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**Civil Wildness:
Representations of Arcadia in English Literature
1590 – 1720**

Vikki Forsyth
PhD Thesis
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Abstract

The thesis explores the ways in which the land of Arcadia has been depicted in English literature from 1590 to 1720. Although the seventeenth century was a turbulent period in English history, the thesis aims to show that depictions of Arcadia at this time are surprisingly constant because they are more literary than historical and strongly influenced by the works of earlier authors. Earlier representations of Arcadia in Classical and Italian literature are discussed in chapter one. The thesis particularly aims to show the influence of the historian Polybius on the English Arcadia by showing how Sir Philip Sidney, author of the first English Arcadia and instigator of the tradition, is indebted to Polybius. The thesis finds evidence that Arcadia is not an idealised pastoral retreat, as has previously been thought, but can be negative and ironic about the possibility of pastoral perfection, although this seems to change after 1720. This ironic attitude to its pastoral ideal is related to recent 'antipastoral' criticism in the first chapter. Arcadia is also shown to take an interest in the society and organization of its supposedly perfect world, and in this respect is similar to the Renaissance genre of literary utopia, that also focuses on the creation of an imaginary ideal community.

Declarations

I, Vikki Forsyth, hereby certify that this thesis, which is approximately 92,000 words in length, has been written by me, that it is the record of work carried out by me and that it has not been submitted in any previous application for a higher degree.

I was admitted as a research student in September 2002 and as a candidate for the degree of PhD in September 2003; the higher study for which this is a record was carried out in the University of St. Andrews between 2002 and 2005.

I hereby certify that the candidate has fulfilled the conditions of the Resolution and Regulations appropriate for the degree of PhD in the University of St. Andrews and that the candidate is qualified to submit this thesis in application for that degree.

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Yet the person who did the most to help me complete this thesis within the three years was my younger brother, John – not that he offered any advice on the subject or even knew what I was writing about. He struggled very bravely and patiently with cancer in 2003, which not only helped me to keep my own problems in perspective, but provided an inspiring example of how to get up every morning and face the tasks you have to face without complaining about them, an example that kept me focused and helped me to work through the difficulties that inevitably arose in my research. Accordingly, this thesis is gratefully dedicated to his memory.

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The frontispiece shows a woodcut from Giovanni Battista Guarini's *Il Pastor Fido* (Venice: Gio. Battista Ciotti, 1602)

Note on translations

I have preferred to quote works originally written in a language other than English in English translations wherever possible. Bibliographical details of the translation employed are always clearly stated; when no reference is given the translation is my own. I have used modern scholarly editions of foreign texts where these exist. For Tasso's *Aminta* and Guarini's *Il Pastor Fido* these happen to be modern editions of Renaissance English translations; this was not intentional and the translations employed are simply the most recent scholarly editions of these plays. For works in Greek and Latin I have used Loeb Classical library editions and translations in every case except that of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. The *Metamorphoses* is the exception because it exists in more recent translations than that of the Loeb edition.

Preface

The myth of Arcadia, conjuring up idyllic pastoral images and vague wistful ideas of a better, simpler, and more harmonious life, is one that enjoys an enduring popularity. Its most recent champion is the Booker prize-winning author Ben Okri, whose novel *In Arcadia* pursues the idea of Arcadia as an only partially definable pastoral retreat of which everyone has a different personal vision. The undefinable and personal nature of Okri's Arcadia is emphasised when all the characters are asked to 'reveal what their private Arcadia would be, whether a book, a person, a piece of music, a season of the year, a state of spirit, a country, a dream, an idea, or a vanished moment.'¹ For Okri, the dream of Arcadia has nothing to do with the region of Greece from which it takes its name; the novel's climax occurs when the characters visit the Louvre to see Poussin's famous painting *Les Bergers d'Arcadie*, and it has finished long before the characters complete their intended journey into Greece to see the real Arcadia. As he gazes at Poussin's painting, the main character muses on the strange transformations of the Arcadian ideal that have effectively obscured its origins. Arcadia has travelled

from a real place to a poem; from the real Arkadia in the Peloponnese to the idyllic and pastoral poems of the Greek poet Theocritus, and from Theocritus to Virgil. . . . Virgil transformed Arcadia into a landscape of the human spirit, where love, history, politics, religion, work, poetry, and power converge and live. With Virgil, Arcadia became the seed of an ideal, a dream, and a lyric meditation on the mystery of creation and creativity. . . . The idea of the inscription in Poussin's painting had its true origins in Virgil, in the fifth eclogue, called *Daphnis at Heaven's Gate*, in which two shepherds come upon the tomb of Daphnis and sing of his deification. For Daphnis existed in the Theocritus original, but was raised even higher by Virgil. In the *Eclogues*, Daphnis is a great and original poet, and Virgil is lamenting the death of a beloved contemporary.

¹ Ben Okri, *In Arcadia* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 2002), p. 134.

Daphnis was famous, gifted, and beautiful, and he died young. In the poem Virgil lifts him up to heaven, to become a minor star, a little deity. (pp.206-7, p.208).

As a history of Arcadia this account seems thorough and plausible, yet almost every point of this history is open to challenge. Theocritus's *Idylls* are not set in Arcadia; neither are Virgil's *Eclogues*. It is doubtful whether the *Eclogues* are a 'landscape of the human spirit.' They have often been read as political allegory: the deification of Daphnis in the fifth Eclogue (that the pagan Virgil did not entitle *Daphnis at Heaven's Gate*) has been taken to be a reference to Julius Caesar as the details that Virgil gives about his death – deification proved by the appearance of a comet – match the contemporary Roman myths of Julius Caesar's death and apotheosis; and Eclogue IV is not necessarily 'one of the most mysterious and messianic poems in literature' (Okri p.207), but may be a political panegyric celebrating the short lived peace of Brundisium, an event in Roman history that looked as if it would end the wars between Octavian and Mark Anthony.

More significantly, Okri's account leaves out those depictions of Arcadia that do not fit in with his own idea of what Arcadia means, including the prose romance that to English readers is likely to be one of the most famous versions of Arcadia, Sir Philip Sidney's *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia*. Sidney's *Arcadia*, first published in 1590, is elided from this informal history that progresses from Virgil directly to the seventeenth-century painter Poussin. However, as we can each choose our own Arcadia, this is a study of a very different Arcadian idea or myth, one that is found in the prose and drama of late-sixteenth and seventeenth-century England. The works that I will consider are inspired by Virgil and Theocritus just as much as Poussin was, but their authors have interpreted the classical Arcadia in a different way.

Although the authors to be considered in this study have been influenced by Virgil and Theocritus, they have also been influenced by Polybius, the only Arcadian to have described his homeland, but whose description of Arcadia is now largely ignored because it does not fit in with the standard view of Arcadia as a pastoral ideal. But however underappreciated Polybius might find himself today, he was important to Sidney and other Renaissance authors precisely because of his unpastoral view of Arcadia as a society that was actually rather challenging to govern owing to the harshness of its climate. Polybius's concern with how to govern Arcadia so as to make its people obedient finds a perfect analogue in the Renaissance genre of literary utopia, typified by its concern with all the small details of running the perfect society and best exemplified in Thomas More's *Utopia*. Arcadia, in the hands of the authors that this study will consider, shows a strong concern for the details of the society behind the pastoral myth.

To pursue this reading of Arcadia it is of course necessary to disassociate the land from the long critical tradition of interpreting it as a simple pastoral idyll. This study therefore treats Arcadia as a specific locality, not as general synonym for pastoral (or for any book, person, piece of music, season of the year, state of spirit, country, dream, idea, or vanished moment), and is only concerned with works that specifically claim to be set in the real country of Arcadia. This approach has produced interesting results as Arcadia is actually quite distinct from other pastoral locations as a result of two widely different mythical interpretations of it found in ancient sources. For the Greeks and Romans, Arcadia was both a pastoral ideal and a primitive, backwards, place that had unique and weird customs and rituals. The Renaissance imagination plays with both of these Arcadias, so the myth of perfection that might be received from Virgil (and later Sannazaro) can be countered by Polybius and Ovid's wicked

Arcadians. The Renaissance Arcadia, far from being a pastoral ideal, is usually negative and ironic about its own supposed perfection.

Because ideas like Okri's, of Arcadia as a pastoral ideal, have become so prevalent, not much attention has been paid to it as a setting in its own right. Surprisingly, there is no study that provides an overview of the uses and interpretations of Arcadia in the Renaissance. When it is discussed at all, as for example in Harry Levin's *Myth of the Golden Age in the Renaissance*, it tends to be dismissed as an idyllic pastoral setting without any consideration of what evidence there is for this opinion.² In recent years there have been some critics who have focused attention on the land of Arcadia itself. Foremost amongst these is Winfried Wehle, who has offered an interpretation of Arcadia as an artistic concept, a 'Freiraum' ('free space') for the poet, and the characters who in some sense double or mirror the poet, to explore their own identities. Arcadia became popular in the Renaissance, she argues, because it was in that period that a sense of humankind's ability to 'self-fashion' (that she considers to be one of the hallmarks of modern consciousness) first arose – she refers to Pico Della Mirandola's assertion that man may either ascend to the level of the angels or descend to the level of the beasts. The emphasis is on man's right to choose, to shape himself. This new awareness of the free choice involved in the creation of one's own identity necessitated some kind of artistic avenue or outlet to explore the complexities of this new consciousness, and Arcadia proved to be a perfect setting for these artistic explorations because of its idyllic setting that reminds the poet and readers of the original, primitive age when man lived in harmony with nature and life was not nearly so complicated.³

² Harry Levin, *The Myth of the Golden Age in the Renaissance* (London: Faber and Faber, 1970).

³ Winfried Wehle, 'Arkadien: Eine Kunstwelt' in Wolf-Deiter Stempel and Karlheinz Stierle ed., *Die Plurität der Welten: Aspekte der Renaissance in der Romania* (Munich: Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 1987), pp.137-165, and Winfried Wehle, 'Menschwerdung in Arkadien: Die 'Wiedergeburt' der Anthropologie aus dem Geist der Kunst', in Winfried Wehle ed., *Über die Schwierigkeiten, (S)ich zu Sagen: Horizonte literarischer Subjektkonstitution* (Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 2001), pp.83-105. For the

Wehle's interpretation is valuable for the way it recognises real meaning and significance behind Arcadian stories through the link to what she describes as 'anthropology' (the developing consciousness of the Renaissance), rather than just dismissing Arcadia as a pastoral retreat. Also valuable is her recognition that Arcadia is not a simple golden age ideal but in fact exists in a complex dialectical relationship with this ideal. She in fact sees the awareness that the golden age is lost and the lament for it in the sixth book of Sannazaro's *Arcadia* as a turning point in the work as a whole, providing the chance to contrast the idealism and stasis of first six books with the complex psychologies and situations of the characters who follow.⁴ Yet Wehle's account is incomplete. The anthropological concept of Arcadia that she creates is based on a reading of comparatively few texts – her main example is Sannazaro's *Arcadia* – so it cannot offer a theory that fits all the works to have ever been set in Arcadia. She interprets Arcadia as an inward-looking land, of personal exploration and self-creation, even going so far as to call it 'eine anthropologische Versuchsanstalt' ('an anthropological research institute'), but the Arcadias of Sidney, and the other authors to be discussed in this study, show an interest in larger concerns like the details of social organisation, and the self presentation of the Arcadian society as a whole that is sometimes even achieved at the expense of the individual.⁵ She offers a brilliant reading of the eventual union of the shepherd and the nymph as a symbol of the rational and the wild sides of the human psyche achieving harmony, yet love affairs, and more particularly marriage, are also a sociological and societal phenomenon.⁶

'Freiraum' of fiction see 'Kunstwelt' p.140, for the characters doubling the poet see 'Kunstwelt' pp.153-5, for her discussion of Pico and self-fashioning see 'Menschwerdung' pp.85-9, and for the importance of the golden age idea in the appeal of Arcadia see 'Kunstwelt' pp.155-6 .

⁴'Kunstwelt', pp. 149-50.

⁵'Menschwerdung' p.98.

⁶See 'Menschwerdung' pp. 90-92 for her account of the symbolism of the nymph and shepherd.

Gary Wills opens up the possibility of a very different interpretation, one that focuses on the actual land of Arcadia and not any literary creation of it, when he observes in 'The Real Arcadia' that the area of Greece behind the poetry that has made it famous is not in fact the ideal of literary pastoral.⁷ But in itself that observation is not surprising, and Wills does not question the assumption that the Classical and Renaissance works to be set in Arcadia were trying to offer their readers this ideal. Yet this study will consider several works from the Renaissance period that do not use the land of Arcadia to offer their readers a pastoral escape, and may even deliberately invoke the idea of the pastoral ideal only to disprove its existence.

The aim of this study is to reassess one part of the long history of depictions of Arcadia that does not fit either the conventional theory of it as a pastoral ideal, or Wehle's anthropological reading, and to offer new contexts for interpreting these texts. These works, as it happens, all come from the English literature of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. I have adopted a close-reading approach, looking at what these authors actually make of Arcadia and trying not to be misled by preconceived ideas about what Arcadia is. Several of the works that this study considers are rather obscure, in which case its detailed close-reading approach helps the reader to form an appreciation of the works under discussion. Even where works are very well-known, however, it is still useful to read them afresh in this new context of the history of depictions of Arcadia. This study, as far as I know, is the first attempt to consider the history of Arcadia itself as a distinctive setting. As such, it often finds itself without a critical tradition to refer to. My response at such times has always been to focus on the texts themselves as they are the fundamental material upon which theories must be based.

⁷ Gary Wills, 'The Real Arcadia', *American Scholar* 67, (1998), 15-27.

This study, then, is an attempt to describe the history of depictions of the unique land of Arcadia in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries based on a close reading of these depictions. This has resulted in an interpretation of Arcadia that diverges significantly from the pastoral ideal with which it is usually associated. Pursuing the idea of an ironic and antipastoral Arcadia that is interested in the mechanics of government and social organisation as well as pastoral love affairs is important because Arcadia is a land that is persistently misunderstood, as is its relationship to the pastoral genre. As such, I like to think this study can be part of the general ongoing attempt to better understand the pastoral genre and what it meant to the Renaissance, an attempt that often does involve questioning preconceived notions of the ideality and escapism of the pastoral genre.

Chapter I: Inventing Arcadia

This is a study of the representations in English literature, between the years 1590 (when Sir Philip Sidney's famous *Arcadia* was first published) and 1720, of the land of Arcadia. Any broadly based study of this kind has to begin by defining its terms, so the first question that needs to be addressed must be: what exactly do we mean by 'Arcadia'? In a sense this is not a difficult question to answer; Arcadia is an area of Greece with unique social customs that were first described by the historian Polybius back in the mid second century BC. But Arcadia has proved a very popular region and since Polybius's time has been written about by many people living in times and societies very different from those of the Greek historian. Moreover, this study is about the literary representations of Arcadia; not the area itself but its myths, what it has meant to its authors and poets, and what they have used its landscape to connote or express. Defining 'Arcadia' thus becomes a complex task of sifting through readings and misreadings of the landscape to determine what it meant to the Renaissance and seventeenth-century writers on whom this study concentrates. The study ends with John Gay's *Dione* in 1720 because after that time the meanings of the land of Arcadia seem to change again, becoming both more positive and more recognisably pastoral, so that eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Arcadias do not have much in common with earlier versions.¹ This study tells only the early part of Arcadia's story, from Polybius to Gay, focusing on sixteenth- and seventeenth-century examples from England and Italy when, and where, it was particularly prolific.

Turning to previous criticism is not of much help in defining Arcadia. It is not that critics do not mention Arcadia, it is just that when they do it tends to be associated

¹ As I shall show, the later but distinctly different uses of Arcadia have unfortunately caused much critical confusion in defining the Renaissance Arcadia.

with an ideal pastoral landscape, a conclusion that a careful reading neither of works set in Arcadia nor most pastoral works can support. The only recent commentator to begin to define Arcadia without confusing it with the pastoral is Gary Wills in 'The Real Arcadia.' Wills begins this essay with the observation that very few of the poets who have written about Arcadia had ever visited the place. Upon realising this, he was prompted to visit it for himself to see how far the reality measures up to the pastoral ideal that the poets have created. Not surprisingly, he concludes that the real Arcadia is a scenic but desolate rural area where it is difficult to scrape a living and that the poets have got it totally wrong, even down to details so trivial as Ovid and Milton's sandy banks of the river Ladon (apparently they are actually of clay). Yet the Arcadian landscape is very beautiful and he finds himself seduced by the poets' idyll even though he knows it to be no accurate depiction of the country, concluding paradoxically that '[t]heir dream is only a dream, and that is its weakness, but it is also its strength. The dream of "Arcady" can be entertained anywhere – even in the real Arcadia.'²

This conclusion is in fact open to question. As I will show, many of the poets who have represented Arcadia have created much less of a straightforward pastoral ideal than Wills suggests, especially Sir Philip Sidney, someone whom Wills accuses of 'starry-eyed enthusiasm' about Arcadia. But Wills does offer some centrally important insights into the nature of Arcadia. He highlights the fact that it is a real place as well as a literary pastoral ideal, and that there is a large disjunction between these two Arcadias. In this insight he is really correcting modern perceptions of Arcadia. The term 'Arcady' that he uses to describe the poets' Arcadia is taken from Keats and reflects developments in the representation of Arcadia that take place

² Gary Wills, 'The Real Arcadia', *American Scholar* 67, (1998), 15-27, p.27. For the difficulty of scraping a living from the land, see p.25, for the banks of the Ladon pp.19-20.

outside the timescale of this study.³ Sixteenth and seventeenth-century authors, as I will argue, were already well aware of this disjunction and exploit its possibilities in their representation of Arcadia. Wills's second very important observation is that Arcadia had a bad reputation for the ancient Greeks. 'They thought it a region to be avoided, a spooky, even repulsive, place with mentally retarded inhabitants. The area's principal rites – the sacrifices to Wolf-Zeus atop Lycaeus (Wolf-Mountain) – were thought to involve human sacrifice . . .'⁴ These negative aspects are ignored by modern criticism but may have shaped early representations of the land.

As a starting point for the definition of Arcadia, let us consider its representation in Sir Aston Cokain's 'Second Eclogue', an obscure seventeenth-century pastoral that does not make it in to Wills's collection of famous poets who have contributed to the myth of 'Arcady.' We are starting with Cokain not because he is a well known or particularly original poet, nor because there is anything exceptional about his depiction of Arcadia, but because his brief account of an Arcadian love affair clearly demonstrates some of the key ideas explored by other authors considered later in this study. That many of the same basic ideas can be found in so little-known a work as the 'Second Eclogue' may suggest that it was natural for seventeenth-century writers to create a slightly ironic, slightly unpastoral Arcadian landscape although that seventeenth-century viewpoint has now been obscured by the works of later poets, and critics, who see Arcadia as an ideal pastoral world. This is how Cokain's shepherdess Amarillis describes her relationship with her now-absent beloved to the listening Thenot:

³ Keats was not the first, and is not the only, author to have used the term 'Arcady'. Wills takes this term from Keats's 'Ode on a Grecian Urn' simply because he is a major author who seems in this poem to see Arcadia as an idealised pastoral landscape. Although I aim to show that Arcadia is not an idealised landscape in many works by Renaissance and seventeenth century authors, its representations do become more idealistic from the eighteenth century onwards, as is discussed in chapter five, so Wills's reading of Keats's falsely idealised 'Arcady' seems likely to be correct.

⁴ Wills, p.16 (both quotations).

Happy the day when we by *Ladon* side
 Eat Cream, and kisses mutually enjoyde:
 And happy were those Nights, when on his knee
 He by the Fire side did dandle me!
 How often as we sat so hath thy Son
 Thy Billy *Thenot* to th'old Woman run,
 For apples to make Lambs-wooll!⁵

At first glance the 'Second Eclogue' is a typical and not particularly distinguished pastoral. It has a familiar, seemingly idyllic, setting and a familiar plot of a shepherdess forsaken by her swain.⁶ A closer look, however, reveals that Amarillis's reminiscences are slightly atypical of conventional pastorals and are more detailed and specific in their creation of the rural community. In the first place, the river is named and it is known to be one of the chief rivers of Arcadia. Wills has warned us that *Ladon* is a conventional Arcadian detail used by writers who have never been there, but even so it indicates a deeper level of specificity and exactness about the location of the poem than many pastoral poets feel to be necessary. The cream they eat is also slightly divergent from the pastoral norm. It is obviously produced from the Arcadian herds and consistent with the tradition of offering rustic gifts to the beloved. But cheese, not cream, is the normal pastoral gift, that Polyphemus offers Galatea in Theocritus's Idyll XI and Marvell's Damon, influenced by Theocritus, offers Juliana. Virgil's shepherds make extensive use of milk and cheese, as love-offerings (Eclogue II), as gestures of hospitality (Eclogue I), and as sacrificial offerings (Eclogues V and VII), but cream is never mentioned, possibly because his rustics are predominantly shepherds and cream does not come from sheep. A quick Literature Online search of

⁵ Sir Aston Cokain, 'Second Eglogue', *Small Poems of Divers Sorts* (London: Wil. Godbid, 1658), lines 129-35.

⁶ In classical pastoral it is usually a shepherd who has been abandoned by his beloved, but the shepherdess takes over as the usual complaining figure from about the Caroline period onwards. However a precedent for Cokain's forsaken shepherdess can be found in Virgil's Eclogue VIII.

other pastoral poems of the same period reveals that cream is not a popular detail at this time and when it does appear it is usually in the formula ‘curds and cream’ (i.e.cheese), for example as Dryden translates Tityrus’s offer of hospitality in Eclogue I.⁷ The choice of cream over the more conventional cheese suggests that Cokain is imagining this Arcadian relationship for himself and not being unduly constrained by pastoral convention. The lambs-wool, identified by the OED as ‘a drink consisting of hot ale mixed with the pulp of roasted apples, and sugared and spiced’ is another unconventional, and in fact unprecedented, choice that seems to reflect a personal preference rather than pastoral symbolism.

The second image, of nights by the fire, is also not typically pastoral. It is an attractive, cosy image, and there is certainly a precedent for it in Eclogue VII (‘With me you will find a hearth and pitchy brands; with me a good fire ever blazing and doorposts black with many a layer of soot’), but it would still have been more conventional to stick to outdoor settings on sunny days.⁸ It is the last lines of this extract, though, that are really unusual. Amarillis indicates the presence of a community that exists alongside the lovers, in the shape of Thenot’s young son who is sent on errands, and the old apple woman. A reader might wonder where these evenings by the fire are taking place – in Thenot’s house? Some kind of village hall? Bearing in mind that they are drinking ale, a tavern? Why are the lovers not at home, why do they not want privacy, or are they not allowed it? The point is that Cokain seems to have a specific situation in mind and to be describing something that he is imagining rather than recreating a conventional pastoral image. Finally, most strikingly of all, the economy of a pastoral environment is never normally mentioned.

⁷ John Dryden, *The works of Virgil containing his Pastorals, Georgics, and Aeneis* (London: Jacob Tonson, 1697), *Pastorals* I.114.

⁸ Virgil, Eclogue VII, in *Eclogues, Georgics, Aeneid I-VI*, trans. H. Rushton Fairclough, revised by G.P. Gould (Cambridge Mass.: Harvard University Press (Loeb Classical Library edition), revised edition 1999), lines 49-50, p.71 in the translation.

Readers are not encouraged to imagine shepherds, who are depicted as working and singing together and offering one another gifts, going to market and driving bargains with one another the next day. Cokain, however, raises the possibility that the old woman sells apples, perhaps she even has a market stall or shop. If so, she is an image that the modern reader can just as easily connect forwards to the old bumboat woman in Virginia Woolf's *Orlando* as backwards to Virgil's shepherds. Cokain is not always this detailed and imaginative in his pastoral settings, but this pastoral set in Arcadia seems to have brought out the best in him.

I have spent so long discussing this short passage because it illustrates one of the main features that I want to define as Arcadian, namely that Arcadia is a real and specific place, not just any idealised pastoral setting and – in contrast to Wills – that many of its authors are aware of this fact. Whether or not Cokain himself can be counted as one of those authors, Arcadia has certainly and perhaps not coincidentally encouraged the flowering of his poetic imagination in this poem. Of course not all authors who set works in Arcadia (even prior to the age of Keats) are imagining it as a real place. This study has had to ignore or discount many texts that are simply conventional, uninteresting pastorals that merely mention the word 'Arcadia' or 'Arcadian' at some point. Arcadia is a popular pastoral setting, as I shall explain more fully later, and not all pastorals that are set in Arcadia engage with the Arcadian landscape or character suggested by its real history. But there are some works set in Arcadia (though not necessarily pastorals) that do respond to the facts of Arcadia as a geographical reality, its history and its previous literary depictions, and it is on these texts that this study will concentrate. I suggest that there is a minor, alternative, Arcadian tradition that is aware of Arcadia as a real place, and has read Polybius as

well as Sannazaro and the other poets. Cokain's 'Second Eclogue' shows itself influenced by this understanding of Arcadia.

The principles of textual selection for this study can thus be stated as follows. Firstly, 'real' Arcadias foreground the idea that Arcadia is a real place and make an effort to imagine what it would actually be like to live there (as Cokain does). Also, in the works I will consider, there can be found an ironic recognition that the real-place Arcadia does not live up to the reputation, propagated by writers of pastoral, that Arcadia is a perfect place. Both these attributes of Arcadia stem ultimately from Sidney's treatment of the subject in response to Sannazaro's earlier work. The English Arcadia can therefore be seen as an ironic, more self-aware, response to the Italian tradition. Apart from being 'a work that is set in Arcadia', a representation of Arcadia might also be defined as a work that foregrounds and investigates its setting, both its landscape and its society. As such it is situated halfway between the genres of pastoral, where it is usually placed by critics, and utopia, or 'imaginary society', and it partakes of some of the qualities of both. Cokain's Arcadia exemplifies this dual generic identity as it creates its effect both from pastoral convention and precedent and detailed independent imagination of the scene. It is to a closer analysis of these genres and their relationship to the representation of Arcadia that this discussion now turns.

Arcadia and Pastoral

It is easy to link Arcadia and the pastoral genre as Arcadia is widely recognised as a conventional pastoral setting. In fact, the difficulty lies more in disassociating rather

than associating Arcadia with the pastoral, as pastoral is a genre that has been misunderstood in ways that are particularly confusing for the study of Arcadia. To properly appreciate the relationship between Arcadia and the pastoral, then, it is first necessary to establish what we mean by pastoral, particularly as this genre is notoriously difficult to define. The definition suggested by its etymology – ‘of shepherds’ – gives a reasonable idea of the genre’s hallmark character, but it has proved very tricky to establish the exact nature and purpose of the shepherd and his song. In twentieth-century criticism there have been two main approaches to defining the pastoral, that might be characterised as ‘thematic’ and ‘formal.’ ‘Thematic’ interpretations of the pastoral focus not on the genre’s formal features but on a set of themes that seem to recur in pastoral works, such as nostalgia for a simpler way of life and preference of the country to the town. William Empson’s pioneering study *Some Versions of Pastoral* is an obvious example of the thematic approach, for having first developed a formula from his reading in the pastoral genre – pastoral is the process of ‘putting the complex into the simple’ – he can apply this to a surprising number of texts that do not seem obviously pastoral and do not involve shepherds.⁹ From Empson’s work it was easy to develop the idea that pastoral is a mode as well as a genre, that is, it is a set of themes that can surface in any work and interact with that work’s dominant values and assumptions. Sojourns with simple people in the country for epic heroes is the classic example of pastoral functioning as mode. Empson’s influential idea is that pastoral is not about the shepherds from whom it takes its name, but about something else, about some underlying theme or themes. This idea offers a way of unifying texts that have been identified as pastoral but that may not seem to have much in common (such as many of Marvell’s pastorals that are usually defined as such yet do not have shepherd speakers, to say nothing of Empson’s more

⁹ William Empson, *Some Versions of Pastoral* (London: Chatto and Windhus, 1950), p.23.

far-fetched examples of 'pastoral' texts) and imposing an interpretative pattern that allows critics to group loosely pastoral texts together.

Thematic interpretations dominated twentieth-century pastoral criticism. In 1975, Renato Poggioli opened *The Oaten Flute* with a definition that has proved influential:

The psychological root of the pastoral is a double longing after innocence and happiness, to be recovered not through conversion or regeneration but merely through a retreat.¹⁰

This short sentence clearly reveals that for Poggioli what is important about pastoral is its ethos which apparently offers innocence and happiness to the reader escaping from the corrupt world. The implied observation that pastoral is about the needs and desires of 'complex' or worldly people, not the simple people it purportedly describes, is obviously correct as it is only complex people who write pastorals. To desire a retreat into the pastoral ideal is only to acknowledge that one is alienated from it, although, as Poggioli points out, real country life is very different and not as pleasant as the poets' ideal.¹¹ But this insight does not mean that pastoral critics need not concern themselves at all with its shepherds. The simple characters and subject matter of the pastoral, however falsified, are still integral features of the genre that are too much ignored by thematic characterisations. Moreover, although Poggioli's definition neatly defines and shows the guiding principle behind some pastoral texts, there are others that it does not fit, most obviously pastorals that offer political allegory and criticism like Milton's 'Lycidas', 'September' in Spenser's *Shepherd's Calendar*, and Virgil's first Eclogue.¹² His choice of pastoral themes both narrows the pastoral

¹⁰ Renato Poggioli, *The Oaten Flute: Essays on Pastoral Poetry and the Pastoral Ideal* (Cambridge Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1975), p.1.

¹¹ Poggioli, p.2.

¹² Religious allegory is another major use of the pastoral genre but one that I do not want to discuss here as it is not relevant to the texts used in this study.

canon by rejecting works conventionally considered pastoral that do not fit his definition and widens it at the same time by (presumably) including works not conventionally described as pastoral that do.

A more extreme version of thematic interpretation is found in Richard Cody's *The Landscape of the Mind* which essentially argues that all pastoral is Platonic allegory and that several of Shakespeare's early comedies, because they can be shown to possess the same Platonic philosophy as the *Aminta* (his main example of the pastoral), are therefore pastoral.¹³ (I am here of course only summarising a complex and nuanced argument and not doing justice to its subtleties or the many illuminating ideas it offers). On this reduced reading of *The Landscape of the Mind*, however, it will be evident that it alters the pastoral canon in the same ways that Poggioli's definition does. Definitions of the pastoral that turn on the attempt to identify its themes can offer new insights into the genre's guiding principles and help to explain what a wide range of texts conventionally defined as pastoral actually have in common. But the attempt to draw themes out of pastoral texts and then call the themes, rather than the texts that produced them, 'pastoral' can be circular and misleading. It changes the pastoral canon without a solid enough foundation for explaining why certain pastorals are no longer to be considered as such, so that which texts are pastoral becomes a matter of each individual interpreter's judgement, a process that rather defeats the point of definition. Thematic interpretations may also become too inclusive, perhaps stretching the concept of the pastoral too thin until it becomes no more than a theme that is shown to be present in a huge variety of otherwise very different texts. And they tend to ignore the shepherd. Yet this is still the main way that the term 'pastoral' is used by contemporary critics, who can use

¹³ Richard Cody, *The Landscape of the Mind: Pastoralism and Platonic Theory in Tasso's Aminta and Shakespeare's Early Comedies* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969).

this obligingly flexible term with ‘ungoverned inclusiveness’ to explicate an astonishing range of literary works.¹⁴

In recent years there has been a reaction against thematic interpretations by pastoral scholars, led by Paul Alpers in *What is Pastoral?* Alpers himself admits that his argument is ‘a formalist account of pastoral and its literary history’ and sets out in the preface his reasons for pursuing the formalist approach:

A literary definition is revealing and useful, it seems to me, not when it plants its banner everywhere, but when it is clear about what does and does not count as an example of the phenomenon in question. Hence when a colleague asked me what would be the book’s surprising examples, I answered, “None.” My endeavour is rather to treat evident examples, of which I seek to give convincing critical accounts that are also accurately suggestive in their implications and extensions.¹⁵

The last sentence shows how the contradiction between the thematic and the formal approaches to the pastoral might be solved. Themes can be extrapolated from pastoral texts and even applied to other works (the book opens with an account of a ‘pastoral interlude’ in Primo Levi’s *If This is a Man*) but the presence of pastoral themes does not make another work pastoral. Formal features are essential to the definition of genre. Alpers’s most recent work, defining the pastoral eclogue and identifying modern as well as ancient examples, again reveals his interest in form as well as theme.¹⁶ In *What is Pastoral?*, he continues to bridge the gap between the thematic

¹⁴ The term ‘ungoverned inclusiveness’ comes from Paul Alpers in *What is Pastoral?* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1996), p.ix. Perhaps it is unfair to pick on examples of ‘ungoverned’ usage of the term, but recent studies that seem to stretch the normal range of pastoral texts include A.J. Grant and Connie Ruzich’s ‘A Rhetoric of Roads: *Their Eyes Were Watching God* as Pastoral’, *Interdisciplinary Literary Studies* 5, (2004), 16-28; Scott Hess’s ‘Postmodern Pastoral, Advertising, and the Masque of Technology’, *Interdisciplinary Studies in Literature and Environment* 11, (2004), 71-100 and Timothy Gray’s ‘Process and Plurality in New York’s Urban Pastoral’, *Contemporary Literature* 44, (2003), 362-78. Some people would regard ‘urban pastoral’ as an oxymoron.

¹⁵ Alpers, *What is Pastoral?*, p.x, p.ix.

¹⁶ Alpers, ‘Modern Eclogues’, *TriQuarterly* 116, (2003), 20-47.

and formal aspects of the pastoral genre by suggesting how pastoral texts can be grouped together in thematic as well as formal terms: ‘what connects pastoral works to each other, what makes them a literary “kind”, is the way each deals, in its circumstances and for its reasons, with the representative anecdote of the herdsmen and their lives.’ This ‘representative anecdote’ is what he defines as the true guiding principle behind all pastoral. And as the shepherd is ‘representative of some other or of all other men and/or women’ this definition includes the hitherto problematic ‘political’ pastorals (the shepherd stands for ‘some other’ person) as well as those pastorals that have lent themselves to more universal thematic interpretations (the shepherd stands for ‘all other’ people, in fact for all of us).¹⁷

The reason why it is so difficult to define pastoral is this essential tension between the claims of form and those of theme. Put simply, the problem facing the critic is deciding how much the claims of form matter, and at what point a work must be deemed to have strayed too far away from the conventions of the genre to qualify as a pastoral – although the importance of some seemingly formal aspects of the genre are open to debate just as its themes are, such as whether pastorals must always be in verse, or always involve two speakers. Alpers offers by far the best of the recent definitions of the pastoral, a thorough and thoughtful way of bridging the gap between the formal and thematic claims of the genre. But one might dispute even his modest claim that pastoral is a work that deals with the representative anecdote of the herdsman. He himself acknowledges that this does not work for Marvell’s mower poems, and even leaving this objection aside, one might not accept as a complete explanation of the pastoral the themes that he finds in his texts – community, the importance of ritual, noontime relaxation and song. Selection of themes inevitably entails some bias in the selection of texts towards illustrating his own argument. But

¹⁷ *What is Pastoral?*, p.26 (both quotations).

a definition of the pastoral that recognised no thematic similarities between works featuring shepherds would in the first place not be very useful to the critic, and secondly, could distort the pastoral canon in the same way that an overly thematic definition can; for example, it would have to include something like a television documentary about the problems faced by modern Australian sheep farmers. As Alpers realises, although formal considerations might dominate the definition of the genre, there needs to be some way of moving from a generalisation about the form of the pastoral to a generalisation of its themes.

A different, and decidedly formal, approach to the pastoral genre is taken by Sukanta Chaudhuri in his encyclopaedic *Renaissance Pastoral and its English Developments*. He includes in this study any work that might be popularly or loosely defined as pastoral in the Renaissance period, unearthing a huge variety of different texts. These works do not have much in common with one another and he does not attempt to find a key that would impose unity on his pastoral corpus. Chaudhuri's work is not really pastoral theory at all, but 'a critical history of English Renaissance Pastoral' and in the introduction he attempts to define the genre not through the programmatic statements of the theorist like Poggioli, but through close reading of a wide range of texts. He recognises similarities and generalisations that emerge in some pastoral works, but also recognises that no one pattern will explain all the effects of all the texts, and that there is no reason why all these widely different works, written by different people at different times, should have anything in common. His analysis of the root of the genre agrees with that later suggested by Alpers – 'The shepherd of pastoral functions as basic or representative man' – but he knows that the number of ideas that the shepherd might be used to represent is practically infinite. The most obvious example of this is that pastoral can vary between the poles of

straightforward, point-for-point allegory, and no allegory at all but an allusive representation of what life might be like if it were run along simpler lines. He prefers the latter type of pastoral, but accepts that both *are* pastoral. At the same time, the shepherd plays some roles repeatedly, such as poet and lover, and these can be used to thematically link many (but not all) pastorals.¹⁸ There is not any one neat definition of pastoral, but a whole range of uses has been found for the representative shepherd. These different uses, though, can be identified and subdivided so *a* pastoral idea (as opposed to *the* pastoral idea) emerges from each pastoral poem and often several poems can be shown to share the same idea. Definition of the pastoral solely in terms of the shepherd might not feel very satisfying. But it is thorough and runs no risk of imposing a false pattern on the pastoral canon or of leaving anything out. After all, there is no solid evidence that pastoral is meant to be about anything more (critical opinion to the contrary) and examples and counterexamples can easily be produced whenever a more thematic definition is attempted. I think Chaudhuri has the right idea. There is not one kind of pastoral or one set of pastoral themes, there are several. Thematic definition is useful within the genre, not to try to create a formula that explains the whole genre.

In a sense, though, the exact definition of the pastoral canon does not matter to the present study because Arcadias unmistakably announce themselves. But pastoral has a much bigger problem than that of themes versus forms in its definition, and that is the persistent misconception that it depicts a golden age or an ideal landscape. This is an important issue for the study of Arcadia as 'Arcadian' has actually become the accepted critical shorthand for describing an ideal pastoral landscape, possibly because Arcadia is a common pastoral setting, but more likely because of an almost

¹⁸ Sukanta Chaudhuri, *Renaissance Pastoral and its English Developments* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989). The quotations in this paragraph can be found on p.vi and p.2. For the number of the shepherd's possible roles see pp.2-3, for the discussion of allegory and allusiveness pp. 5-6.

equally persistent misconception that it is the setting for Virgil's *Eclogues*. This is a very significant mistake because it both seems to define Arcadia as no more than a pastoral backdrop and because it links the place to a wrong idea of what the pastoral is. Most critics now would accept that pastoral is not about simple idealism of its rural setting – there is nothing ideal about the situation of the dispossessed Tityrus in Eclogue I, for example. Suggestions of idealism in the pastoral setting can be found in earlier criticism, though – Poggioli's definition (quoted above), might be paraphrased as 'pastoral is a wished-for retreat into innocence and happiness' (although this is acknowledged to be an impossible wish), where the country landscape is meant to provide the unalloyed innocence and happiness, and Harry Levin associates the lovely setting of Arcadia with the desire to regain a lost golden, or perfect, age.¹⁹ Linda Woodbridge has recently pointed out the persistence of the belief that pastoral is idealistic about rural life and landscapes, to the extent that 'all too often when a pastoral doesn't fit the stereotype, it doesn't negate stereotype but becomes evidence of the author's unhappiness with pastoral.'²⁰ It is an exasperating misconception. But Woodbridge's voice is one of several protesting that most pastoral is not 'pastoral' or 'Arcadian' in the sense in which these words are too often used and the idea must now be regarded as unservicable. It is certainly unhelpful for the study of works set in Arcadia.

But if it has never been true that pastorals depict ideal landscapes and golden ages, where did this very persistent idea come from? As far as Arcadia is concerned, and perhaps pastoral literature as a whole as well, the answer must lie in Sannazaro. The first author to entitle his work 'Arcadia', Sannazaro quite unwittingly creates an ideal

¹⁹ Harry Levin, *The Myth of the Golden Age in the Renaissance* (London: Faber and Faber, 1970), p.7, p.9, see below for further discussion.

²⁰ Linda Woodbridge, 'Country matters: *As You Like It* and the Pastoral-Bashing Impulse' in Evelyn Gajowski (ed.), *Re-Visions of Shakespeare: Essays in Honour of Robert Ornstein* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2004), p.192.

pastoral landscape by his detailed descriptions of beautiful rural settings and the fact that he never describes bad weather there (seemingly a matter of personal taste, not lack of precedent, as Virgil describes bad weather in his *Eclogues* and Sannazaro's slightly older contemporary and friend Pontano includes a 'Winter' Eclogue in his pastorals). The supposed ideality of the shepherds' lives might come from the fact that Sannazaro never depicts hard or unpleasant work for his shepherds and that all the pains of their lives come from the circumstances of unrequited love and death. Even then the unrequited love is experienced by strangers in Arcadia, and the grief of bereavement is used as an opportunity for the community to come together to take part in funeral games. Sannazaro was not trying to depict real rural life, and the *Arcadia* is better interpreted as an exercise in literary allusion. He was himself certainly not longing for a pastoral escape. He did not enjoy his own political exile and in the twelfth book of the *Arcadia* imagines the return to Naples that he does long for. Sincero, the character in the work who represents the author, makes it clear that his Arcadian sojourn has been forced on him by his own troubles, and is not a way of life that he has specially sought out for its ideal qualities.

It is possible that Sannazaro took his title from a hint in Virgil's *Eclogues*, where two shepherd singers are described as 'Arcades ambo', 'Arcadians both', an image of shared nationality, friendship and poetical skill that he probably thought suitable to a work that was written for and allegorically describes the members of his own circle of poet friends.²¹ Virgil himself may have got the idea of musically skilled Arcadian shepherds from Polybius's *Histories* where the compulsory musical education of all the inhabitants of the country of Arcadia is first recorded, although as the setting of the *Eclogues* varies between the real Italian countryside, where small farmers are dispossessed by Augustus and beautiful slave boys pine for the city, a mythical

²¹ Eclogue VII.4, p.66.

countryside where Silenus can be caught, and Arcadia, mentioned in Eclogues VII and X, the work as a whole cannot accurately be described as being located in any one real place. Nevertheless, a misreading of Sannazaro that only took account of the beauty of his landscape and the untroubled and simple lives of his shepherds might easily support and endorse such an interpretation of the pastoral as Poggioli's, and in fact has often done so.

For pastoral criticism, not just pastoral literature, there is a second reason why the golden age idea of pastoral should have taken root so persistently. Serious attempts to define pastoral can be thought of as beginning in the late seventeenth century with the publication of the first treatises wholly devoted to the pastoral by the French theorists René Rapin and Bernard le Bovier de Fontenelle. Rapin and Fontenelle's slightly differing theories soon gained followers in England and even influenced the way Pope and Ambrose Philips wrote their pastorals in the eighteenth century. But both Rapin and Fontenelle, and all their devotees and imitators, agreed that the pastoral depicted an idyllic golden age landscape. Rapin insists that the pastoral is 'a perfect image of the state of Innocence, of that golden age, that blessed time, when Sincerity and Innocence, Peace, Ease, and Plenty inhabited the Plains.'²² The 'golden age' pastoral setting was believed to be based on a real but lost historical time, so Fontenelle could easily reconcile it with his awareness that the lives of contemporary shepherds were far from idyllic. Although Rapin does observe that Virgil's *Eclogues* have contemporary Roman subject matter (thus cannot be wholly set in a golden age), it was their golden age idea, not their exceptions to it, that stuck. And although there is no real evidence for this idea and even Rapin and Fontenelle could not wholly sustain it in their reading of Virgil, it has proved very difficult to dismiss. The golden age

²² Rapin, 'A Treatise de Carmine Pastoralis', trans. Thomas Creech in Thomas Creech ed., *The Idylliums of Theocritus with Rapin's Discourse of the Pastorals Done into English* (Oxford: Anthony Stephens, 1684), p.5.

became a given of pastoral criticism from the very moment that the genre began to attract sustained critical attention.²³

But what did pastoral mean in the time before it was indelibly associated with the golden age? George Puttenham's often quoted remark in *The Art of English Poesy* expresses exactly the opposite of Rapin and Fontenelle's belief, and is often taken to mean that Renaissance pastoral is political allegory:

I do deny that the eclogue should be the first and most ancient form of artificial poesy, being persuaded that the poet devised the eclogue long after the other dramatic poems, not of purpose to counterfeit or represent the rustical manner of loves and communications, but under the veil of homely persons, and in rude speeches to insinuate and glance at greater matters, and such as perchance had not been safe to have been disclosed in any other sort.²⁴

There are undoubtedly some cases, like Spenser's 'September' and Milton's 'Lycidas', where this is true. But Puttenham's is only one opinion and it is not clear whether Sidney himself, the best-known literary critic of this period as well as the author of the *Arcadia*, shared in it. His own comment on the pastoral in the *Defence of Poesy* may support Puttenham's interpretation:

Is the poor pipe disdained, which sometimes, out of Meliboeus' mouth, can show the misery of people under hard lords or ravening soldiers, and again, by Tityrus, what blessedness is derived to them that lie lowest from the greatness of them that sit highest; sometimes, under the pretty tales of wolves and sheep can include the whole considerations of wrongdoing and patience.²⁵

²³ A fuller discussion of Rapin and Fontenelle's thought and its effect of eighteenth-century pastoral can be found in chapter five.

²⁴ George Puttenham, *The Art of English Poesy*, in Gavin Alexander ed., *Sidney's 'The Defence of Poesy' and Selected Renaissance Literary Criticism* (London: Penguin, 2004), Part I chapter 18, p.89.

²⁵ Sidney, *The Defence of Poesy*, in Gavin Alexander ed., *Sidney's 'The Defence of Poesy' and Selected Renaissance Literary Criticism* (London: Penguin, 2004), p.26.

However, attempts to find sustained political allegory in the *Arcadia* have not been wholly successful.²⁶ Maybe all that Sidney means by his remark in the *Defence* is that the author of a pastoral has licence to include themes and plot devices that do not relate to the lives of shepherds, such as garden art, statecraft, and how to rescue a friend from captivity when heavily outnumbered. It is true that Elizabethan and Jacobean pastoral seems more significant and interesting than later, more stylised, versions that have to conform to stricter definitions.²⁷ But, as Chaudhuri realises, this variety and interest makes Renaissance pastoral impossible to define because it does not correspond to any pattern. If pastoral is not about the golden age, what is it about? Or can it be about anything at all so long as it features a shepherd? The attempt to disassociate the pastoral from the golden age landscape only returns criticism to the choice between thematic and formal definitions.

I had hoped that choosing to study texts whose distinguishing feature is that they are set in Arcadia would circumvent the need to define the pastoral genre or decide whether the Arcadias are in fact pastorals. But the texts this study will consider all

²⁶ The best known attempt to read the *Arcadia* allegorically is Blair Worden's in *The Sound of Virtue: Philip Sidney's Arcadia and Elizabethan Politics* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1996), but even Worden cannot find a sustained, coherent political allegory in the *Arcadia*, and has to settle for moments of allegory in which characters mean different things in the allegorical scheme at different times. Pyrocles and Musidorus, for example, most of the time 'are seekers of virtue and in some respects exemplars of it' (p.24), but also represent Mary Queen of Scots in the trial scene (pp.180-3). The second half of *The Sound of Virtue* is devoted to showing how ideas in the *Arcadia* correspond to Sidney's larger opinions about various topics, for example echoing his ideas about the power of poetry in the *Defence* – but it is debatable whether this is really allegory. David Norbrook takes a more cautious view in 'Sidney and Political Pastoral' in *Poetry and Politics in the English Renaissance (Second Edition)* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), pp.82-96, pointing out Sidney's interest in questions of abstract politics and statecraft, and moments when the *Old Arcadia* seems to reflect views of the Leicester circle, but never suggesting that the *Arcadia* is an allegory or comments in detail on contemporary politics.

²⁷ Amelia Zurcher Sandy observes that some prominent pastoral critics see the genre as losing its potential for dialectic and becoming conventional in Stuart times when interest in rural poetry shifts into the georgic, an argument that she challenges with reference to Mary Wroth's *Urania* in 'Pastoral, Temperance, and the Unitary Self in Wroth's *Urania*', *Studies in English Literature* 42, (2002), 106. The same argument about the shift from pastoral to georgic has been made by David Fairer, only he does not see it taking place until the eighteenth century, in *English Poetry of the Eighteenth Century 1700-1789* (London: Pearson Education Ltd., 2003), chapter five. I would have to agree with the Stuart timing as far as *Arcadia* is concerned. As I will argue, this tradition becomes stale and repetitive rather early and interest switches to other forms of imaginary lands like utopia.

feature shepherds and rural, although not ideal, landscapes so it is impossible to escape the pastoral altogether. The exact relationship of Arcadia to the pastoral, which would vary according to the definition of the pastoral, still needs to be clarified. One way into the question is to foreground the idea of pastoral landscapes. Many pastorals are not given a named setting – the poet mentions a tree and a river and we imagine the rest – but there are other popular geographical pastoral locations besides Arcadia, most obviously Sicily and Thessaly. Tempe is also popular in the early seventeenth century and I have come across, particularly in the mid seventeenth-century, other Greek locations like Byzantium (William Killigrew's *Selindra*) and Messenia (Anne Finch's *Aristomenes: Or, The Royal Shepherd*). This study works on the supposition that all pastoral landscapes are not the same or interchangeable, that setting a work in Arcadia is a conscious artistic choice, especially when we consider that pastorals do not need named settings at all. What does it mean to set a work in Arcadia rather than Sicily?

I suggest that the difference between Arcadia and Sicily or Thessaly is that Arcadia is more consciously ironic about landscape than these other popular settings. The study of civil war and early Restoration pastorals in chapter four shows that it is for some reason easier to set an unproblematic defence of monarchy and civil war in Sicily than in Arcadia. All these named pastoral settings are real places yet Arcadia, although its authors do try to imagine what it would be like to live there, seems more unreal and mythical than any of the others. This is attributable, I think, not to the fact that Arcadia is a real place, but to the fact that it is a place that has been much written about, and written about in a unique way. What's unique about Arcadia is that it has two bodies of myth attached to it. As Wills points out (above), the ancient Greeks held it in some suspicion as a distant and primitive place where strange rituals were

carried out.²⁸ The first violent crimes of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* are set there. Polybius to some extent combines both myths when he explains that the unique musical education of the Arcadians was only introduced to soften the harshness of their daily lives. Sidney, who instigates the genre in England, shows his awareness of both aspects of Arcadia. As will be discussed in chapter two, he plays the harsh Polybian and idealised Sannazaran Arcadias off against each other and creates a self-correcting, self-ironising Arcadian landscape. Sidney's Arcadia is very conscious of its own reputation for pastoral perfection. Later authors of course followed Sidney's lead in ironising the supposedly perfect landscape of Arcadia. It is the blend of literary imagination and real-life location, the positive and the negative traditions, found in Arcadia that explain its enduring appeal.

The ironic aspects of the Arcadian landscape do find an explanation in one branch of modern pastoral criticism. There is a growing awareness of the irony at the heart of many of the most famous examples of Renaissance pastoral. Peter Lindenbaum coins the term 'anti-pastoral' to describe the effect of some prominent pastorals, including Sidney's *Arcadia*, that work by slyly deflating the pastoral ideal they ostensibly offer the reader. He defines the 'anti-pastoral' thus: '[a]nti-pastoral sentiment expresses the view that in this world of ours man simply has no time for relaxation or even momentary escape from the pressing activity of day-to-day living.'²⁹ Perhaps this definition is unfair as it is based on a misreading of the pastoral as about relaxation,

²⁸ Perhaps it is worth noting that Thessaly, another setting in the north of Greece, is also associated with superstition and danger in at least one ancient work, as the narrator of Apuleius's *Golden Ass* goes there because it is a notorious home of witches and he is curious to observe witchcraft for himself. This might be different as Apuleius does not associate Thessaly with the pastoral (except maybe in the tiny detail that the travelling merchant who opens the book has come to Thessaly as he has heard that 'some fresh and succulent cheese was on the market for a modest price at Hypata, the leading city in all Thessaly') (*The Golden Ass*, trans. P.G. Walsh (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994), I.v, p.3). But Fletcher's foreboding Thessalian landscape in *The Faithful Shepherdess*, full of danger, mystery and the celebration of pagan rites, may owe something to this tradition as well as to the pastoral genre. If so, Fletcher's Thessaly could be compared to earlier representations of Arcadia, like those of Ovid and Guarini (discussed below).

²⁹ See Peter Lindenbaum, *Changing Landscapes: Anti-Pastoral Sentiment in the English Renaissance* (Athens, Georgia: The University of Georgia Press, 1986), p.1.

escape and the golden age that Renaissance authors may not actually have shared. But Lindenbaum's argument works because his examples, like Sidney's *Arcadia*, to which he devotes two chapters, and *As You Like It*, foreground the relationship of pastoral ideas to their landscapes. These works are both set in specific landscapes and create their effects by juxtaposing realistically depicted landscapes and their inhabitants with the unrealistic longings for blissful escape felt by the courtly characters who are exiled there. The courtly characters do not necessarily express a general misreading of the pastoral as they have their own personal reasons for desiring a retreat. The irony may be directed at the courtly characters not a general pastoral ideal. My own reading of Sidney's *Arcadia* differs from Lindenbaum's in paying more attention to Sidney's use of sources and disagrees somewhat about the importance of Polybius, whom he dismisses, but I arrive at a very similar conclusion that *Arcadia* undermines the notion that an unproblematic pastoral retreat can be found anywhere, however much certain characters might want to believe in it. Judith Haber has argued along similar lines, that many pastoral works fall apart because of competing values within them. In the case of the (Old) *Arcadia*, the goal-orientated courtiers cannot sustain the shepherds' patience and contentment and their belief in the importance of their songs and rituals as ends in themselves not as means to ends. Basilius, Pyrocles and Musidorus undertake the pastoral not for its own sake but in order to get something out of it, so 'pastoral harmony is undermined by the very desires that create it.' She therefore agrees that the pastoral is in fact 'antipastoral', characterising it as 'a mode that worked insistently against itself, problematising both its own definition and stable definitions within its texts.'³⁰

³⁰ Judith Haber, *Pastoral and the Poetics of Self-Contradiction: Theocritus to Marvell* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994). The quotations can be found on p.73 and p.1. For her discussion of the differences between the courtiers' and shepherds' attitudes to singing see pp.58-9, p.66.

It might be objected that ‘anti-pastoral’ criticism depends on an idea of pastoral as an ideal retreat that Renaissance authors may not have shared in the first place. Linda Woodbridge is scathing in her dismissal,³¹ and Alpers’s definition of a pastoral as a work whose representative anecdote is that of a herdsman and his life would include several texts that might also be labelled ‘anti-pastorals.’³² For my purposes, though, the exact terminology is not important. The point is that there is a body of criticism that can explain the effects of the representations of Arcadia that I will discuss in terms of their irony about their own ideal. In the case of Arcadia this self-ironising can be explained by the tension between the two traditions of its depiction, the idealised Arcadia deriving from a misreading of Sannazaro, and the harsh Arcadia deriving from Polybius and earlier Greek superstition. Arcadia does have an ideal to deflate and so can be interpreted according to ‘anti-pastoral’ arguments, a claim that perhaps cannot be made of the pastoral genre as a whole.

One last aspect of contemporary pastoral criticism that bears on the study of Arcadia is the allusiveness of pastoral. This has not been an aspect of the genre that has received as much attention as any of the ideas discussed so far. Allusion, or intertextuality, is still more widely studied in Classical than in English literature, for example in recent works like Richard F. Thomas’s *Reading Virgil and His Texts: Studies in Intertextuality* (1999) and R.A. Smith’s *Poetic Allusion and Poetic Embrace in Ovid and Virgil* (1997), studies that owe much to the influential theory of Gian Biagio Conte and Joseph Farrell’s 1991 study of the allusiveness of Virgil’s *Georgics*. The importance of allusion in English pastoral is acknowledged by some critics, though, for example in Haber’s emphasis on the way each pastoral author

³¹ Woodbridge, pp.189-92.

³² Although, interestingly, Alpers would not include Sidney’s *Arcadia* as pastoral. He considers the *Arcadia* as ‘unpastoral’ because the courtiers and non-shepherd characters Strephon and Klaius can’t share in the shepherds’ value system (p. 122, p.348), so the shepherds do not represent ‘some other or . . . all other men’(p. 26) – a conclusion very similar to that drawn by Haber.

modifies and transforms his predecessors, in Annabel Patterson's work on the later transformations of Virgil's *Eclogues*, and in Thomas K. Hubbard's less well known but more recent study of 'intertextuality and literary filiation in the pastoral tradition', where there is an excellent treatment of Sannazaro's *Arcadia* viewed as a reinterpretation of Virgil and consciously freed from any suggestion that pastoral is about representing the golden age.³³ Allusiveness is a quality of central importance to the pastoral, however, because it is a very conventional (it is not too much to say 'repetitive') genre and it is easy to spot echoes of earlier texts in almost all pastorals. Allusion is the only explanation of why Marvell's problematic 'Mower' poems (problematic because their central character is not a shepherd) can be considered as pastorals – because they so deliberately and self-consciously echo their ancestors and draw attention to the tradition in which they belong even as they reinterpret its chief feature. Understanding pastoral as a genre that consciously both propagates and reinterprets its own traditions is of value for understanding the history of depictions of Arcadia, where the same landscape, and in some cases same title, indicates the relationship to earlier works, and texts are always consciously looking back to one another; Sidney to Sannazaro and Daniel to Tasso and Guarini as well as Sidney. Although there is little vitality left in Caroline and Restoration examples they can still be seen to be repeating details found in earlier Arcadias, for whom Sidney is the ultimate model. The engagement with earlier models is central to Sidney and his English inheritors.

