

Fall 2005

"Invidiam viam aut faciam": "I will find a way or
make one" The poetic practice of political counsel
in the courts of Elizabeth I and James I

Andrea L. Harkness

University of New Hampshire, Durham

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholars.unh.edu/dissertation>

Recommended Citation

Harkness, Andrea L., ""Invidiam viam aut faciam": "I will find a way or make one" The poetic practice of political counsel in the courts of Elizabeth I and James I" (2005). *Doctoral Dissertations*. 285.

<https://scholars.unh.edu/dissertation/285>

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by the Student Scholarship at University of New Hampshire Scholars' Repository. It has been accepted for inclusion in Doctoral Dissertations by an authorized administrator of University of New Hampshire Scholars' Repository. For more information, please contact nicole.hentz@unh.edu.

NOTE TO USERS

This reproduction is the best copy available.

UMI[®]

**“Invidiam Viam Aut Faciam”—“I will find a way or make one”:
The Poetic Practice of Political Counsel in the
Courts of Elizabeth I and James I**

BY

**ANDREA L. HARKNESS
BA, University of Hawaii, 1987
MA, University of Washington, 1989**

DISSERTATION

**Submitted to the University of New Hampshire
in Partial Fulfillment of
the Requirements for the Degree of**

**Doctor of Philosophy
in
English**

September, 2005

UMI Number: 3183899

Copyright 2005 by
Harkness, Andrea L.

All rights reserved.

INFORMATION TO USERS

The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted. Broken or indistinct print, colored or poor quality illustrations and photographs, print bleed-through, substandard margins, and improper alignment can adversely affect reproduction.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send a complete manuscript and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if unauthorized copyright material had to be removed, a note will indicate the deletion.

UMI[®]

UMI Microform 3183899

Copyright 2005 by ProQuest Information and Learning Company.

All rights reserved. This microform edition is protected against unauthorized copying under Title 17, United States Code.

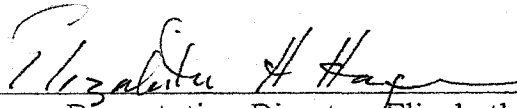
ProQuest Information and Learning Company
300 North Zeeb Road
P.O. Box 1346
Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1346

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

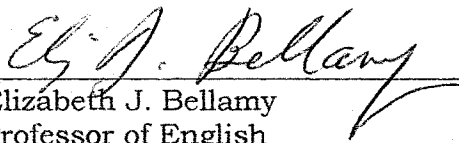
© 2005

Andrea Harkness

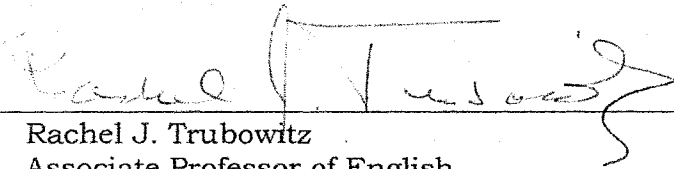
This dissertation has been examined and approved.



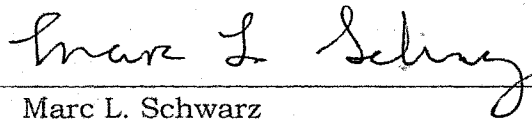
Dissertation Director, Elizabeth H. Hagemen
Professor of English



Elizabeth J. Bellamy
Professor of English



Rachel J. Trubowitz
Associate Professor of English



Marc L. Schwarz
Associate Professor of History



Marco L. Dorfsman
Assistant Professor of Spanish

May 11, 2005

Date

DEDICATION

For

Elizabeth McCutcheon

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My work on this dissertation received support through two grants from the Graduate School at the University of New Hampshire. A Summer Fellowship for Teaching Assistants and a Dissertation Fellowship enabled me to do research and write early drafts of this study. I found more support and inspiration in the meetings of the Dissertation Workshop and especially the insights of its director, Susan Schibanoff, who has helped me at important moments with timely advice.

Members of my Dissertation committee Rachel Trubowitz, and Jane Bellamy, in English, and Marc Schwarz of the History department were generous with their comments. I want to thank them for their thoughtful suggestions which have only improved this work. Betty Hageman showed me a sustained patience for which I am immeasurably grateful. She gave me hours of work in reading and commenting on every draft. This dissertation would not have been written without her understanding and support, nor would it make as much sense without her expertise and guidance.

Many friends supported me in this project. In the early stages Molly Doyle shared her love for reading and research with me for which I am grateful. Sarah Allday and all of her family steadied me through much of my graduate studies. Suzanne Wones and Rebecca Dawson Webb each deserve my especial thanks. They have encouraged me steadfastly and never let me cheat myself. They have been my family throughout graduate school and I love being a part of their growing families. Jonathan Paul has

weathered all of the storms of my writing and remained a cheerful and helpful support. He has been indispensably encouraging. Catherine Fatina, who has given me long years of support, has helped me to see that there is always a harvest. I also want to thank the members of my Monday night support group who always listen.

Lastly, though she was first, I am especially indebted to Elizabeth McCutcheon who urged me to write on Sir Philip Sidney as an undergraduate. She's been a friend and mentor even from very far away. She is a blessing without disguise.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DEDICATION.....	iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	v
ABSTRACT.....	viii
CHAPTER	PAGE
INTRODUCTION	1
I. IN THE SERVICE OF COUNSEL: SIR PHILIP SIDNEY'S <i>ASTROPHIL AND STELLA</i>	31
II. HANDMAIDEN TO THE QUEEN: MARY SIDNEY HERBERT'S TRANSLATIONS AS COUNSEL IN QUEEN ELIZABETH'S COURT.....	92
III. IN THE SERVICE OF "FAIRE VIRTUE": AEMELIA LANYER'S POLITICAL ROLE FOR WOMEN UNDER JAMES I	142
IV. LOVE IN THE SERVICE OF THE KING: MARY WROTH'S <i>PAMPHILIA TO AMPHILANTHUS</i>	187
AFTERWARD.....	222
WORKS CITED	231

ABSTRACT

“INVIDIAM VIAM AUT FACIAM”—“I WILL FIND A WAY OR MAKE ONE”:

THE POETIC PRACTICE OF POLITICAL COUNSEL IN THE
COURTS OF ELIZABETH I AND JAMES I

by

Andrea L. Harkness

University of New Hampshire, September 2005

In this study I argue that at least four poets: three aristocrats from the Sidney family—Sir Philip Sidney, Mary Sidney Herbert, and Mary Wroth—with a history of service to Tudor monarchs, and one non-aristocratic writer, Aemilia Lanyer, who claimed to be a poetical descendant of a Sidney, responded to the efforts of Elizabeth I and James I to restrict the power of the aristocracy by claiming a right to offer counsel to their monarch. Though no one of them could claim a position from which to offer direct counsel, they each exploited the Petrarchan discourse of love to assert an expanded role for themselves by writing poetry that offers counsel concerning the most intimate aspects of a monarch’s rule—the nature and temper of his or her personal desires—in ways that formal counsel might not. Where they could not claim an intimacy with their monarch, they dramatized the conflicts which the commitments of the monarch’s desires created with their efforts for a just public rule. In his sonnet sequence, *Astrophil and Stella*, Sir Philip Sidney extends of his more formal counsel to the Queen regarding her affair with

the Duke of Alencon. I read Philip's sister, Mary Sidney Herbert, and niece, Mary Wroth, as drawing on Sidney's idea of fiction to write their own counsel to the monarch. Philip's sister Mary began her career as a poet translating Robert Garnier's play, *Marc Antonie*, which depicts the frustration of counselors in addressing a monarch's passions and examines the personal triumphs and public costs of great princes in love. Their niece, Lady Mary Wroth wrote a sonnet sequence, *Pamphilia to Amphilanthus*, which dramatizes the struggles of King James' Queen Anne and his favorite, the Duke of Buckingham, to love and serve a man of multiple and wavering affections like the King himself. Aemilia Lanyer, too, borrows from Sidney's idea of poetry in her collection of poems, the *Salve Deus Rex Judaeorum*. Writing as a spokesperson for the aristocracy, she identifies a virtue particular to women ("faire virtue") without which King James' rule is not truly Christian.

INTRODUCTION

Before her coronation in 1558, Queen Elizabeth addressed an assembly of lords and officeholders of the realm, telling them that central to beginning her reign was the selection of those who should advise her and provide counsel to her government. This was an especially sensitive issue for the young woman monarch, and as she ascended her throne, the role of those who would provide her advice was clearly foremost in her thoughts. The Queen called upon her nobles “to be assistant” to her rule and told them she meant “to direct all my actions by good advice and counsel.”¹ On the surface, the Queen's words invite her nobles to participate in her rule. Our understanding of Elizabeth's speech and her subsequent reign, however, must be modified by Lawrence Stone's argument that the very people Elizabeth requested counsel from lost a great deal of power during her and her successor, King James', reign. Despite the appearance of her offer to open power, Queen Elizabeth, as a ruling monarch, actually worked to close down the power of the nobility.

During the mid-sixteenth to mid-seventeenth century, Stone argues, Tudor monarchs strove to weaken the power of the aristocracy, making them increasingly dependent on the crown, and helping to create a crises of power for the English aristocracy.² I argue in this study that at least four poets: three aristocrats from the

¹ Queen Elizabeth, *Elizabeth I: Collected Works*, ed. Leah S. Marcus, Janel Mueller, and Mary Beth Rose (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2002) 52.

Sidney family—Sir Philip Sidney, Mary Sidney Herbert, and Mary Wroth—with a history of service to Tudor monarchs, and one non-aristocratic writer, Aemilia Lanyer, who claimed to be a poetical descendant of a Sidney, responded to this crisis by claiming a right to offer counsel to their monarch. Interesting in this regard is the fact that both Philip's sister Mary and his niece (also Mary) identify themselves not with their married names, but with the name Sidney. Strikingly, Aemilia Lanyer, who is not herself an aristocrat, speaks for aristocratic women. She validates her voice as a spokesperson for the nobility as authorized by the Countess of Cumberland. She also claims to follow in Mary Sidney's very footsteps as a writer of biblical exegesis. The Sidney's various literary writings advising their monarch may be seen as attempts on their part to shore up aristocratic power, in particular the power of their own family. Indeed, the counsel which they offer asserts an expanded role for themselves as counselors. These three courtier poets, and one aspiring courtier poet, adapted Petrarchan love discourse to address the most intimate aspects of a monarch's rule—the nature and temper of his or her personal desires. Each insists that a ruler's personal desires, as a series of commitments, both conscious and unconscious, not compromise his or her commitment to a just public rule.

In the same speech from which I quote above, Queen Elizabeth publicly illustrated her willingness to place her trust in valued servants when she spoke to William Cecil. She told him “that without respect of my private will, you will give me that counsel that you think best,” and she pledged to keep confidential any matters he deemed only for her (52). Cecil, who would serve the Queen for forty years, was thus placed

² Lawrence Stone, *The Crisis of the Aristocracy, 1558-1641* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1965) 13.

among the privileged few the Queen relied upon for their service. But in placing her confidence in Cecil, who was not a member of the nobility, the Queen signaled to her lords that appointments by her predecessors would not necessarily govern her selection of office holders and advisors. Toward the end of her speech Elizabeth said that she would beg “counsel and advice” from some of her nobles and also those she thought “meet and [would] shortly appoint.” She would choose her appointments [to her Privy Council] from those recently appointed to office by her late sister, and from among others of “long experience in government” raised into office by her father, and brother. She cautioned those who would not win her appointment. They ought “not to think the same for any disability in them,” she advised them, adding that “a multitude doth make rather discord and confusion than good counsel.” Thus even before she had worn her crown, according to David Starkey, Elizabeth was engaged in a “heavy cull,” among the recently ennobled office-holders and followers of her late sister Mary.³ In this she clearly indicated she was in charge of managing how she was to receive advice and who might give it.

For King James, the choices of who advised him had a different texture. After his coronation, King James showed his favor to the noble Scotsmen who had accompanied him into England. When in rare instances he referred to the lieges (other nobility) of the country, as in “The Trew Law of Free Monarchies” (1598), it was in the context of his theory of absolute monarchy in which he claimed to have been made “a naturall Father to all his Lieges at [his] Coronation.”⁴ In his treatise to his son, Henry, on how to rule as

³ David Starkey, *Elizabeth: The Struggle for the Throne* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, Inc., 2001) 240.

⁴ King James VI and I, *The Trew Law of Free Monarchies, Political Writings*, ed. Johann P. Sommerville (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994) 65.

king, *Basilicon Doron*, King James wrote of the value of appointing men to office who were “men of knowen wisdom, honestie, and good conscience; well practised in the points of the craft, that yee ordaine them for.”⁵ He recommended that Prince Henry view men of the court as rich ornaments and emphasized their acquaintance and employment in great affairs especially where they might enforce his laws (29). According to Neil Cuddy, James concerned himself with investing power in the men of his bedchamber with an aim to favor the politically powerful Scotsmen he had brought with him to England. During James’ reign, Cuddy remarks, the men of his bedchamber became so influential that even a powerful “would be chief-counsellor” like Robert Cecil (William Cecil’s son) could not stem the tide of powers which were eventually invested in the men who served in the King’s bedchamber.⁶ Eventually, towards the end of his reign, George Villiers, the Duke of Buckingham, received so much of James’ trust that he ultimately exercised a large hand in running the government of England.

Despite the significant differences between Elizabeth I and James I in the conduct of their courts, according to John Guy, Tudor and early Stuart rulers assumed that *consilium* went hand-in-hand with the exercise of royal power, *imperium*, more out of a tradition of rule than a legal requirement to rule with counsel.⁷ Rulers were not “bound”

⁵ King James VI and I, *Basilicon Doron, Political Writings*, 37. First written in 1598, first printing for private distribution 1599, revised and printed in Edinburgh and in London 1603. See Johann P. Sommerville, “Principle Events in James’ Life,” *Political Writings*, ed. Johann P. Sommerville (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994) xxx.

⁶ Neil Cuddy, “The revival of the entourage: the Bedchamber of James I, 1603-1625,” *The English Court: from the Wars of the Roses to the Civil War* (London: Longman, 1987) 177, 197-202.

⁷ John Guy, “The rhetoric of counsel in early modern England,” *Tudor Political Culture*, ed. Dale Hoak (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995) 305. Guy explores the intellectual history of counsel up to its breakdown in the Civil War when Parliament claimed to be, in Guy’s

to follow any advice given, or even to seek out advice. They sought advice out of a general sense of the moral rightness of doing so and exercised a “king’s prerogative” in choosing among which voices to listen (Guy 294, 305). Even as English monarchs chose from among the voices of counsel that which they would hear, they also sought to control the offers of counsel given them. John Guy points out that Queen Elizabeth in her addresses to Parliament “stressed the limits of its authority to counsel a prince” (302). King James reminded the Parliament of 1605 that they were to advise him only on “matters proposed by him” and to deliberate within the narrow concerns of how these matters agreed with the “weale” of King and Country, “whose weales cannot be separated.”⁸ In addition, both monarchs sought to regulate what might be said or printed about them. Unsolicited advice or criticism of a monarch could have disastrous consequences. In 1579, the Protestant lawyer, John Stubbs, and his printer each lost his right hand for publishing a pamphlet, *The Gaping Gulf*, critical of Elizabeth’s proposed marriage to the Duke of Anjou. Subsequently, Elizabeth issued a proclamation which prohibited criticisms of the Duke’s person.

Given the voluntary nature of a monarch’s acceptance of counsel, finding a way to address monarchs on matters of kingship and rule became a tremendous challenge to those within the sphere of court as well as on its margins. Many theorists and practitioners questioned how best to conduct the affairs of counsel. Early sixteenth-century changes in humanist education comprised one response. Led by Roger Ascham, who became the Princess Elizabeth’s tutor, formal education for males increasingly

phrase, a “*locus consilium*.”

⁸ King James VI and I, “A Speech in the Parliament House, as neere the very words as could be gathered at the instant,” *Political Writings*, 156.

focused on skills to create capable servants for the king. Thomas Elyot echoed these aims in his opening to his final chapters of *The Book Named the Governor* (1531) in which he wrote, "The end of all doctrine and study is good counsel. . . wherein virtue may be found."⁹ Baldesar Castiglione's *Libro del Cortegiano* (1528), translated into English as *The Book of the Courtier* in 1561, offered another response with a highly idealized vision of the courtier which shaped the end of all the courtier's accomplishments in arms, manners, merrymaking, and morality so as

to win...the favor and mind of the prince whom he serves that he may be able to tell him, and always will tell him, the truth about everything he needs to know, without fear or risk of displeasing him; and that when he sees the mind of his prince inclined to a wrong action, he may dare to oppose him and in a gentle manner avail himself of the favor acquired by his good accomplishments, so as to dissuade him of every evil intent and bring him to the path of virtue.¹⁰

Earlier in the century, Sir Thomas More presented a different portrait of the courtier as a Prince's counselor in Book I of his *Utopia*. More wrote both books of the *Utopia* between 1514-1516. According to J.H. Hexter, More wrote Book II, in which the habits and customs of the Utopians are described, while on a diplomatic mission for King Henry VIII to the Netherlands. Upon his return to England, King Henry offered More a

⁹ Quoted in Guy 293.

¹⁰ Baldasar Castiglione, *The Book of the Courtier*, trans. Charles S. Singleton (New York: Anchor Books, 1959) 289.

position at court. Henry's offer prompted More to write the debate in Book I¹¹ between the seasoned traveler Raphael Hythloday and the fictional More concerning whether the difficulties of counseling a prince makes truthful counsel possible, and how best to present counsel.¹² Hythloday discounts the possibility as most monarchs are interested in war and acquiring new lands, and the counselors with whom they surround themselves think themselves wise, but are willing to pander to the monarch with flattery. When Hythloday confidently asserts he can only offend men of different minds with his ideas, the fictional More agrees (31). He chastises Hythloday that he could do no good to "force strange and untested ideas on people who you know are firmly persuaded the other way" (36). With his "school philosophy" Hythloday wrongly "supposes that every topic is suitable for every occasion" (35). The fictional More proposes an alternate philosophy "better suited for the political arena." This philosophy "takes its cue, adapts itself to the drama in hand, and acts its part neatly and appropriately" (36). He instructs Hythloday to "strive to influence policy indirectly, urge your case vigorously but tactfully" (36).

In his response to Hythloday, the fictional More critiques an important aspect of what the "new" humanist education aimed at achieving: a greater role for the exercise of rhetoric. Humanists employed rhetoric as training in ways to craft an effective appeal to an audience. More's character does not give a name to this alternate philosophy, but contrasts it with Hythloday's outmoded "school philosophy." Yet even as the fictional

¹¹ Summarized from J.H. Hexter, "The Composition of *Utopia*," *The Complete Works of St. Thomas More*, vol. IV, ed. Edward Surtz and J.H. Hexter (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1965) xv-xxiii.

¹² All references to the text of the *Utopia* are to Sir Thomas More, *Utopia*, ed. George M. Logan, trans. Robert M. Adams (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989).

More builds a case for the use of this alternate philosophy, the debate between them draws more attention to the strains between the ideal of giving counsel to a monarch and its practice in the sixteenth-century. Their exchange points to the limitations of the practice of rhetoric as persuasion which humanists proposed it to be.

In response to the fictional More's appeal that he act more "tactfully," Hythloday replies that such strategies of indirection will drive him as mad as those whom he is trying to cure (36). Hythloday deftly sketches the constraints under which a king's counselor may be caught, not only by the king, but also by his fellow counselors:

In a council, there is no way to dissemble or play the innocent. You must openly approve the worst proposals and warmly urge the most vicious policies. A man who went along only half-heartedly would immediately be suspected as a spy, perhaps a traitor. How can one individual do any good when he is surrounded by colleagues who would more readily corrupt the best of men than be reformed themselves? Either they will seduce you, or, if you remain honest and innocent, you will be made a screen for the knavery and folly of others. Influencing policy indirectly! You wouldn't have a chance (37-38).

In this passage, Hythloday takes the practice of dissembling as risking one's life before men who demand consent or approval. He rules out the possibility of playing any other part as grounds for being identified as the enemy. The closer one is to authority, he suggests, the less room there is for maneuvering. Hythloday's depiction of the constraints surrounding counsel goes unchallenged as the fictional More's silence

recognizes Hythloday's criticism of the aims and practice of counsel as fraught with tensions. Sixteen years later the historical More found himself with no room to maneuver in disagreeing with the policies of his king. In a particularly telling irony, More lost his life for refusing to accept the newly created English church established by King Henry in his search for a divorce from his wife.

While Hythloday's criticism of influencing policy indirectly goes unchallenged at the time, it stands out in the context of both books of the *Utopia* as a bit nearsighted. In the story of his conversation with the Cardinal, Hythloday dismisses the positive impression on the Cardinal that his ideas make. Hythloday, however, focuses on the entrenched reactions of the men attending the Cardinal, whose views, Hythloday remarks sarcastically, only change when the Cardinal takes up Hythloday's ideas (26). Moreover, Hythloday's claim "to speak the truth" (36) takes on troubling ironies given that he and his tale of Utopian society are both elaborate fictions, products of the historical More's mind, through which he indirectly criticizes the institutional structures around him.

More than sixty years later, another royal servant, Sir Philip Sidney, recast More's brilliant use of instructional tale telling in his own ideas of fiction. Sidney might well have been answering Hythloday's objections to acting a part as merely telling lies when in his *Defense of Poetry* (written 1580; printed 1595), Sidney described the poet as never lying because he never professed to tell the truth—"Now, for the poet, he nothing affirms, and therefore never lieth."¹³ Nor did Sidney require the poet to write in verse to earn such a defense, "verse being but an ornament and no cause to poetry" (81). In his

¹³ Sir Philip Sidney, *The Defense of Poetry, Miscellaneous Prose of Sir Philip Sidney*, ed. Katherine Duncan-Jones and Jan Van Dorsten (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1973) 102.

Defense, Sidney praises Sir Thomas More and his *Utopia* alongside poets like Xenophon and Virgil for creating a “feigned image of poetry,” which was better than the counsel of philosophers “to so readily direct a prince” (86-87). Sidney, who had been educated by humanist tutors, earned the renown of a courtier as accomplished as any Castiglione could have prescribed. While never admitted to the councils of his prince, as More had been, Sidney as a courtier could in theory address his ruler.¹⁴ In practice, however, the Queen and the men who surrounded her carefully regulated offers of advice from others.

Other English literary theorists in the period connected poetry to the practice of government, but only Sidney, who wrote as a member of the aristocratic circles of court, identified in poetry skills through which courtiers might actively affect the actions of their prince. In his *Defense*, Sidney described “divers smally learned courtiers” as far surpassing “some professors of learning” in their use of the art simply by “following that which by practice he findeth fittest to nature” (118-19). For Sidney, poetry is a “counterfeiting” art, a kind of imitation in which the poet—“figuring forth”—creates a “speaking picture” (79-80). Sidney finds poetry’s counterfeiting power in the use of “feigned examples” which he recommends as having “as much force to teach” as a true example, but which possess even greater force to persuade since a feigned example “may be tuned to the highest key of passion.” As illustrations of feigned examples, Sidney turns to the “honest dissimulation” of servants of kings who deliver up the king’s enemies by pretending to be traitors (89). For Sidney, poetry distills this fiction-making power and dissembling can serve a positive place in service to a king.

¹⁴ Katherine Duncan-Jones and Jan Van Dorsten eds., *Miscellaneous Prose of Sir Philip Sidney*, 35.

Sidney's *Defense* circulated in manuscript for nearly a decade before George Puttenham printed his treatise *The Arte of English Poesie* (1589) with which it contrasts strongly in its more muscular and less apprehensive view of the poetic idiom at court. Jennifer Summit explores how Puttenham found in the Queen's poetic abilities "the centerpiece of a new English literature" in which a female tradition of poetry "consciously departs" from the male dominated tradition of oratorical training.¹⁵ Summit argues in her reading of Elizabeth's poem "The Threat of Future Foes" that Elizabeth found in poetry a political language that might carry covert meanings and thus insinuate what the Queen might not say directly (170). Puttenham, who was an out-of-court poet, viewed courtly dissimulation as ornamenting or embellishing indirect speech. By contrast, Sidney argued that the courtier had a potential to affect the actions of his prince—not simply as ornament, but towards action. Puttenham perceived figures of speech as "abuses or rather trespasses in speach [which] passe the ordinary limits of common utterance" as in "*allegorie* [which works] by a duplicitie of meaning or dissimulation under covert and darke intendments."¹⁶ In contrast with Sidney, Puttenham writes about the deceptive power of poetic language; as Summit points out, Puttenham perceives in it a potential danger and threat to the order of court (Summit 177). Conversely, Sidney shows dissimulation as a way of honest service. While both writers signal that they are aware of the difficulty of identifying the motives of dissembling, Sidney is much more positive in its uses than Puttenham.

¹⁵ Jennifer Summit, *Lost Property: the Woman Writer and English Literary History, 1380-1589* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2000) 171.

¹⁶ Quoted in Summit 171-72.

In the late sixteenth-century, poetry was well suited to become the vehicle Sidney used for his practice of rhetoric. More had written in Latin, which in the 1580s was still used to conduct the affairs of state among other nations. Yet Sidney in his *Defense* was intent on promoting the development of poetry in English as a national project. Among vernaculars he saw the English language as suited “for uttering sweetly and properly the conceits of the mind” and more “fit” than Italian, Dutch or French for versifying (119-20). As Richard Halpern points out, poetry was never made a part of the early modern English university curriculum as it had been in Italy.¹⁷ Sidney writes against those who “professing learning, inveigh against poetry” (*Defense* 74). And though it inhabits the margins of those institutions where males received formal rhetorical training, poetry is for Sidney a skill as teachable as oratory (111-12), and the purposes Sidney assigns it range well beyond the more pedantic uses of rhetoric. The poet is not constrained to follow “what is, hath been, or shall be,” but may “range, only reined with learned discretion, into. . . what may be, and should be” (81). Sidney makes poetry an improved practice of persuasion. Its end is to make men more virtuous, specifically to know “a man’s self, in the ethic and politic consideration, with the end of well-doing and not of well-knowing only” (83).

Sidney chose a propitious moment to promote English poetry. The printing of Tottel’s *Miscellany* in 1557, a collection of songs and sonnets, drew attention to the politically sophisticated court poetry of Sir Thomas Wyatt and the Earl of Surrey. Tottel’s collection was so popular it was reprinted six times before 1600.¹⁸ Other

¹⁷ Richard Halpern, *The Poetics of Primitive Accumulation: English Renaissance Culture and the Geneology of Capital* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991) 46-48.

miscellanies of ballads and poems were popular through the next several decades after their first publication. Clement Robinson issued a collection of ballads entitled *A Handfull of Pleasant Delites* in 1566 (3 editions followed), *The Paradise of Dainty Devices* appeared in print in 1576 (10 editions between 1576 and 1606), and a single edition of Thomas Proctor's *Gorgeous Gallery of Gallant Inventions* was issued in 1578.¹⁹ In 1579, Edmund Spenser's *Shepherds Calendar* appeared in print. In his *Defense*, Sidney cites the Earl of Surrey's poems as containing "many things tasting of a noble birth, and worthy of a noble mind," alongside Spenser's eclogues which Sidney praises as containing much poetry "worthy of reading" (112). King Henry VIII had written poetry, and both Queen Elizabeth and King James were identified as poets during their reigns. Poems by Elizabeth had appeared in print in 1548 when her translation of Psalm 13 appeared at the end of her prose translation of Margarite of Navarre's *Godly Meditation*, and in 1563 when John Foxe published her "Written with a Diamond" in his *Actes and Monuments*.²⁰ By 1580 Sidney might well have known of the poetical interests of the young King James VI of Scotland. At fifteen, King James' library contained the works of numerous French poets and he may well have begun composing those poems which appeared in 1584 under the title *The Essayes of a Prentise in the Divine Art of Poesie*.²¹

¹⁸ Marjorie Plant, *The English Book Trade: an Economic History of the Making and Sale of Books* (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1939) 109.

¹⁹ Steven May, "Verse Anthologies," *Tudor England: An Encyclopedia*, eds. Arthur F. Kinney, David W. Swain (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 2001) 728-30.

²⁰ Patricia Gartenberg, and Nena Thames Whittemore, "A Checklist of English Women in Print, 1475-1640," *Bulletin of Bibliography and Magazine Notes*, 34.1 (1977): 8-9.

I chose to include in this study three writers from one aristocratic family with a long tradition of service to English monarchs. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries two generations of the Sidney family produced court servants who were notable poets. In addition to Philip Sidney, two other Sidneys were male courtiers who wrote poetry—Robert Sidney, Philip and Mary's youngest brother, and William Herbert, Mary Sidney Herbert's first son. While their works are important avenues for the study of courtier poetry, they do not appear in this study. I focus instead on the poets of the Sidney family who sought to be identified as poets and who used poetry to reach an audience around and including the monarch. Before Mary Sidney Herbert embarked on the editing and printing of Philip Sidney's works, she printed (1592) her own translations of works by contemporary French authors: a prose work, *A Discourse of Life and Death*, by Philip de Mornay and a play, *Antonius*, by Robert Garnier. She continued her composition of works up to the end of Queen Elizabeth's reign, including four original poems and her verse translation of 107 of the Psalms which completed the work of Philip Sidney who translated the first 43 Psalms. Her works, particularly the *Psalms*, had a substantial circulation in manuscript which helped earn her a reputation as a poet. Three decades later, her niece, Lady Mary Wroth, printed, or at least allowed the printing of, her prose romance, the *Urania*, and her sonnet sequence, *Pamphilia to Amphilanthus*.

Although Robert Sidney and William Herbert both held positions of influence in the Stuart courts, neither sought to be known as a poet or to circulate his poetry widely. Robert Sidney served both Queen Elizabeth and King James' Queen Anne. In the last

²¹ James Craigie, Introduction, *The Poems of James VI of Scotland*, vol. 1 (London: William Blackwood & Sons Ltd., 1955) xviii, xxv.

decades of Queen Elizabeth's reign, he served as the governor of Flushing, and early in James' rule he was appointed Queen Anne's lord chamberlain in which position he served until Anne's death in 1619. He helped shape the program of entertainments and cultural activities at Queen Anne's court which, according to Leeds Barroll, made it "a crucial center for early Stuart high culture."²² His verse, however, dates from 1595-98, five years before Elizabeth's death²³ and his subsequent management of Queen Anne's court. Robert Sidney's modern editor, P.J. Croft, notes that Robert Sidney did not seek to be known publicly as a poet. At least one dedication in 1612 refers to Mary Wroth as inheriting her now famous uncle's poetic talents. Though this dedication appeared nine years before her own poetry entered print, the author makes no reference to her father as writing poetry (Croft 2). By contrast, William Herbert presented himself as a poet early on in James' reign. He entered the field of one court spectacle with the impresa of a sonnet on his shield. By 1616 he had risen to be King James' lord chamberlain, but during his ascent of the ranks of the king's court he did not sustain his reputation as a poet. His poems were issued in print in 1660, thirty-six years after his death.²⁴ Lady Mary Wroth knew well the poetry of her father, as Josephine Roberts shows, and Roberts further speculates that Wroth may have been influenced by the work

²² Leeds Barroll, *Anna of Denmark, Queen of England: a Cultural Biography* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001) 37.

²³ P. J. Croft, Introduction, *The Poems of Robert Sidney*, ed. P.J. Croft (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984) xiv; Millicent V. Hay, *The Life of Robert Sidney, Earl of Leicester (1563-1626)* (Washington: The Folger Shakespeare Library, 1984) 196-97.

²⁴ Gaby E. Onderwyzer, Introduction, *Poems written by the right honourable William Earl of Pembroke (1660)*, ed. Gaby E. Onderwyzer, No. 79 The Augustan Reprint Society (Los Angeles: William Andrews Clark Memorial Library, 1959) ii.

of her cousin.²⁵ While it would appear that both William Herbert's and Robert Sidney's poems circulated among what Marion Wynne-Davies calls the "domestic coterie" of the Sidney family,²⁶ neither he nor Robert Sidney amplified his activities as a poet during his career at court. Indeed, while both male and female members of the Sidney family were highly esteemed patrons of the arts, writers who dedicated their works to one of these Sidneys only acknowledged the women as poets. Mary Sidney Herbert and Lady Mary Wroth, in turn, each received and confirmed these acknowledgments in circulating their works in both manuscript and print.

I argue that Philip Sidney realized the necessity of addressing the personal desires of the monarch which would have a profound influence on matters of state. He used poetry to open a way for poets who assert themselves as courtiers to dramatize the issues which complicated a monarch's public rule. As a noble in service to the Queen, Sir Philip Sidney asserts the importance of his role as a knowledgeable commentator on issues as delicate as the Queen's sexual desire. He advocated a particular performance of gender for the monarch, urging her to examine her desires as a series of commitments, both conscious and unconscious, and to follow her desires only when they would serve the public good. As he wrote he embodied the sense of agency expressed in a personal

²⁵ Josephine A. Roberts, Introduction, *The Poems of Lady Mary Wroth*, ed. Josephine A. Roberts (Baton Rouge, Louisiana: Louisiana State University Press, 1983) 47-48. Roberts reprints one poem (217) included by Lady Mary Wroth in the second part of her *Urania* which in three other manuscripts is attributed to William Herbert.

²⁶ Marion Wynne-Davies, "'For Worth, Not Weakness, Makes in Use but One': Literary Dialogues in an English Renaissance Family, 'This Double Voice': Gendered Writing in Early Modern England," eds. Danielle Clarke and Elizabeth Clarke (New York: MacMillan Press, Ltd., 2000) 167.

motto he probably used in one of his tiltyard appearances²⁷ and which appears on a late sixteenth-century portrait of a young nobleman frequently identified as Sir Philip Sidney. The portrait, acquired by the National Portrait Gallery in 1920, shows a young man with a finely embroidered coat, sword, and scarf, holding a baton in his right hand, and a plumed helmet resting beneath his left hand. The motto, rendered in an *impresa*, appears above the man's right shoulder, reads in Latin "Invidiam viam aut faciam" and translates as "I will find a way or make one." This motto, which I use in the title of this dissertation, captures the sense of agency Sidney asserted in his ideas of poetry as a form of political service which his sister and niece later followed, as did Aemilia Lanyer, who claimed a place as a spokesperson for the aristocracy.

In this study I examine how the counsel offered by four poets is affected by issues of gender in as yet unexplored ways. The feminist theorist Judith Butler might well have been writing of the late Tudor and early Stuart monarchs when she notes "being a certain gender does not imply that one will desire a certain way."²⁸ Nor does gender imply how those around you will respond to those desires. The monarchs who ruled England in the 100 years after More's *Utopia* illustrate how central the desires of each monarch was to his or her rule, even as their desires would be difficult to characterize. In the first decades of Elizabeth's rule, she considered several suits for marriage. Many of her advisors urged her to marry, while in the later decades many of these same councilors

²⁷ For a discussion of the portrait by Alexander C. Judson, *Sidney's Appearance: a Study in Elizabethan Portraiture* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1958) 58-61; and of the *impresa* by Emma Marshall Denkinger, "The *Impresa* Portrait of Sir Philip Sidney in the National Portrait Gallery," *PMLA* 47.1 (1932).

²⁸ Judith Butler, *Undoing Gender* (New York: Routledge, 2004) 1.

discouraged her later suits. Although he was married, James I entertained the attentions of a series of male courtiers throughout his reign. While Butler reasons that there is “no quick or easy way to separate the life of gender from the life of desire” (2), she develops her ideas about gender as an essentially “performative” trait.²⁹ Butler argues that gender is a “kind of doing, an incessant activity performed, in part, without one’s knowing and without one’s willing, it is not for that reason automatic or mechanical. On the contrary, it is a practice of improvisation within a scene of constraint” (*Undoing Gender* 1). Both Elizabeth and James took advantage of this performative aspect of gender in their representations of themselves.³⁰

In the debate over counsel in Book I of the *Utopia*, gender remains an unbroached topic. The fictional More and Hythloday are both critical of monarchs’ appetites for war, and their capacity for corrupt action, but they are silent regarding the ways in which advisors might counsel monarchs with respect to those personal desires that affect their rule. More was certainly savvy to the ways monarchs’ affections towards their advisors and their sexual desires affected their rule. But, in 1516, Henry VIII’s quest for a male

²⁹ Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (New York: Routledge, 1990) 33.

³⁰ On Elizabeth’s flexible use of both male and female genders see Mary Beth Rose, “Gender and the Construction of Royal Authority in the Speeches of Elizabeth I,” *Gender and Heroism in Early Modern English Literature* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2002) 26-54; Janel Mueller, “Virtue and Virtuality: Gender in the 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: University of Delaware Press, 2000) 220-246; and the articles by Ilona Bell, “Elizabeth I—Always Her Own Free Woman,” 57-82, and Lena Cowen Orlin, “The Fictional Families of Elizabeth I,” 85-110 both in *Political Rhetoric, Power, and Renaissance Women*, ed. Carole Levin and Patricia A. Sullivan (New York: State University of New York Press, 1995). On James I’s representations of gender see Jonathan Goldberg, “Fatherly Authority: The Politics of Stuart Family Images,” *Rewriting the Renaissance: The Discourses of Sexual Difference in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Margaret W. Ferguson, et al. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1986) 3-32.

heir had yet to threaten England's embrace of the Catholic faith which would disjoint More's ability to serve his king. Neither More nor Castiglione anticipated in their writings how the dynamics of counsel would be affected by issues of gender when a male courtier served a female monarch. Sir Philip Sidney found a way to address these issues through the conventions, imagery, and ideas characterized as the discourse of Petrarchanism. In modifying the tradition he found there, he was able to speak to the personal concerns that affected the monarch's public rule and for which there was no well-worn path of communication at court. Sidney's sister and niece asserted their place as Sidneys and use their love poetry to assert they have a place to speak to the monarch. Along with Aemilia Lanyer who presented herself as following in the literary footsteps of Mary Sidney, the authors in this study allow a representative rather than exhaustive treatment of poets who adapted Sir Philip Sidney's use of the language and conventions of love poetry to address the actions of the ruling monarch. Each used love poetry because it crosses the boundaries of many discourses. Love is, as Roland Greene points out, "a heavily freighted bridge between discourses, societies, and even worldviews."³¹ These authors' use of love to counsel the monarch speaks to what Greene argues are the ways "the interpersonal, the social, the political, and the religious senses of love may animate each other in ways that now seem strange to us" (23). Mary Sidney spoke with a doubled voice to her queen, offering advice as a woman and a Sidney, and shaping the discourse of Petrarchanism in her translation of Robert Garnier's closet drama to emphasize how love transforms monarchs from rulers into passionate lovers. Aemilia

³¹ Roland Greene, *Unrequited Conquests: Love and Empire in the Colonial Americas* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1999) 10.

Lanyer addresses aristocratic women as a source of devout love and service and adapts the Petrarchan conventions to describe the virtue that gives them a spiritual beauty like that of Christ. Lanyer implies that King James, who did not desire the company of women, made his rule less Christian in distancing virtuous women from his service. Mary Wroth wrote a sonnet sequence like her uncle in which she addressed the reversed gender roles of a female courtier and a king. In the creation of a speaker who is not exclusively gendered male or female, she represents the position of King James' Queen, Anne, and his favorite at the time, the Duke of Buckingham. Wroth recasts the conventional Petrarchan beloved as a man of multiple affections who causes the poet/speaker to become the emblem of chastity the beloved no longer is. Each poet in this study adapted Petrarchan conventions to their chosen genre in the way Rosalie Colie argues the choice of genre represents a kind of thought: "Experience can be seen as searching for its own form, after all: the kinds may act as myth or metaphor for a man's new vision of literary truth."³² Along with Aemilia Lanyer who presented herself as inspired by the virtue of certain English aristocrats, the Sidneys used their literary skills to assert their importance as courtiers capable of counsel that would assure a monarch's just public rule.

In my chapter on Sir Philip Sidney, I focus my analysis on his political use of poetry to represent Elizabeth's involvement with the Duke of Alençon during negotiations for her marriage to him from 1578-1584. I argue that Sidney used his sonnet sequence, *Astrophil and Stella*, to approach personal aspects of the Queen's attachment to

³² Rosalie Colie, *The Resources of Kind: Genre-Theory in the Renaissance*, ed. Barbara K. Lewalski (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1973) 30.

the Duke which formal counsel could not. Sidney shadowed the positions of the Queen and her French suitor in the dynamics of the relationship between Stella and Astrophil. He found in lyric poetry a way to make private affections more public and to address personal aspects of monarchical rule which could not otherwise be raised. The public and private spheres were intertwined throughout a monarch's rule. Medieval political theory bound the two together in the body of the king. In addition to his natural body, the king possessed a body politic which encompassed the entire realm. A ruler's natural body was subject to decay and death, but the body politic lived on and was taken on by his successor.³³ The theory intended to maintain a smooth succession of state power where authority was invested in personal rule. In her first speech before her assembled lords and officeholders quoted above, Elizabeth cast her authority through her body politic: "As I am but one body naturally considered, though by His permission a body politic to govern. . . ." (Elizabeth I 52) and her request for counsel and advice was expected to be directed to her governing body. However, where international politics involved negotiations of marriage, the silence of counsel on private, personal concerns does not discount their centrality. Earlier, Sidney had reminded the Queen in his letter to her regarding the Alençon match that "Often have I heard you with protestations say, 'No private pleasure nor self affection could lead you unto it.'"³⁴ Throughout her long reign, Elizabeth repeatedly pledged to suppress her personal desires when deciding on matters

³³ See Ernst Kantorowicz, *The King's Two Bodies* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957), and Marie Axton, *The Queen's Two Bodies: Drama and the Elizabethan Succession* (London: Royal Historical Society, 1977).

³⁴ Sir Philip Sidney "A Letter Written by Sir Philip Sidney to Queen Elizabeth Touching her Marriage with Monsieur," *Miscellaneous Prose of Sir Philip Sidney*, ed. Katherine Duncan-Jones and Jan Van Dorsten (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1973) 51.

of state. Sidney's innovative use of the sonnet sequence made lyric poetry a way to frame advice and consolation for the temper and direction of the Queen's personal desires.

Like Philip Sidney, each of the women writers in this study found literary language especially suited to their individual purposes. Each author had to create himself or herself as a voice of counsel.³⁵ This follows the work of Ann Rosalind Jones who in *The Currency of Eros*, a study of eight early modern women writers, traces women's writing in relation to male texts and traditions. Jones argues that through a "mixed process of acceptance and resistance" early modern women writers found "productive contradictions" which they exploited to make themselves "heard *through* the gridwork of gender rules and lyric tradition." She builds on the concept of *negotiation*, which she borrows from Marxist cultural studies, to describe how subordinated groups respond in a "range of interpretive positions" to the dominant culture.³⁶ Neither Mary Sidney Herbert nor Mary Wroth let her lack of an official position prevent her from voicing her ideas. I argue that each of these women found in Philip Sidney's negotiations of court culture a productive model for addressing political issues on which they were otherwise prohibited to speak. The women writers in this study used Philip Sidney's fashioning of love poetry as a way to speak to their monarch about issues of desire. I trace a convergence in their

³⁵ This is not the self-fashioning described by Stephen Greenblatt, creating themselves against an "other," (*Renaissance Self-Fashioning: From More to Shakespeare*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1980), or of Richard Helgerson in which poets worked to create themselves within the literary system (*Self-Crowned Laureates: Spenser, Jonson, Milton, and the Literary System*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983).

³⁶ Ann Rosalind Jones, *The Currency of Eros: Women's Love Lyric in Europe, 1540-1620* (Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1990) 2.

purposes in the way in which their works speak to the public and private aspects of monarchical politics.

Since her works have come under serious study, literary critics have focused on Mary Sidney Herbert's roles as patron, editor, and translator. While highlighting the political/Protestant affiliations in her works, they have consistently viewed Mary Sidney as primarily seeking to fulfill her brother's cultural program of supporting English writers to create works to rival those of continental writers and much earlier English writers.³⁷ While critics like Margaret Hannay have pointed to the Countess' offer of counsel to a Davidic Queen in her translation of the *Psalms* and her later poems (*Philip's Phoenix*, 96-98), less attention has been paid to the Countess' earlier choice of texts and their immediate political content.³⁸ Though a woman with no official political role, Mary Sidney Herbert placed herself at the head of a family which had served the Queen long and loyally. She took up where the male members of her family left off—serving their Queen through the offering of advice.

When Mary Sidney Herbert asserted herself as a writer in 1592, she boldly challenged the exclusion of women as serious counselors at court. Her translation and printing of two Protestant French writers placed her within an established tradition of women acting as humanist scholars reaching back to St. Thomas More's daughter, Margaret Roper. However, her choice to translate and print less religious texts signaled an interest outside of the traditional role of translation in which women were encouraged

³⁷ See for example, Hannay, 62; and Alexander Maclaren Whitherspoon, *The Influence of Robert Garnier on Elizabethan Drama* (London: Archon Press, 1968) 71.

³⁸ A significant exception is Danielle Clarke, "The politics of translation and gender in the Countess of Pembroke's *Antonie*," *Translation and Literature* 6 (1997) 149-66.

to participate. While her translations of men's texts literally appropriated their authority, she exploited the gap between languages to craft a translation subtly different from the original to speak meanings other than those found in the original texts. As critics, such as Margaret Hannay, have noted, the Countess' early translations extended the boundaries of what women could write and print without compromise. In this chapter, I argue that while the Countess chose texts for translation which appealed to the Queen's desires to rule as a godly monarch, in addition she addressed delicate issues of rule which involved the Queen's desires as a woman. With her translations, most particularly in her translation of Garnier's play, the Countess quietly, yet boldly drew attention to the dangerous strength of the Queen's personal attachments at a time when Elizabeth faced the need to find new court counselors. Between 1588 and 1591, Elizabeth lost three of her most trusted counselors and members of her Privy Council: the Earl of Leicester (Mary Sidney's uncle and the Queen's lifelong personal favorite at court), Francis Walsingham, and Christopher Hatton. Her choice of Mornay's *Discourse on Life and Death* and Garnier's *Antonie* dramatized the conflicts of passion, politics, and personal integrity for a reigning female monarch.

Following in the tradition of the Sidney family, Aemilia Lanyer creates herself as a spokesperson for the nobility. At the moment when Queen Anne's influence in James court was at its height and the Queen was cultivating her relationship with her son, Prince Henry, to ensure her future influence at court, Aemilia Lanyer published a volume of poetry which highlighted the important contributions of women to the rule of a godly Christian monarch. In her volume of poetry, the *Salve Deus Rex Judaeorum*, printed in 1611, Lanyer wrote to and for many esteemed noble women to reassert the value of

women's political service to the king and his advisors. Prominent among these women is Mary Sidney Herbert to whom Lanyer writes a dream vision in which she claims the Countess as her poetic predecessor and esteems her "virtue, wisdom, learning, dignity...farre before" her noble brother.³⁹ Lanyer's poetry has been widely regarded for its proto-feminist views and radical Biblical exegesis in which women are exhorted to not be silent and obedient in the face of a male-dominated rule. In my third chapter, I analyze the way in which Lanyer articulates a "faire virtue" in women, which makes mature, prudent women an important counter-balance in the rule of a king. In the *Salve Deus* she creates a unique political role for women in which they define, judge, and assure good kingship. They are virtuous defenders of right rule. For Lanyer, women's "faire virtue" links them not only to her version of a feminized Christ, but to a rich classical and Biblical tradition of women whose integrity, will, and honesty enables them to unseat tyrants. Lanyer's model of virtuous integrity is the Countess of Cumberland, a devote, politically retiring patron of the arts and a widow who spent the last decades of her life defending her daughter's right to inherit her late husband's estate. Yet, far from posing women's influence as a challenge to monarchy, Lanyer casts women in the role of zealous servants of kings, like the women who stood beside Christ during his trial and crucifixion. By asserting that all princes in the spirit of Christ should desire "faire virtue," Lanyer indirectly challenges the present and future kings of England to make their courts more Christian by desiring the counsel and wise direction of women.

Ten years later with the print publication of her prose romance, *The Urania*, and

³⁹ Aemilia Lanyer, "The Authors Dreame to the Ladie Marie, the Countess Dowager of Pembroke," *Salve Deus Rex Judaeorum*, ed. Susanne Woods (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993) 1.151-52.

her sonnet sequence *Pamphilia to Amphilanthus* in 1621, Lady Mary Wroth asserted herself as a Sidney and a knowledgeable presence in court politics. While the political content of Wroth's *Urania* is well documented, I argue in my fourth and final chapter that it is in *Pamphilia to Amphilanthus* that Wroth risked writing most assertively on the Stuart court. As Philip Sidney had in *Astrophil and Stella*, Wroth creates a poet/speaker who is a ventriloquist for a lover of the reigning monarch. Read independently from the *Urania*, Wroth's poetry reveals a capacity to cross over gender lines. Noting that Wroth gives the poet/speaker Pamphilia no definite gender outside of her name, I argue that the speaker may be read as *either* male or female. Wroth revises a conventional language of love—the tradition of stories regarding Cupid and Venus—to address a political situation in which female erotic powers held so little sway over a homosocial ruler like James I. Working from the literary tradition of the Sidney family, Wroth thus offered to a court-centered readership political counsel that might mediate the demands of loving a monarch of multiple affections. Appearing in print at a time when the king's favorite, the Duke of Buckingham, underwent the first public trial of his loyalty, Wroth's sonnet sequence shows support for Buckingham in his efforts to love and loyally serve the king.

