John Lyly (1554? – 1606)

*Euphues: The Anatomy of Wit (1579)*

A didactic romance with flimsy plot but interesting for its style. Characterized by a wide vocabulary, alliteration, ornate language, elaborate similes, odd combinations of words, syntactical symmetry.

Euphuistic language

I have read that the bull being tied to the fig-tree loseth his strength, that the whole herd of deer stand at the gaze if they smell a sweet apple, that the dolphin by the sound of music is brought to the shore. And then no marvel it is that if the fierce bull be tamed with the fig-tree, if that women being as weak as sheep be overcome with a fig, if the wild deer be caught with an apple, that the tame damsel is won with a blossom, if the fleet dolphin be allured with harmony, that the women be entangled with the melody of men’s speech, fair promises and solemn protestations. But folly it were for me to marke their mischiefs, sith I am neither able, neither they willing to amend their manners, it becometh me rather to show what our sex should do, than to open what yours doth.

Euphuistic language

I have read that the bull being tied to the fig-tree loseth his strength,

Ho letto che il toro stando legato all’albero di fichi perde la sua forza,

that the whole herd of deer stand at the gaze if they smell a sweet apple,

the l’intera mandria di cervi sta ad osservare (fisso) se odorano una dolce mela,

that the dolphin by the sound of music is brought to the shore.

Che il delfino dal suono della musica è portato alla spiaggia.

And then no marvel it is that if the fierce bull be tamed with the fig-tree, if that women being as weak

as sheep be overcome with a fig,

E allora nessuna meraviglia se il fiero toro viene domato con il fico, se poi le donne, essendo deboli come pecore, siano sopraffatte con un fico.

if the wild deer be caught with an apple, that the tame damsel is won with a blossom,

se il cervo selvaggio viene catturato con una mela, che la docile donzella viene vinta con un bocciuolo,

if the fleet dolphin be allured with harmony, that the women be entangled

with the melody of men’s speech, fair promises and solemn protestations.

Se il rapido delfino sia adescato con l’armonia, che le donne siano intrappolate dalla melodia dei discorsi degli uomini, belle promesse e solenni dichiarazioni.

But folly it were for me to marke their mischiefs, sith I am neither able, neither they willing to amend their manners, it becometh me rather to show what our sex should do, than to open what yours doth.

Ma follia sarebbe per me rimarcare i loro difetti, poichè non sono in grado, e nemmeno loro disposte a riformare i loro comportamenti, mi si addice piuttosto di mostrare cosa il nostro sesso dovrebbe fare, piuttosto che svelare quello che i vostro fa.