All in all, then, pastoral criticism does offer a useful context for interpreting the English Arcadia, provided that it is used with caution. The myth that pastoral depicts an ideal, or golden age, landscape is completely misleading and the unfortunate use of

³³ Patterson in *Pastoral and Ideology: Virgil to Valéry* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988) and Hubbard in *The Pipes of Pan: Intertextuality and Literary Filiation in the Pastoral Tradition from Theocritus to Milton* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1998), pp.256-64; for his rejection of the golden age misinterpretation of the pastoral see pp.4-5.

the term 'Arcadian' to refer to this supposed ideal pastoral can be confusing. Arcadia is certainly not 'Arcadian' in this sense, but then most pastoral is not either. But once divorced from the golden age misconception, pastoral criticism can be helpful in offering a model of deliberately conventional and allusive texts that can criticise the ideals offered by earlier generations of authors. In the case of Arcadia, this involves an ironic rewriting of (a misread) Sannazaro.

Early Examples of Arcadia

This study focuses on the English Arcadia and so starts with Sidney, but examples of allusiveness and 'anti-pastoral' sentiment can easily be seen in earlier depictions of Arcadia. The earliest historical descriptions of Arcadia are negative about the place. Polybius, who in the second century B.C. started the idea that Arcadians are skilled in music, gives an account that emphasises the harshness of the countryside:

the universal practice of personal manual labour in Arcadia, and in general the toilsomeness and hardship of the men's lives as well as the harshness of character resulting from the cold and gloomy atmospheric conditions usually prevailing in these parts.³⁴

The musical education is only provided by the state in a bid to soften this austerity and cheer up the citizens. It also has for Polybius an important moral function as when it is neglected in one part of Arcadia, the people become traitors to the rest of Greece.³⁵ It is important to note that, although Polybius's description of Arcadia started a poetic

³⁴ Polybius, *The Histories Volume II*, trans. W.R. Patton (London: William Heinemann, 1922), Book IV.21, p.351.

³⁵ Polybius IV.20, p.349.

myth of pastoral lives and beautiful landscapes, he described the region not because of its landscape but in order to describe the lives and society, and explain the treachery, of some of its inhabitants. Polybius's gloomy description of Arcadia is usually neglected by modern critics as a real source for Renaissance Arcadias. As it is unpastoral, the argument runs, it cannot have influenced these later pastoral authors. I will argue in the next chapter, however, that Polybius is an important influence on the way Sidney creates the land of Arcadia. The negative aspects of the land that Polybius captures, and the importance he places on Arcadian education and society, are known to Renaissance writers and do exert an influence on their representations of Arcadia, which are in fact less pastoral than is often supposed.

Pausanias's much later account of the history of Arcadia, dating from the latter half of the second century A.D., although it is an objective account giving historical details like who founded the main cities and what wars the Arcadians have been involved in since Troy, nonetheless emphasises the number of violent deaths that the Arcadian royal family has been involved in, including the story about Lycaon who was changed into a wolf for offering a human sacrifice to Zeus. Pausanias speculates about the continuation of rituals involving wolves in the worship of 'Lycaen Zeus', a cult unique to Arcadia.³⁶ Pausanias's Arcadia sounds like a mysterious and slightly sinister place. Pausanias does mention that the land is 'rich in sheep', and is described thus in the *Iliad*, but the land's association with the pastoral genre really stems from the poems of Theocritus.

Not that Theocritus set his *Idylls* in Arcadia. They do not seem to be set in any particular place, although the speaker of *Idyll* I announces himself as 'Thyrsis of

³⁶ Pausanias, *Description of Greece* vol. III, trans. W.H.S. Jones (London: William Heinemann; New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons (Loeb Classical Library edition), 1933). The history of the early Arcadian royal family is given in VIII.I-V (pp.349-71). The story of Lycaon can be found in VIII.II (p.351), the reference to the land 'rich in sheep' in VIII.III (p.355), this is found in *Iliad* II.605.

Etna', so they are sometimes taken to be set in Italy.³⁷ Theocritus does once or twice refer to Arcadia, though (in *Idylls* II, IV and VII). The reference in *Idyll* VII is most revealing as Arcadia is only mentioned as the habitation of Pan. Pan is a significant figure for the pastoral *Idylls* as he is a rustic god who is unlucky in love and makes beautiful music on his pan pipes. He inspires all Theocritus's rural singers. Pan is also the god of Arcadia, not because he is a pastoral god, but because he is a primitive one and half-god half-animal, recalling the other Arcadian cult of wolf-Zeus. The prominence of Arcadia's god in the *Idylls* may explain why Arcadia started to be associated with pastoral poetry and why Virgil used Arcadia as a setting for at least one of his *Eclogues*.³⁸

Whether he got the hint from Polybius, Theocritus, or both, Virgil was the first poet to create something like the Arcadian ideal that we know today. Critics often associate him with the creation of that ideal pastoralism that now goes by the name of 'Arcadianism.' The most influential proponent of this reading of Virgil has been Bruno Snell, who argued in *The Discovery of the Mind* that the landscape of the *Eclogues* is a wholly imagined and unrealistic realm, 'the land of the spirit and of poetry', that reflects the mind and dreams of the poet rather than any external reality.³⁹ But a careful reading of the *Eclogues* reveals a much more nuanced picture. The tag-line 'Arcades ambo' and the good-natured singing contest in *Eclogue* VII certainly suggest a companionable and harmonious rural existence.⁴⁰ This is not, however,

³⁷ *Theocritus* vol I, ed. with translation and commentary by A.S.F. Gow (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1950), p.9.

³⁸ I take *Eclogue* VII to be the only one that is truly set in Arcadia. The country is certainly mentioned in *Eclogue* X but so too is Sicily, and although the speaker is frustrated by the fact that he is distanced from the lives of Arcadian shepherds it does not follow that he is surrounded by them as he speaks.

³⁹ Bruno Snell, *The Discovery of the Mind: The Greek Origins of European Thought*, trans. T.G. Rosenmeyer (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1953), p.306.

⁴⁰ The phrase 'Arcades ambo' comes from an epigram of Erucius, a Greek poet who lived at approximately the same time as Virgil. Wendell Clausen, in his discussion of this fact, suggests that it is most likely that Virgil was borrowing from Erucius, *A Commentary on Virgil's Eclogues* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994), p.215. Clausen goes so far as to suggest that Virgil's 'Arcadians' here are metaphorical, solely an imitation of Erucius, and the poem is really set in the Po valley like all the other *Eclogues*, p.216, although I am not sure that this is enough evidence to definitely rule out an Arcadian

evidence that Virgil's Arcadia is a country of the mind. Guarini interestingly quotes this line from Virgil, in conjunction with a reference to Polybius, to claim that his land of Arcadia in *Il Pastor Fido* is perfectly plausible and even realistic.⁴¹ Guarini uses the classical authors to authorise his own interpretation of the real land of Arcadia, the exact opposite of using Virgil as justification for creating an allegorical landscape of the mind.

In Eclogue X the mournful Gallus praises the simple lives of the Arcadians:

Yet ye, O Arcadians, will sing this to your mountains; Arcadians
only know how to sing. O how softly then would my bones
repose, if in other days your pipes should tell my love! And
O that I had been one of you, the shepherd of a flock of yours,
or the dresser of your ripened grapes (X.31-36, p.91).

As Snell argues, Gallus does here create an idealised landscape that seems to connect the poet, with his special sensitivity and creativity, to the Arcadian shepherds.⁴² But Snell fails to note that this identification of the poet with Arcadia is not complete as Gallus, in wishing that he was an Arcadian shepherd, reveals the actual distance between them. This Arcadia is the product of Gallus's fantasy and he recognises the paradoxical impossibility of the pastoral fantasy as the very sophistication that gives rise to the desire to be a simple shepherd ensures his social and psychological distance

setting for this poem. Incidentally, Erucius uses the phrase in the context of a description of people making offerings to Pan, again suggesting that Arcadia only came in to pastoral poetry through its patron deity.

⁴¹ 'è nell' Arcadia finta questa attione, per far più verisimili le vaghezze, che sono in lei conciosia cosache anticamente gli Arcadia non havessero studio, ne esercitio più nobile, ne piu frequente della poesia, si come mostra Polibio nel 4. libro delle sue storie. . . Per questo disse Virgil in una della sue Eglodge, 'Arcades ambo/ Et cantares pares, et respondere parati.' che ci dimostra la naturale attitudine, e gran prontezza di quella gente nell'improvvisare' (the action is set in Arcadia, to give greater verisimilitude to the rustics, as you are aware that in former times the Arcadians did not have to study, in the most noble and most frequent exercise of poetry, as Polybius shows in the fourth book of his *History*. . . For this reason Virgil says in one of his Eclogues, 'Arcades ambo/ Et cantares pares, et respondere parati', which demonstrates the natural aptitude and great promptitude of this people in improvisation), Giovanni Battista Guarini, *Il Pastor Fido* (Venice: Gio. Battista Ciotti, 1602), in 'Annotationi sopra al Pastor Fido', sig. a7.

⁴² Snell, p.295.

from that way of life. From almost the identical second of Arcadia starting to be idealised it becomes a lost, impossible, bitter ideal. The different landscapes and gods in Eclogue X may represent projections of Gallus's unhappy state of mind, but that is not to say that Arcadia itself is a landscape of the mind. This is certainly not true in the sense that Snell means it, that the land of the *Eclogues* is really an allusive, symbolic, realm expressing the mind and dreams of Virgil himself, because some of the *Eclogues* have realistic settings (including, perhaps, the Arcadian Eclogue VII – at least Guarini thinks so). Even where the landscape does seem unreal, as in Eclogue VI where Silenus sings of the creation of the world, this landscape is not necessarily that of Arcadia (the exact setting of Eclogue VI is not specified) and not necessarily a psychologised landscape either; in fact no one has ever explained what it might be meant to represent.⁴³ Gallus does use Arcadia as an example of a lost simple rural existence, that might be a deliberate play with the Arcadia of Eclogue VII, but Gallus is simply a character in one of Virgil's poems.⁴⁴ There is nothing to indicate that he is meant to represent Virgil himself or that his view of Arcadia should be privileged over the more realistic and less gloomy depiction of Arcadia in Eclogue VII. Gallus's understanding of Arcadia should not be taken to stand for Virgil's, and cannot sum up the attitude of the *Eclogues* as a whole.

This was not the end of Virgil's engagement with Arcadia. He offers a more straightforwardly positive representation in the *Aeneid*, where Aeneas finds a group of exiled Arcadians living on the future site of Rome. In spite of the fact that Aeneas essentially wants to take over their home, the Arcadians are friendly – a poor but

⁴³ Some more recent accounts, notably that of Wolfgang Iser, have updated Snell's idea by arguing that the *Eclogues* represent an unreal world that is a realm not of the mind but of art, being themselves a work of art that is about art. Charles Martindale gives a good overview of the different recent approaches to the *Eclogues* in 'Green Politics: *The Eclogues*', Charles Martindale ed., *The Cambridge Companion to Virgil* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), pp.107-24, esp. p.111.

⁴⁴ Eclogue V refers back to some of the earlier poems, so it is not implausible to see the bitter Eclogue X as ironically glancing back to the cheerful Eclogue VII.

hospitable people – and fight on the Trojan side. That the earliest Romans were really Arcadians seems to be a mythological variant unique to Virgil.⁴⁵ The simple, virtuous lives of the early Romans was an ideal for writers of the Augustan period so it is understandable that Virgil should have depicted Rome's earliest inhabitants in this way, but less clear why he chose to make these people Arcadian.⁴⁶ Perhaps it was Polybius's account of the Arcadians' austere lives and hospitality that influenced him.⁴⁷ In the scheme of the *Aeneid*, Aeneas's allies on the site of Rome need to be Greeks so that the future city can be shown to amicably include all races, finally resolve the Trojan war, and make Rome the natural as well as the destined leader of the world by Augustus's time.⁴⁸ There may also be a glance at Virgil's own career progression from the poet of pastoral people (the Latins as well as the Arcadians are part of this representation of the pastoral) to the epic poet of Rome. The city of Rome literally replaces the earlier pastoral landscape in the *Aeneid*.

Virgil's younger contemporary Ovid loved intertextual engagement and rewriting, and it is Ovid who provides the first example of an allusive, ironic, antipastoral Arcadia through his engagement with his predecessor Virgil. The intertextuality of Ovid and Virgil is a subject that has received some critical attention, although that attention tends to be directed towards Ovid's treatment of Aeneas's story in the

Metamorphoses and little has been paid to his rewriting of the land of Arcadia. His

⁴⁵ Pausanias does not mention it, although he does claim that the Arcadians fought at the Trojan war (on the Greek side) (VIII.v, p.365), and also links Arcadia to the Aeneas myth by claiming that Aeneas's father Anchises, who died *en route* to Rome, was buried in Arcadia as that was where their ship happened to be passing at the time (VIII.xii, p.409).

⁴⁶ Longing for the simple life is a theme that recurs in the satires of Horace, especially Satire II.ii, see H. Rushton Fairclough ed. and trans., *Horace: Satires, Epistles and Ars Poetica* (London: William Heinemann, New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons (Loeb Classical Library edition), 1926), pp.134-47. The editor comments on the similarities between this poem and Cicero's philosophical writings, p.135.

⁴⁷ For Polybius's account of Arcadian hospitality, see IV.20, p.349: 'Since the Arcadian nation on the whole has a very high reputation for virtue among the Greeks, due not only to their humane and hospitable character and usages, but especially to their piety to the gods'. Virgil's Arcadians also display their piety – they are shown celebrating a religious ritual when Aeneas first arrives.

⁴⁸ The oracle that predicts '[t]he road to safety, little though you think it, shall first issue from a Grecian city' is found in *Eclogues, Georgics, Aeneid I-VI*, trans. H. Rushton Fairclough, revised by G.P. Gould (Cambridge Mass.: Harvard University Press (Loeb Classical Library edition), revised edition 1999), *Aeneid* VI.96-7, p.539.

treatment of Arcadia does differ significantly from that of the *Aeneid*, however, and as Arcadians are the first inhabitants of Rome, it seems worth considering how and why Ovid rewrites the landscape.⁴⁹ The Arcadians have a claim to be the founders of Rome not just because they were already living there when Aeneas arrived but also because Aeneas claims, and the Arcadian king, Evander, does not contradict him, that the Trojans and the Arcadians share a common ancestry.⁵⁰ Ovid repeats this shared ancestry in *Fasti* but changes its associations, as A.J. Boyle explains: ‘the canonic hero Aeneas is marginalised, the exilic Evander is heroised, correct aetiologies are delayed to allow for the narrative of foundation-rapes’.⁵¹ Boyle links this reworking of Aeneas’s story in *Fasti* with Ovid’s desire to expose the ‘discourse of power’.⁵² The *Aeneid* is the story of Augustus’s as well as Rome’s rise to power so it was an obvious text to rework in order to lay bare the mechanisms of power. However, criticism of Augustus that was too overt would (and did) result in exile, so Ovid’s intertextuality had to be more subtle. The land of Arcadia, now that Virgil had associated it with Rome, could be used to criticise Rome itself.

Ovid begins the *Metamorphoses* by rewriting Evander’s account of Rome’s earliest beginnings:

In these woodlands the native Fauns and Nymphs once dwelt,
and a race of men sprung from trunks of trees and hardy oak, who
had no rule or art of life, and knew not how to yoke the ox or to lay
up stores, or to husband their gains; but tree branches nurtured
them and the huntsman’s savage fare. First from heavenly
Olympus came Saturn, fleeing from the weapons of Jove and
exiled from his lost realm. He gathered together the unruly race,

⁴⁹ Interestingly, his reworking of Virgil’s Arcadia is based more on the *Aeneid* than the *Eclogues*, perhaps not surprisingly as the *Aeneid* is Virgil’s most important work although it does confound the modern association of Arcadia and the *Eclogues* with the pastoral.

⁵⁰ Virgil, *Aeneid VII-XII, Appendix Vergiliana*, trans. H. Rushton Fairclough, revised P.G. Goold (Cambridge Mass. and London: Harvard University Press, 2000), *Aeneid* VIII.134-42, pp.69-71.

⁵¹ A. J. Boyle, *Ovid and the Monuments: A Poet’s Rome* (Bendigo, Victoria, Australia: Aural Publications, 2003), p.14.

⁵² Boyle, p.14.

scattered over the mountain heights, and gave them laws . . .
 Under his reign were the golden ages men tell of: in such perfect
 peace he ruled the nations (*Aeneid* VIII.314 – 325, p.83).

Virgil's balanced account goes from an extremely primitive age to a golden age, created on earth through the war in heaven, back through war on earth to another fairly primitive age (the current state of Evander's kingdom) to, implicitly, a second golden age through Aeneas and Rome that will take place after the story has finished. This second golden age too requires war to bring it about. Ovid parodies Virgil's golden age fairly obviously in his *Fasti* when he sarcastically describes the primitive lives of the Arcadians as 'like that of beasts, unprofitably spent; artless as yet and raw was the common herd.'⁵³ He goes on to criticise this life as one of primitiveness and hardship, exposing the fact that the golden age as Virgil describes it might not have been that pleasant to live through, especially when compared with the civilised comforts of the modern age. The antiquity, and therefore backwardness and primitiveness, of the race of Arcadians is another ancient myth that Ovid draws upon in this passage in the *Fasti*. In the *Metamorphoses*, however, his criticism of Virgil's golden age is more subtle.

Ovid opens the *Metamorphoses* with a sequence of straight degeneration from the original golden age through to the age of iron. The golden age, over which he rules, is destroyed when Saturn dies and can never be brought back.⁵⁴ There is no suggestion that Aeneas or Augustus could create a second golden age. Ovid in fact places this sequence outside historical time as the world is destroyed by a flood in the iron age and repopled. We are presumably now living in the world after the flood.

Virgil made the golden age part of Rome's early history, Ovid makes it very distant

⁵³ Ovid, *Fasti*, trans. Sir James George Frazer (London: William Heinemann, 1931), II.291-2, p.79.

⁵⁴ *The Metamorphoses of Ovid*, trans. David R. Slavitt (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1994), I.114-5, 'When Saturn died and Jove succeeded as ruler, the silver/ age began with another race of men'.

prehistory or myth. He also destroys any suggestion that Arcadia is a latter-day golden age, as Virgil hints and later poets have often assumed, as it is the crime of the Arcadian king Lycaon that provokes Jupiter to send the flood (I.165-6).

The first metamorphosis of an individual in Ovid's history of the world, that of Lycaon into a wolf, takes place in Arcadia. Jupiter, visiting earth in order to test how virtuous people now are, goes to Arcadia because it is 'a place with a terrible reputation' (I.217), a reversal of the Arcadians' high reputation for piety in Polybius and Virgil. Lycaon's crime of serving a sacrilegious meal is a perversion of normal Arcadian hospitality. Lycaon's story is told by Pausanias, but Ovid makes his account more negative than Pausanias's as his Lycaon is much more cruel and serves human flesh to Jupiter deliberately, in order to test his divinity, whereas in Pausanias he genuinely does not understand that human sacrifice is not in fact an acceptable religious offering.⁵⁵ This action by an Arcadian destroys the human race. Lycaon's cruelty certainly complicates the notion that the Arcadians, and by association the earliest Romans, are simple virtuous people and models to emulate. Ovid may have been rewriting Virgil here, but as his *Metamorphoses* was extremely well-known in the English Renaissance his depiction of Arcadia must also have influenced later writers. It is surely significant that the first metamorphosis of an individual human character, as a punishment for a vicious crime, occurs in Arcadia. Ovid's account also fits in with the negative myths about human sacrifice and wolf-gods surrounding Arcadia, ensuring that Renaissance poets were informed about the negative as well as the positive Arcadian tradition. A reader familiar with Ovid's Arcadia would be unlikely to imagine the land of Arcadia as an idealised pastoral retreat.

⁵⁵ Pausanias VIII.ii, p.351. This is not as ridiculous a misunderstanding as it first sounds as there is some precedent for human sacrifice in Greek myth – the sacrifice of Iphigenia to Artemis is the most familiar example.

The next metamorphosis to occur in Arcadia is that of Callisto, mother of the legendary ruler Arcas after whom the land is named.⁵⁶ Like his account of the early Arcadians in *Fasti*, this too is a tale of a ‘foundation-rape.’ It is again more negative than Pausanias’s account. Pausanias briefly states that

This Callisto . . . was loved by Zeus and mated with him.
When Hera detected the intrigue she turned Callisto into a bear,
and Artemis to please Hera shot the bear. Zeus sent Hermes
with orders to save the child that Callisto bore in her womb,
and Callisto herself he turned into the constellation known as
the Great Bear (VIII.iii, p.357).

Ovid turns Callisto into a devotee of Diana who is raped by Jove. He stresses her unwillingness:

Had Juno seen how she fought him,
The anger the goddess later directed at her might have been
much less severe. The girl did her utmost, but mighty Jove,
stronger by far, did more, did what he would, undid her,
and then went back to his home in the sky (II.442-6).

Despite her unwillingness, Callisto is still made to suffer cruelly. First she is banished from Diana’s train, then after she has given birth to Arcas Juno turns her into a bear. For years she has to remain a bear, yet with the mind of a human, and Jupiter does not help her or answer her prayers, until finally Arcas encounters her while hunting and is about to throw a spear at her. It is only then that ‘at last Jupiter answered Callisto’s prayer’, turning Callisto and Arcas into constellations (II.496). Jupiter is here presented in a negative light, yet the rape giving rise to the birth of Arcas is necessary if Arcadia is to be founded. Ovid seems to be commenting on the

⁵⁶ Callisto is also the daughter of Lycaon, as Ovid points out at II.488, having forgotten that the entire human race, especially Lycaon, was supposed to have been destroyed in a flood.

brutality of real state-formation and on the myth and poetry that is used to give these deeds a positive gloss.⁵⁷ The same can be said of his treatment of the story of Daphne, turned into a laurel tree in order to escape the pursuit of Apollo, as the laurel then becomes the (mute) symbol of male triumph and dominance.⁵⁸ Another foundation-rape occurs in Ovid's *Ars Amatoria* when the founders of Rome attack the Sabine women, this is also mentioned briefly in the *Metamorphoses* (XIV.783-4).⁵⁹ In both Arcadia, the ancestor of Rome, and early Rome itself, the foundation of male political power is achieved through violence. This is not nearly as amicable a picture as the one Virgil paints in the *Aeneid*, where the gods give Lavinia to Aeneas, the Arcadians willingly amalgamate with the Trojans, and the war is only caused by Turnus's madness and failure to see Aeneas's, and Rome's, destiny.

Jupiter himself, fair and rational in Virgil, does not come out of Ovid's tale of Callisto very well. There are obvious associations between the emperor and the highest of the gods. Virgil describes Augustus as a god in Eclogue I (p.3). Ovid compares Jupiter's assembly of the gods in the first book of the *Metamorphoses* to Augustus presiding over the senate.⁶⁰ In Daphne's story in the *Metamorphoses*, Ovid directly refers to Augustus who replaces Apollo as the recipient of the laurel, advertising the connection between her silent suffering and the creation of a strong

⁵⁷ Ovid may more generally have been sceptical about Virgil's mythologising over sexual encounters. R. A. Smith points out his adaptation of the tale of Proteus and the sea-goddess in the *Metamorphoses* from Virgil's fourth Georgic, arguing that '[w]hat in Virgil had been a quest for the spiritual knowledge of regeneration has become in Ovid essentially a rape attempt', *Poetic Allusion and Poetic Embrace in Ovid and Virgil* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1997), p.134.

⁵⁸ 'With laurel shall generals wreath/ their triumphant brows, and laurel shall stand at Augustus's door/ to keep watch and to gentle the grove of imperial oaks', (I.558-60).

⁵⁹ Jane Tylus reads the rape of the Sabine women in the *Ars Amatoria* as 'Ovid cleverly and, as was his wont, cynically explor[ing] the role that the "arts" play in effecting the civilization and assimilation of potentially dangerous and exploitable Others', in 'Colonizing Peasants: The Rape of the Sabines and Renaissance Pastoral', *Renaissance Drama* 23, (1992), p.115. In the *Metamorphoses* the Sabine men attack Rome to avenge their kinswomen, but after a battle agree to share power with Romulus – a sell out by the Sabines for the sake of power? (*Metamorphoses* XIV.783-809).

⁶⁰ See Heather James, 'Ovid and the Question of Politics in Early Modern England', *English Literary History* 70, (2003), p.350. She points out that although he nominally calls the assembly to ask for its consent, Jupiter in fact sends the flood because he himself wants to even though the other gods do not agree with this course of action.

state. Ovid's Jupiter, perhaps like Augustus, is cruel, selfish and capricious and does not use his power to protect his victims, in direct contrast to Virgil's god, who in *Aeneid* XII has made Turnus's sister Juturna into a minor goddess in return for her favours (XII.140-41, p.311) – a beneficent metamorphosis unlike those he performs in Ovid's *Arcadia*. The *Arcadia* in the early part of the *Metamorphoses* challenges that of Virgil, emerging not as a primitive but ideal community but as a sinister place where humans perform violent acts and a god inflicts suffering on mortals in order that the Arcadian state be formed. Ovid, unlike Virgil, is aware that *Arcadia* is not a specially idyllic land but a state not unlike Rome, with political power and political ideology, and this awareness of the realities of Arcadian politics is something that will recur in later English authors.

There is little mention of *Arcadia* in medieval literature, and it is not until the Italian Renaissance that it re-emerges as a literary landscape. The pastoral dramas of Torquato Tasso and Giovanni Battista Guarini were important influences on later English writers of *Arcadia*. Like Ovid with Virgil, Guarini's conscious emulation and rewriting of Tasso creates an *Arcadia* that corrects and redresses the earlier depiction of the landscape. Guarini, however, goes further than Ovid in realistically imagining the land of *Arcadia*. He also follows Sannazaro in using *Arcadia* as a pastoral setting. Guarini's *Il Pastor Fido*, first performed in 1586, is a conscious attempt to revise and improve upon Tasso's earlier pastoral drama *Aminta*, as is shown by Guarini's deliberate echoes and revisions of his predecessor's work. One change he makes that has gone practically unnoticed is in the pastoral setting. Tasso's *Aminta* does not have a specific, named location on its title page. It is popularly believed to be set in *Arcadia*, but nobody in the play ever says that they are in *Arcadia* or they are *Arcadians*, and in fact it is set in an idyllic no place, purposely vague. Critics of

course do not care much about this because they use 'Arcadia' as shorthand for any pastoral setting, but the difference is in this case important as Guarini uses the land of Arcadia to create a pastoral society more realistic than any seen before.

Unusually for a pastoral, the social hierarchy of Guarini's Arcadia is apparent. The audience does not learn much about the pecking order of the lower classes, but the local aristocracy is clear. The most important Arcadian family is that of Montano, who is also the chief priest. Second most important is the family of Titiro. One character calls them

Two the most lov'd and honour'd shall I say
Shepherds, or Fathers of Arcadia?⁶¹

These two families are the last two of divine origins left in Arcadia. In order to lift the curse on the land, Montano's son must marry Titiro's daughter. These young people, because of their social position and their natural gifts, are also the preeminent members of Arcadia's teenage society: Silvio is the star athlete whom girls have crushes on (the subplot concerns Dorinda's love for him, unrequited until the last act) and Amarillis the most beautiful and popular girl (her father comments on the number of suitors she has, I.iv.776). There are plenty of characters who are obviously social inferiors in the way they obey Montano and the interest they take in the personal lives of the chief characters. The lower classes are less important to Guarini but it is possible to locate even some of these humbler characters in the social hierarchy of Arcadia. Amarillis's jealous friend Corisca, for example, is not as exalted as Amarillis, but yet not badly off as she has a servant of her own (III.v.2624-5) and as she has been brought up at the house of a rich lady in town she must at least have

⁶¹ Walter F. Staton jnr. and William E. Simeone eds., *A Critical Edition of Sir Richard Fanshawe's 1647 Translation of Giovanni Battista Guarini's Il Pastor Fido* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1964), IV.v.3576-7. All quotations from *Il Pastor Fido* are from this edition unless stated otherwise.

wealthy relations. Her life is less sheltered than Amarillis's, as is proved by the number of friends she has when Amarillis knows practically no one, the fact that she (unlike Amarillis) does not have a group of attendants, and the fact that, as Mirtillo's friend remarks, everyone knows her (II.i.1167).⁶² That she moves around Arcadia unattended and everyone knows her perhaps recalls the Renaissance belief that nice girls (like Amarillis) stay indoors and only harlots wander around on their own. This depiction of Corisca's status and character is exactly consistent with the scheming part she performs. The point is how much information the reader is able glean about Arcadian society through minor details like these. This land seems realistic and its social network bigger than the story it happens to be telling. In fact it actually seems real and as if it will still exist even after this particular Arcadian story is told.

There are realistic touches too in Corisca's boredom in Arcadia and preference for the town (I.iii.699-701), Silvio's realisation that he cannot bribe Dorinda with a goat from his flock because it is his father's valuable property (II.ii.1491-3), and, more significantly, in Amarillis's repeated dread of becoming the subject of gossip.⁶³ She will not enter the cave, although her intentions are innocent, until she has checked that the coast is clear (III.vi.2965-6), agrees to speak in private to her suitor Mirtillo only provided 'that he may not know/ I was acquainted with it' (II.v.1804-5) and as if they met by accident, and in fact makes so many objections to the idea of meeting Mirtillo that the less scrupulous Corisca gets impatient with her. But Amarillis knows it's a small community and that all eyes are on her. She cannot afford to slip. Guarini's Arcadia is socially realistic. It is not a pastoral world like that of Sannazaro's *Arcadia*, a land full of essentially private individuals who respond with sympathy when their fellow shepherds choose to air their private misfortunes and love-stories,

⁶² For Amarillis's attendants see II.v.1820.

⁶³ Although Silvio's fear of his father also has a source in Theocritus's Idyll VIII.

but show no curiosity about and almost no previous knowledge of other people's affairs even though they live side by side and obviously know one another. Guarini's Arcadia is a gossiping community like any other small town.

The woodcut created to illustrate the preface of the elaborate 1602 edition of *Il Pastor Fido* (see frontispiece) makes this point as it depicts not pastoral spaces and solitary lovers, but houses crammed close together. With the two sets of houses facing each other and the space left clear in the middle of the scene for action and interaction, it looks more like an illustration for a Roman comedy than a pastoral. One suddenly understands Amarillis's fear – it would not be easy to keep a secret living in this environment, especially with the temple in the background ready to regulate all aspects of Arcadian life and pass judgement on wrongdoers. Mirtillo's adoptive father Carino, returning to Arcadia in order to seek his son, comments not on the pastoral landscape, but on the number of houses:

Did ever man so many houses view,
And the inhabitants thereof so few? (V.iv.4620-1).

This Arcadia is, as the woodcut suggests, a settlement (if not quite a town), and home to a community.

Carino also comments in the same scene that it's a shame that the land is still blighted with its curse which requires that human sacrifices be made every year to the goddess Diana, raising a very important point as *Il Pastor Fido* is not just a love story played out between individuals like Tasso's *Aminta*, but a story that involves the whole community. Everyone's eyes are on Amarillis and Silvio because there's a lot riding on them – they have to marry one another and remain faithful in order to lift the curse. Mirtillo's love for Amarillis isn't just part of a trivial story of fickle young

lovers, but would spell disaster for all the Arcadians as they have interpreted the oracle. When the old blind prophet Tirenno finally works out that Mirtillo is Silvio's long-lost older brother and the destined faithful shepherd of Amarillis, they rejoice not just for themselves, but for the whole community that has now been freed from the annual sacrifice.

The difference between *Aminta* and *Il Pastor Fido* is that Guarini's drama is not just a love story, but the story of a whole community and the steps (in the form of the marriages) that community projects and eventually takes in order to ensure its own survival. Young love here has implications for the whole society, and the dimension of the wider fate of the community is never far from Amarillis or Mirtillo's thoughts. Joseph Loewenstein feels that Arcadia itself becomes a presence, almost a character, in the play and relates this to the theatrical incarnation of the vague land of literary pastoral.⁶⁴ The land of Arcadia is certainly realistically depicted and the love story affects the whole community, but the effect of this realism and incarnation of the vague pastoral land is to move Guarini's landscape further away from the normal pastoral setting. The unidentified and barely characterised pastoral setting is not enough for Guarini. His pastoral drama is not just a love story but also the story of the community that is affected by the actions of the lovers, and that is a feature that recurs in later Arcadian stories. Arcadia is a realistically imagined land that also has to deal with love stories.

Il Pastor Fido's land of Arcadia can be explained in terms of pastoral allusiveness and Guarini's desire to rewrite Tasso in such a way as to alter his concern with the private and deliberately amoral aspects of love.⁶⁵ But Guarini's realistic Arcadia with its clear social hierarchy and sketched-in lower classes seems to break the boundaries

⁶⁴ Joseph Loewenstein, 'Guarini and the Presence of Genre' in Nancy Klein Maguire ed., *Renaissance Tragicomedy: Explorations in Genre and Politics* (New York: AMS Press, 1987), pp.44-6.

⁶⁵ For the rewriting of Tasso's amoral understanding of love, see Guarini's famous rewriting of Tasso's golden age ode, discussed in chapter three.

of the pastoral genre. He uses Arcadia as his setting because he believes it adds verisimilitude to the world he describes, and makes an effort to imagine what it would really be like to live in the small rural community. Arcadia is starting to need interpretation in a different context than the pastoral. This is where the genre of the literary utopia comes in, and where this discussion now turns.

Arcadia and Utopia

In trying to connect the literary landscapes of Arcadia and utopia we immediately run into difficulties because utopia has traditionally been defined against Arcadia, as its opposite.⁶⁶ This definition seems to be primarily owing to the fact that Arcadia has been wrongly held to be a vague and idealised pastoral landscape. This equation of Arcadia with idealised pastoral is open to challenge, as I have shown, and it is certainly a contention of this study that the examples of Arcadia it includes can stand comparison with the many works produced in the Renaissance that are conventionally defined as literary utopias. But this is a complicated assertion not just because of the misunderstanding of Arcadia, but as utopia itself is also a genre that is difficult to define. There is debate at the margins of the genre about what utopia is and what it can include. One recent and authoritative definer of utopia, Lyman Tower Sargent, argues that even a pastoral fantasy world (that he inevitably terms ‘Arcadia’), is a

⁶⁶ This is the view of W.H. Auden in ‘Arcadia and Utopia’, Northrop Frye in ‘Varieties of Literary Utopia’, and Harry Levin in *The Myth of the Golden Age in the Renaissance*. More recently, J.C. Davis, one of the best-known literary critics of utopia, has offered a reading of utopia that clearly distinguishes it from Arcadia, in *Utopia and the Ideal Society: A Study of English Utopian Writing 1516-1700* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), although in Davis’s view the two worlds are not polar opposites. The most recent consideration of Arcadia and utopia is Franziska Sick’s in ‘Utopia, Arcadia und die Welt der Wahren Liebe’, although she follows the lead of her compatriots Bruno Snell and Winfried Wehle in treating Arcadia as a world of pastoral role-playing and artifice rather than a realistically imagined rural community. We will return to all these critical works later in the discussion.

utopia of a sort.⁶⁷ So in considering the question of Arcadia's identification with utopia, we are going to have to begin at the beginning, to start by investigating the problems of defining utopia in order to see how Arcadia might fit in to the category or, as I will suggest, help in that process of definition.

From the point of view of attempting a definition, utopia is curiously like the pastoral: there is a wide range of texts that the term can be applied to, and a single definition based on common themes is therefore impossible. In the case of utopian studies, however, there is widespread agreement that, although they must be somehow related to one another, the literary genre of utopia is different from the more general impulse of 'utopianism.' Utopianism can be loosely defined as any kind of social dreaming. It is dreaming of a better world and often involves action, whether suggested or attempted, such as a detailed plan of the rules for the perfect society, a political tract or programme of political action, or an attempt to actually put these plans and ideas into practice, like starting a commune. Most realised utopian communities have failed, but that does not mean that all utopianism is impracticable. A political act like the 'glorious revolution' of 1688, for example, might be seen as a piece of utopian dreaming that led to successful action in the real world. Utopianism is a wide and expansive category that can include all sorts of works from all time periods. Utopian thinking has recently been espoused by feminist critics who see it as a useful way of imagining a better world that might lead to a clearer understanding of how to change the existing one.⁶⁸ Seemingly more relevant to this study is Robert Appelbaum's work on the many different kinds of social dreaming and political

⁶⁷ Lyman Tower Sargent, 'The Three Faces of Utopianism Revisited', *Utopian Studies: Journal of the Society for Utopian Studies* 5, (1994), p.4.

⁶⁸ See, for example, Greg Johnson, 'The situated self and utopian thinking', *Hypatia* 17, (2002), 20-44 and Ashlie Lancaster, 'Instantiating Critical Utopia', *Utopian Studies* 11, (2000), 109-19. Recent attempts to use feminist critiques to correct literary utopias will be discussed below.

activity that appeared in the seventeenth century.⁶⁹ But Appelbaum's book is a study of real politics and ideas for political action, not literary fiction, and does not offer much insight into the definition of the purely literary Arcadia. The narrower, more specific category of literary utopias, fictional works that imagine a different world but do not necessarily call for action or even take their own ideas seriously, is of most use to the present enquiry.

But even after having distinguished literary utopia from the larger and more vague category of 'utopianism', it is still difficult to come to an exact definition of what utopia is. A rough definition, taking account of the genre's basic features, is fairly easy to come by; Susan Bruce's 'fictional works which claim truly to describe a community posited at some level as ideal' is particularly clear and succinct.⁷⁰ But such a definition is like defining the pastoral as a work featuring shepherds – it gives no insight into the genre's themes and aims. The question of utopia's aims is an important one because it has motivated and given its name to so much utopian thinking that does demand political action, yet it is not at all certain that utopia (or all utopia) is itself about politics, and although it does bear some kind of critical relationship to reality (it would not be dreaming of something better if it was satisfied with reality) it is not certain what it intends the reader to do with its criticisms. To take an obvious example, nobody is sure of whether More is seriously recommending Utopia as an ideal society or whether, and where, he is being sarcastic. If More is sometimes sarcastic, his criticism of the real world is not clear-cut anyway as in some points (like in not encouraging euthanasia) his own society must be superior to Utopia. Bruce's account also highlights the puzzling fact that the majority of utopias claim to be true accounts of societies that do actually exist somewhere in the world,

⁶⁹ Robert Appelbaum, *Literature and Utopian Politics in Seventeenth-Century England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

⁷⁰ Susan Bruce ed. and introd., *Three Early Modern Utopias: Utopia, New Atlantis, The Isle of Pines* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), p.xi.

further complicating the relationship of utopia to reality. A certain wariness about utopia's claims to be ideal is also evident in the last part of her definition and in fact the supposed relationship between utopia and ideal perfection is one of the biggest problems that critics and readers of utopia encounter. For utopia (perhaps unlike the pastoral), the obvious rough definition is not enough. A definition that tries to explain the genre's themes and aims is necessary too. Inevitably, there have been several completely different approaches to the problem of defining utopia. I will only consider three of the most influential of these attempts here; those of Louis Marin, J. C. Davis and Lyman Tower Sargent. Each offers some insight into the nature of the literary utopia although no one definition can hope to provide the entire answer to the question of what utopia is.

Marin himself might have objected to the suggestion that he has a 'theory' of what utopia is because he stresses the fact that he is really interested in the practice of utopics not the theory of utopia. The primary subject of his enquiry is not utopias themselves but what he calls 'utopics', the thought processes that lie behind the literary representations of utopia. Utopic thought processes exist outside of discourse and literary representation because they allow for the free play of ideas and for contradictions to be held in suspension, so that a utopic thought can comprehend more than one side of an argument at the same time. Utopics therefore open up space to imagine alternatives; alternative worlds, alternatives, and perhaps also opposition, to the existing power structure. As such they could not be written down because an author would then have to choose one alternative out of many. The significant thing about utopias is not the fact that they depict imaginary better worlds, but that in the way they are written they allow the reader to glimpse the utopic thought, with its inherent contradictions, that produced them. Utopia works by 'exposing its

construction procedure' and its primary subject is not the imaginary world it describes but 'fiction and fable-making', the processes it is using to create its ostensible subject. This is very similar to the anti-pastoral idea that Arcadia ironises itself and highlights its debts to previous authors. The fictional land is a by-product of utopia's real interest in exposing and exploring strategies of literary representation.⁷¹

Marin's is an unconventional response to the challenge of defining literary utopias, that at first glance ignores everything that is obvious about the genre to focus on an aspect that he claims is not even fully representable in discourse, but it offers a surprising amount of help in fully understanding the literary genre. For one thing, he arrives at his conclusions through a close study of More's *Utopia* (something many critics do not do) and his ideas help to clear up the problem of More's contradictions and irony. According to Marin's theory of utopics, ambivalence and unresolved contradictions about the imaginary world would be *expected* in a utopia.⁷² His ideas also offer a new way of uniting the larger impulse of utopianism with the literary genre as both attempts at action and literary representation can be seen as results of utopic thought processes. But the neutrality of the utopic space means that there is no need to argue that utopia is prompting its readers to political action. Some time spent in the utopic playspace might convince a thinker that there are alternatives to the current power structure that are so viable that he should attempt to bring them into being. But he might only decide to work off his insight into the processes of power and state-formation by creating a fictional world that exposed them. Either way, the

⁷¹ Louis Marin, *Utopics: The Semiological Play of Textual Spaces*, trans. Robert A. Vollrath (Atlantic Highlands NJ: Humanities Press International, 1984, reprinted 1990). I have tried to give a general summary of Marin's thought, but for specific ideas the reader is directed to the following pages; for his interest in utopic practice not theory p.4, p.196; for utopics existing outside discourse p.7 (this is stated in a more extreme version in the second preface: 'It may simply be impossible to write and speak about utopia', p.xx); for utopics as free play, neutral space and containing contradictions p.7 (the entire first chapter is relevant here); for an explicit treatment of utopia's relationship to prevailing power structures pp.198-9. The two quotations can be found on p.8.

⁷² 'Inconsistencies, incoherences and absences' are considered to be narrative hallmarks of utopia, Marin p.xvi, see also p.xiv.

action or fiction would be the result of utopics, yet literary utopia is still distinct from political action and his account actually emphasises the literary nature of utopias, that take strategies of fictional representation as their first subject. Although Marin's response to the problem of defining utopia is unconventional, his approach results in some unique insights about what utopia is and how it works. A similar approach, and one better known to scholars of literature, is Harry Berger's definition of imaginary world texts like More's *Utopia* as 'second worlds', mental constructs that allow for the free play of ideas and offer a space to imagine alternatives to reality without having to choose between them. (An imagined world that does present a single alternative to reality is defined as a 'green world').⁷³ Berger's 'second world' offers the same opportunities as Marin's utopic thought. It is also a usefully neutral terminology for describing both Arcadia and utopia. He derives the definition from More but I will also apply it to Sidney's *Arcadia* in the next chapter.

Much more conventional is J.C. Davis's idea of utopia. In contrast to Marin, he is very specific about the exact content of literary utopia and defines it in terms of formal and organisational features rather than the impulse or thought process that might lie behind its creation. His focus on the content of the genre makes sense because he is acutely aware that there is a 'plethora of political writings generated by the past', including tracts, treatises and sermons as well as utopias. These presumably all represent dreaming of a better world, so how can the specific category of utopia be identified amongst them? Davis solves this problem not simply through an appeal to the utopian subject matter of the imagined other world because there are several types of ideal worlds in Renaissance thought (Arcadia is one he identifies), but through an analysis of what features of an imagined world mark it out as utopian in

⁷³ Harry Berger jnr., *Second World and Green World: Studies in Renaissance Fiction-Making* (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, 1988).

contrast to the other possible ideal worlds. For Davis, the distinguishing feature of each imaginary society is its social organisation, specifically, how it deals with the problem of supply and demand. Arcadia satisfies the desires of its inhabitants without the need for any real work or social organisation because the Arcadians are content to be impoverished shepherds. It is a paradise of gratification, where there is always enough to go round, but only because none of its inhabitants wants much to start with. Utopia takes a tougher approach to the problem of satisfying human desires.

Assuming, unlike the Arcadians, that desire is unbounded and that people will always want more, utopia invents a strict system of social organisation that can be backed up by a government and penal system. Government and discipline tend towards totalitarianism as to ensure fairness there cannot be any loopholes in the utopian system. '[T]he perfection of utopias must be total.'⁷⁴

Davis takes the opposite approach from Marin, focusing primarily on the content of utopia as a key to its definition and considering utopia as attempting totality of detail not as purposely leaving space for contradictions. He puts utopia in a more purely literary context, comparing it to other ideal worlds rather than attempts at political reform. The idea that it would after all be possible to define utopia by its content is a helpful one. But his definition does not stand up to close scrutiny because it works by defining utopia against other imaginary worlds and therefore is only as accurate as his definitions of all those worlds. I have already pointed out how little critical definition there is of Arcadia. Davis's characterisation of Arcadia falls victim to the old error of wrongly equating it with the pastoral genre. He asserts that Arcadia 'not only rejects . . . the institutions of an acquisitive society, but it rejects all institutions whatsoever and so highlights the institutional preoccupations of the utopian.' But

⁷⁴ J.C. Davis, *Utopia and the Ideal Society: A Study of English Utopian Writing 1516-1700* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), p.7, p.39. He discusses Arcadia on pp.22-6. The quotation in the next paragraph is on p.24.

Sidney's factious Arcadian nobles and power-hungry Cecropia do not reject institutions or acquisitiveness, neither do the Arcadian townspeople who revolt because their duke has left them ungoverned.⁷⁵ Daniel's *Qveene's Arcadia* reveals a preoccupation with the actual organisational structures underlying the seemingly ungoverned Arcadian society – in fact Marin's ideas are of greater help in explaining Daniel's Arcadia. A close reading of works set in Arcadia will not support Davis's definition. Close reading would also complicate the relationship between Arcadia and utopia. Davis sees them as clearly differentiable ideal worlds based on their treatment of social organisation, but if social organisation can be shown to be a concern of Arcadia then Arcadia must be a utopia too.

As was the case with pastoral, definition of utopia solely by its themes is shown to be too rigid to work in all cases, and a more flexible definition is needed. Lyman Tower Sargent provides just such a definition. Arguing that 'the central problem with most approaches to utopianism is the attempt to use a single dimension to explain a multi-dimensional phenomenon', he creates a pluralistic concept of utopia that begins from the basic and indisputable definition of utopianism as 'social dreaming' but goes on to offer categorisation of utopias within this larger basic idea. Literary utopia, he suggests, should be regarded as a subset of utopianism, thereby bringing these concepts into a relationship with one another while still accepting that they are not the same. Within the category of literary utopia he employs the same method, offering a fairly exhaustive list of different ideal worlds, including Arcadias, that can be seen as utopias. In a sense this is merely a change of terminology, from Davis's 'ideal worlds' to Sargent's 'utopias', although he includes many more examples of utopia than the five ideal worlds that Davis identifies, but it is a change of terminology that

⁷⁵ For the factionalism of the nobles, see *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia (The New Arcadia)* ed. Victor Skretkovicz (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987), p.23: there is 'some appearance of danger [towards Basilius] in respect of the valiant Amphialus, his nephew; and much envy in the ambitious number of the nobility against Philanax to see Philanax so advanced.'

reflects a broader and more inclusive view of utopia itself. The mere definition of utopia as an imaginary world is not particularly helpful to the scholar, but Sargent allows for this by allowing for more detailed categorisation and definition within the umbrella terms of utopianism and literary utopia. Although utopia as a literary genre ‘refers to works which describe an imaginary society in some detail’ he offers a detailed lexicon of ‘utopian terms’ to help the reader classify the variety of utopias and he explains the criteria that should be used to judge whether a work is or is not a utopia (form, intent and content – in contrast to Davis, content is the least important of these for Sargent). Even in this case he accepts that no one definition will fit all texts, that an appeal to all of form, intent and content might still be inconclusive and that, finally, ‘definitions are intellectual constructs that attempt to provide a useful tool to deal with the bulk of a phenomenon. Definitions are rarely or ever useful at the extremes, and the boundaries established by definitions are both moveable and porous or permeable.’⁷⁶

On Sargent’s authority it is possible to try to define Arcadia as a branch of literary utopia. What, then, are Arcadia’s claims to be utopian? The simple answer is that it is an imaginary society, depicted in some detail, that purports on some level to be ideal. Sidney and Daniel, and to a lesser degree Forde in the Restoration and even Cokain in the example above, all show an interest in the Arcadian community and the details of its social organisation. This interest is particularly strong in Sidney and strongly ironic in Daniel. It might be objected that Arcadia is a real place not a utopian ‘no place.’ Two answers can be made to this objection. In the first place, the societies depicted in the geographic reality of Arcadia are imaginary so they still

⁷⁶ Lyman Tower Sargent, ‘The Three Faces of Utopianism Revisited’, *Utopian Studies: Journal of the Society for Utopian Studies* 5, (1994), p.3, p.7, p.5. The list of literary utopias can be found on pp.11-2; his observations about form, intent and content on pp.12-3. His placing of Arcadia in the category of myth, ‘utopias of sensual gratification’ (p.10), is baffling and cannot be sustained when applied to works set in Arcadia, but that does not really matter as his classification is tentative and allows for groups within it to be added, deleted or reclassified if necessary.

qualify as utopias. But more importantly, Arcadia gains its unique strength from the fact that it is a real place and that it has two contradictory literary traditions, alternately depicted both as a sinister place and an ideal one. As I will argue, the tension between these two traditions means Arcadia is perfectly suited to an exploration of the nature of ideal perfection, one of the most important topics of the literary utopia. On a more basic level, it gives rise to Arcadia's interest in depicting community as it forces writers of Arcadias to imagine the Arcadian society in detail in a bid to reconcile its opposite traditions.

The problem facing any attempt to connect Arcadia and the literary utopia is that critics have traditionally seen Arcadia and utopia as opposites. In his scheme of the different golden ages available to the Renaissance imagination, Harry Levin shows Arcadia and utopia as the opposite poles of a better world located in a time different from our own: 'we must choose between the past and the future, between an Arcadian retrospect and a Utopian prospect.'⁷⁷ Arcadia is 'primitivistic', looking back to an imagined better past that is now lost to the modern dreamer whose needs and desires have become more complex and sophisticated; utopia 'millennial', looking forward to the perfection of the existing complex and fallen world. I have already noted Davis's similar treatment of Arcadia as a simple society and utopia as a more complex one that has to work to achieve the submission of complex desires to the order of the perfect world, and Sargent too places Arcadia in the category of simple, mythological utopias.

Most recently, Franziska Sick has argued that Arcadia and utopia are opposite and complementary fictional worlds, utopia characterised by its concern with society and the organisation of individuals into social roles, Arcadia by its interest in the

⁷⁷ Levin, p.8.

psychology of the individual and the discourse of love.⁷⁸ Her reading recognises no similarity at all between these two worlds as their aims and interests are completely different – the inhabitants of a utopia see themselves in terms of their place in a well-organised society and have no time to explore their personal feelings, those in Arcadia dwell on their private emotions and experiences and are scarcely aware of the world that exists around them. Her main examples of Arcadia, however, are Honoré d'Urfé's *Astrée* and Tasso's *Aminta*, neither of which is actually set in Arcadia.⁷⁹ In fact all these readings that contrast Arcadia with utopia are based not on a study of works actually and specifically set in Arcadia, but are using 'Arcadia' as a synonym for 'the pastoral', so their conclusions, doubtless correct as far as pastorals are concerned, are misleading for the study of Arcadia itself. These critics all reject the idea that Arcadia has any interest in social organisation, yet one of main contentions of this study is that it is precisely this interest, created by a real effort to imagine the place, that makes it impossible to explain Arcadia in terms of conventional pastoral criticism. Ironically, their ideas in fact show that the usual pastoral theory is inadequate to describe the real Arcadia.⁸⁰

The misunderstanding, I think, arises over the aspect of the appropriate degree of realistic detail, what Sargent calls the 'considerable detail' required in the depiction of a utopia.⁸¹ Arcadia on a first reading seems to be too vague about its society and not

⁷⁸ Franziska Sick, 'Utopia, Arcadia und die Welt der Wahren Liebe', in Klaus W. Hempfer and Helmut Pfeiffer ed., *Spielwelten: Performanz und Inszenierung in der Renaissance* (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2002), pp.131-46, especially p.131, p.138

⁷⁹ She does refer briefly to Sidney, considering the *Arcadia* as a clear example of a pastoral 'Artikulationsform von Liebe, in der Liebe sich im Spiel und durch die Maske hindurch artikuliert' ('strategy for articulating love, in which love articulates itself in play and through masks'), p.143, rather puzzlingly as the disguises of Sidney's princes actually present obstacles to the successful revelation of their loves and identities to their beloveds. The sentence might be taken to mean that it is through the use of disguise motifs that Sidney and the reader can explore the idea of love, but she has earlier argued that 'role-playing' on this narrative level is only a characteristic of utopia, not Arcadia (pp.137-8).

⁸⁰ There has been at least one attempt to make the opposite argument and find utopianism in a work conventionally considered pastoral. Annette Lucia Giesecke has argued for Virgil's *Eclogues* as a utopian vision of a better future for Rome, especially taking into consideration Virgil's use of the philosophies of Lucretius, in 'Lucretius and Virgil's Pastoral Dream', *Utopian Studies* 10, (1999), 1-15.

⁸¹ Sargent, p.9.

to provide realistic social detail to the required degree, so has therefore been associated with the pastoral, but as I shall show the best Arcadias have thought about their societies in some detail. Sidney particularly presents a cross-section of Arcadian society and the problems facing its different groups in the revolt, and Guarini, as we have seen, clearly attempts to create greater verisimilitude in his Arcadian tragicomedy than is normal in the pastoral. In spite of the prevailing critical misunderstanding, Arcadia does have a claim to be considered as a utopia. It fits the basic definition of a reasonably detailed imaginary ideal society and no better or more specific definition has yet been discovered.⁸² Sargent in fact suggests that any more specific subgroup of imaginary worlds that fits the basic definition can be helpful in improving our understanding of utopia. Arcadia is helpful in this respect as it uses its unique background to consider and solve in a distinctive way some of the problems that critics have identified as belonging to many literary utopias.

One of the problems that plagues utopia is that nothing much happens in it, making for an uninteresting read. This is a necessary evil, as William T. Cotton explains:

[a] utopia is by commonly held definition an ideal society and therefore does not need to change. In fact, by the strictest standards of logic, such a state cannot change, because it represents an ideal achieved. . . . Consequently, one criterion of the quality of a utopian vision is the way and degree to which it is dynamic and handles the problem of the static nature of a perfected society.⁸³

⁸² It might be unnecessary even to make this argument as Sargent suggests that even very basic fantasies of gratification count as utopias in some ways, p. 4, although not everyone would agree with this. Judith Shklar, for example, argues that 'not every image of a happiness that is remote from actual misery is a utopia.' Utopia is 'the happiness that is created by social concord and true knowledge. This is politically planned happiness,' in 'What is the Use of Utopia', in Tobin Siebers ed., *Heterotopia: Postmodern Utopia and the Body Politic* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1994), p.41, p.42. The question of social detail is one of the most important objections that could be raised with regard to Arcadia's identification as utopian. My answer, which I can only state here but aim to prove in the following chapters, is that Arcadia does in fact offer enough social detail to be accepted as a utopia. In this it does differ from most other pastorals.

⁸³ William T. Cotton, 'Five-fold Crisis in *Utopia*: A Foreshadow of Major Modern Utopian Narrative Strategies', *Utopian Studies* 14, (2003), p.42.

Cotton feels that More gets round this problem by hinting at the changes that are made by the Utopians as a result of Hythloday's visit, for example their adoption of Christianity and eager absorption of western learning, but there are plenty of utopias that do not find any way of suggesting dynamism. Some feminist critics have seized on the apparent stasis of utopia to suggest that it is a result of the complacent attitudes of its male authors. Alessa Johns, for example, has argued that

Traditional eighteenth-century English utopias stress timelessness, inevitability, order, and fixity: they offer a static picture that will forever provide an ideal toward which England might strive. By contrast, innovative utopias in eighteenth-century England suggest a sense of history that is ongoing, not static; utopian communities are inhabited and constructed before our eyes.⁸⁴

Lucy Sargisson has argued in the same vein over late twentieth-century examples.⁸⁵ But even when not written by a female author, *Arcadia* always avoids this problem through its use of narrative events drawn from romance plots. The ideal society of *Arcadia* is always portrayed and tested through the events that befall its heroes and heroines and through their understanding of the society they live in. The fact that *Arcadia* has a plot that will temporarily involve danger and hardship for its characters means that the Arcadian society is in fact less than ideal. Daniel's *Qveene's Arcadia* is unusually forthright about this fact, beginning with a lament that *Arcadia* does not seem to be as perfect as it once was. In other *Arcadias* the realisation that the land is actually less than perfect is more subtle and can only be achieved through the protagonists' direct experience of unfairness and suffering. The addition of narrative

⁸⁴ Alessa Johns, 'Engendering Utopias: Examples from Eighteenth-Century England' in George Slusser, Paul Alkon, Roger Galliard and Danièle Chatelain eds., *Transformations of Utopia: Changing Views of the Perfect Society* (New York: AMS Press, 1999), p.19.