Focusing on the works by women writers that appeared in print is not to argue a privilege for the medium of print, but it does point to these women as placing themselves in an exclusive category. Margaret Ezell has argued persuasively that an author's choice of the medium of publication, whether manuscript or print, needs careful scrutiny, for decisions about transmission of a text are the outcome of specific material conditions of reading and writing as well as self-definitions of authorship.⁴⁰ As J.W. Saunders points

⁴⁰ Margaret J. M. Ezell, *Social Authorship and the Advent of Print* (Baltimore: The Johns

out, even manuscript circulation left an author uncertain of “how many copies were abroad” and whether “his [or her] own name, or another’s, had been appended.”⁴¹ Yet when Mary Sidney Herbert issued her translations in print, she joined a very small and consciously self-selected group of women in England who willed their writing to enter far wider circulation. Before 1592 only seventeen women, including two English queens, Catherine Parr and Elizabeth Tudor, appeared in print as authors, just under one half as translators (Gartenberg 3-13). Between 1616-20, just 8 new publications by women were printed. Compared with the total number of publications for those years, 2240, women’s print publications amounted to 0.5 per cent of all print publications (Crawford 212). In her analysis of printed works by women in the seventeenth-century, Patricia Crawford notes these women were aware that their behavior was extraordinary. Mary Sidney Herbert and Lady Mary Wroth made very deliberate efforts to be part of this exclusive group despite discouragements of their class and gender.

As many scholars have argued, English women, especially well-born women, were mostly discouraged from print. Writing itself has been seen as a transgressive act for women in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. By simply writing, women disrupted conventional gender roles which prescribed silence and chastity to women. For a woman to put her writing into print or allow it to reach print pushed female transgression even farther. To add to this, Mary Sidney Herbert and Lady Mary Wroth

Hopkins University Press, 1999) 12.

⁴¹ J.W. Saunders, “The Stigma of Print: a Note on the Social Bases of Tudor Poetry,” *Essays in Criticism*, vol.1 (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1951) 153. My argument aligns more closely with Steven W. May’s challenge to Saunder’s ideas in “Tudor Aristocrats and the Mythical ‘Stigma of Print’,” *Renaissance Papers 1980*, eds. A. Leigh Deneef and M. Thomas Hester (The Southeastern Renaissance Conference, 1981).

were also members of the aristocracy to whom J. W. Saunders had argued “a stigma of print” especially attached (Saunders 140). I argue that the Sidney women may have risked, but they did not invite their denigration by venturing to print. Mary Sidney Herbert printed her works boldly and unapologetically. She established a reputation for herself that her niece later identified herself with alongside her uncle as a part of her writerly heritage. In entering print, both women sought not only to circulate their works, but also to circulate the idea of them as writers. As poets and translators of poetry, they composed or chose works which suggest their potential to advise their monarchs as well as a man might.

Current surveys of women’s political thought tend to leave a gap in the Tudor and early Stuart period. Recent anthologies on women’s political and social thought move from the fifteenth-century works of Christine de Pisan to the mid-seventeenth century works of Margaret Cavendish and Aphra Behn.⁴² Currently, this trend is mirrored in collections of critical essays on women’s political thought.⁴³ But the women highlighted in this study show that women in the early modern period were not silent on or unconcerned with matters of political theory.⁴⁴ All of the women in this study are remarkable because of their contributions to women’s thought on politics and the function of monarchy from within the dominant institutional structures of their culture. Their lack of an official position as an advisor to their monarch did not keep them from

⁴² Hilda L. Smith and Berenice A. Carroll, eds. *Women’s Political & Social Thought: An Anthology* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2000).

⁴³ See for example, Hilda L. Smith, *Women Writers and the Early Modern British Political Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

⁴⁴ One other women writer from this period being read for her politics is Elizabeth Cary.

commenting on the monarch's reign. They participate in the political conversation in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries through their visions of how the personal rule of the monarch might be directed or bettered. Unlike the more oppositional women writers who would enter into print later in the seventeenth-century, they entered into the controversy over women's capacities so as not to threaten the rule of kings.⁴⁵ Earl Miner describes a similar tendency in the Cavalier poets whose tradition of a "social mode" of poetry they inherited from the Elizabethans was essentially conservative.⁴⁶ For example, Lady Mary Wroth and Aemilia Lanyer retain a conservative acceptance of hierarchy, while each looks toward ways of transforming it from within. Both writers find service to another above them on a hierarchy as a cornerstone of individual identity.⁴⁷ They describe a more conservative strain of commentary which we can find similar examples of in the poetry of Katherine Philips and Anne Bradstreet.

The sense of agency within a tradition of service which invests the work of the authors in this study is captured in Sidney's personal motto "Invidiam viam aut faciam"—

⁴⁵ They contribute only marginally to the development of the public sphere which Jurgen Habermas describes, or to the counterpublics described by Catherine Gray in her critique of Habermas. They challenge and attempt to make the public sphere more hospitable to monarchical rule by advising it how to shape its private sphere for the public. See Jurgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1989; and Catherine Emma Gray, *Forward Writers/Critical Readers: Women and Counterpublic Spheres in Seventeenth-Century England*. Unpublished PhD. Dissertation. State University of New York at Buffalo, 2001.

⁴⁶ Earl Miner, *The Cavalier Mode from Jonson to Cotton* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1971) 14-15.

⁴⁷ For a contrasting view of self-definition of a women writer later in the century with a more oppositional viewpoint see Catherine Gallagher's reading of Margaret Cavendish's works in "Embracing the Absolute: Margaret Cavendish and the Politics of Female Subjectivity in Seventeenth-century England," *Early Women Writers: 1600-1720*, ed. and intro. Anita Pacheco (London: Longman, 1998) 133-45.

'I will find a way or make one'. This phrase is both assertive in establishing a power for writers of the aristocracy, or an aspiring aristocrat such as Aemilia Lanyer, and can be read as conservative in so far as it asserts the nobility are maintaining their traditional roles within the nation.

CHAPTER I

IN THE SERVICE OF COUNSEL:

SIR PHILIP SIDNEY'S *ASTROPHIL AND STELLA*

On New Year's Day in 1581, Philip Sidney presented to Queen Elizabeth a jewel of gold fashioned in the shape of a whip "garnished with small diamondes in foure rowes and cordes of small seede pearle."¹ While Sidney scholars often notice this gift, few have made more than passing reference to it.² As one of many gifts of gold, jewelry, plate, and richly adorned clothing Elizabeth received each New Year's Day, it stands out not so much for its costliness as for its symbolism. The jewel is the sort of flamboyant gesture of self-presentation in which Sidney often engaged. Less obvious are the ways in which the same subtle fictions Sidney creates with this gift, fictions which he ascribed in his *Defense of Poetry* as essential to the courtier's vocation, inform a highly politicized aspect of Sidney's theory of literary production and practice which he articulated in his *Defense* and exemplified in the lyric drama of his sonnet sequence, *Astrophil and Stella*.

Returning to court after an absence of many months, Philip Sidney clearly felt the need to represent himself to his Queen with a degree of humility. His jewel places

¹ List of "juelles given to her Majestie at Newyer'a tyde, 1580-1," *The Progresses and Public Processions of Queen Elizabeth*, vol. II, ed. John Nichols (New York: Burt Franklin, 1965) 301.

²A significant exception is Sally Minogue's "A Woman's Touch: Astrophil, Stella and 'Queen Virtue's Court'," *English Literary History*, 63.3 (1996): 555-70. Minogue reads two sonnets from the sequence (9, 83) as "poetic versions" of Sidney's jewel whip which she argues dramatize the public and "possible private" relationship between Elizabeth and Sidney (555).

himself in the position of a servant offering up the whip to his master. Before his departure from court early in the previous year, he had presented the Queen with a letter of advice regarding her proposed marriage to Francis, Duke of Alençon (later the Duke of Anjou), the younger brother of the King of France. In this letter Sidney argued strongly against the match, emphasizing that the Queen's choice of a Catholic suitor would not sit well with her Protestant subjects. Closely aligned with the proponents of Protestantism in Elizabeth's court, including Elizabeth's long-standing favorite the Earl of Leicester (Sidney's maternal uncle) and Elizabeth's secretary of state, Sir Francis Walsingham (Sidney's future father-in-law), Sidney most likely wrote the letter at the request of these men.³ A short time later he engaged in a heated argument on a tennis court with the Earl of Oxford, an argument which would have led to a duel had the Queen not intervened. In prohibiting the planned combat between these men, Elizabeth pointedly reminded Sidney of his need to respect the greater rank of the Earl over him.

While there is no evidence that the Queen's displeasure (at either the letter or his argument with Oxford) caused Sidney to remain away from court for a little over a year,⁴ his returning gift indicates he felt the need to speak to the nature of his relationship with his Queen. Many royal servants used similar rituals of exchange to signify or promote what Lisa Klein calls a "desired relationship" with the Queen.⁵ The preceding year (1580) Sidney had given the Queen "a cup of cristall, with a cover," a gift which referred

³ This suggestion derives from one of Hubert Languet's letters to Sidney. Languet was something of a self-appointed mentor to Sidney. Quoted in Katherine Duncan-Jones, *Sir Philip Sidney* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1991) 162.

⁴ Duncan-Jones 164-65.

⁵ Lisa M. Klein, "Your Humble Handmaid: Elizabethan Gifts of Needlework," *Renaissance Quarterly* 50 (1997) 472.

quiescently to his place as the Queen's appointed Cupbearer. At that time, Sidney's uncle, the Earl of Leicester, gave the Queen two richly bejeweled gold bodkins (small daggers) decorated with 36 "true-love knotts and raged staves."⁶ His gift could well have meant the Queen could take his life, but it would be with the reminder of his unwavering devotion and the long number of years of their friendship. The Earl had good reason to revive the memory of their many years of close acquaintance, since late in the summer of 1578 the Queen had learned of his secret marriage to her cousin, Lettice Knollys, the Countess of Essex. Her outrage was considerable, and Leicester seems to have sought the most graceful means available to him to symbolically submit to her disapproval and reinforce his desire to return to her favor.

Like Leicester's bodkins, Sidney's jewel whip participates symbolically in reinforcing Elizabeth's power to control, and, particularly, to punish him as her servant. Indeed, as Lisa Klein has cogently argued, gift-giving at court was ultimately a conservative act which reinforced the hierarchical relationship between the giver and recipient, even despite the inherent pressure exerted by the expectation of a gift in return (461). As she notes, the act of gift giving in itself, and especially at court, implied a further exchange between the giver and the gift recipient. As Sidney uses the emblem of the whip to represent his submission to Elizabeth's will, he also signals that she could trust him to do her every bidding even under her heaviest hand. By giving her a sign of his loyalty, Sidney might ask for some important service to do but whether he would be given such a charge would lie entirely with her, his mistress. Hers is the power whenever

⁶ List of "Juells geven to her Majestie at Newyeres-tide, 1579-80," *The Progresses and Public Processions of Queen Elizabeth*, vol. II, 290.

she chooses to answer the gift and take up the thinly veiled offer of conciliatory service that Sidney conveys with it.

Ritualized gift exchange illustrates how deeply the public and private spheres at court interpenetrated one another. Personal gifts like these might adorn Elizabeth's person through a mode of public display self-consciously created by the gift-giver. Gift giving at court was a kind of publicized intimacy, the offering of valuable tokens as a public suit in the hope of their being treasured by the Queen in her most private spaces, kept in her personal cabinet, or perhaps even worn before the eyes of all at court. Like gifts of costly clothing which were often handmade for Elizabeth, Sidney's jewel and what it represents—his implied service to her—do double work: they adorn Elizabeth's person and express the giver's desire to enrich her public state.

My argument is that working within this complex and essentially conservative ritual, Sidney exercised his abilities as a consummate image-maker not simply to flatter his Queen, but also to represent her actions. Like the personality behind it, Sidney's gift yokes his humble desire to act in the Queen's service with an assertiveness that strives to define the realm in which the Queen herself may react. In the face of a rival such as the Earl of Oxford parceling out insults, Sidney gave license to a fiery temper. Towards his Queen, he used, instead of insults, all of his talent for making images to shape her response toward him. In his jewel whip we see a form of self-presentation which also enacts a representation of the Queen's power.

With his jewel whip, Sidney created an image for his relationship with the Queen which insists on questioning the powers of the ruled and the submission of the ruled. His jewel illustrates that the servant's submission is an important measure of Elizabeth's powerful control. By virtue of being the servant who symbolically hands his master the whip, Sidney sides with Elizabeth's claim to his having deserved her disapproval, but in

doing so he somewhat co-opts her ability to punish him. By handing his master the whip, he suggests he has already repented. His willingness to receive punishment appeals to her mercy. Behind this image of the submissive servant lies the implication that the whip-handler must show an answering virtue of self-restraint. The same sentiment plays itself out in Shakespeare's sonnet 94 which begins, "They that have pow'r to hurt, and will do none." These actors, the speaker here assures us, "rightly do inherit heaven's graces" (l.5). In the same vein, were Elizabeth to take up Sidney's offer to punish him, she would reveal her insensitivity to the punishment he has already suffered and disclose an interest on her part in needlessly adding to the suffering of those around her. The Queen might choose, in another vein, to take his show of repentance as false or a mere role played to further his own personal ends. If so, she would run the risk of appearing to suspect her servant's loyalty. As a monarch, much less as a Christian woman, Elizabeth would further the sense of her taking pleasure in punishment were she to treat her "slave" too hard.

Sidney, like the practiced courtiers around him, could calculate that these layers of meaning would be clearly understandable by someone of as much political savvy as Elizabeth. At other points in his career Sidney created literary forms which, like his jeweled whip, shape the Queen's actions. Often his poems addressed sensitive matters of state in which Elizabeth held serious personal attachments. What he called in the *Defense of Poetry* his "unelected vocation" he drew into the service of his chosen vocation: political service.

On both sides of his family—the Dudleys on his mother's side and the Sidneys on his father's side—Philip Sidney enjoyed a history of royal service dating back to the reign of Henry VIII. His father, Sir Henry Sidney, was a highly respected servant of the Queen (and privy councilor, though often in Ireland). His maternal uncle, Robert

Dudley, the Earl of Leicester, was the Queen's favorite. Philip had been raised with the expectation that he would serve his prince, a goal for which his humanist education prepared him. His three-year continental tour and his embassy to the Prince of Orange were a part of his more direct training in matters of policy and governance. He had high expectations for preferment and political activity. In this light it is understandable that during his lifetime, Sidney, despite his own amazing poetic talents, was addressed publicly as a patron of the arts, and only privately among his friends as a writer.

Germaine Warkentin shows that Sidney's own library contained few books on poetry or its practice; most of his collection dealt with politics.⁷ His modern editor William Ringler speculates that only his closest associates knew his writings.⁸ When in his *Defense of Poetry* Sidney declaims his interest in poetry as his "unelected vocation," he spoke a literal truth: he had been groomed for political service from a young age. Sidney did not live long enough (he died at 32) to indicate whether he would have sought for himself the reputation as a public author which his sister Mary Sidney Herbert created for him through her careful printing of his works.

From his own writings we know that Sidney had an intriguing view of the role of courtiers. In the *Defense of Poetry*⁹ Sidney characterized the poet's power of persuasion as parallel to that of the prince's servant. Fiction proves to be among the most flexible of

⁷ Germaine Warkentin, "Sidney's Authors," *Sir Philip Sidney's Achievements*, ed. M.J.B. Allen (New York: AMS Press, 1990) 75.

⁸ William A. Ringler, *The Poems of Sir Philip Sidney* (Oxford: the Clarendon Press, 1962) lx-lxi.

⁹ While various dates for the composition of the *Defense* have been proposed, Sidney may have written it during the winter of 1579-80, not long after his letter to the Queen on the Alençon affair discussed below. See Duncan-Jones, Van Dorsten eds. *Miscellaneous Prose of Sir Philip Sidney* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1973) 62.

mediums to serve one's prince and it is not in the least restricted to the kind poets write. Indeed, Sidney testifies that courtiers often excel at the poet's art:

Undoubtedly (at least to my opinion undoubtedly), I have found in divers smally learned courtiers a more sound style than in some professors of learning; of which I can guess no other cause, but that the courtier, following that which by practice he findeth fittest to nature, therein (though he know it not) doth according to art, though not by art: where the other, using art to show art, and not to hide art (as in these cases he should do), flieth from nature, and indeed abusedth art. (118-19)

In this passage we see Sidney's belief that courtiers are often more proficient practitioners of "style" than learned "professors" because they come to it in the nature of their service. As with his jewel whip, Sidney with his poems could perform displays that confirmed his role as a loyal servant, a role that enabled him to offer considered criticism to his monarch.

Arguing that the historian is hampered by his need to remain true to the "bare Was" of history, Sidney argues that the poet can more readily move a person to virtuous action because he is able "to frame his example to that which is most reasonable."¹⁰ Sidney builds his concept of the poet's art from Aristotle's idea of mimesis or imitation in which poetry, according to M.H. Abrams, "imitates the form of things" in the world "in the matter or medium of words." Abrams adds that for Aristotle poetry can make

¹⁰ Sir Philip Sidney, *Defense of Poetry, Miscellaneous Prose of Sir Philip Sidney*, ed. by Katherine Duncan-Jones and Jan Van Dorsten (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1973) 89. All references to Sidney's *Defense* are to this edition, pp. 73-121.

statements in the mode of “universals,” while history works in “singulars.”¹¹ For Sidney, the kind of imitation which poetry offers is a “representing, counterfeiting, or figuring forth—to speak metaphorically, a speaking picture—with this end, to teach and delight” (79-80). In the chain of gerundives Sidney explicates his idea of poetry as the poet’s reshaping of the world to bring life to an image of the world through words. The poet in Sidney’s mind is not “tied to any subjection” to the world of things, but “doth grow in effect another nature, in making things either better than nature bringeth forth, or, quite anew...” (78). He gives a striking illustration of his meaning in the example of successful fictions that have won wars for great princes. Sidney recalls the efforts of a “faithful servant” of King Darius, who through sacrificing parts of his body sought to deceive their warring enemies that he had been disgraced and banished from the kingdom was able to bring a decisive advantage to his king:

For that a feigned example hath as much force to teach as a true example (for as for to move, it is clear, since the feigned may be tuned to the highest key of passion), let us take one example wherein an historian and a poet did concur. Herodotus and Justin do both testify that Zopyrus, King Darius' faithful servant, seeing his master long resisted by the rebellious Babylonians, feigned himself in extreme disgrace of his king: for verifying of which, he caused his own nose and ears to be cut off, and so flying to the Babylonians, was received, and for his known valour so sure credited, that he did find means to deliver them over to

¹¹ M.H. Abrams, “Poetry, Theories of,” *Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics*, enlarged edition, ed. Alex Preminger (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1974) 640.

Darius. Much like matter doth Livy record of Tarquinius and his son. Xenophon excellently feigneth such another stratagem performed by Abradatas in Cyrus' behalf. Now would I fain know, if occasion be presented unto you to serve your prince by such an honest dissimulation, why you do not as well learn it of Xenophon's fictions as of the other's verity; and truly so much the better, as you shall save your nose by the bargain: for Abradatas did not counterfeit so far. (80)

In contrast to Zopyrus' literal sacrifice of his nose and ears, Adabratas' "honest dissimulation" allows him to literally "save face" (or at least parts of it), and it is this distinction to which Sidney turns his wry humor at the end of this passage. The direct query of which kind of service his reader would choose—how far to go in this high stakes play of counterfeiting—allows Sidney to shift the discussion away from the uneasy implications which counterfeiting and feigning raise. For Sidney, the "faithful servant," like the poet, is guided by his duty to his sovereign; his deceptions are therefore trustworthy in that they serve an end which is authorized by its intent to serve the king. Sidney's praise of Xenophon's fiction—Abradatas' stratagem—clearly asserts the political servant's blatant self-interest in self-preservation (who wouldn't want to succeed *and* 'save their nose'), but in no sense does Sidney find in a prince's servant, or a poet, a self-serving motive. In this case Sidney side steps the questions of duplicity and deception which skills in counterfeiting and feigning so readily beg. The matter is defined largely by Sidney's effort to describe the "right poet" and the "faithful servant." It is to these that the idea of "honest dissimulation"—however suggestive of an oxymoron the phrase may be—belongs. It is in the nature of each that they share a commitment to the service of powers greater than they are where virtue resides.

Sidney praised fictions as capable of being framed to what is most reasonable as well as to “tune them to the highest key of passion.” The poet best combines the “particular truth of things” with the “general reason of things.” Whereas the philosopher’s “wordish descriptions” fail to “strike, pierce, nor possess the sight of the soul,” the “peerless poet perform[s] both: for whatsoever the philosopher saith should be done, he giveth a perfect picture of it in someone by whom he presupposeth it was done, so as he coupleth the general notion with the particular example” (85). As Sidney shows from the passage above, a “feigned example” may be the best vehicle for a particular truth.

Sidney frequently acknowledged that he rendered much of his service as a courtier through his use of language. In a letter written to his uncle the Earl of Leicester in August of 1580, Sidney complained that a bad cold keep him from returning to court, quipping that “my only service is speeche and that is stopped.”¹² And though he had held only a ceremonial position as the Queen’s cupbearer since his first attendance at court (1576), Sidney was no stranger to addressing the Queen. In 1578 he had written an entertainment, “The Lady of May,” performed for the Queen on her visit to Wanstead in Essex, Leicester’s house. Several years later in 1581, Sidney would contribute to another entertainment for the Queen. Probably written as a collaborative effort, the “Four Foster Children of Desire” would be a two-day spectacle in which Sidney played a role as one of the foster children seeking to return to their mother “Desire” who assail the impenetrable “Fortress of Perfect Beauty.”¹³

¹² Sir Philip Sidney, *The Prose Works of Philip Sidney*, Vol. 3, ed. Albert Feuillerat (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1963) 129.

¹³ Duncan-Jones 205-212.

Late in the summer of 1579, between the composition of these entertainments, Sidney wrote directly to the Queen opposing her plans to marry the French Duke. What Sidney in that letter termed “an odious marriage with a stranger”¹⁴ had begun to appear to many at court as a remarkably serious attempt by the Queen to realize a personal and political alliance with the young, Catholic nobleman. The preceding summer, the Queen, at that time 46 years old, had reopened in earnest political negotiations concerning marriage with the young duke, then just 26 years of age.¹⁵

Throughout her reign, the Queen had always been a savvy player in the realm of marriage proposals. Such proposed alliances, often parlayed, but never realized, provided Elizabeth with yet another way to exert her influence on the constantly shifting political alliances of her European counterparts.¹⁶ In many ways the Queen’s interest in Alençon directly reflected her search for a way to protect England’s interests in the recent revolt of the Dutch Netherlands against Spanish rule. The young Duke had offered to serve as a protector of the Low Countries against the threat of Spain reasserting its

¹⁴ Sir Philip Sidney, *Miscellaneous Prose of Sir Philip Sidney*, 55. All references to Sidney’s letter to the Queen are to this edition, pp. 46-57. Peter Beal summarizes different claims for the date of composition of the letter in “Philip Sidney’s Letter to Queen Elizabeth and that ‘False Knave’ Alexander Dicsone,” *English Manuscript Studies 1100-1700: Manuscripts and their Makers in the English Renaissance*, vol. 2, ed. by Peter Beal and Grace Ioppolo (London: the British Library, 2002) 21.

¹⁵ Conyers Read, *Lord Burghley and Queen Elizabeth* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1960) 64-65. My reading of Alençon and the Queen’s courtship relies on Read’s account and Susan Doran’s more detailed analysis. See Susan Doran, *Monarchy and Matrimony: the Courtships of Elizabeth I* (London: Routledge, 1996). My view of the historical account has been influenced by the work of J.E. Neale, Wallace MacCaffrey, Christopher Haigh and John Guy.

¹⁶ On Elizabeth’s courtships see also Susan Frye, *Elizabeth I: the Competition for Representation* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), and Carole Levin, *The Heart and Stomach of a King: Elizabeth I and the Politics of Sex and Power* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1994).

control. Conyers Read argues that Elizabeth considered that support of the Duke might allow her to keep England's archrival, Spain, out of the Low Countries with a minimal commitment of money and men (256).

Despite her obvious political motivations, Elizabeth's revived interest in the French Duke aroused especially intense concern on the part of her court. The 46-year-old Queen took a remarkably enthusiastic interest in this new courtship. Alençon's ambassador and confidant, Simier, garnered the Queen's attentions with his proficient Petrarchan lovemaking skills and 20,000 pounds in jewels that he lavished upon the Queen in Alençon's name. Alençon himself was clandestinely brought into the country and entertained by the Queen for three weeks in August of 1579 (Read 207, 215). The Queen's attentions to the man she dubbed her "Frog" overreached anything her courtiers had seen in previous marriage negotiations. Even her earlier negotiations between 1572 and 1578 regarding Alençon were much more coolly political. The historian Susan Doran characterizes this six-year period as one in which the Queen "used matrimony simply as a diplomatic tool" (130). The Queen's enthusiasm for Alençon during and after his 1579 visit to London made these new negotiations a much more serious prospect since her own affections appeared to ratify them.

The Queen's Privy Council took a cautious approach. In early October of 1579, Elizabeth asked her Privy Council to advise her on whether or not to marry Alençon. Four members of the Council (Burghley, Walsingham, Leicester and Sussex) reported back to the Queen that the council had been too divided to render an unambiguous decision (Read 220). According to the report summarized in the Calendar of Manuscripts from Hatfield House, their response was that "in as much as her Majesty's own wishes and disposition are principally to be regarded, it was their duty first to offer her Majesty all their services and counsel to do what best *shall please her*" (italics added). They opted

to let her decide on the matter. Perhaps they also judged they could not argue against the Queen's strong personal attachment. Elizabeth was infuriated by her Council's unwillingness to take a stand. Lord Burghley reported in minutes he made of the meeting that she "uttered many speeches," and shed "many tears" in answering them.¹⁷

The seed of Elizabeth's anger with her councilors lies in her desire for a decisive answer from her Council. In deferring to the Queen's wishes, the Council was abdicating its primary responsibility. As one historian of the Privy Council, Michael Pullman, notes, Elizabeth relied on her councilors to give her the measure of the people's views and to ensure her adoption of policies that would preserve her sovereignty and popularity. Unlike Philip II of Spain, whose council would propose two or more possible actions for the sovereign to make a final decision, Elizabeth expected her council to render her advice on what they as a consensus considered the best alternative.¹⁸ She viewed their response on this occasion as insultingly solicitous in a manner that showed their doubt of her ability to protect her people and settle the matter of the secession. For her part she regretted putting the matter before them because "she thought to have rather had a universal request made to her to proceed in this marriage than to have made doubt of it...."¹⁹

As I noted above, Sidney was most likely asked to write on the Queen's proposed marriage matter by Francis Walsingham and the Earl of Leicester, both of whom strongly

¹⁷ Minutes in Lord Burghley's hand for October 7 & 8, 1579, *Calendar of the Cecil Manuscripts Preserved at Hatfield House, Hertfordshire, Part II* (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1888) 272.

¹⁸ Michael Barraclough Pulman, *The Elizabethan Privy Council in the Fifteen-Seventies* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971) 63, 248.

¹⁹ Minutes in Lord Burghley's hand, Oct. 7 & 8, 1579, *Calendar of the Cecil Manuscripts* 272.

opposed the Alençon match. Sidney's most recent biographer, Katherine Duncan-Jones, suggests that the letter was issued after a London meeting of these men at which the Alençon matter was likely addressed.²⁰ In asking Sidney to write the letter, the other two men were both taking advantage of Sidney's obvious talents and also insulating themselves from voicing direct criticism of the match to the Queen.²¹ While the modern editors of his prose argue that Sidney was fulfilling a role of the courtier as it was conceived of by theorists of the period,²² Sidney must have known he was placing himself in a provocative position in voicing strong doubts concerning the Queen's political acumen. As a courtier more desirous of a political career than experienced in one, he was at 25 offering advice to a powerful and shrewd monarch nearly twice his age.

Sidney's letter anticipates the Queen's dislike for any outspoken stand against the marriage. He is as careful as the Privy Council had been to frame all of his arguments in the terms of public policy, touching only incidentally on matters more personal to the Queen. He writes of the Queen's desires in terms of profitable alliances between state powers. When he speaks of love, he touches on the Queen's own characterization of her rule as enjoying a loving relationship with her subjects. Her people are her "inward force." They comprise the "sinews of your crown" and were "your chief, if not your sole,

²⁰ Duncan-Jones, *Sir Philip Sidney*, 162.

²¹ The number of extant manuscript copies of the letter confirms that it enjoyed a wide circulation at the time and later. See Beal, *English Manuscript Studies*, 1. See also Peter Beal's "Sir Philip Sidney: 1554-86," *Index of English Literary Manuscripts*, Vol. 1 (London: Mansell, 1980) 485-88.

²² Katherine Duncan-Jones and Jan Van Dorsten eds., *Miscellaneous Prose of Sir Philip Sidney*. (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1973) 35. For a discussion of the political theory of counsel see John Guy, "The rhetoric of counsel in early modern England," *Tudor Political Culture*, ed. by Dale Hoak (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995) 292-310.

strength” (47). Sidney implores her not to compromise this relationship. Indeed, he plays the public concerns with this proposed marriage against any desires or personal affections of the Queen, recalling to her in her own words that she has often said “No private pleasure nor self affection could lead you unto it” (51).

In his letter Sidney was as constrained as the council members had been to speak on matters of public policy. As Ty Buckman notes, Sidney (like the Queen’s councilors) sidestepped the most troubling aspect of Elizabeth’s courtship with Alençon—how strongly she had expressed desire for her French suitor. Buckman suggests that Sidney thus protected himself from the outrage the Queen had shown toward John Stubbs, the writer of the public pamphlet against the marriage printed several months earlier in August.²³ The Queen was so angered by Stubbs’ ad hominem attacks on Alençon, she wanted his life: she settled for his, and his printer’s, right hands. Buckman argues that by “situating the Alençon courtship in the context of the diplomatic or political (in its traditional sense) instead of the personal,” Sidney could suggest “by example how she herself should approach the question of marriage: with the wary eye and realpolitik of an Italian prince.”²⁴

Buckman offers a cogent reading of the letter in the light of the unfolding historical events. He helpfully highlights how Sidney’s protestations against this “French papist” and “son of a Jezebel” curiously overstate the case against Alençon as a Catholic.

²³ John Stubbs, a Puritan lawyer, authored *The discoverie of a Gaping Gulf whereinto England is like to be swallowed by an other French marriage, if the Lord forbid not the banes, by letting her Maiestie see the sin and punishment thereof*. Some critics have suggested that Sidney had read Stubbs. Duncan-Jones notes that rumors also circulated that Stubbs may have been prompted to write by Walsingham (161-62).

²⁴ Ty Buckman, “The Perils of Marriage Counselling: John Stubbs, Philip Sidney, and the Virgin Queen,” *Renaissance Papers*, 139-40.

Alençon had demonstrated his willingness to support the Dutch Protestants in revolt against Spain. Buckman recalls that Elizabeth continued to play upon Alençon's interest and military activities in the Netherlands in order to keep Spain from resecuring control over them (128). However, Buckman's argument assumes that Sidney made a choice to address the Queen's political involvement in the affair rather than her personal involvement. In practice, however, Sidney, like the Queen's official counselors, had no other recourse than to address the Queen's public interests in any marriage negotiation. Offering the Queen counsel on being in love was not a part of their role as court counselors. When Sidney mentions Alençon's personal attachment to the Queen, he does so only to dismiss it as too dependent upon her person. Concluding that neither desire of a shared political end, nor fear will "knit" Alençon's will to the Queen's, Sidney implies a great weakness in the one assurance that could "bind" Alençon's political will, his affection for the Queen:

...So that if neither fear, nor desire, be such in him as are to bind any public fastness, it may be said that the only fortress of this your marriage is of his private affection: a thing too incident to your person, without laying it up in such ivy knots. (53)

Sidney undercuts the potential stronghold of their marriage by doubting the strength of Alençon's personal attachment to the Queen. For Sidney, Alençon's personal affection can not ensure the Queen's ability to command his public commitments.

There is no known evidence to suggest that Sidney's letter was effective. On the other hand, there is no evidence that the Queen sent him away from court at her displeasure with him for writing this letter. To date, no record exists to show that

Sidney's letter provoked any response from the Queen.²⁵ As noted above, Sidney's subsequent argument with the Earl of Oxford and the threatened duel between them which the Queen stopped brought him a reprisal from Elizabeth to remember his lower rank. Sidney remained at court after this exchange, but left a few months later in the autumn of 1579 for Wilton, his sister's home. During his ensuing respite from court activities, he is thought to have written the *Old Arcadia* and begun work on his *Defense*. Sidney probably left court as an exercise in discretion just as his uncle the Earl of Leicester had in the preceding year when the Earl's secret marriage to the Queen's cousin (by a previous marriage), Lettice Knollys, was discovered to the Queen by Alençon's ambassador, Simier. Sidney returned to court in the spring of 1581 investing upon his return in impressing the Queen with his new year's gift of the jewel whip described above.

In the remainder of this chapter, I argue that following his 1579 letter to the Queen and his 1581 gift of the jeweled whip Sidney found a way to address personal aspects of the Queen's affair with Alençon through his sonnet sequence *Astrophil and Stella* (1581(?)-1583). Traditionally, *Astrophil and Stella* has been read as a lyric expression closely explicated by Sidney's personal life. Even politicized readings of the sequence focus on it as a sublimation of Sidney's frustrated political ambitions: in these readings his public frustrations are typically re-mapped in an aesthetic realm as a register of his personal anxieties.²⁶ I suggest that in the sequence Sidney does not overwrite his public concerns with personal-political ones, but instead, as a courtier-poet, he creates a

²⁵ Duncan-Jones, *Miscellaneous Prose*, 34; Ringler xxvii.

²⁶ Ann Rosalind Jones and Peter Stallybrass, "The Politics of *Astrophil and Stella*," *Studies in English Literature* 24 (1984) 53-68; Arthur F. Marotti, "'Love is not love': Elizabethan Sonnet Sequences and the Social Order," *ELH* 49.2 (1982): 396-428. These influential articles in Sidney studies are discussed more fully below.

lyric drama which offers advice to his Queen on a delicate matter of state: the temper and direction of her personal desires. In the dynamics of the love affair between Stella and Astrophil Sidney shadows the position of the Queen and her French suitor. As Elizabeth considered marriage with Alençon, Sidney depicted his Stella, herself a married woman, refusing her own desires for Astrophil to preserve her public commitments to her marriage. As Sidney's Stella is married to Lord Rich, the Queen, as she mentioned in her first speech before her parliament in 1559 was married to her state. Sidney's Astrophil is a suitor who reveals to all but himself that he is more selfish than selfless, and who desires to rule, rather than serve, his beloved. Astrophil's uncompromising ambition to ascend to the "monarchy" (69.10)²⁷ of Stella's heart parallels what Sidney referred to in his letter to the Queen as Alençon's "man-like disposition to desire that all men be of his mind."²⁸ Sidney thus represents in Astrophil's love a gift which would take command of Stella, just as marriage for a Queen would create a King who might assert his claim to rule over her. Couched within a fiction of courtly lovers, Sidney's sequence recalls the Queen's own concerns during the marriage negotiations that she had no guarantee of Alençon's promises to limit himself were they to marry. Elizabeth wrote Alençon in the winter of 1580 admitting that "I have doubts about our agreement as individuals, being uncertain as much about not complying as not assured that I should consent."²⁹ In its own historical period the fictional image of Astrophil and Stella's plight spoke as bold

²⁷ Through the remainder of this essay all references to *Astrophil and Stella* appear in parenthesis by sonnet number and line number. All references are to William A. Ringler, ed., *Astrophil and Stella, The Poems of Sir Philip Sidney* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1962) 165-237.

²⁸ Sidney *Miscellaneous Prose*, 52.

²⁹ Queen Elizabeth to Monsieur, circa December 1579-January 1580, *Elizabeth I: Collected Works*, ed. Leah S. Marcus, et al. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2000) 243-44. All references to Queen Elizabeth's letters are to this edition.

counsel to the Queen, urging her to keep Alençon from her bed. It also offered her the consolation that denying the fulfillment of love is a heroic deed on the part of a woman who chooses her public duty over her personal desires.

* * *

Sidney's sonnet sequence is the first written by an English male poet which treats Petrarchan love.³⁰ Its first printing in 1591 sparked an outpouring of sonnets from English poets and a slew of sonnet sequences during the decade.³¹ According to Ringler, it continued the verse experiments of his *Certain Sonnets* (xlvi, lv), 32 poems Sidney composed mostly between 1577 and 1581, collected, titled, and allowed to circulate somewhat in manuscript (423, lx). The rhetorical skill and dexterity in versification which mark his sequence reflect Sidney's desire to bring to English the power of poetic expression of which he laments the present poverty in his *Defense*. Its intensity as an intimate portrait of a lover's courtship of a beautiful and virtuous woman also reflects Sidney's desire to answer what he identified in the *Defense* as the source of the failure of English love poetry: the authors' lack of feeling. Sidney describes English poets who write of love as defeated by an excess of words and "swelling phrases" which fail to imbue the conventional images and language of love poetry with their conviction of love:

³⁰ Earlier sonnet cycles in English like those written by Anne Lok and her son Henry were written on religious subjects. Ann Locke wrote *A meditation of a Penitent Sinner*, 21 sonnets inspired by the 51st psalm which appeared in print in 1560 at the end of her translation of four of John Calvin's *Sermons* (STC 4450). Ann Locke's son, Henry Lok, wrote *Sundry Christian Passions*, a collection of 328 religious sonnets, printed in 1593, now lost (STC 16697).

³¹ Michael G. Spiller, *The Development of the Sonnet: An Introduction* (New York: Routledge, 1992) 123, and Arthur F. Marotti, *Manuscript, Print, and the English Renaissance Lyric* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1994) 228-38.

But truly of many such writings as come under the banner of irresistable love, if I were a mistress, would never persuade me they were in love: so coldly they apply fiery speeches, as men that had rather read lovers' writings—and so caught up certain swelling phrases which hang together like a man that once told my father that the wind was at northwest and by south, because he would be sure to name winds enough—than that in truth they feel those passions, which easily (as I think) may be bewrayed by that same forcibleness or *energia* (as the Greeks call it) of the writer. (116-17)

In the sequence, Sidney creates a poet-speaker whose passion and eloquence succeeds in persuading the woman he loves that he truly loves her and she should love him in return. Sidney's collection of 108 sonnets and 11 songs shows that passionate love poetry in English could be written. The sequence is an extended dramatic monologue told through the words of the male lover. Ringler stresses that Sidney arranged the order of the sonnets carefully to "form a unified whole" (440). Each sonnet appears to the reader as the beloved might read it for the first time; in some sonnets the speaker addresses his beloved directly, while in others he recounts and reflects upon what has happened between them. Sidney's interest in portraying a successful courtship is matched only by his attention to how that courtship unravels over the conflict between the male lover's personal desire and the lady's public commitments. The lovers' affair eventually ends in the lady's rejection of the poet-speaker.

Frequently the courtship in the sequence is read as autobiographical. As Ringler notes, it is impossible to avoid the autobiographical elements in the sequence. In sonnet 65 the poet-speaker bears the Sidney family arms, and in sonnet 30 he speaks of his

father's political efforts to govern Ireland even as Philip's father, Sir Henry Sidney, spent many years as Elizabeth's governor of Ireland. Ringler also traces Sidney's interaction with the woman who has been identified as Sidney's "Stella," Penelope Devereux. Arrangements for a marriage between Philip and Penelope had been considered when the two were children, but were never concluded. Sidney might well have made Penelope Devereux's acquaintance before her marriage to Lord Rich on November 1, 1581, and then later regretted his missed chance even as the poet-speaker describes his falling in love in the second sonnet ("I saw and liked, I liked but loved not" (2.5). The Devereux arms are suggested in sonnet 14, and a pun on the name "Rich" appears in sonnets 24, 35 and 37. In sonnet 37 he praises Stella as being rich in innumerable gifts in herself only to lament in the couplet that she "Hath no misfortune, but that Rich she is" (37.14) (Ringler 435-36). Finally, in the Eighth song Sidney gives his poet-speaker the name—Astrophil—which roughly translates into lover of the star or sun, and deftly puns on Sidney's given name, Philip.

Admirers of Sidney have long struggled with why he chose to write about a poet-courtier's implacable desire for a married woman while actively pursuing a political career at court. On the surface the sequence exposes Sidney to the practice of many of the corruptions with which his contemporary Stephen Gosson libeled against poetry and drama claiming that poets mask their vanity, wantonness, and folly as "fresh pictures on rotten walls."³² and which has led even modern readers to find the poetic seduction of

³² Stephen Gosson, *The Schoole of Abuse, conteining a pleasant invectiue against poets, pipers, plaiers iesters and such like caterpillers of a commonwealth*. T. Woodcocke, 1579. STC 12097, A3.

Sidney's sequence contemptible.³³ Sidney's pride in his family name and its history of service to the princes of England would hardly recommend even the circulation in manuscript of so unsavory a view of himself. Ringler suggests that Sidney composed most of the sequence in the summer of 1582, though he may have begun work on the sonnets as early as November 1581 (438-40). Throughout his work on the sequence, Sidney appears to have kept his manuscript close to him or allowed it to circulate among a very few friends.³⁴ To what end, then, did Sidney calculate the need for so intimate and potentially disruptive a self-exposure in identifying selected aspects of himself with his poet-speaker? Ringler insists that "the legitimate critical procedure is, not to ignore the biography," but rather to question what kind of biography this is (440). He emphasizes that the sequence is "in no sense a diary," but he ventures too far from possible critical readings of the sequence when he asserts that "Sidney did not write about the full range of his interests and activities" including his opposition to the proposed marriage of the Queen and the Duke of Anjou (447).

Recent criticism, including new historicist readings of the past two decades, has brought a new spin to the autobiographical nature of the sequence. More recent critics have embraced the identification of Sidney with his poet-speaker. In some cases these readings illuminate the texture of the historical context in which Sidney wrote. Clark Hulse explores the nature of the relationship between Penelope Devereux and Philip Sidney and argues that Lady Rich would have been an able audience for Sidney's sonnet

³³ A formidable example of a reading of this sort is Richard A. Lanham, "Astrophil and Stella: Pure and Impure Persuasion," *English Literary Renaissance* 2 (1972): 100-15.

³⁴ On the circulation of Sidney's sequence in manuscript see H.R. Woudhuysen, *Sir Philip Sidney and the Circulation of Manuscripts 1558-1640* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996) 356-384.

sequence.³⁵ In a different light, several influential new historicist readings of the sequence interpret the poet-speaker's longings and frustrations as sublimations of Sidney's personal anxieties as a courtier in Elizabeth's court. Such views implicitly accept Sidney as the poet-speaker of this sequence.

A crucial effect of seeing Sidney as the dramatic persona of the sequence is to circumscribe his agency as an author and as an actor at court. New historicist readings depict Sidney as written by the pressures and frustrations he experienced even as his works represent his efforts to manage those conflicts. Many critics depict Sidney as an emblem of the experience of courtiers, the mob of ambitious young men at Elizabeth's court, seeking favor and preferment. Ann Jones and Peter Stallybrass examine how Sidney's poetry "could function as a complex displacement of the ideological pressures of the court." They analyze the ways in which "public" service to the Queen as a courtier relates to the "private" courtship in Sidney's sequence, emphasizing how both require "strategies of manipulation" (54). Arthur Marotti argues that Sidney's love poetry represents his submission to the power relations of court as an attempt at mastery over them. Marotti claims that Sidney, like other courtly authors, used his sonnet sequence "as a way of metaphorizing" his social and political rivalry as amorous love (398). Where Jones and Stallybrass describe a "displacement," Marotti describes Sidney's sequence as a "form of mediation" between "socioeconomic or sociopolitical desires and the constraints of the established order" (399). Though these critics' language implies an exchange between the public and private spheres, in each instance the concerns of the public sphere replace those of the private. By privileging the contextual and cultural

³⁵ Clark Hulse, "Stella's Wit: Penelope Rich as Reader of Sidney's Sonnets," *Rewriting the Renaissance: the Discourse of Sexual Difference in Europe* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986) 272-286.

influences and pressures at play at any given historical moment, these readings rewrite the literary as a sublimation of existing political tensions. The poet-speaker's frustrated seduction manifests Sidney's frustrated political ambitions, and Sidney's very dramatic persona ceases to exist as a dramatic character with any other possible purpose.

These different political readings of Sidney share a perception of literary production as distinct from the political activities of court. In this light, writing is an alternative activity to political service—a kind of other vocation. Sidney's own famous disclaimer with which he opens his *Defense* that poetry was his “unelected vocation” seems to support this dichotomy. Even earlier political readings of Sidney's works divide his literary output from his political activity at court. Richard McCoy, who initiated the political readings of Sidney's *Arcadia* in the 1970's, views Sidney's literary output as a product of his retreat from court. Sidney wrote most of his works at his sister's estate at Wilton and at his family home, Penshurst. Frustrated in his public and political efforts, McCoy argues, Sidney withdrew to a more private sphere to consider and comment upon the political sphere in which he had no active role. Citing Sidney as having written his works quite literally in the country, McCoy sees Sidney as oscillating between these two poles: the political (court) and the literary (countryside). McCoy's view gives Sidney more autonomy as an author and shows his construction of a self-consciously critical view of the workings of court.³⁶ However, the persistent division between Sidney's political activities and his literary ones creates a gulf which makes any reading of Sidney's writings as an assertive political activity less possible.

When literary production is viewed as displaced anxiety or aggression, authorship becomes a place to imaginatively master an audience, especially if they are your real

³⁶ Richard McCoy, *Rights of Knighthood: the Literature and Politics of Elizabethan Chivalry* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989) 64.

masters. In this view Sidney writes about his own experience for himself and precisely because he has been barred from acting in a real political forum. Thus, Sidney's poetic production is seen as a measure of his separation from vital political action, and becomes an inscription of the adverse effects of that separation. These readings characterize Sidney's relationship with the Queen as antagonistic and governed by anxious political tensions. While critics such as Louis Montrose argue that the ritualized ceremonies of court opened the way for symbolic struggles between the Queen and her servants, Montrose, like Jones and Stallybrass and Marotti, emphasizes that a courtier's motives were predominantly politically self-serving.³⁷ These critics represent Sidney's poetry as presenting forms of manipulation, most often to forward a deception which only serves its author.

I argue that Sidney's relationship with the Queen was not as oppositional as has been characterized by these critics nor were Sidney's motives as a courtier reserved to serve only himself.³⁸ Just as Sidney urged the Queen to reflect upon the nature of his service and her mastery with his jewel whip, Sidney, who had already written his *Defense* before his return to court in 1581, was already conceiving of a place for fiction in the

³⁷Louis A. Montrose, "Celebration and Insinuation: Sir Philip Sidney and the Motives of Elizabethan Courtship," *Renaissance Drama*, New Series 8 (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1977) 3-35. I find in Sally Minogue's analysis a more balanced critique which retains important aspects of Sidney's personal relationship with the Queen together with his public one.

Despite my disagreement with Montrose's arguments regarding Sidney's relationship with the Queen, his reading of "The Lady of May" and the "Four Foster Children of Desire" open the way to see Sidney's sequence as an effort to instruct the Queen. I build on this aspect of Montrose's reading of Sidney by examining the nuances of that instruction.

³⁸ Steven May describes how courtiers were made by the Queen's attention to them [*The Elizabethan Courtier Poets: The Poems and Their Context*. (London: University of Missouri Press, 1991) 25]. In an earlier article May describes Sidney as having received "signs of favouritism" from the Queen which were "continuous and plentiful," including allegedly a lock of her hair, and the exchange of New Year's gifts with him from 1578 to 1584, excluding only 1582. See Steven May, "Sir Philip Sidney and Queen Elizabeth," *English Manuscript Studies 1100-1700*, vol. 2, ed. by Peter Beal & Jeremy Griffiths (London: Basil Blackwell, 1990) 258-59.

service of his prince. *Astrophil and Stella* stands as an instance in which he gave a fictional form to his experience in order to give a much more personal form of counsel to the Queen on the matter of Alençon's courtship. In his sequence Sidney offers his experience to the Queen—creating a persona who shadows her lover—as a way of sympathetically situating his advice to her. Sidney used only those details from his own life which establish his experience of loving an unattainable woman and shade his authority with a sense of sympathy for the lovers' disappointment. Sidney's careful crafting of the reader's experience of learning about his characters contains a political purpose which has yet to be given serious critical consideration. I argue that *Astrophil and Stella* is another version of his letter to the Queen objecting to her marriage with the Duke of Anjou. Sidney's great daring was that he addressed the Queen's most personal concerns. In the sequence he enters into the intimate sphere of a lover's relationship to expose the ways the language of love reveals in his poet-speaker a drive for power which he refuses to limit. When at the end of the sequence Stella denies her love for Astrophil, Sidney speaks to the Queen as a private person, urging her to deny her love for Alençon.

