

A COURTIER'S LEGACY: CASTIGLIONE'S LITERARY INFLUENCE ON
ELIZABETH ENGLAND

BY

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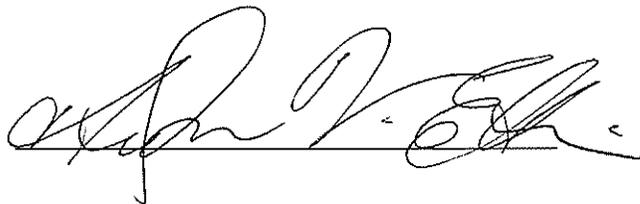
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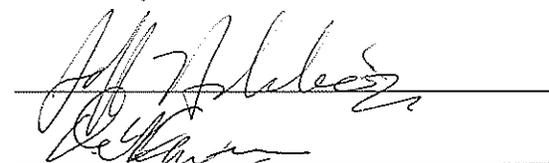
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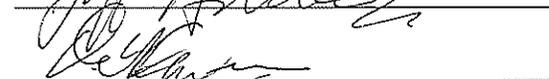
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Michael S.J. Vitale

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Thesis under the direction of Andrew Ettin, Ph.D., Professor of English

This thesis examines the cultural influence of Baldesar Castiglione's *Book of the Courtier* on European culture. Specifically, I argue that the *Courtier* had a profound influence on Elizabethan England and its cultural development. I achieve this goal by examining various genres of literature during this period, and analyze Castiglione's effect on the author's writing and attitudes exhibited in the works. In examining a treatise, play, and epic romance, I surmise that various facets of Castiglione's seminal work influenced these forms in unique ways. Each work I examined utilizes the *Courtier* in putting forth and strengthening their own views of how society should act. Thus, examining these works through a Castiglionean lens provides a microcosm of what other Elizabethans were thinking at this time. Whether they consciously knew it, the English population, especially the aristocracy, absorbed Castiglione's ideologies and integrated them into a developing English society. This thesis provides a template for such an examination.

INTRODUCTION

How do some written works weather time's merciless barrage and attain the title of timelessness? This phenomenon does not always hinge upon randomness or luck; rather, the success of works like Baldesar Castiglione's *The Book of the Courtier* depends on several significant factors. Determining who and what class of people owned a copy of the text would provide insightful information on contemporary reception, both domestic and international. These inquiries would illustrate a text's dissemination throughout various communities and populations. Furthermore, a text's influence is exemplified by a culture acclimatizing its ideologies into the fabric of their literature. As aforementioned, the *Courtier* fulfilled all these criteria, and—as a result—became a commercial and cultural phenomenon throughout Europe. Exploring the *Courtier's* commercial success would establish a strong foundation for my study on Castiglione's effect on literary genres during the Elizabethan period. For the purposes of the study, England will be the primary focus, while the *Courtier's* effect on other European states will be mentioned briefly and will provide ancillary insight to the study as a whole.

Before discussing the *Courtier's* print history, there must be an explanation of the social and political changes that occurred in Europe during the sixteenth century. The governmental paradigm in sixteenth century Europe shifted from a feudalistic system of government to a centralized monarchy (Einstein 58). Foucault would characterize this shift as the dawn of the nation-state in which nationhood and self-aware nationalities

emerged¹. Because the sovereign wielded absolute power over the state, the former feudal lords now had to petition the king for high positions and royal grants. Consequently, courtiership was born out of these circumstances, which forced these ambitious noblemen to depend on “royal favor” for power and privilege (Einstein 59). Thus, potential courtiers competed for a limited number of governmental posts and positions. This system resulted in two phenomena: the courtiers had to be proficient in state and domestic affairs, and much cutthroat violence and backstabbing ensued among these petitioners (Einstein 59). As a result, this competitiveness engendered a wave of books lending recommendations on how to succeed in this dangerous court world. Lewis Einstein claims that Italy—namely the provinces of Mantua and Ferrara—started formulating a concept of how a courtier should act (60). Soon after, similar ideas of courtiership spread throughout Europe and influenced developed nations like Spain, France, and eventually England. Such circumstances explain how the *Courtier* followed a similar vein in its spread throughout Europe.

The influence of the Italian language provides another explanation as to why the *Courtier* spread through Europe so swiftly and successfully. Because the Renaissance cultural phenomenon found its roots in Italy, Italian customs, arts, and even its language profoundly affected European culture. In fact, several prominent English figures were fluent in Italian, which expresses how far west Italian authority spread. These figures included future English monarchs—Mary and Elizabeth—as well as Sir Thomas Hoby, who travelled to Italy and spent time there learning the language (Einstein 93, Kelly 1). The famous courtier and poet Philip Sidney travelled to Italy on his tour through Europe,

¹ See Foucault, Michel. *Security, Territory, and Population*. Trans. Graham Burchell. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004.

as many English courtiers later did to gain valuable continental experience (Woudhuysen 3). The writer William Patten mentions Castiglione and the *Courtier* in his 1548 account of Prince Edward². A 1549 Italian edition of the *Courtier* was catalogued in Sion College's library, which provides further evidence of the Italian culture and language's infiltration of Tudor England (Lievsey 57). An English edition of the *Courtier* did not come out for another twelve years, but this Italian translation indicates that the *Courtier* had a substantial following, despite being in a foreign language. Only a considerable knowledge of Italian—and an extremely popular text—would have warranted such an edition in a university library. Peter Burke corroborates with this assessment and claims that “it is likely that Italian was the first modern foreign language to be learned in France, England, and Spain . . . [and the language] became more accessible to the English from the middle of the sixteenth century onwards” (56). Italian's linguistic similarities to Latin could also be a reason for the former's advent in Europe. Latin still held importance as the courtly and international language, and it was still taught in schools³.

Before examining the *Courtier*'s effect on Europe upon, it is necessary to explore the *Courtier*'s reception in its native Italy. Upon the *Courtier*'s release in Italy in 1528, 1,030 copies were sold, and there was widespread interest in printing another edition (Burke 40). The printers quickly obliged and another edition came out shortly after the first. In all, sixty-two editions of the text were printed in Italy in the sixteenth and

² See Patten, William. *The expedition into Scotla[n]de of the most woorthely fortunate prince Edward*. [London : Printed by Richard Grafton, 1548 (30 June)]. Early English Books Online. Database Online http://eebo.chadwyck.com/search/full_rec?SOURCE=var_spell.cfg&ACTION=SINGLE&ID=99849412&ECCO=N&FILE=../session/1271367473_2793&SEARCHSCREEN=CITATIONS&DISPLAY=AUTHOR&SUBSET=2&ENTRIES=5&HIGHLIGHT_KEYWORD=default.
 Ascham, Roger. *The Scholemaster* (1570). Literature Theory Full-Text Database, Cambridge, 1999. http://lion.chadwyck.com/searchFulltext.do?id=Z000726174&divLevel=0&queryId=../session/1271119622_26613&trailId=1275A236741&area=Prose&forward=textsFT&warn=Yes&size=351kb. 8.

seventeenth centuries (Burke 41). This profound interest proves the text's demand and importance throughout the early modern period. Surely the *Courtier* inspired "the honorable career path for a gentleman," while also providing a sense of national pride in a fractured state that suffered from inner turmoil and continuous outside threats (Einstein 89).

When discussing the *Courtier*'s international significance, one must account for the international editions as well as the copies printed in Italy. While a complete study of this would prove too exhaustive for this the study's central focus, some further explaining would provide important background information. In Spain, the first translation of the *Courtier* was printed in 1534, was translated by the Spanish poet Juan Boscan, and produced between twelve and sixteen editions by the end of the sixteenth century (Burke 62-63). Burke attests that the *Courtier* "sold even better in France . . . [where three different translations] appeared in twenty-three editions between 1537 and 1592" (63). There were even two German translations that appeared in the mid-to-late sixteenth century (Burke 64). Naturally, these translations circulated around Europe in various aristocratic and intellectual spheres. These diverse translations expanded the *Courtier*'s linguistic accessibility to different populations.

The other significant translations in the early modern period were Sir Thomas Hoby's English translation and Bartholomew Clerke's Latin Translation. Hoby's considerable political and intellectual connections assisted in the propagation of his 1561 English edition, the first English translation of the *Courtier* (Burke 64). These connections include Elizabeth Parr—marchioness of Northampton and sister-in-law to Henry VIII's sixth wife Katherine Parr—who commissioned Hoby to write the

translation (James 1). Poet Thomas Sackville, a contributor for *Mirroure for Magistrates*, wrote a prefatory sonnet that praised Hoby's accomplishment, while the humanist professor John Cheke commended Hoby's translation for its using English words and reinforcing national pride in England (Burke 12). The scholar Roger Ascham confesses his surprise, in his prominent contemporary work *The Schoolmaster*, that "this booke [the *Courtier*], is no more read in the Court, than it is, seyng it is so well translated into English by a worthie Ientleman syr Th. Hobbie, who was many wayes well furnished with learning, and very expert in knowledge of diuers tonges" (34). Ascham's praise works twofold: he is praising the *Courtier*, but, most likely, Ascham lauds Hoby and his *English* translation. Ascham was proto-Puritan, who distrusted Catholic Italy, and he was a prominent supporter of writing texts in native English⁴. Hoby's translation went through three more editions in 1577, 1588, and the last in 1603⁵. Although Hoby's translation has its faults—namely, with its odd translations of particular words—Daniel Javitch verifies that the translation "became, as Hoby had desired, 'a storehouse of most necessarie (sic) implements for conversation, use, training up of man's life with courtly demeanors'" (4-5).

In comparison to Hoby, Clerke's Latin translation may have been even more popular, going through five editions to Hoby's four. Printed ten years after Hoby's first edition, Clerke translation was printed in 1571, 1577, 1585, 1591, 1593, and 1612, with

⁴ O'Day, Rosemary. "Ascham, Roger (1514/15–1568)." Oxford Dictionary of National Biography. Ed. H. C. G. . Matthew and Brian Harrison. Oxford: OUP, 2004.
<<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/732>>. 9.

⁵ Castiglione, Baldesar. *The Book of the Courtier (1561)*. Trans. Hoby, Thomas. Ed. W.E. Henley. New York: AMS Press Inc, 1967.

the last editions printed posthumously⁶. Clerke—a Cambridge professor—had boldly dedicated his translation to Queen Elizabeth whom Burke maintains “may have well have been familiar with the original, since she learned Italian [as aforementioned] as a girl and was tutored by Roger Ascham” (149-150). These high aspirations denote both an ambitious plan for patronage and perhaps an attempt to emulate Castiglione in his aim to educate nobility on proper courtly behavior. Other advocates for Clerke’s translation included Edward de Vere—Earl of Oxford and courtier poet—who wrote a prefatory note lauding Clerke for writing “with precise and well-chosen words, with skillfully constructed and crystal-clear sentences, and with every art of dignified rhetoric” (Fowler 3). The Latin translation’s popularity could be due, despite the rise of vernacular languages, to the universality of Latin as both the court and international language. De Vere confirms this conjecture when he states that Latin has practical “use in modern courts as a polished language of an excellent temper, fitted out with royal pomp and possessing admirable dignity” (Fowler 3). Thus, while Hoby’s translation appealed to a wider range of the English population, Clerke’s Latin edition enticed and appealed to the educated nobility more than the English edition.

From these observations, deciphering the reading audience becomes an easier task. However, while *Courtier* does pertain to the upper class, some scholars suggest Castiglione’s vignettes of the perfect gentleman and lady apply to the middle class as well. Louis Wright attests that “since the middle-class persons were social climbers, the

⁶ Clerke, Bartholomew. *The Book of the Courtier*. London, 1577. Early English Books Online. Henry E. Huntington
http://eebo.chadwyck.com/search/full_rec?SOURCE=var_spell.cfg&ACTION=SINGLE&ID=99857305&ECCO=N&FILE=../session/1271122353_15157&SEARCHSCREEN=CITATIONS&DISPLAY=AUTOR&SUBSET=2&ENTRIES=9&HIGHLIGHT_KEYWORD=default.

gentleman's manual of education [such as the *Courtier*] was a volume desired above others" (123). The age of mercantilism helped beget a middle class, which allowed social mobility. Moreover, Early Modern figures like William Martyn reference Castiglione and the *Courtier* in his work advising youths⁷, which Wright believes "represents an attempt to adapt some of the moral lessons of Castiglione to the tastes of the common citizens" (124). Nonetheless, despite these attempts to modify the *Courtier*, the text itself explicitly clears this matter early in Book One. In describing the perfect courtier, Ludovico Canossa declares, "Our Courtier should be of noble birth and parentage" (1.14.21). Although Gasparo argues against Canossa's contentious statement, Canossa responds, "Since it our task to form a Courtier free of any defect . . . I deem it necessary to have him be of noble birth" (1.16.23). Although the conflict remains relatively unresolved, Castiglione appears partial towards Canossa's view of noble birth trumping noble worth. By avoiding a long and tedious conflict, Castiglione deftly moves beyond this question of birth versus worth. Nonetheless, the author clearly makes his target audience known through this short debate. As a result, even the English translation of the *Courtier* appealed more to the upper classes.

