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Representations of Counsel in Selected Works of Sir Philip Sidney

A dissertation presented

by

Marie Celeste Henson

to

The Department of English

in partial fulfillment of the requirements

for the degree of

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in the subject of

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Representations of Counsel in Selected Works of Sir Philip Sidney

Abstract

This dissertation addresses the historical, political, and literary-rhetorical framing of counsel in selected works of Sir Philip Sidney: his *Letter to Queen Elizabeth* (1579), *The Old Arcadia* (1580), the first two books of *The New Arcadia* (1585), and the strikingly different final book of *The New Arcadia*. In these works, Sidney makes resourceful and varying use of the *topos* of the mirror.

First, I show in what ways Sidney serves as the Queen's mirror in advising her against the marriage to the Duke of Alençon. In the *Letter,* Sidney gathers, shatters, and distorts aspects of Elizabeth's image; he multiplies reflections to discredit arguments of his political opponents and reconstitutes Elizabeth in an imperial, Protestant image. Turning to *The Old Arcadia*, I argue that, through the presentation of Gynecia, Sidney broadens the conventions of the genre familiarly known as the mirror for princes. Gynecia's complexity and moral ambiguity complicate the traditional generic categories of virtue to be emulated and vice to be avoided. She serves as both an object in, and a reader of, the mirror for princes text and becomes a means for Sidney's commentary on the genre and the moral questions it raises. By inviting the reader into an active experience of the mirror's pedagogical enterprise, Sidney tests and refines the reader's assumptions and moral judgments.

In Books I and II of *The New Arcadia*, Sidney presents and interrogates poetry as a strategy for overcoming limited human agency and imperfect knowledge, limitations that appear in deployments of the mirror that show stasis and in images of the maze to indicate blocked access and thwarted mobility. By questioning poetry's capacity to uncover and represent truth,

Sidney holds the mirror up to himself. Book III of *The New Arcadia* restores the mirror as the productive mode of counsel in a mirror for princes text that instructs on a central theme of the Renaissance debate on counsel: discerning the flatterer. Sidney's *New Arcadia* in its entirety offers an exemplary mirror of the self-scrutiny that leads to self-knowledge and the consequent authority to offer counsel of worth.

Table of Contents

Acknowledgments ... vi

Chapter 1 Counsel in Sir Philip Sidney's *Letter to Queen Elizabeth* (1579) ... 1
- I. Framing and Uniting: The Gathering Mirror ... 6
- II. Reflecting: Shattering and Shattered Mirrors ... 12
- III. A Multiplicity of Competing Reflections ... 20

Chapter 2 Sidney's *Old Arcadia* as a Mirror for Princes ... 40
- I. Gynecia Introduced ... 59
- II. Gynecia's Monologue ... 72
- III. Gynecia and Cleophila: Mirrored Princes ... 85
- IV. Verses on the Lute ... 90
- V. Object of Deceit ... 98
- VI. Moral Mirror to Basilius ... 102
- VII. The Fall of a Princess ... 113
- VIII. Conclusion ... 117

Chapter 3 The Mirror, the Maze, and Poetry as Strategy: Counsel in Books I and II of *The New Arcadia* ... 120
- I. The Mirror ... 123
- II. The Maze ... 136
- III. The Poetry ... 143

Chapter 4 The Mirror in Book III of *The New Arcadia* ... 164

Bibliography ... 189
- Primary Works ... 189
- Secondary Works ... 191

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Chapter 1

Counsel in Sir Philip Sidney's *Letter to Queen Elizabeth* (1579)

On November 10, 1579, Protestant England's Virgin Queen announced her intention to marry. Her choice was a man half her age, reputed to be ill with syphilis, and heir to the throne of one of the most Catholic kingdoms in Europe. Historians still debate whether Elizabeth truly gave her heart to Francis, Duke of Alençon and Anjou, brother of the King of France; whether the entire scheme was a calculated maneuver to balance the powers on the continent; or whether there arose some combination of both head and heart, with Elizabeth, politically shrewd, also deeply affected by the knowledge that this was her final opportunity to marry and to provide England with an heir.[1]

In the earlier months of 1579, this potential royal marriage to a French Catholic prince had divided the Privy Council, reduced Queen Elizabeth to outbursts of temper and tears, and filled the streets and pulpits of the country with protests—in sermons, ballads, and in a printed pamphlet so offensive to the Queen that it was condemned as treasonous and cost its author his right hand. [2] Into this firestorm stepped a young Philip Sidney. In what has been described as

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[1] For details and interpretations of the marriage negotiations, see Lloyd E. Berry, ed., *John Stubbs's* Gaping Gulf *with Letters and Other Relevant Documents* (Charlottesville: UP of Virginia, 1968) ix–xl; Wallace T. MacCaffrey, *Queen Elizabeth and the Making of Policy 1572–1588* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 1981) 243–66; Conyers Read, *Lord Burghley and Queen Elizabeth* (New York: Knopf, 1960) 203–34; Conyers Read, *Mr. Secretary Walsingham and the Policy of Queen Elizabeth,* vol. II (New York: Archon, 1967) 1–117; and Blair Worden, *The Sound of Virtue: Sir Philip Sidney's* Arcadia *and Elizabethan Politics* (New Haven, CT: Yale UP, 1996) 71–124.

[2] For the divisions in the Privy Council, see MacCaffrey 261–63 and Read, *Walsingham,* II 14, 20–21; for the Queen's frustration at the Council for its refusal to reach a conclusion, see Read, *Walsingham* II 21–22 and, for a first-hand account, the *Calendar of the Manuscripts of the Most Hon. The Marquis of Salisbury, K.G., Preserved at Hatfield House, Hertfordshire* Part II (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1888) 271–73 (hereafter referred to as *Salisbury II*); for public agitation against the match see Read, *Walsingham* II 20–21 and MacCaffrey 255, 264; for John Stubbs's pamphlet (printed August 18, 1579) and sentence (November 3, 1579) see Berry, *Stubbs*, xxv–xlv, MacCaffrey 255 and Natalie Mears, "Counsel, Public Debate, and Queenship: John Stubbs's *The Discoverie of a Gaping Gulf,* 1579," *Historical Journal* 44.3 (2001): 629–50; for the Proclamation of September 27, 1579, see Berry, *Stubbs,* xxvii–xxxiii, 147–52 (where it is reprinted) and MacCaffrey 255–56.

"the most potentially dangerous literary undertaking of Sidney's life,"[3] he wrote the Queen a letter in the style of formal discourse and advised her against the marriage. It was addressed to her and maintained the fiction of a private correspondence, but it circulated in manuscript at court: Woudhuysen believes Sidney ordered it copied by "professional penmen" to reach as wide a readership as possible in court circles.[4] We do not know precisely when in 1579 he wrote it.[5] Nor do we know whether he was coerced to write it by Walsingham or by his mentor and uncle, the Earl of Leicester; or whether Elizabeth herself had requested written opinions from her courtiers.[6] We do not know for certain whether it damaged Sidney's future, or whether the Queen concerned herself with it very much at all.[7]

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[3] Peter Beal, "Philip Sidney's *Letter to Queen Elizabeth* and That 'False Knave' Alexander Dicsone," *English Manuscript Studies 1100–1700* 11 (2002): 1 but also see note 7.

[4] H. R. Woudhuysen, *Sir Philip Sidney and the Circulation of Manuscripts, 1558–1640* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1996) 153.

[5] A long tradition, mentioned in Beal 22, dates the *Letter* to the late fall or winter of 1579, even as late as January 1580, the latter largely based on the assumption that Sidney's absence from court after January was a consequence of displeasing the Queen with his advice: see, for example, the November or December 1579 dating reached in 1973 by the *Letter's* Oxford editors, Katherine Duncan-Jones and Jan Van Dorsten, eds., *Miscellaneous Prose of Sir Philip Sidney* (Oxford: Clarendon P, 1973) 33–34, hereafter referred to as *MP,* and the January 1580 dating in James E. Phillips, "George Buchanan and the Sidney Circle," *The Huntingdon Library Quarterly* 12.1 (1948): 34. In recent years, dating has been revised, and it is now thought Sidney wrote either in March or April 1579, when the Queen was requesting written opinions from her counselors (see Simon Adams quoted in Beal 21) or in mid- to late August of 1579, as a result of the emergency meeting convened by the Leicester–Sidney circle at the Earl of Pembroke's London house after Alençon's arrival in England and Leicester's banishment from court for being discovered in a secret marriage of his own. For August dating, see Duncan-Jones's revised view in her *Sir Philip Sidney: Courtier Poet* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1991) 162–64; also Worden 112–13, Beal 21–22, and Read, *Burghley* 217. Correspondence forms significant evidence for dating: 1) Languet's letter to Sidney of October 22, 1579, which mentions the *Letter* (qtd. in Duncan-Jones, *Courtier Poet* 162); and 2) Sidney's letter to George Buchanan of October 1579. Where scholars once saw an absence of mention of the *Letter* to Buchanan as evidence that Sidney had not yet composed it, Beal 20–21 argues that Sidney had enclosed a copy, a view supported by a subsequent letter from Buchanan to Daniel Rogers dated November 9 which includes one of Sidney's arguments. My view is that the *Letter* was written after the *Leicester–Sidney* meeting and before the Royal Proclamation of September 27. I find in a comparison of Lord Burghley's April 13 and October 2 Privy Council writings on the marriage a startling number of new arguments and vocabulary in the latter, all echoing Sidney and conspicuously absent before October; I take the new material as evidence that the *Letter*'s contents had penetrated to the Privy Council by October 2. Significant for me is that one of Burghley's pro-marriage arguments that Sidney had ridiculed in the *Letter* is by October conspicuously absent in Burghley's treatment.

[6] See Worden 42 and Woudhuysen 151 for examples of the widely held belief that Sidney was obeying his uncle, the earl of Leicester. Leicester was unquestionably the leader of the opposition (Woudhuysen 151; Read, *Walsingham*

The *Letter* did attract notice in the *Leicester–Sidney* circle and among those with whom Sidney corresponded.[8] Today its arguments are quoted by historians and scholars of Machiavelli, and by literary critics who compare it to the pamphlet by John Stubbs or find in its politics a precursor to the *Old Arcadia.*[9] Its tone has been described as either deferential and courteous or "daringly open and aggressive."[10] I find in Sidney's performance of counsel so important a use of a traditional visual trope that I consider it to be essential for understanding the rhetorical and persuasive strategies of the text.

The word "mirror" first appears in the *Letter*'s conclusion. It is almost the final word:

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20). Yet Beal finds evidence that the real engine behind Sidney's authorship was Walsingham, Sidney's godfather and soon-to-be father-in-law (Beal 33–34). Beal 38 also considers the possibility that Elizabeth tacitly encouraged private written opinions on the matter (and cites Read, *Walsingham* 13). Mears also supports the view that the Queen requested extra-conciliar written advice from her courtiers in Mears, "Counsel" 647 and in her *Queenship and Political Discourse in the Elizabethan Realms* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2005) 125–26.

[7] Aside from Sidney's clear retention of life and limb, assessment of outcome depends on dating. If Sidney wrote in April or August of 1579, his absence from court in 1580 is not necessarily related to the *Letter.* Duncan-Jones in *Courtier Poet* 163 writes that Fulke Greville's account, that the Queen treated Sidney "generously," is likely true. Worden 42 points out the Queen's more severe treatment of other opponents of the match, like Walsingham; in October he was rebuked in a fit of royal temper and told to leave court (Read, *Walsingham* 22). One cannot help but notice the absence of significant political appointments in Sidney's career, though, and wonder if the Dudley family tie and the high (and perhaps competing) esteem from continental courts were the only reasons.

[8] Languet worried that the *Letter* would offend the Queen (qtd. in Worden 113) but he rationalized to Sidney that "you were ordered to write as you did by those whom you were bound to obey," qtd. in Duncan-Jones, *Courtier Poet* 162. For Spenser's possible presence at the August meeting and subsequent anti-marriage views in the *Shepheardes Calender* and *Mother Hubberd's Tale,* see Berry, *Stubbs* li–lv. For the connections to Scotland and Buchanan, see Phillips 3–55 and Beal 7–12 and 19–33.

[9] See Worden, especially 127–41 for the *Letter* and the *Old Arcadia*; also Worden 260–63 for Machiavelli in the *Letter*; also Irving Ribner, "Machiavelli and Sidney's *Discourse to the Queen's Majesty,*" *Italica* 26 (Sept., 1949): 177–87 and the reply in William R. Drennan, "Sidney's Debt to Machiavelli: A New Look," *Journal of the Rocky Mountain Medieval and Renaissance Association* 7 (Jan., 1986): 93–96. A brief but interesting view of Machiavelli in the *Letter* appears in a comparison of Sidney to Stubbs in Ty F. Buckman, "The Perils of Marriage Counseling: John Stubbs, Philip Sidney and the Virgin Queen," *Renaissance Papers* (1995): 125–41. For Stubbs and Sidney, see also Mears, "Counsel," 629–50. For a treatment of politics of authorship which includes the *Letter,* see Maureen Quilligan, "Sidney and His Queen," in Heather Dubrow and Richard Strier, eds., *The Historical Renaissance: New Essays on Tudor and Stuart Literature and Culture* (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1988) 171–96.

[10] For the quoted words, see Edward Berry, *The Making of Sir Philip Sidney* (Toronto: U of Toronto P, 1998) 57. For a contrasting view see Worden 41, 178 and 262 and Mears, "Counsel" 646–48. Mears attributes Elizabeth's benignant response to Sidney's deferential, "feudal-baronial" approach to counsel. On the opposite side, Maureen Quilligan 179 describes the *Letter*'s "surprisingly blunt" language and "coarse" treatment of marriage. Lloyd E. Berry 57 writes: "Sidney was unwilling or unable to engage in a rhetoric of deference." I find it interesting that the *Letter* produces widely divergent assessments of tone.

> Lastly, doing as you do, you shall be as you be: the example of princes, the ornament of this age, the comfort of the afflicted, the delight of your people, the most excellent fruit of all your progenitors, and the perfect mirror to your posterity. (57.4–8)[11]

"Mirror" here can readily be understood to mean a person "deserving imitation," "an exemplar" (*OED* 1a) as well as a "model of excellence" and "paragon" (*OED* 1b). "If you follow my prescriptions, and conduct yourself as the Protestant champion I have shown you to be," Sidney says, in essence, "you will be the ideal for all succeeding generations of princes to look upon to model themselves." In my view, the visual trope of the mirror is present from the *Letter*'s opening pages. I see its framing, uniting, reflecting, and distorting capacities as forming the center of Sidney's persuasive and rhetorical strategies. Use of a mirroring mode of counsel allows Sidney to address the division in the realm with a uniting tool; to create a model for the Queen's dependence upon him for his advice; to fashion himself as the aristocratic courtier—the Queen's most natural counselor—in contrast to his humanist rival; and to present himself, untried, as a formidable political and rhetorical presence among experienced, elder statesmen. Above all, the mirroring mode of counsel allows Sidney to focus attention and offer comment on one of the most vital negotiations of statecraft: the necessity for an awareness of the importance of appearances, and of one's image on the public stage, with the simultaneous necessity for concealing that awareness, and hiding any appearance of acting from it.

I find that three variations of Sidney's mirroring mode of counsel appear in a chronological order in the *Letter*.[12] I refer to Sidney as the author and performer of these

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[11] All page and line number references are to *MP* 46–57.

[12] The first two variations I present correspond to the first of two argumentative divisions of the *Letter* observed in *MP* 44–45: "Reasons Against the Marriage (a) dangers to the state and (b) danger to the Queen's person." My third variation corresponds to part b of her second division of the *Letter,* "Motives for the Marriage Refuted (a) fear of standing alone and (b) contempt of subjects."

strategies, even as I acknowledge that a letter of counsel involves a construction of stance and persona, and should be termed a "fiction of advice."[13] I use "reflecting" in its most fundamental sense, "of mirrors or other polished surfaces: To give back or exhibit an image of (a person or thing); to mirror" (*OED* 6a). Because Sidney himself speaks of the Queen's "two bodies" by addressing "your estate, or your person" (46.26), I characterize as reflection his portrayal of the realm—or the Queen's own political body—as well as herself in her "natural" person.[14] Given the *Letter*'s deliberate circulation at court, I see its possibilities for "double discourse," with embedded messages for multiple audiences; but I focus instead on the mirroring mode of counsel as the performance of a private transaction visible to an audience of the court.

By the conclusion of Sidney's *Letter,* Elizabeth has been figuratively restored, through Sidney's reflecting gaze, as the Virgin Queen: the "mirror" with which he names her is rich in associations with the moon and virginity.[15] She has, through his instruction, arguably become a "mirror for princes" herself, the book whose pages the princes of the future will turn to glimpse the ideal ruler. By reflecting her as "the perfect mirror," Sidney has even elevated her to the level of the divine, as God is "the paramount mirror," and from antiquity it was known that "the soul is cleansed by contemplation of the divine mirror." Sidney has crowned her anew, with the instrument of his counsel, as the Protestant Virgin Queen, leading souls to purity and salvation.

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[13] The term is applied to advice texts by Judith Ferster in her *Fictions of Advice: The Literature of Politics of Counsel in Late Medieval England* (Philadelphia: U. of Pennsylvania P, 1996) 13.

[14] The "body natural" and the "body politic" as two inseparable but distinct elements of the sovereign appear in Ernst H. Kantorowicz, *The King's Two Bodies: A Study in Medieval Political Theology* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP 1997 repr from 1957). Kantorowicz writes that the body natural and the body politic "form one unit indivisible" (9); that Sidney applies the uniting capacity of the mirror to Elizabeth's two persons may suggest to what extent he saw the need for a counselor's remedial intervention as the Alençon marriage divided the Queen from her people, and thus, from herself.

[15] The mirror associations in this paragraph are taken from Herbert Grabes, *The Mutable Glass: Mirror-Imagery in Titles and Texts of the Middle Ages and English Renaissance* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1982) 48–51, 77, 139.

Yet, as with any coronation, the prince must first be lowered. An almost sacramental process of scrutiny and reflection and correction precedes the elevation.

I. Framing and Uniting: The Gathering Mirror

In his study of a manuscript copy of the *Letter* which has recently come to light, Peter Beal describes Sidney's text as it appears in the Oxford edition of 1973 as follows:

> Sidney's dialectical progression is discursive rather than strictly deductive. He presents an orderly enough series of points, warning the Queen of potential dangers which she can avoid by standing alone. But he never really exhausts any of these arguments, and, as the discourse continues, he does occasionally revert to earlier subjects.[16]

Further, Beal observes, "one does sense that some arguments might be made at almost any stage in the discourse and are not rigidly anchored to fixed points in a formal system of logical exposition or demonstration."[17] In my view, repetition and appearance of randomness in the presentation of arguments arise from a different design. I contend that one persuasive strategy in Sidney's *Letter* is cumulative and circular, forming an image of a whole by gathering its parts,[18] and creating context through relationships among elements both near and far, contrasting and similar. Furthermore, a circular perusal, or even seemingly random re-visitations of various elements in the light of others, supplies a means of understanding the systemic, relational interconnectedness among the parts forming the whole.

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[16] Beal 15.

[17] Beal 15.

[18] In using the term "gathering," I distinguish between the eye's synthesizing of discrete elements which appear in a moving, circular view of a mirrored image and the discursive Renaissance practice of collecting textual fragments, such as sayings and aphorisms, for the copy book. For the discursive practices of gathering and framing (or arranging), see Mary Thomas Crane, *Framing Authority: Sayings, Self, and Society in Sixteenth-Century England* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 1993) 3–4; also Peter Mack, *Elizabethan Rhetoric: Theory and Practice* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2002) 4–5. For the medieval and Renaissance book's encyclopedic function of presenting an abundance of information in smaller form, like a convex mirror, see Grabes 68.

In the first part of the *Letter,* it is Sidney's task to explain for the Queen the dangers that Alençon's entry into England as her husband would create for the realm. These dangers had been dismissed or overlooked in the writings of the two chief advocates of the match, William Cecil, Lord Burghley and the Earl of Sussex.[19] There was, of course, the real and acknowledged fear for Elizabeth's safety in childbirth, given her age; but, in Lord Burghley's account of arguments, the danger of a foreign and Catholic presence in Protestant England is dismissed in favor of a view that sees danger only if Elizabeth declines Alençon's offer and compels him to seek a marriage alliance with Spain instead.[20] Burghley's writings are filled with the confidence that God would preserve an anointed Queen.[21] As for public distaste for foreign rule, Burghley brushes it aside as unworthy of English subjects; after all, England would continue to be ruled by Elizabeth and by her ministers and laws.[22] Burghley cites the example of King Philip and Queen Mary as evidence to refute any number of concerns about the match, including public acceptance,

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[19] Printed versions of Lord Burghley's writings on the marriage fall into two categories: 1) two memoranda about the proposed match dated March 27, 1579, in his hand and now among the Cecil papers at Hatfield, and quoted in full in Read, *Burghley* 208–11; and 2) long arguments on both sides of the question; those dated March and April 13, 1579 are self-titled "Memoryalls for the Queen's Majestie tochyng the matters of her marryage" and "Minutes" dated October 1579." The April writings coincided with lengthy Council meetings about the match. All are printed in *Salisbury II* 239–45, 249–52 and 267–73. Sussex's Letter to the Queen of August 1578 is printed in Edmund Lodge, Esq., 2nd ed., *Illustrations of British History, Biography, and Manners, In the Reigns of Henry VIII, Edward VI, Mary, Elizabeth, & James I, Exhibited in a Series of Original Papers, Selected from the Mss. of the Noble Families of Howard, Talbot, and Cecil* vol. II (London: John Chidley, 1838) 107–18. On the Earl of Sussex and Lord Burghley as the chief advocates of the marriage, see MacCaffrey 263; Read, *Walsingham* 14 and 21; Duncan-Jones, *Courtier Poet* 160, and Worden 97–98. Mears, in "Counsel" 636 argues that Burghley always opposed the match; I find that she uses as evidence the April 1579 "Memoryall" in which, humanist fashion, he argues both sides of the question. Burghley's bias in April is clear; and Read, in *Burghley* 214 writes: "Burghley, with a great show of impartiality, managed to present the case for marriage in the most attractive terms and the case for the alternative in the most distasteful ones"; among other tactics, Burghley showed how expensive it would be not to marry.

[20] *Salisbury II* 242. I am restricting my account of Burghley's recorded arguments to the March and April 1579 writings in case the October minutes reflect opinion affected by Sidney's *Letter.*

[21] *Salisbury II* 240; one can understand Sidney's sense of urgency about communicating the dangers of Alençon's presence in England when Burghley is writing with such confidence, "whatsoever she shall do in her marryge, God I dowte not will preserve her from all treason, as his awne chosen."

[22] *Salisbury II* 243: this fear "dothe rather saver of Wyatt's humor then of good matter or of the dysposytyen of the good subyects of the realme."

danger of French incursion, and the financial burdens to England of a foreign consort.[23] Rebellion he considers only in the event of the Queen's refusal.[24] If she refuses Alençon, the grief of it will destroy her health and send her to an early death, plunging England into civil wars and the terror of a return to Catholicism.[25] If she accepts, however, English subjects will be overjoyed by her care of them in providing an heir; she will secure the safety of Protestants everywhere, bring peace to all Christendom, and become the most famous king in Europe for 1,000 years—all of which French presence in England could accomplish.[26]

Sidney—and the Leicester-Walsingham group—needed to stand this view of the marriage on its head.[27] Above all, the Queen had to be brought to see two key points: the importance of her public image; and the systemic, interconnected nature of the polity, the absence of which view obscured the potential for danger posed by the presence of a Catholic prince in a divided Protestant country. The mirroring mode of counsel makes it possible for Sidney to present both. No other advisor on the Alençon match so clearly employs that mode of counsel or uses its potential for gathering and traveling radially among the constituent parts to show the interconnected relationships in the realm.

While I see the *Letter* as a whole to be working by a cumulative, circular treatment of words, images, examples, and arguments, this gathering quality of the mirror is particularly evident in the first persuasive section about the dangers of Alençon's presence in England. Here

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[23] *Salisbury II* 241, 243.

[24] *Salisbury II* 250.

[25] *Salisbury II* 250.

[26] *Salisbury II* 244.

[27] Among the many reasons, Berry, *Stubbs* liv describes the fear in the anti-marriage party that if the marriage succeeded, Burghley would join with Alençon; there was genuine concern that Elizabeth would be deposed and the Protestant faith subverted. See also Worden 97 for the fear of a foreign prince taking possession.

Sidney persuades by reflecting to Elizabeth the state of the realm—a mirror of her own body politic. He gathers in sequence the realm's relevant constituent elements: the Protestant subjects whose love and loyalty supply England's primary strength; the Papist subjects, whose numerous causes of discontent Sidney lists; and the discontented subjects whose disaffection, joined to the thwarted ambitions of the Papists, produces a realm beset by division and flammability. To these elements Sidney adds Alençon, whose vices accumulate in lists whose fragmented, disruptive rhetoric "reflects" in the prose the divisions Alençon's presence will cause in the realm. It is precisely this gathering, this uniting, of internal weakness and the external, malignant predisposition to exploit that weakness, which Elizabeth must be brought to see:

> that your country, being as well by long peace and fruits of peace, as by the poison of division (whereof the faithful shall by this means be wounded, and the contrary enabled) made fit to receive hurt, and Monsieur being every way apt to use the occasion to hurt; there can almost happen no worldly thing of more evident danger to your State Royal. (50.18–23)

A repeating appearance of the "head of the realm" image, a long-standing metaphor in the concept of the body politic,[28] supplies a good illustration. Throughout the *Letter,* there are frequent reminders to Elizabeth, in direct instruction and figurative reflections, that she is singular, the one legitimate ruler—the single "so fair a sun" of lineal monarchy (54.25–26). First, her status as head of the realm appears in some instruction about the benefits of continuity: "For as in bodies natural any sudden change is not without peril, so in this body politic, *whereof you are the only head,* it is so much the more, as there are more humours to receive a hurtful impression" (47.7–10) (italics mine). Some lines later, in a different context, in the midst of reflecting the division and discontent in the realm, Sidney circles back to the term: "But at this present they [Papist and discontented subjects] *want nothing so much as a head,* who shall in

[28] See Kantorowicz 15.

effect need but to receive their instructions, since they may do mischief enough only with his countenance" (49.5–7) (italics mine). Between the two passages, Sidney has presented both the dire unhappiness along with the courage and alertness ("bravest" and "wakefullest") of the two groups of disaffected subjects he joins to create the context for the extreme danger of Alençon's arrival: the Papist English subjects, who are oppressed by (among other things) disgrace, thwarted ambition, and imprisoned friends; and all the discontented subjects in England, "such as want and disgrace keeps lower than they have set their hearts" (48.14–30). Until this point in the text, Alençon has received mention as the instigator of the St. Bartholomew's Day Massacre (48.6–8), to explain why Protestant subjects will be "aliened" (48.2) if Elizabeth marries him, but he has not formally been introduced into or treated in Sidney's discourse. In the passage quoted above, no figurehead has yet been named, but an implication is clear: the discontent among these subjects has left an empty space ready to be filled, a gap for someone whose presence alone will be sufficient to incite rebellion. Through the repetition of an image, the text places Elizabeth, "the only head" of the body politic, next to a flammable group of subjects who lack only "a head" to be ignited into violence. She might have recognized her past self in a reflection of a passive figurehead: rebellions formed in her name during her sister's reign nearly cost her her life. The text has now challenged her singularity as "the only head" of the realm by the potential if passive rival "head" of rebellion.

By the third appearance of this particular repeated word, the empty space for a rival leader able to cause harm merely through passive presence is filled by Alençon explicitly:

> His power, I imagine, is not to be despised, since he is to come into a country where the way of evil doing will be presented unto him; *where there needs nothing but a head* to draw together evil affected humours; himself a prince of great revenues, of the most populous nation of the world, full of soldiery, and such as are used to serve without pay, so they may have show of spoil; and without question shall have his brother in such a case ready to help him, as well

> for old revenges, as for to divert him from troubling France, and to deliver his own country the sooner from evil humours. (50.1–10) (italics mine)

Now Alençon's more active qualities appear as well: his wealth, his supply of men, the support of his brother the French king, and, particularly important, his mercenary army.[29] In the interim, before this third appearance of "head," Sidney has done three things: he has raised the specter of other leaders of rebellions in history, particularly the French "Lewis" who obtained the fealty and strongholds of half the English nobility; he has instructed Elizabeth in how Alençon's presence will widen the divisions between loyal and discontented subjects in a realm already poisoned by division; and he has added to the portrait of Alençon by reflecting him as inconstant and surrounded by counselors who encourage and mirror his ambition and murderous impulses (49.7). So that when Elizabeth sees Alençon reflected explicitly as "head" in this occurrence of the word, the danger of Alençon, now specifically the rival leader of elements in the realm, has been increased by intervening information.

Also, by circling back to an image found earlier, in one of the passages I've quoted above, Sidney reflects Elizabeth and Alençon in a new and specific relationship. Sidney shows both England and France to be political bodies constituted of "humours." Elizabeth's instigation of change would cause harm to the body politic ("more humours to receive a hurtful impression") (47.10); whereas Alençon as a mere figurehead is capable of drawing humours together. Elizabeth has not succeeded in uniting her deeply divided realm, but Alençon will unite the worst and most dangerous elements in the English polity, her "evil affected humours" (50.4). Even more alarming, Alençon becomes a malignant force himself, as the French king's eagerness to aid Alençon is fueled by the desire "to deliver his own country the sooner from evil humours"

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[29] Beal 44 notes that only Stubbs and Sidney (perhaps both motivated by Walsingham, although Mears, in "Counsel" 641–45 disagrees) and then later Buchanan to Rogers, in reporting Sidney's argument, record the danger of Alençon's French mercenary armies.

(50.9–10). Sidney's reflection of two potential heads in England simultaneously presents to the Queen her own inability to cure England's division in the light of Alençon's strength.

II. Reflecting: Shattering and Shattered Mirrors

From the time of the arrival at court of Alençon's representative, Jean de Simier in January 1579, to the Duke's eagerly awaited personal interview with the Queen in August, Elizabeth "transformed a conventional round of diplomatic sparring into an intensely personal drama," Wallace MacCaffrey writes, in which she set in motion, "with unwonted eagerness," "an intense, almost breathless courtship."[30] Simier was treated to lavish feasts, dances, masques, and tournaments, and pressed into constant service as envoy to Monsieur to send personally from the Queen innumerable keepsakes, handkerchiefs, trifles, and "miniatures of herself" as tokens of her affection.[31] When Alençon arrived in person, in pretended concealment, there was so much "love dalliance" at court that Leicester convened an emergency meeting in London, and the French and Spanish ambassadors wrote home predicting the certain success of the match.[32]

If, as many scholars now believe,[33] Sidney's *Letter* appeared soon after Alençon's visit to England, when the climate of romantic ardor at court coincided with Leicester's disgrace for the Queen's discovery of his own secret marriage, Sidney faced a task of enormous psychological delicacy. How could the young nephew of a man once loved and sought by the Queen intrude into the new romantic fervor of a woman once wooed by his uncle and senior to him by a

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[30] MacCaffrey 251–52.

[31] MacCaffrey 250.

[32] On the courtship and the ambassadors, see Read, *Walsingham* 20, Read, *Burghley* 217; on the exchange of "ardent love letters" once Alençon had returned to France, see Read, *Walsingham* 21; for examples of letters from Elizabeth to Alençon see *Salisbury II* 264–67. For the Leicester-circle meeting see MacCaffrey 262 and Duncan-Jones, *Courtier Poet* 162, 164; Berry, *Stubbs* xlvii quotes *Calendar of State Papers Spanish, 1568–79* 693: among the topics discussed at the meeting was a plan to block the Alençon marriage in Parliament.

[33] See note 5.

generation? Walsingham's arguments against the match had been written and presented at a much less heated time, and at Elizabeth's request.[34] Burghley and Sussex, who favored the match, could counsel the Queen in their writings to follow her heart.[35] While Elizabeth was "deep in love dalliance" with her "frog," as she affectionately called Alençon, the Council met in Greenwich without her.[36] How was Sidney to engage her reason when passion appeared to obscure it? And how could he possibly avoid offending when the Queen appeared besotted with a man even younger than himself?[37]

The mirror serves as his medicinal tool. The counselor's capacity to reflect allows Sidney to shatter—and then reconstruct—the Queen's image of herself. In the *Letter*'s first half, not just his mirror, but hers, too, become the means of instruction and correction. There are no literal scenes of entering the Queen's chamber and physically breaking a glass.[38] Sidney shatters through the figurative language of his reflecting. He uses knowledge of images which Elizabeth herself has cultivated and projected and destroys them to replace the faulty with the true—and conveniently congenial to militant Protestant aims. This strategy permits the fiction that he corrects royal vision, not judgment. And the "blame the counselor" trope—implicit in the unspoken exposure of what other counselors have failed to show—removes any blame or censure from the Queen. If the changes are displeasing, so much more does Sidney offer good counsel by declining merely to flatter and say what the Queen wishes to hear.

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[34] Read, *Walsingham* 13–14.

[35] *Salisbury II* 239; Lodge 113.

[36] Read, *Burghley* 215.

[37] Sidney was Alençon's senior by 3 ½ months: Sidney was born November 30, 1554 and Alençon March 18, 1555.

[38] An example of physical and literal shattering occurs in Act IV scene i of *Richard II.* See Grabes 214–16.

First appearing in the opening persuasive section of the *Letter,* the early examples of shattering challenge Elizabeth's self-image as a good governor. Sidney's boldness in setting his reflecting capabilities in competition with the Queen's view of herself may help to explain the fictional speaker; but the "any man" also reminds Elizabeth that her public image is at stake. Sidney writes, "a man might well ask: What makes you in such a calm to change course? To so healthful a body, to apply such a weary medicine?" (47.3–5). In the first question, the mirror operates to show Elizabeth to herself conventionally, as the pilot of a ship of state.[39] Not conventionally, though, the Queen is changing nautical—and political—course when, as the metaphor makes clear, there is no political need: the ship of state sails in waters that are "calm." In one sentence the speaker simultaneously reflects to Elizabeth her realm (as "calm" and healthy); herself as navigator correcting course; and her intended course of action, the marriage, as unnecessary change. A juxtaposing of "calm" and "change" forces the Queen to see, in place of a picture of wise governance, an image of ruling with folly, submitting to a misguided perception of necessity.

Sidney's hypothetical "any man" inflicts a more destructive break in the Queen's mirror in the second of the two questions: "[What makes you] To so healthful a body, to apply such a weary medicine?" (47.4–5). As in the previous question, the figurative language casts reflections back to Elizabeth of herself, her realm, and the marriage. The reflection of the realm, "To so healthful a body," speaks literally of the political body, and the imagery is explicitly of health or sickness, the language of diagnosis. As in the previous question, the state is healthy, unusual in the long tradition of counsel literature to the prince, which most often diagnoses the ills of the

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[39] It is interesting that the first shattering moment occurs in the midst of a "ship" reflection; the *Letter*'s second half reconstitutes the Queen's image as a ship, emblem of England's navy and symbol of imperial power.

realm for the purpose of offering remedy.[40] Two elements have changed from the previous question. The reflection of the contemplated marriage, no longer conceived of as an unnecessary course adjustment, more ominously appears as "a weary medicine." Most important is the reflection of Elizabeth. No longer is she performing the unnecessary by marrying Alençon; now she pursues the harmful: "*to apply* such a weary medicine" (italics added). "Weary" means "fatiguing," "toilsome," "exhausting," even "burdensome to the spirit" (*OED* 5 and 6). To present to the Queen an image of herself as dosing the realm with harmful medicine is a critical reflection of her, and one in which the counselor has acted, under cover of another speaker, to shatter the image in Elizabeth's mirror. Instead of the Queen's cultivated image of herself as the guardian of her people,[41] Sidney's fictional "man" asks a question that reflects Elizabeth as essentially poisoning her healthy political body.

As Sidney's stance becomes bolder, and he issues his shattering reflections in his own voice, the gesture begins to work in support of the persuasive "gathering" strategy of the mirror I discussed above. For example, in the midst of reflecting to the Queen a divided and flammable body politic, warning of Alençon's power as a nameless but implicitly rival "head," Sidney moves once again to shatter Elizabeth's self-image as the protector of her realm: "This double rank of people [Papists and discontented subjects] how their minds have stood, the Northern Rebellion and infinite other practices have well taught you" (49.1–3). Sidney's primary point, of course, is the level of danger posed by disaffected subjects: aligned in figurative military formation ("double rank"), they have not only shown their willingness to rebel openly (in the Northern Rebellion of 1569), their other sinister practices are "infinite." Sidney appears to be

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[40] See Arthur Ferguson, *The Articulate Citizen and the English Renaissance* (Durham: Duke UP, 1965) 315–40.

[41] Among many protestations of a maternal care for her people's safety, see Elizabeth's "Answer to the Commons' Petition That She Marry," January 28, 1563 in Leah Marcus, Janel Mueller and Mary Beth Rose, eds., *Elizabeth I: Collected Works* (Chicago: U Chicago P, 2000) 70–72.

using the reflecting mode of counsel to praise the Queen for her capacity to learn from these events; the Rebellion and other incidents have "well taught you." In the system of counsel, it is important for the prince to be seen to be receptive to instruction.[42] Sidney seems to be using the authority of a counselor to reflect and praise in her this quality of good governance. But at the very moment of appearing to place Elizabeth in the system of counsel, Sidney uses his mirroring capacity to shatter one of Elizabeth's most cherished self-images, as the mother and protector of her people, considering their safety above all else. In place of this protection, the real image Sidney reflects is one of unpreparedness: the Queen was "well taught" but too late. Had she truly seen "how their minds have stood," no rebellion would have occurred, a point reinforced by his subsequent commentary, "if it be said, 'It did not prevail', that is true indeed; for if they had prevailed, it were too late now to deliberate" (49.3–5). Elizabeth must see her own blindness and accept that others may see the potential for rebellion before she does. And if the accompanying commentary hints at the belated nature of her learning, it also reminds her that stability was regained from the Northern Rebellion only through the quick and effective intervention of her Protestant subjects,[43] a tie of dependence I believe Sidney is at pains to make clear throughout the *Letter*. Shattering the Queen's mirror is necessary when Sidney's aim is to replace her view with his own. If Elizabeth is "the only head" of England, she nevertheless rules with singular power because of the strength of her Protestant subjects, whose loyalty and affection she cannot afford to harm by marrying a Catholic prince.

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[42] See Mary Crane, "'Video et Taceo': Elizabeth I and the Rhetoric of Good Counsel," *Studies in English Literature* 28 (1988): 3.

[43] See *MP* 182: "The Catholics were particularly strong in the North, and a rebellion led by the Earls of Northumberland and Westmoreland broke out in November 1569, which was quickly suppressed by loyal peers, led by the Earl of Huntingdon."

In addition to shattering self-images of the Queen in her political role, Sidney destroys far more personal images in the Queen's mirror: those of herself as a recipient of proposed and intended love. Sidney's reflections of Elizabeth and her suitor shatter images of the Queen as the object of desire and of Alençon as capable of entering into a genuine, constant courtship. The first such shattering is liable to be overlooked, so hidden is it among a list of other vices Sidney critiques in the French prince: "his sometimes seeking the King of Spain's daughter, sometimes your Majesty" lies buried almost parenthetically in the center of a detailed anatomy of Alençon's will—a list of all those international actions, coupled with an indictment of his counselors, that show Alençon to be driven by ambition alone (49.21–25). By placing this explosive phrase among factual references both to Alençon's political actions against his brother the King of France and to attempts to secure power in the Netherlands, Sidney both elevates Alençon's inconstant courting of Elizabeth to the level of fact and, importantly, shows that the courtship rightly belongs alongside other examples of Alençon's pursuit of political gain. In this reflection, Elizabeth confronts herself as the object of an inconstant suitor and sees the courtship as just one more political striving for self-aggrandizing ambition.

Where the discourse turns to the dangers posed by the marriage to the Queen's person, Sidney's shattering of the courtship becomes even more specific:

> I will not show so much malice as to object the universal doubt of all that race's unhealthfulness; neither will I lay to his charge his ague-like manner of proceeding, sometimes hot and sometimes cold in the time of pursuit, which always likely is most fervent; and I will temper my speeches from any other unreverent disgracings of him in particular, thought they might be never so true. (50.27–32)

The courtship alternating between one princess and another in the earlier passage now becomes a reflection of Alençon's inconstancy in his courting of Elizabeth alone, and includes, through its

reference to the syphilitic condition of the Medici family[44] so blatant an account of Alençon's sexual past as to shatter irrevocably any possible image, cultivated by the Queen before her self or her court, of a genuine suit of devotion and loyalty in love. If there had been any doubt from the brevity of the previous example, there can be no doubt here: Sidney is in control of the destruction of the image of the Queen as the object of desire and love, an image she had cultivated and projected to her court in a public display and in a personal drama we can only surmise. Sidney's boldness and control is evident in his use of the very language of Petrarchan love poetry used by the suitors themselves to fashion the performance and experience of courtship. In Alençon's "ague-like manner of proceeding," Sidney transforms the freezing and burning of true and ardent love to the chills and fever associated with the "ague" of malaria (or worse). Sidney lowers the ennobling fever of love to the level of malignancy and disease.

A final example of the shattering-the-Queen's self-image will show how completely Sidney destroys any vestiges of the chivalric, courtly ideal in Alençon's suit to the Queen, and any possible image, in the Queen's own view, of Alençon as the noble and constant courtier by her side. Demonstrating at the same time an example of the tendency to "build" reflections by circling back to increasingly more completed pictures—a kind of circular copia—Sidney returns to the theme of Alençon's inconstancy by focusing more and more boldly on the French duke's wantonness. In the only examples of bawdy language in this otherwise decorous and formal discourse, we find crude sexual puns associated with Alençon and with his political relationships with England and the Protestant Netherlands. Sidney's own proverbial-sounding construction, sententious in sound and authority, provides the broad terms, "true inward strength" and "some outward force," with which he proceeds to reflect the realm: "For neither outward accidents do

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[44] *MP* 183.

much prevail against a true inward strength, nor inward weakness doth lightly subvert itself without being thrust at by some outward force" (47.14–16). Because Alençon, although not named, can be inferred as the source of the threatening external force able to exploit the realm's "inward weakness," the normally innocuous verb, "thrust at," acquires a potential layer of meaning. And yet it will require a second look to conclude with certainty that Sidney means to reflect Alençon in a crude, sexual light, and thereby shatter in the Queen's mirror any sense of herself as the object of an ennobling, courtly suit.

Sidney repeats the verb later in the text, while discussing the dangers Alençon brings to the realm. Characteristically, Sidney returns the eye to a reflection only briefly shown before, in order to add to its detail and meaning: "His [Alençon's] will, to be as full of light ambition as possible, besides the French disposition and his own education; his inconstant attempts against his brother; *his thrusting himself into the Low Country matters*; his sometimes seeking the King of Spain's daughter, sometimes your Majesty, are evident testimonies" (49.21–25) (italics mine). Alençon's "thrusting himself into" as in "intruding himself into" a political position (*OED* 8b) now has a political object, the Protestant Netherlands, where Alençon historically did seek military and political command, creating from his self-aggrandizing ambitions a political mess.[45] The pun on "Low Country" reveals a different purpose from the political, however, as Low can be understood as "low" (as in bawdy) and "country matters" as a well-known expression for love-making.[46] In a passage that appears as an indictment of Alençon's character, Sidney is at the same time acting to destroy all potential images held and projected by the Queen of her courtly,

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[45] *MP* 183: "Alençon accepted the Governorship of the Netherlands in 1578. His campaigns there were almost entirely disastrous."

[46] See *Hamlet* III.ii.115: "Do you think I meant country matters?" and John Donne's "The Flea," where "country [pleasures]" is glossed by the editor as "An indecent pun": John Carey, ed., *John Donne: The Oxford Authors* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1990) 438.

royal suitor. The courtship is desecrated to a farce of political seeking and sexual sport, and the Queen herself changes to the target of a crude, low wanton. Sidney shatters not only the courtly aura of Alençon's suit but the Queen's reflected reality, or even her projected fictive image, of love.