Whatever frustrations Sidney experienced in the Queen's continued attentions to Alençon, he knew more of their relationship in 1582 than he had in 1579. By 1582 Sidney's experiences included seeing his Queen and Alençon together during the French Duke's second visit to the Queen in November 1581. Ringler notes that before Alençon's visit, from January through October 1581, Sidney was "more active than he had ever been before in political and courtly affairs" (441). Presumably his involvement at court would have included or at least given him knowledge of the preparations for Alençon's visit. Ringler's brief history of Sidney's activities during the Duke's visit, from November 1581 through March 1582, highlights several instances in which Sidney's love for the Lady Rich paralleled events in the Queen and Alençon's affair. In November

1581, Sidney was appointed to the entourage which accompanied Alençon upon his arrival in England. In that same month Penelope Devereaux married Lord Rich. Later that month Sidney performed in a tournament while the Queen and her attendant looked on. Alençon performed before the Queen in a tournament held on New Year's Day which included challenges between himself and the Earl of Leicester, though Sidney does not appear to have attended. Sidney's poet-speaker recounts a joust in which he wins in the eyes of the English as well as "some sent from that sweet enemy *Fraunce*" (41.4-5). Sidney would have had an opportunity to meet Alençon and observe his behavior with the Queen during the six weeks he was at court before leaving to spend Christmas with his sister at Wilton. After his return to court in February 1582, Sidney attended the Duke on his departure from England and remained with Alençon's escort during the ceremonies in Antwerp in March in which the Duke was installed as the overlord of the Netherlands. Ringler comments that Sidney would have watched with chagrin as a French prince was given the role of leader of the Protestant cause he wished his Queen to support (442).

Any direct commentary from Sidney regarding Alençon during his second visit is still a secret of history. Alençon continued to aspire to a leading military role in the Netherlands against Spain, moving between pressuring his brother, King Francis I of France, and suing the Queen for funds. In the two years between Alençon's first visit and his second in November 1581, there is little to suggest that Alençon had changed greatly, and in all likelihood Sidney's concerns regarding him were unchanged. What had changed was that Sidney had had an opportunity to see the personal relationship between the Queen and her suitor. In his letter Sidney somewhat audaciously wondered to the Queen how "Monsieur's desire and yours...should meet in public matters I think no oracle can tell" (52). He painted a vigorous opposition between Alençon's desires as a

Catholic Frenchman with the Queen as a Protestant English prince. With his sequence Sidney conveys his earlier concerns regarding Alençon's character in a fictional form which shears away the Duke's troubling political and religious affiliations and in their place dramatizes the far-reaching consequences of Sidney's personal concerns regarding Alençon. In the sequence the poet-speaker is unquestionably an English gentleman. Among his earliest laments regarding the power which he has ceded to Love is how it disenfranchises him of his sense of self, particularly his sense of national identity. He laments that "Now even that footstep of lost libertie / Is gone, and now like slave-borne *Muscovite*, / I call it praise to suffer Tyrannie" (2.9-11). Even an Englishman cannot preserve himself in the face of Love's power.

In the sequence Sidney's concerns are no longer regarding a Frenchman or a Catholic; instead he focuses on the nature of young men's ambitions. Sidney recasts Alençon's ambition as a prince who has modeled himself on "Alexander's image...but perchance ill painted" (52) from his letter to emphasize how a young man's personal desire may direct his ambition into a will to all the power in his personal relationship with a woman. Similarly Sidney's concern that Alençon had that "man-like disposition to desire all men be of his mind" (52) with respect to religion is recast as a lover's desire to dominate his beloved. Like the faithful servants of Cyrus and Darius which Sidney refers to in his *Defense*, Sidney creates a portrait not of who Alençon was, but of Sidney's concerns regarding his affection for the Queen.

The drama of courtship Sidney creates in the sequence shadows the relationship of Alençon and the Queen. Where in his letter Sidney cast the Queen and Alençon on parallel courses beginning from "contrary principles" which never meet (52), in the sequence Sidney captures the vitality of an enthusiastic courtship in which the poet-speaker seeks the love of a beautiful and virtuous woman. This is a drama in which

Astrophil and the Queen's suitor equally prevailed. In the Eighth song Stella attests to her love belonging to Astrophil. In words recounted by a third person narrator—not Astrophil—she tells him: "...if thou love me, my love content thee, / For all love, all faith is meant thee" (91-92). Astrophil's efforts are as skillful and convincing as those which Alençon directed toward the Queen. Alençon preceded his own courting with an envoy, Simier, who wooed the Queen in his name. He answered Elizabeth's expectation of seeing the man she would marry before agreeing to a marriage by being the first foreign prince and suitor who visited her. According to Susan Doran, "Elizabeth played the role of a woman in love" during Alençon's visit and following (163). When he returned in 1581, she surprised her court when during an Accession day celebration she announced in public that she would marry Alençon, kissed him on the mouth, and gave him her ring (Doran 187). If the Queen was indulging in love play for the pleasure of it, she had those around her uncertain of her intentions.

As Sally Minogue points out, there is reason to think that Sidney is writing of the Queen in writing of Stella, more so than just an aristocratic woman. The sequence has a courtly setting and the poet-speaker refers to Stella as like the sun, a conventional motif in Petrarchan discourse, and a common symbol for the Queen. Stella's eyes are "sun-like" (7.8), her face the place of "Queene Vertue's court" (9.1), and the sun itself has no power to burn her (sonnet 22). In her study of the images used to represent the Queen, Philippa Berry details the association between the queen and the sun in royal entertainments, tilts, several state portraits (including the Ditchley and Rainbow portraits), and poetry dedicated to the queen.³⁹ Indeed, in his letter to the Queen Sidney described her as "the only sun that dazzleth [men's] eyes." Astrophil also describes

³⁹ Philippa Berry, *Of Chastity and Power: Elizabethan Literature and the Unmarried Queen* (New York: Routledge, 1989) 135.

Stella as his chief authority—a Book of Nature—from which he simply copies. His own name also capitalizes on the image of the beloved as a star or sun. Astrophil translates as “lover of the star.”

In a manner which would suit a powerful monarch, the poet-speaker turns Stella’s distance into power. At the outset of the cycle Stella is as distant as the star or sun which her name translates. In the second sonnet he describes the slow process by which he fell in love, and he turns his beloved’s distance from him into a compliment of her power. The repetition of “I” in the overlapping phrases of the *gradatio* in lines 5-7 emphasizes his initial one-sided affection:

Not at first sight, nor with dribbed shot
 Love gave the wound, which while I breathe will bleed:
 But knowne worth did in mine of time proceed,
Till by degrees it had full conquest got.
I saw and liked, I liked but loved not,
 I loved, but straight did not what *Love* decreed:
 At length to *Love*’s decrees, I forc’d, agreed,
Yet with repining at so partiall lot. (2.1-8)

Stella is the “knowne worth” in line 3 which inspires Love’s commands. She is an extremely distant figure, solely an object of admiration. She neither encourages him nor shares his attraction. Nevertheless, Stella is an agent of Love’s power, and Astrophil depicts her as irresistible as any force of nature or an overwhelming warring power.

Through this conventional language Sidney could refer to a more powerful woman than Penelope Rich without tendering offense. Stella is as removed from

Astrophil as any Queen might be from a courtier, and as quintessential in her beauty, distant and captivating. Such passive power was certainly what was expected of virtuous women in the period. A wooing woman was a wanton woman. The Queen herself remarked in a letter to Alençon in May 1582 that she wondered that the King of France “will repute me for such a one as goes a-wooing, which will always be a fine reputation for a woman!” (255). The Queen, who had more leeway for love play than most women, made it a part of the ceremony of her rule to be treated as an object of desire, though she remained independent of those who desired her. Francis Bacon later characterized her as one who “admits of admiration, but prohibits desire.”⁴⁰ Stella’s steady resistance to Astrophil’s advances through the first fifty sonnets is not unlike the image of Beauty as a fortress in the royal entertainment of May 1581 in which Sidney performed before the Queen and the French ambassadors who preceded Alençon’s second visit, playing one of the “Four Foster Children of Desire” who assailed the fortress over the course of three days only to fail to gain entry.⁴¹

But while the Queen’s image may be shadowed in Stella’s, it is in learning about Astrophil’s character—the man who would woo—which lies at the heart of this sequence. The nature of a sonnet sequence—a collection of small, discreet and exceedingly well wrought pieces indeterminately connected—illustrates how the individual moves among a complex set of perspectives out of which he constructs a view of the world upon which to act. Each sonnet conveys a distinct experience or feeling. Sidney is thus free to have Astrophil modulate his tone from sonnet to sonnet, and while

⁴⁰ Sir Francis Bacon, *Sir Francis Bacon: The Essayes or Counsels, Civill and Morrall*, ed. Michael Kiernan (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1985).

⁴¹ Duncan-Jones, 204-212.

several sonnets together often sing in the same key, the openness in the movement from one sonnet to the next leads to dramatic shifts in color and timbre.⁴² Sometimes these more dramatic changes result from Astrophil's response to Stella, but at others they are a measure of the internal workings of Astrophil himself. A reader of the sequence experiences these disorienting shifts and is continuously attempting to integrate perceptions gathered from discontinuous planes of perspective.

Astrophil's first words in the sequence relate that he has been spurred into writing sonnets because he is "Loving in truth, and fain in verse my love to show" (1.1). This alexandrine is certainly among the most pregnant lines of poetry written in the sixteenth-century. In a literal sense, the abundance and richness of poetry in the 107 sonnets and 11 songs that follow testifies to its fecundity. In a conceptual sense, it raises a nexus of questions, variously interconnected, of what it means to love "truthfully," why poetry is

⁴² To read Sidney anachronistically, the sonnet sequence opens a view onto a character not unlike a twentieth-century cubist painting. The viewer experiences a number of varying perspectives on the canvass at one time. It is the cubists' insight that the experience of an object lies not in its surface representation, but in our multiple experiences and encounters with it which enables us to somehow "see" a sense that lies within the object. The artist reminds us that it is in the dynamism of our encounters with the surface layers of an object that we step behind the facade and into a more deeply contoured experience of the object. In this same way the seeming "fracturedness" of the sonnet sequence paradoxically opens feelings and experiences between the lovers which surface values seek to mask. Sidney certainly could never have anticipated such a radical re-vision of art, but his interest in formulations of verbal art as crossing different modes of perception—as in poetry as a "speaking picture" in his *Defense*—suggests a sensitivity to the ways in which our perceptions of the world are in themselves built up by cross-layering modes of sensory perception. Read in this light, Astrophil's, at times frustrating, clash of impulses and actions depicts a more complex sense of the individual variously led by and leading his desires as he struggles to overcome oppositions to them.

In contrast, Stephen Greenblatt in *Renaissance Self-Fashioning: From More to Shakespeare* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1980) uses the literal shifting of perspectives which Holbein requires for viewing the whole of his famous painting "The Ambassadors" as a way of understanding the paradox present in Sir Thomas More's life and works (see esp. pp. 17-26). To see the death's head painted at the feet of the subjects in Holbein's painting the viewer must move to the edge of the canvas. Greenblatt's reading of More and his *Utopia* are nuanced and persuasive. However, his emphasis on the dynamic shifting of perspectives as a force that undermines the material and spiritual values depicted in the rest of the painting does not fit Sidney's use of layered perspectives. Sidney, in contrast, aims at creating irony while retaining his commitment to the artistic work as having an end it may achieve. In this way Sidney comes closer to the view of action Greenblatt attributes to Machiavelli.

the vehicle for testifying to love, and just what a show of love means—to the beloved, as well as to others. Throughout Astrophil's efforts to remedy his "partiall lot" (2.8), the reader consistently experiences the awareness that the action of the sequence is being told to us and shaped by Astrophil himself. Astrophil is the filter through which we explore the growing attachment between himself and Stella. Astrophil's instability, which we might at times feel as his slipperiness because of his linguistic sophistication, is an essential part of the experience of reading this sequence.

The reader's consciousness of what Alan Sinfield calls the "creating poet"⁴³ begins in this first line, which establishes several important perspectives on him and his endeavors. The first division of our view occurs with a pun on the words "my love to show." Astrophil wants to show his beloved, Stella, (his "love") that he is "loving in truth." But the phrase also represents Astrophil engaged in showing or displaying his love: how he loves Stella, how he came to love her, how he is affected by loving her, and how he plans to win her love in return. Astrophil's self-display is reinforced in the early sonnets by his speedy rejection of every literary precedent to which he turns for inspiration for how to win Stella's love. He ends the first sonnet chided by his Muse who directs him back on himself for the inspiration to write: "'Foole,' said my Muse to me, 'looke in thy heart and write'" (1.14). Astrophil's pronounced self-consciousness of himself as a poet-lover, having to invent a new poetry suited to his task, goes hand in hand with his self-absorption as a lover—his intense inward-looking, his complaints, pleas and desires—entwine throughout as major themes of the sequence. He returns repeatedly to how other poets fail to render him service when he approaches so rare a

⁴³ Alan Sinfield, "Sidney and Astrophil," *Studies in English Literature* 20.1 (1980): 35.

woman as Stella. As he turns to his own experience, he wrestles the language of the Petrarchan lover into a new medium, radically changing its tone and tenor.

It is not the case as Jones and Stallybrass argue that “Even within the poems, the supposedly ‘private’ sphere of love can be imagined only through its similarities and dissimilarities to the public world of the court” (54). Rather, Sidney brings the language of court to the lover’s world to connect them to royal lovers and expose the threat which Astrophil’s love holds for Stella. Sidney uses an imagery of kingship and monarchy throughout the sequence as the site at which the tension between the lover’s desires and the public world play out. Over the course of the sequence the imagery undergoes a series of changes, each signifying an important transformation in the lover’s relationship. The most important transformations occur in the 36th and 69th sonnets and in the 5th song. They divide the sequence, though not with formal rigor, into four sections (1-35, 37-68, 70-86, and the 6th song-108) at which moments monarchical images punctuate instances when Astrophil or Stella urges a new pattern for their relationship to follow.

Astrophil’s use of the imagery of rule throughout the first half of the sequence describes an uncompromising hierarchy. While there is no evidence that an exchange between the ruler and ruled is possible (Stella rules by absolute power), Astrophil uses the imagery to comment on Stella’s rule. He varies from suing for her mercy (40) and resolving to be happy as a sign of her triumph (42), to despising his enslaved state, and resolving to defy her, only to lose his resolve the moment he sees her (47). He is careful to balance his complaints against her rule with testimonies of high praise and deep devotion. She is his “Princess of beauty” (28.6) and “Rich” beyond bounty (37.6-11). Yet though his rank does not license him to offer advice or question his ruler, Astrophil acts the role of the critical servant. Were Stella a real monarch, Astrophil might be chastised for his audacity, but his ambition to win her love overwhelms any concerns.

Early in the sequence Astrophil expresses a strong awareness of fear, shame, and public scandal (14, 18, 19, 21). Subsequently, however, he defines his desire to love Stella as his sole ambition (23, 27, 64). This leads him to defy the potential threat of shame the public world would accord his illicit love (28, 54).

Astrophil uses the language of monarchy in the first 50 sonnets to rhetorically bridge the distance which separates him from Stella. In several instances he portrays Stella's disinterestedness as its opposite. In sonnet 29 he turns her indifference into a conscious strategy of her heart. Here he uses an extended simile of how "weake Lords" ensure against being ravaged by "mighty kings" whose lands they border, to portray himself as a slave on Stella's shores and insinuate her responsibility for his enthrallment. Creating an elaborate blazon of Stella as her own army and armory, Astrophil depicts himself as completely impotent in the face of her onslaught:

...her eyes

Serve [Love] with shot, her lips his heralds arre:

Her breasts his tents, legs is triumphall carre:

Her flesh his food, her skin his armour brave,

And I, but for because my prospect lies

Upon that coast, am giv'n up for a slave. (29.9-14)

In these lines Astrophil succumbs to Love's forces (literally Stella's body) through her efforts to repel him. He skillfully depicts her indifference as an assault upon him. In sonnet 36 Astrophil again casts Stella as the dominating power, but now he shows her in a more active role which he desires her to assume. Astrophil revises his projection of his feelings onto an external force, Love, onto Stella, whom he now presents as the cause of

his love and responsible for it. In sonnet 36 Astrophil portrays her in the role of a besieging force. And since Henry VIII had made it illegal for anyone in England but the king to maintain an army, Astrophil presents Stella as an aggressive prince:

Stella, whence doth this new assault arise,
A conquerd, yelden, ransackt heart to winne?
Whereto long since, through my long battred eyes,
Whole armies of thy beauties entred in.
And there long since, Love thy Lieutenant lies,
My forces razde, they banners raisd within:
Of conquest, do not these effects suffice,
But wilt new warre upon thine owne begin? (36.1-8)

Behind the hyperbole in Astrophil's lines, Stella's actions are the antithesis of aggression and mastery. His depiction of Stella as a ruthless conqueror belies her continued indifference to his suit. No warrior ever possessed more benign weapons: her beauty, her voice and her character. Yet Astrophil's portrait insinuates Stella's complicity in his love for her. Because the mere fact of her existence entralls him, Stella can not escape the power she has. Depicting her as a prince with "sweetest strength, so sweetly skild withall, / In all sweete strategems" (36.10-11), he shapes his words to question the present justness and sensibility of her rule. In an ironic, playful and finally celebratory sense Astrophil uses the imagery of warring kings to pose serious questions of whether her present insensitivity to him is the responsible action of a ruler with the power to command him.

Up to sonnet 69, Astrophil locates an antidote for his feelings of internal turmoil in Stella's wealth of power. The "civill warres" he begs Sleep to calm in him (39.7) find a counterpoint in his description of Stella as the "Court of blisse" (44.11). By sonnet 44, Stella's transformative powers disarm his grief stricken sobs by 'metamorphosizing' them to sounds of joy (44.13-14). By the sonnets in the late 50's, Astrophil's efforts begin to show an effect. Stella now not only hears his complaints, but 'sings' (57.10) and 'reads' them back to him (58.11). Stella's slow thawing helps to show that she does not take loving lightly. Indeed after four dozen sonnets it would seem any woman might be wooed.

Just as Astrophil succeeds in winning Stella's notice and her affection, Sidney's Petrarchan sequence takes a noteworthy Ovidian turn. As her affection turns into love, the tenor of Astrophil's desire becomes markedly more sexual. In sonnet 69 Stella confesses her love for Astrophil. He in turn interprets her profession as a sign of his personal triumph and an occasion of ecstatic celebration. Although he has not used the imagery of rule since sonnet 47, he returns to it to describe the new pattern of their love. This first moment of synthesis also initiates the central conflict between them as lovers.

Throughout the sonnet Astrophil makes his experience and his new sense of power paramount. What words Stella has spoken are not clearly hers. Astrophil represents her confession in what appears to be his own language. Nevertheless, through the ecstatic heights of Astrophil's expression, Stella's conception of the nature of their relationship is equally clear.

O JOY, too high for my low stile to show:

O blisse, fit for a nobler state then me:

Envie, put out thine eyes, least thou do see

What Oceans of delight in me do flow.
My friend, that oft saw through all maskes my wo,
Come, come, and let me powre my selfe on thee;
Gone is the winter of my miserie,
My spring appears, o see what here doth grow.
For Stella hath with words where faith doth shine,
Of her high heart giv'n me the monarchie:
I, I, ô I may say, that she is mine.
And though she give but thus conditionly
This realme of blisse, while vertuous course I take,
No kings be crown'd, but they some covenants make.

Astrophil's transformation of the imagery of rule is shaped by two opposing sets of tensions: his eager ambition to possess Stella in every way and the conditions upon which Stella has granted him her love. He translates Stella's confession of love into a transfer of power. Though he acknowledges that she is the source of his power ("For Stella hath . . . giv'n me the monarchie"), Astrophil is absorbed by the newly empowered role he conceives for himself. Stella's love raises him up from being her lowly servant and slave to a position which seems to overshadow her power. His ascension to the "monarchie" of her "high heart" means more to him than just the possession of her love. He claims all of Stella as his: "I, I, O, I may say, that she is mine." The repetition of "I" is an emblem of Astrophil's self-absorption.

While Astrophil's sense of triumph-at-long-last makes his feeling of new found power his focus, his acquiescence to the conditions Stella imposes comes too easily. Stella's qualification that he follow a "virtuous course" threatens to mitigate his triumph.

Astrophil treats Stella's claim as an assumption of any monarch's rule. The aphoristic quality of the last line, "No kings be crown'd but they some covenants make," attempts to dismiss Stella's sanctions by treating them as a commonplace. Astrophil's frustration in the impossibility of embracing Stella at the moment the private realm between them is metaphorically consummated is evident in his having to turn to a friend to express his joy. The unmistakable sexual undertones of "Oceans of delight" flowing after the thaw of winter and the growth of his "spring" undermines Astrophil's easy acceptance. The allusion to Ovid's "Io Paeon" from his *Ars Amatoria* to which William Ringler points resonates in the initial "I,O" of line 11. Ovid's exclamation follows his having shown how to win a mistress and translates, as Ringler relates, into "in joy that the prey he sought has fallen into his toils" (478, n.63.9) Astrophil's lyrical alignment with Ovid's seducer gives greater emphasis to his desires.

Jones and Stallybrass represent Astrophil's acceptance of Stella's conditions as a Machiavellian expedient (59). However, to ascribe Astrophil devious motives based on his failure to embrace Stella's provisions reduces the complexity of the relationship between them. Astrophil can not see that his design for the basis of their relationship is incompatible with the pattern she can allow their love to take. Stella can grant Astrophil the monarchy of her heart, but only as a conditional monarchy. Astrophil, on the other hand, conceives of their relationship as one in which power is invested and absolutely exercised by one of them alone. Both of these patterns emerge in this sonnet. Astrophil does not realize the full implications Stella's conditions nor his inability to abide by them, until several sonnets later when he directly addresses the nature of his love in sonnet 72.

The lover's conflict raises concerns similar to those which occupied the Queen and her councilors with regard to her potential marriage to the Duke of Anjou. Might a

man who receives the love of a Queen accede to the powers of a King? Whether the Queen might marry had been debated throughout her reign. In general, Parliament and many of her councilors wished her to marry in order to secure an heir. In her turn, the Queen pledged repeatedly to marry if the choice suited her. Elizabeth had an established precedent upon which to retain all of her powers were she to marry. As Susan Doran points out, Elizabeth's sister, Mary Tudor, had married Philip I of Spain in 1553 under a marriage treaty which reserved all of Mary's titles, policy-making powers, and awards of patronage to the Queen herself. Doran argues against other historians' analyses that Mary upheld the terms of treaty and had not allowed power "to slip from her hands into those of her husband" (7-8). Doran cites John Aylmer, later the bishop of London, who defended the Queen against the attacks of John Knox in a pamphlet written in 1559. In *An Harborowe for Faithful and Trew Subjectes* he argued that the Queen as a wife could submit to the authority of her husband in private affairs, while retaining her regal precedence as a governor by which she could command and even punish her husband under the law (8). Sidney, however, who opposed the Queen's marrying might well dramatize an alternative outcome to the insistent desires of the man. As Astrophil's claims play out in the language of the rule of princes, Sidney implies that the desire for dominance in the personal sphere will not be so easily restrained from the political sphere. In the sequence the lovers' conflict plays out a battle of wills which marriage treaties can not negotiate and where affection can be overwhelmed by the desire for control.

Far from deceiving Stella, Astrophil proves unable to grapple with her prohibitions at the moment she first tells him she loves him. In sonnets 70-72 Astrophil examines his capacity to follow the "virtuous course." By sonnet 72 he realizes that he can not divorce his desire from his love for her: "But thou Desire, because thou wouldst

have all, / Now banisht art, but yet alas how shall" (72.13-14). Astrophil can not accept the limits Stella sets out, and he claims ever more power within their relationship. He does not question whether the satisfaction of his desire accords with what Stella can allow him. Instead, he is intent upon overwhelming any resistance from her in his language, and in her company. The imagery of rule reappears twice before the Fifth song, the next turning point in the sequence, in sonnets 75, and 85 to bolster Astrophil's claims for his desire. In these sonnets Astrophil presents images of kingly figures that he chooses as models for his behavior toward Stella. He shows in them the proper conduct of a king.

Astrophil's troubling use of Edward IV as the most noble and virtuous model of a monarch for himself recalls Sidney's concern in his letter to the Queen that Alençon's image of Alexander might be "ill painted" (52). Astrophil catalogues Edward's heroic and virtuous deeds, and then in the couplet asserts that all of these feats pale in comparison to Edward's willingness to sacrifice his kingdom rather than disappoint the woman he loved.

Of all the kings that ever here did raigne,
Edward named fourth, as first in praise I name,
Not for his faire outside, nor well lined braine,
Although lesse gifts impe feathers oft on Fame,
Nor that he could young-wise, wise-valiant frame
His Sire's revenge, joyn'd with a kingdome's gaine:
And gain'd by *Mars*, could yet mad *Mars* so tame,
That Ballance weigh'd what sword did late obtain,
Nor that he made the Flouredeluce so fraid,

Though strongly hedg'd of bloody Lyon's pawes,
That wittie *Lewis* to him a tribute paid.
Nor this, nor that, nor any such small cause,
Not only for this worthy knight durst prove
To lose his Crowne, rather than faile his Love.

To a late sixteenth-century reader Edward IV as a model of kingly virtue would have been riddled with irony. As Ringler notes, though Edward was a popular king, most chroniclers and poets did not depict him as either great or admirable. They stressed his bloodthirstiness in battle and his wantonness. Turbulent and bloody times characterized the early part of his rule. When Edward married secretly, he provoked key members of the nobility into rebellion. Subsequently, these nobles forced him into exile; though after a strenuous campaign Edward eventually regained his throne (481, n.75.12-14). While *Astrophil* reveres Edward for his willingness "To lose his Crowne, rather than faile his love," Edward's affection for his wife waned, as Robert Kimbrough notes, and in later years he took another woman as a mistress.⁴⁴

The troubling ironies of *Astrophil's* choice of a kingly model cement the ironic distance between Sidney as the sequence's author and *Astrophil* as its dramatic poet-creator. Ringler glosses Sidney's praise of Edward IV as "patently sophisticated" (480, n.75.12-14). What is Sidney's sophistry is set off from *Astrophil's* serious embrace of Edward as a model of kingly virtue. *Astrophil* goes to great rhetorical lengths to portray Edward's deeds as praiseworthy. The involuted syntax and encomium filled descriptions suggests *Astrophil's* awareness that Edward's unsavory reputation needs to be construed

⁴⁴ Robert Kimbrough, ed., *Sir Philip Sidney: Selected Prose and Poetry*, 2nd ed. (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1983) 206, n.6.

in the right terms in order to appear admirable. Astrophil translates Edward's usurpation of the throne and his murder of his father's enemies as his having "gain'd" a kingdom and revenged his father. Edward's better-known reputation makes Astrophil's praise of him an ominous sign of his claim for greater power.

By sonnet 85 Astrophil resolves to enact his monarchical designs. He rejects the actions of "Lords" with "weake confused braine[s]" (85.5) for a role in which he will rule Stella's body so to "all the kingly Tribute take" (85.14). This sonnet is the first instance in which Astrophil insists upon Stella's subservience to him and considers her only in terms of how he may enjoy her. He reduces her from the power that bestowed his crown to one his lips will "indenture" as his servant. Astrophil thus translates the physical enjoyment of their love into Stella's honoring him, as any king would expect to receive tribute from his loyal servants.

Astrophil's claim to dominate Stella's body usurps the conditional rule which first empowered him. When he complains in the next sonnet "Alas, when came this change of lookes?" (86.1), Stella shows the deep offense his boldness has wrought in her. He attempts again to embrace the image of the slave and slingshots her back into a position of power and command: "O ease your hand, treate not so hard your slave" (86.9). However, his effort to reaffirm his devotion and submissiveness comes too late. When it has apparently failed, Astrophil erupts in fury in the Fifth song. In this song Astrophil insists on the authority of his claim to rule. The assertion of his predominance amounts to nothing less than his effort to discredit Stella's rule and her conditions as unjust and unnatural. The rage Astrophil vents in the Fifth song sets it apart from the rest of the sequence as a dramatic anomaly. In his gloss Ringler points to evidence that this song was composed before the sonnets and for another pair of lovers (484). But in the sequence it marks a significant moment in the dramatic context. The imagery of rule

appears in it with a consistency with which it has been used throughout the sequence. It is Astrophil's almost violent and inconsistent use of it in this song that indicates his effort to strip from Stella the defense of her rule and impose his own command.

In the opening stanzas Astrophil suggests that Stella's power depends upon how he chooses to exercise his poetic skill. He describes how Stella's "unkindnesse" has "metamorphosd" his words of praise for her into his wish to publish her faults (v.13-14). He threatens her with the harshness of his pen: "The same key op'n can, which can locke up a treasure" (v.18). In the next stanza he exonerates himself from the responsibility of maintaining Stella's good name by arguing that the burden falls to her not to commit those faults which will cause her to fall in his estimation: "Whose owne fault casts him downe, hardly high seat recovers" (v.24). Astrophil then again reverses the hierarchy of the ruler-ruled and portrays Stella as a "subject" to himself and his muse's princely powers: "Suffer her not to laugh, while both we suffer paine: / Princes in subjects wrongd, must deeme themselves abused" (v.29-30).

This image initiates a series of accusations in which Astrophil defames Stella for denying the true powers by which she should be ruled. As the monarchical images build upon one another, they create a vague sense of confusion. While Astrophil's first image of kingship overturns the swift reversal he made in the 86th sonnet and places Stella once again below him, the later images in this song accord her a sense of authority, though only so Astrophil may declaim against her abuse of it. Though Astrophil definitely wants to disarm Stella of the power to dictate what the nature of their relationship will be, the mixed use of the imagery suggests that he is uncertain as to where the rightful power lies. Astrophil manipulates the imagery in this song to establish his dominance, but there is enough ambiguity in the collection of images to suggest that he is in fact forcing his desires upon Stella, rather than directly assessing their interconnected realms of power.

In the tenth stanza in which the imagery next occurs, Astrophil recalls Stella's previous position of power, but now insists she has abused her rule and become a tyrant:

I lay then to they charge unjustest Tyrannie,
If Rule by force without all claime a Tyran showeth,
For thou doest lord my heart, who am not borne thy slave,
And which is worse, makes me most guitlesse torments have,
A rightfull Prince by unright deeds a Tyran groweth. (v. 56-60)

Astrophil can not entirely deny Stella's authority, yet he can no longer accept his subservience or, more importantly, suffer torments of which he feels himself not guilty. The definition of tyranny in these lines is the same definition of Love's tyrannical rule in the second sonnet. Stella now completely fills the role Love played at the beginning of the sequence. Astrophil, in contrast, is no longer willing to act as her slave (a role he grudgingly bore under Love's rule). These lines overturn his impulsive return in the preceding sonnet 86 to his image as Stella's slave and his appellation of Stella there as a "sweet Judge" (86.11). Stella, he now claims, has judged him of faults he has not committed and made him suffer torments of which he is not guilty.

A final twist in the imagery of rule appears in the eleventh stanza in which Astrophil makes Stella the subject of Love's power and a rebel to her sovereign Prince's rule:

Of foule rebellion then I do appeach thee now;
Rebell by Nature's law, Rebell by law of reason,
Thou, sweetest subject, wert borne in the realme of Love,

And yet against thy Prince thy force dost dayly prove:

No vertue merits praise, once toucht with blot of Treason. (v.61-66)

Astrophil levies his charges based on what he feels Stella's actions ought to be. Since she loves Astrophil he defines the "realme of Love" where her acts are considered treason. Thus, when Stella acts against the force of Love, she acts against Astrophil's love. In sonnet 72 Astrophil described the nature of love as an inseparable physical and spiritual union. Stella's refusal to physically reciprocate her love thus makes her a rebel to the law of nature that in Astrophil's mind demands it. Significantly, Astrophil holds tyranny and rebellion as the most condemning charges against Stella. The imagery allows Astrophil to charge Stella with two public claims of injustice, both of which he considers more serious than even "murder," a crime which he calls a "private fault" and which "seems but a toy" to her (v.55).

In each of these images the pattern of power is the same: the one who rules commands the service of the other. Astrophil tries in this song to assert his control of the hierarchy. He first refuses to serve Stella, claiming that her abuse of her power forces the pattern into default and then argues that she is guilty of treason, as she denies the rule of those to whom she should submit. In order to understand the complexity of Astrophil's claims in the fifth song and why this crisis marks a conflict they are unable to resolve, we need to look ahead to the eighth song where Astrophil and Stella meet for the last time.

The eighth song is the only poem in the sequence told in the third person by a detached narrator. The narrator, who sympathizes with the lovers' plight, describes the meeting between Astrophil and Stella in a garden and the words they exchange there. For

the first time Stella's words are heard outside of Astrophil's poetic fashioning.⁴⁵ The narrator describes her as bearing a "foule yoke" (viii.10), but when she speaks she professes her love to Astrophil and testifies that were she free to love him she would, but because she is not she must deny him.

'Trust me while I thee deny,
In my selfe the smart I try,
Tyran honour doth thus use thee,
Stella's selfe might not refuse thee. (viii.91-96)

Stella's "tyran honour" and the "foule yoke" she bears both describe her married state. They remind the reader and Astrophil that Stella is not free to love him though she does. In describing her honor as tyrannical, Stella both condemns her need to serve this honor and establishes its power to rule her. The formal opposition she creates between her "selfe" and this "honour" in these two lines belies a much more mutually defined relationship between them. Due to the power her "honour" wields, Stella's "selfe" is constrained by how she feels the public would judge her. In the next stanza she illustrates how much her concern for her public honor takes on the character of a personal fear:

'Therefore, Deere, this no more move,

⁴⁵ See Katherine Roberts, "Realism in Sidney's *Astrophil and Stella*: The Creation of Stella," *Sidney Newsletter and Journal* 12.2 (1993): 37-38 for a discussion of the significance of Stella's speech in this song.

Least, though I leave not thy love,
Which too deep in me is framed,
I should blush when thou art named.' (viii.97-100)

She pleads with Astrophil that even if her shame were not registered by others she would feel it in the heated blush that would cross her face at any mention of his name. Her very reaction would in turn display it to others.

Stella's plea is her confession that she can not submit to Astrophil's rule because she is already ruled by another power. When we conceive of Stella's position in this light, Astrophil's furious rage in the fifth song becomes deeply ironic. His charges against her as a tyrant and a rebel condemn actions that really show another power acting through her. His efforts to make her change her ways are in essence attempts to coerce her to rebel against this other power. When he condemns Stella as guilty of tyranny and rebellion, he is himself guilty of the same crime: he attempts to force his rule upon her without any claim which can outweigh the claims already on her. By soliciting her to rebel against them, he is himself acting as a rebel eager to overthrow the social order which marriage maintains. His desire to love Stella and be loved by her in every sense would instigate a rebellion against a far more pervasive power than Love's.⁴⁶

⁴⁶ According to Ringler, the complete text of the Eighth song was first printed in the authorized text of Sidney's works in 1598. In the second of the two pirated versions printed without the authorization of the Sidney estate in 1591 lines 69-100 which comprise Stella's speech did not appear. The other pirated version printed none of the songs and only sonnets 1-36 and 38-95. Both printed versions omitted the 37th sonnet. It seems likely that this sonnet and Stella's speech were suppressed for fear that the identification of Stella with the married Lady Rich might have compromised Sidney's reputation. Ringler speculates that the manuscript from which both printed copies derived probably contained both sonnet 37 and a complete text of the Eighth song (Ringler 45-53). The Eighth song did circulate individually (the way a number of *Certain Sonnets* were circulated). It appears in two courtly manuscript anthologies in the 1580's: MS Harley (Ha, British Museum 6910) and MS Rawl. Poet. (Ra, Bodleian 85). Ringler speculates that along with songs iv, vi, ix, x it was in circulation shortly after 1587 (Ringler 453).

The conflict which separates Astrophil and Stella occurs not merely on the private level in which Astrophil intends to seduce Stella and exercise his desire, but on the level in which the individual's private life is intrinsically involved in the public world it inhabits. Astrophil's seduction is intended in the broadest sense of that word; its implications extend beyond the solely private realm. The obstacles to Astrophil and Stella's love all result from irresolvable tensions posed by public interests neither can fully escape. This conflict is represented in the contention between competing hierarchies. Astrophil would overthrow the hierarchy Stella serves in order to establish his own rule. This revolt would bring Astrophil power over Stella and the satisfaction of his desires, but would bring Stella public shame and threaten her personal sense of worth. While she is unable to completely deny her personal desires, she can not risk the censure that the public world would convey upon her and which she would then have to wear equally as a public and personal stigma. It is true to say that her attention to the public's concerns is equally self-interested as is her love for Astrophil. When she leaves and bids Astrophil to no longer see her in the eighth song, she does so as an act of self-preservation. Though Stella is willing to be a little rebellious, she can not afford to pay the price of full rebellion.

For Sidney the satisfaction of an individual's private desires can be struck only if it is in consonance with the public order. In the revised *Arcadia* Sidney's eloquent description of the relationship between Parthenia and Argalus presents an instance in which this harmony occurs. Here the lovers' mutual desire and passion is publicly sanctioned through their marriage:

The messenger made speed, and found Argalus at a castle of his own,
sitting in a parlour with the fair Parthenia, he reading in a book the stories of

Hercules, she by him, as to hear him read; but while his eyes looked on the book, she looked on his eyes, and sometimes staying him with some pretty question, not so much to be resolved of the doubt as to give him occasion to look upon her. A happy couple: he joying in her, she joying in herself, but in herself, because she enjoyed him: both increasing their riches by giving to each other; each making one life double, because they made a double life one; where desire never wanted satisfaction, nor satisfaction ever bred satiety: he ruling, because she would obey, or rather because she would obey, she therein ruling.⁴⁷

In this passage Sidney describes the dynamic order of the lovers' relationship in two subtly different ways through the imagery of rule. In the first, Argalus' rule is empowered by Parthenia's willing submission to his rule. The other emphasizes Parthenia's submission as her power: because of it she also rules. In either case, both of the lovers, and especially Parthenia, freely exercise their will to submit or rule, though, unquestionably, Argalus' rule ultimately possesses the greater authority; he rules by her obedience and she also rules by her obedience, but not by his.

Stella's marriage may well recall the Queen's similar claims to be married to her state. In William Camden's account of the Queen's first speech to Parliament he recounts her saying:

...it is long since I had any joy in the honour of a husband; and this is that I thought, then that I was a private person. But when the public charge of governing the kingdom came upon me, it seemed unto me an inconsiderate folly

⁴⁷ Sir Philip Sidney, *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia*, ed. Maurice Evans (New York: Penguin Books, 1977) 501.

to draw upon myself the cares which might proceed of marriage. To conclude, I am already bound unto an husband, which is the kingdom of England...

(Elizabeth I: Collected Works 59)

While Camden's record has been questioned for its accuracy,⁴⁸ other critics, like Lena Orlin, perceive Camden as reflecting a role the Queen upheld throughout her reign.⁴⁹ Orlin quotes a remembrance of John Harrington, one of the Queen's courtier's, in which the Queen asked his wife how she kept her husband's "good will and love?" Harrington's wife answered,

"she had confidence in her husband's understanding and courage, well founded on her own steadfastness not to offend or thwart, but to cherish and obey; hereby she did persuade her husband of her own affection, and in so doing did command his."—"Go to, go to, mistress," sayeth the Queen, "you are wisely bent I find: after such sort do I keep the good will of all my husbands, my good people; for if they did not rest assured of some special love toward them, they would not readily yield me such good obedience." (89)

⁴⁸ Ilona Bell questions whether Camden's "interpolations and revisions" have not obscured a more subtle reading of Elizabeth's "contradictory rhetoric" regarding her willingness to marry. See "Elizabeth I—Always Her Own Free Woman," *Political Rhetoric, Power and Renaissance Women*, ed. Carole Levin and Patricia A. Sullivan (New York: State University of New York Press, 1995) 60-61.

⁴⁹ Lena Cowen Orlin, "The Fictional Families of Elizabeth I," *Political Rhetoric, Power and Renaissance Women*, ed. Carole Levin and Patricia A. Sullivan (New York: State University of New York Press, 1995) 89.

Elizabeth may well have been making a distinction which Susan Doran argues she does in that she was married to them with her body politic, but not her natural body by which she might choose to marry (2).⁵⁰ Sidney might doubt that the Queen could hold her personal and politic bodies apart—successfully submitting in one role while ruling in another, as John Aylmer argued. In his letter to the Queen, Sidney reminds her that she has pledged to always submit her personal desire to her public duty: “Often have I heard you with protestation say, ‘No private pleasure nor self affection could lead you unto it’” (51)—a comment which in his letter he interpreted as her not marrying Alençon.

In the sequence Sidney uses the illicitness of an adulterous affair to characterize the compromise to public honor and personal integrity which the Queen would suffer being ruled by Alençon. It is not the hierarchy of marriage in which the man is the head that Sidney is concerned with, but that which may exist in a man’s love for a woman. Astrophil’s desire is a threat to Stella because the personal and public spheres of her life are so closely interwoven. The difference between Stella and the Queen is that Stella can not show her love—she is frightened that a mere blush will betray her. Stella is held up as virtuous for her keeping Astrophil’s desires at bay. The Queen, on the other hand, could engage in amorous play, though whether she would stop short of marrying was another question. Rumors of Elizabeth’s sexual activity were active throughout her reign. While she always denied these, they did not restrain her.⁵¹ However, the Queen herself may have doubted her own powers to rule Alençon after their marriage. In her letter to Monsieur of February 14, 1579 she cautions him against dismissing others’ advice “in

⁵⁰ For a similar argument see Carole Levin, *The Heart and Stomach of a King: Elizabeth I and the Politics of Sex and Power* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1995) 42.

⁵¹ See especially Levin, chapter 4, 66-90.

order to follow the desire that proceeds from you alone” (232). Stella’s example of a woman who denies her lover’s desires in order to preserve her own integrity could stand as a model for the Queen’s own decision to resist Alençon’s love.

Banished from Stella’s presence in the Eighth song, Astrophil’s despair and grief give frequent rise to his unabated desire for Stella. In the Tenth song he invokes the power he imagines he will exercise when he is again with her. This power is defined in exclusively sexual terms:

Thinke of my most Princely power,
When I blessed shall devower,
With my greedy licorous sences,
Beauty, musicke, sweetnesse, love
While she doth against me prove
Her strong darts, but weake defenses. (x 31-36)⁵²

Before the end of the sequence the imagery of rule undergoes one final transformation. In the penultimate sonnet 107 Astrophil abruptly restores Stella to the position of power as his queen and princess and places himself in the service of her rule. This last reverse in their roles is less suggestive of a true reconciliation between himself and Stella, as it

⁵² Ringler describes a varied textual history for the Tenth song as well. It appears as a complete text in 1598, but in the second 1591 printed copy lines 25-42 are omitted. This section of the text includes three stanzas just before the last; the central stanza of these is the one quoted here. The stanzas conceivably could have been struck out of the same concern which led to the suppressing of the 37th sonnet and the lines in the Eighth song; their explicit sexual overtones could have defamed Sidney’s reputation for virtue. This song also circulated independently in manuscript and appeared in two courtly manuscript anthologies: Harington MS (Arundel Castle) and MS Rawl. poet. 85 held in the Bodleian (Ringler 453).

suggests Astrophil's inability to come to terms with Stella's refusal to accede to his desires:

Stella since thou so right a Princesse art
Of all the powers which life bestowes on me,
That ere by them ought undertaken be,
They first resort unto that soueraigne part;
Sweete, for a while give respite to my hart,
Which pants as though it still should leape to thee:
And on my thoughts give thy Lieftenancy
To this great cause, which needs both use and art,
And as a Queene, who from her presence sends
Whom she employes, dismisse from thee my wit,
Till it have wrought what thy owne will attends.
On servants' shame oft Maister's blame doth sit;
O let not fooles in me thy workes reprove,
And scorning say, 'See what it is to love.'

After many sonnets in which Astrophil bewails Stella's absence, this sonnet seems like an effort to rationalize his separation from her. In the first 11 lines he treats their separation as if it had not been as complete and bleak as the preceding sonnets portrayed. His suit to Stella depicts him not in anguish over her insistence that they part, it shows him pleading for an even more profound separation. He appears in the role of her servant only to part from her further. This sonnet makes a show of strength and resiliency on Astrophil's part. He also wants to absolve himself of the responsibility for the sad fate of their love.

In the last three lines, his discontent erupts at the surface. Knowing her fears, Astrophil plays on Stella's sense of public shame by arguing that as her servant he shows to the world what her rule is like. Astrophil concedes Stella the power of their relationship together with the responsibility that she must better her servants' charge or inflict the shame of failing to act upon herself.

Of course, in the dramatic action of the sequence Stella has been Astrophil's absent ruler since the Eighth song. Without her consent to even see him, he has had to content himself in the powerless role of suffering in her absence. Astrophil shows again in this sonnet that he is unable to perceive or address Stella outside of the frame of his own understanding. Astrophil remains blind to the fact that the public shame Stella fears is not what could be said of the sorry state of her neglected lovers; she fears the shame that would accrue were she to give them her attention and love. Astrophil can only perceive and represent his experience from his own point of view. He is so absorbed in his personal desires that he can not imaginatively consider Stella's perspective or understand the different pressures upon her.

When Astrophil returns to the imagery of rule in sonnet 107, the hierarchy he restores is again absolute: one rules, and one serves. Astrophil is unable to compromise or restructure his conception of how a relationship between two individuals might function. Stella's conditional rule offers an alternate pattern, one she is equally unable to compromise, and by which Astrophil can not rule himself. As the sequence ends Astrophil is trapped in a cage of his own fashioning. The image in sonnet 108, in which he is closed off from the sun's light (and his sun's light) behind "iron doores" (108.11), literally enacts what at the beginning of the sequence he projected as a metaphorical enthrallment. The image is one of debilitating pathos, yet in it Stella remains the source of both his joy and grief. Astrophil's isolation is the only closure to the sequence.

* * *

To say that Astrophil is fully aware of what he intends in loving Stella—simply to use her physically—is to overlook his more complicated response to Stella’s resistance to his sexual wishes. Many readers respond to Astrophil’s burning self-absorption and his self-aggrandizing claims as testimony that his pronounced self-display is itself a predominant, if not overriding, motivation for his writing, if not indeed, for his being in love. As a result, the sequence looks more like a venue to express illicit desires from a rather unlikeable character. Indeed some readers are moved to doubt the sincerity of Astrophil’s profession that he is “loving in truth.” This suspicion is fueled by the increasingly sexual tone of Astrophil’s desire (more evident as we read into the later sonnets in the fifties and sixties) as Stella reads, knows, pities and then comes to love Astrophil. For these readers, Astrophil’s desires to physically consummate their love undermine his early professions of adoration and admiration. As the Platonic tone which Petrarch’s poet-lover finds as the eventual plumb-line to any wanderings in his love for Laura is overwritten by an strong Ovidian strain of physical love in this sequence, Astrophil and with him Sidney appears to break the acceptable bounds of persuasion in love. Astrophil is deprived of any authority for claiming a “truth” in his love, as his words become the strivings of an unmitigatable desire aimed at achieving a rather unadmirable end. To turn a significant phrase of Astrophil’s on its head: he cannot profess to tell the truth because he speaks only self-serving lies.

To conclude, however, that Astrophil is simply corrupt drastically reduces the complexity of the reader’s experience of learning about Astrophil and his later relationship with Stella. We witness a contest for control and prerogative between the

lovers much more than a portrait of corruption. Read in this light the sequence is endemically ironic. It breaks into two lines of reading which are contradictory and are made simultaneously: that which Astrophil says about his love, and that which we read behind Astrophil's words as a "truer" sense of his love for Stella. The sequence offers a nuanced reading of how limitations of self-knowing are revealed within a dynamic relationship of strong affections. Astrophil speaks his truth, but it is a truth we as readers recognize the limitations; limitations we map along the contours of his dramatic use of language. Thus the reader can see, where Astrophil can not, that his story tells a larger story than the one he is aware of telling. Astrophil's words detail the lovers' fate, but as they reveal his desire to fashion Stella, they also reveal how he is fashioned. The sequence urges a careful examination of character through the use of language. In courtly romance, or a high stakes game of courtship like that between the Queen and Alençon, actions may be dictated by staged displays of ceremony. Sidney provides a longer lasting display of underlying commitments in what one lover says and does not say.

Far from a portrait of self-possessed corruption, the sequence illustrates the limitations in Astrophil's own self-awareness. We as readers find ourselves in the same position as Stella, reading to know and learning about this lover as we go. And we watch how Stella decides to act upon what she learns. Through the imagery of rule Astrophil speaks himself. Through it he also expresses his desire to speak Stella. The limitations of Astrophil's character—revealed through his language—are increasingly highlighted by Stella's demands regarding their relationship. Stella offers conditional monarchy. Stella threatens to lose all control if she accedes to him. Her only claim to retain the power she has is to maintain her sovereignty. Sidney ultimately positions Stella as the unsung hero of this sequence. Ringler tells that the real Penelope Devereux went on to have a famous

affair in which she bore several children with Lord Charles Blount (444). Such later evidence suggests that early modern British women may have had more leeway than the drama between Astrophil and Stella suggests. But the more narrow limitations between the fictional lovers better outlines the confines in which a ruling sovereign had to maneuver when it came to love. With Astrophil, Sidney might not portray Alençon as a villain, but he could represent his limitations.

