* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), p. 8.

[24] Jonathan Lear, p. 8. We can contrast Aristotle on knowledge from the *Metaphysics* with a quotation from Pascal's *Pensées,* based on a fragment from Montaigne, another writer of essays whose pessimistic worldview doubts the human capacity for real self-knowledge and insight. For Aristotle:

> [a]ll men by nature desire to know. An indication of this is the delight we take in our senses; for even apart from their usefulness they are loved for themselves; and above all others the sense of sight. For not only with a view to action, but even when we are not going to do anything, we prefer seeing (one might say) to everything else. The reason is that this, most of all the senses, makes us know and brings to light many differences between things. (Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, trans. by W. D. Ross, in *The Basic Works of Aristotle*, ed. by Richard McKeon [New York: Random House, 1941], p. 689.)

On the other hand, for the French moralists:

> Man is nothing but a subject full of natural error that cannot be eradicated except through grace. Nothing shows him the truth, everything deceives him. The two principles of truth, reason and the senses, are not only both not genuine, but are engaged in mutual deception. The senses deceive reason through false appearances, and, just as they trick the soul, they are tricked by it in their turn: it takes its revenge. The senses are disturbed by passions, which produce false impressions. They both compete in lies and deception. (Blaise Pascal, *Pensées*, trans. by A. J. Krailsheimer [London and New York: Penguin Books, 1995], pp. 12–3)

[25] In classical rhetorical terms, *dissimulatio* indicates concealing the truth, while its opposite, *simulatio*, requires pretending something that is not true. Early modern literature was particularly interested in the interplay of the two.

[26] The two most famous courtly guides to governance are Castiglione's *Il Cortegiano* (1528), which introduces the idea of *sprezzatura* and Nicolas Faret's *L'honneste home, ou, l'art de plaire à la court* (1630), treatises which make clear that the courtier must strictly control his true feelings. Also see Jon R. Snyder, *Dissimulation and the Culture of Secrecy in Early Modern Europe* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009).

[27] According to André Aciman, being too 'legible' poses a danger: 'the most basic assumption in *cryptomania* is that everyone either is or could easily become an opponent, an *adversaire*. The need to penetrate faces and to sound others was so broadcast in the sixteenth and seventeenth century that its popularity ultimately bespeaks […] an epistemologic malaise functioning at the heart of Modern social, political, courtly, religious, personal, and aesthetic life' ('L'Esprit de pénétration: Psyche and Insight', in *L'Esprit en France au XVIIe siècle*, ed. by François Lagarde, [Paris: *Papers on French Seventeenth-Century Literature*, 1997], p. 99).

[28] Francis Bacon, *The History of the Reign of King Henry VII and Selected Works*, ed. by Brian Vickers (Cambridge, New York, and Melbourne: Cambridge University Press, 1998), p. 227. All citations from this text will be made in in-line references from this edition. Bacon also outlines three disadvantages of dissimulation in order to maintain a balanced view.

[29] William Shakespeare, *Macbeth*, I. 5. 61–5. ed. Barbara A. Mowat (New York: Washington Square Press/Folger Shakespeare Library, 1992).

[30] See A. C. Bradley's *Shakespearean Tragedy* (New York: Macmillan, 1904), retrieved from <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/16966/16966-h/16966-h.htm> [Last accessed 16 October 2015].

[31] This is a rhetorical move typical of early modern narrators; we also see it in Marguerite and Lafayette.

[32] The trope of 'the two friends,' a popular theme for Renaissance writers (such as Boccaccio's tale of Gisippus and Titus in *The Decameron*, X:8), attempted to prove that male friendship was morally superior to heterosexual liaisons, and that two men could be spiritually and intellectually joined better than any male-female couple. For example, when Euphues looks for a friend, he hopes to find 'the express image of mine own person' and 'at all times another I' (p. 44). The device of the two friends highlights two opposed kinds of discourse; here we see Philautus distinguishing between the duplicitous discourse of heterosexual love and the reasonable, logical nature of the discourse between friends. But of course, his distinctions are not nearly as clear-cut as he believes since he also uses euphuistic rhetoric, turning the device of the two friends on its head.

[33] The word 'vicious' appears many times through the work, usually in reference to women. In the seventieth *nouvelle* of the *Heptaméron,* however, Parlamente, who is often interpreted as the voice of Marguerite, claims that '[w]hether a woman loves virtuously or viciously, her honor is alike doubted, because men judge only from appearances' (Marguerite de Navarre, *Heptameron of Margaret, Queen of Navarre*, trans. by Walter K. Kelly [Paris: Société des Bibliophiles Français, 1853] retrieved from <http://digital.library.upenn.edu/women/navarre/heptameron/heptameron.html> [Last accessed 16 October 2015]).

[34] Madelon Gohlke, p. 106.