
Nashe's Red Herring: Epistemologies of the Commodity in "Lenten Stuffe" (1599)

Author(s): Henry S. Turner

Source: *ELH*, Vol. 68, No. 3 (Fall, 2001), pp. 529-561

Published by: The Johns Hopkins University Press

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/30031982>

Accessed: 02/06/2009 15:32

Your use of the JSTOR archive indicates your acceptance of JSTOR's Terms and Conditions of Use, available at <http://www.jstor.org/page/info/about/policies/terms.jsp>. JSTOR's Terms and Conditions of Use provides, in part, that unless you have obtained prior permission, you may not download an entire issue of a journal or multiple copies of articles, and you may use content in the JSTOR archive only for your personal, non-commercial use.

Please contact the publisher regarding any further use of this work. Publisher contact information may be obtained at <http://www.jstor.org/action/showPublisher?publisherCode=jhup>.

Each copy of any part of a JSTOR transmission must contain the same copyright notice that appears on the screen or printed page of such transmission.

JSTOR is a not-for-profit organization founded in 1995 to build trusted digital archives for scholarship. We work with the scholarly community to preserve their work and the materials they rely upon, and to build a common research platform that promotes the discovery and use of these resources. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.



The Johns Hopkins University Press is collaborating with JSTOR to digitize, preserve and extend access to *ELH*.

NASHE'S RED HERRING: EPISTEMOLOGIES OF THE COMMODITY IN *LENTEN STUFFE* (1599)

BY HENRY S. TURNER

Small things we may expresse by great, and great by smal, though the greatnesse of the redde herring be not small.

—Thomas Nashe, *Lenten Stuffe*¹

At a moment in early modern studies when a declared interest in material culture—objects, things, bodies, places—has become synonymous with a claim to theoretical currency, methodological innovation, or even, at its most dramatic, to the promise of disciplinary reinvention, we would do well to remind ourselves of the flourishing interest in the physical substance of everyday life that characterized early modern England and to revisit the very similar intellectual claims that such an interest sponsored. Here, too, research methods that had long enjoyed decades, if not centuries, of respectability and institutional support suddenly began to appear quaint, naïve, or unreliable when compared to the rigor and acumen of the new procedures favored by more forward-looking contemporaries: I am referring, of course, to the antiquarian interest in artifacts, documents, and physical remains, an interest that characterized a small but increasingly significant circle of English thinkers and their European counterparts and would eventually replace the categories of Aristotelian natural philosophy and finally lead to the scientific methods of modern empiricism. John Leland, William Lambarde, William Camden, Archbishop Matthew Parker, John Stow: each is a figure and a shadowy precedent for our own current fascination with the “matter” of culture and our increasingly reflexive “methodological fetishism,” as several critics have recently described it.²

In our current attempts to excavate—or perhaps to bury more deeply—the operative presumptions of a now outdated New Historicism and to supplement them with the exhumed spirit of Marx or the respectability of the archive, we would do well to revisit also one of the most penetrating, eccentric, and, happily, one of the most amusing critics of Elizabethan antiquarianism: Thomas Nashe. Nashe's peculiar *Lenten Stuffe* arguably remains the most elusive work of Elizabethan

England's most unconventional writer, a text as protean and difficult to characterize as the red herring that is its primary motif. Ostensibly written as a panegyric to the city of Yarmouth and its chief product, the work's rambling, stream-of-consciousness style soon yields to Nashe's legendary invective and devolves into a scathing critique of papists and court culture, becoming by turns a vehicle for his considerable xenophobia and for his equally considerable national pride. An earlier critical tradition singled out the parody of Marlowe's *Hero and Leander* as the centerpiece of the text and regarded it as a peak in Nashe's mercurial literary career; the work as a whole has been called the premier English example of the mock *encomium*, epideictic oration, or paradox, in the European humanist tradition.³ More recently, new historicist and materialist scholars have situated *Lenten Stuffe* in the context of England's growing participation in overseas trade, praising it for the radical social critique embedded in its carnivalesque language and Menippean form.⁴

A red herring: the fish was one of Elizabethan England's most spectacularly successful commodities and would provoke commercial rivalry and armed skirmishes with the Dutch for more than a hundred years. At the close of the sixteenth century it had not quite become proverbial. Nashe dangles it before his reader like the jesting Cambridge graduate described in *Lenten Stuffe* who baits his hook with the fish, lifting it from the river before stupefied onlookers. "To draw on hounds to a sent," Nashe boasts, "to a redde herring skinne there is nothing comparable" (221).⁵ The figure seems calculated to elude our grasp; indeed, perhaps the most salient aspect of *Lenten Stuffe* is the persistent way it renders any simple "reading" of its object an impossibility.

In this essay I suggest that we approach *Lenten Stuffe* as an exercise in epistemology: the text should be understood as an extended satire of many different modes of Elizabethan writing, all of which sought in some way to derive "scientific" knowledge from physical objects. In particular, I argue that the hybrid and oddly discontinuous nature of the work results from the attempt to accommodate an historically novel object within early modern intellectual paradigms that conventionally could make no sense of it. This object is the manufactured commodity. Although the red herring appears at first as merely the immediate occasion for Nashe's *bravura* rhetorical performance, it soon emerges as a trope for any object of knowledge whatsoever and sets in motion a series of competing epistemologies of the object that together provide both the form and the content of Nashe's text.

The first section of my argument examines how the form of *Lenten Stuffe*—its component parts and its physical extension across the page—are inseparable from the philosophical problems that it entertains. This section focuses on Nashe's satire of one primary mode of writing and the intellectual methods that animated it: chorography and English antiquarian thought. Since every satire is simultaneously an imitation of and a departure from its object, the second section of my essay then considers what antiquarianism had to offer to an analysis of the commodity and why Nashe seems to have in part rejected its methods in favor of alternative ones. Here I introduce two additional discursive contexts that are of central importance to his treatment of the red herring: these are neo-Aristotelian hylomorphism, or the philosophy of matter and form, as it was being taught in sixteenth-century universities and natural philosophy textbooks, and a "maker's knowledge" tradition derived from craft and artisanal production.⁶ I will demonstrate that the red herring emerges at the point where several distinct epistemological models converge, and that the strange reticence that surrounds the figure derives from the fact that it does not fit easily within any single system of taxonomy or set of intellectual protocols.

• • •

It has gone largely unrecognized that *Lenten Stuffe* consists in an elaborate parody of chorographical writing, that hybrid form of topography and local history which sprung from the Continental humanist interest in the classical past. Owing as much to the ancient geographical writings of Strabo and Ptolemy as it did to the medieval chronicle history, the chorography offered itself as a cosmography writ small, supplementing its descriptions of landscape, ruins, customs, and natural resources with maps of the county or administrative area.⁷ In England, the prodigious labors of John Leland (ca. 1503–52) inaugurated a new period of antiquarian interest in the ancient origins of the British Isles, and the innumerable lists, notes, and observations Leland compiled as "King's Antiquary" to a diffident Henry VIII formed the foundation for all subsequent English chorographical writing, despite the fact that much of it remained unpublished during his lifetime. A collection of disorganized notes and commentary was finally printed in 1549 as the *Laborious Journey and Serche of Johan Lelande, of Englandes Antiquities*, two years after Leland himself had gone insane. Commonly known as the *Itinerary*, the work organized the vast information Leland had compiled on his lengthy walking tours, or "perambulations," according to the separate itineraries he followed through the English

countryside, and this model came to dominate later chorographies.⁸ William Lambarde's *Perambulation of Kent* (1576, 1596), William Camden's *Britannia* (printed in Latin in 1586 and in many subsequent editions, English in 1611), and the many surveys and local histories of John Norden (nearly all published posthumously) each exemplified the genre, and as we shall see the first twenty-one pages of *Lenten Stuffe* make all the form's typical gestures, often citing these authors and others by name.⁹

Ironically, in his *Pierce Penilesse* (1592) Nashe had made fun of "lay chronigraphers" who "write of nothing but of Mayors and Sheriefs, and the deare yeere, and the great frost," and now, fleeing London after his ill-considered dramatic collaboration with Ben Jonson, *The Isle of Dogs*, Nashe found himself in "exile and irkesome discontented abandonment" (153) on the remote shoals of East Anglia, at the mercy of the Yarmouth gentlemen and the sudden beneficiary of civic hospitality.¹⁰ In his dedication to the reader, Nashe immediately disavows any suggestion that he writes out of obligation to the town, but the imputation lingers and I hardly see why his denial should be taken at face value. After a brief allusion to *The Isle of Dogs* affair, some bitter recriminations for his enemies, and a dash of ostentatious groveling to the "graue wisdoomes" (154) of the authorities, Nashe breaks into a fanciful comparison between his own state and that of Homer, offering "vast corpulent volumes of imortality" (155) to any town who would offer "mutto[n] & broth, and a pallet to sleep on" (155). He then offers a "patterne or tiny-sample" (156) of what he might offer, with the appropriate remuneration, and begins "to describe this superiminent principall Metropolis of the redde Fish" (156).

Initially, at least, Nashe roughly follows the typical order of presentation set out in the chorographies. He refers explicitly to Camden's description of the surrounding landscape in which Yarmouth sits (157) and then several pages later delves into the pre-Saxon incarnation of the city and its two later Saxon foundations (160–61). He again refers to Camden, citing his enumeration of householders (161) and then, in good antiquarian method, sets these numbers against a "Chronographically Latine table" (161) that contradicts Camden's account. This table seems to have provided him with the distances between Yarmouth and Norwich which follow and certainly provides the "notes" (162) for several pages of chronicle material: an account of the privileges, charters, and major buildings of Yarmouth narrated in order of regnal year (162–65). Interestingly, Nashe claims to have "smothered" (167) his plans for what sounds like a genuine chorographical project, a descrip-

tion of all the coast towns of England. In doing so he makes a throwaway remark about the Kentish inheritance practice of “gavilkinde” and its bias against daughters, which Lambarde’s *Perambulation* had made famous, and this suggests that he has been reading Lambarde, or at least Camden’s use of Lambarde’s material. This first “chorographical” section closes with a burst of references to other authors, including Bede and Polydore Vergil, and Nashe makes his departure through the metaphor of the trading vessel (172), laden with the red herring which will fill the remainder of his text.¹¹

Already, however, we can sense a distinct shift in emphasis away from the conventional chorographical topics, as Nashe departs from a balanced description of climate and Yarmouth’s geographical location and turns instead to the physical *substance* of the land itself. The town, he rhapsodizes, seems to emerge “miraculously” “out of an hill or heape of sande,” surrounded and “inamorately protected and patronized” by “the neyboring sands” and a tribute to the “industry” of its busy residents (156–57). The chronological account he promises his reader is not a history of mythological figures or royal fiat but an energetic portrait dominated by the sands and shore:

An. Do. 1000 or thereabouts (as I haue scrapt out of wormeaten Parchment) and in the Raigne of *Canutus*, hee that dyed drunke at Lambeth or Lome-hith, somewhat before or somewhat after, not a prenticeship of yeares varying . . . *Caput extulit undis*, the sands set vp shop for themselves, and from that moment to this sextine centurie . . . they would no more liue vnder the yoke of the sea, or haue their heads washt with his bubbly spume or Barbers balderdash, but clearely quitted, disterminated, and relegated themselues from his inflated capriciousnesse of playing the Dictator ouer them. (160)

In the landscape where Camden, Leland, or Lambarde mused over the traces of prehistorical civilizations, Nashe finds only a “yellow heape or plumpe,” a “clod-mould, or turffe ground” that the wind has “clustred or congested . . . together” (160). By mimicking the latinate phrasing and technical vocabulary of the chorography, Nashe laughs at the solemnity with which the antiquarian searched assiduously for the mythological origins of his people, instead denigrating his sources, imputing an ignoble end for Canutus, the Saxon king, and finally designating his death-place with mock-etymological precision. He continues the gesture by recounting the arrival of “*Cerdicus*, a Plashing Saxon” (161) who bestows his name on the sands, and then follows these sands through an elaborate chronicle-like sequence:

in the time of King *Herrolde* and *William* the Conquerour, this sand of Yarmouth grew to a setled lumpe, and was as drie as the sands of Arabia. . . . In the raigne of King *Henrie* the first, King *Steu*, King *Henrie* the second, and *Richard de corde Lyon*, the apostacie of the sands from the yalping world was so great that they ioynd themselves to the maine land of Eastflege, and whole tribes of males and females trotted, bargd it thither, to build and enhabite. (162–63)¹²

The vividness of Nashe's description is one of its most striking aspects—his account assumes an almost cinematic quality as the sands surge and hordes flock, like a Mel Brooks parody of a Technicolor epic.