I find Sidney's shattering gesture to be unique in the advice literature addressed to Elizabeth around the Alençon marriage. According to Herbert Grabes, "the 'true', faithful, or unflattering glass, which neutralizes or even prevents deceptive appearances," was, around the time of Sidney's writing, gaining in importance and "prestige."[47] By fashioning himself as the "true" mirror, piercing the sources of blindness and breaking images requiring correction, Sidney shows himself to be the good counselor, one who reflects truth rather than flattery. Where each "shattering" moment may contain a silent suggestion of a remedy or alternative, in the *Letter*'s second half, Sidney will reconstruct a reflection of the Queen that adheres more closely to the image of governance desired by militant Protestants. But before re-creating the Queen in the wishful Protestant image, Sidney will use the capacities of the mirror to instruct Elizabeth in the importance of understanding and choosing her public image. To do this, he will change stances entirely: he will need to distort her reflection, and involve her in a witty, courtly spectacle at the expense of his political rivals.

III. A Multiplicity of Competing Reflections

In the final persuasive section of the *Letter,* Sidney demonstrates a new use of the mirroring mode of counsel. Through a deliberate distortion of Elizabeth's reflection, which he signals very clearly to the Queen, Sidney is able to shift a humanist debate of argument into a more courtly, witty, and entertaining competition of reflections. Continuing in an altered and

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[47] Grabes 105.

exaggerated role as the Queen's mirror, Sidney both exposes the pro-marriage arguments of his political rivals for the ways they reflect upon the Queen and instructs Elizabeth in how she will be reflected in the eyes of her people should she choose to be guided by those arguments.[48] By providing new reflections that arise from an alternate course of action, one that conforms to the more militant Protestant agenda, he multiplies images of the Queen available for her selection. In this way, Sidney styles himself not as humanist debater, but as aristocratic, courtier-counselor, well suited to guide her in the ways that her own heraldic motto, "Video et Taceo,"[49] suggests to be her chosen field of battle.

When, halfway through the *Letter,* Sidney turns his attention to the motives for proceeding with the marriage, he is careful to represent them as having been articulated by the Queen herself: "Now resteth to consider what be the motions of this sudden change, *as I have heard you in most sweet words deliver:* fear of standing alone in respect of foreign dealings, and in home respects, doubt of contempt" (51.20–23) (italics mine). I find in these lines an ambiguity about whether Elizabeth has stated the fact of these arguments or whether she is being staged by Sidney as motivated by them. There is a blurring of agency in this representation of motive. Has Elizabeth informed Sidney of these reasons to convey to him the Council's thinking?[50] Or is this Sidney's representation of the Queen, contemplating a marriage out of fear, so that he as her

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[48] I observe Sidney's first move to shift a debate of argument to a field of reflections in his preceding persuasive section on the Anglo-French alliance (noted in *MP* 44 as the "fear of standing alone" section). Unlike Walsingham, who in his April 1579 letter to the Queen (partially printed in Read, *Walsingham* 14–15) argued that an alliance with France was unnecessary, Sidney ignores argument almost entirely in favor of a strategy of casting reflections of Elizabeth and Alençon together. These reflections make clear that such an alliance, desirable or not, would simply never succeed: "Monsieur's desires and yours, how they should meet in public matters," he writes, are like "parallels, because they maintain diverse lines, [and so] can never join" (52.9–12).

[49] See Crane, "Video et Taceo" 2.

[50] In the *Letter*'s opening, Sidney refers to an antecedent conversation with the Queen in which he has "already delivered to your gracious ears what is the general sum of my traveling thoughts therein" (46.19–20). We do not know what, if anything, Elizabeth communicated to him.

counselor may reassure her with his praise that no such concerns are necessary? If Sidney is merely preparing to refute these motives, why show such care to represent them as having been expressed by Elizabeth herself?[51] We know that Elizabeth did weigh the benefits of an alliance with France and that she saw it as advantageous in light of the disputes in the Low Countries and Spain's potential acquisition of Portugal.[52] To represent Elizabeth as pursuing the marriage alliance out of fear of Spain's increasing power would have been neither unreasonable nor inaccurate. The truth in that reflection lends support to a strategy of representing the Queen as expressing not only the fact of the motives but also a confession of feeling them herself.

But the "doubt of contempt" motive is more puzzling. "Doubt" might be understood in several senses, as "apprehension" and "fear" (*OED* 3a); as a "thing to be dreaded; danger, risk" (*OED* 3b); and as uncertainty (*OED* 1a). Doubt as uncertainty suggests the possibility that Elizabeth may or may not have been persuaded by her counselors before now, and, as a good sovereign, she may thus be receptive to counsel. There is no evidence in Elizabeth's speeches or recorded conversations or in diplomatic correspondence that she considered marrying Alençon to avoid the contempt of her people. From what we know of the Queen's temperament, acting out of fear of her subjects' response would be offensive. Indeed, the first part of the *Letter* works to persuade the Queen of the importance of attending to the effects of her actions on her public image. If, however, I place Sidney's *Letter* beside Lord Burghley's writings on the marriage, I observe a new manipulation, one of risk and daring. First, Sidney attributes to Elizabeth one of the arguments in favor of the marriage promoted by Burghley; second, through various rhetorical

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[51] Louis Montrose argues that Sidney "attributed to Elizabeth herself" both motives, in *The Subject of Elizabeth: Authority, Gender, and Representation* (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 2006) 211–12. Ty Buckman 140 argues the opposite, that Sidney is deliberately misrepresenting Elizabeth's motives, not in their specifics, necessarily, but in their nature, so that he can ascribe political reasons to her actions (and guide her to political solutions) and thereby avoid the real issue, her desire. My own views will become clear.

[52] MacCaffrey 252–54, Read, *Burghley* 223, Read, *Walsingham* 25–26.

means, Sidney signals his strategy to Elizabeth; and, finally, by reflecting the Queen as herself choosing to act from a motive urged upon her by a political rival, Sidney formulates a unique way to discredit it: to stage a spectacle acted by and for the Queen in which to expose that argument for the reflections of Elizabeth it assumes or creates.

While nowhere in the written proceedings of the marriage negotiations is it recorded that the Queen considered the match to counter any potential contempt from her people, grave concern about future contempt of the Queen appears as a strong motive in the March 1579, "Memoryall for the Queen's Majestie tochyng the matters of her marryage," a list of arguments for and against the marriage in the Salisbury manuscripts at Hatfield, in the hand of Sir Edward Stafford but endorsed by Burghley and believed by historians to be written by him.[53] There, in a concluding summation of the "benefytes lyke to growe by the marryage" is Burghley's assertion that "by this marryage" to Alençon, Elizabeth "shall have a husband to defend her, a child to revenge her & therby *avoyde contempte in her latter yeres*"[54] (italics mine). The motive appears again in the same document, under a list of "perrells that maye growe yf her Majestie do not marrye": chief among them is "The perrell of contempte in her latter yeres."[55] Sidney has taken on not only an argument, but also the powerful statesmen behind it, chief among them Lord Burghley, whose personal views these writings may well represent.[56]

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[53] On assigning it to Burghley, see Read, *Burghley* 211 and 562. Through Leicester, Sidney would have known of the arguments circulating, certainly by the time of the Leicester–Sidney meeting of August 1579, if not before. See note 5.

[54] *Salisbury II* 244.

[55] *Salisbury II* 245.

[56] Read, *Burghley* 212: "it is not quite clear whether he [Burghley] was spokesman for the group or whether he was delivering his personal view." Sussex's letter to Elizabeth, though, also advocating the marriage behind a fiction of a careful consideration of both sides, does not verbalize anything remotely close to Burghley's "contempt of subjects" argument.

With the help of Sidney's mirror strategy, Elizabeth becomes both a participant in, and an audience to, a drama in which an argument is not reasoned or debated but exposed for its reflection upon her and to her people. In its first stage, the strategy operates simply to follow Burghley's argument not to its logical conclusion but to its logical reflection. Here, as the formal discussion of the second motive begins (the alliance being the first, contempt of subjects the second), Sidney once again takes pains to portray it as articulated by Elizabeth herself:

> The other objection, of contempt in your subjects, I assure your Majesty, if I had not heard it proceed out of the mouth I do of all others most dearly reverence, it would as soon (considering the perfections of your body and mind, set to all men's eyes by the height of your estate) have come to the possibility of my imagination, as if one should have told me on the contrary side that the greatest prince in the world should envy the estate of some poor deformed pilgrim. (53.7–14)

This is a masterful double assault on Lord Burghley's reasoning: the passage communicates the absurdity of Burghley's argument and simultaneously exposes that argument for the way it reflects upon and affects the image of the Queen. Sidney (through Leicester) and Elizabeth would both have known that "contempte" of her subjects was an argument and phrasing articulated by Burghley and that "obyectyons" which he "awenswers" appear as Burghley's primary means of arguing in favor of the match in his "Memoryall" of March 1579.[57] Sidney's use of these phrases in combination would have signaled a direct and unmistakable imitation of Burghley's language and reasoning. Except for the brief announcement of his purpose in the opening ("Then will I answer those objections of those fears which might procure so violent a refuge" (46.22–24))—also an imitation of the "Memoryall"—Sidney's use of "objection" here is new within the *Letter.* Until this point, the motives for entertaining the marriage have appeared,

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[57] *Salisbury II* 239: see Lord Burghley's "Obyectyons to be made ageynste the Queen's marryage with the Duke of Alençon with the awenswers to every of them in order as the obyectyons be placed."

as we saw, exclusively as "motions"—"what be the motions of this sudden change" (51.20). Sidney not only departs from his earlier vocabulary by writing "the other objection," but he refers the reader to an antecedent that does not exist. What other objection? What was the first one? The phrase is only understandable if read as a direct reference to Burghley's "Memoryall." The long passage quoted above registers Sidney's disbelief at such a reason for marrying. It is an open criticism of the argument, and only the first of many imitations of Burghley, signals to Elizabeth of a bold and purposeful strategy of persuasion.

On the one hand, the passage could be read solely as reassurance—a comment on the absurdity of an alleged need for the Queen to concern herself with the contempt of her subjects. Read this way, the passage reproduces in miniature the comparing process which forms the mirror's principal mode of instruction.[58] Sidney couples his own (laudatory) reflection of the Queen with the reflection of her as she is presented in Burghley's argument, motivated by the fear of contempt; and he finds such absurdity in the comparison as to suggest yet a third reflection of her, illustrative of the incongruity. Sidney's reflection of Elizabeth is abundant in its praise: she is possessed of perfections of both mind and body, which are highly visible to all men by being displayed, like a jewel, in the setting of her high estate.[59] Royal status is not the source of her perfections, which reside within her; rather, her status serves to display them. As frequently happens in Sidney's text, the reflection of Elizabeth appears in the center of the passage, serving as a structural "reflection" of her centrality. In light of this praiseworthy mirrored image, the contrasted reflection of the Queen as needing to be concerned about the

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[58] Grabes 82 and 141–43. Grabes writes that a mirror imaging either the imperfect or the ideal can serve to instruct if we engage in correction through an observation of correspondence: "in both [cases] [ideal or imperfect], the mirror furnishes one of the images necessary for the correction desired." And that we "register the difference between one's self" and the view in the mirror, thus "enabling one … to see one's true self and possibly to improve it."

[59] Among the examples of iconography which occur frequently in representations of Elizabeth is the pearl, emblem of purity. Reflections of the Queen as a jewel abound and increase in the course of Sidney's *Letter*.

contempt of her subjects—the image of the Queen arising from Burghley's argument—is so unbelievable as to require illustration with a new, hypothetical reflection, of the Queen as envious of a poor and deformed pilgrim, the most humble imaginable figure of the realm. Read in this way, the passage flatters and praises, offering reassurance in an illustration of the utter impossibility of needing to fear such a response from her people.

But Sidney's manipulation of his role as the Queen's mirror does more here than flatter (or praise) and reassure. It is true that "On the contrary side" seems to signal an opposition, between the hypothetical reflection of the Queen as envious of a deformed pilgrim and the immediately preceding reflection of her perfections as visible to all men. And yet, the real comparison the passage presents is less an opposition than an equivalency: the Queen's potential concern about contempt, and her envy of becoming a lowly pilgrim, are equally unlikely, and therefore equivalent: "it *would as soon* … have come to the possibility of my imagination" (italics mine). And in that equivalency—in that substitution—lies Sidney's exposure of the logical reflection arising from an acceptance of Burghley's argument, to marry to avoid her subjects' "contempte." For a Queen to act out of fear of her subjects is equivalent to an abdication. While reassuring and flattering to Elizabeth on the one hand, this passage also exposes Burghley's pro-marriage argument. A Queen who is seen to act from fear of her subjects exchanges the royal scepter for the palmer's staff. It would not only be degrading (and shape-changing)[60] for Elizabeth to marry Alençon out of fear, it would constitute her fall as a prince. The image of such an exchange, prince for pilgrim, traces its history to the "mirror for magistrates" and "Fall of Princes" tradition. Shakespeare would draw upon it two decades later

[60] Because Alençon was also pock-marked from small pox, and he was reputed to be hunch backed as well, I wonder if in "deformed" there isn't some suggestion in Sidney's text of Elizabeth's becoming like the thing she would join: no longer a reigning prince, and misshapen herself.

to portray the fall of Richard II.[61] And in the sentence that follows, Sidney will unite the terms "contempt" and "fall" (53.15).

Sidney's emphasis on the extremes of high and low in the passage are in keeping with the image of a prince's fall; there is nothing that falls between the pilgrim's humble and deformed status and Elizabeth's perfections, displayed to the world by the "height" of her "estate." By serving as the Queen's mirror and providing reflections in relation to each other, Sidney can expose Burghley's argument for its encouragement of an action that weakens royal prerogative and power; furthermore, he can remind Elizabeth that a Queen who chooses action based on such a motive falls from sovereignty. Even a hypothetical reflection of the Queen as fallen from power may strike us as too bold and trangressive to be expressed by a young courtier, even with the compensating move of a "reverence" or bow, a rare gesture of deference in the *Letter,*[62] carefully included. But Sidney would also have been holding up for Elizabeth a mirror of recognition. In November 1566, she had herself responded to one of Parliament's incessant demands for her to marry with an angry outburst expressing what Janel Mueller has called "imagining her own deposition": "I thanke god I am in deede indued with suche qualytyes, that yf I were turned owte of the Realme in my pettycote, I were hable to lyve in any place of Chrystendom."[63] In 1566, Elizabeth pictured her own fall from sovereignty when a Parliament of men overstepped its function of granting subsidies and redressing grievances by presuming to

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[61] *MP* 184 draws attention to Shakespeare's character of Richard II. I note that Shakespeare's sources for Richard's deposition scene ("I'll give/ My scepter for a palmer's walking staff") included the "tradition of complaint" and the *Mirror for Magistrates,* Arden ed., lxxix.

[62] According to Berry, *Making*; see note 10.

[63] Janel Mueller, "Virtue and Virtuality: Gender in Self-Representations of Queen Elizabeth I," *Form and Reform in Renaissance England: Essays in Honor of Barbara Kiefer Lewalski,* ed. Amy Boesky and Mary Thomas Crane (Newark: U Delaware P, 2001) 227. For Queen Elizabeth's words, Mueller cites Cambridge University Library MS Gg.3.34, fols. 209–14.

counsel her to marry. In 1579, Sidney invokes a similar reflection of a sovereign's fall, this time to illustrate how sovereignty collapses once it is perceived to be governed by subjects—or by a concern for their contempt. Sidney's portrayal of the pilgrim, and its suggestion of a fall from sovereignty, supplies Elizabeth with a remembered image of herself as she once responded to the counsel to marry. The similarity—the mirror of recognition—places Burghley's pro-marriage counsel next to the Parliamentary demands that had once so incensed the Queen. Before an audience of the Queen and the courtiers and counselors reading the *Letter,* Sidney has stage-managed a spectacle of exposure.

If, in the passage quoted above, Sidney refutes an argument by exposing the reflection it casts upon the Queen, in the following passage he supplies Elizabeth with alternate reflections arising from a different course of action altogether. The contest of argument is thereby removed to the field of competing reflections, and the Queen may and ought to choose a course of action with an awareness of its effect on the public's perception of her image. If Sidney appeals to her vanity, he is also making clear—as he asserts in the earlier discussion about the dangers to the state—that how the Queen is viewed by her subjects affects the well-being of the realm.

Again following Burghley's motive of "contempte" of subjects to its logical reflection, Sidney also supplies an alternative:

> What is there either within you or without you that can possibly fall into the degree of contempt: to whom our fortunes are tied by so long descent of your royal ancestors, our minds joyed with the experience of your inward virtues, and our eyes delighted with the sight of you? (53.14–18)

By casting Elizabeth as holding Burghley's view, Sidney can expose its outcome—the reflection assumed and created by Burghley's argument—by interrogating her directly on a public stage, before the reading audience of the court. To promote the marriage to avoid the people's contempt suggests something contemptible within Elizabeth. It is irrelevant that the origin of that contempt

lies within the people who are viewing her, and not within herself (the "eye of the beholder"). Sidney exposes the argument's assumption that Elizabeth contains within her some quality—here left undefined and open to her speculation—that, deserved or not, will draw the people's attention as a focus of their collective disdain.

Of course, we know, as did Elizabeth and Sidney and the court, the specific source of the contempt Burghley so openly feared: that the Queen would grow old while unmarried and childless. As we saw earlier, if she marries Alençon, Burghley reasoned, she "shall have a husband to defend her, a chyld to revenge her & therby avoyde contempte in her latter yeres."[64] If Sidney's reference to Burghley's argument brought to the Queen's mind the contemptible reflection of herself as a childless, solitary spinster-Queen, fading in popularity as she withered with age, Sidney supplies an alternate reflection, one she may choose for herself by accepting an alternate course of action: "to whom our fortunes are tied … our minds joyed with the experience of your inward virtues, and our eyes delighted with the sight of you." Sidney adds to his stance of counselor that of subject to provide this reflection, claiming the authority of his experience as her subject, which her experience will of necessity always lack. Here is allegiance, loyalty, and shared fortunes, rooted in the long history of legitimate ancestry, an aspect of herself that she valued, projected, and found pleasing in celebrations and pageants.[65] Here, too, is delight arising from her image; and "minds" made joyful by experiencing her "inward virtues." I contend it is no accident that this alternate reflection, which dwells on the "sight of you," also penetrates beyond the surface to speak of something experienced, felt, and "inward." As an alternative to

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[64] *Salisbury II* 244. In *The Subject of Elizabeth* 212, Louis Montrose's explanation of the acuteness of this worry helps us to understand how Burghley could have been so explicit: "The prospect that Elizabeth might end her reign as an old, unmarried, and childless woman—and one who continued to resist declaring the succession—threatened to erode the charismatic power of her royal office and thus to destabilize the late Elizabethan polity."

[65] Anne Somerset, *Elizabeth I* (New York: Knopf, 1991) 352–53.

Burghley's motive for her to marry and its attendant "contempt" image, there arises a reflection in which, recognizable to herself through celebrated lineage, she stands alone before her subjects—and may see herself to be deeply loved.

To distort the Queen's reflection by attributing to her one of the arguments known to be advocated by the senior statesman of the realm, and to involve the Queen in a court-wide challenge and exposure at that statesman's expense, is so daring as to suggest the heightened thrill of the Accession Day tilts. Sidney is about to unleash the bravado of heroic and immortal youth. But first, in a passage that teaches Elizabeth how to interpret this portion of the *Letter,* he pauses to speak with the same seriousness and depth of conviction that he was to exhibit on a Zutphen battlefield seven years later: "But because your own eyes cannot see yourself, neither can there be in the world any example fit to blaze you by, I beseech you vouchsafe to weigh the grounds thereof" (53.18–20). Here seems to be Sidney's apology for fashioning himself as the Queen's indispensable mirror. He deftly locates the source of the Queen's need to depend upon him in a reflection of supreme praise. He invokes the sententious authority of the humanist-trained counselor by alluding to a proverb which Katherine Duncan-Jones has identified, "He who sees all cannot see themselves."[66] Behind a phrase which appears to inform the Queen of her limitations lies the laudatory reflection of her as unable to see herself because she sees all. The praise continues, "neither can there be in the world any example fit to blaze you by." Even if she could see herself, there are no sufficiently excellent examples anywhere to which she could compare herself: no models or books—or mirrors—for learning about herself through the process of comparison. Having established that both aspects of the comparing process are absent for Elizabeth—a suitable external reflection and an internal ability to see herself to draw a

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[66] *MP* 184.

comparison to it—Sidney seems to proceed with the only replacement for these deficiencies which he can provide—himself. "I," he begins, "beseech you." Without her own mirrors or the ability to learn from them, Elizabeth needs him, her counselor, to perform those functions she cannot do for herself: to see her in her natural and political persons and reflect those images back to her. Because of the praiseworthy quality of seeing all, and her superiority to all possible mirrors, Elizabeth is of necessity dependent upon her counselor to see herself.

But why does this passage, offering such clarity about Sidney's role, occur so late in the *Letter,* rather than in the beginning, where he justifies and defends his boldness in offering his counsel? In my view, a contradiction within the passage explains why its present context is so necessary and how the Queen is to interpret his strategy. If I paraphrase, we find the following: "Because you cannot see yourself, I beseech you to consult your own judgment about this." In a statement that seems poised to claim agency and judgment for Sidney as the Queen's counseling mirror, a surprising reversal shifts the agency of judging back to the Queen. As much as the passage asserts why the Queen should listen to her counselor, it also asks her not to.

I find that the contradiction resolves as soon as we understand the passage to contain a prescription for Elizabeth for confronting the multiplicity of reflections Sidney is in the process of generating. In the sentence just preceding, we saw that Sidney supplied a reflection of the Queen as deeply loved for herself in contrast to the reflection created by Burghley's argument, that something "within you or without you" would attract contempt. The plea to Elizabeth to "weigh the grounds thereof" announces that she has a choice. Because you cannot see your public image, Sidney pleads, weigh the action which informs it and the reflection that the action casts; I will be your mirror and show you each action's image, but you must choose among them.

By inviting her agency in a partnership, the reflective mode of counsel permits a performance that no reasoned argument alone could achieve.

Attributing to the Queen the "fear of contempt motive" urged by Burghley, therefore, allows Sidney to stage a drama, before and including the Queen, in which Burghley's argument can be interrogated and exposed for its effect on the royal image. Even as Elizabeth remains its heroine, Sidney is its stage manager, exerting authority and control over all the generated images of the Queen. He is arbiter over what is "fit" to "blaze" her by, for example, in the passage cited above. The *Letter*'s concluding advice to the Queen takes the form of a prescription for stage managing her image, with an authority Sidney refuses to relinquish.[67] The question arises then: if, at this point in the text, Elizabeth becomes conspicuous as being controlled by her counselor, what is the likely effect on her receptivity to Sidney's points and on his self-advertisement for this desirable political role of counselor? If one purpose of the mirror is to cast Elizabeth in a drama populated by characters on both sides of the marriage question, the play must entertain as well as edify. It is at precisely this point in the *Letter* that I would argue the mirror acquires a new characteristic in Sidney's hands: an occasion for the self-conscious and clever display of wit known to be pleasing to this prince, and which will distinguish Sidney from the grave, sententious humanist (Burghley) as the aristocratic, courtly alternative.

A new tone of playful wit and a new aristocratic stance are illustrated well in Sidney's response to the "length of reign" argument, his extension of Burghley's promotion of the marriage to avoid contempt from the people in the Queen's "latter yeres":

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[67] His prescription reads, "let your excellent virtues of piety, justice and liberality daily, if it be possible, more and more shine. Let some such particular actions be found out (which is easy, as I think, to be done) by which you may gratify all the hearts of your people. Let those in whom you find trust, and to whom you have committed trust in your weighty affairs, be held up in the eyes of your people" (56.33–57.4).

> As I take it, you imagine two natural causes thereof [of contempt of subjects], and two effects you think you find thereof. The natural causes be length of government and uncertainty of succession; the effects be looking, as you term it, to the rising sun, and some abominable speeches certain hellish minded people have uttered. (53.21–25)

In what is clearly a mirroring passage, Sidney reflects Elizabeth as agreeing with Burghley's argument about contempt in the people arising from the length of her reign. This gesture allows Sidney to refute that argument by supplying an alternative set of reflections of Elizabeth, all of which arise from an alternative argument. By choosing the more pleasing reflection of herself, Elizabeth is won to an argument on the side of declining the marriage. So bold a distortion of the Queen's image requires some form of acknowledgement. Through a change in tone and choice of wording, Sidney signals a strategy in which he allies himself with Elizabeth at the expense of Lord Burghley.

The first such signal appears in the language describing himself as her mirror. His "As I take it, you," presents the closed, mirroring system of viewing and then articulating that vision to its object. But the language with which Sidney reflects her ostensible thinking introduces a note of self-conscious fun. The tonal shift is given away by repeating such phrases as "you imagine" and "you think you find" and "as you term it"—phrases whose tongue in cheek quality rests with noticeable incongruity beside the reasoned seriousness of "cause" and "effect." Sidney is not drawing attention to serving as the Queen's mirror; he is exaggerating it. In a joke which allies him with Elizabeth, this mirror is presenting not the Queen, but Lord Burghley, in whose "Memoryalls" written for Privy Council meetings these very arguments may be found.

There is enough truth in the reflected image to make it seem plausible. Elizabeth did fear her people's tendency to look with favor upon a successor or "rising sun"; it was a name

frequently given to Mary Queen of Scots.[68] And the public's distaste for the French marriage was indeed circulating in "abominable speeches," regardless of whether we date Sidney's *Letter* before or after the appearance of the most inflammatory protest of all, John Stubbs's *Gaping Gulf*. That diatribe so angered the Queen that she only reluctantly commuted its author's sentence from death to public amputation.[69] But the reflection of Elizabeth as Sidney presents it here is an unmistakable distortion. Not only was the source and proponent of the "contempt of subjects" argument Lord Burghley; it was Lord Burghley who imagined the people were (as he himself was) grieved and discontented by the uncertainty of succession. Sidney's deliberate use of cause and effect in this passage distorts the otherwise plausible elements of the Queen's image. It was not Elizabeth's contention that uncertainty of succession (the "cause" of contempt) resulted in the people's "looking, as you term it, to the rising sun" (the "effect" of that contempt). On the contrary, Elizabeth insisted repeatedly that were she to name a successor, that person would be favored over her. Whenever there is an heir, a "second person" (as Sidney shrewdly characterizes Alençon), Elizabeth knew from experience that the discontented of the realm would fasten their hopes upon that "rising sun." In such a way had she been favored by Protestants during her sister Mary's reign. For that reason she refused to name a successor. It was Elizabeth who argued in favor of an uncertain succession, and Lord Burghley who argued against it.[70] A distortion of the mirror, to reflect Elizabeth as holding Lord Burghley's pro-marriage views, allows Sidney to expose those arguments and to provide competing ones of his own.

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[68] Beal 16.

[69] Mears, "Counsel" 632, MacCaffrey 255 and 257: to prosecute and sentence, she resurrected an expired law on sedition from Mary's reign, and any lawyers who disagreed with it were dispatched to the Tower.

[70] For Elizabeth's views on the succession, clearly opposite to Burghley's, see her "Conversations with the Scottish Ambassador, William Maitland, Laird of Lethington, September and October 1561" in Marcus 60–67.

Additional signals of his strategy to Elizabeth –both daring and entertaining—appear in Sidney's send-up of Lord Burghley's sententious style.[71] Sidney's manipulation of the style asserts a counseling stance that subsumes humanist education into the witty, verbal sprezzatura of the courtier—those men at court who are the prince's natural counselors instead of educated, self-made men of lesser rank, like Burghley. Once Elizabeth ostensibly holds Burghley's view of a long reign as the cause of her people's contempt, a response through sententious generality becomes almost inevitable. How else but through generality is it possible to disprove a prediction about the future? Richard Lanham reminds modern readers that proverbs and adages served "for most of formal rhetoric's history [as] a means of proof rather than a substantiating ornament."[72] Here is Sidney's answer to Elizabeth's ostensible concern about the people's contempt for her at the end of her reign: "The longer a good prince reigns, it is most certain the more he is esteemed; for there is no man ever weary of well being; and good increased to good makes the same good both greater and stronger" (53.25–28). Exaggerated repetition of Burghley's sententious style places the spotlight on the style itself, with repetitions of isocolon, parallelism, and hyperbole, accompanied by a side of irony: "it is most certain" announces the (style of) truism even while disguising the fact that the truism is not necessarily true (a good prince is not always esteemed in proportion to his years). Playing Hamlet to Burghley's Polonius communicates Sidney's distortion of the Queen's reflection and undermines the authority with which Lord Burghley had promoted the marriage.

Appropriating and manipulating features of Burghley's sententious style permits Sidney to supply an array of competing reflections for the Queen's perusal and selection.

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[71] Burghley's reliance on sententious constructions as a means of asserting authority is well known. See Crane, "Video et Taceo" 3, 14.

[72] Richard A. Lanham, *A Handlist of Rhetorical Terms* (Berkeley: U of California P, 1991) 125.

Simultaneously, Sidney uses Burghley's strategies of asserting authority to transfer Elizabeth's dependence on a counselor to himself in Burghley's place. General and hyperbolic language, unclear antecedents, ellipsis, and citation of classical precept contribute to the ambiguities which permit the multiplicity of reflections Sidney lays before the Queen and among which he invites her to choose.

As the response to the "length of reign" argument develops, for example, Sidney uses Lord Burghley's means of claiming authority, his sententious style and citation of classical precept, to assert an aggressive stance against him. By reflecting the Queen as herself of the mindset of Lord Burghley, that she should marry to avoid contempt at the end of her reign, Sidney can elevate his refutation to a spectacle of competitive reflections, before a captive and participating audience of the Queen. Such competitive verbal jousting for the Queen's eye and favor highlights the knightly, aristocratic Sidney in contrast to Burghley, who is so clearly an inadequate warrior next to the younger Sidney. Accordingly, it is in this portion of the *Letter* that the language of knighthood proliferates, as Sidney styles himself the Queen's champion, eager to defend her "with my blood" (55.28). Perhaps such self-fashioning is also politic. A persuasive strategy that works by transferring Burghley's mindset to the Queen carries the risk of reflecting the Queen as easily influenced by her chief counselor. But then, no joust is exciting without risk.

Still boldly reflecting the Queen as herself of Burghley's mind, concerned about contempt for the length of her reign, Sidney refutes with competing reflections:

> But in so rare a government, where neighbors' fire gives us light to see our own quietness, where nothing wants that true administration of justice brings forth, certainly the length of time rather breeds a mind to think no other life but in that, than any tediousness in so fruitful sweetness. (53.33–54.1-4)

Through the sententious feature of ellipsis, competing reflections of the Queen arise from opposing courses of action. Once the reader supplies the missing phrase, "to think," competing

images emerge. The passage then reads: the length of time in Elizabeth's reign "rather breeds a mind to think no other life but in that, than [to think] any *tediousness* in *so fruitful sweetness*" (italics mine). "Tediousness"—what the "length of time" of her reign is not—is a characterization of Elizabeth's governance created by Burghley's concern about "contempte" in her "latter yeres." Sidney's contrasting reflection is one of "so fruitful sweetness," an image that praises Elizabeth and simultaneously promotes the forward Protestant agenda by constructing a Queen who can preside alone over Protestant Europe. Her "fruitful" sweetness makes clear that no husband is needed for fertility. On the contrary, Sidney affirms a generative self-sufficiency for the Virgin Queen: the length of her reign "breeds" minds; and her administration of justice "brings forth." The phrase "bringing forth" occurred once before when Sidney showed the barrenness of a religious union between Elizabeth and Alençon: having such "contrary principles," they could never "bring forth" one doctrine (52.13). Sidney's reflections of Elizabeth as self-sufficiently fertile will accumulate and build, forming one of the dominant tropes with which he reconstructs Elizabeth's reflected image in the *Letter*'s second half.

In addition to manipulating sententious style, Sidney appropriates one of the defining characteristics of the humanist counselor's means of establishing authority. The ability to cite classical precepts and other textual fragments served to advertise the cultural capital of a humanist education and establish the authority of learning, wisdom, and moral virtue associated with that education.[73] Burghley's writings are peppered with illustrative Latin phrases. Sidney, not to be outdone, includes them in the *Letter*; and yet he cannot resist some one-upmanship. He, too, received the humanist education, but he will show a courtier's flourish by manipulating the fragment for his own ends. About the phrase, "where neighbours' fire gives us light to see our

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[73] Crane, "Video et Taceo" 3.

own quietness," critics have come to varying conclusions. Arthur Kinney comments that it is a dim light for viewing the realm and "hardly proper enlightenment" for a reliable monarch.[74] Katherine Duncan-Jones finds the source of the image in Horace's first Epistle; but notes that instead of using it as it as a warning, as it appears in Horace, Sidney turns the image to praise.[75] I find that Sidney appropriates this humanist strategy of authority to remind Elizabeth that he, not Burghley, is her mirror. The process depicted—of seeing one's own image ("our own quietness") in the "light" of another ("neighbours' fire")—is precisely the comparing process that Grabes describes as the mirror's mode of instruction.[76] The comparison of a neighbors' realm to one's own yields in the difference the "quietness" or peacefulness of England. This pleasing reflection of the realm is possible for Elizabeth to see quite literally because Sidney knows how to change the apt Latin fragment so that it enacts his own role as mirror to the Queen.

Elizabeth's long reign as a period of peace, not contempt, is an image Sidney supplies in his mirror based on a course of action he offers as an alternative to the action—and attendant reflections—advocated by Lord Burghley. It is also one that we know Elizabeth cultivated. Having shattered the images in the Queen's mirror that required correction, and having used arguments and methods of asserting authority against his influential political rival, Sidney begins to reconstruct and re-create the image of the Queen in his mirror, now in accordance with the governance necessary to fulfill the aims of the forward Protestant party. In Sidney's reconstituted mirror, Elizabeth is self-sufficiently fertile and attached to God's (Protestant) purpose through

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[74] Arthur F. Kinney, "Sir Philip Sidney and the Uses of History," in Heather Dubrow and Richard Strier, eds., *The Historical Renaissance: New Essays on Tudor and Stuart Literature and Culture* (Chicago: Chicago UP, 1988) 300. Beal 22 uses the proverb to aid in dating Sidney's *Letter* by determining whether Sidney influenced Buchanan's use of it, or visa versa. Beal concludes the former.

[75] *MP* 184.

[76] See note 58.

increasingly deployed religious language. Allusions to the parts of a ship rebuild Elizabeth's image as emblem of imperial power. At last the Queen encounters a reflection of herself as equipped and ready to embark on the program of uniting the Protestant world under her leadership.

Chapter 2

Sidney's *Old Arcadia* as a Mirror for Princes

In Chapter 1, we explored Sidney's performance of the role of counselor to his prince in his *Letter to Queen Elizabeth* of 1579. We saw that he acted as a mirror to the Queen, and that consecutive sections of the *Letter* demonstrated a progression of mirroring functions in the service of persuading her against the marriage to the French duc d'Alençon. From gathering and framing, thereby showing Elizabeth a view of the state of her realm, to shattering Elizabeth's view of herself in a love attachment to the duke and dismantling any appearance of chivalric devotion which Elizabeth had sustained through public displays of courtly love, Sidney argued against the policy of the French marriage. By exaggerating his role as the Queen's mirror, he presented a multiplicity of reflections of the Queen, based on the outcomes of the arguments of his political opponents, and instructing the Queen in how she would be seen by her people if she chose to be guided by the pro-marriage party at Court. Finally, Sidney reconstituted the reflection he had shattered, portraying the Queen as ruling without the aid of France and with no need of a child, as the fruitfulness of her virtuous and wise governance presided powerfully over an empire. By heeding his counsel, Sidney concluded in the *Letter,* Elizabeth would no longer need Sidney's mirroring capacity, and would herself become "the perfect mirror to your posterity."[77]

We do not know with certainty the Queen's response to the *Letter*.[78] We do know that negotiations over the Alençon marriage continued well into 1581[79] and that a few months after

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[77] *MP* 57.

[78] For a summary of the opinions of scholars on the Queen's reception of the *Letter,* see Chapter 1, n. 7.

[79] Read, *Walsingham*. See Duncan-Jones, *Courtier Poet* 174, for the Queen's "continued dalliance with Alençon" in the spring and summer of 1580; and 197 for the Countess of Huntingdon's gift to the Queen in January 1580/81 of a jeweled pendant alluding to the Queen's affection for Alençon. See Worden for the idea that during the months of

the *Letter*'s circulation in the fall of 1579, Sidney withdrew himself from Court, staying at Leicester House, Baynard's Castle, and most often at his sister's home at Wilton for most of the following year.[80] The Queen's displeasure over Sidney's attempt to advise her, a public argument with the Earl of Oxford, and lack of funds to maintain himself at Court have all been suggested as reasons for Sidney's extended absence.[81] What is clear, particularly from two of Sidney's personal letters, is that the Queen was not offering him employment.[82] Her distrust of the Dudley family because of their interference with the succession a generation earlier had kept the Sidneys under a cloud of suspicion, in addition to the Queen's distrust generally of powerful aristocratic families and the connections among them.[83] Scholars also believe Sidney incurred

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1580 in which Sidney devoted the most time to writing *The Old Arcadia,* the danger of the match was "reduced" although not gone; the alarm it caused among Protestant subjects would be long remembered: Worden 7.

[80] Duncan-Jones, *Courtier Poet* 167.

[81] The long-held, traditional view is that the *Letter* cooled the Queen's favor toward Sidney, resulting in his exile from court, and that the months in the country at his sister's home at Wilton afforded him the opportunity to write the first *Arcadia.* For an example of this view, see Helen Hackett: "Most of the work was probably composed while Sidney was staying at the Countess's seat of Wilton, having incurred disfavour at court by criticizing the Queen's proposed marriage to the Duke of Anjou; he was therefore himself enjoying a pastoral retreat from public duties" in *Women and Romance Fiction in the English Renaissance* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2000) 101. For the details of Sidney's quarrel with the Earl of Oxford, see Duncan-Jones, *Courtier Poet* 164–67. The quarrel began with heated words on a tennis court, but Oxford was a dangerous enemy at Court, and was bitterly opposed to Sidney's view of the French marriage. Alan Stewart cites the importance to Sidney of his family heritage, which received insult in the altercation with Oxford and subsequent upbraiding from the Queen. See Alan Stewart, *Philip Sidney: A Double Life* (New York: St. Martin's P, 2000) 34; also Duncan-Jones, *Courtier Poet* 5. For the view that Sidney was not out of favor but could not afford to remain at Court, see Stewart 225. In a letter to Leicester, Sidney complains that "so long as she sees a silk doublet upon me her Highness will think me in good case"; he concludes that his best option is "either constantly to wait, or constantly to hold the course of my poverty, for coming and going neither breeds desert, nor witnesseth necessity," Letter from Philip Sidney to Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester, August 2, 1580, quoted in Stewart 225. See Chapter 1 for the argument that Sidney was obeying either Leicester or Walsingham in writing the *Letter,* and for Hubert Languet's warning to Sidney about the danger to himself of speaking so forthrightly, even if required to do so by others.

[82] For the letters to his younger brother Robert and his friend Edward Denny, see Duncan-Jones, *Courtier Poet* 170. Duncan-Jones writes that Sidney grew closer to family and friends as his position at court deteriorated.

[83] Duncan-Jones. *Courtier Poet* 5 and 89.

the Queen's distrust after his continental tour because of his popularity with foreign princes.[84] Sidney found the enforced political idleness difficult, and fashioned for himself the poetical and political identity of the outsider shepherd, melancholy and longing.[85] He found consolation in the literary interests and pursuits he shared with his sister, Mary, and in the community of poets she assembled at her estate at Wilton, seat of the Earls of Pembroke.[86] In the winter of 1580, both she and Sidney produced new creations, she the third Earl, and Sidney his pastoral romance, *Arcadia.*[87]

In this chapter, I consider Sidney's performance of counsel in *The Old Arcadia.* While entertaining and youthful, a tale of beautiful princesses and the princes who rescue them, the *Arcadia* has a serious moral purpose. I explore the work in the context of the genre of mirrors for princes, and I argue that the key to understanding the work as a mirror for princes text lies in understanding the character of Gynecia. It is through her character, I propose, that Sidney most

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[84] Matthew Woodcock, *Sir Philip Sidney and the Sidney Circle* (Horndon, England: Northcote House, 2010) 18. For the view that the Queen was suspicious of Sidney's meetings with the Jesuit Edmund Campion during his time abroad, see Duncan-Jones, *Courtier Poet* 125–35.

[85] For the shepherd role Sidney fashioned for himself at court to symbolize his alienation, see Duncan-Jones, *Courtier Poet*: "In the play-world of Wilton, love melancholy may have functioned partly as an analogue to political dissatisfaction and alienation," 140. If the Queen was prepared to ignore his talents and advice, he could "play the outsider role for all it was worth, physically absenting himself from Court whenever possible and presenting himself … as an unhappy and lonely figure," 140. There is evidence that Sidney saw himself in the role from early in his life. In a Christmas entertainment he composed for festivities at Wilton, *A Dialogue betweene two shepherds, uttered in a pastorall shew at Wilton,* the two parts are thought to have been played by Sidney and his 14-year-old brother, Robert: see Duncan-Jones, *Courtier Poet* 139. For the work's authenticity, see William A. Ringler, ed. *The Poems of Sir Philip Sidney* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1971) 517. See Stewart 225–26 for the likely collaboration with his sister Mary in this work; he argues that the shepherd role and shared literary pursuits brought Sidney closer to his sister. For love poetry of this time as an expression of political frustration and alienation, see also Arthur F. Marotti, *John Donne: Coterie Poet* (Madison: U of Wisconsin P, 1986).

[86] John Buxton believes that as early as 1577 Mary had turned Wilton into a gathering place for poets and that Sidney and his friends and fellow poets Fulke Greville and Edward Dyer were already at that early date sharing visits at Wilton and discussing the critical debates of English poetry; many of Sidney's poems and theirs were written at Wilton. See John Buxton, *Sir Philip Sidney and the English Renaissance* (New York: St. Martin's P, 1954) 98 and 107.

[87] It is possible that Sidney began work on *The Old Arcadia* as early as 1577, but it is generally believed that most of the work was written primarily at Wilton during the year 1580: see Nancy Lindheim, *The Structures of Sidney's Arcadia* (Toronto: U of Toronto P, 1982) 3.

clearly comments on the conventional mirror for princes, enlarges the genre's parameters and adds to its complexity. Before turning to the text, I will briefly consider the nature of *The Old Arcadia* and explain my reasons for choosing Gynecia as a focus for the discussion.

The work's professed audience is Sidney's sister Mary, the Countess of Pembroke, to whom it is dedicated, and her coterie of friends, addressed by the story's narrator as "fair ladies." The dedication indicates that the book was to be read by Sidney's sister alone, and that she was to guard it from public or hostile eyes: "Now it is done only for you, only to you" and "his chief safety shall be the not walking abroad; and his chief protection the bearing the livery of your name" (3).[88] However, Mary is allowed to share it with chosen friends, "such friends who will weigh errors in the balance of goodwill" (3). We can of course interpret the wish for benevolent and sympathetic readers as a modesty topos. Helen Hackett sees the dedication as a means of directing the reader in how to read: "We must read in a way which is femininely tolerant, sisterly and intimately complicit in the creation of a private world of imagination and pleasure."[89]

Its romance elements might appropriately place the work in a female world, to be concerned with and enjoyed in the private realm, preoccupied with love and removed from court and political concerns.[90] A number of romance elements appear, including an enigmatic prophecy, unattainable princesses, threats from wild beasts and a fire-breathing dragon (in the form of a rebellious mob); brave princes to supply rescue, love and liaisons, a magic potion, and a happy ending. Yet Sidney's letter to his brother Robert, promising him a copy, indicates a male

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[88] Page numbers refer to Sir Philip Sidney, *The Old Arcadia* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1999).

[89] Hackett 102.