⁸⁵ Lucy Sargisson, 'Contemporary feminist Utopianism: practising Utopia on Utopia' in John Horton and Andrea T. Baumeister eds., *Literature and the Political Imagination* (London and New York: Routledge, 1996), pp.238-55.

allows the author to imagine the Arcadian society without making that society the sole subject of the work or running the risk of creating a static image of unrealisable perfection.

The suggestion that its aim is to depict and promote an ideal of perfection with which not everyone would agree is another problem utopia frequently encounters. Again reminiscent of the pastoral, it is not actually true that utopia tries to project an image of ideal perfection. There have been many attempts by critics to show that it is not ideally perfect, but the notion persists. Even the OED defines utopia as 'A place, state, or condition ideally perfect in respect of politics, laws, customs, and conditions,' reflecting a common usage of the word rather than more accurate critical definitions. The serious problem is that the goal of achieving the perfect political state may become morally objectionable in utopia as it can lead to a totalitarian system of government that single-mindedly attempts to carry out its programme for perfection. Davis is just one critic who argues for the inevitable connection between utopia and totalitarian government (above). As utopia can encourage political action, and is sometimes taken to be a blueprint for social reform, there is always the possibility that some readers, especially if those readers happen to be the government, will try to take measures to achieve the utopian vision. The danger is that the utopian ideal, if taken too seriously, could lead to brutal attempts to actualise itself, and even if the ideal could be peaceably actualised, and however close to perfect the ideal was, there would always be some groups of society who would be worse off under the utopian regime and who would have to be repressed. The holocaust, from one point of view, was a utopian project, as W.H. Auden makes very clear:

Even Hitler, I imagine, would have defined his new Jerusalem
as a world where there are no Jews, not as a world where they

are being gassed by the million day after day in ovens, but he was a Utopian, so the ovens had to come in.⁸⁶

Auden's fear seems to be that acting on a utopian dream would always lead to totalitarianism and violence. Northrop Frye has also commented that '[i]n the United States particularly the attitude toward a definite social ideal as a planned goal is anti-utopian: such an ideal, it is widely felt, can produce in practice only some form of totalitarian state.'⁸⁷

It is the twentieth-century's rejection of totalitarianism, Sargent asserts, that has led to its rejection of utopia.⁸⁸ His answer is twofold: in the first place, just because some utopian projects have been idealising, totalitarian and evil does not mean that they all are. In the second place, utopia does not strive for ideal perfection as that is impossible, but only for a world that is better than the existing one. The utopian world is run upon 'more perfect' but not 'perfect' lines as compared to the real world.⁸⁹ The idea that utopia is a blueprint for action can easily be dismissed by recalling the distinction between utopiansim and the literary utopia. As Sargent comes close to arguing, it is not the utopia's fault if some people try to act on what they believe to be the image of ideal perfection it offers. As everyone knows, and whatever the intention of their authors, utopias are inevitably not ideally perfect as there will always be some little details of the better society with which the reader does not agree. The question is whether these little lapses from the 'totalitarian gaze of the narrator' are strengths, as Marin would say, or weaknesses and flaws in a vision that is

⁸⁶ W.H. Auden, 'Arcadia and Utopia', extracts reprinted in Bryan Loughrey ed., *The Pastoral Mode: A Casebook* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1984), p.91. He also observes that 'the Utopian dream permits indulgence in aggressive fantasies in a way that the Arcadian dream does not' (p.91), but again equates 'Arcadian' with 'pastoral' in a way unhelpful to this study.

⁸⁷ Northrop Frye, 'Varieties of Literary Utopias', in Frank E. Manuel (ed.), *Utopias and Utopian Thought* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1965), pp.29-30.

⁸⁸ Sargent, p.24.

⁸⁹ Sargent, p.6.

trying to be ideal and complete, as Davis would say.⁹⁰ But perfection – or a better world at least – is inevitably a concern of utopia, whether it delivers or attempts to deliver ideal perfection or not, and this can be a problem for late twentieth-century commentators.

Arcadia is innovative as it makes ideal perfection its subject, but in a deliberately ironic way. It has already been shown how Arcadia's irony about its own supposedly ideal landscape links to modern theories of antipastoralism. The same relationship with perfection also fits in with theories of utopia. Marin would expect to find a simultaneous acceptance and rejection of the better world in a literary utopia. Less radically, Arcadia can easily be seen to fit Sargent's definition of 'anti-utopia' – 'a non-existent society described in considerable detail and normally located in time and space that the author intended a contemporaneous reader to view as a criticism of utopianism or of some particular utopia' – or 'critical utopia' – 'a non-existent society described in considerable detail and normally located in time and space that the author intended a contemporaneous reader to view as better than contemporary society but with difficult problems that the described society may or may not be able to solve and which takes a critical view of the utopian genre.'⁹¹ These are deliberately thoughtful kinds of utopia that get around the problems of static perfection and totalitarianism associated with classic utopianism. They are only believed to exist in more recent times, certainly no earlier than the eighteenth century and there only in the work of female authors, but here they are in Arcadian works by male authors and courtiers in the Renaissance.

The other obvious problem with utopia's tendency towards perfection and stasis is that it makes all people behave and think in exactly the same way, stifling human

⁹⁰ Marin, p.xiv.

⁹¹ Sargent, p.9.

individuality. As Judith Shklar explains, utopia has to be this way because ‘truth is one and only error is multiple.’⁹² The utopians all know that they have arrived at the best way of running a community so differences of opinion are no longer possible. Utopians are rational and know that they are right. But human nature doesn’t work this way and the most obvious example of this is in love. William Morris in *News from Nowhere* recognises that More’s utopians are unrealistically passive and rational and redresses this situation in his updated version of More’s ideal by allowing love and all its consequences into Nowhere. As the narrator’s guide remarks:

‘For you know love is not a very reasonable thing, and perversity and self-will are commoner than some of our moralists think.’ He added, in a still more sombre tone: ‘Yes, only a month ago there was a mishap down by us, that in the end cost the lives of two men and a woman, and, as it were, put out the sunlight for us for a while.’⁹³

Although the primary plot of his novel is Guest’s discovery of Nowhere, Morris hints at the romance plots that occur in Nowhere, not just here, but also in Dick’s relationship with Clara, and Guest’s own love affair towards the end of the story.

Arcadia too takes love as its main plot motivator and thereby problematises the aspect of unrealistic human obedience often found in utopia. Arcadian love affairs often involve acts of individual disobedience against parents or the demands of the society. Perhaps that is what Sick means when she defines Arcadia as exploring the microcosmic level of community living and utopia the macrocosmic.⁹⁴ Arcadian love affairs do seem to be about the achievement of individual desires at the expense of societal demands. But on closer inspection it becomes apparent that happiness can

⁹² Shklar, p.42.

⁹³ William Morris, *News from Nowhere*, ed. David Leopald, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), p.31.

⁹⁴ Sick, p.138.

only be restored to the land in the final act through the successful outcome of its love affairs; happiness and prosperity for the community at large is actually dependent on that of the individual inhabitants. In Guarini's *Pastor Fido*, for example, the curse on Arcadia can only be lifted through the marriage of the faithful lovers Amarillis and Mirtillo, and not through the marriage of Amarillis and Silvio as the priests dictate. What seems to be the doom of the community through the fulfilment of Amarillis and Mirtillo's personal desires in fact turns out to be its salvation. Arcadia is a unique sort of utopia that tries to imagine how a society would have to be constructed in order to accommodate love affairs and promote the interests of the community through individual happiness. In this concern with the individual as well as the wider society, and with happiness as the main goal of the community, it is unlike most Renaissance utopias, that are concerned with social organisation, but anticipates the utopias of later ages where individuality and happiness were more important ideals, like Morris's *News from Nowhere* and even Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World*.

Arcadia, then, can fairly be defined as an imaginary world, whose society is described in some detail, that tries to explore and test out through imagining another society what an ideally perfect society might be like, although it always concludes that perfection is unsustainable and never really exists. This qualifies it as one sort of utopia because it is a detailed imaginary society and also because it is most useful to think of utopia as a pluralistic and flexible category. Arcadia's primary subject is a love plot rather than the discovery of a new society, but it is nowhere a rule that utopia cannot have any other subject matter than itself, and the adoption of narrative can in fact help redress some classic utopian problems. Romance plots ensure that Arcadia is not a static image of ideal perfection, and the focus on the love affairs and personal happiness of individuals avoids the creation of a utopia with unrealistically mindless

and obedient inhabitants. Critics of utopia should not ignore Arcadia because it addresses one of the key utopian issues, that of perfection, and does so in a unique way that is the result of its specific traditions. Arcadia's irony about its own ideal can be just as easily related to a 'critical' or 'anti'-utopianism as to antipastoralism, and the aspect of the detailed imagination of Arcadian society, unusual in ordinary pastorals, forces the reader of Arcadia to look for a context beyond pastoral criticism to account for Arcadia's unique effects. If it is true, as many critics conventionally argue, that pastoral deals with the concerns of the individual and utopia with problems of social organisation, Arcadia is a unique example of an imaginary society that investigates the overlap between private and the public concerns. In Arcadia, individual pastoral love stories are shown to affect the surrounding community.

Civil Wildness

It should now be a bit easier to attempt a definition of Arcadia. The texts that this study will focus on, all set in the land of Arcadia, are an unusually specific and ironic group of pastorals that also bear strong affinities with the genre of literary utopia and can usefully be compared to more conventional utopias. 'Real' Arcadias (as opposed to pastorals that merely claim to be set in Arcadia) can be identified by their awareness that Arcadia is a real place and their interest in imagining the land and society of Arcadia in some detail, and by their characteristic concern with the nature of perfection, exposing the myth that Arcadia itself is a perfect place. Arcadias are often very allusive, referring back to and ironically rewriting earlier models.

The 'civil wildness' of the title, however, still needs to be explained. The quotation is taken from Sidney's first description of Arcadia when Musidorus arrives there in the *New Arcadia*. 'Civil wildness' expresses Arcadia's dual nature. For Sidney it is an untamed, somewhat primitive country as well as a civil one, using 'civil' to suggest both its government and laws and the exemplary civility shown by some of its inhabitants, like Kalander, Strephon and Klaius. Civility can be contrasted with primitiveness or 'rudeness' both on the individual level of good manners and on the wider level of society and government. Although discussion of contemporary political events is very rare in Arcadias, society and government more generally – 'politics' in the wider sense of the term – are usually concerns. Ovid is interested in the glossing of the realities of state formation; Guarini in how far the preferences of individuals have to be sacrificed for the good of the whole community. We will see this concern with the society and political organisation of the land repeatedly resurfacing in English Arcadias. Sidney peppers his *Arcadia* with moral maxims, examples and advice on how to govern well and explores the consequences of bad government and naïve idealism about Arcadia; Daniel investigates the reciprocal relationship between individual happiness and social control; Restoration authors explore the strengths and weaknesses of kingship. In all cases, the events taking place in one Arcadian family (usually the first or royal family) are shown to spread outwards and have implications for the whole community, thereby illustrating the relationship between both senses of 'civility' as well, incidentally, as proving that these Arcadias have the interest in society that distinguishes the literary utopia.

Civility on the individual level is a concern as well, and authors explore a range of behavioural models. This is of particular interest in Sidney as it links in with the classic question asked about the *Arcadia*, of how well the princes have actually

behaved, whether or not they deserve Euarchus's judgement, and how Sidney meant for the readers to feel about his heroes. There are lots of possible answers to these questions, but it does seem that Sidney remains fond of his heroes until the end, tolerating a little wildness with his civility. As Helen Moore points out, the images of the ideal courtier found in sixteenth-century courtesy manuals are impossible ideals that could not be achieved in real life.⁹⁵ Sidney's *Arcadia* may simply be as sceptical about the possibility of perfection in individual manners and morals as it is about the possibility of an ideal pastoral landscape, or perfect government. At least, however they disguise themselves, the princes are more or less honest; they always fight for their principles (and princesses) and respect people who are worthy of respect. Sidney reserves his scorn for the hypocritical and dissembling characters like Plexirtus, Cecropia, and possibly to some extent Amphialus, who pretend to civility and virtue but show themselves to be rude and wild at heart.

In her authoritative study of changing modes of and attitudes towards civility, Anna Bryson shows that civility is really all about fitting oneself for life in a well-mannered community, and that one of the main objections to civility in the early modern period was that it was dishonest precisely because it involved study, training, repression of instincts, aspects that might all be considered as forms of dissembling.⁹⁶ Daniel in *The Qveenes Arcadia* explores these anxieties about civility more fully. Like Sidney he shows dissembling characters, and explicitly draws a contrast between their false 'civility' and honest Arcadian rudeness ('if thus their skill/ Doth ciuilize let vs be barbarous still').⁹⁷ But he also explores the more subtle forms of civility and hypocrisy that have gone in to creating the Arcadian society itself. Instinct is pitted

⁹⁵ Helen Moore, 'Of Marriage, Morals and Civility', in Jennifer Richards ed., *Early Modern Civil Discourses* (Palgrave Macmillan: Basingstoke, 2003), p.36.

⁹⁶ Anna Bryson, *From Courtesy to Civility: Changing Codes of Conduct in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998). She describes civility as a 'technique of self-orientation in a complex world' on p.96, and discusses the objections to civility in chapter six.

⁹⁷ Samuel Daniel, *The Qveenes Arcadia* (London: G. Eld for Simon Waterson, 1606), V.iii.106-7.

against civilisation in all its forms in this Arcadia, and even love affairs are shown to be a complex blend of matchmaking and social manipulation as well as desire.

‘Civil wildness’ is, however, an apt description of Arcadia for more reasons than this. For a start it dispels any lingering notion that Arcadia is a country of the mind or an idealised pastoral landscape as ‘civility’ expresses Arcadia’s concern with community and ‘wildness’ its less-than-ideal nature. It reflects other aspects of the land’s dual nature too, like the negative as well as positive superstitions and previous traditions about the place, and the paradox that it is realistically imagined and depicted by its authors, yet still a result of literary engagement and rewriting. The real-place, realistic Arcadia is also wholly literary: a wild land that is a product of a civilised and even sophisticated consciousness.

The parameters of the present study should be fairly clear now that its concept of Arcadia and principles of textual selection have been explained. The chapters that follow are studies of representations of Arcadia that are interesting for the ways in which they use and reinterpret this literary landscape. They show an awareness of the negative as well as positive traditions surrounding the country of Arcadia, realistically imagine the rural community that underpins the love stories, and through these two attributes cast doubt on the idea that Arcadia is an idealised pastoral world. It is a literary study and focuses on close reading of the texts in question, although the theories behind Arcadia, outlined above, are ideas I try to keep in play and refer back to when they are most relevant to understanding a particular text. The study is of English Arcadias but does refer to earlier examples when they seem particularly relevant. Sidney makes more sense when read in the context of Polybius and

Sannazaro, and Daniel deliberately enters into dialogue with Tasso and Guarini. Most of the Arcadias featured come from the late sixteenth or seventeenth century and I have tried to give some idea of the broader historical and literary movements in this period. The concluding chapter, on Gay's *Dione*, is intended as a coda to the body of the study, interpreting *Dione* in the light of the earlier Arcadian tradition, and makes no attempt to be an authoritative survey of the early eighteenth century.

The area of study is dictated by the material in the texts themselves, and as such produced its own natural limitations, some of which can be quite frustrating. The vexed question of contemporary politics in Arcadia was the biggest of these frustrations. There is not much comment on the politics of their own day in these Arcadian texts, even though both other pastorals and literary utopias have occasionally been read in this way.⁹⁸ The biggest disappointment in this respect was Anna Weamys's *Continuation to Sir Philip Sidney's Arcadia*. Despite Elizabeth Spiller's recent attempt to argue that the act of completing, figuratively resurrecting, Sidney was itself a political statement when the *Continuation* was first published in 1651, Weamys's text is essentially a careful and detailed engagement with Sidney's original that barely glances at politics.⁹⁹ Weamys's lack of interest in the contemporary situation is all the more remarkable when compared to Samuel Sheppard's rewriting of Spenser's *Faerie Queene* in 1650, that does comment on recent political events. I was also unable, in spite of Weamys's most recent editor Patrick Cullen's creation of her as a proto-feminist, to find much female bias either in Weamys or in other female-authored Arcadias.¹⁰⁰ This again is in contrast to work on female pastorals and the

⁹⁸ The best-known politicised readings of pastorals are those of Louis Montrose; for politicised reading of utopia see Marina Leslie *Renaissance Utopia and the Problem of History* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1998). Marin calls contemporary politics, or 'reality' utopia's 'absent referential term', p.xxi.

⁹⁹ Elizabeth A. Spiller, 'Speaking for the Dead: King Charles, Anna Weamys, and the Commemorations of Sir Philip Sidney's *Arcadia*', *Criticism* 42, (2000), 229-251.

¹⁰⁰ Partick Colborn Cullen ed., *Anna Weamys's A Continuation of Sir Philip Sidney's "Arcadia"* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), introduction pp. xvii-lxi.

female utopia – although both of these areas of study refer primarily to eighteenth century texts, slightly later than the period of this study.¹⁰¹ This study, however, may serve as a kind of prehistory to the eighteenth-century developments in these genres. But the subject of this discussion is the land of Arcadia itself and the way that it has been represented. Arcadia is so interesting and unusual a country that it is its own main subject and could not easily be pressed into the service of politics. Perhaps it does not mesh well with contemporary critical concerns, but the number of authors over whose imaginations it has exercised its appeal and who have been inspired to rewrite the Arcadian depictions of their predecessors is surely remarkable and deserving of attention in its own right.

The lack of explicit political comment in Arcadia leads on to the second great frustration inherent in the Arcadian material: how similar the seventeenth-century Arcadias are to one another. This is of course a useful quality as it allows comparisons to be made and generalisations to be drawn. And some of it at least must be attributable to the fact that there was more continuity running through this period than is sometimes thought. Graham Parry highlights this aspect of continuity: ‘The first three Stuart kings were all forceful personalities, who pursued controversial religious aims and quarrelled with their parliaments more than they agreed with them.’¹⁰² Critics of the Elizabethan period as well as the early eighteenth century like to claim that it was at this time that England began the slow change from a traditional feudal and agricultural economy to a modern mercantile one. If the concerns of these authors seem similar, it is probably because they lived in worlds not radically different

¹⁰¹ The female utopia in the eighteenth century has already been discussed, but see also Ruth Perry, ‘Bluestockings in Utopia’ in Beth Fowkes Tobin ed., *History, Gender and Eighteenth Century Literature* (Athens and London: The University of Georgia Press, 1994), pp.159-78; for the female pastoral see for example Ann Messenger, *Pastoral Tradition and the Female Talent: Studies in Augustan Poetry* (New York: AMS Press, 2001).

¹⁰² Graham Parry, *The Seventeenth Century: The Intellectual and Cultural Context of English Literature 1603 – 1700* (London and New York: Longman, 1989), p.9.

from one another. Nonetheless one might have expected that the restoration Arcadia would show more of a decisive break with the past and have more to say about the experience of having lost and regained a king. In fact the Arcadias written in the 1660s are consciously backwards looking, emulating their Caroline predecessors as if there had never been a Republic. Compared to most of the other dramas of the period, Arcadian tragicomedy of the 1660s eschews political comment almost altogether. I suspect that this is because interest had already shifted to other forms of the imaginary world by this time and Arcadia itself was a relatively antiquated setting. I was for this reason unable to make use of Virginia Ogden Birdsall's tantalisingly entitled *Wild Civility*, a study of the libertinism of Restoration drama, because Restoration playwrights stopped writing about Arcadia just before they turned to the comedies that form the basis of her study. As Bryson shows, libertinism forms an intriguing contrast to normal ideas of civility, but it is one that falls just outside the time period of this study.

It is frustrating that Arcadia was a complex and valuable 'second world' that could explore interesting ideas like the vulnerable nature of perfection only for a short time. As early as the Caroline period it was starting to become no more than part of the highly stylised court pastoral, although there are still some interesting examples like Heywood's 'Amphrisa' at this time. There is a big change in the way Arcadia is used in nineteenth century poetry, where it becomes a wistful image of lost perfection, as in the famous line 'I too have been in Arcady.'¹⁰³ It is the poets' 'Arcady' that Wills challenges in his account of the real Arcadia. In the seventeenth century Arcadia was being used to demonstrate that perfect worlds can never really exist. The contrast between these two uses is striking, but the large time-gap between them made it too

¹⁰³ George Augustus Simcox, 'Et Ego in Arcadia Fui', *Poems and Romances* (London:1869), line 36.

difficult for me to do more than merely mention the nineteenth-century Arcadia in this study, certainly not to give it the attention it deserves.

Yet in spite, or perhaps because, of these limitations, a group of works set in Arcadia has emerged from the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries that is well worth studying. Arcadia might be of value because it is an extremely literary landscape and as such challenges more politicised readings of seventeenth century literature. Not all texts fit all theories, and this is a group of works spanning a fairly large period that thematically have a lot in common with one another but have never been studied as a group. The textual evidence shows that the strange and contradictory land of Arcadia really did fascinate many early modern minds, and not because it was a pastoral ideal as is conventionally thought, but because it provided an opportunity to test a pastoral ideal. It also shows that there were several people who were prepared to write imaginative literature for its own sake and play games with the work of their predecessors even at a time when all about them were losing their heads.

Chapter II: *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia*: literary utopias and symbolic
landscapes

The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia by Sir Philip Sidney, first published as an unfinished fragment in 1590, is the first Arcadia in English literature. It is one of the earliest works in English to be entitled 'Arcadia' and the first to be actually set there.¹ As well as being the first, Sidney's is by far the most famous of English Arcadias and has attracted the most critical attention. Most Sidney criticism, however, in the seventeenth century as well as today, focuses on the political and moral meanings of the *Arcadia*, and/or on its treatment of its female characters.² The actual Arcadian realm he created has received comparatively little attention. But it is surely significant that Sidney chose to set his prose romance in the land of Arcadia, especially as no English author had done so before. One recent commentator who has considered landscape is Kenneth Borris, who offers an allegorical reading of the *Arcadia*.³ This is valuable for the attention that it focuses on the Arcadian background, but still privileges character over landscape as that background is considered only in so far as it symbolises characters' states of mind. Walter R. Davis provides another reading of

¹ The Literature Online database lists two earlier works that have 'Arcadia' in their titles: one anonymous late medieval poem called 'The Beautiful Shepherdess of Arcadia' which does not refer to its landscape at all and one untitled short poem that has 'Arcadia' in its first line – 'Erst in Arcadia's londe much prais'd was' – by Sidney's contemporary, Sir John Harington, which tells the story of the departure of the gods from the earth. The OED cites Thomas Watson's poem *Meliboëus* or *An Eglogue upon the death of the right honorable Sir Francis Walsingham* of 1590 as the first use of the words 'Arcadian' and 'Arcady' in English. (There is of course no OED entry for 'Arcadia' itself as it is a proper noun.) 1590 is also the date of the first publication of Sidney's *Arcadia*. But Watson's *Meliboëus* laments the death of Sidney as well as that of his father-in-law Walsingham, and it is more likely that his use of Arcadia is a tribute to Sidney than an independent earlier English Arcadia.

² For evidence of seventeenth-century interpretations of the *Arcadia* see Peter Lindenbaum, 'Sidney's *Arcadia* as Cultural Monument and Proto-Novel', Cedric C. Brown and Arthur F. Marotti ed., *Texts and Cultural Change in Early Modern England* (London: Macmillan Press, 1997), pp.80-94, especially p.84, and Mary Ellen Lamb, *Gender and Authorship in the Sidney Circle* (Madison, Wisconsin: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1990), p.8.

³ Kenneth Borris, *Allegory and Epic in English Renaissance Literature: Heroic Form in Sidney, Spenser and Milton* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

the landscape that verges on the symbolic, calling it an 'enclosed retreat' in which good and evil can be represented in an 'especially pure form.'⁴

My own reading is somewhat different. Although I agree that the Arcadian scenery comes to symbolise aspects of Sidney's thought, I will argue that it does so through the connotations that he attaches to the earlier descriptions of Arcadia on which his own understanding of it depends. Sidney's conception of the land of Arcadia is based in Polybius and Sannazaro's earlier accounts of it that he uses as models. He plays these two very different accounts off against one another, creating a realistic and vulnerable kingdom in spite of the myth of its perfection that surrounds it. But these differing Arcadias are not merely literary sources as they come to symbolise aspects of Sidney's own life and attitudes, in particular expressing the tension he felt between the need for the Protestant values of hard work and civic duty and the more aristocratic need for pleasure, relaxation and retreat. This chapter therefore aims to explore Sidney's use of the literary land of Arcadia, and how the understanding of the land of Arcadia that he was able to develop through reading earlier accounts of it influences the political and moral vision(s) of his *Arcadia*. The *Arcadia*'s social and political meanings and attitudes will be approached through the reading of its contrasting topographies that are derived from its literary sources.

The Green World and its Frames

As there are no earlier English models for the land of Arcadia, Sidney turned for his models to the classical and European sources that were outlined in the previous

⁴ Walter R. Davis, *A Map of Arcadia: Sidney's Romance in its Tradition* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1965), p.168, p.175.

chapter. His most immediate source was Jacopo Sannazaro's *Arcadia*, first published in 1502, that will be discussed in more detail later. A model for his use of these sources, and for the creation of an imaginary world, however, is provided by Sir Thomas More's *Utopia* of 1516. More, like Sidney, uses a fictional world in order to make observations about the outside world, although he invents a completely imaginary place whereas Sidney uses the land of Arcadia that already had a considerable reputation and had accumulated a number of meanings. More presents his *Utopia* not as a work of fiction but as an account of a real society.⁵ Arcadia is known to be a literary setting as well as a real place and Sidney does not expect his reader to pretend that the world he describes is true.

Despite this difference, there are similarities in the ways in which More and Sidney create their imaginary worlds and draw the reader in to them. Harry Berger, in his essay 'The Renaissance Imagination: Second World and Green World,' offers a reading of More's *Utopia* that distinguishes between the different levels of fantasy world that More creates, and shows how these different levels are used to create one another. Berger first distinguishes between the second world, that lies in the creative imagination, and the green world which is the art it creates. The second world is the 'playground, laboratory, theater, or battlefield of the mind, a model or construct the mind creates, a time or place it clears in order to withdraw from the actual environment.' The mind can withdraw into itself and create other, better, worlds in the imagination. These imagined better worlds are the green worlds. The second world can include infinitely many green worlds because the second world is open to corrections, changes of opinion and contradictory ideas: 'The clarity and simplicity of the green world may be balanced by the variety of an imaginary field in which a number of such worlds coexist.' Each green world, on the other hand, is unique and

⁵ Thomas More, *Utopia*, ed. Edward Surtz (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1979).

whole. The rules upon which it was constructed cannot be altered but this limitation is the green world's specific strength. Its well-defined limits offer 'a clarified image of the world.' The green world is not as full or complex as either the actual world or the second world but as such it can be a welcome refuge from both. But the value of the green world, and even the second world of the mind, is only temporary. The relief and clarification they offer should strengthen their author and reader to re-engage with the actual world. The reader may also learn from the image of the green world and apply those lessons in the actual world. There are obvious similarities between Berger's model of the green world and Sidney's argument that poetry teaches by imaginary examples in the *Defence of Poetry*. I do not, however, want to concentrate on this aspect of Berger's thought, but on his definitions of the second and green worlds and how More depicts both in the *Utopia*.

Berger points out that the *Utopia* is in three parts; More's letter to Peter Giles, Part One, which is a political discussion one evening in the house of Cardinal Morton, and Part Two which is Hythloday's description of *Utopia*. The first two parts may be described as images of the second world while the third is a description of a green world. The green world of *Utopia* is thus enclosed by the second world, and Berger suggests that this is because More understood the dangers of too prolonged a retreat into the green world and sought to contain his powerful green world fantasy by framing and limiting it with the second world. Green world wishful thinking is a more appropriate, and safer, subject for conversation between friends than for solitary writing – safer because the reluctance of an author to leave his green world is 'the urge of the paralyzed will to give up, escape, work magic, abolish time and flux and

the intrusive reality of other minds.’⁶ Both More and Sidney believed that civic duty, and engagement with the real world, were duties that should *not* be given up.

What Berger describes in the *Utopia* is a series of frames for the actual fantasy ‘green world’ that is the most famous feature of the work. The frames protect the reader from the green world by enclosing it in images of the second world and something closer to the real world. But they can also provide commentary on the green world that helps the reader to interpret it. The green world is not presented to the reader on its own, without any supporting guidelines. As Berger suggests, there is a level of irony in More’s presentation of Utopia that can only be understood with reference to the real world that it is contrasted against.⁷ The frames thus have a function in guiding the reader’s response to the work and the final meaning of the work as a whole exists not in its green world but in the tension between the green world and its frames.

Berger’s argument can be extended to Sidney, who makes a similar use of frames in the *Arcadia*, although his framing devices are less clearly announced than those of the *Utopia*. The *Arcadia*, however, opens on a fairly realistic view of the province of Arcadia and progresses, just as More’s *Utopia* does, into an image of a green world that is here represented by Basilius’s lodge. More was creating an imaginary world and so only had the real world to use as a frame. Sidney has all the previous literary depictions of Arcadia at his disposal, so he has the potential to create a fictional frame as well as a fictional green world. What he creates out of his sources is two versions

⁶ Harry Berger jnr., *Second World and Green World: Studies in Renaissance Fiction-Making* (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, 1988). The quotations given can be found on pp.11-12, pp.14-15, p.12, p.36. He points out the the *Utopia* is in three parts on p.26. For the value of the green world and its positive effects on the reader see p.36, for its dangers see p.30, p.35.

⁷ Berger, pp.33-4. Quentin Skinner also finds that the *Utopia* ‘embodies by far the most radical critique of humanism written by a humanist’ in *The Foundations of Modern Political Thought vol I: The Renaissance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978), p.256. Marina Leslie has also recently argued for the necessity of reading Renaissance utopias with reference to historical reality, in *Renaissance Utopias and the Problem of History* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1998), pp.5-6.

of Arcadia, one realistic and derived from reading Polybius and the other idealistic and derived from reading Sannazaro. Sidney can play his two different Arcadias off against one another, offering idealistic escape from reality but also undercutting the impossible idealism of the Sannazaran myth. The tension between these two Arcadias is an issue that Sidney seems to have still been working out as he wrote and rewrote the *Arcadia*, because the value he assigns to the Sannazaran world changes from his first draft of the story, now called the *Old Arcadia*, and the incomplete revision of that first draft that was published in 1590 and is now referred to as the *New Arcadia*.⁸ In the *Old Arcadia* the more realistic Arcadia frames the idealistic one as it opens and closes the work, but, as in More's *Utopia*, there is tension between the green world and its frame. In the *New Arcadia* Sidney's vision of the realm of Arcadia becomes more complicated as both the 'realistic' second world and the 'idealistic' green world seem to be destroyed by the bitter events of the third book. From reading the *Old Arcadia* only it would be possible to argue that it is the Polybian 'second world' vision of Arcadia that Sidney recommends to the reader as the perfect Arcadia. The *New Arcadia* complicates this reading and casts doubt on the notion that Arcadia could possibly be a perfect place as neither of the 'perfect' Arcadias offered to the reader is able to contain Cecropia's wickedness or Amphialus's passion. The *Old Arcadia* simply mocks Sannazaro's unrealistic pastoral landscape. The *New Arcadia* is a more thoughtful enquiry into the nature of Arcadia and whether it could be possible to create or imagine a perfect place.

⁸ The publication history of Sidney's *Arcadia* is a complex one. The *New Arcadia* is a rewrite that follows the basic story of the earlier draft with some new material added, but it was left unfinished at the time of Sidney's death. Yet it was the *New Arcadia* that was edited by the Countess of Pembroke and published as a fragment after her brother's death. The 'composite' *Arcadia*, the first three books of the *New Arcadia* with the last two books of the *Old Arcadia* added on in order to provide an ending, appeared in 1593. The *Old Arcadia* must have circulated in manuscript in Sidney's lifetime but it was quickly forgotten and not published until the twentieth century. The differences between the *Old* and *New Arcadias* have provided critics with many opportunities to speculate on Sidney's aims and intentions both in writing the work and in revising it.

Polybian Arcadia

It is clear from the moment that Musidorus arrives in Arcadia in the *New Arcadia* that it is a realistic Greek province. This is what Musidorus first sees when he arrives:

There were hills, which garnished their proud heights with stately trees; humble valleys, whose base estate seemed comforted with refreshing of silver rivers; meadows enamelled with all sorts of eye-pleasing flowers; thickets, which being lined with most pleasant shade, were witnessed so to by the cheerful deposition of many well-tuned birds; each pasture stored with sheep feeding with sober security, while the pretty lambs with bleating oratory craved the dams' comfort; here a shepherd's boy piping, as though he should never be old; there, a young shepherdess knitting and withal singing, and it seemed that her voice comforted her hands to work, and her hands kept time to her voice's music. As for the houses of the country (for many houses came under their eye), they were all scattered, no two being one by th' other, and yet not so far off as that it barred mutual succour – a show as it were of an accompanable solitariness, and of a civil wildness.⁹

The arrival in Arcadia represents a progression from the war-torn province of Laconia where Musidorus was originally shipwrecked. The realism of the war in Laconia is continued in Sidney's description of Arcadia. Arcadia looks to Musidorus like quite a nice place to live but it is not a magic realm nor a land cut off from the realities of work and warfare: the boy pipes 'as if' he should never be old but this conditional phrase actually reminds us of the realities of time and decay, proving that this Arcadia is not a timeless realm, the shepherdess who knits destroys the myth that there is no need to work in Arcadia, and above all this Arcadia borders on the 'wasted soil of

⁹ *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia (The New Arcadia)* ed. Victor Skretkovicz (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987), pp.10-11.

Laconia' (p.10), a land destroyed by war. When Musidorus's host Kalander describes the country to his guest, this is what he says:

This country, Arcadia, among all the provinces of Greece hath ever been had in singular reputation, partly for the sweetness of the air and other natural benefits, but principally for the well-tempered minds of the people . . . Even the muses seem to approve their good determination by choosing this country for their chief repairing place, and by bestowing their perfections so largely here that the very shepherds have their fancies lifted to so high conceits as the learned of other nations are content both to borrow their names and imitate their cunning (p.16).

Several important points can be drawn from Kalander's speech. He grants that Arcadia has a high reputation, which the reader knows to be true as it is a land that has already been much written about. He also grants that this reputation is partly for the land's natural beauty, acknowledging the frequency with which poets like Virgil and Sannazaro use Arcadia for its pastoral landscape. Arcadia's reputation for beauty is not wholly false. Neither is its reputation for poetry, as Kalander acknowledges the surprising skill of the Arcadian shepherds. But Kalander is not interested in natural beauty or poetry. He is interested in politics and government, so what pleases him most about the country is the docility of its people. He goes on to praise the people's obedience more explicitly when he says that Basilius is

a prince of sufficient skill to govern so quiet a country where the good minds of the former princes had set down good laws, and the well bringing-up of the people doth serve as a most sure bond to hold them (p.16).

Kalander's preference for talking about good government (or, in the story of Basilius's retreat he goes on to tell Musidorus, of questionable governmental

decisions and how to improve them) rather than poetry or natural beauty reflects Sidney's own priorities. He hardly mentions scenery at all when he is describing this realistic Arcadia. Kalander's house and garden is the setting that is described in detail in the early part of the romance, and that carries numerous connotations of Sidney's martial, protestant ideal that structure the reader's response to Kalander and are more than merely decorative. Kalander is a generous host, but not overly-magnificent or ostentatious as he knows that 'provision is the foundation of hospitality, and thrift the fuel of magnificence' (p.12). His house is like him: 'built of fair and strong stone' (p.12) but not ostentatious or uselessly fine. This thriftiness and moderation fits in with the beliefs of Sidney's Protestant circle of friends, and is opposed to the extravagance and decadence associated with Catholicism. Alastair Fowler believes that Kalander's house is partly modelled on the Countess of Pembroke's Wilton.¹⁰ Michael Leslie shows that Kalander's house has a specifically Palladian, Venetian architecture, as opposed to the more extravagant architectural styles favoured by the rest of Italy, and points out the similarities between the ideals of the 'anti-papal' Venetian Republic and Sidney's Protestant circle of friends.¹¹ The 'Polybian' Arcadia thus becomes associated with the 'Protestant' ideals of moderation, thriftiness, practicality and service (Kalander's house is serviceable, and he himself is keen to serve his country) rather than useless and empty magnificence. It is only in his Sannazaran 'green world' Arcadia that Sidney finds the time to describe the landscape in loving detail, presumably in deliberate imitation of Sannazaro himself. In fact, as Musidorus later points out to Pyrocles, lyrical praise of trees and grass is a suspicious sign of a deranged mind (p.52, quoted below).¹²

¹⁰ Alastair Fowler ed., *The Country House Poem: A Cabinet of Seventeenth-Century Estate Poems and Related Items* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1994), p.13.

¹¹ Michael Leslie, 'Spenser, Sidney, and the Renaissance Garden', *English Literary Renaissance* 22, (1992), 29-36.

¹² In this Sidney shows himself to hold the opposite point of view to Andrew Marvell, writing pastoral towards the end of the Renaissance period, who uses his lyrical praise of trees and natural beauty as a

Sidney's realism about Arcadia becomes clear. He does not think it is an idyllic green world but makes a real effort to imagine what this Greek province, even with its special attributes of musical shepherds and great scenic beauty, would really be like to live in. Hence his focus on government, and on the role of the people in preserving government, as Kalander raises the spectre of revolt, which does eventually take place, right from the beginning of the story. The phrase 'civil wildness' perfectly expresses the real nature of Sidney's Arcadia. 'Civil' reminds us of the need for laws and rules in any society, even in the supposedly pastoral Arcadia, and underpins Sidney's thematic concern with government. 'Wildness' reminds us that the poetic Arcadia does not exist. The real Arcadia is a primitive society where work is hard. The harsh conditions of real Arcadian life are described by Polybius, but Sidney makes some concession to the poetic myth in describing the landscape as cheerful although harsh, and its houses as companionable although far apart.

Sidney continues to stress the realism of his Arcadia by differentiating it from other, pastoral, Arcadias. The learned of other nations imitate Arcadian shepherds; Sannazaro uses his shepherds as disguises for himself and his literary friends, but Sidney's Arcadian shepherds are actually Arcadian shepherds. It is debatable where Sidney himself fits in to this dichotomy of literary shepherds and real ones, but his own persona in the text, Philisides, is certainly not a shepherd. Perhaps this is part of the gloomy pastoral recognition that nobody can become an Arcadian shepherd, it is an unconscious state of being that shepherds themselves do not recognise and outsiders recognise only to recognise their own separation from it. Walter R. Davis goes so far as to argue that the Arcadia's shepherds exist in the unfallen world and the

beneficial escape from the real world. Sidney and Musidorus, as we shall see, are suspicious of the desire to escape into a green world, and even suspect the motives of the person who sees an idyllic green world in the natural surroundings.

isolated and unhappy nobles in a fallen one.¹³ Paul Alpers has more recently argued along the same lines, that Sidney's aristocrats are isolated from one another but the shepherds have a community that softens their individual sufferings.¹⁴ Be that as it may, the point is that Sidney's shepherds are real shepherds and he is determined to imagine their lives as they might really have been, not to rely on the conventions of pastoral poetry. This resolution is stronger in the *New Arcadia* as their staged, seemingly literary pastorals are not transcribed. He tries to rationalise the shepherds' skill so that this detail, made so much of in literary pastorals, can be made to fit in with his own more realistic invention of Arcadia. Musidorus voices a doubt about their skill: 'But among many strange conceits you told me which have showed effects in your prince, truly even the last – that he should conceive such pleasure in shepherds' discourses – would not seem the least unto me' (pp.23-4). Kalander resolves the doubt: the shepherds are not common labourers but own their flocks (singing ability goes with wealth in the *Arcadia* – the courtiers repeatedly outshine the shepherds in the *Old Arcadia's* pastorals); and all the people of the country love poetry and continually practice it.¹⁵ Sidney's need to rationalise the more extravagant aspects of the Arcadian myth is clear. So too is his constant effort to imagine what the real Arcadia might have been like, always rejecting and questioning the poetic tradition. This attempt to imagine the real Greek province is often revived in later depictions of Arcadia.

Another instance of Arcadian civil wildness and the realistic depiction of the country is provided in the rebellion in the second book. 'Civil wildness' sounds like it

¹³ Davis, p.171. Judith Haber uses similar terms when she contrasts the shepherds' 'golden world' with the courtiers' 'fallen world', *Pastoral and the Poetics of Self-Contradiction: Theocritus to Marvell* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994), p.58.

¹⁴ Paul Alpers, *What is Pastoral?* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1997), p.121.

¹⁵ The musical education of the shepherds is made even stronger in the *Old Arcadia*, where they are actually 'brought up unto it', *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia (The Old Arcadia)*, ed. Jean Robertson (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1973), p.56.

might mean ‘civil war’ or ‘civil unrest.’ Even the Arcadians who live around Basilius’s lodge are not actually blissfully unconscious shepherds, but, through their proximity to the king, are aware of the affairs that their less naïve and more politically active compatriots engage in. In spite of the Arcadians’ well tempered minds and long tradition of obedience, Sidney never forgets that they might one day disobey and behave in a wild manner. In this understanding of the Arcadians’ vaunted virtue and obedience, Sidney recalls Polybius’s recognition that although Arcadia has ‘a very high reputation for virtue among the Greeks, due not only to their humane and hospitable character and usages, but especially to their piety to the gods’, it has also produced the race that ‘surpassed all other Greeks at this period in cruelty and wickedness.’¹⁶

The cross-section of society that he shows partaking in the rebellion adds to the impression of realism as it proves that the Arcadians are not all shepherds. Many of the rebels have distinctive trades: tailor, butcher, miller, farmer. Any society needs a cross section of skills if it is to survive, so that each member of the society can supply a need himself and have his needs supplied by others. Plato mentions this when he creates his ideal society in the *Republic*, and Sidney also knows it. Arcadia, like England and like Plato’s *Republic*, is a country with a social and political infrastructure; an aristocracy (Kalander and Philanax), a centralised government, an important international position (Euarchus, Duke of Macedon, visits Basilius in person because he appreciates how important it is for all of Greece that Arcadia has a strong government, *The Old Arcadia*, pp.357-8). As David Norbrook comments, ‘Sidney’s ‘feigned commonwealth’ of Arcadia is not just a timeless idyll but a state with a complex economy and social structure.’¹⁷ But the balance of power in the state

¹⁶ Polybius, *The Histories Volume II*, trans. W.R. Patton (London: William Heinemann, 1922), Book IV.20, p.349.

¹⁷ David Norbrook, *Poetry and Politics in the English Renaissance* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, second edition 2002), pp.85-6.

is precarious – in the neighbouring and not dissimilar province of Laconia the infrastructure of power breaks down completely as the helots revolt, emphasising the difficulty the ruling classes have in holding on to power. The involvement of the Arcadian Kalander and his son in Laconian affairs connects them with the troubles of the Laconian ruling class, and the peasants of Arcadia themselves here go on to revolt, an attempt that is put down by the efforts of Pyrocles as the rebellion in Laconia was.

Yet the country is not wholly wild either. It has been civilised to the extent of creating pastures for the sheep and organising small towns as centres of commerce where the tailor, butcher and miller can ply their trades. Pyrocles turns the complexity of Arcadian society to his advantage, diffusing the rebellion by asking the rebels to tell him what their grievances are. The population is so diverse that it cannot agree on its grievances:

for the artisans, they would have corn and wine set at a lower price, and bound to be kept so still; the ploughmen, vine-labourers, and farmers would none of that. The countrymen demanded that every man might be free in the chief towns – that could not the burgesses like of. The peasants would have the gentlemen destroyed; the citizens (especially such as cooks, barbers, and those that lived most on gentlemen) would but have them reformed. And of each side were like divisions, one neighbourhood beginning to find fault with another (p.284).

Aside from dispelling the myth that all Arcadians are shepherds, this diversity emphasises the need for strong government as it is impossible that a civilisation so complicated could run itself without some kind of authority and social structure.

It might seem paradoxical to offer a literary source for a realistic place, but this Arcadia, although realistically imagined, does also seem to be modelled on Polybius's account of Arcadia in his *Histories*. It is likely that Sidney had read Polybius.

Germaine Warkentin believes the *Histories* to have been in the library at Penshurst in Sidney's time based on her study of its catalogues.¹⁸ She also points out that Polybius is one of the historians Sidney mentions as essential reading in a letter to his friend Edward Denny in 1580.¹⁹ Sidney's indebtedness to Polybius has gone largely unremarked by scholars. Only one recent commentator on *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia*, Peter Lindenbaum, cites Polybius as a source for Sidney's Arcadia, and even he claims that Sidney's description of Arcadia 'owes more to Virgil's and Sannazaro's work than to, for instance, the presumably more accurate account Polybius provides of his native land in his *History*.'²⁰ But the details of Sidney's Arcadia everywhere correspond to Polybius's account of his home. The 'wildness' aspect of Sidney's 'civil wildness' can only come from Polybius as it is Polybius alone who stresses the harshness of Arcadian life:

the universal practice of personal manual labour in Arcadia, and in general the toilsomeness and hardship of the men's lives as well as the harshness of character resulting from the cold and gloomy atmospheric conditions usually prevailing in these parts.²¹

Elizabeth Dipple is a commentator who does observe the importance of Polybius as a model for Sidney's Arcadia, arguing that the more realistic Polybian landscape that he creates allows Sidney to 'scrutinize the viability of pastoral' and prove 'the impracticability of Arcadia.'²² Her idea that there is a 'realistic' Arcadia that

¹⁸ Germaine Warkentin, 'Sidney's Authors' in M.J.B. Allen, Dominic Baker-Smith and Arthur F. Kinney ed., *Sir Philip Sidney's Achievements* (New York: AMS Press, 1990), p.79.

¹⁹ Warkentin, p.79. The letter can be found in James Osborn, *Young Philip Sidney 1572 – 1577* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1972), pp.537-40 (the reference to Polybius is on p.539).

²⁰ Peter Lindenbaum, *Changing Landscapes: Anti-Pastoral Sentiment in the English Renaissance* (Athens, Georgia: The University of Georgia Press, 1986), p.24.

²¹ Polybius IV.21, p.351.

²² Elizabeth Dipple, 'Harmony and Pastoral in the *Old Arcadia*', *English Literary History* 35, (1968), 313. Her argument concerns the *Old Arcadia* but I think that Polybian influence is also evident in the *New*.

undermines the ‘poetic’ or ‘pastoral’ one is very similar to my own interpretation of the *Arcadia*. But the influence of Polybius clearly extends beyond the sphere of landscape as it has moral and social implications for Sidney’s conception of Arcadia as well. Landscape in this work is interconnected with its themes and politics, and Polybius’s account of Arcadia influences Sidney’s creation of the Arcadian state in some fundamental ways. Arcadia’s methods of government and education are suggested by Polybius. It was Polybius who first described the Arcadian musical education that was to capture the imagination of pastoral poets, which may explain why Sidney is content to keep this detail of the pastoral myth in his realistic country. Kalander tells Musidorus that the shepherds have special ability in music partly because they own their own flocks, a details that corresponds to Polybius’s ‘universal practice of personal manual labour’ amongst the Arcadians.²³ The thriftiness and hard work of the Arcadians, even those wealthy enough to own their flocks, also corresponds to the ideal of thrift, moderation, and service expressed in the architecture of Kalander’s house. Kalander says that the laws of the country have been set down by wise former princes and that makes it easy to govern; Polybius tells us that wise ‘forefathers’ devised this musical education and other laws ‘with the view of softening and tempering the stubbornness and harshness of nature.’²⁴ Hospitality is for Polybius one of the Arcadians’ chief virtues: ‘the Arcadian nation on the whole has a very high reputation for virtue among the Greeks, due not only to their humane and hospitable character and usages, but especially to their piety to the gods.’²⁵ Sidney often refers to this fabled hospitality. It is depicted in the figures of Kalander, Strephon and Klaius, commented on when the poor Menalcas entertains the disguised Musidorus (p.107), and invoked by Pyrocles to put down the revolt; ‘the law of hospitality (so long and

²³ Polybius IV.20, p.351.

²⁴ Polybius IV.20, p.349 and IV.21, p.353.

²⁵ Polybius IV.20, p.349.

holily observed among you)' (p.285). Basilius alone of all the Arcadians falls short of this native virtue by his refusal to allow visitors to his lodge.²⁶

More importantly, Polybius's understanding of Arcadia as a land that has produced a cruel and wicked race of people, as well as many pious and hospitable races, creates a sense of Arcadia's insecurity. The world of Sidney's *Arcadia* acquires a new moral depth and complexity if we bear Polybius's idea in mind as we read. Far from being a static golden world, Arcadia is a moral vacuum where either great virtue *or* great wickedness can be produced. In spite of its reputation for music and virtue, Arcadia is insecure and ready to fall. Once we understand that Arcadians are liable to corruption, we understand the underlying anxiety in Sidney's introduction to the country and its ruler:

a prince of sufficient skill to govern so quiet a country
where the good minds of the former princes had set down good
laws, and the well-bringing up of the people doth serve as a most
sure bond to hold them (p.16).

Arcadian virtue comes from without, from the 'good laws' that were made a long time ago and the people's custom of keeping them. Virtue is a habit but, as the example of the wicked race of the Cynaetheans reminds us, the habit can be broken. Basilius has already begun to alter his habits and turn his back on the Arcadian virtue of hospitality. Euarchus is aware of the possible political repercussions of Basilius's retirement and the falling-off of Arcadia that it entails: 'He saw the Asiatics of the one side, the Latins of the other, gaping for any occasion to devour Greece' (*Old Arcadia*, p.358). An invasion by the Latins is exactly what the Cynaetheans brought about in Polybius's day. Polybius's account of the Cynaethan's degeneration is paralleled by

²⁶ Piety, Polybius's other great Arcadian virtue, does not feature so prominently, however, possibly because Sidney wants to criticise Basilius's addiction to oracles.

the degeneration of Basilius and the Arcadian people that is only narrowly averted. Sidney is here borrowing the moral parable of Polybius's Arcadia as well as specific details about the Arcadians' musical skill. Polybius has influenced his moral perspective both on the land of Arcadia and his plot.

It is not necessarily paradoxical to find a literary source for Sidney's realistic Arcadia. Much depends on the nature of the literary source. Polybius is a historian and it is surely acceptable to research one's historical novel by reading history – in fact it would be more purely literary and historically irresponsible not to do any research. Lindenbaum has shown the accuracy of Sidney's Greek geography according to the best maps of his day.²⁷ Real history and geography are what separate Sidney's Arcadia from that of the poets. The *Arcadia* opens on a realistic land whose characteristics have been carefully deduced from Polybius. There is nothing extravagant or falsely poeticised about it. This is the Polybian frame that promises realism to the reader and will be used to undermine the poetic dream of Arcadia.

Sannazaran Arcadia

Yet almost immediately a competing green world vision of Arcadia is offered to the characters and the reader alike. A clear moment when the green world and its frame collide occurs early in the story, when Pyrocles, who is in love, and Musidorus, who is not, debate the beauty of Arcadia. Before Musidorus sees Pamela he can say, 'I marvel at the excessive praises you [Pyrocles] give to this country. In truth, it is not unpleasant; but yet, if you would return into Macedon, you should see either many

²⁷ Peter Lindenbaum, 'The Geography of Sidney's *Arcadia*', *Philological Quarterly* 63, (1984), 524-31.

heavens, or find this no more than earthly' (p.52). Is it possible that throughout the story the land of Arcadia is no more that that which Polybius described and that it is only the deluded eyes of lovers that see extraordinary beauty in the landscape? If this is the case then it is established right from the start that the idealistic Sannazaran vision of Arcadia that the inhabitants of the lodge try to create is false. Pyrocles's description of Basilius's retreat emphasises its unreality. It '*seems a pleasant picture of nature, with lovely lightsomeness and artificial shadows*' (p.85, my italics). His first meal there is served in a garden arbour featuring a water sculpture, a moving table, and animatronic birds (p.86). As Michael Leslie points out, hydraulically powered moving statues were features of decadent Italian garden art that were viewed with suspicion by English writers.²⁸ The delightful but artificial Arcadia that Basilius attempts to create, following the poets', especially Sannazaro's, descriptions of the country, is a target for irony and ridicule throughout the *Arcadia*.

It is worth pausing here to establish what kind of Arcadia Sannazaro created that apparently provoked Sidney into rewriting and correcting him. For Sannazaro must be the source of Sidney's title. Sannazaro's *Arcadia*, first published in 1502, was already old by the time Sidney started to write, but it was still popular and a new edition had in fact appeared in 1578. Sannazaro himself almost single-handedly created the popular perception of Arcadia as an idyllic pastoral setting. This can be proved by a comparison of his earliest titles. The 1502, pirated, edition of Sannazaro has the full title '*Un libro pastorale nominato Arcadio.*' The description 'libro pastorale' needs to be added as 'Arcadia' alone does not give the reader a sufficient idea of what the work will be about. By 1504, and in all subsequent editions, *Arcadia* is all the title Sannazaro needs. The popularity of his work means that his Arcadia has become the definition of Arcadia that everyone knows. Victor Skretkovicz, in his

²⁸ Leslie, p.22.

introduction to the *New Arcadia*, points out the close connections between the *New Arcadia* and Montemayor's *Diana*, which is also set in Arcadia (p.xix). But Montemayor's influence on Sidney is mainly observable in plot details, not in landscape, as Montemayor too borrows his setting from Sannazaro and does not describe his woods and villages in any great detail as plot is what really interests him. It is Sannazaro, the only author before Sidney to entitle his work 'Arcadia,' who creates the idyllic pastoral setting and who can therefore be challenged by an author who undermines that idyll.

Sannazaro's Arcadia is distinguished by its beautiful natural setting, often described in great detail. Sannazaro's landscapes are not allegorical – the catalogues of trees and flowers are there for their own sakes. His aim is literary imitation and many of the *Arcadia*'s scenes and techniques are recognisable from Petrarch, pastoral poems, and classical epic (the catalogues of trees belong in this category), but a beautiful and lovingly described landscape is an undeniable by-product of this aim. It's a strange fact that the beautiful landscape of Arcadia, considering that it is meant to be one of the country's main attractions, is not often described by its authors. A token *locus amoenus* is usually found somewhere in a pastoral, but the critic would look in vain for a distinctive Arcadian topography or even for distinctively Arcadian flora and fauna. After Sannazaro, nobody seems to want to describe the Arcadian countryside in lush detail. Perhaps they felt it had already been done well enough by him.

The situation that then arises is that, although it is a given that Arcadia is a beautiful place, specific descriptions of its beauty are surprisingly rare. It also means that all subsequent writers, including Sidney, are reliant on Sannazaro's description of the Arcadian landscape, even when their aim is to call the poetic myth of Arcadia into

question. Comparison of Sannazaro's landscape with Sidney's reveals the extent of Sidney's borrowings. This is Sannazaro's opening scene:

There lies on a summit of Parthenius, a not inconsiderable mountain of pastoral Arcadia, a pleasant plateau, not very spacious in extent, since the situation of the place does not permit it, but so filled with tiny and deep green herbage that, if the wanton herds with their greedy nibbling did not pasture there, one could always find green grasses in that place. There, if I am not mistaken, there are perhaps a dozen or fifteen trees of such unusual and exceeding beauty that any who saw them would judge that Mistress Nature had taken special delight in shaping them. These trees, standing somewhat apart and arranged in non-artificial order, with their rarity ennoble beyond measure the natural beauty of the place. There without any gnarl is seen the fir-tree, wholly straight, born to endure the perils of the deep; and with more open branches the sturdy oak and the lofty ash and the most pleasant plane tree there dispread themselves, covering with their shade no little part of the rich and beautiful meadow. And there with shorter leaf is the tree with which Hercules was wont to be crowned, into whose trunk the wretched daughters of Clymene were transformed. On one side may be seen the knotty chestnut, the leafy box tree, and with its pointed leaves the towering pine laden with the hardest fruits: on the other the shady beech, the incorruptible linden and the fragile tamarisk, together with the oriental palm, the welcome and honored reward of the victors. But in their midst, near a limpid fountain, soars toward heaven a straight cypress, a most accurate imitator of the lofty obelisks, into which not only Cyparissus but, if one may say it, Apollo himself would not disdain to endure a transformation.

Nor are the trees of which I speak so discourteous that with their shade they altogether forbid the rays of the sun to enter the pleasant little grove; on the contrary, so graciously do they admit them in diverse places that rare is that tree that does not receive from them the greatest invigoration: and though it be at all times a pleasant spot, in the flowery spring more than in all the rest of the year it is most pleasing.²⁹

²⁹ *Arcadia and Piscatorial Eclogues* trans. Ralph Nash (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1966), pp.30-31. As there is no recent critical edition of Sannazaro in the original Italian, this translation is the best scholarly text available.