Several critics have noted that Sidney is often in his works, and in this sequence in particular, critical of courtly manners and the overblown Petrarchan language used there.⁵³ Sidney could acknowledge how strongly the Queen was searching for a personal attachment. Her own favorite had betrayed her and married secretly, and Alençon and the dalliance with his ambassador Simier must have spoken to her own affections. Hardly a matter to be embarrassed by as Conyers Read suggests.⁵⁴ The sequence dramatizes the need to closely scrutinize an offer of love. Not for hidden ulterior motives, but that love in itself may hold an idea of dominance. Sidney speaks to this concern in his letter to the Queen in which he characterizes men as wanting to make other men of their own minds. His comment there comes in the context of Alençon's opinion on religion: "He of the Romish religion, and if he be a man, must needs have that man-

⁵³ Arthur Kinney makes a passing reference to this in "Puritans Versus Royalists: Sir Philip Sidney's Rhetoric at the Court of Elizabeth I," *Sir Philip Sidney's Achievements* (New York: AMS Press, 1990) 45. Richard McCoy (*The Rites of Knighthood*, 63-66) develops Sidney's antipathy to courtliness by examining his two pastoral poems, "Dispraise of a Courtly Life" and a poem in the Otley manuscript attributed to Sidney by Peter Beal.

⁵⁴ In the many historical accounts of the Queen's displays of emotion there runs a profound skepticism regarding her personal feelings. Emotional displays of the sort which Elizabeth evinced before her council are interpreted as shows calculated for the news they would carry to important ears abroad. They are reported with a thinly veiled disdain for the emotionalism associated with the problem of a woman ruler. Indeed, historians seem inclined to doubt all of Elizabeth's professions of attachment as disingenuous. They are represented as more machinations in a game of high stakes foreign policy in which Elizabeth plays a part aimed at gaining advantages on the broader political stage.

like disposition to desire that all men be of his mind.”⁵⁵ This anticipates Astrophil’s attitude in the sequence—the assertion of his power over Stella. Sidney acknowledges the private self in this love affair that carries with it profound policy implications. In the midst of serious political negotiations the queen might receive commiseration as a woman and a lover.

Sidney throws a positive light on courtiership; the sequence is an elaborate impersonation for the purposes of political counsel. Sidney’s fiction enters the head, not just the camp, of the enemy. He fashions Astrophil as English, not French, in a presentation that borrows from the kind of relationship he created with the presentation of his jewel whip. Yet it also presumes a position from which to speak to the Queen on matters of policy and love. His ‘counterfeiting’ serves the Queen. The manner in which Sidney sees the courtier serving his sovereign shares a kinship with Castiglione’s view of how women particularly can serve their prince.⁵⁶ Most often they used their skills to negotiate their personal relations with the Queen, as witnessed in the exchange of gifts between the Queen and her courtiers. Another way was through poetry. Jennifer Summit’s close reading of the Queen’s poem “In Doubt of Future Foes” shows how adept the Queen herself was in expressing in poetry personal sentiments she could not otherwise acknowledge.⁵⁷ Sidney, whose jewel whip shows his capacity to use images

⁵⁵ Sidney, *Miscellaneous Prose* 52.

⁵⁶ At least one report from Camden suggests that if the Queen ever heard direct criticism or advice on her involvement with Alençon it was from her ladies-in-waiting. Following the Queen’s show of affection for Alençon in which she gave him a ring, kissed him publicly, and said she would not marry another man, her ladies in waiting chastised her. Reported in Doran, 187.

⁵⁷ See Jennifer Summit, *Lost Property: the Woman Writer and English Literary History, 1380-1589* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2000) 163-202.

persuasively, also used his generous talents as a poet to address political issues that were otherwise unapproachable.

While Sidney does not use poetry to achieve what the formal idea and practice of consilium intended, neither does he address only the private aspects of Elizabeth's affair. Sidney addresses the private side of important public issues. The particular efficacy of Sidney's sonnet sequence is to take seriously the underlying personal matter of public policy. As Patricia Fumerton points out the Queen's most private space, her cabinet, was where she kept her sonnets and miniatures.⁵⁸ Sidney found in poetic expression a way to enter into a space nearer the Queen's person. Thus, this kind of personal counsel is self-consciously in line with the modes that a courtier would have in terms of access to his Queen. It aims at the gap that more formal counsel could not decorously serve. This reading of Sidney's sequence makes the tension of the public and private spheres more pronounced. This tension does not alloy them, and it engages the reader to make them more carefully distinguished.

When we broaden the context of Sidney's service to include his considerable writing talents, we perceive that he eventually came to address the personal aspect of Elizabeth's courtship in his sonnet sequence. The Queen's strong reactions had placed obstacles in the way of speaking to her on these sensitive matters. What is characteristic of Sidney, though not exclusive to him as a member of court, is his ability to create signs which subtly pressured the Queen to reflect upon her own behavior. Like his jewel whip, Sidney found a way to speak to the personal aspects of the Queen's desire where no clear path existed. *Astrophil and Stella* acts as a caution to the Queen, speaking directly to those years when the Queen seriously considered marriage with Alençon. Stella is caught

⁵⁸ Patricia Fumerton, *Cultural Aesthetics: Renaissance Literature and the Practice of Social Ornament* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1991) 67.

in a similar bind as the Queen was with Alençon—pitting her personal affection against her public duty. When we imagine Elizabeth as a primary audience for the sequence, the drama of the lovers engages those strongest personal feelings about the match that the Queen held: her personal attraction to Alençon. This is the same elusive element—Elizabeth’s personal desire—which no member of Elizabeth’s government dared approach. As the sequence sympathizes with Elizabeth’s personal feelings, it acts as a form of counsel meant to reassure her that the personal side of the decision she had arrived with Alençon was correct.

Sidney’s ability to reassure Elizabeth emerges not simply out of compassion and perhaps a shared experience of unrealized love, but out of a skepticism about the nature of the language of love at court. The conventions which had come to structure the dynamics of social exchange between the Queen and her courtiers were riven with strains which threatened the Queen’s personal and political sovereignty. The sequence urges the Queen toward a more profound suspicion of the language she herself promoted as a way to deal with the men in her court. Sidney used his lyric drama to expose the complex drives within the accepted Petrarchanism of court. Astrophil stands out not only as a negative example, but an example of how women must be careful readers of suitors whose language lays them bare, whether they are aware of it or not. Astrophil is one of Sidney’s best “feigned examples” who illustrates that many of the impulses behind the desire to serve can be the same as the desire to rule.

CHAPTER II

HANDMAIDEN TO THE QUEEN: MARY SIDNEY HERBERT'S TRANSLATIONS AS COUNSEL IN QUEEN ELIZABETH'S COURT

Thy utmost can but offer to hir sight
Her handmaids taske, which most her will endeeres;
and pray unto thy paines life from that light
which lively lightsome Court, and Kingdome cheeres,
What wish shee may (farre past her living Peeres
and Rivall still to Judas Faithfull King)
In more then hee and more triumphant yeares,
Sing what God doth, and doo what men may sing.

("Even now that Care" 89-96)¹

In 1599, the 41st year of Queen Elizabeth's reign, Mary Sidney Herbert prepared a manuscript copy of her and her brother's translation of the *Psalms of David* as a gift for the Queen. In the last stanza of "Even Now that Care," one of two dedicatory poems she

¹ All references to Mary Sidney Herbert's work are to *The Collected Works of Mary Sidney, the Countess of Pembroke*, 2 volumes, ed. by Margaret P. Hannay, Noel J. Kinnamon, and Michael G. Brennan (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998). Line numbers appear in parentheses.

wrote for the volume, Sidney calls her work her “handmaids taske” (l.90). As humble a stance as this appears, it is as much as what Elizabeth’s most valued servant (“Thy utmost”) may do: offer the Queen works which she makes more valuable (“endeeres”) by having wished them done. Mary Sidney Herbert closes this poem with concerns she held for the Queen throughout her reign. She hopes the “pains” of a life of rule might be lightened, that Elizabeth will do God’s will, and have “men” sing her praises. Her consolation for the Queen is combined with an insistent urging that the Queen remember God’s words and align her works accordingly.

A quarter of a century earlier, in the spring of 1575, Elizabeth had called Mary Sidney into service at court. Mary was just thirteen years old.² She joined the group of women carefully chosen by the Queen to dress, enjoyably distract, and personally accompany her majesty. Elizabeth’s reign coincided with an unusually high number of powerful women in Europe (Mary Stuart, Catherine de Medici, and Marie de Guise), and today we know that the women in the English court played significant political roles within the personal sphere of attendance on the Queen.³ However, unlike their male counterparts, the Queen’s female attendants did not act as political advisors. They were excluded from offering counsel to the Queen on matters of state. As I shall argue here, despite this exclusion, Mary Sidney Herbert took up her brother’s use of love poetry as

² For Mary Sidney Herbert’s biography, see Margaret P. Hannay, *Philip’s Phoenix: Mary Sidney, the Countess of Pembroke* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990).

³ For the character of Queen Elizabeth’s courts, see Pam Wright, “A Change in Direction: The Ramifications of a Female Household, 1558-1603,” *The English Court: from the Wars of the Roses to the Civil War*, ed. David Starkey (London: Longman, 1987); Christopher Haigh, *Elizabeth I*, 2nd ed. (London: Longman, 1998); David Starkey, “Introduction: Court history in perspective,” *The English Court from the Wars of the Roses to the Civil War* (London: Longman, 1987).

the best means by which to address her queen on political matters which involved the Queen's most personal interests. Mary Sidney Herbert builds on Sir Philip Sidney's ability to "adapt" his fictions to the "drama in hand," in the phrase of the fictional Sir Thomas More, by shaping (in her translations) other men's fictions to point out the contradictions held in the Queen's commitments as her reign entered the 1590's. While drawing on her brother's increasing reputation in letters to expand her personal influence and authority, Mary Sidney Herbert also assumed an authority from her family's long years of personal service to Tudor monarchs to present in her literary works a kind of political counsel. In 1590 she translated Philip de Mornay's *Discourse on Life and Death* and Robert Garnier's tragedy *Marc Antony*, both—I suggest—commenting on the crisis of counsel which confronted Elizabeth in her last decade as England's ruler. By pairing Mornay's Protestant treatise with Garnier's classical drama, she avoided directly stating policy to the Queen; she offered her counsel through the conversation generated between these works. Through "subtilty," this "handmaid" then represented to the Queen how personal and political conflicts threatened her political power and personal happiness.

The interplay between *The Discourse* and *Antonius*⁴ opens up complex explorations of what guides the good ruler (and courtier) and of the central tensions inherent in a female monarch's personal and public commitments (love and empire and good rule). Together these works re/affirm the need for loyal counsel from both male and female members of court. By drawing attention to the need for serious counsel, Mary Sidney Herbert threw into relief the changes to Elizabeth's government that followed the

⁴ Although Garnier's play is entitled *Marc Antony*, Mary Sidney Herbert follows Garnier's source, Plutarch's *Lives*, for her title.

deaths of four of her most trusted counselors between 1588 and 1592. When these writings were printed in 1592, the Countess may well have risked the Queen's displeasure by venturing to present in public matters of political policy she could not have presented in private to the Queen. Still, these public works are the words of a faithful servant offering her Queen serious criticism, tempered by sympathy for the strains of rule.

Since her works have come under serious study, literary critics have focused on the Countess' roles as patron, editor, and translator. While highlighting the political/Protestant affiliations in her works, they have consistently viewed Mary Sidney as primarily seeking to fulfill her brother's cultural program of supporting English writers to create works to rival those of continental writers and much earlier English writers.⁵ While critics like Margaret Hannay have pointed to the Countess' offer of counsel to a Davidic Queen in her translation of the *Psalms* and her later poems (*Philip's Phoenix*, 96-98), less attention has been paid to the Countess' earlier choice of texts and their political content.⁶ The Countess' translation of the works of Mornay and Garnier initiate her efforts to address the Queen with counsel. While I perceive along with other critics, such as Margaret Hannay, that her early translations extended the boundaries of what women could write and print without compromise, I argue that particularly with her translation of Garnier's play, the Countess addressed delicate issues of rule which involved the Queen's desires as a woman. My argument is that the Countess' aggressive appropriation of the

⁵ See for example, Hannay, 62; and Alexander Maclaren Whitherspoon, *The Influence of Robert Garnier on Elizabethan Drama* (London: Archon Press, 1968) 71.

⁶ A significant exception is Danielle Clarke, "The politics of translation and gender in the Countess of Pembroke's *Antonie*," *Translation and Literature* 6 (1997): 149-66.

Sidney family's political legacy and her brother's literary efforts signal Mary Sidney Herbert's striving to occupy the role of political servant more than active humanist scholar. With her translations she quietly, yet boldly, drew attention to the dangerous strength of the Queen's personal attachments in a shifting context of political counsel. She appealed, as well, to the Queen's desires to rule as a godly monarch. Mary Sidney Herbert's translations raised this nexus of concerns a full decade before the crises between Elizabeth and Essex erupted—even as *Astrophil and Stella* had done a decade earlier during a different set of political crises during the 1580s.

Mary Sidney Herbert's service of offering political advice ended when the reign of her Queen did. Aside from the printing of an elegy on her brother in 1595 and a poetical dialogue entitled "In Praise of Astrea" in 1602, her translation of the *Psalms* and the two dedicatory poems that preface them were her last written works. Though she lived for another 18 years after the end of Elizabeth's reign, there are, as of yet, no known manuscripts, nor printed materials by her, dating from the early Stuart period. She continued to encourage other writers—all men—to write and translate. Daniel writes of her asking him to write of matters of state. And she continued to translate the *Psalms* of which she prepared a presentation copy to give to the Queen in 1601. The visit never took place, and there is no evidence to prove whether the copy was given to the queen. During the years of King James I's rule throughout which she lived, only her niece, Lady Mary Wroth, issued works in print. Whether she encouraged her niece in writing, or advised her on her role at court, we do not know. From her letters we know she spent most of her time in these years advocating for the place of her children, William and Philip Herbert, at court. No similar writings exist to show that she ever approached the

new king, James I, in the same or similar way. With Elizabeth's passing, the role of a monarch's handmaiden fell behind the scenes in the court of a King where women served at the court of his Queen and he drew more from the men of his bedchamber.

* * *

Toward the end of a year (1586) in which she experienced the death of her father, mother, and her brother Philip, Mary Sidney Herbert retired from court for a period of mourning. When she returned again on the occasion of the Accession day festivities in November 1588, she returned to London with a flourish. The Spanish ambassador recorded her entry:

On Thursday the wife of the earl of Pembroke made a superb entrance into this city. She has been for more than a year on her estates in the country. Before her went 40 gentlemen on horseback, two by two, all very finely dressed with gold chains. Then came a coach in which was the Countess and a lady, then another coach with more ladies, and after that a litter containing the children, and four ladies on horseback. After them came 40 or 50 servants in her livery with blue cassocks.⁷

⁷ Quoted in Hannay, *Philip's Phoenix*, 59-60.

In a court in which ceremony and display signaled power and position, large processions were designed to attract attention. Robert Lacey describes how Lettice Knollys, the Queen's cousin, routinely entered London in a coach pulled by four milk-white steeds and four footmen in black velvet jackets with an entourage of thirty gentlemen, two knights, and other coaches of friends, retainers, and servants. Ten years earlier Knollys had married the Earl of Leicester—Elizabeth's long-standing favorite—to the Queen's great displeasure. Knollys' ostentation flouted the Queen's prestige, and Elizabeth took note. When she wore gowns which were finer than the Queen's, Elizabeth told her there would be "but one Queen in England," boxed her ears, and sent her from court.⁸ In addition to processions like these, Mary Sidney Herbert would have known of her father's processions into the city, licensed by his roles as Elizabeth's administrator of Ireland and Lord President of the Council of the Marches of Wales. As Mary Sidney Herbert's modern biographer Margaret Hannay relates, when Sir Henry Sidney entered court with 200 liveried men, Queen Elizabeth took notice of the measure of state in which he arrived. She is said to have remarked, "It is well enough: for he had two of the best Offices in the Kingdom."⁹

Mary Sidney Herbert's procession attested to the evolution of her identity at court. In 1588 she was 27 years old and the mother of 3 children. She had married the Earl of Pembroke, 35 years her senior, in 1577. For ten years she had directed her attention toward the Pembroke estates and her growing family. Now, as she returned to court, she signaled her status as the wife of the Earl of Pembroke and still, as ever, a

⁸ Robert Lacey, *Robert Earl of Essex* (New York: Atheneum, 1971) 30-31.

⁹ Quoted in Hannay, *Philip's Phoenix*, 20.

Sidney. She also claimed her place as the eldest surviving child of the Sidney family and, for the moment, she was the only Sidney who could maintain a position of prominence *at* court. Robert, her brother two years younger than her, had been appointed Governor of Flushing (today the Netherlands) and sent abroad following Philip Sidney's death. The size of her procession befitted her rank, her retinue suiting her station as a Countess of one of the foremost Earls of England, and she dressed her servants in the family colors of the Sidney. The richness and the presentation of her household—the number of men clad in gold chains, ladies, and servants she brought with her—indicate she intended to have a notable presence at court. Her contemporaries would have taken special note that the livery her servants wore was *not* of the Pembroke—but of the Sidney—family: blue and gold. Mary Sidney Herbert's conscious identification with her natural family bore especial significance since just two months earlier her uncle, Robert Dudley, the Earl of Leicester, the Queen's favorite and Privy Councilor, had also died.

Mary Sidney Herbert's returning procession heralded a renewed life for the legacy, power, and connections of the Sidney family at court. She choreographed her return to signal that she was both Countess of Pembroke and, even in spite of her sex, the new head of the Sidney family in Queen Elizabeth's court. She emphasized her place in two families of long-standing service to Tudor monarchs. The reassertion of these once potent connections to court was essential for a woman who, though a Countess, was in a royal court where political roles for women were sharply limited.¹⁰

¹⁰ For a related discussion of the celebration of the Countess as the primary surviving member of her family line see Hannay, *Philip's Phoenix*, 60.

After her return to court, several writers addressed Mary Sidney Herbert as a patron in the place of her brother Philip, and as a writer on her own.¹¹ As noted above, contemporary literary history casts Mary Sidney Herbert in the shadow of the legacy she promoted for her brother.¹² Modern readers underestimate how consciously the Countess established a name for herself as a woman of letters through her own work before she began to issue the works of her brother. And when she issued those works, she gave her name, and her role as his prime motivator (muse), place of prominence in the title of his major work's first printing.

The boldness of the Countess in issuing her works in print is hard to overstate. In 1590, the stationer who printed her texts, William Ponsonby, had issued a version of Philip Sidney's *Arcadia* which Fulke Greville saw through the press. The Countess would work with Ponsonby over the next 8 years to print Philip Sidney's works.¹³ But in 1592, before that project began, Ponsonby issued both texts by the Countess with her name as translator printed conspicuously on the title page. Her title, the Countess of

¹¹ Among them were Thomas Churchyard whom Steven May [*The Elizabethan Courtier Poets: The Poems and Their Contexts* (London: University of Missouri Press, 1991) 36-37,40] describes as an outsider to court, Edmund Spenser who added a sonnet to her in the second printed edition of the *Faerie Queene* in 1596, and Samuel Daniel who praised her as a patron, inspiration, and fellow poet. For a more complete discussion of dedications to the Countess see Margaret P. Hannay, Noel J. Kinnamon, and Michael G. Brennan, "Introduction," *Collected Works of Mary Sidney Herbert*, vol. 1, 12-18.

¹² Margaret Hannay has credited the Countess' careful work as the catalyst for the creation of Philip's literary legend (*Philip's Phoenix*, 60). In addition, her translation of Garnier has been characterized (and criticized) as promoting Philip's plan for a classical foundation for English drama (Victor Skretkowitz, "Mary Sidney Herbert's *Antonius*, English Philhellenism and the Protestant Cause," *Women's Writing* 6.1 (1999): 9; Witherspoon 82-83; Hannay, *Philip's Phoenix*, 61). Mornay was a friend of the Sidney's and the Countess' translation testified to her continued support of the Huguenot cause.

¹³ Michael Brennan, "William Ponsonby: Elizabethan Stationer," *AEB* 7 (1983): 94.

Pembroke appears in a font size closely matching that in which both authors' names appear (STC 18138). She offers no apology for her work as being inferior because it is a woman's. Neither does she apologize (as Margaret Tyler does with her Spanish romance) for translating a secular work, as if this were the improper domain of women. Her high social status certainly freed her from seeking patronage or protection. Her position is highlighted in contrast by the careful pleas of Edward Aggas to the Countess of Darby in his 1576 translation of Mornay's work (STC 18136). Steven May has argued that the printing of her translations suggests the "stigma of print" was not as strong against the upper classes as literary historians have previously argued.¹⁴ As a member of court, her choice of texts presents a view of the court to the reading public. Though she preserves a distance between herself and her print audience by not addressing the reader or including any dedications, she surely wanted to address out-of-court readers, particularly poets.¹⁵ The emphasis by nineteenth and twentieth-century critics on her supporting a Senecan drama over the public theaters has been discredited.¹⁶ For whatever reason she chose not to delineate her purposes. The only factor that may have delayed the Countess in printing her translations is that Ponsonby might have had to secure a

¹⁴ Steven W. May, "Tudor Aristocrats and the Mythical 'Stigma of Print,'" *Renaissance Papers* (The Southeastern Renaissance Conference, 1981): 11-12.

¹⁵ Marta Straznicky, "Closet Drama," *A Companion to Renaissance Drama*, ed. Arthur F. Kinney (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2002) 424-25.

¹⁶ See excerpts of Alice Luce (1897), T.S. Eliot (1927) and Virginia Walcott Beauchamp (1957) in *Readings in Renaissance Women's Drama: Criticism, History, and Performance 1594-1998*, ed. S.P. Cerasano and Marion Wynne-Davies (London and New York: Routledge, 1998) 18, 21-22, 27-28.

waiver to print a new translation of the *Discourse* since it had earlier been printed by John Allde (STC 18136).¹⁷

In her choice of texts to translate, the Countess subtly, yet insistently sidestepped the predominantly pious aims of other female humanists. Choosing to publish translations placed the Countess within the tradition of female humanist scholars who brought significant scholarly and religious works to literate English eyes. Yet, while she occupied the role of female humanist scholar, she undercut the typical female humanist aims: the translation of religious works for their dissemination in English. Unlike her humanist “mothers” (Margaret More Roper, Lady Ann Bacon, and Margaret Ascham), Mary Sidney Herbert used an already-translated work of a French Protestant court counselor, Philip de Mornay, to introduce to the English a secular, neo-classical play from another French Protestant, the poet and legal scholar, Robert Garnier.

When the Countess began these two translations has yet to be established; neither one exists in a holograph manuscript, and to date no copy of either has been found in manuscript to indicate the circulation of the work.¹⁸ The first printed editions (STC 18138, 11623) specifically date her completion on the last page of each text: *The Discourse* completed on “The 13 of May 1590. At Wilton.” and *Antonius* “At Ramsburie. 26 of November. 1590.” Due to the fire at Wilton in 1654 that destroyed many of Mary Sidney Herbert’s papers, we may never know the full textual history of these works in manuscript. We can speculate that once these pieces were in manuscript, the Countess could have circulated them among the members of court close to her. The

¹⁷ Conversation with Elizabeth H. Hageman.

¹⁸ Mary Sidney Herbert, *Collected Works*, vol. 1, 305-315.

widespread use of manuscript copies to circulate literary works among the aristocracy would have made this a significant avenue of publication.¹⁹ However, the lack of manuscripts or reports of once-existing manuscripts suggests her translations did not circulate widely. In contrast, her translation of the Psalms appears to have enjoyed a wide circulation. Peter Beal has indexed 17 copies or portions of manuscript copies of the Psalms in existence—and at least four of these Beal dates as late sixteenth-century copies.²⁰

The Countess' translations appeared in print before her work on her brother's texts despite early incentive for her to attend to the printing of his works. She chose to put her work into a more public forum before working on her brother's texts. The Sidney family assertively protected the printing of Philip Sidney's works. According to Michael Brennen, in 1590, Fulke Greville oversaw the printing of his unique copy of the *New Arcadia* that he had from Philip Sidney's widow Frances. The edition had headings and chapter divisions not indicated by Philip, and had been carelessly proofread. Then in 1591, Thomas Nashe printed an unauthorized version of *Astrophil and Stella* which lacked all of the songs, and sonnet number 37 of the 108-sonnet sequence. The Sidney family moved quickly to have this printing suppressed. These instances, perhaps, gave the Countess incentive to take up her brother's texts, and by 1593 she had edited the first

¹⁹ Recent studies of manuscript circulation include Arthur F. Marotti, *Manuscript, Print and the English Renaissance Lyric*, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1995); Margaret J. M. Ezell, *Social Authorship and the Advent of Print* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999); Arthur F. Marotti and Michael D. Bristol eds., *Print, Manuscript, and Performance* (Columbus, Ohio: Ohio State University Press, 2000); H. R. Woudhuysen, *Sir Philip Sidney and the Circulation of Manuscripts 1558-1640* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996).

²⁰ Peter Beal, "Philip Sidney," *Index of English Literary Manuscripts*, vol. 1 (London: Mansell, 1980) 475-76.

of Philip's texts for print (Brendan 94-96). As Margaret Hannay describes the history of the Countess' role in editing her brother's works, she combined his first version of the *Arcadia* (known today as *The Old Arcadia*) with his substantial yet partial revision of it (*The New Arcadia*) and re-issued a volume as *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia* (1593; STC 22540). As with the edition Greville had overseen through printing, the Countess emphasized her name on the volume by printing her title, "Countess of Pembroke," on the title page in a font more than twice the size in which her brother's name as author appears. She also oversaw the later reprinting of the *Arcadia* as well as the issue of several others of Philip Sidney's works over the next 5 years.²¹

* * *

When Elizabeth first called her to serve at court in 1575, the 13-year-old Mary lived among the Queen's Ladies of the Bedchamber, Gentlewomen of the Privy Chamber, Maids of Honor, and a handful of paid chamberers. Even after her marriage, she would have attended Elizabeth personally at various times of the year in the manner in which Steven May describes courtiers rotated in the Queen's service throughout the year.²² These women attended the Queen's physical person and the needs of her bedchamber. Most were Elizabeth's steady companions, and their gossip kept the Queen well informed of the talk and activities of the members of court. As Pam Wright also notes, these unfeud members of the Privy Chamber enabled the Queen to provide a

²¹ Hannay, *Philip's Phoenix*, 69-75.

²² Steven W. May, *The Elizabethan Courtier Poets*, 20.

“prestigious show” when needed for matters of ceremony and state (Wright 151). In her conduct of the business of government, they insulated her from the political issues and concerns of rule. According to Wright, they formed a “barrier or cocoon” to the struggle of factions at Court, and Elizabeth worked to keep the “cockpit” of faction which flourished within her father’s Privy Chamber outside of her own (159). As Wright describes them, the official duties performed by members of the monarch’s Privy Chamber since Henry VIII’s reign devolved to the few men who served in Elizabeth’s Privy Chamber. Sir William Cecil²³ took on the roles of both Elizabeth’s “private secretary and Secretary of State” and the neglected position of Lord Chamberlain was revitalized (Wright 153-54). Wright also describes how Elizabeth carefully chose the women who served her from a select number of noble families who were near relations. This created a long-term stability in her Privy Chamber staff which lasted throughout her reign, with daughters often serving after their mothers (158), as in the case of Mary Sidney Herbert who followed her mother Lady Mary Sidney into the Queen’s service.

Elizabeth’s efforts to keep her attendant Ladies out of politics were, as Christopher Haigh describes, her way of assuring their loyalty to herself alone (101). Shortly after her accession she is said to have forbidden the women of her Chamber from speaking on business affairs (Wright 153).²⁴ Haigh interprets this command as a sign that

²³ Elizabeth had raised him to the peerage in 1571 as Baron of Burghley. He was installed as a Knight of the Garter in 1572. See Conyers Read, *Lord Burghley and Queen Elizabeth* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1960) 33, 81.

²⁴ See also David Starkey, “Introduction: Court history in perspective,” *The English Court from the Wars of the Roses to the Civil War*, ed. David Starkey (London: Longman, 1987) 9.

she did not want her women to become pawns of those seeking place and power in court (many of these seekers were, of course, male members of their own families) (101). How strictly Elizabeth managed to keep the women of her Privy Chamber from influencing her is a matter under exploration by critics and historians today. All, however, agree that access to the Queen determined who received privilege and power (Starkey 5). And Elizabeth, who has been characterized by David Starkey as a “distant” ruler, granted access to her Privy Chamber only “sparingly and capriciously” (8-9). Thus the women who did surround Elizabeth apparently had ample opportunity to speak with the Queen and to influence who might be seen by her. Wright describes how these Ladies “could and did regularly promote the suits of individual courtiers for pardons, licenses to travel abroad, deaneries, stewardships of royal lands...” (161). But there is as yet no evidence that the women of Elizabeth’s Privy Chamber actually advised the Queen on matters of state. The position of a male courtier with the implicit potential to advise the Queen on political issues, which Philip Sidney held, was not open to Mary Sidney Herbert. In the case of her negotiations for marriage, as Wright notes, the Queen was especially vigilant in preventing her waiting women from forwarding commentary on issues in writing without her consent. In 1562 Elizabeth put two long-standing members of her household on house arrest for corresponding with the king of Sweden about her marriage plans (Wright 167).²⁵ Wright concludes that Elizabeth did not object to the raising of issues by her Privy Chamber members, but that she objected to any “independent initiative.” Elizabeth saw her Privy Chamber as “an extension of herself,” and its members were not to support policies that contradicted the Queen (Wright 168).

²⁵ They were Catherine Asteley and Dorothy Bradbelte.

Negotiating a space from which to speak to the Queen was thus no simple matter, even for a countess. Indeed, Mary Sidney Herbert must have risked the Queen's displeasure even when she printed translations of works that speak to several of the most pressing policy issues at court. To date no evidence exists to show that Mary Sidney Herbert thus invoked either a direct or a subtly construed conflict with the Queen. Indeed, Elizabeth visited Mary Sidney Herbert just two months after her translations were issued in print. The lack of reaction to the boldness of the Countess' act may be an as yet untold story of history. On the other hand, it may indicate that the Countess, for all of her boldness, was wary enough to not step too far out of the roles allowed to women to invoke censure. Her translations mark a kind of performance in which the Countess subverts the gendered roles at court by indirectly appropriating Sir Philip Sidney's use of role playing to assert a place for herself in the male-only role of counsel-giver to the Queen.

For a precedent of a subtly cloaked political appeal the Countess could rely on Elizabeth's awareness of another handmaiden who counseled King David. There are numerous instances in which the Bible speaks of a ruler's "handmaiden." One search of the Geneva Bible collected over 49 instances in which the word appears in that translation.²⁶ Among the most famous of Biblical handmaidens is the virgin Mary who in the gospel of Luke twice refers to herself as God's handmaiden.²⁷ Perhaps the most arresting story is told in 2 Samuel 14²⁸ in which King David's counselor, Joab, uses a

²⁶ <http://bible.gospelcom.net>, 10/11/01.

²⁷ *The Geneva Bible: A facsimile of the 1560 edition*, introd. Lloyd E. Berry (Madison, Wisconsin: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1969) 141-42.

handmaiden to speak to the King. David is estranged from his son Absalom. Absalom has killed his brother, Amnon, after Amnon raped their sister Tamar. Joab calls on a “subtile woman” to “faine thy selfe to mourne...And come to the King, and speake of this maner unto him (for Joab taught her whar she shulde say).” The widow tells David that she faces the loss of both her sons because her eldest boy, too, has killed his brother and “many revengers of blood” would kill her living son. The woman begs David’s protection for her son. When David grants it along with his compassion for her plight, she turns and asks David why he does not do the same for himself? David perceives the counsel offered by the woman’s words as Joab’s which the handmaiden confirms. David accepts her words and by the reflection allowed by his perceiving his own reaction through another’s guise recalls Absalom from exile. David ultimately reconciles with his son and rejoices in his return.

As Margaret Hannay has shown in her study of Mary Sidney Herbert’s dedicatory poems to her translation of the *Psalms*, the identification of Elizabeth with King David was a familiar as well as “astute” choice by the Countess.²⁹ More than simply praising her Queen, the comparison allowed Mary Sidney Herbert to urge Elizabeth to follow David’s model as a king (Hannay 165). The handmaiden remains close to the service which women were allowed in Elizabeth’s court—to forward the suits of other individuals. She approaches the king with a request for him to advise her on her situation

²⁸ In *The Geneva Bible* (27) Mary is the “servant” of God. “Handmaiden” appears in the King James Bible.

²⁹ Margaret P. Hannay, “‘Doo What Men May Sing’: Mary Sidney and the Tradition of Admonitory Dedication,” *Silent But for the Word: Tudor Women as Patrons, Translators, and Writers of Religious Works*, ed. by Margaret Patterson Hannay (Kent, Ohio: The Kent State University Press, 1985) 160.

so as to bring David around to seeing in a different light his reaction towards his son.

Seeing his dilemma dramatized before him, David is newly open to the compassion that a listener of the tale of the widow's losses feels. Having repositioned the king through this dramatic re-presentation, the handmaiden affects Joab's counsel much more persuasively than Joab's direct addresses. In this case a woman plays the role of the courtier. Yet also like an actress in a theatrical production, she dramatizes the strong maternal ties and losses she suffers, drawing David into facing a situation in which he had resolved against the pleas of sympathy for his son from his people and counselors.

Like David's handmaiden, Mary Sidney Herbert's texts offer no ordinary counsel.³⁰ Instead, her translations placed before the Queen a way to see into the complexity of political issues before her from multiple perspectives. Like Philip Sidney who used a sonnet sequence to enter a space where his presence and speech were forbidden so to raise matters of seemingly un-broachable policy, Mary Sidney Herbert stepped beyond her service in what we would now call the Queen's personal space—where she was forbidden significant speech on state policy—into the public realm where she could project a voice to speak on matters of political magnitude. In this form of counsel the focus is on how these issues push and pull across the public and private domains out of which royal policy was set. They reposition the Queen by opening her to the crossing of the public and private interests in her making of policy, and urge her not to conclusions, but to deeper reflections on what she may do. Mary Sidney Herbert's translation of Mornay and Garnier's texts allows her to enact words as David's

³⁰ My argument builds off of Margaret Hannay's point that the Countess' translation of one of Mornay's works offered support to the Protestant alliance at court and through translation that she "displaced her own criticisms of the court." (*Philip's Phoenix*, 62).

handmaiden does to engage her monarch's private as well as public self. Like David's handmaiden who performs the role Sidney ascribed to the courtier in his *Defense*—making use of fictions to serve a monarch—the Countess invests herself with a degree of the male courtier's agency in bringing forward important issues. However, like Joab's handmaiden, she uses the words of a high counselor to speak to her king. For in 1592 Mornay was a close counselor to the French King Henry IV. Garnier was a French civil servant, a judge. Mary Sidney Herbert uses Garnier's text to bring before the Queen the drama of another Queen who measures her love for a prince against the good of the state and that state's imperial drives.

Mary Sidney Herbert's pairing of these translations (in print as well as two years earlier in translating them) suggests that she was especially interested in situations in which counsel was offered and received particularly where the personal and the public roles of the monarch intersected. She also questioned her monarch's awareness of the ultimate ends of her rule. Through these translations, Mary Sidney Herbert explored: 1) the effect a monarch's awareness of her mortality has upon royal rule; 2) the cultural contradictions which strong personal commitments—especially erotic love—create for a female monarch; and 3) the possibility of women in the position of counselors. Especially intriguing about Mary Sidney Herbert's translations is how they alternately deny and affirm the possibility of counseling a monarch. Her pairing of texts questions the nature of good service. In the *Discourse* Mornay concludes that even with the best intentions service to a king will ultimately fail. For Mornay the bottom line is that both monarch and courtier ultimately must work to “serve God” (948).³¹ In contrast, *Antonius*

³¹ Philippe du Plessis-Mornay, “Discours de la Vie et de la Mort,” ed. Mario Richter (Milano: Editrice Vita e Pensiero, 1964). All parenthetical references are to line numbers.

presents an array of interchanges between counselors/servants and their monarchs as if to display the varieties of discourse which may occur between them. The play dramatizes three distinct rulers—Antony, Caesar, and Cleopatra—and their servants engaged in intense exchanges in which decisions of state policy are explored on both public and personal levels.

Mornay's treatise (1576) and Garnier's play (1585) share a common temperament of dark brooding on the nature of existence. Both portray suffering in human life as a part of an eternal cycle. In the first two-thirds of his 960 lines, Mornay follows the stages of life from infancy, youth, manhood, and old age, to death. He is addressing a disoriented reader who has confused health and disease. It is to correct the reader's vision that Mornay's speaker works: "We looke, but through false spectacles; we have eyes but overgrown with pearles; we thinke we can see, but it is in a dreame, wherein we see nothing but deceit" (792-94). Mornay concludes that a meaningful life *in* the world, like the service that a courtier offers his king, is *impossible*. Despite these kinds of obstructions, Mornay does not advocate despair. He urges his masculine reader to refocus his vision and be healed; to see death at the heart of all efforts to live. For Mornay death is the cure for life. In *Antonius* the Choruses in Acts 1 and 2 assert the same sense of struggle and loss as endemic to the human condition that undergirds Mornay's treatise. The Chorus in Act 1 sees human life enslaved to woe. "Mishapps" (169), and "woes which beare no dates" (171) extend from those in the "low world" (167) to those whose "misereries" (185) "cling even to the crowne" (187). In Act 2, the Chorus ends with the complaint that their woes go beyond all those who have suffered before: "Our plaints no limits stay, / Nor more then doo our woes: / Both infinitely straie / And

neither measure knowes” (386-89). Garnier depicts Anthony and Cleopatra’s suicides, an embrace of death Mornay strictly forbids, as attempts to secure their honor and integrity at the end of their lives.

Mornay shares with the Neo-Platonists a distrust of passions which place man on the path of pleasures and which assure his “bondage.” “Like an unclean spirit possessing him,” a man’s passions “cast him now into the water, now into the fire; sometimes carries him cleane over a rocke, and sometime flings him headlong to the bottome” (97-100). Mornay’s invective against pleasure (73-100) anticipates Antony and Lucillus’ condemnation of pleasure in Act 4 of *Antonius*. But, in contrast to Neo-Platonists, Mornay finds no saving grace in the exercise of reason. Indeed, Mornay concludes that through his reason man is in continual conflict—or civil war—with himself. The man who takes reason as his guide “must resolve to fight in every part of the field” (102-3). In resisting his passions he is so wearied “so bruised and broken, that either he is upon the point to yield himselfe, or content to dye....” (125-27).

As he writes, Mornay’s work folds in on itself, beginning as a general discourse relevant to any interested person and eventually addressing the specific concerns of members of royal courts. As he follows the stages of a man’s life, he increasingly narrows his focus to “those which are best and most precisely brought up” (61) and “such as are esteemed the wisest, and most happie in conceit of the world” (135-36). He takes up the two pleasures that threaten this class the most: avarice and ambition. Avarice is open to all men who cannot be persuaded that “mortall men have any other good in this world, but that which is mortal (195). Yet ambition, a “greediness of honour,” occupies

only the “greatest persons” (215). Having attained these heights, Mornay then addresses courtiers and kings alike.

Like a number of critics, Margaret Hannay reads Mornay’s discussion of the courtier’s failure as a severe critique of court with which Mary Sidney Herbert sides (*Philip’s Phoenix*, 62). Yet, while critical of both kings and courtiers, the *Discourse* presents a sympathetic view of the constant, wearying struggle fought by Princes and their advisors. Mornay judges kings “Crowned...in deede, but with a crowne of thornes” (353-54). He produces a catalogue of great kings who were, despite their success, greatly unhappy in their lives (362-415). And when he finds that there may have been “in former ages” men of “sinceritie” (436), he voices the statement in the form of a well-worn nostalgia.

While Mornay’s courtier is “loaden with fetters” like the prisoner, he wears them not on his body, but in his “mind” (305; 307). Mornay’s often caustic estimation of the courtier is never far from his depiction of the king. Even as a prince’s favorite is “as the Lions keeper,” exhibiting “long patience,” he must endure “a thousand injuries” and “a thousand disgraces” to make the king like “a fierce Lion familiar” (240-48). The lion is among the noblest beasts. But Mornay amplifies the prince’s bestial appetites when he depicts the king toying with his favorites more as a cat with a mouse. “[The king] makes it his pastime...to cast him downe at an instant: when he hath filled him with all wealth, he wrings him after as a sponge” (249-52). These unflattering acts reflect the king’s self-absorbed love for himself in which he thinks “every one made, but to serve, and please him” (252-53). They lead moreover to an inward torture in which the king is “no better” than a slave. They “feare” and “distrust” those they have gathered around them. Within

they cultivate a paranoia which haunts them wherever they are: "Alone they looke behinde them; in company they have an eye on every side of them. They drinke in gould and silver; but in those, not in earth or glasse is poison prepared and dronke" (293-95).

Not only does Mary Sidney Herbert's choice of texts hold strong words for those who rule and serve, but it also conveys all the spirit and tone of a sermon demanding humility from kings. Mornay crafts a very assured speaker for this piece, one who admits of no doubts. The speaker insistently asks questions of the reader. His repeated questionings bring the reader in closer and cut off any wiggle room for slipping outside of his argument. His catalogue of kings offers consolation, but it also describes the fate of men who have overstepped themselves. According to the speaker, these men have tempted God who has struck back at them:

They [kings] have no end nor limit, till God laughing at their vaine purposes,
when they thinke themselves at the last step, thunderstrieth all this presumption,
breaking in shivers their scepters in their hands, and oftentimes intrapping them in
their owne crownes. (411-15)

Mary Sidney Herbert translated a text, in all but form, which dares to preach to kings. Mornay concluded his work with "Amen" (1032)³² though Mary Sidney Herbert left this out of her translation.

Mornay paints a picture of courtier and king caught in a vicious circle in which competing interests embattle all good intentions:

³² Edward Aggas also retained the closing "amen" in his translation.

For deale you in affayres of estate in these times, either you shall do well, or you shall do ill. If ill, you have God for your enemy, and your owne conscience for a perpetually tormenting executioner. If well, you have men for your enemies, and of men the greatest: whose envie and malice will spie you out, and whose crueltie and tyrannie will evermore threaten you. Please the people you please a beast: and pleasing such, ought to be displeasing to your selfe. Please your selfe, you displease God: please, him, you incurr a thousand dangers in the world, with purchase of a thousand displeasures. (438-47)

And yet, were these external “warres and troubles” to end, courtier and king would be no less free of the skirmishes of “greater civill warre within our selves” (499). For Mornay there is no worldly answer to the questions of how best to rule and to advise those who rule. Mornay thus writes in the tradition of humanist thought reaching back to Book 1 of Thomas More’s *Utopia* in which Raphael Hythloday and the character of Thomas More openly debate the possibility of political service and its values. Unlike Hythloday, Mornay attributes this failure not to the corruption of government or politics, but to the essential nature of the world. The ultimate cause of this dilemma between courtier and king is simply that the world (which we are in and is equally within us) (514) is a “continual combat” (541).

While the body of Mornay’s work is filled with a sense of ceaseless struggle, his ending and opening portray life as a constant reaffirmation of faith. On the first page of

his treatise, he presents this world as a “Penelope’s web” in which we are constantly “doing and undoing” (11). The allusion is to the faithful wife of Odysseus who staved off having to choose to marry one of her importunous suitors by weaving a cloth which she unwove again at night. The end of her weaving was the sign that she would have to choose, and Penelope kept herself free from choosing for twenty years. Mornay’s reference casts life in female terms as a woman’s work of weaving, even as it suggests a darker and more mysterious end to that work in referring to her activity as weaving a “web.” While he creates a sense of incessant work through the repetition of words (“doing and undoing”), he also invokes the image of the faithful attendance of a wife engaged in the constant work of loyal service even when her lord has been long absent. In his ending Mornay drives home that man must look towards death with hope and not fear. Among the obstacles to a fuller embrace of death are man’s attachment to the domestic, to “thy houses and gardens” (876), which men lament to lose. Mornay’s image of life as a Penelope’s web subtly genders all work in life as female. The image of life as given a sense of circularity with a long delay in rewards contrasts with Mornay’s later more violent images of life as a constant war, a scenario where suffering is much greater. The image allows Mornay to suggest that women’s work in the world shoulders a sense of the duties of faith and that his words apply to women as well as men.

Whereas Mornay portrays courtier and king most often at a metaphysical impasse, Garnier’s play focuses on three different princes’ interactions with their advisors. The play presents a contrast of scenes on the nature of counsel in which the reader witnesses exchanges between Antony and his one loyal servant, Lucillus (Act 3); Caesar and Agrippa (Act 4); and Cleopatra and her serving women (Acts 2 and 5). Far from siding

with Mornay's conclusion that the struggle inherent in life can only lead to a renunciation of it, Garnier's play insists that acts of counsel are scrutable and reveal significant aspects of rule and culture.

The exchange in Act 3 between Antony and his last loyal servant, Lucillus, depicts the service of counsel as a rendering of loyalty and consolation. The loyalty of a comrade in arms is a keynote in Lucillus' character. His soldierly loyalty earns him a relationship of mutual respect with Antony. Antony recounts how Lucillus earned this bond when he offered his life for Brutus, who was at the time Antony's enemy. Antony spared Lucillus, and Brutus' soldier became Antony's ally. Now nearing the end of his own fortune, Antony speaks of Lucillus as his "sole comfort...only trust...only hope" (875-76). He is the one servant left to the now-fallen monarch—all others have "betraide" him. So great is the bond between Antony and his servant that Antony sees Lucillus' care as "never changing" in the face of "fortunes blast" (986). While Garnier clearly refers to Antony's bond with Lucillus as "*amitie*" in contrast to the "*amour*" he feels for Cleopatra, Mary Sidney emphasizes the strength of this bond when she translates Garnier's praise of Lucillus' "*amitie*" as "love" and not mere friendship. In her translation, Mary Sidney Herbert renders Antony's affection for Lucillus with the same emotion he bears Cleopatra. To the English reader, the bond of love between two friends—here a monarch and his servant—shares in the powerful affection between lovers. Indeed, in Antony's speech his love for a male comrade at times rises above that which he estimates Cleopatra's love for him. Whereas Antony feels Lucillus' loyalty standing as a "tower / In holy love" (985-86), he fears that Cleopatra plans to "transport / My flame, her love, more deare then life to me" (891-92) to Caesar.

Master and servant share a strongly-felt bond; however, the interaction between Antony and Lucillus shows that Lucillus cannot sympathize with Antony to engage in a significant level of counsel. Lucillus' attempts to offer Antony counsel or consolation succeed only when Antony turns away from the private terms of personal passion which Lucillus does not feel, and both master and servant speak of private emotions on a public mytho-heroic level. Lucillus is able to console Antony by defending Cleopatra's constancy. He insists that Cleopatra has stood Antony's tests. Her constancy Lucillus attributes to her nobility: "Too high a heart she beares, / Too Princelie thoughts" to give her love to Caesar (893-94). Though Antony fears to believe in this, he tells Lucillus more fully of his devotion to Cleopatra. He describes his love as a feverish sickness, but he assures Lucillus that he would rather Caesar take everything from him (all honor, all conquest, his goods, as well as his sons) so long as he not take Cleopatra. Lucillus cannot accept Antony's resignation of agency to a sickness in which the sufferer "can not rule himselfe" (939). As a soldier who had fought beside Antony, Lucillus urges him to bring his sense of once public greatness to bear against "this vaine affection" (944) which has crippled him. Lucillus' reproof is slight, but it shows with certainty that he cannot understand Antony's great passion. Lucillus can do no better in representing Antony's torment than to reduce it to a nearly absurd understatement. For Lucillus, the passionate fury that burns Antony earns the generic term of "affection," though in Garnier's original it is the same word, "amitie,"³³ used by Antony to describe his strong friendship for Lucillus. That it is "vaine" (also "vaine" in Garnier's original) plays upon the idea that it

³³ Robert Garnier, *Two Tragedies: Hippolyte and Marc Antonie*, eds. Christine M. Hill and Mary G. Morrison (London: The Athlone Press, 1975) 135, line 933.

is certainly fruitless as well as gestures toward Antony's indulging in a selfish vanity. After twenty lines in which Antony reaffirms that he loves Cleopatra despite his torment and his now infamous defeat, Lucillus presses Antony to consider that if what he has achieved will not counter love's power than the great military character he once possessed should. Some of Lucillus' inability to perceive the inward private torments of Antony seem mirrored in his later misreading of Caesar's character when he argues that Caesar will have no reason to call for Antony's death. Yet, just as surely as he misreads Caesar, Lucillus is deaf to Antony's personal anguish.

Instead, Lucillus can offer consolation to his commander only when his concerns pertain to some form of the public realm—one that is typically male centered. Lucillus attributes Antony's ultimate downfall at Actium to the work of fortune whose powers "rule all, do all, have all things fast enchained / Unto the circle of hir turning wheele" (1135-36). Yet Antony, who had in the opening speech of the play ascribed his defeat to the "cruell Heav'ns" (1), to his "cruell, traitres" (18), and to Caesar whom "fortune and the Gods" had befriended (40), here turns aside Lucillus' affirmation of his earlier complaints and takes up another cause which Lucillus can join him in sympathy: Pleasure. Antony now excoriates his inner feeling as the corruption imposed by an outward force which with personified abandon wrecks all who give into its temptations. What he had earlier spoken of an inward torment and disease, Antony now shapes in the form of a servant: pleasure turns the "souldier" into a "Chamberer, / Carles of vertue, careles of all praise" (1164-65).