[90] See Stewart 229 for one reading of the book "as a romance firmly in women's space, away from the Court." Yet see Hackett 102–05 for the male use of the construction and expectation of a female romance readership, and specifically for *The Old Arcadia* as a romance. For the implications of gendered readings in *The Old Arcadia,* see Mary Ellen Lamb, *Gender and Authorship in the Sidney Circle* (Madison: U of Wisconsin P, 1990) 72–89.

readership as well.[91] And a private readership of the *Arcadia* is partly contradicted by what we know of its manuscript circulation.

Blair Worden has called the audience of "fair ladies" a "decoy" for the work's deeply political import.[92] Copies of the manuscript proliferated in number and yet simultaneously appear to have been closely guarded. Woudhuysen reports: "At least seven and perhaps as many as fourteen copies were made from Sidney's working version of *The Old Arcadia*" possibly in the span of twenty months (spring of 1581 and end of 1582).[93] From this, Woudhuysen concludes that Sidney wished for a wide manuscript publication of the work. Sidney "may have let only his family and friends have copies of it, but he could not stop them from letting others have access to copies from which four extant manuscripts were made."[94]

That the work was well known among the Sidney circle is suggested by Fulke Greville's decision to print the newer, revised version upon Sidney's death, because the first version was so "common."[95] Scholars often point to Greville's description of "common" to conclude that the manuscript was in wide circulation; yet, according to Woudhuysen, references to the *Arcadia* before 1590, when the newer version was published, predominantly show familiarity with its title but not its contents: accounts that reveal knowledge of its contents are few.[96] Woudhuysen deduces that many people were shown the manuscript, but few were invited to read it and, still

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[91] Hackett 102. For the letter to Robert, see Woudhuysen 305.

[92] Worden 20.

[93] Woudhuysen 309–10.

[94] Woudhuysen 310.

[95] Woudhuysen 300; Hackett 102. By choosing to print the revised version, Greville unwittingly deprived readers for centuries from knowledge of *The Old Arcadia,* as the manuscript was lost; it was rediscovered in 1906, and republished for the first time since the Renaissance two decades later in 1926: see Woudhuysen 297.

[96] Woudhuysen 302.

fewer were given a copy.[97] On the one hand, "as many as eighteen manuscript copies of *The Old Arcadia* may have existed at one time"—eighteen being a large number for a work of this length;[98] the evidence of manuscripts that survive "shows that the copying of Sidney's romance during his lifetime was permitted on a generous scale."[99] On the other hand, in Woudhuysen's words, two eyewitnesses, Edmund Molyneux, secretary to Sidney's father, Sir Henry, and John Harington (translator of *Orlando Furioso*) "specifically say it was Sidney's friends, rather than his social and political superiors (the Queen, or perhaps the Earl of Leicester, or Sir Francis Walsingham), who saw the work."[100] Molyneux wrote in 1586:

> Few works of like subject hath been either of some more earnestly sought, choicely kept, nor placed in a better place, and amongst better jewels than that [manuscript] was; so that a special dear friend he should be that could have a sight, but much more dear that could once obtain a copy of it.[101]

Sidney had "authorized his sister to disclose it to sympathetic friends."[102] There is thus an unmistakable difference between this work and the *Letter to Queen Elizabeth,* which was designed to be circulated openly at Court.[103] Alan Stewart speculates that simply by its association with Wilton, the manuscript would have "called attention to *The Arcadia*'s political potency." As a known gathering place for the Pembrokes, Dudleys and Sidneys, the Wiltshire house "provoked considerable mistrust at court" and Queen Elizabeth had made her displeasure

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[97] Woudhuysen 301.

[98] Woudhuysen 310.

[99] Woudhuysen 300.

[100] Woudhuysen 301.

[101] Edmund Molyneux in *Holinshed Chronicles* 3: 1554, qtd. in Stewart 229.

[102] Woudhuysen 301.

[103] See Peter Beal's discussion of the manuscript history in "Philip Sidney's *Letter to Queen Elizabeth* and that False Knave" Alexander Dicsone," *English Manuscript Studies, 1100–1700* 11 (2002): 1–51.

known when Sir Henry visited Wilton.[104] The inclusion of excerpts of *The Arcadia* in Abraham Fraunce's *Arcadian Rhetorike* multiplied the readership of Sidney's material; but by the time Fraunce's anthology was published in 1588, royal displeasure could not have affected Sidney: he had died of his wounds from battle two years before.

The Old Arcadia's political significance—and subversive quality—would have been recognizable to its readers. Since classical times, the stories of shepherds piping to their flocks had been known to serve as cover for deeply political matters. In a famous passage in his *Arte of English Poesie,* nearly two decades later, George Puttenham would refer to this ancient tradition:

> under the veil of homely persons and in rude speeches to insinuate and glance at greater matters, and such as perchance had not been safe to have been disclosed in any other sort; which may be perceived by the Eclogues of Vergil, in which are treated by figure matters of great importance.[105]

Sidney blends multiple genres, interests, perspectives, and traditions into one unified and entertaining whole: "The clash of different generic expectations is fundamental to *The Old Arcadia*'s construction and narrative method, Woodcock observes."[106] Sidney's deep investment in political and religious policy unfolds in a romance genre that grants love and desire a central focus.[107] Worden notes the work's participation in "the literary tradition of advice to princes,"[108]

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[104] Stewart 229. The Queen was displeased even when Sir Henry visited Wilton for his grandson's christening.

[105] George Puttenham, *The Arte of English Poesie,* ed. Frank Whigham and Wayne A Rebhorne (Ithaca, NY: Cornell UP, 2007) 128. In any edition of Puttenham's work, this passage appears in Book I, Chapter 18.

[106] Woodcock 20. For the history of pastoral romance, see the "Introduction" by Judith Kennedy in *A Critical Edition of Yong's Translation of George of Montemayor's* Diana *and Gil Polo's* Enamoured Diana (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1968) xv-lxviii. For Sidney's use of sources, see Katherine Duncan-Jones's edition of *The Old Arcadia* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1999) x–xiii.

[107] See Stewart 227 for the conclusion that Sidney was at times beleaguered by his political mentor, the humanist Hubert Languet, and consequently wished to write a work that would not be available to Languet's critical eye. See Steuart A. Pears, *The Correspondence of Sir Philip Sidney and Hubert Languet* (London: William Pickering, 1845) 5, 73, and 95 (among many examples) for letters from Languet that urged Sidney to act more decisively, further his learning, and write more often.

and analyzes *The Old Arcadia*'s urgent political and religious message and its use of militant Protestant discourse to signal its aims, at a time when alliance with France appeared imminent and the Protestant cause under threat.[109] Alan Stewart believes that use of the romance genre in English showed that Sidney, the continental traveler and internationally respected English Protestant prince,[110] was speaking to a primarily English audience.[111] Kathryn DeZur sees the work as advice to English aristocratic ladies whose responsibility to guard the household affected the welfare of the realm.[112] This chapter treats *The Old Arcadia* as an example of the mirror for princes genre and utilizes markers and concerns of the genre as a lens through which to understand this performance of Sidney in the role of counselor. Before I turn to the text, it will be useful to review characteristics of the genre.

To understand the mirror for princes genre (also known as the *speculum* and *furstenspeigel* traditions) and its history, I rely on a recent discussion by Cristian Bratu.[113] Bratu defines the genre broadly as "didactic writings intended to serve the moral, religious, and political education of future kings and princes," and characterizes them as "practical textbooks which instructed rulers on how to conduct their life and govern their country, or literary texts

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[108] Worden 7.

[109] Worden sees *The Old Arcadia* as a cautionary tale to Queen Elizabeth about the dangers of Catholicism at home and abroad; see Worden 176–83.

[110] "Sidney [in European courts] was accepted by experienced statesmen as the future leader of Protestant Europe," Buxton 34.

[111] Stewart 227.

[112] Kathryn DeZur, "Defending the Castle: The Political Problem of Rhetorical Seduction and Good Huswifery in Sidney's *Old Arcadia,*" *Studies in Philology* 98.1 (Winter, 2001) 93–113.

[113] Cristian Bratu, "Mirrors for Princes," *The Handbook of Medieval Studies: Concepts, Methods, Historical Developments and Current Trends in Medieval Studies* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2010) 1921–1949. Bratu traces the genre's history from classical times to the Renaissance in the Judeo-Christian and European traditions.

which presented the image of an ideal king worthy of imitation—hence the idea of the mirror."[114] There is some critical debate as to whether the genre should be further subdivided and whether the specula constitutes a unique subset of the genre: scholars William Berges and Michel Sennellart see the mirror texts as part of a greater and "transhistorical" tradition of "parenetics," from the Greek *parainesis* or "exhortation," which is "a type of discourse which prompts the reader to lead a virtuous life."[115] Quentin Skinner asserts that the mirror for princes text can be written from two potential perspectives, that of a ruler or of a counselor.[116] From the perspective of the ruler, the genre tended to present (among other topics) advice on the choice of counselors and on discerning flatterers from friends.[117] From the counselor's perspective, the work might be concerned with the competing demands of the active and contemplative lives, the responsibility

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[114] Bratu 1921. See also the "Introduction" in Christine de Pizan, *The Book of the Body Politic,* ed. Kate Langdon Forhan (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2007) xiii–xxiv. About the genre, Forhan writes: The substantive discussion of political ideas is organized around a narrative order—the transformation of the prince into an ideal king. In some works this is presented in part as a physical transformation, and the advice includes principles of nutrition, hygiene, and instruction in a variety of subjects. In others the transformation is metaphorical; the prince's moral and intellectual infancy is gradually exchanged for a mature wisdom and virtue …. All political mirrors emphasize the development of character, good judgment, and the classical virtues of courage, justice, temperance, and prudence, as well as the princely qualities of liberality, magnificence, generosity, and authority. The differences in mirrors stem from their authors' disagreements about the essential nature of kingship and the problems of ruling as well as the differences brought about by political culture and context," xvii–xviii. In addition to the cardinal virtues (justice, fortitude, temperance, and wisdom) and the "princely virtues" of "liberality, clemency and fidelity to one's word" in the Renaissance mirror for princes texts, Quentin Skinner observes the virtues of affability, placability, mercy, godliness, and the importance of seeking honour, in his *The Foundations of Modern Political Thought,* vol. 1 (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1992) 229–34.

[115] Bratu 1921; see his citations of Berges and Sellenart.

[116] Skinner 214–17.

[117] Skinner 216. The caution against flatterers dates back at least to the first-century Greek scholar, Plutarch, who wrote to advise a friend in government "Quo modo adulator ab amico internoscatur" or "How to tell a flatterer from a friend." See Plutarch's *Moralia,* vol. 1, trans. Frank Cole Babbitt (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1927) 263–395. Plutarch's essay on the flatterer was considered so important to rulers that in the first printing of the mirror for princes by Erasmus in 1516, Plutarch's essay appeared in the volume. See Erasmus, *The Education of a Christian Prince,* ed. Lisa Jardine (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1997) 8 n. 15. Erasmus 54 warns, "Nowhere do we read of a state oppressed by implacable tyranny without a flatterer playing a leading part." See John of Salisbury's warming about the many terms of praise bestowed by flatterers, including "mirror of the virtues": John of Salisbury, *Policraticus,* trans. Cary J. Nederman (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2007) 20. See Christine de Pizan 36–40 for advice on how to choose councilors and how to follow their advice. Machiavelli included a section on the topic in his twenty-third chapter, "How to Avoid Flatterers" in *The Prince* (New York: Norton, 1977) 64–65.

to choose an active life and to serve one's ruler, the concern about delivery of frank advice, and the consequences if the advice should fail.[118] In my view, both sets of concerns appear in *The Old Arcadia* through the figures of Basilius, Dametas, Philanax, and Musidorus.[119] Sidney's work also has affinities with the mirror for princes genre as applied to the expanded audiences of the courtier or gentleman, in such works as Baldesar Castiglione's *Courtier* (1528), its English expression, Sir Thomas Elyot's *The Governor* (1531), and Steeven Guazzo's *The Civile Conversation* (1574, translated into English in 1581 and 1586).

Above all, the mirror for princes genre was characteristically concerned with the virtues thought necessary for a prince to govern well, the educational process for the ideal king to attain those virtues, and, in contrast, the perilous vices, such as those that led to tyranny, that were to be avoided. In the medieval period, according to Arthur Ferguson, the good governance of a realm was understood to have as its source the prince's embrace of virtue; if political problems arose, the remedy lay in a truthful reporting of the problem and an exhortation to the prince to solve it

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[118] Skinner 217. The Renaissance "debate about counsel" undertook to examine the questions from the counselors' point of view. The "Dialogue of Counsel" in Sir Thomas More's *Utopia* famously confronts the question of how to advise a ruler who does not wish to take advice. The work advises an "indirect" approach just as Sir Thomas was in actual life pondering an acceptance of King Henry's offer of position at Court; Sir Thomas Starkey's *Dialogue Between Reginald Pole and Thomas Lupset,* ed. Kathleen Burton (London: Chatto and Windus, 1948) also participates in the debate and considers the needed qualifications for a prince's counselor, another frequent topic of this literature from the counselor's perspective. Other handbooks such as Sir Thomas Elyot's *The Governor* and Castiglione's *The Courtier* include advice for the counselor and a consideration of these questions, including the role of sincerity. See also John Guy. "The Rhetoric of Counsel in Early Modern England," in Dale Hoak, *Tudor Political Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1995). See Sir Thomas Elyot, *The Governor* (New York: Dutton, 1937). This edition of Elyot's book, first published in 1907, contains the excellent introduction by Foster Watson. See Baldesar Castiglione, *The Book of the Courtier,* George Bull, trans. (New York: Penguin, 1976); and Sir Thomas More, *Utopia,* George M. Logan and Robert M. Adams, eds. (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2002).

[119] See in *The Old Arcadia* Basilius's choice of the foolish shepherd Dametas as his favorite (28); Basilius's (tyrannical) refusal to heed the advice of his wise counselor, Philanax (5–9); the picture of Euarchus as the ideal ruler (9); the counsel scene between Musidorus and Pyrocles and debate about contemplative *vs.* active lives (12–24); and Musidorus's articulation at the trial of a central question in the debate from the counselor's perspective: "Shall persuasion to a prince grow treason against a prince?" and "Who will ever counsel his king if his counsel be judged by the event, and if he be not found wise shall therefore be thought wicked?" (348).

through a return to the path of virtue.[120] Current scholarship of the genre has recently opened a new avenue of inquiry: works that had once been read by scholars as sententious, general, and ponderous,[121] particularly those mirror texts that derived from the pseudo-Aristotelian *Secretum Secretorum*,[122] are now understood to be offering subtle and even subversive commentary and warning about contemporary political practices and policies.[123] Important for our analysis of *The Old Arcadia* is the development of a change in focus among some mirror texts: the supreme value placed upon virtue as the font of good governance shifted, centuries before Machiavelli, in favor of any qualities that permitted the maintenance of power, virtuous or not. Bratu, in agreement with Senellart (qtd. in Bratu) first locates this change in the medieval period; specifically, Bratu contends, in the twelfth century *Policraticus* of John of Salisbury. There appeared in that work "the relative insufficiency of virtue in political matters," and this inadequacy of virtue constituted "a fundamental shift from previous mirrors for princes, in which good morals were almost always synonymous with good government."[124] A century later appeared the *De regimine principum* of Giles of Rome in which "the main concern of a king is

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[120] Ferguson writes, for example, "the causes of disease in the political body [were] not in such tangible factors as might be susceptible to adjustment by governmental policy, but in the moral failure they saw at the bottom of all problems affecting the commonwealth" (68). A citizen's duty was "moral exhortation and a true reporting of grievances rather than discussion of policy" (69).

[121] Ferguson holds this view in *The Articulate Citizen*; Judith Ferster aptly summarizes it: mirrors for princes "are often seen as compilations of platitudes, clichés, and ancient stories so general, so distant in time and place, and so inert that they have no bearing on political concerns contemporary with their writers and translators" (2).

[122] Ferster 2

[123] See, for example, Ferster; Istvan P. Bejczy and Cary J. Nederman, *Princely Virtues in the Middle Ages, 1200–1500* (Turnhout, Belgium: Brepols, 2007); Nigel Mortimer, *John Lydgate's* Fall of Princes*: Narrative Tragedy in its Literary and Political Context* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2005); and Nicholas Perkins, *Hoccleve's* Regiment of Princes: *Counsel and Constraint* (Cambridge: Brewer, 2001).

[124] Bratu 1936.

now the *preservation* of power for an indefinite period of time."[125] *The Old Arcadia,* I contend, places this change in the value of virtue before its reader.

The presence of characteristic themes and topics argues for the *Arcadia*'s participation in the generic category of mirrors for princes. The typical themes are present: educating a prince, choosing a counselor, distinguishing between good advisor and flatterer, listening to counsel, the active as opposed to the contemplative life, advising a prince honestly (and managing the outcome of failed and unheeded counsel), the role of fortune and virtue, and a portrayal (or absence) of the virtues associated with governance. As with all literary works that participate in the tradition, royal figures are portrayed for our assessment of their virtuous or tyrannical conduct. It should not be surprising that Sidney's first long work of fiction should be a mirror for princes; he esteemed an ancient example of a prince's education, Xenophon's *Cyropaedia,* and gave it recurring attention in his *Defence of Poetry*.[126]

Other analyses of literary mirrors for princes have focused on their frequently submerged commentary on contemporary events, on the traits depicted of the ideal king, and of such practices as the unwise reliance upon a favorite.[127] I focus on the mirroring, pedagogical process invited by the genre: that is, its characteristic engagement of the reader and consequent instruction relevant to governance. I argue that through the mirror text genre's distinctive mode of engaging the reader, and its application in particular to the character of Gynecia, Sidney is

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[125] Bratu 1938.

[126] See Duncan-Jones, *Courtier Poet* 27 for Sidney's introduction to the *Cyropaedia* at Shrewsbury School and 263 for its influence on *The New Arcadia.* For Sidney's use of the *Cyropaedia* in his *Defence,* see James Tatum, *Xenophon's Imperial Fiction* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 1989) 6, 12–14 and 186; for Xenophon's popularity in the sixteenth century generally, see Tatum 6. For Sidney's uses of Cyrus in the *Defence,* see 24, 27, 33, 35, 37, 40, 47, and 54.

[127] See the works of Judith Ferster, Nigel Mortimer, and Nicholas Perkins. For literary representations of the "favorite," see Curtis Perry, *Literature and Favoritism in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2006). For reading a medieval romance for the education of the ideal ruler, see David Staines, "*Havelok the Dane*: A Thirteenth Century Handbook for Princes," *Speculum* 51.4 (Oct., 1976): 602–23.

exposing some of the limits and parameters of the genre in a post-Machiavellian world and expanding its conventions.

A pause to understand the nature of the engagement invited by the genre will help to inform my approach to *The Old Arcadia.* Bratu locates the origin of the connection between text and mirror in Seneca and cites the opening lines of the *De Clementia* as establishing the trope: "I have undertaken, Nero Caesar, to write on the subject of mercy, in order to serve in a way the purpose of a mirror, and thus reveal you to yourself."[128] I observe that in the course of acknowledging and praising the extent of Nero's power, Seneca touches on (and hints to his young pupil) how to read the text: "it is enjoyable to inspect and go through the good state of one's conscience."[129] In other words, the book's prescription or portrayal of a virtue or vice is designed to prompt a moment of self-scrutiny and a comparison. A literary example of this mirroring engagement with the reader appears in the *Mirror for Magistrates,* published during the reigns of Queens Mary and Elizabeth.[130] Often seen as a source book for Shakespeare, it was written as an English continuation of Lydgate's *Fall of Princes,* based on the *De casibus virorum illustrium* of Boccaccio. I use it to inform an analysis of *The Old Arcadia* because, according to Paul Budra, the *de casibus* tradition was a form of history writing that "combined the *Furstenspiegel* ('Mirror for Princes' or counsel book)" genre with the "exemplary mode."[131] In

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[128] Bratu 1923. Cicero had used the mirror image, but, in his conception, the prince, rather than the text, served as the mirror, as does Queen Elizabeth at the conclusion of Sidney's *Letter.* See the quotation from Cicero's *De Re Publica,* I, ii, 69, qtd. in Bratu 1922: "He [the prince] must never cease from cultivating and studying himself, that he may excite others to imitate him, and become, through the splendor of his talents and enterprises, a living mirror to his countrymen."

[129] Seneca, "De Clementia," in *Moral and Political Essays,* John W. Cooper and J. F. Procope, eds. (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1995) 128.

[130] Editions appeared in 1559, 1563, 1574, 1578, 1587, and 1610.

[131] Paul Budra, A Mirror for Magistrates *and the* de casibus *Tradition* (Toronto: Toronto UP, 2000) xiii.

the 1559 edition of the *Mirror for Magistrates,* in his dedication, "To the nobilitye and all other in office," William Baldwin explains the task of reading the mirror text:

> For *here as in a loking glas, you shall see (if any vice be in you)* howe the like hath bene punished in other heretofore, whereby admonished, I trust it will be a good occasion to move you to the soner amendment. This is the chiefest ende, whye it is set furth, which God graunt it may attayne. (italics mine)[132]

Upon reading a mirror for princes text, then, whether prescriptive advice or—more relevant for this analysis—a depiction of virtue or vice, one engages in an observation of correspondence.

In his study of mirror texts of the Middle Ages and the English Renaissance, *The Mutable Glass,* Herbert Grabes explains the reader's proper engagement with a mirror-title text: "to look into this mirror is to register the distance between oneself and the negative extreme (or one's proximity to it), thereby enabling one, even when beholding extreme virtue, to see one's true self and possibly to improve it."[133] Thus, the reader embarks upon a comparative process, finding in the text an image, and scrutinizing oneself in relation to it. Even a negative picture, such as the portrayal of vice, can serve as a mirror. The question of difference *vs.* similitude is the first of two questions I wish to address before turning to Sidney's text. Grabes has described a measurement of "distance" or "proximity" to the reflected image. To some degree, of course, our nearness to or distance from a reflection depends upon what is presented: a perfection or ideal, on the one hand, or its opposite, a vice or terrible outcome of fortune, such as we encounter in the *Mirror for Magistrates* or in a tyrant depicted on the stage.[134] I wish to extend the question to apply both to a reflection in a clear surface (an actual mirror) and to an object that we appropriate

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[132] William Baldwin, "To the nobilitye and all other in office," in *The Mirror for Magistrates*, ed. Lily B. Campbell (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1938) 50.

[133] Grabes 82.

[134] Thomas Sackville's tragedy, *Gorbuduc* (1561) is an example of depicted cruelty. Sidney singles it out for praise in his *Defence* 65.

for ourselves as a mirror. Rabun Taylor, a scholar on the mirror as a form of moral art in the ancient world, is emphatic about the importance of the moral mirror—one that is "metamorphic" for the viewer—as eliciting awareness of difference, not similitude; he writes that a moral mirror "turns upon the principle of difference, not sameness"; and that what is "magnetic" about a mirror image and what "draws the viewer's attention away from its referent, and toward itself" is the expectation of seeing difference, not similitude.[135] We encounter this question of similitude as opposed to difference in relation to reflections in Sidney's text.

Finally, there remains the effect of what Taylor calls the "metamorphic" aspect of the mirror[136]—that is, how the outcome of the comparison of reflection to self moves one to change or to improve. If Sidney is writing a fictional "mirror" text for us, then his prescription or hope for our use of it is an important element of his counsel, and of his performance of counsel. "The action of a mirror," Taylor writes, referring to Plato's *Phaedrus,* "does not end at the reflection. It is carried back to the viewer and changes him."[137] Baldwin, in the excerpt I quoted above, hopes that a vision of punishment may deter us from vice. Would not a recognition "as in a loking glas" of our own vice be in itself be a form of punishment? How does one recognize self in a presentation of vice? A vision of virtue, on the other hand, would ideally inspire emulation. In the *Defence of Poetry,* Sidney affirms that depictions of virtues move us to emulate them in our lives: "Who could see virtue would be wonderful ravished with love of her beauty"; and "as the image of each action stirreth and instructeth the mind, so the lofty image of such worthies most inflameth the mind with desire to be worthy, and informs with counsel how to be

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[135] Rabun Taylor, *The Moral Mirror of Roman Art* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2008) 198.

[136] Taylor 7.

[137] Taylor 7, referring to Plato's *Phaedrus* 255b-d.

worthy."[138] Poetry, which for Sidney includes prose, "ever sets virtue so out in her best colours, making Fortune her well-waiting handmaid, that one must needs be enamoured of her."[139] Desire to become more like a vision of virtue helps us to improve: by heeding a warning against a depicted vice or by desiring to emulate virtue, we benefit morally, and, if we are princes, we benefit politically.[140] As we read *The Old Arcadia* for depictions of virtues and vices, it is important to keep in mind the prescribed interaction with the text: the process whereby we measure ourselves in relation to the reflection and also how we are changed, how inspired or moved into new understanding and transformation. As modern readers, we can apply these questions imaginatively to Sidney's sixteenth-century audience: the circle of family and friends, and their friends, including men on the Privy Council and Sidney's future father-in-law Walsingham;[141] as well as the imagined audience Sidney posits in the *Defence*: all those readers universally whom he wished to "mov[e] to well-doing."[142] The means by which the pictures of virtues or vices in the text morally transform the reader is an important part of Sidney's use of the mirror text genre.

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[138] Sidney, *Defence* 47.

[139] Sidney, *Defence* 37.

[140] See Skinner 234–36 for the specific ways moral virtue was understood at this time to result in successful political life for both rulers and for the politic body as a whole. For rulers, the goal of attaining honor and fame could only be attained through exercising virtue: "the pursuit of virtue constitutes the sole pathway to honour" (234); and for political harmony generally, "the key to eliminating faction, overcoming corruption and establishing a well-ordered commonwealth lies in bringing about a triumph of the virtues" (236).

[141] Duncan-Jones, *Courtier Poet* 110. Sidney became engaged to Sir Francis Walsinghams's daughter, Frances, in March 1583.

[142] Sidney, *Defence* 38. As Blair Worden summarizes, Sidney "wants his fiction, as his *Defence* indicates, to improve the world" (*Sound of Virtue* 7). There is no evidence to suggest that Queen Elizabeth either saw or knew of Sidney's text. Woodcock asserts that *The Old Arcadia* "was never intended to influence Elizabeth herself" (35).

There remains for me to indicate my reasons for embarking upon a generic analysis by focusing on one character, Gynecia ("womanly"[143] or "goddesse of wemen"[144]) and subordinating other important characters, including four princes, in favor of attending to one duchess. In her study of the female characters in Sidney's works, Katherine Roberts writes that "many critics have noted Sidney's emphasis on Gynecia, though without commenting in any depth on Sidney's attitude toward her, or discussing its significance"[145] Two critics in particular, she observes, note the fully developed nature of Gynecia's character: Richard Lanham calls her "third-dimensional" and, in his comparison of the two versions of the work, R. W. Zandvoort determines her to be "almost fully developed in the original version"—that is, *The Old Arcadia*.[146] Gynecia's vitality in *The Old Arcadia* is not reflected in an abundance of scholarship about her. Donald Stump's *World Bibliography* of Sir Philip Sidney's works shows the degree to which scholars consider Gynecia's character primarily in the context of *The New Arcadia.*[147]

Gynecia presents something of a puzzle to scholars. To Nancy Lindheim, "Gynecia's power within the *Arcadia* is perhaps just that she is an anomaly."[148] About Gynecia's role in *The Old Arcadia,* Katherine Duncan-Jones concludes, "Gynecia, indeed, threatens to leap out of the

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[143] Robert Kimbrough, *Sir Philip Sidney: Selected Prose and Poetry* (Madison: U of Wisconsin P, 1983) 10.

[144] Plutarch, "Life of Julius Caesar," in *The Lives of the Noble Grecians and Romanes by Thomas North* (1579) SSS6, qtd. in Victor Skretkowicz, *European Erotic Romance: Philhellene Protestantism, Renaissance Translation and English Literary Politics* (Manchester: Manchester UP, 2010) 169.

[145] Katherine Roberts, *Fair Ladies: Sir Philip Sidney's Female Characters* (New York: Lang, 1993) 49.

[146] Katherine Roberts 49 cites Richard Lanham 260 and R. W. Zandvoort 89.

[147] Donald Stump, http://bibs.slu.edu/sidney, April 10, 2015. A notable exception is Kathryn DeZur 93–113. DeZur sees Gynecia as the representative of "the limitations of female reason" and places her within the economy of humanist rhetoric, particularly in relation to "seductive rhetoric," 103. Gynecia "reads the text of Pyrocles's body without proper regard for her station," thereby causing political upheaval in the realm; DeZur condemns Gynecia for her neglect of Basilius and failure to fulfill her marital duties. Because of my understanding of Gynecia as demonstrating a process of learning, my discussion diverges from DeZur's conclusion that Gynecia is "almost without critical reading skills."

[148] Lindheim 54.

story's frame: she is a disturbing figure for whom readers will feel a nagging anxiety even when the book is finished."[149] Katherine Roberts concedes that she has "not found any precedent in the romance tradition of the late Middle Ages or the early Renaissance" that would account for Gynecia.[150] She speculates that Sidney's "characterization of Gynecia may owe a great deal to his classical education."[151] Roberts observes that Gynecia differs from the strong female characters in ancient drama, such as in *The Medea*; neither does Gynecia's repentance and change link her to the women in scripture or saints' lives.[152] Her conclusion is that "Gynecia is unique."[153]

Northrop Frye and Clark Chalifour similarly attempt to locate Gynecia in the context of classical literature. In *Sir Philip Sidney: The Maker's Mind,* Dorothy Connell cites Frye's determination of Gynecia as a "blocking character," a type of comic figure whose function is to prevent a hero from attaining his beloved.[154] Gynecia does interpose herself between Pyrocles and his beloved, Philoclea. However, Gynecia's fate in *The Old Arcadia* diverges from the typical classical outcome, in which the blocking character is "exposed, defeated, and shown to be absurd."[155] In seeing *The Old Arcadia* as an example of Terentian comedy, Chalifour notes that Gynecia has traits in common with "the ranting Senecan heroine," yet, her "amorousness and

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[149] Duncan-Jones, *Courtier Poet* 186; she identifies Gynecia as the Senecan Phaedra, but notes that Gynecia is "less faulty."

[150] Roberts 49.

[151] Roberts 49.

[152] Roberts 49.

[153] Roberts 49.

[154] Northrop Frye, "The Argument of Comedy" in *Shakespeare: Modern Essays in Criticism,* ed. Leonard F. Dean (New York: Galaxy, 1961) and in his *Anatomy of Criticism: Four Essays* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 1957) 171, qtd. in Dorothy Connell, *Sir Philip Sidney: The Maker's Mind* (Oxford: Clarendon P, 1977) 31 n. 1.

[155] Connell 31 n. 1.

relative youthfulness set her apart from that stock figure."[156] He believes that Sidney's treatment of her may have "a didactic purpose," since, being a wife and a mother, Gynecia's succumbing to passion "is much more culpable than the other major characters who do so."[157]

I propose that much about Gynecia can be illuminated by understanding her within the generic context of the mirror for princes. At the same time, Gynecia's characterization serves to reveal Sidney's thought about the genre's limitations as well as possibilities for a new handling of its conventions.[158] Unlike the other characters who can confide in a friend or counselor, Gynecia is mostly alone. Basilius can confide in Philanax (although he does not heed his advice); the princesses can console one another in prison; and Pyrocles and Musidorus can offer to one another their counsel, their shared experiences, and even (for a brief period) an army.[159] Gynecia is the first of the characters to see herself and her vice. Her early self-scrutiny and interior life form a serious counterpoint to the comedic and entertaining adventures of the love-sick princes, the virtuous but suspected princesses, and the foolish, old duke, who, frightened to the point of hiding himself in the woods from an enigmatic prophecy, is soon singing and skipping at the sight of a lovely stranger princess who is really a man. Because Gynecia demonstrates so early and frequently a tendency to scrutinize herself and to seek reflections around her, I propose that

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[156] Clark Chalifour, "Sir Philip Sidney's *Old Arcadia* as Terentian Comedy," *Studies in English Literature, 1500–1900,* 16 (Winter, 1976): 62.

[157] Chalifour 62.

[158] For a concise history of theories of characterization, see Elizabeth Fowler, *Literary Character: The Human Figure in Early English Writing (*Ithaca, NY: Cornell UP, 2003) 3–4. See Fowler 2 for the definition of characters as "models of the person, familiar concepts of social being that attain currency through common use …. As conventional kinds of person, social persons are very much like literary genres, because they depend upon the recognition of convention." I focus on Gynecia's actions and rhetoric in relationship to generic conventions of the mirror text.

[159] For the friendship between Pyrocles and Musidorus, see Tom MacFaul, "Friendship in Sidney's *Arcadias," Studies in English Literature* 49 (Winter, 2009) 17–83. MacFaul describes the two princes as serving as mirrors to one another, in "a sweet reflection of the same joy, and (as in a clear mirror of sincere goodwill) see a lively picture of his own gladness," 21. This is the friendship that Gynecia lacks.

she becomes herself a potential reader of mirror texts within the story, and, thereby, a vehicle for Sidney's commentary, for our participation in an experience of reading, and for Sidney's performance of counsel.

I. Gynecia Introduced

My analysis of scenes which present Gynecia and Sidney's use of her to comment on and experiment with the conventions of the mirror for princes genre is generally chronological. By showing a few key moments in the sequential development of Gynecia's portrayal, I hope to demonstrate, and, for the purpose of argument, to replicate, through performative criticism, some of the unfolding of detail and ambiguity that engages and challenges the reader's judgment.[160] The scenes I discuss outline the trajectory of Gynecia's character through the story: a fall from virtue, a reclaiming of power and an apparent moral restoration, a subsequent fall, and redemption at the story's end. I argue that changes in Gynecia's portrayal teach us elements of good governance, not through prescription or even wholly by a mirror comparison, but by experience, as the gradual addition of new information reveals to us our own biases and assumptions when judging with incomplete or imperfect knowledge. *The Old Arcadia* as a mirror text confronts us with ourselves, but not through a static presentation of virtues to be emulated and vices to be avoided. We encounter ourselves through an experience of reading that invites us to observe ourselves in a process of moral judging and, by that means, to refine our capability.

Accordingly, I begin with Gynecia's introduction, a passage I see as serving from the outset as a generic marker for the mirror for princes tradition:

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[160] For Sidney, "judgment" is "a word usually synonymous with or related to the exercise of reason," Blair Worden 343, citing examples of Sidney's use of it in *The Old Arcadia.* By judgment I refer to the sixteenth-century meaning of "the critical faculty; discernment" (*OED* 8a). In evaluating depictions of virtues and vices in a mirror text, the use of discernment is moral.

> He married Gynecia, the daughter of the king of Cyprus; a lady worthy enough to have had her name in continual remembrance if her latter time had not blotted her well governed youth, although the wound fell more to her own conscience than to the knowledge of the world, fortune something supplying her want of virtue. (4)

Attentiveness to Gynecia's royal status and to her worthiness to be remembered for her virtue gestures toward the conventional, medieval mirror for princes, in which "Traditionally, *fama* was considered directly dependent on the prince's virtue."[161] In contrast to the introductions of other characters—Basilius appears as a "sufficient" ruler; the princesses are of marriageable age; and the princes are associated with virtues—Gynecia qualifies as a figure for a "fall of princes": a "blot" stains the years of her previously virtuous self-governance. The narrator's accounting, "the wound fell," signals a fall.[162] The fall is diversely called a "blot," a "wound," and a "want of virtue." Appearing alongside the "fall" is Fortune, another generic marker for the mirror for princes. These mirror texts include among their concerns the degree to which we are responsible: whether we cause our downfalls, or whether we live at the caprice of Lady Fortune.[163]

While Gynecia's introduction signals alignment with the mirror for princes genre, two variations suggest departures. First, the passage announces an uncharacteristic triangle of viewing or knowledge: the fall (or "wound") is known to her conscience, but not to the world. It is a private happening, but one which the reader sees. In contrast, in works such as the *Mirror for Magistrates,* fallen figures experience public ruin, often invasion or death, and return in mournful parade to offer morals against the vices that brought them low.[164] Second, Gynecia's

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[161] Bratu 1943.

[162] I use the term "fall" throughout the discussion as in *OED* n.1. I.1b: a "descent" from "moral elevation."

[163] See Nigel Mortimer, *John Lydgate's* Fall of Princes*: Narrative Tragedy in its Literary and Political Contexts* (Oxford: Clarendon, 2005) for the common fall of princes' theme of whether responsibility for reversals of circumstance resides in the blind Lady Fortune's dictates or with human agency and choice.

[164] For one example of moralizing to the reader, see "Robert Tresilian" in *Mirror for Magistrates* 80.

introduction suggests redemption or restoration. Although she falls in her "latter time," her image is sustained as virtuous through the intervention of fortune, which appears here not to punish, as in the conventional mirrors,[165] but to cover her trespass from the eyes of the world.

In this one introductory passage, then, we receive a character's entire arc of experience, one that differs from that of the conventional fallen prince. I find it significant that Gynecia is introduced with such foreshadowing: foreshadowing is associated with her character often, far more frequently than with any other figure. In my view, this foreshadowing keeps the question of destiny or choice continually before the reader, and thereby invites the ongoing question of whether Gynecia chooses her fate or falls prey to it.

Early in her portrayal, Gynecia lacks the prominence she will acquire. Her first display of agency is all the more visible to our moral judgment because she begins as a shadowy, background figure, more acted upon than acting, and seen primarily through the eyes of her husband, Basilius, as part of a collective family unit. Because one of the narrator's tendencies is to join with each character's point of view, accounts of Gynecia in the early part of the story are much aligned with Basilius's perspective. To Basilius, Gynecia is hardly an individual. It may seem so at first, as he consults the oracle "to inform himself whether the rest of his life should be continued in like tenor of happiness as thitherunto it had been, accompanied with the wellbeing of his wife and children, whereupon he had placed greatest part of his own felicity" (5). But this phrasing suggests a self-preoccupation that the story will bear out: the "wellbeing of his wife and children" is important for his own convenience and interest, but not theirs. Frightened by the

[165] See Frederick Kiefer, "Fortune and Providence in the 'Mirror for Magistrates,'" *Studies in Philology,* 74.2 (Apr., 1977) 146–64, for the separation of divine justice as a causative agent from Fortune; the writers of the *Mirror for Magistrates* keep these two forces divided and separate in their deployment in the stories. In either case, however, the outcome is grim, and not restorative. See Mortimer 266–73 for a discussion of the causative agents of the suffering in the *Mirror for Magistrates* stories.

oracle's enigmatic predictions, he has no compunction about an immediate uprooting of his family from their home in Mantinea (which ironically means "oracle town").[166] Basilius resolves at once "to retire himself with *his wife and daughters* into a solitary place" (5–6).[167] Alarmed by the fate foretold, "*he and his wife* would keep their younger jewel, Philoclea" (6). In comings and goings, into the lodge and to the eclogues, the duke proceeds each time "with *his wife and daughters*" (36). He sends Dametas to ask Cleophila to attend the entertainments "with *his wife and daughters*" (39). When Basilius offers sacrifices to Apollo, believing he has deciphered the oracle's enigmatic predictions, he "commanded *his wife and daughters* to assist him" (117). Even in an urgent counsel session to determine the fate of the royal family, Gynecia is excluded from anyone's consideration. In response to the plan to remove the court to the countryside, Philanax upbraids Basilius for depriving his daughters of their freedom, but he ignores Gynecia completely (7).

Even when she is expressly summoned, Gynecia first appears as a silent character, whose one, simple action is inadvertent. The newly arrived princess Pyrocles-Cleophila is so charming to the old duke that he commands Dametas to "bring forth *his wife and two daughters*" to persuade Cleophila to stay (33). But Gynecia remains silent throughout the scene. It is Philoclea's beauty that persuades the new guest to stay. Gynecia acts only "by chance" (34) to step forward and block Cleophila's view of Philoclea, enabling a general return to collective senses and a conclusion to the planning of Cleophila's visit.[168] Gynecia neither speaks nor commands agency, although we infer from Cleophila's "receiv[ing] the salutation of the duchess"

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[166] Eva Brann, *Feeling Our Feelings: What Philosophers Think and People Know* (Philadelphia: Dry, 2008) 13.

[167] In this and the next paragraph, the italics are mine.

[168] This moment calls to mind the above-mentioned description by Northrop Frye of Gynecia as the classical "blocking character," the stock character who stands between the lover and his beloved.

that Gynecia bows and extends courtesy (34). The narrator takes the occasion of the ladies' entrance to describe Gynecia, and again there is foreshadowing of her fall: Gynecia is "in grave matronlike attire, with a countenance and behaviour far unlike to *fall* into those inconveniences she afterwards tasted of" (33) (italics mine). It is important for understanding *The Old Arcadia* as a mirror text, and for seeing it as an invitation to the reader to engage in a specific way of reading, that the text is slowly providing a repertoire of vocabulary with which to describe Gynecia's fall. As will become clear, the reader is invited to judge Gynecia and to ponder the cause of her fall. With each new foreshadowing, the narrator provides a differently nuanced view. A "wound," for example, is inflicted and implies victimization: "a hurt caused by the laceration or separation of the body caused by a hard or sharp instrument," "an external injury" (*OED* 1 a and d); whereas "inconveniences" (quoted above) can similarly be an "injury" or "misfortune" (*OED* 3b) or a "moral or ethical unsuitableness"—an unseemly impropriety (*OED* 2).[169] The text creates a number of uncertainties about Gynecia, but does not leave us without interpretive, moral choices.

The form of Gynecia's fall becomes clearer when the narrator contemplates the book's ostensible audience of ladies for this scene. Cleophila's stay is arranged, and the duke is overjoyed; but the narrator wonders if the other royal ladies present, Gynecia and Pamela, haven't felt some envy at Philoclea's receiving such open admiration: "You ladies know best whether sometimes you feel impression of that passion [envy]; for my part, I would hardly think that the affection of a mother and the noble mind of Pamela could be overthrown with so base a thing as envy is—especially Pamela" (35). The "especially Pamela" serves as a conspiratorial

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[169] For a discussion of the "wound" of love, see Marion A. Wells, *The Secret Wound: Love Melancholy and Early Modern Romance* (Stanford: Stanford UP, 2007). For the wounds exposed by the spectacle of tragedy, see Sidney, *Defence* 45.

hint on the narrator's part that it will not be Pamela who feels the sting of envy. On the contrary, the narrator hints that Gynecia, not Pamela, will fall prey to envy of her own daughter for Cleophila's admiration. As good mirror readers, we peruse the royal figures for recognizable virtues and vices and perform the self-scrutiny that the genre invites. We seek to understand the moral status of the figure whose reflection we are invited to see. But here is a figure changing before us, a virtuous, matronly duchess, whose moral goodness is understood, yet who repeatedly appears as about to undergo a secret fall. Why would Gynecia, an older woman, a married mother, an embodiment of a long-standing virtue, envy a stranger's admiration of her daughter's beauty? The moral ambiguity around the figure we are meant to see and to use as a means of self-improvement constitutes one important departure from the genre's conventions. A second departure is the narrator's appeal to our experiential knowledge ("You ladies know best"). The potential sympathy and fellowship that this creates for a fallen prince—in a text that conventionally warns against their actions—is an alteration to the conventional parameters of the genre.

Gynecia's inadvertent action was to participate in a visual process: she stepped forward to block Cleophila's view of Philoclea. Throughout the text she is associated with vision. Accordingly, her first agency, and the means of her fall, is visual. The context is the opening of the evening's entertainments by the shepherds, an offering of song and dance to amuse and edify the royal party and pastoral community. Indicative of the unleashing of unaccustomed passions, a wild bear and lion appear from the woods. Once the danger recedes because Cleophila has struck the lion's head with her sword, the royal party gathers: "Gynecia came to them; whose look had all this while been upon the combat, *eyeing so fixedly* Cleophila's manner of fighting that no fear did prevail over her" (43) (italics mine). In her first autonomous action in the story,

“fixedly” to watch Cleophila, Gynecia falls prey to the power of stronger forces. The moment is important for two reasons if we understand this text to be operating as a mirror text. First, the text reveals a structural means of offering clues to assist us in the moral assessment of characters. Second, the narrator attempts to understand the degree of change in Gynecia by invoking the forces of love and fortune, thereby prompting a dialogue with the reader about Gynecia’s moral status.

