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"Some secret scourge which shall by her come unto England": Ireland and Incivility in Spenser

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I

This essay is an attempt to perceive and examine Spenser's thought about Ireland as a totality. My intention is to approach in two complementary ways the question of the meaning of Ireland in Spenser's work. In that work Ireland constitutes a radical alterity – a challenging otherness – to Spenser's consciousness, and I propose to examine the ways that alterity is registered in his writings, and the strategies they use to encounter and contain it. Ireland is a prime site of difficulty and complexity, both in its stubborn recalcitrant self, and in the dilemmas to which it gives rise in those who must have to do with it. The essay will focus particularly on two topics: first, on Spenser's various images of incivility in human behaviour and way of life, particularly those which are explicitly named as Irish, and his associated representations of the Irish landscape or territory; and second, on the significance of Spenser's use of dialogue form in *A View of the Present State of Ireland*.

My method will be to treat Spenser's writing as the site of a single complex of thought where Ireland and the Irish are concerned, differently expressed – and, indeed, variously edited and suppressed – in the poetry and the *View*, and riven by internal contradictions, but richly repaying a comparative approach seeking to comprehend the continuity of

symbolic representations with social behaviour. I shall approach these writings without recognizing the conventionally observed split between Spenser's political ideology and actions on the one hand, and his cultural practice on the other – that is, between his policy proposal for the better government of Ireland, made by the Clerk to the Council of Munster and New English planter, in the form of a prose dialogue, and his courtly epic and pastoral verse. It is not that I intend to ignore the generic conventions which assuredly do differentiate these works. But it is true that until very recently analysts of the two kinds of text have continued to grant the force of a timeless and absolute division to a combined privileging of Art above Life and separation of the two originating in the nineteenth century and which would have been quite foreign to Spenser himself and to his contemporaries. As a result a division of labour was instituted in approaching the problems raised by the writings. It oversimplifies this situation only slightly to describe it as follows: historians cleaving to the *View* as to a clear window on matters of fact and politics, literary critics preserving the imaginative structures of *The Faerie Queene* supposedly immune from the infection of mere ideology, each politely acknowledging the notional integrity of the other domain, a state of affairs resulting in an impoverishment of both kinds of discussion. The work in recent years of historians such as Nicholas Canny and Ciarán Brady, and of literary scholars such as David Norbrook and Stephen Greenblatt, has greatly improved upon the earlier situation. Brady's 1986 essay on the *View*, for example, acknowledges the internal contradictions which beset it and shows a lively awareness of the necessity to pay some attention, at least, to the part played by the form of that text in determining its meaning.[1] On the one hand, texts such as the *View*, and indeed much less obviously polished and sophisticated writings, are obliged to partake just as much as does tragedy or pastoral of the communicative resources of the period – the contemporary forms of rhetoric, fictionality, and symbol. In the specific case of the *View*, the textual fact of its dialogue form has still not been sufficiently attended to; it is highly significant that for his explanation of the pitfalls of Irish government Spenser deliberately chose a genre with such strong classical and humanist associations of civility and urbane philosphical reflection. On the other hand, no magic circle exists which would cut off *The Faerie Queene* from implication in an ideological position among the discursive products of the 1590s. As Lauro Martines remarks in his discussion of the culture of the Italian city-states, there is "no escape from the world, even in

imagined structures''.[2] The myth of the gentle poet found perhaps its most eloquent formulation in Yeats's celebrated hypothesis of the corruption, allegedly evident in the *View*, of Spenser's imagination by his role as colonial official. But the work of Greenblatt and Norbrook has shown clearly that this myth – the comfortable notion of a dreamy creature of the imagination, discussable in a sphere set apart from the iron insistences of the *View* – cannot be sustained.[3] Power and poetry are bound up together, as Hazlitt pointed out; and far from resisting that relation, or occasionally falling back into it in the manner of one giving in to a temptation, Spenser constantly and expressly gestures towards a given, ideological, truth outside the poetic work.

II

Before examining Spenser's accounts of Irish incivility, it is perhaps necessary to remark that he did not, of course, construct these images purely in an empirical way – out of his own actual participation in the intensive phase of Elizabethan colonization in Ireland in the 1580s and 1590s. In his writing there is a conjunction of two sets of inherited stock images with sixteenth-century Munster actuality in all its complexity. What were these two sets of images – one specific to the Irish, one general? Specifically, a large stock of fixed representations of the Irish already existed, constructed during the centuries-long interaction of prejudice and experience in the power relations of Irish and English. It will not be appropriate here to detail the features of these stereotypes, freshly deployed from standard sources like Giraldus Cambrensis by Elizabethan writers such as Camden, a specific influence on Spenser; Joseph Leerssen's recent *Mere Irish and Fíor-Ghael* provides a very full account of the matter.[4] But more generally, Spenser's images of the Irish were also most assuredly formed by his intellectual and emotional familiarity with the Renaissance Christian typology of the wildness outside civil society. This set of representations has been well described by Hayden White, and one may form an impression of its interweaving with and modification by actual colonial activities by bringing general theoretical discussions such as White's into relation with specific case-histories of the various colonial fields, such as D. B. Quinn's on the Irish, James Muldoon's on the North American Indians, Peter Hulme's on the Caribbean, and Anthony Pagden's analysis of Spanish interpretations of South American indigenes in the context of their rule over them.[5] In spite

of the major actual differences between these various places and people, their colonizing interpreters came to them equipped with more or less the same model of civility *versus* barbarity, formed in the tradition of European classical and Christian thought.

In the discussion which follows I shall be mainly considering Spenser's images specifically of the "wild", or native, Irish, and paying less attention to his attacks on the Old English, the largely Catholic descendants of earlier English arrivals, of whose part-assimilation to the native culture he so strongly disapproved. One should, however, remark Spenser's evident intention to blur for his mainland readers the actual distinctions between the two groups, and his extensive use of the *topos* of the degeneration of the Old English to tar both with the same brush. The merging of the two kinds of figure – wild man by origin, and degenerate – is, as we shall see, interestingly evident on occasion in *The Faerie Queene*.[6]

It will be useful to pause on White's description of the complex of Renaissance beliefs about barbarians and Wild Men, figures distinguishable, but nevertheless often merged. He describes the Wild Man – believed to dwell on the fringes of civil society, in mountain wastes, forests and caves – as a figure primarily inspiring fear and disgust, in two different ways:

> the Wild Men represented a threat to the individual, both as nemesis and as a possible destiny, both as enemy and as representative of a condition into which an individual man, having fallen out of grace or having been driven from his city, might degenerate.[7]

The Wild Man was often portrayed as dumb or a meaningless babbler, thus as lacking the most essential qualification for civility, language. Further, existing outside the city, the necessary locus for the achievement of civility or full human function, both barbarians and Wild Men were conceived, following classical and medieval writers, as being enslaved to nature and unable to control their passions; they were characterized as

> mobile, shifting, confused, chaotic . . . incapable of sedentary existence, of self-discipline, and of sustained labour . . .[8]

Wildness was understood rather as a lack, a failure to realize full human potentiality, than as a positive force; the Wild Man represents the deeply

threatening image of the man outside social control, "the man in whom the libidinal impulses have gained full ascendancy". White finds that a transformation of this strongly negative representation into a positive image connoting desirable freedom and natural innocence, a proto-Noble Savage figure, takes place in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, and indeed, following Richard Bernheimer's study of wildness as a medieval literary topic, points to an instance in Spenser himself of such a gentle savage. As we shall see, however, it is negative and deeply anxious and hostile versions of "salvage" men which in fact predominate in Spenser's work; the benign Wild Man is fairly exceptional.[9] In most cases his subhuman otherness is a matter for detestation and fear. But this is not a simple matter: bearing in mind the prevailing fixed convictions about the incivility of those without a native urban culture, still in Spenser's attitude to Ireland and the Irish there is a marked uncertainty of perspective, a series of complex contradictions and tensions. I shall argue in the second section of this essay that these tensions are also manifest in the dialogical form of the *View*, in ways which have not been adequately explored.