Nashe's satire, however, extends beyond antiquarian syntax and vocabulary to expose fundamental tensions in the evolving methods of early modern historical thought. His description of Yarmouth's surrounding landscape effectively pokes fun at the chorographer's attempt to integrate nontextual, physical evidence into historical narratives which traditionally made no place for them.¹³ In the chorography, the antiquarian impulse to collect and describe physical objects coincided with a newly felt imperative to *explain* those objects by incorporating them within a larger historical trajectory, and for this the only available model of history writing—chronicle history—offered no assistance. Confined as it was to monumentalizing a series of royal acts, the chronicle exhibited none of the complex social vision that had increasingly become the focus of antiquarian research and refused to admit as historically relevant evidence that did not immediately contribute to an understanding of statecraft. The chronicle's narrow historical scope thus ensured that its methodology remained an essentially conservative one, and its writers largely restricted themselves to the consideration of themes and problems that had been established by previous authorities. The antiquarian, in contrast, having turned to the surviving evidence of everyday life—the ruins, inscriptions, rituals, coins, and monuments scattered across the contemporary landscape—was also forced to develop new criteria for interpreting and evaluating this evidence, and the tendency within antiquarian thought to emphasize firsthand experience as a guarantor for historical fact has been celebrated by historiographers and historians of science as an important antecedent to the empiricism of the seventeenth century.¹⁴

In his *Perambulation of Kent*, William Lambarde is acutely aware of the tension between chorography and history and tries to preserve a balance between them, although the dedication to the *Perambulation* explicitly designates it as a history and then generically hastens to recommend the study of history to every gentleman. Lambarde's

hesitation is instructive, for here, rather than a modern proto-empiricism, we find the persistence of an older epistemology under the guise of a novel vocabulary. The title page to the 1576 edition of the *Perambulation*, for instance, trumpets the fact that the work is “nowe increased by the addition of some things which the Author him selfe hath observed since that time.”¹⁵ The authority of these particular additions derives from the fact that Lambarde himself has seen and collected the information, and in this way it would appear that the title page establishes “autopsy,” or self-seeing, as the enabling methodology of the work. But when Lambarde actually uses the language of seeing and looking in the course of his account he does so as an organizational technique, a way of indicating a transition from one section of the work to the next. “Seeing” becomes a metaphor for the proper order of exposition and not for empirical research:

But of this saint (saving your reverence) we shall have fit place to speake more largely heereafter, and therefore let us now leave the Sea, and looke towarde Shipwey.¹⁶

As much as the Elizabethan chorography owed to the proto-empiricist traditions of geography and cosmology, in other words, it owed an equal debt to the contemporary humanist reformers who emphasized the orderly presentation of textual material. One of the most popular textbooks of the sixteenth century, Rudolph Agricola’s *De Inventione Dialectica libri tres* (1539), advocates a “natural” order of narration that follows chronology, geography, and social status, exactly the principles of organization structuring the chorography.¹⁷ Philip Melanchthon’s later *Erotemata Dialectices* (1547) provides an even more striking definition:

Method is an acquired aptitude, that is a science or art, for making a way according to a certain plan; that is, method discovers and opens a way as if through places blocked and made impassable by thorns, and produces material pertinent to a theme, and sets it out in an orderly fashion.¹⁸

Lambarde’s *Perambulation* thus assumes a rich set of semantic associations: it has gone from being a physical movement through the actual, lived space of the countryside in the work of Leland to what we might call the epistemological space of taxonomy, in which thought itself is conceptualized as a process of division, classification, and proper arrangement.¹⁹ The book-in-the-hand further reinforces this habit of giving spatial form to analytic thinking, especially, as in the chorography,

when the *seriatim* movement of reading through a written argument is supported by the synchronous glance at the graphic space of the map.

Nashe's account is precisely calculated to expose the textuality of the chorographical enterprise: he makes evident the fact that even if antiquarians such as Lambarde invoked the rhetoric of eyewitness authority, their actual method depended less on the relation between object and eye than on the epistemological space of the *page* and its organizing principles. Nashe also positions the reader as the viewer and Yarmouth as the object viewed, but his gesture explicitly evokes a community of readers who are presumed to identify not simply with the national landscape, its cities, and its product but with the process of *representing* that landscape and its attributes:

A narrow channell or Isthmus in rash view you woulde opinionate it: when this I can deuoutly auerre, I beholding it with both my eies this last fishing, sixe hundreth reasonable barkes and vesselles of good burden (with a vantage) it hath giuen shelter to at once in her harbour, and most of them riding abrest before the Key betwixt the Bridge and the Southgate. Many bows length beyond the marke my penne roves not, I am certain: if I doe, they stand at my elbow that can correct mee. The delectablest lustie sight and mouingest obiect, me thought it was, that our Ile sets forth. (157)

Here the invocation of "looking" makes us aware of the process of identification as it occurs, since we watch Nashe in the process of watching and writing; we see him being positioned as a national subject at the very moment that we are asked to take up the identical position, in an act of "empirical" observation that oscillates between the pretense of an unmediated, purely subjective "view" and an explicitly textualized process ("my penne roves not"). Nashe's manic, self-referential digressions regularly divert our gaze from the object before our mind's eye to the physical page beneath our nose:

I had a crotchet in my head, here to haue giuen the raines to my pen, and run astray thorowout all the coast townes of England, digging vp their dilapidations, and raking out of the dust-heape or charnell house of tenebrous eld the rottenest relique of their monuments, and bright scoured the canker eaten brasse of their first bricklayers and founders, & commented and paralogized on their condition in the present, & in the pretertense. (167)

Stay let me look about, where am I? in my text, or out of it? not out, for a groate: out, for an angell: nay, I'll lay no wager, for nowe I perponder more sadlie vpon it, I thinke I am out indeede. (219)

Where now is the studied distance and objectivity of the roving antiquary? The impulse to anatomize an individual region that is so evident in the chorography—to gather every conceivable aspect of a locality, no matter how insignificant, into one volume—now appears to warp and stretch through the lens of Nashe’s distorting rhetoric, threatening to exceed the parameters of the page and to continue multiplying until it swamps the very hand that would arrange it.

Nashe has grasped one of the fundamental methodological principles underlying the chorography—its fascination with cataloguing particular objects of knowledge—and has exploded this preoccupation into the figure of the red herring. Turning the encomiastic tradition to full advantage, his praise of the fish becomes a parody of trivial fact-finding, a prodigious send-up of record searching, myopic scrutiny, and, as F. Smith Fussner so aptly puts it, the “infatuated patience” of the antiquary who seeks knowledge in physical things.²⁰ His text devolves into a riot of the particular: the herring, already among the most trivial of objects, is even more specifically qualified by the predicate *red*, and this trope itself mutates at every moment, each instance of its appearance bringing a new guise, new title, or new attribute. First “old *Ticklecob*, or *Magister fac totum*” (174), the red herring then becomes “Captaine of the squamy catell” (180), then “*Semper-Augustus* of the seas finnie freeholders” (180), “Our mitred Archpatriarch, *Leopald* herring” (181), “Solyman Herring” (182), “Donsel herring” (183), “*Domingo Rufus* or *Sacrapant herring*” (184), “*Piemont Huldrick Herring*” (185), “*Hydra* Herring” (189), “*Cadwallader* Herring” (199), “Noble Caeserean charlemaine herring” (223); and finally, in a last salvo of rhetoric:

The puissant red herring, the golden *Hesperides* red herring, the *Meonian* red herring, the red herring of red Herrings Hal, euery pregnant peculiar of whose resplendent laude and honour to delineate and adumbrate to the ample life were a woorke that would drinke drie fourescore and eighteene Castalian fountaines of eloquence, consume another *Athens* of facunditie, and abate the haughtiest poetically fury twixt this and the burning Zone and the tropike of Cancer. (226)

Lenten Stuffle enacts before our eyes the ridiculous spectacle of the absolutely particular principle becoming, somehow, even more particular than it began. A figure for the emerging power of the particular example to constitute the general principle, the red herring fails to produce this principle, with the result that Nashe’s text can come to no “conclusion”: there can be no demonstration, no general principle, no universal premise, no end—there is only enumeration and the limit of human eloquence.

Herein lies the significance of the remaining two-thirds of *Lenten Stuffe*: the text's *formal* transition from chorography to encomium marks a movement between two distinct modes of analyzing physical objects, juxtaposing the antiquarian's insistence on autopsy and objective fact with the emblematic logic that was the distinguishing feature of encyclopedic thinking and humanist natural history. Here, as William Ashworth has argued, knowledge of a particular thing depended not on acuity of observation but on the subtle associative logic that joined any individual object to a potentially endless series of other seemingly unrelated things: myths, paintings, animals, exotic locations, astrological influences, even the entire cosmos.²¹ The red herring acts as a unifying principle or strange tool, and we peer into *Lenten Stuffe* as we would the lens of a curious optical device to see the kaleidoscopic movements of an English literary tradition consolidating itself. From Xerxes on the Hellespont to Bullingbroke at Dover, from Cleopatra and Dido to Robin Hood and Little John, from Ovid and Virgil to Ascham's comparison of Varro to the lowly herringmen of Yarmouth, the red herring is the food of ancient philosophers and a figure more beautiful and enticing than "that strumpet" Helen, a figure "which draweth more barkes to Yarmouth bay, than her beauty did to *Troy*" (185). Nashe in fact makes disparaging reference to both Pliny and the Swiss medical scholar Conrad Gesner for having overlooked the red herring in their encyclopedic studies of animals, and the gesture indicates that natural history formed an important template for his own work.²²