Sidney’s mirror text offers clues to inform our judgment, and the means by which we read those clues involves the comparative process so indicative of the mirror text genre. Matthew Woodcock observes, “symmetry and parallelism are important structural devices in *The Old Arcadia.*”[170] The text is replete with mirrored moments, disparate scenes across the text that are linked by similar phrasing. Comparison of such scenes, in the comparative pedagogical mode associated with mirror texts, yields information relevant to the moral judging the text requires of its readers.

For example, in the chase scene following the appearance of the lion and bear, the three characters, one running after another, are each “carried away with the violence of an inward evil”: Philoclea with fear for her life, Cleophila with frustrated desire, and Gynecia “not so much with the love she bare to her best beloved daughter as with a new wonderful passionate love,” a love which “had possessed her heart of the goodly Cleophila” (43). We understand the change in Gynecia, then, as outside of her control—she is “carried away” with “violence” and “possessed.” The words come close to describing the carrying away of a woman for violent purposes, except that the force of the evil is “inward.” The wording links this moment in Gynecia’s experience to Basilius’s choice to leave Arcadia to consult the Delphic oracle, arguably the start of all the

[170] Woodcock 22.

misfortunes that befall this family and the realm. He did so, "*not so much stirred with the care for his country and children,* as with the vanity which possesseth many" (4–5) (italics mine). The two passages are linked by their similarity: "not so much [stirred] with the love (or care)" that familial ties should be eliciting, as with an equivalent *x*—an overpowering, all-consuming passion, whether it be curiosity or desire.

The scenes are thus related; but the difference between them (remembering Taylor's moral mirror of difference), yields potential instruction to help us assess Gynecia. Basilius in the equivalent moment was similarly "possessed" by passions, those which impelled him to consult the oracle—vanity, desire to see the future, curiosity (4–5). Yet, at this point in the scene, Basilius has already acted on that passion. He has already journeyed out of his realm to consult the oracle—a physical departure that foreshadows in miniature his abdication—more consumed with curiosity than care for his family. In contrast, at the mirrored moment, Gynecia has not yet acted, even though she, too, runs after her object of curiosity. She, too, is "possessed" and overcome by a powerful force, but she has not committed a consequent deed. There has been no adulterous action, no acting on her desire to know if Cleophila is a man, which has sparked her passionate love. Do we see her as less culpable than Basilius as a result?

The narrator's participation in assessing and explaining Gynecia also exposes our evaluation of her. Even without the vice of a resulting action, so high a degree of passion in Gynecia is still morally problematic. For a second time, the narrator presents Gynecia's desire for Cleophila to be opposed to her love of family, but now the passion has grown beyond a symmetrical conflict. Gynecia's "longing to enjoy" is so great that "it reduced her whole mind to an extreme and unfortunate slavery"; it could "in one moment overthrow the heart of a wise lady, so that neither honour long maintained, nor love of husband and children, could withstand it"

(43–44). In a royal figure, such a change has grave implications for social and political order. As readers of a conventional mirror we would censure Gynecia's lack of internal governance. Yet the narrator is unwilling to condemn her. On the contrary, he sees this change "pitifully, truly, considering her beauty and estate" (43). He appeals to our sympathy. Are we meant to condemn Gynecia, and then temper our judgment with clemency, a traditional virtue of good governance? Or are we genuinely to feel the pain of her downfall—to view the object of our moral discernment with compassion? The narrator's pronouncements engage us in an internal dialogue, by means of which our opinions and reasoning enter our awareness.

Similarly, the narrator's presentation of love and fortune as potentially causative agents prompts a reader's internal dialogue about Gynecia's moral status. Behind this generic marker of a concern to understand the cause of a fall or a reversal in circumstance lies an early hint of one of the innovations of this text as a mirror for princes: *The Old Arcadia* scrutinizes not only the categories, but also the nature, of virtue and vice, the traditional classifications that inform our moral conduct and the literary texts which instruct us about them. The narrator is not only concerned to know what causes Gynecia's fall; he wants to know what causes virtue to lose power—for virtue to lose "virtue," in its sense of force or energy (*OED* 6). Sidney's text is interrogating all of our assumptions about the moral framework within which the mirror for princes genre lives.

Marveling that human will and long-standing virtue could in so sudden and complete a manner ("in one moment") lose power, the narrator searches for explanations, first from love, then from fortune: "For so it seemed," he says, "that love had purposed to make in those solitary woods a perfect demonstration of his unresistable force" (44). According to this observation, Gynecia does not choose her fall; it arises from the power ("unresistable force") of love's action

upon her. Love's force seems to include the ability to make its own choices, to possess the agency to "purpose," which can mean to put forward or to intend (*OED* I and III 5a). In presenting a "demonstration," love creates a display of characters' feelings (*OED* 4a). We could also understand from "demonstration" that love creates the "perfect" example for instruction (*OED* 5a); evidence of its own power (*OED* 2); or a manifestation in order to make itself known (*OED* 3a). Thus, in the narrator's portrayal, love is an agent, potentially with the power to intend its actions. Love's formidable possession of passion and reason together forms for the reader one possible explanation for Gynecia's long-standing virtue to collapse.

As the chase and rescue scene unfolds, the narrator tries again to explain how so established a virtue could fail. Safely returned to the lodge, Cleophila's wounds are dressed, although her injuries are forgotten in the eagerness of all parties to kiss her and express their feelings. So great is the excitement of tending to Cleophila that Philoclea must remind her parents to inquire about their other daughter, whose similarly life-threatening plight has slipped their minds. This prompts the narrator to reflect: "indeed, fortune had framed a very stage-play of love among these few folks, making the old age of Basilius, the virtue of Gynecia, and the simplicity of Philoclea, all affected to one; but by a three-headed kind of passion" (49). So now it is fortune, not love, that "framed" the action among these figures, so that Gynecia's "virtue" is changed to "passion" (49). In a genre that presents virtues and vices for our perusal to be emulated and avoided, we are seeing a collapse of virtue caused by a power that cannot be controlled. To "frame" in the definitions of the time is to give shape to (*OED* II.) and also to "lead" and "direct a person, a person's life, thoughts, actions" (*OED* II. 5. a.). Fortune's control brooks no choosing and no moral participation. With the new and implacable powers of love and fortune now controlling virtue in the duchess, there arises the question: is there a virtuous way

for a lady to experience desire?[171] Given that this superior power appears to be capable of overpowering even a virtue of long standing, how can a royal lady reconcile desire with a continuing ability to govern? For the counselors surrounding a Queen who appeared to be subordinating public safety to private desire in a continual appearance of romance with the Duke of Alençon, this question had significance beyond its literary entertainment. Gynecia's jealous envy toward one daughter and forgetfulness of the other presage a collapse of familial roles, hierarchy, and social and political order.

As a mirror text genre that we read for criteria related to the maintenance of power, there is no ambiguity; to preserve power, a ruling figure cannot give way to the dictates of feeling. Worden discusses at length this text as a cautionary example of the political consequences for doing so.[172] But as a work in the mirror text tradition of presenting virtues and vices for emulation and avoidance, the text continually challenges and interrogates our judging processes. In just a few introductory scenes, Sidney has challenged the categories by which we form moral judgments and the nature of the virtues and vices that have traditionally informed us.

Finally, because of the manner in which Gynecia penetrates Cleophila's disguise, I view Gynecia herself as operating within the text as a potential reader of a mirror text. Gynecia sees mirrors everywhere, and she engages in the comparative process prescribed by writers such as Seneca, and Baldwin, who describe the reading that the genre invites. We, in turn, are invited to

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[171] Ty Buckman observes that of all the topics Sidney addresses in his *Letter* advising the Queen against marriage to Alençon, the one he cannot mention and does not address is desire. In this light, the extended exploration of desire in *The Old Arcadia* is intimately connected to the design of the *Letter,* and must of necessity be concealed from the Queen. See Ty Buckman, "The Perils of Marriage Counseling: John Stubbs, Philip Sidney, and the Virgin Queen," *Renaissance Papers* (1995): 124–41.

[172] Worden 172–83. In his analysis of *The Old Arcadia,* Worden emphasizes the Catholic threat to England and Elizabeth's unwillingness to see its danger. Sidney had tried to warn her of this threat in his *Letter.* See Worden 177: Walsingham saw the danger to England as "the "lenity" of "too merciful a princess." In Worden's view, the trial scene at the story's end provided precisely the grounds on which Mary Queen of Scots could be tried and condemned, if only Elizabeth would not yield so much to her heart in granting leniency to her cousin and fellow-Queen.

observe Gynecia's viewing, comparing and drawing instruction, and, as with all figures depicted in the mirror text genre, to compare the portrayal to ourselves.

I see one such example in Gynecia's manner of reading Pyrocles-Cleophila when she watches so "fixedly" his engagement with the lion. At their first meeting she suspected his disguise: "her heart gave her she [Cleophila] was a man" (43). Watching him in combat, she knows it for certain "because she measured the possibility of all women's hearts out of her own" (43). Sidney is inviting us to judge Gynecia's manner of judging, in addition to the conventional virtues and vices we are prepared to look for in a mirror for princes text. As a reader, Gynecia in this passage measures outwardly from herself in order to understand another. She succeeds in seeing difference—she maintains sufficient detachment to know Cleophila is different, and she is able to conclude "she" is a man; yet she does so first by a correspondence to herself: measuring "all women's hearts out of her own." Gynecia alone among all of the characters succeeds in penetrating Pyrocles's disguise. By doing so, she launches a question that resounds throughout the text and confronts us with our own answer: whether outcome can offer moral comment on our judgment of an action.[173]

Gynecia's measuring of others by looking to herself has its mirrored moment, too, and its concomitant opportunity for us to observe our own judging in process. The mirrored scene occurs so much later in the text, in Book IV, that when we encounter it, we are confronted with the conclusion we have reached here; its implications for our view of Gynecia affect almost the

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[173] That this question alludes to Machiavelli is clear, but I have held back from a direct comparison of Sidney to Machiavelli. As we saw in Bratu's analysis, some of the late medieval writers of mirrors for princes anticipated Machiavelli when they privileged the ends of power. I have thus preferred to focus on the questions arising from Sidney's text. Inquiry into Sidney's use of Machiavelli in the critical literature is directed primarily toward *The New Arcadia*: see Irving Ribner, "Sidney's *Arcadia* and the Machiavelli Legend," *Italica* 27 (Sept., 1950) 225–35. Ribner looks at the Machiavellis in *The New Arcadia:* Plexirtus, Clinias, Amphialus, and the kings of Phrygia and Pontus. In disagreement with Ribner, arguing for an anti-Machiavellian stance and also focused on *The New Arcadia* is William Drennan, "Sidney's Debt to Machiavelli: A New Look," *Journal of the Rocky Mountain Medieval and Renaissance Association* 7 (Jan., 1986): 83–96.

whole of the story. In Book IV, when Basilius is thought to be dead, Philanax speaks to the gathered noble gentlemen to propose inviting a Protector king from a nearby realm to preside over them until a political solution can be found and Basilius's murderer tried and punished. Philanax is interrupted by Timautus, a nobleman who accuses Philanax of engineering all of Arcadia's troubles for his own ambitious ends. The Timautus scene is linked to Gynecia's measuring of Cleophila through a similarly depicted manner of judging. Timautus judges Philanax by what is in himself: "measuring all men's march by his own pace" (279). In this example of measuring another by means of oneself, there is no ambiguity. Timautus is unequivocally a portrayal of vice, "tyrannically minded," and "a servant to unbridled desires" (279). The ultimate outcome is unambiguous as well: the crowd sets upon him and beats him. Injured and having lost one of his eyes, he must flee to Philanax for his life. Like Gynecia, he measures others by criteria within himself.

How did we judge Gynecia for discerning Cleophila's disguise by measuring from herself? Had we condemned her, as the narrator condemns Timautus for doing the same? Do we find a difference—Taylor's criteria for the moral mirror—that exonerates Gynecia? Perhaps Gynecia elicited more of our sympathy or leniency. If she did, we become aware of it at the end of Book IV, when we meet Timautus. Gynecia, we learn shortly, maintains enough of her virtue to see her vice, and it will torment her with guilt. Timautus presents a contrast to the very ability Gynecia retains: "virtue," the narrator explains, "whose image he [Timautus] had so quite defaced in his own soul that he had left himself no eyes to behold it" (279). I believe we are meant to compare these instances of formulating judgment by measuring others according to ourselves. In Timautus, it shows self-love and error and vice. If we judged Gynecia for the same action with less censure, the text prompts an inquiry into the reason. Gynecia discerns gender

while Timautus slanders. Does the difference reside in the moral nature of the character or rather the end to which the measuring is directed? Is sizing up others according to what we know within ourselves a signal of pride or self-love, or is it simply the natural consequence of our limited knowledge? Whatever causes us to see the judging processes of the two characters differently will enter our awareness. We will gain in self-knowledge about our use of reason. Sidney is counseling us by inviting us to participate in an experience, and thereby to acquire experiential knowledge.

II. Gynecia's Monologue

Measuring others according to ourselves and reading with undetected assumptions are central concerns in an encounter with a mirror text and in the moral transformation resulting from that encounter. In the first of Gynecia's monologues, Sidney refines his exploration of her manner of reading. As readers of Gynecia, we are confronted with moral ambiguity and a multiplicity of moral, interpretive choices. That we are now to be the object of our own judging, in addition to judging the characters in the story, is suggested, I believe, by Gynecia's clear role as a fellow reader, and by her direction of our focus to the experiential process.

Sidney's manipulation of the romance genre provides a key to understanding the generic manipulations of the mirrors for princes that we see in Gynecia's monologue. In her *English Romance in Time,* Helen Cooper observes the following about the convention of the desiring heroine's monologue:

> [The desiring heroine] sets eyes on the man she is to love and is smitten with desire for him, typically by the arrow of the God of Love piercing through her eye to her heart. She is overwhelmed by the strangeness and paradoxical nature of the feelings that ensue, and engages in a long monologue with herself, usually as she

> lies in her bed, while she tries to come to terms with what has happened to her. She then devises means to let the man know of her desire.[174]

This convention of the desiring woman's speaking in order to confront the changes caused by the igniting of desire is transformed in *The Old Arcadia* into tormented, strife-ridden expressions of despair. I see in this first monologue additional evidence that Sidney is inviting us to assess Gynecia as a fellow reader of a mirror text. In this scene, it is our assessment of her as a reader that partly informs our moral judgment of her.

Gynecia has now fallen, in the sense that a long-standing virtue has been overpowered by a passionate desire for an adulterous lover.[175] Jon Lawry sees Gynecia in this scene as "one in whom desire has overpowered the will, even though reason remains urgent. She cannot fool herself, as the princes had; she cannot command herself as Pamela will; and she thus becomes a grand … expression for the tension of knowledgeable reason and knowing passion."[176] I believe that this "knowing passion" is important for understanding Sidney's use of the mirror genre: here, early in her portrayal, Gynecia shows a capacity to see herself in the context with which we read characters in the traditional mirrors for princes, in relation to virtue or vice. The source of despair in Gynecia's monologue is the impossibility of attaining her desire, but, also, significantly, her judgment of herself. The degree of Gynecia's despair is evident from Sidney's alteration of the romance convention: this desiring heroine does not speak from her bed; she must physically

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[174] Helen Cooper, *The English Romance in Time: Transforming Motifs from Geoffrey of Monmouth to the Death of Shakespeare* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2004) 229–30.

[175] See Cooper 308 for her discussion of adultery in romance: the myths of adulterous love as the "*sine qua non* of courtly love" and as central to the romance genre are not true, and very hard to eradicate; the misconception is due to a misreading on the part of C. S. Lewis earlier in the 20th century regarding the importance and the range of dissemination of Andreas Capellanus's view that it was not possible to love one's husband or wife. Despite our contemporary understanding of romance as sanctioning adulterous love, it would not have been understood as so readily permissible by Renaissance readership.

[176] Jon S. Lawry, *Sidney's Two* Arcadias (Ithaca, NY: Cornell UP, 1972) 74.

escape it, manifesting her internal strife by "going up and down" with the "unquiet motions" that the "grieved and hopeless mind is wont to bring forth" (80). In this context, Gynecia sees her own vice: "There appeared unto the eyes of her judgment, the evils she was like to run into, with ugly infamy waiting upon them; she saw the terrors of her own conscience; she was witness of her long-exercised virtue, which made this vice the fuller of deformity" (80). More quickly than any other character in the work, Gynecia is able to detach enough from herself to see herself, to see the temptation that beckons, and the outcome if she succumbs to desire.

I am arguing that this capacity to view herself as a depiction of vice and to compare her current vice-ridden self with her former virtue—being "witness of her long-exercised virtue, which made this vice the fuller of deformity"—creates in Gynecia a potential model reader of a mirror text, a reader of herself, within the text of *The Old Arcadia*. In both of her earlier, autonomous actions in the story—the first being the scene just discussed, in which she looks to her own heart to discern the gender of Pyrocles-Cleophila—we find her performing the pedagogical process, comparison, at the heart of the mirror's method of instruction. That the means of formulating that comparison has moral valence is reinforced by this monologue scene. The narrator's comment is instructive: "no small part of her evils was that she was wise to see her evils" (80). I am not suggesting that the text advocates self-division, but rather that Gynecia's early apprehension of her state of mind, the outcome of self-division, makes it possible for us to observe her in this comparative process. We are invited to read a mirror text to understand the means by which we apprehend depictions of virtue and vice, and the implication of that apprehension for moral change.

Sidney creates a complexity to Gynecia's character that generates both the necessity and the opportunity for a more complex judging process on the part of the reader, one not created by

unambiguous or static depictions of vice in a mirror text. We are witness both to Gynecia's judgment of herself and the means by which she achieves that judgment, as a reader of herself. The narrator, as we saw, described Gynecia as witness of herself in relation to a former virtuous self. In her monologue, Gynecia appeals to the external objects and abstractions outside of herself as mirrors of her fall. I contend that, in addition to judging her morally, we are invited to assess Gynecia for her construction of a mirroring process; evaluating her as a reader becomes part of our moral assessment of her. As a model of a reader of a mirror text (herself), she demonstrates many forms of self-condemnation. It may be that she is a Narcissus figure; she may be imprisoned in introspection that will not allow any introduction of a changing or redeeming—or compassionate—view of her predicament and of herself. I see the ways in which we use a mirror to be as suggestive of moral status as the reflections we find in them. Renaissance readers would have understood the emblems of vanity and pride associated with the mirror.[177] We also witness the plight of someone left alone with the vision of the vice within, who (unlike other royal characters in Arcadia), has no counselor or friend in whom to confide and from whom to seek help.

We assess Gynecia, then, for her manner of appealing to external mirrors; at the same time, the opportunity offered by the text to observe her as a reader creates a social context for us as readers and judges of others and of ourselves. In my view, Sidney is arguing for a social or communal ingredient for the success of moral transformation, particularly when a reading can serve to reveal guilt. Lindheim argues that the basis of Gynecia's soliloquy is "the paradoxical inability here of knowledge to produce virtue."[178] I believe that in Sidney's Arcadian world, a

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[177] Grabes 58, 118, 131–32, 156–57.

[178] Lindheim 52.

social context is requisite for knowledge or vision to lead to moral change. The exploration of a social element becomes more pronounced for Gynecia as the text advances, particularly in a scene I will discuss later between Gynecia and Basilius. At this moment, we see Gynecia alone, tormented by an experience of passion as she turns to the natural and abstract entities around her for a reflection of herself and a means to express her despair. Whether the text judges her to be excessively engaged with her own reflection or, more sympathetically, to be seeking self-understanding in the tradition of the romance heroine mentioned above, arises here as a question for the reader.

Gynecia's despair about an unattainable desire and about herself for harboring desire meets with no redemption. Each potential source of redemption—sun, heavens, countryside, virtue, and reason—yields mirror images that confirm, to her, a fallen and unredeemable state. Her apostrophe to the sun, for example, shows moral self-condemnation. "O sun," she cries, "whose unspotted light directs the steps of mortal mankind, art thou not ashamed to impart the clearness of they presence to such an overthrown worm as I am?" (80). The term "overthrown" is associated with Gynecia throughout the text, both by the narrator and by herself; in the 1500s its meaning of "knocked or thrown to the ground" carried also the possible sense of "disordered" (*OED* B. 1. a). That Gynecia perceives this additional level of subtlety about her moral status and its consequences suggests that we can no longer understand her by using the easily discerned vice of the traditional mirror. As a "worm," Gynecia has been thrust as low to the ground as one can be; its sixteenth-century figurative meaning also indicates that she pronounces a moral sentence upon herself, one of contempt or scorn (*OED* II. 10. a).[179] I see it as significant that her

[179] As a "serpent" or "snake," (*OED* I.1), the worm's inevitable parallel with Eve and her associated deceitful vices are present, although at this stage in the text Pyrocles is more deserving of censure for deceit and temptation than is Gynecia. Nearly a century later, Milton uses the term for the serpent in Eden in his *Paradise Lost* (Book IX, 1068).

question is not "how could you let this happen, if you guide our steps"; instead, she questions her worthiness for the sun's light: "art thou not ashamed to impart the clearness of thy presence" to me? (80). She does not question this external object for its answer; she makes it complicit in her view of herself. Not even the sun god, Apollo, can redeem Gynecia's fall in her eyes; her experience of unlawful desire renders her undeserving even of light. This god of direction, truth and prophecy, poetry and healing, offers no compassion for human weakness in Gynecia's eyes.

As Gynecia reads her vice in an appropriated mirror and pronounces judgment upon herself, we assess her for her reading. For example, the trajectory of her question begins with "O sun" and ends with "I am." We are invited to judge Gynecia's reading for its moral valence: whether, for example, such a closed, circular motion which brings Gynecia back to herself could be indicative of a Narcissus-like gaze at the self. Perhaps we conclude instead that her imprisonment is a call for the transformative potential of a compassionate response to human vulnerability. I believe the text moves us increasingly in that direction.

Gynecia's look to the sun for confirmation of her view of herself, appropriating it as a mirror of her moral self-judgment, is revealing for her observation of difference: the sun's presence is "clear" and "unspotted"; she, by inference of her question, is spotted, stained with vice. In Gynecia's use of the three external objects in the monologue—sun, heavens, deserts—I find that she makes a progression of increasing similitude, dramatizing increasing identification. Rabun Taylor, we remember, had characterized the moral mirror as one that shows difference from the perused image, not sameness.[180] Renaissance understanding of uses of the mirror, which would have included images of the dangers of vanity and also of the dangers of distortion and

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[180] Taylor 198.

deceit,[181] alerts the reader to a range of interpretations of Gynecia's use of objects as her mirrors. Sidney offers a multiplicity of possibilities and invites the reader to choose among them.

Gynecia's question to the heavens confirms her role as a fellow mirror text reader. Her question creates a mirror that reveals difference, and it introduces two themes relevant to our exploration. Here her observation of contrast arguably serves more successfully a moral purpose—a view into a mirror to see oneself in a way that enables a potential improvement. She uses this particular mirror to confirm her view of a deserving past contrasted to a fallen present: "O you heavens, which continually keep the course allotted unto you, can none of your influences prevail so much upon the miserable Gynecia as to make her preserve a course so long embraced by her?" (80). The stars which are so steadfast in their circuits become for Gynecia, through contrast, an image of her changefulness, of a virtuous heart now astray. She laments that their power to keep their own course cannot influence her own capacity for constancy. In her appropriation of external objects to create a mirror, Gynecia's use of difference nevertheless reinforces and confirms her view of herself, as a morally fallen princess. As with her apostrophe to the sun, the trajectory of her question moves from "O you heavens" to Gynecia herself, only here in the third person, "her." Such a closed, circular system reinforces a view of Gynecia as a Narcissus, even within her self-condemnation.

Yet this step away from herself through use of the third person gestures toward a theme I see as part of Sidney's exploration of the mirror text genre and the moral reformation it invites: a questioning of the efficacy of the medicinal portrayal of vice as resulting in punishment and alienation. This theme appears in a submerged word play within Gynecia's question. Although not openly stated, the "virtue" of the heavenly bodies—that is, their "influence" (*OED* II. 9 b)—

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[181] Grabes 104.

cannot, in Gynecia's view, reach or affect her "virtue," her "conformity of life and conduct with the principles of morality" (*OED* I. 2 a). She laments that something that ought to be connected, the efficacy of the stars' influence over her, is broken, alien, separate. Virtue is broken from virtue. Images of brokenness and separation recur in Gynecia's experience and in her conception of her vice and its consequences. It will be a final irony that she who has no real fellowship or connection to anyone in the story will be condemned to death for having torn the social fabric.[182]

Alienation and separation are states of being that do not readily allow transformation or growth, and I believe Sidney is exploring in this work those conditions that most readily are conducive to such change. I will return to this argument more fully; for now, it is enough to note that we readers, invited to judge others and ourselves, are included in a fellowship created by the text: the narrator appeals to the reader frequently; the purported audience is a community of ladies; and Sidney has given us a companion in our moral judging of ourselves in the figure of Gynecia.

It is in keeping with Sidney's affirmation of the power of fiction to make many Cyruses from one Cyrus[183] that he should extend that interest to the mirror genre's means of achieving moral change. *The Old Arcadia* asks by what means we learn from vice when we recognize it within ourselves, as Gynecia does, if we are confronted only by our guilt and unworthiness. How are we to avoid becoming like the tyrant Alexander Pheraeus in the *Defence,* who wept to see a play about tyranny and changed nothing about himself?[184] I contend that *The Old Arcadia* explores this question by utilizing the generic framework of mirror texts, and does so partly

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[182] See Euarchus's sentence on her severance of the marriage bond: marriage "which not only by community of goods but community of children is to knit the minds in a most perfect union which whoso breaks dissolves all humanity … she had not only broken it but broken it with death" (331).

[183] Sidney, *Defence* 24.

[184] Sidney, *Defence* 45.

through the examination of and remedy for the alienation and separation experienced by Gynecia when confronted with recognition of vice. Through Gynecia, *The Old Arcadia* provides an extreme example of "howe the like [vice] bene punished in other heretofore."[185] In my view, Sidney's text interrogates the conclusion that punishment and separation from the community, and even alienation from oneself, form the best means of achieving moral change.

Not unrelated is Gynecia's understanding of virtue. The second theme to consider from this moment in Gynecia's monologue is her vision of the virtuous constancy from which she has diverged: such virtue is as predictable and as much in conformity with a pre-determined path as the planetary motions. It was the regularity and consistency of the paths of the heavenly bodies that showed by contrast her own changefulness in departing from her virtuous ways, "a course so long embraced by her" (80). Here and elsewhere, Gynecia regards virtue as a fixed and external entity, with which one is in alignment or from which one diverges in vice. I believe *The Old Arcadia* challenges the notion of virtue as static, as understood in the conventional mirror for princes. Accordingly, Philanax counsels Basilius against entrusting the heir to the throne with the herdman Dametas in these terms: "he cannot be good that knows not why he is good, but stands so far good as his fortune keeps him unassayed" (8). Virtue must be tested; therefore it is more elastic, internal, and organic than is yet understood by Gynecia. Most importantly for the refinement of our moral judging is that Philanax's counsel occurs early in the story and can serve to inform our reading of Gynecia. Such placement raises the question: whether a new divergence from the understood path of virtue is a genuine vice and moral fall; or whether we are viewing a good character at the precise moment of trial. To read with Philanax's counsel in mind offers the

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[185] William Baldwin, qtd. in *Mirror for Magistrates* 50.

possibility that Gynecia's portrayal illustrates the nature of the passage from virtue untried to virtue "assayed."

In Gynecia's final apostrophe to external objects, she continues the pattern of constructing a mirror in order to notice difference—difference, as Rabun Taylor had noted, distinguishing the mirror that operates in a moral capacity. Yet, again, Gynecia observes difference for the ultimate purpose of confirming her view of herself: "O deserts, deserts, how fit a guest am I for you, since my heart is fuller of wild ravenous beasts than ever you were!" (80). Even though her outcry works to protest a difference, a greater wildness within than without, its real function is to confirm her view of herself as filled with wildness of passions. This mirror works to show a similarity, even an excessive identification with an externalized image of herself: she is filled with what is wild; therefore she perceives and selects the wildness outside. An internal state creates an external; more accurately, she becomes trapped within a cycle of identification of her own making. Appropriating the external reality for its reflection of herself might ally her with a Narcissus figure in our judgment. At the same time, however, I believe it is possible to see her attempt to describe and define the passions that rage within her as a use of a reflection to articulate and thus define the changes caused by encountering a desired lover, more in accordance with the purpose of the romance monologue Helen Cooper describes. The multiplicity of possible interpretations of Gynecia in this monologue offers an effect distinct from the experience of reading a traditional mirror: the reader's judgment is kept open. The moment we arrive at one conclusion, we are challenged by another, creating the experience for a reader of suspending moral evaluation.

When Gynecia turns from appropriating external entities to address the abstract qualities of virtue and reason, she aligns herself again with the reader as a mirror text reader within the

text: “O virtue, how well I see thou wert never but a vain name and no essential thing, which hast thus left thy professed servant when she had most need of thy lovely presence!” (80). She could be addressing virtue as a part of herself from which she is now divided and separated. I believe she also envisions virtue as we would characterize the virtues in a conventional mirror, as the amalgamation of qualities that would, as Bratu defines, form “the nexus of moral goodness in traditional mirrors for princes.”[186] She serves as both a conventional reader, condemning herself for divergence from that “nexus of moral goodness” and as a challenge to the conventional reader by interrogating the nature of virtue itself. Her outcry could as well be directed to virtue as conceived by Machiavelli, who in revising virtue to virtu changed the traditional content of the mirror text genre. According to Bratu, Machiavelli’s virtu is “the capacity to form large and difficult purposes, and to act resourcefully and resolutely in pursuit of them. Virtu in this (heroic) sense, is imagination and resilience as well as courage and intelligence.”[187] It is an irony that Pyrocles is so repeatedly associated with the “virtues” in the opening scenes[188] and in the digression of Erona’s story told by Histor in the First Eclogues[189] and yet should become such an exemplar throughout the book of morally questionable virtu, exhibiting so much resourcefulness, imagination and intelligence in his deceitful plans to satisfy his desire for a girl in a picture.

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[186] Bratu 1945.

[187] John Plamenatz, “In Search of Machiavellian Virtu,” *The Political Calculus: Essays on Machiavelli’s Philosophy* (1972) 157–78, qtd. in Bratu 1945.

[188] The princes’ introduction in Book I continually emphasizes their “virtues.” They are “like in virtues” (9) and, between them, the “sweet emulation being an excellent nurse of the good parts in these *two princes, two princes indeed* born to the exercise of virtue (italics mine)” (9–10). The repetition and use of “indeed” suggest that these virtuous princes may not be so virtuous after all.

[189] For Erona’s story, see the First Eclogues 60–64. The princes postpone Erona’s rescue in favor of their own amorous quests: “Great was the compassion Cleophila and Dorus conceived of the queen Erona’s danger—which was the first enterprise they had ever entered into; and therefore (besides their noble humanity) they were loath their own worthy work should be spoiled. Therefore, considering they had almost a year of time to succour her, they resolved as soon as this their present action (which had taken full possession of all their desires) were brought to any good point they would forthwith take in hand that journey,” 64.

Similar to her view of the planets, Gynecia sees virtue here as a static and external entity, a "conformity of life and conduct with the principles of morality" (*OED* I. 2a). To understand virtue as a more organic, changing, and interior entity is a project of the work.

When Gynecia addresses reason in her final apostrophe, she most clearly registers awareness of the inability of knowledge to produce virtue, which we noted earlier in the work of Nancy Lindheim (52): "O imperfect proportion of reason, which can too much foresee, and so little prevent" (80). If one theme of the later mirrors for princes is the preservation of power, Gynecia's experience is forcing her to revise her understanding of agency. Reason is not the guide it promised to be. Its proportion is "imperfect" because it cannot subdue the forces of passion; it can foresee the outcomes of temptation to desire, but it cannot prevent the fall. Gynecia is confronting her first challenge to the props that have upheld her virtuous life, and when the narrator introduces her view of herself and the temptations that threaten her long-held virtue, they are "evils," "terrors," "dangers," and "mortal wound" (80). The "wound" of her moral fall (4) becomes the "wound" of her death. If reason alone cannot create virtue, then moral restoration must lie elsewhere.

Having confronted the change in herself, Gynecia becomes extreme in her despair. Her appropriation of self-constructed mirrors serves to confirm her experience of a shattering of her own former self-image, much as Sidney had done with the Queen's reflection in his *Letter to Queen Elizabeth.* The difference here is that no reconstitution is yet in evidence for Gynecia, and there is no counselor figure to offer her hope or help. In a lament that mixes the wish for her desire and the grief at her fall, she mourns, "if there were but one hope for all my pains, or but one excuse for all my faultiness" (80). This lament captures the simultaneous grief for a virtue

lost and for the impossibility of accomplishing the deed that causes its loss—a self-imprisoning, unending wish, which potentially unites her with a Narcissus figure again.

Gynecia's subsequent lapse into hyperbolic language confronts us with the question of whether we judge her to display vanity and prideful self-love in deriving comfort from the extremity of a singular pain. Or perhaps she shows a defiance that reveals a possible means of regaining the power to combat despair and reconstitute herself. There are no facile moral conclusions about Gynecia. By claiming the status of a singular extremity, she begins to reassert herself against the forces that seem to be reducing her: "wretch that I am, my torment is beyond all succour" (80). Instead of feeling united with the rest of human kind in a universal experience, she claims for herself the status of a singular suffering.[190] We may be further encouraged to see her as a Narcissus figure through the pride behind an extremity of despair:

> For nothing else did my husband take this strange resolution to live so solitary, for nothing else have the winds delivered this strange guest to my country, for nothing else have the destinies reserved my life to this time, but that only I, most wretched I, should become a plague to myself, and a shame to womankind. (81)

Gynecia reasserts herself through a glorying in misery and a co-opting of universal forces united in one cause alone, her suffering.

A mirroring scene for this part of Gynecia's speech appears in Pyrocles's outcry to Musidorus in their opening counsel scene: "such a one am I … in such extremity as no man can feel by myself, nor no man believe; since no man ever could taste the hundredth part of that which lies in the inwardmost part of my soul" (16). These passages show that the fall into passion is—or might be—a narcissistic business. The *Arcadia*'s readers would have understood the warning against the blindness of self-love caused by submission to the dictates of the heart.

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[190] Gynecia's claim of a singular status allies her with Queen Elizabeth. Singularity would have been recognizable to the readership of Sidney's *Letter to Queen Elizabeth* as his characteristic description of the Queen.

At the same time, though, Gynecia re-creates her shattered self-image. Through defiance, Gynecia garners power from powerlessness. Acknowledging the forces that have brought her to this state and asserting that their purpose is to make her a "plague" (Lat. *plaga,* wound) to herself and a shame to all womankind constitute a defiance that bestows power. In this view, she is not victim to her husband. His taking her away from her court empowers her as destructive agent. The strange visitor whose attraction has overthrown her virtue arrived solely with that purpose in mind. She, like Basilius who sees the oracle as a response to his wishes,[191] responds to the magnetism of desire by constructing a universe and forces within it with herself as the center. Her defiance as a power-generating quality confronts the reader with a task that enlarges upon the traditional mirror text: to evaluate the source of power, the moral implications of that power, and whether those implications should matter. And if our moral judgment of Gynecia tends to shift in response to her changes, applauding power from self-reassertion where once we censured vanity, it may be that we are being educated in the process by which virtue undergoes the transformative process whereby its foundation becomes stronger and "assayed."

III. Gynecia and Cleophila: Mirrored Princes

If Gynecia's monologue invited moral judgment for her use of the mirror to confirm a view of herself, an auditory reflection in her first dialogue scene with Cleophila offers additional evidence for the Narcissus-like quality of desire in Gynecia's experience. The scene is both a source of pedagogical mirrors within *The Old Arcadia* text and a cautionary tale about the dangers of over-identification with the mirrored image. There are two (mirroring) scenes in *The*

[191] See the end of Book II, 117. Basilius misinterprets the oracle: "Thus the fawning humour of false hope made him take everything to his own best."

Old Arcadia in which Gynecia and Cleophila overhear one another's lament for a beloved: at the beginning of Book II, Gynecia overhears a voice in the woods, and discovers the sighs and singing of Cleophila (81–83). In Book III, Cleophila overhears sobbing and singing from within the cave and discovers the voice to be Gynecia (158–62). Each character feels compelled to pursue the voice of the unidentified other.[192] In this mirror for princes, one of the dangerous effects of desire is a preoccupation with the self, evident in both Pyrocles-Cleophila and Gynecia. At the same time, it is not straightforward to censure Gynecia for the vice of vanity or self-love. By confronting us with questions not so easily resolved, the text requires us not only to reason but to observe ourselves in the process of reasoning.

Gynecia ends her monologue by tearing her hair, at which point she hears a lamenting voice not far away, "an extremely doleful voice, so suppressed with a kind of whispering note that she could not conceive the words distinctly" (81). Like the Narcissus compelled by the power of his reflection, Gynecia is attracted by the similarity to her suffering. She approaches "in hope to find some companion of her misery" (81). In a text in which the counsel of friendship is so important, and in which Sidney explores the social context of moral change, Gynecia's solitude and potential search for a companion has implications for our view of her plight. She alone among the royal figures is without friend or confidante, either to curb or to help her

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[192] See Cleophila's response to the mysterious voice which he discovers to be Gynecia's: "who is this so well acquainted with me that can make so lively a portraiture of my miseries?" (159). For reasons of space I have omitted this "cave scene" from the discussion. The scene marks Gynecia's transition from looking outside of herself for mirrors to becoming a mirror, "a glass of ruin's end" (158). The scene includes the verses on the rock penned by Gynecia and found by Cleophila, and the monologue that Cleophila overhears. The speech and lyrics serve as important articulations of Gynecia's imprisonment within unattainable desire; her lyric, "How is my sun, whose beams are shining bright," enacts the circular motion in which she is trapped. The hollowness of the cave sends Gynecia's voice back to her in echoes, duplicating in auditory form the circular motion of Narcissus's gaze, although with Gynecia's choice and agency in her entrapment open to question. The "cave scene" also marks her "fall" from her earlier appeal to the sun and heavens to an appeal to entities of the underworld. It marks a conscious articulation of her earlier dream of a living death and her first alignment of herself with the furies, indicative of her determined course of revenge. See *The Old Arcadia* 158–62. I discuss the complexity of her interior life, and the complexity this creates for our moral conclusions about her, in the next section, which treats her lyrics on the body of the lute.

understand her experience. Sitting as "softly" as she can, she is "desirous to understand" what she hears (81). The narrator casts her impulse in universal terms: "a lamentable tune is the sweetest music to a woeful mind" (81). Yet the moment reveals a Narcissus quality that could be open to moral censure. Her hope for a "companion of her misery" may be another example of the reflections of herself she seeks externally, an entrapment in self-love and self-contemplation to be observed as the outcome of passionate desire. Or perhaps her wish to know the words is a longing for the social world of sympathy and companionship. How to interpret Gynecia's "hope"—for a multiplication of herself or for the transformative power of fellowship—for language to emerge from inarticulate sound—is open to the reader.

The overheard song is an echo of Gynecia's interior life. So similarly does it express the entrapment in and futility of unattainable love that the lyrics create an auditory form of the Narcissus-like gaze. As the scene develops, that correlation increases and contributes to our moral conclusions. The strange voice sings consecutively to eyes, heart, and reason, articulating the conventional falling in love by means of the sight's conveyance of its impress to the heart. In a Petrarchan commonplace, the heart in turn is burned, because the sighs meant to cool the heat only increase its fire. Reason seeks the head, as it has lost the heart, but once in the head, the eyes play false. Since he finds all his striving has been in vain, vainly he yields his life to this "strange death" (81–82). The speaker's word play on "vain" is a suggestive counterpoint if it is serving as an answering reflection of Gynecia: "'in vain, mine eyes,' 'in vain, my heart,' 'Reason in vain,' and 'in vain I find were all my strife, /To this strange death I vainly yield my life'" (81–82). An endlessly thwarted pursuit of desire can show self-love and is, of course, futile (from Latin *vanus,* empty). The narrator establishes for all of the characters in the *Arcadia* a desire for another that consists of a heightened preoccupation with the self. This self-love, as Plutarch

writes in his moral essay, can give rise to dangerous political outcomes, including a misplaced trust in others and in ourselves, one of the central themes of mirror for princes texts.[193] If we are too much governed by self-love, we will be susceptible to the flattery of false counsel and unable to see ourselves as we truly are.[194]

The song that Gynecia hears serves as a mirror reflection of her pain, a commensurate state of mind. The speaking that she hears supplies an illustration of the "mirroring" structure of scenes—chronologically disparate scenes linked by identical words or phrases and, juxtaposed by their echoing sounds, yielding information to help us in moral judgment. The synesthetic coupling of disparate scenes based on echoes conjures Sidney's phrase from the *Defence,* "the sound of virtue."[195] The speaker, who turns out to be Cleophila, echoes the narrator in the chase scene in Book I: there, when Gynecia pursued Cleophila (who was running after Philoclea), the narrator described each of the figures as "carried away with the violence of an inward evil" (43). Now, Gynecia hears the stranger addressing his lute on the identical topic, the torment caused by the awakening to desire: "The evil is inward, my lute, the evil is inward" (82). Resemblance in phrasing registers a correspondence between the mysterious voice and Gynecia.

Gynecia's changing portrayal continually challenges us to adjust our judgment. We have seen Gynecia acting on impulse, given over to the dictates of desire—running after Cleophila, kissing the wounded Cleophila, exclaiming in grief, and seeking defiant comfort in extremity;

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[193] See Skinner 216: the writers of advice manuals and treatises for princes "focus[ed] on the importance of choosing good councilors and learning to distinguish between true and false friends."

[194] Plutarch, "How to tell a flatterer," 265 and 267: It is due to "self-love," Plutarch warns, "that everybody is himself his own foremost and greatest flatterer, and hence finds no difficulty in admitting the outsider to witness with him and to confirm his own conceits and desires." Furthermore, susceptibility to flattery works directly against the aim of self-knowledge because the flatterer "creat[es] in every man deception toward himself and ignorance both of himself and of the good and evil that concerns himself."

[195] *Defence* 34. In Sidney's use in the *Defence,* the "sound" is the poetry of the stories articulated by the "dumb beasts" of Aesop's fables (more edifying than philosophy).

now, approaching and listening to the unknown speaker, she acts with quietness and restraint, moving slowly through the trees so as not to reveal her presence (81). In the next moment, the mirroring of misfortune delivers her to impulsive action once again: she "could not refrain to show herself, thinking such griefs could serve fitly for nothing but her own fortune" (82). Her impulse upon hearing a lament is not to comfort or to assuage another's pain; rather, she is drawn to its replication of her internal strife. To "serve fitly" is to "satisfy" (*OED* 10 b). She is drawn to what is similar to herself. If it had seemed that her hopefulness for fellowship offered a potentially redemptive moment, identification overpowers, and the speaker pulls her back toward the pool. She slips back into the magnetism of the mirror, and our judgment swings toward censure.

Sidney's mirror text both requires and warns against identification with reflection. When Gynecia meets the speaker, pronouns merge, and one character could be taken for another. The effect here rests on the ambiguity of "witness" as a transitive or an intransitive verb: "But as she came into the little arbour of this sorrowful music, her eyes met with the eyes of Cleophila (which was the party that thus had *witnessed her sorrow*), so that either of them remained confused with a sudden astonishment" (82) (italics mine). In the center of the sentence, as in the center of the clearing, the witness of sorrow could be either of them. Cleophila is the party that thus had "witnessed her sorrow"; it is Cleophila who has given testament of her pain, singing in Petrarchan conventions, addressing her lute, and complaining of "inward evil." But because Gynecia has herself just done the same in her monologue, the phrase, "her sorrow," is sufficiently ambiguous to give the reader pause. Who has witnessed whom? Whose is the reflection?