Let us consider the range of Spenser's representations of Wild Man figures in his work and investigate the relation of these figures to his reaction of disgust at and hostility chiefly towards the native Irish. Both the *View* and *The Faerie Queene* construct descriptions of barbarous persons and groups, who are *either* completely incapable of civility, *or* ultimately redeemable, but not yet rendered civil by submission to good order. Both texts explore in a deeply troubled manner the tension beween these two versions of "salvage" men and nations; and in both, though the question is not absolutely decided, there is a strong tendency to conclude that civility cannot be easily or promptly learned, and that only the eradication of such barbarous creatures will answer. Discussing the ideology of colonization, Nicholas Canny indentifies in Elizabethan colonial discussions at large a progressive hardening of the assumption that on the nature either of the Gaelic Irish or the American Indian, "nurture will never stick", and that extirpation, or at the very least bloody campaigns of reduction, is the right approach.[10] The more optimistic view, that such peoples *were* capable of becoming civil and, subsequently, Christian subjects, was to be found in Elizabethan Ireland, but rather among the old English, who were in Spenser's eyes themselves contaminated by their too complete participation in Irish culture.[11] Nevertheless, it is striking that there are moments, especially in *The Faerie Queene*, when he does

invent some "salvage wights" about whose development to fully human status he can express a sense of possibility.

An example of such moments is the saving of Una in Book I.vi from Sansloy, who is about to rape her, by a "salvage nation", who, though they look repulsive – "a rude, misshapen, monstrous rablement" – do comfort and pity her. Una is at first afraid to commit "her single person to their barbarous truth" but then recognizes their basically benign nature. They honour her, crown her and try to worship her (I.vi.11ff.). So remote are they from Christian undertanding that when she discourages them from this they turn instead to adoring her donkey. This has its parallel in the *View*, in the inadequate grasp of Christianity attributed to the Catholic Irish:

> . . . the most of the Irish are so far from understanding of the popish religion as they are of the protestants' profession. (*View*, p. 161)

We may discern here the horrified reactions of Protestant Englishmen to the Gaelic Irish practice of Catholicism – more outlandish and distasteful even than the "normal", Anglicized version prevailing in the Pale.[12] The episode of Una's faun and satyr rescuers suggests, however, that natural man *can* live well even in his unregenerate state (the salvage nation's behaviour compares favourably with that of the rapacious Sansloy), and further that the forest can be made the setting for religious enlightenment, at least to some degree. In the *View*, too, though very rarely, there are moments of optimism, when it is felt that the mere Irish can be drawn from "the former rudeness in which they were bred" by the wonderful power of learning which "can soften and temper the most stern and salvage nature" (p. 159). In *The Faerie Queene*, VI.iv.4ff., there is another benign "salvage man" who saves the lady Serena and her inadequate knight Calepine from the evil Turpine. He is "naked, without needful vestiments", has no armour or knightly weapons, and lacks articulate language. He is also immune to the fear of attack, and magically invulnerable. Serena at first fears this natural creature, but unnecessarily, because as it turns out he respects and admires her – out of an innate goodness, it is explained. He lives deep in the forest, without roof or bedding, and neither tills the soil, nor eats any meat, living on "the frutes of the forrest", which makes him a "bad Stuard" in the narrator's eyes. This "salvage man" in VI is, however, different from those in I, in that it is stressed that he is a degenerate, someone who has once

had, but has lost, the attributes of civility, rather than an ineffable primitive. It is odd and interesting that Spenser should treat such a character so favourably; when the characteristics used to describe him turn up again in the *View*, they have invariably a sharply negative tone. It has not been sufficiently noticed that this "salvage man" is in fact a compound of characteristics which are distributed, in the *View*, between Gaelic Irish and Old English. The latter are in Spenser's eyes examples of degeneracy: he makes the English spokesman Eudoxus express sorrowing wonder that they can have sunk into such a "Lethargie" that they have "even forgotten their English names" (p. 115). Yet the "gently born" salvage man in *The Faerie Queene* VI who has lost not only his name but even the faculty of using human language is presented as benign, revealing the capacity of Spenser's consciously fictive work to idealize characteristics which could not on the literal level be approved: a process we shall encounter again in discussing the *Mutabilitie Cantos*.

Failure to plough, sow, or eat red meat, are characteristics attributed in the *View* to the Irish, who are said to live on "white meats" (curds) and milk; and the *View* also inveighs famously against the "barbarous" use of their mantles as bedding and shelter by the Irish rebels and herdsmen (pp. 51-2). These points loom large in Spenser's attack on Gaelic Irish culture. Of course the practice of "booleying" or transhumance – seasonal movement between lower and higher pastures – and the strongly pastoral character of Irish agriculture in general drew a hostile reaction from many of the Elizabethan colonists.[13] Such a shifting population with its large numbers of apparently "idle" cowherds and "horseboys", made in Spenser's and other English eyes for insecurity and offered cover to the warrior class of remoter districts. (We may recall White's characterization of the Wild Man as unstable, chaotic, shifting, and incapable of sedentary life.) The pastoral way of life can evidently figure as an ideal only within the conventions of poetry; the actual Irish cattle-based version posed too many problems. (In *The Faerie Queene* VI.x.35 and 37 Spenser revealingly derives "coward" from "cowherd".) The booleying reminded the English planters and officials of central Asian and other barbarian nomadic practices, usually labelled "Scythian". So

> unto the plough therefore are all those loose stocaghs and horseboys to be driven, and made to employ that ableness of body which they were wonte to use to theft and villainy henceforth to labour and husbandry . . . (*View*, p. 157)

Throughout the *View* there is a set of antitheses between ideas of looseness, wildness, wandering, illicit liberty, on the one hand, and of control, order, and repression on the other: between the Irish, who "swerve", "straggle", "miche in corners", "break forth", "walk disorderly", are "loose", "wandering", "idly roguing", "loitering", and the policy to be used to "let them have the bitterness of martial law", to have them "shortly to be brought in by the ears", "tythed and bound" to a particular place, "particularly entered and set down in the tything books", and so forth.[14] Like the wild villainous characters in *The Faerie Queene*, the Irish are a "rebellious rout of loose people . . . infesting the woods and spoiling the good subject".[15]

Turning now from the inhabitants to the actual terrain of Ireland, one finds that in Spenser it also wears two faces. Sometimes its fertility and potential for development are praised, in the manner of contemporary advertisements for planters such as that of Robert Payne, but more forceful by far is its negative face: it is mostly composed of dark and impenetrable forests, mountains and bogs, threatening places among which a savage and implacable enemy fleetingly appears and disappears; as the *View* has it:

> he is a flying enemy, hiding himself in woods and bogs, from where he will not draw forth but into some strait passage or perilous ford where he knows the army must needs pass, there he will lie in wait . . . (*View*, p. 98)

Irenius outlines a "plot" for the rendering harmless of this landscape, by shutting down and containing it in "streight passages and strong enclosures". The forests are to be removed:

> first I wish that order were taken for the cutting down and opening of all paces through woods, so that a wide space of a hundred yards might be laid open in every of them for the safety of travellers . . . (*View*, p. 164)