After establishing the reading audience, further analysis warrants an examination of which prominent figures owned a copy of the *Courtier*. Thomas Cromwell owned an Italian copy of the *Courtier* as early as 1530—the earliest account of an Englishman

⁷ See Martyn, William. *Youth in Instruction*. London : Printed by Iohn Beale, 1613. Early English Books Online. Online Database.
http://eebo.chadwyck.com/search/full_rec?SOURCE=var_spell.cfg&ACTION=SINGLE&ID=99847619&ECCO=N&FILE=../session/1271368106_4445&SEARCHSCREEN=CITATIONS&DISPLAY=AUTHOR&SUBSET=13&ENTRIES=14&HIGHLIGHT_KEYWORD=default.

owning a copy (Major 47). For a time, Cromwell was Henry VIII's most trusted advisor, and he coincidentally came from modest origins to become one of the most powerful men in England before his untimely death⁸. Cromwell, then, appears as a practical example of applying the *Courtier* to the real world. Elizabeth and William Parr, Marchioness and Marquess of Northampton, commissioned Hoby to write his translation, while John Cheke advised Hoby during the translating process. Roger Ascham—Queen Elizabeth's tutor—was, as aforementioned, familiar with the text⁹. Consequently, a significant English monarch was tutored by a scholar who owned an edition of the *Courtier*. This information provides an interesting insight into how the nobility and royalty were exposed to the text in their early learning. In addition to these examples, Gabriel Harvey, scholar and poet, and Henry Howard, earl of Northampton, provide the two most sedulously annotated copies from the Early Modern Period (Burke 79, 80). While Harvey annotated more about grace, letters, and jokes, Howard appeared more preoccupied with conduct on war and arms (Burke 79, 80). Despite the varying interests, Harvey and Howard both found virtue in Castiglione's text, and the pair found the advice in the *Courtier* significant enough to highlight for their benefit.

This introduction, for the most part, has been a summary of Castiglione's considerable influence throughout Europe in the Early Modern period. In examining Castiglione's popularity, I am laying down the foundation for the rest of the study. Literature tends to reflect society's preoccupations and catalytic causes, and I wanted to broadly and briefly illustrate this point before approaching my main focus. My study will

⁸ Leithead, Howard. "Cromwell, Thomas, earl of Essex (*b.* in or before 1485, *d.* 1540)." Oxford Dictionary of National Biography. Ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison. Oxford: OUP, 2004. Online ed. Ed. Lawrence Goldman. May 2009. <<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/6769>>. 17.

⁹ O'Day, Rosemary *IBID*.

examine Castiglione's cultural effect on three different literary genres in English literature. These literary choices provide a small sample of how the *Courtier's* ideologies not only affected England's court culture but also its literature. The first chapter will examine George Puttenham's poetic handbook, *The Art of English Poesie*. Puttenham's treatise attempts to validate English poetry, and explores the proper modes of poetic expression. I will be exploring the last section "On Ornament," which explores what Puttenham deems the proper modes for writing poetry, as well as Puttenham's interest in courtesy and proper courtly conduct. Puttenham achieves these goals by adopting language and ideologies from the *Courtier* and applying them to his treatise. For example, Puttenham's text holistically represents an attempt at achieving Castiglione's ideal of *sprezzatura*. The Second chapter examines John Lyly's play *Endymion* and its connection to Castiglione's views on love but mainly Castiglione's defense of women. The chapter will explain how Lyly's female characters face persecution from their male counterparts, similar to the slanders the *Courtier's* misogynists hold against the female interlocutors. The chapter will specifically examine Castiglione's third book about the perfect lady, and how Lyly appropriates ideologies from the *Courtier* in defending his female characters. My study will culminate and conclude with Philip Sidney's *Old Arcadia*, and how the work reflects Castiglione profound influence on Sidney's writings. The chapter will examine how Sidney attempts to apply the *Courtier's* tenets in a realistic setting. The *Old Arcadia* explores themes like love, virtue, and good government, which are central focuses within the *Courtier*. As a result, Sidney's work becomes a didactic form of literature that deviates from the epic form he originally chooses.

I want to plant the idea and stress how important Castiglione truly has been on English culture. These texts I am exploring provide a starting point, though I do not assume they are the only or even the best examples of Castiglione's influence. Shakespeare, Spenser, and countless other poets and writers show clear Castiglionian¹⁰ influence. Thomas Dekker and John Webster reference Castiglione in their collaborative play, *Westward Ho*. At the same time, the *Courtier* does not represent the only or penultimate guide for gentlemen, ladies, or monarchs. Giovanni de la Casa's *Il Galateo* explores the proper etiquette for the middle class, while Niccolo Machiavelli's *Prince* provides more cynical and ruthless views on governing. Nevertheless, the texts I chose—and the *Courtier*—grant powerful insight into a rapidly evolving society, filled with dangers and a growing awareness of self. I have selected a diverse range of literary genres in order to prove that Castiglione's influence was not restricted to one literary genre. Rather, the *Courtier* affected various forms of literature that entailed different topics. Puttenham's treatise, Lyly's play, and Sidney's epic romance all provide examples of Castiglionian thought, despite being very different forms of literature. Because they share a connection in some way, these works provide a proper template on which to base my study.

¹⁰ A term I will use throughout the study when referencing Castiglione's ideologies

CHAPTER ONE

DISSEMBLING LANGUAGE: THE LINGUISTIC EFFECT OF CASTIGLIONE'S
COURTIER ON PUTTENHAM'S *ART OF ENGLISH POESIE*

In *The Art of English Poesy*'s third book, George Puttenham appropriates socio-political rhetoric and applies it to the linguistic realm of poetry. By constructing an argument this way, Puttenham attempts to standardize poetic modes of expression and behavior through courtly and stately language, thus, legitimizing rhetorical language as both a poetical and governmental device. Puttenham allocates these socio-political ideologies from various sources. Nevertheless, Baldesar Castiglione's *The Book of the Courtier* establishes itself as one of Puttenham's most prominent aids. Although Castiglione's seminal work focuses on navigating the political sphere, Puttenham utilizes particular courtesy ideologies within the *Courtier*, which support his poetic exploration. As a result, Puttenham sublimates political practices—such as masking and courtly civility—into proper poetic modes. This allocation endows the treatise with a dialectic that forms between dissembling one's art and making artifice accessible. At the same time, the *Art* records an infinite number of rhetorical devices in the third book. This exhaustive list apparently complements Castiglione's own general account of rhetoric mentioned among the plethoric qualities within the *Courtier*. Consequently, Puttenham's treatise accentuates and specifies linguistic themes Castiglione only broadly examines, while also assimilating Castiglione's important political devices into the *Art*'s underlying framework.

Language—its use and type—proves pivotal in Puttenham’s treatise. Not only do linguistic usage and manipulation embody the fundamental theme of the work, but the language Puttenham chooses for the *Art* warrants discussion. Puttenham writes a treatise about *English* poetry rather than Latin poetry. English, which Puttenham repeatedly refers to as the “vulgar¹¹” language, had historically taken the proverbial backseat when discussing the proper language for poetry (3.1.222). However, in bestowing this classification upon the English language, one must take in consideration that English was still a nascent and malleable nature at the time. Consequently, Puttenham’s treatise provides a bold example of an Englishman exhibiting pride and confidence in his native tongue. The treatise solely becomes an English guide, distinct from total Latin influence.

While designating English as vulgar refers to its embryonic nature, it could also refer the *Courtier*’s Ludovico Canossa who designates Italian as a “vulgar tongue [which] is still tender and new although it has been in use for quite some time now” (Castiglione 1.32.39). This connection expresses an attempt by Puttenham and Castiglione to validate their languages by undervaluing them. Defining their languages as vulgar—or common—the pair create an air of nonchalance around their language’s validity. This strain of thought continues to gain ground as the century progresses, and English, and other vernacular languages, become the clear standard in their respective countries. Both authors utilize sprezzatura as a tool to appear modest, while boldly presenting their respective languages as significant and appropriate outlets for conveying their ideals.

¹¹ Wayne Reborn, editor of the *Art of English Poesie*, refers to vulgar as the vernacular language, but it can also refer to the uneducated, common people (448). Puttenham could be exploiting the double meaning of the word in this context.

In choosing the vernacular, Puttenham follows Castiglione's lead language usage. Ludovico Canossa castigates those who leave Italy and come back speaking foreign tongues like Spanish or French, and he denounces them for being pretentious (Castiglione 1.28.35). Moreover, Canossa claims that a modern, Tuscan dialect contains "grace and venerableness . . . not only to words, but to buildings, statues, [and] pictures," while Benardo Bibbieno corroborates with Canossa and states that archaic words and phrases are the vernacular of the commoners and not nobility (1.30.37, 1.30.38). Bibbieno's declaration illustrates a keen awareness of language's malleability, and that certain words fall out of usage in the formal vernacular.

Similarly, Puttenham claims that a Southern English dialect should be used over a Northern or Western dialect because they are "not so courtly nor as current as our southern English . . . [and they] especially [do not] write, as god southern . . . do" (3.4.229). Puttenham's assertion echoes Castiglione's language too closely to be coincidental, and this supposition appears valid, since Puttenham definitely owned a copy of the *Courtier*¹². More importantly, Puttenham and Castiglione's language propensities represent an attempt at nationalistic self-fashioning. Puttenham recognizes that certain regions have varying dialects, and so chooses what he believes should be the proper dialect for formal speaking and writing proper English. Puttenham's third book standardizes writing, which Castiglione denotes as "simply a form of speaking" (1.29.36). Instead of just explaining the proper modes of poetic expression, Puttenham constructs an argument for what should be England's proper national language. The author fashions the poet and his poetry, but also fashions a linguistic identity for his state,

¹² Rebhorn, Wayne and Whigham, Frank. "Introduction." *The Art of English Poesy*. Cornell University Press: Itaca, 2007. 35.

which is a rather seminal conception at this time. Puttenham realizes these nationalist ambitions by emulating Castiglione's justification for using Tuscan Italian. Puttenham may have been inspired by Thomas Hoby whose English translation of the *Courtier* has a preface supporting works written in English¹³.

Despite the *Courtier*'s clear influence on Puttenham's treatise, Puttenham deviates from Castiglione's writing style. Castiglione wrote in a Ciceronian style, which consists of several interlocutors discussing topics through varying points of view, which prevented any of the participants from making any "direct pronouncements" (Rebhorn 153). Thus, a consensus is eventually reached on a topic, although the issue may not get fully resolved. Puttenham, on the other hand, wrote the *Art* with his voice as the only one heard in the treatise. In doing so, Puttenham's authoritarian voice allows him to project his ideologies without any critical opposition. Puttenham's direct, cogent argument and examples for English poetry are necessary for creating a framework for rhetorical writing and speaking. Puttenham does not want any room for doubt in his argument because he wants to establish a standard in the English language. As such, Puttenham again manipulates language to attain his means. Although he differs stylistically from Castiglione, Puttenham still incorporates Castiglione's ideologies into his overall argument.

In employing the *Courtier*'s political and ideological rhetoric into the *Art*'s third book, Puttenham transforms a treatise that could be superficially viewed as a grammar book into a richer, more complex work. Catherine Bates asserts that "Puttenham is essentially an application of the humanist rhetoric taught in grammar schools to the

¹³ Hoby, Thomas. *The Book of the Courtier (1561)*. Ed. W.E. Henley. AMS Press, Inc.: New York, 1967.

writing poetry” (261). However, this assessment proves to be entirely too simplistic and diminishes the different genres circulating within the third book. Although grammar plays a role in the *Art*, Puttenham’s language and rhetoric imply a larger reading audience than just poets. In fact, the third book strays away from grammar as Puttenham’s addresses rhetorical figures and their importance. However, these figures address a higher importance than mere poetics; instead, Puttenham adopts Castiglione’s rhetoric to successfully unite poetic language with conduct and courtly behavior.