Choosing on whom to bestow the Narcissus name is to ponder a moral assessment of Pyrocles and Gynecia, which invites and reinforces the pedagogical method of comparison of the mirror text genre. In seeing Gynecia as a reader of a mirror text within the text, reading the equivalent of a depicted character in herself, this moment in the scene presents a potential danger for us as mirror text readers: becoming lost, without ability to change or distinguish, in a degree of similarity, especially if that correspondence rests on a recognition of suffering or of vice. The reader is invited to decide, on the one hand, whether such identification further suggests a moral status within the reader or whether it signals an early stage in the development of a moral discernment, the possibility of virtue tested, not discarded.

IV. Verses on the Lute

As a text that works to challenge and refine our judging faculties, *The Old Arcadia* expands the range of the traditional mirror for princes by offering a depth to the characters' interior lives. This depth complicates our reading of the traditionally clear classifications of virtues and vices apparent in conventional figures and potentially recognizable in ourselves. By inviting us to participate in lyric moments of experience created by the characters we morally evaluate, the text enables us to observe the effect on our judgment of a subjective response.

On the one hand, the text explores the articulation of female desire or intense feeling. Sacred or royal women contribute various types of texts to the story. As the story progresses, poetic expressions of female desire become more public, culminating in the entwining of the names of Musidorus and Pamela on the trunks of trees. But the text also works to control such articulations, by confining them to solitary and often nocturnal occasions and by limiting the audiences who find or overhear them. Verses left behind by female characters are seldom found: Philoclea finds her own verses in dedication to Diana; Cleophila finds the verses penned by

Gynecia, and Philoclea sees the song written by her mother. Except in a few scenes with their lovers, or in the prison scene where the princesses can console one another, female characters are without the help and counsel of friendship, and they speak or encounter text alone. At times, texts by women are ambiguous. *The Old Arcadia*'s plot is set into motion by male interpretation of a divine message articulated by a priestess.[196] The woman "appointed to the impiety" of prophecy is "furiously inspired" (5) and speaks in the form of a riddle, an unclear text whose interpretation can itself function as a type of mirror to the hearer. The text that accompanies Gynecia's potion bottle, a gift from her mother, is misleading, suggesting the joys of love but in operation appearing to cause death.

Gynecia's utterances appear out of sequence, with Cleophila's hearing Gynecia's song before coming across her verses, which were composed before either her song or her subsequent speech (158 ff). Gynecia's verses on the lute were written first, when Basilius interpreted Gynecia's pain as jealousy. Her writing on the lute is thus overlain chronologically with other material, which works on our judgment first. This is in keeping with other concealments of the female poetic voice. After the entwining of names on trees by Pamela and Musidorus, the text then returns the female voice to relative silence. Even the letters written by the princesses are suppressed by Philanax at the trial and have no influence on events. Philanax in particular, counselor to the realm, suppresses, or wants to suppress, the female voice, as he advises Basilius to take no heed of the oracle's predictions and likewise fears that the princesses' letters will result in leniency for those he believes guilty. Among the women, desire and its consequences,

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[196] For the Delphic oracle as a female voice see Plutarch, "The Oracles at Delphi" in *Moralia,* vol. 5, trans. Frank Cole Babbitt Cambridge: Harvard UP, 2003) 275: "even if these verses be inferior to Homer's let us not believe that the god has composed them, but that he supplies the origin of the incitement, and then the prophetic priestesses are moved each in accordance with her natural faculties …. the voice is not that of a god, nor the utterance of it, nor the diction, nor the metre, but all these are the woman's; he puts into her mind only the visions, and creates a light in her soul in regard to the future; for inspiration is precisely this."

articulated in speech or writing, remain largely in the shadows, much like the face of the Renaissance girl in Dutch paintings of the time, and, like Gynecia's verses, under a "veil" (185).[197]

In a text which chronologically (dis)orders Gynecia's utterances and works to conceal and suppress expressions of female interior life, our exercise of a judging capacity in order to observe and refine it is subject to significant authorial control. The text bestows the freedom to question the facile classifications of virtue and vice at the same time it maintains a control that is tempting to interpret as an analogue of the mirror for princes concern with the limits of human freedom in relation to providential power. Such control both presents and contains problematic desire experienced by a female royal figure. That Gynecia, the figure of female desire, should also become the means of refining our moral discernment and of rewriting the conventions of the counsel to a prince enlarges the understanding of *The Old Arcadia* as political counsel or censure of the Queen's conduct in the Alençon negotiations.

Philoclea's discovery of her mother's verses at night, in the context of her own desiring heroine's monologue, contributes to their shadowed quality in the text.[198] According to the narrator, Gynecia "had made the lute a monument of her mind" (185); but at the same time she figures forth her feelings, Gynecia uses the lute's surface to conceal them from too public a view,

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[197] For a similar public privacy, see Kristen Poole, "'The Fittest Closet for All Goodness': Authorial Strategies in Jacobean Mothers' Manuals," *Studies in English Literature* 35.1 (1995) 69–88.

[198] Constraints of space prevent more than a nod to the implications of treating Philoclea's soliloquy as a mirror of her mother's. Both present variations on the romance convention of the desiring heroine's monologue. Both scenes dramatize a woman's self-condemnation before self-perceptions of desire. Gynecia's appropriation of external objects as her mirrors leads to questions about her status both morally and as a reader of the mirror text within a mirror text. Her despair culminates in a break from all bonds of maternal love by threatening her rival daughter with destruction (81). In this light, we read of Philoclea's call in her own monologue for Pyrocles to use a mirror for self-correction: "let me call thee before the judgement of thine own virtue!" (184). Repeated calls like hers within the text mirror one another, as in Musidorus's similar injunction to Pyrocles: "O sweet Pyrocles, separate yourself a little, if it be possible, from yourself, and let your own mind look upon your own proceedings" (17). That Gynecia is outside the fellowship of appeals to use the moral mirror and instead functions inside of one highlights both her aloneness in the work and her role as reader within a text.

"to cover her never-ceasing anguish" (185). The text has offered other examples of her concealing behavior. She covered her passionate desire for Cleophila with the chaste cover of kisses in company, since both characters appeared to be female (45). She behaved seductively before Cleophila (83) but retained an appearance of modesty before her family and the shepherds. Her husband is unaware of her knowledge of Cleophila's disguise and wrongly interprets her feelings for Cleophila to be jealousy. Her verses acquire life at the moment they become a mirror image. Ringler notes that upon reading them, Philoclea "realizes that her own mother is her rival in love."[199] Philoclea's notice of them is the first break out of Gynecia's mirrored stance with Cleophila.

We saw in Gynecia's monologue her tendency to confide her sorrows to external objects, and to look to them for glimpses of herself in order to confirm her view of herself, having no friend or companion in whom to confide. In two poetic octaves, Gynecia addresses her lute. In this instance, the medium of writing figures in her quest for self-expression and self-definition and offers additional evidence for reading Gynecia as both an object of and source for an experiential reading experience.

Gynecia's address to her lute has rich literary associations.[200] I propose one association to supply context for understanding Gynecia. An address to a lute as a representative of the Muse is well known in the poetry of classical times and in the sixteenth century.[201] In the case of Sir Thomas Wyatt's "My lute, awake," addressing the lute becomes a male lover's complaint to an unyielding lady; Wyatt contrasts a male lover's "frailty and pathos" with the hardness of his

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[199] Ringler 408.

[200] See John Hollander, *The Untuning of the Sky: Ideas of Music in English Poetry, 1500–1700* (New York: Norton, 1970) 128–41.

[201] Hollander 128–29.

beloved, who is like “marbill stone.”[202] When his song is finished, his voice disappears, but he has left behind the writing on the page as a form of revenge: “May chance thee lie withered and old / The winter nights that are so cold / Plaining in vain unto the moon/ Thy wishes then dare not be told. / Care then who list for I have done” (ll 26–30).[203] Alternately, in Wyatt’s “Blame not my lute, for he must sound,” the lover becomes the instrument, a conceit arising from a pun on the Latin *chorda,* the strings of an instrument or heart, and the Latin *cor* or *cordis,* for heart.[204] As the lady plays on the strings of his heart, the poet plays the strings of the lute. Both become targets of the lady’s cruelty; but in the final stanza, the lover extricates himself (and his lute) by showing the disdain that the lady has shown for him: “Yet have I found out for thy sake / Strings for to string my lute again.”[205] The reader of Gynecia’s verse can assess her within the precedent of a woman’s disdain and a scorned male lover’s reassertion of identity through retaliation.

Gynecia addresses the lute as an instrument she is unable to play because of her sorrow. Instructing it to close up its music (“My lute within thyself thy tunes enclose”), she laments her inability in the third person, as if to emphasize her alienation from herself: “Thy mistress’ song is now a sorrow’s cry, / Her hand benumbed … / Her mind amazed” (185). Gynecia’s first poetic utterance launches a recurring theme of stasis and entrapment, in which she is as stilled as the

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[202] Elizabeth Heale, *Wyatt, Surrey and Early Tudor Poetry* (London: Longman, 1998) 81. Although Wyatt’s “Whoso list to hunt” was excluded from the collection because of its possible portrayal of Anne Boleyn and the consequent association with Queen Elizabeth, *Tottel’s Miscellany* presented Wyatt’s lyrics for a sixteenth-century audience and is “likely to have been the major first reading of near-contemporary poets to which the young Shakespeare, Sidney, Edmund Spenser and John Donne were exposed”: see Amanda Holton and Tom MacFaul’s “Introduction” to *Tottel’s Miscellany: Songs and Sonnets of Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey, Sir Thomas Wyatt and Others* (New York: Penguin, 2013) xxv.

[203] Heale 81.

[204] Heale 81

[205] For Wyatt’s knowledge of the Italian poetry of Serafino, particularly in which the lover breaks his lyre at the end of the song, see Heale 70–86.

music in the mute instrument. She begins by defining herself in relation to the ink, or text, using musical puns to show that the writing is her music, an appropriation of an external object for self-definition:

> Wear these my words as mourning weeds of woes,
> Black ink becomes the state wherein I die.
> And though my moans be not in music bound,
> Of written griefs, yet be the silent ground (185).

Her words are the mourning clothes of sorrows (*OED* "weeds" 2 and 5b), and the black ink "becomes" the state in which she dies, that is, both to "come about" (*OED* I. 1) or turn into, and also "to agree or accord with; suit" (*OED* III). The transformation she describes is one of being transfixed into death, literally brought motionless before turning into the "state" of death: her hand is "benumbed"—or "deprived of the power of motion by a chilling influence" (*OED* "benumbed") and her mind "amazed," or stunned (*OED* 1).

Being rendered motionless, mute, amazed or transfixed by passion or an unexpected glimpse of the object of passion is a common occurrence in *The Old Arcadia*. Such frequent moments heighten our experience of a character's emotion and also demonstrate that passion can stop the flow of action or language or thought: in a lesson for rulers, desire has caused Gynecia to be unable to sing. Basilius is similarly transfixed with "amazement" when he learns the oracle's prediction, and his static condition, dominated first by curiosity and then desire, culminates in his own motionless slumber, taken for death. Change in agency is a central concern of *The Old Arcadia* in its capacity as a mirror for princes. Gynecia's opening stanza instructs the reader that desire can usurp a ruler's power.

Gynecia's use of a lyric form associated with scorned love contributes to her moral complexity. Where we expect the force of disdain, we encounter depth of sorrow. When she speaks of the inability to sing, "And though my moans be not in music bound," her use of

"bound" plays on two senses, being "confined" (*OED* adj. 2) and also being "dressed, attired" (*OED* adj. 1). The word-play reinforces the conceit of her words as mourning clothes: her sorrows are not dressed or "bound" in music, but are instead silent, as written text. Her use of "ground" offers multiple meanings: "yet be the silent ground" (185). Ringler points out the play on "ground," as "surface" and as "musical accompaniment."[206] John Hollander understands "ground" as a "continuous theme for variations."[207] I also understand "ground" to be the "ground bass" or *basso ostinato*. This is a repeating pattern in the bass line of music, above which the melody changes.[208]

In the sixteenth century, melodies composed above a repeating bass line changed according to the patterns dictated by the line, conforming to the rules of counterpoint favoring certain melodic motions and harmonic progressions over others. One well-known example of "ground bass" at the time was the "descending tetrachord," a repeating descent in the bass line of steps spanning the interval of a fourth.[209] Elizabethan examples of a chromatic descending tetrachord appear in the lute music of John Dowland.[210] The image creates an almost Sisyphean plight for Gynecia. The descending shape of the line presents an aural emblem of weight and sadness. Its repetitive nature presents imprisonment within unceasing repetitive motion. Seen in this light, Gynecia's sorrow moves from "words" to "moans" to silence, increasing inarticulation that is nevertheless governed by a relentless and unchanging succession of notes, from which there can be no harmonic divergence or escape.

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[206] Ringler 408.

[207] Hollander 139.

[208] Donald J. Grout, *A History of Western Music* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2006) 329.

[209] Grout 330.

[210] A notable example is Dowland's "Forlorn Hope Fancy."

In addition, “silent ground” creates an image of the grave, and of Gynecia stilled and silenced and coffined, like the poem’s first image of music closed up in the lute. It becomes increasingly difficult to reconcile this depth of sorrow with Gynecia’s murderous rage toward her daughter, which as readers of vice we are right to condemn. Sidney engages our affect as well as our moral discernment. As the figure in a tragedy, Gynecia stirs our “commiseration.”[211] If competing impulses toward reasoning judgment and sympathetic feeling create conflict within us as readers, the text will expose it, and increase our self-awareness.

In the second octave, Gynecia’s vision widens to include the general disorder and disproportion in the “ill consorted shows” of the world. Disorder prevails in the image of “noble gold” sinking to the bottom, while “worthless cork” floats to the surface. Written when Basilius had thought Gynecia’s jealousy was all for him, the underlying disorder is her jealousy of her daughter, who “(Better despised) bewonder[s] gazing eye” (185). Cleophila is admiring Philoclea, not Gynecia. What is most valuable is plunged to the depths, and what is least valuable rises, an image Gynecia turns back to the lute metaphor at the poem’s end: “Thus in thyself least strings are loudest found, / And lowest stops do yield the highest sound” (185). Thus the lute itself, with the paradox of lowest stops or “frets”[212] yielding a higher sound, becomes an emblem of the disorder of Cleophila’s preference for Philoclea as the most worthy, over Gynecia.

Given that one context of poems to the lute is disdain and retaliation in love, what do we learn about Gynecia from this poem? I suggest that by rejecting the articulation and musical order of the lute, Gynecia’s words figuratively enact the gesture of throwing down the instrument found so often in pastoral scenes. In an earlier, mirroring scene, Cleophila does so literally (82).

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[211] Sidney, *Defence* 45.

[212] Ringler 408.

For both Gynecia and Cleophila, a “lute poem” forms their first poetic utterance. Cleophila throws down her lute in an acknowledgement of self-division: “be not ashamed to leave thy master, since he is not afraid to forsake himself” (82). Gynecia’s gesture is a mirror image; that is, more like Wyatt’s speaker in “Blame not my lute,” she moves to reclaim herself. She maneuvers from the stasis of anguish to appropriate an object to illustrate the disorder she sees in being rejected for her daughter, and she thereby asserts the injustice of Cleophila’s preference and her own worthiness. That Sidney should present this assertion by Gynecia so much later in the text, out of chronological order, in opposition to the introspective self-blame and despair we have witnessed in her character thus far, reinforces the observation that he is controlling a narrative which adds new information to encourage readers to experience and scrutinize an ongoing judgment of Gynecia. This is the most eloquent expression of her conviction that she is worthier than her daughter of Cleophila’s love. Yet its revelation of suffering is so acute that it must engage our affect. The presence of a lyric that reveals so deeply interior a life of Gynecia is a statement on Sidney’s part about what ought to enter into moral discernment.

V. Object of Deceit

From this point in the text, the plot centers around Cleophila’s strategizing and execution of the switch at the cave, by which she hopes to rid herself of “her two lovers’ unwelcome desires” (188) and seize an opportunity to be with Philoclea. The narrator keeps before us a picture of Gynecia as the devalued wife, whom Basilius imagines to his delight to be destined for an approaching death and a swift replacement by his new love. Basilius is the old man foolishly in love, ridiculous in the story, at times breaching decorum by leaping a few steps in happy

anticipation of illicit love. But the comedy is darkened by the effect upon Gynecia.[213] When Cleophila pretends favor to Basilius and Gynecia to further her design to be with Philoclea, Basilius "grow[s] now so hearted in his resolution that he little respected Gynecia's presence" (187). He becomes devoted to being "rid for that time of her" (192). He discards the ideals of fidelity in marriage as "imaginative rules (whose truth stands but upon opinion)" (194). And in the quest for the satisfaction of his desires with Cleophila, he compares Gynecia to a bird he will cage if she asserts any will against him (194). As we judge Gynecia, and witness her in judgment of herself, we understand that her fall from virtue occurs within the circumstance of being discarded by a husband who wishes and plans for her death.

Such a context complicates the clear moral categories of the conventional mirror. More than at any other point thus far in Gynecia's story, the text here places the values of virtue and power most clearly at odds. Gynecia acquires a new degree of agency as her character transforms vice in thought into vice in deed. Immediately upon Cleophila's declaration of a plan "by which your contentment shall draw on my [Cleophila's] happiness," (187) Gynecia becomes a more autonomous character. It is Gynecia who collects the company and informs them it is "time to retire" (187). This is the first departure in the narrative from Gynecia's accustomed role of being the recipient of commands, as part of a unit of "wife and daughters" to do Basilius's bidding. It is Gynecia who sets the plan into motion: "presenting a heavy sleepiness in her countenance, [Gynecia] brought up both Basilius and Cleophila to see Philoclea" (195). Although it is Cleophila's script, Gynecia initiates the action, charging Basilius to stay with their daughter and

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[213] Sidney acknowledges the modes of comedy and tragedy as effective vehicles for instruction in his *Defence* 44–45. Comedy is "an imitation of the common errors of our life, which he [the writer of comedy] representeth in the most ridiculous and scornful sort that may be, so as it is impossible that any beholder can be content to be such a one," 44. Comedy exposes the faults in ourselves that we cannot see (using Aesop's image of the two sacks, one containing our own faults that we carry behind us, and the one of others' faults, which is visible because carried in front; he refutes the argument that comedy encourages the vices it portrays. Tragedy "openeth the greatest wounds, and showeth forth the ulcers that are covered with tissue," 45.

feigning indisposition to deceive him, so that she might steal out of the lodge and Cleophila might take her place in the bed.

In addition to claiming the power to direct more of the action, Gynecia, according to the narrator, feels greater power. We know that the source of her new-found agency is immoral, arising from her decision to step out of the social order and commit herself to vice. Yet, by doing so, she emerges from passivity. She enjoys the superior knowledge over her husband: when Cleophila suggests the switch of places and of garment, Gynecia "yielded quickly": "indeed, not among the smallest causes, tickled thereunto by a certain wanton desire that her husband's deceit might be the more notable" (196). She is thus "pleasurably stirred or excited" (*OED* adj. 2) by the idea of increasing the deceit practiced upon her husband. The detail is easy to miss, but I see this as a new element in Gynecia's character, one that affords the opportunity to qualify our judgment. We may assume that delight in deceiving the husband is part of the appeal of adultery. A "wanton" desire to do anything is in keeping with the "lascivious" and "unchaste" dalliance that is understood in adulterous actions (*OED* 2). Yet "wanton" in this context, and in the 1570s and 80s in particular, might also mean "unrestrained in merriment" (*OED* 3) or "capricious" or "frivolous" (*OED* 6a). In fact, as a noun at this time, it might refer to a "child, spoiled by over-indulgence" (*OED* B. n. 1). There is a child-like aspect of Gynecia's character in this moment, especially in its assertion of power against a figure of restriction and authority. We see her in rebellion against the head of her estate, but if power is a virtue in the mirror texts, then the text has not wholly condemned her.

Indicative of new-found autonomy is a new relation to her external surroundings. She acquires the new-found bravery of walking by herself in the dark: "she that before would not have gone alone so far (especially by night, and to so dark a place) now took a pride in the same

courage" (197). For once she does not look to her surroundings for self-definition, for a confirming mirror. As she walks to the cave, she is "guided" by "the moon's fair shining" (197); she does not look to it for condemnation or understanding, but to confirm the direction she already knows.

It is at this point in the narrative that the text confronts us with the experience of judging with incomplete knowledge. It is now, as Gynecia readies herself for the assignation in the cave, that we learn—despite our assumptions—that she has never loved before. All of her torment, shock at the force of desire, self-condemnation, search for comfort in the extremity of guilt and shame, and choice to obtain her ends with threat and revenge, Gynecia has experienced as someone encountering desire for the first time, unschooled in its power, its nature, and its effects. Gynecia, we learn now, had been "very young married to her husband of much greater age" (197). She had never cared before to use her mother's potion on Basilius, but had "suffered his affection to run according to his own scope" (197). With the range of meanings inherent in that phrase, from Gynecia's allowing Basilius's affection (*OED* II. 13. a) to enduring or submitting to something injurious (*OED* I. 1), the image of a young bride entrusted to an aging man for political alliance places Gynecia in a potentially new light. For the first time in her experience, "love of her particular choice had awaked her spirits" (197).

It is worth pausing to observe with what degree of incomplete knowledge we have been viewing Gynecia's character, and to what degree all of our judgments are necessarily reached with incomplete knowledge, a variation *The Old Arcadia* offers to the conventional mirror for princes, in which classifications are clear. As the trial scene in Book V exemplifies, when Basilius appears to be lifeless and Euarchus fails to recognize his son and nephew, we can be misled to a great degree by appearances and misguided in our assumptions.

Gynecia's appearance, especially in "grave, matronlike attire" (33), and in the narrator's description of her as falling morally in her "latter time," (4) allows us to assume, based on appearance and on others' report, that she is an older woman. We remember from Chapter 1 Lord Burghley's "Memoryall for the Queen's Majestie" of 1579, in which his use of "latter yeres" to describe Queen Elizabeth in her post-50 years would have been known by everyone in Sidney's circle.[214] Gynecia is thus linked to the Queen through the narrator's description; but the text exposes that assumption: Gynecia is not the aged royal figure the text has led us to believe. In fact, we learn at an advanced point in the text that she is younger than Basilius and experiencing desire for the first time. We are confronted now with the nature of the conclusions we had reached about Gynecia through limited knowledge and misleading report and the assumptions we formed as a result. Like Castiglione's *Courtier, The Old Arcadia* offers an abundance of material for retrospective discussion. Initial impressions of Gynecia and the subsequent surprise that Gynecia is not the figure we may have imagined her to be might comprise an entertainment for the inner circle, but it would also be cause for reflection on how we have judged with imperfect knowledge.

VI. Moral Mirror to Basilius

When Cleophila executes the plot, Gynecia learns she has been deceived. The switch of characters and mistaken identity are entertaining for the reader, especially as Basilius is blind to the fact that his fantasy evening has taken place in the arms of his wife. Gynecia's response to this change in the plan reveals a new tactic in Sidney's instruction in the exercise of judgment.

Gynecia knows that she has been visited by her husband and not by Cleophila. A change in her behavior serves, again, as opportunity to revise judgment. Where before she walked

[214] *Salisbury II* 245.

headlong toward the expected arrival of her lover, carrying the potion and "provoked with lust," (197) Gynecia now restrains herself from any articulations of surprise or disappointment: "But of the other side her love, with a fixed persuasion she had had, taught her to seek all reason of hopes; and therein thought best, before discovering of herself, to mark the behavior of her husband" (199). The woman who delighted in her power on the way to the cave exhibits a considered and deliberate response to unexpected developments, checking her emotion and guarding her secret.

While we learn from the narrator that Gynecia's restraint is based upon the hope of a future assignation, the narrator also issues judgment about the source of Gynecia's choice to remain silent: "her love, with a fixed persuasion she had had, taught her" (199). As readers of a mirror, we are to use the pedagogical method of comparison. The narrator's "fixed persuasion" invites comparison of Gynecia with other characters similarly described. Furthermore, the narrator's use of "her love" invites questioning of whether Gynecia's "lust"-provoked desire has undergone a change.

Comparisons of "fixed persuasion" invite evaluative questions. Every court figure in Arcadia appears to be motivated by a "fixed persuasion." Basilius has been immoveable in his decision to journey to Delphos to learn the future. He has been unyielding in his interpretation of its prophecy as presaging harm and in his strategy for evading that harm. The narrator judged that Basilius "resolved to use a friend's secrecy rather for confirmation of fancies than correcting of errors" (5) when Basilius refuses the counsel from Philanax. Basilius is determined in his favorable view of Dametas and in his use of him as guard to his eldest daughter, which by now the reader understands to be a mistake. He is as determined to enjoy Cleophila as is Gynecia.

When judged through the consequences, an unyielding "fixed persuasion" is a deleterious choice: all of these fixations lead to negative consequences for Basilius and for his realm.

Pyrocles and Musidorus have been so fixed in their pursuit of Philoclea and Pamela that even the plight of Erona, who is in serious need of chivalric rescue, has become temporarily irrelevant to them, and deceit has been justifiable to them in the pursuit of amorous desires. As the story advances, Gynecia's "fixed persuasion" will resonate with similar determinations among other characters. Philanax, the wise humanist counselor, will become so overly steadfast in his devotion to serve Basilius that his reason, his speech, and his adherence to justice itself (when he suppresses the princesses' evidence at trial) will collapse entirely in his zeal to avenge Basilius's murder. Even Euarchus, the neighboring ruler and father of Pyrocles, portrayed in every way as an exemplary king, will be so unmoved in his restrictive view of justice, unable to temper his justice with mercy, that he will proceed with the sentence to execute his own heirs. Gynecia's "fixed persuasion" in this scene thus echoes with a detrimental resonance when remembered in the context of other characters. This mirror unambiguously warns against governance by a fixed idea that does not yield to counsel or to moderation. The narrator's assessment of Gynecia highlights her deceitfulness and her fidelity to an immoral choice.

On the other hand, Philoclea displays a "fixed persuasion" when the stings of her mother's hostility and "the spite her mother bare her" serve to reinforce and solidify her love for Pyrocles:

> For as the arrival of enemies makes a town so fortify itself as ever after it remains stronger, so that a man may say enemies were no small cause to the town's strength; so to a mind once fixed in a well pleasing determination, who hopes by annoyance to overthrow it doth but teach it to knit together all his best grounds, and so perchance of a changeable purpose make an unchangeable resolution. (183)

In the context of Philoclea's resolution, Gynecia's "fixed persuasion" seems to be a more virtuous trait, if it has been "taught" to her by "love." Such an assessment invites the reader to decide if Gynecia truly has grown in a capacity for love. Is the value of a "fixed persuasion" determined more by the virtue of the character exercising it or the worthiness of the aim to which it is directed? If characters are alike in submission to a single governing entity, the text asks what, if anything, determines distinctions in evaluating them as figures of qualities to be emulated or to be avoided—a central project of the mirror genre. Philoclea's virtuous determination for Pyrocles and Gynecia's vice-ridden restraint in the service of desire, both fixed persuasions, show distinctions either in the character or in the aim to which the fixedness is directed: acquiring the right partner or an adulterous one. The reader must make the distinctions and understand the source of those distinctions.

If virtuous characters like Euarchus can demonstrate similar conduct, then the story suggests that all human nature is fallible—which reinforces the importance and necessity of the book's project to increase self-knowledge and invite the reader's scrutiny of a judging process. If the same quality can be appraised in different ways given the circumstance in which it occurs or the object to which it is directed, then an awareness of the criteria by which judgments are formed is necessary. However we view Gynecia now in the continuum of morally good and bad choices, the text also offers the opportunity to assess Gynecia's conduct in relation to that topic which began to appear with more frequency in the late Medieval and Renaissance mirrors for princes: power.[215] How she acquires power and how she uses it will be the subject of my next discussion.

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[215] Bratu 1936, 1939.

Gynecia seizes moral stature over her husband in a way that makes her the unquestioned broker of power in the marriage. Basilius is so governed by his assumptions that he believes himself to be in the arms of Cleophila. His conduct shows the degree to which assumptions can govern judgment. He expected to embrace his mistress and concludes that he has. He marvels aloud that there could exist so great a difference between women and enjoins an imaginary Gynecia to "yield to the pre-eminence of more excellent gifts" (238–39). While entertaining us by holding Basilius up to ridicule, the story serves also to remind us that advantage lies with those who are aware of the danger of being guided by assumption. Power resides in possessing the more accurate knowledge.

Gynecia's response, in contrast, is carefully thought out: according to the narrator, her hope for a future assignation with Cleophila, her husband's "livelier fancies" in his amorous pursuits, the memory of Philoclea's sickness, and the recent, strange behavior between her daughter and Cleophila "all coming together in her mind (which was loath to condemn itself of an utter overthrow) made her frame herself, not truly with a sugared joy, but with a determinate patience, to let her husband think he had found a very gentle and supple-minded Cleophila" (200). Gynecia is a good reader of Chaucer: she seems to know that each partner in a marriage wishes to have "mastery."[216] She seizes her moral advantage, claims power for herself, and then submits herself to Basilius, paradoxically attaining advantage and winning gratitude from her husband by appearing not to take advantage.

As he does frequently in the story, the narrator supplies a motive for Gynecia's conduct. Finding that Basilius still thinks her to be Cleophila, "she had liberty to imagine it might rather be the duke's own unbridled enterprise which had barred Cleophila than Cleophila's cunning

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[216] Derek Brewer, *An Introduction to Chaucer* (London: Longman, 1992) 208–09.

deceiving of her" (239). She knows that she is in a precarious position. And so she determines a plan: she will use "fine handling of the duke to settle in him a perfect good opinion of her" and as she learns the cause of events, "so take into herself new devised counsels" (239). It is the most deliberate planning we have seen in Gynecia. The narrator's use of the phrase "fine handling" or "consummately skillful" (*OED* "fine" I. 5.) "management" (*OED* "handling" I. 2.) suggests a manipulation of her husband, and the "modest bitterness" with which she plans to speak to him suggests a response calculated to control him by eliciting a specific reaction. Such conduct confirms the view that chastity is the well-spring of all virtues; its opposite leads Gynecia in the contrary direction, adding deception to vice.

Yet, before Gynecia speaks, the narrator reveals a change in her that invites a concomitant change in our judgment of her:

> having given unlooked-for attendance to the duke, she heard with what partiality he did prefer her to herself; she saw in him how much fancy doth not only darken reason but beguile sense; she found opinion mistress of the lover's judgement. Which serving as a good lesson to her wise conceit, she went out to Basilius. (239) (italics mine)

Her observation about the lover's vulnerability to blindness in "reason" and "judgement" and to love's distorting effects of "fancy" and "opinion" occurs arguably within the context of her self-serving calculation. But I believe it is left open to the reader to decide where an earnest moral purpose shades the narrator's ironic tone. Subsequent tempering of her angry speech suggests that she has learned from seeing love's effects in Basilius. I believe that this passage invites us to see Gynecia anew: that from the moment "she saw in him," Gynecia finds the mirror image of herself that can instruct her in her experience, and which will serve as the basis for a new authority in her character. While it is a comment on the misidentification that has taken place, the phrase "her to herself" directly precedes her view of Basilius ("she saw in him") and gestures

toward the comparative, pedagogical project of viewing the mirror—supplementing the sense of Basilius's humorous self-deception with Gynecia's self-recognition. In this example, I believe Gynecia learns from similarity: she sees the effects of love in Basilius. How she learns from the view of herself, drawing "a good lesson to her wise conceit" (239) is left open for the reader's evaluation.

The Gynecia who comes before Basilius with "grave behaviour and stately silence" (239) is arguably among the most changed of all of Arcadia's characters. It was not sufficient learning for either of the princes to see in the other the infectious effects of love-sickness. They were unable to use those mirrored images to amend the lies and deceit thought justifiable, in the pursuit of desire, to both of them.[217] Gynecia alone shows such learning and change from observing another. She is an exemplar of a mirror reader when her subsequent speech shows that she has learned from the comparison of herself with Basilius.

To summarize the scene briefly, in her first speech to any character besides Cleophila, Gynecia uses the advantage of being the recipient of intended adulterous attention to seize the authority of moral superiority, delivering a scathing reproach. She speaks bitterly about Basilius's assignation with a lover. She contrasts her fulfillment of duty with his failure. By reminding Basilius she has provided an heir to the throne she claims the respect due to her as a royal mother. She claims a morally superior status: "If my life hitherto led have not avoided suspicion; if my violated truth to you be deserving of any punishment; I refuse not to be chastised with the most cruel torment of your displeasure; I refuse not misery purchased by mine own merit" (240). She inveighs against the condition of women's mistreatment in general and concludes with the bitterness from the betrayal by a man who cannot even do it properly: "If

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[217] One need only remember Pyrocles's planning for the night in the cave and Musidorus's deceptions of Dametas, Miso, and Mopsa.

Cleophila's young years had not had as much gravity hidden under a youthful face as your grey hairs have been but the visor of a far unfitting youthfulness, your vicious mind had brought some fruits of late repentance" (239–40). She serves as a mirror to expose him—his age and his vice, his "vicious" or "vice-ridden" mind (*OED* I.1.).

The scene invites simultaneously conflicting judgments: a view of Gynecia as genuinely wronged (having wronged as well); an awareness of her duplicity; and an awareness of our own response to the power she can claim through the morally questionable exercise of that duplicity. We may judge her as a Machiavelli in this scene, as she is certainly ignoring and in fact using her own guilt and complicity to condemn and gain advantage over another. We know that she claims the virtuous status of motherhood in the wake of a murderous jealousy toward her daughter. Her offer to undergo punishment for any deserved violation of her own is arguably Machiavellian, striking preemptively as a mode of defense.[218] Gynecia has found the courage to gain the upper hand by comparing (the appearance of) her innocence to her husband's evident guilt before he can inquire why she is also at the cave. Whether we censure her duplicity or cheer her boldness in seizing the advantage (or both), our choice confronts us with awareness of evaluating a moral choice within its context of circumstances. Unlike the traditional mirror in which we encounter vice or virtue portrayed with uncomplicated clarity, moral conditions in this text do not allow for facile moral classifications.

The scene also shows that the performance of a mirroring function is not a static enterprise; performing as a mirror, here of exposure, leads to change in the performer. In identifying, reading, and reflecting the vice in Basilius, she confronts externally the self-same vice she once so condemned in herself. She moves from the despair about her own fall to an

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[218] Machiavelli 40.

angry—and externalizing—condemnation of it in Basilius and from there to a gentler instruction about its consequences. Most importantly for our view of her as an exemplary reader, she includes herself in the learning to be gained.

That Gynecia acts as a moral mirror to Basilius is clear from his response to her censure: Basilius is "ashamed to *see himself*" (240) (italics mine)—although, at this juncture, he is arguably more ashamed to be caught than remorseful through any learning. He falls into excuses and contrary assertions, a mirror of discomfort at the uncovering of vice. We know from the narrator that Gynecia initiates a mirroring stance toward Basilius in a tone of bitterness: she is "content thus to fasten up the last stitch of her anger" (240). But for the remainder of this scene, the narrator falls silent. Unlike the many places in the text where we are guided in our moral evaluation by the narrator's direction, here he allows the reader to decide where Gynecia's vitriol subsides and true care for Basilius appears.

It is left to the reader to judge Gynecia's tone when she instructs Basilius that self-governance will restore the balance of power in his favor: "it shall well become you so to govern yourself as you may be fit rather to direct me than to be judged of me, and rather be a wise master of me than an unskilful pleader before me" (240). The reader must decide on her tone when she instructs him in the social consequences of adultery:

> Remember the wrong you do me is not only to me, but to your children, whom you had of me; to your country, when they shall find they are commanded by him that cannot command his own undecent appetites; lastly to yourself, since with these pains you do but build up a house of shame to dwell in. (240)

Readers know that Gynecia can speak of shame from the authority of experiential knowledge. Here her conception of shame changes from the passive and despairing defeat she experienced when she tried to take comfort in the extremity of its power to a more active sculpting of its effects: that is, to "build up a house" of shame warns against a life (not a death) within walls.

Gynecia's instruction signals a shift in her relationship to the effects of vice, suggesting that seeing it in another and addressing it outside of herself offers freedom from the paralysis of self-condemnation. She draws closer to the picture of the vice she condemns in her husband, as a reader of a mirror might yield to the acceptance that a particular depicted vice is recognizable. In this light, *The Old Arcadia* comments on the potential for an ideal functioning of the mirror text as an external representation of a vice that can free a reader from the pain of guilt, particularly for those vices one would be apt to conceal and harbor alone, as Gynecia has been alone.

Effects of the passage of time serve to reduce Gynecia's adversarial stance toward Basilius and his vice. This time, her reference to his age is less angry; this time, her (Machiavellian) pre-emptive strike, a mirror of her earlier claim to moral superiority, acknowledges the possible loss of beauty in his eyes and includes herself in her speech less as an accuser but as a fellow royal and marital companion:

> If from those movable goods of nature (wherewith in my first youth my royal parents bestowed me upon you) bearing you children and increase of years have withdrawn me, consider, I pray you, that as you are the cause of the one, so in the other, time hath not left to work his never failing effects in you. (240)

When she condemns the vice, the "fires in you," she includes herself in the counsel against committing it: "very untimely are these fires in you. It is high season *for us both* to let reason enjoy his due sovereignty. *Let us not* plant anew those weeds which by nature's course are content to fade" (240) (italics mine). The reader must judge whether Gynecia's inclusion of herself marks a genuinely different stance in her relationship toward Basilius and the vice he exemplifies here, or if her words are manufactured strictly to extricate herself from a compromising situation and maintain her advantage. Her emphasis on commonality as she appraises him and moves to include herself in her response to the vice of another—the self-evaluative move that the mirror genre invites—is reminiscent of Sidney's view of the human

condition as a fallible one, marred from perfection by the "infected will" of human nature.[219] Gynecia's capacity to move from self-condemnation to condemnation of vice in another and finally to an inclusion of herself in a more compassionate view of the figure of vice before her serves as a model for us as readers of a mirror text. In order genuinely to achieve recognition of oneself in the figure portrayed in the text, there must be a stance on the part of the reader that is not adversarial but rather accepting of a view which might truly reflect the self. The success of such a mode of instruction—of the discovery and acceptance of commonality—can be better achieved by a text that aids us in finding that fellowship.

Basilius hears Gynecia's instruction, and he asks for Gynecia's pardon: according to the narrator, "he would repay the debt of this error with the interest of a great deal more true honour than ever before he had borne her" (241). Gynecia succeeds in obtaining reconciliation, but the language of "debt" and "interest" suggests that power imbalances persist. She responds with a mirroring framework of exchange that restores the balance of affection:

> Neither am I to give pardon to you, my lord … nor you to bear honour to me. I have taken this boldness for the unfeigned love I owe you, to deliver my sorrow unto you, much more for the care I have of your well doing than for any other self-fancy. For well I know that by your good estate my life is maintained; neither, if I would, can I separate myself from your fortune. For my part, therefore, I claim nothing but that which may be safest for yourself; my life, will, honour, and whatsoever else, shall be but a shadow of that body. (241)

In Gynecia's deference to Basilius, Sidney likely plays with tropes of marital advice for the entertainment of his young, married sister; I would suggest a more serious gesture as well. The narrator, who is usually so forthcoming about attributing motive to characters, remains silent about Gynecia's motive here. No commentary guides the reader to decide how Gynecia uses her acknowledgment of dependence and consequent care for Basilius's welfare. She understands that

[219] Sidney, *Defence* 25.

his “estate” depends upon moral health (“well doing”). Through the narrator’s withdrawal, the text places the reader into the space before the mirror text, to hear the change in Gynecia’s address and to decide whether (and where) Gynecia’s choice is a calculated strategy or becomes a genuine gesture of care for Basilius.

If we see the text as conferring virtue and wisdom upon Gynecia through a return to order, through the pairing of husband and wife, the choice of marital over adulterous love, then we see in ourselves a tendency to return to the traditional mirror text world of sharply divided moral categories, and of a world in which good actions lead to good outcomes. The view of order rewarded, however, must account for a good end from immoral means: both husband and wife intended an adulterous encounter. A view of Gynecia in this scene as acting authentically for Basilius’s good may arise from a belief that her experience of the same vice renders her more capable of extending compassion and forgiveness. On the other hand, if we see her as yet being duplicitous, speaking only to solidify her advantage, we will be made to observe the degree of duplicity in ourselves. With every turn of the plot around Gynecia, the reader cannot arrive at an interpretation about her choices and actions without observing and experiencing the process of reaching it. Sidney has extended the parameters of the mirror genre by inviting the reader to learn not only from a reflected image but also from a created experience.

VII. The Fall of a Princess

It appears that Gynecia has restored social and political order. She has reclaimed a royal marriage and instructed herself and Basilius in the “well doing” on which good government depends. Basilius vows she will be “the furthest and only limit of his affection” and becomes an improved mirror reader himself, as he “began something to mark himself in his own doings” (241). Gynecia, it appears, has effected a moral transformation in her husband. She has served as

his mirror by showing her husband an image of his vice, instructing him in the lesson from that image, and extending an expression of compassion to him that she was unable to offer to herself. Basilius's response suggests that the text affirms the morally transformative power of love. Understood within a mirror text framework, Sidney's entertaining story about love explores the serious moral power of compassion. The danger of over-identification with a mirror image becomes a prescription for that very identification in order to effect a moral transformation.

However virtuous Gynecia appears now, this reconciliation has arisen from a foiled intention to commit adultery, which itself arose from lies on the part of Pyrocles-Cleophila. The reader must judge whether Basilius has in turn served as a moral mirror for Gynecia, instructing and changing her with a reflection of the desire that had overtaken her; and whether a genuine change in her to seek Basilius's good serves as the source of restoration of order. It may be that a good result cannot arise from corrupted means. Basilius seems to suggest that it can: reunited with Gynecia, he "thanked the destinies that had wrought honour out of his shame; and that had made his own striving to go amiss to be the best mean ever after to hold him in the right path" (241). Because the narrator remains silent about how we are to judge the scene, readers confront an interpretive, moral choice, the opportunity to observe how that choice is determined, and how it changes as their knowledge develops.

In this reconciliation, Gynecia reaches the high point in her trajectory through the story thus far. From being overpowered by a first-time passion and being the object of scorned love, Gynecia has emerged with autonomy and agency; she has spoken with authority guided by experiential knowledge; and she has effected a reconciliation with Basilius. Now her character undergoes an even greater fall. The semblance of Basilius's death from the cordial suggests that good that is achieved through immoral means cannot be sustained. Memories of the past that

dominate Gynecia's story in Books IV and V suggest that her fall in the book's beginning should be the central event of her life and raise the possibility that no reform is achievable.

The reconciliation has only just been sealed with Basilius's embrace when the fall occurs: Basilius demands the potion Gynecia brought for her own adulterous purpose. She warns him against it, but, impelled by thirst, Basilius drinks, collapses, and falls silent with the appearance of death (242). After silence in the previous scene, the narrator resumes the role of directing appraisal of Gynecia; we are to believe unequivocally that Basilius's collapse was not her intention: she "had not looked for such a sudden overthrow, but rather had bethought herself what was best for him" (242). The "overthrow" calls to mind Gynecia's earlier state of being possessed and conquered by desire. Having given every appearance of overcoming vice in a joyful restoration of her marriage, Gynecia is thrust back into despair as a consequence of an unintended sin: "the height of all ugly sorrows did so horribly appear before her amazed mind that at the first it did not only distract all power of speech from her but almost wit to consider, remaining as it were quick buried in a grave of miseries" (242). For a second time, Gynecia's mind is "amazed," transfixed and stunned, a return of the image of a living death. The foreshadowing associated with Gynecia's character has pointed toward living death all along—in her dream sequence (102–03), as a result of unattainable desire (158 ff), and here to be "quick buried" in a grave—all anticipating her ultimate sentence from Euarchus: to be "buried quick" in a tomb (331). The image contributes to the text's ongoing questioning of inevitability: whether a part of Gynecia's nature had predisposed her towards such a fate, whether her choices along the way determined it, or whether she instinctively knew what destiny would determine outside of her control.