He plans to have "bridges built" on all the rivers, and "all the fords marred and spilt so that none might pass any other ways but by those bridges"; and to fortify all the "passages between two Bogs". He would set a governor at Athlone (guarding the main route out of Connacht) "upon the skirts of that unquiet country"; and ultimately the land is to

be "enclosed and well fenced" (pp. 164, 83). As Michael McCarthy-Morrogh shows in his study of the Munster plantation, travel outside towns in this period was indeed made sufficiently difficult by the lack of bridges and roads, even without the additional risk of hostile encounters.[16]

To the seething violence of this countryside in Spenser's account of it, an equal violence of repression must be brought: a relentless winter pursuit of the enemy which will reduce him to starvation and therefore to submission:

> It is not with Ireland as with other countries, where the wars flame most in summer, and the helmets glister brightest in the fair sunshine, but in Ireland the winter yieldeth best services, for then the trees are bare and naked, which use both to clothe and hide the kern, the ground is cold and wet which useth to be his bedding, the air is sharp and bitter to blow through his naked sides and legs, the kine are barren and without milk which useth to be his onely food; neither if he kill them, then will they yield him flesh, nor if he keep them will they give him food, besides then being all in calf, for the most part they will through much chasing and driving, cast all their calves and lose all their milk which should relieve him the next summer after. (*View*, pp. 100-1)

It will be recalled that throughout *The Faerie Queene*, brightly shining armour and weaponry are the signs of the good knight's active virtue.[17] But in the *View* the description of such fit and proper war accoutrements is merely an instant of beauty and pleasure; the place where "the wars flame most in summer and the helmets glister brightest in the fair sunshine" is somewhere else, the shining moment of chivalric clarity is quickly past, and the inhuman plan of hunting down the kerns like their cattle takes its place. Yet the harshness of their fate is not spared in the language: "the air is sharp and bitter to blow through his naked sides". The paragraph yokes together the two moments, of glamour and ruthlessness, almost casually. Here again is the tension between the rebel as enemy and as victim; it is not permitted to amount to a contradiction. But just as in *The Faerie Queene* the possible goodness of natural man is sometimes entertained, so the *View* has some moments in which pity for the Irish does seem to supplant rage, fear and disgust. Alienation from them and the intense sense of their otherness are replaced by a momentarily vivid awareness of them as kindred flesh. Such moments occur particularly in the well-known passages in which Irenius recounts his memories of the famine following the Desmond Rebellion in the 1580s. He grants that there may actually be some Irish – "old men, women, children and hinds" – who did not partake in the rising, and who when they are turned away by the rebels, "though policy would turn them back again . . . yet in a pitiful commiseration I would wish them to be received" (p. 102). "A pitiful commiseration" presumes the sense of a common humanity with the object of pity, the turning in fact of such people into feeling subjects and thus creatures not absolutely other. After a year and a half of rebellion, says Irenius,

> they were brought to such wretchedness, as that any stony heart would have rued the same. Out of every corner of the woods and glens they came creeping forth upon their hands, for their legs could not bear them. They looked anatomies of death, they spake like ghosts crying out of their graves, they did eat the dead carrions, happy where they could find them, yea and one another soon after in so much as the very carcasses they spared not to scrape out of their graves . . . (*View*, p. 104)

"Any stony heart would have rued the same"; but the memory of such "rue" does not prevent Irenius' advocacy now of a scorched-earth policy, which is clearly intended to produce the same effects. Just a little earlier in the dialogue, he has assured Eudoxus that "one winter's well following" of the kern "will so pluck him on his knees that he will never be able to stand up again".

Finally, let us look at the most clearly positive aspect of Spenser's representations of Ireland: the landscape idealized, as it is sometimes rendered in *The Faerie Queene*. In the poem, as opposed to the dialogue, though there sometimes *are* incursions from the wilds upon the settled subjects – for instance in the attack on the house of Alma in II.ix – more usually the Irish countryside is appropriated benignly, made to function in a mythopoeic process. Such passages reconstruct it as an ideal territory, to which the beauty of perfect order is imputed by the genial personification of Munster mountains and streams. The river-marriage episode in IV.xi uses the attendance of the Irish rivers in a general British procession to prefigure optimistically the acquiescence, in fact withheld, of the inhabitants in the conquest and plantation. More interesting is the

deployment of topography in the Mutabilitie Cantos at the end of the poem, because there a resistance to any such facile resolution is registered. The main topic of the Cantos is the rebellion of Mutabilitie against Jove and its containment by decree alone; there is also a secondary episode, the Faunus-Diana story (vi.38-55), and both are of importance to this discussion.

In this minor tale, which is enclosed by the major one, Faunus is a wood-god, who hides, like the Irish rebels, in a thicket; but unlike them he does it for a voyeur's reason. Diana and her attendants haul him out "into the open light", and consider castrating him, but decide against it, because it is necessary that wood-gods should continue to exist as a species; instead they dress him in animal-skins and hunt him to exhaustion. All of this is of course impeccably Ovidian, but to the reader of the *View* it cannot fail to have also strong echoes of Irenius' policy programme for Ireland. At the end of the episode Diana's anger causes her to curse the whole district of "faire forests" and "richest champaign", to the effect

> . . . that Wolves where she was wont to space,
> Should harbour'd be, and all those Woods deface,
> And Thieves should rob and spoile that Coast around.
> Since which, those Woods, and all that goodly Chase,
> Doth to this day with Wolves and Thieves abound:
> Which too-too true that lands in-dwellers since have found.
> (VII.vi.44-5)

The whole story might be read as a minor mythic transformation of Irish actuality in the 1590s, a dream re-enactment with the harm removed and a magical or metaphysical reason provided for the infestation of the Munster surroundings with dread and horror; a revision of history which eliminates the "anatomies of death". One might also notice that by this explanation, the Irish landscape becomes not the *original* haunt of barbarity and incivility, but a place which has degenerated from a former state of order, and, we may conclude, on those grounds a less hopeless place. This relinquishing of the actual for a passage to a metaphysical level undermines the general sense of a retreat from active intervention in the world which has often been noticed about the latter part of *The Faerie Queene*.

As Brady puts it:

> The principal subject [in Book VI and the Mutabilitie Cantos] is the means by which the good man may come to terms with and make his peace in a world he cannot control.[18]

As has often been pointed out, the rebellion of Mutabilitie against Jove is also full of echoes of Spenser's explicitly Irish discussions. Mutabilitie is a "rebel", of the stock of the Titans, whose rule was usurped, in Greek mythology, by Jove. She is "bred of that bad seed"; she intends, as Jove says, to thrust

> . . . our selves from heavens high Empire,
> If that her might were match to her desire. (VII.vi.21)

Mutabilitie, for her part, argues that she represents the rightful succession. Jove insists that the power is his for two reasons: the right of conquest and "the eternall doome of Fates decree" (VII.vi.33). The insistence on the rights of conquest is one frequently resorted to by Elizabethan writers on Ireland as part of a legalistic justification of English rule; the other reason Jove gives, the decree of fate, might be interpreted both as a characteristically Protestant invocation of divine providence, and as a pragmatic, not to say cynical, argument. The character and role of Mutabilitie in the poem certainly have much in common with Spenser's characterization of the Irish of various complexions: she shows incurable restlessness and a recalcitrance to reforming efforts, and is above all a force for disturbance in the world. Her defence is to appeal over the head of Jove to a higher court, that of Nature; a gesture which suggests a further parallel between Mutabilitie's role and that of the Irish, who as we have seen are required by colonial ideology to be portrayed as merely natural, or at best semi-civilized, creatures. Spenser critics have found a "contradiction" in Mutabilitie's plea: as A. C. Hamilton puts it, "a rebel cannot go to court to defend rebellion".[19] But Mutabilitie is here engaging in a procedure very commonly adopted by Old English magnates (and sometimes by native ones) in sixteenth- and even seventeenth-century Ireland, namely, going above the heads of the Dublin administrators and using their direct links with the monarch to bring about their policy demands against Dublin orders.[20]