In this mode of discourse in which private emotions are manifest in a public sphere, Lucillus can join Antony. In this speech when Antony again complains that he

has lost all personal agency ["So I me lost" (169)], he alludes to the corrupting power of Ceres who turns Odysseus' soldiers into pigs. Like these decrepit men, Antony describes himself "as the fatted swine in filthy mire / With glutton heart I wallow'd in delights, / All thought of honor trodden under foot" (1166-68). The heroic martial myth resonates with Lucillus who expounds eloquently for twenty-five lines on Pleasure's "hurtfull workes" (1209). In his next twenty-five lines Lucillus affirms Pleasure's power to subdue those who subdue, such as the "Demy-gods the olde world knew" (1119). For proof, Lucillus recounts the story of the great Hercules who also became "captive" to his "passion" (1228). That great hero could no more resist "Pleasure's" powers as he too forfeited all of his public duties and famed prowess to an effeminized "base unseemlie service" (1232) in which he earned his love by spinning wool "in maides attire" (1234). Antony bitterly agrees with Lucillus' comparison, and he renounces all of his claim to Hercules' great feats of male heroism. He is like his great ancestor only in his base captivity.

The scene ends as Antony and Lucillus' language of mythic-heroic struggle redeems some of Antony's stature and reestablishes a space for Lucillus to meet Antony in consolation. Turning the torments of an inward emotion into the sufferings imposed by an outward power reconnects Antony with Lucillus and allows the once great captain to feel the warmth of his ever-loyal servant's presence. By objectifying a subjective emotion, Antony gives his fellow soldier and friend a way to empathize with his pain. The mytho-heroic language gives both characters a sense of continuity with a long and much revered tradition of heroic struggle. Though it feels like a more stylized and somewhat sterilized version of Antony's earlier personal laments, this language

repositions Antony's grave sorrow and defeat out of the suffering of a solitary lover and into a community of men poisoned by their enemies. Lucillus could argue for a greater truth in this version of Antony's loss because he connects and is connected to the sufferings of his captain and other great soldiers through it. The reader is left to wonder how much Antony's attempt to move to a more personal exploration of his torments is stymied by his still thriving desire for human connection. The Antony of this second speech could be moving toward a clearer sense of self-responsibility for his feelings and actions. Yet, affirming his powerful feelings for his last loyal servant gives Antony some measure of outward consolation. At the end of the scene, Lucillus weeps for Antony in sympathetic acceptance of his resolve to find "succor" in a "glorious death" (1255). Though he may not have found a language which reconciles his great passion to his sacrifice of great deeds and renown, Antony walks off stage with Lucillus in shared sorrow and agreement.

The exchange between Caesar and his general Agrippa in the next act reverses the dynamic of ruptured connection moving to agreement seen between the great captain and his soldier. The most significant effect of this reversal is to throw Caesar's pride, narrowness, and politic cruelty into relief against the increasingly humbled Antony. The exchange between Caesar and Agrippa explores only matters of public discourse, but it erupts over an issue of moral action which draws into question the integrity of Caesar's rule.

For four pages the conversation between Caesar and his famed general Agrippa is conducted in unstrained agreement. Both men see Antony as brought low by his "presumptuouse pride" (1412) and his "Voluptuouse care of fonde and foolish love"

(1413). Both agree that by giving away lands to the Egyptian Queen and his sons by her he has robbed “his owne cuntrye of her due” (1453). But when Agrippa applauds the rule of one man over many as like the heavens, Caesar presses for the murder of Antony and any other challengers, in order to assure his own solitary place. Moving out of the first person which was so resonant in Caesar’s first speech of triumph in this act, Caesar now appeals to Agrippa in the first person plural—insisting that “*We* must with blood marke this *our* victorie” (1513); (emphasis added); Agrippa parries with his dislike of the plan, and the two battle out their stances in an extended stichomythia. Caesar argues that force and fear are the best means by which to rule a people, while Agrippa counters that it is the people’s love which creates the strongest hold and defense of power. Their contention over the best path of action is stopped, however, before it begins in earnest when Directus arrives to tell the story of Antony’s death. Agrippa had just returned to his argument that the gods granted Caesar this victory to bring unity to Rome’s rule and that he cannot “defile” or ‘abuse’ it with cruelty (1542-43). The abrupt conclusion of this exchange leaves Caesar’s unscrupulous desire to set himself above all others even more pronounced. As Caesar falsely laments Antony’s death, Agrippa voices an honest disdain for the duplicity of Caesar’s feelings: “Me seemes your self your glory do envie” (1706).

In this interchange the narrowness of mind revealed is the master’s—not his servant’s. Agrippa is unquestionably Caesar’s ally, in a position to give him close and seasoned counsel, but his refusal to see Antony’s murder as good policy leads Caesar to lay bare his philosophy of rule. For Caesar fear and hate are tools of power; nourishing and breeding them assures his rule. An Elizabethan reader would have felt in Agrippa’s counter-claims echoes of Elizabeth’s avowed policy of governing with the love of the

people. Against Agrippa's resistance, Caesar unveils himself to be a tyrant—holding on to power at any cost. Antony's earlier description of Caesar as corrupt and brutal (1113-24) sounds less like the spite of defeat and more like an accurate assessment of Caesar's unscrupulous tactics. Garnier cuts short Agrippa's efforts to refute Caesar's position leaving any potential shift in Caesar's view unexplored. Instead, we're left to see Caesar's lament for Antony's death as patent hypocrisy. In the midst of his grief, Caesar is quick to respond to Agrippa's warning that Cleopatra may destroy more treasures. In this scene Agrippa's counsel casts a shadow over Caesar's integrity—exposing his rapacious and duplicitous nature. As this scene ends it is hard to imagine how our estimate of Caesar could fall lower.

Strongly contrasting examples of counsel rendered and received in this play occur between Cleopatra and her serving women. These exchanges in Acts 2 and 5 frame the scenes of Antony and Lucillus' and Caesar and Agrippa's interactions. Cleopatra and her serving women are, with Antony, the only characters who appear twice in the play (excluding Antony's silent, dying presence in Act 5). In Act 2 Cleopatra and her women are sharply separated in their views of what action Cleopatra should take. By the end of the act, her women capitulate to Cleopatra out of their loyalty toward her. Unable to change her mind, they share fully in her sorrows and choose to die with her. Yet, before they arrive at their acceptance Cleopatra's women refuse to let their Queen take her life uncontested. Whether her women typically offer her their views, this moment of crisis draws out their vehement concerns; each, in turn, argues with their Queen.

These interchanges work within a wholly new dynamic between public and private interests. In conjunction with Antony and Lucillus' exchange, they highlight how

Caesar and Agrippa never leave the public realm—Caesar resists all ethical concerns that might call a public morality or a private one into question. In contrast, Antony casts his personal desires in the role of daemon, having thrown his identity in the public realm into chaos. By contrast Cleopatra literally weds herself to her personal desires and raises them above any other concerns for herself as a woman or ruler. While the fury of love which has struck both Antony and Cleopatra is an agonizing turmoil for Antony, it is an emotion around which Cleopatra consolidates her self-identity.

In Act 2 Cleopatra's serving women, Eras and Charmion, attempt to persuade her to change her design with counter-arguments. Unlike Lucillus who offers Antony only a mild reproof, both women proffer their Queen ardent appeals to change her course of action. Strikingly, though, Eras and Charmion share in the same failure as Lucillus to persuade. In both instances, these servants who would counsel their princes fail because they never embrace the terms which each monarch uses to describe and ground their experience. Both Eras and Charmion are more adept at appeals which intersect with Cleopatra's concerns, but at each turn Cleopatra co-opts their arguments or side steps them. Neither Eras nor Charmion can mount a serious refutation of Cleopatra's desires because neither will acknowledge the potently radical redefinition of self which their Queen presents.

Like Lucillus, Eras and Charmion are hard pressed to speak on any terms which approximate the personal experience of their prince. They use terms which resonate with personal meanings, however, each weighing the action of those personal virtues in the public realm. Eras begins by invoking the language of beauty to assure Cleopatra that she still holds the power—that "force of lovely face" (436)—to change the result of her

present “mishapps” (435). Cleopatra grants Eras’ claim to the power which her physical beauty affords her, but she redirects Eras’ argument by showing that it was her beauty which has wrought her personal downfall, and Antony’s: “My face too lovely caus’d my wretched case. / My face hath so entrap’d, so cast us downe, / That for his conquest *Caesar* may it thanke” (437-39). Beauty does not wield a power to free her, but to tie others to her. She claims to be the “sole cause” of Antony’s overthrow because Antony’s soul was “enchain’d” (447) to her by a love which “Was with my beautie fir’d” (442-43). And though her servants lament her decision, Cleopatra asserts that her beauty now serves only her devotion to Antony. She will not use her beauty again for political measures.

Charmion takes up where Eras falls silent and counters that Cleopatra’s fate has not relied on her actions, but has been her destiny—decided by the gods. In the exchange that follows Cleopatra and Charmion square off on opposite ends of this argument. Charmion offers a lengthy appeal (50 lines) to Cleopatra to save herself from the storm that has caused Antony’s wrack. Cleopatra reframes Charmion’s closing metaphor of storm and wrack in an impassioned embrace of the tempest as testimony to her loyalty to Antony:

... Soner shining light

Shall leave the daie, and darknes leave the night:

Sooner moist currents of tempestuous seas

Shall wave in heaven, and the nightlie troopes

Of starres shall shine within the foming waves,

Then I thee, *Antonie*, Leave in depe distres

(540-45)

Cleopatra's sacrifice resonates in apocalyptic heroic terms rooted in her deepest sense of self. It is at this point that Charmion will not, or can not, stay with her Queen's argument and that the first of two profound gaps appear in their exchange. Charmion asserts that Cleopatra's "love nought mitigates [Antony's] paine" (558), to which Cleopatra counters "Without this love I should be inhumaine" (559). This is an extraordinary claim. Without recognizing its depths, Charmion resorts immediately to countering that suicide is "inhumaine" (560). Cleopatra reframes the seeking of death as a searching for mercy from suffering—"Not inhumaine who miseries eschues" (561). If the double negative indicates any slippage in Cleopatra's assurance, Charmion cannot detect it. Instead, she moves the argument jarringly back out into other realms of duty—"Live for your sonnes" (562)—and condemns Cleopatra as a "Hardhearted mother" (563). A similar leap occurs some thirty lines later when Charmion asserts that "Our first affection to our self is due" (594) to which Cleopatra replies "He is my selfe" (595). Again, few lovers [in any age] take the claims of love so far. Yet, Charmion does not seem to hear this second significant claim. She continues on as if Cleopatra had never spoken: "Next it extends unto/ Our children, frends, and to our countrie soile" (595-96). Only grudgingly is Charmion willing to acknowledge that her list of attachments lacks the realm of marriage and duty to a husband—"And you for some respect of wivelie love, / (Albee scarce wivelie)" (597-98). Charmion's parenthesis refers to Antony's official marriage to Caesar's sister Octavia and reveals that she cannot take Cleopatra's claim to

be Antony's wife seriously. Implicit in Charmion's view is the idea that Cleopatra has been sexually promiscuous with Antony and might be most accurately called his mistress.

Charmion's unwillingness, or inability, to take seriously Cleopatra's passion for Antony stymies the possibility of an effective exchange. It is as if both Eras and Charmion believe that appeals to Cleopatra's sense of public duties will overturn the emphasis she is laying on her personal affections. Charmion in particular cannot address the profound claims of identity which Cleopatra boldly asserts lies in love's power. Their interchange illustrates repeatedly how a counselor fails her prince when she refuses to engage her in the personal terms upon which she has founded her decision. By avoiding or trying to wish away the claims which strong personal attachments make on a monarch, merely political counsel fails to acknowledge key issues—how strong emotional commitments profoundly impact a prince's actions.

Cleopatra's women certainly do not fail her for lacking in loyalty or love for their queen. In this sense, their active and forthright exchange is noteworthy. The intensity and earnestness of her servants' desires to keep her alive is powerful testimony to their loyalty and love for her. Garnier named them "*Femmes d'honneur de Cleopatre*" (108). Mary Sidney Herbert gives a mild translation of this as "*Cleopatras women*" ("*The Argument*" 1.41). Both versions testify to the close bond which Cleopatra shares with her waiting women. Throughout both Acts 2 and 5 Cleopatra calls them her "companions" (2005), her "good friends" (656), and most often, as well as most emphatically, her "sisters."³⁴ Cleopatra draws on this familial term and the close affection it implies once

³⁴ In these instances Garnier used the words "compagnes" (649, 1982), and "mes soeurs" (669, 1883).

she has determined that she will not be persuaded to change her mind. Where she is to die, she asks them, her “deare sisters,” to remember her with flowers, thoughts, and tears. She urges them to “Live, sisters, live...” (676).³⁵ But the greater testimony is left to Eras and Charmion who vow not to live past Cleopatra’s death—“And thinke you Madame, we from you will part?” (666). This self-sacrifice is mirrored by Antony’s servant Eros, who kills himself rather than use his sword to kill his general (4.1616-19). In the last Act Eras and Charmion fear Cleopatra will die without a chance to say goodbye. More than Lucillus or Eros, Cleopatra’s women step across the gap in meaning which has opened between them and their queen. Cleopatra retains her forms of self-expression and it is her servants who move across the gulf that separates them in mind to join her in her actions.

In each of the scenes of counsel within this play, there is a doubled movement. Overall, the play shows a range of ways in which the personal and public realms commingle. In each scene, the clash between the public and the personal shows that the tension between the two realms *always* exists—whether it appears in the seeming erasure of the personal for terms which are always public as with Caesar; or whether the personal creates chaos in both private and public realms as it does for Antony; or whether the personal overrides all other concerns as with Cleopatra. On the other hand, they also show that there is commonly a gap between the modes of expression in which the prince and his counselors speak. Antony cannot explain his attachments. He ends by lamenting

³⁵ The suggestion of a familial connection between Cleopatra and her serving women is less evident in Shakespeare’s rendering of these characters. For an interesting discussion of the similarities of Elizabeth’s waiting women and Shakespeare’s staged version see Elizabeth A. Brown, “Companion Me with My Mistress’: Cleopatra, Elizabeth I, and Their Waiting Women,” *Maids and Mistresses, Cousins and Queens: Women’s Alliances in Early Modern England*, eds. Susan Frye and Karen Robertson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999) 135-45.

his weakness as a part of a long history of heroic failures. He seeks his own death as a last “couragious act” to wash away the “spotts” of his “wanton loves” (1252-54). His loyal servant Lucillus cannot speak to so great a disorder. Nor can he conceive of so great a loss of agency for a man who has been so great a commander. Cleopatra embraces her passionate attachments. Ultimately, she attunes herself to the ideal of one female virtue—constancy—and makes this her “fix’d intent” (657). Neither Eras nor Charmion address Cleopatra’s attachment at its root. Where prince and counselors never meet, persuasion never occurs. This gap, the play implicitly illustrates, constitutes an unstated crisis of its own.

Given this emphasis in Garnier’s play, it is not surprising that Mary Sidney Herbert chose to translate it. The play illustrates that strong and loyal counselors are common. Yet, when issues of rule move between the realms of the personal and the public a counselor’s challenge is far greater than simply solid reasoning. The play does not strive to teach the resignation of passionate attachments, (indeed, Cleopatra dies with overtones of female heroism as she expires with sorrow on Antony’s lips) as it elucidates that it is folly to ignore the powerful impact these attachments have on a prince’s actions as governor. Instead, it sets out so clearly to counselors engaged in the balancing game of policy, how preserving a prince’s sense of personal integrity is as vital as sounding the commitments in which that integrity is grounded.

Presented during the reign of a female monarch, the play casts doubt on whether the legal ideal of the Queen’s two bodies is a concept which could be applied within the chambers at court. As we saw in the first chapter, during her courtship with the Duc d’Alencon, Elizabeth’s counselors often met with the same failure. They could not find a

mode of expression to speak *with* the Queen regarding the constraints, demands, and contradictions of the public and private roles she played. In translating Garnier's text, the Countess could empathize with the contradictions in which Queen Elizabeth as a female ruler lived. She shows the importance of addressing the Queen's passionate attachments in the terms of those attachments.

* * *

The year Mary Sidney Herbert printed her translations (1592) Elizabeth was 59 years old, yet she was still a prince of strong personal passions. The Elizabeth who had vigorously flirted with the French Duke twelve years earlier was within six months of accepting her favorite, the 26 year old 2nd Earl of Essex onto her Privy Council (Lacey 102). The brash hero of Cadiz, Robert Devereux had Elizabeth's personal and an increasing amount of her political attention. In 1593 the Earl settled into Elizabeth's government, foregoing his earlier far-flung adventures, and began a consolidation of his influence at court.³⁶ In 1590 or 1592, few in England could have foreseen where the Earl's ambitions would lead him. His eventual revolt against the Queen's government in 1601 has been described elsewhere in detail. Reflecting back on this time of upheaval Fulke Greville commented that the publishing of a play on Antony and Cleopatra would have been much too sensitive for the times.³⁷ Modern critics seem as willing to

³⁶ Wallace T. MacCaffrey, *Elizabeth I: War and Politics, 1588-1603* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1992) 473.

³⁷ Geoffrey Bullough, ed. *Narrative and Dramatic Sources of Shakespeare Vol.5, The Roman Plays* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1966) 216-17.

characterize the Countess' translation as a prescient cautionary tale on the downfalls of passionate love aligned with Elizabeth's favoring of the Earl of Essex as her later contemporaries were. Yet Greville's remark appeared well after the Countess' first printing of *Antonius* with Mornay's text (1592) and a second printing in an edition of its own (1595). The Countess' prescience is easier to gauge in hindsight nearly a decade later, but it seems more likely that she could not foresee the future as well as she could read the past and know the character of the Queen for whom she was in her sixteenth year of service.

Elizabeth's last serious possible personal commitment ended in 1582 with the end of her courtship with the Duc d'Alencon after which marriage for the Queen was no longer considered. Still, Elizabeth's willingness to flirt with romantic attachments (established with Robert Dudley at the outset of her reign) did not abate in the last years of it. Her attentions to the Earl of Essex had by 1592 the same intensity and dynamism as her previous courtships. After his exploits in France and at Cadiz, Essex was regarded popularly as a great English hero. He had inherited the heroic legacy of Sir Philip Sidney. At his death, Sidney bequeathed to Essex his sword, and four years later (1590), Essex married Philip Sidney's widow, Frances Walsingham. By 1592 the Earl of Essex had both the charisma and stature of an English Antony. And the Queen was much taken with him. At court, the Queen's penchant for passionate attachments which colored her political decision making would have been an important and extremely delicate topic for the Countess of Pembroke to raise before her sovereign.

In translating Garnier's play, Mary Sidney Herbert was not, however, offering a portrait of the English court's potential political course. Antony and Cleopatra's choices

had not been Queen Elizabeth's and were not likely to be. Her translation, however, does put into public circulation one view of the inner workings of self-sacrifice at the cost of great political power. There is distinctly more of an offer of consolation than caution in this tragedy. Antony and Cleopatra's passion is a more potent portrayal of a love Elizabeth might have imagined than ever lived. Antony is old. He laments his "gray hayres" (1069) and his "feeble age" (1063) next to Caesar's prime. Cleopatra is less of a political manipulator than she is in Plutarch's version and much more the ardent lover. She claims that a "burning jealousie" of Antony's returning to Octavia possessed her to follow him into battle (470-73). Garnier's play in Mary Sidney Herbert's hands offers a version of what an uncompromised personal integrity might look like, and its implications—especially for a female ruler. The play ends on a note of unresolved tension between the heroic commitments of passionate love and the conflict with the public good these commitments cause.

At the root of this conflict is the shaping power of love. In this play love is a force as great as, or perhaps even greater than, the gods and fortune. It possesses the power to remake personal identities, a power to which both Antony and Cleopatra testify. Though each experiences love as a disruptive force, both continue to value the other's love above all else in the world. In his opening speech Antony laments that he has become "A slave" to Cleopatra's beauty (17), but then affirms that no one other than Cleopatra will ever hold him in triumph: "None els hencefoorth, but thou my dearest Queene. / Shall glorie in commanuding *Antonie*" (38-39). He tells Lucillus that he would give all to Caesar, all but Cleopatra (929-33). Cleopatra for her part bewails the loss of

her realm, her liberty, her children, and the light of the sun, but attests to Antony being “More deare then Scepter, children, freedome, light” (417).

While each remains the other’s greatest value, love essentially remakes their essence. Antony early in his first speech describes the subtle, insinuating, pervasive force of love which “Reframes, reformes it selfe and stealingly / Retakes his force and rebecomes more great” (100-101). Like a fire not of Cupid’s meager brand, but the tormenting flames of “some furies torch, *Orestes* torche” (58), love consumed everything he once was—prince, commander, and hero. He has lost his sense of agency (as discussed above) and he speaks of having worshipped Cleopatra as an “Idoll” (78), and wanting her back as his “Goddes” (107).

Love remakes Cleopatra as well, but it marks a significantly different shift in her subjectivity. Her love for Antony brings a new identity—a completely new definition of her being. These claims emerge where each of the gaps occur in Cleopatra’s exchange with Charmion in Act 2. Cleopatra claims her love for Antony now constitutes her basic humanity: “Without this love I should be inhumaine” (559). The basis of her humanity is Antony himself. To Charmion’s urging that “Our first affection to our self is due,” (594) Cleopatra answers, “He is my selfe” (595). Mary Sidney Herbert’s translation stresses the metaphysical and ontological sense behind this claim. She shifts the emphasis from Cleopatra’s duty as a wife to her being as an individual. Cleopatra’s equating herself with her beloved is not a part of Garnier’s text. In the original, Cleopatra claims that he is her spouse: “*Charmion. L’affection premier est a nous-mesmes deue./ Cleopatre. Mon espous est moymesne*” (587-88). Garnier’s text resonates with overtones of the Protestant marriage service: man was made for God; woman for God in

man. In Act I Antony worships his love as an "Idoll" (78). Garnier's Cleopatra becomes in love's remaking a wife. Mary Sidney Herbert deftly shifts that change from the bond of marriage to the woman whose identity is rooted in her beloved. The echoes of Cleopatra's wifely duty still resonate in translation. Charmion goes on to refer doubtfully to Cleopatra's marriage to Antony (598). Still, the effect of the change is profound. With a word, Mary Sidney Herbert makes Cleopatra more of an independent entity (not defined by a societal role) whose identity is defined by another.

Love's paradoxical power makes Antony and Cleopatra's world an entity unto itself. The lovers' commitments create a world only they share which stands against the demands of their kingdoms; it defies the rules of the public realm. In Mary Sidney Herbert's translation, Antony and Cleopatra's passion anticipates the intimate sexual love which John Donne's lovers celebrate in his *Songs and Sonnets*. Donne's lovers create a world which signals the potential for a new kind of individualized and shared subjectivity. Yet Garnier's play emphasizes what happens to lovers who are also world rulers. The price is higher for those who forsake their public duties for the passionate commitment of love. For lovers here, especially, there is little room for compromise. The conflicts with their public roles assure that Antony and Cleopatra won't live long enough to prove a full model for Donne's lovers.

The play gives the reader both a sympathetic view from the lovers' world out, and a view from the public realm in at this world is transformed by love. Most remarkable about the play is that though Antony & Cleopatra are destroyed by their own characters, they invoke our sympathy. Not every reader will feel for these "voluptuous" lovers, but even Cleopatra's people, represented in the choruses as condemned to bondage under

Caesar by their Queen's unwillingness to intercede for them with their conqueror, are overwhelmed with pity at their terrible end. As many critics have noted, the Countess chose to translate a play in which Cleopatra is presented in an overwhelmingly positive light. She is given more fortitude and devotion to Antony than Plutarch attributes to her in his life of Antony. She follows Antony into battle out of jealousy and not political plotting. She unhesitatingly takes responsibility for her actions at Actium and the part she has played in the defeat of Antony.

Readers may be moved to great pity as are the people of Cleopatra's city who watch despondent and in great despair as Cleopatra and her women haul Antony's body into the tomb (4.1675-88). Or readers may take something of a warning from this depiction of love's power. Cleopatra's is an extremely potent passion, yet the play shows how love for a woman involves a foregoing of the self for the claims of an other. This conception is built upon Cleopatra's ideal of their love as a "holy marriage" (1969) and the female virtue of constancy which was lauded in the early modern period. Among the play's first words are Antony's condemning Cleopatra as a "traitres" who has "forsworne, my love and life betraie[d]:" (18-19). His first speech ends by condemning all women as "wav'ring" and "Each moment changing and rechanging mindes" (146-47). Cleopatra's first words disavow her betrayal, questioning how she could ever be thought of as having a "changing minde" (408). Having conceived of herself as Antony's wife, Cleopatra asserts that she would live in "infamie" (626)—be thought "Not light, unconstant, faithlesse.../ But vile, forsworne, of treacherous crueltie" (590-91)—were she to ever to appear to leave her love for Antony for Caesar.

Nevertheless, this couple creates a world which challenges the reality in which they act as public figures. Their demise earns the reader's sympathy (even if only grudgingly) because it proves them true to their commitments as lovers. Though their integrity compromises the greater good, it never falters. Their constancy to one another resonates with the heroic. In dying together Antony and Cleopatre paradoxically assure that their love will never be compromised. Because they end their lives together, their love lasts.

None of these attributes are admired in Mornay's text. Yet Mornay agrees with Garnier in the monarch's forgoing of empire. In *Antonius*, part of our sympathy is evoked by the fact that both forgo empire for their love. Antony was always giving lands away and he acted on his love over and above his imperial appetite. In contrast to Caesar and his lack of morals, Cleopatra, too, is willing to leave all she has in the world—treasures, riches, heritage, vast lands—or the struggle to regain them, to prove her love for Antony was not false. In Mornay's *Discourse* imperial kings run the risk of God's wrath.

Garnier's play highlights the inherent conflict for any female ruler who would be measured by the feminine ideal of constancy in the late sixteenth century. Having aligned herself with the role of wife and its highest virtue, Cleopatra is absorbed into its claims. The role divests Cleopatra of the power of self-definition. The price of constancy is the negation of other values by which a woman might regard herself. Throughout her reign Queen Elizabeth most frequently spoke of herself as married to her rule and to her people. Mary Sidney Herbert's translation and printing of this play signals her sensitivity to the sacrifices required of a monarch, especially if she is female.

Constancy to her realm meant Elizabeth would never experience many other aspects of herself. On the other hand, had she or were she ever to commit herself to a deep passion, she would risk the security of her kingdom and even the definition of herself. Garnier's play acknowledges that the stakes for a female ruler were very high and the contradictions endemic.

Far beyond the question of marriage, Elizabeth represented herself as an ideal of constancy. Her choice of personal motto—*semper eadem* (“always the same”)—testifies to the discipline, consistency, and constancy she wanted known as her trademark. Students of Elizabeth's life will feel the irony in this claim for a Queen whose flexibility, especially in the realm of courtship, best defined her constancy as inconsistent. Perhaps Elizabeth knew that for a woman, especially a woman ruler, in the sixteenth-century this was a badge better worn than lived by.

* * *

Throughout her reign Elizabeth was surrounded by a coterie of men from whom she expected expressions of desire while she obstructed and carefully managed their advances. This was the case with her first favorite, the Earl of Leicester, and it carried on into the last decade of her rule. For Elizabeth to remain desirable she must always be beautiful. Sir Philip Sidney posed this idea as an axiom in *The Arcadia* where he describes a portrait of the Queen of Laconia: “She was a queen, and therefore beautiful.”³⁸ The best representation of this axiom can be seen in the portraits of Queen

³⁸ Sir Philip Sidney, *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia (The New Arcadia)*, ed. Victor Skretkovicz (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987) 96.

Elizabeth painted throughout her reign. Over the course of her forty-five year reign, her portraits represent her as an ageless presence. They show the Queen holding as firmly to her rule as she held to an unchanging corporeal appeal. In these paintings she is the physical embodiment of her personal motto—*semper eadem*. Yet, the divergence between Queen Elizabeth's represented body and her aging physical person certainly grew as she moved toward her sixties. Given the presence of an aging Queen, it is not surprising that Mary Sidney Herbert would capitalize on translating a play which critically assesses the role beauty was expected to play for a female ruler.

The reader of this play feels the pressure on Cleopatra to protect her people from Caesar's wrath with any available means. We've seen how Eras first pleas with her queen to use her beauty to win Caesar's favor. This plea is expanded upon at the end of that scene by Cleopatra's secretary Diomedes whom she sends to tell Antony of her plan to take her life. For fifty lines Diomedes speaks of Cleopatra's unrivaled beauty and its irrefutable persuasive power. He makes it perfectly clear that Cleopatra's "swete allurements" (703), "her caelestiall Sp'rite, hir training speache, / Her grace, hir Majestie, and forcing voice" (728-29), and all her "loving charmes" (744) would not fail to win mercy from Caesar. Diomedes voices the broad cultural expectation that as a female ruler Cleopatra ought to use her physical beauty and sexual allure as political tools. Cleopatra, however, refuses to follow the expectations of her political role. As Diomedes attests, she now drowns her beauty in sorrow. Her refusal signals a greater personal constancy: her beauty and love for Antony go together. She will not uproot her subjectivity by making herself an object of desire before Caesar. Cleopatra's response positions the reader to see

this demand as a corrupt practice which places the female ruler in a double bind where her public obligations compromise her personal commitments.

Though Cleopatra is beautiful, Garnier never moves far from the conventional Petrarchan language to describe Cleopatra's beauty. In addition, as Kim Hall notes, Mary Sidney Herbert's translation "excises references to Cleopatra's beauty in an otherwise faithful translation."³⁹ This overall de-emphasis on beauty makes Cleopatra a greater hero whose beauty is celebrated in terms not infrequently used to describe Queen Elizabeth. In the court of a Queen whose aging beauty had to be reframed in conventional terms, or in the case of her portraits, denied, such a perspective would offer a respite from the sense of failing powers which must accompany the natural process of aging for a female monarch.

Mary Sidney Herbert's coupling of two works bring death to the center stage of both drama and life suggests not a morbidity on the part of the Countess, but rather an emphasis on the growing dis-ease which with age and death were increasingly regarded at Elizabeth's court.⁴⁰ Mary Sidney Herbert would have been especially sensitive to the shift in the Queen's counselors. Between 1588 and 1592, four of Elizabeth's most trusted counselors died. These changes began with the death of her uncle, Robert Dudley, the Earl of Leicester, in 1588, barely a month after the defeat of the Spanish Armada. Since the first years of her reign, Dudley had been doted upon by the Queen and had even for a

³⁹ Kim Hall, *Things of Darkness: Economies of Race and Gender in Early Modern England* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1995) 184.

⁴⁰ Victor Skretkovicz suggests that *Antonius* is a gloss on Mornay's treatise (8), yet in important ways the two works challenge one another. The Countess might have chosen to present herself as unquestioningly supporting Mornay's views had she published Mornay's treatise apart from *Antonius*. Her pairing, however, disrupts an iconoclastic reading of Mornay's *Discourse*.

time aspired to marry her. Up to the time of his death he held a significant place in Elizabeth's esteem and her government, as a Privy Councilor. Leicester's death was followed upon by other significant counselors: Sir Walter Mildmay In 1589, Francis Walsingham in 1590, and Christopher Hatton in 1591. In a span of four years the heart of Elizabeth's Privy Council was emptied. In addition, her most trusted servant, Lord Burghley, was entering his seventies. Already his younger and equally able son had begun to undertake many of Burghley's duties, but the Queen lost in her ailing servant the consistent presence of a superior statesman and friend. Mary Sidney Herbert's translations offer an essential empathy and stoic consolation for the loss of the men upon whose service Elizabeth relied. Her printed translations can be read as attempts to offer the queen counsel in their place.

Mary Sidney Herbert may well have chosen to present translations rather than original compositions to draw more keenly on the Queen's personal literary interests. Known throughout her reign for her skill in French, Latin and Italian, Elizabeth was herself an established translator. At least one of her translations, *A godly medytacyon on the christen sowle...*, by Queen Marguerite of Navarre from the French, was a present to Queen Katherine Parr in 1544. It was printed by John Bale in 1548, when she was yet a princess, and was reissued three times by 1590.⁴¹ In 1545 she gave a trilingual translation of Katherine Parr's *Prayers or Meditation* as a New Year's gift to her father.⁴² Then, as Queen, she worked on portions of Petrarch's *Trionfi*, and works by Seneca, and

⁴¹ Patricia Gartenberg and Nena Whittemore, "A Checklist of English Women in Print 1475-1600," *Bulletin of Bibliography and Magazine Notes*, 34.1 (1977): 8-9.

⁴² Elizabeth I, *Collected Works*, eds. Leah S. Marcus, Janel Mueller, Mary Beth Rose (Chicago: the University of Chicago Press, 2000) 9.

Boethius, as well as parts of Horace and Plutarch's works.⁴³ Given Elizabeth's interest in translation, Mary Sidney Herbert chose a well-established route to introduce herself as a woman of the written word that emphasized the link between her literary activities and those of her Queen.

The issues she raised in her translations make the challenge to counsel her Queen much greater than that which David's handmaiden faced. As Joab shows in the Bible, where it came to the very sensitive subject of David's love for his son, other means than direct address, formal argument and logical reasoning were needed. Joab used an intermediary—a handmaiden—to act out the conflict of a parent losing her children to draw the king into a position from which he could engage the issue from a place in between his personal and public selves. The effect was to give David a way to see into his own heart and the conflicting desires and demands as both father and enforcer of laws for his people. Garnier's play dramatizes the challenges to rule responsibly for a person with passionate commitments or the potential for them. Perhaps the bind never finds you, but if it does, how does a counselor forbidden to speak to her monarch counsel her? And as it was with Elizabeth, if the desire to retain personal physical appeal as a political tool is a key feature of your style of rule, how does a counselor speak to the shortcomings of so great a choice. Mary Sidney Herbert chose a complement of discourses to illustrate the contradictions, and the directions for a monarch to go.

⁴³ May, *Elizabethan Courtier Poets*, 41, 51, 317.

CHAPTER III

IN SERVICE OF “FAIRE VIRTUE”: AEMILIA LANYER’S POLITICAL ROLE FOR WOMEN UNDER JAMES I

Aemilia Lanyer was born in 1571 to Baptist Bassano, a musician at the court of Elizabeth Tudor, and his common law wife, Margaret Johnson, about whom little is known. At seven years old, two years after the death of her father in 1576, Lanyer apparently entered the household of Lady Susan, Countess of Kent.¹ That she later appeared in Queen Elizabeth’s court is suggested by her assertion in her poem “To the Queenes most Excellent Majestie” printed in 1611 that she received signs of courtesy from “great Elizae,” whose “favor blest my youth” (110),² and by a note in Simon Forman’s diary that “She was pa[ra]mour to my old L. of huns-Dean that was L Chamberline and was maintained in great pride and yt seames that being with child she

¹ Details of Lanyer’s biography are from Susanne Woods’ Introduction, *The Poems of Aemilia Lanyer: Salve Deus Rex Judaeorum*, ed. Susanne Woods, Women Writers in English 1350—1850 series (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993) xv-xxx, and Susanne Woods, *Lanyer: A Renaissance Woman Poet* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), esp. pp 3-41. For important questions about Lanyer’s claim of association with the Countess of Kent see Leeds Barroll, “Looking for Patrons,” *Aemilia Lanyer: Gender, Genre, and the Canon*, ed. Marshall Grossman (Lexington, Kentucky: University Press of Kentucky, 1998) 29-48.

² All references to Lanyer’s works are to *The Poems of Aemilia Lanyer: Salve Deus Rex Judaeorum*, ed. Susanne Woods, Women Writers in English 1350—1850 series (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993). Line numbers appear in parentheses except where indicated.

was for collour married to a minstrell” (quoted in Woods xvii). The nobleman to whom Forman refers was Elizabeth’s Lord Chamberlain, Henry Cary, Lord Hunsdon, whose child (named Henry) she bore in 1593, soon after she married a court musician Alphonso Lanyer—the marriage apparently an attempt to mask her affair with Hunsdon.

Hunsdon’s death in 1603, the same year as Queen Elizabeth, appears to have ended Lanyer’s attendance at court. Through King James I’s reign, she had no known place as a member of the royal courts. She could not claim any connection to James I’s Privy Councilors or the highly influential noble servants of his bedchambers. She may not even have had the access to the court spaces her husband, as one of the king’s musicians, would have enjoyed—an access presumably limited to the king’s physical presence.

Despite Lanyer’s significant distance from Stuart court circles, she addressed her poetry to noble women of the highest political standing in England. Several copies of the *Salve Deus Rex Judaeorum*, printed in 1611, contain nine prefatory addresses to women whom Elaine Beilin describes as “the most prominent noblewomen in England.”³ She praises Queen Anne and her daughter Princess Elizabeth. She writes to the Countess of Bedford, then a young woman of great influence in Queen Anne’s court, and to the older Countess of Cumberland, whom Beilin describes as having “played little part in the politics and powermongering of the day” (192), and to her adult daughter, the Countess of Dorcet. She addresses both women with whom she claims a personal association, including the Countess of Kent, and women whom she is not likely to have met, such as the Lady Arabella Stuart. And she celebrates Mary Sidney Herbert as the author of the

³ Elaine V. Beilin, *Redeeming Eve: Women Writers of the English Renaissance* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1987) 188.

Psalms in a 56-stanza poem entitled “The Authors Dreame to the Ladie *Marie*, the Countesse Dowager of *Pembrooke*.”

Lanyer’s bold addresses to aristocratic women both known and unknown to her has been read by many modern critics as bids for patronage. Barbara Lewalski places Lanyer as suing for a closer association with these noble women “as a male poet of the era might”⁴ although remaking her plea in “distinctively female terms.”⁵ Susanne Woods also sees her as akin to Spenser in her style of praise, but aspiring, like Jonson, to secure authority from her patrons to “speak for [her] culture.”⁶ While Lewalski and Woods offer significant insights in their readings of Lanyer, their alignment of her aspirations with her male counterparts obscures Lanyer’s unorthodox claims for female authority. In this study, I seek to show that in the *Salve Deus Rex Judaeorum* Lanyer represents herself as a poetic heir of Mary Sidney Herbert and a servant of the Countess of Cumberland. In both her prefatory poems and in the volume’s 1840-line title poem, Lanyer offers devoted service to an aristocrat whom she describes as a pattern of Christian integrity. Lanyer does not give counsel to the Countess or offer her a veiled critique of her actions. Instead, her presentation of the Countess renders an important service to the political community at large: in imaging her female excellence Lanyer

⁴ Lewalski compares Lanyer’s numerous dedications to the prefatory material included in Spenser’s first printed edition of the *Faerie Queene* (1590). In that first edition, Spenser included ten dedicatory sonnets all to prominent noble men in England. He added seven more dedicatory sonnets in later editions. Three of these seven were addressed to noble women, including, the Countess of Pembroke, Lady Carew and “all the gracious and beautifull Ladies in the Court.” See A. C. Hamilton, ed., *The Faerie Queene* (London: Longman, 1980) x, and 741-43.

⁵ Lewalski, “Imagining Female Community: Aemelia Lanyer’s Poems, *Writing Women in Jacobean England* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1993) 213-41.

⁶ Woods, *Lanyer*, 71, 99.

comments on the blindness of monarchs such as James Stuart who ignore important roles played by Christian women in civil societies.

Debra Rienstra argues persuasively for the importance for Lanyer of Mary Sidney Herbert as a model of a woman artist who is a “divinely ordained improviser” on scriptural texts.⁷ In what is Lanyer’s longest address, which occurs at the center of the section of nine addresses, her “Authors Dreame” images the Countess surrounded by pagan Goddesses who sing her “holy sonnets” (121). Using a family emblem of the Sidney’s, the industrious bee, Lanyer aligns her own “unlearned lines” with the “higher style” (202-203) of the Countess. While Lanyer acknowledges the Countess is an author of “many Books...more rare” than Lanyer’s (195), she describes her own work as like honey that is “both wholesome, and delights the taste” more than the refined and “higher priz’d” sugar (197-200) of other poets’ lines. Lanyer extols the Countess as a worthy sister of Sir Philip Sidney who “liv’d and di’d so nobly,” and then praises her as excelling even Sir Philip’s worth and fame: “And far before him is to be esteemd / For virtue, wisedome, learning, dignity” (150-51). Lanyer claims the Countess as her literary predecessor who, with God’s approval, writes “female exegesis superior to its masculine rivals” (Rienstra 92). As Mary Sidney recast the Old Testament Psalms for Elizabeth I, Lanyer rewrites the New Testament story of the Passion for James I.

⁷ Debra Rienstra, “Dreaming Authorship: Aemilia Lanyer and the Countess of Pembroke, *Discovering and (Re)Covering the Seventeenth Century Religious Lyric*, ed. Eugene R. Cunnar & Jeffrey Johnson (Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania: Duquense University Press, 2001) 94. For a contrasting view see John Rogers, “The Passion of a Female Literary Tradition: Aemilia Lanyer’s *Salve Deus Rex Judaeorum*, *Forging Connections: Women’s Poetry from the Renaissance to Romanticism*, ed. Anne K. Mellor (San Marino, California: Huntington Library (2002): 7-18. Elaine Beilin describes Mary Sidney Herbert’s “studied development as a literary artist,” especially as a lyric poet (121), and her establishment as a “divine poet” (122) in her chapter on *Mary Sidney in Redeeming Eve* (121-150).

Rienstra also argues for a strong parallel between the role Mary Sidney Herbert plays in Lanyer's imagination as the "central figure in a pastoral, literary kingdom of women" and the dominant place Lanyer gives to Margaret Clifford, the Countess of Cumberland, "in the earthly kingdom of heavenly-minded women" within the *Salve Deus* (87). While the Countess of Pembroke helps Lanyer establish her authority as a sacred poet, the Countess of Cumberland is the woman of whom and for whom Lanyer claims to write her story of Christ's Passion. In the last lines of "Salve Deus" itself,⁸ Lanyer represents a remarkable image of herself as a servant of the Countess. The "Virtues" of the woman she serves literally engender her poetry:

Whose excellence hath rais'd my sprites to write,

Of what my thoughts could hardly apprehend;

Your rarest Virtues did my soule delight,

Great Ladie of my heart: I must commend

You that appeare so faire in all mens sight:

On your Deserts my Muses doe attend:

You are the Articke Starre that guides my hand,

All what I am, I rest at your command. (1833-1840)

Using the language of Petrarchan devotion to an angelic lady, Lanyer here describes the Countess inspiring her to write. The power, even the capacity ("of what my thoughts

⁸ Throughout this chapter I use *Salve Deus* to denote the complete volume of poems Lanyer composed, and "Salve Deus" to refer to the title poem in the volume.

could hardly apprehend”), to write this sacred matter is due to the Countess’ excellence. Though in a preceding line Lanyer excuses her muse as “weake” (1831), all its power is dedicated to attending on the Countess. Lanyer as the author of “Salve Deus” dedicates herself without reservation—“All what I am”—and awaits the Countess’s “command.” In these lines Lanyer says she is inspired to write by the Countess’s “excellence” and “Virtues.”

Throughout the *Salve Deus*, Lanyer’s use of the word “virtue” overturns the traditional gender associations of virtue as male and assert a renewed sense of the power of women’s virtues. Susanne Woods’ discussion of the word “virtue” in Lanyer’s poetry connects it to its repeated appearance within ten words of the word “beauty.” Woods points out Lanyer’s emphasis on virtue and its religious associations as distinct from its connotations of “manly agency” (46). Through this association, Lanyer transforms the idea of women’s beauty to refer to an “inner spiritual force” rather than the conventional sense of female beauty as characterizing an “outward appearance.” Woods glosses Lanyer’s use of the word “virtue” to mean “the power or operative influence inherent in a supernatural or divine being” (*OED* 1a) and, in turn, “an embodiment of such power” (*OED* 1b). Throughout the “Salve Deus,” Lanyer invests the Countess of Cumberland with the supernatural influence of a “virtue” which women in particular may exercise. Lanyer builds on the political associations of the word “virtue” from Machiavelli’s uses of it—from its root word in Latin—*virtù*—to represent a manly strength and forcefulness (*OED* 7). Yet, she modifies these typically masculine qualities to allow women “faire virtues” in which they transform the exercise of heroic virtue through the confident and quiet wisdom of mature women.

Recent scholars have begun to explore Aemelia Lanyer's position in the context of early Stuart politics and the roles women played in James' male dominated court. As Leeds Barroll points out, women did not hold any offices which would enable them to formally influence policy matters.⁹ The influence on the court of James' misogynistic views of women combined with his shift of power to the men who served him personally in his bedchamber that Neil Cuddy shows,¹⁰ diminished even further the roles at court women might play. Despite James' preferring of men, Linda Levy Peck argues that the structure of James' court was "fluid and polycentric" and included the activities of the separate households the King established for his Queen, Anne, their first son, Henry, and after Henry's early death, Prince Charles. Leeds Barroll argues that by the end of 1610, Queen Anne's court reached the height of its influence in a period distinguished by a flourishing of the arts. According to Barroll, Anne's court opened up "a new royal sphere peculiar to noblewomen in general" and the Queen used her influence to showcase women in the cultural activities of James' court. Queen Anne presented noblewomen in her masques to "establish the importance of her presence and that of her ladies at the center of a new royal court" (97). She used masques to honor Prince Henry upon his installation as the Prince of Wales (126) and she sought to build her prestige around Henry who, in 1610, had taken on the title of the Prince of Wales and established his own court. For a brief time before his death in 1612, Henry and his court also exercised a robust attention to the arts (130). Barroll perceives in Queen Anne's efforts to influence

⁹ Leeds Barroll, *Anna of Denmark, Queen of England: A Cultural Biography* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001) 39-40.

¹⁰ Neil Cuddy, "The Revival of the Entourage: the Bedchamber of James I, 1603-1625, *The English Court: from the Wars of the Roses to the Civil War* (London: Longman, 1987) 173.

the culture of James' court her positioning herself to be a person of influence when her son became king (117-23).

The *Salve Deus Rex Judaeorum* was entered in the Stationers' Register in 1610 and printed in 1611. In this chapter I argue that at the very moment when, as Barroll has shown, Queen Anne's court reached the height of its influence, Aemilia Lanyer published a book that represents women's virtue as essential to a Christian court. Though she names men who possess the virtues women wield so exceptionally in her poems, she never directly addresses the king, or even his popular son, Henry. Lanyer's prefatory addresses to the Queen, her daughter, and notable aristocratic women portray the Queen as a central power in England. Her focus on the Queen and these female aristocrats gains greater emphasis by the noticeable *absence* of the reigning English king.¹¹ In her opening address "To the Queenes most Excellent Majestie," Lanyer celebrates Anne as "Renowned Empresse, and great Britaines Queene, / Most gracious Mother of succeeding Kings" (1-2), anticipating Anne's continuing influence in the rule of her son. The Princess Elizabeth draws Lanyer's thoughts back to the reign of the late Queen, the "deare Mother of our Common-weale" (7) who was "the Phoenix of her age" (4). Although this is Lanyer's only mention of Queen Elizabeth in the *Salve Deus*, her reference to Elizabeth so close to the beginning of her volume is a sign that she rejects the kind of masculine rule exemplified by James' court in favor of a very different power

¹¹ Barbara K. Lewalski highlights a striking parallel to the notable, yet unspoken, absence of male authority in her analysis of "The Description of Cooke-ham" as Lanyer's celebration of an estate "without a lord—or indeed any male inhabitants—but with a virtuous mother and daughter as its defining or ordering principle" (50). "Seizing Discourses and Reinventing Genres," *Aemilia Lanyer: Gender, Genre, and the Canon*. Ed. Marshall Grossman. (Lexington, Kentucky: The University of Kentucky Press, 1998).

dynamic. Throughout her book, Lanyer claims that through the quality of a specifically female virtue women can be an important counter-balance in the rule of a king. Women in Lanyer's poetry, Pilate's wife and the daughters of Jerusalem who are among the most prominent examples, are virtuous defenders of right rule. They define, judge, and assure good kingship. As servants of "faire virtue," women are compared not only to a feminized representation of Christ, but to a rich classical and Biblical tradition of women whose integrity, will, and honesty enable them to unseat tyrants. In the *Salve Deus* Lanyer praises many seventeenth-century women for participating in this tradition, and she urges other women to join as well.

* * *

With her title, *Salve Deus Rex Judaeorum*, Lanyer presents herself as an author intent on scriptural interpretation. Her title reinterprets the passages from the gospels when Pilate asks Christ—"Art thou the King of the Jews?" (Mark 15.2; see also Matthew 27.11, Luke 23.3, and John 18.37).¹² Later when the Roman soldiers lead Christ away they taunt him with this title. In the gospel of Mark the soldiers mockingly cast Christ in the role of king; they "clad him with purple, and platted a crowne of thornes, & put it about his head, And began to salute him, saying, Haile, King of the Jewes" (Mark 15.17-18, see also Matthew 27.28-29). Christ bears this title with morbid irony as many in the mob cry for his crucifixion. Lanyer's subtle addition of "Deus" to Christ's original title

¹² Biblical citations refer to *The Geneva Bible: A facsimile of the 1560 edition* (Madison, Wisconsin: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1969).

erases this irony and confirms him—as Janel Mueller points out—as both God and a true King.¹³ Lanyer’s alignment of “Deus” and “Rex” in her title also signals to her readers the importance of kingship within her poem. Lanyer depicts Christ through his trial, and crucifixion—moments when Jesus’ kingship is publicly debated and disputed and in which his true kingship is affirmed. At the end of the book, in a final prose passage addressed “To the doubtfull Reader” Lanyer assures her readers that her title was not the choice of an idle moment. Though it came to her “in sleepe” many years before she wrote her *Passion of Christ*, she assigns a prophetic power to her dream. When years later she came to write the *Salve Deus*, she recalls her dream as a “significant token,” a sign that she “was appointed to performe this Worke” (p.139).