In the *Arcadia* the place where the Eclogues are held seems to be modelled on this passage:

It was indeed a place of delight, for through the midst of it there ran a sweet brook which did both hold the eye open with her azure streams, and yet seek to close the eye with the purling noise it made upon the pibble-stones it ran over; the field itself being set in some places with roses, and in all the rest constantly preserving a flourishing green. The roses added such a ruddy show unto it, as though the field were bashful at his own beauty. About it, as if it had been to enclose a theatre, grew such a sort of trees as either excellency of fruit, stateliness of growth, continual greenness, or poetical fancies have made at any time famous; in most part of which there had been framed by art such pleasant arbours that, one answering another, they became a gallery aloft, from tree to tree, almost round about, which below gave a perfect shadow, a pleasant refuge then from the choleric look of Phoebus (p.111).

The geographical features of the flowery plain surrounded by trees, shade, and some kind of natural water feature, whether fountain or river, are common to both passages although Sannazaro's is described in more loving detail. This is one of the few descriptions of the landscape that Sidney gives in the *Arcadia* and it is obviously very close to Sannazaro's landscape. But the natural beauty of Arcadia is not what Sidney wishes to attack. Kalandar was willing to grant the land's great natural beauty, but both he and Sidney agree that natural beauty should not be everything that a land bases its reputation on. Sidney can accept Sannazaro's landscape. It is in the lives of his Arcadian inhabitants that he challenges Sannazaro's vision.

Sannazaro's characters are a group of shepherds who spend their time roaming the landscape, looking after their sheep and singing songs to one another. The narrative alternates between prose sections and eclogues, a structure that Sidney initially

adopted for his own *Arcadia*. But Sidney subordinated the eclogues to the prose sections that contain the plot. Sannazaro uses the prose sections to introduce the songs, which seem to be the real point of his *Arcadia*. When shepherds have fallen out, or if one shepherd is feeling sad, songs are used to reharmonise the group. Alpers considers the shepherds' use of song to ease and share suffering to be one of the main features of Sannazaro's *Arcadia*, but argues that Sidney is critical of this easy use of song to solve problems, especially in his depictions of the courtiers for whom song does not work to mitigate suffering.³⁰ Jane Tylus is even more critical, arguing that the shepherds can only achieve their aim of using song to enforce community by ignoring the actual content of the song, so songs about grief can give pleasure to the hearers who do not acknowledge or offer to comfort the singer's own grief.³¹ She comments that 'the community achieves its identity only by interpreting personal loss as communal gain.'³² As these critics point out, Sidney targets Sannazaro's easy resolution of problems and shows that life is more complicated than the pastoral genre allows for. Such criticism of Sannazaro is of course completely unfair as it misses the point. Sannazaro is not trying to be psychologically realistic. He is trying to create a work of literary allusion. Ralph Nash's introduction provides a reading of the *Arcadia* that stresses literary allusion as its primary aim.³³ More recently, Thomas Hubbard has considered Sannazaro as primarily an imitator of Virgil.³⁴ He is trying to delight the reader with the idyllic setting and does not claim that it is realistic. Because his *Arcadia* is primarily a set of pastoral eclogues, he has not tried to imagine

³⁰ Alpers, p.115, p.113, p.123. Haber takes a similar view of the limitations of the rewards and comforting powers of songs for aristocrats, as on pp.58-9 where she argues that victory in a singing contest brings Musidorus no pleasure as what he wants is success in love.

³¹ Jane Tylus, 'Silencing Parthenope: The Origins of Culture in Sannazaro's *Arcadia*' in Mario A. Di Cesare ed., *Reconsidering the Renaissance* (Binghamton, New York: Centre for Medieval and Early Renaissance Studies, 1992), p.117.

³² Tylus, p.119.

³³ *Arcadia and Piscatorial Eclogues*, pp.23-5, especially p.25.

³⁴ Thomas K. Hubbard, *The Pipes of Pan: Intertextuality and Literary Filiation in the Pastoral Tradition from Theocritus to Milton* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1998), pp.256-64.

what it would really be like to live there. Eclogues do not have to tell the whole truth. They have always been allowed to select the most pleasing features of real life.

But whatever good reasons there are for his artistic choices, Sannazaro's understanding of Arcadia is partial and inadequate. And the problem is that many people seem to have taken it seriously and really believe that Arcadian shepherds lead idyllic lives. It is these people that Sidney satirises in his *Arcadia*. He demolishes the Sannazaran vision by showing that it is an inadequate conception of any real country, especially Arcadia, which, as Polybius shows, has special problems of its own that arise from the harshness of the environment. But he emphasises from the start that the Sannazaran vision of Arcadia is one that is specially created by people, mainly lovers, who want to shut their eyes to reality and to live out the Sannazaran idyll.

Basilus is the character who is most determined to create a false green world. He consistently sees a Sannazaran illusion where everybody else sees Polybian reality. His treatment of Dametas is characteristic of his false outlook. He thinks that Dametas is a simple but wise and virtuous rustic, of the kind that he is used to reading about in pastoral poetry; Kalander considers him 'the most arrant, doltish clown that I think ever was' (p.17). Kalander explains how Basilus has deceived himself over Dametas: 'His [Dametas's] silence grew wit, his bluntness integrity, his beastly ignorance virtuous simplicity' (p.19). Basilus consistently judges people romantically instead of realistically – he assumes that his wife and eldest daughter are virtuous and obedient but Gynecia tries to commit adultery and in the *Old Arcadia* Pamela rebels against his authority by eloping with Musidorus, he believes that the disguised Musidorus is a shepherd even though he performs an obviously heroic act when he single handedly defeats the lion, and most foolishly of all, he believes that

the disguised Pyrocles is an Amazon woman (although this was a mythical race even for the ancient Greeks) and then falls in love with him.

Unfortunately for Basilius, the idyllic landscape and secluded pastoral life that he attempts to create are constantly being undermined, first by the appearance of Phalantus and the jousting, then by Cecropia's lion and bear that interrupt the Eclogues, next by the citizens' revolt and finally by Cecropia kidnapping his daughters. Basilius is endlessly besieged by the very political and amorous complications that he had hoped to avoid in his retreat. Even a temporary retreat into an unproblematic green world is denied him. However, the reason that he cannot escape into the green world of Sannazaro's *Arcadia* is that his Sannazaran vision of the world is seriously flawed. The Sannazaran Arcadia only exists in Basilius's mind. The other characters all find his behaviour confusing, alienating and inconvenient in varying degrees. Basilius is the only character who believes that retreat is the surest means of avoiding the troubles predicted by the oracle. Everybody else is sure that trouble will follow from the retreat.

Basilius's Sannazaran outlook proves contagious. Musidorus and Pyrocles abandon their heroic responsibilities to enter his pastoral retreat for the love of his daughters and they too start to see Arcadia in an unrealistically Sannazaran light. From knowing that the grass in Arcadia is no greener than it is anywhere else, they start to see it as the most beautiful place in the world. They abandon their heroic careers in order to seduce their host's daughters. Musidorus telling his story in the third person to Pamela in the presence of Mopsa takes courage by 'remembering in myself that as well the soldier dieth which standeth still as he that gives the bravest onset' (p.133), but the military metaphor only exposes the gap between what Musidorus is really doing – telling a story to ladies – and what he really ought to be doing. Every second he

spends telling tales in Arcadia he is not acting like a hero. We also learn from Pyrocles's tale of Zelmane in the *New Arcadia* that the princes have never been in love before. It is Arcadia that has this effect upon them and the effect is heightened by the leisure and irresponsibility they are able to indulge in at Basilius's lodge.

Basilius shows himself to be aware that leisure is directly related to falling in love: 'these young companions make themselves believe they love at the first liking of a likely beauty, loving because they will love for want of other business' (p.91).

Although they are no longer 'young companions', Basilius and his wife Gynecia both fall in love with the disguised Pyrocles 'for want of other business.' Gynecia connects her love for Pyrocles with their retreat:

For nothing else did my husband take this strange resolution to live so solitarily, for nothing else have the winds delivered this strange guest to my country, for nothing else have the destinies reserved my life to this time, but that only I, most wretched I, should become a plague to myself, and a shame to womankind (p.120).

Presumably Gynecia would find it easier to resist her passion for her daughter's suitor if she were supported by the business and protocol of the court. The solitary Sannazaran life that Basilius is determined to create only increases Gynecia's chances of falling in love. The moral is clear: when you live in the real Arcadia it is dangerous to indulge in a pastoral fantasy.

Basilius's inability to see through the falsely idealistic Arcadia that he creates at the lodge brings disaster upon his family and his kingdom. Perhaps it is significant that the princesses are lured away to Cecropia's ambush under the pretence of watching a pastoral entertainment, suggesting that the pastoral ideal can be manipulated by the unscrupulous for their own ends. As the disguised Musidorus has already

demonstrated, in Arcadia it pays to be suspicious of any stranger who turns up claiming to be a shepherd or shepherdess. Most Arcadians are not shepherds, but there is enough confusion of the ideal with the real in the minds of their hearers for Cecropia's ladies' claims to seem plausible. As a creator of a naively idyllic and Sannazaran Arcadia, Basilius is different from Sidney himself, who has been able to see through the poetic myth and imagine a real country with its own political system and its own problems. The reason why Sidney chose to use Arcadia as his setting becomes clear. It is because Arcadia is a place that has already been described in more than one way by several authors. Arcadia already has two literary traditions that can be contrasted and used to undermine one another. This mocking of the poets' Arcadia, best represented by Sannazaro, is a constantly recurring feature of the English Arcadia. Any full-scale literary depiction of Arcadia (vacuous pastorals aside) enters into this tradition of an ideal place that is just waiting to be undermined and shown to be unreal. As Lindenbaum shows in *Changing Landscapes*, the pastoral always carries the seeds of the antipastoral within itself. Tension between Polybius and Sannazaro permeates the English Arcadia. Sannazaro's Arcadia is the one explicitly invoked, but Polybius, the realistic and anti-idealistic, is always there waiting to deflate the poetic ideal. The flaws in the ideal can always be shown up through the attempt to imagine what it would be like to live in a real Arcadia. This level of realism, imagining what Berger would call a second world, that is particularly strong in Sidney but is also continued by later authors, means that Arcadia is much closer to utopia than is normally recognised. It is not accurate to see Arcadia as the green world and utopia as the second world. Arcadia, in Sidney's version, contains its own green world and therefore has to be seen as a complex (and revisable) second world in its own right.

Balancing the Arcadias

But this model of Sidney's two Arcadias competing against one another, with the Polybian reality eventually completely undermining the Sannazaran ideal, is a little simplistic and is complicated by the way Sidney created, and particularly how he revised and recreated, his idealised Arcadia. The destruction of Basilius's Sannazaran world is of particular interest as the way it is destroyed changes from the *Old Arcadia* to the *New*, suggesting that Sidney's opinion of its value had changed too. The *Old Arcadia* is a fairly straightforward parody of the poets' Arcadia. Basilius is easily deluded into believing that Pyrocles is an Amazon, Musidorus is a shepherd and Dametas is an asset to the royal household. He believes that the shepherds live charmed lives, takes no interest in the lives of those subjects of his who are not shepherds, and passes his days inventing songs and believing himself in love. The Sannazaran delusion becomes more insidious and dangerous when it also corrupts the princes and encourages them to deviate from their heroic paths. It can come as a shock to the reader when the princes are suddenly put on trial and for the first time become aware that they are guilty of serious crimes. The leisured irresponsibility of the lodge has impaired their judgement and that of the reader. But once everyone becomes aware of the dangerous falseness of Basilius's Arcadia, it is easy for Sidney to put an end to his pastoral vision. Basilius wakes up, understands the oracle, learns of everything that had been taking place right under his nose at the lodge (with the exception of Gynecia's passion for Pyrocles that he never discovers), pardons the princes and arranges the marriages. The Sannazaran vision breaks down and there is a

scary moment for the princes while Euarchus reasserts moral authority, but in the end no harm comes to anyone and it is beneficial that the Sannazaran delusion is over. Everyone learns a lesson of some kind, and they retreat back to the Polybian frame for their Sannazaran experiment that opened and now closes the story. The Polybian vision of Arcadia is not questioned or destroyed. It is simply a frame for the internal green world. Sidney achieves his aim of mocking Sannazaro and he offers his own more realistic version of Arcadia to put in place of the poetic ideal.

The *New Arcadia* is more complicated. Of course it is difficult to speculate on how the *New Arcadia* would have ended. It certainly opens along the same lines as the earlier draft, and although new material is added to the first two books this does not affect the essential story of Pyrocles and Musidorus's courtship of the Arcadian princesses. Michael McCanles points out that Sidney does introduce the same oracle, that seems to dictate the plot, into the *New Arcadia* and argues that this is a sign that Sidney intended to stick to his original plot.³⁵ Philanax's second visit to the oracle does confirm the original plot: '[Basilius] should keep on his solitary course till both Philanax and Basilius fully agreed in understanding the former prophecy' (p.457). But the kidnap and siege of the third book are a departure from the original plot, and events become so bitter and bloody that it is difficult to see how the Sannazaran ideal could ever have been reinstated, even in order to be destroyed in the fifth book. The *New Arcadia* becomes so bitter that it is not just the Sannazaran ideal that is destroyed, but the framing Polybian ideal too.

For Sidney's Polybian vision, although more realistic than Sannazaro's Arcadia, is still an ideal.³⁶ Polybius described the Arcadian climate as 'cold and gloomy,' but

³⁵ Michael McCanles, *The Text of Sidney's Arcadian World* (Durham, North Carolina, and London: Duke University Press, 1989), p.142.

³⁶ In this suggestion my reading of the landscapes of the *Arcadia* differs from Dipple's. She considers the 'Polybian' Arcadia to be a realistic world used to undermine and mock the more pastoral, poetic vision of Arcadia. Lindenbaum's 'anti-pastoral' argument is essentially similar. But 'realistic' may not be the best term to describe Sidney's 'Polybian' Arcadia as this is just as much of an ideal for Sidney as

Sidney's Arcadia is warm and sunny.³⁷ Perhaps this discrepancy arises because Sidney wants to follow Sannazaro's vision of Arcadia for the lodge scenes, or simply because he needs warm weather for his story (otherwise the climate would not reflect the overheated imaginations of the lovers, and it would be impossible to swim in the river or watch outdoor performances), or even as a result of his geographical accuracy: the climate of Greece seems warm from an English perspective. But it does hint at the fact that Sidney has used the elements he found in Polybius's account to imagine the best Arcadia he could. This can also be seen in his hopeful yoking of 'civil' to 'wildness.' Arcadia is a wild country, but in his imagination it is tamed and civilised. It is an ideal commonwealth, ruled over by a king who, although not wise, is loved by his people and continues to rule by the wise laws that his ancestors laid down. It has had a long time of peace, and the people are obedient. Sidney's Arcadia, as Kalander describes it to Musidorus, is the perfect state. Kalander and Philanax, the wise, virtuous, obedient counsellors of Basilius, are Sidney's perfect courtiers. Philanax possesses another important qualification, as in addition to his wisdom and obedience, he is not afraid to speak his mind to his sovereign. He writes Basilius a letter advising him against his determination to live in retreat at the lodge. Sidney wrote Elizabeth I a letter advising her against the marriage with the French prince Anjou that she seemed determined on.³⁸ That Philanax and Kalander act the way Sidney himself acted suggests that these virtuous characters are his ideals, and the role models he offers the reader.

the 'Sannazaran' Arcadia that he mocks. More's *Utopia* is a useful analogy – the ideal commonwealth of Utopia is still an ideal even though it could not be accused of pastoralism. Sidney's *Arcadia*, particularly the *New Arcadia*, might be more accurately considered as a mediation between two different literary models of the country, not as a use of 'realism' to undercut a pastoral ideal.

³⁷ *The Histories of Polybius*, IV.20, p.351.

³⁸ Renee Pigeon discusses the possible relationship between Sidney's protest over the French match and the *Arcadia* in '“An Odious Marriage with a Stranger”: Sidney's *Arcadias* and the French Match', *English Language Notes* 31, (1993), 28-40. Katherine Duncan-Jones asserts that in Philanax's advice to Basilius Sidney 'is clearly echoing his own recently written *Letter*' *Sir Philip Sidney: Courtier Poet* (London: Penguin, 1991), p.178.

Sidney's *Arcadia* is an ideal, although it is not the poets' ideal. It is not Sannazaro's idyllic landscape where there is no need to work and no mention of society or government, but it is Sidney's ideal of the perfect Protestant state: a happy, well-governed, disciplined, active community supervised by ideal lords like Kalander and Philanax. His *Arcadia* is very similar to More's island of *Utopia*. They are both imaginary ideal communities, where almost every detail of daily life has been thought out by the author. The only differences are that *Arcadia* has sources where *Utopia* is wholly imagined, and Sidney chose to recommend his ideal through a romance plot that satirises the poets' *Arcadia* instead of a traveller's tale.

Sidney's ideal state recurs in the description of Helen of Corinth's government of Corinth:

she using so strange and yet so well-succeeding a temper that she made her people (by peace) warlike, her courtiers (by sports) learned, her ladies (by love) chaste; for, by continual martial exercises without blood, she made them perfect in that bloody art; her sports were such as carried riches of knowledge upon the stream of delight; and such the behaviour both of herself and her ladies as builded their chastity, not upon waywardness, but by choice of worthiness: so as it seemed that court to have been the marriage place of love and virtue (pp.253-4).

This is an even closer image of his ideal England as it shares some specific features with Elizabeth's England: the wise unmarried queen, the long peace and the martial exercises. David Norbrook points out the importance of jousting tournaments at Elizabeth's court, and the prominence of Sidney and his family in these courtly displays.³⁹ In the *Old Arcadia*, this ideal is allowed to stand unchallenged. The green world is created and destroyed but the underlying 'real' Arcadian ideal remains intact as a counterpoint to the Sannazaran vision. But in the *New Arcadia* the Polybian ideal

³⁹ Norbrook, p.95.

too is destroyed. Basilius's own family rebels against him, civil war breaks out, the gallant court pastime of jousting becomes fierce single combats, Philanax becomes ruthless in the quarrel and resists his own better impulse towards mercy when he kills Amphialus's page in revenge for the death of his brother. Good government and virtuous courtiership are forgotten in the bitter combat that breaks out. But why are Arcadia's problems so much more serious in the *New Arcadia*, and why is the ideal state of the Polybian Arcadia suddenly inadequate to prevent civil war?

I think the answer is that the target of the *New Arcadia* has changed. The creator of problems in the *Arcadia* is no longer Sannazaran idealism, which is easy to destroy and replace with Polybian idealism, but love. Musing upon his new-found delight in singing, Pyrocles wonders what has caused it, 'whether it be the nature of this clime to stir up poetical fancies, or rather as I think, of love' (p.80). The suggestion that it is something in Arcadia itself that inspires poetry in others is a play with the Sannazaran ideal, but Kalander has already rationalised the skill of the Arcadians themselves and Pyrocles is right that it is love, not Arcadia, that has made him a musician. Love is what the Sannazaran green world encourages. Apart from Pyrocles and Musidorus, we have already seen its effects on Gynecia and Basilius, and Amphialus is in the green world space of the lodge when it is first revealed that he loves Philoclea. In the *Old Arcadia* love is easily channelled into marriage where appropriate, or dissolved in the cases of Gynecia and Basilius, when the Sannazaran vision is destroyed. But in Amphialus the effects of love cannot be dissolved and he is forced by the violence of his passion to continue in a civil war that goes against all his better instincts. The same thing happens to Helen of Corinth, who leaves her well governed kingdom for the love of Amphialus, and to Erona, who ends up a captive of Artaxia when she leaves the government of her kingdom to her unworthy husband Antiphilus. In the

New Arcadia love is a much more serious malady and its effects can be much more destructive. And once unleashed, as in the case of Amphialus, or Erona, who can never stop loving Antiphilus, it is impossible to contain. If Sidney's *Arcadia* was originally written to criticise the easy resolutions of Sannazaro, as Alpers suggests, the *New Arcadia* in its turn seems to criticise the easy resolutions of the *Old*.

The greater destructiveness of love in the *New Arcadia* is one reason why the Polybian ideal is inadequate to cope with it. But the fault may also lie in the ideal itself, which has no place for love. In the *Old Arcadia*, Euarchus is the character who most strongly represents Sidney's Polybian ideal and who reinstates that ideal by his actions in the princes' trial. But Euarchus is not perfect. As Bi-qi Beatrice Lei points out in a recent article demonstrating the structural misogyny of the *Arcadia*, Euarchus does not understand the concept of marrying for love. His own marriage was very brief and made for political reasons, and he arranged a political marriage for his sister. He would have married his son and nephew to Basilius's daughters for political reasons whether they were in love or not. For him 'marriage functions as a means to reinforce male friendships and to form alliances.'⁴⁰ His justice at the trial involves suppressing and imprisoning Basilius's wife and daughters. 'Since a woman-free household, as practised by Euarchus, is an impracticable ideal, women are to be silenced, imprisoned, and commodified, so their influences can be minimized.'⁴¹ Euarchus, like Musidorus before he has seen Pamela, is wary of ever leaving his male, martial activities. Love is 'the very first down step to all wickedness,' and must be avoided by the continual practice of virtuous male pursuits (p.71). Musidorus and Euarchus's words, as Lei points out, reveal a fear of women and of women's ability to come between male duties and friendships (Pyrocles has left Musidorus in order to be

⁴⁰ Bi-qi Beatrice Lei, 'Relational Antifeminism in Sidney's *Arcadia*', *Studies In English Literature* 41, (2001), p.35.

⁴¹ Lei, p.36.

near Philoclea).⁴² But the *New Arcadia* has a lot of praise for women, particularly in the depictions of Pamela and Philoclea's virtue in their captivity. The Polybian ideal, Euarchus's ideal, that denies women any value, must be seen to be flawed.

In fact, it is too long an adherence to the Polybian male ideal that eventually destroys it in the *New Arcadia*. Amphialus is loyal to his friend, who loves Helen, and will not accept Helen's offered love. He puts the claims of friendship above those of love. But then when he does fall in love he is unable to cope with it and destruction follows. Pyrocles is more sympathetic to his first experience of love in the Zelamne episode, so is better able to become a lover in the Arcadian green world. Argalus is a great knight who has fallen in love, married, and retired from his martial exploits. His married life is blissful, he and Parthenia '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 never bred satiety; he ruling because she would obey – or rather, because she would obey, she therein ruling' (p.372). Yet he easily agrees to return to battle at Basilius's request, in spite of Parthenia's unanswered objection that, being married, he is no longer at the time of life at which martial exploits are appropriate: '*Then* was it time for you to follow these adventures when you adventured nobody but yourself and were nobody's but your own' (p.373, my italics). Argalus is killed by Amphialus and Parthenia commits suicide by challenging Amphialus to a duel she cannot win. It does seem that Parthenia is right. There is a time for male exploits and obligations, but there is a time for marriage too. Euarchus would not understand that. His wife died shortly after his son was born and he carried on with his war. The Polybian ideal is flawed because it rejects love and is therefore, appropriately, destroyed by it.

⁴² Lei, pp.28-9.

Love is precisely what the Sannazaran ideal encourages. In the *New Arcadia*, as Berger argued for More's *Utopia*, neither of the lands depicted is wholly perfect or wholly without value. Tension is created by their interplay and the reader has to recognise and interpret sarcasm and find the moral of the story somewhere between the two extremes it depicts. The Sannazaran Arcadia is not wholly without value. A reading of the *Arcadia* that values its green world as well as its Polybian frame is at odds with the old view of Sidney as the author of a narrowly Protestant ideal, taking into account the association of Kalander's Polybian ideal with Protestantism, and the extravagance of Basilius's Sannazaran ideal with Catholicism.⁴³ But recent criticism has complicated that old view of Sidney by stressing the elements of the aristocrat as well as the Protestant in his background. Robert Matz neatly defines the differences between the Protestant and courtly outlooks:

These middle-class Protestants stressed the value of discipline and austerity, often in direct opposition to courtly celebration and expenditure, which they associated with licentious pleasure. To the courtly aristocrat, however, such pleasure was a signifier of status; and criticism of this pleasure constituted an attack on that status.⁴⁴

Matz goes on to argue that the *Defence of Poetry*, that was probably written in response to a zealously Protestant attack on poetry, is an attempt to synthesize Sidney's Protestantism with his courtly pastimes. Debora Shuger has argued for a similar tension between Protestant and aristocratic values in the *Old Arcadia*, with the princes' behaviour at the lodge aligning them on the side of aristocratic pleasure

⁴³ For an example of a strictly protestant view of Sidney, see Andrew D. Weiner in *Sir Philip Sidney and the Poetics of Protestantism: A Study of Contexts* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1978), who argues that the *Old Arcadia* 'presents a distinctly unflattering view of humanity based largely on sixteenth-century Protestant conceptions of human nature, here made even more dark by the absence, for the most part, of the workings of grace on Sidney's "pagan" stage', p.52.

⁴⁴ Robert Matz, *Defending Literature in Early Modern England: Renaissance Literary Theory in Social Context* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), p.59.

against Protestant virtue, and she too uncovers this tension in Sidney's use of his literary models.⁴⁵ Even Jonathan Gibson, who has recently argued that all of Sidney's literary works are attempts to establish a Protestant and 'anti-courtierly' poetic, agrees that Pyrocles, Musidorus and Amphialus have problematic 'courtierly' traits that undermine the virtuous Protestant ethic of the *Arcadia*, although he would disagree about the value that ought to be assigned to the courtier and the green world.⁴⁶

There is a growing body of opinion that the courtly or aristocratic ethos, as well as the well-documented Protestant one, is fundamental to understanding Sidney's work. David Norbrook has shown that although Sidney in the *Arcadia* is critical of absolute monarchy and his views are comparable to those of his Protestant friends, he is also nervous about 'Puritan' absolute democracy.⁴⁷ Norbrook's study also suggests that Sidney's position as sincere Protestant is complicated by his other position as privileged aristocrat, and offers a historical context for the re-evaluation of love in the *New Arcadia* in the fact that Puritans in the 1570s demanded severer punishments for sexual misconduct that clashed with the more tolerant views of the traditional aristocracy.⁴⁸ The aristocratic ethos of leisure and pleasure is in the *Arcadia* associated with the Sannazaran world created at Basilius's lodge. Re-evaluating the importance of pleasure and leisure to Sidney means re-evaluating the importance of the green world. The balancing of aristocratic and narrowly Protestant claims in the *Arcadia* translates into the balancing of the Sannazaran and Polybian landscapes that are respectively associated with these lifestyles. This balancing act was also one that Sidney had to perform in his real life, as an aristocrat and poet (and, if we can believe

⁴⁵ Debora Shuger, 'Castigating Livy: The Rape of Lucretia and the *Old Arcadia*', *Renaissance Quarterly* 51, (1998), 526-48.

⁴⁶ Jonathan Gibson, 'Sidney's *Arcadias* and Elizabethan Courtiership', *Essays in Criticism* 52, (2002), 36-55, esp. pp.41-2.

⁴⁷ Norbrook, pp.88-90.

⁴⁸ Norbrook, p.90.

Astrophil and Stella, a lover), but also a Protestant with a zeal for public and military service.⁴⁹

The green world is of value because it encourages and supports love, and disaster strikes when love is unleashed in the Polybian world, associated with duty, martial valour and the Protestant work ethic, because it does not have any place for it. The green world seems to be a necessary, although temporary, complement to the Polybian world around it. As Berger argues, the green world is a valuable retreat for the politically-active philosopher, as long as he does not want to stay there forever.

Another case that proves the value of the green world is that of storytelling.

Musidorus is criticised for telling tales to ladies instead of being out in the world and fighting for good causes (above). Sidney too suffered his share of criticism for his

retired life at Wilton where, according to some sources, he began to write the

Arcadia.⁵⁰ Fiction and stories are a product of leisure, and a good Protestant should be too busy working to have any leisure time. As Brian Vickers has shown, the retired life of *otium*, far from being a Renaissance ideal, was held in deep suspicion.⁵¹

⁴⁹ Sidney's very Protestantism can be called into question. Katherine Duncan-Jones suggests that Sidney may have been a 'discreet Catholic fellow-traveller' for a few years, including during the time he was writing the *Old Arcadia*, p.127, and points out his sympathy to a Catholic correspondent and his friendship with Catholic courtiers in the early 1580s, p.127, p.198. Sidney's association with his uncle, the Earl of Leicester's, 'forward Protestant' circle may have been for political rather than religious reasons, and indeed Leicester himself may not have chosen this position for religious reasons alone. Duncan-Jones points out that both Leicester and Sidney's father protected the Jesuit Edmund Campion, p.126, and Simon Adams points out that in his own area of clerical patronage, although he was clearly a Protestant, Leicester encouraged more moderate rather than zealously puritan ministers, *Leicester and the Court: Essays on Elizabethan Politics* (Manchester, Manchester University Press, 2002), p.5. For Sidney's inclination for public service, and his family's similar expectation, see Osborn p.3, p.5.

⁵⁰ For evidence that the *Old Arcadia* was written at Wilton see Robertson's introduction to her edition, pp.xv-xvi. She conjectures that it was written or at least begun in 1580, p.xvi. James Osborn, in his biography of Sidney based on his surviving correspondence, points out that Sidney's mentor Languet encouraged Sidney to engage in martial or courtly activity in 1580, but that Sidney preferred to remain in retirement at Wilton, Osborn, p.504. But this may not be evidence that Sidney was wholly enjoying his retirement: in the letter to Denny written from Wilton in 1580 he mourns his lack of 'fitte employment' but blames this on the time in which he lives, not his own idleness, Osborn p.537. Richard McCoy also observes Sidney's desire for leisure and Languet's repeated exhortations of the importance of duty and service in their correspondence at this time, in *Sir Philip Sidney: Rebellion in Arcadia* (Sussex: Harvester Press, 1979), p.54.

⁵¹ Brian Vickers, 'Leisure and Idleness in the Renaissance: The Ambivalence of *Otium*', *Renaissance Studies* 4, (1990), 1-37;107-54.

But storytelling has its value too. Musidorus's tales help him to win a dynastic marriage that is also a love match. Sidney defends it by claiming that tales of virtue can promote virtuous action in the real world. Berger considers the activity of creating both second and green worlds as a valuable way for the scholar to better understand the real world. The *Arcadia* provides useful political hints that early readers copied into their commonplace books.⁵² Besides, writing fiction becomes a much more appropriate activity when it is the only way in which the author can now engage with the real world. James Loxley shows that writing poetry became the main means of active resistance to Cromwell's government for defeated royalists.⁵³ Derek B. Alwes has recently offered a reading of the *Defence of Poetry* that sees its main purpose as persuading more courtiers to become poets, and to use poetry to advise the sovereign.⁵⁴ Sidney had left the court partly because he knew that Elizabeth would be displeased by his letter advising against the French match, and partly out of frustration as she would not employ him. Telling tales may well have become Sidney's most effective means of influencing the wider world as he was denied the chance to serve the queen in a more active way.

But even without this line of argument, attitudes to the activities of courtly leisure like poetry and military displays were beginning to change anyway. As Benjamin Scott Grossberg shows, court games like jousting are ways of keeping courtiers in line and loyal, and deflecting violence into socially acceptable channels, all the more important as aristocrats are now a civil rather than a military elite and do not have the

⁵² See Lindenbaum, 'Sidney's *Arcadia* as Cultural Monument and Proto-Novel', pp. 83-4, p.86.

⁵³ James Loxley, *Royalism and Poetry in the English Civil Wars: The Drawn Sword* (Basingstoke and London: Macmillan, 1997), pp.214-5.

⁵⁴ Derek B. Alwes, '“To Serve Your Prince by . . . An Honest Dissimulation”: The *New Arcadia* as a Defense of Poetry', *Explorations in Renaissance Culture* 29:2, (2003), p.149. He uses the example of Musidorus's tale-telling to Pamela and Mopsa as an illustration of how Sidney believes that poetry is meant to work in the *Defence*: the common reader (Mopsa) is drawn in by the seductive fiction and takes it literally but the educated, aristocratic reader (Pamela) can understand the serious point behind the pleasing allegory, pp.152-3.

option of working out their aggression by going to war.⁵⁵ Phalantus's jousts are an elaborate and frivolous waste of time, but they're surely preferable to Amphialus's single combats. Alwes argues that the princes in the *New Arcadia*, unlike in the *Old Arcadia*, have learned the importance of storytelling and fictionalising as a valid heroic strategy, in contrast to Amphialus who persists in the *Old Arcadia*'s strategies of abduction, seduction and combat as the means of achieving his goals in love.⁵⁶ He too associates fiction and love in the *New Arcadia* and sees both as quasi-heroic: 'In the *New Arcadia*, fiction is redeemed as a legitimate social tool, and its proper practitioners (as opposed to the various "abusers of wit") are honored for their peculiar brand of heroism.' These considerations redeem the green world activities of writing and tale telling and make it harder to dismiss them as unproductive wastes of time. Sidney himself seems to have realised this and reassessed the value of the Sannazaran vision that encourages both love and fiction between writing the *Old Arcadia* and the *New*.

Ultimately, Sidney in his *New Arcadia* recommends the wisdom of balance. He presents two different versions of the land of Arcadia, but not so that one can be rejected and one accepted. Although he can still be seen to broadly endorse the Polybian ideal, he does not destroy the Sannazaran Arcadia and the perfect Arcadia lies somewhere between the two. The exact balance is left for the reader to work out. The seventeenth century Irish historian, politician and author Richard Bellings provides an excellent conclusion to the *Arcadia* that shows that he understood from Sidney the wisdom of balance and moderation when he ends his *Sixth Book to the Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia* by having Euarchus listen to pastorals. Paul Salzman dismisses Bellings's *Sixth Book* as little more than 'neat and efficient,' and perhaps it

⁵⁵ Benjamin Scott Grossberg, 'Politics and shifting desire in Sidney's *New Arcadia*', *Studies in English Literature* 42, (2002), 63-83.

⁵⁶ Alwes, p.157. The quotation in the next sentence can be found on p.156.

does not do much to reveal its author's imaginative powers, but it is actually an astute conclusion to the *Arcadia* offered by an attentive reader, and one who shared Sidney's interests in politics and history as well as fiction.⁵⁷ Bellings's narrative is set during the celebration of the weddings of Pamela and Philoclea to Musidorus and Pyrocles that Sidney mentioned but did not depict at the end of the *Arcadia*. The courtly characters have returned from their pastoral retreat and order and government have thereby been restored to the kingdom of Arcadia. Bellings's description of the Arcadian landscape, now that the lodge is abandoned, echoes Sidney's 'civil wildness'. His Arcadia is a 'delightfull mixture of a civill Wildnesse.'⁵⁸ A joust is held as part of the marriage celebrations, which Amphialus enters, showing that his duelling has again become part of courtly order and has lost the destructiveness it had in the third book of the *New Arcadia*. Pyrocles contemplates entering the marriage joust himself but is 'by a secret looke from *Philoclea*, commanded the contrarie' (p.22). Parthenia's advice that a married man should not fight any more has obviously been heeded. Bellings also features an unproblematic instance of storytelling when Amphialus, reunited with Helen of Corinth, tells her of his recent adventures for no other purpose than the pleasure the recital will bring.

Most strikingly of all, Euarchus is persuaded to listen to pastorals. His presence in Arcadia occasions the need for royal entertainments, so

Basilus invited the Shepheards, both to change their daily pleasures, as also to shew *Evarchus*, that though a greater cause had mov'd him to the solitarie course of life by him imbrac't; yet the witts of *Arcadia*, and the pleasantnesse of their harmlesse life, might have drawn him to that retirednesse (pp.88-9).

⁵⁷ Paul Salzman, *English Prose Fiction 1558 – 1700: A Critical History* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985), pp.126-7.

⁵⁸ Richard Beling, *A Sixth Booke to the Covntess of Pembrokes Arcadia* (Dublin: The Societie of Stationers, 1624), p.4. The exact spelling of the author's name is variable, I follow the DNB in giving it as 'Bellings'.

The language of this extract is highly self-conscious. Basilius wants to 'shew Evarchus' as if he suspects that Euarchus disapproves of his recent choice and he points out the 'greater cause' for this choice as if in excuse. It is as if he is aware of Sidney's criticism of his retreat and the false Sannazaran Arcadia he created there. Yet Basilius does not actually apologise and remains confident that he can 'shew' Euarchus. He displays the advantages of the shepherds' company not just in defence of his recent actions but in order to force Euarchus to admit that the Arcadian shepherds do have their merits. He meets the arguments of those who object to pastoral retirement head on by defending his Sannazaran version of Arcadia and forcing severe critics like Euarchus to admit that it does have value. Bellings concludes Sidney's unfinished work by emphasising its message about the wisdom of balance.

As the first Arcadia in English, Sidney's *Arcadia* was obviously very influential. It has been much imitated although it is actually not the imitators who go on to create the most thoughtful versions of Arcadia. Sidney's *Arcadia* highlights some key points that recur in the English Arcadia from the very outset of that tradition. In the first place, Arcadia is a literary utopia. It is an imaginary world whose political and social structures are often imagined in detail, but it is an imaginary world that is inspired by literary sources. The nature of these literary sources is the second key point that distinguishes Arcadia both from other imaginary worlds and from other pastorals. Arcadia has two literary traditions, the Polybian and the Sannazaran. Irony about the idealistic Sannazaran Arcadia is always a part of Arcadia writing as it is inevitable that when the ideal land comes to be investigated it proves less than ideal. Arcadia's unique literary background means that it is fundamentally antipastoral. But Sidney

goes beyond simple satire to include Sannazaro's green world in his ideal Arcadia. The end message of Sidney's *Arcadia* is that although it is important to know what is real and what is not, and not to get carried away by the seductive Sannazaran ideal, the green world has its place as part of the wider experience of life. Some of the attributes of the Sannazaran world, like leisure, love, fiction and poetry, are valuable aspects of human life, and aspects that Sidney himself is known to have found important. Sidney investigates the two models of Arcadia and finds the need for balance.

Chapter III: 'The whole complection of *Arcadia* chang'd': Daniel's reappraisal of
Arcadian civility

Philip Sidney wrote the first English Arcadia but Samuel Daniel wrote the first English Arcadian drama: *The Qveenes Arcadia*, first performed in 1605 and published in 1606. Daniel's treatment of the land and society of Arcadia is not nearly as well-known as Sidney's, yet goes further in imagining its social organisation and is a more extreme treatment of the paradoxes of Arcadia's civil wildness. The play was originally commissioned for King James, Queen Anne and Prince Henry's visit to Oxford university in August 1605 and was performed under the title *Arcadia Reformed*, an ambiguous title that hints at Daniel's dissatisfaction with the myth of Arcadia as a perfect pastoral setting. Its publication title, *The Qveenes Arcadia*, refers to its original royal audience, especially as James was not in the end present at the performance. Even if he had been Daniel might have dedicated it to Anne anyway: she was one of his regular patrons as James was not, and the Italianate nature of the play was evidently designed to appeal to the queen's literary taste (although, as will be discussed below, it also reflects Daniel's own interests).¹ The essential plot of *The Qveenes Arcadia* is that some characters from the city of Corinth manage to make their way into the land of Arcadia, where they find it easy to impose upon the innocent and credulous Arcadians. Their schemes are discovered and foiled through the watchfulness of two old shepherds Ergastus and Meliboeus, who have started to notice that Arcadia is no longer quite the same as it used to be and take measures to discover what the problem is. The plot's complications are all created by the

¹ For Anne's interest in Italian fashions, see Samuel Daniel, *Hymen's Triumph*, ed. John Pitcher (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), p.x and J. Procter, 'The *Qveenes Arcadia* (1606) and *Hymen's Triumph* (1615): Samuel Daniel's Court Pastoral Plays' in June Salmons and Walter Moretti ed., *The Renaissance in Ferrara and its European Horizons/ Il Rinascimento a Ferrara e i suoi Orrizonti Europei* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press/ Ravenna: Mario Lapucci, 1984), p.88.

manipulations of the deceitful city characters, but this new imposition of city manners on to the strangely backward land of Arcadia also affords Daniel the perfect opportunity for exploring the underlying society of Arcadia itself, and the social mechanisms that have to be employed to keep Arcadia in a state so much more primitive than that of its neighbours.

Daniel is not the best-known author to have emerged from the English Renaissance, and has generated far less criticism than Sidney. Luckily, critics of Daniel are generally in agreement about his qualities and significance, stressing his moral seriousness, deep thinking, and eagerness to debate and solve problems in his poetry.² *The Qveenes Arcadia* is not now one of his most popular works. There have been recent editions of his poetry and even of his other pastoral drama *Hymen's Triumph* but *The Qveenes Arcadia* has been largely neglected by critics.³ Those critics who have discussed *The Qveenes Arcadia* often take the view that it is a disappointing and not wholly successful play because it fails to blend together its elements of pastoral drama (the land of Arcadia and the Arcadians) and social satire (the city characters and their effect on Arcadia). Joan Rees unflatteringly describes it as 'a hotch-potch of satire, high-flown romantic situation and solid common sense.'⁴ She goes on to argue that the tone of the play deepens into 'a note of moral severity worlds away from the

² For a representative, and chronological, sample, see C. S. Lewis: 'Daniel actually thinks in verse, thinks deeply, arduously, and perhaps with some originality' (*English Literature in the Sixteenth Century Excluding Drama* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1954), pp. 530-1), Joan Rees: 'his best moments and his worst in his two pastoral plays derive from the same thing, the essential seriousness-mindedness which makes him relate his scenes and his characters to life as he knows it' (Joan Rees, *Samuel Daniel: A Critical and Biographical Study* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1964), p. 162), Johanna Procter, who stresses the 'seriousness' of Meliboeus's speech to the Arcadians (Procter, p. 98), and Hiller and Groves: 'his poetry reflects the intense working of a mind in the act of engaging with different (even opposing) perspectives on philosophical and literary problems and on psychological and social situations' (Geoffrey G. Hiller and Peter L. Groves ed., *Selected Poetry and a Defense of Rhyme* (Asheville: University of North Carolina at Asheville, 1998), p. ix).

³ The poetry in Hiller and Groves's edition, and *Hymen's Triumph* in Pitcher's edition, both mentioned above. The lack of a reliable modern edition means the best available text of *The Qveene's Arcadia* is the 1606 original, which I use throughout this chapter. The only other more recent text (besides seventeenth-century reprints) is Alexander B. Grosart's 1885 edition, part of his edition of Daniel's complete works, but Grosart's editorial principles are somewhat erratic, making it safer to stick to the contemporary edition.

⁴ Rees, p. 118.

romantic episodes culled from the Italians', thus effectively seeing the play's satirical and didactic elements as winning out over its lightweight Italian elements.⁵ Rees's is an 'either/or' argument – the play could be either an Italianate pastoral or a morally-severe satire but could not effectively combine both backgrounds. Daniel's oft-noted qualities of moral seriousness and deep thinking of course make it more likely, as Rees argues, that he would prefer the social satire.

Rees claims that Daniel did not enjoy writing masques and only did so when he was specifically asked to by his patrons.⁶ But Daniel can be shown to have had a genuine interest in Italian drama, as will be discussed below, and it is possible to take the opposite view to Rees, seeing its Italian elements as more important to *The Qveenes Arcadia* than its social satire. Jason Lawrence argues for Daniel as an 'English Tasso', a self-conscious and admiring emulator and translator of Tasso's *Aminta* and other Italian pastorals.⁷ He sees Daniel as emulating the Italian drama stylistically and linguistically and does not mention any possible moral seriousness on Daniel's part. Johanna Procter to some extent balances the play's pastoralism and its satire by arguing that, as satire had long been an aspect of the pastoral genre, Daniel's satire in *The Qveenes Arcadia* is 'an extension of the role of satire in pastoral, but the very nature of the pastoral form, with its belief in the unchanging truths, contains and finally banishes the threats to its stability.'⁸ But even Procter's more moderate argument sees a tension between the play's elements of pastoral and satire that needs to somehow be resolved and justified, and eventually concludes, unlike Rees, that it is the pastoral that wins this contest to dominate and banish the satire.

⁵ Rees, p.116.

⁶ Rees, p.93. Graham Parry, on the other hand, suggests that although Daniel, unlike Jonson, considered masques to be a lightweight and throwaway literary form with no permanent seriousness, he had no aversion to writing them, 'The Politics of the Jacobean Masque', in J.R. Mulryne and Margaret Shewring ed., *Theatre and Government under the Early Stuarts* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), p.92.

⁷ Jason Lawrence, '“The whole complection of *Arcadia* chang'd”: Samuel Daniel and Italian Lyrical Drama', *Medieval and Renaissance Drama in England* 11, (1999), 143-71.

⁸ Procter, p.90.

My own interpretation of the play differs from these ‘either/or’ arguments. As I shall show, Daniel’s interest in the earlier Italian dramas of Tasso and Guarini is just as sincere as the deep thinking and interest in complex ideas he demonstrates in his history of the English civil wars. More importantly, the Italian elements and the social or satirical ideas that coexist in *The Qveenes Arcadia* are not incompatible, and even flow naturally into one another. Sukanta Chaudhuri is one of few commentators who recognises the interdependence of these two plot strands in *The Qveenes Arcadia*, as ‘the topical satire paradoxically demands the contrasted setting of a removed world of the imagination’.⁹ The corrupt city characters would be no threat if there were not a contrasting vulnerable pastoral world for them to exploit and potentially destroy. The play does gain its tension from the contrast between these two worlds, but this is not a weakness. It is central to the dramatic composition. If anything, Chaudhuri thinks this tension is not strong enough; the social problems introduced, such as tobacco and quarrelling over the extent of one’s neighbour’s ‘sheep-walke’, are not all that serious and Daniel’s Arcadia is too secure in its own perfection, too easily able to resist these comical challenges.¹⁰ In fact these challenges do greatly confuse the Arcadians throughout the first four acts, until the plotters are uncovered and everything is set right again, and are almost successful in creating permanent rifts in the Arcadian society. The confusion that can be created by a handful of city characters suggests the deeply flawed and insecure state of Arcadia, and this is not comical but problematic. This Arcadia would never cope with any challenge more serious than tobacco.¹¹

⁹ Sukanta Chaudhuri, *Renaissance Pastoral and its English Developments* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), p.369.

¹⁰ Chaudhuri, p.369. The reference to the ‘Sheep-walke’ is found in Samuel Daniel, *The Qveenes Arcadia* (London: G. Eld for Simon Waterson, 1606), I.i.36.

¹¹ It could be questioned whether tobacco is not a serious challenge. James I took it seriously enough to write his treatise ‘A counterblaste to tobacco’ against it. The king’s interest in this issue is presumably why Daniel includes it in his play.

The last impostor to enter Arcadia is Pistophoenax, the pedlar of false religion whose name means ‘trusty impostor.’¹² False religion would indeed be a serious challenge, and one that had great resonance for Daniel’s own time. Significantly, however, Pistophoenax is unmasked almost as soon as he appears on stage and is never allowed to speak. Daniel knows that this challenge is too great for his Arcadia so he stops the Arcadian experiment he has been conducting at this point. The main plot confusions created by the city characters are in love affairs, but love affairs are far from trivial in Arcadia. It is often the successful outcome of love affairs that ensures the prosperity and safety of the whole community, and this is an aspect of Arcadian happiness that Daniel explores very fully.¹³ *The Qveenes Arcadia* is a comprehensive social satire, that widens out from exploring the effects of the city characters on the land of Arcadia to an exploration of the Arcadian society itself.

The aim of this chapter, then, is to offer an alternative interpretation of *The Qveenes Arcadia* that explains and reconciles its previously problematic aspects of Italianate pastoral and social satire through a close reading of the play that focuses on the society and nature of Arcadia itself. Chaudhuri’s opposite, yet equally necessary, poles of satire and pastoral ideal in *The Qveenes Arcadia* fits easily into the recognition that Arcadia is a land that has both a positive and negative literary tradition and that it is through contrasting these two traditions that it creates its unique effects. The contrast with the corrupt characters highlights Arcadia’s supposed perfection but also its vulnerability to change and degeneration, whether that change comes from inside or without. In this Daniel perhaps recalls Polybius’s recognition that although Arcadia was the country with the highest reputation for piety and

¹² Procter, p.91.

¹³ Procter makes the interesting suggestion that the love plots and the social satire are complementary, the love plots reflecting the queen’s concerns and the social threats the king’s, p.99. I will connect these plot elements in a different way, arguing that in Arcadia love plots can become social threats.

goodness in all of Greece, it produced the wickedest race in Greece as well.¹⁴ Daniel reveals his uneasiness with the simplistic reading of Arcadia that sees it only as a golden age ideal.

Daniel's social satire in *The Qveenes Arcadia*, at first confined to the antics of the city characters, could easily and naturally expand to critically explore the society of their host nation. The whole plot foregrounds the nature of Arcadian society because the city characters could only prosper in Arcadia at all if Arcadian society was unusually inexperienced and trusting. But Daniel, like all authors of Arcadia, imagines what it would really be like to live in this society, especially when stimulated by the awareness that this Arcadia has got to be very different from the world that the city characters are used to. In so doing, he uncovers all the ways in which the golden age ideal of Arcadia could not possibly exist or be sustained. Sidney had already shown that the pastoral Arcadia was an impossible and unsustainable ideal, and that the real Arcadia was a civil wildness that would require social organisation and control, however harmoniously these social realities could be disguised. Daniel looks at the problem from the opposite point of view to Sidney, not assuming that a real Arcadian would quickly abandon the notion that he was living in an ideal world, but asking what that Arcadian would have to do, what social mechanisms he would have to put in place, if he wanted at all costs to keep up the pretence that he was living in an ideal world? If it seems a little far-fetched to imagine anyone creating this penetrating an analysis of the flaws in an imaginary society, the possibility that Daniel's Arcadia represents or reminds him of England explains why Daniel took the Arcadian society so seriously and why he was disturbed

¹⁴ 'Since the Arcadian nation on the whole has a very high reputation for virtue among the Greeks, due not only to their humane and hospitable character and usages, but especially to their piety to the gods, it is worth while to give a moment's consideration to the question of the savagery of the Cynaetheans, and ask ourselves why, though unquestionably of Arcadian stock, they so far surpassed all other Greeks at this period in cruelty and wickedness', in Polybius, *The Histories Volume II*, trans. W.R. Patton (London: William Heinemann, 1922), Book IV.20, p.349.

first by the complacency of the society that imagines itself to be ideal, and then by the social manipulation and even repression inherent in that society.¹⁵

Daniel's sources: an alternative Arcadian tradition

The Qveenes Arcadia is the earliest English pastoral drama to be set in Arcadia.¹⁶

Pastoral drama was to become very popular in the Caroline period so that drama became the dominant genre in which to explore the land of Arcadia in the later seventeenth century.¹⁷ For understanding Daniel's play, however, it is more appropriate to look back to the origins of his Arcadian drama than forward to the Caroline development of the genre. Arcadia had long been a common setting for Italian pastoral plays and Daniel was interested in Italian drama, especially the works of Tasso and Guarini.¹⁸ Jason Lawrence has demonstrated Tasso's influence on Daniel's poetic style, dubbing Daniel the 'English Tasso' (quoted above). But Daniel had also met Guarini, and debated the relative merits of Italian and English poetry with him, while travelling in Italy with his patron Sir Thomas Dymoke.¹⁹ Guarini

¹⁵ For Arcadia as England see Chaudhuri p.369, and Procter, who points out that Daniel was writing for a royal audience and that pastoral was a favourite genre for the court to reflect upon itself, suggesting that the overall message of *The Qveenes Arcadia* is that England, like Arcadia, requires constant vigilance if it is to remain perfect and uncorrupted, p.88, p.90. She also points out that the challenges Daniel introduces in Arcadia are exactly the same as those facing Jacobean England – false medicine, litigation and false religion, p.98. There are no explicit parallels of Daniel's Arcadia with England that might suggest it is allegorical, but there is a general, obvious similarity between the two nations, both insular, slightly backward and threatened by their more sophisticated neighbours, afraid that the good old days are slipping away and asking for constant vigilance to maintain the old standards.

¹⁶ Procter calls it the first English Arcadia on the stage, p.83.

¹⁷ The significance of pastoral tragicomedy in the Caroline and Restoration periods is discussed in chapter four.

¹⁸ For Arcadia as a common Italian pastoral setting, see Louise George Clubb, 'The making of the pastoral play: Italian experiments between 1573 and 1590', in Julius A. Molinaro ed., *Petrarch to Pirandello: Studies in Italian Literature in honour of Beatrice Corrigan* (Toronto and Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 1973), p.52. Just to prove the breadth of Daniel's knowledge of Italian drama, Rees points out that Act One scene two of *The Qveenes Arcadia* is largely a translation of Luigi Groto's *Il Pentimento Amorososo*, p. 113, although Daniel was evidently more influenced by the better-known works of Tasso and Guarini.

¹⁹ For a discussion of Daniel's meeting with Guarini and its effect on his own work, see Hiller and Groves, p.1.

himself was interested in rewriting some aspects of Tasso's vision of pastoral love in his *Aminta*. Daniel shows himself to be influenced by both Tasso and Guarini at the level of plot and theme as well as style. Interestingly, although he preferred Tasso's poetic style, as Lawrence shows, he seems to have agreed more with Guarini about the nature and purpose of pastoral love. As later English Arcadian drama is quite different from Daniel in respect of its sources, being influenced primarily by Sidney's *Arcadia* and French romance and drama (both in fashion at the Caroline court) it is more useful to interpret Daniel as the culmination of this alternative, essentially Italian, Arcadian tradition.²⁰ Although Daniel would certainly have read Sidney's *Arcadia*, especially as he was close to the Countess of Pembroke, having been tutor to her children at Wilton in 1594 to 1595 and dedicating several of his early works to her, his *Arcadia* clearly owes more to the Italian dramatists than to his predecessor in his native language.²¹

Daniel inherited these earlier authors' debate over the nature of pastoral love, and especially Guarini's uneasiness with Tasso's representation of the passion of love as private and amoral. That Guarini felt the need to redress Tasso's view of love is shown by his rewriting of the famous 'golden age' ode in the *Aminta*, an ode that Daniel certainly knew well as he had translated it in 1601 under the title 'A Pastoral.' Tasso's ode is a chorus appearing at the end of the first act of the *Aminta*, that clarifies the moral values of Tasso's pastoral world for the audience. The ode insists that the pastoral world of the play is not a golden age landscape merely because of its milk, honey and fruits, eternal springtime, and lack of industry, shipping, commerce and war. It is a golden age primarily

²⁰ Tasso's *Aminta* is not actually set in Arcadia, but I include it as part of this Arcadian tradition as Tasso was so important to Guarini, and Guarini's very interesting *Arcadia* is so clearly an influence on Daniel.

²¹ For Daniel's connection with the Countess of Pembroke, see W.L. Godshalk, 'Recent Studies in Samuel Daniel (1975 – 1990)', *English Literary Renaissance* 24, (1994), 489-90.

Because that vaine and ydle name,
 That couz'ning Idoll of unrest,
 (Whom the madd vulgar first did raize,
 And call'd it *Honour*, whence it came
 To tyrannize or'e ev'ry brest)

has not yet been invented.²² The socially constructed nature of honour is emphasised by Tasso's 'madd vulgar' who gave it its name. Instead of invented honour, the golden age shepherds follow '[t]he goulden lawes of nature' (first chorus, line 25). Tasso defines nature's golden rule as 'S'ei piace, ei lice' ('if it pleases, it is allowed').²³ This golden rule suits the action of the *Aminta*, whose plot turns on a nymph eventually succumbing to love. Tasso's amoral pastoral land is a world in which Daniel's unscrupulous and licentious city characters would be quite at home.

But Tasso's chorus was countered by Guarini's. His chorus appears at the end of the fourth act of *Il Pastor Fido*, once the events of the play have already proved that the concept of 'honour' is valuable and is actually decreed by the gods – who have prescribed the 'law in bloody letters writ' that any unfaithful woman must be condemned to death, in direct contrast to Tasso's golden rule.²⁴ Guarini's chorus, it is often pointed out, retains Tasso's rhyme scheme and line endings but reverses his meaning. (I quote them in the Italian here to show these deliberate echoes). Tasso began

O bella età dell'oro,

²² Henry Reynolds trans., *Tasso's Aminta Englished*, in *Henry Reynolds: Tasso's 'Aminta' and Other Poems*, ed. Glyn Pursglove (Salzburg: Salzburg Studies in English Literature, 1991), first chorus, lines 15-9. All quotations from the *Aminta* are from this edition unless otherwise stated.

²³ Torquato Tasso, *Aminta: A Pastoral Drama*, ed. and trans. Ernest Grillo (London and Toronto: J.M. Dent, 1924), p.92. Reynolds does not translate this line in his *Aminta Englished* but it is important for this discussion as Guarini went on to adapt it.

²⁴ Richard Fanshawe trans., *A Critical Edition of Sir Richard Fanshawe's 1647 Translation of Giovanni Battista Guarini's Il Pastor Fido*, ed. Walter F. Staton jnr. and William E. Simeone (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1964), I.ii.567.

*Non già perchè di latte
Se'n corse il fiume e stillò mèle il bosco (my italics)*

(Reynolds translates 'O Happy Age of Gould, happy houres;
Not for with milke the rivers ranne,
And hunny dropt from ev'ry tree' first chorus I-3 (my italics));

Guarini begins

O bella età de l'oro
Quand' era cibo il latte
Del pargoletto mondo, e culla il bosco (my italics)

(Fanshawe translates 'Fair golden Age! *when* milk was th'only food,
And cradle of the infant-world the wood'
IV.ix. 4179-80 (my italics)),

thereby reversing Tasso's sentiment.²⁵ Tasso's golden age was golden *not only* because of the milk and honey, but Guarini's is again golden because of it. Tasso uses present tense verbs but Guarini uses the past tense. For Guarini the golden age has already been lost. His Arcadia is not an ideal world but a community struggling to survive under its serious problem of a curse that requires an annual human sacrifice to please the goddess Diana.