Earlier, in his pastoral poem *Colin Clouts Come Home Againe*, written in 1591, Spenser had attempted to combine both aspects of his vision of Ireland; but the result is uneasily paradoxical and confusing, and

strains the pastoral form of the poem. On the one hand, he adopts the fiction of making Munster the native place of his persona Colin Clout, both the "home" of the title and an enchanting pastoral landscape in which he traces a topographical myth of river-courtships (the loves of the Mulla and Bregog streams). On the other hand, Ireland is described as "that desert", and as "that waste, where I was quite forgot" (recalling the language of the *View*, which represents Ireland as consisting of "great mountains and waste deserts full of grass").[21] It is contrasted sharply with the peace and plenty of distant England, where there is "no wayling" nor "wretchednesse":

> No griesly famine, nor no raging sweard,
> No nightly bodrags, nor no hue and cries;
> The shepheards there abroad may safely lie,
> On hills and downes, withouten dread or daunger:
> No ravenous wolves the good mans hope destroy,
> Nor outlawes fell affray the forest raunger. (ll. 308-19)

One may well ask, as Colin's listener does:

> Why didst thou ever leave that happie place,
> In which such wealth might unto thee accrew?
> And back returnedst to this barrein soyle,
> Where cold and care and penury do dwell:
> Here to keep sheepe, with hunger and with toyle . . . (ll. 654-8)

But for answer the poem provides only an admission of incomprehension, or at least of incapacity to make sense of Colin's situation: "Most wretched he, that is and cannot tell" (l. 659). Colin has somehow *both* willingly opted for his outcast state – he "rather chose back to his sheep to turne" (l. 672) – *and* been cast out without his volition, there being no place at court, as he puts it, for "gentle wit", "single truth", or "simple honestie" (ll. 708, 727) – or in other words for such a trenchant critic of court lewdness and venality. Colin says he has chosen exile as a matter of principle, but chafes at this state; and the place which he presents himself as having chosen to leave is both desirable and fallen. With a similar and matching uncertainty of perspective, Ireland too is contradictory: it is simultaneously a beautiful, fertile, fictionally native land, and a "waste desert" full of human and inhuman horrors. Thus

both the directions in which he can turn are fraught with negatives. We shall encounter this situation again, differently framed but quite recognizable, in examining the dialogical mode of existence of the *View*.

III

As I have remarked at the outset of this discussion, it has until recently been usual among commentators on Spenser to treat fairly cursorily the fact that the *View* is a dialogue, as if the work were simply an expository one, fairly plain and transparent as to language and form. I propose to argue here that the dialogue form of the *View* deserves to be treated as far from a mere polite learned surface, and to explore how revealing this form is of the characteristic tensions in Spenser's thought and position which we have just been examining largely on the level of content, in the discussion of his versions of Irish recalcitrance and otherness both human and territorial.

To explore Spenser's employment of this form, it will be useful to examine its generic character.[22] The Renaissance dialogue form was the inheritor of the Platonic and Ciceronian practice of philosophical debate and the product of the humanist social milieu of oligarchies and courts. It is the generic embodiment of civility – in the case of the *View*, itself an instance of that civility whose lack in Ireland it inveighs against. The likes of Spenser and his fellow official in Munster, Richard Beacon, also the author of a political dialogue about Ireland, wrote against the background of a rich formal tradition, both from the Renaissance and from antiquity, in English, Greek, Latin and other European languages. In the modern period, dialogue had ranged from Reformation religious polemic, in the hands of Thomas More and his Protestant opponents, to genial reflection on manners and morals in Erasmus's *Colloquies* – used far and wide as a grammar school textbook – and the urbane courtesy handbooks and high neo-Platonic reflection of the Italian humanists. Furthermore, the dialogical construction of thought was a scholastic habit deeply ingrained from both grammar-school and university curricula, in which the holding of formal disputations survived as a common pedagogical exercise, in spite of some modern attacks on such scholastic set practices.[23]

Two main kinds of dialogue are normally defined, from antiquity on: one, the Platonic, which is much the rarer, is genuinely an encounter between opposing views and a real rehearsal of their confrontation; the

other, the Ciceronian or expository dialogue, more common, merely sets out, with maximum courtesy and clarity, the correct attitude to an outlined issue. Formally, both kinds make an implicit claim to openness and geniality, to represent a consensus in whatever conclusions are arrived at, and to arrive at those conclusions by the exercise of a rationality which can tolerate the expression of opposing views; they pretend to thrash the matter out without the blatant suppression of the dissenting voice. But not all even of Socrates's own dialogues are Platonic in the sense I have outlined above; when they are, a genuine struggle is enacted – ultimately, as Erich Voegelin argues, the struggle between Socrates and Athens, which was won historically by Athens, but philosophically and imaginatively by Socrates:

> [Plato's] desire was to show the philosopher in the dramatic instant of seeking and finding, and to make the doubt and conflict visible.[24]

Socrates will not entertain fake contributions to the argument; he insists, for example, that the Sophists should not get away with long rhetorical harangues, however elegant, but must address the issue.

Predominant Renaissance versions of the form are mostly much nearer to Cicero, who offers genial expositions of mainstream philosophy: a map rather than an act of discovery. As Roger Deakins remarks,

> Dialogue, since Agricola, has been committed to "informing" rather than to a give-and-take of genuinely opposed points of view.[25]

Studies prescriptive and descriptive of the art of dialogue and the nature of dialectic multiplied in the course of the sixteenth century, as the work of Deakins and C. J. R. Armstrong has recently shown. Armstrong finds a strain of what he calls "probabilism" in the contribution of some of the great humanist writers – Vives, Sturm, Ramus – to the composition of dialogue and the art of argument in it:

> This dialectic . . . concerned . . . with greater and less probability was decidedly not conceived as delivering "answers" in the way that a well-conducted piece of algebraic reasoning delivers the values of x, y and z. It is no longer a closed system, the yardstick of true and false, but subordinate, relative.[26]

But such openness was untypical; there was a movement in the later part of the century, also noticed by Deakins in English dialogue, to resist probabilism in the interest of sternly reasserting the non-plurality of truth. So Renaissance dialogue has more in common with Socrates's opponents, the Sophists, than with Socrates himself. In this connection Stephen Greenblatt's observation that in Renaissance writing

> Socrates is absorbed into the ethos of rhetorical self-fashioning that Plato, in *Theaetetus* and *Gorgias*, has him condemn

is particularly useful.[27] In a discussion of Spenser, whose obsequious attitude to the queen elicited a particularly harsh condemnatory epithet from Marx, it is relevant to notice that this marks a rearrangement in the relations between the philosopher-intellectual and the state. In the Renaissance the equivalent of Athens, or the state, generally has the services of the Socrates-figures; as Lauro Martines says about the humanist historians even of republican Italian cities:

> All humanists, whatever their stripe, made a candid alliance with power. They plumped for the ruling classes, empires, and luminaries of past civil times; they also wrote in unashamed praise of their own cities, rulers and patrons.[28]

However, Renaissance versions of dialogue certainly sought to arrogate to themselves the Platonic prestige of this "symbolic form of the order of wisdom"; like dozens of other examples, the *View* is, though it is at several removes from the early humanist moment, an instance of that intention. Of course the utter difference in the social context alters the effect of the use of any form, whatever the individual intentions of a writer: the *agon* of Socrates with Athens has certainly undergone a peculiar transformation when it assumes the shape of the Munster officials proposing pragmatic colonial policies to the reluctant monarch.