Thus, Puttenham manipulates language within the treatise and dictates his message to the readers, which proves similar to how Castiglione teaches courtiers to manipulate the court world. Puttenham’s designation of the poet or maker as a courtier¹⁴ reinforces this claim. Although most poets at that time were courtiers—Wyatt, Surrey, Sidney—Puttenham’s label also signifies that his treatise, like the *Courtier*, addresses not only poets but also courtly figures. Daniel Javitch claims, “The language used at court determines the current standard of English which poetry must adopt” (Javitch 869). Puttenham’s treatise attempts to standardize the English language, and so the appeal to the court realm proves to be an effort to educate courtly figures on how they should speak and write properly. This method would allow the successful appellation to the court world, and would initiate possibilities to receive patronage. Both prospects would validate Puttenham’s treatise, and additionally display his shared desire with Castiglione to aid courtiers and receive patronage. Thus, Puttenham’s *Art* reveals an ambition to improve the England’s rhetorical skills in writing and speaking, as well as procure courtly favor.

¹⁴ Throughout the treatise, Puttenham habitually uses the name courtier as a designation for a poet as well as man of court.

Because Puttenham employs this political and courtly rhetoric, particular concepts and words convey unique meaning when transposed to the poetic realm. Puttenham constructs his argument using Castiglione's terms that encompass pivotal roles in the third book. For example, ornament, according to Puttenham, is the "fashioning of . . . language and style to . . . delight and allure . . . the mind as the ear of the hearers . . . disguising it no little from the ordinary and accustomed" (3.1.221). As a result, poetry should always be adorned in the "richest attire," so that it will always be pleasing to the eyes and ears (3.1.221). That poetry should be hidden under an array of elaborate language, symbols, and conceits relates directly back to Castiglione. The *Courtier's* comprehensive list of qualities given to the Courtier¹⁵ and later the Lady¹⁶—such as horseback proficiency, competency in arms, and even joke-telling—serve as a form of ornaments. In other words, both poetry and courtier wear metaphorical "ornaments" that make the courtier appear very appealing to a prince and others at court in the same way elaborate poetry always sounds more pleasing than straightforward, simple language.

These ornaments also serve to mask the true intentions of the courtier and the poem. The ambiguity maintains an air of mystery for the courtier, and help poetics inwardly stir the mind (Puttenham 3.3.227). Puttenham requires poets to speak and write "cunningly and eloquently," which echoes the *Courtier* and its recommendation for the outward facade a courtier must constantly present (3.2.223). These comparisons appear odd and tenuous; in actuality, they are examples of Puttenham amalgamating two unlikely conceits into a harmonious balance to further his agenda of poetic erudition.

¹⁵ Castiglione, Baldesar. *The Book of the Courtier: The Norton Critical Edition*. Trans. Charles Singleton. Ed. Daniel Javitch. W.W. Norton & Company: New York, 2002. 1.21.28, 2.46.106.

¹⁶ Javitch, Daniel . . . *IBID*

Moreover, Julian Lamb states that “Puttenham’s tendency to focus on the ornamental nature of poetry must . . . be understood as an attempt to not only to beautify language, but also to release the semantic force of use” (32). The use of ornaments within poetry enhances a poem’s vigor, and this puissance arises from using ideologies that associate more with etiquette and manners than with poetry. Innocuous comments by Castiglione on improving presentation become remade into a tool of poetic standardization.

While Castiglione ornaments his courtier with athletic and combative skills, he also peppers him with rhetorical competency. For writing, Castiglione suggests that his courtier should “choose words which best express what he wished to say . . . to reveal their dignity and splendor,” while oration should sound “sonorous, gentle and well-constituted . . . tempered by a seemly expression of the face . . . to give grace and . . . consonant with words” (1.33.40, 1.33.41). Reminiscent of Shakespeare’s Polonius, Castiglione advocates such use of language when in the political and courtly sphere; a part of the guise that the courtier should feign in this atmosphere. Although Castiglione advises that a courtier should speak “sensibly in everything, with readiness and a lucid fullness,” the author does not specifically explain the ways in which to achieve these linguistic goals. Instead, Castiglione makes generalizations about pursuing rhetorical excellence (1.34.41). Puttenham progresses Castiglione’s embryonic ideas, and he achieves this goal through utilizing rhetorical figures. Javitch adds that “because the highly particularized nomenclature allows him [Puttenham] to make exhaustive distinctions . . . thereby a variety of verbal devices to effect what Castiglione can only suggest” (876). Since Puttenham focuses on the linguistic aspects of the courtier’s training, he can expand points that Castiglione can only superficially touch in the

Courtier. Thus, Puttenham's detailed list of rhetorical devices proves to be a reimagining of Castiglione's linguistic insights.

This expansion does not insinuate that Puttenham disagrees with Castiglione's views on speaking and writing; rather, Puttenham's exhaustive list provides the reader with the tools to realize Castiglione's advice. Puttenham defends using rhetorical devices because figures provide "sweetness of speech, sentence, and amplification [which] are . . . necessary to an excellent orator and poet, nor may in no wise be spared any of them" (3.18.280). The complete poet/courtier must have complete mastery over the vernacular language, and must—in poetry and court—be able to manipulate language to his will. Puttenham creates a poet who can also play the competent politician as well as a linguist. Because of this importance, Chapter 19, of Book Three, dedicates itself solely to rhetorical devices. This chapter provides a microcosm of Puttenham's *Courtier*-influenced designs. Puttenham provides numerous terms, and explains their importance in writing and speaking. Thus, Puttenham provides specific rhetorical advice, and consequently shows his aspirations of standardizing poetry through political and courtesy rhetoric. Puttenham mentions terms like *athypophora* (the rhetorical question) which asks "a question to the intent we will answer it ourselves, and is a fissure of argument and also of amplification" (3.19.289). Other terms like *Sarcasmus*, a bitter taunt, or *Erotema*, interrogational speech, reinforce the double quality of Puttenham's language that can be used in various fields and situations (3.19.294, 3.19.296).

Furthermore, Puttenham creates actual English words for these rhetorical terms; typically, by transposing Latin and Greek words into English. Terms like *allegoria* and

*decorum*¹⁷ Puttenham employs throughout chapter 19. Castiglione actually recommends this action in the *Courtier*. Although Castiglione admits, “I would praise him [the courtier] if he *sometimes* used *some* of those French or Spanish terms that are current with us,” he recommends using mainly vernacular language and even advises courtiers to “coin some new words; and he should use new figures of speech; taking these elegantly from the Latins, even as the Latins themselves took them from the Greeks” (1.33.41, 1.33.41-42). Puttenham emulates Castiglione in this way since he adapts rhetorical terms from Latin or Greek. Puttenham even adapts the word *decorum* from its Latin root and subsequently dubs it as *decency* (3.23.347). This specificity denotes a progression beyond anything Castiglione conceived. Nonetheless, foreseeing the possibility that someone could emulate his work, Castiglione expresses that one should “imitate but not in everything . . . if Virgil had imitated Hesiod in everything, he would not have surpassed him” (1.37.44). Puttenham’s treatise emulates Castiglione’s language, but—as Castiglione advises—Puttenham moves past the *Courtier*’s rhetorical advice and finds deeper meaning. Puttenham’s ideas and language reflect the *Courtier*, but they consider the finer points of poetic and prosaic language. As a result, the *Art* exhibits a more enriched detail of language use with political, poetic, and conduct language molding together and forming an insightful examination into the English language.

Puttenham’s use of these rhetorical devices refers to style, which has a mutable connotation. Puttenham defines style as “a constant and continual phrase or tenor of speaking and writing . . . of words, speeches, and sentences together a certain contrived form and quality, many times natural to the writer” (3.5.233). In this way, Puttenham’s

¹⁷ Both of these terms will be discussed further later on when discussing sprezzatura and grace.

definition of style echoes Castiglione's charge for political adaptability. Javitch comments on this stylistic adaptability when he states, "The courtier wins admiration among his equals by balancing seriousness with jest" (323). Castiglione's supposition that "the courtier be eloquent when it suits his purpose and, when he speaks on political matters, let him be prudent and wise; and let him have the good judgment to adapt himself to the customs of the countries where he happens to be" reveals a rather protean and artificial attitude towards acting in various situations (2.22.84-85). There is an inconsistent consistency in the courtier's actions, where the courtier constantly changes personas, yet he maintains a steadfast guise in particular situations. This malleable existence allows the courtier to fit any political or courtly situation with astonishing aptitude. Following suit, Puttenham states "It behooveth the maker or poet to follow the nature of his subject . . . if his matter be high and lofty, that the style be so too; if mean, the style should also be mean" (3.5.234). In other words, Puttenham proposes that courtiers and poets should adapt their speech and writing to particular situations. This may appear rather self-evident, but Puttenham bemoans the idea of mixing styles. Naturalness and proper placement plays a role in style, but Puttenham supports changing one's style depending on a situation's gravity. This point-of-view appears rather tactful than didactic, as if Puttenham wants his poets prepared to change styles seamlessly and suddenly if necessary. In the court world, courtiers consistently mask and change personas as a pivotal survival technique. Puttenham appears to clothe his poet with the same habits, despite doing so would apply more to courtiers. Additionally, Puttenham suggests judging a "man's manners by . . . his daily manner of speech and ordinary writing" (3.5.233). Curiously, Puttenham—whose treatise has focused mainly on

poetics—comments on studying a person’s behavior. These recommendations reinforce the connection Puttenham constructs between the poet and the political sphere. These poetic conventions combine with courtly styles, and this amalgamation aids in validating the rhetorical standardizations being instilled throughout the treatise.

Ultimately, Puttenham derives his stylistic proclivities from the art of dissembling. Dissembling—a political term—refers directly to “the masking . . . or the different roles required by different social situations . . . shift[ing] from role to role with the lightning speed of a quick change artist” (Rebhorn 14). Dissimulation becomes an extremely useful weapon in the courtier’s arsenal. Federico Fregosa stresses maintaining “a certain dignity . . . with a fine and airy grace,” while always acting “more humble than his rank would require” whether dancing, horse riding, or accepting accolades (2.11.75, 2.19.82). This suppression of behavior and ability fosters “grace and adornment” when the courtier unleashes said abilities (2.40.101). Castiglione wholeheartedly supports this calculated display of “circumspect dissimulation” because this masking creates an aura of mystery and admiration for the multi-talented courtier (2.19.101). This dissimulation may appear counter-productive to self-fashioning; however, this malleability allows the courtier to fit into any social situation without appearing ambitious or overly grandiloquent. Masking permits unproblematic flexibility around fickle courtly personas, and provides forums to impress those same courtly figures when the opportunity arises.

Puttenham uses dissimulation as a valuable tool for enriching his artifice. Sublimating dissimulation into the poetic realm, Puttenham declares that the “profession of a courtier . . . is . . . to be able to dissemble” and the “chief praise and cunning of our poet is in the *discreet* use of figures” (3.25.379, 3.1.222). Even if the third book is

categorized as a book of manners, Puttenham's amalgamation of the poet and courtier into one entity—conflating the responsibilities and goals of the two as contiguous—defies the common convention in contemporary courtesy treatises. Javitch claims that while other rhetoricians remained incredulous about dissembling¹⁸, Puttenham recommends that “courtly poet[s] do dissemble *not only* in his countenances and conceits, but also his ordinary actions of behavior . . . whereby the better to win his purposes” (3.25.379).

This deviation from typical conduct rhetoric further confirms the impression Castiglionean thought has had on the *Art*. Although dissimulation does not appear to have a principal role in poetry, Puttenham considers the “fashioning of our maker's language and style to . . . delight and allure . . . with a certain novelty and strange manner of conveyance, disguising it no little from the ordinary and accustomed” (3.1.221). This ambiguity contributes to the richness of the poem, and makes it appear natural and sophisticated; thus, dissimulation becomes a necessary part of the poetic process. Additionally, the poet/courtier, already adept at dissembling, would be particularly advantageous in court proceedings and dealings, since they utilize Puttenham's dissimulation of ornaments and stylistic conventions. These figures include terms like *allegoria* whose sub-figures “fight under the banner of dissimulation” (3.17.276). Puttenham's steadfast propensity towards dissimulation signifies a concerted effort to create practical application out of the multiple poetic devices he creates. In this way, Puttenham's multi-faceted formulations construct a standardized English poetic system

¹⁸ Javitch, Daniel. “Poetry and Court Conduct: Puttenham's Arte of English Poesie in the Light of Castiglione's Cortegiano.” *MLN* 87.7 (1972): 865-882. Print. 876.

by appropriating court rhetoric. This allocation validates the legitimacy of poets as practical civil servants.