Daniel shares Guarini's belief that the golden age is over. That Daniel's Arcadia is not a natural golden age idyll is made clear from the play's opening lines. The old shepherd Ergastus complains that Arcadia has been going downhill in recent times:

How is it *Meliboeus* that we finde
Our Country, faire *Arcadia*, so much changd
From what it was; that was thou knowst of late,
The gentle region of plaine honestie,

²⁵ Grillo's edition of *Aminta*, p. 90 and Giovanni Battista Guarini, *Il Pastor Fido* (Venetia: Gio. Battista Ciotti, 1602), p.342.

The modest seat, of vndisguised trueth,
 Inhabited with simple innocence:
 And now, I know not how, as if it were
 Vnhallowed, and diusted of that grace,
 Hath put off that faire nature which it had,
 And growes like ruder countries, or more bad (I.i.1-10).

Arcadia's decline from perfection is indispensable to Arcadian drama. If Arcadia were perfect, there would not be anything to write about. Every Arcadian drama, whether it admits it or not, has to begin from the same position of a changed Arcadia, an Arcadia that has fallen off from perfection. Daniel is only making explicit what other dramatists might leave implicit: that this Arcadia is no longer a golden age world. Meliboeus and Ergastus bemoan the loss of a previous innocence, a previous better time. The golden age of uninterrupted contentment and harmony has already necessarily passed away before Arcadia can have any stories worth the telling.

Arcadia of course has a strong body of negative myth attached to it, making it difficult for any dramatist to imagine it as an unproblematically ideal pastoral setting. It is easier to create a golden age in a vague, unnamed pastoral setting, as Tasso does, than in the land of Arcadia, which has to be regarded as a flawed and fallen pastoral world. Daniel seems to feel the need to rationalise the golden age myth and to find a reason why the plot of his play is about to unfold in Arcadia. The same rationalising motivation can be discerned in Daniel's later pastoral play, *Hymen's Triumph*, where the allegorical characters of Hymen, Envy, Avarice and Jealousy appear in the prologue and announce that they will intervene in the events of the play which follows, which explains why there are so many obstacles for the lovers to overcome.²⁶

²⁶ The prologue was not part of the play's original performance, but was added for its publication (see *Hymen's Triumph* ed. Pitcher, p.xi). Pitcher has suggested that Daniel was anxious about the differences between manuscript and print culture and afraid of being misunderstood in the more impersonal medium of print in 'Editing Daniel' in *New Ways of Looking at Old Texts: Papers of the Renaissance English Text Society 1985 – 1991* ed. W. Speed Hill (Binghamton, New York: Centre for Medieval and Early Renaissance Studies, 1993), pp.57-73. Perhaps the addition of the prologue suggests that Daniel felt a stronger need to clarify and rationalise his subject matter in print than in a

Daniel is acutely aware that if Arcadia were as perfect as everyone says it is, Italianate plot events would simply not occur there.

The decline from the golden age also has consequences for Arcadian love and morality. As Guarini's golden age has already been lost, a new, more conventional, set of morals has taken its place in his Arcadia:

those sober souls . . . knew
 No happiness but what from vertue grew.
 Then sports and carols amongst Brooks and plains
 Kindled a lawfull flame in Nymphs and Swains (IV.ix.4193-6).

Guarini sums up this state of lawful happiness as 'Piaccia se lice' ('it is pleasing if it is allowed'), a phrasing that deliberately recalls Tasso's 'S'ei piace, ei lice'.²⁷ Tasso's despised honour governs sexual behaviour in Guarini's Arcadia but everything that is allowed is pleasing. There is no clash of wills, there are no unattainable desires. Everything that has to happen always pleases everyone. Guarini has in this idea cleverly reconciled the demands of love with those of society and achieved a new Arcadian ideal, but it is not one that stands up to close scrutiny. His earlier four acts have shown that there are always characters who want what they can not have and insist on doing what is *not* allowed. Guarini's ideal state of Arcadian happiness according to the rules can only be achieved by the selfish characters' repentance in the last act. Daniel's corrupt characters do not repent and so have to be expelled from Arcadia.

In fact the formula of 'piaccia se lice' does not always work even for the virtuous characters in Guarini's Arcadia, as is proved when Nicandro, taking Amarillis the

performance amongst friends.

²⁷ This phrase can be found in the Venice edition of *Il Pastor Fido* mentioned above, p.343. Like Reynolds with Tasso's similar phrase, Fanshawe does not translate it, both English translations thereby obscuring Guarini's borrowing from Tasso.

supposed adulteress to the temple to be sacrificed, separates the formula into polar opposites:

Contra la legge di natura forse
 Non hai, Ninfa, peccato; Ama se piace:
 Ma ben hai tu peccato incontra quella
 De gli huomini, e del cielo; Ama se lice

(Fanshawe translates ‘Not Nature’s law perchance, *Love where thou wilt*.
 But that of Men and Heav’n, *Love without guilt*’ IV.v. 3610-1).²⁸

Nicandro’s law-abiding stance supports the fact that in Guarini’s pastoral world, unlike Tasso’s, love is not about private pleasure – Amarillis cannot marry Mirtillo simply because they love each other, in fact she does not dare even to meet him in the interest of avoiding gossip and suspicion – and she must marry Silvio even though they do not love each other in order to save Arcadia from its curse. The equation of what is allowed with what is pleasing breaks down as marrying Mirtillo would be pleasing to Amarillis and marrying Silvio would be anything but. It is not even the case that the gods demand Amarillis and Silvio’s union. The gods are in fact on Tasso’s side of the question as what they have destined is not what the priests believe is allowed, but instead what is pleasing to Amarillis and Mirtillo, and also what is pleasing to Dorinda and Silvio.

Yet Guarini’s Arcadians take their own rules and ideas, their socialised version of love and marriage, so seriously that even when it has been proved that the gods want Amarillis to marry Mirtillo the high priest Montano objects that she cannot as she is already betrothed to Silvio and breaking her betrothal would unfortunately result in her death (V.vi. 5201-8). (Although perhaps there is a touch of sarcasm in the wise priest Tirenno’s brusque rejoinder, when this objection is immediately resolved,

²⁸ Venice edition of *Il Pastor Fido*, p.281.

‘Twas an important doubt. Follow me now’ (V.vi.5211).) Although Guarini tries to alter Tasso’s formula to create a less immoral pastoral world, his thinking gets muddled and the formal demands of his genre for a happy ending achieved by reversals and recognitions ultimately undermine his attempt to bring pastoral love into line with a moralistic and law-abiding society. But Guarini has raised some important points about the problems of attempting to integrate the demands of love into those of a realistically imagined pastoral society.

Daniel takes Guarini’s awareness of the important role played by love affairs in society at large even further, as successful pairing-off is shown to be essential to the happiness of his Arcadia. This is true in the obvious sense that happy marriages ensure offspring, but a more subtle, yet very important, benefit of happy marriages in Daniel’s Arcadia is that happy Arcadians are less likely to send their children off to town for a foreign education, and it is the city education of the Arcadian Colax that starts all the problems of *The Qveenes Arcadia*. Daniel also closely investigates the problems associated with what is pleasing being permitted, and vice versa, weighing up how a lawful happiness could be achieved and how what is permitted or determined could always be made to seem pleasing. In spite of Daniel’s reputation as the English Tasso, he takes Guarini’s side in the moral debate about love, and shares Guarini’s understanding of Arcadia as an ordinary, imperfect, gossiping society that needs control.²⁹ But Daniel blends this with the myth of Arcadia as a golden age to create an Arcadian society that is actually hypocritical, and therefore darker than those of Guarini or Sidney.

²⁹ See chapter one for this view of Guarini’s Arcadia.

The Complications of Civility

Daniel's real concern, like Guarini's, is with the society and social organisation of Arcadia rather than the stories of the individual characters. Early modern attitudes to the concept of civility are thus the perfect context for Daniel's Arcadia as civility is all about making social life run more smoothly and pleasantly. Although civility manuals like Erasmus's *De Civilitate Morum Puerilium* (Of Civil Manners for Boys), that first introduced the word and concept of 'civility' into English life, are lists of precepts for individuals to model their behaviour after, the idea behind them is that social life as a whole will run more smoothly if its every participant is following the same basic rules of civility.³⁰ But civility has its negative side too. Anna Bryson, in her well known study of early modern attitudes to civility, analyses the main objections that were made to courtesy manuals and civility handbooks at this time and discovers a common theme. The central objection to civility was that it is deceitful. Reading a civility book could help someone who was not virtuous, cultivated, or noble pretend to be so by providing him with the exact rules of conduct in favour with the virtuous, and with the rules of conduct that are most likely to impress other people with a belief in their practitioner's innate virtue. Erasmus, as she points out, assumes at the start of *De Civilitate* that his reader is virtuous and talented but needs instruction on how he can best express these qualities in his behaviour, but does not consider the alternative possibility that his book might fall into the hands of an untalented man of little virtue who is simply looking for court advancement.³¹ Castiglione's *Book of the Courtier*, Bryson suggests, is guilty of the same problem: 'the image of the ideal courtier seems to be constructed with a view to the social impact of noble virtues and

³⁰ Anna Bryson, *From Courtesy to Civility: Changing Codes of Conduct in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998), for comment on Erasmus's *De Civilitate* see p.46, for the relationship between personal manners and civility as social organisation see p.50, p.53.

³¹ Bryson, p.199.

accomplishments rather than to their actual possession.³² The rules of civility do not reveal actual innate qualities, but only give the appearance of possessing them. The possibility that the unscrupulous could use good manners and civility for their own ends, and to pretend to virtues they do not possess, is thus opened up.

Daniel in *The Qveenes Arcadia* shows that he is aware of this potential pitfall in civilised life by making all his civilised city characters self-serving and deceitful. It is their civilised training in town that has taught them how to deceive others and how to appear sincere and open when they are in fact self-interested. The city characters' smooth deceitfulness of course creates interpretative problems for the more rustic Arcadians who do not have much experience of distinguishing sincere characters from insincere ones.³³ I would like here to approach just some of the interpretative dilemmas offered by the plot of *The Qveenes Arcadia*, those linked by Daniel's use of the recurrent metaphor of blushing to highlight their interpretative complexity.

Before looking at how Daniel uses the symbol of blushing, it is worth establishing how the blush was discussed in contemporary medical and philosophical treatises, and why it is so difficult to interpret. Blushing is itself an ambiguous sign, making it a perfect symbol for the complexities of interpreting social behaviour and the gap between the inward, sincere personal world and the outside world that is so uncertain and difficult to interpret. The problem that early commentators have with interpreting the blush is that they believe it expresses two distinct states of mind: modesty and shame. As modesty is considered to be a good quality, but shame expresses guilt and

³² Bryson, p.200.

³³ There may, however, be an additional level of irony in this, bearing in mind the influential idea that the civilising process is one of 'emasculatation', centralisation of the court and bureaucracy and surrender of individual rights, an idea recently formulated (although to argue against it) by Jennifer Richards in '“A Wanton Trade of Living”? Rhetoric, Effeminacy, and the Early Modern Courtier', *Criticism* 42, (2000), pp.187-8. People who use civility books for their own profit are arguably those who most resist the normative forces of civilisation. The Arcadian Colax is an example of this as he exploits what he knows of the manners and assumptions of his own home. Daniel goes on to explore the real civility of Arcadian society, and it is noteworthy that it is the guileless young Arcadians, not the supposedly civilised city characters, who can be easily brought back into line with the norms of their own society.

previous wrongdoing the blush can be either a good or a bad sign, that is, very tricky to interpret. Most commentators are aware of this ambiguity. F.N. Coeffeteau attempts to create blushing as a positive sign by discussing it as the effect of shame, a passion that he defines as ‘*a kinde of feare, which ariseth, for that man doubts some blame and some censure of his actions.*’³⁴ Shame is an ambiguous passion as it can ‘by the apprehension of an imaginary dishonour’ (p.495) dissuade us from good actions as well as bad ones (the example he gives of shame dissuading someone from a good action, that of a man who drinks too much at a banquet because he does not want to admit in front of his friends that he has had enough (p.504), is a problem that has not diminished with time). He concludes that ‘*Shame is sometimes profitable, and sometimes pernicious; but it is alwayes commendable, when it serves vs as a bridle to retire vs from vice*’ (p.507). But although shame may be ambiguous, blushing, the effect of shame, is always a good sign because it shows that the blusher is aware of wrongdoing and afraid of being suspected of it. He observes that the ‘Ancients did alwaies hold it for a good signe and presage in young men, to see them blush easily; wherefore they called this blushing *The colour, or vermillion of Vertue*’ (p.500). Thomas Wright agrees that both shame and blushing are evidence of good and virtuous natures as it is only good and virtuous people who would be ashamed of doing wrong or being supposed to have done wrong (p.30).³⁵

Of particular interest for *The Queenes Arcadia* is all commentators’ insistence that blushing is particularly appropriate to young women, as it expresses modesty.

Coeffeteau’s view is typical:

there is no kinde of people in whom an honest bashfulnesse

³⁴ F.N. Coeffeteau, *A Table of Humane Passions. With their Causes and Effects*, trans. E. Grimeston (London: Nicholas Okes, 1621), p. 496.

³⁵ Thomas Wright, *The Passions of the Minde in Generall: Corrected, enlarged, and with sundry new discourses augmented* (London: Valentine Simmes for Walter Burre, 1604), p.30.

is more commendable; yea, vpon the lightest occasions, then in Virgins, and Women: for to blush for words, for motions, and for the least licencious actions, is a signe of an exact modesty, which is the rarest and the most rich ornament of their sexe (p.501).

Daniel's treatment of female blushing in *The Queenes Arcadia* is more complex than this as he is aware of the possibility that the blush can represent shame as well as modesty. This aspect of the blush, however, belongs more to Daniel's exploration of Arcadian society itself than the problems created by the arrival of the city characters, so I do not want to discuss it in detail here, but it is a point to which we shall return.

Even leaving aside the problems associated with specifically female blushing, there are obvious problems with Coeffeteau's definitions. As he defines it, shame always precedes wrongdoing as it is only the imagined fear of disgrace which one feels before one has done wrong. That is why shame, in his definition, can be a bridle to vice. This does not correspond to our everyday experience that people feel shame about bad things that they have done, not bad things that they have not done. Even if blushing and shame at wrongdoing are good qualities, being unblushing and unashamed because one has actually not done anything wrong are surely better ones. In his *Iconologia*, a successful seventeenth-century emblem book, Cesare Ripa always uses the image of a young woman dressed in white to suggest innocence, purity and virtue. He does not discuss blushing as in his system of allegorical representations mental states are generally expressed through the colours of clothing. White clothing represents 'la purità dell'animo' ('the purity of the soul').³⁶ Ripa's belief that white is the best colour to represent virtue is at odds with Coeffeteau and other commentators' insistence that a blushing face is a sign of virtue.

³⁶ Cesare Ripa, *Iconologia: ovvero descrizione di diverse imagini cavate dall'antichità, et di propria inventione*, Erna Mandowsky introd. (Hildeshilm, Zurich and New York: Georg Olms Verlag, 2000), entry for 'Castità', p.66.

The entire early modern discussion of blushing is hampered by the large number of ancient writers who insisted that blushing is always a sign of virtue. In quoting and agreeing with them there is no room for considering actual experience. All Coeffeteau's arguments and ideas about shame and blushing can be found in Peter de la Primaudaye's earlier *The French Academie*, and he in turn mentions all his sources: Cicero, Plato, Quintillian, Hesiod, Seneca, Menander, Euripides, Plutarch.³⁷ Even Coeffeteau's example of the man who drinks too much at a banquet can be found in la Primaudaye (p.260), and he took it from Plutarch. Coeffeteau does not consider that shame can be an effect of guilt as he sees fear of punishment, and turning pale rather than blushing, as the signs of having actually done something wrong (pp. 500-1). This too is inherited classical thinking. We might compare Ergastus's dichotomy in *The Qveenes Arcadia* 'blush with shame, or to be pale with feare' (I.i.47). This of course contrasts with Ripa's use of white. If the philosophers had considered the blush as possible evidence of guilt instead of evidence of innocence, they might have found it more difficult to explain why blushing is so commendable in women. Daniel's drama goes much further than the philosophical treatises do in exploring the paradoxes both of blushing and of modest female behaviour.

Coeffeteau's theory about the blush indicating modesty only makes sense because he ignores the much more common possibility that the blush can indicate guilt. It makes sense on paper, but not in the real world. But we should not be surprised at this muddled thinking as Wright makes it clear that this is the best that humans can do when it comes to interpreting signs of the passions:

[a]nd questionlesse wise men often, thorowe the windowes of the face, behold the secrets of the heart . . . not that they can exactly

³⁷ Peter de la Primaudaye, *The French Academie* (London: Edmund Bollifant for G. Bishop and Ralph Newbery, 1586), p.257, p.259.

vnderstand the heartes which bee inscrutable; and onely open vnto God, but that by coniectures they may aime well at them (p.27).

It is impossible, and almost blasphemous, for anyone to know what another person is really feeling. All that we can do is observe the changes in other people's 'externall physiognomy and operations' (Wright, p.27) and guess at their likely causes. As Daniel will show, the blush does not mean any one thing. Interpretative dilemma and ambiguity are the inevitable results of trying to understand the behaviour of others. The treatises only confirm the early modern anxiety of interpretation that Daniel explores in *The Qveenes Arcadia*.

The metaphor of blushing in *The Qveenes Arcadia* is insistently repeated throughout the play yet it has never been commented on. It is introduced almost from the play's opening lines, when Ergastus, having opened the play with his complaint about Arcadia having gone downhill in recent times, goes on to observe the decay in the beauty of the Arcadian girls:

And me thinkes too, the beauty of our Nymphes
Is not the same as it was wont to be.
That Rosie hew, the glory of the Cheeke,
Is either stolne, or else they haue forgot,
To blush with shame, or to be pale with feare:
Or else their shame doth make them alwayes blush,
For alwayes doth their beauties beare one hew,
And either Nature's false, or that vntrue (I.i.41-8).

It seems odd initially that he judges the girls' beauty by their ability to blush, but we have seen how blushing was considered to be commendable in young women as it signified their virtue or modesty. Part of Ergastus's concern seems to be that beauty in a woman is of no value without virtue, and the nymphs have now lost this outward

sign of their modesty. To Ergastus a girl who is no longer modest is not as beautiful as she used to be. This interpretation of female beauty interestingly corresponds to the opinion expressed by Daniel's Rosamond, the speaker of his earlier *Complaint of Rosamond*. Rosamond, a fallen woman, laments the loss of her natural blush, that she defines as true beauty because it represents true modesty.³⁸ On this evidence, it becomes clear that Ergastus is not concerned solely with beauty, but with a recent change in the behaviour or manners of the young Arcadians that has had this effect on their natural shows of modesty. Blushing recurs throughout *The Qveenes Arcadia* and becomes its main symbol for moral decay and for the interpretative dilemmas occasioned by that decay.

Blushing reappears in the second scene when Carinus and Amyntas argue about which of them Cloris loves most, and try to interpret her recent behaviour to Amyntas. A blush is the first sign Amyntas adduces to prove Cloris's love for him:

First if by chance, whilst she at Barely-breake
With other Nimphe, do but perceiue me come,
Streight looks her cheeke with such a Rosie red,
As giues the setting Sunne vnto the West
When morrow tempests are prefigured (I.ii.30-4).

We learn later that Cloris does love Amyntas so he has interpreted this sign correctly, but Carinus is able to cast doubt over his interpretation:

Euen so that hew prognosticates her wrath,
Which brings to thee, the stormie windes of sighes (I.ii.35-6).

³⁸ *The Complaint of Rosamond*, in Hiller and Groves, lines 134-40, 148-51.

The point about Cloris's blushing seems to be that it is not a clear symbol but only an ambiguous sign. Blushing, and all other kinds of facial expression and signs to do with the face, are very important because they can reveal what is going on in the mind. The whole face (and not just the eyes) is a window to the soul but the problem is that that window is no longer transparent.³⁹ Cloris's blushing can be interpreted in more than one way. It is a signifier divorced from its signified, no longer necessarily conveying the message of affection to Amyntas that comes from Cloris's mind. It is this new problem of how to interpret blushing that Ergastus seems to be concerned about. Once upon a time, he suggests, a nymph blushed when she saw her lover and you knew exactly what she meant. The signal of blushing was a transparent symbol. But the girls are blushing at new times and for new reasons, or, even worse, not blushing at all, and there's no telling *what* they mean by it. Ergastus has arrived at a new understanding of the deceptiveness of the face. One may blush and blush and be a villain.

The greatest deceiving face in the play, although it is one which has long ago been cured of blushing, belongs to Colax. Ergastus comments:

. . . we see open-fac't villany
 Without a maske, no mischiefe could haue done;
 It was the couerture of honestie,
 That laid the snare, whereby they were vndone (II.iv.9-12).

Colax is like the reader of Erasmus or Castiglione who uses their rules for civility only to pretend to be virtuous and so be in a better position to get his own way. Colax uses his veneer of civil behaviour only to disguise his real intentions. Meliboeus calls him

³⁹ The eyes as window to the soul is a poetic commonplace, but for the face as a window see Thomas Wright in *The Passions of the Minde in Generall*, who writes 'it cannot be doubted of, but that the passions of our mindes worke diuers effects in our faces' (p.26) and 'questionlesse wise men often, thorowe the windowes of the face, behold the secrets of the heart' (p.27).

a 'monster' (I.iv.5) who compares unfavourably to the satyr who attacked Cloris. At least the satyr is not hypocritical, he does not pretend to be more virtuous or less dangerous than he is. Colax's deceitful civility is worse than the forces of mere wild nature:

. . . these [Colax's] wild mischiefs that doe lurke,
And worse infest, then th'*Erimanthian* Boare,
Or all Beasts else, which onely spoile our fields,
Whilst these which are of more prodigious kindes,
Bend all their forces to destroy our mindes (IV.v.14-8).

Deceit is more insidious and therefore more dangerous than violence. Colax is able to look honest and friendly but commit deceits and treacheries, turning faithful lovers against one another.⁴⁰ He is not what he seems to be, exposing the gap between a fair face and an ugly mind, a gap which the more innocent Arcadians will go on to grasp imperfectly. In the play's last act, the metaphors of false faces are finally externalised and dramatised in the unmasking of Pistophoenax, a character who has only recently arrived from the city. Pistophoenax's ugly face is presumably the window to his equally ugly soul but he has covered it up with a more attractive mask. Colax uses his face to mask his soul but in this unmasking scene Colax's ugly inner nature is exposed as well as Pistophoenax's. At this point Arcadia is cleared of deceit and ambiguity, but this point is only reached after most of the young Arcadians have been deceived by appearances and have misinterpreted the face.

The metaphors of blushing and of the deceptiveness of the face continually recur in the play. Cloris is surprised by Palaemon's desertion of Silvia because

⁴⁰ It is interesting to note, in passing, that the destruction of love affairs is more of a threat to this Arcadia than the mere destruction of its fields. Ergastus recognises that the prosperity of this society depends more on the happiness and contentedness of all its members than on more practical problems like being able to grow enough crops to survive. Natural disasters can be overcome, but discontent within the society cannot.

I neuer saw a face
That promis'd better of a heart than his (II.i.43-4)

and Mirtillo is equally surprised by Silvia's desertion of Palaemon for the same reason:

who euer would haue thought,
That modest looke, so innocent a face,
So chaste a blush, that shamefast countenance,
Could euer haue told how to wantonise? (II.iii.53-6).

Palaemon's bitter answer to Mirtillo reveals that he too has learned that 'the out-side of a face' (II.iii.90) is not necessarily a transparent symbol of a woman's heart:

What haue they but is faind? their haire is faind,
Their beauty fain'd, their stature fain'd, their pace,
Their iesture, motion, and their grace is fain'd:
And if that all be fain'd without, what then
Shall we suppose can be sincere within? (II.iii.82-6).

In the disappointment of his love, Palaemon is even more suspicious of female blushing than Ergastus. All women are deceitful and lecherous, he insists,

Let them lay on what couerture they will
Vpon themselues, of modestie and shame (II.iii.76-7).

Palaemon has done away with innocent blushing altogether. For him all female blushing, at one time the symbol of modesty and shame, is faked.

From metaphors of the face, the play extends its investigation of visible tokens of guilt to another, slightly different and more physical sign, that of Daphne's pulse in which the quack doctor Alcon pretends to read signs of her recent unfaithfulness. Left alone on stage, Daphne muses

what is my pulse
 Become th'intelligencer of my shame?
 Or are my lookes the index of my heart? (III.ii.57-9)

Alcon has in fact been told about her recent history and his knowledge has nothing to do with her pulse. But it seems to Daphne as if her face and wrist are able to betray the secret she carries in her mind. She still believes that there is some correlation between her inside and outside that does not exist for the corrupt characters, all of whom believe only in keeping up outside appearances. Daphne's conscience is awakened by Alcon's knowledge of her shame and she suddenly appreciates that there is nothing that medicine can do for a guilty conscience:

oh what
 Can Phisicke doe to cure that hideous wound
 My lusts haue giuen my Conscience? (III.ii.66-8).

Some wounds are internal and mental. They will be felt in the mind and cannot be eased by any kind of external covering up or keeping up of appearances.

But lust has one completely unambiguous physical sign that nothing can cover up. Daphne may be pregnant and the medicine that she wants from Alcon may be an abortion. Although they are both very discreet about Daphne's problem Alcon does seem to understand her. Daphne certainly thinks he understands her condition:

He said I had misruled my bodie much,
 As if he meant that in some wanton sorte,
 I had abus'd my bodie with some man:
 O how should he know that? (III.ii.56-9).

When Daphne enters, she describes her symptoms to Alcon:

For I suppose, in troth, I am not well,
 Me thinkes I should be sick, yet cannot tell:
 Some thing there is amisse that troubles me,
 For which I would take Phisicke willingly (III.ii.3-6).

Daphne's mystery sickness is usually taken to be psychosomatic, the effect of guilt and shame. Procter, in her discussion of this scene, points out Alcon's sly allusions to Daphne's two lovers – her "*Colaxicall hote humours*" which must be cooled by some "*Menalchian Cordials*" (III.ii.32, 34) – and finds in these allusions a programme of moral and mental regeneration.⁴¹ Daphne must learn to forget Colax and return Menalchas's love. Her mind is purified, not by Alcon's medicine, but by her startled recognition of her guilt which his words induce. Procter thus reads Daphne's symptoms as entirely psychosomatic and symbolic of moral error and guilt.

But Daphne's words could suggest a physical as well as emotional cause for her symptoms. Her feelings of shame seem not to be awakened until after Alcon has taken her pulse and discovered her secret, making it unlikely that her illness is wholly induced by guilt. Earlier in the play Alcon had said that he gives the same medicine to everyone because he's only got two recipes (III.i.110-3) yet he repudiates Daphne's suggestion that she take the same medicine as Phillis:

⁴¹ Procter, p.96.

Faire Nimph, you must, if you wil vse my arte,
 Let me alone, to giue what I thinke good,
 I knew what fitted *Phillis* maladie,
 And so, I thinke, I know what will serve you (III.ii.40-3).

Alcon might just be showing off and pretending to have more medicines at his disposal than he has in reality, or he might be slyly implying that he will have to prescribe something that will undo her pregnancy, something that Phillis did not need. Alcon might know nothing about medicine but knowledge of how to avoid pregnancy would be typical of the corrupt characters and is possibly what *Techne* refers to here:

Techne teaches them those trickes,
 As they wil not forget againe in haste.
 I haue so opened their vnapt conceipts
 Vnto that vnderstanding of themselues,
 As they will shew in time they were wel taught,
 If they obserue my rules and *hide a fault* (I.iii.93-8, my italics).

Daniel has deliberately written this ambiguity into the play. It is an interpretative dilemma that he offers his audience.

Even in the final scene Daphne's situation remains ambiguous. She is not reunited with Menalchas even although all the other sundered lovers are brought back together. Is that because her offence is unpardonable? Ergastus asks her if anything is amiss and she replies

Nothing amisse with me, but that of late
 I tooke a fall, which some what grieues me yet (V.iv.153-4).

Surely we are meant to hear a pun on 'fall'? Instead of burying Daphne's offence, Daniel reminds us of it in the closing moments of the play. Ergastus advises her to be more careful in future

Which if you doe, no doubt but all will be well (V.iv.157)

That sounds like a pardon, but it is not complete. Daphne is still on her own on the stage as Menalchas is not there. Menalchas never appears on stage and is actually not a character in the play, which differs from Daniel's treatment of all the other couples of sundered lovers. Daphne's problem, uniquely amongst the faithless nymphs and swains, is not presented as a problem involving two people but as a problem for her alone. Ergastus can only promise that everything will 'be well' in the future even if it is not in the present.

The possibility of a physical transgression, paralleling the mental one but perhaps not so easily curable by the power of Daphne's mind or the strength of her repentance, is an intriguing one, raising the possibility that not just the happy ending but Arcadian innocence itself is based upon discreet, oblique social mechanisms and little deviations from perfect truth. We will return to the issues of Arcadian social indoctrination and mythmaking later in the discussion. For now it is enough to note that this is not simply a problem or plot complication introduced by the city characters, but an interpretative dilemma that they introduce as well.

The idea of a physical symbol which cannot be misinterpreted, however, is a positive relief in this world of free-floating signifiers. In fact there are genuine signs throughout the play. Palaemon and Silvia's pleasant, seemingly honest faces, upon which Cloris and Mirtillo commented with such surprise above, are not empty signs

because both Palaemon and Silvia are in fact faithful. Palaemon is appalled that the woman he believes to have been unfaithful still looks the same as she did before her fall:

oh these were *Silvias* images,
Then whilst her heart held faire, and she was chaste,
Now is her face all sullied with her fact,
And why are not those former prints defac'd?
Why should she hold, still in the forme she was,
Being now deform'd, and not the same she was? (II.iii.117-22).

Palaemon sees what he believes to be an empty sign, a mockery of the face and footprints of true chastity.⁴² In actual fact the sign is reliable because Silvia is still chaste and still the same as she ever was. Her mind has not changed any more than her features have. Physical signs are still working in this play; the real problem lies in their new interpretative complexity. The corrupt characters lie and deceive, problematising the relationship between inner mind and outer face. The inevitable effect of their actions is that Arcadian swains and nymphs stop trusting external signs and start experiencing the great divide between appearance and reality which was one of the most fundamental anxieties of the English Renaissance. They are plunged into all the anxieties of interpretation.

Genuine signs but corrupt interpretation of them are the hallmarks of the play's most significant blushing scene. This again involves Cloris and occurs when Amyntas sees her emerge, blushing, from a cave with Colax in pursuit. Techne had earlier told Amyntas that Cloris was secretly in love with Colax and had arranged to meet him in the cave. Amyntas did not believe Techne at the time but when he sees Cloris and

⁴² The word 'prints' that Palaemon uses might sound like a metaphysical conceit but does actually mean 'footprints' in this instance – it was coming across some footprints that he assumed to be Silvia's in one of their old lovers' meeting places that prompted Palaemon's reflections.

Colax leaving the cave he immediately assumes the worst. He takes Cloris's blushing face as a sign of her guilt:

Ah how she blusht when as she issued forth
 With her inamor'd mate out of the caue?
 And well then might she blush at such a deed (IV.i.61-3).

This is another occasion on which Amyntas has to interpret Cloris's blushes but this time he interprets wrongly. What he supposes to be a guilty look is really the countenance of disdainful and outraged modesty, as we find out later.⁴³ Amyntas wants to counteract Cloris's ambiguous blushing with a 'sign' of his own – he wants to kill himself. The dying lover, as will be discussed below, is a recurrent Arcadian topos and the dying Amyntas is another sign which all the other characters misinterpret. Blushing is produced by blood rushing to the cheeks so Amyntas effectively wants to shed his blood for Cloris's, to answer her symbol of blood with one of his own:

[to] rend that pact of nature, and dissolve
 That league of blood that ties me to my selfe (IV.i.46-7).

He and Cloris also form a 'league of blood' as his blood loss is the result of the excess of blood in her blush. Amyntas imaginatively connects his blood with Cloris's honour:

her immodestie hath lost this day,
 Two the most honest guardians of her good
 She had in life, her honour, and my blood (IV.i.95-7).

⁴³ It is worth noting that Ripa considers red to be the colour of disdain, again providing a sounder interpretation of colour in Daniel's Arcadia than either contemporary philosophers or the Arcadians themselves, Ripa, p. 446.

Amyntas's misinterpretation of Cloris's innocent blush leads to his threat to spill Colax's blood in return (IV.i.86) and his own nearly fatal suicidal blood loss.

But Cloris has not been unfaithful to Amyntas and has actually repulsed Colax by her use of unambiguous facial expressions:

I . . . lookt with such an angry eye,
And frowd so sowre, that I made loue afeard (IV.iii.11-2).

Cloris is the only character who does not lose her faith in the correlation between mind and face. She knows what she means and believes that it shows unambiguously in her face. Cloris rejects the mere world of appearances and puts her faith in internal worth, what she calls 'substance':

all the thing he [Colax] is he is with out,
For affection striues but to appeare,
And neuer is of substance, nor Sincere (IV.iii.64-6).

Cloris's distinction between the genuine substance inside and the outside of appearances and manners recalls the objection to civility manuals, that they teach only outside behaviour regardless of the actual moral worth of their reader. Earlier she had stood up to *Techne* on similar grounds, again showing her belief that the outside must reflect the inside:

Techne: Our promise must not preiudice our good:
And that it is no reason that the tongue,
Tye the whole body to eternall wrong.
Cloris: The Tongue is but the Agent of the heart (II.ii.157-60).

Cloris is the heroine of *The Qveenes Arcadia*. She is the only character who understands that there can be a gap between outsides and insides, who understands that it is possible to deceive and be deceived, without losing her confidence that outsides can and often do express insides and without plunging into the quagmire of wrong interpretations. Her main symbolic function in the play is to blush the blush of innocence and virtue, let the other characters misinterpret it as they like. In her reconciliation with the dying Amyntas, she blushes so unambiguously that even Carinus is forced to interpret it correctly.

And yet I see sh'is toucht, if not too late,
For I perceiu'd her coulour come and goe (IV.iv.81-2),

says Amarillis when Cloris hears that her beloved Amyntas is close to death. When she finds him she blushes again

As being asham'd that any eye should see
The new appearing of her naked heart,
That neuer yet before was seene till now.
Carinus: And'tis ill hap for me it was seene now.
Mirtillo: For we perceiued how *Loue* and *Modestie*
With seu'rall Ensignes, stroue within her cheekes
Which should be Lord that day (V.ii.64-70).

Carinus is forced to conclude:

Alas this sad reporte doth grieue me much,
And I did neuer thinke, that *Cloris* had
So deerey lou'd him as I finde she doth,
For by this act of hers I plainly see,
There will be neuer any hope for me (V.ii.137-41).

Although Cloris is the heroine of *The Queenes Arcadia*, and the only girl whose pattern of blushing, in spite of Ergastus's concern, has not changed at all, the other characters, in a final irony, misinterpret *her*. The rest of the community persists in blackening her name by insisting that she has been cruel to Amyntas and that he has killed himself over her cruelty, neither of which assertion is true. It is an example of Arcadian mythmaking at its least attractive, and this is a misinterpretation which cannot be blamed on the corrupt characters. The misinterpretation of Amyntas's suicide comes from the social and mythological fabric of Arcadia itself. Cloris is an outstanding exemplar of virtuous blushing, but Ergastus's complaint that 'the whole complection of *Arcadia*' is changed suggests that the nymphs' blushing is somehow linked to landscape and has a social as well as an individual function. Wright also addresses the idea of collective blushing in his preface to *The Passions of the Minde* where he suggests that northern peoples, like the English and Scots, are particularly prone to blushing and it is a sign of their virtue, preferable to the brazenness of Italians and Spaniards.⁴⁴ It is an interesting parallel as Wright is defining English virtue in the same terms as Ergastus defines Arcadian virtue, by the national characteristic of blushing, and in one sense Daniel's Arcadia may represent England. Coeffeteau remarks that sometimes humans can do things 'whereat heauen and earth blush and are ashamed' (p.155), which may be a rather conventional piece of rhetoric, but perhaps also suggests that passions in the human mind can go on to affect the world outside the individual body as well as producing changes in the face. Blushing spreads outwards. The beauty of the landscape is here linked to the virtue, expressed through blushing, of its inhabitants. Arcadia, it seems, is only as fair as its inhabitants and careful vigilance and social control, at times amounting even to the suppression of

⁴⁴ Preface [unpaginated], sig a4.

information, as here in Cloris's case, and earlier in Daphne's, is required to keep them all fair. However virtuous she is, Cloris finds herself being called cruel because that is the only way in which Arcadians know how to interpret the suicide of a young shepherd. The individual blusher is sacrificed to the whole.

Daniel's Arcadian Society

The problems raised by the difficulty of interpreting the new meaning of the blush cannot all be blamed on the surface plot of the arrival of the city characters in Arcadia and their complication of previous Arcadian relationships. Some of the responsibility must lie in the complexities of Arcadian society itself, in the importance it had previously attached both to the blush and to a certain understood code of behaviour in courtship. Amyntas and Carinus, discussing Cloris's signs of affection, reveal the ambiguities and interpretative dilemmas that were inherent in Arcadian courtship before any of the corrupt characters set foot in Arcadia. An Arcadian code of civility or social conduct had to be in place first before any city characters could come and complicate it. It is perfectly natural that, from the consideration of the effects of the city characters on Arcadian society, Daniel should have widened his focus to an exploration of the problems inherent in Arcadian society itself.

The idea of Daniel creating a supposedly ideal society that nonetheless explores its own tensions and imperfections fits in very well with Louis Marin's theory of utopics, discussed in chapter one. As Daniel is so concerned with the society of Arcadia underlying the plot events of *The Queenes Arcadia*, his work is better interpreted with reference to utopian than pastoral theory. Marin argued that any literary utopia would reveal, through gaps and puzzling inconsistencies in the text, the process of its own

formation and some of the imaginable alternatives to itself.⁴⁵ In Daniel's Arcadia we can almost see his thought processes unfolding. Arcadia is perfect, so how can these plot events happen? What would the society have to be like for this plot to be created there, and for the characters to react in this way to these plot events? Through a careful reading of Daniel's Arcadia we can spot the unspoken rules of Arcadian society, the education and thought processes that go into forming the next generation of young Arcadians, and the places where the reality of Arcadian life is clearly at odds with its outward self-presentation as a golden age ideal.

Arcadian society is Daniel's main concern in spite of the fact that almost everything that happens in Arcadia is courtship and love. He is able to reconcile these seeming opposites as love in Arcadia is shown to have a social function.⁴⁶ This is most obviously shown by the surprising fact that the old shepherds Ergastus and Meliboeus take the rifts that Colax has created in Arcadia's teenage relationships very seriously, and ensure that all sundered lovers are reconciled at the end of the play. It is surely strange that the village elders take this much interest in the love affairs of its adolescents.

Their unusual interest in the loves of the younger generation, however, may be explained by a prevalent view amongst seventeenth century moralists that adultery was a crime that not only deserved public punishment, but that threatened the whole of society. David Turner explains that '[m]ore than a 'private' matter of personal morality, the effects of infidelity rippled outwards threatening to engulf the whole of society.'⁴⁷ This opinion was possible because of the widespread conception that the

⁴⁵ Louis Marin, *Utopics: The Semiological Play of Textual Spaces*, trans. Robert A. Vollrath (Atlantic Highlands NJ: Humanities Press International, 1984, reprinted 1990), p.7.

⁴⁶ This bringing together of love and society in Arcadia is an answer to the long line of critics, the most recent of whom is Franziska Sick, who argue that Arcadia is concerned only with love and utopia only with society. See also chapter one for a fuller discussion of these arguments.

⁴⁷ David M. Turner, *Fashioning Adultery: Gender, Sex and Civility in England, 1660 – 1740* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), p.56.

family was a political and social institution, a microcosm of the state, and the first place where each person living in a community could make a difference by the practice of morality and good citizenship.⁴⁸ Turner also points out the family's significance as 'an important unit for the education and civilisation of children', an aspect of family life of particular interest for *The Qveenes Arcadia* as it is the city education that Colax's father bestows on him that eventually leads to the arrival of the city characters in Arcadia.⁴⁹ Ergastus and Meliboeus's behaviour, in this context, is that of exceptionally good, concerned citizens, who believe in the institution of marriage and its central importance to a harmonious and prosperous community. But their behaviour does have a more sinister side as it reveals the lengths to which they will go, and the amount they will interfere, to preserve their own vision of how Arcadia should be. The young lovers have to be corrected and brought into line with the vision of their elders, even in the seemingly private question of whom they should love. The fascinating question that Daniel explores is how the Arcadian society would have to be created to be able both to function effectively, ensuring its own survival, and to assimilate the love affairs of the young that seem to be its main business and one of its main concerns. Accordingly, this discussion of Arcadian society will start with an analysis of the rituals and processes of the courtship that seems to be Arcadia's main business.

Arcadian courtship is built around myth and ritual. As is shown by the discussion in Act one scene two, Cloris cannot directly show her affection but intimates it to Amyntas in small behavioural details like her blushing, playing with his dog and dropping a bunch of flowers when he is nearby. For Amyntas and Cloris to directly discuss the affection that they feel for each other is out of the question. Love has to be

⁴⁸ Turner, p.51. For a fuller discussion of the family as a social and economic unit in the early seventeenth century, see Susan Dwyer Amussen, *An Ordered Society: Gender and Class in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1988).

⁴⁹ Turner, p.51.

discreetly expressed through these circuitous means. Silvia describes the right Arcadian ending to such a love-affair; although she loved Palaemon she was far too modest to admit it to him so after he had told her of his love for her a few times he attempted suicide in rather a self righteous tone:

O *Silvia*, said he, since nor othe nor vow,
 Nor teares, nor prayers, haue the power to moue,
 Nor all that I can doe, can make thee know
 How true a heart, I offer to thy loue;
 I must trie some way else to shew the same,
 And make thy vndiscerning wilfull youth
 Know, though too late, (perhaps vnto thy shame)
 Thy wayward error, and my constant truth:
 When thou maist sigh, and say in grieffe of minde,
Palaemon lou'd, and *Silvia* was vnkinde (II.i.64-73).

Silvia is here threatened with the 'cruel maiden' stigma that is later attached to Cloris but she still can not overcome her modesty:

Faine would I haue recald him back but shame,
 And modestie could not bring forth his name (II.i.82-3).

But when Palaemon climbs the hill and resolutely prepares to jump she is overcome:

pittie breaking all those bands of shame,
 That held me back, I shrikd, and ran God knowes,
 With all the speed my feeble feete could make,
 And clammering vp at length (with much adoo)
 Breathlesse, I got, and tooke him by the hand,
 And glad I had his hand, and was not come
 Too late to haue it, and I puld him back:
 But could not speake one word; no more did he
 . . .
 And though I would haue spoken, yet me thought
 I should not, but my silence told him this,
 That tolde too much, that all I was was his (II.i.96-103, 115-7).

The suicide of a lovelorn shepherd is a motif borrowed from Italian drama. Tasso's Aminta attempts suicide and the attempt wins Silvia's love; Guarini's Mirtillo offers to die for Amarillis in imitation of Guarini's original faithful shepherd, Aminta, who kills himself in place of his faithless love Lucrina. But whereas in Italian drama suicide is a very serious and highly emotional issue, in Daniel it has become a commonplace, almost verging on parody. This is Guarini's Amarillis responding to her suitor Mirtillo's threat to kill himself over her cruelty:

Death? let me speak then; and be sure these words
 Be as a charm unto thee: though I know
 When Lovers talk of dying, it doth show
 An amorous custome rather of the tongue,
 Then a resolve of minde (continuing long)
 To do't indeed: yet if thou ere shouldst take
 So strange a frenzie; know, when thou dost make
 Away thyself, thou murtherst my fame too:
 Live then (if thou dost love me) (III.iii.2453-61)

Amarillis first of all recognises, and then rejects, the poetic convention of the lover dying for love. Guarini's plot is in fact so well crafted that Mirtillo does not seriously offer to die for love until it is absolutely necessary as his death will save the life of Amarillis herself. This makes Mirtillo's offered death noble, and unassailable by the charges of selfishness or petulance, accusations which could certainly be levelled at Palaemon.

In *The Queene's Arcadia*, by contrast, ritual suicide, or at least ritually attempted suicide, is now the accepted means of winning one's love. The connotations of Amyntas's suicide are clearly understood by everyone in Arcadia. As Amyntas rushes off to kill himself, Techne, who knows perfectly well that Cloris is innocent, calls her

a 'cruell mayde' (IV.i.122), that makes her cruelty sound more like the effect than the cause of Amyntas's suicide. He does not kill himself because Cloris has been cruel, but she is cruel because he kills himself. As Cloris and Techne leave to seek out Amyntas, Amarillis unfairly comments:

Ah cruell maide, she little knowes the grieffe
Of such a heart that's desperate of reliefe,
Nor vnderstands she her owne happinesse,
To haue so true a loue as he is

...

And poore *Amyntas* if thou now be gone,
Thou hast (like to the Bee that stinging dyes,
And in anothers wound leaft his owne life)
Transpierced by thy death, that marble heart,
Which liuing thou, couldst touch by no desert.
And if thou shalt escape, thou hast surui'd
Her crueltie, which now repents her wrong (IV.iv.77-80, 85-91).

Amarillis's moralising is completely misplaced. Amarillis is despised by her own beloved, which perhaps makes her particularly sensitive to Amyntas's plight, but everyone else in Arcadia seems to interpret it in the same wrong way. Mirtillus, describing Cloris's actions on seeing the unconscious Amyntas, evidently also believes that she is now repenting of cruelty in the accepted Arcadian way, and he uses Cloris as an example to all Arcadian nymphs:

Ah would to God *Dorinda* had bene there,
T'haue seene but *Cloris* acte this wofull part;
It may be, it might haue deterr'd her heart
From cruelty, so long as she had liu'd (V.ii.144-7).

The suicidal shepherd has a social function. By warning all nymphs not to be cruel, he ensures another generation of happy marriages in Arcadia. It is a risky strategy, but one that has an important social benefit: it allows the nymphs to relent and give

themselves in marriage without forcing them to admit to being in love. Silvia did not have to say a word. Arcadian courtship is silent, composed of gestures, looks, blushes and kisses. When Ergastus denounces the corrupt characters it is *talking* that he really accuses them of bringing to Arcadia:

These new and vnknowne mischiefes of debate,
Of wanton pride, of scandalous reportes,
Of vile deluding chaste and honest loues (V.iii.36-8).

The confusions that they bring are all created through speech. Arcadians prefer looks and facial expressions. They also have two ideals of behaviour for young women, firstly, they must be chaste, modest and silent, but secondly, they should be in love, although their love should not be revealed through talking. The problem for Arcadian nymphs, even when they are in love with their suicidal swains, is how to love and preserve their modesty at the same time. At what point does it become permissible to reciprocate affection? And how do they then admit to affection without speech? It is true that everyone knows that their looks and gestures can be ritualised and to some extent faked, but these are still preferable to actual speech. Arcadian idealism sets the modesty threshold rather high; love can only be admitted in the wake of a momentous catastrophe.⁵⁰ Nymphs have to pretend to be innocent for as long as they can.

We might want to question whether the nymphs' reserve, that reduces their lovers to despair, is really innocence, or a coy, rather calculated affectation of it. This returns us to the deceitfulness of civility, that is really just a code of outward behaviour and bears no relationship to the mind and disposition of the civilised person. Only now it is not the city characters, but the Arcadians themselves, who can be accused of

⁵⁰ Carinus in the second scene proclaims that Cloris must love him because he rescued her from a satyr. This is likewise a motif from Italian drama and seems to be another acceptable pattern for inducing love in a nymph – although in point of fact no nymph in these Italian dramas or in Daniel does fall in love because of a satyr's attack. However it seems to count as a suitably catastrophic romantic opportunity.

deceitful civility. Amarillis, who is honest enough to admit her love for Carinus without requiring a gesture of suicide, might seem more innocent to us but is despised and insulted by him:

Amarillis: If I had donne like *Cloris*, skornd your sute,
 And spourn'd your passions, in disdainfull sorte,
 I had bene woo'd, and sought, and highly prizd,
 But hauing n'other arte to winne thy loue,
 Saue by discouering mine, I am despisd

...
Carinus: Tis true I know you haue too much bewrayd
 And more then fitts the honour of a mayde (V.i.29-33, 48-9).

From one point of view Amarillis has been more truly innocent than Silvia was with Palaemon. (I am excluding Cloris, whom Amarillis names, from this criticism because she genuinely does not love Carinus and is therefore justified in her indifferent behaviour to him. She encourages Amyntas). Amarillis has candidly admitted her love because she does not see anything wrong or shameful in loving. Nobody has taught her to suppress her natural feelings. We may also question whether Daphne and Dorinda, who succumb to Colax's persuasions, are really less innocent than Cloris, who resists him, or Silvia, who resists Palaemon until he attempts suicide. This underscores the point made by Tasso and Guarini's golden age odes. In Tasso's pastoral world, all young people acted like Amarillis as they had not been taught to repress their natural feelings. In Guarini's Arcadia, a severe moral code had been invented. Daniel seems to follow Guarini, apparently condemning Amarillis's indiscreet behaviour. But the differences in the behaviour of Daniel's young Arcadians raises the questions of how this social code came into being, and how the young people have been instructed in it.

The differences between the levels of innocence and education in the Arcadian youth are illustrated in one scene where Cloris, Amarillis and Dorinda tell one another about dreams they have had that obviously relate to their current situations. Dorinda's dream is about her seduction by Colax:

I dreamt, that hauing gone to gather flowers,
 And weary of my worke, reposing me
 Vpon a banke neere to a Riuers side,
 A subtle Serpent lurking in the grasse,
 Came secretly, and seizd on my left breast,
 Which though I saw, I had no power to stirre,
 But lay me still, till he had eate away
 Into my bosome, whence he tooke my heart (IV.iii.135-42).

Dorinda is like Eve, innocently gathering flowers in the Garden of Eden, and Colax is the 'subtile Serpent' Satan. Dorinda's individual fall is like the original fall of man. 'Fall', as we have seen, is the word that Daphne uses to describe her lapse from grace. But the serpent was only able to work on Eve because she was completely innocent. Eve did not know what falsehood was so she believed the serpent; Dorinda and Daphne trusted Colax because they were not used to the idea of deception.

Ergastus and Meliboeus protest against knowledge as the root of all evil:

we see, how vice doth grow
 With knowledge, and brings forth a more increase,
 When skilfull men begin, how good men cease.
 And therefore how much better do we liue,
 With quiet ignorance (III.v.20-4).

This sounds as if Ergastus and Meliboeus believe that Arcadia is not just a golden age but an actual Garden of Eden, in a state of natural bliss due to its complete innocence and ignorance. But this is not in fact the case because there is some knowledge that is

essential if female ‘innocence’ – or virginity – is to be maintained. La Primaudaye comments, ‘[t]hat which commonly causeth men to will euill rather than good, proceedeth chiefly of this, that they haue no knowledge or experience therof’ (p.171). The mental strength that would have enabled Daphne and Dorinda to resist Colax, the strength which Cloris has, is based on knowledge and education. Cloris is not like the innocent but vulnerable Eve but like Britomart or the lady in *Comus*: mentally armour-clad with chastity. The danger is that Cloris’s well fortified chastity looks more like coy civility than open innocence. Techne comments

I perswade my selfe she is as like
As any subtile wench was euer borne,
To giue as wise a man as you the skorne (III.iii.46-8).

She uses the same adjective for Cloris’s virtue that was earlier applied to the serpent.

Daniel’s description of Dorinda’s dream is very similar to Ripa’s description of ‘Innocenza’ (‘innocence’), so similar in fact that it is worth pausing to compare them. Ripa’s ‘Innocenza’ is represented by a ‘[v]erginella, vestita di bianco, in capo tiene una ghirlanda di fiori, con un’Agnello in braccio’ (‘virgin, dressed in white, wearing a garland of flowers around her head, with a lamb in her arms’).⁵¹ The first point to notice is that this sounds like a pastoral scene. Does Ripa believe that innocence is more a property of the country than the city? If so that might explain why Daniel has chosen to investigate the issues of female behaviour and modesty in a pastoral drama. The white clothing and garland of flowers, Ripa explains, are meant to represent mental strength and purity: ‘l’innocenza è una libera, et pura mente dell’huomo, che senza ignoranza pensi, e operi in tutte le cose con candidezza di spirito, e senza puntura di coscienza’ (‘innocence is a free and pure mind, that thinks without

⁵¹ Ripa, p.235. The whole entry for ‘Innocenza’ can be found on p.235.

ignorance, and acts in all things with a candid spirit, and without the pangs of a guilty conscience'). Ripa's 'Innocenza' is like Cloris, not ignorant but truly innocent because she does not do and does not want to do things that she knows would result in guilt, whether in her own conscience or in the judgement of the world. Ripa's presentation of innocence, that he significantly imagines as a young girl, seems very positive and liberating for women, not condemning them to perpetual ignorance.

However, Ripa's positive presentation here is undermined by the detail of the lamb, that he explains is a figure of innocence 'perche non hà nè forza, nè intentione di nuocere ad alcuno' ('because it does not have the strength, nor the intention to hurt anybody'). The lamb is innocent partly because it is weak; it could not hurt anybody even if it did want to. The lamb, as he continues to explain, is also a symbol of innocence because of its patience, and in the self-denying way it gives up its milk, wool, and ultimately its life to its owners. In this last respect it is, as Ripa points out, also an image of Christ. But the sacrificial overtones of the lamb, heightened perhaps by the garland of flowers around the head, a usual detail of Greek ritual sacrifices, reflect negatively on the positive image of 'Innocenza.' The powerlessness and victimisation of the lamb suggest that this innocence, despite Ripa's confident assertion of its mental strength, is actually very vulnerable. This innocence now sounds like that more shaky concept of innocence as ignorance, displayed by Dorinda and Eve. More troublingly, could it be that innocence is itself a sacrifice? The innocence that is virginity (and 'Innocenza' is represented by a virgin) has certainly got to be sacrificed if the human race is to survive.

Ripa's entry for 'Virginità' is very similar to that for 'Innocenza', also featuring a young girl dressed in white and crowned in flowers, this time following a lamb through a meadow, but it makes some of these negative connotations clearer.⁵² The

⁵² Ripa, p.504.

green meadow represents the delights of the lascivious life, that the virgin eschews. There is a garland of flowers on her head 'perche, come dicono i Poeti, la virginità non è altro, che un fiore' ('because, as the poets say, virginity is no different to a flower').⁵³ But it is a flower just waiting to be picked, again suggesting the vulnerability of the young girl. There is a long poetic tradition, that is also followed by Ovid, of depicting Proserpine as in the act of picking flowers at the moment of her abduction by Pluto.⁵⁴ We have already seen how Daniel uses flowers to make Dorinda seem more vulnerable and like Eve. In *Paradise Lost*, Adam appears with a garland of flowers for Eve just after she has eaten the apple, ironically inappropriate as she is no longer crowned with innocence.⁵⁵ The details by which she is surrounded emphasise the precariousness of the virgin's state.

More surprisingly, Ripa's praise of virginity is less generous than his praise of the mental strength of innocence. The virgin is 'pallida, et alquanto magra' ('pale and also thin') because she is fasting, a detail presumably intended to signify the fact that she does not satisfy any of her natural appetites. Her virginity is 'il suo trionfo, et il suo prezzo, per la contraria inclinazione di quella età' ('her triumph and her price, because of the contrary inclination of her youth'). Virginity, it seems, is a self-sacrificing ideal. It is an unnatural state for a young girl to maintain, although her ability to do so does seem admirable (it is a triumph). But again the images of fecundity, the meadow and flowers, with which the virgin is surrounded undermine the representation of her triumph, and the sacrificial image of the lamb, and to some extent the flowers too, suggest the vulnerability of virginity to the far greater pressures of youth and fertility. If Ripa does not seem as enthusiastic about virginity as

⁵³ Ripa, p.505. The whole entry for 'Virginità' can be found on pp.504-5.

⁵⁴ *The Metamorphoses of Ovid*, trans. David R. Slavitt (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1994), V.375-7, p.96.

⁵⁵ John Milton, *Paradise Lost*, ed. Christopher Ricks (London: Penguin, 1968), IX.840-2. At IX.901 Adam calls Eve 'deflow'r'd' by eating the apple.

'Innocenza', it is probably because he recognises that virginity, although admirable in some ways, has got to be sacrificed in the end. This explains why he defines innocence as really a mental quality, as this can be maintained even after virginity is sacrificed. The woman in his image of 'Castità Matrimoniale' ('marital chastity') still wears the white clothing that represents purity.⁵⁶ There is more than one way of defining female 'innocence.' It could be virginity, ignorance, or the mental strength and knowledge needed to always behave well. Ripa, like Daniel, explores these alternatives and concludes that the third sort of innocence is best. Both authors show that innocence is too much surrounded by perils to be able to be maintained by mere ignorance. It takes the quality of genuine mental purity to maintain innocence, defined as the absence of guilt and wrongdoing, throughout a woman's life.