But in late antiquity there also arose another kind of dialogue, that of Lucian, the second-century A.D. Greek writer from Samosata. Lucian's work merges the dialogue form with more frankly fictive genres, such as the imaginary or otherworld journey, and the description of the ideal state. Lucian is mentioned prominently in the *View*, and this is surprising, because of the irreverent, humorous character of much of his writing. His dialogues are playful, humorous, parodic and sometimes

bawdy; they frequently poke fun at the pretensions of philosophers and at the gods, and are far closer in spirit to Petronius's *Satyricon* than to Plato's *Symposium*. Given to travesty, impious and cynical, Lucian is at times the most dialogical of writers (in the sense of that word developed by Mikhail Bakhtin).[29] Euphrates in what is now Turkey, was a babel of different languages: the inhabitants commonly spoke Aramaic, the educated classes operated in Greek, and the administrative language was Latin. As Bakhtin says:

> Lucian's cultural and linguistic consciousness was born and shaped at this point of intersection of cultures and languages.

Bakhtin also stresses Lucian's invocation of the

> private, everyday sphere, where one finds food, drink, sexual relations . . . in all its specificity as low and private life

and says Lucian needs this sphere "to undercut the lofty planes of ideology, which have become rigid and false".[30] By contrast Spenser is the most monological of writers: that is, he is strongly insistent upon the existence of a single authoritative order in the political and social world, and upon the necessity of repressing any dissenting voices, whose very existence is seen as dangerously threatening. As Stephen Greenblatt puts it, even in his poetry he constantly gestures beyond the frame of the fiction towards a truth given outside it. And further, Lucian's pleasure in and attention to materiality is utterly at odds with Spenser's attitude to it. Throughout *The Faerie Queene* he consistently presents physical actuality as inferior, illusory in the Platonic sense, and as the locus of dangerous temptation. His imaginative enterprise is opposite to that of Lucian (as Bakhtin characterizes it): it is a transcendence of the actual, which is seen as *merely* so, in favour of an ideal order. The great problem, and for many readers the greatest interest, of his work resides in the appalling difficulty he finds in achieving such a transcendence, and the complexity with which it is necessary to construct it imaginatively; and, as I have said, Ireland functions in his work as a major site of that difficulty and complexity.

For the reasons I have been outlining, one would not, then, be tempted to think of the *View* as dialogical in the Bakhtinian sense of authentically giving representation to a radical alterity, and Lucian seems an unlikely

influence upon Spenser; but nevertheless there is interesting evidence both of his appreciation of Lucian in a general way, and of the presence of a specific Lucian text in his mind while composing the *View*. In December 1578 he arranged with his friend Gabriel Harvey that Harvey would pass him his own copy of Lucian (in four volumes) as part of a game of literary forfeits, unless Spenser had read a certain four light humorous tales (including the Spanish picaresque novel *Lazarillo* and a version of *Till Eulenspiegel*). It seems that in the event Harvey retained the Lucian. But from this we can gather that Lucian was considered frivolous but not unworthy reading. He was sometimes used as a texbook in the Renaissance and Harvey, writing to Spenser in 1580, playfully lists him as rather tending to displace more serious authors:

> . . . Tully and Demosthenes nothing so much studyed, as they were wonte: Livie, and Sallust possiblye rather more than lesse: Lucian never so much: Aristotle much named, but little read: Xenophon and Plato reckoned much among Discoursers, and conceited Superficiall fellowes . . .[31]

Lucian's work, however, is varied, and not all of it is blatantly anti-authoritarian; his specific presence in the *View* is in a particularly inoffensive form, as the author of the *Toxaris*, a dialogue between a Greek and a Scythian about friendship. This text, considered "an oddity among Lucian's works" because of the uncharacteristic seriousness of its tone, is especially unthreatening to Spenser's ideological position: its twin accounts of loyal and courageous friendship could easily be taken up into the Renaissance discourse of courtly behaviour, and its interest in the details of Scythian custom sanctioned and therefore neutralized as learned ethnographic enquiry (as indeed Irenius's accounts of Irish customs partly are).[32] The *Toxaris* is mentioned in the context of Irenius's general ethnohistorical speculation about the origins of the Irish. His chief candidates for the ancestry of the Irish are the Scythians. (This idea of Scythian descent is not, of course, peculiar to Spenser; it is also to be found in the work of Camden, on which he drew.) The relevant passage in the *View* is:

> And by the same reason may I as reasonably conclude that the Irish are descended from the Scythians, for that they use even to this day some of the same ceremonies which the Scythians anciently used, as

> for example ye may read in Lucian in that sweet dialogue which is entitled Toxaris, or of Friendship . . . (*View*, p. 58)

and he goes on to find certain Scythian and Irish customs in common: ways of swearing oaths, by the sword and by the fire, and ways of cooking, for example seething meat over the fire in the hide of an animal.

The *Toxaris* was a famous formal model in the Renaissance: Erasmus and Thomas More both practised their Greek and their literary skills in making Latin versions of it.[33] The dialogue is between the charcters Toxaris and Mnesippus. Toxaris is a Scythian, Mnesippus a Greek, and the subject of their talk is friendship. Each vies with the other in claiming superiority for his own nation's practice of friendship, and to prove his claim, each tells several anecdotes. At first glance it seems that this text's detailed, if somewhat lurid, descriptions of Scythian social life account entirely for its presence in the background of the *View*. But I wish to argue that it is not merely this anthropological material about Scythian customs which influenced Spenser, as has been hitherto assumed. Rather, much more importantly, the notion of the ethnically based opposition between two sets of values, and the nature of those values themselves, both find striking parallels in the *View*. Secondly, Spenser obviously also takes aesthetic pleasure in the *Toxaris* as a text, calling it "that Sweet dialogue", which should draw our attention to its operation as a formal parallel behind the *View* and cause us to examine comparatively the manner of the interplay between the interlocutors, as rhetorical and fictional constructs, in both texts. A greater understanding of the use Spenser made of the *Toxaris* should result from investigation of these two questions, and can in various ways assist the interpretation of the *View*.

Mnesippus, the Greek representative, is dry, witty and affectionately ironic in his responses to Toxaris; he teases him with accusations of prolixity, and Toxaris in turn complains that he interrupts (as Irenius does to Eudoxus in the *View*). Mnesippus further has an attitude of disbelief in some of the Scythian stories, which, he says, are "quite like fables". We may compare with this Eudoxus's scepticism about Irenius's finding the Irish bards and chronicles fit sources of historical knowledge. In general Mnesippus stands for a norm of civility, and Toxaris is something of a wild man, only less savage than the semi-nomadic pastoral barbarians at home, whose representative he is. He refers to having left home out of a desire for Greek culture.[34] One should note his suggestive similarity, in this, to Spenser's pastoral persona Colin Clout, who claims

in the poem *Colin Clouts Come Home Againe* to be a rude and simple native of Ireland, to whom the sea, and still more the court, when he visits it, are strange. Kilcolman is designated "home", and the poem is presented as written from there: "From my house at Kilcolman, the 27. of December. 1591". In Lucian, Toxaris is evidently to be conceived as in part assimilated to Greek "civil conversation", as Spenser might have put it. But at the end, though a continuing friendship is being sworn between the two, Mnesippus again defines a sharp opposition between their behaviour: instead of drinking a cup of blood together to seal their bond, he says, they will simply agree verbally. He thus opposes rational resolution to participatory and physically based ritual, conversation and similarity of ideals to the shared cup of blood; the adoption of Mnesippus's suggestions at the end duly marks the hegemony of Greek over Scythian. Metropolitan culture thus remains the only conceivable ground for the operation of civilized consciousness, as is the case, implicitly, in the *View*. (This is a resolution unusual in Lucian, but normal in Spenser.) But, preserving the parallel (one presumes that about Scythians Lucian did not feel so very strongly either way), we should notice that structurally, in place of Lucian's matched tales of friendship, Spenser gives his plans for conquest, starvation, and expropriation.