But of even greater importance to understanding Nashe's treatment of his red herring is the analytic paradigm that lay behind natural history and the study of natural objects: the hylomorphism, or matter-form theory, of neo-Aristotelian philosophy. We know that the final quarter of the sixteenth century in England was marked at both Oxford and Cambridge by a gradual return to the scholastic natural philosophy and Aristotelian texts that had been purged by earlier Edwardian and Elizabethan statutes.²³ After approximately seven years at Cambridge, Nashe certainly would have been familiar with the principles of Aristotelian hylomorphism, and when we recall that the university was the seat of Ramism in England and that the debates between the Ramist William Temple (1555–1627) and the Aristotelian Everard Digby (1550–92) were taking place just as Nashe arrived at St. John's in 1581, his parody of antiquarianism in *Lenten Stuffe* implies a certain anti-Ramist attitude and an interest in Aristotelian thought. "Those years which should bee employed in *Aristotle* are expired in Epitomes," Nashe had complained in his 1589 preface to Robert Greene's *Menaphon*, and the sentiment is

in keeping with other slighting references to Ramus and Ramist techniques in that work.²⁴ Indeed, the very playful opacity that distinguishes Nashe's red herring can itself be taken as an ironic reference to Aristotle. Charles Schmitt has identified in humanist attacks on the scholastic tradition the recurring trope of "Aristotle as cuttlefish." The critique was as follows, writes Schmitt: "Aristotle's teaching is uncertain, for his way of expressing it was obscure. He is like the cuttlefish who obscures himself in his own ink when he feels himself about to be grasped."²⁵ Beneath the patina of neologisms and nonsense phrasing that lends to *Lenten Stufe* its air of deliberate inscrutability, Nashe's treatment of his red herring in fact corresponds closely to Aristotle's conceptualization of change as motion, and I suggest that the encomiastic sections of *Lenten Stufe* reflect the basic principles of hylomorphism, in which a particular substance might be decomposed into its constitutive *forma*, its properties, qualities, or attributes.²⁶

Although for Aristotle the distinction between matter and form was purely a theoretical one that could not be perceived empirically, in the natural philosophy of the Renaissance discrete *formae* tended to assume a real existence of their own, especially the notorious "substantial forms" which Descartes, Gassendi, Boyle, and others hastened to dismiss in their accounts of change and matter. Thomas Blundeville's *The Art of Logicke*, published in the same year as *Lenten Stufe*, provides a standard sixteenth-century definition of "form" as "that which giueth shape and being to the thing formed, whereof also the thing taketh his name," and then further defines "substantial form" as that "which is the first beeing or shape of anie thing."²⁷ The red herring displays many of the characteristics of the substantial form and its complement, prime matter, as defined by Blundeville or as taught in natural philosophy textbooks: as form, it is both an epistemological principle (how we know a thing) and an ontological entity (a thing existing), an internal structuring principle endowed with an informing, causal power; as prime matter, it is that which persists through change and which can take any form.²⁸ The red herring operates both as a particular substance in Nashe's text *and* as a metonym for the evolving form of that text, whose own "Stuffe," we might say, is finally one long string of accidental predicates further specifying the statement "The red herring is . . ." ("every man's money, from the King to the Courtier" [179], "legate of peace" [188], "stately borne, stately sprung" [189], and so forth).

A preponderance of evidence adduced by Charles Schmitt, Antonio Perez-Ramos, Patricia Reif and others demonstrates that hylomorphism remained the primary discursive framework for the production of

knowledge concerning natural bodies, despite the hybrid mix of Ramism and neo-Platonism developing at the universities. It is thus not surprising that when Francis Bacon—Nashe's almost exact contemporary at Cambridge—sought to accommodate into philosophical discourse both the products and the epistemological potential of industry and new technology, he did so initially within neo-Aristotelian structures of thought.²⁹ Nashe, too, attempts to reconcile the world of manufacture with the work of nature: the specific problem posed by the red herring *as an object of intellectual analysis* derives from the fact that it is *both* a natural and a manufactured object, and for this reason it required a more elaborate analytic context than either natural philosophy or antiquarian thought could provide alone.

By 1600 the English market in consumption goods had reached an historically unprecedented level of diversification, geographical extension, and distribution among social classes, but for all their increasing ubiquity in everyday life manufactured commodities still remained of little intellectual interest to the educated gentleman. The emergence of a self-sustaining market brought with it a pervasive mistrust of new instruments of commercial exchange, and studies of Elizabethan life such as William Harrison's *A Description of England* (1577) could only denigrate English habits of consumption and commodities such as those to which Nashe compares his red herring ("tart and galingale . . . comfittes and sugar" [176]).³⁰ Despite the encouragements of Vives, Harvey, or Bacon, the mechanical arts still suffered from the social and intellectual stigmas that had been generally associated with them from antiquity through the middle ages, and manufactured objects did not fit easily into the categories of peripatetic natural philosophy that dominated the university curriculum.³¹

I suggest that the juxtaposition of chorography with the logic of the encomium and natural history—all fields with a pretension to comprehensiveness—created an epistemological context in which the commodity might gradually be integrated into the existing categories of rigorous philosophical or "scientific" analysis. Antiquarian thought had emerged as one of the first intellectual methods to seek knowledge in the common objects of everyday life, and the use of material culture as evidence for historical argument was precisely what distinguished antiquarianism from conventional modes of historical writing. At first these objects were not commercial products. Early chorographies either ignored or treated cursorily the economic life of their regions, perhaps noting a key product or industry in passing but in no way integrating the economic sphere into their accounts of civil society. Given the nature of

historical thought in the period this bifurcation is hardly surprising; indeed, the very notion of an abstract market would emerge fully only in the next century.³² But the chorography's broad scope of inquiry positioned it as the ideal form in which to study the interconnections between social life and the processes of commerce. Carew's *Survey of Cornwall*, for instance, published only three years after *Lenten Stuffle* but almost certainly circulating in manuscript well before this, devotes as many pages to Cornish tin manufacture and the delicate balance between the economy of the region and London-based financiers as it does to taking an inventory of the natural world and to listing gentlemen of name.

One of Nashe's more notable departures from conventional chorographical description lies in the way that he chooses to overlook Yarmouth's civic institutions and governance—"a theame displeasent to the graue modesty of the descreet present magistrates" (159), or so he claims—in favor of hard economic data. His survey of town structures calls particular attention to the custom house, "with the appurtenances for the loading and vnloading of ships" (164), and this building is in turn followed by a precise enumeration of the town's foreign trade deficit and annual revenue from herrings. Many passages throughout the initial sections of *Lenten Stuffle* testify to Nashe's acute awareness of the economic life of East Anglia as a complex, interrelated totality. The red herring, he explains:

sets a worke thousands, who liue all the rest of the yeare gayly well by what in some fewe weekes they scratch vp then, and come to beare office of Questman and Scavenger in the Parish where they dwell . . . Carpenters, Shipwrights, makers of lines, roapes, and cables, dressers of Hempe, spinners of thred, and net weauers it giues their handfults to . . . [it] keeps in earnings the Cooper, the Brewer, the Baker, and numbers of other people, to gill, wash, and packe it, and carrie it and recarrie it. In exchange of it from other Countries they returne wine and Woades, for which is alwaies paide ready Golde, with salt, Canuas, vitre, and a great deale of good trash. Her Maiesteies tributes and customes this Semper Augustus of the Seas finnie freeholders augmenteth & enlargeth vncountably, and to the encrease of Nauigation for her seruice hee is no enemy. (179–80)

Indeed, Elizabethan projectors such as Robert Hitchcock, Tobias Gentleman, and even John Dee reasoned that developing the fishing industry held the key to military strength, and their logic is remarkably borne out in surviving state documents and Royal Acts that advocate the institution of Wednesday "as an Additional Fish Day" in the hopes that

enforced demand might augment the number of English fishing vessels available for naval warfare.³³

English herring, in short, not only fed the Elizabethan subject: it functioned as an ideological hinge, a node around which the State could consolidate its legislative and administrative powers. There can be little question that Nashe demonstrates an awareness of the herring industry's strategic importance, and these moments in his text have led several critics to identify a protomaterialist attitude running throughout *Lenten Stuffe*.³⁴ The fact that Nashe appears to have reserved his most florid rhetoric for one of early modern England's most profitable commodities has only made a Marxist analysis all the more inviting. Indeed, amidst *Lenten Stuffe*'s many ramblings the red herring emerges as something similar to Marx's general form of value—a commodity that operates as the form of expression for the value of all other commodities—and it would be hard to imagine an early modern text for which a discussion of fetishism would be more appropriate: not simply of the commodity but of the entire system of capital production, in which land, civic structures, social classes, and particular divisions of labor all spring from the production of herring.³⁵

But while Nashe's prescient grasp of the relationship between social, economic, and political processes certainly makes possible our own retrospective insights into the nature of Tudor absolutism, differentiating and integrating markets, and emerging English nationalism, this awareness does not seem to have led Nashe *himself* to articulate any consistent philosophy of social change. Complaint, in short, does not necessarily produce critique: *Lenten Stuffe* is so self-involved and driven by perceived personal injury that its polemic never achieves the status of sustained argument. His account rather reflects the pique of an exile out of favor, a sentimental fondness for the region of his boyhood, and perhaps a general suspicion of London that was widespread during the period. Thomas Milles, Customer for Sandwich and its ports from 1586, complained of the outports' decline in trade that:

All our Creeks seek to one River, all our Rivers run to one Port, all our Ports join to one Town, all our Towns make but one City, and all our Cities and Suburbs to one vast, unwieldy and disorderly Babel of buildings, which the world calls London.³⁶

Indeed, Nashe's discontent with the London authorities even results in a paradoxical strain of conservatism and patriotism, in that he identifies instead with "England" and praises the red herring as the *epitome* of English products, as the very object that *reconciles* potentially divisive

oppositions by meeting the needs of merchant capital *and* the diverse laboring population of East Anglia, of the outports *and* London, of domestic (“coasting”) trade *and* international export. Moreover, in satirizing the chorography Nashe is playing an extremely learned joke of the kind best appreciated by a Lambarde, a Camden, or a Stow—as W. Scott Blanchard points out, it is the paradoxical nature of the Menippean satire to couch its anti-intellectualism in urbane language.³⁷

From a philosophical and encomiastic standpoint, the red herring thus appears as an index of absolute particularity—and its status as an epistemological principle introduces a paradox into Nashe’s treatment of it as a commodified object. The very particularity that allows the red herring to function as a general form of value, for instance, also disturbs the entire process of valorization itself: even as its unique status renders it indispensable, this same singularity ensures that there can be *no* real comparison between it and other products.³⁸ The red herring exceeds all other commodities and renders them superfluous through its prodigious generative power. But even in its very “materiality” the red herring is perpetually transforming and evolving, an object that is never self-identical at any given instant and one that remains, finally, too particular, too heterogeneous *in and of itself* to submit to any form of equation or quantification—exactly the operations that define the commodity form and that are necessary for the generation or appearance of value.