The difference between natural innocence, that is ignorance, and the innocence that is based on knowledge can be related back to the issues surrounding the problem of female blushing. If we return to Coeffeteau's suggestion that a very modest woman blushes for the 'lightest occasions', for 'words, for motions, and for the least licentious actions' it becomes evident that this blushing is actually based on knowledge, not the innocence defined as ignorance of Dorinda and Eve. How else would the blusher know which words and occasions are worth blushing about? Why this knowledge should necessarily be a sign of modesty is a difficult question to answer. In Friedrich Dedekind's *Grobianus and Grobiana*, a deliberate parody of the civility books popular in the sixteenth century, women are advised never to blush as

All men will think that you the way to vice will never know,
If in your gestures you no sign of blushing use to show.⁵⁷

⁵⁶ Ripa, p.66.

⁵⁷ Friedrich Dedekind, *The Schoole of Slovenrie*, trans, R.F (London: Valentine Simmes, 1605), 3.8, lines 4272-3, quoted in Barbara Correll, 'The Politics of Civility in Renaissance Texts: Grobiana in *Grobianus*', *Exemplaria: A Journal of Theory in Medieval and Renaissance Studies* 2, (1990), p.650. The poem went through three Latin editions in the mid-sixteenth century and was first translated into

Dedekind's advice is presumably meant to be a sarcastic inversion of the usual advice to young women to blush at the lightest occasion. But the parody in *Grobianus* is not straightforward as there is a genuine sense in which his advice is true. A girl cannot be expected to blush at something she is too innocent to understand. It is true, as some commentators were evidently starting to realise, that blushing is based on knowledge yet innocence is often defined as ignorance. Ironically, Meliboeus and Ergastus's wish that Arcadia could be as ignorant as Eden is completely at odds with their concern about the girls' lack of ability to blush. This again exposes how far distant Arcadia really is from the original golden age.

Daniel, as has already been noted, follows Guarini in his presentation of Arcadia but he keeps Tasso's idea that the Arcadians are living in a golden age. This allows him to expose the level of social control required to ensure that what is allowed is always pleasing. Daniel's nymphs and swains all have to be carefully taught both what is allowed or destined and that it is always pleasing. Sometimes we catch glimpses of this process of education. Silvia tells Cloris that she has 'heard' that men 'would not/ Regard the thing that easily was got' (II.i.55-6) and Cloris replies that she has 'heard' so too. But, considering that this happened before the corrupt characters arrived in Arcadia, where can they have heard that? Whoever told them that, though, it has had the desired effect as they both resist their lovers. Even Arcadian nymphs must be discreetly warned that there are limits to openness, honesty and innocence in amorous affairs, otherwise far more of them would be in need of Alcon's medicine. Like every other western society, Arcadia has invented a complex and rather hypocritical state of female virtue, that it chooses to call innocence, and some equally complex and hypocritical means for getting round this state of virtue in the interests of

English in 1605, the same year as *The Qveenes Arcadia* was performed, see Correll, p.640.

matrimony, of which ritual suicide is the most perverse. But even dropping flowers and petting dogs are symbolic, coy, ritualised gestures that preserve innocence while discreetly admitting love.

Corrupt characters, the play's ostensible plot, are nothing new in Arcadia; Guarini's Corisca had been educated in town, like Colax, and boasted of her skill in the art of deception. Daniel's innovation in *The Queenes Arcadia* is to expose the deceits and social mechanisms of Arcadian society itself. The issue of modest female behaviour in a civilised society, with all the paradoxes of silence and modesty but yet being in love, is the main problem he identifies for Arcadian society. For Daniel it is a confusing scenario that is based upon nymphs having to pretend to be innocent of all knowledge of either love or chastity, silently loving if they like but definitely remaining chaste, for as long as they possibly can.

Daniel had long had an interest in the question of female behaviour. His earliest literary works are the sonnet sequence *Delia*, where Delia is a conventionally cruel, chaste Petrarchan mistress, and *The Complaint of Rosamond*, the lament of a fallen woman. After their first individual appearances, Daniel always published these two pieces together. Hiller and Groves comment:

Daniel's innovatory idea of juxtaposing sonnet sequence and complaint exposes the disturbing irony that should the chaste and virtuous lady of Petrarchan love poetry succumb to her lover's persuasions she is discredited according to the very terms by which she was once praised.⁵⁸

Daniel had evidently always had an awareness of the ironies of female innocence in the larger context of society. Imagining this issue in the context of the perfect golden

⁵⁸ Hiller and Groves, p.9.

age society is like turning the screw, allowing for an exploration of female behaviour and innocence in the most extreme context possible.

Daphne's possible pregnancy, discussed above, is an issue that brings together Daniel's reworking of Tasso's golden age and his interest in female innocence alongside social reality. Tasso's pastoral world is supposed to be a paradise of free love because it exists before the concept of 'honour' or 'chastity', and therefore that of shame, has been invented. This is Tasso's depiction of Arcadian love in his golden age ode:

The Nymphes sate by their Paramours,
Whispring love-sports, and dalliance,
And joyning lips, and hand to hand;
The fairest Virgin in the land
Nor scorn'de, nor glor'yed to displaye
Her cheekes fresh roses to the eye,
Or ope her fair brests to the day,
(Which now adayes so vailed lye,)
But men and maydens spent free houres
In running Rivers, lakes, or shady Bowres (first chorus, 30-9).⁵⁹

However, as Renato Poggioli has noticed, the highest bliss that Tasso's golden world offers is the kiss. Except through the image of kissing, Tasso does not hint at sex; the girls in the river are virgins, there are no babies in his Arcadia, very few references to mothers, and definitely no pregnancies.⁶⁰ His supposedly free and frank celebration of

⁵⁹ The words denoting 'virgin' in this passage are an accurate translation of the Italian, and not simply Reynolds's invention. Tasso calls the girl in the water 'la verginella', although he also uses the more ambiguous term 'l'amata' ('the beloved') later in the passage, see Grillo's edition p.92.

⁶⁰ References to mothers disappear from the *Aminta* as its action progresses. Daphne's first argument that Silvia should return Aminta's love is so that she can become a mother and be able to reproduce herself (I.i.85-7), there are references to Silvia's own beautiful mother in the first act, and Thyrsis accuses the 'nurse and mother' of teaching girls the art of coquetry (II.ii.27). But after this there are no more references to mothers: Nerina is worried about having to tell Silvia's father she is dead, but does not mention her mother (III.ii.29), Elpino leaves the stage at the end of the play to inform Silvia's father, but again not her mother, of her impending marriage (V.i.130-1), and Daphne's arguments in favour of procreation are not alluded again to in the scene where Aminta and Silvio are reconciled. The play might be trying to distance the thoughts of pregnancy and motherhood that it finds distasteful as the plot moves closer to consummation. Venus does appear to speak the epilogue, looking for her errant son Cupid, but the goddess of love is probably an exception to this general silence about mothers.

human love is a cover-up, a half-truth. Poggioli relates this not to any latent prudery or modesty at work the *Aminta*, but to a pastoral fantasy of total irresponsibility: '[t]he pastoral longing is but the wishful dream of a happiness to be gained without effort, of an erotic bliss made absolute by its own irresponsibility.'⁶¹ Tasso avoids all reference to sex and/or marriage because he does not want to have to deal with the long-term physical and emotional realities of human relationships.⁶² There does not seem to be any conversation or companionship between his amorous couples either. This means that the picture of pastoral bliss that he offers his reader is severely limited in its possibilities and does not reflect the whole spectrum of human experience. The image of pastoral bliss that he offers can only be achieved by the suppression of reality. It is not in fact true that one can do whatever one likes in Tasso's golden age. As well as feeding a pastoral fantasy of irresponsibility because it will have no consequences, Tasso's equation of the kiss with the whole of human love is also an aestheticisation of a less attractive reality.

Daniel undermines Tasso's ideal by suggesting the possibility of pregnancy. He can do this because he is not trying to create an aestheticised, static, golden age world. Daniel's Arcadia is full of change, not just in Daphne's slip and Colax's love-affairs, but also in the other challenges, like medicine and litigation, that are introduced to Arcadia by the city characters in the course of the play. At the end of *Aminta*, and even *Il Pastor Fido*, the golden age of happiness and prosperity is restored even though the events of the play have temporarily undermined the Arcadian ideal. But Daniel does not recreate the golden age in the final act of *The Qveenies Arcadia*.

⁶¹ Renato Poggioli, *The Oaten Flute: Essays on Pastoral Poetry and the Pastoral Ideal* (Cambridge Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1975), p.14.

⁶² Tasso's reluctance to engage with the world around him, and fantasy of a pastoral bliss that is essentially self-contained and without consequences, might be related to the Italian ideal of otium. See Brian Vickers, 'Leisure and Idleness in the Renaissance: The Ambivalence of *Otium*' (Part II), *Renaissance Studies* 4:2, (1990), pp.111-2 for a discussion of the positive values of otium in Petrarch, although he does stress the undercurrent of disapproval present even in the Italian conception of otium elsewhere in the article.

Change will still occur and watchfulness will still be needed. Ironically, change, action and learning are actually necessary in order to preserve the illusion of the golden world in Arcadia. Ergastus and Meliboeus have to thwart the corrupt characters, and stories like Daphne's have to be suppressed. Her predicament becomes a matter of concern for the whole society, further emphasising the point that where Tasso considers love as a private gratification, Daniel is interested in its social implications. Once again, the play that is set in Arcadia shows greater realism and a greater interest in the workings of the whole society of the play-world than one that is set in a vague, generalised pastoral location. The glossing of Daphne's slip enables the Arcadians to feel that they are still living in a golden age, but Daniel has allowed the audience to glimpse the alternative Arcadian reality.

It is again to preserve the fiction that Arcadia is a golden age that Cloris finds herself cast as a cruel maiden. Her story is subverted by her society so that that society can promote its own self image. Amyntas does not kill himself over Cloris's cruelty but because he saw her leaving a cave with Colax. The play does try to blacken Cloris with the charge of cruelty through her resolve not to encourage Amyntas any further after she hears Silvia's tale of Palaemon's unfaithfulness. This is touched on in III.iv and made much of in the final act but the charge is not very convincing. At the beginning of the play Amyntas looks back upon signs of affection from Cloris and even if she does temporarily withdraw her favours the timescale of the play means that she cannot do so for more than a few days. Even Arcadian swains are supposed to persevere for a bit longer than that. And Amyntas has not actually told Cloris that he loves her so she cannot really be seen as unfaithful to him. Cloris's signs of affection to Amyntas are conveniently forgotten by the other Arcadians in their determination to cast her as a cruel maiden. Besides, it is evident that Amyntas

kills himself not for these few days of neglect but because of the cave incident. Amyntas is simply wrong and uses his dramatic gesture to establish himself as in the right again. Cloris has common sense and trusts her own innocence:

if he doe this deed,
It is his error, and no fault of mine (IV.iv.48-9)

but she has to accept the official interpretation of his suicide anyway and agree that it was all her fault. In the final act she meekly tells Amyntas's father:

[I] sorry am with all my heart that I,
Haue bene the cause he hath indur'd so much (V.iv.114-5).

This is an interesting example of a utopic contradiction, or alternative, visible in the text. Cloris and the reader know the truth about Amyntas's suicide attempt, and it even seems as if she is going to protest her own innocence and refuse to pretend to be responsible. Then the play for some reason loses interest in Cloris's innocence and allows the plot to proceed just as if she was responsible. It is a moment when the earlier demands of the plot and characters seem to lead to one interpretation (Amyntas wrongly believed that Cloris was an adulteress and tried to kill himself from grief and shame) but the interpretation that is actually offered is different (we seem to be expected to believe that Amyntas did in fact kill himself over Cloris's cruelty to him). The story has effectively changed course halfway through. The reader, however, remains aware of this lapse in logic. If the real story got out it would be a story of error, jealousy, misinterpretation and needless suffering and Amyntas, not Cloris, would be the one at fault. But Arcadians are not used to stories like that and do not

know how to deal with them, so they rework it to make it more socially acceptable, fitting in to the pastoral stories to which they are accustomed (this particular plot is borrowed from Tasso's *Aminta*). Arcadian myth is preserved even at some expense of the absolute truth.

Daniel's Arcadian society finally emerges as complex and paradoxical. Its main problem lies in its contradictory expectations for female modesty and chastity yet submission to courtship. Arcadian courtship is thus an extremely complicated business that relies on significant ritualised gestures and repeated understood stories like that of the suicidal shepherd and cruel maid rather than the more common-sense measure of conversation. Daniel also suggests that certain discreet kinds of education are needed in order to achieve the Arcadian ideal for young women. The audience is allowed to catch glimpses of the processes of education, and perhaps suppression, in operation. It is through these little glimpses, as Marin argues, that it is easiest to understand the nature and boundaries of the imagined society.

Daniel's Civil Wildness

Arcadian innocence is a carefully constructed reality preserved by the social indoctrination of myth and ritual (and possibly also suppression of individual lapses like Daphne's). This state of affairs can be related to the concept of Arcadia's 'civil wildness.' Sidney called Arcadia a 'civil wildness' because he suggested that there was order and control even in the seemingly wild and natural Arcadian retreat. In *The Queenes Arcadia* Daniel repeatedly stresses the element of social control present in Arcadian innocence. Ergastus and Meliboeus, the old shepherds whose care and

watchfulness eventually unmasks Colax and Techne's villainy, comment upon Arcadian laws and customs almost every time they are on stage. Meliboeus blames Colax's deviousness on his foreign education:

This is that *Colax* that from forraine lands,
 Hath brought home that infection that vndoes
 His countrie goodnesse, and impoysons all.
 His being abroad would marre vs quite, at home.
 Tis strange to see, that by his going out,
 He hath out-gone that natiue honestie,
 Which here the breeding of his countrey gaue (I.iv.10-6).

There is a paradox in his words that Meliboeus seems not to hear. How can 'natiue honesty' be bred? 'Native' refers to something one is born with, 'breeding' implies something that has been taught. Meliboeus suggests that something *has* been bred into the Arcadians but, whatever this is, it cannot be 'natiue honesty.' It must be a state, like Arcadian innocence, that is in reality carefully worked out and controlled, but which is *called* 'natiue honesty' – and perhaps most people really believe that that is what it is. The most effective social mechanisms are those that are invisible. Ergastus makes this invisibility conspicuous in his words on the same theme:

As if that nature had not tooke more care
 For vs, then we for our owne selues can take,
 And makes vs better lawes then those we make (III.v.14-7).

But it is the Satyr, not the Arcadians, who follows the laws of nature. Arcadian society is not really in the state of nature, its laws are as artificial as those of civilisation, but it likes to pretend that it is.

Colax's father aimed

T'advance his forward sonne beyond the traine
Of our *Arcadian* breed (I.iv.21-2),

again suggesting that Colax has been taught more, or taught something different, to the rest of the Arcadians. His foreign education when still a boy has cut Colax off from his compatriots. Even in Arcadia he cannot live as they live or think as they think. Arcadianism has been trained into the nymphs and swains, as Meliboeus admits when he claims that Colax can 'reuerse/ The course wherein by custome they were bred' (II.iv.33-4). Colax may be able to undo Arcadian breeding, but he cannot create it. As a child he was brought up differently and now he can never be a real Arcadian. Being an Arcadian means more than simply having been born in Arcadia; it means receiving the Arcadian education in 'natiue honesty' and 'innocence', and growing up to share that distinctive education with the next generation. Arcadia can only survive in isolation. When the corrupt – or perhaps we could substitute the phrase 'not specially educated' – characters come to Arcadia they begin to destroy it and would destroy it totally if it were not for Meliboeus and Ergastus's intervention.

Arcadia has to exclude foreign elements if it wants to survive and everyone in Arcadia has to share the same Arcadian vision and education. This need for isolation gives point to Meliboeus's address to the Arcadians in the final act:

You gentle Shepheards and inhabitants
Of these remote, and solitarie parts
Of *Montaynous Arcadia*, shut vp here
Within these Rockes, these vnfrequented Clifts,

Th'*Arcadia* that weThe walles and Bulwarkes of our libertie,
From out the noise of tumult, and the throng

Of sweating toyle, ratling concurrence,
 And haue continued still the same and one
 In all successions from antiquitie

...

Least that we leaue not to posteritie, found continued thus
 By our fore-fathers care who leaft it vs (V.iii.1-9, 16-8).

It gives point to Meliboeus's concerns, but also adds irony. The contrast that Meliboeus paints is not really between a natural golden age and the corrupted iron age outside it, but between two societies that both imagine themselves superior to others. We know that Arcadia is no more a golden age than the next place so Meliboeus's words become mere empty rhetoric designed to flatter his audience. Meliboeus is also addressing his royal audience but Daniel's insistence that Arcadia's specialness and golden age attributes are a myth subtly undermines his praise of England as well. Using Arcadia to suggest England is a subtle way of undermining the ideal society that the royal audience might want to imagine they preside over because Arcadia is a land that consistently undermines its own pretence of perfection. The same subtle irony can be felt in Meliboeus's final speech, the final speech in the play, in which he warns that custom can destroy innocence and that we must not allow our characters to be formed by habit.⁶³ Daniel shows throughout the play that Arcadian innocence *is* a custom and a habit. If Meliboeus's advice were followed it would lead not to Arcadia but to anarchy.

We are returned to the paradox of 'civil wildness', the need for order and organisation even in the supposedly wild Arcadia. For Sidney, Arcadian civil wildness implied no more than that there are well organised, 'civilised' towns and

⁶³ Meliboeus's conservative attitude, distrustful of new ways and preferring the customs inherited from earlier generations, parallels what Gregory Kneidel has recently shown to be the underlying debate of Daniel's *Musophilus*. Philocosmus, the practical man of action, does not want to be limited by the old ways and has no respect for tradition while Musophilus, who eventually wins the debate, believes in the value of inherited wisdom and is cautious about ever disregarding it. See Gregory Kneidel, 'Samuel Daniel and Edification', *Studies in English Literature* 44, (2004), p.62.

governments regulating the rural community somewhere off-stage, that the reader, like Basilius, is free to ignore in the poetic dream of Arcadia (although if these realities are ignored for too long they will start to make their presence felt). For Daniel, sophistication and civility have encroached more deeply upon Arcadia's rural innocence. Daniel takes Sidney's, and his main source Guarini's, recognition that Arcadia is a normal rural community not a golden age ideal one stage further. Daniel's Arcadians try to maintain the idealised illusion Basilius is forced to reject. Because this is no more than an illusion a great deal of complex backstage work is necessary to keep up this image that they present both to themselves and to the outside world. Meliboeus has made it clear that there is a social order, received through education, at work in Arcadia. Ergastus says that he would rather be what the corrupt characters see as 'barbarous' than be like them – 'if thus their skill/ Doth ciuilize let vs be barbarous still' (V.iii.106-7) – although this is not a fair comparison as Arcadia is not barbarous but carefully controlled. Meliboeus earlier argued that deceitful civility is more dangerous to Arcadia than wildness. This is again slightly disingenuous as Arcadian civility is itself deceitful, and what he might call 'civility' could equally well be termed 'an alternative education.' This Arcadia pretends to be an ideal, golden age, innocent world even though it is in reality a complex and carefully organised society. Daniel's Arcadia is thus more sinister than Sidney or Guarini's as the state clearly controls and manipulates its inhabitants, yet pretends to be ideal and innocent. It shows all the deceit of civility, appearing to be one thing while it is really quite different underneath.

Comparison with the figure of the satyr clearly reveals that there is some civility and organisation at work even in Arcadia. Daniel's Silvia takes an interesting view of the satyr:

oh no maruaile tho the Satyre shund,
 To liue with man, when he perceiu'd he could,
 With one and the same breath blow heat and cold (II.i.32-4).

This satyr is not deceitfully civil but perfectly honest about his feelings. He would rather be alone than be with corrupt people. Silvia's satyr is not, as one might expect, extremely wild but extremely discerning. He is a hyper-Arcadian: Arcadians isolate themselves from other civilisations because they see them as corrupt and the satyr isolates himself from the Arcadians because he sees them as corrupt. The complete flight from civilisation once again ends in the satyr. Like Meliboeus's advice about custom, it ends not in Arcadia but in anarchy.

Characters who feel betrayed by their Arcadian lovers want to retreat into the woods away from Arcadia. Silvia says

what will folke thinke of me?
Cloris in troth, it makes me so much loath
 My selfe, loath these woods, and euen hate the day,
 As I must hide my griefes out of the way:
 I will be gone, *Cloris*, I leaue thee here,
 I cannot stay (II.i.158-63)

and Palaemon expresses this wish more strongly:

O know *Mirtillus* that I rather could
 Runne to some hollow caue, and burst and die
 In darknes, and in horroure, then vnfold
 Her shamefull staine, and mine owne infamie.
 But yet it will abrode (II.iii.43-7).

Amyntas retreats into the woods to die and echoes Palaemon's violent language of 'burst'ing in his phrases 'rend the pact of nature' and 'dissolue the leauge of blood' (quoted above). They all desire solitude and even dissolution of the self, overwhelmed in private grief, and they all link this to society, to other people finding out about their griefs. These are satyr-fantasies. Hidden and alone in forests and dark caves, they want their lives to be nasty, brutish, solitary and short. Silvia, Palaemon and Amyntas want to retreat from society altogether, even Arcadian society. The dissolution of the self would free them from having to think, from having to act as social individuals in accordance with the rules of society, and from being judged by other members of that society. *L'enfer, c'est les Autres*. These intense satyr-fantasies again expose the real civility of the Arcadian retreat and they also expose how tempting it would be to retreat again even from Arcadia itself.

We noted above that social satire was a genre appropriate to Daniel's Arcadia. The satyr is another satire on Arcadia, embodying an ironic critique of civil wildness, society and innocence. It is easy to connect satires with satyrs because the two words were believed to be etymologically related, and Elizabethan satires were in fact written in the persona of the satyr.⁶⁴ Silvia, Palaemon and Amyntas all have to counteract these satyr-fantasies and become happy members of Arcadian society once more and for all of them this is achieved through reciprocated love. Love is Arcadia's main social lever. Their early education indoctrinates the nymphs and swains in Arcadian innocence and prepares them for Arcadian love affairs, then fulfilment in love is used to maintain social contentment. It is not too far fetched to compare the use of sex as a means of social control in Aldous Huxley's dystopian novel *Brave*

⁶⁴ For an account of this wrong connection of satire with satyrs, see Angus Fletcher, 'Jonson's Satiric-Comedy and the Unsnarling of the Satyr from the Satirist', *Ben Jonson Journal* 7, (2000), p.247.

New World. Apart from during courtship, no one in Arcadia is allowed to love in vain. Everyone ends up married. Even love has a social function.

But because everyone in Arcadia has to end up married, it is vital that they marry the right people. There is no free choice in Arcadian love affairs: everyone has a predestined partner. Sometimes both nymphs and swains can be temporarily confused about who they are meant to love – Carinus pursues Cloris until he realises that she is meant for Amyntas, whereupon he turns to Amarillis, Dorinda rejects Mirtillus but is brought to realise her mistake. In every partnership there is one partner who loves faithfully – Amarillis and Mirtillus are examples – and the other partner is brought into line. Carinus agrees quite ungraciously to love Amarillis –

Amyntas haue her [Cloris's] loue? that were most strange,
When he hath gotten that you shall haue mine (V.i.91-2) –

but he has no choice in the matter: he must love someone, he cannot continue to love Cloris, and Amarillis already loves him. He knows the Arcadian rules and agrees to play by them.

The cruel maiden myth is a product of this belief in socially organised love-matches. Because individuals have no free choice but are forced to love a destined partner, withholding love becomes wilful and cruel. This socialised pairing off comes from Guarini, where a wrong marriage between Silvio and Amarillis is nearly made by the priest and a repatterning of lovers – Silvio with his faithful Dorinda and Amarillis with her faithful Mirtillo – has to take place in order for the ending to be happy. One feels that Daniel's older generation of Arcadians would not make such a mistake. Their grip on Arcadian happiness is much surer. The importance of successful love affairs in creating happy Arcadian citizens explains why Ergastus and Meliboeus take

them so seriously and go to such efforts to reconcile the young lovers. For seventeenth century moral commentators, as Turner points out, the best means of avoiding adultery was to marry happily, and the best means of marrying happily was to marry the right person.⁶⁵ Meliboeus and Ergastus promote what they see as the 'right' partnerships, banishing Colax and persuading his victims Dorinda and Daphne to make it up with their own previous partners. All the young Arcadians go along with this vision of socially correct pairings, even when, as in the case of Carinus, it means relinquishing their first choice. In *Brave New World*, the Director of Hatcheries and Conditioning comments that 'that is the secret of happiness and virtue – liking what you've got to do. All conditioning aims at that: making people like their unescapable social destiny.'⁶⁶ This is just another way of saying 'piaccia se lice.' Even the emotion of love is carefully controlled and exploited in Daniel's Arcadia, whose characters would do anything to preserve their myth of Arcadian perfection.

Daniel's version of Arcadia is the most bitter and ironic of any to be considered in this study. From the surface plot of the arrival of the city characters in Arcadia, *The Qveenes Arcadia* extends into an exploration of the world of Arcadia itself. This is a perfectly natural development of the play's interest in social satire, and not at odds with its Italianate plot as most critics think. The way Daniel imagines Arcadia grows out of the clash between the pastoral dramas of Tasso and Guarini. Mixing Tasso's idea of the golden age world with Guarini's realistic and moral Arcadia seems to have stimulated Daniel's imagination to create an imaginary world that is almost dystopian in its level of social control, yet that fights hard to believe that it is in fact a golden age. It was argued in chapter one that Arcadia can be a utopia by virtue of its interest

⁶⁵ Turner, pp.58-9. The ideal marriage partners had to be equal, or at least compatible, 'particularly in respect of religious persuasion, rank and breeding, wealth and age' (p.59). Turner is here describing a belief prevalent in a time slightly later than Daniel's, but we can clearly see similarities between this idea and Daniel's views in *The Qveenes Arcadia*.

⁶⁶ Aldous Huxley, *Brave New World* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1932), p.17.

in social organisation and control; here it is close to a dystopia. Daniel is interested in exploring the mechanisms behind Tasso's golden age, and a close reading of the play allows us to see the process of imaginary world formation in operation, through the ways the Arcadians respond to plot events that reveal their education and opinions. *The Qveenes Arcadia* is clearly sarcastic about the idea that Arcadia is a perfect place and exposes it as a complex and carefully orchestrated society. But it differs from the earlier Arcadias of Sidney and Guarini, and indeed from most later Arcadias, in keeping a strong awareness of the fact that Arcadia is meant to be perfect, and creating an Arcadian society that is aware of and tries to present itself in accordance with its golden age myth.

Although aware in *The Qveenes Arcadia* that all civility is deceitful and that the only honest characters are the satyr and Erminthian boar, Daniel seems to feel that the greatest danger is presented by those who, like his Arcadians, are least aware of their own civility. The play's original title, 'Arcadia Reformed' reflects his uneasiness about Arcadian civility. Who is it who reforms Arcadia, and when is this achieved? Is it an ironic reference to the efforts of the city characters, or are their efforts a genuine and necessary reform of Arcadia, making it more aware of its own flawed society? Arcadia is 're-formed', in the sense of reconstructed along its old lines, in the last act, but whether this is a change for the better is open to debate. Daniel in *The Qveenes Arcadia* creates an Arcadia that is more intense and original than any other in English literature, and one that is certainly much more bitter and paradoxical than any of the Arcadian dramas to be written later in the seventeenth century.

Chapter IV: Arcadian Tragicomedy in the Restoration

After Samuel Daniel wrote *The Queene's Arcadia*, drama became the dominant genre used to explore the idea of Arcadia. Pastoral dramas and masques of all kinds were popular in the Caroline and early Restoration periods. Although it will consider some of these pastoral dramas, this chapter will focus more narrowly on two plays set in Arcadia written in the early Restoration period: Thomas Forde's *Love's Labyrinth*, printed in 1660 as part of a larger collection of imaginative and patriotic works intended to celebrate the king's return but never performed; and Thomas Shadwell's *The Royal Shepherdess*, performed and published in 1669.¹ Little is known about Forde except that he was a royalist and author. Shadwell's career is much better documented – although today he may be chiefly remembered as the target of Dryden's *MacFlecknoe*, in his own time his poetry was better regarded and he became poet laureate under William III in 1689 after Dryden's fall from favour.² His best known plays now are *The Virtuoso*, a satire of the aims of the Royal Academy, *The Libertine*, a Don Juan play, and the musical version of Dryden and Davenant's adaptation of Shakespeare's *Tempest*. *The Royal Shepherdess* is his only pastoral drama and it today attracts practically no critical interest. It will be considered here less for any

¹ Forde's book in which *Love's Labyrinth* appears is essentially a collection of literary works, including apothegems, letters, poems and the play *Love's Labyrinth*, but made to sound contemporary by its title '*Virtus Rediviva a panegyrick on our late King Charles the I. &c. of ever blessed memory*' and its concluding 'panegyrick on his sacred Majesties most happy return', (London: R. and W. Leybourn for William Grantham, 1660). Shadwell's *Royal Shepherdess* was performed by the Duke of York's company in 1669, as we know from Pepys's reference to it in his diary (discussed below), and published in London by Henry Herringman in 1669. These plays are so little-known today that they are not available in reliable modern editions, meaning the best available editions for a scholarly study are the original ones. For this reason I use the first (and in many cases the only) edition of all the texts cited in this chapter. Shadwell's *Royal Shepherdess* did have more than one printing as a new edition appeared in 1691 and it is part of the collection of Shadwell's complete works collected and edited by his son in 1720 (printed in London for J. Knapton and J. Tonson). The most recent edition is that in Montague Summer's 1927 edition of Shadwell's complete works, but I have decided to use the first edition of this play too, in keeping with the other primary texts cited in this chapter.

² For Forde, see DNB vol. 20, p.352, for Shadwell vol. 49, p.922, p.924.

intrinsic literary merit than because it is set in Arcadia and has some thematic concerns in common with other depictions of Arcadia discussed earlier in this study. Forde's *Love's Labyrinth* by contrast, although so little known, is a more accomplished play that actually demonstrates considerable imagination and originality in the construction of its plot.

Forde and Shadwell, like Sidney and Daniel, explore the imperfections and tensions of their own societies by exploding the myth of Arcadian perfection. Although this might seem as if the study is jumping from Daniel to the Restoration, eliding the entire Caroline period in the process, examples of Caroline dramas will be used to contrast with the primary texts in this chapter as the dramatists of the early Restoration looked back to Caroline drama for inspiration. In fact it will become clear that these plays are dependent on Caroline literary culture and that there are many similarities between the Caroline and Restoration periods for royalist tragicomic writers. This chapter aims to place Forde and Shadwell's plays in two contexts: to show how Restoration tragicomedy reflects its own time and addresses the issues of regicide and restoration through an exploration of their treatment of kings and sexual transgressions in the royal family, but also to place its central texts in a continuing literary tradition of Arcadian depictions by exploring, as for Sidney's *Arcadia* and Daniel's *The Qveene's Arcadia*, their presentation of the land of Arcadia itself. In so doing it will evaluate the level of literary continuity in depictions of Arcadia against the historical background of major social and political change.

Interpreting Tragicomedy

That Forde and Shadwell's plays are tragicomedies is a fact that deserves attention. Tragicomedy, as Dryden tells us, was the most popular form of drama in the seventeenth century, yet it has only recently begun to attract critical interest. The new wave of interest in tragicomedy as a genre was sparked off by two collections of essays, *Renaissance Tragicomedy: Explorations in Genre and Politics*, edited by Nancy Klein Maguire in 1987, and *The Politics of Tragicomedy*, edited by Gordon McMullan and Jonathan Hope in 1992, when it was realised that the tragicomedy of seventeenth-century England might be intimately connected to its politics.³ As Maguire points out in her introduction, the possibility of political interpretation makes seventeenth-century tragicomedy particularly suited to New Historicist interpretations.⁴ It is attractive to link seventeenth-century drama with politics because in both the Caroline and Restoration courts drama was an important form of entertainment that was actively sponsored by the monarch. But on the other hand, the king's involvement with the theatre might only have tightened his control over what dramatists could and could not say. Caroline censorship was strict. In the 1640s and 50s, when the chaos of civil war was preventing the censors from fulfilling their duties, a wealth of subversive pamphlets appeared as if from nowhere as, whatever Charles I's subjects may have been thinking, it had not been possible for them to

³ In contrast to the new interest in tragicomedy as a genre, interest has always been taken in the plays of Beaumont and Fletcher and in the drama of the Restoration, but criticism of these before 1987 tends to focus on dramatic form rather than political content, as in Laura Brown's 'The Divided Plot: Tragicomic Form in the Restoration', discussed below.

⁴ *Renaissance Tragicomedy: Explorations in Genre and Politics* (New York: AMS Press, 1987), p.1.

publish their radical ideas any earlier.⁵ The possibility of political interpretations in the early part of the seventeenth century, at least, is a doubtful one, although there have been some attempts at it – Walter Cohen and Nicholas F. Radel are two recent commentators who offer readings of Caroline tragicomedies that suggest the subversive possibilities these plays may have offered to the ordinary audience member.⁶

Tragicomedy certainly became extremely popular at Charles I's court, and likewise flourished in the first ten years of Charles II's reign. McMullan and Hope illustrate the Caroline fondness for the genre when they point out that Fletcher's *The Faithful Shepherdess* failed when it was first performed and did not become successful until its revival at court in 1634.⁷ But then again, Beaumont and Fletcher's tragicomedy *Philaster* was an instant success in 1608. The question arises of whether tragicomedy was so popular in the Caroline and early Restoration periods for political reasons alone, or whether there are literary reasons too for its success.

The form of Caroline drama owed a great deal to the king and queen's involvement with the theatre. Andrew Gurr notes that '[u]nder Charles in the last fifteen years playgoing, playwriting and discussion of the art became a serious courtly pastime'.⁸ It is difficult to know how to separate 'political' explanations for the popularity of tragicomedy from 'literary' ones because the kind of drama that Charles and Henrietta Maria preferred surely stems from their personal tastes as well as from political motives. Henrietta Maria's specific influence on Caroline drama was to introduce a 'cult of Platonic love, mediated through French romance and pastoral drama, which

⁵ See Christopher Hill, *Some Intellectual Consequences of the English Revolution* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 1980), p.46.

⁶ Cohen in 'Prerevolutionary Drama' in McMullan and Hope ed., *The Politics of Tragicomedy: Shakespeare and After* (London and New York: Routledge, 1992), pp.122-50 and Radel in 'Homoeroticism, Discursive Change, and Politics: Reading 'Revolution' in Seventeenth-Century English Tragicomedy', *Medieval and Renaissance Drama in England* 9, (1997), 162-78.

⁷ McMullan and Hope, p.2.

⁸ Andrew Gurr, *Playgoing in Shakespeare's London* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), p.xiii.

projected women centre-stage as the embodiment of ideal beauty.’⁹ In the Restoration period, partly as a result of Henrietta Maria’s earlier influence, heroines not heroes became the central characters in pastoral drama. Graham Parry, in an analysis of the court masques of the Caroline period, connects their cult of refined NeoPlatonic love with the queen’s personal literary taste, formed at the French court, but also points out that

Charles seems to have been quick to indulge the Queen’s taste, seeing in this cult an admirable means of projecting the royal image in a way that distracted attention from the political aspects of his kingship, offering instead a vision of a beneficent love at the heart of a happy nation.¹⁰

‘Literary’ choices can acquire political significances. Conversely, politically motivated court productions are still works of literature. Even if the kind of drama that the king and queen chose to popularise was chosen by them not because they liked it but only in order to promote their political message (which is very unlikely), it would still have set the literary fashion and become an influence for other Caroline authors. Nevertheless, we will try to separate the inseparable and trace the ‘political’ implications of the royal involvement with the theatre as distinct from the literary tastes of the Caroline period.

One implication of Charles and Henrietta Maria’s interest in drama and attendance at theatres is the development of the Caroline ‘coterie’ theatre. From the first decade of the seventeenth century a gradual split emerged between the larger, open-air theatres that performed old-fashioned, popular plays and the small indoors theatres

⁹ Sophie Tomlinson, ‘She That Plays the King : Henrietta Maria and the Threat of the Actress in Caroline Culture’ in Gordon McMullan and Jonathan Hope ed., *The Politics of Tragicomedy: Shakespeare and After* (London: Routledge, 1992), p.190.

¹⁰ Graham Parry, *The Golden Age restor’d: The Culture of the Stuart Court 1603-42* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1981), p.189.

that performed the latest literary trends to a fashionable audience.¹¹ As these new-style plays were often written by gentlemen-amateurs rather than professional playwrights, it was even easier for the tastes and aims of the indoor theatre audiences to diverge from those of traditional theatregoers.¹² The new elitist audiences were effectively writing their own plays. These divisions of taste, and the social distinctions that they carry, are evident in the praeludium to Thomas Goffe's *The Careles Shepherdess* (performed at court and also at the Salisbury court theatre), the short opening scene in which some Londoners arrive to watch the play. The four characters – Spruce the courtier, Sparke the Inns of Court student, Thrift the merchant and an unnamed country landlord – represent the usual components of a typical audience at Salisbury court and each reflect the tastes and opinions of their own class.¹³ The landlord and merchant's old fashioned dramatic preferences are mocked by the fashionable young student:

Your judgements are ridiculous and vain
 As your Forefathers, whose dull intellect
 Did nothing understand but fools and fighting;
 'Twill hardly enter into my belief
 That ye are of this Age, sure ye are Ghosts.
 The Poets now have with their heavenly fire
 Purg'd their inventions of those grosser follies,
 And with sublime conceits enrich'd the Stage:
 Instead of loose lascivious mirth, they bring
 Ingenious raptures, which do please, not tickle,
 And rather move us to admire, then laugh¹⁴

¹¹ See Gurr, p.182.

¹² See Norbert F. O'Donnell, 'The Authorship of the *Careless Shepherdess*', *Philological Quarterly* 33, (1954), pp.44-5.

¹³ William A. Armstrong used the evidence of the praeludium to guess at the nature of typical audiences of private theatres in the Caroline period, 'The Audience of the Elizabethan Private Theatres' in Gerald Eades Bentley ed. *The Seventeenth Century Stage: A Collection of Critical Essays* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1968), pp. 215-34. He arrives at the same conclusions about the audience as Gurr, whose study is based on surviving diaries and other contemporary accounts of the theatre and playgoers.

¹⁴ *The Careles Shepherdess* (London: Richard Rogers and William Ley, 1656), p.5.

although the student rather blatantly flatters the courtier:

'tis my fortune
To sit neer you: If the Play should prove dull
Your company will satisfie my ears (p.3).

The landlord contemplates leaving the theatre on hearing the student's description of the play because 'the Comedy / Will be as tedious to me, as a Sermon' (p.5) but is persuaded to stay partly to enjoy the company of the courtier and student, and partly to see the ladies in the theatre audience. This idea of the theatre as a social occasion, a chance to see and be seen in fashionable society, which is also evident in the student's wish to sit with the courtier, rather overshadows any interest the audience members seem to have in the play itself.¹⁵ In this, Goffe's Caroline theatregoers foreshadow the fashionable theatregoing of Samuel Pepys. This is a play that does not owe its popularity to its literary merit. The merchant, however, remains unmoved by these social considerations and decides to go to the Bull or the Fortune, both old fashioned, open-air theatres, where the entertainment will be more to his taste. Audiences at the indoor theatres preferred sensational, highly-contrived storylines and impressive special effects. As tragicomedy is a genre which relies on audience manipulation and audience involvement it was ideally suited to the tastes of well-heeled Stuart theatregoers.

Another effect of the king and queen's interest in the theatre is that tragicomedy in the Caroline period borrowed from the court masque, another very popular form of entertainment at court that involved lavish staging and audience involvement, partly through identifying the high-ranking courtiers who were performing and also because

¹⁵ John R. Elliott jnr, in a study of the diaries of four Inns of Court students, observes that the theatre, particularly the Blackfriars, was a place where students could mingle with courtiers, 'Four Caroline Playgoers', *Medieval and Renaissance Drama in England* 6, (1993), p.182.

the masque usually ended with a dance in which the entire audience was invited to join. Joseph Rutter's *The Shepheard's Holy-day*, a tragicomedy set in Arcadia and performed before the king and queen, reflects the royal taste by its focus on idealised Platonic love, confined to the younger generation perhaps because Charles's court liked to position itself as more pure and idealistic than that of his father, and the resurrection from a seeming death of one of the characters, a sensational storyline that can be related to the miraculous plots of the court masque.¹⁶ Goffe's *The Careless Shepherdess*, also set in Arcadia and also performed before Charles and Henrietta Maria, but afterwards at the Salisbury court theatre, also contrasts the idealistic love of the young heroes with the cynicism of their fathers and features the pretended deaths of its heroines.¹⁷ This borrowing from masque to tragicomedy meant that all the dramatic performances to which the courtly audience was exposed came to express the same courtly ideology, strengthening the continuity of the court's symbolic presentation of itself but perhaps increasing its isolation from reality.¹⁸ As Lois Potter has shown (and Goffe's praeludium confirms), tragicomedy is a royalist genre.¹⁹

Caroline tragicomedy's use of romance material can be explained in 'political' as well as purely literary terms, by the court's enthusiasm for Sidney's *Arcadia*, that became a 'coded vehicle for that court's own political and aesthetic vision'²⁰, and for romance generally. Potter demonstrates that royalists sometimes addressed one

¹⁶ Joseph Rutter, *The Shepherds Holy-day*, (London: N. and I. Okes, 1635). For the contrast between James's and Charles's courts, see Parry, p.192.

¹⁷ Although generalised pastoral settings abound in Caroline drama, these are the only two plays I have found that are actually set in Arcadia.

¹⁸ See Parry, p.203. He also comments that 'In retrospect, it is evident that Caroline court culture was excessively distracted by sophisticated game-playing, insufficiently aware of its dangerous isolation, and indifferent to the growing bitterness in the world outside', in *The Seventeenth Century: The Intellectual and Cultural Context of English Literature 1603-1700* (London and New York: Longman, 1989), p.35.

¹⁹ Lois Potter, *Secret Rites and Secret Writing: Royalist Literature 1641 – 1660* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989).

²⁰ Peter Lindenbaum, 'Sidney's *Arcadia* as Cultural Monument and Proto-Novel' in Cedric C. Brown and Arthur F. Marotti ed., *Texts and Cultural Change in Early Modern England* (London: Macmillan Press, 1993), pp.83-84.

another by 'romance' names and used romance as a means of understanding the events of the civil war.²¹ In addition to royalist tragicomedy, there were three prose continuations of Sidney's *Arcadia* in the seventeenth century and these are all related to the court cultures of their time. Gervase Markham's 1607 continuation, *The English Arcadia*, seems to have been designed to appeal to Prince Henry's taste; the other two were both written by royalists (Richard Bellings in 1624 and Anna Weamys in 1651).²² Both Forde and Shadwell, writing Arcadian tragicomedy in the Restoration, were also royalists, although Shadwell was one of those who later favoured the succession of a Protestant rather than the Catholic James II, which helps to explain why he was made poet laureate on the accession of William III. There are certainly reasons for linking the content of Caroline drama with the court and with loyalty to the royalist cause.

In the Restoration period the connections between politics and drama are quite different. Maguire describes Restoration tragicomedy as 'divided tragicomedy' because it typically involves two plots: one 'high' plot which deals with the theme of regicide and the events of 1640-1660 and the other 'low' and comic, reassuringly reflecting the pragmatic world of the court of Charles II.²³ The unique effect of this Restoration form of drama is that 'tragicomedies functioned as psychotherapy. The plays gave the audience a way to talk about the past and relive it from a relatively safe vantage point.'²⁴ The political content of tragicomedy is here associated more with the ordinary people in the audience, who might have a psychological need for these

²¹ Potter, pp. 72-3.

²² For the popularity of Sidney's *Arcadia* at Henry's court, see Parry, *Golden Age restor'd*, chp. 3. Markham's treatise on the care of horses had come to the attention of Prince Henry in 1606, making the publication of *The English Arcadia* in 1607 look like an attempt to continue to engage the Prince's interest. See F.N.L. Poynter, *A Bibliography of Gervase Markham 1568? – 1637* (Oxford: The Oxford Bibliographical Society, 1962), pp.20-1, although Poynter does not make the same connection between the publication date of *The English Arcadia* and the Prince's recent interest in Markham.

²³ Nancy Klein Maguire, 'Tragicomedy' in Deborah Payne Fisk ed., *The Cambridge Companion to English Restoration Theatre* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), p.96.

²⁴ Maguire, 'The "Whole Truth" of Restoration Tragicomedy' in *Renaissance Tragicomedy*, p.225.

plays, than with the ideology of the court. This is unlike the court-sponsored Caroline tragicomedies, although it does connect with Cohen and Radel's 'subversive' readings of Caroline tragicomedy, mentioned above.

Maguire's reading of 'divided tragicomedy' may well be right, but neither of the Restoration tragicomedies we will be discussing here has a plot of this kind and both plays exhibit strong similarities in subject matter and theme to Goffe's earlier *Careless Shepherdess* and Rutter's *Shepherd's Holy-day*. Reading these four plays, it is hard to believe that a civil war, republican government, and restoration of monarchy took place between the second and third of them. This continuity may be explained by the fact that Restoration dramatists in the 1660s had no other dramatic tradition to draw on than that which had flourished before the closing of the theatres in 1642, so were forced to use Caroline dramas as a starting point for creating their own literature. The 1660s might also have seen a nostalgic desire to resurrect the past, including the courtly literature of the past. Forde and Shadwell's plays are both structured around an idealised royal couple, a central image of Caroline drama because it reflected the happy marriage of Charles and Henrietta Maria, but one that is irrelevant to Charles II's understanding of marriage. There seems to be no way of explaining the plots of these plays in terms of contemporary politics, and they make better sense interpreted in literary terms, as throw-backs to the Caroline style. This nostalgic reprise of Caroline tragicomedy did not last. The Restoration soon developed its own style of drama: the witty comedy for which the period is now most famous. Shadwell's *Royal Shepherdess*, performed to a disappointing reception in 1669, perhaps fell on the wrong side of this change in taste.²⁵ These two plays do

²⁵ It may be assumed that Shadwell was disappointed with the play's reception from the self-righteous tone that he assumes in his preface to the printed edition: 'I shall say little more of the Play, but that the Rules of Morality and good Manners are strictly observed in it: (Vertue being exalted, and Vice depressed) and perhaps it might have been better received had neither been done in it: for I find it pleases most to see Vice encouraged . . . But it is said, by some, that this pleases the people, and a Poets business is onely to endeavour that: But he that debases himself to think of nothing but pleasing

differ in some ways from their Caroline predecessors; most obviously, in the fact that they now have the issues of the civil war and restoration to address and a related sense of scepticism about Caroline Platonism and divine kingship.²⁶ In their return to Caroline themes and motifs, however, these specifically Arcadian plays show a greater level of continuity with literary tradition than the 'divided tragicomedies' that Maguire analyses, and it is to the literary content of Caroline and Restoration tragicomedy that we now turn.

Literary discussions of seventeenth-century tragicomedy have to start with Beaumont and Fletcher, who developed the style of tragicomedy that was to become popular during the reign of Charles I. It is instructive here to notice the differences between Daniel's *The Qveene's Arcadia* and Goffe's *Careless Shepherdess* as Daniel, although he wrote a pastoral tragicomedy and imitated Tasso and Guarini, was writing before Beaumont and Fletcher had appeared on the Jacobean stage. Goffe's play is different in tone to Daniel's because the satiric-comic elements represented by the city characters have been removed and the play focuses exclusively on an upper-class romance. Goffe pays less attention to theme in order to leave more room for improbable plot twists, so the play involves the audience more in one sense but is less didactic than Daniel's. Goffe's treatment of the character who chooses to become a

the Rabble, loses the dignity of a Poet, and becomes as little as a Jugler, or a Rope-Dancer; who please more then he can do' (*The Royal Shepherdess* (London: for Henry Herringman, 1669), sig. A2v-A3). Pepys was there for its first performance in the Duke of York's theatre, noting on the 25th of February 1669 that the new play was 'the silliest for words and design, and everything, that ever I saw in my whole life', and that he was 'never less satisfied with a play in my life', Robert Latham and William Matthews ed., *The Diary of Samuel Pepys* Volume IX: 1668 – 1669 (London: G. Bell and Sons, 1976), pp.458-9, p.459. Pepys's reaction to the play does suggest that it was not pleasing to the Restoration audience, but on the other hand Pepys seems to have disliked most of the plays that he saw and he does not record that the rest of the audience felt the same way about Shadwell's *Royal Shepherdess*. Montague Summers records one audience member who saw the play 'acted with good Applause' (Montague Summers ed., *The Complete Works of Thomas Shadwell* volume I (London: The Fortune Press, 1927), p.97. The DNB records that it had a run of six days at the theatre, which is not a success but not a spectacular failure either (vol. 49, p.923). Unlike many of Shadwell's other plays, however, the *Royal Shepherdess* was not reprinted in the eighteenth century (except as part of a complete works), suggesting that it was one of his plays least admired by younger generations.

²⁶ Although Parry does show that there was some scepticism about the cult of Platonic love within Caroline drama, *Golden Age restor'd*, pp.205-7.

satyr looks shallow when compared to Daniel's treatment of the same impulse.

Goffe's satyr reveals at the end that he is the exiled father of Castarina in disguise; she reveals that she had known this all along. The satyr explains to the other heroine's (wealthy and influential) father:

I've practiz'd all that's done
 With this intent, that if I could procure
Arismena as my Love, I hop'd I sho'd
 The easier intreat you to sue for my
 Returne, which I doe finde you have obteyn'd (V.xiv, p.73).

Choosing to live like a satyr has now become, not a theme to explore, but a plot device to exploit. This 'renunciation of meaning' in favour of a skilfully-controlled, sensational plot is what Eugene M. Waith defines as the hallmark of Beaumont and Fletcher in his classic study of their plays.²⁷ Even unmediated by Caroline dramatists, Beaumont and Fletcher were a powerful model: as Maguire points out, 'Restoration playwrights endlessly copied *Philaster*'.²⁸ It is also worth bearing in mind that critics before Maguire interpreted the 'divided tragicomedy' of the Restoration period not in terms of Restoration politics but in terms of the neo-classical rules for drama that the king and court brought back with them from France. Laura S. Brown explains that the neo-classical rules did not permit characters of different social classes to be on stage at the same time and did not permit dramatists to mix comic and tragic events in the same plot, so the separate 'high' and 'low' plots of Restoration tragicomedy became a way to create variety for the audience without breaking the strict new rules.²⁹

²⁷ *The Pattern of Tragicomedy in Beaumont and Fletcher* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1952), p.41.

²⁸ Maguire, 'Tragicomedy', p.87.

²⁹ Laura S. Brown, 'The Divided Plot: Tragicomic Form in the Restoration', *English Literary History* 47, (1980), p.68.

Despite the turbulent political events of the Interregnum period that separates them, the tragicomedies that pleased early Restoration audiences do not seem that different from those that pleased their Caroline predecessors. Perhaps that is because court culture, even though Charles II's personality and outlook were very different from those of his father, had not changed as much as is often supposed. N.H. Keeble, in a recent study of court culture in the 1660s, conventionally concludes that Charles presided over an 'erotized court culture' where women were valued for beauty but not virtue, and could only hope to achieve power in the 'powerfully masculinist' Restoration court by becoming mistresses or bawds.³⁰ But even in this court environment Keeble sees some kind of continuity with Caroline court culture because he suggests that both courts are essentially dominated by romance values – an emphasis on beauty as women's most important attribute and the pursuit of beautiful women as men's major pastime.³¹ The cynical Restoration court values may be seen as the Caroline court culture without its redeeming Platonic philosophy and with a new sense of pragmatism created by the civil war and Restoration. Even without the help of a scandalous court, it is all too easy for idealistic romance values to break down.³² According to this view, the Restoration court culture represents not a radical break with the past, but a radical development of it.

It is also true that the fashion for chaste heroines was not simply a Caroline throw-back that disappeared after a few years. Even after the Caroline-influenced married loyal heroines and pastoral tragicomedies had been replaced by cynical witty comedies set in London, chastity continued to be a central quality for comic heroines. The

³⁰ N.H. Keeble, *The Restoration: England in the 1660s* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2002), p.176, p.175.

³¹ Keeble, p.174.

³² See, for example, Sheila T. Cavanagh's comment on the tournament episode in Spenser's *Faerie Queene* Book IV: 'the knights abandon any pretence of honouring chastity in order to promote libidinous delight in female beauty', in *Wanton Eyes and Chaste Desires: Female Sexuality in The Faerie Queene* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1994), p.88. If knights in *The Faerie Queene* can do this, those of the Restoration obviously have little hope of maintaining romance values.

central female characters in many of the best-known Restoration comedies – Florimell in Dryden’s *Secret Love*, Harriet in Etherege’s *The Man of Mode* and Millamant in Congreve’s *The Way of the World* – are witty but virtuous heroines who are specifically contrasted with the corrupt women round about them. As Sarup Singh comments, Restoration comedy offers its audience the positive message that ‘even in a fallen state men and women search for and often find reasonably stable moral values and satisfying human relationships’.³³ The treatment of women in drama shows more continuity between the Caroline and Restoration periods than their relative court cultures suggest.

To sum up, there are ‘literary’ as well as ‘political’ reasons for the popularity of tragicomedy in the early Restoration period and for the form that it took. It is difficult to separate the ‘literary’ and the ‘political’ in this period anyway. The Platonic mysticism of the Caroline court masque, for example, is both a development of a literary culture and a convenient metaphor for expressing royal authority. Our understanding of the genre of tragicomedy could suffer if we were forced to choose between literary and political readings of the genre, but fortunately we do not have to choose. Any author, any work of literature, is always influenced by numerous, diverse, and even contradictory sources and contexts and it is not necessary or possible to decide which single context provides the ‘best’ reading of a given work. In the case of these plays that are set in Arcadia a straightforwardly political reading would not be enough to explain the whole play anyway because introducing the land of Arcadia inevitably introduces a literary tradition – the audience cannot help but remember the famous Arcadias of Sidney, Sannazaro and Guarini. Forde and

³³ Sarup Singh, *Family Relationships in Shakespeare and the Restoration Comedy of Manners* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983), p.29. Perhaps this more positive treatment of women can be related to the facts that the Restoration theatre was no longer a coterie theatre (see Harold Love, ‘Who Were the Restoration Audience?’, *Yearbook of English Studies* 10, (1980), 21-44) and the rest of the country did not share in the court’s lack of moral values (see Singh, p.13 and Keeble, p.180).

Shadwell's plays can simultaneously be responses to the civil war, engagements with Caroline drama, and part of an ongoing exploration of the land of Arcadia.

Restoration and Kingship

As Derek Hughes points out, 'the first great subject of Restoration drama was the Restoration itself'.³⁴ *Love's Labyrinth* and *The Royal Shepherdess* both explore issues that were raised by the civil war, particularly that of monarchical authority and good government. Comparison with earlier Arcadias reveals the extent of Forde and Shadwell's new preoccupation with kingship. Politically, as has been said, all seventeenth-century Arcadias (whether tragicomedies or continuations of Sidney) are royalist. In the late Caroline and Restoration periods, practically all tragicomedies are set at court and Forde and Shadwell's plays are no exception.³⁵ But Arcadia was not always a monarchy. In fact, setting aside Sidney's *Arcadia*, which seems to be a monarchy partly because Sidney was so interested in issues of Elizabethan politics and statecraft and his own preoccupations have influenced his literary work, most pre-Restoration Arcadias are not monarchies. Polybius's Arcadia is governed by the rules of wise elders, Sannazaro's and Tasso's pastoral worlds are communities of individuals who only come together to participate in religious ceremonies, Guarini increases the authority of Arcadia's priests. Daniel imagines a self-governing assembly that is watched over behind the scenes by some wise elders. He adopts this democratic, or perhaps oligarchic, model even though he, like Sidney, was using Arcadia in some respects as a mirror of England for the instruction of the sovereign.

³⁴ Derek Hughes, *English Drama 1660-1700* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), p.30.

³⁵Cohen, pp.131-2, p.142.

Pressing Arcadia into the service of monarchy at this time makes sense because pastoral lands like Arcadia were supposed not just to be perfect places (monarchy by implication becoming the perfect form of government), but also to be still in the state of nature. Pastoral settings were also popular in Caroline masques and tragicomedies, many of which also depict kings and queens, because the pastoral setting 'show[s] royal power in its most benevolent aspect, with no political strains admitted.'³⁶ Monarchy in a pastoral context would thus become the most natural form of government, an opinion that was worth proving for royalists in the seventeenth century but which earlier Arcadian authors do not seem to have shared. In fact, as I shall argue, although good kings abound in Restoration dramas, both Forde and Shadwell use their kings of Arcadia to explore questions of tyranny and selfishness in the monarch rather than as examples of benevolent leadership. This may suggest that the attempt to use the land of Arcadia as a natural pastoral setting for monarchical government was not wholly successful, and that Arcadia once again turns out to be darker and more problematic than other pastoral settings. The seventeenth century, however, saw other challenges both to the validity of monarchy and the previous conception of the state of nature.

Thomas Hobbes was a royalist who fled to France after his participation in the civil war. It was in France that he wrote and first published *Leviathan*, his meditation on the nature of society and government.³⁷ *Leviathan* offers an original outlook on the idea of monarchy because Hobbes, instead of believing that monarchs are divinely appointed, believes that monarchy is a man-made system of government designed as a defence against the state of nature. Hobbes believes that the human race did not begin in a state of perfection or some kind of golden age, but in the same condition as

³⁶ Parry, *The Seventeenth Century*, p.31.