How does all this illuminate the *View*? It is clear that Spenser conceived Eudoxus as, like Mnesippus, the representative of central order, the modern equivalent of Athenian culture in the ancient world; is it not also likely that at least in part he was casting his Irenius in the pendent role of a rather wild and rough character, like Toxaris? In Irenius's manner of arguing, we certainly find a passion, even sometimes a ferocity, which is drily noted and ironically soothed by Eudoxus. This immoderate quality of Irenius's and its significance may best be explained by turning to the second of our two topics for investigation in this section, the roles of the two characters in the discussion and the nature and meaning of their interplay.

One cannot say too emphatically that what enables Eudoxus and Irenius to be the means of conveying policy arguments and positions to possible readers of the text, and to represent the two sides of an *interior* debate Spenser is conducting with himself, is their prior existence as fictions, what one might call their textuality. Too little attention has customarily been given by students of the *View* either to the rhetorical moves made by the two speakers, or to what may be called their dramatic characterization, which is the product of those moves. It is true that the

View lacks dialogicality in the sense of making two different registers of language confront each other. Both voices are, linguistically speaking, equally authoritative; both are standard users of official English; neither is lexically or syntactically a less than adequate formulator of judgement or description. But this should not warrant any rash decision to write off the dialogue form, or assume it merely a decoy or mantle to conceal an absolute decisiveness.[35] As David J. Baker has recently put it:

> Irenius is not Spenser's spokesman in a simple sense, but one voice in a dialectic Spenser constructs between inadmissible scepticism of royal policy and articulations of the official "view", articulations Spenser usually puts in the mouth of Eudoxus.[36]

What kind of total impression does this interplay produce? A discourse expressly constructed as a dialogue lays particular stress on the dual character of all thought as it is analysed in the linguistic and literary work of Bakhtin's school – the constitution of both inner and outer speech, as Voloshinov describes it, by two basic tendencies, described as commentary and retort.[37] How far, then, does this duality go to constitute Eudoxus as genuinely representing an alterity to Irenius?

Firstly, within the shared standard language of the two, real differences of opinion are framed: one clear instance of such a difference is in the debate near the beginning of the *View* about whether laws can be one and universal, or need to be differently framed for different places.[38] Another is the question whether the Irish chronicles and bards' accounts of history are at all reliable. Here Eudoxus takes a standard humanist view – that they are all "fabulous and forged" – whereas Irenius insists that they *can* be used as sources.[39] Both of these are fairly important points, in an English discussion about the treatment of Ireland; as is shown by such substantial disagreements as these and others (for example the major clash about the role of "the sword"), Eudoxus *is* fashioned to provide in several respects a genuine alternative to Irenius; and it is by no means the case that the reader is successfully manipulated always to agree with the latter. Certainly Irenius is the dominant speaker, in the sense that (especially towards the end) he gets a good deal more space; nevertheless the reader has the distinct impression that Eudoxus is the one who will judge, the voice of an ultimate authority and of a knowledge not experientially derived, as Irenius's is, but given. What gives us this idea? It runs counter to the contemporary

rules for disputations, as laid down by one of the standard treatises on the subject, Sigonio's *De Dialogo* (1562).[40] In his analysis of Tudor dialogue Roger Deakins finds that one of the following basic pairs of functions always underlies a superficial diversity of roles: those of Master and Pupil, Objector and Answerer; in this case the Answerer does not always satisfactorily dismiss the Objector's objections.[41] It follows that *Spenser's* attitude to the Irish issues, as distinct from Irenius's, is a complex and ambivalent one, capable at the very least of framing convincingly the likely arguments of those nearer the cultural and political centre, the capital and the court.

Secondly, discussing Eudoxus as an equivalent of Lucian's Mnesippus, I have already noted how the content of his speeches defines his role as the representative of a centralized, metropolitan, distanced viewpoint; but so too does what we may call their dramatic form. Eudoxus has often a slightly patronizing air, as of an older or more eminent man – as when he gives Irenius his head to "follow the course which you have purposed to yourself" (p. 21), or when he commends Irenius's arguments rather loftily, in a "my dear boy" tone. He is the one who constantly reminds Irenius (and the reader) of the state of the discussion and the general structure of the argument being pursued; this, like the tone Mnesippus takes with Toxaris in Lucian, is sometimes made the source of mild comedy, and has the effect of strengthening the reader's impression of a slightly disordered or frenetic quality in Irenius. The occasion of this humour is partly the defensiveness of Irenius, as if he is aware of his own over-enthusiasm; when Eudoxus asks him whether there ever were Irish High Kings, for instance, he replies:

> I would tell you, in case you would not challenge me anon for forgetting the matter which I had in hand . . . (*View*, p. 16)

It is obvious that Eudoxus is consistently the more moderate one, appealing to given and general principles of law, ethics and politics to counter Irenius's advocacy of extreme measures, based on his bitter experience. When, for example, he claims the necessity of

> new framing as it were in the forge all that is worn out of fashion; for all other means will be but lost labour by patching up one hole to make many . . . (*View*, p. 93)

Eudoxus roundly rejects such wholesale "innovation" as foolish:

> . . . and not as ye suppose to begin all as it were anew and to alter the whole form of the government, which how dangerous a thing it is to attempt, you yourself must needs confess . . . For all innovation is perilous . . . it may hazard the loss of the whole. (*View*, p. 94).

IV

Finally, what insights into Spenser's thought about Ireland are afforded by the combined study of his images of Irish incivility and of the *View* as dialogue? Primarily, perhaps, the use of these two approaches can make us freshly aware of the complex ironies and contradictions which, as I have noticed at the outset, characterize that thought and the circumstances out of which it arises. The two different focuses throw light on two of the main aspects of the English problem with Ireland as it presented itself in the late sixteenth century.

First, the major and obvious tension in the historical situation out of which the *View* came was between Irish actuality, in all its factional complexity and instability, and the English concept of order which was being applied to it. (This is so if for the moment we take the Old English as ultimately part of the general awkward problem of the Irish, a position to which they certainly seem consigned by Spenser's furious assertions of their degeneracy.[42]) But both in the *View* and in *The Faerie Queene* V, a second struggle on a smaller scale, arising out of and contained within the first, also plays an extremely important role: that between the New English administrations based in Ireland and the central government authority in England about policies and practice in Ireland.[43] When one takes both these facets of the situation into account, it is clear that the immoderate anger of Irenius has a complex of causes: if one focuses on the major historical issue, between English as a whole and Irish as a whole, then one will notice primarily the railing against Irish incivility and turpitude; if on the other hand one concentrates on the difficult relations between the centre and outpost, it is the gap between English strategy for the government of Ireland, and the formation and implementation by local officials of detailed tactics based upon it, which appears as the main occasion of Irenius's frustration.