Despite Puttenham's interest in fusing poetry and dissimulation, dissembling does not have full reign over rhetorical language within the treatise. Rather, Puttenham tempers dissimulation's dispersal through the practice of moderation, which results in what Castiglione refers to as sprezzatura. Sprezzatura, an elusive term, prevents a courtier from falling into affectation because it "conceal[s] all art and make whatever is done or said appear to be without effort and almost without any thought about it" (Castiglione 1.26.32). Sprezzatura has been translated as nonchalance, but Thomas Hoby, in his translation, vacillated between using disgracefulness and recklessness in different editions¹⁹. Either way, sprezzatura serves an important function in fashioning dissimulation into an honorable cause because "it is at once artifice made to seem natural and a seemingly effortless resolution of the difficult" (Javitch 871). Masking one's abilities enables the courtier to appear greater than he might ordinarily seem, but this dissembling also emits an air of moderation and humbleness that makes the courtier that much more attractive. Furthermore, tempering dissimulation through moderation prevents one from falling into vice, which a courtier wants to avoid at all costs²⁰. Thus, moderate dissimulation masks a courtier's abilities, which produces sprezzatura and creates a perception of modesty and superior ability within the courtier, since all feats *appear* effortless.

¹⁹ Burke, Peter. *The Fortunes of the Courtier*. Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1995 70-71. Burke: "The use of "recklessness" could have been an attempt by Hoby to use an English word to translate *sprezzatura*. The 1588 edition came out with "disgracefulness," which Philip Sidney uses in his *Defence of English Poesie*, and it is defined as "inelegance."

²⁰ Castiglione, Baldesar. *Book of the Courtier*. Trans. Charles Singleton. Ed. Daniel Javitch. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2002. 2.41.102.

Much like dissimulation, sprezzatura has a ubiquitous presence in the *Art's* third book. Puttenham attempts to make the treatise itself an exemplum of sprezzatura through its presentation of literary knowledge, familiarity with foreign languages, and numerous examples in a didactic yet nonchalant manner. Moreover, Puttenham preaches what he practices and discusses the ideology of sprezzatura. Just as sprezzatura “enables the courtier to make himself into a much more enticing and compelling figure,” Puttenham’s application of sprezzatura to rhetorical language further expands the poet’s technical outlets (Berger 296). This expansion allows profound creativity to develop. Puttenham advocates “moderating and abating the force of the matter by craft and for a pleasing purpose” (3.15.269). This pronouncement emphasizes Puttenham’s desire to use figures but not flood poetry with their use; as a result, moderation and sprezzatura go hand-in-hand in accomplishing this feat in poetry. When discussing a particular figure, Puttenham declares that “making a great matter seem small and of little difficulty . . . will seem to . . . make light of everything that might be a discouragement” (3.19.305). This statement echoes Castiglione’s whole view of sprezzatura, and its purpose in making the courtier appear modest. Nevertheless, Puttenham develops sprezzatura to suit several functions: a political technique, a rhetorical device, a writing style, and an inspiration for several poetic figures. Moderating dissimulation results in sprezzatura and prevents poetry from becoming convoluted and “vicious . . . by nothing more than by using too much surplusage” (3.22.343).

The thematic endgame of Puttenham’s treatise results in an examination of poetic decorum. Decorum, though not the most important facet of Puttenham’s discourse, is the culmination of the third book, as dissimulation, sprezzatura, and all the figures aim to

ultimately achieve decorum. David Attridge defines decorum as “the principle whereby any poetic device can be judged” (30). This ideology mirrors Castiglione’s own idea about grace that consists of an “‘air,’ which shall make him at first sight pleasing . . . to all . . . let this be an adornment informing all his actions . . . [making him] worthy . . . of a every great lord” (1.15.22). Castiglione’s definition of grace shares the same meaning as Puttenham’s decorum, which embodies what Puttenham designates as everything “that makes our speech well pleasing and commendable” (3.23.347). Similar to Puttenham, Burke claims that Castiglione’s preoccupation with grace revolves around “the aesthetics as well as the ethics of behavior” (30).

Puttenham’s focus on rhetoric signifies an outward expression of Castiglione’s dialectic between aesthetics and ethics. In fact, the acquisition of poetic decorum—or decency as Puttenham designates it—requires one “to know the comeliness of an action as well as of a word and thereby to direct himself both in praise or persuasion . . . that pertains to an orator’s art” (3.24.360) Puttenham even acquiesces that decorum “resteth in writing, speech, and behavior” (3.23.349). Again, Puttenham brackets speech, writing, and *behavior* together as the main tools for the courtier/poet. Part of art requires certain behavioral modes that again make the courtier/poet amenable to courtly procedure. Competent poetry requires the attainment of decorum, which “keeps poetry safe from the indecorous [affectation]” (Lamb 26). Puttenham again adopts Castiglionian ideologies in order to legitimize his own standards, as well as prepare his courtier/poet for the challenges of succeeding in court. Nevertheless, Puttenham establishes modes of rhetorical development and conduct that, if done correctly, results in the acquisition of

decorum (grace) from the monarch. Rebhorn considers this attainment the courtier's "the highest achievement" (41).

Puttenham does not create a complete facsimile of the *Courtier*; rather, the *Art* establishes itself as a formidable complement to the *Courtier*. Throughout his third book, "Puttenham adapted the art of courtiership to the art of poetry" (Burke 80). Through language, the *Art* becomes more than a mere grammar book, and it also grows beyond just a treatise on conduct. Just as Peter Wiggins declares that "Castiglione was a guide for getting ahead in the late Elizabethan and early Stuart political world," Puttenham attempts achieve similar acclaim linguistically and orally through the *Art* (5). In terms of speaking and writing, Puttenham provides an expansion and even a sequel to Castiglione's *Courtier* where Puttenham explicates the rhetorical sphere more profoundly than Castiglione. However, rather than merely emulating Castiglione, Puttenham appropriates important Castiglionean ideologies and applies them to various linguistic modes. These allocations further legitimize his treatise's agenda of standardizing English poetry. As a consequence, Puttenham's treatise becomes a grammar manual, a courtesy handbook, an exemplum of proper poetic styles, and a self-fashioning guide for poets entering the public sphere. Thus, Castiglionean ideologies aid Puttenham in creating an intricate and richly wrought treatise that moves beyond a simple grammar handbook.

CHAPTER TWO

TAMING *ENDYMION*: LYLY'S DEFENSE OF FEMALES AND LOVE THROUGH
CASTIGLIONE'S IDEOLOGIES

Creating the female ideal concerned many minds during the Early Modern Period. How much freedom should women have in the public and private sphere, and what are women truly capable of accomplishing? Many harrowing views present a condescending vision regarding women, depicting them as either dissembling temptresses or angelic objects to be idealized. However, Castiglione's *Courtier* aims to dispel this narrow, binary representation of women through a comprehensive, though largely unresolved, defense of women. This noble justification departs from the majority's consideration of women, and generates a template that could be utilized by other proto-feminist writers and thinkers. John Lyly, influenced by Roman writers like Ovid and Cicero, recreates this traditional binary in *Endymion*, and follows Castiglione's formula for the ideal female. Nonetheless, Lyly actually deconstructs and subverts this model through several female characters, and presenting how unjustly they are treated by their male counterparts. Concurrently, Lyly presents an argument for love that retains the Platonic elements that resemble Bernardo Bibbieno's soliloquy in Book IV of the *Courtier*. Love, then, transforms into a necessary tool for furthering agency and promoting an ideal state of being. By establishing this antithetical argument between females and their foils, Lyly can reveal the flaws and virtues in the female and male characters and arrive at a reconciliatory view between the two. This consensus is moderated by the ideal female, Cynthia, who has all the virtues Castiglione recommends a female to embody. These

intricate interchanges result in *Endymion* deviating from contemporary denigration of women and instead embracing a proto-feminist ideology, which is complemented by a belief in the ascendant power of love.

Castiglione confers the task of creating the perfect lady to two male courtiers, Magnifico Giuliano and Cesare Gonzaga. Castiglione's choice in this area is quite interesting, since two males construct *their* version of the perfect female instead of the ladies in this coterie performing this task. Perhaps Castiglione felt that only men could defend the innocent women from their virulent detractors. Despite these questionable choices, Castiglione conveys a coherent and cogent argument accenting women's virtues and rehabilitating their damaged reputations. Castiglione's lady conducts herself with constant moderation whether through her "fluent discourse," or a "vivacity of spirit" (3.5.151, 3.7.153). Quite like the courtier, the perfect lady must dress appropriately, dance expertly, and modestly avoid showing any faults she may have in knowledge or character (3.7.153-154). These skills imbued women with qualities that complemented and matched those of the courtier.

Although modern critics—like Lawrence Stone—believe that the *Courtier* endorsed social rather than educational ideals, Castiglione's defense is a seminal and progressive attitude toward women's agency at this period (143). Moreover, the Magnifico claims that "many virtues of the mind are as necessary to a woman as to a man" as well as a "knowledge of letters" (3.5.151). This statement dispels the pejorative declaration that Castiglione focuses more on social qualities than didactic qualities. Magnifico also boldly declares that "women can understand all the things men can understand and that the intellect of a woman can penetrate whatever a man's can" (3.156-

157). This claim counters Gasparo's denunciation that "women are quite beyond the pale of reason" (2.35.96). Placing women on equal planes as men intellectually supposes that women can perform the same duties as man, even rule. This concept would have especially appealed to the Duchess of Urbino who is seen as the ultimate authority figure within this debate. The Duchess, although silent for the most part, wields a tremendous amount of influence and only speaks when directing the course of the dialogue (Burke 26). Because of this phenomenon, the Book III argument becomes a defense for both women and the sovereign. For these reasons, the woman debate undergoes "extensive development in Book III," and is polemically argued the rest of the book (Rebhorn 125).

Upon constructing the perfect lady, Castiglione faces obstinate opposition from three misogynistic courtiers: Gasparo, Ottaviano, and Niccolo Frisio who have berated women from the very beginning of the book (Rebhorn 125). Revealing the oppositions' diatribes allows Castiglione to systematically dismantle their argument, while acknowledging that such vile depictions of women ubiquitously exist during this period. However, though Gasparo claims that women are defects in nature and they consciously toy with their lovers, the Magnifico soundly rebukes his circumstantial denouncements. (Castiglione 3.11.156, 3.74.204). This polarizing debate separates the interlocutors into two camps, which essentially separates women into a binary: the Fallen Woman and the Perfect Lady. This binary wriggles its way into the *Courtier*, and throughout Europe. Gasparo declares that the majority of women correspond more to the imperfect, sinful temptress than the meticulously constructed Perfect Lady. This seed of prejudice exists despite Magnifico's—and Cesare Gonzaga's—noble defense that women, if sinful, become that way because they are "kept under too close a watch, or are beaten by their

husbands or fathers” (3.41.179). Thus, Cesare claims that sinful women are products of their bleak situations, which defeats the whole idea of women being naturally sinful or angelic. Nevertheless, Judith Butler believes that dispelling women from a particular category proves an arduous task, due to generations of prejudices mounting into a societal fixture²¹. This dynamic subsists in the *Courtier* with Gasparo and his misogynists continuing to grieve the female participants with prejudices, even after being defeated by the ladies’ champions. Nevertheless, Castiglione’s logical defense provides an example of dismantling the entrenched prejudices women faced.