The brief list of the contents of her volume, which appears directly below the title on the title page, sets the tone of Lanyer’s exegesis of the Passion story:

- 1 The Passion of Christ.
- 2 Eves Apologie in defence of Women.
- 3 The Teares of the Daughters of Jerusalem.
- 4 The Salutation and Sorrow of the Virgine Marie.

The first item in this list names the Biblical story upon which Lanyer builds her text, “The Passion of Christ,” while the next three items emphasize women’s roles within this story. Women play prominent roles in protest of, as witnesses to, and in compassion with

¹³ Janel Mueller, “The Feminist Poetics of *Salve Deus Rex Judaeorum*,” *Aemilia Lanyer: Gender, Genre, and the Canon*, ed. Marshall Grossman (Lexington, Kentucky: University Press of Kentucky, 1998) 116.

Christ's fate. Pilate's wife delivers an impassioned indictment of Pilate's judgment of Christ as the worst exercise of tyranny and gives a forceful defense of Eve's actions in the Garden of Eden (753-896). The Daughters of Jerusalem follow Christ as he bears the cross. Their "pitious cries" have the power to move Christ to "take compassion" and comfort them, but their entreaties cannot stop the soldier's beating of him (968-1005). Christ's mother Mary bent by the weight of her grief onto her knees "in open street" is hailed by her son as the mother of god (1041-1128). Lanyer's radical revision of the Passion story in which she emphasizes women's experience has been noted by many commentators.¹⁴

The next line on her title page offers a description of the remainder of her volume: "With divers other things not unfit to be read." The use of litotes in the description of her work as "*not unfit to be read*" [italics added] contrasts with Sir Thomas More's similar but different litotes on the title page of his *Utopia*. More introduces his work as "*nec minus salutaris quam festivus*," ["*No Less Beneficial than Entertaining*" (italics added)]. There the litotes points to the comic, dialogic tone of the conversation between Raphael Hythloday and the fictional More.¹⁵ On Lanyer's title page the "not unfit to be read" may be a use of the feminine modesty topos in which the litotes signals an ironic

¹⁴ See the articles by Achsah Guibbory, Barbara K. Lewalski, and Janel Mueller in *Aemilia Lanyer: Gender, Genre, and the Canon*, ed. Marshall Grossman (Lexington, Kentucky: The University of Kentucky Press, 1998). See also Catherine Keohane, "'That blindest weaknesse be not over-bold': Aemilia Lanyer's radical unfolding of the Passion," *ELH* 64 (1997): 359-89.

¹⁵ I wish to thank Elizabeth Hageman for directing me to this parallel with More's text. For a particularly fine analysis of More's use of litotes see Elizabeth McCutcheon, "Denying the Contrary: More's Use of Litotes in the *Utopia*," *Essential Articles for the Study of Thomas More*, ed. R.S. Sylvester and G.P. Marc'hadour (Hamden, Connecticut: Archon Books, 1977) 263-74. The reference to the *Utopia* is from *The Complete Works of St. Thomas More*, eds. Edward Surtz and J.H. Hexter, IV (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1965).

understatement of the volume's contents, especially since in her opening address to Queen Anne Lanyer suggests that the reader will join with royalty in the reading of this work. Or the litotes may highlight a certain degree of ambivalence as to the purpose of this woman's work. The use of the double negative shies away from a positive assertion of the material's value. That there is a *fitness* to these "diverse other things" (a peculiarly general term for her verse) suggests that Lanyer's writing—its topics and forms—are what a woman of her social position might write. Yet while a woman writing on religious matters needs no excuse, the unusual feminine perspective offered by Lanyer's "Salve Deus," within her 11 prefatory addresses, and in "The Description of Cooke-Ham" requires acknowledgment.

For all the self-fashioned authority Lanyer asserts in the *Salve Deus*, the reader's first sight of the work is under several imprimaturs of patriarchy. The title page goes on to describe her volume as

Written by Mistris *Æmilia Lanyer*, Wife to Captaine

Alfonso Lanyer Servant to the

Kings Majestie.

This description confers both public and private authority to her as an adult woman married to a man who works for the king. Since the speaker of the poems in *Salve Deus* never refers to herself as a wife or as otherwise connected to a servant of James I, it seems unlikely Lanyer composed this presentation of herself. Lanyer's social status was well below that of Mary Sidney Herbert, who was quite likely to have overseen the

composition of the title page to her own translations given that she later carefully supervised the printing of her brother's works.¹⁶ The uneasiness suggested by the need to represent Lanyer in legitimate feminine roles stands in bold contrast to the confident assertion reflected in the work's title and the four numbered items listing the contents of the volume at the top of the title page.

The unresolved tensions on the title page presage similar tensions in the text itself. In both the prefatory poems and prose epistles and in the "Salve Deus" itself, Lanyer negotiates her claim for authority against the assumption of her "want of womans wit" ("Salve Deus" 15). Lanyer's phrase suggests the changes her poem represents for women. She is not lamenting a lack of "wit," nor indeed do women lack "wit," rather a wit that is uniquely women's is the standard by which Lanyer measures herself. From the outset of this work, we read the dynamic of a woman rewriting patriarchal codes to argue for a more profound political presence for women within Stuart politics.

At present, only nine copies of the *Salve Deus* have been located. It seems reasonable to speculate as Susanne Woods does that the volume was printed in a small edition and circulated carefully—possibly by Lanyer herself or by the Countess of Cumberland, the woman on whom her book focuses.¹⁷ Six of these nine volumes include the nine addresses to particular female aristocrats and two addresses to more general, yet certainly female, readers. In the remaining three copies, certain addresses do not appear.

¹⁶ Margaret Hannay, *Philip's Phoenix: Mary Sidney, Countess of Pembroke* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990) 70.

¹⁷ Susanne Woods, "Textual Introduction," *The Poems of Aemilia Lanyer: Salve Deus Rex Judaeorum*, ed. Susanne Woods, Women Writers in English 1350—1850 series (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993) 1.

Two of these copies are noteworthy for having been presentation copies for the Archbishop of Dublin and Prince Henry. One was apparently given by Lanyer's husband, Alphonso Lanyer, to Thomas Jones the Archbishop of Dublin in 1610.¹⁸ This copy includes only four addresses and one prose epistle: to the Queen, Princess Elizabeth, "all Vertuous Ladies in generall," to the Countess of Cumberland, and to her daughter Lady Anne, along with the "Salve Deus" and "The Description of Cooke-Ham." The other is a beautifully adorned volume clearly intended as a presentation copy for Prince Henry, a gift which may have celebrated Prince Henry's installation as Prince of Wales in June 1610. This volume contains the four addresses and one prose epistle found in the copy given to Thomas Jones, as well as the poem addressing the Countess of Bedford. This presentation volume thus lacks four of the addresses: to the Ladie Arabella, the Countess Dowager of Kent, the Countess Dowager of Pembroke (Mary Sidney Herbert), and the Countess of Suffolk.¹⁹

With an authority derived from the women she addresses, Lanyer seeks an audience of the highest female figures in England's aristocracy. Although a paradoxical stance, Lanyer writes unabashedly to a constellation of women. Lanyer's nine prefatory addresses and two prose epistles fall into two distinct groups of noble women. The first group comprises the addresses to the Queen and her daughter, the Princess Elizabeth.

¹⁸ Woods notes that the *Salve Deus* was probably printed shortly after it was entered on the Stationer's Register 2 October 1610. The inscription on the volume to Thomas Jones bears the date 8 November 1610, although the date on the title page is 1611 (*Ibid.* xlvi).

¹⁹ The third remaining volume also excludes the addresses to Arabella Stuart; Lady Susan, the Countess Dowager of Kent; Lady Mary, the Countess Dowager of Pembroke; and Lady Katherine, Countess of Suffolke. All textual information is summarized from Woods, "Textual Introduction," xlvii-li.

The second group of addresses to aristocratic women opens with a verse letter “To all virtuous Ladies in general” and ends with a prose epistle addressed to the “Virtuous Reader.” In these more general addresses Lanyer appeals to gentlewomen and not just female aristocrats. “All vertuous Ladies in generall” modulates at its end into a recognition of the need to single out certain women because they are especially noteworthy in honor and fame. Of the seven addresses that follow six are in verse, and one (to the Countess of Cumberland) is written in prose. Finally, Lanyer concludes the second circle of seven addresses with a prose epistle to the “Vertuous Reader” as if to signal a return to one of her central purposes: the ways in which readers exercise their virtue.

The number of addresses suggests Lanyer was appealing for literary patronage. Barbara Lewalski argues that the sheer number of prefatory pieces is not unlike that of Edmund Spenser’s initial poems to the *Faerie Queene* (“Seizing Discourses and Reinventing Genres,” 50). The first edition of Spenser’s work appeared with ten sonnets. On its second printing this was expanded to seventeen.²⁰ In addition, the careful tailoring of addresses in the volumes for Thomas Jones and Prince Henry suggests a carefully constructed appeal to each recipient. Leeds Barroll points out that Lanyer’s husband had unusually high-placed connections,²¹ like the Archbishop of Dublin, Thomas Jones, to whom Alphonso inscribed one of the existing copies of the *Salve Deus*. Susanne Woods notes, too, that Alphonso’s cousin, Nicholas Lanier, was Prince Henry’s master of

²⁰ A. C. Hamilton, ed., *The Faerie Queene* (London: Longman, 1980) x, and 741-43.

²¹ Barroll, “Looking for Patrons,” 36-37. Barroll argues that Lanyer’s husband may have had access to certain powerful men at Court and was in a position to help her seek patronage.

music.²² But Barbara Lewalski suggests that rather than working through her husband's connections, the limited number of copies may have been for the Countess of Cumberland to circulate.²³

Barroll's inquisitive article on Lanyer's relationship with the Countess of Kent and her bid for patronage makes it possible to speculate that Lanyer wanted to access something other than literary patronage from those she addressed. Barroll argues that Aemilia Lanyer was "as far from the nobility of the persons invoked in her volume as from the moon," and does not place her in a position to seek patronage from the high born women whom she addresses ("Looking for Patrons" 30). Other recent scholarship has begun to raise intriguing questions about the relationship the poet/speaker establishes with each of these heralded women. Recent studies have pointed to the subtle subversions and tensions that complicate several of the opening poems as commendatory verse and the role the speaker established vis-à-vis these upper class women.²⁴ Though she has no acquaintance with several of these aristocrats, she writes directly to them. And despite some of their profound reputations, her addresses are bold. While she most often writes to commend those who have much virtue, she directly appeals to others as with the Countess of Bedford, an influential member of Queen Anne's court, to let "Virtue...unlocke" her soul (1-2) and let Christ in. Thus even while praising the

²² Woods, "Textual Introduction" xlviii. For a contrasting view on Nicholas Lanier's place at court see Leeds Barroll, "Looking for Patrons," 41.

²³ Cited in Woods "Textual Introduction," xlix.

²⁴ See, for example, Kari Boyd McBride, "Sacred Celebrations: the Patronage Poems," *Aemilia Lanyer: Gender, Genre, and the Canon*, ed. Marshall Grossman (Lexington, Kentucky: The University of Kentucky Press, 1998) 17-40. Also, Ann Baynes Coiro, "Writing in service: sexual politics and class position in the poetry of Aemilia Lanyer and Ben Jonson," *Criticism* 35 (1993): 357-76.

Countess' "cleare sight" (7) and "cleare Judgement" (15), Lanyer suggests that the Lady has more to do if she is to receive Christ's salvation.

Throughout the *Salve Deus Rex Judaeorum*, Lanyer presents herself as seeking opportunities to serve these virtuous women and as desiring their respect as if she were a courtier attending them. Lanyer variously attributes her ability to write to "celestiall powres" to a "fatall starre" and, most significant, to the virtues of other women. In the first poem in her volume, these powers all share in the same source of inspiration, a form of spiritual and secular virtue. In the "Salve Deus," however, Lanyer distinguishes her service to the Countess of Cumberland as her richest source of authority—not only for her method of presenting the work to the noble women whom she addresses, but also for her authoring the *Salve Deus*. In her concluding poem, "The Description of Cooke-ham" Lanyer confirms the Countess' virtues as living in her own "unworthy breast" and as tying her heart to the Countess by "rich chaines" (208-10).

Lanyer first ascribes the source of her work to virtue's power in her address to Queen Anne. Initially, Lanyer appeals to the Queen to honor virtue as an inherent value in her work and not one to which Lanyer's poor appearance cannot attest: "To virtue yet / Vouchsafe that splendor which my meannesse bars..." (27-28). In a second instance, Lanyer rewrites her appeal to the Queen by portraying herself as virtue in an allegorical sense who offers her work to the Queen. She asks the Queen to "accept.../ This holy worke, *Virtue* presents to you, / In poore apparell, shaming to be seen" (61-63 italics added). In a final reference, Lanyer aligns the Queen's virtues with those engendered by the "Faire Virtue" of her own efforts:

And sith all royall virtues are in you,
The Naturall, the Morall, and Divine,
I hope how plaine soever, being true,
You will accept even of the meanest line
Faire Virtue yeelds; by whose rare gifts you are
So highly grac'd, t'exceed the fairest faire. (67-72)

In this third instance, Lanyer elevates the power which engenders her poetry from "Virtue" to "Faire Virtue." And her valuation of her work rises together with the encomium she lavishes upon the Queen. In the last line of this passage, the Queen exceeds even "the fairest faire," including presumably the "Faire Virtue" Lanyer's work displays. Lanyer continues to emphasize the paradox between her mean outward appearance and the rich value within herself as an author and within her work. Her work may be "plaine" but it is "true" and Lanyer counts on the Queen's "royall" virtues as answering to those housed in even Lanyer's "meanest line." This paradoxical relationship between mean external appearances and the richest internal, spiritual realities anticipates Lanyer's identification of her poetry with Christ himself, the humblest of mighty kings in the "Salve Deus."

Toward the end of the "Salve Deus" as we have seen above, Lanyer identifies her virtue as having its source in the Countess of Cumberland (1831-1840). Lanyer introduces this connection 350 lines earlier when she first portrays her authorship in the service of the Countess as pre-ordained before her birth:

And knowe, when first into this world I came,
 This charge was giv'n me by th'Eternall powres,
 Th'everlasting Trophie of thy fame,
 To build and decke it with the sweetest flowres
 That virtue yeelds; Then Madame, doe not blame
 Me, when I shew the World but what is yours,

 And decke you with that crowne which is your due,
 That of Heav'ns beauty Earth may take a view

("Salve Deus" 1457-1464)²⁵

Lanyer's verse creates the "everlasting Trophie" of the Countess' fame. She claims to have been appointed to this task from before her birth, assuming for herself, as other commentators have pointed out, an incarnation of heavenly powers like Christ himself.²⁶ Lanyer's bestowing of a "crowne" upon the Countess bedecked with virtue's flowers subtly recalls her appeals to Queen Anne in the first poem of the volume to honor her virtue. The Countess receives her crown from Lanyer in an extravagant gesture which will allow all the world to see the "Heav'ns beauty" in the Countess. In contrast, Lanyer

²⁵ While critics often quote this passage, there is no consensus on its meanings or Lanyer's claims in it. Mary Ellen Lamb reads them as verging on a "parody of the inflated rhetoric of patronage." See "Patronage and Class in Aemilia Lanyer's *Salve Deus Rex Judaeorum*," *Women, Writing, and the Reproduction of Culture in Tudor and Stuart Britain*, ed. Linda L. Burke (Syracuse, New York: Syracuse University Press, 2000) 41. John Rogers views them as a "final, and most outrageous, assumption of authority" by Lanyer (13). Susanne Woods describes these lines and the "first unambiguous claim of personal poetic vocation from a woman writing in English" in Woods, "Vocation and Authority: Born to Write," *Aemilia Lanyer: Gender, Genre, and the Canon*, ed. Marshall Grossman (Lexington, Kentucky: University Press of Kentucky, 1998) 96.

²⁶ For example, see Rogers.

describes Queen Anne in her address to her as securing her “rich gifts” (9) by having “rifled Nature of her store / And all the Goddesses...dispossest” (7-8). The Countess’ crown graces her more nobly even than that of the reigning Queen.

Lanyer also describes her discovery of her capacity to serve the Countess in “The Description of Cooke-Ham” when she says that during her time there she “first obtain’d / Grace” (1-2) from the Countess of Cumberland and discovered she could write to satisfy those with virtue. She relates that at Cooke-Ham “the Muses gave their full consent, / I should have powre the virtuous to content” (3-4). Strikingly, Lanyer attributes her “powre” as conferred by the Countess; the Muses simply confirm her authority. Lanyer’s line describing her receiving the essential quality of the Countess’ nature elegantly weaves around the word “grace”: “Grace from that Grace where perfit Grace remain’d” (2). The repetition of the word “grace” acts like a rhetorical ladder which the reader climbs to see that the “Grace” Lanyer receives takes its source from both the noble (pun on “your grace”) and the divine (“perfit Grace”)²⁷ qualities of the Countess’ nature.

In the next lines of “Cooke-Ham” Lanyer says she wrote “The sacred Storie of the Soules delight” (6)—perhaps “Salve Deus Rex Judaeorum” itself— while with the Countess on the estate of this “princely Palace” (5). At that time “Virtue” (7) which like “all delights” that “did harbour in her breast” (8) resided at Cooke-Ham in the person of the Countess. And it is the Countess whose “desires” Lanyer responds to in writing “this worke of Grace” (12). The repetition of “Grace” in reference to the “Salve Deus”

²⁷ The first sense of grace is defined in the *OED* (16.b) as a “title of courtesy,” the second conveys the sense of grace as a “divine influence” (11.b). Susanne Woods explores the implications of Lanyer’s frequent use of the word “grace” throughout the *Salve Deus* in “Vocation and Authority.”

resonates with the grace (in line 2) which has descended from the Countess to Lanyer. In this transaction Lanyer is a conduit through which the Countess' "Virtue" appears in the form of Lanyer's written verse. Lanyer confirms this connection in the last lines of "Cooke-Ham":

This last farewell to *Cooke-Ham* here I give,
When I am dead thy name in this many live,
Wherein I have perform'd her noble hest,
Whose virtues lodge in my unworthy breast,
And ever shall, so long as life remains,
Tying my heart to her by those rich chaines. (205-210)

In this passage, Lanyer is at first like *Cooke-Ham*, a residence for the "virtues" of the Countess which "lodge" in Lanyer's breast. Then the image of the last line expands the sense of Lanyer harboring the Countess' virtues into a sense of connection between the two women. The predominant sense of this connection is for Lanyer a highly valued bondage [tied with "rich chains" (210)] to which Lanyer is committed for the remainder of her life.

In each of these poems, Lanyer represents herself as an embodiment of the abstract value of "Virtue." She boldly claims for her writing a value which her personal appearance and past history would seem to contradict. What she consciously admits to lacking in her dress recalls her past attendance in Elizabeth's court, including her affair with Lord Hunsdon, the child she bore him, and her marriage to a court musician for

appearance's sake. Lanyer's personal experience might undermine her claim of virtue to a reader, but she reconciles her bold claim to be virtue's representative by presenting herself in the later poems in this volume as a servant of the Countess. In serving the Countess by describing and promoting her virtues, Lanyer derives a respectability and prestige unavailable to her as a woman writing alone. For a woman who has little else to lay claim to the attention of some of the women whom she addresses, this is an essential aspect of Lanyer's authorship.

* * *

The principal Biblical story of this book—the narrative of Christ's Passion drawn from Matthew 21-28, Mark 11-16, Luke 19-24, and John 12-21—accounts for 990 of the 1840 lines of the "Salve Deus" (329—1320). The passion story is the narrative beginning with Christ's entry into Jerusalem and the Last Supper and extending through his betrayal, death, and resurrection. The remaining 850 lines frame this story. In this frame Lanyer illuminates the Countess of Cumberland as a living example of Christ's virtues. Her story is so important that early in the poem Lanyer begs the Countess' "pardon" for having "digrest / From what I doe intend to write of thee" (144-145) in having written the preceding one hundred plus lines describing Christ's "glorie" (146). Later, as she describes Christ's brutal death, Lanyer turns to the Countess as foremost in her audience. The Countess is the "Deere Spouse of Christ," who can see more "with the eie of Faith" than Lanyer writes (1169-1170). In fact, the final five hundred lines of the

poem present praise of the Countess as the person whose prayers and works may heal Christ's wounds (1335-36).

Readers can also trace the parity between the Countess and Christ in the instances in which the word "virtue" appears in the poem. Forms of the word virtue appear 22 times in the "Salve Deus" and 59 times elsewhere in the book. In two instances Lanyer uses "Virtue" as another name for Christ. When Lanyer describes Christ's arrest she says, "Here Grace was seised on with hands impure, / And Virtue now must be supprest by Vice" (525-526). Pilate's wife condemns Pilate's conviction of Christ as "Virtues fall" (879). In a third instance Lanyer describes Christ in going to his death; "He plainly shewed that his own profession / Was virtue, patience, grace, love, piety" (957-58). In addition to these three references, an angel proclaims Christ's mother Mary to be "Virtues worth" (1046), and Lanyer uses the word once in the section labeled "An Invective against outward beauty unaccompanied with virtue" to argue that "A mind enrich'd with Virtue shines more bright" (197).

In the remaining 16 instances Lanyer describes the Countess' virtue. One half of these references show the Countess's close relationship with virtue. Her "Virtue" makes revenge powerless (182-184). She is attended upon by "faire Virtue" (189). She possesses "faire virtues" (1372). She sits above "The proud that doe "faire Virtues rule neglect" (1387). She rejects "All wealth and honour" if they stand against "virtue, learning, and the powres divine" (1389-1391). Lanyer's "everlasting Trophie" to the Countess is covered with "the sweetest flowres/ That virtue yeelds" (1459-1461) from one who holds a "store" of "faire seeds of Virtue (1456). Lanyer closes the "Salve Deus" with the comment that "Your rarest Virtues did my soule delight" (1835).

In the other half of her uses of the word “virtue,” Lanyer contrasts the Christian Countess with great women of antiquity and the Old Testament. Because of those “fair Virtues” which attend upon her, the Countess is more fair “to behold” than Helen of Troy (189-192). Cleopatra’s earthly love for Antony cannot compare to the Countess’ “Love Divine” (1414), for her “inward virtues all [Cleopatra’s] worth denies” (1430). The Countess’ “many virtues” (1542) are even more pure than those of Susanna of the book of Daniel who resisted assaults by two elders (1529-1552). Her boldness is greater than the women of the Old Testament who took an active part in bringing down their sovereign’s enemies: Deborah, Judith, and Hester. Lanyer describes “Wise *Deborah* that judged Israel” (1481), the “valiant” Judith who worked her way into her enemies confidence and then slew Holiernes (1482-86), and finally the “faire” and “virtuous” Hester who contrived to have Hamen hanged “gives place” to the Countess (1505-1520). Like Christ’s quiet defeat of vice, the Countess’ spiritual conquest is greater than the conquest of bloody warriors. Lanyer claims the Countess has won “a greater conquest” than the victory of the Scythian women in battle who “by their powre alone” slew thousands in the armies of Darius and Alexander (1465-1472). The Scythian women’s “worth, though writ in lines of blood and fire” (1473) was not created as the Countess’ wroth is by “Virtues line” (1476). The Queen of Sheba’s great majesty, wisdom, beauty, and bounty are a mere “map” of what the Countess’s love expresses (1585-1616).

Lanyer’s women display a virtue ascribed in the early modern period more typically to men. Machiavelli’s ideas of virtue as the heroic abilities men exercise in the establishment and preservation of the state would have been commonplace in the early seventeenth-century. Lanyer gives to women the “courage and energy” which scholars of

Machiavelli identify as the most general sense of virtue in Machiavelli's thought.²⁸

Lanyer retains Machiavelli's sense of virtue as a key political force by which the state is preserved. However, she transforms the conflict Machiavelli depicts through these gender stereotypes, so that the masculine qualities of virtue are embodied in a more proper display of masculinity in the women she describes.

Machiavelli depicted masculine virtue as in a perpetual contest with the female figure of fortune. In a famous passage in *The Prince* (chap. 25) he describes fortune as a torrential force of water "which when it rages, over-flows the plaines, overthrowes the trees, and buildings,...everyone flies before it, every one yeelds to the fury thereof, as unable to withstand it."²⁹ For Machiavelli this force which could overwhelm the works of men was feminine if she was not resisted. Wherever fortune "shews her power where vertue is not ordeind to resist her" man will experience a similar ruin. For Machiavelli men's virtue is most appropriately displayed as a man who overpowers a woman he desires:

Fortune is a mistresse; and it is necessary, to keep her in obedience, to ruffle and force her: and we see, that she suffers her self rather to be mastered by those, than by others that proceed coldly. And therefore, as a mistress, she is a friend to young men, because they are less respective, more rough, and command her with more boldnesse. (209)

²⁸ John Plamenatz, "In Search of Machiavellian Virtù," *The Political Calculus: Essays on Machiavelli's Philosophy*, ed. Anthony Parel (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1972) 157.

²⁹ Niccolò Machiavelli, *The Prince* (Menston, England: The Scholar Press Limited, 1969) 203. All references are to this edition.

The will to restrain, or at times roughly master, unruly aspects of present circumstance, which Machiavelli describes as aspects of feminine behavior in the idea of Fortune, represents a heroic exercise of virtue. While Lanyer's "virtue" shares in the political purposes of Machiavelli's "virtue," to establish and perpetuate the state, virtue in the *Salve Deus* is so often ascribed to women that it becomes a feminine quality. Lanyer emphasizes the more dominant role women play in her sense of "virtue" by frequently describing it as "faire." Throughout the *Salve Deus*, Lanyer uses "faire virtue" or a form of it in twelve different instances to describe the virtue which women possess. Lanyer uses the word "fair" just as its meaning was changing from "good" (OED 10) to associations with light complexion, particularly blonde hair (OED 6). In the sixteenth-century the word was probably moving to this new meaning through older uses of the word to describe women as the "fair" sex. Lanyer's women may perform actions as aggressive and bold as the men Machiavelli admired, even in a martial setting, but their "courage and energy" is tempered with qualities of their being mature women. The women in Lanyer's "Salve Deus" share the qualities of strength, consistency, and thoughtful action as the women to whom Lanyer addresses her prefatory poems. In the addresses she speaks of "faire virtue" when she writes to Queen Anne, the Countess of Bedford, the Countess of Kent, and Anne Clifford, the daughter of the Countess of Cumberland. All of these women exercise, or Lanyer invites them to exercise, a virtue as powerful as that attributed to men, but which is restrained by a definite sense of Christian purpose and humility of service. In the "Salve Deus" "faire virtues" belong almost exclusively to the Countess.

Lanyer locates her model of virtue in the Countess who melds Christ's virtues with the great virtue of the women from the Old Testament. Both comparisons create what Lanyer praises as a "union of contraries" (1258): the Old Testament women are females who exercise more characteristically masculine virtue, Christ is a male with both masculine and feminine virtues. Lanyer's Biblical women exhibit the root sense of the Latin word—*virtù*—meaning strength. They may possess the valor of great fighters and express that in a stereotypically "masculine" (chopping off heads) or "feminine" way (suffering). Judith Butler's notion of performativity is a helpful concept for analyzing Lanyer's compounded sense of gender in women of virtue. Lanyer depicts the Old Testament women not as manly women, but as women who exhibit a proper masculinity by infusing it with so-called feminine characteristics, such as quiet wisdom. As others have noted, Lanyer presents Christ with many stereotypically female characteristics.³⁰ In, for example, her address to the Lady Katherine, Countess of Suffolk, Lanyer gives a richly feminized catalogue of Christ's virtues:

In whom is all that Ladies can desire;
If Beauty, who that bin more faire than he?
If Wisedome, doth not all the world admire

³⁰ See Michael Morgan Holmes, "The Love of Other Women: Rich Chains and Sweet Kisses," *Aemilia Lanyer: Gender, Genre, and the Canon*, ed. Marshall Grossman (Lexington, Kentucky: University Press of Kentucky, 1998) 178-79; Lynette McGrath, "Let Us Have Our Libertie Againe': Amelia Lanier's Seventeenth-Century Feminist Voice," *Women's-Studies: An-Interdisciplinary-Journal* 20.3-4 (1992): 342-43; and Mueller, 112-13.

That this address does not appear in either the copy inscribed to Archbishop Thomas Jones or in the copy intended for Prince Henry may suggest that Lanyer considered that women exhibiting the proper masculinity is more appealing to male readers than the representation of a male exhibiting valuable feminine traits.

The depth of his, that cannot searched be?

If wealth, if honor, fame, or Kingdoms store,

Who ever liv'd that was possest of more?

If zeale, if grace, if love, if pietie,

If constancie, if faith, if fair obedience,

If valour, patience, or sobrietie;

If chast behaviour, meekenesse, continence,

If justice, mercie, bountie, charitie,

Who can compare with his Divinitie?

Whose vertues more than thoughts can apprehend,

I leave to their more cleere imagination,

That will vouchsafe their borrowed time to spend

In meditating, and in contemplation

Of his rare parts, true honours faire prospect,

The perfect line that goodnesse doth direct. (85-102)

The function of this "female" Christ is to be a model for courtly women's behavior and aspirations. This Christ is the epitome of female desire for good. Christ was, as women in Lanyer's time were expected to be, pious, constant, obedient, patient, chaste, meek, and generous. These are the kind of female characteristics associated with Renaissance matrons. Yet he also possessed the virtuous qualities more often associated with great

men: valor, justice, mercy. In Christ these virtues further overlap with the rewards enjoyed by great monarchs: “wealth,” “honor,” “fame,” and “Kingdoms store.”

Throughout the “Salve Deus” Lanyer presents Christ with this same compendium of masculine, feminine, and royal virtues. Early in the “Salve Deus,” Lanyer claims that Christ dies on the cross with prowess greater than that of any conquering warrior. Christ endures more than any earthly king, and His glory and power have no rival in the history of kings of the world:

More glorious than all the Conquerors
That ever liv'd within this Earthly round,
More powreful than all Kings, or Governours
That ever yet within this World were found;
More valiant than the greatest Souldiers
That ever fought, to have their glory crown'd:
For which of them, that ever yet tooke breath,
Sought t'indure the doome of Heaven and Earth?

(537-544)

This “masculine” virtue Lanyer parallels with more “feminine” traits which Christ displays again his “patience, grace, love, piety.” These traits combined make His suffering the force that allows him to be a conqueror greater than any other in human history:

Being in such odious sort condemn'd to die;

He plainly shewed that his own profession

Was *virtue*, patience, grace, love, piety:

And how by suffering he could conquer more

Than all the Kings that ever lived before.

(956-960; italics added)

Lanyer then represents Christ upon the cross with a blazon, a trope often used to describe a male poet's beloved:

This is that Bridegroom that appeares so faire,

So sweet, so lovely in his Spouses sight,

That unto Snowe we may his face compare,

His cheekes like skarlet, and his eyes so bright

As purest Doves that in the rivers are,

Washed with milke, to give the more delight;

His head is likened to the finest gold,

His curled lockes so beauteous to behold;

Blacke as Raven in her blackest hew;

His lips like skarlet threeds, yet much more sweet

Than is the sweetest hony dropping dew,

Or hony combes, where all the Bees doe meet;

Yea, he is constant, and his words are true,
His cheekes are beds of spices, flowers sweet;
His lips, like Lillies, dropping downe pure mirrhe,
Whose love, before all worlds we doe preferre.

(1305-1320)

Lanyer's blazon draws on the description of the beloved in the Song of Solomon. Few other blazons of a man had been written up to this time. Lanyer may have read Chaucer's comic blazon of Absolon in "The Miller's Tale" in which Chaucer writes a secular parody of the Biblical text, ascribing feminized qualities to the lustful parish clerk: "Crul [curly] was his heer, and as the gold it shoon,/ And strouted [spread out] as a fanne large and brode;/ Ful straight and evene lay his joly shode [parting of the hair]./ His rode [complexion] was reed, his yen greye as goos."³¹ Lanyer's blazon of Christ renders the feminized qualities of Christ as a bridegroom in the tone of the sacred context. She draws her imagery directly out of the Bible:

His head is as fine golde, his lockes curled and blacke as a raven. His eyes are like dooves upon the rivers of waters, which are washt with milke, and remaine by the ful vessels. His chekes are as a bed of spices and as sweete flowres, and his lippes like lilies dropping downe pur myrrhe" (*Song of Solomon* 5:11-13)

³¹ Geoffrey Chaucer, "The Miller's Tale," *Chaucer's Poetry: An Anthology for the Modern Reader*, ed. E.T. Donaldson (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1975) lines 128-131.

Lanyer closes her story of the Passion with her blazon of Christ (“This taske of Beauty” (1322)) and returns to address the Countess in whom Christ’s “perfect picture,” one more true than in the words of the Bible, lies in the Countess’ s heart “Deepely engraved in that holy shrine” (1326-27)).

From the outset of the “Salve Deus,” Lanyer sets the Countess on par with the Son of God. She transforms the story of Christ’s passion into the resurrection of those virtues in the Countess whom Lanyer describes “Still reckon[s Christ] the Husband of [her] Soule” (253). His death makes the Countess the “Dowager of all; / Nay more, Co-heire of that eternall blisse” (257-258). The Countess inherits equally all that Christ earned in the sacrifice of his life for humankind in the manner in which a wife would share in her husband’s wealth. Yet as these two passages show, Lanyer portrays the Countess as both the widow and wife of Christ. Toward the middle of the poem Lanyer again describes her as the “Deere Spouse of Christ” (1170). As the wife of Christ, Lanyer ascribes to the Countess these same virtues of Christ—feminine, masculine, and royal:

Thy beauty shining brighter than the Sunne,
Thine honour more than ever Monarke gaind,
Thy wealth exceeding his that Kingdomes wonne,
Thy Love unto his Spouse, thy Faith unfaind,
Thy Constancy in what thou hast begun,
Till thou his heavenly Kingdom have obtaind;

Respecting worldly wealth to be but drosse,
Which, if abus'd, doth proove the owners losse.

(1401-1408)

In this passage the Countess possesses more “honour” and greater “wealth” than any earthly monarch and she will enlarge her estate upon her death when she will “obtain” a “heavenly Kingdom.” To these royal riches Lanyer highlights those typically feminine virtues of beauty, love, faith, and constancy. In the last two lines, Lanyer underscores this catalogue of the Countess’s excellent qualities in declaring the Countess to be above respecting wealth in the material world and yet knowing the price “owners” pay in abusing it.

Neither Christ nor the Old Testament women with whom Lanyer compares the Countess create revolutions. Instead, they root out evil or protect their people from their enemies. They challenge whatever force aims to overwhelm the rightness of rule. Lanyer depicts women exposing corruption, fighting an enemy, or following God’s call to help the state. In her prose epistle “To the Virtuous Reader,” Lanyer describes the women of the Old Testament in the role of counselor or advisor to the king. “Noble” Deborah who was “Judge and Prophetesse of Israel” brings down Sisera with her “discreet counsell” (33-34). Jael’s “resolution” unseats Sisera, the enemy king whom she drives a nail into the head of, and Hester’s “prayers and prudent proceedings” overthrow Haman and his wicked doings (35-36). Judeth brings home the head of her people’s enemy Holofernes with “invincible courage, rare wisdom, and confident carriage” (37-38). And Susanna undoes the “unjust Judges” who accuse her of seducing them when she refuses to submit

to their desire by proclaiming her “innocency” (38-39). Lanyer’s descriptions of these Old Testament women draws on a long and well-known tradition of them as “types” who anticipate Christ.³² Lanyer emphasizes the qualities of nobility, discrete counsel, resolve, prudence, courage, wisdom, and a confident bearing which are all most desirable in those who serve a monarch at court. Several of these women also act as we have seen counselors be advised to as when they enact a fiction to help serve their ruler. Judeth best exhibits this capacity when she pretends to betray her people only to get close enough to the enemy to cut off the head of their king.

These women act as Lanyer in the “Salve Deus” describes Christ and the first male saints acting. Christ upturns the rule of those who govern badly. “He joyes the Meeke, and makes the Mightie sad, / Pulls downe the prowde, and doth the Humble reare” (75-76) and “Unto the Meane he makes the Mightie bow” (123). In Peter and John the Baptist Lanyer accentuates the courage in death each showed with the same quality of challenging rulers who “did not right.” These men, “The Princes of th’Apsotles” (1801), like Christ have the bold confrontational quality of “Champions from the field” (1808):

They still continued in their glorious fight,
Against the enemies of flesh and blood;
And in Gods law did set their whole delight,
Suppressing evill, and erecting good:

³² For example, in his study of medieval imagery regarding the virtues, Adolph Katzenellenbogen cites Judith and Jael as exemplary figures in the expression of humility (*Humilitas*). See *Allegories of the Virtues and Vices in Mediaeval Art: From Early Christian Times to the Thirteenth Century* (London: The Warburg Institute, 1939) 57.

Not sparing Kings in what they did not right. (1809-13)

Like Lanyer's women, John the Baptist in this passage speaks the "truth according to Gods word" (1820) and accuses King Herod of incest. For this confrontation John was beheaded.

These qualities of keeping kings on the right path mirror the example set by Lanyer's women from both the Old and New Testament. In the "Salve Deus" women serve an important role in the right rule of kings. In the New Testament Lanyer brings to life the qualities of bold confrontation, forthrightness, and truth telling in her depiction of Pilate's wife. In admonishing her husband to turn away from condemning Jesus, Pilate's wife proves an able counselor, able to address with authority the consequences of Pilate's decision in God's eyes, for the unruly mob, and with respect to his immediate superior, Herod. She warns Pilate that Eve's offense will be compounded by "This sinne of yours" which "hath no excuse, nor end" (832), and that he cannot "appease" the people demanding Christ's death "With blood, and wrong, with tyrannie, and might" (844-45). When Lanyer identifies the Countess' virtue with these Biblical women and Christ, she creates a person in whom the reenactment of these political actions could occur during the reign of the first Stuart king. Moreover, Lanyer represents the Countess as a conduit through which others may come to act with the same integrity. In her address to the Countess Lanyer describes the "Salve Deus" as a "mirroure of your most worthy minde. . . to be a light unto those that come after, desiring to tread in the narrow path of virtue, that leads the way to heaven" (30-34). In the "Salve Deus" Lanyer is more explicit,

describing the Countess' "faire virtues" as invested with the power to draw others into her own sphere:

These are those Keyes Saint *Peter* did possesse,
Which with a Spirituall powre are giv'n to thee,
To heale the soules of those that doe transgresse,
By thy faire virtues; which, if once they see,
Unto the like they doe their minds adresse,
Such as thou art, such they desire to be:

If they be blind, thou giv'st to them their sight;

If deafe or lame, they heare, and goe upright. (1369-1376)

In these lines, Lanyer describes the Countess' power to transform in those miraculous terms used to describe Christ's healing powers: the blind are made to see, the deaf to hear, and the lame to walk. But the Countess also possesses an appeal to those who "transgresse." Lanyer invokes the Petrarchan love language in describing the others' attraction to the Countess. As they see the example of the Countess, these "soules" feel a "desire" to be like her. Lanyer acts as the Countess' spokesperson to those who may affect the fortunes of her virtuous mistress and of the whole community of followers of Christ. The Countess' virtues are meant to spread their influence to others. In praising the beauty of the Countess' mind, Lanyer represents her writing as preparing the soil for those "fair seeds of Virtue" in the next passage of which the Countess holds a "store":

Good Madame, though your modestie be such,
Not to acknowledge what we know and find;
And that you thinke these prayes overmuch,
Which doe expresse the beautie of your mind;
Yet pardon me although I give a touch
Unto their eyes, that else would be so blind,

As not to see thy store, and their owne wants,
From whose faire seeds of Virtue spring these plants.

(“Salve Deus” 1449-1456)

As this passage shows, there is little restraint in Lanyer’s praise for the Countess or modesty in her presentation of herself as giving sight to those who are blind. Lanyer’s capabilities follow those which the Countess possesses and which Lanyer gains from the Countess herself. The Countess’ beauty grows beyond herself through her virtue: it can be transferred to others and cultivated. Lanyer depicts this literally in the goodness in the Countess’ daughter, Anne, whom she describes in her address to her as being as “Gods Steward.../ In whom the seeds of virtue have bin sowne, / By your most worthy mother, in whose right, / All her faire parts you challenge as your owne” (57-60). In addition to this literal sense of the Countess’ nurturing power, the image of “seeds of virtue” also suggests that her virtue may grow elsewhere, in others.

In her addresses Lanyer writes to persuade powerful women of court, and through them the court itself that “faire virtue” is an essential element of service to their king. Throughout the addresses Lanyer refers so frequently to virtue that a reader may well

overlook it as a commonplace. In the addresses Lanyer splits her use of the word to represent Virtue as a powerful entity, with uses of the word to describe persons as virtuous. Nearly three times as many forms of the word virtue—59—appear in 10 of the 11 addresses (806 lines of poetry (mainly) and prose) as appear—22—in the “Salve Deus” (1840 lines). In fewer than half the number of lines the word occurs four times as frequently. Given the political agency the word “virtue” underscores, it is fitting the only address in which the word virtue does not appear is to Arabella Stuart. There Lanyer refers to the Lady receiving Christ’s “grace” (14) from reading this work. Given Stuart’s strong claim to the throne as James’ cousin,³³ Lanyer could not address her as working within a political sphere. The Lady Arabella’s political efforts would be circumscribed by her ever-present claim to the throne. She would be unable to exercise virtue in the sense Lanyer constructs in this volume.

Virtue, which keeps kings from wandering from their goodness, is meant to reinforce a sense of service, not threaten a king’s rule. This meaning lies behind Lanyer’s claim in her address to the Queen (which opens all known copies of the volume) that: “Faire virtue, though in meane attire, all Princes of the world doe most desire” (65-66). Lanyer places “Faire virtue” at the apex of the political world—an entity unto itself—which is “most desired” by kings. Few kings would outwardly deny this claim. Nor does Lanyer’s “Faire virtue” hide any more Machiavelian expedient. “Faire virtue” identifies a collection of agents who strive to keep the king on the right path. The way in which these different agents—Lanyer, as author; the *Salve Deus*; Christ; and the

³³ A claim she strengthened when Stuart secretly married William Seymour in 1610. Seymour was a grandson of Lady Catherine Grey through whom he had a claim to the English throne.

Countess of Cumberland—all resonate within the term “Faire virtue” is characteristic of Lanyer’s poetic style. Lanyer asserts that a king could want nothing more than to be served by those who would preserve his rule and the integrity of his rule.

Lanyer’s addresses to women of power and position to take up the Countess’ virtue as a model for female political action make them apart of the vanguard which will lead other non-aristocratic readers, especially women, to virtuous action. In her address “To the Vertuous Reader,” Lanyer connects the responsibility God invests women with for defending those who rule justly with their defense of women themselves. Lanyer characterizes “wise and *virtuous* women” (31-33, italics added) such as Deborah, Judith, Hester and Suzanna as invested with the power from God to “bring downe the pride and arrogancie” of men in power (32-33). She asserts that as women defend themselves from the mob and modern day Pilates who defame women, they assist in the maintenance of political integrity. She counsels her reader to guard against those who speak “imputations” against women: “such . . . are they that dishonoured Christ his Apostles and Prophets, putting them to shamefull deaths” (25-26). In the “Salve Deus” Pilate’s wife draws a similar connection through her designation of unequal treatment of women as the abuse of power by men. When men deny women equal treatment, they lay claim to a “Sov’raigtie” which they transform into “tyranny” (825-832).

Lanyer’s virtuous women display in their regard for hierarchy an unswerving loyalty that contrasts with the male characters in her book. Peter, for example, is among the other disciples when they fail to stand by their lord at his death. Lanyer strenuously censures the faltering loyalty of these men asserting that they are weak because they are men (and “earth”—a reference to Genesis 1:27):

His hatefull foes are ready now to take him,
And all his deere Disciples do forsake him.

Those deare Disciples that he most did love,
And were attendant at his becke and call,
When triall of affliction came to prove,
They first left him, who now must leave them all:
For they were earth, and he came from above,
Which made them apt to flie, and fit to fall:

Though they protest they never will forsake him,
They do like men, when dangers overtake them.

(623-632)

In this passage the disciples as followers of Christ are like men of counsel. They attend Christ at his “becke and call” and are near to him not only in person, but in feeling, as the repetition of “deare” conveys. Still this intimacy and previous service do not prevent their devotion from wavering. They fail Christ as faithless courtiers might a desperate king. And though Lanyer ascribes their weakness to their being of mortal flesh (“they were earth”), she leaves open the implication that women are more loyal than men: they remain in attendance. When Christ labors to carry the cross, those who stay beside him are the daughters of Jerusalem. They weep for Jesus’ pain:

Your cries enforced mercie, grace, and love

From him, whom greatest Princes could not moove:

To speake one word, nor once to lift his eyes

Unto proud *Pilate*, no nor *Herod*, king;

By all the Questions that they could devise,

Could make him answere to no manner of thing;

Yet these poore women, by their pitious cries

Did move their Lord, their Lover, and their King,

To take compassion, turne about, and speake

To them whose hearts were ready now to breake. (975-984)

In this passage the women's cries publicly mark the injustice inflicted on Christ. Their deep emotion moves Christ to return them words of comfort and to honor them above worldly princes. In the end only the daughters of Jerusalem attempt to ameliorate the tyranny Jesus suffers:

When spightfull men with torments did oppresse

Th'afflicted body of this innocent Dove,

Poore women seeing how much they did transgresse,

By teares, by sighes, by cries intreat, may prove,

What may be done among the thickest presse,

They labor still these tyrants hearts to move;

In pitie and compassion to forbear

Their whipping, spurning, tearing of his haire. (993-1000)

In Lanyer's story of the passion men condemn, abandon, and torment Christ. Men may possess the virtues of Christ, but in the "Salve Deus" it is women who enact them.³⁴

* * *

Lanyer chooses to speak in the form like that used by an earlier Scottish king and on a biblical subject which James I of England himself wrote. Lanyer's use of a verse form, rhyme royal, and variations on it, recalls King James I of England's reputation as a poet and the poetry of another Scottish king, James I of Scotland. Lanyer uses a variety of stanza forms in the *Salve Deus*. Her poem to Mary Sidney Herbert is in four line stanzas. In three other poems Lanyer used six line stanzas: to Queen Anne, to the Lady Susan, and to the Countess of Suffolk, and she used the eight line form of ottava rima to compose her address to the Countess of Dorset and the "Salve Deus" itself in. "The Description of Cooke-Ham" is a 210-line poem in heroic couplets. Lanyer also wrote

³⁴ Critical views of Lanyer's treatment of men vary widely. I am in agreement with Kari Boyd McBride who in "Gender and Judaism in Meditations on the Passion: Middleton, Southwell, Lanyer, and Fletcher," *Discovering and (Re)Covering the Seventeenth Century Religious Lyric*, ed. Eugene R. Cunnar & Jeffrey Johnson (Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania: Duquense University Press, 2001), characterizes Lanyer as portraying men "as sinners who, on account of their sin, do not have the right to lord it over women" (32) rather than demonizing them. The latter is the view expressed by Debra Rienstra in the same volume who argues that Lanyer's gender configurations throughout the *Salve Deus* are "women are central and men are marginalized, demonized, or excluded" (90). See also Lanyer's praise of Lady Katherine's husband Thomas Howard in her address to the Countess of Suffolk (22-30).

four of her prefatory addresses in seven line stanzas, two in iambic pentameter verse known as rhyme royal. *The Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry* describes Chaucer as the first poet to exploit the flexibility of the rhyme royal for combining “narrative” with “description, digression and comment.” *The Princeton Encyclopedia* attributes Puttenham and Gascoigne with establishing rhyme royal as the “chief English stanza for serious verse.” Both Spenser (in his *Four Hymns*) and Shakespeare (in *The Rape of Lucrece*) used it. The form took its name, however, from King James I of Scotland, who used it in his long poem *The Kingis Quair*.³⁵ Lanyer uses rhyme royal (ababbcc) in two of her prefatory poems: to the Lady Arabella Stuart, and to the Countess of Bedford. In two other verse addresses, to the Princess Elizabeth, and “To all vertuous Ladies,” Lanyer varies her rhyme scheme (ababacc) to make the rhyme royal her own. The ottava rima (abababcc) in which Lanyer composed the “Salve Deus” has a close structural kinship with rhyme royal. Also well suited to combining narrative and discursive modes, ottava rima adds one line between the first couplet in rhyme royal. The effect of this additional line is to allow Lanyer to sustain her discussion or narration through the first six lines, delaying the sense of closure brought about in the concluding couplet.

There is no evidence to suggest that James I read Lanyer’s work, and even less reason to believe he was affected by its argument. In writing on the Passion, she interpreted a Biblical story which years later James would write on himself. The Biblical Passion tells of the challenge to and ultimate proof of Christ’s kingship. King James I turned to it as a preface to a longer work he intended to write on the craft of kingship. In

³⁵ “Rhyme royal,” *Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics*, enlarged edition, ed. Alex Preminger (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1974) 710.