Solon his Follie (Oxford, 1594), the Irish dialogue of Richard Beacon,

Spenser's fellow official and undertaker in the Munster plantation, affords a suggestive analogue to the attitude of Irenius.[44] More elaborately literary and erudite than Spenser's, Beacon's work is based on a *prosopopeia*, borrowing its two central speakers, Solon and Epimenides, from Greek history, and aligning England with Athens and Ireland with Salamina, the Athenians' persistent and troublesome enemy. Solon, as narrated in Plutarch, assumed his famous madness as a licence to urge the necessity of making vigorous war on Salamina at a time when this policy was officially discredited. The parallel with Solon is invoked by Beacon to allow him preach the urgency of effective suppression of Irish dissent and rebellion and fairly frankly to criticize what he presents as the inadequacies and halfheartedness of current policies, making the work another expression of New English and planter dissatisfaction and impatience with the handling of Ireland by higher authority. In his prefatory address to the reader, Beacon threatens to become a wild man if effective action is not soon taken in Ireland. Unless his pleas get a sympathetic hearing, he promises to forsake "the pleasaunt fieldes, and meddowes" and

> henceforth take up my habitation amidst the rocks and deserts, where my arrowes may not pearce, nor the strength of my bowe withstand the bitter windes, and the harde and hoary frostes, where I shall no more play the foole with Solon in the marketplace, but the wilde man in the desertes.[45]

In both cases, as in the satiric indignation of Colin Clout, a righteous rage is being assumed as a deliberate gesture. It is not, of course, necessary to assume that such rage is not genuinely felt, just because it can be understood as part of a literary convention (in this case that of the justified rough anger of the moralist and satirist which is the motivating force of Spenserian and much other Renaissance pastoral).[46] Aesthetic forms are not ethically and ideologically neutral, but the effective and inescapable means of articulating moral and political positions. In fact one might align this indignation and air of extremism with the first term of a major implicit contradiction in Spenser's political position: that between the desire to counsel bluntly coercive courses of action and the obligation to preserve a humane distance and be seen to uphold civility.[47] Thus the tension between the reactions of the colonist *in situ* – hatred, indignation, desire for revenge, all mingled with fear – and the aspira-

tions of the urbane humanist intellectual finds expression not merely in the content of Spenser's writing, but also in its formal gestures.

It is even possible to read this extremism of Irenius, no doubt against the grain of Spenser's conscious intention, as an ironic shadow version of the native wildness imputed to the Irish themselves, his antagonists and the very objects of his ainmus. It is, of course, true that even if he is harsh, angry, and extreme, *his* wildness is, so to speak, textual – as I have suggested, a conscious and staged literary pose or attitude and therefore at first sight utterly different from that of the alien Irish, whose condition, as we have seen, Spenser strongly feels to be irredeemable. (Their incivility might be described as invincible, like the ignorance attributed to heathens in traditional Catholic theology.) But it is nevertheless significant that the assumption of an explicitly pastoral guise to express indignation both by Beacon, in his threat of ascetic withdrawal from civil society, and by Spenser himself in *Colin Clout* and *The Shepheardes Calender*, entails the deployment of the same motifs as the descriptions of wild men as aliens which we have seen employed to encompass the Irish. The satirist's roughness was normally derived in the Renaissance (by a famous false etymology) from that of the satyrs, woodland monsters. And further, if we apply the analogy with the *Toxaris*, Irenius is quasi-barbarian, outlandish Scythian to Eudoxus's sane, centrist Greek. As Scythians are to Greeks and wild men are to the civil, so the Irish are to the English; but so too, in a sense, are the colonists and officials in the field to the distant metropolitan policy-makers. And so too, in his stern reproachfulness, the reforming Protestant poet-satirist is to the corrupt court and church.[48] Thus the biographical and historical subject Spenser, who would be regarded as the agent of civility, in a sense places in the position of wild men – severe critics of the court, church and state establishment – some of the most forceful among his personae both prose and poetic. Colin Clout brought to Ireland becomes as a native. Hence the literal and radical alterity in the major English-Irish encounter is rehearsed again in the Eudoxus-Irenius dialogue, in which the tensions between the remote central government and the New English on the ground in Ireland repeat *in parvo* those between civilized Christian Englishmen and the quasi-barbarian Irish natives. This may seem a perverse reading, and no doubt it does not, as I have said, conform to intentionalism; but it would be unwise to attribute simplicity or too great a singleness of motive to Spenser. As I have sought to show, his descriptive accounts of Ireland taken as a whole reveal a marked

uncertainty of perspective: impulses in opposite directions, rage and disgust yielding to idealization and moments of imaginative identification; and a scrutiny of the workings of the dialogue form in the *View* disposes of the too ready conclusion that Irenius wins the argument.

In the first main section of this discussion my purpose has been to show how Spenser's descriptions of the Irish, whether in his prose or his poetry, have the status of symbolic representations – mediated by pre-existing conventions of interpretation and necessarily formulated out of them – rather than pure reflections of the phenomena of late sixteenth-century Ireland, drawn merely from life or fact. In the second, I have been arguing for a fuller awareness of the fictive mode of existence of the *View*, and against the treatment of it as an expository document. The two investigations, of course, overlap, and as I have said at the beginning they have in common the project of viewing Spenser's, and by implication all writing, as simultaneously textual and political, fictive and discursive, and of refusing any disjunction between the realms of symbolic representation and social practice. Rhetoric and symbol are not overlays or adornments to mask the real matter and what is fictive is not thereby trivial. But these two perspectives also combine to reveal, I believe with especial and renewed clarity, the subtlety and complexity of Spenser's, and perhaps also his contemporaries', thought about, and difficulties with, Ireland.

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1. See Canny, "Edmund Spenser and the Development of Anglo-Irish Identity", *Yearbook of English Studies* 13 (1983), 1-19; Brady, "Spenser's Irish Crisis: Humanism and Experience in the 1590s", *Past and Present* 111 (1986), 17-49; Norbrook, *Poetry and Politics in Renaissance England* (London, 1984); Greenblatt, *Renaissance Self-Fashioning* (Chicago, 1980).
2. Martines, *Power and Imagination: City-States in Renaissance Italy* (London, 1979), p. 266.
3. Greenblatt, p. 192, and see Norbrook, Ch. 5. The force of such arguments has not been recognized in all quarters: see Sheila T. Cavanagh, "'Such was Irena's Countenance': Ireland in Spenser's Prose and Poetry", *Texas Studies in Language and Literature* 28 (1986), 24-50.
4. (Utrecht, 1986). Leerssen's work might be more searching theoretically, but is a very full and informative account of writings on the Irish and Irishness, noticing, among other groups of writings, those of Spenser's close English predecessors and successors. For a discussion of the fate of these representations in the succeeding century, see my "'Cheap and Common Animals': The English Anatomy of Ireland in the Seventeenth

Century", in T. Healy and J. Sawday (ed.) *"Now Warre Is All The World About": English Literature and the English Civil Wars* (Cambridge, forthcoming). See also J. O. Bartley, *Teague, Shenkin and Sawney* (Cork, 1954).