Lyly subsequently adopts this female dichotomy into *Endymion* through Cynthia and Tellus who each represent opposite sides of this apparent paradigm. This binary would fit easily into Lyly’s infatuation with antithetical conceits, characters, and concepts. Within these antitheses, the gender issue emerges in a variety of forms within the play. One would presume that a play consisting of characters and their gender-foils would present one dimensional character types with a straightforward storyline. However, this assumption would be incorrect, since the various antitheses provide Lyly with space to accept and reject numerous aspects of the play’s arguments. In fact, G.K. Hunter believes that Lyly paradoxically accepts both sides of this female binary, displaying characteristics resembling both “the gay misogyny of Gaspar[o] Pallavicino as well as the mystical raptures of Pietro Bembo” (128). Hunter’s assessment, however, still relegates Lyly to the restrictive paradigm of females being either angelic or sinful. Although Lyly does indulge in this dichotomy through Cynthia and Tellus, whom Peter Saccio refers to as “higher and lower kinds of love,” Lyly’s other characters thoroughly

²¹ Butler, Judith. *Gender Troubles*. Routledge: New York, 1990. 4.

undermine this overly neat and simple designation (172). These characters include the *angelic* Cynthia, the *earthy* Tellus, and grotesque Dipsas, as well as the protagonist Endymion, and the foolish Tophas. These characters provide elements that dismantle entrenched female stereotypes. Although the play catered to a female monarch, Elizabeth, Lyly did not necessarily have to put complex female characters into the play. Stone reports that there was a consensus that “woman is a weak creature not endued with like strength and constancy of mind” (138). However, Lyly makes the protagonist, Endymion, more inconstant than the *vile* Tellus. Furthermore, Lyly Intertwines these ideas and characters with the varying degrees of love established by Plato. Love, then, performs a pivotal role in the play and in confronting this polarizing issue of categorizing a woman’s place.

Peter Weltner refers to *Endymion* as a play where “the Feminine dominates utterly,” and the depiction of Cynthia reinforces this idea (8). Cynthia, easily the most prominent figure in the play, embodies both Castiglione’s perfect lady and his noble sovereign. Cynthia is “absolute and perfect” (Weltner 12). She embodies the true ideal whom male characters should worship and female characters should aspire to be but can never reach. Endymion calls her divine, and that time would fear to offend her delicate features²². Further, Endymion remarks on Cynthia’s “ripe years and infinite virtues, great honours and unspeakable beauty . . . whose face neither the summer’s blaze nor the winter’s blast chap” (1.1.60-64). These Petrarchan conceits also echo the praise ladies receive in the *Courtier*. Cynthia’s inward goodness and outward beauty emanate in a way that hopelessly attracts Endymion to her, just as Pietro Bembo claims this phenomenon

²² Lyly, John . *Endymion*. Ed. David Bevington. Manchester University Press: Manchester, 1996. 1.1.66-68.

could happen in the *Courtier* (4.57.248). Although the Magnifico erroneously assumes that a woman's physiological makeup makes them naturally temperate, he lauds coldness as a tool for moderate demeanor (3.17.160). Similarly, Cynthia exhibits continually tranquil and composed persona in every situation, which makes her the most practical and detached character within the play. She maintains a consistent temperament whether punishing Tellus or compassionately awakening Endymion (3.1.41-43, 5.1.129). The play does not portray Cynthia as the irrational woman that the *Courtier's* misogynist interlocutors construct; thus, Lyly shows support for compelling female characters, especially through Cynthia who is the female, and human, ideal. Additionally, Cynthia's comparison with the moon invokes the idea of dissimulation. Cynthia, like the moon, constantly changes yet also remains unwavering; she conceals herself and her feelings until absolutely necessary; in other words, she dissimulates from the other characters, so they do not truly know her motives or decisions. They just know to fear and respect her, for they know the consequences that ensure obedience. For example, Cynthia commands Semele not to speak or else her tongue will be cut out (4.3.76-77). This fear and respect clothe Cynthia in a dissembling wardrobe because no character truly knows what the calculating moon queen might be thinking at any given moment. Cynthia at times acts magnanimously and stern at other times. In this way, Cynthia dissembles just as absolutist monarchs dissembled to keep the population and nobility in line. Moreover, the Magnifico suggests that women in general should dissemble in their regular demeanor, as well as in hiding her feelings when in love (3.5.151, 3.67.200). As a result, Cynthia dissembles as both a monarch and a woman. This dissembling, unlike Endymion and

Tellus's dissembling, does not hurt the other characters or affect their attitudes' toward Cynthia; rather, the divine monarch receives more praises for her frosty demeanor.

Cynthia's divinity places her beyond the passionate, emotional feelings of love. However, since "love is the element on which the whole play moves," Cynthia's love must then be something heavenly and beyond the normal, human conception of the idea (Hunter 184). Because of this conundrum, Endymion admits that "it is impossible for love to fit her humour, which no man knoweth" (1.1.25-26). Truly, Cynthia is "invulnerable to unchaste desire and . . . wedded affection" (Bevington 10). This amorous indifference does not make Cynthia heartless; conversely, the moon queen follows another form of love: the platonic ideal. Plato outlines this ideology in the *Symposium*, where Socrates argues the values of love with other interlocutors. The debate culminates with Socrates outlining the ideal passage of love, which entails escalating one's body and soul through the various stages of beauty to attain the ultimate form of wisdom, virtue, and divinity²³. Cynthia's accession to this ideal sets the tone for the entire play, and Cynthia receives more accolades for pursuing a life of more spiritual contemplation than earthly niceties. Even Cynthia's kiss is devoid of any physical desire; instead, Cynthia admits, "I will do that to Endymion which yet never mortal men could boast of heretofore, nor shall ever hope for hereafter" (5.1.27-29). Empathy, not adoration, compels Cynthia's kiss. These actions constitute the "union of body soul," and the kiss indicates a "chastely compassionate test of Cynthia's virtue" (Castiglione 4.64.253, Edge 180). Cynthia avoids *vulgar* love and so becomes the most admirable

²³ Socrates. *Symposium*. Trans. Christopher Gill. New York: Penguin Books, 1999. 43-49.

character within a play flooded with flawed characters; thus, providing Cynthia, a woman, with the proper agency women lacked.

The amorous Endymion provides a stark contrast to Cynthia's views on love. Endymion personifies all the qualities of the perfect courtier with the celestial Cynthia declaring, "I favoured thee, Endymion, for thy honour, thy virtues, thy affections" (4.3.83-84). In fact, only Endymion's attraction to Cynthia occludes him from becoming the perfect courtier. Since Cynthia's divinity places her above love, Endymion involves himself in a fruitless enterprise, and he becomes a parody of the Petrarchan lover, infatuated with "possessing the body" (Castiglione 4.52.244). While Violet Jeffries contends that Lyly's characters have a propensity towards attaining the neo-platonic ideal, Endymion allies himself with the lower rings of love before his enchanted slumber (43). Until that point, Endymion's thoughts are "stitched to the stars," where he wastes away admiring and vainly hoping to possess perfection, which is impossible for a mere human being, regardless of how virtuous he can be (1.1.5-6). These vulgar proclivities become more apparent through Tophas whose embellished persona mocks Endymion's own behavior. In fact, this *miles gloriosus*, with his "ink and paper," actually makes light of Endymion's love excesses²⁴ (3.3.40). Tophas's hyperbolic behavior emphasizes how foolish Endymion's behavior has been, and the necessity for Endymion's enchantment. If Endymion had not been placed under sleep, his fiery passion could have possibly exceeded the bounds of moderation, which may have caused more consequence than the damage the infatuated courtier had already done.

²⁴ Edge, Donald. *Critical Editions of John Lyly's Endymion and Love's Metamorphosis*. 174.

The progression from Tophas' neo-platonic pursuits to the forlorn love-poet becomes an instantaneous transformation, just as Endymion's conversion to a spiritualized form of love appears just as unexplained. The answer to this quandary can again be found in the *Courtier* where Bembo explains that older gentlemen "are smitten by beauty and direct their desire thereto, guided by rational choice" (4.52.244). Older courtiers are guided by more sensible rationales and not by the impetuous passions and ego that plague younger courtiers (Castiglione 1.15.79). Because Endymion has aged, and has had forty years of extreme contemplation—emblemized by his surreal dreams—Endymion has apparently grown into a new understanding of his relationship with Cynthia. In the play's very beginning, Eumendides foreshadows that "sleep would do thee more good than speech," and this advice becomes quite prophetic (1.1.78-79). Even though Endymion regains his youth, he still has the mindset of an elder person, and so he has become more amorously mature in his feelings. While he still does not admit his faults against Tellus²⁵, he admits that his relationship with Cynthia "must be duty, loyalty, and reverence; nothing . . . be termed love" (5.4.165-166). Endymion's revelation has finally reached its culmination, and he accedes to a higher plane of spiritual contemplation and adoration of Cynthia.

Despite Endymion's evident development, his behavior beforehand suggests selfish and rather sexist tendencies that harmfully affect other female characters, namely, Tellus. In his unrealistic pursuit of Cynthia, he admits that "with Tellus, fair Tellus, have I dissembled, using her but as a cloak for mine affectations" (2.1.25-26). Endymion essentially denigrates Tellus into an object or tool to be wielded for his pleasure and

²⁵ Endymion's lack of admission is very problematic and will be explored later.

leisure. This form of dissembling contradicts the theory in the *Courtier* that dissimulation should not be done to place anyone under false pretenses (Castiglione 2.50.109). In this way, Endymion proves “untruthful, deceitful, and the discovery of this elicits Tellus’s mischievous, malicious rage” (Edge 183). Endymion’s own actions warrant the consequences he subsequently suffers. Ironically, Endymion berates Tellus and all women for being dissemblers and states that dissimulation is inherent in women as “spots upon doves . . . caterpillars upon sweet apples” (2.1.72-74). The haughty protagonist tosses this slur at Tellus and womankind only shortly after admitting his own dissembling acts. Apparently, Endymion invokes one of the many double standards between men and women. After all, women were considered “purgatory of men’s purses . . . and the hell of their minds,” (Stone 137). This degrading behavior subverts the supposedly virtuous qualities Endymion has, which the audience never witnesses but only hears from other characters’ testimonies²⁶. As a result, Endymion aids in subjugating women and degrading them as objects. After all, Endymion cherishes the ideal lady, Cynthia, while he misleads Tellus, the fallen woman who causes much of the play’s conflicts. In actuality, one could assume that Endymion is the catalyst for the mistreatment of the female characters in the play. As Susan Thomas bluntly declares, “He [Endymion] is thinking only of himself, his impression on Cynthia . . . He is not concerned about the problems caused by his behavior or the difficulties his love brings to others” (46).

Because of Endymion’s actions, Tellus’s descent into iniquity does not contain the same amount of disgust it once did. Rather, Tellus appears more as a victim of deceit in a male-dominated world than a jealous temptress bent on revenge. Before this

²⁶ See Cynthia’s speech in 3.1.60-63 and Eumenides’ speech in 3.1.31-34

development, Tellus appears to be virtuous, beautiful, and understanding. Even Endymion describes her as “fair . . . wise . . . honourable . . . [and] fortunate” and calls her his “only companion . . . [and] paradise” (2.3.12-18, 2.1.61-62). Perhaps Endymion loved Tellus at one point, but that has given way to his obsession for Cynthia. The maiden Scintilla is not incorrect in her assessment that men’s “hearts are scarce tipped on the side with constant desires” (2.2.7-8). In Endymion spurning Tellus and then spuriously denying his affection for Cynthia, he denies the fair Tellus any form of agency.

Tellus, by neither hearing the truth nor being able to escape her feelings for Endymion, becomes restricted in what she can accomplish. Thus, Endymion compels Tellus to become the conniving, revenge-plotting antagonist she embodies in the play. This phenomenon surprises most characters when the truth emerges because Tellus’s character has always been virtuous beyond question. Panelion articulates these ubiquitous feelings when she wonders aloud, “who would have thought that Tellus, being so fair by nature, so honourable by birth, so wise by education, would have entered into a mischief to the gods so odious” (5.3.1-3). Such genuine astonishment denotes a candid belief in Tellus’s previous and overall virtue. This statement becomes particularly poignant since Panelion’s description harkens back to Castiglione’s perfect lady. Because Panelion expresses these feelings among her peers, there is no reason to question the veracity of her claim. Again, from this evidence, one can conjecture that Endymion’s transgressions against Tellus compelled her to act out of character. Unlike Gasparo, who claims that women are naturally inclined towards vice, Tellus’s behavior fits Cesare’s claim that women “who are kept under too close a watch or are beaten by their husbands or fathers,

are less chaste than those who have a certain liberty” (3.41.179). While Cesare’s claim describes physical harm, Tellus suffers from emotional scarring that could be just as deleterious as physical punishment. In her book *Gender Trouble*, Butler attests that males—like Endymion—cancel out female thought and make them “*unrepresentable*” through words and language (9). With this idea in mind, who truly becomes the sympathetic character: the truculent Endymion or the unfortunate Tellus? Further evidence reveals itself when Tellus—imprisoned for speaking badly about Endymion—laments her actions and admits, “That I might once again see Endymion . . . Most devilish Tellus . . . [my] hate too intolerable!” (4.1.14-20). Unlike a grotesquely evil character like Richard III, Tellus regrets her actions; however, she does not receive atonement until at the conclusion. Until that hour arrives, Tellus reasons that her only choice is to “practice that which is most contrary to our sex, to dissemble” (4.1.30-31). Tellus not only embodies the unfair treatment of women, but she also defends womankind and their aversion to deceitfulness and dissembling. In wading through these various injustices and regrettable circumstances, Tellus epitomizes female degradation at the hands of male chauvinists, and Lyly incorporates this dichotomy as subversive instrument to the ideal-fallen lady binary.