We can see this not only in Nashe’s hyperbolic gestures of predication but also in the metaphors of making and practical skill that he momentarily invokes:

of my note-books and all books else here in the countrey I am bereaued, whereby I might enamell and hatch ouer this device more artifiically and masterly, and attire it in his true orient varnish and tincture; wherefore heart and good wil, a workman is nothing without his tooles. (175–76)

Like so much in this text, his conceit again derives from chorographical writing. There is a striking change in the metaphors used to frame Lambarde’s methodology in the two editions of his *Perambulation of Kent*. The 1576 edition invokes the language of seeing, as I have described above. The 1596 edition repeats this same language, but Lambarde now adds a dedication that draws a striking comparison between the procedures of the antiquary and the smelting of precious metals:

I my selfe, being very desirous to attaine to some knowledge and understanding of the *Antiquities* of this Realme, which (as *Metall* contained within the bowels of the earth) lie hidden in olde bookes

hooded up in corners, did not onely my selfe digge, and rake together whatsoever I could of that kinde, but procured divers of my friends also to set to their hands and doe the like. And when the matter was by our diligent travaile growne (as me thought) to a convenient *Masse*, with such fire of discretion as I had, I severed the metall and drosse in sunder, and cast it into certeine rude, and unformed *Sowze*, not unmeet for a worke man. But, whereas no small commendation groweth to the metall, by the skilfull hand of the craftsman that bringeth it to fashion . . . I . . . having neither good arte nor instrument to begin withall, *nor yet approved patterne or Moald to imitate and follow*, adventured nevertheless to fashion somewhat out of my *Sowze*, and have (as I now see) shaped such a peece, as is more meete to be condemned to the kitchen, than woorthy to be admitted, or have place in the parlour.³⁹

The proximate source for the metaphor is likely to be found in rhetorical handbooks such as George Puttenham's *The Arte of English Poesie* (1589), in which the poet is placed explicitly within the tradition of the mechanical arts. Echoing Lambarde's phrasing, Puttenham argues that the poet works according to the methods of the carpenter, joiner, or shoemaker, but that he exceeds other workmen in that he makes his works without any "paterne or moule . . . nor by any foreigne copie or example."⁴⁰

Here Nashe, Lambarde, and Puttenham all place themselves within a discursive formation that Perez-Ramos has referred to as a "maker's knowledge," in which the subject knows a thing not by observing it, collecting it, or formulating logically true statements about it, but because he is instrumental in the process of its coming to be. The emergence of this epistemological model in the early modern period has been well described by Perez-Ramos, Paolo Rossi, and others and is typically associated with Bacon's neoempiricism; it has been explained by the loosening of guild structures, the rise of urban-dwelling mercantile classes, and the usual shifts associated with the development of capitalism.⁴¹ But the maker's knowledge model interests me here not because Bacon could assimilate it into a rational, instrumental mode of scientific knowledge, nor simply because of its associations with capitalist production: it interests me because it provides an alternative model for "theorizing" the material object—the terms "theorizing" or "thinking" in an abstract, intellectual sense are inadequate here, since this "thinking" is really a form of doing. It is an epistemology of the object that breaks open the tight relationship between the particular instance and the general principle and forces us to try and imagine the *absolutely particular thing*: as Puttenham and Lambarde both insist, the made thing is based on "no mold, model or pattern."

Recent rereadings of Marx's work through deconstruction by Gayatri Spivak and Thomas Keenan have pointed to the irreducible heterogeneity of "use value"—the state in which particular qualities refuse to become equivalent quantities—as a way of revealing the constitutive fissures of the valorization process.⁴² The epistemology of the object in *Lenten Stufe*, however, suggests that the stages *prior* to use value—the stages of working the useful object—reveal similar aporetic moments that constitute the very category of "matter" itself: it is not simply that the labor expended on the useful object is particular and thus essentially different from other kinds of labor (as both Marx and Aristotle argued), but that the body of the made thing itself changes continuously.

It would be interesting to consider how far Marx himself conjoined a maker's knowledge model with neo-Aristotelian hylomorphism to produce his labor theory of value. We can read the theses on Feuerbach, for instance, as a maker's knowledge tradition radicalized into a potentially revolutionary mode of social *praxis*.⁴³ In *Capital*, we may suspect that Marx looked to Aristotle for a model of natural dialectics that would enable him to *invert* Hegelian methodology and allow him to assert the natural world as a state actually existing outside of consciousness but which is constantly modified or mediated by human activity, and from which all ideal forms are subsequently derived.⁴⁴ Marx, of course, explicitly traced his analysis of use value and exchange value in *Capital* back to Aristotle's discussion of justice in book five of the *Nicomachean Ethics*. He makes it clear, moreover, that he understands this economic notion of form to be analogous to both social and natural forms.⁴⁵ Heinz Lubasz has pointed out that Marx's writings contain many scattered references not simply to the *Nicomachean Ethics* or the *Politics* but to Aristotle's *scientific* writings: the *Physics*, *On the Heavens*, *On Generation and Decay*, and *On the Generation of Animals*, precisely the texts in which the fundamental principles of hylomorphism can be found.⁴⁶

Much depends on how we interpret Marx's use of the term "form" throughout *Capital* and the *Grundrisse*, and indeed this would require a careful consideration of the relation between Aristotelian logic and Hegel's *Science of Logic*—especially the sections on matter and form—which Marx read so closely. Scholars of the *Logic* have argued that Hegel himself derived his dialectical method in part from Aristotle, whose *own* metaphysics was modeled after his studies of biological development.⁴⁷ The chapter on "Ground" in the second book of the *Science of Logic* subsumes a *hylomorphic* understanding of form within a *phenomenological* one: in the first, form is opposed dialectically to *matter* and appears as a shaping, structuring, or determining principle

of undifferentiated substance; in the second, form is opposed to *content* and is in fact subordinated to it, such that content becomes the determining category that specifies the thing. Form and content are then reconciled dialectically as the first stage of the opposition between “appearance” and “essence”; the entire movement is presented as one determinate stage in the larger process whereby a self-moving substance (the Concept) gradually reveals itself through a series of “moments,” “appearances,” or “forms” of conscious, knowing thought.⁴⁵

The analysis of the commodity’s “double form” (138; 78) of value in the early chapters of *Capital* follows Hegel’s method closely, as Marx pointed out in the postface to the second edition. He employs phenomenological language from the first sentence and throughout the subsequent analysis of exchange value, money, price, and surplus value, such that each stage and indeed the entire work is at one level undertaken from the standpoint of how the capitalist mode of production “appears” [*erscheint*] to a perceiving, thinking, analytic consciousness (125 and throughout; 63).⁴⁹ This use of phenomenological categories persists even though Marx is attempting finally to *dislodge* an idealized, Hegelian self-consciousness by asserting the primacy of material reality and its perpetual transformation by human *praxis*.⁵⁰ Chapter 3, section 2, “The Means of Circulation,” is strongly Hegelian in its method: Marx speaks of contradiction as the “form of motion” [*Bewegungsformen*] for the exchange of commodities; breaks the commodity down into its “external opposition” between use value and value [*einen äußeren Gegensatz, worin sie ihren immanenten Gegensatz von Gebrauchswerth und Werth darstellen*]; taken together, these forms constitute a “unity of differences” [*Einheit von Unterschieden*] through which “value appears only ideally” in price [*ihr Werthsein erscheint nur ideell im Preis*] (199; 128). He opposes the “changes in form” [*Formwechsel*] (200; 129) that constitute the exchange process to its “material content” [*stofflichen Inhalt*] (200; 129), and he insists on analyzing “the phenomenon in its pure shape” [*das Phänomen rein zu betrachten*] (203; 131). The remainder of the section (“The Circulation of Money”) proceeds in similar terms, as does the fourth chapter (“The General Formula for Capital”), in which Marx describes value much like the Hegelian Concept or Spirit as an “automatic subject” [*automatisches Subjekt*] (255; 170), a “dominant subject” [*übergreifende Subjekt*] (255; 170), and a “self-moving substance . . . for which commodities and money are both mere forms” [*selbst-bewegende Substanz, für welche Waare und Gelde beide bloße Formen*] (256; 170).

Other passages, however, suggest that Marx has—again like Hegel—embedded a hylomorphic understanding of matter and form within his larger phenomenological method, although this hylomorphism exists only as one element in a famously diverse series of references to chemistry, infection, citizenship, transubstantiation, mirrors, Shakespeare, “wooning glances” (205), and the mysterious “language of commodities” (143). At each stage of his analysis Marx’s materialism leads him to join the most ideal or abstract forms of value—exchange, money, price—to an understanding of substance that is persistently concrete, physical, and derived from the natural world. Readings of *Capital* that emphasize the appearance of value through equivalence, exchange, and substitution—admittedly a crucial aspect—tend to overlook this concurrent emphasis on *continuity* of substance and the perpetual transformation or “metamorphoses” (198; 127) of matter, both in making *and* in the process of exchange. “Since a commodity cannot be related to itself as equivalent,” Marx writes, “and therefore cannot make its own physical shape [*Naturalhaut*] into the expression of its own value, it must be related to another commodity as equivalent, and therefore *must make the physical shape of another commodity into its own value-form*” [*die Naturalhaut einer andren Waare zu ihrer eignen Werthform machen*] (148; 87, my emphasis). It would be possible to cite many similar passages. He describes the movement of value as “merely the movement undergone by commodities while changing their form” [*Formbewegung*] (212; 138); later he explicitly opposes this process of *physical* transformation to the change in phenomenal form undergone by the Hegelian concept.⁵¹

I suggest that Marx’s hylomorphic understanding of form emerges most prominently in his discussion of use value and labor, although the former in particular remains tantalizingly underdeveloped, as Spivak has reminded us. He opposes phenomenal forms of value to the “coarsely sensuous objectivity of commodities” [*Sinnlich gorben Gegenständlichkeit der Warenkörper*], their “matter” [*Naturstoff*] (138; 78), their “palpable bodily form” [*reellen Körperform*] (189; 120), or the “natural forms” [*Naturalformen*] (141; 81) of objects. In its useful form, the object subsists on the side of nature and this remains true when the object is shaped or re-formed by particular human labor:

Use-values like coats, linen, etc., in short the physical bodies of commodities [*waarenkörper*], are combinations of two elements, the material [*Naturstoff*] provided by nature and labour. If we subtract the total amount of useful labour of different kinds which is contained in the coat, the linen, etc., a material substratum [*materielles Substrat*] is

always left. This substratum is furnished by nature without human intervention. When man engages in production, he can only proceed as nature does herself, i.e. he can only change the form of the materials [*nur die formen der Stoff ändern*]. Furthermore, even in this work of modification he is constantly helped by natural forces. (133–34; 74–75)

Here labor is opposed as a principle of form to the matter that constitutes the irreducible natural substance of the object, and Marx's terms are remarkably similar to several definitions of substance offered by Aristotle that articulate physical change—of both natural and man-made objects—in hylomorphic terms. Compare, for instance, the following passages from the *Physics*:

Some identify the nature or substance of a natural object with that immediate constituent of it which taken by itself is without arrangement; e.g. the wood is the “nature” of the bed, and the bronze the “nature” of the statue . . . “nature”. . . is the immediate material substratum of things which have in themselves a principle of motion or change. Another account is that “nature” is the shape or form which is specified in the definition of the thing.

[A] bed and a coat and anything else of that sort, *qua* receiving these designations—i.e. in so far as they are products of art [by which Aristotle means any product of a productive skill]—have no impulse to change. But in so far as they happen to be composed of stone or of earth or of a mixture of the two, they do have such an impulse, and just to that extent.⁵²

In Marx's analysis, *particular* human labor forms the useful object and as such it is, like form in Aristotle, a principle of differentiation and particularity: it is that which allows the matter of one useful object to be distinguished from another.