5. Quinn, *The Elizabethans and the Irish* (Ithaca, 1954); Muldoon, "The Indian as Irishman", *Essex Institute Historical Collections* 3 (1975), 267-89; Hulme, *Colonial Encounters: Europe and the Native Caribbean* (London, 1986); Pagden, *The Fall of Natural Man: The American Indian and the Origins of Comparative Ethnology* (Cambridge, 1982).
6. See the discussion below of *The Faerie Queene* VI.iv.4ff.
7. "The Forms of Wildness: Archaeology of An Idea", *Tropics of Discourse* (London, 1978), p. 166.
8. White, pp., 165-6.
9. White, p. 172; Bernheimer, *Wild Men in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge, Mass., 1952), pp. 113ff.
10. "The Ideology of Colonization in England and America", *William and Mary Quarterly* 30 (1973), 573-598. See also Pagden on Spanish colonial ideology.
11. Canny (1973), 580.
12. See Steven Ellis, *Tudor Ireland* (London, 1985), p. 223, and Canny (1973), 583; see also Alan Ford, *The Protestant Reformation in Ireland* (Frankfurt, 1981).
13. On transhumance, see Jean M. Graham, "Rural Society in Connacht 1600-1640" in N. Stephens and R. Glasscock (ed.), *Irish Geographical Studies* (Belfast, 1970), pp. 192-207. I am grateful to Kevin Whelan for this reference.
14. See, for example, *View* 159, 160. It has been pointed out to me by Robin Hughes that this language strongly recalls that of contemporary anti-vagrancy statutes. See 39 & 40 Eliz. Cap. III, IV; 7 & 8 Jac. I Cap. I, G. W. Prothero (ed.), *Select Statutes* (Oxford, 1965); see Hughes's University of York M.A. thesis (1983) on criminal stereotypes in sixteenth-century English popular literature.
15. See the "Brigants" in *The Faerie Queene* VI.x who show the mark of villainy, the failure to plough and sow, as do the evil cannibals in VI.viii who kidnap and start to sacrifice Serena. Both groups live in remote habitations unfit for humankind, as do the "villeins" in II.ix who erupt out of woods and caves and fall at dusk upon the House of Alma.
16. See the graphic contemporary accounts of the resultant delaying of the 1584 Commission to survey the escheated Desmond property in Munster after the rebellion (*The Munster Plantation* (Oxford, 1986), pp. 8-10, 13).
17. See for example I.vii.29, V.v.11, V.viii.29, 37-8, and VI.ii.39; and see Michael Leslie, *Spenser's "Fierce Warres and Faithfull Loves": Martial and Chivalric Symbolism in The Faerie Queene* (Cambridge and Totowa, N.J., 1983), pp. 55, 72-3.
18. Brady, 48.
19. In his edition of *The Faerie Queene* (London, 1977), note on VII.vi.35 (paraphrasing Angus Fletcher).
20. Ormond, the queen's cousin and much favoured at court, who was so much a thorn in the side of the New English and particularly of advocates of coercion such as Spenser's admired Lord Grey, is a good example of such figures. See Ellis, pp. 280, 283-5.
21. *Colin Clout* 1. 183; *View*, p. 49.
22. For this account of dialogue, I have drawn upon the following discussions: Elizabeth Merrill, *The Dialogue in English Literature* (New York, 1911), C. J. R. Armstrong, "The Dialectical Road to Truth: The Dialogue" in P. Sharratt (ed.), *French Renaissance Studies 1540-1570* (Edinburgh, 1976), Roger Deakins, "The Tudor Prose Dialogue: Genre and Anti-Genre", *Studies in English Literature* 20 (1980), 5-25, and Katherine Wilson, *Incomplete Fictions: The Formation of English Renaissance Dialogue* (Washington, D.C., 1985).

23. For a detailed account of the pervasiveness of set dialogue and disputation in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century education, see Patricia Coughlan, *Classical Themes and Influences in the Poetry of Andrew Marvell*, unpublished Ph.D. thesis, London University, 1980, Ch. 1.
24. Werner Jaeger, quoted in *Oxford Classical Dictionary* (Oxford, 1970), article on "Dialogue, Greek", p. 337; see Voegelin, *Plato* (Baton Rouge, Louisiana, 1966), p. 11.
25. Deakins, 23. Rudolf Agricola's much reprinted *De Inventione Dialectica*, completed *circa* 1479, was the classic earlier Renaissance treatise on the subject.
26. Armstrong, pp. 42-3.
27. Greenblatt, p. 164.
28. Martines, p. 271. Marx called Spenser "Elizabeth's arse-kissing poet" (quoted in Norbrook, p. 311, n. 80).
29. See M. Bakhtin, *The Dialogical Imagination: Four Essays*, tr. C. Emerson and M. Holquist (Austin, Texas, 1981).
30. Bakhtin, pp. 184, 220.
31. *The Works of Edmund Spenser: A Variorum Edition*, ed. E. Greenlaw, C. M. Osgood and F. M. Padelford (Baltimore, 1938-), Vol. X, Appendix I, p. 460; for the forfeit, see Harvey, *Marginalia*, ed. G. C. Moore Smith (Stratford-on-Avon, 1913), p. 53.
32. On the untypicality of the *Toxaris* among Lucian's works, see C. P. Jones, *Culture and Society in Lucian* (Cambridge, Mass., 1986), p. 57.
33. Erasmus sent his version to the Bishop of Winchester, writing: "I hope that it may not be altogether unacceptable to your Excellency: for it preaches friendship, an institution so holy that it was formerly held in reverence even by the most savage tribes"; and he goes on to notice the difference Lucian makes between the two interlocutors' manner of speech, characterizing that of Toxaris as "wholly Scythian in atmosphere, direct, unsophisticated, rough, earnest, serious, and manly" (Letter of 1 January 1506, *Correspondence of Erasmus*, tr. R. A. B. Mynors and D. F. S. Thomson (Toronto, 1975), Vol. II, pp. 101-3).
34. See also Lucian's other dialogue called *The Scythian*, in which an earlier Scythian namesake of this Toxaris becomes assimilated to Athenian life and is found "dressed in the Greek fashion, without sword or belt", wearing "no beard", and speaking Greek like "An Athenian born, so completely had time transformed him" – a suggestive reversal of the degeneration of the Old English in Ireland in Spenser's eyes.
35. As Ciarán Brady does at one point (p. 41) in his discussion of the *View* – though perhaps as a rhetorical ploy, which is abandoned later.
36. "'Some Quirk, Some Subtle Evasion': Legal Subversion in Spenser's *A View of the Present State of Ireland*", *Spenser Studies* 6 (1986), p. 163, n. 13.
37. V. N. Volosinov, "Reported Speech" in L. Matejka and K. Pomorska, ed. *Readings in Russian Poetics* (Ann Arbor, Michigan, 1978), pp. 149ff.
38. A topic illuminatingly discussed by Baker.

39. *View*, pp. 39-40. See Martines, p. 268, on the scorn of high humanists such as Piccolomini for such material.
40. Sigonio, who is repeatedly mentioned by Spenser's Cambridge mentor Gabriel Harvey, says the main speaker should not only represent the opinions of the author clearly and unambiguously, but must win the argument (Deakins, p. 13) – not perhaps a programme carried out with conspicuous success by the *View*.
41. Deakins, pp. 9-10.
42. As Steven Ellis remarks, however English the Old English Catholics might still have considered themselves, in fact by the late Tudor period "after the breach with Rome . . . and the growing consciousness of differentiation from continental Europe which accompanied the Elizabethan idea of an 'elect nation', a narrower definition of 'Englishness' emerged, from which the Catholic Old English were clearly excluded" (p. 319).
43. Spenser's defence of Grey is of course a part of this struggle, which gave rise to the frustration of such officials – Sir John Davies is another example – with central administrations which they perceived as negligent and uncooperative. For a very illuminating longer view of the increasing divergence of interest between Anglo-Irish colonists and the mainland leading, paradoxically, in the end to eighteenth-century colonial nationalism, see Nicholas Canny, "Identity Formation in Ireland: The Emergency of the Anglo-Irish" in Canny and A. Pagden (ed.), *Colonial Identity in the Atlantic World, 1500-1800* (Princeton, New Jersey, 1987).
44. On Beacon, see Alexander Judson, "Spenser and the Munster Officials", *Studies in Philology* 44 (1947), 157-73; on his role as a Munster planter, see McCarthy-Morrogh.
45. *Solon his Follie*, "The Author to the Reader".
46. Several good examples are afforded by Spenser's *Shepheardes Calender*, in the Renaissance tradition of Christian pastoral of which the Neo-Latin eclogues of Mantuan are the model. See Leonard S. Grant, *Neo-Latin Literature and the Pastoral* (Chapel Hill, North Carolina, 1965); Patrick Cullen, *Spenser, Marvell and Renaissance Pastoral* (Cambridge, Mass., 1970); and Anthea Hume, *Edmund Spenser: Protestant Poet* (Cambridge, 1984).
47. This contradiction is well analysed by Ciarán Brady. See also Canny (1983).
48. On the cast of Spenser's Protestantism, and his reforming or prophetic pastoral, see Hume and Norbrook.