How, then, do these problems reconcile the relationship between Cynthia and Tellus? Lyly’s certainly had strong proclivities towards antithetical conceits, and there exists a very conscious connection between Cynthia and Tellus. Certainly, Endymion provides the link between the two foils; nevertheless, the pair shares more characteristics than a love triangle with the philandering protagonist. In her tirade against Endymion, Tellus reasons:

Is not my beauty divine, whose body is decked with fair flowers, and veins are wines, yielding sweet liquor . . . whose ears are corn to bring strength . . . Doth not frankincense and myrrh breathe out of my nostrils and all the sacrifice of the gods breed in my bowels” (2.1.20-26).

However, Tellus’s defense also begets her differences with Cynthia. Tellus describes herself and her beauty in *earthy* terms, while Cynthia’s attributes have been established as divine. Even Tellus later admits that the difference between Cynthia and her is the former’s divine nature. Tellus pleads, “Were it possible that in so heavenly thoughts as yours there could fall such earthly motions as mine” (5.4.61-63). Tellus implies that the two characters belong in two separate categories. As Arthur Lovejoy explains in *The Great Chain of Being*, human beings and divine entities belong on two varying planes of existence with divine entities beyond the comprehension of less divine humanity²⁷.

Rather than designating Tellus and Cynthia as opposites or enemies, it would be more appropriate to classify Tellus as the earthly version of Cynthia; a facsimile that can be affected by human emotions and earthly predicaments. Unlike Cynthia, Tellus can be corrupted because Tellus, though she shares similar qualities to the moon goddess, does not have the ability to maintain a completely removed demeanor. Tellus’s humanity, flaws, and qualities shine forth throughout the play. In fact, Donald Edge astutely comments that Tellus—Earth in Latin—has companions whose names reflect her attributes: “Floscula [flowers] represents her benign nature, while Dipsas [herbs] represents her malevolent witchcraft. Her consuming love . . . [allegorized] by the maids

²⁷ Lovejoy, Arthur. *The Great Chain of Being*. Ed. Humphrey Milford. Harvard University Press: Cambridge, 1936.

in walking, Scintilla [spark] and Favilla [glowing ash, ember]” (3). Tellus’s evident humanity exhibits itself openly, and this signifies her firm entrenchment within the human sphere; as such, Tellus cannot be considered some evil villain. Rather, Tellus is a human being with the foibles and virtues present in any person. Her foil, Cynthia, does not encounter such issues because of her divinity. This reasoning explains why Endymion falls in love with Cynthia, the truly perfect woman. Peter Saccio explains that Endymion’s infatuation with the *other*, the divine Cynthia, exists because Cynthia offers a higher form of love than Tellus (173). While Cynthia may be perfect, Tellus does not exactly exemplify the fallen, evil woman that Gasparo would label her. Rather, Tellus dismantles the evil-angelic paradigm completely because she has virtues and flaws, which place her in a gray area. The unfortunate Tellus, therefore, becomes a clear symbol for defending women from men’s persecution. Tellus, the earthly Eve, falls into evil but does not embody evil, and for this reason, Cynthia acknowledges the wrongs Endymion has done to her and allows the contrite Tellus to partake in a blissful, while bittersweet, conclusion (5.4.256-268).

Because Tellus does not suit the ideal-fallen woman binary, someone must replace her, so that Lyly’s mathematical antitheses remain in place. Since Lyly ensconces Cynthia into the role of the perfect lady, the antithesis would be Dipsas, the witch. In a mocking blazon, Tophas perversely describes Dipsas’s *features*: “What a low forehead! What a tall and stately nose! What little hollow eyes! What great and goodly lips! How harmless she is, being toothless! . . . In how sweet a proportion her cheeks hand down to her breast like dugs” (3.3.55-60). These *flattering* descriptions contrast Cynthia’s angelic features, which automatically set them apart. While Cynthia maintains an eternally

youthful visage, Dipsas's age—though undetermined—borders on ancient, and she becomes more haggard as the play progresses. While they both possess supernatural ability, Dipsas acquiesces that “I differ from the gods, that I am not able to rule hearts” (1.4.26-27). These distinguishing characteristics present an alternative view of the female binary with Cynthia and Dipsas as the true counterparts. Tellus, meanwhile, ultimately disrupts the binary through being a sympathetic woman with genuine virtues and flaws.

Furthermore, according to Percy Long, Dipsas's name derives from “serpent,” which would lend credence to the idea that the earthly Eve, Tellus, is seduced into evil by the corrupting Dipsas (175). The true villain, then, shifts from the unfortunate Tellus to the virulent, bitter witch, who cursed her own husband Geron long before enchanting Endymion. Nevertheless, although Dipsas fills an antithetical role, she does not fulfill the narrow, suffocating binary. Rather than a truly evil influence, Dipsas becomes a caricature and comic relief. Much like the flamboyant Sir Tophas, Dipsas engenders a light-hearted comedic quality to the play with the pages Epiton and Samias lampooning her repulsive figure²⁸. Since Tophas does not represent all men in his buffoonery, Dipsas should not symbolize women in her wicked machinations.

With these new understandings of female roles and relations, the character Semele deserves a closer examination. Due to Semele's obstinate diatribes against love and men, she bears a striking resemblance to *Much Ado About Nothing's* Beatrice. Naturally mistrustful of man's motivations, Semele even recommends Eumenides joining Endymion in his enchanted slumber (3.1.32-34). Semele constantly and biting speaks her mind, which causes even the moderate Cynthia to call her “the very wasp of all

²⁸ *Endymion* 3.3.95-113.

women, whose tongue stingeth as much as an adder's tooth" (5.4.206-208). Despite her designation as a cold-hearted shrew by her peers, Semele actually embodies the most stalwart stoic in the play. Semele does not get swayed by silky language of the various male courtiers; rather, Semele staunchly defends her chastity and honor even with Cynthia threatening to cut out her tongue (5.4.225). Her honor means more than her life, and Castiglione would extol her perseverant pursuit of virtue. The Magnifico explicitly states that a "courtier must never show them [women] . . . a lack of chastity, either in jest or in earnest," which implies that a woman's constancy remains one of her most important virtues in society (3.98.143). A courtier must not even make facetious remarks about a woman's chasteness. Consequently, only when Eumenides offers to have his tongue cut off instead of Semele does the vocal woman willfully yield and agree to marry the virtuous courtier (5.4.241-243). While Semele may appear extreme, chastity and virginity were pivotal to a woman's character and social standing. Thus, Semele's aversion to an inconstant companion does not seem as excessive as previously perceived. Women had to be prudent in choosing an honest, constant male companion, and Semele painstakingly and patiently waits to see Eumenides prove himself worthy. Semele's constancy provides another alternative to the harmful stereotypes about women's philandering, which shows Lyly's true feelings about women and the female characters in *Endymion*.

Ultimately, Lyly and Castiglione prove progressive in their treatment of women. This idea proves true when Lyly incorporates Castiglione's ideologies on love and women in *Endymion*. The play establishes a series of binaries among the various characters, which Lyly employed frequently in his works. This paradigm, however,

contributes to the adverse treatment of women by the male characters, especially the title character Endymion. The protagonist's selfish actions catalyze a series of events that lead to Tellus, Endymion's spurned lover, to seek revenge on him. Conversely, rather than being portrayed as an unremorseful villain, Tellus becomes a sympathetic character. In fact, Tellus receives a consolatory ending due to Endymion's wrongs against her. Tellus and other female characters—such as Cynthia and Semele—personify elements that the *Courtier* lauds in women. The wrongs done to Tellus and the slurs said against Semele resemble the slurs Gasparo and his chauvinist comrades spew against women throughout the *Courtier*. Because of these startling resemblances between the *Courtier*'s treatment of women and the occurrences in *Endymion*, Lyly clearly received influence from Castiglione's seminal text in order to defend women in the play.

CHAPTER THREE

“MY TOYFUL BOOK”: THE *COURTIER* AS EXEMPLUM IN SIDNEY’S *OLD*
ARCADIA

The writings of Philip Sidney provide an example where studying one’s works can definitively unlock a passage into the author’s views and aims. Since the courtier-poet accomplished much in his short life span, Sidney provides multiple areas for examination in a compact amount of time. These ambitious undertakings arise from Sidney’s keen desire to embody Castiglione’s perfect courtier. Notably, Sidney’s writings, which usually involve chivalric themes and love, reflect a strong Castiglionian tone through its characters, themes, actions, and morals. Sidney, a “thorough disciple of Castiglione,” consciously develops these ideas in his epic romance, *Old Arcadia*²⁹ (Myrick 26). In its depiction of rulers, princes, princesses, and shepherds, the prodigious work indicates a literary experiment by Sidney where the poet tries to apply Castiglione’s ideologies to a realistic setting. The supernatural does not exist in Arcadia; instead, Sidney’s characters encounter love, lust, rebellion, virtue, and disharmony, and they do not always choose the virtuous route. In fact, Sidney contrasts the characters’ descent into iniquity with didactic eclogues at the end of each book. These eclogues provide commentary on the events of the text, and the second eclogue especially bears a resemblance to the *Courtier*’s advice. At the same time, Sidney’s writing style and aims signify his own desire to emulate Castiglione. As a result, Sidney’s *Old Arcadia* presents

²⁹ I designate *Old Arcadia* as an epic romance, despite the ongoing contentions of many scholars over the exact genre of the text. I have chosen the description that has been most generally accepted.

a moral fable tailored after *Courtier* ideologies while simultaneously exhibiting these ideologies in the writing style itself.

Sidney likely started writing *Arcadia* in 1577, which is the same year another Hoby edition of the *Courtier* was printed. Sidney wrote the *Old Arcadia* while he was banished from Elizabeth's court despite being considered "Castiglione's courtier made flesh" (Woudhuysen 6, Burke 37). Known for his restlessness, Sidney "had a lively and enquiring intellect, a quickness of understanding" (Buxton 35). This generous description presents Sidney as an individual capable of embodying the perfect courtier. The banishment Sidney suffered inspired the young courtier to write the *Old Arcadia* in the first place. This idea becomes startlingly apparent when one encounters the ironic ambivalence underlying the work. Castiglione's ideologies are tested in a setting where vice is never too far from virtue. Despite these setbacks, Sidney maintains an unbreakable attitude in his retreat, and the "disciple of Castiglione" manages to write an impressively complex and intricate work in the *Old Arcadia* (Burke 97). Sidney most likely wrote the *Old Arcadia* at Wilton castle, his sister Mary's home, where he wrote for "predominantly female" audience (Duncan-Jones 182). Sidney's audience bears a likeness to the *Courtier* in which the Duchess of Urbino represents the most prominent figure involved in Castiglione's coterie. In this way, Sidney emulates the *Courtier* from the very beginning of his literary enterprise.

Sidney's prefatory letter provides the ideal template for starting an analysis through a Castiglionian lens. The letter exhibits the most vital quality that should be inherent in every courtier's actions: sprezzatura. Sidney employs this nonchalance that makes any deed "appear to be without effort and almost without any thought about it" at

the very beginning of the work (1.26.33). In labeling *Old Arcadia* an “idle work” in the letter to Mary, Sidney presents his prodigious work as a simple pleasantry written here and there on “loose sheets of paper” (4). Indeed, the letter itself appears to be an “extreme form of sprezzatura” (Lanham 197). Upon examining the text, however, Sidney’s designation of the *Arcadia* as an idle work appears completely and utterly ludicrous. Rather, the text is “extremely carefully structured” in a “terentian formula,” which separates the work into five books with the first four complemented by pastoral eclogues (Duncan-Jones 177, Kimbrough 71).