Labor, however, is also precisely that singular *quality* which can nevertheless be measured in terms of *quantity* and which can accumulate in a heterogeneous series of physical things. When useful labor is converted into *homogeneous* or undifferentiated human labor, this latter comes to constitute the “substance” (*substanz, stofflich*) of value itself, which now proceeds to pass through a series of phenomenal forms of appearance.⁵³ Labor thus emerges as the fundamental determining principle of both use value and exchange value, and as such it allows Marx to combine Aristotelian and Hegelian formal categories. We may see this conjunction also in a passage from the third Notebook of the *Grundrisse*:

There is an indifference on the part of the substance [*Stoff*] towards the form, which develops out of merely objectified labour time, in whose objective existence labour has become merely the vanished, *external form* of its natural substance [*äusserlich Form ihrer natürlichen Substanz*], existing merely in the external form of the substantial [*das Stoffliche*] (e.g. the form of the table for wood, or the form of the cylinder for iron); no immanent law of reproduction maintains this form in the way in which the tree, for example, maintains its form as a tree (wood maintains itself in the specific form of the tree because this form is a form of the wood; while the form of the table is accidental for wood, and not the intrinsic form of its substance [*Substanz*]); it exists only as a form external to the substance, or it exists only as a substance [*stofflich*]. The dissolution to which its substance is prey therefore dissolves the form as well. However, when they are posited as conditions of living labour, they are themselves reanimated. . . . The transformation of the material by living labour, by the realization of living labour in the material—a transformation which, as purpose, determines labour and is its purposeful activation (a transformation which does not only posit the form as external to the inanimate object, as a mere vanishing image of its material consistency)—thus preserves the material in a definite form, and subjugates the transformation of the material [*Formwechsel des Stoffs*] to the purpose of labour.⁵⁴

Marx's English editors note the almost exact citation of Hegel's *Science of Logic*, but again the resemblance to Aristotle is equally remarkable.⁵⁵ These are precisely the passages in which Marx seeks to reconcile a humanist vision of creative potential and practical activity—a maker's knowledge—with a naturalism rooted in hylomorphic categories. They are also the passages that render the category of the "material" anything but a stable or self-evident one.

Charting the conceptual overlaps between Nashe and Marx—the transition from *Stufe* to *Stoff*, as it were—allows us to begin to undertake an epistemological history of the commodity *as a distinct kind of object* and an analysis of the pressures that it exerted on early modern modes of thought. Here Foucault's middle work may serve as a useful supplement to the methods of historical anthropology that have recently reinvigorated materialist criticism and sponsored a series of excellent studies of early modern commodities, in which the object's very physicalness or "thingness" make it a convenient artifact for an analysis of cultural forces and categories.⁵⁶ *The Archeology of Knowledge* can be read as a theoretical inversion of these studies, or as an attempt to replace the Marxist concept of fetishism with an epistemological-linguistic model—an analysis that shifts the critical focus of theory away from the reified "thing" and toward the parameters set by discourse and its structures on the formulation of statements *about* the thing:

The object does not await in limbo the order that will free it and enable it to become embodied in a visible and prolix objectivity; it does not pre-exist itself, held back by some obstacle at the first edges of light. It exists under . . . relations . . . established between institutions, economic and social processes, behavioral patterns, systems of norms, techniques, types of classification, modes of characterization; and these relations are not present in the object . . . What, in short, we wish to do is to dispense with “things.” . . . To substitute for the enigmatic treasure of “things” anterior to discourse, the regular formation of objects that emerge only in discourse. To define these objects . . . by relating them to the body of rules that enable them to form as objects of a discourse and thus constitute the conditions of their historical appearance.⁵⁷

For all its frustrating abstraction and inconsistencies, I suggest that the method put forward in the *Archeology of Knowledge* not only sheds light on Nashe’s perplexing text but “opens a way,” as Melanchthon might say, for a revised intellectual history of the commodity, from its early appearance in philosophical thought at the end of the sixteenth century to its spectacular eruption in Marx’s work more than two hundred and fifty years later.

Like *Capital*, *Lenten Stoffe* is both a theoretical and an historical study; both texts, too, combine social, natural, and economic categories to produce an analysis of the commodity form. The text precisely demonstrates what Foucault might describe as the process of the commodity’s historical appearance in and through discourse: the transposition of the herring into an intellectual principle makes it thinkable as a “commodity” and thus allows it to be inserted into other domains of early modern thought concerning prices, currency devaluation, national trade balances, profit speculation, or mercantilism and protectionism. These were the very strands of thought that would coalesce into the eighteenth-century science of political economy and which found their early modern expression in the work of those writers closely associated with the Tudor state, such as Bacon, Sir Thomas Smith, and John Dee; in the publications of private speculators such as Hugh Platt or Robert Hitchcock; or in the writings of the early seventeenth-century theoreticians of the market such as Thomas Mun, Gerald de Malynes, and Edward Misselden.⁵⁸ Antiquarians such as Lambarde or Carew have been overlooked as proto-economic thinkers, and their chorographies warrant further study in this regard. As *both* natural history and social history, the chorography provides a glimpse into the reconceptualization of natural objects into commodities with use values and exchange values, a process conveniently registered in the double use of the term “commoditie” in English from Leland to Lambarde to Carew: the term

designates an object of utility or convenience that is simultaneously a product bearing a value on the market and that is destined for commercial exchange. When we consider that the specific focus of the chorography is to organize its knowledge of objects within a mappable national space, we can see how it establishes important preconditions for the notion of an integral national market as a system of interrelated goods and regions.

At the same time, however, the conjunction of several distinct epistemologies in *Lenten Stufe* is not without fissures and contradictions: the emphasis on the particularity of the red herring and the perpetual transformation of the made thing result also in a conceptualization of the object that remains distinct from, if not antithetical to, the quantification and production of surplus value required by capitalism. Nashe's red herring is finally much more than a particular object of knowledge: it is the trope that stands for the many possible methodological gestures of "taking an object of knowledge" and of the multiple discursive strategies and interarticulations which result. *Lenten Stufe* is unusual among examples of early modern writing in that it makes these moments of convergence visible and takes its own form—its own existence for us as literary critics or cultural historians—from this convergence, all while managing to "comment" on this process not by speaking about it explicitly but by "working" it, or putting it into practice as it unfolds across the page. Its form is not imposed from the outside, like a pattern or like good humanist method, but evolves from *within* itself: the "form" of *Lenten Stufe*, like the commodity, is that which remains when the red herring has finished its peculiar journey.

University of Wisconsin, Madison

NOTES

Over time this essay has been through many drafts, and I would like to thank the following people for readings, suggestions, or conversations that contributed to its "unfolding form": John Archer, Deborah Barchat, Jonathan Gil Harris, Martha Howell, Margaret Pappano, Douglas Pfeiffer, Anne Prescott, Rebecca Walkowitz, and all the members of the Renaissance dissertation seminar at Columbia. Howard Bloch, Jean Howard, and David Scott Kastan deserve special thanks for their many readings and generous comments. Earlier versions were presented as a part of panels at the 1997 MLA in Toronto entitled "Experimental Histories of Early Modernity" and at the 2001 SAA in Miami entitled "Antiquarianisms, Past, Present, and Future"; I would like to thank both Juliana Schiesari and Natasha Korda, respectively, for organizing those sessions and inviting me to participate.

¹ *Lenten Stufe*, in *The Works of Thomas Nashe*, ed. Ronald B. McKerrow, 5 vols. (London: A. H. Bullen, 1904), 3:185–86. Hereafter cited parenthetically by page number.

² See in particular Jonathan Gil Harris's trenchant comments in his "The New New Historicism's *Wunderkammer* of Objects," *European Journal of English Studies* 4 (2000): 111–24.

³ G. R. Hibbard, *Thomas Nashe: A Critical Introduction* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1962), 233–49; Stephen Hilliard, *The Singularity of Thomas Nashe* (Lincoln: Univ. of Nebraska Press, 1986), 221–42; Donald McGinn, *Thomas Nashe* (Boston: Twayne, 1981), 152–70; R. G. Howarth, *Two Elizabethan Writers of Fiction: Thomas Nashe and Thomas Delony* (Capetown: Univ. of Capetown, 1956), 13–15; W. Scott Blanchard, *Scholars' Bedlam: Menippean Satire in the Renaissance* (Lewisburg, Penn.: Bucknell Univ. Press, 1995), 117; Elaine Cuvelier, "Un Eloge Paradoxal Elisabethan: Nashe's *Lenten Stoffe*," *Le Paradoxe au Temps de la Renaissance*, Centre de Recherches Sur la Renaissance 7 (1982): 181–94. Readers may also wish to consult the relevant sections of Antoine Demadre's unfinished but very full survey of Nashe's life and work, published in two volumes as *Essais sur Thomas Nashe* (Salzburg: Institut für Anglistik und Amerikanistik, 1986). On the paradoxical encomium see Rosalie Colie, *Paradoxia Epidemica: The Renaissance Tradition of Paradox* (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1966), who does not mention *Lenten Stoffe*; Blanchard; and the bibliography collected by Hilliard.

⁴ See Hilliard, 221–42; Blanchard, 117–34; Jonathan Crewe, *Unredeemed Rhetoric: Thomas Nashe and the Scandal of Authorship* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 1982), 91–107; Neil Rhodes, "Nashe, Rhetoric and Satire," in *Jacobean Poetry and Prose: Rhetoric, Representation and the Popular Imagination*, ed. Clive Bloom (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1988), 25–43; Michael D. Bristol, *Carnival and Theater* (New York: Methuen, 1985), 95–103; and Lorna Hutson, *Thomas Nashe in Context* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), 245–68.

⁵ The *OED* records no use of "red herring" in the modern sense of "diversion" or "subterfuge" before 1892, although it does refer to a 1686 citation indicating that a red herring may be used for "laying the Dogs on the scent," the very phrase used by Nashe. The anecdote about the Cambridge student appears on 212. On the importance of herring to English domestic and overseas trade see Neville John Williams, *The Maritime Trade of the East Anglian Ports, 1550–1590* (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1988); James T. Jenkins, *The Herring and the Herring Fisheries* (London: P. S. King, 1927); Arthur M. Samuel, *The Herring: Its Effect on the History of Britain* (London: J. Murray, 1918). On competition with the Dutch see Jenkins, 1–12, 68–79, 80–90; Samuel, 57–100, esp. 92–96; Joyce Appleby, *Economic Thought and Ideology in Seventeenth-Century England* (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1978), 73–74; and G. D. Ramsay, *English Overseas Trade During the Centuries of Emergence* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1957), 115–16, 120.

⁶ I take the phrase "maker's knowledge" from Antonio Perez-Ramos's excellent study *Francis Bacon's Idea of Science and the Maker's Knowledge Tradition* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988).