³⁷ See Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*, ed. Richard Tuck (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p.x, p.xlii.

beasts. Without any laws life is 'solitary, poore, nasty, brutish, and short', so humans banded together to form laws.³⁸ In Arcadia, the supposed golden age, this condition of beasts is represented by the satyr and, even more interestingly, by characters who choose to become satyrs.³⁹ Goffe's treatment of this theme is comic, but he does show a character who is exiled from society, becomes a satyr to enable him to satisfy his appetites outside the social law, and is then reintegrated into the social system.

In *The English Arcadia*, his continuation of Sidney's *Arcadia*, Gervase Markham explores the same idea in greater depth as his monster, who has terrorised the inhabitants of Tempe throughout the story, is revealed at the end to be a former Duke and governor in Dalmatia. The monster/duke (called Astense) fell in love with the princess of Dalmatia and was so incensed when she met and became engaged to the Prince of Sicily that he threw poison in her face and was forced to flee the land, leaving her for dead. Astense's crime puts him beyond the pale of society and he chooses to take revenge on the world, especially women, by becoming like a satyr or wild man.⁴⁰ He is sick of the social code, whose laws have not enabled him to achieve his desires, so he consciously decides to abandon it and return to a state like Hobbes's state of nature. He does not use language, he grows wild, he steals, rapes and murders, and men hunt him like a wild animal in return. Throughout the story they refer to him as a 'monster', never as a man. He has actually put himself beyond the pale of humanity by his crimes. It seems to be only too easy for characters to turn their backs on the fragile social construct. Hobbes had seen this in his own life when the civil war broke out in England and the monarchy was overthrown.

³⁸ Hobbes, p.89.

³⁹ Walter Chernaik describes Hobbes's vision of man in the state of nature as 'an ironic secular equivalent of the myth of unfallen man', in *Sexual Freedom in Restoration Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), p.24. Chernaik links Hobbes's theories to the libertine aspects of Restoration literature, especially in Rochester, but this is a development that happens after the 1660s.

⁴⁰ Gervase Markham, *The English Arcadia Part One* (London: Edward Allde, 1607), p.54, and *The Second and Last Part of the First Booke of the English Arcadia* (London: Nicholas Okes for Thomas Saunders, 1613), pp.57-9.

Markham was the earliest of the continuers of Sidney. Anna Weamys, the latest of them, uses her *Arcadia* as an opportunity to ‘resurrect’ the dead Sidney and thus obliquely express the hope that the same could be done for the dead king through the loyalty of his followers.⁴¹ Her *Continuation* was published in 1651, the same year as *Leviathan*. Earlier authors like Markham, Daniel and Goffe might have flirted with the satyr theme but by the time Hobbes formulated his theory of the state of nature *Arcadia* had become determinedly royalist, eschewing the discontented satyr-figures in favour of a divinely sanctioned and idealised model of monarchical government. Not that Hobbes was actually against monarchy, it is just that he saw it as a pragmatic response to the natural threats of war and lawlessness; exactly as the real-life restoration of the monarchy in England turned out to be, but just the opposite point of view to that suggested in Weamys’s *Continuation*. Hobbes offers a pragmatic argument for obeying the sovereign, whether one had voted for him or not, and leaving aside the question of whether he was divine, by emphasising the consequences if one chose to rebel:

because the major part hath by consenting voices declared a Sovereigne, he that dissented must now consent with the rest . . . he must either submit to their decrees, or be left in the condition of warre he was in before; wherein he might without injustice be destroyed by any man whatsoever.⁴²

Royalists did not want to justify the monarch in Hobbes’s pragmatic terms (many of his royalist and Anglican friends did not like *Leviathan*)⁴³ so Hobbes’s defence of the

⁴¹ For a fuller account of this argument, see Elizabeth A. Spiller, ‘Speaking for the Dead: King Charles, Anna Weamys, and the Commemorations of Sir Philip Sidney’s *Arcadia*’, *Criticism* 42:2, 2000, 229-251.

⁴² Hobbes, pp. 123-4.

⁴³ Hobbes, p. xlii.

existing form of government actually became a challenge to the 'divine authority of kings' argument that we will see in Forde.

Thomas Killigrew's *Bellamira her Dream* is an example of a royalist tragicomedy that engages with the events of the civil war. It is particularly interesting to compare it to Forde's *Love's Labyrinth* as they were both written in the interregnum period and neither of them was designed to be acted.⁴⁴ Both Forde and Killigrew seem to be using the experience of writing tragicomedies 'as psychotherapy', to quote Maguire's phrase again. We can see the Caroline NeoPlatonic values at work in Killigrew's *Bellamira*, most noticeably in the figure of the satyr who is tamed by his love for the disguised princess. What is new in Killigrew's play, however, is its plot of civil war. There is a hint of the real political situation that overtook Charles I in Killigrew's opening description of how the war started: 'This news has awaked the King, till then lost in security; and now too late he finds the fire he despis'd has taken hold of his Palace'.⁴⁵ At one point the Sicilian king is wounded and believed to be dead but later is found to be alive and well, a wistful image of restoration (although reversals in the fortunes of characters believed to be dead was also a common plot device in Caroline tragicomedies).

In this play Killigrew takes the opportunity to reimagine the English civil war and emphasise the blamelessness of the combatants on all sides. Killigrew's king has been a model ruler but has simply been misunderstood by his people. The rebels believe that the king (of Sicily) has usurped the kingdom of Naples that properly belongs to his nephew, who is missing but believed to be alive in exile, whereas in fact the king would be glad to restore Naples to its rightful inheritor but cannot because his niece and nephew are being brought up in a pastoral retirement, ignorant

⁴⁴ Hughes calls Killigrew's plays 'closet dramas', p.1.

⁴⁵ Thomas Killigrew, *Bellamira her Dream: or The Love of Shadows Part I*, in Thomas Killigrew, *Comedies and Tragedies* (London: for Henry Herringman, 1664) I.i, p.467.

of their true identities, by a faithful advisor who does not trust the Sicilian king. This contorted scenario allows Killigrew to create a guilt-free civil war, in which everyone on both sides of the quarrel acts from the best of intentions and it is only misunderstanding that creates conflict. The prince of Sicily is temporarily captured by the rebels and is able to judge of the purity of their motives while in their camp. What he learns of the rebels' real motivation and noble behaviour enables him to forgive them for their rebellion at the end as 'what I thought crime is but virtue in thee, and loyalty to thy Master' (Part II, I.i, p.534). This high-minded behaviour on all sides fits in well with the play's NeoPlatonic values, but is also a necessary and politically-motivated response to the real-life civil war. Forgiving and forgetting was something that all royalists, even the royal family itself, eventually had to do. This was especially true for those royalists who returned to England during Cromwell's reign and made their peace with the Republic. Killigrew seems to be responding to the real political situation created after the civil war by defending both the king and the rebels and suggesting that their problems were just misunderstandings that can still be solved.

The same spirit of forgiving, forgetting, and carrying on somehow is shown in the plot of Forde's *Love's Labyrinth* when the heroine, Sephestia, remarries. This is not the best way to show her loyalty to her dead husband. Such a remarrying plot represents a radical departure from the earlier tragicomic tradition as it would have been unthinkable in the drama of any earlier generation. It is impossible to imagine Clorin in Fletcher's *Faithful Shepherdess*, for example, choosing another husband; loyalty and virtue are expressed by the morbid work of tending a shrine to her first husband for the rest of her life. But loyalty is involved in Sephestia's second marriage too, because she chooses her disguised first husband, Maximus, who has assumed the

name of Melecertus, to be her second husband because he reminds her of her first husband. He chooses to marry her for the same reason. This seeming disloyalty of course turns out to prove their loyalty to one another as their second marriage-partners turn out to be the same as their first. Sephestia and Maximus show loyalty, not disloyalty, in falling in love with one another again and they are rewarded for this constancy at the end. It is tempting to see this as a royalist parable of constancy and a hope that Charles II would turn out to be Charles I.⁴⁶ The experience of the civil war has necessitated the rewriting of the conventional faithful heroine. Sephestia is a model royalist heroine by the way in which she combines loyalty to her first husband with the desire to be happy in a new relationship. Her combination of loyalty and pragmatism is eventually rewarded.

Forde and Shadwell both depict Arcadian kings, but, surprisingly, these are not good kings like Killigrew's king of Sicily, but vice-ridden and unsympathetic figures who have to reform their characters at the end. Damocles, the king of Arcadia in Forde's *Love's Labyrinth*, opens the play by exiling his daughter and her husband and child because she married in secret and without his consent. His lords urge him to be lenient and offer excuses for her conduct:

Yet shot she not at rovers, but a Prince
 He is, young and deserving; therefore since
 Sh'has hit the mark, it will now be in vain
 To give her aym, or make her shoot again,

but Damocles's anger knows no bounds and he commands that his daughter and her family be set adrift in a boat

⁴⁶ A similar hope that Charles II would somehow resurrect his father can be seen in the full title of Forde's *Virtus Rediviva*. The 'panegyrick on our late King Charles the I. &c. of ever blessed memory' with which the work opens merges into the concluding 'panegyrick on his sacred Majesties most happy return', making it sound as if it was Charles I himself who was returning.

without oar,
Or sail, or pilot, but the wilful wind,
And waves, true emblemes of their giddy act.⁴⁷

This plot is reminiscent of Prospero's exile in *The Tempest* but instead of landing on a magical island, Sephestia, Maximus and their son Plusiddipus are simply shipwrecked on the coast of Arcadia from which they departed and have to live as shepherds in their own native land (except Plusiddipus who is kidnapped by pirates, of which more later). Perhaps their arrival on the coast of Arcadia instead of Prospero's island is an ironic comment on the nature of the supposedly ideal Arcadia. Forde's Arcadia is emphatically not an enchanted island.

A very good, but unanswered, question that arises is why Damocles is so angry about Sephestia's marriage. He claims that he is shipwrecking them out of his sense of justice (the same impartial justice which leads Euarchus to sentence Pyrocles and Musidorus to death in Sidney):

know I have
Not yet forgot the name of father, though
You thus have slighted it; but as a King,
We must be just to punish your contempt (I.iv.2-5),

but in fact it seems that he is personally angry with Sephestia. The queen confronts her husband and rebuts his 'justice' argument – 'Ah cruel justice! Justice! no tyranny,/ This is' (I.v. 39-40) – before dying of grief, the king's brother follows Sephestia and shares her punishment in protest over his brother's harshness, and all the courtiers try to dissuade the king from a severity that they clearly feel is out of

⁴⁷ Thomas Forde, *Love's Labyrinth, or, The Royal Shepherdess* in Thomas Forde, *Virtus Rediviva* (London: R and W Leybourn, 1660), I.i.7-10, I.i.70-2.

proportion to the offence committed. There is a suggestion that Damocles is paranoid about the security of his crown:

Now shall I live secure, for now there is
 None left, whose nearness to our blood might edge
 Their hopes, by killing us to gain our Crown (I.v.1-3).

This explanation for his conduct is not convincing though, partly because it is incredible that he would feel threatened by his own daughter and grandson's claims to the throne, and also because such reasoning would make Damocles's act a calculated one but the impression created when Damocles first hears of Sephestia's marriage is one of spontaneous, uncontrollable anger. For reasons that may not even be clear to him himself, he hates the idea of Sephestia having married, especially without his consent.

Another puzzling question is why Sephestia got married without her father's consent in the first place. Her choice of husband is perfectly appropriate – it is not as though she has fallen in love with a beggar – so why does she keep her marriage a secret from her father? It is made clear that she is virtuous and has always been a good daughter, which makes this secrecy even more puzzling:

Shall one misdeed
 Forfeit all former loyalty? She us'd
 To be more ready to give, than you
 Could be to ask. Come, let the weight of that
 O're-poize your anger, and this light offence (I.i.49-54).

Is it perhaps because she knew perfectly well that her father did not want her to get married, that he would have reacted as angrily and perhaps even forbidden the

marriage if she had asked his permission? A parallel with a similar story in Boccaccio's *Decameron* suggests the reason for Damocles's anger. Boccaccio's first story on the fourth day is that of Tancredi, Prince of Salerno, who waits an unusually long time before finding a husband for his daughter and then refuses to find her a second husband when she is widowed shortly after her marriage because '[h]e was as passionately fond of this daughter as any father who has ever lived'.⁴⁸ His daughter's enforced celibacy inevitably leads her to find a lover (she realises that her father will not want her to marry again so that honourable option is closed to her) and Tancredi's jealousy and anger when he learns about the affair result in tragedy. When he confronts his daughter about her behaviour, Tancredi reminds her of the love he has always felt for her, 'deeper by far than that of any other father for a daughter' (p.295). But his obsessive love has essentially been the whole problem. It is possessive and almost incestuous of him to refuse to give his daughter to any other man. It is this unhealthy love that occasions his daughter's seemingly unnatural and disobedient behaviour. As Damocles flies into the same jealous rage as Tancredi when he finds out about his daughter's relationship, one wonders if Sephestia has the same problem.

The suggestion of an over-fondness of Damocles for Sephestia even at the beginning of the play helps to prepare for the denouement and eventual reconciliation. This occurs when Sephestia is living as a shepherdess and has assumed the name of Samela. The report of her beauty has spread and reached not just the king but also her son, living in Thessaly, prompting them both to visit her in order to test the truth of this report. Both Sephestia's father and her son are instantly inflamed by lust for her when they see her and conspire to kidnap her. After Plusiddipus has kidnapped her for the king, whom he believes to be an old shepherd, the king reveals his true

⁴⁸ Giovanni Boccaccio, *The Decameron*, trans. G.H. McWilliam (London: Penguin, second edition 1995), p.291.

identity, sends Plusiddipus packing, and pressurises Sephestia to marry him. He never wants to dishonour her, but he does not mind what strongarm tactics he has to use to wear her down until she agrees to the marriage. The incestuous events of the last two acts, the king's initial disproportionate anger over Sephestia's marriage and her unfortunate 'beauty that would tempt/ The gods to lust' (I.ii.5-6) all suggest that something is wrong or unhealthy about the Arcadian royal family.

Shadwell's king, Basilius, in *The Royal Shepherdess*, likewise tries to seduce the heroine, Urania, whom he wrongly believes to be a shepherdess and, as he later finds out to his rage, is secretly married to his son. Led on by the counsel of a corrupt adviser, he decides to 'try/ Whether *Urania* will Love or Die' (I.i.194-5), but quickly repents of his decision as Urania, employing the same bed trick that Pyrocles uses on Sidney's Basilius, substitutes his wife for herself. Basilius's use of a wicked adviser, who encourages the king's immorality in order to secure his own position at court, perhaps parallels the situation of Arbaces in Beaumont and Fletcher's *A King and No King*, who, when the first adviser whom he asks to procure him the woman he believes to be his sister refuses in horror, simply finds an adviser who is less choosy and willing to take any opportunity to gain a privileged position with the king. There is another incestuous overtone in the plot of *The Royal Shepherdess* as, although the king does not know it, Urania is his daughter in law. She has the same lethal beauty as Sephestia and Panthea in *A King and No King*. As in *Love's Labyrinth* the heroine is punished by the king for her marriage but in this case it is simply the Arcadian law that punishes her and the king does pity her when his initial anger is over. Her punishment is averted when her mother arrives to reveal that she is in fact a princess and therefore a suitable match for the prince of Arcadia. Basilius is not a tyrant or a

bad king, but he is weak and ineffectual, unable to avert Urania's punishment and almost fooled by the machinations of the characters in the subplot.

Walter Cohen observes that incest is a recurrent situation in Caroline tragicomedy.⁴⁹ It has also long been recognised that unnatural or extreme sexual situations are the backbone of Beaumont and Fletcher's tragicomedies. This theme survives into the Restoration too, for example in Dryden's *Marriage a-la-Mode*. Perhaps we should not read too much into this; as Verna Foster points out, there has to be some potentially tragic element in the plot in order for the play to be a tragicomedy, and the threatening moral dilemmas that characters face may only contribute to the atmosphere of the plays' 'world of seeming evil'.⁵⁰ But it is also tempting to read the incest theme as a political metaphor, bearing in mind the long standing analogy between the relationship of father to child and that of king to country.⁵¹ The analogy between the family and the state is strengthened, as Richard McCabe points out, when it is the royal family that is under consideration and incestuous situations in these plays only occur in royal families.⁵² He comments, 'Sexuality is political as politics is sexual, and incest functions as an appropriate metaphor for political disturbance by virtue of received concepts of natural law uniting private and public morality in the interests of the familial state.'⁵³ The recurrence of the incest theme in Caroline drama and these later plays translates into the dramatists' unease about political not sexual situations. Something is wrong or unhealthy within the monarchy. The monarch is seemingly out of touch, self-indulgent, and not acting like a good father to his people.

⁴⁹ Cohen, p128.

⁵⁰ Verna A. Foster, 'Sex Averted or Converted: Sexuality and Tragicomic Genre in the Plays of Fletcher', *Studies in English Literature* 32, (1992), p.318; Waith p.18.

⁵¹ See for example Susan Dwyer Amussen, *An Ordered Society: Gender and Class in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1988) on the analogies between family and state and contradictions within these or Parry, *The Seventeenth Century*, p.11, p.15. Parry quotes from James I's first speech to parliament: 'I am the husband, and the whole Island is my lawful wife', p.11.

⁵² Richard A. McCabe, *Incest, Drama and Nature's Law 1550-1700* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), p.120.

⁵³ McCabe, p.120.

But however the monarch may act, it is the duty of a subject to obey him. Sephestia and Urania still retain their loyalty to the king, and faith that he will eventually do the right thing, throughout their trials. Restoration royalists were keen to emphasise this point. In *Love's Labyrinth* Forde tests the claims of the monarch on his subjects to the limit when Damocles demands that his courtiers set the heirs to the throne adrift. One of the Arcadian lords debates whether or not he should obey and concludes:

the commands of Kings are not
To be gain-said, or broken; for the will
Of heaven is obey'd in doing them (I.iv.56-8).

This is so extreme that it might sound like sarcasm, but Forde's loyalty to the Stuart cause and the new king is unquestionable. He seems to be taking Damocles's unnatural orders as a test case for whether there are ever circumstances under which subjects can disobey the king. Obedience is ultimately upheld because everything works out to the advantage of Arcadia in the end – Plusiddipus gains another kingdom in addition to the two he will inherit from his parents, and this is another parallel with the plot of *The Tempest* – even though the king's subjects have to suffer in the short term. In *Leviathan*, the royalist Hobbes reaches the same conclusion about the necessity of always obeying the king whether he is right or not, but for different reasons. For Hobbes, once mankind has emerged from the state of nature and entered into a social contract which involves a system of monarchy, that contract can never be broken. Following the king, from Hobbes's point of view, is still a much better bet in terms of security and life expectancy than returning to the warlike state of nature which inevitably follows the breaking of the social contract.⁵⁴

⁵⁴ Hobbes, p.93.

But Forde wanted to show more than this; not just that it is right to obey the monarch, but that monarchy can be a good system of government. To this end he introduces a virtuous king who mirrors the unhealthy Damocles. Agenor is the king of Thessaly. He has a daughter but no son and is consequently glad to adopt Plusidippus when the pirates who have kidnapped him from the coast of Arcadia present him to Agenor in exchange for their pardons. Damocles rejected his heir and had him set adrift but Agenor, struck by the child's beauty, rescues him from his shipwreck and makes him his heir. Damocles was furious when his daughter married a high-born stranger but Agenor is angry with his daughter, Euriphyla, when she refuses to marry Plusidippus, who is not well-born so far as anyone knows but to whom Agenor has taken a liking. When Euriphyla confesses that she does in fact love Plusidippus, Agenor is pleased to be able to plan their marriage but allows Plusidippus to visit Arcadia anyway as he has sworn a vow to do so:

Then daughter, since it must be so, I can
 Not tell how to denie his just request:
 But see you part with him in friendship. And
 The like Sir, I require of you to her (IV.vii.15-18).

Agenor is just and sensible: the kind of king we would all like to be ruled by. But it is interesting to note that, in spite of Agenor's good example to him, Plusidippus has not turned out very well. He is visiting Arcadia solely because he has heard of the beauty of Samela and would like to meet this beautiful shepherdess himself – this is why he swore his vow to go there although he does not mention this to Agenor for obvious reasons. In earlier Arcadian dramas there are often oracles, prophecies, or other compelling reasons for the heroes to visit Arcadia so that their identities can be revealed but in this case the gods have no hand in the denouement, which is brought

about by Plusidippus's selfish lust. He has just become engaged to Euriphyla, whom he professes to love, and Agenor has announced his intention of leaving his throne to him – not bad going for a penniless orphan – but Plusidippus is stupid and arrogant enough to travel to another country in order to pursue a shepherdess.

As soon as he sees Samela he asks her to marry him and seems surprised when she refuses him:

And have I left my dear *Euriphila*
 For this! I see beautie makes women proud,
 I would I were at *Thessaly* again,
 There should I welcome be unto *Euriphila*,
 Whose heart I know's my fellow-traveller,
 Her salt tears, by this time, would make a sea,
 Wherein I might swim back again with ease (V.i.54-60).

Plusidippus shows his arrogance both in attributing Samela's rejection of his proposal to her pride, and not to the facts that she has never seen him before and loves someone else anyway, and the way in which he takes Euriphyla's love and support for granted while attempting to desert her. His pride is offended enough for him to want revenge:

I will revenge this scorn, if force or wit
 Will do, I'll make her pride come down (V.ii.16-17),

and he goes on to kidnap and threaten Samela, revelling in his power over her. This cannot be how Agenor has taught him to treat the weak and oppressed. In the eventual reconciliation scene, when Samela reveals that she is Sephestia in order to explain why she cannot marry the king and thus prevent him from killing her new husband (actually the disguised Maximus although she does not know this), Plusidippus's role in the reconciliation is very brief:

My *Maximus*, I'm thy *Sephestia*:
 Oh that our *Plusidippus* too were here!
Plu.
 And I am he, my name is *Plusidippus*.
Seph.
 My dearest son! 'tis he; now were my joys
 Compleat indeed, were but my Uncle here (V.viii.45-9).

It is no wonder, though, considering what has passed between Sephestia and Plusidippus, that she cannot find more to say in praise of her son. There is nothing at all to be said in defence of Plusidippus's character or recent conduct. Perhaps there is something inherently unhealthy about kings of Arcadia which Agenor's good example was unable to counteract in Plusidippus.

It is interesting to compare Forde's negative presentation of Arcadian kingship with Killigrew's honourable king in *Bellamira her Dream*. *Bellamira* is set in Sicily and Naples, a pastoral setting typical of Caroline drama. Forde's Agenor, king of Thessaly, is also a good king. It seems that presentations of royalty that are not set in Arcadia are more positive than those that are, in spite of royalist writers' obvious interest in creating positive images of monarchy. Arcadia itself may not be a neutral enough setting to be able to be easily pressed into the service of political ideology. For some reason, Arcadia seems to be the setting that is used to explore the negative aspects of kingship, in contrast to the positive presentations of kings that feature in other pastoral settings. Although Forde's investigation of kingship obviously grows out of the concerns of the time in which he was writing, it also has to be understood in an Arcadian context, and seems to be part of Forde's exploration of the nature of Arcadia as well as the nature of monarchy.

The nature of Arcadia

The nature of Arcadia itself, perhaps hinted at in Forde's pessimistic presentation of Plusidippus, remains a thematic concern for both Forde and Shadwell. This aspect of their plays is one that obviously grows out of the literary tradition of Arcadia and has less to do with the politics of their time than their presentation of Arcadian kingship. The form of drama had changed since Daniel's time and the form of Arcadia has changed too. Caroline and Restoration drama is witty and audience driven, because it has a sophisticated and knowledgeable courtly audience to please. Following the example of Beaumont and Fletcher, it is a highly stylised drama, relying on a narrow range of stock plots and stock elements that are endlessly manipulated and varied.

Anne Finch, Countess of Winchilsea's unacted pastoral drama *Aristomenes: Or, The Royal Shepherd*, exemplifies well how witty variations can be made to a stock plot.⁵⁵ The royal shepherd of the title is not in exile and does not enjoy his life of pastoral retreat. He would rather be helping out in the war that is raging around him but has been commanded by the priests of his own country, Rhodes, to live as a shepherd in the war-torn Messenia in order to fulfil the demands of an oracle that he must marry the daughter of the 'best of men'. The priests assume that the best of men with a beautiful daughter must be an innocent shepherd but he in fact turns out to be the king of Messenia. The prince meets his daughter as she is disguised as a shepherdess in order to escape the enemy soldiers who are attacking Messenia. A

⁵⁵ Anne Finch, although slightly younger than Forde and Shadwell, has a comparable background of disappointed royalist loyalty. She was a maid of honour to Mary of Modena, James II's second wife, but she and her husband had to give up their court positions when William and Mary became the new king and queen, and her husband was even arrested, accused of Jacobitism. She claimed to have written *Aristomenes* in order to divert her spirits from her recent disappointments, perhaps another example of a royalist turning to pastoral tragicomedy for consolation, DNB vol. 19, p.551. *Aristomenes* can be found in Myra Reynolds ed., *The Poems of Anne Finch, Countess of Winchilsea* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1903).

romance between aristocratic characters disguised as shepherds is a commonplace, but Finch's plot presents it in a new and unexpected way. Pleasure lies not in finding out what is going to happen in the plot, but in finding out exactly how she is going to make it happen. She draws attention to her own theatricality and her own manipulation of stock elements. It is also interesting that, although the 'best of men' is king of Arcadia as well as Messenia, the priests of Rhodes send their prince to Messenia, not Arcadia, to find the most virtuous of men amongst its shepherds. Perhaps Arcadia's reputation for virtue is not that high in Rhodes, or perhaps Finch raises the spectre of the 'perfect Arcadia' myth only to deliberately abandon it. The plot plays too with the received notion that it is shepherds and humble characters who are most virtuous. Forde plays with this notion as well when the shepherd who rescues Sephestia falls in love with her and first turns her out of his house, then betrays her to the king, out of spite when she is unable to return his love.

Witty surprises can also be created by the way in which the dramatist combines elements from different stock plots. Shadwell in *The Royal Shepherdess* withholds the information that Urania is married until the third act. Up until that time we believe that her suitor Endymion is the hero and will marry her. From then on we realise that we are actually in another plot, in which Endymion has a different function as one of the heroine's unwanted suitors, and this is confirmed when we learn that Cleantha loves Endymion in vain. This puts Endymion in the same plot situation as Daniel's Carinus: he rejects the woman who loves him and pursues the heroine, but will marry his devoted lover at the end when he realises that the heroine loves someone else. Dramatists seem to take delight in baffling the audience's expectations by alluding to well-worn and expected plots but changing subtle details. This is not drama which strives to be original, profound, or realistic, but it does strive to create

wit and pleasurable variety within a deliberately delimited and stylised range of options that are designed to test the range and extent of social, political and sexual obligations.

This mid-century wittiness and subtle variations on stock themes are evident in the way in which Forde and Shadwell represent the land of Arcadia. ‘Wittiness’ is a quality normally associated with the Restoration, but the roots for this can clearly be seen in Caroline and interregnum dramas. ‘Restoration’ wit was already developing in the mid-century. Forde and Shadwell’s plays should be understood in the context of earlier tragicomedies and depictions of Arcadia as well as in terms of ushering in the new Restoration taste. Thomas Heywood’s ‘A Pastorall Drama called Amphrisa, or the Forsaken Shepherdesse’ of 1637 is a Caroline piece that also explores the nature of its setting, Arcadia, and subverts the normal Caroline expectations of the pastoral. It is worth pausing to consider ‘Amphrisa’ in detail as it can throw light on Shadwell’s *Royal Shepherdess*.

The plot of ‘Amphrisa’ is that the queen of Arcadia, presumably a role designed for Henrietta Maria herself, meets some shepherdesses while out hunting and asks them to describe and defend the pastoral life to her. This gives Heywood the chance to depict life in Arcadia. He gives a wholly conventional, clichéd pastoral picture, but what is original in ‘Amphrisa’ is that it is shepherdesses themselves who give this picture, and they do so consciously. The speakers of pastoral poetry are supposed to be unaware that the life they live and sing about might be refreshing entertainment to a court audience. Tasso and, following him, Gervase Markham had depicted Arcadians who attempted to become professional singers, but these characters tried to sing about wars and politics. They never consciously created pastorals, and in both cases the shepherd singer lost his voice when he attempted to sing the higher strains of

poetry, emphasising that point that the musical skill of the Arcadian shepherd only lasts as long as it is spontaneous and unconscious.⁵⁶ The shepherdesses in 'Amphrisa' perform pastoral for the queen. This raises all sorts of questions about consciousness, unconsciousness and irony.

The shepherdesses are initially anxious about complying with the queen's request:

Tis our feare; A life that is so meane, so ill exprest
As needs it must bee, (if impos'd on us)
May make you rather loath it.⁵⁷

It is not just the ill expression that Amphrisa is worried about, she says here that she is also worried about the 'meane'ness of the pastoral life itself, afraid that it is not a worthy subject with which to entertain the queen. This might suggest pastoral unconsciousness, except that the girls then launch into a completely conventional praise of their lives such as any world-weary city-dwelling poet might have written. If the pastoral life is so good, why did Amphrisa call it 'meane' and why were they so anxious about immortalising it in song? It seems that the shepherdesses actually believe that the pastoral life is not mean at all, but the best life because it is simple and free from ostentation, or, a more likely possibility, they praise the pastoral life because they know that is what the queen wants to hear and believe about it.

⁵⁶ See Henry Renyolds trans., *Tassos Aminta Englisht*, in *Henry Reynolds: Tasso's 'Aminta' and Other Poems*, ed. Glyn Pursglove (Salzburg: Salzburg Studies in English Literature, 1991), I.ii and Gervase Markham, *The English Arcadia Part One* (London: Edward Allde, 1607), p.61.

⁵⁷ Thomas Heywood, 'A Pastorall Drama called Amphrisa, or the Forsaken Shepheardesse' in *Pleasant Dialogues and Dramma's* (London: R.O for R.H, 1637), pp.192-202, lines 277-9.

There are some hints that the second of these two possibilities is the correct one.

The shepherdesses only praise the pastoral at the queen's express command. Left to themselves, they talk wittily about the philosophical and pseudo-medical problem of curing love. In her praise of the pastoral, Amphrisa's tongue outruns her heart and she thoughtlessly proclaims

The Shepherd with his home-spun Lasse
 As many merry houres doth passe,
 As Courtiers with their costly Girles,
 Though richly deckt in gold and pearles:
 And though but plaine, to purpose woo,
 Nay oft-times with lesse danger too (312-7),

forgetting that she is no longer passing merry hours in love because, as we found out earlier, her shepherd has forsaken her. She hastily corrects herself:

If we sometimes the Willow weare,
 By subtill Swaines that dare forswear.
 We wonder whence it comes, and feare,
 Th' have beene at Court, and learn'd it there (324-7).

It's a nice try, but her beloved has not been at court and there was no suggestion when the girls discussed his infidelity that it is a quality foreign to Arcadia; in fact, they suggest the reverse:

Pelopoea. What newes in our Arcadia?
Alope. I know none:
 For well you wot it is no newes with us,
 That men should prove inconstant (19-22).

Unhappy love can be bred in home-spun clothing just as easily as it can in 'gold and pearls'. Amphrisa's slip reveals that the shepherdesses' praise of their life is conventional and untrue. They do not believe what they are saying, and pastoral life is not really like this at all, but they are saying it because they know what the expectation is. These shepherdesses are entirely sophisticated. They must have read pastoral poetry themselves and, although they know it is inaccurate, they also know that the queen wants to hear it and they are prepared to satisfy her demand.

The blame for this apparent insincerity on the part of the shepherdesses (and pastoral poets too) seems to lie not with them but with their audience. After all, they would not be repeating these blatant falsehoods if they could help it – they would rather talk about something else. The queen asks to hear a pastoral because

were I not a Queen, I'de wish to be
As one of you, a witty Shepheardesse.
Pray sing me somthing of your countrey life,
To make me more in love with't (273-6).

Her desire to be a shepherdess suggests the longing for a simpler world traditionally ascribed to readers and writers of pastoral. But here again there are clues that the queen does not really mean it, or at least that she knows that the pastoral life she imagines is illusory. In the first place, she knows that the shepherdesses are 'witty' and when she was listening in to their conversation it was their 'choice wit' (242) that pleased her, not their simplicity or innocence. She is also sensible enough to want to be a shepherdess only if she were not in fact a queen. She knows in reality that her lifestyle is superior to that of the shepherdesses and relegates her desire for the simple life to the position of an escapist fantasy, something she indulges in in her leisure moments when she is not enjoying the benefits of being queen. She is not deluded

enough to emulate Don Quixote although she might emulate Marie Antoinette. There is even a suggestion that she knows that the shepherdesses are not telling the truth about the pastoral life and knows that her escapist fantasy is no more than a fantasy. Although the girls have praised poverty as being free from care, unlike wealth, she gives them jewels before she leaves (355). They have eulogized the country and its simple values in direct contrast to the corrupt and care laden court, yet she continues

Greater than these we have for you in store,
And mean hereafter to employ you more (357-8).

This sounds like she is offering to find places for the girls at court, probably as her personal attendants. If she really believed that the pastoral life is the best life and that the girls were supremely happy where they are she would surely not offer to remove them from it. These are the dialogue's last lines so we do not know whether the shepherdesses accept these offers, but we are presumably meant to believe that they do. The queen is not deluded. She knows perfectly well that what they have said about the joys of the pastoral life is not true and rewards them for their skilled performance with the superior delights of court life.

The queen's response to the shepherdesses' performance makes them look positively calculating. It now seems as if they have performed the pastoral, knowing that that was what she wanted to hear, in order to gain the rewards they knew she could bestow. Their scruples about the meanness of the subject matter now look like part of the act, part of the illusion of innocence and unconsciousness that they know the queen expects. These scruples may even have been a way of subtly gauging the queen's real enthusiasm for the subject before they embarked upon it. When you only have one chance to impress the queen, you want to get it right. This calculating

performance dressed as innocence takes us back to Daniel's Arcadia, where innocence was a carefully manipulated state veiling all sorts of societal mechanisms. The difference is that in Daniel's Arcadia many people believed that Arcadian innocence *was* innocence and believed literally in the picture of the good pastoral life that 'Amphrisa' performs. Heywood's Arcadian shepherdesses have evolved to a point far beyond this where the pastoral ideal is no longer practised or believed in and is a useful fiction only when there is money to be made. Arcadia has become a tourist town. Daniel struggled to seriously imagine Arcadia as a real place and imagine what it would really be like to live there but in this poem by Heywood it is more like a masquerade in which all the participants are fully conscious that they are playing a part in a make believe world. This sense of role playing is of course heightened when we remember that the scene was probably written for the queen and her ladies to perform so 'Amphrisa's shepherdesses are in reality courtly ladies-in-waiting. Arcadia is now a fiction that the queen and court amuse themselves with, but they certainly do not associate their pastoral fantasy with any notion of geographical reality or the history of Polybius. Heywood's queen knows that there is a gap between the real lives of Arcadian shepherdesses and the pastoral lives that they perform for her. It is just that, as it happens, the queen, and Henrietta Maria herself, were only interested in the fantasy lives. Heywood himself, however, shows himself an attentive reader of Sidney by making the reader aware of the disjunction between Arcadian reality and pastoral fantasy.

Shadwell's Restoration presentation of shepherds and shepherdesses is very similar to Heywood's in 'Amphrisa'. Shadwell's *The Royal Shepherdess* is set exclusively at court and has no shepherd characters. It does have one pastoral interlude, however, when some shepherds come to entertain the king and queen. They sing and dance, as

Arcadian shepherds are wont to do, and the subject of their songs is the joys of the shepherd's life. They employ every pastoral cliché; their country is beautiful and temperate, they live in fragrant bowers, they play games, dance and sing all day, they are free from fear, jealousy and ambition, they enjoy loving yet innocent relationships, they have no problems. Their songs follow the Sannazaran pattern of day – to – night as they describe the joys of their lives in an approximate chronological sequence, beginning with

Shepherds awake, the God of day does rise (III.i.227)

and proceeding through 'the Cool Evening' (III.i.273) to the suggestion of night time ('when we have done, we laugh, and lie down' III.i.320) in the final refrain. Not all the pleasures that they describe in a typical day are strictly pastoral:

We teach our little Doggs to fetch and to carry
The Partridge, the Hare, and the Pheasants our Quarry:
The nimble Squirrels with Cudgells we Chase (III.i.322-4).

Hunting is not a typical pastoral pastime, but it is a courtly pastime, and one of the reasons why courtiers might visit the countryside. The shepherds are not really singing about the joys of their lives, but performing a pageant of country pleasures from the perspective of the court.

Their performance is heavily, deliberately staged. We are given this stage direction before they appear:

Scene draws, and Shepherds and Shepherdesses are discovered lying
under the Shades of Trees, at the appearance of the King and Court;

one arises and sings as follows, *In Stilo recitativo* (p.35).

This sounds like the stage direction for the opening of a court masque and the shepherds' performance is presented to the on-stage audience like a masque. It is elaborately staged and the songs and dances are elaborately choreographed, as is proved by another stage direction:

Here the Shepherds and Shepherdesses take hands round, and Dance, as they sing the following Song, and at the end of the Song they fall into the Figure they must dance in (p.38).

Unlike the performance of Sidney's Arcadian shepherds for Basilius, this performance is not spontaneous but deliberate and practised. It is ironic that the shepherds claim in their song that 'instead of Court-Revels, we merrily play [at a host of country games]' (III.i.317) because they *are* in fact the court revels. The content of their songs seems stylised and conventional rather than realistic. It is a performance, which the court can believe is an accurate picture of rural life if it wants. Some other aspects of their songs bear little relation to reality. For example, they praise the clemency of the weather:

Here a perpetual Spring does cloath the Earth,
And makes it fruitful with each seasons birth.
In this fair Climate every day
Is fresh and green as May,
And here no beauty can decay (III.i.240-4),

but surely the atmospheric conditions do not vary that much over the small country of Arcadia. If everyone, even courtiers, enjoys an equally lovely climate, why mention it as a benefit of the shepherd's life?

The shepherds brag about their peaceful existence – 'No noise of War invades our Eares,/ We suffer not the Rage of Sword' (III.i.307-8) – yet we know that Arcadia is at war in Thessaly and immediately after their performance a messenger arrives to inform the king that the war has just been won. Throughout the play the character Neander has been mocked for his cowardice in refusing to go to the wars. Is there one rule for courtiers and another for shepherds? Are shepherds exempt from the duty of having to defend their country? And do the shepherds not care how many of their compatriots suffer and die in the war, so long as they can live peacefully in their fields? If their praise were not conventional it would look inappropriate and callous, or at best, it would look like an ironic comment on Arcadia's desire to conquer Thessaly.

Similarly, they gloat about their love affairs:

With our delicate Nymphs we Kiss and we Toy,
 What all others but Dream of we daily Enjoy;
 With our sweet-hearts we dally so long till we find
 Their pretty Eyes say that their hearts are grown kind (III.i.333-6).

This may be another ironic comment on the whole court's desire to 'kiss and toy' with Urania, the supposed shepherdess. A moralist might be alarmed at the level of kissing and toying going on *before* the shepherdesses' hearts grow kind, though, and, as we saw with Daniel's Daphne, the Arcadian emphasis on the kiss is only half of the truth about love affairs: it is discovered that Urania is married to Theander when it is discovered that they have a child. But the desire for sexual fulfilment is an important

part of the courtly fantasy of the pastoral life so the shepherds cannot leave it out of their account, however vaguely and unconvincingly they allude to it. The whole pastoral interlude is staged, not just in its outer form, but in its content too. The shepherds begin with some blatant flattery of the king, comparing him to the sun, but it is harder to spot that the whole interlude is also a flattery of the king and court. The shepherds perform what the audience wants and expects to hear. The court wants to believe in its pastoral myth (the same one propagated by its own poets) and even real shepherds are willing to oblige. After all, they probably get paid well for their entertainments and they have access and influence with the king, in case they ever need it. For those considerations, no wonder they are happy to dance and sing to whatever tune the court calls.

The exposure of the shepherds' conventional and unrealistic depiction of their lives is so subtle that one wonders if even Shadwell was really aware of it. It does not seem as deliberately and ironically conventional as Heywood's picture of Arcadian life in 'Amphrisa' because Shadwell, unlike Heywood, does not allow us to see the shepherds behaving naturally before their performance for the court. Does Shadwell present this charming interlude in his charming Arcadian drama in all seriousness, or does he intend its subtle ironies? In his preface he comments that although he has adapted the play from that of an earlier writer he has changed little, but he has added songs in order to please the audience. Only the final song is original, meaning that he has added the shepherds' interlude. The irony of the shepherds' presentation would be extended into real life if Shadwell, like them, decided that the courtly audience would be charmed by some conventional, idealised praise of the pastoral life in the mouths of some carefully choreographed shepherds. The real shepherds acting the part of ideal shepherds now become actors acting the part of real shepherds acting the

part of ideal shepherds. But it is difficult to be sure if Shadwell intended to create an ironic comment on the taste of courtly audiences by the shepherds' suspiciously conventional praise of Arcadia. Heywood's earlier work actually seems more self-consciously witty than Shadwell's Restoration drama.

What is certain is that authors are by this time losing interest in exploring the idea of Arcadian perfection. Shadwell's interlude of shepherds presents the courtly audience with an idealised and vague picture of rural life, onto which the audience is invited to project its own escapist pastoral fantasy. This is more like Tasso's golden age ode than Guarini and Daniel's more realistic evaluations of the social costs of such escapism and wishful thinking. Shadwell's Arcadia is starting to return to the pastoral idealism of Tasso and Sannazaro from which it came. In *The Royal Shepherdess* the shepherds' interlude can be contrasted with the 'real' and less ideal court environment that surrounds it. The main action that takes place in Shadwell's Arcadian court is drawn from Sidney's *Arcadia*, in the substitution of the king's wife for the young visitor with whom he has become infatuated. Shadwell's Basilius, like his predecessor, might be seen as deluded by the pastoral fantasy of Arcadia, in believing that he can commit adultery without any negative consequences, and in misunderstanding the true situation of Urania. She is not a beautiful shepherdess, as he thinks, but a disguised princess (perhaps echoing Pyrocles?), and his daughter-in-law. The scheming and slanderous courtiers emphasise the point that Arcadia is not a pastoral realm untroubled by politics. Shadwell like Sidney juxtaposes a seductive image of pastoral escape with a more realistic everyday Arcadian world, but this contrast is not nearly as pointed in the later work, and the interlude seems to be intended as a genuine, although temporary, escape into pastoral fantasy for both the onstage and real-life audiences.

Forde in *Love's Labyrinth*, like Finch in *Aristomenes* (above), more deliberately plays with the idea that Arcadia is a perfect place. Just before Maximus gets into the boat that Damocles has arranged for his punishment, he says:

Arcadia adieu! Thou hast before
 Been famous for the happiness of loves:
 Now mischief hath usurp't the seat (I.iv.74-6).

He alludes to Arcadia's reputation as a place where love (and everything else) prospers but, like Daniel at the start of *The Queene's Arcadia*, he recognises that something has already gone wrong in Arcadia. The reputation is false, or at any rate out of date. Arcadia is no longer the perfect place that it is believed to be. Arcadia's lapse from perfection, in Forde as in Sidney, is something that has begun in the royal family, with Damocles's strange behaviour and Sephestia's disobedience, but it spreads outwards.

Undermining the myth of Arcadian perfection is of course one of the main aims of all the authors who write about Arcadia and it always stems from the attempt to imagine Arcadia as a real place and imagine what it would really be like to live there. Forde too goes on to explore the society of the Arcadian shepherds when Sephestia and Maximus take refuge there and finds it decidedly imperfect. Contrary to popular opinion, the Arcadian shepherds are inferior of intellect, can be mean spirited and inhospitable, are unhappy in love, and are not innately good at singing or composing songs. Doron is a comic and pathetic character, the butt of everyone else's jokes. A nice example of Restoration wit and playing with convention occurs when we find out that he has a brother called 'Moron' ('Doron' is a conventional pastoral name but nobody had thought to change its first letter before), although it later features in rather a lame joke:

Lam.

Moron! what was he a kin to a fool?

Dor.

Why he was my own brother, Sir.

Lam.

I thought so (IV.v.62-4).

The shepherd Menaphon initially takes Sephestia and her uncle Lamedon in but throws them out again when Sephestia rejects his amorous advances. Perhaps it is significant that Menaphon is the king's shepherd as the king's inhospitality and cruelty seem to be corrupting his subjects. The shepherds are crossed in love: Doron loves Carmela, Menaphon's sister, who laughs at him and does not return his affection until the end, and Doron's sister Pesana loves Menaphon, who had rejected her even before Sephestia appeared on the scene.

Doron complains that love has made Menaphon witty but has not had the same effect on him and decides that he will have to hire a professional poet to impress Carmela:

This 'tis to be in love, how spruce is *Menaphon*
 Become of late, as he were always going
 To a feast? and talks as if he were some
 Citie Orator. Why can I not do so? I'm
 Sure I am in love as well as he. But
 I'll go hire some journey-man Poet, or other,
 And he shall make me some verses
 For my *Carmela*: And that will do as
 Well, as if I made them my self (III.ii.86-94).

The reason why love has not had the same effect on Doron as it has on Menaphon (apart from his greater stupidity) is that Menaphon loves a beautiful princess while Doron 'only' loves a shepherdess. Forde exploits the conventional aristocratic bias of

romance that Sidney also uses but makes less allowance than Sidney does for the innate good qualities of the Arcadian shepherds. As far as he is concerned, they are just ordinary comic rustics. They even look up to the town, despised by some pastoral writers as inferior to the country. Doron is impressed by 'Citie Orator's and his 'journey-man Poet' surely comes from the nearest town. Forde taps into the alternative Arcadian tradition of Tasso and Markham, that town poetry is better than anything the uneducated country can produce.

Yet although Forde's Arcadians are ordinary rustics, not particularly virtuous or happy, Lamedon has much to say in their praise:

How happy are these shepherds! here they live
 Content, and know no other cares, but how
 To tend their flocks, and please their Mistris best.
 They know no strife, but that of love, they spend
 Their days in mirth; and when they end, sweet sleeps
 Repay, and ease the labours of the day.
 They need no Lawyers to decide their jars,
 Good herbs, and wholsom diet, is to them
 The onely *Æsculapius*; their skill
 Is how to save, not how with art to kill.
 Pride and ambition are such strangers here,
 They are not known so much as by their names.
 Their sheep and they contend in innocence,
 Which shall excell, the Master or his flocks.
 With honest mirth, and merry tales, they pass
 Their time, and sweeten all their cares:
 Whilst Courts are fill'd with waking thoughtful strife,
 Peace and content do crown the shepherds life (III.viii.1-18).

His monologue is very conventional praise of the pastoral life but by this point in the play we have seen enough of the shepherds' real lives to know that it is no reflection of reality. All that Lamedon says is literally true, the shepherds do not have anything else to do other than 'tend their flocks, and please their Mistris best', but he gives the impression that this is a pleasant life whereas in reality it is a hard and frustrating one.

Lamedon is a courtier looking at the shepherd's life and imagining that it is a happy one. He falls victim to the same pastoral delusion as Sidney's (and perhaps Shadwell's) Basilius. Forde underscores Sidney's point that the ideal Arcadia only exists in courtly rhetoric: only town dwellers wish they could be shepherds.

Lamedon's speech seems to be part of the same attack that Sidney makes on the unreality of courtly pastoral, perhaps now also attacking the dangerously out-of-touch and idealised pastoral settings of the previous Caroline period. Perhaps the old courtier Lamedon is genuinely unable to see beyond the myths propagated by courtly pastoral poetry. (The same poetry that is written by the 'journey-man Poet'). Forde subtly confounds our expectations that Arcadia will be an ideal pastoral locale but in Lamedon's speech he adroitly draws our attention to the convention that he is subverting. This subversion may be related to Restoration pragmatism and the new generation's inability to believe in Caroline Platonism or pastoralism, but it is also a common feature of Arcadia writing that, as analysis of Heywood's 'Amphrisa' shows, was present even in the idealistic Caroline period and can be found earlier in the Arcadias of Sidney and Daniel.

Both Forde and Shadwell, like Sidney and Daniel before them, conclude that Arcadia is actually not a perfect place and expose all the contradictions and impossibilities in the Arcadian myth. In Forde's *Love's Labyrinth* this is partly due to his attempt to imagine what living in Arcadia, amongst the peasants and shepherds rather than at court, would really be like, as it was for Sidney and Daniel. But Forde and Shadwell's presentation of Arcadia owes more to the seventeenth-century wittiness that had developed in the sophisticated coterie drama of the Caroline period that delighted in subverting an audience's expectations. Unlike the Arcadias of earlier authors, these plays do not make sustained efforts to imagine what it would be like to

be an Arcadian shepherd and, although they do deflate the literary myth of Arcadia's perfection, they show no awareness of the negative tradition of Arcadia that Sidney and Daniel took seriously. The negative tradition of Arcadia perhaps persists semi-consciously, however, in their presentation of deeply flawed Arcadian kings. It is the contrast between the highly artificial courtly pastoral and the simultaneous awareness that this is not how real shepherds live, this is just a courtly game, that undermines Arcadian perfection in these plays, although this too is part of a courtly game, an example of wit that the court and sophisticated theatregoers will appreciate. In this sense there is a high level of continuity between these tragicomedies of the 1660s and those of the Caroline period. As Heywood's 'Amphrisa' proves, the Arcadia myth had already been wittily deflated in the Caroline period and Forde and Shadwell do not really add anything new to the Caroline understanding of Arcadia. But this continuity of taste between the Caroline and Restoration periods was short-lived as a distinctively new style of witty comedy became popular in the 1670s.

Comparison with Sir William D'Avenant's comedy *The Rivals*, performed in 1664 and published in 1668, and also set in Arcadia, reveals the rise of the new taste. D'Avenant also confounds the audience's expectations about Arcadia as when his play opens the Arcadians have just won a war. They joke about the differences between their country's reputation and its reality:

Sir, he presum'd,
 That your *Arcadians* were grown weak with ease;
 And Love had soften'd us to Cowardize.
Arcon.
 But he has found the heat of Love in them,
 Had not so stifl'd all their sparks of Valour,
 But that they still retain'd enough to make
 A Lightning which did blast his spreading pow'r.
Polynices.
 And that they had not so much Courage lost,
 Amongst the Myrtles, as not to deserve

A Victor's Laurel; Though they seem inclin'd
 Only to Pastoral delights, yet when
 They quit the Sheep-hook to assume the Sword,
 They can write *Tragedies* (on those Who shall
 Intrench upon their Liberty) in wounds,
 And Characters made legible by blood.
 Our soft *Arcadians* conquer'd these who were,
 By Tyranny and War to hardship bred.⁵⁸

This is still a witty joke about the true nature of Arcadia, but it is a different witty joke. D'Avenant is not interested in imagining what it would really be like to be an Arcadian shepherd or in deflating the idealised courtly presentation of the pastoral lifestyle. He simply makes the point that the myths about Arcadia must be false because it's impossible for any country to be so rustic and backward. Instead of exploring the myth of Arcadia he just dismisses it. Restoration taste had in fact moved beyond the Caroline pastoralism that Forde and Shadwell show in these plays. Forde's play, published in 1660 in order to welcome the new king, was a special case that had symbolic value. It also engages with its own time by exploring the question of loyalty, both in the public realm (obeying Damocles's unnatural orders) and the private one (Sephestia's remarriage). Shadwell's play, as he tells us in his preface, was an adaptation of an older play that was not particularly successful when it was performed in 1669. Shadwell never wrote another pastoral tragicomedy. The Restoration Arcadia, by growing out of the Caroline literary tradition, was old-fashioned and dated in its own time.

Arcadia and Utopia Revisited

⁵⁸ Sir William D' Avenant, *The Rivals* (London: for William Cademan, 1668), I.i.4-20.

As imaginary worlds go, Arcadia had become rather a poor choice for one that would allow its author to explore new ideas. Restoration Arcadias are consciously backwards-looking and therefore repetitive, not able to move far beyond the concerns of the Caroline period. Writers in the 1660s and early 1670s, instead of creating therapeutic pastoral tragicomedies, began to invent new imaginary worlds that could give them the freedom to explore whatever ideas they wanted to. Margaret Cavendish makes the appealing freedom of her imaginary world particularly clear in her preface:

though I have neither Power, Time, nor Occasion, to be a great Conqueror, like *Alexander*, or *Cesar*; yet, rather then not be Mistress of a World, since Fortune and the Fates would give me none, I have made One of my own.⁵⁹

Between 1666 and 1673, five new imaginary voyages were published: Margaret Cavendish's *The Description of a New World, Called the Blazing World* (1666), Peter Belon's *A Relation of the Country of Jansenia* (1668), Henry Neville's *The Isle of Pines* (1668), P.M.'s *The Hairy-Giants* (1671) and Richard Head's *The Floating Island* (1673). This is a strikingly large number of imaginary voyages to appear in such a short space of time, especially as accounts of imaginary voyages dating from earlier in the century are rare.⁶⁰ These five texts are of course quite different from one another and were written for different reasons – Belon's is a translation of an earlier French satire on the Jansenists, a religious sect, Head's is a satirical allegorical description of London in the Summer, and P.M.'s is a protest against colonial expansion – but I think it is still possible to group them together for the features they

⁵⁹ Margaret Cavendish, *The Description of a New World, called the Blazing-World* (London: A Maxwell, 1668).

⁶⁰ There are some, mainly in the first half of the seventeenth century: John Healey's *The Discovery of a New World* (1609), W.P.'s *The Relation of a Wonderful Voiage* (1619), Richard Bernard's *The Isle of Man* (1627), Francis Godwin's *The Man in the Moon* (1638), James Howell's *Dodona's Grove* (1640), and in the Cromwellian period, James Harrington's *The Common-Wealth of Oceana* (1656).

have in common. They all describe imaginary worlds and each of these imaginary worlds can only be reached by some kind of overseas journey.

The feature of the overseas journey links these texts to accounts of real travels that were also popular in the period but the difference is that travel writing, although it often exaggerates and distorts its account, has to describe real places.⁶¹ With the exception of Cavendish's *Blazing World* these imaginary worlds are presented as real places, in the tradition of travel writing and literary utopia, but the reader knows that they are imaginary and therefore looks to find the meaning of the work not in its presentation of a strange place but in a message it presents about the familiar world. Real accounts of foreign lands can raise questions about the familiar world too, but this is more accidental because it depends firstly on the chance that the foreign country has some customs that reflect badly on those of the reader's country, and secondly on the traveller or reader's response to a custom that is simply a matter of reported fact, neither bad nor good in itself. Imaginary worlds have the advantage of being specifically created to comment on the real world.

Imaginary worlds that are reached by overseas journeys and present themselves as real places clearly have a lot in common with More's *Utopia*. The genre of literary utopia is difficult to define but 'imaginary worlds that are used to comment on the real world, or bear some relationship to the real world' is not a bad working definition. This is also a fair description of what Berger defines as the 'second world' of the Humanist imagination, using More's *Utopia* as his main example.⁶² As I argued in

⁶¹ Although modern accounts of travel writing often focus on the ways in which the author creates the place being described by projecting his or her own ideas onto it. The fictionality of travel writing is recognised in the phrase 'imaginative geography' that is sometimes used to describe it. For a recent account of the role of the author in creating, instead of merely recording, foreign places, see Ivo Kamps and Jyotsna G. Singh ed., *Travel Knowledge: European "Discoveries" in the Early Modern Period* (New York: Palgrave, 2001), p.4.

⁶² It might be possible to see Hobbes's state of nature in *Leviathan* as a second world too, especially bearing in mind his Humanist background (for Hobbes and Humanism, see Quentin Skinner, *Reason and Rhetoric in the Philosophy of Hobbes* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996)). Tuck also suggests that *Leviathan* is 'utopian', Hobbes, p.xliii. If so this could be another way in which the *Leviathan* challenges the Restoration Arcadia.

chapter two, Arcadia can also be a second world, although it is a second world that has the specific qualifications that it is aware of its own literary tradition and investigates the conditions of its own society at least as much as it comments on that of its author. The fact that the popularity of utopia increases in the 1660s as the popularity of Arcadia declines supports this argument as it suggests that Arcadia and utopia are after all two sides of the same coin. When one is popular, there is no market for the other. Andrew Varney suggests that the seventeenth century in England was for the most part an inward-looking period, when writers were too anxious about problems at home to consider the wider world, but that after the political settlement of 1689 they felt secure enough at home to be interested in foreign exploration again.⁶³ These imaginary worlds perhaps suggest that some people were feeling interested in foreign affairs and new ideas as early as the 1660s, but it is certainly true that the Restoration sees a change in taste that results in Arcadia falling out of fashion and leads to the eighteenth-century enthusiasm for travel narratives, utopias and imaginary worlds.

⁶³ Andrew Varney, *Eighteenth-Century Writers In Their World: A Mighty Maze* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1999), p.6.

Chapter V: *Dione*: The End of the Arcadian Tradition

This study ends with John Gay's *Dione* because this play, first published in 1720 but never performed, seems to offer a natural end to seventeenth-century ways of thinking about Arcadia. It is not Gay's best-known play and has not attracted much critical attention at any time. Gay's most recent biographer, David Nokes, calls *Dione* a 'frozen museum-piece.'¹ But it is of interest as it depicts its setting of Arcadia in a way that is different to the ways Arcadia had been used in drama before. *Dione* returns to several of the themes familiar from earlier depictions of Arcadia, especially issues surrounding female behaviour in love affairs, social or familial obligations pitted against the claims of love, and a tragicomic plot. Yet it employs these familiar features in an unexpected way, so that instead of being a tragicomedy, *Dione* becomes the first Arcadian tragedy. This naturally begs the question of what has changed: why is Gay's Arcadia so different to its predecessors, and why have the earlier tragicomic ways of imagining Arcadia evolved into tragedy?