1619 he used the story of the Passion from Matthew (21-28) as a “forewarning” for Prince Charles as he prepared himself “for the bargain” of future kingship, should it come to him. James interpreted Christ’s crucifixion on a more literal level, seeing it as a “patern for a kings inauguration,” likening it to a king’s coronation, and commenting upon the story of Christ’s suffering as “a perfect description of the cares and crosses, that a King must prepare himselfe to indure.”³⁶

Lanyer presents a version of Christ’s Passion which suggests that King James ought to be reading Christ’s story to understand the valuable service women traditionally offer kings. From the first King James discounted women among a large portion of his court as distracting from rather than contributing to the proper management of the kingdom. Hugh Jenkins in his study of the seventeenth-century country house poem describes King James I’s pursuit of a policy of repasturalization. The King wanted people back on their estates in order to, according to Jenkins, “assume their rural communal responsibilities.”³⁷ Lanyer’s view of women counters James I’s claim that women wished to be in London only to exercise their “wanton pleasures...[which] doe ruinate/insensibly both honor, wealth, & state.”³⁸ She presents Christ as a model for all kings who incorporated in himself female characteristics and valued specific female service. In the *Salve Deus* women are Christ’s most devoted supporters. In stark contrast

³⁶ King James VI and I, “A Meditation Upon the 27, 28, 29 Verses of the XXVII Chapter of Saint Matthew or A Paterne for a Kings Inauguration,” *Political Writings*, ed. Johann P. Sommerville (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994) 232-33.

³⁷ Hugh Jenkins, *Feigned Commonwealths: the Country-House Poem and the Fashioning of the Ideal Community* (Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania: Duquesne University Press, 1998) 37.

³⁸ Quoted in Jenkins, 52.

Lanyer draws a lesson of how kings who ignore the value of women's counsel imitate the rule of Pontius Pilate who compounded Eve's sin by condemning Christ to death. In the *Salve Deus* Pilate's wife is a shrewd character who is able to place the political moment Pilate faces in the context of Biblical history. Pilate's wife's speech is so forceful and forthright that it is a wonder Pilate would not have followed her advice. Lanyer lays open a choice for King James: he may make his rule more like Christ's or like Pilate remain insensible to the value of women's counsel. Lanyer suggests that, just as Queen Elizabeth could be an excellent monarch, male monarchs could incorporate female characteristics and could benefit from wise advice from female servants.

James, however, was not the only English prince whom Lanyer might hope to influence. Lanyer's addresses to Queen Anne and so many notable aristocratic women during the time that Anne was expanding the influence of her court, especially in her cultivation of her influence with her son Henry, suggests that like the Queen, Lanyer had her real sight on James' eventual heir, Prince Henry. Lanyer's preparation of a presentation copy of the *Salve Deus* for Prince Henry signals that Lanyer could imagine boldly presenting a future king of England an appeal she could not directly address to the reigning king.

CHAPTER IV

LOVE IN THE SERVICE OF THE KING:

MARY WROTH'S *PAMPHILIA TO AMPHILANTHUS*

When James VI of Scotland ascended to the throne of England in 1603, the then Mary Sidney, eldest daughter of Robert Sidney (Philip and Mary Sidney's younger brother) was 17 years old. A year later she married Sir Robert Wroth, a favorite hunting companion of James. When the new Queen Anne consolidated her own court, Wroth's father was appointed the Queen's Lord Chamberlain. Together with these immediate male associations, Mary Wroth earned a place of preferment in Queen Anne's court. She remained involved in court activities until the death of her husband in 1614, when her family finances overwhelmed her.¹ Her difficult financial situation and a dramatic change in the composition of Anne's court in 1616² contributed to Wroth not returning to court after 1614. Anne's death in 1619 closed Wroth's formal access to court. Though Lady Wroth left court circles, her writing indicates that she remained deeply attached to

¹ Biographical information is summarized from Josephine A. Roberts, ed., "Introduction," *The Poems of Lady Mary Wroth* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1983) 6-12. Roberts discusses the evidence for Mary Sidney's birth in 1586 or 1587.

² Josephine A. Roberts points out the change in Anne's court in her "Critical Introduction," *The First Part of the Countess of Montgomery's Urania by Lady Mary Wroth* (Binghamton, New York: Medieval and Renaissance Text and Studies, 1995) iii.

them. Despite her remove, Wroth not only maintained contact with members of court, but in 1621 she asserted a place for herself as a writer that she had never occupied as a member of Queen Anne's court. Following in the steps of her aunt and uncle, Wroth turned to authorship when other channels to court were closed. She penned a prose romance, the *Urania*, and a sonnet sequence, *Pamphilia to Amphilanthus*, which appeared together in print in 1621.

The seven years between her husband's death and her publication of her writing were years of tremendous change and challenge for Mary Wroth. After the death of her infant son in 1615, she struggled with debt and the loss of Sir Robert's estate (Roberts, "Introduction," 23, 26, 28). Her love affair with her first cousin, William Herbert, the Earl of Pembroke, led to the birth of two children. One modern critic, Ann Rosalind Jones, has characterized Wroth's appearance as a writer as an attempt to recoup herself as a "fallen courtier." Jones argues that Wroth turned to the "discourses of pastoral and tragedy...to claim a sympathetic hearing for the complaint of the woman courtier."³ Jones argues that "Wroth makes Pamphilia's situation as an unrequited lover the subject of laments that were strategic attempts to rewrite her disgrace [bearing two illegitimate children] and to put an end to her exclusion from court society" (137). Jones' argument is important because it views Wroth as a writer within the political context in which she remained very interested.

Though she probably did not have direct access to the king after the dissolution of Queen Anne's court in 1619, following Anne's death Wroth did remain in contact with

³ Ann Rosalind Jones, *The Currency of Eros: Women's Love Lyric in Europe, 1540-1620* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990) 151.

members of King James' court, including the highly influential and powerful favorite of King James, George Villiers, the Duke of Buckingham. Building on Jones' argument, in this chapter I will argue that Wroth's poetry moves through her own personal situation into the dynamics of the personal relationships between the king and his closest advisors. I argue that in her sonnet sequence, *Pamphilia to Amphilanthus*, Wroth created a speaker who comments from within on the dynamics of being in service within the Stuart court. In a radical revision of the erotically charged male-female relationship of *Astrophil and Stella*, Wroth creates a poet/speaker whose performance of gender may be read as either male or female. Wroth's speaker, I argue, is a ventriloquist, either a male or female lover serving a beloved whose name Amphilanthus (lover of two) indicates that even if he returns the speaker's affections, he loves others as well. Through this speaking lover, Wroth offered to a court-centered readership political counsel that might mediate the demands of loving a monarch of multiple affections. Pamphilia, Wroth's speaking lover, negotiates the multiple desires of her beloved in a fashion paralleling the manner in which King James' counselors had to negotiate his loves for a variety of different men and women. Thus Wroth's sonnet sequence speaks both to Buckingham and the king in the language of a devoted servant, even as it reflects how Queen Anne may well have struggled with James' desires for his courtiers. Wroth's poetry functions as more than a register of personal complaint. It is an assertion of herself as a Sidney who is a knowledgeable presence in court politics.

* * *

By 1621 more than ever the Sidneys lacked a presence in Stuart court politics. When in May of 1621 Mary Wroth's mother, Barbara Gamage, died unexpectedly, Wroth's father, Robert Sidney, took the loss of his wife especially hard. According to his modern biographer, Millicent Hay, Sidney had continued to serve his king as an advisor over the war in the Palatinate after Queen Anne's death. However, ill health, debt, and sorrow increasingly incapacitated him.⁴ Then in October of 1621, Mary Sidney Herbert died from the smallpox. Her funeral celebration displayed what her prominence had been during her life.⁵ Her death left the Sidney family without a representative in name to carry on their legacy of royal service. Like her aunt before her, Wroth intimately identified herself as a Sidney and she entered into publication as a female author boldly. Though married to a knight, Wroth retained the Sidney family emblem—an arrowhead—as her coat of arms.⁶ Until the death of her husband, she was an active member of court and a patron of the arts. She participated in masques. In 1612 Ben Jonson dedicated *The Alchemist* to her, describing her as “most aequall with virtue and her blood: The Grace, and Glory of women.”⁷ Even after her remove from court she remained in contact with

⁴ Millicent V. Hay, *The Life of Robert Sidney, Earl of Leicester (1563-1626)* (Washington: The Folger Shakespeare Library, 1984) 228.

⁵ Hannay, Margaret P., *Philip's Phoenix: Mary Sidney, Countess of Pembroke* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990) 205.

⁶ Henry Peacham pictured and gave a description and her coat of arms in *The Compleat Gentleman*, STC 19502 (London: F. Constable, 1622) 161. For a reproduction of the design and a part of Peacham's description see Roberts, “Introduction,” *Poems*, 11.

⁷ All references to Ben Jonson's poetry are to Hereford and Simpson, eds., *The Complete Works* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1925-1952).

members of court (Roberts, "Critical Introduction," xlv), and signed her correspondence with the Sidney family seal.

The pathway to royal power Wroth sought in her writing ignited in controversy just a few months after the printing of her prose romance and sonnet sequence in October 1621. Before the end of December, Wroth wrote the Duke of Buckingham in defense of her works: "The strang constructions which are made of my booke contrary to my imagination, and as farr from my meaning as is possible for truth to bee from conjecture...."⁸ Here and in the following lines of the letter Wroth affirms her ownership of her works which in expressing "my purpose" she never "bent to give the least cause of offense" and "my thoughts" for which she thought "free" of what she is now "censurd for." In response to the claim of her "thinking any such thing"—a description so vague Wroth has assumed Buckingham was fully informed of the complaint against her—she has "caused" the sale of her book to "bee forbidden."

Toward the end of her letter, Wroth asserts parenthetically that these books "(...from the first were solde against my minde I never purposing to have had them published)...." Whether Wroth agreed with the printing of her volume for sale or not, she did not intervene in the preparation of the text for printing between July when the *Urania* was entered in the Stationers' Register and its sale in October. That the volume was incompletely prepared for a public edition—the text of the *Urania* begins with the B signature—suggests to Roberts "that the printer expected some preliminary material he

⁸ Lady Mary Wroth to the Duke of Buckingham, *The Poems of Lady Mary Wroth*, ed. by Josephine A. Roberts (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1983) 236. All references to this letter are to Roberts' text.

did not later receive” (“Introduction” 69). More significant, however, is the beautifully engraved title page, probably completed in September, which announces Wroth as the Daughter of the Earl of Leicester and “Neece to the ever famous, and renowned Sir Phillips Sidney knight. And to the most excellent Lady Mary Countesse of Pembroke late deceased.” Whether or not Wroth authorized the volume’s sale, during its preparation for print Wroth’s lineage as a Sidney was clearly laid out.

Margaret Ezell notes her agreement with other critics, among them Elizabeth Hageman, that Katherine Philips, a later seventeenth-century poet, was “an author at odds with changing literary culture and technology.”⁹ So, too, we may think of Wroth’s earlier invocation of the “I-didn’t-want-my-writing-in-print” stance as a response to the patriarchal strictures that discouraged women from public pursuits at the very cultural moment when women such as Wroth were establishing a tradition of women’s printing their own writing. Or perhaps Wroth was not aiming for a public consumption of her texts, but for a limited circulation of a small printed edition of a work whose sheer length would have made scribal publication of even a few copies almost impossible.

Whatever Wroth’s intentions for print, her letter to Buckingham confirms that she intended him to be part of the audience of her works and that she intended to be read as a Sidney. Her letter to the king’s favorite shows Wroth had personal access to important members of the Stuart court. While in her letter she makes little of her connection with Buckingham, Wroth shows that she was on familiar enough terms with George Villiers to have sent him a copy of her “booke.” She reassures Buckingham that she never sought to

⁹ Margaret J.M. Ezell, *Social Authorship and the Advent of Print* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999) 52.

cause harm and asks him to help her secure a warrant from King James to aid her in retrieving “thos [copies] that are abroad.” She delicately requests that he return “that which I sent you” to serve as an example for others to return their copies. Wroth may be referring to a recently printed copy of her work, or a version of it in manuscript. In either case, her request shows that she made recourse to Buckingham in part because he had already personally received a copy of her writing from her before any controversy.¹⁰

Though she signed the letter “Mary wrothe,” she identified herself as a Sidney in the use of her Sidney coat of arms beneath her signature (Roberts “Introduction,” 11 n.25).

Maureen Quilligan notes that thirty years earlier, Mary Sidney Herbert’s public printing of translations made a “public female authorship” possible. But as Quilligan further notes, it was not through translation that Wroth sought authorship; rather she took her uncle’s works (prose romance, sonnet sequence, courtly drama) as her models.¹¹

¹⁰ The controversy continued in one form in an exchange of letters between Wroth and Lord Denny who felt excoriated by Wroth’s thin depiction of him as an evil father-in-law (Roberts “Introduction” 31-32). In one of his letters Denny suggests that he would not be so concerned if Wroth’s depiction could detract from his standing with the king: “I could have borne your trampling upon me or any other disgrace that had not produced me as a scorn to the eyes of my dread and dear sovereigne and master....” The controversy centered upon the *Urania*, not Wroth’s sonnet sequence. For the text of the letters see the appendix to *The Poems of Lady Mary Wroth*, 237-41.

¹¹ Maureen Quilligan, “The Constant Subject: Instability and Female Authority in Wroth’s *Urania* Poems,” *Soliciting Interpretation: Literary Theory and Seventeenth-Century English Poetry*, ed. Elizabeth D. Harvey and Katherine Eisaman Maus (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1991) 308.

Wroth’s sonnets also recall those of her father, Robert Sidney, and her first cousin, William Herbert. Robert Sidney’s sonnets are generally dated as written during the late 1590’s. From their themes and images, Millicent Hay interprets them as “composed during the darkest moments of his career” when Sidney had returned to court after a decade of service in the Netherlands and received little favor from Queen Elizabeth (197). William Herbert’s sonnets are less readily dated. They appeared in print in 1660, 36 years after his death (Onderwyzer ii). However, even in the early years of James’ reign, Herbert identified himself in a tradition of sonneteers. He presented an *impres*a as a sonnet on paper in a tiltyard appearance early in James’ reign.

Wroth's changes to these genres are often distinguished by her gender. In her 1995 critical edition of Wroth's *Urania*, Josephine Roberts outlined the complex interrelationship between the female characters in the *Urania* and Lady Wroth's life. In her introduction Roberts argues Wroth's "multiple self-portraits within the work—most prominently Pamphilia, Bellamira, and Lindamira—suggest a continuing struggle of self-representation, in which the author seeks to assert and justify her behavior in the face of a disapproving public" (*Urania* lxxi-lxxii). In Lindamira, Roberts perceives, Wroth "shadows her own career as a courtier and poet in relation to her personal life." Through Bellamira "she highlights her private relationship with [the Earl of] Pembroke, but subordinates her role as an artist." For Roberts, Pamphilia in the *Urania* is Wroth's most comprehensive self-portrait. Through her "Wroth attempts to integrate her public and private lives into a single portrait, but one which undergoes marked transformation from the first to the second part of the romance" (lxxii).

Drawing a similar connection between Wroth's gender and her fictional women, critics have attributed Wroth's sonnet sequence, *Pamphilia to Amphilanthus*, with being an important moment in which a female author creates an autonomous feminine voice. Among the "important innovations to the sonnet sequence" with which Josephine Roberts credits Wroth is "the creation of a female persona." With this Roberts marks her as "the first English writer to reverse the sexual roles within a complete sonnet collection" ("Introduction" 62). Nona Fienberg argues that through the richly textured fictional lives of the characters in the *Urania* Wroth "establishes a female subjectivity," and a

“language for female desire.”¹² Naomi Miller analyzes the speaker’s movement among multiple subject positions which press against, pull on, and at times threaten to erase one another. Miller argues that the speaker’s movement among these positions destabilizes traditional poetic conventions and social conventions and opens up a space in which a female speaker can establish her agency as a poet, lover, and lady without compromising her individual integrity, chastity, or her own heart.¹³ Each of these is and remain valuable readings of Wroth in women’s literary history.

Yet each of these readings relies on an inter-relationship between Wroth’s prose romance and her sonnet sequence which Wroth suggests, but does not complete. Wroth connects her texts through the title of her sequence which bears the names of a pair of lovers who appear in the *Urania*, Pamphilia and Amphilanthus. Though Amphilanthus is never named in the sequence, Wroth signs the name “Pamphilia” after P55 (“How like a fire does love increase in mee”) which ends the first section of poems, and after poem 103 (“My muse now hapy, lay thy self to rest”), the last poem in the collection. As Roberts suggests, it appears as if “Pamphilia” were signing her name to her work. These signatures appear in both the printed editions and in the holograph manuscript of the poems. In addition, the manuscript displays in Wroth’s italic hand the words “Pamphilia’s poems” on the inside page and the title “Pamphilia to Amphilanthus” before the first sonnet. In the printed edition this title is carried over as a heading on each page.

¹² Nona Fienberg, “Mary Wroth and the Invention of Female Poetic Subjectivity,” *Reading Mary Wroth: Representing Alternatives in Early Modern England*, ed. Naomi J. Miller and Gary Waller (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 1991) 180, 185.

¹³ Naomi J. Miller, *Changing the Subject: Mary Wroth and Figurations of Gender in Early Modern England* (Lexington, Kentucky: University Press of Kentucky, 1996).

Though Roberts considers that Wroth emphasizes the poet/speaker's identity as Pamphilia's with the appearances of this name, when Roberts refers to the "many additional details" concerning Pamphilia to Amphilanthus she points not to the sequence but to the *Urania* ("Introduction" 42). A careful reading of the sequence shows that these limited references to Pamphilia are curiously the *only* identification of the poet/speaker with a female character in the *Urania*.

Wroth's connection of her sonnets with a female protagonist in the *Urania* has encouraged readers to interpret her sequence as a continuation of her prose romance. Elaine Beilin, for example, argues for this connection in describing the *Urania* as the "companion work" to Wroth's sonnet sequence which "provides a context for the sonnets."¹⁴ Yet while Wroth frames her sequence with Pamphilia's name, she does not confirm or fill in the frame for the speaker's identity which she creates.¹⁵ In the one instance in which the speaker describes being amidst others who engage in the sports, the "pleasing pastime[s]" (26.1), associated with court when "Some hunt, some hauke, some play, while some delight / In sweet discourse, and musique shoves joys might" (26.2-3),

¹⁴ Elaine V. Beilin, "'The Only Perfect Vertue': Constancy in Mary Wroth's *Pamphilia to Amphilanthus*," *Spenser Studies* II, ed. by Patrick Cullen and Thomas P. Roche, Jr. (Pittsburg, PA: The University of Pittsburgh Press, 1981) 230.

¹⁵ Certainly there are textual and compositional connections between the *Urania* and *Pamphilia to Amphilanthus*; however, these connections are not echoed in the fictions of each of these works. In her critical edition of Wroth's poems, Josephine Roberts shows that Wroth moved poems from the manuscript collection to her prose romance. According to Roberts, five songs, three sonnets, and a dialogue from the Folger manuscript are distributed throughout the first part of the *Urania* ("Introduction" 62). Masten questions Roberts' relationship of the printed texts to the manuscript, but—concerned with whether Wroth's sonnets circulated in manuscript—he focuses his arguments on the inconclusive watermark dates, and the absence of copies of Wroth's poems in contemporary miscellanies (67-68). By limiting his analysis to these aspects and not examining the compositional connections between the texts he does not raise credible doubts about Roberts' textual analysis.

Wroth identifies the speaker as a member of court, but she does not provide details to confirm the identity of her speaker as the Queen Pamphilia of her prose romance. One result of the name which Wroth gives to her sequence, but not explicitly to her poet/speaker, is that critics base their readings of the sequence on two undemonstrated assertions. The first is that Wroth's poet/speaker is, like the character of Pamphilia in the *Urania*, a representation of Wroth herself. The second is that Wroth's poet/speaker represents a strictly female point of view.

The biographical connection between Wroth and the poet/speaker of her sequence arises from the detailed biographical references in Wroth's *Urania* between herself and the character of Queen Pamphilia. Yet, just as Wroth does not describe or even subtly allude within her sequence to the fictional character of Queen Pamphilia in the *Urania*, she does not include elements of her own biography. As Josephine Roberts has noted, "Wroth sharply limited the degree of personal reference" within the sequence.¹⁶ Similarly Ann Rosalind Jones notes that the sequence is set in a "rural vacuum" which excludes "the characters modeled on the courtiers [with whom] Wroth actually associated" (144). Whereas the selective biographical details in Sidney's *Astrophil and*

¹⁶ Josephine A. Roberts, "Biographical Problem" 48-49. One possible reference to Wroth's own beloved, William Herbert, the Earl of Pembroke, occurs in the last line of poem 55—the end of the first full section of the sequence. ["Yet love I *will* till I butt ashes prove" (italics added).] Roberts changed her view of Wroth's sequence in her 1983 critical edition of Wroth's poetry. There Roberts comments: "In her poetry, [Wroth] turned to examine a more deeply personal goal which in her own life seemed to remain elusively beyond her grasp: the possibility of ever attaining an enduring human relationship in love" (*Poems* 40). Though Roberts is careful to never identify the speaker of the sequence with Lady Mary Wroth, many readers have worked explicitly or implicitly from this assertion of a biographical connection.

Stella lead the reader to wonder what *kind* of biography his sequence creates, there is no biography to question in Wroth's sequence.¹⁷

Equally unproven is the assertion that the speaker in Wroth's sequence is female. The feminine ending of the name Pamphilia (in Latin) encourages the reader to identify the speaker as female. Yet, Wroth does not develop her speaker's display of gender other than in the name she gives in her title and in the two signatures. Nona Fienberg describes the significant contrast in the depiction of gender between the *Urania* and *Pamphilia to Amphilanthus*:

...unlike *Urania*, where women's participation in the material world is given such concrete form as Pamphilia's embroidering of a waistcoat, *Pamphilia to Amphilanthus* banishes the signs of women's material culture. In the songs and sonnets there is no needlework, no housecleaning, no childrearing, no supervising of servants, no cookery, preserving, surgery, physic, tailoring, and no hospitality (Fienberg 180).

As Fienberg points out, Wroth's sonnet sequence leaves out any traces of the speaker's participation in a world characterized by women's activities or a performance of gender

¹⁷ The added critical assumption that a text reflects the author's gender is a part of what Danielle Clarke in her "Introduction" to *This Doubled Voice: Gendered Writing in Early Modern England* [eds. Danielle Clarke and Elizabeth Clarke (New York: St. Martin's Press, Inc., 2000) 1-15.] describes as a "gynocritical tendency" of literary criticism regarding women's writing "to attribute certain qualities to the text on the basis of the writer's sex" (2). While Clarke acknowledges that this has been a useful critical and political concept for critics, she argues that "the sex of the author is neither a reliable nor an authentic indication of the speaker's gender" (2).

by the speaker which is definitively female. Nevertheless, the idea that Wroth's poet/speaker is female is almost universally assumed. This assumption may derive from the nature of love poetry itself. Ann Rosalind Jones argues that love poetry is a mode which "centralizes sociosexual differences as no other literary mode does" and whereas "the narrator of epic or prose romance is not necessarily marked by gender; the speaker in erotic poetry always is" (7). In her *Urania*, Wroth creates male and female characters with identifiable gender traits. The reader does not scrutinize the narrator's voice with questions of gender. Yet, the reader addressing a sonnet about love is placed in a context where issues of desire and gender are foremost. Encountering a sonnet written by a female poet, a reader might well assume the narrative "I" of the sonnet to be a woman's. In her first sonnet of *Pamphilia to Amphilanthus* Wroth initiates nearly all of the major concerns of the sequence, yet as Heather Dubrow notes this sonnet has not received the critical attention it deserves (137). The somber, melancholy tone characterizes the disorientation and disruption that initiates the speaker into a notably solitary arena of love:

When nights black mantle could most darknes prove,
And sleepe deaths Image did my senceses hier
From knowledg of my self, then thought did move
Swifter then those most swiftnes need require:

In sleepe, a Chariot drawne by wing'd desire
I sawe: wher sate bright Venus Queene of love,

And att her feete her sonne, still adding fire
 To burning hearts which she did hold above,

 Butt one hart flaming more then all the rest
 The goddess held, and putt itt to my brest,
 Deare sonne, now shutt sayd she: thus must wee winn;

 Hee her obay'd, and martir'd my poore hart,
 I, waking hop'd as dreames itt would depart
 Yett since: O mee: a lover I have binn.¹⁸

Through the first eleven lines of this sonnet, the speaker is disarmed by the powers of sleep and night and is at first the witness and then the victim of the dream vision that enters unawares. Wrapped in the shroud-like image of "nights black mantle," and plunged into the depths of "sleepe deaths Image" (1.1-2), the speaker is physically isolated from others and completely passive. What would seem to be a safe remove from love's plays, however, turns out to be where the speaker is the target of love. Love lays claim to the speaker's heart while sleep disables the speaker's defenses, divorcing "senceses" from the "knowledg of self" (1.2-3). The speaker implies that while good sense which might control this vision slumbers, the speaker's passionate senses are

¹⁸ All references to Wroth's poetry (including the poem numbers assigned them in this edition) are to *The Poems of Lady Mary Wroth*, ed. Josephine A. Roberts (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1983).

unloosed from the control usually imposed on them. In this state of disconnection, the speaker's "thoughts" move with a disorienting speed ("swifter then those most swiftness need require" (1.3-4)).

This first sonnet sets Wroth's sequence off from earlier English sonnet sequences. Josephine Roberts credits Wroth with innovating on the sonnet sequence tradition by shifting the focus away from the beloved and onto the struggles of the poet/speaker (*Poems* 48). Unlike other early modern sequences which depict fictional efforts at seduction, Wroth's sequence does not dramatize the seduction of the beloved. The dream vision recounts the speaker's initiation into love in a scene in which the beloved has no role. The speakers in Philip Sidney's *Astrophil and Stella*, and Edmund Spenser's *The Amoretti* (1595), for example, use the first sonnet of their sequences to establish their purpose for writing—to woo their female beloved. Astrophil addresses his beloved in the first lines of the sonnet as the "Deare She" (1.2) and tells her of his aim to win her "grace" (1.4).¹⁹ Spenser refers to his beloved as "she" (1.10) and states the purpose of his poems as to "seeke her to please alone" (1.14).²⁰ In later sonnets in their respective sequences, Sidney and Spenser each confirm the beloved's gender and establish the gender of each speaker as male.²¹ In contrast, Wroth does not initiate her sequence with

¹⁹ All references to Sir Philip Sidney's *Astrophil and Stella* are to *The Poems of Sir Philip Sidney*, ed. William A. Ringler (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1962): 165-237.

²⁰ All references to Edmund Spenser's poetry are to *Edmund Spenser's Poetry*, 3rd ed., ed. Hugh Maclean and Anne Lake Prescott (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1993).

²¹ For the gendering of the speaker as male in *Astrophil and Stella* see sonnet 30 in which the speaker refers to his father, a sonnet read as autobiographical; sonnet 37 in which the speaker addresses "Lordings;" sonnets 41 and 53 in which the speaker engages in a joust, known only as a male sport; sonnet 43 in which the speaker comments that "no man" can enter Stella's room; and sonnet 54 in which the speaker refers to himself as "he." In the *Amoretti* the speaker refers to

an awareness of the sexual identity of her beloved, nor does she make it, or the speaker's sex, a significant feature in the 102 poems which follow.

In the remainder of the sequence, the beloved is, as Ann Jones remarks, "virtually absent" from the sequence: "never named, rarely described, and only occasionally addressed" (Jones 144, see also Beilin 230). While the beloved's name, Amphilanthus, appears in the title of the work, it never appears, like the poet/speaker's name, in the body of the sequence. In an earlier assessment Roberts notes that Amphilanthus is so distant from the sequence that his "inconstancy serves as merely the condition which prompts the persona's reflections" ("Biographical Problem" 51). He is not described physically—there are no blazons (a rhetorical trope in which the poet catalogues parts of the beloved's body), and limited addresses to body parts.²² The speaker is physically removed from the beloved, except for references to his "eyes" in poems 2, 42 and 62 and to their absence in poem 50. In just five sonnets the poet/speaker addresses the beloved directly: "Deare fammish nott what you your self gave food" (15.1), "Deare cherish this..." (30.1), "Sweetest love returne againe" (28.1) and sonnets 61 and 62, where the speaker veers toward giving the beloved advice. Wroth genders the beloved through a scattering of pronoun references throughout the sequence. One example occurs in poem 47 when the speaker describes how the beauty of the stars "breeds desire" (47.5), though even

himself as male in sonnet 8 ("Well is he borne that may behold you ever" (14)); sonnets 36 and 49; as well as sonnet 75 in which the speaker addresses himself as "Vaine man" (5).

²² The feminist critique of the traditional male poet's use of blazons began with Nancy J. Vickers, "Diana Described: Scattered Woman and Scattered Rhyme," *Critical Inquiry* 8.2 (Winter 1981): 265-79. While critics often censor male poets for silencing the female beloved, few notice that Wroth's male beloved is equally silent. Instead, Wroth is typically praised for shifting the focus away from the poet/speaker's relationship with the beloved and onto the internal experience of love.

stronger is the “warmth inspire[d]” (47.7) by “*his grace*” (47.8, italics added). In other instances in which the speaker may be construed as addressing the beloved, the address doubles as one to Love, also imaged as male, which stands in place of the beloved (P6, 8, 12, 38, 48, 53, 76). The speaker’s appeal to a force of love, rather than directly to the beloved, dampens the expressions of desire. Any effort at seduction in Wroth’s sequence involves the speaker’s efforts to seduce “love”—to engage its powers to draw the beloved closer. Particularly through the first 55 poems, the speaker seeks to have “Love butt play thy part” (3.1).

The speaker’s distance from immediate desire is consistent throughout the sequence. In instances where desire might enter, the speaker turns the effect of it away. In the example discussed above in poem 47, the beloved’s eyes are likened to the beauty of the cosmos in the “blessed starrs” (47.1), and these have the power to “breed desire” (47.5). Yet in professing that another “sight on earth”—that of the beloved—is stronger still, the speaker can only muster up the assertion that it “more warmth inspire[s] / Into my loving soule...” (47.7-8). Even when the speaker is turning to ashes born of the fires of passion, these fires have more of the sacrificial quality of the martyr than the sensual quality of the passionate lover. Wroth’s poet/speaker burns in the fires of a passion of oxymorons: a chaste desire, where chastity denotes not only constancy and monogamy, but something almost vestal.

In addition, several poems in the manuscript version that do more to foreground the speaker’s desire do not appear in the later print edition. For example, the poem numbered F2 by Roberts is modeled on an aubade, a poem in which the rising sun signals the departure of the lovers. This song, which opens with “The birds doe sing, day doth

apeere / Arise, arise my only deere, / Greete this faire morne with thy faire eyes" (F2.1-3), appears in the folio version between poems 73 and 74, but does not appear in the print edition. Also appearing in the manuscript, several poems after the last sonnet (103), is a more sensually suggestive poem (F5) describing the first "blow" (F5.1) of love launched by "Two sparckling eyes" and "love-begetting lips" (F5.9-10). This sonnet, which concludes with the speaker's vow to "still serve those lips, and eyes" (F5.14), also does not appear in the later print version.

In critical readings in which the speaker is cast as a female, critics portray Pamphilia as caught in the bind of trying to show a love that is both passionate *and* chaste. According to this narrative, a woman driven by the active force of love to write and woo enters a traditionally defined male sphere, yet in her culture she must be still the chaste female who embodies the purest form of love. Beilin attributes the speaker's distance from the site of seduction and sexualized elements in the sequence to the modesty required of women in the period (230). Ann Rosalind Jones points out that situating her female speaker away from her beloved allows Wroth to "fulfill a social as well as a rhetorical requirement": the guarantee of "the speaker's purity" (35). In these explicitly gendered readings, Wroth's speaker enters the tradition of Petrarchan love poetry in such a way that she may claim space within it without compromising her feminine virtue.

Critical readings of the sequence which ground the speaker's authority in the identity of Wroth herself, or with Queen Pamphilia in the *Urania* rely on the persona's gendering as female. The assumption of the speaker's female gender, however, is not upheld in the sequence. Wroth does not appeal to the authority Philip Sidney gives his

speaker by incorporating select details of her life experience in her sonnet sequence. Neither does she carry over the details of Queen Pamphilia's life from her *Urania*. In fact, Wroth excludes all telling references to the physical or sexual identity of the speaker. The "Pamphilia" of the sequence lacks even an indirect portrayal of gender, outside of "her" name. The poet/speaker's authority is based upon an ability to craft a fictional space in which the experience of love is its own authority. What Wroth writes is of a love that is not distinctively gendered, but which stands up to the forces of love to establish an authentic space for itself.

One contemporary reader of Wroth's poetry recognized that her depiction of love could serve a doubled gender role. Ben Jonson wrote a sonnet in praise of Wroth's poetry in which he attributed her poems with having made him a better poet *and* a better lover. Though the date of composition is unknown, Jonson's tribute to Wroth appeared in *Underwood*, a collection of his poetry printed in 1640, three years after his death. Jonson's first line recalls the end of Wroth's first sonnet in her collection "Yett since: O mee: a lover I have been":

I that have been a lover, and could show it,
Though not in these, in rhymes not wholly dumb,
Since I exscribe your sonnets, am become
A better lover, and much better poet. (xxviii, 1-4)

As Josephine Roberts remarks Jonson intensified his compliment to Mary Wroth by writing in the sonnet form: this being one of just five sonnets Jonson ever wrote

("Introduction," 59). Jonson attested to his friend Drummond that he felt the sonnet form treated verse "like the Tirrants bed, where some who were too short were racked, others too long cut Short" (*Works* VII, 224). This helps explain the reference to "these" in line 2 above as sonnets ("Though not in these,...") which Jonson typically did not use to "show" himself as "a lover." Not a sonnet writer himself, Jonson suggests he literally copied out ("exscribed") Wroth's sonnets to get inside the experience of love she presents.

Jonson's testimony resonates across gender lines. As a scribe or copyist of Wroth's poems, Jonson implies that immersing himself in the vantagepoint of a woman writer's perspective has made him a better poet and lover. This is impressive praise from an accomplished poet (pleasantly understated by Jonson here as being "in rhymes not wholly dumb") who credits the verse of a woman as teaching him something worthwhile within his own male dominated tradition. Jonson attests that through literally writing down a *woman's* experience of love Jonson could "become / A better lover." Jonson's tribute also suggests that he can literally re-write the sonnets as if he were their writer—as if his perspective as a male is not excluded from the poet/speaker's point of view. Jonson can "write" out Wroth's sonnets and learn something more about being a lover because they allow him to read about an experience of love from a male as much as a female point of view.²³

²³ Maureen Quilligan offers a similarly dual-gendered position for Wroth's poet/speaker when she writes: "Pamphilia as crowned royalty is not 'trafficked' in; she is her own sovereign subject, a queen. From this position as monarch, she as female may the more easily inhabit the speaking position of the male 'subject'" (327). That Wroth framed her poems with references to Pamphilia, a monarch in her own right in the *Urania*, is enough to sustain the possibility of a subject position in which there is a crossing of genders; yet, I do not think it is possible to view

If like Jonson we recognize that the speaker's performance of gender is not exclusively female or male, we see that Wroth's sonnet sequence differs from her male predecessors not only because she is proscribed by the circumstance of being a female writer, but because she is addressing a drastically different political situation. I argue that Wroth turned to love poetry, as her uncle had before her, to address the erotic relationship between the reigning monarch and his lover(s). As Roland Greene remarks, Petrarchan love poetry is "a discourse of differences—especially of gender and power...."²⁴ Wroth shifts the differences in gender from between the lover and the beloved onto the force of love to emphasize that she is not as interested in differences in sex, as she is in differences in power.

In the remainder of this chapter I examine how Wroth uses the classical images of Venus and Cupid to explore the speaker's self-creation as a servant of the beloved who is not compromised in the role of a subject. Unlike Astrophil, the speaker in Wroth's sequence does not attempt to reverse the hierarchy within the relationship between the lover and the beloved. Rather, Wroth's speaker seeks to find a way to image a service to love and the beloved which preserves the speaker's integrity as a lover. The difference between Sidney's lovers and Wroth's is that the authority of the beloved in *Pamphilia to*

Wroth's poet/speaker through the critical lens developed by Catherine Gallagher whom Quilligan cites. An important aspect of Wroth's poet/speaker is that s/he is not, in Gallagher's terms, a "monarch" who "becomes a figure for the self-enclosed, autonomous nature of any person" (25). The *Pamphilia* of the sequence remains throughout a subject of and servant to love. Wroth, unlike Margaret Cavendish whom Gallagher reads, does not create characters that aspire to absolute autonomy; Wroth's characters aspire to serve a higher power (love) while preserving their personal integrity. See Catherine Gallagher, "Embracing the Absolute: The Politics of the Female Subject in Seventeenth-Century England," *Genders*, no.1 (Spring 1988).

²⁴ Roland Greene, *Unrequited Conquests: Love and Empire in the Colonial Americas* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1999) 6.

Amphilanthus cannot be challenged. Unlike Elizabeth who as a Queen might have her authority challenged by a consort who became King, James' regal authority could not be threatened by the unintended consequences of amorous play. Wroth's speaker struggles with the same stresses as the consorts of James: his wife, Queen Anne, and his reigning male favorite, who, at the time her sequence went into print, was the Duke of Buckingham. Wroth would have seen first hand Queen Anne's interactions with King James. I argue that the lovers in her sequence shadow the efforts of James' principal lovers to adapt to being both subject and lover of a man of multiple affections.²⁵

Wroth signals that she is doing something new with the language of love in the first sonnet of her sequence. Whereas the speaker may be either a male or a female, and the beloved is absent, the power of love is imaged as male *and* female. The depiction of Love as Venus and Cupid riding in a chariot draws upon the triumphal procession of Love described by Petrarch in the first of his six poems, the *Trionfi*. In the first of Petrarch's poems, *The Triumph of Love*,²⁶ the speaker sees in a dream vision the figure of "a great Duke victorious to beholde / Tryumphyng on a chayre" (80) who leads before him a great host of figures. The great duke is Cupid who also appears as "a boye on a firye chayre on hyghte. . . Wyth bowe in hande and arrowes sharpe and keene" (80-1). The progress, as the speaker notes in the poem, is patterned on the triumphal processions

²⁵ Throughout the remainder of this essay, I refer to the gender of the speaker as a performance of male and female qualities. I use the pronoun s/he to represent the speaker's potential for being read as female and male.

²⁶ All references to Petrarch's *Triumphs* are to *The Trymphes of Fraunces Petrarcke: The First English Translation of the "Trionfi,"* trans. Henry Parker, Lord Morley, ed. D.D. Carnicelli (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1971). Line numbers appear in parentheses.

of the Romans who led their captured enemies through Rome in a celebration of their conquest and a display of power. Cupid's prisoners include the greatest figures from classical history, mythology, the Bible, medieval literature, and all the most renowned poets, including among them Jupiter, Paris, Helen, Caesar, Lancelot and Guinevere, Paolo and Francesca, Virgil and Ovid. The speaker himself is taken up in the procession—made a slave of Cupid—until the speaker's beloved, Laura, appears and conquers Cupid with her beauty. Whereas Cupid is overthrown in Petrarch's *Triumph* by the feminine figure of Laura, Wroth introduces a feminine power together with the figure of Cupid who appears to rule over him.

In the dream vision of Wroth's speaker, Venus rides with Cupid in "a Chariot drawne by wing'd desire" (1.5) and bears the commanding title of "Queene of love" (1.6). Venus and Cupid work in league with one another, casting the speaker as a trophy of their powers. The description of their progress draws upon the sense of a tournament or battle—a sense capped by Venus' incitement to Cupid that they "winn" the speaker (1.11). The substitution of the flaming hearts for Cupid's traditional weapons, the bow and arrow, emphasize the degree to which the speaker is physically claimed by their powers. Cupid must penetrate the speaker's breast to place the heart "flaming more then all the rest" within (1.9). While Venus and Cupid join forces in this first sonnet, Venus is subtly positioned above Cupid in command. Cupid "obeys" her (12). Described as her son, he sits at her feet doing the hard labor of stoking the flames of the "burning hearts" which Venus "did hold above" (1.7-8). These flaming hearts are the badges of those who serve this Queen and her Prince.

This vision figuratively moves the speaker in opposing directions: up to join the procession of other great personages, including the most famous poet/lovers who have been captured by love, and simultaneously down into the chains of love's unrelenting powers. This split movement is reflected in the language of religious sacrifice in the last lines of the sonnet which places the speaker's personal sympathy in tension with love's aims and suggests an uneasy alliance between the speaker and love's conquest. In line twelve the speaker describes Cupid's triumph as having "martir'd my poore heart" (1.12). This phrase confirms the speaker's role as a sufferer which love's conquest assures, yet it also casts the experience in terms which resist the speaker's full participation in love's conquest. The speaker is simultaneously in thrall to love's powers, and in conflict with them. Martyrs are persecuted by forces opposed to them. They suffer for a faith they refuse to relinquish. They are not distinguished by gender: martyrs may be male or female. They achieve distinction through their sacrifice in the service of their faith. As Venus and Cupid replace the speaker's heart, they sacrifice it to their power. Yet, at the same time, because they are the powers who martyr, they appear as the speaker's persecutors. By concluding the image of Love's triumph in these specific religious terms, the speaker shows s/he has joined with love's powers although there is a substantial gap in power between them.

The speaker's uneasiness with this vision follows into waking. Hoping it will "depart" like "dreaumes" do, the speaker, now awake, confirms the truth of love's conquest. While the tone of the last line of this sonnet is difficult to read—it may convey a sense of discovery and confirmation, or surprise and concern—it affirms the solitary nature of the speaker's experience with love up to this point. The line itself visibly sets

off the invocation of the first person pronoun: "Yett since: O mee: a lover I have binn."

The speaker's self-consciousness at the end of this sonnet is a sign of the primacy the internal struggle with love will have in the sequence. In the 102 poems that follow, the speaker attempts to resolve the transformation begun by Love in this first sonnet.

In the speaker's dream vision Venus and Cupid do not seem especially welcome as much as they are an undeterable force. The speaker allegorically figures Love in the actions of a pair of monarchs intent on making the speaker a sign of their triumph. Venus and Cupid's characterization in this first sonnet resembles Wroth's treatment of these same figures in her tragicomedy *Love's Victory*. Wroth's drama, which was not published in the period, describes the interrelationship of four couples. Venus and Cupid oversee the human world in the play, appearing in scenes which open each act, unrevealed to any of the characters. They evaluate the actions of the lovers as to whether they adequately pay homage to their power. While Venus ultimately defers to her son, they preside together over the characters whose actions they claim to control until the very end of the play when the gods appear before them to reveal their aims.²⁷ They resolve the tragic ending anticipated in the deaths of Philisses and Musella with the lovers' revival to life and marriage. Whether or not the gods' assertion of control over the actions of the characters is true, they demand and receive the honor and respect of the characters as if it were.

²⁷ *Lady Mary Wroth's Love's Victory: the Penshurst Manuscript*, ed. by Michael G. Brennan (London: the Roxburghe Club, 1988). Roberts notes that the manuscript of *Love's Victory* shows Cupid and Venus' parts were added later. See Roberts' article, "Lady Mary Wroth," *Dictionary of Literary Biography*, vol. 121 (Detroit, Michigan: Gale Research, 1978) 307.

In *Pamphilia to Amphilanthus*, Venus and Cupid affect the speaker in ways in which in other sonnet sequences the beloved affects the poet/lover. In the speaker's struggle to make sense of this unexpected and overwhelming experience of love, Venus and Cupid represent the beloved's ability to lay claim to the speaker's affections from a far. Venus and Cupid figure the beloved's power to dominate the speaker. The speaker submits to the beloved in the manner s/he depicts his submission to Venus and Cupid. The speaker's submission is in very important ways not complete, as shown below, but it is enough to compel the speaker to love a man who inspires jealous fears in him. The beloved's wandering affections are so much a part of him that Wroth gives the beloved a name which translates into "lover of two." Though the speaker never uses this name, the beloved's frequent absence and wandering attentions are a permanent aspect of the lovers' relationship which eventually the speaker must accept. The speaker endeavors to sustain a constant love for the beloved, to the point of championing constancy as a heroic virtue. Commentators who have read Wroth's speaker as exclusively female denote constancy as a measure of a feminine heroism in the face of deepening melancholy (Beilin 242, Jones 144-45). While constancy is a virtue associated with women in the period, it is not an exclusively feminine virtue. The speaker's response is necessitated by the beloved's intransigence rather than the speaker's gender.

The speaker, however, is not totally in thrall to the beloved, a stance prefigured in the speaker's ambivalent response to the dream vision. The sequence depicts the speaker's struggle to refuse love's demands for submission. The speaker contrasts his loss of liberty and suffering under love's conquest with an agency asserted in a boldness to question love's rule. From the very first, the speaker urges Love and the beloved to

reflect upon the correctness of his actions as a ruler. In sonnet 3 the speaker questions if Love will abandon his “servant” (3.12) and if such a show will move Love to reflect on his unjust rule. In the couplet, the speaker concludes with the assertion: “Who wears loves crowne, must nott doe soe amiss, / Butt seeke theyr good, who on they force doe lye” (3.13-14). The speaker insists on the interrelationship between the ruler and the ruled: the ruler has a responsibility to do good for those whom they rule. Even at the height of the speaker’s praise of love in the last sonnet of the crown of sonnets, the speaker affirms the value of the heart Venus and Cupid took and raises a doubt regarding Cupid’s rule. The speaker reminds Cupid that the heart he took as a “signe of conquest” (90.1) and which he “gave away / As worthles to bee kept in your choyse store” was “more spotles” than any other (90.2-4). That heart still pays Cupid “tribute” in “faith untouch’d” and “pure thoughts” and is ruled by “constancy” and “unharm’d by envyes sore” (90.5-8). In stark contrast, the heart Cupid has given makes the speaker the target of his enemies and open to “jealousie” (90.11) in a way which leaves the speaker not knowing which way to “turne” (90.13). The speaker’s self-portrait as undone by love’s pains stands beside the speaker’s assertive addresses to love for mercy and just action (P8, P9, P11, P68, and P72).

Throughout the sequence the speaker addresses Cupid in a doubled discourse: one that like the language of courtiers employs wit and playfulness as well as seriousness. Beilin and Roberts both perceive a “dual Cupid,” one that sets Eros off from virtue, and which contrasts a child-like self-absorption with the view of a mature king (Beilin 233-40, Roberts *Poems* 45-46). In the early sonnets, the speaker builds upon references to love as Cupid’s power. In poem 16 the poet/speaker asks “Why should wee nott loves

purblind charmes resist?" (16.8) and by poem 25 wishes to "weare the marke of Cupids might" (25.12) in worship.²⁸ Already in poem 48 the speaker addresses the beloved/love and swears "Non ever felt the truth of loves great miss / Of eyes, till I deprived was of bliss" (48.9-10) and in poem 50 the beloved's eyes are "The guids of love, / The joyes of Cupid" (50.1-2). The speaker confirms Cupid as love's monarch in the crown of sonnets. A crown is the name given to a series of sonnets which are connected to one another by the repetition of the last line of a sonnet as the opening line of the next. The final sonnet of the series closes the circle by repeating the first line of the first sonnet in the crown. Wroth's crown contains 14 sonnets in which the speaker amplifies all of the spiritual good which love—and thus Cupid's reign—accomplishes.

This elegant tribute, however, does not prevent the speaker from playing with Cupid's representation in a later poem as "The Monarck of loves crowne" (92.4) who becomes the object of "jest" for Sylvia and her nymphs. Discovered by them "all naked playing with his wings," Cupid erupts in a "rage" (92.14) at their "sorne" (92.13). His "murduring dart" (92.17) pierces the heart of a nymph and makes the others "to bow" (92.21). The speaker reflects on this vignette as a warning that none should "idly smyle / Nor loves commands despise" (92.25-26) for fear of Love's unmerciful retribution. Yet, while the speaker can claim that Cupid's swift reaction proves him "butt for honor first...borne" (92.14) Cupid's unbounded anger at being found frolicking parodies a kingly defense of honor. Cupid's rage suggests the embarrassed tantrum of a child, and a king prone to overreacting. The speaker can suggest the potential for the abuse of power

²⁸ Poem 25 was moved from the second half of the sequence in the manuscript version (swapped with poem 72) to emphasize the speaker's service to Cupid.

in Cupid's outrage while forgiving him. Yet, as the speaker notes in an earlier poem, though love often acts like a "wanton child," he cannot fall below mortals in honor, because humans "can nott his sports refuse" (64.5, 14).

Early in the sequence Love's aggression sparks a return of aggression from the speaker. Though wishing to avoid love's spurious shows, the speaker mirrors love's drive to triumph and to embody in the beloved the pageant of love. In the first half of the sequence, the speaker's desire to win the beloved leads to the speaker to reflect love's domineering side: the speaker wants to possess similar trophies. Poem nine concludes with the hope that despite these pains the speaker, too, will eventually triumph in love: "Yett though I darke do live I triumph may / Unkindnes, nor this wrong shall love allay" (9.13-14). At other times the speaker uses the imagery of the sacred fires burning within to claim a return from the beloved. In poem 15 the speaker challenges the beloved to "sacrifice me not in hidden fire" (15.10), but rather "nurrish good" (15.8) the "soule to which you spiritt gave" (15.3). The speaker wishes to wear love for the beloved like a badge which like the "Indians, scorched with the sunne" whom they as a "God adore." The speaker claims to have worshipped the beloved equally, and yet to have "less favors...wunn" (25.1-4). In this poem the speaker asserts that a hidden "rite" is "worthles" unless the beloved "Grant mee to see wher I my offrings give" (25.9-11). Not long after this the speaker entreats the beloved to send his heart to where it may see the "sacrifices made / Of pure, and spottles love which shall nott vade" in the speaker's breast (30.12-13). In such instances the speaker uses the language of love's power to lay claim to the object of devotion—the beloved. The speaker tempers this impulse in the

second section of sonnets through his offer of the crown of sonnets in praise of Cupid's power.