⁷ See the period definitions of chorography offered by John Dee, Arthur Hopton, Thomas Blundeville, and others cited by Stan A. E. Mendyk, *Speculum Britanniae: Regional Study, Antiquarianism, and Science in Britain to 1700* (Toronto: Univ. of Toronto Press, 1989). General overviews of the form are provided by Mendyk; Richard Helgerson, *Forms of Nationhood: The Elizabethan Writing of England* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1992), 105–47; May McKisack, *Medieval History in the Tudor Age* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971), 126–54, 155–69; two works by E. G. R. Taylor, *Tudor Geography 1485–1583* (London: Methuen, 1930), and *Late Tudor and Early Stuart*

Geography, 1583–1650 (New York: Octagon Books, 1968), esp. 100–29. Of Nashe critics, only Blanchard notes the similarity between chorography and *Lenten Stufe* (117, 121, 122). On antiquarian thought in England see the works cited above and T. D. Kendrick, *British Antiquity* (London: Methuen, 1950); Arthur Ferguson, *Clio Unbound: Perception of the Social and Cultural Past in Renaissance England* (Durham: Duke Univ. Press, 1979), 28–59, 78–125; F. Smith Fussner, *Tudor History and the Historians* (New York: Basic Books, 1970), 277–84, and his *The Historical Revolution: English Historical Writing and Thought, 1580–1640* (New York: Basic Books, 1962), 92–106, 113–16, 299–321; F. J. Levy, *Tudor Historical Thought* (San Marino, Cal.: Huntington Library, 1967), 124–66; the essays collected in *English Historical Scholarship in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, ed. Levi Fox (London: Oxford Univ. Press, 1956), esp. Stuart Piggot, “Antiquarian Thought in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries,” 93–114; Joseph Levine, *Humanism and History: Origins of Modern English Historiography* (Ithaca: Cornell Univ. Press, 1987); Joan Evans, *A History of the Society of Antiquaries* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1956); and Linda Van Norden, “The Elizabethan Society of Antiquaries” (Ph.D. diss., Univ. of California, Los Angeles, 1946).

⁸ On Leland, see Kendrick’s foreword and Lucy Toulmin Smith’s introduction to her edition of the *Itinerary*, reprinted as *Leland’s Itinerary in England and Wales*, 5 vols. (Carbondale: Southern Illinois Univ. Press, 1964).

⁹ The work as a whole contains three explicit references to Camden (157, 161, 205); two to Bede (172, 205); one to Polydore Virgil (172); one to Buchanan (172); one to Hakluyt (173) (who, as Barbara Shapiro argues, thought of his *Principal Navigations* as a chorography); one to Froissart (185); one to Holinshed (195); one to “oldest writers” (160); and many other echoes of these and other unacknowledged sources. See Shapiro, “History and Natural History in Sixteenth- and Seventeenth-Century England: An Essay on the Relationship Between Humanism and Science,” in *English Scientific Virtuosi in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, ed. Shapiro and Robert G. Frank, Jr. (Los Angeles: William Andrews Clark Memorial Library, Univ. of California, 1979).

¹⁰ *Works*, 1:194; also cited in John Stow, *The Survey of London*, ed. C. L. Kingsford, 2 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1908), 1:18; and Fussner, *Historical Revolution*, 213. Charles Nicholl provides biographical background to the circumstances surrounding Nashe’s exile and the publication of *Lenten Stufe* in his *A Cup of News: The Life of Thomas Nashe* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1984), 242–72.

¹¹ McKerrow curiously overlooks the fact that this passage is a loose translation of a similar statement in Camden and argues that the punctuation of the passage implies that Nashe had travelled out of England (4:387, note to line 17). The relevant passage from Camden is cited by Fussner, *Tudor History*, 280, from Richard Gough’s 1789 translation.

¹² See also the passage on 160; Compare Hutson, 252–53.

¹³ Ferguson, 80; Fussner, *Tudor History*, 280.

¹⁴ See in particular Mendyk; Fussner, *Historical Revolution*, 92–106, 113–16, 299–321; Shapiro, “History and Natural History,” 3–55, and her *Probability and Certainty in Seventeenth-Century England* (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1983), 1–14, 119–62; Ferguson, 28–59, 78–125; Arnoldo Momigliano, “Ancient History and the Antiquarian,” *Studies in Historiography* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1966), 1–39; Levine, 123–54.

¹⁵ William Lambarde, *A Perambulation of Kent* (London, 1576).

¹⁶ Lambarde, *A Perambulation of Kent* (London: Baldwin, Cradock, and Joy, 1826), 162. I am citing this reprint of the 1596 edition.

¹⁷ See Lisa Jardine, *Francis Bacon: Discovery and the Art of Discourse* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1974), 17–58, who notes that while Agricola's work was first published in 1515, it was used in English university courses until the end of the sixteenth century (33).

¹⁸ Cited by Jardine, 28 n. 2.

¹⁹ Compare Jardine, 42; see also Walter Ong, "System, Space and Intellect in Renaissance Symbolism," in his *The Barbarian Within and Other Fugitive Essays and Studies* (New York: Macmillan, 1962), 68–87; and Ong, *Ramus, Method, and the Decay of Dialogue* (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 1958).

²⁰ Fussner, *Historical Revolution*, 113.

²¹ William B. Ashworth, Jr., "Natural History and the Emblematic World View," in *Reappraisals of the Scientific Revolution*, ed. David C. Lindberg and Robert S. Westman (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1990), 303–32, esp. 306.

²² "Noble Caesarean Charlemaine herring, Plinie and Gesner were too blame they slubderd thee ouer so negligently" (223). We might note also that the encyclopedic tendency of the chorography was already leading the form away from its exclusive focus on civil history and towards an increasing preoccupation with the natural world: Carew's *Survey of Cornwall* included a much more comprehensive discussion of natural formations and products than Lambarde's *Perambulation*, and by the mid-seventeenth century chorography had become almost completely annexed to new fields of scientific inquiry such as geology and botany. Compare Mendyk; Shapiro, *Probability and Certainty*, 128.

²³ The work of Charles Schmitt has been central to restoring our sense of the enduring and hybrid Aristotelianism of Renaissance thought. See the essays collected as *The Aristotelian Tradition and Renaissance Universities* (London: Variorum Reprints, 1984); *Aristotle and the Renaissance* (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 1983); and especially *John Case and Aristotelianism in Renaissance England* (Kingston, Ont.: McGill-Queen's Univ. Press, 1983); see also his "Philosophy and Science in Sixteenth-Century Universities: Some Preliminary Comments," in *The Cultural Context of Medieval Learning*, ed. John Emery Murdoch and Edith Dudley Sylla (Dordrecht: D. Reidel, 1975), 485–537. See also two works by Sister Patricia Reif, "Natural Philosophy in Some Early Seventeenth-Century Textbooks" (Ph.D. Diss., St. Louis Univ., 1962), and "The Textbook Tradition in Natural Philosophy," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 30 (1969): 17–32; Perez-Ramos, esp. 68–96, 216–38; Jardine, esp. 1–65; and Norma E. Emerton, *The Scientific Reinterpretation of Form* (Ithaca: Cornell Univ. Press, 1984), 48–75. Roger French, *William Harvey's Natural Philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1994), provides a useful overview of Aristotelian natural philosophy and its pursuit at Cambridge during the 1590s (see esp. 51–59 and 10–17).

²⁴ *Works*, 3:318. Epitomes were typical of Ramist teaching methods; see also 3:313, where Nashe rails against "*Peter Ramus* . . . his petty Logicke" and "Art-maisters" (312; "art" was also a Ramist keyword). Nashe's attitude here is undoubtedly bound up with his dislike for Gabriel Harvey, a devout Cambridge Ramist; compare Wilbur Samuel Howell, *Logic and Rhetoric in England, 1500–1700* (1956; reprint, New York: Russell & Russell, 1961), 196–99; see also Blanchard, who discusses the Nashe-Harvey quarrel, 108–17, 120–21. McKerrow provides information on Nashe's matriculation at St. John's College and his eventual departure before taking the MA degree under circumstances which remain obscure (*Works*, 5:6–12).

²⁵ The comparison seems to have originated with Atticus the Platonist (second century) and appears in both southern and northern Renaissance authors. Schmitt,

"Aristotle as a Cuttlefish: the Origin and Development of a Renaissance Image," in *The Aristotelian Tradition*, 60–72 (nonsequential pagination).

²⁶ Compare the explanation offered by Marie Boas Hall and cited by Perez-Ramos: "For mediaeval and later Peripatetic scientists, whatever caused sense perception was assumed to be a form or quality. Heat, colour, solidity . . . corrosiveness and a host of other properties were perceptible because the body under observation possessed, more or less completely, certain forms. The classic example is heat; when fire was applied to a body, it grew hot by acquiring temporarily from the fire 'the form of heat'" (68). See also Perez-Ramos, 63–132; the works by Reif; Peter Alexander, *Ideas, Qualities and Corpuscles* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1985), 35–59; Emerton, esp. 48–75; E. J. Dijksterhuis, *The Mechanization of the World Picture*, trans. C. Dikshoorn (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1986), 17–24; A. C. Crombie, *Augustine to Galileo*, 2 vols. in 1 (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 1961), 1:80–89.

²⁷ Thomas Blundeville, *The Arte of Logicke* (London, 1599), 79.

²⁸ See Perez-Ramos, 68–82; see also the works by Reif, Emerton, and Alexander.

²⁹ Perez-Ramos, esp. 48–62, and 150–66.

³⁰ William Harrison, *The Description of England*, ed. Georges Edelen (Ithaca: Cornell Univ. Press, 1968), 263. On the rise of a market for consumption goods in England, see Joan Thirsk, *Economic Policy and Projects: The Development of a Consumer Society in England* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978); Chandra Mukerji, *From Graven Images: Patterns of Modern Materialism* (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1983); the work of F. J. Fisher, usefully collected in the volume *London and the English Economy* (London: Hambledon Press, 1990); and Jean-Christophe Agnew, *Worlds Apart: The Market and the Theater in Anglo-American Thought, 1550–1750* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1986). For the rise of the market in Yarmouth and East Anglia see Williams; for the wider European context see the essays collected in the volume *Consumption and the World of Goods*, ed. John Brewer and Roy Porter (New York: Routledge, 1993); and Fernand Braudel, *Civilization and Capitalism, 15th–18th Century*, 3 vols., trans. Siân Reynolds and Miriam Kochan (New York: Harper and Row, 1981–84).

³¹ See Perez-Ramos, 79–80. In his 1589 preface to Greene's *Menaphon*, Nashe himself uses the term "mechanicall mate" in a derogatory sense and goes on to criticize those "deep read Schoolemen or Grammarians, who [have] no more learning in their skull then will serue to take vp a commoditie" (*Works*, 3:311, 312). A decade later, ironically, Nashe's encounter with the commodity seems to have provoked an excessive, compensatory display of learning. On the place of the mechanical arts in the changing medieval and early modern hierarchies of knowledge see two articles by Jacques LeGoff, "Licit and Illicit Trades in the Medieval West," and "Labor, Techniques, and Craftsmen in the Value Systems of the Early Middle Ages," both in *Time, Work, and Culture in the Middle Ages*, trans. Arthur Goldhammer (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1980), 58–70 and 71–86, respectively, with extensive bibliography; George Ovitt, Jr., *The Restoration of Perfection: Labor and Technology in Medieval Culture* (New Brunswick: Rutgers Univ. Press, 1987), esp. 107–36; Bertrand Gille, *Engineers of the Renaissance* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1966); Christine Smith, *Architecture in the Culture of Early Humanism* (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1992); Paolo Rossi, *Philosophy, Technology and the Arts in the Early Modern Era*, ed. Benjamin Nelson, trans. Salvator Attanasio (New York: Harper and Row, 1970). For England and Renaissance drama in particular, see Patricia Parker, "Rude Mechanicals," in *Subject and Object in Renaissance Culture*, ed. Margreta de Grazia, Maureen Quilligan, and Peter Stallybrass (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1996), 43–82, esp. 43–48.