Gay's Arcadian landscape is different to those of Sidney, Daniel, Forde and Shadwell. Although many of these landscapes are not presented in much detail, the clear implication is that they are all beautiful rural settings. Sidney, as we have seen, did not challenge Sannazaro's presentation of the physical landscape of Arcadia, just the importance that should be attached to the land's natural beauty, and Sannazaro's conception of the lives and society of its inhabitants. Gay's Arcadia is still isolated and rural, but his presentation of the landscape has changed to focus on what is negative and slightly menacing about the country. The countryside of Arcadia is not

¹ David Nokes, *John Gay: A Profession of Friendship* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), p.286. Nokes's description refers to the fact that *Dione* is not parodic or fast-paced like most of Gay's dramas, but an attempt at a serious literary pastoral that is rather dull to read by comparison.

depicted as a pastoral idyll but as a wild rural setting – Act One opens on a stage set described as ‘A Plain, at the foot of a steep craggy mountain’ where Dione seeks out ‘horrid caverns of despair’ – because the characters themselves describe the landscape and use it to reflect their own feelings.² Dione later compares herself to a young bird struggling to fly against ‘autumnal tempests’ (II.iv.4), again using natural imagery to reflect her own despair. In the same way, the disguised Evander, lying on the grave of a shepherd who has died for love, notices only the negative aspects of the landscape:

Come, sable Death! give, give the welcome stroke;
The raven calls thee from yon’ blasted oak (II.i.5-6).

Evander also twists the usual descriptions of pastoral beauty when he compares Parthenia, the beautiful Arcadian girl who does not love anyone, to a thorny rose or ripe peach with a worm inside it (IV.i.23-6). Cleanthes too finds the land unwelcoming: he searches for Dione ‘with weary pain’ (V.i.43) through every path and glade in the ‘wide forests’ (V.i.42) and the only Arcadians he meets, after a brief scene with Laura, who conceals Dione’s whereabouts from him, are the thieves who murder him. This Arcadian landscape is evidently inhospitable to strangers. Images of natural beauty have become corrupted and the landscape is harsh and threatening. Laura has searched for Dione through ‘the brown desert, and unshelter’d moor’ (I.i.4), Parthenia sleeps in ‘noxious shade’ (IV.iii.8), and the woods, like the characters that inhabit them, are ‘lonely’ (II.v.123, III.iii.77). If Parthenia herself can be seen to represent Arcadia – she is the native character with the largest part in the story – then Arcadia is distinctly unwelcoming. Parthenia prefers solitude and, like the land of Arcadia itself in this play, cannot give the other characters what they want.

² John Gay, *Dione* in *John Gay: Dramatic Works* volume I, ed. John Fuller (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983), I.i.2.

Parthenia and Arcadia cannot give the other characters what they want, but what the play's characters are looking for represents a change from earlier reasons for visiting or depicting Arcadia. Previously, various characters had attempted to create idyllic golden age retreats in Arcadia, and had generally found that real life, even in Arcadia, is considerably more complex and unpredictable than their ideals had allowed for. But *Dione* is different. Its main characters are all from the neighbouring court and have all come in to the Arcadian countryside not because they want to enjoy an idyllic pastoral retreat, but to look for love. Evander leaves the court because he has fallen in love with the beautiful country girl Parthenia; Dione leaves the court to search for Evander, her fiancé; and Cleanthes to search for Dione, whom he loves, as her father, unaware of her engagement to Evander, has arranged a marriage for Dione and Cleanthes. The play's main interest is in the resolution of these love-complications, not in the landscape or society of Arcadia. Unlike any of the previous versions of Arcadia that have been considered in this study, there is almost no depiction of the Arcadian society in *Dione*. The attempt of the Arcadian shepherds to blame Parthenia for the suicide of one of their friends can be related to the Arcadian 'cruel maiden' myth found in Daniel's *Qveenes Arcadia*, but this is the only scene of the play in which a group of Arcadians is depicted, and their philosophy is undermined there by Parthenia's refusal to be labelled as a cruel maiden. The country of Arcadia in *Dione* functions more as a backdrop to the plot. It is a psychologised landscape as characters describe it in terms reflecting their own frustration. Dione sees 'horrid caverns of despair' and Evander rotten peaches because they are both unhappy in love. It is also an unwelcoming and foreboding landscape because the play will end in tragedy. This negative presentation of Arcadia may recall Polybius and Ovid's negative depictions of the place and its history and myth. However, the play's psychologised landscape is

a departure from the previous interest in imagining Arcadia as a real place with a complex society, although it perhaps recalls the way Sidney's characters saw what they wanted to see in Arcadia, and also looks forward to the nineteenth-century poetry that uses Arcadia as a metaphor for a lost past happiness or a lost self (although there the landscape is always presented positively).

The negative description of the land of Arcadia in *Dione* means that Gay cannot be trying to invoke the myth that Arcadia is idealistic or a golden age. The prologue's opening lines recall Tasso's description of the golden age:

There was a time (Oh were those days renew'd!)
Ere tyrant laws had woman's will subdu'd;
Then nature rul'd, and love, devoid of art,
Spoke the consenting language of the heart (Prologue 1-4).

But Gay goes on to reject this conventional pastoral ideal, adding a new psychological insight into how passion operates to the usual pastoral lament for the lost golden age:

Love uncontroul'd! insipid, poor delight!
'Tis the restraint that whets our appetite (Prologue 5-6).

This is certainly true in *Dione*, where all the characters persist in loving those who do not return their love. Before the play even begins, Gay has dissociated his Arcadia from the Arcadia of myth. The myth of Arcadia as a golden age, perfect place where love prospers is rejected in *Dione*. Gay does not even want, like most Arcadia writers, to juxtapose this myth with the reality that he depicts. After the prologue, no references are made to the supposedly ideal nature of Arcadia. The Arcadian myth is forgotten while Gay gets on with telling the stories of unrequited and unhappy love.

But why has this radical change in the presentation of Arcadia occurred? It seems likely that it is linked to the new debate surrounding the nature and purpose of the pastoral genre in Gay's time. The pastoral debate in England in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries was essentially a matter of taking sides between two schools of thought: neoclassicism and rationalism. Each of these schools has at its heart a treatise by a French author: the neoclassicists align themselves with the 'Dissertatio de Carmine Pastorali' of Rapin, translated into English by Thomas Creech and published with his translation of Theocritus in 1684; and the rationalists with Fontenelle's 'Discours sur la nature de l'éplogue' of 1688. The 'Discours' was translated into English by Pierre-Antoine Le Motteux³ but it is in Knightly Chetwood's 'Preface to the Pastorals with a short defence of Virgil, against some of the reflections of Monsieur Fontenelle', published in Dryden's translation of Virgil in 1697, that Fontenelle's arguments really made their mark on the English pastoral debate. Virgil was in need of defence against Fontenelle because Fontenelle, unlike Rapin, had presumed to criticise him and mention areas in which he felt that Virgil falls short of perfection. Rapin's treatise had done nothing but praise Theocritus and Virgil, especially Virgil, and used their works to formulate a series of rules for writing pastoral. It followed, then, that Virgil and Theocritus could never break those rules and so never fall short of perfection. Fontenelle prefers not to be swayed by the authority of the ancients and prefers to judge them, not by rules, but by 'the natural Light of Reason . . . as if they had been some living authors whom I saw every Day; and there lies the Sacrilege!'⁴ The pastoral debate can eventually be shown to be an extension of the question of ancients versus moderns. The neoclassicists, following Rapin, rely on the authority of Theocritus and Virgil and will not allow anyone to

³ The translation appears in the Le Bossu, *Monsieur Bossu's Treatise of the Epick Poem* (London, 1695).

⁴ Fontenelle, 'Of Pastorals', trans. Motteux in Le Bossu (second edition, 1719), p. 351.

criticise them; the rationalists, following Fontenelle, judge by the light of their own reason and their own taste and refuse to be dictated to by dead authors. However, as J.E. Congleton shows, although the amount of deference to pay to the ancients was the main division between neoclassicists and rationalists it did lead to a host of minor differences, like whether pastorals could be successfully set in England or who was the best modern writer of pastorals (the neoclassicists preferred Pope, the rationalists Ambrose Philips).⁵ But the debate at times seems more apparent than real as, although Rapin and Fontenelle disagree about Virgil, they agree about nearly everything else. Their theories of the pastoral are so similar that Pope found it easy to ‘reconcile’ them in his ‘A Discourse on Pastoral Poetry’.⁶

Gay was interested in this debate, and especially in blending realism with the pastoral. *Dione* is the last of his experiments in pastoral realism, that also include the famous *Shepherd’s Week* of 1714, and the ‘tragi-comi-pastoral farce’ *The What D’Ye Call It* in 1715, both reprinted in *Poems on Several Occasions*, the same collection in which *Dione* was first published, in 1720. The *Shepherd’s Week* fits into the pastoral debate on the neoclassical side. It is a series of poems (one for every day of the week) set in the English countryside and determinedly rustic. Instead of classical names, his rustics have names like Cloddipole, Blouzelinda and Grubbinol, their language, as Gay points out in his Proeme, is rustic and homely and their expressions and metaphors are drawn from their life experience rather than that of their author:

Her breath by far excell’d the breathing cows

...

What I have done for thee will *Cic’ly* do

Will she thy linnen wash or hosen darn

...

⁵ J.E. Congleton, *Theories of Pastoral Poetry in England 1684 – 1789* (Florida: University of Florida Press, 1952), p.75. Congleton’s work is still the standard reference work on this topic.

⁶ Alexander Pope, ‘A Discourse on Pastoral Poetry’ in E. Audra and Aubrey Williams ed., *Alexander Pope: Pastoral Poetry and An Essay On Criticism* (London: Meuthen &co., 1961), p.23.

This penknife keen my windpipe shall divide.
 What, shall I fall as squeaking pigs have dy'd!⁷

Some of the minor issues that had sprung up in the pastoral debate were about Englishness and rusticity: should shepherds, their nationality, their language, and their minds and manners be realistic or literary. Gay responds to this debate with a sarcastic depiction of what pastoral poetry would be like if the 'realism' of the rationalistic school became the standard. His friend and fellow neoclassicist Pope had earlier used a similar ironic approach in the *Guardian* no. 40, writing an essay on the pastoral as if he were the rationalist pastoral critic Thomas Tickell and deflating Tickell's arguments in favour of rustic language by the vulgar examples he uses to illustrate his essay.⁸

But although Gay is ironic and neoclassicist in *The Shepherd's Week* he appears to have changed his mind about the value of realism in *Dione*.⁹ In the genre of pastoral tragicomedy, at least, he is open to innovation and a slightly less stylised presentation of the problems created by passion than the conventional dramaturgy of pastoral tragicomedy would allow. His rebellion against the golden age myth in *Dione* proves that he is not slavishly following the pastoral critics, as both Rapin and Fontenelle concurred that pastoral poetry could only be set in the golden age. Rapin insists:

tis very plain, that as *Donatus* himself observ'd, Pastorals were the invention of the simplicity and innocence of that Golden age, if there was ever any such, or certainly of that time which succeeded the beginning of the world: For the Golden Age must be acknowledged to be only in the fabulous times, yet tis certain that the Manners of the first Men were so plain and simple, that we may

⁷ John Gay, *The Shepherd's Week* in *The Poetical Works of John Gay*, ed. G.C. Faber (London: Oxford University Press, 1926), p.34, pp.36-7, p.42.

⁸ *Guardian* 40 (April 27th 1713), reprinted in *The Guardian* (London: 1757) volume I, pp.169-76.

⁹ Norman Gillespie considers whether *Dione* can be seen as a burlesque like *The Shepherd's Week* and concludes that it must have been 'offered as a serious work in its own right' instead, in 'An Operatic Version of John Gay's *Dione*', *English Studies* 65, (1984), p.422.

easily derive both the innocent employment of Shepherds, and Pastoral from them,¹⁰

and Fontenelle concurs:

[o]f all kinds of poetry the pastoral is probably the most ancient, as the keeping of Flocks was one of the first Employments which men took up.¹¹

The explanation of the origins of pastoral poetry in terms of a fantastic idea of real prehistory might seem naive to modern readers – and not just modern readers, as Puttenham, writing in the sixteenth century, had already rejected the idea that pastoral was the first form of poetry.¹² But the eighteenth-century conception of pastoral – the imitation of a shepherd in the golden age – made sense as it allowed critics to explain certain aspects of Virgil's *Eclogues*. By allowing that Virgil was imitating only golden age shepherds, critics were able to defend his polished use of language and introduction of metaphysical conceits that would otherwise be inadmissible in a genre whose aim is 'the imitation of the Action of a Sheapard'.¹³ Puttenham tried to explain the effects of the pastoral genre in terms of political allegory. The seventeenth-century critics take the opposite approach.¹⁴

¹⁰ Rapin, 'A Treatise de Carmine Pastoral', trans. Thomas Creech in Thomas Creech ed., *The Idylliums of Theocritus with Rapin's Discourse of the Pastorals Done into English* (Oxford: Anthony Stephens, 1684), pp.14-15.

¹¹ Fontenelle in Le Bossu, p.316.

¹² I do deny that the eclogue should be the first and most ancient form of artificial poesy, being persuaded that the poet devised the eclogue long after the other dramatic poems, not of purpose to counterfeit or represent the rustical manner of loves and communications, but under the veil of homely persons, and in rude speeches to insinuate and glance at greater matters, and such as perchance had not been safe to have been disclosed in any other sort', George Puttenham, *The Art of English Poesy*, in Gavin Alexander ed., *Sidney's 'The Defence of Poesy' and Selected Renaissance Literary Criticism* (London: Penguin, 2004), Part I chapter 18, p.89.

¹³ Rapin, p.19. Pope also insists that 'pastoral is an image of what they call the Golden age', *Discourse on Pastoral Poetry*, p.25.

¹⁴ Fontenelle protests against political allegorical pastorals, p.337.

Pope describes the limited allowable subject matter and means of delighting the reader thus:

This Variety is obtain'd in a great degree by frequent comparisons, drawn from the most agreeable objects of the country; by interrogations to things inanimate; by beautiful digressions, but these short; sometimes by insisting a little on circumstances; and lastly by elegant turns on the words, which render the numbers extremely sweet and pleasing.¹⁵

Pastoral means exactly what it says it does and its subject matter is strictly limited to landscapes and the lives of shepherds. Its delightful effects are created through the skilful use of poetic language, and the golden age myth is used to explain away the disjunction between the poems' elegant language and humble subject matter.¹⁶ It also ensures that no poet can introduce inappropriately rustic subject matter into the pastoral.

This insistence on the golden age was why Ambrose Philips's more realistic, English, pastorals, attracted so much ridicule from the neoclassicists. Gay's *Arcadia* is not English and it conforms in some ways to the neoclassical expectation for decorum and elegant language. There is nothing authentically rustic or lowbrow in *Dione*. Its subject matter is not political and seems to conform to the limited subject

¹⁵ Pope, *Discourse on Pastoral Poetry*, p.28.

¹⁶ The belief that pastoral is an imitation of golden age shepherds cannot wholly be sustained when reading Virgil as he did use some of his eclogues for political criticism. Knightly Chetwood does not mention the political aspects of Eclogue I in his 'Preface to the Pastorals with a short DEFENCE of VIRGIL, Against some of the Reflections of Monsieur Fontenelle' (in *The Works of Virgil* vol.I, trans. John Dryden (Glasgow: Robert and Andrew Foulis, 1769), Eclogue I discussed on p.xiv), yet the 'Argument' that appears as a headnote for Eclogue I in this edition explicitly states: 'The occasion of the first pastoral was this. When Augustus had settled himself in the Roman empire, that he might reward his veteran troops for their past service, he distributed among them all the lands that lay about Cremona and Mantua: turning out the right owners for having sided with his enemies. Virgil was a sufferer among the rest; who afterwards recovered his estate by Mecaenas' intercession, and, as an instance of his gratitude, compos'd the following pastoral; where he sets out his own good fortune in the person Tityrus, and the calamities of his Mantuan neighbours in the character of Meliboeus.' (p.1). The critics seem to have chosen to ignore the political side of ancient pastoral in order to promote their golden age idea.

matter proscribed by neoclassical critics. Yet *Dione* is not Rapin's golden age pastoral either, and tragic deaths are not amongst his acceptable pastoral subjects. The rebellion against the golden age pastoral idea in *Dione* suggests a greater realism and 'rationality' (whether Gay would have objected to that description of himself or not). It also suggests a desire to confound expectations, to create something that the criticism does not allow for. The irony of the *Shepherd's Week* could also be interpreted this way.¹⁷ This desire to be original and confound expectations can most clearly be seen in Gay's experimentation with conventional tragicomic plot elements in *Dione*.

The play's plot involves several well-worn conventions: court characters in Arcadia in disguise, love and abandonment, the rejected lover Dione acting as page to her beloved. Although *Dione* is subtitled 'A Pastoral *Tragedy*' (my italics) it uses so many of the well-worn tragicomic plot elements that the reader is genuinely in doubt about whether there will not in fact be a happy ending after all. The characters are all crossed in love, but it seems likely that there will be a re-pairing of the lovers that will ensure a happy ending; perhaps Dione with Cleanthes and Evander with Parthenia, or perhaps Dione and Evander will be reconciled and Cleanthes and Parthenia will be happy to remain single. What in fact happens is that Cleanthes, Dione and Evander all die in the inhospitable Arcadian countryside: Cleanthes is robbed and killed by a band of thieves; Evander kills Dione, partly out of jealousy that Parthenia prefers the 'page' to him, when he finds Parthenia and Dione struggling over a knife (Parthenia is trying to stop Dione from killing herself, but Evander leaps to the wrong conclusion

¹⁷ Nigel Wood in 'Gay and the Ironies of Rustic Simplicity', in Peter Lewis and Nigel Wood (eds), *John Gay and the Scriblerians* (London: Vision Press; New York: St. Martin's Press, 1988), pp. 94-121, and Judith Haber in *Pastoral and the Poetics of Self-Contradiction: Theocritus to Marvell* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), pp.153-60 both take the *Shepherd's Week* seriously as an ironic pastoral and experiment in the pastoral genre rather than a satirical parody of Philips. David Nokes, on the other hand, concludes that *Shepherd's Week* is a parody as irony and bathos are always at the ready to undercut potentially moving scenes of rural life, Nokes, p.143.

and stabs Dione, still believing her to be the page, in order to protect Parthenia); Evander kills himself when he realises all the wrong that he has done to Dione and, more indirectly, Cleanthes. Dione and Evander die for guilt as well as love. Parthenia remains isolated from the tragic events and at the end of the play still remains uninterested in love. Perhaps she survives because she has had no guilty passion.

The play's familiar tragicomic plot naturally leads the reader to expect a reconciliation rather than a tragic ending. But confounding the reader's 'natural' expectation of a comic reconciliation seems to be the whole point. *Dione* is a pastoral experiment, a testing of how far previous generic boundaries had been loosened and how far a dramatist could go in subverting convention. Restoration tragicomedy is highly stylised. By the time of *Dione* in 1720 the dramatic conventions governing pastoral tragicomedy have changed and the narrow range of acceptable plot options open to Restoration dramatists has widened, which means that tragicomedy is able to become tragedy. It is unrealistic to expect events to work out to one of a fairly narrow, predictable set of conclusions every time, and not surprising that a dramatist might have wanted to break out of the prescribed pattern. In one sense, *Dione* follows more realistic criteria than tragicomedy or romance. There is no reason why the woods and wilds of Arcadia should be less dangerous than those of any other part of Greece, or have fewer bands of robbers. It is surely more likely that Evander, who has already left Dione once for another woman, would be unable to stop loving that woman the moment that Dione reappeared on the scene than it is that Dione's presence would sort everything out. It would be absurd to say that *Dione* is realistic, but it does show a greater psychological realism than Forde or Shadwell's plays and the dramatist has a greater concern with verisimilitude. Gay knows that characters will not change their minds at the last moment simply in order to fit in with the

demands of the plot and he knows that, at the end of the day, there is no reason why things should turn out happily when a chain of events is set in motion by someone who abandons his fiancé, even if he does so in Arcadia. That there is a tragic ending to the conventional tragicomic plot shows that the seventeenth-century Arcadian tragicomedy has disappeared forever. Tastes have changed and dramatists are eager to experiment with new plots and ideas.

These new ideas, however, are not without their sources. Gay's *Parthenia*, the girl who does not love anyone, is based on Marcela, a character in Cervantes' *Don Quixote* who rejects love.¹⁸ *Don Quixote* is a satirical anti-romance, designed to show the absurdity of some of the conventions Romance takes for granted. This satirical Spanish romance is a new source for Arcadian drama that is very different to the Italian and French pastorals that had inspired authors in the seventeenth century. Earlier dramatists had not been interested in *Don Quixote* even though it was readily available to them as it was first published in 1605. It came into its own in the early eighteenth century, however, and inspired some of the earliest English novellists.¹⁹ It was translated by Charles Jarvis, who moved in the same circle as Gay and seems to have been a personal acquaintance.²⁰ The new popularity of the satirical and more realistic *Don Quixote* is further evidence of the eighteenth-century change in taste that had grown tired of conventional tragicomic plots.

¹⁸ Cervantes, *Don Quixote*, trans. Charles Jarvis, ed. E.C. Riley (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), pp.99-102 (Part I chp 14).

¹⁹ Examples are Charlotte Lennox's *The Female Quixote* (published 1752) and, famously, Fielding's *Joseph Andrews* (published 1742). Fielding had also earlier written the play *Don Quixote in England*. For the importance of *Don Quixote* to the eighteenth century novel see Lennard J. Davis, *Factual Fictions: The Origins of the English Novel* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983), p.11; John Skinner, *An Introduction to Eighteenth-Century Fiction* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2001), p.23.

²⁰ The evidence from Gay's correspondence suggests that he was friendly with Jarvis. Although no letter from Gay to Jarvis survives, they were both contributors to a letter sent jointly from Gay, Jarvis, Arbuthnot and Pope to Parnell in February 1716, and in a letter to Swift dated the 16th of September 1726 Gay mentions that he had to borrow sheets from Jarvis the last time Swift was his guest, C.F. Burgess ed., *The Letters of John Gay* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1966), pp.26-7, p.56. Jarvis's translation was published posthumously in 1742. Coincidentally, the same Pierre-Antoine Le Motteux who translated Fontenelle's treatise on pastorals also made a translation of *Don Quixote* at about the same time as Jarvis's.

Gay's Parthenia is very clearly based on Cervantes's Marcela. Marcela's beauty has attracted many suitors, one of whom dies for love, and she, like Parthenia, is blamed for the shepherd's death. Parthenia's speech in her own defence at the funeral of the love-sick swain is reminiscent of the speech Marcela makes under the same circumstances. Both Parthenia and Marcela are called 'basilisk' by the shepherds at the funeral and in both cases the suggestion is made that the corpse will start to bleed again because it is in the presence of its murderer. They both reply that they have only come to the funeral in order to clear their names, and both attempt this by pointing out that:

I ne'er trifled with a shepherd's pain,
Nor with false hope his passion strove to gain:
'Tis to his rash pursuit he owes his fate,
I was not cruel; he was obstinate (I.iii.17-20).

As Cloris discovered in *The Qveene's Arcadia*, when shepherds persist in dying for love there is not much a mere heroine can do to prevent it, but she does take the blame. Both Gay and Cervantes introduce pity for the beautiful heroine because she is censured and accused when all she wants is a quiet life:

Why will intruding man my peace destroy?
Let me content, and solitude enjoy (I.iii.25-6).

Parthenia does not want to be in love with anyone and wishes that they would all just leave her alone instead of rushing to their own destruction and blaming her for it:

If I'm a Basilisk, the danger fly,
Shun the swift glances of my venom'd eye:

If I'm a murd'rer, why approach ye near,
And to the dagger lay your bosom bare (I.iii.7-10).

Parthenia, like Marcela before her, rejects the conventional pastoral understanding of the 'cruel maiden' story. Daniel had earlier questioned this conventional plot more subtly in *The Qveenes Arcadia*, but had not rejected it outright as Gay does here. Parthenia's able defence of her own conduct, however, reveals the essential stupidity of the suicidal swain. In *Don Quixote*, Marcela's use of the same arguments leads Don Quixote to declare her innocent of her suitor's death, although the rural community persists in blaming her. The more realistic Cervantes and Gay reject pastoral convention and appeal to common sense. It is of course very unlikely that any young woman should be so uninterested in love, but on the other hand, once that unbelievable fact is accepted, Parthenia is presented perfectly credibly as shunning the suitors who embarrass her by their protestations and call her cruel names, and as not suddenly changing her mind about any of her existing suitors. Arcadians are always correctly paired off eventually, as we saw in Daniel, but in real life there is no reason why this should be so, and suicide is in any case not the best means of achieving marriage or inducing Parthenia to change her mind about love. In the figure of a young woman who genuinely does not love anybody, Gay introduces a new challenge to previous Arcadian society. As Parthenia survives where all the lovers die, he presumably approves of her conduct and clearly, unlike the Arcadians, does not blame her for the deaths of the others. Parthenia's avoidance of love connects to Gay's exploration of a time-honoured Arcadian theme, the proper behaviour of young women in love affairs, that is explored most fully in the character of Dione.

In his presentation of Dione's dilemma, Gay's realism seems to have grown out of the earlier contradictory traditions about female behaviour as he shows two different

expectations about the behaviour of virtuous women coming into conflict with one another. Dione should both be constant to her first love and marry the man who loves her and whom her father tells her to marry. At the end, Dione's friend Laura comments:

Unhappy maid,
Hadst thou a Parent's just command obey'd,
Thou yet hadst liv'd – But who shall Love advise?(V.iv.32-4).

Dione herself feels guilty when she comes upon the dying Cleanthes in the forest – she knew he had been looking for her but wanted to avoid him – and it is his death and his love for her that prompt her to attempt suicide.

But in following Evander and refusing to marry anyone else, Dione is only acting like Shadwell's virtuous Urania. Laura had earlier commented on Dione's corpse that 'There pure Constancy lies dead' (V.iv.13). It is impossible to reconcile Dione's two duties. Whichever way she acts, whichever man she is loyal to, she will be displeasing someone. The relative virtuousness or disobedience of Dione's behaviour is finally dependent not on what she does but on its interpreter. It depends also on Evander's attitude to her. As long as her first love loves her, she is virtuous to return his love. When he falls out of love with her - and not just temporarily, to be reconciled in the fifth act, but irrevocably - a completely new dilemma is created, one which Arcadia has never had to face before. Dione makes this connection herself:

He [Cleanthes] falls by thine, thou, by *Evander's* hate (V.i.98).

Dione cannot reconcile the loyalties she owes to both her family and her beloved and how well or badly she acts is ultimately judged not against any objective standard, but against how much her first love loves her. Instead of a clearly defined plot scenario, *Dione* is plotted around a moral dilemma. Because the plot is not prescribed but reacts to the choices of the characters its conclusion is not inevitable and the reader cannot be certain about what is going to happen in the end.

John Fuller calls *Dione* ‘an investigation into the rival claims of natural law and social convention in matters of love.’²¹ ‘Natural law’ would endorse the course of action that Dione takes, following her real love Evander even after he has abandoned her. ‘Social convention’ would rather she stayed in the court and obeyed her father even to the extent of marrying someone she does not love. The first option in this case ended in her death but there is no guarantee that the second option would have turned out any better. The Arcadian background that Gay creates is ideal for this investigation of Dione’s rival duties as it seems to be a space isolated from society. It is beyond the court, beyond Dione’s family and conventional duties. Both of her lovers but none of her responsibilities can be found there so it is a place where she can decide for herself how she is going to act, who to pursue and who to avoid. The wild Arcadia is a place for following the demands of love and ‘natural law’ rather than those of society.

This is a conventional description of the land of Arcadia, but it is of course not true of many of the earlier depictions of Arcadia that this study has so far considered. *Dione* is an obscure play yet ironically it fits in better with what critics usually claim about Arcadia than the better known works of, for example, Sidney and Guarini, who both show a strong interest in the Arcadian society. Imagining the society of this pastoral locale had until now been a major concern of Arcadia writers (if a declining

²¹John Gay: *Dramatic Works* volume I, p.36.

one in the Restoration), but in *Dione* the land is used as a wild setting that does not have a society, or at least no society that exerts any claims on the courtly characters. Gay's Arcadia is like the 'state of nature' in the philosophy of Hobbes and Locke, an imagined primitive age used for testing ideas about civilised society, but not a place with a civilised society of its own. Gay seems to see Arcadia as a place that is in a state closer to that of nature than anywhere else, and thus the ideal place to explore the importance of love and its influence on young women. His Arcadia is a pastoral landscape, unusual only in that it is a foreboding not idyllic landscape, where the claims of love can be explored without reference to society. In this respect it is unlike the Arcadias of the seventeenth century, where social organisation was important and where love was shown to be inextricably linked with the smooth running of society.

Perhaps one reason for this change in the way of thinking about Arcadia and reconciling love and society was the economic growth of the eighteenth century, that saw a rapid growth of factories and businesses and the corresponding decline of the family as an economic unit.²² What David Turner has shown to be a prevalent early seventeenth-century belief, that faithful, loving marriages would ensure the stability and prosperity of a society, may have been an influence on Daniel's Arcadian society.²³ But as the spheres of home and family diverged, it became more usual to see the claims of love and society as opposed rather than connected.

Gay's *Dione* can clearly be seen to end the seventeenth-century Arcadian tradition. It has no interest in either the myth of Arcadia's golden age perfection, or in its social organisation, both hallmarks of earlier descriptions of the land. Its tragic ending breaks with the conventions of seventeenth-century tragicomedy, and its main source,

²² See Susan Dwyer Amussen, *An Ordered Society: Gender and Class in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1988), p.187. She sees this decline in the importance of the family as social and economic unit, with the corresponding separation of men's and women's spheres beginning as early as 1660, and the analogies between the family and the state declining from about 1640 onwards, p.181.

²³ See David M. Turner, *Fashioning Adultery: Gender, Sex and Civility in England, 1660 – 1740* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), p.51, p.56, also discussed in chapter three.

Don Quixote, reflects the tastes of the early eighteenth century rather than the influence of any earlier depiction of the land of Arcadia. So why does the understanding of Arcadia change so radically at this time, and what replaces it as a second world? It is impossible to answer these questions with any certainty, but some suggestions as to what had changed in the eighteenth century can be offered.

Why does Arcadia disappear?

Firstly, following on from the suggestion made in the last chapter that more conventional utopias were increasingly able to replace Arcadia from as early as 1670, it can be observed that imaginary world fiction and travel literature continued to grow in popularity throughout the eighteenth century. Famous examples of early eighteenth-century travel narratives are *Gulliver's Travels* and *Robinson Crusoe*. There was a continued interest in travel and overseas exploration. The island of Ceylon, to give one example, was further explored in 1681 by an expedition sponsored by the Royal Academy.²⁴ Evelyn's diary records the public interest in the visit of the Moroccan ambassador to England in 1682, and also reveals his own and the Royal Society's interest in the tales of explorers.²⁵ Cook was to finish his first voyage in 1771 (admittedly rather later than when *Dione* was written in 1720) and new countries continued to be discovered (most significantly Tahiti). Travellers' tales even from less exotic locations were also extremely popular – Amy Elizabeth Smith

²⁴ See Andrew Varney, *Eighteenth-Century Writers in their World: A Mighty Maze* (Houndsmills and London: Macmillan, 1999), p.173.

²⁵ *The Diary of John Evelyn*, ed. William Bray (London: J.M. Dent and co., New York: E.P. Dutton and co., 1936). He records the visit of the Moroccan ambassador on the 11th January 1682, p.165, on the 26th August 1676 he had dinner with 'Captain Baker, who had been lately on the attempt of the North-west passage', p.111, and on more than one occasion met with Sir John Chardin who had travelled in Persia and India, p.149, p.195.

points out the success of Catherine D'Aulnoy's *Ingenious and Diverting Letters of the Lady-Travles into Spain* (first published in 1691, it had by 1739 gone through eleven editions, all the more remarkable as scholars now believe that D'Aulnoy had never been to Spain).²⁶ Against this background of traveller's tales and genuine discoveries of new countries, utopias and imaginary worlds must have seemed realistic and one does find stories of readers of *Gulliver's Travels*, like the earlier readers of More's *Utopia*, who were not sure if the work was actually purporting to be true.²⁷ Utopia seems more realistic than the strongly literary land of Arcadia in this respect, and seems to have better satisfied the taste of the reading public at this time.

There is also a second way in which the preference for traveller's narratives and imaginary worlds may have affected the interest in the land of Arcadia in the eighteenth century. Renato Poggioli blames the discovery of Tahiti in 1767 for the decline of pastoral in the eighteenth century.²⁸ More recently, James Sambrook also sees the discovery of Tahiti as 'the most imaginatively significant European discovery in the Pacific.'²⁹ Both Poggioli and Sambrook relate the discovery of Tahiti to a set of new myths that grow up in the eighteenth century, like the myth of the noble savage and the myth of the happy islands of the South seas. For Poggioli these replace the old pastoral myths, meaning there is no more interest in the pastoral genre; for Sambrook they are evidence of the new taste and ideas that develop in the eighteenth century and mark it as distinct from earlier generations. But I would like to suggest

²⁶ Amy Elizabeth Smith, 'Naming the Un-'Familiar': Formal Letters and Travel Narratives in Late Seventeenth- and Eighteenth Century Britain', *Review of English Studies* 54, (2003), p.181.

²⁷ Colin McKelvie, in the introduction to his edition of *Gulliver's Travels*, quotes Swift himself in a letter to Pope, describing someone he had met who thought the 'Book was full of improbable lies, and for his part, he hardly believed a word of it', *Gulliver's Travels* ed. Colin McKelvie (Belfast: The Appletree Press, 1976), p.8.

²⁸ Renato Poggioli, *The Oaten Flute: Essays on Pastoral Poetry and the Pastoral Ideal* (Cambridge Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1975), p.60.

²⁹ James Sambrook, *The Eighteenth Century: The Intellectual and Cultural Context of English Literature 1700-1789* (London and New York: Longman, 1986), p.193, see also pp. 192-4. It must be pointed out that this is a 'European' development though, and not a specifically English one – Literature Online searches of early eighteenth century English literature revealed no mentions of Tahiti, although there does seem to have been an interesting predilection for Jamaica as a setting at this time.

that Tahiti did not just help to create new myths, it also realised the old ones. It was a real Arcadia, satisfying both the older desire for an idyllic land still in the golden age and the current interest in exploration and exotic cultures. Ironically, the early descriptions of Tahiti reveal that, whether the setting is Tahiti or Arcadia, many of the same problems arise when an author attempts to imagine the real society of a supposedly idyllic land.

Although accounts of Tahiti had been published by explorers who had actually been there, Diderot was the first writer to imagine the land and society of Tahiti without having seen it. His fictitious account appears in his *Supplément au Voyage de Bougainville*, written in 1772, that is based on the explorer Louis-Antoine Bougainville's account of the island, first published in 1771.³⁰ Diderot is like all the authors of Arcadia who know the myth and the literary tradition of the place but have never visited it. Like all inventors of imaginary world communities, he finds it difficult to create the rules that will satisfy all the contradictory demands he makes of his ideal community. Some particular problems arise through the collision of his European standards with the values of Tahitian society as reported by Bougainville. For example, although he knows that there are no marriages or stable relationships in Tahiti and promiscuity is encouraged, he adds the proviso that women are only allowed to change partners once a month, so they can be sure of who the fathers of their children are.³¹ There is tension between Diderot's idea of the traditional family and Tahiti's more communal lifestyle, so that some Tahitian children are brought up by their parents and some are 'shared' by the whole community.³² As Diderot's Tahitians are devoted to the goal of strengthening their state by producing more

³⁰ As Sambrook points out, Diderot's *Supplément*, although written in 1772, was not published until 1796, p.194.

³¹ Denis Diderot, *Supplément au Voyage de Bougainville*, ed. Herbert Dieckmann (Geneva: Libraire Droz; Lille: Libraire Giard, 1955), p.39.

³² Diderot, p.31.

Tahitians, their treatment of infertile women seems particularly harsh; they are made to wear black veils that mark their condition and are forbidden from ever having any kind of relationship with a man despite the sexual freedom that is enjoyed by their compatriots.³³ There are also sanctions attached to young people who indulge in sexual relationships before their parents consider them to be old enough and they have been through a coming-of-age ceremony.³⁴ As in Guarini's *Arcadia*, the young Tahitians can not do whatever they like, they can only do what they like within the rules of their society, and those rules are handed down and protected by parents and elders (even if the Tahitian rules do seem quite liberal to the European reader). Just as it happened in *Arcadia*, the attempt to imagine the society behind the mythical ideal world only results in the conviction that the golden age cannot exist and the society behind it must be organised and ruthless in its pursuit of its ideals if it is to sustain its golden age illusion.

In Diderot's *Tahiti* the problem arises from the author's European outlook and failure to really understand the culture and values of the alien nation. But in his misunderstanding and his attempt to imagine a society like the one he is used to behind the island's seeming perfection, Diderot is in exactly the same position as the earlier English creators of *Arcadia*. His *Tahiti* experiences exactly the same anxieties as *Arcadia*: the problem of how to organise a society around the love affairs that seem to be its main business, how women and girls should respond to love and how they should be treated and educated, with the resultant question of what is the point of such a society solved in the same way that Daniel solved it in *The Queenes Arcadia* – love is encouraged because it produces more contented natives, ensuring the survival of the society. *Arcadia* itself may have disappeared, but the ideas and impulses behind it can

³³ Diderot, p.41.

³⁴ Diderot, pp.33-4.

still be found in the new imaginary worlds that presented themselves in the eighteenth century. These new settings, first utopias and imaginary worlds, as was briefly discussed in the previous chapter, and then Tahiti, by taking over many of the concerns of Arcadia ensured that there would be little interest in continuing to recreate Arcadia itself.

I have defined Arcadia as a literary type that sits halfway between the genres of pastoral and utopia, and partakes of some of the qualities of both. Arcadia and utopia, as we have seen, diverged in the eighteenth century owing to the taste for travel narratives that culminated in imaginary accounts of the real island of Tahiti. This would seem to push Arcadia back towards the pastoral genre. So another possible reason for the disappearance of Arcadia in the eighteenth century might lie in the decline of the pastoral genre at this time. Although there was no noticeable decline in the popularity of the pastoral, there was a decline in the genre's significance and importance. Ironically, this can be attributed to the increased critical attention that it began to receive. Rapin, Fontenelle and their followers, as we have seen, prescribed strict rules for the form and subject matter of pastorals, blocking improvisation and experiment and so having the effect of stultifying the genre's imaginative energies.

One aspect of critical thought about the pastoral that has already been touched on is the insistence that all pastorals must be set in the golden age. As disproving this notion is an integral part of writing an Arcadia, such a stricture could not fail to severely hamper the potential for recreating Arcadia. Gay in *Dione* has gone the other way, not creating a golden age but uncompromisingly rejecting it. That too, though, is a more simplified and less balanced approach to the land of Arcadia than had been usual in seventeenth-century authors. In Arcadia the opposites of the mythical perfect place and the place where extreme and tragic events unfold could be held in balance

and tragedy could always be explored but averted. In *Dione* this has broken down because Gay deliberately refuses to consider Arcadia as a perfect place. For him it is only a place where love turns out to be unfulfilled or complicated and tragic events unfold, and this means that one side (the positive side) of the delicate Arcadian balance of opposites is missing in *Dione*. In the minds of the critics, it's the other way around and it's the negative side of Arcadia that is denied existence. Either way the previously complex land of Arcadia is simplified. By forcing Arcadia into the golden age, the potential for dialogue or balance between the golden and ideal world versus the real world that underlies the myth was destroyed.

One example of this simplification of the pastoral can be seen in the theorists' treatment of female behaviour. In Virgil's third Eclogue, when Galatea 'pelts me with an apple, then runs off to the willows – and hopes I saw her first', Rapin is quick to explain that 'this doth not proceed from any malicious ill-natur'd Coyness, as some imagine, but from an ingenuous modesty and bashfulness, which usually accompanies, and is a proof of *simplicity*'.³⁵ Dryden also found in pastoral depictions of love 'a perfect image of that passion which God infused into both sexes, before it was corrupted with the knowledge of acts, and the ceremonies of what we call good manners'.³⁶ Daniel's serious investigation of the problems created by the conflict between natural and educated behaviour in Arcadian love affairs is simply ignored or denied. In *Dione*, Gay uses Arcadia as a place to represent love in its natural state, not as a place where opposing values can be tested and resolved. Pastoral critics in the late seventeenth century denied that there was any depth to the pastoral genre. But this was not a sudden change: the value of the pastoral and of Arcadia had been steadily decreasing since the 1660s. Even by the time of the Restoration, the

³⁵ Virgil, *Eclogues, Georgics, Aeneid I-VI*, trans. H. Rushton Fairclough, revised by G.P. Gould (Cambridge Mass.: Harvard University Press (Loeb Classical Library edition), revised edition 1999), III.64-5, p.43, and Rapin, p.42.

³⁶ Quoted in Congleton, p.174.

subtleties that Daniel addressed in *The Qveene's Arcadia* were becoming undermined by the demands of the new dramatic style. The decisive change of taste on the part of pastoral critics is only what finally ended the long slow process of Arcadia's decline that had begun with the advent of Beaumont and Fletcher's sensational, plot based dramaturgy. Pastoral was no longer about exploring and testing ideas, and in fact pastoral parody became popular in the early eighteenth century.³⁷

Of course, authors are not necessarily influenced by critics, and *Dione* is certainly full of experimentation in its rejection of the conventional tragicomic plot and the belief that pastoral is set in the golden age. Johnson, however, missed the play's subtleties and experimentation with plot, dismissing *Dione* as if it were a conventional pastoral with no novelty to recommend it: 'A Pastoral of an hundred lines may be endured but who will hear of sheep and goats, and myrtle-bowers and purling rivulets, through five acts?'³⁸ Perhaps the problem lies not so much in the critics as in the audiences. Criticism in popular publications like the *Guardian* and *Spectator* may have led to a popular idea that pastoral was conventional and dull. David Fairer argues that eighteenth-century poets preferred to pour their creative energies into georgics rather than pastorals because the georgic mode allowed them to celebrate new technologies, industrialisation, progress and modernism of all kinds.³⁹ The pastoral was considered to be too constrained and circumscribed to be able to adapt to this new subject matter and was only written as an opportunity for satire.⁴⁰ Pastoral becomes a kind of satirical 'non-georgic'; not progressive, not modern, and only highlighting modern georgic values by its inability to include them. The rise of the

³⁷ Examples of pastoral parody include Lady Mary Wortley Montagu's 'Court Poems', that transfer events of court life into pastoral eclogue form, and, arguably, the *Shepherd's Week* itself.

³⁸ Samuel Johnson, *Life of Gay*, quoted in Fuller, p.36.

³⁹ David Fairer, *English Poetry of the Eighteenth Century 1700-1789* (London: Pearson Education Ltd., 2003), pp.79-80.

⁴⁰ See Fairer chapter five, especially p.80, pp.84-5.

georgic, perhaps more than the strictures of pastoral critics, may have contributed to the decline in the importance of the pastoral in the eighteenth century.

The real watershed in the history of English pastorals, however, is not the new criticism of the early eighteenth century, but the realistic pastorals of Wordsworth in the later part of the century. As J.E. Congleton has shown in his study of the history of the pastoral in the eighteenth century, although there was intense debate about the relative merits of Pope's 'neo-classical' pastorals and Ambrose Philips's 'realistic' ones, debate that initially saw Philips severely criticised for not following the prescriptions of Rapin and Fontenelle, taste steadily swung in favour of greater realism in pastorals as the century progressed. Congleton sees realism and the pastoral as incompatible and considers this movement towards realistic pastoral in the eighteenth century as what finally killed off the English pastoral tradition: 'When the Romantic critics pushed pastoral theory into the realm of realism, they exceeded the bounds of the genre'.⁴¹ The decline of the pastoral in the eighteenth century may in the end be explained less by Rapin and Fontenelle's interference with the flexible Renaissance conception of the pastoral, pushing it into the golden age and limiting its subject matter, than by the fact that their theory went unheeded by writers in search of realism. In *Dione* in 1720 greater realism in plot and character, impatience with convention, and rejection of the golden age setting are already evident, yet even *Dione* was too conventionally pastoral to satisfy the taste of Johnson, writing in the mid-century. In the end all that can be said with certainty is that the value and even the nature of the pastoral, that had enjoyed pre-eminence before the civil war and had never been questioned in the Renaissance, began to be questioned in the early eighteenth century. Various movements, towards golden age pastoral, towards realism, towards parody and satire, can be discerned within this general re-evaluation

⁴¹ Congleton, p.314.

of the genre. It does not matter exactly which of these movements is held to be primarily responsible for the demise of Arcadia; the point is that the pastoral genre itself, for all these reasons, became unstable at this time and lacked its former prestige. The steady rise of pastoral realism in particular, however, makes it seem likely that the definitely literary land of Arcadia would have increasingly not suited contemporary tastes. It is certainly true that depictions of Arcadia had disappeared before Wordsworth's time, and it did not reappear until long after the Romantic movement was over.

A final point, that has often been noted but is nonetheless worth reiterating, is that the decline in Arcadia in the eighteenth century corresponds to a growth of interest in landscape architecture and garden planning. Perhaps the new vogue for physically creating fantasy pastoral landscapes was partly responsible for the waning interest in imagining pastoral lands. Tom Stoppard's 1994 play *Arcadia* makes this point clearly as the 'Arcadia' of the title seems to refer to the changing styles of garden design that the characters experience. Pope is one example of a pastoralist who never felt the need to write another pastoral after he had created his garden at Twickenham. Pope's carefully planned garden, as Sambrook has shown, had themed areas including an area that represents death or mourning with an obelisk commemorating his mother in the darkest and shadiest part of the garden, and areas of pleasure in the sunnier part of the garden whose main feature was a miniature temple.⁴² Incidentally, these areas correspond to some of the main episodes in Sannazaro's *Arcadia* – the funeral games in book XI, the temple in book III, and the numerous pleasant glades where the shepherds allow their flocks to graze. Probably it does feel pointless imagining what Arcadia would be like from indoors when you could just step outside into your

⁴² Sambrook, p.161. He also offers a plan of Pope's garden, pp.162-3.

recreation of it.⁴³ Marie Antoinette is another example of someone who chose not to read pastoral but to physically recreate it. Her pastoral landscape in the grounds of the royal palace of Versailles, like Pope's garden at Twickenham, was an idealised and unrealistic version of shepherds' lives derived from literary pastoral. Yet there is a way in which the attempt to build and engineer and physically create pastorals can be seen as part of a desire for a greater sense of reality – the progression from reading about milkmaids to going out and milking one's own cows – even though that reality was idealised and heavily contrived. Landscape architecture may be another example of the taste for pastoral realism that rendered the literary land of Arcadia superfluous and out of date. And of course someone with views like Marie Antoinette's would not have appreciated an Arcadian warning that there is no ideal pastoral world.

Dione can clearly be seen to be the end of the previous Arcadian tradition as it demonstrably simplifies, changes or ignores many of the main concerns of that tradition. Gay's new take on Arcadia can be linked to various aspects of the new taste of the eighteenth century, especially in the most relevant genres of pastoral and utopia, although it is of course never going to be possible to arrive at a definitive answer to the questions of why Gay wrote *Dione* in the way he did or why the earlier literary tradition of writing Arcadias should have ended at this time. The exact reasons behind why tastes change are complex and contradictory, but do not finally matter much. The fact that does matter is that the old, anti-pastoral, ironic way of writing Arcadia, showing an interest in its social organisation as well as its love plots and questioning the popular belief that it is a perfect place, had come to an end.

⁴³ Although deliberately creating a garden that would stand comparison with Sannazaro's *Arcadia* may not have been Pope's intention, indeed no one has ever suggested that it was. The similarities, though, are striking even if they are accidental.

Arcadia did not disappear forever, and is frequently referenced in nineteenth century poetry, but what the nineteenth century authors mean by Arcadia is different from the seventeenth-century conception of the land. Poets now tend to lament the fact that industrialisation or time or maturity have destroyed their Arcadia. George Augustus Simcox asks us to ‘write upon my tomb for me,/ “I too have been in Arcady”’; Yeats laments that ‘The woods of Arcady are dead’; Lady Emmeline Stuart-Wortley considers the faculty of memory to be ‘a green Arcadia for the heart.’⁴⁴ Arcadia is not being seen as a real place in these descriptions but as a metaphor for a lost point in time. By the same token, it has to be imagined as a perfect place or time, not one that can be explored and undermined by its author, or there would be no point in feeling nostalgia for it. Even the seemingly darker poems of the late nineteenth century that focus on the exploits of Arcadia’s god Pan, such as Robert Browning’s ‘Pan and Luna’, are essentially reacting against the idea of Arcadia as a pastoral ideal (like Gay in *Dione*), and do not try to reconcile the land’s positive and negative aspects.⁴⁵

Happy Arcadia, a play by William Schwenk Gilbert first performed in 1872 in which all the characters are completely miserable and admit to this whenever they are on stage alone, but have to pretend to be happy Arcadians as soon as anyone approaches, bears an interesting relationship to the carefully choreographed Arcadian happiness found in Daniel’s *Qveenies Arcadia*, but Gilbert’s play too has to be seen as a satire of the contemporary belief in Arcadia’s perfection rather than a return to its Renaissance roots. Later poets continue to accept the early eighteenth century’s understanding of the pastoral as the uncomplicated representation of the golden age. Because they see

⁴⁴Simcox in ‘Et Ego in Arcadia Fui’ (*Poems and Romances*, London: 1869), Yeats in ‘The Song of the Happy Shepherd’ (Richard J. Finneran ed., *The Collected Poems of William Butler Yeats* (New York: Scribner Paperback Poetry, 1996), and Stuart-Wortley in ‘Memories’ (*Queen Berengaria’s Courtesy and Other Poems*, 1838. Text taken from the Literature Online database).

⁴⁵ Paul Grootkerk points out the number of Victorian authors who wrote about Pan, including Browning, Robert Louis Stevenson (‘Pan’s Pipes’), Oscar Wilde (‘Santa Deca’), and Algernon Charles Swinburne (‘Pan and Thalassius’, ‘A Nympholept’, and ‘The Palace of Pan’), in ‘The Satyr’ in Malcolm South ed., *Mythical and Fabulous Creatures: A Source Book and Research Guide* (New York, West Port, Connecticut and London: Greenwood Press, 1987), p.221.

Arcadia as unrealistic it can be satirised or wistfully contrasted with reality, but that does mean that, even though Arcadia experiences a resurgence in popularity in the nineteenth century, the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century tradition of using Arcadia to explore reality was gone forever.

Conclusion

It turns out, then, that Arcadia is not an idyllic pastoral land after all. The pastoral landscape of Arcadia is in fact one of literary allusion and reinterpretation, and this ensures that the negative as well as the positive interpretations of the land and society of Arcadia familiar from ancient literature find their way into the English Arcadia. Sidney found inspiration in Polybius as well as Sannazaro, creating for later English authors the model for a pastoral landscape with a richly detailed society that sometimes, inevitably, undermines its own idyllic associations. In *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia* he creates a specific and detailed world as the setting for his story, but this is deliberately contrasted with the dream of pastoral escapism entertained by some of its characters. Caroline and Restoration Arcadias are more conventionally pastoral, but through Sidney's influence the awareness of the impossibility of some of the wilder aspects of the pastoral dream persists, creating ironic and negative undercurrents in many representations of Arcadia produced in these periods.

Because this body of ancient myth is specific only to Arcadia, Arcadia in the works of these authors is a specific place, and not interchangeable with any other pastoral setting. The focus on Arcadian society and imagining the practical details of what it would be like to live there means that depictions of Arcadia go beyond the pastoral genre and have elements in common with the literary utopia. Literary utopia is completely distinct from pastoral images of the golden world, as Berger makes clear. It is less clear, though, how Arcadia fits in to the dichotomy of second world and green world, or utopia and pastoral. The second world, or utopia, is flexible and

complex, aware of social and political problems that cannot be easily solved. The Renaissance Arcadia, in spite of its association with the pastoral, is like this too, particularly in Daniel's *Qveene's Arcadia*, where the imagined society becomes ever more complex and contradictory in a bid to reconcile plot elements drawn from Italian pastoral tragicomedy and satirical city comedy with the overarching belief that Arcadia is naturally perfect. Arcadia is a land that bridges the gulf between the two genres of pastoral and utopia.

What the history of Arcadia in English literature finally shows is the constructed and artificial nature of seemingly natural and unchallengeable concepts such as society, pastoral and perfection. This is why Sidney's oxymoronic summary 'civil wildness' is a good description of it, as amongst many other possible meanings this phrase hints at the futility of attempting to create or impose civility, order, and even meaning on a land (or in some cases a body of literature) that remains stubbornly wild and irreducible to a neatly patterned and predictable order. Writers of Arcadia show that their perfect worlds are just illusions and creations. In fact creating seeming perfection is practically an act of will: anyone can make a golden age Arcadia – or seeming golden age Arcadia – who is willing to create their society in such a way as to suppress all negative or troublesome elements such as free choice in marriage, or slavery (hinted at in Sidney's rebellions in Lacedomia and Arcadia). The fact that Arcadia and its meanings change over time (from the Classical world to the Renaissance and Restoration to the nineteenth century and beyond) is a real-life example of how malleable and artificial the seemingly timeless notions that it explores actually are.

This study began by quoting at length Ben Okri's idealised pastoral view of Arcadia. By way of symmetry, it will end with a quotation from another modern author, one

who pursues a different vision of Arcadia that shows an awareness of historical contingency and the constructed nature of its seemingly timeless ideals. This is Lady Croom in Tom Stoppard's play *Arcadia* objecting to the proposed plans to redesign her garden in the new picturesque style:

But Sidley Park is already a picture, and a most amiable picture too. The slopes are green and gentle. The trees are companionably grouped at intervals that show them to advantage. The rill is a serpentine ribbon unwound from the lake peaceably contained by meadows on which the right amount of sheep are tastefully arranged – in short, it is nature as God intended, and I can say with the painter, '*Et in Arcadia ego!*'¹

Needless to say, Lady Croom's carefully arranged pastoral scene is swept away in favour of more modern constructions, and the 'engraving of Sidley Park in 1730' (I.ii, p.27) becomes the other kind of Arcadia, an idealised image of lost perfection, for Hannah, the garden historian who arrives to carry out research at Sidley Park in the late twentieth century.

But it is not enough to conclude that the mid-eighteenth century garden is the true Arcadia of the title and all the other gardens are degenerations of this original perfection, as it is made clear that Hannah's preference for the garden of 1730 is no more than a personal taste and not an objective or professional opinion. 'I don't like sentimentality', she tells Bernard, an admirer of the picturesque style, in explaining why she prefers the earlier garden. But he responds, disconcertingly, 'Are you sure? You seem quite sentimental over geometry' (I.ii, p.28). Hannah seems here to have allowed her own inclinations to colour her interpretation of the past, although Bernard himself goes on to misinterpret past events far more radically when he erroneously

¹ Tom Stoppard, *Arcadia* (London: Faber and Faber, 1993), I.i, p.12.

concludes that Lord Byron killed another poet in a duel while they were both guests at Sidley Park when the garden was being modernised for the second time.

Stoppard's garden is like Arcadia; no one of its incarnations can be seen as perfection, or 'nature as God intended', but each incarnation represents the attempt to achieve perfection according to contemporary taste. What emerges is not the timelessness of either Arcadia or perfection, but a sense of their precariously artificial and constructed natures. The garden is destined to change as tastes change, and which garden the twentieth-century expert prefers is no more than an act of individual taste. Arcadia is like the garden art that perhaps superseded it in the eighteenth century: an artificial and malleable construct that is open to change and reinterpretation. But like the garden, it survives until the present day, although in a somewhat altered form.

Stoppard's Arcadian garden demonstrates that Arcadia is not a natural ideal, but carefully planned and engineered according to the ideas of its creators. The modern playwright thereby shows himself to understand what his seventeenth-century counterparts knew very well about the nature of Arcadia. Arcadia is not a naturally and eternally perfect place because there is no such thing. Instead, the perfect place must be created, organised and governed by human endeavour. The attempt to imagine the details of Arcadian life only entangles its author in an involved rearrangement of social and sexual mores that should not have surfaced in the ideal Arcadian retreat at all. For the Arcadian authors of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, as for Stoppard, the artificiality and implausibility of the poetic myth of Arcadia becomes an opportunity to expose the impossibility of ever achieving perfection – in society or in gardens. The Renaissance and seventeenth century depictions of Arcadia offer a means of critiquing their society's ideas both of the ideal pastoral world and of an ideally well-managed and harmonious (or 'natural') society.

Arcadia, as Stoppard shows, is still liable to misinterpretation by later generations, but, in contrast to the prevailing interpretation of it as an idealised pastoral land, a careful reading of the English Arcadias of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries reveals a literary landscape that is considerably more hard-edged, ironic and unidealistic than many modern literary critics and garden historians allow for.

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