For the speaker, physical desire threatens a self-corruption. To preserve his service to love, the speaker attributes Cupid's wanton corruption to the influence of Venus. The disruptive aspects of love are identified with female qualities and shunned. Venus' role in love is ultimately identified as lust and, along with all but one female figure of authority, shunned. Venus' initial control over Cupid erodes over the first half of the sequence. Midway through the sequence, the speaker openly challenges Venus' power, and questions whether she has given just returns for service: "Say Venus how long have I lov'd, and serv'd you heere?" (58.1). Venus' new title, "Goddess of desire," (58.5) and the speaker's aggressive tone in the song testify to a heightened challenge to her authority. The speaker expects Venus to "redress" Cupid, her "wayward child" (58.7, 13), and by the end of the poem orders Venus to "command" her son "to grant your right" (58.13), and to "Rule him" (58.19). In apparent frustration, the speaker turns his more challenging tone on Cupid.

In the poems that follow poem 58, the speaker accuses Cupid of being a "wanton child" (64.5), a "wanton boy" (72.14), and complains of Cupid's insatiable "craving" (72.3), and his "desires" that "have noe measure" (72.5). When the speaker is surprised by the "fond phant'sie" (95.3) of "loose desires and wanton play" (95.6) in his own thoughts, s/he snaps at Cupid in angry impatience to "lett thy mother know her shame" (95.9) whose influence only detracts from Cupid's great name. Venus, now named the "only Queene of lust" (95.13), is portrayed in contest with the power of this "God of love" (95.13) and unjustly strive to weaken Cupid.

Venus is the most prominent and yet just one of many female authorities whose claims to power over Cupid are thwarted. The goddess Diana fails to prosecute Cupid after he escapes from her nymphs (P70). As we have already seen, in poem 92 Silvia's nymphs are "made to bow" (92.21) to "powerful Cupids name" (92.24). And Night (P13), also depicted as feminine, bows like the speaker "Cloy'd with...torments" (13.1). Fortune in poem 36 is the only female figure who succeeds. Like Cupid, Fortune is "blinded" (36.5) and "her blesse'd armes" do "inchaine" (36.6) the speaker. Her aims align with those of Love—to have the poet/speaker "depend" (36.12) on her.

The speaker divides love's monarchy of male and female power to suggest the beloved embrace a more platonic sense of love. From the speaker's first dream vision, Venus establishes the part of sensual love as the guiding force who directs Cupid to accomplish the task. The power struggle between Venus and Cupid suggests that in the first flush of love a sensual desire, identified as a feminine quality, predominates. To remain the beloved's devoted servant the speaker punishes Venus while s/he celebrates Cupid and forgives or treats his bad behavior playfully. By the end of the sequence, the speaker has erased the threat initially posed by the influence of the feminine, and raised the aspects of love identified as masculine qualities to the sole power.

* * *

Readers of this chapter may wonder if Wroth missed an opportunity in *Pamphilia to Amphilanthus* to create a poetic expression of the female subjectivity so prominent in her work in the *Urania*. Where she might have given texture to a woman's experience of

heterosexual love, she refrained from a detailed representation of the poet/speaker's gender. But rather than view the absence of gender details as a lack in the sequence, I argue that Wroth attempts something much bolder. She creates a narrator position both a male and a female can occupy. As Jonson's sonnet on Wroth reminds us, Wroth does not essentialize the experience of love around gender. Instead she gives the sequence a provocative breadth by leaving it open to both.

We can read the sequence as sympathizing with Queen Anne's plight of loving a monarch whose affections were broadly showered on his favorites. The poet/speaker shows her a path of self-realization which maintains both her personal integrity and her loyalty and devotion to her beloved and her king. If we also read the sequence as an act of ventriloquism which allows Pamphilia to stand in for a male speaker, it represents an abiding passion which could belong both to the king's consort, Queen Anne, and to his favorite, the Duke of Buckingham. Rather than suggesting that Buckingham took Anne's place, Wroth's sequence recognizes that he occupied as challenging a position in maintaining his relationship with James as did Queen Anne. James could find in the speaker's experience testimony that his favorite indeed loved him. In 1621 Buckingham was just emerging from the first serious public challenge by Parliament to his position as the king's favorite.²⁹ Privately, from the first years of his service at court, Buckingham had faced challenges to his position as most favored-favorite from other courtiers who sought to attract James' attention.³⁰ Wroth's publication of her sequence could be read as

²⁹ Roger Lockyer, *Buckingham: the Life and Political Career of George Villiers, First Duke of Buckingham 1592-1628* (London: Longman, 1981) 89-105.

her support for Buckingham in the face of the surrounding controversy. The speaker's experience quietly validates one man's expressions of love for another. Queen Anne had helped in Buckingham's promotion as a favorite at court in 1615 (Lockyer 19-20), along with William Herbert, Wroth's cousin and lover, who as James' Lord Chamberlain was another influential member of court attached to the Sidney family. We might read Wroth's sequence as an offer of the continued sympathy and advocacy of a favorite who strengthened the political relationship between the King and William Herbert's supporters (Lockyer 66-67).

Revisions to the manuscript version of the sequence suggest that Wroth might have written an earlier version with Queen Anne in mind and then revised it to accommodate the view of a male lover of James. In her print edition, Wroth chose to extend the drama of the speaker's renunciation of Venus and the ascension of Cupid. In the print edition Wroth moved poem 95, in which the speaker urges Cupid to renounce the lascivious influence of Venus, from its place much earlier in the manuscript version as sonnet 40. This exchange of material from the front end of the sequence to the end accents Wroth's swapping of other poems of Cupid (64, 70, 96 and 97) which depict the drama of Cupid's ascension to points later in the sequence with poems from the first part of the sequence. Each of these poems which appear in the second half of the print edition had appeared in the manuscript as poems 17, 19, 47, and 41. Other revisions to the printed edition further de-emphasize Venus' power. Wroth removed what had been

³⁰ According to Lockyer, Villiers' rise in James' affections in 1615 had contributed to the fall of the king's previous favorite, the Duke of Somerset (21). In 1618 James' attentions turned to another young man, William Monson (35). By the time Buckingham had arranged to have Monson sent abroad, he had grown alarmed at James' attentions toward one of his cousins, Arthur Brett, whom Buckingham also arranged for orders to travel (122).

sonnet 4 in her manuscript version, in which Venus sues the gods to be more than a “partner” in love’s power “with her child” (F1.4). In that sonnet, Venus wins her suit so that Cupid may not “shoot without her leave” (F1.13). Other changes include poem 16 in which Wroth replaced the reference to “Venus” in the manuscript with the word “wishings,” as well as, in poem 65 where she revised the manuscript’s “Raigne of Venus” to the “Raigne of Love.” These excisions reduce Venus’ role in love’s power.

Wroth was as a woman excluded from the male circles of James’ court, but as a writer she found in poetry an instrument through which she could offer a critique of men at court from a doubled perspective of a woman on the outside and a man within the court. She reached back to a form popular in the decade before King James’ reign, not only to show herself as the poetic heir of her uncle and aunt, but because she could adapt it to speak to similar issues of counsel to which Sidney spoke in his sequence. As it had during Elizabeth’s reign, love poetry continued to serve as a vehicle for political concerns, one especially well suited to cross the boundary between the monarch’s personal rule and his/her public rule. Wroth did not resort to love poetry, but rather she found in it a discourse which she could adjust to speak to the current political situation at court.

Wroth’s speaker achieves independence even in devotion to a lover of inconstant attentions. Ben Jonson recognized that Wroth in her poetry had mastered the predominantly male conventions of love poetry and made them serve her purposes. He concludes his tributary sonnet to her with an acknowledgment of her extraordinary skill:

For in your verse all Cupid's armory,

His flames, his shafts, his quiver, and his bow,

His very eyes are yours to overthrow.

But then his mother's sweets you so apply,

Her joys, her smiles, her loves, as readers take

For Venus' cestion, every line you make. (9-14)

Jonson's references to Cupid and Venus are closer to the conventional uses of these figures in love poetry. Jonson is less anxious about Venus' sensually appealing "sweets" than Wroth shows her speaker to be. He speaks more directly to Wroth's complete control over the conventional language of love poetry in which these figures appear. He reminds us that Wroth is a master in a traditionally male dominated arena of both male and female qualities of love.

AFTERWARD

...when the prince can do whatever he desires, then there is a great danger he might not desire what he ought.

Baldesar Castiglione, *The Book of the Courtier*¹

In the fourth and final book of the *Courtier*, signor Ottaviano Fregoso defines the end to which a courtier directs all of his “accomplishments” as good counsel. Ottaviano describes the courtier as earning the forbearance of his Prince to allow him always to tell the truth, so that

when he sees the mind of his prince inclined to a wrong action, he may dare to oppose him and in a gentle manner avail himself of the favor acquired by his good accomplishments, so as to dissuade him of every evil intent and bring him to the path of virtue (289).

When I quote this passage in the Introduction to this study, I contrast it with Raphael Hythloday’s view that a counselor cannot oppose the views of the king or his advisors

¹ Baldasar Castiglione, *The Book of the Courtier*, trans. Charles S. Singleton (New York: Anchor Books, 1959) 308.

without being considered a spy or a traitor. Hythloday rejects the fictional More's plea for adapting his words to the "drama in hand." In refusing More's recommendation to improvise, Hythloday discounts the theatricality behind political discourse.² In the *Courtier*, on the other hand, Castiglione's company of gentlemen and ladies who discuss the attributes of the perfect courtier and court lady, embody those "accomplishments" with a theatrical flair that makes the discussions before the Duchess of Urbino such a polished performance. The courtier's *sprezzatura*, his ability to accomplish difficult tasks with an artistry that looks unschooled, makes him the ultimate performer: every studied action appears unrehearsed.

Ottaviano describes the courtier's performance as the foundation of the relationship between monarchs and their advisors. What might an advisor do who, as Ottaviano describes, had won "the favor and mind of the prince he serves" (289)? Castiglione reminds us that the courtier's persuasive powers were rooted in his relationship with the monarch. As recent historians have argued, the Tudor revolution in government, in David Starkey's words, "did not depersonalize government...it focused it more directly than before on the king's person and his palace." (19).³ Starkey notes that during the rule of the Tudor and Stuart monarchs, courtiers and counselors were often the same person (13). Even during Elizabeth's reign when government by the royal household diminished because Elizabeth drew a strong distinction between the private

² For a discussion of More's use of role-playing in his life and within the *Utopia* see Stephen Greenblatt, "At the Table of the Great: More's Self-Fashioning and Self-Cancellation," *Renaissance Self-Fashioning: From More to Shakespeare* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1980) 11-73.

³ All references to Starkey are to his "Introduction: Court history in perspective," *The English Court from the Wars of the Roses to the Civil War*, ed. David Starkey (London: Longman, 1987) 1-24.

and public aspects of her rule, Sir William Cecil was as Pam Wright puts it both Elizabeth's "private secretary and Secretary of State."⁴ It was Sir William's son, Robert Cecil who served as Elizabeth's Secretary after his father, and later James' I secretary, who described relations between the Secretary and the monarch as like "the mutual affection of two lovers, undiscovered to their friends" (quoted in Starkey 16). As his metaphor suggests, it was through an extraordinary balance of authority and intimacy that an advisor achieved success.

Still, a challenge for the most trusted of counselors was addressing those instances in which the personal desires of the monarch affected their public actions. Sir Philip Sidney's letter to the Queen indicates the degree of diplomacy required in addressing her interest in the Duke of Alençon as a matter of real politic. In imagining that Sidney turned to the more personal aspects of Elizabeth's affair in his sonnet sequence, we can imagine him drawing from the *Courtier* the insistence that knowing *how* to speak—indirectly and discreetly—of such important matters was essential. In his cogent analysis of Book III of the *Courtier*, in which the perfect court lady is fashioned, Dain Trafton argues that Castiglione offers his most substantive commentary on rule, applicable to both men and women, in the tales of good women.⁵ In this camouflage of political doctrine beneath the fashioning of the court lady, Castiglione iterates that the essential interpretive element of courtly political speech: the main point is not always explicit. Often the message is conveyed through "hints and implications" (34). Toward the end of

⁴ Pam Wright, "A change in direction: the ramifications of a female household, 1558-1603," *The English Court: from the Wars of the Roses to the Civil War*, ed. David Starkey (London: Longman, 1987) 153.

⁵ Dain A. Trafton, "Politics and the Praise of Women: Political Doctrine in the Courtier's Third Book," *Castiglione: the Ideal and the Real in Renaissance Culture*, ed. Robert W. Hanning, and David Rosand (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983) 29-44.

Book III, the court lady practices this kind of interpretation particularly when courtiers speak to her of love (259). Of course, the too-subtle rhetoric of the lover or counselor might run the risk of not being understood, but this ambiguity provides a protection for both the speaker and receiver (270). Such intimate matters should not be spoken of lightly or without due consideration since they may expose vulnerabilities or urge a denial of desire which makes them difficult to digest.

In this study I have argued that all three Sidneys and Aemilia Lanyer are distinguished by their bold efforts to speak on a level of intimacy matched only by their claims of authority. Though no one of them could claim a position from which he or she could offer direct counsel, they all exploited the discourse of early modern love poetry as a performance in a courtly language. Thus they acknowledged the very personal aspect of a monarch's rule in ways that formal counsel might not. Their performances imaged aspects of each monarch's relationship drawn out of particular historical instances in which the ruler pursued desires which threatened a strong impact on their public rule. Where they could not claim an intimacy with their monarch they could dramatize relationships in which the effects of that intimacy could be evaluated. Each of these authors found a way to speak to the conflicts each monarch's personal commitments created with the public domain.

I have also suggested that the poetry of the Sidneys and Aemilia Lanyer might well be viewed as representative of a cultural moment in the late sixteenth- and early seventeenth-centuries when the aristocracy sought to reassert the importance of their role as advisors to the monarch. As Lawrence Stone has argued, the English aristocracy underwent a transformation from martial powers whose resources of men, munitions and land made them capable of rebellion against the king, to functionaries in attendance at

court, partly administering the bureaucracy created by “an enormous expansion of the court and the central administration,” and caught up in the lavish expenses of life at court and in London.⁶ In an attempt to slow the persistent decline in their powers and ancient privileges, these writers increased the value of their services by finding a way to engage the monarch in questions of the effect their personal desires may have on their public rule. In addition, they enriched the monarch's rule by offering literary works which Englished conventional literary discourses which had flowered under the pens of European writers. Sir Philip Sidney staked out the ground in this effort with his Englishing of Petrarch's sonnet sequence. Earlier courtier poets, like Sir Thomas Wyatt, brought the Italian sonnet into the English court, but Philip Sidney was the first to write a collection of sonnets and songs in the form of Petrarch's sequence. While he translates Petrarch's sequence into English, Sidney also innovates on Petrarch's conventions of love to reflect a radically sexualized passion. Infusing Petrarch's language with the poet/speaker's irrepressible desire, he creates a sonnet sequence with Ovidian overtones. Sidney continues Petrarch's praise of the lady as a model of chastity. His poet/speaker, however, lacks the flexibility of Petrarch's to find in his beloved's rejections a motivation for spiritual growth. Astrophil cannot accept Stella's frustration of his desires. While Sidney fashions Stella's resistance to Astrophil's physical desire as heroism, he uses the conflict between them to reveal Astrophil's limitations and to show that Astrophil's desire for Stella includes an inclination to dominate her.

Eight years later, when Philip's sister Mary chose to print her translation of Robert Garnier's *Marc Antonie*, she signaled her interest in literary works which examine the

⁶ Lawrence Stone, *The Crisis of the Aristocracy, 1558-1641* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1965) 385.

capacity of counselors to speak to the monarch's personal desire when faced with a crises of rule. The passion of Antony and Cleopatra creates a contest between the traditional ideals of male and female heroism and the intense passion which they share. Antony's love for Cleopatra compromises his stature as a military hero and leader. His flight at Actium to follow Cleopatra's retreating ship signals how far love guides even his actions as a hero. Cleopatra places her love for Antony above her children, her country, and her commitment to rule her people. The one-sided passion of Petrarch's poet/speaker is replaced with a mutually passionate desire between a Queen and her Prince. Cleopatra pledges her constancy to Antony and her commitment to remain beside him as his most devoted wife. Mary Sidney Herbert's translation emphasizes the self-defining power of a passionate commitment between a man and a woman which transcends the appeal of earthly power and glory. Neither Antony nor Cleopatra strongly values the acquisition of earthly empires. Their love for one another throws into relief the insatiable appetite of Caesar for power and land. While these larger-than-life lovers show themselves willing to sacrifice the stability they might offer their people for their love, Mary Sidney Herbert presents them as a rare union which almost justifies the sacrifice they make of their rule.

In her depiction of Cleopatra, Mary Sidney Herbert presents a Queen who recasts a feminine submission to beauty and asserts her sovereignty as a lover over her power as a sovereign. This is a position which Sidney's Stella lacks the power to occupy. Sidney's female beloved is tied to the conventional expectations of married women to uphold unquestioning chastity and to reject any suitor's appeal. As a rightful queen, Cleopatra displays the power to reject the cultural expectations placed on women and creates her own definition of "married" chastity. Mary Sidney Herbert, a female aristocrat asserting a position as the head of the Sidney household, speaks quite directly to Elizabeth about

choices facing a Queen. As Mary Sidney Herbert steps beyond the bounds of cultural expectations for even aristocratic women, she acknowledges that the Queen herself might go beyond similar bounds. There is a tragic glory in the deaths of Antony and Cleopatra which Mary Sidney Herbert's translation celebrates, yet with her translation she also underscores their triumph as a glory princes achieve at the cost of the stability of the state and the welfare of the common people.

With the ascent of a Scottish king to the English throne, poetic expressions of counsel emerge from two women writers: Aemilia Lanyer, who would be a courtier and derives her literary heritage through Mary Sidney Herbert, and Lady Mary Wroth, a female courtier who as a writer identified herself as a Sidney. Despite King James' lack of interest in the company and capabilities of women to contribute politically to his rule, both of these women expanded the scope of what women writers wrote by composing original works in which they recast again the conventions of Petrarchan poetry.

Aemilia Lanyer translates the attractions of the Petrarchan lady in the physical and spiritual beauty of Christ. Rewriting the traditional blazon of the female beloved for a man, Lanyer makes Christ an object of desire for the virtuous women for whom she writes. Lanyer perceives in women a "faire virtue" that she identifies as the object of all princes' desires. Lanyer moves away from the erotic overtones of the works of Philip and Mary Sidney to emphasize her place in the tradition of biblical exegesis in which Mary Sidney Herbert played a prominent role with her Englishing of the *Psalms*. A Prince's desire for "faire virtue" indicates his wish to emulate Christ as an earthly and heavenly king. Lanyer translates the story of the Passion into a testimony of the faithful and compassionate service which women rendered Christ as he was betrayed and put to death. Lanyer depicts women—the daughters of Jerusalem, Pilate's wife, and his mother

Mary—displaying the unwavering love and devotion which offer Christ comfort, support, and solace in the midst of his persecution. In stark contrast, Lanyer depicts Christ's male servants, his apostles, as abandoning him in his darkest hours. Lanyer creates a religious love poetry in which women, who like the Countess of Cumberland embody "faire virtue," serve as a profound asset in a true Christian king's rule. Aemilia Lanyer printed her poems at a moment which historians now identify as an apex in the influence of Queen Anne and her court. Lanyer's addresses to the Queen and several aristocratic women emphasizes the number of women of "faire virtue" who might ably serve the first Stuart king.

In the ten years which followed the print edition of Lanyer's poems, the influence of women in James' court in fact waned. In 1612, Queen Anne was devastated by the death of her son Henry, the Prince of Wales, and her court never regained the status she had aspired to during her eldest son's life. When in 1621 Lady Mary Wroth brought her works into print, Queen Anne had been dead for two years. In her place King James' favorite, George Villiers, the Duke of Buckingham, wielded more and more of the king's power. Even in the atmosphere of a court dominated by men, Lady Mary Wroth prepared her original works of prose and poetry in the genres in which her uncle had written for print. In her sonnet sequence, Wroth revised the Petrarchan conventions in a fashion which reflect the radically different desires of the homosocial King James. In the place of the Petrarchan lady, Wroth presents a male beloved of multiple and wavering affections, and her poet/speaker becomes an emblem of chastity and constancy rather like Petrarch's Laura. Wroth represents the ambiguous place of the female courtier in a court hostile to women in the persona of a poet/speaker not exclusively gendered male or female. She gives a breadth of

expression to her poet/speaker which allows her to address the conflicts once shared by Queen Anne and now faced by the king's favorite, Buckingham, who continued to support the interests of the Sidney family. Far from finding herself silenced within the heart of a court ruled by a self-professed misogynist, Mary Wroth drew on her Sidney family connections to bring her work to light. In the immediate wake of her famous aunt's death, Mary Wroth thus acted as her family had for generations, serving the government of her king through an offering of poetical counsel. For these remarkable members of the Sidney family the crisis which the aristocracy had faced in the eighty years preceding the English Revolution led to their efforts to advise the monarch in a fashion of their own poetical making.

WORKS CITED

- Abrams, M.H. "Poetry, Theories of." *Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics*. Enlarged edition. Ed. Alex Preminger. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1974. 639-49.
- Aggas, Edward, trans. *The Defence of Death. Contayning a moste excellent Disourse of life and death, written in Frenche by Philip de Mornaye Gentleman. And doone into English by E.A.* STC 18136. London: John Allde, 1576.
- Axton, Marie. *The Queen's Two Bodies: Drama and the Elizabethan Succession*. London: Royal Historical Society, 1977.
- Bacon, Francis Sir. *Sir Francis Bacon: The Essayes or Counsels, Civill and Morrall*. Ed. Michael Kiernan (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1985).
- Barroll, Leeds. *Anna of Denmark, Queen of England: A Cultural Biography*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001.
- . "Looking for Patrons." *Aemilia Lanyer: Gender, Genre, and the Canon*. Ed. Marshall Grossman. Lexington, Kentucky: University Press of Kentucky: 1998. 29-48.
- Beal, Peter. "Philip Sidney's Letter to Queen Elizabeth and that 'False Knave' Alexander Dicsonne." *English Manuscript Studies 1100-1700: Manuscripts and their Makers in the English Renaissance*. Vol. II. Ed. Peter Beal and Grace Ioppolo. London: the British Library, 2002. 1-51.
- . "Sir Philip Sidney: 1554-86." *Index of English Literary Manuscripts*. Vol. 1. London: Mansell, 1980. 465-88.
- Beilin, Elaine V. *Redeeming Eve: Women Writers of the English Renaissance*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1987.
- . "'The Only Perfect Vertue': Constancy in Mary Wroth's *Pamphilia to Amphilanthus*." *Spenser Studies II*. Ed. Patrick Cullen and Thomas P. Roche, Jr. Pittsburg, PA: The University of Pittsburgh Press, 1981. 229-245.
- Bell, Ilona. "Elizabeth I—Always Her Own Free Woman." *Political Rhetoric, Power and Renaissance Women*. Ed. Carole Levin and Patricia A. Sullivan. New York: State University of New York Press, 1995. 57-82.
- Berry, Philippa. *Of Chastity and Power: Elizabethan Literature and the Unmarried Queen*. New York: Routledge, 1989.

- Brennan, Michael. "William Ponsonby: Elizabethan Stationer." *AEB* 7 (1983): 91-110.
- Brown, Elizabeth A. "Companion Me with My Mistress': Cleopatra, Elizabeth I, and Their Waiting Women." *Maids and Mistresses, Cousins and Queens: Women's Alliances in Early Modern England*. Ed. Susan Frye and Karen Robertson. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999. 131-45.
- Buckman, Ty. "The Perils of Marriage Counselling: John Stubbs, Philip Sidney, and the Virgin Queen," *Renaissance Papers* (1995): 125-41.
- Bullough, Geoffrey, ed. *Narrative and Dramatic Sources of Shakespeare. Vol. 5: The Roman Plays*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1966.
- Butler, Judith. *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. New York: Routledge, 1990.
- . *Undoing Gender*. New York: Routledge, 2004.
- Calendar of the Cecil Manuscripts Preserved at Hatfield House, Hertfordshire. Part II*. London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1888.
- Castiglione, Baldasar. *The Book of the Courtier*. Trans. Charles S. Singleton. New York: Anchor Books, 1959.
- Cerasano, S.P. and Marion Wynne-Davies, eds. *Readings in Renaissance Women's Drama: Criticism, History, and Performance 1594-1998*. New York: Routledge, 1998.
- Chaucer, Geoffrey. "The Miller's Tale." *Chaucer's Poetry: An Anthology for the Modern Reader*. Ed. E.T. Donaldson. New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1975.
- Clarke, Danielle. "The politics of translation and gender in the Countess of Pembroke's *Antonie*." *Translation and Literature* 6 (1997): 149-66.
- Coiro, Ann Baynes. "Writing in service: sexual politics and class position in the poetry of Aemilia Lanyer and Ben Jonson." *Criticism* 35 (1993): 357-76.
- Colie, Rosalie. *The Resources of Kind: Genre-Theory in the Renaissance*. Ed. Barbara K. Lewalski. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1973.
- Conyers Read. *Lord Burghley and Queen Elizabeth*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1960.
- Craigie, James. Introduction. *The Poems of James VI of Scotland. Vol. 1*. London: William Blackwood & Sons Ltd., 1955. xi-lxx.
- Croft, P. J. Introduction. *The Poems of Robert Sidney*. Ed. P.J. Croft. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984. 1-114.

- Cuddy, Neil. "The revival of the entourage: the Bedchamber of James I, 1603-1625." *The English Court: from the Wars of the Roses to the Civil War*. London: Longman, 1987. 173-225.
- Denkinger, Emma Marshall. "The Impresa Portrait of Sir Philip Sidney in the National Portrait Gallery." *PMLA* 47.1 (1932): 17-45.
- Doran, Susan. *Monarchy and Matrimony: the Courtships of Elizabeth I*. London: Routledge, 1996.
- Dubrow, Heather. *Echoes of Desire: English Petrarchanism and Its Counterdiscourses*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1995.
- Duncan-Jones, Katherine, Van Dorsten, Jan eds. *Miscellaneous Prose of Sir Philip Sidney*. Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1973.
- . *Sir Philip Sidney: Courtier Poet*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1991.
- Elizabeth I. *Elizabeth I: Collected Works*. Ed. Leah S. Marcus, Janel Mueller, and Mary Beth Rose. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2000.
- Ezell, Margaret J. M. *Social Authorship and the Advent of Print*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999.
- Fienberg, Nona. "Mary Wroth and the Invention of Female Poetic Subjectivity." *Reading Mary Wroth: Representing Alternatives in Early Modern England*. Ed. Naomi J. Miller and Gary Waller. Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 1991. 175-190.
- Frye, Susan. *Elizabeth I: the Competition for Representation*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1993.
- Fumerton, Patricia. *Cultural Aesthetics: Renaissance Literature and the Practice of Social Ornament*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1991.
- Gallagher, Catherine. "Embracing the Absolute: Margaret Cavendish and the Politics of Female Subjectivity in Seventeenth-century England." *Early Women Writers: 1600-1720*. Ed. and introd. Anita Pacheco. London: Longman, 1998. 133-45.
- Garnier, Robert. *Two Tragedies: Hippolyte and Marc Antoine*. Eds. Christine M. Hill and Mary G. Morrison. London: The Athlone Press, 1975.
- Gartenberg, Patricia, and Nena Thames Whittemore. "A Checklist of English Women in Print, 1475-1640." *Bulletin of Bibliography and Magazine Notes*. 34.1 (1977): 1-13.

- The Geneva Bible: A facsimile of the 1560 edition.* Madison, Wisconsin: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1969.
- Goldberg, Jonathan. "Fatherly Authority: The Politics of Stuart Family Images." *Rewriting the Renaissance: The Discourses of Sexual Difference in Early Modern Europe.* Ed. Margaret W. Ferguson, et al. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1986. 3-32.
- Gosson, Stephen. *The Schoole of Abuse, conteining a pleasant invecctive against poets, pipers, plaiers iesters and such like caterpillers of a commonwealth.* T. Woodcocke, 1579. STC 12097.
- Gray, Catherine Emma. *Forward Writers/Critical Readers: Women and Counterpublic Spheres in Seventeenth-Century England.* Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation. State University of New York at Buffalo, 2001.
- Greenblatt, Stephen. *Renaissance Self-Fashioning: From More to Shakespeare.* Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1980.
- Greene, Roland. *Unrequited Conquests: Love and Empire in the Colonial Americas.* Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1999.
- Guibbory, Achsah. "The Gospel According to Aemilia: Women and the Sacred. *Aemilia Lanyer: Gender, Genre, and the Canon.* Ed. Marshall Grossman. Lexington, Kentucky: University Press of Kentucky, 1998. 191-211.
- Guy, John. "The rhetoric of counsel in early modern England." *Tudor Political Culture.* Ed. Dale Hoak. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995. 292-310.
- Habermas, Jurgen. *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society.* Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1989.
- Haigh, Christopher. *Elizabeth I.* 2nd ed. London: Longman, 1998.
- Hall, Kim. *Things of Darkness: Economies of Race and Gender in Early Modern England.* Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1995.
- Halpern, Richard. *The Poetics of Primitive Accumulation: English Renaissance Culture and the Genealogy of Capital.* Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991.
- Hamilton, A. C. Ed. *Chronological Table of Spenser's Life and Principal Publications. The Faerie Queene.* London: Longman, 1980. vii-xii.
- Hannay, Margaret P. "'Doo What Men May Sing': Mary Sidney and the Tradition of Admonitory Dedication." *Silent But for the Word: Tudor Women as Patrons, Translators, and Writers of Religious Works.* Ed. Margaret Patterson Hannay. Kent, Ohio: The Kent State University Press, 1985. 149-165.

- . *Philip's Phoenix, Mary Sidney, Countess of Pembroke*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990.
- Hay, Millicent V. *The Life of Robert Sidney, Earl of Leicester (1563-1626)*. Washington: The Folger Shakespeare Library, 1984.
- Helgerson, Richard. *Self-Crowned Laureates: Spenser, Jonson, Milton, and the Literary System*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983.
- Herbert, Mary Sidney, Countess of Pembroke. *The Collected Works of Mary Sidney Herbert, Countess of Pembroke*. 2 vols. Corrected Reprint. Ed. Margaret P. Hannay, Noel J. Kinnamon, and Michael G. Brennan. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998.
- Herbert, William, Third Earl of Pembroke. *Poems: Written by the Right Honourable William Earl of Pembroke (1660)*. Ed. Gaby E. Onderwyzer. No. 79. The Augustan Reprint Society. Los Angeles: William Andrews Clark Memorial Library, 1959.
- Holmes, Michael Morgan. "The Love of Other Women: Rich Chains and Sweet Kisses." *Aemilia Lanyer: Gender, Genre, and the Canon*. Ed. Marshall Grossman. Lexington, Kentucky: University Press of Kentucky, 1998. 167-90.
- Hexter, J.H. "The Composition of Utopia." *The Complete Works of St. Thomas More*. Vol. IV. Ed. Edward Surtz, and J.H. Hexter. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1965. xv-xxiii.
- Hulse, Clark. "Stella's Wit: Penelope Rich as Reader of Sidney's Sonnets." *Rewriting the Renaissance: the Discourse of Sexual Difference in Europe*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986. 272-286.
- Jenkins, Hugh. *Feigned Commonwealths: the Country-House Poem and the Fashioning of the Ideal Community*. Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania: Duquesne University Press, 1998.
- Jones, Ann Rosalind. *The Currency of Eros: Women's Love Lyric in Europe, 1540-1620*. Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1990.
- . "Designing Women: The Self as Spectacle in Mary Wroth and Veronica Franco." *Reading Mary Wroth: Representing Alternatives in Early Modern England*. Ed. Naomi J. Miller and Gary Waller. Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 1991. 135-153.
- Jones, Ann Rosalind and Peter Stallybrass. "The Politics of *Astrophil and Stella*." *Studies in English Literature* 24 (1984). 53-68

- Jonson, Ben. *The Complete Works*. Ed. C.H. Hereford and Percy Simpson. Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1925-52.
- Judson, Alexander C. *Sidney's Appearance: a Study in Elizabethan Portraiture*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1958.
- Kantorowicz, Ernst. *The King's Two Bodies*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957.
- Katzenellenbogen, Adolph. *Allegories of the Virtues and Vices in Mediaeval Art: From Early Christian Times to the Thirteenth Century*. London: The Warburg Institute, 1939.
- Keohane, Catherine. "That blindest weakenesse be not over-bold': Aemilia Lanyer's radical unfolding of the Passion." *ELH* 64 (1997): 359-89.
- Kimbrough, Robert, ed. *Sir Philip Sidney: Selected Prose and Poetry*. 2nd ed. Madison, Wisconsin: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1983.
- King James VI and I. "A Meditation Upon the 27, 28, 29 Verses of the XXVII Chapter of Sain Matthew or A Paterne for a Kings Inauguration." *Political Writings*. Ed. Johann P. Sommerville. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994. 229-249.
- . "A Speech in the Parliament House, as neere the very words as could be gathered at the instant." *Political Writings*. Ed. Johann P. Sommerville. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994. 147-58.
- . *Basilicon Doron*. *Political Writings*. Ed. Johann P. Sommerville. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994. 1-61.
- . *The Trew Law of Free Monarchies*. *Political Writings*. Ed. Johann P. Sommerville. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994. 62-84.
- Kinney, Arthur F. "Puritans Versus Royalists: Sir Philip Sidney's Rhetoric at the Court of Elizabeth I." *Sir Philip Sidney's Achievements*. New York: AMS Press, 1990. 42-56.
- Klein, Lisa M. "Your Humble Handmaid: Elizabethan Gifts of Needlework." *Renaissance Quarterly*. 50 (1997): 459-93.
- Lacey, Robert. *Robert Earl of Essex*. New York: Atheneum, 1971.
- Lamb, Mary Ellen. "Patronage and Class in Aemilia Lanyer's Salve Deus Rex Judaeorum." *Women, Writing, and the Reproduction of Culture in Tudor and Stuart Britain*. Ed. Linda L. Burke. Syracuse, New York: Syracuse University Press, 2000. 38-57.

- Lanham, Richard A. "Astrophil and Stella: Pure and Impure Persuasion." *English Literary Renaissance* 2 (1972): 100-15.
- Lanyer, Aemilia. "The Authors Dreame to the Ladie Marie, the Countess Dowager of Pembroke." *Salve Deus Rex Judaeorum*. Ed. Susanne Woods. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993. 21-31.
- . *The Poems of Aemilia Lanyer: Salve Deus Rex Judaeorum*. Ed. Susanne Woods. Women Writer's in English 1350-1850 series. New York: Oxford University Press, 1993.
- . "To the Queenes most Excellent Majestie." *Salve Deus Rex Judaeorum*. Ed. Susanne Woods. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993. 3-10.
- Levin, Carole. *The Heart and Stomach of a King: Elizabeth I and the Politics of Sex and Power*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1994.
- Lewalski, Barbara K. "Re-Writing Patriarchy and Patronage: Margaret Clifford, Anne Clifford, and Aemilia Lanyer." *Yearbook of English Studies* 21 (1991): 87-106.
- . "Seizing Discourses and Reinventing Genres," *Aemilia Lanyer: Gender, Genre, and the Canon*. Ed. Marshall Grossman. Lexington, Kentucky: The University of Kentucky Press, 1998. 49-59.
- . *Writing Women in Jacobean England*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1993.
- Locke, Anne. *A meditation of a Penitent Sinner*. J. Day, 1560. STC 4450.
- Lockyer, Roger. *Buckingham: the Life and Political Career of George Villiers, First Duke of Buckingham 1592-1628*. London: Longman, 1981.
- Lok, Henry. *Sundry Christian Passions*. R. Field, 1593. STC 16697.
- MacCaffrey, Wallace T. *Elizabeth I: War and Politics, 1588-1603*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1992.
- . *Queen Elizabeth and the Making of Policy, 1572-1588*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1981.
- Machiavelli, Niccolo. *The Prince*. Menston, England: The Scholar Press Limited, 1969.
- Marotti, Arthur F. and Michael D. Bristol eds. *Print, Manuscript, and Performance*. Columbus, Ohio: Ohio State University Press, 2000.
- . "'Love is not love': Elizabethan Sonnet Sequences and the Social Order. *ELH* 49.2 (1982): 396-428.

- . *Manuscript, Print, and the English Renaissance Lyric*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1994.
- Masten, Jeff. "‘Shall I turne blabb’": Circulation, Gender, and Subjectivity in Mary Wroth’s Sonnets." *Reading Mary Wroth: Representing Alternatives in Early Modern England*. Ed. Naomi J. Miller and Gary Waller. Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 1991. 67-87.
- May, Steven W. *The Elizabethan Courtier Poets: The Poems and Their Contexts*. London: University of Missouri Press, 1991.
- . "Sir Philip Sidney and Queen Elizabeth." *English Manuscript Studies 1100-1700*. Vol. 2. Ed. Peter Beal & Jeremy Griffiths. London: Basil Blackwell, 1990. 257-67
- . "Tudor Aristocrats and the Mythical ‘Stigma of Print’." *Renaissance Papers 1980*. Eds. A. Leigh Deneef and M. Thomas Hester. The Southeastern Renaissance Conference, 1981. 11-18.
- . "Verse Anthologies." *Tudor England: An Encyclopedia*. Ed. Arthur F. Kinney, David W. Swain. New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 2001. 728-30.
- McBride, Kari Boyd. "Gender and Judaism in Meditations on the Passion: Middleton, Southwell, Lanyer, and Fletcher." *Discovering and (Re)Covering the Seventeenth Century Religious Lyric*. Ed. Eugene R. Cunnar & Jeffrey Johnson. Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania: Duquense University Press, 2001. 17-40.
- . "Sacred Celebration: The Patronage Poems." *Aemilia Lanyer: Gender, Genre, and the Canon*. Ed. Marshall Grossman. Lexington, Kentucky: The University of Kentucky Press, 1998. 60-82.
- McCoy, Richard. *The Rights of Knighthood: the Literature and Politics of Elizabethan Chivalry*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989.
- McCutcheon, Elizabeth. "Denying the Contrary: More’s Use of Litotes in the Utopia." *Essential Articles for the Study of Thomas More*. Ed. R.S. Sylvester and G.P. Marc’hadour. Hamden, Connecticut: Archon Books, 1977. 263-74.
- McGrath, Lynette. "‘Let Us Have Our Libertie Againe’: Amelia Lanier’s Seventeenth-Century Feminist Voice." *Women’s-Studies: An Interdisciplinary Journal*. 20:3-4 (1992): 331-48.
- Miller, Naomi J. *Changing the Subject: Mary Wroth and Figurations of Gender in Early Modern England*. Lexington, Kentucky: University Press of Kentucky, 1996.
- Miner, Earl. *The Cavalier Mode from Jonson to Cotton*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1971.

- Minogue, Sally. "A Woman's Touch: Astrophil, Stella and 'Queen Vertue's Court.'" *English Literary History*. Fall 63.3 (1996): 555-70.
- Montrose, Louis Adrian. "Celebration and Insinuation: Sir Philip Sidney and the Motives of Elizabethan Courtship." *Renaissance Drama*. New Series VIII. Ed. Leonard Barkan. Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1977. 3-35.
- More, Saint Thomas. *The Complete Works of St. Thomas More*. Eds. Edward Surtz and J.H. Hexter. Vol.IV. New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1965.
- . *Utopia*. Ed. George M. Logan. Trans. Robert M. Adams. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989.
- Mueller, Janel. "The Feminist Poetics of *Salve Deus Rex Judaeorum*." *Aemilia Lanyer: Gender, Genre, and the Canon*. Ed. Marshall Grossman. Lexington, Kentucky: University Press of Kentucky: 1998. 99-127.
- . "Virtue and Virtuality: Gender in the 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: University of Delaware Press, 2000. 220-246.
- Neale, J.E., Sir. *Queen Elizabeth I: A Biography*. New York: Doubleday, 1957.
- Onderwyzer, Gaby E. Introduction. *Poems written by the right honourable William Earl of Pembroke (1660)*. Ed. Gaby E. Onderwyzer. The Augustan Reprint Society. No. 79. Los Angeles: William Andrews Clark Memorial Library, 1959. i-ix.
- Orlin, Lena Cowen. "The Fictional Families of Elizabeth I." *Political Rhetoric, Power and Renaissance Women*. Ed. Carole Levin and Patricia A. Sullivan. New York: State University of New York Press, 1995. 85-110.
- Peacham, Henry. *The Compleat Gentleman*. STC 19502. London: F.Constable, 1622.
- Peck, Linda Levy. "The Mental World of the Jacobean Court: An Introduction." *The Mental World of the Jacobean Court*. Ed. Linda Levy Peck. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991. 1-17.
- Petrarch, Frances. *The Trymphes of Fraunces Petrarcke: The First English Translation of the "Trionfi"*. Trans. Henry Parker, Lord Morley. Ed. D.D. Carnicelli. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1971.
- Plamenatz, John. "In Search of Machiavellian Virtù." *The Political Calculus: Essays on Machiavelli's Philosophy*. Ed. Anthony Parel. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1972. 157-178.
- Plant, Marjorie. *The English Book Trade: an Economic History of the Making and Sale of Books*. London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1939.

- Plessis-Mornay, Philippe du. "Discours de la Vie et de la Mort." Ed. Mario Richter. Milano: Editrice Vita e Pensiero, 1964.
- The Progresses and Public Processions of Queen Elizabeth*. Ed. John Nichols. Vol. II. New York: Burt Franklin, 1965.
- Pulman, Michael Barraclough. *The Elizabethan Privy Council in the Fifteen-Seventies*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971.
- Quilligan, Maureen. "The Constant Subject: Instability and Female Authority in Wroth's *Urania* Poems." *Soliciting Interpretation: Literary Theory and Seventeenth-Century English Poetry*. Ed. Elizabeth D. Harvey and Katherine Eisaman Maus. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1990. 307-335.
- Read, Conyers. *Lord Burghley and Queen Elizabeth*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1960.
- "Rhyme royal." *Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics*. Enlarged edition. Ed. Alex Preminger. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1974. 710.
- Rienstra, Debra. "Dreaming Authorship: Aemilia Lanyer and the Countess of Pembroke." *Discovering and (Re)Covering the Seventeenth Century Religious Lyric*. Ed. Eugene R. Cunnar & Jeffrey Johnson. Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania: Duquense University Press, 2001. 80-103.
- Ringler, William A. Jr., Ed. *The Poems of Sir Philip Sidney*. Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1962.
- Roberts, Josephine A. "The Biographical Problem of Pamphilia to Amphilanthus." *Tulsa Studies in Women's Literature*. Spring 1.1 (1982): 43-53.
- --. Introduction. *The Poems of Lady Mary Wroth*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1983. 3-81.
- --. "Critical Introduction," *The First Part of the Countess of Montgomery's Urania*. Vol. 140. Ed. Josephine A. Roberts. Binghamton, New York: Medieval & Renaissance Texts & Studies, 1995. xv-civ.
- --. "Lady Mary Wroth." *Dictionary of Literary Biography*. Vol. 121. Detroit, Michigan: Gale Research, 1978. 296-309.
- Roberts, Katherine. "Realism in Sidney's *Astrophil and Stella*: The Creation of Stella." *Sidney Newsletter and Journal* 12.2 (1993): 30-41.
- Rogers, John. "The Passion of a Female Literary Tradition: Aemilia Lanyer's *Salve Deus Rex Judaeorum*." *Forging Connections: Women's Poetry from the Renaissance to Romanticism*. Ed. Anne K. Mellor. San Marino, California: Huntington Library (2002): 7-18.

- Rose, Mary Beth. "Gender and the Construction of Royal Authority in the Speeches of Elizabeth I." *Gender and Heroism in Early Modern English Literature*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2002. 26-54.
- Saunders, J.W. "The Stigma of Print: a Note on the Social Bases of Tudor Poetry." *Essays in Criticism*. Vol.1. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1951. 139-64.
- Sidney, Sir Philip. "A Letter Written by Sir Philip Sidney to Queen Elizabeth Touching her Marriage with Monsieur." *Miscellaneous Prose of Sir Philip Sidney*. Ed. Katherine Duncan-Jones and Jan Van Dorsten. Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1973. 46-57.
- . *Arcadia*. Ed. Maurice Evans. New York: Penguin Books, 1977.
- . *Astrophil and Stella. The Poems of Sir Philip Sidney*. Ed. William A. Ringler. Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1962. 165-237.
- . *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia (The New Arcadia)*. Ed. Victor Skretkowicz. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987.
- . *The Defense of Poetry. Miscellaneous Prose of Sir Philip Sidney*. Ed. Katherine Duncan-Jones and Jan Van Dorsten. Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1973. 73-128.
- . *The Prose Works of Philip Sidney*. Vol. 3. Ed. Albert Feuillerat. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1963.
- Sinfield, Alan. "Sidney and Astrophil." *Studies in English Literature* 20.1 (1980): 25-41.
- Skretkowicz, Victor. "Mary Sidney Herbert's *Antonius*, English Philhellenism and the Protestant Cause." *Women's Writing*. 6.1, 1999. 7-25.
- Smith, Hilda L, and Berenice A. Carroll, Eds. *Women's Political & Social Thought: An Anthology*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2000.
- . *Women Writers and the Early Modern British Political Tradition*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998.
- Sommerville, Johann P. ed. Principle Events in James' Life. *King James VI and I Political Writings*. Ed. Johann P. Sommerville. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994. xxix-xxxii.
- Spenser, Edmund. *Edmund Spenser's Poetry*. 3rd ed. Ed. Hugh Maclean and Anne Lake Prescott. New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1993.
- Spiller, Michael G. *The Development of the Sonnet: An Introduction*. New York: Routledge, 1992.

- Starkey, David. *Elizabeth: The Struggle for the Throne*. New York: HarperCollins Publishers, Inc., 2001.
- . "Introduction: Court history in perspective." *The English Court from the Wars of the Roses to the Civil War*. Ed. David Starkey. London: Longman, 1987. 1-24.
- Straznicki, Marta. "Closet Drama." *A Companion to Renaissance Drama*. Ed. Arthur F. Kinney. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2002. 424-25.
- Stone, Lawrence. *The Crisis of the Aristocracy, 1558-1641*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1965.
- Stubbs, John. *The discoverie of a Gaping Gulf whereinto England is like to be swallowed by an other French marriage, if the Lord forbid not the banes, by letting her Maiestie see the sin and punishment thereof*. H. Singleton for W. Page, 1579. STC 23400.
- Summit, Jennifer. *Lost Property: the Woman Writer and English Literary History, 1380-1589*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2000.
- Trafton, Dain A. "Politics and the Praise of Women: Political Doctrine in the Courtier's Third Book." *Castiglione: the Ideal and the Real in Renaissance Culture*. Ed. Robert W. Hanning, David Rosand. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983. 29-44.
- Vickers, Nancy J. "Diana Described: Scattered Woman and Scattered Rhyme." *Critical Inquiry* 8.2 (Winter 1981): 265-79.
- Warkentin, Germaine. "Sidney's Authors." *Sir Philip Sidney's Achievements*. Ed. M.J.B. Allen, et al. New York: AMS Press, 1990.
- Whitherspoon, Alexander Maclaren. *The Influence of Robert Garnier on Elizabethan Drama*. U.S.A.: Archon Press, 1968.
- Woods, Susanne. "Introduction." *The Poems of Aemilia Lanyer: Salve Deus Rex Judaeorum*. Ed. Susanne Woods. Women Writer's in English 1350-1850 series. New York: Oxford University Press, 1993. xv-xlii.
- . *Lanyer: A Renaissance Woman Poet*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999.
- . "Textual Introduction." *The Poems of Aemilia Lanyer: Salve Deus Rex Judaeorum*. Ed. Susanne Woods. Women Writer's in English 1350-1850 series. New York: Oxford University Press, 1993. xlvii-li.
- . "Vocation and Authority: Born to Write." *Aemilia Lanyer: Gender, Genre, and the Canon*. Ed. Marshall Grossman. Lexington, Kentucky: University Press of Kentucky, 1998. 83-98.

- Woudhuysen, H.R. *Sir Philip Sidney and the Circulation of Manuscripts 1558-1640*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996.
- Wright, Pam. "A change in direction: the ramifications of a female household, 1558-1603." *The English Court: from the Wars of the Roses to the Civil War*. Ed. David Starkey. London: Longman, 1987. 147-72.
- Wroth, Lady Mary. *Lady Mary Wroth's Love's Victory: the Penshurst Manuscript*. Ed. Michael G. Brennan. London: the Roxburghe Club, 1988.
- . *The Poems of Lady Mary Wroth*. Ed. Josephine A. Roberts. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1983.
- Wynne-Davies, Marion. "'For Worth, Not Weakness, Makes in Use but One': Literary Dialogues in an English Renaissance Family." *'This Double Voice': Gendered Writing in Early Modern England*. Eds. Danielle Clarke and Elizabeth Clarke. New York: MacMillan Press, Ltd, 2000. 164-84.