From this point, when her past evils appear to her mind, until her restoration at Basilius's hands at the story's (magical) end (360), Gynecia's character depicts the suffering attendant upon vice. With the intensifying addition of memory, she seems to slip back into an even deeper and more futile form of the despair that has characterized her through much of the story:

> Her painful memory had straight filled her with the true shapes of all the forepassed mischiefs. Her reason began to cry out against the filthy rebellion of sinful sense, and to tear itself with anguish for having made so weak a resistance; her conscience (a terrible witness of the inward wickedness) still nourishing this debateful fire; her complaint now not having an end directed to it, something to disburden sorrow; but as a necessary downfall of inward wretchedness, she saw the rigour of the laws was like to lay a shameful death upon her—which being for that action undeserved, made it the more insupportable; and yet in depth of her soul most deserved, made it more miserable. (242)

Seeing "the true shapes" of her former evil in her memory suggests that only now is she accurately reading the vice within her– that she had not fully seen or read herself. Her reason, which she had seen affected by the view of vice in Basilius, reasserts itself with the "tear[ing]" she had once applied to her garments and hair. As before, her conscience is a witness to her wickedness, still "nourishing" internal conflict: we remember her early distress that she had only sufficient goodness to see her own evil. Gynecia feels all the torments caused by the unattainable desire for Cleophila, but with a difference: her "complaint now not having an end to it." This is no longer desire directed toward an object but fixation on what lay within her to fuel it. Gynecia slips into a deeper fall created by the distillation of her vice caused by memory. She sees a "necessary downfall" in the laws' punishment by shameful death. For the murder of Basilius, it is not deserved, "and yet in the depth of her soul most deserved."

If we understand her reasoning, I believe we see her most fully now as a fellow reader within the text. Gynecia's torments in prison and the self-condemnation for a crime she did not commit depict her in the act of reading as we have been reading: "for although the effect came

not from her mind, yet her mind being evil, and the effect evil, she thought the justice of God had for the beginning of her pains coupled them together" (316). When Basilius and Gynecia reconciled, and social and political and moral order had seemed restored, the text asked whether a relationship exists between the moral status of an outcome and the means by which that outcome is achieved. In appraising the reconciliation scene with Basilius, we thought from outcome back to means: was the reconciliation between the duke and duchess less virtuous because it came about through a mutual attempt to seek adulterous love? Gynecia now confronts the same question. In this she departs from the "fall of princes" or *Mirror for Magistrates* figures who parade before their authors to bemoan their sins and the downfall that resulted from them. The outcome of Basilius's death does not arise from her intention, but considering herself evil, and the effect evil, she reasons mistakenly to see a relationship between the moral status of outcome and of its source—herself. She reads events and herself incorrectly, with damning results. So unjust is the consequence that the story will not allow us to escape the moral questions. The seriousness of the moral mirror erupts through the surface of the romance to teach us what is at stake in moral judgment.

VIII. Conclusion

On the one hand, the ending of *The Old Arcadia* appears morally problematic. Exigencies of the romance plot appear to override the mirror text genre: a romance, after all, cannot end with a parade of woe and overt moralizing as in the "fall of princes" literature. The moral prescription of *The Old Arcadia*'s ending remains questionable: immoral deeds go unpunished and appear to be rewarded instead. Euarchus remains the good ruler with no mercy to temper his justice. The princes obtain their princesses with no further consequences for their lies because Basilius takes all responsibility upon himself. Gynecia is vindicated before all the company, and her virtue

praised. Her fall is kept secret by Philoclea and Pyrocles. We alone have journeyed with her through the changes in perspective and understanding.

But perhaps it is not so problematic. Sidney as the teller of tales extends to his characters the compassion he has encouraged in us as part of the judgment we exercise upon others and ourselves. By utilizing a genre that requires the reader's moral engagement, Sidney creates an educative experience, succeeding in the teaching and delighting he expounded in his *Defence:* to delight and move to right action, to help us understand the complexity of moral judgment and temper condemnation with mercy, sympathy, and compassion, and, above all, in the company of Gynecia, our fellow reader, to witness and experience ourselves in Sidney's mirror as refined and merciful judges of the moral conduct of others and ourselves. That moral reformation is a social endeavor he shows through his narrator, his audience, his appeals to our experience, and by providing a companion reader for us within the text. Sidney's mirror shows us to ourselves in spite of ourselves, because, engaged by the plot and sympathetic to characters' internal life, like those who draw near to the fire to hear a story, we find our judgment engaged and invested. Gynecia is the most interesting and vibrant character in the work, unless we include ourselves, alive in the present, revealed to us as in a mirror, in ever changing, ever shifting moral judgment and inquiry, our "infected will" helped to repair and reform through the charm of a story and the fellowship of a compassionate teller and reader.

It is Gynecia who concludes the book as a "mirror" of virtue, just as Queen Elizabeth is a "mirror to her posterity" in Sidney's *Letter.* Gynecia, all along, has been the key to understanding *The Old Arcadia* as a mirror for princes: as both depiction of vice and reader of vice, and as both figure and reader of the more complex moral questions with which the work engages the judging faculties of the reader –the relationship, if any, between the moral status of

an outcome and the moral status of the means by which an outcome is achieved; whether virtue resides in its performer or in the end to which an action is directed; whether, ultimately, the lines between vice and virtue are as clear as the traditional mirrors would have us believe. Inconsistencies and ambiguities in Gynecia's character can be explained by seeing her as Sidney's designated object of our judgment, the means by which our judgment may be challenged and assumptions interrogated, and by which we as readers might observe our judging faculties changing in response to the ever unfolding clues and information most representative of true life.

Chapter 3

The Mirror, the Maze, and Poetry as Strategy: Counsel in Books I and II of *The New Arcadia*

In Chapter 2, I discussed Sidney's *Old Arcadia* from the generic perspective of the mirror for princes. I explored the character of Gynecia as both object in and reader of a mirror for princes text that complicated and expanded the conventional mirror text in which virtues are presented for emulation and vices for avoidance. We saw that a multiplicity of mirrored scenes across the text, linked by similarities of phrasing, engaged the reader in the mirror's pedagogical project of comparison. Such scenes commented on one another and offered accumulating information for the reader's experience of forming moral judgments. We saw that *The Old Arcadia* text served as a mirror for readers: by reading the text, and by accompanying the character of Gynecia most specifically, we, as readers, observed ourselves in the process of moral judging within a condition of limited knowledge. In *The Old Arcadia,* the mirror appears as an image of promise, enabling comparison that is directed toward increasingly refined moral discernment, deepening our understanding and expanding our vision.

Sidney revised his pastoral romance, changing its tone and its nature. By supplementing his original narrative with digressions and exempla about new characters, changing the chronology of some episodes, and providing additional history of his two princes, he created an essentially different work. There is more new material in Sidney's unfinished revision of the first two and a half Books of *The Old Arcadia* than there is of the original narrative, although that narrative's parts are still there, modified, fragmented, and in slightly different order.[220] Scholarly

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[220] See Woodcock 63 for the changes in Sidney's *New Arcadia,* including generic shifts. For changes in the chronology of episodes and addition of characters, see Stewart 256.

work on Sidney's *New Arcadia* treats Sidney's process of revising;[221] the characteristics of added material;[222] generic considerations and the early modern epic romance; and Sidney's use of his sources, in particular the Greek novel of Heliodorus, the *Aethiopica* or *Ethiopian Story,* from which Sidney drew some of his plot and narrative qualities.[223] Scholars have also explored *The New Arcadia* through the lens of individual characters, especially the morally complex Amphialus and the feminine heroism of patient endurance in the princesses Pamela and Philoclea during their captivity.[224] Others have cast Sidney's text in political terms, discussing it in the context of Machiavellian thought, the politics of the French Huguenot movement in France,[225] and in terms of correlations between various characters and their contemporary counterparts, such as Cecropia's representation of Catherine de' Medici[226] or Mary Queen of Scots.[227] Scholars have also explored the work in relation to its themes of love,[228] complex narrative, and rhetorical patterns.[229]

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[221] Woudhuysen 310–16 and 354. See Woodcock 63 for the argument that Sidney began revising the work between 1583–84.

[222] Woodcock 63–75.

[223] See Sir Philip Sidney, *The New Arcadia,* ed. Victor Skretkowicz (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1987) xiii-li; and Steve Mentz, *Romance for Sale in Early Modern England: The Rise of Prose Fiction* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006) 47–104.

[224] Tiffany Jo Werth, *The Fabulous Dark Cloister: Romance in England after the Reformation* (Baltimore, Johns Hopkins UP, 2011) 30–69.

[225] Richard McCoy, *Rebellion in Arcadia* (New Brunswick: Rutgers UP, 1979) 138–217. Brian Lockey, *Law and Empire in English Renaissance Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2006); Irving Ribner, "Machiavelli and Sidney: The *Arcadia* of 1590," *Studies in Philology* 47 (Apr., 1950) 152–72; Woodcock 63–80.

[226] Katherine Duncan-Jones, *Sir Philip Sidney: Courtier Poet* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1991) 263.

[227] Worden 6–7 sees in Cecropia a "close and pressing" analogy to Mary Queen of Scots but also asserts that "Cecropia can stand for more than one figure of Sidney's time," and acknowledges her identification with Catherine de' Medici.

[228] Victor Skretkowicz, *European Erotic Romance: Philhellene Protestantism, Renaissance Translation and English Literary Politics* (Manchester: Manchester UP, 2010) 168-224.

[229] Nancy Lindheim, *The Structures of Sidney's Arcadia* (Toronto: U of Toronto P, 1982).

I argue in this chapter that Sidney's use of the mirror trope changes. Earlier, we saw that Sidney performed as the Queen's counseling mirror in his *Letter to Queen Elizabeth*. There, he asserted that, if she heeded his advice, she would no longer require his counseling mirror and would herself become the "mirror" of exemplarity to her royal descendants. Subsequently, he offered as a mirror *The Old Arcadia,* which participated in the mirror text genre and offered to his readers an evolving reflection of themselves in the process of refining moral judgment. I contend that Sidney's performance of counsel in the first two Books of the revised or *New Arcadia* changes because aspects of his own identity and poetic project become the material reflected for scrutiny.

In this chapter, I treat Books I and II of *The New Arcadia*. As will become clearer in the discussion, I see Books I and II as fundamentally different in character from Book III. Characters in the revised Books I and II undertake much of the story telling performed by the narrator in *The Old Arcadia*. In a scene in Book II reminiscent of Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales,* the princesses and their rustic attendants invite one another to tell stories. There is no metaphorical mirror, as in a letter or counsel or text, that Sidney can hold up for his reader's viewing and comparison, because aspects of Sidney himself, in the form of his poetic project, become the mirror. I argue that the mirror reflection offered in Books I and II of *The New Arcadia* is an aspect of Sidney's artistic creation as a response to limited autonomy, and that a central concern of the revised Books I and II is the agency offered by artistic endeavor in times of blocked access and frustrated forward motion. First, I show that the mirror as a trope acquires a new character in the revised Books I and II and no longer serves as a prompt to deepen moral understanding, as in *The Old Arcadia*. Second, I argue that the new trope of the revised *Arcadia* is the maze, with its walls and perplexity. Finally, I show that the text's answer to a world in which human autonomy

is perilous and limited, the power of literary creativity, is in turn interrogated by the text. Sidney does not present a mirror in which readers can choose to follow his counsel, as in the *Letter To Queen Elizabeth,* or see themselves in the process of judging, as in *The Old Arcadia,* because Sidney himself becomes the mirror reflected in the work. Sidney's own creative project becomes the object scrutiny. The revised Books I and II thus function to dramatize the use of a mirror for the goal of *nosce te ipsum,* to know thyself.

I. The Mirror

Sidney's friend and literary executor, Fulke Greville, offers a contemporary's view of Sidney's use of the mirror in the revised *Arcadia*. In his *Life of the Renowned Sir Philip Sidney,* Greville describes Sidney's "intent and scope" in *The New Arcadia* as follows:

> to turn the barren Philosophy precepts into pregnant Images of life; and in them, first on the Monarch's part, lively to represent the growth, state, and declination of Princes, change of Government, and lawes: vicissitudes of sedition, faction, succession, confederacies, plantations, with all other errors, or alterations in publique affaires. Then again in the subjects case; the state of favor, disfavor, prosperitie, adversity, emulation, quarrell, undertaking, retiring, hospitality, travail, and all other moodes of private fortunes, or misfortunes. In which traverses (I know) his purpose was to limn out such exact pictures, of every posture in the minde, that any man being forced, in the straines of this life, to pass through any straights, or latitudes of good, or ill fortune, *might (as in a glasse) see how to set a good countenance upon all the discountenances of adversitie, and a stay upon the exorbitant smiling of chance*. (italics mine)[230]

Greville thus sees the Arcadian text as a mirror in its definition as a model. Greville's description creates the impression of a mirror of instruction, of exemplarity, for hard times. I believe Sidney's revised Books I and II are concerned less with the refinement of moral judgment of his

[230] Sir Fulke Greville, *Life of the Renowned Sir Philip Sidney: A Facsimile Reproduction* (Delmar: Scholars' Facsimiles and Reprints, 1984) 18–19.

readers than with the right action to be taken when one's being in the external world is threatened with "adversitie" and must "pass through any straits."

That *The New Arcadia* continues to engage the mirror as a central image is clear from the work's early scenes. In fact, in one respect, early scenes of *The New Arcadia* present a mirror image of Sidney's *Old Arcadia*. *The Old Arcadia* opens with the narrator's account of Basilius's solitary journey in search of counsel: the attempt to satisfy his passions of curiosity and vanity by inquiring into the future from the oracle at Delphi, a journey that, figuratively and physically, leads him away from his realm and his responsibilities as a ruler. The opening journey in *The New Arcadia,* on the other hand, depicts a quest for counsel toward a more worthy source: the two shepherds, Strephon and Claius, seek to aid the shipwrecked Musidorus to recover his friend (Pyrocles), by leading him into the realm of Arcadia to visit Kalander, from whom the "ease of wise counsel shall not be wanting" (68).[231] The opening journey in *The Old Arcadia,* in search of ambiguous counsel from an improper source becomes, in Sidney's *New Arcadia,* a quest for good counsel to aid in the virtuous ideal of friendship. Kalander's role as an exemplar of hospitality shows the mirror used in the sense Greville describes, as a model or paragon. Accordingly, other characters appear as exemplars of virtues to be emulated or vices to be avoided: Argalus, for instance, is a "rare example" of "virtuous constancy" in his love for the disfigured Parthenia (91); and Euarchus lives as a model to his realm, "making his life the example of his laws, and his laws … his axioms arising out of his deeds" (255). The moral complexity and ambiguities of *The Old Arcadia* largely disappear, and Sidney's revised version presents moral absolutes, clearly defined classifications in virtues, vices, and sources of authority.

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[231] These and all subsequent page references are from Sir Philip Sidney, *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia,* ed. Maurice Evans (London: Penguin, 1987). Evans's edition is based on the 1593 printed edition, emended against the 1590 edition and the Folio of 1598, and checked against Feuillerat's collation. Henceforth, page numbers that require distinction between *The Old Arcadia* and *The New Arcadia* will appear as *OA* and *NA.*

Such a shift in the use of the mirror, from pedagogical tool for refining judgement, as in *The Old Arcadia,* to the mirror of exemplarity, suggests a shift from value placed on complexity and ambiguity toward value placed in certainty, of a belief in the strength of truth. If there is belief in an external ideal, to which one must measure one's proximity or distance, one must detach sufficiently from seeing that image to look upon oneself, and, in the words of Musidorus, "to separate yourself a little, if it be possible, from yourself, and let your own mind look upon your own proceedings" (132).[232] As will become clear, the revised Books I and II dramatize Sidney's performance of that process.

The pedagogical mirrors of *The Old Arcadia* give way in the revised Books I and II to multiplicities of correspondences in the natural world, such as the appearances, new to the revision, of Kalander's garden and the Ladon River. These appearances of the mirror show the natural world to be complicit in—a mirror of—the duplication that the mirror of exemplarity invites, to make many Cyruses of one Cyrus,[233] to copy and thus multiply the virtuous ideal of the exemplar. And so in the center of Kalander's garden is "a fair pond whose shaking crystal was a perfect mirror to all the other beauties" (73). The mirror of exemplarity would suggest a world of fertile abundance, of proliferating reflections.

The fruitful mirror also appears early in the text as the mirror of affect. To mirror someone on the level of feeling can open communication and effect change when otherwise one "had not a lively entrances to his senses" (69) or is otherwise separated by some passion or preoccupation. As Strephon and Claius take Musidorus to consult Kalander, for example, they observe Musidorus's sorrow. Their response is "never [to] troubl[e] him either with asking

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[232] For the comparable scene in *The Old Arcadia,* see Sir Philip Sidney, *The Old Arcadia,* ed. Katherine Duncan-Jones (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1999) 17.

[233] This and all subsequent page references are from Van Dorsten's edition of Sidney's *Defence*: see Sir Philip Sidney, A *Defence of Poetry,* ed. J. A. Van Dorsten (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1966) 24.

questions or finding fault with his melancholy, but rather fitting to his dolour dolorous discourses of their own and other folks' misfortunes." The result is that, "ere sorrow was aware," Musidorus becomes able to listen, to enjoy company, and, finally, to "vouchsafe conference" (69). The shepherds' reflection of Musidorus's affect elicits a return of strength and speech in him after the experience that convinces him that Pyrocles is dead and the reflection of the friend is gone. Restoration of reflection resurrects life.

Musidorus similarly reflects Pyrocles, when the latter is changed by the new experience of loving Philoclea. In *The New Arcadia,* the "counsel" scene between the two princes is divided into two episodes, separated by Kalander's invitation to the hunt, Pyrocles's secret departure, and Musidorus's re-encounter with him after Pyrocles has disguised himself as an Amazon. The first episode centers on Musidorus's counsel on love, the second on dressing as a woman and the consequent questions about outward appearance and inner identity. At first, Musidorus is full of advice and caution for his friend, in whom he observes so negative a change. He is prepared to argue with Pyrocles about the deleterious effects of solitude and idleness and to urge him to remember the importance of action. Instead, "when he found Pyrocles leave that and fall into such an affected praising of the place, he left it likewise and joined with him therein, because he found him in that humour utter more store of passion" (113). It is when Musidorus changes his tactic to follow Pyrocles's temper, in praising the countryside and venturing the idea of "lovers," that Pyrocles can divulge the truth of his predicament to his friend. Mirroring on the level of affect is more than empathic feeling in Sidney's work. Using language to express and supply an identical temper ("dolorous" or "affected praising") can awaken expression and articulation in the reflected friend. In these instances, the mirror is an awakening device, a source of

understanding vision that renders the object of reflection more responsive and alive. But these are the exceptions.

The mirror of Sidney's revised Books I and II predominantly figures stasis or impasse—an entrapment in the alternation between similar or identical reflections. This is clear in the opening scene between the two lamenting shepherds, Strephon and Claius. It has long been understood that Sidney used as a source for his revised opening the analogous scene that opened Jorge de Montemayor's pastoral romance in Spanish, *Diana*.[234] Source study is not my focus, but it is worth noting for understanding my points here that Sidney chose to omit a plethora of mirror uses appearing in Montemayor's treatment, although elsewhere Sidney translated Sireno's verse in which a mirror serves to praise Diana's beauty.[235] The *Diana* also employs the familiar trope of the mirror of the lover's eyes, which the opening scene of *The New Arcadia* omits as well.[236] That Sidney's mirror presents the mirror of stasis is all the more evident from a comparison to the opening of the *Diana,* which devotes significant attention to the inconstancy of Diana and mutability in general; Sidney translated but omitted from his Arcadian world Sireno's verse contemplation on mutability.[237]

The mirror use that *The New Arcadia* does import from Montemayor is the mirror of exemplarity, although Sidney omitted this aspect in the treatment of Strephon and Claius. In *The New Arcadia,* Strephon and Claius are friendly rivals. In the *Diana,* one shepherd learns from the

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[234] See Kennedy's edition of Yong's translation of George of Montemayor's *Diana* xxxvii and Skretkowicz's edition of Sidney's *New Arcadia* 508.

[235] See Ringler 159 for Sidney's verse, "Of this high grace with blisse conjoyn'd," number 29 in *Certain Sonnets,* Sidney's collection of miscellaneous poems; and Ringler 423 for dating this and number 28 from 1581 or earlier. The song turns the mirror into a trope of praise for Diana, as she is paid back in the coin of her beauty when the loving shepherd holds a mirror up for her while she combs her hair.

[236] For the prevalence, particularly in the 1580s, of the reflected image in the lover's eyes, see Grabes 88.

[237] See Ringler 157 for Sidney's English translation from Montemayor, "What changes here, o haire," number 28 of *Certain Sonnets.* Sireno addresses a keepsake of Diana's hair to lament and reflect upon change.

other how to face the adversity of Diana's inconstancy. Bartholomew Yong's translation shows how the *Diana*'s opening scene dramatizes the exemplary mirror; the shepherd Syrenus describes his counterpart, Sylvanus, as follows: "an example of patience to those who know not how to suffer the adversities, that fortune puts before their eyes … how much more then ought this unfortunate Shepherd [myself] to emulate thee, by seeing thee suffer thy greefes with such content.[238] Yong's translation of Montemayor's opening scene is surprisingly similar to Greville's account of Sidney's revised *Arcadia,* as quoted at the outset of discussion of the mirror—even to the word, "adversitie."

That *The New Arcadia* is concerned with mirrored correspondences is evident from the opening lines. The first action takes place at the vernal equinox: "the sun, running a most even course, becomes an indifferent arbiter between night and day" (61). The world is thus perfectly balanced between mirror images of light and darkness. Correspondences inform the world the text draws us into: Strephon "set[s] first down in his darkened countenance a doleful copy of what he would speak" (61). These mirrored elements do not offer the comparative pedagogical experience of *The Old Arcadia,* in which the "moral mirror" of "difference" led to moral instruction and learning.[239] *The New Arcadia* presents still points, where reflections are so identical that nothing can be compared; change cannot be effected; and characters are caught in stasis.

Such points of unchanging reflection, the mirror of stasis or of circular motion that entraps its participants, serve as the context for the shepherds' lamentations. When the two shepherds describe their love for Urania and lament her absence, we do encounter the Platonic

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[238] Yong's translation of Montemayor's *Diana,* 18.

[239] Taylor 198.

progression of contemplation that leads from preoccupation with earthly matters to heavenly excellencies. In a theme that recurs throughout the work, contemplation of a beloved creates an ennobling effect on the lover. Its depiction here relies on use of the image of the mirror, for the best of reasons: self-knowledge. The lover is raised to more virtuous actions by thoughts of the beloved and inspired to self-scrutiny in the service of another: “Hath not the desire to seem worthy in her eyes made us, when others were sleeping, to sit viewing the course of the heavens; when others were running at Base, to run over learned writings; when others mark their sheep, *we to mark ourselves*?” (63–64) (italics mine). This is not the mirror of Narcissus, with its longing for self-gratification and its concomitant moral warning against excessive introspection, but a mirror turned upon the self for the ennobling purpose of self-knowledge and becoming more worthy.

At the same time, though, in counterpoint to the progression toward virtue and self-knowledge, mirroring imagery and rhetorical structure in this scene reveal an immobility, a simultaneous entrapment of the two shepherds in unfulfilled longing and sense of loss. In a rhetorical structure that is itself a mirror, and subsequently mirrors itself, a perfectly balanced call and response to action is followed by a mirroring “as … so” phrase, in which Strephon recounts to Claius how they are caught within a mirroring circle: “Well, then,” Strephon narrates, “remembrance commanded; we obeyed, and here we find that *as* our remembrance came ever clothed unto us in the form of this place, *so* this place gives new heat to the fever of our languishing remembrance” (62) (italics mine). A mirroring rhetorical structure of equalities, subject and verb, subject and verb, ironically heightens the call and answer of unequal forces. Each rhetorical element receives equal weight—“remembrance commanded; we obeyed”—but the meaning describes the inequality of command and obedience, of action performed, while in

the power of a greater force. In the gloss to his edition of *The New Arcadia,* Skretkowicz characterizes “remembrance” as “the surviving memory of another person,”[240] yet the shepherds’ love for Urania is clear. The scene is dominated by the force of “over busy remembrance”—that “racking steward” who exacts the payment of “rent” and compels the shepherds to reflect upon their longing for a love they cannot have (61–62). Memory itself becomes a mirror, but one that imprisons them in their longing.

Second, in the subsequent, mirroring phrase (quoted above), Strephon recounts that a consequence of their obedience is an entrapment in a cognitive circle: “*as* our remembrance came ever clothed unto us in the form of this place, *so* this place gives new heat to the fever of our languishing remembrance” (62) (italics mine). The “memory places” discussed by Yates suggest fruition and abundance created by a cognitive faculty that associates places with things and thus renders numbers of entities accessible to the mind.[241] In a play on “place” as the prompt of memory and the island of Cithera, the mirroring yields only imprisonment in frustrated longing. With Urania absent and love and action having nowhere to go, the shepherds cannot get out. The circular, mirroring structure is emblematic of a cognitive and emotional immobility. Thus far, the revised *Arcadia*’s mirror does not promise abundant progress through comparison. Even the fruitful mirror of self-scrutiny and self-knowledge, inspired by the quest to be deserving of a beloved, is attached to rhetorical structures and images which bind the viewers in stasis and unfulfilled desire.

In fact, mirroring structures that suggest stasis and entrapment proliferate in this opening scene. Skretkowicz argues that the use of hyperbolic terms shows Strephon’s “idealistic

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[240] Sidney, *The New Arcadia,* ed. Skretkowicz 508.

[241] See F. A. Yates, *The Art of Memory* (London: Harmondsworth, 1978).

naiveté,"[242] yet Strephon continues to use phrasing indicative of static alternation: "O Urania, blessed be thou, Urania, the sweetest fairness and fairest sweetness!" (62). According to Hoskins's characterization of Sidney's rhetoric, this phrase presents *antimetabole,* a replication of phrases or clauses in reverse or inverse order[243]—a mirror. Strephon is unable to continue to speak in this moment and falls to sobbing: Alexander argues that this *antimetabole* (mirror) is the cause of Strephon's inability to continue to speak, one example of *aposiopesis,* or incompletion, so characteristic of *The New Arcadia*.[244] Mirrors of rhetoric and imagery accompany cessation of speech and agency; they are mirrors indicative of immobility, not comparisons for moral development and experiential knowledge.

Even Claius's attempt to console his friend falls back into disempowerment. He affirms the ennobling value of their love, reminding Strephon of the progress of contemplation to ever-higher things. He breaks out of circular rhetoric to formulate a comparative observation—the mirror's pedagogical mode—but, in the end, it, too, reveals compulsion by a greater force: "As well may sheep forget to fear when they spy wolves as we can miss such fancies when we see any place made happy by her treading" (62–63). Claius, too, is in the end unable to speak outside of the circular "as … so" phrase used by Strephon, and thus, even while insisting on the motion and progress caused by love, mirrors his friend's rhetorical expression of circular entrapment:

> Who can choose that saw her but think where she stayed, where she walked, where she turned, where she spoke? But what is all this? Truly no more but as this place served us to think of those things, so those things serve as places to call to memory more excellent matters. (62)

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[242] According to Victor Skretkowicz, "what Sidney's characters say, and how they speak, tends to indicate how their given personalities become shaded by psychological states. Idealistic naiveté is reflected in Strephon's exaggerated "sweetest fairness and fairest sweetness": see Sidney, *The New Arcadia,* ed. Skretkowicz xl.

[243] Hoskins 14 qtd. in Sidney, *The New Arcadia,* ed. Skretkowicz 507.

[244] See Gavin Alexander, "Sidney's Interruptions," *Studies in Philology* 98.2 (2001) 184–204. "The *antimetabole* ('sweetest fairenesse and fairest sweetnesse') seems to cause the *aposiopesis* here," Alexander 198.

In the very course of asserting that contemplation of Urania's actions transports them to "more excellent matters," Claius falls back into the "as … so" pattern with which Strephon had revealed immobility. As the banks of Cythera call to mind Urania's actions, so her actions serve to evoke what is "more excellent," but the rhetorical structure of mirrored alternation remains at odds with the meaning of progressive movement. The content of progress remains bound in rhetorically structured (and mirrored) equalities.

Claius tries one more time to assert the upward motion of increasingly higher being to comfort his friend for Urania's absence; but the climax to which the *gradatio* phrasing builds ends in mirrored and circular phrasing, once again. Sidney's rhetorical structures continually emphasize imprisonment in longing and loss, even when Platonic progression is being simultaneously asserted as a source of "joy" to them "in the midst of all woes":

> No, no, let us think with consideration, and consider with acknowledging, and acknowledge with admiration, and admire with love, and love with joy in the midst of all woes. Let us in such sort think, I say, that our poor eyes were so enriched as to behold, and our low hearts so exalted as to love, a maid who is such that as the greatest thing the world can shew [sic] is her beauty, so the least thing that may be praised in her is her beauty. (63)

Claius lapses into the mirroring phrasing, despite his efforts to elevate thoughts to admiration and love. His efforts to comfort his friend with increasingly elevated motion, from "poor eyes" to "behold" and "from low hearts" to "love," stop abruptly with the mirrored "as … so" phrases about Urania's beauty. That, after all, is where they are stuck. Her beauty should elevate them, but it serves as the last in a series of reflected alternations between which the two shepherds are both immobile and unhappy. The mirroring structures of their rhetoric reveal as much about the shepherds as do the ideas with which they try to comfort and convince themselves.

And, arguably, the two shepherds are mirror images of each other as well, not opposed through difference, but more similar in correspondence, since love for Urania's beauty has

"taught [both] the beholders chastity" (64) and allowed them to remain friends rather than rivals, the friend relationship characteristically described in the Renaissance as one of reflection.[245] The shepherds' functions throughout the scene consist of one shepherd's accounting and a subsequent attempt at consolation by the other: like alternating strophe and antistrophe, Strephon and Claius say to each other part of the narration. Their friendship and their quest to be worthy of Urania's love prevent their participation in mirroring processes from the moral censure of Narcissus figures. Rather, the mirrors in their depictions reveal the immobility when attempts at virtuous contemplation reach impasse. We are less in a moral world of fine distinctions than in a condition of immobility.

Katherine Duncan-Jones considers several possible identities for the figure of Urania in the *Arcadias,* including Heavenly Beauty and a representation of Sidney's sister, the Countess of Pembroke.[246] From the perspective of the mirror, Urania is also connected to reflection emblematic of loss. If Urania is the impetus for self-scrutiny and self-knowledge, she is also the mirror of empathy and a depiction of reflected light, neither of which progresses. When she sees Claius weeping, Strephon recalls, "she laid her hand over thine eyes … as if she would conceal them from other and yet herself feel some of thy sorrow." But in the next moment, even a gesture marking fellowship of affect introduces loss; then "did she put her foot into the boat" to depart from them. Claius advises that the best way to look for her is in indirect, reflected light, the evidence of her goodness in her works rather than by directly gazing at her (62–63). This is a mirror that cannot work, of a reflection that does not answer. Urania's reflection recedes into a

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[245] Cicero's articulation of the classical view of friendship became the Renaissance ideal. See Cicero, "On Friendship," *On Old Age, On Friendship, On Divination,* ed. William Armistead Falconer (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1996) 133: "he who looks upon a true friend, looks as it were, upon a sort of image of himself."

[246] See Katherine Duncan-Jones, "Sidney's Urania," *The Review of English Studies* ns 17.66 (May, 1966) 123–32, especially 124 for the view that Urania is the Countess.

distance, creating joy in the waves and the winds through a pathetic fallacy, but leaving the shepherds with sadness and longing, albeit with the accompanying consolation of elevating self-knowledge. In the opening pages of Book I, then, the mirror has appeared as rhetorical structure that marks immobility, or as alternation between corresponding likenesses that results in imprisonment—or both simultaneously.

In the shepherds' encounter with the shipwrecked Musidorus, we find again the static mirroring that occurs within a context of gestures of progress. The task of saving Musidorus appears in evolving, causally linked action. Speaking of the shepherds' glimpse of Musidorus's shape in the water, the narrator explains the progression of emotions which allow Strephon and Claius to rescue Musidorus from drowning: "That sight increased their compassion, and their compassion called up their care" (64). A similar advancement characterizes their life-saving actions: they lift his feet over his head, expel water from his mouth, lay him upon the shore and warm him with chafing. Their agency is juxtaposed against a mirroring rhetorical structure that shows Musidorus in destructive stasis. Musidorus tries to cast himself back into the water, which confuses the shepherds, "to whom it seemed that before, being in appearance dead had yet saved his life, and now, coming to his life should be a cause to procure his death" (64). The two clauses mirror one another, life and death, "saved" and "procure[d]," in opposed (mirroring) positions to one another. The sequence of actions on the part of the shepherds is stopped when characters and reader believe that friendship between Musidorus and Pyrocles, whom the shepherds will perceive to be "some dear friend" (65) has been severed, friendship which, again, in classical and Renaissance terms is so frequently viewed as a mirrored correspondence.[247] The absence of mirroring reflection initiates the phrases indicative of immobility and loss. That is, Musidorus's

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[247] See n. 245.

despair has been initiated by his "looking round about to the uttermost limits of sight," crying out Pyrocles's name, and not so much as "seeing nor hearing cause of comfort" (64). Musidorus has sought his mirrored self in Pyrocles, who cannot be seen, and, from this absence of an answering likeness, the static mirror usage begins: Musidorus's rescue effected and his life extinguished in one dyad of opposing clauses.

The shepherds counsel Musidorus to be hopeful about his friend's safety by urging him to look at himself as an example of unlikely survival, more in keeping with the mirror usage of *The Old Arcadia,* in which one reads correspondence for instruction: "they wished him, if opinion of some body's perishing bred such desperate anguish in him, that he should be comforted by his own proof, who had lately escaped as apparent danger as any might be" (65). But Musidorus refuses to read the reflection and will not be comforted; "it is not for me to attend so high a blissfulness" (65). Instead, in what will prove the more characteristic exchange of *The New Arcadia,* Musidorus proposes an economic bargain and he finds a boat "for the hire," exchanging contents of the coffer for a means to find the body of his friend (65). The exchange that functions effectively in the first two Books of *The New Arcadia* is more economic than visual. Numerous examples of recompense serve the plot, and both princes characterize love as economic exchange.[248]

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[248] For examples of economic exchanges as parts of the plot, see Musidorus's "defraying" (or reimbursing) the fishermen with his ring (69); his "hir[ing]" Menalcas's service to deliver the letter which imprisoned him (173); and Musidorus's purchase of service to Dametas through gold (174). For examples of the princes' characterization of love as economic exchange, see, for example, Pyrocles-Zelmane's complaint to love that "thou hast employed my love there where all love is deserved, and for recompense, hast sent me more love than ever I desired" (219); and Musidorus's description of Pamela (through his address to Mopsa) as "the overthrow of my desires, and yet the recompense of my overthrow" (223). The *OED* notes that from the 15th century forward, meanings of the term "recompense" revolve around ideas of payment: compensation for trouble and services (*OED* 3); payment "for a thing given or received" (*OED* 4); compensation for a loss or injury (*OED* 5a). Both "recompense" examples appear close to images of the maze and the frustration the trope articulates of a lack of a way forward.

Except for a moment that portrays the mirror of friendship with an answering voice when Pyrocles is found, and examples of mirroring on the level of empathy (as discussed above), mirror usages that are static and immobilizing predominate in *The New Arcadia*'s opening scenes. Even the mirror of friendship occurs within the context of frustrated, stymied desire or action. A good illustration is Musidorus's search for Pyrocles in the midst of the floating wreck. When he encounters Pyrocles alive, Musidorus's visual scanning of the horizon for the reflecting friend is answered:

> Which when Musidorus saw, though he were almost as much ravished with joy as they with astonishment, he leaped to the mariner and took the rope out of his hand, and saying, "Dost thou live, and art thou well!" who answered, "Thou canst tell best, since most of my well-being stands in thee." (67)

But immediately afterward the friends are separated. Musidorus must watch as a pirate ship gives chase. No mariners will take Musidorus to Pyrocles's rescue—a clear moment of stymied action and heroism—and it appears that Pyrocles will be enslaved. In *The New Arcadia*'s opening scenes, then, the trope of the mirror exemplifies the inability to act.

II. The Maze

The Oxford English Dictionary reports that "maze" (or "mase") first appears in manuscript c. 1430 (composed 1386) in Chaucer's *Legend of Good Women* (*OED* II.4a).[249] Its definition does not distinguish between the terms "maze" and "labyrinth": "A structure designed as a puzzle, consisting of a complicated network of winding and interconnecting paths or passages, only one of which is the correct route through; a labyrinth; (occas. in pl.) the windings of a labyrinth" (*OED* II.4a). It is this meaning of the maze that I explore in Books I and II of

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[249] Chaucer, *Legend of Good Women* 2014: "The hous is krynkeled to and fro, And hath so queynte weyes for to go For it is shapen as the mase is wrought" (*OED* II.4a).

Sidney's *New Arcadia*. It is well known that the myth of Ariadne, with "its central image of thread winding through a labyrinth," serves to represent narrative.[250] Sheila Delany also discusses the labyrinth as an architectural device, particularly when mazes were built into cathedral floors, most famously at Chartres, and in churches in England, France and Italy.[251] A church maze executed on one's knees was considered the equivalent of making a pilgrimage; like the pilgrimage, the maze became an emblem of life itself.[252] Indeed, the plot of *The New Arcadia* resembles a labyrinth.[253] Tales are nested within tales, so that readers can lose track of how they have arrived at a given episode. This nesting or winding and consequent effect of becoming lost in the narrative is evident from the outset: for example, Musidorus is invited to enjoy Kalander's garden; but Kalander's grief and subsequent absence prompts the steward to relate to Musidorus the circumstances surrounding Kalander's missing son, Clitophon; this tale, in turn, presents the story of Argalus and Parthenia, which in turn develops the story of Demagoras (rival to Argalus) and the battle with the Helots. Not only have we progressed from a pastoral *locus amoenus* to

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[250] Sheila Delany, *The Naked Text: Chaucer's* Legend of Good Women, (Berkeley: U of California P, 1994) 210.

[251] Delany 211; see this discussion for details on the maze in English churches, where it was less common, although the cathedral at Ely contains a pavement maze. In England, Delany explains, mazes were found more readily in outside structures such as earthenwork, stone, hedge, and turf. For the influence church mazes exercised on dances on the continent and in England, see Thomas M. Greene, "Labyrinth Dances in the French and English Renaissance," *Renaissance Quarterly* 54.4, Part II (Winter, 2001) 1403–66. For the popularity of the maze in Elizabethan gardening, see Elisabeth Woodhouse, "Spirit of the Elizabethan Garden," *Garden History* 27.1 (Summer, 1999) 10–31; and, by the same author, "Propaganda in Paradise: The Symbolic Garden Created by the Earl of Leicester at Kenilworth, Warwickshire," *Garden History* 36.1 (Spring, 2008) 94–113.

[252] See Delany 211 for the central tile of destination, "Le Ciel"; she writes, "the labyrinth came to Chaucer already glossed as an image of life."

[253] Episodes of *The New Arcadia* are labyrinthine, but see Delany 210–11 for a caution about applying the metaphor to narrative: she writes that "although medieval narrative structure may well (loosely speaking) be 'labyrinthine,' no labyrinth has two parallel or interlocking paths as is the case with *entrelacement.*" That Sidney is also engaging in the romance convention of "interlace plotting" is clear from Woodcock's discussion (see Woodcock 66) and from *The New Arcadia's* position within the debate about the best heroic presentation, single action epic or multiple actions and heroes in romance. For a summary of the terms of the debate and *The New Arcadia*'s position within it, see the "Introduction" to Maurice Evans's edition of Sidney's *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia* 20–21. For a contemporary statement of the debate, see the 1559 *Discorso Intorno Al Comporre dei Romanzi*: Giraldo Cinthio, *On Romances,* Henry L. Snuggs, trans., (Lexington: U of Kentucky P, 1968). Cinthio uses "romanzo" as a synonym for "heroic poem."

civil war, but, as readers, we are not quite sure how we got there. It is easy to lose track of the characters we have met in the digressions that punctuate the scenes we believe we are following.

Matthew Woodcock's recent study of Sidney's works attests to "the highly convoluted way in which the story is told, particularly in Books 1 and 2, through a series of flashbacks, episodes set in the 'present', and reports of 'off-stage events.'"[254] Woodcock observes:

> the action is continually interrupted by shepherds and messengers running in breathlessly with news and additional tales, verbally recreating an ensemble cast of characters and leading the reader off into a labyrinth of plots and subplots, of tales within tales. Episodes set out in a linear fashion in the *Old Arcadia* are now fragmented and distributed through the expanded text.[255]

One could suppose that the text's enticement of the reader into labyrinthine plots made more perplexing by confusing chronology and the numbers of characters whose tales form nested episodes is meant to guide the reader into forests of confusion, much like the Socratic aporia, in which a moment of cognitive impasse allows true learning to occur. My concern is less for the moments of realization that might dawn, Dante-like, in the middle of a dark wood; but rather in what I see to be the text's preoccupation, first, with recognizing the walls that thwart forward motion and, second, developing the strategies to surmount or pierce through them. The trope of the maze expresses the limited autonomy in which human beings can perform actions and execute choices in Sidney's New Arcadian world. The work becomes increasingly an action-filled meditation (the oxymoron is intentional) on how to strategize around or through what thwarts our ability to act and move forward. If *The Old Arcadia* explores moral questions surrounding the relationships between means and ends, *The New Arcadia* asks how we achieve any ends at all, when all means appear to be blocked.

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[254] Woodcock 66.

[255] Woodcock 66.

As we saw, the mirror that figures stasis or impasse appears most prevalently in the first episodes of the work. Representations of the maze appear in Book I and proliferate in Book II. I am not suggesting a design in which one trope takes over for the other at a transitional moment; rather that the maze trope emerges when the static mirror can no longer express adequately the degree of impasse and thwarted mobility.

In its first explicit appearance, though, the maze appears in contrast to blocked action, that is, it is imagined in conjunction with an alternative to the lack of access to Basilius's court. On the one hand, its appearance here summarizes changes in actions until this moment, but it serves equally as a point of departure for measuring changes about to occur. So, poised at the intersection of past events and a choice that will determine the future, it becomes an emblem of life. Soon after arrival in Arcadia, Musidorus wishes to leave it. The narrator explains that Musidorus has learned all that he can about the country, its inhabitants, and its laws: "and, seeing the court could not be visited, prohibited to all men but to certain shepherdish people, he greatly desired a speedy return to his own country after the many mazes of fortune he had trodden" (109–10). The reference to the maze, absent in the comparable moment of *The Old Arcadia,*[256] suggests the end of a journey, part of a homecoming after adventures, like the battles with the Helots, and thus a marker of *The New Arcadia*'s generic shift toward the heroic. Musidorus is reflecting upon paths traversed, not thwarted. The use of "trodden" nods to the mazes walked in churches as an emblem of pilgrimage and of life. The phrase, "mazes of fortune," appears in the service of a solution to the lack of access to Basilius's court, an obstacle mirrored rhetorically by

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[256] The comparable moment in *The Old Arcadia* omits all reference to a maze. See Sidney, *The Old Arcadia* 12: "For Musidorus, having informed himself fully of the strength and riches of the country; of the nature of the people, and of the manner of their laws; and seeing the duke's court could not be visited, and that they came not without danger to that place, prohibited to all men but to certain shepherds, grew no less weary of his abode there than marveled of the great delight Pyrocles took in that place."

the interrupting appearance of the modifying clause, "prohibited to all men but to certain shepherdish people." From this point, Musidorus is able to exercise agency; he chooses his path, remaining in Arcadia, if only to seek to understand the change he has observed in his friend, who has by now become altered by seeing Philoclea's picture. In this use, confrontation with walls and the distress of immobility have not yet arisen. The text introduces the trope at the moment of choosing a path, to remain or to go home, to confront change or to retreat.