³² Appleby; Ferguson, esp. 3–59.

³³ On projects to develop the fishing industry see Samuel, 92–98; the anonymous pamphlet by “E. S.” entitled *Brittaines Busse. Or Accomptation aswell of the Charge of a Busse or Herring-Fishing Ship . . .* (London, 1615), and two documents from 1563, “Arguments in Favour of Establishing Wednesday as an Additional Fish Day” (partially in Cecil’s hand), and “An Act Towching Certyne Politique Constitutions Made for the Maintenance of the Navye” (5 Elizabeth, c. 5, 1563), both printed in *Tudor Economic Documents*, ed. R. H. Tawney and Eileen Power, 3 vols. (London: Longmans, 1924), 2:104–10, and 110–17 respectively.

³⁴ Compare Blanchard, 120–24, who argues that even as Nashe’s excessive rhetoric apes the humanist penchant for Latinate phrasing, *imitatio* and argumentation, his language camouflages a “robust materialist analysis” (123 n. 23) through which he affirms the independence of Yarmouth against the grasping hand of the ever-expanding Tudor state; see also Hutson, 261–62. Both note the similarity of key passages in *Lenten Stufte* to the commonwealth literature of economic development that flourished among Tudor statesmen during the latter half of the sixteenth century, such as Sir Thomas Smith’s *Discourse* (1549; reprint, 1581), Francis Trigges’s *An Apologie, or Defence of our Dayes* (1589), Henry Arthington’s *Provision for the Poore* (1597), and Robert Hitchcocke’s *Politique Platt* (1580).

³⁵ “Behold, it is euery mans money, from the King to the Courtier; euery household or goodman *Baltrop*, that keeps a family in pay, casts for it as one of his standing prouisions. The poorer sort make it three parts of there sustenance; with it, for his dinnier, the patchedest *Leather piltche laboratho* may dine like a Spanish Duke, when the niggardliest mouse of biefie will cost him sixpence” (*Lenten Stufte*, 179). In addition to the passages cited above see also 168–71, and 174–75. Compare William Pietz, “Fetishism and Materialism: The Limits of Theory in Marx,” in *Fetishism as Cultural Discourse*, ed. Emily Apter and William Pietz (Ithaca: Cornell Univ. Press, 1993), 119–51.

³⁶ Quoted in Taylor, *Late Tudor and Early Stuart Geography*, 106–7.

³⁷ See Blanchard’s excellent discussion of form in Renaissance Menippean satire, particularly with regards to genre and the epistemological complexities it entails (11–45).

³⁸ Compare 178–79: “That English marchandise is most precious which no country can be without: if you ask *Suffolke, Essex, Kent, Sussex, or Lemster, or Cotswold*, what marchandise that shoulde bee, they will answer you it is the very same which *Polidore Vergill* calls *Varè aureuem vellus*, the true golden fleece of our woll and English cloth, and naught else; other engrating vpland cormorants will grunt out it is *Grana paradisi*, our grain and corne, that is most sought after. The Westerners and Northerners that it is lead, tinne and iron. Butter and cheese, butter and cheese, saieith the farmer: but from every one of these I dissent and wil stoutely bide by it, that, to trowle in the cash throughout all nations of christendom, there is no fellowe to the red herring.”

³⁹ Lambarde, *Perambulation* (1826), (“nor . . . follow” my emphasis).

⁴⁰ George Puttenham, *The Arte of English Poesie*, Kent English Reprints (Kent, Ohio: Kent State Univ. Press, 1980), 19; comparisons to other artisans are throughout, but see in particular 304–14. Compare Parker, “Rude Mechanicals,” who cites Puttenham as well as Thomas Wilson’s *The Art of Rhetorique* (1553) and many other comparisons between the poet or playwright and the artisan.

⁴¹ In addition to the accounts provided by Rossi and Perez-Ramos, the historiographic tradition is usefully surveyed by Richard W. Hadden’s *On the Shoulders of Merchants* (Albany: State Univ. of New York Press, 1994).

⁴² See Thomas Keenan, "The Point Is to (Ex)Change It: Reading *Capital*, Rhetorically," in *Fetishism as Cultural Discourse*, 152–85; and three articles by Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak: "Speculation on reading Marx: after reading Derrida," in *Post-Structuralism and the Question of History*, ed. Derek Attridge, Geoff Bennington, and Robert Young (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1987), 30–62; "Scattered Speculations on the Question of Value," in *In Other Worlds: Essays in Cultural Politics* (New York: Routledge, 1988), 154–75; and "Limits and Openings of Marx in Derrida," in *Outside in the Teaching Machine* (New York: Routledge, 1993), 97–119.

⁴³ Especially the first thesis: "The chief defect of all hitherto existing materialism (that of Feuerbach included) is that the thing, reality, sensuousness, is conceived only in the form of the *object or of contemplation*, but not as *sensuous human activity, practice*, not subjectively. Hence, in contradistinction to materialism, the *active* side was developed abstractly by idealism—which, of course, does not know real, sensuous activity as such. Feuerbach wants sensuous objects, really distinct from the thought objects, but he does not conceive human activity itself as *objective* activity. Hence . . . he regards the theoretical attitude as the only genuinely human attitude, while practice is conceived and fixed only in its dirty-judaical manifestation. Hence he does not grasp the significance of 'revolutionary,' or 'practical-critical,' activity" (*Karl Marx: Early Writings*, trans. Rodney Livingstone and Gregor Benton [New York: Vintage, 1975], 421–22). Compare the recent discussion by Judith Butler in her *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of "Sex"* (New York: Routledge, 1993), 1–55, esp. 250 n. 5.

⁴⁴ See Alfred Schmidt's *The Concept of Nature in Marx*, trans. Ben Fowkes (London: NLB, 1971), for an admirably lucid discussion of Marx's materialism and the role of "nature" in his dialectical philosophy of human *praxis*. Schmidt also locates Marx within a maker's knowledge tradition via Hegel (although not in these terms); see all of chapter 3, esp. 107–23. He discusses many of the same passages in Marx that I do and argues convincingly that Marx's treatment of nature is not metaphysical in the way that Feuerbach or Engels understood it; i.e. that the natural world, while distinct and independent from the human social world, nevertheless does not exist in itself and is inaccessible to thought except through the mediation of concrete human activity. Compare his objection to George Cottier that nature in Marx is not "in the language of Aristotle and the scholastics . . . 'material prima,' i.e. . . . a shapeless substratum, lacking the 'immanent form' ascribed to it by Marx" (97). Aristotle certainly regarded nature in a metaphysical way, but in places he also provided a way of thinking about man-made objects in natural terms and thus arguably offered Marx a model for how human activity might be joined to the natural world. If we regard labor as a principle of form (as I argue below), then in this respect Aristotle's and Marx's positions are closer than they might appear to be.

⁴⁵ "The two peculiarities of the equivalent form we have just developed will become still clearer if we go back to the great investigator who was the first to analyze the value-form, like so many other forms of thought, society and nature. I mean Aristotle." Karl Marx, *Capital*, trans. Ben Fowkes, 3 vols. (New York: Vintage, 1977), 1:151. For the German I cite *Das Kapital, Karl Marx Friedrich Engels Gesamtausgabe* (Berlin: Dietz, 1989), 89. Hereafter cited parenthetically by page number of Vintage followed by Dietz edition.

⁴⁶ Heinz Lubasz, "The Aristotelian Dimension in Marx," *The Times Higher Education Supplement*, 1 April 1977, 17. A full consideration of Marx's Aristotelianism obviously exceeds the scope of this essay, but see the essays collected in the volume *Marx and Aristotle: Nineteenth-Century German Social Theory and Classical Antiquity*, ed.

George E. McCarthy (Savage, Maryland: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 1992), most of which focus on the political and ethical dimensions to their thought. Of these, Michael DeGolyer's "The Greek Accent of the Marxian Matrix" (107–53) does the best job of setting Marx's writings in the context of nineteenth-century German classical studies and of tracing his considerable debt to Aristotle. See also Schmidt, 213–14 n. 43. Like Hegel, Marx evinced a remarkable enthusiasm for Aristotle, calling him "the acme of ancient philosophy," "the greatest thinker of antiquity," "a Giant Thinker"; he regularly cites Immanuel Bekker's first modern Greek text of Aristotle, which had begun to appear in 1831, five years before he arrived at the University of Berlin. Classical studies flourished at the university, and Marx was already an accomplished student of both Greek and Latin, having devoted one of his exams at the University of Jena entirely to Aristotle and written his doctoral dissertation there on Epicurean and Democritean philosophy. He also read widely for pleasure in both languages: DeGolyer observes that over half the classical volumes in his library were in the original (see esp. 111–16, 119). Marx's opinions on Aristotle are cited by Patricia Springborg, "Karl Marx on Democracy, Participation, Voting and Equality," *Political Theory* 12 (1984): 537–56, 555 n. 47. In his lectures Hegel spoke of Aristotle as "one of the richest and deepest of all the scientific geniuses that have as yet appeared—a man whose like no later age has ever yet produced." *Lectures on the History of Philosophy*, trans. E. S. Holdane and Francis H. Simson, 3 vols (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner and Co., 1894; reprint, Lincoln: Univ. of Nebraska Press, 1995), 2:117.

⁴⁷ See Dominique Janicaud, *Hegel et le Destin de la Grèce* (Paris: J. Vrin, 1975), 285–301; Pierre Aubenque, "Hegel et Aristote," in *Hegel et la Pensée Grecque*, ed. Jacques D'Hondt (Paris: PUF, 1974), 97–120; Errol E. Harris, *An Interpretation of the Logic of Hegel* (Lanham, Maryland: Univ. Press of America, 1983), 172–73, 21–22; Giacomo Rinaldi, *A History and Interpretation of the Logic of Hegel* (Lewiston, New York: The Edwin Mellon Press, 1992), 31–36. For Aristotle's own use of natural categories in his *Metaphysics*, see note 52 below.

⁴⁸ *Hegel's Science of Logic*, trans. A. V. Miller (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1969; reprint, Atlantic Highlands, New Jersey: Humanities Press International, 1989), 444–78, esp. 447–56. Compare Harris, 172, 176–78.

⁴⁹ This basic phenomenological orientation appears in expressions such as *Erscheinungsform*, variously translated as "form of appearance" (127–28; 69), "form of manifestation" (148, 152; 87, 90), and, along with *Verwirklichungsform*, as "form of realization" (156; 93). Also relevant is *Darstellung* [presentation] (152; 90), *Existenzweisen* [modes of existence] (255; 169), and the phrase "purely idea or notional form" [*ideelle oder vorgestellte Form*] of price (189; 120). Compare Jean Hyppolite's *Studies on Marx and Hegel*, trans. John O'Neill (New York: Basic Books: 1969), esp. 126–49.