Sidney’s ostensibly aloof manner is all part of his artifice as a courtier, which conceals the apparent painstaking and laborious process it most likely took to complete the *Arcadia*. This strain of thought coincides with Harry Berger’s idea that “sprezzatura is to be worn as a velvet glove that exhibits the contours of the handiness it conceals” (Berger 298). Sidney’s pleading, self-effacious tone in the letter to Mary appears genuine, which displays Sidney’s ability to maintain a humble and moderate demeanor, despite writing a work of *Arcadia*’s magnitude. Although Sidney “presents his first major work with the charming *sprezzatura* expected of an accomplished courtier,” Sidney’s preface displays more personal affection because he addresses his sister in it (McCoy 37). Unlike many poets, who usually address patron in a preface, Sidney’s choice enriches the letter because it appears to be a truthful expression of *Arcadia*’s potential, as well as a skillful presentation of sprezzatura.

Sidney further aligns himself with Castiglione through the style in which he writes the *Arcadia*. In the *Courtier*, Castiglione recommends treating weighty issues with an ironic, light air (2.73.124). This technique masks the weighty issues by glossing them

over with humor, and Sidney utilizes this technique in various parts of the *Arcadia*; namely, in two sections where disturbing occurrences are treated with perverse humor. Duke Basilius' infatuation with Pyrocles creates an awkward situation because Basilius believes that Pyrocles is an Amazon woman named Cleophila. Basilius "began to feel the sparkles of those flames which shortly after burned all other thoughts out of his heart, [he] felt . . . such an eye-pleasing in her [Pyrocles'] face" (32). Basilius and his zealous ardor filled with the "ill taste of a medicine, and the operation of a poison," further complicate matters because he is married to Gynecia (156). Gynecia also loves Pyrocles, and, in turn, Pyrocles encounters similar feelings towards Basilius' and Gynecia's daughter, Philoclea (34). This love *square* evokes facetious situations in which jealousy and courting become muddled under the unreasonable fervor the characters feel for each other.

These comic situations mask the gross reality of what occurs: A Duke, already neglecting his kingdom, tries to commit adultery with a man disguised as a woman. The Duke's wife attempts the same feat with the same person. Meanwhile, Pyrocles furtively dissembles in his lustful pursuit of Philoclea. Sidney disguises these immoral situations under light-hearted amusement. These actions are not fully judged for their malignancy until the conclusion. In this way, Sidney's style of writing emulates Castiglione's recommendations of treating serious matters lightly, and this strain of thought coincides with John Buxton's observation that the *Courtier* keenly influenced Sidney and other Elizabethans (19). Neglect of duty, adultery, and fraud are covered by the characters' romantic pursuits. The narrator reveals the action and provides commentary in a way that

diminishes the characters' misconduct, and, instead, persuades the audience to focus on the passion the characters feel. The narrator, most likely Sidney, observes that

it seems to myself [the narrator] I use not words enough to make you see how they [Basilius and Gynecia] could in one moment be so overtaken . . . Worthy ladies [the audience], that have at any time feelingly known what it means [to fall into such fervor], will easily believe the possibility [of having such feelings] (44).

The narration aids in constructing a masquerade that hides the characters' major defects, and prevents the reader from passing judgment on them. Sidney utilizes this technique and creates comedy out of perverse events, which mitigates their wrongdoings and does not affect the readers' positive view of the principal characters.

Another example of Sidney utilizing this Castiglionian technique involves the affair between Musidorus and Pamela. In their escape, Musidorus tries to violate Pamela's honor, while the virginal beauty sleeps. Musidorus feels "overmastered with the fury of delight, saving all his senses partial against himself and . . . he was bent to take the advantage of the weakness of the watch" (177). Clownish villains intervene at the last possible moment to spare Pamela's honor (177). Instead of the narrator masking a controversial issue, the intervention of other characters prevents Musidorus from committing the heinous act of rape. The adjective "clownish" refers to rustics or ignorant peasants³⁰, and these characters were typically used for comic relief or pageantries in pastorals. Thus, the tone shifts from avaricious desire to comic chivalry. The gravity of

³⁰ Oxford English Dictionary, second edition. "Clownish." 1989.
http://dictionary.oed.com.go.libproxy.wfubmc.edu/cgi/entry/50042035?single=1&query_type=word&queryword=clownish&first=1&max_to_show=10.

Musidorus' attempted actions does not dawn on the readers or other characters until the trial scene. Musidorus *valiantly* defends Pamela from the clownish villains and ameliorates a potentially damning act. Only a surprise intervention saves Musidorus from committing a fatal error in the eyes of the readers and the fellow characters in the *Arcadia*. Because of the action, most forget what Musidorus *tried* to do; as a result, Sidney devises another way to cover the grievances of another character. Daniel Javitch, echoing the *Courtier*, reiterates that within a courtier's arsenal, "the ability to shift from gravity to facetiousness" or blending these ideas together should be an important tool in any interaction (322). Sidney's implementation of these Castiglionean ideas create an ambivalence and sharp irony that runs throughout the epic.

These scenarios figure heavily into one of Sidney's over-arching aims for the *Old Arcadia*: the creation of a morality story. Some of the morality situations in the work arise from themes within the *Courtier*. Wayne Rebhorn states that Castiglione showed great "interest in the analysis of behavioral situations and the moral problems they pose in producing a set of specific prescriptions for social success and ethical behavior" (13). Since Sidney creates different scenarios where the characters fail and sometimes succeed in upholding the *Courtier's* virtues, the poet follows Castiglione's exemplum that Rebhorn discusses. Consequently, Sidney attempts to become an example of the perfect courtier through the writing of the *Old Arcadia*.

In the course of his didactic exposé, Sidney addresses, like any well-meaning courtier, the issue of good government. Maurice Evans states, "Undercover of this romantic story, Sidney examines the responsibilities of kingship," which parallels the *Courtier's* advice in the Fourth Book (11). In his speech, Signor Ottaviano recommends

that the courtier “inform his prince’s mind with goodness, and teach him continence, fortitude, justice, and temperance . . . [and] in this way, the Courtier will be able to lead his prince by the austere path of virtue” (4.9-10.213). Castiglione advises a courtier, such as Sidney, to teach and guide monarchs on the proper use of power within the state. This wariness explains why the opening of the *Old Arcadia* addresses a monarch shirking responsibility. Basilius’ decision to flee catalyzes every conflict within the epic. Although Basilius leaves to “prevent . . . the loss of his crown and children,” the foolhardy duke leaves Arcadia unprotected and leaderless (5). Basilius’ lack of resolve and inconstant leadership appear as major issues from the very beginning of the narrative, which implies that Sidney wants to explore the ramifications of such irresponsible actions.

The counselor Philanax fills the role of courtier, a role Sidney actively serves through writing the narrative, and reminds Basilius that he “has governed this governed this realm that neither your subjects have wanted justice . . . nor . . . [has Basilius] wanted obedience from them . . . [and] neighbors . . . have found it better to rest in your friendship than make new trial of your enmity” (7). Basilius, Philanax recollects, has been exactly the kind of sovereign Castiglione would revere and laud. Despite Philanax’s cogent and reasonable pleas for Basilius to act like a sensible sovereign, Basilius abdicates his dukedom, even though his fears are tantamount to one “kill[ing] himself for fear of death” (7). According to Richard McCoy, Castiglione’s courtier devotes all of his energies and time to serve and please the sovereign, and Philanax serves this purpose (5). Ultimately, Basilius’ leave of absence signifies an unnatural and sudden shift in the power of the state. Sidney painstakingly sets up a scenario to demonstrate the problems

that ensue when sovereigns ignore adroit counselors. The shirking of one's responsibilities and duties initiates unforeseen conflicts, and Castiglione and Sidney both explicitly demonstrate trepidation for such possible occurrences.

Sidney realizes that inadequate rule can result in invasion or rebellion. Because Sidney aims to instruct, Basilius faces an internal and external rebellion directly resulting from his irresponsible hiatus. The rebellion at the end of the second book foreshadows further problems that arise from Basilius' absence, especially since the people's ire was exacerbated by the Duke's absence and apparent indifference towards his countrymen (112). Strict adherence to duty begets harmony and constancy. Ottaviano astutely corroborates with this view and testifies that sovereigns should "witness in with their own eyes and be present at the execution of their commands according to the times and needs and must sometimes take part in them himself" (4.24.225). This active approach to governing sharply contrasts Basilius' neglect, and Sidney makes the audience lucidly aware that the Duke's "unprincely failure of nerve" principally contributes to the turmoil within the state (Lanham 203).

Further civil unrest results from the two princes, Pyrocles and Musidorus, who attempt to purloin Basilius' two loving daughters for their own lascivious pleasures. Musidorus even agrees to marshal an army to extract Pyrocles and Philoclea from Arcadia and Basilius' grasp (150). This aberrant behavior from the two heroes indicates a gradual regression toward ignominious activities. Richard Lanham blames Pyrocles and Musidorus' degradation on Basilius, whose "initial choice of pastoral passivity, rather than princely fortitude, leads to the 'unnatural' transformation of the two princes and the necessity of using the subterfuge to woo their loves" (209). The two heroes never

considered committing such belligerent deeds before Basilius' *retreat*. Again, this hardship originates from Basilius' fear of the unknown and inability to staunchly encounter adversity as a competent sovereign would. The *Courtier* states that being a capable ruler requires "seeing rightly and in judging . . . in commanding reasonable things in which they have authority, and in requiring the same of those who should rightly obey, at appropriate times and places" (4.26.225). Ironically, Basilius performs the exact opposite of this advice, and so breeds opposition and mistrust among his subjects. Basilius resigns his authority; as a consequence, figures like Pyrocles and Musidorus have opportunity to disobey and create mayhem. In turn, the princes' motivation for such chaos stems from their amorous pursuits for Basilius' daughters³¹. In framing Basilius and his troubles, Sidney creates a cautionary tale using ideologies from the *Courtier* to aid in this endeavor.

Sidney rectifies the wrongs Basilius commits in misgoverning only after Euarchus invades and takes reign of the leaderless Arcadia. Euarchus represents the stringent adherence to the law. Unlike Basilius, who willingly bends the law for his family and his desires, Euarchus, "Sidney's conception of the ideal prince," steadfastly pursues justice for the characters' transgressions against the Arcadian state (Zandvoort 150). Even after finding out that Pyrocles, his son, is the culprit, the lamenting Euarchus, declares, "Pyrocles and Musidorus, I prefer you much before my life, but I prefer justice as far before you" (356). Euarchus' actions indicate that Sidney utilizes the sovereign in two diverse ways. On the one hand, Euarchus signifies the dangers of invading forces seizing England, especially if the force aligns itself with Catholicism. Sidney's fear appears

³¹ Pyrocles and Musidorus' lewd behavior will be discussed in more detail at a later point.

prophetic since the Spanish Armada did end up attempting an invasion in 1588³²; thus, Sidney again addresses the vital importance of good government. However, Euarchus most likely represents the return of order after Basilius' chaos. Through Euarchus, "we see Sidney the courtier, fully desirous of a strong monarchy" (Parker 84). Euarchus fulfills the *Courtier's* main requirements for a sovereign aforementioned as he puts the state's well-being before his own desires, even though that entails executing his son and nephew. Only Basilius' sudden awakening prevents such a tragic conclusion; rather, it appears evident that Sidney favors a monarchy based on justice and merit than a government based on whimsical nepotism. These feelings reflect Sidney attitude towards the Elizabethan government. By writing *Arcadia*, Sidney essentially tries to rectify the mistakes within the government.

Sidney's other half of this moral examination consists of analyzing reason versus passion, specifically, how the loss of reason results in falling into lust. These themes collude with the theme of governmental responsibility, and complement rather than counter each other. This reason-passion paradigm strongly resembles the spiritual-vulgar love that Castiglione encourages the courtier pursue. The two heroes Pyrocles and Musidorus—as mentioned—shift from performing heroic deeds to debasing themselves in disguises and fervently looking to slake their lustful desires. Their introduction into the narrative consists of an argument about the virtues of love and reason. Musidorus definitively declares, "The reasonable part of our soul is to have absolute commandment,

³² Collinson, Patrick. "Elizabeth I (1533–1603)." *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. Ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison. Oxford: OUP, 2004. Online ed. Ed. Lawrence Goldman. May 2008. <<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/8636>>. 40-41.

against which if any sensual weakness arise, we are to yield all our sound forces to the overthrowing of so unnatural a rebellion” (17). This statement foreshadows the problems that arise from the characters descent into lustful folly, and it evokes the aged argument. Castiglione also expresses his opinion on this matter in Book Four, where Pietro Bembo asserts that “from reason comes choice . . . from intellect whereby man can communicate with angels . . . man can choose [between appetite and reason/will] to turn his desires in one direction . . . and in the other” (Castiglione 4.51.244). This reasoning expands the idea of spiritual love against bodily love. Castiglione rationalizes that man has a choice between real love and vulgar love, and Musidorus and Pyrocles face the same exact dilemma.