With its next usage, however, the maze begins to supplant the mirror as the figure of impasse. It appears in the text immediately following a rhetorical mirroring of immobility. In the counsel scene between the two princes, Pyrocles relates to Musidorus the predicament resulting from his Amazonian disguise; Basilius believes the disguise, and Gynecia sees through it; both are offering him a consequent, unwanted love, which hinders his pursuit of their daughter. Pyrocles is trapped by the very disguise he had created to serve him in opening access to Basilius's court and the presence of Philoclea. In Chapter 2, we explored Gynecia's character in *The Old Arcadia* for a rich and morally complex interior life; in *The New Arcadia,* the "blocking" quality of Gynecia's character type becomes more pronounced.[257] Lamenting to Musidorus the quandary created by Gynecia, Pyrocles references a static mirror through the rhetorical figure of *antimetabole*: "it was my foolish fortune or unfortunate folly to be known by her" (150). Even though Gynecia's love for Pyrocles prevents her from revealing his identity to Basilius, the "dead end" that Pyrocles faces in his pursuit is clear—Gynecia causes obstruction. The presence of two unwelcome lovers as obstacles to Pyrocles's suit creates a situation for which he can find no solution. And, as the narrator reports, neither can his friend. The figuration shifts from the

[257] See Chapter 2 for a discussion of Gynecia's classical and medieval precedents, and for Northrop Frye's argument that Gynecia is an incarnation of the "blocking" character, a stock figure who hinders the suits of young lovers in ancient drama.

mirror to the maze: "Musidorus recommended to his best discourse, all which Pyrocles had told him, but therein he found such intricateness that he could see no way to lead him out of the maze" (150–51). Now, the maze presents walls that prevent forward motion. From this point forward, uses of "intricate," "intricacy," and "perplexity" increase. Pyrocles will continue the image of an imprisoning intricacy in his monologue and attempt at self-counsel after Basilius presents his suit openly: "But what wilt thou do, Pyrocles? Which way canst thou find to rid thee of thy intricate troubles?" (219).

When Musidorus similarly laments the difficulties in pursuing Pamela, who disdains a shepherd's low birth, he, too, invokes the maze, this time in a figurative referencing. It is worth comparing the comparable moments in the *Old* and *New Arcadia* texts to understand this example of Sidney's new trope of puzzlement and limited agency:

> Dorus … was a great while like them that in the midst of their leap know not where to light. Which in doleful manner, he would often times utter, and make those desert places of counsel in his miseries. But in the end (seeing that nothing is achieved before it be attempted, and that lying still doth never go forward), he resolved to take this mean for the manifesting of his mind. (*OA* 86–87)

> Truly in such cogitations have I sometimes so long stood that methought my feet began to grow into the ground, with such a darkness and heaviness of mind that I might easily have been persuaded to have resigned over my very essence. But love (which one time layeth burdens, another time giveth wings) when I was at the lowest of my downward thoughts, pulled up my heart to remember that nothing is achieved before it be thoroughly attempted, and that lying still doth never go forward; and that therefore it was time, now or never, to sharpen my invention to pierce through the hardness of this enterprise, never ceasing to assemble all my conceits one after the other how to manifest both my mind and estate. Till at last I lighted and resolved on this way. (*NA* 222)

The New Arcadia retains some of the original image of "lighting" upon a strategy, but *The Old Arcadia* presents Musidorus's quandary more like a mere suspension in indecision. In *The New Arcadia,* love gives Musidorus the experience of upward motion ("wings") and its opposite

("downward thoughts"), which he transposes to his purpose of moving forward: "lying still doth never go forward" (222). Even allowing for the varieties in punctuation in Renaissance transcriptions, the "lying still doth never go forward" is parenthetical in *The Old Arcadia,* in a subordinate, modifying clause; but, in Sidney's revised *Arcadia,* it acquires emphasis and becomes more emblematic of being positioned within the maze, articulating the choice to stand still, to go forward, or to pierce through the "hardness" or "obduracy" (*OED* 8a.) of obstacles. Sidney's *New Arcadia* contains more of the element of movement –or inability to move—in space. Musidorus finds himself in a figurative maze and knows that he faces a wall. When he describes to Pyrocles the effect of Pamela's indifference, he refers to walls explicitly: "you may well find you have beaten your sorrow against such a wall which, with the force of rebound, may well make your sorrow stronger" (234). The image of natural stasis—of becoming rooted to the ground like a tree—contrasts to the abundant organic processes that appear so often throughout the text.[258]

In associating the maze with the quest of love, *The New Arcadia* thus builds upon the two instances that appear in both *Arcadia* texts, the maze as emblem of the beloved or as love inaccessible. Pyrocles's remembered song from Philisides, recited as a blazon of Philoclea at the moment of enjoying her love, becomes, in *The New Arcadia,* Pyrocles's view of Philoclea as she bathes in the river Ladon: "In whose incirclets if you gaze/ Your eyes may tread a lover's

[258] Many of them appear in Musidorus's voice: to name a few, Pamela's living image is "planted" in him (224); his good luck "breed[s]" (228); Euarchus "engraffed" (or implanted) confidence in his subjects (228) and Leonatus, in Musidorus's voice, appeals to affection for a father "engraffed" in a son's heart (277).

maze."[259] In both versions of the *Arcadia,* Musidorus characterizes his love for Pamela as that which "left in himself nothing but a maze of longing and a dungeon of sorrow" (229).[260]

III. The Poetry

That Sidney turned to poetic creation at moments of stymied ambition and inability to act is well known.[261] It is generally accepted that he turned away from political ambitions, at least temporarily, and retreated to the country home of his sister at Wilton during periods of absence from court. In his analysis of *aposiopesis,* or incompletion, in Sidney's life and writing, Gavin Alexander argues that *The New Arcadia* presents "Sidney's apprehensions about his role in life and about the moral efficacy of his fictions."[262] Alexander sees the character of Amphialus as a "figure" for those apprehensions, in part because of Amphialus's "fundamental inability to connect his best intentions to the outcomes he produces."[263] I see *The New Arcadia* as interrogating elements of the poetic project, particularly positions that hover as criticisms of poetry articulated in the *Defence*. My focus is on scenes between Pamela and Musidorus in Book II, before the text develops the character of Amphialus. That the inability to act appears in the context of love scenes in *The New Arcadia* does not mean that love is exclusively the realm in which Sidney is exploring strategies to overcome limited autonomy. It is now understood in

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[259] See Sidney, *The Old Arcadia* 208 for the passage at the end of Book III; see Sidney, *Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia* 288 for its appearance in Book II of *The New Arcadia.*

[260] See Sidney, *The Old Arcadia* 92, in Book II, for the corresponding moment.

[261] "The *Arcadia* itself originated in Sidney's attempt to turn a burdensome restraint into an opportunity for heroic effort, at least in the mediated form of literary labor. In fact, Sidney was at Wilton because he was involuntarily rusticated by Queen Elizabeth": Sue P. Starke, *The Heroines of English Pastoral Romance,* (Cambridge: Brewer, 2007) 44. For treatment of Sidney's literary endeavors during periods of enforced *otium* and his attempts to find employment, see Duncan-Jones, *Courtier Poet* 134–40, 216–17, 218–20, 222–25, 229–30, 249–50, and 272–74.

[262] Alexander 201.

[263] Alexander 201, 199.

scholarship about the Renaissance that presentations of frustrated desire in love can veil references to frustration in ambitions more political and public.[264] We know that Sidney's political ambitions were thwarted many times, and at the time of revising this work.[265] A substantial part of *The New Arcadia*'s plot involves two princely heroes who experience blocked aspirations and devise strategies to overcome them. In the course of exploring an issue so biographically important, Sidney ultimately creates a mirror of and for himself.

Sidney also creates a mirror of his poetic project by dramatizing a progression of generic registers, from pastoral and comedic, to the tragic mode, and, finally, the heroic. Such a progression in the princely education undertaken by Musidorus and Pamela in the revised Book II mirrors the Virgilian hierarchy of genres and the humanist ideal of advancing from pastoral to epic that Sidney enacts in his revision of the *Arcadia*.[266] In Musidorus's sustained narrative in the revised Book II, plot elements from *The Old Arcadia* become the occasion for an interrogation of the literary project and of princely education. The educative process thus dramatized in scenes between Musidorus and Pamela in Book II also moves on a continuum from deceit to truth. The text keeps the question of poetry as source of truth or deceit at the forefront of the narrative.[267]

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[264] For an articulation of this view, see Arthur Marotti, *John Donne: Coterie Poet,* (Madison: U of Wisconsin P, 1986).

[265] As one example, see Duncan-Jones, *Courtier Poet* 256–59 for the failed diplomatic mission to console Catherine de' Medici for the death of her son, the duc d'Alençon; the French monarchy stopped mourning sooner than expected, and Sidney was recalled before leaving England. This would have been doubly humiliating after being sent to offer consolation for the death of a man whose policies and presence in England Sidney had fought, at some personal risk, to eliminate.

[266] For the high value placed on generic classification in the latter half of the sixteenth century, see Daniel Javitch, "Italian Epic Theory" in *The Cambridge History of Criticism: The Renaissance,* ed. Glyn P. Norton (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2006) 205. For Sidney's codification of genres in his *Defence,* as well as theories of the period, see Ann E. Imbrie, "Defining Nonfiction Genres," *Renaissance Genres: Essays on Theory, History, and Interpretation,* ed. Barbara Lewalski (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1986) 59–60.

[267] I use the terms poetry and stories interchangeably in this discussion, guided by Sidney's argument in the *Defence* 27 that "it is not rhyming and versing that maketh a poet."

Poetry as a source of lies is one of the objections that Sidney answers in his *Defence*.[268] As I chart a generic progression from pastoral to epic as it appears in Sidney's revised Books I and II, I show in what ways the text keeps the anxiety about truth and dissembling before the reader.

In both *Arcadias,* Musidorus gains access to the sequestered Pamela by taking on the disguise of a shepherd. She disdains his low estate, so he devises a way to reveal the truth of his princely identity. In *The Old Arcadia,* as soon as she learns his true identity, she agrees to flee the realm in his company, prompted by her father's strange behavior, her sense of an unjust confinement, and her confidence in Musidorus's virtue (*OA* 94). In *The New Arcadia,* the strategies necessary to lead to Pamela's eventual capitulation are more elaborate and more lengthily portrayed. In *The New Arcadia,* the very act of disguising raises anxiety about dissembling, and associates Dorus's choices to an exploration of—and education in—generic modes, interrogating, by implication, the literary project as a whole.

Sidney stated in the *Defence* that poetry creates a golden world through art, that poetry alone can improve upon nature through the poet's making:

> Only the poet, disdaining to be tied to any such subjection, lifted up with the vigour of his own invention, doth grow in effect another nature, in making thins

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[268] See Sidney, *Defence* 52–53 for the objections to poetry that he quotes from detractors: "First, that there being many other more fruitful knowledges, a man might better spend his time in them than in this. Secondly, that it is the mother of lies. Thirdly, that it is the nurse of abuse, infecting us with many pestilent desires; with a siren's sweetness drawing the mind to the serpent's tail of sinful fancies …. And lastly, and chiefly, they cry out with open mouth as if they had outshot Robin Hood, that Plato banished them out of his commonwealth." For the view that Sidney's *Defence* contains an opposing strain of antipoetic opinion from political exigency and the pressures of his militant Protestantism, see Peter C. Herman, *Squitter-Wits and Muse-Haters: Sidney, Spenser, Milton and Renaissance Antipoetic Sentiment* (Detroit: Wayne State UP, 1996) 61–93. It has become a commonplace of Sidney scholarship that the *Defence* contains multiple voices; the tradition began with Hardison's discussion of the distinct voices of humanism and neoclassicism: see O. B. Hardison, Jr. "The Two Voices of Sidney's *Apology for Poetry*," in *Sidney in Retrospect: Selections from English Literary Renaissance*, Arthur F. Kinney et al. eds. (Amherst: U of Massachusetts P, 1988) 45–61. Rpt from *English Literary Renaissance* 2 (1972) 83–99.

> either better than nature bringeth forth, or quite anew, forms such as never were in nature …. [Nature's] world is brazen, the poets only deliver a golden.[269]

In both *Arcadias,* an extended discussion calls attention to the question of whether an outward manifestation of womanliness will change Pyrocles's interior identity. In *The Old Arcadia,* Pyrocles is eager to become transformed, not into a woman, but into the beloved: he chooses the name Cleophila, "turning Philoclea to myself, as my mind is wholly turned and transformed into her" (*OA* 17). The theme of asking the beloved to love what has been created within the lover by love is a persistent theme in both works, particularly in *The New Arcadia*.[270] Musidorus in both versions responds with an impassioned warning: "see how extremely every way you endanger your mind; for to take this woman's habit, without you frame your behaviour accordingly, is wholly vain; your behaviour can never come kindly from you, but as the mind is proportioned unto it" (*OA* 18; *NA* 133). Interior and exterior must be in harmony. To dissemble, to disguise, is to change oneself within, as well as more obviously without. In both versions, Musidorus pleads with Pyrocles, to step aside from himself a little, enough to see himself: to look in the mirror and be instructed by what he sees he has become. The disguise has deleterious consequences in both versions, particularly in causing torment and questioning in Philoclea, whose not knowing Cleophila/Zelmane's true identity causes her to struggle with feelings for the female Amazon warrior and fears of her own seemingly unnatural longing.

Sidney's *New Arcadia* focuses more attention than *The Old Arcadia* on the moral status of dissembling. Disguising appears in the revision as more morally weighted than it appeared in *The Old Arcadia*. For example, *The Old Arcadia* passes over Pyrocles's transformation lightly. Following the extended dialogue to gain Musidorus's approval, Pyrocles dons his disguise so

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[269] Sidney, *Defence* 23–24.

[270] Three examples in this edition of *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia* appear on 218, 224, and 250.

quickly that the narrator comments that it seemed love sped the use of his hands as well as the machinations of his mind (*OA* 24). In *The New Arcadia,* on the other hand, Pyrocles presents his new appearance in a more morally questionable context: Pyrocles appears while Musidorus, not yet changed into a shepherd, is resting among some trees. As Blair Worden has noted, moments of repose in Sidney's Arcadian world tend to be moments in which bad or morally questionable things happen.[271] The narrator seems to take Musidorus's part in justifying the repose: his horse "with flat tiring taught him that discreet stays make speedy journeys" (130), and so he "went to repose himself in a little wood" (130). But the disguised Pyrocles, approaching him, arrests his attention and persuades him to remain awake. That the Amazon Pyrocles transforms and appears to Musidorus in the context of idleness and sleep, the corrupting influence of *otium,* suggests that the revised text views dissembling with apprehension.

On the other hand, by placing Musidorus in an initially more heroic light, *The New Arcadia* retains a vantage point for questioning the effect on his status of the tale-telling Musidorus will choose as a strategy for winning Pamela's love. In *The Old Arcadia,* Musidorus is so overcome upon seeing Pamela that he deserts his heroic stature and runs into the woods like a "madman." The narrator speculates on possible reasons—Cupid's wish for revenge or Musidorus's resistance to love (which deepens the wound)—but, whatever the cause, "not being able to bear the vehement pain, he ran away through the grove … hoping perchance (as the fever-sick folks do) that the change of places might ease his grief" (*OA* 37). In *The New Arcadia,* our first glimpse of Musidorus shows him as a knight doing battle in the defense of his lady, the princess Pamela, in the jousting contests demanded by Artesia as confirmation of superior beauty. We do not see him running away, but planning his strategy, which he recounts to Pyrocles, as

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[271] Worden 61–63 and 139–40: he explores the political danger, in militant Protestant discourse, of being found asleep. Sidney in his *Defence* 51, listed the "soften[ing]" effect of poetry as one of the criticisms of its detractors.

Pyrocles narrated to him, showing both princes to be more self-aware than in their earlier portrayal.

Even in shepherd's guise, Musidorus is more heroic in stature in the revised *Arcadia* than in *The Old Arcadia*. To compare the two versions:

> She [Pyrocles-Cleophila] might perceive afar off one coming toward her, in the apparel of a shepherd, with his arms hanging down. (*OA* 37)

> She [Pyrocles-Zelmane] saw walking from her-ward, a man in shepherdish apparel, who being in the sight of the lodge, it might seem he was allowed there. A long cloak he had on, but that cast under his right arm, wherein he held a sheep hook, so finely wrought that it gave a bravery to poverty; and his raiments, though they were mean, yet received they handsomeness by the grace of the wearer. (*NA* 169)

It is clear in Sidney's revised version that Musidorus's disguise has not changed him internally from his former status, since he bestows quality upon the baseness of the garments. After he is struck with love for Pamela, he appears first as the black knight, undertaking to defend her beauty, not manifesting a fall in status. Musidorus maintains heroic stature in *The New Arcadia*. With elevated stature comes ethical responsibility.[272] Thus, a more consistently heroic context makes changes in moral status more visible.

Furthermore, Musidorus goes to much greater lengths to obtain his disguise in *The New Arcadia,* with greater consequences to others. And if we read the account of Musidorus's assumption of a disguise in the light of anxieties about truth and dissembling, then there are implications for views of poetry. Musidorus accomplishes his disguise in *The Old Arcadia* by trading garments with Menalcas, a shepherd he meets on the way to the eclogues. After the trade, his own garments being greater in value, and after learning the pastoral customs and eclogues from him, Musidorus "hired him to go without stay into Thessalia" and dispatches Menalcas

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[272] Victor Skretkowicz, "Hercules in Sidney and Spenser," *Notes and Queries* (Aug., 1980) 309.

with a note written to a servant of his, to arrest him until he should make his wishes known. That this is part of a plan of dissembling we know from Musidorus's note to the servant "in a pair of tables well closed up" (*OA* 37); but Menalcas is rewarded for the exchange, with compensation and richer apparel. Musidorus's use of Menalcas does not call his status into further question.

In *The New Arcadia,* treatment of obtaining Menalcas's help to procure disguise is substantially extended, with details that make concerns about dissembling and its consequences more central to the scene. Importantly for our discussion, *The New Arcadia* shows that Musidorus's disguising himself as a shepherd involves abusing the trust between guest and host. It thus violates one of the text's first moral ideals, the hospitality exemplified in the figure of Kalander. Obtaining the disguise arises from Musidorus's sojourn at Menalcas's house in order to remain sufficiently near to view Pyrocles's adventures. Menalcas is therefore not a passing stranger, as in *The Old Arcadia,* but someone who shares his home and friendship with Musidorus, and is worthy of trust. He extends "right honest hospitality" and "faithfully promised" to keep Musidorus's secret (171). Both versions depict the trade of clothing, but Musidorus in the revised *Arcadia* obtains his goal of wooing Pamela by telling Menalcas a story: "that I was a Thessalian gentleman who, by mischance having killed a great favorite of the prince of that country, was pursued so cruelly that in no place but either by favour or corruption they would obtain my destruction" (172). Therefore, Musidorus explains, he must blend in with the pastoral folk of Arcadia and seek Basilius's presence in the hope of protection from those who wish his death (172). All of this is untrue, a tale of deception. As in *The Old Arcadia,* Musidorus uses a letter to arrange Menalcas's detention; but now Musidorus concocts a false reason for Menalcas to deliver it for him and lies about the letter's contents, pretending it is a mission of rescue, "conjuring him to bring me as speedy an answer as he could" (173) with information about

friends who might intercede on his behalf. The consequences differ, as well. In *The Old Arcadia,* Menalcas was to be "kept in good order" (*OA* 37); but, in Sidney's revision, Menalcas is to be kept "prisoner" and bound by Musidorus's servant Kalodulus to solitude and isolation, "not suffering him to have conference with any body till he knew my further pleasure" (173). If Musidorus's assumption of a shepherd's attire does not change his heroic status, then achieving his end by telling a false tale becomes more clearly visible as a strategy to be evaluated for moral valence.

Moreover, in *The New Arcadia,* the interaction between Musidorus and Menalcas appears in Musidorus's voice. His recounting to Pyrocles the obtaining a shepherd's disguise allows the reader to be privy to Musidorus's judgment about his own narration of tales. We hear his characterization of Menalcas as a man of "honest disposition" who "pitied" his plight (172), and we learn that Musidorus has no scruples about his false tale to a host or the letter that deprives Menalcas of freedom, company, and speech. If anything, he seems pleased by his strategy and dismissive of the suffering it causes: "And thus is Menalcas gone, and I here a poor shepherd, more proud of this estate than any kingdom" (273). All of this is new material in *The New Arcadia,* all of it calling attention to story telling, raising questions about its status as deceit, its consequences, and its corruption of virtue. While these changes to the plot may simply challenge the status of the princes as heroic characters, I believe the text questions the moral status of stories, the understanding of poetry as the tale meant to "win the mind from wickedness" by stirring a love of virtue and the wish to emulate it.[273] The telling of tales may serve expediency for problems of access and limited autonomy, but the text questions whether their effect on others is as always as positive as their portrayal in the *Defence*.

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[273] Sidney, *Defence* 40.

Such additional focus on dissembling and false tales creates a more weighted context for Musidorus's pretense of pastoral activities, more lengthily portrayed in Sidney's *New Arcadia*. That the text is apprehensive about dissembling and simultaneously portrays it at greater length colors Musidorus's subsequent observation about the pastoral mode's tendency to conceal: "this estate [of shepherd] is not always to be rejected, since under that veil there may be hidden things to be esteemed" (*OA* 93; *NA* 230). In Sidney's *Old Arcadia,* the narrator speaks these words; in the revised *Arcadia,* Musidorus says them to Pamela while attempting to reveal the truth of his identity in a tale of himself in the third person. Thus, it is Musidorus who refers to his knowledge of pastoral's ability to conceal, but he ironically does so at the moment of concealing. He is not a shepherd piping about political realities in Rome: he is a prince pretending to be a shepherd, hiding an incursion into a kingdom, using a genre known for its concealment to conceal. The distinction is a fine one, but it shifts Sidney's story from the world of pastoral entertainment in *The Old Arcadia* to a more self-conscious scrutiny of dissembling in a poetic mode. The text functions in these moments as a mirror of Sidney's poetic project; we are conscious of his engagement of literary creation at the moment of questioning it. Sidney's counsel to the reader has shifted to a scrutiny of his own practice.

If we understand the text to be articulating apprehensions about literary disguising, then Musidorus's strategy for attempting to inform Pamela of his true identity (since she disdains a shepherd's station) also acquires overtones that place the literary project under investigation. Musidorus's strategy is to "counterfeit the extremist love toward Mopsa that might be" (*OA* 87; *NA* 222). In the context of an increased attention to the literary project, the phrase recalls the poet's task of "making things … better than nature bringeth forth."[274] Using Sidney's

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[274] Sidney, *Defence* 22.

pedagogical method of the mirror, to notice difference within similarity, both endeavors, counterfeiting to Mopsa and "making" poetry, reproduce intensification. The juxtaposition serves to question whether the storyteller intensifies Nature or deceit. Two consequences of his story telling appear for our evaluation, the responses of Mopsa and Pamela. Pamela's response to Musidorus's counterfeit simultaneously announces the comedic mode and confounds the reader's expectations of it. Musidorus has not yet learned how to use a literary strategy to attain his ends. Our characters have not yet discerned the appropriate genres in which to articulate their voices and identities. That characters are not in their proper generic registers raises questions about the nature of the genres that intrude upon one another when, in the revised *Arcadia,* characters who interact with each other bring with them the genres they normally inhabit and all of the associated conventions of reading. In *The New Arcadia,* readers' expectations can be challenged and foiled by this multiplicity of genres, which calls attention to the poetic project.

First, Mopsa appears to be oblivious to Musidorus's intention of pretending to be in love with her, and she is convinced he will seek to marry her; but, in both versions of the *Arcadia,* she also appears capable of her own kind of cruder truth-telling. Her responses are simultaneously ridiculous and revelatory: on some level, she understands exactly what is going on. "In faith," she cries, after Musidorus has made some eloquent speeches about his love, "you jest with me. You are a merry man indeed" (*OA* 88; *NA* 224). The difference between the two versions lies in the narrating of the counterfeit. In *The New Arcadia,* the scene is no longer told by the narrator, as it was in *The Old Arcadia*; instead, it is recounted by Musidorus, when he shares his news with Pyrocles-Zelmane. If Mopsa appears to be aware on some level that his story is deceiving her, then Musidorus, by narrating this scene, appears to show some awareness that she knows. The text leaves the question of his knowledge open. Perhaps generic cues are telling us how to

respond to observing the deception of a comedic and rustic character by a royal hero and heroine. The comedic mode is supposed to expose human errors, but the object of exposure shifts from Mopsa, the ridiculous character within the comedy, to Musidorus, the teller of the tale, who is therefore supposed to be outside of it.

Conversely, Pamela becomes a co-creator of the deceit. Pamela is often discussed as a model of heroic suffering and an ideal of feminine majesty.[275] But here, we witness an aspect of Pamela that is not so consistent with an exemplary and regal virtue. Sidney in his *Defence* observed comedy's moral efficacy of "contemptibly" setting forth men's actions.[276] But he also wrote that the "'comedy-writer' or possibly 'comic actor' must … indicate by a 'signifying badge' … the general folly of a comic character in order to show 'who be such' and so stress the moral point."[277] Yet Musidorus's account emphasizes Mopsa's comedic quality, her "smackering" and "wagging" ignorance (*OA* 88–89; *NA* 224–25). Pamela is understood to be a heroine; Musidorus continually describes her shining virtue (225) and the "her natural majesty" (234). And so her portrayal introduces an additional question about the status of creating. Sidney's *New Arcadia* describes Pamela as participating in creating Musidorus's fiction. In *The Old Arcadia,* she retains a detached observance of the drama: she "did not so much attend Mopsa's entertainment"; rather, she notices the disproportion of the content and manner of Musidorus's speaking to Mopsa as audience (*OA* 88). In contrast, in the revised work, Pamela actively

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[275] See William Craft, "Remaking the Heroic Self in the *New Arcadia,*" *Studies in English Literature, 1500–1900,* 25.1 (Winter, 1985) 45–67 and especially 64: "Philoclea's simplicity and Pamela's majesty are never shaken." Tiffany Jo Werth 65 regards the heroism of Philoclea and Pamela to be Sidney's Protestant versions of "the virtuous lives of female saints and virgin martyrs" in *The Fabulous Dark Cloister: Romance in England After the Reformation* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 2011) 65. Sue P. Starke explores the two sisters' contrasted models of femininity and finds chastity to be a defining characteristic in *The Heroines of English Pastoral Romance* (Cambridge: Brewer, 2007) 41–85.

[276] Sidney, *Defence* 44–45.

[277] See Sidney, *Defence* 93 n. 44, l. 17 ff: van Dorsten comments upon Sidney's treatment of comedy.

conspires with Musidorus to create the comedy: she "well found the comedy would be marred if she did not help Mopsa to her part" (*NA* 224). Thus, the command that appears in both versions, "to urge a little further" of Musidorus (*OA* 88; *NA* 224), registers a difference in Pamela's agency. Pamela retains her aloofness from the deceit progressing around her in Sidney's *Old Arcadia,* but, in Sidney's revision, she is, in Musidorus's account, eagerly propelling it forward.

If the reader is to understand Musidorus's narration of this scene to Pyrocles as indicative of his wish to include Pamela in the conspiracy to pursue their love, then the text explores a further consequence of story-telling: that we "make" those around us through our fictions about them, revealing a mirror of ourselves. The mirror of impasse between alternating reflections then becomes, in the moment of narrating a tale, a mirror of Narcissus. Out of all Pamela's subsequent anxieties about revealing her love for Musidorus—her capitulation to his stories—she fears vanity the most: "Truly I would hate my life if I thought vanity led me" (249). It is suggestive to think of Sidneys confronting this question in light of his death-bed wish to destroy the *Arcadia* text and his words before dying, that "all things here are vanity."[278]

Whether we can consider either Musidorus by creating tales or Pamela by believing them to be showing a propensity for vanity raises the question of where to locate meaning in stories. At this point in the narrative, when the scenes in Book II between Pamela and Musidorus begin bridging the comedic and tragic modes, each princely participant articulates a competing view that could as well be applied to the nature of meaning in poetry. Sidney throughout *The New Arcadia* keeps questions about the nature of poetry present. Pamela offers one view in the course

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[278] Duncan-Jones, *Courtier Poet* 302. See also *MP* 171 for George Gifford's "The Manner of Sidney's Death," which, although of questionable accuracy in some areas, records Sidney's purported words, "All things in my former life have been vain, vain, vain." See her n. p. 224 for Sidney's wish to destroy the text of the *Arcadia* and for her reference to Greville 19, who wrote in his *Life*: "when his body declined, and his piercing inward powers were lifted up to a purer Horizon, he then discovered, not onely the imperfection, but vanitie of these shadowes."

of the disputation on fortune and virtue: she advises, “so is not one thing one, done by divers persons” (226). Evans glosses the phrase to mean that “the same act carries different values when performed by different people.”[279] If we understand the extended scenes between Pamela and Musidorus in Book II to address questions about the literary project as well, as I believe they do, then, by implication, the same utterance contains different meanings when told by different speakers. Since the performer determines the nature of the deed, the speaker determines the nature of the story, and meaning, according to Pamela’s view, resides with the teller of the tales. Such a view makes sense in light of the Chaucerian scenes of story telling among the rustics and the royals in Book II. The characters of those who narrate stories contribute to our understanding of the tales.[280] Musidorus, however, suggests an alternate view: “But to what serve exclamations, where there are no ears to receive the sound?” (227). He is speaking of his royal name, which he wishes Pamela to understand as his, but his exclamation is equally applicable to the tale-telling in which he is engaged. In other words, it is up to the hearer to understand the story, as he clarifies in his summation of his tale, “if I be understood, I have said enough” (230). It is an important question that applies to counsel as well as poetry, and recalls Sidney’s strategy of creating a complicit audience with the Queen in the spectacle of exposure of Lord Burghley’s political arguments.[281] All of the roles Sidney has performed through writing begin to manifest in this mirror.

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[279] See Sidney, *The Countess of Pembroke’s Arcadia* 854, n. 2.5.

[280] See 307 for the scene in Book II in which Miso imposes some order on the selection among the gathered participants for telling their stories. The “draw” of “cuts,” with “the shortest cut” speaking first places us in the world of Boccaccio’s *Decameron* and Chaucer’s *Canterbury Tales.* Miso’s interruption to decide who will go next and her own manner of claiming a speaking voice is reminiscent of Chaucer’s Wife of Bath. Miso even defines herself from the outset as a wife, although one who “might have had another-gains husband than Dametas” (307).

[281] See Chapter 1.

The tale Musidorus tells about himself in the third person is his strategy for overcoming the obstacle created by Pamela's indifference to his suit. In this literary strategy, he has chosen a tragic register, as is clear when he names Thessalia, "that accursed country which brings forth nothing but matters for tragedies." The death of Hercules in Thessaly raises Musidorus's lamenting voice to the register of mythic tragedy.[282] Accordingly, Arcadia is the "stage" of his overthrow. He cannot name the misfortunes that happened to his cousin because of their horror, and he cannot linger on the "loathsome misadventures" of Musidorus (229).[283] He ends an account of his "dolorous tale" and chides himself for including Mopsa in his summary of events, but justifies it to Pyrocles because "she was an actor in this tragedy" (227–33).

But the tragic is not the mode in which Musidorus can tell his true story, nor does it win Pamela's love. His tale in the tragic vein reveals continuing anxieties about truth in the literary project, in the forms of the embedded audience and the authority of sources. That meaning is contingent upon listener he emphasizes in his acknowledgment to Pyrocles-Zelmane that he is addressing a multiple audience; he justifies his evasive speech to Pyrocles by alleging that Pamela "would know well the parties I meant," while he feared Mopsa would recognize specific names if he used them (231). *The New Arcadia* calls attention to the embedded audience by a change to the choice of jewel Musidorus gives to Pamela to bestow upon Mopsa; he chooses the crab-fish "because it looks one way and goes another" and thus "did fitly pattern out my looking to Mopsa but bending to Pamela" (233). Musidorus's story remains on the level of deceit; that is, supposedly a token of his true identity, the jewel simultaneously becomes an occasion for a

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[282] See Sidney, *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia* 855, n. 3.1: Thessaly is "the scene of Hercules' tragic death which Sidney may have had in mind. Seneca's *Hercules Oetaeus* was published in Thomas Newton's *Ten Tragedies* in 1581."

[283] See Butcher's translation of Aristotle's *Poetics* for the "horror" appropriate to tragedy: Aristotle, *Poetics,* trans. S. H. Butcher (New York: Hill and Wang, 1961) 78.

further false tale to his listeners, that the plough turned up the earth and led him to find some pretty items beneath a stone in the soil. He maintains a deceit about the jewel by lying about its origin.

It is at this point in the scenes between Pamela and Musidorus that the sources of stories become an open concern, as does the truth within them. In the *Defence,* Sidney argues that the poet cannot lie because "he nothing affirms," a point he repeats: "the poet (as I said before) never affirmeth … though he recount things not true, yet because he telleth them not for true, he lieth not."[284] Similarly, Musidorus alleges to Pyrocles that while he lied to Pamela to say Pyrocles was killed in the shipwreck, "yet affirmed no lie unto her, since I only said I would not deny it" (230). It is a neat side-stepping. The question of Musidorus's truthfulness then arises explicitly from the variety of sources, and, by implication, evaluation of authority to discern truth.[285] "You have told me a pretty tale," Pamela responds, "but you are much deceived in the latter end of it" (230). Pyrocles and Musidorus must have died in a shipwreck, she alleges, since she heard Plangus tell her father. Musidorus, on the other hand, asserts the authority of a different source, "as I have read it fair written … and therefore Plangus might easily be deceived" (230). Plangus, he argues, also has limited knowledge, not having seen Musidorus rescued. The discussion is framed in their uses of the word "deceived." Such a context of competing sources and authorities—whether he is shepherd or prince, drowned or saved—gives new meaning to the conclusion of Musidorus's subsequent song, "you must the judgement give" (*OA* 94; *NA* 232). From the added

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[284] Sidney, *Defence* 52–53. Brian Vickers discusses the origins of the paradox, proposed by Sidney here, that "only those who set out to affirm a truth can be called liars"; see Brian Vickers, *English Renaissance Literary Criticism* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1999) 369.

[285] The Chaucerian scene of story-telling in Book II raises a similar question: Miso's references to other authorities—a good old woman, an old wise man, a learned clerk—remind us of Chaucer's many invocations of *auctorite.* The scene also draws attention to how stories are made: someone tells someone who tells someone who writes it down and keeps it safely ("in my prayer-book") 307.

scenes in the revised *Arcadia,* we know that Pamela struggles over a response to Musidorus's tales. It is part of her education to interpret the veracity of stories, and part of his to find the truest generic register for his voice. As Pamela judges, so are we meant to judge, and so Sidney opens the mirror to the reader's collaborative scrutiny of the mirror of Sidney's identities, his princely education and poetic practice.

The tragic strain comes close to winning Pamela, but, as we learn from Pamela's voice, it fails. She comes close to revealing her love for Musidorus when he delivers his letter, but she reasserts her resolution to show him no feeling. With the multiple layers of reference in the text, it is hard to know whether she is tempted to yield to Musidorus because of his trembling or because of the literary mode of his letter. Pamela's responses to him, in her own words, confided to her sister, are "pity and delight," those Aristotelian terms that describe our response to a literary mode (247).[286] He writes in the tragic mode, but he begins to sound the first notes of the genre that will enable his true voice and identity to emerge. "Say then," he writes in his letter, in formulaic epic invocation (250). But, in his letter, Musidorus retreats from further allusion to the epic and resumes the tragic mode, lamenting, "in woeful language," (250) the depth of his suffering.

One example from this part of his effort to win his princess suggests that Musidorus has not found the poetic genre to articulate his true voice and that we must yet question his strategy. Pamela confides to Philoclea Musidorus's enlisting of Dametas in a "dialogue" as entertainment, in the form of the story of Paris and Priam and of Paris's courtship of Oenone (249). Skretkowicz notes in his edition of the work that a "dialogue" would have been the word used by Musidorus "in order to persuade Dametas to participate, for Priam's role in the life of Paris was only to send

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[286] See Vickers 363 for Sidney's substitution of "admiration," meaning "wonder or amazement," for fear.

him as an infant to be slain, and much later to recognize him as his son."[287] As a result, Dametas would have virtually no part in the play-acting: "presumably, then, Dametas stood dumbly by."[288] Musidorus and Pamela, who ostensibly exemplify the heroic in *The New Arcadia,* continue to place themselves in literary roles at others' expense. If, as Pamela hints, her treatment of Mopsa and Dametas arises from their association with her parents' "dealing so cruelly with me" (249) then Pamela shows a taste for revenge (a quality otherwise associated with Gynecia) and approves of and participates in Dorus's use of literary roles and gestures to accomplish it.

The story of Paris is a self-conscious literary gesture in the context of Musidorus's deception. Its rich literary history serves as a clear reference to poetic "making." I can touch upon only a few of its allusions here. Euripides offers a fruitful source for the associations that hover over this literary episode and render the scene ambiguous as an effective and morally correct strategy.[289] The story of Paris and the concealment of his royal status behind the shepherd and herdsman identities in which he was raised by his adopted father, Agelaus, could, of course, serve as yet another means for Musidorus to communicate to Pamela his own royal birth concealed beneath his disguise. That both Musidorus and Pamela are, arguably, enjoying an inside literary joke at others' expense is made clearer by Euripides's version of the story of Paris and its reference to a herdsman, which is Dametas's genuine estate before his elevation as an unworthy favorite and guardian of Arcadia's heiress by a misguided Basilius. In his study of

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[287] Sidney, *The New Arcadia,* ed. Skretkowicz 536.

[288] Sidney, *The New Arcadia,* ed. Skretkowicz 536.

[289] "For a discussion of Sidney's knowledge of Euripides," Geoffrey Shepherd and Robert W. Maslen direct the reader to Kenneth Myrick, *Sir Philip Sidney as Literary Craftsman* (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1935) 105–07. Their citation appears in their edition of Sidney's *An Apology for Poetry* (Manchester: Manchester UP, 2002) 236: according to Shepherd and Maslen, Sidney knew the Hecuba well. See T. C. W. Stinton, *Euripides and the Judgement of Paris* (Oxford: Alden, 1965) 25: "[Paris's] folly was held culpable by the Trojan women."

representations of Paris in the works of Euripides, Stinton notes that the "bucolic aspect of Paris receives some emphasis in all the lyric passages in which Euripides touches upon the story."[290] In the *Andromache,* for example,

> For pain and, more than pain,
> constraint of bondage comes upon me;
> And for all, from the folly of one,
> doom has come on the land of Troy,
> ruin for us and grief for more besides.
> For on Ida's slopes the three
> daughters of god in rivalry
> were judged by a herdsman.
>
> Hence blood and steel and rape and the looting of houses:
> some Spartan girl, too, by deep-flowing Eurotas,
> red-eyed with tears, sits keening in her house;
> and a grey-haired mother beside her
> mourns her dead children,
> her head and her cheeks all blood,
> all gashed and torn with bloody hands and nails.[291]

These images of the war and suffering unleashed by Paris's misguided judgment are thus inextricably a part of the entertainment Musidorus offers and which Pamela praises. Such a context of suffering makes it easier to believe that Musidorus's portrayal refers not only to his own royal status but also to Dametas's infliction of grief upon Pamela; even so, the association in Musidorus's narrative is excessive and disproportionate. The incursion of the tragic mode in a pastoral dialogue of love highlights the artifice of the literary project. Ironically, in the course of praising Musidorus's beauty, Pamela notes the sincerity of his "true tears" (249). But the more convincingly Musidorus places himself in this literary role, the more questions he raises about his literary choices.

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[290] Stinton 40.

[291] Quoted in and translated by Stinton 24.

For example, if we take Ovid's *Heroides* v for an informing literary model of Paris's courtship of Oenone, as Skretkowicz advises for this scene,[292] then Paris's faithlessness to Oenone becomes central. Musidorus may be enacting a legendary courtship, but it is one that fails, and leads to betrayal, grief, and reproach. In some literary treatments, Oenone resorts to suicide.[293] In Ovid's version, the suffering is as vivid as in Euripides. The betrayed Oenone glimpses Helen, her triumphant rival for Paris's love, and

> I tore the clothes away from my breasts
> and beat my hands against my flesh; my long nails
> tore at my tear-stained cheeks and my cries
> filled Ida's holy land with their sad lament:
> I took my grief to the barren rocks.[294]

That Sidney was aware of the violence of the literary associations he has given to his characters to say and to use as strategy is suggested by episodes in Book III, where such suffering appears: war appears with unvarnished brutality, and the princesses are subjected to physical and emotional torture by their aunt Cecropia, who is driven by her lust for a crown and for the bride of his choice for her son. In Book III, the metaphorical stasis and impasse of alternating and imprisoning mirror reflections and the walls of the maze give way to the impenetrable stone of real castle walls. But violent associations are not appropriate in courtship, nor for a princess who promises to read Musidorus's tales, to "trust something to my own judgement" (249).

Philoclea's advice to her sister serves as the foundation for the turn toward a new generic register, toward the success of Musidorus's suit, and toward a right use of poetry to embody truth. In the multi-layered language of Sidney's text, Philoclea's counsel to "leave sorrow" (251) can

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[292] Sidney, *The New Arcadia,* ed. Skretkowicz 536.

[293] Stinton 40.

[294] Ovid, *Heroides,* Harold Isbell trans. (London: Penguin, 1990) 42.

be read as a generic imperative. And, while Philoclea's explicit request is for her sister to tell the truth about her love for Musidorus, the outline of Philoclea's subsequent counsel applies as well to the telling and reading of tales: "Dissemble no further," Philoclea urges. Pamela then acknowledges, "It is true" (251). The words dramatize the emergence of truth from the deceit of Pamela's pretense of indifference to Musidorus, and they initiate a change in generic register that will result in the success of Musidorus's strategy.

The outcome begins with Pamela's summons of Musidorus in order to "take further judgement of him" (252), the reading function that she continually represents. She chooses the source for her story: she wishes to hear it from Musidorus, even though she knows the story from the reports of fame (252). She makes clear to Musidorus that she seeks truth. That is, she frames her request once again in the language of deception and its opposite, acknowledging that "Plangus was deceived" in believing Musidorus drowned, but that all men's expectations of the virtue promised for Pyrocles "should not be deceived" (252). Most importantly, Pamela initiates the genre that will offer Musidorus a successful strategy, his truest voice and the right use of poetry, not for its possibilities of lies but for its right teaching. She asks:

> I pray you, Dorus ... *tell me,* since I perceive you are well acquainted with that story, what prince was that Euarchus, father to Pyrocles …. And *then so descend to the causes* of his sending first away from him, and then to him for that excellent son of his, with the discourse of his life and loss: and *therein you may (if you list) say something* of that same Musidorus his cousin. (253) (italics mine)

To a Renaissance reader of Homer and Virgil, this phrasing would be familiar.[295] She prompts him in an echo of epic language, "Who hath not heard" of the brave Dorilaus, and so launches

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[295] To offer just two examples in modern translation, see Homer's *Iliad*: "Rage—Goddess, sing the rage of Peleus' son Achilles …. Begin, Muse, when the two first broke and clashed, Agamemnon lord of men and brilliant Achilles. What god drove them to fight with such a fury?" (I.1 and I.7–9) from *The Iliad,* trans. Robert Fagles (London: Penguin, 1990) 77; see also Virgil's *Aeneid*: "Tell me the causes now, O Muse, how galled / In her divine pride, and

Musidorus into his narrative of his heroic story, his lineage, the oracular predictions of his actions, and the history of wars and his great deeds. Now, in the context of Musidorus's true voice and generic register, poetry appears for its correct purpose, to teach virtue. As part of the princely education received by Pyrocles and Musidorus:

> the delight of tales being converted to the knowledge of all the stories of worthy princes, both to move them to do nobly and teach them how to do nobly; the beauty of virtue still being set before their eyes, and that taught them with far more diligent care than grammatical rules. (258)

Nature, Musidorus asserts, "made them lords of truth" (259), a contrast to his disguise and his earlier false tales, and in keeping with Sidney's assessment of the heroic mode as capable of stirring not only to "truth," but "the most high and excellent truth."[296] In the example of Pamela and Musidorus in the revised Book II, Sidney has interrogated poetic practice in the form of questions about the source and location of its meaning. He has dramatized a poetic journey to find the genre that succeeds as strategy and reveals true identity. Confronting questions about the poetic project in his revised Books I and II has been a collaborative process, undertaken by a prince and princess, calling to mind Sidney's true life at Wilton, engaging in poetic pursuits with his sister, Mary. Having scrutinized a view of himself in the mirror of his text, Sidney can resume, in Book III, to counsel the reader once again.