⁵⁰ Compare his critique of Hegelian dialectics in the *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts*: "Hegel's positive achievement in his speculative logic is to present *determinate concepts*, the universal *fixed thought-forms* [*fixen Denkformen*] in their independence of nature and mind, as a necessary result of the universal estrangement of human existence, and thus also of human thought, and to comprehend them as moments in the process of abstraction. For example, being superseded [*aufgehobne*] is essence, essence superseded is the concept, the concept superseded is . . . the absolute idea. . . . But the abstraction which comprehends itself as abstraction knows itself to be nothing; it must relinquish itself, the abstraction, and so arrives at something which is its exact opposite, *nature*" (*Early Writing*, 397; *Gesamtausgabe*, 415, Marx's emphasis). Marx continues: "the abstract thinker discovers from intuiting nature that the entities

which he imagined he was creating out of nothing, out of pure abstraction, in a divine dialectic, as the pure products of the labour of thought living and moving within itself and never looking out into reality, are nothing more than *abstractions* from *natural forms* [*Naturbestimmungen*]. The whole of nature only repeats to him in a sensuous, external form [*sinnlichen, äusserlichen Form*] the abstractions of logic. He *analyses* nature and these abstractions again. His intuiting of nature is therefore only the act of confirmation of his abstraction from the intuition of nature, a conscious re-enactment of the process by which he produced his abstraction . . . In the natural form, superseded Movement as Matter corresponds to superseded Becoming as Being [*Dem aufgehobnen Werden als Dasein—entspricht in natürlicher Form—die aufgeobne Bewegung als Materie*]” (399; 417, Marx’s emphasis).

⁵¹ “In order, therefore, that a commodity may in practice operate effectively as exchange value, it must divest itself of its natural physical body and become transformed from merely imaginary into real gold, although this act of transubstantiation may be more ‘troublesome’ for it than the transition from necessity to freedom for the Hegelian ‘concept’” (197). Following Lubasz, DeGolyer argues that Marx’s use of the term “form” in *Capital* is specifically Aristotelian and not Platonic or Hegelian, although he offers no justification for this reading and overlooks Marx’s obvious and considerable debt to Hegelian phenomenology. Unfortunately, Cornelius Castoriadis seems never to have published his promised analysis of “substance” in Aristotle, Hegel, and Marx, to which he alludes in an enticing note to his *Crossroads in the Labyrinth*, trans. Kate Soper and Martin H. Ryle (Brighton: Harvester Press, 1984), 332 n. 7, but I have benefited greatly from his discussion. I draw also on Scott Meikle, “History of Philosophy: The Metaphysics of Substance in Marx,” in *The Cambridge Companion to Marx*, ed. Terrell Carver (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1991), 296–319, esp. 313–16; and Meikle’s *Aristotle’s Economic Thought* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), 15 n. 11, 52 n. 7, 183–90.

⁵² *Physics*, in *The Basic Works of Aristotle*, ed. Richard McKeon, trans. R. P. Hardie and R. K. Gaye (New York: Random House, 1941), 193a 8–11, 28–31, 192b 17–21. In the *Metaphysics*, Aristotle is attempting to define a supersensible substance (that which most truly “is”; “Being”), to establish the study of such a supersensible substance as appropriate to philosophy, and to refute the Platonic argument that Ideas or mathematical figures constitute one example of such a substance. He proceeds by identifying several kinds of substance, of which natural objects (“sensible” or “perishable” substance) are the first; eternal sensible substances (Ideas, mathematical forms) and insensible, immovable substance (the Prime Mover, that which is pure actuality and is the proper object of philosophy) are the second and third, respectively. His analysis of philosophical substance thus proceeds *by way of* an analysis of natural objects (Hegel calls Aristotle’s *Physics* “properly speaking . . . the Metaphysics of Nature,” *Lectures*, 2:153), in which substance is defined first as matter (potentiality, privation), then as form (actuality), and finally as the composite of the two. Compare *Metaphysics*, 1042a 24–34, 1043a 27–29; 1070a 6–8. See also W. D. Ross’s helpful discussion in his *Aristotle* (1923; reprint, London: Methuen, 1953), 154–86, esp. 165–73; and André Doz, *La Logique de Hegel et les Problèmes Traditionnels de l’Ontologie* (Paris: J. Vrin, 1987), 161–64. Hegel’s discussion of the *Metaphysics* can be found in *Lectures* 2:137–53. Peter Stallybrass notes in passing that Marx’s own analysis posits value as a “supra-sensible” substance: see his “Marx’s Coat,” in *Border Fetishisms: Material Objects in Unstable Spaces*, ed. Patricia Spyer (New York: Routledge, 1998), 184; compare *Capital*: “It is absolutely clear that, by his activity, man changes the forms of the materials of nature in

such a way as to make them useful to him. The form of wood, for instance, is altered if a table is made out of it. Nevertheless the table continues to be wood, an ordinary, sensible thing. But as soon as it emerges as a commodity, it changes into a thing which transcends sensuousness" (163). Compare also Schmidt, esp. 63–76.

⁵³ Compare Castoriadis: "The paradox, the antimony of Marx's thought, lies in the fact that Labour, which constantly modifies everything, including itself, is at the same time conceived of under the category of Substance/Essence, of that which can 'appear' under a given form or take on a given 'expression' (concrete labour as opposed to abstract labour, the production of 'use values' as opposed to that of 'exchange values,' etc.), but which, in itself, does not modify itself, does not alter, and subsists as the immutable foundation of changing attributes and determinations" (274).

⁵⁴ Marx, *Grundrisse*, trans. Martin Nicolaus (New York: Penguin, 1973), 360–61 (Marx's emphasis); *Gesamtausgabe*, 271–72. Schmidt discusses the same passage on 75–76.

⁵⁵ See for instance *Physics*, 193a 9–17: "Some identify the nature or substance of a natural object with that immediate constituent of it which taken by itself is without arrangement, e.g. the wood is the 'nature' of the bed, and the bronze the 'nature' of the statue. As an indication of this Antiphon points out that if you planted a bed and the rotting wood acquired the power of sending up a shoot, it would not be a bed that would come up, but *wood*—which shows that the arrangement in accordance with the rules of art is merely an incidental attribute, whereas the real nature is the other, which, further, persists continuously through the process of making."

⁵⁶ See *inter alia* Lena Cowen Orlin's "The Performance of Things in *The Taming of the Shrew*," *Yearbook of English Studies* 23 (1993): 167–88, and her *Private Matters in Public Culture* (Ithaca: Cornell Univ. Press, 1994); Natasha Korda, "Domesticating Kates," *Shakespeare Quarterly* 47 (1996): 109–31; Patricia Fumerton, *Cultural Aesthetics: Renaissance Literature and the Practice of Social Ornament* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1991); the essays collected in *Subject and Object in Renaissance Culture*, esp. the introduction by De Grazia, Stallybrass, and Quilligan, De Grazia's "The Ideology of Superfluous Things" (17–42), and Stallybrass's "Worn Worlds: Clothes and Identity on the Renaissance Stage" (289–320); see also the introduction by Jonathan Gil Harris and Natasha Korda to their forthcoming volume entitled *Staged Properties* and the essays in that collection. I am grateful to Professors Harris and Korda for sharing a draft of their introductory essay with me in advance of its publication. All the above work has begun to pursue what we might call a "genealogy of the object" by tracing its imbrication in many different early modern (and modern) discursive structures, although not all of it deals specifically with the discursive formation of the commodity as such, i.e. as a distinct kind of object. Compare also two articles written by historians of early modern Europe, both of which focus on how legal language in particular, combined with local practices, made possible different conceptualizations of consumption goods and social uses for them: Martha C. Howell's "Fixing Movables: Gifts by Testament in Late Medieval Douai," *Past and Present* 150 (1996): 3–45; and Ronald Rainey's "Dressing Down the Dressed-Up: Reproving Feminine Attire in Renaissance Florence," *Renaissance Culture and Society: Essays in Honor of Eugene F. Rice, Jr.*, ed. J. Monfasani and R. G. Musto (New York: Italica Press, 1991), 217–39. Seminal anthropological texts for recent work on the cultural status of the commodity include Mary Douglas and Baron Isherwood's *The World of Goods* (New York: Basic Books, 1979); Arjun Appadurai's "Introduction: Commodities and the Politics of Value," in *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspective*, ed. Appadurai (Cambridge:

Cambridge Univ. Press, 1986), and the other essays in that volume. I draw also on Jean Baudrillard, *Le Système des Objets* (Paris: Gallimard, 1967), as well as Roland Barthes's *Elements of Semiology*, trans. Annette Lavers and Colin Smith (New York: Hill and Wang, 1967); and his *Mythologies*, trans. Annette Lavers (New York: Hill and Wang, 1972).

⁵⁷ Michel Foucault, *The Archeology of Knowledge*, trans. A. M. Sheridan Smith (New York: Vintage, 1972), 45–48. The limitations of space prevent a comprehensive discussion of Foucault's detailed terminology, above all because it changes as the *Archeology* unfolds. Let it suffice to say that although Foucault insistently refuses analogies with grammar or speech act theory and repeatedly asserts that “discursive formations” and the “statements” that form their core should not be reduced simply to *linguistic* entities but should be understood rather as “that which . . . defines the general set of rules that govern the different modes of enunciation, the possible distribution of the subjective positions, and the system that defines and prescribes them” (115), he nevertheless continues to rely on the model of the linguistic unit (for both practical and theoretical reasons, I suspect) at key moments in his argument. While I find Foucault's attempt to formulate “rules” for discursive formations unconvincing, I think that other aspects of the work remain rich and promising, and I have chosen to accentuate certain elements in the *Archeology* because I think they shed light on a problematic in Nashe's text which has been overlooked. For an analysis of the place of the *Archeology* in Foucault's work, readers may refer to Hubert Dreyfus and Paul Rabinow, *Michel Foucault: Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics*, 2nd ed. (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1983), 44–100; for this and an excellent discussion of the relationship of Foucauldian “discourse” to Marxism and “ideology,” see Michèle Barret, *The Politics of Truth: From Marx to Foucault* (Stanford: Stanford Univ. Press, 1991), esp. 123–56; and Stuart Hall, “The Toad in the Garden: Thatcherism Among the Theorists,” in *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*, ed. Cary Nelson and Lawrence Grossberg (Urbana: Univ. of Illinois Press, 1988), 35–73, esp. 51; on the relation between Foucauldian discourse and materialism, elaborated through a Derridean notion of the iterable performative, see Butler, 1–55. As I was in the final stages of completing this essay, Mary Poovey's *A History of the Modern Fact: Problems of Knowledge in the Sciences of Wealth and Society* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1998) appeared, and I am pleased to see that she shares my reservations about the “rules” and limitations of Foucauldian discourse, although she does not discuss the *Archeology* in particular. My own attempt to situate the commodity within larger shifts in modes of knowing—especially the shift from a qualitative to a quantitative epistemology, i.e. from an “Aristotelian” to a “modern” scientific world view—and to chart these epistemological shifts in the form and rhetorical structure of Nashe's text bears some resemblance to Poovey's larger project as set forth in this recent work, in particular her attempt to revisit intellectual history through categories derived from Foucault and the history of science. See in particular 16–26.

⁵⁸ In addition to the works cited in note 32 above, see Hugh Platt's *The Jewell House of Art and Nature* (London, 1594), and Gabriel Platte's *Discovery of Infinite Treasure* (London, 1639); see also Appleby, Agnew, and Poovey, esp. 66–91, who notes on 67 that Misselden uses Aristotelian categories in his analysis of economic forces.