Despite these high values that Pyrocles and Musidorus attach to love and reason, both characters fall sharply and rapidly from their heroic ideals and follow Basilius’ foul example in his retreat from duty. Neil Rudenstine suggests that while “Sidney’s heroes undoubtedly aspire to a chaste, virtuous love capable . . . of drawing them to the performance of admirable deed[s] . . . they fall prey to sudden . . . sensual desire” (24). Rudenstine basically re-states Castiglione’s idea that man choose between reason or passion in pursuing love. Pyrocles and Musidorus fall prey to this trap, despite Musidorus claiming, “There is no man suddenly either excellently good or evil, but grows either as he holds himself up in virtue or lets himself slide to viciousness” (18). Musidorus and Pyrocles’ amorous passion for Pamela and Philoclea respectively occurs as quickly as love at first sight (10, 37). The pair quickly descends into iniquity, and this progression from honorable heroes to lecherous fiends emerges as uncharacteristic for the typically valorous heroes.

Moreover, Pyrocles and Musidorus turn away from reason completely and try to commit heinous acts as a consequence. Pyrocles deflowers Philoclea before marriage, while Musidorus attempts to rape Pamela (207, 177). Both of these acts require tactful, chicanery, which contradict Castiglionian ideologies. This dissembling counters Castiglione because it harms other characters. Castiglione designates dissimulation as a way to gain grace through sprezzatura, and as a way to create court adaptability (Castiglione 1.26.32). Instead, “Sidney inverts . . . [the] chivalric formula. To gain their mistresses’ favor, his heroes must abandon their heroic adventures and assume shameful disguises as an Amazon and shepherd” (39). This deception escalates, as Pyrocles and Musidorus dissemble for their own selfish, lecherous desires. Pyrocles tricks Basilius and Gynecia into committing adultery with *each other*, while Musidorus deceives Pamela’s guardians into going on fruitless ventures (239-240, 165-170). Pyrocles and Musidorus commit these machinations solely to fulfill their desires for bodily love. Sidney shows his disapproval for this perverse dissembling and punishes Pyrocles and Musidorus shortly after their plans come to fruition.

Gynecia and Basilius fall into this lecherous trap as well. However, while Pyrocles and Musidorus are younger and more inclined to amorous behavior, Gynecia and the much older Basilius should know better. Basilius, the reason behind all these issues, continues his misrule by pursuing Pyrocles, disguised as an Amazon. Basilius passionately confesses, “I plainly lay my death unto you [Pyrocles], the death of him who loves you, the death of him whose life you may save” (192). Basilius’ foolish behavior sharply contrasts Castiglione’s claim that older gentlemen “are guided by rational choice . . . [and] come into perfect possession of beauty. And thus good always comes to them

from that possession” (4.53.246). As earlier surmised, Basilius gives up adhering to reason after hearing the prophesy. As a result, Basilius degrades himself from constant husband and wise ruler to an irresponsible Petrarchan poet³³, and Sidney judges him the most for these transgressions. Sidney portrays Gynecia—a rather tragic and sympathetic figure—in a slightly better light because of the remorse she feels for Basilius’ *accidental* death (Sidney 242). Duncan-Jones asserts, “At several key moments he [Sidney] invites his female readers to enter into her [Gynecia’s] situation for sympathy” (185). Gynecia’s sympathetic qualities could derive from Sidney’s desire to please his mostly female audience, and perhaps from Sidney’s desire to further align himself with the *Courtier*, which valiantly defends women. Nonetheless, since Sidney develops a moralistic tale, characters must be punished for their wrongs. Basilius dies, for a while, and Gynecia gets sentenced to death, for a while. Though the Basilius, Gynecia, and the other characters do not actually receive their punishments, Sidney poignantly reminds them of the consequences of forgoing their honorable paths and disregarding Castiglionian morality.

The eclogues perhaps provide the most deliberate exemplum of moral virtue. Sidney uses the eclogues as a tool to criticism on the narrative’s main actions. The Second Eclogue provides the most pertinent counsel and commentary, since it directly considers the Castiglionian idea of reason/platonic love over passion/physical lust. This commentary figures crucially into the narrative as passion “weak’neeth all your [reason’s] might” (120). Ironically, Pyrocles immediately ignores this advice and stares with his “two unrestrained part, the mind and eye, [which] had free convoy to the delicate

³³ The Petrarchan Poet displays an abandon for all other responsibilities in his pursuit for his unattainable love. In failing in this endeavor, the Petrarchan Poet wallows in self-pity and despair. For a King to exhibit such behavior would be intolerable, and would ultimately be a threat to his position and state. In this way, Basilius transgresses against his natural position and against the state.

Philoclea” (120). The eclogues act as a play within a play, so Sidney can surreptitiously relay messages to the characters on how they should act. Boulon and Plangus’ discussion expounds upon this dynamic as they discuss the reason issue in detail. Boulon’s advice that “reason should have the ability to hold worldly things in such proportion as let them come or go with e’en facility” (132). This statement echoes the *Courtier*’s discussion of moderation and rationality in love (1.26.32, 4.52.244). The eclogues, especially the second, contain vital commentary that aid in Sidney’s didactic ambitions, as well as provide dramatic irony for the readers who recognize the connections and realize the eclogues attempt to provide guidance that is never realized by any of the characters.

The *Old Arcadia* is a prodigious text consisting of varying themes, genres, and conflicts wound up neatly in a tightly constructed narrative. In addition to all the goals Sidney attempted to accomplish in the text, the poet-courtier constructs a strong didactic element to *Old Arcadia*, which shines forth through Castiglionian ideologies on kingship and love. Sidney’s moral ambitions coincide with Ottaviano’s idea that the ultimate goal of the courtier is to “become his prince’s instructor,” (4.47.240). Sidney aspires to accomplish this feat in the *Old Arcadia*. In this way, Sidney uses the *Courtier* as a guide to instruct Queen Elizabeth through his long fable, consisting of aristocratic characters embroiling themselves in misrule and deviant behavior. Just like Castiglione, Sidney is “serious and playful at the same time, while not being pedantic” in the narrative (Burke 27). Sidney, while not seminal in this endeavor, constructs a narrative on characters that plummet from virtue into torpor and decadence. This development differs from most heroic romances where the characters become more virtuous, usually, as the narrative continues. Sidney’s characters feel remorse for their behavior, but they do not reach a

new level of enlightenment. To the ever-energetic and chivalrous Sidney, such behavior would be completely unacceptable and abhorrent. As a result, the *Old Arcadia*—utilizing Castiglione's *Courtier*—becomes a cautionary tale to the English nobility and monarch on the proper avoidance of vice and misrule.

CONCLUSION

Through my study, I have presented a small sample of the literary influence Castiglione maintained in Elizabethan England. Castiglione's seminal text surely has affected other writers and various other forms of literature than who and what I have discussed. However, in choosing three different genres, I have exhibited the *Courtier's* adaptability to many forms of literature. Further examples include Edmund Spenser's Christian epic *The Faerie Queene* and Thomas Elyot's *The Governor*. Both of these texts exemplify other forms of literature that reflect Castiglionic attitudes. *Two Noble Kinsmen* and *Two Gentlemen from Verona* by Shakespeare appear to reflect ideologies from the *Courtier* as well. Although similar tracts were published around the same timeframe as Castiglione's work—*The Prince* to name one major work—the *Courtier's* affect on England can neither be ignored nor disregarded for its importance in shaping Elizabethan England and beyond. Aside from the text's appealing ideologies, the *Courtier's* adaptability to different genres of literature and real-life situations provide the reason for its smooth integration into English culture. The *Courtier* discusses a wide range of topics through diverse situations, events, and scenarios. As a result, the *Courtier's* ubiquitous presence could have resulted from its array of topics, ideas, and reflections all harmoniously packed into its binding.

Why, then, did the *Courtier* fall out of favor after the Elizabethan period? Hoby's last English edition was printed in 1603³⁴, the same year as Elizabeth's death. The reason for this decline could be due to the rapidly changing English language. Hoby's translation was first printed in 1561. Over a span of forty years, Hoby's edition would become inaccessible and outdated, as language rapidly changed during this period. In addition,

³⁴ Hoby Thomas. *The Book of the Courtier (1603)*. Early English Books online. 2003. <http://eebo.chadwyck.com/search>.

Clerke's Latin translation was last printed in 1612³⁵ during James I's reign. With more states using their vernacular language, Latin would naturally begin to fade into the background of the literary world.

While these suppositions provide a valid argument, no one wrote another translation for approximately one hundred years after the 1612 edition. The reason for this phenomenon could be a shift to a cynical, more Machiavellian view in which Burke believes that "in the age of 'absolute power', it was increasingly assumed that a prince should rule his state alone, without the aid and advice of his nobility" (119). The age of the courtiers gave way to the Stuart vision of the absolutist king as the sole wielder of the state's power. James actually wrote a treatise defending this ideology as an informational guide for his son, Henry³⁶. There would no room for the opportunistic courtiership that thrived during the Elizabethan period.

Despite Burke's valid points, I conjecture that the rising republicanism and radical Puritanism extinguished the desire for the *Courtier* more than absolutism. One of the *Courtier*'s core focuses describes how to win the sovereign's favor. This ideology would run counter to the opponents of the Stuart Dynasty, who supported the power of Parliament over the sovereign³⁷. This tension escalated, and, over the next fifty years, England embroiled itself in a fierce civil war that resulted in the creation of England's

³⁵ Clerke, Bartholomew. *The Book of the Courtier (1612)*. Early English Books Online. 2003. http://eebo.chadwyck.com/search/full_rec?SOURCE=pgimages.cfg&ACTION=ByID&ID=99843317&FILE=../session/1271343851_17531&SEARCHSCREEN=CITATIONS&SEARCHCONFIG=var_spell.cfg&ECCO=N&DISPLAY=AUTHOR.

³⁶ Stuart, King James. "A Defence of the Divine Right of Kings." *The Political Works of James I*. Ed. Mcilwain, Charles. Harvard University Press: Cambridge, 1918.

³⁷ Lamont, William. "Prynne, William (1600–1669)." *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. Ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison. Oxford: OUP, 2004. Online ed. Ed. Lawrence Goldman. Jan. 2008. <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/22854>>. 3.

first and only republic. These events ultimately culminated in the creation of a constitutional monarchy, in which the power shifted from the sovereign to Parliament³⁸. As a result, Castiglione's guidance became obsolete during this period.

Despite this setback, the *Courtier* did not fade away completely. Rather, "It [*Courtier*] continued to be used, alongside more up-to-date texts, as a guide to what was now called 'civility' in the everyday life of the upper classes" (Burke 124). The 18th century engendered an age of standardization with Samuel Johnson's *Dictionary of the English Language* establishing proper language use, while proper modes of conduct were also being established. The *Courtier* was printed seven times in the 18th century with two new translations by Richard Sambler and A.P. Castiglione, with an edition as late as 1771 (Burke 130, 131). This renewed interest undoubtedly correlates to England's new focus on civility, and the "Age of Reason" resurrected Castiglione's *Courtier* as a guide for proper conduct. Moreover, literature continued to be influenced by Castiglione with Samuel Richardson's 1740 novel *Pamela*, where the title character strongly resembled Castiglione's perfect lady. In turn, Jane Austen's 1813 novel, *Pride and Prejudice*, portrayed Mr. Darcy with qualities that would befit the perfect courtier. The *Courtier*'s governmental advice ebbed away, yet its ideologies on courtesy maintained a strong presence within England's upper-class. This influence has continued over the years, and the *Courtier* can be considered an integral text in England's societal development even today.

³⁸ "United Kingdom." *Encyclopædia Britannica. Encyclopædia Britannica Online*. Encyclopædia Britannica, 2010. Web. <<http://search.eb.com/eb/article-44877>>.

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