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how sore at heart / From her old wound, the queen of gods compelled him" (I.13–15): *The Aeneid,* trans. Robert Fitzgerald (New York: Random House, 1985) 3.

[296] Sidney, *Defence* 47.

Chapter 4

The Mirror in Book III of *The New Arcadia*

Thus far, we have explored the trope of the mirror as it relates to counsel in three of Sidney's works. In Chapter 1, I argued that the trope of the counselor as mirror supplied an organization to what had been viewed as a random presentation of arguments in Sidney's *Letter to Queen Elizabeth* (1579). I discussed Sidney's use of the mirroring processes of gathering and uniting, shattering the reflection, and presenting a multiplicity of competing reflections in order to persuade Queen Elizabeth against the marriage to the duc d'Alençon.[297] In Chapter 2, I turned to his pastoral romance, *The Old Arcadia* (1580), to consider Sidney's broadening of the conventions of the mirror for princes genre through the portrayal of the figure of Gynecia. A character who had been puzzling to scholars became clearer, I argued, when viewed as both object in and commentator on the mirror for princes genre. Her interior life and moral ambiguity complicated the traditional generic categories of virtue to be emulated and vice to be eschewed. By creating reflections of characters, scenes, gestures and verbal and dramatic moments across the text, Sidney invited his reader into an active experience of reading that simulated the mirror, testing and revealing the reader's own assumptions and moral judgments.

Chapter 3 explored the trope of the mirror in Books I and II of Sidney's revised or *New Arcadia* (1583–85). I considered how Sidney presented the strategy of storytelling as a response to limited human agency and imperfect knowledge; and how he represented those limitations

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[297] In using the term "gathering," I distinguish between the eye's synthesizing of discrete elements, which appear whole in the view of a reflected image, and the discursive Renaissance practice of collecting textual fragments, such as sayings and aphorisms, for the copy book. For the discursive practices of gathering and framing (or arranging), see Crane, *Framing Authority* 3–4; also Peter Mack, *Elizabethan Rhetoric: Theory and Practice* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2002) 4–5. For the medieval and Renaissance book's encyclopedic function of presenting an abundance of information in smaller form, like a convex mirror, see Grabes 68.

through tropes of the mirror and the maze: of paralysis in a closed system of reflections and in labyrinthine perplexity. Repeatedly, as we saw, the mirror served not as the pedagogical force for learning and moral refinement as in *The Old Arcadia,* or as the productive process of counsel between sovereign and advisor, as in the *Letter to Elizabeth,* but as representation of stasis and unproductive suspension. I explored the response to these limitations and problems through storytelling: through gestures toward literary antecedents and through characters' participation in, and the creation of, tales. I observed that characters in Books I and II of *The New Arcadia* undertake much of the storytelling performed by the narrator in *The Old Arcadia*: in Sidney's revision, for example, Pamela placed herself within Musidorus's disguised autobiography; Clinias recounted the tale of the rebellion (390 ff); Basilius narrated the tale of Erona (398 ff); and Kalander in his narrative to Musidorus introduced the royal figures of Arcadia and the prophecy which dictated Basilius's rule from pastoral refuge (75 ff). In a scene reminiscent of Chaucer's tale telling, the ladies and their rustic attendants invited one another to tell stories (306 ff). I argued in Chapter 3 that, by examining the nature of storytelling as a response to limited agency and knowledge, Sidney ceased to serve as a counseling mirror to his reader because he himself had become the object of his scrutiny.

I see Book III of *The New Arcadia* as fundamentally different in character from Books I and II. Sidney all but eliminates the storytelling on the part of his characters in favor of restoring his narrator. Also, in Book III, Sidney intensifies the ethos of conflict, through battle, internal struggle, and philosophical confrontation. I argue that Book III serves as a mirror reflection of Books I and II. That is, as we saw in Chapter 3, the freedom of narration and movement among characters in Books I and II accompanies Sidney's presentation of mirrors as objects of stasis and suspension; conversely, in Book III, characters are confined in captivity and siege: yet Book

III restores the mirror as the productive mode of counsel, and, through a multiplicity of mirror uses, Sidney reasserts his role as counselor to the reader. I argue that Sidney continues his pedagogical strategy of educating the reader through linked and reflected scenes and characters. In Book III, we are offered comparisons that ask whether the passions can ever be an impetus to heroic action. The moral ambiguity and complexity in the categories of virtue and vice that Sidney so favored in *The Old Arcadia* give way to clear and absolute moral distinctions of good and evil, more commensurate with the conventions of the traditional mirror for princes genre from which *The Old Arcadia* departed. I argue that Book III functions as a mirror for princes and that through its deployments of the mirror trope it focuses its instruction on one of the central themes of the contemporary debate on counsel: the importance of discerning the flatterer and thus of seeking truth. Sidney's revised *Arcadia* in its entirety thus serves as the exemplary mirror of introspection that leads to self-knowledge and the consequent authority to offer meaningful counsel.

Book III dramatizes a move from one kingdom to another. The first is a realm in which King Basilius holds his kingdom and his family hostage by misinterpreting a prophecy, necessitating as a consequence the strategy of disguise by the two princely suitors, Pyrocles and Musidorus. The second realm is governed entirely by deceit and stage-managed spectacle for the ends of power. In this second, more intensified world of captivity, Pyrocles, disguised as Zelmane, is, until near the end, helpless to fulfill his role as epic romance hero[298] and save his lady Philoclea. He must confront his belief that he has failed to save her after Cecropia stages a drama to show Philoclea's death. Escape from captivity lies with a strategy of more deceit, as a

[298] For a discussion of the Renaissance genre of epic romance, see Charles Stanley Ross, "Boiardo and the Derangement of Epic" in Matteo Maria Boiardo, *Orlando Innamorato* ed. Charles Stanley Ross (West Lafayette: Parlor, 2004) l–lxiv.

pretense to submit to captors' demands will buy the time to effect rescue and liberation. The text is left unfinished before Musidorus and his army can intervene.[299]

In approaching Book III for a restored use of the mirror trope, we find so intricate a web of reflected facets that they resist the effort to be separated for linear discussion. And yet, two things are clear from the outset: that a virtuous character must learn to claim authority supplies an important trajectory of Book III; and the text immediately places each important character in a mirrored relationship.

The goodness of the princesses Pamela and Philoclea and their patient endurance in captivity is clear in the text and well known in the literature. That they are virtuous is not in question. But when we first encounter the princesses together in Book III, they are still portrayed as daughters to a potentially angry father and king, fearful of his authority and unable to exercise their own. When Cecropia's disguised temptresses arrive at the lodging door to invite the princesses and Zelmane to the festivities in emulation of the Arcadian shepherds, the princesses do not know how to respond: "The ladies stood in some doubt whether they should go or not, lest Basilius might be angry withal" (442).[300] Because of their father's fear of an oracular prediction, they have been confined to the rural Arcadian retreat and watched by his appointed guards, the rustics Dametas and Miso and their daughter.[301] It is Miso who decides that they should go. She

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[299] For the argument that Sidney intended to leave the work unfinished, see Alexander 202. For an example of the view that Sidney intended to return to the text, and broke off in mid-sentence as an aid to memory, see Woodcock 75 and Duncan-Jones, *Courtier Poet* 266.

[300] Page references are from Sir Philip Sidney, *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia,* ed. Maurice Evans (New York: London, 1987).

[301] It is worth considering this early Book III scene of the princesses' fear in mirror image to the fearfulness of their father, Basilius. The similarity highlights the difference: as Basilius fears oracular authority, so the princesses fear him. But in contrast to Pamela and Philoclea, Basilius does not show an assumption of authority. His last depicted act in *The New Arcadia* is to send to the oracle a second time in the face of new threats from Anaxius and the perplexity caused by his desire, despite the counsel from Philanax to exercise authority and arms (587). To place the two Delphic consultations in mirror image reveals the paralysis caused by a superstitious, fearful and ineffectual ruler.

is led by a desire for pleasure, and the ladies submit to her, “glad to be warranted by her authority” and “with a smiling humbleness obeyed her” (442). Unable to assert their authority in the captivity enforced by their father and king, Pamela and Philoclea succeed in claiming authority while held captive, tortured, and threatened with death in the adversarial realm dominated by their aunt. In Book III of *The New Arcadia,* the education of the princesses evolves not through discernment of virtue from vice or even through their experience of being tested in that knowledge, as in *The Old Arcadia,* but through the characters’ increasing ability to claim a moral authority, a mirror of the authority that Sidney has acquired through his introspection in Books I and II. In the central debate scene of Book III between Pamela and Cecropia, itself abundant with mirror uses[302] and a mirror scene itself of the temptation scene discussed above, Pamela succeeds in asserting a moral authority over her aunt’s arguments, which favor the quest for pleasure from fleeting beauty. By showing a trajectory of Pamela’s increasing capacity to assert moral authority, the text shows us a virtuous prince’s developing ability to wield power and, as we will see shortly, to discern truth from deception. I find it significant that the princesses’ inability to exert authority appears in concert with their inability to penetrate the flattery of the disguised Artesia and her attendants.

If Book III announces its trajectory of a princely education through constancy and moral power in captivity, it also places its characters in mirrored relationships. The realms of love and war cross over innumerable times in this last Book, with the language of strife applied to love and that of courtesy applied to war. Pamela and Musidorus will each undertake versions of

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[302] For example, the purse Pamela is sewing evokes the tradition of the mirror and the beloved: the cloth “looking with many eyes upon her, and lovingly embracing the wounds she gave it” (483); Pamela herself “had not rejected the counsel of a glass” in attiring herself well and thus demonstrating fortitude in captivity (484), and thus serving also as a contrasting mirror to Philoclea, who had allowed her grief the upper hand in her appearance (457).

warfare, Musidorus in the field and Pamela in interior life. The Book's opening establishes them immediately in mirrored relationship to one another.

In Chapter 2, we explored Sidney's scrutiny of the poetic project, including the progression of a generic hierarchy that Musidorus developed in his strategies to overcome obstacles in his quest for Pamela's love. When we left the two characters in our discussion, Musidorus had succeeded, through a deployment of a generic hierarchy, in winning his princess; Pamela intended "to give some comfort to his passionate heart" (252). Book III opens with an outward change in her conduct: she "grew content both to pity him and let him see that she pitied him" and she makes clear, with "chaste plainness" that, were she to be loved by the prince in his stories, she would answer his love (435). Musidorus cannot help but respond with excess, unable to contain his happiness. Both reveal their true characters by not being able to prevent the display of their feelings toward one another (435). Their actions touch off a series of correspondences that will engage the reader in learning from comparison, the pedagogical method of the mirror.[303] In so doing, Sidney gestures toward the comparison that Plutarch recommends to discern the flatterer from the friend: "since the flatterer uses resemblances to deceive and to wrap about him, it is our task to use … differences in order to unwrap him and lay him bare."[304] This comparative pedagogical method restores to Book III the productive mirror of *The Old Arcadia,* but the intervening Books I and II of Sidney's revision, in which he dramatized his self-scrutiny of the poetic project, have supplied him with new authority, of *nosce te ipsum,* with which to counsel the reader.

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[303] For the mirror's pedagogical project of comparison, see Grabes and Taylor. See especially Grabes 131–44 and Grabes 82 for the argument that the mirror may lead one "to register the difference between one's self" and the reflected image and "even when beholding extreme virtue, to see one's true self and possibly to improve it."

[304] Plutarch, "How to Tell a Flatterer," 279.

When Pamela's love "shine[s] upon Dorus," he falls into excesses of emotion. His inability to control his passions causes him to attempt to embrace and kiss her, which halts the progress of his suit. Each responds to the misstep with mirrored reflections of self-detestation, Musidorus by "throwing himself down at the foot of a tree … as one that detested himself" (436). As if to reinforce the mirroring project of Book III even further, the narrator describes Musidorus's response to Pamela's anger with mirror uses reminiscent of those Sidney deployed in his *Letter to Elizabeth*.[305] First, Musidorus sees a reflection of himself in "finding himself" (436). Then, through the narrator, he employs a gathering process reminiscent of the visual process we observed in the *Letter,* in which Sidney's opening advice to Elizabeth gathers and synthesizes the images offered by the circular reading of the mirror's reflected surface.[306] Musidorus's gathering defines through opposition: "not only unhappy, but unhappy after being fallen from all happiness; and to be fallen from all happiness not by any misconceiving but by his own fault, and his fault to be done to no other but to Pamela" (436). The sequence of passions rushes forward through oppositions of increased specificity. The gathering process continues and becomes explicit as Musidorus "draw[s] into his mind all conceits which might more and more torment him." Then he falls into the self-detestation which mirrors that which Pamela showed but a moment ago, when she in her own voice cried that she "hate[d]" herself "for being so deceived" (436). Thus, the mirroring project of Book III appears in its opening. Pamela's use of "deception" shows the persistence of the concern with encountering deceit and discerning truth.

Furthermore, this scene offers mirrored reflections of a fall experienced by Pamela and Musidorus, she in "the only fall of my judgement" and he in being "fallen from all happiness"

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[305] See Chapter 1.

[306] See n. 245.

after being happy; and fallen “to lamentation” and “to curses of his life” (436). At the center of Musidorus’s fall into despair is internal combat: his love “strave with the fury of his anguish”; and in that conflict lies the impetus for restoration in the form of the image of his Pamela, the common Renaissance theme of the internalized image of the beloved. Once he locates her reflection within himself, we see in the beginning of his restoration a mirror image of his fall: “when the thought of that was crept in unto him, it began to win of him some compassion to the shrine of the image, and to bewail not for himself (whom he hated) but that so notable a love should perish” (437). For a second time, in the mirror image of his fall, we see a progression defined between binary oppositions:

> Then began he only so far to wish his own good as that Pamela might pardon him the fault, though not the punishment; and the uttermost height he aspired unto was that after his death she might yet pity his error and know that it proceeded of love and not of boldness. (437)

Their mirrored images persist after she finds his verse epistle of remorse. Pamela questions whether she should become a mirror image of Musidorus by reading his letter: “Shall I … second his boldness?” He, in turn, anticipates her and reassures her in the epistle that she will not reflect his boldness by reading it: “Dread not a whit … that pity may enter / Into thy heart by the sight of this Epistle I send” (438).

The correspondences set in motion by this scene are almost too numerous to mention; many moments in scenes to come serve to recall this scene and to contrast the elements that delineate the Arcadian world from Cecropia’s castle. One “fall” in particular will serve: As Musidorus falls from the height of happiness he had experienced when Pamela first showed him favor, Cecropia falls from the height of status when the succession is lost to her when Basilius marries and produces heirs. So Cecropia tells her son Amphialus, “Think then what my mind was, since withal there is no question, the fall is greater from the first to the second than from the

second to the undermost" (446). The similarity in descriptions of the fall prompts the reader to notice the distinctions between characters who, on the surface are impelled by their passions, Musidorus by desire of Pamela and a mistaken treatment of love as a military conquest ("to establish a trophy of his victory" (436)) and Cecropia by the lust for political power. Rhetorical structures everywhere underscore the duality of the mirrored reflection and the theme of opposition. These structures include the binary motivations of characters, the narrator's binary knowledge of motivation, and the paths of agency open to characters so often presented as a choice between two possibilities. Oppositions and equivalencies permeate Book III.

The rhetoric of binaries appears everywhere in the text, as Sidney's narrator makes use of chiasmus, antimetabole, (identified by Hoskins[307]) and epic similes, weighing opposing entities and creating equivalencies meant to be taken in together in small rhetorical units just as the scenes and characters correspond more broadly. To read Book III is constantly to confront equivalencies that point in turn to the larger correspondences of characters and actions. In a mirroring that is reminiscent of the mirrors of stasis in the early Books, for example, binary correspondences aid in dramatizing the helplessness of heroes frustrated in action or thwarted in desire. "Woe is me that thy noble heart could love who hated thee, and hate who loved thee," Helen laments to her desired but uninterested Amphialus, who wounds himself after reproaching himself for his deeds toward his beloved, Philoclea (577). Similarly, Cecropia describes to Amphialus the others' captivity to her when she was princess and heir: "in my presence their tongues were turned into ears, and their ears were captives unto my tongue" (445). Pyrocles's narrated thoughts meet with just this mirror of stasis in his helplessness to free Philoclea from the bondage of Cecropia: "he that despised his own death in respect of honour yet could well nigh

[307] Hoskins lists examples of antimetabole and adds, "Our learned knight [Sidney] skipped often into this figure," John Hoskins, *Directions for Speech and Style,* ed. Hoyt Hudson (Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 1935) 14–15.

dispense with honour itself in respect of Philoclea's death" (561). Richard Lanham's definition of chiasmus invokes a mirror image: it "sets up a natural internal dynamic that draws the parts closer together, as if the second element wanted to flip over and back over the first, condensing the assertion back toward the compression."[308] In a Book permeated with captivity and helplessness, it is not surprising that rhetorical structures should reinforce stasis.

But other uses of binaries suggest more active possibilities: not entrapment but choice, for both characters and reader. The motivations of characters and the narrator's knowledge of the motivations of characters often appear as binary possibilities, a narrative trait Sidney adopts from his predecessor, Heliodorus.[309] For example, Pyrocles stops himself from committing suicide after Philoclea seemingly dies because of the idea of revenge, "whether indeed it were his good angel which used that voice to stay him from unnatural murdering of himself, or that his wandering spirits lighted upon that conceit" (564). Similarly, the narrator does not know Anaxius's motive for not venturing abroad after healing from his wound, but it is one of two possibilities: "he was exceedingly vexed either with kindness or (if a proud heart be not capable thereof) with disdain that he who had the honour to be called the friend of Anaxius should come to such an unexpected ruin" (575). Sometimes the narrator's lack of knowledge, presented as a choice between two possibilities, then appears beside contrasting, certain knowledge, as with Basilius's and Anaxius's motivations for granting leave to Helen of Corinth to remove the wounded Amphialus to her country for care: Basilius grants permission for one of two reasons, "either natural kindness prevailing over all the offences done, or rather glad to make any passage

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[308] Lanham 33.

[309] Among numerous examples in Heliodorus, see Thyamis's hurtling of himself toward the enemy, "perhaps too proud to run away, or even possibly unable to bear the thought of life without Charikleia" in Heliodorus, "An Ethiopian Story," *Collected Ancient Greek Novels,* ed. B. P Reardon (Berkeley: U of California P, 2008) 378.

which might lead him out of his country and from his daughters" (576). Yet in the next sentence, Anaxius "granted her leave" "at his brother's request" (577).

Often the choices open to a character appear in binary terms as well. Cecropia informs Amphialus why she cannot lodge Zelmane and Philoclea together in their prison as he wishes; companionship and solitude lead to diverging outcomes: "company confirms resolutions, and loneliness breeds a weariness of one's thoughts, and so a sooner consenting to reasonable proffers" (448). Similarly, Anaxius at the surgeons' pronouncement of doom upon Amphialus "stood partly in doubt, to kill or save them, between his own fury and their humbleness, but vowing with his own hands to kill the two sisters as causers of his friend's death" (576). Katherine Duncan-Jones has called Book III of *The New Arcadia* a "dark atmosphere" of "dark images of imprisonment and pointless conflict."[310] Yet I see in the conflict an element of Sidney's more productive moral mirror, the binaries a rhetorical product of the duality of mirrored reflection in the service of choice and judgment. Unlike Books I and II, which present the maze, which confounds with perplexities and obstacles, Book III acknowledges opportunities for choice. If viewed against the walls of the maze in Books I and II, then, paradoxically, possibilities are not thwarted as much as multiplied. Judgment is necessary for choosing the way forward.

For instance, the weighing of equivalencies in knowledge and motivation is in keeping with Book III's ubiquitous theme of measuring value, in characters and actions, and of the pervasive use of "worthy" and "worthiness" to judge the deserving of love and honour, freedom, and life. "Is a captive life so much worth?" Philoclea asks Pyrocles, when he proposes that she dissimulate to win time and rescue (562); then she pleads with him to "let me be thy last love; for

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[310] Duncan-Jones, *Courtier Poet* 261.

though I be not worthy of thee, who indeed art the worthiest creature living, yet remember that my love was a worthy love" (562). Even Anaxius must see the worthiness in Pamela's aspect when he arrives with the intention to kill her: "if his anger could not so quickly love nor his pride so easily honour, yet both were forced to find a worthiness" (581). This rendering of judgment between equal entities is required in the decisions of characters and in the moral engagement of the reader of the text's correspondences. Pamela near the end of the text remarks, "my destiny is such that at each moment my life and death stand in equal balance" (583). Attempts at forward action through the limiting autonomy of the maze give way, in Book III, to the necessity of applying judgment to choice between equivalencies.

Many mirrors in the text arise from pronouncements of judgment. Inaccessible lovers and cruel enemies are reflected and reproached, for example, in exclamations of anger and chastisement. Pamela knows and speaks Philoclea's mind to Amphialus when he asks her how she judges him: "Traitor," said she, "to thine own blood, and false to the profession of so much love as thou hast vowed" (572). Helen in an apostrophe levels a reproachful reflection at Philoclea for not loving Amphialus: "excellent may you be in all other things (and excellent sure you are since he loved you) your want of pity, where the fault only was infiniteness of desert, cannot be excused" (577–78). Another mirror of judgment appears in challenges to combat, such as that of Zelmane to Anaxius:

> if fame have not been over-partial to thee, thou art a man of exceeding valour. Therefore I do call thee even before that virtue, and will make it the judge between us. And now I do affirm that to the eternal blot of all the fair acts that thou hast done, thou dost weakly, in seeking without danger to revenge his death, whose life with danger thou mightest perhaps have preserved: thou dost cowardly, in going about by the death of these excellent ladies, to prevent the just punishment that hereafter they (by the powers which they, better than their father or any other, could make) might lay upon thee; and dost most basely, in once presenting thyself as an executioner, a vile office upon men and in a just cause; beyond the degree of any vile word, in so unjust a cause and upon ladies, and such

> ladies. And therefore as a hangman, I say, thou art unworthy to be counted a knight, or to be admitted into the company of knights. Neither for what I say will I allege other reasons of wisdom or justice to prove my speech, because I know thou dost disdain to be tied to their rules; but even in thine own virtue, whereof thou so much gloriest, I will make my trial: and therefore defy thee, by the death of one of us two, to prove or disprove these reproaches. Choose thee what arms thou likest. I only demand, that these ladies, whom I defend, may in liberty see the combat. (581–82)

In his study on warfare in the Renaissance epic, Michael Murrin argues that Sidney's *New Arcadia* "seems more warlike than it is"; the sense of war pervades the text, but the actual battles are "a tiny fraction" of the text.[311] This is all the more reason to understand conflict in terms of the imaginative and moral ground of the mirror.

Among the uses of the mirror trope, the mirror of counsel forms much of the texture of Book III. Mirrors of mirroring counselors proliferate and also serve to contrast the Arcadian realm with the Cecropian. Several counsel scenes instruct on what is most fitting for someone of royal status, reminiscent of Philanax's instruction to Basilius to respond to the oracle's prognostication like a prince (81). An aged gentleman reminds Helen in her lamentations over a wounded Amphialus what is more fitting for her royal station: he "besought her to remember what was fit for her greatness, wisdom, and honour: and withal, that it was fitter to show her love in carrying the body to her excellent surgeon … rather than only show herself a woman-lover in fruitless lamentations" (578). Philoclea counsels Pyrocles in what is fitting and, like Musidorus to the besotted Pyrocles, instructs him to look upon himself and see, in the counsel scene so reminiscent of Boethius, in which she visits him in disguise in his cell after she is believed by him and the reader to be dead.

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[311] Michael Murrin, *History and Warfare in Renaissance Epic* (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1994) 239.

The scene is a series of mirrored reflections, she wishing long life to him, and “he wishing death to her (in his despair)” (566). In her answer, she reproaches him with a reflection of the hero she sees:

> an unkind answer, and far unworthy the excellency of your mind; but not unsuitable to the rest of your behaviour. For most part of this night I have heard you … and have heard nothing of Zelmane in Zelmane, nothing but weak wailings, fitter for some nurse of a village, than so famous a creature as you are. (566)

She instructs him to “See the folly of your passion … As though you should be nearer to her, you being dead and she alive, than she being dead and you alive” (566). Management of the passions is among the occasions for counsel. Book III is filled with passionate action, raising questions about the role of reason in the heroic. Pyrocles insists that he has “reason” to bemoan his lost Philoclea (567), but Philoclea exposes his suffering (Lat. *passio*) for the self-love inherent within it. Judgment is required to identify the source of our actions. The true heroic, Book III counsels, lies within, in the form of self-knowledge.

Interestingly, the one figure in Book III who adopts the stance Sidney adopted in his *Letter to Queen Elizabeth* is the deceiver and servant of the evil Cecropia, Artesia. The tone of Sidney’s earnest counsel to the Queen in his letter of advice appears here unmistakably in a scene of deception and purely evil intent. One implication is that Sidney is questioning the project of counsel, since his own counseling stance now appears in an evil context. I would argue, however, that Sidney is showing both the ease by which one may be taken in by flattery and the difficulty of discerning the true purpose behind what Judith Ferster characterizes as the appropriate “lowering” of a counselor before a prince.[312] The combination of subservient flattery and bold pronouncement that so characterized Sidney’s voice in the *Letter* appears now in the

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[312] “The king must ask advice, but when he does he is weakened”; see Ferster 47.

temptress Artesia, who uses all the strategies of the royal counselor to persuade her royal audience to accompany her to the rural festivities in emulation of the Arcadian shepherds. There is the characteristic assertion of good faith in her "goodness of intention" (442) which she places beside her acknowledgement of boldness, as the "the hurtlessness" of their female gender will "excuse the breach of the commandment" in arriving uninvited. As Sidney asked the Queen to "vouchsafe" her gracious hearing, Artesia begs the ladies to "vouchsafe our message your gracious hearing" (442). As Sidney hoped Elizabeth would consent to allow her subjects to see her, Artesia hopes the princesses will not deny "the shining of your eyes upon us" (442). In all the counsel scenes in Book III, the stance most reminiscent of Sidney's own counsel now appears in the servant of a would-be Queen, the figure of Cecropia.[313]

The reader is given numerous clues to the deception in Artesia's invitation, which the characters do not see. The reader sees the discord in their dress and appearance: the scarlet petticoats, the intertwining of artifice and nature in their hair and dress, and their "wanton modesty and enticing soberness" (442). Ironically, it is the concord of their musical instruments that entices the ladies to see them: "The music entering alone into the lodge, the ladies were all desirous to see from whence so pleasant a guest was come" (442). In a mirror image of the interruption in Pamela's consideration of Musidorus's verse epistle by Zelmane's visit ("before her reason could moderate the disputation between favour and faultiness," she is summoned to entertain Zelmane (441)), the princesses have no time to weigh the appearance of their newest guests before Artesia begins to speak. Deceit is intensifying and so is the characters' inability to

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[313] Skretkowicz discusses Cecropia's antecedent in Heliodorus's Arsace, who tries to obtain Theagenes through confinement and torture. She is one of the numerous borrowings from *An Ethiopian Story.* See Sidney, *The New Arcadia,* ed. Skretkowicz xviii. For Cecropia as Catherine de' Medici, See Duncan-Jones, *Courtier Poet* 263–64. For Cecropia as Mary Queen of Scots, see Worden 174–75. For Cecropia as the Catholic Church as a whole, see Woodcock 73.

pause, consider, and discern falsehood from truth, as if the "error" of Musidorus's attempted kiss (435) unleashed error and contagion into all of Arcadia. Just as Pamela perceived in his over-vehement embrace the "poison" rather than the sweet wine she expected, upon receiving his letter she experiences a double image of contagion when she puts it away "as if it had been a contagious garment of an infected person" (438). Musidorus in writing it had felt it necessary to "counterfeit" his handwriting and choose a presentation in verse to "draw her on to read the more" (437). Error has been unleashed, and its reflections magnify, from the youthful vehemence of Musidorus's attempt at a "trophy" of love to the evil determination of Cecropia to seize political power for herself and her son at all costs. At the end of Book III, Pamela tells Zelmane that her greatest grief is that Zelmane, who ought rightfully to be honoured by them, "should receive only hurt by the contagion of our misery" (585). The *Arcadia* seeks causes, and as we observed, choices are often between dual possibilities. The poison of dissembling arrived in Arcadia from Cecropia's castle, her evil motivated by a hunger for the succession and its power. And yet disguise was introduced into Arcadia by its own king, who flattered himself that he understood the truth of an oracle.

It becomes clear to the reader that the hallmarks of Cecropia's domain are deceit and flattery. Cecropia's stage-managed spectacles of the princesses' deaths are perhaps the most extreme form of deceit used to incline others to her will. She succeeds to a point. After she stages a pageant to threaten Pamela's beheading, Kalander advises Basilius to retreat from the siege (547), although it is Gynecia, silently nursing her love for Zelmane, who causes him to draw his soldiers away (549). Early modern readers would have recognized Plutarch's flatterer when Amphialus sends out letters to incite others to join him in his rebellion against Basilius.

Amphialus

> dispatched private letters to all those principal lords and gentlemen of the country whom he thought ether alliance or friendship to himself might draw with special motions from the general consideration of duty; not omitting all such whom either youthful age or youthlike minds did fill with unlimited desires, besides such whom any discontentment made hungry of change, or an overspended want made want a civil war: to each (according to the counsel of his mother) *conforming himself after their humours*. To his friends, friendliness; to the ambitious, great expectations; to the displeased, revenge; to the greedy, spoil: wrapping their hopes with such cunning, as they [fulfillment of their aspirations] rather seemed given over unto them as partakers than promises sprung of necessity. (452) (italics mine)

To conform oneself to the humours and shapes of another for reasons of self-gain is Plutarch's definition of the flatterer.[314] It is not enough to be rid of Cecropia in her domain to escape from deception's hold; now from the vice of pride, rather than a craving of power for herself and her son, Cecropia's mirror in the form of Anaxius must receive the flattery due to his inflated self-perception. Accordingly, Helen "beseech[es] him withal, since she was in a country of enemies (where she trusted more to Anaxius' valour than Basilius' promise) that he would convey them safely out of these territories" (578). Queen Helen knows her audience: we learn that "nothing thoroughly persuaded him but the last request of his help" (579). Even the most trustworthy and trusted counselor figure in the text, Philanax, deceives and flatters to thwart Anaxius, answering his messenger's threats so as to acknowledge and preserve Anaxius's princely "birth and profession" and to cast all the blame for injuries upon Amphialus (587). In such a hall of distorting mirrors, deceit proliferates. Anaxius, for example, addresses Pyrocles in disguise as Zelmane without knowing it is he; and Zelmane denies accusations of falsehood (killing Euardes in a treacherous way) with yet more falsehood, claiming to be begotten of Pyrocles's father by an Amazon lady (582–83).

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[314] The flatterer "adjusts and shapes himself, as though he were so much inert matter endeavouring to adapt and mould himself to fit those whom he attacks through imitation": see Plutarch, "How to Tell a Flatterer" 277.

Flattery and poison have long been linked.[315] Such proliferating reflections of flattery and of poison's contagion suggest that the text presents one of the key points in the debate about counsel, one that Quentin Skinner classifies as a problem seen the from the ruler's perspective:[316] the problem of the flatterer and of discerning the dissembling from the truth. Judith Ferster has argued that this problem could never be solved for a ruler: "the interpretive problems associated with advice mean that no king is immune from errors in judgment, his own and others'."[317] Thus, advice on the topic would always be needed. I would argue that the text also suggests possibilities of solutions, and in this way counsels the reader. As he so often does, Sidney presents moments, scenes, or characters linked by verbal patterns in order to invite the reader to draw distinctions and exercise judgment. In addition, he offers examples of acquiring self-knowledge through the use of the mirror. Near the end of Book III, he addresses the problem and its solution directly in a counsel scene between Pyrocles and Philoclea.

Maurice Evans has observed that Sidney in the *New Arcadia* often leaves pronoun usage unclear, so that the reader is forced to go back and distinguish among possible antecedents.[318] The narrator of Book III achieves a similarly active engagement from the reader by presenting multiplicities of mirrors within the text: patterns that invite the reader to see the resemblance and then note the difference, drawing distinctions and exercising judgment on the merits of the

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[315] See, for example, the images of the poison in honey in John of Salisbury's discussion of flattery in *Policraticus* 24. Also, see Skinner 216 for a reference to the *Boke Named the Governor,* in which Sir Thomas Elyot characterizes the problem as "the mortal poison of flattery."

[316] Skinner 216.

[317] Ferster 51.

[318] See Evans's edition of Sidney's *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia* 9 ff.

motivations and action.[319] Use of rhetorical schemes, such as linked word usage, occurs not only to delineate vice from virtue but also false flattery from sincere suit. It is telling that one of the first noticeable mirror images invites the reader to distinguish between the latter two: Artesia in her speech of temptation uses the same play on words that Musidorus used in his verse epistle to Pamela, inviting the reader to distinguish the flattery from the sincerity: "If that love be a fault, more fault in you to be lovely," Musidorus writes (439); "as it comes from love, so comes it from lovely persons," entices Artaxia (442). At this point, the readers have read the narrator's indications about the deceptive nature of Artesia, but the characters, the princesses and their attendants, have not penetrated her disguise.

An additional example I borrow from Victor Skretkowicz, who points out the similarity of the narrator's descriptions of Musidorus's response to Pamela's anger and banishment and Pyrocles's response to what he believes to be Philoclea's death.[320] The narrator describes Musidorus after inciting Pamela's anger by defining what his reaction was not: "It was not an amazement, it was not a sorrow, but it was even a death which then laid hold of Dorus" (436). When Pyrocles sees what he believes to be Philoclea's cut off head, "It was not a pity; it was not an amazement; it was not a sorrow which then laid hold of Pyrocles, but a wild fury of desperate agony" (563). Reflections of nearly identically worded reactions allow us to compare multiple facets of action and to pronounce judgment, here, I suggest, on heroic characters who are pushed to the extremes of emotion by helplessness and an inability to act, Musidorus frustrated in desire having created his own exile and Pyrocles thwarted from any means of helping his beloved. We are invited to compare causation, and causation in both can be linked to self-deception, such as

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[319] For the mirror's pedagogical project of comparison, of finding difference within similar reflection, I refer the reader again to Grabes 131–44 and Taylor 198.

[320] Sidney, *The New Arcadia* xxxv.

Pamela's anger at being self-deceived in him; similarly, Pyrocles is now forced to witness the price of his fall for Artesia's deceit, as he, disguised as Zelmane, failed to penetrate Artesia's deceitful invitation and subsequent kidnapping. In that instance, we can say that disguise has met its reflection of disguise, as Pyrocles dressed as Zelmane confronts the villainess Artesia and participates unknowingly in her train of deceptive "sweet music and pretty conversation" (443).

Other contrasting mirrors within the text reinforce Book III's generic identity as a mirror for princes, which Sidney now offers with the authority derived from the self-scrutiny of Books I and II. One example between Basilius and Amphialus illuminates a quality of good governance. Amphialus's preparations for the siege warfare with Basilius are reminiscent of the preparations for war advised by Cambyses to Cyrus, in the father and son advice scene in the *Cyropaedia,* a mirror for princes favored by Sidney.[321] I believe that, in these preparations, Amphialus serves as a mirror image to Basilius in his use of men, a contrast to Basilius's improper use of his favorite, Dametas. Unlike Basilius, who does not use men according to their qualities, Amphialus is shown in a considerable description performing the reverse:

> distributing each office as near as he could to the disposition of the person that should exercise it …. Therefore would he not employ the still man to a shifting practice, nor the liberal man to be a dispenser of his victuals, nor the kind-hearted man to be a punisher; but would exercise their virtues in sorts where they might be profitable, employing his chief care to know them all particularly, and thoroughly regarding also the constitution of their bodies; some being able better to abide watching, some hunger, some labour; making his benefit of each ability, and not forcing beyond power …. Even of vices he made his profit, making the cowardly Clinias to have care of the watch, which he knew his own fear would make him very wakefully perform. (455)

In this quality, Amphialus shows a greater merit in governance than Basilius.

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[321] In all editions, this father-son advice scene occurs in Book I Chapter 6. See Xenophon, *The Education of Cyrus,* Wayne Ambler, trans. (Ithaca, NY: Cornell UP, 2001) 46 ff. For Sidney's fondness for the *Cyropaedia,* see Tatum 12.

If pairs of lovers and pairs of rulers serve as mirror images of one another, so do the knights who meet to fight one another in the field. The proliferation of knights in combat lends itself to a myriad of mirror image possibilities, all of which invite the reader to form discernments in judgment about conduct. So, for example, Amphialus finds the Forsaken Knight, who is Musidorus:

> in his own livery, as black as sorrow itself could see itself in the blackest glass …. Their very horses were coal black too, not having so much as one star to give light to their night of blackness; so as one would have thought they had been the two sons of sorrow. (536)

They meet in such close and furious combat "as the one seemed a lightning of the other's thunder" (537). So close is the combat between them that pronouns shift so that the reader loses the distinction between them, giving rise to an intensified mirror image in the form of psychomachia.

At times, the mirror images for the reader's comparison and judgment are subtle. One such example is created by verbal links between Musidorus's suit of love to Pamela and Amphialus's to Philoclea. The similarity invites observation of their difference and also of their relative merit. Musidorus in his verse epistle tells Pamela it is her fault that he is imprisoned: "you should your beauty have hidden: / You should those fair eyes have with a veil covered. … Or with fair hands' nails (O hand which nails me to this death) / You should have your face (since love is ill) blemished" (439–40). Amphialus, on the other hand, tells Philoclea that it is her fault that she is imprisoned: "It is you yourself that imprisons yourself" (451).

In addition to prompting the reader's judgment of distinctions in the merits of characters and their actions through mirroring phrasing, Book III presents mirrors of self-division and self-representation. Often the self-scrutiny is presented by the narrator, not the character in monologue (unlike Gynecia), and sometimes it is offered by another character in dialogue.

Pamela responds to Musidorus's seizing her for a kiss, and her dismay at being deceived in him, by looking at a reflection of herself, "looking first unto heaven, as amazed to find herself so beguiled in him," and then showing her disdain. Characters in Book III learn about themselves by seeking and finding reflections of themselves, sometimes within themselves and sometimes prompted by views of others. A proliferation of views of the self serves to engage the reader in comparison as well. In these examples in Book III, the reader is no longer tasked with evaluating moral gradations of a character's use of the mirror, as in the use of reflections for confirmation of views of herself that we remember from Gynecia in *The Old Arcadia*. Now, in Book III, classifications are clear.

For example, deceitful and proud characters see reflections in mirrors of narcissism, the traditional flattering mirror of vanity.[322] Artesia receives "some false persuasion her glass had given her of her own incomparable excellencies" (517), similar to Lycurgus, proud brother of Anaxius, "still viewing his graces in no glass but self-liking" (584). Cecropia tries to use the mirror as a weapon to persuade Pamela to seize the day before her beauty fades: "when your glass shall accuse you to your face what a change there is in you" (486–87). For virtuous characters, the mirror serves as a prompt to instruction or self-knowledge. Musidorus achieves a measure of self-knowledge by writing his verse epistle to Pamela: he sees his true self in the mirror as he reproaches himself for the thought of destroying Pamela's beauty: "Well, but faulty I was. Reason to my passion yielded, / Passion unto my rage, rage to a hasty revenge" (440). Unlike Pyrocles, whose thoughts of revenge stay his hand from self-harm, Amphialus does attempt suicide, self-divided upon seeing himself through the reproaching eyes of his beloved: "self-ruin the only triumph of a battle fought between him and himself" (575).

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[322] See Grabes 71 for "the personal vanity which is early associated with the looking-glass."

Self-discovery for the evildoers results in their destruction. Cecropia encounters "the guilty amazement of a self-accusing conscience" (492) by seeing herself in the mirror of Pamela: "So foully was the filthiness of impiety discovered by the shining of [Pamela's] unstained goodness" (492). It is a mirror scene for Cecropia's death, when she sees in Amphialus with his sword drawn "and a look more terrible than the sword, she straight was stricken with the guiltiness of her own conscience" and plunges unwittingly from the roof of the castle to her death (573). Cecropia's evil counsel to Philoclea in her captivity is a mirror of contrast to the advice Philoclea will offer to Pyrocles toward the end of Book III. "Look upon your own body and see," Cecropia tells Philoclea, "take a glass and see whether those tears become your eyes" (457, 458). Philoclea's mirror to Pyrocles will seek to restore him from being separated from himself in grief: "so was your mind estranged from your senses and have heard nothing of Zelmane in Zelmane" (566).

When Pamela counsels constancy in the face of death, she in all her magisterial authority is the counselor figure, too. "A ship is not counted strong for biding one storm," Pamela advises, and Philoclea is content to follow where she points: "how can I tread amiss, that see Pamela's steps" (580). Pamela refuses to flatter when Zelmane proposes deception as a strategy to win time for rescue: "And why," said Pamela, "shall we any longer flatter adversity? Why should we delight to make ourselves any longer balls to injurious fortune" (584). But it is given to Philoclea to counsel Pyrocles and the reader how to penetrate to truth. The Boethius-like scene of Philoclea's appearance to Pyrocles in his cell when he is despairing after the pageant of her death formulates Book III's most openly didactic counsel to the reader on the problem of discerning truth from falsehood. Philoclea's last counsel to him before revealing herself is: "Do not deceive thyself" (567); she is his Philoclea, she affirms. Pyrocles's intransigent belief in her other-

worldliness even after she reveals herself as alive is humorous but also articulates a central question in a text full of disguise, the poison of flattery, and stage-managed spectacle: "how shall I believe mine eyes any more? … how can I believe mine own senses?" (568). Do not forget virtue, Philoclea answers, as she reveals the sleights and flatteries of Cecropia, who hoped by convincing each sister of the other's death "to have wrested our minds to the forgetting of virtue" (569).

We end where we began, with Sidney's mirror in a long line of mirrors for princes that advise virtue as remedy.[323] Books I and II of Sidney's revised *Arcadia* presented mirrors of stasis and paralysis, and the recurrent image of the maze portrayed the limitations of agency and knowledge. Sidney in the first Books turned to storytelling as a strategy in response, as the actions of heroes and conflicts in other realms are narrated in turn by the royal and rustic characters of Arcadia. Most importantly, Sidney turned the mirror upon himself in a demonstration of self-scrutiny for self-knowledge. In Book III, with the exception of Cecropia, who narrates to Amphialus her grievances at the loss of the succession to Basilius, characters of Sidney's final Book replace storytelling with confrontation, and the narrator reclaims his dominance. Book III restores the mirror as the productive trope of counsel, serving to instruct characters and reader alike, in the discernment of flattery from truth, through a multiplicity of uses. Book III is unfinished. Sidney left the princesses and Zelmane awaiting the rescue of Musidorus and he may have departed for a diplomatic mission to France (1584) or turned to write his *Defence of Leicester* in response to a libelous pamphlet.[324] His translations of the Psalms and of Du Plessis Mornay's *De la vérité de la religion Chrestienne* from this time also

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[323] Ferguson 3–90.

[324] This and the following biographical details are from Woodcock 75–76 and Duncan-Jones, *Courtier Poet,* 267 and 276–79.

remain unfinished, and a translation of Salluste du Bartas's epic poem *La Semaine ou Création du monde* (1578) has been lost. In 1586 he was wounded in military action in the Low Countries, and is reported to have been writing to the very end, composing a poem, "La Cuisse Rompue," (now lost) that was set to music and performed for him as he lay dying. Queen Elizabeth never fully trusted Sidney or his Dudley family connections, and she did not advance his political career as his education and talents warranted. It is hard not to see the added poignancy of Sidney's long-term disappointments and the probable self-realization at his death that he had not achieved his political potential. One hopes, therefore, that in his use of the mirror to counsel the reader, with a new authority of self-knowledge, he found restored to him the power of written counsel to forge a more virtuous and golden world.

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